

Part II: Overall Results by Benchmark with 2008-2011 Comparison

CCSSE groups 38 of the engagement items into five “Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice”: active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction and support for learners. According to CCSSE, these benchmarks “reflect many of the most important aspects of the student experience” and “are some of the most powerful contributors to effective teaching, learning, student retention, and student success.”

CCSSE Benchmark scores are standardized so the weighted mean for each score is 50. The table below lists MCC’s benchmark scores. Active and Collaborative Learning is highest and falls at the mean. All other benchmarks fall below the mean, with student effort ranking lowest.

<i>Benchmark</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>Difference</i>
Active and Collaborative Learning	50.3	50.1	-0.2
Academic Challenge	46.2	47.3	+1.1
Support for Learners	45.3	46.4	+1.1
Student-Faculty Interaction	47.2	46.2	-1.0
Student Effort	44.8	44.8	0.0

Benchmark Mean = 50

The tables below present CCSSE-calculated weighted mean scores from 2008 and 2011 for each item comprising the five CCSSE benchmarks. Statistical significance between administrations is noted; however, this calculation of significance was determined by ORP and is based on unweighted raw survey data. A difference is statistically significant with a p value of ≤ 0.05 at the 95% confidence interval.

Active and Collaborative Learning

The active and collaborative learning benchmark consists of seven items about the frequency of students’ participation in academic activities. Students responded that they most frequently asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions (2.90), and they least frequently participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course (1.29). In 2011, Students were more likely to engage in discussion of course materials with people outside of the classroom.

<i>Item</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>Difference</i>	<i>Scale</i>
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	2.86	2.90	+0.04	Very often (4), Often (3), Sometimes (2), Never (1)
Made a class presentation	2.02	2.02	0.00	
Worked with other students on projects during class	2.59	2.64	+0.05	
Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	1.89	1.80	-0.09	
Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	1.38	1.41	+0.03	
Participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course	1.28	1.29	+0.01	
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, coworkers, etc.)	2.53	2.65*	+0.12	

*Statistically Significant Difference ($p \leq 0.05$)

Student-Faculty Interaction

The student-faculty interaction benchmark consists of eight items about the frequency of contact and communication between students and faculty. Of individual benchmark items, students reported most frequently using email to communicate with an instructor (2.65) and least frequently working with instructors on activities other than coursework (1.35). Students are both communicating via email and discussing grades/assignments with instructors more in 2011.

<i>Item</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>Difference</i>	<i>Scale</i>
Used email to communicate with an instructor	2.57	2.65*	+0.08	Very often (4), Often (3), Sometimes (2), Never (1)
Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	2.42	2.48*	+0.06	
Talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor	1.88	1.88	0.00	
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class	1.62	1.66	+0.04	
Received prompt feedback (written or oral) from instructors on your performance	2.62	2.64	+0.02	
Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework	1.35	1.37	+0.02	

*Statistically Significant Difference ($p \leq 0.05$)

Academic Challenge

The academic challenge benchmark consists of ten items “addressing the natures and amount of assigned academic work, the complexity of cognitive tasks presented to students and the standards faculty members use to evaluate student performance.” Overall, students reported that exams at the college were slightly more challenging than they were easy (4.86). MCC students now perceive being more engaged in several areas of challenging academic work than in 2008, by a statistically significant margin. For example, students indicate coursework now has a greater emphasis in skills of memorizing, analyzing, synthesizing, and making judgments. In fact, students reported being more likely to work harder than they thought they could to meet instructor expectations in 2011.

<i>Item</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>Difference</i>	<i>Scale</i>
Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor’s standards or expectations	2.42	2.49*	+0.07	Very often (4), Often (3), Sometimes (2), Never (1)
Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory	2.85	2.95*	+0.10	Very much (4), Quite a bit (3), Some (2), Very little (1)
Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways	2.72	2.77*	+0.05	
Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods	2.54	2.61*	+0.07	
Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	2.70	2.68	-0.02	
Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill	2.76	2.78	+0.02	
Number of assigned textbooks, manuals, books, or book-length packs of course readings	2.60	2.71	+0.11	None (1), 1-4 (2), 5-10 (3), 11-20 (4), More than 20 (5)
Number of written papers or reports of any length	2.42	2.61*	+0.19	Extremely challenging (7) – Extremely easy (1)
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.	4.79	4.86	+0.07	
Encouraging you to spend significant amounts of time studying	2.82	2.90*	+0.08	Very much (4), Quite a bit (3), Some (2), Very little (1)

*Statistically Significant Difference ($p \leq 0.05$)

Support for Learners

The support for learners benchmark consists of seven items designed to measure students' perceptions of how much the college emphasizes "services targeted to assist them with academic and career planning, academic skill development and other issues that may affect both learning and retention." Students responded that the college most frequently emphasizes providing the support they need to help them succeed at the college (2.91) and least frequently emphasizes helping students cope with their non-academic responsibilities (1.87). Overall, students perceived a significant increase in the college's emphasis on each key student support metric in this benchmark. The frequency of visits to academic advising/planning and career counseling remained flat from 2008.

<i>Item</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>Difference</i>	<i>Scale</i>
Providing the support you need to help you succeed at this college	2.85	2.91*	+0.06	Very much (4), Quite a bit (3), Some (2), Very little (1)
Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	2.41	2.55*	+0.14	
Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	1.80	1.87*	+0.07	
Providing the support you need to thrive socially	1.97	2.10*	+0.13	
Providing the financial support you need to afford your education	2.12	2.40*	+0.28	
Frequency: Academic advising/planning	1.70	1.67	-0.03	Don't know (0), Rarely/Never (1), Sometimes (2), Often (3)
Frequency: Career counseling	1.32	1.32	0.0	

*Statistically Significant Difference ($p \leq 0.05$)

Student Effort

The student effort benchmark consists of eight items measuring student behavior. Students reported an increased level of effort in several areas compared to 2008. They more frequently prepare multiple paper drafts and integrate ideas from various sources, read more books outside of class, spend more time preparing for class, and more frequently receive tutoring.

<i>Item</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>Difference</i>	<i>Scale</i>
Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	2.26	2.32*	+0.06	Very often (4), Often (3), Sometimes (2), Never (1)
Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	2.62	2.68*	+0.06	
Came to class without completing readings or assignments	1.93	1.91	-0.02	
Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment	2.04	2.11*	+0.07	None (1), 1-4 (2), 5-10 (3), 11-20 (4), More than 20 (5)
Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, or other activities related to your program)	1.82	1.92*	+0.10	None (0), 1-5 (1), 6-10 (3), 11-20 (4), 21-30 (4), More than 30 (5)
Frequency: Peer or other tutoring	1.41	1.52*	+0.11	Don't know (0), Rarely/Never (1), Sometimes (2), Often (3)
Frequency: Skill labs (writing, math, etc.)	1.67	1.67	0.0	
Frequency: Computer lab	1.89	1.84	-0.05	

*Statistically Significant Difference ($p \leq 0.05$)