NOVA
Northern Virginia
Community College

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT SUCCESS

RESEARCH BRIEF

Evaluation of NOVA Education, Services, and Facilities: Comparison of Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 Ratings

Introduction

This Research Brief compares the Class of 2017 and the Class of 2020 on their responses to NOVA's annual graduate survey—specifically, 35 survey items that asked graduates to evaluate general education, services, and facilities at NOVA, as well as their preparedness for continued studies and employment. Ratings were assigned a numerical value (e.g., "Excellent" is equal to four points and "Poor" is equal to zero points), and a weighted average score was calculated for each evaluative survey item (see Appendix Data Tables for numerical scores).[1]

Key Findings

Evaluation of NOVA Education, Services, and Facilities

- The average rating among respondents improved slightly from the Class of 2017 to the Class of 2020 for *educational proficiency gained in "awareness of many cultures"* (from 3.3 to 3.4).

- The average rating for *educational proficiency gained in "understanding mathematics"* declined slightly from Class of 2017 to Class of 2020 respondents (from 2.9 to 2.8).

- The average rating among respondents improved slightly from the Class of 2017 to the Class of 2020 for the *registration process* at the College (from 3.1 to 3.2).

Preparation for Continued Studies and Employment

- Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 graduate survey respondents' ratings ranged from "somewhat" to "very much" for the extent that they felt that their NOVA degree program *academically prepared them for their present college studies* and was *related to their current academic program*.

- The extent to which graduates felt their NOVA degree *related to their current occupation* declined from Class of 2017 to Class of 2020 respondents (from 2.6 to 2.2).

- The extent to which graduates felt their NOVA education *helped them in the workplace* declined from Class of 2017 to Class of 2020 respondents (from 2.7 to 2.4).
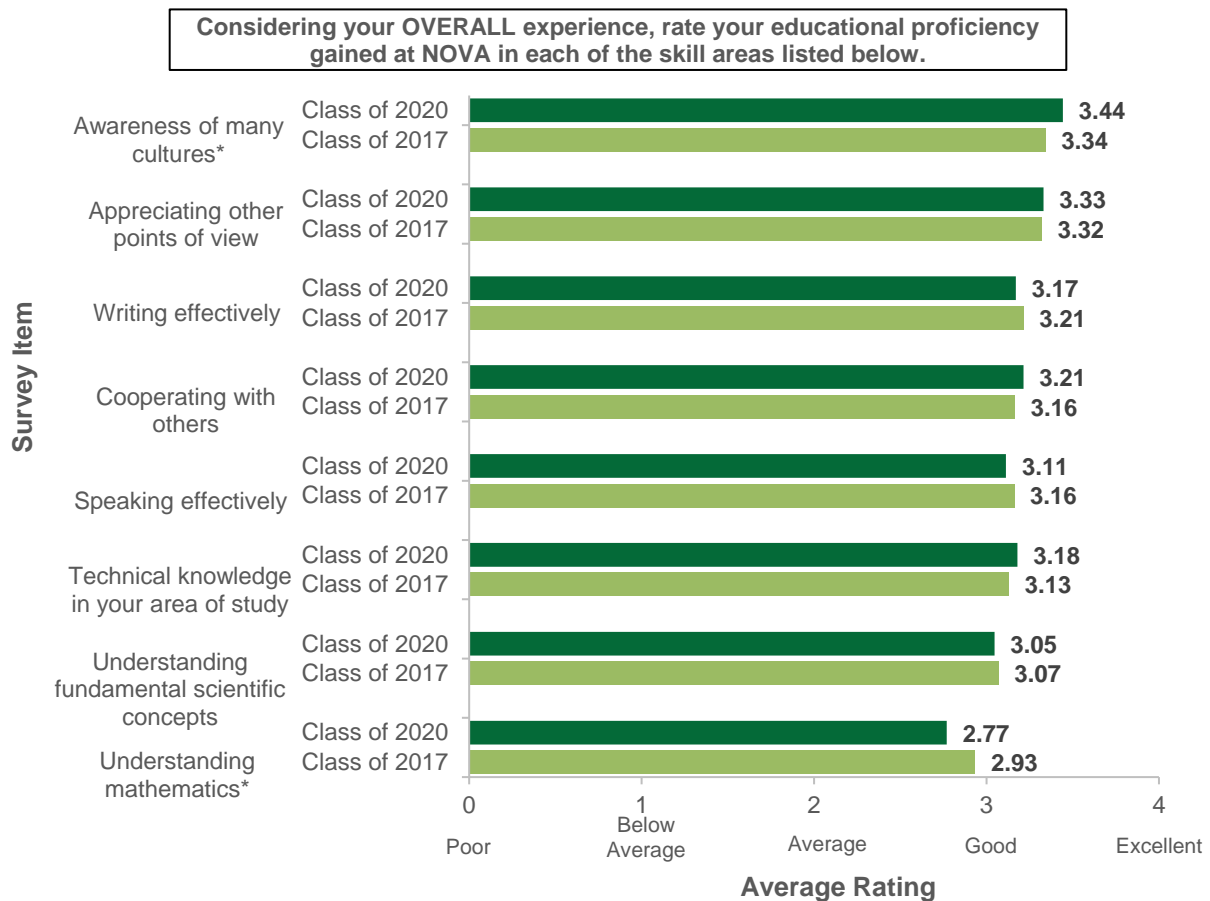
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[1] Numerical scores exclude respondents who indicated "no basis to judge/did not use."

Section 1. Evaluation of NOVA Education, Services, and Facilities

Educational Proficiency Gained

On average, Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 graduate survey respondents' ratings ranged from "good" to "excellent" for educational proficiency gained in seven out of the eight skill areas listed in Figure 1 (ratings ranged from 3.1 to 3.4).[2] The average rating among respondents for *educational proficiency gained in awareness of many cultures* improved slightly from the Class of 2017 to the Class of 2020 (from 3.3 to 3.4). Conversely, the average rating for *educational proficiency gained in understanding mathematics* declined slightly from Class of 2017 to Class of 2020 respondents (from 2.9 to 2.8). Differences in average ratings between Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 respondents for both *educational proficiency gained in awareness of many cultures* and *educational proficiency gained in understanding mathematics* were statistically significant; however, rating differences for the remaining skills areas listed in Figure 1 were not (see Figure 1, below).[3]

Figure 1. Comparison of Educational Proficiency Gained in Skill Area Ratings: Class of 2017 and Class 2020

*Difference in Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 rating is statistically significant (*p* < .001).
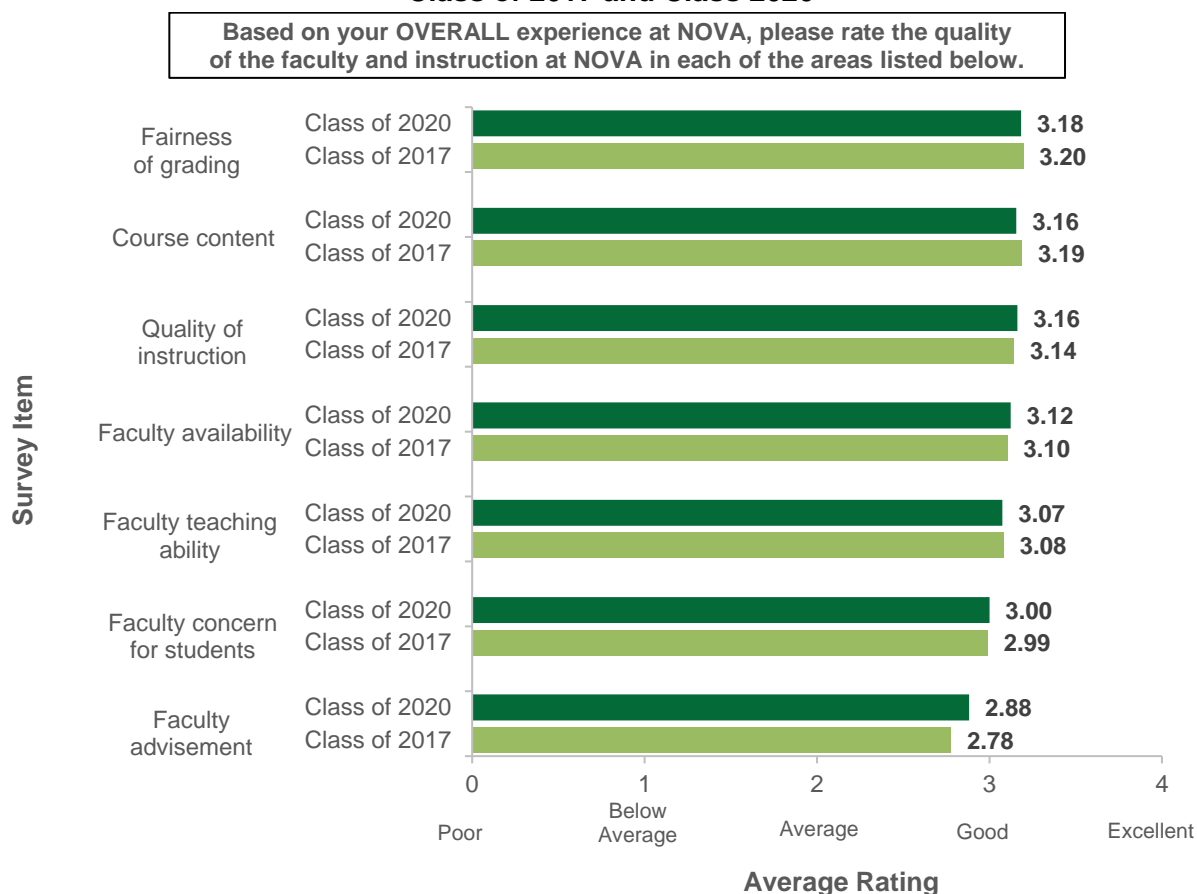
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[2] Survey items utilized a five-point rating scale (0=Poor; 1=Below average; 2=Average; 3=Good; 4=Excellent)
[3] Two-tailed, independent means difference test (t-test), *p* < .001

Rating of NOVA Instruction and Faculty

On average, Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 graduate survey respondents' ratings ranged from "good" to "excellent" for the *quality of faculty and instruction* in five out of seven areas listed in Figure 2 (ratings ranged from 3.0 to 3.2).[4] Ratings for the *quality of faculty advisement* ranged from "average" to "good" (ratings from 2.8 to 2.9). None of the differences in average ratings between Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 respondents listed in Figure 2 were statistically significant (see Figure 2, below).[5]

**Figure 2. Comparison of Faculty and Instruction Area Ratings:
Class of 2017 and Class 2020**

Based on your OVERALL experience at NOVA, please rate the quality of the faculty and instruction at NOVA in each of the areas listed below.

Survey Item	Class	Average Rating
Fairness of grading	Class of 2020	3.18
	Class of 2017	3.20
Course content	Class of 2020	3.16
	Class of 2017	3.19
Quality of instruction	Class of 2020	3.16
	Class of 2017	3.14
Faculty availability	Class of 2020	3.12
	Class of 2017	3.10
Faculty teaching ability	Class of 2020	3.07
	Class of 2017	3.08
Faculty concern for students	Class of 2020	3.00
	Class of 2017	2.99
Faculty advisement	Class of 2020	2.88
	Class of 2017	2.78

Scale: 0 Poor; 1 Below Average; 2 Average; 3 Good; 4 Excellent

Rating of NOVA Services and Facilities

On average, Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 graduate survey respondents' ratings ranged from "average" to "excellent" for *performance of College services and facilities* listed in Figure 3 (ratings ranged from 2.6 to 3.3).[6] The average rating among respondents improved slightly from the Class of 2017 to the Class of 2020 for the performance of the *registration process* at the College (from 3.1 to 3.2). This difference was statistically significant, but the remaining differences were not (see Figure 3 on the next page).[7]
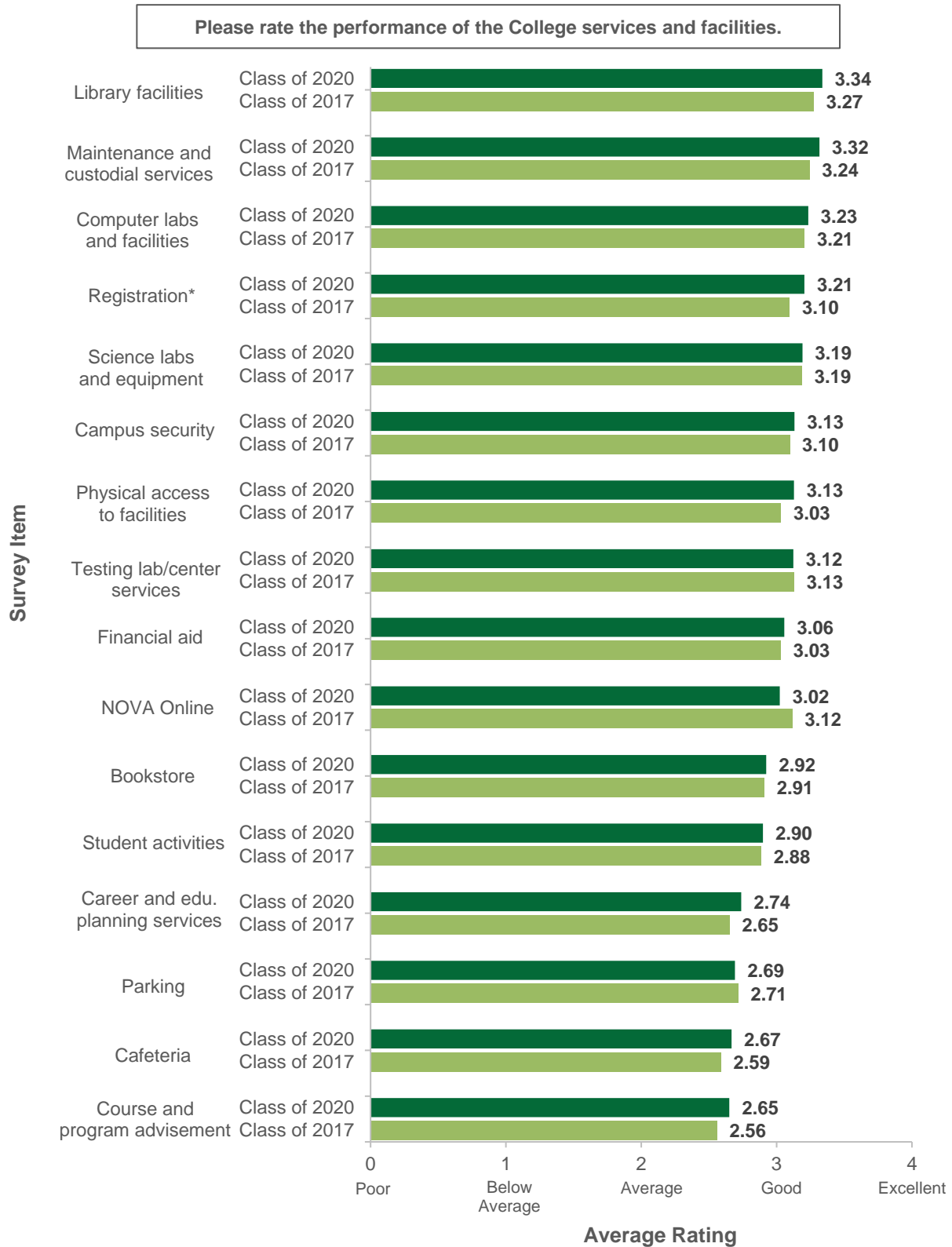
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[4] Survey items utilized a five-point rating scale (0=Poor; 1=Below average; 2=Average; 3=Good; 4=Excellent)
[5] Two-tailed, independent means difference test (t-test), *p* < .001
[6] Survey items utilized a five-point rating scale (0=Poor; 1=Below average; 2=Average; 3=Good; 4=Excellent)
[7] Two-tailed, independent means difference test (t-test), *p* < .001

**Figure 3. Comparison of Performance of College Services and Facilities Ratings:
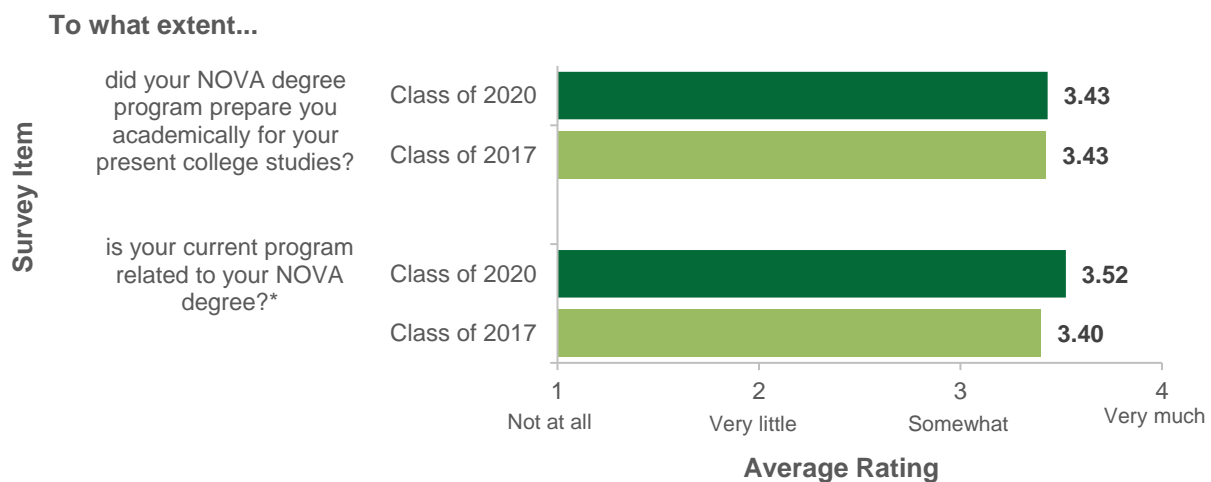Class of 2017 and Class 2020**

Please rate the performance of the College services and facilities.

Survey Item		Class	Rating
Library facilities	Class of 2020		3.34
	Class of 2017		3.27
Maintenance and custodial services	Class of 2020		3.32
	Class of 2017		3.24
Computer labs and facilities	Class of 2020		3.23
	Class of 2017		3.21
Registration*	Class of 2020		3.21
	Class of 2017		3.10
Science labs and equipment	Class of 2020		3.19
	Class of 2017		3.19
Campus security	Class of 2020		3.13
	Class of 2017		3.10
Physical access to facilities	Class of 2020		3.13
	Class of 2017		3.03
Testing lab/center services	Class of 2020		3.12
	Class of 2017		3.13
Financial aid	Class of 2020		3.06
	Class of 2017		3.03
NOVA Online	Class of 2020		3.02
	Class of 2017		3.12
Bookstore	Class of 2020		2.92
	Class of 2017		2.91
Student activities	Class of 2020		2.90
	Class of 2017		2.88
Career and edu. planning services	Class of 2020		2.74
	Class of 2017		2.65
Parking	Class of 2020		2.69
	Class of 2017		2.71
Cafeteria	Class of 2020		2.67
	Class of 2017		2.59
Course and program advisement	Class of 2020		2.65
	Class of 2017		2.56

Average Rating scale:
0 Poor — 1 Below Average — 2 Average — 3 Good — 4 Excellent

Average Rating

*Difference in Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 ratings is statistically significant ($p < .001$).

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Preparation for Continued Studies

Graduate survey respondents who indicated they were enrolled in another academic program at the time of the graduate survey were asked to rate how prepared they were for continued studies (see Figure 4, below). On average, the Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 graduate survey respondents' ratings ranged from "somewhat" to "very much" for the extent that they felt that their *NOVA degree program prepared them academically for their present college studies* (both 3.4) and the extent to which their *NOVA degree related to their current academic program* (3.4 compared to 3.5).[8] The average rating among these respondents improved from the Class of 2017 to the Class of 2020 for the extent to which their NOVA degree related to their current academic program (from 3.4 to 3.5). The difference between Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 average ratings was statistically significant for this survey item (see Figure 4).[9]

Figure 4. Comparison of Preparation for Continued Studies Ratings: Class of 2017 and Class 2020

To what extent...

*Difference in Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 ratings is statistically significant ($p < .001$).
Note: Survey items were only answered by NOVA graduates who indicated they were enrolled in another academic program at the time of the graduate survey.

Preparation for Employment

Graduate survey respondents who indicated they were employed at the time of the graduate survey were asked to rate how prepared they were for their employment (see Figure 5, below). On average, Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 graduate survey respondents' ratings ranged from "very little" to "somewhat" for the extent that they felt that their *NOVA degree program related to their current occupation* (2.5 compared to 2.2).[10] From the Class of 2017 to the Class of 2020, the average ratings among respondents declined for the extent to which their *NOVA degree helped their performance in the workplace* (from 2.7 to 2.4) and the extent to which their
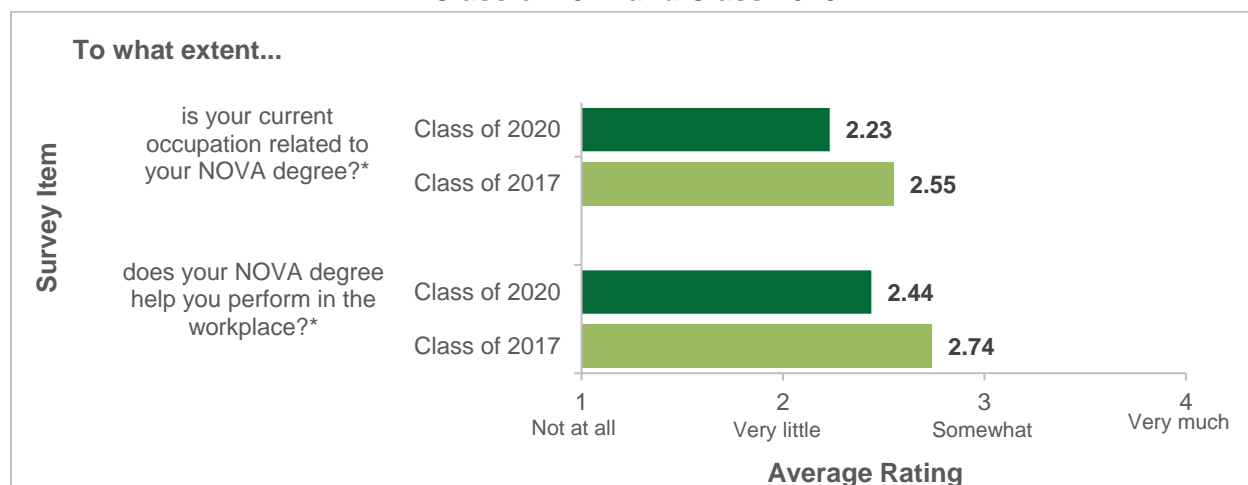
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[8] Survey items utilized a four-point rating scale (1=Not at all; 2=Somewhat; 3=Very little; 4=Very much)
[9] Two-tailed, independent means difference test (t-test), $p < .001$
[10] Survey items utilized a four-point rating scale (1=Not at all; 2=Somewhat; 3=Very little; 4=Very much)

NOVA degree related to their current occupation (from 2.7 to 2.4). Differences between Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 average ratings on these two survey items were statistically significant (see Figure 5).[11]

**Figure 5. Comparison of Preparation for Employment Ratings:
Class of 2017 and Class 2020**

*Difference in Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 rating is statistically significant ($p < .001$).
Note: Survey items were only answered by NOVA graduates who indicated they were employed at the time of the graduate survey.

Section 3. Conclusion

Overall, ratings were favorable across all 35 evaluative survey items for Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 graduate survey respondents. Ratings about NOVA education, services, and facilities typically ranged from "good" to "excellent" for most evaluative survey items. However, while respondents' ratings indicated that they were "somewhat" to "very much" prepared for continued studies, respondents also signaled that they were "very little" to "somewhat" prepared for employment.

Statistically significant differences between Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 respondents' ratings were apparent for some evaluative survey items. This result suggests that there have been significant changes in respondents' evaluations of these survey items. Ratings improved from Class of 2017 to Class of 2020 respondents for educational proficiency gained in *awareness of many cultures* and performance of the registration process at the College. Conversely, ratings declined from Class of 2017 to Class of 2020 respondents for their educational proficiency gained in *understanding mathematics*, and the extent to which they felt their NOVA degree related to their current occupation and helped them in the workplace.

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[11] Two-tailed, independent means difference test (t-test), $p < .001$

Table A1. NOVA Education Ratings: Class of 2017 and Class of 2020

Category	Class of 2017		Class of 2020		Score Diff. from Class of 2017 to Class of 2020	Statistical Analysis (t-test)
	n	Average Rating	n	Average Rating		
Appreciating Other Points of View	495	3.32	608	3.33	0.01	$t^{(1101)}=0.23$, $p=0.819$; $d=0.01$
Awareness of Many Cultures*	484	3.34	603	3.44	0.10	$t^{(1085)}=2.01$, $p=0.045$; $d=0.12$
Cooperating with Others	497	3.16	611	3.21	0.05	$t^{(1106)}=0.96$, $p=0.337$; $d=0.06$
Speaking Effectively	486	3.16	596	3.11	-0.05	$t^{(1080)}=0.93$, $p=0.353$; $d=0.06$
Technical Knowledge in Your Area of Study	503	3.13	603	3.18	0.05	$t^{(1021)}=0.9$, $p=0.368$; $d=0.05$
Understanding Fundamental Scientific Concepts	482	3.07	582	3.05	-0.02	$t^{(987)}=0.39$, $p=0.697$; $d=0.02$
Understanding Mathematics*	485	2.93	580	2.77	-0.17	$t^{(1063)}=2.60$, $p=0.009$; $d=0.16$
Writing Effectively	490	3.21	600	3.17	-0.04	$t^{(1088)}=0.88$, $p=0.379$; $d=0.05$

*Difference in Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 rating is statistically significant ($p < .001$)
Note: Rating scores were calculated by assigning the following values to each response option: Excellent=4, Good=3, Average=2, Below Average=1, and Poor=0. Scores exclude respondents who indicated "no basis to judge/did not use."

Table A2. NOVA Instruction and Faculty Ratings: Class of 2017 and Class of 2020

	Category	Class of 2017		Class of 2020		Score Diff. from Class of 2017 to Class of 2020	Statistical Analysis (t-test)
		n	Average Rating	n	Average Rating		
Instruction	Course Content	519	3.19	619	3.16	-0.03	$t^{(1136)}=0.65$, $p=0.513$; $d=0.04$
	Fairness of Grading	520	3.20	619	3.18	-0.01	$t^{(1137)}=0.2$, $p=0.796$; $d=0.02$
	Quality of Instruction	519	3.14	620	3.16	0.02	$t^{(1026)}=0.34$, $p=0.738$; $d=0.02$
Faculty	Advisement	493	2.78	600	2.88	0.10	$t^{(1002)}=1.44$, $p=0.151$; $d=0.09$
	Availability	511	3.10	613	3.12	0.02	$t^{(11228)}=0.33$, $p=0.738$; $d=0.0$
	Concern for Students	513	2.99	614	3.00	0.01	$t^{(1050)}=0.15$, $p=0.879$; $d=0.01$
	Teaching Ability	519	3.08	620	3.07	-0.01	$t^{(1137)}=0.15$, $p=0.878$; $d=0.01$

Note: Rating scores were calculated by assigning the following values to each response option: Excellent=4, Good=3, Average=2, Below Average=1, and Poor=0. Scores exclude respondents who indicated "no basis to judge/did not use."

Table A3. Rating of NOVA Services and Facilities: Class of 2017 and Class of 2020

Category	Class of 2017		Class of 2020		Score Diff. from Class of 2017 to Class of 2020	Statistical Analysis (t-tests)
	n	Average Rating	n	Average Rating		
Bookstore	483	2.91	574	2.92	0.01	$t^{(1055)}$=0.23, p=0.819; d=0.01
Cafeteria	393	2.59	481	2.67	0.08	$t^{(872)}$=1.03, p=0.302; d=0.07
Campus security services	403	3.10	440	3.13	0.04	$t^{(841)}$=0.53, p=0.594; d=0.04
Career and educational planning services	428	2.65	493	2.74	0.09	$t^{(860)}$=1.07, p=0.287; d=0.07
Computer labs and facilities	453	3.21	539	3.23	0.03	$t^{(990)}$=0.54, p=0.589; d=0.03
Course and program advisement	478	2.56	564	2.65	0.09	$t^{(959)}$=1.14, p=0.253; d=0.07
Financial aid	357	3.03	440	3.06	0.03	$t^{(726)}$=0.34, p=0.737; d=0.02
Library facilities	460	3.27	544	3.34	0.06	$t^{(940)}$=1.27, p=0.206; d=0.08
Maintenance and custodial services	420	3.24	537	3.32	0.07	$t^{(849)}$=1.33, p=0.183; d=0.09
NOVA Online	371	3.12	550	3.02	-0.09	$t^{(919)}$=1.4, p=0.163; d=0.09
Parking	476	2.71	569	2.69	-0.02	$t^{(1043)}$=0.32, p=0.752; d=0.02
Physical access to facilities	428	3.03	538	3.13	0.10	$t^{(864)}$=1.64, p=0.102; d=0.11
Registration*	500	3.10	599	3.21	0.11	$t^{(1097)}$=2.03, p=0.042; d=0.12
Science labs and equipment	430	3.19	512	3.19	0.01	$t^{(875)}$=0.10, p=0.923; d=0.01
Student activities	347	2.88	386	2.90	0.01	$t^{(731)}$=0.18, p=0.860; d=0.01
Testing lab/center services	437	3.13	543	3.12	<0.01	$t^{(978)}$=0.08, p=0.936; d=0.01

*Difference in Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 rating is statistically significant ($p < .001$)

Note: Rating scores were calculated by assigning the following values to each response option: Excellent=4, Good=3, Average=2, Below Average=1, and Poor=0. Scores exclude respondents who indicated "no basis to judge/did not use."

Table A4. Preparation for Continued Studies: Class of 2017 and Class of 2020

Survey Item	Class of 2017		Class of 2020		Score Diff. from Class of 2017 to Class of 2020	Statistical Analysis (t-tests)
	n	Average Rating	n	Average Rating		
To what extent did your NOVA degree program prepare you academically for your present college studies?	317	3.43	432	3.43	0.01	$t^{(747)}$=0.14, p=0.887; d=0.01
To what extent is your current program related to your NOVA degree?*	317	3.40	432	3.52	0.12	$t^{(747)}$=2.16, p=0.031; d=0.16

*Difference in Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 rating is statistically significant (p < .001)
Note: Rating scores were calculated by assigning the following values to each response option: Very much=4, Somewhat=3, Very little=2, and Not at all=1. Survey items were only answered by respondents who indicated "Yes, I am currently enrolled at a four-year college/university" to the survey item "Are you currently enrolled at a post-secondary institution?"

Table A5. Preparation for Employment: Class of 2017 and Class of 2020

Survey Item	Class of 2017		Class of 2020		Score Diff. from Class of 2017 to Class of 2020	Statistical Analysis (t-tests)
	n	Average Rating	n	Average Rating		
To what extent is your current occupation related to your NOVA degree?*	373	2.55	397	2.23	-0.32	$t^{(768)}$=3.59, p<0.001; d=0.26
To what extent does your NOVA degree help you perform in the workplace?*	373	2.74	397	2.44	-0.30	$t^{(768)}$=3.72, p<0.001; d=0.27

*Difference in Class of 2017 and Class of 2020 rating is statistically significant (p < .001)
Note: Rating scores were calculated by assigning the following values to each response option: Very much=4, Somewhat=3, Very little=2, and Not at all=1. Survey items were only answered by respondents who indicated they were currently employed at the time of the survey.