

RESEARCH BRIEF

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Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) 2015: Benchmark Comparisons by Selected Student Characteristics

Introduction

What is CCSSE?

- The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) is an annual nationwide survey of community college students.
- CCSSE helps institutions gauge their performance in different areas of **student engagement**.

What are benchmarks?

- CCSSE identifies five **benchmarks** for assessing institutional performance in student engagement based on groups of conceptually-related items on the survey:
 - *Active and Collaborative Learning*
 - *Student Effort*
 - *Academic Challenge*
 - *Student-Faculty Interaction*
 - *Support for Learners*

CCSSE 2015 at NOVA

- At NOVA, **1,588 students** participated in the CCSSE in Spring 2015.

In This Research Brief

NOVA Student Characteristics

- CCSSE benchmark scores in this Research Brief are examined by the following NOVA student characteristics:
 - Family Support
 - Academic Goal
 - Source of Tuition
 - Credit Hours Completed
 - Developmental Course Enrollment
 - First-Generation College Student Status

Highlights

Family Support

- NOVA students who indicated that their immediate families were at the extreme ends of supportiveness -- **not very supportive** or **extremely supportive** – reported the highest benchmark scores as compared to those whose families offered moderate levels of support.

Academic Goal

- The lowest benchmark scores were given by the two largest groups of NOVA students: those students whose primary goals were either to obtain an **associate degree** or those aiming to **transfer to a four-year institution**, as compared to students with other academic goals.

Source of Tuition

- Students whose primary source of tuition was **income or savings of their own or from their parent(s)/family** scored at or below the national average on all five benchmarks. Students who received **grants, loans, or employer contributions** scored higher on each benchmark.

Credit Hours Completed

- NOVA students with 30 or more credit hours gave higher scores for each benchmark than students who had completed 0 to 29 credit hours.

Developmental Course Enrollment

- Developmental students reported lower scores for each benchmark than non-developmental students.

First-Generation College Student Status

- NOVA students who were first-generation college students (i.e., neither parent had attended college) scored higher for every benchmark except *Active and Collaborative Learning*.

Data Notes

Benchmark Scores

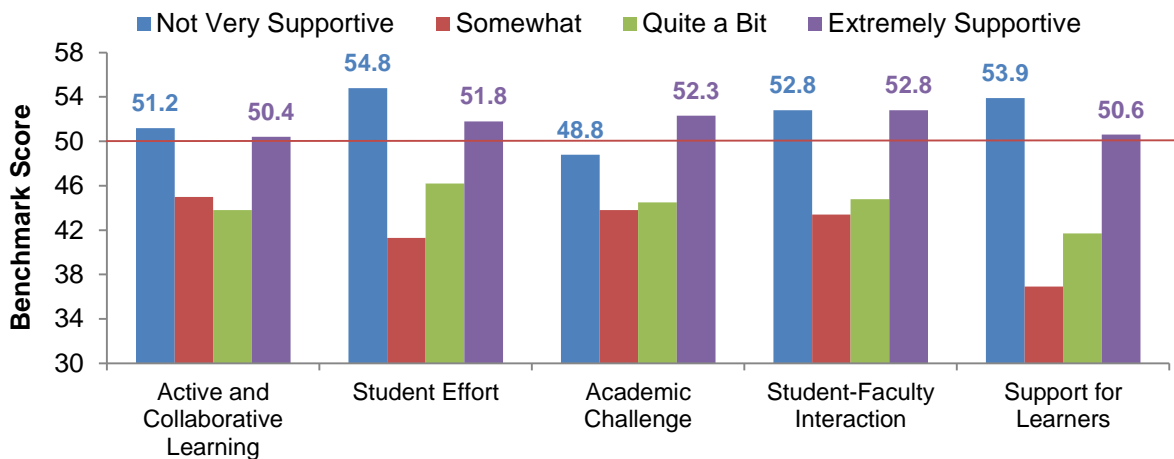
- Each benchmark score was calculated by averaging the scores of items that comprise that benchmark. The scores were then transformed (standardized), such that the national average is always 50 for all benchmarks.
- With this kind of transformation, the scores of other colleges can be viewed as relative scores; this provides an easy way to assess whether an individual college or a group of colleges are performing above or below the mean (50) on each benchmark.
- This standardization process was done by CCSSE.

Family Support

How supportive is your immediate family of your attending NOVA?

The results show that NOVA students who indicated that their immediate families were **not very supportive** or **extremely supportive** reported the highest benchmark scores, which were almost all above the national average of 50.0. The lowest scores for four of the five benchmarks were reported by students who indicated their families were **somewhat supportive**. These findings were especially pronounced on the *Support for Learners* benchmark, where the difference between the highest and lowest scores was 17 points.

Figure 1. CCSSE 2015 Benchmark Scores by Level of Family Support

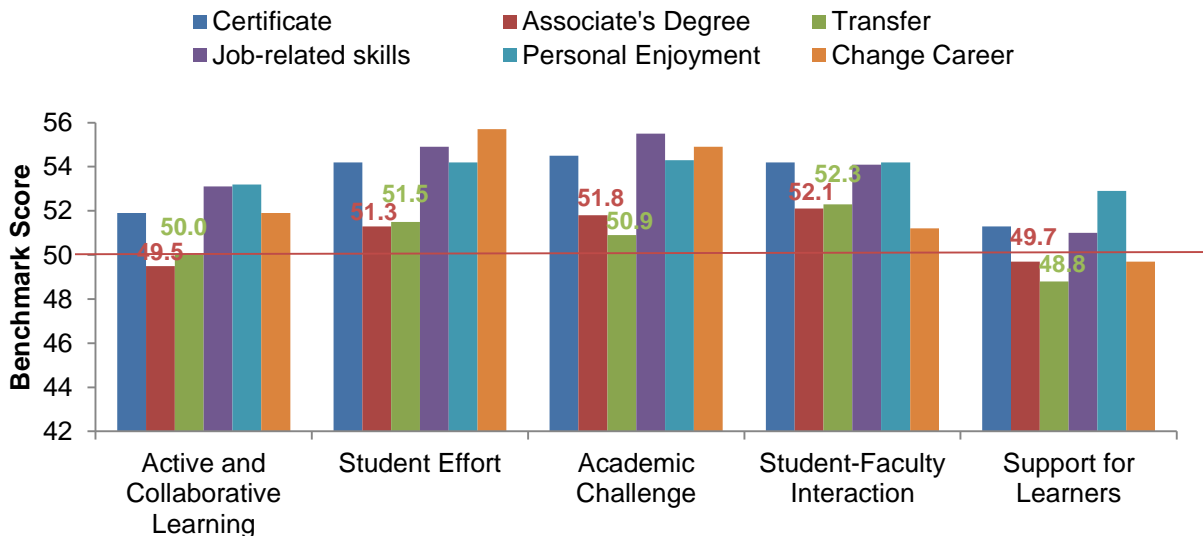


Academic Goal

Which is your primary goal for attending NOVA?

The lowest benchmark scores were given by the two largest groups of NOVA students whose primary goal was to obtain an **associate degree** or those aiming to **transfer to a four-year institution**.

Figure 2. CCSSE 2015 Benchmark Scores by Primary Academic Goal

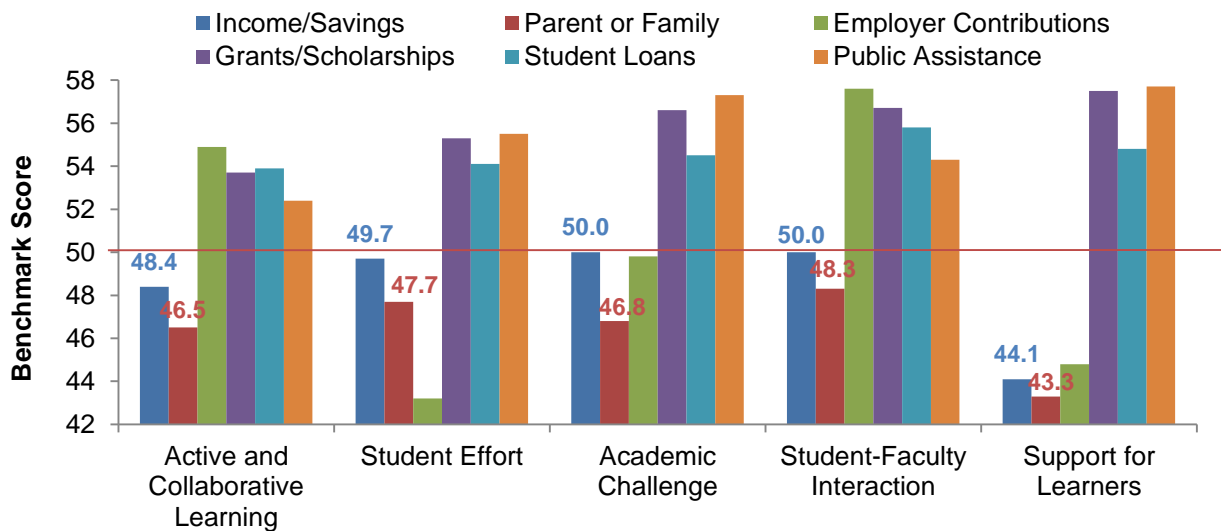


Source of Tuition

Which is a major source you use to pay your tuition at NOVA?

Students whose primary source of tuition was **income or savings of their own** or **from their parent/family** scored at or below the national average on all five benchmarks. Students who paid for college primarily through **grants and scholarships** or through **public assistance** gave consistently high scores across all five benchmarks. *Support for Learners* received the lowest scores from students who paid for college using their own income/savings, or from a parent or family member, or from their employer.

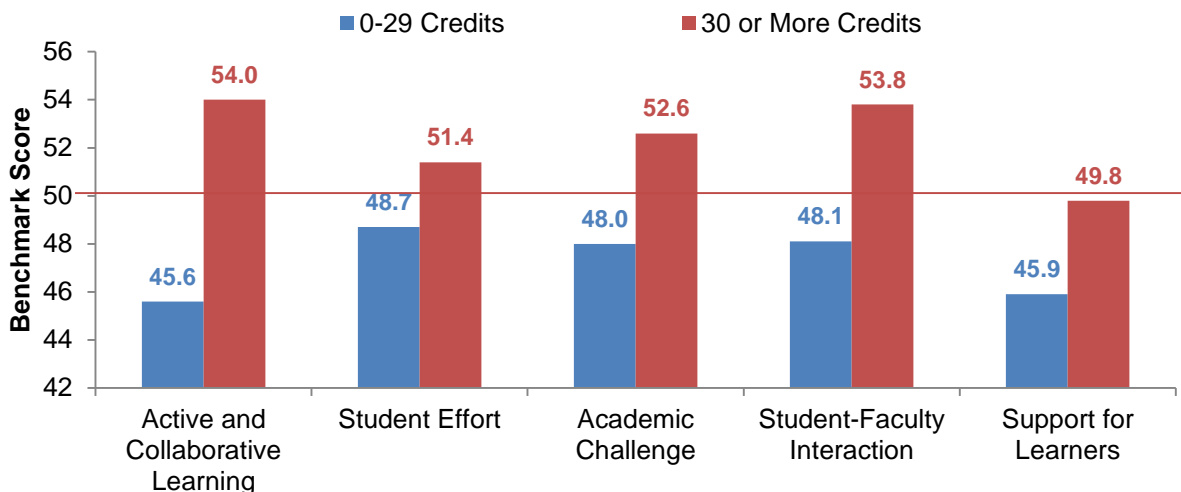
Figure 3. CCSSE 2015 Benchmark Scores by Major Source of Tuition Payment



Credit Hours Completed

NOVA students with **30 or more credit hours** gave higher scores for each benchmark than students who had completed 0 to 29 credit hours. The differences between the two groups' scores ranged from 3 to 8 points.

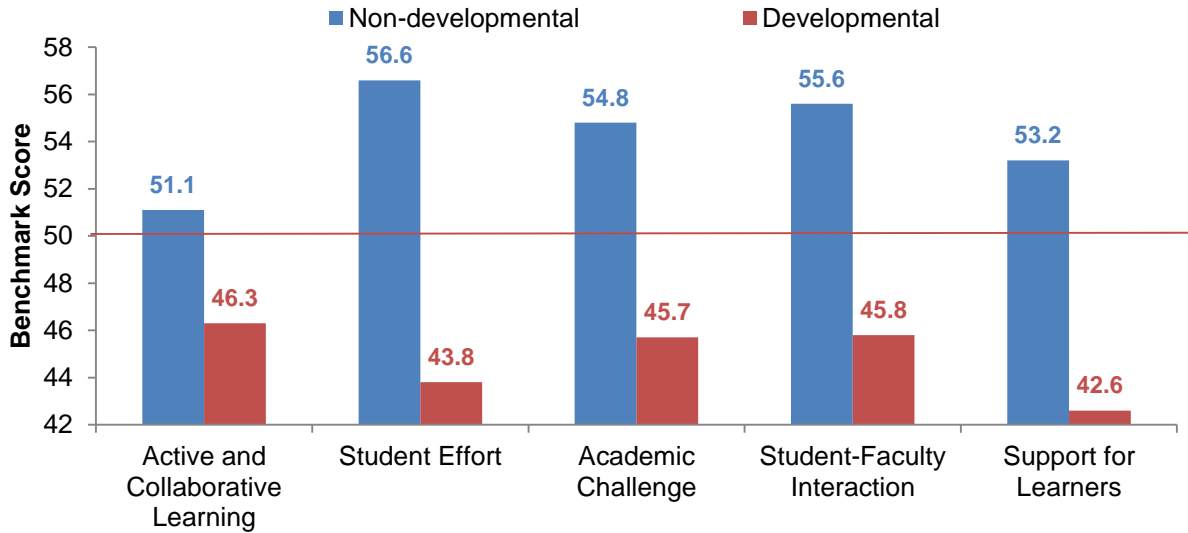
Figure 4. CCSSE 2015 Benchmark Scores by Credit Hours Completed



Developmental Course Enrollment

Developmental students reported lower scores for each benchmark than non-developmental students, with the difference in scores ranging between 4 and 13 points. The *Active and Collaborative Learning* benchmark received the lowest scores from non-developmental students, but the highest scores from developmental students.

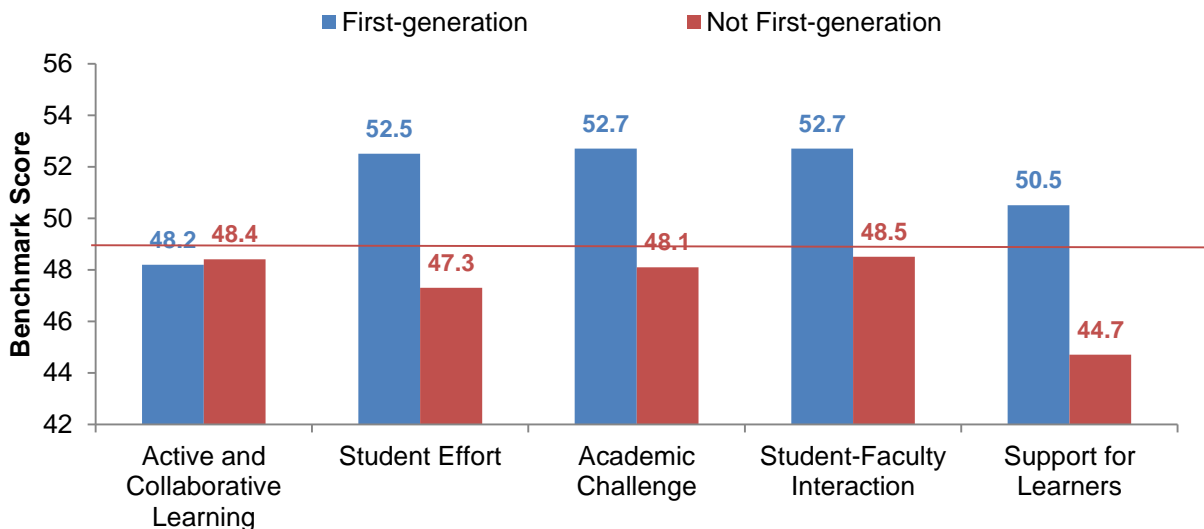
Figure 5. CCSSE 2015 Benchmark Scores by Developmental Coursework



First-Generation College Student Status

NOVA students who were first-generation college students (i.e., neither parent had attended college) scored higher for every benchmark except *Active and Collaborative Learning*. On the other four benchmarks, the differences in scores were between four and six points. First-generation students gave their lowest scores to *Active and Collaborative Learning*, while non-first-generation students gave their lowest scores to *Support for Learners*.

Figure 6. CCSSE 2015 Benchmark Scores by First-Generation Status



Appendix. CCSSE 2015 Benchmark Scores by NOVA Student Characteristics

Table 1. Benchmark Scores by Student Characteristics: Spring 2015

Survey Question	Benchmark				
How Supportive is Your Immediate Family of Your Attending NOVA?	Active and Collaborative Learning	Student Effort	Academic Challenge	Student-Faculty Interaction	Support for Learners
Not very supportive	51.2	54.8	48.8	52.8	53.9
Somewhat supportive	45.0	41.3	43.8	43.4	36.9
Quite a bit supportive	43.8	46.2	44.5	44.8	41.7
Extremely supportive	50.4	51.8	52.3	52.8	50.6
Which is Your Primary Goal for Attending NOVA?	Active and Collaborative Learning	Student Effort	Academic Challenge	Student-Faculty Interaction	Support for Learners
Complete a certificate program	51.9	54.2	54.5	54.2	51.3
Obtain an associate degree	49.5	51.3	51.8	52.1	49.7
Transfer to a 4-year institution	50.0	51.5	50.9	52.3	48.8
Obtain or update job-related skills	53.1	54.9	55.5	54.1	51.0
Self-improvement/personal enjoyment	53.2	54.2	54.3	54.2	52.9
Change careers	51.9	55.7	54.9	51.2	49.7
Which is a Major Source You Use to Pay Your Tuition at NOVA?	Active and Collaborative Learning	Student Effort	Academic Challenge	Student-Faculty Interaction	Support for Learners
My own income/savings	48.4	49.7	50.0	50.0	44.1
Parent or spouse/significant other's income/savings	46.5	47.7	46.8	48.3	43.3
Employer contributions	54.9	43.2	49.8	57.6	44.8
Grants and scholarships	53.7	55.3	56.6	56.7	57.5
Student loans	53.9	54.1	54.5	55.8	54.8
Public assistance	52.4	55.5	57.3	54.3	57.7
Credit Hours Completed	Active and Collaborative Learning	Student Effort	Academic Challenge	Student-Faculty Interaction	Support for Learners
Students with 0-29 Credits	45.6	48.7	48.0	48.1	45.9
Students with 30 or More Credits	54.0	51.4	52.6	53.8	49.8
Developmental Course Enrollment	Active and Collaborative Learning	Student Effort	Academic Challenge	Student-Faculty Interaction	Support for Learners
Non-developmental	51.1	56.6	54.8	55.6	53.2
Developmental	46.3	43.8	45.7	45.8	42.6
First-Generation Status	Active and Collaborative Learning	Student Effort	Academic Challenge	Student-Faculty Interaction	Support for Learners
First-generation	48.2	52.5	52.7	52.7	50.5
Not First-generation	48.4	47.3	48.1	48.5	44.7