



## 2013 Noel-Levitz Research Report

# Freshman Attitudes Report for Two-Year Colleges

## An exploration of college readiness

This special companion report to Noel-Levitz's 2013 National Freshman Attitudes Report examines the college readiness of entering freshmen at two-year colleges in 2012. **Based on student survey responses**, the report identifies students' self-reported attitudes that may influence students' progress toward degree completion. The study is based on a sizable sample of incoming, first-year undergraduates at two-year colleges nationwide.

Among the highlights:

- In a notable contrast, only 58 percent of the incoming, traditional-age freshman respondents in this study indicated they "study very hard for all my courses, even those I don't like" vs. 79 percent of freshmen respondents age 25 and older;
- Just over half (53 percent) of the study's traditional-age freshman respondents agreed with the statement, "Math has always been a challenge for me" vs. 60 percent of freshmen respondents age 25 and older;
- Nearly one-third (32 percent) of the traditional-age freshman respondents planned to transfer to another institution before completing a degree at their college vs. just 13 percent of freshman respondents age 25 and older;
- More than 60 percent of the first-generation freshman respondents in this study, across age groups, indicated they did *not* have the financial resources they needed to finish college; and
- Nearly 70 percent of the freshman respondents in the study, overall, indicated they were planning to attain a four-year bachelor's degree or higher, led by traditional-age students, non-first-generation students, and female students.

Complete findings of this report appear in Appendix B on pages 7-13, including responses to all 100 survey items reported separately for adult vs. traditional-age freshmen, first-generation vs. non-first-generation freshmen, and male vs. female freshmen. To access Noel-Levitz's main 2013 National Freshman Attitudes Report, visit [www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport](http://www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport).

### What are the implications for student success and college completion?

For a brief reflection on the findings and their implications for student retention and college completion initiatives at two-year institutions, please see page 6 (Appendix A).

This study examines a range of attitudes and attributes of entering freshman respondents at two-year colleges that may affect their perseverance and success in college.



## Contents

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Source of data .....  | 3 |
| College readiness of the incoming freshman respondents at two-year institutions ..... | 4 |
| Commitment to finishing college .....   | 4 |
| Financial challenges .....  | 5 |
| Plans to transfer to another college .....  | 5 |

## Appendix

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Reflections and actions to consider .....                             | 6  |
| Additional findings .....   | 7  |
| – All findings for adult vs. traditional-age freshmen                 |    |
| – All findings for first-generation vs. non-first-generation freshmen |    |
| – All findings for male vs. female freshmen                           |    |
| – Demographic breakdown of the incoming freshman respondents          |    |
| About Noel-Levitz and the survey instruments used in this study ..... | 14 |



### View more student attitude reports online

#### [www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport](http://www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport)

- 2008-2013 National Freshman Attitudes Reports, including a parallel 2010 report for two-year colleges
- 2012 Attitudes and Needs of Freshmen at Mid-Year
- 2012 Addendum by Race/Ethnicity

#### [www.noellevitz.com/SecondYearAttitudes](http://www.noellevitz.com/SecondYearAttitudes)

- Attitudes of Second-Year College Students: 2011 Pilot Study
- Addendum: Transfer Students

**For additional findings, please see the Appendix on pages 7-13, including complete breakdowns for adult vs. traditional-age freshmen.**

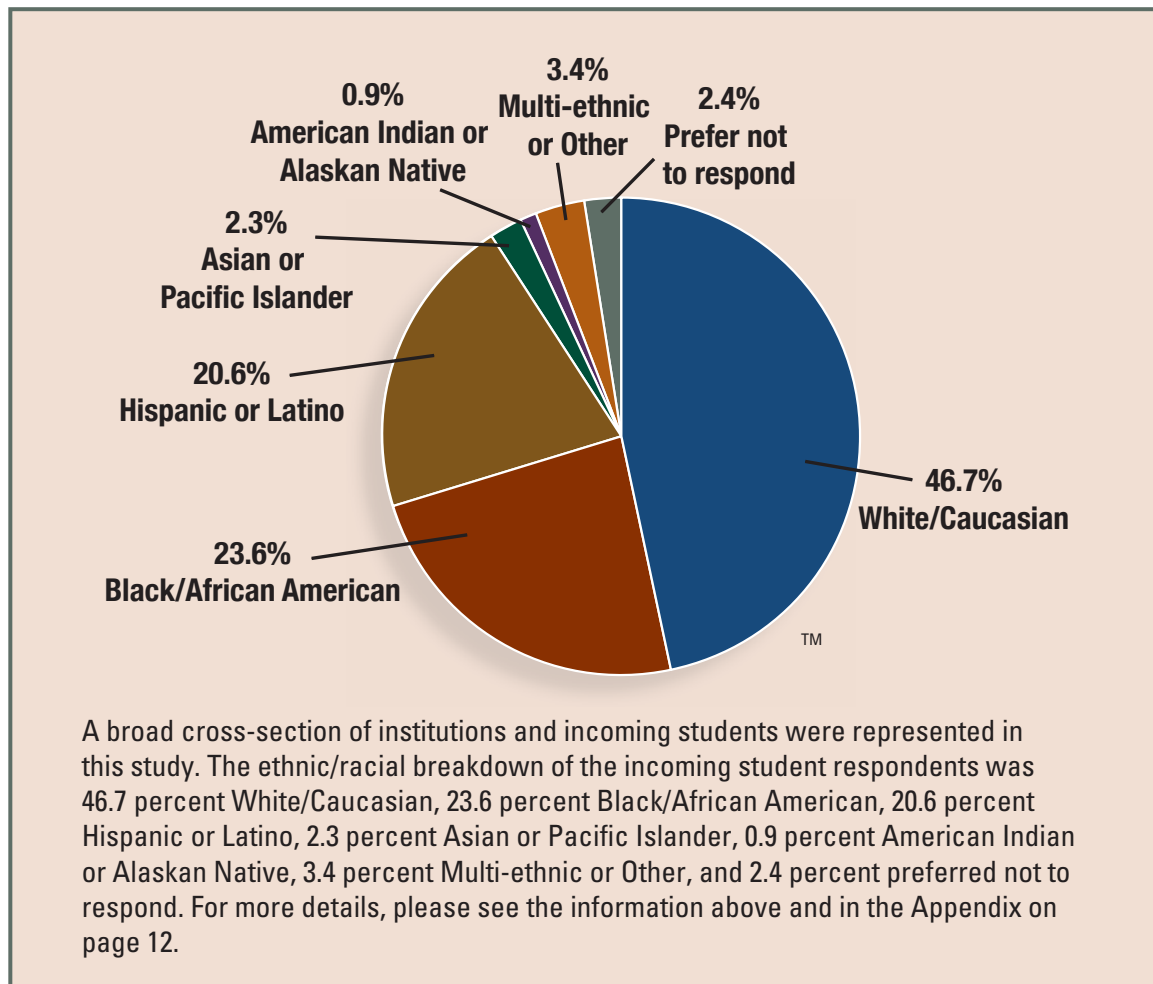
## The source of data

The incoming freshman data in this report were collected by a student survey administered to 29,801 entering first-year college students at 85 two-year colleges nationwide in 2012. The 100-item attitudinal survey examined a broad range of motivational perspectives that students brought with them to their collegiate learning experience. Students completed the survey online or used a traditional paper-and-pencil format.

A great majority of the 29,801 incoming student respondents were enrolled at two-year, public, community and technical colleges, though private two-year colleges were also represented. Consistent with national enrollment trends, a slight majority of the respondents (54.4 percent) were female. The average age of the respondents was 23.4 years.

The 100-item survey instrument was the College Student Inventory™ Form B (CSI-B), part of the Retention Management System *Plus*™ from Noel-Levitz. This attitudinal, early-alert assessment identifies self-reported attitudes that may pose barriers and opportunities for students as they transition to college. Note that many two-year colleges also administer Noel-Levitz's shorter assessment, the College Student Inventory Form C (CSI-C). For more information on Noel-Levitz attitudinal assessments, please see page 14.

For additional context, please refer to the series of National Freshman Attitudes Reports available at [www.noellelvitz.com/FreshmanReport](http://www.noellelvitz.com/FreshmanReport).



## Half of these incoming freshman respondents at two-year colleges expressed doubt in their math skills; less than two-thirds “study hard”

As Table 1 shows in **blue** below, slightly over half of the entering undergraduate respondents in this study indicated that “math has always been a challenge for me.” In addition, the overall percentages in the final column, bottom right, show that almost half of the respondents (43.2 percent, the inverse of 56.8 percent shown) lacked a solid system of self-discipline for keeping up with schoolwork.

**Table 1: College readiness of incoming freshmen at two-year colleges by subgroups and overall (Percentages indicate students in agreement with each statement)**

| Selected survey items  | Freshmen age 25 and older | Traditional-age freshmen | First-generation freshmen | Non-first-generation freshmen | Male students | Female students | OVERALL percentages |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Math has always been a challenge for me.   | 60.1%                     | 53.2%                    | 57.2%                     | 53.1%                         | 46.9%         | 61.7%           | <b>55.0%</b>        |
| I study very hard for all my courses, even those I don't like.                                 | 78.9%                     | 57.9%                    | 67.0%                     | 60.3%                         | 55.2%         | 70.0%           | 63.3%               |
| I have developed a solid system of self-discipline, which helps me keep up with my schoolwork. | 63.3%                     | 54.5%                    | 58.6%                     | 55.3%                         | 53.0%         | 60.0%           | 56.8%               |

TM

Notice in particular the differences in Table 1 between adult vs. traditional-age freshmen and between male vs. female freshmen. Identifying substantial differences by subgroup helps campuses to customize interventions to each subpopulation's needs.

## Almost 90 percent of respondents were deeply committed to their educational goals

Table 2 below in **blue** shows that the vast majority of the respondents were deeply committed to their educational goals, to the point of making sacrifices to achieve them. In addition, the overall percentages in the final column at right show that approximately two-thirds of respondents were both settled on a career decision *and* interested in receiving help with “selecting an educational plan to get a good job.”

**Table 2: Commitment to college and a career direction among incoming freshmen at two-year colleges by subgroups and overall (Percentages indicate students in agreement with each statement)**

| Selected survey items   | Freshmen age 25 and older | Traditional-age freshmen | First-generation freshmen | Non-first-generation freshmen | Male students | Female students | OVERALL percentages |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 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. | 94.7%                     | 88.2%                    | 91.1%                     | 88.9%                         | 86.8%         | 92.5%           | <b>89.9%</b>        |
| I have made a firm decision to enter a certain occupation and have begun planning my life around that decision.                             | 74.0%                     | 66.5%                    | 68.2%                     | 68.7%                         | 66.6%         | 70.1%           | 68.5%               |
| I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job.  | 61.3%                     | 63.9%                    | 66.8%                     | 60.2%                         | 61.9%         | 64.3%           | 63.2%               |

TM

Incoming freshmen age 25 and older and incoming female freshmen tended to bring a deeper commitment to their educational goals than traditional-age freshmen and male freshmen.

## More than 60 percent of first-generation freshman respondents said they lack financial resources to finish college

As highlighted in **blue** in Table 3 below, fully 60 percent of the freshman respondents in this study (the inverse of the **40 percent** shown) indicated they did *not* have the financial resources they needed to finish college. Furthermore, 42 percent of the freshman respondents overall expressed interest in talking with someone about getting a part-time job, and 46 percent of the freshman respondents overall expected to work at a job more than 20 hours per week while enrolled in classes.

**Table 3: Financial challenges of incoming freshmen at two-year colleges by subgroups and overall (Percentages indicate students in agreement with each statement)**

| Selected survey items   | Freshmen age 25 and older | Traditional-age freshmen | First-generation freshmen | Non-first-generation freshmen | Male students | Female students | OVERALL percentages |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| I have the financial resources that I need to finish college.                                 | 40.9%                     | 45.4%                    | <b>39.9%</b>              | 48.0%                         | 45.5%         | 43.1%           | 44.2%               |
| I would like to talk to someone about getting a part-time job during the regular school year. | 33.3%                     | 45.1%                    | 43.2%                     | 41.0%                         | 45.4%         | 39.2%           | 42.0%               |
| Respondents expecting to work at a job more than 20 hours a week while enrolled in classes.   | 51.1%                     | 44.0%                    | 48.7%                     | 43.5%                         | 46.8%         | 45.1%           | 45.8%               |

TM

The financial stress of the freshmen in this study was noteworthy, especially for first-generation students.

## Nearly one-third of traditional-age freshman respondents planned to transfer

Table 4 below in **blue** shows that 32 percent of the freshman respondents in this study who were under age 25 planned to transfer to another college or university before completing a degree. In addition, more than two-thirds of the respondents overall, and nearly three-quarters of the traditional-age respondents, planned to attain a bachelor's degree or higher.

**Table 4: Transfer plans and proportion of incoming freshmen seeking a bachelor's degree or higher among students at two-year colleges by subgroups and overall (Percentages indicate students in agreement with each statement)**

| Selected survey items  | Freshmen age 25 and older | Traditional-age freshmen | First-generation freshmen | Non-first-generation freshmen | Male students | Female students | OVERALL percentages |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| I plan to transfer to another school before completing a degree at this college or university.             | 13.4%                     | <b>31.8%</b>             | 24.8%                     | 29.1%                         | 26.5%         | 27.6%           | 27.1%               |
| Respondents planning to attain a four-year bachelor's degree or higher (a master's or professional degree) | 58.4%                     | 73.1%                    | 65.1%                     | 72.8%                         | 65.5%         | 72.5%           | 69.3%               |

TM

The groups of students in this study who brought the highest degree aspirations were traditional-age freshmen, non-first-generation freshmen, and female freshmen. For more details, see page 12 (Appendix B).

## Appendix A: Reflections and actions to consider

Each year, Noel-Levitz releases the National Freshman Attitudes Report, a summary of the self-reported attitudes of incoming college students that may pose barriers or opportunities for student success and college completion. These “non-cognitive” findings go beyond the usual test scores and high school transcripts to provide an overview of how students’ attitudes, motivations, and college preparation are changing from year to year.

In our 2013 National Freshman Attitudes Report, we identified a number of ways these data can be used to inform and guide your campus. We encourage you to use this student assessment data to:

### 1. **Guide institutional planning**

Assess the motivations and needs of incoming students—including how receptive these students are to institutional assistance—and use the findings to guide freshman programming, academic support services, student success interventions, and other campus resources.

### 2. **Identify non-cognitive differences among student populations**

Address the challenges of specific populations, such as the adult learner vs. the traditional-age student, with customized strategies that take into account each subpopulation’s distinctive needs and attitudes.

### 3. **Develop a more holistic view of incoming students and their college readiness**

There is increasing interest among higher education professionals in looking past traditional college-readiness measurements like grades and test scores to instead develop systems that take into account non-cognitive factors.

### 4. **Connect coursework and career aspirations**

Many students report a lack of self-discipline for keeping up with schoolwork and do not express a willingness to study hard. Using attitudinal data, you can assess the prevalence of these issues among the populations that are most susceptible and work at building up motivation. Table 2 in this report suggests that students’ commitment to college may be increased when students develop a career-oriented educational plan.

### 5. **Create ways to address student financial concerns**

Which students on your campus have the most pressing financial concerns and are these students in close communication with financial aid counselors? How can you help more students who are financially stressed to balance external factors and their academic careers?

These ideas only touch on ways that attitude and motivation assessments can become a vital part of your campus planning and intervention strategies. In addition to the aggregate data, having student-specific attitude data allows your leadership team to identify and target specific at-risk students.

For more ideas, see Appendix A of the 2013 National Freshman Attitudes Report, available at [www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport](http://www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport). If you’d like to discuss these findings or measure non-cognitive attitudes on your campus, please contact Noel-Levitz at [ContactUs@noellevitz.com](mailto:ContactUs@noellevitz.com) or call 1-800-876-1117.



## Appendix B: Additional findings and data from incoming college freshmen at two-year colleges in 2012

Listed in this section is a detailed breakdown of the 100 items that were captured from the 29,801 incoming college students in 2012, broken down into three pairings: adult vs. traditional students, first-generation vs. non-first-generation students, and male vs. female students. Figures in **bold** indicate greater contrasts within each pairing, though virtually all differences were statistically significant. For a detailed explanation of the statistical processes used to produce these data, see page 9. For a demographic breakdown of the respondents, see pages 12 and 13.

### Percent of freshmen in agreement (2012)

| All survey items  | Adult students* | Traditional students | First-generation students** | Non-first-generation students | Males        | Females      | OVERALL two-year college percentages |
|---|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Desire to finish college</b>   |                 |                      |                             |                               |              |              |                                      |
| I have a very strong desire to continue my education, and I am quite determined to finish a degree.   | 95.2%           | 93.0%                | 94.2%                       | 93.2%                         | <b>91.5%</b> | <b>95.4%</b> | 93.6%                                |
| I am very strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in my way.   | 95.6%           | 93.1%                | 94.4%                       | 93.2%                         | 91.9%        | 95.3%        | 93.8%                                |
| 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.       | <b>94.7%</b>    | <b>88.2%</b>         | 91.1%                       | 88.9%                         | <b>86.8%</b> | <b>92.5%</b> | 89.9%                                |
| Of all the things I could do at this point in my life, going to college is definitely the most satisfying.  | 86.5%           | 82.6%                | 86.6%                       | 81.2%                         | <b>79.3%</b> | <b>87.2%</b> | 83.6%                                |
| 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.                        | <b>14.0%</b>    | <b>20.9%</b>         | 19.7%                       | 18.6%                         | <b>23.0%</b> | <b>15.9%</b> | 19.1%                                |
| I can think of many things I would rather do than go to college.  | 10.2%           | 14.0%                | 11.8%                       | 14.0%                         | <b>17.5%</b> | <b>9.2%</b>  | 13.0%                                |
| 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. | 9.3%            | 13.7%                | 11.9%                       | 13.1%                         | <b>15.6%</b> | <b>10.0%</b> | 12.6%                                |
| 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.              | 9.5%            | 12.3%                | 11.5%                       | 11.6%                         | 12.0%        | 11.2%        | 11.6%                                |
| <b>Attitude toward educators</b>  |                 |                      |                             |                               |              |              |                                      |
| The teachers I had in school respected me as a person and treated me fairly.  | 76.8%           | 78.4%                | 78.4%                       | 77.6%                         | 76.0%        | 79.6%        | 77.9%                                |
| Most of my teachers have been very caring and dedicated.  | 79.8%           | 79.4%                | 80.2%                       | 79.0%                         | 77.4%        | 81.3%        | 79.5%                                |
| I liked my teachers, and I feel they did a good job.  | 76.8%           | 72.8%                | 74.6%                       | 73.4%                         | 72.2%        | 75.2%        | 73.8%                                |
| Most teachers have a superior attitude that I find very annoying.   | <b>8.6%</b>     | <b>17.5%</b>         | 14.5%                       | 15.9%                         | 17.5%        | 13.3%        | 15.2%                                |
| Most of the teachers I had in school were too opinionated and inflexible.   | 16.1%           | 19.5%                | 19.9%                       | 17.6%                         | 20.1%        | 17.5%        | 18.6%                                |
| In my opinion, many teachers are more concerned about themselves than they are about their students.  | <b>9.3%</b>     | <b>14.9%</b>         | 13.5%                       | 13.5%                         | 15.4%        | 11.8%        | 13.5%                                |

\* Adult learners were defined, for this study, as students age 25 and above.

\*\* First-generation students were defined, for this study, as students whose parents did not have *any* college experience.

Percent of freshmen in agreement (2012)

| All survey items  | Adult students | Traditional students | First-generation students | Non-first-generation students | Males        | Females      | OVERALL two-year college percentages |
|---|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Intellectual interests</b>   |                |                      |                           |                               |              |              |                                      |
| Over the years, books have broadened my horizons and stimulated my imagination.   | <b>64.5%</b>   | <b>45.4%</b>         | 49.3%                     | 51.1%                         | <b>44.7%</b> | <b>55.0%</b> | 50.3%                                |
| I get a great deal of satisfaction from reading.  | <b>63.2%</b>   | <b>42.2%</b>         | 48.5%                     | 46.9%                         | <b>38.9%</b> | <b>54.9%</b> | 47.6%                                |
| I don't enjoy reading serious books and articles, and I only do it when I have to.  | <b>30.1%</b>   | <b>46.3%</b>         | 42.6%                     | 41.9%                         | 44.3%        | 40.4%        | 42.2%                                |
| Books have never gotten me very excited.  | <b>33.6%</b>   | <b>45.2%</b>         | 41.8%                     | 42.7%                         | <b>48.5%</b> | <b>37.0%</b> | 42.2%                                |
| <b>Study habits</b>   |                |                      |                           |                               |              |              |                                      |
| I take very careful notes during class, and I review them thoroughly before a test.   | <b>77.0%</b>   | <b>62.4%</b>         | 69.1%                     | 63.8%                         | <b>55.1%</b> | <b>75.5%</b> | 66.2%                                |
| I study very hard for all my courses, even those I don't like.  | <b>78.9%</b>   | <b>57.9%</b>         | 67.0%                     | 60.3%                         | <b>55.2%</b> | <b>70.0%</b> | 63.3%                                |
| I have developed a solid system of self-discipline, which helps me keep up with my schoolwork.                                | <b>63.3%</b>   | <b>54.5%</b>         | 58.6%                     | 55.3%                         | 53.0%        | 60.0%        | 56.8%                                |
| My studying is very irregular and unpredictable.  | <b>25.1%</b>   | <b>35.6%</b>         | 32.2%                     | 33.5%                         | <b>36.9%</b> | <b>29.6%</b> | 32.9%                                |
| When I try to study, I usually get bored and quit after a few minutes.  | <b>16.0%</b>   | <b>33.3%</b>         | 28.7%                     | 28.9%                         | 29.2%        | 28.5%        | 28.9%                                |
| I have great difficulty concentrating on schoolwork, and I often get behind.  | 23.3%          | 27.7%                | 27.4%                     | 25.9%                         | 28.2%        | 25.3%        | 26.6%                                |
| <b>Math and science confidence</b>  |                |                      |                           |                               |              |              |                                      |
| I have a very good grasp of the scientific ideas I've studied in school.  | 40.0%          | 40.1%                | 36.2%                     | 43.3%                         | <b>45.4%</b> | <b>35.6%</b> | 40.1%                                |
| I have a hard time understanding and solving complex math problems.   | 57.1%          | 50.2%                | 54.3%                     | 50.1%                         | <b>46.1%</b> | <b>56.9%</b> | 52.0%                                |
| Math has always been a challenge for me.  | 60.1%          | 53.2%                | 57.2%                     | 53.1%                         | <b>46.9%</b> | <b>61.7%</b> | 55.0%                                |
| I have always enjoyed the challenge of trying to solve complex math problems.   | 36.3%          | 33.2%                | 35.0%                     | 33.2%                         | <b>38.2%</b> | <b>30.5%</b> | 34.0%                                |
| I have a very good understanding of general biology (e.g., cell structure, metabolism, genetics, and the circulatory system). | 32.9%          | 36.4%                | 32.0%                     | 38.4%                         | 37.7%        | 33.7%        | 35.5%                                |
| My understanding of the physical sciences is very weak.   | 33.0%          | 27.9%                | <b>33.2%</b>              | <b>25.9%</b>                  | <b>24.7%</b> | <b>33.1%</b> | 29.2%                                |
| <b>Verbal confidence</b>  |                |                      |                           |                               |              |              |                                      |
| I am capable of writing a very clear and well-organized paper.  | 54.0%          | 54.5%                | 51.5%                     | 56.8%                         | 52.6%        | 55.9%        | 54.4%                                |
| I pick up new vocabulary words quickly, and I find it easy to use them in my speech and writing.                              | <b>64.1%</b>   | <b>53.5%</b>         | 53.8%                     | 58.3%                         | 58.2%        | 54.5%        | 56.2%                                |
| I am very good at figuring out the deeper meaning of a short story or novel.  | 55.9%          | 48.5%                | 48.9%                     | 51.8%                         | 48.6%        | 51.9%        | 50.4%                                |
| I have difficulty organizing my ideas in a paper, and I tend to make a lot of punctuation and grammar mistakes.               | 39.7%          | 37.7%                | 41.9%                     | 35.1%                         | 38.5%        | 38.0%        | 38.2%                                |
| In English classes, I've had difficulty analyzing an author's style and theme.  | 27.1%          | 29.4%                | 30.8%                     | 27.1%                         | 29.9%        | 27.8%        | 28.8%                                |
| Learning new vocabulary words is a slow and difficult process for me.   | 17.3%          | 20.3%                | 21.7%                     | 17.6%                         | 17.6%        | 21.2%        | 19.5%                                |



Percent of freshmen in agreement (2012)

| All survey items   | Adult students | Traditional students | First-generation students | Non-first-generation students | Males        | Females      | OVERALL two-year college percentages |
|--|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Career closure</b>  |                |                      |                           |                               |              |              |                                      |
| I have found a potential career that strongly attracts me.   | <b>86.0%</b>   | <b>79.2%</b>         | 80.3%                     | 81.6%                         | 80.1%        | 81.7%        | 80.9%                                |
| I have made a firm decision to enter a certain occupation and have begun planning my life around that decision.          | <b>74.0%</b>   | <b>66.5%</b>         | 68.2%                     | 68.7%                         | 66.6%        | 70.1%        | 68.5%                                |
| I become very confused when I try to choose an occupation.   | 18.5%          | 24.5%                | 24.1%                     | 21.9%                         | 22.7%        | 23.2%        | 23.0%                                |
| I am very confused about what occupation to pursue.  | 15.9%          | 21.0%                | 20.9%                     | 18.6%                         | 19.6%        | 19.7%        | 19.7%                                |
| <b>Family emotional support</b>  |                |                      |                           |                               |              |              |                                      |
| When I was a child, my parents usually understood me, respected my judgment, and treated me in ways that helped me grow. | <b>61.0%</b>   | <b>72.9%</b>         | 66.5%                     | 72.7%                         | 71.3%        | 68.6%        | 69.8%                                |
| My family and I communicated very well when I was young, and we had a good understanding of each other's point of view.  | <b>55.0%</b>   | <b>63.6%</b>         | 58.5%                     | 63.8%                         | 63.1%        | 59.9%        | 61.4%                                |
| My family had one way of looking at me when I was a child, and they didn't understand my feelings very well.             | 25.3%          | 19.5%                | 24.1%                     | 18.4%                         | 18.9%        | 22.8%        | 21.0%                                |
| When I was a child, the other members of my family often said hurtful things that caused unpleasant feelings.            | <b>22.7%</b>   | <b>15.7%</b>         | 20.4%                     | 15.1%                         | <b>13.9%</b> | <b>20.6%</b> | 17.5%                                |
| <b>Sense of financial security</b>   |                |                      |                           |                               |              |              |                                      |
| I have the financial resources that I need to finish college.  | 40.9%          | 45.4%                | <b>39.9%</b>              | <b>48.0%</b>                  | 45.5%        | 43.1%        | 44.2%                                |
| I don't have any financial problems that will interfere with my schoolwork.  | 35.4%          | 37.5%                | 34.3%                     | 39.3%                         | 39.1%        | 35.2%        | 37.0%                                |
| I have financial problems that are very distracting and troublesome.   | <b>39.5%</b>   | <b>30.0%</b>         | <b>36.5%</b>              | <b>29.0%</b>                  | 29.6%        | 34.8%        | 32.4%                                |
| I am in a bad financial position, and the pressure to earn extra money will probably interfere with my studies.          | 19.1%          | 19.1%                | 21.3%                     | 17.3%                         | 19.2%        | 19.0%        | 19.1%                                |
| <b>Sociability</b>   |                |                      |                           |                               |              |              |                                      |
| I greatly enjoy getting together with a crowd of people and having fun.  | <b>66.4%</b>   | <b>75.4%</b>         | 72.2%                     | 74.0%                         | 72.3%        | 73.8%        | 73.1%                                |
| I am very adventurous and outgoing at social gatherings.   | 52.6%          | 55.6%                | 53.7%                     | 55.8%                         | 54.1%        | 55.4%        | 54.8%                                |
| Participating in large social gatherings is of little interest to me.  | 34.3%          | 32.1%                | 34.1%                     | 31.6%                         | 32.4%        | 32.9%        | 32.7%                                |
| It is hard for me to relax and just have fun with a group of people.   | 16.1%          | 12.7%                | 14.7%                     | 12.5%                         | 12.9%        | 14.1%        | 13.6%                                |

**About our statistical processes**

Due to the large sample sizes, virtually all differences in the means shown in this report proved to be statistically significant based on either a t-test (using two-level variables such as first-generation/non-first-generation) or ANOVA analysis (using multi-level variables such as school type). To identify greater contrasts (the items that appear in **bold**), Cohen's d was used to identify items with small or medium effect sizes. Virtually all other differences, although statistically significant, registered negligible effect sizes.

Percent of freshmen in agreement (2012)

| All survey items   | Adult students | Traditional students | First-generation students | Non-first-generation students | Males        | Females      | OVERALL two-year college percentages |
|--|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Opinion tolerance</b>   |                |                      |                           |                               |              |              |                                      |
| I get along well with people who disagree with my opinion openly.  | <b>70.6%</b>   | <b>58.2%</b>         | 62.6%                     | 60.3%                         | 61.4%        | 61.4%        | 61.4%                                |
| I can feel comfortable with someone who thinks quite differently than I do on major social issues.                                       | <b>70.7%</b>   | <b>58.6%</b>         | 62.2%                     | 61.4%                         | 61.7%        | 61.8%        | 61.7%                                |
| I find it easy to be friends with people whose political ideas differ sharply from my own.   | <b>63.7%</b>   | <b>52.5%</b>         | 55.7%                     | 55.1%                         | 55.4%        | 55.3%        | 55.4%                                |
| When someone's opinions strongly disagree with my own, I tend to develop unfriendly feelings and to avoid close contact with the person. | 10.2%          | 12.8%                | 12.2%                     | 12.1%                         | 11.6%        | 12.5%        | 12.1%                                |
| I feel uneasy and distrustful toward people whose way of thinking is quite dissimilar to my own.   | 8.1%           | 10.2%                | 10.0%                     | 9.3%                          | 10.2%        | 9.2%         | 9.7%                                 |
| Because they irritate me, I tend to stay away from people whose ideas are quite different from my own.                                   | 9.6%           | 11.7%                | 11.6%                     | 10.7%                         | 11.7%        | 10.6%        | 11.1%                                |
| <b>Receptivity to academic assistance</b>  |                |                      |                           |                               |              |              |                                      |
| I would like to receive some instruction in the most effective ways to take college exams.   | 76.6%          | 74.4%                | 77.9%                     | 72.5%                         | 72.1%        | 77.3%        | 74.9%                                |
| I would like to receive some help in improving my study habits.  | 61.0%          | 62.3%                | 65.3%                     | 59.1%                         | 59.2%        | 64.2%        | 61.9%                                |
| I would like to receive some individual help in improving my math skills.  | <b>61.9%</b>   | <b>53.4%</b>         | <b>60.0%</b>              | <b>51.7%</b>                  | <b>50.2%</b> | <b>60.0%</b> | 55.6%                                |
| I would like to receive some individual help in improving my writing skills.   | 49.8%          | 44.9%                | <b>51.0%</b>              | <b>42.1%</b>                  | 44.2%        | 47.8%        | 46.2%                                |
| I would like to receive tutoring in one or more of my courses.   | 47.3%          | 41.1%                | 46.6%                     | 39.3%                         | <b>38.3%</b> | <b>46.4%</b> | 42.7%                                |
| I would like to receive some training to improve my reading skills.  | 33.1%          | 29.5%                | <b>35.2%</b>              | <b>26.3%</b>                  | 30.0%        | 30.7%        | 30.4%                                |
| <b>Receptivity to career counseling</b>  |                |                      |                           |                               |              |              |                                      |
| I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job.   | 61.3%          | 63.9%                | 66.8%                     | 60.2%                         | 61.9%        | 64.3%        | 63.2%                                |
| I would like to talk with someone about the qualifications needed for certain occupations.   | 58.3%          | 62.3%                | 63.4%                     | 59.5%                         | 59.4%        | 62.8%        | 61.3%                                |
| I would like to talk with someone about the salaries and future outlook for various occupations.   | 48.2%          | 52.1%                | 52.8%                     | 49.7%                         | 52.9%        | 49.6%        | 51.1%                                |
| I would like to talk with someone about the advantages and disadvantages of various occupations.   | 41.5%          | 43.7%                | 45.0%                     | 41.6%                         | 43.8%        | 42.6%        | 43.2%                                |
| I would like some help selecting an occupation that is well-suited to my interests and abilities.  | 41.3%          | 45.3%                | 47.3%                     | 41.6%                         | 45.7%        | 43.0%        | 44.2%                                |

Percent of freshmen in agreement (2012)

| All survey items   | Adult students | Traditional students | First-generation students | Non-first-generation students | Males         | Females       | OVERALL two-year college percentages |
|--|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Receptivity to financial guidance</b>   |                |                      |                           |                               |               |               |                                      |
| I would like to talk to someone about getting a scholarship.   | 54.1%          | 59.9%                | 60.6%                     | 56.5%                         | 54.7%         | 61.5%         | 58.4%                                |
| I would like to talk to someone about getting a part-time job during the regular school year.                                    | <b>33.3%</b>   | <b>45.1%</b>         | 43.2%                     | 41.0%                         | 45.4%         | 39.2%         | 42.0%                                |
| I would like to talk to someone about the opportunities available for summer employment.   | <b>37.7%</b>   | <b>46.4%</b>         | 46.7%                     | 42.0%                         | 44.8%         | 43.6%         | 44.1%                                |
| I would like to talk with someone about getting a loan to help me through school.  | <b>38.8%</b>   | <b>28.6%</b>         | 34.0%                     | 29.0%                         | 30.6%         | 31.8%         | 31.2%                                |
| <b>Receptivity to personal counseling</b>  |                |                      |                           |                               |               |               |                                      |
| I would like to talk with a counselor about my general attitude toward school.   | 22.3%          | 19.5%                | 22.6%                     | 18.0%                         | 19.6%         | 20.6%         | 20.2%                                |
| I would like to talk with a counselor about some difficulties in my personal relationships or social life.                       | 12.4%          | 12.0%                | 12.8%                     | 11.4%                         | 11.0%         | 13.0%         | 12.1%                                |
| I would like to talk with a counselor about eliminating an unwanted habit (involving food, drugs, cigarettes, or alcohol, etc.). | 13.0%          | 11.1%                | 12.7%                     | 10.6%                         | 12.1%         | 11.1%         | 11.6%                                |
| I would like to talk with a counselor about some emotional tensions that are bothering me.                                       | 9.6%           | 9.1%                 | 9.9%                      | 8.7%                          | 7.9%          | 10.4%         | 9.2%                                 |
| I would like to talk with a counselor about some feelings of discouragement or unhappy thoughts that keep bothering me.          | 9.1%           | 9.2%                 | 9.9%                      | 8.5%                          | 8.7%          | 9.5%          | 9.2%                                 |
| I would like to talk with a counselor about some family problems.  | 7.7%           | 7.1%                 | 7.9%                      | 6.7%                          | 6.2%          | 8.2%          | 7.3%                                 |
| <b>Receptivity to social enrichment</b>  |                |                      |                           |                               |               |               |                                      |
| I would like to attend an informal gathering where I can meet some new friends.  | 40.4%          | 45.0%                | 44.1%                     | 43.5%                         | 44.3%         | 43.4%         | 43.8%                                |
| I would like to find out more about the clubs and social organizations at my college.  | <b>36.1%</b>   | <b>47.5%</b>         | 45.1%                     | 44.1%                         | 44.1%         | 45.0%         | 44.6%                                |
| I would like to find out more about student government and the various student activities on campus.                             | 34.5%          | 38.5%                | 39.9%                     | 35.4%                         | 35.9%         | 38.8%         | 37.5%                                |
| I would like to meet an experienced student who can show me around and give me some advice.                                      | 38.4%          | 42.9%                | 44.2%                     | 39.5%                         | 41.6%         | 41.8%         | 41.7%                                |
| <b>Desire to transfer</b>  |                |                      |                           |                               |               |               |                                      |
| I have no desire to transfer to another school before finishing a degree at this college or university.                          | <b>60.8%</b>   | <b>41.3%</b>         | 48.6%                     | 44.5%                         | 47.8%         | 45.0%         | 46.3%                                |
| I plan to transfer to another school before completing a degree at this college or university.                                   | <b>13.4%</b>   | <b>31.8%</b>         | 24.8%                     | 29.1%                         | 26.5%         | 27.6%         | 27.1%                                |
| <b>Total number of students</b>  | <b>7,675</b>   | <b>22,126</b>        | <b>13,314</b>             | <b>16,105</b>                 | <b>13,596</b> | <b>16,205</b> | <b>29,801</b>                        |
| <b>Average age of students</b>   | <b>34.7</b>    | <b>19.3</b>          | <b>24.6</b>               | <b>22.4</b>                   | <b>22.7</b>   | <b>24.0</b>   | <b>23.4</b>                          |

## Respondent demographics (2012)

| All survey items                            | Adult students | Traditional students | First-generation students | Non-first-generation students | Males  | Females | OVERALL two-year college percentages |
|---|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|---------|--------------------------------------|
| Number of respondents                       | 7,675          | 22,126               | 13,314*                   | 16,105*                       | 13,596 | 16,205  | 29,801                               |
| Percent of respondents                      | 25.8%          | 74.2%                | 44.7%                     | 54.0%                         | 45.6%  | 54.4%   | 100.0%                               |
| Percent male                                | 39.0%          | 47.9%                | 41.6%                     | 49.0%                         | 100.0% | 0.0%    | 45.6%                                |
| Percent female                              | 61.0%          | 52.1%                | 58.4%                     | 51.0%                         | 0.0%   | 100.0%  | 54.4%                                |
| <b>Racial/ethnic origin</b>                 |                |                      |                           |                               |        |         |                                      |
| Black/African-American                      | 31.4%          | 20.9%                | 24.6%                     | 22.6%                         | 20.7%  | 26.1%   | 23.6%                                |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native           | 0.9%           | 0.9%                 | 0.7%                      | 1.1%                          | 1.0%   | 0.9%    | 0.9%                                 |
| Asian or Pacific Islander                   | 2.0%           | 2.4%                 | 2.2%                      | 2.4%                          | 2.5%   | 2.1%    | 2.3%                                 |
| White/Caucasian                             | 44.7%          | 47.4%                | 38.1%                     | 54.1%                         | 50.1%  | 43.8%   | 46.7%                                |
| Hispanic or Latino                          | 15.0%          | 22.6%                | 29.4%                     | 13.4%                         | 19.8%  | 21.3%   | 20.6%                                |
| Multi-ethnic or other ethnic origin         | 2.8%           | 3.7%                 | 2.8%                      | 3.9%                          | 3.1%   | 3.7%    | 3.4%                                 |
| Prefer not to respond                       | 3.2%           | 2.1%                 | 2.1%                      | 2.5%                          | 2.7%   | 2.1%    | 2.4%                                 |
| <b>Highest education level of mother</b>    |                |                      |                           |                               |        |         |                                      |
| 8 years or less                             | 8.4%           | 6.0%                 | 13.7%                     | 0.9%                          | 5.4%   | 7.7%    | 6.6%                                 |
| Some high school                            | 16.7%          | 12.6%                | 26.0%                     | 3.6%                          | 11.5%  | 15.4%   | 13.6%                                |
| High school diploma                         | 39.8%          | 34.6%                | 60.4%                     | 16.0%                         | 35.8%  | 36.0%   | 35.9%                                |
| 1 to 3 years of college                     | 22.8%          | 26.9%                | 0.0%                      | 47.4%                         | 25.6%  | 26.0%   | 25.8%                                |
| Bachelor's degree                           | 7.3%           | 12.2%                | 0.0%                      | 20.1%                         | 13.7%  | 8.7%    | 11.0%                                |
| Master's degree                             | 2.7%           | 5.0%                 | 0.0%                      | 8.1%                          | 5.2%   | 3.8%    | 4.4%                                 |
| Professional degree                         | 1.9%           | 2.3%                 | 0.0%                      | 4.0%                          | 2.4%   | 2.0%    | 2.2%                                 |
| <b>Highest education level of father</b>    |                |                      |                           |                               |        |         |                                      |
| 8 years or less                             | 11.2%          | 7.5%                 | 16.6%                     | 1.9%                          | 7.0%   | 9.8%    | 8.5%                                 |
| Some high school                            | 18.2%          | 16.0%                | 28.5%                     | 6.9%                          | 14.1%  | 18.5%   | 16.5%                                |
| High school diploma                         | 40.8%          | 38.6%                | 54.9%                     | 26.9%                         | 38.2%  | 40.0%   | 39.2%                                |
| 1 to 3 years of college                     | 16.3%          | 20.9%                | 0.0%                      | 36.3%                         | 21.5%  | 18.2%   | 19.7%                                |
| Bachelor's degree                           | 6.9%           | 9.9%                 | 0.0%                      | 16.8%                         | 11.0%  | 7.6%    | 9.1%                                 |
| Master's degree                             | 3.1%           | 4.0%                 | 0.0%                      | 6.9%                          | 4.6%   | 3.1%    | 3.8%                                 |
| Professional degree                         | 2.3%           | 2.3%                 | 0.0%                      | 4.2%                          | 2.7%   | 1.9%    | 2.3%                                 |
| <b>Highest degree planned by respondent</b> |                |                      |                           |                               |        |         |                                      |
| None  | 0.4%           | 0.3%                 | 0.4%                      | 0.3%                          | 0.4%   | 0.3%    | 0.3%                                 |
| 1-year certificate                          | 5.4%           | 2.6%                 | 4.1%                      | 2.6%                          | 4.1%   | 2.7%    | 3.3%                                 |
| 2-year degree (associate's)                 | 35.8%          | 23.9%                | 30.4%                     | 24.2%                         | 29.9%  | 24.5%   | 27.0%                                |
| 4-year degree (bachelor's)                  | 34.2%          | 39.9%                | 38.1%                     | 38.7%                         | 38.9%  | 38.0%   | 38.4%                                |
| Master's degree                             | 15.7%          | 18.4%                | 15.5%                     | 19.5%                         | 16.7%  | 18.5%   | 17.7%                                |
| Professional degree                         | 8.5%           | 14.8%                | 11.5%                     | 14.6%                         | 9.9%   | 16.0%   | 13.2%                                |

\* 382 students did not provide the necessary data to classify them as first-generation or non-first-generation students. These students have not been included in the percentages for first-generation and non-first-generation students.

Respondent demographics continued

| All survey items  | Adult students | Traditional students | First-generation students | Non-first-generation students | Males | Females | OVERALL two-year college percentages |
|---|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-------|---------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Time expecting to spend at work</b>                        |                |                      |                           |                               |       |         |                                      |
| 0 (I have no plans to work)                                   | 23.2%          | 14.7%                | 17.2%                     | 16.5%                         | 15.6% | 17.9%   | 16.9%                                |
| 1 to 10 hours per week  | 8.9%           | 13.0%                | 11.2%                     | 12.5%                         | 11.4% | 12.3%   | 11.9%                                |
| 11 to 20 hours per week                                       | 16.7%          | 28.3%                | 22.9%                     | 27.4%                         | 26.1% | 24.7%   | 25.3%                                |
| 21 to 30 hours per week                                       | 17.7%          | 25.0%                | 23.5%                     | 22.8%                         | 23.4% | 22.9%   | 23.1%                                |
| 31 to 40 hours per week                                       | 23.7%          | 15.1%                | 19.1%                     | 15.8%                         | 16.5% | 18.0%   | 17.3%                                |
| Over 40 hours per week  | 9.7%           | 3.9%                 | 6.1%                      | 4.9%                          | 6.9%  | 4.2%    | 5.4%                                 |
| <b>Average grades as senior in high school</b>                |                |                      |                           |                               |       |         |                                      |
| A   | 4.0%           | 6.4%                 | 4.5%                      | 6.8%                          | 4.9%  | 6.5%    | 5.8%                                 |
| A to B  | 19.3%          | 30.0%                | 26.2%                     | 28.2%                         | 23.3% | 30.6%   | 27.3%                                |
| B   | 16.8%          | 18.4%                | 16.3%                     | 19.4%                         | 19.1% | 17.0%   | 18.0%                                |
| B to C  | 34.3%          | 32.0%                | 34.8%                     | 30.8%                         | 32.9% | 32.3%   | 32.6%                                |
| C   | 14.7%          | 7.9%                 | 10.4%                     | 9.0%                          | 11.6% | 8.0%    | 9.6%                                 |
| C to D  | 8.3%           | 4.5%                 | 6.2%                      | 4.8%                          | 6.7%  | 4.5%    | 5.5%                                 |
| D   | 2.6%           | 0.7%                 | 1.6%                      | 0.9%                          | 1.5%  | 1.0%    | 1.2%                                 |
| <b>Respondent's self-assessment of academic knowledge</b>     |                |                      |                           |                               |       |         |                                      |
| Highest 20%   | 8.8%           | 7.8%                 | 6.8%                      | 9.1%                          | 8.6%  | 7.6%    | 8.1%                                 |
| Next to highest 20%   | 19.5%          | 24.0%                | 20.1%                     | 25.1%                         | 23.8% | 22.0%   | 22.8%                                |
| Middle 20%  | 62.1%          | 63.0%                | 65.4%                     | 60.6%                         | 61.0% | 64.2%   | 62.7%                                |
| Next to lowest 20%  | 7.5%           | 4.5%                 | 6.2%                      | 4.5%                          | 5.4%  | 5.2%    | 5.3%                                 |
| Lowest 20%  | 2.1%           | 0.7%                 | 1.4%                      | 0.7%                          | 1.1%  | 1.0%    | 1.1%                                 |
| <b>Respondent's self-assessment of academic ability</b>       |                |                      |                           |                               |       |         |                                      |
| Considerably below average                                    | 1.6%           | 0.7%                 | 1.2%                      | 0.7%                          | 1.0%  | 0.9%    | 0.9%                                 |
| Slightly below average  | 8.0%           | 5.9%                 | 7.2%                      | 5.8%                          | 6.4%  | 6.5%    | 6.4%                                 |
| Average   | 49.8%          | 49.1%                | 54.8%                     | 44.6%                         | 43.4% | 54.2%   | 49.3%                                |
| Slightly above average  | 24.6%          | 28.4%                | 24.0%                     | 30.3%                         | 31.3% | 24.2%   | 27.4%                                |
| Considerably above average (top 20%)                          | 13.7%          | 14.4%                | 11.6%                     | 16.6%                         | 16.0% | 12.8%   | 14.2%                                |
| Extremely high (top 5%)                                       | 2.3%           | 1.6%                 | 1.3%                      | 2.1%                          | 2.0%  | 1.5%    | 1.7%                                 |
| <b>Timing of decision to attend chosen college/university</b> |                |                      |                           |                               |       |         |                                      |
| Decision made few days before                                 | 4.4%           | 5.7%                 | 5.7%                      | 5.0%                          | 6.1%  | 4.7%    | 5.4%                                 |
| Decision made weeks before                                    | 23.0%          | 23.8%                | 24.0%                     | 23.3%                         | 26.7% | 21.0%   | 23.6%                                |
| Decision made many months before                              | 72.6%          | 70.5%                | 70.3%                     | 71.6%                         | 67.2% | 74.3%   | 71.0%                                |

To see a sample of the 100-item student survey used in this study, please visit [www.noellelitz.com/RMSPlus](http://www.noellelitz.com/RMSPlus).

## Questions? Want additional information?

If you have questions about this report, or if you would like to discuss how an attitudinal student survey can support student success and persistence on your campus, please contact Noel-Levitz at 1-800-876-1117 or [ContactUs@noellelitz.com](mailto:ContactUs@noellelitz.com). Additionally, see the description below to learn more about how the early-alert assessments of the Noel-Levitz Retention Management System *Plus*<sup>TM</sup> (RMS *Plus*) help campuses focus early individual interventions with at-risk students.

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

Noel-Levitz has served the higher education community for 40 years. Campus leaders turn to Noel-Levitz for consultation and resources for student recruitment, student retention, marketing, and strategic enrollment planning. More than 2,800 colleges and universities throughout North America have used Noel-Levitz services.

The data in this report are drawn from Noel-Levitz's 100-item, Form B version of the College Student Inventory (CSI-B), part of the Noel-Levitz Retention Management System *Plus*. Student respondents complete this survey during orientation or within their first weeks of classes. Immediately upon the survey's completion, findings are reported electronically to the respondents' college or university for early and ongoing identification of student needs.

Two companion, follow-up surveys to CSI-B are also available to help campuses keep an eye on students' changing needs. The Mid-Year Student Assessment (MYSA) identifies changes in student attitudes and motivation at the mid-point of their first year. In addition, the Second-Year Student Assessment (SYSA) identifies the needs of second-year students.

Using the findings of these surveys, educators are able to engage students in timely conversations and to proactively connect students with key services that make a difference.

To see sample copies of these assessments, please visit [www.noellelitz.com/RMSPlus](http://www.noellelitz.com/RMSPlus).

All material in this report is copyright © by Noel-Levitz, LLC. Permission is required to redistribute information from Noel-Levitz, LLC, either in print or electronically. Please contact us at [ContactUs@noellelitz.com](mailto:ContactUs@noellelitz.com) about reusing material from this report.

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

The rating scale at left is used by the survey instrument, CSI-B. For this report, "agreement" was defined as the aggregated number of students who selected a rating of 5, 6, or 7.

## How to cite this report

Noel-Levitz. (2013). *Freshman attitudes report for two-year colleges*. Coralville, Iowa: Author. Retrieved from: [www.noellelitz.com/TwoYear](http://www.noellelitz.com/TwoYear)

Find it online.

This report is posted online at: [www.noellelitz.com/TwoYear](http://www.noellelitz.com/TwoYear)

Sign up to receive additional reports and papers as they become available: [www.noellelitz.com/SubscribeHere](http://www.noellelitz.com/SubscribeHere)