

Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement Fall 2009 OSU Results

This issue of Perspective is primarily dedicated to reporting the key findings from the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement that was administered to incoming first year students during summer 2009 START sessions. This is the first of several reports that will be using this information for further analysis with Banner and National Survey of Student Engagement data. The full report of OSU results on the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement is located under Reports on the following website: <http://oregonstate.edu/studentaffairs/assessment/index.html>.

A total of 2,924 students were asked to participate in the survey with 2,781 completions which is a return rate of 95%. Approximately 32% of these were first generation college students (defined as no parent or guardian had graduated with a 4-year college degree). Generally respondents reported that they would be full-time students and that they had a high school grade point average of B or better. Most (77%) reported their race as white (non-Hispanic) with about 23% reporting a race other than white. Most (85%) intended to graduate from Oregon State though about 13% were uncertain whether or not they would graduate. Additional demographic information may be found in the full report.

Past and Expected Academic Engagement

Student involvement in educationally purposeful activity during their last year of high school and student expectation for academic engagement during their first college year were examined. Two scales, the High School Academic Engagement Scale (HAS) and the Expected Academic Engagement Scale (EAE), were developed to assess these areas.

Overall, entering students reported a moderate level of high school academic engagement as meas-

ured by the High School Academic Engagement Scale with a mean of 5.36 on a scale of 0 (minimum) to 10 (maximum). While some students reported a lot of engagement, others reported very minimal or no engagement on the questions that made up this scale. The most frequent response to questions was "some" or "sometimes."

For example when asked how frequently they had worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments, over 50% reported at least sometimes.

Likewise when asked about the fre-

quency of making a class presentation, over 50% of students reported at least sometimes. Less than 10% reported very often making a class presentation or working with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments with another 10% reporting they never engaged in these behaviors.

Likewise students reported a moderate expectation for academic engagement during their first year in college with a mean of 5.79 (scale 0 (minimum) to 10 (maximum)). While their

(Continued on Page 2)



In This Issue

- **Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement-Fall 2009-OSU Results**
 - **Past and Expected Academic Engagement**
 - **Importance of the Campus Environment**
- **Advancing Data Collection Technology in Student Affairs**

(Continued from Page 1)

Academic Engagement (continued)

expectations of academic engagement were somewhat higher than their reported high school engagement experience, it was nevertheless still a modest level of expected academic engagement as measured by the Expected Academic Engagement Scale.

Most students reported that they had written short papers (5 or fewer pages) in their last year of high school quite a bit or very much. Less than 5% reported that they had written short papers very little in their last year of high school.

Approximately 40% reported that they had written longer papers or reports (more than 5 pages) very little or not at all during their last year of high school. Only 27% indicated that they had written papers of more than 5 pages quite a bit or very much during their last year of high school. See Figure 1.

About 64% of first year students reported that they spent 10 hours or less preparing for class during their last year of high school. Further approximately 95% also reported a high school grade point average of B or better. Thus, for most students studying 10 hours or less was sufficient to receive at least a B average their last year of high school.

Students generally expected to spend more time preparing for class in their first year of college than they had done during their last year of high school. During the last year of high school 64% reported studying 10 hours or less per week. In contrast, only 8% expected to study 10 hours or less per week in college. While only 18% of students reported studying 16 hours or more during their last year of high school, 73% expected to study 16 or more hours per week in their first

Figure 1

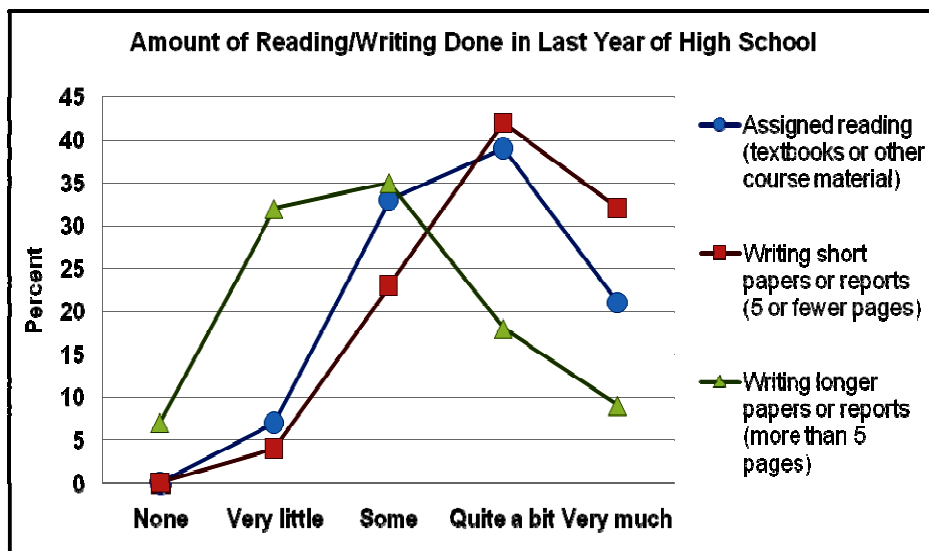
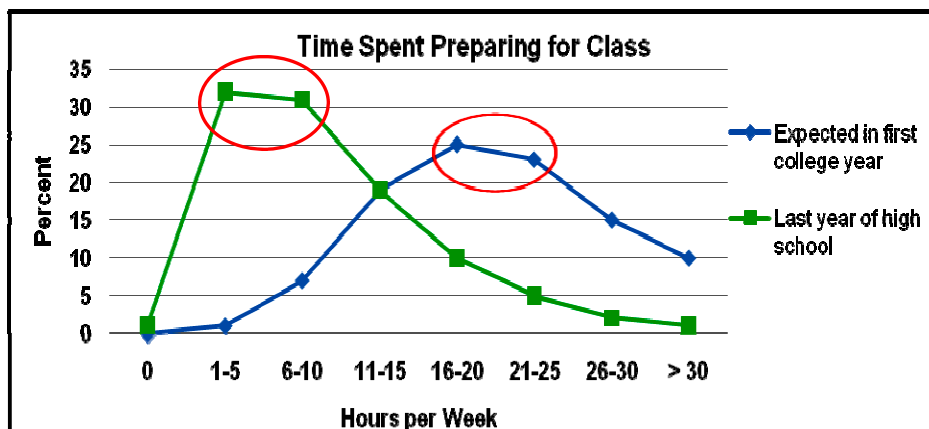


Figure 2



college year. See Figure 2 .

Overall, students reported that during their first college year, they expected to write more, spend more time studying and preparing for class, talking more with faculty about ideas and grades, talking more with others about their readings or class experiences, and contributing more to class discussions than they had in their last year of high school. While shifts in reported last high school year behaviors and expected first

college year behaviors were not always substantial, there definitely was a pattern of expecting to be more engaged in educationally relevant behaviors in college than they had been in high school.

Unfortunately, often past behavior predicts best which might suggest that while entering students expect to increase their academic involvement during their first year, old habits may be difficult to break.

Importance of the Campus Environment

Campus environmental influences on students have been shown to matter in terms of adjustment to and success in college. OSU entering students were asked about several environmental factors and the degree to which these factors were important to them. The Importance of Campus Environment scale was made up of questions that focused on the institution providing an academically challenging and also supportive environment. Table 1 contains the overall mean rating for this scale of 7.04 on a 0 to 10 point scaled score.

About 53% of students reported that it was quite important to them that the campus provide a challenging academic experience. Only 2% noted that this was not very important to them. Likewise, only 51% reported that it was very important to them to have opportunities to interact with students from different economic, social and racial backgrounds. Assistance coping with non-academic responsibilities was rated as the least important item in this scale with about 31% indicating this was very important to them.

Two areas stood out as having the greatest endorsement in terms of what students expected in the campus environment. Approximately 82% of entering students reported that it was very important for the campus to provide them support to succeed academically. The second most endorsed factor was that the campus provide them with the opportunity to attend campus events and activities. About 64% of students rated this as very important for the campus environment.

Note however, with this particular scale, only one item was related to the campus providing a challenging academic environment, the other five items making up this scale were related to support. Thus the relative high mean rating on this scale likely indicated that students might have been responding more to their desire for support than necessarily their overall desire for academically challenging experiences.

Table 1 **ICE Mean Scale Scores and Selected Comparisons**

BCSSE Scale	OSU All Students			OSU Gender Comparisons				OSU First-Generation Comparisons			
	Mean	SD	N	Means		Tests of mean differences		Means		Tests of mean differences	
				Female	Male	Sig	Effect Size	FG	Non-FG	Sig	Effect Size
ICE	7.04	1.60	2,781	7.43	6.69	***	.47	7.13	7.00	*	.08

ICE = Importance of Campus Environment—Student-rated importance that the institution provides a challenging and supportive environment.

Scale scores are expressed in 0 (minimum) to 10 (maximum) point scales; T-test results (2-tailed): *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001. First generation is defined as no parent or guardian having graduated with a 4-year college degree.



Summary of Overall Results of the 2009 BCSSE

Overall, OSU's entering students are optimistic about their ability to succeed at OSU. They generally report feeling well-prepared in most areas with the possible exception of mathematics. Most expect to graduate from OSU with their degree and they expect to engage in the intellectual/academic environment at OSU. They do report that they want to have access to campus events and activities and that they want access to services that will help them succeed academically. They expect to work more hours for pay, study somewhat more, and have more time to relax and socialize than they had in their last year of high school. They are concerned overall about their ability to pay for college and this is especially true for first generation students.

While often past behavior is a reliable predictor of future behavior, OSU entering first year students expect to be more engaged in their academic work during their first year in college than they were in their last year of high school. Whether or not their expectations override some past behaviors in some areas remains to be assessed as they complete their first college year.

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

Oregon State University, 102 Buxton Hall, Corvallis, Oregon 97331, 541.737.8738, Rebecca.sanderson@oregonstate.edu

Advancing Data Collection Technology in Student Affairs

By Angi Baxter, Student Affairs Research and Evaluation Graduate Assistant

Recently, the Student Affairs Research and Evaluation Office (SARE) upgraded the handheld assessment tools available to Student Affairs departments. This upgrade makes the gathering of assessment data easier, quicker and more user friendly. For the last two and a half years the SARE office has provided Palm Pilots for checkout to various departments across Student Affairs for use in their assessment data collection. The Palm technology created an environment which offered more accessible data collection and quicker translation of data into results than paper and pencil data collection.

In a move to upgrade the technology and make it more streamlined to use, Student Voice, OSU's partner in managing data collection, assessment consultation, and hosting assessment plans on a secure web site, converted from the Palm technology to the Apple iPod Touch.

The Apple iPod Touch technology offered a more user friendly environment and a more flexible platform for implementing the Student Voice projects platform. In addition, according to Student Voice, the Apple iPod Touches are "more durable," and have a "full-color touch screen; built in Wi-Fi or EDGE/3G internet access; and a new, intuitive operating system" (StudentVoice). Further, Student Voice states that the Apple iPod Touches are more efficient with data collection and offer "self-synchronization." What this ultimately means is a better data collection method with a more user friendly application.

The Apple iPod Touch comes with a

variety of features that enhance data collection. Below Table 1 contains a comparison of the two technologies in terms of user advantage.

The iPod Touch technology is more efficient and durable for the purposes of data collection than the Palm.

If any Student Affairs department is interested in utilizing this technology for assessment purposes, please contact Angi Baxter via email at Angi.Baxter@oregonstate.edu or at 541-737-4366. We look forward to working with each of you and this new technology in support of your assessment efforts.

References:

StudentVoice. "Mobile Data Collection Platform Takes Big Leap Forward." *StudentVoice*. Nov 18, 2009.

Table 1

Palm Technology	Apple iPod Touch Technology
Syncing with cord (delay)	Wireless (live)
Open ended with stylus	Open ended with touch screen keyboard
Black & white display	Color display
Limited survey functionality	Limitless survey functionality
Outdated technology	Students familiar with technology
Cost \$100	Cost \$185
Technical support via SV limited hrs	Technical support via Apple 24/7
Desktop application required for each administration	iTunes required only at setup with one computer
When battery runs out, all data is lost	When battery runs out, data is saved

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>

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

Masthead designed by Judy Burks, OSU. Editing assistance by Jodi Nelson, OSU.

<https://studentvoice.com/app/views/about/technology/Apple.aspx>

StudentVoice. "SV Mobile." *StudentVoice*. Nov 18, 2009. <https://studentvoice.com/app/Training/WebinarsFall09.aspx#3>

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

Oregon State University, 102 Buxton Hall, Corvallis, Oregon 97331, 541.737.8738, rebecca.sanderson@oregonstate.edu