Why do freshmen go to college?

Freshmen who entered Buffalo State in Fall, 1999 cite the following reasons for going to college:

- To make money 73%
- To get a better job. 75%
- To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas. 60%

Women are more likely than men to cite:

- To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas.
- To get training for a specific career.**
- To prepare myself for graduate or professional school.**
- To learn more about things that interest men.**

Men are slightly more likely than women to cite:

- To make more money.

Why do freshmen choose Buffalo State?

The majority of freshmen do not cite any one particular reason as very important in their decision to attend Buffalo State. The most cited reasons were:

- Low tuition. 35%
- Buffalo State has a good academic reputation. 34%
- Buffalo State graduates get good jobs. 33%
- Wanted to live near home. 30%

Women are more sure of the reasons they choose Buffalo State than men. More women cite above reasons than men do.
How do freshmen rank Buffalo State among other colleges/universities they considered?

- 58% chose Buffalo State as their first choice.
- 28% chose Buffalo State as their second choice.
- 14% chose Buffalo State as their third or lower choice.

At the same time, 83% of Buffalo State freshmen applied to at least one other institution and were accepted by at least one other institution.

What predictions do freshmen make about their educational careers at Buffalo State?

Freshmen expect to succeed at Buffalo State. Two-thirds (down from three-quarters in 1998) say there is a very good chance they will earn a bachelor’s degree. Almost half (44%) say chances are very good that they will make at least a "B" average; 13% expect to graduate with honors. Few expect to fail; only 3% say there is a very good chance that they will fail one or more courses. About three out of ten say there is a very good chance that they will be satisfied with Buffalo State; while 13% say there is a very good chance that they will transfer to another institution, an additional 29% say there is some chance they will transfer.

Women are more likely than men to say there is a very good chance they will:

- Earn a bachelor’s degree
  - women 71%; men 60%
- Earn at least a "B" average
  - women 47%; men 40%
- Be satisfied with college
  - women 32%; men 24%

Although freshmen are confident about their overall chances for success, they are not so sure that their present career and major field choices will remain the same throughout college. Fourteen percent say there is a very good chance that they will change their major almost an equal percentage say there is a very good chance they will change their career choice.

They also voiced concerns about their ability to finance college. Over seven out of ten (71%) reported some or major concerns about their ability to afford college with 19% not sure they will have enough funds to complete college.

- Women are more concerned about financing college than men
  - women 76%; men 63%
What are their long-term academic goals?

Freshmen have high long-term academic goals: 73% expect to earn a graduate degree (women 77%; men 69%). About 29% of them expect to earn a graduate degree at Buffalo State.**

How do freshmen see themselves?

Freshmen were asked to rate themselves on nineteen traits by comparing themselves with "the average person your age." 1999 freshmen were most likely to rate themselves above average on the following traits:

- Cooperativeness. 64%
- Understanding of others. 61%
- Drive to achieve. 58%
- Creativity. 57%
- Intellectual self confidence. 52%**
- Leadership ability. 52%**
- Self-understanding. 51%
- Social self confidence. 50%**

Compared with the 1999 national norms for public four-year colleges, Buffalo State freshmen ratings are low on all the above items. Women and men differ in the way they rate themselves. In general, men are more likely to rate themselves above average. Women rated themselves higher on:

- Cooperativeness.
- Understanding of others.

What are the long-term personal goals of today’s freshmen?

Freshmen were asked to rate the personal importance of eighteen long-term goals. The most highly rated goal by far was "being well off financially"; three out of four freshmen rate this goal as essential or very important.
Other highly rated goals were:

- Raising a family. 70%
- Helping others. 58%
- Becoming an authority in my field. 56%

Women were much more likely than men to rate "helping others" as an essential or very important goal.

Men were more likely than women to rate the goal of "becoming an authority in my field" as essential or very important.

There is little difference between men and women on:

- Being very well off financially.
- Raising a family.

* All data reported here is from the Freshmen Survey administered during Summer, 1999 orientation.
**Indicates a change from 1998.

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