

National Survey of Student Engagement

Mount Mercy University 2012

Executive Summary

The findings from this year's National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) show Mount Mercy University is continuing to provide a sound academic environment in which students are both challenged and supported. Highlights from this year's survey include:

- Mount Mercy freshmen engage in more active and collaborative learning than at peer institutions.
- Mount Mercy seniors report significantly less involvement in Enriching Educational Experiences than the benchmarking groups. Our seniors are not getting foreign language coursework or participating in many co-curricular activities.
- Both Mount Mercy freshmen and senior evaluate their entire educational experience at Mount Mercy somewhat higher than how students in the benchmarking groups rated their experiences. Seniors (90%) and freshmen (93%) rated their experiences as good to excellent.
- 88% of the freshmen and 87% if the seniors would come to Mount Mercy if they could "start all over again".

About the Survey

The Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and the Executive Director of Institutional Research and Data oversaw the administration of this year's NSSE survey. The survey was completed by students on-line. There were several email reminders sent to students and a publicity campaign which included posters, newspaper announcements, faculty announcements, student media announcements and a drawing for prizes for completers. The response rate for freshmen (FY) was 53% and the response rate for seniors (SR) was 42%. In both instances, response rates were down from the previous year. The average U.S. institutional response rate for web-only surveys was 31% and 33% respectively.

	Freshmen n=69	Seniors n=236
Gender		
Males	19%	25%
Females	81%	75%
Residence		
On-Campus	85%	17%
Off-Campus	15%	83%
Transfer Students	9%	62%
Non-Traditional Students- 24 years or older	0%	46%

Comparison Schools

- **Plains Private** – 32 private institutions in the same geographic region and sector (private)
- **Carnegie Class** – 88 private institutions across the country sharing the same Carnegie Classification as we have
- **NSSE 2012** – 545 institutions; all other current-year U. S. NSSE participant institutions

To help guide institutional improvement efforts, NSSE has created five Benchmarks to Effective Educational Practice and the questions on the survey would each fall into one of these categories: Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interaction, Enriching Educational Experiences, and Supportive Campus Environment.

Level of Academic Challenge

- Mount Mercy first-year students (FY 55.8 mean) and seniors (SR 60.8 mean) both report somewhat higher levels of satisfaction in Level of Academic Challenge than all of the comparison categories with one exception – FY Plains Privates.
- Mount Mercy FY students (52%) report preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, homework, etc.) between 6 to 15 hrs per week. Between 45% to 47% of the benchmarking groups' first-year students report the same preparation time.
- Both Mount Mercy FY students (77%) and SR students (69%) report reading 5 to 20 assigned textbooks, books or packets during the year compared with the benchmarking groups' average of FY (61%) and SR (57%).
- 16% of Mount Mercy FY students report writing at least one 20-page paper in the year versus the comparison groups (22%, 20%, 19%) respectively. Mount Mercy SR students (44%) report writing at least one 20-page paper in the year versus the comparison groups (50%, 50% and 49%) respectively. On writing at least one paper of 5 to 19 pages in length, both Mount Mercy's FY students (95%) and SR students (98%) were higher than the comparison groups FY (88%, 85%, 85%) and SR (94%, 91%, 90%) respectively.
- 81% of Mount Mercy FY students indicated the extent (quite a bit and very much) the institution emphasizes spending significant amount of time studying and on academic work; somewhat less than the benchmarking groups' average of 84%.
- 62% of FY and 62% of SR students at Mount Mercy often or very often work harder than they thought they could to meet instructor's standards or expectations.

Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)

Mean Comparisons

Mount Mercy University compared with:

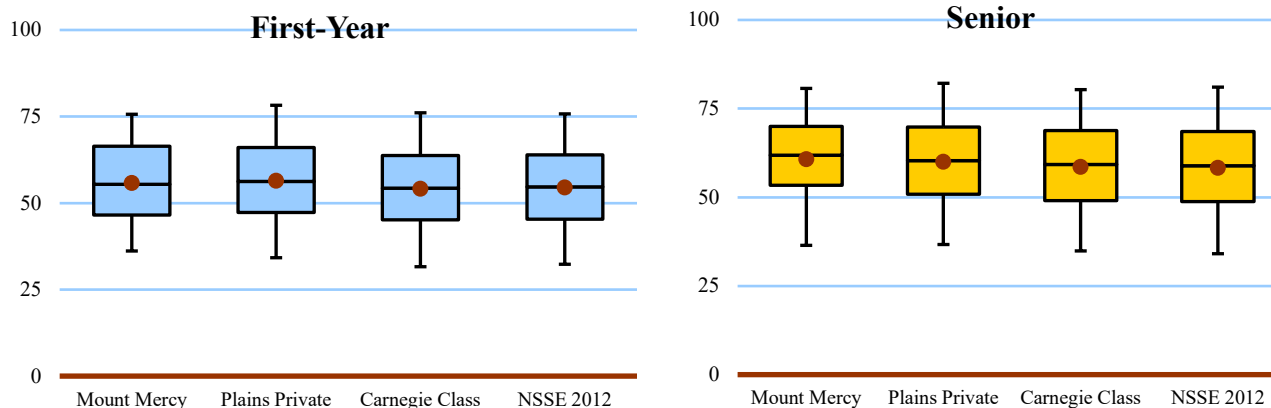
Class	Mount Mercy	Plains Private	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Carnegie Class			NSSE 2012		
	Mean ^a	Mean ^a			Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
First-Year	55.8	56.5		-.05	54.2		.12	54.5		.10
Senior	60.8	60.0		.06	58.6	*	.16	58.4	**	.17

^a Weighted by gender and enrollment status (and by institution size for comparison groups)

^b * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed)

^c Mean difference divided by the pooled standard deviation

Distributions of Student Benchmark Scores



Active and Collaborative Learning

- Both FY (49.5 mean) and SR (54.5 mean) students at Mount Mercy engage in more active and collaborative learning than comparison schools in the benchmarking groups.
- At Mount Mercy, SR students (78%) give more class presentations often or very often than Mount Mercy FR students (49%). Both groups at Mount Mercy exceeded the comparisons groups.
- Mount Mercy SR students (61%) often or very often worked with other students on projects during class while the comparison groups did so less often (48%, 53%, 51%) respectively.
- Mount Mercy FR students (53%) often or very often worked with other students on projects outside of class while the comparison groups did so less often (40%, 47%, 46%) respectively.
- Half of the Mount Mercy SR students (50%) at some time tutored or taught other students.
- Significantly more FY students (94%) at Mount Mercy have at some time in the year, participated in a community based project than those in the benchmarking groups (44%, 47%, 41%) respectively.
- Mount Mercy FR students (52%) discussed ideas from class with others outside of class somewhat less than the benchmarking groups with an average of 60%.

Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)

Mean Comparisons

Mount Mercy University compared with:

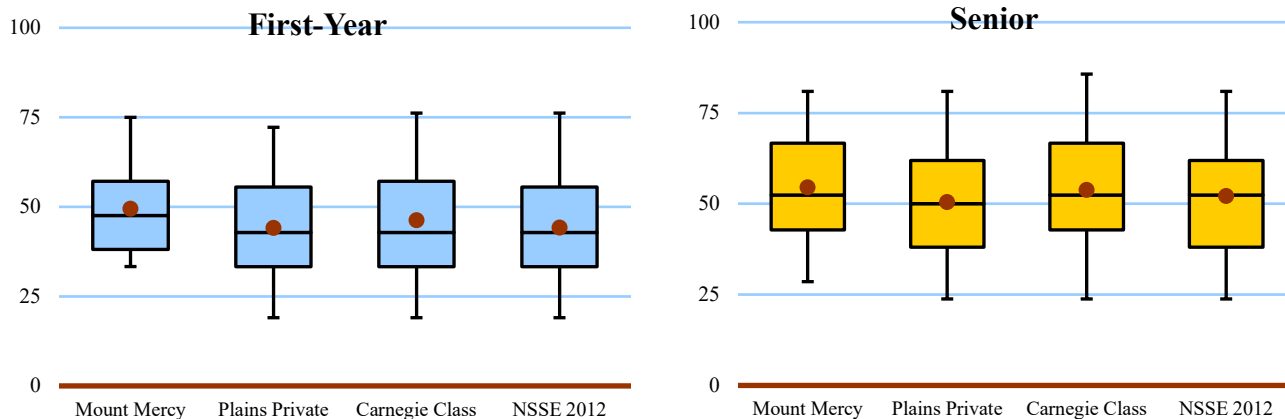
Class	Mount Mercy	Plains Private			Carnegie Class			NSSE 2012		
	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
First-Year	49.5	44.1	**	.31	46.2		.19	44.2	**	.30
Senior	54.5	50.5	***	.23	53.8		.04	52.1	*	.14

^a Weighted by gender and enrollment status (and by institution size for comparison groups)

^b * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed)

^c Mean difference divided by the pooled standard deviation

Distributions of Student Benchmark Scores



Student-Faculty Interaction

- Mount Mercy SR students lagged behind the benchmarking groups in student-faculty interaction.
- Mount Mercy FY students (15%) discussed very often, grades or assignments with an instructor, less than the benchmarking groups (23%, 25%, 22%) respectively.
- Mount Mercy FY students (87%) sometime to very often have talked with a faculty member or advisor about their career plans. This is more than the average of the benchmarking groups FY students (79%).
- 70% of Mount Mercy SR students discussed ideas from class with faculty members outside of class sometime to very often during the year. This is comparable to the benchmarking groups.
- 54% of FY students and 53% of SR students at Mount Mercy, at least occasionally worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework.
- 59% of FY students and 72% of SR students at Mount Mercy, indicate they receive often or very often, prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on their academic performance.
- By the senior year, only 13% of Mount Mercy SR students report having completed work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements. This is significantly lower than the benchmarking groups' average of 19%.

Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)

Mean Comparisons

Mount Mercy University compared with:

Class	Mount Mercy	Plains Private			Carnegie Class			NSSE 2012		
	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
First-Year	37.9	37.7		.01	38.5		-.03	35.9		.10
Senior	40.8	43.1		-.11	46.4	***	-.26	42.9		-.10

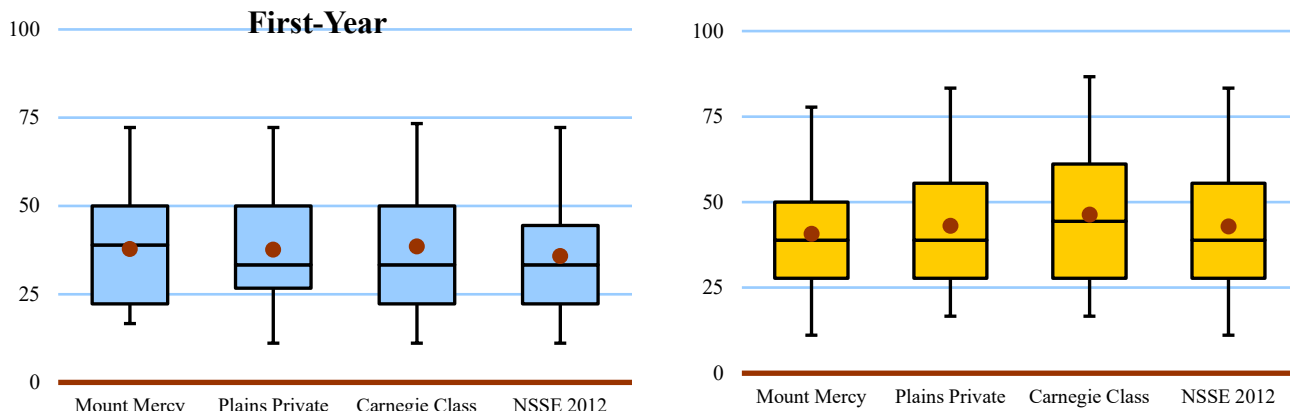
^a Weighted by gender and enrollment status (and by institution size for comparison groups)

^b * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed)

^c Mean difference divided by the pooled standard deviation

Distributions of Student Benchmark Scores

Senior



Enriching Educational Experiences

- Mount Mercy FY students (29.3 mean) participated in more enriching educational experiences than their counterparts in the benchmarking groups. However, Mount Mercy SR students (34.2 mean) had significantly fewer experiences than the average mean of the comparison groups (39.9 mean).
- Significantly more of Mount Mercy FY students (83%) participated in co-curricular activities of at least one hour than the comparison groups (57%, 57%, 60%) respectively.
- 78% of Mount Mercy FY students plan to participate in an internship, field experience or practicum and 51% of Mount Mercy SR students had completed an internship, field experience or practicum by their senior year.
- 95% of Mount Mercy FY students either planned to do or had already participated in community service or volunteer work which was significantly higher than their counterparts in the benchmarking groups (80%, 80%, 82%) respectively.
- Significantly less Mount Mercy SR students (10%) reported completing foreign language coursework compared to an average of 33.7% of the seniors in the benchmarking groups.
- 43% of Mount Mercy SR students completed a culminating senior experience and 43% were planning to do so.

- 23% of Mount Mercy FY students report never having had a serious conversation with a student of a different race or ethnicity than their own. This is higher than the benchmarking groups' average of 18%.
- Only 7% of Mount Mercy FY students report never having had a serious conversation with a student who varies from them in terms of religious beliefs, political opinions or personal values. This is much lower than the benchmarking groups' average of 15%.
- 51% of Mount Mercy FY students and 48% of Mount Mercy SR students feel Mount Mercy encourages quite a bit or very much, contact among students from different economic, social or racial backgrounds.

Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE)

Mean Comparisons

Mount Mercy University compared with:

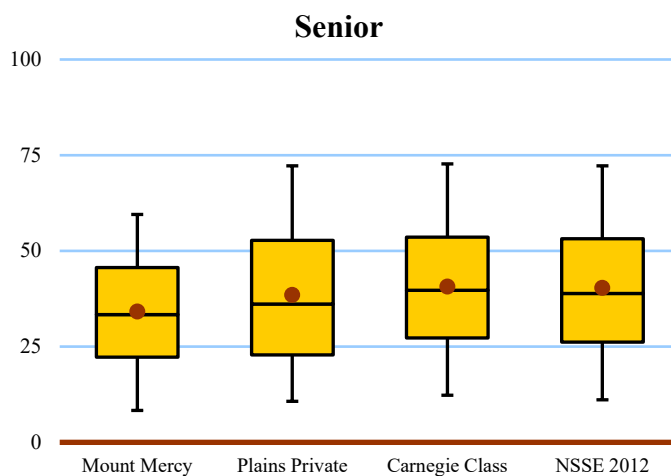
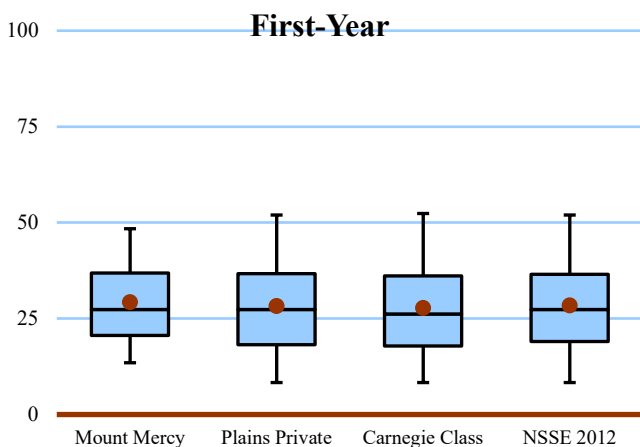
Class	Mount Mercy	Plains Private		Effect Size ^c	Carnegie Class		Effect Size ^c	NSSE 2012		Effect Size ^c
	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b		Mean ^a	Sig ^b		Mean ^a	Sig ^b	
First-Year	29.3	28.3		.07	27.8		.11	28.4		.06
Senior	34.2	38.5	***	-.22	40.7	***	-.35	40.4	***	-.33

^a Weighted by gender and enrollment status (and by institution size for comparison groups)

^b * p<.05 ** p<.01 *** p<.001 (2-tailed)

^c Mean difference divided by the pooled standard deviation

Distributions of Student Benchmark Scores



Supportive Campus Environment

- Mount Mercy students found the campus environment about as supportive as the comparison groups students.
- 87% of Mount Mercy FY students report the campus environment either quite a bit or very much provides the support they need to succeed academically.

- Mount Mercy FY students (43%) indicated the campus environment either quite a bit or very much helped them cope with non-academic responsibilities, which was comparable to the benchmarking groups (45%, 44%, 41%) respectively.
- 58% of Mount Mercy FY students indicated the campus environment either quite a bit or very much provided them with the support needed to thrive socially; this was slightly higher than the comparison groups.
- Mount Mercy FY students (36%) rated the quality of their relationships with administrative and office personnel as helpful, considerate and/or flexible; this was significantly lower than the benchmarking groups (56%, 45%, 38%) respectively.
- 66% of Mount Mercy SR students rated the quality of their relationships with faculty members as available, helpful and/or sympathetic; this was comparable to the benchmarking groups.

Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)

Mean Comparisons

Class	Mount Mercy University compared with:									
	Mount Mercy	Plains Private			Carnegie Class		NSSE 2012			
	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
First-Year	66.1	68.3		-.12	64.9		.06	63.4		.14
Senior	62.2	64.1		-.10	62.6		-.02	60.5		.08

^a Weighted by gender and enrollment status (and by institution size for comparison groups)

^b * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed)

^c Mean difference divided by the pooled standard deviation

Distributions of Student Benchmark Scores

