What does the CIRP (Cooperative Institutional Research Program) The Freshman Survey tell us about incoming ‘K’ students, what brought them here, and what they might expect to do while at ‘K’?

“Very Highly Selective” Comparison Group
Characteristics of ‘K’ First-Year Students

- SAT Verbal 655 667; Math 656 668; Writing 650 669
- ACT Composite 28 29
- Average grade in high school – 75% A/A-
- Number of AP exams taken – 62% 1 to 4
- Studied did homework – 33%*41 11 or more hours
- Distance between ‘K’ and home – 43% 100 to 500 miles
- Highest degree planned – 33% PhD; 18% MD; 6% JD
- High school racial comp. – 55% mostly wht; 26% ca ½ wht
- Current religious preference – 37%42 None; 18% RomCath; 7%9 Jewish

Characteristics of ‘K’ First-Year Students

- Was bored in class – 34% Frequently; 62% Occasionally
- Skipped school/class – 65% not at all
- Was a guest in teacher’s home – 71% not at all
- Drank beer – 56%*44 not at all
- Drank wine or liquor – 46% not at all
- Partied less than one hour/wk – 56%*36
- Felt overwhelmed with what I had to do – 91% Freq/Occ
- Felt depressed – 54% Freq/Occ
- Played musical instrument – 52% Freq/Occ
Characteristics of ‘K’ First-Year Students

- Asked teacher for advice after class – 93% Freq/Occ
- Socialized with someone of another racial/ethnic group – 97% Freq/Occ
- Performed volunteer work – 91% Freq/Occ
- Performed community service as part of class – 54% Freq/Occ
- Asked questions in class – 99% Freq/Occ
- Political views – 49% Liberal; 34% middle-of-the-road
  Men 44% Lib/38% motr; Women 53% Lib/31% motr

Characteristics of ‘K’ First-Year Students

- There is too much concern in the courts for the rights of criminals – 62% disagree somewhat or strongly
- Abortion should be legal – 75% agree somewhat or strongly
- Marijuana should be legalized – 54% Agree some/strong
- Racial discrimination is no longer a major problem in America – 90%*84 Disagree somewhat or strongly
- Same sex couples should have the right to legal marital status – 81%*86 Agree somewhat or strongly
Factors Affecting College Choice

- I was accepted by my first choice - 77%
- ‘K’ was my first choice - 62%
- I was offered financial assistance - 70%*44
- I was not offered financial assistance by 1st choice - 13%*6
- My parents wanted me to come here - 14%
- ‘K’ has a very good academic reputation - 83%
- ‘K’ has a good reputation for social activities - 21%*39
- ‘K’ grads are admitted to top graduate programs - 62%*45
- ‘K’ grads get good jobs - 66%*55
- Rankings in national magazines - 28%

CIRP Constructs are designed to capture the experiences and outcomes institutions are often interested in understanding, but that present a measurement challenge because of their complex and multifaceted nature. To measure these broad underlying areas more precisely, folks at CIRP use Item Response Theory (IRT) to combine individual survey items into global measures that capture these areas. CIRP Constructs are more than a summation of related items; IRT uses response patterns to derive construct score estimates while simultaneously giving greater weight in the estimation process to survey items that tap into the construct more directly. This results in more accurate construct scores.
Habits of Mind

Survey items

How often in the past year did you:
* Seek solutions to problems and explain them to others
* Support your opinions with a logical argument
* Seek alternative solutions to a problem
* Evaluate the quality or reliability of information you received
* Seek feedback on your academic work
* Ask questions in class
* Take a risk because you felt you had more to gain
* Explore topics on your own, even though it was not required for a class
* Accept mistakes as part of the learning process
* Revise your papers to improve your writing
* Look up scientific research articles and resources
Academic Self-Concept

Survey items
Rate yourself on each of the following traits as compared with the average person your age:
* Academic ability
* Self-confidence - intellectual
* Drive to achieve
* Mathematical ability
Social Self-Concept

Survey items
Rate yourself on each of the following traits as compared with the average person your age:
* Leadership ability
* Public speaking ability
* Popularity
* Self-confidence - social
Pluralistic Orientation

Survey items
Rate yourself on each of the following traits as compared with the average person your age:
* Ability to work cooperatively with diverse people
* Tolerance of others with different beliefs
* Openness in having my views challenged
* Ability to discuss and negotiate controversial issues
* Ability to see the world from someone else’s perspective
Social Agency

Survey items

Indicate the importance to you personally of each of the following:
* Participating in a community action program
* Helping to promote racial understanding
* Becoming a community leader
* Influencing social values
* Keeping up to date with political affairs
* Helping others who are in difficulty
College Reputation Orientation

Survey items

* How important was each reason in your decision to come here?
  * This college's graduates get good jobs
  * This college's graduates gain admission to top graduate/professional schools
  * This college has a very good academic reputation
Likelihood of College Involvement

Survey items
What is your best guess as to the chances that you will:
* Socialize with someone of another racial/ethnic group
* Participate in a study abroad program
* Participate in volunteer or community service work
* Participate in student government
* Participate in student clubs/groups
Surveys are the flashlights that lead us to where we need to get out the shovels.

Frank Boyd, Illinois Wesleyan University

Based on these self-reports, what are your impressions about ‘K’ students?