

The Co-curricular Experience

National Survey of Student Engagement

Student Life Research & Assessment

April 2011

INTRODUCTION

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is a national survey from the Center for Postsecondary Research (CPR) the Indiana University School of Education. The survey was administered to first-year and senior students at hundreds of four-year colleges and universities across the country. The results were provided to The Ohio State University in a customized report. Student Life Research & Assessment conducted additional analysis on questions concerning the co-curricular experience of students on Ohio State's campus. This brief covers the most salient results for Student Life.

METHODOLOGY

In March, 2010, a stratified proportionate random sampling technique was used to select 5,015 students to invite to take the survey at Ohio State. The stratification was based on academic class (years 1 and 4). The proportion for each class was based on the entire population; all Columbus-campus students enrolled in March of 2010 were considered. The survey was administered online; each potential respondent was sent a URL to the survey. The response rate was 18.5 %; 927 students responded.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender	%	Race/Ethnicity	%
Male	40.9	African American/Black	5.2
Female	59.1	American Indian/Alaska Native	0.3
		Asian/Pacific Islander	5.5
Year in School	%	Hispanic/Latino/a	2.6
First-year	45.4	White/Caucasian	78.7
Senior	54.6	Other	2.6
		International	5.2

Around 83% of the survey participants were full time students. Regarding housing, 34.5% live on campus while 36.9% live off-campus within walking driving distance and 26% live within driving distance. When compared to the Ohio State University 15th Day Report from Autumn Quarter 2010 (when this survey was administered), there is a significant difference between the proportions of first-years and fourth-years as well as males and females. Thus, the samples are not representative of the first and fourth year or female and male population at Ohio State.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **82%** of respondents believe that other students are friendly and supportive.
- **57%** of respondents consider administrative personnel helpful, considerate, and flexible.
- Many students (**65%**) reported that they try to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective (*often or very often*).
- **68%** of respondents have learned something that changed the way they understand an issue or concept outside of the classroom (*often or very often*).
- In terms of international focus, **63%** of participants plan to finish or have finished foreign language coursework while **40%** plan to study abroad or have studied abroad.
- A large proportion of students do not work while in college. **79%** of first-years and **57%** of seniors work *0 hours per week* (on or off-campus).

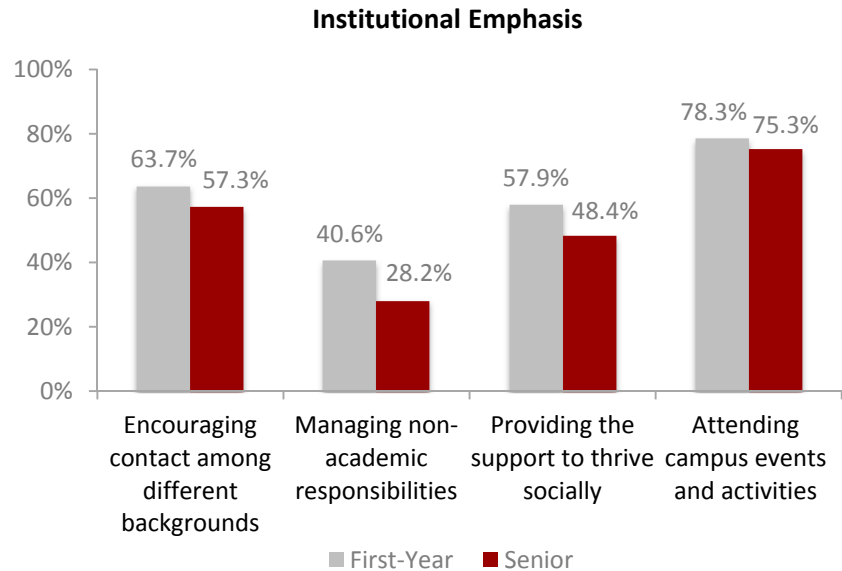
FINDINGS

The following results are selected from questions regarding co-curricular experiences of students on Ohio State's campus. The results are broken down into categories for clarity. Results are reported by first-years and seniors.

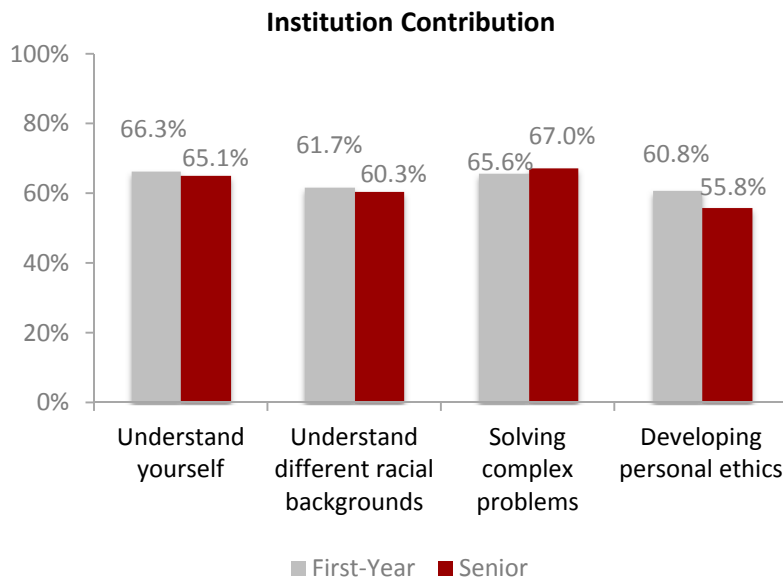
INSTITUTIONAL EMPHASIS AND CONTRIBUTION

Institutional emphasis

The chart to the right showcases students' perception on four questions that NSSE categorizes as institution emphasis upon certain variables. Data show the extent to which Ohio State encourages these items. The light gray shows the response of first-year students while the red indicates the response of seniors. The differences between the groups vary significantly except in the question about attending campus events. Both seniors and first-year students feel that Ohio State emphasizes student involvement on campus.



*Scale: Never, Sometimes, Often, Very Often
Percentages reflect sum of Often and Very Often responses*



*Scale: Never, Sometimes, Often, Very Often
Percentages reflect sum of Often and Very Often responses*

Institutional Contribution

The chart to the left demonstrates the minimal differences between first-year students and senior students on questions concerning how the institution contributed to their learning and growth. Overall, both first-years and seniors feel that Ohio State had a positive impact (*quite a bit* or *very much*) on their understanding of themselves, understanding different racial backgrounds, solving complex problems and developing personal ethics. These results make a strong case for the role of the university in creating well-rounded global citizens. These out-of-classroom areas of growth suggest that the institution has an impact on more than in-classroom learning and development.

ACTIVITIES ATTENDANCE

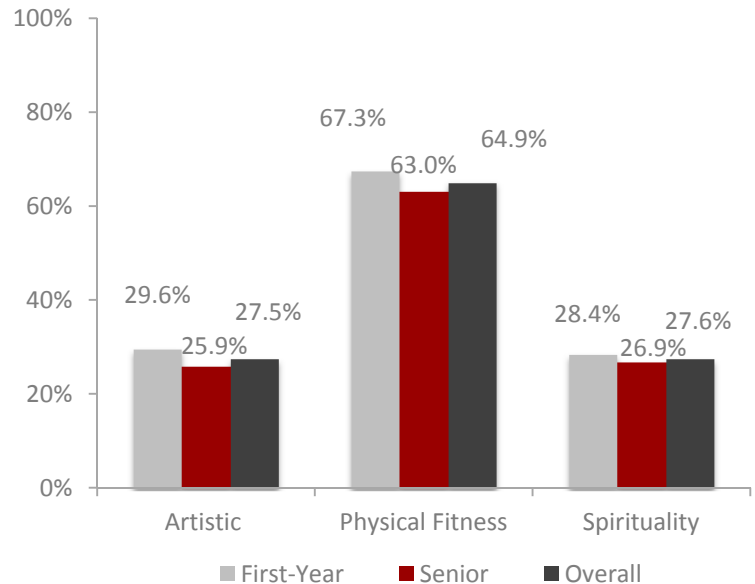
The following questions demonstrate that the activity type that students are most likely to participate in is exercise or physical fitness during their current school year. Far fewer students reported taking part in artistic or spiritual activities either often or very often. This may be because physical activity could easily be part of a student's regular routine while attending spiritual or artistic activities may be on more of a sporadic basis. The full questions are available below.

Artistic = Attended an art exhibit, play, dance, music, theater, or other performance

Physical Fitness = Exercised or participated in physical fitness activities

Spirituality = Participated in activities to enhance your spirituality (worship, meditation, prayer, etc.)

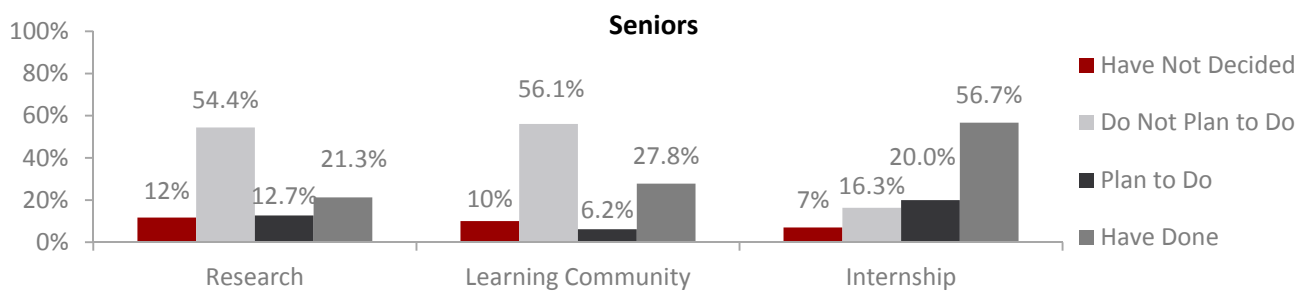
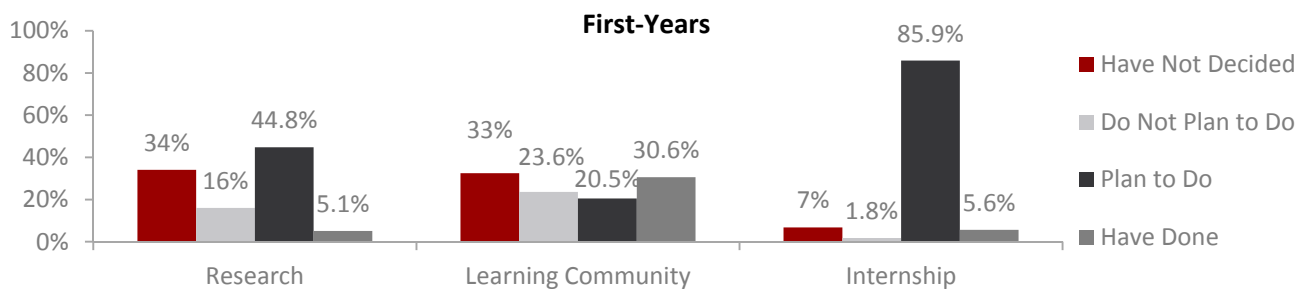
Activity Attendance



Scale: Never, Sometimes, Often, Very Often
Percentages reflect sum of Often and Very Often responses

PLANS TO PARTICIPATE

The graphs below show the percentages of students who either plan to or have participated in select co-curricular activities. First-year students may view college as a buffet of opportunity and may report interest in participating in many types of co-curricular activities. A far greater numbers of first-year students report a desire to engage in activities than the numbers of seniors have reported completing them.



Research = Work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements; Learning Community= Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together; Internship = Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment

DISCUSSION SKILLS

Question	FY%	SR%	All%
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	61.1	67.3	64.6
Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own	53.8	57.3	55.7
Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	58.0	59.9	59.6

Scale: Never, Sometimes, Often, Very Often; Percentages below reflect sum of Often and Very Often responses

The NSSE study illuminated some opportunities that are not often measured. On average, about 65% of students discuss ideas from classes outside of class frequently (*often* or *very often*). The co-curricular experience also shows that students have serious conversations with students who are different than themselves at a considerable rate (between 50% and 60% engage *often* or *very often*). These results suggest that learning is occurring outside of the classroom and that the college experience as a whole promotes this in-depth discussion and evaluation.

HOURS SPENT WORKING

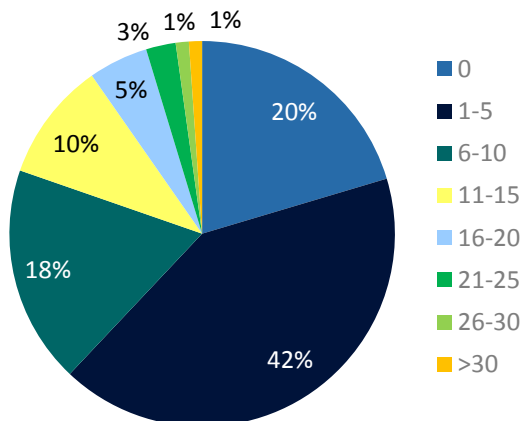
A significant number of students do not work (either on or off campus) during their college experience. Of those who do work, the median range of hours for on-campus employment is 11-15 hours per week and for off-campus employment is 16-20 hours per typical week.

Category	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	30+
First-Years, % working On-Campus	73.1	2.2	6.5	9.7	5.8	1.9	0.5	0.3
First-Years, % working Off-Campus	85.1	4.2	2.8	3.5	2.3	1.2	0.5	0.5
Seniors, % working On-Campus	60.7	1.8	8.2	10.4	9.4	4.0	2.3	3.2
Seniors, % working Off-Campus	52.7	4.6	6.2	7.5	10.3	6.9	4.5	7.4

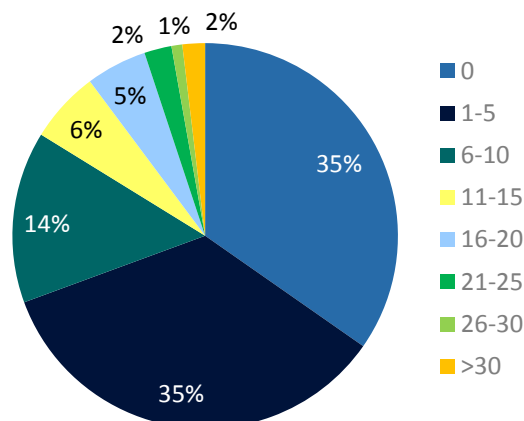
Hours spent participating in Co-curricular activities

Over a third of students indicated that they spend zero hours per week on co-curricular activities. An additional third reported 1-5 hours per week of co-curricular involvement. Almost 16% spend between 6-10 hours involved in clubs, organizations, and sports. This is a significant proportion of the student experience and students are putting a great deal of time into co-curricular experiences.

Hours Spent on Co-curricular Activities
FIRST YEARS



Hours Spent on Co-curricular Activities
SENIORS



Hours per typical 7-day week spent: Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)