

A Summary of Student Engagement Results

Student engagement represents two critical features of collegiate quality. The first is the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and other educationally purposeful activities. The second is how institutional resources, courses, and other learning opportunities facilitate student participation in activities that matter to student learning. NSSE surveyed first-year and senior students to assess their levels of engagement and related information about their experiences at USC Aiken and other institutions across the nation.

Comparison Group

The comparison group featured in this report is

Southeast Public

See *Selected Comparison Groups* report for details.

This *Snapshot* is a concise collection of key findings from our institution's NSSE 2014 administration to stimulate discussions about undergraduates' experiences at USC Aiken. Additional details about these and other results appear in the reports referenced throughout.

Engagement Indicators

Sets of items are grouped into ten Engagement Indicators, organized under four broad themes. At the right are summary results for our institution. For details, see the *Engagement Indicators* report.

Key:

▲ Our students' average was significantly higher ($p < .05$) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.

△ Our students' average was significantly higher ($p < .05$) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.

-- No significant difference.

▽ Our students' average was significantly lower ($p < .05$) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.

▼ Our students' average was significantly lower ($p < .05$) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.

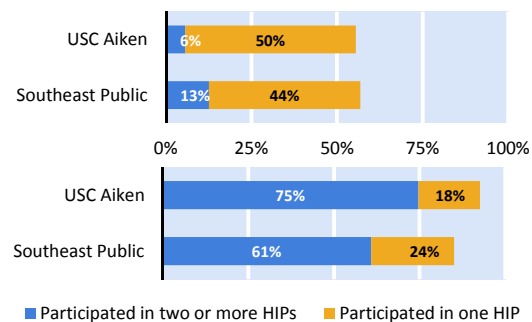
Theme	Engagement Indicator	Our students compared with Southeast Public	
		First-year	Senior
Academic Challenge	Higher-Order Learning	--	--
	Reflective & Integrative Learning	▽	--
	Learning Strategies	--	--
Learning with Peers	Quantitative Reasoning	--	--
	Collaborative Learning	--	--
	Discussions with Diverse Others	--	--
Experiences with Faculty	Student-Faculty Interaction	--	--
	Effective Teaching Practices	--	△
Campus Environment	Quality of Interactions	--	△
	Supportive Environment	--	▲

High-Impact Practices

Due to their positive associations with student learning and retention, special undergraduate opportunities are designated "high-impact." For more details and statistical comparisons, see the *High-Impact Practices* report.

First-year
Learning Community, Service-Learning, and Research w/Faculty

Senior
Learning Community, Service-Learning, Research w/Faculty, Internship, Study Abroad, and Culminating Senior Experience

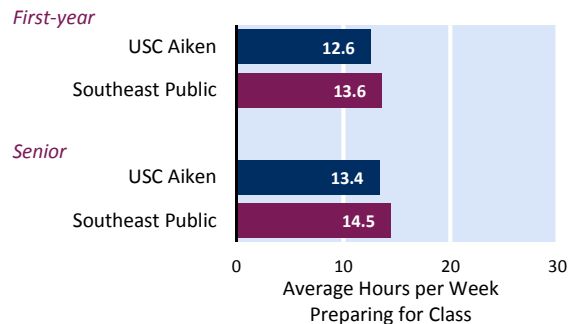


Academic Challenge: Additional Results

The Academic Challenge theme contains four Engagement Indicators as well as several important individual items. The results presented here provide an overview of these individual items. For more information about the Academic Challenge theme, see the *Engagement Indicators* report. To further explore individual item results, see the *Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons*, the *Major Field Report*, the *Online Institutional Report*, or the Report Builder—Institution Version.

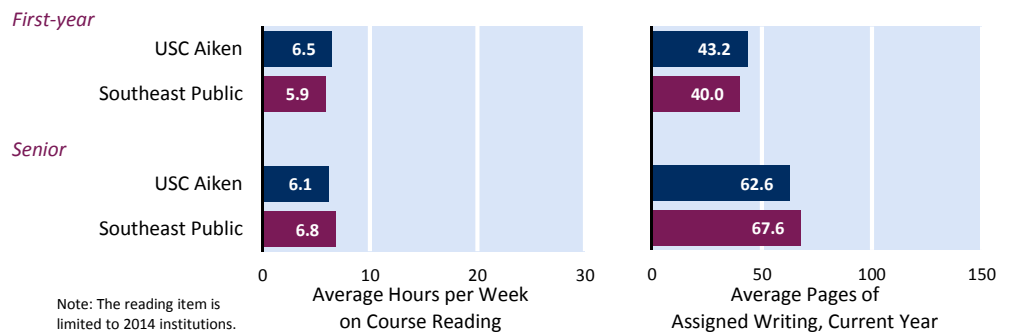
Time Spent Preparing for Class

This figure reports the average weekly class preparation time for our first-year and senior students compared to students in our comparison group.



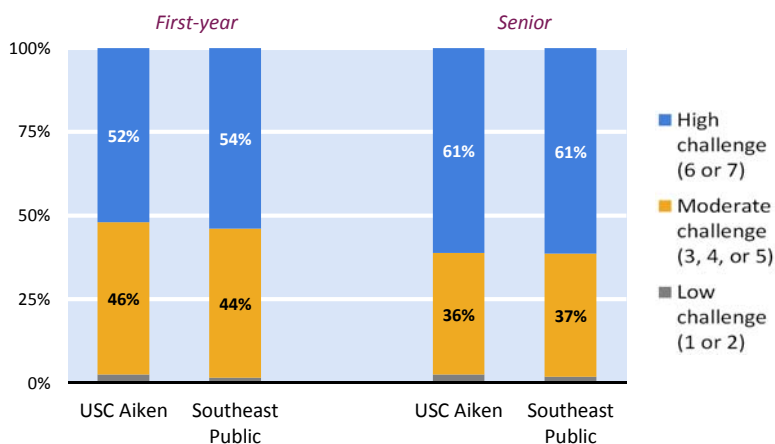
Reading and Writing

These figures summarize the number of hours our students spent reading for their courses and the average number of pages of assigned writing compared to students in our comparison group. Each is an estimate calculated from two or more separate survey questions.



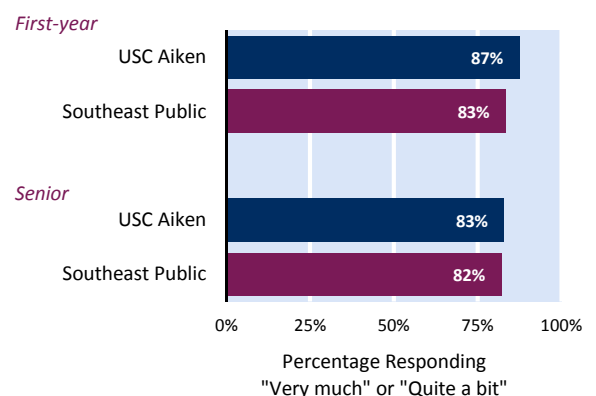
Challenging Students to Do Their Best Work

To what extent did students' courses challenge them to do their best work? Response options ranged from 1 = "Not at all" to 7 = "Very much."



Academic Emphasis

How much did students say their institution emphasizes spending significant time studying and on academic work? Response options included "Very much," "Quite a bit," "Some," and "Very little."



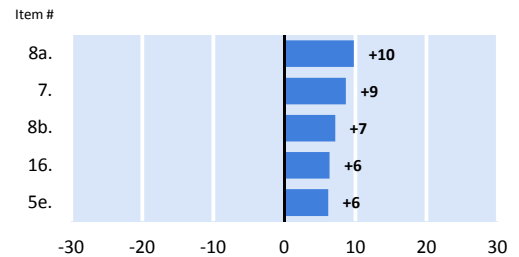
Item Comparisons

By examining individual NSSE questions, you can better understand what contributes to our institution's performance on Engagement Indicators and High-Impact Practices. This section displays the five questions^a on which our first-year and senior students scored the highest and the five questions on which they scored the lowest, relative to students in our comparison group. Parenthetical notes indicate whether an item belongs to a specific Engagement Indicator or is a High-Impact Practice. While these questions represent the largest differences (in percentage points), they may not be the most important to our institutional mission or current goals. For additional results, refer to the *Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons* report.

First-year

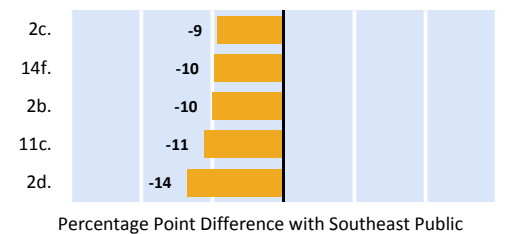
Highest Performing Relative to Southeast Public

- Discussions with... People of a race or ethnicity other than your own^b (DD)
- Assigned more than 50 pages of writing^b
- Discussions with... People from an economic background other than your own^b (DD)
- Spent more than 10 hours per week on assigned reading^f
- Instructors provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments^c (ET)



Lowest Performing Relative to Southeast Public

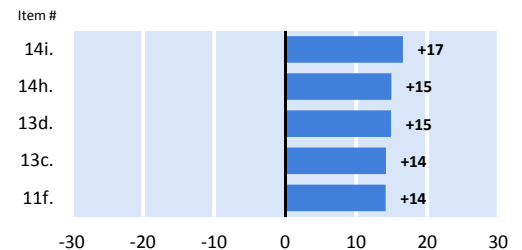
- Included diverse perspectives (...) in course discussions or assignments^b (RI)
- Institution emphasis on providing support for your overall well-being...^c (SE)
- Connected your learning to societal problems or issues^b (RI)
- Participated in a learning community or some other formal program where... (HIP)
- Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue^b (RI)



Senior

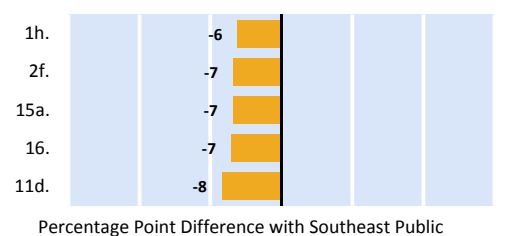
Highest Performing Relative to Southeast Public

- Institution emphasis on attending events that address important social/econ./polit. issues^c (SE)
- Institution emphasis on attending campus activities and events (...) ^c (SE)
- Quality of interactions with student services staff (...) ^d (QI)
- Quality of interactions with faculty^d (QI)
- Completed a culminating senior experience (...) (HIP)



Lowest Performing Relative to Southeast Public

- Worked with other students on course projects or assignments^b (CL)
- Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept^b (RI)
- Spent more than 15 hours per week preparing for class
- Spent more than 10 hours per week on assigned reading^f
- Participated in a study abroad program (HIP)



a. The displays on this page draw from the items that make up the ten Engagement Indicators (EIs), six High-Impact Practices (HIPs), and the additional academic challenge items reported on page 2. Key to abbreviations for EI items: HO = Higher-Order Learning, RI = Reflective & Integrative Learning, LS = Learning Strategies, QR = Quantitative Reasoning, CL = Collaborative Learning, DD = Discussions with Diverse Others, SF = Student-Faculty Interaction, ET = Effective Teaching Practices, QI = Quality of Interactions, SE = Supportive Environment. HIP items are also indicated. Item numbering corresponds to the survey facsimile included in the *Institutional Report*.

b. Combination of students responding "Very often" or "Often."

c. Combination of students responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit."

d. Rated at least 6 on a 7-point scale.

e. Percentage reporting at least "Some."

f. Estimate based on the reported amount of course preparation time spent on assigned reading.










g. Estimate based on number of assigned writing tasks of various lengths.

How Students Assess Their Experience

Students' perceptions of their cognitive and affective development, as well as their overall satisfaction with the institution, provide useful evidence of their educational experiences. For more details, refer to the *Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons* report.

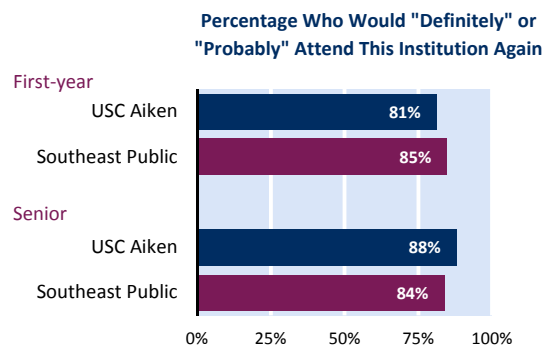
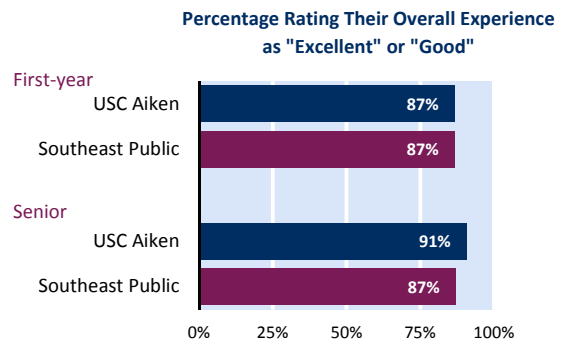
Perceived Gains Among Seniors

Students reported how much their experience at the institution contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in ten areas.

Perceived Gains (Sorted highest to lowest)	Percentage of Seniors Responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit"
Writing clearly and effectively	86% 
Thinking critically and analytically	84% 
Speaking clearly and effectively	84% 
Working effectively with others	77% 
Acquiring job- or work-related knowledge and skills	73% 
Understanding people of other backgrounds (econ., racial/ethnic, polit., relig., nation., etc.)	72% 
Developing or clarifying a personal code of values and ethics	71% 
Analyzing numerical and statistical information	70% 
Solving complex real-world problems	68% 
Being an informed and active citizen	67% 

Satisfaction with USC Aiken

Students rated their overall experience at the institution, and whether or not they would choose it again.



Administration Details

Response Summary

	Count	Resp. rate	Female	Full-time
<i>First-year</i>	147	26%	74%	94%
<i>Senior</i>	137	31%	73%	91%

Refer to the *Administration Summary* and *Respondent Profile* reports for more information.

What is NSSE?

NSSE annually collects information at hundreds of four-year colleges and universities about student participation in activities and programs that promote their learning and personal development. The results provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending their college or university. Institutions use the data to identify aspects of the undergraduate experience that can be improved through changes in policy and practice.

NSSE has been in operation since 2000 and has been used at more than 1,500 colleges and universities in the US and Canada. More than 90% of participating institutions administer the survey on a periodic basis.