

**Beginning College Student  
Satisfaction Survey (BCSSE)  
Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)  
Report**

February 2010



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THE UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON

*INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH OFFICE*

## **Introduction**

In fall 2009, 239 freshman completed the BCSSE Freshman Survey. The Institutional Research Office linked specific questions to desirable student learning outcomes, which are able to be compiled into three main categories: “What do students do?” “How do students improve?,” and “What do students care about?” The questions that are relevant to each of these categories are included in Appendix A following this summary. This model is based on the work completed by St. Olaf College.

### **What do students do?**

This category is directly related to the behaviors of the students attending the University. The first variable in this category refers to the level of academic engagement with faculty and other students. The BCSSE survey revealed that 80% of students asked questions in class “often” or “very often” during their last year of high school. In the upcoming school year, 72% of students expect to ask questions in class “often” or “very often,” 57% plan to discuss grades or assignments with a professor “often” or “very often,” and 45% expect to discuss ideas from readings or class with a faculty member “often” or “very often.” In terms of engagement with other students, 65% of participants worked with students on projects during class “often,” and 53% reported “sometimes” working on projects outside of class with other students in the last year of high school. During the upcoming school year, 44% of respondents report that they expect to “sometimes” work with other students during class, and 48% of students expect to work with classmates outside of class “often”.

The next variable evaluates the investment of time and effort students will bring to their education. This variable is reliant upon the amount of participation students contributed to classroom discussions. As listed above, in the last year of high school 80% students participated “often” or “very often” and 72% expect to participate “often” or “very often” in their first year of college. This variable also includes the level of preparedness students had throughout their last year of high school. An approximate 90% of students reported having “sometimes” or “never” come to class without completing readings or assignments. Another relevant question to this variable revealed that 62% of participants have done “quite a bit” or “very much” assigned reading during their last year of high school. The final dimension of this variable measures the amount of effort expended in academic work. This dimension included the number of Advanced Placement (AP) courses taken by the participants during high school. The results revealed that: 26% completed one AP class, 14% completed two, 7% completed three, 8% completed four, and 8% completed five or more. Students were also asked to report how many courses they completed for college credit during their last year of high school. The responses revealed 10% completed one college course, 10% completed two, 3% completed three, 6% completed four, and 4% completed five or more courses. The remaining 67% of students did not complete any courses for college credit during high school. The last question included in this dimension asks the number of honors courses that students were enrolled in. The breakdown is as follows: 12% of students completed one honors course, 9% completed two courses, 9% completed three courses, 9% completed four courses, and 40% completed five or more courses. The remaining 21% of students did not complete any honors courses during high school.

### **How do students improve?**

This category measures cognitive outcomes of the students. The first set of variables relates to the use of specific academic skills. The BCSSE results show 71% of students who participated in this survey have written short papers or reports (five pages or less) “quite a bit” or “very much” during their last year of high school. Forty-eight percent of the participants claim to have written longer papers or reports (more than five pages) “some” or “quite a bit” during their last year of high school. The second dimension in this set of variables pertains to academic reading, which 62% of students reported to have done “quite a bit” during their last year of high school. The next variable pertains to improvement of knowledge or understanding and explores the quantitative literacy of the students. Survey results prove that 54% of students are “moderately” to “very prepared” to analyze mathematical problems at this institution. Another variable in this category examines student improvement in academic proficiencies. In the BCSSE, 85% of students reported that they feel “moderately” to “very prepared” to learn effectively on their own. This variable also analyzed the preparedness of students to work with other students. Eighty-six percent of students replied to feeling “moderately” to “very prepared.” The third dimension in this category pertains to writing and computer/technological ability. An estimated 71% of students feel moderately to very prepared to write clearly and effectively and 69% of students feel moderately to very prepared to use computing and information technology.

### **What do students care about?**

The last category pertains to the interests and aspirations of students in terms of their commitment to excellence and their future academic plans. The dimension that concerns itself with the student’s commitment to excellence is based off the number of AP, honors, and college courses taken by the participants. The percentages for these questions were listed in the category, “What do students do?” The second dimension asks students to report the highest academic degrees they intend to obtain. The breakdown is as follows: 2% of students wish to receive an associate’s degree, 17% intend to obtain a bachelor’s, 40% aspire to achieve a master’s degree, 30% hope to obtain a doctoral degree, and 12% are uncertain.

Appendix A

**Variable 1: Academic Engagement with People**

***Dimension A: Academic Engagement with Faculty***

Question 9a: During the last year of high school, about how often did you discuss ideas from your readings or classes with a teacher outside of class?

Very often- 20%

Often- 20%

Sometimes- 36%

Never- 14%

Question 14g: During the coming school year, about how often do you expect to discuss grades or assignments with an instructor?

Very often- 14%

Often- 43%

Sometimes-40%

Never- 2%

Question 14h: During the coming school year, about how often do you expect to discuss ideas from your readings or classes with a teacher outside of class?

Very often- 12%

Often- 33%

Sometimes- 45%

Never- 10%

***Dimension B: Academic Engagement with other Students***

Question 9e: During the last year of high school, about how often did you work with other students on projects during class?

Very often- 13%

Often- 52%

Sometimes- 32%

Never- 4%

Question 9f: During the last year of high school, about how often did you work with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments?

Very often- 5%

Often- 32%

Sometimes- 53%

Never- 10%

**Variable 3: Investment of Time and Effort**

***Dimension C: Participation in Classes/Labs***

Question 9a: During the last year of high school, about how often did you ask questions or contribute to class discussions?

Very often- 45%

Often- 35%

Sometimes- 18%

Never- 2%

***Dimension D: Being on Time/Prepared for Class***

Question 7a: During the last year of high school, how much assigned reading (textbooks or other course materials) did you do?

Very much- 18%

Quite a bit- 44%

Some- 25%

Very little- 13%

None- 0%

Question 9c: During the last year of high school, about how often did you come to class without completing readings or assignments?

Very often- 2%

Often- 8%

Sometimes- 59%

Never- 31%

**Dimension E: Amount of Effort Expended in Academic Work**

Question 9a: During the last year of high school, about how often did you ask questions or contribute to class discussions?

Very often- 45%

Often- 35%

Sometimes- 18%

Never- 31%

Question 6a: During high school, how many Advanced Placement (AP) classes did you complete?

0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
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37%	26%	14%	7%	8%	8%
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Question 6c: During high school, how many college classes taught at your high school did you complete?

0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
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67%	10%	10%	3%	6%	4%
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Question 6b: During high school, how many honors courses did you complete?

0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
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21%	12%	9%	9%	9%	40%
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**Variable 4: Use of Specific Academic Skills**

**Dimension B: Doing Academic Writing**

Question 7c: During the last year of high school, how much did you write short papers (5 or fewer pages)?

Very much- 8%

Quite a bit- 33%

Some- 25%

Very little- 13%

None-0%

Question 7d: During the last year of high school, how much did you write long papers (more than 5 pages)?

Very much- 5%

Quite a bit-16%

Some- 32%

Very little-39%

None- 8%

***Dimension C: Doing Academic Reading***

Question 7a: During the last year of high school, how much assigned reading did you do?

Very much- 18%

Quite a bit- 44%

Some- 25%

Very little- 13%

None- 0%

**Variable 6: Improvement in Knowledge or Understanding**

***Dimension I: Quantitative Literacy***

Question 17d: How prepared are you to analyze mathematical problems at this institution?

Very prepared- 12%

5- 19%

4- 23%

3-27%

2- 16%

Not prepared- 4%

## **Variable 7: Improvement in Academic Proficiencies**

### ***Dimension A: Ability to Work/Learn Independently***

Question 17g: How prepared are you to learn effectively on your own at this institution?

Very prepared- 24%

5- 28%

4- 31%

3- 11%

2- 4%

Not prepared-3%

### ***Dimension B: Ability to Work/Learn with Others***

Question 17f: How prepared are you to work effectively with others at this institution?

Very prepared- 30%

5- 35%

4- 26%

3- 4%

2- 4%

Not prepared-2%

### ***Dimension H: Writing Ability***

Question 17a: How prepared are you to write clearly and effectively at this institution?

Very prepared- 17%

5- 23%

4- 31%

3- 19%

2- 7%

Not prepared-4%



***Dimension I: Computer/Technological Ability***

Question 17e: How prepared are you to use computing and information technology at this institution?

Very prepared- 16%

5- 23%

4- 30%

3- 20%

2- 7%

Not prepared-5%

**Variable 9: Interests and Aspirations**

***Dimension B: Commitment to Academic Excellence***

Question 6a: During high school, how many Advanced Placement (AP) classes did you complete?

0      1      2      3      4      5 or more

37%   26%   14%   7%    8%    8%

Question 6c: During high school, how many college classes taught at your high school did you complete?

0      1      2      3      4      5 or more

67%   10%   10%   3%    6%    4%

Question 6b: During high school, how many honors courses did you complete?

0      1      2      3      4      5 or more

21%   12%   9%    9%    9%    40%

***Dimension C: Future Academic Plans***

Question 23: What is the highest academic degrees that you intend to obtain at this or any institution?

Associate's degree- 2%

Bachelor's degree- 17%

Master's degree- 40%

Doctoral degree- 30%

Uncertain- 12%

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