

## **Choosing a Transfer Institution: What Our Alumni Tell Us**

Research literature on the factors affecting students' choice of college focuses almost exclusively on why these students select the first school they attend. Little is known, however, about what prompts the choice of a transfer institution. Our 2007 Alumni Survey, given to a sample of students in baccalaureate programs who earned an associate degree or at least 30 credits at Oakton and last attended in 2003-04 or 2005-06, gives us some insights into this question. Specifically, we asked alumni who had transferred to tell us how important each of a host of reasons were in their choices. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being 'very important,' here's what they told us (about 400 alumni responded to each item).

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Mean</b>
My Oakton credits transferred easily to that institution	4.5
It had the program I wanted	4.3
It had a reputation as a good school	4.3
It had articulation or transfer agreements with Oakton	4.1
I liked the location of the school	4.1
It was affordable	4.0
I liked the quality of faculty	3.9
It was close to home	3.7
I was offered a good financial aid package	2.9
It was close to work	2.8
My family encouraged me to go there	2.5
I had friends who were going there	2.4
A representative from the institution encouraged me to go there	2.0
An Oakton advisor or faculty member encouraged me to go there	1.8
I had attended the school before or while at Oakton	1.6
My employer encouraged me to go there	1.5

We know from other studies that Oakton's convenient location and affordability are the two key reasons students choose to come here. It is interesting that transferability of credits, program and reputation are the key reasons driving the choice for a transfer institution. In our complete Alumni Survey Report, we shall explore these data in more depth.