



## Ninth Annual National Research Study

# 2014 National Freshman Attitudes Report

### Special focus on career decision-making toward the goal of college completion

This annual report from Noel-Levitz goes beyond the usual metrics of standardized test scores and high school transcripts to explore a wide range of non-cognitive attitudes that influence student retention and college completion rates for today's **entering college freshmen**. Findings are reported separately for four-year and two-year institutions, private and public, as well as for student subsets such as male vs. females. The report is **based on student survey responses** drawn from a sizable national sample of entering undergraduates in 2013.

The special focus of this 2014 report is on career decision-making. Just how many (and which) of today's entering freshmen are uncertain of their career direction? And how many of these students want help with choosing a career direction?

A few highlights:

- 47 percent of incoming freshmen *want* career counseling. When examined more closely by student type, this desire was expressed by 48 percent of male students; 41 percent of students age 25 and older; and 55 percent of Hispanic/Latino students.
- 21 percent of entering freshmen reported being "very confused" about which career occupation to pursue. When examined more closely by student type, this view was held by 22 percent of traditional-age students and by 20 percent of White/Caucasian students.
- 93 percent of incoming female freshmen, vs. 88 percent of incoming male freshmen, reported being "deeply committed" to their educational goals.
- Nearly 40 percent of incoming first-generation freshmen reported having "financial problems that are very distracting and troublesome."
- Compared to White/Caucasian freshmen, incoming students of color brought greater receptivity to institutional services and higher degree aspirations beyond a bachelor's.

For many more findings, see *inside*. Don't miss the detailed Appendix on pages 11-17. Also, see this report's 2014 *Addendum by Race/Ethnicity* available at [www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport](http://www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport).

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

See pages 8-10 for a discussion of the student perspectives in this report and their implications for retention and college completion initiatives on campus.

This study explores non-cognitive freshman attitudes that may pose barriers or opportunities as students transition to college.



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### Findings color key

**4-year private institutions**

**4-year public institutions**

**2-year institutions (public and private)**



### View more student attitudes online

— 2008–2013 National Freshman Attitudes Reports

— 2013 Report: The Attitudes of Second-Year College Students

— 2013 Report: The Attitudes and Motivations of College Transfer Students

— 2013 Freshman Attitudes Report for Two-Year Colleges

— 2012 Attitudes and Needs of Freshmen at Mid-Year

To download these reports, visit [www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport](http://www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport)

**Don't miss the additional findings in the Appendix on pages 11-17, including breakdowns for private and public, four-year vs. two-year institutions.**

## The source of data

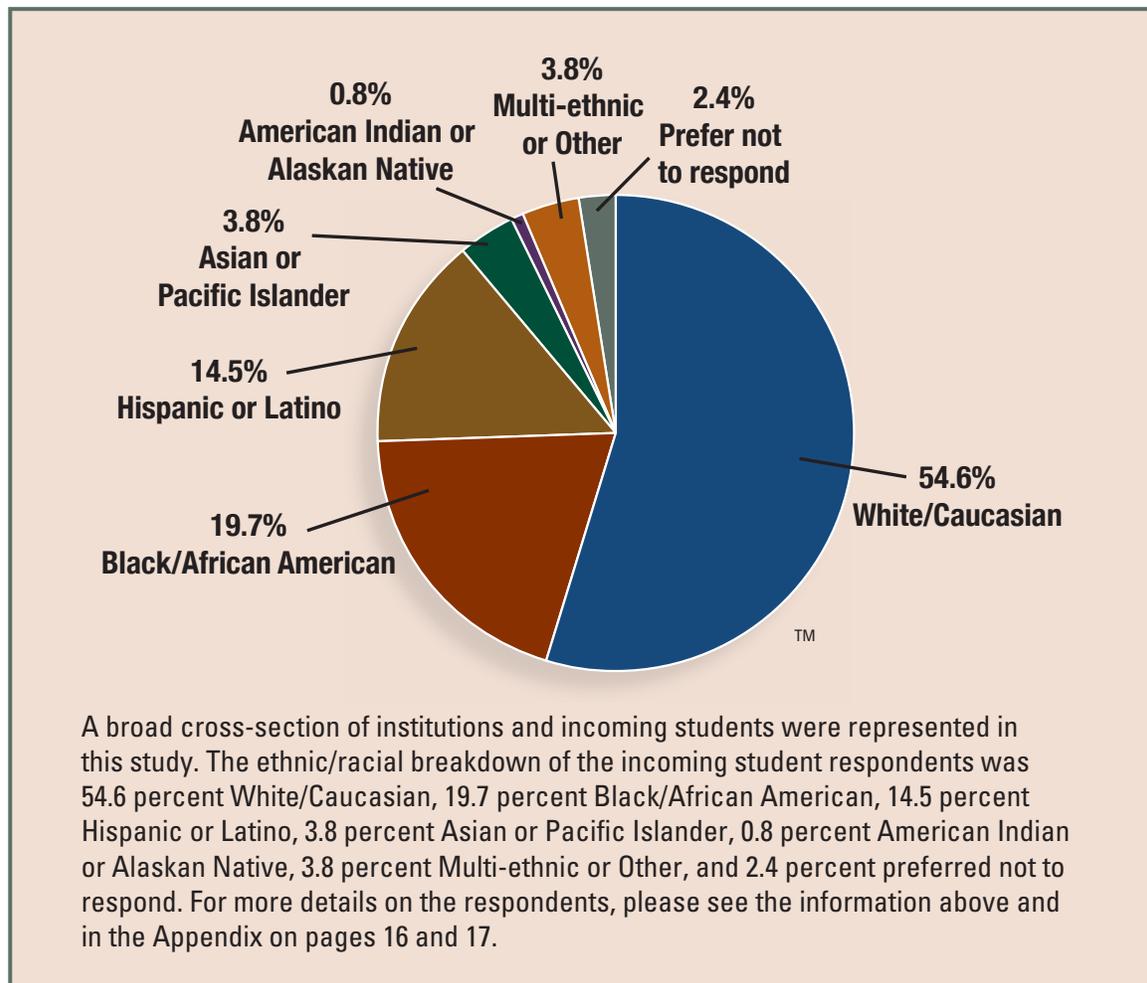
The freshman data in this report were collected by a student survey administered to 100,727 incoming, first-year college students at 338 colleges and universities nationwide in 2013. The 100-item attitudinal survey examined a broad range of motivational perspectives that students brought with them to their collegiate learning experience. Students completed the survey online or used a traditional paper-and-pencil format.

The 100,727 incoming student respondents were enrolled at a broad cross-section of institutions, with 39.5 percent of the respondents coming from four-year private institutions, 35.2 percent from four-year public institutions, and 25.3 percent from two-year institutions, public and private.

Consistent with national enrollment trends, a slight majority of the respondents (56.1 percent) were female. The average age of the respondents was 20.1 years.

The 100-item survey instrument was the College Student Inventory™ Form B (CSI-B), part of the Retention Management System *Plus*™ from Noel-Levitz. This non-cognitive, motivational assessment identifies self-reported attitudes that may pose barriers and opportunities for students as they transition to college. For more information on Noel-Levitz attitudinal assessments, please see page 18.

To provide context, references to findings from earlier freshman attitudes research conducted by Noel-Levitz are included in this report. Please refer to the series of National Freshman Attitudes Reports available at [www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport](http://www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport).



## Half of incoming freshmen want career counseling

Table 1, below, shows 47 percent of incoming freshmen overall in 2013 affirmed the statement, “I would like some help selecting an occupation that is well suited to my interests and abilities.” In addition, the majority of incoming freshmen wanted help with “selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job” (67 percent) or were interested in discussing the qualifications needed for certain occupations (64 percent).

**Table 1: Receptivity to career counseling—Proportions of incoming freshmen in agreement**

Select survey items— Receptivity to career counseling	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	Male students	Female students	OVERALL national percentages
I would like some help selecting an occupation that is well suited to my interests and abilities.	45.9%	49.6%	43.9%	48.2%	45.5%	46.7%
I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job.	68.5%	69.8%	61.7%	65.0%	69.1%	67.3%
I would like to talk with someone about the qualifications needed for certain occupations.	63.0%	67.6%	59.4%	60.9%	65.9%	63.7%

TM

When asked about their interest in career counseling, incoming freshmen have consistently given a strong response, dating back to before the recession. In 2013, freshman receptivity to career counseling again ranked highly among 25 measures of students’ receptivity to institutional services. For additional measures of receptivity to institutional services, see the Appendix on pages 14-15. For trendline data, see previous National Freshman Attitudes Reports, 2006-13, available at [www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport](http://www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport).

## One in five freshmen “very confused” about which career occupation to choose

As shown in Table 2, below, 21 percent of incoming freshmen overall in 2013 agreed with the statement, “I become very confused when I try to choose an occupation,” a proportion that has generally held steady since before the recession. In contrast, a record high of 65 percent of incoming freshmen in 2013 (up from 60 percent in 2006) indicated they had made a “firm decision to enter a certain occupation.” Notice also the differences between male and female students.

**Table 2: Career closure status—Proportions of incoming freshmen in agreement**

Select survey items— Career closure	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	Male students	Female students	OVERALL national percentages
I become very confused when I try to choose an occupation.	19.7%	22.6%	22.5%	21.1%	21.7%	21.4%
I have made a firm decision to enter a certain occupation and have begun planning my life around that decision.	64.2%	62.6%	70.4%	62.8%	67.1%	65.2%

TM

Above: the proportions of entering freshmen who indicated they were either highly uncertain (21 percent) vs. highly certain (65 percent) of a career direction. For additional measures of career closure, see the Appendix, page 13.

**Special focus:**  
Career decision-making toward the goal of college completion

**Colleges and universities whose students participated in this study also received institution- and student-specific findings. For details, see page 18.**

## Students of color more receptive to career counseling

Table 3 further explores incoming students' strong interest in career counseling. Here we see that Asian students appear to be the most receptive to career counseling, while White/Caucasian students appear to be the least receptive.

**Table 3: Receptivity to career counseling by race/ethnicity—  
Proportions of incoming freshmen in agreement**

Select survey items— Receptivity to career counseling by race/ethnicity	Asian or Pacific Islander	Hispanic or Latino	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Black/African-American	White/Caucasian	OVERALL national percentages
I would like some help selecting an occupation that is well suited to my interests and abilities.	62.6%	55.4%	43.7%	52.9%	40.9%	46.7%
I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job.	78.2%	74.5%	63.5%	75.5%	61.6%	67.3%
I would like to talk with someone about the qualifications needed for certain occupations.	76.8%	69.8%	61.2%	74.8%	56.9%	63.7%

TM

On all 25 of this study's measures of student receptivity to institutional services, including career counseling, Asian students tended to indicate the greatest receptivity, while White/Caucasian students tended to indicate the least receptivity. For complete findings, see the addendum to this report, *Addendum by Race/Ethnicity*, available at [www.noellelvitz.com/FreshmanReport](http://www.noellelvitz.com/FreshmanReport).

## Incoming adult freshmen more clear on their career direction but 40 percent still want career counseling

Table 4 below explores incoming students' strong interest in career counseling by student age. At 76 percent, more incoming students 25 and older indicated they had made a "firm decision to enter a certain occupation" compared to traditional-age incoming students (64 percent). In addition, only 18 percent of these students (vs. 22 percent of traditional-age students) indicated they became "very confused" when trying to choose an occupation.

**Table 4: Career closure status and receptivity to career counseling by student age—  
Proportions of incoming freshmen in agreement**

Select survey items—Career closure for adult learners vs. traditional-age students	Students age 25 and older	Traditional-age students	OVERALL national percentages
I have made a firm decision to enter a certain occupation and have begun planning my life around that decision.	75.9%	64.0%	65.2%
I become very confused when I try to choose an occupation.	17.5%	21.9%	21.4%
I would like some help selecting an occupation that is well suited to my interests and abilities.	40.8%	47.4%	46.7%

TM

Despite bringing greater career certainty, 41 percent of incoming freshmen age 25 and above still want career counseling.

## Incoming female freshmen express greater commitment to college

This study found that incoming female freshmen tended to bring a deeper commitment to their educational goals when compared with incoming male freshmen, as shown in Table 5 below. In 2013, a record high 25 percent of incoming male freshmen (up from 21 percent in 2006-10) agreed with the third item in this table, “I wonder if a college education is really worth all the time, money, and effort that I’m being asked to spend on it” versus 17 percent of females.

**Table 5: Desire to finish college, males vs. females—**  
**Proportions of incoming freshmen in agreement**

Select survey items—Desire to finish college for males vs. females	Male students	Female students	OVERALL national percentages
I am deeply committed to my educational goals, and I’m fully prepared to make the effort and sacrifices that will be needed to attain them.	88.2%	93.2%	91.0%
Of all the things I could be doing at this point in my life, going to college is the most satisfying.	81.2%	88.1%	85.1%
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.	24.6%	17.3%	20.5%

TM

In general, incoming female freshmen showed a stronger commitment to attending college. See complete findings for incoming male vs. female freshmen in the Appendix on pages 11-17.

## Differences in academic preparedness for incoming male vs. incoming female freshmen

Table 6 below explores a few differences between incoming male vs. female freshmen in three areas of academic preparedness. Among these, the most pronounced difference is the third item in the table—“I study very hard for all my courses, even those I don’t like”—with two-thirds of females vs. just over half of males in agreement.

**Table 6: Academic preparedness, males vs. females—**  
**Proportions of incoming freshmen in agreement**

Select survey items—Academic confidence and study habits for males vs. females	Male students	Female students	OVERALL national percentages
I am capable of writing a very clear and well-organized paper.	59.9%	63.9%	62.2%
I have a very good grasp of the scientific ideas I’ve studied in school.	51.7%	44.1%	47.4%
I study very hard for all my courses, even those I don’t like.	53.0%	67.3%	61.0%

TM

Compared to male freshmen, more female freshmen expressed a willingness to study hard.

## Incoming first-generation freshmen face greater financial challenges

Students' sense of financial security is explored in Table 7 below. As we see here, the concerns of incoming first-generation students, in particular, continue to be acute, consistent with previous years' findings. (For a summary of previous years' findings, see the trend tables on page 8 of the 2013 National Freshman Attitudes Report, available at [www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport](http://www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport)).

**Table 7: Sense of financial security—Proportions of incoming freshmen in agreement**

Select survey items— Sense of financial security	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
I have the financial resources that I need to finish college.	47.6%	47.3%	45.8%	38.5%	50.6%	47.0%
I don't have any financial problems that will interfere with my schoolwork.	39.2%	39.2%	36.6%	30.4%	41.9%	38.5%
I have financial problems that are very distracting and troublesome.	27.3%	27.2%	33.0%	38.1%	24.8%	28.7%

TM

Nearly 40 percent of incoming first-generation freshmen in 2013 reported having “financial problems that are very distracting and troublesome.”

## Students of color bring the highest degree aspirations beyond a bachelor's

Table 8 below examines the degree aspirations of incoming students by racial/ethnic groups. Compared to White/Caucasian students, all four of the students of color groups examined brought greater aspirations for a professional degree, as highlighted below in bold. In addition, Asian and Black/African-American students aspired to a master's degree at higher rates than did White/Caucasian, Hispanic/Latino, and American Indian/Native American students.

**Table 8: Highest degree planned among incoming freshmen by race/ethnicity—Proportions of incoming freshmen in agreement**

Select survey items— Highest degree planned by race/ethnicity	Asian or Pacific Islander	Hispanic or Latino	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Black/African-American	White/Caucasian	OVERALL national percentages
1-year certificate	0.4%	1.6%	2.4%	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%
2-year associates degree	4.2%	10.8%	11.1%	6.6%	8.0%	7.8%
4-year bachelor's degree	33.8%	37.5%	36.7%	32.7%	41.6%	38.3%
Master's degree	35.3%	28.9%	27.1%	31.8%	31.7%	31.5%
Professional degree	<b>26.2%</b>	<b>21.0%</b>	<b>22.1%</b>	<b>27.8%</b>	<b>17.6%</b>	<b>21.1%</b>

TM

Compared to other racial/ethnic groups, Asian students reported the highest degree aspirations, with 95 percent planning to pursue a bachelor's degree or higher and 62 percent planning to pursue a master's degree or higher.

Here are some ways your institution may wish to respond to the findings.

## Appendix A: Reflections and actions to consider

All too often, college students' involvement with career planning occurs at the end of their educational experience, when they are almost ready to graduate. The information in this report reveals that freshmen—whether they are 18 or 35—are asking for assistance from the very beginning of their college careers. This shouldn't come as a surprise, as the students who participated in this study have lived the last six years of their lives under the economic recession and its aftermath. For traditional-age students, this means their entire teenage years have been during the recession.

So how can your institution respond? In what ways can your institution organize itself to meet the career development needs of its first-year students as early as possible in their college careers? What purposeful strategies and opportunities can be put in place to improve your students' persistence, retention, college completion, and career-goal attainment?

The following are some suggestions and comments from Noel-Levitz on how institutions of higher learning may want to approach today's entering college freshmen differently in light of the data. For further information or discussion, consider arranging a complimentary telephone consultation with one of our student retention consultants.

**1. Help students develop a holistic educational plan every year until graduation.** An effective college-to-career model starts with connecting first-year students to their present and future through a career assessment process that includes traditional tools such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) as well as other instruments that reveal non-cognitive, motivational variables that influence students' choices and decisions. First-year students should also be connected to career development professionals early in their first year. Career development professionals can use the assessment results to help students develop a plan that affirms the pathway they are already on or direct their talents in a new direction. Since many students will change their majors, the process of developing a plan—and keeping it up to date—is a critical step in reaching a timely graduation.

This written, educational plan should, in addition to connecting students to their academic programs, identify opportunities for students to gain relevant experience and develop skills that are transferable to a variety of settings through service experiences, leadership roles, work-study assignments, assisting professors with projects, and placements both on and off campus. Institutions should ensure that high-quality, credit-bearing internships (or, as relevant,

clinical and practical experiences) are available to every student in every major, and make freshmen aware of these opportunities.

**2. Begin the introduction to the career development process early.** Even though a high percentage of students in this study (65 percent) indicated they had made a firm commitment to enter a certain occupation, the majority of these same students indicated they still wanted help with developing a plan to realize their goals (67 percent) as well as with learning more about the qualifications they will need to have to enter certain occupations (64 percent). Orientation programs should include formal sessions on the career development process with introductions to the career resources available through campus programs, including but not limited to the career services office. For schools with first-year seminar programs, timely curricular modules on career development can be developed and used within the seminar. These same modules can be used in residence hall programming, leadership development workshops, and in professional development programs within sorority, fraternity, or other campus organizations. There is also a need for major and career fairs targeting first-year students for participation.

3. **Differentiate the needs of varying groups of students and target communications and resources accordingly.** The non-cognitive data in this report reveal different levels of receptivity to career counseling by gender and ethnicity. Consider outreach measures that address the varying needs of certain groups on campus. Peer mentors can be identified and organized to connect with these targeted groups. In some cases, planning targeted interventions with specific groups of students will be more effective than “one-size-fits-all” campuswide interventions.
4. **Include parents in the process.** At orientation as well as family weekend events, host sessions for parents to learn more about the career development programs and services available to their students. Regularly communicate with parents (via email, newsletters, web pages) about upcoming career development events and opportunities to which their students have been invited. With the investment in a college degree being questioned by the popular media, colleges and universities should continuously articulate the value of earning a college degree to both students and their parents.
5. **Embed career development programming in the curricular and co-curricular programs of the institution.** Prepare academic advisors to be able to talk about pathways to careers with their advisees. For students interested in high-stakes competitive majors, develop “plan B” resources for those who need to or decide to change direction. Feature what alumni are doing with the majors they studied at the institution on web pages, in publications, and in materials students receive when they express interest in and/or declare a major. Also consider offering career planning resources to prospective students, and to very young students who haven’t begun to explore colleges.
6. **Help students see the connection between “boring coursework” and career possibilities.** Especially in the general education or core curriculum classes, be intentional about helping students see the value of the content they are studying as well as the skills they are developing. Employers indicate that the major may be less important than skills (writing/speaking, analyzing, working collaboratively in teams, creativity, behaving ethically) that students learn and develop in virtually every course they take. Declaring the major is just the first step, and really, it’s just the tip of the iceberg since most students change their majors at least one time. When a student changes his or her major, develop a referral system that connects the student to available career resources to fully explore how their talents and abilities match the demands of the academic program.
7. **Work to address students’ concerns about financing their education.** Recent trends suggest that the majority of students attend college in order to “get a good job.”<sup>1</sup> If students are worried about affording college, they are at risk for not finishing their degrees. Further, they may be prone to pursue majors that have a direct line to a specific job after graduation. This may or may not be the best path and could narrow the student’s options rather than expand them. Working closely with students on covering the costs of their education, while at the same time, providing them with information on both the short- and long-term benefits of earning a degree from a wide variety of majors, will provide a great service to students in shaping their futures.
8. **Engage alumni in the lives of students.** Connecting students early and often to alumni deepens the engagement of both students and alumni alike. This is particularly relevant for younger alumni who may not be in a position to contribute financially to their alma maters but who can share their experiences with current students. Student-alumni networking events can provide rich and meaningful face-to-face opportunities. Technology, particularly through social media, provides another venue through Skype events, Facebook postings, and LinkedIn connections. In addition to alumni, invite older students who are participating in internships and nearing program completion to share their experiences with first-year students, as this can be helpful and motivating to freshmen to continue on the path to graduation.

**Questions? Want to discuss your strategies for meeting the needs and expectations of incoming students?**

Contact Noel-Levitz to schedule a complimentary telephone consultation with a retention consultant. Call 1-800-876-1117 or email [ContactUs@noellevitz.com](mailto:ContactUs@noellevitz.com).

**Related references**

Readers may also wish to explore the findings from other surveys of the first-year experience such as the CIRP Freshman Survey and resources available through NACE (the National Association of Colleges and Employers).

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<sup>1</sup> Kevin Eagan, et. al. (2013). *The American freshman: National norms Fall 2013*. Los Angeles, CA: Higher Education Research Institute. Retrieved from <http://heri.ucla.edu/monographs/TheAmericanFreshman2013.pdf>.

## Appendix B: Additional findings and data from 2013 incoming college freshmen

Listed in this section is a detailed breakdown of the 100 items captured from 100,727 incoming college students nationally at the beginning of the 2013-14 academic year, broken down by various institution types and male vs. female. Figures in **bold** indicate greater contrasts between male and female students, though virtually all differences are statistically significant. For a detailed explanation of the statistical processes used to produce these data, please see page 13. For a demographic breakdown of the respondents, see pages 16-17.

### Percent of 2013 entering freshmen in agreement

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	Male students	Female students	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.	96.0%	95.1%	93.3%	93.2%	96.4%	95.0%
I am very strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in my way.	95.7%	94.7%	93.5%	93.1%	96.1%	94.8%
I am deeply committed to my educational goals, and I'm fully prepared to make the effort and sacrifices that will be needed to attain them.	91.6%	90.9%	90.2%	<b>88.2%</b>	<b>93.2%</b>	91.0%
Of all the things I could do at this point in my life, going to college is definitely the most satisfying.	85.6%	86.2%	82.8%	<b>81.2%</b>	<b>88.1%</b>	85.1%
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.	19.6%	21.2%	21.1%	<b>24.6%</b>	<b>17.3%</b>	20.5%
I can think of many things I would rather do than go to college.	9.9%	10.6%	14.0%	<b>14.7%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	11.2%
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.	11.1%	12.4%	14.2%	14.9%	10.3%	12.3%
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.	8.2%	9.5%	12.5%	10.2%	9.4%	9.8%
<b>Attitude toward educators</b>						
The teachers I had in school respected me as a person and treated me fairly.	83.2%	82.8%	78.2%	79.9%	83.3%	81.8%
Most of my teachers have been very caring and dedicated.	82.2%	78.7%	81.2%	79.7%	81.6%	80.7%
I liked my teachers, and I feel they did a good job.	77.6%	75.5%	75.1%	74.8%	77.4%	76.3%
Most teachers have a superior attitude that I find very annoying.	14.6%	17.8%	14.5%	17.9%	14.1%	15.7%
Most of the teachers I had in school were too opinionated and inflexible.	12.5%	16.3%	13.5%	16.0%	12.6%	14.1%
In my opinion, many teachers are more concerned about themselves than they are about their students.	14.9%	15.6%	19.0%	18.3%	14.6%	16.2%

Percent of 2013 entering freshmen in agreement

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	Male students	Female students	OVERALL national percentages
<b>Intellectual interests</b>						
Over the years, books have broadened my horizons and stimulated my imagination.	57.0%	54.1%	50.6%	<b>46.8%</b>	<b>60.3%</b>	54.4%
I get a great deal of personal satisfaction from reading.	46.5%	44.5%	47.6%	<b>36.8%</b>	<b>53.4%</b>	46.1%
I don't enjoy reading serious books and articles, and I only do it when I have to.	44.6%	46.7%	42.5%	45.3%	44.4%	44.8%
Books have never gotten me very excited.	38.0%	39.3%	42.1%	<b>47.3%</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	39.5%
<b>Study habits</b>						
I take very careful notes during class, and I review them thoroughly before a test.	65.1%	65.8%	67.2%	<b>54.5%</b>	<b>74.8%</b>	65.9%
I study very hard for all my courses, even those I don't like.	61.3%	59.1%	63.2%	<b>53.0%</b>	<b>67.3%</b>	61.0%
I have developed a solid system of self-discipline, which helps me keep up with my schoolwork.	61.5%	59.7%	56.9%	<b>55.3%</b>	<b>63.2%</b>	59.7%
My studying is very irregular and unpredictable.	30.7%	33.3%	33.3%	<b>36.9%</b>	<b>28.6%</b>	32.3%
When I try to study, I usually get bored and quit after a few minutes.	26.3%	29.7%	28.8%	28.8%	27.6%	28.1%
I have great difficulty concentrating on schoolwork, and I often get behind.	18.1%	20.1%	26.8%	23.6%	19.0%	21.0%
<b>Math and science confidence</b>						
I have a very good grasp of the scientific ideas I've studied in school.	49.6%	49.4%	41.2%	<b>51.7%</b>	<b>44.1%</b>	47.4%
I have a hard time understanding and solving complex math problems.	43.1%	44.2%	51.3%	<b>39.9%</b>	<b>50.0%</b>	45.6%
Math has always been a challenge for me.	40.7%	42.9%	54.7%	<b>38.6%</b>	<b>50.0%</b>	45.0%
I have always enjoyed the challenge of trying to solve complex math problems.	35.7%	35.5%	34.2%	<b>39.5%</b>	<b>31.9%</b>	35.2%
I have a very good understanding of general biology (e.g., cell structure, metabolism, genetics, and the circulatory system).	39.7%	40.9%	36.0%	39.4%	39.0%	39.2%
My understanding of the physical sciences is very weak.	24.5%	24.3%	29.4%	<b>21.2%</b>	<b>29.1%</b>	25.6%
<b>Verbal confidence</b>						
I am capable of writing a very clear and well-organized paper.	66.0%	62.8%	55.3%	59.9%	63.9%	62.2%
I pick up new vocabulary words quickly, and I find it easy to use them in my speech and writing.	55.2%	55.5%	57.0%	58.0%	54.0%	55.8%
I am very good at figuring out the deeper meaning of a short story or novel.	53.0%	51.1%	51.3%	49.3%	54.0%	51.9%
I have difficulty organizing my ideas in a paper, and I tend to make a lot of punctuation and grammar mistakes.	28.8%	31.1%	37.0%	32.7%	30.8%	31.7%
In English classes, I've had difficulty analyzing an author's style and theme.	27.7%	29.2%	29.0%	30.6%	26.9%	28.5%
Learning new vocabulary words is a slow and difficult process for me.	17.4%	17.5%	19.2%	16.4%	19.1%	17.9%

**Percent of 2013 entering freshmen in agreement**

<b>All survey items</b>	<b>Students at 4-year private institutions</b>	<b>Students at 4-year public institutions</b>	<b>Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)</b>	<b>Male students</b>	<b>Female students</b>	<b>OVERALL national percentages</b>
<b>Career closure</b>						
I have found a potential career that strongly attracts me.	81.5%	77.8%	82.2%	78.6%	81.7%	80.4%
I have made a firm decision to enter a certain occupation and have begun planning my life around that decision.	64.2%	62.6%	70.4%	62.8%	67.1%	65.2%
I become very confused when I try to choose an occupation.	19.7%	22.6%	22.5%	21.1%	21.7%	21.4%
I am very confused about what occupation to pursue.	18.5%	21.8%	18.5%	19.7%	19.6%	19.7%
<b>Family emotional support</b>						
When I was a child, my parents usually understood me, respected my judgment, and treated me in ways that helped me grow.	79.7%	78.2%	69.9%	77.0%	76.4%	76.7%
My family and I communicated very well when I was young, and we had a good understanding of each other's point of view.	69.6%	68.6%	61.4%	67.8%	66.7%	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.	13.7%	14.7%	21.3%	15.4%	16.4%	16.0%
When I was a child, the other members of my family often said hurtful things that caused unpleasant feelings.	11.7%	11.9%	17.7%	10.9%	15.2%	13.3%
<b>Sense of financial security</b>						
I have the financial resources that I need to finish college.	47.6%	47.3%	45.8%	49.7%	44.9%	47.0%
I don't have any financial problems that will interfere with my schoolwork.	39.2%	39.2%	36.6%	41.3%	36.3%	38.5%
I have financial problems that are very distracting and troublesome.	27.3%	27.2%	33.0%	25.9%	30.9%	28.7%
I am in a bad financial position, and the pressure to earn extra money will probably interfere with my studies.	16.4%	17.0%	19.2%	16.8%	17.8%	17.3%
<b>Sociability</b>						
I greatly enjoy getting together with a crowd of people and having fun.	79.0%	79.0%	71.3%	75.2%	78.5%	77.1%
I am very adventurous and outgoing at social gatherings.	54.6%	55.8%	54.1%	54.0%	55.6%	54.9%
Participating in large social gatherings is of little interest to me.	24.6%	26.4%	34.1%	28.5%	27.0%	27.7%
It is hard for me to relax and just have fun with a group of people.	12.5%	12.6%	14.8%	12.2%	13.9%	13.1%

**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 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.

**Percent of 2013 entering freshmen in agreement**

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	Male students	Female students	OVERALL national percentages
<b>Opinion tolerance</b>						
I get along well with people who disagree with my opinion openly.	59.0%	58.1%	61.8%	59.8%	59.1%	59.4%
I can feel comfortable with someone who thinks quite differently than I do on major social issues.	60.9%	60.5%	62.2%	62.3%	60.2%	61.1%
I find it easy to be friends with people whose political ideas differ sharply from my own.	53.8%	52.2%	54.4%	53.9%	53.0%	53.4%
When someone's opinions strongly disagree with my own, I tend to develop unfriendly feelings and to avoid close contact with the person.	12.7%	12.7%	12.1%	12.3%	12.8%	12.6%
I feel uneasy and distrustful toward people whose way of thinking is quite dissimilar to my own.	9.0%	9.8%	10.0%	10.3%	8.9%	9.5%
Because they irritate me, I tend to stay away from people whose ideas are quite different from my own.	9.0%	10.8%	11.9%	10.9%	10.0%	10.4%
<b>Receptivity to academic assistance</b>						
I would like to receive some instruction in the most effective ways to take college exams.	75.9%	79.0%	74.3%	<b>73.0%</b>	<b>79.4%</b>	76.6%
I would like to receive some help in improving my study habits.	56.5%	63.4%	61.1%	58.3%	61.5%	60.1%
I would like to receive some individual help in improving my math skills.	44.6%	50.5%	54.6%	45.1%	52.4%	49.2%
I would like to receive some individual help in improving my writing skills.	45.6%	48.9%	46.4%	45.6%	48.1%	47.0%
I would like to receive tutoring in one or more of my courses.	44.1%	51.9%	42.4%	<b>41.8%</b>	<b>50.0%</b>	46.4%
I would like to receive some training to improve my reading skills.	27.9%	31.2%	30.7%	31.4%	28.5%	29.8%
<b>Receptivity to career counseling</b>						
I would like some help selecting an educational plan that will prepare me to get a good job.	68.5%	69.8%	61.7%	65.0%	69.1%	67.3%
I would like to talk with someone about the qualifications needed for certain occupations.	63.0%	67.6%	59.4%	60.9%	65.9%	63.7%
I would like to talk with someone about the salaries and future outlook for various occupations.	54.2%	57.5%	49.2%	55.1%	53.3%	54.1%
I would like to talk with someone about the advantages and disadvantages of various occupations.	48.6%	52.0%	41.9%	48.3%	47.9%	48.1%
I would like some help selecting an occupation that is well suited to my interests and abilities.	45.9%	49.6%	43.9%	48.2%	45.5%	46.7%

**Percent of 2013 entering freshmen in agreement**

<b>All survey items</b>	<b>Students at 4-year private institutions</b>	<b>Students at 4-year public institutions</b>	<b>Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)</b>	<b>Male students</b>	<b>Female students</b>	<b>OVERALL national percentages</b>
<b>Receptivity to financial guidance</b>						
I would like to talk to someone about getting a scholarship.	64.6%	69.4%	58.9%	<b>60.5%</b>	<b>68.2%</b>	64.8%
I would like to talk to someone about getting a part-time job during the regular school year.	53.4%	54.6%	41.9%	50.3%	51.4%	50.9%
I would like to talk to someone about the opportunities available for summer employment.	50.7%	52.5%	44.6%	48.7%	50.7%	49.8%
I would like to talk with someone about getting a loan to help me through school.	26.3%	27.1%	27.7%	25.1%	28.3%	26.9%
<b>Receptivity to personal counseling</b>						
I would like to talk with a counselor about my general attitude toward school.	16.1%	20.5%	19.8%	18.2%	18.9%	18.6%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some difficulties in my personal relationships or social life.	10.8%	11.7%	12.1%	10.3%	12.3%	11.4%
I would like to talk with a counselor about eliminating an unwanted habit (involving food, drugs, cigarettes, or alcohol, etc.).	8.0%	10.3%	11.7%	10.2%	9.4%	9.7%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some emotional tensions that are bothering me.	9.1%	9.6%	9.6%	8.3%	10.3%	9.4%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some feelings of discouragement or unhappy thoughts that keep bothering me.	9.0%	10.0%	9.7%	8.9%	10.0%	9.5%
I would like to talk with a counselor about some family problems.	6.5%	6.8%	7.4%	5.8%	7.7%	6.9%
<b>Receptivity to social enrichment</b>						
I would like to attend an informal gathering where I can meet some new friends.	61.5%	59.8%	43.9%	53.2%	59.0%	56.4%
I would like to find out more about the clubs and social organizations at my college.	66.9%	68.5%	43.7%	<b>56.0%</b>	<b>66.0%</b>	61.6%
I would like to find out more about student government and the various student activities on campus.	49.6%	50.2%	37.0%	<b>40.4%</b>	<b>51.5%</b>	46.6%
I would like to meet an experienced student who can show me around and give me some advice.	52.1%	55.8%	40.2%	47.4%	52.8%	50.4%
<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%	59.4%	47.5%	58.9%	61.3%	60.3%
I plan to transfer to another school before completing a degree at this college or university.	7.5%	13.8%	26.5%	14.9%	14.3%	14.5%
<b>Total number of students</b>	<b>39,746</b>	<b>35,497</b>	<b>25,484</b>	<b>44,194</b>	<b>56,487</b>	<b>100,727</b>
<b>Average age of students</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>20.1</b>

## Respondent demographics (2013)

### Percent of 2013 entering freshmen in agreement

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	Male students	Female students	OVERALL national percentages
Number of respondents	39,746	35,497	25,484	44,194	56,487	100,727
Percent of respondents	39.5%	35.2%	25.3%	43.9%	56.1%	100.0%
Percent Female	56.9%	57.7%	52.6%	0.0%	100.0%	56.1%
Percent Male	43.1%	42.1%	47.4%	100.0%	0.0%	43.9%
<b>Racial/ethnic origin</b>						
Black/African-American	16.1%	23.1%	20.7%	18.3%	20.8%	19.7%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.6%	0.9%	1.0%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%
Asian or Pacific Islander	4.2%	4.0%	2.8%	4.0%	3.6%	3.8%
White/Caucasian	63.3%	52.2%	44.3%	56.1%	53.4%	54.6%
Hispanic or Latino	9.3%	12.6%	25.0%	14.1%	14.7%	14.5%
Multiethnic or other ethnic origin	4.1%	3.8%	3.4%	3.4%	4.1%	3.8%
Prefer not to respond	2.4%	2.1%	2.7%	2.8%	2.0%	2.4%
<b>Highest education level of mother</b>						
8 years or less	2.3%	4.3%	7.7%	3.9%	4.8%	4.4%
Some high school	4.3%	6.2%	12.8%	6.5%	7.6%	7.1%
High school diploma	24.2%	25.4%	34.5%	27.0%	27.4%	27.2%
1 to 3 years of college	25.9%	27.1%	26.4%	24.8%	27.7%	26.4%
Bachelor's degree	27.1%	23.3%	11.1%	23.6%	20.2%	21.7%
Master's degree	12.2%	10.6%	4.6%	10.4%	9.2%	9.7%
Professional degree	3.6%	2.7%	2.3%	3.3%	2.7%	2.9%
<b>Highest education level of father</b>						
8 years or less	2.8%	4.9%	9.2%	4.6%	5.5%	5.1%
Some high school	6.4%	8.6%	16.6%	8.9%	10.5%	9.8%
High school diploma	28.5%	31.4%	37.0%	30.7%	32.4%	31.7%
1 to 3 years of college	21.3%	22.0%	20.0%	20.9%	21.5%	21.2%
Bachelor's degree	23.3%	19.7%	9.7%	20.4%	17.2%	18.6%
Master's degree	11.1%	8.7%	4.0%	9.1%	8.0%	8.4%
Professional degree	5.6%	3.6%	2.3%	4.4%	3.8%	4.1%
<b>Highest degree planned by respondent</b>						
None	0.1%	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%
1-year certificate	0.1%	0.1%	3.5%	1.3%	0.7%	1.0%
2-year degree (associate)	1.3%	0.7%	28.0%	9.7%	6.4%	7.8%
4-year degree (bachelor's)	38.1%	39.2%	37.3%	41.8%	35.6%	38.3%
Master's degree	37.6%	34.6%	17.9%	30.1%	32.7%	31.5%
Professional degree	22.7%	25.1%	12.9%	16.7%	24.5%	21.1%

Respondent demographics continued

Percent of 2013 entering freshmen in agreement

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year institutions (public and private)	Male students	Female students	OVERALL national percentages
<b>Time expecting to spend at work</b>						
0 (I have no plans to work)	25.8%	28.5%	18.0%	26.4%	23.5%	24.8%
1 to 10 hours per week	31.3%	24.3%	12.8%	21.8%	26.0%	24.1%
11 to 20 hours per week	27.5%	31.0%	25.7%	27.5%	28.8%	28.2%
21 to 30 hours per week	9.1%	11.4%	22.3%	13.7%	12.9%	13.2%
31 to 40 hours per week	4.5%	3.9%	16.0%	7.3%	7.1%	7.2%
Over 40 hours per week	1.8%	1.0%	5.3%	3.2%	1.8%	2.4%
<b>Average grades as senior in high school</b>						
A	23.6%	21.3%	6.4%	14.4%	21.6%	18.4%
A to B	37.9%	40.4%	28.9%	33.3%	39.0%	36.5%
B	18.7%	19.2%	17.7%	21.3%	16.5%	18.6%
B to C	15.3%	15.5%	32.1%	22.1%	17.7%	19.6%
C	3.2%	2.5%	8.4%	5.6%	3.2%	4.3%
C to D	1.2%	0.8%	5.2%	2.6%	1.6%	2.1%
D	0.2%	0.1%	1.3%	0.7%	0.3%	0.5%
<b>Respondent's self-assessment of academic knowledge</b>						
Highest 20%	19.6%	17.4%	8.9%	17.2%	15.3%	16.1%
Next to highest 20%	36.5%	35.7%	23.9%	33.6%	32.6%	33.1%
Middle 20%	41.8%	44.9%	60.8%	45.8%	49.2%	47.7%
Next to lowest 20%	1.7%	1.6%	5.2%	2.8%	2.4%	2.6%
Lowest 20%	0.2%	0.3%	1.2%	0.6%	0.4%	0.5%
<b>Respondent's self-assessment of academic ability</b>						
Considerably below average	0.3%	0.4%	1.0%	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%
Slightly below average	3.1%	3.4%	6.3%	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%
Average	26.9%	29.9%	47.2%	28.9%	36.4%	33.1%
Slightly above average	37.5%	37.9%	28.1%	36.5%	34.3%	35.3%
Considerably above average (top 20%)	29.1%	25.8%	15.4%	26.7%	22.8%	24.5%
Extremely high (top 5%)	3.0%	2.6%	2.1%	3.4%	2.1%	2.6%
<b>Timing of decision to attend chosen college/university</b>						
Decision made few days before	2.5%	2.0%	5.3%	3.7%	2.5%	3.0%
Decision made weeks before	12.6%	10.3%	21.8%	16.7%	12.1%	14.1%
Decision made many months before	84.9%	87.6%	72.8%	79.5%	85.3%	82.8%

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

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

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

The data in this report are drawn from Noel-Levitz's 100-item, Form B version of the College Student Inventory (CSI-B), part of the Noel-Levitz Retention Management System *Plus*. Student respondents complete this survey during orientation or within their first weeks of classes. Immediately upon the survey's completion, findings are reported 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 to proactively connect students with key services that make a difference.

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

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

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

*Please watch for our next report on freshman attitudes in 2015.*

## Questions? Want additional information?

If you have questions about this report, or if you would like to discuss how an attitudinal student survey can support student success and persistence on your campus, please contact Noel-Levitz at 1-800-876-1117 or [ContactUs@noellevitz.com](mailto:ContactUs@noellevitz.com). Additionally, see the description page 18 to learn more about how the early-alert assessments of the Noel-Levitz Retention Management System *Plus*<sup>™</sup> (RMS *Plus*) help campuses focus early individual interventions with at-risk students.

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