The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey is designed to capture a portrait of student characteristics of our incoming first-year (FY) class. This survey was administered early in the fall 2012 semester to students enrolled in English Composition I. There were 1,132 respondents. Of these, 998 (88 percent) were first-time, full-time college students.

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is designed to capture the views of FY and senior students on the nature and quality of their undergraduate education. This survey was administered in the spring of 2012 to all FY and senior students. There were 1,149 respondents (805 senior students and 344 FY students).

Together these surveys provide a glimpse of student habits and perceptions as they enter UCO, as they finish their first year, and before they graduate.

**Physical & Mental Health**

Research shows that entering college students face numerous challenges during their college career. Current surveys on the lives of college students show continued interest in their mental health. Compared to their peers, UCO entering FY students are more likely to report having a psychological disorder, attention deficit disorder, or a learning disability. Compared with their national peers, they are more likely to report engaging *frequently* in cigarette smoking and alcohol consumption and to feel overwhelmed and depressed.
Although UCO students appear to be facing issues of mental health strain at higher levels than their peers, they seem to see themselves as capable of coping with those challenges on their own. Entering FY students rate themselves equal to their peers in terms of emotional health, and above average in terms of self-confidence (both intellectual and social). Moreover, FY students at UCO were less likely than their national peers to report that they might seek personal counseling. This somewhat contradictory pattern of responses may have implications for the ways in which support services might reach out to these students.

**Could this data be relevant to your work?**

This report highlights several findings that the Office of Institutional Assessment thought might be of interest to you. The Freshman Survey Report and the NSSE data are very rich and can provide many insights into our students and their experiences at UCO. Sometimes the data is much more meaningful if the responses are disaggregated to reveal contrasts or patterns among different categories of students or over time. Please let us know if you want us to create a report for you that reflects your specific interests. If you are unsure how the data could be helpful to you, the Institutional Assessment staff will work with you to clarify the parameters of a useful report. Please call or send us an e-mail; we welcome working with you to use the data to help us understand and improve UCO.