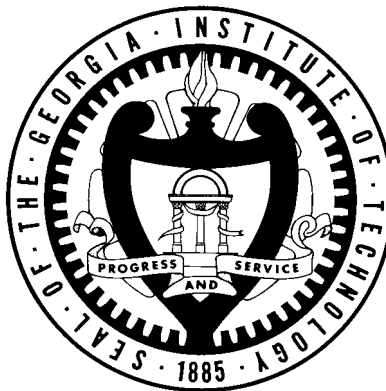




Georgia Institute of Technology

Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) 2008 Freshman Survey Report



Office of Assessment
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Executive Summary

The Georgia Institute of Technology (GT) has participated in the Higher Education Research Institute's (HERI) Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) since 1966. Each year incoming freshmen at participating institutions complete the Student Information Form, and the results are used by HERI as part of a longitudinal study. In the study, Georgia Tech is classified as a public high-selectivity (SAT scores of 1140 or more) institution and is compared to both public high-selectivity and private very high-selectivity universities ("Public" and "Private" comparator institutions).

Incoming 2008 Georgia Tech freshmen who participated in FASET activities were asked to complete the CIRP student survey in a dedicated FASET session. As a result, this report is based on the 1,089 responses of those students (41.1 percent of the first-time full-time class). The sampling error is 3.02 percent.

This report presents selected results from the 2008 survey, and can be found along with tables of the complete results at < <http://www.assessment.gatech.edu> >. Highlights from the survey:

- A substantial majority (90.9 percent) of freshman respondents cite Georgia Tech's academic reputation and the opinion that GT's graduates get good jobs (80.9 percent) as main reasons influencing their decisions to attend Georgia Tech.
- Less than one-third (32.5 percent) of GT respondents report working for pay six or more hours per week their senior year in high school. This figure has steadily decreased among GT respondents from 51.4 percent in 1988.
- Compared to their public university and private institution counterparts, GT respondents were more likely to join a social fraternity or sorority. Nearly one-fifth of GT respondents (18.3 percent) estimated that the chances were very good that they would join a social fraternity or sorority compared to 11.4 percent at public universities and 11.7 percent at private institutions.
- GT respondents' self-confidence in academic ability exceeds that of their comparators. GT respondents are more likely than their public university counterparts to rate themselves highly in their academic (GT: 93.9 percent, public peers: 88.4 percent) and mathematical (GT: 82.7 percent, public peers: 61.3 percent) abilities. GT respondents rate themselves less highly than do their public university peers in social self-confidence (GT: 46.4 percent, public peers: 55.0 percent).
- Over time, fewer GT freshmen have reported drinking beer, wine, and liquor "frequently" or "occasionally" in their senior year of high school. In 2008, 27.8 percent of GT respondents indicated they drank beer compared to 40.6 percent in 1998. Similarly, 33.9 percent of freshman respondents in 2008 reported consuming wine and liquor compared to 49.6 percent in 1998.
- Compared to their public and private university counterparts, GT respondents were far more likely to classify themselves as "conservative" or "far right" politically; 32.3 percent of GT respondents characterized their political views as "conservative" or "far right," compared to 21.5 percent at public universities and 19.0 percent at private institutions.
- GT females were more likely than were their male counterparts to report that Georgia Tech's reputation for having graduates admitted to top graduate and professional schools was a factor in their attendance decision. Slightly less than two-thirds of female GT respondents (63.1 percent) reported that this reputation was important to their decision compared to 50.1 percent of GT males.

Overview

The Georgia Institute of Technology (GT) has participated in the Higher Education Research Institute's (HERI) Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) since 1966. Each year, incoming freshmen at participating institutions complete the Student Information Form, and the results are used by HERI as part of a longitudinal study.

Incoming Georgia Tech freshmen were asked to complete the survey during a FASET orientation session. Of the 2,633 first time full-time students in the incoming 2008 class, 1,089 students completed the survey (41.4 percent of the incoming first time, full-time class). Chi-square tests for sample representativeness ($p < .01$) revealed that there were no significant differences in proportion between the 2008 freshman class and the obtained response in terms of gender, ethnicity, college entered, or U.S. residency status.

In addition to GT's results, HERI reports aggregate results of other institutions, categorized by admission selectivity. Georgia Tech is classified as a public high-selectivity (SAT scores of 1140 or more) institution. Sixteen universities are included in the public high-selectivity comparison norms ("Public" comparison group).¹ This report also provides comparison norms for 18 private very high-selectivity (SAT scores of 1310 or more) institutions ("Private" comparison group).²

In most cases, a response difference of +/- 5 percent between Georgia Tech and either comparison group (public or private comparator institutions) was used to highlight the results. Results for GT males and females are also presented for select items, with differences of 10 percent or more statistically significant. Based on the obtained samples of students, these differences are significant at a $p < .01$ level.

Demographics

- CIRP respondents at GT were 66.2 percent male and 33.8 percent female
- Ethnicity: GT respondents labeled themselves as
 - White/Caucasian (68.4 percent)
 - African American/Black (6.2 percent)
 - Asian American/Asian (18.4 percent)
 - Hispanic (5.5 percent)³

¹ *Public high selectivity institutions:* Florida State University, University of Georgia, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, University of Texas-Austin, Miami University, University of California-Los Angeles, University of California-San Diego, University of California-Santa Barbara, University of Florida, University of Michigan, University of Pittsburgh, University of South Carolina-Columbia, University of Vermont, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

² *Private very-high selectivity institutions:* Brandeis University, Columbia University, Duke University, Princeton University, University of Chicago, University of Pennsylvania, Boston College, Brown University, California Institute of Technology, Carnegie-Mellon University, Cornell University, Emory University, Johns Hopkins University, Northwestern University, Rice University, University of Notre Dame, University of Southern California, Vanderbilt University. There is no "very-high selectivity" group for public universities.

³ Respondents are allowed to check more than one ethnicity. Thus, numbers sum to more than 100 percent. The Hispanic category includes Mexican American/Chicano, Puerto Rican, and Other Latino.

In Table 1, Georgia Tech CIRP respondents are compared to the population of first-time full-time freshmen based on sex, ethnicity, residency and citizenship.

Table 1. CIRP respondents compared to GT freshmen (percentages)

	CIRP Respondents* (n = 1,089)	GT Freshmen* (n = 2,663)
Sex		
Male	66.2	68.2
Female	33.8	31.8
Ethnicity		
White/Caucasian	68.4	63.4
African American/Black	6.2	5.2
American Indian/Alaska native	0.0	0.2
Asian/Pacific Islander	18.4	23.5
Hispanic	5.5	4.8
Other	1.4	2.8
College		
Architecture	6.5	4.9
Computing	8.3	6.5
Engineering	63.4	64.0
Ivan Allen	6.7	7.6
Management	4.6	6.5
Science	10.6	10.6
Residency		
In-state	73.0	64.8
Out-of-state	27.0	35.2
Citizenship Status		
U.S. citizen	92.3	87.9
Permanent resident	5.0	5.4
International	2.0	6.6

*Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding

- Citizenship/Language: 92.3 percent of GT respondents are U.S. citizens and 87.4 percent report English as their native language.
- The percentage of GT respondents living within 100 miles of campus is significantly higher than for public university students (34.1 percent) and private university students (20.2 percent). Additionally, 58.0 percent of GT respondents live within 50 miles of Georgia Tech, while only 19.2 percent of public university students and 14.6 percent of private university students live within 50 miles of their campuses. Among GT respondents, women are significantly more likely to live within 50 miles of campus (66.2 percent) than are men (53.8 percent).
- Regarding their secondary education, 71.4 percent of GT responders attended traditional public schools, with 2.9 percent attending public charter schools and 8.4 percent attending public magnet schools. Of the remaining respondents, 16.6 percent attend private schools, either religious/parochial

schools (9.3 percent) or independent college prep schools (7.6 percent), while less than one percent of respondents are home-schooled during high school (0.6 percent).

- Parents of GT respondents are largely comparable to parents at the public and private universities in terms of both income and education; however, students attending private universities are significantly more likely to report parental income exceeding \$250,000 and mothers with graduate degrees.

In general, GT respondents who attended private schools (either religiously affiliated or college prep) report higher parental income levels than do respondents who attended either public or public magnet high schools. Additionally, respondents who attended private independent college prep schools are significantly more likely to say that they have no concerns about their ability to finance their college education (62.5 percent) than are respondents who attended public school (44.9 percent), private religious schools (51.0 percent) and homeschoolers (33.3 percent).

Table 2. Respondents' parental income

		GT*	Public*	Private*
		%	%	%
Under	\$30,000	6.1	10.8	6.5
\$30,000	to \$49,999	7.5	9.6	6.7
\$50,000	to \$74,999	15.4	14.5	11.1
\$75,000	to \$99,999	14.9	13.9	11.0
\$100,000	to \$249,999	44.3	40.0	41.0
\$250,000	or More	11.8	11.3	23.8

*Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding

Table 3. Respondents' parental education

	Father			Mother		
	GT*	Public*	Private*	GT*	Public*	Private*
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Grammar school or less	0.7	3.0	1.1	1.0	3.0	1.1
Some high school	1.0	3.2	1.6	1.2	2.5	1.3
High school graduate	6.5	12.0	5.6	8.0	12.2	6.3
Postsecondary school other than college	1.9	2.3	1.4	3.0	2.7	2.0
Some college	9.2	11.6	7.2	12.7	13.7	8.6
College degree	37.5	30.5	27.1	43.2	38.1	38.7
Some graduate school	3.7	2.9	3.6	4.1	3.6	4.5
Graduate degree	39.5	34.5	52.4	26.8	24.2	37.6

*Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding

Self-Ratings of Abilities and Life Objectives

Students were asked to rate themselves in comparison to an average person their age on a number of abilities. The percentages of students rating themselves “above average” or “in the highest 10%” of all eighteen abilities are shown in Table 4. GT respondents rate themselves significantly higher than do their public university counterparts on academic ability (item 1) and spirituality (item 16), and above peers at both public and private universities in both on mathematical ability (item 9) and computer skills (item 3). GT respondents rate themselves significantly lower than do both their public and private university peers on physical health (item 10), popularity (item 11), and social self-confidence (item 14).

Men and women also differ in their perceived strengths. Female respondents are significantly more likely to rate themselves “above average” or “in the highest 10%” of artistic ability (item 2), understanding of others (item 17), and writing ability (item 18). Male respondents, however, have greater perceived strengths in computer skills (item 3), emotional and physical health (items 7 and 10), math ability (item 9), and intellectual self-confidence (item 13).

Between 2007 and 2008, there was a significant increase in the percentage of GT respondents reporting that their mathematical ability is “above average” or “in the highest 10%” from 75.8 percent in 2007 to 82.7 percent in 2008. Over the past decade, the percentage of male GT respondents reporting their mathematical ability as “above average” or “in the highest 10%” has remained relatively stable (1998: 87.9%, 2008: 89.5%), while these ratings have declined for female respondents (1998: 75.8%, 2008: 69.2%). For both men and women, there have been significant declines over time for ratings of physical health (1998: 65.1%, 2008: 56.2%), social self-confidence (1998: 52.5%, 2008: 46.4%) and self-understanding (1998: 65.6%, 2008: 60.0%). Similar declines are not evident for counterparts at either public or private universities.

Table 4. Ability self-ratings: Percent rating themselves “above average” or “highest 10%” compared with the average person their age

	GT Men	GT Women	GT Total	Public	Private
1 Academic ability	95.4	91.0	93.9	88.4	94.6
2 Artistic ability	26.7	42.8	32.1	30.3	38.1
3 Computer skills	63.6	34.1	53.6	41.5	42.8
4 Cooperativeness	73.3	73.5	73.4	77.5	77.8
5 Creativity	55.3	61.3	57.3	56.2	62.8
6 Drive to achieve	76.0	85.6	79.3	82.9	89.1
7 Emotional health	64.6	52.3	60.4	62.1	63.4
8 Leadership ability	63.4	60.8	62.5	66.7	72.4
9 Mathematical ability	89.5	69.2	82.7	61.3	73.0
10 Physical health	60.1	48.5	56.2	62.3	63.2
11 Popularity	35.3	31.4	34.0	43.0	46.6
12 Public speaking ability	39.1	35.7	37.9	42.3	53.0
13 Self-confidence (intellectual)	79.0	60.7	72.8	68.9	76.9
14 Self-confidence (social)	47.1	45.1	46.4	55.0	54.9
15 Self-understanding	62.2	55.7	60.0	63.1	67.7
16 Spirituality	41.3	44.4	42.4	37.5	40.5
17 Understanding of others	60.2	72.1	64.2	69.4	72.4
18 Writing ability	43.7	55.5	47.6	54.7	64.8

Students were also asked to rate the personal importance of 20 life objectives from “essential” to “not important.” Table 5 illustrates the top five objectives for GT respondents, along with the ratings from their public university and private institution counterparts. GT respondents are significantly more likely than are their peers at private universities to indicate that being well-off financially is “very important” or “essential,” while they are less likely to say that it is “essential” or “very important” to become an authority in their field. Additionally, GT respondents are significantly less likely than both their private and public university counterparts to report that helping others who are in difficulty is “essential” or “very important” (GT: 60.1%; private: 72.6%; public: 69.5%). Among GT respondents, women are significantly more likely (68.0 percent) than are men (56.0 percent) to indicate that it was “very important” or “essential” to help others who are in difficulty.

Since 1998, there has been no change in the top five objectives that both male and female GT respondents consider personally “very important” or “essential.”

Table 5. Selected life objectives: Percent rating objective “essential” or “very important”

		GT Men	GT Women	GT Total	Public	Private
1	Being very well off financially	79.6	81.1	80.1	77.2	71.6
2	Raising a family	74.2	71.4	73.2	74.6	74.4
3	Becoming an authority in my field	62.2	62.6	62.3	62.0	68.5
4	Helping others who are in difficulty	56.0	68.0	60.1	69.5	72.6
5	Obtaining recognition from my colleagues for contributions in my special field	58.8	56.0	57.9	58.9	62.0

Political Orientation and Opinions

When asked for their overall political orientation, respondents at GT indicate that they are more conservative than are their counterparts at the public and private comparator institutions, as seen in Chart 1. The trend for GT freshman respondents from 1971–2008 is presented in Chart 2, along with selected trend data for specific opinion items in Table 6.

Chart 1. Political orientation of freshman respondents

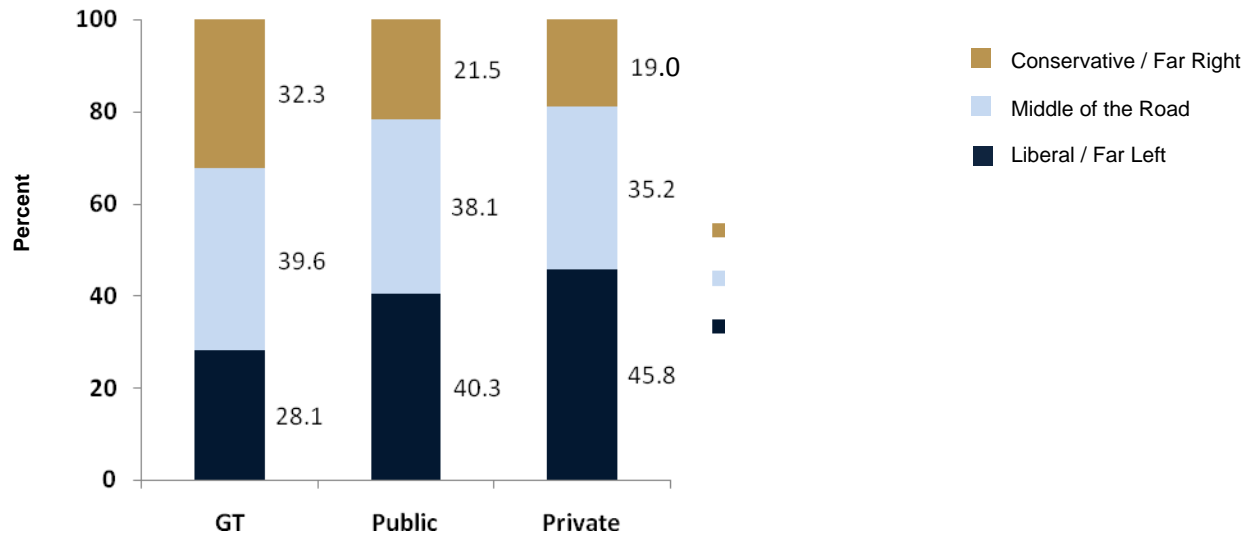


Chart 2. Political identification of GT freshman respondents: 1971–2008

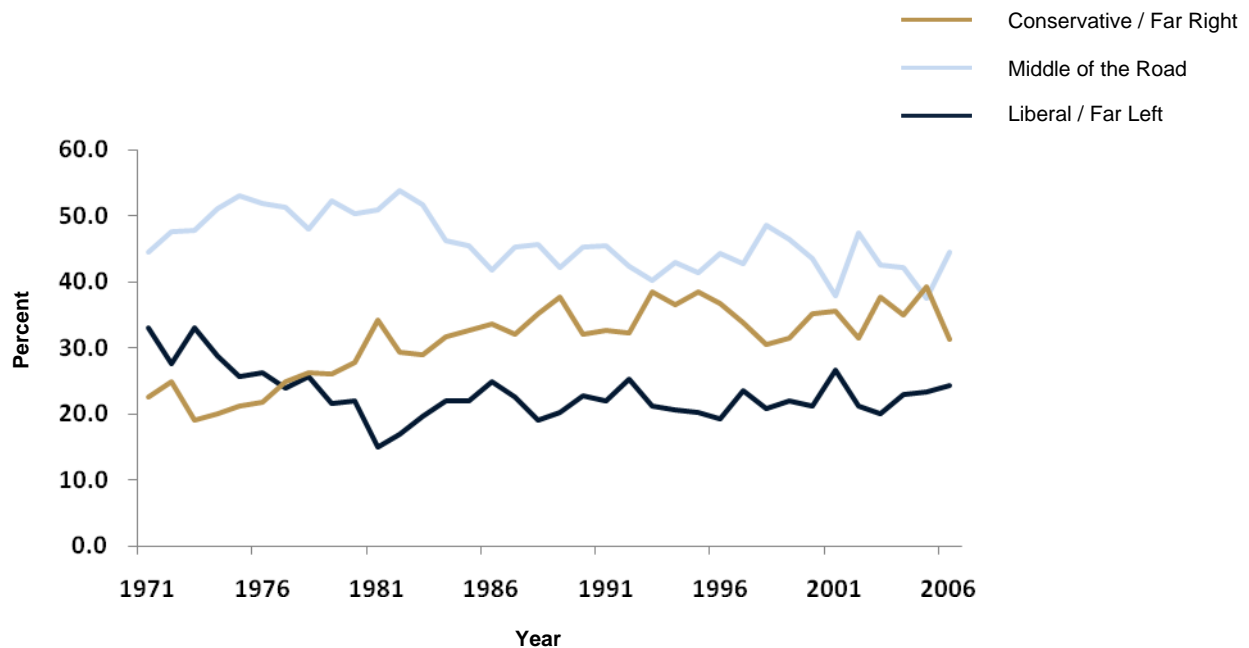


Table 6. Opinion trends for GT respondents with public and private comparators

Percent saying "Strongly" or "Somewhat Agree"	Georgia Tech				Public	Private
	1998	2003	2007	2008	2008	2008
Racial discrimination is no longer a major problem in America	27.7	33.6	28.2	28.9	18.7	17.6
Affirmative action in college admissions should be abolished	n/a	71.3	65.1	62.3	57.1	60.3
There is too much concern in the courts for the rights of criminals	77.0	64.3	58.1	56.9	53.7	49.2
The death penalty should be abolished	19.6	27.9	34.1	29.6	37.0	49.8
Abortion should be legal	55.1	54.1	59.4	56.5	67.0	71.5
Wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes than they do now	48.8	39.0	48.3	49.6	58.5	57.1
It is important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships	30.9	30.8	24.9	26.9	18.1	15.0
Same-sex couples should have the right to legal marital status	46.8	51.0	62.2	59.9	71.6	76.4

High School Activities and College Preparation

Students indicated their attitudes and engagement while in high school. A selection of these items and the percentage of respondents who indicated they frequently engaged in these activities are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Percent of respondents indicating "frequently" in the following activities

	GT	Public	Private
1 Was bored in class	46.5	42.6	37.3
2 Felt overwhelmed by all I had to do	18.7	27.1	27.9
3 Asked teacher for advice after class	23.2	27.9	32.1
4 Voted in a student election	19.9	24.0	26.4
5 Used the Internet to read news sites	47.6	47.6	57.9
6 Used the Internet for research or homework	79.0	82.3	88.2
7 Used the Internet to read blogs	28.9	26.1	27.8
8 Used the Internet to blog	13.9	13.6	11.9
9 Discussed politics	44.4	42.0	48.2
10 Tutored another student*	75.9	69.9	77.9
11 Came late to class*	52.0	62.1	60.4
12 Socialized with someone of another racial/ethnic group	80.0	74.7	75.4

* Includes "frequently" and "occasionally" responses

GT respondents are more likely than are their private university peers to have been bored in class (item 1), while they are less likely to have asked a teacher for advice after class (item 3), voted in a student election (item 4), or used the Internet to read news sites and for research/homework (items 5 and 6). Compared with their public university counterparts, GT respondents are more likely to have tutored another student (item 10) or socialized with someone of a different race/ethnicity (item 12). GT respondents are, however, less likely than are their peers at either public or private universities to have felt overwhelmed by all they had to do (item 2) and to have been late to class (item 11).

Among GT respondents, women are significantly more likely to feel overwhelmed by all they have to do (31.1 percent) than are men (12.4 percent), a pattern that is similar to respondents in both public and private universities. Although, among female respondents, the 31.1 percent of GT women who report feeling overwhelmed by all they have to do is significantly lower than for their peers at public (37.4 percent) or private universities (37.9 percent).

Among GT respondents in 2007 and 2008, the only significant change is in the percentage of students who discussed politics (item 9), which increased from 34.9 percent in 2007 to 44.4 percent in 2008. The percentage of GT respondents who indicated that they “frequently” or “occasionally” discussed politics in 2008 is also significantly higher than for GT first-year students in the election years of 2004 (36.2 percent), 2000 (23.5 percent), and 1996 (25.6 percent).

Table 8 reveals differences in how students at Georgia Tech and their peers at both public and private universities allocated their time during their senior year of high school. Relative to their private university counterparts, fewer GT respondents report spending significant time studying (item 1), joining student clubs/groups (item 7), or talking with teachers outside of class (item 3).

GT respondents are also less likely than were their public and private university peers to report socializing (item 2), partying (item 4), or exercising (item 5). GT males, however, spend more time playing video games than do males from either the public or private institution comparator groups⁴ (item 10). While a greater percentage of GT respondents work for pay than do their private university peers, GT respondents spend less time working for pay than do their peers at public universities (item 6).

Table 8. Time spent per week on various activities in senior year (percent responding)

	GT	Public	Private
1 Studying/homework (11 or more hours)	20.6	24.1	45.4
2 Socializing with friends (11 or more hours)	33.3	43.1	42.5
3 Talking with teachers outside of class (at least one hour)	44.3	47.2	57.4
4 Partying (3 or more hours)	23.2	36.2	35.8
5 Exercising or playing sports (6 or more hours)	46.9	54.0	55.5
6 Working for pay (6 or more hours)	32.5	41.3	24.9
7 Student clubs/groups (3 or more hours)	36.8	36.7	50.4
8 Watching TV (6 or more hours)	24.2	23.8	24.3
9 Reading for pleasure (3 or more hours)	27.4	25.8	30.6
10 Playing video/computer games (6 or more hours; <u>males only</u>)	31.6	21.0	19.1
11 Online social networks (MySpace, Facebook, etc.) (6 or more hours)	16.6	16.2	19.5

⁴ GT females reported spending considerably less time playing video games than their male counterparts, as did females in the public and private comparator groups. There were no significant differences between females among the three groups.

Between 2007 and 2008, the percentage of GT respondents who reported talking with teachers outside of class (item 3) declined from 49.8 percent to 44.3 percent. GT responders in 2008 were also significantly less likely than were their peers in 2007 to report partying (item 4) which declined from 29.6 percent in 2007, and participating in student groups (item 7) which declined from 45.4 percent in 2007. The percentage of men who reported playing video/computer games (item 10), however, rose from 26.2 percent in 2007.⁴

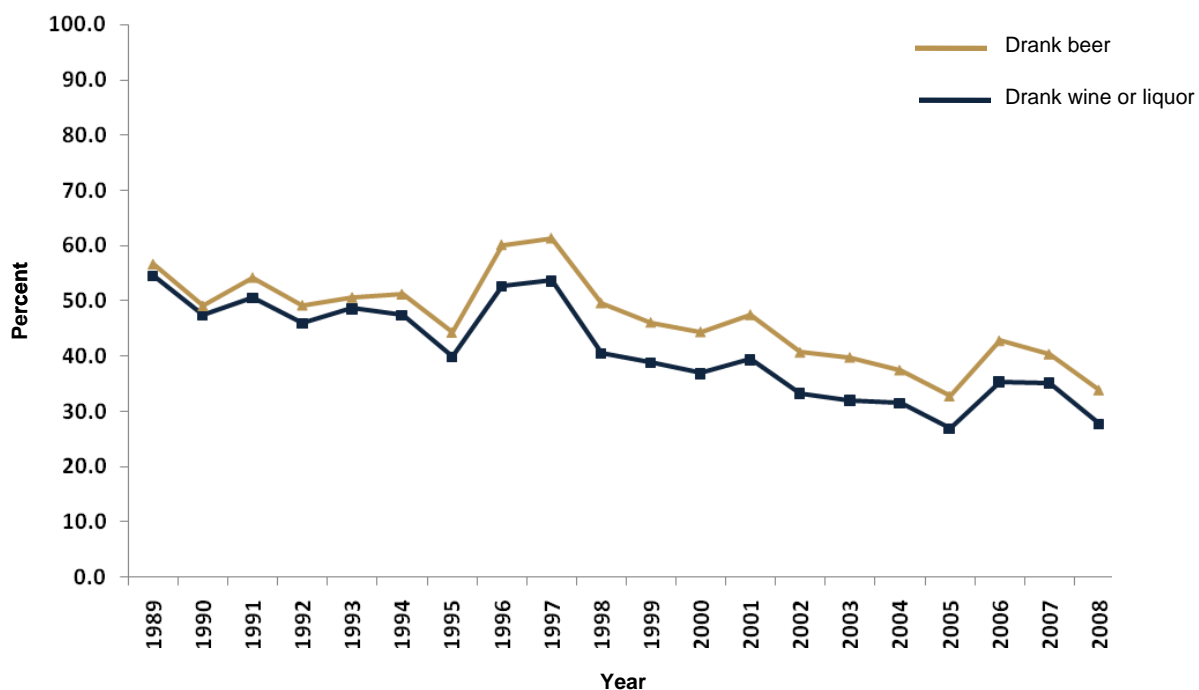
During the decade between 1998 and 2008, fewer GT respondents reported being late to class (1998: 60.7%, 2008: 52.0%), while more respondents reported socializing with members of other racial/ethnic groups (1998: 73.3%, 2008: 80.0%). The advances in computing technology and the Internet over this decade resulted in an increase in the percent of GT respondents who report “frequently” using the Internet for research or homework (1998: 53.8%, 2008: 79.0%).

Alcohol Use

GT respondents are less likely than are their peers at either public or private universities to report having drunk beer (GT: 27.8%; public: 40.9%; private: 41.0%) or wine/liquor (GT: 33.9%; public: 45.9%; private: 46.5%) in high school. When compared to responses on the 2007 CIRP, the 2008 results indicate a significant decline in the percentage of GT respondents reporting “occasional” or “frequent” consumption of beer (35.2 percent vs. 27.8 percent) and wine or liquor (40.4 percent vs. 33.9 percent) during their senior year of high school.

The trend since 1998 is presented in Chart 3.

Chart 3. GT freshman respondents stating “frequent” or “occasional” use of alcohol in their senior year of high school



From 1998 to 2008, there were a number of changes in the way that GT respondents indicated spending their time. The percentage of students socializing with friends for at least 11 hours a week declined from 48.0 to 33.3 percent, and the percentage of students who partied three or more hours a week saw a similar decline from 38.7 to 23.2 percent. Interestingly, the percentage of respondents who indicated working at least six hours a week also declined from 48.4 to 32.5 percent. The only significant increase in time allocated to a specific purpose was for video game time, with the percentage of males spending at least six hours a week increasing from 8.4 percent in 1998 to 31.6 percent in 2008.

College Expectations

Satisfaction

Students estimated the likelihood of various actions and events occurring during their first year of college. Table 9 presents some selected items in which respondents felt the chances of occurrence are “very good.”

Table 9. Predictions for the college experience: Percent estimating a “very good chance”

		GT	Public	Private
1	Change major field	12.2	18.1	17.0
2	Change career choice	11.4	17.7	19.6
3	Make at least a “B” average	61.5	67.8	74.9
4	Need extra time to complete your degree requirements	12.5	4.6	3.0
5	Be satisfied with your college	63.6	66.6	75.6
6	Participate in volunteer or community service work	30.4	35.0	48.1
7	Communicate regularly with your professors	33.4	37.9	54.2
8	Get tutoring help in specific courses	40.5	30.5	25.9
9	Participate in student clubs/groups	63.9	57.8	70.4
10	Participate in a study abroad program	35.5	39.3	49.9
11	Participate in the InternationalPlan	18.3	n/a	n/a
12	Participate in undergraduate research	20.9	n/a	n/a
13	Participate in Co-op	43.5	n/a	n/a

GT respondents are less likely than are their public university and private university counterparts to anticipate changing their major (item 1) and career choice (item 2), and to make a least a “B” average (item 3). GT respondents are, however, more likely than are their public and private institution counterparts to anticipate needing more time to complete their degree requirements (item 4) and to indicate that they are likely to get tutoring (item 8). GT respondents also anticipate spending more time studying during their first year of college than they did in their senior year of high school.

GT respondents are significantly less likely to anticipate volunteering or engaging in community service than are their private institution counterparts (item 6). GT responders are more likely than are their public university peers but less likely than are their private university peers to indicate that there is a very good chance they will participate in student clubs or groups (item 9). More than one third of GT respondents

expect to participate in a study abroad program (item 10) compared with nearly half of their peers at private institutions. Only a third of GT respondents indicate that there is a very good chance that they will communicate regularly with their professors (item 7), compared with more than half of their counterparts at private universities.

Among GT respondents, women are significantly more likely than are men to anticipate volunteering (item 6), participating in student clubs (item 9), and studying abroad (item 10). Women are also more likely than are men to anticipate communicating regularly with their professors and seeking tutoring (items 7 and 8).

While approximately two-thirds of GT respondents indicate that there is a “very good” chance they will be satisfied with Georgia Tech (item 5), a significantly higher proportion of their counterparts at private universities feel the same way. Importantly, more than two-thirds of those for whom GT is their first choice college report a “very good” chance of being satisfied, while only a third of those for whom GT is less than a third choice think there is a “very good chance” they will be satisfied with Georgia Tech. These data are summarized in Table 10.

Table 10. Percent of respondents who believe there is a “very good chance” they will be satisfied with Georgia Tech by college choice

GT was my:	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice	Less than Third Choice
	70.3	57.4	40.6	33.3

A significantly greater percentage of GT respondents in 2008 (43.5 percent) than in 2007 (34.7 percent) indicate that they plan to participate in Co-op. The percentage of GT respondents indicating that they intend to participate in the International Plan rose from 16.1 in 2007 to 18.3 in 2008, while the percentage of respondents indicating that they plan to participate in undergraduate research decreased from 22.5 in 2007 to 20.9 percent in 2008.

Between 1998 and 2008, the percentage of GT respondents who indicated that they anticipated being satisfied with Georgia Tech significantly increased from 57.8 to 63.6 percent. Similarly, the percentage of GT respondents anticipating that they would make at least a “B” average increased from 55.9 percent to 61.5 percent in 2008, while the percentage of respondents indicating that they would participate in community service work increased from 23.4 in 1998 to 30.4 in 2008.

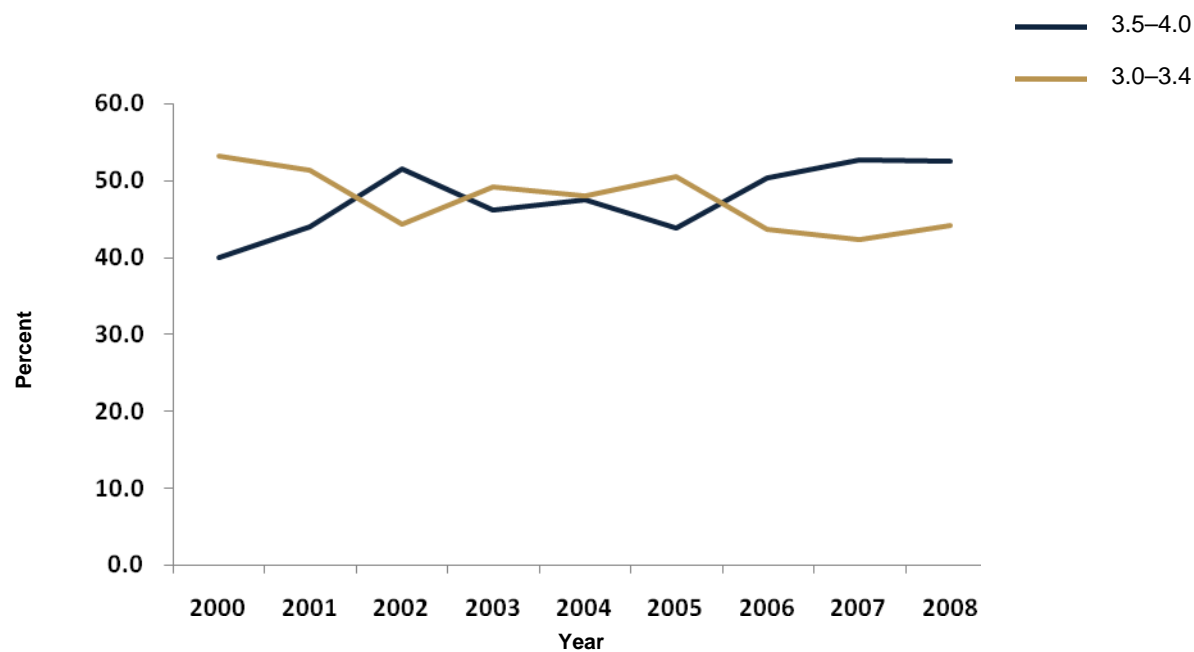
Studying

Georgia Tech traditionally uses the CIRP to ask students to indicate the amount of time they expect to study per week and to indicate their anticipated cumulative grade point average at the end of their first year. Between 2000 and 2008, the percentage of GT respondents indicating that they anticipated studying at least sixteen hours a week declined (see Chart 1) while the GPA they expected to achieve by the end of their first year actually increased (see Chart 2).

Chart 4. Anticipated amount of time spent studying per week



Chart 5. Anticipated grade point average at the end of the first year



In addition to data collected at matriculation, GT also collects information through the National Survey of Student Engagement. This survey asks freshmen at the end of their first year to indicate the amount of time they spent “preparing for class” in a typical week during their first year of college. Table 11 shows the aggregated data across the two instruments.

Table 11. Anticipated amount of time spent studying per week vs. reported amount of time spent preparing for class per week

	2002–2003	2004–2005	2006–2007	2007–2008
Anticipated studying 16+ hours/week (beginning of Fall Semester)	44.5	34.6	36.3	34.7
Reported preparing 16+ hours/week (end of Spring Semester)	54.2	50.9	51.6	45.1

As can be seen from Table 11, while students systematically underestimate the amount of time they will spend studying in their first year, they also overestimate their grade point average at the end of the spring semester of their first year. Between 2000 and 2008, over 90 percent of CIRP respondents expected to earn at least a 3.0 GPA at the end of their first year. However, actual achievement of a 3.0 GPA for freshmen at Georgia Tech has ranged from between 46.6 percent (in 2001) to 57.1 percent (in 2008). Thus, it appears that there is a considerable gap between freshman expectations and reality when it comes to academic achievement at Georgia Tech.

Influences on College Choice

Among GT respondents in 2008, 8.4 percent applied solely to Georgia Tech, while 51.4 percent applied to between one and three other colleges. Only 12.6 percent of GT respondents applied to more than six colleges. GT is the first or second college choice for 88.7 percent of respondents. Since 1998, the percentage of respondents who indicate that Georgia Tech is their first choice has declined from 79.0 percent to 66.0 percent in 2008, while the percentage of respondents indicating that Georgia Tech is their second choice has increased from 15.4 percent to 22.7 percent in 2008.

Students rated possible factors that influenced them to attend their particular institution. GT respondents continued a 37-year trend in rating Georgia Tech’s academic reputation as the top reason for choosing Georgia Tech. Additionally, 80.9 percent of GT respondents cite the ability of graduates to obtain good jobs as a reason for their enrollment. Respondents also cite Georgia Tech’s reputation for graduates’ admission to top graduate/professional schools (item 3), rankings in national magazines (item 4), and financial cost (items 5 and 6) as very important influences on their decision to attend Georgia Tech. Women are more likely than are men to cite reputation for getting into graduate schools (item 3), cost (items 5 and 6), a visit to campus (item 7), and size (item 10) as influences. Additionally, women are nearly twice as likely as were men to indicate that their parents’ wanting them to attend GT (item 11) is a very important influence on their decision to attend Georgia Tech.

Compared to both their public and private university counterparts, GT respondents are more likely to report that the ability to obtain a good job (item 2), rankings in national magazines (item 4), and financial cost (item 5) as important reasons for enrollment. Conversely, GT respondents are less likely than are their public and private university counterparts to report campus visits (item 7), institutional size (item 10), or reputation for social activities (item 9) as reasons for enrollment.

The only significant difference among GT respondents from 2007 to 2008 is the decline in the percentage of respondents who are concerned about size (item 10) from 27.2 percent in 2007 to 21.2 percent in 2008.

During the decade between 1998 and 2008, there were few significant changes in the relative influence of these factors on a student's decision to attend Georgia Tech. The only exceptions were the influence of rankings (item 4) which increased from 32.4% to 51.3%, and the importance of Georgia Tech's size (item 10) which increased from 16.0% to 21.2%. Interestingly, between 2007 and 2008, there was also an increase in the importance of the school's reputation for social activities (item 9) from 16.6 percent to 22.0 percent.

Table 12. Reasons noted as "very important" in influencing student's decision to attend this particular college (percent responding)

	GT Men	GT Women	GT Total	Public Total	Private Total
1 This college has a very good academic reputation	90.7	91.2	90.9	78.0	88.6
2 This college's graduates get good jobs	80.0	82.5	80.9	60.2	71.8
3 This college's graduates gain admission to top graduate/professional schools	50.1	63.1	54.5	46.6	58.2
4 Rankings in national magazines	50.8	52.1	51.3	32.6	41.8
5 The cost of attending this college	37.4	54.1	43.1	32.3	22.2
6 I was offered financial assistance	24.1	35.1	27.8	30.6	34.0
7 A visit to campus	23.4	32.7	26.6	40.8	51.3
8 Information from a website	21.3	24.5	22.4	20.5	27.2
9 This college has a good reputation for its social activities	21.2	23.5	22.0	47.9	41.2
10 I wanted to go to a school about the size of this college	17.9	27.7	21.2	29.2	39.6
11 My parents wanted me to come here	12.3	22.1	15.6	12.5	14.7
12 My relatives wanted me to come here	3.6	6.9	4.9	4.5	5.1

Conclusion

Georgia Tech respondents to the 2008 CIRP are confident students. They report spending fewer hours per week studying than their peers, and a majority expects to have at least a “B” average in college. They are more likely than their peers to admit to being bored in high school and are less likely to report feeling overwhelmed by all they had to do (although women are more likely to report feeling overwhelmed). They are, however, less likely than are their peers to report taking notes in class, revising papers, and asking a teacher for advice after class.

Georgia Tech respondents were less likely than were their peers to socialize, party, or exercise, although GT men were more likely than were their male peers to play video or computer games at least six hours a week. Georgia Tech respondents were also less likely to have drunk either beer or wine/liquor during their senior year in high school. Their self-ratings of abilities and skills are more similar to those of their public school peers than to their private school peers. Georgia Tech was the first or second college choice for over 85 percent of respondents, and respondents reported that GT’s academic reputation was the top influence on their decision to attend GT.

Additionally, respondents in 2008 report spending less time in high school socializing with friends, working, and partying than did respondents in 1998. Respondents in 2008 also reported drinking less alcohol during their senior year than did respondents in 1998. During the decade between 1998 and 2008 there was also an increase in the percentage of GT respondents who frequently used the Internet for research or homework, and the percentage of men who spent at least six hours a week playing video games more than doubled.

While the primary influences on a respondent’s decision to attend GT remained the same between 1998 and 2008, with good academic reputation and graduates getting good jobs the most salient influences for respondents in 2008, Georgia Tech’s national rankings and size took on added importance.