National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

Spring 2008 Summary: College of Pharmacy (PHA)

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which has been administered annually since 1999, obtains information from random samples of first-year and senior students about the nature of their undergraduate experience. The survey is designed to evaluate the extent to which students engage in effective educational practices empirically linked with learning, personal development and other desired outcomes such as student satisfaction, persistence, and graduation. St. John’s University has participated in the survey five times (2001, 2002, 2004, 2006, and 2008).

In Spring 2008, St. John’s first-year and senior students were randomly selected and they were initially contacted by email that provided a link for them to complete NSSE online, and two reminders followed. Then, the non-respondents were randomly selected and a hardcopy was sent to them, and the remaining non-respondents were contacted by email again. A total of 664 students participated in the 2008 survey. Of them, 357 were first-year students (9%) and 307 were seniors (12%).

For College of Pharmacy (PHA), 64 first-year students (14% of student population) and 82 seniors (13%) completed the survey. Respondents fairly resembled the profile of the PHA first-year and senior students in ethnicity, while the proportion of female is a little higher than that of male students. The survey data, however, were weighted by gender.

There are more than 80 items in the survey, and in an attempt to support efforts to talk about student engagement and the importance to student learning, collegiate quality and institutional improvement, NSSE created five clusters of related groups of items on the survey, expressed in 100-point scales, as the National Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice. These benchmarks (Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Relations, Enriching Educational Experiences, and Supportive Campus Environment) are the standardized indicators of student engagement, and they were adopted as institutional success measures in St. John’s Strategic Plan 2004-08 and continued in the 2008-13 Plan.

This report summarizes the 2008 NSSE survey results for College of Pharmacy (PHA). It consists of two parts: 1) Summary at the Benchmark Level, including student overall evaluation and 2) Summary at the Survey Item Level (PHA 2008 data are compared with St. John’s University (STJ) for both first-year and senior students). Highlighted are the benchmarks or survey items with a difference of five points either between PHA 2008 and 2006 or between PHA and STJ. The appendix provides detailed data for each survey item for 2008, together with the 2004 and 2006 data.

Part 1. Summary at the Benchmark Level

In 2008, the PHA first-year students were more engaged in Student-Faculty Interactions (31 vs. 26) and Supportive Campus Environment (60 vs. 55) than they were in 2006.
PHA seniors had lower Student-Faculty Interactions than STJ seniors (35 vs. 43). In addition, PHA seniors were less involved in Enriching Education Experiences compared to STJ seniors (32 vs. 41).

PHA first-year students’ entire educational experience revealed a negative change from 2006 to 2008: 70% rated their entire educational experience as EXCELLENT or GOOD in 2008 as compared to 77% in 2006, while the quality of academic advising received by PHA first-year students were rated higher in 2008 than in 2006 (75% vs. 67%).

The entire educational experience was rated lower by PHA first-year students than by STJ first-year students: 70% of PHA rated it as EXCELLENT or GOOD compared to 79% of STJ first-year students. The quality of academic advising was also rated lower by PHA first-year students than STJ first-year students: 75% of PHA rated it as EXCELLENT or GOOD compared to 80% of STJ first-year students.

**Part 2. Summary at the Survey Item Level**

Part 2 presents data at survey item level and it consists of two sections. Section 1 illustrates PHA trend data from 2006 to 2008, and Section 2 compares PHA with STJ.

**Section 1: College of Pharmacy 2008 versus 2006**

PHA first-year students became more engaged in the following areas:

**Benchmark 1: Level of Academic Challenge**
- Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more (16 for 2008 vs. 6 for 2006)
- Number of written papers or reports of between 5 and 19 pages (38 vs. 30)
- Coursework emphasizing analysis of the basic element of an idea, experience or theory (76 vs. 71)

**Benchmark 2: Active and Collaborative Learning**
- Participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course (38 vs. 29)

**Benchmark 3: Student-Faculty Interactions (overall-36 for 2008 vs. 31 for 2006)**
- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor (52 vs. 47)
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor (40 vs. 32)
- Discussed ideas from readings or classes with faculty members outside of class (36 vs. 27)
- Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc) (28 vs. 19)

**Benchmark 4: Enriching Educational Experiences**
- Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, publications, student government, sports, etc.) (19 vs. 13)
- Campus environment encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds (59 vs. 52)
Benchmark 5: Supportive Campus Environment (overall 60 for 2008 vs. 55 for 2006)
- Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially (50 vs. 45)
- Quality of relationships with faculty members (68 vs. 59)
- Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices (63 vs. 56)

PHA first-year students became less engaged in the following areas:

Benchmark 1: Level of Academic Challenge
- Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings (58 for 2008 vs. 65 for 2006)

Benchmark 3: Student-Faculty Interactions (overall 36 for 2008 vs. 31 for 2006)
- Worked or planned to work with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements (2 vs. 9)

Benchmark 4: Enriching Educational Experiences
- Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment (4 vs. 19)
- Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together (19 vs. 27)

PHA senior students became more engaged in the following areas:

Benchmark 1: Level of Academic Challenge
- Coursework emphasizing analysis of the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory (81 for 2008 vs. 75 for 2006)
- Coursework emphasizing synthesis and organization of ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships (77 vs. 69)
- Coursework emphasizing the making of judgments about the value of information, arguments or methods (79 vs. 72)
- Coursework emphasizing application of theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations (84 vs. 77)
- Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations (84 vs. 60)

Benchmark 2: Active and Collaborative Learning
- Participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course (27 vs. 21)

Benchmark 3: Student-Faculty Interactions
- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor (50 vs. 45)

Benchmark 5: Supportive Campus Environment
- Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc) (46 vs. 38)
- Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially (51 vs. 46)
PHA senior students became less engaged in the following areas:

**Benchmark 1: Level of Academic Challenge**
- Number of written papers or reports of between 5 and 19 pages (24 for 2008 vs. 31 for 2006)
- Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages (38 vs. 45)

**Benchmark 3: Student-Faculty Interactions**
- Worked or planned to work with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements (13 vs. 18)

**Benchmark 4: Enriching Educational Experiences**
- Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together (15 vs. 20)
- Foreign Language coursework (7 vs. 18)
- Using electronic technology (listserv, chat group, internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment. (61 vs. 69)

**Section 2: College of Pharmacy (PHA) versus St. John’s University (STJ):**

PHA first-year students were more engaged than STJ (overall) in the following areas:

**Benchmark 1: Level of Academic Challenge**
- Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework, rehearsing, and other academic activities) (50 for PHA vs. 41 for STJ)

**Benchmark 2: Active and Collaborative Learning**
- Tutored or taught other students (30 vs. 25)
- Participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course (38 vs. 30)

PHA first-year students were less engaged than STJ (overall) in the following area:

**Benchmark 2: Active and Collaborative Learning**
- Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions (54 for PHA vs. 60 for STJ)
- Made a class presentation (44 vs. 51)
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.) (49 vs. 54)

**Benchmark 3: Student-Faculty Interactions**
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor (40 vs. 45)
- Worked or planned to work with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements (2 vs. 7)
Benchmark 4: Enriching Educational Experiences
- Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment (4 vs. 9)

Benchmark 5: Supportive Campus Environment
- Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.) (43 vs. 50)

PHA senior students were more engaged than STJ (overall) in the following areas:

Benchmark 1: Level of Academic Challenge
- Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework, rehearsing, and other academic activities) (59 for PHA vs. 41 for STJ)
- Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings (66 vs. 57)
- Coursework emphasizing analysis of the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory (81 vs. 76)
- Coursework emphasizing synthesis and organization of ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships (77 vs. 70)
- Coursework emphasizing the making of judgments about the value of information, arguments or methods (79 vs. 71)
- Coursework emphasizing application of theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations (84 vs. 75)
- Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor’s standards or expectations (84 vs. 57)
- Campus environment emphasizing time studying and on academic work (81 vs. 71)

Benchmark 2: Active and Collaborative Learning
- Worked with other students on projects during class (58 vs. 53)
- Worked with other students on projects outside of class (61 vs. 54)

PHA senior students were less engaged than STJ (overall) in the following areas:

Benchmark 1: Level of Academic Challenge
- Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more (12 for PHA vs. 18 for STJ)
- Number of written papers or reports of between 5 and 19 pages (24 vs. 36)
- Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages (38 vs. 44)

Benchmark 3: Student-Faculty Interactions (Overall – 35 for PHA vs. 43 for STJ)
- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor (50 vs. 57)
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor (41 vs. 51)
- Discussed ideas from readings or classes with faculty members outside of class (34 vs. 42)
• Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc) (25 vs. 31)
• Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance (46 vs. 58)
• Worked or planned to work with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements (13 vs. 18)

Benchmark 4: Enriching Educational Experiences (Overall – 32 for PHA vs 41 for STJ)
• Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, publications, student government, sports, etc.) (11 vs. 19)
• Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment (45 vs. 55)
• Community service or volunteer (45 vs. 58)
• Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together (15 vs. 28)
• Foreign language coursework (7 vs. 41)
• Study Abroad (5 vs. 11)
• Independent study or self-designed major (7 vs. 14)
• Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive, etc.) (12 vs. 21)

Benchmark 5: Supportive Campus Environment
• Quality of relationships with faculty members (63 vs. 73)
• Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices (56 vs. 62)