Howard University College of Arts and Sciences
College Student Needs Assessment Survey (CSNAS)
Results – 2008
First-year Student Academic and Personal Needs

Prepared by the

Office of Institutional Assessment and Evaluation
“Working together to create a culture of evidence-based decision making...”

Gerunda B. Hughes, Ph.D., Director
Michael B. Wallace, Ph.D., Assistant Director

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the College Student Needs Assessment Survey (CSNAS) is to provide detailed information to college academic stakeholders on the self-perceived personal and academic needs of college students. Such information has the potential to inform instruction; program planning and refinement; and appropriate allocation of student support resources. This information on mediating factors provides the basis for more accurately interpreting findings of immediate and longitudinal studies of student learning outcomes.

The Howard University Office of Institutional Assessment and Evaluation (OIAE) administered the College Students Needs Assessment Survey to incoming students during the opening weeks of the fall semester (September, 2008). The standardized instrument, developed by the American College Testing Program (ACT), was administered to students in as many freshman orientation classes as were available within each school and college via paper mode by trained OIAE staff using standardized procedures. The schools and colleges included the College of Arts and Sciences (COAS), the School of Business (SOB), the College of Engineering, Architecture and Computer Science (COEAC), the School of Communications (SOC), the School of Education (SOE), and the College of Pharmacy, Nursing and Allied Health Sciences (CPNAH). A total sample of 737 first-year Howard University students completed surveys. Of that total, 315 students are enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences.

The results of the survey indicate that College of Arts and Sciences students perceive the need for a lot of help in several very key general education skill areas, including bolstering reading comprehension and reinforcing basic skills in mathematics and writing.

Needs in Personal Areas
For the great majority (80%) of COAS students, some level of need exists in learning to manage time more effectively. Slightly less than half of the COAS respondents (47%) report needing help with learning how to solve personal problems. More than half (57%), however, report needing help in deciding what to do with their lives. Nearly two thirds (63%) of COAS students express need in learning to handle stress and anxiety.

Needs in General Academic Support Skills
Great proportions of COAS students responding report needs associated with several critical and fundamental academic support areas and skills. Large numbers of these students report needs in improving study skills and habits, and improving test-taking skills (83% and 80%, respectively). In contrast, approximately 39% of COAS students report needing help in coping with academic difficulties. Approximately 71% of COAS students of the sample report needing assistance in learning how to make better use of library facilities.

Needs in General Education Skills
In each key general education skill area targeted, substantial proportions of COAS students report some level of need. COAS students report needs in increasing skills in mathematics (82%), in improving problem-solving abilities (76%), in increasing understanding of art, literature and culture (68%), and better expressing ideas in writing (66%). Additionally, in perhaps the most critical area of reading, COAS students cite the need to improve their reading comprehension (61%) and to increase their reading speed (58%).

Overall Areas of Greatest Need at Howard University
Very large proportions of COAS students report some levels of need for help with funding their education (92%). Similarly, large proportions (80%-86%) of those students also report needing some level of help in the area of career planning. Specifically, substantial proportions of COAS students report needing a lot of help in the following areas:

- Learning more about available financial aid sources (45%)
- Obtaining adequate funds to finance education (35%)
- Obtaining work experience in career areas of interest (47%)
- Discussing career interests with people in the field (49%)
- Learning about educational opportunities after graduation (33%)
Purpose
The purpose of the College Student Needs Assessment Survey (CSNAS) is to provide detailed information to college academic stakeholders on the self-perceived personal and academic needs of college students. Such information has the potential to inform instruction; program planning and refinement; and appropriate allocation of student support resources. This information on mediating factors provides the basis for more accurately interpreting findings of immediate and longitudinal studies of student learning outcomes.

Procedure and Results
The Office of Institutional Assessment and Evaluation (OIAE) administered the College Students Needs Assessment Survey (CSNAS) to incoming students during the opening weeks of the fall semester (September, 2008). The standardized instrument, developed by the American College Testing Program (ACT), was administered to students in as many freshman orientation classes as were available within each school and college via paper mode by trained OIAE staff using standardized procedures. The schools and colleges included the College of Arts and Sciences (COAS), the School of Business (SOB), the College of Engineering, Architecture and Computer Science (COEAC), the School of Communications (SOC), the School of Education (SOE), and the College of Pharmacy, Nursing and Allied Health Sciences (CPNAH). A total sample of 737 Howard University students completed surveys. Of that total, 315 student respondents are enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences.

This first report highlights the five areas in which incoming students indicate the greatest amount of need. In addition, selected CSNAS results from each survey subscale are reported in the following tables and figures. The CSNAS subscales of focus in this report include Career Development (CD), Educational Planning (EP), Intellectual Skills Development (ISD) and Life Skills Development (LSD), which together comprise the Educational and Personal Needs (EPN) section of the instrument. All areas of focus were selected based on their basic relative importance and priorities set by University administrators. The results for the COAS are the focus of this report.

Subscale items were further grouped into three broad categories as they are presented in the tables and figures that follow. The categories are: (1) Needs in personal areas, (2) Needs in general academic support skills, and (3) Needs in general education areas.

Five Areas of Greatest Need
Table 1 and Figure 1 below present summary data for the five areas of greatest need as indicated by the total Howard University (HU) sample. Those areas are:
- Obtaining adequate funds to finance my education
- Learning more about other sources of financial aid available
- Obtaining work experience in career areas of my interest
- Arranging to discuss my career interests with people in my planned career area
- Learning about educational opportunities after graduation

Table 1 and Figure 1 present for ready comparison the levels of need reported by the sample of student respondents from the College of Arts and Sciences (COAS), the total group of students comprising the HU sample, and the national normative group (NRM).

Table 1 and Figure 1 below indicate that the greatest levels of COAS student need are in two areas related to career planning. Nearly half of the COAS student respondents indicate needing a lot of help in arranging to discuss their career interests (49%) and obtaining work experience in
career areas of their interest (47%). The figure for the former area specifically relating to career counseling exceeds the proportion of HU students of the total sample substantially (by 16%) and is more than two and a half times greater than the figure on the national normative sample. The proportion of COAS students reporting a lot of need in the latter area specifically related to work experience is not substantially different than that of the total group of HU students responding. However, it is nearly three times as large as the corresponding national sample statistic (47% and 16%, respectively).

Two areas with the next greatest proportions of COAS students reporting a lot of need for assistance relate to financial issues. Similar to the proportion of the total HU sample, nearly half (45%) of the COAS student respondents indicate a lot of need in learning about other sources of financial aid available. This proportion is nearly twice that of the national normative sample reporting that level of need for assistance in that particular area (45% and 26%, respectively). More than a third (35%) of COAS students responding, report a lot of need for assistance in obtaining adequate funds to finance their education. This is a substantially smaller proportion than the half of the total group of HU students reporting the need for such level of help in that area. The COAS statistic in this specific area exceeds the national figure by nearly ten percent.

Approximately one third (33%) of the COAS students responding indicate a lot of need in learning about educational opportunities after graduation, not substantially different from the proportion of HU students comprising the total group that reported similarly. The proportion of COAS students reporting this level of need is substantially greater (by 12%) than that of the national normative sample.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>COAS LOT</th>
<th>COAS MED</th>
<th>COAS LITTLE</th>
<th>COAS NONE</th>
<th>HU LOT</th>
<th>HU MED</th>
<th>HU LITTLE</th>
<th>HU NONE</th>
<th>NRM LOT</th>
<th>NRM MED</th>
<th>NRM LITTLE</th>
<th>NRM NONE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining work experience in career areas of my interest</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranging to discuss my career interests with people in my planned career area</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning more about other sources of financial aid available</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about educational opportunities after graduation</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Obtaining adequate funds to finance my education</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Areas identified based on statistics for the total group of Howard University students responding
Note: Percentage may not sum to 100 due to rounding error.
Note: COAS=College of Arts & Sciences; HU =Howard University Total Sample; NRM=National Normative Group
Figure 1a below presents summary data that describe the proportion of students who express any level of need (a little, a medium amount, or a lot) for each of the three samples, focusing on the identified five areas of greatest need.

**Obtaining adequate funds to finance my education**
Approximately 92% of COAS students responding indicate having some level of need in obtaining adequate funds for financing their education. The size of this proportion exceeds those of the total Howard University sample and the national normative group (85% and 75%, respectively).

**Learning more about other sources of financial aid available**
Approximately 91% of COAS students responding report some level of need for help in learning about other sources of financial aid available to them. This proportion is practically identical to that of the total group of Howard University respondents, but substantially greater than that of the national sample (78%).

**Obtaining work experience in career areas of my interest**
Approximately 80% of COAS student respondents indicate some level of need with regard to obtaining work experience in career areas of their interest. This proportion is considerably smaller than that of the total group of HU students similarly responding, however substantially greater than that of the national sample (93% and 65%, respectively).

**Arranging to discuss my career interests with people in my planned career area**
Approximately 86% of those COAS students responding report having some level of need in arranging to discuss their career interests with people in their planned career area. This proportion is considerably smaller than that of the Howard University group of respondents as a whole, and nearly equivalent to that of the national normative sample (93% and 87%, respectively).
Learning about educational opportunities after graduation

Approximately 88% of COAS respondents indicate some level of need in learning about educational opportunities after graduation. In this area, the proportion of COAS students responding is identical to that of the total group of HU students, and just slightly larger than that of the national normative group (83%).

![Figure 1a](image)

*Note Percentages represent all levels of need (from a little to a lot).

Note: COAS=College of Arts & Sciences; HU=Howard University total sample; NRM=National Normative Group

Additional Important Areas of Need

Table 2 and Figures 2a-2c below present data on selected items from the subscales of the survey that were identified as additional important areas of need. The subscales include Life Skills Development (LSD), Career Development (CD), Intellectual Skills Development (ISD), and Educational Planning (EP). In the table, the items have been further organized into three sections: (1) personal needs (2) general academic support, and (3) general education skills. Items were selected based on their relative importance as established in the educational psychology (higher education) literature, as related to priorities set by University administrators, and as supported by informal observations and conventional wisdom of educational researchers/evaluators in the Office of Institutional Assessment and Evaluation.

The majority of COAS students responding report needing either a medium amount or a little bit of help in most of the selected items of the survey. However, relatively substantial proportions of COAS students report needing a lot of help in the following several important areas.

**Increasing skills in mathematics**

More than a quarter (27%) of the COAS students responding indicate having *a lot* of need related to increasing their skills in mathematics. This proportion of students is nearly the same as that of the total HU sample (25%) similarly responding. All HU proportions (COAS and HU total group) of students responding in this manner are greater than that of the national normative sample (20%), relating to this area of need.

**Improving test-taking skills**

Approximately one quarter (25%) of COAS students responding report experiencing *a lot* of need in improving their test-taking skills. This proportion nearly mirrors the Howard University
total group response (24%), but substantially exceeds the corresponding national normative group statistic (16%).

**Improving study skills**
Regarding this very basic and fundamentally important academic support area, just over a fifth (21%) of COAS students responding indicate having *a lot* of need associated with improving their study skills. This is nearly the same proportion (23%) of the total group of HU students similarly responding to the item. The proportions of HU students (COAS and the total HU group) reporting need in this area substantially exceeds that of the national sample (15%).

**Managing time more effectively**
One fifth (20%) of COAS students responding indicate having *a lot* of need in learning to manage their time more effectively. This proportion does not differ significantly from that of the total HU group (19%) of students similarly responding to the item. However, proportions of HU students (COAS and HU total group) expressing this level of need substantially exceed that of the national normative sample (11%).

In addition, larger proportions of COAS students report needing *no help* in two of the selected areas:

**Coping with academic difficulties**
Approximately 61% of those COAS students responding indicate having *no need* for assistance in coping with academic difficulties. This proportion is considerably lower still than that of HU student respondents as a whole (70%), but is slightly greater than that of the national normative group (58%).

**Learning how to solve personal problems**
Slightly more than half (53%) of COAS students responding report having *no need* for assistance in learning how to solve personal problems. This is exactly the same proportion as that of the total HU sample similarly responding to the item. The proportion of the national normative sample reporting no need in that area is notably smaller (47%).
<table>
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<th>Description of Item (CSNAS Subscale)</th>
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<th>COAS LITTLE</th>
<th>COAS NONE</th>
<th>HU LOT</th>
<th>HU MED</th>
<th>HU LITTLE</th>
<th>HU NONE</th>
<th>NRM LOT</th>
<th>NRM MED</th>
<th>NRM LITTLE</th>
<th>NRM NONE</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing my time more effectively (LSD)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying career areas that fit my skills, abilities, and interests (CD)</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deciding what to do with my life (CD)</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>38%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning how to handle stress and anxiety in my life (LSD)</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>29%</td>
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<td>13%</td>
<td>18%</td>
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<td>19%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<td>Learning how to solve personal problems (LSD)</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving my study skills and habits (ISD)</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>23%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving my test-taking skills (ISD)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>23%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning how to make better use of library facilities (ISD)</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<td>34%</td>
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<td>Understanding and using computers (ISD)</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Obtaining remedial/tutorial assistance (EP)</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>Coping with academic difficulties (EP)</td>
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<td>61%</td>
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<td>8%</td>
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<td><strong>Needs in General Education Area</strong></td>
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<td>28%</td>
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<td>25%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>29%</td>
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<td>Improving my problem-solving abilities and reasoning skills (ISD)</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<td>42%</td>
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<td>12%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<td>Expressing ideas in writing (ISD)</td>
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<td>34%</td>
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<td>21%</td>
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<td>15%</td>
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<td>39%</td>
<td>14%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding error
Note: COAS=College of Arts & Sciences; HU=Howard University Total Sample; NRM=National Normative Group
Table 3 and Figures 3a-3c below present summary data that describe the proportion of students that express any level of help needed (a little, a medium amount, or a lot) for each of the three sample groups on selected items from the subscales in the survey that were identified as additional important areas of need.
The needs in the personal areas category, presented in Figure 3a, includes items from the Life Skills Development subscale (LSD) and the Career Development subscale (CD). The needs in general academic support skills category, presented in Figure 3b, includes items from the Educational Planning subscale (EP) and from the Intellectual Skills Development subscale (ISD). The needs in general education skill category, presented in Figure 3c, includes items from the Intellectual Skills Development subscale (ISD).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs in Personal Areas</th>
<th>Description of Item: Area of Consideration</th>
<th>COAS</th>
<th>HU</th>
<th>NRM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deciding what to do with my life (CD)</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>71%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identifying career areas that fit my skills, abilities, and interests (CD)</td>
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<td>62%</td>
<td>72%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning how to handle stress and anxiety in my life (LSD)</td>
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<td>63%</td>
<td>67%</td>
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<td>Learning how to solve personal problems (LSD)</td>
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<td>53%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Managing my time more effectively (LSD)</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Needs in General Academic Support Skills</td>
<td>Obtaining remedial/tutorial assistance (EP)</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>54%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Coping with academic difficulties (EP)</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>42%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improving my test-taking skills (ISD)</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>77%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding and using computers (ISD)</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Learning how to make better use of library facilities (ISD)</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs in General Education Areas</td>
<td>Increasing skills in mathematics (ISD)</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expressing ideas in writing (ISD)</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improving my understanding of what I read (ISD)</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increasing my reading speed (ISD)</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improving my study skills and habits (ISD)</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increasing understanding of art, literature, and culture (ISD)</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3  Perceived Student Need for Assistance* in Personal and Academic Areas

*Note: Percentages represent all levels of need (from little to a lot).
Note: COAS=College of Arts and Sciences Sample; HU=Howard University Sample; NRM=National Normative Group

Needs in Personal Areas
Table 3 and Figure 3a presents that of the five selected personal areas, COAS and Howard University students overall in great and largest proportions indicate some level of need in learning to manage their time more effectively (80% and 77% respectively). These statistics substantially surpass the proportions of the national normative sample reported (69%). A smaller proportion of Howard University students report need in all other targeted personal areas, than do students of the national sample.

Well over half (57%) of COAS students responding report having some level of need for help in deciding what to do with their lives; identifying career areas that fit their skills, abilities and interests (59%); and learning how to handle stress and anxiety (63%). In each of these areas, COAS statistics do not differ markedly from those of the total HU sample (59%, 62%, and 63%,
respectively). The proportions of students of the national sample similarly responding are markedly greater than those of the HU groups for the first two items mentioned here (71% and 72%, respectively) and slightly larger for the remaining item (67%).

In the remaining personal area, need related to learning how to solve personal problems, is reported by identical proportions of nearly half (47%) of COAS and HU students overall. This proportion is slightly lower than that of the national normative sample, which is just over half (53%).

**Figure 3a**

![Student Needs in Personal Areas at Any Level* Comparison of COAS, Total HU Sample, and National Norm Group](image)

*Note: Percentages represent all levels of need (from little to a lot).

**Needs in General Academic Support Skills**

As displayed in Table 3 and Figure 3b, within the realm of general academic support skills, greatest proportions of COAS students and HU students overall (approx. 84% each group) report needs in the areas of improving study skills and habits. This figure exceeds that of the national normative sample (77%). In another critical area of focus, need in improving test-taking skills, an equally great proportion of COAS students and HU students of the total group (81% each) report some level of need. This figure also exceeds that of the national normative sample (also 77%).

Another very important area in which COAS students and HU students overall cite needs in great proportions (approx. 70% each) is in learning how to make better use of library facilities. The HU statistic in this highly critical academic support skill area slightly exceeds the proportion reporting such needs in the national sample (66%).
Needs in General Education Areas
As presented in Table 3 and Figure 3c, high proportions of HU students report some level of needs in the highly critical and fundamental general education areas of increasing skills in mathematics, and in improving problem-solving abilities and reasoning skills. COAS students report needing assistance in bolstering skills in mathematics in a greater proportion (83%) than do HU students overall (79%) and students of the national normative sample (75%). A similar pattern is observed with regard to improving problem-solving and reasoning skills, though at slightly lower percentages than in the area of mathematics. More than three quarters (76%) of COAS students responding report need in this area, similar but slightly larger than the total group of HU students (74%) and the students of the national sample (72%).

Additionally, relatively large proportions of responding COAS students and HU students overall report needs in each of the other general education areas of focus. More than two thirds of COAS and students of the total HU sample (69% each) express some level of need in increasing their understanding of art, literature and culture. Exactly the same proportion of the national sample report some level of need in that area.

More than two thirds (67%) of the COAS students responding register some degree of need related to expressing their ideas in writing. Nearly the same proportions of the total HU student sample and the national normative group (70% and 68%, respectively) also express some level of need in that area.

Nearly two thirds (61%) of COAS students responding indicate having some degree of need in the very critical and important area of improving reading comprehension. Corresponding figures are only slightly higher for the total group of HU students surveyed, and the national sample (64% and 65%, respectively).

Well over half (57%) of COAS students responding cite some level of need in increasing their reading speed. Proportions of the HU total sample and that of the national normative sample are greater in this area (61% and 66%, respectively).
Implications
Beginning students of the College of Arts and Sciences, as HU students in general, have personal and academic needs in areas that are most critical and foundational to academic success in college. In that the majority of the students of the COAS express confidence in their abilities to solve personal problems and to cope with academic difficulties, they may likely be inclined to make use of any available resources that they are aware of that can help them to improve in foundational, core areas of particular need (e.g., study skills, reading comprehension, mathematics skills, etc.). Adequate, timely and sustained allocations of supportive University resources to address each identified area of student need have the potential of positively influencing student retention and academic outcomes.

Recommendations
Inform all faculty and administrators in the various departments of the College of Arts and Sciences of the self-perceived needs of students new to the University. Share this assessment report broadly and encourage its use, along with other relevant information, for planning and implementing appropriate supports for students. In addition:

- Continue to provide comprehensive, detailed and timely information to prospective and incoming students and their families about financial aid and many of its sources available to them.
- Continue to build and sustain opportunities for students to have meaningful internship/practicum experiences in their fields of interest.
- Continue to conduct career fairs and to create additional opportunities for students to interact directly with professionals in their career field of interest, for guidance, mentoring and/or assistance in career planning.
- Strongly consider allocation or reallocation of sufficient resources that will provide student support services necessary to address the identified and targeted student academic and personal needs (e.g., the Center for Academic Reinforcement, library training workshops, tutoring, etc.)

*Note: Percentages represent all levels of need (from little to a lot).
Requirements for Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness
The College of Arts and Sciences should periodically provide to the Office of Institutional Assessment and Evaluation information on the implementation of plans to address the identified immediate needs and related performance data of new and continuing students. This will facilitate the assessment and evaluation of program and student support service improvement in relation to expected student outcomes.

Limitations
Survey data are indirect measures of perceptions at a certain period of time. Participation in the survey was voluntary for schools and colleges and for students within them.

References
American College Testing Program (ACT, 1999). *What Helps or Hinders Students’ Educational Achievement?*

American College Testing Program (ACT, 2005). *ACT College Readiness Benchmarks, Retention, and First-Year College GPA: What’s the Connection?*