



The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)

Overview of 2014 Survey Results

El Camino College

Introduction

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) provides information about effective educational practice in community colleges and assists institutions in using that information to promote improvements in student learning and persistence. CCSSE's goal is to provide member colleges with results that can be used to inform decision making and target institutional improvements. **Student engagement**, or the amount of time and energy students invest in meaningful educational practices, is the underlying foundation for CCSSE's work. CCSSE's survey instrument, the Community College Student Report (CCSR), is designed to capture student engagement as a measure of institutional quality.

CCSSE Member Colleges

CCSSE data analyses include a three-year cohort of participating colleges. This approach increases the total number of institutions and students contributing to the national dataset; this in turn increases the reliability of the overall results. In addition, the three-year cohort approach minimizes the impact, in any given year, of statewide consortia participation.

The 2014 CCSSE Cohort includes all colleges that participated in CCSSE from 2012 through 2014. If a college participated more than one time in the three-year period, the cohort includes data only from its most recent year of participation. The 2014 CCSSE Cohort represents over 438,000 community college students from 684 community and technical colleges in 48 states and the District of Columbia, three Canadian provinces, plus Bermuda, Micronesia, and the Marshall Islands.

El Camino College (ECC) falls in the Extra Large College size category and is classified as being located in a Suburban-serving area. El Camino College is also a member of the Hispanic Student Success Consortium composed of 67 other 2-year Hispanic-Serving Institutions.

CCSSE Sampling

In CCSSE sampling procedures, students are sampled at the classroom level. The survey was administered in classes randomly selected from all of the courses offered by the institution during the Spring 2014 academic term, excluding non-credit, dual-enrollment, distance learning, all but the highest level ESL courses, labs, individual instruction, and individual study or self-paced classes.

Of those students sampled at El Camino College, 840 respondents submitted usable surveys. The number of completed surveys produced an overall “percent of target” rate of 56%. The percent of target rate is the ratio of the adjusted number of completed surveys (surveys that were filled out properly and did not fall into any of the exclusionary categories) to the target sample size.

2014 Student Respondent Profile

Please note that percentages may not add up to 100% in each category due to missing data and/or rounding.

Enrollment Status

Thirty-four percent of respondents at El Camino College report being less than full-time college students, compared to 28% of the 2014 CCSSE Cohort colleges’ total student respondents. Sixty-six percent of the student respondents report attending ECC full-time, while 72% of the 2014 CCSSE Cohort colleges’ student respondents attended full-time.

Population data¹ for all students at our college is 70% less than full-time and 30% full-time. This inverse representation is a result of the sampling technique and the in-class administration process. For this reason, survey results are either weighted or disaggregated on the full-time/less than full-time variable so that reports will accurately reflect the underlying student population.

Age

Student respondents at ECC range in age from 18 to 65+ years old. Seventy-four percent of respondents are between 18 and 24 years old. Students at ECC are younger than the 2014 CCSSE Cohort, of which over half (63%) of students are between 18 and 24.

Gender

Forty-five percent of student respondents are male and 53% are female, which is comparable to the 2014 CCSSE Cohort, which is 43% male and 55% female.

Racial Identification

Sixteen percent of student respondents identified themselves as White, Non-Hispanic; 38% as Hispanic, Latino, Spanish; 11% as Black or African American; and 15% as Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander. None of the student respondents are American Indian or Native American. 6% marked *other* when responding to the question, “What is your racial identification?” Our student sample is more diverse than the 2014 CCSSE Cohort, which is comprised of 56% White/Non-Hispanic; 14% Hispanic, Latino, Spanish; 11% Black or African American; 5% Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander; and 2% American Indian or Native American respondents.

International Students

Eleven percent of our students responded yes to the question, “Are you an international student or foreign national?”

Our college has more international students than the 2014 CCSSE Cohort, of which 6% are international

¹ Population data are those reported for the most recent IPEDS enrollment report.

The results for the following student respondent categories are weighted according to the most recent IPEDS population data.

Languages Other Than English

There are 36% of CCSSE respondents are bilingual or non-native English speakers.

First-Generation Status

Thirty-five percent of student respondents indicated that neither parent has earned a degree higher than a high school diploma nor has college experience; accordingly, these students are considered "first-generation."

Nineteen percent indicate that their mothers' highest level of education is a high school diploma (with no college experience), and 17% indicate that level for their fathers.

College-Sponsored Activities

Eighty-one percent of students respondents do not participate in any college-sponsored activities (including organizations, campus publications, student government, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.) while 13% typically spend only 1 to 5 hours per week participating in these activities.

Educational Attainment

Sixty-nine percent of respondents report starting their college careers at El Camino College. Approximately 75% of students indicate that their highest level of educational attainment is a high school diploma or GED; 63% have completed fewer than 30 credit hours of college-level work; 15% report having either a certificate or an associate degree; 6% have earned a bachelor's degree; and 1% have earned an advanced degree.

Total Credit Hours Earned

Forty-three percent of surveyed students have completed fewer than 15 credit hours; 19% have completed 15-29 credit hours; and 38% have completed more than 30 credit hours.

External Commitments

Thirty-five percent of respondents work 21 or more hours per week; 30% care for dependents at least six hours per week; and 23% spend at least six hours per week commuting to class.

Goals

Students were asked to indicate their reasons or goals for attending this college; students could choose more than one primary and secondary goal. 69% indicated that transferring to a 4-year college or university is a primary goal, while 19% indicated this as a secondary goal. 51% indicated that obtaining an associate degree is a primary goal, while 31% indicated this as a secondary goal. Additionally, 38% indicated obtaining or updating job-related skills is a primary goal, while 42% indicated that self-improvement/personal enjoyment is a primary goal.

Excluded Respondents

Exclusions serve the purpose of ensuring that all institutional reports are based on the same sampling methods and that results are therefore comparable across institutions. Respondents are excluded from institutional reports for the following reasons:

- ✘ The respondent did not indicate whether he or she was enrolled full-time or less than full-time at the institution.

- ✘ The survey is invalid. A survey is invalid if a student does not answer any of the 21 sub-items in item 4, answers *very often* to all 21 sub-items, or answers *never* to all 21 sub-items.
- ✘ The student reported his or her age as under 18.
- ✘ The student indicated that he or she had taken the survey in a previous class or did not respond to item 3.
- ✘ Oversample respondents are not included because they are selected outside of CCSSE's primary sampling procedures.

Selected Findings

Many crucial questions that community colleges need answered—What are our students' goals? What issues keep our students from persisting? How effectively are we engaging students in the classroom? How satisfied are our students with the support services we offer?—can be answered by investigating the percentage of student responses to specific CCSSE survey items. This section on Selected Findings from El Camino College data mirrors that found in the Overview of National 2008 CCSSE Cohort Survey Results.

The section is organized in terms of seven key topics: Educational Goals, Time on Task, Relationships, Academic Experience, Barriers to Persistence, Student and Academic Support Services, and Student Satisfaction.

Educational Goals

Community colleges have multiple missions and goals, as do their students. Students responding to the survey were given the opportunity to mark Primary Goal, Secondary Goal, or Not a Goal in response to a list of possible goals for attending El Camino College (item #17). As a result, many students mark more than one primary goal; therefore, the percentages in the table below do not sum to 100%.

As seen in Table 1, students identify various educational goals. Sixty-nine percent are interested in transferring to a 4-year college or university. Fifty-one percent of the student respondents identify obtaining an associate degree as a primary goal, while 38% are primarily interested in obtaining or updating job-related skills. Nineteen percent of respondents seek to change careers, and 32% aspire to complete a certification program.

Table 1: Educational Goals

	Primary Goal	Secondary Goal	Not a Goal
Complete a certification program	32%	23%	46%
Obtain an associate degree	51%	31%	19%
Transfer to a 4-year college or university	69%	19%	13%
Obtain or update job-related skills	38%	31%	31%
Self-improvement/personal enjoyment	42%	37%	20%
Change careers	19%	19%	63%

Time on Task

Students' behaviors and obligations contribute significantly to their learning and the likelihood that they will attain their educational goals. "Time on task" is a key variable, and there are a variety of settings and means through which students may apply themselves to the learning process. Table 2, featuring item #10, highlights that only 17% of full-time students spend at least 21 hours per week preparing for class while 34% spend 5 hours or fewer preparing for class. Work and family obligations can often interfere with spending sufficient time studying classes. Forty percent of part-time and 23% of full-time students spend more than 20 hours per week working for pay. A third of part-time students and 29% of full-time students spend at least 6 hours per week caring for dependents. Twenty-three percent of ECC students indicated that they have children who live with them (item #28).

Table 2: Time on Task

	Part-time			Full-time		
	5 or fewer	6-20 hours	21 hours or more	5 or fewer	6-20 hours	21 hours or more
Preparing for class	45%	47%	9%	34%	49%	17%
Participating in college-sponsored activities	95%	4%	0%	90%	7%	3%
Working for pay	40%	20%	40%	51%	26%	23%
Providing care for dependents	70%	14%	16%	72%	15%	14%
Commuting to and from class	79%	16%	4%	73%	25%	2%

Relationships

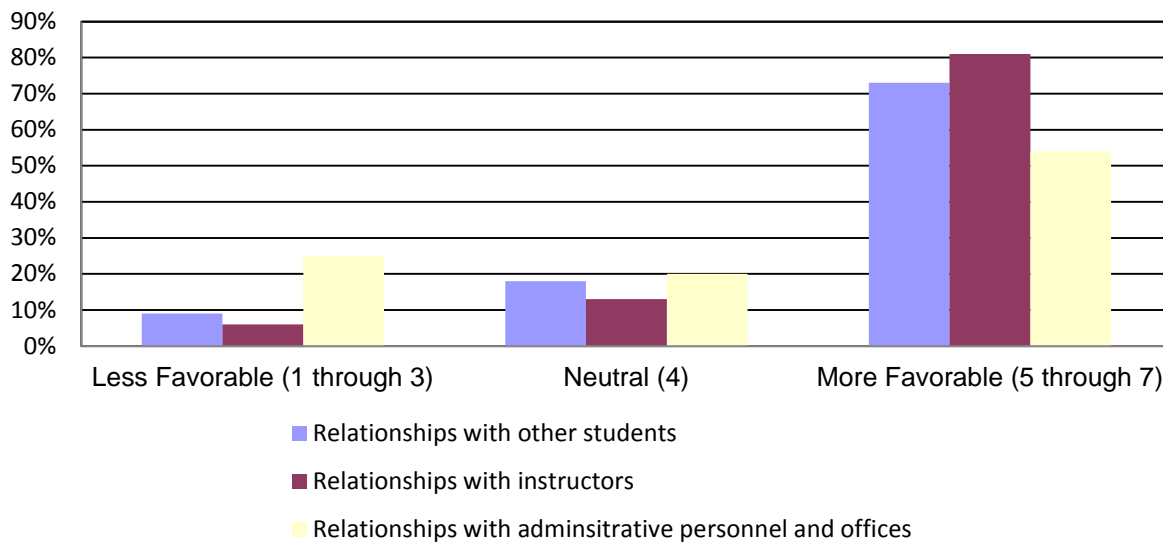
Many educators believe in the power of their individual connections to students – a belief that is supported by higher education research as well. In point of fact, the level of student-faculty interaction is one of the most powerful predictors of student persistence in college. And, in numerous focus groups conducted with community college students, it was found that when asked to cite the factor that was most important in helping them stay in school and succeed there, students inevitably talk about relationships.

Various items on the survey can address the level and extent of students' relational experience while attending the college. Item #4q on the survey asks students to indicate how often they worked with instructors on activities other than coursework. Nearly three-fourths (70%) indicated they "Never" engaged in such activities. When asked how much ECC encouraged contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds (#9c), 59% stated that this occurred "Quite a bit/Very much." Over a third (36%) indicated that ECC provided "Quite a bit/Very much" of the support needed to thrive socially (#9e). Finally, 74% of their friends are "Quite a bit/Extremely" supportive of their attending the college while 80% of their families were supportive of this decision (items #15 and #16).

Figure 1 highlights results from item #11 on the survey, which ask specifically about students' relationships with other students, instructors, and administrative personnel and offices at the college. Overall, students gave high ratings to their relationships. Regarding relationships with other students, respondents judged the quality of their relationships quite favorably with a rating of 5 or higher given by 73%. An even higher percentage (81%) gave favorable ratings to the quality of their relationships with

instructors, while relationships with administrative personnel and offices were given a lower favorable rating (54%).

Figure 1: Relationships



Finally, a locally-selected item asked students whether they had “a faculty or staff member to whom I could go to with any questions or concerns as a student at this college.” Sixty percent of students selected either Agree or Strongly Agree, with 57% of full-time students selecting one of these options.

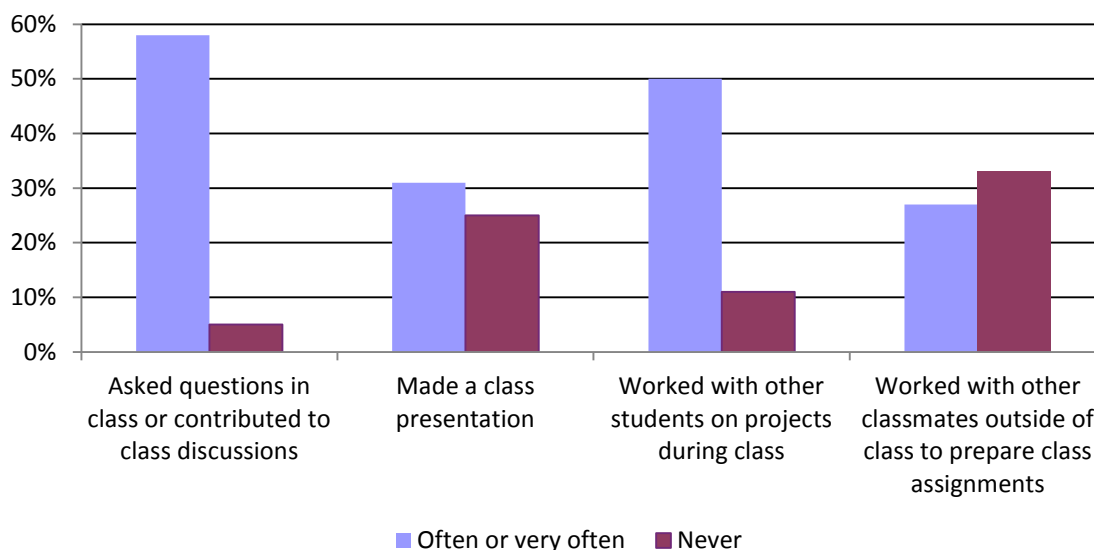
Academic Experience

A positive academic experience is a product of many ingredients, one of which is the amount of time and energy students invest in their academic work. *CCSSE* asks students to respond to several survey items in order to gauge how actively they are involved in their education. Students are given the opportunity to mark *very often*, *often*, *sometimes*, or *never* in response to items such as the following:

- “Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions”
- “Made a class presentation”
- “Worked with other students on projects during class”
- “Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare assignments”

While some students are highly involved in their academic experience (those who marked Often or Very Often), others are less engaged, as illustrated by their responses of Never, as displayed in the figure below.

Figure 2: Academic Experience



Study Skills and Orientation Courses

Over 43% of students have taken or will enroll in a study skills course, and nearly half (47%) have taken or will enroll in an orientation program or course. This level of participation in programs or courses that directly aid student academic success and persistence is considerably higher than the CCSSE cohort as a whole.

Curricular Experience

El Camino College offers a variety of curricular ways that students can become more engaged in their learning process, such as through honors courses, internships, field experiences, clinical assignments, and learning communities (linked courses/study groups led by faculty or counselors). As shown in Table 3, 60% have participated or plan to participate in some form of internship or field experience (11% have done so). Forty-two percent plan to or have participated in an honors course. Finally, 41% have participated or plan to participate in an organized learning community—item #8h. The latter two categories are well above the average of the CCSSE cohort.

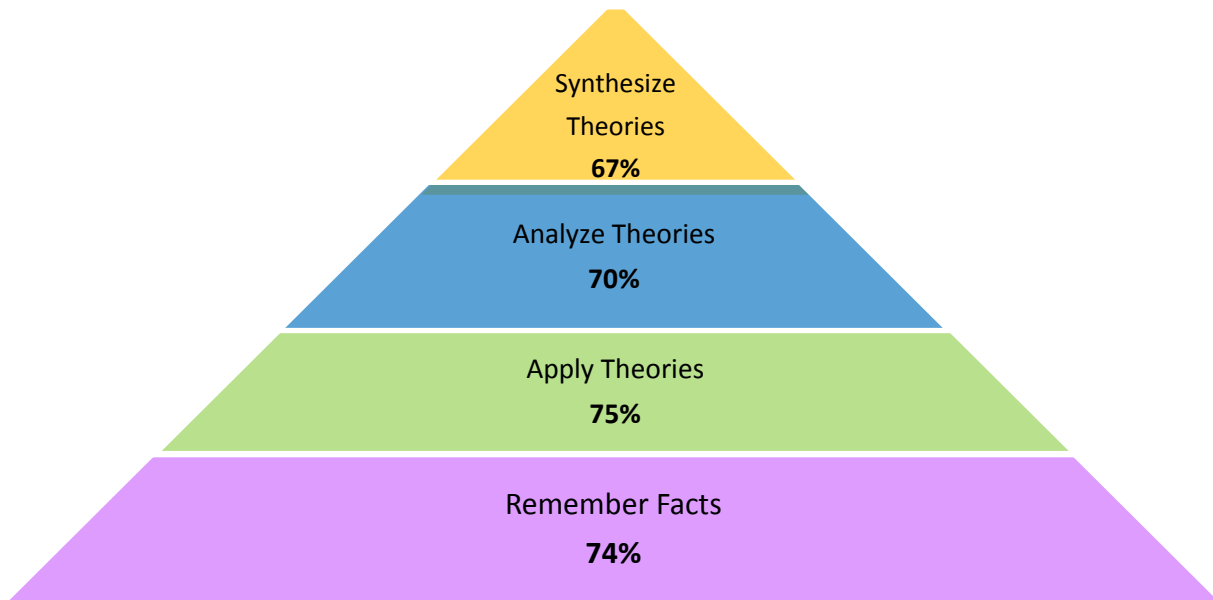
Table 3: Curricular Experiences

	Have Done or Plan to Do
Internship, field experience, or clinical assignment	60%
Honors course	42%
Organized learning communities	41%

Student Learning

Student respondents indicate how much their coursework emphasizes intellectual processes such as memorization, the application of theories and concepts to practical problems, analysis, synthesis and organization, making value judgments, and using learned information to perform new skills. Figure 3 illustrates students' perceptions of the extent to which El Camino College promotes these cognitive activities (item #5). Over 70% of students perceived that ECC course work encouraged higher-order cognitive activities such as analyzing and synthesizing ideas “quite a bit” or “very much.”

Figure 3: Student Learning



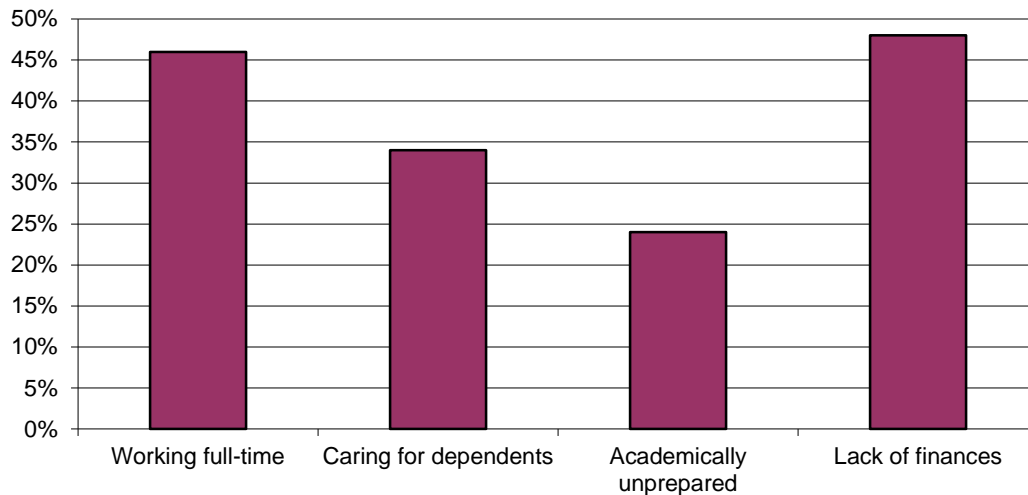
Barriers to Persistence

CCSSE also asks students to indicate the issues that would require them to withdraw from college (item #14). That is, what keeps students from achieving their educational goals? The percentage of students who report that the various factors would result in their withdrawing from class or from college is highlighted in Figure 5. Again, students could mark more than one factor; therefore, percentages will not sum to 100%. About 46% of students felt that working full-time and 48% indicate that lack of finances would likely or very likely cause them to withdraw from El Camino College.

Other barriers to persistence include lack of peer or familial support (items #15 and #16). Twenty-six percent of students report that their friends are somewhat or not very supportive of “your attending this college” while 20% respond similarly about support from their immediate families.

Similar results were found in a parallel local item selected by the college. This local item also found that “time management or study skills” was considered the biggest obstacle to academic success by 36% of ECC students.

**Figure 5: Barriers to Persistence
(Likely or Very Likely Cause)**



Student and Academic Support Services

Often surveys ask a combination of questions relating to satisfaction, use, or importance levels of services, but rarely are surveys designed in a way that asks students to link all three, as does CCSSE. Table 4 displays use, satisfaction, and importance of a number of key academic and student support services (item #13). The first column reports the percentage of students who say that they used the service either sometimes or often; the second column shows the percentage of students who report they are Somewhat or Very Satisfied with the service; and the third column reports the percentage of students who rate the service as Somewhat or Very Important.

Many El Camino College students do not use the variety of student services available to them. Just over 50% of students indicated that they use computer labs and academic advising Sometimes or Often, the top two in usage. Eleven percent or fewer were periodic or frequent users of job placement assistance, child care, and services to students with disabilities (6% of ECC students have a registered disability).

Students were most satisfied with skills labs (writing, math, etc), computer labs, and academic counseling/advising. Academic and career counseling and computer labs also rated as the highest in importance. Students were least satisfied with child care, job placement services and student organizations, although these services represent categories of low usage.

Table 4: Student Services by Use, Satisfaction, and Importance

	Use (Often/Sometimes)	Satisfaction* (Very/Somewhat)	Importance (Very/Somewhat)
Academic advising/planning	56%	90%	93%
Career counseling	40%	87%	89%
Job placement assistance	11%	82%	69%
Peer and other tutoring	31%	92%	79%
Skills labs (writing, math, etc.)	42%	92%	79%
Child care	4%	70%	42%
Financial aid advising	45%	84%	82%
Computer lab	59%	91%	85%
Student organizations	23%	89%	63%
Transfer credit assistance	28%	83%	79%
Services to student with disabilities	11%	80%	60%

* Percent of periodic or frequent users who are somewhat or very satisfied.

Note: Percentages in **bold** are the three highest ratings in each column; *italicized* percentages are the three lowest in each area.

Student Satisfaction

A useful measure of satisfaction is whether a student recommends a service or institution to others. Students were asked if they would recommend El Camino College to a friend or family member (item #26). Ninety-five percent report they would make such a recommendation, slightly higher than the national CCSSE average. Another item asks students to evaluate their entire educational experience (item #27). Eighty-two percent describe their experience as Good or Excellent, and 1% rated their experience as Poor.

Another measure of student satisfaction is the percent of returning or successful students. Sixty-seven percent of the students indicate that they plan to enroll at El Camino College within the next 12 months, while 13% report that they have accomplished their goals and will not be returning. On the other hand, 18% report they are uncertain or have no plans to return.

Participation in Engagement Activities

The first 21 engagement items asked students to indicate how often they have engaged in particular activities during the current academic year. For purposes of analysis, CCSSE collapsed the response categories Often and Very Often to report substantial levels of engagement; the criterion for inclusion was that half of all students had to report participating in the activity. This information is highlighted in Table 5. Over 70% of all respondents indicated that they use the internet or instant messaging to work on assignments. Half of students worked with other students on a project during class and discussed ideas from reading or classes outside of class. Across the board, part-time students are less likely than full-time to indicate substantial levels of engagement.

Table 5: Percentage of Students Who Reported Participating Often or Very Often in Selected Engagement Activities by Enrollment Status

Most Frequent Student Activity Items	All	Part-time	Full-time
Used the internet or instant messaging to work on an assignment	73%	71%	76%
Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various resources	69%	69%	70%
Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity other than your own	55%	52%	62%
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	58%	57%	61%
Worked with other students on a project during class	50%	50%	51%
Received prompt feedback (written or oral) from instructors on your performance	59%	59%	60%
Prepared one or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	59%	59%	57%
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class	51%	50%	53%

In comparison, it is also important to note what students are not doing in college as frequently as one might expect. Table 6 consists of items where 30% or more of all students report never engaging in that particular activity. Seventy-two percent of students have never participated in a community-based project as part of a course. Another 70% of students have never tutored other students or worked with instructors on activities other than coursework. Part-time students are more likely than are their full-time peers to report never when responding to student activity items.

Table 6: Percentage of Students Who Reported Never Participating in Selected Engagement Activities by Enrollment Status

Most Frequent Student Activity Items	All	Part-time	Full-time
Participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course	72%	73%	70%
Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	69%	72%	64%
Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework	70%	71%	66%
Discussed ideas from your readings or class with instructors outside of class	45%	46%	42%
Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	33%	36%	26%
Made a class presentation	25%	29%	17%
Talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor	30%	31%	28%

El Camino College Local Questions

Course Offerings

Repeating a question asked in the 2008 CCSSE survey, El Camino College asked students about their desire for more online (internet-delivered) courses. Twenty-eight percent indicated that they would like to see more online courses and 17% would like to see more online and hybrid courses. Forty-three percent of students indicated that they did not need to see a change in online offerings.

Sixty-four percent of students are taking courses outlined by their educational while 19% indicated that they did not have an educational plan. When asked if the courses offered at ECC are offered in a way that they can take them in the recommended sequence and still complete a degree in a timely manner, 72% of students Strongly Agreed or Agreed while 25% of students Disagreed with this statement.

Student Support

Forty-two percent of students indicated that their best source of academic counseling has been an academic counselor or advisor. Another 22% said that friends, family and other students were their best source of academic counseling. Of the students who are having difficulty making progress with their studies, 36% indicated that time management or study skills were most responsible for this difficulty. Twenty-eight percent of students said that external pressures (family, health, or work obligations) were the reason for their academic difficulty.

If full-time students who receive the Board of Governors Fee Waiver (BOGFW) were no longer able to receive the award, 37% would still enroll in 12 units while 29% would enroll in less than 12 units. Thirty-four percent would not enroll if they no longer received BOGFW.

Student Activities

Sixty-eight percent of students strongly agreed or agreed that ECC provides ample opportunities to participate in student life activities (clubs, guest speakers, dance, performances, films, etc) and 63% indicated that there were ample opportunities for college-sponsored activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, intercollegiate or intramural sports). Twenty-three percent did not know what student life activities are offered while 25% were unaware of the college sponsored activities that are offered at El Camino College.

Textbooks

Over half of respondents (54%) purchased all of their required textbooks and course materials. Sixteen percent purchased half or more of their required textbooks while 22% purchased some or no textbooks at all.

Conclusion

Overall, respondents indicated that they participate in engagement activities, are highly involved in their academic experience and satisfied with El Camino College. The results for the 2014 CCSSE are consistent with the findings from the 2008 CCSSE.

Along with the student survey, El Camino College participated in the Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE). A summary of the ECC faculty responses along with comparisons of student and faculty perceptions is available in a separate report.