

Introducing the Class of 2005

Introduction

Every year, for the past thirty years or so, the “Freshman Survey¹” is given to incoming students during orientation. The survey, sponsored by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA, provides a snapshot of young people on the verge of their college career. The survey gathers data from students from large and small schools, public and private, and answers questions about family background, high school activities, interests, attitudes, academic and social strengths and weaknesses, why they chose to attend Sweet Briar, and most important of all, their expectations for the next four years and beyond.

Sixty-nine percent of the Class of 2005 have traveled outside the United States, which is reflected in their interest in study abroad programs.

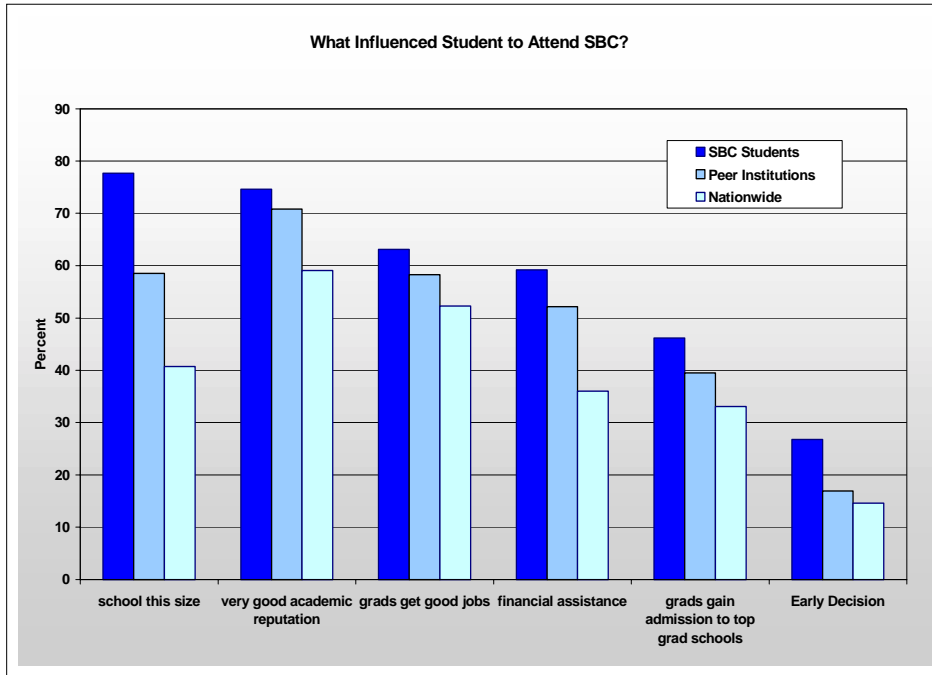
The results of the survey allow comparisons with highly selective institutions like Sweet Briar, as well as nationally with all schools. HERI, the sponsoring agency, has been tracking the results and publishing The American Freshman annually which provides a summary with national trends.

The results this year depict a group of young women filled with drive to achieve, persistence, and intellectual self-confidence. Sixty-nine percent of the Class of 2005 have traveled outside the United States, which is reflected in their interest in studying abroad: 80% of them stating that they were either very interested or somewhat interested in study abroad programs. Ninety-five percent came to Sweet Briar with the expectation of staying two years or longer. And while at Sweet Briar, 72% of them expect to participate in alternative educational opportunities such as internships, summer research, independent study, or community service. They are an engaged group, with 78% expecting to be involved in some type of student club or organization. Upon graduation, 65% anticipate attending graduate school, 22% will join the work force, 6% professional school, 1% volunteer work, while 6% are undecided or cite other plans.

The following presents a sampling of responses to survey questions by Sweet Briar’s Class of 2005 as compared with other first-year female students at peer schools and at schools nationwide.

1. The “Freshman Survey” is also referred to as CIRP for Cooperative Institutional Research Program.

Why do students attend Sweet Briar?



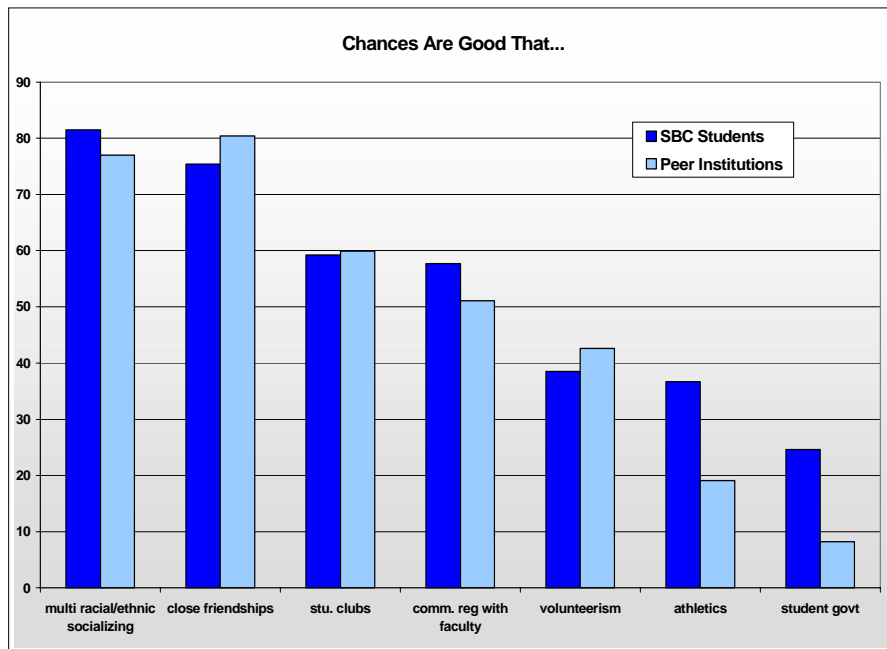
As first-time, first year freshman complete this survey, the reasons that they choose Sweet Briar College are fresh on their minds. The results show that 78% selected Sweet Briar because of their desire to attend a school of this size. This is up from last year's result of 68%.

Academic reputation continues to play a big part in the reasons students chose Sweet Briar. This year's survey showed that academic reputation was a key influence for 75% of those completing the survey compared with 76% for the previous year.

Other influences include financial aid, which also remained the same from last year. Additionally, the fact that Sweet Briar alumnae get good jobs and are admitted to top graduate programs are deciding factors. However, this factor has dropped from last year with "good jobs" at 71% and "grad school" at 57%. The Early Decision admission program is a key influencing factor for first-year students. In fact, this factor has nearly doubled from the previous year - 14% for the Class of 2004 to 27% for the Class of 2005.

Chances are good that...

One section of the survey asks students to anticipate what activities and social interactions they expect to engage in during their college years. Most of these activities are on par with peer institutions; however, a couple of them are significantly higher. Sweet Briar students expect to participate in varsity or intercollegiate athletics at a rate almost twice that of our peers (37% vs. 19%). Students' interest in an active lifestyle continues



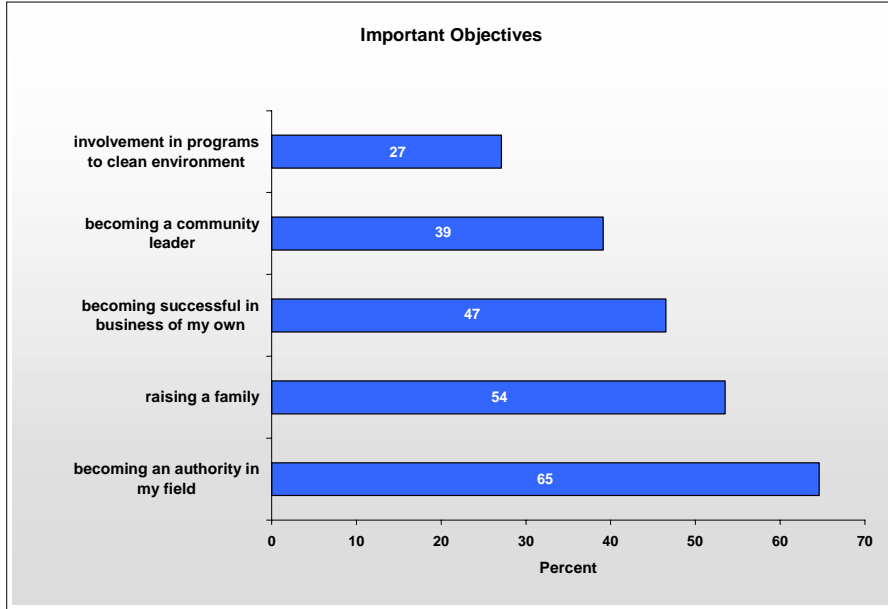
to grow and this category jumped by ten points from last year when it was 27%. In addition, they expect to participate in student government at a 3-to-1 ratio compared to our peers. The highest category continues to be socializing with others from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds at 82%; however, this area is down from the previous year at 91%. Seventy-five percent expect to develop close friendships with other students, again, down from the previous year at 84%. Not surprisingly, 58% of the Class expects to communicate regularly with their professors. Finally, their interest in volunteerism fell slightly from 44% for the Class of 2004 to 39% for the Class of 2005.

Important objectives

The most important goal or objective for the Class of 2005 is their desire to become an authority in their chosen field.

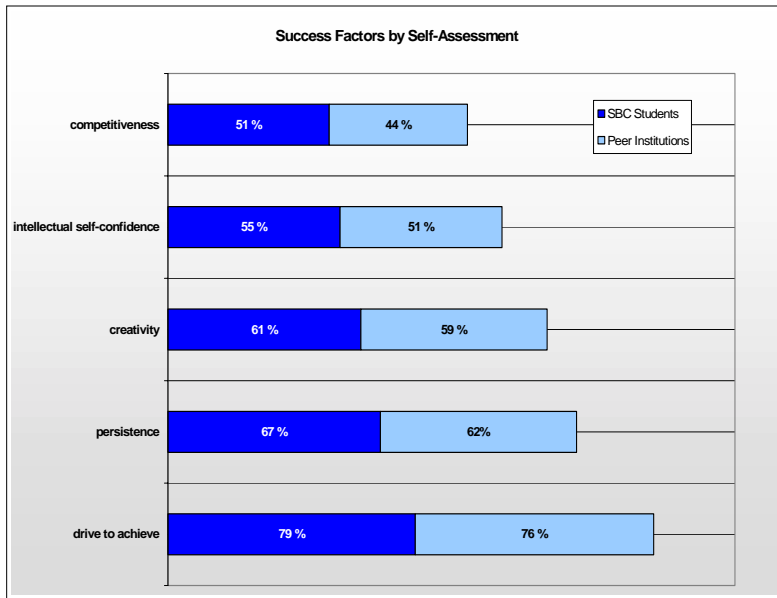
The survey results show that 65% of the class view this as important, remaining near last year's result of 69%.

Becoming successful in their own business has increased from 40% to 47%. While raising a family is important, 54% rating it as an important goal, it is significantly lower than at peer schools (71%) or nationally (72%). Students are committed toward



working to have a clean environment and 27% anticipate being involved in an activity to support environmental issues. Becoming a community leader slipped from 44% in the previous year to 39% this year.

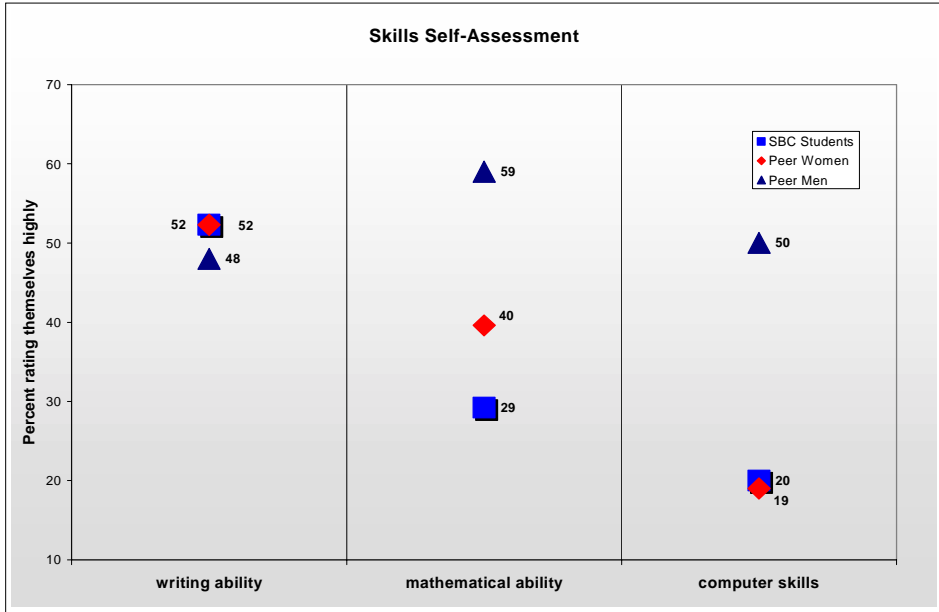
Self assessment factors



Historically, Sweet Briar students have seen themselves as having a strong drive to achieve. This year continues with no exception as 79% rated themselves either above average or in the highest 10%, compared with the average person in her age group. This category was followed by persistence in which 67% of the Class rated themselves in the high category. Other factors include creativity with a 61% rating, down from 69% for Class of 2004, as a high area for them. Fifty-five percent of the Class rated

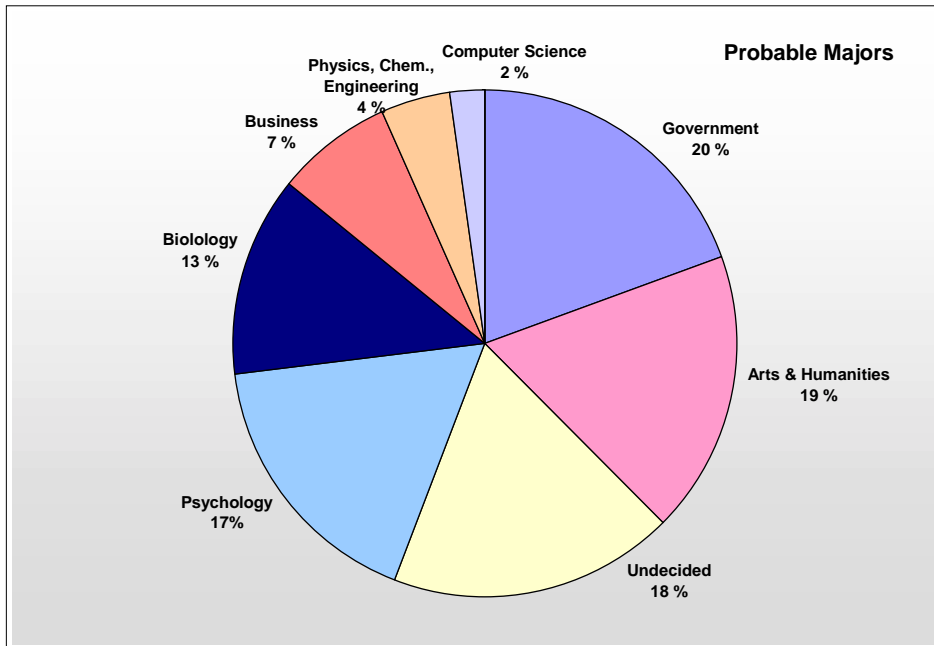
their intellectual self-confidence highly, compared to 65% for Class of 2004, and competitiveness at 51%, which was similar to last year.

In the area of specific skills, 52% of this Class rated their writing ability as high, which is identical with women at peer institutions, and higher than men at our peers at 48%. In contrast, men are more than twice as likely to rate themselves highly in both math and computer skills. Twenty-nine percent of the Class of 2005 rated themselves highly in math skills compared with 40% of women and 59% of men at our peer schools. The pattern is slightly different in computer skills where Sweet Briar women are almost identical to their peers (20% SBC vs. 19% peers) while 50% of men rate themselves highly in this category.



Probably majors

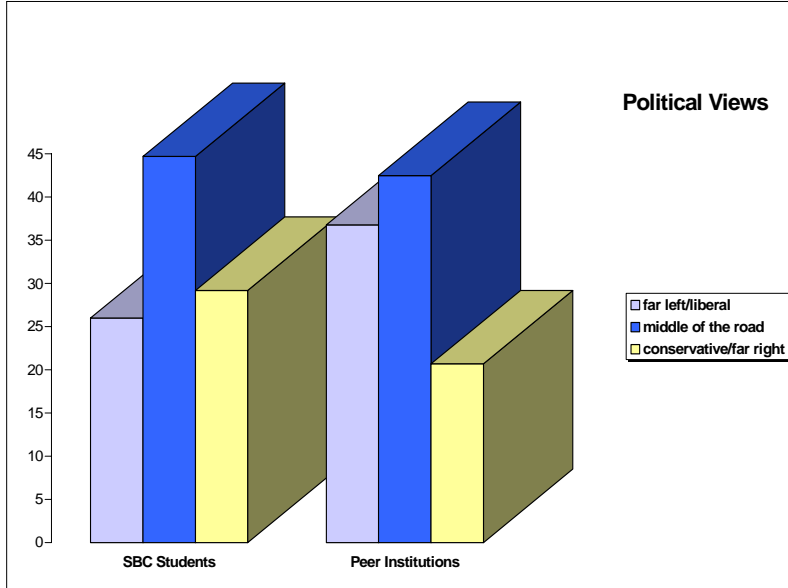
As depicted in the pie chart below, the majority of the Class of 2005 has decided on a major or at least a general field of study. The most popular majors for this Class are Government at 20% and Psychology at 17%.



This is followed by 19% leaning towards the Arts and Humanities, 13% in Biological Sciences, 7% in Business, 4% in Physics, Chemistry, or Engineering, and 2% in Computer Science.

Political views

Political views are always interesting to monitor as new students arrive at Sweet Briar College. The survey results indicate that a majority of the Class of 2005 – 45% compared with 43% at peer institutions – consider themselves middle of the road politically. The spectrum is skewed toward the conservative end with 28% of the Class choosing conservative viewpoints (20% with peers) and fewer liberal students – 21% as compared with 34% with peers. Thirty six percent “discussed politics” during the past year, while 28% cite “influencing the political structure” and 47% cite “keeping up-to-date with political affairs” as important objectives.



Profile of the Class of 2005

<u>Race</u>	<u>%</u>
White	80
African American	5
Asian American	3
American Indian	1
Hispanic	2
Non resident alien	4

<u>Residency</u>	<u>%</u>
Virginia	47
Tx., Md.	5
Calif., N. C.	4
Fla., Ga., Ind., Penn.	3

	<u>Mother</u>	<u>Father</u>
Has graduate degree	23 %	34 %
Has college degree	33 %	24 %
Professional occupation	37 %	56 %

Average high school GPA	3.43
Percent with GPA 3.30 – 3.69	22
Percent with GPA 3.70 – 4.00 +	38
Top 10% of high school class	33 %
Avg. Verbal/Math SAT	570/542

Summary

In summary, the Class of 2005 can be portrayed as a well traveled, confident, competitive, motivated, active, and involved group of young women. Sweet Briar’s academic reputation, small size, and quality of faculty attracted them here and they expect to spend the majority of their college years here.