



Research Briefs

Office of the Vice Chancellor for Students
 University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
 No. 22 January 2008

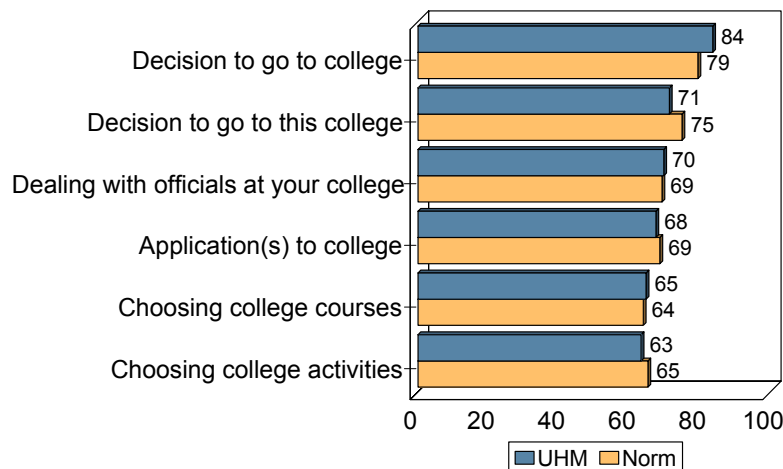
Freshmen and Parental Involvement

“Helicopter parents” are known to hover over every move made by their college-age children. How do students feel about this seemingly intense parental involvement?

In a fall 2007 survey, UH-Mānoa first-time freshmen responded to six questions asking whether their parents or guardians were involved “too little,” the “right amount,” or “too much” in the college selection process. The results in Figure 1 indicate that across all items, most students report that their parents were involved the “right amount.”

- Most freshmen view parental involvement as the “right amount” in the college selection process, including the decision to go to college, the decision to go to UHM in particular, dealing with college officials, and applying to UHM.
- Most freshmen also felt that parental involvement in the selection of college courses and activities was of the “right amount.”
- Mānoa’s results were comparable to benchmark institutions with similar selectivity.

Figure 1
 Percent of “Right Amount” of Parental Involvement
 UHM and Norm

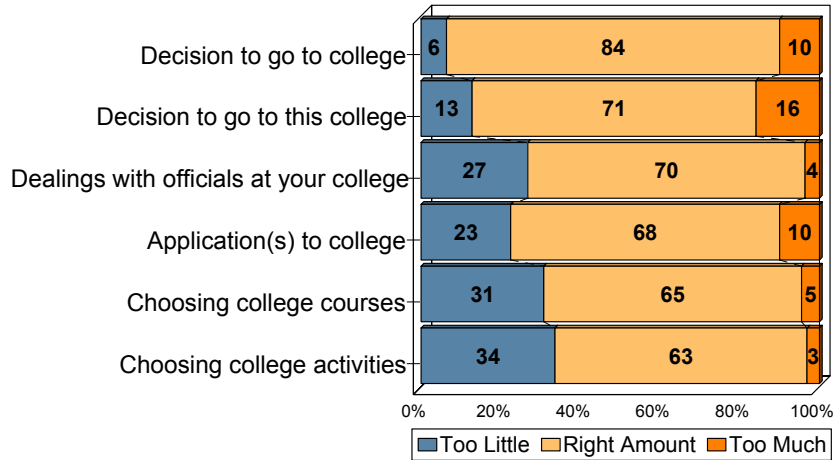


In fact, parents may not be as engaged as some students would like them to be. Figure 2 shows a good percentage of students reporting “too little” involvement by their parents.

- About one-fourth of freshmen report not enough parental participation in dealing with UHM officials and with assisting in the application process.
- An even larger amount, about one-third, felt that parents were not engaged enough in helping to choose college courses and activities.

(OVER)

Figure 2
Parental Involvement



These data also show that parents are not as engaged as their children would like them to be for some ethnic groups. Filipino students were more likely than other ethnic groups to report “too little” parental involvement in dealings with college officials and in choosing college courses. They, along with Hawaiian/Part-Hawaiian freshmen, also wanted more participation by parents in choosing college activities. See Table 1.

Table 1
Percent of Freshmen Reporting “Too Little” Parental Involvement by Ethnicity

Item	Total	Asian	Caucasian	Filipino	Hawaiian
Decision to go to college	6	8	5	8	6
Decision to go to this college	13	12	17	19	10
Dealings with officials at your college	27	32	24	40	23
Application(s) to college	23	24	25	25	17
Choosing college courses	31	34	26	42	35
Choosing college activities	34	39	28	46	40

Lastly, far more freshmen from Hawaii than from the mainland report “too little” parental involvement in dealings with college officials, applying to the University, choosing college courses, and selecting college activities. See Table 2.

Table 2
Percent of Freshmen Reporting “Too Little” Parental Involvement by Hawaii and Mainland Students

Item	Total	Hawaii	Mainland
Decision to go to college	6	7	6
Decision to go to this college	13	12	14
Dealings with officials at your college	27	31	16
Application(s) to college	23	24	18
Choosing college courses	31	34	23
Choosing college activities	34	37	25

Source: 2007 Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) web survey of first-time classified freshmen with a response rate of 428 or 24 percent and margin of error of about +/- 4.8 percent.