

OSU Students of Color Results on the National Survey of Student Engagement

The National Survey of Student Engagement has been administered at OSU since 2002. During the 2004 administration, OSU students of color were over sampled in order to gain a better understanding of the educational experiences of non-white domestic students. The administration of the survey was done according to a standard protocol where students had the opportunity to respond to the survey either on paper or on the web. All first year and senior domestic students of color (SOC) enrolled at OSU were asked to complete the survey as was a students in general sample (SIG) during the winter and spring terms of 2004. Overall, 45% of the SOC group responded to the survey, with 51% reporting first year status and 49% Senior status.

Respondents' race/ethnicity included: Asian American/Pacific Islander (FY 58%, SR 56%), Hispanic/Latino (FY 26%, SR 28%), American Indian/Native American (FY 8%, SR 10%), and African American (FY 5%, SR 6%). Thus, the respondents closely mirror the actual domestic SOC populations on campus.

Most (> 90%) of the respondents reported being full time students with 60% of FY students living on campus and 95% of Seniors living off campus. The SOC group was predominately composed of students of traditional age (< 24 years of age). About the same percentages of students in the SOC group were student athletes or members of Greek organizations as in the OSU FY and SR students in general (SIG) groups.

Overall, OSU SOC reported

similarly to OSU SIG. There were, however, some differences between groups at both the FY and Senior levels.

On average SOC reported that they spent between 11-20 hours per week studying. While Senior students reported closer to the top end of that range, FY students reported closer to the low end of the range. This was consistent with both SIG groups as well. Both SOC groups, however, did indicate that OSU emphasized spending significant amounts of time on studying "quite a bit." Additionally, SOC Seniors reported that they worked harder than they thought they could in order to meet an instructor's expectations significantly more often ($p < .001$) than did Senior SIG.

It was also interesting to note that Senior SOC worked significantly more hours on campus

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Project DEEP: Documenting Effective Educational Practices

OSU has participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) since 2002. For the most part, OSU's results have not been very satisfactory. Many faculty and administrators who have reviewed OSU's results each year since 2002 have

consistently asked, "What are the schools who are performing better than expected doing?"

Project DEEP was launched to "... identify and document what strong-performing colleges and universities do to promote student success,

which was defined as higher-than-predicted graduation rates and better-than-predicted student engagement scores on the NSSE" (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2005, p. xvi). The results of this project have recently been published by the Ameri-

can Association for Higher Education and Jossey Bass. *Student Success in College: Creating Conditions That Matter* presents the results of several years of

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First Year Students' Opinions on Social and Political Issues

The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey has been administered nationally since 1966. OSU has participated annually since 2001 administering the survey to incoming first year students at the annual START program in the summer. While the CIRP poses a variety of questions to incoming first year (FY) students, this article will focus on the responses of entering students on a variety of social and political issues.

Overall, OSU's entering FY class tended to be politically middle-of-the-road. Not surprisingly, this has been the case at OSU since 2001. Only 2.5% reported being far left while 2.5% reported being far right in political orientation (Figure 1). Women tended to be significantly more liberal than men in their orientation ($p < .001$).

The overall FY students' opinions on specific social or political issues tended to stay in the middle. Yet, when the results for men and women were compared the results looked quite different. Men generally tended to be more conservative in their opinions than were women.

Women reported significantly more agreement ($p < .05$) with the following statements than did men:

- Death penalty should be abolished,
- Federal government should do more to control the sale of handguns,
- Colleges should prohibit racist/sexist speech on campus, and
- Same sex couples should have the right to legal marital status.

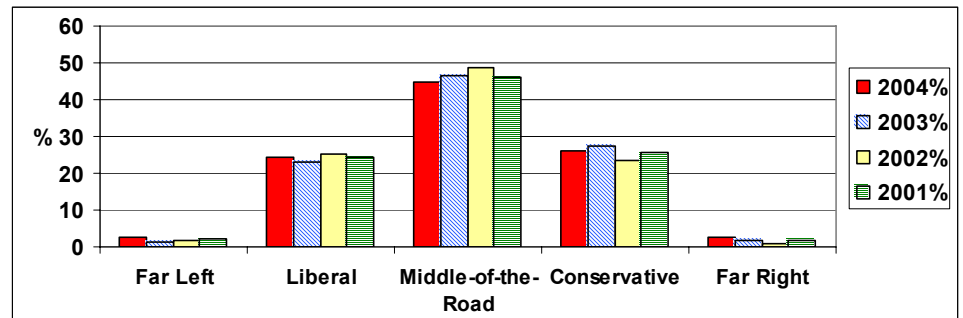
Alternatively, men reported significantly more agreement than women with ($p < .05$):

- Too much concern in courts for the rights of criminals,
- Marijuana should be legalized,
- Important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships,
- Racial discrimination is no longer a major problem in America,
- An individual can do little to bring about change in our society,
- Affirmative action in college admissions should be abolished,
- Activities of married women are best confined to the home and family,
- Federal military spending should be increased, and
- Sex is okay if people like each other.

There were only three items in which men and women did not differ in their opinions:

- Abortion should be legal,
- Wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes than they do now, and
- Colleges have the right to ban extreme speakers.

Figure 1 Student-Reported Political Orientation



The top three issues that women reported the highest percentage of "strongly agree" responses included:

1. Same sex couples should have the right to legal marital status,
2. Federal government should do more to control the sale of handguns, and
3. Abortion should be legal.

For men the top three issues that had the highest percentage of "strongly agree" responses included:

1. Abortion should be legal,
2. Same sex couples should have the right to legal marital status, and
3. Colleges should prohibit racist/sexist speech on campus.

The top three issues that students reported "disagreeing strongly" with are listed below.

For Women and Men the top item was:

1. Activities of married women are best confined to the home and family.

From that point however, the issues diverge. For women the second and third

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Project DEEP

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research on 20 higher education institutions who met the criteria as strong-performing colleges and universities in the area of student success. The institutions range from public to private, small liberal arts colleges to large major research institutions to colleges that serve historically underrepresented populations. Yet each of these institutions performs better than predicted regarding their graduation rates and their student engagement scores on the NSSE.

Student Success in College describes why the 20 schools were selected, what policies and procedures foster student success, what conditions are present across the campuses that make a difference in student success, and suggestions and ideas for practices that enhance the student and institutional success. For anyone interested in improving the educational engagement of students, the persistence rate, the satisfaction, and learning of students, this book will stimulate your thinking.

For Further Reading

Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Schuh, J. H., & Whitt, E. J., (2005). *Student Success in College: Creating Conditions That Matter*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Angelo, T. A. & Cross, K. P. (1993). *Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Walvoord, B. E. (2004). *Assessment Clear and Simple: A Practical Guide for Institutions, Departments, and General Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Students of Color on NSSE

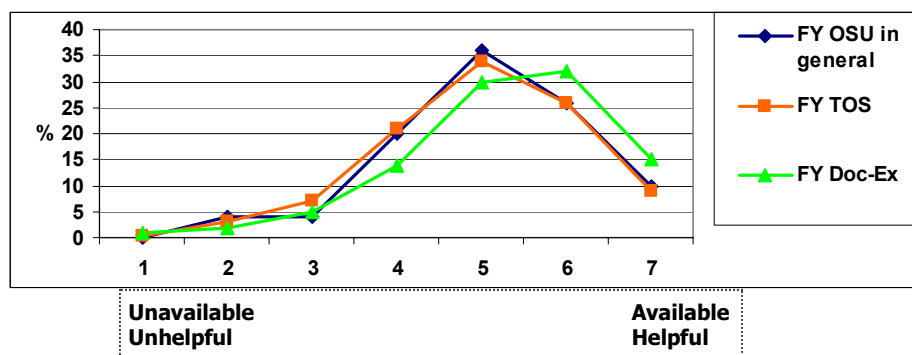
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and cared for dependents significantly more often than did their SIG counterparts ($p < .05$). They also reported significantly less time in a week devoted to relaxing and socializing than did their SIG counterparts. There were no differences at the first year level.

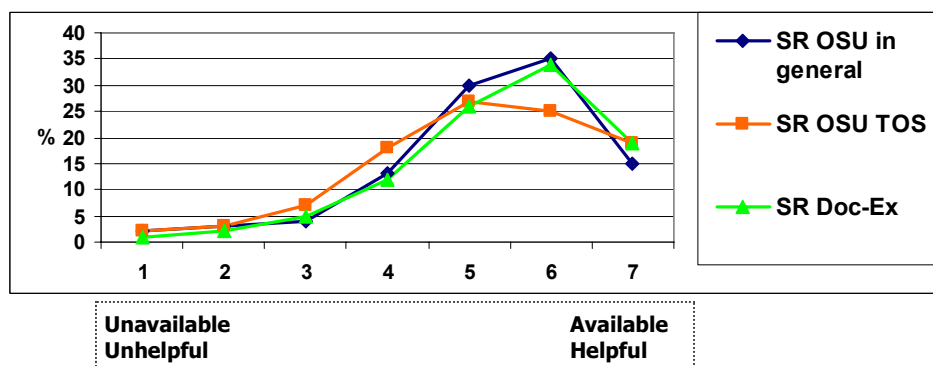
While Senior SOC reported that they worked with faculty members on activities, such as committees, significantly more ($p < .05$) frequently than did SR SIG, this did not translate into working with faculty members on research. Significantly fewer Senior SOC than Senior SIG indicated that they had worked with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements ($p < .05$). Yet, Senior SOC did report that they generally had good relationships with faculty.

The figures below contain ratings of relationships with faculty reported by OSU SIG and SOC, as well as Doctoral Research Extensive Comparator Senior and FY students. There were no significant differences in ratings among the groups. SOC perceptions of relationships with other students was generally also rated positively. The least positive relationships were seen with administrative offices, yet they too were generally positive and did not differ from SIG perceptions.

FY Students Relationship with Faculty



Senior Students Relationship with Faculty



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Students of Color on NSSE

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Approximately 80% of FY SOC rated their entire educational experience at OSU as good or excellent, while a little over 75% of Senior SOC responded likewise. Less than 5% of FY and Senior SOC rated their experiences as poor. There was no difference in means between the SOC groups and the SIG groups on this item.

More troubling, however, were the results concerning whether or not students would attend OSU if given the opportunity to start over again. Senior SOC reported significantly less inclination to attend OSU again when compared to Senior SIG counterparts. The response for FY students did not show any differences on this item.

While much of the survey results suggested that the levels of engagement of SOC and SIG were quite similar, there were differences in some items which suggested that SOC were having a different experience than their SIG counterparts. Likely as important is to note that the overall results for OSU were quite disappointing when compared to the results of other Doctoral Research Extensive Universities. Thus, while OSU students of color appear to be generally as engaged as students in general at OSU, the results do not compare favorably with other institutions in the same Carnegie classification.

For further information about this project or the executive summary, please contact Dr. Rebecca Sanderson at Rebecca.sanderson@oregonstate.edu or 541-737-8738.

First Year Students' Opinions

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items that they disagreed strongly with were:

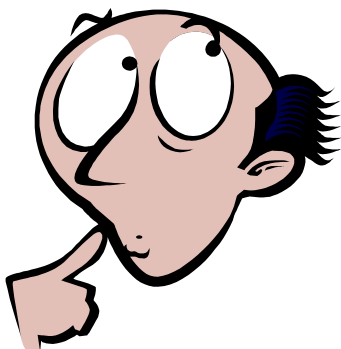
2. It is important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships, and
3. An individual can do little to bring about change in our society.

The second and third items that men most often strongly disagreed with included:

2. The death penalty should be abolished, and
3. Marijuana should be legalized.

These results were not entirely surprising or unanticipated. Results reviewed from the last four years indicated that incoming FY student opinions had not changed appreciably during that time.

For additional findings from this survey contact: Rebecca Sanderson, PhD at Rebecca.sanderson@oregonstate.edu or 541-737-8738. Also note that the executive summary and full report on this project can be found on the web at : http://oregonstate.edu/admin/student_affairs/research/com_reports.html#CIRP



Student Affairs Assessment Council Updates

- Currently the council is in the process of reviewing assessment plans from departments in the division. The results of these reviews will be shared with departments and with the council membership in an effort to continue to improve the use of data in our decision-making.
- Plans are in place to hold a retreat in the summer to design division-wide learning outcomes for use by departments.
- Remember our work is on the OSU web under Student Affairs Research and Evaluation.

OSU Perspective:

What is it?

The **OSU Perspective** was developed to provide assessment and other information about our students and programs. We have also from time to time published articles designed to provide to the readership opportunities for further education about assessment. 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 quarterly both in print and on the web:
http://oregonstate.edu/student_affairs/research/perspective.html

Ideas and suggestions for subsequent **OSU Perspective** publications are welcomed.

Please contact Rebecca Sanderson, Ph.D., Student Affairs Research and Evaluation Office, 102 Buxton Hall, 541-737-8738, or email: rebecca.sanderson@oregonstate.edu.

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