

**Entering Student Survey 2009**  
**Special Report Prepared for the Honors College**  
**With additional information on GPA students**

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## Introduction

This report presents summary data in table form on the Entering Student Survey (ESS), which was administered to new freshmen undergraduate students of the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) during New Student Orientation in the summer 2009. The responses are disaggregated to represent the students who were enrolled in the Honors College in Fall 2009 (N=209) and all others (N=2095). A subset of the Honors College respondents are the students who were admitted as GPPA students (N=66). To reiterate, the GPPA students represented in the report are also part of the Honors College numbers.

The results are reported in 12 tables in 5 sections on pages 4 through 10 of this report. The sections are: Background Characteristics; Academic Preparation and High School Behavior; College Attendance and Choice; Self-rated Abilities and Skills; and Goals and Aspirations for College and Beyond.

## Survey Instrument

The Entering Student Survey is a survey instrument developed by UIC administrators with the advice and input of the University Data Analysis Group (UDAG). The survey was initially administered during the summer 2008. The 2009 administration was a slightly expanded survey. It is a two-page paper and pencil instrument. It includes 113 quantitative items distributed as follow:

- 8 background information about students
- 32 items related to student pre-disposition and self-assessment of motivation
- 31 items on the college choice and decision
- 42 items related to student aspirations and future plans

The survey includes one open-ended question on the native language of students who indicate that English is not their first language. In addition, the survey requests student University Identification Number (UIN). Use of the UIN allows us to report demographic characteristics of the respondents.

## Methodology

The participants were students admitted to UIC as new freshmen who attended one of 14 summer orientation sessions held on the UIC campus during June, July and August 2009. Of the 3182 new freshmen students who participated in summer orientation, 2304 completed the ESS. This represents 73% of the new freshman cohort. Of the students who completed the survey, 2089 provided a UIN number (90% of the completers). The table below details the number of survey participants enrolled in the Honors College and the number of GPPA students who participated compared with the entering cohort totals for each group.

<b>Participants and Enrollment</b>	Survey Participants *	New Freshman Enrollment	% of Enr. reflected in Participants
Honors College	209	302	69%
NonHonors	2095	2845	
Total	2304	3147	73%
GPPA	66	86	77%

\*NonHonors number includes students who did not provide an UIN.

A caveat to the reader: GPPA enrollment is less than 100. While 77% of the GPPA freshmen participated in the survey, the total number is only 66 students. The percentages reported in the tables should be interpreted with caution.

## Highlights

### Background Characteristics:

- The Honors students and the GPPA students in many ways reflect similar background to other new freshmen – such as the proportion of students who express major concern about their ability to finance their college education – 20.1% of the non-Honors compared with 23.8% and 18.2% of the Honors and GPPA students respectively.
- The proportion that report U.S. citizenship and native English speakers is similar – with GPPA students reporting English as their first language a bit more frequently (85% for GPPA compared to 78% and 75% for Honors and non-Honors students), but still less than the national figure at four-year universities which was 89% in 2006 (source: *The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 2006*).
- The most dramatic difference in background is the level of parental education. 28% of non-Honors respondents indicate that both (or the only parent) held a college degree; while this figure is 47% for Honors students and 55% for GPPA students.

### Academic Preparation and High School Behaviors

- As would be expected, a higher percentage of Honors and GPPA students enrolled in more Advance Placement courses and took more Advance Placement exams than non-Honors students
- Again, not unexpectedly, more non-Honors students reported that they had assistance in Math, Science and/or Writing in high school and anticipate needing assistance in college than their Honors and GPPA counterparts.
- When reporting time allocation during their last year of high school, a much higher percentage of the Honors and GPPA students reported that they studied/did homework 6 hours or more in a typical week (28% non-Honors; 60% Honors; 67% GPPA).
- On the other hand, close to one-half of the non-Honors students worked at least 6 hours per week; while this was less than one-third for the Honors and GPPA students.
- While about 20% of each group reported spending at least 6 hours each week participating in online social networking; the item on 'Texting' revealed some differences -- with 34% of the non-Honors compared with 26% and 14% of the Honors and GPPA groups texting at least 6 hours per week.

### College Attendance and Choice

- Of the 12 factors about college attendance and the 19 factors about the decision to attend UIC, students across the groups were similarly influenced by many of the factors with a few notably differences.

- Fully one-half of the non-Honors students indicate that ‘Improving reading and study skills’ was a very important factor in the decision to attend college in contrast to 39% of the Honors students.
- A higher proportion of Honors (and GPPA) students considered the preparation for graduate or professional school as very important (89% Honors; 88% GPPA; and 71% non-Honors).
- About 37% of the non-Honors students indicated that ‘Wanting to live near home’ was a very important factor influencing their decision to attend UIC; in contrast to just 29% of Honors student (20% of GPPA).

#### Self Rated Abilities and Skills

- Not surprisingly, Honors (and GPPA) students come to UIC more confident. Most dramatic differences were ‘Academic Ability’ (Honors 51% compared to 14% for non-Honors); and ‘Drive to Achieve’ (63% Honors; 36% non-Honors).

#### Goals and Aspirations for College and Beyond

- Overall Honors and GPPA students were more likely to anticipate ‘Graduating with Honors’; ‘Earning at least a ‘B’ average’; ‘Being satisfied with college’; ‘Communicating with professors regularly’; and ‘Participating in student clubs/groups’ while in college.
- However, aspirations for beyond college, (such as ‘Influencing the political structure’; ‘Holding administrative responsibilities for others’; ‘Being recognized for contributions to my field’ and ‘Involved in cleaning up the environment’) revealed more similar responses across the groups.

## **Explanation of Tables**

### **Section 1: Background Characteristics**

This section presents data on the characteristics and background of respondents ranging parents' level of education, concern about financing college, religion, citizenship and first language. Parent education is a recalculated variable from questions about highest level of schooling for father and mother separately.

### **Section 2: Academic Preparation and High School Behavior**

The tables in this section present information on students' academic preparation based on Advanced Placement course enrollment and test participation, as well as use of tutoring in specific disciplines. This section also included information on self-reported high school activities. Time spent on various activities ranging from studying, working to time spent texting provides a context for how students managed their time during the last year of high school. The figures reflect the proportion of students who reported spending 6 hours or more each week doing an activity. (Response categories ranged from: no time; less than 2 hours; 3 to 5 hours; 6 to 10 hours; and more than 10 hours.)

### **Section 3: Decisions about College Attendance**

Tables in this section display the results of two questions related to the college choice and decision to attend UIC.

Students were asked to indicate the importance of various factors in the decision to attend college. Reasons listed ranged from: 'To get training for a specific career' to 'To gain a general education and appreciate of ideas'. In regard to the decision to attend UIC, students were asked to rate the importance of various factors in the decision to attend UIC; factors ranged from: 'A relative wanted me to come to UIC' to 'Not offered aid by my first choice'. Response categories for both variables were: 1) Very important; 2) Somewhat important; and 3) Not important.

### **Section 4: Self Rated Abilities and Skills**

Students were asked to rate themselves compared to the average person their age on 18 traits associated with aspects of college preparation and motivation such as mathematical ability, self-understanding, and self confidence and drive to achieve. The responses range from: 1=*highest 10%*; 2=*above average*; 3=*average*; 4=*below average*; and 5=*lowest 10%*.

### **Section 5: Plans, Goals, and Aspirations**

The tables detail responses to two questions regarding anticipated behaviors and activities during college in the question: "What is your best guess as to the chance you will:" followed by a list of 21 responses ranging from change major fields, to participate in student clubs/groups. A four level response scale is provided: 1) Very good chance; 2) some chance; 3) Very little chance; and 4) No chance.

Students are also asked to indicate the value placed on a range of 'life goals' ranging from 'Becoming an authority in my field' to 'Integrating spirituality into my life'. Response categories are: 1=Essential; 2=Very Important; 3=Somewhat Important; and 4=Not Important.

## Section 1: Background Characteristics

<b>Citizenship &amp; Language</b>	<b>NonHonors</b>	<b>Honors</b>	<b>GPPA</b>
<b>English is native language?</b>	74.7%	77.9%	84.8%
<b>Citizenship Status:</b>			
U.S. Citizen	91.8%	88.0%	90.8%
Perm Resident/Green Card	5.9%	8.2%	9.1%
Neither	2.3%	3.8%	0.0%

<b>Religious Affiliation</b>			
<b>Which best describes your religious affiliation?:</b>			
	<b>NonHonors</b>	<b>Honors</b>	<b>GPPA</b>
Buddhist	2.0%	1.9%	1.5%
Hindu	3.1%	13.5%	21.5%
Jewish	1.8%	1.0%	0.0%
Muslim	6.1%	9.6%	9.2%
Protestant Christian	14.1%	16.8%	24.6%
Roman Catholic	41.6%	34.6%	30.8%
Other Religion	10.1%	8.2%	4.6%
No Affiliation	21.2%	14.4%	7.7%

<b>Parental Education</b>			
	<b>NonHonors</b>	<b>Honors</b>	<b>GPPA</b>
No exposure to college	30.6%	12.4%	10.6%
Some college experience	18.7%	11.0%	9.1%
One college degree	22.6%	29.2%	25.8%
Both (or only) college degree	28.1%	47.4%	54.5%

<b>Concerns about financing college</b>			
<b>Do you have any concerns about your ability to finance your college education?</b>			
	<b>NonHonors</b>	<b>Honors</b>	<b>GPPA</b>
None (confident sufficient funds)	18.9%	19.9%	34.8%
Some (probably enough funds)	61.0%	56.3%	47.0%
Major (not sure enough funds)	20.1%	23.8%	18.2%

## Section 2: Academic Preparation and High School Behavior

<b>AP Courses and Exams</b>						
<b>How many AP courses or exams did you take in high school?</b>						
	<u>AP courses</u>			<u>AP exams</u>		
	NonHonors	Honors	GPPA	NonHonors	Honors	GPPA
None	32.3%	5.9%	8.1%	43.5%	6.7%	3.2%
1 to 2	39.8%	18.3%	11.3%	34.7%	24.1%	15.9%
3 to 5	22.6%	46.5%	35.5%	18.3%	44.6%	41.3%
6 or more	5.3%	29.2%	45.2%	3.5%	24.6%	39.7%

<b>High School Behavior</b>			
<b>During last year in high school, spent 6 hours or more during typical week:</b>			
	NonHonors	Honors	GPPA
Studying/homework	28.0%	60.4%	66.7%
Socializing with friends	59.0%	54.2%	53.9%
Talking with teachers (not in class)	4.8%	5.3%	3.0%
Exercise or sports	38.3%	37.8%	40.0%
Partying	14.1%	3.9%	9.2%
Working (for pay)	46.1%	30.5%	30.3%
Volunteer work	9.2%	16.0%	10.6%
Student clubs/groups	13.5%	27.5%	30.3%
Watching TV	17.9%	16.0%	15.1%
Reading for pleasure	9.7%	13.0%	7.6%
Online social networking	20.5%	20.8%	22.8%
Texting	34.1%	25.7%	13.6%
Prayer/meditation	4.0%	6.3%	9.1%

<b>Academic Assistance</b>						
<b>Students report that s/he has had or anticipate will need any special tutoring or help:</b>						
	<u>Had Help</u>			<u>Will need help</u>		
	NonHonors	Honors	GPPA	NonHonors	Honors	GPPA
Math	16.4%	12.4%	7.6%	24.2%	16.7%	9.1%
Science	10.5%	7.2%	6.1%	18.4%	11.5%	7.6%
Writing	12.2%	11.5%	7.6%	18.5%	9.1%	9.1%

### Section 3: College Attendance and Choice

<b>Factors in decision to attend college</b>			
<b>Proportion who cited following reasons as "Very Important" influencing decision to attend college</b>			
	<b>NonHonors</b>	<b>Honors</b>	<b>GPPA</b>
Parents wanted me to go	51.3%	52.9%	57.6%
I couldn't find a job	7.4%	5.3%	3.1%
Opportunity to get away from home	16.8%	12.1%	10.8%
To get a better job	85.6%	81.6%	85.9%
Gain gen educ and apprec of ideas	78.0%	79.4%	77.3%
Improve reading and study skills	50.1%	38.5%	31.8%
Make me more cultured	43.9%	47.6%	45.5%
To be able to make more money	73.8%	64.4%	72.3%
Learn about things that interest me	82.5%	85.2%	87.9%
Prepare for grad or prof school	70.8%	89.4%	97.0%
Mentor encouraged me	18.4%	14.9%	12.1%
Get training for specific career	80.4%	83.2%	81.8%

<b>Reasons that influenced decision to attend UIC</b>			
<b>Considered the following "Very Important"</b>			
	<b>NonHonors</b>	<b>Honors</b>	<b>GPPA</b>
Relatives wanted me to come here	12.4%	14.4%	15.2%
Teacher advised me	6.7%	5.3%	1.5%
Good academic reputation	61.0%	59.6%	47.0%
Good social reputation	32.8%	25.0%	16.7%
Racial and ethnic diversity	39.2%	39.4%	25.8%
Offered financial assistance	32.4%	26.4%	24.2%
Special educational programs	17.3%	34.8%	59.1%
Low tuition	43.4%	49.8%	45.5%
High school counselor advised me	9.8%	10.2%	7.7%
Wanted to live near home	36.8%	28.5%	19.7%
Not offered aid by 1st choice	7.1%	9.3%	6.1%
Graduates are admitted to top professional schools	48.3%	62.3%	60.6%
Grads get good jobs	62.9%	68.6%	66.7%
Not accepted elsewhere	3.1%	1.4%	0.0%
Rankings in national magazines	13.7%	13.6%	15.2%
Info from website	20.6%	14.6%	9.2%
Friends attending UIC	12.9%	6.3%	7.6%
Offered a scholarship	14.0%	18.4%	15.2%
Admitted to special program	30.1%	67.1%	98.5%



#### Section 4: Self Rated Abilities and Skills

<b>Rated self in 'Highest 10% on following traits compared with average person your age</b>			
	<b>NonHonors</b>	<b>Honors</b>	<b>GPPA</b>
Academic Ability	13.6%	51.2%	56.1%
Artistic Ability	7.5%	11.6%	4.5%
Computer skills	10.1%	12.6%	12.1%
Competitiveness	20.4%	26.1%	22.7%
Cooperativeness	32.7%	44.0%	37.9%
Creativity	18.7%	25.2%	15.2%
Drive to achieve	36.2%	63.3%	63.6%
Emotional health	26.7%	34.3%	42.4%
Initiative	19.5%	35.1%	33.3%
Leadership ability	20.2%	30.4%	27.3%
Mathematical ability	13.9%	28.2%	34.8%
Physical health	21.2%	25.1%	21.2%
Self Confidence (intellectual)	23.4%	30.7%	34.8%
Self Confidence (social)	21.6%	26.1%	24.2%
Self-understanding	23.5%	29.6%	26.2%
Spirituality	12.6%	20.3%	22.7%
Understanding of others	23.6%	35.9%	36.9%
Writing ability	10.7%	25.4%	23.1%

## Section 5: Goals and Aspirations for College and Beyond

<b>During college:</b>			
<b>Student reported there is a "Very good chance"s/he will:</b>			
	<b>NonHonors</b>	<b>Honors</b>	<b>GPPA</b>
Change major	17.0%	8.3%	3.1%
Change career choices	13.4%	4.9%	0.0%
Grad with honors	23.7%	71.1%	73.8%
Participate in student government	5.3%	8.8%	7.7%
Get job to help pay for college	60.8%	53.7%	49.2%
Work fulltime	11.6%	4.9%	3.1%
Play varsity athletics	6.4%	3.9%	1.5%
Play intramural athletics	13.7%	18.0%	15.4%
Make at least a "B" average	65.4%	87.8%	92.3%
Need extra time to complete deg	5.4%	4.4%	1.5%
Get bachelor's degree	82.4%	95.1%	95.4%
Drop out of UIC temporarily	0.5%	1.0%	0.0%
Drop out of UIC permanently	0.5%	1.0%	0.0%
Transfer to another college	3.5%	2.9%	1.5%
Be satisfied with college	55.9%	65.0%	67.7%
Participate in volunteer or community service	24.5%	55.9%	55.4%
Seek personal counseling	7.5%	7.8%	4.6%
Dev close friendships w/other students	67.8%	78.7%	87.5%
Communicate regularly with professors	36.5%	54.7%	53.1%
Socialize w/ other racial/ethnic groups	73.0%	86.7%	93.8%
Participate in student clubs/groups	38.2%	65.2%	61.5%

<b>Personal aspirations:</b>			
<b>Indicated the importance to student personally each of the following was rated either "Essential" or "Very Important":</b>			
	<b>NonHonors</b>	<b>Honors</b>	<b>GPPA</b>
Accomplished in performing arts	20.8%	21.8%	16.7%
Authority in my field	66.7%	80.2%	77.3%
Recognition for contribute in my field	67.9%	75.2%	72.8%
Influencing political structure	22.1%	18.4%	16.7%
Influencing social values	49.5%	46.4%	40.9%
Raising a family	68.5%	70.5%	87.9%
Hold administrative responsibility for work of others	47.8%	46.4%	42.4%
Being well off financially	84.4%	80.2%	84.8%
Helping others in difficulty	74.2%	80.0%	80.0%
Writing original works	14.5%	16.5%	4.6%
Successful in own business	58.3%	53.4%	46.2%
Involved in cleaning up environment	26.4%	28.2%	23.1%
Meaningful philosophy of life	50.5%	55.3%	56.9%
Participate in community action programs	31.3%	45.6%	41.5%
Promote racial understanding	37.7%	45.9%	35.4%
Keeping up with political affairs	29.1%	34.0%	36.9%
Becoming community leaders	35.0%	50.7%	56.3%
Integrating spirituality into life	30.5%	43.7%	56.3%