

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT (CCSSE) 2007 A RESEARCH BRIEF

Research Briefs

Research Briefs are short publications prepared by the Department of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (IRE) that are intended to provide relevant information which assists in the performance improvement process used by St. Petersburg College (SPC). Research Brief topics include, but are not limited to, student achievement, state accountability measures, institutional survey results, student enrollment, and faculty/adjunct compensation.

Introduction

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) is a voluntary national survey designed to measure how engaged students are in learning. For more information about CCSSE, please visit <http://www.ccsse.org/>. SPC administered the 2007 CCSSE to randomly selected classes during the Spring 2007 session. SPC survey results were included in various institutional reports provided by CCSSE (complete report available on request).

Table 1 shows respondent characteristics from SPC compared to population data for SPC, similarly-sized 2007 CCSSE Cohort colleges, and All 2007 CCSSE Cohort. About two-thirds of the students enrolled in community colleges are part-time students while the sample shows almost the opposite; therefore, all results in the CCSSE reports are either presented separately for part-time and full-time students or are weighted by enrollment status. Systematic bias does not appear to be present for other individual characteristics.

Table 1

Respondents to Underlying Populations Comparisons: Comparison Group and All 2007 CCSSE Cohort Colleges

	SPC Respondents	SPC Population	2007 Cohort Size Group Comparison	2007 CCSSE Cohort Population
Gender				
Male	41%	37%	43%	41%
Female	59%	63%	57%	59%
Race/Ethnicity				
American Indian or other Native American	1%	1%	1%	1%
Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander	4%	3%	9%	6%
Black or African American, Non-Hispanic	9%	11%	14%	14%
White, Non-Hispanic	68%	76%	47%	59%
Hispanic, Latino, Spanish	7%	5%	21%	14%
Other	3%	3%	5%	5%
International Student or Foreign National	8%	2%	3%	2%
Student Age				
18 to 19	33%	17%	20%	23%
20 to 21	24%	17%	19%	18%
22 to 24	14%	16%	16%	15%
25 to 29	11%	16%	15%	14%
30 to 39	9%	18%	15%	15%
40 to 49	6%	11%	9%	9%
50 to 64	3%	4%	4%	4%
65 and over	1%	1%	1%	1%
Enrollment Status				
Full - Time	59%	32%	34%	37%
Part - Time	41%	68%	66%	63%

Source: 2007 CCSSE Results - Institutional Report

Note: Population data are those reported by colleges for the most recent IPEDS enrollment report. Respondents include only data used in the national CCSSE analysis as in accordance with the CCSSE data exclusion rules.

Results

A three-year cohort of participating colleges (2005 through 2007) was used for all data analyses including the computation of the benchmark scores. The five benchmarks were created from the 38 engagement items that seemed to reflect some of the most fundamental contributors to effective teaching, learning, student retention and success. Additional information about the benchmarks is shown in Appendix A (Benchmark Descriptions). Benchmark means are centralized using the entire 3-year cohort which changes year to year. Due to the cohort shift, benchmark scores are not directly comparable across years; however, individual items can be directly compared.

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To make the benchmark scores easier to interpret and to allow comparisons across the five benchmarks and across institutions, the individual item responses are rescaled so that all items are on the same scale (0 to 1). Next, the benchmark scores are computed by averaging the scores of the related survey items. Finally, the scores are then standardized around the mean of the 3-year cohort so that respondents' scores have a mean of 50 weighted by full-time and part-time attendance status, and a standard deviation of 25. Benchmark scores are then computed by averaging the scores on the associated items.

Table 2 shows the performance of St. Petersburg College students on these benchmarks and in comparison to other community colleges within Florida (Florida Consortium), other extra large colleges (more than 15,000 students, 46 colleges total), and to 525 participating colleges from 48 states across the United States plus British Columbia and the Marshall Islands. Values in blue represent areas where SPC benchmark was higher (≥ 1.0) than the comparison group while values in red show the opposite.

Table 2
Benchmark Category Comparison Group Results

	SPC	Florida Consortium	SPC vs. Florida Consortium Difference	Extra Large Colleges	SPC vs. Extra Large Colleges Difference	All Colleges	SPC vs. All Colleges Difference
Active Collaborative Learning							
All Students	47.7	50.0	-2.3	49.2	-1.5	50.0	-2.3
Full-time Students	55.8	56.8	-1.0	54.9	0.9	56.2	-0.4
Part-time Students	43.9	46.0	-2.1	46.2	-2.3	46.6	-2.7
0-29 Credits	46.1	47.4	-1.3	46.7	-0.6	47.7	-1.6
30+ Credits	51.5	55.2	-3.7	53.9	-2.4	56.5	-5.0
Student Effort							
All Students	48.7	50.3	-1.6	49.2	-0.5	50.0	-1.3
Full-time Students	55.0	55.1	-0.1	55.1	-0.1	55.5	-0.5
Part-time Students	45.7	47.5	-1.8	46.0	-0.3	46.8	-1.1
0-29 Credits	48.4	49.6	-1.2	47.5	0.9	49.1	-0.7
30+ Credits	49.4	51.2	-1.8	51.8	-2.4	52.9	-3.5
Academic Challenge							
All Students	49.8	50.4	-0.6	49.5	0.3	50.0	-0.2
Full-time Students	56.6	56.8	-0.2	55.4	1.2	55.6	1.0
Part-time Students	46.6	46.7	-0.1	46.4	0.2	46.4	0.2
0-29 Credits	49.3	48.6	0.7	47.5	1.8	48.1	1.2
30+ Credits	51.1	53.9	-2.8	53.3	-2.2	56.5	-5.4
Student-Faculty Interaction							
All Students	50.0	51.5	-1.5	48.3	1.7	50.0	0.0
Full-time Students	55.7	57.1	-1.4	53.7	2.0	56.0	-0.3
Part-time Students	47.3	48.1	-0.8	45.5	1.8	46.8	0.5
0-29 Credits	48.9	49.2	-0.3	46.2	2.7	48.1	0.8
30+ Credits	52.4	55.8	-3.4	52.4	0.0	56.1	-3.7
Support for Learners							
All Students	49.4	49.6	-0.2	48.9	0.5	50.0	-0.6
Full-time Students	53.7	53.4	0.3	52.3	1.4	53.8	-0.1
Part-time Students	47.4	47.4	0.0	47.0	0.4	48.4	-1.0
0-29 Credits	50.0	49.1	0.9	48.2	1.8	49.9	0.1
30+ Credits	47.7	50.2	-2.5	49.8	-2.1	52.1	-4.4

Blue - SPC benchmark value is 1.0 more than or equal to the comparison group.

Red - SPC benchmark value is 1.0 less than or equal to the comparison group.

Source: 2007 CCSSE Results - Institutional Report

Note: Respondents include only data used in the national CCSSE analysis as in accordance with the CCSSE data exclusion rules.

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Table 3 shows the individual questions, benchmark area, and highlights items at SPC that fall notably above or below the mean of a specific comparison group (The items listed are significant at $p < .001$ with an effect size greater than or equal to .2).

Table 3
Individual Questions That Fall Notably Above or Below the Mean by Characteristics and Comparison Group

Benchmark	Mean	Survey Items	(A)ll Colleges, (F)lorida Consortium, (X)-Large Colleges				
			All Students	Full-time	Part-time	Credit (0-29)	Credit (30+)
Active and Collaborative Learning	Below	Made a class presentation				F	
Student Effort	Below	Frequency of Computer Lab	A	A, X	A, X	A	A, X
Student-Faculty Interaction	Below	Talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor					A
Student-Faculty Interaction	Below	Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class					A
Student-Faculty Interaction	Above	Used email to communicate with an instructor	A, X	A, X	A, X	A, X	
Support for Learners	Below	Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)					A

Source: 2007 CCSSE Results - Institutional Report

Note: Respondents include only data used in the national CCSSE analysis as in accordance with the CCSSE data exclusion rules.

Summary

The 2007 administration of the CCSSE to SPC students revealed some areas for possible improvement especially when compared to other Florida Community Colleges (Active and Collaborative Learning, Student Effort, Student-Faculty Interaction). SPC performed better when compared to other Extra Large Colleges especially in Student-Faculty Interaction and Academic Challenge and Support for Learners (Full-time, Credits (0-29)only). SPC students indicated they used email to communicate with instructors more than the Extra-Large Colleges and All Colleges comparison groups while computer lab use was less.

According to CCSSE, college results should be considered in terms of its own mission, institutional focus, and student characteristics. Below are some recommendations regarding the analysis and the interpretation of results based on feedback from member institutions, conference and workshop presentations, and experts in the field.

Ask general question first such as the following:

- What questions do the results raise for you?
- What data confirm what you already guessed?
- What data confirm facts you already new?
- What results were unexpected?
- Is the sample representative of your entire population of students?

Further examining results in light of your institution’s vision, mission, and/or strategic objectives.

- What are high priority objectives in your college’s strategic plan?
- What benchmarks, trends, or services are most important to your college?
- What education practices most concern your college?
- How do your mission and specific programs at your college relate to the CCSSE benchmarks?

Compare where you are now with where you want to be - perform a gap analysis looking at where you want to be.

- What issues have been identified for your college through self-study for reaffirmation of accreditation - or recommendations from the visiting team?
- What strengths or opportunities for improvement in your college have been identified through other data-gathering or institutions research efforts?
- Are there emerging trends that fit with your college’s strengths?
- Are there emerging trends that amplify areas where your college needs improvement?

Appendix A Benchmark Descriptions

Active & Collaborative Learning: Research shows that students learn more when they are actively involved in their education and have opportunities to apply what they have learned in various settings. Seven survey items contribute to this benchmark and they are listed below:

During the current school year, how often have you:

- Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions?
- Made a class presentation?
- Worked with other students on projects during class?
- Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments?
- Tutored or taught other students (paid or volunteer)?
- Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course?
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class?

Student Effort: Students own behaviors contribute to their learning and the likelihood that they will successfully attain their academic goals. Associated with this benchmark are eight survey items that summarize student behavior in this area:

During the current school year, how often have you

- Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in?
- Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources?
- Come to class without completing readings or assignments?
- Used peer or other tutoring?
- Used skill lab?
- Used a computer lab?

During the current school year

- How many books did you read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment?
- How many hours did you spend in a typical week preparing for class?

Academic Challenge: Ten items in the survey correspond to components of academic challenge as shown below:

During the current school year, how often have you

- Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards?

How much does your coursework at the college emphasize

- Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory?
- Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information or experiences in new ways?
- Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments or methods?
- Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations?
- Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill?

During the school year

- How many assigned textbooks, manuals, books or book-length packs of course readings did you read?
- How many papers or reports of any length did you write?
- To what extent have your examinations challenged you to do your best work?

How much does this college emphasize

- Encouraging you to spend significant amounts of time studying?

Student-Faculty Interaction: Interaction with faculty strengthens students' connections to the college, increases effective learning and increases persistence of students toward their educational goals. Six items compose this benchmark:

During the current school year, how often have you

- Used email to communicate with an instructor?
- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor?
- Talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor?
- Discussed ideas from your readings/classes with instructors outside of class?
- Received prompt feedback from instructors on your performance?
- Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework?

Support for Learners: Community college students' benefit from services targeted to assist with career/academic planning, academic skill development and other issues that might affect learning and retention. Seven survey items contribute to this benchmark:

How much does this college emphasize

- Providing the support you need to help you succeed at this college?
- Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social and racial/ethnic backgrounds?
- Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities?
- Providing the support you need to thrive socially?
- Providing the financial support you need to afford your education?

During the current school year, how often have you

- Used academic advising/planning services?
- Used career counseling services?