ANALYSIS OF RUTGERS-NEWARK DATA 2005

It should be noted at the outset that although CIRP usually includes the Rutgers-Newark campus in the “highly selective public university” stratum, this year their report shows peer institutions as “public university – low selectivity.” For reporting purposes, we continue with the traditional practice of comparing Rutgers-Newark first-time full-time students to those attending peer institutions of high selectivity. Even so, given the different character and mission of some of the institutions included in the high selectivity stratum, the following comparisons between Rutgers-Newark and peer institution students should be viewed cautiously.

The responses to questions regarding Selection of College (Items A1-A5) reveal that Rutgers-Newark and peer institution students are similar. Approximately two-thirds of Rutgers-Newark students and students in peer institutions report that their institution was their first choice (66% and 69%). However, the most important reasons in deciding to go to college differ for students at Rutgers-Newark and its peer institutions. Rutgers-Newark students are more likely to be motivated to get training for a specific career (77% vs. 62% for students at peer institutions), or state that they decided to go to college to be able to get a better job (76% vs. 71%), or to be able to make more money (75% vs. 68%), as well as to prepare for graduate or professional school (70% and 65%). With respect to other important reasons in deciding to go to college, Rutgers-Newark students are similar to their peers. They are equally likely to indicate they go college to learn more about things that interest them (84% and 80% for peer institution students), and to gain a general education and appreciation of ideas (72% and 69%).
Rutgers-Newark students and students at other highly selective institutions report different reasons for selecting their current college. Although the most important reason cited by both groups is the colleges’ good academic reputation (66% for Rutgers and 71% for peer institutions), Rutgers-Newark students are much more likely to indicate “cost of attending this college” (48% vs. 31%) and “want to live near home” (33% vs. 12%).

About two in three Rutgers-Newark students report concern about college financing. More than half of Rutgers-Newark students and peer institution students report some concern about financing college (54% for both), while 15% of Rutgers-Newark students indicate major concern (10% for peer institution students). Although the majority of Rutgers-Newark students plan to receive some financial support for educational expenses from parents, family or friends (69%), more students at the peer institutions expect similar support from these sources (84%). At the same time, close to half of Rutgers-Newark and peer institution students indicate it is very likely they will get a job to help with college expenses (46% for both, see question C2). Two-fifths of Rutgers-Newark and slightly fewer peer institution students plan to rely on loans to help fund their education (40% and 35%).

With respect to Educational and Career Plans (Items B1-B4), a similar percentage of Rutgers-Newark students and students in peer institutions plan to attain a post-baccalaureate degree (86% and 84%, respectively). Specifically, more than one-third of Rutgers-Newark and peer institution students plan on obtaining a Masters degree (34% and 39%). And more two-fifths plan to obtain other professional or terminal degrees including Ph.D., Ed.D., medical, and law degrees (48% and 43%). In particular, a slightly
higher percentage of Rutgers-Newark students compared to peer institution students intend to do so at their current institution (41% vs. 36%).

The most probable undergraduate major of study for first-time full-time Rutgers-Newark students is in business (24% vs. 15% for peer institution students). Biological Sciences and Professional fields\(^1\) are the second and third most probable majors for Rutgers-Newark students (22% and 17%), while students from peer institutions intend to choose these fields at a lower rate (13% and 15%, respectively). Approximately one out of ten Rutgers-Newark students and their peers at comparable institutions are undecided about major of study as they begin college, but this may change after students’ first year.

In responding to questions developed for Rutgers students only (Items B5-B9), almost 80% of Rutgers-Newark students believe that it is extremely important to achieve their career goals while pursuing an undergraduate degree. Furthermore, about three in five of Rutgers-Newark students believe it is extremely important to achieve social interaction and personal growth goals as well as critical thinking and communication skills goals (61% and 59%). Nearly half of Rutgers-NBP students believe it extremely important for achieving personal interests and talents goals and intellectual growth goals (49% and 46%). Altogether, ninety or more percent of Rutgers-Newark students feel it important or extremely important to achieve each of the five goals while pursuing their undergraduate degree.

With regard to **Student Attitudes and Background** (Items C1-C15), Rutgers-Newark students are more likely than peer institution students to consider financial success

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\(^1\) Professional fields include architecture/urban planning, home economics, health technology, library/archival science, nursing, pharmacy, predental /medical/veterinarian, occupational/physical/speech therapy, and other professional.
“help others in difficulty” (71% vs. 65% for peer institution students), and “obtain recognition from colleagues” (66% vs. 55%). Similar to their peers at comparable universities, three-fourths of Rutgers-Newark students consider raising a family as essential or very important (75% and 74%). A similar percent of students at Rutgers-Newark and at peer institutions see themselves as "middle-of-the-road" on political issues (45% and 41%) or liberal (37% and 34%), while Rutgers-Newark students are slightly less likely to see themselves as “conservative” (14% vs. 20%).

On issues relating to personal freedom, Rutgers-Newark students are very similar to the peer institution students in supporting government control of the sale of handguns (81% for both). They are also similar to the peer institution students on agreement with “wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes than they do now” (63% and 60%). However, Rutgers-Newark students show a lower approval rate than peer institution students towards legalizing same sex marriage (60% vs. 67%) or legalizing abortion (57% vs. 65%).

Rutgers-Newark students report lower parental income compared to their peers at highly selective institutions. Approximately one-third (31%) of Rutgers-Newark students report parental annual income between $30,000 and $59,999 compared to 19% of these peer institution students. Additionally, a much lower percentage of Rutgers-Newark students report parental income exceeding $100,000 compared to that of peer institution students (27% vs. 43%). In general, parents’ education is considerably lower for Rutgers-Newark students than for students at peer institutions. Only 47% of Rutgers-Newark students’ fathers received a college or graduate degree compared to 64% of peer institution
students’ fathers. A far fewer percent of Rutgers-Newark students (61%) report that they are native English speakers, while 88% of peer institution students are native English speakers. Eighty-four percent of Rutgers-Newark students are U. S. citizens while 96% of peer institution students are citizens.

Rutgers-Newark campus is much more ethnically diverse than the comparable institutions. Less than one-third (27%) of Rutgers-Newark students indicate that they are White or Caucasian compared to nearly three-fourths (72%) of students at peer institutions. Correspondingly, a higher percentage of students at Rutgers-Newark indicate they are Asian American/Asian (33%), Latino (22%), or African American (15%) compared to the comparable rates of 18 percent, 6 percent, and 6 percent of students at peer institutions. Accordingly, Rutgers-Newark students are more likely than students at peer institutions to report that they frequently socialized with people from different ethnic groups (85% vs. 72%) in the previous year, thus bringing with them multicultural experience.

Rutgers-Newark students are similar to their peers in self-reported needs for remedial work. Almost one in five Rutgers-NBP (19%) and peer institution students (17%) indicate they will need remedial work in mathematics, followed by 12% and 11% of Rutgers-Newark students who feel the need for remedial work in writing and in English (10% and 8%, respectively for the peer institution students).

Comparing Rutgers-Newark students to their peers on self-ratings, Rutgers-Newark students are less likely to rate themselves above average or in the highest ten percent of people their age in academic ability (71% vs. 85% for peer institution students) or being

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2 In answering the question about racial background, students may have selected more than one category. Consequently, the percentages may add to more than one hundred percent when the total percentage of minority students is added to the percentage of white students. This is true for both Rutgers-Newark and its peer institutions.
intellectually self-confident (59% vs. 65% for peers). They do rate themselves similarly to students at peer institutions in terms of “Drive to achieve” (79% and 78%), “Cooperativeness” (75% for both), and “Understanding of others” (69% and 68%).

Rutgers-Newark students are similar in several ways to students at peer institutions in how they spent time in the previous year before their first year of college. Forty-four percent of Rutgers-Newark students and 48% of peer institution students spent six to fifteen hours per week on socializing with friends. Twenty-eight percent of Rutgers-Newark students and students at peer institutions spent this much time working for pay. A slightly lower percent of Rutgers-Newark students spent five to fifteen hours per week studying or doing homework compared to their peers (24% vs. 32%).

At the same time, Rutgers-Newark students report a number of ways they spent their time during the previous year that differ from students at peer institutions. Rutgers-Newark students were slightly less likely as their peers at comparable institutions to have “frequently” or “occasionally” studied with other students in the previous year (83% vs. 89%) or to have performed volunteer work (80% vs. 88%). However, over eighty percent of students in both groups frequently used personal computers (88% for Rutgers-Newark and 90% for peer institutions) and used the internet for research or homework during the previous year (81% and 84%).