National Survey of Student Engagement

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Survey of First Year and Senior Cohorts

Office of Institutional Research and Office of Academic Planning and Assessment

April 12, 2001
NSSE 2000 Methodology

- **National**
  - 276 colleges and universities participated
  - 63,000 students responded
  - Response Rate: 42%
- **UMass Amherst**
  - Administered in Spring 2000 to randomly selected first year and senior students
  - 374 students responded by mail (73%) or through optional web survey (27%)
  - Response Rate: 37%
## Respondent Characteristics

### Gender
- **Female**: 60% (Respondents: n=374) vs. 48% (Original Cohort: n=6731)

### Race/Ethnicity
- **White**: 79% (Respondents) vs. 75% (Original Cohort)
- **Asian American**: 6% vs. 7%
- **Hispanic/Latino**: 3% vs. 4%
- **African American**: 2% vs. 3%
- **Native American**: 0% vs. 0%
- **Unknown**: 8% vs. 10%

### Class level
- **First Year**: 48% (Respondents) vs. 60% (Original Cohort)
NSSE Benchmarks

Indicators of effective educational practice in five areas:

- Level of academic challenge
- Active and collaborative learning
- Interactions with faculty members
- Enriching educational experiences
- Supportive campus environment
Benchmark Score Calculation

A benchmark is a score summarizing the responses of students to a group of related items

- Calculated separately for first year students and seniors
- To calculate each benchmark:
  - A weighted mean for each benchmark item was calculated (adjusted for gender and PT/FT enrollment status)
  - The item means were summed to create an overall score
  - This score was converted to a 100 point scale (where 0 is the lowest possible score and 100 is the highest).
Benchmark Comparisons

First Year Students

- **UMass Amherst**
- **Special Peers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>UMass Amherst</th>
<th>Special Peers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Challenge</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>47.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active and Collaborative</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>36.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interactions with Faculty</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>26.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enriching Educational</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>49.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Supportive Campus Environment</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>53.9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Range for Doctoral Extensive Institutions:**
- Academic Challenge: 41.5 - 55.7
- Active and Collaborative Learning: 33.5 - 42.9
- Interactions with Faculty: 21.4 - 34.2
- Enriching Educational Experience: 41.6 - 63.9
- Supportive Campus Environment: 45.2 - 70.6
Benchmark Comparisons

Seniors

UMass Amherst    Special Peers

Academic Challenge: 51.1 49.1
Active and Collaborative Learning: 44.2 45.1
Interactions with Faculty: 34.9 34.3
Enriching Educational Experience: 43.2 43.0
Supportive Campus Environment: 47.6 49.6

Range for Doctoral Extensive Institutions: 46.5 - 55.8
38.6 - 53.8
28.0 - 41.2
34.9 - 54
40.5 - 62.6
University emphasizes spending time on studying and academic work

**Academic Challenge Benchmark**

First Year Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UMass Amherst</th>
<th>Peers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>3.06</td>
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Means*

<table>
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<th>UMass Amherst</th>
<th>Peers</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>3.00</td>
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</table>

*Significant at p < .001
Time spent relaxing and socializing

UMass Amherst First Year Students

- 1-2 = 10 or fewer hrs/wk
- 3 = 11-15 hrs/wk
- 4 = 16-20 hrs/wk
- 5-7 = More than 20 hrs/wk

Means*:
- 4.08
- 3.53

*Significant at p ≤ .001

UMass Amherst Seniors

- 1-2 = 10 or fewer hrs/wk
- 3 = 11-15 hrs/wk
- 4 = 16-20 hrs/wk
- 5-7 = More than 20 hrs/wk

Means*:
- 3.74
- 3.11

*Significant at p ≤ .001
Number of written papers or reports fewer than 20 pages

First Year Students

UMass Amherst

Peers

Means*

3.77

3.37

Seniors

UMass Amherst

Peers

Means

3.49

3.24

*Significant at p ≤ .001
University emphasizes encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial/ethnic backgrounds.

First Year Students

- UMass Amherst: Mean 2.59
- Peers: Mean 2.33

Seniors

- UMass Amherst: Mean 2.26
- Peers: Mean 2.10

*Significant at p ≤ .001
Enriching Educational Experience Benchmark

Used an electronic medium to discuss or complete an assignment

First Year Students

UMass Amherst: 2.10
Peers: 2.42

Means: 2.10

Seniors

UMass Amherst: 2.15
Peers: 2.52

Means: 2.52

1 = Never, 2 = Occasionally, 3 = Often, 4 = Very often

*Significant at p < .001
Supportive Campus Environment Benchmark

Student satisfaction with administrative personnel and offices

First Year Students

UMass Amherst
Peers

Means
3.97
4.25

Seniors

UMass Amherst
Peers

Means*
3.39
4.05

*Significant at p ≤ .001

1-2 = Unhelpful; inconsiderate  3-4  5-6  7 = Helpful; considerate
How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 = Poor</th>
<th>2 = Fair</th>
<th>3 = Good</th>
<th>4 = Excellent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Year Students</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>UMass Amherst</td>
<td>-60% -40% -20% 0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>Mean: 3.06</td>
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*Significant at p ≤ .001
If you could start over, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?

First Year Students

UMass Amherst

Peers

Means

3.15
3.23

Seniors

UMass Amherst

Peers

Means

3.01
3.07

*Significant at p ≤ .001