

Introduction

Embry-Riddle participated in the nationwide administration of the 2007 CIRP¹ Freshmen Survey, a study developed to gather information from students prior to their experiencing college life. Demographic, experiential and attitudinal information are gathered as first-time freshmen begin their educational experience.

The Office of Institutional Research (IR) administered the survey to Fall 2007 first-time freshmen at both the Daytona Beach and Prescott campuses during scheduled class time of the student success courses. Out of 1038 incoming freshmen from the Daytona Beach campus, a total of 585 (56%) responded to the survey. Out of 400 incoming freshmen from the Prescott campus, 198 (50%) responded to the survey.

This report presents the 2007 survey responses of Embry-Riddle first-time freshmen by campus and, where appropriate by degree program. Within the body of the report, when available, national CIRP results are presented for comparison. These national statistics are comparable to those of ERAU in that they are based on responses of first-time freshmen attending private, 4-year colleges with average SAT scores ranging from 1100 to 1249, termed 'high selectivity' colleges by the CIRP foundation. Longitudinal trends are also presented in this report when appropriate.

This report is organized as follows:

- Introduction/Executive Summary/Methodology
- The Students
- The College Attendance Decision
- Selection of Career and Degree Program
- Plans for Financing College
- Expectations of College and Beyond
- Data Tables
- Survey Materials

¹The Cooperative Institutional Research Project (CIRP) survey is administered by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI), located at UCLA's Graduate School of Education & Information Studies, and conducted under the sponsorship of the American Council on Education. Results of this 40-year old survey are published each year in The American Freshman.

Executive Summary

The Office of Institutional Research administered the CIRP Freshman Survey to Fall 2007 first-time freshmen at both the Daytona Beach and Prescott campuses. Out of 1038 incoming freshmen from the Daytona Beach campus, a total of 585 (56%) responded to the survey. Out of 400 incoming freshmen from the Prescott campus, 198 (50%) responded to the survey. Where applicable, this report compares ERAU findings to those from a national comparative group – first-time freshmen entering ‘highly selective’, private four-year colleges – obtained from the longitudinal CIRP study.

The Student:

- Both Daytona Beach (14%) and Prescott (9%) campuses attracted more incoming freshmen noting English as their second language than did comparable schools (7%).
- Students at both campuses were significantly less likely to frequently feel overwhelmed (22% at Daytona Beach, 19% at Prescott, and 31% CIRP), or perform volunteer work (81% at Daytona Beach, 79% at Prescott, and 88% CIRP). Students at Daytona Beach were significantly less likely to vote in a student election (17% at Daytona Beach, 23% CIRP), discuss religion (24% at Daytona Beach, 35% CIRP), come late to class, (50% at Daytona Beach, 61% CIRP), or discuss politics (26% at Daytona Beach, and 37% CIRP) than their national counterparts.
- Students at both campuses were significantly more likely to tutor another student (66% at Daytona Beach, 71% at Prescott, and 56% CIRP).

Attendance Decision:

- Like past administrations, the largest proportions of ERAU incoming freshmen at both campuses have cited the same three factors as ‘very important’ in their decision to attend Embry-Riddle: ‘want to be in aviation/aerospace environment’; ‘ERAU’s graduates get good jobs’; and ‘good academic reputation’.
- Both ERAU residential campuses attracted a larger share of first-time freshmen whose first choice was ERAU (85% and 87% at Daytona Beach and Prescott, respectively) than did the average college attended by CIRP respondents (65%).
- Freshmen at both campuses continue to respond at a significantly higher rate than their national counterparts that very important factors in selecting college of attendance include national magazine rankings (52% at Daytona Beach, 41% at Prescott, and 21% CIRP) and information from college website (32% at Daytona Beach, 29% at Prescott, and 20% CIRP) are very important reasons in selecting college of attendance. Conversely, students at both campuses continue to respond at significantly lower rates than their national counterparts that a good reputation for social activities (22% at Daytona Beach, 13% at Prescott, and 34% CIRP), being offered financial assistance (33% at Daytona Beach, 34% at Prescott, and 54% CIRP), the cost of the college (18% at Daytona Beach, 16% at Prescott, and 26% CIRP), wanting to live near home (5% at Daytona Beach, 2% at Prescott, and 13% CIRP), a visit to the campus (35% at Daytona Beach and Prescott, 54% CIRP), and the size of the college (24% at Daytona Beach, 34% at Prescott, and 54% CIRP) were very important reasons in selecting college of attendance.

2007 CIRP Freshman Survey

Career and Degree Program Choice:

- Responses indicating a very good chance of a change in their career field (5% at Daytona Beach and 3% at Prescott) indicated that ERAU freshmen are significantly more certain about their career choice than are CIRP freshmen (18%).
- ERAU freshmen, significantly more so than CIRP respondents, come to college with a clear direction in mind for their course of study. Only 6% of incoming freshmen at Daytona Beach and 6% at Prescott expect their chance is 'very good' they will change their degree program, compared to 16% of incoming freshmen nationwide.

Plans for Financing College:

- Both Daytona Beach and Prescott campuses have seen a decrease this year in those freshmen who express a "major concern" over their ability to finance their college education. Daytona Beach is down to 20% from 25%; Prescott 17% from 29%. Those expressing "some concern" have remained at about one-half. Embry-Riddle incoming freshmen consistently express more concern than do their contemporaries.
- 64% of Daytona Beach freshmen (down 8% points from 2005), and 64% of Prescott freshmen (down 12% points from 2005) expect to receive \$3,000 or more of financial aid that must be repaid.

Expectations of College and Beyond:

- Both Daytona Beach (64%) and Prescott (72%) incoming freshmen continue to predict more frequently a 'very good chance' of being satisfied with their college than their contemporaries nationwide (61%).
- ERAU freshmen from both campuses placed a high degree of importance on becoming an active participant in the field of aviation (81% at Daytona Beach and 90% at Prescott).
- When asked to rate the chances of certain academic situations occurring as Very Good ERAU student were significantly less likely to note communicating regularly with professors (25% at Daytona Beach, 33% at Prescott, and 46% CIRP), or participate in study abroad (13% at Daytona Beach, 9% at Prescott, and 47% CIRP). ERAU students were significantly more likely to need extra time to complete degree requirements (9% at Daytona Beach, 11% at Prescott, 4% CIRP).

Methodology

Overview

From 1988 to 1991, the Institutional Research office (IR) distributed a national freshman survey, the Cooperative Institutional Research Project survey (CIRP) to ERAU freshmen at both campuses. National results of aggregated responses from all participating institutions in this survey, which is overseen by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA, are published annually. In 1993, ERAU developed and administered its own freshmen survey instrument, the *Incoming Freshmen Survey*, which was modeled in large part after the CIRP Freshman Survey and included additional questions tailored to the needs of the university. The *Incoming Freshmen Survey* continued to be administered at Daytona Beach each fall from 1993 until 1999, and at Prescott each fall from 1995 until 1999. Then, a biennial cycle was implemented as well as a return to utilization of the CIRP instrument itself.

Survey Administration

IR administered the 2007 CIRP Freshman Survey to Fall 2007, first-time freshmen at both the Daytona Beach and Prescott campuses. The Office of First Year Programs at Daytona Beach assisted by coordinating administration sessions held during scheduled class time of the student success courses. At the Prescott campus, survey instruments were mailed to each college, who coordinated the survey administration process within their college. Surveys were distributed to instructors of the College Success course and administered during the first week of class. After completion, the forms were collected and returned to IR for clean up prior to being sent to UCLA for processing. The numbers of participants (and proportion of the entire incoming freshmen class that was represented) for the past seven administrations are shown below:

Daytona Beach, Fall 2007 – 585 (56%)	Prescott, Fall 2007 – 198 (50%)
Daytona Beach, Fall 2005 – 706 (72%)	Prescott, Fall 2005 – 260 (72%)
Daytona Beach, Fall 2003 – 728 (72%)	Prescott, Fall 2003 – 286 (94%)
Daytona Beach, Fall 2001 – 598 (59%)	Prescott, Fall 2001 – 311 (83%)
Daytona Beach, Fall 1999 – 945 (88%)	Prescott, Fall 1999 – 313 (58%)
Daytona Beach, Fall 1998 – 829 (89%)	Prescott, Fall 1998 – 223 (70%)
Daytona Beach, Fall 1997 – 736 (71%)	Prescott, Fall 1997 – 212*(64%)

*May include some transfer students, as the majority of respondents did not provide student identification numbers, which are used to identify respondents' demographics.

Weighting & Data Analysis

Upon receipt of the data file from UCLA, an examination of the demographics was conducted. Variations between the proportions in the sample and the population were found within degree program for both Daytona Beach and Prescott campuses. Responses presented in this report have been statistically weighted by degree program for both campuses. Please refer to previous reports for specifics about weighting procedures employed prior to 2003. SPSS was used to maintain and analyze survey data.

Possible Sources of Error

The results of any survey research are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors. (1) Samplings – Since this survey is not a census, a possible error is the inability to survey first-time freshmen because they were, for whatever reason, unavailable to participate. (2) Non-sampling – This research is also subject to errors such as unit item non-response, where students answer only certain items. No imputation was performed for missing data items. Another type of non-sampling error is measurement error, which may exist for some of the variables due to difficulty of defining ambiguous concepts. Lastly, differences in interpreting questions and inability or unwillingness to give correct information are two other sources of non-sampling errors. Error margins are not listed in this report, but may be obtained through IR if needed.

CIRP Institutional Stratification Design

The 1,571 institutions identified as part of the national population are divided into 26 stratification groups based on institutional race (predominantly non-black vs. predominantly black), type (two-year college, four-year college, university), control (public, private nonsectarian, Roman Catholic, and other religious) and ‘selectivity level’ of the institution. ‘Selectivity’ is defined as the average composite SAT score of the entering class. The 2007 CIRP data reflects that out of 1,571 institutions, 1,488 were predominantly white. Out of this group, 1,290 colleges were 4-year, of which 413 were private nonsectarian. Finally, out of this group of 413 schools, 92 had an average SAT score between 1,100 and 1,249. ERAU is compared to this group of 92 schools.

Calculation of Averages

An average of the estimate of parental income was computed using the midpoint of each category. The top end category ‘\$250,000 or more’ was reassigned to the closed ‘\$250,000 to \$299, 999’ and its midpoint was calculated as \$274,999.50. The low-end category ‘less than \$10,000’ was reassigned to the closed interval ‘\$0 to \$10,000’ and its midpoint calculated as \$4,999.50.

Significance Testing

All significance tests discussed in this report that were run to compare 2007 ERAU data with 2007 CIRP data were tests of differences of proportions. These tests were two-tailed, designed to test the hypothesis that the proportion of CIRP respondents providing a particular response was *equal* to the proportion of ERAU respondents answering the same way. Statistical significance was calculated at the .001 level. Results that were statistically significant are noted in the report.