

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF PARENTS

SUMMARY: In this section, generalizations regarding the patterns of responses for first- and “second” generation college students¹ are offered for the four areas covered by the CSEQ. With information available from two samples of the CSEQ, we find few differences in the response patterns of first- and second-generation college students. Participation in the academic and social life of the campus appears to be similar, as does environmental ratings. In the important area of student development, there are no reported differences between subgroups. However, between 1994 and 1999 significant gains in science/technology development and career development are reported by first-generation college students.

I. The Academic and Co-Curricular Experiences of Students by Educational Level of Parent

- ◆ There are no meaningful differences between first and second generation college students' participation in the academic life of the campus. And while first generation college students tend to be less involved in co-curricular activities than second-generation college students, the differences between the two subgroups are not significant.

II. Perceptions of the Campus Environment by Educational Level of Parent.

- ◆ **Emphasis on the academic, personal, social, and career development of students.** We found no substantial differences in students' perceptions of the campus environment based educational level of the parent(s). When we compared the response patterns of the 1994 sample with those of the 1999 sample, however, we found that first generation college students in today's academic environment view the curriculum as having greater personal relevance and practical value.
- ◆ **Quality of Relationships between Students, Faculty, and Administrative Offices.** Relationships between students, faculty and administrative offices are equally positive for both first- and second-generation college students. For both groups, the quality of these relationships has improved significantly since 1994.

III. Student Development Gains by Educational Level of Parent

- ◆ In terms of their intellectual, scientific, personal, social, and career development, both first- and second-generation college students report similar gains. Compared to previous cohort reports, both groups report gaining “quite a bit” or “very much” in Science/Technology and Vocational/Career development.

¹ “First” generation college student: Neither parent a college or university graduate
“Second” generation college student: One or both parent(s) a college or university graduate.

IV. Student Satisfaction Ratings by Educational Level of Parent

- ◆ There are no apparent differences in the satisfaction ratings of first- and second-generation college students. Although first generation college students are reportedly less satisfied than second generation college students on College associated measures (e.g., residential life, programs and activities), and with the social life of the campus, differences between the two groups are not significant.