



NSSE 2014

Engagement Indicators

University of South Carolina Aiken

Office of Institutional Effectiveness

Director: Lloyd A. Dawe, Ph.D.

About this *Engagement Indicators* Report

Engagement Indicators (EIs) provide a useful summary of the detailed information contained in our students' NSSE responses. By combining responses to related NSSE questions, each EI offers valuable information about a distinct aspect of student engagement. Ten indicators, based on three to eight survey questions each (a total of 47 survey questions), are organized into four broad themes as shown at right.

Theme	Engagement Indicator
<i>Academic Challenge</i>	Higher-Order Learning
	Reflective & Integrative Learning
	Learning Strategies
	Quantitative Reasoning
<i>Learning with Peers</i>	Collaborative Learning
	Discussions with Diverse Others
<i>Experiences with Faculty</i>	Student-Faculty Interaction
	Effective Teaching Practices
<i>Campus Environment</i>	Quality of Interactions
	Supportive Environment

Report sections

Overview (p. 3)	Displays how average EI scores for our first-year and senior students compare with those of students at our comparison group institutions.
Theme Reports (pp. 4-13)	Detailed views of EI scores within the four themes for our students and those at comparison group institutions. Three views offer varied insights into our EI scores: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mean Comparisons Straightforward comparisons of average scores between our students and those at comparison group institutions, with tests of significance and effect sizes (see below). Score Distributions Box-and-whisker charts show the variation in scores <i>within</i> our institution and comparison groups. Summary of Indicator Items Responses to each item in a given EI are displayed for our institution and comparison groups.
Comparisons with High-Performing Institutions (p. 15)	Comparisons of our students' average scores on each EI with those of students at institutions whose average scores were in the top 50% and top 10% of 2013 and 2014 participating institutions.
Detailed Statistics (pp. 16-19)	Detailed information about EI score means, distributions, and tests of statistical significance.

Interpreting comparisons

Mean comparisons report both statistical significance and effect size. Effect size indicates the practical importance of an observed difference. An effect size of .2 is generally considered small, .5 medium, and .8 large. Comparisons with an effect size of at least .3 in magnitude (before rounding) are highlighted in the Overview (p. 3).

EIs vary more among students within an institution than between institutions, like many experiences and outcomes in higher education. As a result, focusing attention on average scores alone amounts to examining the tip of the iceberg. It's equally important to understand how student engagement varies within the institution. Score distributions indicate how EI scores vary among our students and those in our comparison groups. The Report Builder—Institution Version and the *Major Field Report* (both to be released in the fall) offer valuable perspectives on internal variation and help us investigate our students' engagement in depth.

How Engagement Indicators are computed

Each EI is scored on a 60-point scale. To produce an indicator score, the response set for each item is converted to a 60-point scale (e.g., Never = 0; Sometimes = 20; Often = 40; Very often = 60), and the rescaled items are averaged. Thus a score of zero means a student responded at the bottom of the scale for every item in the EI, while a score of 60 indicates responses at the top of the scale on every item.

For more information on EIs and their psychometric properties, refer to the NSSE Web site: nsse.iub.edu

Engagement Indicators: Overview

Engagement Indicators are summary measures based on sets of NSSE questions examining key dimensions of student engagement. The ten indicators are organized within four themes: Academic Challenge, Learning with Peers, Experiences with Faculty, and Campus Environment. The tables below compare average scores for USCA students with those in our comparison groups.

Use the following key:

- ▲ USCA students' average was significantly higher ($p < .05$) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.
- △ USCA students' average was significantly higher ($p < .05$) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- No significant difference.
- ▽ USCA students' average was significantly lower ($p < .05$) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- ▼ USCA students' average was significantly lower ($p < .05$) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.

First-Year Students

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Engagement Indicator</i>	Our first-year students compared with Southeast Public	Our first-year students compared with Carnegie Class	Our first-year students compared with NSSE 2013 & 2014
	Higher-Order Learning	--	--	--
<i>Academic Challenge</i>	Reflective & Integrative Learning	▼	▼	▼
	Learning Strategies	--	--	--
	Quantitative Reasoning	--	--	--
<i>Learning with Peers</i>	Collaborative Learning	--	--	--
	Discussions with Diverse Others	--	△	--
<i>Experiences with Faculty</i>	Student-Faculty Interaction	--	--	--
	Effective Teaching Practices	--	--	--
<i>Campus Environment</i>	Quality of Interactions	--	--	--
	Supportive Environment	--	--	--

Seniors

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Engagement Indicator</i>	Our seniors compared with Southeast Public	Our seniors compared with Carnegie Class	Our seniors compared with NSSE 2013 & 2014
	Higher-Order Learning	--	--	--
<i>Academic Challenge</i>	Reflective & Integrative Learning	--	--	--
	Learning Strategies	--	--	--
	Quantitative Reasoning	--	--	--
<i>Learning with Peers</i>	Collaborative Learning	--	--	--
	Discussions with Diverse Others	--	▲	△
<i>Experiences with Faculty</i>	Student-Faculty Interaction	--	--	△
	Effective Teaching Practices	△	△	▲
<i>Campus Environment</i>	Quality of Interactions	△	--	△
	Supportive Environment	▲	▲	▲

Academic Challenge: First-year students

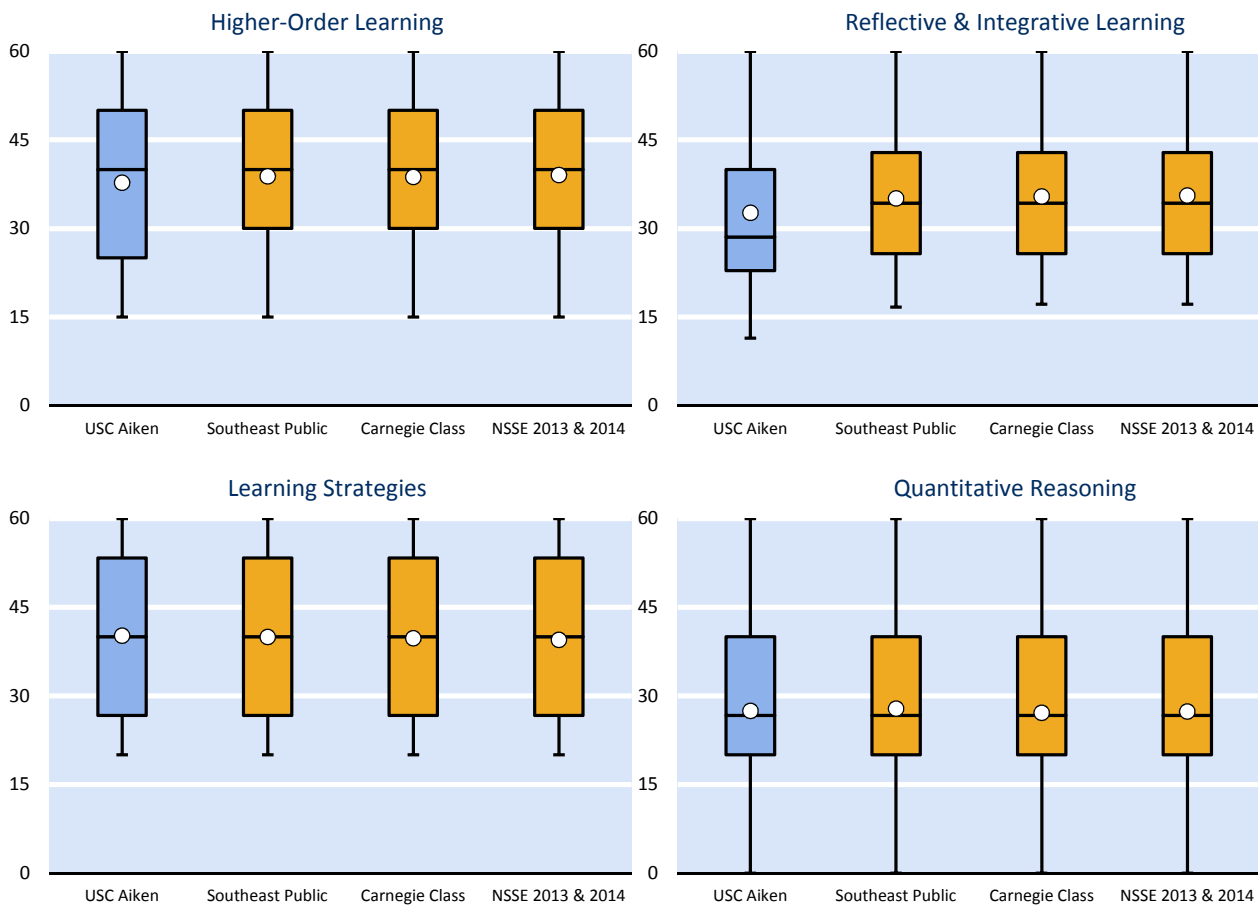
Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote student learning by challenging and supporting them to engage in various forms of deep learning. Four Engagement Indicators are part of this theme: *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective & Integrative Learning*, *Learning Strategies*, and *Quantitative Reasoning*. Below and on the next page are three views of our results alongside those of our comparison groups.

Mean Comparisons

Engagement Indicator	USC Aiken Mean	Our first-year students compared with					
		Southeast Public		Carnegie Class		NSSE 2013 & 2014	
	Mean	Mean	Effect size	Mean	Effect size	Mean	Effect size
Higher-Order Learning	37.7	38.8	-.08	38.7	-.07	39.0	-.10
Reflective & Integrative Learning	32.6	35.1 *	-.19	35.4 *	-.22	35.6 **	-.24
Learning Strategies	40.2	40.0	.02	39.7	.03	39.5	.05
Quantitative Reasoning	27.5	27.8	-.02	27.2	.02	27.4	.01

Notes: Results weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups); *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Effect size: Mean difference divided by pooled standard deviation; Symbols on the Overview page are based on effect size and p before rounding.





































































Score Distributions



Notes: Each box-and-whiskers chart plots the 5th (bottom of lower bar), 25th (bottom of box), 50th (middle line), 75th (top of box), and 95th (top of upper bar) percentile scores. The dot represents the mean score. Refer to Detailed Statistics for the institution's sample sizes.

Academic Challenge: First-year students (continued)

Summary of Indicator Items

	USC Aiken	Southeast Public	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2013 & 2014
Higher-Order Learning				
<i>Percentage responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit" about how much coursework emphasized...</i>				
	%	%	%	%
4b. Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations	67 	73 	72 	73 
4c. Analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts	63 	71 	70 	72 
4d. Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source	69 	69 	71 	70 
4e. Forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information	66 	67 	69 	69 
Reflective & Integrative Learning				
<i>Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...</i>				
2a. Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments	48 	54 	55 	56 
2b. Connected your learning to societal problems or issues	40 	50 	51 	53 
2c. Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments	40 	49 	51 	50 
2d. Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	48 	62 	63 	63 
2e. Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	62 	66 	66 	66 
2f. Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	62 	63 	65 	65 
2g. Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge	67 	75 	76 	77 
Learning Strategies				
<i>Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...</i>				
9a. Identified key information from reading assignments	79 	80 	81 	80 
9b. Reviewed your notes after class	68 	67 	67 	65 
9c. Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials	65 	64 	64 	63 
Quantitative Reasoning				
<i>Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...</i>				
6a. Reached conclusions based on your own analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics, etc.)	52 	53 	51 	52 
6b. Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)	37 	39 	38 	38 
6c. Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information	31 	38 	36 	37 

Notes: Refer to the *Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons* report for full distributions and significance tests. Item numbering corresponds to the survey facsimile included in the *Institutional Report* and available on the NSSE Web site.

Academic Challenge: Seniors

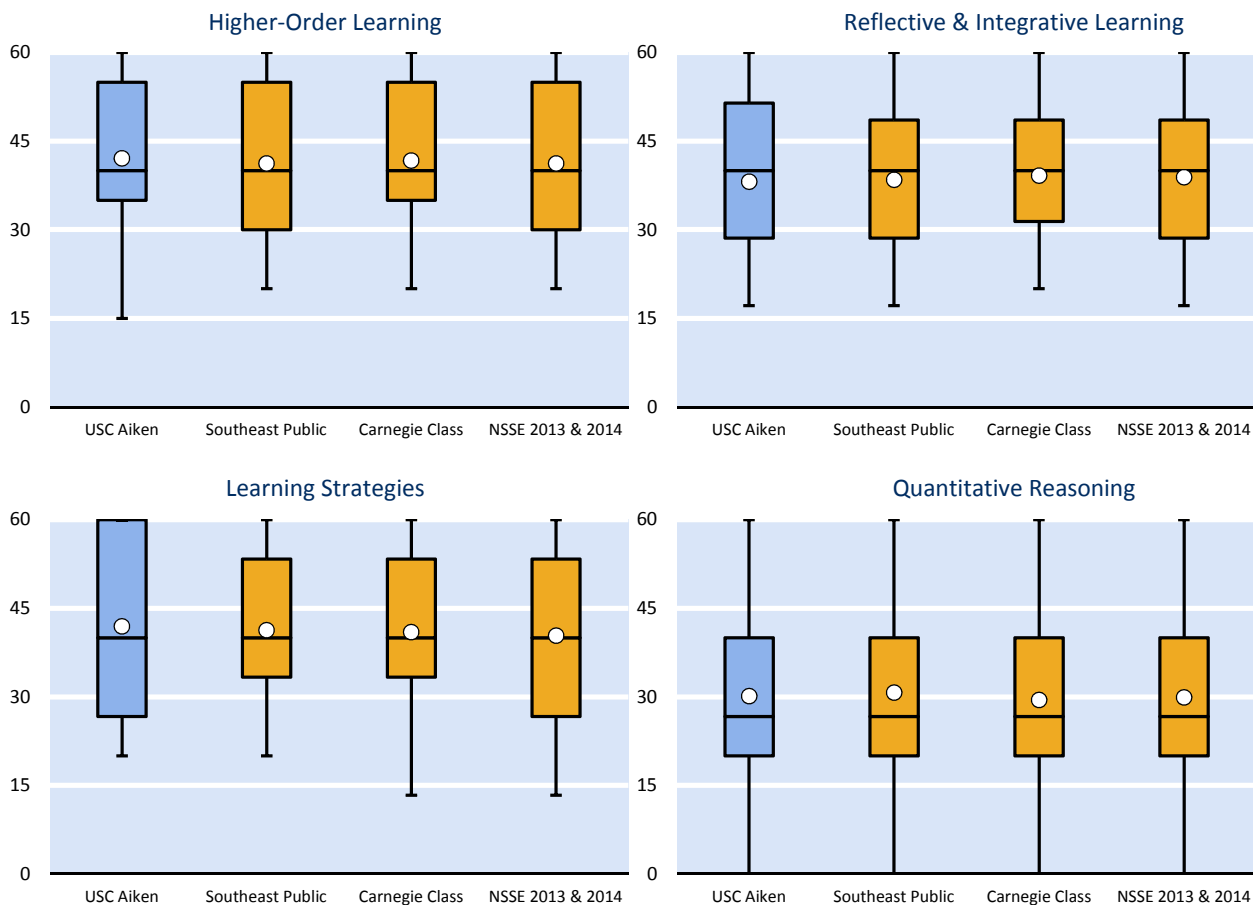
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Mean Comparisons

Engagement Indicator	USC Aiken Mean	Our seniors compared with					
		Southeast Public		Carnegie Class		NSSE 2013 & 2014	
		Mean	Effect size	Mean	Effect size	Mean	Effect size
Higher-Order Learning	42.1	41.2	.06	41.7	.03	41.2	.06
Reflective & Integrative Learning	38.2	38.5	-.02	39.2	-.08	38.9	-.06
Learning Strategies	41.9	41.3	.04	40.9	.07	40.3	.11
Quantitative Reasoning	30.1	30.7	-.03	29.5	.04	29.9	.01

Notes: Results weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups); *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Effect size: Mean difference divided by pooled standard deviation; Symbols on the Overview page are based on effect size and p before rounding.





































































Score Distributions



Notes: Each box-and-whiskers chart plots the 5th (bottom of lower bar), 25th (bottom of box), 50th (middle line), 75th (top of box), and 95th (top of upper bar) percentile scores. The dot represents the mean score. Refer to Detailed Statistics for our institution's sample sizes.

Academic Challenge: Seniors (continued)

Summary of Indicator Items

	USC Aiken	Southeast Public	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2013 & 2014
Higher-Order Learning				
<i>Percentage responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit" about how much coursework emphasized...</i>				
	%	%	%	%
4b. Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations	81 	80 	81 	80 
4c. Analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts	79 	77 	78 	78 
4d. Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source	76 	70 	75 	72 
4e. Forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information	74 	72 	74 	72 
Reflective & Integrative Learning				
<i>Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...</i>				
2a. Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments	74 	72 	71 	72 
2b. Connected your learning to societal problems or issues	58 	63 	65 	64 
2c. Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments	57 	52 	58 	55 
2d. Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	65 	65 	68 	66 
2e. Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	72 	70 	71 	70 
2f. Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	62 	69 	70 	70 
2g. Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge	79 	83 	84 	84 
Learning Strategies				
<i>Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...</i>				
9a. Identified key information from reading assignments	79 	83 	84 	83 
9b. Reviewed your notes after class	69 	67 	66 	63 
9c. Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials	66 	68 	67 	66 
Quantitative Reasoning				
<i>Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...</i>				
6a. Reached conclusions based on your own analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics, etc.)	58 	57 	53 	55 
6b. Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)	46 	46 	45 	44 
6c. Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information	48 	46 	43 	44 

Notes: Refer to the *Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons* report for full distributions and significance tests. Item numbering corresponds to the survey facsimile included in the *Institutional Report* and available on the NSSE Web site.

Learning with Peers: First-year students

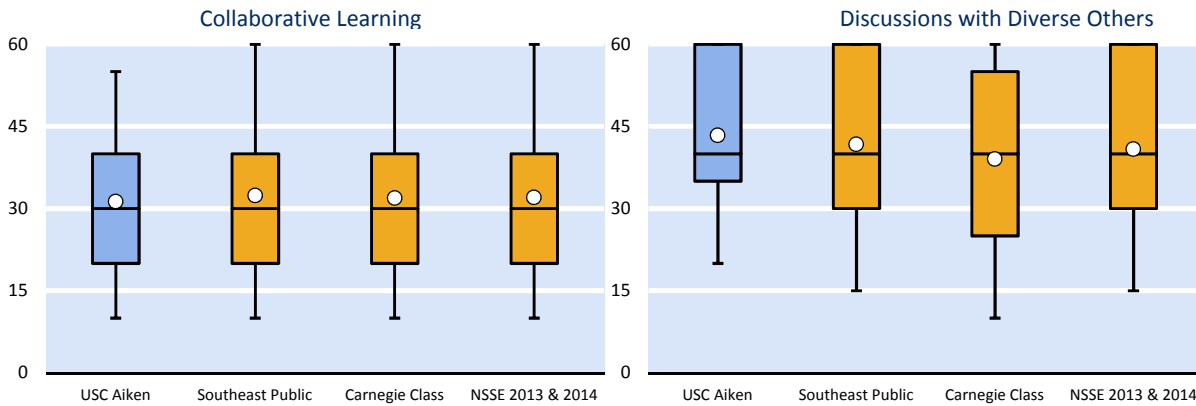
Collaborating with others in mastering difficult material and developing interpersonal and social competence prepare students to deal with complex, unscripted problems they will encounter during and after college. Two Engagement Indicators make up this theme: *Collaborative Learning* and *Discussions with Diverse Others*. Below are three views of our results alongside those of our comparison groups.

Mean Comparisons

Engagement Indicator	USC Aiken Mean	Our first-year students compared with					
		Mean	Effect size	Mean	Effect size	Mean	Effect size
Collaborative Learning	31.3	32.4	-.08	31.9	-.05	32.1	-.06
Discussions with Diverse Others	43.4	41.7	.10	39.1 **	.27	40.9	.16

Notes: Results weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups); *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Effect size: Mean difference divided by pooled standard deviation; Symbols on the Overview page are based on effect size and p before rounding.

Score Distributions



Notes: Each box-and-whiskers chart plots the 5th (bottom of lower bar), 25th (bottom of box), 50th (middle line), 75th (top of box), and 95th (top of upper bar) percentile scores. The dot represents the mean score. Refer to Detailed Statistics for the institution's sample sizes.

Summary of Indicator Items

Collaborative Learning

Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...

- 1e. Asked another student to help you understand course material
- 1f. Explained course material to one or more students
- 1g. Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students
- 1h. Worked with other students on course projects or assignments

	USC Aiken	Southeast Public	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2013 & 2014
%	%	%	%	%
1e. Asked another student to help you understand course material	49	50	48	49
1f. Explained course material to one or more students	55	58	56	57
1g. Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students	46	50	48	49
1h. Worked with other students on course projects or assignments	48	51	53	52

Discussions with Diverse Others

Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often" had discussions with...

- 8a. People from a race or ethnicity other than your own
- 8b. People from an economic background other than your own
- 8c. People with religious beliefs other than your own
- 8d. People with political views other than your own

Notes: Refer to the *Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons* report for full distributions and significance tests. Item numbering corresponds to the survey facsimile included in the *Institutional Report* and available on the NSSE Web site.

Learning with Peers: Seniors

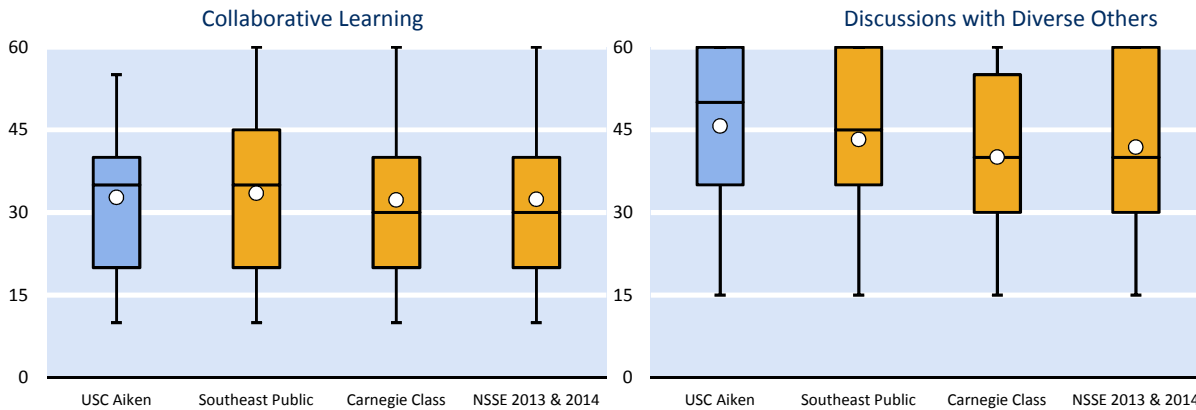
Collaborating with others in mastering difficult material and developing interpersonal and social competence prepare students to deal with complex, unscripted problems they will encounter during and after college. Two Engagement Indicators make up this theme: *Collaborative Learning* and *Discussions with Diverse Others*. Below are three views of our results alongside those of our comparison groups.

Mean Comparisons

Engagement Indicator	USC Aiken Mean	Our seniors compared with					
		Mean	Effect size	Mean	Effect size	Mean	Effect size
Collaborative Learning	32.8	33.5	-.05	32.3	.03	32.4	.02
Discussions with Diverse Others	45.7	43.2	.15	40.1 ***	.35	41.8 **	.24

Notes: Results weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups); *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Effect size: Mean difference divided by pooled standard deviation; Symbols on the Overview page are based on effect size and p before rounding.

Score Distributions



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Summary of Indicator Items

Collaborative Learning

Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...

- 1e. Asked another student to help you understand course material
- 1f. Explained course material to one or more students
- 1g. Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students
- 1h. Worked with other students on course projects or assignments

	USC Aiken	Southeast Public	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2013 & 2014
%	%	%	%	%
1e. Asked another student to help you understand course material	45	43	40	40
1f. Explained course material to one or more students	64	61	59	58
1g. Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students	52	50	46	46
1h. Worked with other students on course projects or assignments	58	64	62	64

Discussions with Diverse Others

Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often" had discussions with...

- 8a. People from a race or ethnicity other than your own
- 8b. People from an economic background other than your own
- 8c. People with religious beliefs other than your own
- 8d. People with political views other than your own

	USC Aiken	Southeast Public	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2013 & 2014
8a. People from a race or ethnicity other than your own	84	76	68	73
8b. People from an economic background other than your own	78	77	73	75
8c. People with religious beliefs other than your own	74	73	62	70
8d. People with political views other than your own	79	75	68	71

Notes: Refer to the *Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons* report for full distributions and significance tests. Item numbering corresponds to the survey facsimile included in the *Institutional Report* and available on the NSSE Web site.

Experiences with Faculty: First-year students

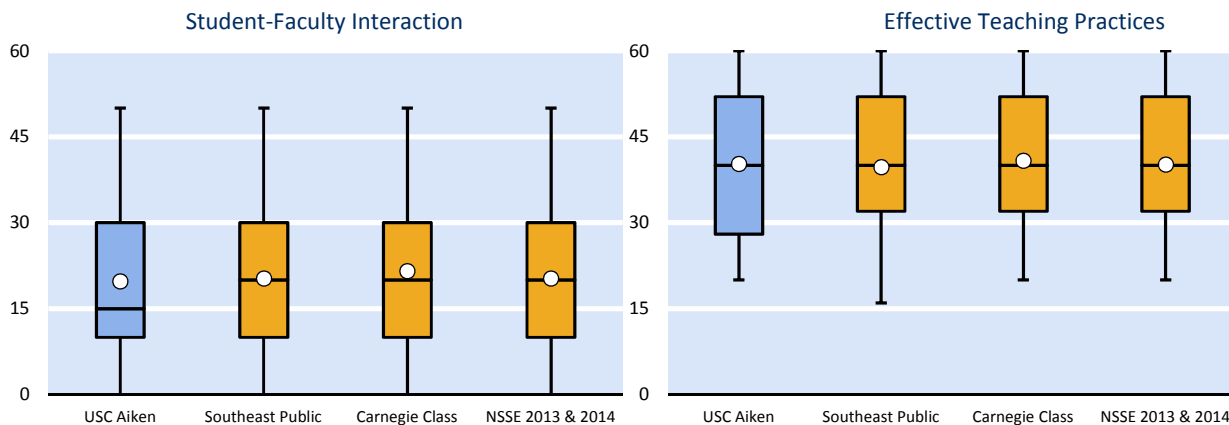
Students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside of instructional settings. As a result, faculty become role models, mentors, and guides for lifelong learning. In addition, effective teaching requires that faculty deliver course material and provide feedback in student-centered ways. Two Engagement Indicators investigate this theme: *Student-Faculty Interaction* and *Effective Teaching Practices*. Below are three views of our results alongside those of our comparison groups.

Mean Comparisons

Engagement Indicator	USC Aiken Mean	Our first-year students compared with					
		Mean	Effect size	Mean	Effect size	Mean	Effect size
Student-Faculty Interaction	19.8	20.3	-.04	21.5	-.12	20.3	-.04
Effective Teaching Practices	40.3	39.7	.04	40.9	-.04	40.2	.01

Notes: Results weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups); *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Effect size: Mean difference divided by pooled standard deviation; Symbols on the Overview page are based on effect size and p before rounding.

Score Distributions



Notes: Each box-and-whiskers chart plots the 5th (bottom of lower bar), 25th (bottom of box), 50th (middle line), 75th (top of box), and 95th (top of upper bar) percentile scores. The dot represents the mean score. Refer to Detailed Statistics for the institution's sample sizes.

Summary of Indicator Items

Student-Faculty Interaction

Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...

- 3a. Talked about career plans with a faculty member
- 3b. Worked w/faculty on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.)
- 3c. Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class
- 3d. Discussed your academic performance with a faculty member

	USC Aiken	Southeast Public	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2013 & 2014
	%	%	%	%
3a. Talked about career plans with a faculty member	28	33	35	32
3b. Worked w/faculty on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.)	18	19	21	19
3c. Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class	26	25	28	25
3d. Discussed your academic performance with a faculty member	31	29	33	29

Effective Teaching Practices

Percentage responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit" about how much instructors have...

- 5a. Clearly explained course goals and requirements
- 5b. Taught course sessions in an organized way
- 5c. Used examples or illustrations to explain difficult points
- 5d. Provided feedback on a draft or work in progress
- 5e. Provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments

	USC Aiken	Southeast Public	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2013 & 2014
	%	%	%	%
5a. Clearly explained course goals and requirements	77	80	80	81
5b. Taught course sessions in an organized way	76	79	79	79
5c. Used examples or illustrations to explain difficult points	70	76	77	77
5d. Provided feedback on a draft or work in progress	65	63	68	65
5e. Provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments	66	60	67	63

Notes: Refer to the *Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons* report for full distributions and significance tests. Item numbering corresponds to the survey facsimile included in the *Institutional Report* and available on the NSSE Web site.

Experiences with Faculty: Seniors

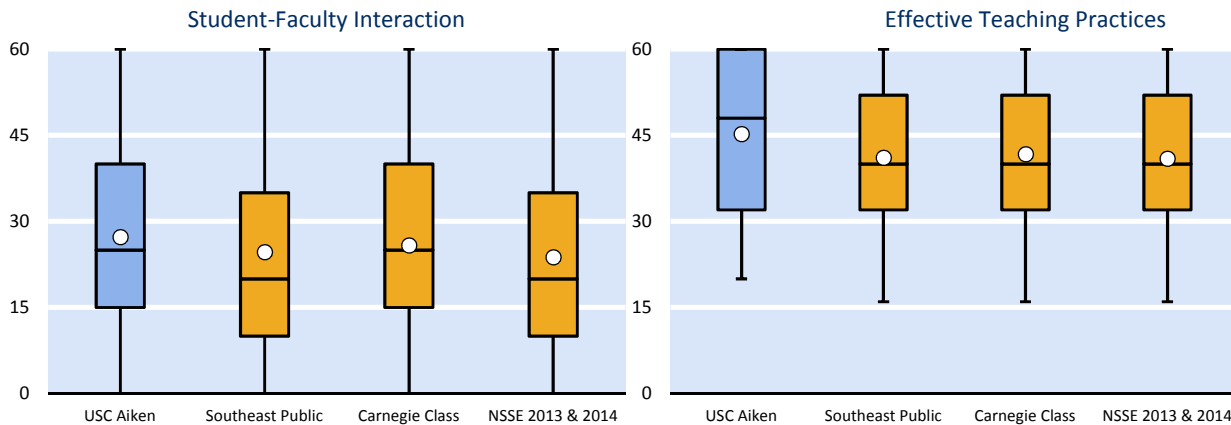
Students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside of instructional settings. As a result, faculty become role models, mentors, and guides for lifelong learning. In addition, effective teaching requires that faculty deliver course material and provide feedback in student-centered ways. Two Engagement Indicators investigate this theme: *Student-Faculty Interaction* and *Effective Teaching Practices*. Below are three views of our results alongside those of our comparison groups.

Mean Comparisons

Engagement Indicator	USC Aiken Mean	Our seniors compared with					
		Mean	Effect size	Mean	Effect size	Mean	Effect size
Student-Faculty Interaction	27.3	24.7	.16	25.8	.09	23.7 *	.22
Effective Teaching Practices	45.2	41.1 ***	.30	41.7 **	.25	40.9 ***	.31

Notes: Results weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups); *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Effect size: Mean difference divided by pooled standard deviation; Symbols on the Overview page are based on effect size and p before rounding.

Score Distributions



Notes: Each box-and-whiskers chart plots the 5th (bottom of lower bar), 25th (bottom of box), 50th (middle line), 75th (top of box), and 95th (top of upper bar) percentile scores. The dot represents the mean score. Refer to Detailed Statistics for the institution's sample sizes.

Summary of Indicator Items

Student-Faculty Interaction

Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...

	USC Aiken	Southeast Public	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2013 & 2014
3a. Talked about career plans with a faculty member	49	44	48	42
3b. Worked w/faculty on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.)	30	28	29	26
3c. Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class	43	35	38	33
3d. Discussed your academic performance with a faculty member	37	35	38	33

Effective Teaching Practices

Percentage responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit" about how much instructors have...

	USC Aiken	Southeast Public	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2013 & 2014
5a. Clearly explained course goals and requirements	86	82	83	83
5b. Taught course sessions in an organized way	85	81	81	81
5c. Used examples or illustrations to explain difficult points	84	80	80	79
5d. Provided feedback on a draft or work in progress	75	61	66	62
5e. Provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments	77	67	70	67

Notes: Refer to the *Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons* report for full distributions and significance tests. Item numbering corresponds to the survey facsimile included in the *Institutional Report* and available on the NSSE Web site.

Campus Environment: First-year students

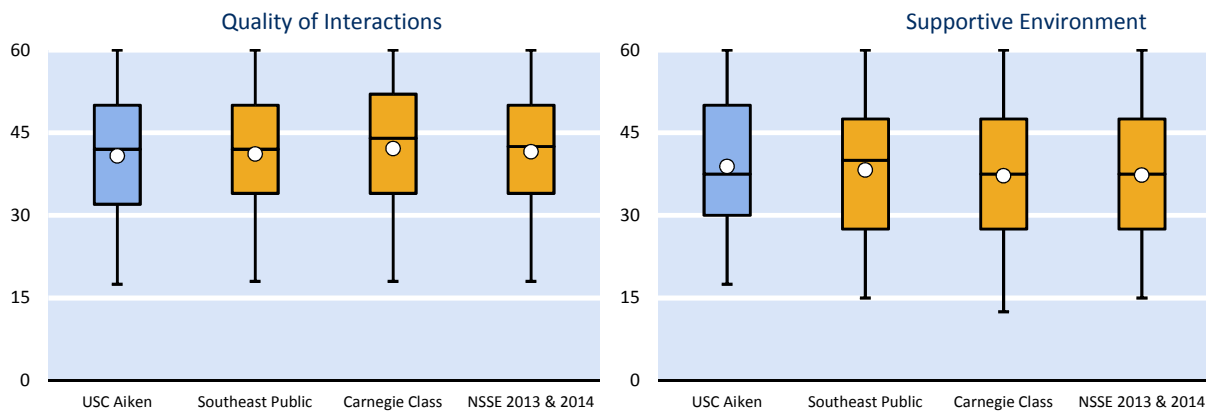
Students benefit and are more satisfied in supportive settings that cultivate positive relationships among students, faculty, and staff. Two Engagement Indicators investigate this theme: *Quality of Interactions* and *Supportive Environment*. Below are three views of our results alongside those of our comparison groups.

Mean Comparisons

Engagement Indicator	USC Aiken Mean	Our first-year students compared with					
		Southeast Public Mean	Effect size	Carnegie Class Mean	Effect size	NSSE 2013 & 2014 Mean	Effect size
Quality of Interactions	40.8	41.1	-.03	42.1	-.11	41.5	-.06
Supportive Environment	38.8	38.2	.05	37.2	.12	37.3	.11

Notes: Results weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups); *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Effect size: Mean difference divided by pooled standard deviation; Symbols on the Overview page are based on effect size and p before rounding.

Score Distributions



Notes: Each box-and-whiskers chart plots the 5th (bottom of lower bar), 25th (bottom of box), 50th (middle line), 75th (top of box), and 95th (top of upper bar) percentile scores. The dot represents the mean score. Refer to Detailed Statistics for the institution's sample sizes.

Summary of Indicator Items

Quality of Interactions

Percentage rating a 6 or 7 on a scale from 1="Poor" to 7="Excellent" their interactions with...

	USC Aiken	Southeast Public	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2013 & 2014
13a. Students	59	59	60	59
13b. Academic advisors	43	48	51	48
13c. Faculty	49	47	54	50
13d. Student services staff (career services, student activities, housing, etc.)	42	43	45	43
13e. Other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid, etc.)	41	39	44	41

Supportive Environment

Percentage responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit" about how much the institution emphasized...

	USC Aiken	Southeast Public	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2013 & 2014
14b. Providing support to help students succeed academically	83	78	77	78
14c. Using learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, etc.)	84	79	78	78
14d. Encouraging contact among students from diff. backgrounds (soc., racial/eth., relig., etc.)	61	59	59	59
14e. Providing opportunities to be involved socially	80	75	72	73
14f. Providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counseling, etc.)	65	75	69	72
14g. Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	45	45	46	44
14h. Attending campus activities and events (performing arts, athletic events, etc.)	79	73	68	68
14i. Attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues	52	54	53	53

Notes: Refer to the *Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons* report for full distributions and significance tests. Item numbering corresponds to the survey facsimile included in the *Institutional Report* and available on the NSSE Web site.

Campus Environment: Seniors

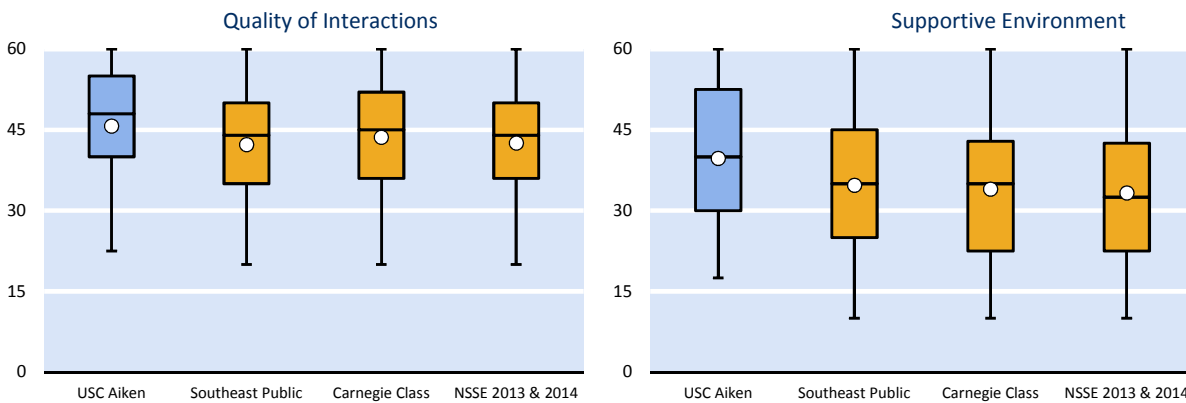
Students benefit and are more satisfied in supportive settings that cultivate positive relationships among students, faculty, and staff. Two Engagement Indicators investigate this theme: *Quality of Interactions* and *Supportive Environment*. Below are three views of our results alongside those of our comparison groups.

Mean Comparisons

Engagement Indicator	USC Aiken Mean	Our seniors compared with					
		Southeast Public		Carnegie Class		NSSE 2013 & 2014	
		Mean	Effect size	Mean	Effect size	Mean	Effect size
Quality of Interactions	45.7	42.2 **	.29	43.6	.17	42.5 **	.27
Supportive Environment	39.7	34.7 ***	.34	34.0 ***	.39	33.3 ***	.45

Notes: Results weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups); *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Effect size: Mean difference divided by pooled standard deviation; Symbols on the Overview page are based on effect size and p before rounding.

Score Distributions



Notes: Each box-and-whiskers chart plots the 5th (bottom of lower bar), 25th (bottom of box), 50th (middle line), 75th (top of box), and 95th (top of upper bar) percentile scores. The dot represents the mean score. Refer to Detailed Statistics for the institution's sample sizes.

Summary of Indicator Items

Quality of Interactions

Percentage rating a 6 or 7 on a scale from 1="Poor" to 7="Excellent" their interactions with...

	USC Aiken	Southeast Public	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2013 & 2014
13a. Students	70	65	65	64
13b. Academic advisors	61	51	58	52
13c. Faculty	73	58	65	60
13d. Student services staff (career services, student activities, housing, etc.)	57	43	44	42
13e. Other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid, etc.)	49	39	45	42

Supportive Environment

Percentage responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit" about how much the institution emphasized...

	USC Aiken	Southeast Public	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2013 & 2014
14b. Providing support to help students succeed academically	81	73	75	72
14c. Using learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, etc.)	78	68	70	67
14d. Encouraging contact among students from diff. backgrounds (soc., racial/eth., relig., etc.)	63	53	53	53
14e. Providing opportunities to be involved socially	78	70	67	66
14f. Providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counseling, etc.)	67	68	61	63
14g. Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	37	34	35	32
14h. Attending campus activities and events (performing arts, athletic events, etc.)	80	65	59	57
14i. Attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues	65	49	47	46

Notes: Refer to the *Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons* report for full distributions and significance tests. Item numbering corresponds to the survey facsimile included in the *Institutional Report* and available on the NSSE Web site.

Comparisons with Top 50% and Top 10% Institutions

The results below compare the engagement of our first-year and senior students with those attending two groups of institutions identified for their high average levels of student engagement:

- (a) institutions with average scores placing them in the top 50% of all 2013 and 2014 NSSE institutions, and
- (b) institutions with average scores placing them in the top 10% of all 2013 and 2014 NSSE institutions.

While the average scores for most institutions are below the mean for the top 50% or top 10%, our institution may show areas of distinction where the average student was as engaged as (or even more engaged than) the typical student at high-performing institutions. A check mark (✓) signifies those comparisons where our average score was at least comparable to that of the high-performing group. However, the absence of a significant difference between our score and that of the high-performing group does not mean that our institution was or was not a member of that group.

It should be noted that most of the variability in student engagement is within, not between, institutions. Even "high-performing" institutions have students with engagement levels below the average for all institutions.

First-Year Students		USC Aiken Mean	Our first-year students compared with					
Theme	Engagement Indicator		NSSE Top 50%			NSSE Top 10%		
			Mean	Effect size	✓	Mean	Effect size	✓
Academic Challenge	Higher-Order Learning	37.7	40.6 *	-.21		42.7 ***	-.36	
	Reflective and Integrative Learning	32.6	37.3 ***	-.37		39.3 ***	-.53	
	Learning Strategies	40.2	41.2	-.07	✓	43.4 *	-.23	
	Quantitative Reasoning	27.5	28.8	-.08	✓	30.6 *	-.19	
Learning with Peers	Collaborative Learning	31.3	34.7 **	-.25		37.0 ***	-.42	
	Discussions with Diverse Others	43.4	43.2	.01	✓	45.6	-.15	
Experiences with Faculty	Student-Faculty Interaction	19.8	23.3 **	-.24		26.9 ***	-.44	
	Effective Teaching Practices	40.3	42.4	-.16		44.6 ***	-.33	
Campus Environment	Quality of Interactions	40.8	44.0 **	-.28		46.0 ***	-.45	
	Supportive Environment	38.8	39.4	-.04	✓	41.4 *	-.20	
Seniors		USC Aiken Mean	Our seniors compared with					
Theme	Engagement Indicator		NSSE Top 50%			NSSE Top 10%		
			Mean	Effect size	✓	Mean	Effect size	✓
Academic Challenge	Higher-Order Learning	42.1	43.3	-.08	✓	45.3 **	-.23	
	Reflective and Integrative Learning	38.2	41.1 *	-.23		43.1 ***	-.39	
	Learning Strategies	41.9	42.5	-.04	✓	44.9 *	-.21	
	Quantitative Reasoning	30.1	31.3	-.07	✓	33.0	-.17	
Learning with Peers	Collaborative Learning	32.8	35.4 *	-.19		37.7 ***	-.37	
	Discussions with Diverse Others	45.7	43.9	.11	✓	45.8	-.01	✓
Experiences with Faculty	Student-Faculty Interaction	27.3	29.5	-.14		34.4 ***	-.43	
	Effective Teaching Practices	45.2	43.0	.16	✓	45.1	.01	✓
Campus Environment	Quality of Interactions	45.7	45.3	.04	✓	47.4	-.14	
	Supportive Environment	39.7	36.1 **	.26	✓	39.0	.05	✓

Note: Results weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups); *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Effect size: Mean difference divided by the pooled standard deviation.

a. Precision-weighted means (produced by Hierarchical Linear Modeling) were used to determine the top 50% and top 10% institutions for each Engagement Indicator from all NSSE 2013 and 2014 institutions, separately for first-year and senior students. Using this method, Engagement Indicator scores of institutions with relatively large standard errors were adjusted toward the mean of all students, while those with smaller standard errors received smaller corrections. As a result, schools with less stable data—even those with high average scores—may not be among the top scorers. NSSE does not publish the names of the top 50% and top 10% institutions due to their commitment not to release institutional results and their policy against ranking institutions.

b. Check marks are assigned to comparisons that are either significant and positive, or non-significant with an effect size > .10.

Detailed Statistics: First-Year Students

	Mean statistics			Percentile ^d scores					Comparison results			
	Mean	SD ^b	SEM ^c	5th	25th	50th	75th	95th	Deg. of freedom	Mean diff.	Sig. ^f	Effect size ^g
Academic Challenge												
Higher-Order Learning												
USC Aiken (N = 131)	37.7	14.7	1.28	15	25	40	50	60				
Southeast Public	38.8	14.2	.06	15	30	40	50	60	52,477	-1.1	.378	-.077
Carnegie Class	38.7	13.9	.10	15	30	40	50	60	17,861	-1.0	.422	-.070
NSSE 2013 & 2014	39.0	13.8	.03	15	30	40	50	60	252,900	-1.3	.276	-.095
Top 50%	40.6	13.6	.04	20	30	40	50	60	124,990	-2.9	.016	-.210
Top 10%	42.7	13.6	.09	20	35	40	55	60	23,220	-5.0	.000	-.365
Reflective & Integrative Learning												
USC Aiken (N = 135)	32.6	12.7	1.10	11	23	29	40	60				
Southeast Public	35.1	12.9	.06	17	26	34	43	60	54,953	-2.5	.027	-.191
Carnegie Class	35.4	12.6	.09	17	26	34	43	60	18,609	-2.8	.010	-.223
NSSE 2013 & 2014	35.6	12.6	.02	17	26	34	43	60	263,949	-3.0	.006	-.236
Top 50%	37.3	12.5	.04	17	29	37	46	60	125,874	-4.7	.000	-.374
Top 10%	39.3	12.6	.08	20	31	40	49	60	27,051	-6.6	.000	-.529
Learning Strategies												
USC Aiken (N = 126)	40.2	14.8	1.31	20	27	40	53	60				
Southeast Public	40.0	14.3	.07	20	27	40	53	60	47,694	.2	.845	.017
Carnegie Class	39.7	14.1	.11	20	27	40	53	60	16,681	.5	.716	.032
NSSE 2013 & 2014	39.5	14.2	.03	20	27	40	53	60	234,364	.7	.557	.052
Top 50%	41.2	14.0	.04	20	33	40	53	60	110,320	-1.0	.414	-.073
Top 10%	43.4	14.0	.09	20	33	40	60	60	23,494	-3.2	.010	-.229
Quantitative Reasoning												
USC Aiken (N = 134)	27.5	16.2	1.40	0	20	27	40	60				
Southeast Public	27.8	16.6	.07	0	20	27	40	60	53,254	-.4	.803	-.022
Carnegie Class	27.2	16.5	.12	0	20	27	40	60	18,175	.3	.830	.019
NSSE 2013 & 2014	27.4	16.4	.03	0	20	27	40	60	257,002	.1	.935	.007
Top 50%	28.8	16.3	.04	0	20	27	40	60	160,786	-1.3	.350	-.081
Top 10%	30.6	16.2	.08	0	20	27	40	60	36,793	-3.2	.025	-.195
Learning with Peers												
Collaborative Learning												
USC Aiken (N = 137)	31.3	14.1	1.21	10	20	30	40	55				
Southeast Public	32.4	14.2	.06	10	20	30	40	60	56,684	-1.1	.365	-.078
Carnegie Class	31.9	14.0	.10	10	20	30	40	60	18,939	-.7	.587	-.047
NSSE 2013 & 2014	32.1	14.1	.03	10	20	30	40	60	270,406	-.8	.518	-.055
Top 50%	34.7	13.7	.04	15	25	35	45	60	152,131	-3.4	.003	-.250
Top 10%	37.0	13.6	.07	15	25	35	45	60	34,771	-5.8	.000	-.423
Discussions with Diverse Others												
USC Aiken (N = 128)	43.4	14.5	1.28	20	35	40	60	60				
Southeast Public	41.7	16.1	.07	15	30	40	60	60	48,282	1.7	.246	.103
Carnegie Class	39.1	16.3	.13	10	25	40	55	60	16,876	4.3	.003	.266
NSSE 2013 & 2014	40.9	16.0	.03	15	30	40	60	60	237,270	2.5	.076	.157
Top 50%	43.2	15.4	.04	20	35	45	60	60	139,003	.2	.898	.011
Top 10%	45.6	14.8	.09	20	40	50	60	60	29,179	-2.2	.091	-.150

Detailed Statistics: First-Year Students

	Mean statistics			Percentile ^d scores					Comparison results			
	Mean	SD ^b	SEM ^c	5th	25th	50th	75th	95th	Deg. of freedom	Mean diff.	Sig. ^f	Effect size ^g
Experiences with Faculty												
Student-Faculty Interaction												
USC Aiken (N = 135)	19.8	15.0	1.29	0	10	15	30	50				
Southeast Public	20.3	14.8	.06	0	10	20	30	50	53,608	-.5	.681	-.035
Carnegie Class	21.5	15.1	.11	0	10	20	30	50	18,180	-1.8	.170	-.118
NSSE 2013 & 2014	20.3	14.6	.03	0	10	20	30	50	257,929	-.5	.671	-.036
Top 50%	23.3	15.0	.05	0	10	20	30	55	91,265	-3.6	.005	-.239
Top 10%	26.9	16.2	.13	5	15	25	40	60	137	-7.2	.000	-.444
Effective Teaching Practices												
USC Aiken (N = 136)	40.3	14.6	1.25	20	28	40	52	60				
Southeast Public	39.7	13.5	.06	16	32	40	52	60	53,914	.6	.627	.042
Carnegie Class	40.9	13.5	.10	20	32	40	52	60	18,415	-.6	.623	-.042
NSSE 2013 & 2014	40.2	13.3	.03	20	32	40	52	60	135	.1	.916	.010
Top 50%	42.4	13.2	.04	20	32	44	52	60	101,238	-2.1	.067	-.157
Top 10%	44.6	13.3	.09	20	36	44	56	60	20,249	-4.4	.000	-.326
Campus Environment												
Quality of Interactions												
USC Aiken (N = 122)	40.8	13.4	1.21	18	32	42	50	60				
Southeast Public	41.1	12.5	.06	18	34	42	50	60	46,490	-.4	.756	-.028
Carnegie Class	42.1	12.7	.10	18	34	44	52	60	16,223	-1.4	.236	-.108
NSSE 2013 & 2014	41.5	12.4	.03	18	34	43	50	60	227,098	-.8	.485	-.063
Top 50%	44.0	11.4	.04	22	38	46	52	60	122	-3.2	.009	-.283
Top 10%	46.0	11.6	.09	24	40	48	55	60	123	-5.3	.000	-.454
Supportive Environment												
USC Aiken (N = 115)	38.8	13.9	1.29	18	30	38	50	60				
Southeast Public	38.2	13.8	.07	15	28	40	48	60	43,794	.6	.627	.045
Carnegie Class	37.2	14.3	.11	13	28	38	48	60	15,557	1.7	.215	.116
NSSE 2013 & 2014	37.3	13.8	.03	15	28	38	48	60	218,492	1.5	.235	.111
Top 50%	39.4	13.2	.04	18	30	40	50	60	111,838	-.6	.645	-.043
Top 10%	41.4	12.8	.08	20	33	40	53	60	24,525	-2.5	.035	-.197

a. Results weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institutional size for comparison groups).

b. Standard deviation is a measure of the amount the individual scores deviate from the mean of all the scores in the distribution.

c. Standard error of the mean, used to compute a confidence interval (CI) around the sample mean. For example, the 95% CI is the range of values that is 95% likely to contain the true population mean, equal to the sample mean +/- 1.96 * SEM.

d. A percentile is the point in the distribution of student-level EI scores at or below which a given percentage of EI scores fall.

e. Degrees of freedom used to compute the t-tests. Values vary from the total Ns due to weighting and whether equal variances were assumed.

f. Statistical significance represents the probability that the difference between the mean of our institution and that of the comparison group occurred by chance.

g. Effect size is the mean difference divided by the pooled standard deviation.

Detailed Statistics: Seniors

	Mean statistics			Percentile ^d scores					Comparison results			
	Mean	SD ^b	SEM ^c	5th	25th	50th	75th	95th	Deg. of freedom	Mean diff.	Sig. ^f	Effect size ^g
Academic Challenge												
Higher-Order Learning												
USC Aiken (N = 126)	42.1	14.4	1.29	15	35	40	55	60				
Southeast Public	41.2	14.4	.05	20	30	40	55	60	74,400	.9	.496	.061
Carnegie Class	41.7	13.9	.09	20	35	40	55	60	21,698	.4	.754	.028
NSSE 2013 & 2014	41.2	14.1	.02	20	30	40	55	60	379,538	.9	.477	.063
Top 50%	43.3	13.7	.04	20	35	40	55	60	150,870	-1.2	.346	-.084
Top 10%	45.3	13.6	.07	20	40	45	60	60	37,210	-3.1	.010	-.231
Reflective & Integrative Learning												
USC Aiken (N = 133)	38.2	14.4	1.25	17	29	40	51	60				
Southeast Public	38.5	13.2	.05	17	29	40	49	60	77,493	-.3	.799	-.022
Carnegie Class	39.2	12.8	.09	20	31	40	49	60	133	-1.0	.419	-.080
NSSE 2013 & 2014	38.9	13.0	.02	17	29	40	49	60	132	-.8	.550	-.058
Top 50%	41.1	12.6	.03	20	31	40	51	60	132	-2.9	.023	-.228
Top 10%	43.1	12.5	.07	20	34	43	54	60	132	-4.9	.000	-.390
Learning Strategies												
USC Aiken (N = 120)	41.9	15.5	1.42	20	27	40	60	60				
Southeast Public	41.3	14.7	.06	20	33	40	53	60	69,380	.6	.641	.043
Carnegie Class	40.9	14.7	.10	13	33	40	53	60	20,694	1.0	.468	.066
NSSE 2013 & 2014	40.3	14.8	.02	13	27	40	53	60	359,077	1.6	.241	.107
Top 50%	42.5	14.5	.03	20	33	40	60	60	185,171	-.6	.675	-.038
Top 10%	44.9	14.1	.06	20	33	47	60	60	47,386	-3.0	.022	-.209
Quantitative Reasoning												
USC Aiken (N = 129)	30.1	18.4	1.62	0	20	27	40	60				
Southeast Public	30.7	17.5	.06	0	20	27	40	60	75,800	-.6	.710	-.033
Carnegie Class	29.5	17.1	.12	0	20	27	40	60	22,120	.6	.668	.038
NSSE 2013 & 2014	29.9	17.4	.03	0	20	27	40	60	386,719	.2	.890	.012
Top 50%	31.3	17.2	.04	0	20	33	40	60	234,340	-1.2	.431	-.069
Top 10%	33.0	16.9	.07	0	20	33	47	60	58,619	-2.9	.051	-.172
Learning with Peers												
Collaborative Learning												
USC Aiken (N = 133)	32.8	14.0	1.22	10	20	35	40	55				
Southeast Public	33.5	14.7	.05	10	20	35	45	60	78,807	-.7	.556	-.051
Carnegie Class	32.3	14.4	.10	10	20	30	40	60	22,670	.5	.697	.034
NSSE 2013 & 2014	32.4	14.6	.02	10	20	30	40	60	399,691	.4	.781	.024
Top 50%	35.4	13.8	.03	15	25	35	45	60	197,654	-2.6	.028	-.191
Top 10%	37.7	13.6	.07	15	30	40	50	60	39,599	-5.0	.000	-.365
Discussions with Diverse Others												
USC Aiken (N = 122)	45.7	15.8	1.43	15	35	50	60	60				
Southeast Public	43.2	16.0	.06	15	35	45	60	60	70,268	2.4	.095	.151
Carnegie Class	40.1	16.1	.11	15	30	40	55	60	20,889	5.6	.000	.348
NSSE 2013 & 2014	41.8	16.1	.03	15	30	40	60	60	362,506	3.8	.009	.238
Top 50%	43.9	15.8	.03	20	35	45	60	60	227,671	1.7	.224	.110
Top 10%	45.8	15.4	.06	20	40	50	60	60	58,898	-.2	.904	-.011

Detailed Statistics: Seniors

	Mean statistics			Percentile ^d scores					Comparison results			
	Mean	SD ^b	SEM ^c	5th	25th	50th	75th	95th	Deg. of freedom	Mean diff.	Sig. ^f	Effect size ^g
Experiences with Faculty												
Student-Faculty Interaction												
USC Aiken (N = 130)	27.3	16.9	1.48	0	15	25	40	60				
Southeast Public	24.7	16.6	.06	0	10	20	35	60	75,759	2.6	.073	.157
Carnegie Class	25.8	16.7	.11	0	15	25	40	60	22,073	1.5	.323	.087
NSSE 2013 & 2014	23.7	16.3	.03	0	10	20	35	60	386,628	3.5	.014	.217
Top 50%	29.5	16.1	.05	5	20	30	40	60	93,414	-2.3	.109	-.141
Top 10%	34.4	16.4	.15	10	20	35	45	60	12,799	-7.1	.000	-.435
Effective Teaching Practices												
USC Aiken (N = 131)	45.2	14.1	1.24	20	32	48	60	60				
Southeast Public	41.1	14.0	.05	16	32	40	52	60	76,619	4.2	.001	.297
Carnegie Class	41.7	13.9	.09	16	32	40	52	60	22,330	3.5	.004	.254
NSSE 2013 & 2014	40.9	13.7	.02	16	32	40	52	60	390,688	4.3	.000	.314
Top 50%	43.0	13.6	.04	20	36	44	56	60	139,961	2.2	.066	.161
Top 10%	45.1	13.4	.09	20	36	48	60	60	23,703	.1	.931	.008
Campus Environment												
Quality of Interactions												
USC Aiken (N = 119)	45.7	12.0	1.10	23	40	48	55	60				
Southeast Public	42.2	12.1	.05	20	35	44	50	60	67,588	3.5	.002	.289
Carnegie Class	43.6	11.9	.08	20	36	45	52	60	20,121	2.1	.059	.174
NSSE 2013 & 2014	42.5	11.9	.02	20	36	44	50	60	347,388	3.2	.004	.265
Top 50%	45.3	11.3	.03	24	38	48	54	60	121,416	.4	.696	.036
Top 10%	47.4	11.6	.06	24	40	50	58	60	32,583	-1.7	.115	-.145
Supportive Environment												
USC Aiken (N = 112)	39.7	14.3	1.35	18	30	40	53	60				
Southeast Public	34.7	14.5	.06	10	25	35	45	60	65,592	5.0	.000	.345
Carnegie Class	34.0	14.6	.10	10	23	35	43	60	19,867	5.7	.000	.392
NSSE 2013 & 2014	33.3	14.4	.02	10	23	33	43	60	342,155	6.4	.000	.447
Top 50%	36.1	13.8	.04	13	28	38	45	60	143,676	3.6	.006	.261
Top 10%	39.0	13.3	.09	17	30	40	50	60	24,124	.7	.571	.054

a. Results weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institutional size for comparison groups).
b. Standard deviation is a measure of the amount the individual scores deviate from the mean of all the scores in the distribution.
c. Standard error of the mean, used to compute a confidence interval (CI) around the sample mean. For example, the 95% CI is the range of values that is 95% likely to contain the true population mean, equal to the sample mean +/- 1.96 * SEM.
d. A percentile is the point in the distribution of student-level EI scores at or below which a given percentage of EI scores fall.
e. Degrees of freedom used to compute the t-tests. Values vary from the total Ns due to weighting and whether equal variances were assumed.
f. Statistical significance represents the probability that the difference between the mean of our institution and that of the comparison group occurred by chance.
g. Effect size is the mean difference divided by the pooled standard deviation.