

GOAL ACHIEVEMENT AT RUTGERS: A REVIEW OF RESPONSES TO SURVEYS OF ENTERING AND GRADUATING STUDENTS

As students enter Rutgers University, they complete the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) survey during orientation. This survey asks entering students about their academic and personal aspirations and their expectations for achieving these goals while at Rutgers. CIRP is a national survey administered by the Higher Education Research Institute and enables participating institutions to compare the responses of their students with the aggregated results of a pre-determined institutional peer group. In order to assess Rutgers' contribution to the achievement of student goals, the Graduating Student Opinion Survey (GSOS) repeats many questions offered on the CIRP. This report compares responses from students entering Rutgers as first-year, full-time students in Fall 1996 to students graduating in Spring 2001. Where appropriate, responses to the 1997 GSOS completed by students who were seniors at the time the 1996 entering cohort was completing their first year of studies at Rutgers are also used for comparison purposes, as are results from CIRP 2001. Specific results supported by tables with data gleaned from CIRP and GSOS surveys follow the summary of results presented here for each Rutgers campus.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS BY CAMPUS

Responses of incoming Rutgers students are compared to responses of entering students who completed the CIRP survey at peer institutions. Camden students are compared to students attending public universities of medium selectivity. Some 24,000 students fell into this category for the CIRP survey conducted in Fall 1996. Approximately 20,000 student respondents were classified as attending public universities with high selectivity in Fall 1996. This is the standard of comparison used for both Newark and New Brunswick.

Camden

- Although Rutgers was their first choice for most first-time full-time students at Camden (57%), students entering in Fall 1996 at Camden were less likely than their peers (70%) to report that Rutgers was their first choice institution.
- Camden students expect to do well. More than half of the entering students stated they have a "Very Good" chance of maintaining a "B" average at Rutgers. Two-thirds rated themselves as above average academically, higher than students who entered peer institutions during this time (60%).
- New Camden undergraduates reported completing remedial work prior to attending college in 1997 at a rate higher than their counterparts, a finding that is the opposite of what was reported in 1995 and 1993. In 1997, like their peers, Camden students believed they would require remedial work in math (24%), science (15%), or English (9%).
- In Camden, more than half of the entering undergraduates (57%) reported that academic reputation was "Very Important" in their decision to attend Rutgers. Low tuition was important for forty-six percent as was the fact that they were offered financial assistance (33%).
- Entering Camden students were more likely than their peers to believe that it was "Very Important" that students who graduate from their college will get good jobs or go to top graduate schools.

- Repeating the findings from graduates in 1997, students graduating from Camden in 2001 overwhelmingly agreed that Rutgers has high quality academic programs in general (96%) and in their particular major area (91%).
- At the start of college, two-thirds of Camden students believed the chances were “Very Good” that they would earn a bachelors degree and three-in-ten expected this would be their terminal degree. Graduation rates for Camden students show that almost half of entering students successfully complete their studies in six-years. Only six percent of graduates in 2001 reported that the baccalaureate degree would be the highest academic degree they would receive.
- Two-thirds of entering Camden students expressed concerns about financing their education, four-in-ten expected they would have to work to supplement the financing of their college education. Eight-in-ten students graduating in 2001 from Camden reported working more than ten hours a week in their final year of school.
- Camden students expected to be satisfied with Rutgers when they began their studies. More than half indicated chances are “Very Good” they would be satisfied. After four years, 92 percent rated their academic experience at Rutgers, in general, and within their major, in particular, as “Good” or “Excellent.” Over eighty percent rated Rutgers as “Good” or “Excellent” in their preparation for the future and eighty-nine percent stated they would choose Rutgers again if starting over.
- Entering Camden students cited their “Very Important” reasons for going to college: career related (to get a better job - 83%, to make more money – 78%) and personal or academic (to learn more about things that interest me – 75%, to gain a general education – 64%, to become a more cultured person – 42%). Data across campuses are presented below which demonstrate that at least sixty percent or more of graduating students credit Rutgers with helping them achieve these goals.

Newark

- Two-thirds of undergraduates new to Newark in Fall 1996 listed Rutgers as their first choice. A similar proportion of students at peer institutions reported that the institution they attend was their first choice.
- For the most part, Newark students believed they would do well at Rutgers. Although less than half of new Newark students thought their chances were “Very Good” that they would make a “B” average at Rutgers, sixty percent rated themselves academically above average as they began their college studies.
- Only one-fourth of new students at Newark reported completing remedial work prior to entering college. In 1997, like their peers, Newark students believed they would require remedial work in math (21%), science (7%), and English (7%).
- Nearly two-thirds of Newark students reported that academic reputation was “Very Important” in their decision to attend Rutgers. Half cited low tuition and one-fourth cited the offer of financial assistance as this was important to them in choosing Rutgers.
- Entering Newark students were slightly less likely than their peers to believe that it is “Very Important” that students who graduate from their college will get good jobs or go to top graduate schools.

- Repeating the findings from graduates in 1997, students graduating from Newark in 2001 overwhelmingly agreed that Rutgers has high quality academic programs in general (94%) and in their particular major area (84%).
- At the start of college, six-in-ten Newark students believed the chances were “Very Good” that they would earn a bachelors degree and fifteen percent believed they would not seek a more advanced degree. Half of Newark students graduate in six years. Only six percent thought they would stop at the bachelors’ degree.
- Half of entering Newark students expressed concerns about financing their education; one-in-four expected they would have to work to supplement the financing of their college education. Three-fourths of the students graduating in 2001 from Newark reported working more than ten hours a week in their final year of school.
- Newark students expected to be satisfied with Rutgers when they began. Thirty-nine percent indicated chances are “Very Good” they would be satisfied. After four years, more than ninety percent rated their academic experience at Rutgers, in general, and within their major, in particular, as “Good” or “Excellent.” Almost eighty percent rate Rutgers as “Good” or “Excellent” in their preparation for the future and eighty-seven percent stated they would choose Rutgers again if starting over.
- Entering Newark students cited their “Very Important” reasons for going to college: career related (to get a better job - 74%, to make more money – 72%) and personal or academic (to learn more about things that interest me – 70%, to gain a general education – 77%, to become a more cultured person – 53%). Data across campuses are presented below demonstrate that at least sixty percent or more of graduating students credit Rutgers with helping them achieve these goals.

New Brunswick

- Only half of first-time full-time undergraduate students entering New Brunswick reported that Rutgers was their first choice compared to student peers at institutions where two-thirds reported that the institution they were attending was their first choice college.
- New Brunswick students believe they would do well at Rutgers. Six-in-ten believed their chances were “Very Good” that they would make a “B” average. Eighty percent rated themselves as above average academically at the start of their college career.
- Only one-fourth of new students at New Brunswick reported completing remedial work prior to entering college. In 1997, like their peers, New Brunswick students believed they would require remedial work in math (24%), science (12%), and English (8%).
- Nearly two-thirds of New Brunswick students reported that academic reputation is “Very Important” in their decision to attend Rutgers. Six-in-ten cited low tuition and three-in-ten cited the offer of financial assistance was important to them in choosing Rutgers.
- Most new students at New Brunswick believed it is “Very Important” that graduates from their university get good jobs, like their peers. A sizeable minority (43%) also stated that it was “Very Important” that Rutgers graduates go to top graduate schools, also similar to their peers.
- Repeating the findings from graduates in 1997, students graduating from New Brunswick in 2001 overwhelmingly agreed that Rutgers has high quality academic programs in general (90%) and in their particular major area (83%).

- At the start of college, eight-in-ten New Brunswick students believed the chances were “Very Good” that they would earn a bachelors degree and twelve percent expected they would not seek a more advanced degree. Approximately three-quarters of New Brunswick entering students obtain their baccalaureate degree in six years. Ninety-two percent of students graduating in 2001 indicated that they expect to earn a more advanced degree.
- Seven-in-ten of entering New Brunswick students expressed concerns about financing their education; four-in-ten expected they would have to work to supplement the financing of their college education. Fifty-seven percent of the students graduating in 2001 from New Brunswick reported working more than ten hours a week in their final year of school.
- New Brunswick students expected to be satisfied with Rutgers when they began. Forty-three percent indicated chances were “Very Good” they will be satisfied. After four years, approximately eighty percent rated their academic experience at Rutgers, in general, and within their major, in particular, as “Good” or “Excellent.” Seventy percent rated Rutgers, as “Good” or “Excellent” in their preparation for the future and more than eighty percent reported that they would choose Rutgers again if starting over.
- Entering New Brunswick students cited their “Very Important” reasons for going to college: career related (to get a better job - 74%, to make more money – 70%) and personal or academic (to learn more about things that interest me – 77%, to gain a general education – 70%, to become a more cultured person – 47%). Data across campuses are presented below which demonstrate that at least sixty percent or more of graduating students credit Rutgers with helping them achieve these goals.

GOAL ACHIEVEMENT AT RUTGERS: DETAILED ANALYSIS AND TABLES

CHOOSING RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

Most entering students indicated that the university they were attending was one of their top choices. This was as true for Rutgers students as students attending peer institutions. However, Rutgers students were less likely to indicate Rutgers as their top choice compared to students attending peer institutions (see table 1a and table 1b). In both years, Rutgers was less likely to be the first choice of first year students for those enrolled in Camden (56%) and New Brunswick (50%) compared to students attending peer institutions (70% and 66%, respectively). In 1996, Rutgers was the first choice for two-thirds of entering students at Newark (67%), like their peer institutions (66%). However, in 2001 students at other highly selective institutions were more likely to report that the institution they were attending was their first choice (71%), while entering students at Newark were less likely to report that Rutgers was their first choice (64%). Eighty percent or more of students entering Rutgers listed Rutgers as one of their top two choices.

TABLE 1a: COLLEGE CHOICE LEVEL OF STUDENTS ENTERING FALL 1996

Choice Level	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
First	56%	70%	67%	50%	66%
Second	32	23	19	32	22
Third	10	4	8	10	7
TOTAL	98%	97%	94%	92%	95%

TABLE 1b: COLLEGE CHOICE LEVEL OF STUDENTS ENTERING FALL 2001

Choice Level	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
First	53%	68%	64%	50%	71%
Second	31	24	27	29	20
Third	9	5	5	11	5
TOTAL	93%	97%	96%	90%	96%

SETTING THE STAGE TO SUCCEED

As students enter college, they have many experiences and expectations that set the stage for their success in college. Rutgers students and those attending peer institutions have varied experiences and expectations about how well they will perform academically at the university they are attending. They also come with experiences and expectations about any remedial work they may have completed or expect they will need to succeed in college.

In Camden, students beginning their studies in 1996 were more likely than their peers to expect that chances were “Very Good” that they would “make at least a B average” while at their institution (56% vs. 49%) (see Table 2a). Students entering Rutgers New Brunswick were as likely to express this expectation as their peers (59% compared to 58%), but Newark students were less likely than their peers (45% vs. 58%) to report that they had “Very Good” chances to make at least a B average. If we look at trends over a five-year period, peer institutions have a slight increase in the proportion of students who believe they would make a “B” average. Approximately half of Rutgers entering students have held steady in their belief over the years that they would do this well in college.

TABLE 2a: CIRP – CHANCES “Very Good” STUDENT WILL MAKE A “B” AVERAGE

Will make a B average	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
1997	55%	50%	55%	54%	61%
1996	56%	49%	45%	59%	58%
1995	48%	47%	53%	55%	59%
1994	NA	NA	NA	55%	57%
1993	55%	45%	50%	55%	52%

While approximately half of incoming students campus-wide expected to earn a “B” average at Rutgers, an even greater proportion rated their academic ability as “above average” or “in the highest 10%” (see table 2b). New Brunswick students’ self-evaluation matches students at other public institutions with high-selectivity at approximately 80 percent, but Newark first year students were considerably less likely to have this positive self-evaluation (61%). On the other hand, Camden students were more likely to believe they are above average (68%) compared to their peers at public institutions of medium selectivity (60%).

TABLE 2b: STUDENT RATED SELF ABOVE AVERAGE OR IN HIGHEST 10% IN ACADEMIC ABILITY – CIRP 1996

Above average or highest 10%	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
Academic Ability	68%	60%	61%	79%	81%

Remedial work prior to entering college and the expectation of the need for additional remedial work are additional indicators of the student’s experience and expectations that he or she will succeed in college. CIRP rotates questions on their annual survey; therefore we use students’ statements about the amount of remedial work completed in any category (English, reading, mathematics, social studies, science, foreign language) and the remedial work they think they will need in math, science, and English taken from the 1997 and 1995 CIRP surveys.

In Fall 1997, entering Camden students (53%) were twice as likely as Newark and New Brunswick students (24% each) and almost twice as likely as their peers (32%) to have undertaken remedial work prior to beginning their college studies (See Table 2c). Two years prior, Fall 1995, a considerably smaller percentage (13%) of Camden students reported completing remedial work. This 40 percent increase in completion of remedial work among students entering Camden is possibly due to enrollment factors, rather than an increase in the number of high school students completing remedial work prior to college entrance. We’ve added CIRP information from 1993 to see how much variation there is in remedial work completed and expected. The three tables have considerable stability across the years for peer institutions, suggesting that much of the variation is due to the relatively smaller numbers of respondents at Newark or Camden in any particular year. In 1996, CIRP had more than twenty-four thousand respondents classified as attending public universities of medium selectivity and approximately twenty thousand respondents who attended highly selective public universities.

TABLE 2c: CIRP – REMEDIAL WORK – FALL 1997

Remedial Work	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
N =	112		290	3,944	
Has Had:	53%	32%	24%	24%	24%
Will Need:					
Math	24%	26%	21%	24%	18%
Science	15%	11%	7%	12%	11%
English	9%	10%	7%	11%	8%

In both years (1995 and 1997), entering Rutgers students thought they would require about the same level of remedial work in math, science, and English as the students entering peer institutions; with remedial math standing out as about twice as necessary as remedial work in either science or English. (see tables 2d and 2e) The notable exception is Newark in 1995 where expected need for remedial work in math, science, and English was at double the level of peer institutions. More than one-third of Newark students (35%) believed they would need to improve their math skills and approximately one-in-five reported needing help in science (18%) or English (20%).

TABLE 2d: CIRP – REMEDIAL WORK - FALL 1995

Remedial Work	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
N =	75		302	2,883	
Has Had:	13%	31%	33%	24%	23%
Will Need:					
Math	20%	27%	35%	24%	17%
Science	12%	12%	18%	12%	9%
English	16%	12%	20%	11%	8%

TABLE 2e: CIRP – REMEDIAL WORK - FALL 1993

Remedial Work	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
N =	235		255	2,882	
Has Had:	21%	27%	20%	19%	24%
Will Need:					
Math	18%	28%	22%	29%	18%
Science	10%	13%	14%	13%	11%
English	11%	10%	9%	11%	8%

MOST IMPORTANT REASONS FOR ATTENDING RUTGERS

Students entering Rutgers University and its peer institutions in the Fall of 1996 had similar reasons for selecting the colleges they would apply to. Primary college choice factors included: cost related factors, the academic reputation of the university, that graduates go to top graduate schools, or get good jobs. Academic reputation draws students to Rutgers much like it does at peer institutions. More than half of entering Camden students (57%) reported that academic reputation is “Very Important” as do students entering peer institutions (54%) (see table 3a). Academic reputation was important to students at Newark (64%), New Brunswick (65%), and peer institutions (69%).

TABLE 3a: NOTED AS “Very Important” IN SELECTION OF COLLEGE – CIRP 1996

SELECTION FACTOR	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
Academic Reputation	57%	54%	64%	65%	69%
Low Tuition	46%	37%	50%	60%	37%
Graduates get good jobs	60%	49%	52%	56%	58%
Graduates go	50%	26%	37%	43%	45%

to top grad schools					
Offered Financial Assistance	33%	25%	23%	31%	21%
Not Offered Aid by First Choice	9%	6%	12%	14%	8%

Costs and financial assistance were also major factors in college choice at all institutions. Camden students cited low tuition as important at a higher rate than students at other public institutions of medium-selectivity (46% vs. 37%). Furthermore, the fact that Camden students were offered financial assistance by Rutgers proved instrumental in their choice for one-third of incoming students (33%) and the fact that they were not offered aid by their first choice institution (9%) was an additional contributing factor in their decision to attend Rutgers. For students attending peer institutions, only 25 percent cited low tuition as “Very Important,” with 6 percent indicating they were not offered aid by their first choice institution.

Low tuition was more important for Rutgers students at Newark and New Brunswick, compared to students entering peer institutions, with half of Newark students and 60 percent of New Brunswick students having reported this was a “Very Important” factor. This compares to only 37 percent of entering students at other public institutions that were highly selective who placed this level of importance on low tuition. In New Brunswick, the offer of financial assistance was a “pull” factor and that they were not offered aid by their first choice institution a “push” factor for 31 percent and 14 percent of the students, respectively. Newark students were more closely aligned with their peers with approximately one-in-five (23% of Newark students and 21% of peers) reported that the offer of financial assistance influenced their decision and approximately 10 percent (12% of Newark students and 8% of students at peer institutions) cited the fact that their first choice institution did not offer them aid.

Most entering students at all institutions believed choosing the right college should help them obtain good jobs or be accepted at top graduate schools on the completion of their studies. These selection factors were “Very Important” to a greater proportion of students entering Rutgers at Camden than it was to their peers. Six-in-ten believed that graduates from Rutgers get good jobs compared to less than half at other moderately selective peer institutions (49%). Furthermore, almost twice as many (50%) of Camden students thought that Rutgers graduates go to top graduate schools compared to the students at peer institutions (26%). Newark students were slightly less likely to indicate that Rutgers graduates get good jobs (52%) or go to top graduate schools (37%) than were their peers (58% and 45%, respectively). New Brunswick students rated the importance of these factors in choosing their college at a similar level compared to other students at highly selective public universities.

Among the important issues for incoming students at Rutgers, the quality of academic programs and cost were determining factors in college choice. Rutgers fairs well on these issues among graduating students. The Graduating Student Opinion Surveys offered in Spring 1997 and 2001 asked respondents to evaluate the quality of academic programs at Rutgers, in general, and the ir department, in particular. More than 90 percent of these seniors agreed that Rutgers has high quality academic programs and between one-third and one-half of the respondents “Agreed Strongly” that this was the case on each of the campuses (see table 3b). Evaluations were this high among Camden students for the quality of programs in the respondents major area, with 91 percent total agreement in 1997 and 83 percent agreement in 2001; four-

in-ten expressed “Strong” agreement (see table 3c). The Newark and New Brunswick students rated the quality of their programs at a slightly lower level than Camden students (total agreement was in the low 80’s, with one-third having agreed strongly with this evaluation).

TABLE 3b: RUTGERS HAS HIGH QUALITY ACADEMIC PROGRAMS – GSOS

CAMPUS 2001	Agree	Strongly Agree	2001 TOTAL	CAMPUS 1997	Agree	Strongly Agree	1997 TOTAL
Camden	45%	51%	96%	Camden	54%	40%	94%
Newark	60%	34%	94%	Newark	59%	32%	91%
New Brunswick	55%	35%	90%	New Brunswick	56%	38%	94%

TABLE 3c: RUTGERS HAS A HIGH QUALITY PROGRAM IN MY MAJOR OR AREA OF STUDY – GSOS

CAMPUS 2001	Agree	Strongly Agree	2001 TOTAL	CAMPUS 1997	Agree	Strongly Agree	1997 TOTAL
Camden	49%	42%	91%	Camden	48%	35%	83%
Newark	51%	33%	84%	Newark	53%	29%	82%
New Brunswick	46%	37%	83%	New Brunswick	49%	36%	85%

In addition to the quality of academic programs, cost was very important to Rutgers students. Slight improvement in student opinion regarding the cost of attending Rutgers occurred between 1997 and 2001 among seniors. In 2001, agreement was quite high on all campuses where 97 percent of the seniors from Camden and approximately 90 percent of the seniors from Newark and New Brunswick agreed that the cost of attending Rutgers is reasonable. Sixty percent of Camden seniors agreed strongly that the costs at Rutgers were reasonable (see table 3d).

TABLE 3d: THE COST OF ATTENDING RUTGERS IS REASONABLE – GSOS

CAMPUS 2001	Agree	Strongly Agree	2001 TOTAL	CAMPUS 1997	Agree	Strongly Agree	1997 TOTAL
Camden	37%	60%	97%	Camden	52%	41%	93%
Newark	47%	42%	89%	Newark	56%	27%	83%
New Brunswick	45%	46%	91%	New Brunswick	58%	31%	89%

EXPECTATIONS

First year students indicated strong expectations about their college career as they began their university studies. They had expectations about their chances of earning their BA/BS degree as well as expectations about their likelihood of pursuing an advanced degree. Incoming first-year, full-time students expressed concerns about financing and the need to work while pursuing their studies. Additionally, time constraints can be problematic when work, internships and externships, and the wish to volunteer for community services compete with time needed for class work, studying, and extracurricular pursuits. On the other hand, incoming students are optimistic about their ability to do well in college. As we saw above, many had done the remedial preparatory work needed for success in college. Furthermore, most students entered college with the expectation that they would be satisfied with the college they were attending and, as we also saw above, think they are above average when it comes to academic ability. Looking at responses from this cohort as many complete their degrees offers us the opportunity to see how their expectations played out over their undergraduate years.

HIGHEST ACADEMIC DEGREE PLANNED

At the start of their college career, two-thirds of Camden students and three-fourths of their peers believed the chances were “Very Good” that they would get a bachelors degree. Newark students were slightly less optimistic with only six-in-ten expecting to attain this degree. Eight-in-ten New Brunswick students and students attending other public universities that are highly selective had the expectation of accomplishing this goal.

TABLE 4a: CHANCES ARE “Very Good” WILL GET A BACHELORS DEGREE
CIRP 1996

	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
BA/BS	66%	77%	59%	80%	82%

Almost half of Camden students (49%) and half of Newark students who began their college tenure in Fall 1995 as first-time full-time students have graduated after six years. The six-year graduation rate for first-time full-time students who entered a New Brunswick undergraduate college in Fall 1995 is 72 percent (see table 4b). All three campuses exceed the graduation rates of their respective peer institutions, as determined from data provided by the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange. Camden students exceed the average graduation rates of other institutions offering a Master's Degree with enrollments of fewer than 5,000 students, Newark students surpass the average graduation rate for Doctoral/Research Intensive institutions with enrollments between 5,000 and 17,999 students, and New Brunswick students graduate at a higher rate than the average public Association of American University institution.

TABLE 4b: SIX-YEAR GRADUATION RATES 1993-1996 COHORTS

	Camden	Peer Group	Newark	Peer Group	New Brunswick	Peer Group
Fall 1995 Cohort	49%	40%	50%	43%	72%	69%
Average Rate: Fall 1993 – Fall 1996 Cohort	51%		51%		73%	

As students complete their four-year degrees, many have upwardly revised their expectation of achieving a postgraduate degree sometime in their lifetime. Three-in-ten incoming Camden students expected they would not pursue an advanced degree, similar in proportion to students at other public universities with medium-selectivity (see table 4c). Newark and New Brunswick students, like their peers at other highly selective public institutions, were less likely than students at Camden to report that a BA/BS was the highest academic degree they plan to achieve (15% and 12% respectively, peers 14%).

TABLE 4c: HIGHEST ACADEMIC DEGREE PLAN TO ACHIEVE – CIRP 1996

	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
BA/BS	29%	30%	15%	12%	14%
MA/MS	31%	46%	46%	38%	38%
Professional	20%	9%	17%	22%	24%
PhD/EdD	18%	13%	18%	24%	23%

With the success of completing their baccalaureate degrees, most students expected to extend their education at some point in their life to earn an advanced degree. In 2001, less than ten percent of students on each campus reported that the BA/BS would be their highest academic degree. After four years of

college, Camden students look a lot like students on the other Rutgers campuses when it comes to their expectations for earning advanced degrees. Data from the GSOS gathered in 1997 and 2001 show that 50 to 60 percent of graduating students across campuses expected to attain a MA/MS degree and 20 to 25 percent expected to acquire a doctoral degree (see table 4d).

TABLE 4d: HIGHEST ACADEMIC DEGREE PLAN TO ACHIEVE – GSOS

Camden	2001	1997	Newark	2001	1997	New Brunswick	2001	1997
BA/BS	6%	7%	BA/BS	6%	13%	BA/BS	8%	11%
MA/MS	61%	55%	MA/MS	56%	48%	MA/MS	50%	49%
Professional	8%	14%	Professional	14%	18%	Professional	18%	17%
PhD/EdD	25%	23%	PhD/EdD	25%	19%	PhD/EdD	24%	21%

FINANCING AND TIME CONCERNS

Financing their college education and the expectation of their need to work to supplement funds for college expenses puts a strain on student activities that include class work, studying, volunteer work, internships, and other extracurricular activities. In the GSOS surveys of 1992 and 1997 it was found that more than two-thirds (69% and 68%, respectively) of graduating students reported that they had participated in extra-curricular activities. (Because of a concern for survey length and the desire to obtain information on a variety of topics, not all questions are repeated on the graduating student survey each time it is administered. In the 2001 administration of GSOS the questions on extracurricular activities were excluded.) In both years, three-in-ten reported involvement in academic and professional activities and approximately one-in-five participated in community service, honor societies, or intramurals. Although one-third indicated they had not participated in any of the extracurricular activities listed, another three-in-ten of all respondents in these two time periods reported engaging in three or more activities (data not shown).

Most students entering in Fall 1996 expressed concern about financing college. Like their peer institutions, approximately two-thirds of Rutgers students at Camden (65%) and New Brunswick (70%) indicated they had “Some” or “Major” concern about financing college. Newark students were somewhat less concerned, although half still were at some level (see table 5a).

TABLE 5a: CONCERN ABOUT FINANCING COLLEGE – CIRP 1996

Level of Concern	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
Some	57%	54%	33%	54%	52%
Major	8%	15%	17%	16%	14%

One-in-four Newark students reported that chances were “Very Good” that they would get a job to help pay for college expenses (see table 5b). Students at Rutgers campuses where concern with financing college is greater, also had higher expectations that they would need to work to help pay for college expenses. Four-in-ten students in New Brunswick and Camden believed chances were “Very Good” that they would get a job to supplement expenses, like their peers at similar institutions.

TABLE 5b: CHANCES ARE “Very Good” WILL GET A JOB TO HELP PAY FOR COLLEGE EXPENSES – CIRP 1996

Chances are	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
“Very Good”	40%	44%	27%	38%	37%

While the majority of entering students believed they would not work to help pay for college, many students indicated that they did nevertheless work in the last year of their studies, according to results from the GSOS. In 2001, eight-in-ten students graduating from Camden reported working more than ten hours a week in their final year of school. Three-fourths of Newark students and more than half of graduating students from New Brunswick (57%) also worked more than ten hours a week in their final year (see table 5c).

TABLE 5c: WORKED IN THE LAST YEAR OF SCHOOL – GSOS - 2001

GSOS 2001	Camden	Newark	New Brunswick
Worked at All	87%	89%	80%
Worked more than 10 hours	81%	76%	57%

In addition, one-third of these students indicated having had an internship, externship, or co-op work experience while at Rutgers: Camden (35%) and New Brunswick (33%). One-Fourth of Newark students (24%) participated in similar programs (see table 5d).

TABLE 5d: HAD AN INTERNSHIP, EXTERNSHIP OR CO-OP WORK EXPERIENCE WHILE AT RUTGERS – GSOS - 2001

GSOS 2001	Camden	Newark	New Brunswick
Participated	35%	24%	33%

VOLUNTEER WORK AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

One-fourth of students entering in Fall 1996 indicated that chances were “Very Good” that they would participate in volunteer or community service while at Rutgers (see table 6a). Seniors met this expectation in 1997 and 2002 in New Brunswick (see table 6b). Although volunteerism and community service activities increased between 1992 and 1997 among Camden and Newark students, this activity still fell short of the expectations students had when they began their studies.

TABLE 6a: CHANCES ARE “Very Good” WILL PARTICIPATE IN VOLUNTEER OR COMMUNITY SERVICE – CIRP 1996

Chances are	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
“Very Good”	24%	17%	25%	22%	26%

TABLE 6b: PARTICIPATED IN VOLUNTEER OR COMMUNITY SERVICE – GSOS

GSOS	Camden	Newark	New Brunswick
1997	15%	19%	26%
1992	10%	9%	23%

In addition to the time students spent with athletic activities, exercising, sports, socializing, on entertainment and commuting to and from job, school, and classes; they were quite busy at core college and life support activities: attending classes or labs, studying or other academic activities outside of classes or labs, and working for pay, interning, or volunteering. The typical student graduating in 2001 from one of the three Rutgers campuses spent 11 – 15 hours attending classes or labs, 11 – 20 hours studying or on other academic activities outside of classes or labs; or, for Camden and Newark students, more than 20 hours working for pay, interning, or volunteering per week. Half of New Brunswick students worked or volunteered fewer hours (6 – 20), but spent similar time attending classes and with other academic pursuits compared to students at sister campuses (see table 6c).

TABLE 6c: TIME SPENT PARTICIPATING IN VARIOUS ACTIVITIES – GSOS 2001

Attending Classes or Labs	Camden	Newark	New Brunswick
6 – 10 Hours	21%	22%	13%
11 – 15 Hours	34%	27%	34%
16 – 20 Hours	20%	22%	32%

Studying or Other Academic Activities Outside of Classes or Labs	Camden	Newark	New Brunswick
5 Hours or less	19%	24%	22%
6 - 10 Hours	32%	32%	31%
11 – 20 Hours	40%	33%	40%

Working for Pay, Interning, or Volunteering	Camden	Newark	New Brunswick
5 Hours or less	18%	20%	25%
6 - 20 Hours	32%	38%	52%
More than 20 Hours	50%	42%	23%

EXPECTATION OF SATISFACTION WITH COLLEGE

Although for many students Rutgers was not their first choice, incoming students were quite clear about the expectation that their experiences would be positive at Rutgers. Approximately four-in-ten new undergraduate students at Newark and New Brunswick indicated chances were “Very Good” that they would be satisfied with the college they were attending. This was slightly less than students at other highly-selective public institutions where approximately half indicated chances were “Very Good” that they would be satisfied with their institution. Camden students were slightly more positive than their peers with more than half having high expectations of their satisfaction with Rutgers (see table 7a).

TABLE 7a: CHANCES ARE “Very Good” WILL BE SATISFIED WITH COLLEGE ATTENDING – CIRP 1996

Chances are	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
“Very Good”	52%	46%	39%	43%	52%

Among those who complete their studies at Rutgers, the expectation of satisfaction with Rutgers held by first-year students has been fulfilled. Approximately 90 percent of Camden and Newark students graduating in 2001 rated their academic experience at Rutgers as “Good” or “Excellent.” More than eight-in-ten New Brunswick graduates assign a positive good/excellent rating for their academic experience. Furthermore, levels were comparable to university-wide academic ratings when students rated their academic experience within their major for all campuses. (See Table 7b)

TABLE 7b: RATING ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE AT RUTGERS AND WITHIN MAJOR – GSOS 2001

Academic Experience At Rutgers	Good	Excellent	TOTAL	Academic Experience In Major	Good	Excellent	TOTAL
Camden	50%	42%	92%	Camden	42%	50%	92%
Newark	69%	21%	90%	Newark	57%	31%	88%
New Brunswick	56%	27%	83%	New Brunswick	44%	36%	80%

Additional evidence of satisfaction with Rutgers was found in students’ responses to how well they believe Rutgers prepared them for the future. Approximately 80 percent of Camden and Newark graduates and 70 percent of New Brunswick rated Rutgers as a “Good” or “Excellent” in preparing them for the future (see table 7c). Nearly 90 percent of Camden and Newark and 81 percent of New Brunswick students reported that they would choose Rutgers again if they were starting their college career over.

TABLE 7c: RATE HOW WELL PREPARED FOR FUTURE AND WOULD CHOOSE AGAIN IF STARTING OVER – GSOS 2001

Rutgers and Department	Good	Excellent	TOTAL	Would choose RU Again	Agree	Strongly Agree	TOTAL
Camden	46%	36%	82%	Camden	39%	50%	89%
Newark	57%	22%	79%	Newark	51%	36%	87%
New Brunswick	49%	21%	70%	New Brunswick	48%	33%	81%

GOALS AND ACHIEVEMENT

As students begin their college career, they cite many reasons they consider as “Very Important” ones for pursuing a degree. Many reasons are career related: to get a better job, to make more money, to develop personal skills that will help them advance their careers (communication skills, improved self-confidence, increased ability to get along with others, improved leadership skills). Students also want to pursue personal interests, gain a general education, and become a more cultured person.

TO GET A BETTER JOB

Like the student entering peer institutions in Fall 1996, Rutgers students indicated that getting a better job was a key factor in deciding to go to college. Three-fourths of Rutgers students reported this as “Very Important.” (see table 8a).

TABLE 8a: REASONS RATED AS “Very Important” IN DECIDING TO GO TO COLLEGE – CIRP 1996 – TO GET A BETTER JOB

Get a Better Job	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
“Very Important”	83%	78%	74%	74%	73%

In 2001, two-thirds to three-fourths of graduating students reported that Rutgers had been helpful to them when it comes to evaluating several career related goals. Furthermore, one-third or more of respondents reported Rutgers was “Very Helpful” in improving their chances of getting a good job; discovering career interests; improving knowledge, technical skills, and/or competence in work related areas; and formulating long-term career plans and/or goals. In 1997, between half and two-thirds of the senior class credited Rutgers with helping them to achieve these same goals (see table 8b).

TABLE 8b: CAREER RELATED FACTORS – GSOS 2001

	GSOS 2001			GSOS 1997
	RU Moderately Helpful	RU Very Helpful	TOTAL	Achieved Or Achieving
Improved chances of getting a good job	35%	44%	79%	65%
Discovered career interests	34%	39%	73%	63%
Improved my knowledge, technical skills, and/or competence in work-related areas	37%	36%	73%	68%
Formulated long-term career plans and/or goals	33%	35%	68%	55%

TO MAKE MORE MONEY

Most new undergraduates attended college with the expectation that they will make more money as a result of receiving their degrees. Seventy percent of New Brunswick students, 72 percent of Newark students, and 78 percent of Camden students started college at Rutgers with this expectation, similar to expectations at peer institutions (see table 8c).

TABLE 8c: REASONS RATED AS “Very Important” IN DECIDING TO GO TO COLLEGE – CIRP 1996 – TO MAKE MORE MONEY

Make More Money	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
“Very Important”	78%	73%	72%	70%	68%

In 1997, half of graduating seniors believed that Rutgers was instrumental in helping them improve their chances for a raise and/or promotions. By 2001, six-in-ten graduates credited Rutgers with being “Moderately” or “Very” helpful in improving these chances (see table 8d).

TABLE 8d: CAREER RELATED FACTORS – GSOS 2001

GSOS 2001	RU Moderately Helpful	RU Very Helpful	TOTAL	GSOS 1997: Achieved Or Achieving
Improved my chances for a raise and/or promotion	35%	26%	61%	51%

Furthermore, Rutgers 2001 graduates indicated that Rutgers prepared them for the job market: 93 percent of Camden students, 81 percent of Newark students, and 77 percent of New Brunswick students (see table 8e). Even among GSOS 2001 graduates who were looking for work at the time they responded to the survey, 85 percent stated they were “Somewhat (44%) or “Very Optimistic” (41%) about their chances for obtaining a job (data not shown).

TABLE 8e: HOW WELL PREPARED FOR THE JOB MARKET ARE RUTGERS STUDENTS? – GSOS 2001

How Well Prepared For Job Market?	Somewhat Prepared	Very Well Prepared	TOTAL
Camden	54%	39%	93%
Newark	54%	27%	81%
New Brunswick	56%	21%	77%

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENRICHMENT GOALS

Students graduating in 2001 were asked how helpful Rutgers was to them in improving communication and leadership skills, self-confidence and the ability to get along with others. More than eight-in-ten reported that Rutgers helped them improve their communication skills. Three-fourths credited Rutgers with improving their self-confidence and ability to get along with others. Seven-in-ten gained improved leadership skills while at Rutgers (see table 9). Between two-thirds and three-fourths of the students graduating in 1997 reported achieving these skills while at Rutgers.

TABLE 9: CAREER RELATED FACTORS – GSOS 2001

GSOS 2001	RU Moderately Helpful	RU Very Helpful	TOTAL	GSOS 1997: Achieved Or Achieving
Increased my communication skills	41%	42%	83%	76%
Improved my self-confidence	36%	38%	74%	67%
Improved my ability to get along with others	38%	36%	74%	72%
Improved my leadership skills	35%	36%	71%	64%

PERSONAL INTERESTS

Many first year students have a broader interest for pursuing a college education. In addition to the practical considerations of increasing salary or career options, in 1996, most new students at Rutgers reported attending college to learn more about things that interested them: 70 percent of Newark students, 75 percent of Camden students, and 77 percent of students beginning their studies at New Brunswick cited this as “Very Important” to their decision to go to college (see table 10a). Eight-in-ten of the 2001 graduates reported that they had indeed learned more about things that interested them, citing Rutgers as being helpful in this endeavor (see table 10b).

TABLE 10a: REASONS RATED AS “Very Important” IN DECIDING TO GO TO COLLEGE – CIRP 1996 – TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THINGS THAT INTEREST ME

Personal Interests	Camden	Peers: Med- Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High- Selectivity
“Very Important”	75%	73%	70%	77%	80%

TABLE 10b: PERSONAL INTERESTS – GSOS 2001

GSOS 2001	RU Moderately Helpful	RU Very Helpful	TOTAL
Learned more about things that interested me	39%	42%	81%

TO GAIN A GENERAL EDUCATION

Gaining a general education was another “Very Important” factor in the decision to attend college according to at least two-thirds of students starting Rutgers in 1996 (see table 11a). In 2001, 86 percent of graduating seniors reported that Rutgers had been helpful in attaining this goal (see table 11b).

TABLE 11a: REASONS RATED AS “Very Important” IN DECIDING TO GO TO COLLEGE – CIRP 1996 – TO GAIN A GENERAL EDUCATION

General Education	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
“Very Important”	64%	60%	77%	70%	70%

TABLE 11b: GENERAL EDUCATION – GSOS 2001

GSOS 2001	RU Moderately Helpful	RU Very Helpful	TOTAL
Gained a general education and appreciation of ideas	38%	48%	86%

TO BECOME A MORE CULTURED PERSON

Many students enter college with the idea that furthering their education will make them a more cultured person. Camden students entering in 1996 reported this as “Very Important” in their decision to go to college (42%), as did 47 percent of New Brunswick students and 53 percent of those beginning their studies at Newark (see table 12a). Rutgers aided in this pursuit according to 72 percent of students graduating in 2001 (see table 12b). In 1997, seven-in-ten graduating students indicated they had gained a better appreciation of literature and the arts while at Rutgers. This proportion had fallen to six-in-ten among those graduating in 2001.

TABLE 12a: REASONS RATED AS “Very Important” IN DECIDING TO GO TO COLLEGE – CIRP
1996 – TO BECOME A MORE CULTURED PERSON

Become Cultured	Camden	Peers: Med-Selectivity	Newark	New Brunswick	Peers: High-Selectivity
“Very Important”	42%	35%	53%	47%	46%

TABLE 12b: PERSONAL INTERESTS – GSOS 2001

GSOS 2001	RU Moderately Helpful	RU Very Helpful	TOTAL	GSOS 1997: Achieved Or Achieving
Became a more cultured person	29%	43%	72%	NA
Gained a better appreciation of literature and the arts	34%	26%	60%	69%