

The 2005 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

[Overview - How Does UCDHSC - Downtown Denver Compare?](#)

Student Satisfaction
Student Engagement

[Selected Other Results](#)

Selected Student Characteristics

[Student and Faculty Perspectives on Engagement](#)

The FSSE?
Student and Faculty Comparisons

[Methodological Notes](#)

About the NSSE
Urban Consortium
Margins of Error
Statistical Significance
Response Rate

Overview – How does UCDHSC–Downtown Denver Compare?

About NSSE

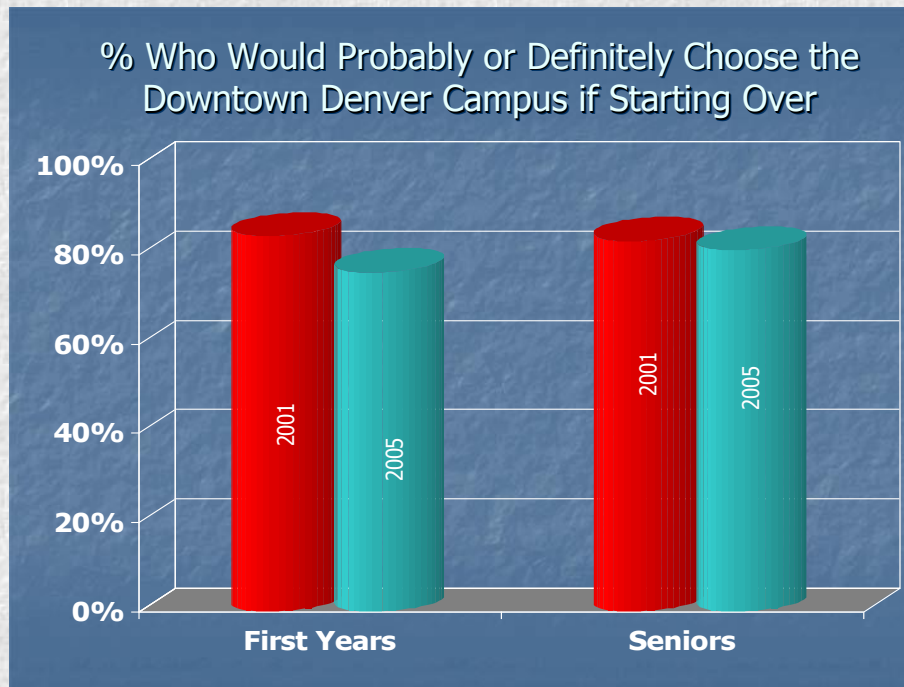
The [National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\)](#) is administered annually to freshman and seniors at participating 4-year institutions to assess the extent to which students engage in a variety of good educational practices. NSSE also measures students' activities and satisfaction with their higher educational experiences. During the Spring 2005 semester, 594 UCDHSC – Downtown Denver Campus (DDC) students participated in NSSE.

NSSE is particularly valuable as an assessment tool because it provides comparisons to students at all universities who participate and allows groups of schools to form consortia for additional comparisons with similar universities. Consortia may also add additional questions to the standard NSSE instrument that are tailored to their unique needs. UCDHSC – Downtown Denver Campus participated in the urban university consortium along with 17 other colleges and universities. See [Methodological Notes](#) for more information on sampling techniques, response rates, the consortium, and statistical issues.

This report highlights major findings for UCDHSC – Downtown Denver Campus and compares our student responses to those at other universities and, for some items, to responses from the 2001 NSSE.

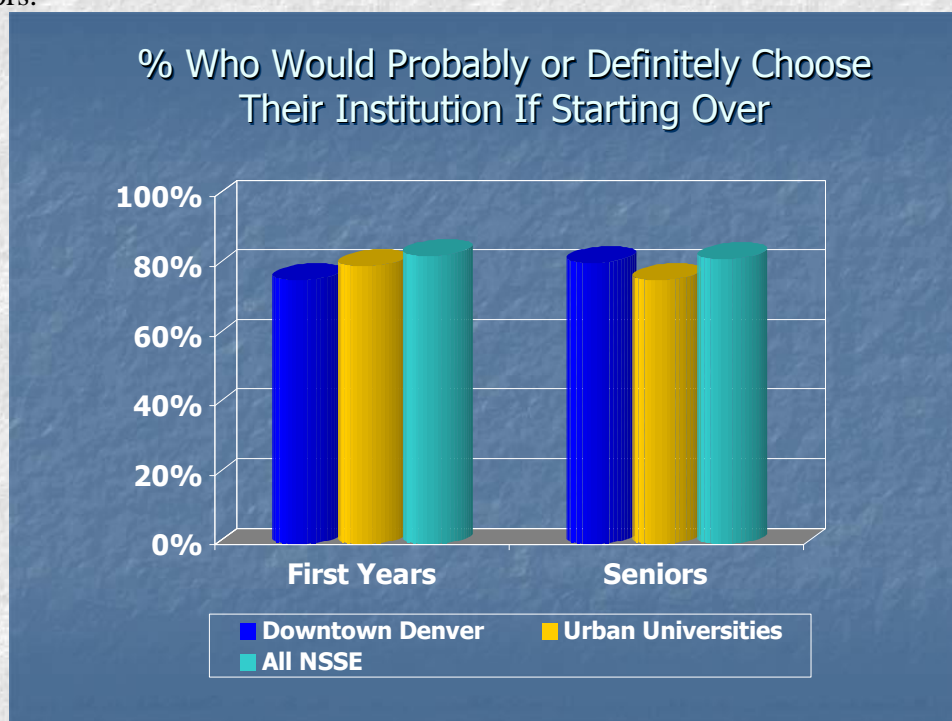
Student Satisfaction

The following graph shows the proportion of students who would probably or definitely choose UCDHSC-DDC if starting over. In 2001, a high proportion of responding students said they would choose DDC if they were starting over again (76% of first years and 80% of seniors). This percentage fell for both groups in the 2005 survey, but not significantly – for both first years and seniors, over three quarters would choose us again.

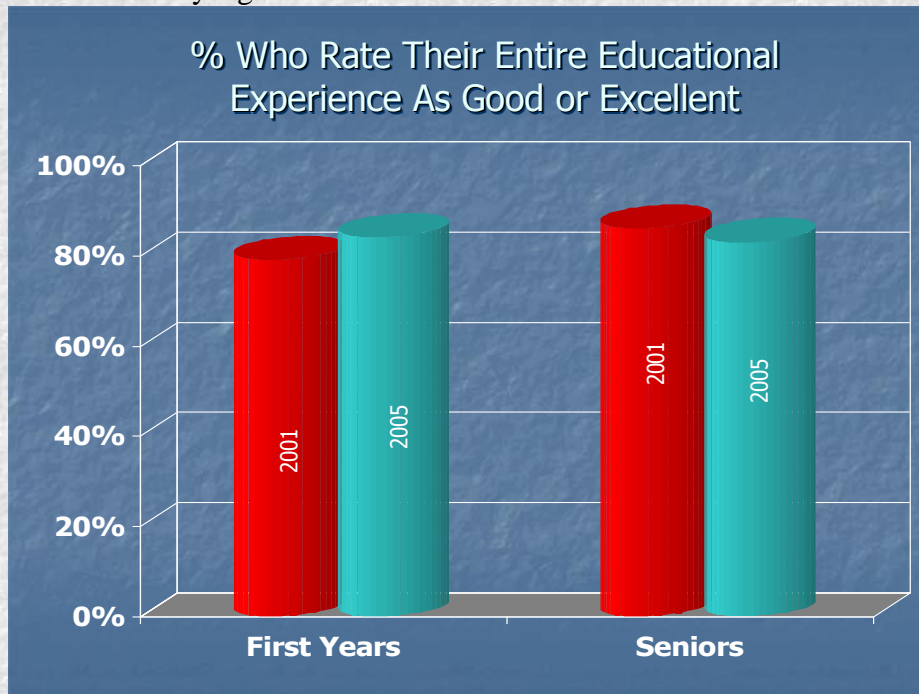


The next graph provides a comparison of DDC student responses to this question to students attending schools in the urban consortium as well as all respondents to the NSSE.

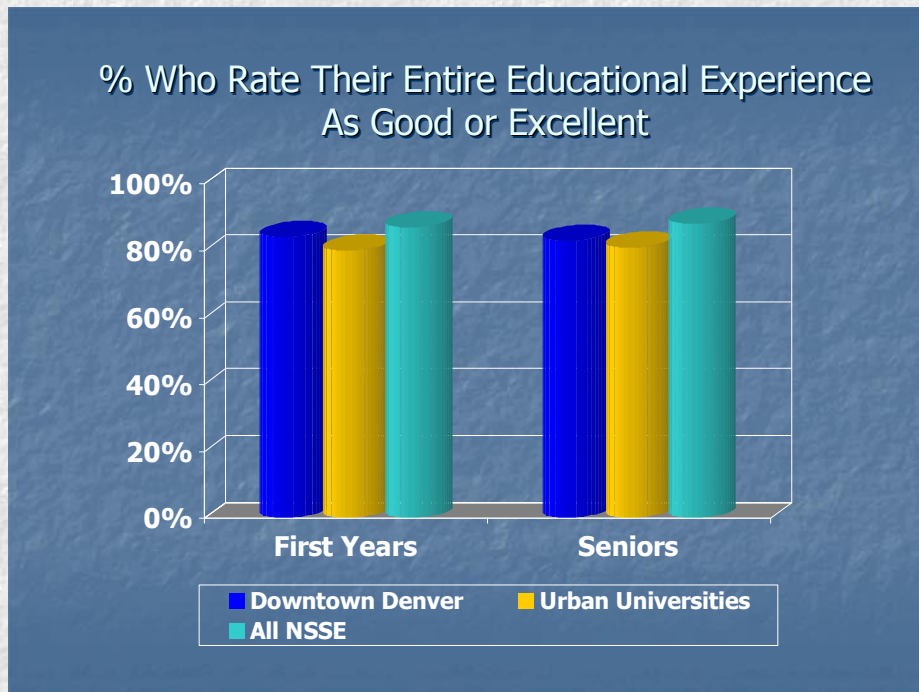
DDC first year students rated us on this question on par with students at the other schools in our urban university consortium but significantly lower compared to all first year students who responded to the NSSE in 2005. Our seniors rated us similarly to seniors at other urban universities (higher but not stat. sig.) as well as all NSSE seniors.



The next graph shows the percentage of DDC first year and senior students who rate their entire educational experience as good or excellent. Once again, a high proportion of our students express favorable ratings of the university. We see little change on this measure since 2001 among our first years and seniors. Those changes that did occur were not statistically significant.

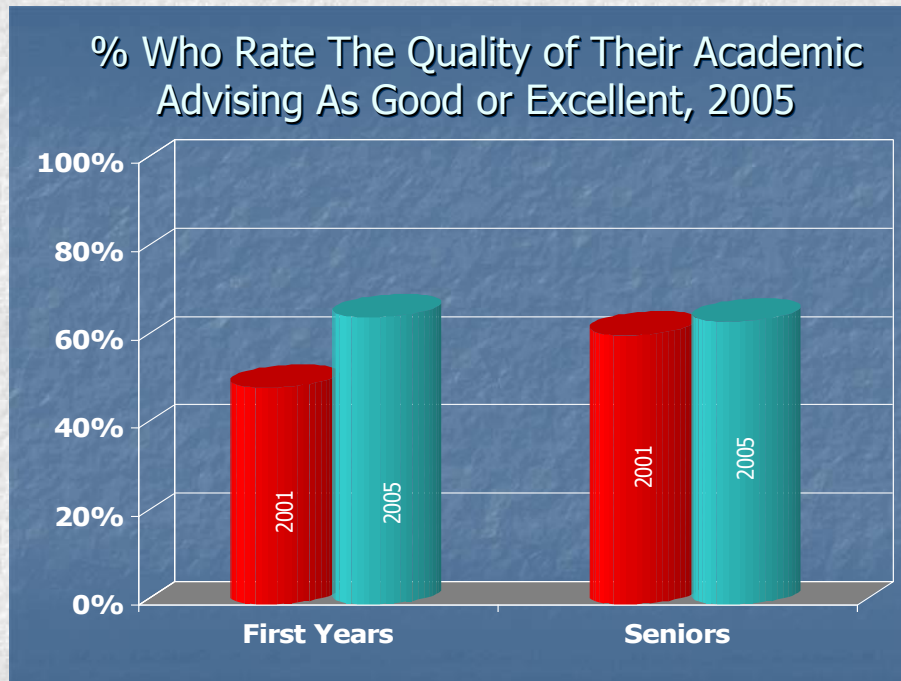


In comparison with other institutions on this question, DDC first year students rated us on this question on par with students at the other schools in our urban university consortium and to all first year students who responded to the NSSE in 2005. Our seniors rated us similarly to seniors at other urban universities but significantly lower than all NSSE seniors.

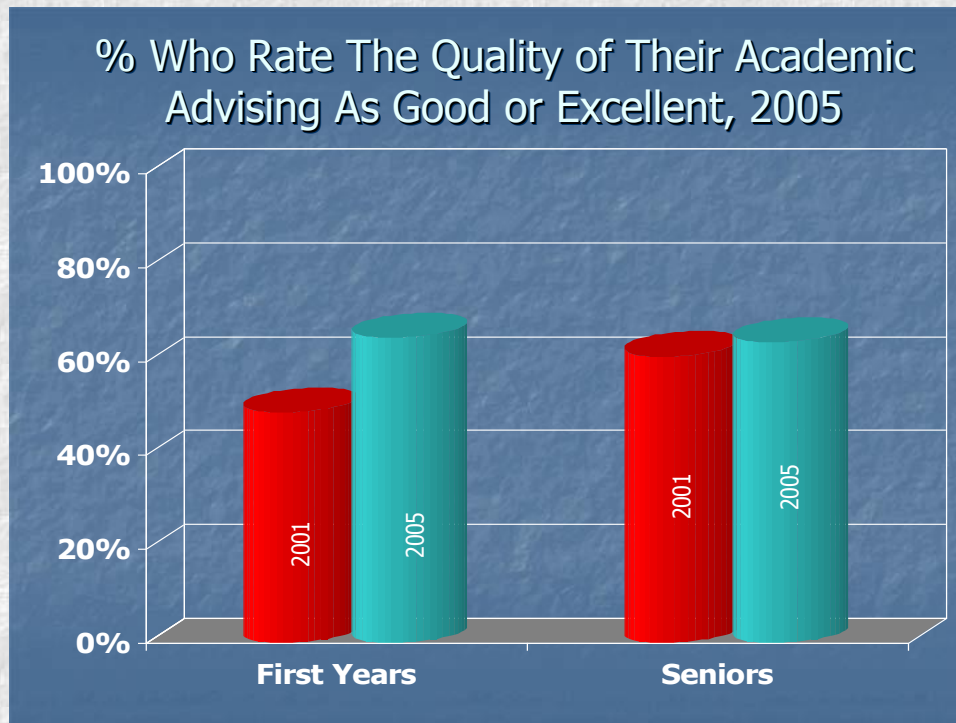


In 2001, satisfaction with advising was among the strongest predictor of overall satisfaction and was significantly lower than other Urbans for first years, and for all NSSE-participating schools for both classes.

DDC has made significant gains since then, particularly among first years. There are no longer statistically significant differences between us and the other urban universities, though we still lag significantly compared to all NSSE institutions.



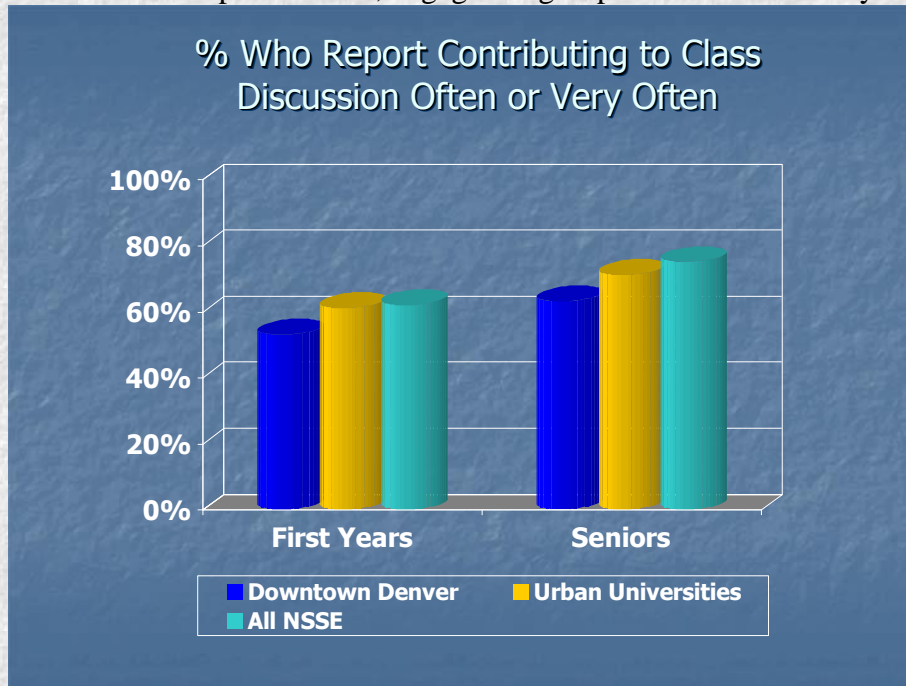
Looking at the same measure with other institutions found that DDC first year students rated us on this question on par with students at the other schools in our urban university consortium and to all first year students who responded to the NSSE in 2005. DDC seniors rated us similarly to seniors at other urban universities but significantly lower than all NSSE seniors.



Measures of Student Engagement

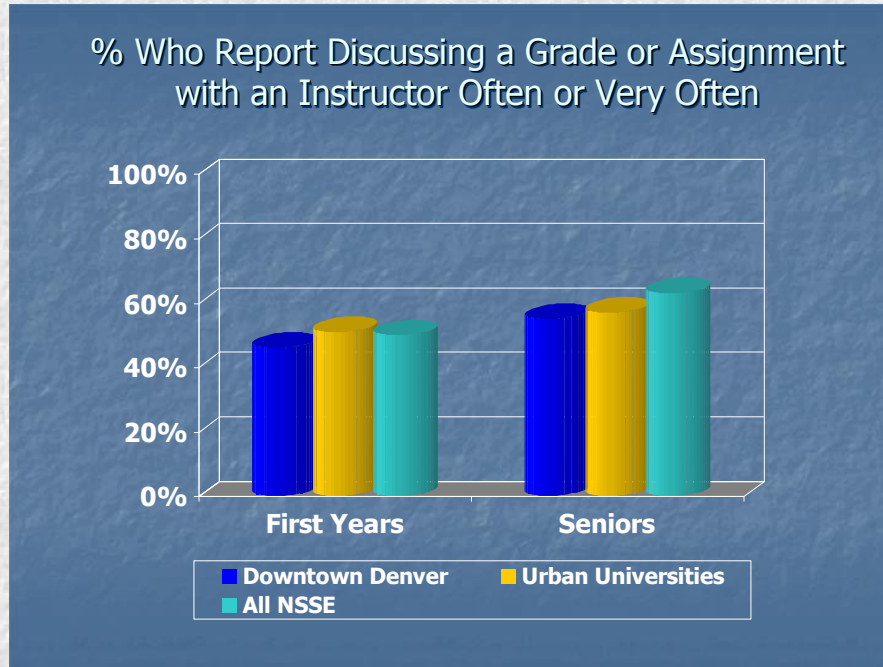
The following slide looks at one measure of what NSSE calls ‘Active and Collaborative Learning’ – the percentage of respondents who report that they ask questions or contribute to class discussion often or very often. Over half of DDC first years and over 60% of seniors report doing so, but we lag significantly behind students in the comparison groups.

Other measures of Active and Collaborative Learning show a similar pattern – these include questions regarding whether the student has made a class presentation, engaged in group work or community-based learning.



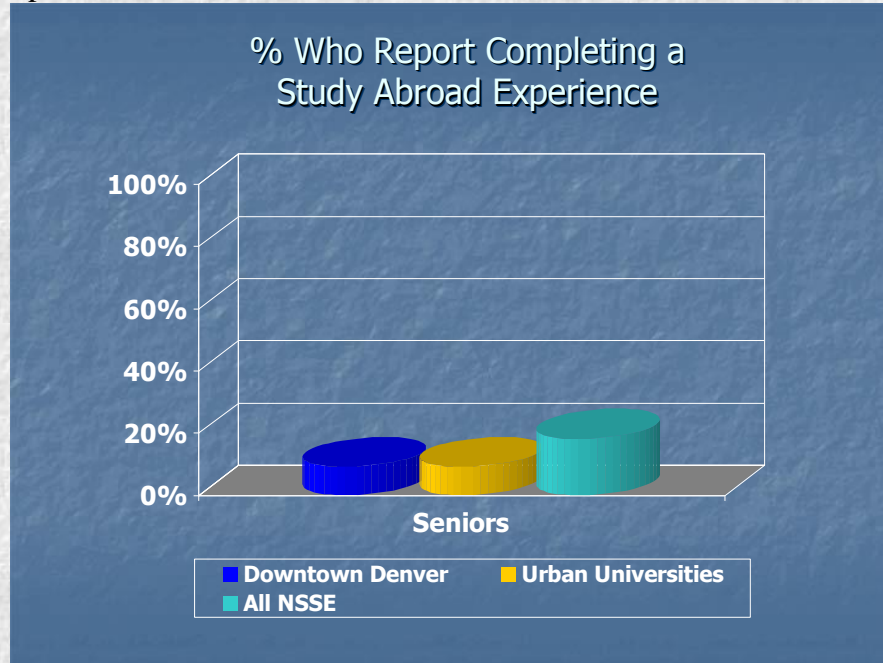
The next measure is one of Student-Faculty Interaction, specifically, the percentage of respondents who report that they have discussed a grade or assignment with a faculty member often or very often. Less than half of our first years and little more than half of our seniors report doing so. Though DDC lags the comparison groups, only one comparison is statistically significant – our seniors are significantly less likely to report this sort of interaction than are seniors from all NSSE institutions.

Other measures of Student-Faculty Interaction show a similar pattern – we’re mostly on par but in selected areas we lag. Measures include whether the student has discussed career plans with a faculty member, worked on activities other than coursework with faculty, e.g., serving on committees, or worked on a research project with a faculty member.



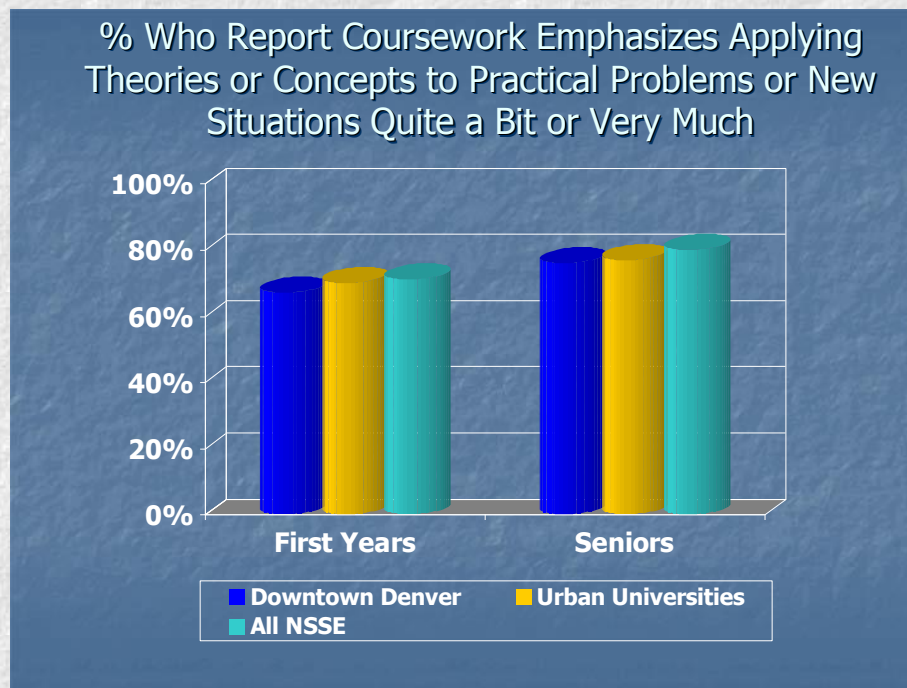
The next graph looks at one component of Enriching Educational Experiences – the percentage of respondents who report that they have participated in a study abroad program. Less than 10% of DDC seniors report doing so. This is identical to seniors at other urban universities, but about half the rate of seniors at all NSSE institutions.

In general, our students report similar or somewhat lower rates of other enriching educational experiences compared to the overall NSSE sample. Measures include participating in an internship or a culminating senior experience such as a capstone course.



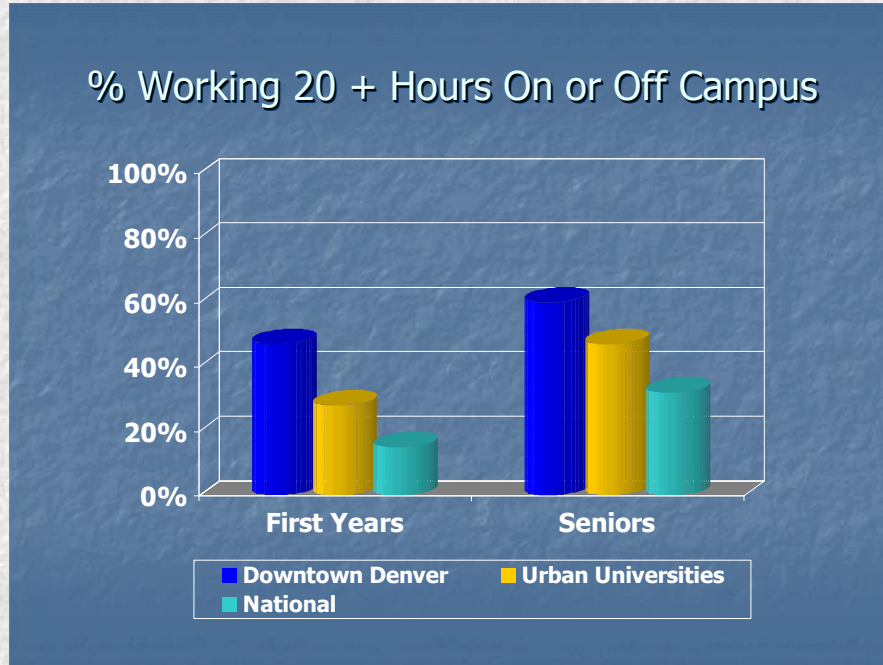
The following graph looks at one measure of the Level of Academic Challenge perceived by students – the percentage of students who say that their courses emphasize applying theories or concepts to problems or new situations quite a bit or very much. Two thirds of DDC first years and 3 quarters of seniors perceive their coursework in this way. These percentages are similar to urban university respondents as well as all NSSE respondents.

Other measures of Academic Challenge include whether coursework emphasizes memorization, analysis, synthesis, and making judgments. Our students report very similar levels of challenge compared to these other groups

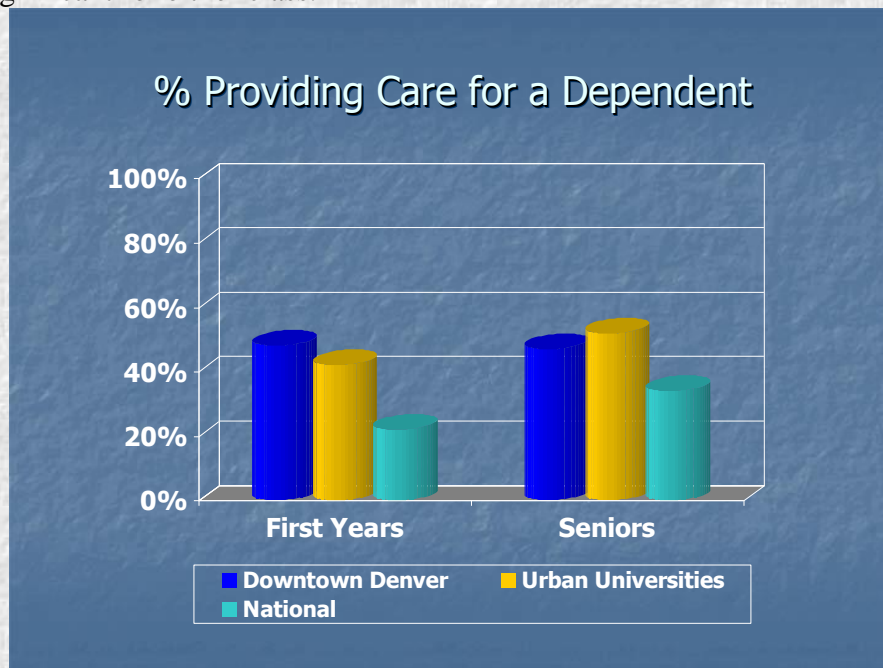


Selected Student Characteristics

The graph below illustrates one of the starkest differences between DDC students and those at other institutions participating in the NSSE. Almost half (47%) of our freshmen work at least half-time, as do 60% of our seniors. At the other universities in the urban consortium, the corresponding percentages are significantly lower (28% for first years, 47% for seniors). Our students are even more distinctive from students at all NSSE institutions – for instance, three times as many of our first year respondents work at least half-time relative to all NSSE first-year respondents.



In addition, a high proportion of our students provide care for a dependent compared to students at all NSSE institutions (48% of first years, 47% of seniors). For instance, our freshmen are more than twice as likely to care for a dependent than those at all participating NSSE schools. Differences compared to others in the urban consortium are not significant for either class.



Student and Faculty Perspectives on Engagement

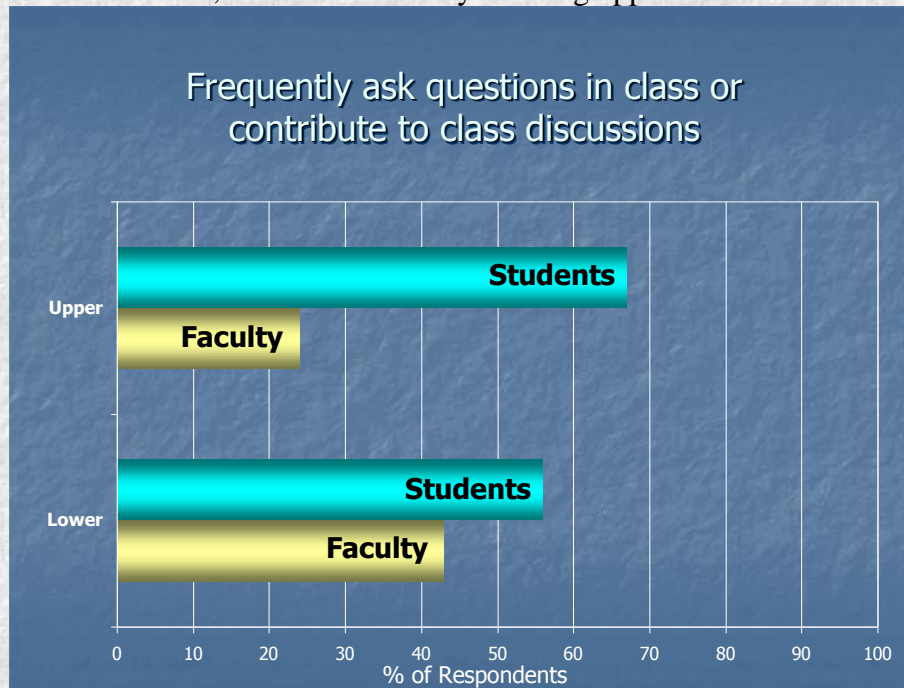
The next section of this analysis compares student and faculty perspectives on student engagement on our campus. In 2004, UCDHSC-DDC not only participated in the NSSE, but also participated in the FSSE – the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement. The FSSE was initiated in 2003 to provide parallel information to the NSSE from a faculty perspective. All 2004 FSSE institutions also participated in the NSSE at least once between 2001-2004. At the Downtown Denver campus, all faculty teaching undergraduate courses (including lecturers, instructors and tenure-track faculty) in academic year 2003-2004 with a valid e-mail address were sampled. 119 responded (32% response rate).

Student Experiences in Courses

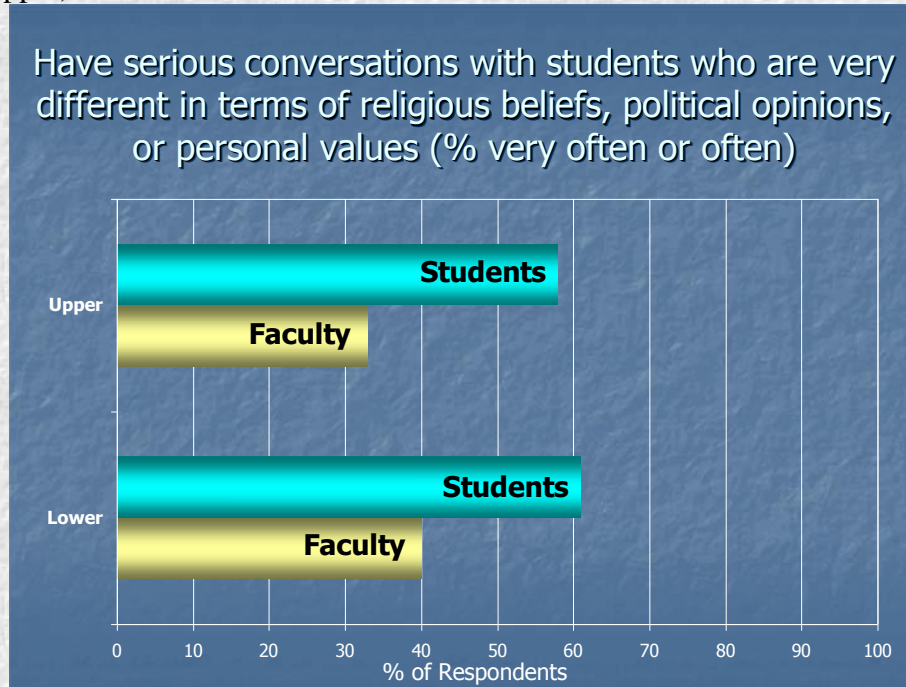
This next piece begins by comparing faculty and student responses to questions about academic and intellectual experiences in courses. Please note that the questions asked of faculty are not always directly comparable to the questions asked of students. Nevertheless, some interesting patterns emerge.

The FSSE asks each faculty respondent to choose one of the courses they taught during the 03-04 academic year in order to answer questions about their perception of classroom experiences of students. Here we compare reports on class participation. The student data shows the percentage of student respondents that reported that they asked questions or contributed to class discussion often or very often. Among first year students, 56% reported this, among seniors, 67%.

Faculty were asked to estimate the percentage of students in their reference course that frequently asked questions or contributed to class discussions. 43% of faculty teaching lower division courses estimated that half or more of their students did so; and 24% of faculty teaching upper division courses did so.

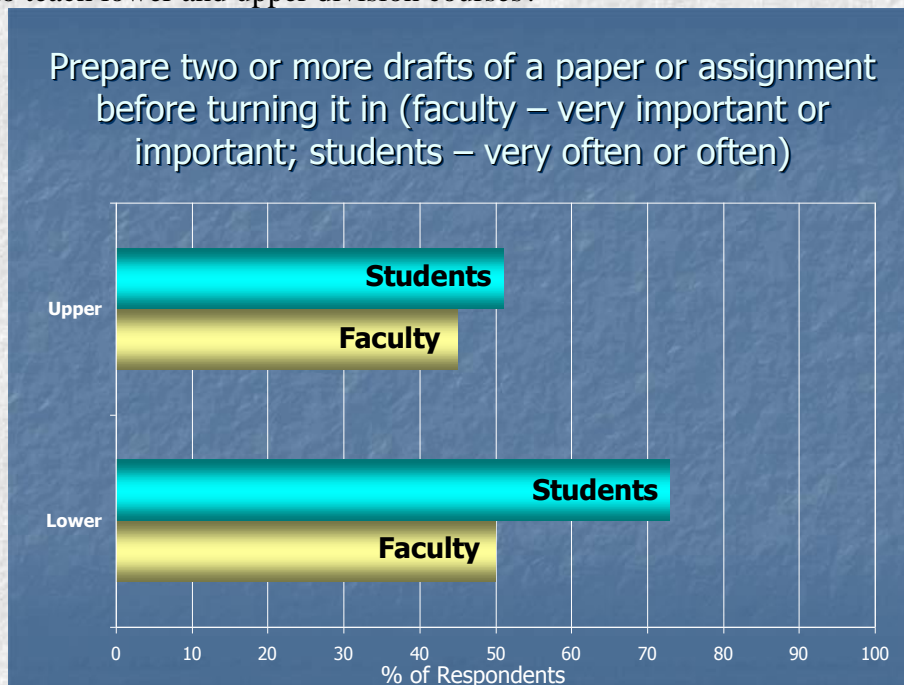


Next to be compared are faculty and student perceptions on how often students interact with other students who share different beliefs or values. Close to 60% of first year and senior students reported that this occurred very often or often. Faculty reported that this occurred often IN THEIR REFERENCE COURSES 40% (lower) and 33% (upper).

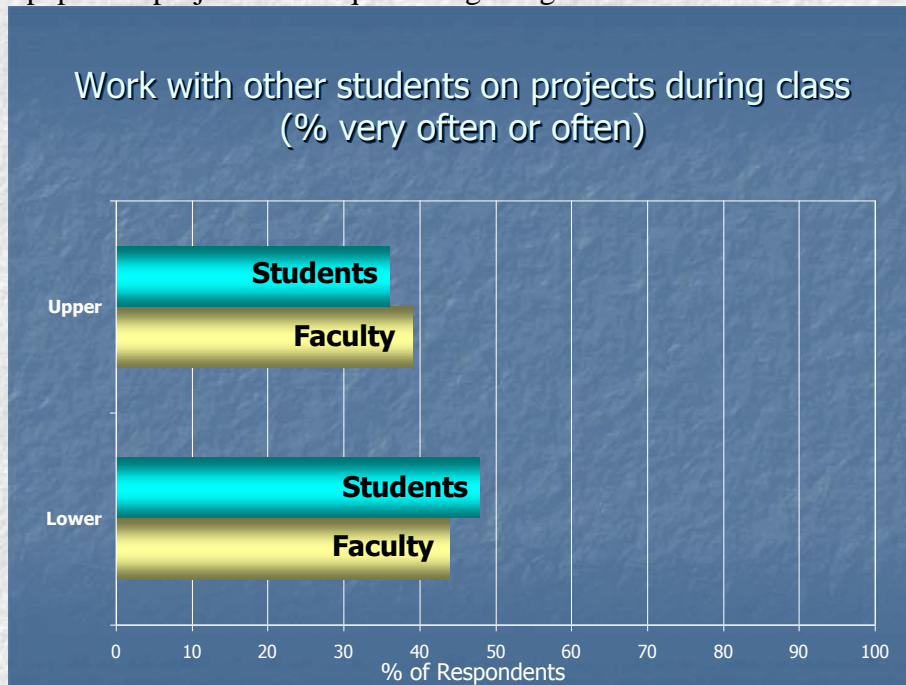


Students report preparing multiple iterations of papers at higher rates than faculty (who report on its importance in their courses). This is particularly true of freshmen.

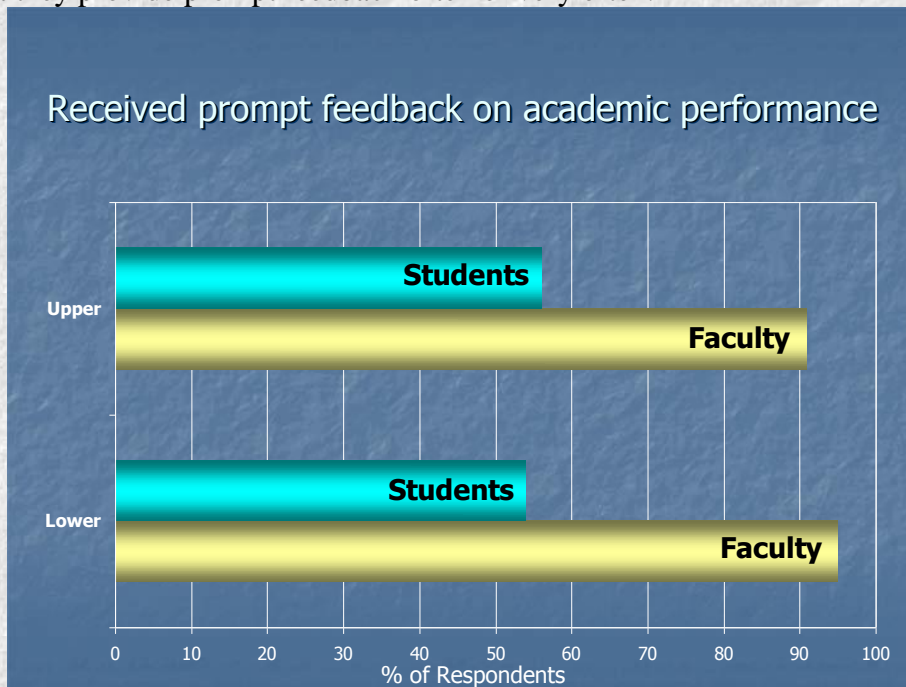
Interestingly, both faculty and student perceptions are higher for beginning students in lower division courses rather than among seniors and upper division courses. This is perhaps due to the differences in composition of faculty members who teach lower and upper division courses?



On some measures, faculty and student responses are very congruent. For instance, both groups at each level reported similar frequencies of group projects in class, as seen in the graph below. This is also true for community-based projects as part of coursework, discussing ideas from readings or class with faculty outside of class, and working on papers or projects that require integrating ideas or information from various sources.



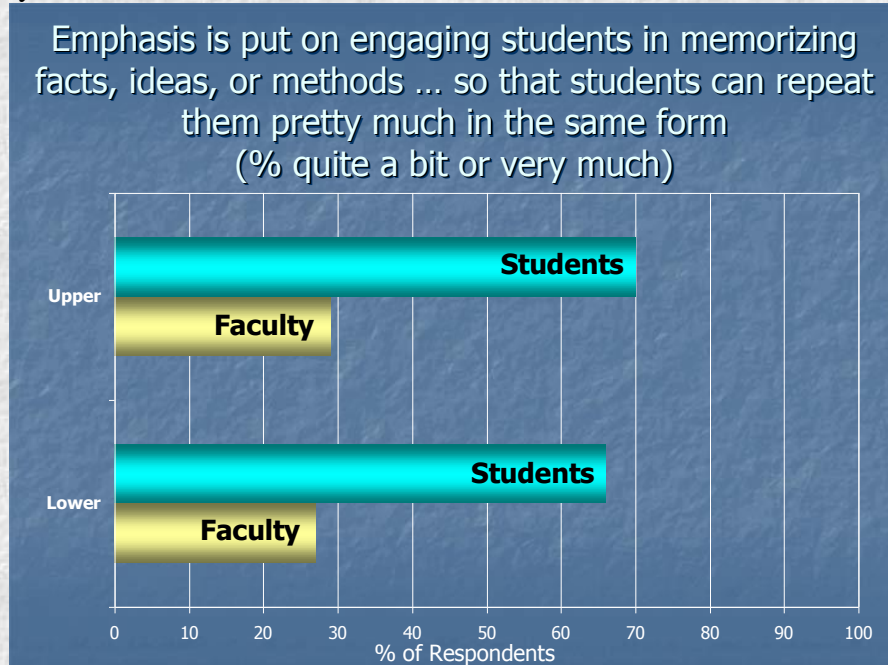
There is one area where faculty perceptions far exceed students -- providing prompt feedback. Just over half of students, both freshmen and seniors, reported that they received prompt feedback from their instructors very often or often. Over 90% of faculty respondents, whether using upper or lower division courses as their reference, report that they provide prompt feedback often or very often.



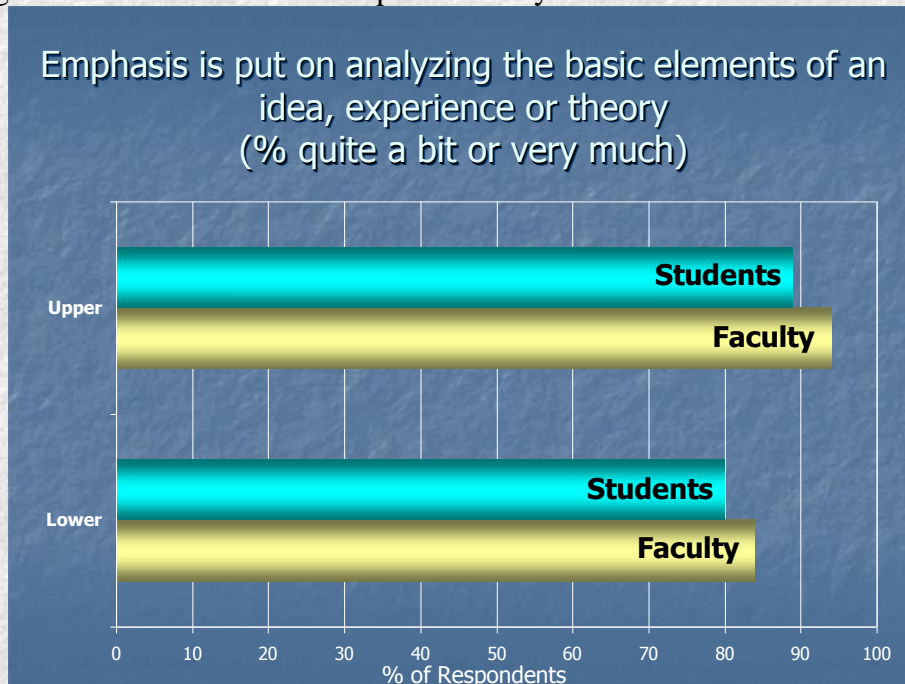
Course Emphases

In this section, we look at the degree to which faculty and student respondents agree about what is emphasized in their courses.

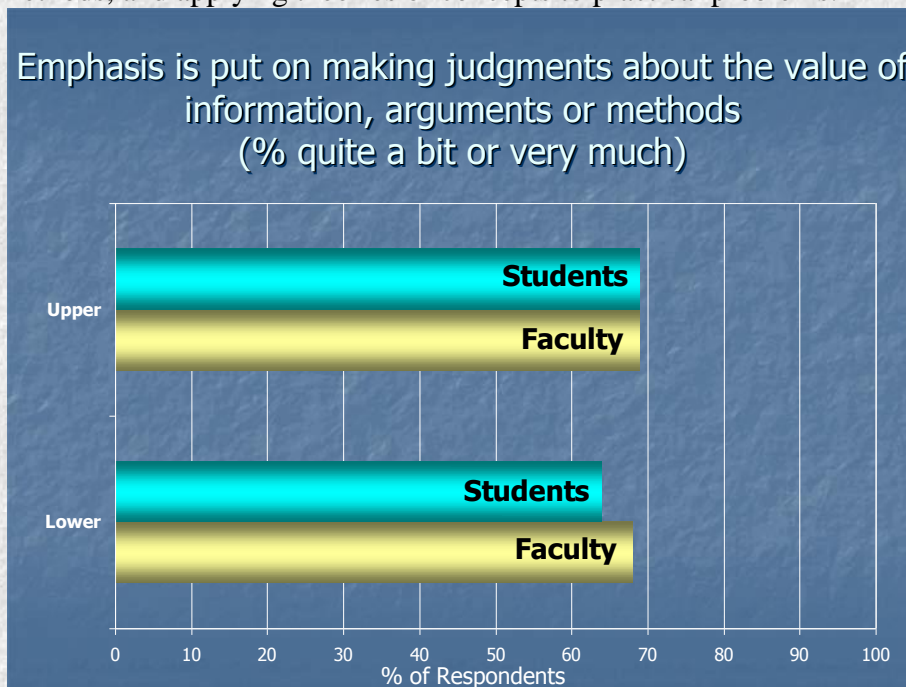
The most striking difference is seen with the degree to which courses emphasize memorizing facts, ideas, etc. Approximately 2/3 of students at both levels report that this occurs quite a bit or very much in their courses. Less than 1/3 of faculty, however, concur.



Other questions about course emphasis, however, show little or no difference in faculty or student perspectives, as seen here with regard to how much courses emphasize analysis of basic elements of theories or ideas.



Additional questions are also relatively close, particularly for seniors and upper division faculty. These emphases include making judgments about the value of information (shown here), synthesizing and organizing ideas, arguments or methods, and applying theories or concepts to practical problems.



Comparison of Faculty & Student Responses

In general, results show that DDC faculty respondents tend to underestimate student engagement across an array of questions. While the data presented here is not broken down by discipline because of small sample sizes by discipline in addition to the disciplines not being analogous to our schools and colleges. Additional analysis, however, shows that this same finding is also true but less pronounced among our Arts & Humanities faculty and students compared to other discipline areas.

Next Steps

As mentioned at the beginning, the NSSE and FSSE provide two rich sources of data and this analysis represents just the tip of the iceberg. There are a number of other topical areas in the NSSE to be explored. For instance, in 2004 there was an experimental battery of questions in the NSSE designed to assess students' civic engagement. The FSSE contains questions on faculty use of time. We'd also like to compare our FSSE results to all institutions who participated in the FSSE in 2004.

Also of note are some additional areas of interest in FSSE-NSSE comparisons.

- Educational and Personal Growth
- Importance of Enriching Experiences
- Quality of Student Relationships
- Institutional Environment