

Fourth Annual National Research Study

2009 National Freshman Attitudes Report

Special focus: the financial concerns of entering undergraduates

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 2008. In particular, the report examines student attitudes that may pose barriers and opportunities for students as they begin their pursuit of an academic degree.

Highlighted in this year's report are findings that described students' financial anxiety. Among these were the following:

- Less than half of entering undergraduates nationwide (46.4 percent) reported that they had adequate financial resources to finish college;
- Approximately one-third of all respondents (29.3 percent) reported that they had financial challenges that were "very distracting and troublesome";
- First-generation students brought higher levels of financial stress than non-first-generation students, and students at two-year institutions brought higher levels of financial anxiety than their counterparts at four-year institutions.

The appendix of this report on pages 9-15 provides details on all 100 attitudes and motivations that were measured, offering a distinctive window into the attitudes of entering undergraduates at the beginning of their college experience.

Keeping an eye on students' financial stress

As the economic situation continues to unfold across the U.S. and around the world, colleges and universities must continue to carefully monitor their students' levels of financial anxiety and take steps to help students address these concerns. Clearly, students' anxiety levels were already noteworthy before the recession took hold. In all likelihood, these levels are changing, and have already changed, since early fall 2008.



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Financial anxiety already evident among students before the recession set in

This year's report highlights students' attitudes toward finances and shows that many students were already experiencing considerable financial concerns prior to the global economic downturn that began occurring in the mid to late fall of 2008. This financial stress was evident among entering undergraduates across public and private, four-year and two-year institutions.

The attitudes of first-generation entering undergraduates are disaggregated in this year's report, indicating that first-generation undergraduates arrived with greater financial stress than non-first-generation undergraduates.

Questions or comments about this report may be directed to Tim Culver, Noel-Levitz vice president of consulting services, at tim-culver@noellevitz.com, or Elizabeth Herr, Ph.D., Noel-Levitz senior statistician, at elizabeth-herr@noellevitz.com.

Find additional breakdowns at www.noellevitz.com/freshmanreport

To view the entire series of National Freshman Attitudes Reports from Noel-Levitz, including reports by race/ethnicity and for nontraditional-age learners, please visit www.noellevitz.com/freshmanreport.

By examining the attitudes of first-year students at the very beginning of their college experience, this annual study, begun in 2006, adds another layer to existing national research on college freshmen.

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Don't miss these additional findings.



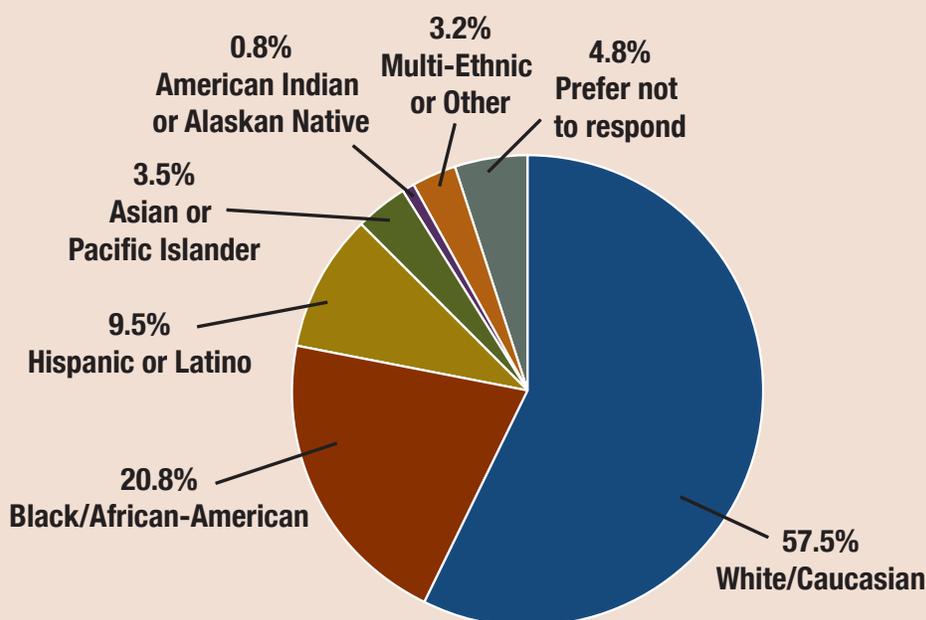
The source of data

In the summer and fall of 2008, a total of 98,120 first-year students at 265 colleges and universities nationwide completed a 100-item attitudinal survey during orientation or within their first few weeks of classes. The survey examined a broad range of motivational attitudes that students brought with them to their collegiate learning experience. Students completed the survey online or used a traditional paper-and-pencil format.

Respondents were enrolled at a broad cross-section of institutions, with 38.4 percent of respondents coming from four-year private institutions, 39.5 percent from four-year public institutions, and 22.1 percent from two-year institutions. Consistent with national enrollment trends, a slight majority of respondents (54.5 percent) were female. The average age of respondents was 20.

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 their transition to college. 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 and a demographic breakdown of the data sample.



A broad cross-section of students and institutions were represented in the study. The ethnic/racial breakdown of respondents was 57.5 percent White/Caucasian, 20.8 percent Black/African-American, 9.5 percent Hispanic or Latino, 3.5 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 0.8 percent American Indian or Alaskan Native, 3.2 percent "Multi-Ethnic or Other," and 4.8 percent "prefer not to respond." For more details, see "the source of data" above.

**Highlights from
the findings**

Less than half of students indicate they have adequate financial resources to finish college, but determination to finish remains strong

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with specific statements. The following statements focused on students' financial resources and desire to finish college.

Percent of freshmen in agreement

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
Financial resources and determination to finish college				
I have the financial resources that I need to finish college.	46.4%	47.9%	43.8%	46.4%
I have a very strong desire to continue my education, and I am quite determined to finish a degree.	95.7%	95.3%	93.3%	95.0%
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.	90.7%	89.8%	89.1%	90.0%

Despite the concerns around finances, the vast majority of students remained optimistic that going to college will be beneficial to them in the long run. Please see the appendix on page 9 for more details.

Continuing a three-year trend, less than half of respondents (46.4 percent) reported having adequate financial resources to finish college. Simultaneously, 95 percent of all respondents indicated having a "very strong desire" to continue their education and finish a degree.

These percentages have held remarkably constant from fall 2005 through fall 2008 across public and private, four-year and two-year institutions. Students' willingness to make sacrifices further illustrates the hope that a college degree represents.

Many entering students interested in scholarships and part-time jobs

Many entering undergraduates arrived at college in fall 2008 interested in talking with someone about getting a scholarship and a part-time job, as shown below.

Percent of freshmen in agreement

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
Receptivity to financial guidance				
I would like to talk to someone about getting a scholarship.	65.2%	68.0%	57.8%	64.6%
I would like to talk to someone about getting a part-time job during the regular school year.	50.6%	49.5%	37.4%	47.3%
I would like to talk with someone about getting a loan to help me through school.	31.1%	30.7%	33.7%	31.5%

Compared to fall 2007, most of the fall 2008 percentages shown above were slightly higher. For example, in fall 2007, 63.7 percent of students

overall were interested in talking with someone about a scholarship, compared with 64.6 percent shown above.

First-generation students more likely to struggle financially

First-generation students were considerably more likely to bring financial concerns than were their non-first-generation counterparts, as shown below.

Percent of freshmen in agreement

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	First-generation students	Non-first-generation students	OVERALL national percentages
Sense of financial security						
I have financial problems that are very distracting and troublesome.	29.2%	26.3%	35.0%	38.3%	25.5%	29.3%
I don't have any financial problems that will interfere with my schoolwork.	38.4%	40.7%	36.0%	31.2%	42.1%	38.8%

As seen above, more than one-third of first-generation students reported having financial problems that were “very distracting and

troublesome,” compared to one-quarter of non-first-generation students. Both of these figures were slightly higher than those reported in fall 2007.

Nearly half of students at two-year institutions expect to work more than 20 hours per week at a part-time or full-time job

Consistent with the greater financial concerns indicated by students at two-year institutions, more of these students brought an expectation for working while attending classes.

Percent of freshmen in agreement

Selected survey item	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	First-generation students	Non-first-generation students	OVERALL national percentages
Time expecting to spend at work						
0 hours/No plans to work	21.4%	27.5%	15.2%	16.8%	24.6%	22.4%
1 to 10 hours per week	24.0%	21.9%	11.4%	15.7%	22.5%	20.4%
11 to 20 hours per week	28.6%	32.6%	27.4%	30.0%	29.9%	29.9%
21 hours or more per week	25.9%	17.4%	46.0%	37.1%	22.8%	26.9%

**Highlights from
the findings**

Many students desire assistance right from the start

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

Percent of freshmen in agreement

Selected survey item	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	OVERALL national percentages
Receptivity to academic assistance and career counseling				
I would like to receive some instruction in the most effective ways to take college exams.	73.1%	77.1%	73.4%	74.8%
I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job.	68.6%	70.2%	61.0%	67.6%
I would like to receive tutoring in one or more of my courses.	38.1%	45.9%	38.9%	41.4%

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. Highlighted this year were the financial concerns that students brought with them to college. These anxiety levels will need to be carefully monitored in the months ahead. Educators face the formidable challenge, right from the start, of helping students identify the financial resources necessary to make earning a degree attainable.

The experience of entering *first-generation* students was an additional focus of this year's report. These students tended to bring higher levels of financial anxiety than non-first-generation students and are less likely to complete a degree.¹ They also tend to report lower emotional support from their families of origin as identified in the appendix.

Many observations could be made about the data in this report. We encourage readers to spend time reviewing the data in the appendix for the complete findings, including differences by institution type and by first-generation vs. non-first-generation students, as well as prior year's studies by race/ethnicity and for nontraditional-age students.

How to use the information in this year's 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:

- *Spark conversations on campus about retention issues.* The appendix of this report offers a wealth of data not available from other sources on motivations and attitudes of incoming students. Consider sharing the findings with members of the retention committee and other faculty and administrators to stimulate campus discussions.
- *Verify and further explore the relevance of the findings to your campus.* Do the findings in this study reflect the perceptions of your students? The best way to find out about students' attitudes and motivations is to ask students to describe them. Because national trends may not fully reflect the perceptions and attitudes of students on your campus, consider conducting surveys² and focus groups to explore student attitudes and issues on your campus and to monitor student concerns.
- *Identify interventions that will address students' anxiety about finances.* For example, could you make information easier to obtain on financial aid, scholarships, part-time jobs, and on scholarships available from outside organizations? Could you confirm awards and on-campus job assignments earlier in the enrollment/re-enrollment process? Could you tell students how much financial assistance will be available during their entire campus careers? Could you equip students and parents with stronger skills in managing their personal finances?

**please continue
next page**

¹ 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.

² Educators whose postsecondary institutions did not participate in this study are welcome to administer the instrument used in this study to their incoming class in summer or early fall 2009 (see page 16 for details).

Conclusion and follow-up continued

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

- *Communicate with students and parents about the value of the education they are receiving.* Emphasize their future return on their investment by citing examples of how alumni from your institution are performing in today's work world and in graduate schools. Document and share what tuition dollars cover while students are currently enrolled and what your institution is doing to keep costs from rising. By reminding students of the quality of education you offer, you are helping them to value you and to stay committed to staying enrolled.
- *Make the most of on-campus jobs.* Student employment on campus can deepen student involvement and students' sense of engagement with your learning environment. Consider developing sequenced job paths for students that offer advancement opportunities, and find ways to make more intentional matches between students' interests and available roles. Explore more ideas in a recent Noel-Levitz white paper.³
- *Look closer at the backgrounds and behaviors of the students on your campus.* Beyond attitudes, this study also explored several aspects of the background and behaviors of students such as the education level of students' parents and the timing of students' decisions to enroll (see final item of appendix, page 15). Do these factors correlate with attrition on your campus? Are there additional background or behavioral signs you can identify that predict attrition? Identifying answers to such questions can be helpful in pinpointing effective and timely retention interventions.

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 See *Enhancing Student Success by Treating Campus Jobs as Real Jobs*, online at www.noellevitz.com/campusjobs.

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.

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, though *virtually all differences are statistically significant*.

For a detailed explanation of the statistical processes used to produce these data, please see page 11. For a demographic breakdown of the student respondents, please see pages 14-15.

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.	95.7%	95.3%	93.3%	94.8%	95.1%	95.0%
I am very strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in my way.	95.2%	94.4%	92.8%	94.5%	94.3%	94.4%
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.	90.7%	89.8%	89.1%	91.0%	89.6%	90.0%
Of all the things I could do at this point in my life, going to college is definitely the most satisfying.	86.1%	86.7%	82.7%	87.0%	85.1%	85.6%
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.	16.6%	15.7%	17.8%	18.8%	15.6%	16.5%
I can think of many things I would rather do than go to college.	11.7%	10.8%	14.1%	11.8%	11.8%	11.9%
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.	10.1%	10.0%	12.2%	11.0%	10.2%	10.5%
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.	8.8%	9.1%	12.3%	10.9%	9.2%	9.7%
Attitude toward educators						
The teachers I had in school respected me as a person and treated me fairly.	82.2%	82.7%	77.7%	81.4%	81.5%	81.4%
Most of my teachers have been very caring and dedicated.	81.2%	75.6%	79.1%	79.9%	78.0%	78.5%
I liked my teachers, and I feel they did a good job.	77.8%	75.9%	74.0%	76.7%	76.2%	76.2%
Most teachers have a superior attitude that I find very annoying.	15.7%	19.7%	16.0%	16.8%	17.5%	17.3%
Most of the teachers I had in school were too opinionated and inflexible.	15.3%	14.5%	18.5%	17.5%	14.9%	15.7%
In my opinion, many teachers are more concerned about themselves than they are about their students.	12.9%	16.6%	13.7%	14.3%	14.6%	14.5%

* 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.	59.9%	57.1%	51.9%	53.6%	58.4%	57.0%
I get a great deal of satisfaction from reading.	48.6%	46.2%	46.0%	46.0%	47.5%	47.1%
I don't enjoy reading serious books and articles, and I only do it when I have to.	41.2%	42.5%	41.6%	43.1%	41.2%	41.8%
Books have never gotten me very excited.	37.8%	38.4%	42.9%	41.3%	38.2%	39.2%
Study habits						
I take very careful notes during class, and I review them thoroughly before a test.	58.9%	59.3%	61.3%	62.6%	58.5%	59.6%
I study very hard for all my courses, even those I don't like.	59.0%	54.7%	60.9%	62.0%	56.1%	57.7%
I have developed a solid system of self-discipline, which helps me keep up with my schoolwork.	57.4%	56.9%	54.9%	58.1%	56.3%	56.6%
My studying is very irregular and unpredictable.	32.5%	33.3%	33.0%	32.7%	32.8%	32.9%
When I try to study, I usually get bored and quit after a few minutes.	27.1%	30.2%	28.7%	29.5%	28.3%	28.7%
I have great difficulty concentrating on schoolwork, and I often get behind.	19.9%	21.0%	26.7%	23.8%	21.0%	21.9%
Math and science confidence						
I have a very good grasp of the scientific ideas I've studied in school.	48.0%	48.7%	40.5%	42.0%	48.7%	46.6%
I have a hard time understanding and solving complex math problems.	44.2%	44.7%	51.8%	48.5%	45.1%	46.1%
Math has always been a challenge for me.	41.7%	41.3%	51.6%	46.6%	42.5%	43.7%
I have always enjoyed the challenge of trying to solve complex math problems.	39.0%	38.8%	33.5%	38.2%	37.6%	37.7%
I have a very good understanding of general biology (e.g., cell structure, metabolism, genetics, and the circulatory system).	37.4%	38.8%	32.6%	33.4%	38.6%	36.9%
My understanding of the physical sciences is very weak.	27.8%	25.6%	31.8%	31.8%	26.1%	27.8%
Verbal confidence						
I am capable of writing a very clear and well-organized paper.	66.4%	65.8%	56.0%	58.5%	66.3%	63.9%
I pick up new vocabulary words quickly, and I find it easy to use them in my speech and writing.	56.1%	56.1%	53.6%	52.8%	56.7%	55.5%
I am very good at figuring out the deeper meaning of a short story or novel.	56.4%	54.4%	50.3%	51.2%	55.5%	54.3%
I have difficulty organizing my ideas in a paper, and I tend to make a lot of punctuation and grammar mistakes.	31.5%	31.9%	39.1%	38.4%	31.2%	33.3%
In English classes, I've had difficulty analyzing an author's style and theme.	28.0%	28.2%	31.1%	31.7%	27.6%	28.7%
Learning new vocabulary words is a slow and difficult process for me.	17.0%	16.2%	20.4%	20.6%	16.2%	17.4%

**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.	81.0%	76.8%	80.9%	80.6%	78.9%	79.3%
I have made a firm decision to enter a certain occupation and have begun planning my life around that decision.	62.0%	59.3%	67.4%	65.6%	60.8%	62.1%
I become very confused when I try to choose an occupation.	21.0%	23.3%	23.9%	23.3%	22.3%	22.5%
I am very confused about what occupation to pursue.	19.1%	22.2%	19.5%	19.9%	20.6%	20.4%
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.	77.9%	79.7%	71.3%	70.9%	80.0%	77.1%
My family and I communicated very well when I was young, and we had a good understanding of each other's point of view.	67.8%	69.7%	62.7%	61.5%	70.1%	67.4%
My family had one way of looking at me when I was a child, and they didn't understand my feelings very well.	14.8%	13.3%	19.7%	19.7%	13.4%	15.3%
When I was a child, the other members of my family often said hurtful things that caused unpleasant feelings.	12.5%	11.4%	17.0%	17.1%	11.3%	13.0%
Sense of financial security						
I have the financial resources that I need to finish college.	46.4%	47.9%	43.8%	38.5%	49.9%	46.4%
I don't have any financial problems that will interfere with my schoolwork.	38.4%	40.7%	36.0%	31.2%	42.1%	38.8%
I have financial problems that are very distracting and troublesome.	29.2%	26.3%	35.0%	38.3%	25.5%	29.3%
I am in a bad financial position, and the pressure to earn extra money will probably interfere with my studies.	18.0%	16.6%	21.4%	23.7%	15.9%	18.2%
Sociability						
I greatly enjoy getting together with a crowd of people and having fun.	81.3%	82.7%	74.8%	78.0%	81.5%	80.4%
I am very adventurous and outgoing at social gatherings.	58.7%	61.1%	56.8%	57.1%	60.3%	59.2%
Participating in large social gatherings is of little interest to me.	23.5%	22.2%	31.2%	28.9%	22.8%	24.6%
It is hard for me to relax and just have fun with a group of people.	12.6%	12.1%	15.0%	14.6%	12.2%	12.9%

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 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.	63.6%	63.1%	63.6%	65.1%	62.8%	63.4%
I can feel comfortable with someone who thinks quite differently than I do on major social issues.	64.4%	62.7%	62.4%	62.9%	63.4%	63.3%
I find it easy to be friends with people whose political ideas differ sharply from my own.	58.9%	57.5%	57.7%	58.1%	58.2%	58.1%
When someone's opinions strongly disagree with my own, I tend to develop unfriendly feelings and to avoid close contact with the person.	12.8%	13.1%	14.2%	13.1%	13.4%	13.2%
I feel uneasy and distrustful toward people whose way of thinking is quite dissimilar to my own.	9.3%	9.5%	10.4%	9.8%	9.6%	9.6%
Because they irritate me, I tend to stay away from people whose ideas are quite different from my own.	8.3%	9.2%	10.5%	9.7%	8.9%	9.1%
Receptivity to academic assistance						
I would like to receive some instruction in the most effective ways to take college exams.	73.1%	77.1%	73.4%	77.9%	73.5%	74.8%
I would like to receive some help in improving my study habits.	53.7%	60.6%	57.6%	61.6%	55.5%	57.3%
I would like to receive some individual help in improving my math skills.	44.1%	49.3%	52.1%	53.0%	45.8%	47.9%
I would like to receive some individual help in improving my writing skills.	43.9%	46.3%	42.8%	49.1%	42.6%	44.6%
I would like to receive tutoring in one or more of my courses.	38.1%	45.9%	38.9%	44.6%	40.0%	41.4%
I would like to receive some training to improve my reading skills.	26.7%	28.4%	29.7%	33.3%	25.8%	28.0%
Receptivity to career counseling						
I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job.	68.6%	70.2%	61.0%	69.0%	66.9%	67.6%
I would like to talk with someone about the qualifications needed for certain occupations.	61.9%	67.1%	58.5%	64.4%	62.6%	63.2%
I would like to talk with someone about the salaries and future outlook for various occupations.	56.7%	57.9%	52.0%	58.2%	55.2%	56.1%
I would like to talk with someone about the advantages and disadvantages of various occupations.	49.3%	51.6%	42.6%	49.3%	48.4%	48.7%
I would like some help selecting an occupation that is well-suited to my interests and abilities.	48.8%	49.8%	43.0%	49.0%	47.4%	47.9%

**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%	68.0%	57.8%	68.2%	63.1%	64.6%
I would like to talk to someone about getting a part-time job during the regular school year.	50.6%	49.5%	37.4%	48.7%	46.5%	47.3%
I would like to talk to someone about the opportunities available for summer employment.	46.0%	45.7%	38.9%	47.0%	42.8%	44.3%
I would like to talk with someone about getting a loan to help me through school.	31.1%	30.7%	33.7%	37.6%	29.1%	31.5%
Receptivity to personal counseling						
I would like to talk with a counselor about my general attitude toward school.	17.1%	20.8%	20.5%	22.4%	18.0%	19.3%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some difficulties in my personal relationships or social life.	10.2%	10.8%	11.1%	12.0%	10.1%	10.6%
I would like to talk with a counselor about eliminating an unwanted habit (involving food, drugs, cigarettes, or alcohol, etc.).	7.6%	9.1%	9.6%	9.8%	8.1%	8.7%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some emotional tensions that are bothering me.	8.6%	9.4%	9.1%	9.8%	8.7%	9.0%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some feelings of discouragement or unhappy thoughts that keep bothering me.	8.2%	9.1%	8.8%	10.0%	8.2%	8.7%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some family problems.	6.3%	6.7%	7.1%	8.2%	6.0%	6.6%
Receptivity to social enrichment						
I would like to attend an informal gathering where I can meet some new friends.	61.2%	60.9%	44.2%	53.8%	58.9%	57.3%
I would like to find out more about the clubs and social organizations at my college.	60.9%	63.0%	40.7%	54.4%	58.3%	57.3%
I would like to find out more about student government and the various student activities on campus.	50.0%	52.6%	36.6%	47.7%	48.2%	48.1%
I would like to meet an experienced student who can show me around and give me some advice.	48.5%	52.5%	37.7%	49.5%	46.9%	47.7%
Desire to transfer						
I have no desire to transfer to another school before finishing a degree at this college or university.	69.9%	59.7%	53.8%	63.3%	62.0%	62.3%
I plan to transfer to another school before completing a degree at this college or university.	7.8%	13.7%	22.6%	13.6%	13.3%	13.4%
Total number of students	37,722	38,765	21,633	26,199	66,847	98,120
Average age of students	20.1	18.6	22.5	21.4	19.5	20.0

Respondent demographics (Fall 2008)

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	37,722	38,765	21,633	26,199*	66,847*	98,120
Representation by institution type	38.4%	39.5%	22.1%	26.7%	68.1%	100%
Percent male	47.6%	42.8%	53.5%	43.0%	46.3%	45.5%
Percent female	52.4%	57.2%	46.5%	57.0%	53.7%	54.5%
Racial/ethnic origin						
Black/African-American	19.0%	25.1%	16.2%	23.5%	19.1%	20.8%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.6%	1.0%	1.1%	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%
Asian or Pacific Islander	3.8%	2.6%	4.4%	4.0%	3.2%	3.5%
White/Caucasian	59.9%	55.8%	56.2%	47.4%	62.5%	57.5%
Hispanic or Latino	9.1%	6.1%	16.1%	17.6%	6.2%	9.5%
Multi-ethnic or other ethnic origin	3.6%	2.9%	3.1%	2.8%	3.3%	3.2%
Prefer not to respond	2.6%	1.8%	2.4%	1.9%	2.2%	2.2%
Highest education level of mother						
8 years or less	2.8%	2.0%	6.5%	10.8%	0.5%	3.3%
Some high school	5.4%	4.9%	10.9%	18.3%	1.9%	6.4%
High school diploma	26.7%	27.4%	35.6%	70.9%	13.6%	28.9%
1 to 3 years of college	27.0%	28.7%	27.3%	0.0%	39.6%	27.7%
Bachelor's degree	23.2%	22.8%	10.5%	0.0%	29.2%	20.3%
Master's degree	9.1%	9.5%	4.3%	0.0%	11.8%	8.2%
Professional degree	3.0%	2.3%	2.0%	0.0%	3.5%	2.5%
Highest education level of father						
8 years or less	3.5%	2.3%	7.5%	12.3%	0.9%	3.9%
Some high school	6.9%	6.7%	13.1%	21.4%	3.6%	8.2%
High school diploma	29.0%	31.5%	37.1%	66.3%	20.5%	31.8%
1 to 3 years of college	20.8%	22.0%	21.2%	0.0%	31.2%	21.4%
Bachelor's degree	20.4%	20.5%	9.4%	0.0%	26.3%	18.0%
Master's degree	9.5%	8.5%	4.2%	0.0%	11.6%	7.9%
Professional degree	5.2%	4.0%	2.4%	0.0%	6.0%	4.1%
Highest degree planned by respondent						
None	0.1%	0.1%	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
1-year certificate	0.3%	0.1%	3.7%	2.0%	0.5%	0.9%
2-year degree (associate)	3.1%	0.7%	31.0%	14.4%	5.9%	8.3%
4-year degree (bachelor's)	41.0%	38.2%	35.6%	41.3%	37.6%	38.7%
Master's degree	37.1%	37.0%	18.3%	27.2%	35.3%	32.9%
Professional degree	18.3%	23.8%	11.0%	14.9%	20.4%	18.9%

* 5,074 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)	21.4%	27.5%	15.2%	16.8%	24.6%	22.4%
1 to 10 hours per week	24.0%	21.9%	11.4%	15.7%	22.5%	20.4%
11 to 20 hours per week	28.6%	32.6%	27.4%	30.0%	29.9%	29.9%
21 to 30 hours per week	12.6%	12.6%	23.7%	18.9%	13.3%	15.0%
31 to 40 hours per week	9.1%	3.9%	17.0%	13.3%	7.0%	8.8%
Over 40 hours per week	4.2%	0.9%	5.3%	4.9%	2.5%	3.1%
Average grades as senior in high school						
A	17.6%	19.3%	6.9%	11.3%	18.1%	15.9%
A to B	33.4%	35.4%	26.5%	30.5%	33.7%	32.7%
B	21.4%	21.3%	19.9%	20.6%	21.2%	21.0%
B to C	19.7%	18.3%	31.1%	26.3%	19.6%	21.7%
C	5.6%	4.2%	10.0%	7.5%	5.3%	6.0%
C to D	2.0%	1.2%	4.6%	3.1%	1.9%	2.3%
D	0.4%	0.2%	0.9%	0.6%	0.4%	0.4%
Respondent's self-assessment of academic knowledge						
Highest 20%	18.5%	17.6%	8.5%	10.6%	18.3%	15.9%
Next to highest 20%	34.3%	35.0%	22.6%	26.8%	34.2%	32.0%
Middle 20%	44.8%	45.2%	62.0%	57.6%	44.9%	48.7%
Next to lowest 20%	2.1%	1.9%	5.8%	4.2%	2.2%	2.8%
Lowest 20%	0.3%	0.3%	1.0%	0.7%	0.3%	0.4%
Respondent's self-assessment of academic ability						
Considerably below average	0.4%	0.4%	0.7%	0.7%	0.4%	0.5%
Slightly below average	3.4%	3.1%	6.4%	5.3%	3.4%	4.0%
Average	28.5%	29.3%	47.8%	43.0%	28.9%	33.1%
Slightly above average	36.3%	37.5%	29.1%	31.9%	36.6%	35.2%
Considerably above average (top 20%)	28.1%	26.7%	14.5%	17.4%	27.5%	24.5%
Extremely high (top 5%)	3.2%	3.0%	1.5%	1.7%	3.2%	2.7%
Timing of decision to attend chosen college/university						
Decision made few days before	3.3%	1.6%	3.9%	3.6%	2.4%	2.8%
Decision made weeks before	15.9%	9.5%	20.2%	17.5%	12.9%	14.3%
Decision made many months before	80.6%	88.1%	75.7%	78.4%	84.3%	82.5%



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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., Noel-Levitz 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 call 1-800-876-1117 to speak with a program consultant.

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

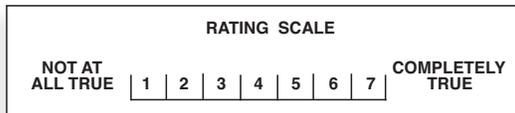
This report has been brought to you by Noel-Levitz as part of our series of student research reports.

Noel-Levitz has served the higher education community for more than 35 years. Campus leaders turn to the firm for consultation and resources for student retention, student recruitment, marketing, and strategic enrollment planning. Noel-Levitz has partnered with more than 2,000 colleges and universities throughout North America.

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). The inventory is designed to assess the motivational characteristics of incoming first-year students. It describes incoming first-year students' strengths and needs and serves as a retention management tool for hundreds of campuses nationwide. The College Student Inventory (available in Forms A, B, and C) 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/CSIB.



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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