

**THE QEP NEWS**

JANUARY 30, 2006

**SURVEY RESULTS****INSIDE THIS ISSUE:****SURVEY RESULTS 1****UPCOMING QEP EVENTS 1****2006 CCSSE FINDINGS 2**

A student survey instrument was published in the last issue of the *QEP News*. A total of 925 responses was received from 4,044 students surveyed – a response rate of 22.9 percent. Here's what we learned.

External demands on their time was the most significant challenge students reported having to overcome to be successful in college (65.95%), followed by problems with study skills (32.11%), keeping up-to-date with coursework (29.51%), problems with math skills (28.22%), academic preparation for coursework (13.19%), problems with writing skills (10.81%), and problems with reading skills (8.54%).

Students rated their ability to complete math assignment lowest among the abilities queried.

However, the average level of preparedness was 5.21 – somewhere in the moderately well prepared range.

When categories were collapsed from 7 to 3 categories (unprepared, prepared, and neither unprepared or prepared), 15.8 percent of student reported they were unprepared to complete math assignments, 9.1 percent were unprepared in overall study skills, 7.5 percent were unprepared in the ability to complete writing assignments, and 7.2 percent were unprepared to complete reading assignments.

Students who reported completing 15 or fewer credits consistently reported lower ability in all areas que-

ried than those with more experience. However, when examining the prepared/unprepared ability scores, students with more than 30 credits reported lower preparedness for reading and math assignments than students with 16-30 hours completed. While these differences were not statistically significant, they warrant note and may indicate new challenges that emerge as students progress to higher-order classes and more demanding coursework. Supporting this hypothesis, a similar result was found for reported "significant challenges" students had to overcome to succeed in college.

*Excerpts from QEP Student Survey, prepared by Fritz Streff,  
Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research*

**UPCOMING QEP EVENT**

**February 1 – Open Discussion of QEP Survey Results  
3:00 p.m. in Godbey 164. Your input is important!**

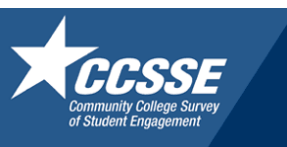


# 2006 FINDINGS: COMMUNITY COLLEGE SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Each year, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) presents the results of its annual survey — and helps colleges use that information to improve student learning and persistence. CCSSE results give community colleges objective and relevant data about students' experiences at their college so they can better understand how effectively they are engaging their students — and identify areas for improvement.

NRCC conducted a separate survey recently to identify educational challenges students face. (A brief summary of those results are shown on page 1 of this newsletter.) The information gathered from the college survey, combined with the information from the CCSSE annual survey, has been very useful in narrowing down our QEP topic.

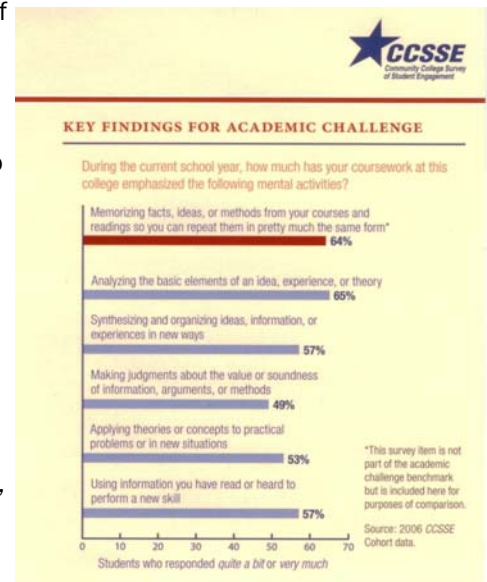
An overview of the CCSSE findings are shown to the right. Hopefully, you will find this information helpful as you participate in the process of selecting a QEP topic.



For more information about CCSSE and the 2006 survey, visit [www.ccsse.org](http://www.ccsse.org).

## Key Findings

- More students are engaged in active and collaborative learning inside the classroom than outside. For example, whereas 21 percent of students work with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments, more than double that number, 45 percent, work with other students on projects during class.
- More than a third of full-time students (38%) spend five hours per week or less preparing for class. Full-time women put forward more effort by this measure than full-time men: 33 percent of women, versus 46 percent of men, spend between zero and five hours preparing for class; and 52 percent of women, versus 46 percent of men, spend between six and 20 hours preparing for class.
- The 2006 CCSSE Cohort responses indicate that students' coursework emphasizes rote memorization as much as, or more than, higher-level cognition. Almost two-thirds (64%) of students report that their coursework emphasizes work associated with memorizing facts "quite a bit" or "very much." A similar percentage of respondents say their coursework emphasizes analyzing ideas, and few respondents report that their coursework emphasizes synthesizing ideas or information, making judgments about the value and soundness of information, and applying concepts to practical problems or in new situations.
- It is useful to compare part-time and full-time students' responses to survey items associated with student-faculty interaction. In the 2006 CCSSE Cohort, responses to all but one survey item associated with student-faculty interaction show significant differences between part-time and full-time students. Part-time students are less likely than full-time students to use e-mail to communicate with an instructor (34 percent of part-time students, versus 47 percent of full-time students, say they "often" or "very often" do so), talk about career plans with an instructor or advisor (19 percent of part-time students versus 30 percent of full-time students), and discuss grades or assignments with an instructor (40 percent of part-time students versus 51 percent of full-time students.)
- Academically underprepared students use services more than their adequately prepared peers, but far fewer than half of academically underprepared students report using these services often. Among all students, the gap between perceived importance and use of these services also indicates that more students value these services than use them.



## Using CCSSE Findings

For colleges, participating in CCSSE and getting results are not ends unto themselves. In fact, they are just the beginning of understanding — and acting on — student results. Colleges that use data wisely are in a never-ending cycle of gathering, analyzing, and most important, *using* data. Here's how CCSSE envisions college's using the data:

1. Identify the areas that are most important to your college.
2. Identify the survey items that address the identified priorities and the student groups in need.
3. Review and analyze the data.
4. Get members of your college community involved and encourage them to ask questions.
5. Design strategies that address concerns and set targets for progress.
6. Share the data and plans to address them with a broad range of stakeholders.
7. Track progress by measuring outcomes.
8. Scale up efforts that are working; modify or discontinue those that are not.
9. Repeat.

Interestingly enough, identifying a QEP topic follows the same basic steps.