

# ALCORN STATE UNIVERSITY



# First GENERATION Y Students

## Who They Are, What They Need

Mississippi Advisors Meeting  
Fall 2009 Workshop

Thad Cochran Center  
University of Southern Mississippi

Presenter, Dr. Edward L. Vaughn, Dean  
College for Excellence



**Alcorn State University**

## 2008-09 Freshmen, Selected Statistics

### Age

17 or younger	1.6%
18	69.5%
19	27.3%

### Religion

Catholic	25.4%
Baptist	10.6%
Methodist	4.5%

### Living Arrangements

Residence Halls	77.7%
Family	14.7%

### Race

White	71.9%
Black	11.3%
Asian	8.8%
Mexican	5.7%

### Distance from Home

Greater than 500 miles	14.1%
101 – 500 miles	33.0%
51 – 100	17.3%
11 – 50	24.3%

### Political Views

Liberal	31.0%
Moderate	43.3%
Conservative	20.7%

## 2008-09 Freshmen, Selected Statistics

### Parent's Educational Level

Graduate/Professional Degree

College Degree

HS Diploma

Some HS

### Father

23.2%

27.4%

19.7%

5.1%

### Mother

18.3%

32.5%

17.9%

3.8%

### Intended Major

Business

16.7%

Professional (Pre-Med. Pre-Law, etc.)

13.8%

Arts/Humanities

13.5%

Social Science

11.5%

Biological Science

9.3%

Engineering

9.3%

Education

8.3%

SOURCE: The Chronicle of Higher Education, March, 2009

# Experiences of Today's Students

Students entering college in the fall of 2008 were generally born in 1990. These are some of their experiences.

1. Coke and Pepsi have always used recycled bottles.
2. Gas stations have never fixed flats, but most serve cappuccino.
3. Electronic filing of tax returns has always been an option.
4. Clarence Thomas has always sat on the Supreme Court.
5. IBM has never made typewriters.
6. The Tonight Show has always been hosted by Jay Leno and started at 10:35 pm CST.
7. Employers have always been able to do credit checks on employees.
8. Caller ID has always been available on phones.
9. Your temperature has always been checked in the ear.
10. GPS satellite navigation systems have always been available.

# Who are the Students of Today?

Generation Y (Why) Students  
Or  
Millennial Generation

Born 1977-1994

73 million (grandchildren of the Baby Boom Generation)

# Characteristics of Generation Y Students

**Special** - parents instilled in them the sense that they are, collectively, vital to the nation and to their parent's sense of purpose.

**Sheltered** - shielded from the harsh realities of life by the parents (Helicopter Parents – always hovering.)

**Confident** - have high levels of trust and optimism (from their parents); boastful about their power and potential.

**Team-oriented** - developed a strong group instincts (soccer team, school uniforms, group learning in school)

**Achieving** – higher school standards, accountable

**Pressured** – pressed to study hard, avoid personal risks, take advantage of opportunities

**Conventional** - believe that social rules can help

## Child Welfare Dominated US Legislation since 1982

- Child restraints, helmets, home products
- TV movie, and video rules/ratings
- Zero Tolerance school policies
- Blanket Medicaid for low-income children
- Child support laws targeting “deadbeat dads
- FERPA Laws
- Tough punishment for child sex abuse offenders
- Intervention in child abuse situations by social services
- Tough enforcement of child-labor laws

# Defining Events for Millennials

- Election of Barack Obama
- Columbine Shooting
- Wars in Iraq/Afghanistan
- Princess Diana's Death
- Clinton Impeachment Trial
- OJ Simpson Trial
- 9 – 11
- McGuire – Sosa Homerun Derby



# Generation Y (Why) Students Are . . . .

- From the upper-middle class
- From two-parent households
- Well-prepared for college

- SOURCE: The Millennial Myth: The Real Values, Beliefs and Needs of the Changing College-Bound Population, Pamela Kiecker, PhD,
- Royall and Company, 2007.

# Generation Y (Why) Students Are Also . .

- 1 in 3 NOT Caucasian
- 2 in 4 come from a single-parent home
- 4 in 5 have working mothers
- More than 2% have one or both parents incarcerated

# 7 Reasons Why This is the Smartest Generation

1. More politically/socially involved than ever before
2. Spend less time watching TV and more time reading
3. Have massive networks to call upon
4. Have a worldwide platform to express themselves creatively
5. Seek active entertainment instead of passive
6. Have quick access to huge amount of information
7. Forcing huge changes in education

# Generation Y Students as Learners

Technological Experts (cell phones, iPods, PCs, VCRs)

Want Entertainment and Excitement; Emphasis on Extracurricular Activities

Teamwork

Traditional Professors Boring

Structure

Little Tolerance for Delays

Prefer Group Work

Experimental/Interactive Learning

# Generation Y Students are NOT Homogeneous

- Females have poorer self-esteem but greater educational success than males
- Minority students rate their ability to succeed in college lower than they rate the ability of their white peers
- First-generation students worry more about financial issues
- Rural students also worry more about financial issues than their urban peers

SOURCE: Undergraduate Student Perceptions of Characteristics Attributed to Millennial Generation College Students and Implications for University Recruitment and Retention, Texas Tech University, Kevin Ramey, 2007.

# What About 1<sup>st</sup> Generation Students ??

## The First in the Family to Attend College

### Older

- 24-yrs old or older 31% vs. 13% some college  
5% BS/BA degree

### Lower Incomes

- Family income < \$25,000 42% vs. 22% some college  
18% BS/BA degree

### Female

- 57% vs. 51% Non-first generation

### African-Amer/Hispanic

- 20 % vs. 13% Other races

### Delayed College Entry

- 46% vs. 19%

### Live Off-campus

- 84% vs. 60%

### Enrolled in 2-yr <

- 88% vs. 43%

# Challenges Facing 1<sup>st</sup> Generation Students

## Academic Preparation

Less likely to have completed advanced courses 16% vs. 76%

Lower ACT/SAT scores

More likely to need remedial courses

## Understanding of Admissions/ Financial Aid Process

Apply late

Weak awareness of resources; overestimate costs

## Understanding of College Experience

Weak knowledge of time management

college finance and budget management

education bureaucracy

## Educational Expectations/Encouragement

Actively discouraged by family

Doubt their motivational/academic abilities ; not college material

Need place to study

# Other Challenges for 1<sup>st</sup> Generation Students

Exposure to technology minimal

Technology access issues

More adjustment problems

More internal pressure to succeed

Pressure to deal with family issues



# Traditional Communications Efforts Will NOT Work

High Tech but Impatient

New Gets Old Fast

Collaboration Valued Over Solitary Pursuit

May Have Very Different Social Skills and Values

Access and Other Issues May Have an Impact

# Tips for Teaching and Working with First-Generation Y Students

- Use technology
- Make it fun
- Allow for creativity and be creative
- Offer multiple opportunities for performance
- Be visual
- Be organized
- Recognize the need for social interaction
- Be clear and precise
- Allow focus time
- Make learning relevant
- Talk is critical
- Help students learn to negotiate the educational process

# Meeting the First Generation Y Challenge

- Don't prejudge or place conditions on students
- Show genuine interest in all students
- Show passion for your own learning
- Allocate as much time as possible to counseling, inspiring, and engaging students
- Constantly look for gifts/talents in your students
- Show compassion without compromising your expectations
- Balance commitment to student success with opportunities for independence and ownership for learning
- Recognize student progress and achievement

# REMEMBER . . . .

## First Generation status INTENSIFIES Generation Y Characteristics

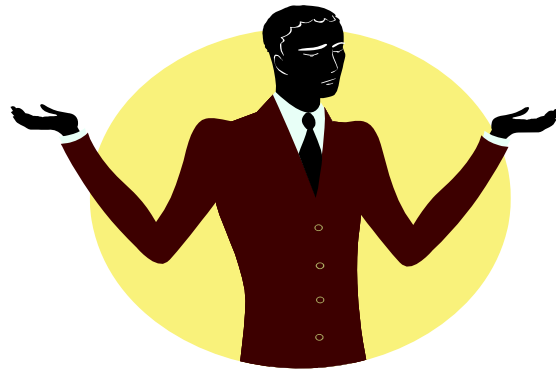
They are sheltered . . Yet pressured      Help them simplify their lives

They are social . . . . Yet isolated by technology      Create face to face relationships

Adventuresome . . . Yet protected      Enable them to take control of their lives

They are high achievement . . . Yet high maintenance      Praise/reward them

# QUESTIONS ???????



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