

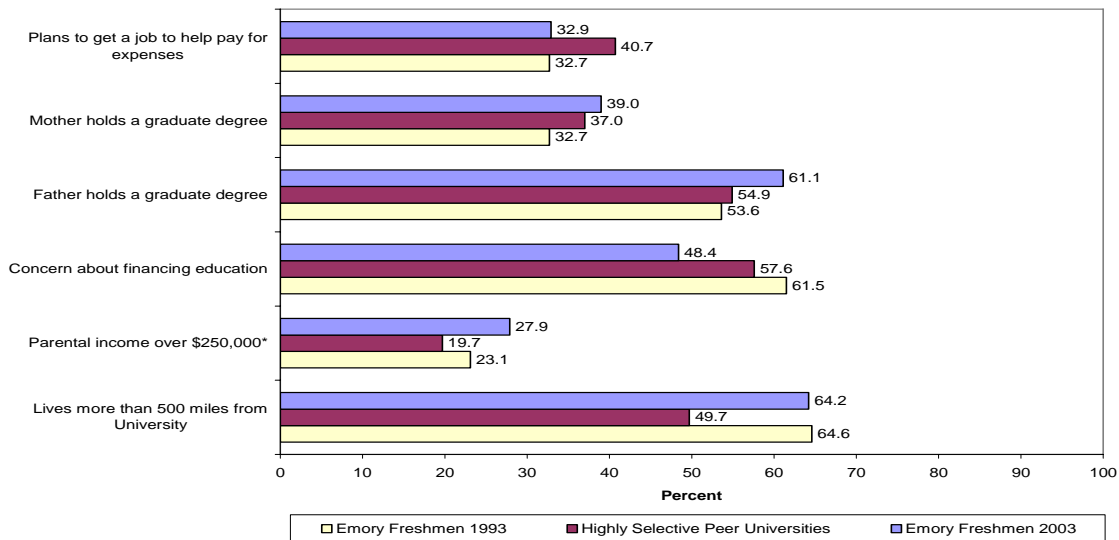
## CIRP 2003 Freshman Survey Selected Findings

Over 1,100 Emory first-time freshmen responded to the national UCLA Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) fall 2003 Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey. This report summarizes some of the responses from Emory freshmen and compares them to the responses from freshmen at similar highly selective private universities, as well as to 1993 Emory freshmen. Among the institutions included in the peer group are Stanford and Duke. (For a complete list of institutions see the appendix.) In particular, our report highlights several areas of comparison such as students' background characteristics, factors that influence college choice, reasons for selecting the university, and students' career and further education plans. Some of the more interesting comparisons the survey reveals are discussed below.

### Socioeconomic Profile

More Emory freshmen live 500-plus miles from their permanent home compared to freshmen at other highly selective private universities (64.2 vs. 49.7 percent). Apparently, fewer Emory freshmen are concerned about financing their education than their peers at other highly selective private universities (48.4 vs. 57.6 percent). This might be why Emory freshmen are less likely than freshmen at other highly selective private universities to consider getting a job to help pay for expenses (32.9 vs. 40.7 percent). This might also result from the fact that 27.9 percent of Emory freshmen reported an estimated parental income of over \$250,000 compared to only 19.7 percent of freshmen at other highly selective private universities. Relevant to their incomes, the parents of Emory freshmen are also more likely to hold graduate degrees than those of freshmen at other highly selective private universities (fathers—61.1 vs. 54.9 percent; mothers—39.0 vs. 37.0). See Chart 1.

**Chart 1. 2003 First-year Students: Socioeconomic Profile**

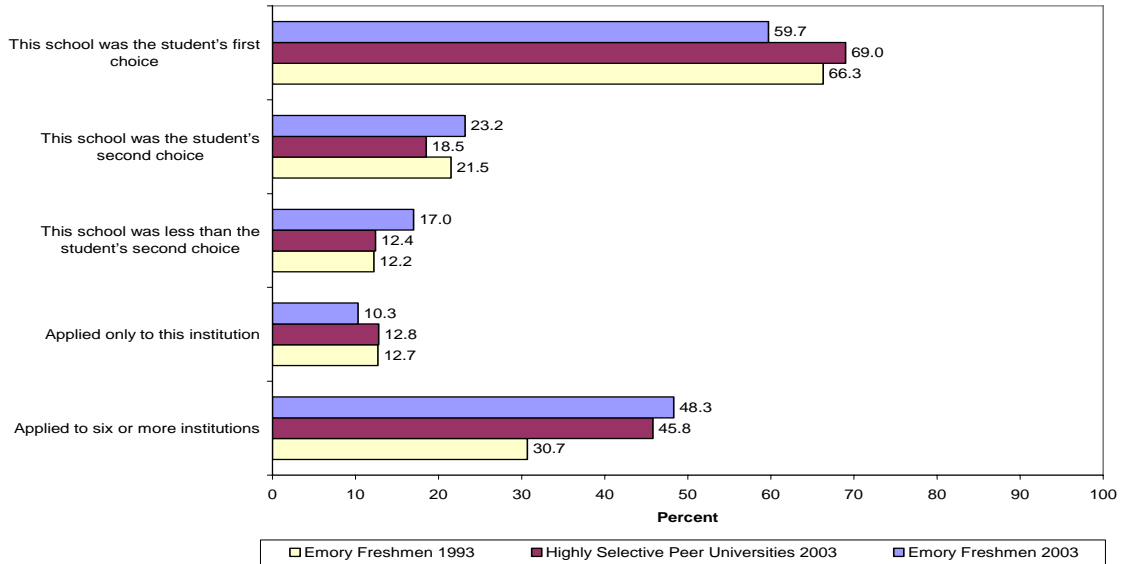


\*After adjusting for inflation, the comparable amount in 1993 dollars is \$200,000.

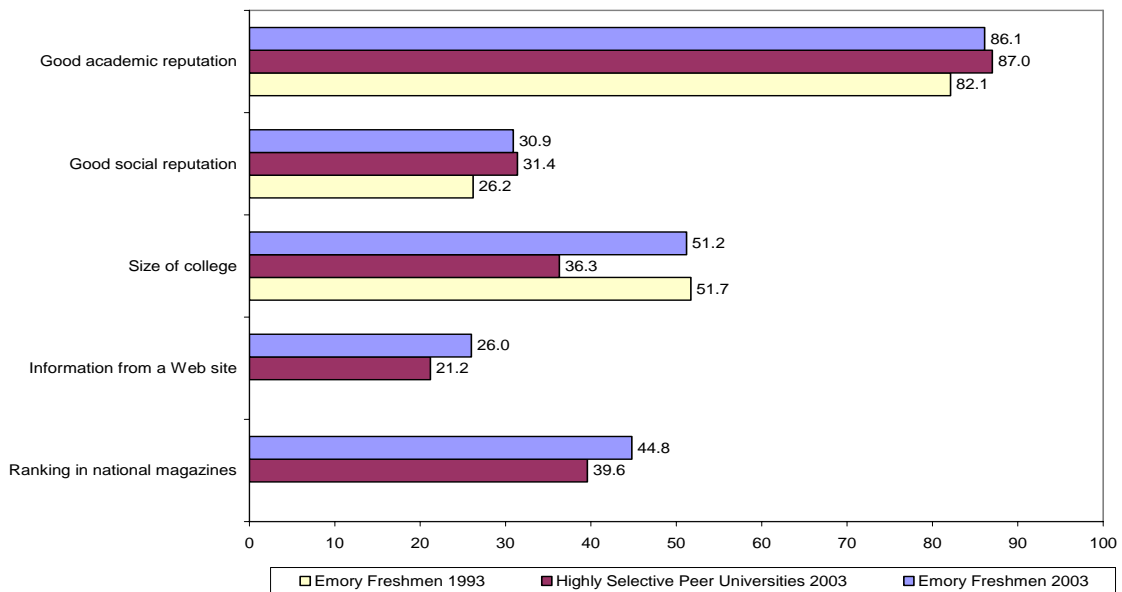
## College Choice

The percentage of freshmen in 2003 who responded that Emory was their first choice decreased somewhat from 1993 (59.7 vs. 66.3 percent: see Chart 2). Nevertheless, 86.1 percent of freshmen in 2003 chose Emory because of its good academic reputation compared to 82.1 percent in 1993. Compared to freshmen at other highly selective universities, more Emory freshmen chose their school because of its size (51.2 vs. 36.3 percent). See Chart 3.

**Chart 2. 2003 First-year Students: College Choice**

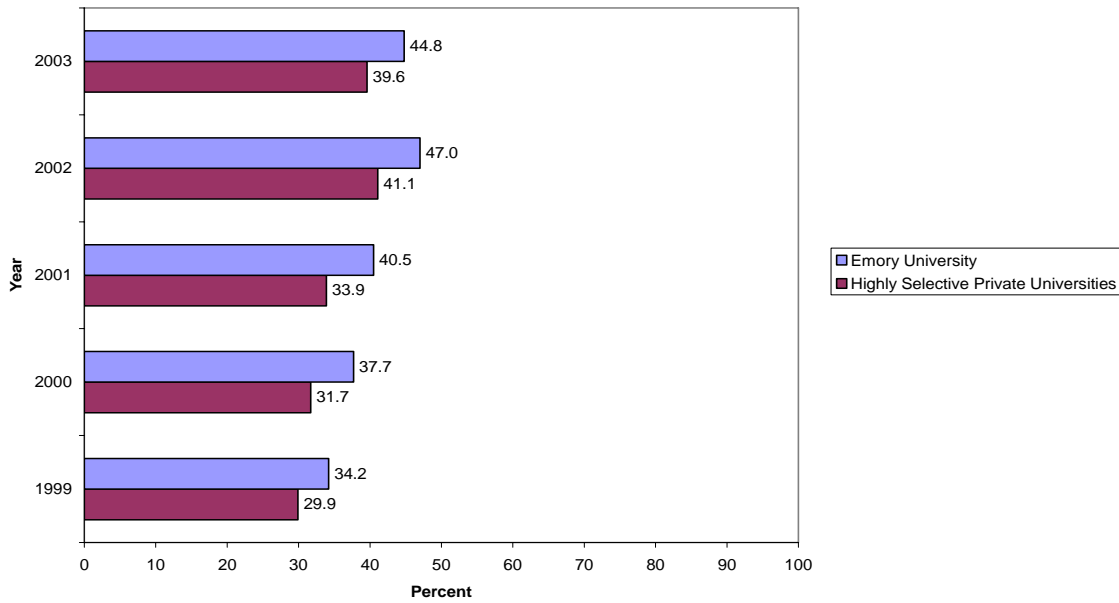


**Chart 3. 2003 First-year Students: Reasons "Very Important" in Selecting this University**

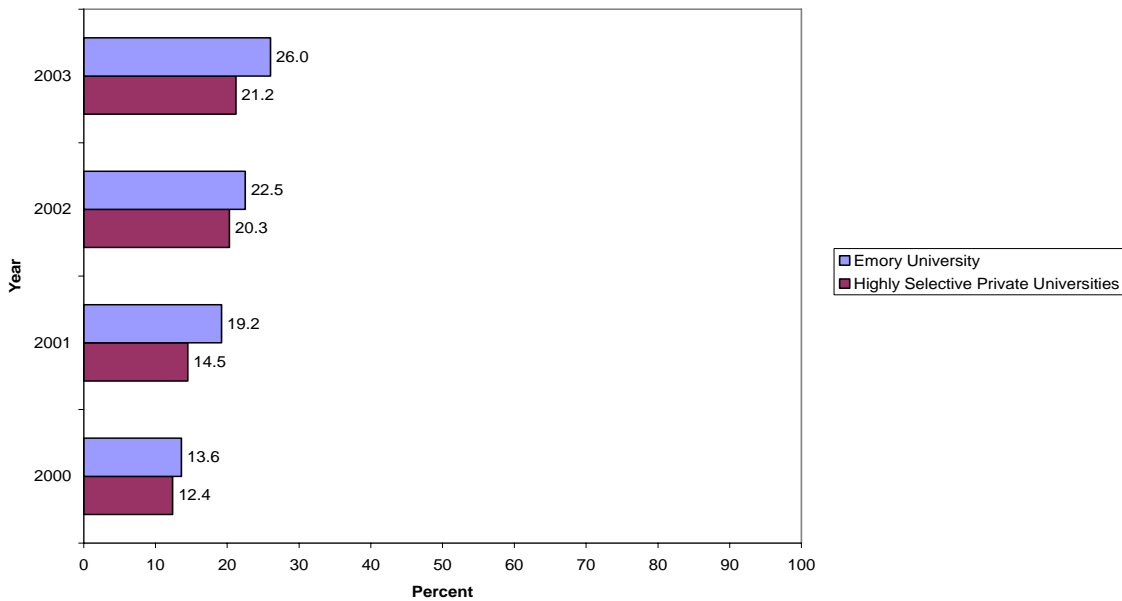


Other reasons given for choosing Emory included Emory’s rankings in national magazines and information from a Web site. Indeed, Emory freshmen were more likely to be influenced than their counterparts at other highly selective private universities by rankings in national magazines (44.8 vs. 39.6 percent) and Web site information (26.0 vs. 21.2 percent). See Charts 4 and 5.

**Chart 4. Chose Emory because of Rankings in National Magazines**

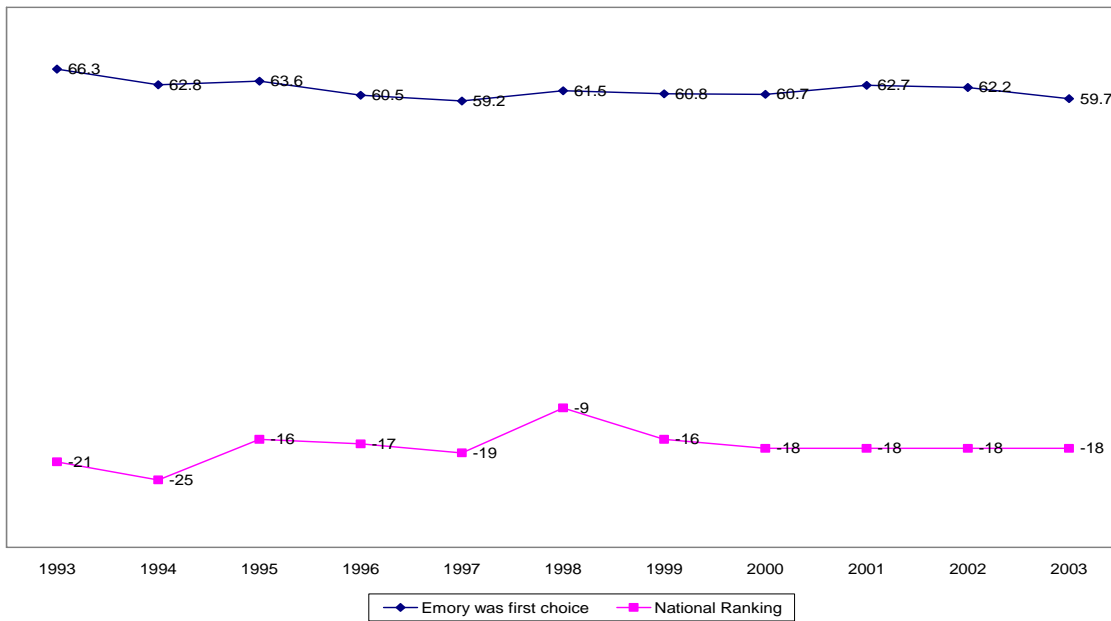


**Chart 5. Chose Emory because of Information from a Web site**

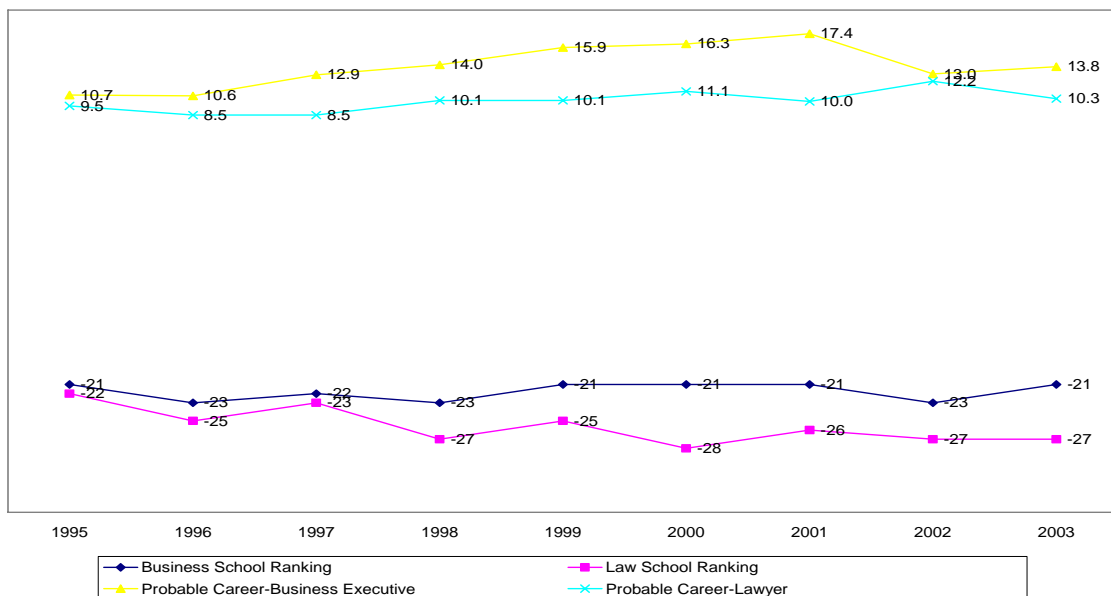


Given the significance of national rankings, the proportion of freshmen who reported Emory as their first choice has fluctuated in conjunction with the university's national rankings (see Chart 6). However, it appears that there is less of a connection between Emory's business and law schools' rankings and the proportion of Emory freshmen who aspire to a career in either business or law (see Chart 7).

**Chart 6. Emory as First Choice and U.S. News National Ranking**



**Chart 7. Emory's Business and Law School U.S. News Rankings and Probable Career Choice**



In what follows, we further discuss the influence of national rankings and the significance of the Web, as well as other sources of information that affect students' decisions in choosing an institution.

### **The Importance of the Web, National Rankings, and Other Sources of Information**

The percentage of freshmen at Emory and other highly selective private universities who chose their school because of information from a Web site has continued to increase since 2000, when HERI first asked this question. Further, from 2002 to 2003, the percentage of Emory freshmen whose choice was influenced by information from a Web site increased from 22.5 to 26.0 percent compared to only 20.3 to 21.2 for freshmen at other highly selective private universities. In contrast, Emory freshmen and those from other highly selective private universities who chose their university because of rankings in national magazines has decreased slightly from 2002 to 2003 (47.0 to 41.1 vs. 44.8 to 39.6 percent). [Refer to charts 4 and 5.]

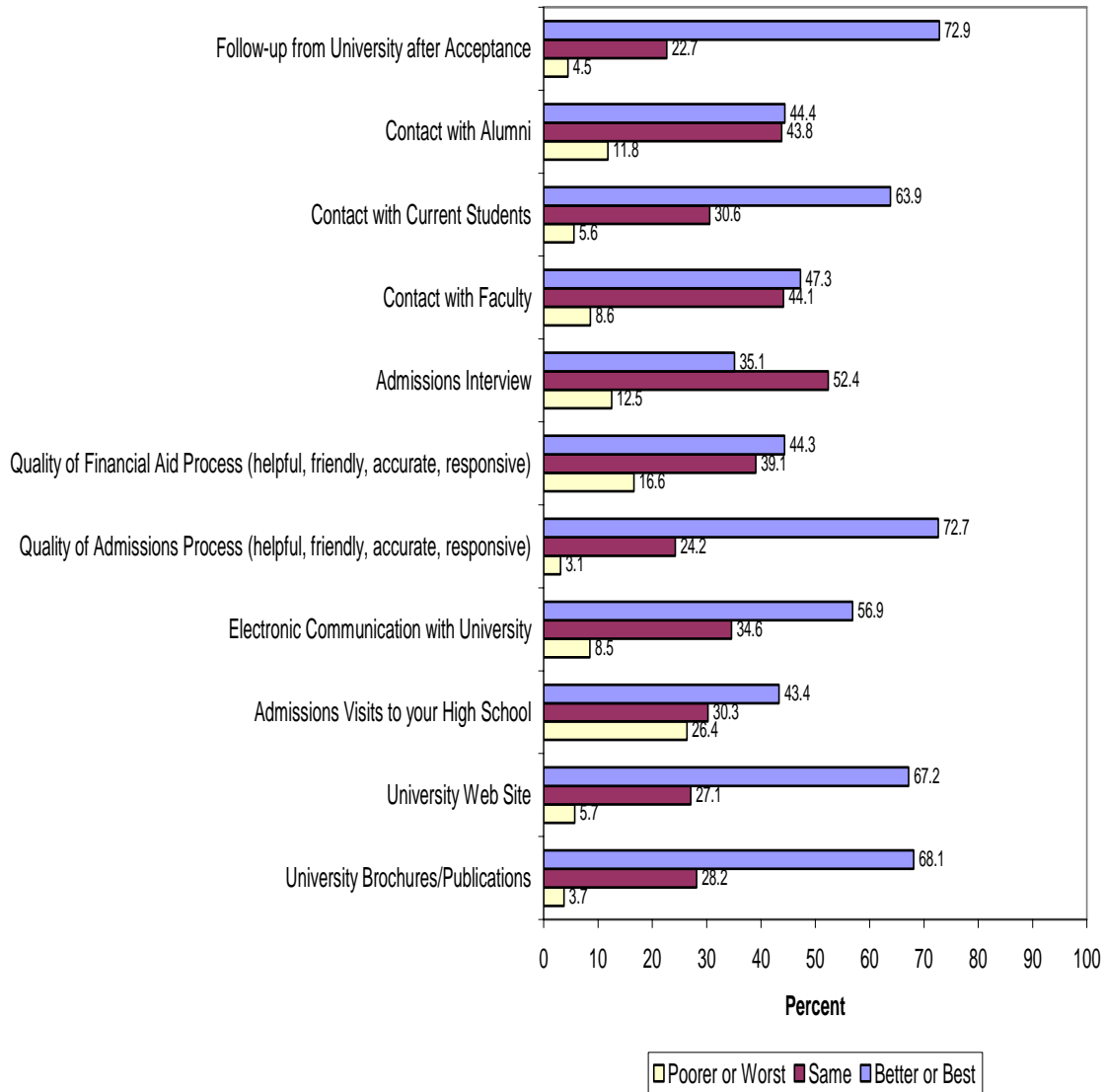
Information on the Web has been and continues to be significant in influencing students' decisions about choosing a university. In fact, Emory freshmen reported that the quality of information they received from Emory's Web site is better than compared to Web sites of other institutions to which they applied. Besides the Web, other sources of information have an impact on students' decisions to apply to and attend Emory. We looked at information from Emory available to prospective students to see how they compare it to other colleges or universities. For instance, we wanted to learn how students rate the quality of university brochures, electronic communication with the university, the admissions process, contact with enrolled students, and follow-up from the university after acceptance. We asked students to rate the quality of information they received from Emory as compared to other colleges or universities to which they applied. Responses can be seen in Chart 8.

A majority of students indicated that Emory's information was better or best compared to other institutions for the following items (see Chart 8):

- University Web site (67.2 percent)
- University publications (68.1 percent)
- Electronic communication with the university (56.9 percent)
- Quality of admissions process (72.7 percent)
- Contact with current students (63.9 percent)
- Follow-up from the university after acceptance (72.9 percent)

The only item that the majority of students rated as the same when comparing Emory to other institutions they applied to was the admissions interview (52.4 percent: see Chart 8).

**Chart 8. Rate Quality of Information Received from Emory University as Compared to other Colleges or Universities You Applied To**



We also wanted to learn how students first become interested in the university; the most useful source of information for deciding to apply to and accept Emory’s offer of admission; and the value of campus visits.

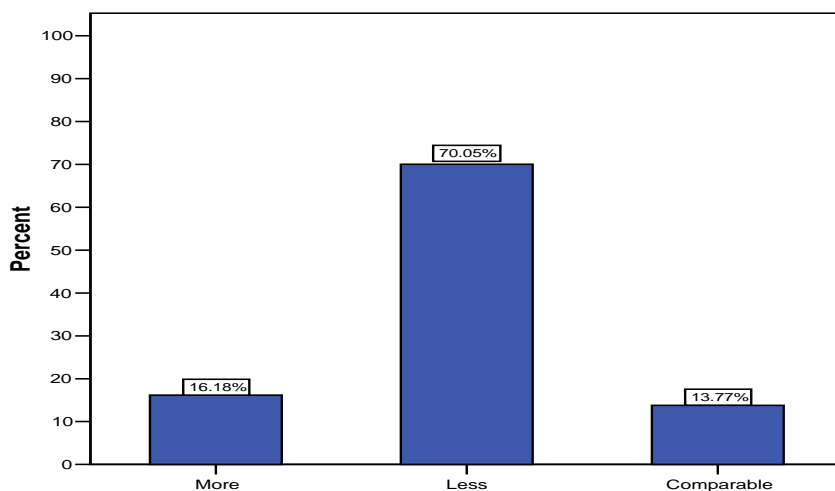
Here are some of the results:

- Students reported their first interest in the university comes from college guide books or national rankings, and also from peers, enrolled students or graduates of Emory more than from a high school teacher or printed material from Emory.

- Students indicated that talks and visits with an admissions representative at Emory and also Emory’s Web site are the most useful university sources of information in their decision to apply to the university.
- Students’ decisions to accept Emory’s offer also are influenced by talks and visits with an admissions counselor.
- As an applicant, students said their most valuable contact during a campus visit was with an Emory student.
- As an applicant, students reported that the two experiences they most wanted, but did not have, was to stay overnight in a residence hall and second, attend a class.
- When applying to Emory, students indicated they wanted to know more about residential life and academic programs than about academic support programs or financial aid.

In addition, we asked students if they were offered a merit scholarship (excluding HOPE and other similar state-funded scholarships) by other colleges or universities to which they applied. Those receiving such an offer were then asked if that offer would have made the cost of their education more, less, or comparable to the cost of attending Emory University. Most said that the cost would have been less (see Chart 9).

**Chart 9. Offer of merit scholarship from another school(s) would have made cost of your education more, less, or comparable to cost of attending Emory University**

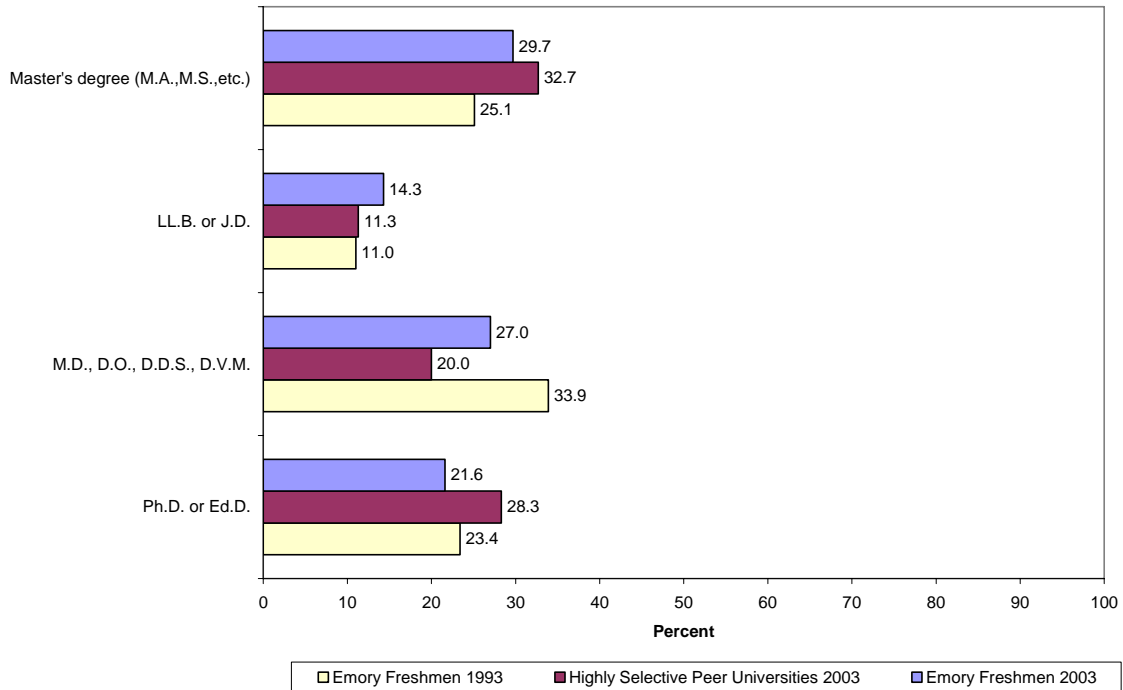


### **Career and Further Education Plans**

The last section of this report contains information on students’ responses about their career aspirations and the advanced degrees they intend to earn to reach their goals. Compared to freshmen at other highly selective private universities, Emory freshmen are more likely to aspire to a professional degree than to a Ph.D. or an Ed.D. For instance, 27 percent of Emory freshmen intend to earn an M.D., a D.O., D.D.S., or D.M.V. compared to 20 percent of freshmen at other highly selective private universities, and 14.3 percent intend to earn an LL.B. or a J.D. compared to 11 percent. But, only 21.6 percent of Emory freshmen intend to earn a Ph.D. or an Ed.D. compared to 28.3 percent at other highly selective private universities. When compared to Emory freshmen ten years ago,

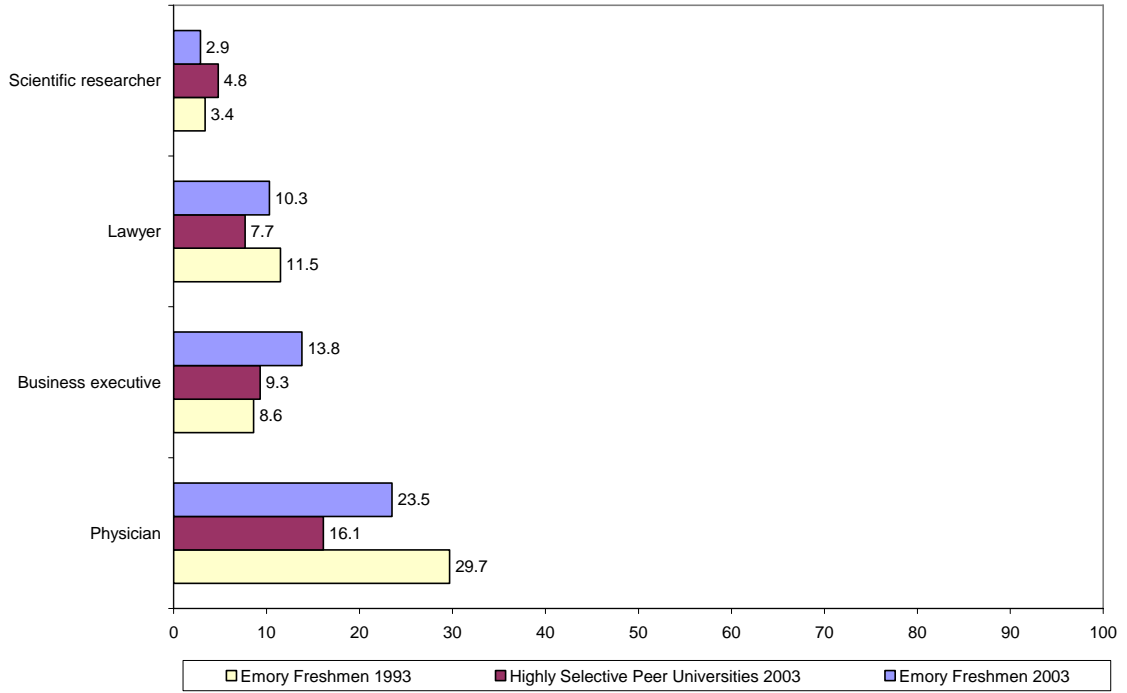
the current cohort is less likely to aspire to a Ph.D. or an Ed.D., or to an M.D., a D.O., D.D.S. or D.M.V. However, the current cohort is more likely to earn an LL.B. or a J.D. than Emory freshmen in 1993 (14.3 vs. 11.0 percent). Further, the current cohort is more likely to aspire to a Master’s degree than freshmen ten years ago (29.7 vs. 25.1 percent). Nevertheless, compared to freshmen at other highly selective private universities, fewer Emory freshmen intend to earn a Master’s (32.7 vs. 29.7 percent). See Chart 10.

**Chart 10. 2003 First-year Students: Further Education Plans**



When asked about career goals, Emory freshmen responses seem to reflect their educational aspirations. For example, compared to 1993, fewer Emory freshmen plan to become physicians, but the percentage of freshmen who intend to have a business career has grown. The latter increase may explain the increase in the percentage who aspire to a Master’s degree, which includes the M.B.A. in the freshman survey. See Chart 11.

Chart 11. Career Plans



## Appendix

### Peer Group

California Institute of Technology

Carnegie-Mellon University

Cornell University

Duke University

Emory University

Johns Hopkins University

Rice University

Stanford University

U of Notre Dame

U of Rochester

Vanderbilt University

Washington University