



Research Brief

CCSSE Results



Office of Planning, Research, and Effectiveness
<http://www.accd.edu/spc>

Achieving the Dream (AtD) Initiative

March 2005

"Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count" is a multi-year initiative funded by the Lumina Foundation for Education that addresses the challenge of providing low income students and students of color with opportunities for academic success. There are five AtD student outcome indicators: (1) Successful completion of remedial courses and progression to college-level courses; (2) Enrollment and successful completion of college-level "gatekeeper" courses; (3) Productive grades (C or higher) in all courses; (4) Semester to semester persistence; and (5) Graduation. All colleges of the Alamo Community College District participate in this initiative to cultivate and promote a culture of evidence, accountability, equity, and excellence in support of the student outcomes.

Feedback? Questions? Contact Dr. Maritha Burmeister at burmistr@accd.edu, (210) 531-3369.

Introduction

The object of the Achieving the Dream initiative is to increase success of low income students and students of color as identified by specific outcome indicators.

The focus of this brief will be to assess the results of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). CCSSE is a project of the Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas at Austin. It provides information on student engagement, a key indicator of learning and of the quality of community colleges. The survey is administered annually in the spring to over 92,000 community college students across the nation, including a random sample of students at each of the ACCD colleges.

Methodology

The 2004 CCSSE survey was administered at St. Philip's College (SPC) to randomly selected classes during the Spring 2004 semester. Included in this brief will be the following:

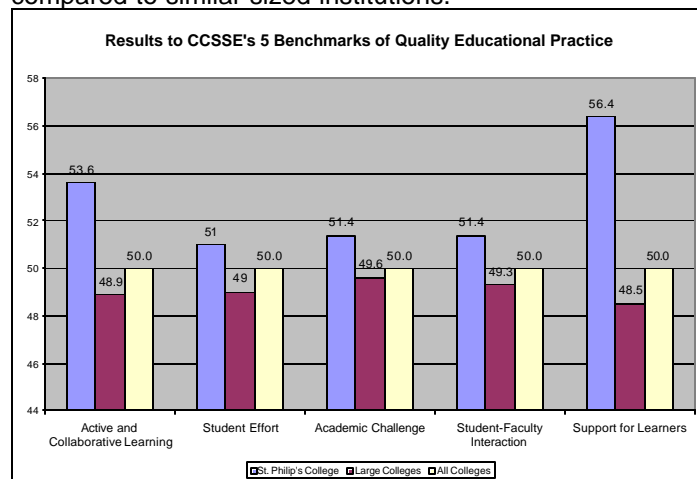
- Benchmarks of effective educational practice in community colleges.
- Reasons/goals for attending SPC
- Reasons for student withdrawal from class or from SPC
- Time spent preparing for class
- Time spent working for pay
- Academic experiences outside of the classroom

Results

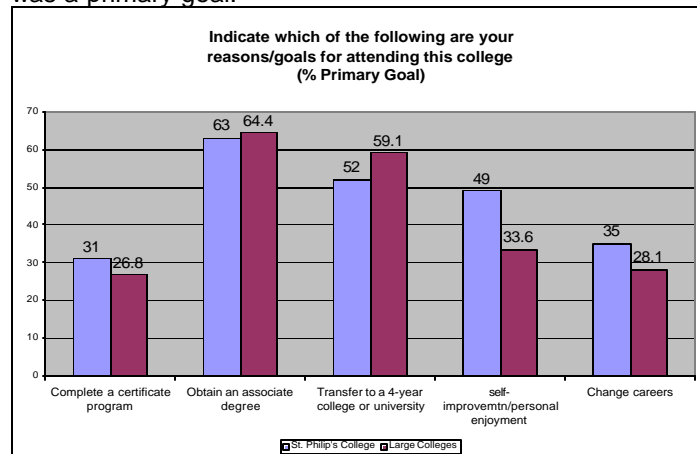
CCSSE has established benchmarks which focus on institutional practices and student behaviors that promote student engagement. The five benchmarks of effective educational practice in community colleges are 1) active and collaborative learning, 2) student effort, 3) academic challenge, 4) student-faculty interaction, and 5) support for learners.

SPC's scores on all benchmarks are at or above the national average score of 50. Benchmark scores are standardized so that the weighted mean across all students

is 50 and the standard deviation across all participating students is 25. Institutions' benchmark scores are computed by taking the weighted average of their students' standardized scores. SPC was among the top performers on three or more CCSSE benchmarks when compared to similar sized institutions.



As indicated by the graph below, SPC students' primary goal is to obtain an associate's degree (63%) or to transfer to a 4-year college or university (52%). Only 31% of SPC students indicated that completing a certificate program was a primary goal.

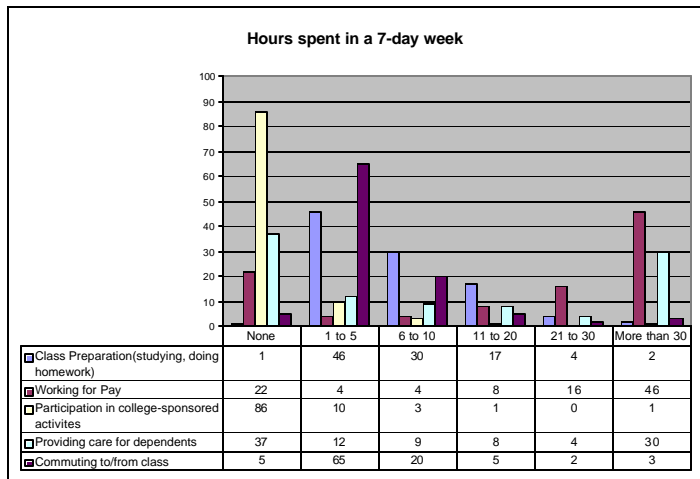


The proceeding table illustrates which reasons would cause an SPC to very likely withdraw from class or from the college. It is noted that more students (37%) would withdraw due to lack of finances.

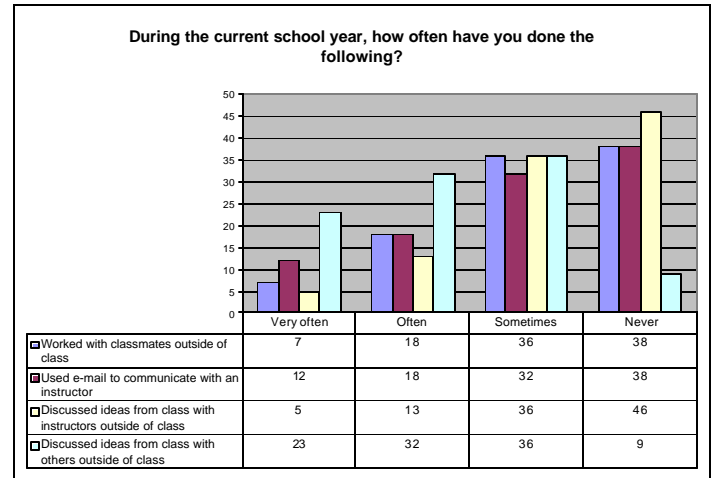


The table below shows how much time students spent on studying during a typical week and how much time was spent working at a job during the week.

Forty-seven percent of SPC students indicated that they spent 5 hours or less studying in a typical week. While 46% of SPC students indicated that they worked more than 30 hours per week.



As indicated by the table below, 38% of SPC students never worked with classmates outside of class. Thirty-eight percent never emailed an instructor. It is interesting to note that while 46% never discussed from readings or classes with instructors outside of class, 55% of students often or very often discussed these with others.



Summary

Recent CCSSE results show that SPC is a top performer among colleges of its size in student engagement. However, an analysis of select survey items indicates that SPC should address the issue of student engagement outside the classroom. Based on this preliminary information, students spend very little time studying and working with instructors outside the classroom and spend more time working for pay.

Stay tuned

While the focus of the brief was on CCSSE data from Spring 2004, we will continue to provide you with additional CCSSE data from future administrations. Student performance information with respect to the Achieving the Dream student outcome indicators as well as student engagement information from CCSSE allow faculty and staff to implement key strategies to aid in the improvement of long-term student success.