

Student Trends: Understanding Today's College Student

March 28, 2008

Presented by Division of Student Life Staff

Panelists

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Outline

- *Define Millennial/Net Generation*
- *Highlight overall Characteristics*
- *Student Development*
- *Theory & Practice*
- *Three important trends*
- *Strategies?*



The Millennial/Net Generation

- *The Millennial/Net Generation was born in or after 1982.*
- *Most students entering college this fall were born in 1989*
- *The largest generation in U.S. history, surpassing 80 million in number.*

Source: Juno R. and Mastrodicasa J., W. (2007) Connecting to the Net. Generation: What Higher Education Professionals Need to Know About Today's Students, New York: NASPA

Previous Generations

	<u><i>Born Between</i></u>
<i>G.I. Generation</i>	<i>1901-1924</i>
<i>Silent Generation</i>	<i>1925-1942</i>
<i>Boom Generation</i>	<i>1943-1960</i>
<i>Generation X</i>	<i>1961-1981</i>
<i>Millennial Generation</i>	<i>1982-2002</i>

Source: Howe and Strauss (2000)

Beloit College's Mind-Set List

For students born in 1989:

- *Iraq has always been a problem*
- *Peeps are not candy, they are your friends.*
- *Computers have always fit in their backpacks.*
- *Gas has always been unleaded*
- *There has always been a scandal*
- *There has always been Lea*



Characteristics of Millennials/Net Generation

Generation Gap 2008

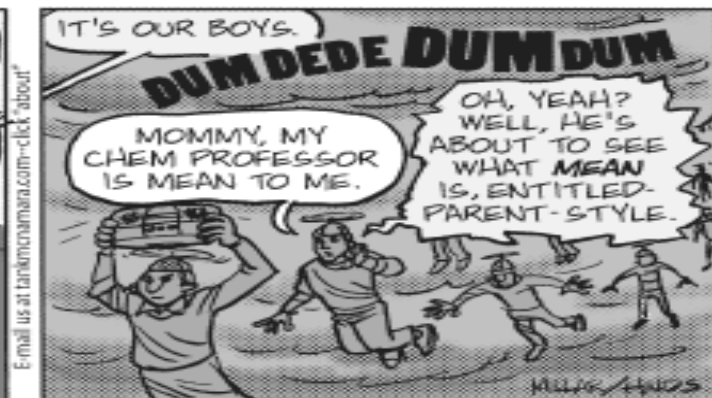
Special
Sheltered
Confident
Team-oriented
Pressured
Achieving
Conventional



Source: Howe and Strauss (2006)

Millennials Are Special

- *Their parents are extremely involved in their lives.*
- *Parents will contact faculty and staff to assure that the student is getting special attention*
- *Parents will take any issue “to the top”*
- *Parents may even argue a perceived unfair grade”*



Millennials are **Special**

- *They believe they will be the generation that will help Americans realize better futures through civic-mindedness and leadership.*
- *The more activities they are involved in the more they believe they will make a difference (quantity vs. quality)*

Student Development Theory and Practice

- ***Chickering and Reiser***

- *Decision-making*
- *Life skills*



"Wait, wait. I'm sorry. Did you really just ask me if there was any way you could pass my class?"

- ***SNC Student Life Competencies***

- *Engage in self-understanding*
- *Develop personal goals in a set time frame*
- *Know how to determine emotional and physical health*

Millennials are Sheltered

- *They are comfortable with parental involvement.*
- *They follow the rules and trust that parents and authority figures will apply rules fairly*
- *They think if they do everything they are told to do they should earn the “A”*



Millennials are **Sheltered**

- *They spent their childhoods in structured, organized activities rather than unstructured play*
- *They don't know how to manage their free time*
- *They expect activities to be planned for them*

Student Development Theory and Practice

- ***Chickering and Reiser***
 - *Decision-making*
 - *Life skills*

- ***SNC Student Life Competencies***
 - *Know how to listen with understanding*
 - *Engage in activities that promote physical and emotional health*
 - *Live a balanced lifestyle*

Millennials are **Confident**

- *They think they can do anything*
- *They think they are perfect all around*
- *They think everyone must be computer literate*
- *They are uncomfortable with conflict, look to authority figures to resolve issues.*

Millennials are **Confident**

- *They think they are special and that they are going to achieve something big later in their lives. All say they know it.*
- *Insatiable appetite for fame – e.g. personal blogs*
- *Adopt the characteristics of their media and cyber space idols*

Student Development Theory and Practice

- ***Chickering and Reiser***
 - *Evolve*
 - *Mature Relationships*
 - *Diversity*
- ***SNC Student Life Competencies***
 - *Develop open, honest relationships through mutual respect*
 - *Live and act with integrity*
 - *Serve as responsible citizens*

Millennials are Team-oriented

- *Net generation students are connected to each other*
- *They seek out technology that helps them stay connected- Facebook*
- *They prefer working on projects in groups.*
- *They are uncomfortable with conflict, look to authority figures to resolve issues.*



Student Development Theory and Practice

- ***Chickering and Reiser***
 - *Critical thinking*
 - *Collaborative work*
 - *Integration of knowledge*
- ***SNC Student Life Competencies***
 - *Strive for the development of effective communication*
 - *Collaborating effectively*

Millennials are Pressured

- *Feel pressured to achieve. They fill their schedules with extra-curricular activities.*
- *Stress and anxiety are common traits; students who reported depression and anxiety has increased steadily*
- *Parents push their children to achieve to show their good parenting skills.*

Student Development Theory and Practice

- ***Chickering and Reiser***
 - *Decision –making*
 - *Time management*
 - *Life skills*
- ***SNC Student Life Competencies***
 - *Self-understanding to develop meaningful goals*
 - *Engage in activities that foster a healthy lifestyle*

Millennials are **Achieving**

- *This is the highest-achieving generation in history.*
- *But report liking school less than previous generations.*
- *They have definitive long-term plans*
- *They believe they will do better in college than those from other generations.*



Student Development Theory and Practice

- ***Chickering and Reiser***
 - *Decision-making*
 - *Life skills*
 - *Integration*
- ***SNC Student Life Competencies***
 - *Engage in self-understanding to develop personal goals*
 - *Live and act with integrity*

Millennials are **Conventional**

- *They are have a strong connection to their parents*
- *They share their parents values*
- *They go along with their peers, to get along*
- *They prefer not to take risks or be out of compliance with social rules*

Student Development Theory and Practice

- ***Chickering and Reiser***
 - *Identify sense of responsibility for individual, civic and social choices*
 - *Integration*
- ***SNC Student Life Competencies***
 - *Develop open, honest relationships*
 - *Identify and strengthen moral convictions*

Student Trends

- *Mental Health Issues*
- *Increased Involvement of Parents*
- *Role of Technology in Students' Lives*

Within the last year how many times have you ...

Felt Things were Hopeless 63%

(Female - 68%, Male - 53%)

Felt Very Sad 79%

(Female - 86%, Male 67%)

Felt Overwhelmed 97%

(Female - 99%, Male 96%)

*American College Health Association: National College Health Assessment,
St. Norbert College, Spring 2006*

Mental and Emotional Health

Percentage of Students functionally impaired by depression

41%

Percentage of Students who considered suicide

10%

American College Health Association: National College Health Assessment, St. Norbert College, Spring 2006

Depression

Of the 22% of Students Diagnosed with Depression:

Percentage in Therapy 29%

Percentage Taking Medication 52%

American College Health Association: National College Health Assessment, St. Norbert College, Spring 2006

Characteristics of Net Generation Parents

- *Failure to "cut the cord"*
- *Want their children to have a perfect experience*
- *Consumer perspective*
- *Take great personal satisfaction from their children's successes*
- *Want to be a part of their children's experiences*



Parent Involvement

In a survey conducted by UC-Davis Student Affairs Research and Information

60% of respondents indicated:

My parents ARE involved in my college education and I would like it to stay this way

<http://www.sariweb.ucdavis.edu/downloads/324.ParentalInvolvement.pdf>



Influences on Parent Involvement

- *Smaller Families*
- *Higher Family Income*
- *Better Educated*
- *Cost of Higher Education*

Role of Technology in Students' Lives

- *They are smart, but impatient*
- *They carry an arsenal of electronic devices – cell phones, iPods*
- *They are able to juggle a conversation on Instant Messenger, a Web-surfing session, and an iTunes playlist while reading Twelfth Night for homework – they multitask*
- *They consume and learn from a variety of media, they want text, video, and sound*

Some strategies to consider

Strategies and Ramifications

Mental Health Issues

- *Market counseling services to students and parents*
- *Train the college community on QPR*
- *Collaboration on stress relieving programs*
- *Training on how to make referrals*

Strategies Cont.

- *Make syllabi clear on expectations for:*
 - Attendance
 - Grade computations
 - Deadlines for papers
 - Instances when you will allow make up exams
 - Review the syllabus in class

Strategies and Ramifications

Parental Involvement

- *Treat parents as partners but remember FERPA regulations*
- *Develop web-based information for parents*
- *Give parents opportunities to provide feedback*
- *Parent orientation programs*
- *Carefully consider parental notification policies*

Strategies and Ramifications

Role of Technology

- *Technology expenditures should include student input*
- *Engage in programmatic efforts to educate students about risky on-line behavior*
- *Use web-based self-assessment tools for academic advising, counseling centers, career centers*
- *Use of on-line surveys to learn student opinion*