

National Survey of Student Engagement

Executive Snapshot 2007 Saint Mary's College of California

Benchmarks of Educational Effectiveness

To represent the multi-dimensional nature of student engagement, NSSE developed five indicators of effective educational practice. These "benchmarks" are created from clusters of NSSE questions that represent these practices.

The table below summarizes key benchmark results for our institution and institutions in our selected peer groups. The '+' symbol indicates that our institution's score is statistically higher than the respective comparison group ($p < .05$) and a blank space indicates no significant difference. For detailed results, review our NSSE 2007 Benchmark Comparisons report.

	Class	SMC	Comparison Groups		
			Catholic C&U	WCC PLUS	NSSE 2007
Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)	First-Year	60	+	+	+
How challenging is your institution's intellectual and creative work?	Senior	66	+	+	+
Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)	First-Year	47		+	+
Are your students intensely involved in their education?	Senior	58	+	+	+
Student-Faculty interaction (SFI)	First-Year	40	+	+	+
Do your students work with faculty members inside and outside the classroom?	Senior	53	+	+	+
Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE)	First-Year	29			
Do your students take advantage of complementary learning opportunities?	Senior	50	+	+	+
Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)	First-Year	63		+	
Do your students feel the college is committed to their success?	Senior	63		+	+

Adapted from the 2007 NSSE Executive Snapshot (Saint Mary's College of California)

Memorandum

TO: Members of the Saint Mary's College Community

FROM: Mark Figueroa

DATE: September 24, 2007

SUBJECT: 2007 NSSE Data

During Spring 2007, Saint Mary's College first-year and senior students were invited to participate in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) along with students from over 600 other colleges and universities. 149 of the 602 first-year and 84 of the 441 senior Saint Mary's students responded, resulting in an overall institutional response rate of 22%. This is lower than the national NSSE response rate of 30%. However, the demographic profile of the College's survey respondents is similar to the overall undergraduate student population.

The National Survey of Student Engagement queries students about their participation in activities that support the educational goals of the College. It is currently the best available instrument for collecting information about, measuring and comparing student activities that support their academic work. In particular, the NSSE survey focuses on activities which research has consistently shown support student's intellectual, social and spiritual development. To help institutions "focus discussions about the importance of student engagements and guide institutional improvement efforts" NSSE aggregates the responses to these questions into five benchmark measurements. The five benchmarks, called Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice, are: Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interaction Enriching Educational Experiences, and Supportive Campus. A detailed report of the five benchmarks can be found at: http://nsse.iub.edu/2007_Institutional_Report/index.cfm

Consistent with previous year's results, the most recent data indicate that Saint Mary's students report higher levels of engagement than those at other comprehensive institutions. To access these data go to: <http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/about-smc/institutional-research/nsse.html>

To allow institutions to compare their students' experiences with those at other institutions, NSSE provides comparative data for institutions that scored in the top 50 percent nationally (what they term above-average institutions) and those that scored in the top 10 percent nationally (what they term high-performing institutions) on the five benchmark indicators. The data in the table below provides an estimate of the performance of the average Saint Mary's student as compared to the average student at other institutions in the 10% and 50% peer groups as identified by NSSE.

2007 NSSE Benchmark Comparisons with Highly Engaging Institutions		SMC mean	Top 50% mean	Top 10% mean
First-Year	Level of Academic Challenge	59.6	55.3	57.8
	Active and Collaborative Learning	46.5	45.3	48.7
	Student-Faculty Interaction	39.8	37.1	40.4
	Enriching Educational Experiences	29.0	29.5	32.4
	Supportive Campus Environment	63.0	65.2	68.2
Senior	Level of Academic Challenge	65.8	58.8	63.0
	Active and Collaborative Learning	57.7	54.3	57.8
	Student-Faculty Interaction	53.2	47.4	54.1
	Enriching Educational Experiences	50.0	45.6	50.3
	Supportive Campus Environment	62.7	63.1	66.3

From the data above, we can conclude that:

- The average score for SMC first-year students is significantly above that of the average student attending schools that scored in the top 50% on Level of Academic Challenge and is as engaged as the average student attending schools that scored in the top 10% on the same benchmark.
- The average score for SMC first-year students is significantly above that of the average student attending schools that scored in the top 50% on Student-Faculty Interaction.
- The average score for SMC first-year students is slightly below that of the average student attending schools that scored in the top 50% on Enriching Educational Experiences and Supportive Campus Environment.
- The average score for SMC seniors is significantly above that of the average student attending schools that scored in the top 50% on Level of Academic Challenge.
- The average score for SMC seniors is significantly above that of the average student attending schools that scored in the top 50% on Student-Faculty interaction and Educational Experiences.

Additional results from the NSSE and FSSE (Faculty Survey of Student Engagement) will be disseminated in the coming weeks.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at x4754 or email me at mfiguero@stmarys-ca.edu

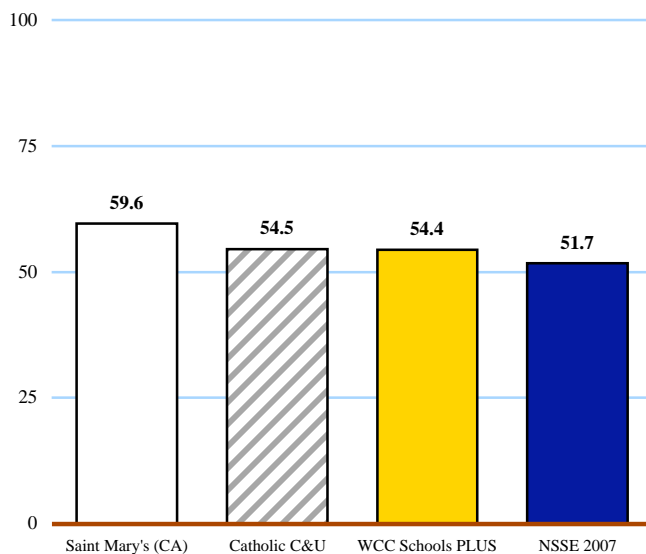
Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)

Benchmark Comparisons

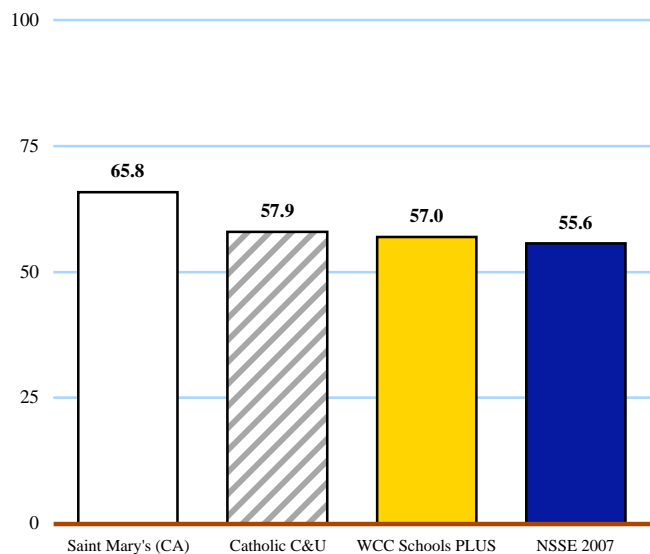
Saint Mary's (CA) compared with:*

Class	Saint Mary's (CA)	Catholic C&U			WCC Schools PLUS			NSSE 2007		
	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
First-Year	59.6	54.5	***	.40	54.4	***	.41	51.7	***	.59
Senior	65.8	57.9	***	.59	57.0	***	.62	55.6	***	.72

First-Year



Senior



Level of Academic Challenge (LAC) Items

Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance.

- Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, etc. related to academic program)
- Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings
- Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more; number of written papers or reports of between 5 and 19 pages; and number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages
- Coursework emphasizing analysis of the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory
- Coursework emphasizing synthesis and organizing of ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships
- Coursework emphasizing the making of judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods
- Coursework emphasizing application of theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations
- Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations
- Campus environment emphasizing time studying and on academic work

*NOTE: The WCC PLUS group includes Loyola Marymount University, Pepperdine University, San Francisco State University, Santa Clara University, University of San Diego, and University of San Francisco.

^a Weighted by gender, enrollment status, and institutional size.

^b * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed).

^c Mean difference divided by comparison group standard deviation.

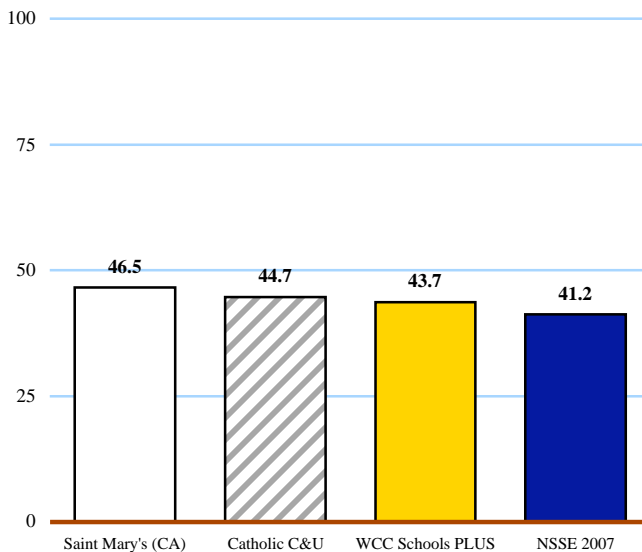
Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)

Benchmark Comparisons

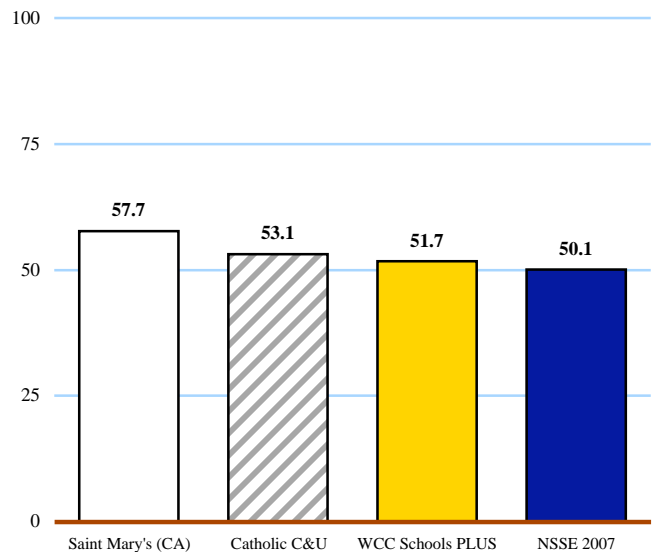
Saint Mary's (CA) compared with:

Class	Saint Mary's (CA)		Catholic C&U			WCC Schools PLUS			NSSE 2007		
	Mean ^a		Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
First-Year	46.5		44.7		.12	43.7	*	.19	41.2	***	.33
Senior	57.7		53.1	*	.27	51.7	**	.35	50.1	***	.44

First-Year



Senior



Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL) Items

Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and asked to think about what they are learning in different settings. Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material prepares students for the messy, unscripted problems they will encounter daily during and after college.

- Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
- Made a class presentation
- Worked with other students on projects during class
- Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments
- Tutored or taught other students
- Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)

^a Weighted by gender, enrollment status, and institutional size.

^b * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed).

^c Mean difference divided by comparison group standard deviation.

Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)

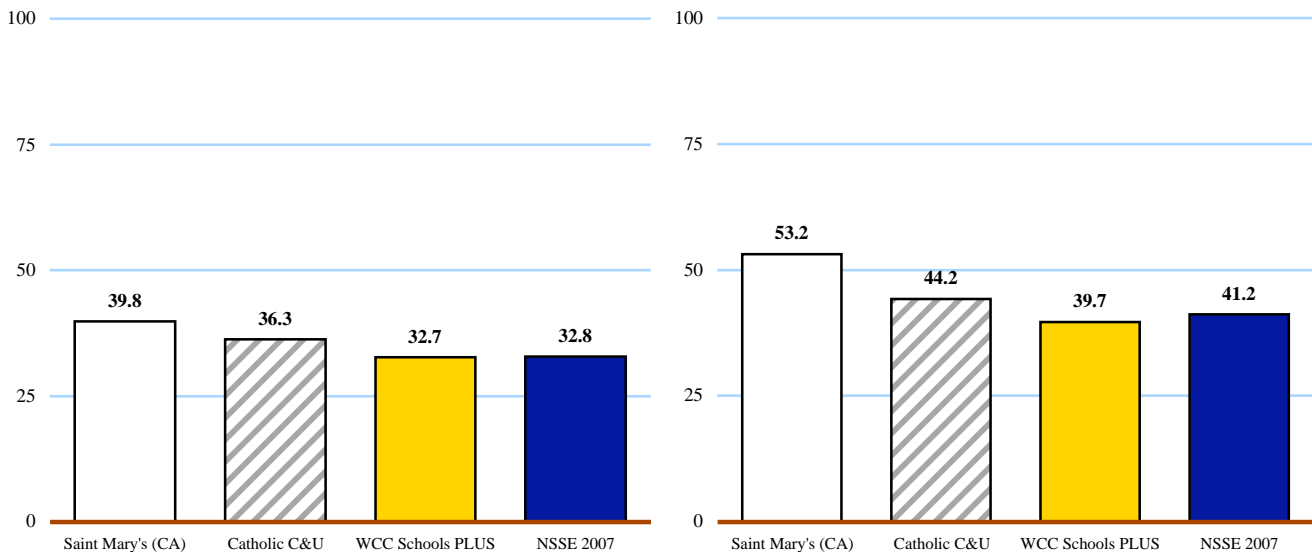
Benchmark Comparisons

Saint Mary's (CA) compared with:

Class	Saint Mary's (CA)	Catholic C&U			WCC Schools PLUS			NSSE 2007		
	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
First-Year	39.8	36.3	*	.19	32.7	***	.40	32.8	***	.39
Senior	53.2	44.2	***	.44	39.7	***	.66	41.2	***	.58

First-Year

Senior



Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI) Items

Students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside the classroom. As a result, their teachers become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, life-long learning.

- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
- Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student-life activities, etc.)
- Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance
- Worked with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements

^a Weighted by gender, enrollment status, and institutional size.

^b * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed).

^c Mean difference divided by comparison group standard deviation.

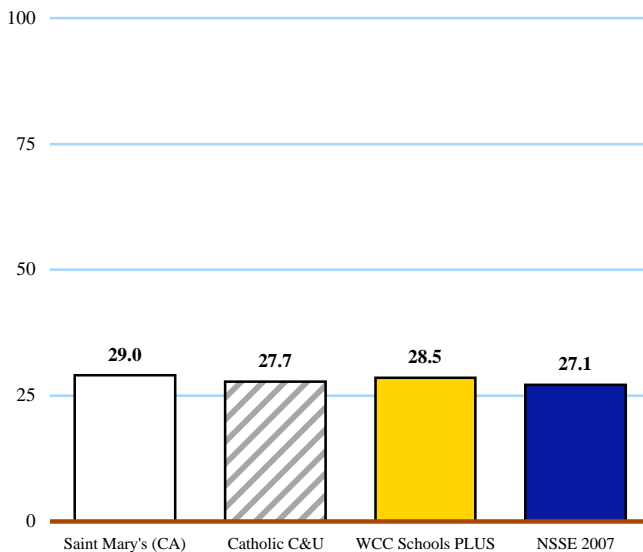
Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE)

Benchmark Comparisons

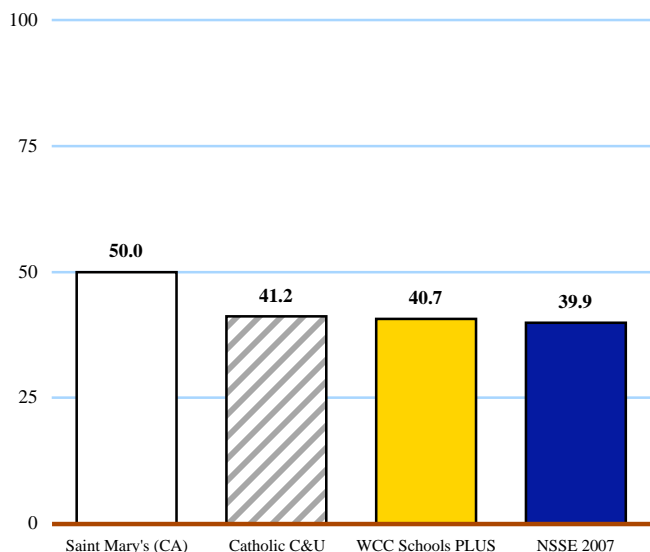
Saint Mary's (CA) compared with:

Class	Saint Mary's (CA)		Catholic C&U			WCC Schools PLUS			NSSE 2007		
	Mean ^a		Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
First-Year	29.0		27.7		.10	28.5		.04	27.1		.15
Senior	50.0		41.2	***	.49	40.7	***	.48	39.9	***	.57

First-Year



Senior



Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE) Items

Complementary learning opportunities enhance academic programs. Diversity experiences teach students valuable things about themselves and others. Technology facilitates collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community service, and senior capstone courses provide opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge.

- Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, publications, student government, sports, etc.)
- Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment
- Community service or volunteer work
- Foreign language coursework & study abroad
- Independent study or self-designed major
- Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.)
- Serious conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values
- Serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity
- Using electronic technology to discuss or complete an assignment
- Campus environment encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
- Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together

^a Weighted by gender, enrollment status, and institutional size.

^b * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed).

^c Mean difference divided by comparison group standard deviation.

Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)

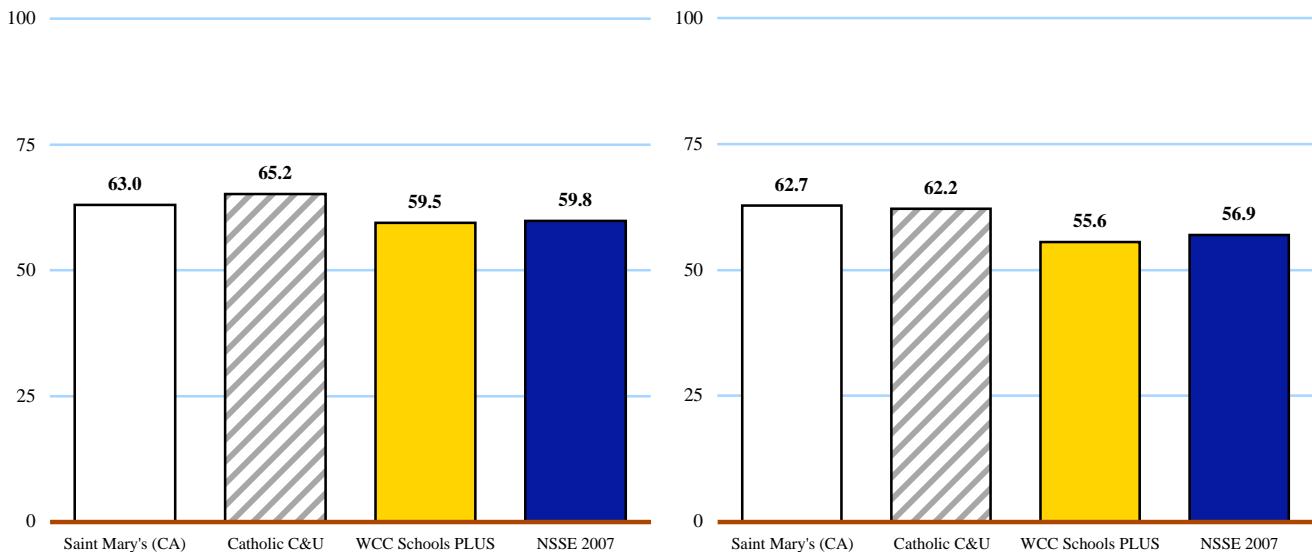
Benchmark Comparisons

Saint Mary's (CA) compared with:

Class	Saint Mary's (CA)		Catholic C&U			WCC Schools PLUS			NSSE 2007		
	Mean ^a		Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
First-Year	63.0		65.2		-.12	59.5	*	.20	59.8		.17
Senior	62.7		62.2		.03	55.6	**	.37	56.9	*	.30

First-Year

Senior



Supportive Campus Environment (SCE) Items

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

- Campus environment provides the support you need to help you succeed academically
- Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
- Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially
- Quality of relationships with other students
- Quality of relationships with faculty members
- Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices

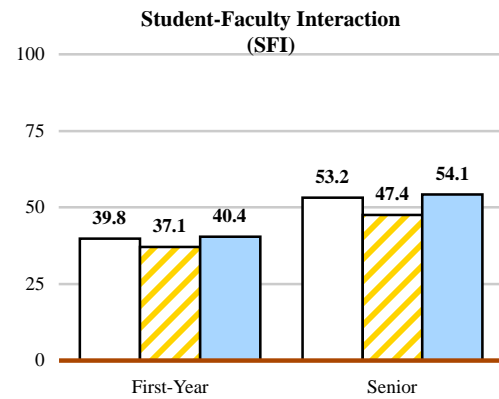
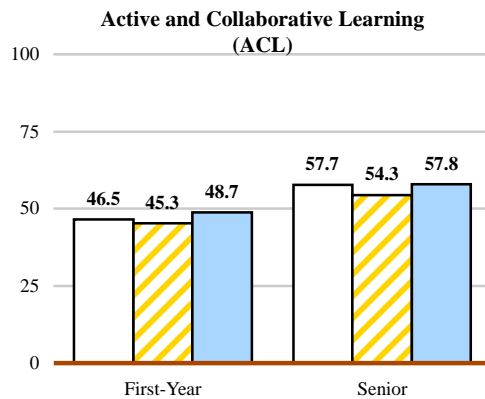
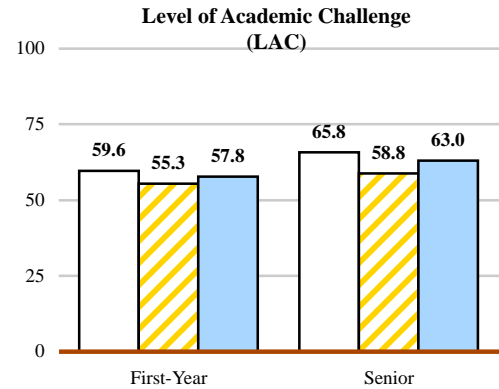
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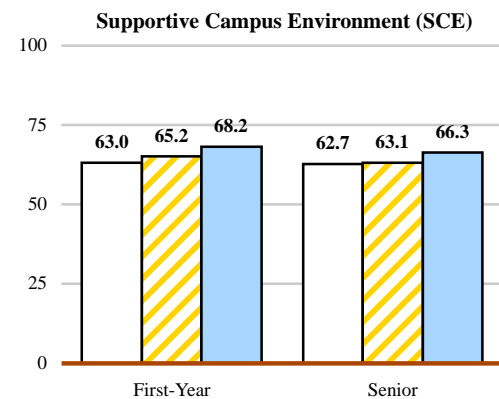
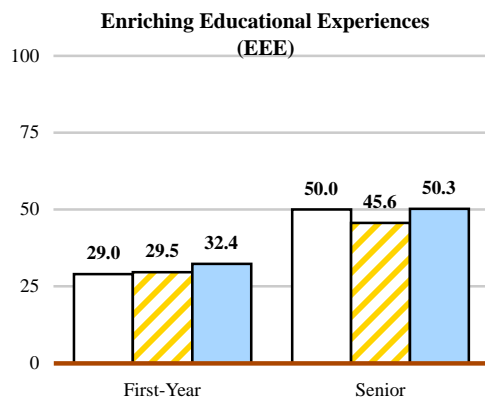
	Saint Mary's (CA)	NSSE 2007 Top 50%			NSSE 2007 Top 10%			
		Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect size ^c
First-Year	LAC	59.6	55.3	***	.33	57.8		.14
	ACL	46.5	45.3		.08	48.7		-.13
	SFI	39.8	37.1		.15	40.4		-.03
	EEE	29.0	29.5		-.04	32.4	**	-.25
	SCE	63.0	65.2		-.12	68.2	**	-.28
Senior	LAC	65.8	58.8	***	.51	63.0		.21
	ACL	57.7	54.3		.20	57.8		-.01
	SFI	53.2	47.4	*	.27	54.1		-.04
	EEE	50.0	45.6	*	.25	50.3		-.02
	SCE	62.7	63.1		-.02	66.3		-.19



Legend

- Saint Mary's (CA)
- Top 50%
- Top 10%

This display compares your students with those attending schools that scored in the top 50% and top 10% of all NSSE 2007 institutions on the benchmark.



^a Weighted by gender, enrollment status, and institutional size.

^b * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed).

^c Mean difference divided by comparison group standard deviation.