THE EFFECTS OF HAVING HIGH SOCIAL STATUS GOALS ON SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

A study of how setting high social status goals affects the happiness of Northwestern University and University of Illinois at Chicago undergraduates

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MMSS Senior Thesis
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1 INTRODUCTION

For a lot of individuals, their years as an undergraduate are the most formative of their lives. They are able to devote multiple years of their life to truly learning about themselves as people, by exploring different things both inside and outside the classroom. The hope is that these new experiences will open their eyes to what they are truly passionate about, and thus inform them about what they want to pursue when they graduate. However, even if one is lucky enough to figure out a career path they are passionate about and would love to pursue, it is not always the career path they choose after graduating college. Year after year, countless individuals decide against going into careers in fields that they love after graduating simply because they are not considered prestigious careers by their friends and peers. Instead, they turn to the jobs that are the hardest to obtain or those that pay the most money, with the hopes that employment at these firms will bring them the respect of their peers and elevate their social status among those around them.

A decision as important as choosing one’s first job after graduating heavily influences their future years and endeavors. So, it is natural that the decision would also have a huge bearing on their happiness. A decision such as this is one of countless we make where the outcome we choose is heavily influenced by the opinions of other people. It is this observation that sparked the idea for this study; it is crucial for the undergraduate population to understand the effects that having high social status goals, which are goals that reflect how popular or preferred individuals are by their peers or colleagues, can have on happiness. With this increased awareness, undergraduates will hopefully think more critically before making decisions that are designed to please others at the expense of their own hopes and dreams.
2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller

Before diving into social status and happiness, let us first consider what drives people to have ambitious goal-setting behavior. In “On the Value of Aiming High: The Causes and Consequences of Ambition”, Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller (2012) seek to more clearly understand the concept of ambition and lofty goals by analyzing how closely correlated certain individual characteristics and external variables are with observed ambition among a sample of 717 high-ability individuals from the Terman life-cycle study (Terman, Sears, Cronback & Sears, 1989). The attributes they focused on were:

1. **Conscientiousness**: tendency to be diligent, motivated and goal directed
2. **Extraversion**: tendency to draw more energy from external environments and translate this stimulation into active behavior
3. **Neuroticism**: tendency to worry and have doubts
4. **General Mental Ability**
5. **Parents’ Occupation Prestige**

Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller use empirical research on the effects of the above five attributes on life outcomes to hypothesize that **conscientiousness**, **extraversion**, **general mental ability** and **parents’ occupational prestige** would all be positively correlated with ambition, while **neuroticism** would be negatively correlated with ambition. **Conscientiousness**, **extraversion** and **neuroticism** are three of the Big Five personality traits (**openness to experience** and **agreeableness** being the other two), which are said to encompass the most common personality traits among individuals (Goldberg, 1993).
It is easy to understand why the positive relations were made. On the subject of neuroticism, the authors suggest that having a tendency to worry and have doubts leads to individuals being less likely to set ambitious targets for themselves, for fear of not meeting them. Further, Hartman & Betz (2007) and Jin et al. (2009) point to individuals with high neuroticism reporting lower levels of occupational confidence. After conducting the study, their findings confirmed each of their initial hypotheses regarding the five attributes measured and how they relate to ambition.

The authors also sought to understand how this ambition affected life satisfaction, by asking individuals to report their satisfaction with five domains of life: occupation, family life, leisure activities, health, and “joy in living”, though no mention of emotional well-being was made. Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller were unsure of how to interpret the weak correlation between life satisfaction and ambition, suggesting that the relationship between ambition and specific goal-setting behavior is worthy of future research.

### 2.2 Happiness and Subjective Well-Being

Achieving happiness is a goal that virtually everyone in the world strives towards, and the actions taken by individuals are often centered on the idea of achieving happiness. However, before understanding how to achieve happiness, one must understand how it is defined.

Research in the field of happiness, or subjective well-being as it is often referred to in scholarly papers (Diener et al., 2009), has introduced a new distinction that needs to be made between two key concepts. As opposed to being considered a single entity, subjective well-being can be split up into emotional well-being and life evaluation. Emotional well-being revolves around how the frequency and intensity of different emotions felt by an individual shape the
overall emotional quality of said individual’s day to day experience, while life evaluation encapsulates an individual’s overall feeling of satisfaction with their entire life (Diener, 1984).

2.3 Income and Happiness

In their pursuit of happiness, most default to trying desperately to maximize income, with the belief that by amassing increasing amounts of income and financial wealth, greater happiness will undoubtedly follow. Thus, the relation between income and happiness has been a subject of interest among researchers for decades, as they have tried to investigate whether financial success truly leads to greater levels of happiness. Interestingly, this does not appear to be the case. Researchers have consistently found that focusing on increasing income or wealth can actually have adverse impacts on happiness. Diener & Bieswas-Diener (2002) found that after gaining enough income to satisfy basic needs, further increases in income do not have a lasting impact on happiness. Similarly, Kahneman & Deaton (2010) find that emotional well-being rises with log income to begin with, but there is no further progress once annual income exceeds $75,000.

2.4 Social Status

An individual’s social status is defined by how popular or preferred said individual is among his/her peers and colleagues (Rodkin et al., 2013). While the desire to be liked is almost universal, research suggests those who yearn for a high social status do so due to a combination of desiring dominance and prestige among one’s peers (Sijtsema et al., 2009).

Though the relationship between income and happiness has been studied at great length as mentioned above, there is an important distinction to be made between income and social status.
While one would think that income is a direct determinant of social status, according to research it is in fact only an indirect determinant. This is because it is correlated with occupational prestige, which is one of the four factors that predict social status, alongside educational level, sex and marital status (Hollingshead, 1975).

### 2.5 Boyce, Brown and Moore (2010)

The topic of how exactly having high social status goals affects subjective well-being does not appear to have been explicitly studied before. While social status and happiness have both separately been studied at length, there have not been studies seeking to link the two and explain how the former affects the latter.

Boyce, Brown and Moore (2010) came close in “Money and Happiness”, when they found that an increase in the rank of income of an individual within a comparison group predicted life satisfaction. However, as suggested earlier, there is still a large distinction between wanting to achieve the highest income rank within a social reference-group and wanted to achieve a high social status, where one is widely respected and admired for factors not just related to income. Furthermore, the paper ignores the relationship between social status and emotional well-being.

### 2.6 This Study’s Contribution

This study contributes to the existing literature in many ways. First and foremost, it directly tackles the question of whether high status goals affect subjective well-being through a lens not entirely tied to income, as most undergraduates have no or small sources of income while they are studying. Instead, it seeks to define what factors predict high status goals, by
investigating how the desire for respect, as well as the desire to be seen as self-confident, impressive or smart affect the development of high status goals, while also directly testing the relationship between self-reported desire to achieve a high social status and subjective well-being.

Secondly, as the study focuses on undergraduates who have not yet entered the workforce, they have not yet been able to achieve significant social status in any way, and their ideas of their social status goals are still being formulated. This allows me to capture the effects on emotional well-being and life satisfaction of having high social status goals during the process of achieving them, which has not been done before.

Lastly, the study looks to determine exactly what attributes seem to influence high social status goal-setting behavior, by observing personality and external characteristics and checking which of these best predict self-reported high status goals.
3 DATA COLLECTION

3.1 Survey Sample

The data for this study was collected through a survey, attached in Appendix A. The individuals who qualified to take the survey were undergraduates at Northwestern University and University of Illinois at Chicago. 342 Northwestern University undergraduates completed the survey, as well as 112 University of Illinois at Chicago undergraduates.

The inclusion of UIC came as a result of the fact that the Northwestern student body alone is not accurately representative of the general undergraduate population in the US. As pointed out by the US Department of Education, between 1976 and 2014 we have seen a staggering rise in Hispanic students from 4% to 17% of undergraduates, while the White student population fell from 84% to 58\%\textsuperscript{1}, with that number continuing to decrease since. According to Northwestern demographic data on the incoming first-year class, only 12% are Hispanic or Latino and 48% are White\textsuperscript{2}. Meanwhile, as of fall 2015 UIC enrollment, 28% of undergraduates are Latino, while 34% are White\textsuperscript{3}. Thus, including UIC enabled me to capture a much more diverse portion of the undergraduate population, specifically allowing me to include more Latino and Asian individuals.


\textsuperscript{2} “UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS.” Diversity: Undergraduate Admissions - Northwestern University, admissions.northwestern.edu/student-life/diversity.html.

\textsuperscript{3} “Diversity Data.” UIC Office of Diversity, diversity.uic.edu/diversity-data/. "Undergraduate Demographics"
3.2 Survey Procedure and Design

The 23-question survey was administered through the online survey tool Qualtrics, with participants gaining access to the survey through a link distributed via email at Northwestern and fliers at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

The survey design is based on a wide range of papers and their methods. Given that personality traits, mental ability and situational factors heavily influence goal-setting behavior (Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012), questions 5 to 9 of the survey in Appendix A try to identify which of the Big Five personality traits apply to the participants, while questions 10 to 12 investigate parental achievement and academic ability. Findings from the same paper also suggest that individuals with high general mental ability often emphasize academic and career goals later in life, both of which would have direct implications on social status, thanks in part to their effects on income and occupational prestige. Thus, questions 18 to 21 are included. To be affected by social status goals, one must be concerned about their future social status. Thus, to measure social status goals, questions 13-17 of the survey were formulated by following the method of another research paper which attempted to do the same (Sijtsema et al., 2009), using a subset of the Interpersonal Goals Inventory for Children (IGI-C) (Ojanen et al., 2005). Finally, questions 22 and 23 drew upon the method of a research paper by Kahneman and Deaton (2010) which, having established that subjective well-being is broken down into two distinct concepts, attempted to accurately measure emotional well-being and life evaluation.
3.3 Measures

Demographics

Participants were asked to provide information about their gender, race and undergraduate year, as well as which university they attend between Northwestern University and the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Traits

Participants were asked the extent to which they agreed ("Strongly agree", "Somewhat agree", "Neither agree nor disagree", "Somewhat disagree", "Strongly disagree") with five statements, with each statement corresponding to one of the Big Five personality traits.

Situational Factors

Participants were asked to provide the highest level of education completed by both their mother and father from a list of 7 options, as well as their current GPA in traditional U.S. numerical format.

Future Goals

Participants were provided five options to choose from ("Extremely important", "Very important", "Moderately important", "Slightly important", "Not at all important") when answering the following 7 questions: “How important is it that you achieve a high social status in the future”, “How important is it to you that your future peers/colleagues respect and admire you”, “How important is it to you that you appear self-confident and make an impression on your future peers/colleagues”, “How important is it to you that your future peers/colleagues..."
think you are smart”, “How important is it to you that your future peers/colleagues agree to do what you suggest”, “How important is it to you that you pursue higher levels of education beyond your current degree” and “How important is it to you that you start your career with one of your top 5 employer choices”. Participants were then asked the extent to which they agreed with the statement “My educational attainment is my top priority at college”, with the options being “Strongly agree”, “Somewhat agree”, “Neither agree nor disagree”, “Somewhat disagree” and “Strongly disagree”.

**Emotions**

In order to understand the emotional well-being of the participants, they were asked whether they experienced any of the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday: Anger, Enjoyment, Happiness, Depression, Laughter, Sadness, Stress and Worry, with the option to select multiple. Lastly, to measure the life evaluation of the participants, the following question was asked: “Please imagine a ladder with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you up to this point, and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you up to this point. On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand?”
4 RESULTS

4.1 Personality, Situational Factors and Social Status Goal Formulation

Table 1
Effects of Personality and Situational Factors on Social Status Goals
Ordinary Least Squares Regression

| Future Social Status Importance | Coef.    | Std. Err. | t       | P>|t|   |
|--------------------------------|----------|-----------|---------|-------|
| Extraversion                   | 0.2447826| 0.0471988 | 5.19    | 0.000 |
| Agreeableness                  | 0.0008545| 0.063173  | 0.01    | 0.989 |
| Conscientiousness              | 0.1263169| 0.047956  | 2.63    | 0.009 |
| Neuroticism                    | 0.0654347| 0.0376752 | 1.74    | 0.083 |
| Openness                       | -0.0152568| 0.0647311| -0.24   | 0.814 |
| Mother's Education Level       | 0.019403 | 0.0458036 | 0.42    | 0.672 |
| Father's Education Level       | -0.0318989| 0.0414185| -0.77   | 0.442 |
| GPA                            | 0.4047759| 0.0690614 | 5.86    | 0.000 |

In order to understand the exact effects of personality traits and other background factors on *Future Social Status Importance*, the results of an ordinary least squares regression are reported in Table 1. When interpreting regressions involving the importance of social status and other goals, it is imperative to be mindful that importance was reported by participants on a 1-5 scale, with 1 corresponding to “Extremely important” and 5 corresponding to “Not at all important”. Meanwhile, personality traits were also reported on a 1-5 scale, with 1 being “Strongly agree” and 5 being “Strongly disagree”.

With regards to personality, of the Big Five personality traits, the two factors that are significant at a 5% level are a 0.245 correlation between *Extraversion* and *Future Social Status Importance* and a 0.126 correlation between *Conscientiousness* and *Future Social Status Importance*. Thus, the 0.245 correlation between *Extraversion* and *Future Social Status Importance* suggests that a 1 level decrease in self-reported *Extraversion* would lead to a 0.245
level decrease in Future Social Status Importance. Similarly, a 1 level decrease in self-reported Conscientiousness would reduce Future Social Status Importance by 0.126 of a level.

GPA is the only situational factor significant at a 5% level. The coefficient of 0.405 suggests that a 1.0 increase in GPA would lead to a 0.405 level drop in the importance of social status. Of the remaining personality traits and situational factors, Neuroticism is significant at an 8.3% level, while Agreeableness, Openness and both Parental Education Levels are not significant at the 10% level.

4.2 Social Status Goals and Other Future Goals

Table 2
Effects of Other Future Goals on Social Status Goals
Ordinary Least Squares Regression

| Future Social Status Importance                  | Coef.   | Std. Err. | t     | P>|t| |
|------------------------------------------------|---------|-----------|-------|-----|
| Respect and Admire You                          | 0.2042969 | 0.0543785 | 3.76  | 0.000 |
| Appear Self-Confident/Make Impression           | 0.1471371 | 0.055422  | 2.65  | 0.008 |
| Think You Are Smart                             | 0.0653112 | 0.046739  | 1.40  | 0.163 |
| Agree to do What You Suggest                    | 0.0241667 | 0.0424882 | 0.57  | 0.570 |
| Pursue Higher Levels of Education               | 0.0625253 | 0.0332461 | 1.88  | 0.061 |
| Start Career with Top 5 Employer                | 0.0998796 | 0.0363082 | 2.75  | 0.006 |
| Very Wealthy in the Future                      | 0.3590197 | 0.0399004 | 9.00  | 0.000 |
| Educational Attainment is Top Priority          | 0.0268556 | 0.0373671 | 0.72  | 0.473 |

To assess the effects of other future goals on social status goal formulation, an ordinary least squares regression was run, with results reported in Table 2. All other future goals questions were also reported on an “Extremely important” (1) to “Not at all important” (5) scale, with the exception of “To what extent do you agree with the following statement: My educational attainment is my top priority at college?” which was answered on a scale of “Strongly agree” (1) to “Strongly disagree” (5).
As seen in the table, four other future goals are shown to be significant at the 1% level when regressed against *Future Social Status Importance*. The most notable is the wealth question, which was posed as “How important is it to you that you are very wealthy in the future?” and has a coefficient of 0.359. This indicates that a 1 level decrease (increase) in the importance of future wealth will decrease (increase) the importance level of future social status by 0.359 units. The second most notable statistically significant variable is the respect question, posed as “How important is it to you that your future peers/colleagues respect and admire you?” Here, we see that a 1 level drop in the importance of future respect and admiration would decrease the importance level of a high future social status by 0.204 units. *Appear Self-Confident/Make Impression* and *Start Career with Top 5 Employer* are the final two significant variables, with coefficients of 0.147 and 0.0999 respectively.

Meanwhile, *Pursue Higher Levels of Education* is significant at the 6.1% level with a coefficient of 0.0625, while the coefficients for future peers/colleagues *Think You Are Smart* or *Agree to do What You Suggest*, as well as *Educational Attainment is Top Priority* are not statistically significant at the 10% level.
4.3 Social Status Goals and Emotional Well-Being

Figure 1
Effects of Social Status Goals on Positive Affect, Blue Affect and Stress
Scatter Plot with Weighted Observations and Weighted Line of Best Fit

To examine the effects of Future Social Status Importance on emotional well-being, the eight emotions (Anger, Enjoyment, Happiness, Depression, Laughter, Sadness, Stress and Worry) were grouped into categories. If participants reported feeling two or more of “Happiness”, “Enjoyment” or “Laughter”, they were assigned a 1 for the “Positive Affect”, whereas participants were assigned a 0 if they reported feeling one or less of the three emotions. The same was done for the Blue Affect, with participants reporting between “Sadness”, “Worry” and “Depression”, while “Stress” and “Anger” remained independent emotions. The sizes of the circles above reflect the number of observations at each level of Future Social Status Importance, with the first three levels (“Extremely Important”, “Very Important” and
“Moderately Important”) having far more observations than the final two levels. Meanwhile, the three colored lines all portray lines of best fit, weighted based on the number of observations at each level so as to avoid being biased by the low number of observations at the last two levels.

As we can see from the graph, the fraction of the sample population experiencing the “Positive Affect”, and by definition positive emotions, declines as Future Social Status Importance decreases from 1 to 5. The red line reflects the fraction of the population that did not report feeling the “Blue Affect” at each importance level, and it’s almost flat slope suggests that Future Social Status Importance does not drastically affect the amount of people experiencing or not experiencing sad emotions, though it has a very slight positive gradient. The green line reports the fraction of the population that did not report having experienced stress the day before, and it follows the slope of the blue line, showing that as Future Social Status Importance decreases, the number of stress free people also decreases. The slope is also rather small, suggesting that the fraction of undergraduates reporting stress appears to be very similar across Future Social Status Importance levels.

4.4 Social Status Goals and Life Evaluation

Table 3
Effects of Social Status Goals on Life Evaluation
Ordinary Least Squares Regression

| Life Evaluation          | Coef.     | Std. Err. | t   | P>|t| |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----|-----|
| Future Social Status Importance | 0.0787849 | 0.0799436 | 0.99| 0.325 |
| cons                    | 6.446423  | 0.2085956 | 30.9| 0.000 |

In order to understand the key question of how Future Social Status Importance affects Life Evaluation (measured as a score out of 10), an ordinary least squares regression was conducted, shown in Table 3. As can be seen, the coefficient on Future Social Status Importance is 0.0788. This suggests that decreasing the importance level of future social status by 1 unit
actually very slightly increases overall *Life Evaluation*. However, it is important to point out that *
*Future Social Status Importance* is not significant at the 5% or 10% level.

**Table 4**
Effects of Social Status Goals on Life Evaluation  
*Mean, Standard Deviation, Frequency*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future Social Status Importance:</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Important</td>
<td>6.500</td>
<td>2.048</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>6.597</td>
<td>1.743</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately Important</td>
<td>6.732</td>
<td>1.702</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly Important</td>
<td>6.756</td>
<td>1.609</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all Important</td>
<td>6.684</td>
<td>2.056</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 above shows the mean *Life Evaluation* numbers for each level of *Future Social Status Importance*. As *Future Social Status Importance* decreases from “Extremely important” to “Slightly important”, we see that at each level mean *Life Evaluation* increases, eventually climbing from 6.500 to 6.756. However, mean *Life Evaluation* dips when *Future Social Status* is deemed “Not at all Important” from 6.756 down to 6.684. As only 19 respondents deemed achieving a high future social status “Not at all important”, it could be that the dip comes as a result of the very small sample. The remaining four levels of importance all reinforce the relationship found from Table 3, which suggests that decreasing the importance level of future social status very slightly increases overall *Life Evaluation*.
Table 5
Effects of Social Status Goals and Other Goals on Life Evaluation

*Ordinary Least Squares Regression*

| Life Evaluation                      | Coef.    | Std. Err. | t     | P>|t| |
|--------------------------------------|----------|-----------|-------|-----|
| Respect and Admire You               | -0.3892732 | 0.108334  | -3.59 | 0.000 |
| Appear Self-Confident/Make Impression| 0.0483026  | 0.113068  | 0.43  | 0.669 |
| Start Career with Top 5 Employer     | 0.0607262  | 0.074783  | 0.81  | 0.417 |
| Very Wealthy in the Future           | 0.2934091  | 0.087342  | 3.36  | 0.001 |
| _cons                                | 6.439727   | 0.265674  | 24.24 | 0.000 |

As *Future Social Status Importance* is not significant at the 5% or 10% level in Table 3, Table 5 shows the results of an ordinary least squares regression of *Life Evaluation* on *Respect and Admire You*, *Appear Self-Confident/Make Impression*, *Start Career with Top 5 Employer* and *Very Wealthy in the Future*, as these were the four factors significant at the 1% level when regressed against *Future Social Status Importance*.

*Respect and Admire You* is statistically significant at the 5% and 1% level, and its coefficient of -0.389 suggests that as the importance placed on future peers/colleagues’ respect and admiration decreases by 1 level, *Life Evaluation* reduces by 0.389 units out of 10, a substantial fall. Meanwhile, *Very Wealthy in the Future*, the only other factor significant at the 5% level, has a coefficient of 0.293, suggesting that if one decreases the importance placed on being very wealthy in the future by 1 level, they will experience a *Life Evaluation* increase of 0.293 units out of 10.

While *Appear Self-Confident/Make Impression* and *Start Career with Top 5 Employer* were both significant when regressed against *Future Social Status Importance*, and were thus included in the regression above, their small coefficients are not statistically significant at the 5% or 10% level.
4.5 Northwestern University vs. University of Illinois at Chicago

4.5a Social Status Goals and Other Future Goals

Table 6
Effects of Other Future Goals on Social Status Goals
Ordinary Least Squares Regression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respect and Admire You</td>
<td>0.2244122</td>
<td>0.059713</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.07595</td>
<td>0.13784</td>
<td>0.583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appear Self-Confident/Make Impression</td>
<td>0.1124096</td>
<td>0.0588839</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.30711</td>
<td>0.14313</td>
<td>0.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think You Are Smart</td>
<td>0.0646471</td>
<td>0.0497951</td>
<td>0.195</td>
<td>0.06292</td>
<td>0.11805</td>
<td>0.595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to do What You Suggest</td>
<td>-0.009172</td>
<td>0.0469176</td>
<td>0.845</td>
<td>0.13389</td>
<td>0.09821</td>
<td>0.176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursue Higher Levels of Education</td>
<td>0.0529749</td>
<td>0.0345596</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>0.13656</td>
<td>0.09208</td>
<td>0.141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start Career with Top 5 Employer</td>
<td>0.0979212</td>
<td>0.0381009</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.09809</td>
<td>0.09873</td>
<td>0.323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Wealthy in the Future</td>
<td>0.4030436</td>
<td>0.0423772</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.22626</td>
<td>0.09997</td>
<td>0.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Attainment is Top Priority</td>
<td>0.0393521</td>
<td>0.0370038</td>
<td>0.288</td>
<td>-0.0531</td>
<td>0.13074</td>
<td>0.686</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To compare the effects of other future goals on *Future Social Status Importance* between Northwestern University and University of Illinois at Chicago undergraduates, an ordinary least squares regression akin to Table 2 was run for each individual school. Table 6 shows the results of the two OLS regressions.

For Northwestern University undergraduates, three future goals were found to be significant at the 5% level when regressed against *Future Social Status Importance*. The most
notable variable is *Very Wealthy in the Future*, which has a coefficient of 0.403, This suggests that decreasing the importance of being wealthy in the future by 1 level leads to 0.403 level decrease in *Future Social Status Importance* for Northwestern University undergraduates. The second most notable of the three is *Respect and Admire You*, with a coefficient of 0.224, followed by *Start Career with Top 5 Employer*, which has a much smaller coefficient of 0.0979. *Appear Self-Confident/Make Impression*, while not significant at the 5% level, is significant at the 5.7% level.

Meanwhile, for University of Illinois at Chicago undergraduates, only two future goals were found to be significant at the 5% level. Just as with Northwestern University undergraduates, *Very Wealthy in the Future* is one of the significant variables, but with a much smaller coefficient of 0.226 in comparison to the 0.403 of Northwestern undergraduates. *Appear Self-Confident/Make Impression* has the largest statistically significant coefficient for UIC undergraduates, at 0.307. This suggests that for undergraduates at the University of Illinois Chicago, decreasing the importance placed on appearing self-confident and making an impression on future peers/colleagues by 1 level would decrease *Future Social Status Importance* by 0.307 of a level. None of the remaining other future goals are significant at the 10% level.
4.5b Social Status Goals and Emotional Well-Being

Figure 2
Effects of Social Status Goals on Positive Affect, Blue Affect and Stress (Northwestern University)
 Scatter Plot with Weighted Observations and Weighted Line of Best Fit

Northwestern University undergraduates also show a declining Positive Affect as the importance level of future social status goes from “Extremely important” (1) to “Not at all important” (5), suggesting that positive emotions actually decline as one places less importance on future social status. Curiously, the fraction of the sample population not experiencing the Blue Affect appears to increase very slightly, largely due to the jump at Future Social Status Importance level 3 (“Moderately important”). However, once again, the slope is very small and suggests that there is not a lot of other variation in the volume of people experiencing negative
emotions. The fraction of stress free individuals also appears to rise slightly, though again the slope is small, as a similar fraction of Northwestern University undergraduates appear to be stressed at every Future Social Status Importance level.

Figure 3
Effects of Social Status Goals on Positive Affect, Blue Affect and Stress (University of Illinois at Chicago)
Scatter Plot with Weighted Observations and Weighted Line of Best Fit

Just like Northwestern University undergraduates, University of Illinois at Chicago undergraduates show a declining Positive Affect line as Future Social Status Importance decreases from “Extremely important” to “Not at all important”. This suggests that at both universities, the fraction of the sample population feeling positive emotions decreases as the importance placed on future social status decreases. Unlike the rather flat, slightly positive green
As seen in Figure 2, the fraction of UIC undergraduates that are stress free appears to steadily decline as Future Social Status Importance decreases, which shows that a substantial portion of UIC undergraduates placing less importance on their future social status are stressed in comparison to those who place a lot of importance on their future social status. The red line also declines for UIC undergraduates in comparison to rising for Northwestern undergraduates. In the case of UIC, as Future Social Status Importance decreases, larger and larger fractions of the surveyed population appear to experience negative emotions. The contradictory “Not blue” and Stress free” slopes between the two university populations suggest that the source of negative emotions and stress for both sets of undergraduates may lie away from the setting of high future social status goals.

### 4.5c Social Status Goals and Life Evaluation

**Table 7**

Effects of Social Status Goals on Life Evaluation (Northwestern University)

*Ordinary Least Squares Regression*

| Life Evaluation               | Coef.      | Std. Err. | t    | P>|t| |
|------------------------------|------------|-----------|------|-----|
| Future Social Status Importance | 0.1006307 | 0.0883047 | 1.14 | 0.255 |
| _cons                        | 6.699654   | 0.2316721 | 28.92| 0.000 |

Table 7 above shows the results of regressing *Life Evaluation* on *Future Social Status Importance* for Northwestern University undergraduates. *Future Social Status Importance* has a positive coefficient of 0.101, suggesting that for Northwestern University undergraduates, as the importance placed on social status declines (moves step by step from 1 to 5), *Life Evaluation* increases very slightly. However, *Future Social Status Importance* is again not significant at the 10% level.
Table 8
Effects of Social Status Goals and Other Goals on Life Evaluation (Northwestern University)
Ordinary Least Squares Regression

| Life Evaluation                  | Coef.    | Std. Err. | t     | P>|t| |
|--------------------------------|----------|-----------|-------|------|
| Respect and Admire You         | -0.3649002 | 0.1128707 | -3.23 | 0.001|
| Start Career with Top 5 Employer | 0.0672563 | 0.0844164 | 0.8   | 0.426|
| Very Wealthy in the Future     | 0.2221659 | 0.0964168 | 2.3   | 0.022|
| _cons                          | 6.907876 | 0.2911202 | 23.73 | 0.000|

As seen in Table 6, the three factors significant at the 5% level for Northwestern University undergraduates when regressed against Future Social Status Importance are Respect and Admire You, Start Career with Top 5 Employer and Very Wealthy in the Future. Thus, Table 8 shows the results of an ordinary least squares regression of these factors against Life Evaluation. As Table 8 shows, Respect and Admire You is significant at the 1% level with a coefficient of -0.365. This suggests that, as a Northwestern University undergraduate places less importance on future peers/colleagues respecting and admiring him/her, their Life Evaluation decreases substantially, by 0.365 units out of 10. Very Wealthy in the Future is also significant at the 5% level, with a coefficient of 0.222. However, Start Career with Top 5 Employer is not significant at the 10% level.

Table 9
Effects of Social Status Goals on Life Evaluation (University of Illinois at Chicago)
Ordinary Least Squares Regression

| Life Evaluation                  | Coef.    | Std. Err. | t     | P>|t| |
|--------------------------------|----------|-----------|-------|------|
| Future Social Status Importance | -0.04479 | 0.1529588 | -0.29 | 0.770|
| _cons                          | 5.800804 | 0.392373  | 14.78 | 0.000|

Table 9 shows the results of regressing Life Evaluation on Future Social Status Importance for University of Illinois at Chicago undergraduates. Unlike for Northwestern University undergraduates, who had a positive coefficient, Future Social Status Importance
actually has a very small negative coefficient of -0.0448 above, suggesting that as UIC undergraduates place decreasing importance on social status, their Life Evaluation actually decreases. However, once again Future Social Status Importance is not statistically significant.

Table 10
Effects of Social Status Goals and Other Goals on Life Evaluation (University of Illinois at Chicago)

Ordinary Least Squares Regression

| Life Evaluation                      | Coef.    | Std. Err. | t     | P>|t| |
|--------------------------------------|----------|-----------|-------|-----|
| Appear Self-Confident/Make Impression| -0.128893| 0.1751618 | -0.74 | 0.463|
| Very Wealthy in the Future           | 0.2548698| 0.1714121 | 1.49  | 0.140|
| _cons                                | 5.360277 | 0.4691906 | 11.42 | 0.000|

Table 6 shows that the two factors that were statistically significant at the 5% level for University of Illinois at Chicago undergraduates when regressed against Future Social Status Importance were Appear Self-Confident/Make Impression and Very Wealthy in the Future. As Future Social Status Importance is not statistically significant as shown in Table 9, Table 10 shows the results of running an ordinary least squares regression of Life Evaluation on these two factors that predict Future Social Status Importance. As seen in the table, neither of the factors are significant at a 5% or 10% level, though Very Wealthy in the Future is significant at the 14% level.
5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Personality, Situational Factors and Social Status Goal Formulation

The results suggest that Extraversion, Conscientiousness and GPA have a large effect on how much importance undergraduates give their future social status. As a reminder, an individual’s social status is defined by how popular or preferred said individual is among his/her peers and colleagues (Rodkin et al., 2013).

The results show that those who self-report a higher level of extraversion also place more importance on their future social status. People who were classified as extraverted reported agreeing to the statement “I am enthusiastic, talkative, action-oriented and enjoy being with people very often”. This relationship could be attributed to the fact that, as extraverted people spend more time around many more people, they are also judged and evaluated by more people, even if it is on a subconscious level. Knowing this, extraverted people may develop a higher level of sensitivity to what people think about them, thus placing a higher importance on their standing among their peers and colleagues.

The fact that Conscientiousness was found to be correlated with Future Social Status Importance could be because people who work hard like to be perceived as hard workers, and want to be rewarded socially for that trait. Thus, they may place increased importance on what their peers and colleagues think about them, especially when it comes to their effort.

Undergraduates with higher GPAs appear to place less importance on social status. This relationship could possibly be attributed to individuals with high GPAs recognizing that they are high achieving and of high ability, as GPA is a very objective measure of academic attainment.
This could give them a huge boost in confidence, and cause them to worry much less about what their future peers or colleagues will think about them.

5.2 Social Status Goals and Other Future Goals

As seen in Table 2, each of the other future goals has a positive coefficient when regressed against *Future Social Status Importance*, suggesting that for each goal, as the importance placed on it decreases, the importance placed on future social status decreases as well. However, *Respect and Admire You*, *Appear Self-Confident/Make Impression*, *Start Career with Top 5 Employer* and *Very Wealthy in the Future* were the four future goals found to have the largest effects on the importance placed on future social status.

The fact that *Respect and Admire You* would affect the importance of future social status is easy to understand. Placing a high level of importance on your future peers/colleagues respecting and admiring you directly shows that you care about what they think of you. Thus, you would naturally worry about how preferred or popular you are among them.

Wanting to appear self-confident and make an impression means that you want your future peers/colleagues to look at you and think that you are impressive. Most people want to be seen as confident and impressive so that people like them, thus boosting their popularity among the group of people in question. Thus, this could explain why *Appear Self-Confident/Make Impression* has a heavy effect on *Future Social Status Importance*.

The fact that wanting to start your career at a top 5 employer predicts *Future Social Status Importance* could be because beginning your career at one of the best five companies in your field would portray to everyone that you are successful in your professional life. As a result, your peers would hold a much higher opinion of you, thus increasing your popularity.
The relationship between wanting to amass a large amount of wealth in the future and wanting a high future social status is perhaps attributable to the widely-held notion that wealth is an objective signal of success. Thus, those who place high importance on amassing a large amount of wealth may want to signal to their peers/colleagues that they are successful, in order to boost their popularity among them and as a result, their social status.

5.3 Social Status Goals and Emotional Well-Being

The emotional well-being analysis gleaned some interesting results. The downward sloping blue fitted line reflecting the “Positive affect” in Figure 1 suggests that as the importance placed on future social status decreases, the fraction of the undergraduate population experiencing positive emotions (Happiness, Enjoyment, Laughter) decreases. This could be attributed to a case of reverse causality; if people are not experiencing positive emotions, they may be preoccupied with fixing this issue and bettering their lives in the present, rather than placing a lot of importance on other people’s perceptions of them in the future.

Meanwhile, the flatness of the red and green lines denoting “Not blue” and “Stress free” members of the undergraduate population suggest that future social status importance does not seem to have a big impact on negative emotions (Sadness, Depression, Worry) or stress. Another explanation is that the measure could be noisy, as respondents may have chosen to underreport their negative emotions due to the stigma attached to experiencing such emotions.

5.4 Social Status Goals and Life Evaluation

The positive coefficient on Future Social Status Importance shown in Table 3 suggests that as one puts less importance on achieving a high future social status, their life evaluation
increases very slightly. However, in addition to the coefficient being very low (0.0788), it is not statistically significant. This could be because *Future Social Status Importance* is a noisy measure.

When *Life Evaluation* is regressed on factors that load into *Future Social Status Importance*, as in Table 5, some of these variables, namely *Respect and Admire You* and *Very Wealthy in the Future*, seem to have a strong effect. These results suggest that if undergraduates focus on taking actions that earn them the respect and admiration of their peers/colleagues moving forward, instead of obsessing over being very wealthy, this will lead to a huge boost in their life evaluation.

**5.5 Northwestern University vs. University of Illinois at Chicago**

**5.5a Social Status Goals and Other Future Goals**

When comparing Northwestern University undergraduates and University of Illinois at Chicago undergraduates, we see that *Very Wealthy in the Future* is correlated with *Future Social Status Importance* for both groups. As explained earlier, this could be attributed to wealth being considered one of the best objective ways to assess the success of someone else, thus acting as a signal to one’s peers and colleagues and boosting one’s perception among them.

For Northwestern University undergraduates, starting one’s career with a top 5 employer and earning the respect and admiration of your peers appears to dictate how much importance is placed on future social status. On the other hand, for UIC undergraduates appearing self-confident and making an impression on their peers/colleagues seems to be the only factor which heavily influences the importance placed on future social status.
5.5b Social Status Goals and Emotional Well-Being

Northwestern University and University of Illinois at Chicago undergraduates both appear to experience a declining “Positive affect” where the fraction of the population experiencing positive emotions declines as the importance of future social status declines. As suggested earlier, this could be explained by reverse causality.

For the “Not blue” and “Stress free” affects, Northwestern undergraduates have a slightly increasing line but overall rather flat trend line, which suggests that the importance placed on future social status does not seem to have a big impact on negative emotions or stress. On the other hand, UIC undergraduates have a decreasing “Not blue” fitted trend line. This makes sense intuitively, as if the positive affect is declining and fewer people are experiencing positive emotions, it could be that these positive emotions are being replaced with more negative emotions, thus increasing the “Blue” affect and decreasing the fraction of the population which is “Not blue”. UIC undergraduates also have a declining “Stress free” fitted line, meaning as less importance is placed on future social status, a higher fraction of the population is experiences stress. This could also be a reverse causality issue, as stressed people have more short-term personal goals to solve before they move to assessing their long-term social goals, while those that are stress free have the freedom to lend more importance to future social goals.

5.5c Social Status Goals and Life Evaluation

Once again, Future Social Status Importance is not statistically significant in either Table 7 or 9. Thus, once again taking it to be a noisy measure for both undergraduate populations and replacing it with its predictors (Respect and Admire You, Start Career with Top 5 Employer and Very Wealthy in the Future) for Northwestern University undergraduates, Appear Self-
Confident/Make Impression and Very Wealthy in the Future for University of Illinois at Chicago undergraduates) produces some interesting results.

The results suggest that moving forward, Northwestern University undergraduates should focus more of their efforts on earning the respect and admiration of their peers, and less of their efforts on becoming wealthy, in order to increase their life evaluation. Meanwhile, as seen in Table 10, neither factor is statistically significant for UIC undergraduates. However, as UIC had fewer observations, if we widen the confidence interval we see that Very Wealthy in the Future is borderline significant, at the 14% level. Thus, UIC undergraduates should decrease the importance of becoming wealthy in the future to experience a boost in their life evaluation.

5.6 Implication

The overall results of this study suggest that the importance undergraduates place on their future social status does not have a direct causal effect on the overall emotional quality of their day to day experience, or in other words, their emotional well-being. One’s social status in the future is such a long horizon away that it is hard for such a factor to have a meaningful effect on the positive or negative emotions experienced by said person on a day to day basis.

On the other hand, the effects of having high social status goals on the other dimension of subjective well-being, life evaluation, are much more interesting. While the findings of the study do not indicate a strong direct relationship between importance placed on future social status and life evaluation, the future goals appearing to predict the importance of future social status do also predict life evaluation, suggesting that if in the future undergraduates emphasize earning the respect and admiration of their peers instead of focusing on being wealthy enough to try and buy that respect and admiration, this will lead to a huge boost in their life evaluation.
On a university-level, the findings of this study culminate in a recommendation to Northwestern University students to reduce the importance placed on being wealthy in the future and increase their efforts to earn respect and admiration from their peers. Meanwhile, unlike Northwestern University undergraduates, University of Illinois at Chicago undergraduates should train their focus on trying to appear self-confident and making an impression on their peers and colleagues. Taking these two pieces of advice could potentially be life-changing for Northwestern University and University of Illinois at Chicago undergraduates, by enabling them to make a meaningful change to their approach in life and, in the process, have a significant and positive effect on how they view themselves and their lives up to this point.
6 REFERENCES


Hollingshead, August B. “Four Factor Index of Social Status” Unpublished Working Paper, 1975


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Appendix A: Undergraduate Survey

I am conducting this short survey to determine a relationship between some explanatory factors and happiness. You must be an undergraduate to complete the survey and be eligible for the reward.

Thank you for taking a few minutes to answer the following questions. Your identity will remain anonymous to everyone, including myself.

Demographics:

1. What is your gender?
   a. Male
   b. Female
   c. Other

2. What is your race? (check all that apply)
   a. American Indian or Alaskan Native
   b. Asian
   c. Black or African American
   d. Hispanic or Latino
   e. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
   f. White
   g. Other

3. What is your undergraduate year?
   a. First Year
   b. Sophomore
   c. Junior
   d. Senior

4. University
   a. Northwestern University
   b. University of Illinois at Chicago

Traits: To what extent do you agree with the following 5 statements?

5. I am enthusiastic, talkative, action-oriented and enjoy being with people very often
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Somewhat agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Somewhat disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

6. I consider myself to be generous, helpful and am willing to compromise my interests with others’
a. Strongly agree  
b. Somewhat agree  
c. Neither agree nor disagree  
d. Somewhat disagree  
e. Strongly disagree  

7. I am organized, dependable, and tend to aim for achievement through self-discipline and planned rather than spontaneous behavior 
   a. Strongly agree  
b. Somewhat agree  
c. Neither agree nor disagree  
d. Somewhat disagree  
e. Strongly disagree  

8. I tend to be more emotionally reactive than those around me, and experience negative emotions more intensely and for longer periods of time  
   a. Strongly agree  
b. Somewhat agree  
c. Neither agree nor disagree  
d. Somewhat disagree  
e. Strongly disagree  

9. I am intellectually curious and always open to trying new experiences  
   a. Strongly agree  
b. Somewhat agree  
c. Neither agree nor disagree  
d. Somewhat disagree  
e. Strongly disagree  

Situational Factors: 

10. What is the highest level of education completed by your mother?  
    a. Did not complete High School  
b. High School/GED  
c. Some College  
d. Bachelor’s Degree  
e. Master’s Degree  
f. Advanced Graduate work or Ph.D.  
g. Not sure  

11. What is the highest level of education completed by your father?  
    a. Did not complete High School  
b. High School/GED  
c. Some College  
d. Bachelor’s Degree  
e. Master’s Degree  
f. Advanced Graduate work or Ph.D.  
g. Not sure  

12. What is your current GPA? Please use the traditional U.S. numerical format (Examples: 3.05, 3.43, 2.78 – as a reminder, your answers are completely anonymous)
Future Goals:

13. How important is it that you achieve a high social status in the future?
   a. Extremely important
   b. Very important
   c. Moderately important
   d. Slightly important
   e. Not at all important

14. How important is it to you that your future peers/colleagues respect and admire you?
   a. Extremely important
   b. Very important
   c. Moderately important
   d. Slightly important
   e. Not at all important

15. How important is it to you that you appear self-confident and make an impression on your future peers/colleagues?
   a. Extremely important
   b. Very important
   c. Moderately important
   d. Slightly important
   e. Not at all important

16. How important is it to you that your future peers/colleagues think you are smart?
   a. Extremely important
   b. Very important
   c. Moderately important
   d. Slightly important
   e. Not at all important

17. How important is it to you that your future peers/colleagues agree to do what you suggest?
   a. Extremely important
   b. Very important
   c. Moderately important
   d. Slightly important
   e. Not at all important

18. How important is it to you that you pursue higher levels of education beyond your current degree?
   a. Extremely important
   b. Very important
   c. Moderately important
19. How important is it to you that you start your career with one of your top 5 employer choices?
   a. Extremely important
   b. Very important
   c. Moderately important
   d. Slightly important
   e. Not at all important

20. How important is it to you that you are very wealthy in the future?
   a. Extremely important
   b. Very important
   c. Moderately important
   d. Slightly important
   e. Not at all important

21. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: My educational attainment is my top priority at college?
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Somewhat agree
   c. Neither agree nor disagree
   d. Somewhat disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

**Emotions:**

22. Did you experience the following feelings during a lot of the day yesterday? (Check all that apply)
   a. Anger
   b. Enjoyment
   c. Happiness
   d. Depression
   e. Laughter
   f. Sadness
   g. Stress
   h. Worry

23. Please imagine a ladder with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you up to this point, and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you up to this point. On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand right now?

   0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10
Appendix B: Demographic Analysis

1. Gender

Future Social Status Importance
Means, Standard Deviations, and t-Test comparisons to Mean = 2.383592

| Gender | Mean    | Std. Dev. | Pr(|T|>|t|) |
|--------|---------|-----------|------------|
| Male   | 2.3307087 | 1.0747193 | 0.2710     |
| Female | 2.4517766 | 1.0221822 | 0.1826     |
| Other  | 2.6666667 | 2.081666  | 0.0000     |

Compared to the undergraduante mean, males report placing more importance on future social status while females place less importance on social status. However, these differences are not significant at the 10% level. Individuals who do not identify as male or female report placing much lower importance on future social status than the mean, and this difference is significant at the 1% level.

Life Evaluation
Means, Standard Deviations, and t-Test comparisons to Mean = 6.64745

| Gender | Mean    | Std. Dev. | Pr(|T|>|t|) |
|--------|---------|-----------|------------|
| Male   | 6.7874016 | 1.8421071 | 0.0709     |
| Female | 6.4670051 | 1.7038904 | 0.0483     |
| Other  | 4.6666667 | 3.0550505 | 0.0000     |

In comparison to the undergraduate population mean, males report having a higher Life Evaluation while females report having a lower mean Life Evaluation. Meanwhile, those identifying as neither male nor female report a much mean lower Life Evaluation than the mean. The differences for females and other genders are significant at the 5% level, while the difference for males is significant at the 10% level.
2. Race

**Future Social Status Importance**
*Means, Standard Deviations, and t-Test comparisons to Mean = 2.383592*

| Race                                    | Mean      | Std. Dev.  | Pr(|T|>|t|) |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| Asian                                   | 2.2195122 | 0.98484704 | 0.0009     |
| Black or African American               | 2.2666667 | 1.0327956  | 0.0172     |
| Hispanic or Latino                      | 2.3800000 | 1.0859022  | 0.9125     |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander     | 1.0000000 | 0.0000000  | 0.0000     |
| White                                   | 2.5212766 | 1.0670437  | 0.0065     |
| Other                                   | 1.6666667 | 0.57735027 | 0.0000     |

Relative to the undergraduate mean, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander and Other race individuals all report placing a higher level of importance on future social status. All of these differences are significant at the 5% level with the exception of Hispanic or Latino individuals. Meanwhile, White individuals place less importance on future social status than the undergraduate mean. This difference is significant at the 1% level.

**Life Evaluation**
*Means, Standard Deviations, and t-Test comparisons to Mean = 6.64745*

| Race                                    | Mean      | Std. Dev.  | Pr(|T|>|t|) |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| Asian                                   | 6.4268293 | 1.779436   | 0.0145     |
| Black or African American               | 6.2       | 2.2103652  | 0.0000     |
| Hispanic or Latino                      | 6.26      | 1.6264397  | 0.0000     |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander     | 10        | 0          | 0.0000     |
| White                                   | 6.9361702 | 1.8079356  | 0.0004     |
| Other                                   | 5         | 1.7320508  | 0.0000     |

Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino and Other race individuals all report a lower mean Life Evaluation than the undergraduate mean. All of these differences are significant at the 5% level, and all except Asian are significant at the 1% level. White individuals and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander individuals report a mean Life Evaluation above the
undergraduate mean, with both of these differences significant at the 1% level. However, it is important to note that only one respondent identified themselves as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

3. Undergraduate Year

Future Social Status Importance
Means, Standard Deviations, and t-Test comparisons to Mean = 2.383592

| Undergraduate Year | Mean    | Std. Dev. | Pr(|T|>|t|) |
|--------------------|---------|-----------|------------|
| First Year         | 2.178571| 1.0994053 | 0.0000     |
| Sophomore          | 2.208696| 1.0470983 | 0.0004     |
| Junior             | 2.537815| 1.0316181 | 0.0023     |
| Senior             | 2.529412| 1.0323736 | 0.0039     |

As we can see from the table above, in comparison to the Future Social Status Importance mean, First Years and Sophomores place more importance on future social status, while Juniors and Seniors place less importance on their future social status on average. These differences are all significant at the 1% level.

Life Evaluation
Means, Standard Deviations, and t-Test comparisons to Mean = 6.64745

| Undergraduate Year | Mean    | Std. Dev. | Pr(|T|>|t|) |
|--------------------|---------|-----------|------------|
| First Year         | 6.083333| 1.9276575 | 0.0000     |
| Sophomore          | 6.373913| 1.7743834 | 0.0022     |
| Junior             | 6.798319| 1.6802937 | 0.0530     |
| Senior             | 7.051470| 1.7398163 | 0.0000     |

In comparison to the undergraduate mean Life Evaluation, First Years and Sophomores have a lower mean Life Evaluation, while Juniors and Seniors have a higher mean Life Evaluation. These differences are all significant at the 1% level with the exception of the Juniors’
mean Life Evaluation. It is also interesting to note that with each undergraduate year, the mean Life Evaluation steadily increases.

4. University

**Future Social Status Importance**

*Means, Standard Deviations, and t-Test comparisons to Mean = 2.383592*

| University                          | Mean     | Std. Dev. | Pr(|T|>|t|) |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| Northwestern University             | 2.4035088| 1.0532951 | 0.7166     |
| University of Illinois at Chicago   | 2.3303571| 1.0771032 | 0.2679     |

In comparison to the mean, Northwestern University undergraduates place less importance on their future social status, while University of Illinois at Chicago undergraduates place more importance on their future social status. However, neither of these differences are significant at the 10% level.

**Life Evaluation**

*Means, Standard Deviations, and t-Test comparisons to Mean = 6.64745*

| University                          | Mean     | Std. Dev. | Pr(|T|>|t|) |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| Northwestern University             | 6.9415205| 1.7183078 | **0.0003** |
| University of Illinois at Chicago   | 5.6964286| 1.7286108 | **0.0000** |

Northwestern University undergraduates report a higher mean Life Evaluation than the undergraduate mean, with this difference significant at the 1% level. Meanwhile, University of Illinois at Chicago report a mean Life Evaluation far lower than the undergraduate mean. This difference is also significant at the 1% level.