



Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

National Survey of Student Engagement 2001-09

Benchmarks of Effective Education Practice: Loyola from 2001 to 2009

Prepared by the Office of Institutional Research

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The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is based on the rationale that student engagement can serve as a proxy for student learning and personal development. The survey was created to assess the extent to which a university's practices, investments, and

environment encourage undergraduate students to take full advantage of institutional opportunities and resources that lead to positive student outcomes such as student satisfaction, persistence, and graduation. The survey is administered to freshmen and seniors only.

This report looks at changes from 2001 to 2009 in Loyola's five NSSE benchmarks of effective educational practice (benchmarks are on a scale from 0 to 100; see Appendix A for definitions and items included in each benchmark). Differences in these benchmarks between freshman and senior students are highlighted, as are changes over time (see Appendix B for sample characteristics). Results are presented in the table and figures below.

Key Findings

- For both freshmen and seniors at Loyola, the highest benchmarks are Level of Academic Challenge and Supportive Campus Environment, (see Table 1 and Figures 1 and 2). The lowest for both classes is Enriching Educational Experiences.

Level of Academic Challenge

- The Level of Academic Challenge (LAC) benchmark is an indicator of the extent to which Loyola emphasizes the importance of academic effort and sets high academic expectations.
- In 2009, the LAC benchmark was 58.7 for freshmen and 59.5 for seniors (see Figure 3).
- The LAC benchmark is approximately the same in 2009 as it was in 2001, for both freshmen and seniors, although there was some fluctuation during the period in between (see Figure 3).

- For most years, the LAC benchmark was a little higher for seniors than for freshmen. In 2008 and 2009, however, the benchmarks were essentially equal.

Active and Collaborative Learning

- The Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL) benchmark indicates the degree to which students are active in class and collaborate with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material.
- According to ACL benchmark, seniors are doing substantially more such learning than are freshmen (see Figure 4). The difference between the classes ranges from about 8 to 10 points.
- In 2009, the ACL benchmark was 41.3 for freshmen and 51.1 for seniors.
- From 2001 to 2009, the ACL benchmark for seniors rose more than the benchmark for freshmen.
- For both classes, the ACL benchmark dropped from 2005 to 2007, then rose from 2007 to 2009.

Student-Faculty Interaction

- The Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI) benchmark measures the degree to which students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty both in and out of the classroom.
- In 2009, the SFI benchmark was 38.3 for freshmen and 48.9 for seniors (see Figure 5).
- Throughout the period from 2001 to 2009, the SFI benchmark was higher for seniors than it was for freshmen.
- The SFI benchmark fluctuated more for freshmen than for seniors.
- For both classes, the highest SFI benchmark level was in 2005, with a decline through 2007

(especially for freshmen) and then a small increase from 2007 to 2009.

Enriching Educational Experiences

- The Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE) benchmark indicates participation in complementary learning opportunities to enhance students' academic programs, including experiencing diversity and involvement in a variety of both academic and non-academic activities.
- In 2009, the EEE benchmark was 29.6 for freshmen and 47.5 for seniors (see Figure 6). This difference is due in part to seniors having had more opportunities to do certain kinds of enriching activities, such as study abroad and internships (see Appendix A).
- The EEE benchmark stayed fairly stable for freshmen from 2004 to 2009, but rose almost 10 points for seniors.

Supportive Campus Environment

- The Supportive Campus Environment (SCE) benchmark indicates the degree to which students feel supported by the university in both academic and non-academic areas, and the quality of students' relationships with other students, faculty members, and administrative personnel.
- In 2009, the SCE benchmark was 61.2 for freshmen and 56.0 for seniors (see Figure 7).
- There was no difference in the benchmark by class in 2001, but by 2009, the SCE benchmark was higher than for freshmen than for seniors.

- The overall trend in the SCE benchmark from 2001 to 2009 was upward for freshmen, but not for seniors.

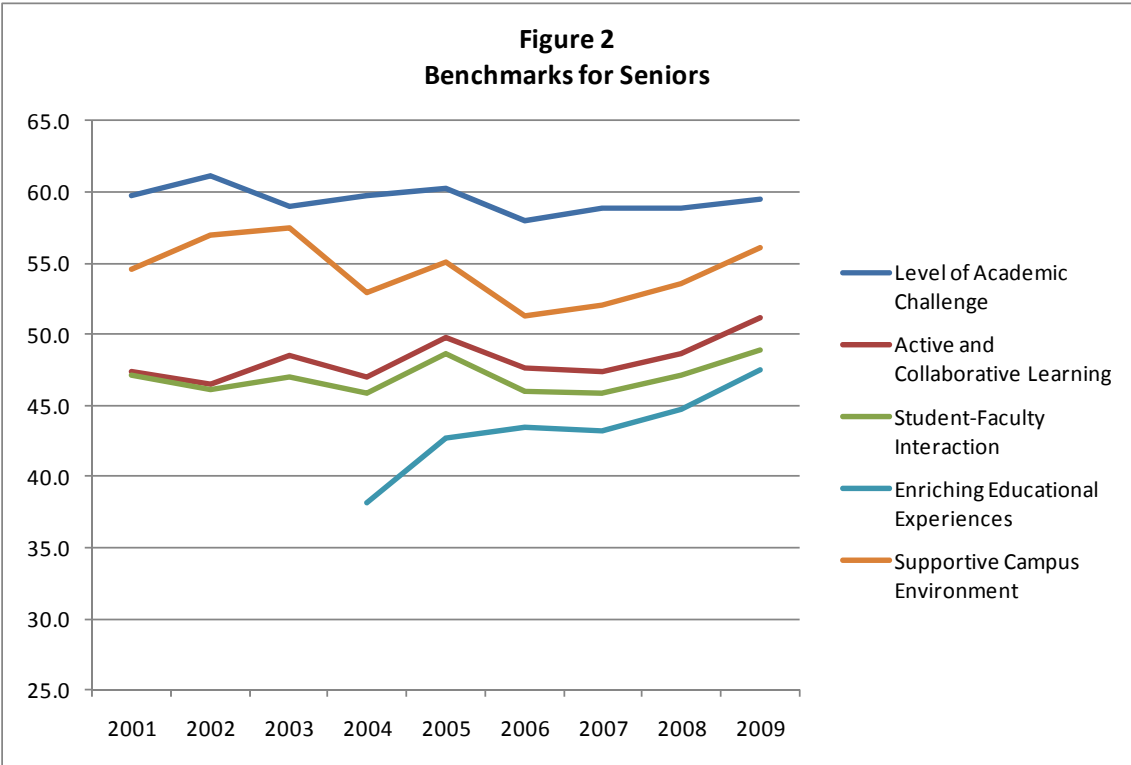
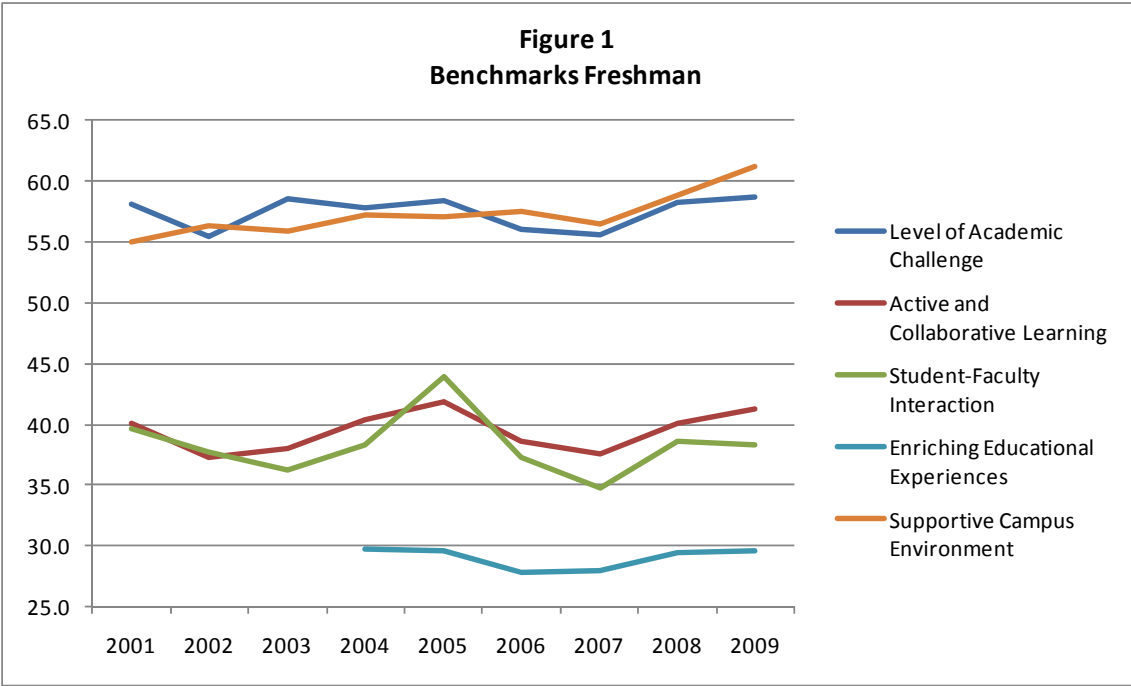
Conclusions

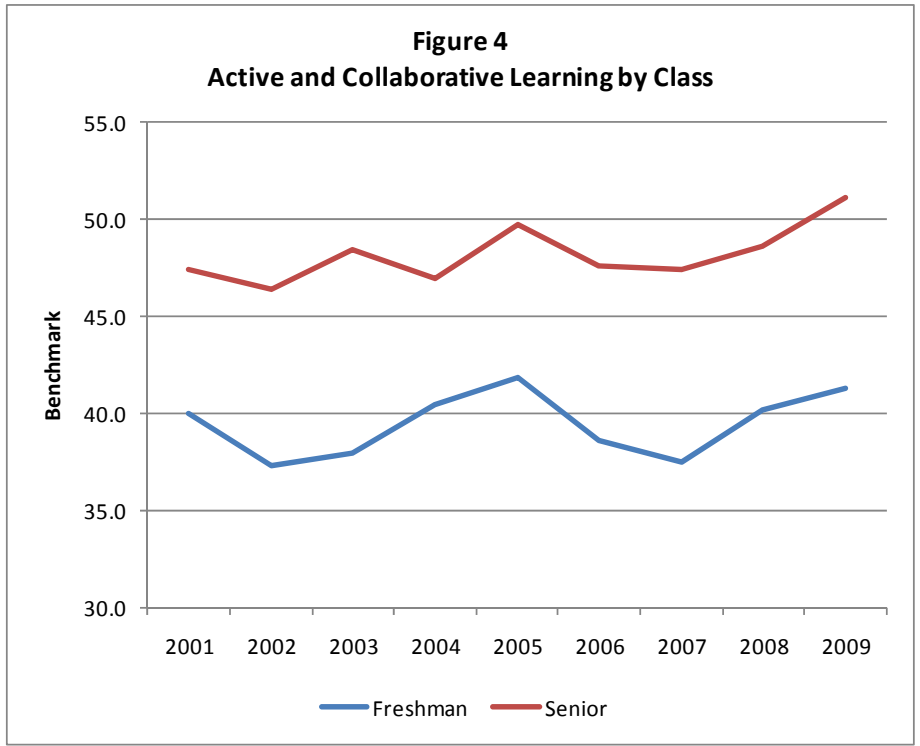
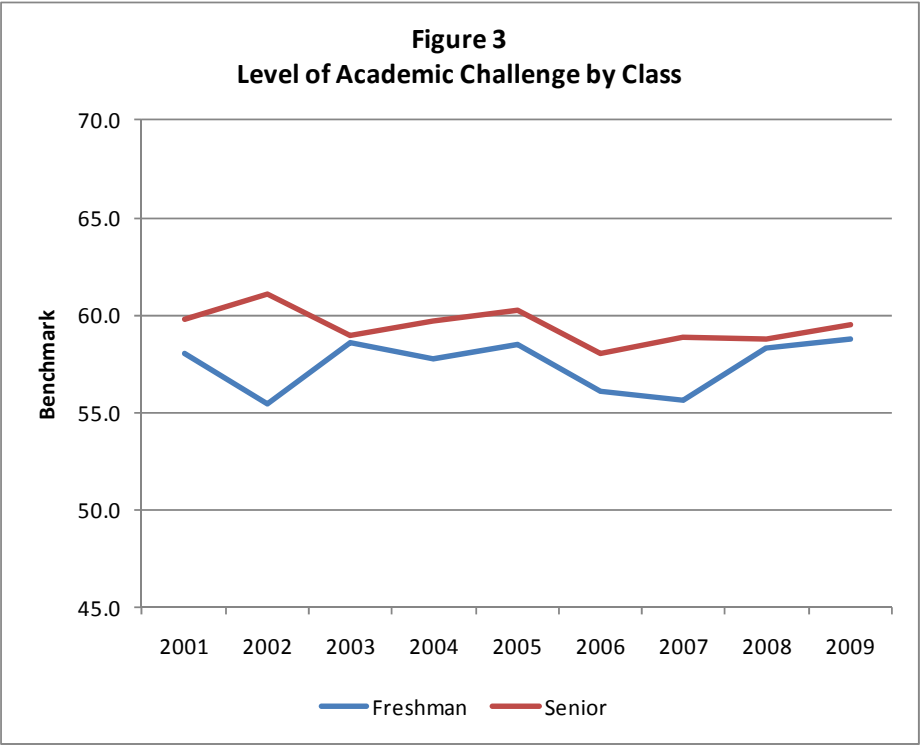
- The fact that the highest benchmarks for both classes are Level of Academic Challenge and Supportive Campus Environment suggests that Loyola does provide a challenging intellectual environment, as well as sense among students that the university does support them and that their relationships with faculty and students on campus are mostly positive.
- That seniors have higher benchmarks of both Enriching Educational Experience and Active and Collaborative Learning may be explained at least in part by seniors having had more opportunities for such experiences, but the gap might also be partially due to seniors taking better advantage of opportunities available to everyone.
- That seniors have higher benchmarks of Student-Faculty Interaction may also be partly due to more opportunities to interact with faculty in areas outside the classroom.
- Freshmen perceive Loyola to be supportive more than do seniors, according to the SCE benchmark.
- For many benchmarks, there is a general pattern of decline from 2005 through 2007, followed by a rise from 2007 to 2009. Over the next couple of years, we will see if these are continuing trends or just erratic highs.

Table 1									
Benchmarks by Class, 2001 - 2009									
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
	Freshmen								
Level of Academic Challenge	58.1	55.4	58.6	57.8	58.5	56.1	55.6	58.3	58.7
Active and Collaborative Learning	40.0	37.3	38.0	40.4	41.9	38.6	37.6	40.2	41.3
Student-Faculty Interaction	39.7	37.7	36.3	38.3	43.9	37.3	34.8	38.6	38.3
Enriching Educational Experiences ¹	---	---	---	29.7	29.7	27.9	28.0	29.4	29.6
Supportive Campus Environment	54.9	56.3	55.9	57.2	57.1	57.5	56.5	58.9	61.2
	Seniors								
Level of Academic Challenge	59.8	61.1	59.0	59.7	60.3	58.0	58.9	58.8	59.5
Active and Collaborative Learning	47.4	46.4	48.5	47.0	49.7	47.6	47.4	48.6	51.1
Student-Faculty Interaction	47.1	46.1	47.0	45.8	48.6	45.9	45.8	47.1	48.9
Enriching Educational Experiences ¹	---	---	---	38.1	42.7	43.4	43.2	44.7	47.5
Supportive Campus Environment	54.6	57.0	57.4	52.9	55.0	51.3	52.1	53.6	56.0

Source: National Survey of Student Engagement, 2001- 2009

¹ Because of changes in how the Enriching Educational Experience benchmark was calculated, comparisons with years 2001 to 2003 are not possible.





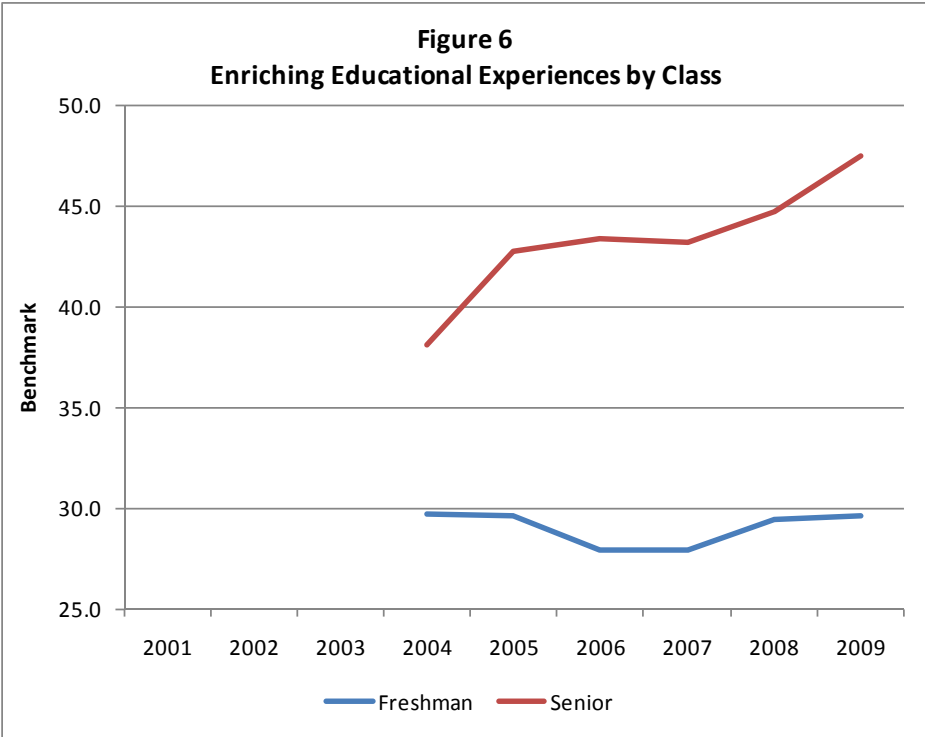
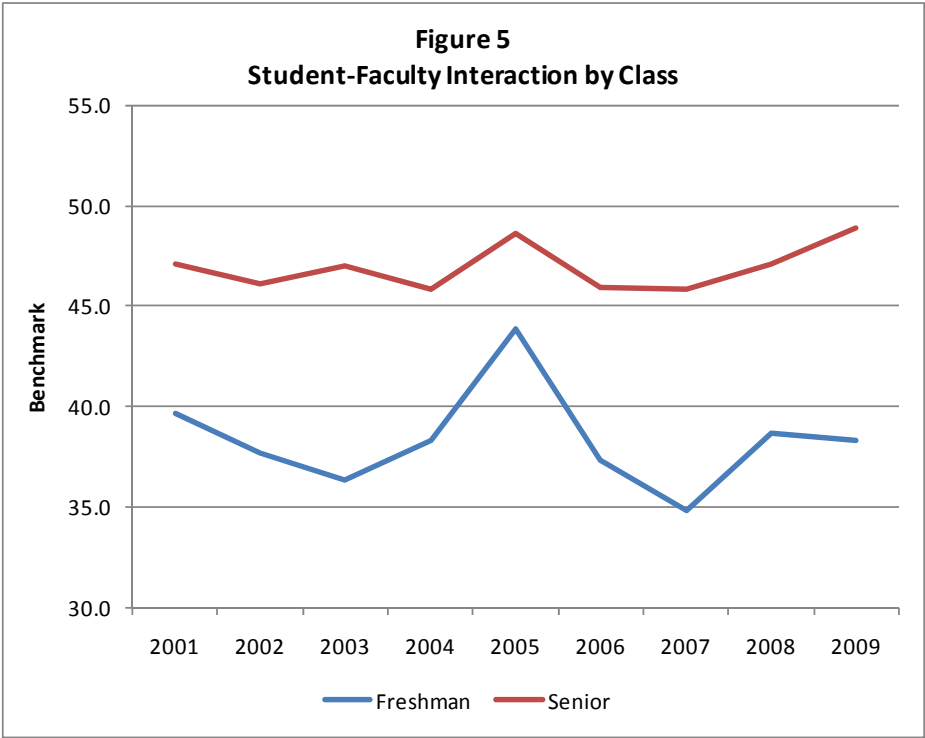
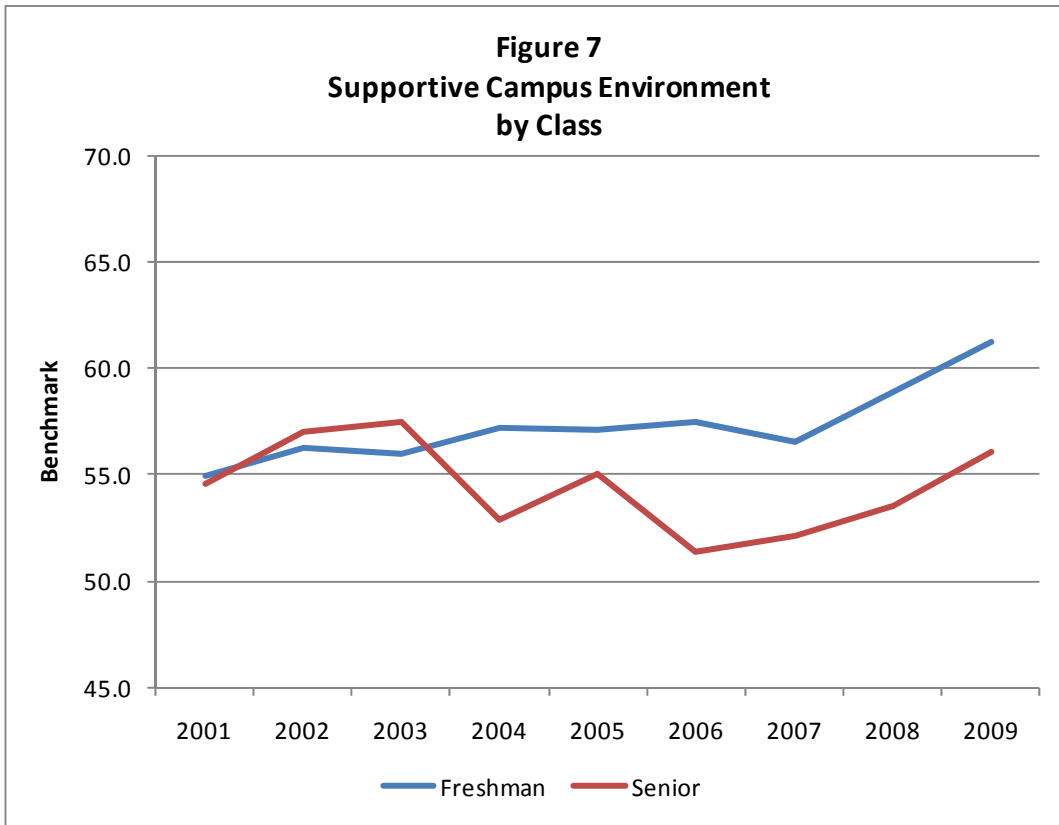


Figure 7
Supportive Campus Environment
by Class



APPENDIX A Benchmark definitions and items included

Level of Academic Challenge

Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance.

- Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, etc. related to academic program)
- Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings
- Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more; number of written papers or reports of between 5 and 19 pages; and number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages
- Coursework emphasizes: **Analysis** of the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory
- Coursework emphasizes: **Synthesis** and organizing of ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships
- Coursework emphasizes: **Making of judgments** about the value of information, arguments, or methods
- Coursework emphasizes: **Applying** theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations
- Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations
- Campus environment emphasizes: Spending significant amount of time studying and on academic work.

Active and Collaborative Learning

Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and asked to think about what they are learning in different settings. Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material prepares students for the messy, unscripted problems they will encounter daily during and after college.

- 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 voluntary)
- Participated in a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of a regular course
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)

Student-Faculty Interaction

Students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside the classroom. As a result, their teachers become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, life-long learning.

- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
- Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student-life activities, etc.)
- Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance

Enriching Educational Experiences

Complementary learning opportunities enhance academic programs. Diversity experiences teach students valuable things about themselves and others. Technology facilitates collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community service, and senior capstone courses provide opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge.

- Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, social fraternity or sorority, etc.)
- Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment
- Community service or volunteer work
- Foreign language coursework / Study abroad
- Independent study or self-designed major
- Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.)
- Serious conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values
- Serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own
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- Using electronic medium (e.g., listserv, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment
- Campus environment encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
- Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together

Supportive Campus Environment

Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus.

- Campus environment provides the support you need to help you succeed academically
- Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
- Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially
- Quality of relationships with other students
- Quality of relationships with faculty members
- Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices

Appendix B							
Sample Characteristics							
Year	Mode	Response Rate ¹		Sampling Error ²		Number of Respondents	
		First year	Senior	First year	Senior	First year	Senior
2001	Paper	38%		8.5%	8.5%	121	123
2002	Paper	40%		8.8%	7.3%	116	152
2003	Paper	48%	57%	7.1%	6.2%	167	196
2004	Paper	36%	46%	8.5%	7.4%	123	154
2005	Paper	44%	45%	7.6%	7.7%	151	146
2006	Web	38%	39%	3.6%	3.7%	534	480
2007	Web	45%	33%	2.6%	3.4%	853	571
2008	Web	49%	46%	2.2%	2.5%	1051	850
2009	Web	30%	35%	3.5%	3.0%	593	707

Source: National Survey of Student Engagement, 2001-09

¹ Response rates (number of respondents divided by sample size) were adjusted for ineligibility, nondeliverable mailing addresses, and students who were unavailable during the survey administration. Before 2003, response rates were not calculated separately by class so overall response rates are reported.

² Sampling error gauges the precision of estimates based on a sample survey. It is an estimate of how much survey item percentages for your respondents could differ from those of the entire population of students at your institution. Data with larger sampling errors (such as +/-10%) need not be dismissed out of hand, but any results using them should be interpreted more conservatively.