Why do freshmen go to college?

Freshmen who entered Buffalo State in Fall, 1998 cite the following reasons for going to college:

- To make more money 77%
- To get a better job 76%
- To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas 62%

Women are more likely than men to cite:

- To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas.

Men are 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 The majority of freshmen do not cite any one particular reason as very important in their decision to attend Buffalo State.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 39%
- Buffalo State has a good academic reputation 37%
- Buffalo State graduates get good jobs 35%

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?

- 60% chose Buffalo State as their first choice.
- 28% chose Buffalo State as their second choice.
- 12% chose Buffalo State as their third or lower choice.
At the same time, 84% 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. Three-quarters say there is a very good chance they will earn a bachelor's degree. Almost half (47%) say chances are very good that they will make at least a "B" average; 13% expect to graduate with honors. Few expect to fail; more than 80% say there is very little or no chance that they will fail one or more courses. About one-third say there is a very good chance that they will be satisfied with Buffalo State; an additional 59% say there is some chance that they will be satisfied with Buffalo State. While 15% 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 77%; men 66%
- Earn at least a "B" average  women 48%; men 42%
- Be satisfied with college  women 33%; men 24%

Men are slightly more likely than women to say there is a chance they will:

- Fail at least one course  men 22%; women 19%

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. Two out of five say there is a very good or some chance that they will change their major and an equal proportion say there is a very good chance or some chance they will change their career choice.

**What are their long-term academic goals?**

Freshmen have high long-term academic goals: 69% expect to earn a graduate degree (women: 74%; men: 62%). About 22% 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." 1998 freshmen were most likely to rate themselves above average on the following traits:

- Cooperativeness: 65%
- Understanding of others: 60%
- Drive to achieve: 58%
- Creativity: 57%
- Competitive: 52%
- Self-understanding: 52%
- Physical health: 51%

Compared with the 1998 weighted national norms for medium and low select 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"; four out of five freshmen rate this goal as essential (47%) or very important (33%). Almost three-quarters (72%) rate "raising a family" as an essential or very important goal; 64% rate "helping others" as essential or very important. The two other goals rated essential or very important by more than half the class is "becoming an authority in my own field" (58%) and obtaining recognition from my colleagues for contributions to my special field" (53%). Other highly rated goals were:
• Raising a family 72%
• Helping others 64%
• Becoming an authority in my field 58%
• Obtaining recognition from my colleagues 53%

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.
• Obtaining recognition from my colleagues.

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

For more information, contact
Rosalyn Lindner
Senior Advisor to the Provost
102 Bulger Communication, 878-6939
lindnera@bscmail.buffalostate.edu