Background
The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) incoming freshman survey, coordinated through the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA, is the nation’s oldest longitudinal study of the American higher education system.

In 2006, all incoming freshmen at Texas A&M were asked to complete the survey during their New Student Conference session. Of the 7,476 students in the population, 4,561 completed at least a portion of the instrument for a response rate of 61%.

Overall, students taking the CIRP were predominantly white, but had interactions with people who were different than themselves. They looked forward to having additional experiences while at Texas A&M.

Results

Ethnicity (in a check all that applied format):
- 82% Caucasian
- 10% Mexican American/Chicano
- 4% Asian American/Asian
- 3% African American/Black
- 3% Other Latino
- 2% American Indian/Alaska Native
- 2% Other
- 1% Puerto Rican
- <1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

Citizenship status:
- 97% U.S. Citizens
- 2% Permanent residents
- 1% Neither

Religious preference (5% or more of respondents):
- 26% Roman Catholic
- 24% Baptist
- 14% Methodist
- 12% Other Christian
- 6% None
- 5% Lutheran

Activities in the past year:
- 76% Frequently socialized with someone of another racial/ethnic group
- 38% Frequently discussed religion

Chances are “very good” that they will:
- 45% Socialize with someone of another racial/ethnic group
- 24% Participate in a study abroad program

Racial composition of their high school:
- 2% Completely non-White
- 16% Mostly non-White
- 32% Roughly half non-White
- 46% Mostly White
- 4% Completely White

Racial composition of their home neighborhood:
- 4% Completely non-White
- 9% Mostly non-White
- 12% Roughly half non-White
- 60% Mostly White
- 16% Completely White

Objectives considered to be “essential” or “very important”:
- 49% Improving their understanding of other countries and cultures
- 28% Helping to promote racial understanding

Students agreed “strongly” or “somewhat”:
- 62% Undocumented immigrants should be denied access to public education
- 57% Affirmative action in college admissions should be abolished
- 43% It is important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships
- 34% Same sex couples should have the right to legal marital status
- 26% Racial discrimination is no longer a major problem in America

Students “strongly agreed” or “agreed”:
- 74% were enthusiastic about having serious conversations with students whose ethnic or racial backgrounds are different than theirs
- 74% were enthusiastic about having serious conversations with students whose philosophy and values are different than theirs

For more information visit http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/cirp.html or http://studentlifestudies.tamu.edu/  Prepared on: June 18, 2007