

# The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)

## Overview of 2006 Survey Results Brookhaven College

### Introduction

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) provides information about effective educational practice in community colleges and assists institutions in using that information to promote improvements in student learning and persistence. CCSSE's goal is to provide member colleges with results that can be used to inform decision making and target institutional improvements. **Student engagement**, or the amount of time and energy that students invest in meaningful educational practices, is the underlying foundation for CCSSE's work. CCSSE's survey instrument, the *Community College Student Report (CCSR)*, is designed to capture student engagement as a measure of institutional quality.

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### CCSSE Member Colleges

Beginning this year, CCSSE will utilize a 3-year cohort of participating colleges (2004 through 2006) in all of its data analyses<sup>1</sup>, including the computation of benchmark scores. This cohort is referred to as the **2006 CCSSE Cohort**.

This new approach increases the total number of institutions and students contributing to the national dataset, which in turn increases the reliability of the overall results. In addition, the 3-year cohort approach minimizes the impact, in any given year, of statewide consortia participation.

The 2006 CCSSE Cohort is comprised of a total of 447 institutions across 46 states participating between 2004 and 2006. Two hundred forty-seven of these member colleges are classified as small (< 4,500), 105 as medium (4,500-7,999), 57 as large (8,000-14,999), and 38 as extra-large institutions (15,000 + credit students).<sup>2</sup> One hundred nineteen of the Cohort member colleges are located in urban areas, 119 in suburban areas, and 209 in rural areas.

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<sup>1</sup> For returning participants, the college's most recent year of participation is included in data analyses. For example, if a college participated in 2004 and 2006, only the 2006 data would be used in the 3-year cohort.

<sup>2</sup> These enrollment statistics are based on the most recent IPEDS data with the exception of situations in which it is necessary for colleges to self-report.

Our college falls into the large size category and is classified as being located in an urban area.

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## **Student Respondents**

Credit classes were randomly selected – stratified by time of day (morning, afternoon, and evening) – from institutional class data files to participate in the survey. Of those sampled at our institution, 1,024 students submitted usable surveys. The number of completed surveys produced an overall “percent of target” rate of 102%. Percent of target rate is the ratio of the adjusted number of completed surveys to target sample sizes. (The adjusted survey count is the number of surveys that were filled out properly and did not fall into any of the exclusionary categories.<sup>3</sup>)

### **2006 Student Respondent Profile**

To compare the characteristics of student respondents with the characteristics of the underlying student population for each participating college, *CCSSE* uses the data reported by the institution in its most recent *IPEDS Enrollment Report* for the following variables: gender, race and ethnicity, student age, and enrollment status (part- or full-time). The data are aggregated to compare the 2006 *CCSSE Cohort* survey respondent population to the total student population of the 2006 *CCSSE Cohort* member colleges.

#### **Gender (survey item #30)**

Of the 1,024 student respondents at our college who answered this item, 48% are male and 52% are female. This mirrors the full population of the *CCSSE Cohort* community college students, comprised of 41% males and 59% females.

#### **Age (survey item #29)**

2006 *CCSSE* student respondents at BHC range in age from 18 to 65 years old. Approximately 90% are between 18 to 39 years old; 56% are 18 to 24 years old while 33% are 25 to 39 years old.

#### **Racial Identification (survey item #34)**

50% percent of student respondents identify themselves as White/non-Hispanic, 28% as Hispanic/Latino/Spanish, 11% as Black or African American, and 7% as Asian. 0.2 percent of the student respondents are Native American. 4 percent marked “other” when responding to the question, “What is your racial identification?”

#### **International Students (survey item #33)**

12 percent of our students responded yes to the question, “Are you an international student or foreign national?”

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<sup>3</sup> See exclusionary rules on page 4.

### **Enrollment Status (survey item #2)**

54 percent of the student respondents at BHC report attending college full-time, while 39% of the 2006 CCSSE Cohort colleges' total student population attended full-time. Only 46% of surveyed students report being part-time college students, compared to 61% as reported to IPEDS. This inverse representation is a result of the sampling technique and the in-class administration process. For this reason, survey results are either weighted or disaggregated on the full-time/part-time variable so that reports will accurately reflect the underlying student population.

***The following student respondent categories are weighted according to Fall 2003 IPEDS population data.***

### **Limited English Speaking Students (survey item #32)**

Students with limited English speaking skills, or those whose native language is not English, comprise a significant proportion of students in community colleges. At our institution, 11% of enrolled students are non-native English speakers.

### **First-Generation Status (survey item #36)**

48% of students indicate that neither parent has earned a degree higher than a high school diploma nor has college experience; accordingly, these students are considered "first-generation" status. 48 percent indicate that their mothers' highest level of education is a high school diploma (with no college experience), and 49% indicate that level for their fathers.

### **Educational Attainment (survey items #1 and #35)**

69 percent of the respondents report starting their college careers at this community college. Approximately 73% of students indicate that their highest level of educational attainment is a high school diploma or GED; 67% have completed fewer than 30 credit hours of college-level work; 17% report either a certificate or an associate degree; 5% have earned a bachelor's degree; and 1% have earned an advanced degree.

### **Credit Hours Earned (survey item #23)**

46 percent of surveyed students have completed fewer than 15 credit hours; 21% have completed 15-29 credit hours; and 33% have completed more than 30 credit hours.

### **Grades (survey item #21)**

45 percent of students report that they earned grades of B+ or higher, while 6% of students report that they earned grades of C- or lower.

### **External Commitments (survey item #10)**

57 percent of students work 21 or more hours per week; 34% of students care for dependents at least 11 hours per week; and 14% of students spend at least 6 hours per week commuting to class.

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## Excluded Respondents

The total counts of respondents in an institution's raw data file will differ from the numbers reported in the institutional reports due to intentional exclusion of certain surveys. Exclusion in accord with consistent decision rules serves the purpose of ensuring that all institutional reports are based on the same sampling methods and that results therefore are comparable across institutions. Respondents may be excluded from institutional reports for the following reasons:

- ✘ The respondent did not indicate whether he or she was enrolled part- or full-time at the institution. *Because all results are either weighted or broken down by enrollment status, this is essential information for reporting.*
- ✘ The survey is invalid<sup>4</sup>.
- ✘ Students reported their age as under 18.
- ✘ Students indicated that they had taken the survey in a previous class.
- ✘ Over-sampled respondents are not included. These are surveys that individual institutions paid an additional fee to acquire. Because there are no requirements stipulating how these students are sampled, these data are not included in the standard institutional report.

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## Educational Goals

Community colleges have multiple goals as do their students. Transfer to a 4-yr college or university is the most frequently cited primary goal of our students (67%) followed by obtaining an associate degree (46%).

	Primary Goal	Secondary Goal	Not a goal
Transfer to a 4-year college or university	67	18	15
Self-improvement/personal enjoyment	34	37	30
Obtain an associate degree	46	24	30
Obtain or update job-related skills	28	27	45
Change careers	26	18	56
Complete a certificate program	18	19	63

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<sup>4</sup> If a student does not answer any of the 21 sub-items on item 4, answers "Very Often" to all 21 items, or answers "Never" to all, the survey is excluded.

## Academic Experience

A positive academic experience is a product of many ingredients, one of which is the amount of time and energy that students invest in their academic work. The CCSR asks students to respond to several survey items in order to gauge how actively they are involved in their education. Students were given the opportunity to mark *Very Often*, *Often*, *Sometimes*, or *Never* in response to items such as the following:

- ✘ “Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions”
- ✘ “Made a class presentation”
- ✘ “Worked with other students on projects during class”
- ✘ “Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare assignments”

While some students are highly involved in their academic experience (those who marked *Often* or *Very Often*), others are less engaged, as illustrated by their responses of *Never*, as displayed in the figure below.

