

# 2008 Entering First-Time, Full-Time Freshman Class Profile

## Executive Summary

Florida State University (FSU) participates in an annual longitudinal study of incoming freshmen administered by the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles. The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) collects self-reported information (biographic, demographic, educational, financial, opinions, etc.) from freshman students. Information is also collected from freshmen in public universities and colleges across the United States<sup>1</sup>. FSU has been participating in the CIRP for over 30 years.

CIRP is administered at a two-day orientation session the summer prior to enrollment at FSU. The Office of New Student and Family Programs administered the survey to 5,355 students entering FSU in fall 2008. The number of entering FSU freshmen (first-time, full-time) that returned completed surveys was 3,064. This resulted in a 57 percent response rate.

The majority (67 percent)<sup>2</sup> of the 2008 FSU freshmen surveyed is 18 years of age; this age pattern approximately reflects the national norm (70%). The FSU freshman class is 80 percent White/Caucasian while the national trend is 71 percent White/Caucasian. Although FSU's racial and ethnic profile reflects national trends, FSU appears to have a lower percent of Asian American freshmen (3%) enrolled and a higher percent Other Latino freshmen (10%) enrollment when compared to the national norm of 15% and 4% respectively. The predominant religion is Catholicism – 26 percent of FSU freshmen reported they were Roman Catholic.

Academically, 98 percent of 2008 FSU freshmen reported a high school grade point average of "B" or better, 3 percent increase from 2007. Exercise and fitness are important activities to FSU freshmen since almost half (48%) of FSU freshmen reported exercising or playing sports 6 hours or more per week in the last year of high school. A stable trend in low percentage of FSU freshmen engaging in behaviors such as smoking cigarettes, drinking beer, and drinking wine or liquor was identified when compared to the prior years beginning with 2001.

Participating institutions are allowed to provide additional institution specific questions. FSU added 16 questions to the 2008 CIRP in order to assess incoming freshmen's opinions of service learning, diversity, leadership, and their mental health status.

Eighty-three percent (85%) of the FSU 2008 freshmen claimed that they had participated in activities and projects that taught leadership in high school. FSU 2008 freshmen were also very confident in their leadership abilities – 72 percent of them rated their leadership ability as above average. In addition, 88 percent of students indicated that taking service learning courses would increase their satisfaction with attending FSU. A complete listing of all additional questions can be found in Appendix B.

More information about CIRP may be obtained from the Office of Research in the Division of Student Affairs. Please contact Dr. Tamara Bertrand Jones at 850.644.5590 or [tbertrand@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:tbertrand@admin.fsu.edu).

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<sup>1</sup> Institutions with high selectivity for SAT and ACT scores of the entering class

<sup>2</sup> The percentages cited in this report reflect the proportion of the 3,064 students who completed the survey