



## The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)

# Overview of 2014 Survey Results Grayson College

## Introduction

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), a product and service of the Center for Community College Student Engagement, provides information about effective educational practice in community colleges and assists institutions in using that information to promote improvements in student learning and persistence. The Center'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 the Center's work. The CCSSE survey instrument is designed to capture student engagement as a measure of institutional quality.

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## CCSSE Member Colleges

CCSSE data analyses include a three-year cohort of participating colleges. This approach 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 three-year cohort approach minimizes the impact, in any given year, of statewide consortia participation.

The 2014 CCSSE Cohort includes all colleges that participated in CCSSE from 2012 through 2014. If a college participated more than one time in the three-year period, the cohort includes data only from its most recent year of participation. The 2014 CCSSE Cohort represents over 438,000 community college students from 684 community and technical colleges in 48 states and the District of Columbia, three Canadian provinces, plus Bermuda, Micronesia, and the Marshall Islands.

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## CCSSE Sampling

In CCSSE sampling procedures, students are sampled at the classroom level. The survey was administered in classes randomly selected from all of the courses offered by the institution during the spring academic term, excluding non-credit, dual-enrollment, distance learning, all but the highest level ESL courses, labs, individual instruction, and individual study or self-paced classes.

Of those students sampled at our institution, 743 respondents submitted usable surveys. The number of completed surveys produced an overall "percent of target" rate of 93%. The percent of target rate is

the ratio of the adjusted number of completed surveys (surveys that were filled out properly and did not fall into any of the exclusionary categories) to the target sample size.

### **Excluded Respondents**

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 full-time or less than full-time at the institution.
  - ✘ The survey is invalid. A survey is invalid if a student does not answer any of the 21 sub-items in item 4, answers *very often* to all 21 sub-items, or answers *never* to all 21 sub-items.
  - ✘ 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 or did not respond to item 3.
  - ✘ Oversample respondents are not included because they are selected outside of CCSSE's primary sampling procedures.
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## **2014 Student Respondent Profile**

Please note that percentages may not add up to 100% in each category due to missing data and/or rounding.

### **Enrollment Status**

26% of surveyed students report being less than full-time college students, compared to 28% of the 2014 CCSSE Cohort colleges' student respondents of the student respondents at our college report attending college full-time, while 72% of the 2014 CCSSE Cohort colleges' student respondents attended full-time.

Population data<sup>1</sup> for all students at our college is 65% less than full-time and 35% full-time. 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/less than full-time variable so that reports will accurately reflect the underlying student population.

### **Age**

Student respondents at our college range in age from 18 to 65 years old. 54% are between 18 and 24 years old. Students at our college are older than the 2014 CCSSE Cohort, of which over half (63%) of students are between 18 and 24.

### **Sex**

38% of student respondents are male and 61% are female, which is not comparable to the 2014 CCSSE Cohort, which is 43% male and 55% female.

### **Racial Identification**

73% of our student respondents identified themselves as White, Non-Hispanic; 7% as Hispanic, Latino, Spanish; 7% as Black or African American; and 1% as Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander. 3% of the student respondents are American Indian or Native American. 2% marked *other* when responding to the question, "What is your racial identification?"

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<sup>1</sup> Population data are those reported for the most recent IPEDS enrollment report.

Our student sample is less diverse than the 2014 CCSSE Cohort, which is comprised of 56% White/Non-Hispanic; 14% Hispanic, Latino, Spanish; 11% Black or African American; 5% Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander; and 2% American Indian or Native American respondents ([CCSSE 2014 Cohort Overview](#)).

### **International Students**

4% of our students responded yes to the question, “Are you an international student or foreign national?” Our college has fewer international students than the 2014 CCSSE Cohort, of which 6% are international.

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

### **Limited English Speaking Students**

At our college, 10.8% of CCSSE respondents are non-native English speakers.

### **First-Generation Status**

32.8% of student respondents indicated that neither parent has earned a degree higher than a high school diploma nor has college experience; accordingly, these students are considered “first-generation.”

26% indicate that their mothers’ highest level of education is a high school diploma (with no college experience), and 29.8% indicate that level for their fathers.

### **College-Sponsored Activities**

80.9% of students respondents do not participate in any college-sponsored activities (including organizations, campus publications, student government, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.) while 14.9% typically spend only 1 to 5 hours per week participating in these activities.

### **Educational Attainment**

67.1% of respondents report starting their college careers at this community college. Approximately 59.5% of students indicate that their highest level of educational attainment is a high school diploma or GED; 55.5% have completed fewer than 30 credit hours of college-level work; 28.8% report having either a certificate or an associate degree; 8.8% have earned a bachelor’s degree; and .7% have earned an advanced degree.

### **Total Credit Hours Earned**

35.6% of surveyed students have completed fewer than 15 credit hours; 19.9% have completed 15-29 credit hours; and 44.5% have completed more than 30 credit hours.

### **External Commitments**

57.0% of student respondents work 21 or more hours per week; 64% care for dependents at least six hours per week; and 25.8% spend at least six hours per week commuting to class.

### **Goals**

Students were asked to indicate their reasons or goals for attending this college; students could choose more than one primary and secondary goal. 45.3% indicated that transferring to a 4-year college or university is a primary goal, while 27% indicated this as a secondary goal. 70.3% indicated that obtaining an associate degree is a primary goal, while 17% indicated this as a secondary goal. Additionally, 48.4% indicated obtaining or updating job-related skills is a primary goal, while 41.4% indicated that self-improvement/personal enjoyment is a primary goal.

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## CCSSE Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice

To assist colleges in their efforts to reach for excellence, the Center reports national benchmarks of effective educational practice in community colleges. Research shows that the more actively engaged students are—with college faculty and staff, with other students, and with the subject matter—the more likely they are to learn and to achieve their academic goals.

CCSSE benchmarks are groups of conceptually related survey items that focus on institutional practices and student behaviors that promote student engagement—and that are positively related to student learning and persistence. Benchmarks are used to compare each institution's performance to that of similar institutions and with the CCSSE Cohort. Each individual benchmark score is computed by averaging the scores on survey items that make up that benchmark. Benchmark scores are standardized so that the mean (the average of all participating students) always is 50 and the standard deviation is 25. The five benchmarks of effective educational practice in community colleges are: active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction, and support for learners.

### Active and Collaborative Learning

Students learn more when they are actively involved in their education and have opportunities to think about and apply what they are learning in different settings. Through collaborating with others to solve problems or master challenging content, students develop valuable skills that prepare them to deal with the kinds of situations and problems they will encounter in the workplace, the community, and their personal lives.

- 4a Frequency: Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
- 4b Frequency: Made a class presentation
- 4f Frequency: Worked with other students on projects during class
- 4g Frequency: Worked with other classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments
- 4h Frequency: Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)
- 4i Frequency: Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course
- 4r Frequency: Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)

### Student Effort

Students' behaviors contribute significantly to their learning and the likelihood that they will attain their educational goals. "Time on task" is a key variable, and there are a variety of settings and means through which students may apply themselves to the learning process.

- 4c Frequency: Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in
- 4d Frequency: Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources
- 4e Frequency: Come to class without completing readings or assignments
- 6b Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment
- 10a Hours spent per week: Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, or other activities related to your program)
- 13d1 Frequency of use: Peer or other tutoring
- 13e1 Frequency of use: Skill labs (writing, math, etc.)
- 13h1 Frequency of use: Computer lab

## **Academic Challenge**

Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Ten survey items address the nature and amount of assigned academic work, the complexity of cognitive tasks presented to students, and the standards faculty members use to evaluate student performance.

- 4p Frequency: Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations
- 5b Amount of emphasis in coursework: Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory
- 5c Amount of emphasis in coursework: Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways
- 5d Amount of emphasis in coursework: Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods
- 5e Amount of emphasis in coursework: Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations
- 5f Amount of emphasis in coursework: Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill
- 6a Number of assigned textbooks, manuals, books, or book-length packs of course readings
- 6c Number of written papers or reports of any length
- 7 Rate the extent to which your examinations have challenged you to do your best work
- 9a Amount of emphasis by college: Encouraging you to spend significant amounts of time studying

## **Student-Faculty Interaction**

In general, the more interaction students have with their teachers, the more likely they are to learn effectively and persist toward achievement of their educational goals. Personal interaction with faculty members strengthens students' connections to the college and helps them focus on their academic progress. Working with an instructor on a project or serving with faculty members on a college committee lets students see first-hand how experts identify and solve practical problems. Through such interactions, faculty members become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, lifelong learning.

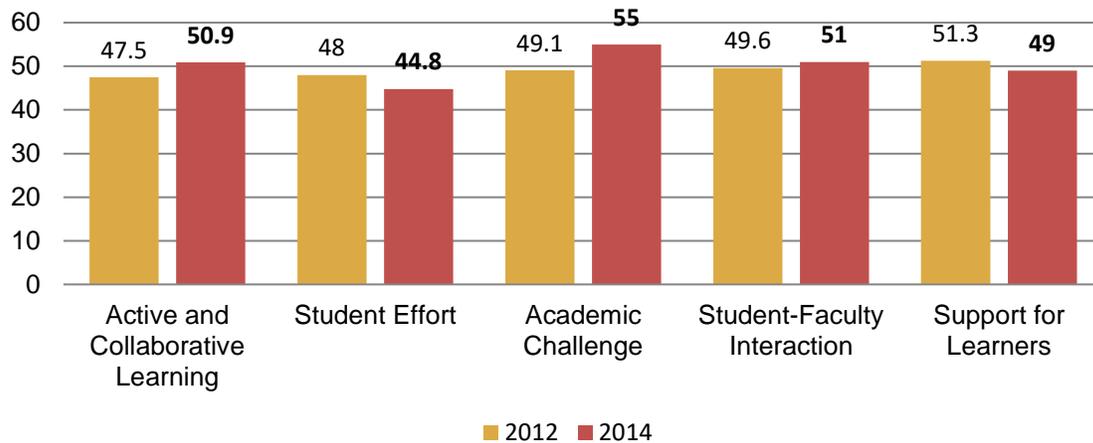
- 4k Frequency: Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor
- 4l Frequency: Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- 4m Frequency: Talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor
- 4n Frequency: Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class
- 4o Frequency: Received prompt feedback (written or oral) from instructors on your performance
- 4q Frequency: Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework

## **Support for Learners**

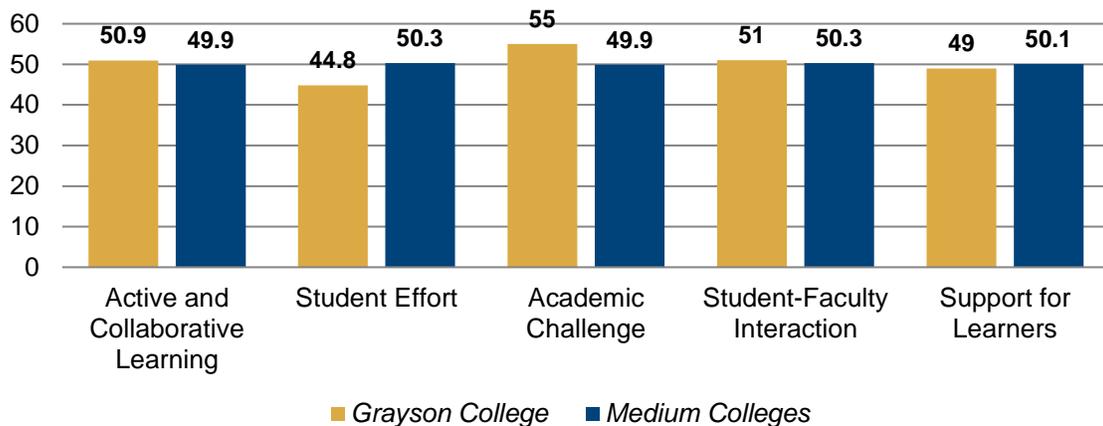
Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relationships among different groups on campus. Community college students also benefit from services targeted to assist them with academic and career planning, academic skill development, and other areas that may affect learning and retention.

- 9b Amount of emphasis by college: Providing the support you need to help you succeed at this college
- 9c Amount of emphasis by college: Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
- 9d Amount of emphasis by college: Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
- 9e Amount of emphasis by college: Providing the support you need to thrive socially
- 9f Amount of emphasis by college: Providing the financial support you need to afford your education
- 13a1 Frequency of use: Academic advising/planning
- 13b1 Frequency of use: Career counseling

## CCSSE Benchmark Scores - Grayson College



## CCSSE Benchmark Scores for Grayson College compared to Medium Colleges



## Example Selected Finding

When presenting findings to the college community, we recommend that you include selected findings that are most relevant to your mission, vision, values, and/or strategic plan. An example of a selected finding related to Academic Experience follows. Other key areas that might be of interest to your institution are listed in an index following this example. You can also refer to your institution's Key Findings for aspects of highest and lowest engagement on your campus or the *CCSSE Drop-In Overview Presentation Template*, available in the [Tools](#) section of the *CCSSE* website, for topics that may be relevant to your college.

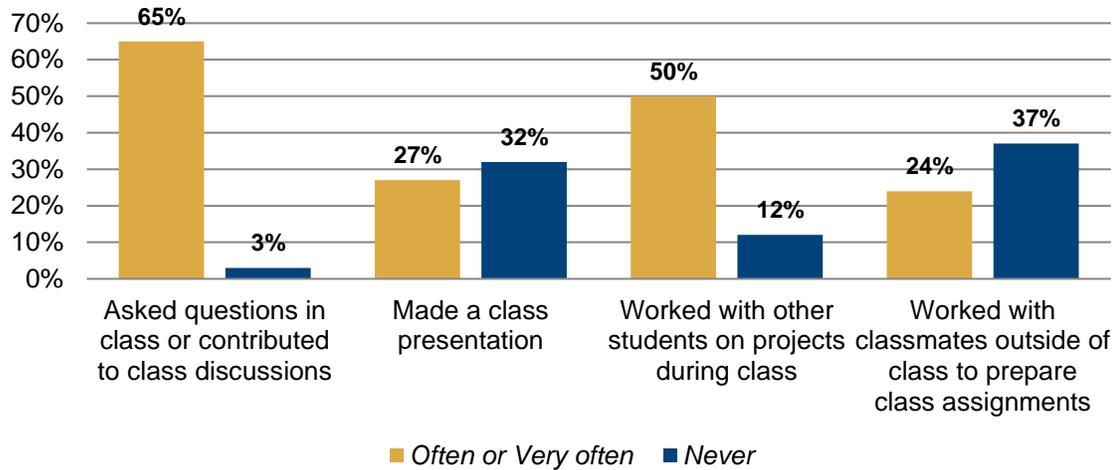
### Academic Experience

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:

- Item 4a—Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
- Item 4b—Made a class presentation
- Item 4f—Worked with other students on projects during class
- Item 4g—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 following graph.

### CCSSE Cohort Academic Experience



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

#### Academic Experience

4a-u

#### Educational Goals

17a-f

#### Student Learning

5a-f

#### Barriers to Persistence

14a-d

#### Relationships

4f, 4g, 4q, 9c, 9e

#### Student Satisfaction

26, 27

#### Curricular Experiences

8a, 8g, 8h, 8i

#### Student Support Services

13a-k

#### Developmental Education, ESL, Study Skills, and Orientation Course

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