



Important Personal Goals of New Freshmen Include Helping Others in Difficulty and Making Money

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New freshmen arriving at Loyola for their first semester have goals for themselves and expectations about what their college years will be like. Students' personal goals provide insight into what they want for their lives over the longer term, while students' expectations for their college years may help to anticipate some of their more immediate needs.

The HERI CIRP Freshman Survey is a national survey administered annually to new freshmen at participating institutions across the United States. With the exception of 2005, the Freshman Survey has been administered at Loyola every year since the 1980s. The survey is administered on paper to new freshmen, in person during the "Discover Loyola" orientations in the summer prior to students' first semester at Loyola, so response rates are higher than for most web-based student surveys. In 2010, the response rate was 97%.

This report examines new freshmen's personal goals and what those freshmen expect to do or experience during their college years.¹ Results presented indicate the percentages of students reporting a given goal as very important or essential² to them, as well as the percentages reporting a very good chance³ of experiencing events and activities while in college. The focus of this report is on the goals and expectations reported by fall 2010 incoming new freshmen, as well as changes over time, from 2001 to 2010. Statistically significant, meaningful changes are indicated in red or blue in the tables (see tables' Notes).

Key findings

Goals

- The listed goal new freshmen most often reported as very important or essential to them was helping others who are in difficulty (77% in 2010).
- The next goals most often reported as very important or essential were being very well off financially and raising a family (74% in 2010).
- Sixty-four percent of the 2010 new freshmen said

¹ Students may have had other goals or expectations that were not on the lists.

² Entire scale includes not important, somewhat important, very important, and essential.

³ Entire scale includes no chance, very little chance, some chance, and very good chance.

that improving their understanding of other cultures/countries was very important or essential to them.

- The professional goals of becoming an authority in their field and obtaining recognition from colleagues for contributions to their field were cited as very important or essential by 61% and 59%, respectively, of 2010 new freshmen.
- Developing a meaningful philosophy of life was reported as very important or essential by 55% of the 2010 new freshmen, while half cited the importance of influencing social values.
- The percentage of new freshmen reporting that adopting "green" practices to protect the environment was very important or essential to them dropped from 57% as recently as 2008 to 48% in 2010. Only 27% in 2010 said that becoming involved in programs to clean up the environment was very important or essential to them.
- Becoming successful in a business of their own became less important to new freshmen over the years from 2001 to 2010, dropping from 40% to 31% saying it was very important or essential.
- Influencing the political structure also declined in importance to new freshmen, from 30% in 2001 saying it was very important or essential to them, to 24% saying so in 2010.
- Of the listed goals, creative work was reported as very important or essential by the fewest new freshmen. Only 17% cited writing original works, 16% cited becoming accomplished in a performing art, and 13% cited creating artistic work.

Expectations of college experience

- Of experiences and activities listed in the survey, 76% of 2010 new freshmen were most likely to say that there was a good chance that they would make at least a 'B' average. However, the converse, of course, is that a fourth think there is at most only some chance that they will make at least a 'B' average.
- Seventy-four percent of the new 2010 freshmen said there was a very good chance that they would socialize with someone of another racial/ethnic group.
- Sixty-five percent of the new 2010 freshmen said

there was a very good chance that they would participate in student clubs/groups.

- The percentage of new freshmen saying there was a very good chance that they would be satisfied with Loyola rose from 48% in 2001 to 62% in 2010.
- Fifty-six percent of new 2010 freshmen said there was a very good chance that they would get a job to help pay for college expenses, but only 6% said there was a very good chance that work would be work full time.
- New incoming freshmen are increasingly likely to expect to study abroad. While 42% in 2002 said there was a very good chance that they would do so, that percentage rose to 50% in 2010.
- New freshmen are also increasingly likely to say there is a very good chance that they will participate in volunteer or community service work, with the percentage rising from 37% in 2001 to 49% in 2010.
- Only about 43% of 2010 new freshmen said there was a very good chance that they would communicate regularly with their professors.
- Thirty percent of 2010 new freshmen said there was a very good chance that they would get tutoring help in specific courses.
- Relatively few 2010 new freshmen said there was a very good chance that they would change their major field (13%) or change their career choice (12%).
- Only 6% of 2010 new freshmen said there is a very good chance that they will require extra time to complete their degree requirements.
- Only 4% of 2010 new freshmen said there was a very good chance that they would transfer to another college before graduating.

Conclusions

- There have been few meaningful changes in the goals of incoming freshmen from 2001 to 2010.

- The most common very important or essential goals for new 2010 freshmen were helping others who are in difficulty and being very well off financially.
- The importance of “green” practices has decreased, and becoming involved in programs to clean up the environment ranks fairly low on students’ lists of important goals. Given Loyola’s increasing emphasis on the environment and “green” practices, the importance of those two goals may increase over time while students are at Loyola.
- A quarter of the new 2010 freshmen said that there was at most only some chance that they would earn at least a ‘B’ average.
- Without further details, it is not possible to know the college implications of the fact that more than half of the new 2010 freshmen said there was a very good chance they would get a job to help pay for college expenses. For example, working on campus tends to integrate students into the college community, while working off campus may actually impede such integration.
- Relatively few students say that there is a very good chance that they will change their major field. Loyola administrative data suggest that quite a few will do so, however, suggesting that students are more likely to eventually do so than they think. Changes in major may, at least sometimes, indicate academic and personal development.
- Very few new freshmen say that there is a very good chance that they will need extra time to complete their degree requirements. Loyola data, however, show that many more students will need extra time, although that number may decrease with the change in required credits at Loyola from 128 to 120.
- Only 4% of 2010 new freshmen said there was a very good chance that they would transfer to another college. Again, Loyola’s and other data show that the percentage will eventually be substantially higher.

Table 1 New Freshman Goals: 2001-10									
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Goals									
<i>% very important or essential</i>									
Helping others who are in difficulty	75.3	73.8	74.6	75.9	77.3	80.0	78.2	79.1	77.4
Being very well off financially	73.1	73.0	74.2	71.2	72.0	67.2	73.1	75.1	74.2
Raising a family	73.3	73.7	71.7	73.2	76.0	75.7	72.7	74.3	73.8
Improving my understanding of other countries and cultures	---	59.7	57.8	62.5	67.6	67.0	68.6	65.9	64.0
Becoming an authority in my field	67.0	65.4	62.7	64.0	64.0	61.4	66.3	63.4	61.4
Obtaining recognition from my colleagues for contributions to my special field	60.6	59.6	61.0	58.4	62.4	62.9	66.9	62.7	59.0
Developing a meaningful philosophy of life	59.0	53.7	49.9	55.2	59.8	62.9	63.9	60.5	54.9
Influencing social values	51.2	48.7	48.4	49.8	55.0	58.8	57.8	---	50.2
Adopting `green` practices to protect the environment	---	---	---	---	---	---	57.4	50.4	48.4
Helping to promote racial understanding	47.3	41.0	39.5	41.7	48.2	50.6	48.6	43.5	43.2
Becoming a community leader	41.6	37.2	38.1	40.4	45.7	44.9	48.9	45.1	43.2
Keeping up to date with political affairs	41.1	40.6	41.9	42.5	47.5	47.4	49.8	44.0	40.9
Participating in a community action program	36.7	31.5	31.5	31.3	42.5	42.8	44.3	42.2	38.9
Becoming successful in a business of my own	39.6	37.1	35.6	33.8	35.6	35.5	36.9	35.8	31.4
Making a theoretical contribution to science	24.1	22.1	23.4	25.8	27.7	28.7	29.7	28.1	28.5
Becoming involved in programs to clean up the environment	21.9	18.3	18.2	21.6	27.3	32.7	36.3	29.9	26.5
Influencing the political structure	30.2	26.5	29.9	28.1	31.1	28.0	30.4	22.6	24.2
Writing original works (poems, novels, short stories, etc.)	19.0	16.4	18.5	19.7	18.3	18.1	19.5	16.6	16.5
Becoming accomplished in one of the performing arts (acting, dancing, etc.)	15.2	16.8	15.1	17.2	14.6	14.9	17.0	17.3	16.0
Creating artistic work (painting, sculpture, decorating, etc.)	17.4	14.5	17.0	18.5	15.2	14.7	16.6	14.3	13.3
Total respondents	1314	1443	1327	1396	1814	1934	2152	1920	1978

Source: CIRP Freshman Survey, 2001-04, 2006-10 (includes new incoming freshmen only)

Note: **Red/blue** indicates that there was a statistically significant **decrease/increase** in the percentage from the first year measured to 2010 and the decrease/increase was at least 15% and at least 5 percentage points.

Table 2 New Freshman Expectations of College Experiences: 2001-10									
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Probability of future events/activities									
<i>% very good chance</i>									
Make at least a `B` average	69.4	74.4	66.6	69.1	68.0	65.5	68.5	73.8	76.3
Socialize with someone of another racial/ethnic group	75.7	77.2	72.6	72.7	75.6	73.1	69.8	75.0	74.1
Participate in student clubs/groups	57.0	54.3	48.3	52.4	63.4	59.2	61.2	64.9	65.0
Be satisfied with your college	48.4	52.7	50.0	51.6	55.7	56.9	58.1	58.6	62.2
Discuss course content with students outside of class	---	---	---	---	---	---	54.5	59.6	57.5
Get a job to help pay for college expenses	49.2	58.3	53.2	57.7	55.6	54.8	55.1	59.0	56.1
Participate in a study abroad program	---	42.2	38.0	46.2	47.5	47.1	47.6	51.4	50.1
Participate in volunteer or community service work	36.8	37.6	34.1	37.3	46.0	44.3	46.9	50.2	48.6
Communicate regularly with your professors	41.7	40.9	38.6	35.0	41.2	36.2	41.4	41.6	42.5
Play club, intramural, or recreational sports	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	29.1	31.9
Work on a professor's research project	---	---	---	---	---	---	27.9	31.2	30.8
Have a roommate of different race/ethnicity	---	---	---	---	---	33.4	30.6	35.0	30.7
Get tutoring help in specific courses	---	---	---	---	---	---	26.7	---	29.7
Change major field	15.3	15.3	12.2	16.0	12.1	13.4	14.9	15.9	13.0
Change career choice	15.1	15.5	12.9	15.7	12.7	13.5	15.5	15.8	12.3
Seek personal counseling	8.2	9.5	9.4	11.8	11.0	9.1	11.8	9.1	11.7
Participate in student protests or demonstrations	9.2	8.8	11.9	12.1	9.7	11.3	10.7	11.9	10.7
Participate in student government	11.0	9.9	9.2	11.0	8.8	7.8	9.1	8.0	7.5
Need extra time to complete your degree requirements	5.5	---	---	---	4.5	5.1	6.3	4.8	5.8
Work full-time while attending college	6.6	6.8	7.9	8.5	6.9	6.9	8.5	6.5	5.7
Join a social fraternity or sorority	6.7	8.0	7.3	5.7	6.0	5.2	6.3	7.0	5.6
Play varsity/intercollegiate athletics	7.9	8.4	8.2	6.3	6.7	6.9	9.5	4.9	5.5
Transfer to another college before graduating	4.9	4.5	4.8	6.0	4.7	4.6	5.4	5.1	4.1
Total respondents	1314	1443	1327	1396	1814	1934	2152	1920	1978

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