

# **Texas State First-Time Freshmen: Results of the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) 2005 Freshman Survey**

## **Background**

Texas State University-San Marcos has participated in CIRP Freshman Survey for five years, in the fall semesters of 2000, 2001, 2003 and 2005. New freshmen complete surveys in their first discussion group meetings during PAWS Preview. In the fall of 2005, surveys were completed by 2,413 students or 78 percent of the 3,099 new freshmen enrolled at Texas State. This report focuses on the responses of a subset of 2,402 new students who enrolled as first-time, full-time freshmen at Texas State.

## **Findings**

In addition to results from Texas State first-time full-time freshmen in 2000, 2001, 2003, and 2005, comparison data are reported for U.S. public four year college freshmen from institutions of high selectivity<sup>1</sup> (n= 23,604 in 2005).

- 99% of the first time, full time freshmen graduated high school in 2005. Sixty four percent are 18 years old, and 34% are 19 years old. Nearly all the freshmen graduated from public school (not charter or magnet) (92%).
- The Texas State freshman class has a greater percentage of freshmen from Mexican American/Chicano descent (17%) than do public universities (3%), and fewer freshmen of White/Caucasian descent (78%) than public universities (81%). The African-American freshmen are the third largest group (4%) and lower than public universities (7%).
- More than half (52%) of Texas State freshmen come from permanent homes 101 to 500 miles from campus. Texas State has more freshmen (25%) coming from homes 11 to 50 miles away than public universities (28%). “Living close to home” was a very important influence for attending in females (23%) more so than males (14%).
- One quarter (27%) of Texas State freshmen applied only to Texas State for admission. Over half (56%) of Texas State freshmen applied to two or more colleges in addition to Texas State. A campus visit was a very important reason influencing the decision to attend the college for new freshmen (40%). Other very important reasons for influencing the student’s decision to attend Texas State include the student wanted to “attend a college about this size” (36%), the cost of attending this college (27%), and the college’s graduates get good jobs (25%).
- When asked about reasons that were very important in influencing the decision to attend a particular college, Texas State freshmen were less likely than public university freshmen to cite the very good academic reputation of the college (21% Texas State compared to 58% public university) or the financial assistance offered (19% Texas State compared to 29% public university).

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<sup>1</sup> Selectivity is an estimate of the mean score of entering freshmen on the Verbal plus Mathematical portions of the SAT (or the converted SAT Math and Verbal equivalents from the ACT composite). In 2005, public four year colleges of high selectivity have mean scores ranging from 1,055 or more.

- Texas State freshmen more often report drinking beer frequently or occasionally in high school (65%) than public university freshmen (45%), and they more often report drinking wine or liquor (70%) than public university freshmen (51%).
- Sixteen percent of Texas State freshmen reported they spent no time partying during high school compared to 24 percent of public university freshmen.
- More Texas State freshmen spent 20+ hours per week socializing with friends during high school (29%) than public university freshmen (19%). Texas State freshmen reported more frequent socialization with someone of another racial/ethnic group (77%) than public university freshmen (72%).
- When asked if the student has a concern about the ability to finance a college education, Texas State students responded more frequently to having a Major (not sure I will have enough funds to complete college (13%) than the public universities (9%). Students estimate the chances are “very good” that he/she will get a job to help pay for college expenses (44%), and work full-time while attending college (8%).
- When asked what is the highest academic degree that the student intends to obtain a third responded the Bachelor’s degree (34%) and over forty percent the Master’s degree (42%). Thirteen percent were planning on obtaining a doctorate degree (Ph.D. Or Ed.D.).
- When asked what is the highest academic degree that the student intends to obtain from Texas State over half responded the Bachelor’s degree (66%) and a quarter the Master’s degree (25%). Two percent were planning on obtaining a doctorate degree (Ph.D. Or Ed.D.).
- Texas State freshmen most often note very important reasons for attending college as “to be able to make more money” (73%) and “to learn more about things that interest me” (71%).
- Texas State freshmen less often decided to attend college to get a better job (66%) than did public university freshmen (71%).
- Texas State freshmen are less likely to estimate chances as very good that they will be satisfied with their college (44%) compared to public university freshmen (52%).

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT CIRP:

Utilize custom questions

Post data collection - develop break outs for the following topic areas:

1. civic responsibility
2. personal responsibility
3. respect for diverse people
4. healthy lifestyle
5. academic- preparation and goals
6. career goals

Develop longitudinal data for responses by students