



*Office of Planning and Research*

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Educational Policy Committee  
Faculty Executive Committee  
Student Affairs Committee  
Senior Staff  
Budget Director

**FR:** Janel Henriksen Hastings, Director

**RE:** National Survey of Student Engagement  
2007 Survey Results

**DT:** December 17, 2007

I am pleased to share with you the attached report which summarizes the findings of our students' participation in the 2007 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). This is the fifth year in which Scripps College has participated in this national study that assesses students' engagement in the classroom and in other academic pursuits.

The survey was administered to 220 first-year students and 186 seniors; a total of 104 first-year students and 79 seniors participated in the survey, yielding a combined response rate of 45%, down from 60% in 2006.

***Level of Academic Challenge***

In compassion to their peers, both first-year students and seniors at Scripps reported having experienced higher levels of academic challenge. In the aggregate, Scripps students also surpassed the top 10% of all NSSE 2007 institutions in terms of this benchmark.

The vast majority of respondents felt that their coursework emphasized high levels of mental activities; 95.4% of respondents felt that mental *analysis* was emphasized "quite a bit" or "very much", while 86.2% felt the same about *synthesis*. *Making judgments* had a smaller percentage of students in agreement (71.8%) while *application of theories* had 79.9% of student indicating that

the activity was strongly emphasized. When comparing the responses of first-year students and seniors, consistent variations could be seen.

- On a Likert scale of 1 to 4 with 1 referring to “very little” and 4 referring to “very much”, seniors has consistently higher mean scores than first-year students.

### ***Active and Collaborative Learning***

In a recent webinar hosted by the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, George Kuh of NSSE indicated that while all the benchmarks are significant in contributing to student engagement, the most effective of the educational practices were *active* and *collaborative learning*.

- Scripps data suggest 74.9% of first-year students and seniors at Scripps are actively engaged in the classroom by asking questions or contributing to class discussions “often” or “very often.” However, only 37.1% reportedly made a class presentation and only 21.3% worked with classmates on projects during class “often” or “very often.” Another 74.6% of respondents stated they “never” participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course.
- Respondents were, however, engaged in discussing ideas from classes and readings with others outside of class, such as family members and co-workers, as demonstrated by 83% who reported that they “often” or “very often” did so. While the data also illustrate that first-year students at Scripps were less engaged in ACL than their peers with the exception of the national average, seniors felt more engaged in ACL than first-year students, reflecting higher levels of ACL compared to most peers.

### ***Student-Faculty Interaction***

In general, Scripps seniors reported significantly higher levels of student-faculty interaction than first-year students. This was the case for seniors in all kinds of institutions, and in the aggregate Scripps seniors ranked high in SFI. However, in comparison to their peers, first-year students at Scripps were the least inclined to rank highly in SFI.

- While more than 75% of student respondents said that they “sometimes”, “often” or “very often” spoke with faculty members regarding grades, career plans, and ideas from the course, 23.2% of respondents said that they had “never” discussed ideas from readings/class with the faculty member outside of class. Another 20% said that they “never” discuss career plans with a faculty member or advisor.
- The data also suggest that students are mixed in their desire to work closely with faculty members; 30% of respondents reported that they had no plans to work on a research project with a faculty member outside of an academic requirement, while 25.9% of respondent had not decided. Another 27.6% plan to do so, while only 16.5% already had done so. Similarly, as evident from Figure 6, 53.7% had “never” worked with a faculty member on a co-curricular committee or activity and only 15.8% had done so “often” or “very often”.

### ***Enriching Educational Experiences***

By far, seniors at Scripps reported the highest levels of EEE when compared to peer institutions aggregates with scores in the top 10% of all NSSE 2007 institutions.

- Measured by the frequency of activities that integrate and apply knowledge, EEE reflect learning opportunities that enhance formal academic programs. 68.3% of respondents reported that they had serious conversations with other students of a different race/ethnicity “often” or “very often.” To a lesser extent (55.4%) of survey respondents engaged in in-depth conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions or personal values.
- More than 70% of respondents indicated that they “plan to do” or have already “done” an internship, volunteer work, enroll in additional foreign language coursework, study abroad, and complete a culminating academic project. In addition, 63% of Scripps survey respondents reported spending between one and ten hours per week on co-curricular activities.

### ***Supportive Campus Environment***

Approximately 86% of survey respondents felt that Scripps provides the support necessary to succeed academically “quite a bit” or “very much”, while only 1.8% reported that the college did “very little.” Another 44.5% reported that the institution provided the support to thrive socially, whereas 42.7% said that Scripps provided only “some” support and 12.8% felt that “very little” support was provided to assist students in this regard. Regarding support for non-academic responsibilities such as work and family undertakings, 22.4% of respondents indicated that the college helped them cope with such matters “quite a bit” or “very much” with 30.9% reporting that the institution did “very little.”

### ***Overall Satisfaction***

First-year students at Scripps were most satisfied with their experiences in college with 90% reporting that they would “probably” or “definitely” select Scripps if they had to make a college choice all over again, while 84% of Scripps seniors felt the same way.

### ***Utilization of NSSE Data for WASC and Assessment Activities***

NSSE has mapped survey questions to the various standards and criteria outlined by WASC. While the final report is not structured to reflect the WASC standards, the benchmarks offer a look into important aspects of student outcomes. Also, since Scripps has participated in NSSE for the last five years, a longitudinal study may be conducted to look at two cohorts of students, namely the Class of 2006 and 2007, rather than merely comparing first-year students and seniors within the same year.

**National Survey of Student Engagement**  
**HIGHLIGHTS OF DATA AND FINDINGS**

Prepared by

Office of Planning & Research  
Scripps College  
December 2007

**Introduction**

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is an annual survey of first-year students and seniors completing undergraduate degrees in colleges and universities nation-wide regarding the nature and quality of their college experiences. It is based on the premise that colleges can assess the quality of their students' experiences by examining the frequency of student engagement in a myriad of activities. Additionally, NSSE provides participating institutions with comparative data to assist in the assessment of student engagement on individual campuses.

*Purpose of Studying Student Engagement*

A large and continually growing body of research literature on college student development demonstrates that the extent to which students involve themselves in educationally purposeful activities is the best predictor of learning and personal growth (Astin, 1993; Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991). Hence, the NSSE survey assesses student participation in various activities that are highly correlated with learning, personal growth and other outcomes such as persistence, graduation and student satisfaction.<sup>1</sup> Based on key educational practices identified by Chickering and Gamson (1987), NSSE created five benchmarks intended to serve as a valuable assessment tool of effective educational practice:

- Level of academic challenge
- Active and collaborative learning
- Student-faculty interaction
- Enriching educational experiences
- Supportive campus environment

Consequently, the discussion of findings, trends and data analyses in this report is structured accordingly with these benchmarks. Additional information reflecting the greatest disparity or alignment amongst peers are also highlighted.

*History of Scripps' Participation*

Scripps became a participating institution in 2002 during its pilot testing phase, and Scripps became a formal participant in 2003. As a result, this year represents the fifth year in which Scripps' data have been included for comparisons with other institutions within its 2005 Basic Carnegie classification, *Baccalaureate Colleges- Arts and Sciences*.

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<sup>1</sup> See NSSE Conceptual Framework at [www.nsse.iub.edu/html/researchers.cfm](http://www.nsse.iub.edu/html/researchers.cfm) for more details.

### *Comparative Data*

In 2006, Scripps joined a consortium of women's colleges participating in the 2006 NSSE study. This consortium also collaborated on the creation and inclusion of twenty additional questions to address the unique characteristics of member institutions. The Office of Planning and Research at Scripps played a key role in the development and finalization of these additional questions. The three peer groups, from which aggregated data is used to conduct comparative analysis, in 2007 are:

- Women's Colleges (21 institutions) <sup>2</sup>
- Carnegie Peers (111 institutions) <sup>3</sup>
- NSSE 2007 (585 institutions) <sup>4</sup>

### *Methodology and Response Rates*

The Office of Planning and Research, in collaboration with the Registrar's office, provided research coordinators at Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research in Bloomington, where NSSE is housed, with email addresses of 445 students who were either a first-year student by academic standing or were candidates for graduation. Email messages, under the President's name, were sent to these two student cohorts inviting them to participate in the survey. The 2007 study was administered solely online in a web-based format and easily accessed by a link provided in each email. Follow-up reminders were also sent prior to the response deadline. While the national NSSE 2007 response rate for web-only schools was 37%, Scripps obtained an overall response rate of 45% where the response rate for first-year students was 47% and the rate of response for seniors was 42%.

### **National Findings and Demographics**

More than one million first-year and senior students from 610 institutions in the U.S. and Canada were invited to participate in the 2007 study. 323,147 students responded, out of which more than 14,000 students were from Canadian institutions. After statistical adjustment for over-sampling and gender imbalance, national data represents 298,083 U.S.-only respondents.

The largest group of respondents (44%) comprised of students 19 years of age and younger, followed by 38% who were 20-23 years old. 8% were between the ages of 24 and 29, while 10% were 30 years of age and older. This is consistent with national data from survey participants in 2005 and 2006.

Table 1 illustrates race/ethnicity of survey respondents in 2006 and 2007. The first major column provides data from student respondents; the second major column represents the student population at all NSSE 2007 institutions, and the third major column reflects the profile of all students in four-year institutions.

While the percentages of NSSE respondents are representative of the national postsecondary populations, some racial/ethnic identifications were either slightly over- or under-represented within the cohort of NSSE respondents. The greatest difference between national data and NSSE respondents is the over-representation of *Caucasian/White* students in the survey population by

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<sup>2</sup> See the Office of Planning and Research for the list of institutions in this peer group.

<sup>3</sup> 2005 Basic Carnegie classification: *Baccalaureate Colleges- Arts and Sciences*. See the Office of Planning and Research for the list of institutions in this peer group.

<sup>4</sup> See [http://nsse.iub.edu/nsse\\_2007/2007-colleges.cfm](http://nsse.iub.edu/nsse_2007/2007-colleges.cfm) for the list of all participating institutions in 2007.

six percent, while *African American/Black* and *Hispanic* students were under-represented. This is consistent with the pattern in 2006 with slight variations in percentage points.

**Table 1. Race/ethnicity of NSSE respondents in relation to national data, 2006-2007**

	NSSE Respondents		All NSSE Schools		IPEDS National	
	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007
African American/ Black	7%	7%	10%	10%	11%	12%
American Indian/ Alaska Native	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Asian/Asian American/ Pacific Islander	4%	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%
Caucasian/ White	75%	74%	67%	73%	64%	68%
Hispanic	5%	6%	7%	8%	8%	10%
Other	1%	1%	7%	1%	6%	n/a
Multiracial/ Ethnic	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	-	n/a

Source: IPEDS Enrollment Data Files, NSSE Institutional Report

In terms of living arrangements, approximately 44% of students lived on campus (71% of first-year students, 18% of seniors) with 40% living within driving distance, and 15% living within walking distance.

42% of all students reported earning mostly A grades while only 9% reported earning mostly C grades and below.

38% of all respondents were first-generation college students, with no parent having completed a baccalaureate degree. However, 50% indicated that at least one parent had graduated from college.

## **Findings: Level of Academic Challenge**

The level of academic challenge (LAC) may be viewed as challenging intellectual and creative work central to student learning. It is measured by the level of emphasis on mental activities, and the amount of reading and writing along with various other items that measure student effort. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate some key indicators of LAC at Scripps.

Figure 1 illustrates that the vast majority of respondents felt that their coursework emphasized high levels of mental activities; 95.4% of respondents felt that mental *analysis* was emphasized “quite a bit” or “very much”, while 86.2% felt the same about *synthesis*. *Making judgments* had a smaller percentage of students in agreement (71.8%) while *application of theories* had 79.9% of student indicating that the activity was strongly emphasized.

Upon further data disaggregation, consistent variations were exhibited between first-year students and seniors. On a Likert scale of 1 to 4 with 1 referring to “very little” and 4 referring to “very much”, seniors has consistently higher mean scores than first-year students. For instance, seniors had a mean score of 3.49 in terms of *synthesizing/organizing ideas* compared to 3.21 for first-year students. Similarly, the mean score for the *application of theories/concepts* for seniors was 3.39 compared to 3.01 for first-year students. Overall, seniors were more apt to indicate that high-level mental activities were more strongly emphasized in their coursework than first-year students.

**Figure 1. Academic and Institutional Emphasis on Mental Activities, by percent**

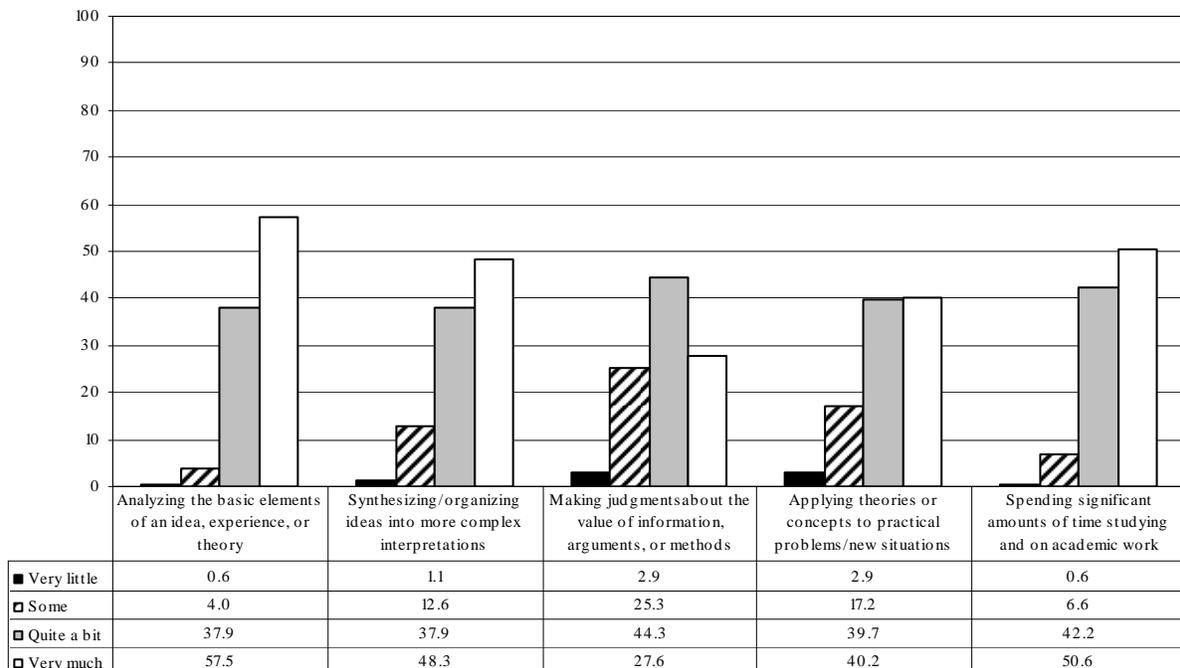
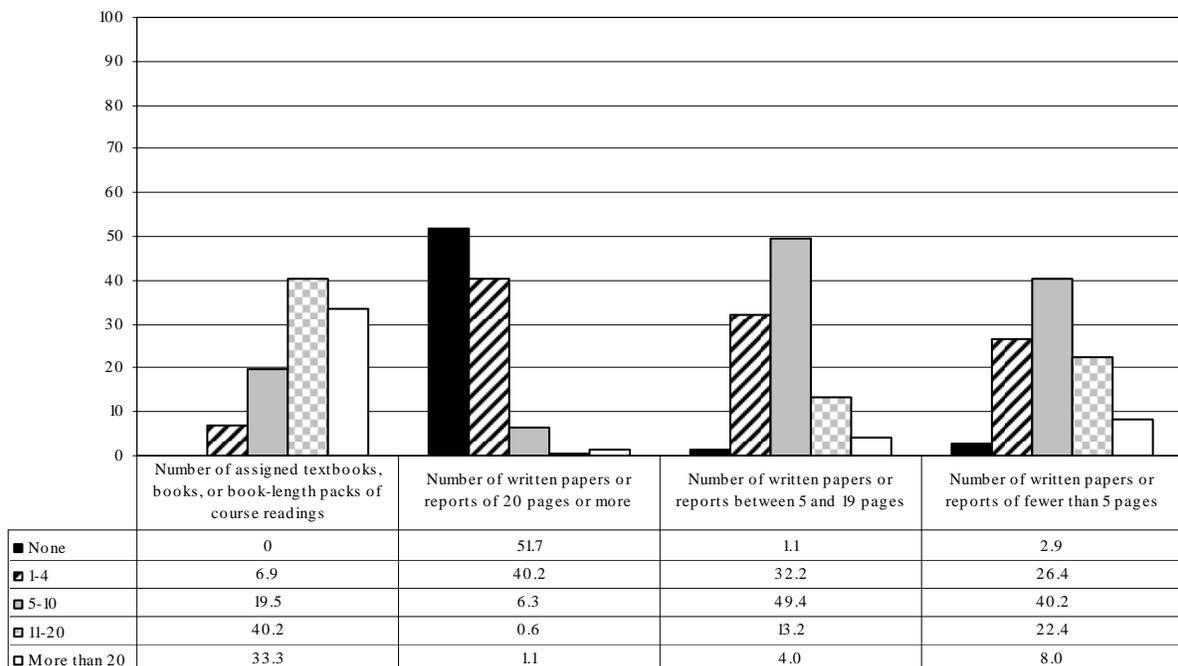


Figure 2 shows the amount of reading and writing in the 2006-2007 academic year. One-third of all respondents reported reading more than 20 assigned academic books with 40.2% indicating that they read between 11 and 20 books. In terms of writing, 51.7% had never written a paper or report of 20 pages or more in the school year but 40.2% had written between 1 and 4 papers of 20 pages or more. 49.4% of respondents reported writing 5 to 10 papers of between 5 and 19 pages.

Comparing responses of seniors to those of first-year students, data show that first-year students had a higher mean score than seniors, indicating that first-year students read more assigned books in the 2006-2007 school year than seniors. However, seniors tended to write more papers regardless of the length of the paper with mean scores higher than those of first-year students.

Respondents admitted having to work harder than expected in order to meet a faculty member’s standards or expectations. Only 10.2% reported never having to work harder than they thought they could with 56.5% stating that they “often” or “very often” had to work harder than they thought. Furthermore, in comparison to respondents at women’s colleges, Carnegie peers and all NSSE respondents who spent an average of 11 to 15 hours per 7-day week on academic-related work, Scripps respondents spent more time doing the same with an average of 16 to 20 hours, with seniors on the higher end of that range. No student reported spending 26 hours or more on academic-related work per week.

**Figure 2. Amount of Reading and Writing in the 2006-2007 School Year**



**Figure 3. Level of Academic Challenge, Benchmark Comparisons<sup>5</sup>**

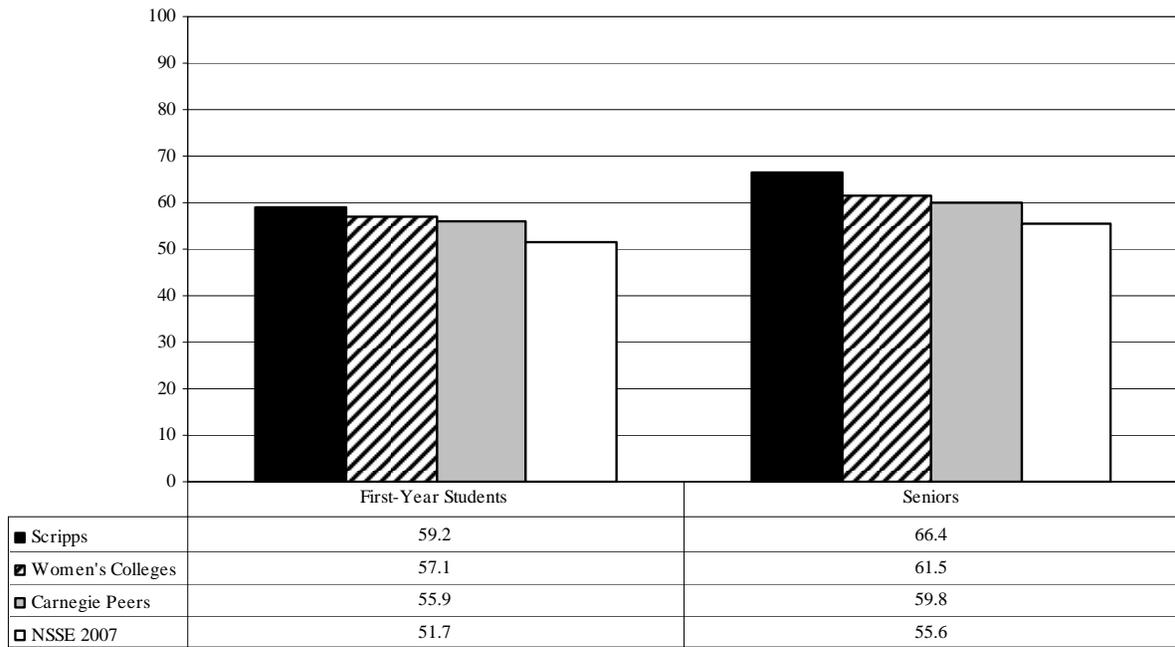


Figure 3 shows the means associated with the level of academic challenge in comparison to the collective aggregate of comparative groups. As evident in the chart, Scripps' responses reflected high levels of academic challenge, highest amongst its peers in this regard.

<sup>5</sup> All benchmark comparison data obtained from NSSE. See the Office of Planning and Research for specific items associated with each benchmark.

## **Findings: Active and Collaborative Learning**

Active and collaborative learning (ACL) is another aspect of student engagement based on the assumption that students learn more when they are intensively involved in learning in different settings. Collaborating with others is viewed as a critical aspect in mastering difficult material, and thus, ACL is gauged by assessing in- and out-of-class opportunities for collaborative work, as well as the application of classroom knowledge to endeavors outside of Scripps.

Figure 4 displays student responses associated with ACL. The data reveal that 74.9% of respondents are actively engaged in the classroom by asking questions or contributing to class discussions “often” or “very often.” In spite of this, only 37.1% made a class presentation and 21.3% worked with classmates on projects during class “often” or “very often.” 74.6% “never” participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course. Respondents were, however, engaged in discussing ideas from classes and readings with others outside of class, such as family members and co-workers, as demonstrated by 83% who reported that they “often” or “very often” did so.

**Figure 4. Active and Collaborative Learning Items, by percent**

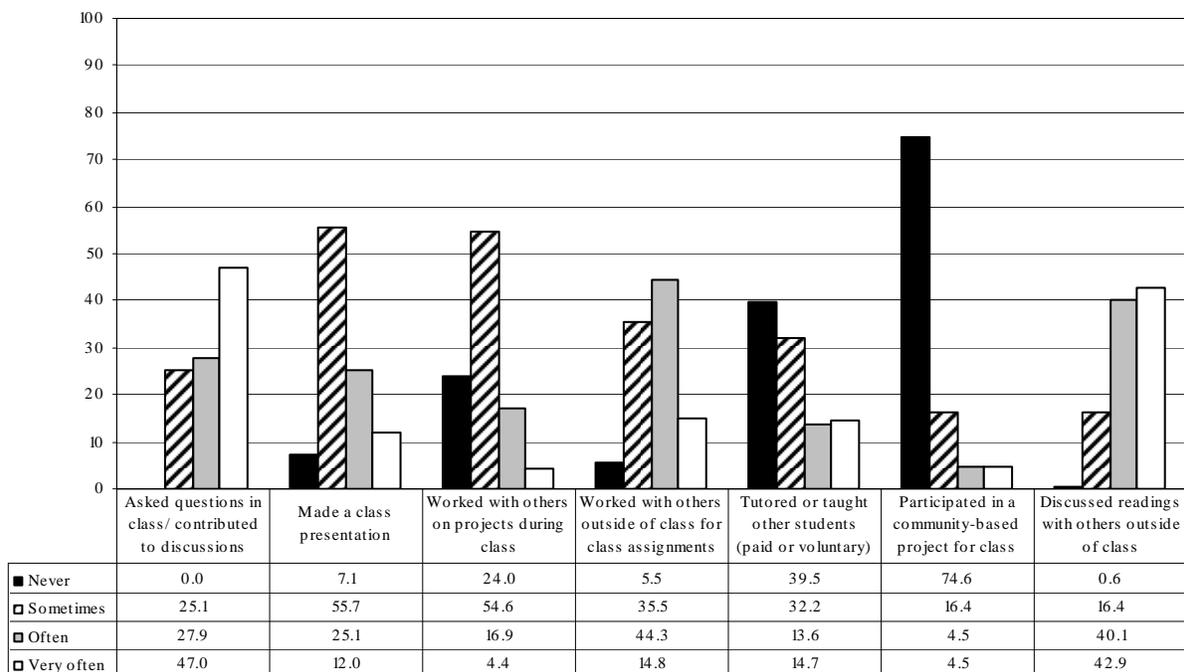
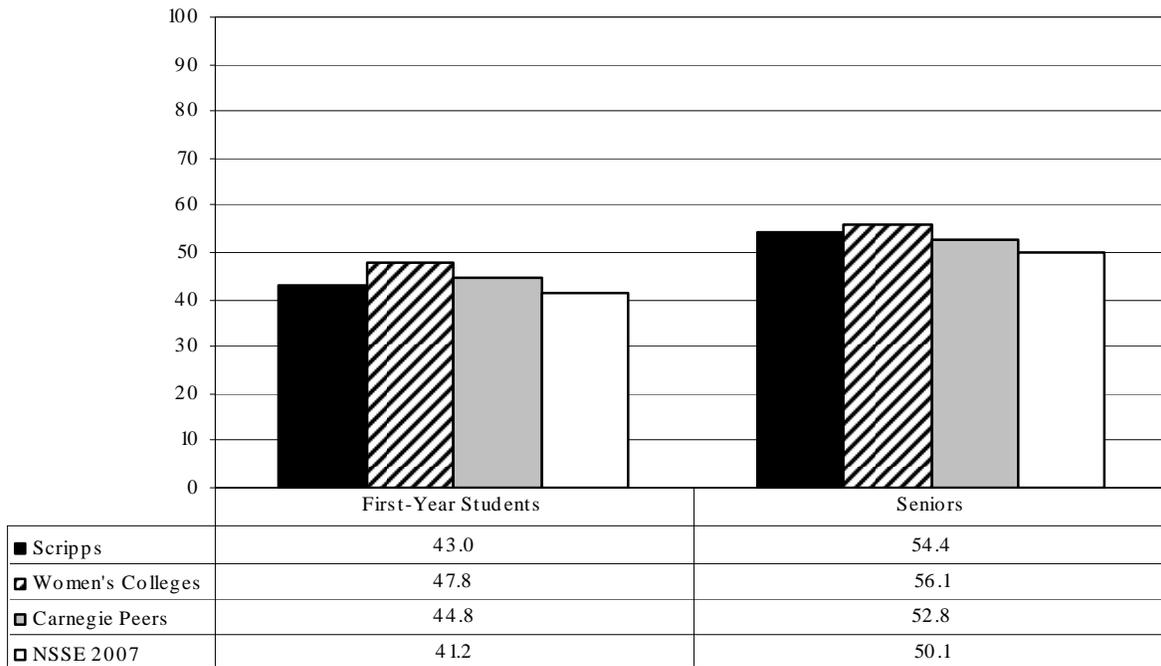


Figure 5 shows the means associated with ACL in comparison to the collective aggregate of comparative groups by respondents’ year in school. The data demonstrate that first-year students at Scripps were less engaged in ACL than their peers with the exception of the national average. On the other hand, seniors felt more engaged in ACL than first-year students reflecting higher levels of ACL compared to their peers, except for women’s colleges.

**Figure 5. Active and Collaborative Learning, Benchmark Comparisons**



## **Findings: Student-Faculty Interaction**

Survey items addressing the amount and quality of student-faculty interactions (SFI) are another aspect of student engagement. As students interact with faculty members, they learn how experts in their respective fields think about and solve issues. Consequently, faculty members evolve into mentors and role models.

**Figure 6. Student-Faculty Interaction Items, by percent**

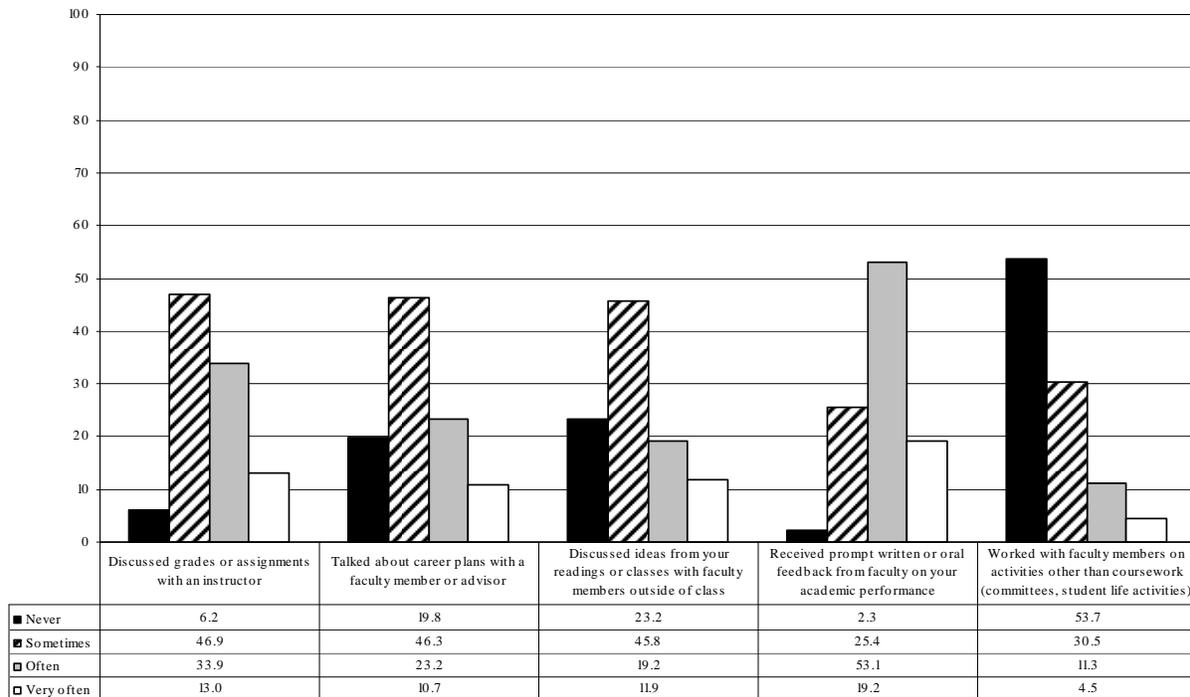
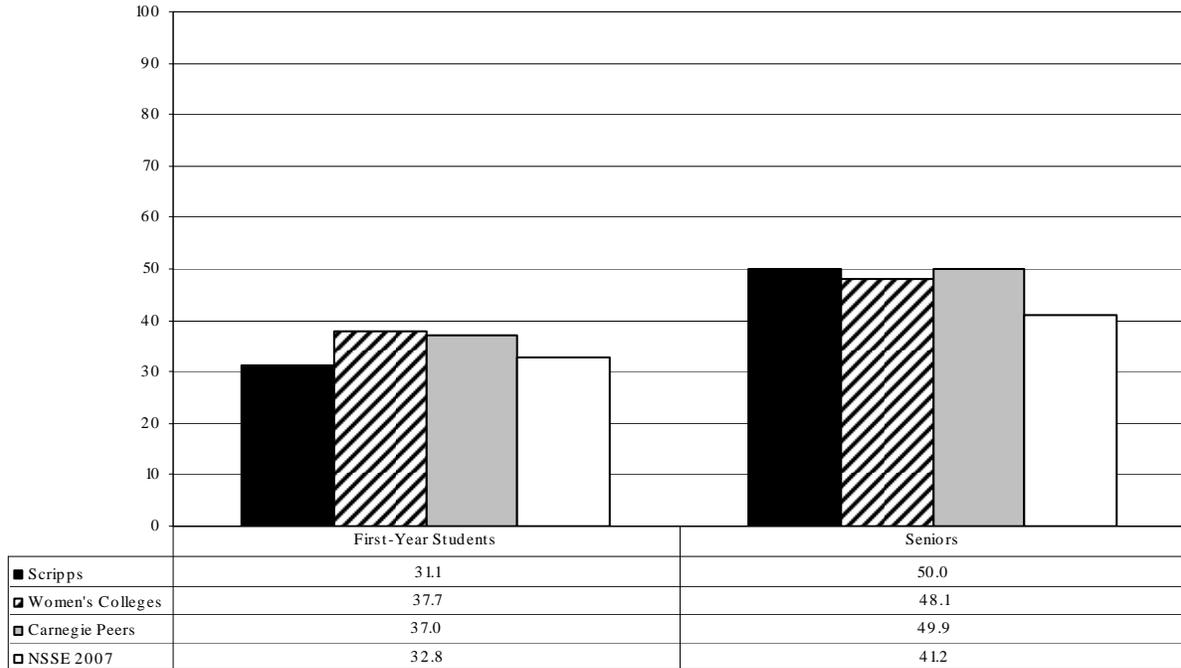


Figure 6 illustrates the frequency of SFI at Scripps, and as evident from the chart, it reveals that students do take advantage of initiating and speaking with faculty members regarding their grades, career plans, and ideas from the course outside of class. While more than 75% of student respondents said that they “sometimes”, “often” or “very often” approached faculty members regarding such issues, 23.2% of respondents said that they had “never” discussed ideas from readings/class with the faculty member outside of class. Close to 20% said that they “never” discuss career plans with a faculty member or advisor.

The data also show that students were mixed in their desire to work closely with faculty members. 30% of respondents reported that they had no plans to work on a research project with a faculty member outside of an academic requirement while 25.9% of respondent had not decided. Another 27.6% plan to do so while only 16.5% already had done so. Similarly, as evident from Figure 6, 53.7% had “never” worked with a faculty member on a co-curricular committee or activity and only 15.8% had done so “often” or “very often”.

Faculty members, on the other hand, were reported as prompt in providing feedback to students regarding their academic performance with close to 98% of all respondents agreeing that faculty members did so “sometimes”, “often”, or “very often.”

**Figure 7. Student-Faculty Interaction, Benchmark Comparisons**



NSSE-provided benchmark comparisons of student-faculty interactions with the performance of peer institutions reveal that first-year students at Scripps were less inclined to have strong SFI, not only in relation to seniors at Scripps but to peer institutions as well, including the national average. Across the board, first-year students as a group all had lower levels of SFI compared to seniors in each peer group as reflected in Figure 7. Scripps seniors are also shown to have stronger levels of SFI compared to peer institution groups.

## **Findings: Enriching Educational Experiences**

The extent to which students involve themselves in enriching educational experiences (EEE) is yet another means by which student engagement occurs. Measured by the frequency of activities that integrate and apply knowledge, EEE reflect learning opportunities that enhance formal academic programs. Figures 8 and 9 illustrate an assortment of such endeavors.

As shown in Figure 8, 68.3% of respondents reported that they had serious conversations with other students of a different race/ethnicity “often” or “very often.” To a lesser extent (55.4%) of survey respondents engaged in in-depth conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions or personal values. A small percentage of respondents reported having “never” had an in-depth conversation with someone who was different from themselves.

**Figure 8. Intellectual Activities that Enrich Educational Experiences, by percent**

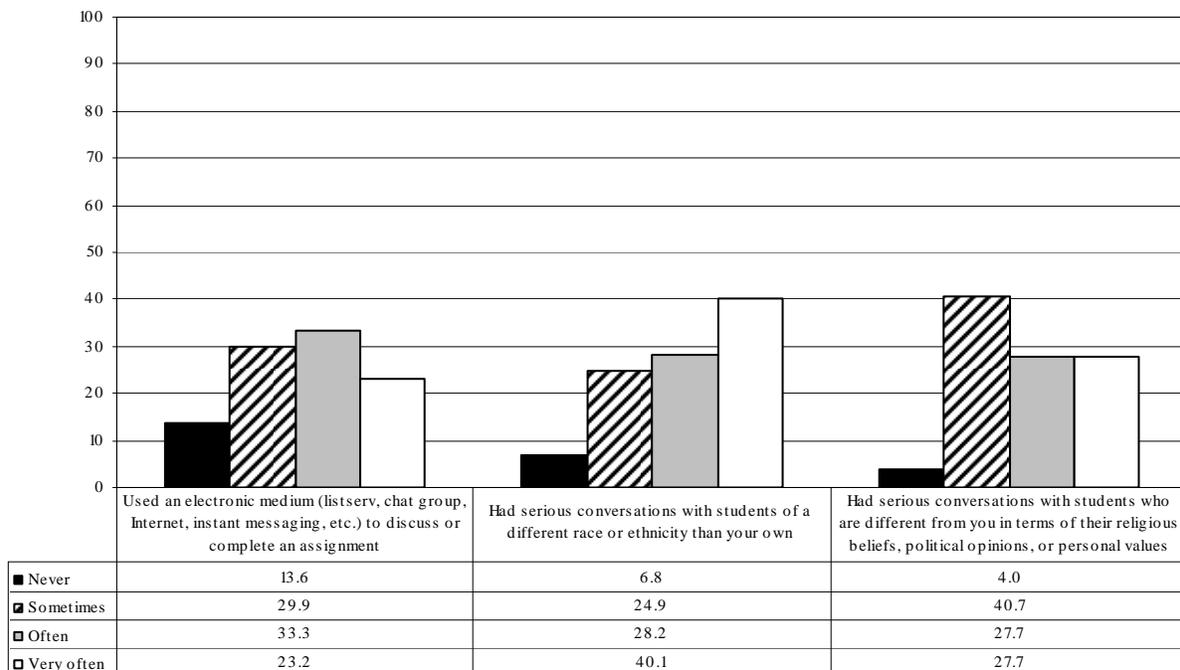
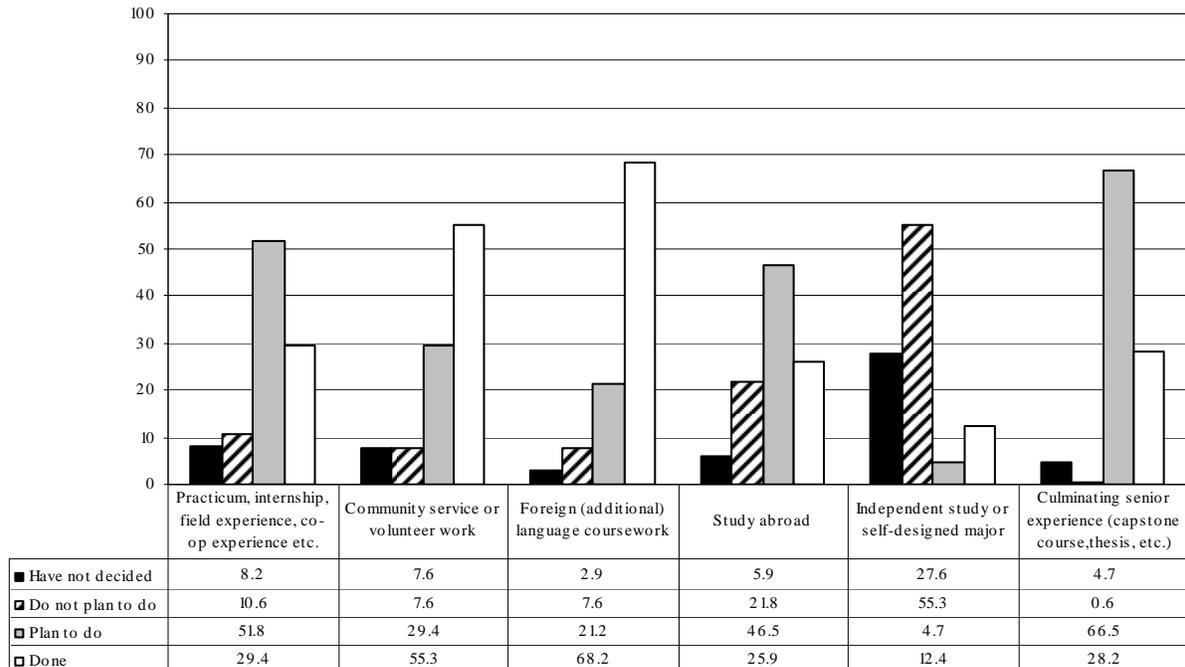


Figure 9 illustrates the level of participation in additional various activities that enrich students’ educational experiences at Scripps. More than 70% of respondents indicated that they “plan to do” or have already “done” an internship, volunteer work, enroll in additional foreign language coursework, study abroad, and complete a culminating academic project. In spite of strong interest in such activities, only 17.1% “plan to do” or have already “done” an independent study or created a self-designed major.

Participating in co-curricular activities, such as student organizations, student government, and intramural sports, are also indicators of EEE. Approximately 63% of Scripps survey respondents reported spending between one and ten hours per week on co-curricular activities; 12.1% spent between 11 and 20 hours per week on co-curricular activities, and 20.2% reported that they did not spend any time participating in co-curricular activities.

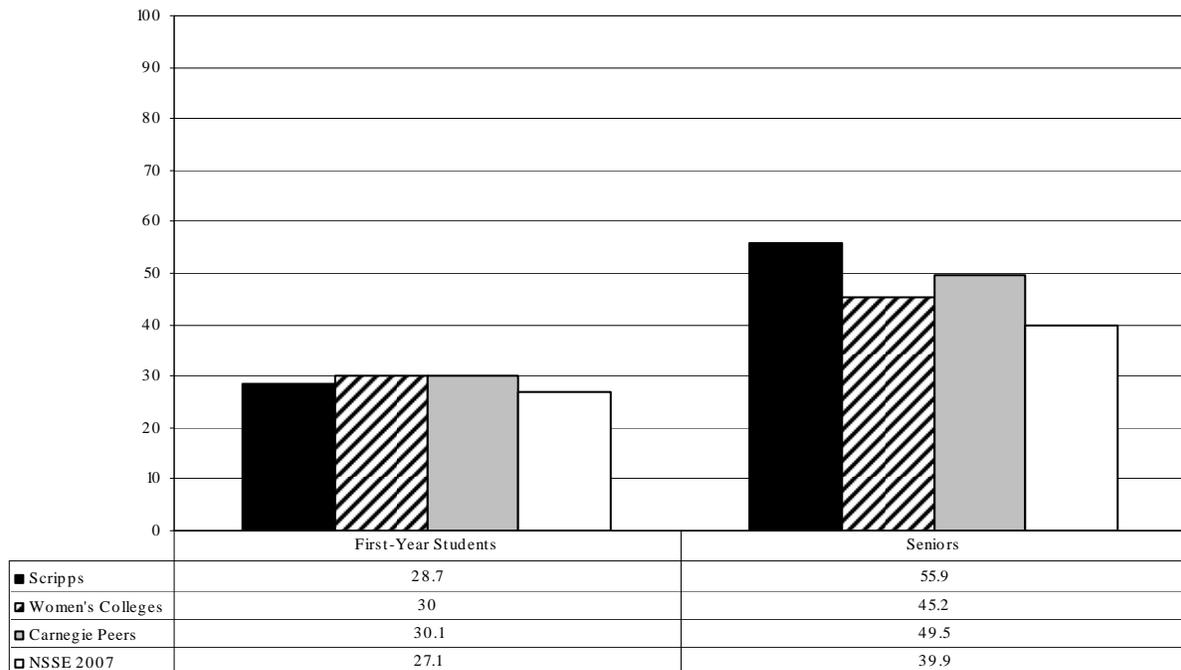
Institutional encouragement to facilitate contact among students from different economic, social and racial/ethnic backgrounds is yet another aspect of EEE. 47.3% of Scripps respondents reported that Scripps encourages such contact “quite a bit” or “very much”, while 18.8% indicated they the college did “very little.”

**Figure 9. Additional Activities that Enrich Educational Experiences, by percent**



According to the NSSE-provided benchmark comparisons of EEE, first-year students had lower mean scores than seniors across the board. A significant disparity of opinion exists between first-year students and seniors at Scripps as shown in Figure 10. The data also demonstrate that Scripps seniors have higher levels of EEE in comparison to peer institution groups.

**Figure 10. Enriching Educational Experiences, Benchmark Comparisons<sup>6</sup>**



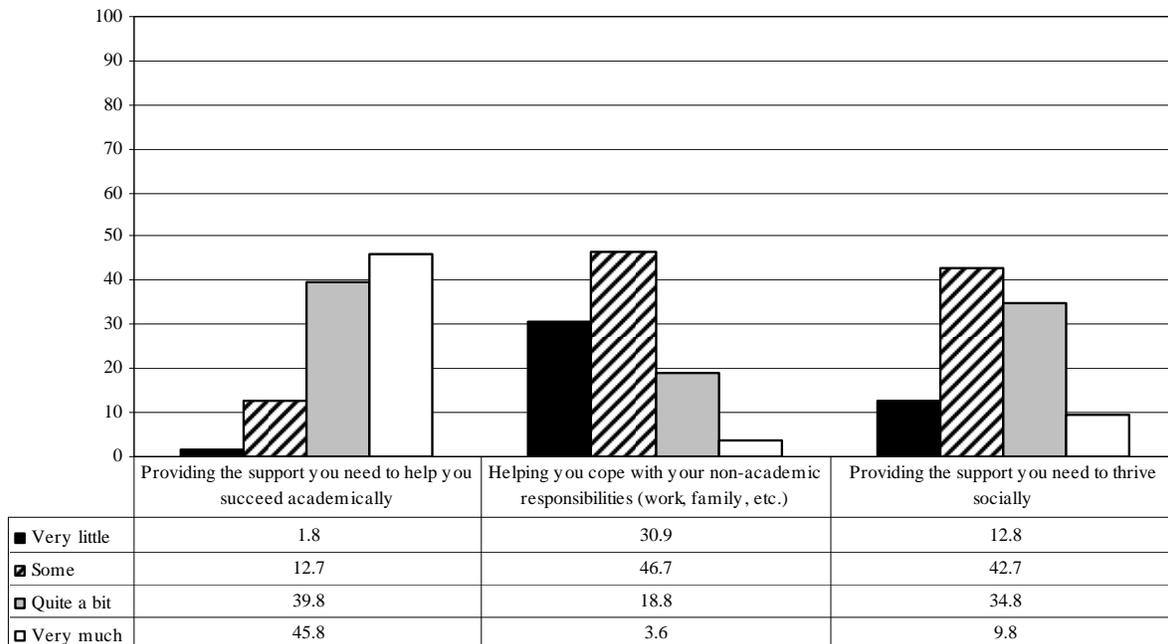
<sup>6</sup> Note that EEE benchmark comparisons include data on participation in learning communities. However, Scripps has no formal program and Scripps data does not adjust for this nuance.

## **Findings: Supportive Campus Environment**

A supportive campus environment (SCE) demonstrates commitment to cultivating positive working and social relations amongst various groups at the institution. This is yet another aspect of an engaged student and is based on the understanding that students perform better and are more satisfied when they have a campus environment that is supportive.

Figure 11 illustrates student responses regarding the extent to which Scripps provides a supportive campus environment. Approximately 86% of survey respondents felt that Scripps provides the support necessary to succeed academically “quite a bit” or “very much”, while only 1.8% reported that the college did “very little.” Also, 44.5% reported that the institution provided the support to thrive socially; 42.7% said that Scripps provided “some” support and 12.8% felt that “very little” support was provided to assist students in this regard. Regarding support for non-academic responsibilities such as work and family undertakings, 22.4% of respondents indicated that the college helped them cope with such matters “quite a bit” or “very much” with 30.9% reporting that the institution did “very little.”

**Figure 11. Supportive Campus Environment Indicators, by percent**



Students were additionally asked to rate the quality of their relationships with different groups of individuals on campus. On a Likert scale from one to seven, with one referring to *unfriendly, unsupportive and unhelpful*, and seven denoting *friendly, available, and helpful*, students’ relationships with fellow students and faculty member were positive with a mean score of 5.8. Students’ relationships with administrative personnel and offices, however, had a lower mean score of 4.4.

**Figure 12. Supportive Campus Environment, Benchmark Comparisons**

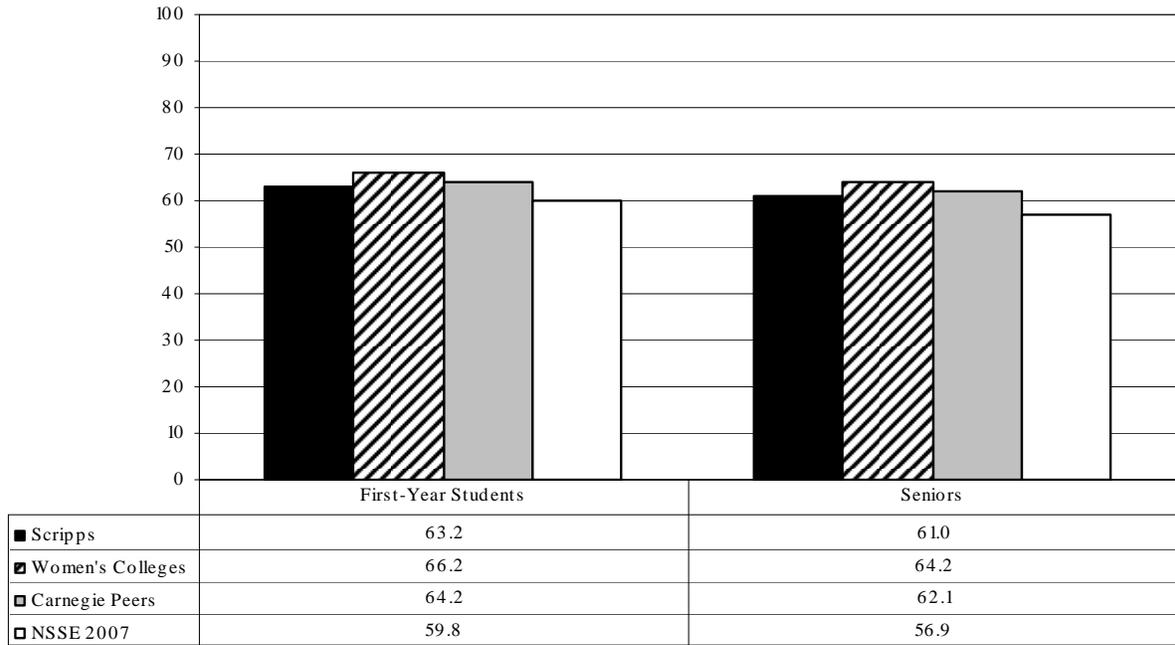


Figure 12 shows SCE benchmarks in comparison to other institutions. Both first-year students and seniors at women’s colleges and peer Carnegie institutions reported slightly higher SCE indicators than Scripps students. However, the differences in aggregate scores shows little variance within institution group type and across students’ year in school.

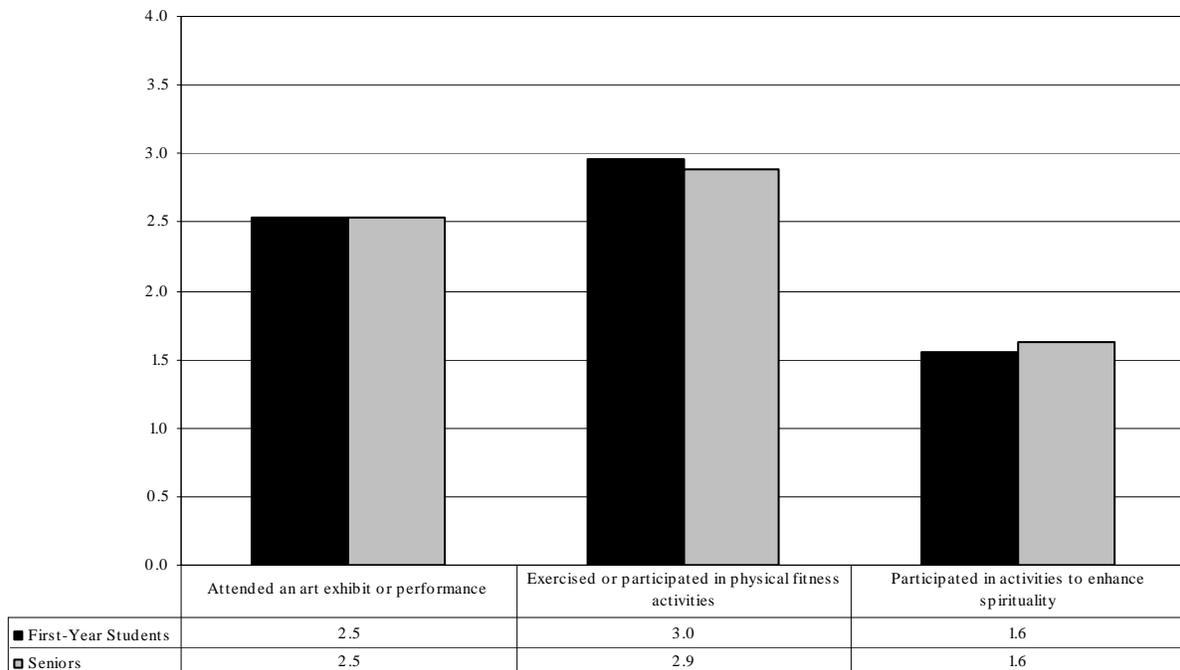
## **Findings: Scripps College**

In addition to assessing the five NSSE-provided benchmarks associated with effective educational practice, the survey also provides insight into other collegiate experiences, students' academic and personal development, and overall satisfaction with the institution.

### *Additional Collegiate Experiences*

Students were asked to indicate the frequency of their participation in various personal activities on a Likert scale of one to four, where one denotes *never*, and four indicates *very often*. As evident from Figure 13 which shows the mean scores for first-year students and seniors at Scripps, there is little differentiation in the frequency of personal activities pursued. However, NSSE-provided comparisons showed greatest differences in the frequency of participation in activities that enhance spirituality when compared with other women's colleges. The mean score for first-year students at women's colleges was 2.24 (Scripps=1.56) while the mean score for seniors was 2.30 (Scripps=1.63). Mean scores for first-year students and seniors at peer Carnegie institutions and all of NSSE 2007 schools were also higher than Scripps.

**Figure 13. Participation in Personal Co-Curricular Activities by Means, Scripps College**



### *Educational and Personal Growth*

On a Likert scale of one to four, where one refers to *very little*, and four denotes *very much*, Scripps students responded to questions pertaining to the extent their Scripps experiences contribute to knowledge, skills, and personal development in various areas. Table 2 shows that seniors were more inclined to credit Scripps for assisting in their educational and personal growth than first-year students. *Speaking clearly and effectively, working effectively with others, and using computing and information technology* revealed the greatest variance in means between Scripps' first-year students and seniors.

**Table 2. Educational and Personal Growth, by Means**

	Scripps		Women's Colleges		Carnegie Peers		NSSE 2007	
	FY	SY	FY	SY	FY	SY	FY	SY
Acquiring a broad general education	3.4	3.6	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.5	3.1	3.2
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge/skills	2.3	2.5	2.9	3.2	2.7	2.9	2.7	3.0
Writing clearly and effectively	3.2	3.6	3.2	3.4	3.1	3.3	3.0	3.1
Speaking clearly and effectively	2.5	3.2	3.1	3.3	2.9	3.1	2.8	3.0
Thinking critically and analytically	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.6	3.3	3.5	3.2	3.3
Analyzing quantitative problems	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.2	2.9	3.0	2.9	3.0
Using computing and information technology	2.3	2.9	3.1	3.3	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.2
Working effectively with others	2.7	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.0	3.2	2.9	3.1
Voting in local, state, or national elections	2.0	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.1
Learning effectively on your own	2.9	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.0	3.2	2.9	3.0
Understanding yourself	2.6	3.1	3.0	3.2	2.9	3.0	2.7	2.8
Understanding people of other racial/ethnic backgrounds	2.5	2.6	2.9	3.0	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6
Solving complex real-world problems	2.5	2.6	2.8	3.0	2.7	2.8	2.6	2.7

**Table 2. Educational and Personal Growth, by Means (continued)**

	Scripps		Women's Colleges		Carnegie Peers		NSSE 2007	
	FY	SY	FY	SY	FY	SY	FY	SY
Developing a personal code of values and ethics	2.5	2.6	2.9	3.1	2.8	2.9	2.6	2.7
Contributing to the welfare of your community	2.4	2.4	2.7	2.9	2.6	2.7	2.4	2.4
Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	1.5	1.3	2.4	2.5	2.2	2.2	2.1	1.9

The data also show that first-year students at Scripps had lower mean scores when referring to *acquiring job or work-related knowledge/skills* and *using computing and information technology*, thus attributing less to Scripps for the development of these skills in comparison to peers at institutional comparative groups.

Seniors consistently had slightly higher mean scores than first-year students with the exception of *developing spirituality*. Here, seniors at Scripps voiced the lowest score in terms of the institution contributing to their development in this area. This score was also lower than first-year students at Scripps.

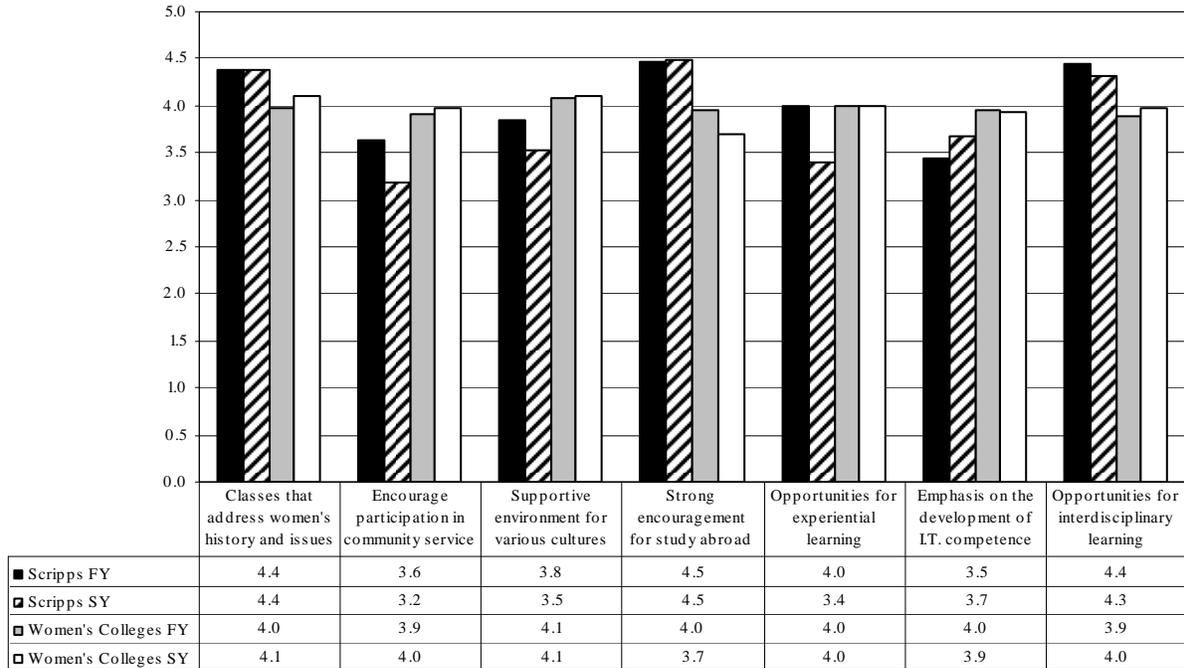
#### *Women's Colleges Consortium*

21 women's colleges also participated in the NSSE study. Additional questions were added to the survey to reflect the distinctive features of women's colleges. On a Likert scale<sup>7</sup>, students were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree that their specific institution provides the environment and resources to facilitate growth in a variety of areas. Figure 14 illustrates the items that reflect the greatest differences in responses.

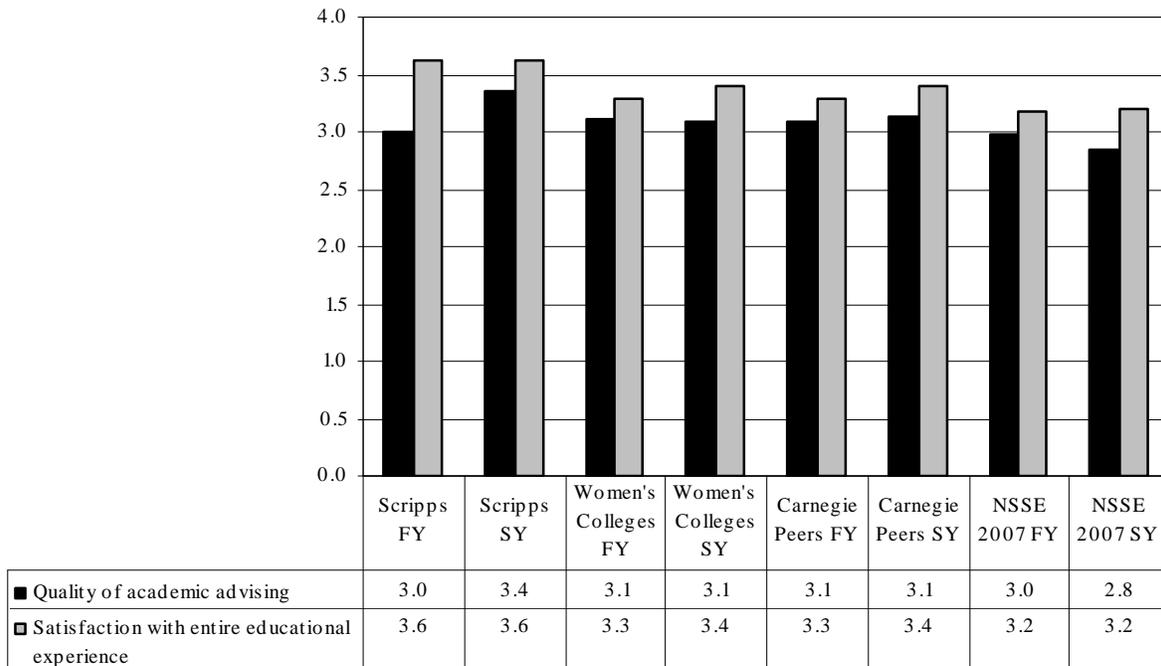
As seen from figure 14, in comparison to women's colleges as a whole, Scripps students *agree/strongly agree* that the College provides *classes that specifically address women's history and issues*, *strongly encourages a study abroad experience*, and *provides many opportunities for interdisciplinary learning*. However, there were other areas where students at women's colleges felt that their campuses supported specific activities more than Scripps. For instance, faculty/staff encouragement of *participation in community service or service-learning activities* is much lower for Scripps students than their peers, and this was particularly true for seniors. Scripps seniors also voiced lower levels of affirmation for the campus providing *an environment that is supportive of people of various cultures/ethnic backgrounds* and *opportunities for experiential learning, such as internships and field work*. Scripps students also did not feel that the campus emphasized *the development of competence in information technology*.

<sup>7</sup> Likert scale for Women's Colleges Consortium questions: 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

**Figure 14. Women's Colleges Consortium Questions by Means <sup>8</sup>**



**Figure 15. Student Satisfaction, by Means**



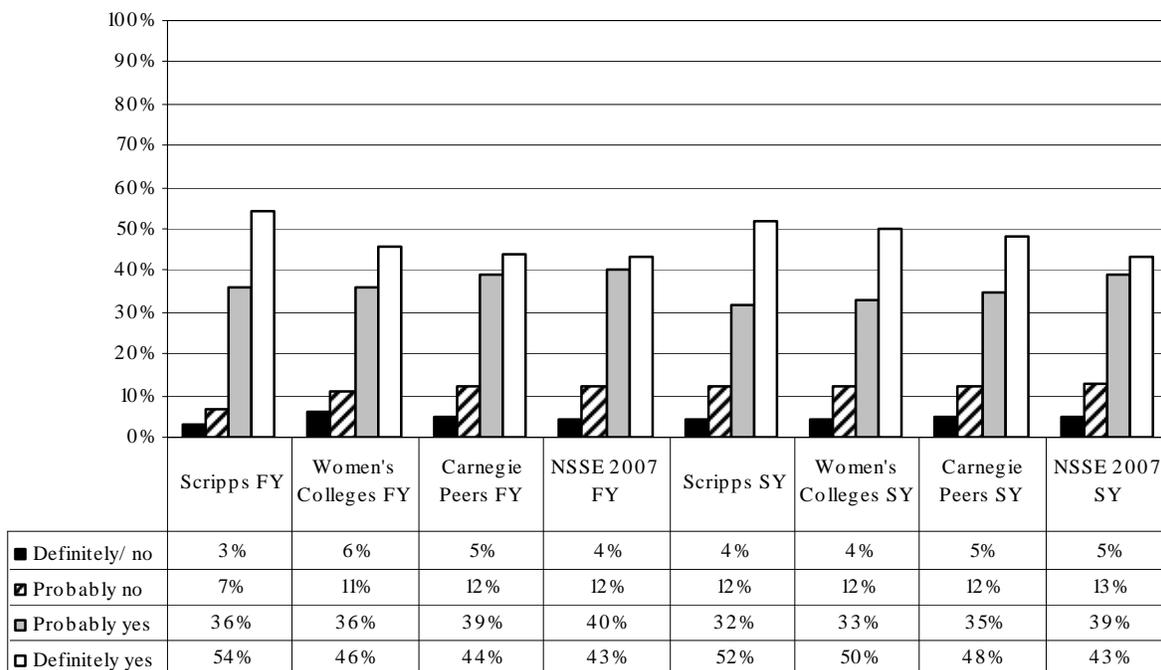
<sup>8</sup> Reflects items with greatest variance. Results of other items may be obtained from the Office of Planning and Research.

### Overall Satisfaction

Figure 15 shows the student responses regarding the quality of academic advising they have received and overall satisfaction with their college experience. With the exception of seniors at Scripps, there was little variation amongst students at Scripps and at peer institutions regarding the quality of academic advising they had received. However, the data illustrate that first-year students and seniors at Scripps had higher mean scores of satisfaction with their entire educational experience.

In terms of students' satisfaction with their college choice and the desire to attend the same institution as they are currently attending, seniors were consistent across the board reporting that "probably/definitely yes" they would enroll in the same institutions (see Figure 16). First-year students at Scripps, however, demonstrated the most satisfaction with 90% of the students reporting that they would "probably/definitely" elect to attend Scripps if they had to make a college choice all over again.

**Figure 16. Overall Satisfaction, by Percent**



## **Conclusion**

### *Summary of Significant Findings for Scripps*

- Even though first-year students at Scripps reported lower scores in four of the five benchmarks in comparison to seniors at Scripps, their satisfaction in the decision to enroll at Scripps was higher than seniors.
- Students at Scripps, regardless of year, did not pursue activities that enhance spirituality as much as their peers at other institutions.
- Seniors had significantly higher levels of student-faculty interaction than first-year students at Scripps. First-year students at Scripps reported the lowest levels of student-faculty interaction in comparison to peer groups.
- Seniors at Scripps had the highest level of enriching educational experiences in comparison to all peer groups.
- The levels of academic challenge experienced by Scripps students were higher than the aggregate of peer institutional groups, surpassing the aggregate for the top 10% of all NSSE 2007 institutions.

### *Future Participation in NSSE*

Scripps has formally administered the NSSE survey since 2003, and the results of these surveys have afforded the campus insight into student engagement for each class of students over the last five years. The College also currently participates in a variety of other national student surveys, such as the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey, Your First College Year (YFCY) Survey, and the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS) Senior Survey on an annual basis. While student engagement remains a significant aspect of institutional effectiveness, the College has elected to realign its participation in NSSE to a biennial schedule with administration of the survey in the Spring semester of odd-numbered years.

### *Utilization of NSSE Data*

Accreditation agencies have shifted the weight attributed to institutional resources to more sustainable efforts that reflect ongoing program review and strategic planning. Rather than viewing such efforts as separate entities, a more intentional convergence of these endeavors is encouraged. NSSE has mapped the survey question to the various standards and criteria outlined by WASC, which will assist in the integration of planning efforts.<sup>9</sup> The benchmarks, as reflected in the structure of this report, may also be used to enhance academic programs, co-curricular activities, enrollment management, and first-year student experience, to name a few.

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<sup>9</sup> See the Office of Planning and Research for the *Accreditation Toolkit* of the NSSE report.

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