

2008 CCSSE Student Survey: Highlights of Benchmark Comparisons

The Community College Student Survey of Engagement (CCSSE) was administered during the Spring 2008 semester to a random sample of classes. Data were gathered on over 900 DCCC students. The student profile is similar to the profile for the entire DCCC student population, except for enrollment status. Survey respondents were more predominantly full time, due to the CCSSE sampling procedure. CCSSE analyses weight the data to account for the overrepresentation of full time students. This report presents the highlights of the DCCC results on five major scales or benchmarks. These benchmarks are comprised of 38 student engagement items that measure the most important aspects of the student experience. This report focuses on two comparison groups: 96 colleges similar in size to DCCC and 585 colleges in the 2008 CCSSE cohort.

Major findings:

- DCCC's average score on Active and Collaborative Learning was lower than average.
- DCCC's average scores on Student Effort and Student-faculty Interaction were closer to average.
- DCCC's average scores on Academic Challenge and on Support for Learners were higher than average

This report describes these findings in greater detail, focusing on:

- Individual items on each benchmark scale that contributed most heavily to the patterns described above.
- Similarities and differences in the findings for students with different enrollment status (full time versus part time) and for students with different credit hour status (0 to 29 credit hours versus 30+ credit hours).

Performance on CCSSE Benchmark Scales: Comparison with Other Large Colleges and with the 2008 CCSSE Cohort

CCSSE items are organized into five major scales or benchmarks: Active and Collaborative Learning, Student Effort, Academic Challenge, Student-faculty Interaction, and Support for Learners. In general, DCCC results were:

- Lower than comparison groups on the Active and Collaborative Learning benchmark (see Table 1). A breakout of the data by enrollment status showed that this pattern was much stronger among full time students (see Table 2).
 - DCCC results differed most markedly on the item “Participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course” (average score of 1.18, compared to 1.30 and 1.31 for large colleges and the CCSSE cohort).
 - A breakout of the data by enrollment status showed that this difference was statistically significant for full time students (1.19, compared to 1.39 and 1.39), but not for part time students.
 - Part time students were also lower on this item, but the difference was small (1.17, compared to 1.24 and 1.24).
- Closer to the comparison groups on the Student Effort and Student-faculty Interaction benchmarks (see Table 1).
 - Full time students were significantly lower than the comparison groups on the Student Effort item “Frequency: Peer or other tutoring” (1.34, compared to 1.50 for large colleges and 1.50 for the CCSSE cohort).
 - Part time students were also lower, but the differences were small (1.39, compared to 1.43 and 1.43).
- Higher than the comparison groups on Academic Challenge and on Support for Learners (see Table 1). However, this pattern held for part time students, not for full time students (see Table 2).
 - DCCC results differed most markedly on the items “Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations” (2.72, compared to 2.64 and 2.64), and “Number of written papers or reports of any length” (2.92, compared to 2.83 and 2.83).
 - DCCC results were lower on “Mark the box that best represents the extent to which your examinations during the current school year have challenged you to do your best work at this college” (4.84, compared to 4.96 and 5.00).

- DCCC results differed significantly on the item “Frequency: Career counseling” (1.59, compared to 1.43 and 1.43).
 - A breakout of the data by enrollment status showed that this result held for part time students (1.60, compared to 1.41 and 1.41), but not for full time students.
 - The pattern for full time students was the same (1.58, compared to 1.46 and 1.46), but it did not reach statistical significance.

Table 1

Community College Survey of Student Engagement
2008 Benchmark Summary Table - All Students
Delaware County Community College

All Students				
Benchmark	Your College	Comparison Group Statistics		
			Large Colleges	2008 CCSSE Cohort
Active and Collaborative Learning	47.1	Benchmark Score	49.3	50.0
		Score Difference	-2.2	-2.9
Student Effort	49.1	Benchmark Score	49.4	50.0
		Score Difference	-0.3	-0.9
Academic Challenge	50.8	Benchmark Score	49.7	50.0
		Score Difference	1.1	0.8
Student-Faculty Interaction	50.1	Benchmark Score	49.2	50.0
		Score Difference	0.9	0.1
Support for Learners	51.7	Benchmark Score	49.3	50.0
		Score Difference	2.3	1.7
		Number of Colleges	96	585

Benchmark Score: Each benchmark score was computed by averaging the scores on survey items that comprise that benchmark. To compensate for disproportionately large numbers of full-time students in the sample, all means used in the creation of the benchmarks are weighted by full- and part-time status. Benchmark scores are standardized so that the weighted mean across all students is 50 and the standard deviation across all participating students is 25. Institutions' benchmark scores are computed by taking the weighted average of their students' standardized scores.

Score Difference: The result of subtracting the comparison group score (same size colleges or 2008 CCSSE Cohort) from your college's score on each benchmark.

Table 2

Community College Survey of Student Engagement
2008 Benchmark Summary Table - Enrollment Status Breakout
Delaware County Community College

Part-Time Students				
Benchmark	Your College	Comparison Group Statistics		
		Large Colleges	2008 CCSSE Cohort	
Active and Collaborative Learning	44.7	Benchmark Score	45.9	46.5
		Score Difference	-1.2	-1.8
Student Effort	45.5	Benchmark Score	46.3	47.1
		Score Difference	-0.8	-1.6
Academic Challenge	47.4	Benchmark Score	46.4	46.5
		Score Difference	1.0	0.9
Student-Faculty Interaction	45.6	Benchmark Score	45.7	46.8
		Score Difference	-0.1	-1.2
Support for Learners	50.9	Benchmark Score	47.4	48.5
		Score Difference	3.5	2.5
		Number of Colleges	96	585

Full-Time Students				
Benchmark	Your College	Comparison Group Statistics		
		Large Colleges	2008 CCSSE Cohort	
Active and Collaborative Learning	50.3	Benchmark Score	54.8	56.0
		Score Difference	-4.5	-5.7
Student Effort	54.0	Benchmark Score	54.3	55.2
		Score Difference	-0.4	-1.3
Academic Challenge	55.4	Benchmark Score	55.1	55.4
		Score Difference	0.3	-0.0
Student-Faculty Interaction	56.1	Benchmark Score	54.5	55.9
		Score Difference	1.6	0.2
Support for Learners	52.7	Benchmark Score	52.3	53.7
		Score Difference	0.4	-1.0
		Number of Colleges	96	585

Benchmark Score: Each benchmark score was computed by averaging the scores on survey items that comprise that benchmark. To compensate for disproportionately large numbers of full-time students in the sample, all means used in the creation of the benchmarks are weighted by full- and part-time status. Benchmark scores are standardized so that the weighted mean across all students is 50 and the standard deviation across all participating students is 25. Institutions' benchmark scores are computed by taking the weighted average of their students' standardized scores.

Score Difference: The result of subtracting the comparison group score (same size colleges or 2008 CCSSE Cohort) from your college's score on each benchmark.

Breakout by Credit Hour Status (0 to 29 credits versus 30+ credits)

A breakout of the data by credit hour status (0 to 29 credits versus 30+ credits) revealed more complex patterns.

- Active and Collaborative Learning: as noted previously, DCCC results were lower than the comparison groups. This pattern held for for both credit hour groups (see Table 3).
 - When individual items were examined, the pattern for the 0 to 29 credit group was due to three items: “Made a class presentation” (1.89, compared to 1.95 for large colleges and 1.96 for the CCSSE cohort), “Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments” (1.70, compared to 1.78 and 1.78), and “Participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course” (1.14, compared to 1.26 and 1.26).
 - The pattern for the 30+ credit group was primarily due to “Worked with other students on projects during class” (2.47, compared to 2.54 and 2.55), “Participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course” (1.27, compared to 1.38 and 1.40), and “Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class - students, family members, co-workers, etc. (2.52, compared to 2.63 and 2.64).
- Student Effort: Results for all students were close to the comparison groups, but the 0 to 29 credit group lagged a bit in their Effort scores (see Table 3).
 - When individual items were examined, both groups were farthest below the comparison groups on “Preparing for class - studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, or other activities related to your program” (0 to 29 credit hour group: 1.74 compared to 1.81 and 1.83; 30+ credit hour group: 1.87 compared to 2.02 and 2.06), and on “Frequency: Peer or other tutoring” (0 to 29 credit hour group: 1.35 compared to 1.43 and 1.44; 30+ credit hour group: 1.40 compared to 1.49 and 1.49).
- Academic Challenge: Opposite patterns emerged: the 0 to 29 credit group was higher than the comparison groups, while the 30+ credit group was below the comparison groups (see Table 3).
 - When individual items were examined, the 0 to 29 credit hour group’s pattern was primarily due to three items: “Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory” (2.91, compared to 2.81 and 2.79), “Applying

- theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations” (2.67 compared to 2.58 and 2.58), and “Number of assigned textbooks, manuals, books, or book-length packs of course readings” (2.90, compared to 2.80 and 2.80).
- When individual items were examined, the 30+ credit group was significantly below both comparison groups on the item “Mark the box that best represents the extent to which your examinations during the current school year have challenged you to do your best work at this college” (4.88, compared to 5.13 and 5.17).
 - Student-faculty Interaction: Both the 0 to 29 credit group and the 30+ credit group were above the “Larger Colleges” comparison group. They were average or below the “2008 CCSSE Cohort” comparison group (see Table 3).
 - When individual items were examined, the 0 to 29 credit group’s pattern was primarily due to one item: “Talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor” (2.06, compared to 1.91 and 1.95).
 - When individual items were examined, the 30+ credit group had the largest discrepancies on three items: “Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor” (2.76, compared to 2.69 for large colleges and 2.70 for the CCSSE cohort), “Talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor” (2.16, compared to 2.09 and 2.15), and “Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework” (1.40, compared with 1.45 and 1.48).
 - Support for Learners: Both the 0 to 29 credit group and the 30+ credit group were above the comparison groups on this benchmark scale (see Table 3).
 - When individual items were examined, the 0 to 29 credit group was significantly higher than both comparison groups on “Frequency: Career counseling” (1.55, compared to 1.41 and 1.42).
 - The 30+ credit group was significantly higher than both comparison groups on “Frequency: Academic advising/planning” (1.96 compared to 1.78 and 1.82) and “Frequency: Career counseling” (1.66 compared to 1.45 and 1.46).

Table 3

Community College Survey of Student Engagement
2008 Benchmark Summary Table - Credit Hour Status Breakout
Delaware County Community College

0 to 29 Credits				
Benchmark	Your College	Comparison Group Statistics		
			Large Colleges	2008 CCSSE Cohort
Active and Collaborative Learning	44.7	Benchmark Score	46.6	47.7
		Score Difference	-1.9	-3.0
Student Effort	47.6	Benchmark Score	48.3	49.3
		Score Difference	-0.7	-1.7
Academic Challenge	50.1	Benchmark Score	47.9	48.1
		Score Difference	2.2	2.1
Student-Faculty Interaction	48.1	Benchmark Score	47.1	48.2
		Score Difference	1.1	-0.0
Support for Learners	51.0	Benchmark Score	48.7	50.0
		Score Difference	2.3	1.1
		Number of Colleges	96	585

30+ Credits				
Benchmark	Your College	Comparison Group Statistics		
			Large Colleges	2008 CCSSE Cohort
Active and Collaborative Learning	52.4	Benchmark Score	55.1	56.3
		Score Difference	-2.7	-3.9
Student Effort	52.1	Benchmark Score	51.5	52.8
		Score Difference	0.7	-0.6
Academic Challenge	52.8	Benchmark Score	53.8	54.6
		Score Difference	-1.0	-1.8
Student-Faculty Interaction	54.3	Benchmark Score	53.7	55.8
		Score Difference	0.6	-1.5
Support for Learners	52.6	Benchmark Score	50.7	51.9
		Score Difference	1.8	0.7
		Number of Colleges	96	585

Benchmark Score: Each benchmark score was computed by averaging the scores on survey items that comprise that benchmark. To compensate for disproportionately large numbers of full-time students in the sample, all means used in the creation of the benchmarks are weighted by full- and part-time status. Benchmark scores are standardized so that the weighted mean across all students is 50 and the standard deviation across all participating students is 25. Institutions' benchmark scores are computed by taking the weighted average of their students' standardized scores.

Score Difference: The result of subtracting the comparison group score (same size colleges or 2008 CCSSE Cohort) from your college's score on each benchmark.