



**NSSE 2001 Summary Report:**

**An Overview of the National Survey of Student Engagement 2001  
Results for UW-Madison**

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## **PART A. WHAT IS NSSE AND HOW DOES IT WORK?**

### **What is NSSE?**

The National Survey of Student Engagement, referred to as NSSE, is a survey of college freshmen and seniors designed to assess how involved students are in practices associated with high levels of learning. This initiative of the Pew Charitable Trusts and Carnegie Foundation was piloted in 1999 and conducted as a full survey in 2000 and subsequent years. A total of 461 colleges and universities participated in 2000 and 2001. The survey is based at Indiana University under the direction of Professor George Kuh.

The survey is intended to be useful for institutional improvement and for public accountability. Because it is a national survey it provides comparison information of institutions. Questions fall into three broad categories. 1. Institutional actions and requirements: specific items about curriculum (research projects, writing, reading). 2. Student behavior: time spent in/out of class doing various things. 3. Student reactions to college: students' perceptions of quality of own experiences.

A complete description of NSSE is available on-line (<http://www.indiana.edu/~nsse/>).

### **Why did UW-Madison participate in NSSE 2001?**

UW System institutions participated in NSSE 2001 as a way to gather information and data for the annual accountability report (“Achieving Excellence”).

UW-Madison was interested because of NSSE provides data for making comparisons with other institutions. UW-Madison participated in a consortium of other universities who are also members of the American Association of Universities (the AAUDE consortium). One benefit of the consortium was that 20 additional questions on topics not well covered by the core NSSE survey, for example, advising and course availability, were covered in the supplemental AAUDE consortium questionnaire.

### **How was the survey administered?**

Administration of the survey follows protocols specified by NSSE. In Fall 2000 UW-Madison sent NSSE a data file that contained contact information for all first year students and seniors. We also sent NSSE UW-Madison provost’s office letterhead, which NSSE used in the distribution of the surveys in Spring 2001. To recipients it appeared that the survey came from the UW-Madison provost’s office. The survey cover letter included a name and number of a contact person for students to contact with questions. NSSE drew a random sample of 1000 students (500 first-year students and 500 seniors) and sent them a paper survey and also 2 follow-up letters to non-responders. Some institutions offered incentives or extra appeals to boost response rates – UW-Madison did not.

NSSE sent UW-Madison and institutional report in August 2001 and the national report in November 2001.

The UW-Madison response rate was 55% -- 266 freshmen and 286 seniors responded. This compares favorably with a 41% response rate among the AAUDE consortium and for Research/Doctoral Extensive universities.

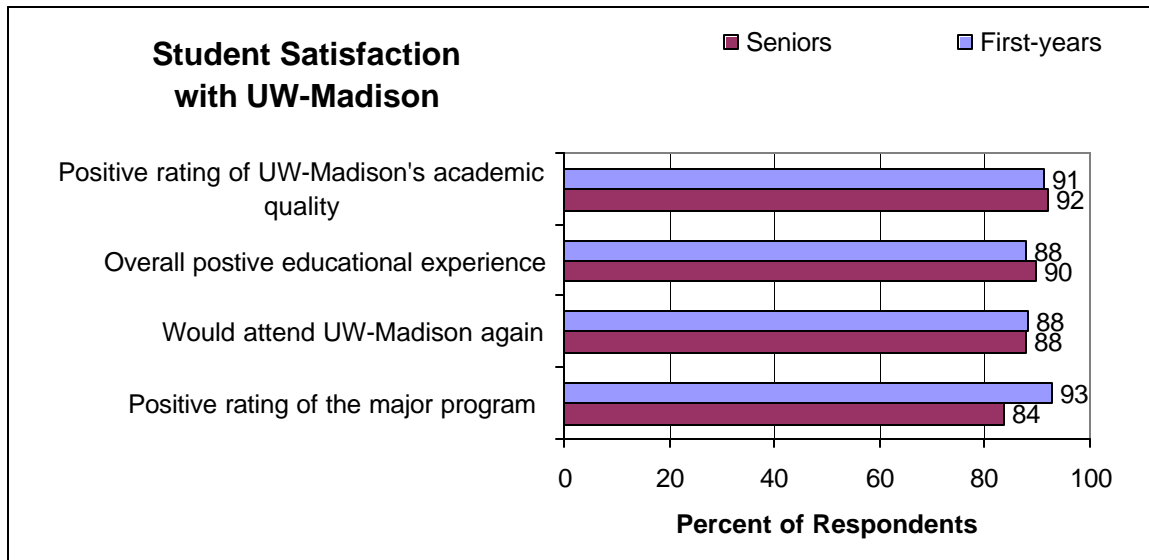
**How do the demographics of our respondents compare with the demographics of our students?**

In general, the demographics of respondents are similar to the demographics of UW-Madison students. One exception is gender - 61% of respondents are female compared with 53% female students.

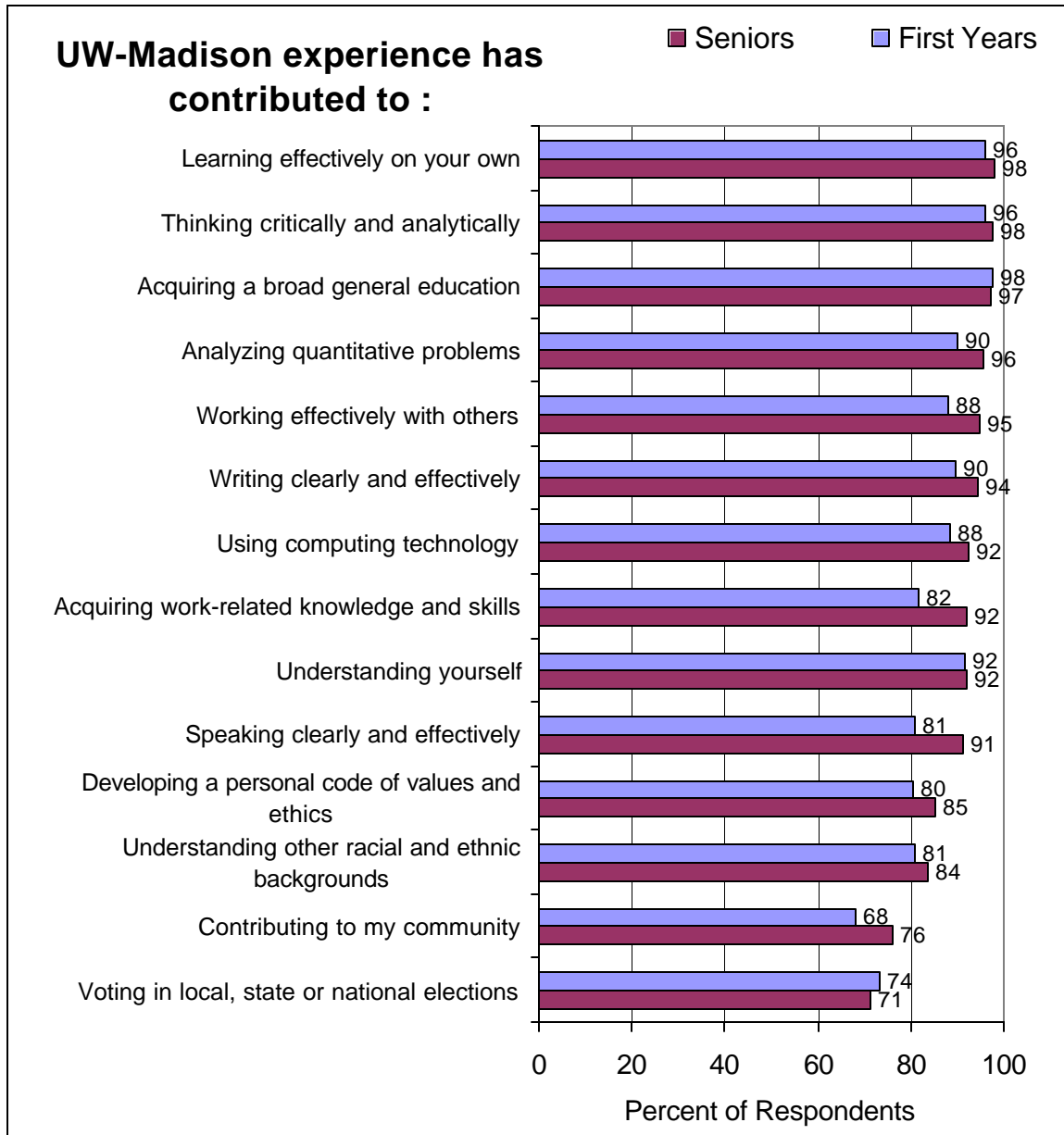
<b>Comparison of UW-Madison Students and NSSE 2001 Respondents</b>	UW-Madison Undergraduates	NSSE Respondents
13. Age - percent 19 or younger	40	47
13. Age - percent 20-23	53	44
14. Sex - percent female	53	63
15. Race/Ethnicity - percent "White"	88	84
17. International student or foreign national	3	4
20. Began college at UW-Madison	84	84
21. Enrolled full-time	94	94

**PART B. AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESULTS**

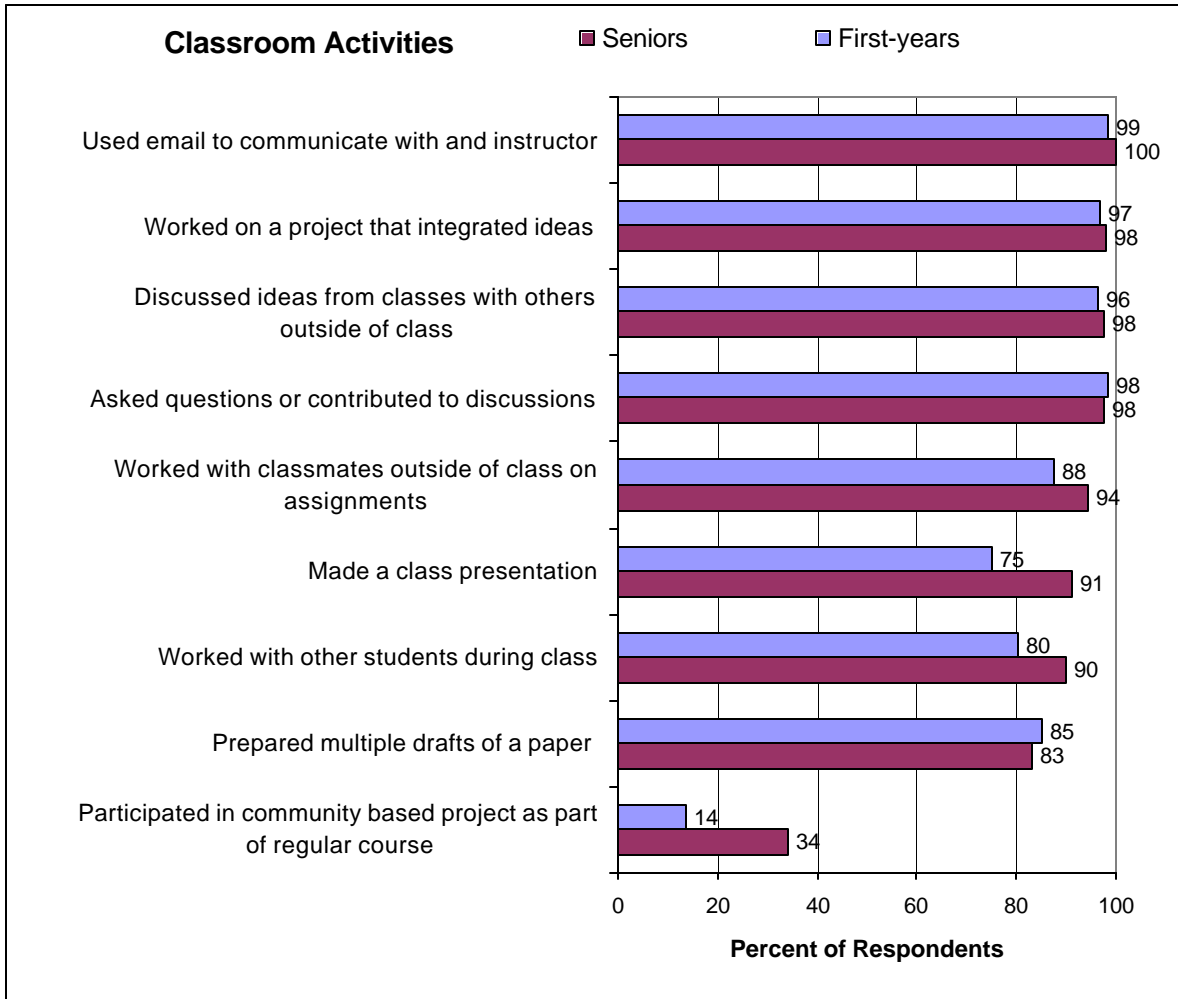
**Satisfaction.** Overall, students are satisfied with their educational experience. Ninety percent of senior gave a positive rating to their educational experience at UW-Madison. Eighty-eight percent would attend UW-Madison if they had the choice to make again.



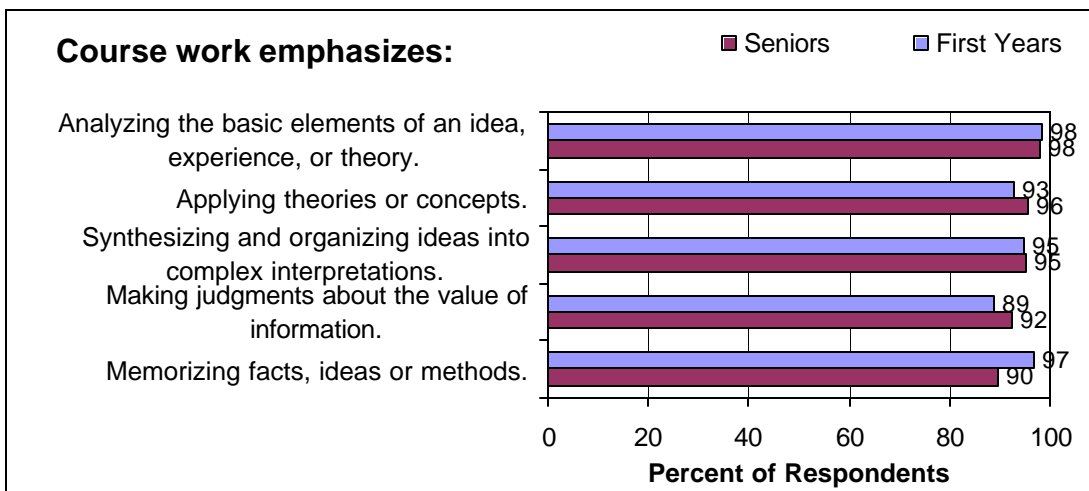
**Skills and Knowledge.** UW-Madison students report that their educational experience has added to their ability to work effectively on their own, to think critically, analytically, and quantitatively, and to work effectively with others. More than ninety percent of seniors have acquired skills in writing, public speaking, working with others, computer technology, and knowledge and skills that will apply to the world or work while UW-Madison students.



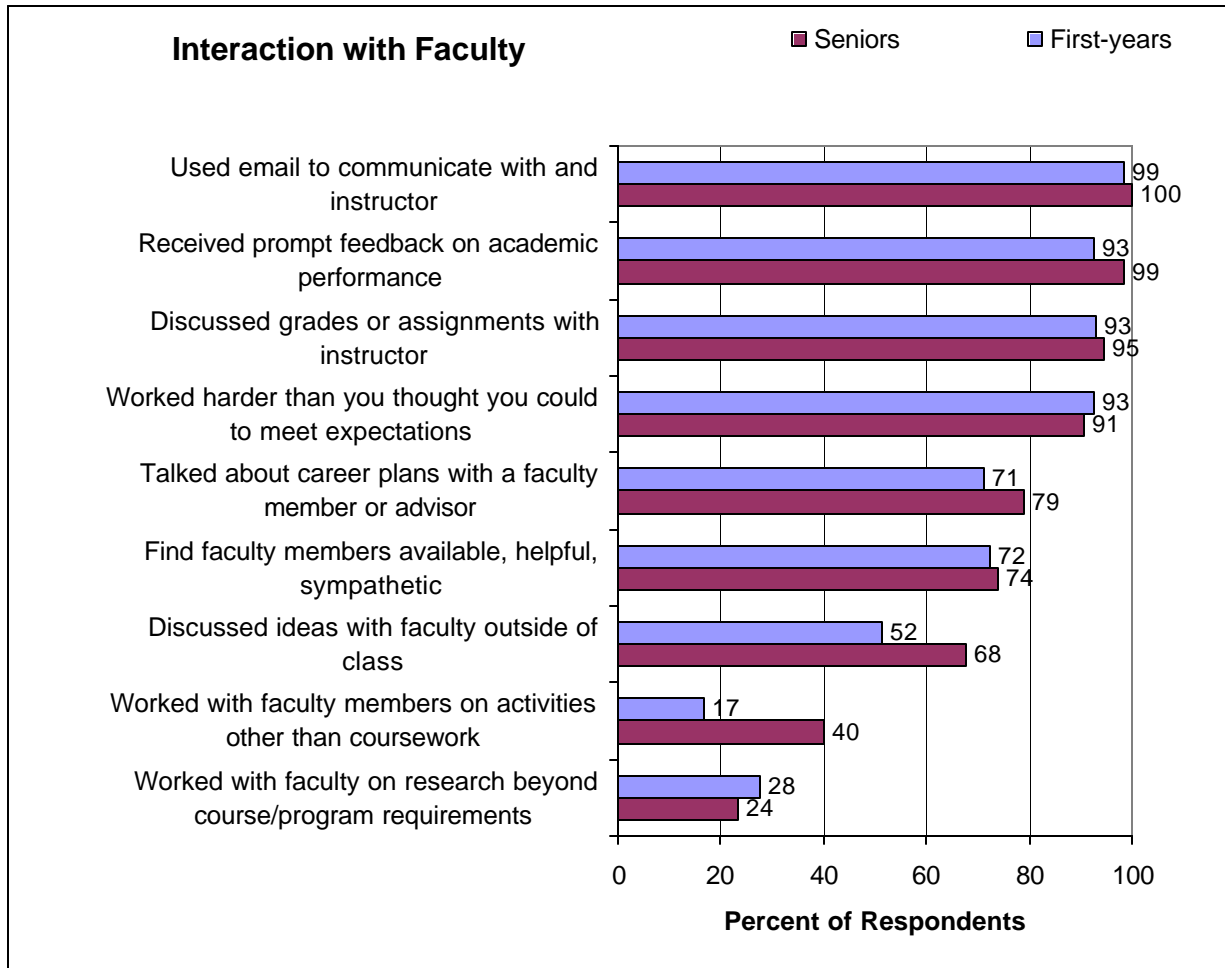
**Classroom Experiences.** Students agree that classroom learning includes a variety of experiences and activities. In a given academic year, almost all students worked on projects that integrated ideas from different sources, contributed to classroom discussions, and discussed the ideas they learned in the classrooms with others outside of class. Seventy-five percent of first-year students made presentations in class and that increased to 91 % for seniors.



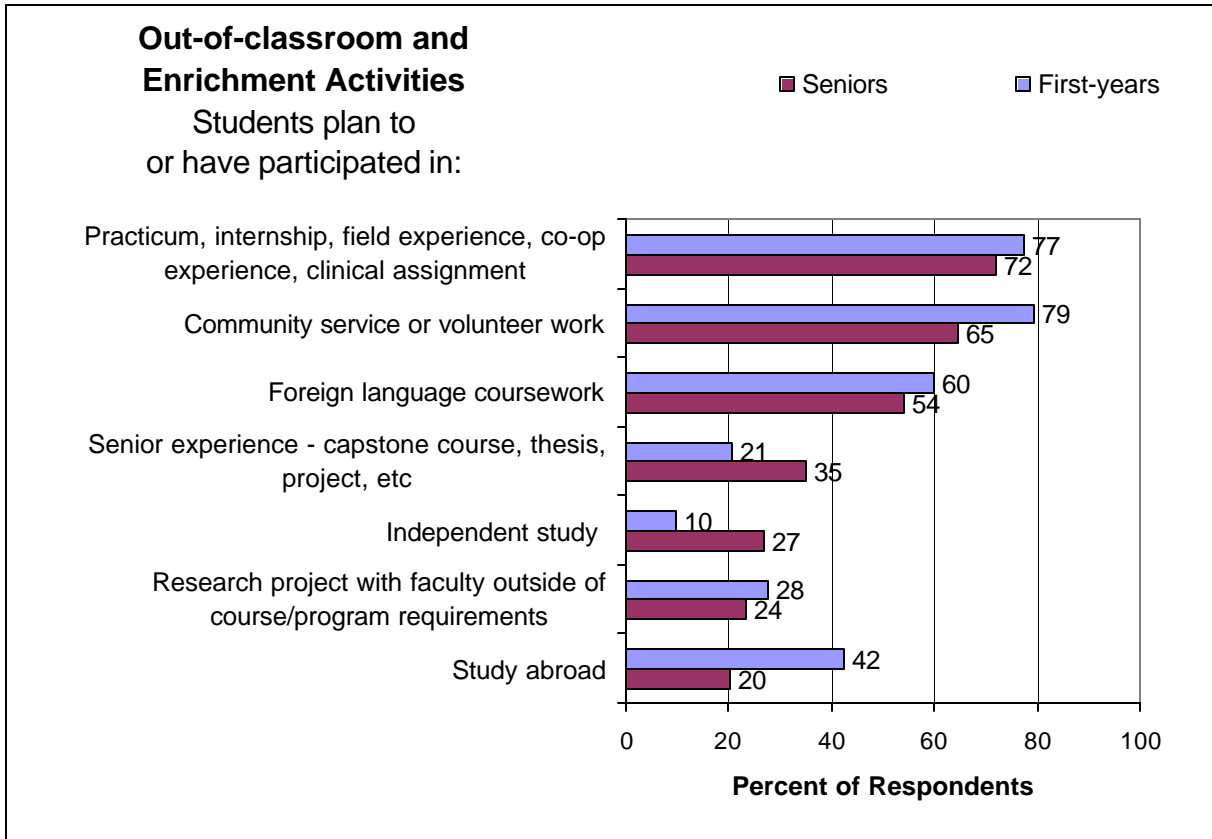
**Course Work.** The variety of classroom activities contributes to a rich class experience. Students agree that course work emphasizes both basic content and higher-order judgment and reasoning skills.



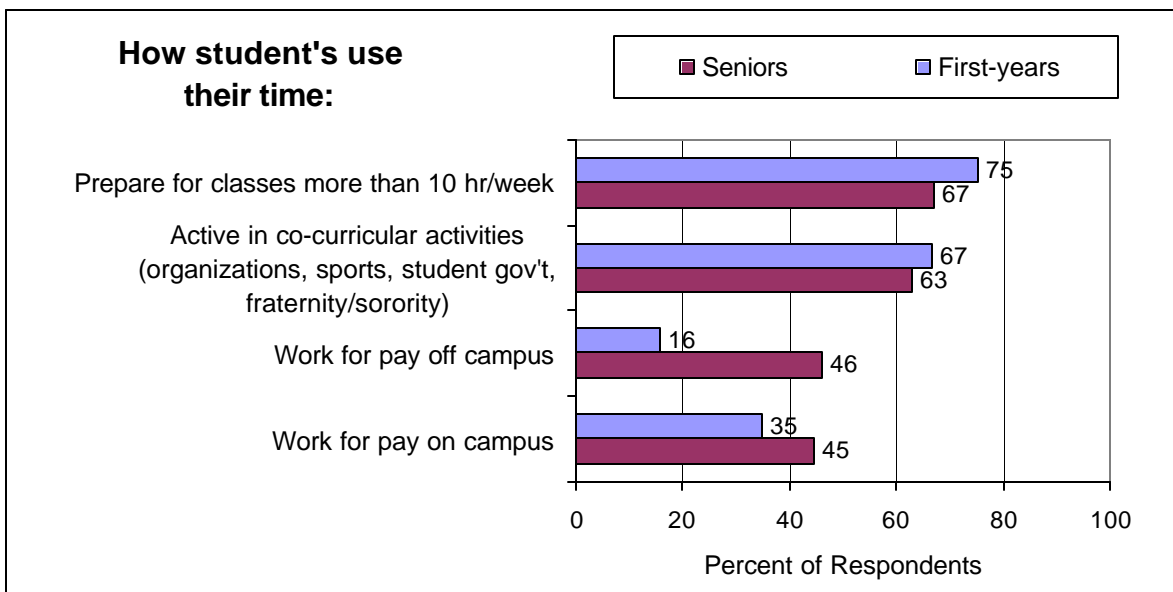
**Interaction with Faculty.** UW-Madison students have a variety of experiences with faculty. Almost all students have discussed assignments, grades, and academic performance with faculty. All seniors are using email to communicate with their instructors. Three quarters of student agree that faculty are available and helpful. Forty percent of seniors worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework in the year of the survey, and 24 % of seniors worked on research projects beyond what are required for their course or program requirements.



**Out-of-Classroom and Enrichment Activities.** Students participate in a wide range of academic activities beyond the classroom. More than three-quarters of senior have done or intend to participate in a practicum, internship, field experience, or co-op education. Seventy-nine percent of seniors have done or plan to do community service or volunteer work.



**Time use.** Students are also involved in co-curricular and extra curricular activities. Forty-six percent of seniors work for pay off campus and 45 % work for pay on campus. The universal activities of our students are preparing for class and socializing – all students report at least some time in these activities each week.



## PART C. NSSE 2001 RESULTS FOR ALL QUESTIONS

### Table Notes

1. The source for all tables is the NSSE 2001 UW-Madison Institutional Report.
2. The AAUDE consortium included UW-Madison and five other universities in 2001 - University of Arizona, University of Kansas, University of Maryland-College Park, University of Michigan, and University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.
3. "Res/Doc Ext" is an abbreviation for the Carnegie Classification, Research/Doctoral Extensive universities, which includes UW-Madison.
4. Items are labeled with the corresponding NSSE survey question number.

TABLE C1.

Demographics of Respondents	First Years			Seniors		
	UW-Madison	AAUDE	Res/Doc Ext	UW-Madison	AAUDE	Res/Doc Ext
	13. Age - percent 19 or younger	98	99	92	0	0
13. Age - percent 20-23	2	1	5	83	81	71
14. Sex - percent female	63	61	62	61	60	59
15. Race/Ethnicity - percent "White"	88	79	79	90	77	80
17. International student or foreign national	3	4	4	4	6	5
20. Began college at this institution	97	95	93	72	69	63
21. Enrolled full-time	98	99	96	90	85	83
22. Member of a social fraternity or sorority	14	16	12	6	13	12
23. Intend to teach at pk-12 level	6	6	9	10	10	11
24. Live in a dormitory or campus housing	91	86	72	4	10	12
24. Live within walking distance	5	3	5	73	36	28
24. Live within driving distance	2	9	21	22	50	58
25. Both parents graduated from college	55	57	43	45	52	39
25. Neither parent graduated from college	24	18	30	32	26	35

TABLE C2.

Satisfaction	First Years			Seniors		
	UW-Madison	AAUDE	Res/Doc Ext	UW-Madison	AAUDE	Res/Doc Ext
11. Entire educational experience at this institution was good or excellent	88	90	86	90	87	85
12. Would attend this institution if you could start over again?	88	88	85	88	84	80
A7. Rate the academic quality of this university in general as good or excellent	91	90		92	86	
A8. Rate the academic quality of your major program as good or excellent	93	92		84	87	



TABLE C3.

1. During the current school year, percent of students who:	First Years		Seniors	
	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext
1a. asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	98	95	98	97
1b. made a class presentation	75	77	91	93
1c. prepared 2 or more drafts of a paper before turning it in	85	85	83	81
1d. Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas from different sources	97	97	98	99
1e. came to class without completing reading or assignments	85	86	90	89
1f. worked with other students on projects during class	80	89	90	88
1g. worked with classmates outside of class to prepare assignments	88	85	94	93
1h. tutored or taught other students	40	47	44	53
1i. participated in community based project as part of regular course	14	22	34	33
1j. used an electronic medium to discuss or complete an assignment	81	83	86	87
1k. used email to communicate with and instructor	99	96	100	98
1l. discussed grades or assignments with instructor	93	92	95	96
1m. talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor	71	73	79	79
1n. discussed ideas from readings or classes with faculty members outside of class	52	50	68	66
1o. received prompt feedback from faculty on academic performance	93	91	99	94
1p. worked harder than you thought you could to meet expectations	93	89	91	92
1q. worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework	17	29	40	43
1r. discussed ideas from readings or classes with others outside of class	96	94	98	97
1s. had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity	82	88	91	90
1t. had serious conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	95	93	96	93

TABLE C4.

2. Percent of students whose coursework during the current year emphasized:	First Years		Seniors	
	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext
2a. Memorizing facts, ideas or methods so you can repeat them in the same form.	97	96	90	92
2b. Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory.	98	98	98	99
2c. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, into more complex interpretations.	95	94	95	95
2d. Making judgments about the value of information arguments or methods.	89	91	92	92
2e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations.	93	95	96	96

TABLE C5.

<b>3. Reading and writing during the current school year - percent of students who:</b>	First Years		Seniors	
	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext
3a. Were assigned more than 5 books or book-length reading packets	86	83	85	75
3a. Were assigned more than 10 books or book-length reading packets	59	46	48	38
3b. Read books for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment	67	72	79	80
3c. Wrote papers or reports of 20 or more pages	8	14	50	47
3d. Wrote any papers or reports of 5 to 19 pages	90	87	91	90
3d. Wrote 5 or more papers or reports of 5 to 19 pages	25	38	51	46
3e. Wrote any papers or reports fewer than 5 pages long.	99	97	97	93
3e. Wrote 5 or more papers or reports fewer than 5 pages long.	68	69	63	61

TABLE C6.

<b>6. Percent of students who plan to do or have done the following activities before graduating:</b>	First Years		Seniors	
	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext
6a. Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, clinical assignment	77	81	72	72
6b. Community service or volunteer work	79	76	65	60
6c. Work with faculty on research project outside of course or program requirements	28	27	24	25
6d. Foreign language coursework	60	57	54	42
6e. Study abroad	42	40	20	16
6f. Independent study or self-designed major	10	12	27	24
6g. Senior experience - capstone course, comprehensive exam, thesis, project	21	30	35	47

TABLE C7.

<b>Satisfaction - percent of students whose:</b>	First Years		Seniors	
	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext
11. Entire educational experience at this institution was good or excellent	88	86	90	85
12. Would attend UW-Madison if they could start over again	88	85	88	80
<b>4. Challenge of Exams: percent for whom examinations challenged them to do their best work</b>	93	88	84	83
<b>5. Quality of advising. Percent of students who rate the quality of advising good or excellent.</b>	55	67	55	57

TABLE C8.

**7. Time Use**

	First Years		Seniors	
	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext
7a. More than 10 hours a week preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, etc)	75	57	67	54
7a. More than 20 hours a week preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, etc)	36	23	25	21
7b. Any time working for pay on campus	35	20	45	30
7b. More than 10 hours a week working for pay on campus	13	9	28	18
7c. Any time working for pay off campus	16	29	46	56
7c. More than 10 hours a week working for pay off campus	5	20	35	44
7d. Any time participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, sports, student gov't, fraternity/sorority)	67	63	63	57
7d. More than 10 hours a week participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, sports, student gov't, fraternity/sorority)	12	15	14	13
7e. 1 to 15 hours relaxing and socializing (TV, partying, socializing, exercising, playing computer and other games, etc)	56	61	64	68
7e. More than 15 hours relaxing and socializing (TV, partying, socializing, exercising, playing computer and other games, etc)	44	28	36	31
7f. Providing any care for dependents living with you (children, parents, other)	3	17	11	30

TABLE C9.

**8. UW-Madison experience contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas (percent of students):**

	First Years		Seniors	
	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext
8a. acquiring a broad general education	98	97	97	97
8b. acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	82	83	92	92
8c. writing clearly and effectively	90	92	94	95
8d. speaking clearly and effectively	81	84	91	92
8e. thinking critically and analytically	96	97	98	98
8f. analyzing quantitative problems	90	90	96	94
8g. using computing and information technology	88	89	92	94
8h. working effectively with others	88	92	95	95
8i. voting in local state or national elections	74	53	71	50
8j. learning effectively on your own	96	94	98	95
8k. understanding yourself	92	90	92	91
8l. understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	81	85	84	87
8m. developing a personal code of values and ethics	80	83	85	82
8n. contributing to the welfare of your community	68	69	76	72

TABLE C10.

<b>9. Percent of students who think that UW-Madison emphasizes:</b>	First Years		Seniors	
	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext
9a. spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	98	97	97	97
9b. providing the support to help you succeed academically	94	94	90	91
9c. encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	77	83	71	75
9d. helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc)	57	63	51	52
9e. providing the support you need to thrive socially	74	77	69	65

TABLE C11.

<b>10. Quality of relationships with other people .</b>	First Years		Seniors	
	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext	UW-Madison	Res/Doc Ext
10a. Other students - friendly, supportive, sense of belonging	85	84	88	83
10b. Faculty members - available, helpful, sympathetic:	72	74	74	75
10c. Administrative Personnel and Offices: helpful, considerate, flexible.	53	59	47	49

TABLE C12.

<b>AAUDE Consortium Questions</b>	<b>First Years</b>		<b>Seniors</b>	
	<b>UW-Madison</b>	<b>AAUDE</b>	<b>UW-Madison</b>	<b>AAUDE</b>
A1. Consider the size of lower-division classes you've taken at this university. Percent of students who consider classes "OK in size".	53	53	34	32
A2. Consider the size of upper-division classes you've taken at this university. Percent of students who consider classes "OK in size".	68	73	79	73
A3. How would you rate the quality of instruction in lower-division classes? Percent "Good" or "Excellent"	71	69	57	56
A4. How would you rate the quality of instruction in lower-division classes? Percent "Good" or "Excellent"	81	85	91	87
A5. Would you say that the courses you need to take for your major have been available "most of the time" ?	57	69	73	79
A6. Would you say that the courses you need to take for your general education requirements have been available hardly ever/ some of the time/ most of the time / not applicable	60	64	79	72
A7. How would you rate the academic quality of this university in general? Percent "Good" or "Excellent"	91	90	92	86
A8. How would you rate the academic quality of your major program ? Percent "Good" or "Excellent"	93	92	84	87
A9. How would you rate the quality of academic advising you have received from your college or department at this university? Percent "Good" or "Excellent"	55	59	45	50
A10. How would you rate this university's responsiveness to student academic problems? Percent "Good" or "Excellent"	53	60	46	42
A11. During the last year, from what source did you receive most of your academic advising? Percent advised most by college or department advisors.	40	43	44	46
A12. The advisors in your college/dept are available when you need to see them? Percent who Agree or Strongly Agree.	73	83	77	78
A13. The information you've received from academic advisors has been accurate and up-to-date? Percent who Agree or Agree Strongly	83	87	78	81
A14. At this university students have to run around from one place to another to get the information or approvals they need? Agree to disagree scale	72	74	75	83
A15. Do you expect to complete a bachelor's degree in less than 5 years?	87	89	88	89
A17. "Money, work obligations, and finances" is the biggest obstacle to your academic progress?	35	38	51	51
A17. "Lack of personal motivation" is the biggest obstacle to your academic progress?	36	35	20	23
A17. "Lack of good academic advising" is the biggest obstacle to your academic progress?	10	10	13	14
A17. "Difficulties getting the courses you need" is the biggest obstacle to your academic progress?	17	14	12	8
A18. What is your primary reason for working for pay? Percent to earn money for basic expenses.	62	55	61	60
A18. What is your primary reason for working for pay? Percent to earn extra spending money.	30	35	23	21
A19. While attending this university how often have you been challenged to do the very best you can? Percent "Some of the Time" or "Most of the Time".	95	92	93	91
A20. Most of the time professors in my courses make it clear what they expect me to learn? Percent who "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"	83	85	88	88