

Higher Education Data Sharing Survey of Seniors
Class of 2008 Senior Survey

HIGHLIGHTS OF DATA AND FINDINGS

Prepared by

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Introduction

In the spring of 2008, Scripps College participated in the ninth annual Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) consortium Survey of Seniors. Membership in the HEDS consortium affords Scripps the opportunity to learn more about the undergraduate experiences, and post-graduation plans, of seniors at Scripps and at peer colleges. HEDS has also provided Scripps with aggregated data from self-selected comparative groups of institutions. However, only two peer colleges participated in this year's Senior Survey, namely Occidental College and Pitzer College.

Prior to 2006, the HEDS Senior Survey was administered during the morning rehearsal the day of Commencement. Since 2006, this survey has been administered electronically in a web-based format. Three emails were sent to 188 graduating seniors in the spring of 2008 inviting them to participate in the survey. The initial email was sent in mid-April, a reminder email was sent two weeks later, followed by a final reminder in early-May. These multiple attempts to elicit participation yielded a final and valid response rate of 59% (N=111). This marked an increase in response rates from 27% in 2007 and 45% in 2006. The increase in responses this year may be attributed to the incentive of a drink coupon for the Motley which was sent to every senior who completed the survey.

This report is divided into the following main sections:

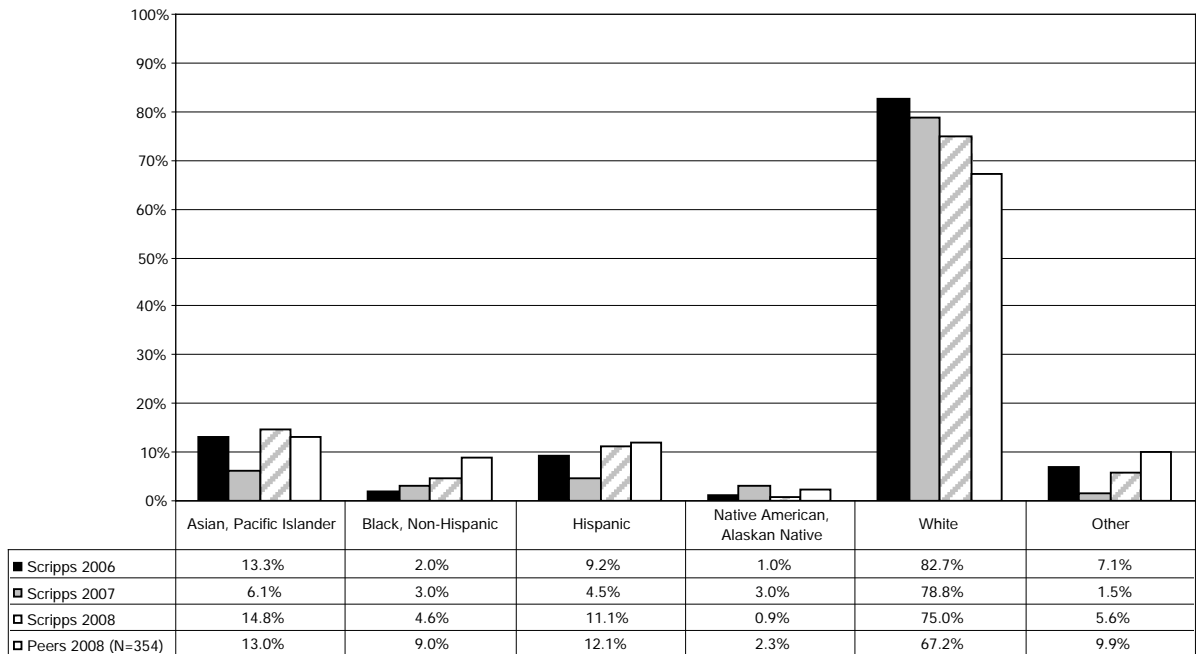
- Student Characteristics
- College Experiences
- Future Plans
- Overall Satisfaction
- Supplemental Items

Student Characteristics

Race/Ethnicity

Figure 1 below shows the race/ethnicity demographics of the students who responded to the survey. This year's data show that while minority respondents reflected the approximate racial/ethnic composition of the Scripps Class of 2008, survey respondents who identified as *white* were over-represented (actual=48.1%) and those classified as "other" were under-represented (actual=25.1%).

Figure 1. Race/Ethnicity of Scripps Survey Respondents, 2006-2008¹

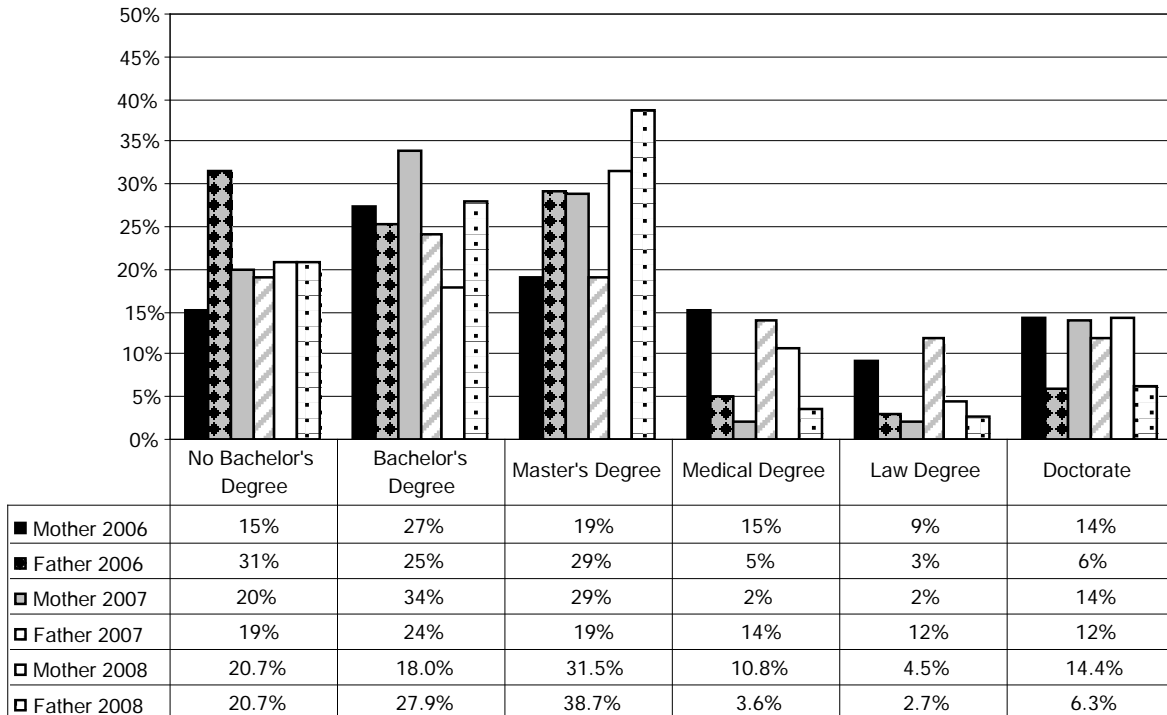


¹ Percentages may total more than 100%. Multiple responses allowed.

Parents' Educational Level

Data in Figure 2 demonstrate that close to 80% of Scripps respondents had at least one parent with a bachelor's degree or an advanced degree. A higher percentage of Scripps mothers held medical, law, and doctoral degrees than fathers. Only 5% of mothers and 2% of fathers did not complete high school. Parents at peer institutions also showed high levels of education with 74% of peer mothers, and 75% of fathers with a bachelor's degree and above.

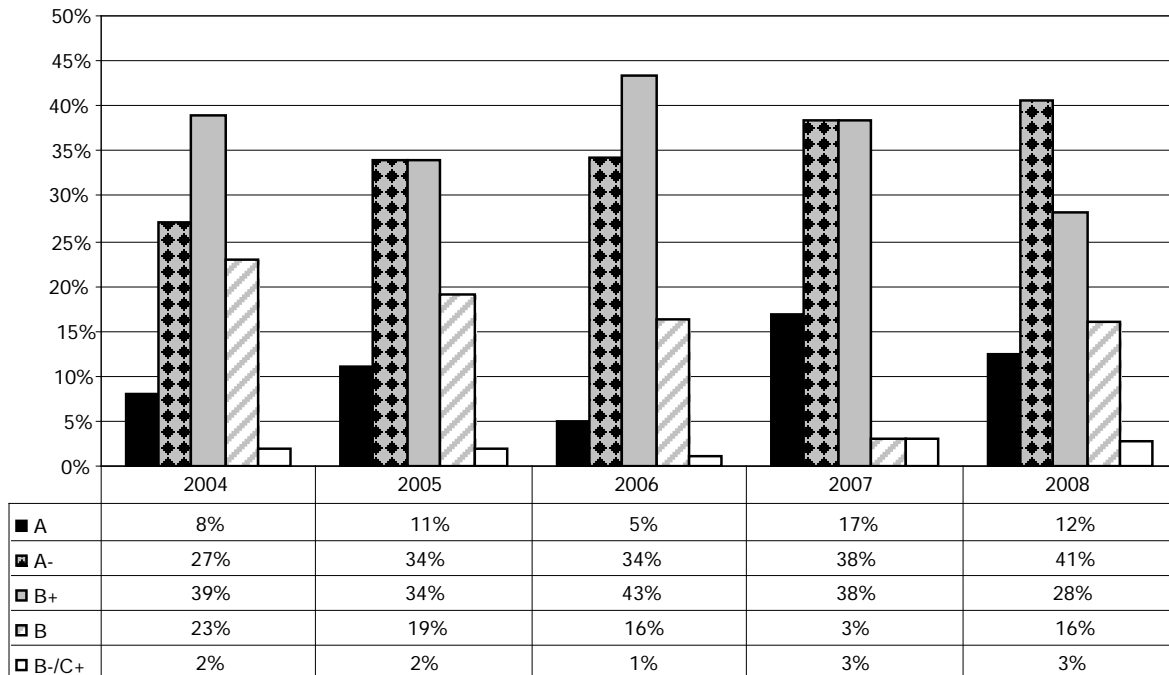
Figure 2. Educational Levels of Scripps Parents, 2006-2008



Academic Performance

Longitudinal data over the last five years reveal that the overwhelming majority (97% and above) of Scripps survey respondents graduated with a grade of *B or better*, and between 35% and 55% graduated with an *A- or better*. Figure 3 provides a graphical representation of the trends pertaining to reported grade average at graduation grades over time for Scripps students. The grade distribution of students at peer institutions was highly similar to Scripps’.

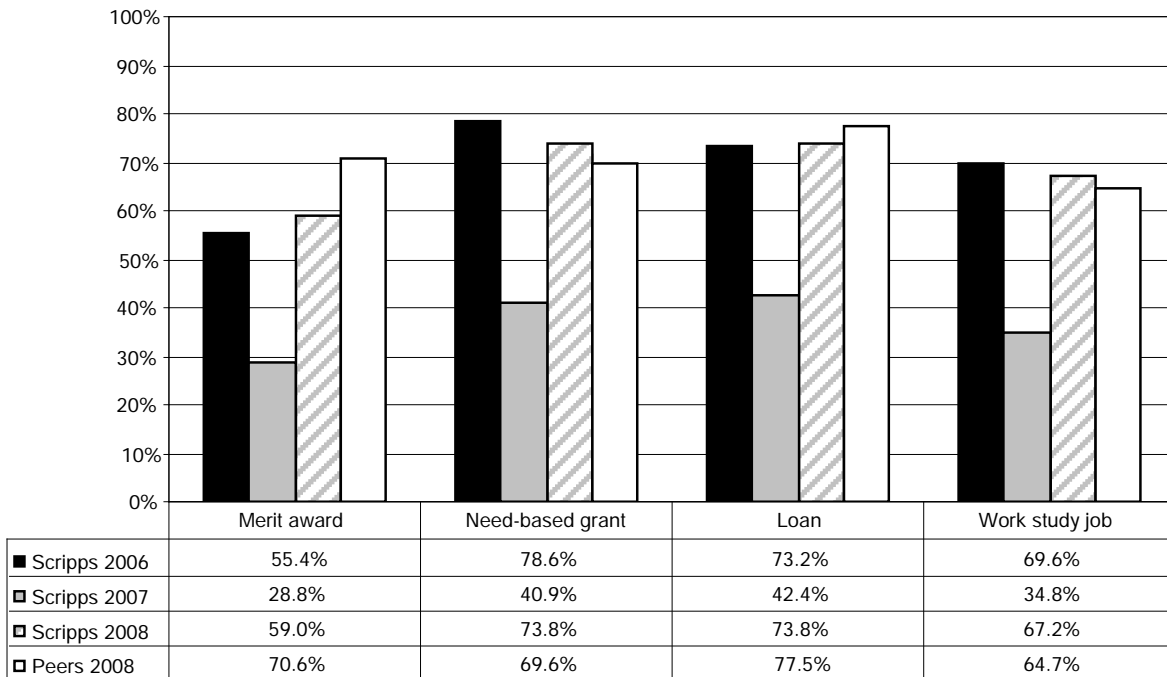
Figure 3. Overall Reported Grade Average at Graduation Grade of Scripps Survey Respondents, 2004-2008



Financing a College Education

Approximately 56% of Scripps survey respondents reported that they received some form of formal financial aid, reflecting a decrease from 89% in the previous year. Figure 4 shows the types of financial aid that Scripps students received, revealing that the aid received increased notably from the previous year. Similar to Scripps, 56% of students at peer colleges received some form of financial aid. However, 71% of students at peer institutions were awarded merit aid compared to 59% of Scripps students. Need-based grants, loans and work-study jobs showed less variation.

Figure 4. Types of Financial Aid Received by Survey Respondents, 2006-2008 ²



² Data reflects multiple responses regarding types of student financial aid received.

College Experiences

Skill Enhancement

One component of the HEDS Senior Survey elicits responses that allow institutions to assess the extent to which students' skills have been enhanced as a result of their college experiences. Table 1 shows the skills Scripps students identified as most *greatly* enhanced during their years in college. Approximately 51% of Scripps respondents felt that their ability to *write effectively* was *greatly* enhanced by the institution while 60% of students at peer colleges thought so. However, while 42% of students at peer colleges felt that their ability to *plan and execute projects* was *greatly* enhanced, 51% of Scripps students felt the same way.

Table 1. "Greatly" Enhanced Skills Identified by Survey Respondents, Scripps and Peers

	Scripps 2008	Peers 2008
Think Analytically and Logically	66.4%	69.6%
Acquire News Skills and Knowledge	64.9%	64.5%
Gain In-Depth Knowledge of a Subject	64.5%	65.8%
Understand Myself	63.0%	64.7%
Function independently	61.5%	64.8%
Work Under Pressure	55.0%	62.1%
Establish course of action	52.3%	50.7%
Plan and execute projects	50.9%	42.4%
Write Effectively	50.5%	60.1%

Students also identified specific skills that were *a little* or *not at all* developed during their college experience. Table 2 illustrates the skills that students reported were enhanced the least for Scripps students. These skills were also the least enhanced for Scripps students in the preceding three years. Scripps students reported that their abilities to *understand process of science, use technology, and evaluate the role of science and technology in society* were *a little* or *not at all* enhanced to a greater degree in comparison to the previous year. Approximately 45% of Scripps students reported that their ability to *read or speak a foreign language* was also *a little* or *not at all* enhanced by the institution.

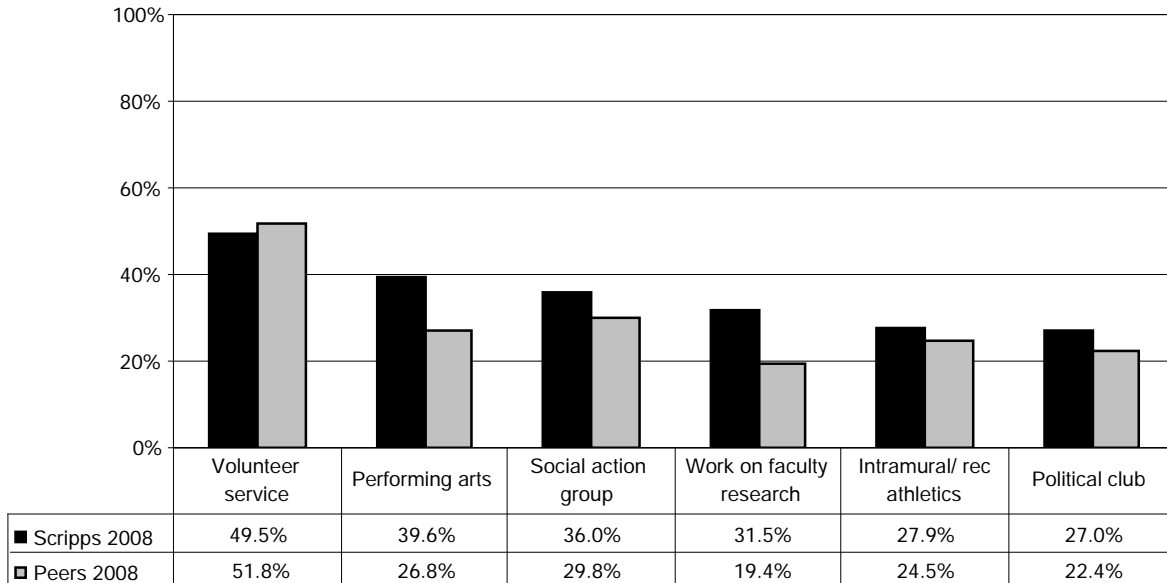
Table 2. Least Enhanced Skills Identified by Survey Respondents, Scripps and Peers

	Scripps 2008	Peers 2008
Use Quantitative Tools	53.2%	51.1%
Read or Speak Foreign Language	45.5%	49.0%
Understand Process of Science	52.3%	51.8%
Use Technology	49.5%	49.3%
Evaluate Role of Science and Technology in Society	55.0%	45.9%

Campus Involvement

Figure 5 illustrates the campus activities that Scripps respondents actively participated in the most. In these six activities, Scripps students were more engaged than students at peer institutions with the exception of *volunteer service* where participation occurred at a slightly lower rate.

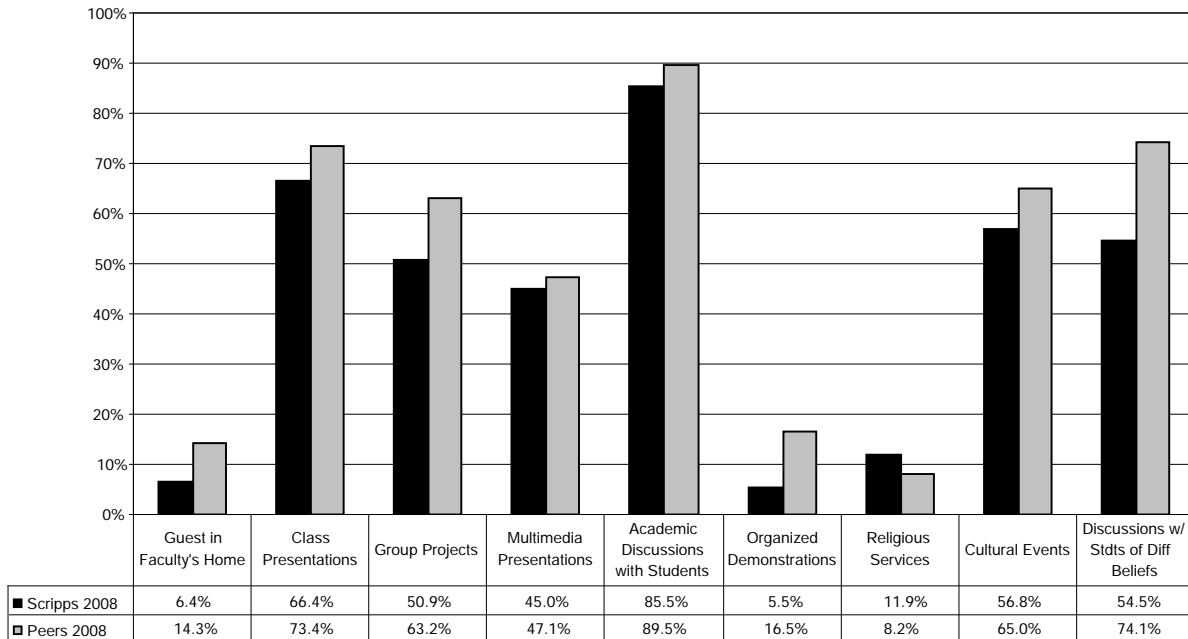
Figure 5. Active Campus Involvement of Survey Respondents, Scripps and Peers



Engagement

Figure 6 illustrates the percentage of respondents who engaged in various activities *often* and *very often*. The data show that students at peer institutions reported higher levels of engagement in *group projects* and *organized demonstrations* than did Scripps students.

Figure 6. Engagement by Survey Respondents, Very and Very Often

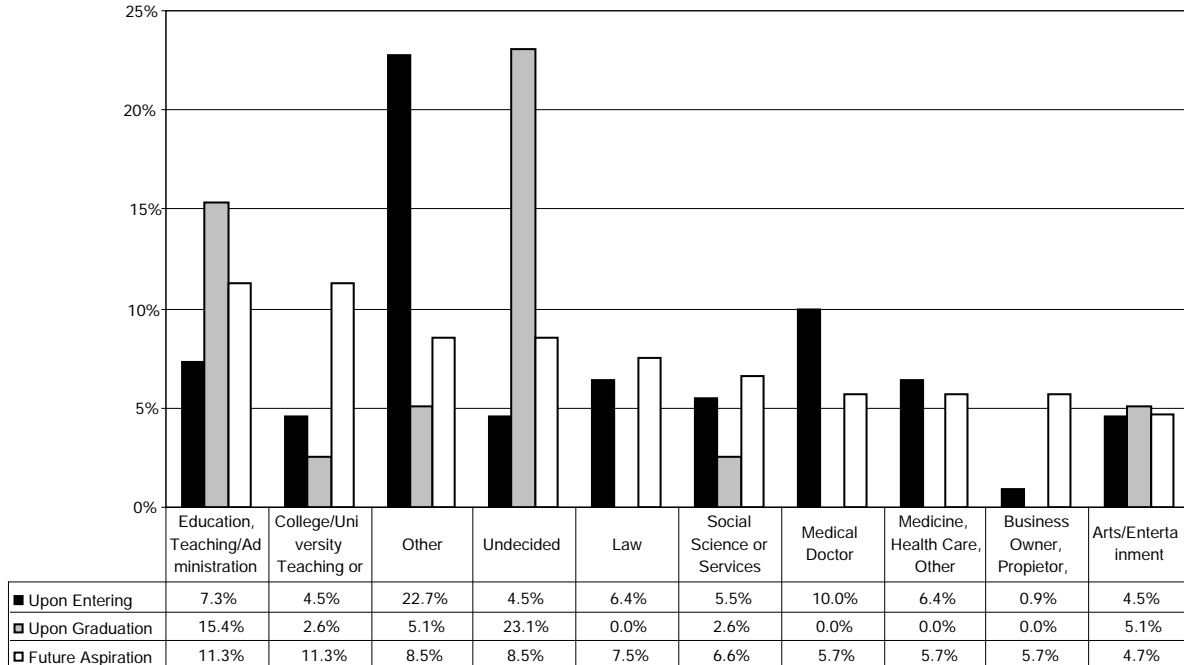


Future Plans

Employment Objectives: Past, Present and Future

The survey asked students to indicate the types of careers they envisioned for themselves at three points in time – when they entered college, when they graduate, and in the long-term. Figure 7 reflects the most popular career choices by future aspirations.

Figure 7. Popular Career Aspirations of Scripps Students Over Time, by Future Aspiration



Other than *undecided* students, *education, teaching/administration* showed the greatest increase in interest from the time students entered college to the time of graduation (+8.1%), followed by *environmental science and natural resources* (+6.8%). Other than *other*, the greatest decrease in interest was *medical doctor* (-10%), followed by *medicine/health care* and *law* (-6.45% each).

However, looking at the change from when students started college to what their long-term aspirations were, other than those who indicated *other*, the careers that showed the most change were in *university teaching/research* (+6.8%), *business owner/proprietor* (+4.8%), and *medical doctor* (-4.3%).

Perhaps most striking is that 22.7% of Scripps survey respondents indicated that they were interested in some *other* career from the list of options³ upon entering college. However, by the time students graduated, that percentage had decreased to 5.1%. Also of interest is that while only 4.5% of survey respondents entered college *undecided* as to what their career aspirations were, 23.1% remained *undecided* upon graduation. Table 3 shows the various career options when they entered college, when they graduate, and in the long-term.

³ The survey offered 32 different career options, including *other* and *undecided*.

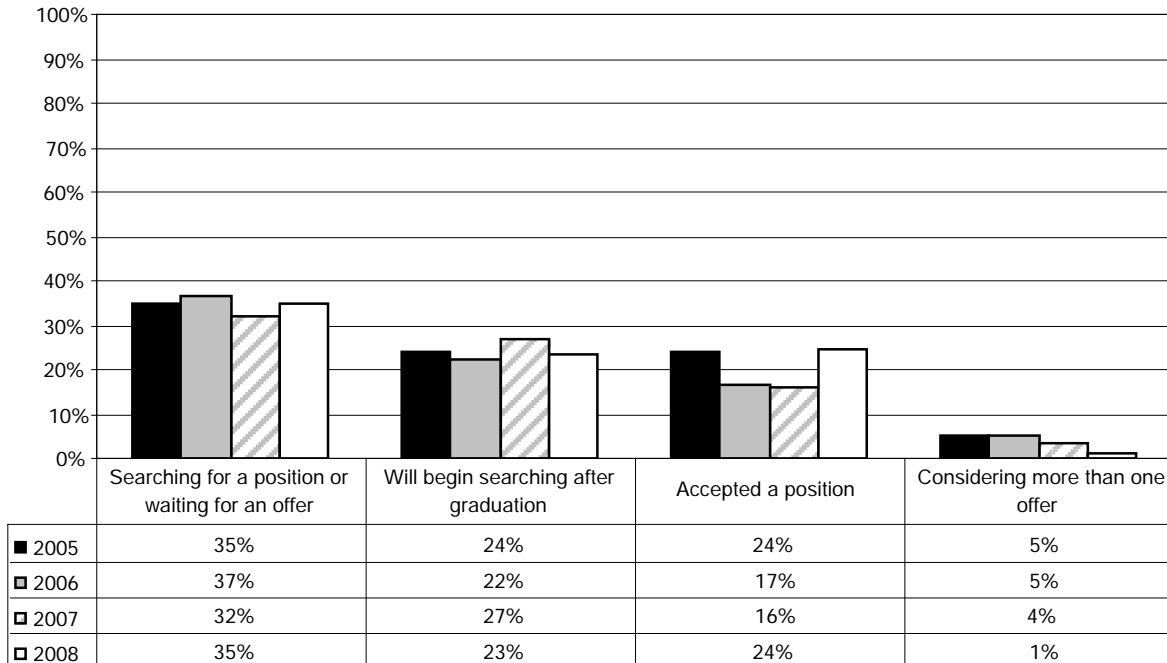
Table 3. Career Aspirations at Three Points in Time, Scripps College

	Upon Entering (N=110)	Upon Graduation (N=78)	Future Aspiration (N=106)
Accounting	0.9%	2.6%	0.9%
Advertising, Public Relations	0.9%	3.8%	0.9%
Architecture, Design, or Planning	0.9%	0.0%	0.9%
Arts/Entertainment	4.5%	5.1%	4.7%
Biology/Life Science	5.5%	6.4%	2.8%
Broadcasting, Media Productions	1.8%	2.6%	1.9%
Business Owner, Proprietor, Entrepreneur	0.9%	0.0%	5.7%
College/University Administration	0.9%	2.6%	0.0%
College/University Teaching or Research	4.5%	2.6%	11.3%
Computer Programming, Science, or Technology	0.9%	1.3%	0.9%
Education, Teaching/Administration	7.3%	15.4%	11.3%
Engineering	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%
Environmental Science, Natural Resources	0.9%	7.7%	0.9%
Finance	2.7%	1.3%	3.8%
Foreign Service, Diplomacy, International Relations	0.9%	5.1%	0.9%
Government, Politics, Public Policy	3.6%	0.0%	2.8%
Homemaker	0.9%	3.8%	0.9%
Hospitality, Travel/Tourism	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
Law	6.4%	0.0%	7.5%
Library or Information Science	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
Management	0.9%	0.0%	1.9%
Marketing, Sales	0.9%	1.3%	0.0%
Mathematics, Statistics	0.9%	2.6%	0.0%
Medical Doctor	10.0%	0.0%	5.7%
Medicine, Health Care, Other	6.4%	0.0%	5.7%
Other	22.7%	5.1%	8.5%
Physical Sciences	0.0%	2.6%	0.9%
Publishing, Print Journalism	3.6%	0.0%	1.9%
Retail	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%
Social Science or Services	5.5%	2.6%	6.6%
Sports, Recreation	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Undecided	4.5%	23.1%	8.5%

Post-Graduation Plans

Senior students were also asked to indicate their primary activity in the fall following graduation in the spring. The pattern of Scripps students' employment status had not changed much over the last four years as evident in Figure 10. However, 24% of Scripps survey respondents reported having *accepted a position*, reflecting an increase in comparison to the previous two years.

Figure 10. Scripps Students' Employment Status at Graduation, 2005-2008



This year, 23% of Scripps respondents reported that they had been accepted by a graduate program with the intention of enrolling in the fall. Only 1% was accepted and elected to defer admission.

Important Career Considerations

Students were asked to rate the importance of various considerations in their choice of careers. Table 3 demonstrates those considerations deemed *very important* and *essential* by survey respondents over the last three years. For the most part, important considerations in career choices did not vary much from year to year. *Interesting daily work* and *quality of colleagues and clients* remained most important when considering career choices while having *limited working hours* remained the least important. Nevertheless, the career considerations with the greatest change from 2007 were *intellectual challenge* (+26%), *high income potential* (+18%), and the *availability of jobs* (-14%).

Table 3. “Very Important” and “Essential” Career Considerations, Scripps 2006-2008

	2006	2007	2008	3-yr Mean
Quality of Colleagues and Clients	84%	88%	92%	88%
Interesting Daily Work	94%	94%	91%	93%
Creativity and Initiative	82%	85%	85%	84%
Intellectual Challenge	82%	56%	82%	73%
Stable, Secure Future	76%	77%	73%	75%
Expression of Personal Values	76%	79%	71%	75%
Work for Social Change	65%	70%	59%	65%
Leadership Potential	58%	56%	55%	56%
Availability of Jobs	53%	64%	50%	56%
High Income Potential	32%	29%	47%	36%
Social Recognition or Status	17%	14%	24%	18%
Limited Working Hours	13%	8%	14%	11%

Overall Satisfaction

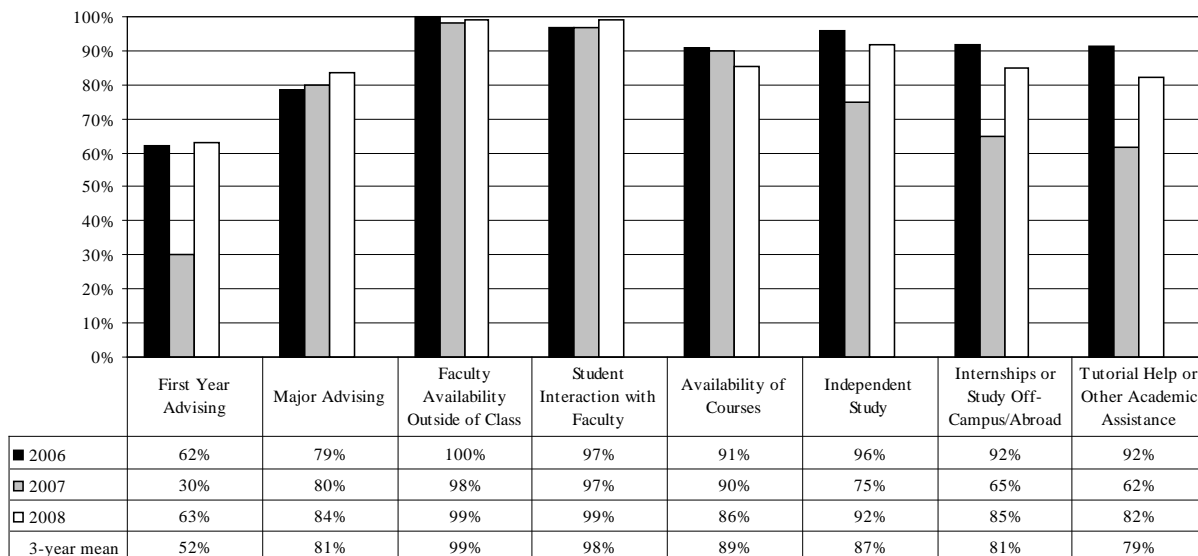
This section covers the overall satisfaction levels of students. It includes the quality of academic experiences, campus services and facilities, and campus life.

Satisfaction with Academic Experiences

Figure 11 illustrates the level of student satisfaction with academic experiences for the last three years. Data from the survey show that the majority of students were *generally* or *very satisfied* with their academic experiences. *Major advising* remained an aspect of academic life which students were the most satisfied. The largest changes in satisfaction levels from 2007 were in *first year advising* (+33%), followed by *tutorial help/academic assistance* (+21%) and *internships or study off-campus/abroad* (+20%).

Students were also asked to assess the quality of course instruction in broad disciplinary categories. Students were *generally satisfied* and *very satisfied* with course instruction, particularly in the *Social Sciences* (93%) and *Humanities and Arts* (92%). This was followed by and *Science and Math* (88%), reflecting an increase from 68% in 2007.

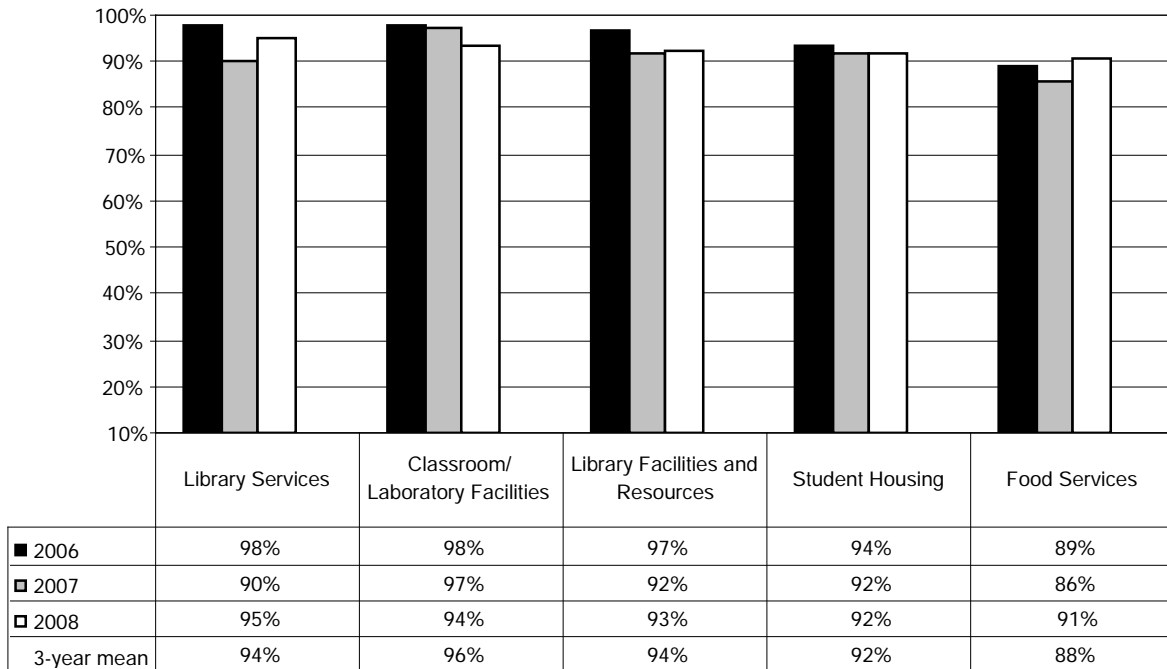
Figure 11. Scripps Students' Satisfaction with Academic Experiences, 2006-2008



Satisfaction with Campus Services and Facilities

Students were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with 16 listed campus services and facilities. In all instances, 50% or more survey respondents indicated that they were *generally satisfied* or *very satisfied* with all listed services and facilities. The five services and facilities that received the highest levels of satisfaction this year (> 90%) are shown in Figure 12. The greatest changes from 2007 were seen in *recreation/athletics* programs (+41%), *counseling services* (+30%), and *student health services* (+26%).

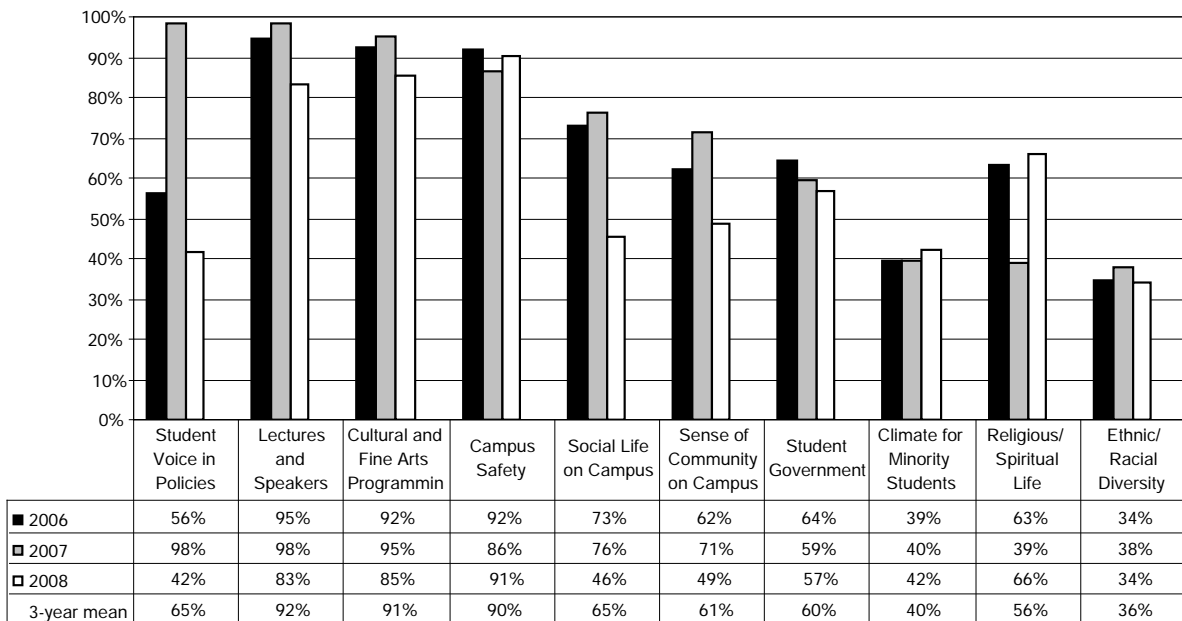
Figure 12. Scripps Students' Satisfaction with Campus Services and Facilities, 2006-2008



Satisfaction with Campus Life

Scripps seniors have expressed notably high levels of satisfaction with three aspects of campus life: *campus safety*, *cultural and fine arts programming*, and *lectures and speakers*. Figure 13 illustrates students' levels of satisfaction (*generally satisfied* or *very satisfied*) with different aspects of student life over the last three years. Notable changes from 2007 were seen in satisfaction levels in *student voice in policies* (-57%) and *social life on campus* (-31%). Satisfaction levels remained low for *ethnic/racial diversity* and *climate for minority students* with three-year averages of 36% and 40% respectively.

Figure 13. Satisfaction with Campus Life at Scripps, 2006-2008



Overall Satisfaction

Overall, 93% student respondents at Scripps were *generally satisfied* and *very satisfied* with their education, a decrease from 97% of respondents in 2007. Approximately 66% of respondents *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that it was a positive factor that Scripps was a women's college. Approximately 60% of respondents also indicated that they *probably would* or *definitely would* choose Scripps again. However, 15% of respondents indicated that they would *probably not* or *definitely not* select Scripps again.

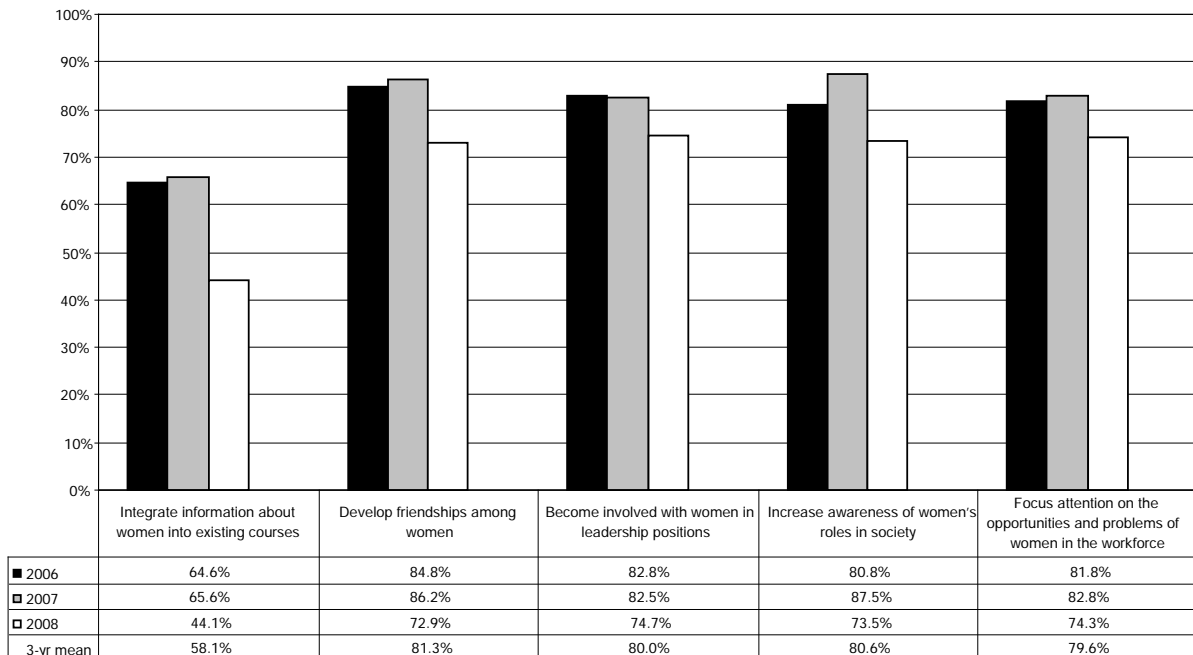
Supplemental Items Specific to Scripps College

Additional questions of the College's choosing were included as supplemental items in the survey. Scripps used this section of the survey to focus primarily on the role and status of women and the Interdisciplinary Core Program in the Humanities. Questions regarding the impact of the Malott Commons as a factor in facilitating social interaction with faculty/staff and fellow students were also included.

Women's Issues

Students were asked to rate the level of importance associated with women-specific developmental and growth opportunities afforded by a Scripps education. Figure 14 illustrates the issues identified as *important* or *very important* for Scripps women for the last three years. In all instances, levels of importance fell with *intergat(ing) information about women into existing course* showing the greatest change from 2007 (-22%). Furthermore, levels of importance in 2008 were lower than three-year means.

Figure 14. Important Issues for Scripps Women, 2006-2008



Social Interaction and Malott Commons

Students were asked to indicate their level of agreement regarding the role of Malott Commons in facilitating social interaction with different members of the Claremont community. Approximately 50% of survey respondents *agreed/strongly agreed* that Malott Commons facilitated their social interaction with other Scripps students, reflecting a decrease from 61% in 2007, and 69% in 2006. Only 33% of respondents *agreed/strongly agreed* that Malott Commons facilitated their social interaction with other Claremont Colleges' students, down from 44% in 2007. Furthermore, only 25% felt that Malott Commons facilitated their social interaction with faculty and staff, a decrease from 30% in 2007. Table 4 shows the percentage of students who *agreed/strongly agreed* that Malott Commons encouraged social interaction.

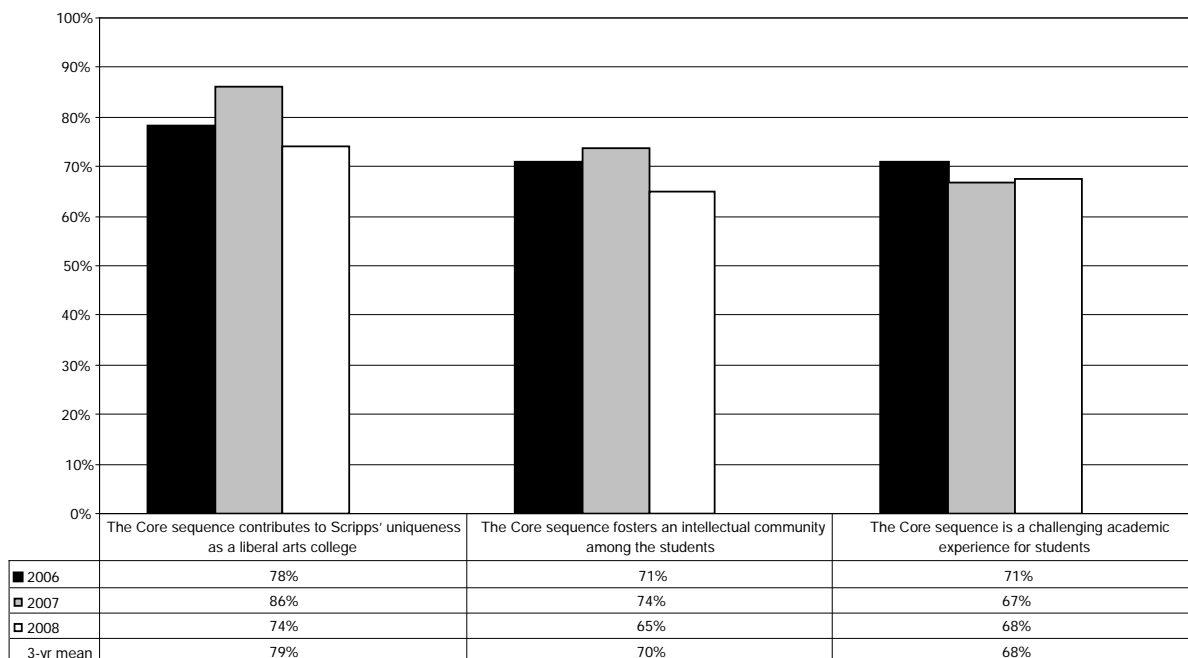
Table 4. *Social Interaction and Malott Commons, Scripps 2006-2008*

	2006	2007	2008
Facilitated my social interaction with other Scripps students	69%	61%	50%
Facilitated my social interaction with other Claremont Colleges' students	50%	44%	33%
Facilitated my social interaction with faculty/staff	31%	30%	26%

Core Sequence/Curriculum

The supplemental questions also asked students for their perspective concerning Core. Approximately 74% of survey respondents stated that they *agreed/strongly agreed* that Core contributed to the College's uniqueness, a decrease from 86% in 2007; another 65% (decrease from 74% in 2007) *agreed/strongly agreed* that the Core sequence fosters an intellectual community among students. Approximately 68% *agreed/strongly agreed* that Core was a challenging academic experience. Data from the last three years are illustrated in Figure 15.

Figure 15. Student Agreement (Agree/Strongly Agree) on the Core Sequence, 2006-2008



Summary/Brief Analysis of Findings

- Approximately 45% of Scripps students reported that their ability to *read or speak a foreign language* was only *a little* or *not at all* enhanced by the institution. This is an important consideration owing to the fact that Scripps mandates a foreign language requirement.
- Approximately 4.5% of survey reported being *undecided* concerning their career interests when they first enrolled at Scripps. However, 23.1% of respondents felt the same way at the time of graduation.
- Satisfaction levels concerning *ethnic/racial diversity* and the *climate for minority students* remained low with a three-year mean satisfaction level of 35% and 40% respectively.
- While only 56% of survey respondents reported being a financial aid recipient, the percentage of respondents who reported receiving merit aid, need-based grants, loans, and work-study jobs was 59% and above. This discrepancy may be attributed to students' working definitions of financial aid.