

My Background, Motivations, and Attitudes

AIU is committed to the educational, professional, and personal growth of each student. In a survey of current and prospective students it was determined that a majority of our students fit into the following:

- Comes from one of four types of backgrounds
- Holds one of six common attitudes

AIU Students' Four Primary Backgrounds and Motivations

The student surveys showed that most students could be placed in one of the following four backgrounds.

Which of these descriptions mostly closely fits your experience?

Traditional Family Background

I am not the first in my family to go to college. All of my siblings or other family members have pursued higher education. I wish I hadn't waited this long to do the same. Now I feel a little behind, but I know I have to get a higher education to catch up and do what was always expected of me.

Motivations

Clear path and expectations |
College education is the norm |
The question is not whether to study but where to study

First Generation College Student Background

I am the first in my family to go to college. Although I haven't received much support or had role models to help guide me, the struggles have made me stronger and better. Sometimes my friends and family may not understand my dreams, but I want to prove to myself that anything is possible and break out of the vicious cycle I've been living in.

Motivations

Lack of positive role models |
Minimal education is the norm |
Builds self from scratch

First Generation Immigrant Background

My family has sacrificed so much to ensure that I have the opportunity to pursue my dreams. Although they sometimes push me in directions my heart may not want to go, I must make sure that their sacrifices are not wasted and that I set an example for my younger siblings. They taught me that, with their help, I have the power to write my own story.

Motivations

Product of their parents' sacrifices | Family is the decision-making unit |
Pressure to achieve more than parents, advance socially

Military Background

I've learned to adapt to many different situations. I am always thinking one step ahead and have a plan B. It wasn't easy, but I've learned discipline and that giving up is not an option. I know the struggles I face now will pay off in the future and allow me to have the flexibility to enjoy life on my own terms.

Motivations

The military was the only opportunity to open doors |
Developed a sense of obligation for a greater good

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AIU Students' Six Primary Attitudes

The student surveys showed that most students had one of the following six primary attitudes.

Which of the attitudes mostly closely fits your personality?

I want to feel useful

- Desires to help others and be of service
- Wants to pass on and give back
- Tries to make a dent, even if small
- **Quotes from surveyed students:**
 - “I have my personal goals, but I also want to help others. I’m in the process of organizing my own non-profit organization that will help to uplift and mentor young boys and keep them in the right path.”
 - “I decided to study Healthcare Management as I see the need for efficient administrators. I recognize the impact I can make coming from the perspective of being a staff member. I enjoy this field and want to excel in it and set standards I believe will make healthcare better.”

I’m in control

- Is mature, grounded, self-sufficient
- Has command over my own story and future
- Says, “I’m my own person”
- **Quotes from surveyed students:**
 - “I know I can make my story better. I get inspiration from role models, but I’ve grown to be my own person.”
 - “It’s not easy to achieve balance, but I think, if you are self-driven, you learn to prioritize and find ways to make things happen.”

I’m determined

- Knows that achieving requires hard work and clear goals
- Accepts that failing is an option, but not getting back up is not
- Works hard as nothing gets handed to you
- Faces struggles head-on
- **Quotes from surveyed students:**
 - “I know you have to work hard to get what you really want, and that is what I’m doing. Nothing gets handed to you.”
 - “My family was very strict, and I was pushed to achieve and to understand that actions have consequences. This made me a stronger person when putting my goals to the test.”

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I know myself

- Is attentive to own strengths and weaknesses
- Realizes untapped potential
- Enjoys discovery of passions and interests, even if later in life
- Understands what works for me, including how I learn
- **Quotes from surveyed students:**
- “Now that I know myself better, I know that I have untapped potential, and I’m working on it.”
- “What I’ve noticed is that I need to have time to myself and to take breaks in between my learning. I feel I have to focus a lot more than if I were in a regular class, and I stop and play a game for a moment.”

I set realistic goals

- Has ambitions but knows there are limitations
- Creates strategies to advance step-by-step
- Re-assesses along the way
- **Quotes from surveyed students:**
- “My dreams have always been sensible. I have never set my goals so high that they were not achievable. I believe that you should have lots of short-term goals and a few long-term goals. The short-term goals are the ones that keep you motivated to do more.”
- “My parents were never overly encouraging on dreams or goals that would never come true. I appreciate that they prepared me for real life and that things don’t always work out the way you want.”

I recognize my timeline is off

- Knows I am not where I am supposed to be at my age
- Regrets following the expected timeline, but moves on
- Accepts that “life happens”
- **Quotes from surveyed students:**
- “All my family members have gone to school and did not have to wait as long as I did to get my degree. I know you are never too old to go to school, but I do wish I had done it earlier. Sometimes I feel old. It would be awkward being the oldest in the classroom.”
- “I feel that I should already have an established career and already have at least 10 years of mortgage payments under my belt.”