ANALYSIS OF RUTGERS-NEWARK DATA 2004

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 different. Students at Rutgers-Newark are more likely than students in peer institutions to state that their institution was their first choice (77% vs. 68%). The most important reasons in deciding to go to college also 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 (84% vs. 70% for students at peer institutions), or state that they decided to go to college to gain a general education and appreciation of ideas (77% vs. 68%). 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 (83% and 79% for peer institution students), to be able to get a better job (73% and 71%), to make more money (71% and 69%), as well as to prepare for graduate or professional school (68% and 65%).
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 (70% for Rutgers and 69% for peer institutions), Rutgers-Newark students are much more likely to indicate other reasons. Among them are “this college’s graduates get good jobs” (63% vs. 54% for peer institutions), “cost of attending this college” (50% vs. 33%), “want to live near home” (36% vs. 12%), and “being offered financial assistance” (33% vs. 23%).

About three out of four 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 (58% and 52%, respectively), while one-fifth of Rutgers-Newark students indicate major concern (19% vs. 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 (76%), more students at the peer institutions expect similar support from these sources (88%). At the same time, more than half of Rutgers-Newark students indicate it is very likely they will get a job to help with college expenses (57% vs. 44% for peer institution students, see question C2). More than two-fifths of Rutgers-Newark and peer institution students plan to rely on loans to help fund their education (42% and 45%).

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 (79% and 82%, respectively). Specifically, two-fifths of Rutgers-Newark and peer institution students plan on obtaining a Masters degree (41% and 40%). And another two-fifths plan to obtain other professional or terminal degrees.
including Ph.D., Ed.D., medical, and law degrees (38% and 42%). However, a higher percentage of Rutgers-Newark students than of peer institution students intend to do so at their current institution (45% vs. 33%).

The most probable undergraduate major of study for first-time full-time Rutgers-Newark students is in professional fields\(^1\) (28%). Approximately twelve percent of Rutgers-Newark students are undecided about major of study as they begin college, but this may change beyond students’ first year. A similar percentage of students from peer institutions begin without a major field of study in mind (9%). Business and Biological Sciences are the second and third most probable majors for Rutgers-Newark students (22% and 10%), while students from peer institutions intend to choose those fields at a rate of fifteen and twelve percent, respectively.

In responding to questions developed for Rutgers students only (Items B5-B9), eighty-five percent 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 (63% and 59%). Half or close to half of Rutgers-NBP students believe it extremely important for achieving personal interests and talents goals and intellectual growth goals (50% 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.

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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.
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 (89% vs. 74%). The other important life goals for Rutgers-Newark students are “help others in difficulty” (77% vs. 61% for peer institution students), “become authority in my field” (67% vs. 59%) and “obtain recognition from colleagues” (63% vs. 53%). Similar to their peers at comparable universities, about three-fourths of Rutgers-Newark consider raising a family as essential or very important (79% and 74%). Students at Rutgers-Newark are slightly more likely to see themselves as "middle-of-the-road" on political issues (57%) compared to students at peer institutions (44%) and slightly less likely to see themselves as “conservative” (13% vs. 20%).

On issues relating to personal freedom, Rutgers-Newark students are more likely to support government control of the sale of handguns (91% vs. 82%). They are similar to the peer institution students on agreement with legalizing same sex marriage (63% and 64%), and “wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes than they do now” (61% and 57%). However, Rutgers-Newark students show a lower approval rate than peer institution students towards legalizing abortion (55% vs. 64%).

Rutgers-Newark students report lower parental income compared to their peers at highly selective institutions. Thirty percent of Rutgers-Newark students report parental annual income less than $30,000 compared to thirteen percent of these peer institution students. Additionally, a far lower percentage of Rutgers-Newark students report parental income exceeding $100,000 compared to that of peer institution students (13% vs. 42%). In general, parents’ education is considerably lower for Rutgers-Newark students than for
students at peer institutions. Only forty-two percent of Rutgers-Newark students’ fathers received a college or graduate degree compared to sixty-four percent of peer institution students’ fathers. Only fifty-eight percent of Rutgers-Newark students report that they are native English speakers, while eighty-eight percent of peer institution students are native English speakers. Seventy-nine percent of Rutgers-Newark students are U. S. Citizens while ninety-five percent of peer institution students are citizen.

Rutgers-Newark campus is much more ethnically diverse than the comparable institutions. On the one hand, only one-third (34%) of Rutgers-Newark students indicate that they are White or Caucasian compared to nearly three-fourths (73%) of students at peer institutions. On the other hand, a higher percentage of students at Rutgers-Newark indicate they are Asian American/Asian (28%), Latino (18%), or African American (13%) compared to the corresponding rates of 17 percent, 6 percent, and 5 percent of students at peer institutions\(^2\). Furthermore, Rutgers-Newark students are much more likely than students at peer institutions to report that they frequently socialized with people from different ethnic groups (89% vs. 73%) in the previous year.

Rutgers-Newark students are similar to their peers in meeting or exceeding recommended years of high school study in Mathematics, History/American Government, English and Foreign language (almost 100% for both in each). Although a slightly higher percent of Rutgers-Newark students had the recommended length of high school study in Computer Science (62% vs. 55%), they are less likely to meet or exceed recommended

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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.
high school study in Arts or Music (72% vs. 81% for peer institution students) or in Physical Science (49% vs. 67%).

Comparing Rutgers-Newark students to their peers in self-ratings, slightly fewer Rutgers-Newark students rate themselves above average or in the highest ten percent of people their age in academic ability (74% vs. 84% for peer institution students). However, they rate themselves slightly higher in terms of cooperativeness (78% vs. 70%). Students from both institutions are similar in self-ratings of “Drive to achieve” (79% and 75%), understanding of others (67% and 64%), and intellectual self-confidence (61% and 62%).

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. Similar numbers of hours were spent weekly on homework and socializing with friends. Thirty six percent of Rutgers-Newark students and thirty four percent of peer institution students spent six to fifteen hours per week on studying. At the same time, forty two percent of Rutgers-Newark students and forty seven percent of students at peer institutions spent this much time with friends. Slightly more Rutgers-Newark students than their peers spent sixteen or more hours per week working for pay (32% vs. 24% for peer institution students).

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 (91% and 89%) as well as having performed volunteer work this often (84% and 87%). A slightly higher percentage of Rutgers-Newark students
report they did not performed volunteer work compared to the peer institution students (28% vs. 22%).

Over eighty percent of students in both groups frequently used the internet for research or homework during the previous year (82% for both). They also report a similar likelihood in use of personal computers (87% and 91%). When asked about maintaining a healthy diet, a question included in the survey for the first time this year, only approximately one-third of Rutgers-Newark and peer institutions students answered that they did so “frequently” (33% and 39%, respectively).