

# Fall 1996 Freshman Survey

The Evergreen State College  
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TO: Faculty and Staff

FROM: Steve Hunter and Art Costantino

RE: Fall 1996 Freshman Survey

Most Fall quarters, we ask entering freshmen to complete the American Council on Education's Freshman Survey. The survey is administered nationally and seeks information ranging from demographics to social values. ACE processes the forms and returns a set of national norms with the Evergreen results. This fall's data have just arrived. Several pages presenting portions of the results are attached. Comparisons with national norms suggest many differences between Evergreen's entering freshmen and freshmen entering other public four-year colleges. The national results have recently been discussed in a variety of media. We thought you might be interested in some of the Evergreen data.

## The Sample

A total of 530 first-time, full-time freshmen enrolled at Evergreen this fall. Of those, 260 (49%) completed the ACE questionnaire. Respondents were not selected randomly. Students who elect to participate in the survey complete the form during check-in and registration before classes begin in the fall.

## Reading the Tables

Evergreen's freshmen responses are compared with the norms for all public four-year colleges on the attached pages. For survey sections where the order of the items was not important, the items are arrayed according to the size of the percentage difference between Evergreen and the norms. Statistically significant differences, as measured by z-scores, are highlighted. Take the "significance" of the difference with a grain of salt. Since the respondents were not randomly selected, some systematic bias among respondents is possible.

## A Quick Summary

In comparison with national norms, these Evergreen freshmen tend to be more liberal in their views, hold the value of a liberal arts education above the value of landing a well-paying job and have parents with higher levels of education. Please note that these data refer to freshmen only. We are planning to develop a similar picture of transfer students in the future.

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STATUS OF PARENTS	n	TESC	Pub 4-Yr	Diff.
Living with each other	252	52.3%	69.3%	-17.0%
divorced or separated	252	42.3%	26.4%	15.9%
one or both deceased	252	5.4%	4.3%	1.1%

FATHER'S EDUCATION	n	TESC	Pub 4-Yr	Diff.
grammar school or less	251	1.6%	4.1%	-2.5%
some high school	251	3.2%	5.3%	-2.1%
high school graduate	251	10.8%	26.1%	-15.3%
postsecondary other than college	251	0.8%	4.9%	-4.1%
some college	251	14.3%	17.4%	-3.1%
college graduate	251	28.7%	24.9%	3.8%
some graduate school	251	1.6%	2.1%	-0.5%
graduate degree	251	39.0%	15.1%	23.9%

MOTHER'S EDUCATION	n	TESC	Pub 4-Yr	Diff.
grammar school or less	255	1.6%	3.8%	-2.2%
some high school	255	1.2%	4.2%	-3.0%
high school graduate	255	9.8%	29.2%	-19.4%
postsecondary other than college	255	3.5%	6.2%	-2.7%
some college	255	20.0%	18.8%	1.2%
college graduate	255	27.5%	23.8%	3.7%
some graduate school	255	5.5%	2.6%	2.9%
graduate degree	255	31.0%	11.3%	19.7%

THIS COLLEGE WAS STUDENT'S	n	TESC	Pub 4-Yr	Diff.
first choice	258	88.8%	69.8%	19.0%
second choice	258	9.3%	22.7%	-13.4%
third choice	258	1.2%	5.0%	-3.8%
less than third choice	258	0.8%	2.4%	-1.6%

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### ACTIVITIES ENGAGED IN DURING PAST YEAR

	n	TESC	Pub 4-Yr	Diff.
used nontraditional medicine (4)	256	44.5%	4.9%	39.6%
discussed politics (3)	256	49.6%	15.6%	34.0%
played musical instrument	256	59.4%	38.5%	20.9%
drank wine or liquor	258	70.9%	53.9%	17.0%
smoked cigarettes (3)	256	27.0%	12.7%	14.3%
overslept and missed a class/appt.	256	47.7%	34.2%	13.5%
felt bored in class (3)	256	51.2%	38.2%	13.0%
drank beer	256	63.3%	50.6%	12.7%
socialized with diff ethnic group	257	73.5%	62.2%	11.3%
felt depressed (3)	257	15.6%	9.5%	6.1%
difficult to study at home (4)	256	64.1%	58.1%	6.0%
worked in political campaign	257	12.1%	6.3%	5.8%
felt overwhelmed (3)	258	33.7%	29.3%	4.4%
missed school due to employment	256	10.9%	6.9%	4.0%
took prescribed anti-depressant(4)	255	7.8%	3.9%	3.9%
participated in demonstration	255	49.4%	46.0%	3.4%
was a guest in a teacher's home	254	31.1%	27.9%	3.2%
performed volunteer work	257	73.2%	72.6%	0.6%
asked teacher for advice (3)	256	23.0%	23.1%	-0.1%
tutored another student	256	50.4%	51.9%	-1.5%
studied with other students	256	83.6%	87.7%	-4.1%
voted in student election (3)	255	18.8%	25.2%	-6.4%
lost my temper (4)	255	67.1%	77.0%	-9.9%
attended a religious service	257	55.6%	85.1%	-29.5%

(3) percentage reporting "frequently" only. Percentages for other items reflect responses of "frequently" or "occasionally".

(4) item included for first time in 1996

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### STUDENT RATED SELF ABOVE

AVERAGE OR IN HIGHEST 10% IN	n	TESC	Pub 4-Yr	Diff.
artistic ability	257	61.5%	25.0%	36.5%
creativity	257	78.6%	49.7%	28.9%
writing ability	258	70.6%	42.4%	28.2%
self-understanding (4)	256	78.1%	56.1%	22.0%
spirituality (4)	255	61.6%	42.9%	18.7%
academic ability	257	77.4%	59.3%	18.1%
self-confidence (intellectual)	257	71.2%	56.0%	15.2%
understanding of others	257	78.6%	64.8%	13.8%
public speaking ability	257	43.2%	31.7%	11.5%
cooperativeness	255	70.6%	71.4%	-0.8%
emotional health	256	52.7%	53.9%	-1.2%
leadership ability	257	53.7%	55.3%	-1.6%
self-confidence (social)	257	48.6%	50.5%	-1.9%
mathematical ability	257	30.7%	39.5%	-8.8%
popularity	251	30.3%	39.6%	-9.3%
drive to achieve	256	55.9%	66.9%	-11.0%
physical health	257	43.6%	56.2%	-12.6%
competitiveness	257	21.0%	55.5%	-34.5%

(4) item added for first time in 1996

### REASONS NOTED AS VERY IMPORTANT IN DECIDING TO GO TO COLLEGE

	n	TESC	Pub 4-Yr	Diff.
become a more cultured person	255	65.1%	37.8%	27.3%
gain a general education	256	85.9%	62.0%	23.9%
learn more about things	256	95.3%	74.3%	21.0%
wanted to get away from home	256	26.6%	20.5%	6.1%
improve reading and study skills	255	47.8%	43.4%	4.4%
nothing better to do	253	5.5%	3.3%	2.2%
could not find a job	254	3.1%	7.2%	-4.1%
role model/mentor encouraged me	253	8.2%	15.4%	-7.2%
parents wanted me to go	255	15.7%	38.9%	-23.2%
prove to others I could succeed	253	14.2%	41.3%	-27.1%
get a better job	256	47.3%	78.1%	-30.8%
make more money	254	30.7%	74.8%	-44.1%

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### REASONS NOTED AS VERY IMPORTANT IN SELECTING THIS COLLEGE

	n	TESC	Pub 4-Yr	Diff.
offers special programs	256	59.4%	23.3%	36.1%
size of college	257	43.6%	37.6%	6.0%
good social reputation	258	26.0%	23.7%	2.3%
friend suggested attending	254	11.8%	10.3%	1.5%
rankings in national magazine	250	9.2%	8.4%	0.8%
religious affiliation of college	250	2.8%	2.5%	0.3%
not accepted anywhere else	248	2.8%	2.5%	0.3%
private college counselor advised me	251	1.2%	1.7%	-0.5%
teacher advised me	253	2.0%	4.2%	-2.2%
recruited by college rep	251	2.0%	4.5%	-2.5%
not offered aid by first choice	248	2.4%	5.7%	-3.3%
HS guidance counselor advised me	253	3.6%	7.5%	-3.9%
recruited by athletic dept.	251	0.8%	6.5%	-5.7%
good academic reputation	258	45.7%	51.8%	-6.1%
relatives wanted me to come	256	1.6%	9.3%	-7.7%
low tuition	256	23.4%	37.1%	-13.7%
graduates go to top grad schools	251	11.6%	26.3%	-14.7%
wanted to live near home	253	4.0%	21.0%	-17.0%
offered financial assistance	251	9.2%	31.5%	-22.3%
graduates get good jobs	253	17.0%	47.8%	-30.8%

### OBJECTIVES CONSIDERED TO BE ESSENTIAL OR VERY IMPORTANT

	n	TESC	Pub 4-Yr	Diff.
create artistic work	255	50.2%	12.7%	37.5%
develop a philosophy of life	255	77.3%	42.4%	34.9%
be involved in environmental cleanup	257	51.4%	21.7%	29.7%
write original works	256	40.6%	13.6%	27.0%
achieve in a performing art	255	26.3%	11.9%	14.4%
influence political structure	256	31.3%	18.4%	12.9%
keep up to date with politics	255	42.4%	29.5%	12.9%
promote racial understanding	255	48.2%	35.9%	12.3%
participate in community action	256	35.9%	24.6%	11.3%

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### OBJECTIVES CONSIDERED TO BE

ESSENTIAL OR VERY IMPORTANT (cont.)	n	TESC	Pub 4-Yr	Diff.
influence social values	257	47.9%	39.9%	8.0%
theoretical contribution to science	257	15.6%	17.1%	-1.5%
help others in difficulty	256	58.6%	63.2%	-4.6%
be a community leader	254	21.7%	34.2%	-12.5%
be successful in own business	256	23.4%	39.7%	-16.3%
obtain recognition from colleagues	257	36.6%	55.2%	-18.6%
become authority in my own field	253	44.7%	65.8%	-21.1%
raise a family	255	44.7%	72.4%	-27.7%
have admin. responsibility	256	7.0%	40.8%	-33.8%
be very well off financially	257	24.9%	75.7%	-50.8%

### POLITICAL VIEWS

	n	TESC	Pub 4-Yr	Diff.
far left	249	17.3%	2.6%	14.7%
liberal	249	61.4%	21.1%	40.3%
middle of the road	249	20.1%	55.0%	-34.9%
conservative	249	1.2%	19.7%	-18.5%
far right	249	0.0%	1.6%	-1.6%

### AGREES STRONGLY OR SOMEWHAT

	n	TESC	Pub 4-Yr	Diff.
marijuana should be legalized	255	82.4%	32.6%	49.8%
abortion should be legal	256	90.6%	56.9%	33.7%
sex OK if people like each other	256	71.1%	40.1%	31.0%
abolish death penalty	254	46.9%	21.6%	25.3%
disobey laws that violate values	253	52.2%	35.2%	17.0%
wealthy should pay more taxes	258	83.7%	66.7%	17.0%
raise taxes to reduce deficit	252	38.1%	23.3%	14.8%
govt not controlling pollution	258	96.1%	82.5%	13.6%
national health care plan needed	257	82.5%	72.6%	9.9%
fed govt do more to control handguns	256	86.7%	82.4%	4.3%
racial discrimination no longer problem	257	8.9%	15.9%	-7.0%
abolish affirm action in coll admissions	241	37.8%	47.7%	-9.9%
individual can do little to change society	256	21.1%	31.3%	-10.2%
prohibit racist/sexist speech	253	49.8%	64.4%	-14.6%
married women best at home	255	5.5%	23.8%	-18.3%
too much concern for criminals	253	50.2%	72.0%	-21.8%
deny educ. access to undocumented immigrants	254	31.5%	55.4%	-23.9%
all official documents in English	254	15.7%	43.5%	-27.8%

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prohibit homosexual relations	256	2.0%	33.2%	-31.2%
employers can require drug tests	257	45.9%	80.6%	-34.7%

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STUDENT'S RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE	n	TESC	Pub 4-Yr	Diff.
Baptist, Buddhist, Congregationalist, Eastern Orthodox, Episcopal, Islamic, Jewish, LDS, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Quaker, Roman Catholic, Seven Day Adventist	245	26.9%	83.3%	-56.4%
Other Religion	245	17.6%	3.6%	14.0%
None	245	55.5%	13.1%	42.4%

STUDENT BORN-AGAIN CHRISTIAN?	n	TESC	Pub 4-Yr	Diff.
no	236	96.2%	68.9%	27.3%
yes	236	3.8%	31.1%	-27.3%