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CIRP Freshman Survey 2008

Compared to Peers, Loyola Freshmen Are Less Likely to Expect to Like Their School, But Have Higher Professional Aspirations

Prepared by the Office of Institutional Research

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The Freshman Survey, conducted yearly by the Cooperative Institutional Research Program of the Higher Education Research Institute, is administered to incoming college freshmen at a wide range of institutions. The survey includes questions in a number of areas, including student characteristics, plans, values and attitudes, self-concept, and goals. It is intended to provide a comprehensive picture of each year's incoming freshman class.

The Freshman Survey has been administered at Loyola every year since 1990. This report compares results for Loyola's 2008 incoming freshman class and that of three peer groups of institutions that participated in the 2008 Freshman Survey.¹ The first group comprises a group of 12 institutions that Loyola considers either equivalent peers or aspirational peers. The second group consists of nine other Jesuit institutions. The third group includes all private universities.

The comparison group most relevant to Loyola differs by item. In the academic area, Loyola is most concerned about its position relative to the selected peer group. On items related to religion and values, it matters more how Loyola compares to other Jesuit institutions. The group containing all private universities is less relevant, but still useful as a benchmark.

Key Findings

Student characteristics

- Students in Loyola's incoming freshman class were slightly more likely to be over 18 years of age than were those in the comparison groups (see Table 1).
- A higher percentage of freshmen identified as white at Loyola than at selected peer institutions or private universities in general. Institutions in the comparison groups had approximately twice the number of blacks as Loyola, although the percentage in all groups was low (3% for Loyola vs. an average of about 7% for the other comparison groups).

¹ Some institutions are included in both the selected peer and the Jesuit groups; all institutions in those groups are also included in the private universities group. See Appendix 1 for composition of selected peer and Jesuit comparison groups.

- Loyola students were less likely to be coming from over 500 miles away (19%), especially compared to selected peers and other private universities (31% and 33%, respectively).
- Only about half of incoming Loyola freshmen had applied to more than three schools, compared to two thirds to three quarters of freshmen in the comparison groups.
- Three quarters of Loyola freshmen said they had been accepted to their school of first choice, 10 percentage points more than freshmen at selected peer institutions (see Figure 1). Likewise, about 62% of students said that Loyola was their first choice, while only 51% of selected peer institution students said so about their own institutions (see Figure 2).
- Almost one in five Loyola freshmen said they would probably major in biology, more than any other comparison group, especially that of selected peers (9%).
- Loyola students were also most likely to report that they intended to get a doctoral or professional degree (50%), especially compared to those at other Jesuit schools (40%)

Reasons for attending Loyola

- Freshmen at Loyola and those at other Jesuit schools were less likely to say, relative to the other two groups, that magazine rankings influenced very much their choice of school to attend (24% and 25%, compared to 31% and 32%; see Figure 3).
- Students at Loyola were more likely to cite a desire to live close to home as a very important reason for coming to Loyola (24%), especially compared to those at other private universities (12%; see Figure 4).
- Along with those at other Jesuit institutions, not surprisingly, Loyola freshmen were more likely to cite the institution's religious affiliation (18% and 20%, respectively) than freshmen at selected peer (12%) or private universities (10%; see Figure 5).

Financial situation

- Loyola freshmen were less likely (46%) than those in the comparison groups to say that their parents' gross income was at least \$100,000, especially relative to selected peers (55%) and other private universities (57%).

- Incoming Loyola freshmen were more likely than freshmen in the selected peer group or at private universities in general to report that they would not be contributing any of their own resources² (70% vs. 59% and 62%; see Figure 6), and less likely to be receiving grants/scholarships to finance their first year expenses (83% vs. 72% and 73%; see Figure 7).
- They were more likely than freshmen in the comparison groups to be financing their first year with loans of at least \$10,000 (29% vs. an average of about 16%; see Figure 8).
- Fewer freshmen at Loyola than in the comparison groups reported that they had no concerns about paying for their college education (29% vs. an average of about 39%; see Figure 9).

Activities during past year

- More Loyola students said they had been frequently bored in class during the last year (42%), compared to students at other Jesuit schools (33%).
- Loyola freshmen were slightly more likely to report that they had frequently felt overwhelmed by all they had to do (35%) compared to those in the comparison groups (average of about 28%).
- About two fifths of Loyola's incoming freshmen reported at least occasionally drinking beer, compared to almost half of those at selected peer institutions.
- Loyola freshmen were less likely to report that they at least occasionally did community service as part of class, compared to those at other Jesuit schools (60% vs. 71%).
- Incoming freshmen at Loyola were more likely to have worked at least 11 hours a week (39%), compared to those in the comparison groups (average about 27%).

Self-ratings

- Loyola freshmen were less likely to rate themselves as above average (compared to others of the same age) in mathematical ability (44% vs. an average of about 59%), but slightly more likely to do so in writing ability (63% vs. an average of about 58%).

Expectations for college years

- Incoming Loyola freshmen were more likely to say that there was a very good chance that they would get a job to help pay for college expenses, especially compared to those in the selected peer group and those at other private universities (55% v. 41% and 45%). Although the percentage was small (8.3%), Loyola freshmen were about twice as likely to expect to work full time.
- Students at other private universities were more likely to report a very good chance that they would be

² "Own resources" refers to the student only; family resources are not included.

satisfied with their college than were Loyola freshmen (67% v. 58%).

Life goals

- Loyola freshmen were more likely than those at other Jesuit institutions to say that an essential or very important goal for them was obtaining recognition from colleagues for contributions to their field (69% vs. 58%), and making a theoretical contribution to science (28% vs. 20%).
- Incoming Loyola freshmen were more likely than peers in any of the comparison groups to see influencing social values and helping to promote racial understanding as very important or essential goals.
- They were less likely than freshmen at the selected peer institutions to see as very important or essential becoming successful in a business of their own (37% vs. 47%).

Political orientation and sociopolitical views

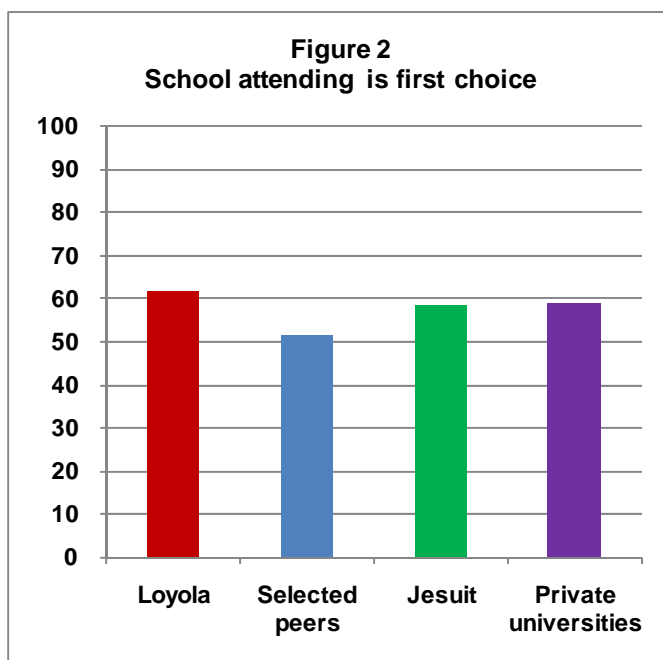
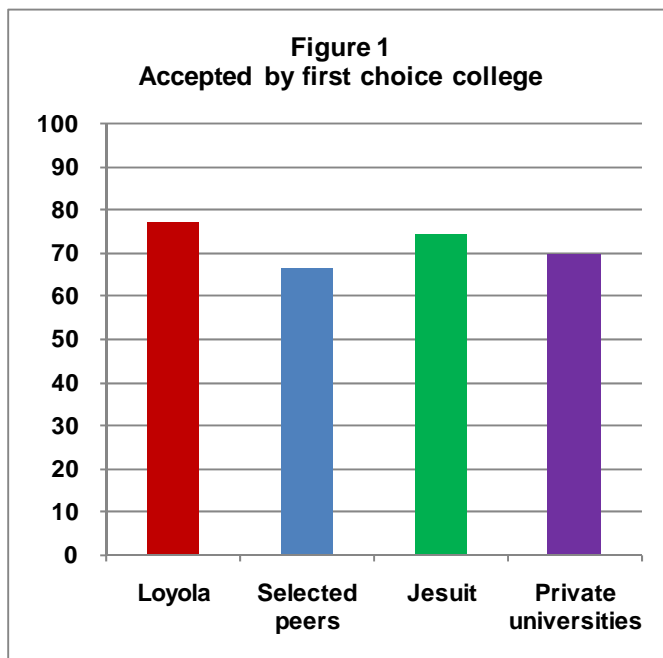
- A higher percentage of incoming freshmen at Loyola consider themselves to be liberal or far left than do those at Loyola's Jesuit peers (47% vs. 38%).
- Loyola freshmen were less likely to agree, compared to those at other private universities, that dissent is a critical component of the political process (64% vs. 74%).
- Loyola freshmen were less likely than those of any of the comparison groups to agree that colleges have the right to ban extreme speakers from campus (30% vs. an average of about 40%).

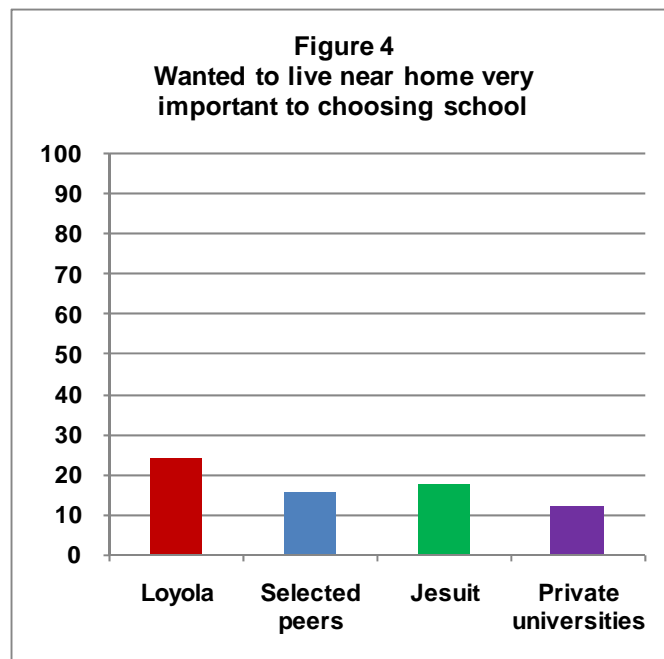
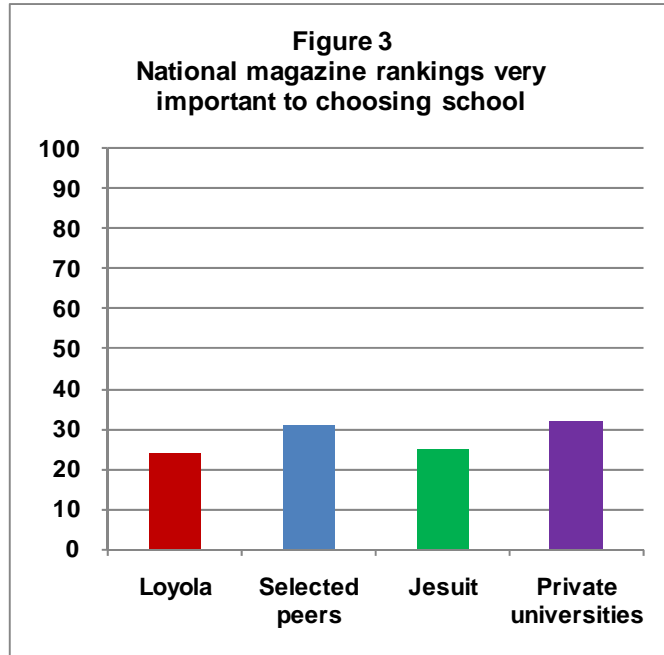
Implications

- Students at Loyola generally seem to have more disadvantageous financial situations, especially in terms of paying for their first year of college.
 - Their parents are less likely to earn at least \$100,000.
 - They were less likely to receive grants/scholarships totaling more than \$10,000.
 - They were more likely to be taking out at least \$10,000 in loans.
 - They were less likely to have no concerns about paying for their education.
 - They were more likely to expect to get a job to cover college expenses, as well as more likely to expect to work full time (although absolute percentages were low).
- There is some evidence that Loyola freshmen have higher professional expectations than students in at least some of the comparison groups.

- They are more likely to plan to get a doctoral or professional degree.
- They were more likely to as very important or essential the goals of obtaining recognition in their professional field and making a theoretical contribution to science.

- The percentage of Loyola freshmen who were entering their first choice school was higher than for their peers. The percentage who expected to be satisfied at their institution, however, was lower. This suggests that these Loyola freshmen had slightly lower expectations of college in general than did freshmen at the comparison group schools.





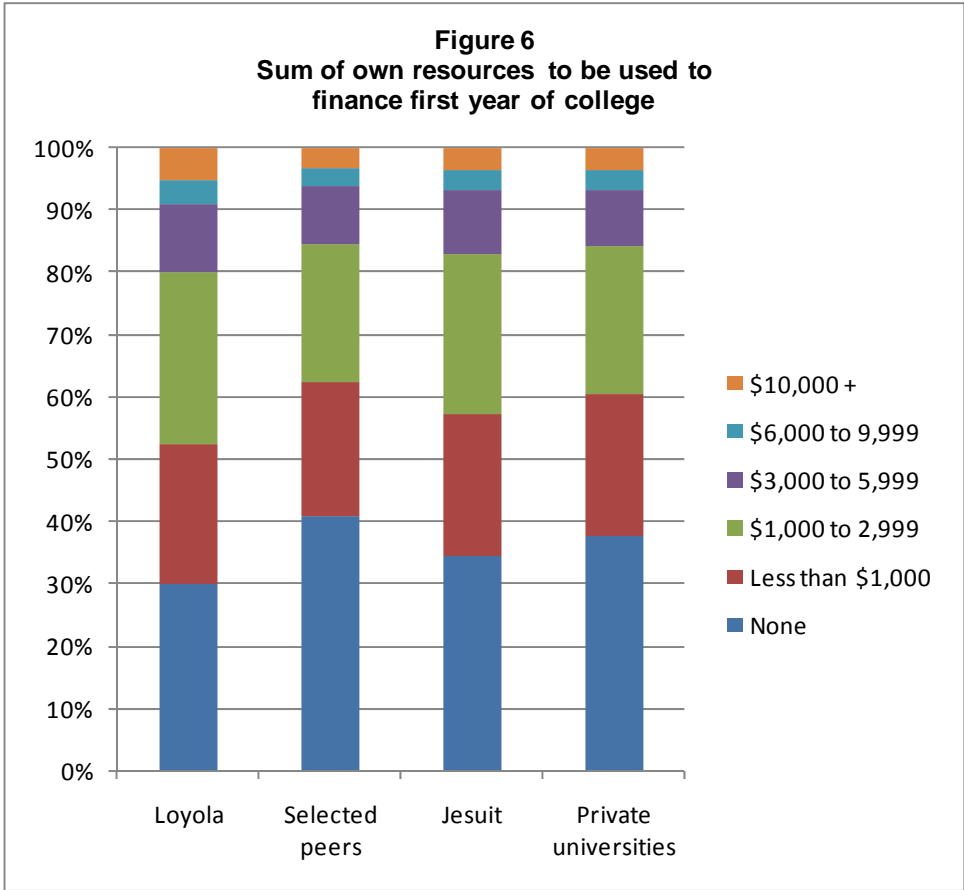
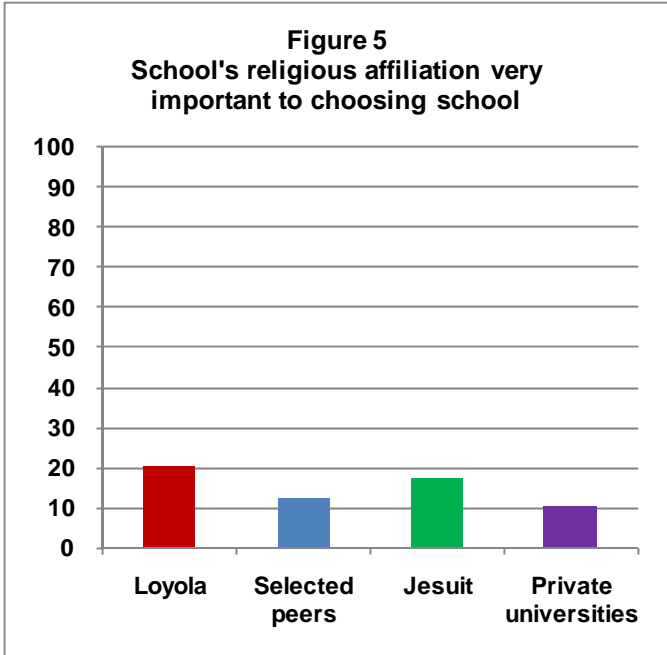


Figure 7
Sum of grants/scholarships to be used to finance first year of college

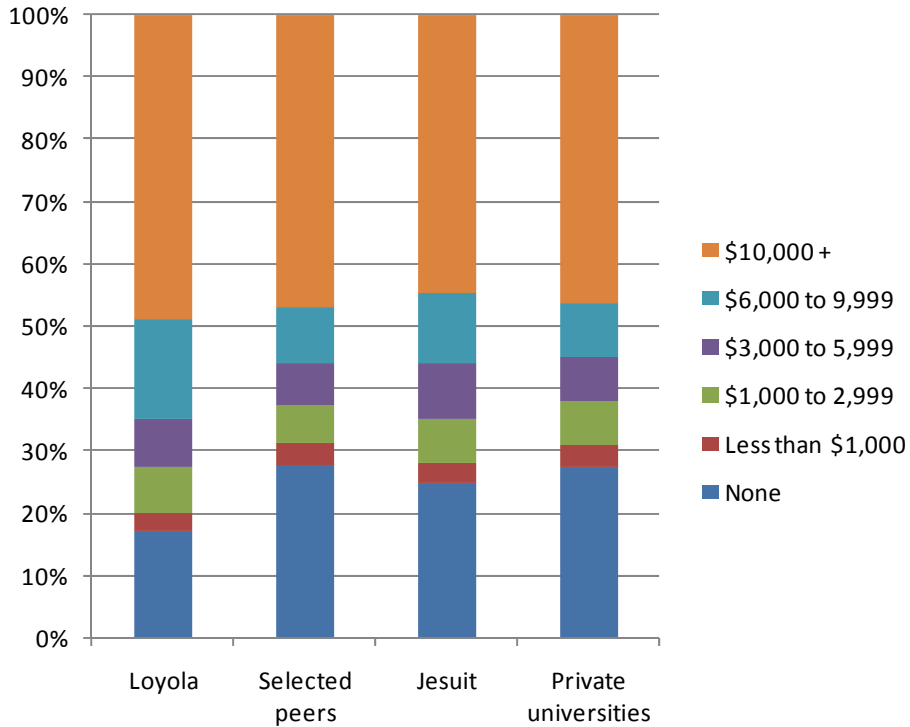


Figure 8
Sum of loans to be used to finance first year of college

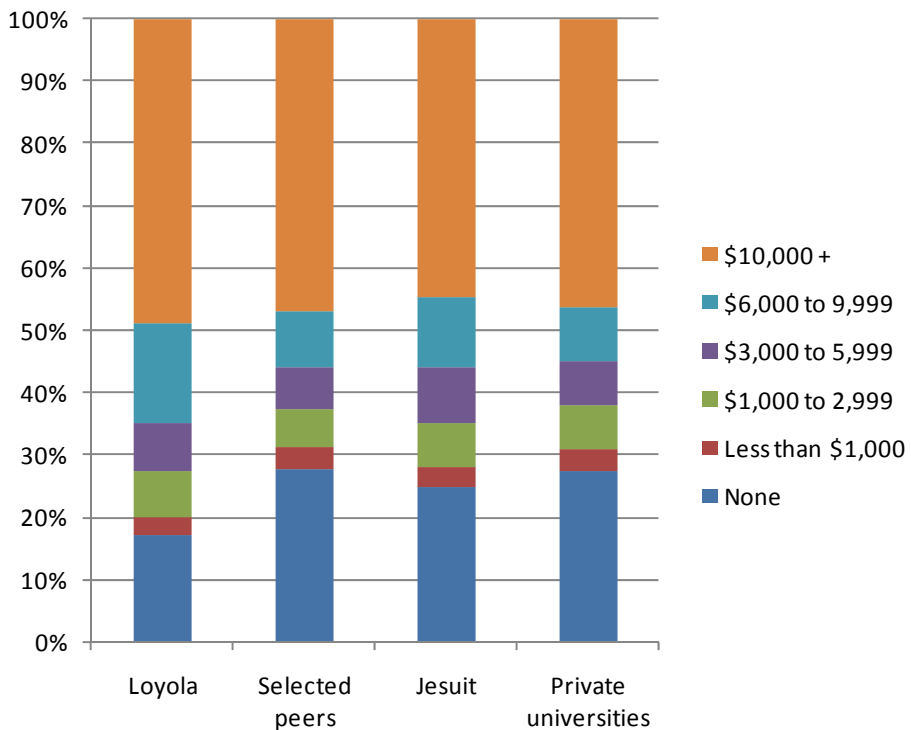


Figure 9
Concern about ability to finance
college education

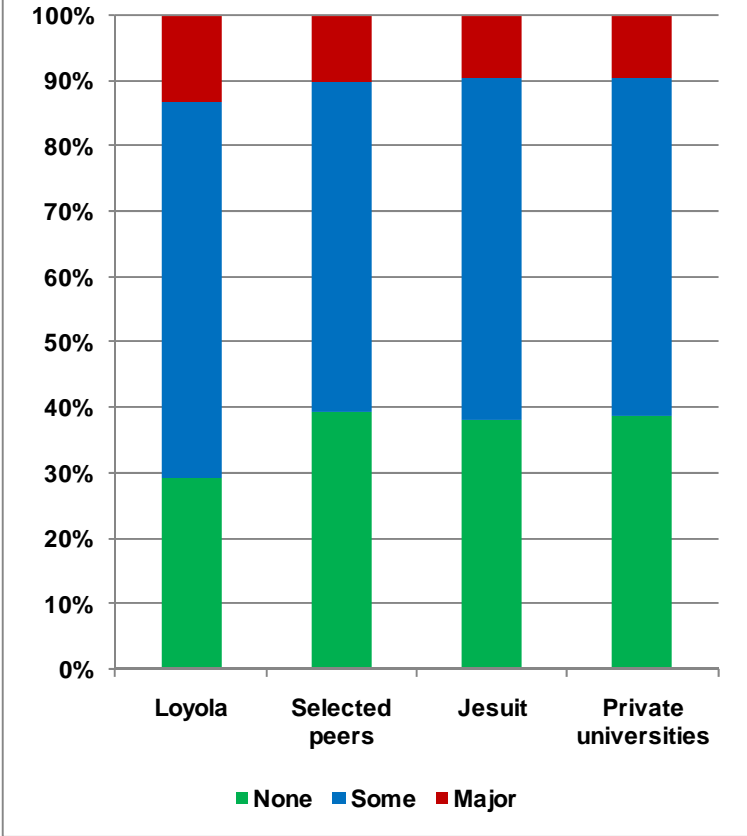


Table 1				
CIRP Freshman Survey Results for Loyola and Peer Groups				
	Loyola	Selected peers	Jesuit	Private universities
Age 19 or older	32.6	24.1	26.1	26.7
Race/ethnicity				
White/Caucasian	77.5	69.6	78.6	70.6
African American/Black	3.4	7.8	6.3	6.6
Loyola over 500 miles from permanent home	19.0	31.3	24.9	33.0
Applied to at least 4 schools	50.8	74.2	66.3	68.8
Accepted by school of first choice	76.8	66.1	74.0	69.6
Loyola was first choice	61.6	51.2	58.6	59.0
Probable major: Biological Science	18.6	8.8	10.6	11.2
Highest intended degree: Doctoral or professional	50.2	43.5	39.8	45.9
Very important reasons for choosing Loyola				
Rankings in national magazines	24.0	31.2	25.1	31.9
I wanted to live near home	23.8	15.4	17.3	12.1
I was attracted by religious affiliation/orientation of Loyola	20.3	12.4	17.7	10.3
Best estimate of parents' pre-tax income				
\$100,000 or more	45.5	54.6	50.6	56.6
Sources for covering first year educational expenses				
My own resources				
None	30.0	40.9	34.5	37.7
\$10,000 +	5.0	3.3	3.5	3.6
Aid which need <u>not</u> be repaid				
None	16.9	27.8	24.6	27.3
\$10,000 +	48.9	46.9	44.8	46.4
Aid which <u>must</u> be repaid				
None	35.5	51.0	46.7	51.8
\$10,000 +	29.0	15.7	14.7	16.4
Concern about ability to finance college education				
None	29.4	39.6	38.3	38.9
Some	57.5	50.2	52.1	51.5
Major	13.0	10.2	9.6	9.6
Activities during the past year				
Frequently was bored in class	41.5	38.7	32.9	38.1
Frequently felt overwhelmed by all I had to do	35.1	27.4	27.7	28.0
At least occasionally drank beer	39.5	47.7	43.8	42.0
At least occasionally performed community service as part of class	60.0	65.8	70.7	62.7
Time spent in typical week working (for pay) during last year				
11 or more hours	38.6	28.6	31.9	26.1
Self-rating "above average"				
Writing ability	63.2	57.5	56.0	58.9
Mathematical ability	44.4	54.4	48.6	61.8
Expectations (very good chance)				
Be satisfied with your college	58.0	60.3	64.8	66.7
Get a job to help pay for college expenses	55.1	41.4	47.6	44.8
Work full-time while attending college	8.3	4.7	4.5	4.0

Table 1, continued				
CIRP Freshman Survey Results for Loyola and Peer Groups				
	Loyola	Selected peers	Jesuit	Private universities
Objectives (essential or very important)				
Obtaining recognition from colleagues for contributions to field	66.8	61.9	57.8	62.0
Influencing social values	57.5	48.1	48.6	45.5
Helping to promote racial understanding	48.3	41.2	40.4	40.1
Becoming successful in a business of my own	36.8	47.4	42.7	42.5
Making a theoretical contribution to science	29.7	23.8	19.9	26.1
Political orientation				
Liberal or far left	46.6	40.3	37.6	42.4
Middle-of-the-road	36.7	39.1	41.0	37.6
Conservative or far right	16.7	20.6	21.4	20.0
Social and political views (agree strongly or somewhat)				
Dissent is a critical component of the political process	64.1	70.1	67.5	73.8
Colleges have the right to ban extreme speakers from campus	30.4	40.1	40.9	40.7
Number of Respondents	2,129	10,446	8,454	43,322

Source: The Freshman Survey 2008

Appendix 1
Institutions in Comparison Groups

Selected Peer Institutions

Loyola University-New Orleans
Boston College
Creighton University
Saint Peter's College
Canisius College
Fordham University
Le Moyne College
John Carroll University
Gonzaga University
Seattle University
Wheeling Jesuit University
Loyola Marymount University

Other Jesuit Institutions

Tulane University
Boston College
Creighton University
Fordham University
Saint John's University-Queens
John Carroll University
Carnegie-Mellon University
Southern Methodist University
Loyola Marymount University