

UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO
A Report to the Undergraduate Quality of Life Committee

**Part I: A Decade of Change:
The Demographics, Behaviors, Attitudes and Aspirations of
First-time UCSD Freshman Students**

Student Research and Information
University of California, San Diego

The Freshman Survey is administered to new students to provide the campus community with information on the changing background, goals, aspirations, and values of its first-time freshmen and new transfer students. At UCSD, the Freshman Survey has been administered five times – in 1986, 1988, 1991, 1996 and 2002.

The 2003 administration of the Freshman Survey included over 4,000 incoming UCSD freshmen and transfer students. Of the 3,789 freshmen surveyed, 2,066 were female and 1,723 were male. Transfer students were also surveyed. Among this group, 210 were female and 153 were male.

This report includes selected findings from 1991 to 2002, tables presenting complete statistical data obtained from each administration of the Freshman Survey over the last 20 years can be found in the “Surveys” section of the Student Research and Information (SRI) website at <http://ugr8.ucsd.edu/>.

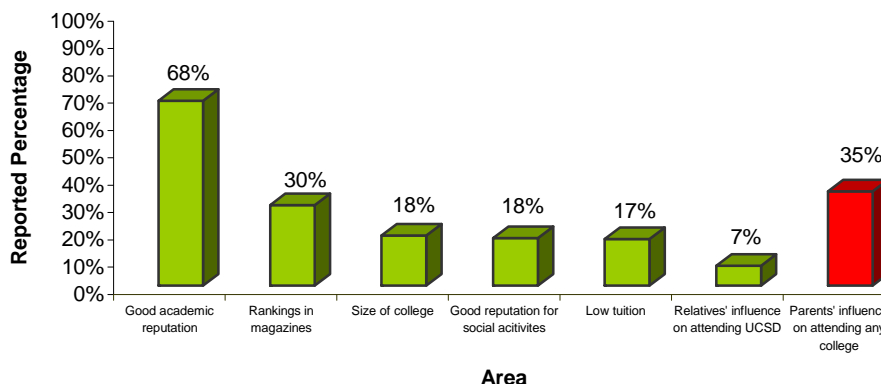
DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

The reported ethnic backgrounds of the 2002 cohort have changed since the 1991 Freshman Survey. Over the last decade, there were declines in the proportions of UCSD-bound students reporting their ethnic background as “African-American/Black” (1% in 2002 compared to 2% in 1991), “American Indian/Alaskan Native” (1% in 2002 compared to 2% in 1991) and “White/Caucasian” (44% in 2002 compared to 59% in 1991). Incoming freshmen reporting their ethnic background as “Asian American/Asian” (43% in 2002 compared to 33% in 1991) have continuously increased over the past two decades and proportions of incoming students reporting their ethnic background as “Mexican American/Chicano” has remained steady at 8%. The number of incoming UCSD students that report a language other than English as their native language has increased from 22% in 1991 to 31% in 2002.

UCSD CHOSEN FOR REPUTATION OF ‘ACADEMIC RIGOR’

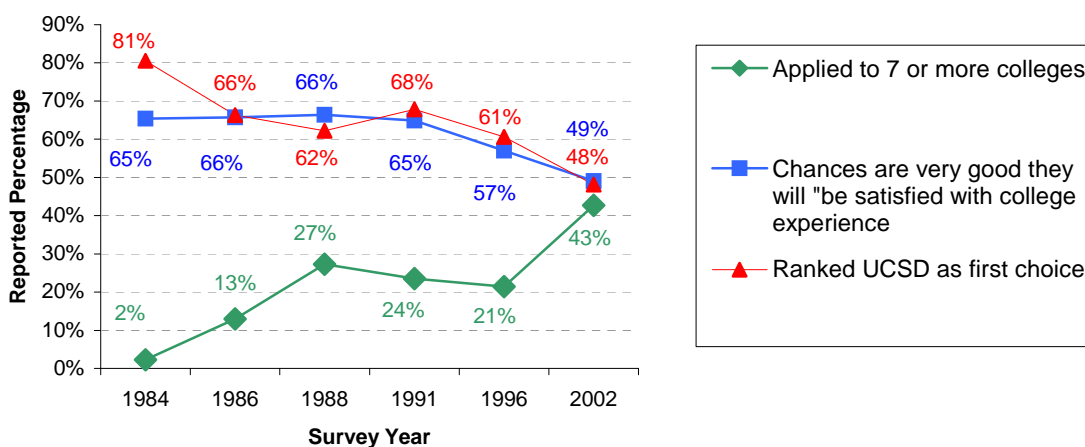
Increasing numbers of freshmen cite “reputation for academic rigor” as an important factor in their decision to enroll at UCSD. Over two-thirds (67%) of the 2002 freshman cohort reported this factor as being “very important.” Among prospective freshmen, UCSD’s “good academic reputation” was the most important factor influencing their decision to enroll (68%). Other substantial factors influencing the decision to attend UCSD included “rankings in national magazines” (30%), “size of the college” (18%), “good reputation for social activities” (18%) and “low tuition” (17%). The Internet has become an increasingly important recruiting tool and source of information for new students.

Figure 1: "Very Important" Factors Influencing Decision to Attend UCSD (2002 Cohort)



The proportion of students ranking UCSD as their first choice (48%) has declined from its record high of 81% in 1986. This first choice ranking could potentially be declining because students are applying to more colleges or as a result of a revision in UC policies allowing students to apply to more than one campus. The enhanced academic reputation of UCSD may also explain in part the attraction of the university to a highly competitive and capable group of students who are applying to other top colleges and universities throughout the country. Approximately 93% applied to 4 or more colleges while 43% applied to 7 or more colleges. In 1991, only half of incoming students (24%) applied to 7 or more colleges. These two factors could explain in part the decrease in UCSD-bound students that state chances are very good they will “be satisfied with their college experience,” 49% in 2002 compared to 65% in 1991.

Figure 2: Anticipated Levels of Satisfaction With UCSD

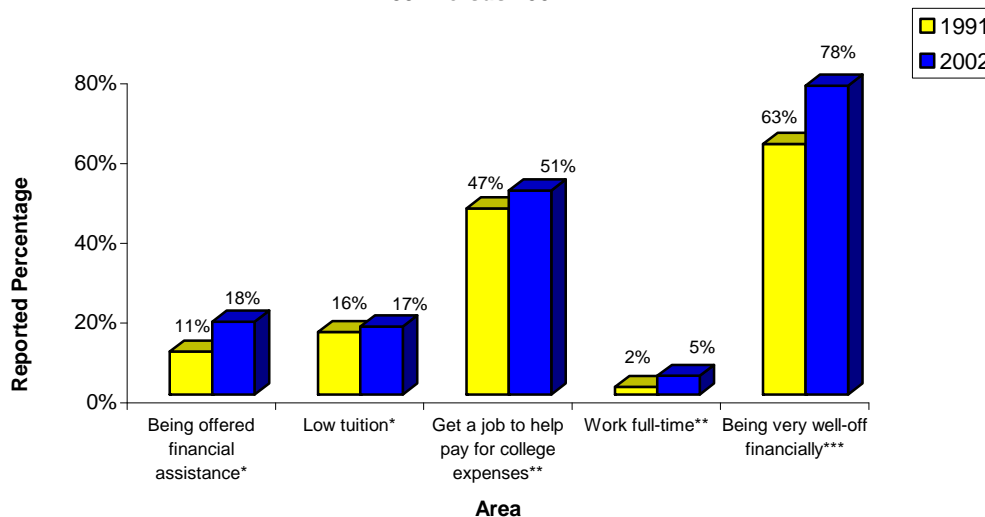


FINANCIING COLLEGE

Financial needs are an important and pressing for many UCSD-bound freshmen. Over half (56%) of incoming freshmen report that they have “some” concern about their ability to finance college while another 16% have “major” concerns. “Being offered financial assistance” (18% in 2002 compared to 11% in 1991) and “low tuition” (17% in 2002 compared to 16% in 1991) were increasingly important

influencing factors when choosing UCSD. In addition, almost half of UCSD-bound students' report that they will be taking out loans (44%) and approximately one-half (51%) of the entering freshmen indicated that there is a "very good chance" they would get a job to pay expenses. There was also a small increase in the proportion of incoming freshmen that estimate chances are very good they will "work full-time while attending college" (5% in 2002 compared with 2% in 1991). Finally, the most important long-term objective of the 2002 cohort was "being very well off financially" which increased from 63% in 1991 to 78% in 2002. This reflects a national trend among college freshmen.

**Figure 3: Comparing Financial Concerns:
1991 versus 2002**

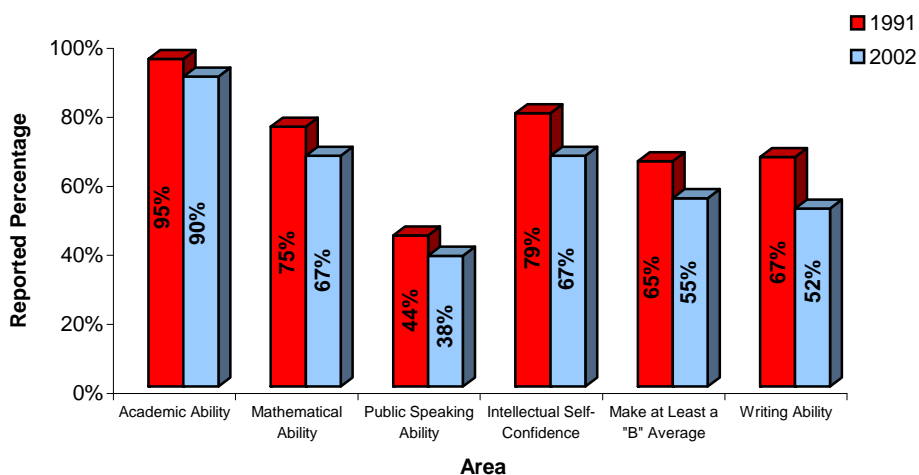


(*Very important influencing factor, **Student estimates very good chance, ***Essential or very important objective)

GRADES ARE UP, BUT ACADEMIC CONFIDENCE REMAINS LOW

Despite increased high school grades and test scores, self-ratings in both academic and social confidence have declined over the last decade. Proportions of incoming students that rated themselves as being "above average" or in the "highest 10%" in "academic ability," "intellectual self-confidence," "mathematical ability," "writing ability" and "public speaking ability" all declined over the last decade. The biggest problem/source of concern for incoming freshmen remains "doing well academically" (53%). Moreover, the number of students who believe they will "make at least a 'B' average" fell from 65% in 1991 to 55% in 2002. It is likely their concerns account for an increase in the number of UCSD-bound students that report they will seek additional academic assistance. Over the last decade, the number of incoming students who self-report that they will need special tutoring or remedial work in "mathematics", "science" and "foreign language" has increased. In addition, almost a fifth (19%) of UCSD-bound students believe they will need help with their writing. Although the confidence of incoming freshmen wavers, the students have set their career goals high with 90% reporting that they intend to receive a degree beyond the bachelor's degree.

Figure 6: Self-Reported "Above Average" or "Highest 10%"



The Freshman survey data also suggest a continuing decline in self-reported social skill ratings. Self-ratings of “above average” or “highest 10%” in “social self-confidence” (48% in 2002 compared to 56% in 1991), “understanding of others” (70% in 2002 compared to 80% in 1991), “leadership ability” (57% in 2002 compared to 63% in 1991) and “cooperativeness” (48% in 2002 compared to 81% in 1991) have all declined in the last decade. Decreases in “emotional health” ratings (57% in 2002 compared to 68% in 1991) may be related to the rise in the number of incoming freshmen who estimate chances are very good that they will “seek personal counseling” which has increased from 2% in 1991 to 13% in 2002. Despite declines in social skills of both sexes, developing and maintaining friendships remains important.

ENGINEERING AND BIOLOGY ARE THE MOST POPULAR AT UCSD

Engineering as a selected major increased from 15% in 1991 to 20% in 2002. It is important to note that the sex of the respondent plays a role in selection. Male students preferred this probable major more than female students - 34% compared to 8%. The selection of biology as a probable major by incoming freshmen has remained consistent (21%), making this choice the most often identified probable major for UCSD-bound students. However, the number of students choosing “Doctor/Dentist” as a probable career field in 2002 declined with only 17% of freshmen choosing this choice compared with 25% in 1991. There has been a growing interest in majoring in fields with a greater careerist orientation. This perhaps reflects a greater interest by respondents in career options and employability at graduation.

The next section provides a brief description of incoming freshmen at UCSD in 2004 and compares our findings with new freshmen at other highly selective college and universities from across the nation.

Part II: Highlights from the 2004 National Freshman Survey

This report presents a brief summary of selected highlights from the UCSD findings and compares these data to national norms for “highly selective” public colleges and universities, (N=42,017) and all public four-year colleges included in the national CIRP sample (62,839). The full survey (and other UCSD surveys) can be reviewed at <http://ugr8.ucsd.edu/>.

Demographics

A somewhat larger proportion of UCSD freshmen are under the age of 19 (84%) compared with highly selective colleges (74%), and much higher proportion are in this age category compared with all public universities in the sample of 62,239 students nationwide (66%). The entering UCSD sample is comprised of substantially fewer Caucasian students (40%), compared with highly selective colleges (73%) and all colleges (75%), and somewhat fewer African American students (UCSD-2%; highly selective and all colleges-5%). UCSD has a much higher proportion of Asian-American students in the sample (49%), compared with other highly selective institutions (19%), and all public institutions (14%). UCSD also has a higher proportion of Mexican American-Chicano-Latino students (12%), compared with other highly selective institutions at 2%, and all public colleges at 4%. Approximately 69% of UCSD freshmen report English as their native language compared with 88% of students from the entire CIRP public four-year college sample.

UCSD freshmen tend to live a greater distance from home while attending college. 65% of UCSD freshmen report that the campus is at least 100 miles from their permanent home, compared with 54% of students from highly selective colleges.

UCSD students have somewhat lower family incomes compared to the national norms. Approximately 46% of UCSD freshmen estimate their parent’s total income at or above \$75,000, while 57% of respondents from other highly selective colleges estimate incomes at or above that level. Parent education is also somewhat lower for UCSD freshmen compared with the national comparison grouping. A somewhat higher proportion of UCSD freshmen report their Mother's education level as high school graduate or below (27%) compared with other highly selective institutions (19%). A similar pattern is found for father's educational level.

UCSD students report average higher grades achieved during high school with 82% reporting an average grade of A+ to A-, compared with 67% reporting these similar grades in high school among highly selective colleges.

Self Ratings and Assessment

UCSD freshmen tend to rate themselves similarly on several academic, cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioral dimensions compared with other freshmen in the highly selective national norms category.

Activities During the Senior Year in High School

UCSD students report engaging in community service at higher rates than their counterparts at other highly selective public colleges and all other public colleges in the CIRP sample. (e.g., Tutoring, teaching, environmental activities, hospital work, service to the homeless, and other community service).

Despite higher grades in high school, approximately one-half of incoming freshmen at UCSD and other highly selective colleges report being "frequently" bored in class. A higher proportion of UCSD freshmen report tutoring other students compared to their counterparts from other highly selective public institutions (77% compared to 65%).

Incoming UCSD freshmen report lower levels of alcohol consumption than their counterparts at other colleges and universities for both wine and beer.

UCSD freshmen tend to associate with a more diverse group of students. A higher proportion of incoming UCSD freshmen (83%) report frequently socializing with "someone of another racial or ethnic group" compared with freshmen at other highly selective public colleges (73%), and all public colleges (67%). Although they tend to come from lower income backgrounds, a lower proportion of UCSD freshmen report working during their senior year in high school (48%), compared with 66% of incoming freshmen at other highly selective public institutions.

Educational Aspirations and College Plans

UCSD freshmen tend to have higher educational aspirations than freshmen at other highly selective and all other public colleges and universities. Approximately 90% of UCSD freshmen intend to obtain a Master's degree or higher, compared with approximately 83% of respondents at highly selective colleges, and 77% of respondents at all public universities. When asked about the important reasons for attending college, preparation for graduate school is also cited by a higher proportion of UCSD freshmen compared with incoming freshmen and comparison institutions.

As has been the trend over the last decade, a lower proportion of UCSD freshmen indicated that UCSD was their "first choice" institution (48%) compared with freshmen at comparison institutions where approximately 68%-70% of respondents indicated that their current college was their first choice institution. A possible corollary to this finding on first choice colleges are data indicating UCSD freshmen tend to apply to colleges and universities at a substantially higher rate than freshmen at other public colleges and universities. For example, approximately 38% of UCSD freshmen report applying to at least seven colleges, compared with approximately 17% of freshmen at other highly selective institutions, and 11% for all freshmen nationwide.

UCSD students tend to show somewhat lower levels of academic confidence compared with freshmen at comparison institutions. Approximately 56% of incoming UCSD freshmen expect to make "at least a B average" compared with 63% of freshmen at comparable

institutions, and 80% of students at all public colleges. This may be due to UCSD's reputation for high academic rigor.

Reasons for Attending UCSD

As in recent years, for the 2004 freshmen, the strong academic reputation and national ranking of UCSD were two of the primary reasons for choosing this campus. A somewhat lower proportion of UCSD freshmen cited the "social activities" reputation of the campus, cost of attendance, and size of the university as very important reasons for choosing UCSD compared with freshmen at other highly selective colleges and in all public colleges.

Life Objectives and Values

A somewhat higher proportion of UCSD students expressed interest in "making a theoretical contribution to science," "developing a meaningful philosophy of life," "helping to promote racial understanding," "improving my understanding of other countries and cultures," and "working to find a cure for a health problem," compared with their counterparts at other highly selective public institutions and public colleges nationwide.

Probable Major and Career

Comparatively a somewhat higher proportion of UCSD freshmen indicate an interest in majoring in the biological sciences and economics and intend to pursue medicine as a career compared with the national norms.

Anxiety over Financing College Expenses

New UCSD students tend to exhibit greater levels of anxiety with respect to financing their first year of college compared with freshmen at other public colleges and universities. A lower proportion of UCSD students expect to receive aid which does not need to be repaid (grants, scholarships, etc.) than students at other highly selective public institutions. Approximately 75% of incoming freshmen express "some" or "major" concern about their ability to finance their college education compared with 62% of students from other highly selective public institutions. Perhaps consistent with this concern over college finances, a higher proportion of UCSD freshmen (55%) expect to get a job at some point during college to help pay for expenses compared with 44% of freshmen from other highly selective colleges and universities.

Concerns, Goals, and Aspirations of Attending UCSD for New Freshmen

The biggest problem or concern anticipated by incoming UCSD freshmen remains "doing well academically" (56%), while 13% worry about financing college, 13% worry about making new friends and 10% are concerned about self-realization or trying to find personal meaning.

Consistent with anxiety over academic performance, approximately 46% of new freshmen anticipated needing help with "academic plans," and "study skills." Personal and family concerns were ranked relatively low on this list of possible problems (4%).

Getting to know and interact with our renowned faculty is a high priority of new UCSD freshmen as indicated by the high proportion of new UCSD freshmen noted the importance of interacting with faculty while attending. Approximately 73% of UCSD freshmen believe it is either "essential" or "important" to establish a close relationship with a faculty member

As was found in another section of the survey and consistent with findings over the past decade, approximately two-thirds of incoming freshmen indicated that the strong academic reputation of the campus was the most important reason for choosing UCSD. Social concerns were lower; approximately 14% cited the social environment as the primary factor in choosing UCSD.

In contrast with high self ratings on academic and intellectual skills, UCSD freshmen are significantly less confident about their interpersonal and communication skills, approximately 57% of UCSD freshmen place themselves either above average or in the highest 10% compared with the average person their age.

Summary

Students are attracted to UCSD in large part due to the strong academic and research reputation of the campus. As UCSD continues to climb in national stature, admission to UCSD has become very competitive. The strong academic preparation profile in terms of grades and entrance test scores of incoming UCSD students in large part reflects the rising national standing and high selectivity of the University.

New UCSD students are well prepared academically and have high educational and career aspirations; however they also exhibit a relatively high degree of anxiety over their anticipated academic performance. Although a high proportion report achieving very strong high school grades, a relatively high proportion also indicate frequently being bored in high school, and studying fewer hours when compared with responses received in prior administrations of the Freshman Survey.

UCSD is also challenged by the evidence that almost one-half of the survey respondents did not indicate the campus was their "first-choice" institution. This finding contrasts with the 1984 UCSD Freshman Survey results which indicated that approximately 80% of freshman respondents reported UCSD as their first-choice institution. As UCSD has grown in national rankings and stature, so too have applications for admission from increasingly well-prepared high school students, thus the selectivity of the institution has increased substantially over the last decade. Thus there may be a greater institutional challenge for the campus to help ensure a positive college experience for those students who did not indicate that UCSD was their preferred choice, particularly those who were denied admission to their first-choice institution. However, UCSD respondents are similar to their counterparts at other highly selective institutions in that approximately equal proportions of freshmen respondents indicate that they "will be satisfied with your college." Approximately 54% anticipate being satisfied with UCSD,

compared with 57% at highly selective public four year colleges and 52% attending public colleges and universities.

There also appears to be increasing concern over the ability to finance college attendance, and more students are indicating the probable need to work to meet college expenses. This may have implications for this generation of students, particularly if the need to work increases the amount of time spent off-campus and engaged in non-academic pursuits and other forms of disengagement from the campus community.

Part III: Student Residence and the Relationship to Engagement and Satisfaction

Data from two surveys were used to examine the relationship between student perceptions of their academic experience and residence during the first college year. These two surveys were the UCSD Undergraduate Experiences Survey (UCUES) and the Your First College Year (YFCY). Both surveys have questions pertaining to the primary residence of the student during the past year. The YFCY is administered to first year freshmen entering directly from high school in the final weeks of the spring quarter. The UCUES analyses include data for both new (first time freshmen and transfers) and continuing students. These surveys provided evidence to compare the academic, social, behavioral, and affective outcomes of students with respect to primary residence.

In general, students who live on campus tend to be more engaged in campus life, (as indicated by lower scores on the "Non Academic Commitments" scale, although both groups of first year students tend to show the same levels of "Academic Disengagement"). On-campus students indicate greater access and use of campus services, feel less isolated from the university, and tend to indicate higher levels of satisfaction with their overall college experience compared to students who reside in private homes or apartments. There does not appear to be a significant difference in the amount of interaction with faculty, or involvement with research projects. Although students living on campus tend to find faculty more accessible, both groups tended to rate the quality of instruction similarly.

With respect to academic performance, students living on campus achieved somewhat higher grades, particularly among first year students. Both on- and off-campus groupings report similar levels of difficulty in maintaining a high GPA with on campus residents reporting somewhat less difficulty, although the differences are not great. In general, as might be expected, living on campus appears to be related to higher levels of involvement and satisfaction with the university, although the impact on academic performance, particularly after the first year, does not appear to be of practical significance. It appears that the on-campus residents spend somewhat more time involved in other campus pursuits and co-curricular activities. The first year students who report living on campus do appear to be more successful in adjusting to campus life and achieve somewhat higher grades while maintaining more active social life compared to first year commuter students.

Part IV: The Academic and Co-Curricular Experiences of Transfer Students

The academic, cognitive, and psychosocial adjustment of new students was measured using both “single-shot” and longitudinal survey data. A sample of incoming freshmen and community college transfer students were given the CIRP Freshman survey at entry and Your First College Year (YFCY) survey during the spring, 2003 quarter. Although the analysis suggested several similarities in adjustment factors, some differences in self-perception, academic engagement, and behavioral variables were found. Transfer students tended to indicate lower levels of self-rated cognitive development, writing ability, and use and satisfaction with student services while indicating higher levels of isolation from campus life and interaction with faculty.

Survey data were gathered from transfer students and students entering directly from high school on two separate instruments. The use of these two surveys is intended to provide comparison data for these two groupings at different points in college. The Your First College Year (YFCY) survey is a national survey given to all first year UCSD students in the spring quarter. The attached tables are from the 2003 administration of the YFCY with responses from approximately 1,600 first year students; this grouping included 316 new UCSD transfer students. The second set of attached tables provides a comparison of student satisfaction, behaviors, and experiences using data from the University of California Undergraduate Experiences Survey (UCUES). This analysis compared the results for fourth-year students (seniors) who entered as freshmen directly from high school (N=1,241) with those for students entering as transfers (N=784).

Interaction with the Campus Community

Transfer students are much more likely to indicate feeling isolated from campus life than freshmen students. Although first-year transfer students report a somewhat higher frequency of interaction with faculty and staff compared with first-time freshmen, transfer students report significantly lower frequency of daily or weekly interaction with “close friends at this campus.” (Transfers: 64%, Freshmen 83%).

Satisfaction Indicators

There do not appear to be significant differences in the ratings of various campus services between new freshmen and transfer students. With respect to satisfaction with Recreational Facilities, transfer students appear to be less familiar or less inclined to use them based on the relatively high number of “Neutral/No Experience: responses. A similar pattern can be found with respect to “New Student Orientation” where transfer students appear significantly less likely to have participated.

College Experiences and Climate

Transfer students indicate lower levels of satisfaction with the “sense of community among students,” and “overall college experience.” (page2: YFCY) Approximately 59% of transfer respondents and 48% of new freshmen indicated frequently or occasionally feeling isolated from campus life. Transfer students are more likely to contribute to class discussions than are new freshmen, although this may be due to enrollment in more upper division courses. Transfer students were somewhat less likely to discuss courses with other students, although they were less likely to skip class. Transfer students were three times less likely to participate in intramural sports compared with new freshmen students. Transfer students were also much less likely to report developing close friendships with students. Despite these indicators of isolation from campus life, when asked if they would choose to enroll at UCSD again given the choice, a similar proportion (77-79%) of both new transfer and freshmen students indicated “probably or definitely yes.”

Academic and Social Adjustment Scales

The YFCY survey contains several internal scales that measure certain factors or themes of experiences, behaviors, and cognitive and affective development. Significant factor score differences ($p < .05$) between freshmen and transfer responses were identified using t-tests. Transfer students report lower levels of writing development and somewhat lower levels of “academic disengagement,” (transfers report being less likely to skip class, arriving late to class, turning in course assignments late or sub par, and feeling bored in class) than new freshmen respondents. Transfer students were somewhat less likely to experience “student focused classroom practices,” (group discussions, presentations, group projects or discussions about class with other students). Transfer students reported higher levels of “non-academic commitments” (hours spent commuting, performing household duties, and working off campus). These outside commitments may be associated with the lower levels of participation and engagement by new transfer students with campus services and other students. A far greater proportion of transfer students report living off campus, this is a likely contributing factor to the relative isolation and lack of interaction with the campus community indicated by transfer students.

UC Undergraduate Experiences Survey (UCUES) Findings

The second part of this analysis used responses to the UCUES for two groups of seniors-those who entered UCSD as freshmen, and those entering UCSD as transfer students.

Use of Campus Services

In general, fourth year transfer students tended to use campus services at a somewhat lower rate than seniors entering as freshmen (with the exception of Financial Aid and Transfer Student Services). For example transfer students used services such as the Career Center, Student Health, Psychology and Counseling, Tutoring, Personal Safety, Shuttles, and Housing at lower levels than students entering UCSD directly from high school.

Ratings of Campus Services

For most indicators, transfer and direct from high school entrants tended to rate campus services similarly. As noted in the usage tables, transfer students tended to be less aware and use services at lower rates than students entering as freshmen. There were some services where transfer students tended to give lower ratings.

Satisfaction with Campus Experience

Transfer students and non-transfers tended to rate certain aspects of the campus climate similarly. When asked if they would again choose UCSD if given the chance to make the choice over again, approximately 75% of both these groupings indicated that they would again choose UCSD. Also, transfers and non-transfers tended to rate their overall UC experience similarly. However, transfer students did indicate a somewhat lower sense of belonging with respect to the UCSD campus and their reported “social experience” is lower than non-transfer students.

Time Commitments

Transfer students spent less time involved in student groups, clubs, and organizations. Transfers report spending somewhat more time on studying and other academic activities outside of class and a lower proportion report working for pay on campus. However both groups of seniors report about the same number hours spent working for pay off-campus.

Academic Self-Ratings

Transfers and non-transfers tended to rate similarly across a range of skills such as writing, quantitative, research, and leadership. A similar pattern was found with respect to academic aspiration.

Part V: The Value of Student Assessment at UCSD: The Extensive Use of Survey Findings to Assess the Perceptions, Beliefs, Behaviors and Development of UCSD Students

The University of California Undergraduate Experiences Survey, 2004

In 2004, the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) participated in the third administration of the University of California Undergraduate Experiences Survey (UCUES). The UCUES is part of a major research effort in support of the UC Student Experience in the Research University in the 21st Century (SERU21) project based at the Center for Studies in Higher Education at UC Berkeley and is a collaborative project involving all UC campuses.

What is UCUES?

The University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) is an online survey that UCSD undergraduate students have been invited to complete each spring for the past three years. Locally, the survey has been supported by the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

and is administered by the UCSD Office of Student Research and Information (SR&I). UCUES provides an opportunity for students to give the university feedback on many aspects of student life at UCSD, such as the quality of the undergraduate experience, advising, access to classes, and overall satisfaction. UCUES provides an opportunity for students to voice their opinion about the university on a variety of dimensions and a variety of formats. Information gathered through UCUES is used by campus academic departments and co-curricular units to find out how they are doing and improve performance.

Sampling: The UCUES 2002 and 2003 Administrations

The UCUES has been administered for the last three years in the spring quarter. Sampling approaches over these three administrations varied. In year one, (UCUES 2002) respondents were sampled by entering cohort. These cohorts included all first year freshmen and transfers, and all seniors who entered as freshmen and as transfers. The first UCUES resulted in approximately 1,500 responses. The second UCUES (UCUES, 2003) administration was administered to a random sample of 2,000 UCSD undergraduates and yielded almost 700 responses.

UCUES 2004: The Census Approach

UCUES 2004 was administered to a census, rather than a sample of UCSD undergraduates. The census approach resulted in 6,995 responses representing a broad array of UCSD student backgrounds, majors, levels, interests, perceptions and behaviors. For all three administrations of the UCUES, extensive publicity was conducted to enhance the response rates. However, for UCUES 2004, the goal was to obtain as many responses as possible.

There were a variety of methods used to boost response rates and encourage participation by all undergraduates. All students were sent “pre-minder” postcards prior to survey administration, six email reminders, including reminders over the summer, 2004, and reminder postcards during the administration of the surveys. In addition, advertising of the survey and the incentive prizes was displayed across the campus. Advertising media included UCUES posters placed at locations throughout the campus, including the colleges, recreation facilities, student centers, library walk, large lecture halls, and other places where students gathered. UCUES bookmarks about the survey and website were placed in the library, on bookstore counters, and in student mailboxes in the colleges and in other locations across campus. Door hangers were created and with the assistance of the resident deans, placed in all residence halls and campus apartments. Table tents advertising the survey were placed in the student center, food courts, and in all campus dining halls. Follow-up phone calls to non-respondents were also conducted. Six cash prizes totaling \$1,500 were awarded as incentive prizes to participants. These efforts yielded the highest number of responses ever received for a UCSD survey, and the responses received were among the highest number of respondents in the UC system in 2004. The UCUES 2004 survey also included open-ended questions where students were prompted to identify, in their own words, how their undergraduate experience could have been improved, either by the campus or through the efforts of the respondent.

Over a three year period, these extensive efforts in gathering assessment data yielded over 9,000 surveys which represent a substantial investment in gathering of student information, opinion, and outcomes (duplicated count). This investment also reflects the high value placed on student assessment by UCSD. If what we measure is a reflection of what we value, then UCSD has placed a high priority on the gathering of information from our students for institutional assessment and improvement. Students were given ample opportunities to provide comments and observations to the campus, and a considerable investment of resources and time were dedicated to gathering and reporting these assessment data. Incentives for survey completion over the three administrations of the UCUES totaled approximately \$3,000 in cash payments and other prizes. These data have been presented to the UCSD campus community in reports given to the Academic Senate Council, Student Affairs meetings, and presentations to staff at each of the UCSD colleges. The data from the 2002 UCUES are available from the "Surveys" section of the UCSD Student Research and Information website: <http://ugr8.ucsd.edu/>.

National Assessments Conducted at UCSD

UCSD also participates in national studies of college students. For example, the six colleges, in cooperation with the SR&I Office administer the CIRP or Freshmen Survey to approximately 75-80% of the entering freshmen class (approximately 3,500-3,800 responses). These data enable the University to compare our freshmen with those from other highly selective public and private universities across the nation. In addition, SR&I has administered the Your First College Year (YFCY) survey to all first year freshmen and transfer students in the spring quarter of their first year at UCSD. Used with the Freshman survey given during orientation, the YFCY enables us to measure longitudinal student development and change over the first college year, and compare these differences and ratings with other colleges in the national sample. Over the past three administrations of the YFCY, we have received approximately 4000 unduplicated YFCY surveys from our first year freshmen and transfer students. This represents another important source of information about the perceptions, behaviors, and development of our students and the impact of our programs and services on various dimensions of student satisfaction and academic performance during this very important time in the students' college career.

Part VI: UCUES and YFCY Selected Findings: The Relationship between Student Satisfaction and Quality of Effort, Program Participation, Place of Residence, and Grades

Although the UCUES includes items assessing a broad array of areas from quality of effort to campus climate, this summary focuses on academic engagement and satisfaction, and the relationship of these variables to other indicators of satisfaction and academic success. There are also selected findings from the UCUES and comparisons with the UC sample.

Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Sample

The UCUES instrument gathered background data from the respondents such as first language learned, year their family moved to the United States, self-reported social class level, political views and academic and career intent. The demographic data suggest dramatic shifts taking place in California with respect to immigration, ethnicity and culture and the impact of

these changes on the composition of the UC student body. For example, approximately 57% of the UCSD sample, and 55% of the UC Norm group report that English was the language first learned in the home while approximately 43% and 45%, respectively, learned some other language first, or both languages together. Among the languages other than English learned by the respondents, Chinese and Taiwanese were reported at the highest rates (34%). Spanish was reported by approximately 15% of the UCSD sample and approximately 19% of the UC Norm group as the first language learned or learned at the same time as English. Approximately 78% of the sample report having been born in the United States, however approximately 58% report that one or both of their parents were born outside of the United States. Approximately one-half of the respondents indicate that they had no biological grandparents born in the United States. Similar proportions were found for the UC Norm grouping.

Academic Engagement and Effort

The data suggest the positive relationship between the self-reported amount of academic effort such as completion of assigned readings and time spent on coursework with the dependent variable of satisfaction with UC grade point average. Nor surprisingly, students who report spending the “right amount” of time on course work or completed assigned readings were significantly more satisfied with their GPA than students who felt they did not devote enough time and energy to course work. Although there were some differences in the self-reported experiences and behaviors between the new UCSD and UC Norm groups, these differences became less pronounced for continuing students. For example, among new UCSD students, approximately 21% reported taking classes where the faculty member “refers to his or her own research,” while approximately 30% of the UC Norm group reports such activity. For continuing students, the proportions reporting this activity are the same at 44%. The remainder of the items in this section does not show any differences of practical significance between the UCSD and UC Norm groupings.

Academic Performance and Satisfaction

The UCUES data also show the strong relationship between academic performance and perceptions and satisfaction with the campus. On a variety of dimensions, students who performed better academically (i.e., a GPA of 3.0 or above), were much more positive about a variety of campus experiences, programs, services, and university climate than those achieving below a 2.5 GPA. For example, students achieving a higher GPA were more likely to indicate they felt a greater freedom to express political views, and a greater sense of belonging to the campus. When asked about the likelihood of re-enrolling at UCSD if given the chance to do it over, almost two thirds of the higher achieving students indicated they would do so compared with approximately 50% of students achieving below a 2.50 GPA. Students achieving above a 3.0 GPA were significantly more satisfied with the quality of the UCSD academic, social, and overall UC experience compared with students achieving below a 2.5 GPA. Stronger academic performance was also found to be positively related to student involvement in clubs and organizations, as well as participation in sports and recreational activities.

The Value of Academic Engagement: The Example of Participation in Education Abroad, Research Internships, and Independent Study (EAP, 197, and 199 Courses)

The UCUES survey data on academic engagement, student satisfaction, and student development also suggested a strong relationship with participation in various programs such as Education Abroad (EAP), and Research Internships and Independent Studies courses. UCUES data were merged with UCSD student transcript information to identify the relationship between student perceptions and satisfaction and participation in these various programs. This study found that on several dimensions that included engagement with faculty, volunteerism, rating of teaching quality and undergraduate instruction, academic engagement and quality of effort, student development, research skill development, communications skills, GPA and the overall academic experience, students participating in these activities tended to rank these areas more highly than non-participants. Although this pattern was found for all of the programs studied, the associations between the student satisfaction dimensions and participation in EAP was particularly positive. EAP participation was also found to be positively related to understanding culturally diverse viewpoints improvement of research skills, interpersonal skills, and the perceived value of the students' UC education compared with how much they were paying for it.

The Value of Residential Life to the UC Experience

Data from the UCUES and the YFCY indicate a generally positive relationship between living on -campus and several measures such as perceived feelings of isolation, first year grades, making friends, and other indicators. The data suggest that being a resident at UCSD during your first college year at UCSD has positive effects. In particular, students living on-campus during their first or second college year were more likely to indicate satisfaction with the campus experience, social life, and higher levels integration with campus life. When analyzed for first year students, on-campus students tended to spend more time studying, have higher GPA's and complete more units than first year students living off-campus. On a variety of factor scales that included Academic Motivation, Civic Engagement, Cognitive Development, Academic Engagement, Physical Health and Activity, and Satisfaction with Student Services first year on campus residents scored significantly higher than their non resident counterparts. On-campus residents indicated a "greater sense of belonging" at a significantly higher rate than students living off-campus. First year students living on campus also reported a greater ability to make close friends with other students, and participate in campus activities such as intramural sports at significantly higher rates than first year students living off-campus.

Faculty Engagement

As was found in the previous UCUES data (although the questions used slightly different language), first-time UCSD students appear to interact or directly engage with faculty at a lower rate than the UC Norm group. On other measures of academic engagement and activities, comparatively fewer UCSD continuing students report having made a class presentation in the past year. This proportion is approximately twice that of the UC norm group of continuing students. For most of the faculty engagement items, the major differences appear to be related to class level (first-time and continuing students) and thus reflect opportunities to engage faculty or take upper division courses and research seminars.

Perceptions of Overall Experience at UC

There are some differences between the perceptions of UCSD students and the UC Norm group regarding selected aspects of their experience at the campus. The UCSD student sample in general indicated somewhat lower levels of satisfaction compared with their peers in the sample on some academic and social domains covered in the survey. Although the level of satisfaction with the overall academic experience at UC is approximately the same for UCSD and the UC norm group (approximately 85%), UCSD students appear to be significantly less satisfied with the “overall social experience” while attending UCSD. Also it appears that the satisfaction level for the “Overall UC Experience” is significantly lower for UCSD students compared with the UC norm grouping. This was found for both new and continuing students.

Factors Contributing to Student Satisfaction for UCSD Freshmen

This section of the report examined the variables that contributed most significantly to higher perceived levels of satisfaction with the first year student experience at UCSD. This analysis was conducted for both new freshmen and new transfer students who completed the YFCY. Survey items from the YFCY were grouped using factor analysis into several broad domains or factors. Multiple regression was used to explain variability in the dependent variable of “Satisfaction with the College Experience.” The satisfaction dependent measure was a composite of several YFCY items that included satisfaction with the overall quality of instruction, relevance of course work for everyday life, relevance of coursework for future academic and career plans, overall college experience, sense of community among students, contact with faculty, and opportunities for co-curricular activities. In this analysis, entering characteristics such as high school grades and test scores were controlled for initially. In addition, student pre-disposition with respect to anticipated college satisfaction was also controlled for at the second step of the model. Variables that were positively related to student satisfaction were developing close friendships with students, getting to know faculty, cognitive development, courses that inspired new thinking, satisfaction with the physical environment (campus, classrooms, labs), academic success, satisfaction with student co-curricular services, on-campus residence, and higher levels of academic engagement (although time spent in “reading for pleasure” also contributed to satisfaction). Negative factors included excessive socializing with friends and poor social and emotional adjustment to college as indicated by feeling isolated or being uninvolved with campus life.

For first year Transfer students, significant contributing variables (after controlling for ASGPA included adjusting to academic demands, perceived cognitive development, and getting to know faculty.

Factors Contributing to Student Satisfaction with College Experience:

Freshmen Students

	Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
	Beta	
(Constant)		0.048
Average High School Grade	0.023	0.410
SAT Verbal Score	-0.027	0.387
SAT Math Score	-0.027	0.368
Be Satisfied with This College	0.058	0.039
COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT	0.096	0.004
Develop close friendships w/students	0.195	0.000
Getting to Know Faculty	0.142	0.000
Satisfied with: Classroom Facilities	0.141	0.000
Courses Inspired New Thinking	0.164	0.000
ACADEMIC SUCCESS	0.134	0.000
SATISFACTION WITH STUDENT SERVICES	0.171	0.000
YFCY SOCIAL SELF VIEW	-0.164	0.000
POOR EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT TO COLLEGE	-0.137	0.000
SELF RATED COOPERATIVENESS AND AWARENESS	0.149	0.000
Felt Bored in Class	-0.093	0.001
FIRST YEAR PRIMARY LIVING PLACE	0.077	0.013
Reading for Pleasure	0.055	0.049

a. Dependent Variable: SATISFACTION WITH COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

Factors Contributing to Student Satisfaction with College Experience:

Transfer Students

	Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
	Beta	
(Constant)		0.114
Average ASGPA	0.155	0.051
COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT	0.311	0.001
Household/Childcare Duties	0.208	0.009
Getting to Know Faculty	0.238	0.005
Join Fraternity or Sorority	-0.237	0.003
ARTISTIC ABILITIES	-0.207	0.010
Adjusting to Academic Demands	0.193	0.023
SELF RATED COOPERATIVENESS AND AWARENESS	0.201	0.018
YFCY RELIGIOUSNESS AND SPIRITUALITY	-0.173	0.037

a. Dependent Variable: SATISFACTION WITH COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

How UCSD Students Compare with other UC Students

The UCUES survey also asked UCSD students to indicate the type of student they most identify with. This question was also asked at the other UC campuses. The results indicated that UCSD students tended to identify themselves similarly to other UC students.

UCUES Results:

Student Strongly Identifies with...	UCSD		All other UC Schools		All UC Students	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Students who are serious about getting good grades	1,040	16%	11,036	18%	12,076	18%
Party-goers, fun-loving students	708	11%	6,441	11%	7,149	11%
Students who are serious about social/political issues	387	6%	4,701	8%	5,088	8%
Intellectuals	690	11%	7,557	12%	8,247	12%
Religious students	281	4%	2,588	4%	2,869	4%
Jocks	314	5%	2,037	3%	2,351	4%
Other students of my ethnic background	449	7%	5,260	9%	5,709	8%
Other students in my major or field of interest	829	13%	9,435	15%	10,264	15%
Fraternity/Sorority types	149	2%	1,380	2%	1,529	2%
Students from affluent backgrounds/'rich' kids	123	2%	1,143	2%	1,266	2%
Artsy students	249	4%	2,779	5%	3,028	5%
Liberal students	476	8%	5,211	9%	5,687	8%
Conservative students	255	4%	2,514	4%	2,769	4%
Other	203	3%	2,232	4%	2,435	4%

Rich Kids 1	89	1.4%	848	1.4%	937	1.4%
Rich Kids 2	34	0.5%	295	0.5%	329	0.5%