

APPENDIX A

Methodology

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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 freshman 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 (next administration was 2001) as well as a return to utilization of the CIRP instrument itself.

Survey Administration

IR administered the 2001 CIRP Freshman Survey to Fall 2001 first-time freshmen at both the Daytona Beach and Prescott campuses. At the Daytona Beach campus, IR staff conducted the administration of the survey during orientation week. Due to an initial low participation at the Daytona Beach campus (32%), IR requested assistance from the Student Success Center who coordinated make-up administration sessions held during scheduled class time of the student success courses. At the Prescott campus, survey instruments were mailed to the Director of the Student Success Center, who coordinated the survey administration process. 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 number of participants (and proportion of the entire incoming freshmen class that was represented) for the past five administrations are shown below:

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%)
Daytona Beach, Fall 1996 - 409 (57%)	Prescott, Fall 1996 - 144 (47%)
Daytona Beach, Fall 1995 - 484 (73%)	Prescott, Fall 1995 - 155 (56%)

*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. Data for both campuses were already representative of the population and did not require weighting by gender, ethnicity, nor degree program. Please refer to previous reports for specifics about weighting procedures employed prior to 2001. 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) Sampling - 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 1,521 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 2001 CIRP data reflects that out of 1,521 institutions, 1,436 were predominantly white. Out of this group, 1,242 colleges were 4-year, of which 384 were private nonsectarian. Finally, out of this group of 384 schools, 93 had an average SAT score between 1,100 and 1,249. ERAU is compared to this group of 93 schools.

Calculation of Averages

An average of the estimate of parental income was computed using the midpoint of each category. The top end category '\$200,000 or more' was reassigned to the closed '200,000 to \$249,000' and its midpoint was calculated as \$224,999.50. The low-end category 'less than \$6,000' was reassigned to the closed interval '\$0 to \$6,000' and its midpoint calculated as \$3,000.

Significance Testing

All significance tests discussed in this report that were run to compare 2001 ERAU data with 2001 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.