

# The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)

## ***2008 Executive Summary of Survey Results University of Cincinnati Clermont College***

### **Introduction**

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) provides information about effective educational practice in community colleges and assists institutions in using that information to promote improvements in student learning and persistence. CCSSE's goal is to provide member colleges with results that can be used to inform decision making and target institutional improvements. ***Student engagement***, or the amount of time and energy that students invest in meaningful educational practices, is the underlying foundation for CCSSE's work. CCSSE's survey instrument, the Community College Student Report (CCSR), is designed to capture student engagement as a measure of institutional quality.

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### **CCSSE Member Colleges**

CCSSE will again utilize a 3-year cohort of participating colleges (2006 through 2008) in all of its data analyses,<sup>1</sup> including the computation of benchmark scores. This cohort is referred to as the **2008 CCSSE Cohort**.

This approach, which was instituted in 2006, increases the total number of institutions and students contributing to the national dataset; this in turn increases the reliability of the overall results. In addition, the 3-year cohort approach minimizes the impact, in any given year, of statewide consortia participation.

The 2008 CCSSE Cohort is comprised of a total of 585 institutions across 48 states, plus British Columbia, Nova Scotia, and the Marshall Islands. Two hundred ninety-five of these member colleges are classified as small (< 4,500), 147 as medium (4,500-7,999), 96 as large (8,000-14,999), and 47 as extra-large institutions (15,000 + credit students).<sup>2</sup> One hundred fourteen of the Cohort member colleges are located in urban areas, 129 in suburban areas, and 342 in rural-serving areas.

Our college falls into the small colleges size category and is classified as being located in a rural-serving area.

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<sup>1</sup> For returning participants, the college's most recent year of participation is included in data analyses. For example, if a college participated in 2007 and 2008, only the 2008 data would be used in the 3-year cohort.

<sup>2</sup> These enrollment statistics are based on the most recent IPEDS data with the exception of situations in which it is necessary for colleges to self-report.

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## Student Respondents

Credit classes were randomly selected – stratified by time of day (morning, afternoon, and evening) – from institutional class data files to participate in the survey. Of those sampled at our institution, 422 students submitted usable surveys. The number of completed surveys produced an overall “percent of target” rate of 70%. Percent of target rate is the ratio of the adjusted number of completed surveys to target sample sizes. (The adjusted survey count is the number of surveys that were filled out properly and did not fall into any of the exclusionary categories.<sup>3</sup>)

### 2008 Student Respondent Profile

To compare the characteristics of student respondents with the characteristics of the underlying student population for each participating college, *CCSSE* uses the data reported by the institution in its most recent IPEDS Enrollment Report for the following variables: gender, race and ethnicity, student age, and enrollment status (part- or full-time). The data are aggregated to compare the 2008 *CCSSE* Cohort survey respondent population to the total student population of the 2008 *CCSSE* Cohort member colleges.

#### Gender

Of the student respondents at our college who answered this item, 39% are male and 61% are female. This mirrors the full population of UC Clermont College as well as the *CCSSE* Cohort community college students which is comprised of 41% males and 59% females.

#### Age

2008 *CCSSE* student respondents at UC Clermont College range in age from 18 to over 65 years old. Approximately 92% are between 18 to 39 years old; 67% are 18 to 24 years old while 25% are 25 to 39 years old.

#### Racial Identification

92 percent of student respondents identify themselves as White/non-Hispanic, 1% as Hispanic/Latino/Spanish, 2% as Black or African American, and 1% as Asian. 2 percent of the student respondents are Native American. 1 percent marked “other” when responding to the question, “What is your racial identification?”

#### International Students

2 percent of our students responded yes to the question, “Are you an international student or foreign national?”

#### Enrollment Status

81 percent of the student respondents at UC Clermont College report attending college full-time, while 60% of the UC Clermont College total student population and 38% of the 2008 *CCSSE* Cohort colleges’ total student population attended full-time. Only 19% of surveyed students report being part-time college students, compared to 62% of the 2008 *CCSSE* Cohort colleges’ total population as reported to IPEDS. This inverse representation is a result of the sampling technique and the in-class administration process. For this reason, survey results are either weighted or disaggregated on the full-time/part-time variable so that reports will accurately reflect the underlying student population.

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<sup>3</sup> See exclusionary rules on page 4.

***The results for the following student respondent categories are weighted according to the most recent IPEDS population data.***

### **First-Generation Status**

42% of students indicate that neither parent has earned a degree higher than a high school diploma nor has college experience; accordingly, these students are considered "first-generation" status. 44 percent indicate that their mothers' highest level of education is a high school diploma (with no college experience), and 44% indicate that level for their fathers.

### **Educational Attainment**

67 percent of the respondents report starting their college careers at UC Clermont College. Approximately 75% of students indicate that their highest level of educational attainment is a high school diploma or GED; 53% have completed fewer than 30 credit hours of college-level work; 17% report either a certificate or an associate degree; 3% have earned a bachelor's degree; and 2% have earned an advanced degree.

### **Credit Hours Earned**

33 percent of surveyed students have completed fewer than 15 credit hours; 20% have completed 15-29 credit hours; and 47% have completed more than 30 credit hours.

### **Grades**

49 percent of students report that they earned grades of *B+* or higher, while 2% of students report that they earned grades of *C-* or lower.

### **External Commitments**

60 percent of students work 21 or more hours per week; 39% of students care for dependents at least 11 hours per week; and 28% of students spend at least 6 hours per week commuting to class.

### **Excluded Respondents**

The total counts of respondents in an institution's raw data file will differ from the numbers reported in the institutional reports due to intentional exclusion of certain surveys. Exclusion in accord with consistent decision rules serves the purpose of ensuring that all institutional reports are based on the same sampling methods and that results therefore are comparable across institutions. Respondents may be excluded from institutional reports for the following reasons:

- ✘ The respondent did not indicate whether he or she was enrolled part- or full-time at the institution. *Because all results are either weighted or broken down by enrollment status, this is essential information for reporting.*
- ✘ The survey is invalid.<sup>4</sup>
- ✘ Students reported their age as under 18.
- ✘ Students indicated that they had taken the survey in a previous class.
- ✘ Over-sampled respondents are not included. These are surveys that individual institutions paid an additional fee to acquire. Because there are no requirements stipulating how these students are sampled, these data are not included in the standard institutional report.

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<sup>4</sup> If a student does not answer any of the 21 sub-items on item 4, answers "Very Often" to all 21 items, or answers "Never" to all, the survey is excluded.

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## Benchmarks

Benchmarks are groups of conceptually related survey items that address key areas of student engagement. CCSSE's five benchmarks comprise 38 engagement items that reflect many of the most important aspects of the student experience. The benchmarks measure behaviors that educational research has shown to be powerful contributors to effective teaching, learning, and student retention. The CCSSE benchmarks are active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction, and support for learners.

Every college has a score for each benchmark. These individual scores are computed by averaging the scores on survey items composing that benchmark. Benchmark scores are standardized so that the mean – the average of all participating students – is always 50 and the standard deviation is 25.

The standardized scores provide an easy way to assess whether an individual college is performing above or below the mean (50) on each benchmark. They also make it possible for colleges to compare their own performance across benchmarks and with groups of similar colleges.

*Source: Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). (2008). High Expectations and High Support. Austin, Texas: The University of Texas at Austin, Community College Leadership Program.*

The 2008 benchmark scores for UC Clermont College (all students) respondents are shown in the charts below.

### **Active and Collaborative Learning**

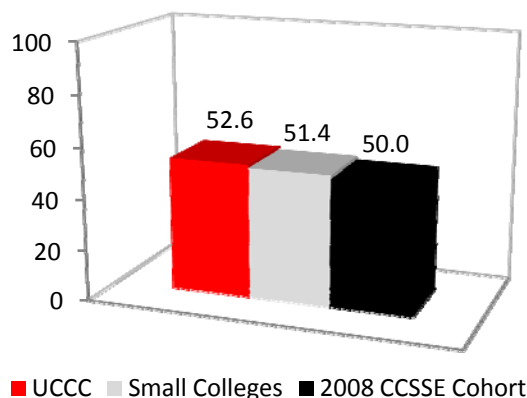
Description – Students learn more when they are actively involved in their education and have opportunities to think about and apply what they are learning in different settings. Through collaborating with others to solve problems or master challenging content, students develop valuable skills that prepare them to deal with the kinds of situations and problems they will encounter in the workplace, the community, and their personal lives.

The survey items used to measure this benchmark such as the following:

- ✗ Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
- ✗ Made a class presentation
- ✗ Worked with other students on projects during class

#### **Active and Collaborative Learning Benchmark Scores**

UC Clermont College (UCCC) compared to Other Small Colleges & 2008 CCSSE Cohort



## Student Effort

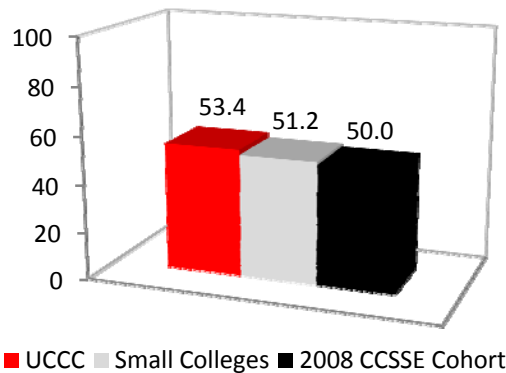
Description – Students' own behaviors contribute significantly to their learning and the likelihood that they will successfully attain their educational goals.

The survey items used to measure this benchmark such as the following:

- ✗ Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in
- ✗ Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources
- ✗ Came to class without completing readings or assignments

### **Student Effort Benchmark Scores**

UC Clermont College (UCCC) compared to Other Small Colleges & 2008 CCSSE Cohort



## Academic Challenge

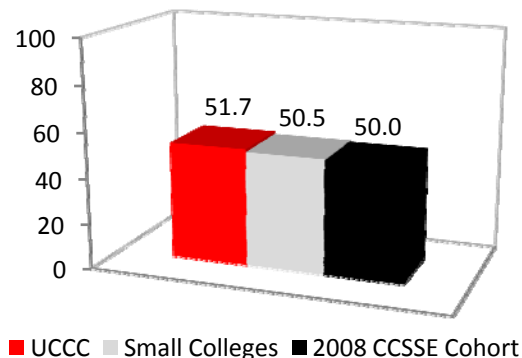
Description – Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Ten survey items address the nature and amount of assigned academic work, the complexity of cognitive tasks presented to students, and the standards faculty members use to evaluate student performance.

The survey items used to measure this benchmark such as the following:

- ✗ Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations
- ✗ Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory
- ✗ Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways

### **Academic Challenge Benchmark Scores**

UC Clermont College (UCCC) compared to Other Small Colleges & 2008 CCSSE Cohort



## Student-Faculty Interaction

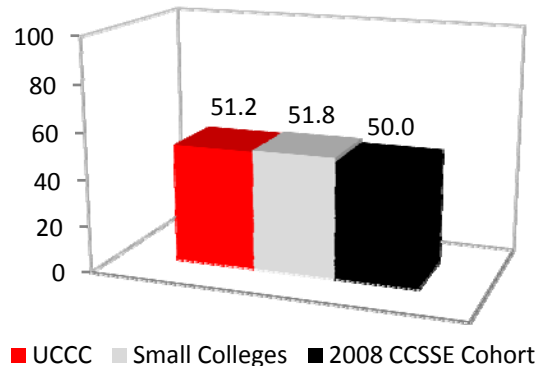
Description – In general, the more contact students have with their teachers, the more likely they are to learn effectively and persist toward achievement of their educational goals. Through such interactions, faculty members become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, lifelong learning.

The survey items used to measure this benchmark such as the following:

- ✘ Used email to communicate with an instructor
- ✘ Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- ✘ Talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor

### **Student-Faculty Interaction Benchmark Scores**

UC Clermont College (UCCC) compared to Other Small Colleges & 2008 CCSSE Cohort



## Support for Learners

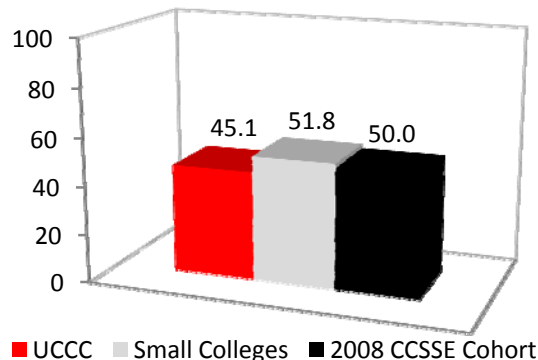
Description – Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relationships among different groups on campus.

The survey items used to measure this benchmark such as the following:

- ✘ Providing the support you need to help you succeed at this college
- ✘ Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
- ✘ Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)

### **Support for Learners Benchmark Scores**

UC Clermont College (UCCC) compared to Other Small Colleges & 2008 CCSSE Cohort



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## Above and Below the Mean

A mean is the arithmetic average of all responses on a particular item. The following reports highlight the survey items where UC Clermont College falls notably above or below the mean of the small college comparison group. Data below represents *all students* at UC Clermont College who responded to the *CCSSE*.

### Above the Mean

#### All Students

##### College Activities

- Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources
- Worked with other students on projects during class
- Used the Internet or instant messaging to work on an assignment
- Used email to communicate with an instructor
- Number of written papers or reports of any length

##### Student Services

- Frequency: Computer lab
- Satisfaction: Computer lab

##### College Experiences

- How many TOTAL credit hours have you earned at this college, not counting the courses you are currently taking this term?

### Below the Mean

#### All Students

##### College Activities

- Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework

##### Opinions About Your School

- Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
- Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
- Providing the support you need to thrive socially

##### Weekly Activities

- Relationships with instructors
- Relationships with administrative personnel and offices

##### Educational and Personal Growth

- Understanding yourself
- Contributing to the welfare of your community
- Developing clearer career goals
- Gaining information about career opportunities

## Student Services

- Frequency: Career counseling
  - Frequency: Job placement assistance
  - Frequency: Skill labs (writing, math, etc.)
  - Frequency: Financial aid advising
  - Satisfaction: Academic advising/planning
  - Satisfaction: Career counseling
  - Satisfaction: Job placement assistance
  - Satisfaction: Child care
  - Importance: Skill labs (writing, math, etc.)
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## **Additional Information**

A more detailed overview of results for UC Clermont College's participation in the 2008 *CCSSE* and summary reports of the 2006 and 2004 *CCSSE* results are available on the UC Clermont College Institutional Research website at <http://www.ucclermont.edu/ir>

Additional information about the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (*CCSSE*) and survey results are available on the *CCSSE* website at <http://www.ccsse.org>

For questions about UC Clermont College's *CCSSE* participation or results, contact:

Susan Riley  
Director of Institutional Research and Project Management  
University of Cincinnati Clermont College  
4200 Clermont College Drive  
Batavia, OH 45103  
Phone: 513.732.5324  
Email: [susan.riley@uc.edu](mailto:susan.riley@uc.edu)