

CCSSE 2007

Community College Survey of Student Engagement

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), conducted by the University of Texas-Austin, provides information that helps colleges focus on good educational practice, defined as that which promotes high levels of student learning and retention, as well as identify areas in which colleges can improve their programs and services.

What is student engagement?

CCSSE defines student engagement as “the amount of time and energy that students invest in meaningful educational practices.” Students with higher levels of engagement are more likely to achieve their academic goals. The CCSSE captures student engagement as a measure of institutional quality. The survey, however, is not focused directly on whether or not students are performing well, but rather how engaged they are in their college and their studies, which in turn leads to greater student success.

Survey administration

The CCSSE was administered at PBCC to students in credit and college preparatory classes in Spring 2004 and Spring 2007. The classes were selected at random by CCSSE using strict sampling procedures that allow for meaningful comparisons across institutions.

The sample generally was representative of PBCC, although more full-time students were selected because they take more classes and, therefore, have a higher probability of being enrolled in a surveyed course. To eliminate this bias, CCSSE applies weights based on FT/PT status.

Survey participation

- All 28 Florida community colleges took part in Spring 2007.
- 525 two-year institutions in 48 states, British Columbia and the Marshall Islands have taken part during the 2005-07 cohort period, including 46 colleges defined by CCSSE as “extra large” (at least 15,000 students).
- 310,013 students have completed a survey during the cohort period.
- 1,327 students from 85 classes completed surveys at PBCC in Spring 2007.

Benchmark scores

CCSSE calculates benchmark scores using groupings of conceptually related items. (Please see the back of this page for a list of those items.)

Benchmark scores are standardized around a mean of 50, with a standard deviation of 25. Generally speaking, institutional benchmark scores above or below 50 indicate where the college is performing above or below average, relative to other colleges. This can vary slightly depending on the comparison group and which students are included.

CCSSE Benchmarks

Benchmark	Items included in benchmark
Active and Collaborative Learning	<p>How often the student has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 as a part of a regular course • Discussed ideas from readings or classes with others (students or otherwise) outside of class
Student Effort	<p>How often the student has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Came to class <i>without</i> completing readings or assignments <p>How often the student uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer or other tutoring • Skills labs (writing, math, etc.) • Computer lab <p>Also measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of books read for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment (<i>not</i> assigned) • How many hours per week spent preparing for class
Academic Challenge	<p>How much the coursework emphasizes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 read or heard to perform a new skill <p>Reading and writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of assigned textbooks, manuals, books or book-length packs of course readings • Number of written papers or reports of any length <p>Also measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How often the student has worked harder than thought possible to meet an instructor's standards or expectations • Extent to which exams have challenged students to do their best work • How much the student feels that the college emphasizes spending significant amounts of time studying
Student-Faculty Interaction	<p>How often the student has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 readings or classes with instructors outside of class • Received prompt feedback (written or oral) from instructors • Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework
Support for Learners	<p>How much the student feels that the college:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides the support needed to help the student succeed at this college • Encourages contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds • Helps the student cope with non-academic responsibilities • Provides the support needed to thrive socially • Provides the financial support needed to afford an education <p>How often the student uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic advising and planning • Career counseling