



**Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)
Executive Summary: 2014**

Introduction

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) is a well-established tool that helps colleges focus on good educational practices and identify areas in which they can improve their programs and services for students. The CCSSE survey provides information on student engagement, a key indicator of learning, and potentially a valid indicator of overall college quality. The survey is comprised of 134 questions that assess institutional practices and student behaviors that are highly correlated with student learning and student retention (view survey instrument at: http://www.ccsse.org/aboutsurvey/docs/CCSR_2005.pdf). **Identifying what students do in and out of the classroom, knowing students' goals, and understanding external responsibilities can help the college create an environment that can enhance learning, development, and success.**

CCSSE was established in 2001 and is a product and service of the Center for Community College Student Engagement, which is part of the Program for Higher Education Leadership at The University of Texas at Austin. The CCSSE survey includes a broad sample of community college students (see Table 1). Folsom Lake College (FLC) is categorized by CCSSE as a large, urban-serving college that is a member of a multi-college system. Approximately 438,756 students at 684 colleges in 48 states participated in the current cohort of CCSSE surveys. Colleges select to participate in the survey and pay for the privilege, so although the sample is diverse, it is not representative of or generalizable to the total population of community colleges.

Table 1: CCSSE National College Characteristics

College Characteristic	Number of Colleges
Organization	
Single campus colleges	295
Multi-campus colleges	304
Member colleges of a multi-college system	85
Size	
Small colleges (fewer than 4,499 students)	296
Medium colleges (4,500–7,999 students)	168
Large colleges (8,000–14,999 students)	141
Extra-large colleges (15,000 or more students)	79
Location	
Urban-serving colleges	140
Suburban-serving colleges	149
Rural-serving colleges	395

All four Los Rios colleges participated in the *CCSSE* in the spring of 2014. Historically, FLC participated in the Noel Levitz Survey of Student Engagement; it was District decision to move to the *CCSSE* survey in order to align student assessment practices across the four colleges. The survey was administered in class to a random sample of FLC courses at all three educational sites, spanning developmental to upper-level courses. In all, the survey instrument was administered in 32 classes, with a total of 645 students participating. The random sampling procedures ensure that survey results can be generalized across the entire FLC student population with a high level of confidence.

Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice

To assist colleges in their efforts to reach for excellence, *CCSSE* introduced national benchmarks to measure student engagement. *CCSSE* benchmarks are groups of conceptually related survey items that focus on institutional practices and student behaviors that promote student engagement and that are positively related to student learning and persistence. Benchmarks are used to compare each institution's performance to that of similar institutions and to the *CCSSE* national cohort.

Table 2: *CCSSE* Benchmarks Defined

Active and Collaborative Learning	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 real-life situations and problems.
Student Effort	Students' own behaviors contribute significantly to their learning and the likelihood that they will attain their educational goals.
Academic Challenge	Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Survey items address the nature and amount of assigned academic work, the complexity of cognitive tasks presented to students, and the rigor of examinations used to evaluate student performance.
Student-Faculty Interaction	In general, the more interaction 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.
Support for Learners	Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that provide important support services, cultivate positive relationships among groups on campus, and demonstrate commitment to their success.

Benchmarks Reports

Benchmark reports provided in the following tables indicate the national cohort mean and the FLC mean scores for each survey item within the benchmark; included in the tables are the actual survey questions and response categories. Items highlighted in yellow reflect specific survey questions in which FLC responses were significantly higher than the national cohort. Items highlighted in dark

blue reflect specific survey questions in which FLC responses were significantly lower than the national cohort.

Table 3: Active and Collaborative Learning Benchmark

	National Cohort Mean	FLC Mean
<i>Item 4: In your experiences at this college during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? 1= Never, 2= Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often</i>		
4a. Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions.	2.93	2.85
4b. Made a class presentation.	2.15	2.25
4f. Worked with other students on projects during class time.	2.54	2.54
4g. Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments.	1.95	1.91
4h. Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary).	1.39	1.32
4i. Participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course.	1.34	1.25
4r. Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	2.55	2.69

Table 4: Student Effort Benchmark

	National Cohort Mean	FLC Mean
<i>Item 4: In your experiences at this college during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? 1= Never, 2= Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often</i>		
4c. Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in.	2.52	2.54
4d. Worked on a paper or projected that required integrating ideas or other information from various sources.	2.82	2.99
4e. Came to class without completing readings or assignments.	1.82	1.91
<i>Item 6: During the current school year, about how much reading and writing have you done at this college? 1= None, 2= Between 1 and 4; 3= Between 5 and 10; 4= Between 11 and 20. 5= More than 20</i>		
6b. Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment.	2.06	2.11
<i>Item 10. About how many how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following? 0=None, 1= 1-5 hours, 2= 6-10 hours, 3= 11-20 hours, 4= 21-30 hours, 5 = more than 30 hours</i>		
10a. Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, or other activities related to your program).	2.01	1.98
<i>Item 13.1 How often do you use the following services at this college? 1= Rarely/Never, 2= Sometimes, 3= Often</i>		
13.1d Peer or other tutoring.	1.52	1.35
13.1e Skill labs (writing, math, etc.)	1.76	1.45
13.1h Computer lab.	2.07	2.03

Table 5: Academic Challenge Benchmark

	National Cohort Mean	FLC Mean
<i>Item 4: In your experiences at this college during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? 1= Never, 2= Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often</i>		
4p. Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations.	2.63	2.56
<i>Item 5: During the current school year, how much has your coursework at this college emphasized the following mental activities? 1= Very little, 2= Some, 3= Quite a bit, 4= Very much</i>		
5b. Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory.	2.92	3.04
5c. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways.	2.79	2.87
5d. Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods.	2.62	2.77
5e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations.	2.73	2.85
5f. Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill.	2.86	2.88
<i>Item 6: During the current school year, about how much reading and writing have you done at this college? 1= None, 2= Between 1 and 4; 3= Between 5 and 10; 4= Between 11 and 20. 5= More than 20</i>		
6a. Number of assigned textbooks, manuals, books, or book-length packs of course readings.	2.90	2.78
6c. Number of written papers or reports of any length.	2.89	3.06
<i>Item 7: 1= Extremely easy... 7= Extremely challenging</i>		
7. Mark the response that best represents the extent to which your examinations during the current school year have challenged you to do your best work at this college.	4.97	4.90
<i>Item 9: How much does this college emphasize each of the following? 1= Very little, 2= Some, 3= Quite a bit, 4= Very much</i>		
9a. Encouraging you to spend significant amounts of time studying.	3.05	2.98

Table 6: Student-Faculty Interaction Benchmark

	National Cohort Mean	FLC Mean
<i>Item 4: In your experiences at this college during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? 1= Never, 2= Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often</i>		
4k. Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor.	2.90	2.83
4l. Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor.	2.62	2.51
4m. Talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor.	2.13	1.96
4n. Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class.	1.79	1.63
4o. Received prompt feedback (written or oral) from instructors on your performance.	2.73	2.70
4q. Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework.	1.47	1.37

Table 7: Support for Learners Benchmark

	National Cohort Mean	FLC Mean
<i>Item 9: How much does this college emphasize each of the following? 1= Very little, 2= Some, 3= Quite a bit, 4= Very much</i>		
9b. Providing the support you need to help you succeed at this college.	3.03	2.93
9c. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds.	2.59	2.43
9d. Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	2.02	1.81
9e. Providing the support you need to thrive socially.	2.23	2.06
9f. Providing the financial support you need to afford your education.	2.59	2.43
<i>Item 13.1 How often do you use the following services at this college? 1= Rarely/Never, 2= Sometimes, 3= Often</i>		
13.1a Academic advising/planning.	1.82	1.77
13.1b Career counseling.	1.45	1.49

Summary of Benchmark Findings

For most items within the benchmark reports, FLC students reported similar levels of student engagement to the national cohort. There are some areas in which FLC students are reporting higher than average levels of student engagement: making a class presentation, discussing course content with others, integration of outside ideas into course projects or papers, course content focused on evaluating soundness of information, and number of papers or reports written. These findings suggest that faculty at FLC have high standards of academic excellence and that they encourage active student engagement in course material.

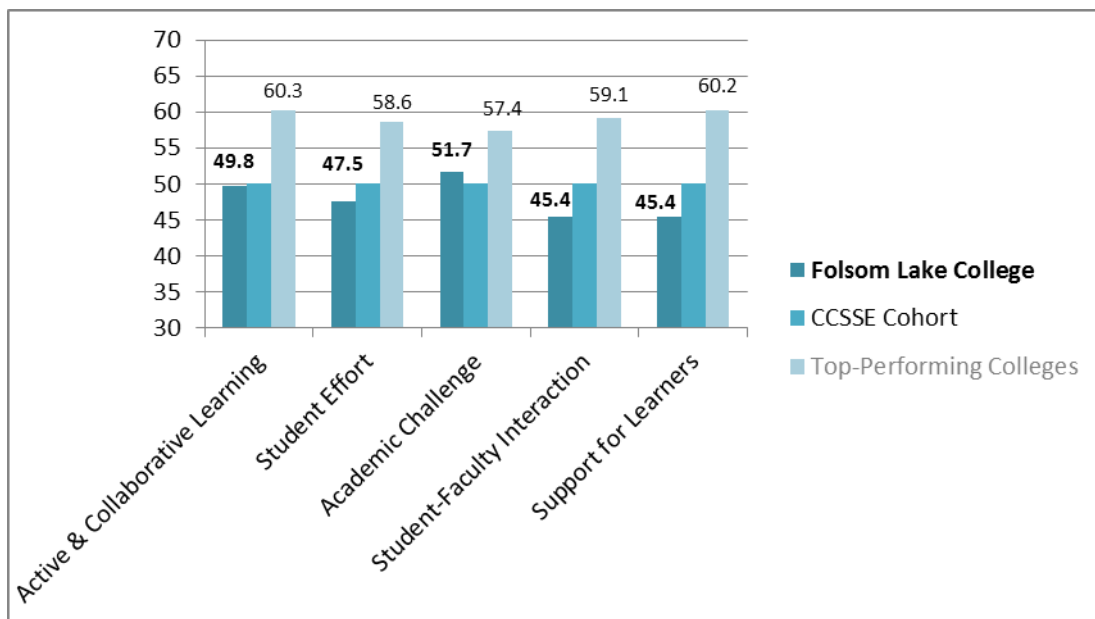
There were a number of items in which FLC students reported lower levels of student engagement than the national cohort. FLC students reported using tutoring services and skill labs less frequently than other participating college students, and FLC students were less likely to talk with faculty about career plans or interact with faculty outside of class. The benchmark with the most significant number of items with lower than average mean scores was “Support for Learners.” FLC students reported feeling that the college emphasized a number of services at a lower level than the national cohort of students: encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds, helping students cope with non-academic responsibilities, providing support to help students thrive socially, and providing financial support. These findings suggest that there are opportunities for improvement in connecting students to existing campus resources, enhancing student-faculty interactions, and exploring student service options to further support learners.

Standardized Benchmark Scores

CCSSE supports the use of survey data for benchmarking effective educational practices, for targeting and monitoring progress in quality improvement, for public reporting in ways that serve to increase understanding of collegiate quality, and to support institutional efforts to improve undergraduate student learning and retention. **CCSSE especially supports public reporting of student engagement results in ways that enable thoughtful, responsible institutional comparisons while encouraging and celebrating institutional diversity.**

One way of evaluating and reporting student engagement is to compare overall standardized benchmark scores across colleges. Overall benchmark scores are standardized to have a mean of 50 (cohort score) and standard deviation of 25 across all respondents. Comparing FLC's standardized benchmark scores to the national cohort and to top performing colleges (top 10% of the cohort by benchmark) is another method to evaluate benchmark findings.

Chart 1: Standardized Benchmark Scores



For the benchmark “Academic Challenge,” FLC reported scores higher than the national cohort mean. The benchmarks “Active & Collaborative Learning” and “Student Effort” were slightly lower for FLC than the national mean, but within close range and not substantively different. The benchmarks of “Student-Faculty Interaction” and “Support for Learners” were each significantly below the national mean by 4.6 points.

Other Significant Findings:

- Overall, FLC students report a high level of satisfaction with services and supports provided by the college:
 - 87.3% reported that their entire education experience at FLC as excellent/good
 - 95.4% reported they would recommend FLC to a friend or family member
 - 89.2% reported their immediate family was very supportive of their attendance at FLC

- FLC students reported being more satisfied with the quality of their relationships with “administrative personnel and offices”
- Among students who use “services to students with disabilities,” FLC students used these services more often
- FLC students reported being less likely to use “student organizations”
- When asked how much their college contributed to their knowledge, skills and personal development in identified areas, FLC students reported lower than average scores for:
 - acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills
 - using computing and information technology
 - gaining information about career opportunities

Conclusion:

This is the first time FLC has participated in the *CCSSE* survey. The 2014 *CCSSE* data provides a baseline against which the college can assess its current standing. FLC will participate in the *CCSSE* again in the spring of 2016, and it is anticipated that current initiatives in many areas on campus will have spurred positive change among several indicators of student engagement.

Significant survey findings have been reported here, but you are encouraged to view responses to all survey questions for a more in-depth picture of student engagement at FLC:

http://www.ccsse.org/survey/profile_reports/CCSSE2014_44421900_pubFreqs_AllStu.pdf

This initial survey found many positive practices at FLC. Faculty are providing a learning environment that encourages critical thinking and academic rigor. Administrative services are provided in ways that students view as friendly and supportive. Students access DSPPS services more often than do students at other colleges. And students report high levels of overall satisfaction with their entire college experience here at FLC.

There are also several opportunities for improvement identified in the *CCSSE* survey findings. More student services aimed at supporting students to manage real-life issues could enhance feelings of engagement. More faculty-student interaction could increase persistence and provide important role modeling of continuous, life-long learning. We can work to encourage students to take advantage of existing support services such as tutoring or skill labs, develop additional support services for non-academic student issues, and encourage students to get more involved in campus activities.

CCSSE survey results can be used in a number of different ways. Findings can be used to inform our strategic planning. Results from the *CCSSE* are already being used in our current accreditation self-evaluation study; many survey items are directly related to accreditation standards. Progress on the college’s 2014-2015 College Goals can be informed with *CCSSE* results. The SSSP and Student Equity Plans can incorporate findings into current and future projects. Findings can also be considered at the department/unit level in the annual planning and/or program review process.