



## Mason Korea Student Profile and Welcome Survey Highlights Academic Year 2014-15

### STUDENT PROFILE<sup>1</sup>

By spring 2015, Mason Korea enrolled a total of 142 students, including 76 women and 66 men. Of the 142, 132 were international students, primarily South Korean citizens (128 of 132; 4 are unreported), and 10 were Mason Fairfax students. Enrollment is up significantly from the previous two semesters (see Table 1 in the Appendix).

Of the 132 international students,

- 81 have declared Business or Pre-Business; 36 have declared Global Affairs; and 15 have declared Economics as their intended majors
- 92% reported Korean as their native language
- The average age at admission was 19.4 years old, and the oldest students were 26

### MASON KOREA WELCOME SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

The Mason Korea Welcome Survey was sent to 69 students enrolled at the Mason Korea campus in August 2014, and 73 matriculating in February 2015. The students were encouraged to complete the survey during the campus orientation period. The survey included questions about their academic experiences, expectations, and plans for college. The survey was open for 3 weeks each time, and yielded 94 responses (66%) for the academic year. This report presents the highlights of the results. Data tables are presented in the Appendix.

#### Past Educational Experiences

- 81% of respondents have lived in an English-speaking country, and 71% have attended an English-speaking school
- 61% studied English in school, or in a private institution such as a Hagwon
- 40% have used an English language tutor during their school years
- The top three favorite subjects in high school were: Visual and Performing Arts (21.5%), History (13%), and Business Studies (13%); followed by Mathematics (12%) and Social Sciences (12%)
- 89% of respondents have studied abroad for an average of four years; 83% of students who studied abroad had at least one of these experiences in an English-speaking country (United States, Australia, Canada, or New Zealand)

#### Academic Expectations

- 64% of students reported that they expect to prepare for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students often or very often
- 69% said that they expect to discuss course topics and ideas with faculty members outside of the classroom often or very often, and 61% were very certain that they would ask instructors for help if they struggle with course assignments
- Of concern is that 42% worry about their ability to succeed academically, and a quarter of respondents do not feel prepared to write clearly and effectively
- Over two-thirds of respondents expected it to be somewhat or very difficult to manage their time, and 79% expected it to be somewhat or very difficult to learn course material
- Students reported that it is somewhat or very important to them that Mason Korea provide:
  - an academically challenging experience (96%)

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<sup>1</sup> Student profile data from Mason Korea Admissions application file

- opportunities to interact with diverse students (98%)
- learning support services (99%)

### Academic Goals

- 88% reported that getting good grades is important to them, and 85% said that graduating from college is necessary to achieve their academic goals
- 76% of the respondents expect to graduate from Mason, and 20% were uncertain; the uncertain students reported that they may transfer to another school (7 students), or get a job (2 students)
- Respondents' academic aspirations vary:
  - 51% expect that a bachelor's degree is the highest level of education they will complete
  - 21% plan on earning a master's degree
  - 19% expect to complete a doctoral or professional degree

### Student Comments

Students were asked some open-ended questions about their expectations and concerns for their education at Mason Korea. Below are summaries of the most common responses, with sample comments.

*Why did you choose Mason Korea?*

- To get an American or international education while staying in Korea and/or living near their families: *Mason Korea is an American university in Asian environment. This special characteristic fits with me who is a Korean but with some international experiences and thoughts.*
- To improve English skills and interact with English speakers: *I choose Mason Korea because I could have more opportunities to speak in English. Also, I can have chances to speak with foreigners daily.*
- Students view Mason as a respected American school: *Because George Mason is somewhat famous school in the world by college of business and the campus...*

*Which experiences at Mason Korea do you think will be the most valuable to you, and why?*

- Relationships with students and faculty: *The most valuable experience to me will be establishing deep connections and relationships with the professors and students because I believe it is through relationships [that] we truly grow.*
- Diversity and cultural experience: *Interacting with diverse people is the most valuable experience for me, since it is the global society.*
- Small class size and low faculty-student ratio: *Learning from distinguished professors, having a small family-like community with other Korean students.*
- Internships, English language and other communication skills, and cultural experiences that will help them get jobs in international companies

*What most concerns you about being a student at Mason Korea?*

- English proficiency and getting enough practice speaking English: *unable to follow the class due to lack of English ability*
- Academic performance and writing essays: *I am little worried about whether I can keep up with good grades...*
- Time management

The following quotes elegantly summarize the hopes for the current Mason Korea class:

- *At Mason Korea, I hope to be challenged and motivated to learn in-depth about the world [in which] I live. I hope to be in a learning environment where students and professors can have a deep relationship.*
- *I look forward to getting the best educational opportunities, job experiences such as intern[ships], and having amazing college experiences with fellow Mason students.*

## APPENDIX

All figures are percentages; n=94 except where noted. Because of the small number of responses, 6-point scales have been collapsed into 3-point scales to make the data more meaningful.

**Table 1.** Student Enrollment at Mason Korea: Spring 2014, Fall 2014, and Spring 2015 Semesters

	Total Enrollment Spring 2014	New for Fall 2014	Total Enrollment Fall 2014	New for Spring 2015	Total Enrollment Spring 2015
International Students	34	35	62	87	132
Mason Fairfax Students	6	4	7	8	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>142</b>

**Table 2.** During the coming school year, about how often do you expect to do each of the following?

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Ask another student to help you understand course material*	25.5%	38.3%	31.9%	4.3%
Explain course material to one or more students*	12.8%	42.6%	39.4%	5.3%
Prepare for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students*	18.1%	48.9%	29.8%	3.2%
Work with other students on course projects or assignments*	22.3%	48.9%	26.6%	2.1%
Discuss course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class* (n=93)	21.5%	47.3%	29.0%	2.2%

**Table 3.** During the coming school year, how difficult do you expect the following to be?

	Very difficult	Somewhat difficult	Not at all difficult
Learning course material*	20.3%	58.5%	21.3%
Managing your time*	21.3%	46.8%	31.9%

**Table 4.** How prepared are you to do the following in your academic work at this institution?

	Very prepared	Somewhat prepared	Not prepared
Write clearly and effectively*	18.1%	57.5%	24.5%
Speak clearly and effectively*	24.4%	54.3%	21.3%
Think critically and analytically*	21.3%	58.5%	20.2%
Analyze numerical and statistical information*	22.4%	63.8%	13.9%
Learn effectively on your own*	30.8%	57.4%	11.7%

**Table 5.** During the coming school year, how certain are you that you will do the following?

	<b>Very certain</b>	<b>Somewhat certain</b>	<b>Not at all certain</b>
Find additional information for course assignments when you don't understand the material*	45.8%	47.8%	6.4%
Participate regularly in course discussions, even when you don't feel like it*	44.7%	51.0%	4.3%
Ask instructors for help when you struggle with course assignments*	61.3%	36.5%	2.2%

**Table 6.** How important is it to you that Mason Korea provide each of the following?

	<b>Very important</b>	<b>Somewhat important</b>	<b>Not at all important</b>
A challenging academic experience* (n=91)	52.8%	42.9%	4.4%
Opportunities to interact with students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ethnic, religious, etc.) * (n=92)	65.2%	32.7%	2.2%
Learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, etc.) * (n=92)	67.4%	31.5%	1.1%

**Table 7.** Please rate your level of agreement with each of the following items:

	<b>Strongly Agree-Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree-Disagree</b>
I am willing to do whatever it takes to stay in college.^ (n=93)	66.7%	30.1%	3.3%
Getting good grades is important to me.^ (n=93)	88.2%	9.7%	2.2%
Graduating from college is necessary for me to achieve my career goals. ^ (n=92)	84.7%	13.1%	2.2%
I worry about my ability to succeed academically. ^ (n=93)	42.0%	38.7%	19.4%
I am hesitant to ask questions in class. ^ (n=93)	18.3%	52.7%	29.1%

\* Items marked with an asterisk (\*) are used with permission from the *Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement*, National Survey of Student Engagement, Copyright 2001-14 The Trustees of Indiana University.

^ Items marked with the (^) symbol are used with permission from the *Beacon* student survey, Campus Labs.