

# The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)

## Overview of 2010 Survey Results Spartanburg Community College

### Introduction

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) provides information about effective educational practice in community colleges and assists institutions in using that information to promote improvements in student learning and persistence. CCSSE's goal is to provide member colleges with results that can be used to inform decision making and target institutional improvements. **Student engagement**, or the amount of time and energy students invest in meaningful educational practices, is the underlying foundation for CCSSE's work. CCSSE's survey instrument is designed to capture student engagement as a measure of institutional quality.

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### CCSSE Member Colleges

CCSSE utilizes a 3-year cohort (2008 through 2010) of participating colleges in all of its data analyses,<sup>1</sup> including the computation of benchmark scores. This cohort is referred to as the **2010 CCSSE Cohort**.

This approach, which was instituted in 2006, increases the total number of institutions and students contributing to the national dataset; this in turn increases the reliability of the overall results. In addition, the 3-year cohort approach minimizes the impact, in any given year, of statewide consortia participation.

The 2010 CCSSE Cohort is composed of a total of 658 institutions across 47 states, four Canadian provinces, plus Bermuda, the Marshall Islands, and the Mariana Islands. Three hundred twenty-two of these member colleges are classified as small (< 4,500), 163 as medium (4,500-7,999), 110 as large (8,000-14,999), and 63 as extra-large institutions (15,000 + credit students).<sup>2</sup> One hundred twenty-six of the Cohort member colleges are classified as urban-serving, 139 as suburban-serving, and 393 as rural-serving.<sup>3</sup>

Our college falls into the medium size category and is classified as being located in a urban-serving area.

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<sup>1</sup> For returning participants, the college's most recent year of participation is included in data

<sup>2</sup> These enrollment statistics are based on the most recent IPEDS data with the exception of situations in which it is necessary for colleges to self-report.

<sup>3</sup> These designations are based on the Carnegie Foundation Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

## Student Respondents

In *CCSSE* sampling procedures, students are sampled at the classroom level. Of those students sampled at our institution, 684 respondents submitted usable surveys. The number of completed surveys produced an overall “percent of target” rate of 86%. Percent of target rate is the ratio of the adjusted number of completed surveys to target sample sizes. (The adjusted survey count is the number of surveys that were filled out properly and did not fall into any of the exclusionary categories.<sup>4</sup>)

### 2010 Student Respondent Profile

To compare the characteristics of student respondents with the characteristics of the underlying student population for each participating college, *CCSSE* uses the data reported by the institution in its most recent IPEDS Enrollment Report for the following variables: gender, race and ethnicity, student age, and enrollment status (part- or full-time). The data are aggregated to compare the 2010 *CCSSE* Cohort survey respondent population to the total student population of the 2010 *CCSSE* Cohort member colleges.

#### Gender (survey item #30)

Of the student respondents at our college who answered this item, 37% are male and 63% are female. This mirrors the full population of *CCSSE* Cohort community college students, comprised of 42% males and 58% females.

#### Age (survey item #29)

2010 *CCSSE* student respondents at our college range in age from 18 to 65+ years old. Approximately 89% are between 18 to 39 years old; 62% are 18 to 24 years old while 27% are 25 to 39 years old.

#### Racial Identification (survey item #34)

67 percent of student respondents identify themselves as White/non-Hispanic, 2% as Hispanic/Latino/Spanish, 26% as Black or African American, and 3% as Asian. Less than one percent of the student respondents are Native American. 2% marked “other” when responding to the question, “What is your racial identification?”

#### International Students (survey item #33)

One percent of our students responded yes to the question, “Are you an international student or foreign national?”

#### Enrollment Status (survey item #2)

53 percent of the student respondents at our college report attending college full-time, while 41 percent of the 2010 *CCSSE* Cohort colleges’ total student population attended full-time. 47 percent of surveyed students report being part-time college students, compared to 59 percent of the 2010 *CCSSE* Cohort colleges’ total student population. This inverse representation is a result of the sampling technique and the in-class administration process. For this reason, survey results are either weighted or disaggregated on the full-time/part-time variable so that reports will accurately reflect the underlying student population.

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<sup>4</sup> See exclusionary rules on page 4.

***The results for the following student respondent categories are weighted according to the most recent IPEDS population data.***

**Limited English Speaking Students (survey item #32)**

Students with limited English speaking skills, or those whose native language is not English, comprise a significant proportion of students in community colleges. At our institution, 6.7 percent of enrolled students are non-native English speakers.

**Educational Attainment (survey items #1 and #35)**

74 percent of the respondents report starting their college careers at this community college. Approximately 79 percent of students indicate that their highest level of educational attainment is a high school diploma or GED; 73% have completed fewer than 30 credit hours of college-level work; 15% report either a certificate or an associate degree; 4% have earned a bachelor's degree; and less than 1% have earned an advanced degree.

**Credit Hours Earned (survey item #23)**

52 percent of surveyed students have completed fewer than 15 credit hours; 21% have completed 15-29 credit hours; and 27% have completed more than 30 credit hours.

**Grades (survey item #21)**

43 percent of students report that they earned grades of B+ or higher, while 11 percent of students report that they earned grades of C- or lower.

**External Commitments (survey item #10)**

48 percent of students work 21 or more hours per week; 42 percent of students care for dependents at least 11 hours per week; and 26 percent of students spend at least 6 hours per week commuting to class.

**First-Generation Status (survey item #36)**

Forty-four percent of students indicate that neither parent has earned a degree higher than a high school diploma nor has college experience; accordingly, these students are considered "first-generation." 55% indicate that their mothers' highest level of education is a high school diploma (with no college experience), and 56% indicate that level for their fathers.

## **Excluded Respondents**

The total counts of respondents in an institution's raw data file will differ from the numbers reported in the institutional reports due to the intentional exclusion of certain surveys. Exclusions serve the purpose of ensuring that all institutional reports are based on the same sampling methods and that results are therefore comparable across institutions.

Respondents are excluded from institutional reports for the following reasons:

- ✘ The respondent did not indicate whether he or she was enrolled part- or full-time at the institution. Because all results are either weighted or broken down by enrollment status, this is essential information for reporting.
- ✘ The survey is invalid. (i.e., If a student does not answer any of the 21 subitems in item 4, answers "Very Often" to all 21 subitems, or answers "Never" to all 21 subitems, the survey is considered invalid and therefore excluded.)
- ✘ The student reported his or her age as under 18.
- ✘ The student indicated that he or she had taken the survey in a previous class (item 3) or did not respond to the item.
- ✘ Oversampled respondents are not included. These are surveys that individual institutions paid an additional fee to acquire. Because there are no requirements stipulating how these students are sampled, these data are not included in the standard institutional reports.

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## **An Example Selected Finding: Academic Experience**

We recommend that you look further into your data and include selected findings that are most relevant to your mission, vision, values and/or strategic plan. An example of a Selected Finding in the Academic Experience arena is highlighted below.

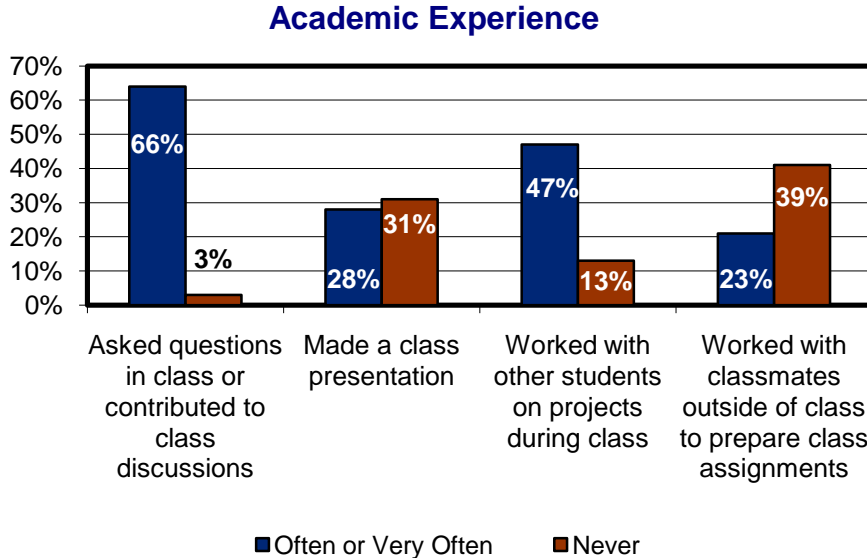
Several key topic areas that might be of interest to your institution are Educational Goals, Time on Task, Relationships, Academic Experience, Barriers to Persistence, Student Satisfaction, and Student and Academic Support Services. The survey items associated with these areas are listed in the index provided on the following page.

## Academic Experience

A positive academic experience is a product of many ingredients, one of which is the amount of time and energy students invest in their academic work. *CCSSE* asks students to respond to several survey items in order to gauge how actively they are involved in their education. Students are given the opportunity to mark *Very Often*, *Often*, *Sometimes*, or *Never* in response to items such as the following:

- ✘ “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 assignments”

While some students are highly involved in their academic experience (those who marked *Often* or *Very Often*), others are less engaged, as illustrated by their responses of *Never*, as displayed in the figure below.



## **Index of Survey Items Associated with Selected Findings Categories**

### **Educational Goals**

17a-f

### **Time on Task**

10a-c

### **Relationships**

4q, 9c, 9e, & 15

**Academic Experience**

4a, 4b, 4f, 4g

**Developmental Education, ESL, Study Skills, and Orientation Courses**

8b, 8c, 8d, 8e, 8f, and 8h

**Curricular Experiences**

8a, 8g, 8h, 8i

**Student Learning**

5a-f

**Barriers to Persistence**

14a-d

**Student Satisfaction**

20, 26, and 27

**Student and Academic Support Services**

13a-k

**Student Activity Items**

4a-u