

Third annual

National Freshman Attitudes Report

Based on their own self-perceptions, how well prepared—and motivated—are today's undergraduates when they enter college?

This report describes the self-reported attitudes and motivations of first-year college students nationally at the beginning of their undergraduate experience, based on a 100-item attitudinal survey administered in the summer and fall of 2007. Among the findings:

- Nearly half of entering students arrived at college lacking confidence in their math and science skills.
- Entering first-generation students arrived with similarly low levels of academic confidence as non-first-generation students, but they worried more about finances.
- One-third of entering Asian students reported that they “become very confused” when trying to choose an occupation.
- Ninety-five percent of entering first-year students arrived highly motivated to complete a degree, while 74 percent wanted assistance in knowing how to prepare for exams and 66 percent indicated a desire for career guidance.

This last finding on motivation, when juxtaposed against national graduation data, highlights a sobering disparity: Although the vast majority of today's first-year students arrive at college highly motivated to complete their degrees, only half of them are likely to accomplish their goal. See more on page 6.

Nearly half of fall 2007 first-year students arrived lacking confidence in their math and science skills

As you are about to read, nearly half of fall 2007 entering undergraduates nationwide indicated that math “has always been a challenge” for them, and many also reported difficulty with science. This finding held true across public and private, four-year and two-year institutions, as well as across racial/ethnic groups.

The attitudes of first-generation students are broken out for the first time in this year’s report, showing that first-generation students, on the whole, arrived with attitudes that were not dissimilar to those of non-first-generation students. However, some interesting differences for first-generation students came to light when disaggregated by institution type and when examined in areas outside the classroom such as anxiety levels about finances.

We invite your responses to this report. Forward comments or questions to Tim Culver, Noel-Levitz vice president of consulting services, at tim-culver@noellevitz.com or Elizabeth Herr, Ph.D., senior statistician, at elizabeth-herr@noellevitz.com.

By examining the attitudes of first-year students at the very beginning of their college experience, this study adds another layer to existing national research on college freshmen.

Don’t miss these additional findings.

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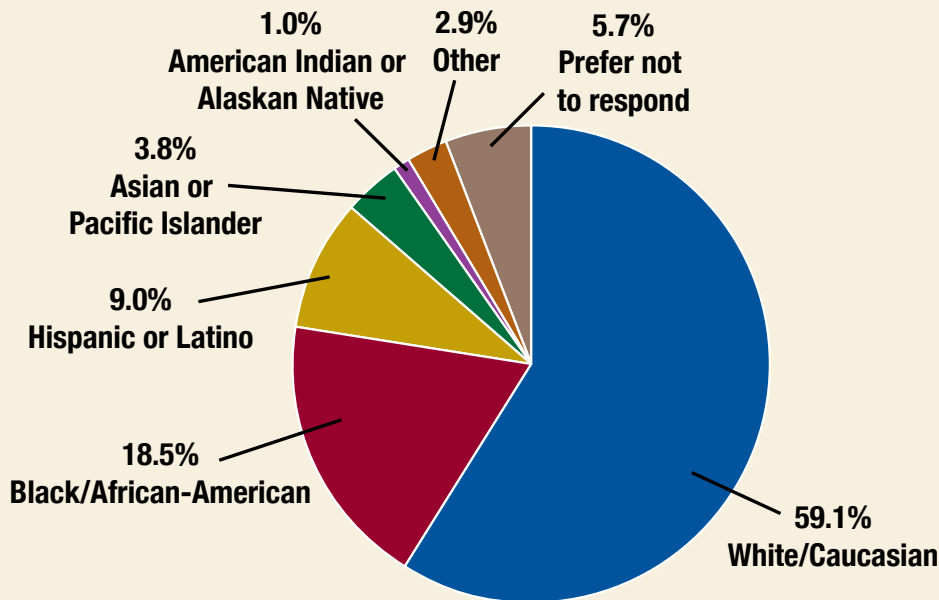
The source of data

In the summer and fall of 2007, a total of 92,894 first-year students nationwide at 302 colleges and universities completed a 100-item attitudinal survey during orientation or within their first few weeks of classes. The survey examined a broad range of the motivational characteristics students brought with them to their collegiate learning experience. Students completed the survey online or used a traditional paper-and-pencil format.

Students were enrolled at a broad cross-section of institutions, with 41.7 percent of respondents coming from four-year private institutions, 38.3 percent from four-year public institutions, and 20.0 percent from two-year institutions. Consistent with national enrollment trends, a slight majority of respondents (54.5 percent) were female. Also consistent with national trends were respondents' ethnic/racial breakdowns (see chart). The average age of respondents was 19.9.

The survey instrument used for this report was the College Student Inventory™ Form B (CSI-B), from the Noel-Levitz Retention Management System™. In selecting the attitudes and motivations to be measured by this instrument, a special focus was to identify attitudes that may pose barriers or opportunities for students in continuing and completing their degrees. For more information on the survey instrument and Noel-Levitz, please see page 16.

See the appendix on pages 9-15 for the complete findings, including differences by institution type, along with a demographic breakdown of the data sample.



A representative sample

Consistent with national trends for undergraduates, the ethnic/racial breakdown of the respondents was 59.1 percent White/Caucasian, 18.5 percent Black/African-American, 9.0 percent Hispanic or Latino, 3.8 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 1% American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 8.6 percent "other" or preferred not to respond.



**Highlights from
the findings**

Nearly half of entering students lack confidence in their math and science skills

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with specific statements. The following statements focused on the students' confidence in the areas of math and science.

Selected survey item	Percent of first-generation students in agreement	Percent of non-first-generation students in agreement	OVERALL national percentages
Math and science confidence			
I have a hard time understanding and solving complex math problems.	49.0%	44.5%	45.7%
Math has always been a challenge for me.	45.8%	41.6%	42.8%
I have a very good grasp of the scientific ideas I've studied in school.	42.9%	50.0%	47.9%

The self-perceptions of first-generation students and non-first-generation students were not all that dissimilar. For more details, see next page.

As shown above, approximately 46 percent of all respondents indicated having difficulty with complex math problems, and approximately 43 percent noted that math “has always been a challenge” for them. At the same time, only

approximately 48 percent of entering students indicated they had a “very good grasp” of their past studies of science. For more details on these findings, and for additional findings by institution type, please see the appendix on pages 9-15.

One-third of Asian students report that they “become very confused” when trying to choose an occupation

Findings by students' racial/ethnic background are available online in an addendum to this report (go to www.noellevitz.com/freshmanreport and choose “Addendum”). Below are a few excerpts.

Percent of students in agreement

Selected survey item	Asian	Black/ African-American	Hispanic	Native American	White/ Caucasian	OVERALL national percentage
Career closure and desire to finish college						
I become very confused when I try to choose an occupation.	32.4%	20.9%	27.2%	27.3%	22.5%	23.4%
I wish that society did not put so much pressure on people to go to college, and I'd really rather be doing other things at this point in my life.	17.8%	12.1%	11.8%	14.7%	9.6%	11.0%
I can think of many things I would rather do than go to college.	17.0%	11.1%	12.7%	16.8%	11.7%	12.2%

From the findings above, it appears that more Asian students than students from other racial/ethnic backgrounds get confused when trying to choose an occupation. In addition, more Asian

students than other students perceived that they would really rather be doing other things than going to college.

First-generation students also arrive lacking academic confidence

Highlights from the findings

It is interesting to note that the self-perceptions of first-generation students and those of non-first-generation students are not all that dissimilar in the areas of math and science confidence shown in the first table on the preceding page.

In addition, in the areas of verbal confidence shown below, first-generation students again tended to rate their confidence at levels that were similar to those of non-first-generation students:

Selected survey item	Percent of first-generation students in agreement	Percent of non-first-generation students in agreement	OVERALL national percentages
Verbal confidence			
In English classes, I've had difficulty analyzing an author's style and theme.	32.3%	28.0%	29.2%
I pick up new vocabulary words quickly, and I find it easy to use them in my speech and writing.	51.3%	54.8%	53.9%
I am very good at figuring out the deeper meaning of a short story or novel.	50.2%	54.7%	53.4%
I have difficulty organizing my ideas in a paper, and I tend to make a lot of punctuation and grammar mistakes.	39.6%	31.1%	33.5%

First-generation students arrived at college with greater financial concerns and indicating they had less emotional support from their families of origin. For details, see the appendix on pages 9-15.

As shown here, first-generation and non-first-generation students, on the whole, rated themselves similarly on various measures of verbal confidence. One exception, however, was in the area of writing well-organized, grammatically-correct papers, with 39.6 percent of first-generation respondents indicating difficulty in that area versus 31.1 percent of non-first-generation students.*

Greater contrasts between first-generation and non-first-generation students were also evident in areas beyond the classroom. For example, first-generation students experienced greater financial concerns, and they indicated they had less emotional support from their families of origin.

For a closer examination of differences between first-generation and non-first-generation students, please see the appendix and additional sections of this report.

* This difference is identified in the appendix on page 10 in boldface type—a designation that indicates a greater contrast. For an explanation of the statistical process used to identify such differences, please see page 11.

**Highlights from
the findings**

Many students desire assistance right from the start

Respondents indicated high levels of receptivity to assistance from a variety of campus services, as indicated below:

Selected survey item	Percent of first-generation students in agreement	Percent of non-first-generation students in agreement	OVERALL national percentages
Receptivity to assistance			
I would like to receive some instruction in the most effective ways to take college exams.	77.0%	72.9%	74.0%
I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job.	67.0%	65.1%	65.8%
I would like to receive tutoring in one or more of my courses.	44.7%	39.5%	41.0%

As shown here, it was clear that a large portion of entering students were receptive to assistance in a range of areas. For additional information on

students’ receptivity to more than 15 additional areas, see the appendix on pages 12 and 13.

Most students bring strong desire to finish despite low completion rates

Consistent with earlier Noel-Levitz studies, entering first-year students in fall 2007 were overwhelmingly positive about continuing and completing their education, as shown below. Here again it was clear that first-generation students perceived themselves similarly to non-first-generation students.

Selected survey item	Percent of first-generation students in agreement	Percent of non-first-generation students in agreement	OVERALL national percentages
Desire to finish college			
I have a very strong desire to continue my education, and I am quite determined to finish a degree.	94.5%	95.0%	94.9%
I am very strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in my way.	93.9%	93.9%	93.9%
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.	90.2%	89.0%	89.3%

As shown here, respondents showed a strong desire to finish college, with nearly 95 percent of all respondents indicating they had a “very strong desire” to continue their education and finish their degree. However, these figures show dissonance

when compared with actual college completion rates. According to the latest degree completion data, only 47.0 percent of entering college students nationally complete their degrees within five years.¹

¹ ACT, Inc. *National Collegiate Retention and Persistence to Degree Rates* (Iowa City: ACT, Inc. 2007), p. 7.

For comparisons by race/ethnicity, please see the addendum to this report, available at www.noellevitz.com/freshmanreport.

Conclusion and follow-up

This report and the data in its appendix offer a unique window into the first-year experience by looking at the attitudes of entering students at the beginning of college. In particular, the report examined student attitudes that may pose barriers and opportunities for students in continuing and completing their academic degrees.

Highlighted this year were the relatively low academic confidence levels of entering college students, especially in the areas of math and science. Such attitudes can be difficult to change, yet represent great opportunities to help these students realize and achieve their potential. Educators face the challenge of helping students develop the skills and confidence to move them closer to their goals.

The experience of entering first-generation students was a special focus of this year's report. These students tended to have levels of academic confidence not dissimilar to those of non-first-generation students, yet past studies have shown first-generation students to be less academically-prepared for college and less likely to complete a degree.² We encourage readers to delve into this disparity through continued dialogue with first-generation students, and to design a range of services to meet their unique needs.

Many additional observations could be made about this year's findings. We encourage readers to spend time reviewing the data in the appendix for the complete findings, including differences by institution type, along with a demographic breakdown of the data sample.

How to use the information in this report—a few suggestions

Careful reflection on the findings, further exploration of entering students' attitudes on one's own campus, and action-planning in relation to these may be appropriate follow-up steps after reviewing this report.

Specifically, readers may want to use the 2008 National Freshman Attitudes Report to:

- Monitor trends in students' perceptions of academic preparation. Academic preparation is key to success in higher education. This year's report offers a wealth of data not previously available on motivations and attitudes of incoming students.
- Jump-start retention committee discussions about campus issues. Everyone seems to like to discuss report findings. Use this report to get committee members thinking and talking.
- Generate ideas for campus intervention strategies. Use the report's findings and items to think about services you may not be offering or aggressively promoting to first-year students, and to create proactive interventions to assist students before they encounter difficulties.
- Create student focus group agendas. Because national trends and student responses from this study may not fully reflect the perceptions and attitudes of students on your campus, consider discussing some of the findings with students to learn more about their attitudes and issues.



please continue next page

² Chen, Xianglei. *First Generation Students in Postsecondary Education: A Look at Their College Transcripts* (NCES 2005–171). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2005.

Conclusion and follow-up continued

- Conduct related surveys (or use the survey tool on which this report is based³). The best way to find out more about students' strengths and areas of challenge is simply to ask them. Consider surveying students at key times when they will be on a campus computer anyway at the beginning and end of terms or at registration. Assessments of motivation and satisfaction are just two examples of surveys that can paint an even better picture of who your students are and how your institution can best help them be successful.

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

Related references

Readers may also wish to explore the results from other surveys on the first-year experience such as Your First College Year and the CIRP Freshman Survey. These findings, when combined with the findings in the National Freshman Attitudes Report, can offer a more complete picture of the first-year experience. Noel-Levitz also offers a bibliography of recent research and practice on student retention, available without charge at www.noellevitz.com.

³ Educators whose postsecondary institutions did not participate in this study may consider administering the same instrument used in this study to their incoming class in summer or early fall 2008 (see page 16 for details).

Appendix with additional findings and data

Listed in this section are the percentages of entering college students nationally that agreed with all 100 items along with the findings broken down by first-generation versus non-first-generation and by various institution types. (To see the findings broken out by students' racial/ethnic background, please download the addendum to this report at www.noellellevitz.com/freshmanreport.)

Figures in **bold** in this section indicate greater contrasts between first-generation and non-first-generation students and between students at two-year institutions versus four-year private versus four-year public institutions, although *virtually all differences are statistically significant*. For a detailed explanation of the statistical processes used to produce these data, please see page 11.

All survey items	Findings by Institution Type			Findings by Parent Educational Background*		OVERALL national percentages
	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions	First-generation students	Non-first-generation students	
Desire to finish college						
I have a very strong desire to continue my education, and I am quite determined to finish a degree.	95.8%	95.3%	92.2%	94.5%	95.0%	94.9%
I am very strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in my way.	94.8%	94.3%	91.4%	93.9%	93.9%	93.9%
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.	90.5%	88.9%	87.7%	90.2%	89.0%	89.3%
Of all the things I could do at this point in my life, going to college is definitely the most satisfying.	86.2%	85.7%	81.2%	86.5%	84.5%	85.0%
I often wonder if a college education is really worth all the time, money, and effort that I'm being asked to spend on it.	17.4%	17.4%	19.6%	20.4%	16.8%	17.8%
I can think of many things I would rather do than go to college.	11.5%	11.3%	15.8%	12.4%	12.2%	12.2%
I wish that society did not put so much pressure on people to go to college, as I'd really rather be doing other things at this point in my life.	10.2%	10.3%	14.3%	11.5%	10.8%	11.0%
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.	9.3%	9.9%	14.0%	12.0%	9.8%	10.5%
Attitude toward educators						
The teachers I had in school respected me as a person and treated me fairly.	82.3%	82.5%	76.4%	80.6%	81.5%	81.2%
Most of my teachers have been very caring and dedicated.	80.9%	75.2%	78.9%	78.8%	78.1%	78.3%
I liked my teachers, and I feel they did a good job.	78.5%	76.9%	73.4%	76.3%	77.2%	76.9%
Most teachers have a superior attitude that I find very annoying.	16.2%	19.4%	16.9%	17.7%	17.4%	17.6%
In my opinion, many teachers are more concerned about themselves than they are about their students.	13.3%	16.8%	14.5%	15.1%	14.7%	14.9%
Most of the teachers I had in school were too opinionated and inflexible.	14.7%	13.8%	19.5%	17.1%	14.6%	15.3%

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



**Findings by
Institution Type**

**Findings by Parent
Educational Background**

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions	First-generation students	Non-first-generation students	OVERALL national percentages
Intellectual interests						
Over the years, books have broadened my horizons and stimulated my imagination.	61.0%	56.4%	51.7%	53.8%	58.6%	57.3%
I get a great deal of satisfaction from reading.	49.2%	46.1%	45.6%	46.7%	47.5%	47.3%
I don't enjoy reading serious books and articles, and I only do it when I have to.	40.2%	43.1%	42.4%	42.7%	41.4%	41.7%
Books have never gotten me very excited.	37.3%	40.4%	46.4%	43.1%	39.3%	40.3%
Study habits						
I take very careful notes during class, and I review them thoroughly before a test.	58.7%	59.6%	61.0%	62.3%	58.5%	59.5%
I study very hard for all my courses, even those I don't like.	58.9%	55.3%	61.4%	62.1%	56.5%	58.0%
I have developed a solid system of self-discipline, which helps me keep up with my schoolwork.	57.7%	55.1%	53.8%	57.5%	55.5%	55.9%
My studying is very irregular and unpredictable.	32.7%	35.0%	34.5%	34.3%	33.6%	33.9%
When I try to study, I usually get bored and quit after a few minutes.	26.1%	30.2%	29.2%	29.0%	27.9%	28.3%
I have great difficulty concentrating on schoolwork, and I often get behind.	20.0%	22.5%	28.3%	25.0%	21.6%	22.6%
Math and science confidence						
I have a very good grasp of the scientific ideas I've studied in school.	50.1%	49.5%	40.1%	42.9%	50.0%	47.9%
I have a hard time understanding and solving complex math problems.	43.3%	44.8%	52.5%	49.0%	44.5%	45.7%
Math has always been a challenge for me.	40.7%	41.1%	50.4%	45.8%	41.6%	42.8%
I have always enjoyed the challenge of trying to solve complex math problems.	39.5%	39.1%	34.3%	37.8%	38.5%	38.3%
I have a very good understanding of general biology (e.g., cell structure, metabolism, genetics, and the circulatory system).	39.3%	39.7%	34.1%	34.9%	40.0%	38.4%
My understanding of the physical sciences is very weak.	26.7%	26.1%	33.8%	32.5%	26.1%	27.9%
Verbal confidence						
I am capable of writing a very clear and well-organized paper.	67.1%	64.8%	56.1%	57.9%	66.5%	64.0%
I pick up new vocabulary words quickly, and I find it easy to use them in my speech and writing.	55.1%	54.1%	50.9%	51.3%	54.9%	53.9%
I am very good at figuring out the deeper meaning of a short story or novel.	56.1%	53.1%	48.4%	50.2%	54.7%	53.4%
I have difficulty organizing my ideas in a paper, and I tend to make a lot of punctuation and grammar mistakes.	31.2%	32.2%	40.7%	39.6%	31.1%	33.5%
In English classes, I've had difficulty analyzing an author's style and theme.	28.1%	28.8%	32.3%	32.3%	28.0%	29.2%
Learning new vocabulary words is a slow and difficult process for me.	17.3%	16.7%	21.8%	21.1%	16.7%	18.0%

**Findings by
Institution Type**

**Findings by Parent
Educational Background**

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions	First-generation students	Non-first-generation students	OVERALL national percentages
Career closure						
I have found a potential career that strongly attracts me.	80.8%	76.6%	80.9%	80.1%	78.9%	79.2%
I have made a firm decision to enter a certain occupation and have begun planning my life around that decision.	61.4%	58.9%	67.8%	64.7%	60.7%	61.7%
I become very confused when I try to choose an occupation.	21.8%	24.3%	25.1%	24.3%	23.1%	23.4%
I am very confused about what occupation to pursue.	19.7%	22.6%	19.9%	20.7%	20.9%	20.8%
Family emotional support						
When I was a child, my parents usually understood me, respected my judgment, and treated me in ways that helped me grow.	78.7%	79.9%	71.2%	71.4%	80.3%	77.7%
My family and I communicated very well when I was young, and we had a good understanding of each other's point of view.	69.1%	69.7%	62.5%	62.4%	70.4%	68.0%
My family had a one way of looking at me when I was a child, and they didn't understand my feelings very well.	14.8%	13.4%	20.2%	19.9%	13.4%	15.3%
When I was a child, the other members of my family often said hurtful things that caused unpleasant feelings.	12.6%	11.4%	17.5%	17.3%	11.4%	13.1%
Sense of financial security						
I have the financial resources that I need to finish college.	47.3%	48.9%	44.7%	39.3%	50.8%	47.4%
I don't have any financial problems that will interfere with my schoolwork.	40.4%	42.6%	37.4%	33.1%	43.8%	40.7%
I have financial problems that are very distracting and troublesome.	27.9%	26.1%	35.5%	38.2%	24.9%	28.7%
I am in a bad financial position, and the pressure to earn extra money will probably interfere with my studies.	17.5%	16.9%	22.3%	23.9%	16.0%	18.2%
Sociability						
I greatly enjoy getting together with a crowd of people and having fun.	82.1%	82.4%	73.8%	77.7%	81.8%	80.6%
I am very adventurous and outgoing at social gatherings.	58.3%	59.9%	55.6%	55.4%	59.6%	58.4%
Participating in large social gatherings is of little interest to me.	23.5%	23.2%	33.2%	30.0%	23.5%	25.3%
It is hard for me to relax and just have fun with a group of people.	13.4%	13.2%	17.7%	16.7%	13.3%	14.2%

About the 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 items, although statistically significant, registered negligible effect sizes.

**Findings by
Institution Type**

**Findings by Parent
Educational Background**

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions	First-generation students	Non-first-generation students	OVERALL national percentages
Opinion tolerance						
I get along well with people who disagree with my opinion openly.	63.7%	62.7%	66.1%	66.0%	63.0%	63.8%
I can feel comfortable with someone who thinks quite differently than I do on major social issues.	63.8%	62.4%	60.7%	62.6%	62.6%	62.6%
I find it easy to be friends with people whose political ideas differ sharply from my own.	56.8%	55.4%	56.0%	56.6%	55.9%	56.1%
When someone's opinions strongly disagree with my own, I tend to develop unfriendly feelings and to avoid close contact with the person.	13.4%	13.8%	15.0%	13.5%	14.1%	13.9%
I feel uneasy and distrustful toward people whose way of thinking is quite dissimilar to my own.	9.6%	10.0%	11.6%	10.7%	10.0%	10.1%
Because they irritate me, I tend to stay away from people whose ideas are quite different from my own.	8.5%	9.2%	11.7%	10.4%	9.1%	9.4%
Receptivity to academic assistance						
I would like to receive some instruction in the most effective ways to take college exams.	73.0%	76.8%	71.1%	77.0%	72.9%	74.0%
I would like to receive some help in improving my study habits.	52.6%	60.0%	55.4%	60.3%	54.2%	56.0%
I would like to receive some individual help in improving my math skills.	42.6%	48.3%	50.1%	51.4%	44.2%	46.3%
I would like to receive some individual help in improving my writing skills.	43.4%	45.9%	40.9%	48.8%	41.8%	43.8%
I would like to receive tutoring in one or more of my courses.	37.8%	46.0%	38.3%	44.7%	39.5%	41.0%
I would like to receive some training to improve my reading skills.	25.8%	27.8%	29.4%	32.9%	25.0%	27.3%
Receptivity to career counseling						
I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job.	67.9%	67.9%	57.2%	67.0%	65.1%	65.8%
I would like to talk with someone about the qualifications needed for certain occupations.	61.7%	65.5%	55.3%	62.7%	61.5%	61.9%
I would like to talk with someone about the salaries and future outlook for various occupations.	56.6%	56.8%	49.6%	56.7%	54.7%	55.3%
I would like to talk with someone about the advantages and disadvantages of various occupations.	50.1%	51.2%	40.3%	48.3%	48.5%	48.5%
I would like some help selecting an occupation that is well-suited to my interests and abilities.	48.7%	48.9%	41.4%	48.1%	46.8%	47.3%

**Findings by
Institution Type**

**Findings by Parent
Educational Background**

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions	First-generation students	Non-first-generation students	OVERALL national percentages
Receptivity to financial guidance						
I would like to talk to someone about getting a scholarship.	65.2%	65.6%	56.8%	67.6%	62.1%	63.7%
I would like to talk to someone about getting a part-time job during the regular school year.	49.7%	47.0%	34.8%	46.3%	45.2%	45.7%
I would like to talk to someone about the opportunities available for summer employment.	43.8%	42.5%	34.6%	44.2%	40.1%	41.5%
I would like to talk with someone about getting a loan to help me through school.	30.7%	29.3%	31.1%	36.1%	28.0%	30.2%
Receptivity to personal counseling						
I would like to talk with a counselor about my general attitude toward school.	17.2%	19.5%	18.8%	20.9%	17.4%	18.4%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some difficulties in my personal relationships or social life.	10.1%	10.6%	11.1%	11.9%	9.9%	10.5%
I would like to talk with a counselor about eliminating an unwanted habit (involving food, drugs, cigarettes, or alcohol, etc.).	7.7%	8.6%	9.9%	9.9%	7.8%	8.4%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some emotional tensions that are bothering me.	8.6%	8.9%	9.5%	9.8%	8.5%	8.9%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some feelings of discouragement or unhappy thoughts that keep bothering me.	8.3%	8.7%	9.5%	10.0%	8.2%	8.7%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some family problems.	6.0%	6.3%	7.3%	7.8%	5.8%	6.4%
Receptivity to social enrichment						
I would like to attend an informal gathering where I can meet some new friends.	63.5%	60.5%	44.8%	54.3%	60.2%	58.6%
I would like to find out more about the clubs and social organizations at my college.	60.0%	58.4%	37.8%	51.4%	56.1%	55.0%
I would like to find out more about student government and the various student activities on campus.	52.2%	50.5%	35.7%	47.0%	48.6%	48.2%
I would like to meet an experienced student who can show me around and give me some advice.	49.8%	50.6%	34.1%	47.4%	46.6%	47.0%
Desire to transfer						
I have no desire to transfer to another school before finishing a degree at this college or university.	69.1%	59.9%	54.5%	63.6%	62.4%	62.7%
I plan to transfer to another school before completing a degree at this college or university.	8.7%	14.5%	22.5%	13.9%	13.6%	13.7%
Total number of students	38,771	35,570	18,553	24,047	65,181	92,894
Average age of students	19.5	18.8	22.9	21.5	19.3	19.9

Respondent demographics (Fall 2007)

Findings by Institution Type

Findings by Parent Educational Background

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions	First-generation students	Non-first-generation students	OVERALL national percentages
Number of respondents	38,771	35,570	18,570	24,047*	65,181*	92,894
Representation by institution type	41.7%	38.3%	20.0%	27.0%	73.0%	100%
Percent male	45.6%	43.2%	48.2%	43.7%	46.0%	45.2%
Percent female	53.8%	56.6%	51.7%	56.2%	53.9%	54.5%
Racial/ethnic origin						
Black/African-American	16.8%	22.0%	15.4%	21.3%	16.9%	18.5%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.6%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	0.9%	1.0%
Asian or Pacific Islander	4.9%	2.5%	4.3%	4.5%	3.5%	3.8%
White/Caucasian	60.1%	58.8%	56.0%	48.6%	64.0%	59.1%
Hispanic or Latino	9.1%	5.8%	15.1%	17.4%	5.9%	9.0%
Multiethnic or other ethnic origin	3.5%	2.4%	2.4%	2.5%	2.9%	2.9%
Prefer not to respond	2.6%	1.9%	2.8%	1.9%	2.4%	2.4%
Highest education level of mother						
8 years or less	2.7%	1.9%	7.7%	11.4%	0.6%	3.4%
Some high school	4.9%	4.9%	11.4%	18.2%	1.9%	6.2%
High school diploma	25.7%	28.5%	35.8%	70.4%	14.3%	28.8%
1 to 3 years of college	27.4%	29.3%	27.4%	0.0%	39.2%	28.1%
Bachelor's degree	24.0%	22.6%	10.0%	0.0%	29.0%	20.6%
Master's degree	9.9%	8.9%	3.9%	0.0%	11.7%	8.3%
Professional degree	3.0%	2.3%	1.6%	0.0%	3.4%	2.4%
Highest education level of father						
8 years or less	3.1%	2.4%	8.8%	13.2%	0.8%	4.0%
Some high school	6.2%	6.6%	13.5%	21.1%	3.3%	7.8%
High school diploma	27.1%	31.5%	36.7%	65.7%	19.3%	30.7%
1 to 3 years of college	21.4%	23.2%	22.1%	0.0%	31.6%	22.2%
Bachelor's degree	21.9%	20.4%	9.2%	0.0%	26.7%	18.8%
Master's degree	10.6%	8.7%	4.3%	0.0%	12.2%	8.6%
Professional degree	5.7%	4.1%	1.8%	0.0%	6.1%	4.3%
Highest degree planned by respondent						
None	0.1%	0.2%	0.6%	0.4%	0.1%	0.2%
1-year certificate	0.3%	0.2%	4.2%	2.0%	0.6%	1.0%
2-year degree (associate)	2.0%	0.7%	32.1%	13.7%	5.2%	7.5%
4-year degree (bachelor's)	38.3%	38.2%	35.9%	41.2%	36.6%	37.8%
Master's degree	37.9%	38.0%	17.3%	27.8%	36.2%	33.8%
Professional degree	20.8%	22.7%	9.8%	14.7%	21.1%	19.3%

* 3,666 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.

**Findings by
Institution Type**

**Findings by Parent
Educational Background**

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions	First-generation students	Non-first-generation students	OVERALL national percentages
Time expecting to spend at work						
0 (I have no plans to work)	22.1%	28.2%	17.7%	17.7%	25.9%	23.5%
1 to 10 hours per week	25.7%	22.5%	12.5%	17.3%	23.6%	21.8%
11 to 20 hours per week	29.1%	32.2%	26.3%	30.5%	29.4%	29.7%
21 to 30 hours per week	12.1%	12.2%	21.8%	18.0%	12.5%	14.1%
31 to 40 hours per week	7.7%	3.9%	16.6%	12.3%	6.3%	8.0%
Over 40 hours per week	3.3%	0.9%	5.2%	4.1%	2.3%	2.8%
Average grades as senior in high school						
A	19.8%	19.2%	7.0%	12.3%	19.1%	17.0%
A to B	33.9%	35.6%	25.5%	30.8%	33.8%	32.9%
B	21.3%	21.4%	19.7%	20.5%	21.1%	21.0%
B to C	18.2%	17.5%	31.3%	24.9%	18.7%	20.6%
C	4.8%	4.2%	9.6%	7.1%	4.9%	5.5%
C to D	1.7%	1.4%	5.8%	3.5%	1.9%	2.4%
D	0.3%	0.2%	1.2%	0.6%	0.3%	0.4%
Respondent's self-assessment of academic knowledge						
Highest 20%	19.5%	17.2%	8.1%	10.7%	18.7%	16.3%
Next to highest 20%	34.7%	34.0%	22.1%	26.4%	34.1%	31.9%
Middle 20%	43.4%	46.3%	62.4%	57.4%	44.6%	48.3%
Next to lowest 20%	2.1%	2.0%	6.1%	4.5%	2.2%	2.8%
Lowest 20%	0.3%	0.3%	1.2%	0.8%	0.3%	0.4%
Respondent's self-assessment of academic ability						
Considerably below average	0.3%	0.3%	0.9%	0.6%	0.3%	0.4%
Slightly below average	3.3%	3.2%	6.5%	5.5%	3.3%	3.9%
Average	26.8%	30.8%	48.5%	42.8%	28.8%	32.7%
Slightly above average	36.2%	36.9%	28.2%	31.4%	36.3%	34.9%
Considerably above average (top 20%)	29.6%	25.8%	14.3%	17.8%	28.1%	25.1%
Extremely high (top 5%)	3.4%	2.9%	1.4%	1.9%	3.2%	2.8%
Timing of decision to attend chosen college/university						
Decision made few days before	3.0%	1.7%	4.9%	3.9%	2.5%	2.9%
Decision made weeks before	14.4%	9.9%	19.8%	17.0%	12.5%	13.8%
Decision made many months before	81.9%	87.9%	75.0%	78.6%	84.8%	82.8%



Iowa
Colorado
Massachusetts

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

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

E-mail: info@noellevitz.com

Web: www.noellevitz.com

Questions? Want additional information?

If you have questions about this report, please contact Tim Culver, Noel-Levitz vice president of consulting services, at tim-culver@noellevitz.com and/or Elizabeth Herr, Ph.D., senior statistician, at elizabeth-herr@noellevitz.com.

If you have questions about the College Student Inventory (CSI) of the Noel-Levitz Retention Management System (RMS), including how to use the inventory to help guide student success and early intervention programs at your institution, please contact Beth Richter, Ph.D., associate vice president of retention solutions, at 1-800-876-1117 or beth-richter@noellevitz.com.

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 pioneering student research reports.

Noel-Levitz is a nationally recognized higher education consulting firm that specializes in strategic planning for enrollment and student success. Over the course of its history, Noel-Levitz has partnered with nearly 2,000 colleges and universities across North America to assist with accomplishing goals for student recruitment, marketing, student retention, and strategic enrollment management.

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

In addition to illuminating first-year students' attitudes nationally in this report, the findings of the inventory were reported directly to the participating campuses within days of completion to provide early guidance for interventions. 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 CSI-B, please visit www.noellevitz.com/RMS (click on "samples" at the top).

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.

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