

Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) 2001 Freshman Survey Report

Summary

The Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) 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 2001 Georgia Tech freshmen were asked to complete the CIRP student survey during their summer or fall FASET orientation program. This report is based on the 1,500 responses of first-time, full-time students (67% of the incoming class) and is generally representative of the 2001 Freshman class. Georgia Tech is classified as a public high-selectivity (SAT scores of 1,140 or more) institution and is compared to both public and private high-selectivity universities ("Public" and "Private" peers). This report presents selected results from the 2001 survey, and can be found along with tables of the full results on the Internet at <http://www.academic.gatech.edu/assessment/>.

In general, Georgia Tech (GT) survey respondents tended to resemble their public university peers demographically, but were more like their private university peers academically. Students chose GT because of its academic reputation and the fact that its graduates get good jobs. While many freshmen plan to pursue graduate degrees, this year fewer GT and public university peer respondents had such plans. Female respondents seemed more concerned than males with being prepared for graduate/professional school. The top reason Georgia Tech respondents decided to attend college was to get a better job, unlike their peers at public and private universities who were more concerned with "learning more about things that interested them". Responding GT students were more likely than their peers to think being well off financially is an "essential" or "very important" life objective.

In high school, GT respondents were less likely than their peers to have interacted with their teachers outside of class. Nationally, an increasing number of respondents report having been frequently bored in high school classes. GT respondents (particularly males) were more likely than their peers to have felt bored. GT respondents also reported studying less in high school than their peers. Although responding GT students were less likely than their peers to have felt overwhelmed by all they had to do in the past year, GT females were nearly three times as likely as GT males to have felt overwhelmed (female peers were only twice as likely). While GT students rated themselves lower than private peer respondents on their drive to achieve, GT women reported a higher drive than GT men.

Responding GT students felt they have higher computer and mathematical abilities than their peers, with GT men indicating higher self-ratings than GT women. As in previous years, fewer GT respondents than peer respondents say there is a "very good chance" they will make at least a 'B' average. GT respondents continue to be more conservative politically than their peer groups. Respondents from GT were less likely than private respondents to place importance on cultural, social, or political values. Responding GT females placed more importance on social-oriented objectives and participated more often in cultural/social activities than did GT males.

Methodology

The Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) 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 their summer or fall FASET orientation program. Of the 2,229 students in the incoming 2001 class, 2,170 attended an orientation session but only 1,503 (67.4% of the incoming class) completed the survey. This report is based on the 1,500 responses of first-time, full-time students. Chi-square tests for sample representativeness ($p \leq 0.01$) revealed that there were no significant differences in proportion between the 2001 Freshman class and the obtained response in terms of self-reported gender or entering college. There were significant differences by ethnicity: White/Caucasian students responded at a higher rate than expected. However, because HERI considered Georgia Tech's response to be a representative sample of the entering class (it approached 75% of the class and the method of survey administration showed no systematic biases), the results presented in this report are considered generally representative of the 2001 Freshman class.

Georgia Tech is classified as a public high-selectivity (SAT scores of 1,140 or more) institution. Thirteen universities are included in the public high-selectivity comparison norms ("Public" peers), including Georgia Tech, UCLA, Michigan, Minnesota, and Virginia Tech. This report also provides comparison norms from thirteen private high-selectivity (SAT scores of 1,310 or more) universities ("Private" peers), including California Institute of Technology, Carnegie-Mellon, Johns Hopkins, Northwestern, and Stanford.

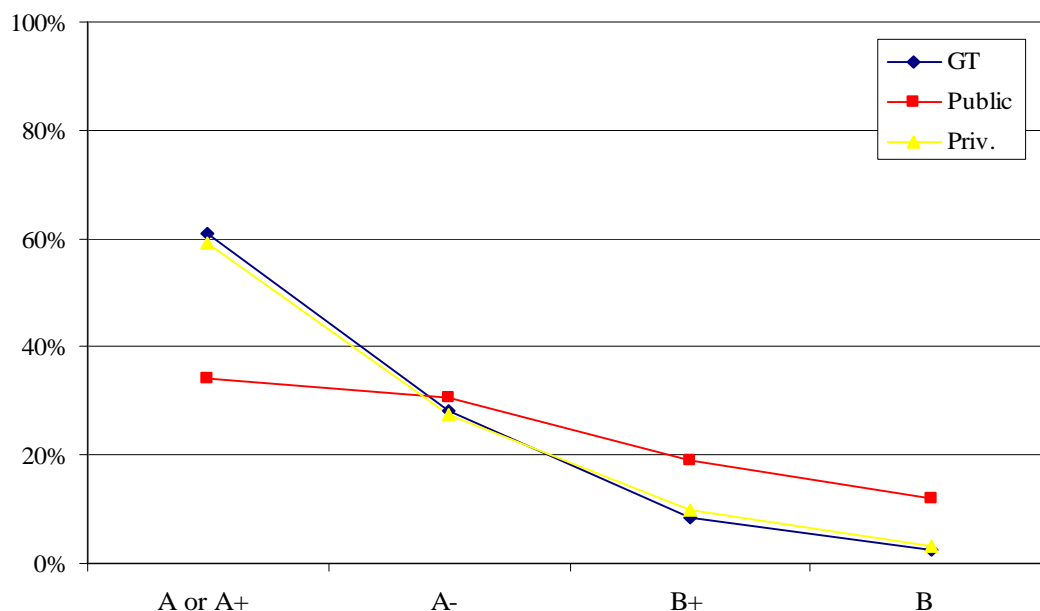
This report presents selected results from the 2001 administration of the CIRP survey. In most cases, a response difference of +/- 5% between Georgia Tech and either comparison group (Public or Private peers) was used to highlight the results. Results for GT males and females are presented for select items. Demographic information on the respondents is presented first, followed by results concerning college decision, high school involvement, predictions about the first year of college, and respondent self-ratings of abilities and life objectives. This report and tables of the full results can be found on the Internet at <http://www.academic.gatech.edu/assessment/>.

Demographics

In this section, Georgia Tech (GT) respondents are compared to respondents from peer public and private universities on several background characteristics. In general, GT survey respondents tended to resemble their public university peers demographically.

- GT respondents: 70.3% Male, 29.7% Female.
- GT respondents: 77.7% White/Caucasian, 16.5% Asian American/Asian, 3.4% African-American/Black.

- U.S. Citizen: GT 93.1%, Public 95.4%, Private 92.5%.
- Native language is English: GT 90.2%, Public 91.3%, Private 88.4%.
- Average grade in high school (self-reported): GT 60.9% A or A+, 28.2% A-



- Highest degree planned:

	At Current Institution			At Any Institution		
	GT	Public	Priv.	GT	Public	Priv.
Bachelor's (B.A., B.S.)	62.6%	63.6%	71.0%	16.5%	17.4%	6.2%
Master's (M.A., M.S.)	32.2%	24.5%	17.9%	49.2%	43.0%	34.3%
Ph.D. or Ed.D.	3.5%	5.0%	4.5%	24.5%	20.2%	28.3%
M.D., D.O., D.D.S., D.V.M.	0.6%	3.8%	3.9%	5.7%	11.9%	18.7%
LL.B. or J.D. (Law)	0.2%	1.2%	1.7%	2.9%	5.9%	11.0%

- Probable career:

	GT Males	GT Females	GT	Public	Priv.
Engineer	49.4%	32.9%	44.4%	14.3%	10.6%
Computer programmer or analyst	16.6%	3.7%	12.7%	4.7%	3.2%
Business executive (mgt., admin.)	5.0%	11.3%	6.9%	9.5%	10.0%
Architect or Urban Planner	3.0%	8.3%	4.6%	2.4%	1.2%
Physician	1.7%	8.5%	3.7%	8.2%	15.3%
Scientific Researcher	2.5%	3.0%	2.6%	2.6%	5.0%
Undecided	8.4%	12.4%	9.6%	16.6%	18.3%

- Parents of responding GT students have income and education levels between those of public and private peer respondents (note that self-reports by students may not be accurate).

<u>Parent's Pre-tax Income</u>	<u>GT</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Priv.</u>
under \$20,000	2.8%	5.4%	3.5%
\$20,000 to \$39,999	7.4%	11.3%	7.2%
\$40,000 to \$59,999	12.7%	15.3%	10.7%
\$60,000 to \$99,999	31.8%	30.1%	21.8%
\$100,000 or more	45.3%	37.7%	56.8%

<u>Parent's Education Level</u>	<u>Father</u>			<u>Mother</u>		
	<u>GT</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Priv.</u>	<u>GT</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Priv.</u>
Grammar school or less	0.5%	1.7%	1.3%	0.7%	1.8%	1.0%
Some high school	1.6%	2.6%	1.3%	1.2%	2.1%	1.3%
High school graduate	7.2%	13.8%	4.9%	11.7%	15.7%	6.7%
Postsecondary school other than college	3.2%	3.5%	1.5%	3.0%	4.7%	2.8%
Some college	9.1%	11.5%	6.5%	14.0%	14.0%	9.0%
College degree	37.7%	31.9%	25.5%	40.6%	35.7%	35.9%
Some graduate school	2.9%	2.8%	3.6%	3.7%	3.8%	5.7%
Graduate degree	37.7%	32.2%	55.4%	25.0%	22.2%	37.6%

College Decision

The top reason Georgia Tech respondents decided to attend college was to get a better job, unlike their peers at public and private universities who were more concerned with learning more about things that interested them. Responding GT students were more likely than their peers to have chosen their school because of its academic reputation and the fact that its graduates get good jobs. Females (GT, public and private) were more concerned than males with being prepared for graduate/professional school.

- “Very Important” reasons for deciding to go to college (top six GT responses):

	<u>GT Males</u>	<u>GT Females</u>	<u>GT</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Priv.</u>
To be able to get a better job	80.3%	80.0%	80.2%	70.7%	65.3%
To learn more about things that interest me	76.8%	79.8%	77.7%	81.6%	87.4%
To be able to make more money	76.1%	71.0%	74.6%	69.4%	60.1%
To get training for a specific career	68.5%	66.8%	68.0%	66.4%	50.7%
To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas	62.0%	73.5%	65.5%	68.2%	79.0%
To prepare myself for graduate or professional school	50.4%	65.2%	54.9%	61.0%	72.5%

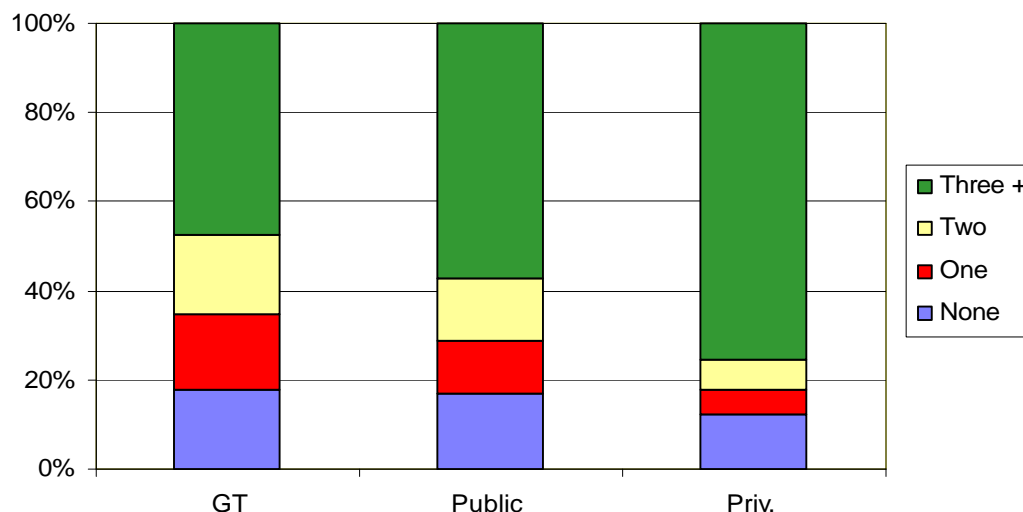
- “Very Important” reasons for attending your college (top six GT responses):

	<u>GT Males</u>	<u>GT Females</u>	<u>GT</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Priv.</u>
This college has a very good academic reputation	89.4%	91.3%	90.0%	70.3%	87.7%
This college's graduates get good jobs	82.9%	83.7%	83.2%	61.1%	71.1%
This college's graduates gain admission to top graduate/professional schools	47.2%	59.6%	50.9%	40.5%	60.7%
Rankings in national magazines	41.4%	33.5%	39.0%	19.9%	33.9%
This college has low tuition	25.6%	30.7%	27.1%	26.0%	3.2%
I was offered financial assistance	23.9%	27.9%	25.1%	20.4%	31.2%

- Choice of school attending:

	<u>GT</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Priv.</u>
First choice	73.7%	71.4%	68.5%
Second choice	18.4%	20.1%	18.9%

- Number of other colleges to which applied for admission:



- 59.4% of GT respondents submitted an admissions deposit only to GT, and 89.1% attended only one freshman orientation program (GT's FASET program).

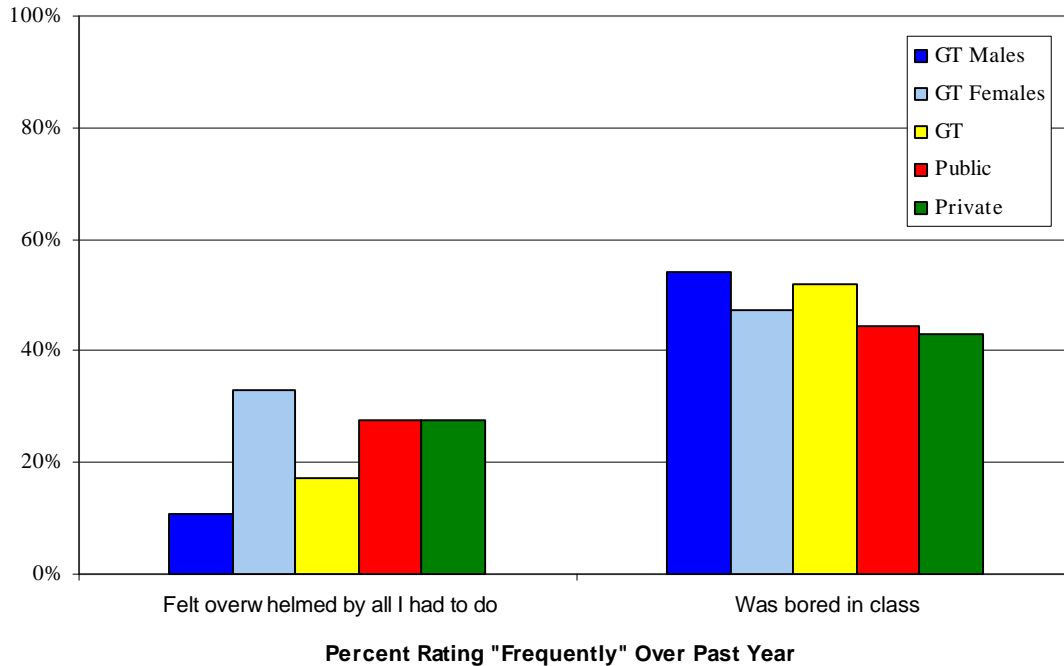
High School Involvement

Students were asked if they engaged in a number of activities during the past year. The following tendencies were noted:

- GT respondents were less likely than their peers to have asked a teacher for advice after class. Among GT respondents, females were more likely than males to have studied with and/or tutored other students. GT respondents were more likely than their peers to have been bored in class, with more males than females indicating boredom.

<u>"Frequently"</u>	<u>GT Males</u>	<u>GT Females</u>	<u>GT</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Priv.</u>
Asked a teacher for advice after class	17.0%	24.9%	19.3%	23.9%	29.0%
Was a guest in a teacher's home	30.6%	32.2%	31.0%	27.8%	36.9%
Studied with other students	84.4%	90.3%	86.1%	89.2%	91.0%
Tutored another student	70.6%	82.5%	74.1%	63.1%	78.1%
Was bored in class	54.1%	47.2%	52.1%	44.4%	43.1%

- Although responding GT students were less likely than their peers to have felt overwhelmed by all they had to do in the past year, GT females were three times as likely as males to have felt overwhelmed.



- Computer use among all respondents was high, with GT students (particularly males) using the Internet slightly more than their peers.
- Responding GT students participated in cultural/political activities less frequently than did students in private schools. GT females performed more volunteer work and attended more cultural events than did GT males.
- GT students reported having frequently consumed beer (39.4%) and wine/liquor (47.5%) less often during the past year than did their responding peers.

Students were asked how they spent a typical week during their last year in high school. GT respondents reported spending less time studying or talking with teachers outside of class, and more time playing video/computer games than did their peers.

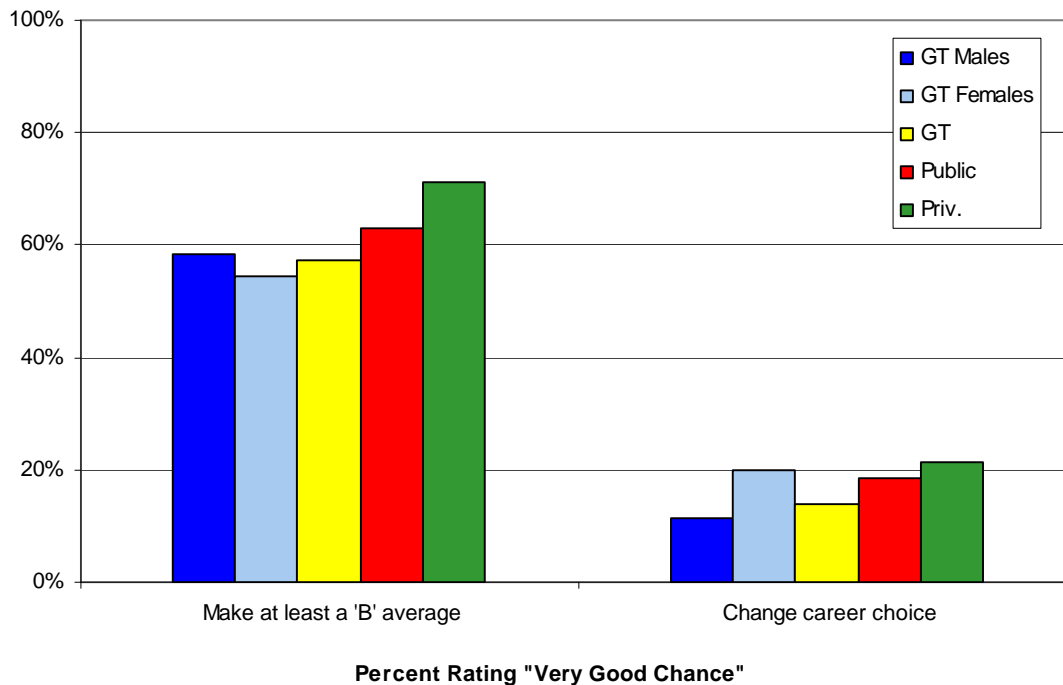
Georgia Tech students were asked several additional questions about academic activities during their senior year in high school. GT respondents indicated they were very involved in their classes (asking questions, contributing to discussions, and making presentations). Most respondents had worked at least occasionally with other students on homework and in study groups, with females collaborating with other students more often than males. More females (43.4%) than males (30.8%) responded that they very often/often worked harder than they thought they could in order to meet a teacher's standards/expectations, while more males said they very often/often came to class unprepared (15.3% vs. 8.3%).

<u>"Very Often" / "Often"</u>	<u>GT Males</u>	<u>GT Females</u>	<u>GT</u>
Worked with classmates on assignments	38.4%	42.7%	39.7%
Worked in study groups	33.5%	40.1%	35.5%
Discussed ideas outside of class	46.8%	57.1%	49.9%

Predictions About First Year of College

Students were asked to predict the occurrence of a number of events during their first year in college. Of those who responded that there was a “very good chance” of the following events occurring during their first year, the following items are of note:

- Responding GT students felt they were *less* likely than their peers to have a very good chance of changing their career choice (14.0%), getting a job to help pay for college expenses (32.4%), or making at least a ‘B’ average (57.3%), but were *more* likely to need more time to complete their degree (16.1%). GT females felt they had a higher chance of changing their career/major or getting a job to help pay for college expenses than did GT males.



- GT students who responded predicted they were less likely than private students to have a very good chance of graduating with honors (24.1% vs. 30.5%), or communicating regularly with their professors (31.3% vs. 47.6%).
- Responding GT students felt they would be more satisfied with college overall (58.5%) than their public peers (53.3%) but less satisfied than their private peers (69.7%). GT females planned more than males to participate in social and volunteer activities.

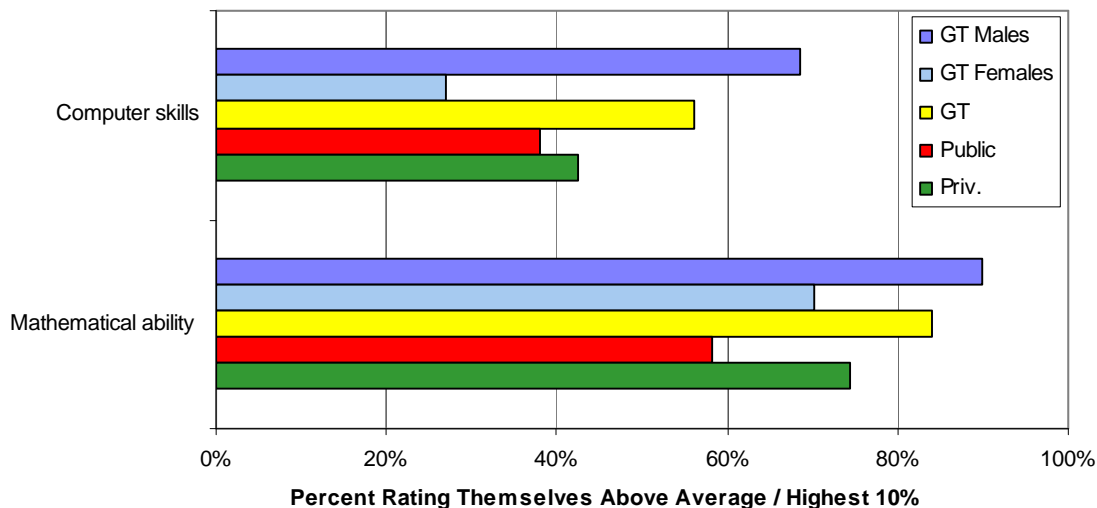
Georgia Tech students were asked an additional question about expected grades. Just over half (51.3%) of GT respondents anticipated making an overall GPA between 3.0 and 3.4 their *first year*, while 43.9% anticipated making between 3.5 and 4.0.

Self-Ratings of Abilities and Life Objectives

Students were asked to rate themselves compared with the average person their age in a number of abilities. The percentages of students rating themselves “above average” or “in the highest 10%” of all twenty abilities are shown in the table below. GT respondents rated themselves generally higher than their public peers, but lower than private respondents in many areas.

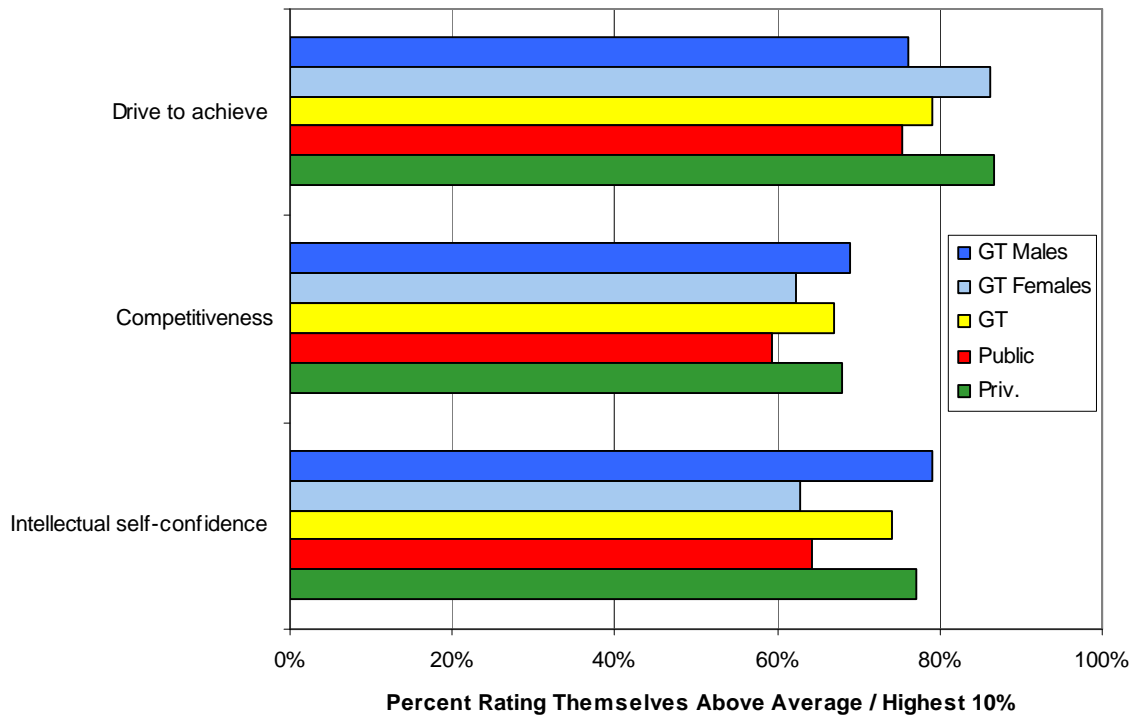
	<u>GT</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Priv.</u>
Academic ability	94.1%	83.6%	95.0%
Mathematical ability	84.0%	58.2%	74.4%
Drive to achieve	79.1%	75.3%	86.6%
Self-confidence (intellectual)	74.2%	64.3%	77.2%
Persistence	70.6%	66.1%	77.8%
Cooperativeness	69.9%	73.6%	75.3%
Competitiveness	67.0%	59.3%	68.1%
Leadership ability	66.2%	62.1%	71.5%
Understanding of others	62.9%	67.0%	71.6%
Self-understanding	62.0%	57.6%	67.3%
Emotional health	62.0%	56.3%	62.4%
Physical health	60.8%	58.9%	62.5%
Creativity	59.2%	58.3%	64.5%
Computer skills	56.1%	38.0%	42.4%
Writing ability	51.0%	52.4%	68.2%
Self-confidence (social)	45.6%	50.0%	53.6%
Spirituality	41.3%	36.4%	43.0%
Public speaking ability	39.9%	39.3%	52.9%
Religiousness	34.6%	28.0%	33.4%
Artistic ability	34.2%	32.4%	37.7%
Popularity	33.7%	40.7%	46.9%

- Responding GT students felt they have higher computer and mathematical abilities than their peers. GT students were asked three additional questions about their computer skills. 63.6% of GT respondents believe that their current computer skills will be sufficient for their program of study at GT. Over 90% are very/moderately confident in their ability to learn new computer skills and are very/moderately comfortable with using a virtual learning environment. More GT males than females are sure of their computer-related abilities.



While GT students rated themselves lower than private peer respondents on their drive to achieve, GT women reported a higher drive than GT men.

- Among GT respondents, men reported higher competitiveness, intellectual self-confidence, self-understanding, public speaking ability, and emotional and physical health than did GT women. GT females rated themselves higher on spirituality and artistic ability.



Students were asked to rate the personal importance of twenty life objectives. Of those who rated each objective as “essential” or “very important” in life:

- Responding GT students (75.4%) were more likely than their private (63.9%) or public (73.7%) peers to think being well off financially is essential or very important.
- GT respondents were less likely than private respondents to place importance on cultural, social, or political values. Responding GT females placed more importance on social-oriented objectives than did males.

“Essential” / “Very Important”	<u>GT Males</u>	<u>GT Females</u>	<u>GT</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Priv.</u>
Helping others who are in difficulty	44.9%	63.2%	50.4%	57.8%	65.2%
Integrating spirituality into my life	40.3%	51.8%	43.8%	37.3%	47.1%
Helping to promote racial understanding	22.8%	27.4%	24.1%	30.1%	37.5%
Participating in a community action program	13.6%	24.7%	16.9%	21.8%	31.8%
Influencing social values	24.5%	35.4%	27.7%	34.1%	37.4%
Influencing the political structure	16.5%	15.2%	16.1%	18.2%	23.1%
Keeping up-to-date with political affairs	37.4%	36.1%	37.0%	35.2%	50.0%

- Among GT respondents, males thought it was more important to have administrative responsibility for the work of others, become successful in a business of their own, and make a theoretical contribution to science.

