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CIRP Freshman Survey, 2009

Loyola Freshmen Have Individual Traits That Are Similar to Freshmen at Peer Schools

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New freshmen arrive at college with their own individual traits and orientations. Knowing something about these traits and orientations helps to understand new freshmen and their needs. In this report, seven traits are presented, comparing Loyola's new freshmen to freshmen at other private universities.

The HERI CIRP Freshman Survey is a national survey administered annually to new freshmen at participating institutions across the United States. At Loyola, the survey is administered during the "Discover Loyola" orientations in the summer prior to students' first semester at Loyola, so the response rate is higher than for most other student surveys. In 2009, Loyola's response rate was 93%.

HERI CIRP combines multiple questions into a set of "constructs," scales that measures an individual trait or orientation. The construct scales are calculated so that the average of each construct is 50.0 across all institutions participating in the Freshman Survey. Specific averages on each of the traits are presented here, for Loyola and for two comparison groups of other institutions participating in the Freshman Survey: other private universities of medium selectivity and other private universities of medium, high, or very high selectivity (groups include only those universities participating in the Freshman Survey; see Appendix A for lists of universities in each comparison group). This shows how Loyola's new freshmen are the same as or different from new freshmen at other similar institutions. The first comparison group includes other universities that are similar to Loyola in selectivity, and so comprises a group of similar peers, whereas the second group also includes universities more selective than Loyola, and so comprises a group that is more aspirational.

This report highlights differences between Loyola and the comparison groups that are both statistically significant and of a substantively meaningful size.

Key findings

- New freshmen at Loyola reported a slightly lower average level of academic self-confidence than did those at private universities of at least medium (medium, high, and very high) selectivity (see Table 1). That is, they were slightly less likely to believe in their academic abilities and have confidence in academic environments.
- New freshmen at Loyola reported a slightly higher average level of social agency than did those at private, medium selectivity universities. That is, the extent to which they value political and social involvement as a personal goal is a little larger. Loyola may draw such students more than other medium selectivity universities because of its Jesuit nature.
- New freshmen at Loyola reported a slightly higher likelihood of college involvement in general than did those at other private, medium selectivity universities.
- There are no meaningful differences between Loyola and either of the comparison groups on any of the other traits: habits of mind (behaviors and traits associated with academic success; learning behaviors seen as foundation for lifelong learning), social self-concept (students' beliefs about their abilities and confidence in social situations), pluralistic orientation (skills and dispositions appropriate for living and working in a diverse society), or college orientation reputation (degree to which students value academic reputation and future career potential as a reason for choosing their college).

Conclusions

- Other than those few described above, there are no meaningful differences between Loyola and the comparison groups on the traits examined here. All of the construct averages, for Loyola and each of the comparison groups, cluster near or at the 50.0 average for the entire group of Freshman Survey institutions.

- This suggests that Loyola's new freshmen are mostly similar on these traits to those at both universities of medium selectivity and

universities of at least medium (medium, high, and very high) selectivity.

Table 1 Individual Traits: Loyola and University Comparison Groups			
Trait	Loyola <i>Average</i> ²	University comparison group	
		Private, medium selectivity	Private, at least medium selectivity ¹
		<i>Average</i> ²	<i>Average</i> ²
Academic self-concept Students' beliefs about their abilities and confidence in academic environments	51.1	50.5	53.5
Habits of mind Behaviors and traits associated with academic success; learning behaviors seen as foundation for lifelong learning	52.2	50.9	53.0
Social self-concept Students' beliefs about their abilities and confidence in social situations	50.5	49.7	51.1
Social agency Extent to which students value political and social involvement as a personal goal	51.4	49.0	50.4
Pluralistic orientation Skills and dispositions appropriate for living and working in a diverse society	52.5	51.1	52.0
College orientation reputation Degree to which students value academic reputation and future career potential as a reason for choosing their college	50.4	50.5	51.6
Likelihood of college involvement Students' expectations about their involvement in college life generally	49.4	47.3	49.3
Number of students ³	1,895	10,179	36,288

Source: HERI CIRP Freshman Survey, 2009

Note: The scale is from 0 to 100, where 50.0 represents the average across all institutions participating in the Freshman Survey. Bolded blue/red indicates that Loyola is higher/lower than the comparison group at a statistically significant level (.001), with an effect size of at least .2.

¹ Includes medium, high, and very high selectivity.

² Scores are calculated so that the mean across all schools participating in CIRP is 50.

³ Because of missing data, the number of students varies slightly by trait.

Appendix A

Comparison Group 1

Bradley University
Butler University
Catholic University of America
Clarkson University
DePaul University
Drexel University
Pratt Institute-Main
St. John's University – New York
Texas Christian University
University of San Diego
University of the Pacific

Comparison Group 2

American University
Baylor University
Boston College
Bradley University
Brandeis University
Butler University
California Institute of Technology
Catholic University of America
Clarkson University
Cornell University
Creighton University
DePaul University
Drexel University
Duke University
Emory University
Fordham University
Georgetown University
Johns Hopkins University
Northeastern University
Northwestern University
Pratt Institute-Main
Rice University
Santa Clara University
Southern Methodist University
St. John's University – New York
Texas Christian University
Tulane University of Louisiana
University of Notre Dame
University of Pennsylvania
University of Rochester
University of San Diego
University of the Pacific
Vanderbilt University
Villanova University
Wake Forest University