



**Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP)  
First-Year Survey  
Selected Results**

**Fall 2009**

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OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT  
GUILFORD COLLEGE  
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**Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP)**  
**Freshman Survey**  
**Selected Results**

The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) survey, a nation-wide survey coordinated by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at the University of California - Los Angeles, is designed to provide comprehensive information on incoming first-year students. In addition to demographic and socioeconomic data, the survey examines what activities students participated in before coming to college, how students choose colleges, student values and beliefs about diversity and civic engagement, and student expectations. The responses of 427 of Guilford's 448 first-time, full-time students entering in the fall of 2009 (95% response rate) were compared to 14,490 students attending highly selective, four-year private, "other religious" institutions (Peer) such as Davidson College, Gettysburg College, Wofford College, Pepperdine University, and Randolph College, and 27,550 students at four-year private, "other religious" institutions (Other).

**STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS**

A typical fall 2009 Guilford College freshmen is similar to freshmen at Peer and Other institutions in that they are white (77.8%), 18 or 19 years old (96.3%), a US citizen (97.2%), a native English-speaker (95.8%), and whose permanent address is 51 miles or more away from campus (78.6%).

The majority of incoming freshmen are graduates of a public high school (69.6%) with an average grade of B or higher (80.0%). Their average SAT test scores were 557 in Math, 563 in Verbal, and 551 in Writing.

Incoming freshmen at Guilford College indicated that their religious preferences was Baptist (17.1%), other Christian (9.4%), Roman Catholic (8.0%), Quaker (6.7%), Methodist (5.3%), or other religion (5.5%). One third of students (31.3%) selected "None" as their religious preference. More than 7 out of 10 (73.3%) of freshmen reported that they had attended a religious service during the past year.

More than half of students estimated their parental income over \$50,000 (61.6%). The majority of students' parents have at least a college degree; both their father's (61.4%) and mother's (64.9%) highest educational attainment was a college degree or more. More than 8 out of 10 students (84.8%) indicated that they expect to utilize aid, which will not need to be repaid (grants, scholarships, military funding, etc.), to cover their first year's educational expenses while 60.8% of freshmen indicate that they expect to utilize aid that must be repaid (loans, etc.). Approximately 1 in 10 students (10.6%) have major concerns that they will not have enough funding to complete college.

## ACTIVITIES PRIOR TO ENTERING GUILFORD COLLEGE

Guilford College freshmen were more likely to have smoked cigarettes (25.9%) in the past year as compared with Peer (13.9%) and Other (13.4%) institutions. They were also more likely to have consumed beer (54.8%) or wine/liquor (47.1%) in the past year than freshmen at Peer (34.4%, 40.2 %) or Other (29.7%, 36.5%) institutions. See Chart 1.

Incoming freshmen were more likely to have socialized with someone of another racial/ethnic group (97.2%) when compared with Peer (97.1%) and Other (96.6%) institutions, and participated in political demonstrations (38.8%) in the past year when compared with Peer (27.1%) and Other (27.5%) institutions. However, incoming freshmen were less likely to have performed volunteer work (81.9%) in the past year when compared with Peer (90.9%) and Other (86.7%) institutions. See Chart 1.

## FACTORS INFLUENCING COLLEGE CHOICE

Guilford College freshmen reported that Guilford College was their first (52.0%) or second choice (30.6%). The majority of freshmen indicated that the offer of financial assistance (66.9%), the size of the college (52.3%), and a visit to campus (53.3%) played a very important role in enrolling at Guilford College.

Good academic reputation (6.7%), rankings in national magazines (49.8%), graduates gain admissions to top graduate/professional schools (37.2%), graduates get good jobs (21.4%), religious affiliation (11.3%), and reputation for social activities (29.8%), in comparison to Peer and Other institutions, were not as important for Guilford College freshmen in making their decision to attend. Athletic department recruiting efforts were more important to freshmen at Guilford College (39.1%) than at Peer (23.4%) and Other institutions (31.0%). See Chart 2.

## POLITICAL/SOCIAL VIEWS

Freshmen at Guilford College indicated that their political views were far left (8.1%) as compared to Peer (3.5%) and Other (2.7%) institutions, or Liberal (43.8%), when compared to Peer (28.0%) and Other (22.1%) institutions.

Freshmen at Guilford College differed from freshmen at Peer and Other institutions in their selection of “Agree Strongly” with the following statements (refer to Chart 3):

Abortion should be legal (40.5%), Peer (25.5%), Other (18.5%)

Same-sex couples should have the right to legal marital status (52.4%), Peer (37.3%), Other (27.8%)

Marijuana should be legalized (26.0%), Peer (14.3%), Other (12.7%)

Students from disadvantaged social backgrounds should be given preferential treatment in admissions (6.4%), Peer (3.7%), Other (6.0%)

## EDUCATION PLANS AND ASPIRATIONS

More than 4 in 5 freshmen at Guilford College intend to seek an academic degree beyond a bachelor's (B.A., B.S., etc.) (18.7%), Master's degree (M.A., M.S., etc.) (43.0%), Ph.D. or Ed.D. (20.7%), or Professional (13.5%).

For more information about the 2009 CIRP First-Year Survey, contact Guilford's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment.