ANALYSIS OF RUTGERS-NEW BRUNSWICK DATA

With regard to Selection of College (Items A1-A5), Rutgers-New Brunswick students consider their institution as their first choice at a slightly lower rate than students in peer institutions (57% vs. 66%). Additionally, Rutgers-New Brunswick students appear to have a less positive view of their institution than peer institution students: a lower percentage of Rutgers-New Brunswick students note that their institution has a very good academic reputation (60% vs. 72% for peer institution students), that their graduates get good jobs (51% vs. 61%), and that graduates go to top graduate and professional schools (37% vs. 46%). Low tuition is a much more important concern of Rutgers-New Brunswick students (50%) than peer institution students (33%) in the selection of their college and it is more likely that Rutgers-New Brunswick students were offered financial assistance (31% vs. 21%). Rutgers-New Brunswick students also plan to rely on state scholarships or grants in helping to finance their education at a higher rate (28%) than students at peer institutions (19%), but are less likely to use savings from summer work (40% vs. 52%). Furthermore, peer institution students are more likely than Rutgers-New Brunswick students to be concerned about college financing (64% vs. 49%).

In responding to questions developed for Rutgers students only (Items A6-A10), Rutgers-New Brunswick students reported that college guides were more important in college selection than magazine ratings or the World Wide Web (23% vs. 11% and 10%). However, the majority said that they relied on other sources of information not listed in the survey (55%). Rutgers’ position as a major research university influenced the decision to attend to a high degree for 27 percent of the respondents, to a moderate degree for 42
percent, and to a small degree for 17 percent, while 12 percent reported it having no influence at all. “Breadth of the academic program” was cited as the most appealing aspect of Rutgers as a major research university by 45 percent of Rutgers-New Brunswick students, while “opportunity to obtain and internship” and “opportunity to participate in research” were cited by 19 and 17 percent, respectively. Both students from New Jersey who were accepted at colleges out of state but elected to stay in New Jersey and those students not from New Jersey cited cost as the most important reason for selecting Rutgers (42% and 29%, respectively).

With regard to Educational and Career Plans (Items B1-B4), a similar percentage of Rutgers-New Brunswick students and students at peer institution plan to obtain a postbaccalaureate degree (84% and 86%, respectively). Furthermore, 36 percent of Rutgers-New Brunswick students and 34 percent of students at peer institutions indicated that they plan to obtain a postbaccalaureate degree at their university. In the area of specific educational plans, Rutgers-New Brunswick students share similar intentions with peer institution students. Approximately similar percentages plan on studying business (16% for Rutgers-New Brunswick vs. 17% for peer institutions), biological sciences (14% for Rutgers-New Brunswick vs. 13% for peer institutions), professional fields (both at 13%), and engineering (10% for Rutgers-New Brunswick and 11% for peer institutions).

The responses to the survey questions pertaining to Student Attitudes and Background (Items C1-C15) also reveal few differences between Rutgers-New Brunswick and peer institution students. These two groups of students are very similar in their responses to questions about life goals and expectations, political attitudes, and various
background factors such as age, status of parents (living together or not), parental income, type of high school curriculum studied, and their ethnic background. However, Rutgers-New Brunswick students are slightly less confident that they will attain a bachelor’s degree (72% vs. 82%) or be satisfied with their college (35% vs. 51%). Rutgers-New Brunswick also has a slightly lower percentage of native English speakers among its student population as compared to peer institutions (79% vs. 84%).