

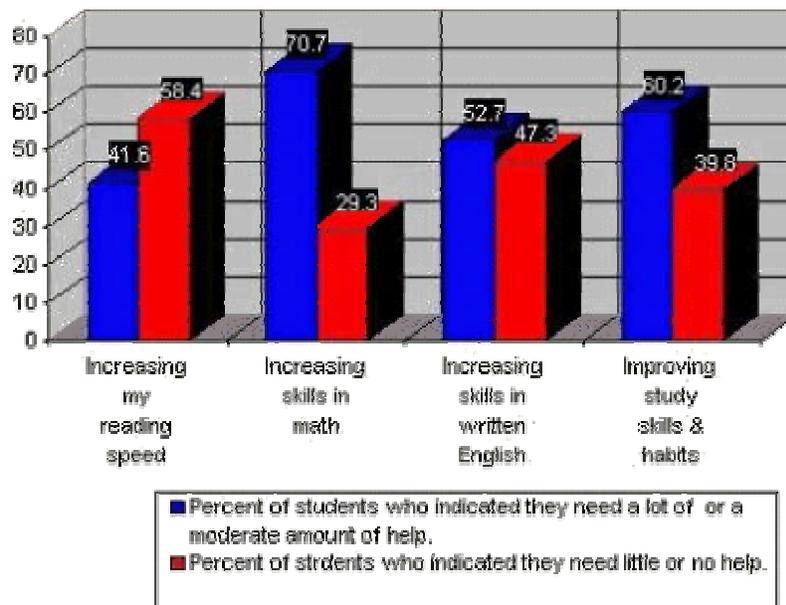
SLU's Entering Freshmen: A Profile

Policy Brief #1

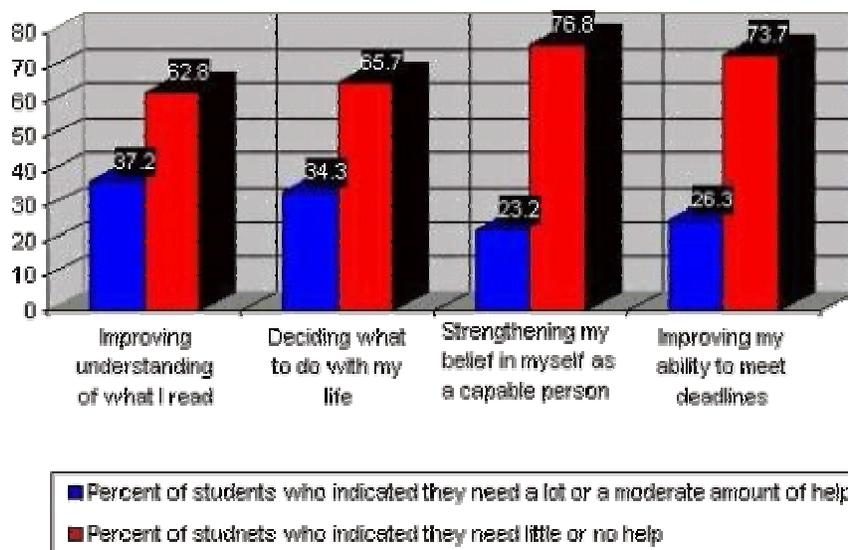
Fall 1996

What skills do they seek?

Freshmen who entered Southeastern in Fall 1995 (n= 3393) indicated how much help they needed in their first year in a variety of educational and personal areas. They indicated that they needed the most help in the following four areas:



They indicated that they needed the least help in these four areas:



What skills do they seek: Summary and Implications

SLU's entering freshmen seem to be most concerned about basic skill abilities in math, English, study skills, and reading. Fewer students are concerned with personal development.

Other notable facts...

- *Most students have a major in mind:* 74.8% of entering students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I know which major I want to pursue."
- *SLU is a family affair:* 86.5% of freshmen agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "Members of my family encouraged me to attend Southeastern." 25% have a brother or sister who is attending or has attended SLU.
- *For many, college is a groundbreaking experience:* 38.1% are first-generation college students. Only 29.9% of entering freshmen indicated that both their mother and father had attended at least one semester of college.
- *Friends are influential:* 72.4% of entering freshmen agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "My close friends encouraged me to attend Southeastern."
- *They want a degree:* 65.1% of entering students indicated that their goal is to earn a four-year degree. Only 5.3% indicated that they wanted to pursue an associate degree; 9.8% said that their intent was to transfer; and the remainder indicated that they wanted specific job skills, were fulfilling personal interests, or wanted to see if college was right for them.
- *And they want to graduate:* When asked to respond to the statement "How firm is your intention to graduate from Southeastern," 79.3% said firm or extremely firm.
- *They plan on mixing college and employment:* Only 21.2% of freshmen said that they did not plan to be employed. 42.8% planned to be employed 20 hours per week or less, and 36.0% planned to be employed more than 20 hours per week. 16.5% were planning for on-campus work, and 62.8% for off-campus employment.
- *Their plans also include travel:* 18.2% of entering freshmen live within half a mile of the Southeastern campus or on campus. 27.3% plan on traveling 20-40 miles one-way, and 25.8% plan on traveling more than 40 miles one-way.
- *Marriage and children are not a concern for most:* 91.0% of entering freshmen are single, and only 12.7% have children.
- *They need financial aid:* 53.1% of entering freshmen said that they have applied for financial aid at Southeastern.

This Policy Brief presents issues addressed in Goal 7 of the University's Strategic Plan: *To increase the proportion of students graduating in four years.* For more information about Southeastern Louisiana University, check the web site of the Office of Institutional Research & Assessment at <http://www.selu.edu/Administration/Inst-Research/>.