

**PROFILE OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE
STUDENT (PACS)
A NATIONAL SURVEY DEVELOPED BY AND
ADMINISTERED IN CONJUNCTION WITH NASPA
AND STUDENT VOICE**

2007 REPORT



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I. Overview of the PACS Study

Profile of American College Student Survey Program

The Profile of the American College Student (Profile), administered by NASPA and powered by StudentVoice, is a comprehensive survey program designed to provide institutions with a descriptive portrait of their students at all levels, from first-year to senior-year-plus. Self-reported data, collected annually, describes key characteristics of students on a specific campus, including how they behave and what they believe. The longitudinal data collected allows an institution to track changes and trends in their students' demographics and make comparisons among different groups of students on their campus. It also gives a participating institution the ability to compare the characteristics of students at their institution with a national profile. The Profile provides an institution with credible, accurate, timely, and useful information that can be used to inform decision making and improve programs and services.

Description of the Survey

The Profile is a standardized survey administered via the World Wide Web to a representative sample of students at a participating institution. It is designed to be completed in less than 20 minutes. All students are asked to complete a demographic section, as well as four out of nine randomly selected sections. The Profile survey sections ask students about their: expectations of college, views on academic dishonesty, campus involvement, well-being, use of technology, consumption of media, perceptions about diversity-related issues, personal values, and future aspirations.

Profile Sections

Demographics

- Mandatory section
 - Descriptive questions about how students identify themselves
- Detailed demographics include questions about:
 - Foreign language fluency
 - U.S. generational status
 - College-going generational status

- Relationship status
- Living arrangements
- Work responsibilities

Expectations of College

- The college search process
- Transition to college
- Academic preparation for college-level work
- Preferred learning style

Diversity

- Meaning of diversity
- Diversity awareness and learning outcomes
- Perspectives on what characteristics add to campus diversity

Well-Being

- Health-related issues
- Sexual activity
- Smoking, drinking, and eating habits

Campus Involvement

- Level of involvement in campus activities and leadership roles
- Campus involvement learning outcomes
- Expectations of campus involvement activities

Technology/Consumption of Media

- Internet, e-mail, and technological device use and patterns
- Newspaper, magazine, radio, and television consumption
- Preferred sources of information
- Influence of media on students' lives

Academic Dishonesty

- Likelihood of cheating
- Definitions of cheating
- Understanding of consequences

Opinions

- What students value
- Perspectives on service to the community
- Concern for various social issues

Future Aspirations

- Collegiate experience
- Certainty about major
- Plans for after college
- Perceptions of the job market

Survey Administration

The spring 2007 administration of the Profile was the inaugural year of the survey. A select group of colleges and universities in the United States, all NASPA institutional members and/or StudentVoice members, were invited to participate in the pilot. Eighty-eight institutions were invited to participate and twelve colleges and universities agreed.

Participating Institutions

Twelve institutions successfully participated in the pilot administration of the Profile. Of the institutions that participated, eleven were four-year institutions and one was a two-year institution. Based on the 2000 Carnegie Classification System (The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2000), six of the participating institutions are Master's Comprehensive Colleges and Universities I, five of the institutions are Doctoral/Research Universities Extensive, and one institution is an Associate's College. According to the 2005 Carnegie Classification System, (The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2005) three of the institutions are private and the other nine institutions are public. Of the four-year institutions, seven are primarily or highly residential, while four are primarily non-residential. According to the 2005 Carnegie Classification, six of the participating institutions are considered large (over 10,000 students), while five are considered medium-sized institutions (between 3,000 and 9,999 students.) Only one of the participating institutions is considered a small institution with between 1,000 and 2,999 students.

Sample

Each institution surveyed a random sample of undergraduate students stratified by class standing. No specific groups or populations were excluded, with the exception of minors – who were not allowed to participate. The overall number of students sampled for the Profile was 60,970.

Data Collection Process

A data collection schedule was created for each participating school. Each institution received and provided verification of Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, or the appropriate equivalent, before the start of data collection. While data collection schedules varied slightly by institution to best meet their needs, the survey generally opened in late spring and lasted for approximately three weeks.

Students in the randomly selected sample at each institution received an email inviting them to participate in the online survey. Each email contained a web link that was used to access the survey. The email specified that participation was voluntary and that by clicking on the link to begin the survey, they would be indicating their willingness to participate in the survey. The email message also included the names and contact information of the researchers, so that students had a person to contact with any questions or concerns.

In addition to the initial email, students were sent two reminder emails. Participation was voluntary and respondents were allowed to skip any questions they did not wish to answer.

Eight of the twelve institutions offered incentives for selected students who completed the survey. Incentives were referenced in the invitation email. Examples of incentives provided included gift certificates, ranging from \$20-\$250, iPods, and a free campus parking space.

Data encryption and other measures were used to ensure the security of the data. All data was compiled in real-time in an online, password-protected reporting site. Only select individuals at the participating institution, NASPA, and StudentVoice have access to the results. All data was compiled in aggregate and no individual respondents are identified. Data will be stored for approximately one year after data collection is complete. It will be stored

in the password-protected reporting site. After one year, the data will be purged.

Respondents

The total number of respondents for the Profile was 11,711. This represents the total number of respondents for the national sample. The total number of respondents in the Mississippi State University sample was 892.

Response Rate

The overall national response rate was 19%. Six of the participating institutions had a response rate of 25% or higher. The MSU response rate was about 16%.

Analysis

Initial data analysis was completed by NASPA and StudentVoice. MSU Assessment & Testing Services also received national and MSU-specific data formatted in SPSS; this allowed Assessment & Testing Services to perform additional statistical analyses of data. The results presented in this report derive from both NASPA/StudentVoice and MSU analyses.

Limitations

There are several things that must be considered in evaluating the results of the Profile.

MSU Results

1. As with most surveys like the PACS, the overall demographics of the respondents may or may not be similar to the overall demographics of all students at the institution. This may limit the generalizability of the results. In order to increase the likelihood of generalizable results, students invited to participate were randomly sampled from the MSU student population.
2. Not all student participants completed all sections of the Profile. All participants were required to complete the Demographics section; all other sections were completed by approximately 50% of the total sample. This method decreased the amount of time necessary to complete an individual survey. It also effectively decreased the sample size for all sections but one, which could impact the generalizability of the results.

National Results

1. The national sample data contains MSU data. There is no simple way to “tease out” the MSU data. Therefore, one should keep in mind that any comparison between MSU results and national results is, in part, comparing MSU to MSU. However, the size of the national sample is great enough that any large differences between MSU students and the students of the other participating institutions should still be apparent.
2. Due to the fact that only twelve colleges participated in the pilot year, the national data set is not necessarily representative of college students nationally.
3. Not all participating institutions completed all survey sections. Please see the following table for the number of institutions that participated in each section.

Survey Section Completion

Section	Section Code	Number of Participating Institutions
Demographics	Dem	All
Future Aspirations	1	11
College Expectations	2	9
Campus Involvement	3	11
Well Being	4	9
Technology Use	5	10
Consumption of Media	6	10
Diversity Related Issues	7	10
Academic Integrity	8	11
Personal Opinions	9	10

II. Results by Survey Section

The results reported in the following pages are mostly derived from MSU student responses. When there are notable differences between MSU student responses and those from the national group, the differences will be indicated.

Demographics

Class Standing. The survey had more representation from MSU seniors than other classifications, which reflects the greater number of seniors in the MSU student population. Approximately 21% respondents were freshmen, 19% sophomores, 24% juniors, and 36% seniors. The national survey results were more evenly balanced across the classifications.

Enrollment Status. Most MSU respondents (94%) were enrolled full-time.

Gender. Approximately 58% of the MSU respondents were female, with 41% male respondents and less than 1% transgender. The national sample had a slightly greater female ratio (approximately 64%).

Age. A wide range of ages were reported, although most MSU respondents (approximately 80%) were between the ages of 18 and 23.

International. Just over 1% of the MSU respondents were international students.

Race. The majority of MSU students were White (79%). Other races reported were Black/African American (13%), Latino(a)/Hispanic (1%), Asian (1%), Multiracial (1%), Indigenous/Native American (.5%), and other (1%). The national sample had a similar percentage of White respondents but a lower percentage that identified themselves as Black/African-American (5%). The national sample also had a larger percentage of students identifying themselves as Asian (5%).

Language. The national sample contained a greater percentage of students fluent in more than one language. Eight percent of MSU students indicated they speak two or more languages fluently, while nearly 18% of the national sample reported speaking two or more languages fluently.

Place of Birth. Most MSU students were born in the United States (95%), and most of their parents (92%) and grandparents (86%) were also born in the U.S. The same trend was viewed in the national sample, albeit with a greater likelihood of parents and grandparents born outside the U.S.: 92%

of the national sample, 83% of the parents, and 66% of the grandparents were born in the U.S.

Religious affiliation: Approximately 64% of the MSU sample reported being Christian (Catholic or other); the national sample proved to have an identical percentage indicating a Christian faith. Other responses include agnostic (8%), spiritual, non-religious (7%), atheist (5%), and Jewish (4%).

Sexual Orientation: Approximately 95% of the MSU sample identified themselves as heterosexual; just over 1% reported being bisexual, and about 1% indicated being gay. The national sample produced somewhat higher percentages of students responding bisexual (2%) and gay (1.4%).

On- or Off-Campus: A higher percentage of MSU students live off-campus (61%) compared to the national sample (52%). About 34% of MSU students report living on-campus, and an additional 4% report living in fraternity or sorority housing.

Work: A smaller proportion of MSU students (53%) work for pay during the academic year, when compared to the national sample (64%). Of those that work, most do not have more than one job (81% for the MSU sample, 72% for the national sample). The jobs that MSU students have are divided nearly equally between on-campus and off-campus work. The majority of MSU students (62%) work 20 hours or less per week. Most work to support themselves and/or their family and to pay personal and school expenses (67%). Approximately 22% work for extra spending money, while about 10% work for the experience.

Marital Status: About 52% of MSU students indicated they were single. Just over 8% reported being married, although 37% indicated they were in a committed partnership. Less than 2% reported they were separated, divorced, or widowed.

Children/Dependents: About 9% of the MSU respondents have children. Of those students with children, approximately 75% claim them as dependents on tax returns. A majority of the respondents (about 64%) indicate that they are claimed as dependents on another's (parent's/guardian's/etc.) tax return.

Family Income: Twenty-nine percent of the MSU sample reported yearly family incomes of \$50,000 or less. About 26% reported family incomes between \$50,000 and \$100,000. About 17% had incomes greater than \$100,000. In contrast, approximately 27% of the national sample reported yearly incomes greater than \$100,000.

Family Education Levels: About 12% of the MSU respondents were the first of their families to attend college. This is less than the national figure – about 16% of the national sample respondents were the first to go to college. Among MSU students, approximately 50% of students' mothers/female guardians and father/male guardians had earned a bachelor's degree or higher; parental education levels of the national sample were similar.

Communication with Parents/Guardians: A large majority of MSU respondents communicate with their parents/guardians a few times a week or daily (about 84%). This is somewhat higher than the national sample figure (about 78%). The two topics discussed most frequently with parents/guardians are academics (e.g., grades, courses, and assignments) and social life/friends.

Credit Cards: A sizable portion of MSU respondents indicate they have no credit cards in their name (approximately 48%). About 30% have one credit card, and greater than 22% have two or more cards. This contrasts with the national sample, in which 67% of the respondents have at least one credit card. Most MSU students (78%) carry less than \$500 in credit card debt. About 7% reported carrying \$2000 or more in credit card debt.

Other Colleges/Universities: About 40% indicated they transferred to MSU from a two-year college or 4-year college/university. This is double the percentage of transfers reported by the national sample (20%). Most MSU respondents (92%) do not plan to transfer to another college. About 51% of the MSU students indicate they have attended two or more colleges, including MSU; a much lower percentage (about 28%) of the national sample has attended more than one college.

1. Future Aspirations

Major: The top three majors reported by MSU participants are Engineering, Business, and Education, in that order. The top three majors reported by the national sample are Business, Liberal Arts/Humanities, and Social Sciences. The overall MSU sample appears certain they will graduate with their current major (91%).

Highest Degree: In both the MSU sample and national sample, many respondents plan to earn a master's degree or higher (62% and 67%, respectively).

Time to Graduation: Results indicate that both MSU respondents and respondents in the national sample underestimate how long it may take them to graduate. When starting at MSU, 56% of the respondents planned to take 4 years to graduate. Only 43% of respondents at the time of the survey estimate that they will actually complete their degrees in 4 years. The national sample displayed a similar trend, with 75% initially planning to graduate in 4 years and only 64% now estimating they can actually complete their degrees in 4 years.

Reasons for Earning a Degree: MSU respondents' top three reasons for earning a college degree are: 1. Wanting to move ahead in life; 2. wanting to make a good salary after graduation; and 3. needing the degree for career plans. Only 4% cited "learning for learning's sake" as the main reason.

After-Graduation Plans: Most MSU students either planned to get a job (46%) or attend graduate school (38%). A somewhat lower percentage of respondents in the national sample (30%) planned to attend graduate school after graduating.

Job Market: MSU students tended to be optimistic about the state of the job market after they graduate. About 87% believed they would find a job before or soon after graduating. The national sample was somewhat more pessimistic about the current job market; approximately 21% of the national respondents thought it would take them a few months or longer to find a job after graduating, compared to about 13% of MSU respondents.

Factors in Job Selection: The top three most important factors in choosing a job, according to MSU students, were: 1. "Salary"; 2. "Love for what you will be doing"; and 3. "Benefits." The national sample responded the same, except "Salary" and "Love for what you will be doing" tied for first.

Expected Earnings: Thirty-nine percent of MSU respondents expected to earn between \$20,000 and \$39,900 per year their first year of employment post graduation, and about 35% expected to earn between \$40,000 and \$59,900. Approximately 13% expected to earn \$60,000 or greater. Very similar expectations were noted in the national sample.

Staying with the Company? Many MSU students (55%) reported that they do not know how long they will stay with the organization that hires them out of college. The remaining respondents are split fairly evenly between 1-2 years (7%), 3-5 years (13%), 6+ years (13%), and until retirement (13%). The national sample resembled MSU, with somewhat higher percentages in the 1-2 years (20%) and 3-5 years (19%) categories.

2. Expectations of College

College Applications: Most MSU respondents applied to either one (34%), two (25%), or three (27%) colleges/universities. Only about 14% applied to four or more schools, whereas about 27% of the national sample applied to four or more schools. In the MSU sample, 89% reported that all of the colleges they applied to accepted them. Only about 75% answered the same among the national sample.

First choice: About 74% of MSU students said that MSU was their first choice when applying for college. Approximately 20% said MSU was their second choice. In the national sample, about 68% indicated the college they were attending was their first choice.

Factors in College Selection: The top three factors for choosing MSU, based on percentages of students who reported "Very Important", were: 1. Choice of major/departmental reputation; 2. Cost/Financial Aid offered; and 3. Academic reputation. The least influential factors (based on "Not at all Important" response frequencies) were: 1. Religious affiliation to the institution; 2. Study abroad opportunities, and 3. Peer influence.

Academic Demands/Expectations: About 47% of MSU students found the difficulty of the coursework matched their expectations; about 33% expected the coursework to be more difficult, and nearly 20% expected it to be less difficult. Nearly 71% thought they were prepared for the academic demands of MSU their freshmen year, and 64% thought they had the study skills to be successful their first year.

Learning Preferences: Although MSU students seem to prefer lectures and class discussions equally (41% and 38%, respectively), more respondents also indicated that they learned the more from class discussions (41%) than lectures (28%). Both MSU respondents and national sample respondents report lectures as far and away the most common class format. Both samples also prefer to study by themselves as opposed to studying with others.

Skipping: About 74% of MSU (versus about 70% of national) respondents said they rarely or never skip classes.

Communication with Faculty: About 84% of MSU respondents report communicating with faculty outside of class. The most frequent method of communication was e-mail (58%), followed by meeting during office hours (26%). Very few communicated by phone or instant messenger.

3. Campus Involvement

Campus Activities: Most students (68%) said that the number of activities at MSU matched their expectations. A significant portion (25%) expected somewhat more activities. The three most common ways students learned about campus events were: 1. campus e-mail; 2. word of mouth; and 3. flyers/posters/banners around campus.

Campus Involvement/Participation: MSU respondents generally indicate that they are involved in campus events and activities; however, that involvement is mostly limited to attending events rather than active participation in them.

- *General Campus Events:* 66% attend, about 10% participate, and 20% no involvement.
- *Athletic/Sports Activities:* 55% attend these activities, about 20% actively participate, and 19% no involvement.
- *Student Clubs/Organizations:* 33% attend, 22% participate, and 36% no involvement.
- *Spiritual/Religious Services:* 33% attend, 17% participate, and 40% no involvement.
- *Community Service:* 28% attend, 18% participate, and 44% no involvement.
- *Performing Arts:* 29% attend, 8% participate, and 54% no involvement.
- *Honor Societies:* 24% attend, 15% participate, and 48% no involvement.
- *Greek-Letter Organizations:* 16% attend, 10% participate, and 59% no involvement.
- *Political Activism:* 10% attend, 3% participate, and 75% no involvement.
- *Student Government:* 10% attend, 3% participate, and 75% no involvement.
- *Student Media:* 8% attend, 2% participate, and 80% no involvement.
- *Residential Life:* 6% attend, 3% participate, and 77% no involvement.
- *Orientation Leader:* 5% attend, 2% participate, and 81% no involvement.

A slight majority (57%) indicated that they would like to be more involved in campus activities, but a significant percentage (42%) also indicated being content with their current level of involvement.

Factors that Decrease Involvement: The top three factors that reportedly contribute to lack of campus activity involvement at MSU are: 1. Not enough time; 2. Interference with academic obligations (studying, group work, etc.); and 3. Unsure about how to get involved.

Impact of Campus Activities: Despite limited participation in many of the campus activities/events at MSU, the respondents reported a number of beneficial outcomes of campus involvement they have personally experienced. Greater than 50% of MSU respondents indicated they either somewhat or strongly agreed with the statements in the following table:

As a result of participating in campus activities...	Percentage agreement
I have met people I would not have otherwise met.	86%
I have been able to meet individuals with different interests from my own.	80%
I have been able to meet individuals with similar interests to my own.	90%
I have been able to connect with other students.	81%
I have been able to connect with faculty.	54%
I feel part of the campus community.	68%
I have gained experience/skills relevant to my academic major.	64%
My self-confidence has increased.	64%
My stress-management skills have improved.	52%
My time-management skills have improved.	57%
My communication skills have improved.	74%
My critical thinking/problem-solving skills have improved.	55%
My leadership skills have improved.	57%
I have become more productive.	64%
I have learned to balance social activities with academic obligations (homework, studying, group meetings)	75%

I have become more knowledgeable about the campus community.	77%
My understanding of diverse perspectives has changed.	58%
I am more likely to donate to my college after I graduate.	53%
I am more likely to complete my degree at this college.	74%
My satisfaction with my collegiate experience has improved.	75%

Although the above beneficial impacts are many, a majority of MSU students indicated no improvement to their overall health – including fitness and eating habits – and to their academic achievement and grades, due to participating in campus activities. This is a particularly odd finding given that many of the improved skills in the table above (e.g., stress management and time-management skills) ought to be positively correlated with improved health and academic outcomes.

4. Well Being

Mental Health: About 5% of the MSU sample reported currently having a mental health issue, diagnosed either before or after enrolling at MSU. The national sample reported a greater percentage of students with mental health issues (more than 8%). Greater than 5% of the MSU sample reported having been diagnosed with specific mental health disorders in the past. The following table delineates the various diagnoses:

Diagnosis	Percentage of MSU respondents
Anxiety	13%
Depression	12%
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	6%
Eating Disorder	4%
Bipolar Disorder	3%
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	2%
Schizophrenia	<1%

Though about 20% of the MSU sample has participated in counseling at some point in their lives, the respondents reported that only about 3% of the total sample were currently receiving any counseling (either off- or on-campus). The national sample was somewhat higher, with 5% currently receiving counseling. About 6% of the MSU respondents were currently taking a prescription for a mental health issue; approximately 8% of the national sample was currently taking prescriptions for mental health purposes.

Physical Disability: Nearly 2.5% of the MSU respondents indicated they had a physical disability. This is almost identical to the figure from the national sample. The following table is a breakdown of disability types, using data from those that responded affirmative to the presence of a physical disability.

Which of the following impairments do you have?	Number (count) of MSU respondents
Blind/visually impaired	2
Deaf/hard of hearing	2
Learning	1
Chronic health impairment (e.g., lupus, diabetes, MS)	1
Other	4

Of those that reported a physical disability, 57% indicated they are not registered with Disability Support Services.

Health-Related Behaviors: The following table reports the percentage of MSU respondents and national sample respondents that do the behaviors specified. The table is not meant to represent “bad” or “good” behaviors necessarily.

Behavior	Percentage of MSU respondents	Percentage of respondents from the national sample
Drink alcohol	56%	70%
Sexually Active	55%	64%
On a diet	25%	26%
Smoke	14%	14%
Do illegal/recreational drugs	6%	10%
Fast during certain times of year (e.g., Ramadan, Yom Kippur)	6%	11%
Maintain religious dietary restrictions (e.g., kosher, halal)	2%	>3%
Vegetarian	>1%	>4%

5. Technology

Technological Devices Owned. The following table lists the various devices owned by MSU students, as well as the percentage of the MSU sample and national sample that owned each one. Because individuals likely owned more than one device, the percentages add up to more than 100%.

Which of the following technological devices do you own?	Percentage of MSU respondents	Percentage of respondents from the national sample
Cell phone	97%	97%
Laptop computer	83%	80%
MP3 Player/iPod	67%	74%
Flash Drive	66%	68%
Wireless internet card	42%	39%
Wireless router	39%	30%
Desktop computer	37%	35%
PDA	8%	6%
Other	2%	2%
None of the above	<1%	<1%

Text Messaging. Text messaging appears to be a frequent activity for MSU students. About 82% of MSU students reported using their cell phones to text message, and about 75% send several to many text messages every day. Approximately 71% occasionally to frequently send text messages during class. Although similar percentages of the national sample report using text messaging, they seem to send messages less frequently than MSU students.

Internet Uses. E-mailing, participating in on-line social networks, and downloading/listening to music were the most frequently reported internet activities for MSU respondents. The following table lists various internet uses and the percentage of respondents that use them at least 1-2 times per week.

How frequently do you use the Internet for the following purposes (1-2 times per week or more)?	Percentage of MSU respondents	Percentage of respondents from the national sample
E-mailing	96%	97%
Participating in on-line social networks	82%	84%
Downloading/listening to music	53%	64%
Downloading/uploading/watching videos	43%	49%
Instant messaging (IM)	38%	64%
Playing games	37%	29%
On-line money management	29%	34%
Watching TV	21%	37%
On-line shopping	19%	17%
Blogging	14%	10%
Hosting/maintaining personal website	14%	11%
Gambling	4%	2%
On-line dating websites/services	3%	4%

Internet Access. Most MSU students reported that they most frequently access the internet through a personal computer (85%) rather than a campus computer. Ninety-three percent indicated that they have access to the internet where they live.

On-line Profile/Photos. Most MSU students (65%) reported that they do not think college administrators look at their on-line profile, whereas a slim majority (54%) believed that potential employers *do* look at their profile. Most indicated that they should be held accountable for actions depicted in their photos posted on-line, however a sizeable portion do not (39%).

Amount of Internet Use. About 64% of MSU respondents actively use the internet 3-5 hours or more per day. Ninety-five percent use the internet at least 1-2 hours per day.

Classroom Internet Use. Twenty-four percent of MSU respondents reported that they access the internet during class for non-course-related purposes. About 29% of the national sample reported doing the same.

E-mail Accounts. About 87% percent of MSU respondents said they have two or more e-mail accounts, and approximately 29% said they have three or more. Most (about 90%) use only 1 or 2 of their accounts; the majority with three or more accounts do not use all of their accounts.

Course-related Web Pages/Services. Almost all (>99%) of MSU respondents reported having used an electronic course management system such as Blackboard or WebCT before. The national response was somewhat less than that (88%). Most MSU students (60%) had not used a Website service to rate a professor, whereas the majority of the national sample had (58%).

6. Consumption of Media

Media Coverage of Events (News). The majority of MSU respondents indicated they stay current with local (66%) and national/international news (72%). Most (71%) also indicated that today's media coverage (including newspaper, radio, magazines) does influence their opinions.

National and International News Sources. The top three news sources most frequently cited by MSU respondents were: 1. Internet; 2. Television; and 3. Newspapers. The top three topics that students try to stay current on were: 1. Entertainment; 2. Politics; and 3. Technology.

Newspaper Use. Sixty-nine percent of MSU respondents indicated they read an on-line newspaper at least 1-2 times per week. Somewhat fewer (63%) read a paper version (other than the college newspaper) at least 1-2 times per week. Fifty-eight percent noted they read the college newspaper often or very often, and 79% read the college paper at least sometimes.

Television. Seventy-nine percent of MSU students reported watching at least 1-2 hours of TV per day, with 48% watching 3-4 or more hours per day. By contrast, about 34% of the national sample reported watching 3-4 or more hours of TV per day. About 63% of the MSU sample noted that they watch TV for both educational and entertainment purposes, while only 3% reported they watch TV for educational reasons alone.

Radio. About 49% of MSU student reported listening to the radio at least 1-2 hours per day. The most frequently cited reason for listening to the radio was for entertainment (66%).

Magazines. Eighty-one percent of MSU respondents indicated they read at least 1-2 magazines each month. About 46% said they read magazines for both educational and entertainment purposes, and 28% said they read them for entertainment purposes alone.

7. Diversity

Diversity Characteristics. The following table reports the percentage of MSU respondents who indicated that certain characteristics add diversity to Mississippi State University.

Which of the following add diversity to your campus?	Percentage of MSU respondents
Race/ethnicity/national origin	92%
Gender	73%
Religion	72%
Age	70%
Home city/state	62%
Political views	58%
Disability	50%
Socio-economic status	50%
Sexual orientation	47%
None of the above	1%

Diversity Beliefs. Many (51%) MSU students indicated that they believe they add to the diversity of MSU. A large majority (93%) agree with the statement "I recognize that others may be different from me, and that is OK." Similarly, about 92% percent agree with the statement "I recognize that others' opinions may be different from my own, and that is OK."

Learning about Diversity. Despite agreeing with statements that support diversity, many MSU students (75%) responded either "neutral" or disagreed with the following statement: "I take advantage of the opportunities provided by my college to learn about diversity-related issues." While there may be a number of reasons why students do not take advantage of learning opportunities, a significant portion (38%) of MSU respondents indicated they are "tired of hearing about diversity."

Discussing Diversity. Fifty-four percent of MSU respondents reported having discussed diversity-related issues with friends. About 52% discuss diversity-related issues with family members.

Discrimination/harassment on Campus. About 43% of MSU respondents said they have witnessed discriminatory (race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) behavior on campus, and about 22% indicated they have experienced discrimination on campus. A smaller amount reported they have witnessed (23%) harassment (based on race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) or experienced (9%) harassment on campus. About 8% indicated they have been singled out in class because of their identity (based on race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.).

College Impact. About 48% of MSU students indicated they have become more open-minded about diversity-related issues since starting college. Most (82%) noted they believe that being able to interact with individuals of diverse backgrounds will help them after college. The top three diversity-related issues student indicate they have learned most about since starting at MSU are: 1. Race/ethnicity/culture; 2. religion; and 3. sexual orientation.

Comfort Level around Diverse People. A number of questions were asked about how comfortable students are interacting with people different from themselves. The following table reports the percentage of MSU students who are comfortable being friends (or close friends) with different people.

I am comfortable being friends with individuals of a different _____ from me.	Percentage of MSU respondents
Sexual orientation	52%
Racial/ethnic group	70%
Religion	76%
Disability	76%
Socio-economic status	83%
Gender	90%

Reactions to Discriminatory Comments. Students were asked how they would respond to discriminatory or stereotyping comments. The most frequent response from MSU students was "It depends on who is making the comment." Beyond that, the top three responses were: 1. "I ignore it"; 2. "I feel uncomfortable/awkward"; and 3. "I correct/challenge the stereotype."

Sources of Diversity Learning. According to MSU respondents, the top three places where they learned the most about diversity: 1. in class; 2. talking with friends; and 3. living in the residence hall with others who are different from me.

Conservative or Liberal? Most MSU respondents indicate they view Mississippi State University as either moderate/middle of the road (55%) or conservative (34%). Likewise, most MSU students state they view themselves as either moderate (40%) or conservative (44%). More respondents from the national sample view their school (39%) or themselves (38%) as liberal.

8. Academic Dishonesty

Institutional Policy. Most MSU respondents were aware that Mississippi State University has an academic dishonesty policy (97%). The top three places MSU students reported learning about the policy are: 1. In class; 2. from a faculty member; 3. during orientation.

Future Cheating. About 90% of MSU respondents indicated that it is very unlikely they will cheat on an exam, paper, assignment, etc. in the future. Of those that indicated that they might cheat, the top reasons why are: 1. "I want to get a good grade/I am pressured by my family to get good grades"; and 2. (Tie) "Everyone cheats", "I want to maintain my GPA", "I am pressured by a friend that needs help", and "I am not good at taking exams".

Past Cheating. More MSU students reported that they have cheated in the past (24%) than those who indicated they might cheat again. Of those that did cheat, the top three reasons why are: 1. "I wanted to get a good grade in the course"; 2. "I was under time constraints"; and 3. "It was easy to cheat." About 3% of MSU students admitted they have been caught cheating before.

Reporting Cheating. Many MSU students (48%) indicated that they do not know how to report cheating. About 6% of MSU respondents state they have reported another student for cheating before. Of those who have reported cheating, the top three reasons students gave for reporting it are: 1. "it was the right/honest/ethical thing to do"; 2. "I thought my professor needed to know"; and 3. "I abided by my college's honor code."

Many more respondents (35%) stated they are aware of cheating but have not reported it. Of those who did not report the cheating, the top three reasons students gave for not doing so are: 1. "It is the responsibility of the professor to notice cheating, not mine"; 2. "I did not want to be responsible for the student's punishment", and 3. "I did not want to make an enemy." Interestingly, more MSU students have reported cheating or are aware of cheating (a combined 41%) than those who indicate they have ever cheated (24%). About 58% of MSU respondents said they are unlikely to report cheating in the future.

Acceptable Cheating. About 10% of the MSU sample indicated that there are circumstances in which cheating is acceptable. About 12% of the national sample indicated the same.

Specific Cheating Behaviors. Note that some of the following behaviors may not be cheating in all circumstances (for example, calculator or textbook is sometimes allowed on exams). The top three exam-related cheating behaviors that MSU students reported doing are: 1. Using a calculator on an exam; 2. Using a textbook on an exam; and 3. Using old, unauthorized exams to study for the final. The top three paper-related cheating behaviors reported by MSU students are: 1. Listing sources in a bibliography after only reading the abstract of an article; 2. Summarizing from a source without citing; and 3. Submitting the same paper for two classes. Other top cheating behaviors reported by MSU students are: 1. Reading the "Cliff's notes" rather than reading the actual work; 2. Signing another student's name on an attendance sheet when he/she did not actually attend the class/event; and 3. Creating fake research data or lab results.

9. Opinions

Personal and Community Contributions. About 92% of MSU respondents agreed with the statement "It is important to make a difference in the world." An even greater percentage (96%) stated they believe it is important to give back to the community. Almost all (99%) agreed at least somewhat with the statement "I treat others with respect." In addition, almost all (99%) agreed with the statement "It is important to stand up for what I believe in."

Opinions about government, politics, and law. A slim majority of MSU respondents indicated support for the legality of the death penalty (57%); the death penalty received somewhat less agreement from the national sample (48%). About 40% of MSU students (32% of the national sample) stated they believe affirmative action is no longer necessary, while about 24% disagreed. Approximately 45% of the MSU sample (only 25% of the national sample) indicated support for the war in Iraq, while about 30% disagreed with supporting the war. About 50% of MSU respondents agreed with the statement "I believe abortion should be illegal." Only about 33% of the national sample agreed with that statement. About 43% of MSU students disagreed with the statement "I am pro-choice", whereas a slight majority of the national sample (52%) agreed with it. Nearly 47% of MSU students stated they pay close attention to national politics, but only 33% appear to do the same with local politics.

Opinions about social and economic issues/problems. About 76% of the MSU sample agreed with the statement "If you work hard enough, you can achieve the American Dream." Only about 62% of the national respondents agreed. Most MSU students (69%) indicated that they do not believe people can live off of minimum wage.

Most MSU students indicated that they are concerned about social issues (79%). A strong majority of MSU respondents believe that racial discrimination (83%) and gender discrimination (76%) still occur in the U.S. Many MSU students (77%) noted concern for the environment. However, only about 30% of MSU students indicated that they recycle on a regular basis.

Many MSU respondents (61%) believed that same-sex couples should not be allowed to marry, while about 55% of the national sample believed that they should be allowed to marry. Similarly, a slim majority of MSU students (55%) disagreed with allowing same-sex couples to adopt children, and 59% of the national sample took the opposing view. MSU respondents were more accepting of allowing single mothers and fathers to adopt children (52%

agreed with it). About 75% of the national sample thought that single parents should be allowed to adopt.

Learning Opinion. Lastly, most MSU students (90%) and national respondents (84%) agreed with the statement "I enjoy learning for the sake of learning."