

Why ESU?

In Fall 2010 and Spring 2011, undergraduate students who indicated their plan to graduate that semester were invited to complete the Graduating Student Survey (GSS). Within the GSS respondents were asked 'Why did you select ESU?' as an open ended question. Of the 531 respondents to the survey, 496 provided a written response to this question. The responses were parsed into broad categories and then quantified in the table below. Note that individual student responses could contain items fitting multiple categories. Typical comments for each category are provided below for context.

Category	Percent of Students Stating as Reason
Location - Proximity to Home	55%
Program Availability/Quality	52%
Cost	23%
Atmosphere/Size/Facilities	16%
Friends/Family/Reputation	13%
Sports/Athletics	11%
Area/Environment	5%
Class Size/Student Teacher Ratio	4%
Scholarship	2%
Other	8%

Location – Proximity to Home

For commuters, financial savings were often mentioned in conjunction with location.

- The location allowed me to commute from home when I started and now I live in an off-campus house (about 40 minutes away from campus), which enables me to keep working at my job throughout college.*
- ESU is close to where I live, which was important because I wanted to stay at home and commute to school in an attempt to save money for after graduation.*

The perfect balance of being away from home but not too far away comprised a second subcategory of comments.

- I enjoyed the fact that it was far enough from my home town that I couldn't go home all the time but close enough that if I needed to I could get home.*

- *It was far enough but not too far from home.*

The ability to share college experiences with family or to maintain proximity to family during times of crisis was also cited.

- *I chose ESU because it was close to home, I wanted my parents to be able to come see my basketball games. My dad passed away in 2008, he was my biggest fan. I am thankful everyday that I was close enough to home for him to come see my games the last days he was alive, and extremely thankful I was only a 30 minute drive from the hospital the night he died.*

Program Availability/Quality

Academic program availability and quality comments ranged from generic to the university overall, to availability of a specific desired program, to the quality of specific desired program.

- *good academic school*
- *ESU also had the major I was interested in*
- *Because I wanted to study Exercise Science, and I heard from several people that they had a good program.*
- *ESU has a well-known program for education. It started as a teaching school and it still is a great teaching school.*

Cost

Comments indicated that ESU was perceived as an economical choice ranging from generic statements to comparisons to other institutions to specifics on why ESU was economical to them personally.

- *Affordable*
- *Also money was a concern and ESU was the right price.*
- *it was cheaper than the surrounding universities*
- *more affordable than other institutions*
- *ESU had an economics degree program at a lower cost than the tuition I paid even after the Wilkes Scholarship at Wilkes University, making ESU a great choice for me.*
- *ESU is close to home so I could commute and save money so I wouldn't graduate in debt.*

Atmosphere/Size/Facilities

The campus itself – size, facilities and overall atmosphere - was an important factor in students' decision to attend ESU.

- *I selected ESU because of its size. I wanted to go to a small school where I would not just be a number.*
- *loved the school because it was a small size but had a BIG school feel with the different events that were going on.*
- *It was a beautiful campus*
- *clean campus, and a nice location between urban and rural life.*
- *Big library and recreation center.*
- *buildings (class, cafe, union, gym, dorms) were all in the same general area.*

Friends/Family/Reputation

Reputation and relationship to alumni who are family, friends and/or role models were given as reasons for choosing ESU.

- *Most of my friends attended.*
- *My mother, aunt, sister, and 3 cousins attended ESU.*
- *High School Guidance counselor*
- *When I graduated from high school in 2000 I had an amazing high school Math teacher that attended ESU. She was wonderful and I wanted to be just like her. I unfortunately only attended one year because I lost my financial aid. Many years later I was given the chance to go back to school and I decided there was no place I would rather graduate from than ESU! And I have finally become the teacher I have always wanted to be.*

The extent of word-of-mouth from current students to potential students was clear in the following comment.

- *I selected ESU because of the size, surroundings, distance and most importantly the education. I had heard it was an excellent school to go to for education. I did not know anyone at the school and it was not a school anyone applied to from my graduating class. At this moment with the word of mouth, I have 11 friends that have now enrolled as freshmen and continuing sophomores at ESU because of the success I have had and the enjoyment I have told them about the past four years.*

Sports/Athletics

Specific sports were cited as the reason for selecting ESU.

- *I was recruited to play soccer my freshman year.*
- *Because of the great football tradition and coaches*
- *While searching for possible schools to attend, I noticed the soccer team here was doing well and anticipated playing on the ESU team.*

Smaller numbers of students cited the physical environment with the corresponding recreational opportunities, small class sizes, and scholarships received as reasons for selecting ESU.

Area/Environment

- *The beautiful scenery, close location to NYC*
- *ESU is located next to the Delaware Water Gap, which I spent much time in throughout my stay at ESU.*

Class Size/Student Teacher Ratio

- *Small classroom size*
- *I also chose ESU because I thought the class size and student to teacher ratio was excellent and I was right because I have been able to develop academic relationships with professors which I do not think I would have had an easy time doing at a larger university.*
- *The small classroom size made it easy to choose over Temple or Penn State, two other colleges that I was accepted to.*

Scholarship

- *I was offered a scholarship for full tuition; it would be foolish to pay more elsewhere.*
- *offering a scholarship for me to hurdle on the indoor and outdoor track and field team*
- *Free scholarship program offered through partnership with Pennsylvania Child Care Association*

Other

There were a variety of other specific reasons given for selection of ESU.

- *ESU accepted more credits than any other college. I attended Reading Area Community College prior to attending ESU.*
- *They also made a phone call to tell me all about the elementary education program which sold me on coming to the school.*
- *It was my 3rd choice, I wasn't accepted to my other choice(s).*
- *Because I paid my own way, ESU also offered great opportunities for on campus work.*
- *medical reasons*
- *I liked the marching band program*