

# Operating System Usage Among CMU Students

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## Introduction

That student-owned computers have become ubiquitous on Carnegie Mellon, there can be no doubt. Which operating system (OS) is most ubiquitous, however, is not entirely known. In this online survey, we attempt to determine the distribution of operating systems among CMU students. Our online survey samples 500 CMU students, stratified by college. In addition to asking what OS students use on their primary computer, we also ask for the OS of their secondary computer, what OS they would like to have on their next computer, and what they use their computers for.

Existing research shows that:

- Windows has 82.55% of the global market share for operating systems on desktop personal computers [1].
- 70% of incoming college freshman use Macs [2].
- A Mac user was twice as likely as a Windows user to have an arts degree [3].

The results of the survey could be useful for CMU's Computing Services in determining:

- Software licensing allocation
- Cluster operating system allocation

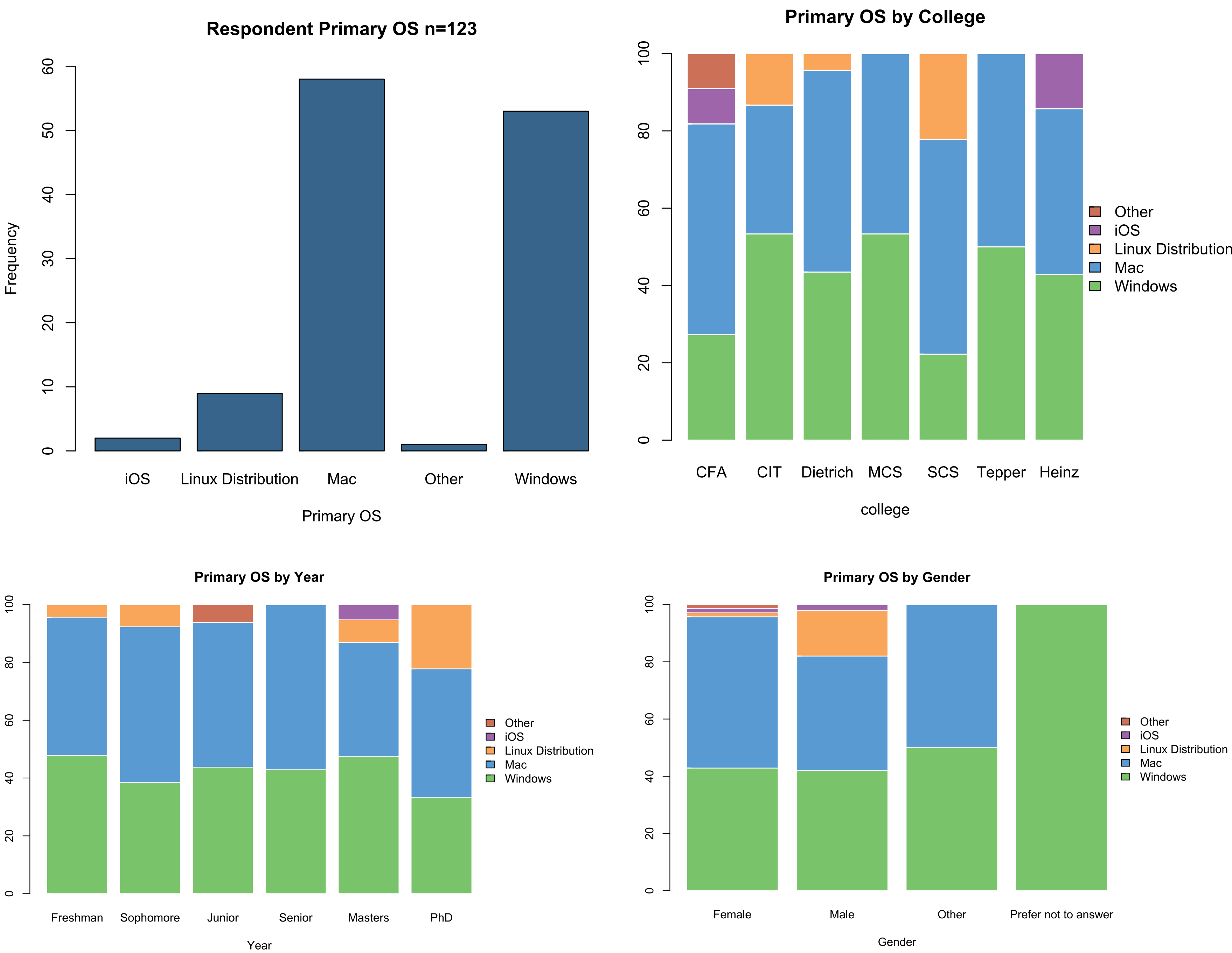
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## Methods

- Target Population: CMU students who use laptops or desktops
- Sampling Frame: List of andrewIDs from the University Registrar's Office
- Sample Size: 500 students
- Sampling Design: Stratified sampling
- Strata: Colleges within CMU (MCS, SCS, H&SS, Tepper, Heinz, CFA, and CIT)
- Data Collection Method: Google Forms
- Response Rate: 25.6%

## Results



## Discussion

- Over 90% of CMU students use Mac and Windows as their primary computer.
- Most of the colleges have similar distributions of Mac and Windows, but by comparison, CIT uses Windows more, whereas CFA uses Macs more.
- In SCS, Mac usage was twice as big as Windows usage, and Linux usage was similar to Windows usage
- Undergraduates use more Macs compared to Windows as grades go up.
- Linux usage is mostly among graduate students.

Most students were very satisfied with their OS, so it is unlikely that this result would change greatly in the near future; however, Mac usage could increase slightly.

## References

- [1] Statista.  
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