

The National Survey of Student Engagement Select OSU 2010 Findings

OSU has participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) for six of the last ten years. Over that time period, significant improvement has occurred in most of the educational benchmarks measured by the NSSE. These benchmarks include: Level of Academic Challenge, Student-Faculty Interaction, Active and Collaborative Learning, Enriching Educational Experiences, and Supportive Campus Environment.

In each of these NSSE benchmark areas, OSU improved scores except in the area of Enriching Educational Experiences.

Level of Academic Challenge

The Level of Academic Challenge benchmark focuses on the degree of academic effort students believe they exert and their perception of what faculty expect of them. They are also asked to estimate their level of involvement in specific academic activities such as writing and preparing for class. First year students made significant gains in their involvement in and perception of the level of challenge and expectations for them academically over the last 10 years. While senior students made some gains in this area, they were not statistically significant and were already ahead of the first year students.

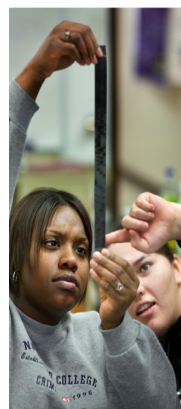
Student-Faculty Interaction

As the title suggests, this benchmark measures the frequency and types of interactions students have with faculty members. This area is one in which senior level students tend to outscore first year students and understandably so. Senior students have developed relationships with faculty members and thus would be predicted to have more interactions than first year students.

Nevertheless, first year students have shown a significant increase in the frequency and types of interactions they are having with faculty members over the last 10 years. Because research has shown that student interactions with faculty members is one of the strongest motivators for student persistence and success, this finding is noteworthy. Increasing new student contacts with faculty members both inside and outside the classroom is integral to student persistence.

Active and Collaborative Learning

Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and are asked in many and varied settings to reflect on what they are learning. The Active and Collaborative Learning benchmark measures the



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BCSSE-NSSE Comparisons

OSU 2009 Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement— OSU 2010 National Survey of Student Engagement Comparisons

OSU entering first year students participated in the 2009 Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) during the summer START program. Additionally first year students were asked to participate in the 2010 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) during the 2010 Winter and Spring terms. Students who participated in both administrations of these surveys had their responses paired in order to see what sorts of changes might have occurred after a term or two at OSU. The following article outlines some of those changes specifically regarding the degree to which specific student expectations for engagement were met.

Generally, students expected to study more hours per week in college than they reported studying in high school; however, as Table 1 shows, first year students spent far less time studying/preparing for class in their first year than they anticipated.

Likewise, students spent far less time being involved in co-curricular activities than they anticipated or reported spending in their last year of high school (Table 2).

Table 2

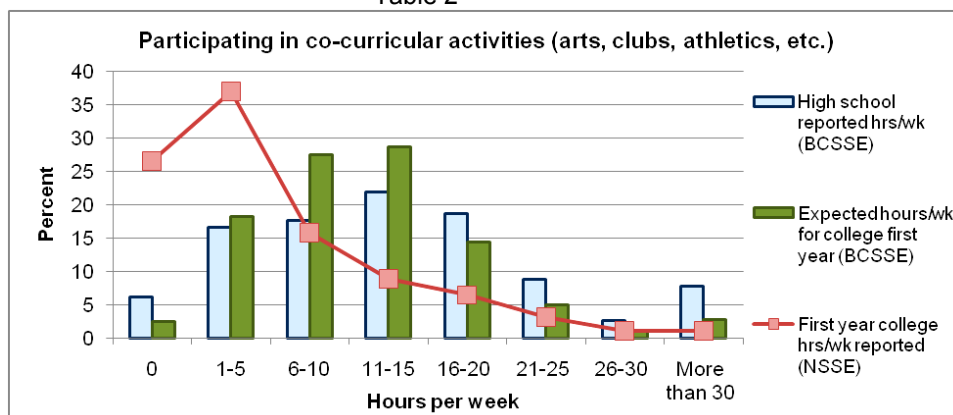


Table 3

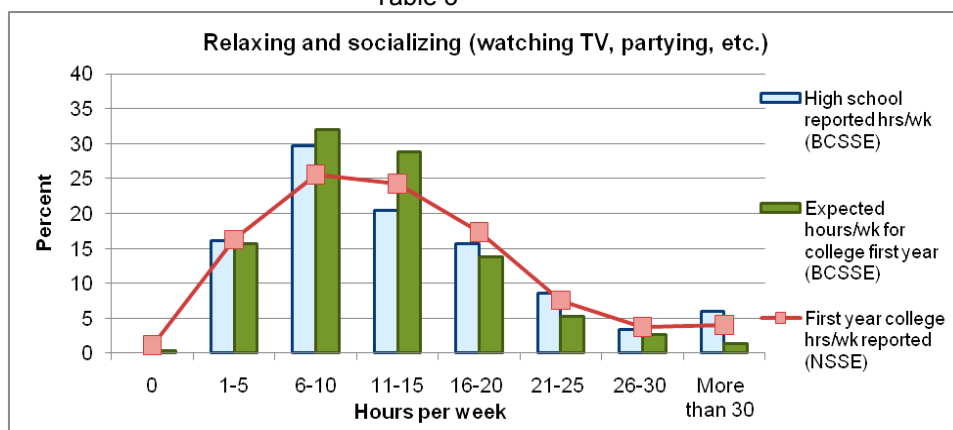
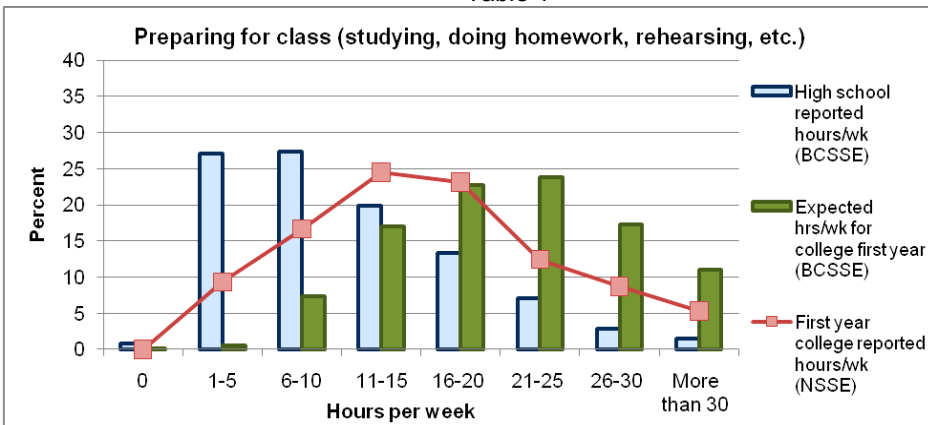


Table 1



Thus, while first year students may not have accurately predicted the amount of time they would devote to studying and participating in co-curricular activities, they were relatively accurate in their predictions for relaxing and socializing (Table 3).

First year students expectations for the grades they would receive were also somewhat inaccurate, realizing that for most first year students these grades

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National Survey of Student Engagement

degree to which students are involved in activities that force them to think about and engage with the academic material in new ways. Both first year students and senior students significantly increased their scores on this benchmark. This suggests that students were more involved in their courses, were talking with others more in terms of their learning, and were working in teams to complete projects and assignments both inside and outside the classroom more frequently. These types of activities increase student learning.

Supportive Campus Environment

At institutions where students perceive a commitment from the institution to their success, students perform better and are better satisfied than student who do not feel that the institution is committed to their success. This benchmark consists of items measuring the quality of relationships with faculty, administrators, and other students as well as the level of support students believe the institution provides.

Both first year students and senior students reported significant gains in this benchmark over the last 10 years. Students reported strong relationships with faculty members and indicated that they believed that OSU provides them the support they need to be successful academically. This was true for both first year and senior students.

Enriching Educational Experiences

This benchmark measures engagement in those learning opportunities that occur out of the classroom and that are complementary to the academic experience. The activities allow students to integrate and apply their in-class learning. Included in this benchmark are co-curricular activities like participating in a club or organization, holding leadership positions on campus, involvement in internships, field experiences, community service, capstone courses, learning community, study abroad, and engaging with students who are different from themselves in terms of race, ethnicity, political perspective, socio-economic status, age, or other demographic or opinion-related differences.

While OSU's scores in this area have improved over the 10 years that comprised OSU's involvement with the NSSE, the level of the improvement has not been statistically significant. Nevertheless, OSU's scores have consistently improved over the 10 years. Additionally, with the increased emphasis on out of class learning experiences, such as service learning and internships, further improvements in this area are expected.

Overall, OSU's mean scores on the five NSSE benchmarks have continued to improve and are expected to show positive gains over time as faculty and staff focus their efforts to build a better overall student experience at OSU.

Negative Academic Impacts and Health

OSU students reported on factors affecting their individual academic performance over the last year. Negative Academic Impacts were defined as: received a lower grade on an exam, or an important project; received a lower grade in the course; received an incomplete or dropped the course; or experienced a significant disruption in thesis, dissertation, research, or practicum work. The following were the top 10 factors (by percentage) reported by OSU students on the 2010 National College Health Assessment..

Health Factor	%
Stress	23.0
Cold/Flu/Sore Throat	20.9
Sleep Difficulties	17.2
Anxiety	17.0
Work	12.6
Internet use/Computer games	11.0
Depression	9.7
Relationship Difficulties	9.4
Concern for a troubled friend/family member	8.1
Alcohol use	8.0



For further information, please contact Rebecca Sanderson at the Student Affairs Research and Evaluation Office.

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BCSSE—NSSE

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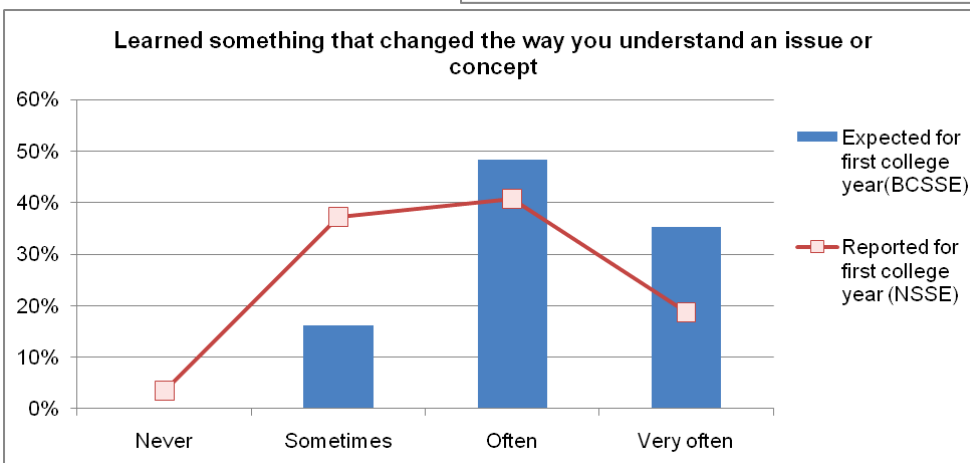
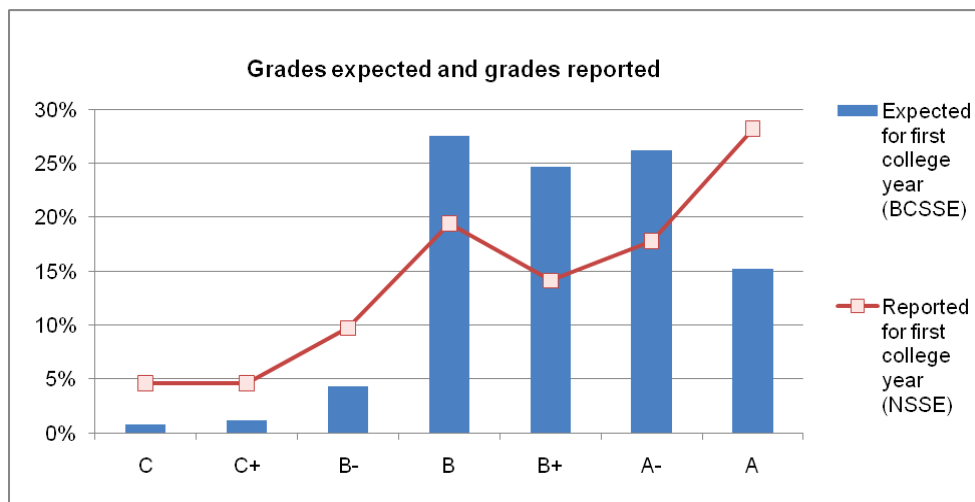


Table 4

would be for the 2009 Fall term. Overall students reported receiving more C's, C+'s, B-'s and A's than they expected. Nearly twice as many students reported getting A's as reported expecting A's. While there is no reported high school grade point average on this scale, it is well known that most OSU entering students have at least a B average (Table 4)

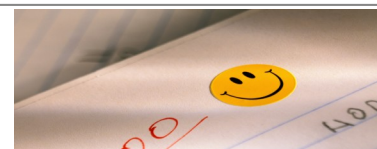
Over 80% of students reported high expectations for learning something that changed the way they understood an issue or concept. While some of this

Table 5



expectation was met, it was not met to the degree expected by these first year students (Table 5).

Students overall on items that could be compared were less accurate in their expectations for their collegiate experience than they reported actually experiencing during their initial terms at OSU. The discrepancy between expectations and their reported experiences may be an issue that warrants further attention in terms of retention. However, since students generally reported better grades than they expected, it may be that other expectations that might not have been completely met are less important for students to be retained. Earlier studies have suggested that the first term grade point average of new first year students does play a role in retention. For further information about BCSSE-NSSE comparisons, contact: Rebecca Sanderson at rebecca.sanderson@oregonstate.edu.



OSU Perspective: What is it?

The **OSU Perspective** was developed to provide assessment and other information about our students and programs. We hope that by making this information available to OSU faculty and staff, we can stimulate conversation that helps keep students and student learning at our core.

The **Perspective** is published both in print and on the web: <http://oregonstate.edu/studentaffairs/assessment/osuperspective.html>

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