



Report of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) 2004 to 2008 Administration Cross Comparison

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) has gained increasing importance as a national cross-institution evaluation tool of student engagement. The number of CCSSE participants rose from 48 colleges in 2002 to 585 colleges in 2008. In Kapi'olani Community College (KCC), the survey has been distributed every other year since 2002 to a random selection of classes chosen by CCSSE. The returned surveys are shipped to CCSSE for processing, after which CCSSE sends back data files and reports to KCC. Survey questions aim to elicit students' **perception** of their engagement in academic life, learning environment and support services. The data presented in this report were based on the CCSSE data and reports. For the most recent five years, the number of KCC CCSSE participants in 2004, 2006 and 2008 was 656, 638, and 450, respectively.

CCSSE benchmarks are groups of conceptually related items that address key areas of student engagement, learning, and persistence. The table below shows the five benchmark areas and their scores across five years from 2004 to 2008. The benchmark scores were calculated based on the average scaled item scores, standardized with a mean of 50 and standard deviation of 25 for a particular CCSSE cohort. The benchmark score does not in itself reflect the students' ratings on the survey items. It is an index of relative position of our institution in comparison with all other institutions that participated in CCSSE.

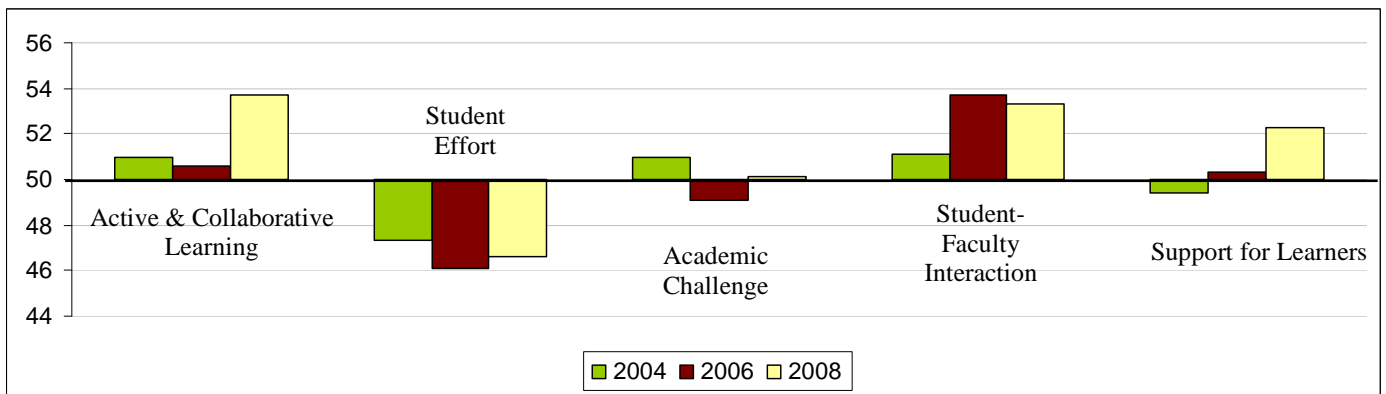


Figure 1. Five CCSSE Benchmark Scores for Kapi'olani Community College 2004, 2006, and 2008.

Figure 1. shows two aspects of Kapi'olani Community College (KCC) CCSSE benchmark scores: comparison with national average, shown as the middle horizontal line across the y-axis, and CCSSE benchmark score changes from 2004 and 2006 to 2008, indicated by different colored bars on the graph.

In regards to the comparison with the national average, we can observe that KCC has outperformed the national average in Active and Collaborative Learning and Student-Faculty Interaction consistently across five years from 2004 to 2008. However, Student Effort is the area that KCC showed a lower score than national average in all three administrations of CCSSE from 2004 to 2008. Scores for Academic Challenge fluctuated around the mean, and Support for Learners rose from being under the mean in 2004 to above the mean in 2006 and 2008.

In terms of score changes from 2004 to 2008, we can see that the benchmark score for Support for Learners continuously improved from 2004 to 2008. The Active and Collaborative Learning score in 2008 improved against the score in 2004 and 2006. In the areas of Student Effort and Academic Challenge, KCC did better in 2008 than in 2006, but not better than in 2004. The scores for Student-Faculty Interaction in 2006 and 2008 were similar, which was an improvement over that of year 2004.

It should be noted again that the comparisons reported above were based on our institution's relative position to other institutions. It doesn't necessarily mean what KCC scored better or worse on absolute terms. Stakeholders and users of the CCSSE results should focus more on the individual items that define a benchmark area as elaborated in the following section of the report.

CCSSE Benchmark Areas Breakdown

Figure 2. below illustrates the frequency of the item scores that changed in 2008 compared with that in 2004 or 2006. The bottom portion shows the number of survey items that significantly improved on the item rating in 2008 compared with that in either 2004 or 2006. The largest portion shows the number of items that did not significantly change, and the top portion in Academic Challenge shows the only item that had a significantly lower item rating in 2008 than that in either 2004 or 2006.

Overall, Support for Learners had the most items proportionally (four out of seven) with an improved item rating in 2008, whereas Student Effort showed fewest items proportionally (one out of seven) that exhibited improvement in 2008 against 2004 or 2006. Items in the other three benchmark areas had two or three improved items ratings each.

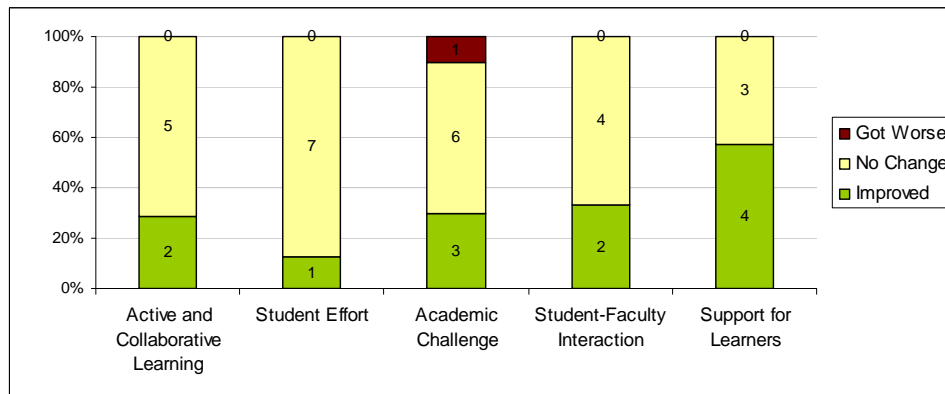


Figure 2. Number of Items that were significantly different from either 2004 or 2006

Improved CCSSE Survey Items

The following table shows in detail which survey items had improved ratings for the 2008 CCSSE cohort compared with those for either the 2004 cohort or the 2006 cohort.

	2004	2006	2008
Active and Collaborative Learning (k¹ = 7)			
4h. Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	1.37	▲ ² 1.39	▲ 1.51
4i. Participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course	1.43	▲ 1.44	▲ 1.58
Student Effort (k = 8)			
4d. Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	2.72	2.69	▲ 2.8
Academic Challenge (k = 10)			
5c. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways	2.63	2.61	▲ 2.72
5e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	2.57	2.50	▲ 2.67
6c. Number of written papers or reports of any length	2.96	▲ 2.90	▲ 3.07
Student-Faculty Interaction (k = 6)			
4k. Used email to communicate with an instructor	2.54	▲ 2.79	▲ 2.98
4q. Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework	1.40	▲ 1.50	1.53
Support for Learners (k = 7)			
9b. Providing the support you need to help you succeed at this college	2.81	▲ 2.82	▲ 2.94
9d. Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc)	1.87	▲ 1.94	▲ 2.11
9e. Providing the support you need to thrive socially	2.07	▲ 2.18	2.28
9f. Providing the financial support you need to afford your education	2.02	▲ 2.08	2.16

Note:

1. k is the number of items in a benchmark area
2. The symbol “▲” indicated that the score is significantly higher in 2008 as compared to the scores in 2004 and/or 2006. Statistical significance testing was done through power analysis of t-tests for each item (2008 cohort vs. 2006 cohort and 2008 cohort vs. 2004 cohort). The significance level was set at $p < .05$, two-tailed. An item was considered significant when power $> .50$ with an effect size greater than or equal to $.10$. Power was set at threshold level to capture any potential meaningful change.

Remaining Challenge

The only item that had a decreased item rating in 2008 is Item 6a in the area of Academic Challenge. The item asked how many assigned book-length readings a student read during the current school year. On a 5-point scale, the item decreased from 2.82 in 2004 and 2006 to 2.67 in 2008.

As Figure 3. illustrates, there were proportionally more students in 2008 who only read four or fewer assigned book-length readings in the 2008 academic year as compared to the number of students in 2004 and 2006. If we conservatively assume students on average took five courses in an academic year, this finding showed that the majority of students read less than one book-length assigned reading per course.

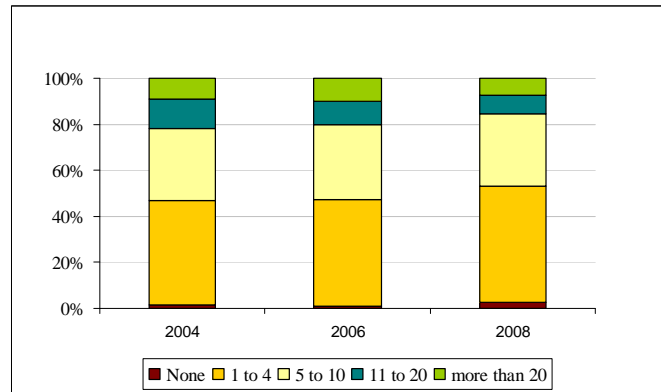


Figure 3. Response Frequency on Number of Book-Length Readings Read by Students in 2004, 2006, and 2008

Conclusion

To summarize our findings: KCC has been making continuous improvement in most of the CCSSE benchmark areas over the last five years. The improvement in Support for Learners is most salient and the improvement covered the widest ground, including support for college success, help in handling non-academic responsibilities, support for social growth, as well as financial support.

The challenges that we are facing lie mostly in the area of Student Effort and some of the items in Academic Challenge, such as completion of assigned book-length reading.

Contact Person

Yao Zhang Hill
Institutional Researcher/Instructor
808-734-9763
ofie@hawaii.edu