

College Outcomes

2012 National Survey of Student Engagement

In spring 2012, we asked first-year and senior students at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) to participate in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).¹ The survey collects information about student engagement in educational practices which are known, through research, to enhance learning. This report describes the quality of students' experiences and the extent to which those experiences have contributed to their personal and professional growth.



The vast majority of students rated their educational experience at CWRU as good or excellent (87%). Women rated their educational experience at CWRU significantly higher than did men (91% vs. 84%) and majority students rated their experience significantly higher than did underrepresented minority students (88% vs. 76%).² There were no significant differences in responses based on citizenship, class standing (i.e., first-year vs. senior students), or college.

Eighty-two percent (82%) of students said they would choose CWRU if they could start over again. Majority students were significantly more likely than underrepresented minorities to agree that they would choose CWRU again (82% vs. 71%). Likewise, Engineering majors were significantly more likely than non-Engineering majors to say they would choose CWRU again (85% vs. 80%). No other significant differences existed in responses by gender, citizenship, class standing, or school/college.

Fewer students rated the quality of academic advising as good or excellent (69%). First-year students were significantly more likely than seniors to rate the quality of academic advising as good or excellent (80% vs. 61%). Similarly, international students rated the quality of academic advising significantly higher than U.S. students (good/excellent: 85% vs. 68%). There were no significant differences in responses by gender, race/ethnicity, or college/school.

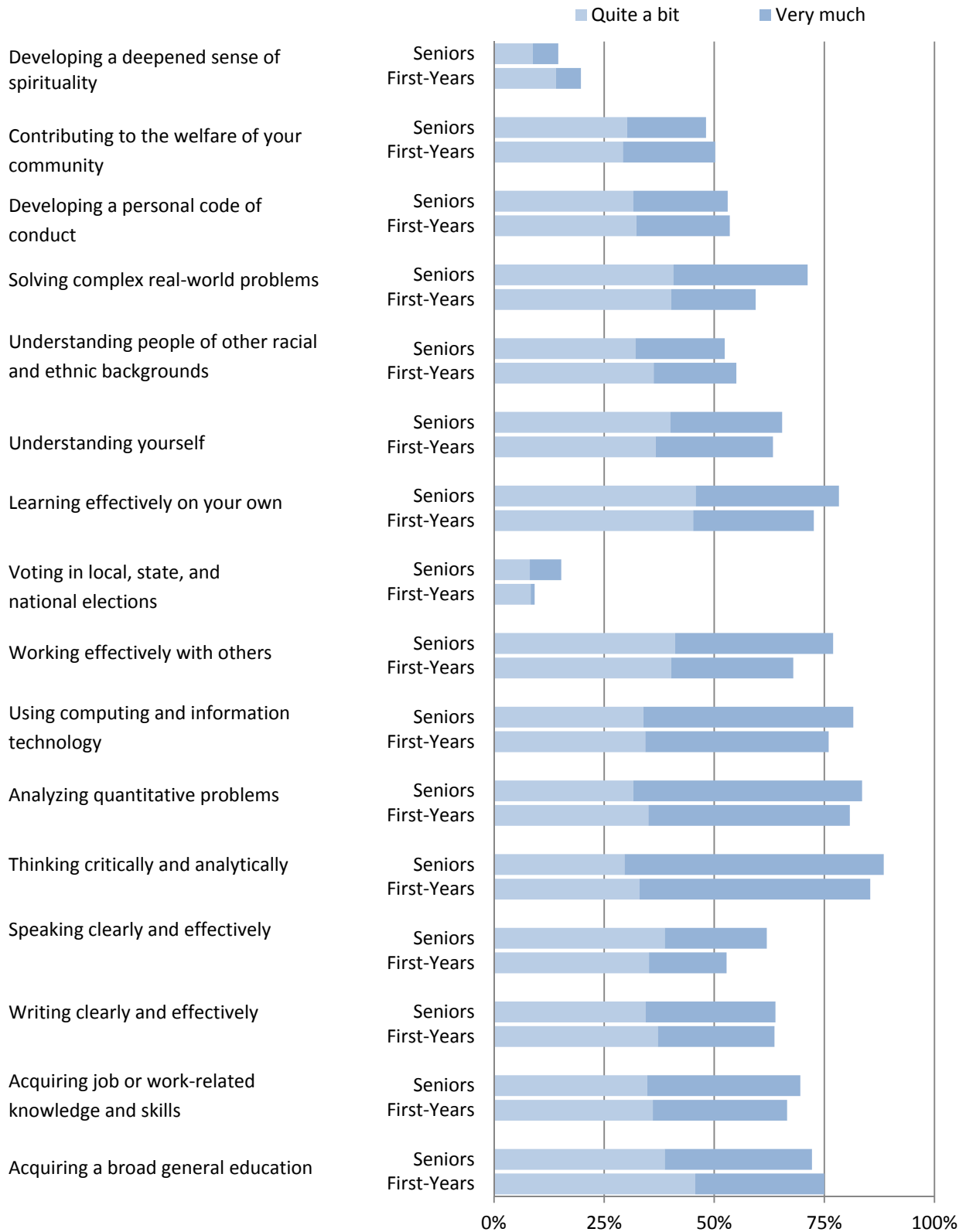
The survey also asked students about the extent to which their experiences at CWRU contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development. Both first-year and senior students reported that CWRU contributed “quite a bit” or “very much” to their ability to:

- ❖ Think critically and analytically (87%)
- ❖ Analyze quantitative problems (82%)
- ❖ Use computing and information technology (79%)
- ❖ Learn effectively on their own (76%)
- ❖ Work effectively with others (73%)
- ❖ Acquire a broad general education (73%)

¹ Of the 1,824 students who received the survey, 33% (n=608) responded. The sample was made up of 45% of first-year students and 55% of seniors. No statistically significant differences existed in response rates by race/ethnicity, citizenship, or school, but seniors and women responded to the survey at a significantly higher rate.

² Majority students include Asian and White students. Underrepresented minority students include Alaska Native/American Indian, Black, Latino, Multi-racial, and Native Hawaiian students.

Figure 1. To what extent has your experience at CWRU contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas:



Deep Approaches to Learning

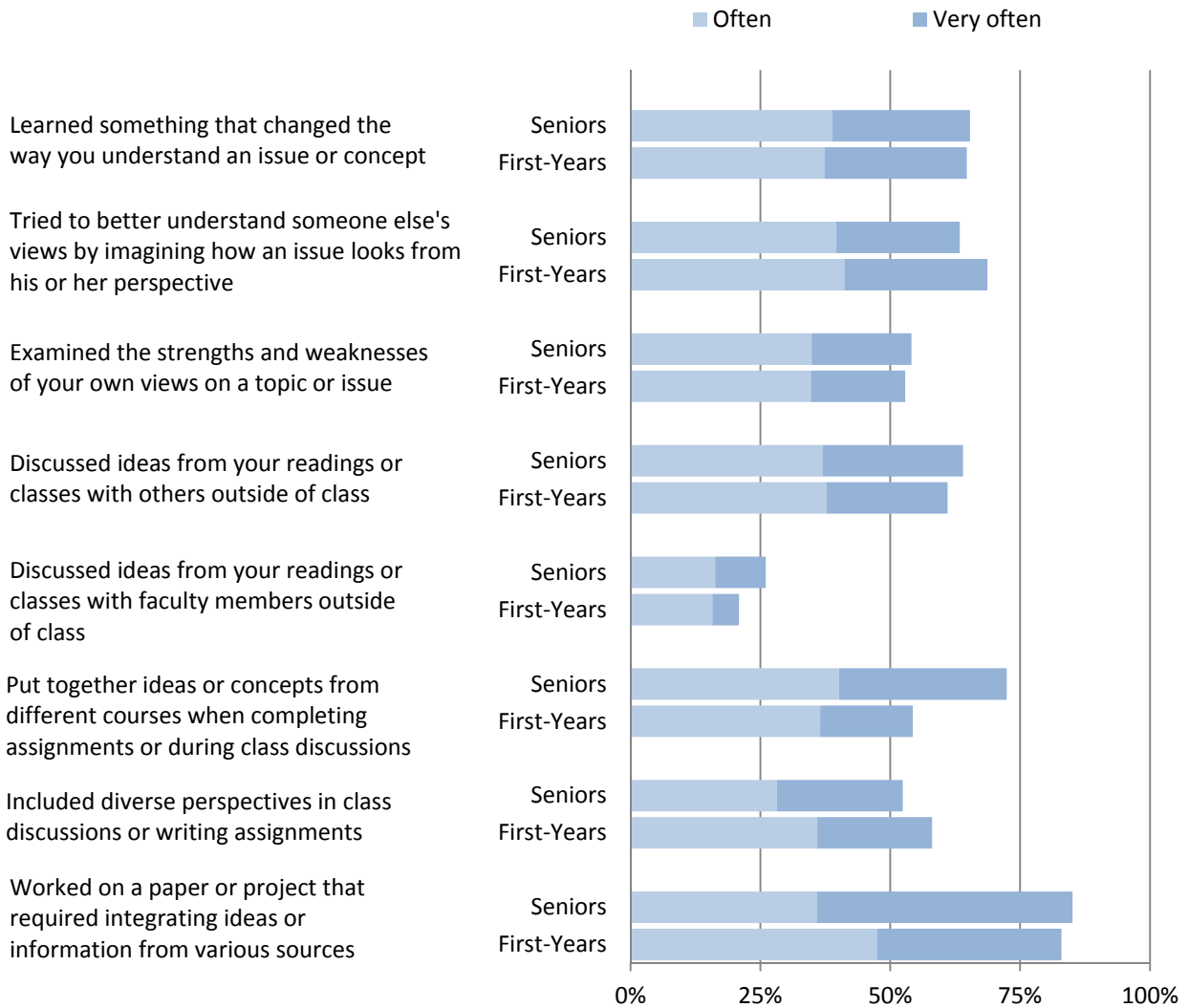
The researchers at NSSE identified a set of questions called “deep approaches to learning.” Their findings indicate that a relationship exists between deep approaches to learning and students’ time spent on studying, perceptions of their gains in learning, and satisfaction with college.

Part of the “deep approaches to learning” scale asks about the emphasis that coursework places on forms of intellectual exercise. First-year students said their courses emphasized analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory the most (quite a bit/very much: 87%) and making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods the least (59%). Seniors also said their courses emphasized analysis the most (90%), however, their courses emphasized memorizing facts, ideas, or methods the least (55%).

Table 1. Extent to which your courses emphasize:	Class standing	Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much
Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods	FY	6%	27%	37%	30%
	SR	10%	35%	32%	22%
Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory	FY	2%	11%	42%	45%
	SR	1%	9%	38%	52%
Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences	FY	2%	20%	42%	35%
	SR	2%	18%	41%	40%
Making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods	FY	9%	32%	34%	25%
	SR	3%	29%	36%	32%
Applying theories or concepts	FY	4%	19%	30%	46%
	SR	5%	18%	31%	47%

Students were also asked questions about the extent to which they searched for new knowledge and integrated their new knowledge into course assignments. Almost all students discussed ideas from their readings or classes with others outside of class, at least occasionally; however, almost one-third of students said they never discussed ideas with faculty members outside of class. Over half of students often or very often examined the strengths and weaknesses of their own views (54%), and tried to better understand someone else’s views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective (often/very often: 66%). Almost all students learned something that changed the way they understood an issue or concept (97%) and put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions (96%)(see figure 2 on next page).

Figure 2. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following:



Additional Information

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