

**Miami's Leadership Commitment
Outcomes Assessment Study - Report #3
Miami – Other University Comparison
by Dr. Dennis C. Roberts
Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs**

Introduction: The following are tabulations of select items from the College Student Survey – a questionnaire used in both 1998 and 1999 to assess Miami graduating seniors' experiences at the University. In this report, Miami responses are compared to the other comparable colleges and universities using this questionnaire. They include:

1998 – 3,393 respondents	1999 – 6,895 respondents
Ohio State University University of Akron University of Georgia University of Illinois – Urbana-Champaign University of Washington	Iowa State University Oklahoma State University SUNY – Stony Brook University of Alabama – Birmingham University of Arkansas – Fayetteville University of California – Los Angeles University of California – Santa Barbara

The College Student Survey is a follow-up to the Freshmen Survey, given to all Miami entering freshmen since 1966. Use of the College Student Survey allowed comparison between Miami students' self-report of involvement, attitudes, and behaviors upon entry to the University compared to parallel items during their last semester before graduation.

The study involved 340 Miami students in 1998 and 426 in 1999. These students are those for whom social security numbers were recorded, allowing for comparisons between their responses as first-year students versus their responses in the spring of their graduation year.

1994/1998 and 1995/1999 Miami University and other Comparisons

Question	1994-1998				1995-1999			
	1994		1998		1995		1999	
Institution	Miami	Other	Miami	Other	Miami	Other	Miami	Other
Anticipate joining (or joined) a social fraternity, sorority, club or organization	31.5	21.9	50.9	24.7	32.8	24.0	55.9	24.0
Expected to be (or were) elected to student office	2.4	2.5	10.9	8.5	4.9	3.7	11.0	11.6
Expected to perform (or performed) volunteer work	82.5	82.6	81.1	69.9	85.6	83.1	81.8	65.1
Participated in leadership training	NA	NA	33.5	18.5	NA	NA	37.6	19.9

Question	1994-1998				1995-1999			
	1994		1998		1995		1999	
	Miami	Other	Miami	Other	Miami	Other	Miami	Other
Institution								
Opportunities for community service very satisfactory	NA	NA	71.8	63.1	NA	NA	72.1	52.3
Leadership opportunities very satisfactory	NA	NA	72.1	57.0	NA	NA	74.2	59.8
Overall college experience very satisfactory	NA	NA	92.6	85.4	NA	NA	93.6	84.7
Rated self above average or top 10% in cooperativeness	73.1	75.6	85.8	78.9	75.4	75.9	78.3	73.1
Rated self above average or top 10% in leadership ability	63.0	62.7	71.6	61.6	65.5	62.8	68.4	59.4
Rated self above average or top 10% in intellectual self confidence	67.7	64.3	73.5	65.8	65.6	66.6	69.8	62.4
Rated self above average or top 10% in social self confidence	45.2	48.9	61.4	52.9	43.6	48.4	57.8	50.1
Reported much stronger ability and skill in critical thinking	NA	NA	44.1	25.2	NA	NA	37.8	19.1
Reported much stronger ability and skill in leadership	NA	NA	27.5	14.0	NA	NA	30.5	16.1
Considered developing a philosophy of life very important or essential	43.6	44.7	56.5	51.4	41.5	41.4	60.1	46.4
Considered helping others in difficulty very important or essential	62.3	64.6	74.0	71.2	63.4	58.9	75.7	63.4
Considered influencing social values very important or essential	39.8	39.3	47.8	42.1	25.9	36.3	43.9	36.4
Considered promoting racial understanding very important or essential	28.2	31.8	34.5	32.1	25.9	26.1	31.5	26.2

Question	1994-1998				1995-1999			
	1994		1998		1995		1999	
	Miami	Other	Miami	Other	Miami	Other	Miami	Other
Agreed strongly or somewhat that individuals can do little to change society	28.1	26.2	19.6	27.8	29.6	25.7	19.7	30.4
Agreed strongly or somewhat that racial discrimination is no longer a problem	13.4	15.6	8.7	15.6	15.8	18.0	8.6	17.3

- Percentages are of students endorsing or strongly endorsing the item

Conclusions

Miami University compares favorably to other colleges and universities on all measures of the College Student Survey in both the years the instrument has been administered - 1998 and 1999. While the College Student Survey is a new instrument, its predecessor and mirror counter-part, the Freshmen Survey, has been administered nationally and at Miami since 1966. The sheer numbers included in the data indicate a substantial measurement of higher education outcomes throughout the nation and in varying types of institutions. The institutions that administered the College Student Survey are not institutions to which Miami typically compares itself. However, the five institutional comparisons in 1998 and seven in 1999 are the only logical and comparative institutions at this time. It is hoped that, as the College Student Survey becomes better known, more institutions will begin to use it, therefore providing more appropriate comparisons to Miami.

Miami exceeds comparison institutions in its ability to deeply engage students in a variety of aspects of college life. Examples include:

- Students anticipate joining and do join student clubs and organizations at 20% higher levels than other colleges. In addition, students at other institutions report the same level of involvement that they anticipate in contrast to Miami's increase over four years of approximately 20%.
- Miami students enter expecting to perform volunteer work at approximately the same level that they actually report involvement (80+% in both cases). By contrast, students at other colleges or universities come to college expecting to be engaged in volunteer work at approximately the same level as Miami students but report almost a 20% drop from their expectation in subsequent measures.
- Miami student participation in leadership programs is nearly double that of other schools (34% versus 19% in 1998 and 38% versus 20% in 1999. Miami

students' satisfaction with leadership opportunities is also significantly higher than comparative institutions.

The gains students report from their college experiences is some of the most persuasive evidence that Miami is superior in its ability to foster leadership and service-related outcomes for its graduates:

- Students rating themselves above average or in the top 10% in leadership increases for Miami students while it drops for other institutions.
- Students who see themselves as above average or in the top 10% in intellectual self confidence increases at Miami while it remains the same or decreases at other institutions.
- Students rating themselves above average or in the top 10% in social self confidence increases by approximately 12% for Miami students while it remains the same or drops at other institutions.
- Miami students report considerably higher critical thinking skills than students do elsewhere.
- The importance of helping others in difficulty increases by 12% at Miami over four years while it increases 5-6% at other institutions.
- Miami students' commitment to promoting racial understanding increases by approximately 6% while no change is reflected elsewhere.

One of the most powerful outcomes of a Miami education and the engagement that is available to Miami students through leadership development and participation is a kind of "can do" perspective toward the world. This finding is particularly important in the face of the challenges we face in a contemporary world, filled with diversity and influenced heavily by technology. Miami students' response to the question, "individuals can do little to change society," dropped by 9-10% from first to senior year while students at other colleges and universities increased in their endorsement of this view by 2-5%. This finding indicates that Miami students view themselves as capable and willing to make a difference in the world while students at other colleges and universities do not share this same optimism or willingness.

The ongoing analysis of the outcomes of "Miami's Leadership Commitment" will continue in 2001 with similar sampling and comparison strategies. As these data are analyzed and used to modify and improve programs, increasing positive outcomes are anticipated over time.

For more information or response to questions, please contact:

Dr. Dennis C. Roberts
Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs
111 Warfield Hall
Miami University
Oxford, OH 45056
(513) 529-3435