

2011 Pilot Study/Research Report

The Attitudes of Second-Year College Students

A national pilot study on the challenges students face as they transition to their second year of postsecondary education

This inaugural report describes the self-reported attitudes and motivations of students nationally during the first term of their second year of college. Based on a 78-item motivational assessment administered to students in the 2010 fall term, the report highlights the educational experiences of second-year students as they transition from their first-year of college.

The second year of college is frequently described as a critical period of transition, adjustment, and potential confusion for students who often leave the safety and security of a very structured and directed first-year program. As students begin their second year, they search for purpose and meaning in the selection of a major, new friendships, a career of interest, and financial solutions for their educational and living expenses and debt, leaving many to feel disconnected and overwhelmed with their new reality. To address these dynamics, second-year student success initiatives typically feature opportunities that focus on academic concerns, leadership, majors, careers, community service, finances, and social relationships.

This report offers a window into four areas of challenge for second-year students as they transition from the first to second year of college: academics, advising, finances, and social and personal relationships. Findings from this study of student attitudes and motivations include:

- More than 95 percent of the 8,600 second-year students who participated in this study indicated a strong **commitment to finishing college**.
- Student receptivity to institutional help from first year to second year increased most in the areas of **advising and career counseling**.
- Student finances were a challenge for second-year students, with only 51 percent indicating they had the **financial resources** they need to finish college.
- Issues around **friendships and social relationships** were evident among 25 to 35 percent of second-year students. For example, 27 percent of these students were unable to affirm that "It has been easy for me to make friends in college."

The appendix of this report on pages 11-18 provides additional data and information, along with some comments from Noel-Levitz regarding the findings.



Noel-Levitz®



The findings of this report offer a window into four areas of challenge for second-year students as they transition from the first to second year of college: academics, advising, finances, and social and personal relationships.

Highlights	
Commitment to college	4
Highest degree or program students seek	4
Attitudes toward academics and academic assistance	5
Attitudes toward advising	7
Attitudes toward finances	8
Attitudes toward social and personal relationships	10
Appendix	
Part A—Additional comments from Noel-Levitz regarding the findings	11
Part B—Additional findings	12
—all findings for private and public, four-year and two-year institutions	
—demographic breakdown of the student respondents	
—rating scales used in this study	
About Noel-Levitz and the survey instrument used in this study	20



View more student attitude reports online

For a window into the attitudes of college *freshmen*, visit www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport to access National Freshman Attitudes Reports from Noel-Levitz, including reports that examined freshman data by gender, by race/ethnicity, and by students' age.

About this study

Second-year students encounter a number of challenges as they transition to the second year of college. These students may struggle with identifying a major, changing a major, dealing with wait lists for competitive programs, recovering from low academic performance during the first year of college, and deciding whether to stay, drop out, stop out, or transfer. In other words, this is a year laced with concerns, unanswered questions, and pending decisions, even for top performers. This study pinpoints many of the hidden challenges students encounter in their second year of college.

The source of data

In the fall of 2010, a total of 8,613 second-year students at 64 colleges and universities nationwide completed a 78-item attitudinal survey during the first term of their second year. The survey examined a broad range of motivational attitudes that students brought with them to their second-year experience. Students completed the survey online.

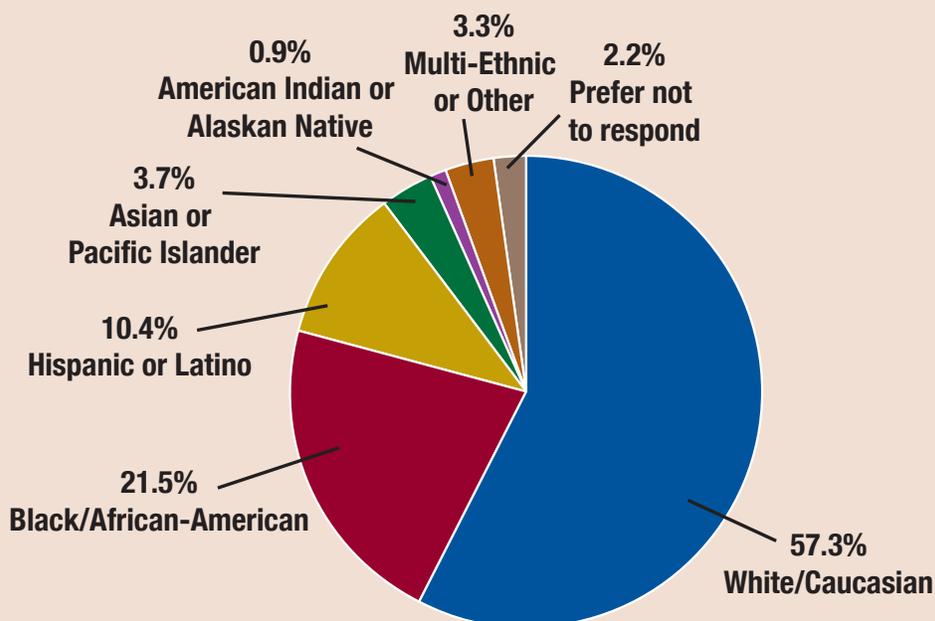
Respondents were enrolled at a broad cross-section of institutions, with 41.2 percent of respondents coming from four-year private institutions, 26.5 percent from four-year public institutions, and 32.3 percent from two-year institutions.

The survey instrument used for this report was the pilot version of the Second-Year Student Assessment™ (SYSA), from the Noel-Levitz Retention Management System *Plus*™. This motivational assessment identifies self-reported attitudes, motivations, needs, and interests, as well as barriers and opportunities for supporting students as they transition to the second year of college.

For more information on the survey instrument and Noel-Levitz, please see page 20.

Additional context for this second-year study is provided in the National Freshman Attitudes Reports from Noel-Levitz which examine the attitudes and motivations of first-year students, available at www.noellelitz.com/FreshmanReport.

For more findings, including a demographic breakdown of the data sample and students' attitudes toward career counseling, please see the appendix on pages 11-18.



A broad cross-section of students and institutions were represented in this study. The ethnic/racial breakdown of respondents was 57.3 percent White/Caucasian, 21.5 percent Black/African-American, 10.4 percent Hispanic or Latino, 3.7 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 0.9 percent American Indian or Alaskan Native, 3.3 percent Multi-Ethnic or Other, and 2.2 percent "prefer not to respond." For more details, please see the information above and in the appendix.

**Highlights from
the findings**

Commitment to college: How committed are second-year students to completing their program of study/degree?

It's clear that the second-year students in this study felt college was the right choice for them (93 percent) and they had a strong desire to finish college (95 percent). A few of their responses merit further exploration, however, as noted in the example below.

Percentage of second-year students in agreement

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
Commitment to college				
Of all the things I could do at this point in my life, going to college is definitely the most satisfying.	82.7%	82.7%	83.6%	83.0%
I am strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in the way.	95.2%	94.6%	95.4%	95.1%
The total college experience is very rewarding.	85.9%	81.6%	85.5%	84.6%
I am quite confident that my decision to go to college was right for me.	93.1%	92.7%	94.6%	93.4%

If going to college is the most satisfying thing that 83 percent of second-year students could do, what circumstances might effectively diminish the perceived value of college?

Highest academic degrees that students are pursuing

Students' commitment is often grounded in their educational aspirations. How are they planning to use their studies? What are their goals for completing their studies? What educational path are they pursuing? The table below represents the educational aspirations of second-year students in this study.

Percentage of second-year students in agreement

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
Highest degree or program students seek				
A one-year certificate	0.1%	0.2%	0.8%	0.3%
A two-year certificate or associate degree	0.6%	0.8%	24.0%	8.2%
A four-year college degree (bachelor's)	35.6%	33.4%	33.1%	34.2%
A master's degree	37.8%	36.4%	25.8%	33.6%
A professional degree (medicine, dentistry, law, Ph.D., or other similar degrees)	25.2%	28.7%	14.7%	22.8%
I do not plan to complete a degree or program	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%
Other	0.7%	0.2%	1.5%	0.8%

Nearly three-quarters of respondents from two-year institutions aspired to a bachelor's degree or higher (74 percent), and one-quarter of these students aspired to a one- or two-year certificate or associate degree (25 percent).

Findings from this study suggest most students begin their second year with a strong commitment to finishing college.

The findings for two-year institutions, at right, are indicative of a national trend that suggests more students are viewing two-year institutions, particularly community colleges, as a launching pad for their postsecondary studies.

Attitudes toward academics and academic assistance—four tables offering four distinct vantage points

Highlights from the findings

Beyond commitment to finishing college lies the expectations and realities of the academic experience. Findings in the next four tables examine students' attitudes toward academics, receptivity to academic assistance, satisfaction with academics, and expected amount of time spent studying.

Percentage of second-year students in agreement

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
Attitudes toward academics				
I am good at figuring out what material is most important for an exam.	78.2%	77.3%	82.1%	79.2%
I feel energized by the ideas I'm learning in most of my classes.	78.7%	74.5%	86.5%	80.1%
I find myself thinking about what I'm learning in class even when I'm not in class.	76.1%	78.6%	86.8%	80.2%
When I become confused about something I'm reading for class, I go back and try to figure it out.	84.5%	89.1%	93.2%	88.5%

Most second-year students brought a reasonably strong sense of confidence, engagement, and determination to succeed. Note, however, that the items at left suggest room for growth across institution types.

Students' responses here show a reasonably strong sense of confidence, engagement, and determination to succeed in their coursework. Across institution types, the lowest agreement above was among students at four-year public institutions in the item regarding feeling energized about learning.

Percentage of second-year students in agreement

Selected survey items	Students who would like to receive help this year (Section A)			Students who received help last year (Section B)			Change (Section A - Section B)		
	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)
Receptivity to academic assistance and past usage of academic assistance									
Get help with my study skills (time management, concentrating, note-taking, exam skills, etc.).	31.8%	42.6%	42.5%	26.9%	31.2%	32.5%	4.8%	11.3%	10.0%
Find tutors for one or more of my courses.	36.6%	49.2%	42.7%	25.3%	32.6%	28.4%	11.3%	16.7%	14.3%

Successful navigation of an academic path is often affected by a student's willingness to accept assistance provided by an institution.

Second-year students at four-year private institutions were less likely to indicate a desire to receive academic assistance than were students at four-year public institutions and at two-year institutions. They were also less likely to report receiving help in their first year of college. In fact, a relatively small percentage of all students in the study reported receiving help in the first year of college. On the other hand, the number of students desiring institutional help with study skills and tutoring showed moderate increases from the first to the second year of college.

**Highlights from
the findings**

Attitudes toward academics and academic assistance, continued

Percentage of second-year students in agreement

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
Amount of time students expected to study vs. their first year of college				
I don't think I will need to study as much as I did last year.	2.3%	2.8%	3.3%	2.7%
I think I will need to study about the same amount as I did last year.	26.1%	26.1%	33.6%	28.5%
I think I will need to study more than I did last year.	71.6%	71.1%	63.1%	68.8%

The percentage of students seeing a need to study more during the second year versus the first year (69 percent) was more than double that of those planning to study about the same or less. Student responses in this area likely indicate an awareness of the increasing demands of the curriculum during the second year, when the academic landscape is often characterized by an intensified curriculum, and when the amount of time students expect to study and their receptivity to assistance takes on greater importance.

Student satisfaction was measured by 13 items in this study. Highlighted at right are two items that focused on academics.

**Mean satisfaction scores
(1 = low satisfaction, 7 = high satisfaction)**

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national mean
Student satisfaction—academic items				
Level of interaction with my instructors	5.56	5.12	5.74	5.49
Degree of academic challenge in my classes	5.74	5.62	5.77	5.70

The importance of student engagement with instructors, both inside and outside the classroom, is well-documented as a key ingredient for student success from the time they enter college until they graduate or complete their program of study. Engagement involves feeling connected with the subject matter via interaction with the instructor. Student satisfaction with the level of interaction with instructors and the perceived challenge in their classes provides additional academic insights regarding the second-year student.

Above, the mean satisfaction level for the “level of interaction with instructors” ranged from a high of 5.74 at two-year institutions to a low of 5.12 at four-year public institutions. Student perceptions of the “degree of academic challenge in my classes” during the first term of the second year had an overall mean score of 5.70.

Attitudes toward advising—two separate vantage points

Second-year students indicated relatively low satisfaction with the level of communication with their academic advisor. At the same time, some of the largest increases in desire to receive institutional help from the first to the second year are reported in this area. The following two tables document these two separate vantage points.

**Mean satisfaction scores
(1 = low satisfaction, 7 = high satisfaction)**

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national mean
Student satisfaction—advising item				
Level of communication with my academic advisor	4.97	4.57	4.93	4.83

The low satisfaction scores shown above combined with the increased interest in academic advising assistance (see next table below) suggest an opportunity to review institutional processes. For instance, has the student transitioned from a first-year advisor to a major advisor? What has changed with the students? Do they have unanswered questions about the impact of their first-year grades on getting into the major they want?

Percentage of second-year students in agreement

Selected survey items	Students who would like to receive help this year (Section A)			Students who received help last year (Section B)			Change (Section A - Section B)		
	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)
Receptivity to advising assistance and past usage of advising assistance									
Select an academic program or major.	32.7%	41.2%	36.3%	54.0%	57.4%	49.9%	-21.3%	-16.2%	-13.5%
Prepare a written academic plan for graduation.	52.8%	55.1%	52.0%	29.0%	26.9%	24.7%	23.8%	28.2%	27.4%
Figure out the impact of my grades on my desired major.	56.3%	62.6%	58.9%	33.0%	39.3%	36.6%	23.3%	23.3%	22.3%
Discuss transfer questions and issues.	24.9%	32.4%	61.0%	17.0%	21.6%	30.3%	7.9%	10.7%	30.7%

Large increases were evident from the first to the second year in students' desire to receive help with their academic plans and discussions around the impact of grades on their major. However, students also expressed much less interest in receiving help with the decision on a major, across all institution types. These decreases (-21.3, -16.2, and -13.5 percent) may suggest an opportunity to reach out to students who no longer feel a need or interest in further assistance to ensure that they are making progress in their current major.

While students begin the second year with a reasonably strong sense of academic confidence, engagement in their own learning, and determination to do what it takes to be successful in their classes, their high levels of change in receptivity to academic advising shown at left is a call to action.

**Highlights from
the findings**

Attitudes toward finances—four vantage points

The questions related to students’ finances were intended as a window into the challenging world of student debt, i.e., indicators of students’ perceived ability to afford to go to college and complete their degrees. These questions open the doors to interventions via information and resources to guide potential solutions. The following four tables offer four separate vantage points on second-year students’ attitudes toward finances.

Percentage of second-year students in agreement

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
Attitudes toward finances				
I have the financial resources that I need to finish college.	50.8%	53.7%	47.9%	50.6%
I don’t have any financial problems that will interfere with my studies.	48.5%	49.8%	44.3%	47.5%

Above, students’ responses overall suggest that half have serious financial challenges. Students attending two-year colleges brought slightly greater concerns.

Percentage of second-year students in agreement

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
Approximate amount of time working at a job this term				
0 (I do not work)	35.6%	42.7%	35.2%	37.4%
1 to 10 hours per week	33.6%	14.1%	11.2%	21.2%
11 to 20 hours per week	20.7%	22.6%	15.6%	19.6%
21 to 30 hours per week	6.0%	12.7%	14.0%	10.4%
31 to 40 hours per week	2.5%	5.3%	14.0%	7.0%
Over 40 hours per week	1.5%	2.7%	10.0%	4.6%

More than a third of students overall (37 percent) indicated they were not working during the fall 2010 term. On the other end of the spectrum, two-year institutions had the largest percentage of students working more than 20 hours. Four-year private institutions had the lowest percentage of students working more than 20 hours per week and significantly more students working 1 to 10 hours, while four-year public institutions had slightly more students working 11 to 20 hours.

Attitudes toward finances, continued

*Highlights from
the findings*

Mean satisfaction scores
(1 = low satisfaction, 7 = high satisfaction)

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national mean
Student satisfaction—financial item				
Adequacy of financial assistance available to me	4.47	4.48	5.01	4.63

Students indicated relatively low satisfaction with the adequacy of financial resources available to them across institution types, with students from four-year institutions indicating the lowest satisfaction.

Percentage of second-year students in agreement

Selected survey items	Students who would like to receive help this year (Section A)			Students who received help last year (Section B)			Change (Section A - Section B)		
	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)
Receptivity to financial assistance and past usage of financial assistance									
Find ways to balance the demands of school and work.	35.1%	42.0%	41.6%	21.2%	24.1%	24.1%	13.9%	17.8%	17.5%
Discuss options for financing my education.	53.6%	56.4%	59.0%	33.9%	35.4%	39.6%	19.7%	21.0%	19.4%
Find better ways to manage my personal finances, including loans, work, and credit cards.	40.7%	44.4%	44.6%	16.3%	20.3%	19.5%	24.5%	24.1%	25.2%

There was a dramatic change from first year to second year in the percentage of students desiring to receive institutional help with their finances. For the third survey item shown above, these increases ranged from 24 percent at four-year public institutions to 25 percent at two-year institutions and at four-year private institutions, perhaps suggesting heightened needs.

Also shown above, students at four-year private institutions indicated the lowest change in the area of needing to receive help with balancing studies and work (14 percent), while students at two-year and four-year public institutions reported changes/increases of nearly 18 percent, indicating the tensions implicit in balancing academics and finances.

**Highlights from
the findings**

Attitudes toward social and personal relationships—two vantage points

It is not always easy to unravel the web, or lack thereof, of social and personal relationships that define individuals and groups on campus. Personal relationships may involve family, significant others, friends, and roommates, while social relationships often refer to students' interface with clubs, organizations, leadership, and other opportunities for social engagement. The complicated nature of these relationships is reflected in the two tables below.

Percentage of second-year students in agreement

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
Attitudes toward social and personal relationships				
It has been easy for me to make friends in college.	77.1%	68.2%	71.0%	72.8%
I feel comfortable with the changes in lifestyle that occur in college.	87.0%	85.7%	85.7%	86.2%
I have many friends and feel like I belong here.	78.5%	70.2%	72.3%	74.3%
It has been easy for me to adapt to my college living arrangements.	83.9%	80.9%	77.8%	81.1%
I feel good about the way I have adapted to the college social environment.	83.8%	78.9%	82.0%	81.9%
I seldom feel lonely because I have many close friends with whom to share my concerns.	67.1%	62.2%	64.4%	64.9%

Students had the lowest level of agreement with issues that related to having friends, feeling like they belong, and loneliness. For example, 27 percent of students overall were unable to affirm that “It has been easy for me to make friends in college” (based on the inverse of the 73 percent shown). On the other hand, students indicated a reasonable level of agreement with being able to adapt to changes in lifestyle, the social scene, and living arrangements.

The lower percentages may raise questions about changes in family dynamics, personal relationships, and friendships from home that may diminish or change by the second year of college. Are there replacements for these relationships on campus, in clubs and organizations, or off campus?

**Mean satisfaction scores
(1 = low satisfaction, 7 = high satisfaction)**

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national mean
Student satisfaction—social and personal relationships				
Social life (both on and off campus)	5.36	5.27	5.27	5.29
Level of interactions with other students	5.53	5.23	5.40	5.39
Sense of belonging to the college community	5.44	5.14	5.36	5.31
My overall experience as a student at this institution	5.72	5.57	5.90	5.71

Students at two-year institutions indicated slightly higher satisfaction with their overall experience as a student (5.90), with a mean score of 5.71 across all institution types.

Appendix, Part A: Additional comments from Noel-Levitz regarding the findings

This inaugural report on second-year students' attitudes and motivations identifies opportunities in four key areas to enhance support to these students: academics, advising, finances, and social and personal relationships. A cross-examination of the complex aspects of each of the four areas was accomplished through demographic, motivation, receptivity, and satisfaction variables. While student attitudes and motivations related to academics were generally positive, results from the remaining three areas suggest an opportunity for campuses to consider potential benefits of interventions and services around advising, career counseling, finances, and social and personal relationships.

- Advising continued to be a high priority for students in the second year, with their concerns centered around the level of communication with their advisor, including the need to develop an academic plan and talk about the impact of grades on their current or desired major.
- Students in this study indicated a very strong desire for career counseling (see pages 14 and 15 of the Appendix, Part B), which is consistent with other national studies that suggest students are becoming much more demanding of this service. They want to define their goals, talk about the ins and outs of their career choice, and learn more about opportunities for work experiences and internships.
- Not surprising is the recurrence of student finances as a key challenge for second-year students. Because of the uncertain economy, financing their education is likely to remain an issue for the duration of their college experience. Beyond the issue of paying for college is the need for assistance with personal finances, including managing work and studies.
- The landscape of the second year is also dotted with many highs and lows associated with the complexities of social and personal relationships, including the desire for leadership opportunities. The waning of high school friendships and shifting family dynamics may suggest a need for alternative sources of both social and personal contact. Students expressed low satisfaction with the leadership opportunities in student government and other organizations, as well as with activities and events associated with their majors (see page 16 of the Appendix, Part B).

Many more observations can be made about the data in this report. We encourage readers to spend time reviewing the data in Part B of the Appendix for additional findings and to study similar data for your students.

Appendix, Part B: Additional findings

Table I: Motivational Data for Second-Year Students By Institution Type

Listed below are the percentages of second-year college students nationally that agreed with 36 motivational items included in the pilot survey instrument, the Second-Year Student Assessment, broken down by institution type.

Percentage of second-year students in agreement

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
Academic motivation				
I am strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in the way	95.2%	94.6%	95.4%	95.1%
I am quite confident that my decision to go to college was right for me.	93.1%	92.7%	94.6%	93.4%
I am motivated to do well in college.	93.1%	92.0%	93.2%	92.9%
I actively pursue my educational goals.	91.9%	91.6%	93.2%	92.3%
When I become confused about something I'm reading for class, I go back and try to figure it out.	84.5%	89.1%	93.2%	88.5%
I am able to grasp complicated ideas.	89.2%	86.8%	88.1%	88.2%
I am getting a lot out of college.	88.8%	85.7%	87.8%	87.6%
I feel as though I'm learning things in my classes that are worthwhile to me as a person.	86.5%	84.0%	91.5%	87.4%
The total college experience is very rewarding.	85.9%	81.6%	85.5%	84.6%
Of all the things I could do at this point in my life, going to college is definitely the most satisfying.	82.7%	82.7%	83.6%	83.0%
I can usually find ways of applying what I'm learning in class to something else in my life.	81.8%	79.3%	87.2%	82.9%
I have a good memory of the information that my instructors present in class.	82.0%	79.8%	83.6%	82.0%
I find myself thinking about what I'm learning in class even when I'm not in class.	76.1%	78.6%	86.8%	80.2%
I feel energized by the ideas I'm learning in most of my classes.	78.7%	74.5%	86.5%	80.1%
During an exam, I'm able to concentrate and keep my thoughts well organized	80.2%	76.1%	80.7%	79.3%
I am good at figuring out what material is most important for an exam.	78.2%	77.3%	82.1%	79.2%
Even when course materials are dull and boring, I manage to keep working until I finish.	75.0%	76.3%	85.6%	78.8%

RATING SCALE								
NOT AT ALL TRUE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	COMPLETELY TRUE

For the items in Table I, agreement was defined as the aggregated number of students who selected a rating of 5, 6, or 7.

Table I, continued

Percentage of second-year students in agreement

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
Social motivation				
I often take the initiative in solving my own problems.	92.4%	93.8%	94.8%	93.5%
I trust my own judgment in the decisions I make.	90.3%	92.3%	92.6%	91.6%
Most people have a lot of trust in my judgment and opinions.	91.5%	90.7%	90.8%	91.1%
I feel confident of my own opinions and am willing to act on them.	89.2%	89.8%	89.9%	89.6%
Many people consider me an effective leader and look to me for direction.	76.0%	74.8%	77.1%	76.0%
When I'm in a group, others often turn to me as the group's leader.	71.0%	69.7%	73.9%	71.6%
Over the years, I have frequently been selected as a spokesperson or group leader.	63.8%	60.7%	61.4%	62.2%
General coping				
I feel comfortable with the changes in lifestyle that occur in college.	87.0%	85.7%	85.7%	86.2%
My family respects my judgment on most decisions.	86.1%	84.2%	86.1%	85.6%
I have always felt that the rest of my family was firmly behind me.	86.8%	85.8%	81.5%	84.8%
I feel comfortable discussing important issues with my family.	82.2%	80.4%	85.2%	82.7%
I feel good about the way I have adapted to the college social environment.	83.8%	78.9%	82.0%	81.9%
It has been easy for me to adapt to my college living arrangements.	83.9%	80.9%	77.8%	81.1%
My family and I understand each other's point of view	81.3%	78.7%	80.5%	80.3%
I have many friends and feel like I belong here.	78.5%	70.2%	72.3%	74.3%
It has been easy for me to make friends in college.	77.1%	68.2%	71.0%	72.8%
I seldom feel lonely because I have many close friends with whom to share my concerns.	67.1%	62.2%	64.4%	64.9%
I have the financial resources that I need to finish college.	50.8%	53.7%	47.9%	50.6%
I don't have any financial problems that will interfere with my studies.	48.5%	49.8%	44.3%	47.5%

Table II: Second-Year Students’ Receptivity to Assistance in Year Two, Usage of Services in Year One, and Percent Change
 Listed in Table II are the percentages of second-year college students that responded “yes” to wanting to receive help this year (Section A) in 15 specific areas, followed by the percentage that indicated they received help last year in those areas (Section B). “Change” shown on the right indicates the difference between Section A and Section B. The findings are again broken down by institution type.

Percentage of second-year students in agreement

	Students who would like to receive help this year (Section A)				Students who received help last year (Section B)				Change (Section A - Section B)			
	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
Academic assistance												
Get help with my study skills (time management, concentrating, note-taking, exam skills, etc.).	31.8%	42.6%	42.5%	38.1%	26.9%	31.2%	32.5%	29.9%	4.8%	11.3%	10.0%	8.2%
Find tutors for one or more of my courses.	36.6%	49.2%	42.7%	41.9%	25.3%	32.6%	28.4%	28.2%	11.3%	16.7%	14.3%	13.7%
Advising												
Select an academic program or major.	32.7%	41.2%	36.3%	36.1%	54.0%	57.4%	49.9%	53.6%	-21.3%	-16.2%	-13.5%	-17.5%
Prepare a written academic plan for graduation.	52.8%	55.1%	52.0%	53.2%	29.0%	26.9%	24.7%	27.1%	23.8%	28.2%	27.4%	26.1%
Figure out the impact of my grades on my desired major.	56.3%	62.6%	58.9%	58.8%	33.0%	39.3%	36.6%	24.5%	23.3%	23.3%	22.3%	34.4%
Discuss transfer questions and issues.	24.9%	32.4%	61.0%	38.3%	17.0%	21.6%	30.3%	22.4%	7.9%	10.7%	30.7%	15.9%
Career counseling												
Define goals suited to my major/career interest(s).	56.3%	62.6%	55.8%	59.2%	43.3%	44.0%	38.1%	41.8%	16.4%	18.6%	17.7%	17.4%
Explore advantages and disadvantages of my career choice.	61.0%	62.9%	54.7%	56.1%	34.3%	34.6%	32.4%	33.7%	26.7%	28.4%	22.4%	25.7%

Table II, continued

Percentage of second-year students in agreement

	Students who would like to receive help this year (Section A)				Students who received help last year (Section B)				Change (Section A - Section B)			
	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
Career counseling—continued												
Identify work experiences or internships related to my major.	74.9%	76.4%	65.7%	72.4%	26.5%	27.0%	25.9%	26.4%	48.4%	49.4%	39.9%	46.0%
Financial guidance												
Find ways to balance the demands of school with work.	35.1%	42.0%	41.6%	39.0%	21.2%	24.1%	24.1%	22.9%	13.9%	17.8%	17.5%	16.1%
Discuss options for financing my education.	53.6%	56.4%	59.0%	56.1%	33.9	35.4%	39.6%	36.1%	19.7%	21.0%	19.4%	20.0%
Find better ways to manage my personal finances, including loans, work, and credit cards.	40.7%	44.4%	44.6%	43.0%	16.3%	20.3%	19.5%	18.4%	24.5%	24.1%	25.2%	24.6%
Personal support and counseling												
Discuss difficulties in my personal relationships and social life.	24.4%	26.4%	25.5%	25.3%	18.2%	16.9%	14.0%	16.5%	6.3%	9.5%	11.5%	8.8%
Receive help with family issues that are distracting me.	16.6%	19.7%	23.1%	19.5%	11.1%	11.9%	11.6%	11.5%	5.4%	7.8%	11.5%	8.0%
Find ways to deal with emotional tensions that are bothering me.	26.5%	28.3%	30.0%	28.1%	16.7%	17.0%	14.3%	16.0%	9.8%	11.3%	15.7%	12.1%

I would like to receive assistance this year.		Find tutors for one or more of my courses.	I received assistance last year.	
YES	NO		YES	NO
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Rating scale used in Table II:

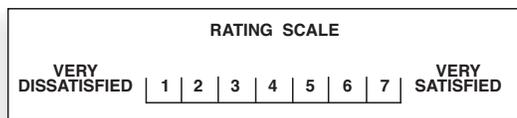
A simple yes/no rating scale was used for the items in Table II, as shown in this example.

Table III: Second-Year Student Satisfaction (Institutional Impressions)

Listed in Table III are the mean satisfaction scores of student respondents to 13 survey items using the seven-point rating scale shown at bottom.

**Mean satisfaction scores
(1 = low satisfaction, 7 = high satisfaction)**

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4 year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national mean
My overall experience as a student at this institution	5.72	5.57	5.9	5.71
Degree of academic challenge in my classes here	5.74	5.62	5.77	5.70
Level of interaction with my instructors	5.56	5.12	5.74	5.49
Variety of majors available	5.34	5.46	5.56	5.43
Level of interaction with other students	5.53	5.23	5.4	5.39
Variety of courses available in my (intended) major	5.31	5.37	5.41	5.34
Sense of belonging to the college community	5.44	5.14	5.36	5.31
Social life (both on and off campus)	5.36	5.27	5.27	5.29
Leadership opportunities in student government and other organizations	5.18	4.9	4.96	5.02
Opportunities to get involved in activities and events associated with my (intended) major	5.19	4.92	4.91	5.01
Level of communication with my academic advisor	4.97	4.57	4.93	4.83
Availability of service learning, internships, or work experiences associated with my career interests	5.05	4.71	4.72	4.83
Adequacy of financial assistance available to me	4.47	4.48	5.01	4.63



The figures shown in Table III are the mean responses to this seven-point scale.

Table IV: Respondent Demographics (Fall 2010)

Findings by institution type

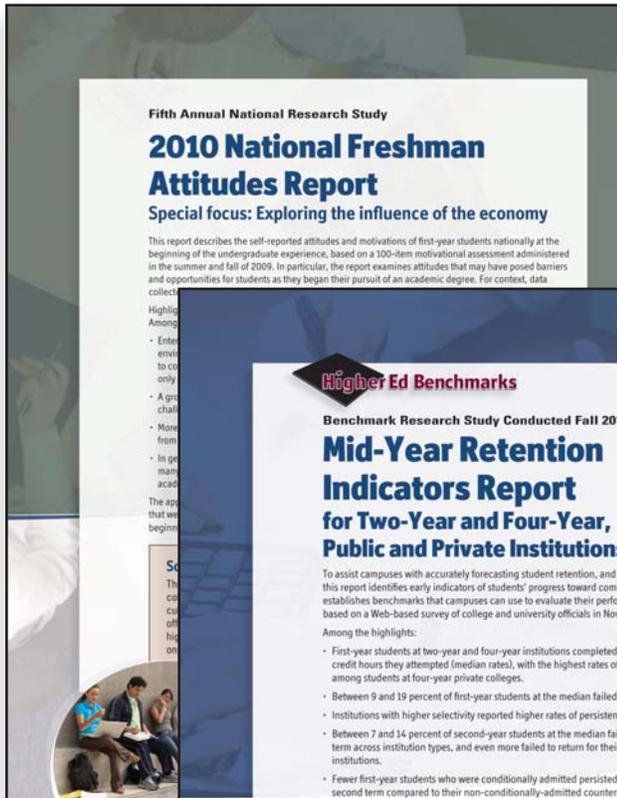
All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
Number of respondents	3,552	2,284	2,780	8,616
Representation by institution type	41.2%	26.5%	32.3%	
The amount of time I am working at a job this term is approximately:				
0 (I do not work)	35.6%	42.7%	35.2%	37.4%
1 to 10 hours per week	33.6%	14.1%	11.2%	21.2%
11 to 20 hours per week	20.7%	22.6%	15.6%	19.6%
21 to 30 hours per week	6.0%	12.7%	14.0%	10.4%
31 to 40 hours per week	2.5%	5.3%	14.0%	7.0%
Over 40 hours per week	1.5%	2.7%	10.0%	4.6%
My current GPA is approximately:				
3.5 – 4.0	44.3%	38.0%	42.3%	42.0%
2.5 – 3.49	47.4%	50.5%	47.6%	48.3%
1.5 – 2.49	7.7%	10.6%	8.8%	8.8%
1.0 – 1.49	0.5%	0.6%	0.9%	0.7%
Less than 1.0	0.1%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%
I would describe my racial/ethnic origin as:				
Black/African-American	6.4%	16.1%	6.4%	9.0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.5%	2.5%	0.6%	1.1%
Asian or Pacific Islander	6.7%	4.4%	1.5%	4.4%
White/Caucasian	71.6%	53.6%	52.8%	60.8%
Hispanic or Latino	5.5%	14.9%	32.8%	16.7%
Multi-ethnic or other ethnic origin	5.1%	5.2%	2.7%	4.4%
Prefer not to respond	4.2%	3.2%	3.2%	3.6%
The statement that describes my current college enrollment is:				
I enrolled here with no previous college credits.	51.3%	48.7%	46.1%	49.0%
I enrolled here with dual-enrollment credits earned while in high school.	30.1%	26.4%	11.3%	23.1%
I transferred here from a community college.	7.4%	10.5%	8.0%	8.4%
I transferred here from a four-year college or university.	5.4%	6.3%	10.4%	7.2%
Other	5.8%	8.0%	24.2%	12.3%
The total number of college credit hours I have earned here AND at other institutions is:				
0 – 15 credits	8.4%	5.2%	6.6%	7.0%
16 – 30 credits	23.1%	26.8%	18.7%	22.6%
31 – 45 credits	45.7%	37.3%	29.1%	38.1%
46 – 60 credits	17.3%	20.2%	20.7%	19.2%
More than 60 credits	5.5%	10.6%	25.0%	13.1%

Table IV, continued

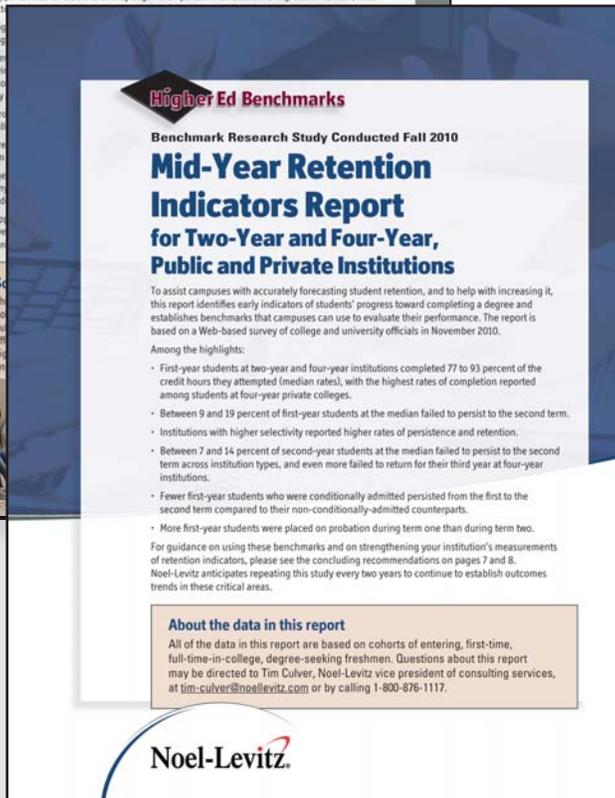
Findings by institution type

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
The number of classes I'm enrolled in at OTHER institutions this term is:				
None	93.4%	90.5%	87.2%	90.6%
One class	1.3%	1.2%	1.7%	1.4%
Two classes	0.8%	1.7%	2.4%	1.6%
Three classes	0.4%	1.3%	2.0%	1.2%
More than three classes	4.1%	5.3%	6.7%	5.3%
My study plans this year are:				
I don't think I will need to study as much as I did last year.	2.3%	2.8%	3.3%	2.7%
I think I will need to study about the same amount as I did last year.	26.1%	26.1%	33.6%	28.5%
I think I will need to study more than I did last year.	71.6%	71.1%	63.1%	68.8%
My current decision in the selection of a major is:				
I plan to continue with the major I have selected.	82.8%	75.7%	82.9%	80.9%
I have selected a major, but I'm thinking about changing it.	8.7%	14.0%	9.7%	10.5%
I'm actively engaged in the process of selecting a major.	6.5%	6.9%	3.3%	5.6%
I have some potential majors in mind, but haven't explored them yet.	1.8%	3.0%	3.5%	2.7%
I have not thought seriously about a major at this point.	0.2%	0.3%	0.6%	0.4%
The highest degree or program that I plan to pursue is:				
A one-year certificate	0.1%	0.2%	0.8%	0.3%
A two-year certificate or associate degree	0.6%	0.8%	24.0%	8.2%
A four-year college degree (bachelor's)	35.6%	33.4%	33.1%	34.2%
A master's degree	37.8%	36.4%	25.8%	33.6%
A professional degree (medicine, dentistry, law, Ph.D., or other similar degrees)	25.2%	28.7%	14.7%	22.8%
I do not plan to complete a degree or program	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%
Other	0.7%	0.2%	1.5%	0.8%
My current college or program completion plan is:				
I plan to complete my degree at this college or university.	91.3%	89.6%	52.9%	78.6%
I plan to transfer to another college or university to complete my degree.	6.1%	8.2%	43.3%	18.6%
I do not plan to re-enroll in college next term.	0.1%	0.1%	0.8%	0.3%
I have not made a decision about my plans to re-enroll in college next term.	2.5%	2.1%	3.0%	2.5%

For further reading...

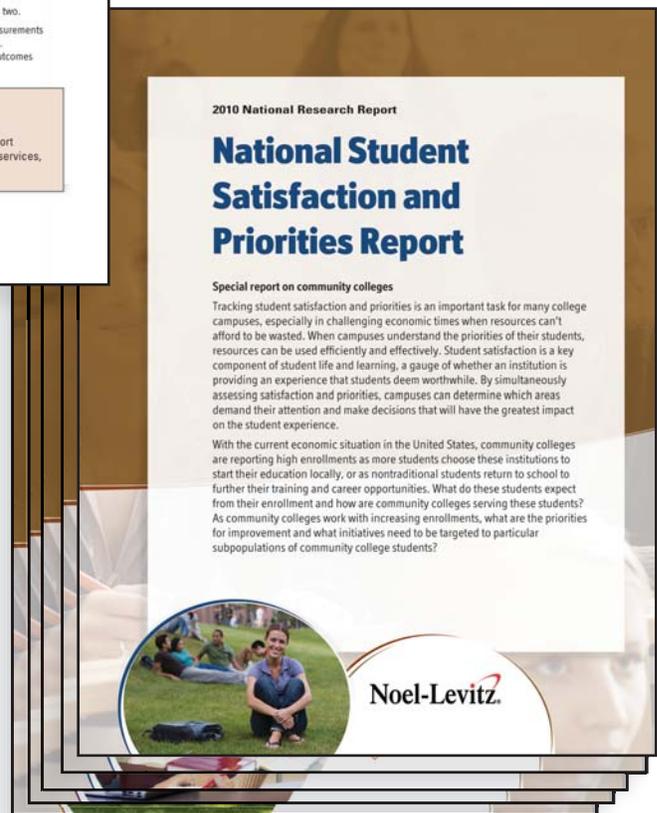


National Freshman Attitudes Reports
www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport



Benchmark poll reports on student retention and recruitment trends
www.noellevitz.com/BenchmarkReports

National Student Satisfaction-Priorities Reports
www.noellevitz.com/SatisfactionReports



Please visit www.noellevitz.com/papers to download additional Noel-Levitz reports and papers.



Contact us at:
2350 Oakdale Boulevard
Coralville, Iowa 52241-9702

Phone:
800-876-1117
319-626-8380

E-mail:
ContactUs@noellevitz.com

Web:
www.noellevitz.com

All material in this paper is copyright © by Noel-Levitz, Inc. Permission is required, in most cases, to redistribute information from Noel-Levitz, Inc., either in print or electronically. Please contact us at ContactUs@noellevitz.com about reusing material from this paper.

To see a sample copy of the survey instrument used in this study, please contact Jo Hillman at 1-866-982-4244 or jo-hillman@noellevitz.com.

Questions? Want additional information?

If you have questions about this pilot study, or to learn how motivational assessment of first- and second-year students can support you in prioritizing and justifying your resources, programs, and services, please contact Jo Hillman at jo-hillman@noellevitz.com. Additionally, please call Jo at 1-866-982-4244 to learn more about how the Second-Year Student Assessment of the Noel-Levitz Retention Management System *Plus* (RMS *Plus*) helps campuses to focus their individual interventions with students and how this approach may be beneficial for your students as well.

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

This report has been brought to you by Noel-Levitz as part of our series of student research reports.

Noel-Levitz has served the higher education community for 38 years. Campus leaders turn to the firm for consultation and resources for student recruitment, student retention, marketing, and strategic enrollment planning. Noel-Levitz has served more than 2,600 colleges and universities throughout North America.

The survey instrument used in this study was the pilot 78-item Second-Year Student Assessment of the Noel-Levitz Retention Management System *Plus* (RMS *Plus*). This assessment is designed to assess the motivational characteristics of second-year students. It profiles individual students' strengths and needs and serves as a retention management tool to guide interventions. In measuring receptivity, it also captures usage of services during the first year. In addition, for those campuses that are also using Noel-Levitz's College Student Inventory, the Second-Year Student Assessment follows up on some individual students' concerns as identified during the first year.

Beyond illuminating second-year students' attitudes nationally in this report, the findings of the Second-Year Student Assessment were reported directly to the participating campuses. Using the findings, educators are able to foster student success by building upon students' strengths and by creating proactive strategies to address students' self-identified areas of challenge.

To see a sample copy of the instrument, please contact Jo Hillman at 1-866-982-4244 or jo-hillman@noellevitz.com

Sign up to receive additional reports and papers as they become available:
www.noellevitz.com/subscribehere