



# ORAP Research Bulletin

Office of Research, Assessment & Planning  
Adelphi University

November 2006

## Results of the 2006 Your First College Year (YFCY) Survey

In the spring of 2006, Adelphi participated in the Your First College Year (YFCY) survey, administered to incoming freshmen by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA. HERI also administers the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) survey in which Adelphi has participated for many years. The YFCY survey is designed to help institutions evaluate and improve the experiences of first-year students. Moreover, when the YFCY is used in conjunction with the CIRP, a comparative longitudinal assessment of first-year students at both the beginning and end of their freshman year can be undertaken.<sup>1</sup>

\*\*\*\*\*

### How were Adelphi freshmen different from their peers?

Adelphi freshmen were distinct from their national counterparts on a number of YFCY survey items. Entering freshmen at Adelphi have better study habits than their peers, especially regarding their course assignments and class attendance.

|  | Adelphi | Private universities | All univs./ 4 yr. colleges |
|--|---------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Percent indicating that they turned course assignments in late:                | 23%     | 33%                  | 38%                        |
| Percent who turned in course assignments that did not reflect their best work: | 69%     | 80%                  | 80%                        |
| Percent reporting that they had skipped class:                                 | 54%     | 74%                  | 71%                        |

One of the most notable differences between Adelphi's respondents and their national counterparts concerns reporting a campus atmosphere which encourages and promotes diversity. These results are strengthened by similar findings in the NSSE surveys which also compare the experiences of Adelphi freshmen to their peers nationally.

<sup>1</sup> Despite a low response rate (12%) and questions about the representativeness of the respondents, the results remain important indicators of students' experiences in their first year of college and changes in initial expectations and attitudes students undergo in their first year of college.

|   | Adelphi | Private universities | All universities/<br>4 yr. colleges |
|---|---------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Percent who frequently socialized with someone of another racial/ethnic group:  | 78%     | 69%                  | 61%                                 |
| Percent who often/very often had meaningful and honest discussions about racial/ethnic relations:                                 | 41%     | 39%                  | 31%                                 |
| Percent who often/very often shared personal feelings and problems with students from a racial/ethnic group other than their own: | 50%     | 47%                  | 38%                                 |
| Percent who are satisfied/very satisfied with respect for the expression of diverse beliefs                                       | 81%     | 67%                  | 66%                                 |
| Percent indicating they agree/strongly agree that there is a lot of racial tension on this campus                                 | 10%     | 23%                  | 20%                                 |

Adelphi's 2005 freshmen also spent less time drinking and "partying" than their peers.

|  | Adelphi | Private universities | All universities/<br>4 yr. colleges |
|--|---------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Percent reporting having had five or more alcoholic drinks in a row at least once in the previous two weeks:                           | 19%     | 46%                  | 44%                                 |
| Percent who spent two or fewer hours per week partying (combination of none, less than one hour, and 1-2 hours) during a typical week: | 65%     | 44%                  | 51%                                 |

Freshmen in the three groups also differed regarding the time spent working and the impact of their job responsibilities on their schoolwork. It is clear that the magnitude of off campus responsibilities of Adelphi freshmen interfered with their schoolwork.

|  | Adelphi | All private universities | All universities/<br>4 yr. colleges |
|--|---------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Percent who worked six or more hours a week off campus:                              | 45%     | 10%                      | 20%                                 |
| Percent indicating that their job responsibilities interfered with their schoolwork: | 58%     | 35%                      | 36%                                 |

## What changes occurred over the first year of college?

Students' responses when entering college as freshmen in fall 2005 were compared with their responses in spring 2006, after having been enrolled in college for more than one semester. Changes in attitudes and behaviors over time were evident in several areas.

One of the noteworthy changes concerned alcohol consumption which declined among Adelphi students while increasing among their national counterparts.

| Students reporting that in the last year they: | Adelphi |      |      | Private Universities |      |      | All Univs./4yr. Colls. |      |      |
|--|---------|------|------|----------------------|------|------|------------------------|------|------|
|  | 2005    | 2006 | Diff | 2005                 | 2006 | Diff | 2005                   | 2006 | Diff |
| • drank beer                                   | 47.1    | 39.2 | -7.9 | 45.3                 | 63.4 | 18.1 | 45.3                   | 59.6 | 14.3 |
| • drank wine or liquor                         | 60.8    | 56.9 | -3.9 | 51.0                 | 67.2 | 16.2 | 52.1                   | 65.5 | 13.4 |

Also, respondents at Adelphi exhibited more engagement with their academic environment after enrolling in college while their peers exhibited less engagement. Not all of the changes were positive, though. For example, performing community service as part of class declined significantly among all groups, as did performing volunteer work.

| Students reporting that in the last year they: | Adelphi |      |       | Private Universities |      |       | All Univs./4yr. Colls. |      |       |
|--|---------|------|-------|----------------------|------|-------|------------------------|------|-------|
|  | 2005    | 2006 | Diff  | 2005                 | 2006 | Diff  | 2005                   | 2006 | Diff  |
| • felt bored in class                          | 39.2    | 33.3 | -5.9  | 36.2                 | 42.4 | 6.2   | 37.5                   | 41.9 | 4.4   |
| • came to class late                           | 64.0    | 56.0 | -8.0  | 57.0                 | 65.1 | 8.1   | 57.4                   | 61.6 | 4.2   |
| • performed community service as part of class | 51.0    | 23.5 | -27.5 | 61.0                 | 24.5 | -36.5 | 56.5                   | 32.2 | -24.3 |
| • performed volunteer work                     | 92.2    | 72.5 | -19.7 | 93.9                 | 69.0 | -24.9 | 86.9                   | 62.5 | -24.4 |

## How satisfied are Adelphi students?

In 2005, only 41% of the Adelphi freshmen surveyed for the 2005 CIRP *expected* to be satisfied with their college. This was much lower than the national average. However, on an encouraging note, the 2006 YFCY indicated that the proportion of Adelphi freshmen expressing overall satisfaction with their college experience was comparable to that of their national counterparts. In addition, more than three-quarters of the YFCY Adelphi respondents *have been* satisfied with Adelphi since starting here. The level of satisfaction with Adelphi is similar to, or higher than, that at its national peer institutions.

| 2005 CIRP Survey  | Adelphi | Private universities | All univs./4yr. colleges |
|---|---------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Percent believing there is a "very good chance" that they will be satisfied with their college:   | 41%     | 63%                  | 52%                      |
| 2006 YFCY Survey  |         |                      |                          |
| Percent noting they are satisfied/very satisfied with [their] overall college experience:         | 73%     | 77%                  | 73%                      |
| Percent indicating that, since entering this college, they have been satisfied with this college: | 82%     | 76%                  | 74%                      |

This ORAP Research Bulletin presents highlights from the full report located on ORAP's website.

**For additional information on this Research Bulletin topic or other ORAP projects and reports, contact:** The Office of Research, Assessment and Planning, Levermore Hall, Rm. 307, Adelphi University, Garden City, NY 11530. Phone: 516.877.3233 Fax: 516.877.3237  
**Or visit our Web site:** <http://intranet.adelphi.edu/orap/>