

2006 College Student Survey results Summary Report

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GVSU has participated intermittently in the College Student Survey (CSS), the senior-year follow-up to the CIRP survey that we administer to incoming freshmen during summer orientation. Our most recent CSS participation was in spring of 2006. This report summarizes selected findings of interest. Complete tabulations of results are attached.

In March of 2006, we invited 2,000 seniors to participate in the online survey. Of those, 383 submitted responses, for a responses rate of 19%. The invited seniors were selected from the pool of students who took the CIRP in 2000-2002, so for those who elected to identify themselves on the CSS survey, we can compare their responses as seniors to the responses they provided when they were entering freshmen. In the summary that follows, I present information about both the absolute levels of responses to the CSS and to the aggregate change between the CIRP and the CSS.

By default, the comparison group is all “public 4-year colleges” that participated in the 2006 CSS. In this case, “4-year college” means institutions that grant bachelors and/or masters degrees, but not doctoral degrees. The pool of CSS “peers” is small and not particularly well suited to GVSU:

- California State University – Channel Islands
- Kutztown University of Pennsylvania
- Montclair State University
- North Georgia College and State University
- Salem State College
- Southwest Missouri State University
- Towson University
- University of Wisconsin – River Falls

The topics covered by the CSS (and CIRP) include a broad range of opinions and behaviors, but the following themes arise from my interpretation of the data. I have paraphrased responses somewhat, but page numbers are included to help those who are interested in finding the exact item phrasing and responses in the accompanying reports.

Overall satisfaction:

GVSU students indicate greater satisfaction than the comparison group

	GVSU	Public 4-yr	Page
Definitely would choose this college again	50.8%	40.0%	A-1
Definitely or probably would <i>not</i> choose this college again	9.7%	15.3%	A-1
Satisfied with overall quality of instruction	89.0%	84.6%	A-8
Satisfied with overall college experience	88.2%	82.3%	A-8
Rate the climate of the college as “improving”	77.3%	66.8%	A-11

Academic habits

GVSU students report greater prevalence of some troubling academic habits (but also provided some indications of good behavior).

	GVSU	Public 4-yr	Page
Failed to complete homework on time	63.5%	57.6%	A-2
Came late to class	72.3%	67.5%	A-2
Studied with other students	96.3%	91.1%	A-2
Frequently used the library for research or homework	41.1%	44.9%	A-2
Overslept and missed class	61.3%	54.5%	A-3
Fell asleep in class	46.4%	35.6%	A-3
Contested a grade	44.9%	33.4%	A-3
Studied at least 6 hours per week	63.0%	56.9%	A-4
Never read for pleasure	35.7%	30.5%	A-6
Frequently felt overwhelmed by all I had to do	49.3%	43.7%	A-8
	GVSU Change	Public 4-yr Change	Page
Frequently felt overwhelmed by all I had to do	+32.1%	+19.3%	B-1
Never read for pleasure	+17.1%	+10.2%	B-3

Academic opportunities

GVSU students generally reported more exposure to (or satisfaction with) active learning environments and special learning opportunities than students in the comparison group.

	GVSU	Public 4-yr	Page
Participated in leadership training	24.0%	17.7%	A-2
Participated in study-abroad	13.3%	9.1%	A-2
Worked on an independent study project	47.5%	61.7%	A-2
Studied with other students	96.3%	91.1%	A-2
Frequently observed professors actively engaging students during class	55.6%	46.3%	A-3
Satisfied with laboratory facilities and equipment	74.8%	63.3%	A-3
Satisfied with tutoring or other academic assistance	65.5%	52.2%	A-3
Satisfied with opportunities for community service	59.1%	50.4%	A-3
Satisfied with ability to find a faculty or staff mentor	67.5%	63.9%	A-3
Satisfied with leadership opportunities	62.3%	57.5%	A-3
	GVSU Change	Public 4-yr Change	Page
Performed community service as part of a class	-15.0%	-4.7%	B-1

Alcohol

GVSU students report more use of wine and liquor, and growth in use of beer, wine, and alcohol was also high at GVSU.

	GVSU	Public 4-yr	Page
Drank wine or liquor	83.4%	77.5%	A-8
	GVSU Change	Public 4-yr Change	Page
Drank beer	+40.8%	+28.3%	B-1
Drank wine or liquor	+56.2%	+37.5%	B-1

Diversity

GVSU students generally indicate commitment to interethnic understanding, but also raise some concerns about their perception of GVSU’s openness to various kinds of diversity. As a contextual note: in the same week that students received their CSS surveys, President Murray convened “special meetings” of students and employees to discuss racial incidents that had recently occurred on campus.

	GVSU	Public 4-yr	Page
Took an ethnic studies course in college	43.9%	34.4%	A-2
Attended a racial/cultural awareness workshop	40.2%	22.3%	A-2
Had a roommate of a different race/ethnicity	37.3%	29.9%	A-2
Participated in an ethnic/racial student organization	17.2%	11.7%	A-2
Socialized frequently with someone of a different ethnic group in last year	34.8%	39.3%	A-8
Satisfied with institution’s respect for the expression of diverse beliefs	69.7%	74.9%	A-8
Helping to promote racial understanding is an important personal objective	42.1%	39.1%	A-10
Give college the highest rating for acceptance of diversity	20.0%	30.1%	A-11
Give college the highest rating for nonsexist climate	21.4%	25.1%	A-11
Rate the climate of the college as homophobic	34.3%	17.8%	A-11
Agree that colleges should prohibit racist/sexist speech on campus	62.2%	59.2%	A-13
	GVSU Change	Public 4-yr Change	Page
Socialized frequently with someone of a different ethnic group in last year	-21.2%	-26.7	B-1
Helping to promote racial understanding is an important personal objective	+23.4%	+15.1%	B-4

Leadership

GVSU students expressed a stronger interest in leadership than students in the comparison group.

	GVSU	Public 4-yr	Page
Participated in leadership training	24.0%	17.7%	A-2
Becoming a community leader is an important personal objective	42.2%	37.6%	A-10
	GVSU Change	Public 4-yr Change	Page
Becoming a community leader is an important personal objective	+16.8%	+12.3%	B-4

Learning and Development

GVSU students reported similar gains to the comparison group in most academic skills covered by the questionnaire. They reported particular gains in discipline-specific knowledge and understanding of societal problems. GVSU students self-assessments on various personal qualities tended to decrease more or increase less than other students'. I don't think this means much, since students rate themselves relative to an "average person", and their perception of "average" is likely to change as much as their own abilities.

	GVSU	Public 4-yr	Page
Knowledge of a particular discipline is much stronger than when entering college	69.8%	62.4%	A-9
Understanding of problems facing my community is much stronger than when entering college	25.5%	22.4%	A-9
Understanding of social problems facing our nation is much stronger than when entering college	32.5%	28.9%	A-9
Rate self above average or top 10% in...	GVSU Change	Public 4-yr Change	Page
Academic ability	-3.9%	+3.2%	B-1
Computer skills	-0.3%	+3.1%	B-1
Drive to achieve	-0.6%	+5.3%	B-1
Emotional health	-5.2%	-1.7%	B-1
Leadership ability	+0.9%	+4.1%	B-1
Self understanding	+17.4%	+13.5%	B-1
Spirituality	-5.5%	-2.3%	B-1
Writing ability	+4.5%	+7.5%	B-1

Satisfaction with facilities

GVSU students are generally more satisfied with campus facilities than students at the comparison institutions. The exception to this rule is the library.

Satisfied with...	GVSU	Public 4-yr	Page
Lab facilities and equipment	74.8%	63.3%	A-3
Library Facilities	57.1%	71.3%	A-3
Computer facilities	81.3%	71.6%	A-3
Student housing	68.4%	48.0%	A-3
Recreational facilities	88.9%	60.9%	A-3

Satisfaction with services

GVSU students rated services highly, except for the availability of classes.

	GVSU	Public 4-yr	Page
Had trouble getting needed courses	76.9%	70.9%	A-3
Satisfied with computer training and help	57.5%	53.5%	A-3
Satisfied with tutoring or other academic assistance	65.5%	52.2%	A-3
Satisfied with academic advising	57.3%	52.4%	A-3
Satisfied with career counseling and advising	68.4%	48.0%	A-3
Satisfied with student housing	68.4%	48.0%	A-3
Satisfied with financial aid services	61.0%	54.7%	A-3
Satisfied with opportunities for community service	59.1%	50.4%	A-3

Social Activism

GVSU students give several indications of a greater commitment to social activism than students in the comparison group.

	GVSU	Public 4-yr	Page
Performed volunteer work in last year	72.3%	60.2%	A-8
Participated in organized demonstrations	22.8%	18.8%	A-8
Frequently discuss politics	18.4%	15.3%	A-8
Frequently discuss religion	18.3%	14.8%	A-8
Helping to promote racial understanding is an important personal objective	42.1%	39.1%	A-10
Becoming a community leader is an important personal objective	42.2%	37.6%	A-10
Believe individuals can do little to bring about social change	21.7%	27.5%	A-13
Expect to be doing volunteer work in coming fall	23.8%	14.8%	A-13

Social Activism (cont'd)

	GVSU Change	Public 4-yr Change	Page
Frequently discuss politics	+2.4%	-0.6%	B-1
Participated in organized demonstrations	-20.1%	-26.9%	B-1
Becoming a community leader is an important personal objective	+16.8%	+12.3%	B-4
Helping to promote racial understanding is an important personal objective	+23.4%	+15.1%	B-4
Influencing social values is an important personal objective	+23.7%	+13.2%	B-4
Influencing the political structure is an important personal objective	+11.9%	+6.1%	B-4
Keeping up to date with politics is an important personal objective	+19.9%	+16.5%	B-4
Participating in a community action program is an important personal objective	+17.6%	+11.2%	B-4

Social Life

GVSU students seem to indicate a more active campus social life than students at comparison schools, but also report a high incidence of loneliness or homesickness.

	GVSU	Public 4-yr	Page
Participated in intramural sports	39.5%	31.8%	A-2
Studied with other students	96.3%	91.1%	A-2
Spent 6 or more hours per week socializing with friends	59.2%	50.7%	A-4
Spent any time in a typical week with student organizations	55.8%	43.8%	A-5
Felt lonely or homesick	64.9%	51.8%	A-8
Socialized frequently with someone of a different ethnic group in last year	34.8%	39.3%	A-8
Satisfied with overall sense of community among students	69.3%	65.3%	A-8
Rate campus climate as friendly	86.1%	78.3%	A-10
Rate campus climate as socially inclusive	51.7%	47.6%	A-10

Student-Faculty Interaction

GVSU students generally reported closer interaction with faculty members than students at the comparison institutions.

	GVSU	Public 4-yr	Page
Met with an advisor/counselor about career plans	91.5%	83.7%	A-3
Frequently observed professors actively engaging students during class	55.6%	46.3%	A-3
Satisfied with ability to find a faculty or staff mentor	67.5%	63.9%	A-3
Spent at least one hour per week talking with faculty during office hours	32.2%	29.1%	A-4
Spent any time in a typical week talking with faculty outside of class or office hours	74.0%	69.2%	A-4
Satisfied with size of classes	93.9%	89.6%	A-8
Satisfied with overall quality of instruction	89.0%	84.6%	A-8
Professors frequently provided encouragement to pursue graduate/professional study	33.9%	37.2%	A-12
Professors frequently provided opportunities to work on research projects	16.6%	22.2%	A-12
Professors frequently provided help to improve your study skills	12.1%	15.4%	A-12