

## **Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) 2003 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 2003 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 1,693 responses of first-time, full-time students (76% of the incoming class) and is generally representative of the 2003 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 2003 survey, and can be found along with tables of the full results on the Internet at <http://www.assessment.gatech.edu>.

In general, Georgia Tech (GT) survey respondents tended to resemble their public university peers demographically, but were more like their private university peers academically. GT respondents now agree with their peers that the top reason to attend college is "learning more about things that interest me". Female respondents seemed more concerned than males with getting prepared for graduate/professional school, while males were more concerned with being able to make more money. Again, the number one reason students chose GT is because of its academic reputation.

Nationally, near record low percentages of freshmen reported having studied six or more hours a week in high school, and GT respondents again reported studying less than their peers. GT respondents (particularly males) were more likely than their peers to have felt bored in high school classes and less likely than their peers to have interacted with their teachers outside of class. Although responding GT students were still less likely than their peers to have felt overwhelmed by all they had to do in the past year, GT females were still nearly three times as likely as GT males to have felt overwhelmed (female peers were only twice as likely).

Responding GT students again 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 in college. Responding GT students were still more likely than their peers to think being well off financially is an "essential" or "very important" life objective and less likely to place importance on developing a meaningful philosophy of life.

College freshmen nationally have shown a recent increased interest in politics, and GT respondents were no exception. Slightly more freshmen identify as conservative/far right than in 2001, and GT respondents continue to be more conservative politically than their peer groups. GT respondents were less likely than private peer 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 2,233 students in the incoming 2003 class, 2,180 attended an orientation session and 1,704 completed the survey. This report is based on the 1,693 responses of first-time, full-time students (76.1% of the incoming first-time, full-time class). Chi-square tests for sample representativeness ( $p \leq 0.01$ ) revealed that there were no significant differences in proportion between the 2003 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 the obtained sample meets HERI standards for being considered a representative sample of the institution's entering class (at least 75% of the class and no systematic biases in the method of survey administration), and GT was included in their national norms, the results presented in this report are considered generally representative of the 2003 Freshman class.

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

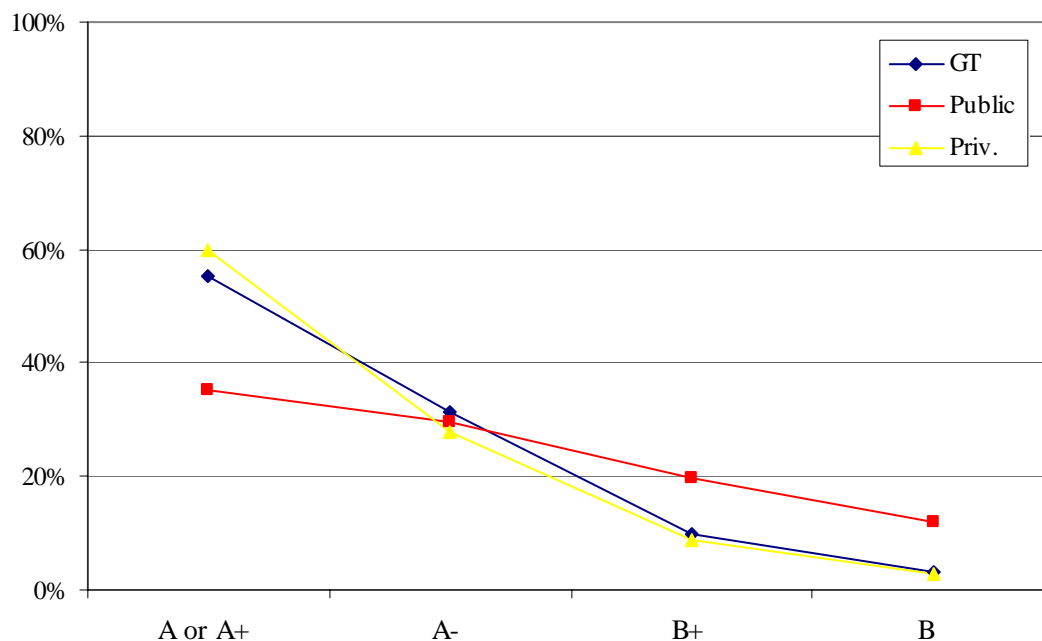
This report presents selected results from the 2003 administration of the CIRP survey. In most cases, a response difference of +/- 5% between Georgia Tech and either comparison group (Public or Private peers) was used to highlight the results. Results for GT males and females are presented for select 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.assessment.gatech.edu>.

## 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: 71.8% Male, 28.2% Female.
- GT respondents: 76.8% White/Caucasian, 15.9% Asian American/Asian, 4.0% African-American/Black.

- U.S. Citizen: GT 93.7%, Public 95.5%, Private 92.7%.
- Native language is English: GT 91.2%, Public 88.9%, Private 88.0%.
- Average grade in high school (self-reported): GT 55.2% A or A+, 31.5% A-.



- Highest degree planned:

	At Current Institution			At Any Institution		
	GT	Public	Priv.	GT	Public	Priv.
Bachelor's (B.A., B.S.)	60.3%	65.2%	73.5%	16.4%	16.2%	6.4%
Master's (M.A., M.S.)	31.4%	22.3%	15.8%	45.7%	40.4%	32.7%
Ph.D. or Ed.D.	6.9%	5.1%	4.0%	28.0%	22.0%	28.3%
M.D., D.O., D.D.S., D.V.M.	0.5%	3.6%	3.9%	7.2%	13.0%	20.0%
LL.B. or J.D. (Law)	0.0%	1.3%	1.5%	2.0%	6.3%	11.3%

- Probable career:

	GT Males	GT Females	GT	Public	Priv.
Engineer	56.3%	34.8%	50.3%	11.7%	11.3%
Computer programmer or analyst	10.2%	1.6%	7.8%	2.7%	2.2%
Business executive (mgt., admin.)	3.6%	7.8%	4.8%	7.9%	9.3%
Architect or Urban Planner	3.4%	9.8%	5.2%	1.8%	1.7%
Physician	2.8%	13.2%	5.7%	9.6%	16.1%
Scientific Researcher	2.6%	3.3%	2.8%	2.6%	4.8%
Undecided	8.9%	11.6%	9.7%	16.6%	17.5%

- 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	2.9%	6.1%	4.1%
\$20,000 to \$39,999	7.1%	11.1%	7.1%
\$40,000 to \$59,999	13.3%	14.5%	9.7%
\$60,000 to \$99,999	27.7%	28.1%	21.1%
\$100,000 or more	48.9%	40.2%	58.0%

<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	0.7%	2.1%	1.2%	0.5%	2.2%	1.1%
Some high school	1.5%	2.9%	1.4%	1.3%	2.3%	1.2%
High school graduate	8.2%	13.6%	5.6%	10.1%	15.6%	6.8%
Postsecondary school other than college	1.9%	3.4%	1.6%	3.0%	4.3%	2.6%
Some college	9.3%	12.0%	6.2%	14.7%	14.3%	8.6%
College degree	36.5%	31.4%	25.4%	41.4%	36.6%	37.4%
Some graduate school	4.2%	3.1%	3.7%	4.6%	3.5%	5.2%
Graduate degree	37.8%	31.4%	54.9%	24.4%	21.3%	37.0%

## College Decision

The top reasons Georgia Tech respondents (and their peers) decided to attend college were 'to learn more about things that interest me' and/or 'to be able to get a better job'. Responding GT students were more likely than their peers to have chosen their school because of its academic reputation and/or rankings in national magazines. It should be noted that one of the top response options GT students normally choose, 'This college's graduates get good jobs', was not reported due to problems with the national dataset.

- "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 learn more about things that interest me	78.8%	80.0%	79.2%	79.6%	86.5%
To be able to get a better job	78.5%	77.2%	78.1%	68.6%	65.6%
To be able to make more money	75.9%	67.2%	73.5%	68.3%	61.1%
To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas	64.1%	72.7%	66.5%	68.1%	78.5%
To get training for a specific career	63.0%	66.7%	64.0%	64.3%	50.7%
To prepare myself for graduate or professional school	52.8%	70.4%	57.8%	63.8%	72.5%

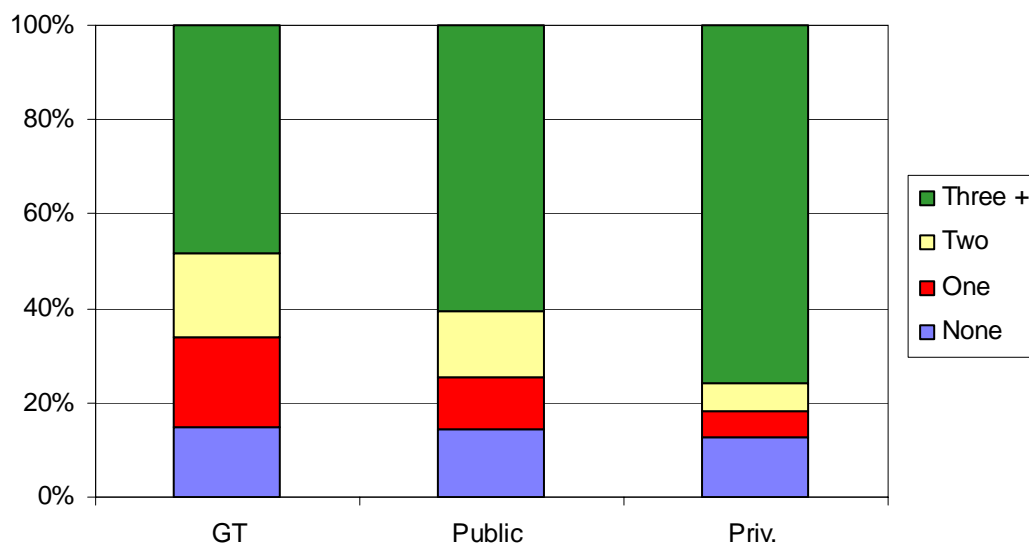
- "Very Important" reasons for attending your college (top four GT responses):

	<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%	90.0%	89.6%	65.2%	87.0%
Rankings in national magazines	45.4%	47.0%	45.9%	20.9%	39.6%
This college has low tuition	26.7%	35.2%	29.1%	26.1%	4.0%
A visit to the campus	20.7%	33.3%	24.3%	36.8%	56.6%

- Choice of school attending:

	<u>GT</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Priv.</u>
First choice	76.6%	68.9%	69.0%
Second choice	17.4%	21.3%	18.5%

- Number of other colleges to which applied for admission:



- 58.4% of GT respondents submitted an admissions deposit only to GT, and 89.5% attended only one freshman orientation program (GT's FASET program).

### High School Involvement

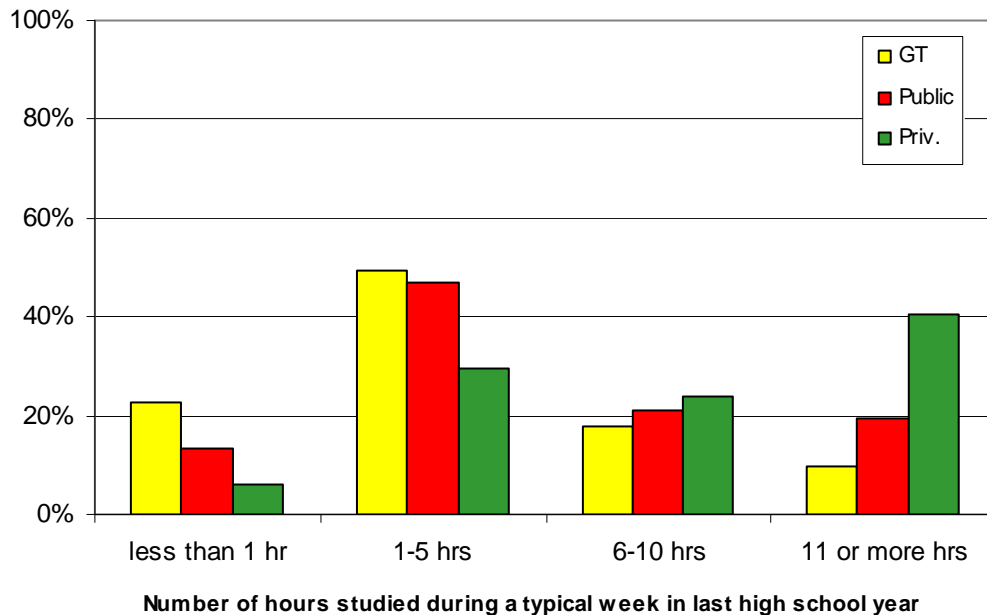
Students were asked if they engaged in a number of activities during the past year. The following tendencies were noted:

- GT respondents were less likely than their private peers to have asked a teacher for advice after class, although the gap has narrowed since 2001. In general, female students were more likely to have asked for advice than were male students.
- GT respondents were more likely than their peers to have been bored in class, with slightly more males than females indicating boredom.
- Nationally, fewer students in 2003 than 2001 reported feeling overwhelmed by all they had to do in their last year of high school. Although responding GT students were still less likely than their peers to have felt overwhelmed, GT females were still three times as likely as males to have felt this way (whereas females at public and private peer institutions were only approximately twice as likely to have felt overwhelmed).

<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	18.8%	30.3%	22.1%	23.2%	29.7%
Was bored in class	54.4%	51.1%	53.4%	44.2%	41.9%
Felt overwhelmed by all I had to do	8.8%	25.8%	13.6%	24.9%	26.7%

- Responding GT students participated in cultural/political activities their last year in high school less frequently than their peers in private colleges reported. GT females performed more volunteer work and attended more cultural events than did GT males.
- GT students reported having frequently consumed beer (32.1%) and wine/liquor (39.8%) less often during the past year than did their responding peers, and at decreased percentages from previous GT freshmen (mirroring a national trend).

Students were asked how they spent a typical week during their last year in high school. Nationally, only 34.0% of freshmen reported having studied six or more hours a week in high school (almost a record low). GT respondents again reported studying less in high school than their peers (even less than 2001 respondents), with 35.9% saying they studied six or more hours compared to 40.5% of public peers and 64.4% of private peers. GT respondents also reported spending less time than peers talking with teachers outside of class but more time playing video/computer games.



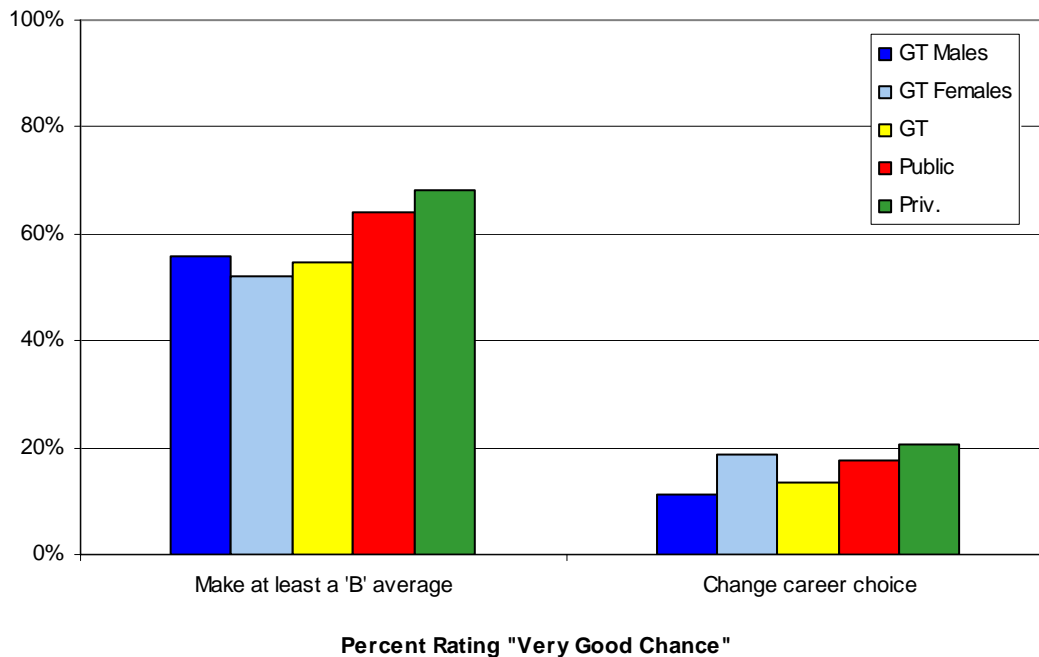
Georgia Tech students were asked several additional questions about academic activities during their senior year in high school. GT respondents indicated they were very involved in their classes (asking questions, contributing to discussions, and making presentations). Most respondents had worked at least occasionally with other students on homework and in study groups, with females collaborating with other students more often than males. More females (45.7%) than males (32.2%) 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 (14.7% males vs. 9.1% females).

<u>“Very Often” / “Often”</u>	<u>GT Males</u>	<u>GT Females</u>	<u>GT</u>
Asked questions/contributed to discussions in class	77.1%	80.6%	78.0%
Worked with classmates outside class on assignments	37.0%	48.8%	40.3%
Worked in study groups	35.4%	44.5%	38.0%

## 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 listed 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 (13.3%), getting a job to help pay for college expenses (34.6%), making at least a ‘B’ average (54.7%), or participating in a study abroad program (19.8%). 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.



- Fewer GT respondents than private peer respondents felt there was a very good chance they would communicate regularly with their college professors (33.0% vs. 46.4%) or participate in student clubs/groups (52.7% vs. 65.3%). GT females planned more than males to participate in social and volunteer activities.
- Responding GT students felt they would be more satisfied with college overall (58.0%) than their public peers (56.3%) but less satisfied than their private peers (69.5%).

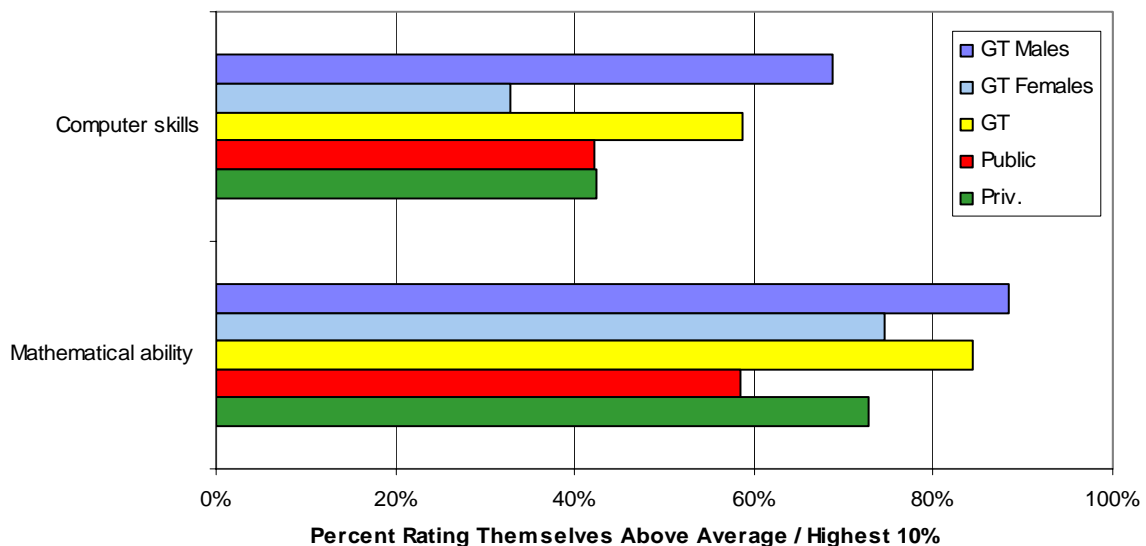
Georgia Tech students were asked several additional questions about expectations of their first year. Nearly half (49.1%) of GT respondents anticipated making an overall GPA between 3.0 and 3.4 their *first year*, while 46.0% anticipated making between 3.5 and 4.0. Males had slightly higher expectations than females. 60.6% of GT students anticipated studying 6-15 hours a week, while 26.0% anticipated 16-20 hours (with GT females planning to study more hours than males). Almost 90% of GT respondents felt they would be at least somewhat effective in managing their time during their first year (females more so than males), with one-fourth predicting that they would be very effective. One-third of GT respondents thought they would only go home 1-4 times during their first year, while one-fifth planned to go home 20 or more times. More than two-thirds of GT respondents were moderately or very interested in courses or activities that would help develop their leadership skills.

## Self-Ratings of Abilities and Life Objectives

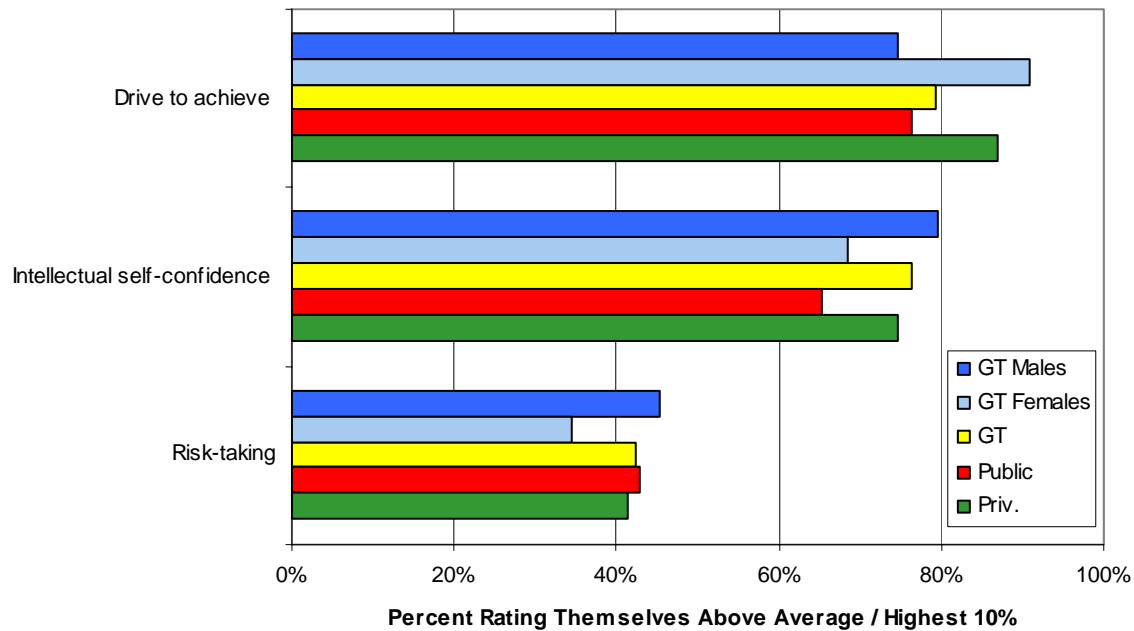
Students were asked to rate themselves compared with the average person their age on a number of abilities. The percentages of students rating themselves “above average” or “in the highest 10%” of all twenty abilities are shown in the table below. GT respondents rated themselves generally higher than their public peers, but lower than private respondents in many areas. In most areas, these GT ratings were very close to the ratings of 2001 GT respondents. One notable difference is that the 2003 respondents rated their intellectual and social self-confidence several percentage points higher than the 2001 respondents.

	<u>GT</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Priv.</u>
Academic ability	95.0%	84.9%	94.9%
Mathematical ability	84.4%	58.4%	72.8%
Drive to achieve	79.3%	76.3%	87.0%
Self-confidence (intellectual)	76.4%	65.2%	74.7%
Persistence	73.0%	68.2%	77.3%
Cooperativeness	71.3%	74.1%	75.0%
Leadership ability	66.7%	62.8%	69.4%
Emotional health	64.1%	58.4%	61.2%
Understanding of others	63.6%	67.3%	70.4%
Self-understanding	62.5%	58.4%	65.1%
Physical health	60.0%	59.2%	61.8%
Creativity	59.5%	58.6%	63.3%
Computer skills	58.6%	42.1%	42.4%
Writing ability	51.0%	51.8%	65.0%
Self-confidence (social)	48.6%	50.2%	50.1%
Spirituality	42.8%	35.9%	40.0%
Risk-taking	42.3%	42.9%	41.4%
Public speaking ability	40.2%	39.1%	50.3%
Religiousness	36.3%	27.9%	31.5%
Popularity	34.4%	40.2%	43.6%
Artistic ability	30.4%	30.9%	35.4%

- Responding GT students (particularly females) felt they have higher computer and mathematical abilities than their peers.



- 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 intellectual self-confidence, risk-taking, self-understanding, and emotional and physical health than did GT women. GT females rated themselves higher on spirituality, religiousness, artistic ability, and understanding others.



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 (75.1%) were still *more* likely than their private (66.6%) or public (74.4%) peers to think being well off financially is essential or very important.
- Responding GT students (38.0%) were *less* likely than their private (51.7%) or public (42.0%) peers to think developing a meaningful philosophy of life is essential or very important.
- GT respondents were less likely than their peers to place importance on cultural, social, or political values. Responding GT females placed more importance on social-oriented objectives than did males. A larger percentage of GT respondents (37.6%) than public (21.7%) or private (22.5%) respondents characterized their political views as ‘conservative’ or ‘far right’.

<u>“Essential” / “Very Important”</u>	<u>GT Males</u>	<u>GT Females</u>	<u>GT</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Priv.</u>
Helping others who are in difficulty	46.2%	65.2%	51.5%	62.9%	66.8%
Helping to promote racial understanding	22.3%	32.4%	25.2%	30.9%	36.9%
Participating in a community action program	15.6%	27.4%	18.9%	22.9%	30.5%
Influencing social values	23.2%	35.0%	26.5%	36.1%	38.6%
Influencing the political structure	16.7%	15.5%	16.4%	20.8%	24.5%
Keeping up-to-date with political affairs	39.8%	33.5%	38.0%	39.6%	50.8%
Improving my understanding of other countries and cultures	36.6%	54.8%	41.7%	48.8%	60.8%