

2009

NATIONAL SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY STANISLAUS
PREPARED BY OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

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2009 National Survey of Student Engagement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

California State University, Stanislaus participates in the *National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)*, which is conducted on behalf of the University by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research (CPR). NSSE collects information from baccalaureate degree-seeking undergraduate first-year students and graduating seniors regarding participation in a variety of University activities and programs related to desirable college outcomes, including student learning and development, satisfaction, persistence and retention (Kuh, 2009). The results provide an estimate of how undergraduate students spend their time and what they gain from attending college (NSSE, 2010, About NSSE).

NSSE provides information that may be used in understanding student learning outcomes, the undergraduate experience, and institutional effectiveness. Moreover, the results show how undergraduate students spend their time in learning and personal development activities. These data focus attention on how well or not students achieve the desired outcomes of an undergraduate program experience. Additionally, these data provide indicators as to how well or not the University engages in “good practices” supporting the student learning experience.

CSU Stanislaus upholds the core belief that higher learning and the “university experience” happens best when learning occurs both within and outside the University. The goal of CSU Stanislaus has been to ensure its effectiveness in adding value to students’ undergraduate experience. NSSE provides such data to help profile the student learning experience. These data also contribute to the policy and decision-making process to improve programs as necessary and in ways that optimize the undergraduate education experience at CSU Stanislaus.

Methodology

In fall 2008, an electronic file containing records of all currently enrolled CSU Stanislaus baccalaureate degree-seeking undergraduate first-year students were transmitted to NSSE through a web interface. The file was revised during the spring 2009 semester removing those students who graduated, transferred, or stopped out. The final population sample size was 2,688 students, including 966 first-year students and 1,722 seniors, which were invited to complete the survey online.

The student survey (*College Student Report, CSR*) was administered by NSSE entirely online via a web-based form. As stated by NSSE, having a third-party manage communication and survey administration with students provides “consistency that strengthens the comparative data we provide and reduces workload for the institution” (NSSE, 2010, Administration Mode Comparison). A total of five contacts were made by NSSE to students via their University email addresses and sent from the University President: a pre-survey announcement, an invitation, and three follow-up notices.

A total of 247 first-year students (26%) completed the survey, as did 435 seniors (25%) for a 25 percent combined response rate. The sampling error is 5.4 percent for first-year students and 4.1 percent for graduating seniors, respectively. Overall the sampling error is 3.3 percent.

Respondent Characteristics

Ninety-three percent of first-year students responding to the survey were enrolled full-time, compared to 76 percent of seniors. The majority of respondents are female; 77 percent of first-year students and 74 percent of senior students.

The proportion of respondent's race and ethnicity also differed in that the two largest groups are White (non-Hispanic) and Mexican/Mexican American students. Among first-year students, 35 percent are White (non-Hispanic) and 32 percent are Mexican/Mexican American. In addition, another 10 percent are Asian, Asian American/Pacific Islanders followed by Other Hispanic/Latino at 4 percent. Among seniors, 50 percent are White (non-Hispanic) and 18 percent are Mexican/Mexican American, with nine percent Asian, Asian American/Pacific Islander and three percent Black/African American. Five percent are Other Hispanic/Latino.

Only a small portion of respondents indicated on-campus housing as their primary place of residence with only 22 percent of first-year students and six percent of seniors indicating they are living on-campus.

Seventy percent of senior respondents are transfer students, and 45 percent are non-traditional students (24 years of age or older). Ninety-nine percent of first-year student respondents are less than 24 years of age.

Summary of Results

The survey is comprised of more than 80 question items with a majority rated on a four point scale from 1 (low/negative) to 4 (high/positive). For analysis and reporting purposes, NSSE clusters question items into the following five "benchmarks of effective educational practice" in order to represent the multi-dimensional nature of student engagement (NSSE, 2009).

- I. Active and Collaborative Learning
- II. Student-Faculty Interactions
- III. Supportive Campus Environment
- IV. Enriching Educational Experience
- V. Level of Academic Challenge

Furthermore, CSU Stanislaus also compares its results to the Selected Comparison Group, which are peer institutions in the same Carnegie Classification and current-year NSSE participants. The Selected Comparison Group results are displayed alongside the results for CSU Stanislaus by benchmark cluster area for first-year students and seniors. Results were weighted slightly based on institution-reported data (i.e. gender and enrollment status).

The following is a summary of some key findings from CSU Stanislaus' performance on the 2009 NSSE.

I. Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL).

The ACL benchmark cluster area contains items designed to assess students' collaborative efforts with faculty and other students, experiential learning, and problem solving through class participation, working collaboratively with other students inside and outside of class, tutoring and involvement with a community-based project. The means are displayed in Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1.**Active and Collaborative Learning**

| Item | Description | First-Year Students | | Seniors | |
|------|--|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers |
| 1a | Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussion | 2.73 | 2.94 ^c | 3.07 | 3.24 ^c |
| 1b | Made a class presentation | 2.44 | 2.40 | 2.97 | 2.91 |
| 1g | Worked with other students on projects during class | 2.74 ^c | 2.48 | 2.76 ^c | 2.61 |
| 1h | Worked with all classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments | 2.54 | 2.47 | 2.77 | 2.76 |
| 1j | Tutored or taught other students | 1.52 | 1.66 ^b | 1.77 | 1.87 |
| 1k | Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course | 1.36 | 1.59 ^c | 1.66 | 1.82 ^c |
| 1t | Discussed ideas from readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.) | 2.85 | 2.78 | 2.99 | 2.94 |

Note. Mean score based on the following scale: 1=never, 2=sometimes, 3=often, 4=very often. (^a p<.05, ^b p<.01, ^c p<.001, 2-tailed)

As students advance from one class level to the next, one would expect to see evidence of growth in students' capacity to learn to solve problems, to handle complexity, and to become intensely involved in their education. In Exhibit 1, comparing first-year students to seniors, the mean scores suggest seniors are more advanced in this regard. The comparisons therefore are as expected.

In comparison with NSSE Selected Peers, however, the results are mixed: some indicators show CSU Stanislaus first-year students and seniors to be the same or above the mean and a few below the comparison group.

Together, the results show seniors with a greater, more active involvement in their education than first-year students.

II. Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI).

The SFI benchmark cluster area includes items that assess student and faculty interaction. This includes collaboration with faculty members and advisors, level of engagement with faculty regarding academic performance and assigned work, and participation with faculty in research projects and activities outside of class. The mean scores in Exhibit 2 summarize the results.

Exhibit 2.**Student-Faculty Interaction**

| Item | Description | First-Year Students | | Seniors | |
|------|--|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers |
| 1n | Discussed grades or assignments with instructor | 2.43 | 2.70 ^c | 2.77 | 2.91 ^b |
| 1o | Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor | 1.98 | 2.23 ^c | 2.34 | 2.51 ^c |
| 1p | Discussed readings or classes with faculty members outside of class | 1.80 | 1.90 | 1.99 | 2.16 ^c |
| 1s | Worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework (committees, orientations, student-life activities) | 1.42 | 1.68 ^c | 1.61 | 1.86 ^c |
| 1q | Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance | 2.70 | 2.70 | 2.74 | 2.88 ^c |

Note. Mean score based on the following scale: 1=never, 2=sometimes, 3=often, 4=very often. (^a p<.05, ^b p<.01, ^c p<.001, 2-tailed)

Mean scores for seniors are higher than for first-year students indicating greater student-faculty interactions by seniors. However, comparing CSU Stanislaus first-year students' scores with Selected Peers, in all cases but one, the scores are lower for CSU Stanislaus first-year students, meaning overall less activity compared to Selected Peers. The indicator "received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance" (item 1q) was virtually the same.

While CSU Stanislaus seniors show greater SFIs compared to first-year students, the SFI compared to the Selected Peer institutions are less and significantly different. In fact, two indicators are particularly noteworthy because of a rather large difference with the Selected Peers group for both CSU Stanislaus first-year students and seniors. It appears that student-faculty interaction having to do with discussing career plans (item 1o), or interacting with faculty on matters other than coursework (such as committee work, student orientations, or student life activities; item 1s) is significantly different from Selected Peers for either first-year students or seniors. The percentages of those responding "often" or "very often" reveals only 25 percent of first-year students and 38 percent of seniors at CSU Stanislaus, "talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor." Moreover, only nine percent of first-year students and 16 percent of seniors indicated they "worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework."

III. Supportive Campus Environment (SCE).

The SCE benchmark cluster area includes items designed to assess the student's perception of the campus environment. This cluster area includes an assessment of the quality of relationships that students have with administration, faculty and other students, as well as an assessment of the level of support provided by the institution to help a student succeed academically, thrive socially, and cope with outside responsibilities. The means are displayed in Exhibit 3.

Exhibit 3.

| Quality of Relationships | | First-Year Students | | Seniors | |
|---------------------------------|--|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers |
| 8a | Quality of relationships with other students | 5.48 | 5.51 | 5.64 | 5.71 |
| 8b | Quality of relationships with faculty members | 5.11 | 5.34 ^b | 5.45 | 5.62 ^b |
| 8c | Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices | 4.71 | 4.86 | 4.74 | 4.82 |
| 10b | Campus environment that provides the support you need to help you succeed academically | 2.99 | 3.10 ^a | 2.95 | 3.03 |
| 10d | Campus environment that helps you cope with you non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.) | 2.09 | 2.32 ^c | 1.96 | 2.10 ^b |
| 10e | Campus environment that provides the support you need to thrive socially | 2.32 | 2.52 ^b | 2.17 | 2.29 ^b |

Note. Item 8a, Mean score based on a 7-point scale: 1 -unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation TO 7 -friendly, supportive, sense of belonging. Item 8b, Mean score based on a 7-point scale: 1 - unavailable, unhelpful, unsympathetic TO 7 - available, helpful, sympathetic. Item 8c, Mean score based on a 7-point scale: 1 - unhelpful, inconsiderate, rigid TO 7 - helpful, considerate, flexible. Items 10b, 10d, 10e, Mean score based on the following scale: 1=never, 2=sometimes, 3=often, 4=very often. (^a p<.05, ^b p<.01, ^c p<.001, 2-tailed)

Relationships are important to student life. Campuses that cultivate the social relationship aspects of university life contribute to student satisfaction and integration into the learning culture.

First-Year Students. CSU Stanislaus first-year students give favorable responses about their relationships with other students, faculty, and administrative personnel. Additionally, the pattern of scores for CSU Stanislaus is consistent with the pattern for that of Selected Peers.

Seniors. Among CSU Stanislaus seniors the responses are also favorable and the pattern of mean scores is consistent with the pattern for Selected Peers. However, for CSU Stanislaus seniors there appear to be a significant difference for the following items: “quality of relationships with faculty members,” a “campus environment that helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities,” and a “campus environment that provides the support you need to thrive socially.”

IV. Enriching Educational Experience (EEE).

Exhibits 4 and 5 display the measures of EEE benchmark cluster area which includes items intended to assess student use and experience in the academic setting with technology, community service, senior capstone courses or seminars. These indicators explore the extent to which CSU Stanislaus first-year students and seniors are involved in complimentary learning opportunities offered by the University.

Exhibit 4.

Using an Electronic Medium

| Item | Description | First-Year Students | | Seniors | |
|------|---|---------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers |
| 1l | Using an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment | 2.52 | 2.61 | 2.74 | 2.86 ^a |

Note. Mean score based on the following scale: 1=never, 2=sometimes, 3=often, 4=very often. (^a p<.05, ^b p<.01, ^c p<.001, 2-tailed)

Exhibit 5.

Time spent on Enriching Educational Experience

| Item | Description | First-Year Students | | Seniors | |
|--|---|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers |
| 7a | Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment | 0.04 | 0.08 ^a | 0.26 | 0.53 ^c |
| 7b | Community service or volunteer work | 0.32 | 0.39 | 0.49 | 0.60 ^c |
| 7c | Participating in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of student take two or more classes together | 0.09 | 0.15 ^b | 0.20 | 0.29 ^c |
| 7d | Worked with a faculty member on a research project outside of class | 0.02 | 0.06 ^a | 0.10 | 0.18 ^c |
| 7e | Foreign language coursework | 0.13 | 0.17 | 0.22 | 0.35 ^c |
| 7f | Study abroad | 0.01 | 0.03 ^a | 0.03 | 0.14 ^c |
| 7g | Independent study or self-designed major | 0.02 | 0.05 ^c | 0.08 | 0.19 ^c |
| 7h | Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.) | 0.01 | 0.02 | 0.08 | 0.35 ^c |
| Note. Mean score based on recoded items as follows: 0=have not decided, do not plan to do, plan to do; 1=done. Thus, the mean is interpreted as the proportion responding "done" among all respondents. (^a p<.05, ^b p<.01, ^c p<.001, 2-tailed) | | | | | |
| 9d | Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, student publications, student government, fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports) | 1.99 | 2.17 | 1.75 | 2.02 ^c |
| Note. Mean score based on the following: 1=0 hrs./wk., 2=1-5 hrs./wk., 3=6-10 hrs./wk., 4=11-15 hrs./wk., 5=16-20 hrs./wk., 6=21-25 hrs./wk., 7=26-30 hrs./wk., 8=more than 30 hrs./wk. (^a p<.05, ^b p<.01, ^c p<.001, 2-tailed) | | | | | |

First-Year Students. While CSU Stanislaus first-year students and seniors are below the mean of Selected Peer institutions in regards to the use of electronic technology (item 1l), ratings from seniors are significantly different from Selected Peers. Among CSU Stanislaus first-year students, there appears to be more activity in community service or volunteer work (Exhibit 5) than for any other indicator (32% say “done”), which is consistent with the Selected Peer institutions. The next most reported activity is foreign language coursework at 13 percent, and not significantly different from Selected Peers.

CSU Stanislaus first-year students show very little involvement when it comes to participating in a learning community (item 7c) compared to the Selected Peer institutions and CSU Stanislaus seniors. While these data reflect slight activity in studying abroad (item 7f), or in independent self-study (item 7g), or in capstone experiences (item 7h), this is not unexpected. There is typically more opportunity structure for seniors to experience these activities in upper-division courses.

Seniors. CSU Stanislaus seniors are more involved and active in “enriching educational experiences” than first-year students; 26 percent have “done” a practicum or internship (item 7a) and 49 percent have “done” community service or volunteer work (item 7b). Another 20 percent have participated in a learning community (item 7c), 22 percent have “done” foreign language coursework (item 7e), and 10 percent have worked with a faculty member on a research project outside of class (item 7d). However, for these indicators, ratings from CSU Stanislaus seniors were significantly below the mean ratings of Selected Peers.

As expected, CSU Stanislaus seniors are more active than first-year students in independent study, studying abroad, and in capstone enriching experiences. Eight percent of seniors experienced senior projects, capstone, thesis and such projects (item 7h); 8 percent have experienced independent study (item 7g); and 3 percent studied abroad.

Most CSU Stanislaus first-year students (mean=1.99, 59%) and seniors (mean=1.75, 65%), however, do not participate in co-curricular activities such as campus organizations, campus publications, student government, fraternity or sorority, and intercollegiate or intramural sports (item 9d).

V. Level of Academic Challenge (LAC).

The LAC benchmark cluster area includes a complex array of items that together measure the level of academic challenge to students. Do CSU Stanislaus students feel they are challenged intellectually and academically? Comparing CSU Stanislaus students to Selected Peers (Exhibits 6 and 7), the answer is a qualified “yes.” However, as the items in Exhibit 7 display, CSU Stanislaus seniors engage more rigorously in academic activity and work than do first-year students. This of course is the desired pattern. As university students mature in academic experience, the intensification of engagement should predict the reporting of greater academic challenges at the senior level rather than at the start of the freshman year.

As expressed by NSSE, the institution and academic environment should set high expectations for student performance. Overall results affirm this to be the case at CSU Stanislaus in that, CSU Stanislaus first-year students and seniors show remarkable engagement in their learning and academic pursuits as intended by the stated mission and philosophy of the University. Only a few items are statistically different from Selected Peers. Results displayed in Exhibits 6-9 are summarized into the following main points.

- The mean scores for first-year students tend to be higher or equal to Selected Peer institutions as shown in items 1f, 2b, 2d, 3a, 3d, 3e, 4b, and 10a. (The items in Exhibit 6-9 are based on different scales. Therefore note the subgroups within the LAC cluster. Each subgroup should be inspected against the noted scale of measurement.)
- First-year students indicate they are working harder than they thought they could (item 1r); they are engaged in coursework that emphasizes critical, analytical thinking (item 2c); they tend to read between 5-10 books per course (and a large percentage report 11 books and greater; item 3a); and during the school year they tend to write between 5-10 papers or reports of 5 pages or less (item 3e; although better than a quarter of students indicate writing papers between 5-19 pages; see item 3d).
- Most first-year students indicate during the typical week they handle between 1-4 problems sets taking more than an hour to complete (item 4a) and on average they spend anywhere from 6 to 15 hours preparing for class (item 9a).
- Most first-year students tend to agree “quite a bit” the University challenges them to spend significant amounts of time studying and focusing on their academic work (item 10a).

Among CSU Stanislaus seniors, the results are summarized as follows:

- Most seniors score higher than first-year students and are about the same as that of Selected Peers. There are few instances of significant differences with Selected Peers.
- Seniors indicate engagement at about the same measure as Selected Peers in coursework that emphasizes theory, critical thinking, and the evaluation of ideas, information, or arguments (Exhibit 7).
- Seniors are engaged more than first-year students in writing large papers (item 3c, 3d) and score fairly comparable to Selected Peers overall in items 3a-3e.
- Seniors spend more time studying and preparing for class than CSU Stanislaus first-year students or Selected Peers (item 9a).
- The majority of seniors report the University emphasizes spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work (item 10a).

Exhibit 6.
Student Effort

| Item | Description | First-Year Students | | Seniors | |
|------|---|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers |
| 1f | Come to class without completing readings or assignments | 1.97 | 1.97 | 2.10 | 2.03 |
| 1r | Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations | 2.63 | 2.71 | 2.77 | 2.81 |

Note. Mean score based on the following scale: 1=never, 2=sometimes, 3=often, 4=very often. (^a p<.05, ^b p<.01, ^c p<.001, 2-tailed)

Exhibit 7.**Coursework Emphasis**

| Item | Description | First-Year Students | | Seniors | |
|------|--|---------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers |
| 2b | Coursework emphasizing analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory | 3.18 | 3.10 | 3.29 | 3.28 |
| 2c | Coursework emphasizing synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships | 2.83 | 2.89 | 3.00 | 3.11 ^a |
| 2d | Coursework emphasizing making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods | 2.99 | 2.92 | 2.98 | 3.06 |
| 2e | Coursework emphasizing applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations | 2.95 | 3.04 | 3.17 | 3.27 ^a |

Note. Mean score based on the following scale: 1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much. (^a p<.05, ^b p<.01, ^c p<.001, 2-tailed)

Exhibit 8.**Number of Textbooks and Papers Assigned**

| Item | Description | First-Year Students | | Seniors | |
|------|---|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers |
| 3a | Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course reading | 3.22 | 3.19 | 3.17 | 3.20 |
| 3c | Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more | 1.22 | 1.32 ^b | 1.48 | 1.66 ^c |
| 3d | Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages | 2.22 | 2.22 | 2.53 | 2.59 |
| 3e | Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages | 3.06 | 3.02 | 3.02 | 3.01 |

Note. Mean score based on the following: 1=none, 2=between 1 and 4, 3=between 5 and 10, 4=between 11 and 20, 5=more than 20. (^a p<.05, ^b p<.01, ^c p<.001, 2-tailed)

Exhibit 9.**Time Spent on Problem Sets, Preparing for Class, and Academic Work**

| Item | Description | First-Year Students | | Seniors | |
|--|--|---------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers |
| 4a | During a typical week, how many problem sets do you complete that take you more than an hour to complete | 2.57 | 2.69 | 2.83 ^b | 2.64 |
| 4b | During a typical week, how many problem sets do you complete that take you less than an hour to complete | 2.79 | 2.78 | 2.50 | 2.44 |
| Note. Mean score based on the following: 1=none, 2=1-2, 3=3-4, 4=5-6, 5=more than 6. (^a p<.05, ^b p<.01, ^c p<.001, 2-tailed) | | | | | |
| 9a | Hours students spend in a typical 7-day week preparing for class | 3.94 | 4.04 | 4.19 | 4.17 |
| Note. Mean score based on the following: 1=0 hrs./wk., 2=1-5 hrs./wk., 3=6-10 hrs./wk., 4=11-15 hrs./wk., 5=16-20 hrs./wk., 6=21-25 hrs./wk., 7=26-30 hrs./wk., 8=more than 30 hrs./wk. (^a p<.05, ^b p<.01, ^c p<.001, 2-tailed) | | | | | |
| 10a | Campus environment emphasizing spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work | 3.13 | 3.14 | 3.15 | 3.13 |
| Note. Mean score based on the following scale: 1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much. (^a p<.05, ^b p<.01, ^c p<.001, 2-tailed) | | | | | |

Overall Student Perceptions of Educational Experiences

NSSE contains a number of items to measure the overall experience and satisfaction levels of students in areas of: student appreciation for diversity, student perceptions of achievement on General Education goals, and student's overall impression of the University. These items are taken to measure student's perceived educational gains.

Students were asked, "To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?" Following the main question was a battery of 16 items with a response set of "very little," "some," "quite a bit," and "very much." Results displayed in Exhibit 10 are first-year students and seniors that responded "quite a bit" or "very much."

First-Year Students. Several items in this benchmark cluster area received high ratings by first-year students: 80 percent say CSU Stanislaus has contributed to their development in "working effectively with others" (item 11h), 88 percent indicate the University has contributed to their development in "thinking critically and analytically" (item 11e), and 85 percent say the University contributed to "acquiring a broad general education" (item 11a).

In addition, several items received a rating of 70 percent or greater: 77 percent indicate the University contributed to their development in "writing clearly and effectively" (item 11c), 71 percent in "learning effectively on his or her own" (item 11j), 72 percent in "speaking clearly and effectively" (item 11d), and 73 percent in "using computing and information technology" (item 11g).

The lowest ratings were for items, "contributing to the welfare of his or her community" at 40 percent (item 11o), and in "developing a deepened sense of spirituality" at 26 percent (item 11p).

For seniors, 87 percent give the University high marks for its contribution to students' development in "thinking critically and analytically" (item 11e), 84 percent say "quite a bit" or "very much" that the University contributed to "acquiring a broad general education" (item 11a), and 80 percent think highly of the University's contribution to knowledge and development in "working effectively with others" (item 11h).

Other items receiving more than 70 percent ratings include, writing clearly and effectively (item 11c, 75%), analyzing quantitative problems (item 11f) and speaking clearly and effectively at 70 percent (item 11d), and learning effectively on his or her own at 74 percent (item 11j). We note also 78 percent said the University contributed to their development in "using computing and information technology" (item 11g), and 72 percent of seniors rated "acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills" to be an important contribution to their knowledge and development (item 11b) compared to a 57 percent rating by first-year students.

The lowest ratings given by seniors were for items 11i, 11o and 11p: only 20 percent indicated "quite a bit" or "very much" that the University contributed to students' "deepened sense of spirituality," (item 11p) and 38 percent said "quite a bit" or "very much" about "voting in local, state, or national elections," as did 38 percent about "contributing to the welfare of his or her community."

Overall, CSU Stanislaus first-year students compare about the same as those from Selected Peer institutions. However, the ratings of CSU Stanislaus seniors pertaining to personal development (see items 11k-11p) appear to be significantly different from the ratings of those from Selected Peer institutions.

Exhibit 10.
Student Ratings of General Education Learning and Experiences

| To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas? | | First-Year Students | | Seniors | |
|--|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers |
| Item | Description | <i>Quite a bit, Very much</i> |
| 11a | Acquiring a broad general education | 85% | 80% | 84% | 84% |
| 11b | Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills | 57% | 67% ^b | 72% | 77% ^b |
| 11c | Writing clearly and effectively | 77% | 76% | 75% | 79% |
| 11d | Speaking clearly and effectively | 72% | 68% | 70% | 75% ^a |
| 11e | Thinking critically and analytically | 88% | 83% | 87% | 88% |
| 11f | Analyzing quantitative problems | 69% | 70% | 70% | 75% |
| 11g | Using computing and information technology | 73% | 75% | 78% | 81% |
| 11h | Working effectively with others | 80% | 74% | 80% | 80% |
| 11i | Voting in local, state, or national elections | 55% | 46% | 38% | 42% |
| 11j | Learning effectively on his or her own | 71% | 72% | 74% | 75% |
| 11k | Understanding himself or herself | 62% | 65% | 60% | 66% ^b |
| 11l | Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds | 59% | 59% | 57% | 58% |
| 11m | Solving complex real-world problems | 57% | 59% | 56% | 64% ^b |
| 11n | Developing a personal code of values and ethics | 55% | 60% ^a | 53% | 62% ^c |
| 11o | Contributing to the welfare of his or her community | 40% | 50% ^b | 38% | 52% ^c |
| 11p | Developing a deepened sense of spirituality | 26% | 40% ^c | 20% | 35% ^c |

Note. Items are based on a 4-point scale: 1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much. (Indicates a difference of means: ^a p<.05, ^b p<.01, ^c p<.001, 2-tailed)

Overall Student Satisfaction: A Final Appraisal

NSSE posed three questions that measure overall student satisfaction:

- “How would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution?”
- “How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?”
- “If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?”

Exhibit 11 summarizes these three items according to “good” or “excellent” responses. Overall, CSU Stanislaus first-year students and seniors give high marks to the University. The ratings are also in line with the responses of selected peer institutions.

First-Year Students. Seventy-four percent of first-year students give ratings of “good” or “excellent” when it comes to academic advising (item 12) and 90 percent say “good” or “excellent” when reflecting upon their entire educational experience at CSU Stanislaus (item 13). When asked if they could start over again, would they go to the same institution, 90 percent of first-year students say “probably, yes” or “definitely, yes” they would attend CSU Stanislaus (item 14).

Seniors. Ratings of satisfaction of CSU Stanislaus seniors are overwhelmingly positive with 69 percent of seniors say “good” or “excellent” to advising compared to 74 percent of first-year students. Seniors indicate by 89 percent that their entire experience was “good” or “excellent” at CSU Stanislaus. Likewise, if seniors could start over again, 84 percent say “probably yes” or “definitely yes” they would attend CSU Stanislaus.

| | | First-Year Students | | Seniors | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers | CSU Stanislaus | Selected Peers |
| Exhibit 11. <i>Overall Student Satisfaction with Educational Experiences at CSU Stanislaus</i> | | | | | |
| Item | Description | <i>Good, Excellent</i> | <i>Good, Excellent</i> | <i>Good, Excellent</i> | <i>Good, Excellent</i> |
| 12 | Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution? | 74% | 80% ^a | 69% | 74% ^c |
| 13 | How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution? | 90% | 87% | 89% | 87% |
| Item | Description | <i>Probably yes, Definitely yes</i> |
| 14 | If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending? | 90% | 83% | 84% | 82% |

Note. Item 12 and 13 are based on the 4-point scale: 1=poor, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=excellent. Item 14 is based on the 4-point scale: 1=definitely no, 2=probably no, 3=probably yes, 4=definitely yes. (Indicates a difference of means: ^a p<.05, ^b p<.01, ^c p<.001, 2-tailed)

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