

Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP)

American Freshman Survey 2005

University of Nevada, Reno

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During New Student Orientation in August 2005, the University of Nevada, Reno (Nevada) participated in the American Freshman survey, sponsored by the American Council on Education. The CIRP survey was conducted annually on the Nevada Campus from 1991 to 2002 and then again in 2005. The CIRP survey was first instituted in 1966 and provides national nominative data about the characteristics of first-time, full-time freshmen. For the purpose of this report, data reported as “national” represent the responses of 66,040 first-time, full-time freshman attending public universities.

The CIRP survey was administered using Student Information Forms (SIFs) provided by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI), UCLA. The SIFs are designed to collect student data including biographic and demographic data, high school background, career plans, educational aspirations, financial arrangements, high school activities, and current attitudes.

As a component of New Student Orientation, August 2005, participants were asked to complete the SIF during a designated time and to return them to their orientation leader. Out of 2,332 first-time, full-time freshmen we received 1,206 responses, representing a response rate of 52%. We also received 73 responses from part-time and transfer students who were also present at orientation. Their responses are not included in this report, but are available for review.

Nevada student data in this report are represented by three non-mutually exclusive categories, all first-time, full-time freshman, northern Nevada first-time, full-time freshman, and southern Nevada first-time, full-time freshman. Data from the 2002 CIRP administration are also presented when significant deviations between the two student bodies occur.

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Profile of the Nevada 2005 Freshman Class

Table 1: CIRP 2005 Respondent Characteristics			
	CIRP 2002	CIRP 2005	National
Gender			
Men	43%	41%	47%
Women	57%	59%	53%
Age			
19 or younger	99%	99%	99%
20 or older	1%	1%	1%
Race/Ethnicity*			
White/Caucasian	82%	82%	73%
African American/Black	3%	4%	9%
American Indian/Alaska Native	2%	2%	2%
Asian American/Asian	7%	10%	13%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	N/A	3%	1%
Mexican American/Chicano	4%	7%	3%
Puerto Rican	0%	1%	1%
Other Latino	2%	2%	2%
Other	4%	4%	3%
High School Graduation Year			
2005 (2002)	99%	99%	99%
2004 or earlier (2001 or earlier)	1%	1%	1%
Native English Speakers			
	94%	92%	90%
Born in the US			
	N/A	94%	92%
* Students were allowed to self-identify in multiple categories, hence the totals will add up to larger than 100%			

Table 1 compares the demographics of the 2002 and 2005 Nevada respondents and the 2005 national respondents.

The Nevada freshman class is disproportionately female compared to the national freshman class, while 99% of college students both in Nevada and nationally are 19 or younger.

Over the last three years Nevada has seen a general increase in the enrollment of students of color. However our White/Caucasian student population remains higher than the national average.

Nevada also has a higher number of native English speakers and students born in the US than public universities nationally.

Parents' Level of Education

Table 2: Parents' Level of Education			
	CIRP 2002	CIRP 2005	National
Mother			
No College Experience	32%	34%	27%
Some College	24%	24%	17%
College Degree or higher	44%	42%	57%
Father			
No College Experience	33%	35%	27%
Some College	23%	19%	14%
College Degree or higher	44%	46%	59%

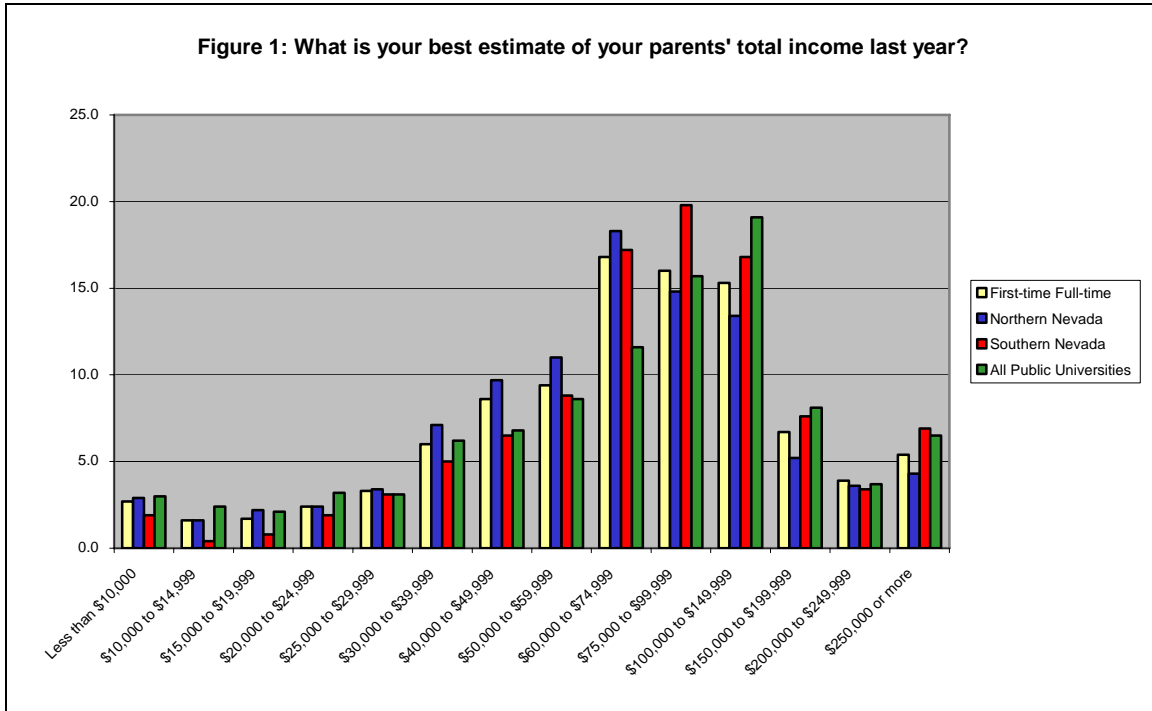
Father: Thirty-five percent (35%) of Nevada respondents indicated that their father has no college experience. Twenty-six percent (26%) indicated that their father has obtained a college degree, and an additional eighteen percent (18%) indicated their father has a graduate degree.

Mother: Thirty-four percent (34%) of Nevada respondents indicated that their mother has no college experience. Twenty-six percent (26%) indicated that their mother has obtained a college degree, and an additional fourteen percent (14%) indicated their mother has a graduate degree.

It is important to note that Nevada students are more likely to be first generation college students. This trend has increased over the last three years while national data shows a decrease in public universities over the same time period.

Financial Considerations

The ability of many students to attend college can depend on such factors as parental income and other resources available for educational expenses.



Estimated parental income as reported by Nevada students was significantly less than the national norms. When comparing Northern versus Southern Nevada students, Southern Nevada students tend to come from more affluent families.

Respondents were asked to identify sources available for their first year college expenses. They were specifically asked about how much they expected themselves and their parents to contribute to their education, and how much aid they expected that would and would not need to be repaid. Finally they were asked about their concern about their ability to finance their college education.

Table 3: Expected Family Resources			
	\$1,000 or less	\$1,000-\$5,999	\$6,000 or more
Northern Nevada	55%	34%	11%
Southern Nevada	27%	30%	26%
National	28%	26%	46%

Northern Nevada students are much more likely to expect their families to contribute \$1,000 or less to their college education by nearly a 2:1 margin.

Both northern and southern Nevada students expect their families to contribute less than \$6,000 or more than students nationally.

Table 4: Expected Personal Resources			
	\$1,000 or less	\$1,000-\$5,999	\$6,000 or more
Northern Nevada	70%	27%	3%
Southern Nevada	71%	26%	3%
National	68%	29%	4%

Both Northern and Southern Nevada students expect to contribute minimally to their own education, which is similar to the contribution

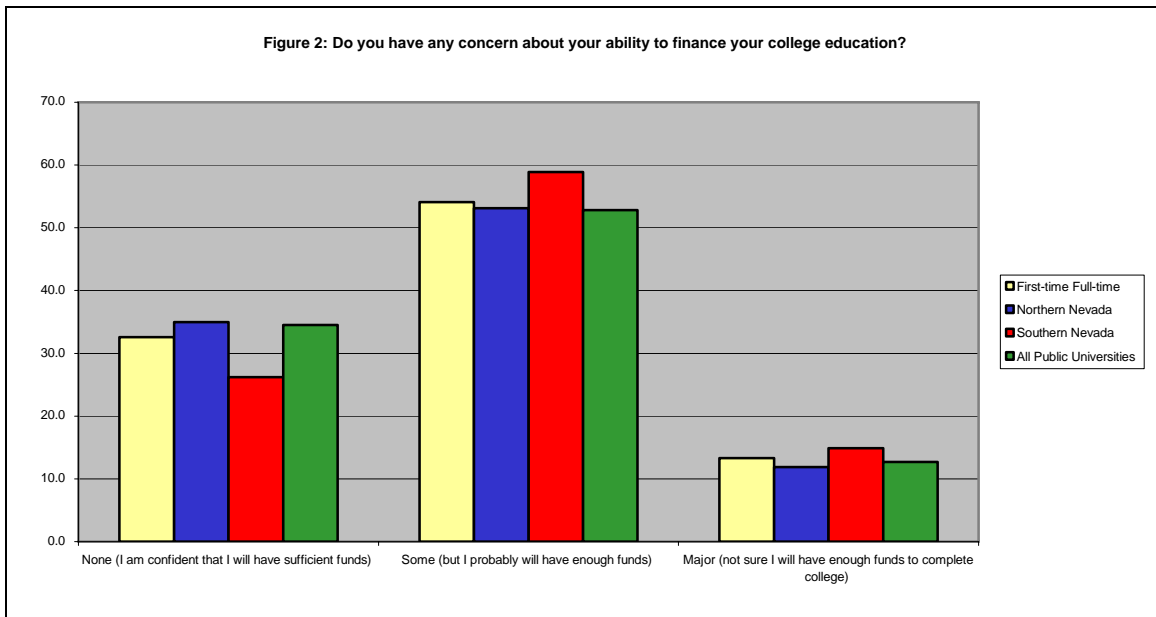
expected by students nationally.

Table 5: Expected Aid Which Need Not Be Repaid			
	\$1,000 or less	\$1,000-\$5,999	\$6,000 or more
Northern Nevada	30%	46%	24%
Southern Nevada	32%	44%	24%
National	48%	30%	22%

Nevada students in general expect more aid that will not need to be repaid than students nationally.

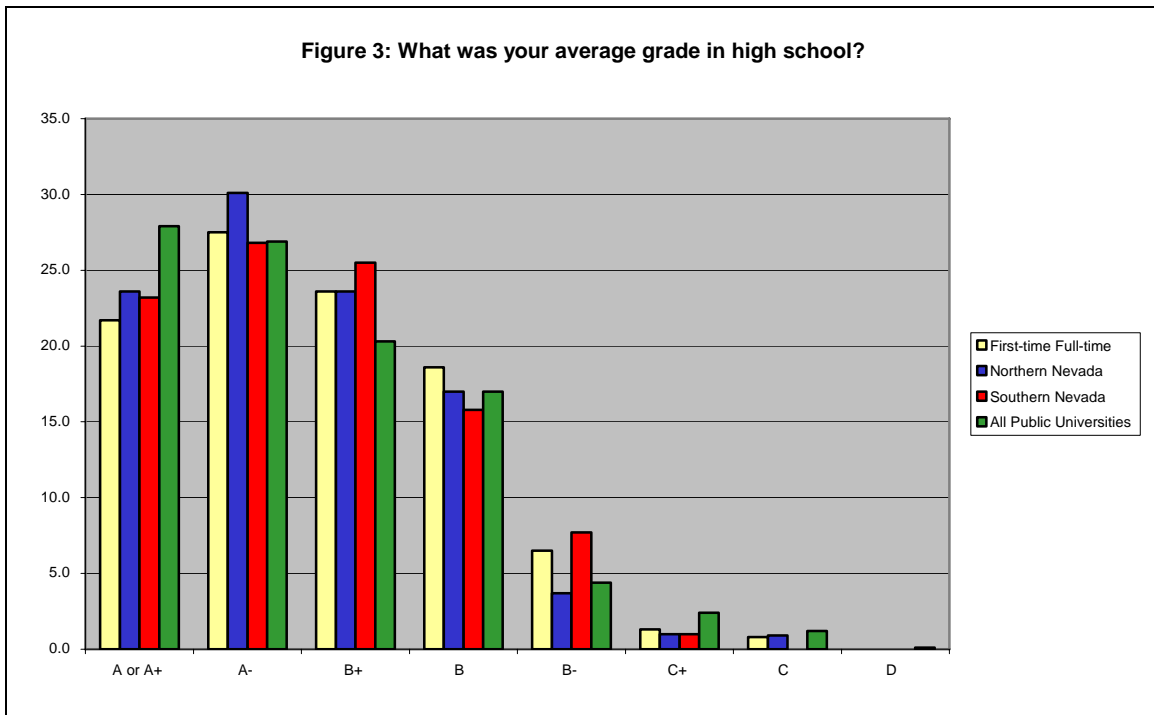
Table 6: Expected Aid Which Must Be Repaid			
	\$1,000 or less	\$1,000-\$5,999	\$6,000 or more
Northern Nevada	90%	9%	2%
Southern Nevada	71%	24%	5%
National	59%	24%	17%

Nevada students in general do not expect to need aid that must be repaid which differs greatly than the expectation of students nationally.



Nevada students in general do not have a greater concern about financing their college education than students nationally, but Southern Nevada students are more concerned than Northern Nevada students about financing their college education.

Educational History



The average student at Nevada has a comparable achievement level to students nationally.

It is interesting to note that Nevada receives a significantly large proportion of public magnet school students from Southern Nevada 18% versus 3% nationally.

Nevada students are less likely than students nationally to have been required to complete some form of community services prior to graduating.

While in high school Nevada students were less likely to have had any special tutoring or remedial work in most subjects compared with students nationally. Northern Nevada students were more likely to have had tutoring or remedial work in social studies and science than Southern Nevada students, while Southern Nevada students were more likely to have had tutoring or remedial work in mathematics and foreign language than Northern Nevada students.

Educational and Future Plans

Why college? While, on average, our first-time, full-time freshman class is generally comparable to students nationally on their reasons for attending college, there are differences between Northern and Southern Nevada students.

Table 7: Reasons noted as “very important” in deciding to go to college			
	Northern Nevada	Southern Nevada	National
My parents wanted me to go	49%	42%	42%
Wanted to get away from home	11%	34%	22%
To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas	65%	74%	66%
To make me a more cultured person	39%	47%	44%
To prepare myself for graduate or professional school	56%	65%	62%

Northern Nevada students are more likely than students nationally to have been influenced by their parents. Southern Nevada students are far more likely than students nationally, while Northern Nevada students are far less likely than students nationally to have wanted to get away from home. Southern Nevada students indicated that gaining a general education and appreciation of ideas and preparing for graduate or professional school was a major factor in deciding to attend college.

Nearly 75% of the respondents indicated that the University of Nevada, Reno was their first choice. Fifty percent (50%) of the respondents did not apply to any other college compared with only 20% of students nationally.

Why Nevada?

Table 8: Reasons noted as “very important” in influencing student's decision to attend Nevada			
	Northern Nevada	Southern Nevada	National
My relatives wanted me to come here	22%	11%	10%
This college has a very good academic reputation	34%	37%	60%
This college has a good reputation for its social activities	17%	25%	35%
I was offered financial assistance	62%	51%	28%
The cost of attending this college	62%	60%	32%
I wanted to live near home	38%	11%	16%
This college's graduates gain admission to top graduate schools	16%	19%	34%
Ranking in national magazines	6%	6%	20%
Information from a website	7%	11%	15%
A visit to a campus	10%	32%	37%

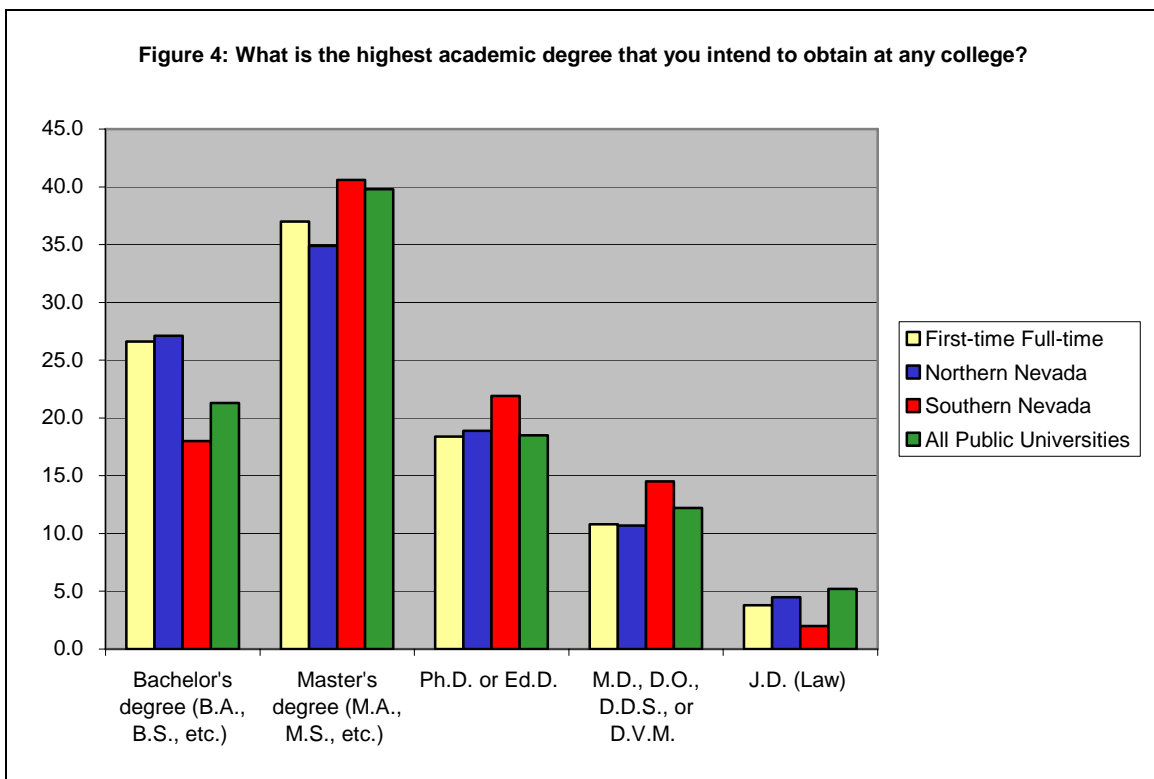
Students nationally were on average twice as likely to indicate that they chose their specific college because of the college's reputation for academics and social activities, the college's graduates to gain admission to top graduate schools, the ranking in national magazines and the information received from a website.

Nevada students were on average twice as likely to indicate that they chose Nevada specifically because they were offered financial assistance and the cost of attending Nevada.

Northern Nevada students were influenced greatly by both relatives and the fact that they wanted to live near home, while Southern Nevada students were influenced significantly more by a visit to campus.

Tutoring or Remedial Work: Northern Nevada students feel that they will need special tutoring or remedial work at about the same rate of students nationally. However, students from Southern Nevada feel that they will need tutoring or remedial work in math and science at significantly higher rates than students nationally.

Intended Degree Attainment: While 60% of our students intend on only obtaining a bachelor's degree at Nevada, only 25% plan on stopping at a bachelor's degree. It is also interesting to note that students from Southern Nevada are more likely to intend to obtain a higher degree than students from Northern Nevada.



Probable occupation

Table 9: Top 5 probable occupations			
	Northern Nevada	Southern Nevada	National
1	Physician	Physician	Engineer
2	Engineer	Engineer	Physician
3	Nurse	Nurse	Business executive (management, administrator)
4	Business owner or proprietor	Writer or journalist	Lawyer (attorney) or judge
5	Teacher or administrator (secondary)	Lawyer (attorney) or judge	Pharmacist

Personal Objectives

Table 10: Top 5 personal objectives of Nevada students	
1	Being well off financially
2	Raising a family
3	Helping others who are in difficulty
4	Becoming an authority in my field
5	Obtaining recognition from my colleagues for contributions to my special field

Behaviors and Activities

In the past year, Nevada students were *more* likely than students nationally to have...

- Participated in organized demonstrations
- Performed community service as part of a class
- Discussed politics in class
- Worked on a local, state, or national political campaign

In the past year, Nevada students were *not as* likely than students nationally to have...

- Attended a religious service
- Been bored in class
- Tutored another student
- Performed volunteer work
- Played a musical instrument

Activities that at least 50% of Nevada students engaged in *frequently* or *occasionally* were:

- Used a personal computer (88%)
- Studied with other students (87%)
- Used the Internet for research or homework (82%)
- Performed volunteer work (78%)
- Socialized with someone of another racial/ethnic group (73%)
- Attended a religious service (67%)
- Came late to class (62%)
- Discussed politics in class (61%)
- Performed community service as part of a class (59%)
- Tutored another student (52%)
- Drank wine or liquor (52%)

The activities that respondents most frequently stated they spent *no time* engaging in over the past year were:

- Prayer/Meditation (46%)
- Playing video/computer games (45%)
- Participating in student clubs/groups (38%)
- Volunteer Work (32%)

Self Perceptions, Attitudes, and Expectations

Perceived Strengths: Students were asked to compare themselves to the average person their age and rate themselves on a 5-point scale (1 = highest 10%, 2 = above average, 3 = average, 4 = below average, 5, lowest 10%) for a number of personal traits.

At least 50% of Nevada students rated themselves as either the *highest 10%* or *above average* in the following areas:

- Academic ability (75%)
- Drive to achieve (74%)
- Cooperativeness (71%)
- Understanding of Others (63%)
- Self-confidence (intellectual) (62%)
- Leadership ability (58%)
- Creativity (56%)
- Physical Health (56%)
- Self-understanding (55%)
- Emotional Health (54%)

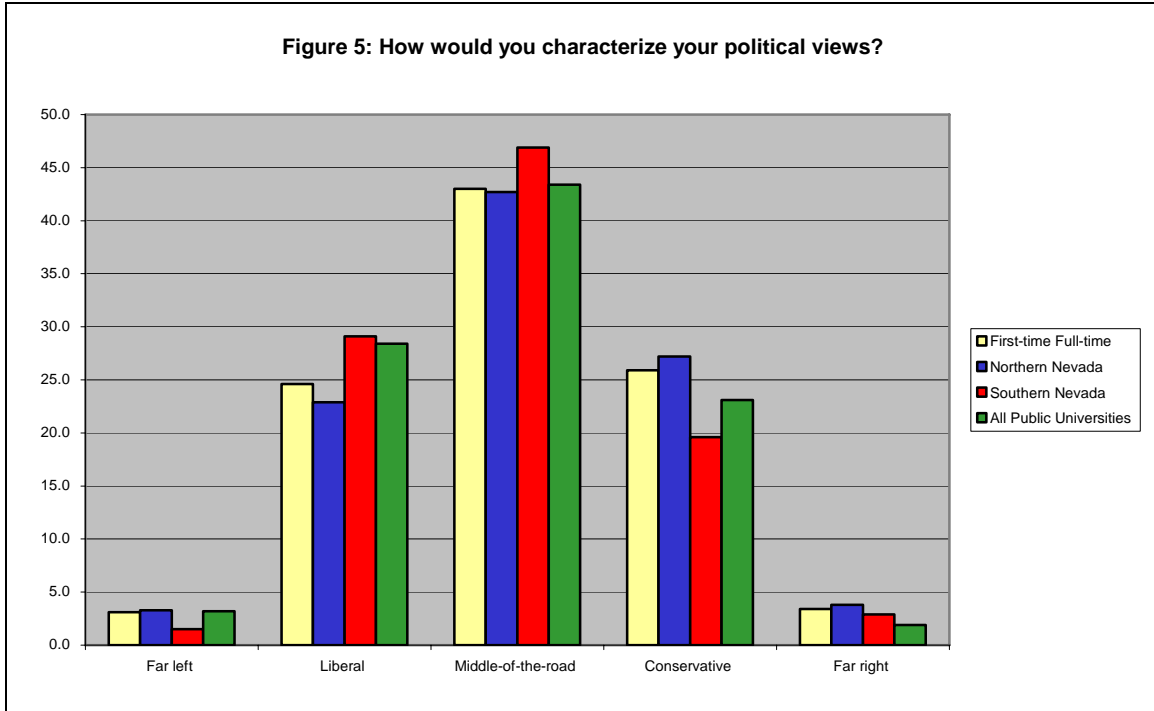
Northern Nevada students were more likely to feel more confident about the following traits than Southern Nevada students:

- Artistic Ability (+5%)
- Computer skills (+5%)
- Emotional Health (+5%)
- Physical Health (+6%)
- Self-confidence (intellectual) (+4%)
- Self-confidence (social) (+7%)

Southern Nevada students were more likely to feel more confident about the following traits than Northern Nevada students:

- Academic ability (+8%)
- Drive to achieve (+5%)
- Public speaking ability (+4%)

Political and Social Attitudes



At least 50% of Nevada students agree *strongly* or *somewhat strongly* that:

- Through hard work, everybody can succeed in American society (86%)
- The federal government is not doing enough to control environmental pollution (74%)
- A national health care plan is needed to cover everybody's medical costs (68%)
- Dissent is a critical component of the political process (66%)
- Abortion should be legal (65%)
- Same-sex couples should have the right to legal marital status (65%)
- There is too much concern in the courts for the rights of criminals (63%)
- Only volunteers should serve in the armed forces (59%)
- Grading in the high schools has become too easy (59%)
- Colleges should prohibit racist/sexist speech on campus (56%)
- Wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes than they do now (52%)

In general Nevada students are more likely to feel strongly about the following than students nationally:

- There is too much concern in the courts for the rights of criminals (+6%)
- Abortion should be legal (+8%)
- Same-sex couples should have the right to legal marital status (+6%)
- Federal military spending should be increased (+5%)
- Grading in the high schools has become too easy (+6%)
- Through hard work, everybody can succeed in American society (+7%)

In general Nevada students are not as likely to feel as strongly about the following than students nationally:

The death penalty should be abolished (-8%)

It is important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships (-6%)

Affirmative action in college admissions should be abolished (-7%)

The federal government should do more to control the sale of handguns (-7%)

Expectations

While in college, Nevada students are more likely to expect to do the following than students nationally.

Transfer to another college before graduating (+8%)

Work full time while attending college (+5%)

While in college, Nevada students are not as likely to expect to do the following than students nationally.

Be satisfied with your college (-14%)

Participate in student clubs/groups (-10%)

Socialize with someone of another racial/ethnic group (-6%)

Participate in volunteer or community service work (-6%)

Join a social fraternity or sorority (-5%)

The Average Nevada Student

The average Nevada student can be characterized as an 18 or 19 year old, Caucasian female whose parents are likely to have obtained a college degree. The average Nevada student does not expect that their parents or themselves will contribute significant financial resources to their college education. The average Nevada student expects to receive scholarships and grants and does not expect to take out any loans to finance their college education. The average Nevada student will have maintained a GPA above 3.5 and will have not required any special tutoring or remedial work while in high school. The average Nevada student chose Nevada as their first choice and did not apply to any other college. The average Nevada student came to Nevada because they were offered financial assistance and the cost of attending Nevada was low. The average Nevada student expects to eventually obtain a graduate or professional degree.

The average Nevada student frequently or occasionally used a personal computer, used the internet for research or homework, performed volunteer work, socialized with someone of another racial or ethnic group, attended a religious service, came late to class, discussed politics in class, tutored another student and drank wine or liquor.

The average Nevada student rated themselves above average in their academic ability, drive to achieve, cooperativeness, understanding of others, intellectual self-confidence, leadership ability, creativity, physical health, self-understanding, and emotional health.

The average Nevada student feels strongly that through hard work, everybody can succeed in American society, the federal government is not doing enough to control environmental pollution, a national health care plan is needed to cover everybody's medical costs, dissent is a critical component of the political process, abortion should be legal, same-sex couples should have the right to legal marital status, there is too much concern in the courts for the rights of criminals, only volunteers should serve in the armed forces, grading in the high schools has become too easy, colleges should prohibit racist/sexist speech on campus, and wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes than they do now.

Other Interesting Tidbits

Nevada students are more likely to come from families where the parents are either divorced or separated. Southern Nevada students are almost twice as likely to come from these families as a student elsewhere.

Top 3 reported parental occupations are as follows, for fathers, 1) business, 2) engineer, and 3) skilled trade, and for mothers, 1) business, 2) nurse, and 3) homemaker.

Over twenty-five percent (25%) of parents and students are Roman Catholic while about another twenty-five percent (25%) of parents and thirty percent (30%) of students reported having no religion.

Fifty percent (50%) of Northern Nevada students are planning to live with family or other relatives while 85% of Southern Nevada students are planning to live in the residence halls compared to only 30% of Northern Nevada students.

Northern Nevada students are more likely to expect to get a job to help pay for college (55%) than students nationally (47%).

Nevada students are more than twice as likely to expect to transfer to another institution before graduating (13%) than students nationally (5%).

Nevada students are less likely to expect to be satisfied with their college (40%) than students nationally (54%).

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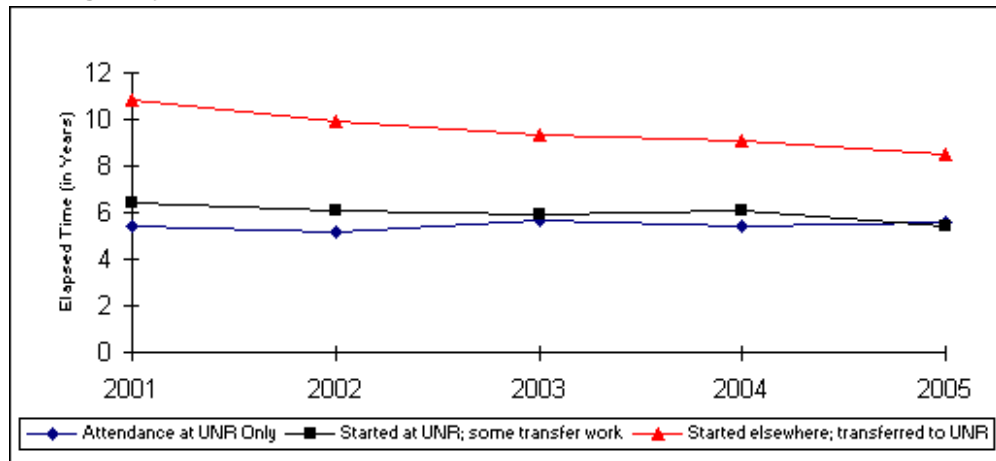
Figure 4: What is the highest academic degree that you intend to obtain at any college?

Figure 5: How would you characterize your political views?

**TIME TAKEN TO ATTAIN THE BACCALAUREATE
GRADUATING CLASSES, MEAN YEARS TO GRADUATION**

NOTE: THIS IS NOT A GRADUATION RATE.

The following data was generated based on approximately half of the number of people receiving bachelor degrees from the University of Nevada, Reno in May of the given year.



Year of Graduation :	<u>2001</u> (N=383)	<u>2002</u> (N=379)	<u>2003</u> (N=436)	<u>2004</u> (N=485)	<u>2005</u> (N=477)
----Average Elapsed Time* to Degree, in Years----					
	5.4	5.2	5.7	5.4	5.6

Coursework Pattern

Attendance at UNR Only

Started at UNR;
Some Transfer Work

6.4	6.1	5.9	6.1	5.4
10.8	9.9	9.3	9.1	8.5
4.8	4.2	4.5	4.3	4.3

Started Elsewhere;
Transferred to UNR

*Time from transfer-in date
to graduation*

* Elapsed Time = time from 1st college coursework to graduation, whether or not enrolled

(may include "stop-out" years).

Percentage of graduates that:

Attended UNR Only

Started at UNR and h
Some Transfer Work

Started Elsewhere and
Transferred to UNR

False

---- Percent of N ----

17%	15%	18%	15%	14%
31%	39%	27%	40%	34%
52%	47%	55%	45%	52%

N (sample size) = approximately one-half of the number of people receiving bachelor's degrees from the University of Nevada, Reno in May of the given year.

Source: Student Information System

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