



IN THIS ISSUE

- ♦ Fall 1999 Incoming Freshmen Survey

FALL 1999 INCOMING FRESHMEN SURVEY

The 1999 *Incoming Freshmen Survey* was developed to gather information from students prior to their experiencing college life. This data can then be used to assess the effects of college on students and provide initial input information that can be used for longitudinal research. Improvements to the quality of college education can be a direct result of data gathered, thus benefiting future generations of Embry-Riddle students.

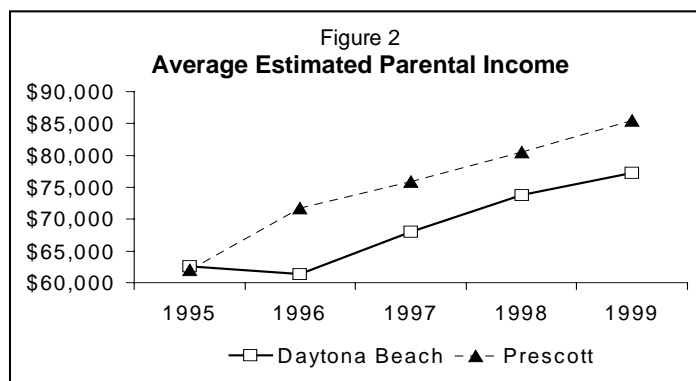
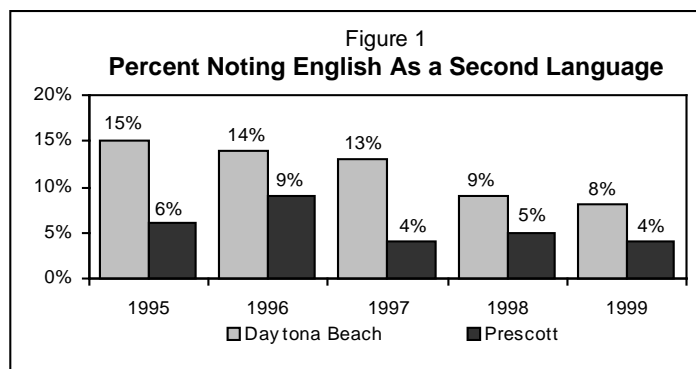
The Office of Institutional Research administered the 1999 *Incoming Freshmen Survey* to Fall 1999 first-time freshmen at both the Daytona Beach and Prescott campuses. Out of 945 incoming freshmen from the Daytona Beach campus, 828 (88%) responded to the survey. Out of 313 incoming freshmen from the Prescott campus, 181 (58%) responded to the survey. Data have been statistically weighted where necessary so that results are representative of all Fall 1999 ERAU incoming freshmen.

This issue of the IR Preview summarizes findings of the 1999 *Incoming Freshmen Survey*. A full report, which includes additional statistics and a comparison of results to the CIRP survey¹, the annual nationwide study of college freshmen, is in progress. Please note that the terms 'incoming freshmen' and 'first-time freshmen' are used interchangeably throughout this issue of the *IR Preview*.

♦ Who are our incoming freshmen?

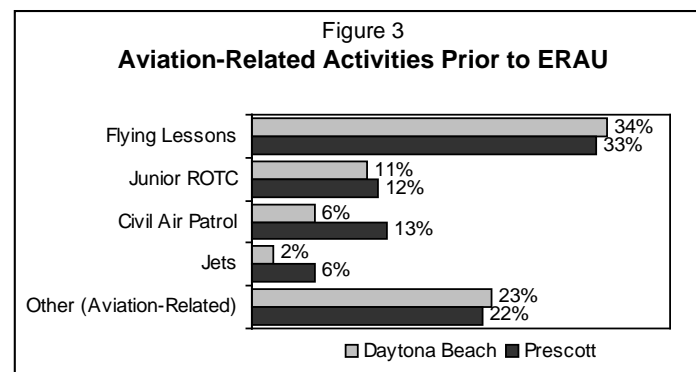
At the Daytona Beach campus the percentage of incoming freshmen noting English as their second language continues to steadily decline, reaching 8%, a five-year low. With the exception of the year 1996, the Prescott campus figure has remained stable. Figure 1 shows the five-year trends.

At both campuses, first-time freshmen entering ERAU are drawn from increasingly affluent family backgrounds. Average parental income in 1999 of Daytona Beach and Prescott first-time freshmen was \$77,237 and \$85,521, respectively. Figure 2 shows the five-year trends.



♦ What preparatory experiences in aviation-related activities did ERAU freshmen have before attending ERAU?

As in previous years, flying lessons were the most common activity, although Prescott first-time freshmen participation has decreased 7% points since last year. Participation in all other categories has remained relatively steady among first-time freshmen respondents from both residential campuses.

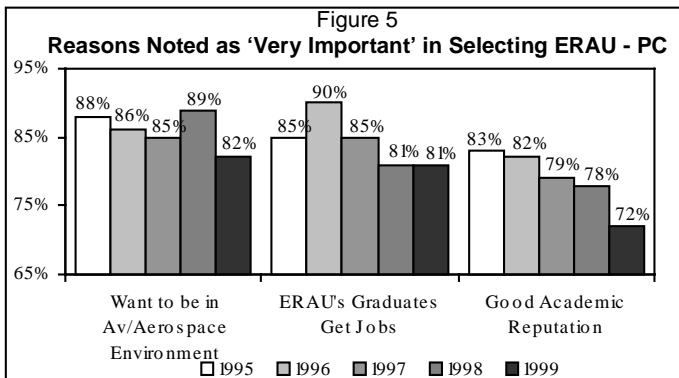
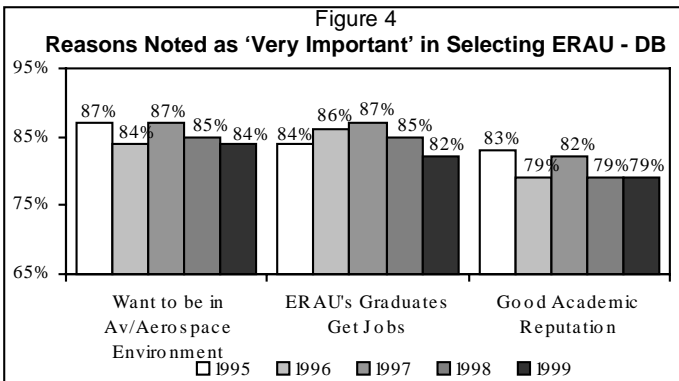


¹The Cooperative Institutional Research Project (CIRP) survey is administered by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI), located at UCLA's Graduate School of Education & Information Studies, and conducted under the sponsorship of the American Council on Education. Results of this 33-year old survey are published each year in The American Freshmen.

♦ **What specific factors lead ERAU freshmen to select Embry-Riddle?**

The figures below list the top three factors indicated by incoming freshmen as 'very important' in their decision to attend ERAU. For the past five years, the largest proportions of ERAU incoming freshmen at both campuses have cited these same three factors. Note, however, the decrease in response to *want to be in aviation/aerospace environment* and *good academic reputation* at Prescott this year.

Conversely, fewer than 5% of incoming freshmen were influenced by: *relatives, friends, teachers, or high school counselor (Daytona Beach only); desire to live near home; recruitment efforts of ERAU representatives, or athletic department; not being accepted by another school; offered ROTC scholarship (Daytona Beach only); and services or accommodations for disability.*

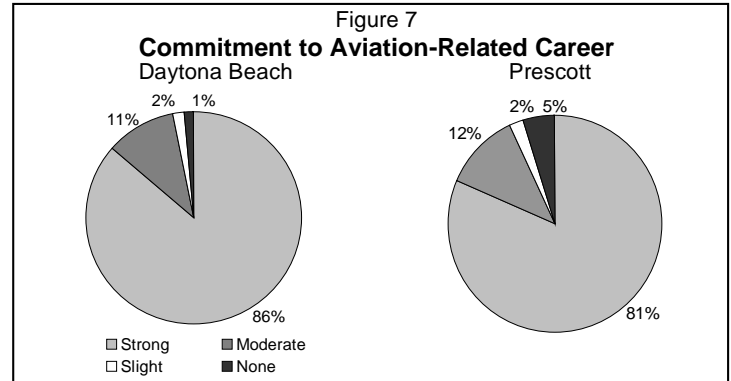


♦ **For Fall 1999, what percentage of freshmen attended ERAU as their college of first choice?**

Incoming freshmen were asked whether the college they were attending was their first, second, third, or less than third choice. An overwhelming majority (87% and 82% at Daytona Beach and Prescott, respectively) of incoming freshmen at ERAU responded they were attending their college of first choice. These results are consistent with responses from previous years.

♦ **How committed are incoming freshmen to an aviation-related career?**

Incoming freshmen continue to indicate a strong commitment to an aviation-related career. In the past five years, over 80% of all incoming freshmen responded they were 'strongly' committed.



♦ **What is the most important reason for choosing the major declared at ERAU?**

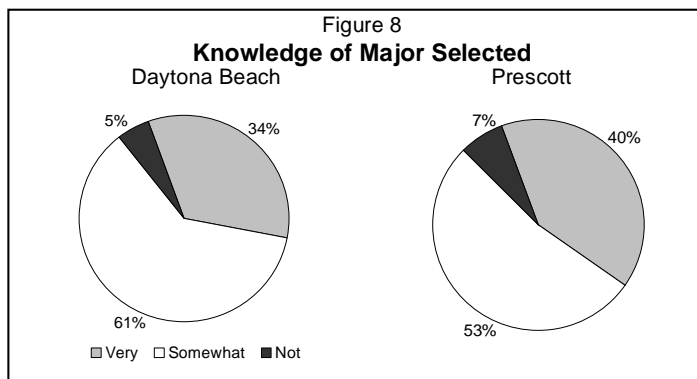
When asked what is the most important reason for choosing their declared ERAU major, incoming freshmen at both campuses cited '*Interest in field*' as the number one, most important reason. '*Interest in field*' has consistently been the most frequently selected reason over the past five years. '*Career satisfaction*' and '*Earn more money*' have remained over the past five years the second and third ranking reasons, respectively. Table 1 below lists each reason by campus.

Table 1
Reasons Cited as 'Most Important' in Selecting Major Declared at ERAU

Reason	Daytona Beach	Prescott
Interest in field	50.5%	47.5%
Career satisfaction	30.8%	37.7%
Earn more money	8.5%	6.9%
Travel opportunities	1.5%	1.6%
Advice from another	2.6%	.4%
No definite reason	4.6%	4.4%
Not major of choice	1.6%	1.6%

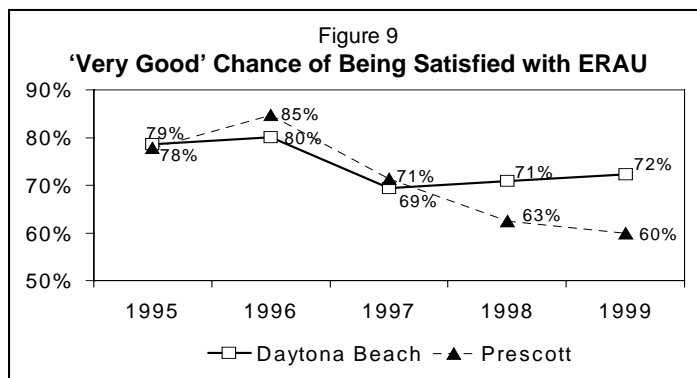
♦ **How knowledgeable do incoming freshmen feel about the course requirements and career opportunities in their major?**

Over one-third of Embry-Riddle incoming freshmen felt they were 'very knowledgeable' about their major's course requirements and career opportunities. As in last year's administration, first-time freshmen attending the Prescott campus indicated a higher level of certainty than their contemporaries at Daytona Beach. Figure 8 on the following page shows the category breakdowns.



◆ **How do ERAU freshmen rate their chances of being satisfied with their college experiences?**

Recently, Daytona Beach incoming freshmen have been more optimistic that they would be satisfied with their college experience than were Prescott incoming freshmen (72% vs. 60%). Figure 9 depicts the percent of incoming freshmen over time who have rated their chances of being satisfied with their college experience as 'very good'.



◆ **How concerned are ERAU freshmen with their ability to finance their entire undergraduate education?**

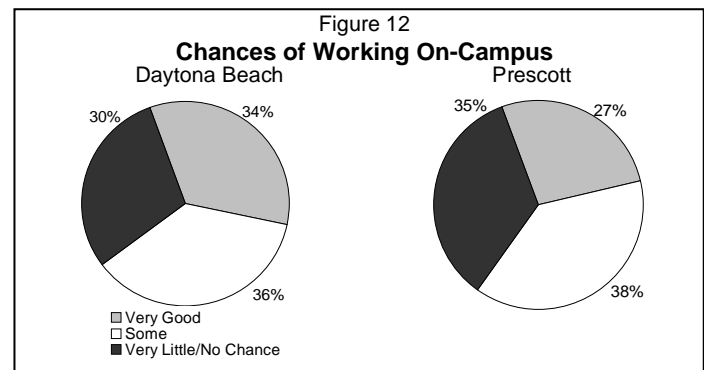
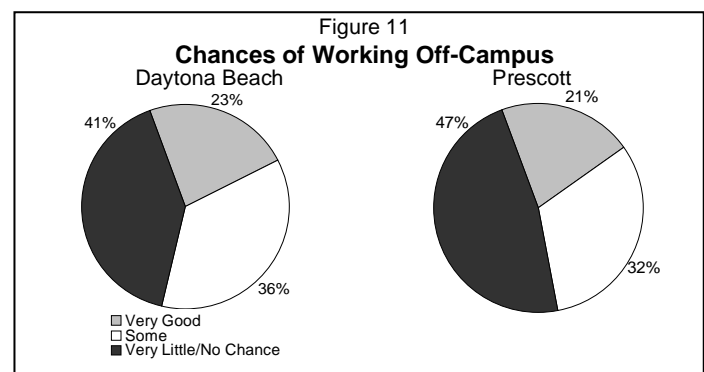
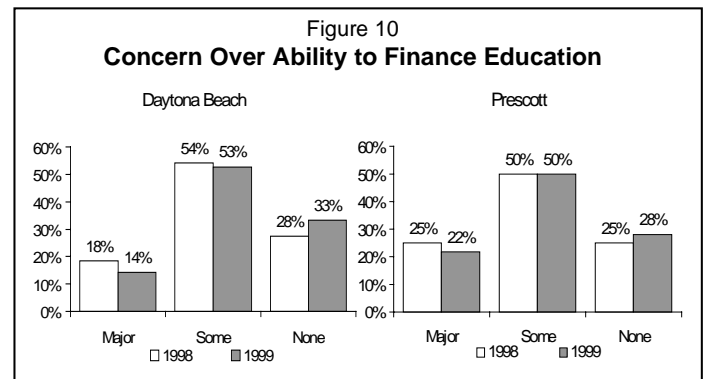
Less than one-quarter of the incoming freshmen at both campuses expressed a 'major concern' over their ability to finance their college education. These figures represent a 4% point and 3% point increase at Daytona Beach and Prescott, respectively. The proportion with 'some concern' remained constant from last year, with the increase found in the frequency of the 'no concern' responses (5% and 3% points at Daytona Beach and Prescott, respectively). Figure 10 displays these frequencies.

◆ **How do ERAU freshmen rate their chances of getting a job to help pay for college expenses?**

23% of Daytona Beach and 21% of Prescott incoming freshmen responded 'very good' to the chance they would

be employed in an *off-campus job*. These figures represent a decrease from last year of 8% points at Daytona Beach and 4% points at Prescott. Figure 11 shows the response breakdowns for 1999.

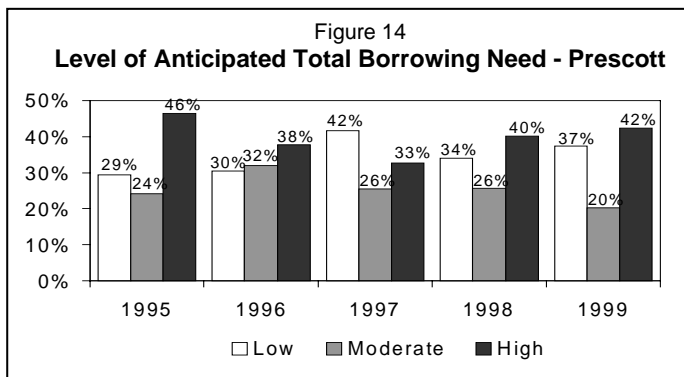
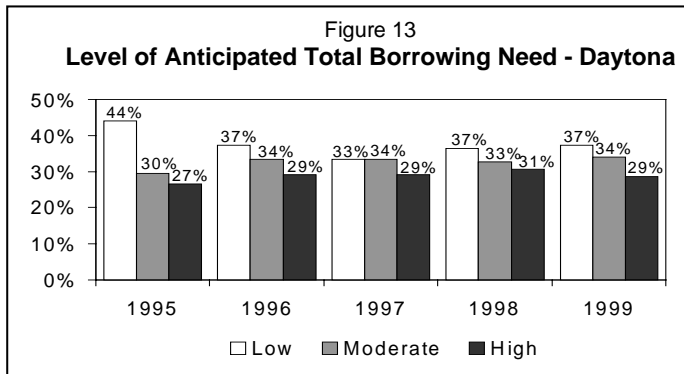
The percent of incoming freshmen from the Daytona Beach campus that rated their chances of working *on-campus* as 'very good' also declined, from 38% to 34%. However, Prescott's figure remained steady at 27%. Figure 12 shows the breakdown for 1999.



◆ **What is the level of anticipated total amount of money incoming freshmen expect to borrow in order to graduate from ERAU?**

Daytona Beach and Prescott respondents were grouped into three levels of borrowing need: low (\$0 - \$10,000), moderate (\$10,001 - \$30,000), and high (over \$30,000). At Daytona Beach (Figure 13), the proportion at each borrowing level has remained fairly consistent over the last 4 years. At Prescott (Figure 14), the proportion of

moderate need borrowers decreased 6% points since last year, while the proportions of both low and high need borrowers increased by 3% points and 2% points, respectively.



♦ **How do incoming freshmen rate their chances of dropping out of school or transferring to another college?**

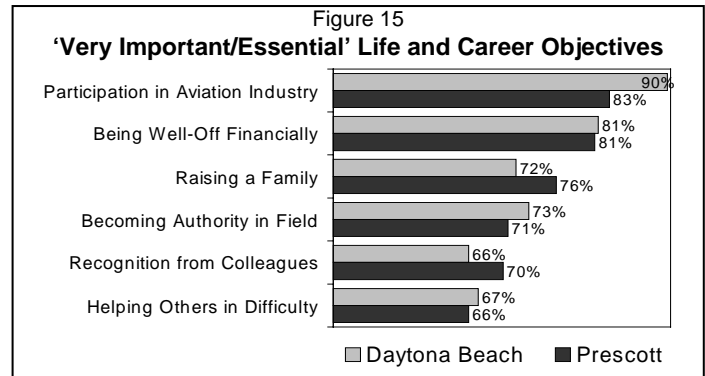
Incoming freshmen at ERAU responded with confidence that chances were slim they would drop out of ERAU temporarily or permanently, or transfer to another college before graduating, as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2
Chances of Dropping Out or Transferring from ERAU

	Daytona Beach		Prescott	
	Very Good	Some Chance	Very Good	Some Chance
Drop out of ERAU temporarily	.2%	2.3%	.6%	2.7%
Drop out of ERAU permanently	.1%	1.1%	0%	1.7%
Transfer to another college	1.1%	8.7%	2.2%	9.4%

♦ **What level of importance do ERAU freshmen place on life and career objectives?**

As with previous years, respondents from both campuses placed a high degree of importance on *becoming an active participant in the field of aviation* and *being well off financially* (see Figure 15).



♦ **How do freshmen rate the need for general education skills in their future career/profession?**

Incoming freshmen were asked to predict how useful general education skills might be in their future career/profession. The dark shaded boxes in Table 3 below represent each skill that garnered an 80% or higher 'very useful' response. Over the past five years the five highest rated skills have been identical. *'Library research skills'* remain the lowest rated skill (lightly shaded boxes) by survey respondents from both campuses. Percentages shown in Table 3 are the proportion of incoming freshmen who predict that the corresponding skill will be 'very useful' in their future profession.

Table 3
Usefulness of General Education Skills
In Future Career/Profession

'Very Useful' Responses Only	'Very Useful'	
	DB	PC
Effective writing	38%	47%
Writing technical materials	51%	60%
Professional speaking	51%	63%
Quantitative/Mathematics	74%	72%
Basic computer programming	55%	53%
PC software (word processor, spreadsheet, etc.)	54%	60%
Library research	26%	25%
Critical thinking	84%	85%
Working independently	67%	66%
Planning, carrying out projects	80%	87%
Defining & solving problems	87%	89%
Working in groups	87%	89%
Leading/Guiding others	73%	80%
Decision making	85%	91%
Understanding others	69%	72%
Awareness of politics/economics	40%	43%

Dark shaded boxes represent skills with 80% or higher response
Lighter shaded boxes represent lowest rated skill

The IR PREVIEW provides the ERAU community with timely information regarding current studies conducted by the Office of Institutional Research. The IR PREVIEW is published whenever preliminary statistics of developing projects become available. Please refer to the full report for final and/or additional statistics.