Volume 9
Issue 5
February 2013

News from Institutional Research

This issue of "News from Institutional Research" continues the series of reports on the results of the 2012 Freshman Survey completed by 791undergraduate freshmen in August of 2012, 84% of the entering class.

2012 Freshman - Internal and External Comparisons

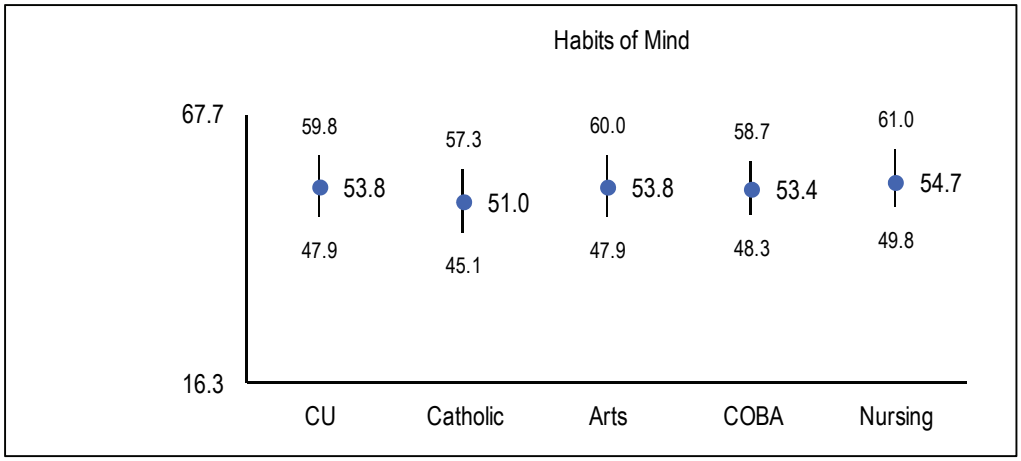
"Constructs"

The Cooperative Institutional Research Project (CIRP) has designed "constructs" which combine weighted individual survey items into global measures they believe capture the experiences and outcomes which reveal information about the student experience. This issue of "News from Institutional Research" examines 1) the differences between entering students at Creighton compared to those at high-select Catholic Colleges and 2) the differences among the freshmen in each school of enrollment.

The chart included in each section is a visual display of the "construct" scores for Creighton and high-select Catholic Colleges as well as each school of enrollment. The Y axis is defined by the highest and lowest possible construct score. Mean scores are bolded. The numbers at the top and bottom of the vertical line are values for the 75th and 25th percentile.

CONSTRUCT– Habits of Mind

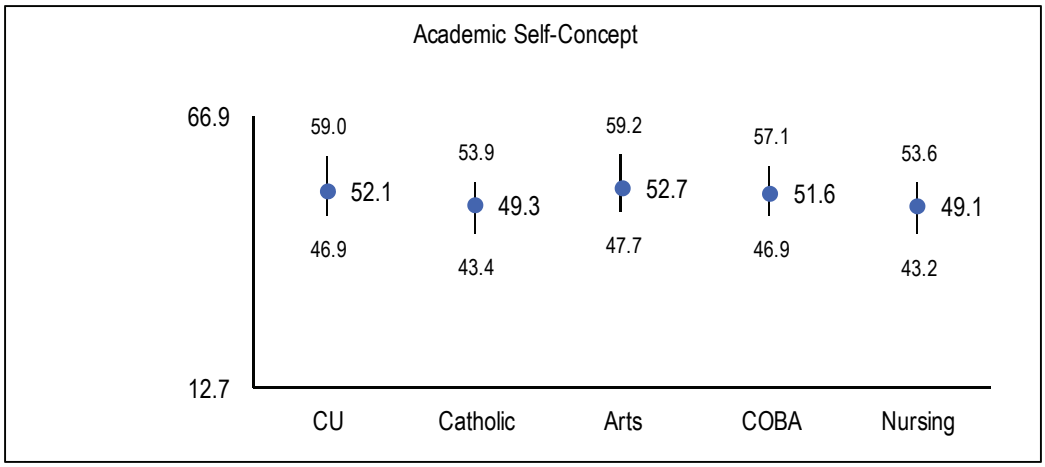
The Habits of Mind construct measures "the behaviors and traits associated with academic success. These learning behaviors are seen as the foundation for lifelong learning." It includes the following items and weights in response to "how often in the past year did you": seek solutions to problems and explain them to others (1.99), support your opinion with a logical argument (1.74), seek alternative solutions to a problem (1.61), evaluate the quality or reliability of information you received (1.58), explore topics on your own, even though it is not required for a class (1.27), seek feedback on your academic work (1.24), ask questions in class (1.20), look up scientific research articles and resources (1.05), revise your papers to improve your writing (1.04), take a risk because you feel you have more to gain (1.03) and accept mistakes as part of the learning process (0.95).



Creighton freshmen had a significantly higher mean score on the Habits of Mind construct than freshmen at the high-select Catholic Colleges at the $p<.001$ level. There were no meaningful differences between the mean scores on the Habits of Mind construct by school/college of enrollment or between freshmen men and women.

CONSTRUCT– Academic Self-Concept

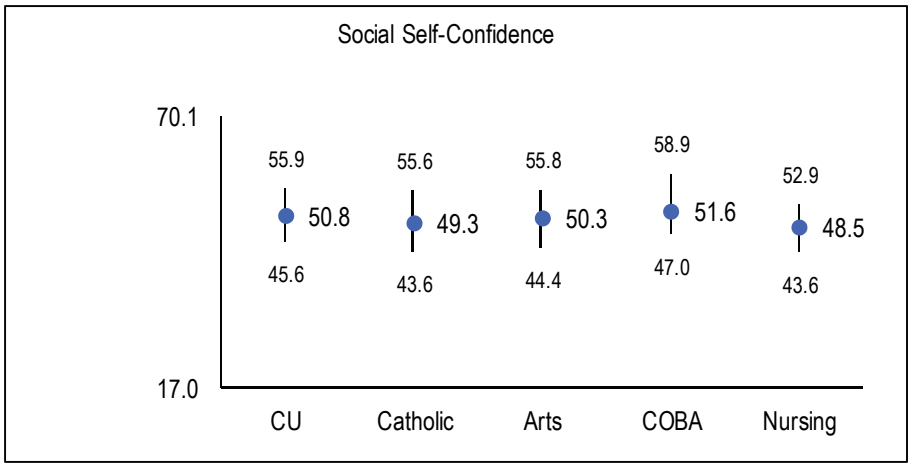
Academic Self-Concept measures "the students' beliefs about their abilities and confidence in academic environments". It includes the following items and weights in response to "rate yourself on each of the following traits as compared with the average person your age": academic ability (3.52) , mathematical ability (1.32), intellectual self-confidence (1.22) and drive to achieve (0.95).



Creighton freshmen had a significantly higher mean score on the Academic Self-Concept construct than freshmen at the high-select Catholic Colleges at the p<.001 level. Arts and Sciences students had a significantly higher mean score than Nursing students at the p<.001 level. Freshmen men had a significantly higher mean score than freshman women at the p<.001 level (53.5 and 51.1, respectively).

CONSTRUCT- Social Self-Concept

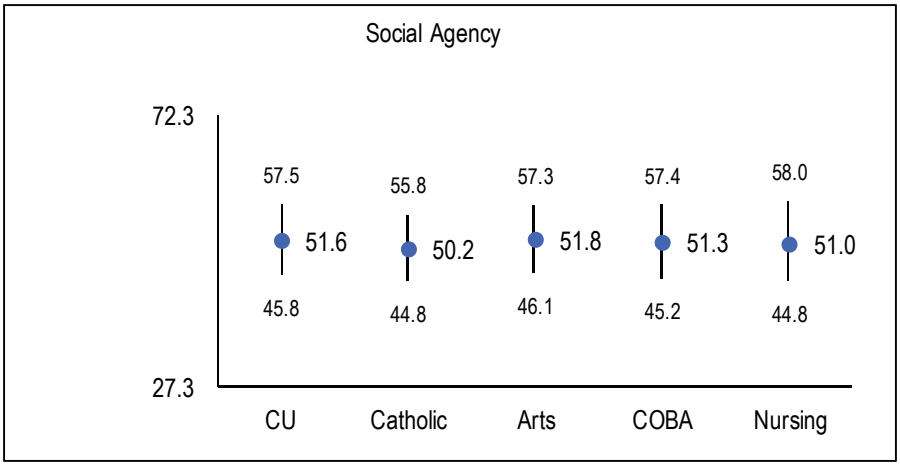
Social Self-Concept measures "the students' beliefs about their abilities and confidence in social situations". It includes the following items and weights in response to "rate yourself on each of the following traits as compared with the average person your age": social self-confidence (2.33), leadership ability (1.96), popularity (1.92) and public speaking ability (1.68).



Creighton freshmen had a significantly higher mean score on the Social Self-Concept construct than freshmen at the high-select Catholic Colleges at the p<.001 level. Business freshmen had a significantly higher mean score (p<.001) than Nursing. Freshmen men had a significantly higher mean score than freshmen women at the p<.001 level (52.2 and 49.8, respectively).

CONSTRUCT- Social Agency

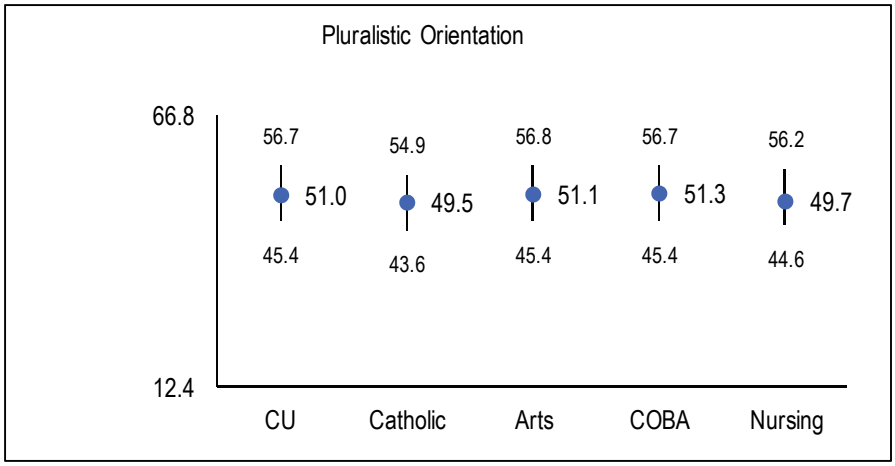
Social Agency measures "the extent to which students value political and social involvement as a personal goal". It includes the following items and weights in response to "indicate the importance to you personally": participating in community action program (2.42), helping to promote racial understanding (2.05), becoming a community leader (2.01), influencing social values (1.58), helping others who are in difficulty (1.36) and keeping up to date with political affairs (1.35).



Creighton freshmen had a significantly higher mean score on the Social Agency construct than freshmen at the high-select Catholic Colleges at the p<.001 level. There were no meaningful differences between the mean scores on the Social Agency construct by school/college of enrollment or between freshmen men and women.

CONSTRUCT– Pluralistic Orientation

Pluralistic Orientation measures "skills and dispositions appropriate for living and working in a diverse society". It includes the following items and weights in response to "rate yourself on each trait compared with the average person your age": ability to work cooperatively with diverse people (2.39), tolerance of others with different beliefs (2.35), openness to having my own views challenged (2.13), ability to discuss and negotiate controversial issues (2.03) and ability to see the world from someone else's perspective (1.78).



Creighton freshmen had a significantly higher mean score on the Pluralistic Orientation construct than freshmen at the high-select Catholic Colleges at the p<.001 level. There were no meaningful differences between the mean scores on the Pluralistic Orientation construct by school/college of enrollment but freshmen women had a significantly higher (p<.02) mean score on Pluralistic orientation than men.

News from Institutional Research is intended for the Creighton community. Comments or questions should be directed to Stephanie Wernig, Ph.D., 280-1164, wernig@creighton.edu.