

# **Oregon State University**

## **Cooperative Institutional Research Program**

### **2003 Freshman Survey Results**

**Presented by:  
Rebecca A. Sanderson, Ph.D.  
Director  
Student Affairs Research and Evaluation  
Oregon State University**

**April, 2004**

**A special thank you to the following Student Affairs faculty who graciously reviewed this report and provided suggestions and recommendations:**

**Edie Blakley  
Deb Burke  
Ryan Collay  
Rosemary Garagnani**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	Executive Summary	1
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....		1
<b>METHODOLOGY</b> .....		2
<b>DATA ANALYSIS</b> .....		2
<b>RESULTS</b> .....		2
<b>DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION</b> .....		3
Student Information .....		3
Student-Reported Parent Information .....		5
<b>ADMISSION-RELATED ISSUES</b> .....		8
<b>FINANCING COLLEGE</b> .....		13
<b>HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES</b> .....		14
<b>ACADEMIC AND CAREER PLANS AND EXPECTATIONS</b> .....		19
<b>POLITICAL AND SOCIAL VIEWS</b> .....		25
<b>STUDENT OPINIONS / VALUES / BEHAVIORS</b> .....		28
<b>DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....		32
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....		32

## LIST OF TABLES AND CHARTS

Table 1: Respondent Characteristics .....	3
Table 2: Student-Reported Parent Born in U.S.....	5
Table 3: Student-Reported Parent Living Status .....	5
Table 4: Student-Reported Parent Racial/Ethnic Background .....	5
Table 5: Student-Reported Highest Level of Formal Education of Parents .....	6
Table 6: Student-Reported Religious Preference of Parents .....	6
Table 7: Occupational Category of Parents .....	8
Table 8: M/F Comparison of Reasons Noted as “Very Important” in Deciding To Go To College.....	9
Table 9: Yearly Comparison of Reasons Noted as “Very Important” in Deciding To Go To College.....	10
Table 10: Factors Reported as “Very Important” in Their Decision to Attend OSU.....	12
Table 11: Expected Sources of Financial Assistance .....	13

Table 12: Concern about Financing College.....	14
Table 13: Activities Involved in During Past Year .....	15
Table 14: Frequency of Alcohol Use (beer, wine, liquor) .....	16
Table 15: Number of Drinks per Drinking Occasion.....	16
Table 16: Frequency and Degree of Tobacco Use .....	16
Table 17: Student-Reported Use of Time in Their Last Year of High School .....	17
Table 18: Average High School Grades by Gender.....	18
Table 19: Comparison of Time Spent Studying or on Homework with Reported High School GPA .....	19
Table 20: Probable Career Choices for Students .....	22
Table 21: Student Choice of Probable Major Area .....	23
Table 22: “Very Good” Expectation That Student Will Engage in Activity.....	24
Table 23: Student-Reported Political Views.....	26
Table 24: Student Opinions on Social and Political Issues.....	27
Table 25: Traits That Describe Student to a “Great Extent”.....	28
Table 26: Student Rating of Skills or Abilities .....	29
Table 27: Student Expectations for Future .....	31
Chart 1: Type of Disability.....	4
Chart 2: Student-Reported Estimate of Parents’ Income.....	7
Chart 3: Courses Taken at OSU for Credit .....	9
Chart 4: Student Ranking of OSU.....	11
Chart 5: Number of Schools Other than OSU Student Applied To .....	11
Chart 6: When Student First Visited OSU .....	13
Chart 7: Expected Sources of Financial Assistance .....	14
Chart 8: High School Required Community Service for Graduation .....	17
Chart 9: Highest Academic Degree Expected to Obtain.....	19
Chart 10: History of and Need for Tutoring/Remedial Work .....	20
Chart 11: Student Reported Need for Tutoring or Remedial Work .....	20
Chart 12: Student-Reported Need for Instruction in How to Conduct Research in the Library .....	21
Chart 13: Expectation of Help from Advisor .....	21
Chart 14: Probable Career Choices for Students .....	22
Chart 15: Expectations for Fall Residence.....	25
Chart 16: Length of Time Planning on Living in College Residence Hall or Cooperative House .....	25
Chart 17: Personal Importance of Diversity .....	28

**Oregon State University  
2003 CIRP Freshman Survey Results**

**Executive Summary  
April, 2004**

Presented by  
Rebecca A. Sanderson, Ph.D.

The Cooperative Institutional Research Program's Freshman Survey (CIRP) is administered annually at hundreds of institutions to thousands of entering first year students. It is the longest standing research study on entering students in the country. OSU first administered the CIRP in 1967. No follow-up was conducted until 2001 when the survey was once again administered to OSU entering students.

The OSU CIRP data may have implications for predicting retention and graduation rates of OSU's students. Additionally, these results could be used to inform intervention programs designed to offset or remedy deficits that likely impede a student's academic success. "Analysis of the effects of entering student (freshman) characteristics show that more than two-thirds of the variation among institutions in their degree completion rates is attributable to differences in their entering classes rather than to differences in the effectiveness of their retention programs" (Astin & Oseguera, 2002, p. ix). Thus, information on OSU's entering class of first year students may in fact be valuable from very practical perspectives (i.e., predicting retention and graduation of OSU's students, monitoring the ramifications for admission criteria and decisions, etc.).

This year incoming first year students were invited to complete the CIRP during the summer START programs. Of the 2,354 students invited to participate, 716 completed and returned the survey for a 30% return rate. This response was somewhat lower than in previous years and steps are currently being considered which will restructure the administrative procedures and which should increase the response rate for summer 2004.

Generally, OSU's results on the 2003 Cooperative Institutional Research Program's Freshman Survey (CIRP) have remained fairly consistent over the last three years. This was not surprising since OSU has made few changes in recent years in admissions requirements, marketing regions, etc. With the advent of new admissions procedures (e.g., Insight resume), we expect to see some differences as these processes are implemented for the coming year.

Approximately 52% of respondents were male and 48% were female. Most (98%) were between the ages of 18-20 years. As was expected, most were U. S. citizens, born in the United States, and were White/Caucasian. Asian American/Pacific Islander students were the second most frequently represented racial/ethnic group. About 50% of students reported that their parents had a college degree and/or a graduate degree. By contrast 3-5% reported that their parents were not high school graduates. In a recent study, Astin and Oseguera (2002) found that the educational level of a student's father was a contributing factor to the student's retention and eventual graduation from college.

Over the last three years, students tended to agree on the top six reasons they considered "very important" in their decision to go to college. These included:

- To learn more about things that interest me;
- To be able to get a better job;
- To get training for a specific degree;
- To be able to make more money;
- To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas; and
- To prepare for graduate or professional school.

Access to college in terms of financial support continues to be an issue for some OSU first year students. For instance approximately 11% of students indicated that their parent's income was in excess of \$150,000 per year. An almost equal percent of students (12%) reported that their parent's income was less than \$30,000 per year. About three times as many students with parental income of \$30,000 per year expected to work to pay expenses than students with parental income of \$150,000 or more. Interestingly the concern about financing college has remained fairly stable over the last three years with no significant differences year to year. Yet, the percentage of parents listed as "unemployed" has increased two-fold from the 2002 results.

Most incoming students reported studying five hours or less per week in high school, on average, regardless of grade point average. Nevertheless, about equal percentages of incoming students reported a high school GPA of A+, A, A-, and B+, B, B- with only about 6% reporting below a C+ average. It is interesting to note that nationally in 1968 only 18% of students had an "A" average compared to 47% in 2003 (Sax et al, 2003). It seems that grades have continued to rise even though there has been a continued decline in study time nationally.

Nationally students are increasingly more involved in community service activities. OSU's data reflected this as well. Additionally, the number of students in the last three years who reported high school requirements for community service as a graduation requirement has steadily increased from 25% in 2001 to over 30% in 2003.

Student substance use continues to be of concern since data from the 2003 *Your First College Year Survey* (YFCY) suggested that substance use increased substantially from the beginning of the first year to the end of the first year (Sanderson, 2003). About 8% of OSU incoming students reported drinking beer in high school, up about 4% from 2002. About twice as many 2003 students than 2002 students also reported drinking wine or liquor. There were no discernable differences between men and women in terms of the number of drinking occasions in a typical month; however men did tend to report consuming more alcohol per occasion than did women. Likewise men reported more cigarette use than women. Yet, women and men smokers showed no differences in the mean number of packs of cigarettes smoked per day.

Approximately 66% of incoming students expected to get their bachelor's degree from OSU with another 26% also expecting to get a graduate degree (either a master's or doctoral degree) from OSU. The probable career choices for students have remained consistent for the last three years: engineering, undecided, and business. As might be expected men were about seven times more likely to select engineering as a career choice than women were. There were few differences between men and women regarding the other two areas.

Students' expectations for their future following college varied in terms of importance; however, the top four expectations have remained constant over the last three years. These included: raise a family, be very well off financially, help others in difficulty, and become an authority in my field.

Students' political views were characterized from far left to far right with most students choosing a middle-of-the-road stance. Nationally there has been a slight shift to the right in terms of the political orientation of entering students. Interestingly, OSU's results seemed to mirror the national "gender gap" in terms of opinions on politically/socially charged issues. Women and men tended to disagree on most of the issues presented (e.g., gay marriage, gun control, affirmative action, and military spending).

The intention of this report is to provide information to the OSU community about the characteristics of in-coming first year students with the hope that this information will aid in understanding, discussing, and eventually decision-making concerning services, programs, structures, and other systems that impact OSU students. With greater information, knowledge, and collaboration, the University community will find ways to act responsibly with this knowledge (Student Affairs Assessment Committee, 2002).

Specific recommendations arising from this data included:

- Use data from the CIRP and other input variables available at OSU to predict retention and graduation rates that can be compared to actual OSU performance in these areas. This could provide a baseline from which OSU could measure the effectiveness of university recruitment and retention initiatives. Additionally, it could provide a measure of our current retention performance (i.e., are we over-performing, under-performing or performing as would be expected given the characteristics of our students and university).
- Post report on the Student Affairs Research and Evaluation web page and distribute URL to university community.
- Present data to faculty and staff groups and engage in discussion about implications of the data.
- Continue to participate in the annual CIRP Freshman Survey for another 1-2 years and then move to every other year. Coordinate use of the CIRP with the administration and use of the Your First College Year survey designed as a follow-up to CIRP.

**Oregon State University**  
**Cooperative Institutional Research Program**  
**2003 Freshman Survey Results**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Cooperative Institutional Research Program's Freshman Survey (CIRP) project was undertaken at OSU in order to:

- Increase institutional knowledge about the students entering OSU for the first time;
- Foster awareness and promote conversations about OSU's entering first year students;
- Inform the institution about changes in and needs of OSU's entering first year students; and,
- Assess change in first year students by establishing some additional baseline data on entering students.

The OSU CIRP data may have implications for predicting retention and graduation rates of OSU students. Additionally, these results could be used to inform intervention programs designed to offset or remedy deficits that likely impede a student's academic success. "Analysis of the effects of entering student (freshman) characteristics show that more than two-thirds of the variation among institutions in their degree completion rates is attributable to differences in their entering classes rather than to differences in the effectiveness of their retention programs" (Astin & Oseguera, 2002, p. ix). Thus, information on OSU entering class of first year students may in fact be valuable from a very practical perspective (i.e., predicting retention and graduation rates of OSU students, monitoring the ramifications for admission criteria and decisions, etc.).

The Cooperative Institutional Research Program's Freshman Survey (CIRP) was introduced nationally in 1966. It was given to entering students at colleges and universities across the country and is the longest standing research on student's attitudes, beliefs, and plans in the nation. This year, 389,338 first year students were surveyed at 646 participating institutions. The CIRP was administered by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at the University of California—Los Angeles with additional support from the American Council on Education. The CIRP Freshman Survey data is regarded as the most comprehensive source of information on college students and serves as a resource for researchers in higher education around the globe (Sax, Astin, Lindholm, Korn, Saenz, & Mahoney, 2003).

The CIRP Freshman Survey posed questions covering a broad array of issues relevant to colleges and universities and the students attending them. In addition to demographic characteristics, CIRP asked questions concerning students' college expectations, high school experiences, degree and career goals, finances, reasons for attending college, and beliefs, attitudes and values.

With over 30 years of research, the CIRP organization has compiled national trends and has provided individual campuses with results compared to students in general as well as to like institutions. OSU's comparators on this instrument were "public universities—medium selectivity" (e.g., Michigan State University, Ohio State University, University of Arizona, University of Oregon, University of Nebraska). Nevertheless, while some comparison might be

useful, the data is primarily meant to be descriptive of OSU's entering class of full-time, first-time, first year students.

OSU first administered the CIRP to incoming first year students in 1967. No follow-up was conducted until 2001 when the survey was once again administered to OSU entering students. As with the reporting of the 2001 and 2002 CIRP results, the 2003 CIRP report attempts "to present students' perspectives and experiences, not to describe a specific course of action for the university (Student Affairs Assessment Committee, 2001, p. 12) ." Rather, it is anticipated that CIRP data will foster conversation and thoughtful reflection regarding the always changing OSU first year student.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The CIRP Freshmen Survey was sent to the OSU contact person from the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. The surveys were distributed to students taking the math placement test during OSU START in the summer of 2003. As students entered the math testing room, they were asked to complete the CIRP after they had completed the math placement test. Students were asked to either return the completed survey following the math placement test or to complete it later and drop it off at drop boxes in the Memorial Union, the Student Health Center, or University Housing and Dining Services. Additionally, reminders to complete and return the survey were located on the checklist of "things to do while at START." This methodology differed from the survey distribution methods in either the 2001 or 2002 administration of the CIRP. For information about the 2001 or 2002 CIRP consult: [http://oregonstate.edu/admin/student\\_affairs/research/res\\_introduction.html](http://oregonstate.edu/admin/student_affairs/research/res_introduction.html).

Completed surveys were mailed to HERI for processing. Data files, frequency distributions and the data dictionary were provided to OSU along with summary data from all participating schools as well as other schools classified as medium selective public universities. While some comparisons between OSU and other medium selective public universities may be helpful, the CIRP Freshmen Survey is primarily descriptive of OSU's entering class of full-time, first-time, first year students. Some part-time and transfer students also completed the survey, however, the number of participants for these groupings (n=14) was not adequate for result generalization and thus were not reported in this document.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

Data provided by the Higher Education Research Institute for the 2003 CIRP Freshman Survey included frequency distributions for each question with sub-distributions for men, women, and total. In addition the raw data for OSU's results were provided so that additional analysis could be conducted. Primarily these analyses consisted of descriptive analysis and for some items, comparison of differences in means.

## **RESULTS**

A total of 2,354 surveys were distributed to in-coming first year students at the summer START sessions with a 30% return rate (n = 716). Unless otherwise noted, the data presented pertained to full-time, first-time, first year students (ft-ft-fy). The number of part-time students and transfer students who responded to the survey was relatively small which limited the ability to generalize results. The results section of this report was organized according to the following categories: Demographic Information, Admission-Related Issues, Financing College, High



School Activities, Academic and Career Plans and Expectations, Political and Social Views, and Student Opinions, Values, and Behaviors.

## DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Information in this section referred to the demographic information of student respondents. Parental information was provided by students and thus, may not, in all cases, reflect how parents might have responded to the questions.

### Student Information

Approximately 52% of respondents were male and 48% were female. Most (98%) were between the ages of 18-20 years. As was expected, most were U.S. citizens, born in the United States, and were White/Caucasian. Asian American/Pacific Islander students were the second most frequently represented racial/ethnic group. The following table provides additional information about the first year first time full time students (ft-ft-fy).

Table 1  
Respondent Characteristics

Characteristic		Percent
<b>Sex</b>	Male	52
	Female	48
<b>Age</b>	≤ 17	1
	18-20	98
	21 or older	1
<b>Citizenship Status</b>	Permanent Resident (green card)	2
	U.S. Citizen	97
	Neither	<1
<b>Entry to U.S.</b>	Born in U.S.	95
	Came to U.S. at < 6 years of age	2
	Came to U.S. at between 6-12	1
	Came to U.S. after age 12	2
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	White/Caucasian	79
	Asian American/Pacific Islander	13
	Latino/Chicano/Hispanic	3
	American Indian/Alaskan Native	2
	Black/African American	1
	Other	2
<b>Year Graduated from H.S.</b>	2003	99
	2002	1
	other	<1
<b>Average High School Grades</b>	A+, A, A-	47
	B+, B, B-	50
	C+ and below	3
<b>Miles OSU is from home</b>	≤ 10	7
	11-50	21
	51-100	36
	101-500	27
	> 500	10
<b>English Native Language</b>	Yes	95
	No	5

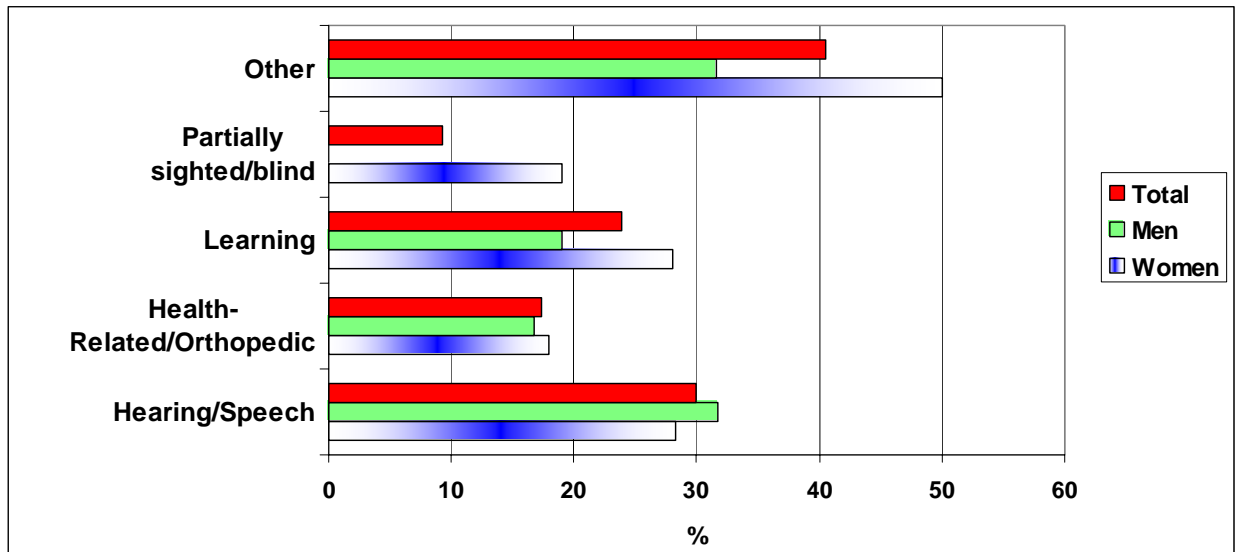
Table 1 continued

Characteristic		Percent
Religious Preference	None	30
	Other Christian	21
	Roman Catholic	18
	Baptist	7
	Presbyterian	6
	Lutheran	5
	Methodist	3
	Other Religion	3
	United Church of Christ	2
	Buddhist	1
	LDS (Mormon)	1
	Episcopal	1
	Eastern Orthodox	<1
	Hindu	<1
	Islamic	<1
	Jewish	<1
Quaker	<1	
Seventh Day Adventist	<1	
Unitarian/Universalist	<1	

(note: any percentage sum over 100% is due to rounding)

Approximately 5% of FT-FT-FY students reported having a disability. Of those reporting a disability, the following chart illustrated the percent of students with specific types of disabilities. Note the categories were not mutually exclusive.

Chart 1  
Type of Disability



The greatest percentage of students reported that their disability did not fit into one of the pre-determined categories. It is likely that some of the students who selected "other" have disabilities related to psychological issues as this is an area of growth in disabilities work.

## Student-Reported Parent Information

Most (86%) students reported that both of their parents were born in the U. S. with only a few reporting that neither parent had been born in the U. S. Thus, for most students either one or both of their parents were born in the U. S.

Table 2  
Student-Reported Parent U.S. Born

Characteristics		Percent
Born in the U.S.	Both	86
	Neither	3
	Father only	3
	Mother only	8

Approximately 21% of students reported that while both parents were living, they were either divorced or living apart. Another 4% reported that one or both of their parents was deceased.

Table 3  
Student-Reported Parent Living Status

Characteristics		Percent
Living/Status	Both alive and living with each other	75
	Both alive and divorced or living apart	21
	One or both deceased	4

Most students reported that both their father and mother were White/Caucasian with Asian American/Pacific Islander being the second most frequent. Considerably fewer parents were of Latino/Chicano, Hispanic or American Indian/Alaskan Native, or Black/African American origin.

Table 4  
Student-Reported Parent Racial/Ethnic Background

Race/Ethnicity	Father	Mother
	%	%
White/Caucasian	86	85
Asian American/Pacific Islander	11	12
Latino/Chicano/Hispanic	2	3
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1	1
Black/African American	1	<1
Other	2	2

(May sum to more than 100% as students could report more than one category.)

Approximately one-third of students reported that their parents had a college degree with another 20-24% reporting some college. Interestingly another 17-23% reported that their parents had a graduate degree. By contrast 3-5% reported that their parents were not high school graduates. In a recent study by Astin and Oseguera (2002) the educational level of a student's father was a contributing factor in the student's retention and eventual graduation from college.

Table 5  
**Student-Reported Highest Level of Formal Education of Parents**

Educational Level	Father %	Mother %
Grammar School or less	1	1
Some high school	4	2
High school graduate	16	19
Postsecondary school but not college	1	3
Some college	20	24
College degree	31	33
Some graduate school	2	1
Graduate degree	23	17

Student report of parental religious preference was quite diverse. The largest category of religious preference for parents was “None.” “Other Christian” and “Roman Catholic” were the next most frequent. Table 6 below provides the student-reported religious preferences of parents.

Table 6  
**Student-Reported Religious Preference of Parents**

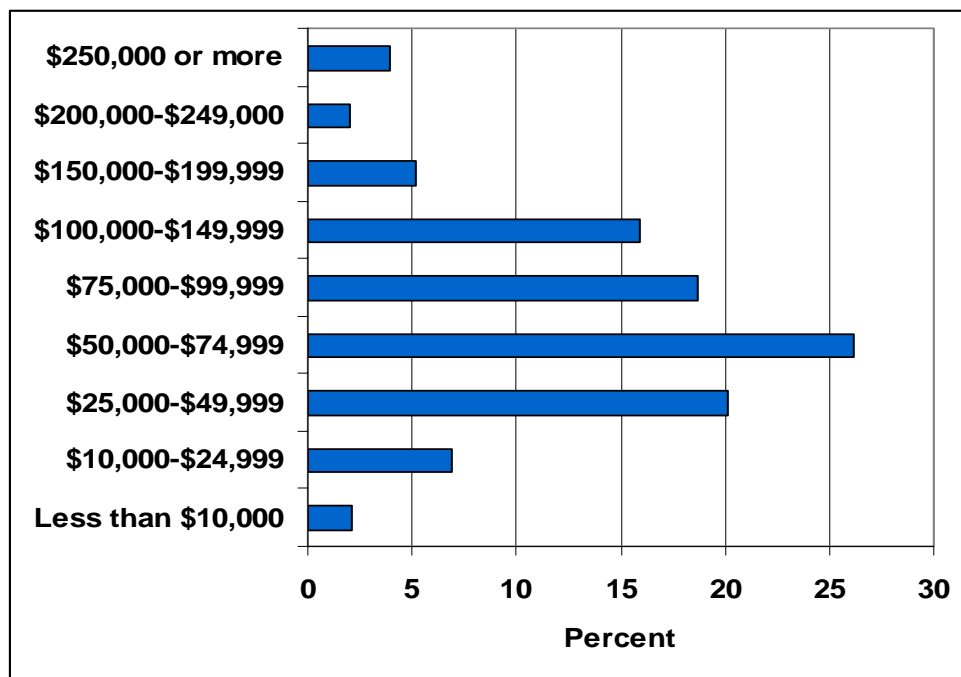
Religion	Father %	Mother %
None	27	19
Other Christian	19	21
Roman Catholic	19	21
Baptist	7	8
Presbyterian	6	7
Lutheran	7	8
Methodist	3	4
Other Religion	2	2
United Church of Christ	2	2
Buddhist	3	3
LDS (Mormon)	2	2
Episcopal	1	2
Eastern Orthodox	<1	<1
Hindu	<1	<1
Islamic	<1	<1
Jewish	<1	<1
Quaker	<1	<1
Seventh Day Adventist	<1	<1
Unitarian/Universalist	<1	<1

Chart 2 below depicts the student-reported estimate of parents' income from all sources and before taxes. As suggested by the chart many of OSU's first year students come from fairly affluent homes. Note however, that this chart reflected only the student's estimate of parental income. Research has shown that students tend not to have an accurate picture of parental income; thus, this data should be used cautiously.

Nevertheless, approximately 11% of students indicated that their parent's income was in excess of \$150,000 per year. Yet, an almost equal percent (12%) of students reported that their parent's income was less than \$30,000 per year. It is likely that these two groups of students may have a very different experience of college.

For those students who reported parental income in excess of \$150,000 per year only 4.5% reported that there was a "very good" chance that they would work for pay while a student. For those students who reported parental income of less than \$30,000 per year, 13.1% reported a "very good" chance of working for pay to help defray costs. Parental income was also related to "concern about financing college" and "getting a job to pay expenses" ( $p < .05$ ).

Chart 2  
**Student-Reported Estimate of Parents' Income**



(Note research has shown that students do not have an accurate picture of parental income figures, thus this data should be used cautiously and cross-checked against more reliable information)

Table 7 below illustrated the categories of parents' occupations. While there was some shifting of occupational category, most remained fairly constant. One area of concern was the percent of parents who were unemployed. The unemployment percentage increased two-fold from 2002 to 2003 for both parents. Since finances are a key element in student persistence in college as well as access to college, the employment status of parents is quite significant.

Table 7  
Occupational Category of Parents

Mother		Occupational Category	Father	
2002 Percent	2003 Percent		2003 Percent	2002 Percent
2.3	1.9	Artist	0.2	0.5
19.2	17.9	Business	30.5	29.2
8.7	5.2	Business (clerical)	0.4	1.2
0	0.5	Clergy	0.9	0.1
0.5	0.3	College Teacher	0.5	0.9
0.6	1.6	Doctor (MD or DDS)	2.8	2.4
5.7	5.7	Education (secondary)	1.8	2.7
8.4	10.2	Education (elementary)	0.5	1.0
0.7	1.4	Engineer	12.3	10.7
1.1	1.0	Farmer or forester	4.9	5.0
4.0	3.3	Health professional	1.4	1.6
10.4	11.4	Homemaker (full-time)	0	0.4
0.7	0.9	Lawyer	0.9	2.2
0	0.2	Military (career)	0.7	0.8
7.6	7.8	Nurse	0.4	0.6
0.4	0.7	Research scientist	0	1.4
1.3	1.2	Social/welfare/rec worker	0.5	0.3
1.6	1.7	Skilled worker	5.8	8.7
1.7	1.9	Semi-skilled worker	3.9	2.3
1.3	1.0	Unskilled worker	2.3	3.4
3.1	5.0	Unemployed	2.5	1.2
20.5	19.1	Other	26.8	23.4

## ADMISSION-RELATED ISSUES

Factors related to the decision to go to college and the subsequent decisions about which college to attend were varied. The next section of the report summarizes some specific questions that students were asked to respond to which were related to their decision-making regarding college attendance and their selection of OSU.

Few students reported that they had taken courses for credit at OSU prior to their first college year. The percentage of students who had taken courses for credit at OSU declined from the 2001 and 2002 results (see Chart 3 below). While the percentages were relatively small (< 3.5%) the decrease suggested that something different had occurred (e.g., financial constraints). Another hypothesis is that this change was merely a one year anomaly.

Chart 3  
Courses Taken at OSU for Credit

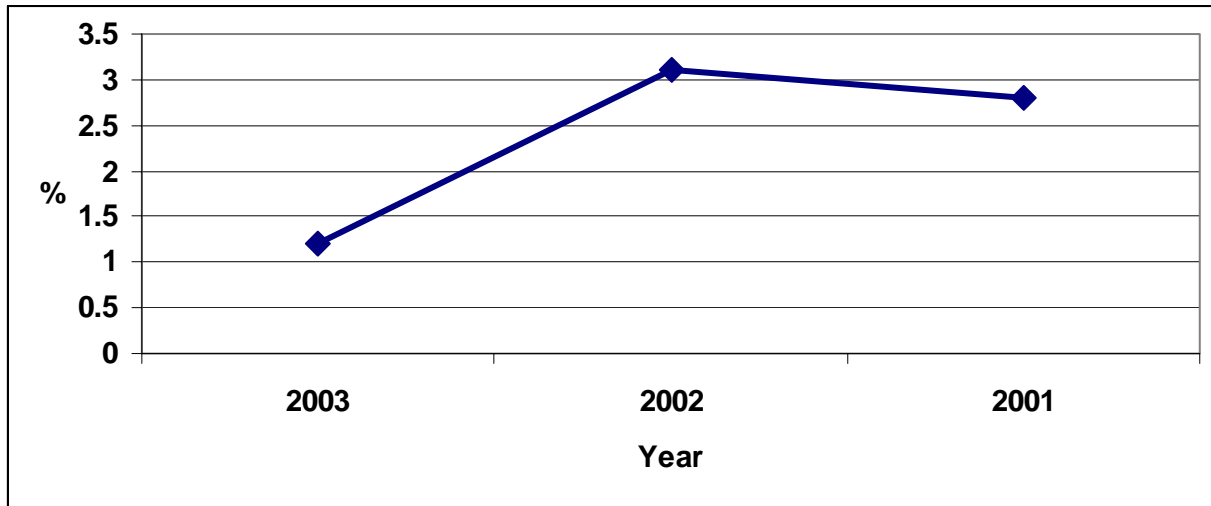


Table 8 provided data regarding “very important” reasons why students decided to attend college (any college). The first item in the table, “To learn more about things that interest me,” has been the number one reason that students have reported for going to college in 2001, 2002, and 2003.

When mean rating of importance was compared between men and women students, women tended to place more importance on:

- Learning more about things that interest me ( $p < .05$ );
- Getting training for a specific career ( $p < .05$ );
- Gaining a general education and appreciation of ideas ( $p < .001$ ); and
- Improving my reading and study skills ( $p < .05$ ).

Male students placed more importance than women students on:

- Having nothing better to do ( $p < .001$ ).

Table 8  
M/F Comparison of Reasons Noted As “Very Important” In Deciding To Go To College

Reason*	Total	Men	Women
	Percent	Percent	Percent
To learn more about things that interest me	78.1	73.8	82.5
To be able to get a better job	72.3	73.9	70.6
To get training for a specific career	71.6	67.8	75.5
To be able to make more money	71.6	74.6	68.6
To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas	60.3	54.3	66.3
To prepare myself for graduate or professional school	51.6	46.5	56.9
To make me a more cultured person	39.0	36.2	41.9
To improve my reading and study skills	36.4	31.7	41.1
My parents wanted me to go	31.5	32.6	30.4

Table 8 Continued

<b>Reason*</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Wanted to get away from home	21.7	23.3	20.1
A mentor/role model encouraged me to go	11.9	12.1	11.7
There was nothing better to do	4.9	7.4	2.3
I could not find a job	3.7	4.4	2.9

\*Note reasons were not mutually exclusive.

Table 9 below depicts the percentage of students who reported reasons as “very important” in their decision to go to college. While the percentages differ year to year, they do not differ significantly. Additionally the top six reasons have been the same and in the same order for the last three years.

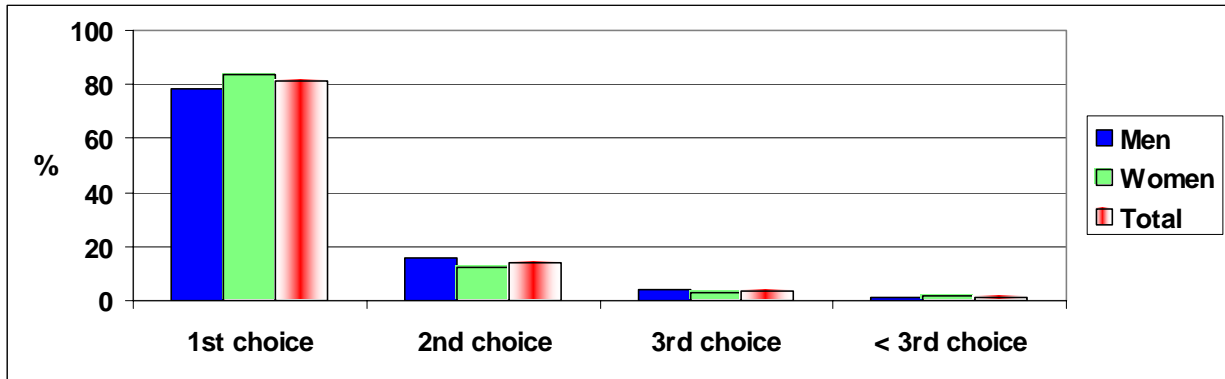
Table 9  
**Yearly Comparison of Reasons Noted As “Very Important” In Deciding To Go To College**

<b>Reason</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>
	Percent	Percent	Percent
To learn more about things that interest me	78.1	80.4	77.5
To be able to get a better job	72.3	72.4	75.4
To get training for a specific career	71.6	72.4	74.6
To be able to make more money	71.6	71.0	70.5
To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas	60.3	63.3	59.3
To prepare myself for graduate or professional school	51.6	51.0	54.5
To make me a more cultured person	39.0	34.1	35.8
To improve my reading and study skills	36.4	35.3	32.0
My parents wanted me to go	31.5	31.5	32.9
Wanted to get away from home	21.7	21.0	23.6
A mentor/role model encouraged me to go	11.9	10.1	12.1
There was nothing better to do	4.9	3.0	5.3
I could not find a job	3.7	4.8	3.8

As can be seen below (Chart 4), most students reported that OSU was their first choice college. Women tended to select OSU as first choice a little more than men but not to a significant degree.



Chart 4  
Student Ranking of OSU



About 38% of students applied only to OSU with decreasing percentages of students applying to additional schools (see Chart 5 below). Less than 5% of students applied to five or more schools. This was consistent with the results from 2001 and 2002.

Chart 5  
Number of Schools Other than OSU Student Applied To . . .

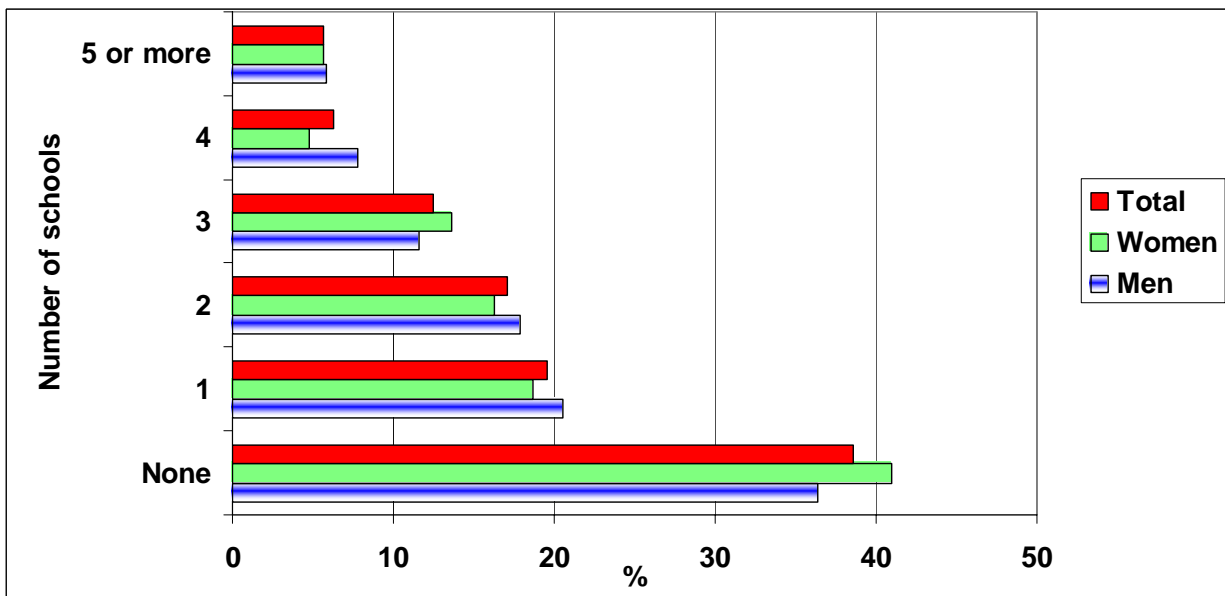


Table 10 provides information concerning reasons noted as “very important” in the student’s decision to attend OSU. While the percentages between 2002 and 2003 differ, they do not differ significantly in terms of the percent of students endorsing each reason as “very important” in their decision to attend OSU.

There were however some gender differences in mean rating of reasons. Women tended to rate the following items as more important in their decision-making than men:

- Offered financial aid ( $p < .05$ );
- Offered special educational programs ( $p < .05$ );

- Wanted to live near home ( $p < .05$ );
- Size of college ( $p < .05$ ); and
- A visit to campus ( $p < .05$ ).

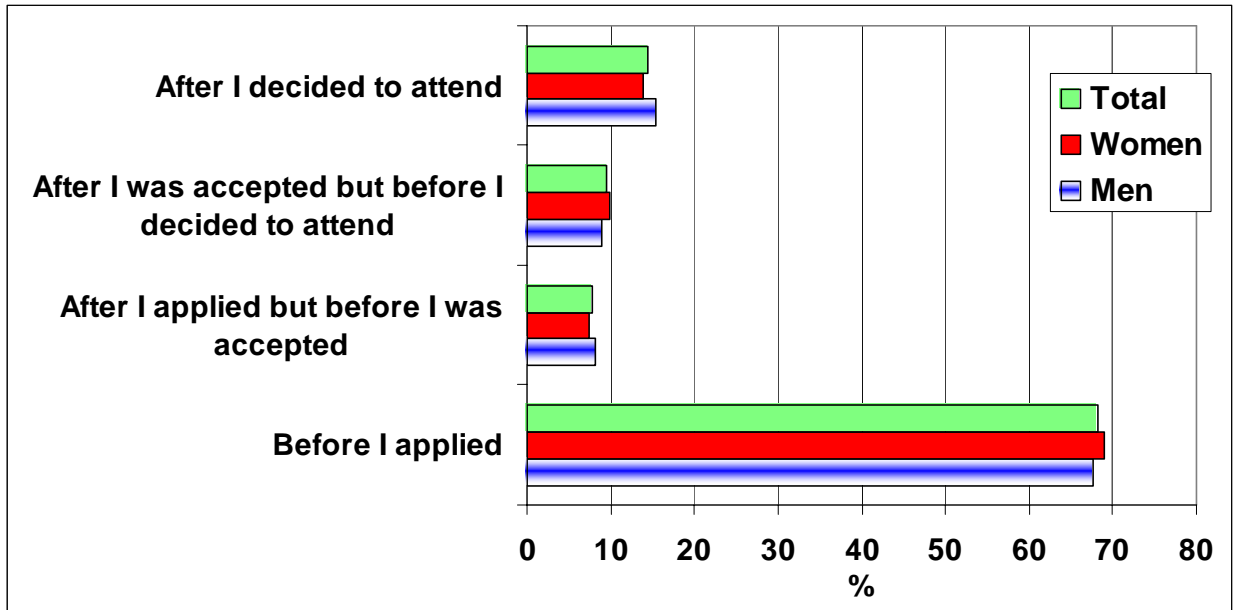
Men rated “rankings in national magazines” ( $p < .001$ ) as more important in their decision-making than women.

Table 10  
**Factors Reported as Very Important in Their Decision to Attend OSU**

Reason	Total %	Total %	Men %	Women %
	2002	2003	2003	2003
This college has a very good academic reputation	37.9	41.1	41.0	41.2
A visit to the campus	Not asked	28.4	23.0	33.7
I was offered financial assistance	22.7	24.9	19.6	30.1
This college has a good reputation for its social activities	20.8	24.8	23.0	26.6
I wanted to go to a school about the size of this college	19.3	21.7	17.7	25.6
This college offers special educational programs	18.2	19.2	15.5	22.9
This college has low tuition	19.1	19.1	15.3	22.8
I wanted to live near home	13.6	16.6	11.0	22.0
I was admitted through an Early Action or Early Decision program	8.6	10.7	9.7	11.8
Information from a website	5.4	8.8	8.5	9.1
Not offered aid by first choice	5.6	5.9	6.6	5.1
Rankings in national magazines	3.1	5.9	8.9	2.9
My relatives wanted me to come here	6.4	5.8	7.0	4.7
High school guidance counselor advised me	3.6	4.4	3.3	5.5
My teacher advised me	2.2	3.1	3.3	2.9
Private college counselor advised me	0.3	2.4	2.2	2.5
I was attracted by the religious affiliation/orientation of the college	0.8	1.3	1.9	0.7
Reputation for campus safety	4.4	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked
The athletic department recruited me	3.2	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked

Most students reported that they visited OSU prior to applying for admission. Yet, approximately 15% indicated that they did not visit OSU until after they had decided to attend. Clearly for both men and women a visit to the campus was a key element in their decision to attend OSU (See Chart 6 below).

Chart 6  
When Student First Visited OSU



## FINANCING COLLEGE

The ability to finance one's college education was one factor affecting a student's decision to attend college and to persist in college. The following items in Table 11 related directly to students' perceptions of their ability to finance college and how they intended to do so.

Most students expected to receive at least some financial support from their families with over 40% expecting to receive over \$6000 in their first year. Yet, a little over one-fifth of students expected no financial help from family. These two sets of students likely will have very different experiences at OSU.

Table 11  
Expected Sources of Financial Assistance

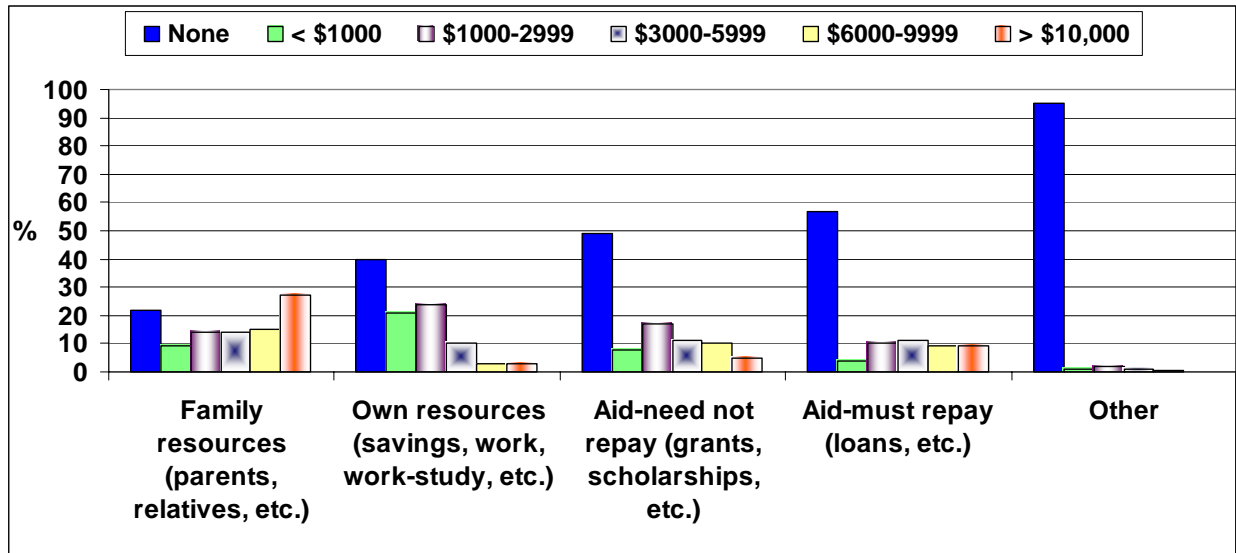
(reported in percent)

Source of Financial Assistance	None	< \$1000	\$1000-2999	\$3000-5999	\$6000-9999	≥ \$10,000
<b>Family resources</b> (parents, relatives, etc.)	22	9	14	14	15	27
<b>Own resources</b> (savings, work, work-study, etc.)	40	21	24	10	3	3
<b>Aid-need not repay</b> (grants, scholarships, etc.)	49	8	17	11	10	5
<b>Aid-must repay</b> (loans, etc.)	57	4	10	11	9	9
<b>Other</b>	95	1	2	1	0.4	0.1

In addition, as Chart 7 below illustrated, nearly half of OSU ft-ft-fy students expected that they would receive no aid (either to be repaid or not repaid). With the increasing costs of higher

education and the decreasing ability of families to help with finances, access for some students to higher education is likely declining.

Chart 7  
Expected Sources of Financial Assistance



The concern about financing college remained fairly stable over the last three years with no significant differences between percentages in each category per year. This was interesting given that the costs of attending OSU rose substantially over the last three years and the level of aid has not kept pace with that increase. Some hypothesized that fewer students with financial concerns were applying to OSU while others suggested that incoming students were not attuned to the financial aspects of college attendance.

Female students have continued to express more concern than male students ( $p < .05$ ) about their ability to finance their college education. The same was true in 2002 (see Table 12 below).

Table 12  
Concern about Financing College

	2003 %	2002 %	2001 %
<b>None</b> (I am confident that I will have sufficient funds)	33.9	29.4	31.6
<b>Some</b> (but I probably will have enough funds)	49.9	54.9	50.0
<b>Major</b> (not sure I will have enough funds to complete college)	16.2	15.7	18.4

## HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Ft-ft-fy students reported being frequently involved in a variety of activities during their last year of high school. Table 13 indicated that while the year-to-year level of involvement varied some, the top six activities have remained stable over the last three years.

Table 13  
Activities Involved in During Past Year

Activity	2003 Percent Frequently Involved	2002 Percent Frequently Involved	2001 Percent Frequently Involved
Used a personal computer	84.8	87.1	90.8
Used internet for research/homework	79.4	83.2	81.8
Socialized with different ethnic group	66.0	70.1	72.3
Other internet use	65.5	56.9	64.0
Communicated via Instant Messaging*	60.8	Not asked	Not asked
Communicated via e-mail	59.5	66.3	81.9
Was bored in class	42.2	36.5	53.6
Attended religious services	37.1	33.0	37.7
Performed volunteer work	35.7	30.7	32.0
Discussed religion	32.9	31.3	35.7
Studied with other students	29.3	33.2	36.6
Asked teacher for advice after class	25.5	24.5	23.6
Voted in student election	25.1	25.7	28.7
Felt overwhelmed	24.7	22.6	30.5
Discussed politics	24.6	22.2	25.7
Did community service as part of a class	23.7	22.6	19.9
Played a musical instrument	19.1	21.6	21.0
Came late to class	14.5	11.2	13.7
Participated in organized demonstrations	12.5	8.0	8.8
Drank beer	7.6	4.9	11.6
Drank wine or liquor	7.0	3.5	9.4
Tutored another student	6.1	8.9	10.8
Visited art gallery or museum	5.4	5.4	4.9
Felt depressed	5.3	4.4	9.8
Was guest in a teacher's home	3.1	3.8	5.7
Overslept & missed class	3.1	2.4	5.9
Smoked cigarettes	2.8	2.2	3.7
Attended public recital/concert	Not asked	17.6	18.3
Participated in internet chat rooms	Not asked	12.9	17.7

\*First time this question has been asked.

Female students reported more involvement ( $p < .05$ ) in the following than did the male students:

- Studied with other students;
- Felt overwhelmed by all they had to do;
- Felt depressed;
- Performed volunteer work;
- Voted in a student election;
- Visited an art gallery or museum;
- Communicated via email;
- Used the internet for research or homework;
- Did community service as a part of a class.

Men reported more involvement ( $p < .05$ ) in the following than did the female students:

- Was bored in class;
- Drank beer;
- Discussed politics.

When students were asked about the frequency of their alcohol use during a typical month during their senior year in high school, there were no significant differences between the mean responses of men and women (Table 14). However, when they were asked the number of drinks per drinking occasions (Table 15), men reported more drinks than women ( $p < .001$ ). Note the table below illustrates the frequency of alcohol use in a typical month in high school.

Table 14  
**Frequency of Alcohol Use (beer, wine, liquor)**

Frequency of Alcohol Use in a Typical Month During Senior Year	Never	1-2 occasions	3-5 occasions	6-10 occasions	10 or more occasions
Men	51.9	18.9	17.5	5.2	6.6
Women	48.1	24.3	15.3	6.4	6.0
Total	49.9	21.7	16.3	5.8	6.3

Table 15  
**Number of Drinks per Drinking Occasion**

During Senior Year, how Many Drinks Per Occasion	1-2 Drinks	3-4 Drinks	5-6 Drinks	7-8 Drinks	9 or more Drinks
Men	20.5	33.3	18.8	13.7	13.7
Women	34.3	32.8	18.7	10.4	3.7
Total	27.9	33.1	18.7	12.0	8.4

With regard to students' frequency of tobacco use, men reported more use than women ( $p < .05$ ). Yet, when asked about the number of packs of cigarettes smoked per day, there was no difference between the mean report of men and women (Table 16).

Table 16  
**Frequency and Degree of Tobacco Use**

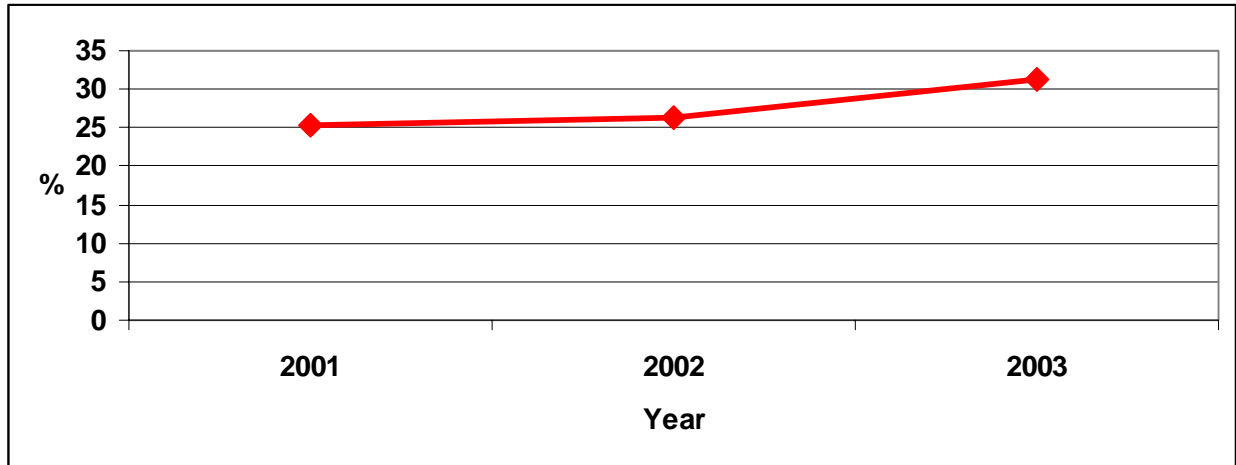
Frequency of Tobacco Use	Never Used	Used, but not in the last 12 months	Used, but not in the last 30 days	Used in the last 30 days	
Men	66.5	12.2	8.6	12.7	
Women	80.7	5.3	4.1	9.8	
Total	74.0	8.6	6.2	11.2	

Table 16 Continued

Number of Cigarettes Smoked Per Day	None	< 1 cigarette	< half a pack	About half a pack	> half a pack
Men	85.1	8.8	4.1	2.0	0.0
Women	80.5	13.4	3.0	1.8	1.2
Total	82.7	11.2	3.5	1.9	0.6

Chart 8 below illustrates the percent of students who reported that their high school required community service as a graduation requirement. Note that this percent has steadily increased over the last 3 years. This mirrors the national trend reported in *The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 2003* (Sax et al., 2003).

Chart 8  
High School Required Community Service for Graduation



As with previous years, students reported that “socializing with friends” dominated their use of time in high school with “exercising or sports” second (Table 17). Most students (69.3%) studied less than five hours per week. When compared to previous years, the top five items in terms of high school time usage have remained constant and in the same order.

Table 17  
Student-Reported Use of Time in Their Last Year of High School  
(Reported in hours per week)

Activity	2001 Mean	2002 Mean	2003 Mean	2003 % 5 hrs or less	2003 % 16 hrs or more
<i>1 = none, 2 = less than one hr, 3 = 1 to 2 hr, 4 = 3 to 5 hr, 5 = 6 to 10 hr, 6 = 11 to 15 hr, 7 = 16 to 20 hr, 8 = over 20hr</i>					
Socializing with friends	5.79	5.46	5.37	30.8	23.9
Exercising or sports	4.80	4.67	4.68	49.7	18.6
Working for pay	4.46	4.30	4.19	49.1	24.9
Studying or homework	4.11	4.13	3.93	69.3	5.9
Watching TV	3.69	3.56	3.57	77.4	4.4

Table 17 Continued

Activity	2001 Mean	2002 Mean	2003 Mean	2003 % 5 hrs or less	2003 % 16 hrs or more
<i>1 = none, 2 = less than one hr, 3 = 1 to 2 hr, 4 = 3 to 5 hr, 5 = 6 to 10 hr, 6 = 11 to 15 hr, 7 = 16 to 20 hr, 8 = over 20hr</i>					
Volunteer work	2.60	2.61	2.82	86.2	3.5
Partying	2.87	2.63	2.74	74.4	4.5
Student clubs or groups	2.74	2.59	2.74	86.4	3.7
Household/childcare duties	2.80	2.69	2.64	93.5	0.4
Reading for pleasure	2.64	2.65	2.64	88.7	1.4
Talking with teacher outside of class	2.57	2.60	2.57	96.2	0.6
Playing video/computer games	2.50	2.42	2.46	88.9	2.7
Prayer/meditation	2.04	1.83	1.91	97.5	0.7

In reference to the Table 17, women tended to be more involved ( $p < .05$ ) than men in:

- Studying or homework,
- Volunteer work,
- Student clubs or groups,
- Household/childcare duties, and
- Reading for pleasure.

Men reported more involvement than women in:

- Playing video/computer games.

Generally, both male and female students reported similar average high school grades. A greater percentage of women tended to have GPA's of A+, A, A- and fewer GPA's of C+, C than male students (Table 18). Though, there was no significant difference in mean GPA between men and women.

Table 18  
Average High School Grades by Gender

	A+, A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C
<b>Men</b>	44.2%	51.9%	4.0%
<b>Women</b>	50.1%	47.7%	2.1%

Table 19 data continues to support the hypothesis that students were unfamiliar with the need to devote significant amounts of time in academic preparation. While there were some differences between 2002 and 2003, most students, regardless of GPA, were devoting five hours or less per week to studying in high school.



Table 19

**Comparison of Time Spent Studying or on Homework with Reported High School GPA**

	High School GPA of A or A+		High School GPA of B		High School GPA of C	
	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002
% 5 hours or less per week studying	65%	64%	73%	69%	78%	67%
% 16 hours or more per week studying	7%	3%	5%	3%	6%	none

**ACADEMIC AND CAREER PLANS AND EXPECTATIONS**

Student expectations for their college years and their career plans were influenced by a number of factors. Previous experience has been shown to be one of the factors in setting expectations. The following sections described both a student's history in certain areas as well as their expectations.

Most students expected to receive a bachelor's degree from OSU with about 20% also expecting to receive their master's degree from OSU (Chart 9). There were no differences in expectations between men and women on this item. Yet, with regard to the highest degree expected from any institution women expected to receive higher degrees than did men ( $p < .05$ ).

Chart 9  
**Highest Academic Degree Expected to Obtain**

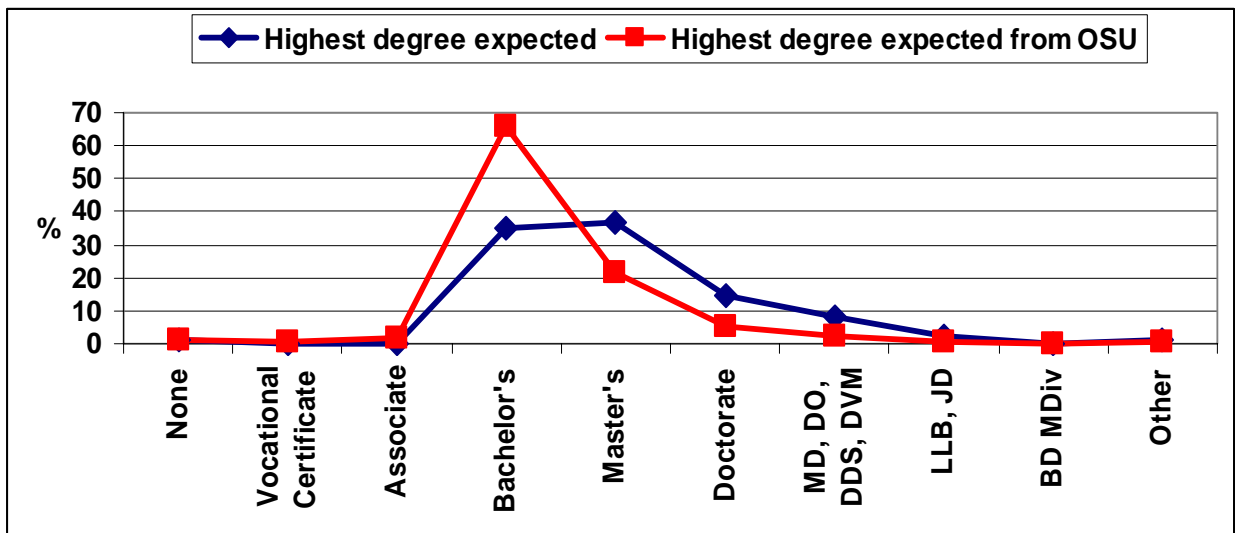
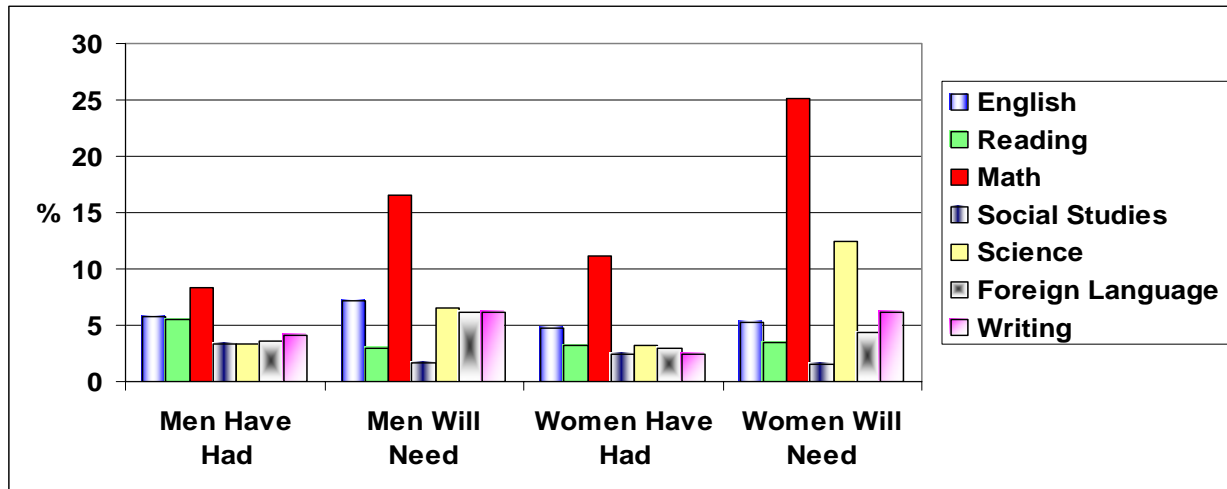


Chart 10 below illustrates the percent of students who have had specific tutoring or remedial work in high school. Additionally, their self-reported expected need for additional tutoring or remedial work during their first college year was also reported.

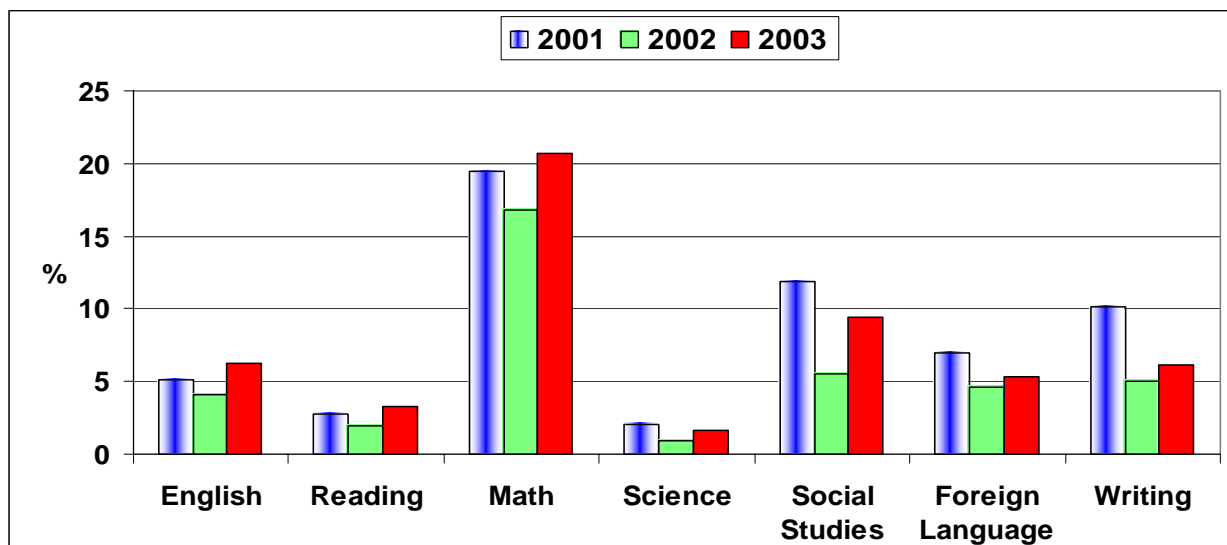
There were no real differences between men and women in terms of having had tutoring or remedial work in high school. However, women reported more expected need ( $p < .05$ ) in college for assistance in mathematics than did male students.

Chart 10  
History of and Need for Tutoring/Remedial Work



Students reported year-to-year need for tutoring or remedial work during their first year remained fairly consistent (Chart 11). There was a consistent (though slight) increase across all areas in expected need for help from 2002 to 2003.

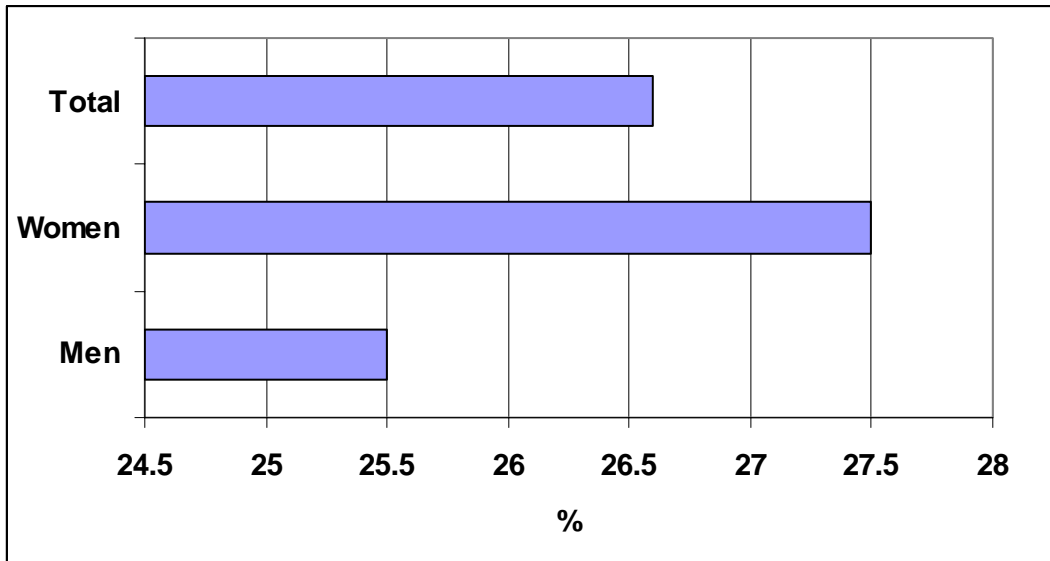
Chart 11  
Student-Reported Need for Tutoring or Remedial Work



It was hypothesized that students have had few, if any, opportunities to conduct research at a major research university library and thus would need instruction. The data in Chart 12 indicated that most students did not believe that they needed instruction to know how to conduct

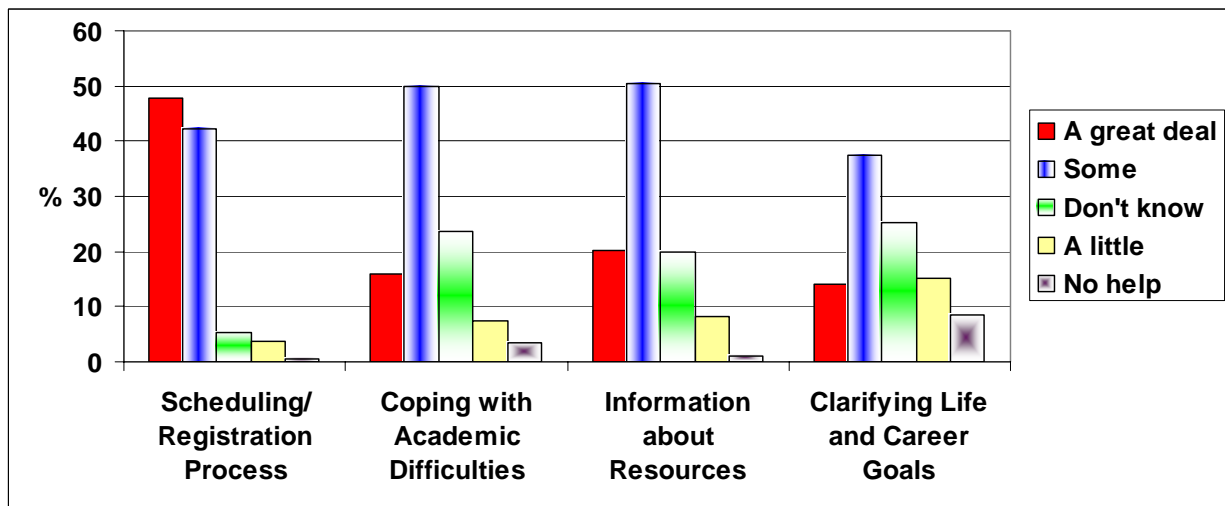
research in the library. This likely reflected naiveté regarding the complexity of a research library. The chart below depicted the percent of students who did believe that they would need instruction on how to use the library for research.

Chart 12  
**Student-Reported Need for Instruction in How to Conduct Research in the Library**



As Chart 13 below illustrates ft-ft-fy students seemed to hold the greatest expectation for their academic advisors to help them in scheduling and registration processes. A lesser degree of help appeared to be expected in the other three categories listed. Reasons for the differences in expectations of academic advisor help might have been related to incoming students' lack of knowledge about the roles of academic advisors in college. When men and women were compared, men tended to expect more help than women in all four areas listed ( $p < .05$ ).

Chart 13  
**Expectation of Help from Advisor**



As in previous years, more students selected engineering as their career choice; however the percentage of students acknowledging that they were undecided was a very close second. The first three career choices (e.g., engineering, undecided, and business) have remained the top three career choices over the last three years (Chart 14).

Chart 14  
**Probable Career Choices for Students**  
 (top 15 in terms of percent endorsed )

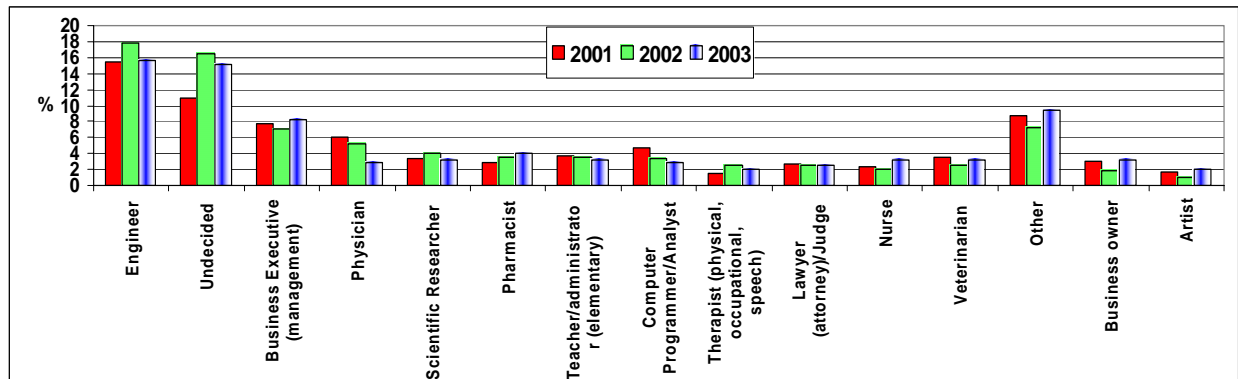


Table 20 provides information about the probable career choices for men and women students for the last three years. In most cases the percent of students choosing a particular career area remained fairly consistent. Notice however that there was a steady decline in women considering engineering but an interest in nursing increased. Both men and women reported a steady decline in interest in being a physician. Men showed somewhat of a decline in computer programmer/analyst but have increased interest in pharmacy and being a business owner.

Table 20  
**Probable Career Choices for Students**  
 (top 15 in terms of percent endorsed )

Men 2001	Men 2002	Men 2003	Probable Career	Women 2003	Women 2002	Women 2001
26.9	32.3	28.1	Engineer	3.2	5.6	6.1
10.9	16.8	14.6	Undecided	15.5	16.3	10.4
8.8	8.0	8.9	Business Executive (management)	7.4	6.3	6.8
3.1	4.9	1.8	Physician	3.9	5.6	8.6
2.2	3.8	2.1	Scientific Researcher	4.2	4.3	4.1
2.0	2.2	4.3	Pharmacist	3.9	4.8	3.4
0.4	0.4	0.4	Teacher/administrator (elementary)	6.0	6.1	6.3
9.2	6.9	5.7	Computer Programmer/Analyst	0	0.4	1.1
0.4	0.9	1.8	Therapist (physical, occupational, speech)	2.1	4.1	2.3
3.3	1.8	1.8	Lawyer (attorney)/Judge	3.2	3.3	2.2
0.4	0.0	0.4	Nurse	6.0	3.9	3.8
0.4	0.4	1.1	Veterinarian	5.3	4.3	6.1

Table 20 Continued

Men 2001	Men 2002	Men 2003	Probable Career	Women 2003	Women 2002	Women 2001
6.8	5.3	7.5	Other	11.3	8.7	10.3
3.7	2.7	4.6	Business owner	1.8	1.1	2.3
1.1	0.7	1.1	Artist	2.8	1.3	2.2

As Table 21 illustrates, selection of major area tended to remain fairly constant for the last three years across categories. Selection of Education as a major appeared to decline while selection of Business seemed to increase steadily.

Women tended to select the following majors more frequently than men:

- Biological Sciences
- Education
- Health professions
- Humanities
- Fine arts
- Social sciences
- Other
- Undecided.

Men selected the following majors more frequently than women:

- Physical sciences
- Other technical
- Engineering. )In fact, engineering was selected 12 times more frequently by men than by women.)

Table 21  
Student Choice of Probable Major Area

	2003 Men %	2003 Women %	2003 Total %	2002 Total %	2001 Total %
<b>Agriculture</b>	4.7	5.2	<b>4.9</b>	2.7	3.6
<b>Biological Science</b>	5.5	11.1	<b>8.3</b>	8.1	7.9
<b>Business</b>	16.4	14.4	<b>15.4</b>	13.1	12.9
<b>Education</b>	1.6	6.6	<b>4.2</b>	6.1	6.9
<b>Engineering</b>	36.3	3.0	<b>19.2</b>	21.4	19.1
<b>English</b>	0.4	1.8	<b>1.1</b>	0.8	1.2
<b>Health Professions</b>	9.0	20.3	<b>14.8</b>	13.4	14.2
<b>History/Political Sc</b>	2.7	3.0	<b>2.8</b>	2.9	2.6
<b>Humanities</b>	0.8	3.0	<b>1.9</b>	1.2	1.6
<b>Fine Arts</b>	2.3	4.1	<b>3.2</b>	2.5	3.3
<b>Math/Stat</b>	0.8	0.4	<b>0.6</b>	0.8	1.1
<b>Physical Sc</b>	4.3	1.5	<b>2.8</b>	3.0	1.9
<b>Social Sc</b>	1.6	7.4	<b>4.6</b>	3.7	5.2
<b>Other Technical</b>	5.5	0.7	<b>3.0</b>	3.7	6.2
<b>Other</b>	3.1	7.0	<b>5.1</b>	5.8	5.9
<b>Undecided</b>	5.1	10.7	<b>8.0</b>	10.6	6.3

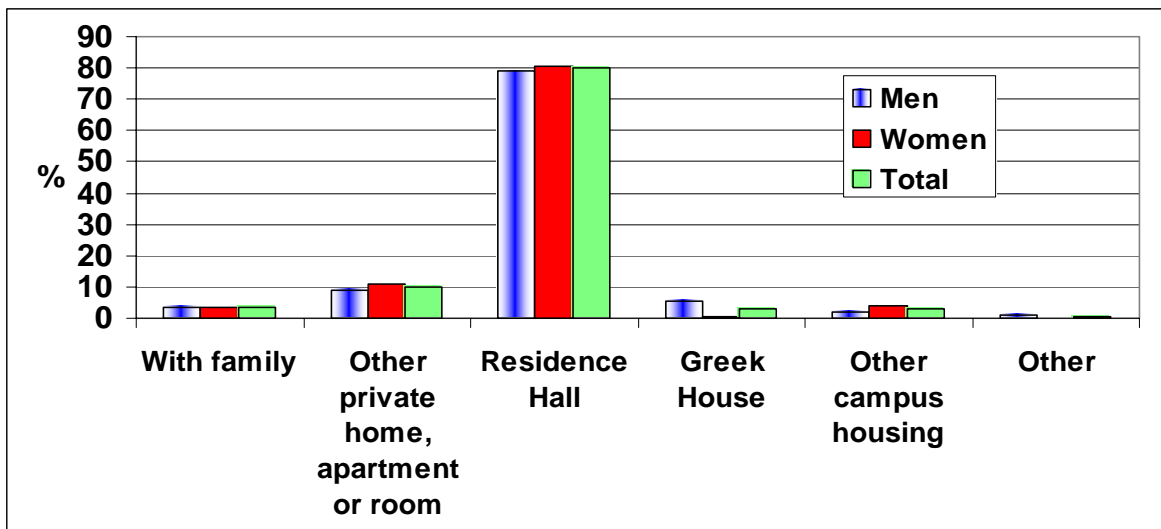
As the information in Table 22 below suggests, students over the last three years entered OSU with some fairly high expectations in terms of getting a bachelor's degree with roughly 80% expecting that outcome. Over 50% of students also expected to make at least a "B" average in college. Almost half expect to get a job to help pay for college expenses with another 5% expecting to work full-time. Students were almost three times more likely to respond positively to "get a job to help pay for college expenses" if their estimate of parental income was \$30,000 or less versus \$150,000 or more.

Table 22  
**"Very Good" Expectation That Student Will Engage in Activity**

<b>Chances Very Good I Will:</b>	<b>2003 Percent</b>	<b>2002 Percent</b>	<b>2001 Percent</b>
Get a bachelor's degree (B.A., B.S., etc.)	80.0	79.9	81.5
Develop close friendships with other students	70.8	75.3	75.9
Socialize with someone of another racial/ethnic group	64.2	71.1	73.9
Make at least "B" average	51.7	53.8	53.4
Be satisfied with your college	47.6	48.5	46.3
Get a job to help pay for college expenses	47.0	51.0	47.7
Participate in student clubs/groups	40.4	32.6	37.4
Communicate regularly with your professors	30.0	30.6	12.8
Participate in volunteer or community service work	24.4	19.7	26.7
Strengthen religious beliefs/convictions	21.8	22.0	Not asked
Participate in a study abroad program	18.0	20.1	Not asked
Change major field	14.1	15.6	15.8
Change career choice	12.7	13.0	14.5
Join a social fraternity or sorority	11.4	11.9	13.4
Play varsity/intercollegiate athletics	9.3	8.1	9.9
Transfer to another college before graduating	8.3	6.4	9.3
Participate in student government	7.5	5.3	5.6
Participate in student protests or demonstrations	5.5	2.4	4.4
Work full-time while attending college	5.3	3.5	4.2
Seek personal counseling	5.0	5.4	4.2
Drop out of college	0.4	0.3	0.5

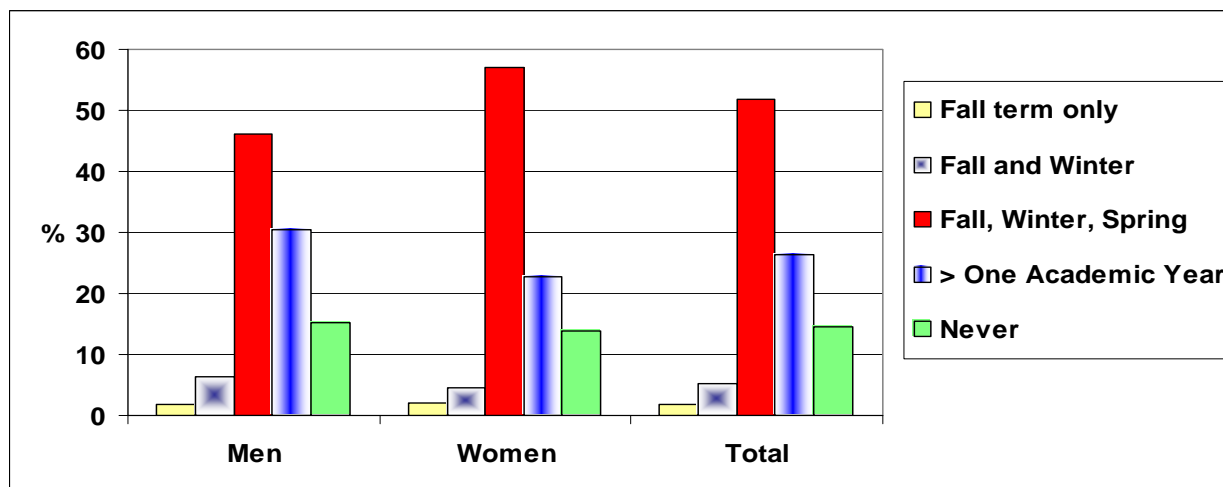
As expected, most first year students (80%) planned to live in a residence hall for fall term. Off-campus housing (e.g., private home or apartment) was at about the 10% level with other options making up another 10%. Men seemed to have slightly more interest in Greek housing than women students (Chart 15).

Chart 15  
Expectation for Fall Term Residence



When students were asked to predict the length of time they intended to live in a college residence hall or cooperative house, most (> 50%) reported they intended to “live in” for one academic year. Yet 30% of men and a little over 20% of women expected to “live-in” for more than one academic year. Only about 15% of ft-ft-fy students expected to “never” live in a college residence hall or cooperative house (Chart 16).

Chart 16  
Length of Time Planning on Living in College Residence Hall or Cooperative House



## POLITICAL AND SOCIAL VIEWS

Students' political views were characterized from far left to far right with most students choosing a middle-of-the-road stance. This finding was consistent with the 2001 and 2002 results. Additionally, men and women differed with regard to their espoused political orientation with

women indicating a more liberal orientation than men ( $p < .05$ ). This too was consistent with 2002 CIRP results. Nationally, over the last few years, there has been a slight shift to the right regarding students' self-reported political views. OSU's results below also seem to be drifting slightly to the right.

Table 23  
**Student-Reported Political Views**

	2001 %	2002 %	2003 %
<b>Far Left</b>	2.3	1.6	1.3
<b>Liberal</b>	24.5	25.1	23.2
<b>Middle-of-the-Road</b>	46.0	48.8	46.7
<b>Conservative</b>	25.5	23.5	27.2
<b>Far Right</b>	1.6	0.9	1.6

Men and women students tended to disagree on most of the items regarding their opinions on social and political issues. Table 24 illustrates the differences between men and women in addition to mean responses from the 2002 survey as well. The significance level is in regard to the differences in means between men and women's opinions on the 2003 survey.

Women tended to hold a more liberal position than men concerning: (significance level refers to the difference in means between men and women's opinions on the 2003 survey)

- Rights of criminals in court ( $p < .001$ ),
- Death penalty ( $p < .001$ ),
- Laws prohibiting homosexual relationships ( $p < .001$ ),
- Handgun control ( $p < .001$ ),
- Racial discrimination ( $p < .001$ ),
- Influence of an individual on social change ( $< .05$ ),
- Legal marriage of same sex couples ( $p < .001$ ),
- Affirmative action in college admissions ( $p < .001$ ),
- Activities of married women ( $p < .001$ ),
- Federal military spending ( $p < .001$ ).

These findings tended to mirror those of the larger United States population and the gender split regarding politically charged issues.

Men tended to be more in favor of the following than women:

- Legalization of marijuana ( $p < .05$ ),
- Not prohibiting racist/sexist speech on campuses ( $p < .05$ ),
- Not obeying laws that violate their personal values ( $p < .001$ ).



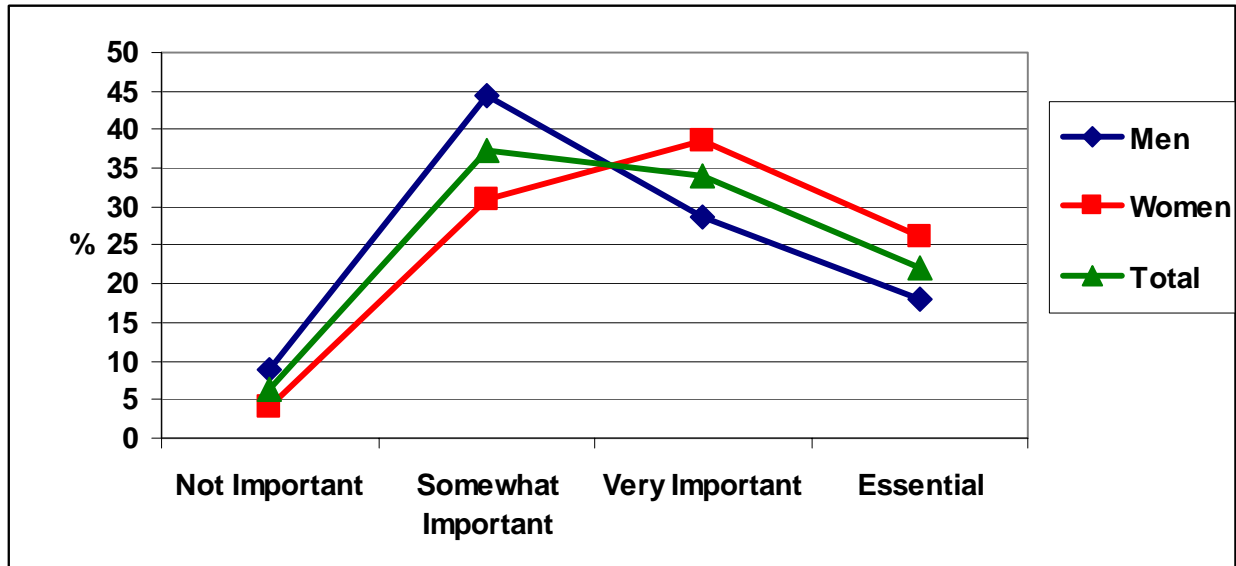
Table 24  
**Student Opinions on Social and Political Issues**

(Significance level of difference in means between M and F for 2003)

Issue	Sex	2002 Mean	2003 Mean	Sig. Level	2003 % Strongly Disagree	2003 % Strongly Agree
<i>1 = Disagree strongly, 2 = Disagree some, 3 = Agree some, 4 = Agree strongly</i>						
<b>Too much concern in courts for rights of criminals</b>	<b>M</b>	2.81	<b>2.78</b>	<b>.001</b>	5.5	14.5
	<b>F</b>	2.74	<b>2.57</b>		5.8	6.5
Abortion should be legal	M	2.68	2.56	.357	24.1	24.1
	F	2.69	2.64		25.4	30.8
<b>Death penalty should be abolished</b>	<b>M</b>	1.93	<b>1.83</b>	<b>.000</b>	43.2	6.2
	<b>F</b>	2.11	<b>2.12</b>		25.5	9.9
<b>Marijuana should be legalized</b>	<b>M</b>	2.25	<b>2.33</b>	<b>.016</b>	28.5	17.9
	<b>F</b>	2.07	<b>2.13</b>		32.0	8.8
<b>Important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships</b>	<b>M</b>	2.04	<b>2.14</b>	<b>.000</b>	33.7	12.8
	<b>F</b>	1.65	<b>1.75</b>		54.5	6.5
<b>Federal government should do more to control the sale of handguns</b>	<b>M</b>	2.71	<b>2.57</b>	<b>.000</b>	17.2	19.7
	<b>F</b>	3.10	<b>3.03</b>		7.2	30.6
<b>Racial discrimination is no longer a major problem in America</b>	<b>M</b>	2.08	<b>2.16</b>	<b>.000</b>	19.7	6.6
	<b>F</b>	1.85	<b>1.93</b>		27.4	2.4
<b>An individual can do little to bring about change in our society</b>	<b>M</b>	2.14	<b>2.11</b>	<b>.022</b>	27.1	4.2
	<b>F</b>	1.96	<b>1.95</b>		32.1	3.4
Wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes than they do now	M	2.46	2.56	.523	15.7	18.5
	F	2.52	2.51		12.5	12.5
<b>Colleges should prohibit racist/sexist speech on campus</b>	<b>M</b>	2.59	<b>2.61</b>	<b>.039</b>	15.1	20.7
	<b>F</b>	2.76	<b>2.78</b>		10.3	24.5
<b>Same-sex couples should have the right to legal marital status</b>	<b>M</b>	2.46	<b>2.42</b>	<b>.000</b>	24.1	18.9
	<b>F</b>	2.85	<b>2.88</b>		15.0	36.0
<b>Affirmative action in college admissions should be abolished</b>	<b>M</b>	2.66	<b>2.78</b>	<b>.000</b>	6.1	24.6
	<b>F</b>	2.45	<b>2.47</b>		8.3	12.9
<b>Activities of married women are best confined to the home and family</b>	<b>M</b>	1.87	<b>1.94</b>	<b>.000</b>	35.4	5.6
	<b>F</b>	1.38	<b>1.54</b>		66.8	4.9
<b>People should not obey laws which violate their personal values</b>	<b>M</b>	2.31	<b>2.25</b>	<b>.000</b>	15.3	6.8
	<b>F</b>	2.01	<b>2.00</b>		28.3	3.8
<b>Federal military spending should be increased</b>	<b>M</b>	2.35	<b>2.30</b>	<b>.000</b>	15.0	6.8
	<b>F</b>	2.20	<b>2.02</b>		24.7	1.8
Federal government should do more to discourage energy consumption	M	2.92	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked
	F	2.95	Not asked		Not asked	Not asked

With regard to the level of importance that students placed on diversity, women students reported a greater degree of personal importance than did male students ( $p < .05$ ). As Chart 17 below illustrates, most OSU ft-ft-fy students indicated that diversity was at least very important to them with less than 10% indicating that diversity was not important.

Chart 17  
Personal Importance of Diversity



## STUDENT OPINIONS, VALUES, AND BEHAVIORS

The following section provides information on students' opinions, expectations for the future, and their rating of their skills and abilities. "Being honest in their relationships with others" was overwhelmingly reported by participants as describing them to a "great extent" (Table 25). The other traits listed appeared to be descriptive of less than 30% of the ft-ft-fy student body.

Table 25  
Traits That Describe Student to a "Great Extent"

Trait	% Men	% Women	% Total
Searching for meaning/purpose in life	28	29	29
Engaging in self-reflection	23	26	25
Appreciating the interconnectedness of everything	23	20	22
Believing in the sacredness of life	25	32	28
Being honest in my relationships with others	64	79	72

As Table 26 below suggests men tended to rate their skills and abilities higher than women. This was particularly true in the areas of:

- Academic ability ( $p < .001$ );
- Computer skills ( $p < .001$ );
- Emotional health ( $p < .05$ );
- Mathematical ability ( $p < .001$ );

- Physical health ( $p < .001$ );
- Risk-taking ( $p < .001$ ); and
- Self-confidence (intellectual) ( $p < .001$ ).

The only area in which women showed a significant difference in rating was in the area of artistic ability ( $p < .001$ ). This is somewhat of a change from the 2002 CIRP results which indicated that women showed a greater degree of confidence in their “drive to achieve” and “persistence” than their male counterparts.

Table 26  
Student Rating of Skills or Abilities

Skill or Ability	Sex	Mean	Sig. Level	% Highest 10%	% Lowest 10%
<i>1 = Lowest 10%, 2 = Below Average, 3 = Average, 4 = Above Average, 5 = Highest 10%</i>					
<b>Academic ability</b>	M	<b>3.99</b>	<b>.000</b>	22.8	0
	F	<b>3.72</b>		10.4	0.3
<b>Artistic ability</b>	M	<b>2.72</b>	<b>.001</b>	3.2	10.9
	F	<b>3.00</b>		5.5	9.1
<b>Computer skills</b>	M	<b>3.69</b>	<b>.000</b>	15.5	0.3
	F	<b>3.16</b>		1.3	1.0
Cooperativeness	M	3.84	.119	14.8	0.3
	F	3.93		21.1	0
Creativity	M	3.68	.473	16.1	0.6
	F	3.63		14.0	1.0
Drive to achieve	M	3.87	.120	24.6	0.6
	F	3.98		29.5	0
<b>Emotional health</b>	M	<b>3.79</b>	<b>.004</b>	21.0	0.3
	F	<b>3.60</b>		14.9	0
Leadership ability	M	3.68	.619	20.3	0.6
	F	3.72		20.2	0.3
<b>Mathematical ability</b>	M	<b>3.64</b>	<b>.000</b>	23.2	1.6
	F	<b>3.06</b>		4.9	5.5
<b>Physical health</b>	M	<b>3.90</b>	<b>.000</b>	26.5	0
	F	<b>3.49</b>		10.1	0.3
Persistence	M	3.77	.367	16.6	0
	F	3.71		17.2	0
Popularity	M	3.40	.056	7.4	0.6
	F	3.28		6.5	1.0
Public speaking ability	M	3.18	.726	9.7	3.9
	F	3.15		7.5	2.6
Religiousness	M	2.60	.086	8.4	25.3
	F	2.78		10.8	19.3
<b>Risk-taking</b>	M	<b>3.46</b>	<b>.001</b>	10.7	1.0
	F	<b>3.24</b>		6.5	2.3
<b>Self-confidence (intellectual)</b>	M	<b>3.80</b>	<b>.000</b>	16.7	0.3
	F	<b>3.52</b>		10.8	1.0
Self-confidence (social)	M	3.59	.114	15.6	1.6
	F	3.47		13.1	1.3

Table 26 Continued

Skill or Ability	Sex	Mean	Sig. Level	% Highest 10%	% Lowest 10%
<i>1 = Lowest 10%, 2 = Below Average, 3 = Average, 4 = Above Average, 5 = Highest 10%</i>					
Self-understanding	M	3.71	.105	16.7	0.7
	F	3.60		13.7	0.7
Spirituality	M	3.10	.163	10.9	11.6
	F	3.22		13.1	8.2
Understanding of others	M	3.76	.703	15.3	0
	F	3.78		15.6	0.7
Writing ability	M	3.42	.483	10.4	2.0
	F	3.46		7.6	0.3

Students' expectations for the future varied in terms of importance especially with regard to the differences between men and women. Nevertheless the top four items selected by men and women as being most important were the same though not in the same order.

Women rated as most important:

1. Raise a family
2. Be very well-off financially
3. Help others in difficulty
4. Become an authority in my field

Men rated as most important:

1. Be very well-off financially
2. Raise a family
3. Become an authority in my field
4. Help others in difficulty

There were some differences in terms of mean rating of expectations which are in bold face type in Table 27 below. The significance level in Table 27 pertains to differences in means between men and women in 2003. Notice in the top four items that while men and women agreed about the top four, there were still some differences statistically in the mean importance of "Being very well off financially" and "Helping others in difficulty."

Table 27  
Student Expectations for Future

Expectation	Sex	2002 Mean	2003 Mean	Sig. Level	% Essential	% Not Important
<i>1 = Not Important, 2 = Somewhat Important, 3 = Very Important, 4 = Essential</i>						
<b>Achieve in a performing art</b>	<b>M</b>	1.37	<b>1.46</b>	<b>.021</b>	2.0	65.3
	<b>F</b>	1.54	<b>1.61</b>		3.8	55.5
Become an authority in my field	M	2.60	2.69	.243	18.7	7.5
	F	2.54	2.61		15.4	10.9
Obtain recognition from Colleagues	M	2.35	2.55	.070	13.1	11.6
	F	2.36	2.41		10.7	15.7
Influence political structure	M	1.69	1.90	.095	5.6	36.0
	F	1.68	1.78		5.4	44.4
<b>Influence social values</b>	<b>M</b>	1.91	<b>2.09</b>	<b>.025</b>	6.4	28.8
	<b>F</b>	2.16	<b>2.26</b>		6.5	19.2
Raise a family	M	2.87	2.98	.342	32.9	7.6
	F	2.88	3.06		38.2	7.3
Have administrative responsibility	M	2.17	2.31	.345	9.6	19.7
	F	2.10	2.23		8.8	23.0
<b>Be very well off financially</b>	<b>M</b>	3.02	<b>3.14</b>	<b>.005</b>	38.2	4.4
	<b>F</b>	2.82	<b>2.93</b>		27.0	5.3
<b>Help others in difficulty</b>	<b>M</b>	2.47	<b>2.63</b>	<b>.001</b>	15.3	4.8
	<b>F</b>	2.77	<b>2.87</b>		23.4	3.8
<b>Make theoretical contribution to science</b>	<b>M</b>	1.87	<b>2.03</b>	<b>.001</b>	7.3	27.9
	<b>F</b>	1.69	<b>1.76</b>		3.9	46.7
Write original works	M	1.39	1.52	.205	4.0	62.9
	F	1.45	1.43		2.7	67.7
<b>Create artistic work</b>	<b>M</b>	1.42	<b>1.53</b>	<b>.019</b>	3.2	64.5
	<b>F</b>	1.61	<b>1.72</b>		9.5	56.9
Be successful in own business	M	2.30	2.43	.396	20.2	23.8
	F	2.08	2.35		19.5	26.3
Be involved in environmental clean-up	M	1.73	1.88	.080	4.5	30.8
	F	1.88	2.01		7.7	31.8
Develop meaningful philosophy of life	M	2.07	2.21	.313	12.5	27.0
	F	2.17	2.12		8.1	30.5
<b>Take part in community action program</b>	<b>M</b>	1.66	<b>1.89</b>	<b>.022</b>	4.0	34.0
	<b>F</b>	1.97	<b>2.06</b>		5.0	26.4
Promote racial understanding	M	1.86	2.00	.645	5.3	30.4
	F	2.03	2.03		5.0	29.9
<b>Keep up with political affairs</b>	<b>M</b>	2.10	<b>2.23</b>	<b>.022</b>	10.4	20.9
	<b>F</b>	2.05	<b>2.05</b>		6.1	29.1
Be a community leader	M	1.86	2.07	.776	7.3	29.0
	F	2.00	2.10		7.6	30.2
Integrate spirituality into my life	M	2.01	2.10	.124	10.8	33.7
	F	2.23	2.23		14.6	28.4
Improve my understanding of other countries and cultures	M	2.21	2.30	.170	10.8	18.1
	F	2.49	2.41		10.4	14.2

## DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The intention of this report is to provide information to the OSU community about the characteristics of in-coming first year students with the hope that this information will aid in understanding, discussing, and eventually decision-making concerning services, programs, structures, and other systems that impact OSU students. With greater information, knowledge, and collaboration, the University community will find ways to act responsibly with this knowledge (Student Affairs Assessment Committee, 2002).

Specific recommendations arising from this data included:

- Use data from the CIRP and other input variables available at OSU to predict retention and graduation rates that can be compared to actual OSU performance in these areas. This could provide a baseline from which OSU could measure the effectiveness of university recruitment and retention initiatives. Additionally, it could provide a measure of our current retention performance (i.e., are we over-performing, under-performing or performing as would be expected given the characteristics of our students and university).
- Post report on the Student Affairs Research and Evaluation web page and distribute URL to university community.
- Present data to faculty and staff groups and engage in discussion about implications of the data.
- Continue to participate in the annual CIRP Freshman Survey for another 1-2 years and then move to every other year. Coordinate use of the CIRP with the administration and use of the Your First College Year survey designed as a follow-up to CIRP.

## REFERENCES

- Astin, A. W. & Oseguera, L. (2002). *Degree Attainment rates at American Colleges and Universities*. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA.
- Sanderson, R. A. (2003). *2003 Your First College Year Survey Results*. Corvallis, OR: Division of Student Affairs, Oregon State University.
- Sax, L. J., Astin, A. W., Lindholm, J. A., Korn, W. S., Saenz, V. B., & Mahoney, K. M. (2003). *The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 2003*. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA.
- Student Affairs Assessment Committee (2002). *Fall 2001 Freshman Survey Results*. Corvallis, OR: Division of Student Affairs, Oregon State University.