

BY THE NUMBERS: Fall 2003 MSU Freshmen Facts

Montclair State University enrolled 1,618 first-time, full-time freshmen this past fall. All full-time freshmen, except for nontraditional, Center for Adult Learning (CAL) students, were asked to participate in the CIRP Freshman Survey. Their responses give us an in depth portrait of these entering students: what they did in their senior year of high school, what their life aspirations are, why they are attending college and in particular MSU, what their beliefs are, if they have concerns about financing college, as well as a host of other issues.

Who Responded to the Survey?

- 60% completion rate
- The sample slightly under represents males

Again this year Freshman Seminar classes were the collection points for the survey.

The overall completion rate of 59.6% percent, 965 respondents, is respectable and comparable to last year. The sample somewhat under represents males. Males make up 41.5 percent of the overall full-time freshman population and 37.3 percent of the sample. If possible, the CIRP Freshman Survey should be administered during Freshman Orientation, which affords better control of the process because distribution and collection are completed at one time and in one place.

Who Are our Freshmen?

- Over a third of freshmen report they are members of an ethnic or racial minority group
- 74% are 18 years old
- 49% identify themselves as Roman Catholic
- 20% say English is not their native language

Montclair State University's freshmen are more ethnically and racially diverse, younger, and living closer to home than freshmen at other four-year medium-selective universities/colleges. The ethnic and racial diversity of our freshmen is also reflected in the higher percents that report English is not their native language and that they hold permanent resident status. MSU freshmen are also more likely to be Roman Catholic (Table 1).

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics, Fall 2003

Characteristics:	Montclair State University	Medium Selective Colleges
Racial/ethnic group:	%	%
African American	8.4	6.2
Asian	6.9	5.4
Latino/a	16.4	8.6
White	67.2	79.1
Other	4.0	2.9
Sex:		
Male	37.3	43.4
Female	62.7	56.6
Age:		
18 Years	73.9	68.9
19 Years	22.3	27.7
Other	3.8	3.3
Religious preference:		
Baptist	5.3	8.2
Buddhist	0.6	1.1
Eastern Orthodox	0.6	0.6
Episcopal	1.2	1.0
Hindu	1.1	0.4
Islamic	3.0	0.9

Jewish	3.5	1.1
LDS (Mormon)	0.2	2.5
Lutheran	2.3	5.8
Methodist	2.2	5.3
Presbyterian	2.5	3.3
Quaker	0.0	0.2
Roman Catholic	48.5	33.2
Seven Day Adventist	0.5	0.2
Unitarian/Universalist	0.4	0.2
United Church of Christ	0.8	2.1
Other Christian	9.1	13.6
Other religion	3.3	2.9
None	14.8	17.3
U.S. citizen:		
Yes	92.3	97.5
Permanent resident	6.5	1.9
Neither	1.3	0.6
English is native language:		
Yes	80.5	93.8
College is miles from home:		
5 or less	13.5	6.5
6 to 10	17.6	9.9
11 to 50	48.0	36.2
51 to 100	14.0	19.4
101 to 500	6.3	24.9
Over 500	0.7	3.1

What Are Freshmen Parents Like?

- 24% of freshmen parents are college graduates and an additional 12% have graduate degrees
- 26% of fathers are in business and 12% of mothers are school teachers

Over a quarter of all employed fathers are in business, about 10 percent are skilled workers and over 6 percent are engineers. Mothers who work are found in most of the listed occupations but are more represented in elementary education, nursing, and the clerical side of business than fathers. About 11 percent of MSU freshmen mothers, and almost 9 percent of the comparator group, are full-time homemakers.

Nearly a quarter of MSU freshmen fathers and mothers are college graduates; and an additional 13.6 percent of fathers, and 10.3 percent of mothers, have graduate degrees (Table 2).

Table 2
Parental Background Characteristics, Fall 2003

Characteristics:	Montclair State University		Medium Selective Colleges	
	Father %	Mother %	Father %	Mother %
Racial/ethnic group:				
African American	7.9	8.1	6.0	5.7
Asian	6.1	6.5	4.7	5.0
Latino/a	15.3	15.4	7.5	7.8
White	67.7	66.9	79.2	79.2
Other	4.7	4.7	4.3	4.2
Religious preference:				
Baptist	4.4	5.6	7.8	8.5
Buddhist	0.7	0.7	1.3	1.5
Eastern Orthodox	1.0	0.8	0.7	0.6
Episcopal	1.6	1.6	1.2	1.3
Hindu	1.0	1.0	0.4	0.4
Islamic	3.5	3.1	1.1	0.9
Jewish	5.5	4.7	1.5	1.6
LDS (Mormon)	0.1	0.3	2.5	2.6
Lutheran	2.1	2.1	6.7	6.9
Methodist	1.7	2.4	5.7	6.3

Presbyterian	2.7	3.5	3.8	4.1
Quaker	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2
Roman Catholic	52.0	52.9	36.2	37.2
Seven Day Adventist	0.5	0.7	0.3	0.3
Unitarian/Universalist	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2
United Church of Christ	0.9	0.8	2.0	2.3
Other Christian	8.6	10.2	12.4	13.6
Other religion	2.7	2.7	2.4	2.5
None	10.6	6.6	13.6	8.9
Occupation:				
Artist	1.0	1.1	0.7	1.2
Business	25.6	12.7	26.2	15.7
Business (Clerical)	0.7	7.4	1.2	6.7
Clergy	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.2
College teacher	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.3
Doctor (MD or DDS)	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.8
Education (secondary)	1.7	2.5	2.8	4.3
Education (elementary)	1.0	9.6	0.9	8.6
Engineer	6.4	0.7	8.6	0.5
Farmer or forester	0.2	0.0	2.0	0.2
Health professional	1.5	1.4	1.2	2.7
Homemaker (full time)	0.1	11.3	0.2	8.9
Lawyer	1.5	0.1	1.0	0.3
Military (career)	0.6	0.0	1.3	0.2
Nurse	0.2	7.9	0.5	9.3
Research scientist	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.2
Social/welfare/recreation worker	0.5	1.3	0.5	1.6
Skilled worker	9.6	1.9	9.7	1.9
Semi-skilled worker	4.3	2.1	3.8	2.5
Unskilled worker	5.2	2.2	4.1	2.1
Unemployed	4.1	6.1	2.6	5.4
Other	33.4	29.8	29.9	26.4
Educational level:				
Grammar school or less	5.8	4.7	2.9	2.5
Some high school	7.2	5.6	5.1	3.6
High school graduate	26.6	31.0	27.6	28.5
Post secondary other than college	5.7	6.8	4.8	5.4
Some college	14.8	16.1	17.4	19.6
College degree	25.1	23.2	26.3	26.4
Some graduate school	1.1	2.3	1.5	2.1
Graduate degree	13.6	10.3	14.6	12.0

MSU freshmen report that 22 percent of their parents have family incomes of less than \$30,000; the comparable figure for medium-selective colleges is 17.2 percent. At the other end of the income range, 23 percent of MSU parents and 22.5 percent of the comparator group report having incomes of \$100,000 or more.

Table 3
Other Parental Characteristics, Fall 2003

	Montclair State University	Medium Selective Colleges
Income range:	%	%
Less than \$10,000	4.9	3.2
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4.4	3.2
\$15,000 to \$19,999	4.2	3.0
\$20,000 to \$24,999	5.7	4.0
\$25,000 to \$29,999	2.9	3.8
\$30,000 to \$39,999	7.8	7.9
\$40,000 to \$49,999	9.4	9.7
\$50,000 to \$59,999	7.9	11.7
\$60,000 to \$74,999	13.4	15.1
\$75,000 to \$99,999	16.5	15.9
\$100,000 to \$149,999	15.5	13.6
\$150,000 to \$199,999	3.7	4.6
\$200,000 to \$249,999	1.5	1.7
\$250,000	2.3	2.6

Parents are:

Both alive & living w/ each other	69.8	71.2
Both alive, divorced or living apart	24.7	25.2
One or both deceased	5.6	3.6

What was High School Like for Freshmen?

Grades

- 32% had average high school grades ranging from A- to A+
- 87% report B or better high school averages

**Table 4
Average High School Grades**

Grade Range:	Montclair State University %	Medium Selective Colleges %
A or A+	12.5	13.5
A-	19.5	19.8
B+	26.9	22.3
B	27.7	27.0
B-	9.4	10.4
C+	2.7	4.7
C	1.2	2.2
D	0.1	0.0

Courses

- 43% had some special tutoring or remedial course work in high school
- 21% feel they will need remediation in mathematics while attending MSU

Table 5 looks at freshmen high school remediation in various areas as well as those that feel they will need help at MSU. The areas in which entering freshmen feel they will need the most help in are: mathematics, 20.6 percent, foreign languages, 12.0 percent, and writing, 10.9 percent.

**Table 5
Remediation Courses in High School and College**

High School Remediation Courses		Remedial Area	Will Need College Remediation	
Montclair State University %	Medium Selective Colleges %		Montclair State University %	Medium Selective Colleges %
14.5	12.7	Mathematics	20.6	27.8
5.6	5.4	English	5.7	11.3
5.5	4.8	Reading	5.0	5.0
4.0	4.8	Science	5.5	11.3
3.8	4.7	Foreign Languages	12.0	10.8
3.3	3.7	Social Studies	1.5	3.9
6.6	4.0	Writing	10.9	11.4

Typical Weekly High School Activities

- 75% worked for pay during the senior year of high school
- 39% worked 16 or more hours a week
- 58% spent some time volunteering
- Three-quarters spent five or fewer hours a week studying and doing homework

The New York Times referred to the senior year in high school as the senior slide year; a time described as not quite as “productive, stimulating and challenging as it needs to be” (*The New York Times*, 1/19/03, Section 14, page 1, How Schools Are Trying to Avoid the ‘Senior Slide’). Table 6 summarizes the time spent in each activity during a typical week as high school seniors. Traditional school activities – studying and homework—were not primary activities for most seniors. Almost 6 out of 10 seniors participated in volunteer work; one of the activities suggested as a counter to the ‘senior slide’.

Table 6
% MSU Freshmen Spending Time in Activities in a Typical Week During the Last Year of High School

Activities:	Hours Spent in Activity							
	None	< One	1 to 2	3 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	16 to 20	20 +
Studying/homework	3.7	17.7	24.8	28.8	15.4	5.6	2.2	1.7
Socializing with friends	0.8	1.3	4.7	16.9	24.0	18.0	12.7	21.7
Talk w/teachers outside class	13.0	41.8	28.9	10.6	3.6	0.9	0.6	0.5
Exercise or sports	8.6	11.0	16.3	19.0	14.6	10.9	7.6	12.0
Partying	22.3	14.4	16.1	19.5	13.6	6.8	3.8	3.6
Working (for pay)	25.1	2.3	1.7	5.8	10.2	15.8	16.8	22.4
Volunteer work	42.5	18.2	19.3	10.9	5.3	1.0	0.9	1.9
Student clubs/groups	32.4	14.1	23.0	16.1	6.6	3.6	2.2	2.2
Watching TV	3.7	15.1	21.3	26.6	14.8	8.6	4.0	5.9
Household/childcare duties	17.8	20.9	29.0	20.4	6.0	2.9	1.4	1.6
Reading for pleasure	32.3	26.9	20.6	13.1	3.4	2.1	1.1	0.7
Play video/computer games	36.2	22.7	18.1	11.7	6.3	3.0	0.9	1.2
Prayer/meditation	41.5	33.0	15.6	6.2	2.0	0.8	0.2	0.8

There are some differences in how males and females spend their time. Slightly more females worked the last year of high school than males, 76 percent and 73 percent, respectively. The number of hours spent in household/childcare duties also varied; 89 percent of females and 70 percent of males reported spending at least one hour in these activities. Females also spent more time doing volunteer work than males, 64 percent and 46 percent respectively. Females were far less likely to play video/computer games than males; 49 and 15 percent, respectively, reported spending no time playing these types of games.

Other High School Activities

- 82% frequently used the Internet for research or homework
- 78% frequently socialized with someone of another racial/ethnic group (compared to 65% for other four-year medium-selective colleges)
- 79% reported they studied with other students
- 69% frequently communicated by e-mail
- 44% frequently or occasionally performed community service as part of a class
- 58% reported coming late to class
- 40% were frequently bored in class
- 32% also reported frequently feeling overwhelmed by all they had to do
- 15% voted in a school election
- 58% drank wine or liquor occasionally or frequently
- 50% drank beer occasionally or frequently
- 9% smoke cigarettes frequently

Respondents were asked if they had participated “frequently”, “occasionally”, or “never” during the past year in a list of activities. Four broad areas are highlighted: computer proficiency, academically related activities/behaviors, health or student well-being issues and political interest. Table 7 summarizes student responses.

Table 7
Freshmen Indicating They Participated in Activity During the Past Year

Activities:	Participated Frequently/Occasionally	
	Montclair State University %	Medium Selective Colleges %
Studied with other students	78.6	83.8
Attended a religious service	74.2	78.9
Performed volunteer work	72.6	77.2
Came late to class	58.2	62.6
Visited an art gallery or museum	52.4	50.7
Drank wine or liquor	57.8	49.1
Participated in organized demonstration	47.0	51.5
Tutored another student	47.9	46.0
Performed community service as part of a class	43.6	49.4
Drank beer	49.9	44.5
Played a musical instrument	32.4	38.6
Overslept and missed class or an appointment	28.1	32.9
Was a guest in a teacher's home	20.0	21.0
Socialized with someone of another racial/ethnic group*	78.1	65.2
Used a personal computer*	84.2	80.3
Used the Internet for research or homework*	81.9	78.3
Communicated via e-mail*	68.9	56.5
Was bored in class*	39.7	40.4
Other Internet use*	66.3	64.1
Felt overwhelmed by all I had to do*	32.1	26.3
Discussed religion*	21.9	25.5
Communicated via Instant Messaging*	79.5	66.6
Asked a teacher for advice after class*	18.9	22.1
Voted in a student election*	14.9	17.9
Discussed politics*	14.4	17.9
Felt depressed*	13.2	7.8
Smoked cigarettes*	9.1	8.5

*Percentage reporting "frequently" only. Results for other items represent percentage responding "frequently" or "occasionally".

What are Freshmen's Higher Education Aspirations?

- 49% intend to earn a master's degree as their highest degree
- 65% want to earn a bachelor's degree and 27% want to earn a master's degree at MSU
- 60% said MSU was their first choice of college/university to attend

Why Do MSU Freshmen Want to Attend College?

- 76% are attending college because they want to learn more about things that interest them
- 76% say to be able to make more money
- 74% want to get training for a specific career

Respondents were asked to choose from a list of 13 possible reasons for attending college. Table 8 summarizes these responses. For MSU freshmen, learning about things that interest me and being able to make more money, were equally important as reasons for attending college, followed closely by to get training for a specific career. MSU freshmen were more likely to view their undergraduate education as a way of improving their reading and study skills than those at other medium-selective institutions, 49 and 40 percent, respectively. As well, MSU

freshmen put a bit more emphasis on “gaining a general education and appreciation of ideas” and “to make me a more cultured person” as important reasons for attending college than those in the comparator group and somewhat less emphasis on “getting away from home” as a reason.

Table 8
% Of Freshmen Responding Reason is Very Important in Deciding to Go to College

Reasons:	Montclair State University %	Medium Selective Colleges %
To learn more about things that interest me	76.3	73.3
To get training for a specific career	74.4	75.0
To be able to make more money	76.2	72.8
To be able to get a better job	72.0	72.4
To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas	69.2	60.3
To prepare myself for graduate or professional school	52.3	50.8
To improve my reading and study skills	49.0	39.8
My parents wanted me to go	41.4	37.1
To make me a more cultured person	41.9	32.7
A mentor/role model encouraged me to go	12.3	13.1
Wanted to get away from home	17.8	19.7
I could not find a job	5.4	7.4
There was nothing better to do	3.7	3.4

Why Are Freshmen Attending MSU?

- **The top three reasons for attending MSU are:**
51% say its good academic reputation is very important
42% chose low tuition as very important and
Closeness to home was mentioned by 38%

Table 9 lists all the reasons freshmen gave as “very important” in their decisions to attend MSU. Academic reputation, low tuition and nearness to home play significantly larger roles for MSU freshmen than for those in other four-year medium-selective colleges.

Table 9
% Of Freshmen Responding Reason is Very Important in Deciding to Go to MSU

Reason:	Montclair State University %	Medium Selective Colleges %
This college has a very good academic reputation	51.0	42.4
This college has low tuition	41.6	31.9
I wanted to live near home	38.0	24.4
This college offers special educational programs	21.6	19.7
I was offered financial assistance	27.9	23.0
I wanted to go to a school about the size of this college	29.1	27.3
This college has a good reputation for its social activities	24.5	21.8
High school guidance counselor advised me	10.7	6.9
Reputation for campus safety		
My relatives wanted me to come here	10.5	8.5
Information from Website	8.6	8.5
My teacher advised me	4.7	4.4
Not offered aid by first choice	8.2	5.1
The athletic department recruited me		
Rankings in national magazines	5.9	4.4
I was admitted through an Early Action program	5.6	4.9
Private college counselor advised me	1.6	1.6
I was attracted by the religious affiliation of this college	1.4	1.7

Which Personal Life Objectives Do Freshmen Think Are Very Important?

- 80% want to be very well off financially
- 81% want to raise a family
- 67% say it is very important to help others who are in difficulty

Table 10 shows, being financially well off was “very important” to 80 percent of this fall's respondents, slightly higher than the percent for other four-year medium-selective public colleges. A considerably larger percent of MSU freshmen, 37, than those from four-year medium-selective colleges, 27, consider helping to promote racial understanding an essential or very important objective.

Table 10
% Freshmen Considering Various Objectives Essential or Very Important

Objectives:	Montclair State University	Medium Selective Colleges
Being very well off financially	80.0	77.1
Raising a family	80.7	74.4
Helping others who are in difficulty	67.2	61.2
Becoming an authority in my field	61.4	56.7
Obtain recognition from colleagues for contributions to my field	58.3	51.4
Becoming successful in a business of my own	45.3	39.2
Improving my understanding of other countries and culture	43.8	37.0
Having administrative responsibility for the works of others	42.9	38.5
Influencing social values	40.8	36.6
Developing a meaningful philosophy of life	39.1	34.4
Integrating spirituality into my life	33.8	33.3
Helping to promote racial understanding	37.3	27.5
Becoming a community leader	28.1	26.9
Keeping up to date with political affairs	25.2	27.7
Participating in a community action program	20.4	19.0
Becoming accomplished in one of the performing arts	21.9	15.0
Influencing the political structure	17.6	17.8
Writing original works (poems, novels, short stories, etc.)	19.2	14.8
Creating artistic work (painting, sculpture, decorating, etc.)	18.6	16.9
Becoming involved in programs to clean up the environment	16.7	15.8
Making a theoretical contribution to science	11.8	14.7

MSU freshmen also viewed several other life goals as more important to them than freshmen in other four-year medium-selective colleges: helping others who are in difficulty, becoming an authority in my chosen field, obtaining recognition from colleagues for contributions to my field, and improving my understanding of other countries and cultures.

What Majors Are Freshmen Pursuing?

- The three top areas in which freshmen expect to major in are:
 - Education
 - Business
 - Arts and Humanities
- 13 percent are undecided about their major

Freshmen were given a long list of possible majors and asked which one they thought might be their choice. Table 11 groups majors by area as well as selected majors within an area. The three top areas in which freshmen expect to major are: education, business, and the arts and humanities.

Table 11
% Of Freshmen Indicating This Area as Their Probable Major

Probable Major Areas With Selected Majors:	Montclair State University %	Medium Selective Colleges %
Arts and Humanities	16.4	10.6
Art, fine and applied	4.1	3.0
Music	1.0	1.6
Theatre or drama	3.9	1.1
Biological Sciences	1.8	4.5
Biology (general)	0.6	2.6
Business	20.0	15.3
Accounting	3.9	2.6
Business administration (general)	3.9	3.2
International business	1.8	0.8
Marketing	2.7	2.8
Management	4.9	3.9
Education	22.0	18.6
Elementary education	11.8	9.1
Physical education or recreation	4.3	1.2
Secondary education	3.5	4.8
Physical Sciences	2.0	2.2
Professional (e.g. physical therapy)	5.1	12.3
Social Science	10.5	9.1
Psychology	6.6	5.0
Other fields	7.6	9.0
Computer science	1.4	2.2
Undecided	12.5	8.0

What Are Some of the Expectations Freshmen Have for Their Upcoming College Years?

- 80% expect to graduate from MSU
- 51% expect to get a job to help pay for college expenses
- 46% expect to be satisfied with their choice of MSU
- 33% expect to participate in student clubs/groups
- 19% will participate in volunteer or community service work
- 13% want to study abroad
- 7% expect to transfer from MSU

Another set of questions asked freshmen to speculate a bit on their actions during their upcoming college years, e.g., do they think they will transfer to another college, complete their degrees or work full-time. Table 12 summarizes the percents for freshmen saying they thought chances were “very good” that they would participate in the activity.

Freshmen expect to be engaged in social activities as well as extracurricular ones while they are attending MSU. Sixty-four percent expect to develop close friendships with other students and almost three-quarters expect they will socialize with someone of another race or ethnic group. Ten percent want to join a social fraternity or sorority. Thirty-three percent expect to participate in student clubs or groups, 12 percent want to play college sports, and 6 percent think they will join in student government activities.

Even though freshmen see the University's low tuition as one of its selling points, over 50 percent say there is a very good chance they will get a job to help pay for college expenses; only 10 percent think they will have to work full-time while attending college.

Table 12
% Reporting Chances are Very Good That S/he Will Participate in This Activity

Activity:	Montclair State University	Medium Selective Colleges
	%	%
Get a bachelor's degree	79.5	76.0
Socialize with someone of another racial/ethnic group	73.3	60.4
Develop close friendships with other students	64.4	64.1
Make at least a "B" average	64.0	53.8
Get a job to help pay for college expenses	50.5	53.3
Be satisfied with your college	45.7	44.3
Participate in student clubs/groups	32.5	32.0
Communicate regularly with your professors	23.1	28.6
Participate in volunteer or community service work	18.9	16.5
Strengthen religious beliefs/convictions	18.4	17.8
Participate in a study abroad program	12.6	12.3
Change major field	15.4	13.0
Play varsity/intercollegiate athletics	12.0	12.8
Change career choice	10.4	11.2
Seek personal counseling	7.3	7.1
Join a social fraternity or sorority	8.4	7.7
Work full-time while attending college	10.0	9.4
Participate in student government	6.1	5.7
Transfer to another college before graduating	7.0	11.6
Participate in student protests or demonstrations	4.2	4.9
Drop out of college	0.9	0.9

How Do Freshmen Characterize Themselves?

- 62% of male and 53% of female freshmen rate themselves as above average in leadership ability
- 57% of male and 60% of female freshmen rate themselves as above average in academic ability
- 47% of male and 29% of female freshmen characterize themselves as above average in computer skills
- 44% say that searching for a mission/purpose in life describes them well

Table 13
% Rating Themselves on Certain Characteristics as Above Average or in the Highest 10% as Compared to the Average Person of His/Her Age

Attributes/Abilities:	Montclair State University		Medium Selective Colleges	
	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %
Academic ability	57.1	60.0	62.3	55.6
Artistic ability	28.4	27.3	29.2	27.6
Computer skills	47.0	28.5	54.2	30.5
Cooperativeness	69.1	72.1	68.6	73.5
Creativity	60.5	55.0	58.1	54.9
Drive to achieve	61.1	70.2	60.9	67.0
Emotional health	49.1	38.6	57.2	45.9
Leadership ability	61.9	53.3	58.2	53.2
Mathematical ability	41.3	32.1	47.7	30.3
Physical health	59.9	39.0	63.6	43.9
Persistence	57.1	56.1	60.2	54.9
Popularity	40.2	26.8	41.7	30.3
Public speaking ability	35.0	28.9	34.2	29.3
Religiousness	19.1	25.5	25.4	29.5
Risk-taking	49.7	31.5	50.8	36.7
Self confidence (intellectual)	59.4	45.4	63.3	46.0

Self confidence (social)	46.2	42.1	52.2	44.1
Self-understanding	53.3	43.4	55.9	47.4
Spirituality	25.4	30.7	32.7	35.7
Understanding of others	58.5	69.1	60.4	66.4
Writing ability	39.6	44.5	40.4	43.7

Freshmen were asked to rate themselves in relation to others their own age on a number of attributes and abilities. Table 13 summarizes the responses for those rating themselves “above average” or in the “highest 10 percent”. For this particular table the comparison will be between male and female respondents for MSU and other public four-year medium-selective college freshmen.

For about half of these abilities and attributes there are some interesting differences between men’s and women’s self-assessments. For example, 32.1 percent of MSU's female freshmen feel they have above average mathematical ability, while 41.3 percent of males do. Forty-five percent of the women compared to 60 percent of the men, report intellectual self-confidence that is above the average for students their own age. Women report feeling socially less self-confident about themselves and they are less likely to report being above average in emotional and physical health.

The CIRP survey asked freshmen if certain traits were descriptive of them. Table 14 summarizes their responses.

Table 14
% Saying These Traits Describe Them to a Great Extent

Traits:	Montclair State University %	Medium Selective Colleges %
Searching for mission/purpose in life	43.6	32.3
Engaging in self reflection	29.0	22.1
Appreciating the interconnectedness of everything	26.7	21.3
Believing in the sacredness of life	33.1	28.1
Being honest in my relationships with others	75.8	72.2

What Political Views Do Freshmen Hold?

- The most popular political label is middle of the road
- Few students say they are at the extremes of the political spectrum: 3.1% at the far left and 2.5% at the far right
- 87% somewhat or strongly agree that the federal government should do more to control the sale of handguns
- 71% somewhat or strongly agree that same sex couples should have the right to legal marital status
- 36% somewhat or strongly agree that marijuana should be legal

Table 15
% Freshmen Holding This Political View

Political Views:	Montclair State University %	Medium Selective Colleges %
Far left	3.1	2.5
Liberal	22.9	21.4
Middle of the Road	57.6	56.7
Conservative	14.1	17.8
Far Right	2.2	1.5

Freshmen were asked their opinions on a number of social issues. Table 16 summarizes the responses of those who agree “strongly” or “somewhat” with each statement. MSU freshmen are more liberal than their peers in other four-year medium-selective colleges especially for the two issues: controlling the sale of handguns, 87 percent of MSU freshmen agree and 75 percent of the comparative colleges do; and the right to legal marital status for same sex couples, 71 percent and 61 percent respectively.

Table 16
% Freshmen Agreeing Strongly or Somewhat with These Opinions

Issues:	Montclair State University %	Medium Selective Colleges %
There is too much concern in the courts for rights of criminals	63.5	64.8
Abortion should be legal	60.8	52.2
The death penalty should be abolished	32.8	27.7
Marijuana should be legalized	36.0	37.1
It is important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships	18.0	24.6
The federal government should do more to control the sale of handguns	87.4	75.2
Racial discrimination no longer a major problem in America	20.7	23.9
Realistically, an individual can do little to bring about changes in our society	35.4	30.1
Wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes than they do now	59.5	54.4
Colleges should prohibit racist/sexist speech on campus	57.9	59.6
Same sex couples should have the right to legal marital status	71.1	60.9
Affirmative action in college admissions should be abolished	45.9	49.3
The activities of married women are best confined to the home and family	19.5	23.7
People should not obey laws which violate their personal values	34.7	33.9
Federal military spending should be increased	37.1	39.9
The federal government should do more to discourage energy consumption		

How Will Freshmen Finance A College Education?

- over half of our freshmen, 54%, have some concern about their ability to finance college
- 13% are not sure they will have enough money to complete college
- a family's own resources is the major source for financing a college degree

Finally, freshmen were asked how much of their first year’s educational expenses such as room, board, tuition and fees, they expected to cover from a variety of sources. Table 17 summarizes these responses. Family resources are the major source for funding college costs. For MSU, 72 percent of freshmen say some amount of their college expenses will be paid for from family resources and 78 percent report this at medium-selective colleges. A smaller percent of our freshmen also say their own personal resources will be used as a source of funding: 46 percent for MSU and 63 percent for medium-selective institutions. This is also the case for aid which need not be repaid, such as scholarships and grants: 47 percent of MSU freshmen say this is a source for some of their college expenses and 56 percent cite this at other four-year medium-selective colleges.

Table 17
% Freshmen Reporting This as a Source for College Funding

Sources:	Montclair State University %	Medium Selective Colleges %
Family resources (parents, relatives, spouse etc.)		
None	28.1	21.6
Less than \$1,000	11.0	14.3
\$1,000-2,999	14.3	17.9
\$3,000-5,999	15.0	17.5
\$6,000-9,999	13.7	12.2
\$10,000+	17.9	16.5
My own resources (savings from work, work-study, other)		
None	53.7	37.3

Less than \$1,000	29.2	30.9
\$1,000-2,999	11.6	22.3
\$3,000-5,999	2.9	6.7
\$6,000-9,999	1.6	1.5
\$10,000+	1.0	1.3
Aid which need not be repaid (grants, scholarships, etc.)		
None	52.7	44.5
Less than \$1,000	9.3	12.5
\$1,000-2,999	16.5	21.9
\$3,000-5,999	10.1	12.8
\$6,000-9,999	6.8	5.3
\$10,000+	4.6	3.0
Aid which must be repaid (loans, etc.)		
None	56.7	53.0
Less than \$1,000	4.7	6.3
\$1,000-2,999	20.4	18.7
\$3,000-5,999	8.9	11.9
\$6,000-9,999	4.4	6.0
\$10,000+	5.0	4.1
Other than above		
None	95.9	95.0
Less than \$1,000	2.8	2.5
\$1,000-2,999	1.0	1.2
\$3,000-5,999	0.2	0.6
\$6,000-9,999	0.0	0.3
\$10,000+	0.1	0.5