

First-Year Student-Faculty Interaction

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 relates to the amount of time students spend with faculty and students' perceptions of faculty support.

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.



Student-Faculty Interaction

The student faculty interaction construct measures the amount and type of interactions students have with faculty that is appropriate for the first year of college, as well as satisfaction with these issues. Compared to the score of private universities that also participated in the survey, CWRU's score on the student faculty interaction construct was significantly lower (48 vs. 50).² Compared to 2011, CWRU's score on the construct decreased significantly (50 in 2011 vs. 48 in 2013). Since entering CWRU:

- ❖ 85% of first-year students interacted with faculty during office hours, at least once
- ❖ 75% received advice/guidance about their educational program from their professor, at least occasionally
- ❖ 75% interacted with faculty outside of class or office hours, at least once
- ❖ 74% asked a professor for advice after class, at least occasionally
- ❖ 49% communicated regularly with professors

What Else Do We Know About Student-Faculty Interactions?

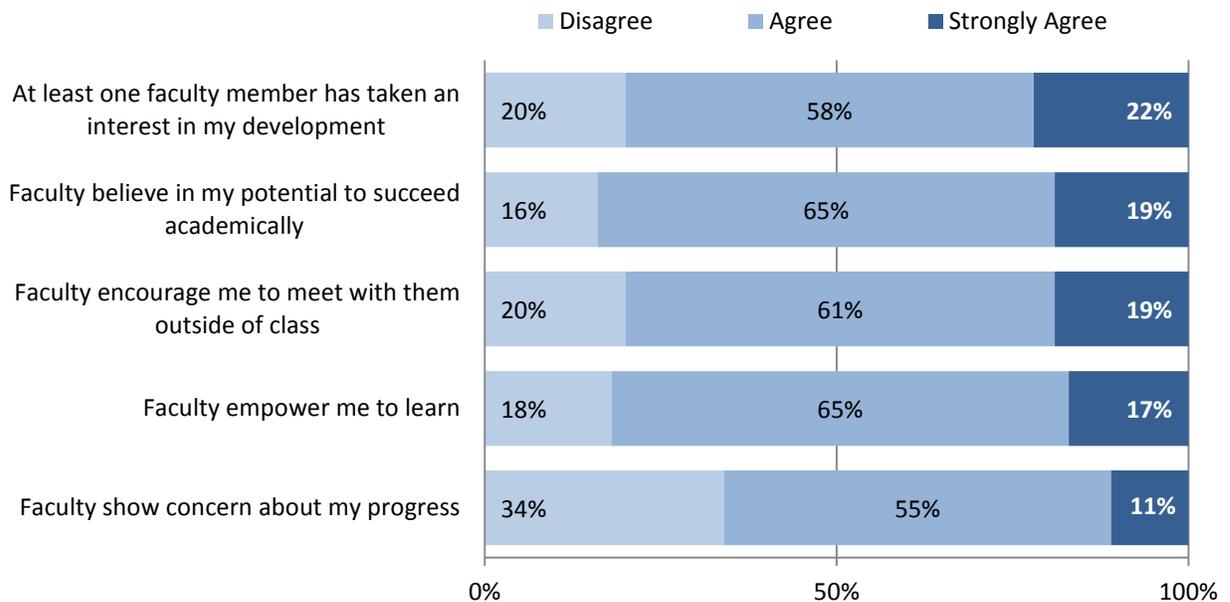
Several additional questions on the survey addressed student and faculty interactions. For example, most students said it was easy to understand what their professors expect of them academically (79%). More than 90% of students agreed that faculty provided them with feedback that helped assess their progress in class and encouraged them to ask questions and participate in discussions. Fourteen percent (14%) of students worked on a professor's research project during their first year. Most students agreed that (figure 1):

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.

- ❖ At least one faculty member took an interest in their development
- ❖ Faculty believed in their potential to succeed academically
- ❖ Faculty empowered them to learn
- ❖ Faculty encouraged students to meet with them outside of class
- ❖ Faculty showed concern about their progress

Figure 1. To what extent do you agree with the following:



Most students were satisfied with their overall academic experience (82%) and the overall quality of instruction (80%). Fewer were satisfied with:

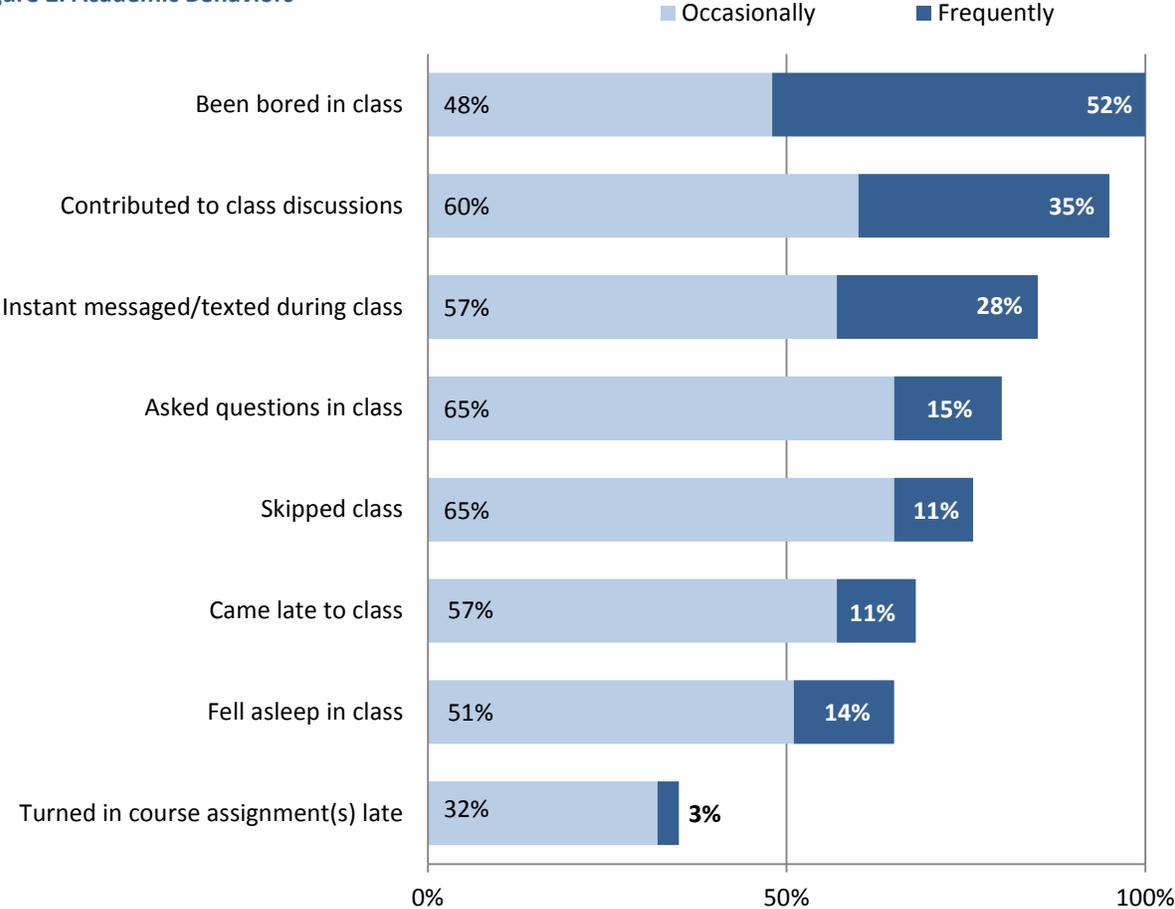
- ❖ Relevance of coursework to their future plans (64%)
- ❖ Amount of contact with faculty (57%)
- ❖ Class size (53%)
- ❖ Racial/ethnic diversity of faculty (53%)
- ❖ Relevance of coursework to everyday life (51%)

Almost all students contributed to class discussions (95%) and asked questions in class (98%). In terms of academic disengagement, the majority of students had (at least occasionally):

- Been bored in class
- Come late to class
- Fallen asleep in class
- Instant messaged/texted during class
- Skipped class

Fewer students turned in course assignments late (figure 2).

Figure 2. Academic Behaviors



Additional Information

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