

Profile of BSC First-Time Freshmen Fall 1995, 2000, 2005, 2006

Based on Results of the CIRP (American Freshman) Survey

Bridgewater State College has participated in the study of new college students sponsored by the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) at UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) since 1990. Begun in 1966, CIRP is a longitudinal study that forms the basis of the *American Freshman* series of books. The CIRP survey is administered to the population of first-time, full-time freshmen as an element of the June orientation sessions conducted by the Division of Student Affairs.

Survey Year	First-Time Freshman Enrollment	Number of Survey Respondents	Percentage of Enrolled Students Responding
1995	1,115	969	86.9%
2000	1,291	1,174	90.9%
2005	1,332	1,194	89.6%
2006	1,361	1,253	92.1%

Selected CIRP results are reported in three broad categories:

Background Characteristics and Preparation

Table 1: Background Characteristics

Table 2: Self-Assessments of Preparation

Activities and Opinions

Table 3: Use of Time in an Average Week

Table 4: Previous Year's Activities

Attitudes and Expectations about College

Table 5: Top Reasons for Attending College

Table 6: Expected College Activities

Table 7: Top Five Life Objectives

Table 1: Background Characteristics of BSC First-Time Freshmen

Item	Fall			
	1995	2000	2005	2006
Family Characteristics				
Father's education: HS grad or less	43.8	41.6	43.2	45.5
Mother's education: HS grad or less	48.2	37.4	35.1	39.1
Parents' income: less than \$50,000	49.8	36.6	28.7	32.9
Parents' income: greater than \$100,000	7.7	12.9	25.1	21.9
Miles from college to home: 100+ miles	5.9	7.5	7.6	7.6
Religious orientation				
Catholic	62.8	53.2	43.6	40.3

Figures represent percentages of students reporting each characteristic.

Table 2: BSC First-Time Freshmen Self-Assessments of Preparation

Item	Fall			
	1995	2000	2005	2006
Academic ability	37.7	45.5	48.3	51.3
Artistic ability	19.6	24.2	24.3	21.6
Computer skills	—	31.2	35.8	36.5
Drive to achieve	48.4	52.4	59.1	60.7
Leadership ability	48.1	50.8	56.3	55.4
Mathematical ability	25.3	29.0	31.3	29.0
Public speaking ability	22.1	26.4	28.6	28.3
Writing ability	33.3	38.1	43.5	44.0
SAT Scores (BSC Institutional Data)				
Math	500	492	510	508
Verbal	507	501	509	502

Table reports the percentage of students in each group that rate themselves as "above average" or "in the highest 10%." "—" indicates that the response choice was not available for that year.

Table 3: BSC First-Time Freshmen Use of Time in an Average Week during the Past Year

Activity/Hours per week during last year of HS	Fall			
	1995	2000	2005	2006
Educational Activities				
Doing homework: Less than 1 hour	15.9	21.3	26.4	22.4
Reading for pleasure: Less than 1 hour	56.8	62.9	61.7	57.5
Work/Service Activities				
Working for pay:				
• Less than 1 hour	11.2	9.5	12.3	13.0
• 11 or more hours	72.1	73.4	69.7	68.1
Doing volunteer work: 0 hours	41.3	42.4	40.3	40.1
Social Activities				
Partying: 6 or more hours	39.9	36.5	26.4	25.3

Figures represent percentages of students reporting each activity.

Table 4: Previous Year's Activities of BSC First-Time Freshmen

Item	Fall			
	1995	2000	2005	2006
Educational Activities				
Asked a teacher for advice*	15.2	18.4	19.5	19.4
Computer-Related Activities				
Used a personal computer*	39.9	72.4	74.2	—
Used Internet for research/homework*	—	66.4	71.2	63.0
Political/Religious Activities				
Attended a religious service	82.3	75.2	70.9	64.9
Discussed politics*	10.7	10.5	41.7**	26.7
<p>*Percentage responding "frequently" only. Other percentages reflect responses of "frequently" or "occasionally." **In 2005, the item specified whether students discussed politics <i>in class</i>. "—" indicates that the response choice was not available for that year.</p>				

Table 5: Top Reasons for attending college among BSC First-Time Freshmen

Reason	Fall			
	1995	2000	2005	2006
To get training for a specific career	—	75.6	73.3	75.1
To learn more about things that interest me	69.8	69.3	72.3	73.1
To be able to get a better job	70.9	68.7	70.7	69.0
To be able to make more money	68.5	68.9	69.6	67.8
To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas	59.7	55.7	55.2	57.7
<p>Figures refer to the percentage of students who identified the reason as "very important" in deciding to go to college. "—" indicates that the reason was not reported for that year</p>				

Table 6: Expected College Activities of BSC First-Time Freshmen

Item	Fall			
	1995	2000	2005	2006
Academic achievement				
Make at least a B average	28.1	39.0	45.6	48.2
Be satisfied with college	39.3	31.9	39.9	44.5
Extra-curricular activities				
Get a job to pay expenses	51.7	52.6	65.1	58.9
Work full-time while in college	5.7	6.8	14.7	11.6
Table reports the percentage of students in each group that report the chances are "very good" that they will participate in the activity.				

Table 7: Top Five Life Objectives of BSC First-Time Freshmen

Life Objective	Fall			
	1995	2000	2005	2006
Raise a family	77.4	74.7	83.0	81.7
Be very well off financially	74.1	70.9	69.1	73.4
Help others in difficulty	62.2	62.3	67.1	64.2
Become an authority in my field	62.9	47.1	50.8	48.8
Obtain recognition from colleagues	53.3	44.5	50.5	50.7
Figures represent the percentage of students who identified each objective as "essential" or "very important."				