How do freshmen who plan to enroll in the Social Sciences differ from other freshmen?

Men and women differ in their responses to survey questions as do participants in special programs. Freshmen who are enrolled or plan to enroll in the Social Sciences are more likely to be female than freshmen in general. This brief focuses on the differences between freshmen who plan to enroll or are enrolled in the Social Sciences and other members of the freshmen class, while acknowledging for gender differences.

Why do freshmen in Social Science go to college?

Social Science freshmen name the following as very important reasons for going to college:

- Make more money 80%
- Get a better job 72%
- Gain a general education and appreciation of ideas 68%
- Prepare for graduate/professional school 59%
- Become a more cultured person 53%

Why do Social Science freshmen choose Buffalo State?

These freshmen name the following reasons as very important influences on their decision to choose Buffalo State:

- Low tuition 41%
- Good academic reputation 37%

Again, these reasons are similar to those given by other freshmen.
How do Social Science majors rank Buffalo State among other institutions they considered?

More than half (55%) rank Buffalo State first among the colleges they considered, and about a third (32%) rank Buffalo State second. The remaining 13% rank Buffalo State third or lower. These rankings are very similar to those given by other freshmen.

What prediction do Social Science majors make about their careers at Buffalo State?

Freshmen in Social Science majors expect to succeed at Buffalo State; most (96%) say there is a very good chance or some chance that they will graduate with a "B" average. Twenty percent think there is some chance or a very good chance that they will fail a course. Like other freshmen, these students think there is some chance or a very good chance that they will change majors (47%) or career choices (46%) while in college. Over a quarter (26%) think there is a very good chance they will be satisfied with Buffalo State, and another 67% think there is some chance that they will be satisfied; nevertheless over half (54%) say there is some chance or a very good chance that they will transfer to another institution.

What are the long-term academic goals of Social Science freshmen?

Freshmen who plan to enter the Social Sciences have high long-term academic goals. Only 25% expect the baccalaureate to be their highest degree; 30% expect to get a master's degree, and 45% say they will earn a doctoral or first-professional degree. Over one quarter (27%) expect to earn a graduate degree at Buffalo State.

How do Social Science freshmen see themselves?

Freshmen were asked to rate themselves on nineteen traits by comparing themselves with "the average person your age." Their responses can be compared to those of a larger norm group of freshmen who entered public four-year colleges in Fall 1998. Generally speaking, Buffalo State freshmen rate themselves somewhat lower than this norm group. Freshmen who intend to enter the Social Sciences are most likely to rate themselves above average on the following traits:
• Cooperativeness 66%
• Physical health 66%
• Drive to achieve 63%
• Leadership abilities 62%
• Understand others 58%
• Competitiveness 57%
• Intellectual self-confidence 56%
• Social self-confidence 56%
• Writing abilities 54%

When compared with other freshmen, Social Science freshmen were more likely to rate themselves above average on leadership ability, physical health, intellectual self-confidence and social self-confidence.

What are the long-term personal goals of Social Science freshmen?

Freshmen were asked to rate the personal importance of eighteen long-term goals. These are the long-term goals rated essential or very important by the greatest number of Social Science freshmen:

• Be very well off financially 81%
• Raise a family 72%
• Help others in difficulty 72%
• Become an authority in my own field 68%
• Obtain recognition from colleagues 60%
• Influence social values 54%
In general, these are the same goals other freshmen cited.

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

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