

## Introduction

Embry-Riddle participated in the nationwide administration of the 2003 CIRP<sup>1</sup> 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 2003 first-time freshmen at both the Daytona Beach and Prescott campuses during scheduled class time of the student success courses. Out of 1017 incoming freshmen from the Daytona Beach campus, a total of 728 (72%) responded to the survey. Out of 304 incoming freshmen from the Prescott campus, 286 (94%) responded to the survey

This report presents the 2003 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

<sup>1</sup>The 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 38-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 2003 first-time freshmen at both the Daytona Beach and Prescott campuses. Out of 1,017 incoming freshmen from the Daytona Beach campus, a total of 728 (72%) responded to the survey. Out of 304 incoming freshmen from the Prescott campus, 286 (94%) 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:

- The percentage of incoming freshmen noting English as their second language remained stable at 10% at Daytona Beach. At Prescott, the percentage dropped three percentage points to 5%. The Daytona Beach campus attracted more incoming freshmen noting English as their second language than did comparable schools (6%).
- Incoming freshmen from both Daytona Beach (42%, down from 53%) and Prescott (45%, down from 54%) cited less prior participation in flying lessons or flight clubs than in the previous administration.
- ‘Middle of the road’ continues to be the most popular political label for ERAU respondents and their counterparts nationwide (47% at Daytona Beach and Prescott, 43% nationwide). While ERAU freshmen view themselves as more conservative (28% at Daytona Beach and 27% at Prescott) than liberal (20% at Daytona Beach and 18% at Prescott), students nationwide view themselves as more liberal (33%) than conservative (19%).

### Family Background:

- Although average parental income of ERAU respondents is generally lower than that of freshmen nationwide, ERAU continues to draw incoming freshmen from increasingly affluent family backgrounds. 49% and 44% of Daytona Beach and Prescott freshmen, respectively, reported family incomes over \$75,000 while 53% of the CIRP comparative group cited the same.
- The proportion of college-educated parents of ERAU’s incoming freshmen is somewhat lower than the proportion nationally. 64% of fathers and 62% of mothers of incoming freshmen nationwide held some type of college degree. 56% and 57% of fathers of Daytona Beach and Prescott incoming freshmen, respectively, held a college degree. 57% and 49% of mothers of Daytona Beach and Prescott incoming freshmen, respectively, held some type of college degree.

### 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’. Ratings for ‘ERAU’s graduates get good jobs’ had a notable decrease at both residential campuses, dropping to 78% from 88% at Daytona Beach and dropping to 82% from 87% at Prescott.

## 2003 CIRP Freshman Survey

- Both ERAU residential campuses attracted a larger share of first-time freshmen whose first choice was ERAU (86% and 88% at Daytona Beach and Prescott, respectively) than did the average college attended by CIRP respondents (71%).
- Over half of the respondents (70% at Daytona Beach and 60% at Prescott) chose to attend their ERAU campus because of its location. Additionally, an overwhelming proportion of respondents (97% and 96% at Daytona Beach and Prescott, respectively) indicated that the degree programs offered at their campus choice were the reason for their attendance.
- Freshmen at both campuses continue to respond significantly higher than their national counterparts that national magazine rankings (42% at Daytona Beach, 36% at Prescott, and 15% CIRP) and information from college website (30% at Daytona Beach, 21% at Prescott, and 14% CIRP) are very important reasons in selecting college of attendance.

### Career and Degree Program Choice:

- Responses regarding chances of a change in their career field indicated that ERAU freshmen are much more certain about their career choice (2% at Daytona Beach and 4% at Prescott) than are CIRP freshmen (16%), solidifying their strong commitment to an aviation-related career choice.
- ERAU freshmen, more so than CIRP respondents, come to college with a clear direction in mind for their course of study. Only 2% of incoming freshmen at both campuses expect their chance is 'very good' they will change their degree program, compared to 15% of incoming freshmen nationwide.

### Plans for Financing College:

- Less than one-quarter of the incoming freshmen at both campuses expressed a 'major concern' over their ability to finance their college education while about one-half expressed 'some concern'. Embry-Riddle incoming freshmen consistently expressed more concern than do their contemporaries.
- 78% of Daytona Beach freshmen (up 16% points from 2001 and 36% since 1999), and 72% of Prescott freshmen (up 6% points from 2001 and 20% since 1999) expect to receive \$3,000 or more of financial aid that must be repaid, a considerably increase since the last administration. Their contemporaries nationwide have responded identically since the 2001 administration at 38%.

### Expectations of College and Beyond:

- Both Daytona Beach and Prescott incoming freshmen continue to predict more frequently a 'very good chance' of being satisfied with their college than their contemporaries nationwide, although the gap over time has narrowed considerably. Expected satisfaction at Daytona Beach campus continued to decline, reaching an all-time low at 59% (a decrease of 6% points from 2001 administration) while Prescott campus and CIRP respondents citing this level of satisfaction remained stable (60% and 57%, respectively).
- A significantly higher proportion of incoming freshmen at both Daytona Beach (91%) and Prescott (89%) rated their chances of getting a bachelor's degree as very good compared with their contemporaries nationwide (82%).

Source: Institutional Research, April 2005

## 2003 CIRP Freshman Survey

- ERAU freshmen from both campuses placed a high degree of importance on becoming an active participant in the field of aviation (87% at Daytona Beach and 82% at Prescott) and being well off financially (81% at Daytona Beach and 75% at Prescott). CIRP respondents most frequently placed a high degree of importance on raising a family (71 %), which has been the case since 1993. Similar to their national counterparts, 71% and 70% of Daytona Beach and Prescott respondents, respectively, frequently rated the importance of raising a family.
- The majority of 2003 ERAU incoming freshmen at both campuses were in agreement that the University should offer a course to enhance career development skills (79% at Daytona Beach and 70% at Prescott).
- Incoming freshmen at ERAU continued to place less importance on helping others who are in difficulty than freshmen nationwide (52% at Daytona Beach, 47% at Prescott, and 64% nationwide) although at Daytona Beach the increase since 2001 is notable (up 7%).

## 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 2003 CIRP Freshman Survey to Fall 2003, first-time freshmen at both the Daytona Beach and Prescott campuses. The Student Success Center 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 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 numbers of participants (and proportion of the entire incoming freshmen class that was represented) for the past five administrations are shown below:

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 the Daytona Beach campus. Responses presented in this report have been statistically weighted by degree program for the Daytona Beach campus only. The Prescott campus results did not require weighting. Please refer to previous reports for specifics about weighting procedures employed prior to 2003. SPSS was used to maintain and analyze survey data.

Source: Institutional Research, April 2005

### **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 1,539 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 2003 CIRP data reflects that out of 1,539 institutions, 1,455 were predominantly white. Out of this group, 1,261 colleges were 4-year, of which 393 were private nonsectarian. Finally, out of this group of 393 schools, 91 had an average SAT score between 1,100 and 1,249. ERAU is compared to this group of 91 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 2003 ERAU data with 2003 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.