

Institutional Benchmark Report

November 2004

American University



Introduction

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) annually assesses the extent to which undergraduate students are involved in educational practices empirically linked to high levels of learning and development. In an effort to make it easier for people on and off campus to talk productively about student engagement and its importance to student learning, collegiate quality, and institutional improvement, NSSE created five clusters or benchmarks of effective educational practice:

- (1) Level of academic challenge
- (2) Active and collaborative learning
- (3) Student-faculty interactions
- (4) Enriching educational experiences
- (5) Supportive campus environment.

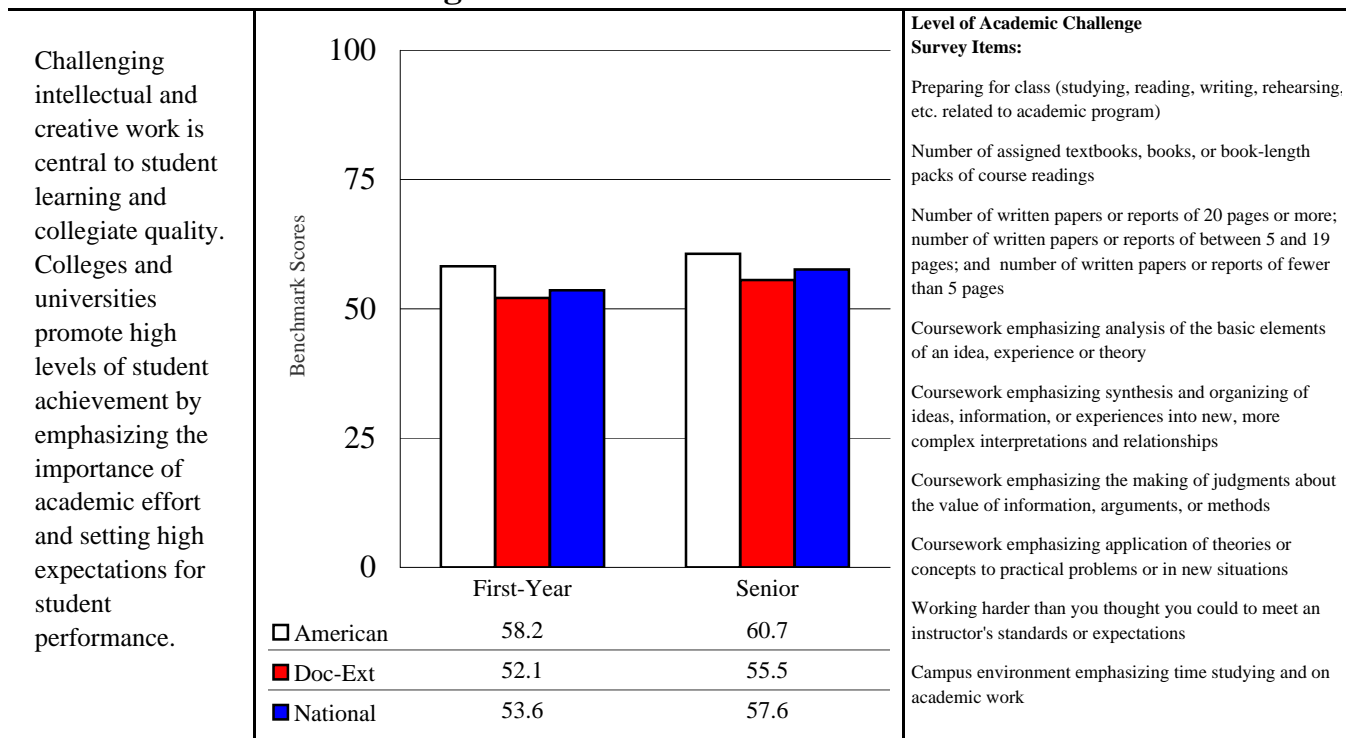
The benchmarks are made up of groups of items on the survey and are expressed in 100-point scales. Each year, NSSE calculates benchmark scores to monitor performance at the institutional, sector, and national level. This year's analysis is based on approximately 162,000 randomly selected students at 472 four-year colleges and universities that participated in 2004. The students represent a broad cross-section of first-year and senior students from every region of the country. The institutions are similar in most respects to the universe of four-year schools. More detailed information about the benchmarks can be found in the annual report that accompanies this mailing and on the NSSE website at www.iub.edu/~nsse.

Benchmark Report

The Benchmark Report presents your institution's benchmark scores and compares them to schools in your Carnegie Classification, and the NSSE national norms. In addition, it provides summary statistics, a decile chart that gauges your institution's performance compared with other schools, and your Institutional Engagement Index. This index represents the degree to which your students do more or less than expected in terms of their engagement in the five areas of effective educational practice after adjusting for the types of students that attend your school and various institutional characteristics.

NSSE and the benchmarks of effective educational practice provide an instructive way to look at and talk about teaching and learning. Thus, they are intended to help stimulate conversations on campus and help determine whether student behavior and institutional practices are headed in the right direction.

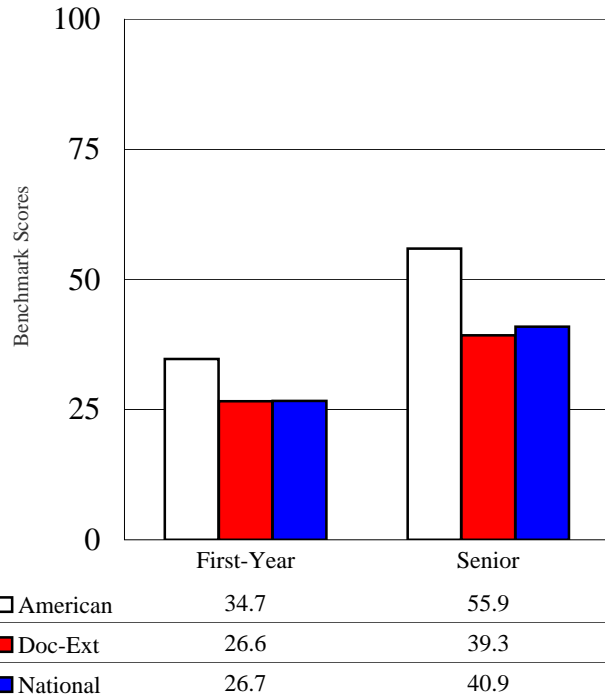
Level of Academic Challenge





Enriching Educational Experiences

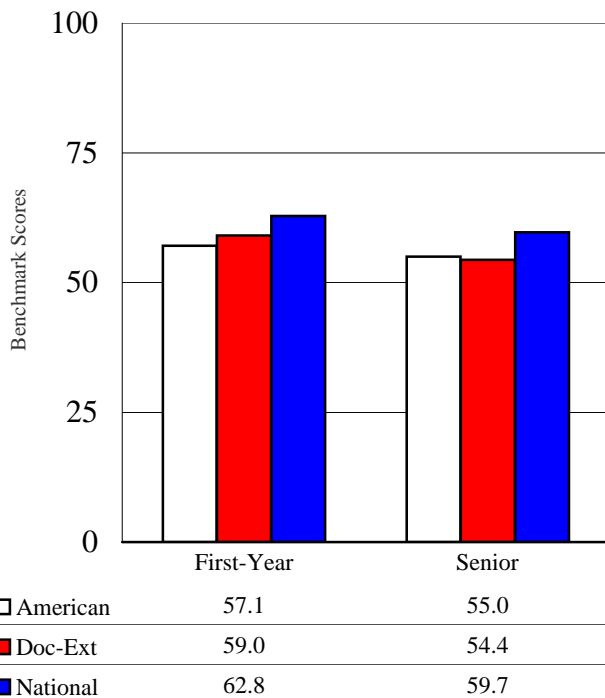
Complementary learning opportunities in and out of class augment academic programs. Diversity experiences teach students valuable things about themselves and others. Technology facilitates collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community service, and senior capstone courses provide opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge.



- Enriching Educational Experiences Survey Items:**
- Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, publications, student government, sports, etc.)
 - Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment
 - Community service or volunteer work
 - Foreign language coursework and study abroad
 - Independent study or self-designed major
 - Culminating senior experience (comprehensive exam, capstone course, thesis, project, etc.)
 - Serious conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values
 - Serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity
 - Using electronic technology to discuss or complete an assignment
 - Campus environment encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
 - Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together

Supportive Campus Environment

Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus.

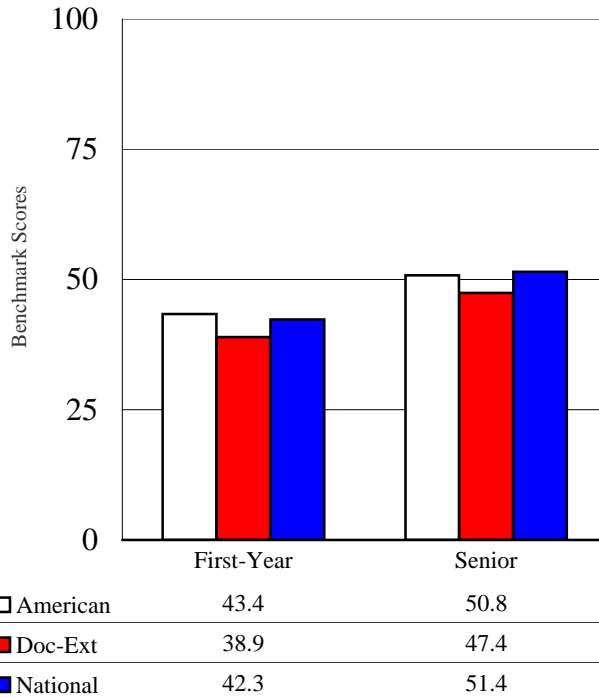


- Supportive Campus Environment Survey Items:**
- Campus environment provides the support you need to help you succeed academically
 - Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
 - Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially
 - Quality of relationships with other students
 - Quality of relationships with faculty members
 - Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices



Active and Collaborative Learning

Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and asked to think about what they are learning in different settings. Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material prepares students for the messy,

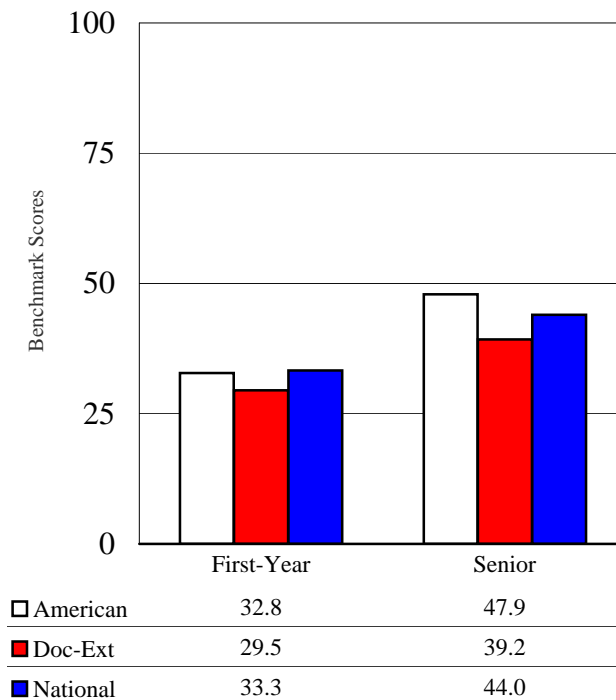


Active and Collaborative Learning Survey Items:

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

Student-Faculty Interaction

Students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside the classroom. As a result, their teachers become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, life-long learning.



Student-Faculty Interaction Survey Items:

- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
- Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student-life activities, etc.)
- Received prompt feedback from faculty on your academic performance (written or oral)
- Worked with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements

These tables present the range of institutional scores by decile for the five benchmarks of effective educational practice for both first-year and senior students. Deciles are percentile scores that divide the range of benchmark scores into ten equal

National	First-Year											Senior										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Level of Academic Challenge	43.0	48.5	50.0	51.3	52.4	53.3	54.2	55.5	56.8	58.8	66.7	46.1	53.3	54.5	55.2	56.3	57.0	58.2	59.3	60.6	62.5	74.6
Active and Collaborative Learning	31.1	36.5	37.9	39.5	40.7	41.9	43.4	44.6	46.1	48.6	65.3	40.2	46.4	47.8	49.2	50.2	51.0	52.3	53.8	54.9	57.1	68.3
Student-Faculty Interaction	23.5	27.6	29.2	30.6	31.6	32.7	34.0	35.4	36.9	38.8	54.7	28.5	36.1	37.8	39.6	41.2	43.0	45.0	47.1	50.3	54.4	68.6
Enriching Educational Experiences	17.8	21.9	23.2	24.2	25.1	26.4	27.5	28.7	30.1	32.3	41.4	24.6	31.5	34.2	36.1	37.8	39.7	41.6	44.6	48.0	52.1	66.1
Supportive Campus Environment	48.7	55.7	58.1	59.7	61.5	63.0	64.2	65.5	67.2	69.4	80.4	46.0	52.7	55.0	56.5	57.9	59.1	60.8	62.8	64.4	66.8	84.5
Doc-Extensive	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Level of Academic Challenge	47.7	48.8	49.4	49.5	50.7	51.3	52.1	53.7	54.4	57.9	59.7	52.1	52.9	53.4	53.9	54.4	55.4	56.0	56.6	57.2	59.4	60.7
Active and Collaborative Learning	32.3	35.6	36.3	36.9	37.2	38.1	39.5	40.1	41.5	43.7	49.3	42.4	44.1	45.2	46.0	46.6	47.0	47.8	48.8	49.7	51.6	52.5
Student-Faculty Interaction	25.5	26.6	27.6	28.0	28.3	28.8	30.0	30.8	31.7	32.7	36.7	32.1	34.7	36.2	37.0	37.8	39.0	40.2	41.3	42.1	43.9	47.9
Enriching Educational Experiences	20.7	22.9	23.6	24.3	26.3	26.8	27.3	28.4	29.4	29.8	34.7	31.0	33.0	35.6	36.5	38.1	38.5	40.2	41.1	42.8	45.1	55.9
Supportive Campus Environment	52.9	54.7	56.5	57.4	57.6	58.8	59.5	59.9	60.8	63.6	73.4	47.9	49.4	51.0	52.2	53.0	53.8	54.5	55.9	56.9	58.6	69.7