Administration of Indiana University’s “Beginning College Survey of Student
Engagement (BCSSE)” Academic Year 2010-2011

Summary of Key Findings

- Of the 1,086 first-year Tarleton students completing the BCSSE in summer 2010:
  - 1,053 matriculated to fall, 2010 semester
  - 63% reported as female; 37% male
  - 81% were white; 7% Mexican/Mexican American; 3% Black/African American
  - 51% were first-generation college students
  - 13% participated in one of 10 Learning Communities
  - 81% persisted from fall 2010 to spring 2011
- By gender:
  - females demonstrate higher levels of high school academic engagement
  - males spent more time in high school relaxing/partying
- By ethnicity:
  - Mexican-American students demonstrated lowest levels of high school academic engagement
  - campus environment less important to Native American/white students
- First-generation students:
  - place more importance on campus environment than second-generation counterparts
  - expect difficulty in paying for college
  - persisted to spring 2011 at lower levels
- Learning Community participants:
  - took more high school honors and college credit courses
  - spent more hours preparing for high school classes
  - have higher expectations of diverse opportunities at college
  - persisted to spring 2011 at higher levels

Introduction

The BCSSE is administered to first-year students prior to the fall semester in an attempt to obtain baseline information related to pre and nascent college academic engagement and satisfaction. Specifically, the BCSSE measures students’ perceptions related to the following scales:
- High School Academic Engagement (HSE)
- Expected Academic Engagement (EAE)
- Expected Academic Perseverance (EAP)
- Expected Academic Difficulty (EAD)
- Perceived Academic Preparation (PAP)
- Importance of Campus Environment (ICE)

The follow-up survey, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is administered during the subsequent spring semester to measure first-year students’ perceived levels of college faculty interaction, experiences with challenging coursework, and development in collaborative learning activities.

One aim of this summary was to present a demographic depiction of Tarleton’s 2010-2011 first-year class. A second purpose of this report was to analyze BCSSE scale values/individual responses based upon: gender; ethnicity; first-generation college status; participation in a Learning Community; and fall 2010 to spring 2011 persistence status.

Methodology

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. This represents a response rate of 73.4% for the 2010 entering first-year class.

Data Analysis

As part of the BCSSE administration, Indiana University delivers an SPSS data set of all survey responses. In addition to self-reported coding for gender, ethnicity, and first-generation college status, the data set was coded to identify students who participated in one of 10 Learning Communities as well as those who persisted to spring 2011. SPSS 17.0 was then utilized to generate descriptive statistics and frequency distributions in order to present a concrete depiction of Tarleton’s 2010-2011 first-year class. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted on the BCSSE scales and individual questions respectively to determine if statistically significant differences exist across the six scales/questions based on group membership (gender, ethnicity, first-generation status, etc...).
This report contains the following:

- A listing of the six BCSSE scales with examples of accompanying questions
- Descriptive statistics for the six BCSSE scales (representing 2010-2011 first-year responses)
- The Pearson product-moment correlation matrix of the six BCSSE scales
- Statistically significant differences on BCSSE scales and associated questions by:
  - Gender
  - Ethnicity
  - First-generation college status
  - Learning Community participation
  - Persistence to spring 2011
Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement Scales and Example Questions

**High School Academic Engagement (HSE):** Engagement in educationally relevant behaviors during the last year of high school
- Read assigned textbooks
- Hours per week preparing for class
- Asked questions in class

**Expected Academic Engagement (EAE):** Expected engagement in educationally relevant behaviors during the first-year of college
- Expect to ask questions in class
- Expect to work with other student in class
- Discuss grades or assignments with faculty

**Expected Academic Perseverance (EAP):** Student certainty that they will persist in the face of academic adversity
- Certainty that you will study when other things to do
- Participate in course discussions when not feeling like it
- Finish project when encountering challenges

**Expected Academic Difficulty (EAD):** Expected academic difficulty during the first-year of college
- Difficulty in learning course material
- Managing time
- Getting help with school work

**Perceived Academic Preparation (PAP):** Student perception of their academic preparation
- Writing clearly and effectively
- Thinking critically and analytically
- Analyze math or quantitative problems

**Importance of Campus Environment (ICE):** Student-rated importance that the institution provides a challenging/supportive environment
- Opportunities to interact with students from different economic, social, ethnic backgrounds
- Support to help you thrive socially
- Assistance in coping with non-academic responsibilities
Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HSE</td>
<td>5.072</td>
<td>1.395</td>
<td>1,086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAE</td>
<td>5.890</td>
<td>1.429</td>
<td>1,086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAP</td>
<td>6.980</td>
<td>1.655</td>
<td>1,086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAD</td>
<td>4.713</td>
<td>1.609</td>
<td>1,086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAP</td>
<td>6.775</td>
<td>1.588</td>
<td>1,086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICE</td>
<td>7.120</td>
<td>1.711</td>
<td>1,086</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Matrix for the Six BCSSE Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HSE</th>
<th>EAE</th>
<th>EAP</th>
<th>EAD</th>
<th>PAP</th>
<th>ICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HSE</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.497**</td>
<td>.287**</td>
<td>-.051</td>
<td>.241**</td>
<td>.227**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAE</td>
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<td>1.00</td>
<td>.441**</td>
<td>-.040</td>
<td>.212**</td>
<td>.356**</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAP</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>-.038</td>
<td>.464**</td>
<td>.444**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAD</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>-.163**</td>
<td>-.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAP</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.330**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICE</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<.01
(Legend: <.250 weak; .300-.600 moderate; >.600 strong)
**Statistically Significant Differences on BCSSE Scales by Gender:**

- **High School Academic Engagement**
  - females revised high school assignments more often
  - females spent more hours preparing for class
  - females read and wrote more during high school
- **Expected Academic Perseverance**
  - females more likely to search out additional information to help understand an assignment
  - females expect to ask for help when needed
- **Importance of Campus Environment**
  - females expect institution to provide challenging academic experience
  - highly important to females that institution provide support to succeed academically
  - females expect opportunities to interact with diverse students

**Statistically Significant Differences on BCSSE Scales by Ethnicity:**

- **High School Academic Engagement**
  - Mexican-American students least engaged
  - Multiracial students most engaged
- **Expected Academic Engagement**
  - Multiracial/Asian American/PI students expect to be most academically engaged in college
  - white/Other students expect to be least engaged academically
- **Importance of Campus Environment**
  - most important to African-American/Multiracial students
  - least important to Other/Native American/white students

**Statistically Significant Differences on BCSSE Scales by First-Generation Status:**

- **Importance of Campus Environment**
  - first-generations expect challenging academic experience
  - first-generations expect support in coping with non-academic responsibilities
  - first-generations expect opportunities to interact with diverse students
  - first-generations expect support to succeed academically
Statistically Significant Differences on BCSSE Scales by Learning Community participation:

- Importance of Campus Environment
  - participants expect opportunities to interact with diverse students
  - participants expect support to thrive socially

Statistically Significant Differences on BCSSE Scales by Persistence to Spring 2011

- no statistically significant differences on any scale