

# 2005 CIRP Freshmen Survey Report: New Century College



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*Prepared by the  
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## Table of Contents

### Executive Summary

1. Introduction to the CIRP Freshman Survey-----	i
2. Response Rates by Program-----	i
3. Important Notes-----	i
4. New Century College Highlights-----	ii

### List of Tables

I. Enrollment Status of Survey Respondents -----	1
1. Enrollment Status-----	1
II. Demographic and Family Characteristics-----	1
2. Demographic Characteristics-----	1
3. Immigrant Background -----	1
4. Race/Ethnicity-----	1
5. Religion -----	2
6. Parental Background -----	2
III. Academic Preparation for College-----	2
7. Type of High School -----	2
8. Prior College Credits-----	2
9. High School GPA and Community Service-----	3
10. Have had Special Tutoring or Remedial Work -----	3
11. Will need Special Tutoring or Remedial Work -----	3
IV. High School Activities -----	4
12. High School Activities -----	4
13. Use of Time -----	5
V. College Motivation and Choice -----	5
14. Educational Aspiration -----	5
15. College Motivation-----	6
16. Number of Colleges Applied to-----	6
17. Choice of College -----	6
18. Reasons for Choosing Mason -----	7
VI. Expectations for College Life -----	7
19. College Living Arrangements -----	7
20. Concerns about Financing College Education -----	7
21. Sources of College Funds -----	8
22. College Expectations -----	8
VII. Self-Perceptions and Personal Goals-----	9
23. Self-Perceptions -----	9
24. Personal Goals-----	10
VIII. Political Views -----	10
25. Political Standing-----	10
26. Political Views-----	11
IX. Mason Specific Questions -----	12
27. First in the Family to Attend College -----	12
28. Expected Studying Time in College-----	12
29. Expectations for Mason Experiences-----	12
30. Need for Advising-----	13
31. Expected University Climate -----	13
32. Reasons for Choosing a Major -----	13

# I. Executive Summary

## 1. Introduction to the CIRP Freshman Survey

The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) is a national longitudinal study established by the American Council on Education and administered by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. The CIRP Freshman Survey is designed for entering freshmen classes, mostly first-time full-time freshmen, who complete the survey right before they start college.

**FIRST-TIME freshmen** are defined as entering freshmen who have never attended any college but include students enrolled in the fall term who attended college for the first time in the prior summer term or who entered with advanced standing (college credits earned before graduation from high school).

## 2. Response Rates by Program

Out of 2,529 first-time freshmen enrolled at Mason in fall 2005, 1,709 responded to the survey for a response rate of 68%. These respondents are representative of the entering first-time freshmen of Mason in fall 2005.

This report is one of four special reports for each of the following programs: University Scholars, Honors, Mason Topics and New Century College. In these reports, freshmen who enrolled in the special programs are compared to all other freshmen peers at Mason. Most of the respondents enrolled in the special programs were identified by matching student identification numbers with those provided by these programs. About **15%** of respondents did not give us permission to use their ID, and therefore, their enrollment status was self-reported. The following is a summary of response rate by program:

### **Response Rate Summary:**

<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Total Freshmen Enrolled</b>	<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>Response Rates</b>
<b>University Scholars</b>	30 (17 are also honors)	26 (14 are also honors)	87%
<b>Honors</b>	128 (including 17 scholars)	94 (including 14 scholars)	73%
<b>Mason Topics</b>	210	146	70%
<b>New Century</b>	126	91	72%

## 3. Important Notes:

- *This report includes both full-time and part-time freshmen, although the number of part-time freshmen is very small. Please check 'Table One: Enrollment Status' for exact counts of respondents.*
- *Throughout the report, the term "Other Freshmen" refers to all first-time freshman respondents who enrolled outside that particular program.*
- *ALL results are based on SELF-REPORTED data. In some areas, such as parental income, estimated use of time and college expectations, the data may NOT be reliable or realistic.*
- *Percentages throughout this report may not add to 100% due to rounding and multiple selections. Sometimes 0% may mean lower than .05%.*
- *Interpret statistical results with caution due to small sample sizes for special programs. This is particularly true for University Scholars.*

For more information about the characteristics of four cohorts of entering first-time full-time freshmen at Mason since 2000, please refer to an earlier report published by the Office of Institutional Assessment – *Trends among First-time Full-time Freshmen of George Mason University*. The University trend report and the special program reports can also be accessed from OIA website at:

<http://assessment.gmu.edu/Results/Freshman/Freshman.html>.

#### **4. New Century College Highlights**

A total of 91 NCC students completed the 2005 Freshman Survey. With such a small number, there is always the potential for surveys given in different years to different cohorts to result in different patterns of response. However, the response rate for NCC was 72%, giving us confidence that these responses reflect the attitudes and perceptions of the entering class of NCC freshmen in 2005.

##### ***Entering Characteristics:***

1. 66% of the respondents from NCC were female, substantially higher than that of Mason freshmen as a whole. NCC has a higher percentage of white students and a lower percentage of Asian and Hispanic students compared to all freshmen.
2. Slightly fewer NCC students than other freshmen at Mason come from immigrant backgrounds: nonetheless, 14% of NCC freshmen were born outside the U.S. and 12% said English is not their native language. In terms of religious preferences, NCC freshmen are as diverse as their peers.
3. Parental income is approximately the same for NCC and other freshmen. However, slightly more NCC students reported that their parents have an annual income of \$150,000 or more. Their parents are also more likely to have an advanced degree. Family resources were the primary source of college funds for 58% of NCC students, much higher than for other freshmen. Fewer of them have received grants or scholarships compared to other freshmen.
4. NCC freshmen have *lower* high school GPAs than other freshmen – the difference is statistically significant. Compared with their peers, fewer NCC freshmen have a GPA above B+ in high school. A higher percentage of NCC freshmen reported having had special tutoring or remedial work in high school, particularly in the subjects of reading, math, foreign language and writing. Consequently, more of them expect they will need remedial work in college, especially in math, science and foreign languages.

##### ***High School Activities:***

5. Given a list of 25 possible high school activities, NCC freshmen and other freshmen differ significantly on 5 of them. NCC students were more likely to have felt bored in class, smoked cigarettes, felt overwhelmed by all they had to do, and came late to class. They were also more likely to have discussed politics with friends.
6. On the above referenced list, both NCC and other freshmen identified the same 3 items as their most frequently engaged in activity: used a computer, used the internet for homework and socialized with someone of another racial/ethnic group.
7. Regarding student use of time during the last year of high school, there were no statistically significant differences between NCC freshmen and other freshmen. More than half of the students spent at least 6 hours a week socializing with friends and working for pay.

##### ***College Motivation and Choices:***

8. In terms of their intended highest degree, NCC students are similar to their Mason peers: 21% plan to get a bachelor's degree, 45% a master's degree, and 30% a doctoral or professional degree. NCC students are more likely to say they plan to get a master's degree (28%) or a doctoral degree (6%) from Mason than other freshmen.
9. NCC students are not significantly different from other freshmen in college motivation (i.e., reasons to go to college), number of colleges applied to, and whether Mason was their first choice school. For both groups of freshmen, "to learn more about things that interest me," "to be able to make more money" and "to be able to get a better job" were the top three most important reasons to go to college.

10. 68% of NCC students said Mason was their first choice and 21% said it was their second choice, compared with 62% and 27% of other freshmen. The differences in percentage are not statistically significant.
11. NCC freshmen are more likely than their peers to say that they chose Mason because of the following factors: “graduates get good jobs,” “ranking in national magazines” and “a visit to campus.” They were less likely to say being offered financial assistance was a factor than their peers did.
12. When it comes to the reasons for choosing a particular major, there was no significant difference between NCC and other freshmen. Personal interest was the most important reason for both groups.

### ***College Expectations and Plans:***

13. On a list of 18 possible college activities, NCC freshmen differ significantly from other freshmen only on one item: NCC students are more likely to say the chance is very good that they will participate in volunteer or community service work. Most Mason freshmen, including NCC freshmen, expect the chance to be very good that they will socialize with someone of another racial/ethnic group and make at least a “B” average in college.
14. Nearly all freshmen, including NCC freshmen, expect to meet their academic advisors at least a few times during the first semester; 83% expect each of their professors to contact them about course-related information outside of the classroom at least a few times during the first semester.
15. NCC freshmen are more likely to say it is very important to have serious discussions about social issues in class and to contribute to class discussions, far more than other Mason freshmen

### ***Self-Perceptions and Goals:***

16. On a list of 18 personal traits, NCC students rated themselves significantly lower in academic ability and math ability than other freshmen. There is no statistically significant difference on other personal trait items.
17. Among a list of 21 personal goals, both NCC and other freshmen identified “raising a family” as their most important goal. NCC freshmen are more likely than other freshmen to say that “influencing social values,” “helping others who are in difficulty,” “developing a meaningful philosophy of life,” and “integrating spirituality into my life” are very important goals.

### ***Political Views:***

18. While equal percentages of NCC and other freshmen consider themselves “middle-of-the-road” on their political standing, slightly more NCC freshmen consider themselves “liberal” or “far left” than their peers (36% vs. 31%). No NCC freshman selected “far right” and 16% selected “conservative.”
19. The CIRP Freshman Survey presents students with 22 statements reflecting various political views. NCC freshmen are significantly different from other freshmen on only one issue: more NCC students *strongly disagree* with having laws prohibiting homosexual relationships.

2005 CIRP Freshmen Survey Report for New Century College

**I. Enrollment Status of Survey Respondents**

†Table 1. Enrollment Status		2005 Mason Freshmen			
		New Century		Other Freshmen	
		Count	Column %	Count	Column %
Are you enrolled (or enrolling) as a:	First-time full-time freshmen	91	100%	1589	98%
	First-time part-time freshmen	0	0%	10	1%
	Enrollment status missing	0	0%	19	1%
	Total respondents	91	100%	1618	100%

†The survey only included FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN who entered Mason in fall 2005.

**II. Demographic and Family Characteristics**

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics		2005 Mason Freshmen	
		New Century	Other Freshmen
Your sex	Male	34%	44%
	Female	66%	56%
How old will you be on 12/31/2005?	18 or younger	74%	73%
	19	26%	24%
	20	0%	2%
	21 or older	0%	1%
Miles from college to your permanent home	10 or less	29%	24%
	11 to 50	32%	38%
	51 to 100	5%	7%
	101 to 500	28%	25%
	Over 500	7%	5%

Table 3. Immigrant Background		2005 Mason Freshmen	
		New Century	Other Freshmen
Is English your native language?	Yes	88%	80%
	No	12%	20%
Citizenship status	U.S. citizen	93%	88%
	Permanent resident	3%	9%
	Neither permanent resident nor U.S. citizen	3%	2%
Which of the following statements applies to you?	I was born in the U.S.	86%	80%
	I came to the U.S. before age 6	8%	7%
	I came to the U.S. between ages 6-12	3%	6%
	I came to the U.S. after age 12	3%	8%

†Table 4. Race/Ethnicity	New Century		Other Freshmen	
	Count	%	Count	%
White/Caucasian	65	71%	1001	62%
African American/Black	8	9%	125	8%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0	0%	28	2%
Asian American/Asian	10	11%	316	20%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	1%	19	1%
Mexican American/Chicano	3	3%	13	1%
Puerto Rican	0	0%	23	1%
Other Latino	1	1%	112	7%
Other	7	8%	112	7%

†Percentages add up to more than 100 when respondents select more than one category.

2005 CIRP Freshmen Survey Report for New Century College

Table 5. Religion		2005 Mason Freshmen	
		New Century	Other Freshmen
Religion	Baptist	11%	10%
	Buddhist	1%	3%
	Episcopalian	1%	3%
	Hindu	1%	2%
	Islamic	7%	6%
	Jewish	2%	2%
	Lutheran	3%	3%
	Methodist	4%	6%
	Presbyterian	5%	5%
	Roman Catholic	20%	24%
	Other Christian	15%	15%
	Other Religion	5%	2%
	None	23%	20%

Table 6. Parental Background		2005 Mason Freshmen	
		New Century	Other Freshmen
Parental Income	Less than \$25,000	8%	9%
	\$25,000-49,999	16%	16%
	\$50,000-74,999	18%	18%
	\$75,000-99,999	14%	17%
	\$100,000-149,999	23%	24%
	\$150,000 or more	23%	17%
Parental Educational Background	High school or lower	9%	12%
	No college degree	17%	16%
	College degree	30%	34%
	Above college	44%	38%
Are your parents?	One or both deceased	4%	3%
	Both alive, divorced or living apart	22%	22%
	Both alive and living with each other	74%	75%

III. Academic Preparation for College

Table 7. Type of High School		2005 Mason Freshmen	
		New Century	Other Freshmen
From what kind of high school did you graduate?	Public school (not charter or magnet)	87%	87%
	Public charter school	0%	0%
	Public magnet school	2%	2%
	Private religious/parochial school	4%	7%
	Private independent college-prep school	7%	3%
	Home school	0%	1%

Table 8. Prior College Credits		2005 Mason Freshmen	
		New Century	Other Freshmen
Prior to this term, have you ever taken courses for credit at this institution?	Yes	1%	3%
	No	99%	97%
Since leaving high school, have you ever taken courses, whether for credit or not for credit, at any other institution?	Yes	11%	7%
	No	89%	93%

2005 CIRP Freshmen Survey Report for New Century College

Table 9. High School GPA and Community Service		2005 Mason Freshmen	
		New Century	Other Freshmen
What was your average grade in high school?	A or A+	7%	13%
	A-	11%	14%
	B+	26%	28%
	B	43%	37%
	B-	7%	6%
	C+ or lower	7%	2%
Did your high school require community service for graduation?	Yes	32%	32%
	No	68%	68%

Table 10. Have you had any special tutoring or remedial work in any of the following subjects?	New Century	Other Freshmen
Had remedial work: English	9%	7%
Had remedial work: Reading	9%	5%
Had remedial work: Mathematics	21%	15%
Had remedial work: Social Studies	4%	4%
Had remedial work: Science	7%	5%
Had remedial work: Foreign Language	11%	6%
Had remedial work: Writing	9%	5%

Table 11. Will you need any special tutoring or remedial work in any of the following subjects?	New Century	Other Freshmen
Need remedial work: English	9%	6%
Need remedial work: Reading	4%	3%
Need remedial work: Mathematics	25%	17%
Need remedial work: Social Studies	4%	2%
Need remedial work: Science	12%	7%
Need remedial work: Foreign Language	13%	9%
Need remedial work: Writing	11%	9%



2005 CIRP Freshmen Survey Report for New Century College

**IV. High School Activities**

†Table 12. High School Activities: How often did you engage in the following activities during the past year?	New Century				Other Freshmen			
	Frequently	Occasionally	Not at all	Mean†	Frequently	Occasionally	Not at all	Mean†
Attended a religious service	38%	44%	18%	2.21	39%	38%	24%	2.15
*Was bored in class	42%	56%	2%	2.40	33%	61%	6%	2.26
Participated in organized demonstrations	9%	32%	59%	1.50	9%	30%	61%	1.48
Tutored another student	12%	35%	53%	1.59	11%	47%	42%	1.68
Studied with other students	26%	62%	12%	2.14	27%	61%	13%	2.14
Was a guest in a teacher's home	2%	16%	81%	1.21	2%	15%	83%	1.19
*Smoked cigarettes	8%	15%	77%	1.31	3%	10%	87%	1.15
Drank beer	8%	25%	67%	1.41	2%	26%	72%	1.30
Drank wine or liquor	4%	36%	60%	1.44	2%	31%	67%	1.35
*Felt overwhelmed by all I had to do	30%	62%	9%	2.21	21%	65%	13%	2.08
Felt depressed	11%	45%	44%	1.67	5%	45%	49%	1.56
Performed volunteer work	33%	53%	14%	2.19	27%	57%	16%	2.11
Played a musical instrument	21%	19%	60%	1.60	22%	22%	55%	1.67
Asked a teacher for advice after class	32%	56%	12%	2.20	24%	63%	13%	2.11
Voted in a student election	23%	56%	21%	2.02	25%	57%	18%	2.07
Socialized with someone of another racial/ethnic group	80%	20%	0%	2.80	85%	13%	2%	2.83
*Came late to class	7%	67%	26%	1.80	6%	54%	40%	1.66
Used the Internet for research or homework	81%	19%	0%	2.81	86%	13%	0%	2.86
Performed community service as part of a class	15%	43%	42%	1.74	17%	42%	42%	1.75
Used a personal computer	88%	11%	1%	2.87	89%	8%	3%	2.87
Discussed religion	40%	52%	9%	2.31	33%	55%	12%	2.21
Discussed politics: In class	64%	31%	5%	2.58	61%	34%	5%	2.56
*Discussed politics: With friends	40%	53%	8%	2.32	31%	55%	14%	2.18
Discussed politics: With family	35%	53%	12%	2.23	28%	54%	17%	2.11
Worked on a local, state, or national political campaign	8%	20%	73%	1.35	3%	17%	80%	1.23

†Note:

These items were rated on a 1-3 scale: 3=frequently, 2=occasionally and 1=not at all.

- When appropriate, an independent t-test is used to test whether the responses from New Century College are significantly different from other Mason freshmen.
- Throughout this report, statistically significant differences are marked by adding asterisks to the corresponding statement:
  - \* means  $p < .05$
  - \*\* means  $p < .01$
  - \*\*\* means  $p < .001$

2005 CIRP Freshmen Survey Report for New Century College

†Table 13. Use of Time: During your last year in high school, how much time did you spend during a typical week doing the following?	2005 Mason Freshmen							
	New Century				Other Freshmen			
	<1 hour	1-2 hours	3-5 hours	6 hours or more	<1 hour	1-2 hours	3-5 hours	6 hours or more
Studying/homework	11%	19%	29%	40%	8%	17%	31%	44%
Socializing with friends	4%	7%	17%	72%	2%	8%	22%	67%
Talking with teachers outside of class	61%	19%	16%	4%	58%	28%	11%	3%
Exercise or sports	20%	28%	20%	31%	18%	19%	21%	42%
Partying	48%	19%	13%	20%	51%	19%	17%	12%
Working (for pay)	27%	7%	6%	61%	34%	4%	8%	54%
Volunteer work	49%	24%	18%	9%	54%	23%	13%	10%
Student clubs/groups	38%	29%	19%	13%	44%	28%	16%	12%
Watching TV	22%	21%	24%	32%	19%	24%	29%	28%
Household/childcare duties	32%	40%	21%	7%	35%	32%	22%	10%
Reading for pleasure	42%	29%	21%	8%	46%	27%	16%	11%
Playing video/computer games	72%	7%	13%	8%	61%	14%	13%	12%
Prayer/meditation	73%	16%	8%	3%	71%	20%	6%	3%

†Chi-square tests did not suggest statistically significant difference between two groups of students in term of use of time during last year of high school.

**V. College Motivation and Choice**

Table 14. Educational Aspiration		2005 Mason Freshmen	
		New Century	Other Freshmen
What is the highest academic degree that you intend to obtain?	Associate degree or lower	1%	1%
	Bachelor's degree	21%	23%
	Master's degree	45%	44%
	Doctoral degree	14%	17%
	Medical degree (MD, DO, DDS, DVM)	4%	7%
	Law degree	12%	7%
	Other (including divinity degree)	3%	2%
What is the highest academic degree that you intend to obtain at Mason?	Associate degree or lower	3%	3%
	Bachelor's degree	61%	70%
	Master's degree	28%	21%
	Doctoral degree	6%	2%
	Medical degree (MD, DO, DDS, DVM)	0%	1%
	Law degree	0%	2%
	Other (including divinity degree)	2%	1%

2005 CIRP Freshmen Survey Report for New Century College

†Table 15. College Motivation: In deciding to go to college, how important to you was each of the following reasons?	New Century				Other Freshmen			
	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Mean	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Mean
My parents wanted me to go	44%	43%	12%	2.32	45%	38%	17%	2.27
I could not find a job	13%	4%	82%	1.31	6%	11%	83%	1.22
Wanted to get away from home	15%	42%	44%	1.71	16%	40%	44%	1.72
To be able to get a better job	69%	17%	14%	2.56	70%	18%	12%	2.57
To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas	68%	27%	6%	2.62	64%	32%	4%	2.61
There was nothing better to do	8%	11%	81%	1.27	3%	11%	86%	1.17
To make me a more cultured person	53%	38%	9%	2.44	48%	39%	13%	2.34
To be able to make more money	73%	22%	4%	2.69	68%	25%	6%	2.62
To learn more about things that interest me	79%	19%	2%	2.77	83%	15%	2%	2.81
To prepare myself for graduate or professional school	60%	30%	10%	2.50	59%	30%	11%	2.48
A mentor/role model encouraged me to go	16%	33%	51%	1.64	13%	34%	53%	1.59
To get training for a specific career	67%	22%	10%	2.57	69%	22%	9%	2.59
To find my purpose in life	56%	34%	10%	2.46	50%	33%	17%	2.33

†Rated on a 1-3 scale: 3=very important, 2=somewhat important and 1=not important. Statistical tests did not find significant differences between two groups of freshmen.

Table 16. Number of Colleges Applied to		2005 Mason Freshmen	
		New Century	Other Freshmen
To how many colleges other than this one did you apply for admission this year?	None	14%	14%
	One	13%	12%
	Two	18%	19%
	Three	16%	20%
	Four	16%	15%
	Five or more	22%	20%

Table 17. Choice of College		2005 Mason Freshmen	
		New Century	Other Freshmen
Is this college your:	First choice	68%	62%
	Second choice	21%	27%
	Third choice	8%	8%
	Less than third choice	3%	3%

2005 CIRP Freshmen Survey Report for New Century College

†Table 18. Reasons for Choosing Mason: How important was each of the following reasons in your decision to come to Mason? (Rated on a 1-3 scale: 3=very important and 1=not important)	New Century				Other Freshmen			
	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Mean	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Mean
My relatives wanted me to come here	8%	26%	66%	1.43	12%	27%	61%	1.51
My teacher advised me	5%	28%	67%	1.38	4%	25%	72%	1.32
This college has a very good academic reputation	60%	34%	7%	2.53	51%	42%	7%	2.44
This college has a good reputation for its social activities	25%	58%	17%	2.08	26%	48%	25%	2.01
*I was offered financial assistance	8%	22%	70%	1.38	17%	21%	62%	1.55
The cost of attending this college	24%	44%	33%	1.91	31%	44%	26%	2.05
High school counselor advised me	4%	33%	63%	1.42	5%	27%	68%	1.37
Private college counselor advised me	1%	8%	91%	1.10	1%	7%	92%	1.09
I wanted to live near home	30%	26%	44%	1.86	25%	31%	44%	1.81
Not offered aid by first choice	6%	9%	85%	1.21	5%	10%	85%	1.19
Its graduates gain admission to top graduate/professional schools	31%	40%	30%	2.01	24%	43%	33%	1.91
*This college's graduates get good jobs	53%	37%	10%	2.43	42%	40%	18%	2.24
I was attracted by the religious affiliation/orientation of the college	3%	16%	81%	1.23	2%	13%	85%	1.18
I wanted to go to a school about the size of this college	33%	42%	24%	2.09	26%	46%	29%	1.97
**Rankings in national magazines	18%	43%	39%	1.80	10%	36%	54%	1.56
Information from a website	20%	44%	35%	1.85	15%	44%	40%	1.75
I was admitted through an Early Action or Early Decision program	6%	16%	78%	1.28	9%	9%	82%	1.27
*A visit to campus	53%	32%	14%	2.39	41%	35%	24%	2.17

†Asterisks are used to indicate statistically significant differences between two groups of freshmen at the following levels: \* means p<.05, \*\* means p<.01, and \*\*\* means p<.001.

**VI. Expectations for College Life**

Table 19. College Living Arrangements		2005 Mason Freshmen	
		New Century	Other Freshmen
Where do you plan to live during the fall term?	With my family or other relatives	29%	34%
	Other private home, apartment or room	2%	2%
	College residence hall	67%	62%
	Fraternity or sorority house	0%	0%
	Other campus student housing	1%	1%
	Other	1%	0%

Table 20. Concerns about Financing College Education	New Century			Other Freshmen		
	None	Some	Major	None	Some	Major
Do you have any concern about your ability to finance your college education?	41%	50%	9%	36%	53%	11%

2005 CIRP Freshmen Survey Report for New Century College

Table 21. Sources of College Funds: How much of your first year's educational expenses do you expect to cover from each of the sources listed below?	2005 Mason Freshmen							
	New Century				Other Freshmen			
	<\$1,000	\$1,000-2,999	\$3,000-5,999	\$6,000 or more	<\$1,000	\$1,000-2,999	\$3,000-5,999	\$6,000 or more
Family resources (parents, relatives, spouse, etc.)	22%	11%	9%	58%	24%	12%	16%	48%
My own resources (savings from work, work-study, other income)	68%	26%	4%	1%	73%	19%	6%	3%
Aid which need not be repaid (grants, scholarships, military funding, etc.)	74%	19%	8%	0%	65%	15%	10%	10%
Aid which must be repaid (loans, etc.)	56%	25%	9%	10%	61%	16%	11%	11%
Other than above	97%	2%	1%	0%	98%	1%	1%	1%

†Table 22. College Expectations: What is your best guess as to the chances that you will:	New Century				Other Freshmen			
	Very good chance	Some chance	No or little chance†	Mean†	Very good chance	Some chance	No or little chance†	Mean†
Change major field	14%	43%	43%	2.63	11%	39%	49%	2.52
Change career choice	18%	41%	42%	2.68	11%	44%	45%	2.56
Participate in student government	11%	33%	56%	2.34	10%	29%	61%	2.26
Get a job to help pay for college expenses	51%	37%	12%	3.36	52%	30%	18%	3.29
Work full-time while attending college	9%	18%	74%	2.03	7%	22%	71%	2.06
Join a social fraternity or sorority	15%	24%	60%	2.26	8%	23%	69%	2.08
Play varsity/intercollegiate athletics	7%	27%	66%	2.00	12%	20%	68%	2.10
Make at least a 'B' average	75%	24%	1%	3.74	68%	30%	2%	3.66
Participate in student protests or demonstrations	10%	31%	59%	2.29	7%	24%	69%	2.15
Transfer to another college before graduating	7%	21%	73%	2.13	8%	24%	67%	2.18
Be satisfied with your college	64%	32%	4%	3.59	57%	40%	3%	3.54
*Participate in volunteer or community service work	34%	41%	25%	3.07	24%	43%	33%	2.86
Seek personal counseling	10%	26%	64%	2.31	5%	24%	71%	2.17
Communicate regularly with your professors	42%	47%	11%	3.31	33%	52%	15%	3.17
Socialize with someone of another racial/ethnic group	80%	16%	3%	3.77	80%	17%	3%	3.76
Participate in student clubs/groups	49%	40%	11%	3.37	43%	40%	17%	3.23
Strengthen your religious beliefs/convictions	27%	33%	40%	2.71	23%	32%	46%	2.59
Participate in a study abroad program	32%	27%	41%	2.76	24%	31%	45%	2.62

†The above items were rated on a 1-4 point scale: 4=very good chance, 3=some chance, 2=little chance and 1=no chance. The table combines “no chance” and “little chance” responses. The mean values were calculated on the original 1-4 scale. Asterisks are used to indicate statistically significant differences between two groups of freshmen at the following levels: \* means p<.05, \*\* means p<.01, and \*\*\* means p<.001.

2005 CIRP Freshmen Survey Report for New Century College

**VII. Self-Perceptions and Personal Goals**

†Table 23. Self-Perceptions: Rate yourself compared to the average person of your age.	New Century					Other Freshmen				
	Highest 10%	Above average	Average	Below average†	Mean†	Highest 10%	Above average	Average	Below average†	Mean†
**Academic ability	8%	53%	39%	0%	3.69	15%	60%	25%	0%	3.90
Artistic ability	8%	19%	37%	36%	2.88	9%	25%	36%	30%	3.06
Computer skills	5%	35%	53%	7%	3.40	10%	38%	46%	6%	3.51
Cooperativeness	23%	51%	24%	1%	3.97	26%	50%	22%	2%	4.01
Creativity	23%	44%	27%	5%	3.84	21%	45%	30%	5%	3.81
Drive to achieve	31%	32%	37%	0%	3.93	32%	44%	21%	3%	4.05
Emotional health	21%	27%	46%	5%	3.64	23%	35%	35%	7%	3.73
Leadership ability	27%	41%	27%	4%	3.90	24%	40%	31%	6%	3.81
*Mathematical ability	9%	22%	49%	20%	3.16	12%	33%	40%	15%	3.40
Physical health	15%	33%	41%	11%	3.52	20%	36%	38%	6%	3.69
Public speaking ability	16%	27%	37%	19%	3.36	11%	27%	40%	22%	3.23
Religiousness	11%	20%	32%	37%	2.85	10%	19%	34%	38%	2.85
Self-confidence (intellectual)	19%	37%	34%	10%	3.65	19%	44%	32%	4%	3.79
Self-confidence (social)	22%	35%	33%	10%	3.68	19%	38%	34%	9%	3.67
Self-understanding	25%	34%	38%	2%	3.82	20%	44%	32%	3%	3.82
Spirituality	15%	21%	43%	21%	3.24	13%	27%	39%	21%	3.23
Understanding of others	26%	43%	30%	1%	3.95	23%	52%	24%	2%	3.95
Writing ability	12%	40%	41%	8%	3.56	13%	41%	38%	8%	3.58

†The above items were rated on a 1-5 point scale: 5=highest 10%, 4=above average, 3=average, 2=below average and 1=lowest 10%. The table combines “below average” and “lowest 10%” responses. The mean values were calculated on the original 1-5 scale. Asterisks are used to indicate statistically significant differences between two groups of freshmen at the following levels: \* means  $p < .05$ , \*\* means  $p < .01$ , and \*\*\* means  $p < .001$ .

2005 CIRP Freshmen Survey Report for New Century College

†Table 24. Personal Goals: Please indicate the importance to you personally of each of the following:	New Century				Other Freshmen			
	†Essential/ Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Mean†	†Essential/ Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Mean†
Becoming accomplished in one of the performing arts	18%	23%	59%	1.64	15%	25%	60%	1.61
Becoming an authority in my field	64%	32%	4%	2.80	65%	28%	7%	2.82
Obtaining recognition from my colleagues for contributions to my special field	58%	33%	9%	2.67	58%	34%	8%	2.67
Influencing the political structure	27%	42%	31%	2.04	25%	39%	36%	1.99
**Influencing social values	57%	35%	8%	2.64	44%	40%	16%	2.39
Raising a family	80%	13%	7%	3.20	73%	20%	7%	3.06
Having admin. responsibility for the work of others	46%	37%	18%	2.37	41%	42%	17%	2.34
Being very well off financially	72%	23%	4%	3.09	77%	20%	3%	3.15
*Helping others who are in difficulty	77%	20%	3%	3.08	67%	30%	3%	2.90
Making a theoretical contribution to science	12%	26%	62%	1.53	15%	31%	54%	1.64
Writing original works (poems, novels, stories, etc.)	20%	27%	53%	1.81	16%	24%	60%	1.61
Creating artistic work	14%	33%	53%	1.68	16%	23%	60%	1.63
Becoming successful in a business of my own	41%	31%	29%	2.22	44%	29%	27%	2.38
Being involved in programs to clean up the environment	29%	48%	23%	2.10	21%	47%	32%	1.93
*Developing a meaningful philosophy of life	56%	30%	14%	2.67	46%	33%	21%	2.43
Participating in a community action program	34%	43%	23%	2.15	24%	48%	28%	2.01
Helping to promote racial understanding	42%	42%	16%	2.38	40%	38%	22%	2.31
Keeping up to date with political affairs	54%	35%	11%	2.59	44%	38%	18%	2.43
Becoming a community leader	42%	41%	18%	2.32	30%	43%	27%	2.13
*Integrating spirituality into my life	46%	34%	20%	2.48	37%	34%	29%	2.24
Improving my understanding of other countries & cultures	69%	25%	5%	2.91	59%	32%	10%	2.73

†The above items were rated on a 1-4 point scale: 4=essential, 3=very important, 2= somewhat important and 1=not important. The table combines “essential” and “very important” responses. The mean values were calculated on the original 1-4 scale. Asterisks are used to indicate statistically significant differences between two groups of freshmen at the following levels: \* means p<.05, \*\* means p<.01, and \*\*\* means p<.001.

**VIII. Political Views**

Table 25. Political Standing		2005 Mason Freshmen	
		New Century	Other Freshmen
How would you characterize your political views?	Far Right	0%	2%
	Conservative	16%	19%
	Middle-of-the-road	48%	47%
	Liberal	33%	28%
	Far left	3%	3%

2005 CIRP Freshmen Survey Report for New Century College

†Table 26. Political Views	New Century					Other Freshmen				
	Agree strongly	Agree somewhat	Disagree somewhat	Disagree strongly	Mean	Agree strongly	Agree somewhat	Disagree somewhat	Disagree strongly	Mean
There is too much concern in the courts for the rights of criminals	6%	40%	46%	8%	2.44	8%	46%	39%	7%	2.55
Abortion should be legal	30%	33%	17%	20%	2.72	28%	33%	18%	21%	2.68
The death penalty should be abolished	13%	24%	29%	34%	2.17	13%	21%	39%	28%	2.19
Marijuana should be legalized	13%	22%	28%	36%	2.13	7%	25%	29%	39%	2.00
**It is important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships	5%	9%	26%	60%	1.59	11%	14%	30%	46%	1.91
Racial discrimination is no longer a major problem in America	2%	16%	47%	35%	1.85	3%	17%	49%	32%	1.91
Realistically, an individual can do little to bring about changes in our society	3%	16%	45%	36%	1.87	4%	23%	40%	33%	1.98
Wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes than they do now	20%	44%	25%	10%	2.75	17%	42%	29%	12%	2.64
Colleges should prohibit racist/sexist speech on campus	31%	36%	16%	17%	2.81	27%	34%	26%	12%	2.76
Same-sex couples should have the right to legal marital status	40%	26%	19%	15%	2.91	33%	28%	19%	20%	2.74
Affirmative action in college admissions should be abolished	26%	31%	36%	7%	2.75	20%	32%	39%	9%	2.63
The activities of married women are best confined to the home and family	8%	11%	16%	65%	1.63	5%	14%	22%	58%	1.66
Federal military spending should be increased	3%	36%	44%	16%	2.27	6%	29%	47%	17%	2.25
If two people really like each other, it's all right for them to have sex even if they've known each other for only a very short time	7%	37%	33%	24%	2.27	11%	30%	33%	26%	2.25
The federal government should do more to control the sale of handguns	45%	42%	10%	3%	3.28	42%	39%	13%	6%	3.18
Only volunteers should serve in the armed forces	19%	35%	37%	9%	2.64	25%	35%	29%	10%	2.76
The federal government is not doing enough to control environmental pollution	30%	51%	17%	2%	3.09	28%	50%	19%	3%	3.02
A national health care plan is needed to cover everybody's medical costs	30%	49%	14%	8%	3.00	27%	46%	19%	7%	2.93
Grading in the high schools has become too easy	9%	21%	45%	25%	2.15	8%	27%	48%	18%	2.25
Undocumented immigrants should be denied access to public education	16%	21%	42%	21%	2.31	19%	25%	36%	21%	2.42
Through hard work, everybody can succeed in American society	45%	35%	19%	1%	3.24	43%	38%	15%	4%	3.20
Dissent is a critical component of the political process	17%	57%	25%	1%	2.89	21%	52%	26%	2%	2.92

†Rated on a 1-4 scale: 4=strongly agree, 3=agree somewhat, 2=disagree somewhat and 1=disagree strongly. Asterisks are used to indicate statistically significant differences between two groups of freshmen at the following levels: \* means  $p < .05$ , \*\* means  $p < .01$ , and \*\*\* means  $p < .001$ .



2005 CIRP Freshmen Survey Report for New Century College

**IX. Mason Specific Questions**

Table 27. First in the Family to Attend College		2005 Mason Freshmen	
		New Century	Other Freshmen
Are you the first in your immediate family to attend college?	Yes	17%	22%
	No	83%	78%

Table 28. Expected Studying Time in College		2005 Mason Freshmen	
		New Century	Other Freshmen
Approximately, how much time do you expect to spend studying for each hour spent in class or lab during your first year at Mason?	< Half an hour	1%	2%
	Half an hour	19%	18%
	One hour	39%	39%
	One and a half hours	25%	23%
	Two hours or more	16%	19%

†Table 29. Expectations for Mason Experiences: Please indicate the importance to you personally of each of the following:	New Century				Other Freshmen			
	†Essential/ Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Mean†	†Essential/ Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Mean†
Attending a college with a multi-ethnic student body	70%	19%	10%	2.93	62%	28%	10%	2.82
Being at least moderately fluent in a language other than my native language	51%	31%	18%	2.52	49%	32%	18%	2.56
Increasing my technology skills in my classes at George Mason	67%	28%	6%	2.85	65%	29%	5%	2.84
Talking with my professors outside of class	63%	33%	5%	2.81	63%	33%	4%	2.81
**Having serious discussions about social issues in class	73%	23%	5%	2.98	57%	35%	8%	2.70
*Contributing to class discussions	78%	20%	1%	3.13	70%	26%	4%	2.92
Working on class projects with a team of students	63%	31%	7%	2.76	59%	34%	7%	2.69
Studying with other students outside of class	72%	23%	6%	2.89	66%	29%	5%	2.84
Socializing with students of other racial/ethnic groups	86%	9%	5%	3.06	84%	10%	7%	3.00

†The above items were rated on a 1-4 point scale: 4=essential, 3=very important, 2= somewhat important and 1=not important. The table combines “essential” and “very important” responses. The mean values were calculated on the original 1-4 scale. Asterisks are used to indicate statistically significant differences between two groups of freshmen at the following levels: \* means p<.05, \*\* means p<.01, and \*\*\* means p<.001.

2005 CIRP Freshmen Survey Report for New Century College

Table 30. Need for Advising: How often do you expect to meet with each of your professors and your academic advisor during your first semester?		2005 Mason Freshmen	
		New Century	Other Freshmen
I expect that each professor will contact me outside of the classroom, about course-related information, my first semester	Weekly	14%	13%
	A few times during the semester	69%	70%
	Once	5%	6%
	Never	0%	1%
	I don't know	13%	10%
I expect to meet with my academic advisor, my first semester	Weekly	75%	75%
	A few times during the semester	25%	23%
	Once	0%	1%
	Never	0%	0%
	I don't know	0%	0%

†Table 31. Expected University Climate: It is important that the University climate is welcoming to:	New Century					Other Freshmen				
	Agree strongly	Agree somewhat	Disagree somewhat	Disagree strongly	Mean	Agree strongly	Agree somewhat	Disagree somewhat	Disagree strongly	Mean
People of different ethnicities	73%	26%	1%	0%	3.72	71%	27%	2%	0%	3.68
People of different religious backgrounds	59%	38%	3%	0%	3.55	59%	37%	4%	0%	3.54
People of disabilities	49%	42%	8%	1%	3.39	51%	40%	7%	2%	3.40
People of different sexual preferences	80%	19%	1%	0%	3.78	81%	18%	1%	0%	3.79

†Rated on a 1-4 scale: 4=agree strongly, 3=agree somewhat, 2=disagree somewhat and 1=disagree strongly. Statistical tests did not find significant differences between two groups of freshmen.

†Table 32. Reasons for Choosing a Major: If you have chosen your major field of study, please state your level of agreement with the following:	New Century					Other Freshmen				
	Agree strongly	Agree somewhat	Disagree somewhat	Disagree strongly	Mean	Agree strongly	Agree somewhat	Disagree somewhat	Disagree strongly	Mean
I was influenced to choose my major by the potential for employment	26%	43%	24%	7%	2.88	36%	38%	17%	9%	3.01
I was influenced to choose my major by my parents or a family member	10%	27%	40%	22%	2.25	11%	32%	28%	29%	2.25
I was influenced to choose my major by my own personal interest	84%	16%	0%	0%	3.84	86%	13%	1%	0%	3.84

†Rated on a 1-4 scale: 4=agree strongly, 3=agree somewhat, 2=disagree somewhat and 1=disagree strongly. Statistical tests did not find significant differences between two groups of freshmen.



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