Summary of Key Findings

- When compared to Tarleton’s first-year students, Tarleton seniors demonstrated:
  - higher mean scores on the benchmarks: Academic Challenge; Active and Collaborative Learning; Student-Faculty Interactions; and Enriching Educational Experiences
  - lower mean scores on the benchmark of Supportive Campus Environment

- In relation to 3 peer/aspiration comparison groups, Tarleton first-year students demonstrated:
  - lower mean scores on the benchmarks: Academic Challenge; Active and Collaborative Learning; and Enriching Educational Experiences

- In relation to 3 peer/aspiration comparison groups, Tarleton seniors demonstrated:
  - higher mean scores on all benchmarks than students from Texas Tech, Sam Houston State University, and UT Arlington, Dallas, El Paso, and San Antonio

- When pre-college expectations were compared to first-year experiences, Tarleton first-year students reported:
  - an increase in the amount of time spent relaxing and socializing
  - a decrease in how often they expected to collaborate with other students, discuss ideas with faculty, make class presentations, and work with faculty on activities other than class work

- When high school performance was compared to first-year experiences, Tarleton students reported:
  - an increase in how often they came to class without completing assignments; prepared two or more drafts of a paper; and worked with classmates outside of class
  - a decrease in the number of conversations with students of different race/ethnicity; the number of presentations made in class; and how often they asked questions/contributed in class

- When comparing 2010 first-year students and participation in Duck Camp:
  - students who participated persisted from fall 2010 to spring 2011 at a statistically significant higher level than those who did not
  - when controlling for pre-college differences, there was no statistically significant difference in NSSE benchmark averages between those who participated in Duck Camp and those who did not
Introduction

The Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) is administered to first-year students prior to the fall semester in an attempt to obtain baseline information related to pre-college expectations related to academic engagement and satisfaction. The follow-up survey, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), is administered during the subsequent spring semester to measure first-year students’ as well as seniors’ perceived levels of college faculty interaction, experiences with challenging coursework, and development in collaborative learning activities.

One aim of this report is to provide mean and effect size NSSE benchmark comparisons between Tarleton’s first-year and senior students as well as three Tarleton selected peer groups. A second purpose of this summary is to report BCSSE/NSSE effect size differences between high school performance, pre-college expectations, and actual first-year experiences for Tarleton’s 2010 first-year students. The final aim of this report is to provide the responses to 20 additional Tarleton specific questions related to student satisfaction with academics, student services & programs, and the campus environment.

Methodology

The paper version of the BCSSE was administered to approximately 1,350 entering Tarleton students during the summer 2010 Texan Orientation sessions with 1,086 students completing the instrument. After the Spring 2011 census date, Institutional Research identified the BCSSE participants who persisted and subsequently served as the first-year target population for the administration of the NSSE (N=883). With the assistance of Residential Living and Learning and Recreational Sports, 444 of the BCSSE respondents completed the paper version of the NSSE between April and May of 2011. In collaboration with Academic Affairs and Tarleton faculty, 297 senior students from randomly selected classrooms across Tarleton’s five colleges completed the NSSE during the same time period. Collecting data from first-year and senior students allowed for an annual and 4-year longitudinal analysis of increases in academic engagement as a potentially indirect result of the Tarleton experience.

Data Analysis

Mean comparisons and effect size differences were conducted by classification (first-year and senior) and across comparison groups. Statistical analyses were conducted on the paired BCSSE/NSSE questions to identify statistically significant differences and associated effect sizes. Finally, frequency distributions were calculated for the 20 Tarleton specific questions.
This report contains the following:

- A listing of the NSSE Benchmarks and example questions
- Mean and effect size comparisons for Tarleton first-year and senior students by NSSE benchmarks
- $T$-test and effect size comparison of paired BCSSE/NSSE questions based upon high school performance, pre-college expectations, and actual first-year experiences
- NSSE comparison groups
- Mean and effect size comparisons for Tarleton first-year students and the comparison groups by NSSE benchmarks
- Mean and effect size comparisons for Tarleton seniors and the comparison groups by NSSE benchmarks
- Frequency distributions for Tarleton specific questions
- Mean and effect size comparisons for Tarleton first-year and senior students by NSSE benchmarks for 2007, 2009, and 2011 administrations
NSSE Benchmarks and Example Questions

Level of Academic Challenge
- Hours spent preparing for class
- Number of assigned text books & course readings
- Number of written papers
- Emphasis on analysis, synthesis, making judgments

Active & Collaborative Learning
- Asked questions in class
- Made a class presentation
- Worked with other students in/outside of class
- Participated in community-based course as part of class

Student/Faculty Interactions
- Discussed grades/assignments/career plans with instructor
- Discussed ideas from readings with faculty outside of class
- Collaborated with faculty on activities other than coursework
- Participated in faculty research

Enriching Educational Experiences
- Hours participated in co-curricular activities
- Community service or volunteer work
- Practicum, internships, field experience, or clinical assignment
- Serious conversations with students of different race/ethnicity/religion

Supportive Campus Environment
- Campus provides support to succeed academically
- Quality of relationships with other students/faculty/staff
- Campus helps you cope with non-academic responsibilities
- Campus provides support to thrive socially
NSSE Mean Benchmark Comparison
First-Year vs Seniors
Spring 2011

Academic Challenge*
Active and Collaborative Learning*
Student-Faculty Interaction*
Enriching Educational Experience*
Supportive Campus Environment

First-Years
Seniors

Effect Size

0.50
0.74
0.36
0.74
0.06

0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70

* p<.05
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Legend</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statistically Significant Differences (probability that differences are not due to chance): *p&lt;.05  ***p&lt;.001</td>
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<td>Effect Size Differences (magnitude of difference): small &lt;.20; moderate .50; large .80 or &gt;</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Self-reported changes from high school to end of first-year and changes from pre-college expectations to end of first-year (n=444)</strong></th>
<th><strong>High School Compared to End of First-Year</strong></th>
<th><strong>Pre-College Expectations Compared to End of First-Year</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Came to class without completing readings/assignments</td>
<td>0.29 ***</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepared two or more drafts of a paper</td>
<td>0.21 ***</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Worked with classmates outside of class on assignments</td>
<td>0.16 ***</td>
<td>-0.67 ***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussed ideas from readings/class with others outside of class</td>
<td>0.10 *</td>
<td>-0.31 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had serious conversations with students of different religion/politics</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.27 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussed ideas from readings/class with faculty outside of class</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.59 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussed grades/assignments with a teacher/instructor</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.33 ***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Had serious conversations with students of different race/ethnicity</td>
<td>-0.16 ***</td>
<td>-0.28 ***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Talked with counselor/faculty about college/career plans</td>
<td>-0.18 ***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Made a class presentation</td>
<td>-0.46 ***</td>
<td>-0.56 ***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worked with other students on projects during class</td>
<td>-0.51 ***</td>
<td>-0.47 ***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions</td>
<td>-0.51 ***</td>
<td>-0.59 ***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worked on a paper that required synthesizing ideas/information from different sources</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.18 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received prompt feedback from faculty on academic performance</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.40 ***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learned something that changed the way you understood an issue or idea</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.46 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tried to better understand someone else's views by adopting their perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.50 ***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Put together ideas/concepts from different courses when completing assignments/class discussions</td>
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<td>-0.56 ***</td>
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<td>Worked with faculty on activities other than coursework</td>
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<td>-0.76 ***</td>
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<td>Hours spent per week preparing for class (studying, doing homework, etc...)</td>
<td>0.44 ***</td>
<td>-0.58 ***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hours spent per week relaxing and socializing</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.23 ***</td>
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<td>Hours spent per week working for pay off-campus</td>
<td>-0.61 ***</td>
<td>-0.64 ***</td>
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<td>Hours spent per week participating in co-curricular activities</td>
<td>-0.71 ***</td>
<td>-0.49 ***</td>
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<td>Hours spent per week working for pay on-campus</td>
<td>-0.84 ***</td>
<td>-0.94 ***</td>
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<td>Comparison Group 1</td>
<td>Comparison Group 2</td>
<td>Comparison Group 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
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<td>--------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Comprehensive, Doctoral, and TAMUS)</td>
<td>(State Aspirations, Doctoral, and Emerging Research Institutions)</td>
<td>(National)</td>
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<td>Stephen F. Austin State University</td>
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<td>Appalachian State University</td>
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<td>The University of Texas at El Paso</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The University of Texas at San Antonio</td>
<td>Emporia State University</td>
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<td></td>
<td>University of Houston</td>
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For additional information/questions/please contact Dr. Michael Haynes, Tarleton State University Office of Institutional Research
## Effect Size Differences between Tarleton First-Years and Comparison Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Comp Group 1</th>
<th>Comp Group 2</th>
<th>Comp Group 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEVEL OF ACADEMIC CHALLENGE (LAC)</strong></td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ACTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING (ACL)</strong></td>
<td>-0.24</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>STUDENT-FACULTY INTERACTION (SFI)</strong></td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENRICHING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES (EEE)</strong></td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPPORTIVE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT (SCE)</strong></td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For additional information/questions/potential contact Dr. Michael Haynes, Tarleton State University Office of Institutional Research
Effect Size Differences between Tarleton Seniors and Comparison Groups

- LEVEL OF ACADEMIC CHALLENGE (LAC)
- ACTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING (ACL)
- STUDENT-FACULTY INTERACTION (SFI)
- ENRICHING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES (EEE)
- SUPPORTIVE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT (SCE)

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Additional NSSE Questions Specific to Tarleton

Academics
- 85.9% indicated that navigating and completing the admission process was easy
- 82.6% agreed/strongly agreed that the registration timeframe is reasonable
- 88.2% were satisfied with the accessibility of their academic advisor
- 85.5% indicated the academic requirements were easy to understand
- 95.4% found the academic staff to be knowledgeable about their areas
- 95.2% agreed/strongly agreed that teaching facilities provide an appropriate learning environment
- 55.7% indicated that they knew how to file a complaint regarding academic issues
- 94.9% indicated that the library staff was helpful
- 95.9% agreed/strongly agreed that the library’s resources were adequate

Student Services & Programs
- 94.7% agreed/strongly agreed that non-academic staff was knowledgeable about their areas
- 87.5% indicated that communications about student services is clear and effective
- 91.1% believed that the student handbook provides useful information
- 87.6% indicated that offices hours were convenient
- 54.2% agreed/strongly agreed that they knew how to file a complaint regarding student services
- 94.5% indicated that computing resources were adequate
- 84.8% agreed/strongly agreed that the university’s website is well organized and easy to access

Campus Environment
- 94.5% agreed/strongly agreed that they felt safe on campus
- 95.3% indicated that the campus is well maintained
- 95.2% agreed/strongly agreed that Tarleton’s campus is supportive of student learning
- 77.4% believed that the institution will respond to their concerns
For additional information/questions please contact Dr. Michael Haynes, Tarleton State University Office of Institutional Research.

NSSE Benchmark Comparisons
First-Year & Senior Students

NSSE Benchmark Comparisons
First-Year & Senior Students
Effect Size Differences between Tarleton First-Years and Seniors for 2007, 2009, 2011

LEVEL OF ACADEMIC CHALLENGE (LAC)  
ACTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING (ACL)  
STUDENT-FACULTY INTERACTION (SFI)  
ENRICHING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE (EEE)  
SUPPORTIVE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT (SCE)  

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