



New Student Interest Orientation Survey, Summer Orientation 2009 Summary of Results

Surveys were conducted with participants attending New Student Orientation sessions held during the months of July and August. There were six orientation sessions held for first-time students and four sessions for transfer students. A total of 1,609 first time students and 834 transfer students responded to the survey.

Findings:

- When asked to rank a list of reasons for attending USA, "being close to home" and "reputation of academic programs" were the top two reasons for both first-time and transfer students for selecting USA.
- Over half of first-time students (61.8%) and nearly two-thirds (66.8%) of transfer students reported that USA was their first choice.
- Approximately 93% of first time students plan to finish their degree at USA as compared to 97% of transfer students.
- The percent of students receiving federal grants increased over time from 24% of session 1 participant to 44% of session 5 participants. In session 6, 32% of participants reported receiving federal grants. A similar pattern is noted for loans.
- Nearly half (46.5%) of first time students were planning to live on campus while only 13% of transfers plan to live on campus. Transfers students were much more likely to live in a private house or apartment (42.4%) or with family or relatives (30.9%).
- For first time students, further analysis of housing plans by orientation session reveals marked differences between session participants. For students participating in the first session, 53% stated they were planning to live in USA residence halls as compared to approximately 20% of participants from orientation session 6. Nearly 50% of session 6 participants were planning to live with family or relatives and nearly 20% had plans to reside in a private apartment or house.
- In terms of work plans and involvement in campus activities, there are again differences reported by student type. A lower percent of first-time students had plans to work while in school, 62% as compared to 74% of transfers, while more first-time students than transfer students reported that they had plans to be involved in campus activities, 69% as compared to 37%.
- In terms of the number of hours students are planning to work while in school, three-fourths (75.8%) of transfer students planned to work at least 20 hours per week with 35% reporting plans to work 30 or more hours per week. For first-time students, 29% of

session 6 participants had plans to work 30 or more hours per week as compared to less than 15% of participants in sessions 1, 2, 3 and 4.

- The majority of students from both groups indicated they would be full-time students. Responses ranged from 88% to 99.6%.
- Survey respondents were linked by JAG Number to BANNER for additional information.
- Students participating in Session 6 were more likely to be from Mobile and the state of Alabama when compared to participants in other sessions. Orientation 6 was nearly evenly divided among males and females whereas the other sessions tended to have a slight female majority. A higher percent of African Americans attend sessions 4, 5, and 6 when compared to sessions 1, 2 or 3. In session 1, 11% of participants were African American as compared to nearly 37% in session 5 and 29% in session 6. The average age of students increased from approximately 18 years for Session 1 to 21 years for Session 6 participants.
- The percent of family members without a college degree was higher in sessions 5 and 6 when compared to earlier sessions; in session 5, 38% and for session 6, 36% reported that neither parents nor brother or sister had a college degree. For sessions 1 and 2, 26% and 23%, respectively, reported neither parents nor brother nor sister had a college degree.
- The average ACT composite scores of participants from the first three sessions were higher than the overall mean for all first-time students. Conversely, the average ACT composite score of participants from the last three orientation sessions is lower than the overall average ACT composite score. Students attending the last session, held five days before classes began, reported the lowest ACT composite mean score. When ACT scores were examined by subject area, again, the average score decreased over-time (see Figure 1).
- When comparing the percent of students by orientation session who scored above the mean for the entire first-time student cohort, 64% of students in session 1 scored at or higher than the average ACT composite score for all first-time students. Less than 25% of those in session 6 had a score that was equal to or higher than the average ACT composite score. The results were similar for the subject areas.
- A higher percentage of USA students scored at the same level or higher for ACT benchmarks in all subject areas, with the exception of mathematics when compared to state and national performance ratings. When analyzed by orientation session, a similar pattern emerges in which a lower percentage of students participating in orientation sessions 5 and 6 scored at or above ACT benchmarks (see Figure 2) when compared to other session, state and national benchmark performance ratings.¹

¹ ACT Profile Report – Graduating Class 2009, National.

Measuring College and Career Readiness, The Class of 2009, Alabama. August 2009.

Allen, J. and J. Scoring. 2005. *Using ACT Assessment Scores to Set Benchmarks for College Readiness.* ACT Research Report Series, 2005-3, August.

Figure 1. ACT Score Means by Orientation Session, Summer Orientation Session 2009.

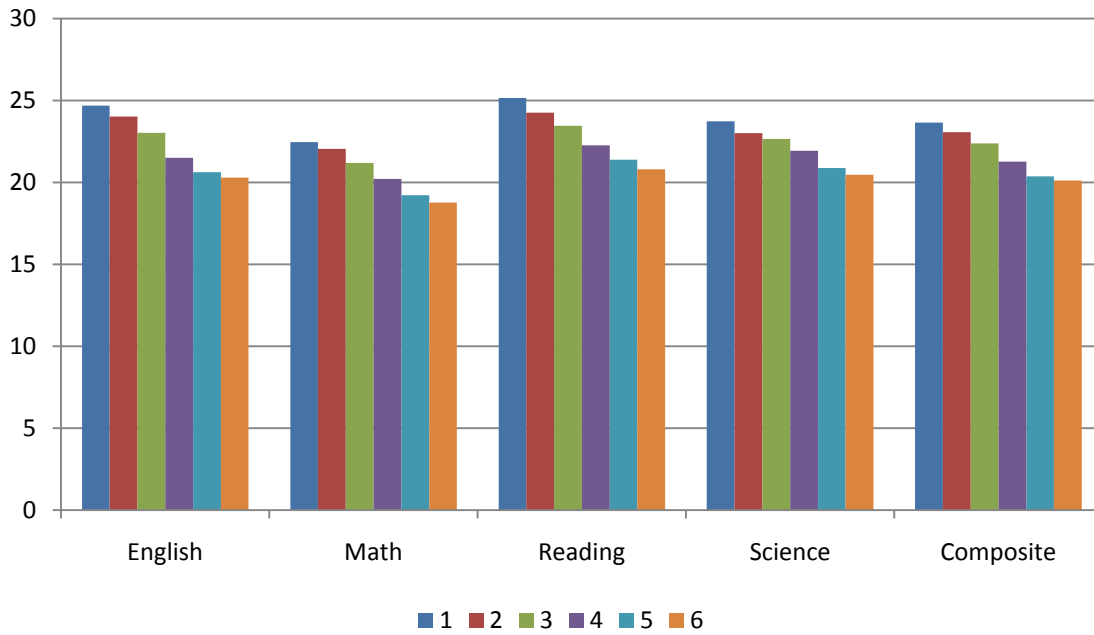
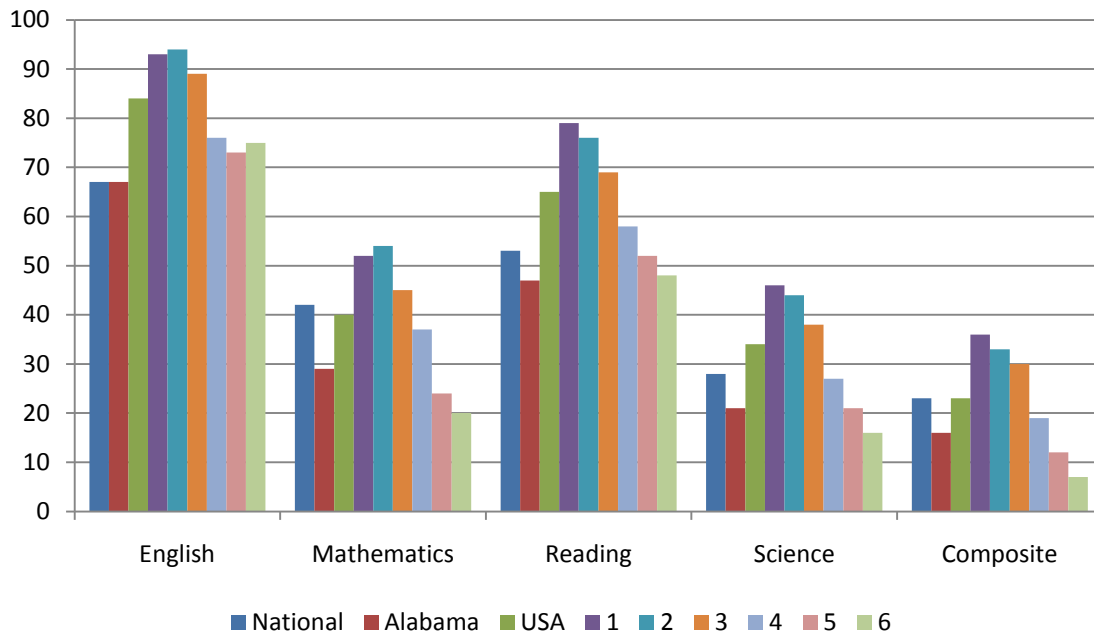


Figure 2. Percent of Students Scoring at or above ACT Benchmarks, First-time Students Summer Orientation 2009 for the Nation, State and USA Overall and by Orientation Session.

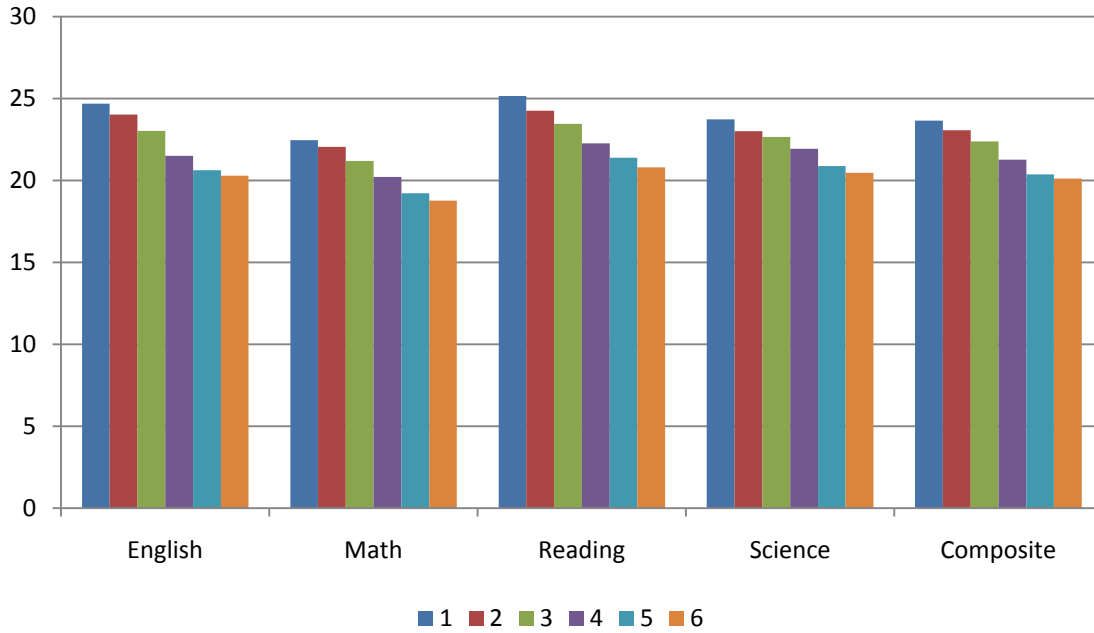


Who is at risk relative to retention and graduation?

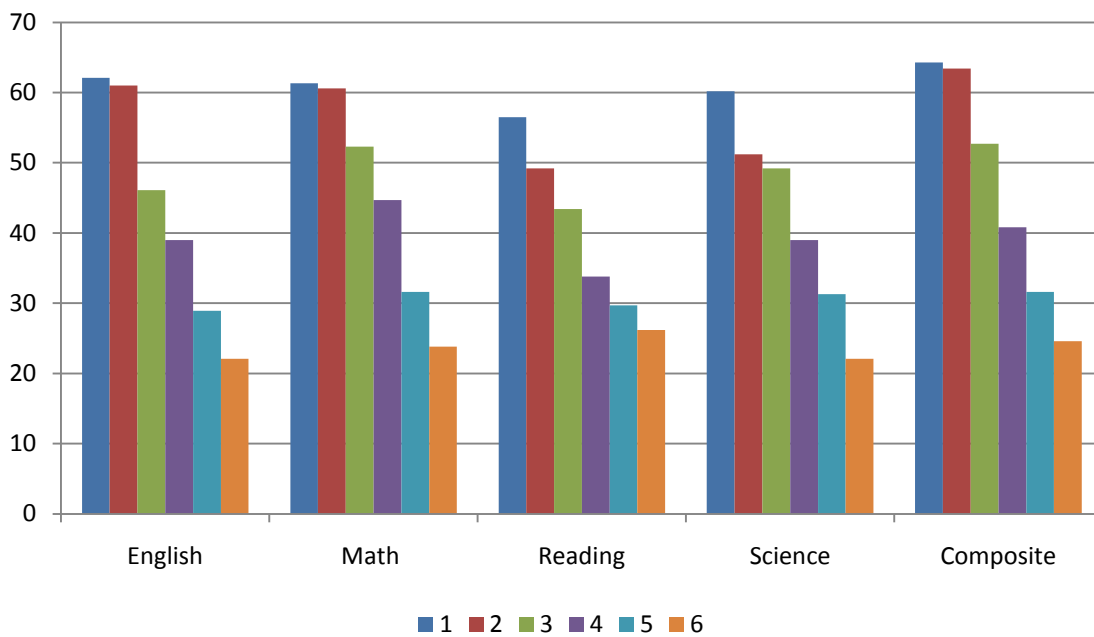
- In general, the later the orientation session students attend the more at risk they are in regard to retention and graduation with those attending session 6 at the greatest risk. Based on this data, risk is defined as a combination of academic, social and economic factors.
- When compared to participants in sessions 1 through 5, session 6 participants:
 - Were more likely to live off campus;
 - Were less likely to be involved in campus activities;
 - Were more likely to work 30+ hours a week and be a full-time student;
 - Had a lower ACT composite and subject mean scores with lower percents achieving ACT benchmarks for success;
 - Were also older and
 - Were more likely to be from Mobile County.
- Similarly, transfer students attending the final session for transfer students, session 4, present many of the same characteristics.
- It is noteworthy that the most at-risk students receive the least amount of information and support due to the structure of the last orientation session. In addition, the courses they need may or may not be available at that late date.

Results from the New Student Interest Survey, Summer Orientation Session 2009, First-time Students

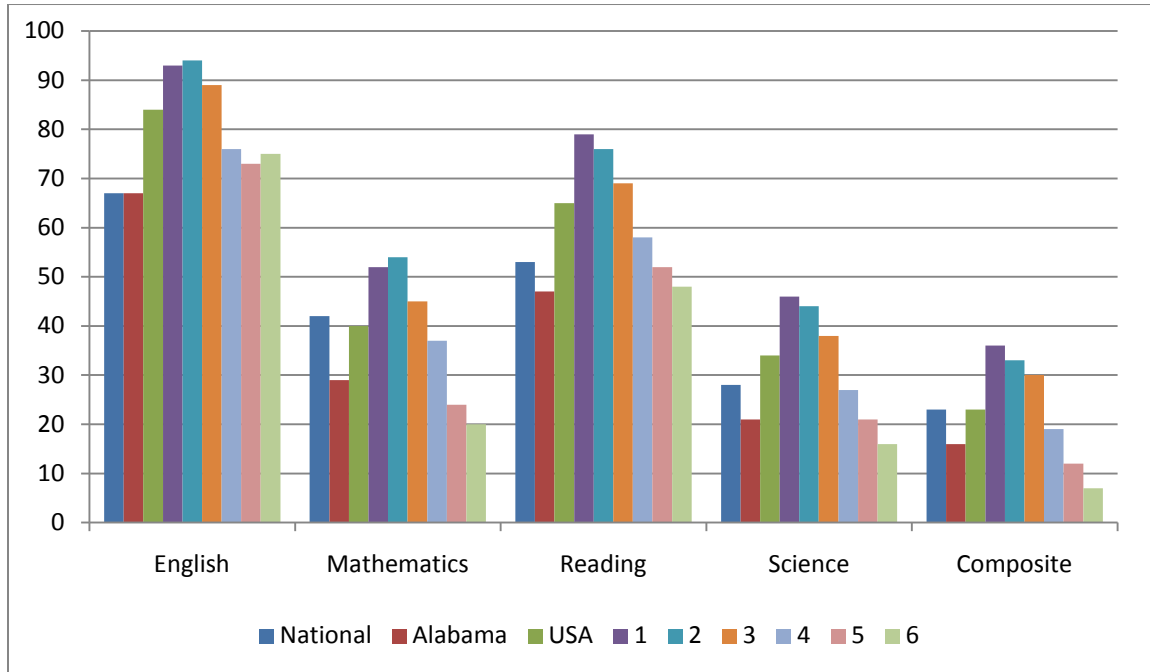
ACT Score Means by Orientation Session, Summer Orientation Session 2009.



Percent Scoring Above the Overall Mean by Orientation Session, Summer 2009.



Percent of Students Scoring at or above ACT Benchmarks, First-time Students Summer Orientation 2009 for the Nation, State and USA Overall and by Orientation Session.



Financial Aid Award of First-time Students by Orientation Session, Summer 2009

	1		2		3		4		5		6	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Federal grant	65	23.8	62	24.4	90	32.8	91	36.5	125	44.0	64	31.8
Loan	98	35.9	100	39.4	124	45.3	129	51.8	155	54.6	65	32.3
Freshmen scholarship ¹	172	63.0	150	59.1	129	47.1	85	34.1	65	22.9	8	4.0

¹Includes Bay Area, Honors, Mitchell College of Business, Presidential, Starns, and Physics Scholarships.

First-time Students Academic Characteristics by Orientation Session, Summer 2009.

	1		2		3		4		5		6	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Dual enrollment	10	3.6	8	3.1	2	0.7	4	1.5	5	1.6	0	0.0
Advanced Placement	22	7.9	19	7.3	13	4.5	3	1.1	7	2.3	2	0.9
Enrolled in Freshmen Seminar	138	50.5	126	49.6	142	51.8	132	53.0	139	48.9	90	44.8
GED	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	3.2	21	10.4

First-time Students Enrolled in Colleges Offering Freshman Seminar by Orientation Session, Summer 2009.

	1		2		3		4		5		6	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Not enrolled	104	44.6	91	41.9	113	47.9	72	35.3	105	43.8	72	39.8
Enrolled	129	55.4	126	58.1	123	52.1	132	64.7	135	56.3	109	60.2
Total	233	100.0	217	100.0	236	100.0	204	100.0	240	100.0	181	100.0

First-time Students in Colleges Offering Freshman Seminar by Orientation Session, Summer 2009, Enrolled in Freshmen Seminar.

	1		2		3		4		5		6	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Not enrolled	11	8.5	10	7.9	8	6.5	10	7.6	8	5.9%	28	25.7
Enrolled	118	91.5	116	92.1	115	93.5	122	92.4	127	94.1	81	74.3
Total	129	100.0	126	100.0	123	100.0	132	100.0	135	100.0	109	100.0

Average Age of First-time Students by Orientation Session, Summer 2009.

	#	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Session 1	273	17.98	.41	17	20
Session 2	254	18.03	.43	16	21
Session 3	274	18.10	.70	16	25
Session 4	249	18.09	.68	16	25
Session 5	284	18.30	1.93	16	44
Session 6	201	21.00	6.33	16	53
Total	1535	18.48	2.67	16	53

Residence of First-time Students by Orientation Session, Summer 2009.

	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
ALABAMA												
	1		2		3		4		5		6	
Mobile County	127	46.5	118	46.8	113	41.4	124	50.0	144	50.9	136	72.0
Baldwin County	25	9.2	37	14.7	30	11.0	30	12.1	18	6.4	15	7.9
Jefferson County	6	2.2	2	0.8	10	3.7	13	5.2	7	2.5	0	0.0
Clarke County	3	1.1	1	0.4	5	1.8	4	1.6	7	2.5	3	1.6
Montgomery County	1	0.4	4	1.6	6	2.2	3	1.2	5	1.8	2	1.1
Madison County	3	1.1	4	1.6	7	2.6	3	1.2	1	0.4	2	1.1
Total	5	60.5	166	65.9	171	62.7	177	71.3	182	64.5	158	83.7
FLORIDA												
Escambia County	5	1.8	4	1.6	6	2.2	5	2.0	10	3.5	1	0.5
Santa Rosa County	2	0.7	1	0.4	4	1.5	4	1.6	4	1.4	2	1.1
Total	7	2.5	5	2.0	10	3.7	9	3.6	14	4.8	3	1.6
MISSISSIPPI												
Jackson County	25	9.2	17	6.7	14	5.1	11	4.4	7	2.5	1	0.5
Harrison County	16	5.9	10	4.0	8	2.9	5	2.0	7	2.5	1	0.5
George County	3	1.1	5	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	2.1	3	1.6
Greene County	2	0.7	0	0.0	1	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.4	0	0.0
Stone County	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	47	17.3	27	12.7	23	8.4	16	6.4	21	7.5	5	2.6
Other areas	54	19.8	49	19.4	69	25.3	46	18.5	66	23.3	23	12.2
Total	273	100.1	252	100.0	273	100.0	248	100.0	283	100.0	189	100.0

Gender of First-time Students by Orientation Session, Summer 2009.

	1		2		3		4		5		6	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Male	114	41.8	105	41.3	119	43.4	107	43.0	127	44.7	99	49.3
Female	159	58.2	149	58.7	155	56.6	142	57.0	157	55.3	102	50.7
Total	273	100.0	254	100.0	274	100.0	249	100.0	284	100.0	201	100.0

Race/Ethnicity of First-time Students by Orientation Session, Summer 2009.

Race/Ethnicity	1		2		3		4		5		6	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
African-American	31	11.4	29	11.4	37	13.5	64	25.7	104	36.6	59	29.4
American Indian/Alaska Native	2	0.7	4	1.6	4	1.5	4	1.6	2	0.7	0	0.0
Asian	17	6.2	7	2.8	6	2.2	7	2.8	6	2.1	5	2.5
Hispanic	5	1.8	8	3.1	10	3.6	4	1.6	6	2.1	2	1.0
Multiracial	1	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.4	1	0.4	2	0.7	0	0.0
Non-resident alien	0	0.0	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	5.5
Unknown	3	1.1	8	3.1	11	4.0	11	4.4	11	3.9	17	8.5
White	214	78.4	197	77.6	205	74.8	158	63.5	153	53.9	107	53.2
Total	273	100.0	254	100.0	274	100.0	249	100.0	284	100.0	201	100.0

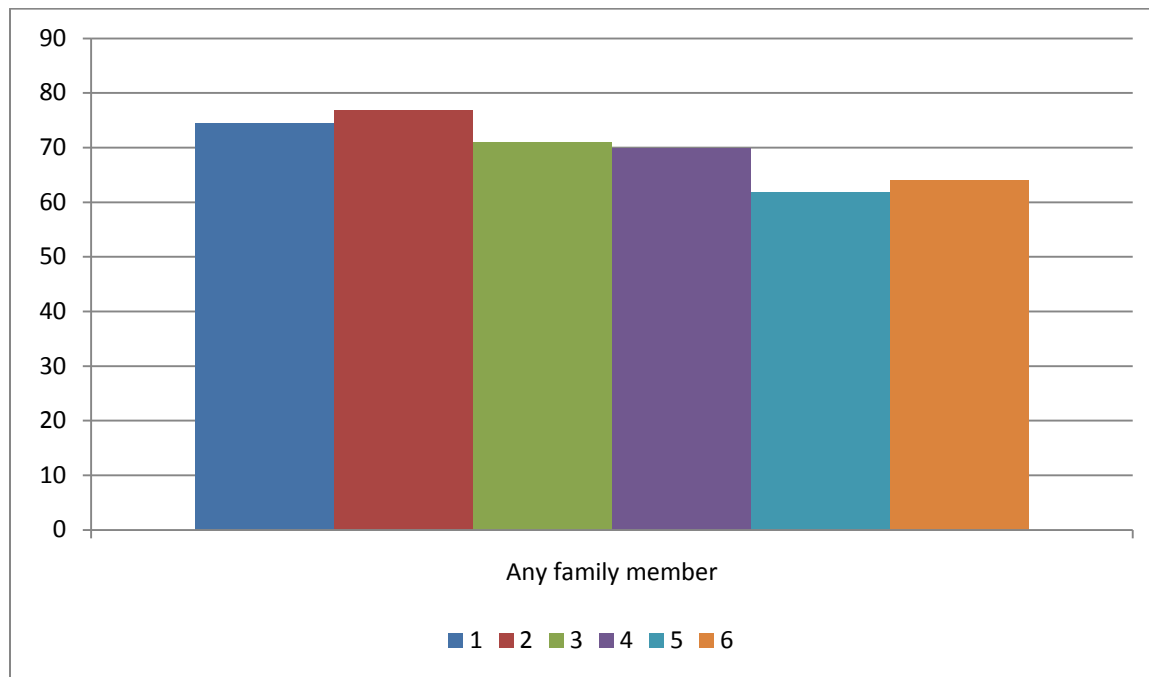
College of First-time Students by Orientation Session, Summer 2009.

College	1		2		3		4		5		10	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
AHP	63	27.0	55	25.3	55	23.3	27	13.2	54	22.5	22	12.2
AS	91	39.1	96	44.2	100	42.4	111	54.4	115	47.9	84	46.4
BU	25	10.7	14	6.5	26	11.0	21	10.3	31	12.9	22	12.2
CS	5	2.1	4	1.8	9	3.8	7	3.4	5	2.1	8	4.4
ED	11	4.7	18	8.3	23	9.7	17	8.3	15	6.3	20	11.0
EG	38	16.3	30	13.8	23	9.7	21	10.3	20	8.3	25	13.8
NU	40	14.4	37	14.3	38	13.3	45	17.2	44	14.5	20	9.1
Total	278	100.0	259	100.0	286	100.0	262	100.0	304	100.0	219	100.0

First-time Students Family Educational Background by Orientation Session, Summer 2009.

Family Member	1		2		3		4		5		6	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
No family member with college degree	71	25.5	60	23.2	83	29.0	79	30.2	116	38.2	79	36.1
One parent	72	25.9	79	30.5	75	26.2	79	30.2	85	28.0	67	30.6
One parent and brother/sister	24	8.6	11	4.2	22	7.7	13	5.0	9	3.0	6	2.7
Two parents	64	23.0	57	22.0	64	22.4	51	19.5	56	18.4	26	11.9
Two parents and brother/sister	20	7.2	20	7.7	21	7.3	19	7.3	12	3.9	5	2.3
Brother/sister	27	9.7	32	12.4	21	7.3	21	8.0	26	8.6	34	15.5
Total	278	100.0	259	100.0	286	100.0	262	100.0	304	100.0	219	100.0

First-time Students Family Members with a College Degree by Orientation Session, Summer 2009.



First-time Students High School, High School by Orientation Session, Summer 2009.

High School	1		2		3		4		5		6	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
ASMS	0	0.0	1	.7	1	0.8	1	.8	2	1.6	1	1.1
Alma Bryant	4	3.1	7	5.1	9	7.4	10	7.8	21	16.5	6	6.7
Baker	17	13.3	25	18.4	18	14.8	17	13.3	16	12.6	11	12.4
Ben C Rain	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	3.1	3	2.4	3	3.4
CF Vigor	1	0.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.8	1	0.8	2	2.2
Citronelle	3	2.3	1	0.7	1	0.8	6	4.7	2	1.6	0	0.0
Daphne	10	7.8	13	9.6	6	4.9	6	4.7	4	3.1	0	0.0
Davidson	6	4.7	9	6.6	8	6.6	11	8.6	1	0.8	8	9.0
Fairhope	4	3.1	10	7.4	11	9.0	6	4.7	1	0.8	2	2.2
Faith Academy	9	7.0	7	5.1	10	8.2	6	4.7	3	2.4	2	2.2
John L Leflore	2	1.6	0	0.0	1	0.8	1	0.8	6	4.7	6	6.7
Lillie B. Williamson	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.6	0	0.0	3	3.4
M. G. Montgomery	10	7.8	19	14.0	6	4.9	11	8.6	18	14.2	7	7.9
McGill Toolen	8	6.3	8	5.9	12	9.8	8	6.3	6	4.7	4	4.5
Mobile Christian	5	3.9	6	4.4	2	1.6	7	5.5	3	2.4	1	1.1
Murphy	12	9.4	13	9.6	17	13.9	16	12.5	24	18.9	19	21.3
Robertsdale	4	3.1	2	1.5	3	2.5	3	2.3	2	1.6	0	0.0
Satsuma	14	10.9	5	3.7	8	6.6	6	4.7	1	0.8	3	3.4
Theodore	17	13.3	9	6.6	9	7.4	6	4.7	13	10.2	9	10.1
UMS Wright	2	1.6	1	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.2
Total	128	100.0	136	100.0	122	100.0	128	100.0	127	100.0	89	100.0

