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

Overview of 2011 Survey Results
NorthWest Arkansas 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.

CCSSE Member Colleges

CCSSE utilizes a 3-year cohort of participating colleges in all of its data analyses,[1] including the computation of benchmark scores. This cohort is referred to as the **2011 *CCSSE* Cohort**, colleges participating 2009 through 2011.

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 2011 *CCSSE* Cohort is composed of a total of 443,818 students at 699 institutions across 48 states and the District of Columbia, five Canadian provinces (Alberta, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Quebec) as well as Bermuda, and Northern Marianas. Three hundred thirteen of these member colleges are classified as small (< 4,500), 185 as medium (4,500-7,999), 125 as large (8,000-14,999), and 76 as extra-large institutions (15,000 + credit students).[2] One hundred forty-nine of the cohort member colleges are classified as urban-serving, 149 as suburban-serving, and 401 as rural-serving.[3]

Our college falls into the large size category and is classified as being located in a suburban serving area.

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[1] For returning participants, the college's most recent year of participation is included in data analyses. For example, if a college participated in 2009 and 2011, only the 2011 data would be used in the 3-year cohort.
[2] 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.
[3] These designations are based on the Carnegie Foundation Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

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Student Respondents

In *CCSSE* sampling procedures, students are sampled at the classroom level. Of those students sampled at our institution, 897 respondents submitted usable surveys. The number of completed surveys produced an overall "percent of target" rate of 90%. 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.[4])

2011 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 2011 *CCSSE* Cohort survey respondent population to the total student population of the 2011 *CCSSE* Cohort member colleges.

Enrollment Status

Sixty-eight percent of the student respondents at our college report attending college full-time, while 42% of the 2011 *CCSSE* Cohort colleges' total student population attended full-time. 32% of surveyed students report being part-time college students, compared to 58% of the 2011 *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.

Age

2011 *CCSSE* student respondents at our college range in age from 18 to 65 or over years old. Approximately 90% are between 18 to 39 years old; 59% are 18 to 24 years old while 31% are 25 to 39 years old. 9% are over 40 years old. Students at our college are older than the *CCSSE* cohort, of which over half (58%) of students are between 18 and 24, 29% are between 25 and 39 and 13% are over 40 years old.

Gender

Of the 884 student respondents at our college who answered this item, 41% are male and 59% are female, which is comparable to the *CCSSE* cohort, which is 43% male and 57% female.

Racial Identification

Sixty-nine percent of student respondents identified themselves as White/non-Hispanic, 14% as Hispanic/Latino/Spanish, 2% as Black or African American, and 3% as Asian. 3% of the student respondents are American Indian. 3% marked "other" when responding to the question, "What is your racial identification?" Our student sample is more/less/equally diverse than the *CCSSE* cohort, which was 56% White/non-Hispanic, 14% Hispanic/Latino/Spanish, 13% Black or African American, 5% Asian, and 1% American Indian.

International Students

Seven percent of our students responded yes to the question, "Are you an international student or foreign national?" Our college has more international students that the CCSSE cohort, of which 2% is international.

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[4] See exclusionary rules on page 4.

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

Limited English Speaking Students

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, 13.2% of enrolled students are non-native English speakers.

First-Generation Status

Twenty-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." 31.2% indicate that their mothers' highest level of education is a high school diploma (with no college experience), and 31.6% indicate that level for their fathers.

Educational Attainment

Seventy percent of the respondents report starting their college careers at this community college. Approximately 73.5% of students indicate that their highest level of educational attainment is a high school diploma or GED; 10% have completed fewer than 30 credit hours of college-level work; 7.6% report either a certificate or an associate degree; 5.2% have earned a bachelor's degree; and 1.2% have earned an advanced degree.

Credit Hours Earned

Forty-five percent of surveyed students have completed fewer than 15 credit hours; 21.8% have completed 15-29 credit hours; and 34% have completed more than 30 credit hours.

Grades

Sixty-seven percent of students report that they earned grades of *B*+ or higher, while 5.8% of students report that they earned grades of *C*- or lower.

External Commitments

Forty-seven percent of students work 21 or more hours per week; 6.1% of students care for dependents at least 11 hours per week; and 67.7% of students spend at least 1-5 hours per week commuting to class.

College-Sponsored Activities

Eighty-one percent of students do not participate in any college-sponsored activities (including organizations, campus publications, student government, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.) while 12.9% of students typically spend only 1 to 5 hours per week participating in these activities.

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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 sub-items in item 4, answers "Very Often" to all 21 sub-items, or answers "Never" to all 21 sub-items, 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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