

1979

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A COMPARISON OF THE RESPONSES
OF UNI STUDENTS DIRECT FROM
HIGH SCHOOL, FALL SEMESTER 1979,
AND THEIR PARENTS TO STATEMENTS
PERTAINING TO SELECTED
EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES

OFFICE OF STUDENT RESEARCH



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OF UNI STUDENTS DIRECT FROM
HIGH SCHOOL, FALL SEMESTER 1979,
AND THEIR PARENTS TO STATEMENTS
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EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES

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OFFICE OF STUDENT RESEARCH
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa
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INTRODUCTION

In recent years new students who have been admitted to the University of Northern Iowa for the fall semester have been invited, together with their parents, to participate in a pre-orientation program in June or July preceding the opening of classes in August. The program included student registration for classes for the fall semester, information sessions for students and parents, tours of the campus, and social events.

The Student Services Division of the University has sponsored information sessions dealing with the areas of housing, financial aids, activities, student government, counseling, placement, food service, admission, registration, health and research.

Prior to the development of the pre-orientation program for the 1979 Fall Semester members of the academic advising and orientation staff and the Coordinator of Student Research discussed ways in which students and parents could become more involved in the pre-orientation programs.

The discussion revealed that, during the past decade, numerous studies dealing with college student attitudes and opinions had been conducted but that very little information was available about the opinions of parents of college students. A decision was made to include a survey of student and parent opinions related to current educational and social issues as a part of the 1979 orientation program.

This paper summarizes the results of the student-parent survey conducted on the University of Northern Iowa campus during pre-orientation sessions for new students and their parents in June and July 1979.

The purposes of the survey were to:

1. Secure the opinions of new students and their parents regarding selected current educational and social issues.

2. Compare the opinions of the students and parents.
3. Present the findings as a part of the orientation program.
4. Utilize the opinions of the students and parents in developing future programs in the various student services areas at the University of Northern Iowa.
5. Secure demographic information pertaining to the students and their parents.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire (See Appendix) included two sections:

1. Demographic information pertaining to students curricular preferences, primary reason for attending the university, and family information regarding size of family, educational level of the parents, and occupations of the parents.
2. A series of 20 statements to which students and parents provided responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The statements included items related to career choices and placement, residence hall living, participation in activities, problems of students, religious activities, drug and alcohol usage, admissions policy, student demands, and related areas.

THE SAMPLE

The questionnaire was distributed to all new students direct from high school and their parents who attended the opening session of the orientation program.

Of the 1970 students new from high school who were enrolled for classes Fall Semester 1979, a total of 1862 (95%) participated in the survey. Of the 1365 parents who registered for the orientation program, a total of 1246 (92%) returned completed questionnaires.

PROCEDURES

In order to compute means of the responses for each group, weights were assigned to responses as follows: strongly agree (+1.00), agree (+2.00), disagree (+3.00), strongly disagree (+4.00).

As soon as computer listings including the means of the responses for each statement for each orientation session were received, the means for each group of participants were placed on the original questionnaire in the space to the left of each statement and a copy was distributed to the parents on the second day of each orientation session. The key to the scores was explained and areas of agreement and disagreement between students and parents were examined and discussed.

After the final orientation session for students and parents, a composite listing, including the means of the responses of all participants, was completed. (See Table I) In addition, the responses of the participants were tabulated to show the percentage of students and parents who strongly agreed or agreed with each statement. (See Table II)

LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

This study was limited to (1) students direct from high school who registered for classes for the Fall Semester 1979 and parents of these students who participated in orientation activities in June and July 1979, (2) a comparison of the responses of the students and parents to the twenty statements listed on the lower one-half of the questionnaire.

This survey was conducted to secure responses of new students direct from high school and their parents to 20 statements dealing with educational and social issues of interest to student services staff members at the University of Northern Iowa.

The means of the responses and percentages of participants strongly agreeing or agreeing with each of the twenty statements on the questionnaire were included in Tables I and II. Further examination of Table II revealed the following information:

1. Ninety five percent (95%) or more of the students and parents agreed (strongly agreed or agreed) with the following statements:

The main purpose of a college education is to prepare for an occupation.

If a student has been notified or is aware of unsatisfactory progress in a course or courses, it is his/her responsibility to seek assistance from the proper university service.

I am confident that I (student) or my son or daughter (parent) will complete a college degree no later than 5 years from now.

2. Less than 50% of the students and parents agreed with the following statements:

College administrators "give in" to student demands more often than they should.

New students at UNI will discuss personal problems related to the college experience with their parents more often than with others.

Most college educated individuals will make three or four major career changes during their lifetime.

3. Less than 30% of the students and more than 50% of the parents agreed with the following statements:

Sophomore students, with the exception of those living at home, etc., should be required to live in university residence halls.

Students who actively participate in extra curricular activities at college are more likely to obtain a college degree than those who do not.

Due to the energy crisis, students who live in residence halls should not have cars on campus.

IMPLICATIONS

1. Since preparation for a career is the primary goal of new students, the University of Northern Iowa has an obligation to provide advising, career planning, counseling, and placement services which will assist these students in making realistic educational, vocational and personal choices.
2. Since the new students feel it is their responsibility to seek assistance from university services, it is the obligation of the university to keep students and faculty informed of the available referral resources and encourage them to utilize the services.
3. Since information pertaining to some of the statements (such as participation in extra curricular activities) is not available, research should be conducted to provide meaningful information to students and parents regarding the various activities and services available at UNI.

UTILIZATION OF THE FINDINGS

1. Provide information to parents and students who participated in the study.
2. Provide information to student services staff members at the University of Northern Iowa which can be utilized in making decisions pertaining to meeting the needs of the students.
3. Share information with staff members at other colleges and universities and with personnel from secondary schools who counsel with students who may enroll at the University of Northern Iowa.

A P P E N D I X

TABLE I A COMPARISON OF THE RESPONSES OF UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHERN IOWA FRESHMEN AND PARENTS TO STATEMENTS
PERTAINING TO SELECTED EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL
ISSUES

TABLE II PERCENTAGES OF 1,862 UNI FRESHMEN AND 1,246 PARENTS
WHO STRONGLY AGREED OR AGREED WITH STATEMENTS
PERTAINING TO EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES

UNI STUDENT - PARENT OPINION SURVEY FALL SEMESTER
1979

TABLE 1

A COMPARISON OF THE RESPONSES OF UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA FRESHMEN AND PARENTS TO STATEMENTS PERTAINING TO SELECTED EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES

MEAN SCORES FOR TOTAL AND SELECTED GROUPS OF RESPONDENTS					MEAN SCORES DERIVED FROM THE FOLLOWING WEIGHTING: STRONGLY AGREE = 1.00 DISAGREE = 3.00 AGREE = 2.00 STRONGLY DISAGREE = 4.00	
Total	Students		Parents			
	Women	Men	Mother	Father		
<u>1.57</u>	<u>1.55</u>	<u>1.56</u>	<u>1.60</u>	<u>1.65</u>	1.	The main purpose of a college education is to prepare for an occupation or a profession.
<u>2.48</u>	<u>2.49</u>	<u>2.49</u>	<u>2.51</u>	<u>2.44</u>	2.	Most college educated individuals will make three or four major career changes during their lifetime.
<u>1.91</u>	<u>2.00</u>	<u>1.85</u>	<u>1.93</u>	<u>1.76</u>	3.	Average lifetime earnings for individuals who graduate from college are higher than those who do not.
<u>1.85</u>	<u>1.83</u>	<u>2.04</u>	<u>1.73</u>	<u>1.85</u>	4.	Living in a residence hall is a significant part of a college education.
<u>2.65</u>	<u>2.93</u>	<u>3.05</u>	<u>2.16</u>	<u>2.25</u>	5.	Sophomore students, with the exception of those living at home, etc., should be required to live in university residence halls.
<u>2.25</u>	<u>2.39</u>	<u>2.38</u>	<u>2.03</u>	<u>2.11</u>	6.	Students who remain on campus most weekends receive more benefits from college than those who spend most of their weekends at home.
<u>2.00</u>	<u>2.03</u>	<u>1.98</u>	<u>2.00</u>	<u>2.00</u>	7.	The primary concern of most freshmen students attending UNI is making satisfactory grades in college courses.
<u>1.85</u>	<u>1.89</u>	<u>1.93</u>	<u>1.78</u>	<u>1.84</u>	8.	It is the obligation of the student to keep parents informed of mid-semester and final grades.
<u>1.62</u>	<u>1.63</u>	<u>1.71</u>	<u>1.56</u>	<u>1.65</u>	9.	If a student has been notified or is aware of unsatisfactory progress in a course or courses, it is his/her responsibility to seek assistance from the proper university service.
<u>2.63</u>	<u>2.68</u>	<u>2.68</u>	<u>2.59</u>	<u>2.55</u>	10.	New students at UNI will discuss personal problems related to the college experience with their parents more often than with others.
<u>2.24</u>	<u>2.27</u>	<u>2.21</u>	<u>2.24</u>	<u>2.27</u>	11.	Students attend church and participate in more religious activities while attending high school than while attending college.
<u>2.23</u>	<u>2.19</u>	<u>2.14</u>	<u>2.33</u>	<u>2.39</u>	12.	Most college students, who drink alcoholic beverages, have established their "drinking patterns" before enrolling in college.
<u>2.18</u>	<u>2.18</u>	<u>2.11</u>	<u>2.24</u>	<u>2.28</u>	13.	The use of marijuana usually begins when students are attending junior or senior high school rather than when attending college.
<u>2.37</u>	<u>2.36</u>	<u>2.33</u>	<u>2.46</u>	<u>2.42</u>	14.	Employers who hire college graduates give first consideration to those with the highest grade point average.
<u>2.05</u>	<u>2.19</u>	<u>2.00</u>	<u>2.00</u>	<u>1.93</u>	15.	Students who pay their own expenses appreciate a college education more than those who have expenses paid by their parents.
<u>2.61</u>	<u>2.84</u>	<u>2.71</u>	<u>2.36</u>	<u>2.32</u>	16.	Students who actively participate in extra curricular activities at college are more likely to obtain a college degree than those who do not.
<u>2.80</u>	<u>3.05</u>	<u>3.15</u>	<u>2.39</u>	<u>2.38</u>	17.	Due to the energy crisis, students who live in residence halls should not have cars on campus.
<u>2.43</u>	<u>2.44</u>	<u>2.50</u>	<u>2.39</u>	<u>2.44</u>	18.	Any Iowa high school graduate, regardless of rank in graduating class or grades in high school courses, who wants to attend UNI, Iowa U, or Iowa State, should be admitted.
<u>2.76</u>	<u>2.88</u>	<u>2.83</u>	<u>2.68</u>	<u>2.56</u>	19.	College administrators "give in" to student demands more often than they should.
<u>1.62</u>	<u>1.56</u>	<u>1.60</u>	<u>1.68</u>	<u>1.77</u>	20.	I am confident that I (student) or my son or daughter (parent) will complete a college degree no later than 5 years from now.

TABLE II

PERCENTAGES OF 1862 UNI FRESHMEN AND 1246 PARENTS WHO STRONGLY AGREED OR AGREED WITH STATEMENTS PERTAINING TO EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES

GROUP 1 - STATEMENTS WITH WHICH MORE THAN 50% OF THE STUDENTS AND MORE THAN 50% OF THE PARENTS AGREED.

STUDENTS %	PARENTS %	STATEMENTS
98	95	The main purpose of a college education is to prepare for an occupation or a profession.
97	97	If a student has been notified or is aware of unsatisfactory progress in a course or courses, it is <u>his/her</u> responsibility to seek assistance from the proper university service.
96	95	I am confident that I (student) or my son or daughter (parent) will complete a college degree no later than 5 years from now.
89	88	It is the obligation of the student to keep parents informed of mid-semester and final grades.
85	87	Average lifetime earnings for individuals who graduate from college are higher than those who do not.
84	85	The primary concern of most freshmen students attending UNI is making satisfactory grades in college courses.
82	92	Living in a residence hall is a significant part of a college education.
72	67	The use of marijuana usually begins when students are attending junior or senior high school rather than when attending college.
70	60	Most college students, who drink alcoholic beverages, have established their "drinking patterns" before enrolling in college.
68	79	Students who pay their own expenses appreciate a college education more than those who have expenses paid by their parents.
65	68	Students attend church and participate in more religious activities while attending high school than while attending college.
54	74	Students who remain on campus most weekends receive more benefits from college than those who spend most of their weekends at home.
50	54	Any Iowa high school graduate, regardless of rank in graduating class or grades in high school courses, who wants to attend UNI, Iowa U, or Iowa State, should be admitted.

TABLE II (CONT.)

GROUP 2 - STATEMENT WITH WHICH MORE THAN 50% OF THE STUDENTS AND LESS THAN 50% OF THE PARENTS AGREED.

STUDENTS %	PARENTS %	STATEMENT
58	49	Employers who hire college graduates give first consideration to those with the highest grade point average.

GROUP 3 - STATEMENTS WITH WHICH LESS THAN 50% OF STUDENTS AND MORE THAN 50% OF THE PARENTS AGREED.

STUDENTS %	PARENTS %	STATEMENTS
20	66	Sophomore students, with the exception of those living at home, etc., should be required to live in university residence halls.
27	57	Students who actively participate in extra curricular activities at college are more likely to obtain a college degree than those who do not.
14	51	Due to the energy crisis, students who live in residence halls should not have cars on campus.

GROUP 4 - STATEMENTS WITH WHICH LESS THAN 50% OF THE STUDENTS AND LESS THAN 50% OF THE PARENTS AGREED.

STUDENTS %	PARENTS %	STATEMENTS
10	28	College administrators "give in" to student demands more often than they should.
35	41	New students at UNI will discuss personal problems related to the college experience with their parents more often than with others.
49	49	Most college educated individuals will make three or four major career changes during their lifetime.

The University of Northern Iowa appreciates your cooperation in responding to the statements listed on this information sheet. Your individual replies, which will remain confidential, will be summarized and presented in a group profile to parents and students during orientation.

PLEASE CHECK ONE:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1. _____ Female Student | 6. _____ Number of older brothers & sisters |
| _____ Male Student | 7. _____ Number of younger brothers & sisters |
| _____ Mother of Student | 8. _____ Student's primary reason for choosing UNI rather than another college. (Indicate one from reverse side) |
| _____ Father of Student | 9. _____ Mother's occupation. _____ |
| _____ of Student | 10. _____ Father's occupation. _____ |

2. Home phone number: _____
- CIRCLE the highest grade completed by each parent:
- | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------|-----------------|-------------|
| | Elementary | High School | Tech or College | Grad School |
| 3. _____ Student's prospective major | 11. Mother: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8/9 10 11 12/13 14 15 16/17 18 19 | | | |
| 4. _____ Teaching (See reverse side) | 12. Father: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8/9 10 11 12/13 14 15 16/17 18 19 | | | |
| _____ Non-Teaching | | | | |

Directions: To the left of each statement place an X in column 1 if you strongly agree; in column 2 if you agree but not strongly agree; in column 3 if you disagree and in column 4 if you strongly disagree with the statement.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree	
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	1. The main purpose of a college education is to prepare for an occupation or a profession.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	2. Most college educated individuals will make three or four major career changes during their lifetime.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	3. Average lifetime earnings for individuals who graduate from college are higher than those who do not.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	4. Living in a residence hall is a significant part of a college education.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	5. Sophomore students, with the exception of those living at home, etc., should be required to live in university residence halls.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	6. Students who remain on campus most weekends receive more benefits from college than those who spend most of their weekends at home.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	7. The primary concern of most freshmen students attending UNI is making satisfactory grades in college courses.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	8. It is the obligation of the student to keep parents informed of mid-semester and final grades.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	9. If a student has been notified or is aware of unsatisfactory progress in a course or courses, it is his/her responsibility to seek assistance from the proper university service.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	10. New students at UNI will discuss personal problems related to the college experience with their parents more often than with others.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	11. Students attend church and participate in more religious activities while attending high school than while attending college.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	12. Most college students, who drink alcoholic beverages, have established their "drinking patterns" before enrolling in college.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	13. The use of marijuana usually begins when students are attending junior or senior high school rather than when attending college.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	14. Employers who hire college graduates give first consideration to those with the highest grade point average.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	15. Students who pay their own expenses appreciate a college education more than those who have expenses paid by their parents.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	16. Students who actively participate in extra curricular activities at college are more likely to obtain a college degree than those who do not.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	17. Due to the energy crisis, students who live in residence halls should not have cars on campus.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	18. Any Iowa high school graduate, regardless of rank in graduating class or grades in high school courses, who wants to attend UNI, Iowa U, or Iowa State, should be admitted.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	19. College administrators "give in" to student demands more often than they should.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	20. I am confident that I (student) or my son or daughter (parent) will complete a college degree no later than 5 years from now.

3. Student's Major

120 Accounting
990 Anthropology
600 Art
840 Biology
170 Business Education
860 Chemistry
870 Earth Science
920 Economics
210 Elementary/Middle School Ed.
620 English Language & Lit.
720 French
970 Geography
740 German
960 History 410 Health
310 Home Economics
680 Humanities
001 Individual Studies
330 Industrial Arts or Tech.
760 Latin American Studies
630 Linguistics
150 Management
130 Marketing
800 Mathematics
520 Music
180 Office Administration
650 Philosophy or Religion
420 Physical Education
880 Physics
940 Political Science
400 Psychology
230 Reading
430 Recreation
770 Russian Studies
300 Safety Education
820 Science
900 Social Science
450 Social Work
960 Sociology
780 Spanish
220 Special Education
500 Speech
510 Speech Path/Audiology
629 TEFL (Tchg. Eng. as For. Lang.)
000 UNDECIDED
999 PRE-PROFESSIONAL(law, med.,etc.)

8. Student's Reason for Choosing UNI

0 Course Offerings, Curricula
1 Cost-Tuition-Fees
2 Location-Near Home, Etc.
3 Size or Type of School
4 Financial Aid Assistance/Scholarship
5 Friend Attending UNI
6 Parent, Brother, Sister, Relative
7 School Principal, Teacher or Counselor
8 UNI Admissions Staff, Letter from UNI
9 Other _____

9. Student's Mother's Occupation

10. Student's Father's Occupation

OCCUPATIONAL DESCRIPTIONS

- 00 UNKNOWN OR NO RESPONSE
- 01 PROFESSIONAL, TECHNICAL, & MANAGERIAL: Scientist, architect, engineer, psychologist, physician, nurse, teacher, attorney, clergy, journalist, accountant, public administration and government officials, social work, store or plant manager or owner, etc.
- 02 CLERICAL AND SALES: Secretary, stenographer, book-keeper, keypuncher, stock clerk, mail carrier, telephone operator, ticket agent, dispatcher/sales agent or representative, auctioneer, realtor, etc.
- 03 SERVICE OCCUPATIONS: Waiter/waitress, bartender, cook, baker, housekeeper, barber/cosmetologist, attendant, dental/medical aides, dry cleaning, protective services (fire, police, military).
- 04 AGRICULTURAL, FISHERY, FORESTRY, AND RELATED OCCUPATIONS: Farming, Etc.
- 05 PROCESSING OCCUPATIONS: Processing of metal (foundry occupations); food (meat cutter, distiller, cake decorator, cannery worker); paper, (petroleum/coal, chemicals, grinding or crushing occupations); wood, stone & clay, leather & textiles.
- 06 MACHINE TRADES: Mechanic, machine operator, machinery repair and maintenance.
Ex.: Tool and die makers, drill press operator, punch press, routers, utility repair, printer, grinders, etc.
- 07 BENCH WORK OCCUPATION: Assembler, pattern maker, jeweler, watches, plasterer, upholsterer, musical instrument repair.
- 08 STRUCTURAL WORK: Carpenters, brick layers, electricians, plumbers, welders, house painters.
- 09 MISCELLANEOUS: Bus driver, train engineer, taxi driver, distribution of utilities, recreation, sanitation, graphic art work, mining, etc.
- 10 HOUSEWIFE:
- 11 UNEMPLOYED:
- 12 RETIRED:
- 13 DECEASED:

