

# WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY

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## OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

### **2018 Subsequent Enrollment of Accepted Students (SEAS) Study**

A Closer Look at Students who Declined to  
Enroll after their Acceptance to William Paterson

July 25, 2019

## Introduction

The Subsequent Enrollment of Accepted Students Study is conducted annually by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The purpose of the study is to take a closer look at students who were accepted to William Paterson, but declined to enroll. The report is organized into three sections.

- **Section I.** addresses the question *“Which students are declining to enroll?”* by analyzing data from our institutional database. This section examines the demographic and academic profiles of Fall 2018 admitted students who declined to enroll and compares them to students who were admitted and enrolled to see which students we are losing based on these characteristics.
- **Section II.** addresses the question *“Where are those who declined going?”* by analyzing data queried from the National Student Clearinghouse. This section breaks those who declined into two distinct groups: students who opted to enroll elsewhere and those who are not attending college at this time. Both groups are analyzed with a special focus on the enrollment behavior of those who enrolled elsewhere.
- **Section III.** addresses the question *“Why did these students decline to enroll?”* by analyzing survey data from our annual SEAS Survey. The instrument asks those who declined about their future plans, whether their reasons for not attending William Paterson were institutional or personal, and what would have persuaded them to enroll at William Paterson University.

## Methodology

The annual study uses admissions data to define its population. The study looks at students who were admitted to William Paterson University, but declined to enroll in Fall 2018. This population is compared to the population of students who were accepted and enrolled at William Paterson in Fall 2018.

Undergraduate students admitted to William Paterson University and enrolled: n=**2,604**

Undergraduate students admitted to William Paterson University and declined to enroll: n=**6,760**

Undergraduate students admitted to William Paterson University: n=**9,364**

## Section I. – Which students are declining to enroll?

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### DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

**Gender:** Although more females enrolled at William Paterson University than males in Fall 2018, a higher percentage of admitted males enrolled (31 percent) compared to female admits who enrolled (26 percent).

Table 1. Enrollment Decision by Gender

	Enrolled		Declined		Total Accepted
	N	%	N	%	N
Male	1,124	31.3%	2,470	68.7%	<b>3,594</b>
Female	1,480	25.6%	4,290	74.4%	<b>5,770</b>

**Race/Ethnicity:** The majority of admits to William Paterson in Fall 2018 were Hispanic (35 percent), however White students enrolled at the highest rate.

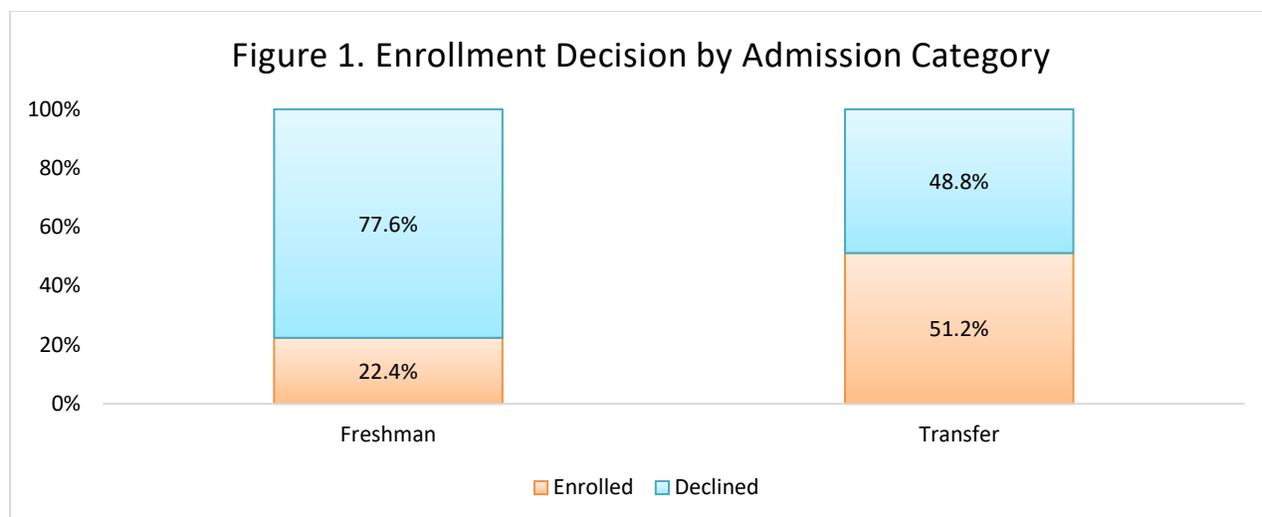
Table 2. Enrollment Decision by Race/Ethnicity

	Enrolled		Declined		Total Accepted
	N	%	N	%	N
Hispanic (all races)	903	27.5%	2,380	72.5%	<b>3,283</b>
White	834	29.2%	2,022	70.8%	<b>2,856</b>
African American	589	28.4%	1,482	71.6%	<b>2,071</b>
Asian	157	22.9%	529	77.1%	<b>686</b>
Multi-racial	91	28.6%	227	71.4%	<b>318</b>
Other/unknown	18	21.4%	66	78.6%	<b>84</b>
Non-resident alien	9	16.4%	46	83.6%	<b>55</b>
Native American	3	27.3%	8	72.7%	<b>11</b>

**Age:** An analysis of age showed that the mean age of those who declined was slightly lower (19 years of age) in comparison to those who enrolled (21 years of age).

### ACADEMIC PROFILE

**Admission Category:** The percentage of Freshmen who were admitted to William Paterson and enrolled (22 percent) was substantially lower than the percentage of transfers who were admitted and enrolled (51 percent).



***A Closer Look at the Non-Enrolled Who Entered WP as Freshmen***

**Combined SAT Score:** The average combined SAT score of those who declined to enroll was slightly higher (1037) than those who enrolled in Fall 2018 (999).

***A Closer Look at the Non-Enrolled Who Entered WP as Transfers***

**Class Level at time of Admission:** Students who had more accepted transfer credit hours enrolled at a higher rate.

**Table 3. Enrollment Decision by Transfer Class Level**

	Enrolled		Declined		Total Accepted
	N	%	N	%	N
Senior	5	83.3%	1	16.7%	<b>6</b>
Junior	332	70.3%	140	29.7%	<b>472</b>
Sophomore	364	53.2%	320	46.8%	<b>684</b>
Freshman	199	33.4%	397	66.6%	<b>596</b>

**Major:** When looking at majors with ten or more students who were admitted in Fall 2018, majors with the lowest decline rates were Liberal Studies (B.A.), Public Health (B.S.), Sociology (B.A.), Sales (B.S.), and Art (B.F.A.). Majors with the highest decline rates were Biotechnology (B.S.), Mathematics (B.S.), Environmental Sustainability (B.S.), Asian Studies (B.A.), and Political Science (B.S.).

Table 4. Top 10 Majors<sup>2</sup> with the Lowest Decline Rates

	Enrolled		Declined		Total Accepted
	N	%	N	%	N
Liberal Studies (B.A.)	25	51.0%	24	49.0%	<b>49</b>
Public Health (B.S.)	26	41.9%	36	58.1%	<b>62</b>
Sociology (B.A.)	60	40.3%	89	59.7%	<b>149</b>
Sales (B.S.)	6	40.0%	9	60.0%	<b>15</b>
Art (B.F.A.)	17	38.6%	27	61.4%	<b>44</b>

Table 5. Majors<sup>1</sup> with Highest Decline Rates

	Enrolled		Declined		Total Accepted
	N	%	N	%	N
Biotechnology (B.S.)	3	8.3%	33	91.7%	<b>36</b>
Mathematics (B.S.)	5	16.7%	25	83.3%	<b>30</b>
Environmental Sustainability (B.S.)	3	16.7%	15	83.3%	<b>18</b>
Asian Studies (B.A.)	2	16.7%	10	83.3%	<b>12</b>
Political Science (B.A.)	17	17.7%	79	82.3%	<b>96</b>

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<sup>1</sup> Includes majors that had 10 or more accepted students in Fall 2018.

## Section II. – Where are those who declined going?

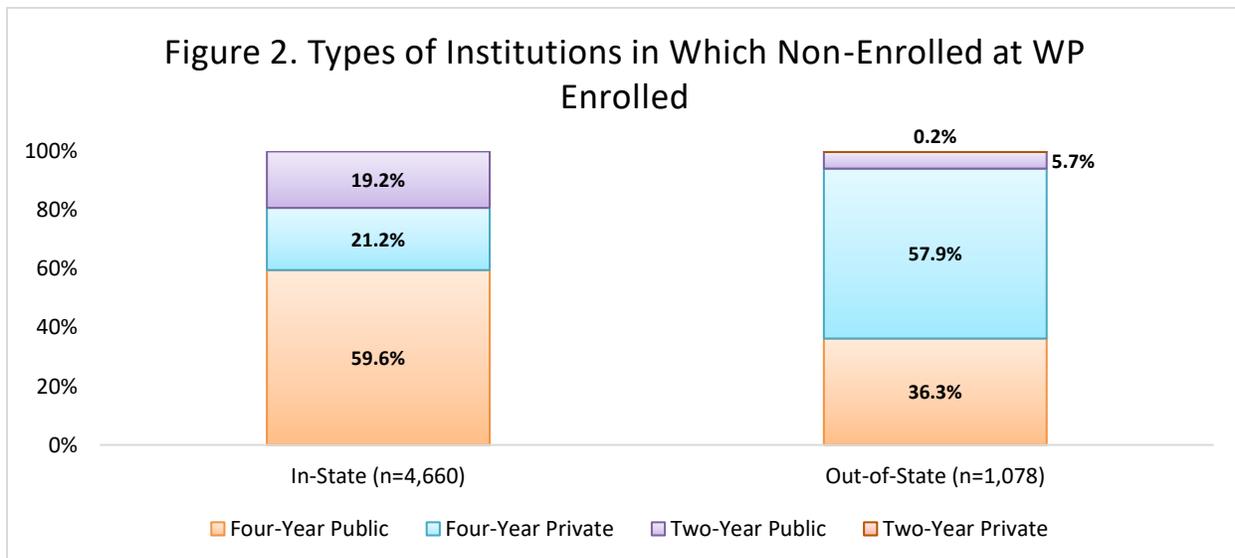
To determine the subsequent enrollment activity of those who declined to enroll, this subset of 6,760 students was submitted to the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). The National Student Clearinghouse is a non-profit organization created by the higher education community that maintains enrollment and graduation data for over 98 percent of U.S. college students from over 3,600 colleges and universities. The ‘StudentTracker’ service provided by the NSC allows colleges and universities to track the subsequent enrollment of their students.<sup>2</sup>

**Subsequent Enrollment:** The majority (85 percent) of admitted students who declined to attend William Paterson University in Fall 2018 subsequently enrolled at another institution. The rate of subsequent enrollment has remained the same as the prior fall.

Table 6. Subsequent Enrollment Activity, Two-Year Trend

	Fall 2017		Fall 2018	
	N	%	N	%
No Enrollment Record	1,057	15%	1,022	15%
Enrolled Elsewhere	5,893	85%	5,738	85%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,950</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>6,760</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Subsequent Institution Type:** Eighty-one percent of students who enrolled at another institution enrolled within the state of New Jersey. Sixty percent of those who remained in New Jersey subsequently attended four-year public institutions. The majority (58 percent) of those who pursued their education outside of the state went to four-year private institutions.



<sup>2</sup> National Student Clearinghouse “About the Clearinghouse” (<https://studentclearinghouse.org/about/>)

**Institutions of Choice:** The top institutions where those who declined subsequently enrolled were Montclair State University, Kean University, Rutgers University (Newark), Ramapo College, and Bergen Community College.

Table 7. Top Institutions the Declined Chose to Attend

	N	%
Montclair State University	853	15%
Kean University	400	7%
Rutgers - Newark	309	5%
Ramapo College Of New Jersey	259	5%
Bergen Community College	210	4%
Other	3,707	64%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,738</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Major at 4-year Institution:** The top five majors students selected at their subsequent four-year institutions of choice were Biology, Nursing, Psychology, and Criminal Justice. The majority (34 percent), however, did not declare a major.

Table 8. Majors of those who Declined at Four-Year Institutions

	N	%
Undeclared/Unspecified	1,463	33.7%
Biology	269	6.2%
Nursing	261	6.0%
Psychology	229	5.3%
Criminal Justice	169	3.9%
<i>Other Majors</i>	1,945	44.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,336</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Major at 2-Year Institution:** The top five majors students selected at their subsequent two-year institutions of choice were Professional Studies, Biology, Criminal Justice, Business Administration, and Health Science.

Table 9. Majors of those who Declined at Two-Year Institutions

	N	%
Professional Studies	86	9.7%
Biology	46	5.2%
Criminal Justice	43	4.8%
Business Administration	42	4.7%
Health Science	39	4.4%
<i>Other Majors</i>	631	71.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Section III. – Why did these students decline to enroll?

The Subsequent Enrollment of Accepted Students Survey was distributed to the 6,760 students who were admitted to William Paterson, but declined to enroll. These students received an initial survey invitation via email followed by two reminders asking them to participate in the web survey. Three hundred twenty-six students (five percent) completed this brief 7-question survey.

**Future Academic Plans:** Respondents were asked what their future academic plans were. The majority (65 percent) of respondents stated that they had already enrolled at another institution and 17 percent planned to delay enrollment, but were still considering William Paterson University.

Table 10. Future Academic Plans

	N	%
Enroll elsewhere this fall semester	209	64.9%
Delay enrollment, but considering WP	56	17.4%
Delay enrollment, considering another college	13	4.0%
Entering workforce	14	4.3%
Other	30	9.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 11. Other Future Academic Plans

1	After the Provost did not show up at an Open House, I enrolled at Rutgers and received Master Degree in Adult Education. I completed in August!!
2	Already enrolled at WPU
3	Applied to another college
4	Attend a school for little to no money!
5	Attending automotive school wanting to learn buisness
6	Better schools out there
7	committed to a different university
8	Continuing my EDUCATION
9	Continuing my studies at Berkeley college.
10	Enroll this fall semester but I am undecided what university I will be committed to
11	Enrolling for spring semester at WP
12	Entering the U.S. Armed Forces
13	I am in the workforce. I am a Medical Assistant. I would like to enroll in the RN program but I have 4 prerequisites to take first. I had 6 but I am taking 2 right now.
14	I'm trying to take Winter, Spring, and summer classes. I'm trying to complete a double major at William Paterson
15	im in Montclair right now but I am thinking of transferring g to William paterson
16	In the workforce and enter enrollment early with some help
17	Looking to enroll at WP for Spring term 2019
18	Marine Corps.

19	military
20	Need the semester off
21	None at the moment
22	starting my studies
23	Stay at PCCC then transfer to a 4 year college
24	Transfer from PCCC With an associate degree to a university
25	Transfer to WP
26	Undecided
27	Went to community college first

**Reasons for Leaving:** To better understand why these accepted students did not enroll at William Paterson, the survey asked whether their reasons for not attending were personal, institutional, or both.

Table 12. What Types of Reasons Led to Your Decision to Not Enroll at WP?

	N	%
Personal reason(s)	114	40.1%
Institutional reason(s)	57	20.1%
Both personal and institutional reasons	113	39.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**What would have persuaded you to enroll:** Students were asked what, if anything, would have persuaded them to enroll at William Paterson University. These responses have been separated to show the responses of those who are not currently attending another institution (Table 13) and those who decided to enroll elsewhere (Table 14).

For those who did not attend another institution, 30 percent who responded to the question “What would have persuaded you to enroll at William Paterson University?” mentioned affordability, 13 percent cited program options, 10 percent mentioned financial aid, and 10 percent said distance/location would have persuaded them.

The below comments are for internal use only and for the purpose of improvement.

Table 13. If *not currently enrolled*, what would have persuaded you to enroll at WP?

1	Availability of more constructive programs for special need
2	cheaper
3	Cheaper tuition
4	Dorms being more sizable Living in a different state
5	Financial aid
6	Full paid tuition or half.
7	Help with tuition.

8	I am concerned about financial aid and how I would be able to pay for housing.
9	I am enrolled
10	I am set to enroll at William Paterson University after I complete my 4 remaining prerequisites. It is cheaper for me, right now, to take them at community college. I would like to apply for scholarships now or in the future.
11	I chose Montclair because it was closer to my house but I want to transfer to William Paterson for next year.
12	I have already been accepted twice to William Paterson, and loved the college tour when I visited the school. I also admire the scenery and the buildings. And thought I would reapply for this semester.
13	I needed a significant amount of scholarship. At Lincoln Tech I only pay 124 a month for 15 months meaning I don't owe much plus I got scholarships like no tomorrow from the school.
14	I wanted to pursue Nursing at Willy P but I was not accepted into the Nursing program and was not sure what other major I would like to pursue.
15	I would have majored in criminal justice
16	I, personally, would consider William Paterson a wonderful college that I would love to enroll in. I believe that WP has a lot of potential for me to achieve a higher education.
17	If I could have had attended the school for little to no money with the help of grants.
18	If I received more money
19	If I received scholarships and was accepted into my major
20	IF THEY HAD A SOCIAL WORK MASTER PROGRAM I REALLY DO NOT WANT TO TRAVEL FAR TO GO TO ONE. ALSO, MORE CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS LIKE MEDICAL INTERPRETER 40 HR PROGRAM OR OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMS .
21	if tuition was cheaper
22	It was a big turn off when Provost no-showed an open house & no one knew why & kept telling me he must be on his way. The program I was considering was newer so that no-show made me nervous. Also it was half on ground & Rutgers offered all online & that was a better fit for me with my demanding full time position & my son being a senior in HS.
23	Its close to my home and I take classes within Mercer to complete my BA
24	Just beginning my Electrical apprenticeship schooling, but might re-enroll for Fall 2019.
25	MONEY
26	More \$\$\$
27	More financial aid
28	More financial aid
29	More guidance.
30	More scholarship money, or grants, even if just for books
31	Not a nearby college
32	Not sure.
33	nothing really. I got into my top school but if I didn't I would go to WP
34	Planning to enroll in Spring 2019
35	Proximity

36	Sure, I will
37	The commute
38	The nursing program you have to offer
39	Visit and tour of the university
40	Well I want to prove myself that I can afford to do anything with help.

For those who decided to attend another institution, 32 percent who responded to the question “What would have persuaded you to enroll at William Paterson University?” stated cost of attendance, 17 percent cited program options, and 10 percent mentioned location/distance.

Table 14. If *currently enrolled elsewhere*, what would have persuaded you to enroll at WP?

1	a better education program
2	A bigger scholarship
3	A dental program
4	A full ride, or near that.
5	a good teacher education 5 year master program
6	A little too far, but certainly thinking about it when I’m done with my associates
7	A scholarship. Every other school I applied to I was accepted and offered a scholarship, except WP.
8	Accepting more of my credits
9	After I get my associates
10	Being in California
11	Bergen’s cheaper.
12	Better academic standing, bigger size
13	Better financial aid package than the one I'm currently receiving.
14	Better Hearing and Speech program, better tuition.
15	Better rooms more specific major
16	Better top tier scholarship options. I was offered the top scholarship but it didn’t even cover full tuition. Ramapo’s presidential scholarship is much better.
17	Catering more to the opportunities in my field. If there was more programs for public relations or business I may have attended.
18	cheap easy to get into school it was a saftey
19	College of Saint Rose gave me a 75% tuition waiver and it played an important part
20	Cost
21	Field hockey
22	Financial aid/ tuition
23	Financial reasons, mire specially wasn’t provided any scholarship from you institution.

24	Financial scholarship
25	Financial Situation
26	Financial stability
27	Full ride
28	Getting accepted would have been a start.
29	Getting into the nursing program
30	Getting scholarship for the school
31	good nursing program
32	Heard it was a very good school to attend and I really did want to attend to but the way my money was set up i couldn't do it.
33	Higher admission standards, more competitive, etc.
34	I can't afford it but by next year I'll be transferring over because it's great
35	I decided not to enroll at WP because I couldn't transfer in as a nursing student. I decided to stay at Montclair since it's closer.
36	I did not get into William Paterson
37	I enrolled to Stockton University the fall semester but ended up withdrawing and getting refunded because I didn't like being away and dorming. I have applied to Montclair State as a readmit because I have already been accepted but did not enroll, to start as a freshman for the Spring 2019 semester. However, if they do not reaccept me, I will reapply to other schools such as William Patterson. I am looking to commute to a 4 year university close to where I live. Depending on where I get accepted is where I will attend.
38	I just want to do 2 years to get my associates at Bergen and then transfer to William Paterson to do 3 years for my Masters
39	I still intend to go to William Paterson after completed an Associate's Degree at community college.
40	I wanna go to William Paterson but i feel as Financial aid won't cover me to have a room on-campus because i would like to stay on campus if i do attend.
41	I wanted a Vet Tech program and only BCC has it
42	I wanted to go there when I was younger
43	I wanted to go to a school with co-op.
44	I was not accepted in the course I wanted. That was the only reason. In fact, WP was my first choice. The fact that i was not accepted, it changed the course of my life and what I will pursue. I had applied for Music/ trombone and audio production. Also, I wished you offered audio production on its own. I would have done that!!
45	I was not accepted into my program of choice. I did not re-apply to another major as suggested. I am pursuing my major of choice at another institution.
46	I was not eligible to enroll into the WP Nursing Program due to insufficient credits to be transferred from Bergen Community College
47	I was not given any merit scholarships and could not afford \$28,500 tuition per year.
48	I will be attending community college for 2 years then I'll transfer to William Patterson

49	I will be going into my second year there. Im in my freshman now. I believe i completed this last year.
50	If financial aid doesn't cover my costs to attend as a commuter, I have absolutely zero interests in attending and will pursue better opportunities elsewhere.
51	If financial aid would have covered my whole tuition I would have enrolled for the 2018 fall semester.
52	If I could see my financial aid since I never got the packet and I submitted my fafsa
53	If I didn't get in anywhere else
54	If I had not moved to a different state and if WP had given me more money
55	If I was being offered more financial aid.
56	If I was given some finical help
57	If I were able to get credits for all the classes I already took at Berkeley College then I would've attended William Paterson University.
58	If it was closer
59	If it were closer to where I live
60	If my financial aid package were much better from you guys, I would have definitely enrolled in your school.
61	If the institution was closer to home.
62	If there weren't so many people from my high school who went there and if I ever got my financial aid packet that could've helped. And the EOF program.
63	If they had offered me EOF, or more financial assistance, since TCNJ offered me a full ride for two years with EOF.
64	If they had the curriculum I was looking for, because I was going to go for Graphic arts but there wasn't much game design, which I wanted to do, so I attened another school.
65	If WP was a bit closer to my house or if I was given a better offer financial wise compared to Montclair State University.
66	If you offered more online courses towards a BS in business management. Night classes are not enough in today's world. For busy adults trying to pursue an education who may live far from campus.
67	Increased amount of majors offered and closer proximity to metropolitan areas
68	It's was mostly a distance thing. If the school was closer, it would have been more convenient for me.
69	More financial aid.
70	more financial help
71	More money
72	More scholarship money
73	Nicer dorms & smaller campus or smaller student body
74	no comment
75	Nothing

76	Nothing
77	Nothing
78	Nothing, I just wanted to be closer to home.
79	Nothing. It was a safety school.
80	personal reasons I need to take care of
81	Scholarship
82	Scholarships
83	Scholarships
84	Scholarships
85	Scholarships
86	Scolarship
87	Sharing a bathroom with three other people instead of communal style
88	Sports
89	TESU accepted more of my credits towards degree completion and all their classes are offered online
90	The application was a little difficult with figuring if I was accepted into WP EOF program. Also, I wasn't intrigued by the accounting program.
91	The cost. I could not afford it with getting loans
92	The nursing program
93	The price was unaffordable at the moment..
94	The school that I am currently attending has a Five year speech program where you can get your masters at the end. If William Paterson had the five year speech program, I would have attended.
95	The supportive staff and career preparation would have persuaded me to enroll at William Paterson University.
96	to be accepted into the nursing program after my first semester
97	To have set me my acceptance letter earlier than they did.
98	Tuition too high
99	Unfortunately, I wanted to attend William Paterson university for nursing and not criminal justice, when I tried to switch majors I was advised that it would be nearly impossible to get into the university's nursing program and my best bet was obtaining my RN at community college. I was accepted into Passaic county's community college's nursing program and I am currently attending.
100	Wanted to be away from home. Too close.
101	Well, the only reason I did not attend WP is because of transportation. I did not have enough money to dorm. However, when I do transfer after finishing my two years at a community college, I want to transfer to WP.