National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

Spring 2008 Summary: Tobin College of Business

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 Tobin College of Business (TCB), 62 first-year students (10% of student population) and 63 seniors (11%) completed the survey. Respondents fairly resembled the profile of the EDU 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 Tobin College of Business (TCB). It consists of two parts: 1) Summary at the Benchmark Level, including student overall evaluation and 2) Summary at the Survey Item Level (TCB 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 TCB 2008 and 2006 or between TCB 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

From 2006 to 2008, TCB seniors made progress in the following three benchmarks: Student-Faculty Interactions (from 38 to 46), Enriching Educational Experiences (from 38 to 46), and Supportive Campus Environment (from 59 to 64).
The benchmark scores for TCB first-year students increased for Active and Collaborative Learning (from 40 to 45) and for Supportive Campus Environment (from 61 to 66).

The 2008 TCB benchmark scores for both the first-year and senior students were similar to those for STJ except that the TCB seniors’ score on Enriching Educational Experiences was five points higher than STJ: 46 vs. 41.

TCB seniors’ overall evaluation revealed a positive change from 2006 to 2008: 86% rated their entire educational experience as EXCELLENT or GOOD in 2008 as compared to 80% in 2006; 80% rated the quality of academic advising as EXCELLENT or GOOD in 2008 as compared to 75% in 2006.

TCB first-year students’ ratings on the quality of academic advising increased by 6%: 83% rated as EXCELLENT or GOOD in 2008 as compared to 77% in 2006.

In 2008, TCB seniors’ ratings on the quality of academic advising are higher than STJ: 80% of TCB seniors rated it as EXCELLENT or GOOD compared to 70% for STJ.

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 TCB trend data from 2006 to 2008, and Section 2 compares TCB with STJ.

Section 1: Tobin College of Business 2008 versus 2006

TCB first-year 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 (75 for 2008 vs. 68 for 2006)
- Coursework emphasizing synthesis and organization of ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships (67 vs. 61)
- Campus environment emphasizing time studying and on academic work (75 vs. 66)

**Benchmark 2: Active and Collaborative Learning (Overall – 45 for 2008 vs. 40 for 2006)**
- Made a class presentation (52 vs. 47)
- Worked with other students on projects during class (51 vs. 39)
- Worked with other students on projects outside of class (42 vs. 33)
- Participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course (31 vs. 24)

**Benchmark 3: Student-Faculty Interactions**
- Discussed ideas from readings or classes with faculty members outside of class (32 vs. 24)
- Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation student life activities, etc) (29 vs. 18)
- Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance (54 vs. 49)
Benchmark 4: Enriching Educational Experiences
• Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment (13 vs. 7)

Benchmark 5: Supportive Campus Environment (Overall – 66 for 2008 vs. 61 for 2006)
• Campus environment provides the support you need to help you succeed academically (73 vs. 68)
• Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.) (54 vs. 43)
• Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially (60 vs. 51)
• Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices (67 vs. 59)

TCB first-year students didn’t become **less engaged** in any surveyed areas.

TCB senior students became **more engaged** in the following areas:

Benchmark 2: Active and Collaborative Learning
• Participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course (27 for 2008 vs. 19 for 2006)

Benchmark 3: Student-Faculty Interactions (Overall – 46 for 2008 vs. 38 for 2006)
• Discussed ideas from readings or classes with faculty members outside of class (44 vs. 35)
• Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.) (34 vs. 21)
• Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance (60 vs. 55)
• Worked or planned to work with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements (20 vs. 9)

Benchmark 4: Enriching Educational Experiences (Overall – 46 for 2008 vs. 38 for 2006)
• Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment (70 vs. 55)
• Community service or volunteer (71 vs. 53)
• Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together (39 vs. 21)
• Foreign language coursework (50 vs. 36)
• Study abroad (14 vs. 8)
• Independent study or self-designed major (13 vs. 5)
• Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive, etc.) (27 vs. 14)
• Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity (64 vs. 59)
• Campus environment encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds (62 vs. 55)
Benchmark 5: Supportive Campus Environment (Overall – 64 for 2008 vs. 59 for 2006)
- Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc) (47 vs. 41)
- Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially (56 vs. 41)

TCB senior students became less engaged in the following areas:

Benchmark 1: Level of Academic Challenge
- Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations (51 for 2008 vs. 56 for 2006)

Benchmark 2: Active and Collaborative Learning
- Made a class presentation (68 vs. 74)

Benchmark 4: Enriching Educational Experiences
- Using electronic technology (listserv, chat group, internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment (60 vs. 70)

Section 2: Tobin College of Business (TCB) versus St. John’s University (STJ):

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

Benchmark 1: Level of Academic Challenge
- Number of written papers or report of fewer than 5 pages (59 for TCB vs. 52 for STJ)
- Campus environment emphasizing time studying and on academic work (75 vs. 69)

Benchmark 5: Supportive Campus Environment
- Campus environment provides the support you need to help you succeed academically (73 vs. 67)
- Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially (60 vs. 53)

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

Benchmark 3: Student-Faculty Interactions
- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor (50 for TCB vs. 56 for STJ)
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor (36 vs. 45)

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 (11 vs. 20)

TCB senior students were more 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 (27 for TCB vs. 18 for STJ)
• Number of written papers or reports of between 5 and 19 pages (42 vs. 36)

**Benchmark 2: Active and Collaborative Learning**
• Made a class presentation (68 vs. 61)
• Worked with other students on projects outside of class (67 vs. 54)

**Benchmark 4: Enriching Educational Experiences (Overall –46 for TCB vs. 41 for STJ)**
• Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment (70 vs. 55)
• Community service or volunteer (71 vs. 58)
• Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together (39 vs. 28)
• Foreign language coursework (50 vs. 41)
• Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive, etc.) (27 vs. 21)

TCB senior students were *less 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) (33 for TCB vs. 41 for STJ)
• Coursework emphasizing analysis of the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory (68 vs. 76)
• Coursework emphasizing synthesis and organization of ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships (64 vs. 70)
• Coursework emphasizing application of theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations (70 vs. 75)
• Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor’s standards or expectations (51 vs. 57)