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Almost two-thirds of them are first generation college students, with neither parent having attended college. Furthermore, 92% are white, non-minority students. Roughly one-third are not working toward any particular degree, another one-third are working toward an undergraduate degree, and the remaining one-third are interested in a graduate and/or professional degree.

More than three-fourths of the Outreach students say they did not miss anything by taking Outreach classes rather than being on the UW campus. Almost all (93%) say they would recommend taking Outreach classes to friends and relatives. Although some express concerns about difficulty in transferring

Outreach credits, overall the students are very satisfied with all aspects of their Outreach education. For example, most believe that their Outreach degree is worth as much as a UW on-campus degree.

Satisfied customers bring in more customers, and the most commonly named source for finding out about Outreach is the recommendation of a friend or relative. Additional effective sources are advertisements in radio, television and newspapers.

The Outreach School has already set to work to incorporate findings from the needs assessment, both strengths and shortcomings, into its current operations and its plans for the future.

*The SRC and SCC are units of the College of Arts & Sciences at the University of Wyoming. For further information, to set up an initial consultation or to inquire about job openings, call (307) 766-4209, e-mail burke@uwyo.edu or visit the Web site at: www.uwyo.edu/src.*

Text and layout by Annette Tezli.

**Services of the SRC & SCC:**

Clients of the Survey Research Center and the Statistical Consulting Center may choose from a wide variety of services. Here is a partial list:

- ◆ Statistical consultation with a professional
- ◆ Sampling
- ◆ Creating questionnaires
- ◆ Questionnaire development and pretesting
- ◆ Focus groups
- ◆ Conducting surveys in various formats
- ◆ Statistical analysis
- ◆ Presentation of results



# Field Notes from the SRC

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An Outreach classroom with compressed video.  
(Photo courtesy of Outreach School.)

## SRC completes needs assessment for UW Outreach School

With the University of Wyoming moving into the second five-year cycle of academic planning, the Outreach School anticipated that an up-to-date needs assessment would be crucial for the planning process.

Working closely with Outreach Dean Maggi Murdock and Outreach Lecturer Steve Aagard, the SRC developed a multifaceted research effort. According to the Dean: "The mission of the UW Outreach School is to deliver the programs of the University to the state and beyond. That requires that we know what learning needs exist for current and potential students, as well as Wyoming citizens and employers. Needs assessment, however, is a complicated and

time-consuming undertaking. The expertise and efforts of the UW Survey Research Center are essential to ensure that the Outreach School needs assessments are current and accurate."

In a first step, questions of interest to the Outreach School were added to a previously scheduled survey of Wyoming employers conducted in July 2002. During 2003, five focus groups were held around the state, as well as a telephone survey of recent Outreach students.

In the spring of 2003, focus groups with five key constituencies were organized and moderated by Lynn Jones, an adjunct faculty

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## Former clients bring repeat business

While seeking to serve new clients, the SRC remains committed to keeping established clients satisfied. Repeat business is therefore a welcome sign.

For example, Memorial Hospital of Converse County commissioned a replication of the Rural Health Resources Survey, which the SRC first conducted two years ago. In August 2003, 421 telephone interviews were completed with a questionnaire very similar to the one used previously, to provide an overall picture of the health care preferences, satisfaction, and needs of Converse County residents.

The Wyoming State Bar Association is another client the SRC has worked with repeatedly. In even-numbered years, the SRC has been conducting the Bar's Judicial Advisory Poll, which provides feedback to judicial officials about their performance and helps the public to make more informed decisions in judicial elections. In 2003, the SRC joined with the Statistical Consulting Center (SCC) for the latest Wyoming State Bar Member Survey (conducted solely by the SCC in prior years). A total of 1342 questionnaires were returned by mail. The SRC's report to the Bar summarized the opinions of its members on a number of current issues.

The Wyoming Department of Health (WDH) has kept the SRC busy with a number of different projects. For the Wyoming Telehealth Survey, 3,000 questionnaires were mailed to healthcare professionals in September 2002. To enhance healthcare services in rural states such as Wyoming, telehealth technologies help to provide services over long distances employing telecommunications and medical computer science.

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Another SRC project for the WDH is the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS). Every new mother who gave birth in Wyoming during 2002 received a paper-and-pencil questionnaire from WDH. In cooperation with UW's Center for Rural Health Research and Education (CRHRE), the SRC handled the data entry and analysis.

The SRC, CRHRE, and WDH also collaborated on the just-completed State Planning Grant (SPG), a federally funded study of the availability and affordability of health insurance in Wyoming. In October 2002, the SRC mailed out more than 7,000 questionnaires to random households in Wyoming, achieving a response rate of nearly 70%. An additional 1,200 interviews were conducted by telephone. The SRC also participated in designing an employer questionnaire for the project, which was administered by the Research and Planning section of the Wyoming Department of Employment.

In December 2003, the SRC completed the third Institutional Image study for UW's Division of University Public Relations. High school students, parents, and school

counselors in Wyoming and Colorado were again surveyed by telephone. The previous studies were conducted in the spring of 2001 and 2002; this fall's survey contacted twice as many respondents. The objective of the study was to provide an overview of how respondents assess the University of Wyoming compared to other colleges and universities in the region.

Another University client in 2003 was the UW College of Agriculture. The College entrusted the SRC with two different studies: a needs assessment for the Cooperative Extension Service and Agricultural Experiment Station (CES/AES), and a survey of participants in the 2003 National Conference on Student Writing and Critical Thinking in Agriculture. The CES/AES study included a mail questionnaire addressed to key constituency groups and a telephone survey of the general public on priorities for research and extension activities in the future. The other survey, conducted by mail and e-mail, obtained feedback from conference participants on their success in implementing ideas from the conference on their own campuses.

**Some SRC & SCC Clients This Year:****University of Wyoming Offices**

Center for Rural Health Research and Education  
College of Agriculture  
Division of University Public Relations  
Intercollegiate Athletics  
Outreach School

Wyoming Statistical Analysis Center

**Wyoming State and Local Agencies**

Memorial Hospital of Converse County  
Teton County Public Library  
Wyoming Department of Education  
Wyoming Department of Health  
Wyoming Division of Victim Services

**National Organizations**

National Park Service  
University Consortium of Geographic Information Science

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member in the UW College of Business. The objective of the focus groups was to obtain information about possible problems and key issues related to the mission and scope of services provided by the Outreach School. The constituency groups included UW faculty, Casper-area business leaders, state government and secondary education personnel, community college faculty, and recent Outreach students.

This fifth group also provided specific input for the development of a questionnaire that was used in computer assisted telephone interviews conducted in May and June, 2003. The Outreach School provided the SRC with a list of all students who had taken at least one Outreach course during 2002, along with their last known phone number. A total of 1,007 telephone interviews were completed.

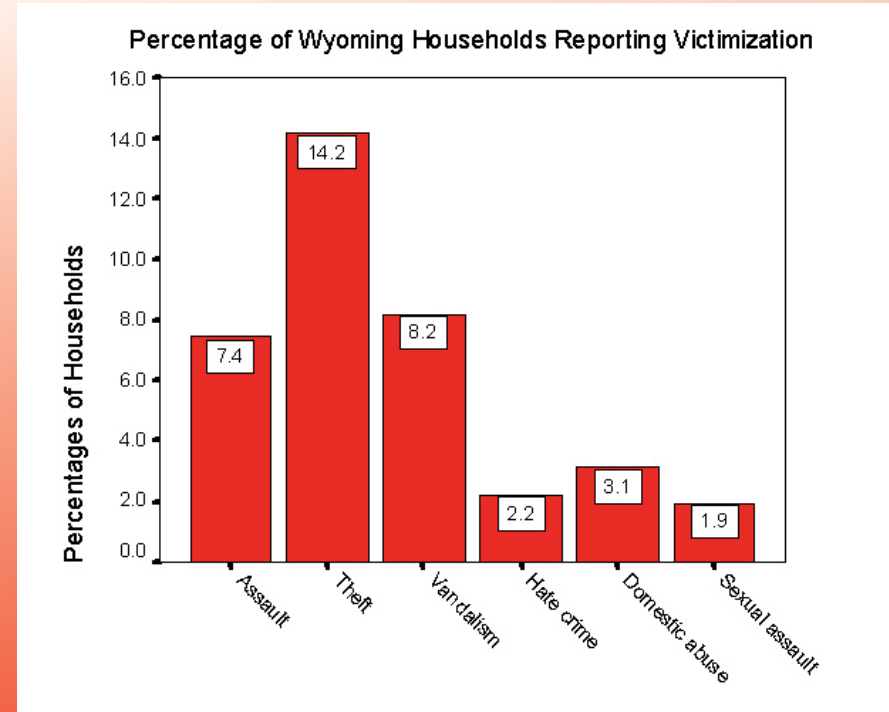
"The expertise and efforts of the UW Survey Research Center are essential to ensure that the Outreach School needs assessments are current and accurate."

Maggi Murdock, Dean of Outreach School.

The survey was to answer the following questions: What is the UW Outreach School student profile? How visible is the UW Outreach School? How satisfied are students with services provided by the Outreach School?

More than three-quarters of Outreach students responding to the survey are female, suggesting that women who are site-bound by family obligations may be especially likely to take advantage of the opportunities for distance education that Outreach provides. Consistent with the view that a key audience for Outreach consists of non-traditional students, more than a third of the respondents are older than 45.

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Source: Scott Freng (Wyoming Statistical Analysis Center), from Wyoming Crime Victimization Survey data, 2003.

## First-ever Wyoming crime victimization survey

In a cooperative effort with the Wyoming Division of Victim Services (DVS) and the Wyoming Statistical Analysis Center (WYSAC), the SRC recently completed the first statewide crime victimization survey in Wyoming. The survey was funded by the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics.

In September 2003 a draft questionnaire was pre-tested in statewide telephone interviews with 96 respondents. The results suggested a low rate of crime victimization in Wyoming. While good news for the public, the low rate would inevitably lead to small numbers of victims available for full-length interviews in the main survey. Therefore, the questionnaire was further polished by the introduction of a more complex

skip logic. This allowed respondents who had not experienced any kind of crime to be asked briefly about their demographics and their awareness of the availability of DVS services, while victims of crimes could be questioned in greater detail about the crimes they had experienced.

Ultimately, 1,439 interviews were conducted in October 2003. The survey was administered by telephone on a statewide random-digit sample of households, stratified by county with probabilities proportional to county size. Scott Freng, an Assistant Lecturer in the UW Department of Psychology, is taking the lead on the data analysis for WYSAC, which will issue a full report on the findings this spring.



