

# Results of the 2011 College Senior Survey

The College Senior Survey was administered during spring 2011 to undergraduate students who were expected to graduate in 2011<sup>1</sup>. Of the 996 students who received the survey, 28% (n=273) responded. Participants had a significantly higher grade point average than non-participants (3.37 vs. 3.28) but did not differ significantly in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, citizenship, or age. The survey included questions about graduates' college experiences, after-college plans, abilities, behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs. This report presents the results of the questions related to students' perceptions of their intellectual and personal growth.

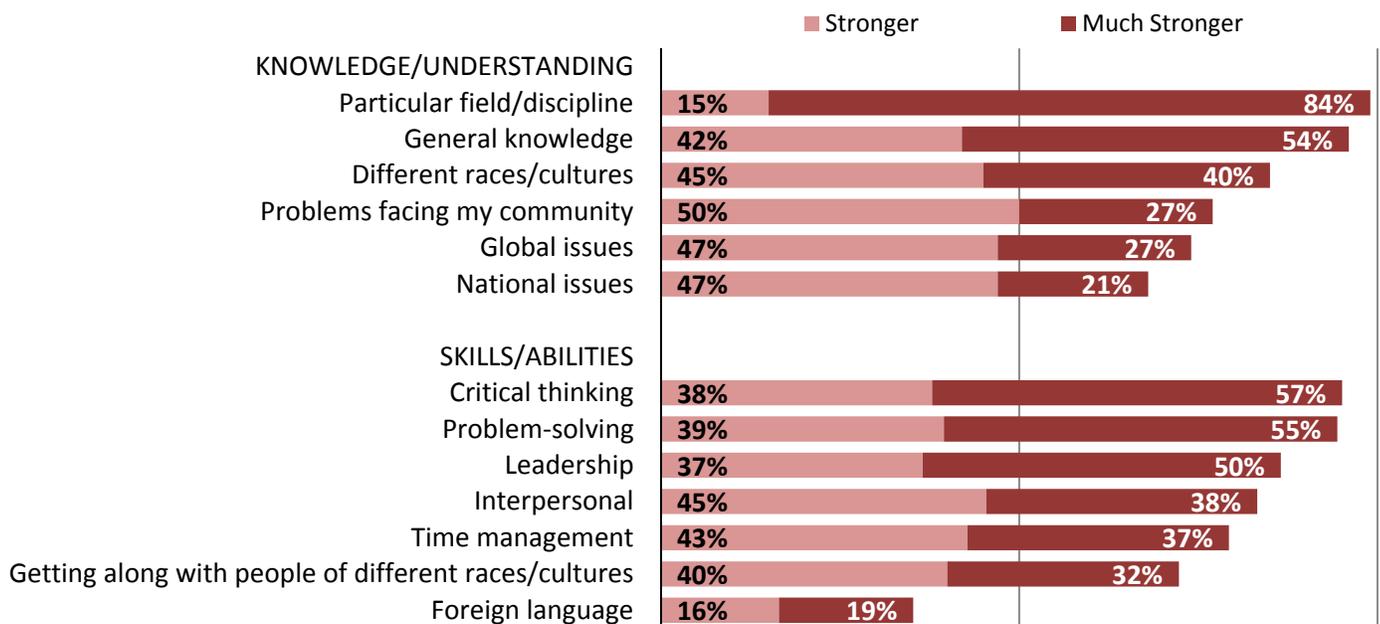
## Student Development

**How has the college experience changed students? Are they more knowledgeable? More understanding? More confident in their skills? How do they compare themselves to others their age?**

### Have Graduates Changed Since They First Enrolled in College?

Compared to when they first entered college, the majority of students rate themselves as "stronger" or "much stronger"<sup>2</sup> on all but one factor related to skills, abilities, knowledge, and understanding. Fewer than half of students said they were stronger or much stronger in their foreign language ability than when they came to college (35%). Figure 1 provides a more complete picture of graduates' perceived changes.

**Figure 1. How have you changed since entering college?**



### How Do Graduates Think They Measure Up to the Average Person their Age?

The majority of graduates rated themselves as higher than the average person their age in terms of all of their skills, abilities, and personal characteristics. The only exception was artistic ability; one-third of students rated themselves as "above average" or higher.

<sup>1</sup> Students who graduated/expected to graduate in January, May, and August received an invitation to the survey.

<sup>2</sup> Scale: Much weaker, weaker, no change, stronger, much stronger.

Of the 273 graduates who completed the College Senior Survey, 91 also completed the Cooperative Institutional Research Program freshmen survey during orientation. Both surveys asked students to rate their skills, abilities, and personal characteristics compared to the average person their age. Results indicate that computer skills, writing and leadership ability, self-understanding, understanding of others, cooperativeness, and social confidence had at least a 10% increase from orientation to graduation. The results of the surveys are provided in Table 1.

**Table 1. Changes in Self-Perceptions: Orientation to Graduation<sup>3</sup>**

Skills/Abilities	Then	Now	% Change	Characteristics	Then	Now	% Change
Computer*	46%	63%	+17%	Self-Understanding*	60%	74%	+14%
Writing*	58%	74%	+16%	Understanding of Others*	67%	81%	+14%
Leadership*	68%	78%	+10%	Cooperativeness*	74%	88%	+14%
Public Speaking	45%	56%	+6%	Social Self-Confidence	41%	52%	+11%
Artistic	25%	31%	+6%	Drive to Achieve	86%	82%	-4%
Academic	99%	93%	-6%	Intellectual Self-Confidence	82%	78%	-4%
Mathematical*	80%	72%	-8%	Creativity	60%	53%	-7%

\* p<0.05

**Table 2. Differences among Colleges/Schools<sup>4</sup>**

	Changes Since First Entering College	Measuring Up to the Average Person their Age
Arts and Sciences	Stronger <sup>5</sup> in understanding global issues (80% stronger vs. 70% of their CWRU peers).	Above average or higher in creativity (64% vs. 49%) of their CWRU peers), self-understanding (76% vs. 68%), understanding of others (86% vs. 72%), and writing ability (81% vs. 68%). Lower in computer skills (50% vs. 62%) and mathematical ability (53% vs. 82%) <sup>3</sup> .
Engineering	Stronger in their knowledge of a particular field or discipline (100% vs. 98%), critical thinking (97% vs. 94%), and problem-solving skills (97% vs. 93%).	Above average or higher in mathematical ability (98% vs. 53%) and computer skills (82% vs. 46%). Lower in understanding of others (71% vs. 83%) and artistic ability (26% vs. 34%).
Management	Stronger in leadership (95% vs. 85%) and time management abilities (87% vs. 78%), general knowledge (100% vs. 96%), understanding of national issues (87% vs. 66%), and understanding of global issues (87% vs. 66%).	Above average or higher in writing ability (82% vs. 73%) and computer skills (63% vs. 58%). Lower in creativity (46% vs. 57%) and mathematical ability (55% vs. 70%).
Nursing	Weaker in foreign language skills (0% stronger vs. 37% of peers).	Lower ratings in computer skills (25% vs. 61%), creativity (37% vs. 57%), mathematical ability (44% vs. 71%), and writing ability (37% vs. 76%).

### Additional Information

For additional information about this report, please call (216) 368-2338 or e-mail [opir@case.edu](mailto:opir@case.edu).

<sup>3</sup> Percentages reflect students' who marked "above average" or higher.

<sup>4</sup> All differences are statistically significant, p<0.05.

<sup>5</sup> "Stronger" refers to those who answered "stronger" or "much stronger."