ANALYSIS OF RUTGERS-New Brunswick/Piscataway DATA

With regard to Selection of College (Items A1-A5), Rutgers-New Brunswick/Piscataway (Rutgers-NBP) students are less likely to consider their institution their first choice compared with students in other highly selective public universities (53% vs. 69%). Additionally, Rutgers-NBP students appear to have a less positive view of Rutgers than these peer institution students of their own school: a lower percentage of Rutgers-NBP students note that Rutgers has a very good academic reputation (51% vs. 65% for peer institution students). Approximately 70% of Rutgers-NBP students and students at peer institutions decided to go to college to make more money, get a better job, get training in a specific career or to gain a general education. Also, similar to peers at comparable institutions, approximately 83% expect to attend graduate school (and 81% students at peer institutions). Proximity to home is a greater selection factor for Rutgers-NBP students than for their peers with more than one-fifth (22% vs. 11%) indicating this was “Very Important” in selecting their college of attendance.

Financing their education is an important concern for many Rutgers-NBP students. They are more likely than students at peer institutions to report low tuition (43% vs. 26%) and being offered financial assistance (30% vs. 22%) as “Very important” reasons in the selection of their college of attendance. Like their peers, Rutgers-NBP students rely most heavily on parents, family, and friends to fund their college education (82% Rutgers-NBP and 85% peers). Savings are not as major a source of college funding for Rutgers-NBP first years students compared to those at other institutions. Half (49%) of Rutgers-NBP students report they will utilize their own resources to fund their education compared to
58% of students at peer institutions. Rutgers-NBP students are also less likely to report that they plan to rely on state scholarships or grants in helping to finance their education than students at peer institutions (52% vs. 60%) while slightly more likely to take out loans (45% vs. 41%). Rutgers-NBP students and peer institution students report approximately the same level of concern about college financing with about half of the students expressing some concern and 11% having major concern. More than one-third of students at Rutgers-NBP and peer institutions expect to hold down a part-time job to help pay for their college expenses (38% and 44% from survey question C2).

With regard to **Educational and Career Plans** (Items B1-B4), a similar percentage of Rutgers-NBP students and students at peer institutions plan to obtain a post baccalaureate degree (83% and 81%, respectively). Approximately one-third of Rutgers-NBP students indicate that they plan to obtain a post baccalaureate degree at their current university as do students at peer institutions (35% and 32%, respectively). In terms of specific educational plans, Rutgers-NBP students are similar to peer institution students. The most commonly cited intended majors are professional fields\(^1\) (18% for Rutgers-NBP vs. 12% for peer institutions), business (15% for both Rutgers-NBP and peer institutions), biological sciences (14% for Rutgers-NBP vs. 11% for peer institutions), and engineering (10% and 15%, respectively). Eight percent (8%) of Rutgers-NBP first-time full-time students and 9% of similar students attending peer institutions are undecided about their probable undergraduate field of study as they begin their college education. These

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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.
educational choices translate into probable careers with 11% expecting to be a physician and 7% to work in business management. Two to three percent of Rutgers-NBP and peer institution students see themselves working as a computer programmer/analyst. Rutgers-NBP students are, however, slightly less likely to indicate they expect to pursue a career in engineering than are students at peer institutions (8% vs. 12%).

In responding to questions developed for Rutgers students only (Items B5 through B9), more than two-thirds of Rutgers-NBP students believe that it is extremely important to achieve their career goals while pursuing an undergraduate degree. Furthermore, more than half of them believe it is extremely important to achieve social interaction and personal growth or intellectual growth goals (55% and 53%, respectively). Close to fifty percent of Rutgers-NBP students indicate that achieving critical thinking and communication skills goals as well as personal interests and talents goals are extremely important as well. Altogether, ninety or nearly ninety percent of Rutgers-NBP students feel it important or extremely important to achieve each of the five goals while pursuing their undergraduate degree.

The responses to the survey questions pertaining to Student Attitudes and Background (Items C1-C16) also reveal few differences between Rutgers-NBP and peer institution students. These two groups of students are very similar in their responses to questions about life goals and expectations and their political attitudes. They expect to be very well-off financially and to raise a family (more than 70%). Approximately half describe their political views as “middle-of-the-road”. Furthermore, they are similar in various background factors such as: age, parental income, status of parents (living together
or not), remedial work done in high school, and remedial work needed in college. One difference between the two groups was that Rutgers-NBP has a lower percentage of native English speakers among its student population compared to peer institutions (80% vs. 89%) and slightly fewer U.S. citizens (92% vs. 96%). Racial and ethnic backgrounds also differ. Approximately six in ten Rutgers-NBP students indicate they are white (58%) compared to three-fourth students at peer institutions are white (75%). The corresponding distribution of minority students also differs: Asian (23% vs. 14%), Latino (9% vs. 5%), and African American (8% vs. 5%).

Rutgers-NBP students are less confident in their expectations about their future experiences at their university. Rutgers-NBP students are less confident that they will attain a bachelor’s degree (71% vs. 83%), develop close friendships with other students (62% vs. 78%), participate in student clubs or groups (40% vs. 48%) or be satisfied with their college (36% vs. 56%). Furthermore, Rutgers-NBP students are slightly less likely than peer institution students to rate themselves above average or in the highest 10 percent of people who are their same age on the following attributes: academic ability (79% vs. 85%), drive to achieve (70% vs. 76%), and intellectual self-confidence (60% vs. 65%).

Like students at peer institutions, nine percent of Rutgers-NBP students have had remedial work in mathematics. They indicate their need for additional remedial work in mathematics (18%), writing (10%), English (8%) and science (7%). Peer institution

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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-NBP and its peer institutions.
students have a similar need for remedial work: mathematics (17%), writing (9%), English (7%) and science (9%).

Approximately half of the Rutgers-NBP and peer students describe their political views as “middle of the road” (51% and 47%, respectively). Rutgers-NBP students as well as their peers are almost equally likely to describe themselves as “liberal” (31% and 29%). When it comes to issues of personal freedom, Rutgers-NBP students are slightly more likely than their peers to indicate that the federal government should do more to control the sale of handguns (81% and 78%). They are also more likely to support the legalization of same-sex marriage (72% vs. 66%), legalizing abortion (68% vs. 63%) and agree that wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes (60% vs. 53%). About sixty percent of both groups believe there is too much concern in the courts for the rights of criminals.

The manner in which the Rutgers-NBP students report spending their time in the past year did not differ from the peer institution students in most activities. However, Rutgers-NBP students were less likely to engage in volunteer work; 79 percent stated that they spent time doing volunteer work compared with 88 percent of the peer institution students. In contrast, Rutgers-NBP students spent more time working for pay compared to their counterparts at peer institutions. Thirty-one percent of Rutgers-NBP students reported spending sixteen or more hours per week working for pay, compared with 25 percent of students at peer institutions. Similarly, 34 percent of peer institution students reported spending no time working for pay compared to 27 percent of Rutgers-NBP students. Rutgers-NBP students are somewhat more likely to report frequent socializing
with a member of a different racial or ethnic group than are students at peer institutions (78% vs. 73%).

Most first year students are computer literate. Both Rutgers-NBP and peer institution students indicated they frequently used a personal computer during the previous year (91% and 89%). Furthermore, more than three-fourth of both groups had frequently communicated by email or used the internet for research or homework during this time.