

*Second annual*

# National Freshman Attitudes Report

This report describes the attitudes and motivations of first-year students nationally at the beginning of their undergraduate experience. Among the findings:

- Ninety-five percent of entering first-year students bring a strong desire to complete their education;
- Only half of entering students enjoy reading, with females enjoying it much more than males;
- Female entering students report superior study habits and a stronger desire to finish college than males, while males report greater confidence in their math and science preparation;
- Nearly half of students at two-year institutions (45 percent) expect to work more than 20 hours per week, compared to 19 percent of entering students at four-year public institutions and 27 percent of entering students at four-year private institutions;
- Most first-year students report that they would welcome assistance in areas such as preparing for college exams (74 percent), career guidance (66 percent), math tutoring (48 percent), and assistance with getting a part-time job (46 percent).

The attitudinal findings, juxtaposed against national graduation data, bring to light a sobering disparity: Although the vast majority of today's first-year students arrive at college really wanting to complete their degrees, only half of them are likely to accomplish their goal. See more on page 3.

## Today's first-year students arrive highly motivated to finish college but not so motivated to read and study hard

The major finding of this annual national study is that today's entering undergraduates are arriving on campuses highly motivated to complete their college degrees. Yet at the same time, many admit they do not enjoy reading and bring less-than-ideal study habits to the classroom.

Some striking differences between males and females are included in this year's report: Entering female students arrive even more motivated to finish college than males, bring stronger study habits, and are more likely to enjoy reading, while male students bring greater confidence in their math and science preparation.

In another interesting finding, entering students as a whole report that they would welcome assistance in areas such as preparing for college exams, career guidance, math tutoring, and assistance with securing part-time jobs.

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

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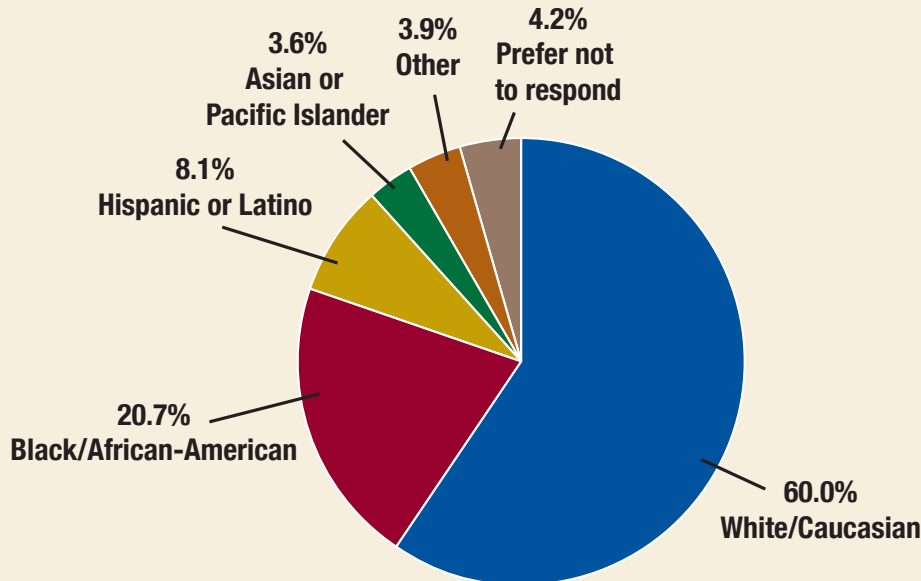
## The source of data

In the summer and fall of 2006, a total of 97,626 first-year college students 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 characteristics that the students brought with them to their collegiate learning experience. Many students completed the survey online while others used a traditional paper-and-pencil format.

Respondents were enrolled at a broad cross-section of 292 institutions, with 36.8 percent of respondents coming from four-year private institutions, 42.3 percent from four-year public institutions, and 20.8 percent from two-year institutions. Consistent with national trends, a slight majority of respondents (56 percent) were female. Also consistent with national trends were respondents' ethnic/racial breakdowns (see chart). 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™. 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 by gender, along with a demographic breakdown of the respondents.**



### A representative sample

Consistent with national trends for undergraduates, the ethnic/racial breakdown of the respondents was 60.0 percent White/Caucasian, 20.7 percent Black/African-American, 8.1 percent Hispanic or Latino, 3.6 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, and 8.1 percent "other" or preferred not to respond. Please watch for a separate report on our findings by race/ethnicity forthcoming in spring 2007.



## Beginning first-year students show a strong desire to finish college Yet data again show nearly half will not graduate

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with specific statements. The following statements focused on the student's desire to finish college:

Selected survey item	Percent of males in agreement	Percent of females in agreement	OVERALL national percentages
<b>Desire to finish college</b>			
I have a very strong desire to continue my education, and I am quite determined to finish a degree.	92.6%	96.2%	<b>94.6%</b>
I am very strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in my way.	91.7%	95.1%	<b>93.6%</b>
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.	85.3%	91.6%	<b>88.8%</b>

**The vast majority of entering students wanted to earn a bachelor's degree or higher, as shown on page 14 of the Appendix. At two-year institutions, two-thirds of respondents wanted to at least earn a bachelor's degree.**

As shown above, respondents were overwhelmingly positive about continuing and completing their education, with female students leading the way on these measurements. Nearly 95 percent of first-year students indicated they had a "very strong desire" to continue their education and finish their degree.

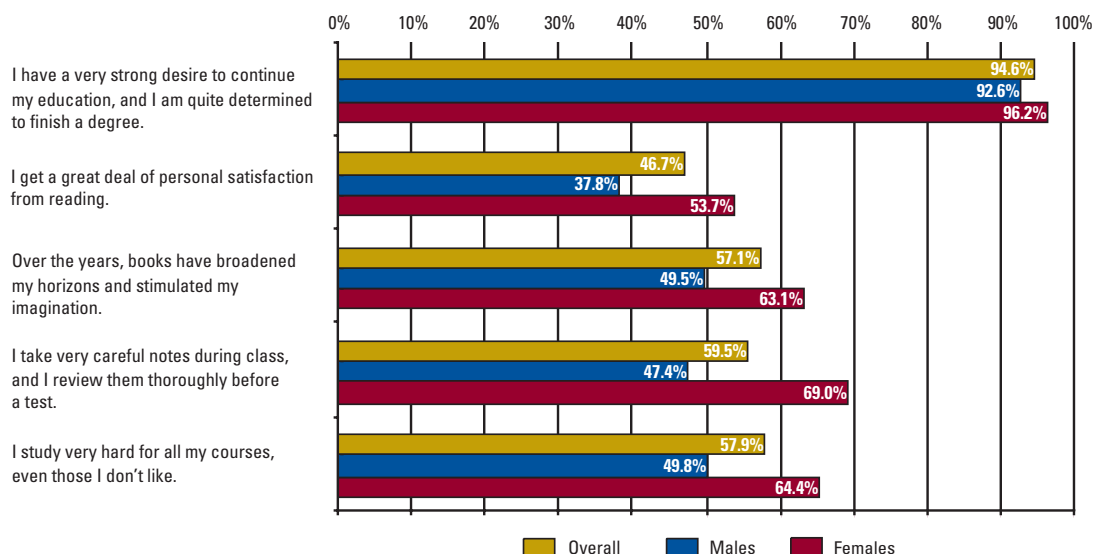
However, these figures show dissonance when compared with actual college completion rates. According to the latest degree completion data, only 46.9 percent of entering college students na-

tionwide complete their degrees within five years.<sup>1</sup> In short, the aspirations and intentions of nearly half of the respondents are going unrecognized.

"What we know is that graduation rates have not significantly improved during the past 15 years even though we see data like these which suggest high levels of motivation for completion," says Kevin Crockett, Noel-Levitz president and CEO. "These findings prove the need for consistent and constant conversation with students about degree planning, goal achievement, and persistence.

## Only half of entering students enjoy reading and bring strong study habits

Although their desire to attend college was strong, only about half of respondents indicated enthusiasm for reading and appeared to have strong study habits, as shown below.



<sup>1</sup> ACT, Inc., *National Collegiate Retention and Persistence to Degree Rates* (Iowa City: ACT, Inc., 2006), 7.

The findings in this report related to study habits, reading appreciation, and writing skills illustrate the strengths and concerns of various groups. As seen below left, it is clear that a large portion of entering students are coming to college with less-than-ideal study habits and only a modest appreciation for reading. This is most pronounced among entering males, who consistently trailed females in all of the measures shown.

For instance, 38.9 percent of males agreed with the statement, “My studying is very irregular and unpredictable,” compared with 28.2 percent of females. Additionally, 30.4 percent of males agreed with the statement, “When I try to study, I usually

get bored and quit after a few minutes,” compared with 25.7 percent of females.

Notably, entering students at two-year institutions scored lower than the national average in their appreciation for reading (51.6 percent on the third item at left) though they scored higher on note-taking and study habits (the fourth and fifth items at left). Additionally, 39.2 percent of two-year students agreed with the statement, “I have difficulty organizing my ideas in a paper, and I tend to make a lot of punctuation and grammar mistakes,” whereas 31.5 percent of students at four-year public institutions agreed with this statement.

For more details, please see the Appendix on page 9.

## Males more confident than females but lag in study habits, enjoyment of reading, and motivation to succeed

As shown below, many students felt underprepared in certain academic areas as they began their college careers. Nearly half of respondents reported a weak or only basic understanding of math and science.

In addition, more differences were evident here by gender. As previously noted above and at

left, female entering students reported stronger study habits, greater enjoyment of reading, and a stronger desire to finish a degree than their male counterparts. In contrast, males reported (below) greater confidence in their math and science preparation:

**Entering female students indicated they have better study habits and a greater appreciation for books and reading, while entering male students expressed greater confidence in their science and math skills.**

Selected survey item	Percent of males in agreement	Percent of females in agreement	OVERALL national percentages
<b>Math, science, and verbal confidence</b>			
I have a hard time understanding and solving complex math problems.	40.1%	50.7%	<b>46.1%</b>
I have a very good grasp of the scientific ideas I've studied in school.	53.4%	42.4%	<b>47.3%</b>
I am capable of writing a very clear and well-organized paper.	62.0%	65.6%	<b>64.0%</b>

The greater confidence shown here by male students was true to a greater degree for white and Hispanic males and less so for African-American males. (Please watch for a separate report on our findings by race/ethnicity forthcoming in spring 2007.)

The relationship between confidence and academic achievement is one that merits further exploration. One study found that, even in situations where students are underprepared, greater confidence was correlated to greater achievement in math.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> J. Daniel House, “The Predictive Relationship Between Academic Self-Concept, Achievement Expectancies, and Grade Performance in College Calculus,” *The Journal of Social Psychology* 135, no. 1 (2001): 111-12.

## Nearly half of students at two-year institutions expect to work more than 20 hours per week

Most survey respondents indicated they planned to hold part-time or full-time jobs in addition to attending classes, as indicated below:

Selected survey item	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions	Male students	Female students	OVERALL national percentages
<b>Time expecting to spend at work</b>						
0 (I have no plans to work)	20.9%	25.4%	14.6%	21.7%	21.4%	21.5%
1 to 10 hours per week	23.8%	21.7%	12.6%	18.8%	22.0%	20.6%
11 to 20 hours per week	28.6%	34.2%	27.3%	30.0%	31.3%	30.7%
21 to 30 hours per week	12.5%	13.8%	22.7%	15.8%	14.6%	15.2%
31 to 40 hours per week	9.1%	3.9%	17.1%	9.0%	8.3%	8.6%
Over 40 hours per week	5.2%	0.9%	5.6%	4.6%	2.5%	3.4%

For this study, the average age of two-year respondents was 22.9 versus 18.6 and 20.3 at four-year public and private institutions, respectively. Confirming our expectations for adult learners, 45 percent of the students at two-year institutions expected to work more than 20 hours per week in fall 2006. Other research indicates that the challenges of managing multiple commitments, financing education, providing for family, and attending classes are a continuous balancing act for adult learners.<sup>3</sup>

In contrast, at four-year institutions, 27 percent of students at four-year private institutions expected to work more than 20 hours per week and 19 percent of students at four-year public institutions expected to work more than 20 hours per week.

Looking at the data by gender, 29 percent of male students expected to work more than 20 hours per week compared with 25 percent of females.

For related information, see Respondent Demographics in the Appendix on pages 14 and 15.

## Entering students welcome 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 males in agreement	Percent of females in agreement	OVERALL national percentages
<b>Receptivity to assistance</b>			
I would like to receive some instruction in the most effective ways to take college exams.	70.8%	76.7%	74.1%
I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job.	63.7%	67.2%	65.7%
I would like to receive some individual help in improving my math skills.	44.1%	51.7%	48.3%
I would like to talk to someone about getting a part-time job during the regular school year.	45.7%	45.9%	45.8%
I would like to receive tutoring in one or more of my courses.	37.0%	43.6%	40.7%

<sup>3</sup> Mbilinyi, Lyungai, Degrees of Opportunity: Adults' views on the value and feasibility of returning to school, [www.degreesofopportunity.org](http://www.degreesofopportunity.org) (August 2006).

As shown below left, a high percentage of students would like instruction on taking college exams and career planning support, while significant numbers of students would also like help with math skills and getting tutoring and part-time jobs. It is also evident that female students are more receptive to these forms of assistance than their male counterparts.

“It is amazing that nearly 75 percent of students say they are receptive to instruction for test-taking strategies and, at the same time, many colleges and universities don’t require student success

courses,” says Tim Culver, Noel-Levitz associate vice president. “Instead, many institutions offer these courses for students who ‘need’ them. Imagine if we would frontload these services and coursework for students before they have to ask for them or know they need the service.”

The examples in the table below left were among more than 20 statements of receptivity to assistance that were measured for this study. For complete data, please see page 12 and 13 of the Appendix.

## Conclusion

By focusing on the attitudes and motivations of entering students, this report and its data intercept students at the critical beginning point of their college experience—when their decisions about staying or leaving are first taking form. We encourage readers to spend time reviewing the data in the Appendix for a more complete view of entering students’ perspectives by gender and institutional type.

For the most complete understanding of entering students, however, we also encourage colleges and universities to apply comparable assessment to their own groups of entering students. This will yield an even richer understanding, complete with the distinctive attitudes, backgrounds, strengths, and needs of each individual student and of various cohorts. In combination with the national findings, such institution-specific assessment early in the term focuses available campus resources on the most salient issues for a given class, driving student participation toward the most relevant activities and services. Through such informed interventions, institutions are able to create educational pathways that actively guide students toward attainment of their academic, personal, and career goals.

Noel-Levitz’s nearly four decades of research and consulting on campuses throughout North America affirms the value of using institution-specific data to direct student-centered programs of various types. These include retention initiatives such as learning communities, first-year seminars, mentoring programs, early intervention initiatives, quality service training, recruitment and financial aid programs, and other proactive services designed to foster student success and engagement.

## Questions and responses

### Why do colleges assess the attitudes of beginning students?

The experience of beginning college students during the first three to six weeks of college has been found to be highly influential in forming their commitment to staying and graduating. The majority of students who leave college do so before their second year. It is thus imperative that colleges understand the motivations and attitudes of these students early in the term, so they can develop programs and interventions that address needs and expectations of the incoming class, thereby strengthening the staying power of the institution, while encouraging student persistence.

### What underlies students’ tremendous desire to finish college?

Getting a good job and preparing to be better off financially are among the leading reasons students are going to college, according to national research.<sup>4</sup> These motives have become even more pronounced in recent years.

### What do we observe about the differences in gender?

Female students appear to bring better study habits, a greater enjoyment of reading, and greater motivation to finish college, while male students appear to bring greater confidence in their math and science skills.

**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](http://www.noellevitz.com/subscribe).**



<sup>4</sup> Higher Education Research Institute, The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 2005 (Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA, 2005).

These findings reflect the influence of society on gender.<sup>5</sup> Note, too, that the findings related to study habits are consistent with national research that has identified stronger study habits among females at the high school level.<sup>6</sup>

#### **What do we observe about the amount of time students are expecting to work?**

Many students are spending time working at jobs while taking classes. For those working fewer than 20 hours a week at campus jobs, this can serve as an effective retention strategy. Work study jobs provide campus connections for students, as well as opportunities for involvement, pressure to manage time, and career connection. The distraction of working too much in college, however, is especially a concern at two-year institutions, where nearly half of students are working more than 20 hours a week, as noted on page 15 of the appendix. This variable affecting students at two-year institutions is in part attributable to the older age and hence different financial and life circumstances of these entering students.

#### **What do we observe about entering students' receptivity to help?**

Once students decide to enroll, colleges and universities need to manage their progress through the retention funnel, from their arrival on campus, through their first year, and on to graduation. One roadblock at any stage can prevent them from succeeding. Encouragingly, beginning college students, on the whole, expressed significant interest in existing campus resources at the beginning of the academic year.

Not surprisingly, a high interest in career counseling was evident across institutional types. For instance, 67 percent of students at four-year public universities, 61 percent at four-year private institutions, and 56 percent of two-year students agreed with the statement, "I would like to talk with someone about the qualifications needed for certain occupations." This interest is likely a natural outgrowth of students' focus on attending college to obtain a good career and to improve their financial situation.

Still, proactively connecting entering students with an array of relevant service/offices that can support them early in the term remains a challenge on many campuses.

#### **What can campuses do to follow up on the findings in this report?**

Careful reflection on the findings, further exploration of entering students' attitudes on one's own campus,<sup>7</sup> and action-planning in relation to these may be appropriate. Specifically, educators are encouraged to build on their students' initial commitment, address their expectations, and tap their receptivity to assistance.

Consider the following:

- Student-centered teaching and learning environments include a full range of coordinated intake services and related programming—including orientation, academic advising, residence life, mentoring, tutoring, first-year seminars, student activities, and other programs.
- Creative collaborations between academic and student affairs provide the opportunity to address not only classroom experiences, but also those programs that support the overall teaching and learning environment.
- Campus communities that are effective in their retention initiatives are guided by data about their students that inform their retention agenda, and they are united by a single-minded focus on student success.
- A coherent retention plan serves to weave together the social fabric of the institution.

"We recognize that many students come to college already at a disadvantage," says Culver. "We assess them, make proper recommendations for course work, support them with our academic resource centers, and then we still see nearly 50 percent of students, for instance, in pre-college-level math courses, fail their first course. Institutions which have been successful in turning this around have made substantial improvements in the content and delivery modality of their courses as well as in the full range of academic support and advising services."

"Student retention requires a campuswide commitment over time," adds Culver. "It's important to reinvigorate colleagues about the importance of student-centered environments, and to provide them with the research and tools they need to create and sustain these."

<sup>5</sup> Lea Hubbard, "The role of gender in academic achievement," *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 18, no. 5 (2005): 605-23.

<sup>6</sup> Jianzhong Zu, "Gender and Homework Management Report by High School Students," *Educational Psychology* 26, no. 1 (2006): 73-91.

<sup>7</sup> Administrators whose post-secondary 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 2007 (see page 16 for details).

***"Student retention requires a campus-wide commitment over time."***

Tim Culver  
Associate  
Vice President,  
Retention  
Consulting,  
Noel-Levitz

## Appendix: The complete findings and respondent demographics

Listed below are the complete findings of this study, including the percentage of entering college students nationally who agreed with each item along with the findings broken down by gender and for students at various institution types.

Figures in bold indicate especially significant differences either between males and females or between two-year institutions versus four-year private versus four-year public institutions. (For an explanation of our statistical processes, please see page 11.)

Please see pages 14-15 for a demographic breakdown of the student respondents.

All survey items	Findings by Institution Type			Findings by Gender		OVERALL national percentages
	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions	Male students	Female students	
<b>Desire to finish college</b>						
I have a very strong desire to continue my education, and I am quite determined to finish a degree.	95.4%	95.2%	<b>91.8%</b>	92.6%	<b>96.2%</b>	94.6%
I am very strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in my way.	94.3%	94.2%	91.1%	91.7%	<b>95.1%</b>	93.6%
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.	89.7%	89.2%	86.6%	85.3%	<b>91.6%</b>	88.8%
Of all the things I could do at this point in my life, going to college is definitely the most satisfying.	85.0%	86.2%	<b>79.9%</b>	80.3%	<b>87.7%</b>	84.4%
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.	17.3%	16.9%	18.1%	21.3%	<b>14.0%</b>	17.3%
I can think of many things I would rather do than go to college.	12.0%	11.0%	15.1%	16.7%	<b>8.7%</b>	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%	10.5%	13.5%	14.1%	<b>8.5%</b>	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.	9.7%	10.3%	14.5%	11.8%	10.3%	11.0%
<b>Attitude toward educators</b>						
The teachers I had in school respected me as a person and treated me fairly.	81.4%	81.1%	<b>75.2%</b>	77.4%	82.6%	80.3%
Most of my teachers have been very caring and dedicated.	79.0%	73.9%	77.2%	74.5%	78.0%	76.5%
I liked my teachers, and I feel they did a good job.	77.8%	76.1%	73.5%	73.1%	78.6%	76.2%
Most teachers have a superior attitude that I find very annoying.	15.7%	20.5%	16.4%	21.3%	<b>15.2%</b>	17.9%
In my opinion, many teachers are more concerned about themselves than they are about their students.	12.6%	17.2%	14.1%	17.2%	13.0%	14.9%
Most of the teachers I had in school were too opinionated and inflexible.	13.7%	13.0%	17.0%	16.9%	11.9%	14.1%



## Findings by Institution Type

## Findings by Gender

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions	Male students	Female students	OVERALL national percentages
<b>Intellectual interests</b>						
Over the years, books have broadened my horizons and stimulated my imagination.	61.2%	56.3%	<b>51.6%</b>	49.5%	<b>63.1%</b>	57.1%
I get a great deal of satisfaction from reading.	49.8%	45.1%	44.5%	37.8%	<b>53.7%</b>	46.7%
I don't enjoy reading serious books and articles, and I only do it when I have to.	38.8%	41.8%	40.3%	43.2%	38.1%	40.4%
Books have never gotten me very excited.	37.1%	39.7%	43.8%	48.1%	<b>32.9%</b>	39.6%
<b>Study habits</b>						
I take very careful notes during class, and I review them thoroughly before a test.	59.5%	59.3%	59.8%	47.4%	<b>69.0%</b>	59.5%
I study very hard for all my courses, even those I don't like.	59.7%	55.3%	60.1%	49.8%	<b>64.4%</b>	57.9%
I have developed a solid system of self-discipline, which helps me keep up with my schoolwork.	56.2%	56.7%	52.2%	50.3%	<b>59.7%</b>	55.6%
My studying is very irregular and unpredictable.	32.3%	33.2%	33.4%	38.9%	<b>28.2%</b>	32.9%
When I try to study, I usually get bored and quit after a few minutes.	25.1%	29.5%	29.0%	30.4%	25.7%	27.7%
I have great difficulty concentrating on schoolwork, and I often get behind.	20.1%	20.4%	<b>26.6%</b>	24.6%	19.2%	21.6%
<b>Math and science confidence</b>						
I have a very good grasp of the scientific ideas I've studied in school.	48.7%	49.8%	<b>39.7%</b>	53.4%	<b>42.4%</b>	47.3%
I have a hard time understanding and solving complex math problems.	43.5%	45.1%	<b>52.6%</b>	40.1%	<b>50.7%</b>	46.1%
Math has always been a challenge for me.	37.6%	37.0%	<b>46.0%</b>	35.2%	42.2%	39.1%
I have always enjoyed the challenge of trying to solve complex math problems.	39.8%	41.7%	<b>32.2%</b>	42.7%	36.1%	39.0%
I have a very good understanding of general biology (e.g., cell structure, metabolism, genetics, and the circulatory system).	39.9%	40.8%	<b>32.0%</b>	43.6%	<b>34.7%</b>	38.6%
My understanding of the physical sciences is very weak.	27.1%	26.0%	<b>33.5%</b>	22.8%	<b>32.0%</b>	28.0%
<b>Verbal confidence</b>						
I am capable of writing a very clear and well-organized paper.	67.1%	65.9%	<b>54.8%</b>	62.0%	65.6%	64.0%
I pick up new vocabulary words quickly, and I find it easy to use them in my speech and writing.	55.3%	54.3%	49.5%	55.7%	52.0%	53.6%
I am very good at figuring out the deeper meaning of a short story or novel.	55.5%	53.1%	48.3%	50.7%	54.8%	53.0%
I have difficulty organizing my ideas in a paper, and I tend to make a lot of punctuation and grammar mistakes.	31.3%	31.5%	<b>39.2%</b>	34.7%	31.7%	33.0%
In English classes, I've had difficulty analyzing an author's style and theme.	28.0%	28.5%	33.2%	31.8%	27.3%	29.3%
Learning new vocabulary words is a slow and difficult process for me.	17.0%	16.2%	21.5%	17.0%	18.1%	17.6%

## Findings by Institution Type

## Findings by Gender

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions	Male students	Female students	OVERALL national percentages
<b>Career closure</b>						
I have found a potential career that strongly attracts me.	80.5%	76.7%	79.6%	76.6%	80.3%	78.7%
I have made a firm decision to enter a certain occupation and have begun planning my life around that decision.	61.0%	58.9%	65.6%	58.5%	63.1%	61.1%
I become very confused when I try to choose an occupation.	23.1%	25.5%	26.5%	25.8%	24.0%	24.8%
I am very confused about what occupation to pursue.	19.4%	22.2%	19.6%	21.2%	20.1%	20.6%
<b>Family emotional support</b>						
When I was a child, my parents usually understood me, respected my judgment, and treated me in ways that helped me grow.	77.4%	80.0%	<b>70.1%</b>	77.1%	76.9%	77.0%
My family and I communicated very well when I was young, and we had a good understanding of each other's point of view.	66.8%	68.9%	<b>60.2%</b>	66.3%	66.3%	66.3%
My family had a one way of looking at me when I was a child, and they didn't understand my feelings very well.	15.1%	13.3%	<b>20.8%</b>	15.0%	16.0%	15.5%
When I was a child, the other members of my family often said hurtful things that caused unpleasant feelings.	13.0%	11.8%	<b>18.2%</b>	11.3%	15.4%	13.6%
<b>Sense of financial security</b>						
I have the financial resources that I need to finish college.	46.1%	46.6%	42.9%	48.9%	43.1%	45.7%
I don't have any financial problems that will interfere with my schoolwork.	40.0%	42.0%	37.4%	42.8%	38.3%	40.3%
I have financial problems that are very distracting and troublesome.	28.3%	26.2%	<b>34.7%</b>	26.2%	30.8%	28.8%
I am in a bad financial position, and the pressure to earn extra money will probably interfere with my studies.	17.6%	17.0%	22.1%	18.2%	18.4%	18.3%
<b>Sociability</b>						
I greatly enjoy getting together with a crowd of people and having fun.	79.7%	81.3%	<b>72.3%</b>	77.7%	79.7%	78.8%
I am very adventurous and outgoing at social gatherings.	56.9%	58.5%	52.9%	58.0%	55.8%	56.8%
Participating in large social gatherings is of little interest to me.	26.7%	24.5%	<b>34.7%</b>	27.6%	27.3%	27.5%
It is hard for me to relax and just have fun with a group of people.	15.3%	15.5%	18.7%	16.0%	16.2%	16.1%

### About the statistical processes used for this study

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 gender) or ANOVA analysis (using multi-level variables such as school type). To determine differences that were especially significant, the items that appear in **bold**, Cohen's d was used to identify medium and small versus negligible effect sizes.

**Findings by Institution Type**

**Findings by Gender**

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions	Male students	Female students	OVERALL national percentages
<b>Opinion tolerance</b>						
I get along well with people who disagree with my opinion openly.	68.1%	66.9%	68.6%	67.1%	68.2%	67.7%
I can feel comfortable with someone who thinks quite differently than I do on major social issues.	62.3%	59.4%	57.6%	60.4%	59.9%	60.1%
I find it easy to be friends with people whose political ideas differ sharply from my own.	56.1%	54.2%	54.5%	55.5%	54.6%	55.0%
When someone's opinions strongly disagree with my own, I tend to develop unfriendly feelings and to avoid close contact with the person.	12.4%	13.5%	14.4%	13.9%	12.8%	13.3%
I feel uneasy and distrustful toward people whose way of thinking is quite dissimilar to my own.	9.2%	10.3%	11.2%	11.3%	9.1%	10.1%
Because they irritate me, I tend to stay away from people whose ideas are quite different from my own.	8.2%	9.5%	11.1%	10.7%	8.3%	9.3%
<b>Receptivity to academic assistance</b>						
I would like to receive some instruction in the most effective ways to take college exams.	72.0%	77.3%	71.4%	70.8%	76.7%	74.1%
I would like to receive some help in improving my study habits.	51.7%	58.8%	55.1%	54.2%	56.4%	55.4%
I would like to receive some individual help in improving my math skills.	43.6%	50.7%	51.9%	44.1%	<b>51.7%</b>	48.3%
I would like to receive some individual help in improving my writing skills.	42.8%	45.9%	41.4%	43.2%	44.3%	43.8%
I would like to receive tutoring in one or more of my courses.	36.6%	45.3%	38.8%	37.0%	43.6%	40.7%
I would like to receive some training to improve my reading skills.	26.0%	27.8%	29.5%	29.6%	25.8%	27.5%
<b>Receptivity to career counseling</b>						
I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job.	66.9%	68.9%	<b>57.0%</b>	63.7%	67.2%	65.7%
I would like to talk with someone about the qualifications needed for certain occupations.	61.0%	66.5%	<b>56.3%</b>	59.9%	64.2%	62.3%
I would like to talk with someone about the salaries and future outlook for various occupations.	56.2%	59.7%	<b>51.0%</b>	58.1%	55.4%	56.6%
I would like to talk with someone about the advantages and disadvantages of various occupations.	49.5%	52.5%	<b>41.6%</b>	49.4%	48.9%	49.1%
I would like some help selecting an occupation that is well suited to my interests and abilities.	47.8%	49.3%	<b>41.8%</b>	48.9%	45.9%	47.2%

## Findings by Institution Type

## Findings by Gender

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions	Male students	Female students	OVERALL national percentages
<b>Receptivity to financial guidance</b>						
I would like to talk to someone about getting a scholarship.	64.7%	69.8%	<b>57.7%</b>	61.4%	68.6%	65.4%
I would like to talk to someone about getting a part-time job during the regular school year.	47.4%	50.3%	<b>33.8%</b>	45.7%	45.9%	45.8%
I would like to talk to someone about the opportunities available for summer employment.	41.5%	43.4%	<b>32.2%</b>	40.0%	40.7%	40.4%
I would like to talk with someone about getting a loan to help me through school.	32.3%	34.0%	33.0%	31.0%	34.9%	33.2%
<b>Receptivity to personal counseling</b>						
I would like to talk with a counselor about my general attitude toward school.	16.7%	19.2%	18.7%	17.8%	18.5%	18.2%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some difficulties in my personal relationships or social life.	9.1%	9.1%	9.7%	9.3%	9.1%	9.2%
I would like to talk with a counselor about eliminating an unwanted habit (involving food, drugs, cigarettes, or alcohol, etc.).	7.1%	8.5%	10.1%	9.1%	7.7%	8.3%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some emotional tensions that are bothering me.	7.9%	8.3%	9.2%	8.0%	8.5%	8.3%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some feelings of discouragement or unhappy thoughts that keep bothering me.	7.7%	8.3%	9.2%	8.3%	8.2%	8.3%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some family problems.	5.6%	5.9%	7.1%	5.4%	6.5%	6.0%
<b>Receptivity to social enrichment</b>						
I would like to attend an informal gathering where I can meet some new friends.	61.1%	61.8%	<b>43.6%</b>	54.7%	60.2%	57.8%
I would like to find out more about the clubs and social organizations at my college.	51.4%	54.8%	<b>32.7%</b>	44.6%	<b>52.4%</b>	49.0%
I would like to find out more about student government and the various student activities on campus.	50.6%	53.8%	<b>35.9%</b>	41.8%	<b>54.5%</b>	48.9%
I would like to meet an experienced student who can show me around and give me some advice.	46.5%	52.8%	<b>33.0%</b>	43.5%	48.6%	46.4%
<b>Desire to transfer</b>						
I have no desire to transfer to another school before finishing a degree at this college or university.	69.2%	59.1%	<b>51.1%</b>	59.8%	62.2%	61.2%
I plan to transfer to another school before completing a degree at this college or university.	8.8%	15.0%	<b>25.5%</b>	15.0%	14.9%	14.9%
<b>Total number of students</b>	<b>35,944</b>	<b>41,341</b>	<b>20,341</b>	<b>43,068</b>	<b>54,405</b>	<b>97,626</b>
<b>Average age of students</b>	<b>20.3</b>	<b>18.6</b>	<b>22.9</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>20.2</b>	<b>20.1</b>

## Respondent demographics (Fall 2006)

### Findings by Institution Type

### Findings by Gender

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions	Male students	Female students	OVERALL national percentages
Number of respondents	35,944	41,341	20,341	43,068	54,405	97,626
Representation by institution type	36.8%	42.4%	20.8%			100%
Percent male	45.4%	42.8%	44.6%			44.1%
Percent female	54.5%	57.0%	55.4%			55.7%
<b>Racial/ethnic origin</b>						
Black/African-American	16.8%	27.0%	15.0%	18.4%	22.6%	20.7%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.6%	1.6%	1.2%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%
Asian or Pacific Islander	4.8%	2.3%	3.8%	4.0%	3.2%	3.6%
White/Caucasian	61.3%	57.5%	60.8%	61.0%	58.5%	59.6%
Hispanic or Latino	9.2%	4.4%	13.6%	8.4%	7.8%	8.1%
Multiethnic or other ethnic origin	3.3%	2.1%	2.7%	2.5%	2.8%	2.7%
Prefer not to respond	2.8%	1.9%	2.7%	4.6%	3.9%	2.4%
<b>Highest education level of mother</b>						
8 years or less	3.3%	1.7%	6.9%	3.0%	3.7%	3.4%
Some high school	5.3%	4.6%	10.5%	5.5%	6.5%	6.1%
High school diploma	26.8%	29.8%	35.7%	29.3%	30.5%	29.9%
1 to 3 years of college	28.8%	29.7%	28.8%	27.7%	30.3%	29.2%
Bachelor's degree	22.8%	22.4%	11.1%	22.0%	18.7%	20.2%
Master's degree	9.3%	9.1%	4.6%	9.0%	7.7%	8.2%
Professional degree	2.3%	1.8%	1.4%	2.1%	1.7%	1.9%
<b>Highest education level of father</b>						
8 years or less	3.9%	2.2%	8.0%	3.5%	4.4%	4.0%
Some high school	6.8%	6.4%	12.6%	7.0%	8.5%	7.9%
High school diploma	28.5%	33.3%	37.0%	30.8%	33.4%	32.3%
1 to 3 years of college	21.7%	23.7%	23.2%	22.8%	22.9%	22.8%
Bachelor's degree	21.1%	20.2%	10.7%	20.1%	17.3%	18.6%
Master's degree	10.1%	8.8%	4.6%	9.2%	7.8%	8.4%
Professional degree	5.4%	3.6%	1.8%	4.3%	3.5%	3.9%
<b>Highest degree planned by respondent</b>						
None	0.1%	0.1%	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%
1-year certificate	0.2%	0.1%	4.1%	1.1%	0.9%	1.0%
2-year degree (associate)	3.5%	0.8%	29.6%	8.1%	7.6%	7.8%
4-year degree (bachelor's)	38.6%	38.1%	37.0%	41.8%	35.0%	38.0%
Master's degree	37.3%	37.8%	18.5%	32.7%	34.3%	33.6%
Professional degree	20.1%	22.9%	10.3%	15.8%	21.9%	19.2%

## Findings by Institution Type

## Findings by Gender

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions	Male students	Female students	OVERALL national percentages
<b>Time expecting to spend at work</b>						
0 (I have no plans to work)	20.9%	25.4%	14.6%	21.7%	21.4%	21.5%
1 to 10 hours per week	23.8%	21.7%	12.6%	18.8%	22.0%	20.6%
11 to 20 hours per week	28.6%	34.2%	27.3%	30.0%	31.3%	30.7%
21 to 30 hours per week	12.5%	13.8%	22.7%	15.8%	14.6%	15.2%
31 to 40 hours per week	9.1%	3.9%	17.1%	9.0%	8.3%	8.6%
Over 40 hours per week	5.2%	0.9%	5.6%	4.6%	2.5%	3.4%
<b>Average grades as senior in high school</b>						
A	19.0%	19.8%	7.2%	12.8%	20.1%	16.9%
A to B	33.3%	34.8%	25.7%	29.3%	34.8%	32.4%
B	20.6%	20.8%	19.4%	22.3%	18.9%	20.4%
B to C	19.5%	18.4%	30.2%	24.1%	19.0%	21.3%
C	5.1%	4.6%	10.6%	7.5%	4.8%	6.0%
C to D	2.1%	1.4%	5.5%	3.2%	1.9%	2.5%
D	0.3%	0.1%	0.9%	0.6%	0.2%	0.4%
<b>Respondent's self-assessment of academic knowledge</b>						
Highest 20%	19.8%	17.5%	8.7%	18.5%	14.9%	16.5%
Next to highest 20%	33.2%	33.3%	22.5%	31.6%	30.6%	31.0%
Middle 20%	44.2%	46.7%	61.1%	46.1%	51.0%	48.8%
Next to lowest 20%	2.3%	2.0%	6.3%	3.1%	2.9%	3.0%
Lowest 20%	0.3%	0.3%	1.2%	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%
<b>Respondent's self-assessment of academic ability</b>						
Considerably below average	0.4%	0.3%	0.9%	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%
Slightly below average	3.3%	2.9%	6.7%	3.9%	3.8%	3.8%
Average	27.9%	31.0%	47.2%	29.5%	36.2%	33.2%
Slightly above average	35.7%	36.7%	28.7%	34.6%	34.7%	34.7%
Considerably above average (top 20%)	29.4%	26.4%	14.8%	27.9%	22.9%	25.1%
Extremely high (top 5%)	3.2%	2.7%	1.7%	3.6%	2.0%	2.7%
<b>Timing of decision to attend chosen college/university</b>						
Decision made few days before	2.9%	1.6%	4.5%	3.3%	2.1%	2.7%
Decision made weeks before	15.6%	9.9%	20.3%	16.6%	12.2%	14.2%
Decision made many months before	81.3%	88.3%	74.8%	79.7%	85.5%	82.9%



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## Questions? Want additional information?

If you have questions about this report, please contact Tim Culver, Noel-Levitz associate vice president, at [tim-culver@noellevitz.com](mailto:tim-culver@noellevitz.com) and/or Elizabeth Herr, Ph.D., senior statistician at Noel-Levitz, at [elizabeth-herr@noellevitz.com](mailto: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 program directors Beth Richter or Lisa Vittetoe at 1-800-876-1117 or [beth-richter@noellevitz.com](mailto:beth-richter@noellevitz.com) or [lisa-vittetoe@noellevitz.com](mailto:lisa-vittetoe@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 has served the higher education community for more than 30 years. Campus leaders turn to the firm for consultation and resources for student retention, assessment, and planning for student recruitment and student persistence. Over the course of its history, Noel-Levitz has partnered with more than 1,800 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 profiles incoming 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 focusing proactive interventions to address students' self-identified areas of challenge.

To see a sample copy of CSI-B, please visit [www.noellevitz.com/RMS](http://www.noellevitz.com/RMS) (click on "samples" at the top).

*Photos courtesy  
of Salve Regina  
University on front  
and back cover and  
on page 3.*

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