



Brazosport College

Gator Stats

The Office of Institutional Research (OIR)

Inside this issue:

Asking the Right Question	1
Did you know?	2

Asking the Right Question

Has anyone asked, "What do we get out the *Community College Survey of Student Engagement* (CCSSE)?" Or, "Does the CCSSE have any value?" The answers to those questions depend on you. In order to get value from the data collected through the administration of the CCSSE, one has to be more than a little bit curious. After looking at the tables/results that are posted on the website (<http://www.brazosport.edu/~ir>) and mulling over the variables available for analysis, the possibilities for additional inquiry/analysis are seemingly endless. This newsletter was written to provide the results of such an inquiry. Are there any differences between traditional and non-

traditional students with regards to how they responded to the survey? While writing the SPSS coding to produce these tables, another question popped up: are there differences between female non-traditional students and female traditional students? The tables are too large to insert into this newsletter, but the tables are posted on the IR website.

Several of the survey items were considered: Classroom Engagement, Weekly Activities, GPA, and Career Goals. For example, are students aged 25 and older (a non-traditional trait) more engaged with class than those aged 18-25 (traditional trait), how do these two groups spend their time outside of class (more focused), and are non-traditional students more successful (GPA)? With respect to the age-trait, 31.4% of the Brazosport College respondents were non-traditional, compared with 37% nationally, and were used for the reporting that follows.

Selected items from the survey were used for the following list. The entire survey results for non-traditional students for CCSSE can be found at http://www.brazosport.edu/~ir/ccsse_2005.html.

- Almost three fourths (72.4%) of the non-traditional students (NTS) asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions, whereas 55.5% of the traditional students (TS) did so. Nationally, the percentages were 73% and 59% respectively.
- The NTS are more likely to come to class prepared than traditional students. 41.7% of the NTS responded "Never" to the item on coming to class unprepared (4e), compared to 18.7% for the TS. Nationally, the percentages were 42% and 22% respectively.
- NTS attend class more consistently than traditional students. Two-thirds of the NTS responded that they never skip classes, whereas one-third of the traditional student responded that they never skip classes. Nationally the percentages were 67% and 22% respectively.
- 54.9% of the NTS spend more than 30 hours per week providing care for dependents that live with them; for the TS, the percentage was 11.7%. Additionally, 50% of the NTS work for pay, more than 30 hours per week.
- NTS are more likely to discuss grades or assignments with instructors. 3.9% of the NTS responded "Never" to this item and for the traditional students the percentage was 12.6%.

Listed below are the findings when the results are separated by gender for NTS and TS:

- Female non-traditional students (FNTS) are more likely to ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions. 71.2% of the FNTS responded "Often" or "Very Often" to this item compared to 52.9% for the FTS.
- FNTS are more likely to discuss grades or assignments with an instructor. 3.7% of the FNTS responded "Never" to this item compared to 13.0% for the FTS.
- Approximately two-thirds (67.6%) of the FNTS responded "Never" to the item about skipping class and one-third of the FTS responded "Never."

OIR Staff and Contact Information

David Preston, Ed. D., Director of Institutional Research and Coordinator of Title V

David.preston@brazosport.edu
Ext. 3256

Jennifer Dudley, Administrative Office Specialist

Jennifer.dudley@brazosport.edu
Ext. 3407

What can we do for you?

If you need our assistance to help design, construct, administer, or scan a survey or help in the analysis of the data collected by a survey, please feel free to call the OIR for assistance. If you would like to have the OIR produce a specialized study or report, please contact us. The OIR does and can help with writing grant proposals. Presenting the results of analysis to an internal or external group is also something the OIR is more than happy to do.

The OIR request form is located at www.brazosport.edu/~ir

Got a question that requires an analysis of student data? Call the OIR or visit www.brazosport.edu/~ir

Surveys currently being administered:

Student Feedback

Gulf Coast Standard Survey of Student Services

Community College Survey of Student Engagement

Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement

- The FNTS are more likely to be prepared for class in that 41.4% of the FNTS responded “Never” to the item about coming to class unprepared (4e) compared to 18.0% for FTS.
- Approximately two-thirds (67.6%) of the FNTS responded Never the item about skipping class and one-third of the FTS responded Never.
- When reporting grade point averages, 78.1% of the FNTS reported a GPA or B or higher compared with 69.9% for the FTS.

Suffice it to say that many other significant differences occur in the analysis. Space limits including other survey items.

After the analysis and reporting the results, what is the next step? How can this knowledge be used to change what we do or validate the effectiveness of the current process or program? Do initiatives need to be introduced to attend to the challenges presented? Improving the awareness of the make-up of our students? Change some of the student services to respond to the needs of these students? What can/would you do? In fact, questions such as this should be used in the planning and institutional effectiveness processes. Otherwise, why do we collect the data?

Two differences, not mentioned in the lists above, is that non-traditional students are less likely to aspire to transfer (35.1% NTS and 67.6% TS respondents marked transfer as their primary goal). How could Brazosport College implement services to help these students seek higher aspirations?

The narrative above demonstrates how CCSSE data can be used to improve student engagement by becoming more aware of the nuances of our students. The ones discussed in the narrative probably would not be discovered unless we had survey data and the tools to analyze and report them. I would like to challenge the reader to study the results of the CCSSE on the IR website and write an inquiry and submit it to the OIR. The results of the analysis will be returned and then you are invited to share your findings with the rest of the college employees by submitting a short (restricted to one page, both sides) article for this newsletter.

Did you know...?

The OIR recently received a catalog from the Community College Press (American Association of Community Colleges). Included in this catalog was a single page of community college facts (national data). Did you know that

- There are 1,158 community colleges (979 public, 148 independent, and 31 tribal)?
- 60% of new nurses and the majority of other new health-care workers are educated at community colleges?
- 95% of businesses and organizations who employ community college graduates recommend community college workforce education and training programs?
- Close to 80% of firefighters, law enforcement officers, and EMTs are credentialed at community colleges?
- The average expected lifetime earnings for a graduate with an associate degree are \$1.6 million—about \$.4 million more than a high school graduate earns?

Suggested readings:

Data Don't Drive: Building a Practitioner-Driven Culture of Inquiry to Assess Community College Performance by Alicia C. Dowd. Lumina Foundation for Education (2005)

Barrier Busters: Community Colleges and Their Students Embrace Challenges. (2006). Focus. Lumina Foundation.

(Note: South Texas College is one of the colleges featured in this publication.)