

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CIRP 2007 FRESHMAN SURVEY REPORT

Webster University

March, 2008

In fall 2007 Webster University participated for the 37th year in the Higher Education Research Institute's (HERI) Cooperative Institutional Research Program Freshman Survey (CIRP). The results of this annual survey provide insight into the academic and emotional preparedness, aspirations, motivations, and expectations for college of full time freshmen. The responses of 458 of Webster's 2007 freshmen were compared to those of 41,124 students attending nonsectarian four-year private institutions (Peer) and of 272,036 national norm students (Norm). Responses to Webster-specific questions were analyzed (Appendix A) and comparisons were also made between the responses of Webster's commuter and residential students.

Summary of Results

- For the second year in a row, Webster's academic reputation was the top reason for our freshmen to choose the University
- Significantly more (72%) of Webster's 2007 freshmen listed their current institution as their first choice, compared with 63% of the Peer and 47% of the Norm freshmen
- Webster's reputation for social activities was considered a very important reason for choosing it by 32% of the 2007 freshmen, up from 21% in 2006
- A new section of the 2007 CIRP Survey explored "habits of mind." Webster freshmen indicated a level of academic effort greater than the Peer students and significantly more vigorous than the Norm students in the following areas: risk-taking, exploring topics on their own and seeking feedback on their academic work
- Among other "habits of mind" explored, checking the reliability of data was frequently done by only 35% of Norm students, with Webster students only a little higher at 37.4%
- Webster students' left-leaning political views continue, as evidenced by the combined facts that they are more white than Peer or Norm students and yet are less likely to agree that race discrimination is no longer a problem in America
- Webster's 2007 freshmen were significantly more likely (93%) to plan on studying abroad than Peer (72%) or Norm (56%) students. In all three respondent groups, females were more likely than males to expect to study abroad

- Webster freshmen would have liked more parental involvement in various aspects of college preparation than either Peer or Norm students. Apparently, “helicopter parents” are not prevalent among Webster students’ families.

Office of Institutional Research
March 2008