

National Freshman Attitudes Report

When they arrive at college, most of today's first-year students bring with them a strong desire to complete their education, yet many are also bringing serious doubts about their ability to afford it and the adequacy of their academic preparation.

These findings are among the highlights of this new report on the attitudes of American first-year students at the beginning of their college experience. Also among the highlights: almost half to two-thirds of these students would like—right from the start—to receive help in areas such as career guidance and improving math skills.

Are today's entering students being set up to fail?

The findings in this report point to a sobering disparity: Although the vast majority of today's first-year students arrive at college really wanting to complete their degrees, only half of them are likely to accomplish their goal. See more on page 3.

Today's first-year students arrive highly motivated to finish college, yet many also bring significant concerns

This new national study reveals that today's entering undergraduates are arriving on campuses highly motivated to complete their college degrees. Yet at the same time, many are bringing with them serious doubts about the adequacy of their academic preparation and their ability to afford college costs.

This mixture of sentiments is—perhaps not surprisingly—also accompanied by students' strong interest in receiving immediate assistance from their college, including help with preparing for college exams, career guidance, math tutoring, and assistance with securing loans and part-time jobs.

This report is based on data collected from 100,573 first-year college students during orientation or within the first three weeks of classes from the fall 2005 term.

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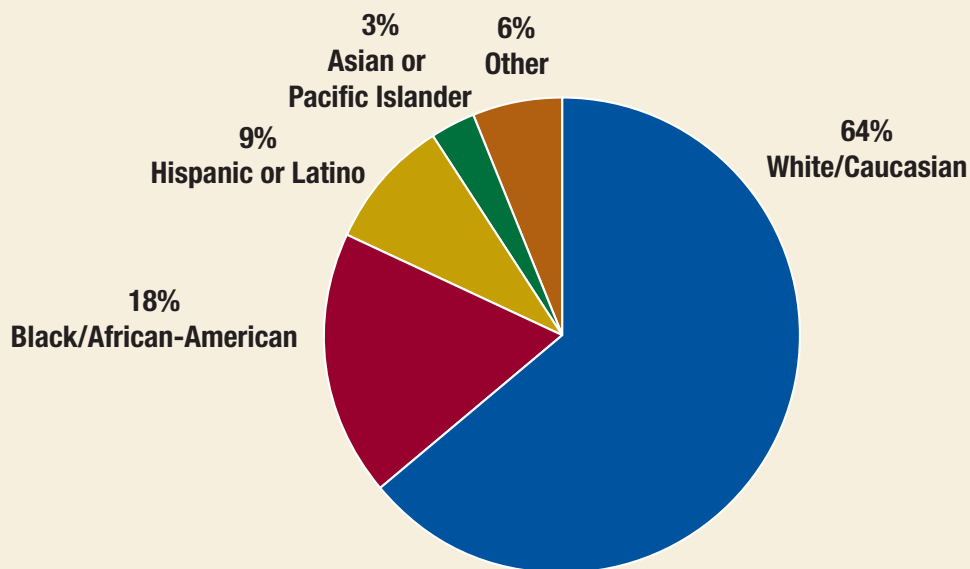
The source of data

In the fall of 2005, a total of 100,573 first-year college students completed a 100-item attitudinal survey during orientation or within their first three weeks of classes. The survey examined a broad range of motivational characteristics that the students brought with them to their collegiate learning experience. Most students completed the survey online while others used a traditional paper-and-pencil format.

Respondents were enrolled at a broad cross-section of 283 institutions, with 30.7 percent of respondents coming from four-year private colleges and universities, 45.1 percent from four-year public institutions, and 24.2 percent from two-year community, junior, and technical colleges. Consistent with national trends, a slight majority of respondents (55.3 percent) were female. Also consistent with national trends were respondents' ethnic/racial breakdowns (see chart).

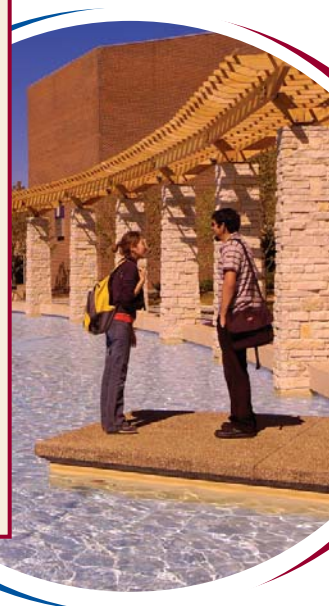
The survey instrument used for this report was CSI-B, the College Student Inventory, Form B, from Noel-Levitz. For more information on the survey instrument and Noel-Levitz, please see page 15.

To see the complete findings, including differences by institution type and a demographic breakdown of the data sample, please refer to the appendix on page 8.



A representative sample

Consistent with national trends for undergraduates, the ethnic/racial breakdown of the respondents was 64.5 percent White/Caucasian, 17.8 percent Black/African-American, 9.1 percent Hispanic or Latino, 3.0 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, and 5.6 percent "Other."



Beginning first-year students show tremendous desire to finish college

Yet data show nearly half will not graduate

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with specific statements. The following statements focused on the student's commitment to completing college:

Nearly 95 percent of first-year students indicated they have a "very strong desire" to continue their education and finish their degree.

While respondents were overwhelmingly positive about continuing and completing their education, these figures show significant dissonance when compared with actual college completion rates. According to the latest data from ACT, only 46.4 percent of entering college students nationwide ever complete their degrees.¹

In short, the aspirations and intentions of fully half of the respondents are going unrecognized.

"What we are seeing here is some significant frustration," says Tim Culver, Noel-Levitz associate vice president. "Students are coming to college *really wanting* to complete their education, but many of them—about half—never meet that goal."

"That kind of frustration translates to larger problems for our society and makes it

imperative that higher education do what it can to close this gap. Thankfully, some institutions are recognizing this and are working to do just that."

On the bright side, the positive attitude that first-year students bring is a sign of hope, since students with strong desires to complete their education are presumably more likely to put great effort toward their goal and to be receptive to institutional interventions aimed at increasing their success.

| Selected survey items | Percent in agreement |
|---|----------------------|
| Desire to finish college | |
| I have a very strong desire to continue my education, and I am quite determined to finish a degree. | 94.6% |
| I am very strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in my way. | 93.3% |
| I am deeply committed to my educational goals, and I'm fully prepared to make the effort and sacrifices that will be needed to attain them. | 88.0% |

In a separate finding, most respondents thought favorably of their past educators, suggesting further that beginning college students arrive with a relatively positive attitude toward college:

As shown here, three-quarters of first-year students arrive on campus with a positive view of past teachers and hence can be expected to bring a relatively positive attitude to undergraduate educators and to their undergraduate education in general.

| Selected survey items | Percent in agreement |
|--|----------------------|
| Attitude toward educators | |
| The teachers I had in school respected me as a person and treated me fairly. | 79.4% |
| I liked my teachers, and I feel they did a good job. | 76.3% |
| Most of my teachers have been very caring and dedicated. | 75.3% |

¹ ACT, Inc., *National Collegiate Retention and Persistence to Degree Rates* (Iowa City: ACT, Inc., 2005), 7.

Students bring concerns

Although their commitment to college was strong, respondents also brought a wide range of financial, personal, and academic concerns. The data below illustrate the financial issues:

As shown at right, nearly half of respondents expressed concerns about their ability to afford their education, while fully a quarter (28 percent) indicated they had serious financial problems—a proportion that represents a tremendous number of students nationwide.

“When you consider that roughly half of all students do not graduate, this figure becomes an important variable in the formula for student success,” says Culver.

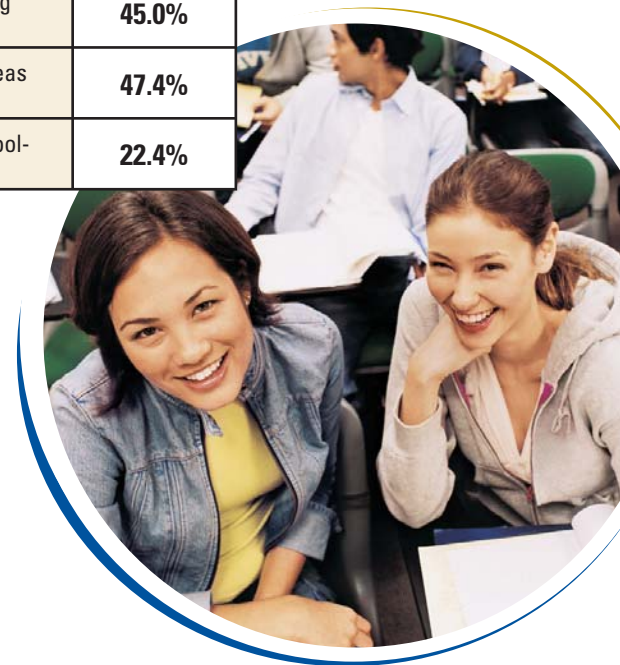
| Selected survey items | Percent in agreement |
|--|----------------------|
| Financial concerns | |
| I have the financial resources that I need to finish college. | 46.6% |
| I don't have any financial problems that will hinder my schoolwork. | 41.6% |
| I have financial problems that are very distracting and troublesome. | 28.0% |

Nearly half of students felt they may not have the financial resources they need to finish college.

Coupled with students' financial concerns were significant concerns about academics:

As shown here, in the area of academics, many students felt under-prepared as they began their college careers. Nearly half of respondents reported a weak or only basic understanding of math and science. In addition, nearly a quarter of respondents reported a significant need for study skills. These findings affirm what other studies have suggested: alarming levels of weak academic preparation, poor study habits, and financial insecurity are conspiring to restrain student success nationwide.²

| Selected survey items | Percent in agreement |
|--|----------------------|
| Academic concerns | |
| I have a hard time understanding and solving complex math problems. | 45.0% |
| I have a very good grasp of the scientific ideas that I studied in school. | 47.4% |
| I have great difficulty concentrating on schoolwork, and I often get behind. | 22.4% |



² Conley, David. “Connecting the Dots: Linking High Schools and Postsecondary Education to Increase Student Success,” *Peer Review* 5, no. 2 (2003): 9-12.

How beginning college students would like campuses to respond to their concerns

In view of their concerns, many respondents were interested in receiving various forms of assistance at the beginning of their college career:

While a high percentage of students would like instruction on taking college exams and career planning support, significant numbers of students would also like help with math skills and locating tutoring, loans, and part-time jobs. The six examples at right were among more than 20 statements of receptivity to assistance that were identified in this study. (Please see the appendix on pages 11 and 12 for complete data.)

This report adds a unique dimension to existing national research on college freshmen by examining students' receptivity to assistance.

| Selected survey items | Percent in agreement |
|---|----------------------|
| Receptivity to assistance | |
| I would like to receive some instruction in the most effective ways to take college exams. | 73.9% |
| I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job. | 65.2% |
| I would like to receive some individual help in improving my math skills. | 48.7% |
| I would like to talk to someone about getting a part-time job during the regular school year. | 44.2% |
| I would like to receive tutoring in one or more of my courses. | 40.9% |
| I would like to talk with someone about getting a loan to help me through school. | 32.8% |

Attitudes of beginning Hispanic students

Hispanic and Latino students were a special focus for this report, as Hispanic students are the most rapidly growing population in American higher education.

Like all students, Hispanic and Latino students showed a very strong desire to finish college. However, in contrast to any other ethnic/racial group, they were the most likely to indicate they had concerns and were even more receptive to assistance in many areas.

| Selected survey items | Beginning Hispanic students | Overall national percentages | Difference |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| I have financial problems that are very distracting and troublesome. | 37.0% | 28.0% | 9.0% |
| I don't have any financial problems that will hinder my schoolwork. | 32.7% | 41.6% | -8.9% |
| I have a hard time understanding and solving complex math problems. | 49.9% | 45.0% | 4.9% |
| I have great difficulty concentrating on schoolwork, and I often get behind. | 28.1% | 22.4% | 5.7% |
| I would like to receive some instruction in the most effective ways to take college exams. | 80.5% | 73.9% | 6.6% |
| I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job. | 74.7% | 65.2% | 9.5% |
| I would like to receive some individual help in improving my math skills. | 62.5% | 48.7% | 13.8% |
| I would like to receive tutoring in one or more of my courses. | 53.0% | 40.9% | 12.1% |
| I would like to talk with someone about getting a loan to help me through school. | 39.5% | 32.8% | 6.7% |

Questions and responses

Why do colleges assess the attitudes of beginning students?

The experience of beginning college students during the first six weeks of college has been found to be crucial in forming their commitment to staying and graduating. Most students who leave college do so before their second year. It is thus imperative that colleges understand the motivations and attitudes of these students, so they can develop programs and interventions that create a positive first impression, meet genuine student needs, and encourage student persistence.

What's behind students' tremendous desire to finish college?

Getting a good job and preparing to be better off financially are among the leading reasons students are going to college, according to national research.³ These motives have become even more pronounced in recent years.

What are the most prominent barriers to degree completion?

As this study confirmed, and as other studies have noted, the most prominent barriers to degree completion are a lack of financial preparedness and a lack of academic preparedness.⁴ These factors are joined by affective variables such as a student's level of family and emotional support, opinion tolerance, etc., as shown in the appendix.

These conclusions are also consistent with studies that have shown an increasing number of students arriving on campuses who are less prepared to succeed academically and less equipped financially to deal with college costs, including an influx of first-generation students who are less familiar with the opportunities provided by postsecondary education.⁵

What do we observe about the specific areas where students would like help?

Here are a few observations:

- Beginning college students, on the whole, expressed significant interest in accessing existing campus resources right from the beginning. Unfortunately, on many campuses beginning students are not connected with offices that can support them until the fall term is well underway.
- Not surprisingly, a high interest in career counseling was evident across institution types. This interest is likely a natural outgrowth of students' focus on attending college to obtain a good career and to improve their financial situation.

³ Sax et. al. *The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 2004* (Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA, 2004).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Williams, Thomas. *Enrollment Strategies to Serve Tomorrow's Students* (Washington, D.C.: Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, 2003).

Noel-Levitz plans to release additional findings in separate reports. Sign up to receive additional reports and information updates by e-mail at www.noellevitz.com/subscribe.

Questions and responses *continued*

- Students are spending significant time working at jobs while taking classes. The distraction of working too much while in college is especially a concern at two-year institutions, where nearly half of students are working more than 20 hours a week, as noted on page 13 of the appendix.
- The vast majority of students want to earn a bachelor's degree or higher, as also shown on page 13 of the appendix. At two-year institutions, the data show that two-thirds of respondents want to at least earn a bachelor's degree.

What do we observe about the differences in Hispanic students?

Hispanic and Latino students appear to be significantly more concerned than other racial/ethnic groups with issues of financial security and academic preparedness. We also noted these students are even more receptive to receiving assistance in many of the identified areas. These findings are consistent with other national research that has shown Hispanic students often face the difficult challenges of being both underprepared academically and underresourced financially.⁶

What can campuses do to follow up on the findings in this report?

Careful reflection on the findings and further exploration of entering students' attitudes on one's own campus⁷ may be appropriate. In addition, educators who intend to affect student success may wish to develop a plan of action to build on their students' desires, overcome their students' concerns, and take advantage of their students' receptivity to assistance.

"Entering students' receptivity to assistance shows that campuses can do many things to address the concerns of incoming students and thereby increase retention and graduation rates," says Culver. "But our earlier research shows that few campuses are pulling these pieces together in a coordinated way. Only 28.7 percent have developed a written annual plan for student retention."⁸

"Addressing student concerns and retention must be done systematically and proactively by using an outcomes-based approach. Institutions most successful in addressing their identified student concerns have developed a comprehensive retention plan that unifies efforts across campus offices and personnel, leverages existing resources, and converts data into actual plans."

⁶ Carnevale, Anthony P. and Richard A. Fry. *Can We Achieve Equity When Generation Y Goes to College?* (Princeton, NJ: Education Testing Service, 2000).

⁷ Campus administrators whose campuses did not participate in this study are welcome to use the same instrument used in this study (see page 15 for details).

⁸ Noel-Levitz, *2004 National Enrollment Management Study* (Noel-Levitz, Inc., 2004), 4.

"Entering students' receptivity to assistance shows that campuses can do many things to address the concerns of incoming students."

Tim Culver
Associate
Vice President,
Retention
Consulting
Noel-Levitz

Appendix: The complete findings and respondent demographics

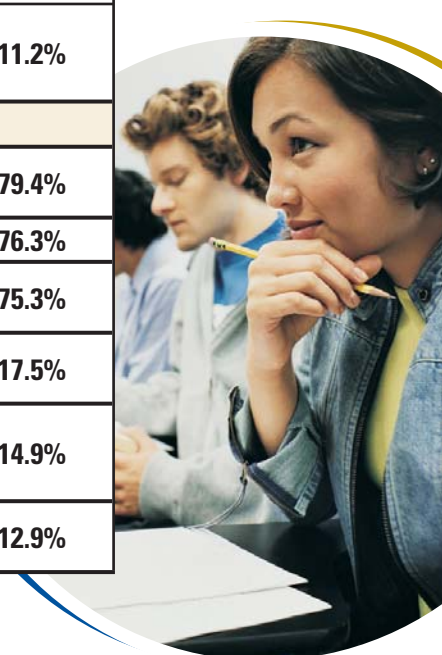
Listed below are the survey items measured for this report, with the percentage of entering college students nationally that agreed with each item along with the findings broken down for students at various institution types.

Please see pages 12-14 for a demographic breakdown of the student respondents.

Percent of entering students in agreement

| All survey items | Students at 4-year private colleges | Students at 4-year public institutions | Students at 2-year institutions | OVERALL national percentages |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Desire to finish college | | | | |
| I have a very strong desire to continue my education, and I am quite determined to finish a degree. | 95.7% | 95.2% | 92.0% | 94.6% |
| I am very strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in my way. | 94.4% | 93.8% | 90.7% | 93.3% |
| I am deeply committed to my educational goals, and I'm fully prepared to make the effort and sacrifices that will be needed to attain them. | 89.7% | 88.0% | 85.7% | 88.0% |
| Of all the things I could do at this point in my life, going to college is definitely the most satisfying. | 84.2% | 84.6% | 79.3% | 83.2% |
| I often wonder if a college education is really worth all the time, money, and effort that I'm being asked to spend on it. | 17.1% | 16.4% | 19.2% | 17.3% |
| I can think of many things I would rather do than go to college. | 11.0% | 11.5% | 15.4% | 12.3% |
| I dread the thought of going to school for several more years, and there is a part of me that would like to give the whole thing up. | 10.6% | 11.2% | 15.6% | 12.1% |
| I wish that society did not put so much pressure on people to go to college, as I'd really rather be doing other things at this point in my life. | 10.4% | 10.3% | 13.9% | 11.2% |
| Attitude toward educators | | | | |
| The teachers I had in school respected me as a person and treated me fairly. | 80.6% | 81.3% | 74.6% | 79.4% |
| I liked my teachers, and I feel they did a good job. | 77.7% | 77.2% | 72.9% | 76.3% |
| Most of my teachers have been very caring and dedicated. | 76.6% | 74.1% | 75.7% | 75.3% |
| Most teachers have a superior attitude that I find very annoying. | 15.9% | 19.1% | 16.9% | 17.5% |
| In my opinion, many teachers are more concerned about themselves than they are about their students. | 13.2% | 16.4% | 14.3% | 14.9% |
| Most of the teachers I had in school were too bossy and inflexible. | 12.1% | 11.5% | 16.3% | 12.9% |

For participating campuses, the findings were also reported separately for each individual student and aggregated for each cohort to enable timely interventions by proactive educators, including academic advisors, student services colleagues, academic affairs colleagues, and student retention offices. See back cover for more details.



Students scored their math confidence significantly lower than their verbal confidence.

| All survey items | Students at 4-year private colleges | Students at 4-year public institutions | Students at 2-year institutions | OVERALL national percentages |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Intellectual interests | | | | |
| Over the years, books have widened my horizons and stimulated my imagination. | 59.4% | 54.8% | 50.5% | 55.2% |
| I get a great deal of satisfaction from reading. | 47.7% | 43.8% | 43.2% | 45.0% |
| I don't enjoy reading serious books and articles, and I only do it when I have to. | 39.0% | 41.7% | 40.6% | 40.5% |
| Books have never gotten me very excited. | 36.6% | 40.4% | 44.2% | 40.1% |
| Study habits | | | | |
| I take very careful notes during class, and I review them thoroughly before a test. | 59.5% | 57.5% | 59.9% | 58.7% |
| I study very hard for all my courses, even those I don't like. | 60.1% | 54.5% | 59.5% | 57.5% |
| I have developed a solid system of self-discipline, which helps me keep up with my schoolwork. | 55.3% | 53.8% | 51.4% | 53.7% |
| My studying is very irregular and unpredictable. | 30.7% | 33.8% | 33.9% | 32.8% |
| When I try to study, I usually get bored and quit after a few minutes. | 25.5% | 30.2% | 29.2% | 28.4% |
| I have great difficulty concentrating on schoolwork, and I often get behind. | 19.7% | 21.6% | 27.3% | 22.4% |
| Math and science confidence | | | | |
| I have a hard time understanding and solving complex math problems. | 42.9% | 43.1% | 50.5% | 45.0% |
| I have a very good grasp of the scientific ideas that I studied in school. | 48.4% | 50.8% | 40.1% | 47.4% |
| I have a very good understanding of the basic ideas related to atoms, molecules, the periodic table, and chemical reactions. | 44.4% | 46.8% | 34.7% | 43.0% |
| I'm very good at understanding the relationship between a scientific principle and a corresponding formula (such as momentum = mass x velocity). | 43.6% | 46.7% | 32.9% | 42.3% |
| I have a very weak understanding of general biology (e.g., cell structure, metabolism, genetics, and the circulatory system). | 32.1% | 31.1% | 36.8% | 32.9% |
| My understanding of the physical sciences is very weak. | 27.7% | 26.0% | 32.9% | 28.3% |
| Verbal confidence | | | | |
| I am capable of writing a very clear and well-organized paper. | 65.0% | 64.4% | 55.2% | 62.3% |
| I am very good at figuring out the deeper meaning of a short story or novel. | 53.4% | 50.8% | 47.8% | 51.0% |
| I pick up new vocabulary words quickly, and I find it easy to use them in my speech and writing. | 53.4% | 52.6% | 49.1% | 52.1% |
| I have difficulty organizing my ideas in a paper, and I tend to make a lot of punctuation and grammar mistakes. | 31.5% | 31.9% | 39.5% | 33.6% |

| All survey items | Students at 4-year private colleges | Students at 4-year public institutions | Students at 2-year institutions | OVERALL national percentages |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Verbal confidence <i>continued</i> | | | | |
| In English classes, I've had difficulty analyzing an author's style and theme. | 28.9% | 30.5% | 32.8% | 30.5% |
| Learning new vocabulary words is a slow and difficult process for me. | 17.3% | 17.3% | 21.1% | 18.3% |
| Career closure | | | | |
| I have found a potential career that strongly attracts me. | 79.9% | 75.2% | 79.0% | 77.6% |
| I have made a firm decision to enter a certain occupation and have begun planning my life around that decision. | 60.3% | 56.9% | 64.3% | 59.8% |
| My thinking goes around in circles when I try to choose a primary, long-term occupation. | 26.2% | 29.6% | 29.2% | 28.4% |
| I am very confused about what occupation to go into. | 19.0% | 23.3% | 20.2% | 21.2% |
| Family emotional support | | | | |
| When I was a child, my parents usually understood me, respected my judgment, and treated me in ways that helped me grow. | 76.6% | 79.0% | 70.2% | 76.1% |
| My parents and I communicated very well when I was young, and we had a good understanding of each other's point of view. | 65.2% | 67.1% | 59.5% | 64.6% |
| My family had a one-sided way of looking at me when I was a child, and they didn't understand my feelings very well. | 14.6% | 13.7% | 19.9% | 15.5% |
| When I was a child, the other members of my family often said hurtful things that stirred up unpleasant feelings. | 13.3% | 12.2% | 18.3% | 14.1% |
| Sense of financial security | | | | |
| I have the financial resources that I need to finish college. | 45.3% | 48.5% | 45.2% | 46.6% |
| I don't have any financial problems that will hinder my schoolwork. | 41.0% | 43.5% | 39.0% | 41.6% |
| I have financial problems that are very distracting and troublesome. | 27.1% | 25.7% | 33.2% | 28.0% |
| I am in a bad financial position, and the pressure to earn extra money will probably hinder my studies. | 16.3% | 16.8% | 21.0% | 17.7% |
| Sociability | | | | |
| I greatly enjoy getting together with a crowd of people and having a lively time. | 76.9% | 78.4% | 69.9% | 75.8% |
| I feel very adventurous and fun-loving when I'm at a large party. | 56.2% | 58.0% | 53.5% | 56.3% |
| I have little interest in going out dancing and partying. | 31.7% | 27.6% | 37.6% | 31.4% |
| It is hard for me to "let go" and just have fun with a group of people. | 20.0% | 19.8% | 21.8% | 20.3% |

Factors such as family emotional support, sociability, and opinion tolerance can make a significant difference in student success.

A high interest in career counseling was evident across institution types.

| All survey items | Students at 4-year private colleges | Students at 4-year public institutions | Students at 2-year institutions | OVERALL national percentages |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Opinion tolerance | | | | |
| I get along well with people whose opinions differ openly with mine. | 76.5% | 74.7% | 74.6% | 75.3% |
| I can feel close to someone who thinks quite differently than I do on major social issues. | 59.0% | 57.8% | 53.8% | 57.2% |
| I find it easy to be friends with people whose political ideas differ sharply from my own. | 56.7% | 53.6% | 53.1% | 54.5% |
| When someone's opinions strongly disagree with my own, I tend to develop unfriendly feelings and to avoid close contact with the person. | 12.3% | 13.1% | 14.1% | 13.1% |
| I feel uneasy and distrustful toward people whose way of thinking is quite dissimilar to my own. | 9.1% | 9.9% | 11.5% | 10.0% |
| Because they irritate me, I tend to stay away from people whose ideas are quite different from my own. | 8.1% | 9.1% | 11.0% | 9.2% |
| Receptivity to academic assistance | | | | |
| I would like to receive some instruction in the most effective ways to take college exams. | 73.8% | 75.4% | 71.6% | 73.9% |
| I would like to receive some help in improving my study habits. | 54.0% | 57.2% | 56.1% | 55.9% |
| I would like to receive some individual help in improving my math skills. | 46.2% | 48.5% | 51.8% | 48.7% |
| I would like to receive some individual help in improving my writing skills. | 45.1% | 44.4% | 43.2% | 44.3% |
| I would like to receive tutoring in one or more of my courses. | 38.1% | 43.9% | 38.9% | 40.9% |
| I would like to receive some training to improve my reading skills. | 27.0% | 27.4% | 29.7% | 27.8% |
| Receptivity to career counseling | | | | |
| I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job. | 66.5% | 68.2% | 57.7% | 65.2% |
| I would like to talk with someone about the qualifications needed for certain occupations. | 60.4% | 65.5% | 58.2% | 62.1% |
| I would like to talk with someone about the salaries and future outlook for various occupations. | 56.6% | 58.5% | 51.9% | 56.3% |
| I would like to talk with someone about the advantages and disadvantages of various occupations. | 49.0% | 51.4% | 42.8% | 48.6% |
| I would like some help selecting an occupation that is well suited to my interests and abilities. | 47.1% | 49.4% | 42.5% | 47.0% |
| Receptivity to financial guidance | | | | |
| I would like to talk to someone about getting a scholarship. | 64.1% | 67.2% | 57.5% | 63.9% |
| I would like to talk to someone about getting a part-time job during the regular school year. | 45.8% | 48.6% | 34.3% | 44.2% |
| I would like to talk to a placement officer about the opportunities available for summer employment. | 36.3% | 39.0% | 30.7% | 36.1% |
| I would like to talk with someone about getting a loan to help me through school. | 33.3% | 32.6% | 32.0% | 32.8% |

| All survey items | Students at 4-year private colleges | Students at 4-year public institutions | Students at 2-year institutions | OVERALL national percentages |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Receptivity to personal counseling | | | | |
| I would like to talk with a counselor about my general attitude toward school. | 17.1% | 17.6% | 18.1% | 17.5% |
| I would like to talk with a counselor about some difficulties in my dating or social life. | 7.8% | 8.4% | 9.1% | 8.4% |
| I would like to talk with a counselor about some emotional tensions that are bothering me. | 7.9% | 8.2% | 9.6% | 8.4% |
| I would like to talk with a counselor about some feelings of discouragement or unhappy thoughts that keep bothering me. | 7.6% | 7.9% | 9.4% | 8.2% |
| I would like to talk with a counselor about eliminating an unwanted habit (e.g., involving food, drugs, cigarettes, or alcohol). | 7.8% | 8.0% | 10.1% | 8.5% |
| I would like to talk with a counselor about some family problems. | 5.5% | 5.5% | 6.7% | 5.9% |
| Receptivity to social enrichment | | | | |
| I would like to attend an informal gathering where I can meet some new friends. | 60.5% | 60.1% | 45.0% | 56.5% |
| I would like to find out more about student government and the various student activities on campus. | 49.1% | 51.8% | 36.1% | 47.1% |
| I would like to meet an older student who could show me around and give me some advice. | 45.0% | 48.3% | 31.0% | 43.0% |
| I would like to find out more about the fraternities and sororities at my college. | 31.9% | 38.0% | 25.7% | 33.1% |

Respondent demographics (Fall 2005)

| All survey items | Students at 4-year private colleges | Students at 4-year public institutions | Students at 2-year institutions | OVERALL national percentages |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Number of respondents | 30,902 | 45,337 | 24,334 | 100,573 |
| Representation by institution type (4-year private, 4-year public, and 2-year) | 30.7% | 45.1% | 24.2% | 100% |
| Percent male | 44.2% | 44.5% | 45.0% | 44.7% |
| Percent female | 55.8% | 55.5% | 55.0% | 55.3% |
| Racial/ethnic origin | | | | |
| Black/African-American | 16.2% | 20.1% | 15.4% | 17.8% |
| American Indian/Alaskan Native | 0.5% | 1.3% | 1.6% | 1.1% |
| Asian or Pacific Islander | 3.9% | 2.4% | 2.7% | 3.0% |
| White/Caucasian | 62.8% | 66.9% | 62.9% | 64.5% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 11.5% | 5.3% | 12.7% | 9.1% |
| Other | 2.6% | 1.9% | 2.5% | 2.3% |
| Prefer not to respond | 2.4% | 2.1% | 2.2% | 2.3% |

| All survey items | Students at 4-year private colleges | Students at 4-year public institutions | Students at 2-year institutions | OVERALL national percentages |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Highest education level of mother | | | | |
| 8 years or less of elementary school | 3.1% | 2.0% | 6.6% | 3.5% |
| Some high school (no diploma) | 5.5% | 4.8% | 10.6% | 6.4% |
| High school diploma/equivalent | 28.6% | 29.6% | 37.3% | 31.2% |
| 1 to 3 years of college | 28.9% | 29.6% | 27.6% | 28.9% |
| 4-year undergraduate degree | 23.1% | 23.4% | 12.4% | 20.5% |
| Master's degree | 9.5% | 9.6% | 4.9% | 8.4% |
| Doctoral degree | 1.3% | 1.0% | 0.5% | 1.0% |
| Highest education level of father | | | | |
| 8 years or less of elementary school | 3.8% | 2.7% | 8.4% | 4.5% |
| Some high school (no diploma) | 7.2% | 6.6% | 12.4% | 8.2% |
| High school diploma/equivalent | 29.8% | 32.2% | 38.2% | 33.1% |
| 1 to 3 years of college | 22.8% | 23.7% | 22.7% | 23.2% |
| 4-year undergraduate degree | 21.4% | 21.8% | 11.5% | 19.1% |
| Master's degree | 10.8% | 9.9% | 5.4% | 9.0% |
| Doctoral degree | 4.1% | 3.1% | 1.3% | 3.0% |
| Highest degree planned by respondent | | | | |
| None | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.4% | 0.2% |
| 1-year certificate | 0.2% | 0.1% | 4.0% | 1.1% |
| 2-year college degree | 2.7% | 1.0% | 25.6% | 7.6% |
| 4-year college degree | 38.5% | 39.5% | 38.8% | 39.1% |
| Master's degree | 37.6% | 38.9% | 21.1% | 34.1% |
| Doctoral degree | 20.7% | 20.3% | 10.1% | 17.8% |
| Time expecting to spend at work | | | | |
| No work plans | 19.7% | 27.3% | 15.3% | 21.9% |
| 1 to 10 hours/week | 24.0% | 21.5% | 12.4% | 19.9% |
| 11 to 20 hours/week | 28.2% | 33.4% | 27.2% | 30.2% |
| 21 to 30 hours/week | 10.5% | 12.9% | 23.0% | 14.7% |
| 31 to 40 hours/week | 10.6% | 4.1% | 16.6% | 9.4% |
| Over 40 hours/week | 7.0% | 0.8% | 5.5% | 3.9% |
| Average grades as senior in high school | | | | |
| A | 19.0% | 20.9% | 8.2% | 17.1% |
| A to B | 32.8% | 35.2% | 25.3% | 31.9% |
| B | 21.0% | 20.9% | 19.1% | 20.5% |
| B to C | 19.3% | 17.2% | 30.4% | 21.2% |
| C | 5.7% | 4.2% | 10.9% | 6.4% |
| C to D | 1.9% | 1.4% | 5.2% | 2.6% |
| D | 0.3% | 0.2% | 0.8% | 0.4% |

| All survey items | Students at 4-year private colleges | Students at 4-year public institutions | Students at 2-year institutions | OVERALL national percentages |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Respondent's self-assessment of how much academic knowledge he or she has, on a continuum from highest to lowest | | | | |
| Highest 20% | 18.7% | 19.0% | 9.2% | 16.5% |
| Next to highest 20% | 32.9% | 33.6% | 22.4% | 30.6% |
| Middle 20% | 45.9% | 44.9% | 61.1% | 49.3% |
| Next to lowest 20% | 2.2% | 2.2% | 6.1% | 3.2% |
| Lowest 20% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 1.1% | 0.5% |
| Respondent's self-assessment of academic ability | | | | |
| Considerably below average | 0.8% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.4% |
| Slightly below average | 6.1% | 2.9% | 3.0% | 3.7% |
| Average | 46.6% | 29.2% | 29.1% | 33.5% |
| Slightly above average | 29.3% | 37.2% | 36.6% | 35.1% |
| Considerably above average (top 20%) | 15.6% | 27.3% | 27.9% | 24.6% |
| Extremely high (top 5%) | 1.7% | 3.0% | 3.0% | 2.7% |
| Timing of decision to attend chosen college/university | | | | |
| Days before classes began | 2.5% | 1.6% | 3.9% | 2.5% |
| Weeks before classes began | 15.8% | 9.5% | 20.3% | 14.2% |
| Months before classes began | 81.5% | 88.8% | 75.6% | 83.2% |





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Questions? Want additional information?

If you have questions about this report, please contact Richard Miller, Noel-Levitz research consultant, at richard-miller@noellevitz.com.

If you have questions about the College Student Inventory (CSI) of the Noel-Levitz Retention Management System, including how to use the inventory to help guide student success and early intervention programs on college campuses, please contact Beth Richter or Lisa Vittetoe at 1-800-876-1117 or beth-richter@noellevitz.com or lisa-vittetoe@noellevitz.com.

About Noel-Levitz and the survey instrument used in this study

Noel-Levitz has served the higher education community for more than 30 years. Campus leaders turn to the firm for research, benchmark data, tools, and consulting for student recruitment and student retention. Over the course of its history, Noel-Levitz has partnered with more than 1,700 colleges and universities throughout North America.

The survey instrument used in this study was CSI-B, the 100-item "Form B" version of the College Student Inventory, which is the central component of the Noel-Levitz Retention Management System™. The inventory is designed to assess the motivational characteristics of incoming first-year students. It profiles incoming students' strengths and needs and serves as a retention management tool on hundreds of campuses nationwide. CSI-B is typically administered during summer orientation or at the beginning of the fall term.

In addition to illuminating first-year students' attitudes in this report, the findings of the inventory were reported directly to participating campuses within days of completion to provide early guidance for academic affairs, student services, retention offices, and academic advisors. Using the findings, educators are able to foster student success by nurturing students' strengths and focusing proactive interventions on each student's self-identified needs.

To see a sample copy of CSI-B, please visit www.noellevitz.com/RMS (click on "samples").

Photo courtesy of Harper College on front and back cover and on page 2.

Find it online.

This report is posted online at www.noellevitz.com.

