ANALYSIS OF RUTGERS-NEWARK DATA

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 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 somewhat similar. Students at peer institutions are equally likely to state that their institution was their first choice (68% for both). The most important reasons in deciding to go to college differ only slightly for students in Rutgers-Newark and its peer institutions. Rutgers-Newark students are more likely to be motivated to get training for a specific career (80% vs. 66% for students at peer institutions), or state that they decided to go to college to gain a general education (76% and 68%) as well as more likely to indicate attending a college to prepare for graduate or professional school (70% vs. 61%). Rutgers and peer institution students are equally likely to indicate they would like to be able to make more money (72% and 70%), and to get a better job (74% for Rutgers and 71% for peer institutions).

Rutgers-Newark students and students at other highly selective institutions cite similar reasons for selecting their college. College selection is based on: the colleges’ good academic reputation (65% for each). Getting training for a specific career (80% and 66%,
Rutgers and peers, respectively), and gaining a general education and appreciation of ideas (76% and 68%) are indicated more often by Rutgers-Newark students than their peers. Rutgers-Newark students are also much more likely to cite two additional reasons: low tuition and the desire to remain close to home (42% vs. 27% and 35% vs. 11%, respectively). The offer of financial assistance is slightly more important for Rutgers-Newark students than for their peers (26% vs. 22%).

Three out of four Rutgers-Newark students report concern about college financing. About half of both Rutgers-Newark students and peer institution students report some concern (57% and 52%, respectively), or major concern about financing college (14% vs. 11%). Although the majority of Rutgers-Newark students plan to receive some financial support for educational expenses from parents, family or friends (79%), more students at the peer institutions expect similar support from these sources (87%). Fewer Rutgers-Newark students compared to peer-institution students plan to rely on a part-time job off-campus as an income source for educational expenses (54% vs. 59%, respectively). Approximately one third of Rutgers-Newark students (34%) plan to rely on loans compared to 42% of peer institutions, in order to help fund their education.

In responding to questions developed for Rutgers students only (Items A6-A10), Rutgers-Newark students report which sources of information about college selection were important to them. Approximately half of the students report that they relied on other information sources not specified in the survey (50%). More students indicate the importance of college guides compared to the World Wide Web or magazine ratings (26% vs. 20% and 4%, respectively). Rutgers’ position as a major research university influenced the decision to attend to “a huge degree” for 31 percent of the respondents, to “a
moderate degree” for 56 percent, to “a small degree” for 9 percent, and only 5 percent report it having no influence at all. When asked to identify the most appealing aspect of Rutgers as a major research university, 47 percent cited the “breadth of the academic program,” 18 percent the “opportunity to obtain an internship,” another 17 percent the “opportunity to participate in research” and 13 percent cited “renowned faculty.”

Rutgers-Newark students from New Jersey who were accepted at colleges out of state but elected to stay in New Jersey indicate cost (34%), location (26%), and high academic reputation (20%) as their most important reasons for selecting Rutgers. Students not from New Jersey also note high academic reputation (31%), cost (23%) and location (12%) as their top reasons for coming to New Jersey and attending Rutgers.

With respect to Educational and Career Plans (Items B1-B4), Rutgers-Newark students plan on attaining a post-baccalaureate degree at similar rate compared to students in peer institutions (78% vs. 80%, respectively). Rutgers-Newark and students at peer institutions are almost equally likely to plan on obtaining a Masters degree, 43% and 41%. As far as other professional or terminal degrees, including Ph.D., Ed.D., medical, and law degrees, they are roughly the same as well, 35% for Rutgers-Newark and 39% for other students. Of those students indicating that they intend to pursue post-baccalaureate degrees, a higher percentage of Rutgers-Newark students (46%) than peer institution students (31%) intend to do so at their current institution.

The most probable undergraduate major field of study for first-time full-time students attending Rutgers-Newark is in the professional fields1 (30%). Approximately 10

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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.
percent are undecided as they begin their first year in college, but this may change beyond a student’s first year. There are a similar number of students at peer institutions who begin without a major area of study in mind as well (8%). Business and engineering were the second and third most probable majors at Rutgers-Newark (21%, and 10%), with comparable rates of students from peer institutions intending to go into those fields (16% and 15%, respectively).

With regard to **Student Attitudes and Background** (Items C1-C15), Rutgers-Newark students are more likely than peer institution students to consider financial success an essential or very important objective to achieve (85% vs. 73%), while simultaneously being more likely to cite helping others in difficulty as important (69% vs. 61%). Students at Rutgers-Newark are slightly more likely to see themselves as "middle-of-the-road" on political issues (55%) compared to students at peer institutions (47%) and slightly less likely to see themselves as “conservative” (14% vs. 19%).

Rutgers-Newark students are considerably more likely to support government control of the sale of handguns (90% vs. 78%) and state that the federal government doing more to discourage energy consumption (71% and 65%, respectively). On the other hand, Rutgers-Newark students show a lower approval rate than peer institution students towards legalizing abortion (51% vs. 62%).

Slightly more peer institution students report higher parental income compared to incomes reported by Rutgers-Newark students. Twenty two percent of Rutgers-Newark students report parental income of less than $30,000 compared to 11 percent of peer institution students, while a far lower percentage of Rutgers-Newark students report parental income exceeding $100,000 (17%) compared to peer institution students (38%).
In general, parents’ education is substantially lower for Rutgers-Newark students than students at peer institutions. Only 26 percent of Rutgers-Newark students’ fathers received a college degree and 17 percent earned a graduate degree compared to 33% of peer institution students’ fathers having a college degree and another 31% having graduate degrees. Only 57 percent of Rutgers-Newark students state that they are native English speakers, while 90 percent of peer institution students indicate that their native language is English. Seventy-seven percent Rutgers-Newark students are U. S. Citizens versus 96 percent at peer institutions.

Rutgers-Newark students are much more ethnically diverse than peer institution students. Only one-third (33%) indicated they are White or Caucasian compared to 77 percent at peer institutions. There are corresponding higher percentages of students at Rutgers-Newark who are Asian American/Asian (27%), Latino (14%), and African American (10%) compared to students at peer institutions (12%, 5%, and 5%, respectively). Furthermore, Rutgers-Newark students are much more likely than students from peer institutions to report that they frequently socialized with people of a different ethnic group (87% vs. 71%) in the previous year.

Mathematics seems to be the most difficult subject for students at highly selective institutions. Nine percent of Rutgers-Newark students and 10 percent of peer institution students report having had remedial work in mathematics, and 12 percent and 19 percent of each group report that they will still need remedial work in mathematics.

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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.
The two groups differed markedly in their self-ratings. Only 70 percent of Rutgers-Newark students compared to 83% at peer institutions rated themselves above average or in the highest 10 percent of people their age in academic ability; they also hold lower intellectual self-confidence (58% vs. 64%). However, they rated themselves similarly or higher in terms of cooperativeness (77% at Rutgers-Newark and 73% at peer institutions), in their drive to achieve (74% and 73%), and their understanding of others (65% and 67% at peer institutions).

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 as likely as those at peer institutions to have “frequently” or “occasionally” studied with other students in the previous year (87% vs. 88%) and slightly less likely to have performed volunteer work this often (83% vs. 86%). In fact, a little less than one-third of Rutgers-Newark students stated that they had performed no volunteer work compared to only one-fourth of peer institution students (31% vs. 27%).

Rutgers-Newark students were slightly more likely to report spending sixteen or more hours per week socializing with friends (21% vs. 16% at peer institutions). They are also more likely to report spending sixteen or more hours per week working for pay (37% vs. 26%) during the previous year.

Most students in both groups frequently used the internet for research or homework during the previous year (80% of Rutgers-Newark students and 82% of their peers). Rutgers-Newark students were slightly less likely to report frequent use of personal computers (82% vs. 89%) and frequent communication by email (68% vs. 73%) over this period of time.