Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Incoming Freshman Survey, 2006: Involvement

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 at least somewhat involved in high school and expected to be involved in activities at Texas A&M. At the same time, they recognized a balance of involvement and academics in their first year.

Results

Students rated themselves “above average” or “highest 10%” as compared with the average person their age in:

- 75% Leadership ability
- 60% Self-confidence (Social)

Activities students did in the past year:
- 94% Performed volunteer work
- 92% Attended a religious service
- 45% Participated in organized demonstrations
- 44% played a musical instrument
- 26% Voted in a student election

During their last year in high school, time students spent in a typical week in student clubs/groups:
- 10% None
- 15% less than one hour
- 32% 1 to 2 hours
- 23% 3 to 5 hours
- 11% 6 to 10 hours
- 4% 11 to 15 hours
- 2% 16 to 20 hours
- 3% Over 20 hours

Chances are “very good” that they will:
- 64% Participate in student clubs/groups
- 11% Join a social fraternity or sorority
- 8% Participate in student government
- 8% Play varsity/intercollegiate athletics
- 2% Participate in student protests or demonstrations

Students “agree” or “strongly agree”:
- 93% believe it is important to be in student organizations and activities outside the classroom some time during their college career
- 93% believe participation in student organizations and activities will develop skills in addition to what they learn in the classroom
- 75% believe it is important to limit their outside of class/co-curricular involvement during their freshman year to adjust to academic demands
- 38% said it was likely they will participate in an international education or work experiences (such as Study Abroad)

Objectives considered to be “essential” or “very important”:
- 69% Helping others in difficulty
- 44% Becoming a community leader
- 42% Influencing social values
- 29% Participating in a community action program
- 20% Becoming involved in programs to clean up the environment
- 6% Participating in an organization like the Peace Corps or AmeriCorps/VISTA

For more information visit
http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/cirp.html or
http://studentlifestudies.tamu.edu/

Prepared on:  June 18, 2007