

Faculty Interaction

2014 College Senior Survey

In spring 2014, we asked graduating seniors at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) to participate in the *College Senior Survey*. The survey was administered by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) in conjunction with the Office of Planning and Institutional Research. It is a follow-up to *The Freshman Survey* (TFS) which was administered to this cohort in fall of 2010. Of 983¹ potential participants, 33% (n=326)² submitted responses. Their results are compared to students from a comparison group of universities³. Additionally, 154 students completed both the TFS and CSS, allowing us to make comparisons over time⁴. This report provides information about students' interactions with faculty on campus.



Measures

The results include constructs derived from multiple items on the survey instrument. 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. The construct scores detailed in this report are more than a basic summation of individual items. Rather, they are computed using Item Response Theory (IRT)⁵ and have been scaled such that the population means equal 50. *Construct scores should not be converted into percentages or compared to other constructs.*

In addition to the constructs, additional individual items are highlighted in the report. The full distribution for constructs and individual items is available on the IR website at: <https://www.case.edu/ir/srvyresults/>. All significant differences also include a measure of

¹ Population n=983: Women=399 (41%), Men=584 (59%); Caucasian=515 (52%), Asian=189 (19%), Black=41 (4%), Hispanic=33 (3%), Other=29 (3%), Unknown=106 (11%), International=70 (7%)

² Sample n=326: Women=166 (51%), Men=160 (49%); Caucasian=184 (56%), Asian=53 (16%), Black=10 (3%), Hispanic=8 (3%), Other=11 (3%), Unknown=42 (13%); International=17 (5%)

³ Pepperdine University, Northeastern University, Fordham University, Texas Christian University and Biola University

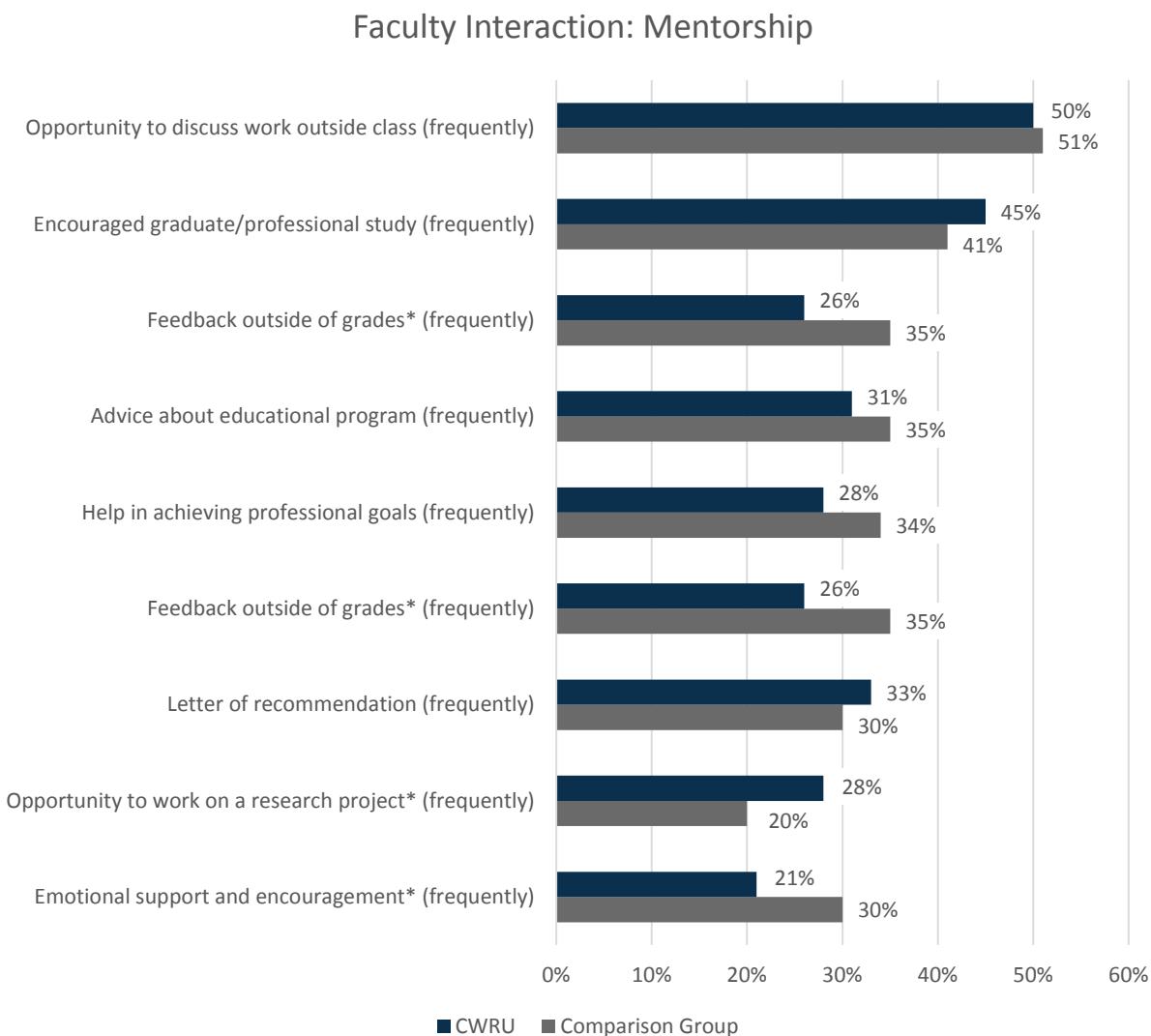
⁴ Longitudinal comparisons examine change in students who completed both TFS and CSS (includes data from 33 non-graduating seniors).

⁵ Item Response Theory (IRT) uses response patterns to derive construct score estimates while simultaneously giving greater weight in the estimation process to survey items that tap into the construct more directly. This results in more accurate construct scores.

effect size, Cohen's d. Effect size allows us to estimate the size of the differences between two means⁶. For ease of reference, bulleted items which demonstrate significant differences are italicized.

Faculty Interaction: Mentorship

The *Faculty Interaction: Mentorship* construct measures the extent to which students and faculty have mentoring relationships that foster both academic and personal support and guidance. CWRU's score on the construct was slightly lower than those at the comparison institutions; ($M=49, SD=9.26$) vs. ($M=50, SD=8.58$); $d=-0.13, p<.05$. A breakdown of the individual items is detailed in the graph below.

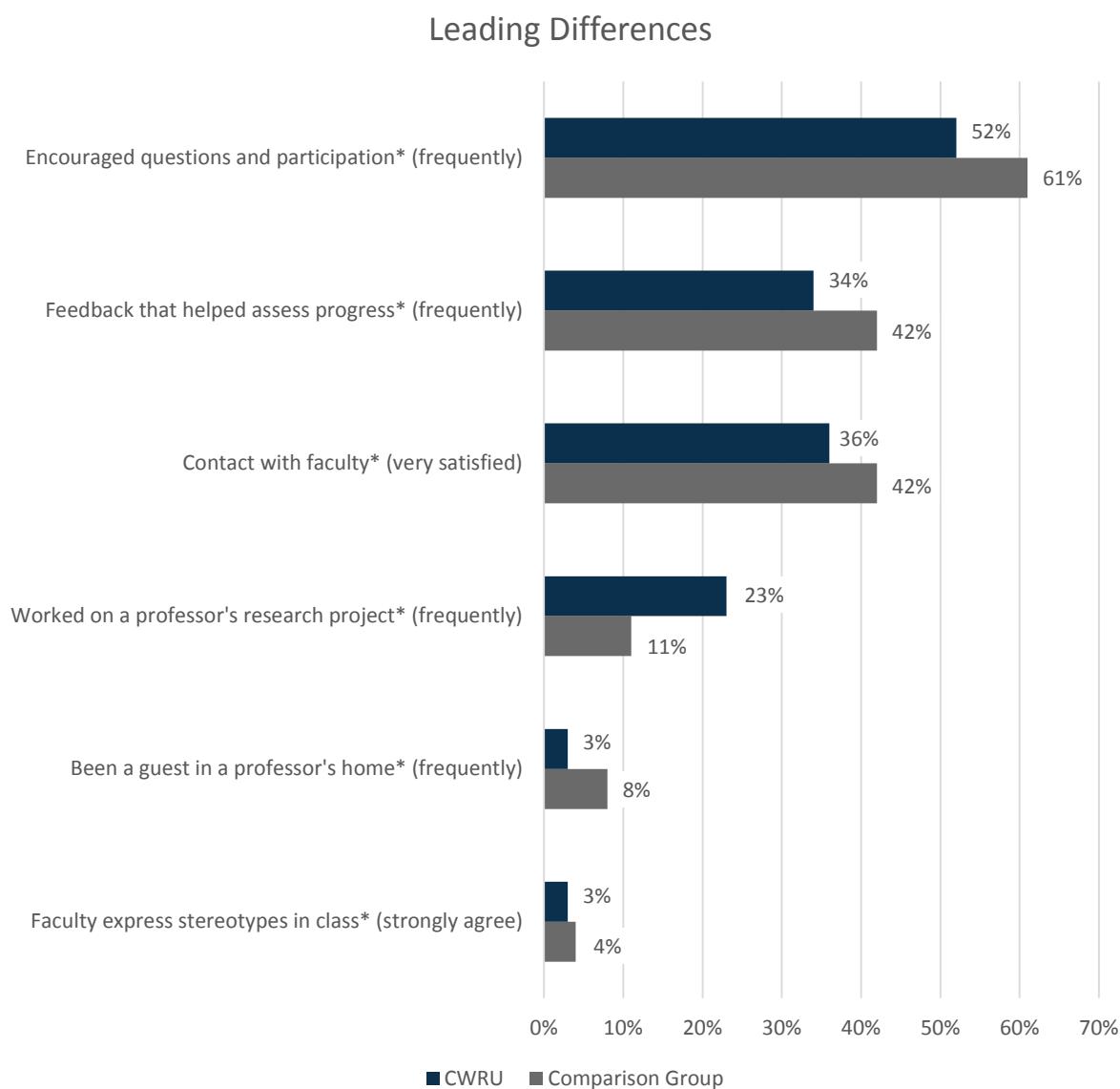


*Slight difference to moderate differences: opportunity to work on a research project ($d=-0.31$), emotional support and encouragement ($d=-0.28$), feedback outside of grades ($d=0.31$)

⁶ The effect size is the size of the difference between two means. Cohen's d values were interpreted according to the criteria used by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research: small ~ .1, medium ~ .3, large ~ .5, very large ~ .7. These benchmark criteria were applied unilaterally to both constructs and individual items for simplicity.

Additional Items

In addition to items that comprise the construct, the CSS includes other items related to faculty/student interaction. When differences were found, CWRU students reported more negative experiences than students in the comparison group on the majority of items. There were two exceptions to this trend. One exception was for work on a professor's research project, as CWRU students reported moderately more of this experience than students at the comparison institutions. The other exception was on the item about hearing faculty express stereotypes based on race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation. CWRU students reported slightly less of this behavior than the comparison group. Items for which there was the most difference are graphically illustrated below.



*Slight difference to moderate differences: encouragement to participate ($d=-0.22$), helpful feedback ($d=-0.22$), contact with faculty ($d=-0.25$), worked on a professor's research project ($d=0.41$), been a guest in a professor's home ($d=-0.20$), heard stereotypes expressed ($d=-0.22$)

For the remaining items below, differences between CWRU and the comparison group were either less pronounced, or there were no meaningful differences.

- *Challenged a professor's ideas in class:* 6% vs. 7% frequently; ($M=1.51$, $SD=0.61$) vs. ($M=1.63$, $SD=0.62$); $d=-0.19$, $p<.01$
- *Faculty empower me to learn here:* 23% vs. 26% strongly agree; ($M=3.05$, $SD=0.69$) vs. ($M=3.17$, $SD=0.59$); $d=-0.20$, $p<.01$
- *Received honest feedback about your skills and abilities:* 36% vs. 46% frequently; ($M=2.29$, $SD=0.60$) vs. ($M=2.40$, $SD=0.60$); $d=-0.18$, $p<.01$
- *At least one faculty member has taken an interest in my development:* 45% vs. 50% strongly agree; ($M=3.26$, $SD=0.83$) vs. ($M=3.38$, $SD=0.71$); $d=-0.17$, $p<.05$
- *Faculty believe in my potential to succeed academically:* 40% vs. 43% strongly agree; ($M=3.26$, $SD=0.73$) vs. ($M=3.35$, $SD=0.63$); $d=-0.14$, $p<.05$
- *Faculty showed concern about my progress:* 17% vs. 21% strongly agree; ($M=2.80$, $SD=0.84$) vs. ($M=2.93$, $SD=0.79$); $d=-0.16$, $p<.05$
- *Ability to find a faculty or staff mentor:* 28% vs. 30% very satisfied; ($M=3.74$, $SD=1.07$) vs. ($M=3.89$, $SD=0.96$); $d=-0.16$, $p<.05$
- *Faculty encouraged me to meet with them outside of class:* 23% vs. 28% frequently; ($M=3.05$, $SD=0.68$) vs. ($M=3.15$, $SD=0.64$); $d=-0.16$, $p<.05$
- Received intellectual challenge and stimulation: 53% vs. 57% frequently; ($M=2.47$, $SD=0.60$) vs. ($M=2.54$, $SD=0.56$); No meaningful difference
- Communicated regularly with your professors: 38% vs. 41% frequently; ($M=2.25$, $SD=0.67$) vs. ($M=2.32$, $SD=0.63$); No meaningful difference
- Received an opportunity to publish: 9% vs. 7% frequently; ($M=1.51$, $SD=0.65$) vs. ($M=1.46$, $SD=0.62$); No meaningful difference

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