

Practices that Lead to Academic Success

2013 Your First College Year Survey

In spring 2013, we asked first-year students at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) to participate in the *Your First College Year* survey. The survey was administered by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA in conjunction with the Office of Planning and Institutional Research. Due to low response rates, the results should be interpreted with caution.¹ This report describes students' participation in intellectual practices associated with academic success.



The survey instrument includes 16 constructs based on rigorous statistical methods. The constructs are designed to capture the experiences and outcomes that institutions are often interested in but find challenging to measure because of their complex and multifaceted nature. Constructs are particularly helpful in examining trends over time and making comparisons to other institutions. Construct scores should not be converted into percentages or compared to other constructs.

The habits of the mind construct is a unified measure of the behaviors and traits associated with academic success. These learning behaviors are seen as the foundation for lifelong learning. Since 2011, CWRU's habits of the mind construct score has not changed significantly (49 in 2011 vs. 49 in 2013). Compared to the private university group, CWRU's score was significantly lower in 2013 (49 vs. 50).²

In terms of the results for the items within the construct, almost all students:

- ❖ Searched for solutions to problems and explained them to others (at least occasionally: 99%)
- ❖ Supported their opinions with a logical argument (98%)
- ❖ Accepted mistakes as part of the learning process (98%)
- ❖ Searched for alternative solutions to a problem (97%)
- ❖ Requested feedback on their academic work (96%)
- ❖ Evaluated the quality or reliability of the information they received (95%)

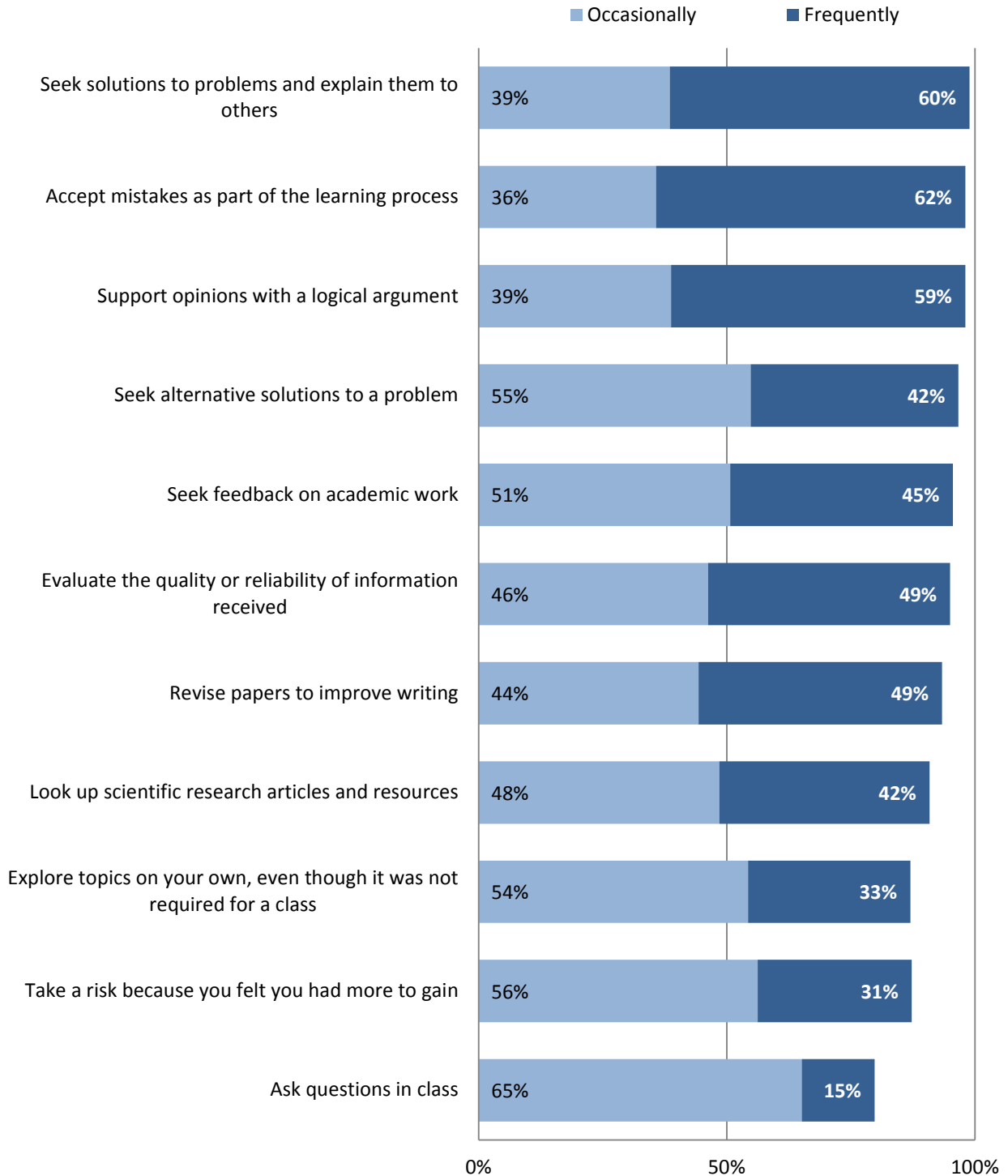
The vast majority of students also:

- ❖ Revised papers to improve their writing (93%)
- ❖ Looked up scientific research articles and resources (91%)
- ❖ Explored topics on their own, even though it was not required for class (87%)
- ❖ Took a risk because they felt they had more to gain (87%)
- ❖ Asked questions in class (80%)

¹ Of the 1,336 students who received the survey, 27% (n=361) answered at least 50% of the questions. Compared to their peers, women, Asian/White, U.S. citizens, and students in non-management majors responded to the survey at significantly higher rates.

² The private university comparison group included Azusa Pacific University, Fordham University, Pepperdine University, University of the Pacific, Wake Forest University, and Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

Figure 1. How often in the past year did you:



Additional Information

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