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TENTH ANNUAL NATIONAL RESEARCH STUDY

2015 National Freshman Attitudes Report

for Four-Year and Two-Year Institutions

Explore a sampling of 85 attitudes that influence student success and retention for incoming freshmen, including contrasting attitudes held by first-generation vs. non-first-generation students and differences by age, race, and gender.

This annual report from Ruffalo Noel Levitz goes beyond the usual metrics of standardized test scores and high school transcripts to explore a wide range of non-cognitive attitudes and motivations that influence student retention and college completion rates. The report is based on student survey responses drawn from a sizable sample of incoming undergraduates in 2014.

Highlights from the findings:

- First-generation incoming freshmen tend to experience greater enjoyment in going to college, but their verbal confidence tends to trail behind the verbal confidence of non-first-generation freshmen.
- Incoming freshmen age 25 and above tend to be less confident in their math skills compared to traditional-age freshmen, but tend to be more tolerant of other students' opinions.
- Hispanic incoming freshmen tend to bring a higher commitment to their educational goals, while incoming Asian freshmen tend to bring a better grasp of scientific ideas, compared to freshmen from other racial/ethnic groups.
- Male incoming freshmen tend to bring less determination to finish college and weaker study habits compared to female incoming freshmen.
- Incoming freshmen at two-year institutions have an almost equal desire to finish college as freshmen at four-year institutions. In addition, freshmen at two-year institutions tend to feel more confident with learning new vocabulary.

See a 14-point checklist inside from Ruffalo Noel Levitz for help with planning freshman interventions

- How can colleges and universities address the concerns of today's diverse freshmen?
- What purposeful strategies and opportunities can be put in place to improve freshmen persistence, retention, and college completion?

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View more freshman attitudes online at www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport

Sample reports available:

- 2008-14 National Freshman Attitudes Reports
- 2014 Addendum by Race/Ethnicity
- 2014 Report: Changes in Freshman Attitudes Following a Semester of Classes and Interventions
- 2013 Report: Attitudes and Motivations of College Transfer Students
- 2013 Report: Freshman Attitudes at Two-Year Colleges

Find all papers and research from Ruffalo Noel Levitz at www.noellevitz.com/PapersandResearch

The source of data

The freshman data in this report were collected by a student survey administered to 95,932 incoming, first-year college students at 297 colleges and universities nationwide in 2014. The 100-item survey examined a broad range of motivational perspectives that influence student success. Students completed the survey online or used a traditional paper-and-pencil format.

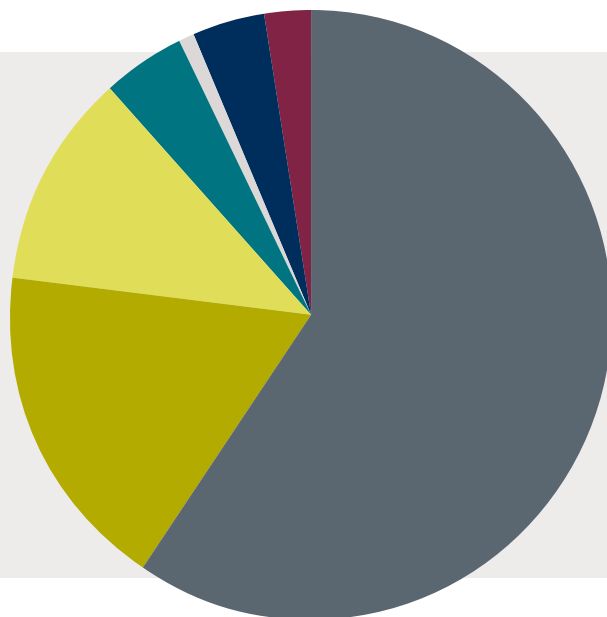
The 95,932 incoming student respondents were enrolled at a broad cross-section of institutions, with 20.3 percent of the respondents coming from two-year institutions, 38.5 percent from four-year private institutions, and 41.2 percent from four-year public institutions.

Consistent with national enrollment trends, a slight majority of the respondents (55.9 percent) were female. The average age of the respondents was 19.5 years.

The 100-item survey instrument was the College Student Inventory™ Form B (CSI-B), part of the Retention Management System *Plus*™ from Ruffalo Noel Levitz. This non-cognitive, motivational assessment identifies self-reported attitudes, motivations, needs, and interests, as well as barriers and opportunities for supporting students as they transition to college. For more information on Ruffalo Noel Levitz attitudinal assessments, please see page 20.

Respondent Profile by Race/Ethnicity

- 59.8% White/Caucasian
- 17.4% Black/African American
- 11.2% Hispanic or Latino
- 4.3% Asian or Pacific Islander
- 0.8% American Indian or Alaskan Native
- 4.0% Multi-ethnic or Other
- 2.3% Prefer not to respond



A broad cross-section of institutions and incoming students were represented in this study. The ethnic/racial breakdown of the incoming student respondents was 59.8 percent White/Caucasian, 17.4 percent Black/African American, 11.2 percent Hispanic or Latino, 4.3 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 0.8 percent American Indian or Alaskan Native, 4.0 percent Multi-ethnic or Other, and 2.3 percent preferred not to respond. For more details on the respondents, please see the information above and in Appendix B on pages 17-19.

First-generation vs. non-first-generation freshmen

Below are sample differences from this study between incoming first-generation vs. non-first-generation freshmen. For all differences found in this study between first-generation and non-first-generation freshmen, see Appendix B on pages 11-19.

Comparison 1: Proportions of incoming first-generation vs. non-first-generation freshmen in agreement with selected survey items

SELECTED SURVEY ITEMS: ATTITUDES OF INCOMING FRESHMEN	FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	NON-FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	OVERALL NATIONAL PERCENTAGE
Of all the things I could do at this point in my life, going to college is definitely the most satisfying.	86.7%	82.9%	83.9%
I study very hard for all my courses, even those I don't like.	62.5%	57.9%	59.1%
I have difficulty organizing my ideas in a paper, and I tend to make a lot of punctuation and grammar mistakes.	36.7%	28.7%	30.8%
I would like to receive some help in improving my study habits.	66.3%	57.9%	60.1%
I would like to talk to someone about getting a scholarship.	71.7%	63.0%	65.3%

What this sampling shows:
Compared to their non-first-generation counterparts, incoming first-generation freshmen tend to experience greater enjoyment in going to college, bring greater determination to study, and have greater receptivity to institutional services. However, the verbal confidence of first-generation students tends to trail behind the verbal confidence of non-first-generation students.

16 categories of attitudes: This study examined 85 attitudes grouped in the following categories...

- Desire to finish college
- Attitude toward educators
- Math and science confidence
- Verbal confidence
- Intellectual interests
- Career closure
- Family emotional support
- Sense of financial security
- Sociability
- Opinion tolerance
- Receptivity to academic assistance
- Receptivity to career counseling
- Receptivity to financial guidance
- Receptivity to personal counseling
- Receptivity to social enrichment
- Desire to transfer

See Appendix B on pages 11-19 for the complete findings of this study for first-generation vs. non-first-generation freshmen and for two-year vs. four-year institutions.

Traditional-age freshmen vs. freshmen age 25 and above

Below is a sampling of differences between traditional-age students and adult learners. Watch for the forthcoming 2015 companion report to this study, *Attitudes of Adult Learners*, for all of the findings of this study for adult learners, available this summer at www.noellelvitz.com/FreshmanReport.

Comparison 2: Proportions of incoming students age 25 and above in agreement with selected survey items vs. incoming traditional-age students' levels of agreement

SELECTED SURVEY ITEMS: ATTITUDES OF INCOMING FRESHMEN	ADULT STUDENTS	TRADITIONAL-AGE STUDENTS	OVERALL NATIONAL PERCENTAGE
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.	95.2%	90.6%	90.9%
Over the years, books have broadened my horizons and stimulated my imagination.	68.2%	53.2%	54.3%
Math has always been a challenge for me.	55.2%	43.5%	44.1%
I get along well with people who disagree with my opinion openly.	73.0%	56.9%	58.0%
I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job.	57.3%	69.0%	
I would like to talk with someone about the qualifications needed for certain occupations.	54.9%	65.1%	64.4%

What this sampling shows:
Compared to their traditional-age counterparts, incoming freshmen age 25 and above tend to be more committed to their educational goals, have higher intellectual interests, and are inclined to be more tolerant of others' opinions. However, these students also tend to be less confident in their math skills.

Notice that adult freshmen also tend to be more receptive to career counseling, even though they are more likely to have chosen a career direction.¹ Also, adult learners and traditional-age students have very different expectations about the amount of time they will spend working at a job while enrolled in classes. For example, 40.6 percent of adult learners plan to work 21 hours per week or more compared to 16.2 percent of traditional-age learners.²

25 measures of student receptivity: Included among the 85 attitudes examined were 25 measures of incoming students' receptivity to institutional services grouped in five categories...

- Receptivity to academic assistance
- Receptivity to career counseling
- Receptivity to financial guidance
- Receptivity to personal counseling
- Receptivity to social enrichment

Nationally, 60 percent of incoming freshmen indicated they would like help with their study habits, 48 percent indicated they would like individual help with improving their math skills, and 48 percent indicated they would like individual help with improving their writing skills, as shown in Appendix B on pages 15-17.

¹ See forthcoming companion report, *Attitudes of Adult Learners*.

² See forthcoming companion report, *Attitudes of Adult Learners*.

Asian vs. Hispanic vs. American Indian vs. African American vs. Caucasian freshmen

The third comparison table below shows sample differences between incoming freshmen of five racial/ethnic backgrounds. For a more complete set of findings by race/ethnicity, see the 2014 Addendum by Race/Ethnicity available at www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport.

Comparison 3: Proportions of incoming Asian, Hispanic, American Indian, African American, and Caucasian freshmen in agreement with selected survey items

SELECTED SURVEY ITEMS: ATTITUDES OF INCOMING FRESHMEN	ASIAN	HISPANIC	AMERICAN INDIAN	BLACK	WHITE
I am deeply committed to my educational goals, and I'm fully prepared to make the sacrifices that will be needed to attain them.	88.1%	94.0%	88.7%	92.2%	90.4%
I have found a potential career that strongly attracts me.	72.7%	81.1%	80.3%	81.9%	80.0%
The teachers I had in school respected me as a person and treated me fairly.	84.6%	84.5%	74.8%	80.7%	81.6%
I would like to receive some individual help in improving my math skills.	50.8%	60.5%	52.2%	65.1%	39.9%
I have a very good grasp of the scientific ideas I've studied in school.	54.2%	45.2%	46.4%	44.7%	50.0%
I would like to receive tutoring in one or more of my courses.	56.7%	58.7%	48.2%	63.5%	38.6%

What this sampling shows (a few observations):

- Incoming Hispanic or Latino freshmen tend to bring a higher commitment to their educational goals.
- Incoming Asian or Pacific Islander freshmen are inclined to bring a better grasp of scientific ideas, but are less likely to have found a potential career.
- Incoming African American freshmen tend to be more receptive to institutional assistance in many areas.
- Incoming American Indian or Alaskan Native freshmen have a tendency to feel less respected by their previous teachers.
- Incoming Caucasian freshmen tend to be less receptive to institutional assistance.

Commonalities across subpopulations

Below is a sampling of commonalities across incoming freshmen subpopulations in 10 of the 16 categories examined in this study. To see the specific survey items for each category and the specific degrees of commonality, please refer to Appendix B.

Commonalities sampling

CHARACTERISTICS	BLACK*	HISPANIC*	FIRST-GENERATION**	MALES***
Desire to finish college	+	+	-	-
Career closure	+	+	+	-
Opinion tolerance	+	+	+	+
Receptivity to academic assistance	+	+	+	-
Receptivity to career counseling	+	+	+	-
Receptivity to financial guidance	+	+	+	-
Desire to transfer	+	+	+	-
Academic confidence	-	-	-	#
Sense of financial security	-	-	-	+
Family emotional support	-	-	-	+

* Compared to white students
 ** Compared to students with college-educated parents
 *** Compared to females

+ Areas in which students in the sample subpopulation expressed higher levels of agreement and/or receptivity than the comparison population
 - Areas in which students in the sample subpopulation expressed lower levels of agreement and/or receptivity than the comparison population
 # Area in which there was no substantive difference between the responses of the sample subpopulation and the comparison population

In addition to examining differences, it is important to look across incoming students at the strengths and challenges they have in common in order to develop core interventions. See the recommendations for applying the findings in Appendix A on page 10.

Male vs. female freshmen

Below are sample differences between incoming male vs. female freshmen. For a more complete set of findings showing differences between male and female freshmen, see the 2014 National Freshman Attitudes Report available at www.noellelvitz.com/FreshmanReport.

Comparison 4: Proportions of incoming male freshmen vs. female freshmen in agreement with selected survey items

SELECTED SURVEY ITEMS: ATTITUDES OF INCOMING FRESHMEN	MALE STUDENTS	FEMALE STUDENTS	OVERALL NATIONAL AVERAGE
I have a very strong desire to continue my education, and I am quite determined to finish a degree.	93.1%	96.5%	95.0%
I study very hard for all my courses, even those I don't like.	50.6%	65.8%	59.1%
I have found a potential career that strongly attracts me.	78.4%	81.2%	80.0%
I would like to talk with someone about the qualifications needed for certain occupations.	61.9%	66.4%	64.4%
I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job.	65.8%	70.0%	68.2%

What this sampling shows:
Compared to their female counterparts, incoming male freshmen tend to bring less determination to finish college and weaker study habits. They also are less likely to be receptive to career counseling, even though more males, compared to females, haven't yet made a clear career decision.

Freshmen at two-year vs. four-year institutions

Below are sample differences between students at two-year vs. four-year institutions. See Appendix B, pages 11-19, for all of the findings of this study by sector.

Comparison 5: Proportions of incoming freshmen at two-year institutions vs. four-year institutions in agreement with selected survey items

SELECTED SURVEY ITEMS: ATTITUDES OF INCOMING FRESHMEN	STUDENTS AT 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS (public & private)	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS	OVERALL NATIONAL PERCENTAGE
I have a very strong desire to continue my education, and I am quite determined to finish a degree.	92.4%	95.5%	95.8%	95.0%
I have a hard time understanding and solving complex math problems.	49.7%	42.6%	42.8%	44.1%
I pick up new vocabulary words quickly, and I find it easy to use them in my speech and writing.	57.3%	54.3%	56.9%	56.0%
I would like to receive some individual help in improving my math skills.	51.5%	44.0%	50.2%	48.1%
I would like to receive tutoring in one or more of my courses.	40.7%	44.0%	52.3%	46.8%

What this sampling shows:
Compared to their counterparts at four-year private and public institutions, students at two-year institutions have an almost equal desire to finish college and tend to feel more confident with learning new vocabulary. However, they are more likely to struggle with math. These students also tend to be less receptive to institutional assistance, except in the area of math.

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Nearly 1 in 4 freshmen from two-year colleges decides to enroll in the final weeks before classes begin.

A finding from the final pages of Appendix B shows 25 percent of freshmen at two-year institutions wait to make their college decision until a few weeks before classes begin, compared to 12 or 13 percent of freshmen at four-year institutions. Don't miss this finding and additional findings in the final section of Appendix B—"Respondent demographics"—on pages 17-19.

Late decision — incoming freshmen

13% of freshmen at 4-year private institutions

12% of freshmen at 4-year publics

25% of freshmen at 2-year public and private institutions

Appendix A: Using identified differences to plan interventions—a 14-point checklist

It wasn't too long ago when student enrollments at many colleges and universities were dominated by a single population. However, for many colleges and universities today, the "traditional" student is, by some standards, a minority population, or one population among many.

So how can your institution respond? In what ways can your institution re-organize itself to meet the changing needs of its students, including the differing needs of specific populations, as early as possible in students' college careers? What purposeful strategies and opportunities can be put in place to improve your students' persistence, retention, completion, and graduation rates?

Below are a few suggestions from Ruffalo Noel Levitz, beginning with a 14-point checklist. For continued discussion, readers are invited to open a conversation by email or phone with a Ruffalo Noel Levitz student retention consultant.

14-point checklist for retaining diverse students

The following is a quick checklist to assist your institution with identifying opportunities to better serve diverse populations.

Does your institution track and use:

1. Data about your entering students to drive program design and development? Do you provide both integrated and differentiated programming that addresses both a common core of needs as well as population-specific needs?
2. Evidence of diverse student success in the form of persistence rates, progression rates, retention rates, and graduation rates on your diverse students, as well as graduate school placement rates and employment rates after graduation?

Does your institution offer:

3. Orientation programs tailored specifically for diverse students, including segments that address concerns such as academic preparation, finances, career exploration, and meaningful work experiences? Extended orientation?
4. Programs beyond the usual classroom and advising services that connect students to faculty, staff, and students within academic or co-curricular interest areas?
5. Faculty and staff development programs to help faculty and staff understand the needs of diverse populations?
6. Mentoring programs for diverse students? Including peer mentors?
7. Advisors within the student's major/area of interest with an early focus on confirming or further refining a written academic plan?
8. "Early alert" sensor systems that identify diverse students in need of support, including those who are less receptive to support?
9. Targeted referrals and communications to connect at-risk students to academic resources/tutoring services?
10. Career services that target diverse students to provide assistance with academic planning/internship/work opportunities related to the major? Including opportunities for diverse students to network with alumni for internship/employment opportunities?
11. Academic support services based on areas of student need and student demand?
12. Communications and programs for parents of diverse populations?
13. Membership in academic honor organizations? Leadership opportunities and recognition?
14. Research that identifies the satisfaction of diverse students about their college experiences? Are the voices of diverse students "heard"?

Appendix B: Additional findings and data from 2014 incoming college freshmen

See page 20 for an explanation of the statistical processes used to produce these data.

Percent of 2014 entering freshmen in agreement

ALL SURVEY ITEMS:	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PRIVATES	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PUBLICS	STUDENTS AT 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	NON-FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	OVERALL NATIONAL AVERAGE
Desire to finish college						
I have a very strong desire to continue my education, and I am quite determined to finish a degree.	95.5%	95.8%	92.4%	94.9%	95.0%	95.0%
I am very strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in my way.	95.4%	95.5%	92.8%	94.9%	95.0%	94.9%
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.	91.4%	91.4%	89.1%	91.9%	90.6%	90.9%
Of all the things I could do at this point in my life, going to college is definitely the most satisfying.	83.9%	85.7%	80.3%	86.7%	82.9%	83.9%
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.	20.8%	22.0%	21.2%	23.4%	20.7%	21.4%
I can think of many things I would rather do than go to college.	9.9%	10.4%	14.1%	10.4%	11.2%	11.0%
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.	12.3%	12.9%	15.1%	13.2%	13.1%	13.1%
I dread the thought of going to school for several more years, and there is a part of me that would like to give up the whole thing.	8.1%	8.8%	12.2%	10.3%	8.8%	9.2%
Attitude toward educators						
The teachers I had in school respected me as a person and treated me fairly.	82.3%	82.4%	78.3%	81.2%	81.7%	81.5%
Most of my teachers have been very caring and dedicated.	81.4%	77.9%	79.0%	79.9%	79.4%	79.5%
I liked my teachers, and I feel they did a good job.	76.5%	75.1%	72.7%	74.5%	75.5%	75.2%
Most teachers have a superior attitude that I find very annoying.	15.7%	18.6%	15.0%	16.4%	16.8%	16.8%

ALL SURVEY ITEMS:	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PRIVATES	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PUBLICS	STUDENTS AT 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	NON-FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	OVERALL NATIONAL AVERAGE
Most of the teachers I had in school were too opinionated and inflexible.	15.3%	15.5%	17.5%	17.0%	15.4%	15.8%
In my opinion, many teachers are more concerned about themselves than they are about their students.	13.6%	16.8%	13.9%	14.5%	15.0%	15.0%
Intellectual interests						
Over the years, books have broadened my horizons and stimulated my imagination.	55.3%	55.2%	50.5%	51.3%	55.3%	54.3%
I get a great deal of personal satisfaction from reading.	44.5%	46.0%	46.2%	46.0%	45.3%	45.5%
I don't enjoy reading serious books and articles, and I only do it when I have to.	44.6%	45.4%	42.2%	44.9%	44.2%	44.4%
Books have never gotten me very excited.	37.8%	37.6%	41.0%	39.1%	38.1%	38.3%
Study habits						
I take very careful notes during class, and I review them thoroughly before a test.	64.1%	64.7%	65.4%	67.9%	63.4%	64.6%
I study very hard for all my courses, even those I don't like.	59.3%	57.9%	61.1%	62.5%	57.9%	59.1%
I have developed a solid system of self-discipline, which helps me keep up with my schoolwork.	60.2%	58.8%	56.0%	59.7%	58.5%	58.8%
My studying is very irregular and unpredictable.	30.6%	34.0%	32.3%	33.2%	32.0%	32.3%
When I try to study, I usually get bored and quit after a few minutes.	27.8%	31.4%	28.8%	30.9%	29.0%	29.5%
I have great difficulty concentrating on schoolwork, and I often get behind.	18.3%	19.3%	25.5%	22.0%	19.5%	20.2%
Math and science confidence						
I have a very good grasp of the scientific ideas I've studied in school.	49.3%	51.3%	42.7%	44.0%	50.5%	48.8%
I have a hard time understanding and solving complex math problems.	42.6%	42.8%	49.7%	47.4%	42.9%	44.1%
Math has always been a challenge for me.	40.3%	40.6%	51.6%	46.7%	41.3%	42.7%

Green Numbers = greater contrasts between first-generation and non-first-generation students

ALL SURVEY ITEMS:	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PRIVATES	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PUBLICS	STUDENTS AT 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	NON-FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	OVERALL NATIONAL AVERAGE
I have always enjoyed the challenge of trying to solve complex math problems.	34.1%	35.8%	32.6%	35.5%	34.1%	34.5%
I have a very good understanding of general biology (e.g., cell structure, metabolism, genetics, and the circulatory system).	39.4%	42.2%	36.4%	36.6%	41.1%	39.9%
My understanding of the physical sciences is very weak.	23.7%	22.9%	27.2%	27.7%	22.8%	24.1%
Verbal confidence						
I am capable of writing a very clear and well-organized paper.	65.0%	63.7%	56.8%	57.1%	64.9%	62.8%
I pick up new vocabulary words quickly, and I find it easy to use them in my speech and writing.	54.3%	56.9%	57.3%	54.5%	56.4%	56.0%
I am very good at figuring out the deeper meaning of a short story or novel.	51.1%	50.4%	49.8%	49.2%	51.0%	50.5%
I have difficulty organizing my ideas in a paper, and I tend to make a lot of punctuation and grammar mistakes.	29.1%	30.3%	35.2%	36.7%	28.7%	30.8%
In English classes, I've had difficulty analyzing an author's style and theme.	28.4%	29.4%	28.7%	30.1%	28.4%	28.9%
Learning new vocabulary words is a slow and difficult process for me.	17.6%	16.9%	18.4%	20.5%	16.4%	17.4%
Career closure						
I have found a potential career that strongly attracts me.	81.5%	77.6%	82.0%	80.9%	79.7%	80.0%
I have made a firm decision to enter a certain occupation and have begun planning my life around that decision.	63.8%	61.6%	69.1%	66.9%	63.0%	64.0%
I become very confused when I try to choose an occupation.	19.1%	22.7%	21.9%	22.0%	20.9%	21.2%
I am very confused about what occupation to pursue.	17.6%	22.4%	18.4%	19.4%	19.9%	19.8%
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.	80.1%	77.8%	71.3%	70.6%	79.8%	77.4%

Green Numbers = greater contrasts between first-generation and non-first-generation students

ALL SURVEY ITEMS:	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PRIVATES	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PUBLICS	STUDENTS AT 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	NON-FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	OVERALL NATIONAL AVERAGE
My family and I communicated very well when I was young, and we had a good understanding of each other's point of view.	69.4%	67.5%	62.6%	60.8%	69.6%	67.2%
My family had one way of looking at me when I was a child, and they didn't understand my feelings very well.	13.1%	14.6%	18.9%	19.8%	13.2%	14.9%
When I was a child, the other members of my family often said hurtful things that caused unpleasant feelings.	11.5%	12.0%	15.7%	16.6%	11.1%	12.6%
Sense of financial security						
I have the financial resources that I need to finish college.	47.7%	47.6%	45.1%	37.1%	50.8%	47.1%
I don't have any financial problems that will interfere with my schoolwork.	39.3%	38.8%	37.7%	28.5%	42.5%	38.8%
I have financial problems that are very distracting and troublesome.	25.5%	27.3%	29.9%	38.2%	23.2%	27.1%
I am in a bad financial position, and the pressure to earn extra money will probably interfere with my studies.	15.8%	16.8%	17.4%	23.3%	14.1%	16.5%
Sociability						
I greatly enjoy getting together with a crowd of people and having fun.	77.1%	78.4%	69.6%	74.7%	76.7%	76.1%
I am very adventurous and outgoing at social gatherings.	53.4%	54.9%	52.5%	53.5%	54.0%	53.8%
Participating in large social gatherings is of little interest to me.	25.4%	25.9%	33.8%	30.6%	26.1%	27.3%
It is hard for me to relax and just have fun with a group of people.	12.8%	12.6%	14.6%	13.9%	12.8%	13.1%
Opinion tolerance						
I get along well with people who disagree with my opinion openly.	56.9%	57.3%	61.5%	61.6%	56.7%	58.0%
I can feel comfortable with someone who thinks quite differently than I do on major social issues.	58.1%	60.1%	61.6%	61.5%	59.0%	59.6%
I find it easy to be friends with people whose political ideas differ sharply from my own.	50.9%	51.0%	53.0%	52.6%	50.9%	51.4%

Green Numbers = greater contrasts between first-generation and non-first-generation students

ALL SURVEY ITEMS:	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PRIVATES	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PUBLICS	STUDENTS AT 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	NON-FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	OVERALL NATIONAL AVERAGE
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%	12.4%	12.0%	10.7%	13.1%	12.5%
I feel uneasy and distrustful toward people whose way of thinking is quite dissimilar to my own.	9.0%	9.5%	9.5%	8.9%	9.4%	9.3%
Because they irritate me, I tend to stay away from people whose ideas are quite different from my own.	9.6%	10.1%	10.9%	9.9%	10.1%	10.1%
Receptivity to academic assistance						
I would like to receive some instruction in the most effective ways to take college exams.	75.4%	79.6%	73.7%	79.6%	75.8%	76.8%
I would like to receive some help in improving my study habits.	56.7%	64.0%	58.8%	66.3%	57.9%	60.1%
I would like to receive some individual help in improving my math skills.	44.0%	50.2%	51.5%	55.4%	45.4%	48.1%
I would like to receive some individual help in improving my writing skills.	45.7%	49.6%	42.9%	53.5%	44.2%	46.7%
I would like to receive tutoring in one or more of my courses.	44.0%	52.3%	40.7%	52.3%	44.7%	46.8%
I would like to receive some training to improve my reading skills.	27.1%	31.2%	28.6%	35.9%	26.6%	29.1%
Receptivity to career counseling						
I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job.	68.5%	71.7%	60.3%	71.2%	67.0%	68.2%
I would like to talk with someone about the qualifications needed for certain occupations.	62.0%	69.1%	59.3%	67.1%	63.4%	64.4%
I would like to talk with someone about the salaries and future outlook for various occupations.	53.9%	58.9%	49.3%	57.5%	54.1%	55.0%
I would like to talk with someone about the advantages and disadvantages of various occupations.	47.7%	53.2%	42.1%	49.9%	48.4%	48.8%
I would like some help selecting an occupation that is well suited to my interests and abilities.	45.2%	51.2%	42.5%	49.4%	46.3%	47.1%

Green Numbers = greater contrasts between first-generation and non-first-generation students

ALL SURVEY ITEMS:	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PRIVATES	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PUBLICS	STUDENTS AT 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	NON-FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	OVERALL NATIONAL AVERAGE
Receptivity to financial guidance						
I would like to talk to someone about getting a scholarship.	63.6%	69.3%	60.4%	71.7%	63.0%	65.3%
I would like to talk to someone about getting a part-time job during the regular school year.	54.3%	55.2%	41.4%	55.8%	50.6%	52.0%
I would like to talk to someone about the opportunities available for summer employment.	49.3%	52.7%	43.2%	54.6%	47.5%	49.5%
I would like to talk with someone about getting a loan to help me through school.	27.0%	27.9%	29.9%	34.9%	25.5%	27.9%
Receptivity to personal counseling						
I would like to talk with a counselor about my general attitude toward school.	15.2%	20.1%	19.0%	22.5%	16.3%	18.0%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some difficulties in my personal relationships or social life.	11.2%	11.7%	11.0%	13.5%	10.5%	11.4%
I would like to talk with a counselor about eliminating an unwanted habit (involving food, drugs, cigarettes, or alcohol, etc.).	7.7%	9.7%	10.5%	11.5%	8.2%	9.1%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some emotional tensions that are bothering me.	9.3%	9.6%	9.0%	10.7%	8.9%	9.4%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some feelings of discouragement or unhappy thoughts that keep bothering me.	9.3%	9.8%	9.2%	10.9%	9.0%	9.5%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some family problems.	6.5%	6.7%	7.0%	8.7%	6.0%	6.7%
Receptivity to social enrichment						
I would like to attend an informal gathering where I can meet some new friends.	61.9%	63.2%	44.2%	56.0%	59.8%	58.8%
I would like to find out more about the clubs and social organizations at my college.	68.3%	72.3%	43.7%	62.5%	65.8%	64.9%
I would like to find out more about student government and the various student activities on campus.	48.9%	51.9%	35.0%	48.7%	46.8%	47.3%

ALL SURVEY ITEMS:	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PRIVATES	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PUBLICS	STUDENTS AT 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	NON-FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	OVERALL NATIONAL AVERAGE
I would like to meet an experienced student who can show me around and give me some advice.	54.2%	59.0%	41.7%	56.4%	52.6%	53.6%
Transfer						
I have no desire to transfer to another school before finishing a degree at this college or university.	69.6%	62.4%	50.4%	59.5%	63.9%	62.7%
I plan to transfer to another school before completing a degree at this college or university.	6.9%	11.4%	23.3%	13.6%	11.6%	12.1%
Total number of students	36,943	39,536	19,453	24,409	70,307	95,932
Average age of students	18.8	18.5	22.8	20.7	19.0	19.5

Respondent demographics and additional findings

The following data are for freshmen who completed surveys in 2014.

RESPONDENT INFORMATION	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PRIVATES	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PUBLICS	STUDENTS AT 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	NON-FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	OVERALL NATIONAL AVERAGE
Number of respondents	36,943	39,536	19,453	24,409	70,307	95,932
Percent of respondents	38.5%	41.2%	20.3%	25.4%	73.3%	100.0%
Percent female	55.7%	58.4%	51.3%	59.4%	54.7%	55.9%
Percent male	43.9%	41.6%	48.7%	40.5%	45.1%	43.9%
Racial/Ethnic origin						
Black/African American	13.1%	20.3%	19.5%	21.4%	15.7%	17.4%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.5%	0.8%	1.4%	1.0%	0.8%	0.8%
Asian or Pacific Islander	4.0%	5.2%	2.9%	5.1%	4.0%	4.3%
White/Caucasian	67.3%	55.3%	54.8%	42.0%	66.4%	59.8%
Hispanic or Latino	8.8%	11.9%	14.5%	24.2%	6.7%	11.2%
Multi-ethnic or other ethnic origin	4.0%	3.9%	4.1%	3.8%	4.0%	4.0%
Prefer not to respond	2.2%	2.1%	2.8%	2.1%	2.3%	2.3%

RESPONDENT INFORMATION	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PRIVATES	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PUBLICS	STUDENTS AT 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	NON-FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	OVERALL NATIONAL AVERAGE
Highest education level of mother						
8 years or less	2.1%	3.8%	5.2%	12.4%	0.4%	3.5%
Some high school	3.9%	5.8%	10.6%	19.5%	1.4%	6.0%
High school diploma	24.0%	24.5%	33.9%	68.1%	11.8%	26.2%
1 to 3 years of college	25.4%	25.3%	28.8%	0.0%	35.2%	26.1%
Bachelor's degree	28.1%	25.1%	13.2%	0.0%	32.4%	23.9%
Master's degree	12.6%	11.6%	5.4%	0.0%	14.5%	10.7%
Professional degree	3.4%	3.3%	2.5%	0.0%	4.3%	3.2%
Highest education level of father						
8 years or less	2.7%	4.3%	7.1%	14.3%	0.8%	4.3%
Some high school	6.1%	8.4%	13.7%	23.1%	3.6%	8.6%
High school diploma	28.9%	29.8%	37.9%	62.6%	20.6%	31.1%
1 to 3 years of college	20.5%	21.0%	22.2%	0.0%	28.6%	21.0%
Bachelor's degree	23.7%	21.3%	11.0%	0.0%	27.4%	20.2%
Master's degree	11.7%	9.8%	4.5%	0.0%	12.9%	9.5%
Professional degree	5.3%	4.5%	2.7%	0.0%	6.1%	4.4%
Highest degree planned by respondent						
None	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%
1-year certificate	0.2%	0.0%	3.9%	1.6%	0.7%	0.9%
2-year degree (associate)	3.1%	0.5%	28.8%	11.6%	5.7%	7.2%
4-year degree (bachelor's)	39.7%	37.6%	37.1%	41.4%	37.2%	38.3%
Master's degree	35.7%	35.0%	17.9%	26.6%	33.6%	31.8%
Professional degree	21.2%	26.8%	12.0%	18.5%	22.6%	21.6%
Time expecting to spend at a job while enrolled in classes						
0 (I have no plans to work)	26.3%	29.1%	16.4%	18.4%	28.0%	25.5%
1 to 10 hours per week	31.9%	25.0%	13.3%	20.6%	26.9%	25.3%
11 to 20 hours per week	29.0%	31.1%	28.8%	32.3%	28.9%	29.8%
21 to 30 hours per week	8.9%	10.7%	23.1%	17.6%	10.7%	12.5%
31 to 40 hours per week	3.0%	3.2%	13.8%	8.6%	4.1%	5.3%
Over 40 hours per week	0.8%	0.9%	4.6%	2.5%	1.2%	1.6%

RESPONDENT INFORMATION	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PRIVATES	STUDENTS AT 4-YEAR PUBLICS	STUDENTS AT 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	NON-FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS	OVERALL NATIONAL AVERAGE
Average grades as senior in high school						
A	24.6%	24.4%	8.0%	14.0%	23.8%	21.2%
A to B	38.6%	39.8%	30.0%	36.2%	37.8%	37.4%
B	17.9%	18.2%	17.9%	18.1%	18.0%	18.0%
B to C	14.8%	14.4%	30.0%	23.3%	15.7%	17.7%
C	2.9%	2.4%	8.2%	5.1%	3.3%	3.8%
C to D	1.1%	0.6%	4.6%	2.7%	1.2%	1.6%
D	0.2%	0.1%	1.2%	0.6%	0.3%	0.4%
Respondent's self-assessment of academic knowledge						
Highest 20%	19.5%	19.8%	9.3%	11.8%	19.6%	17.6%
Next to highest 20%	36.5%	36.5%	25.8%	29.8%	36.0%	34.4%
Middle 20%	42.1%	42.0%	59.4%	54.4%	42.3%	45.5%
Next to lowest 20%	1.6%	1.4%	4.5%	3.3%	1.7%	2.1%
Lowest 20%	0.2%	0.2%	0.9%	0.6%	0.3%	0.4%
Respondent's self-assessment of academic ability						
Considerably below average	0.3%	0.3%	0.8%	0.6%	0.3%	0.4%
Slightly below average	3.0%	3.0%	6.3%	4.9%	3.3%	3.7%
Average	27.1%	27.5%	45.3%	40.8%	27.5%	30.9%
Slightly above average	38.3%	38.3%	30.1%	33.5%	37.8%	36.6%
Considerably above average (top 20%)	28.6%	28.1%	15.9%	18.5%	28.4%	25.8%
Extremely high (top 5%)	2.6%	2.8%	1.7%	1.8%	2.8%	2.5%
Timing of decision to attend chosen college/university						
Decision made few days before	2.1%	1.7%	4.5%	3.3%	2.1%	2.4%
Decision made weeks before	11.3%	10.2%	20.7%	16.3%	11.4%	12.7%
Decision made many months before	86.5%	88.0%	74.7%	80.3%	86.4%	84.8%

About Ruffalo Noel Levitz and the non-cognitive, early-alert survey instrument used in this study

A trusted partner to higher education, Ruffalo Noel Levitz helps systems and campuses reach and exceed their goals for enrollment, marketing, and student success. Over the past three decades, our higher education professionals have consulted with thousands of colleges and universities nationwide.

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

Two companion follow-up surveys to CSI-B are 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 the 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 proactively connect students with key services that make a difference.

To see sample copies of these assessments, please visit www.noellevitz.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 Ruffalo Noel Levitz at 1-800-876-1117 or email ContactUs@noellevitz.com.

Find it online:

This report is posted online at:
www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport

To see a sample of the 100-item student survey used in this study, visit www.noellevitz.com/RMSPlus.

Sign up to receive additional reports and updates.
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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 male/female) or ANOVA analysis (using multi-level variables such as school type). To identify greater contrasts between male vs. female students (the items that appear in bold), Cohen's d was used to identify items with small or medium effect sizes. Virtually all other differences between male and female students, although statistically significant, registered negligible effect sizes.

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