

**An Exploration of Evergreen Benchmark Scores  
on the National Survey of Student Engagement 2008**

Office of Institutional Research and Assessment  
The Evergreen State College  
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## Survey Overview

The Evergreen State College Office of Institutional Research and Assessment produces a report annually that provides details on Evergreen's benchmark scores on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). This report provides detail on individual questions that comprise Evergreen's benchmark scores on the NSSE.

The NSSE is a survey that assesses student engagement in educational practices that are associated with high levels of learning and development. NSSE developed five benchmarks of effective educational practice that are computed based on the results of clusters of individual survey questions.

The NSSE is administered by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research in cooperation with the Indiana University Center for Survey Research.

Evergreen seniors and first-year students have participated in the NSSE since 2000. This report details responses to the survey administered in Spring 2008.

## Participation in the Survey

NSSE staff determined the sample size based on total undergraduate enrollment for fall quarter. Since Evergreen had 4,282 undergraduates in Fall 2007, NSSE randomly selected an original sample of 1200 students, which was split evenly between first-year and senior students. NSSE 2008 was Evergreen's third consecutive year using the web+ mode of administration. This mode means that NSSE selects a much larger initial sample, and students are contacted primarily through email. During the reminder cycle, non-respondents receive one letter at their home mailing address, but all other contacts used students' Evergreen email addresses. Student contact begins in mid-winter quarter and surveys are collected through the beginning of June. The initial sample is adjusted for non-deliverable addresses and students no longer enrolled by spring quarter. Despite being our third year using the web+ mode and the policy change that students receive all official college communications via their evergreen.edu accounts, response rates were a bit lower this year.

Evergreen's response rate of 28% was lower than the national NSSE rate of 33%. Although the response rate of the sample slipped a bit, the results are more representative of the population of first-years and seniors than they were the previous year, with results received from 26% of all first-years and 22% of all seniors enrolled at Evergreen fall 2007.

Class category	Number at Evergreen Fall 2007	Number in Adjusted Sample*	NSSE completers	NSSE response rate	% of all students enrolled Fall 2007
First-year	924	801	239	30%	26%
Seniors	924	749	203	27%	22%

*\*Notes: due to third-party administration of this survey, students who indicate confidentiality on their student records are excluded from potential sample selection. Students with non-deliverable addresses are excluded from the "adjusted sample."*

A total of 714 institutions participated in the NSSE (referred to as "All NSSE" throughout this report). Comparison data for all NSSE questions are available for three comparison groups: all 714 NSSE institutions, a subset of the 46 participating Master's Colleges and Universities-Smaller Programs (Evergreen's Carnegie classification) referred to in this report as "Masters-Small", and 17 participating Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC).

## Benchmark Percentile Scores Compared to Above Average and High-performing Institutions

In the early years of NSSE, the administrators provided a complete range of deciles from which Evergreen could discern its percentile rank relative to each comparison group. Deciles were another lens into how an institution's performance fit into the overall distribution of scores for other participating institutions. In 2005, NSSE stopped providing that presentation of the data to discourage misuse of the survey results, but they replaced the full range of deciles with a new comparison methodology. NSSE now provides two reference groups to help institutions contextualize their scores: above-average institutions with benchmark scores in the top 50% of all participating institutions and high-performing institutions with benchmark scores in the top 10%. NSSE does not identify the institutions that are included in the above average and high performing groups, but it does provide an analysis of how Evergreen's benchmark scores compare to the averages for those two groups. Thus, Evergreen can determine if its average score for a particular benchmark is significantly higher than, lower than, or the same as each of the two performance comparison groups.

### *First-Year Comparison*

Average benchmark scores for Evergreen first-year students were not significantly different from the average benchmark scores of the top 10% of schools on the Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student Interactions with Faculty, Enriching Educational Experiences, and Supportive Campus Environment. In other words, Evergreen first-years were as engaged as students at high performing institutions for the five benchmarks. Evergreen first-year students' benchmark scores for Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning were significantly higher than the first-year students' at above average schools.

NSSE Benchmark (First-Year Students)	Evergreen Benchmark	Above Average (Top 50%)	High Performing (Top 10%)
Level of Academic Challenge	59.0	56.4*	60.7
Active and Collaborative Learning	53.9	47.5*	51.5
Student Interactions with Faculty	40.4	39.7	43.6
Enriching Educational Experiences	31.8	30.3	33.0
Supportive Campus Environment	67.0	65.8	68.5

*\*Evergreen mean benchmark significantly different than comparison group ( $p < .01$ )*

### *Senior-class Comparison*

The table below displays benchmark scores in the same comparative framework for senior-class respondents. Average benchmark scores for Evergreen seniors were not significantly different from the average benchmark scores of the top 10% of schools for Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, and Enriching Educational Experiences. Evergreen seniors' benchmark scores were significantly lower than the top 10% of institutions for Student Interactions with Faculty and Supportive Campus Environment; however, student engagement in these two areas did not differ significantly from the top 50% of participating institutions.

NSSE Benchmark (Senior-class Students)	Evergreen Benchmark	Above Average (Top 50%)	High Performing (Top 10%)
Level of Academic Challenge	64.8	59.9*	63.3
Active and Collaborative Learning	61.2	55.4*	59.6
Student Interactions with Faculty	51.0	49.3	55.3*
Enriching Educational Experiences	51.1	47.3*	54.3
Supportive Campus Environment	62.3	63.5	66.7*

*\*Evergreen mean benchmark significantly different than comparison group ( $p < .01$ )*

## Comparisons of Responses on Individual Questions for Each Benchmark

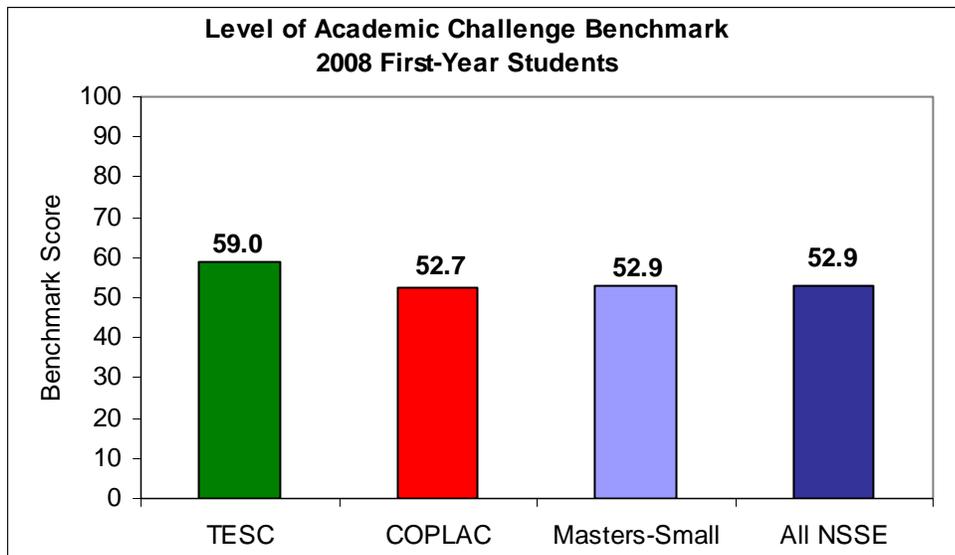
The following sections of this report provide detail on the individual items that comprise each benchmark, comparing the responses of Evergreen students to the responses of students within each comparison group. Benchmark comparison groups are all NSSE institutions, Masters Colleges and Universities-Smaller programs (Masters-Small), and a consortium of participating Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC). The responses of first-year students and seniors are discussed separately for each benchmark.

### Level of Academic Challenge Benchmark

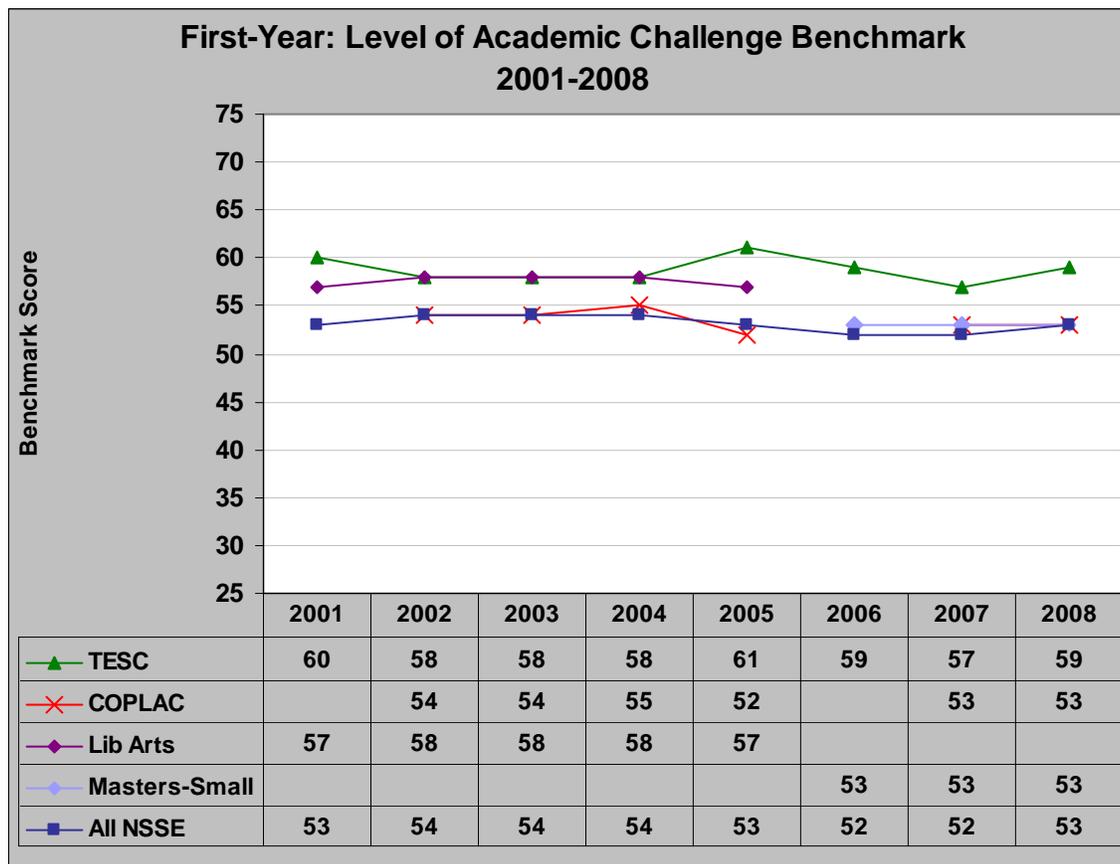
The NSSE Institutional Benchmark Report describes the Level of Academic Challenge Benchmark in the following terms: "Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance."

#### *First-Year Students and Level of Academic Challenge*

The chart below shows the benchmark scores for Evergreen and the three comparison groups on the Level of Academic Challenge benchmark. Evergreen first-year students' benchmark score significantly exceeded all of the comparison groups ( $p < .001$ ).



The following chart shows trends in Level of Academic Challenge Benchmark scores for Evergreen first-year students and comparison groups from 2001-2008. Note that trend charts in this report illustrate only the middle 50% range of possible scores (25 to 75) in order to accentuate differences. Scores for Evergreen first-year students peaked in 2005 and have matched or exceeded those of students in the comparison groups over time.



The following tables show first-year student means for the individual questions that make up the Level of Academic Challenge Benchmark scores for 2008. Means that were significantly different (at  $p < .01$ ) appear with an asterisk next to them.

There were seven questions in the Academic Challenge Benchmark for which Evergreen first-year students had significantly higher mean responses compared to one or more of the comparison groups. These questions are listed in the table below.

First-Year Students: Academic Challenge <i>*Evergreen mean significantly higher than comparison group (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, and other activities related to your academic program) <sup>1</sup>	4.50	4.01*	3.90*	4.04*
Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length pack or course readings <sup>2</sup>	3.76	3.33*	3.26*	3.24*
Number of written papers of fewer than 5 pages <sup>2</sup>	3.48	3.16*	3.07*	3.04*

<sup>1</sup> 8-point scale: 1=0 hrs/wk, 2= 1-5 hrs/wk, 3=6-10 hrs/week, 4=11-15 hrs/wk, 5=16-20 hrs/wk, 6=21-25 hrs/wk, 7=26-30 hrs/wk, 8=more than 30 hrs/wk

<sup>2</sup> 5-point scale: 1=None, 2=between 1-4, 3=between 5 and 10, 4=between 11 and 20, 5=more than 20

<b>First-Year Students: Academic Challenge</b> <i>*Evergreen mean significantly <u>higher</u> than comparison group (p&lt;.01)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Coursework emphasized <b>synthesizing</b> and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships <sup>3</sup>	3.43	2.87*	2.86*	2.89*
Coursework emphasized <b>making judgments</b> about the value of information, arguments, or methods, such as examining how other gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions <sup>3</sup>	3.21	2.89*	2.92*	2.90*
Coursework emphasized <b>analyzing</b> basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components <sup>3</sup>	3.49	3.12*	3.05*	3.10*
Coursework emphasized <b>applying</b> theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations <sup>3</sup>	3.23	2.99*	3.01*	3.03*

There was one item for which Evergreen first-year student responses were significantly lower than the responses of one or more comparison groups.

<b>First-Year Students: Academic Challenge</b> <i>*Evergreen mean significantly <u>lower</u> than comparison group (p&lt;.01)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Number of written papers or reports between <b>5 and 19 pages</b> <sup>4</sup>	2.03	2.30*	2.31*	2.29*

There were three items for which there were no statistically significant differences at p<.01 between the responses of Evergreen first-year students and first-year students in any of the comparison groups.

<b>First-Year Students: Academic Challenge</b> <i>No statistically significant differences (p&lt;.01)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Number of written papers or reports of <b>20 pages or more</b> <sup>4</sup>	1.26	1.23	1.34	1.28
Campus environment emphasizes spending significant amounts of time studying and on <b>academic work</b> <sup>3</sup>	3.02	3.11	3.11	3.14
<b>Worked harder</b> than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations <sup>5</sup>	2.72	2.59	2.72	2.65

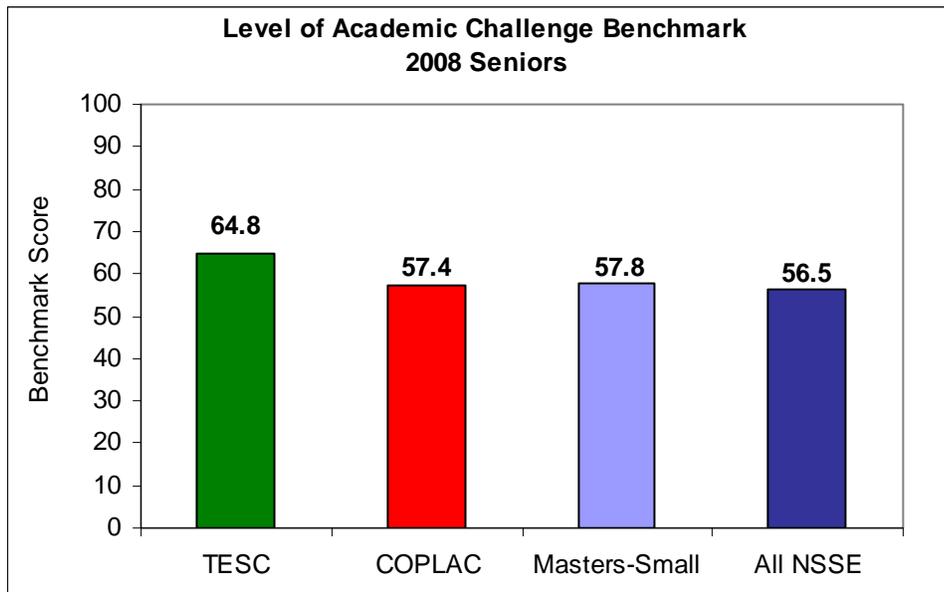
<sup>3</sup> 4-point scale: 1=Very little, 2=Some, 3=Quite a bit, 4=Very much

<sup>4</sup> 5-point scale: 1=None, 2=between 1-4, 3=between 5 and 10, 4=between 11 and 20, 5=more than 20

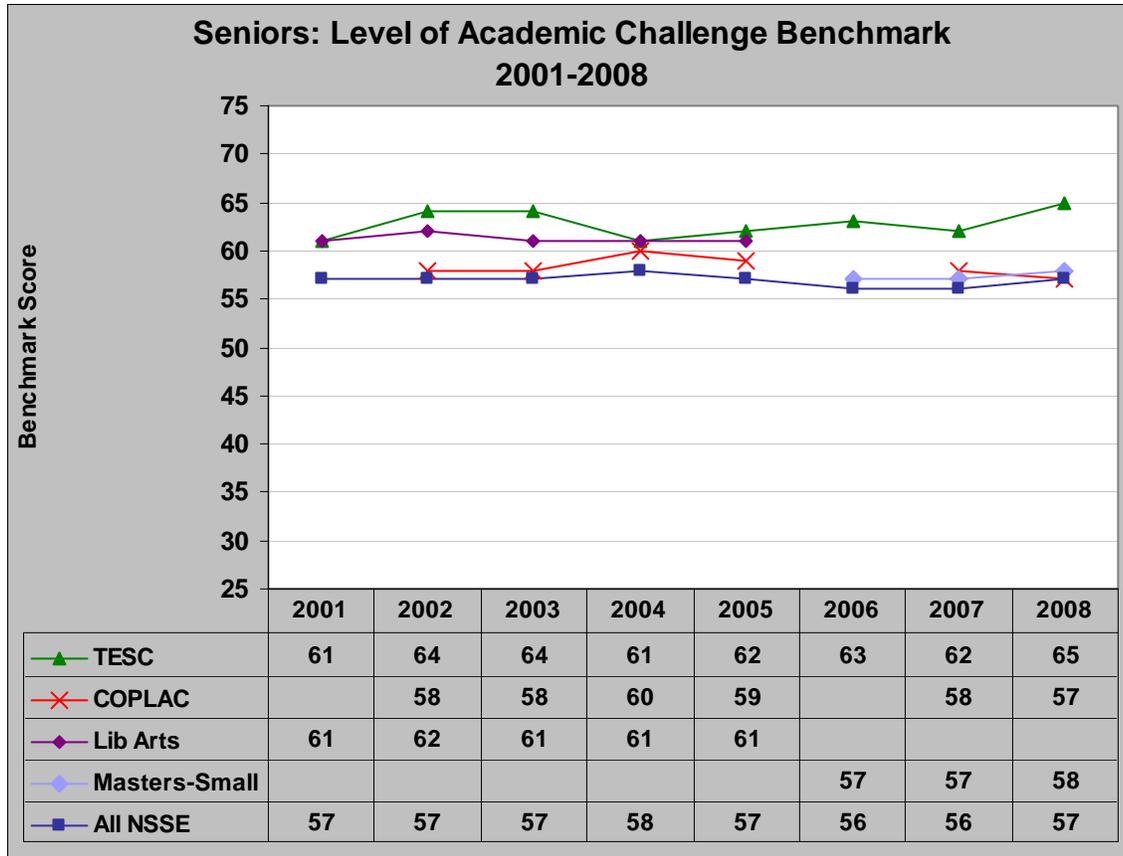
<sup>5</sup> 4-point scale: 1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often

### Seniors and Level of Academic Challenge

The chart below shows the benchmark scores for Evergreen seniors and comparison group seniors on the Level of Academic Challenge benchmark. Evergreen seniors' level of academic challenge was significantly higher than all three comparison groups ( $p < .001$ ).



The following chart shows trends in Level of Academic Challenge Benchmark scores for Evergreen seniors and comparison groups from 2001-2008. Evergreen seniors have been consistently strong in Level of Academic Challenge. For the last three years, they have exceeded other institutions in our Carnegie class, COPLAC peers, and All NSSE institutions.



The tables below show means for the individual questions that make up the benchmark score. Means that were significantly different (at  $p < .01$ ) appear with an asterisk next to the applicable comparison group.

There were eight items, listed in the table below, in which Evergreen seniors had significantly higher means on each item than seniors in one or more of the comparison groups.

<b>Seniors: Academic Challenge</b> <i>*Evergreen mean significantly higher than comparison group (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, and other activities related to your academic program) <sup>6</sup>	5.42	4.21*	4.09*	4.14*
Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length pack or course readings <sup>7</sup>	3.66	3.31*	3.23*	3.20*
Number of written papers of fewer than 5 pages <sup>7</sup>	3.40	3.09*	3.01*	3.00*
Coursework emphasized analyzing basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components <sup>8</sup>	3.54	3.27*	3.26*	3.24*
Coursework emphasized synthesizing and organizing ideas, information or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships <sup>8</sup>	3.62	3.08*	3.09*	3.05*
Coursework emphasized making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods, such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions <sup>8</sup>	3.33	3.01*	3.07*	3.01*
Coursework emphasized applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations <sup>8</sup>	3.41	3.19*	3.24*	3.19*
Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations. <sup>9</sup>	2.94	2.71*	2.83	2.73*

There were no items for which Evergreen seniors had a significantly lower mean response than seniors in any of the other comparison groups.

There were three items for which there were no statistically significant differences at  $p < .01$  between the mean responses of Evergreen seniors and seniors in comparison groups.

<b>Seniors: Academic Challenge</b> <i>No statistically significant differences (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more <sup>7</sup>	1.63	1.64	1.68	1.64
Campus environment emphasizes spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work <sup>8</sup>	3.18	3.19	3.15	3.14
Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages <sup>7</sup>	2.49	2.64	2.65	2.58

<sup>6</sup> 8-point scale: 1=0 hrs/wk, 2= 1-5 hrs/wk, 3=6-10 hrs/week, 4=11-15 hrs/wk, 5=16-20 hrs/wk, 6=21-25 hrs/wk, 7=26-30 hrs/wk, 8=more than 30 hrs/wk

<sup>7</sup> 5-point scale: 1=None, 2=between 1-4, 3=between 5 and 10, 4=between 11 and 20, 5=more than 20

<sup>8</sup> 4-point scale: 1=Very little, 2=Some, 3=Quite a bit, 4=Very much

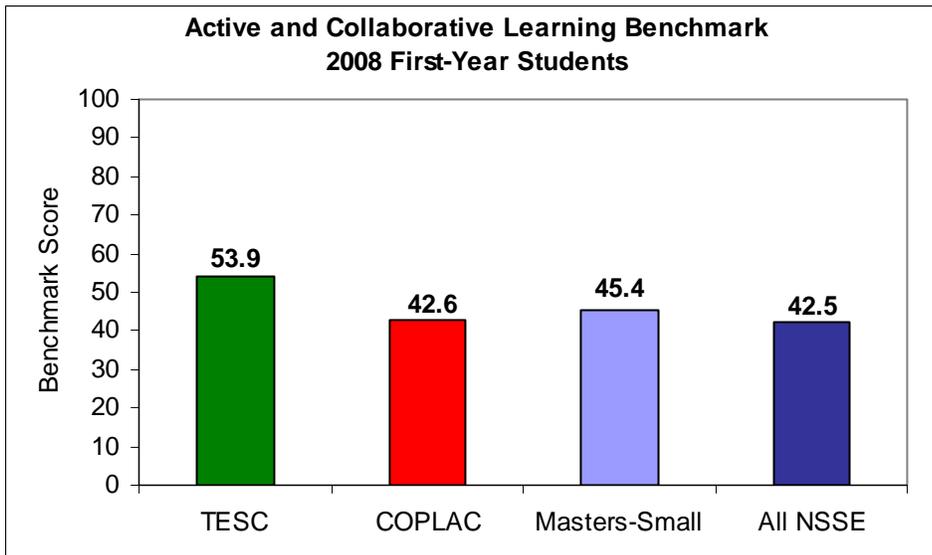
<sup>9</sup> 4-point scale: 1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often

## Active and Collaborative Learning Benchmark

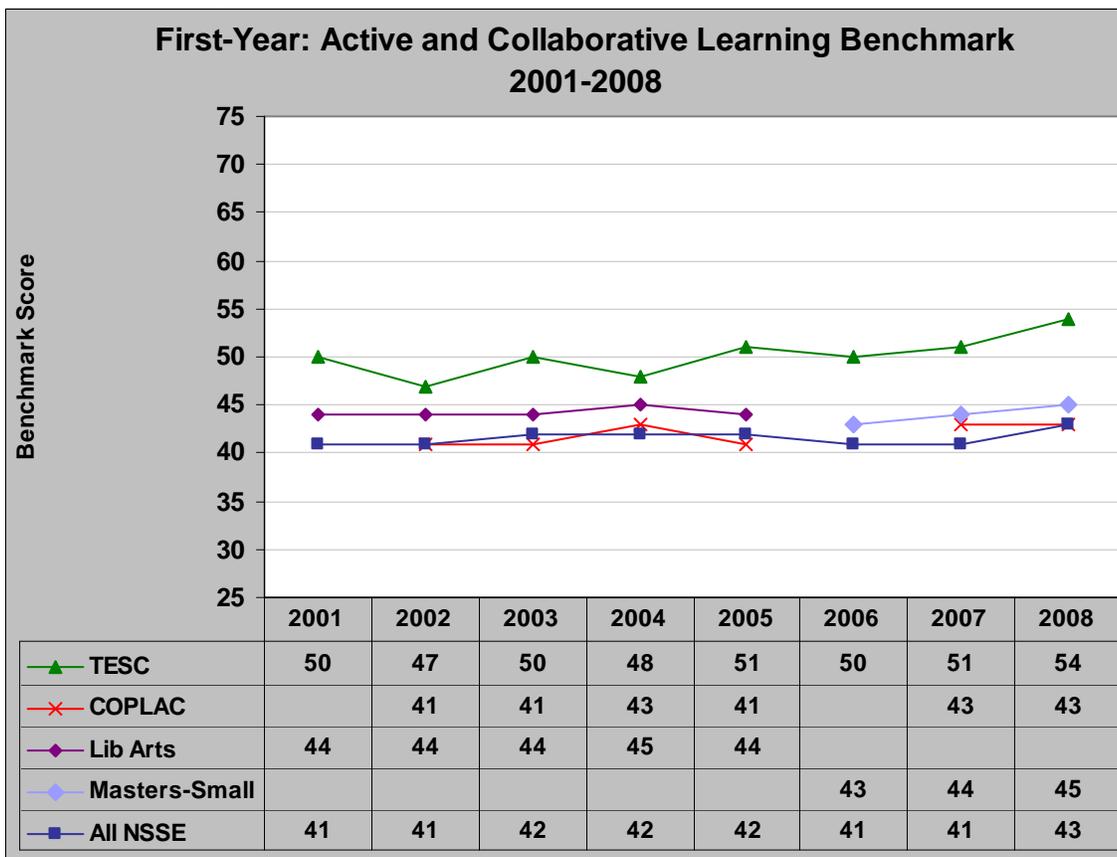
The NSSE Institutional Benchmark Report provides the following statement regarding the Active and Collaborative Learning Benchmark: "Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and asked to think about what they are learning in different settings. Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material prepares students for the messy, unscripted problems they will encounter daily during and after college."

### *First-Year Students and Active and Collaborative Learning*

The chart below shows the benchmark scores for Evergreen and comparison groups on the Active and Collaborative Learning Benchmark based on first-year student responses. Evergreen first-year students significantly exceed the other comparison groups on this benchmark ( $p < .001$ ).



The following chart shows trends in Active and Collaborative Learning Benchmark scores for Evergreen first-year students and comparison groups from 2001-2008. Evergreen's first-year students have outpaced the other comparison groups on this benchmark each year.



The tables on this page show means for the individual questions that make up the benchmark score. Means that were significantly different (at  $p < .01$ ) appear with an asterisk next to them.

There were six items in which Evergreen first-year students had significantly higher mean responses than first-year students from one or more comparison group.

<b>First-Year Students: Active and Collaborative Learning</b> <i>*Evergreen mean significantly <u>higher</u> than comparison group (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions <sup>10</sup>	3.21	2.82*	2.92*	2.78*
Made a class presentation <sup>10</sup>	2.46	2.30*	2.44	2.27*
Worked with other students on projects during class <sup>10</sup>	2.86	2.40*	2.47*	2.41*
Worked with other students outside of class to prepare assignments <sup>10</sup>	2.83	2.46*	2.46*	2.40*
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class <sup>10</sup>	3.40	2.71*	2.72*	2.69*
Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course <sup>10</sup>	1.75	1.55*	1.72	1.60

There were *no* benchmark items for which the average response of Evergreen first-year students was significantly lower than the other comparison groups.

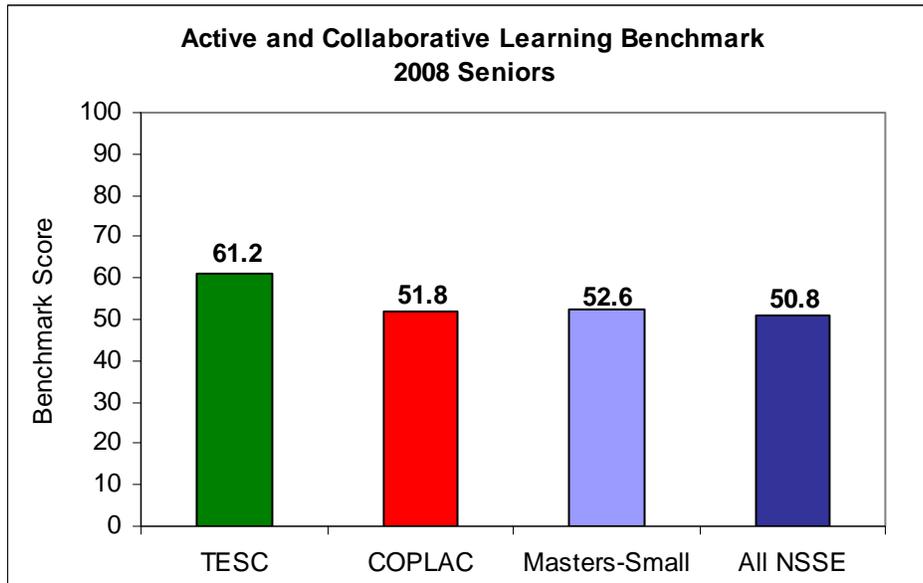
There was only one item for which there was no statistically significant difference between the mean responses of Evergreen first-years and other first-year students.

<b>First-Year Students: Active and Collaborative Learning</b> <i>No statistically significant differences (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary) <sup>10</sup>	1.68	1.63	1.74	1.70

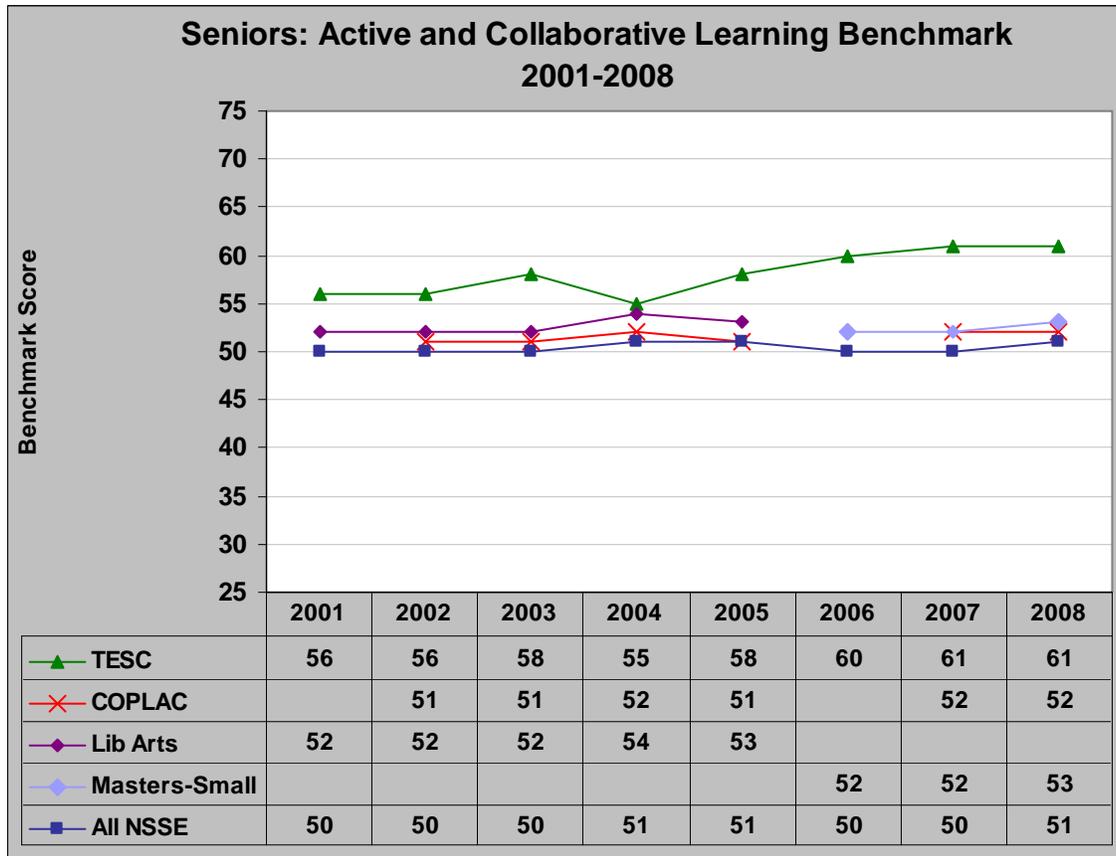
<sup>10</sup> 4-point scale: 1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often

### Seniors and Active and Collaborative Learning

The chart below shows the benchmark scores for the Active and Collaborative Learning Benchmark for Evergreen seniors compared to seniors in the comparison groups. Evergreen seniors report significantly more engagement in Active and Collaborative Learning experiences than seniors in the other groups on this measure ( $p < .001$ ).



The following chart shows trends in Active and Collaborative Learning Benchmark scores for Evergreen seniors and comparison groups from 2001-2008. Evergreen's seniors continue to outpace seniors in the other comparison groups on this benchmark and have widened the gap over the past four years.



The tables on this page show means for the individual questions that make up the benchmark score. Means that were significantly different (at  $p < .01$ ) appear with an asterisk next to the appropriate comparison group.

There were five items for which Evergreen seniors reported significantly higher average levels of engagement than seniors in at least one of the comparison groups.

<b>Seniors: Active and Collaborative Learning</b> <i>*Evergreen mean significantly <u>higher</u> than comparison group (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions <sup>11</sup>	3.47	3.17*	3.27*	3.07*
Worked with other students on projects during class <sup>11</sup>	3.02	2.52*	2.54*	2.52*
Worked with other students outside of class to prepare assignments <sup>11</sup>	2.93	2.74*	2.65*	2.75*
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class <sup>11</sup>	3.38	2.90*	2.89*	2.84*
Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course <sup>11</sup>	1.94	1.74*	1.85	1.74*

There were *no* items in which Evergreen seniors had a lower average score than seniors from other comparison groups.

There were two items for which there was no statistically significant difference between the mean responses of Evergreen seniors and seniors from other comparison groups.

<b>Seniors: Active and Collaborative Learning</b> <i>No statistically significant differences (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Made a class presentation <sup>11</sup>	2.94	2.84	2.92	2.80
Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary) <sup>11</sup>	2.03	1.90	1.85	1.88

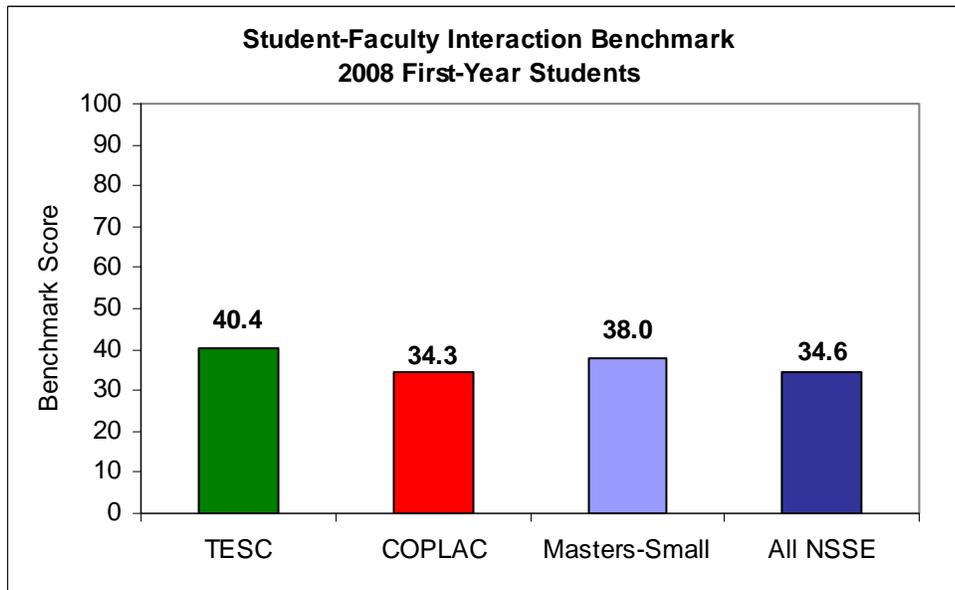
<sup>11</sup> 4-point scale: 1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often

## Student-Faculty Interactions Benchmark

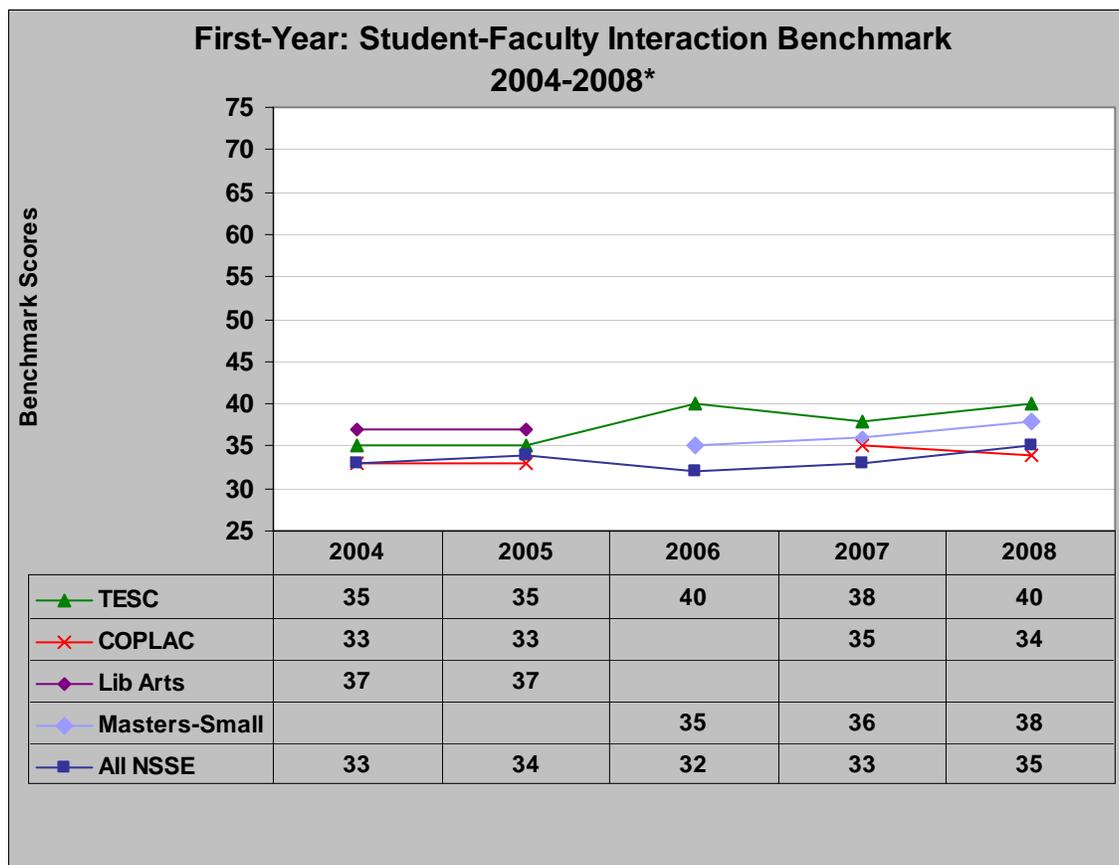
The NSSE Institutional Benchmark Report describes the Student-Faculty Interactions Benchmark as follows: "Students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside the classroom. As a result, their teachers become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, life-long learning."

### *First-Year Students and Student-Faculty Interactions*

The chart below shows the benchmark scores for the Student-Faculty Interactions benchmark for Evergreen first-years compared to first-years in the comparison groups. Evergreen first-years' average score for this measure was comparable to that of first-years at other Masters-Small institutions, and it was significantly higher than the scores of first-years at COPLAC and All NSSE institutions ( $p < .001$ ).



The benchmark scores prior to 2004 could not be added to the trend line below, as one of the questions in this benchmark was reconfigured by NSSE in 2004. Therefore, benchmark scores from prior years are not comparable. Evergreen first-years have been reporting higher average levels of Student-Faculty Interaction over the past three years, compared to earlier scores.



The following tables show means for the individual questions that make up the benchmark score. Means that were significantly different (at  $p < .01$ ) appear with an asterisk next to them.

There were three items for which Evergreen's first-year students had significantly higher average scores than first-year students in one or more of the comparison groups.

First-Year Students: Student-Faculty Interaction <i>*Evergreen mean significantly <u>higher</u> than comparison group (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Discussed ideas from your reading or classes with faculty members outside of class <sup>12</sup>	2.31	1.90*	1.99*	1.91*
Received prompt feedback from faculty on your academic performance <sup>12</sup>	3.04	2.68*	2.71*	2.65*
Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor <sup>12</sup>	2.77	2.59*	2.74	2.62*

There was one item for which Evergreen mean responses were significantly lower than the mean response of first-year students in one of the comparison groups.

First-Year Students: Student-Faculty Interaction <i>*Evergreen mean significantly <u>lower</u> than comparison group (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor <sup>12</sup>	2.09	2.13	2.31*	2.19

<sup>12</sup> 4-point scale: 1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often

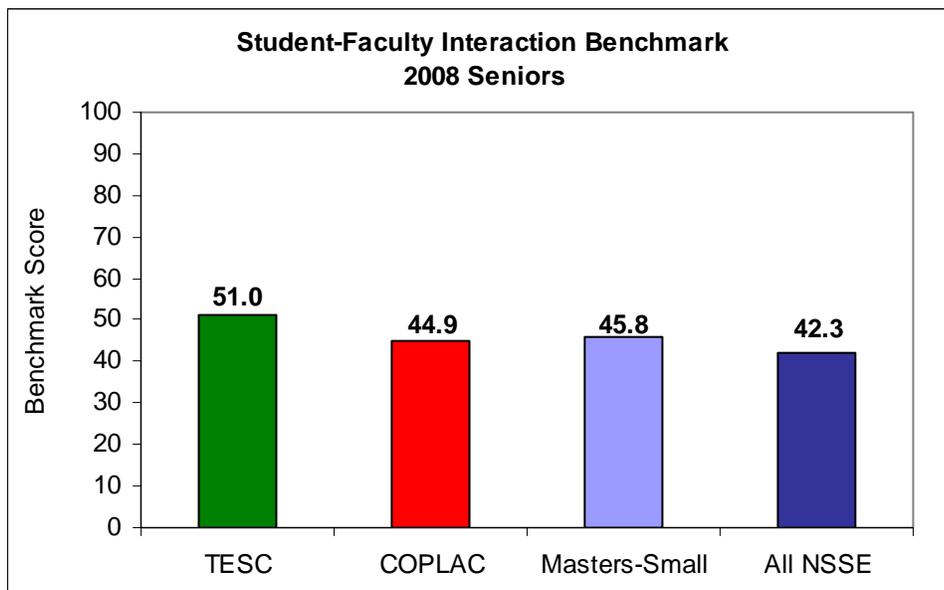
There were two items for which there were no significant differences at  $p < .01$  between the average ratings of Evergreen first-year students and first-years of other comparison groups. The percentages after the question "Have you worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements?" represent the percentage of students who replied "Yes".

<b>First-Year Students: Student-Faculty Interaction</b> <i>No statistically significant differences (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Have you worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements? <sup>13</sup>	10%	5%	6%	5%
Worked with faculty on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student activities, etc.) <sup>14</sup>	1.69	1.68	1.80	1.65

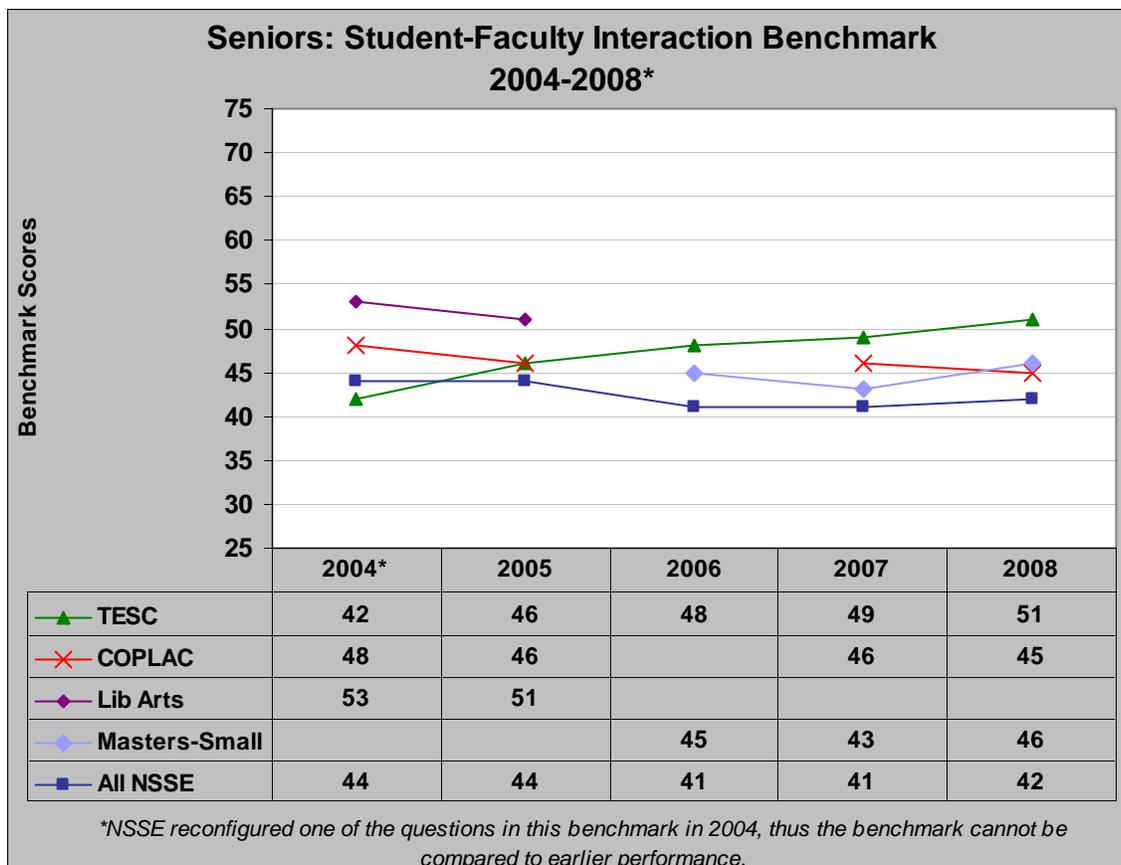
<sup>13</sup> Percent of students who replied "Yes"

### Seniors and Student-Faculty Interactions

The chart below shows benchmark scores for the Student-Faculty Interactions Benchmark for Evergreen seniors compared to seniors in the comparison groups. In 2008, Evergreen seniors' average Student-Faculty Interaction benchmark scores were significantly higher than all three comparison groups (COPLAC at  $p < .05$ , Masters-Small and All NSSE at  $p < .001$ ).



The following chart shows trends in Student-Faculty Interaction benchmark scores for Evergreen seniors and comparison groups from 2001-2008. One survey question used in this benchmark was changed in 2004, thus scores from years prior to 2004 are not directly comparable to 2004-2008 scores. Evergreen continues to show improvement on this benchmark.



The tables on this page show means for the individual questions that make up the benchmark score. Means that were significantly different (at  $p < .01$ ) appear with an asterisk next to them.

There were five items for which Evergreen seniors had significantly higher mean responses than seniors in one or more of the comparison groups. The percentages shown for the “research with faculty” item below refer to the percentage of students who replied “yes” to the question.

<b>Seniors: Student-Faculty Interaction</b> <i>*Evergreen mean significantly <u>higher</u> than comparison group (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor <sup>14</sup>	2.98	2.84	2.95	2.81*
Received prompt feedback from faculty on your academic performance <sup>14</sup>	3.27	2.90*	2.91*	2.80*
Discussed ideas from your reading or classes with faculty members outside of class <sup>14</sup>	2.51	2.19*	2.23*	2.12*
Have you worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements? <sup>15</sup>	29%	24%	19%*	21%*
Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor <sup>14</sup>	2.62	2.51	2.59	2.42*

There were no questions for which Evergreen seniors had lower mean responses or percentages than seniors from one or more comparison groups.

There was one question for which there were no statistically significant differences between Evergreen seniors’ responses and the responses of seniors in other comparison groups.

<b>Seniors: Student-Faculty Interaction</b> <i>No statistically significant differences (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Worked with faculty on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student activities, etc.) <sup>14</sup>	1.88	1.92	1.93	1.84

<sup>14</sup> 4-point scale: 1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often

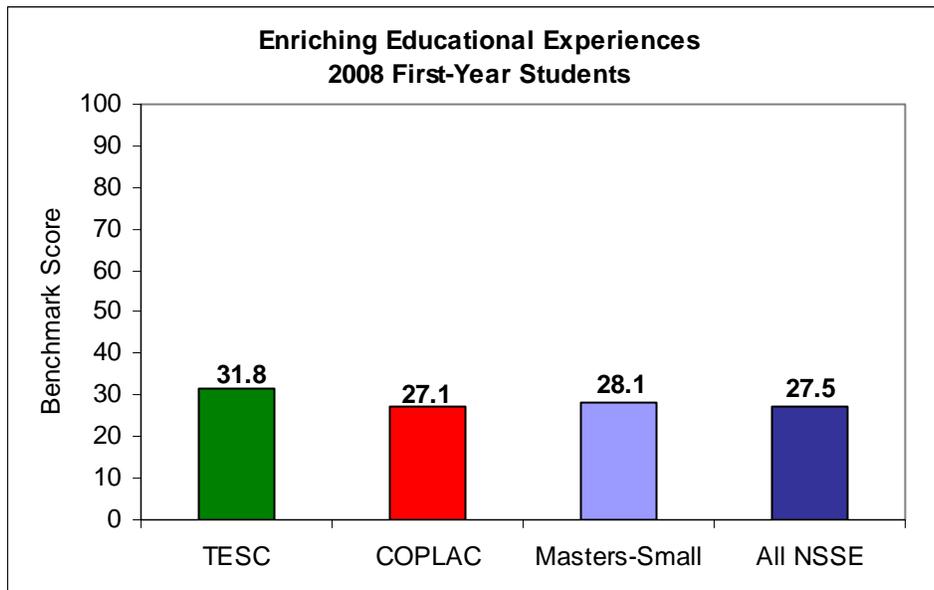
<sup>15</sup> Percent of students who replied “Yes”

## Enriching Educational Experiences Benchmark

The NSSE Institutional Benchmark Report provides the following statement to describe the Enriching Educational Experiences Benchmark: "Complementary learning opportunities in and out of class augment academic programs. Diversity experiences teach students valuable things about themselves and others. Technology facilitates collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community service, and senior capstone courses provide opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge."

### *First-Year Students and Enriching Educational Experiences*

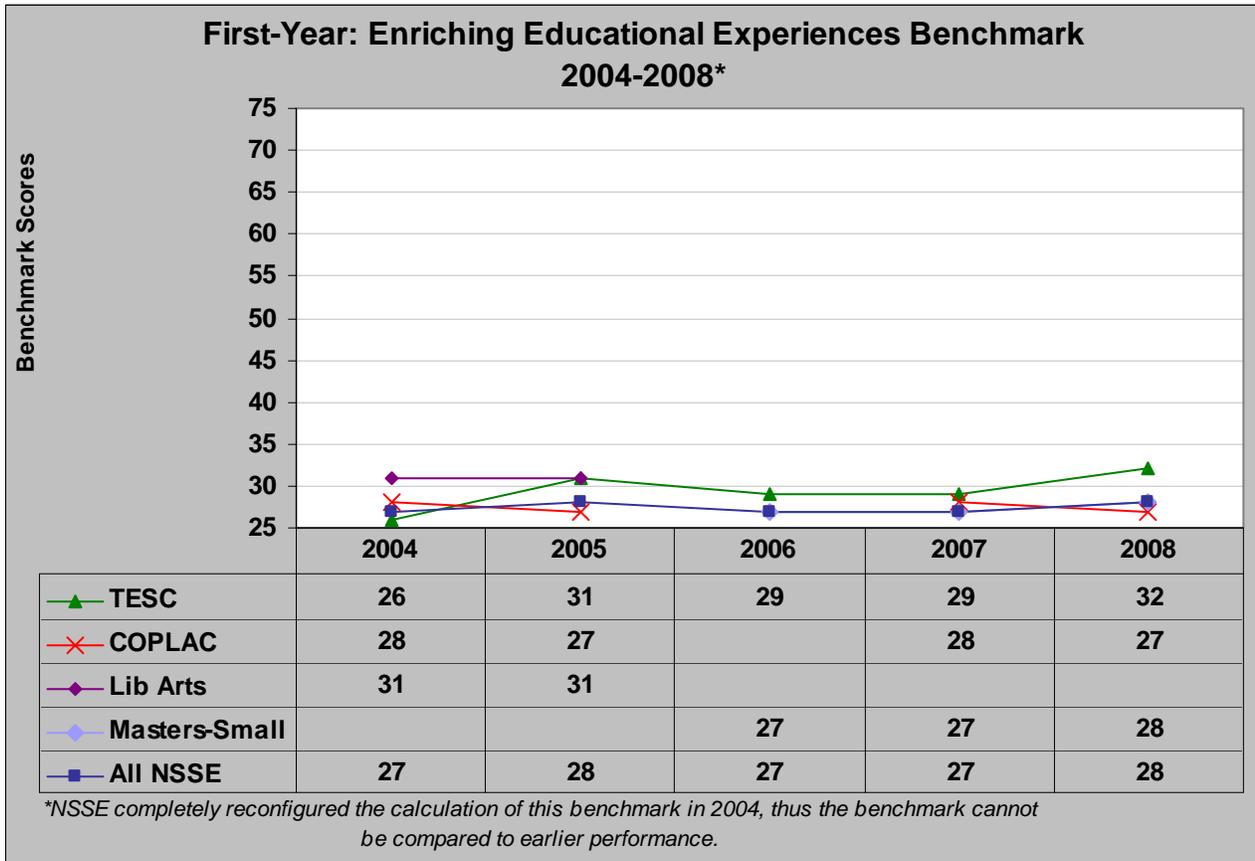
The chart below shows benchmark scores for the Enriching Educational Experiences benchmark for Evergreen first-year students and first-year comparison groups. Evergreen first-year average scores on this benchmark were significantly higher than first-year scores of all other comparison groups ( $p < .001$ ).



Benchmark scores prior to 2004 could not be added to the trend line below, as this benchmark was completely reconfigured by NSSE in 2004. Therefore, benchmark scores from prior years are not comparable to more recent scores. After several years of little change, Evergreen first-year scores are now significantly higher than all other comparison groups.

This change is due to the Evergreen first-year students' improvement on three items included in the enriching educational experience benchmark: serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values; Have done practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment; and Serious conversations with student of different race or ethnicity. These benchmarks were significantly higher for Evergreen first-year students in 2008; there was no significant difference in 2007.

In addition, for reported frequencies of community service or volunteer work, there was no significant difference between Evergreen first-year responses and the other comparison groups in 2008. In comparison, in 2007 Evergreen first-year responses were significantly lower than the first-year responses of other comparison groups for the same benchmark.



The following tables show means for the individual questions that make up the benchmark score. Means that were significantly different (at  $p < .01$ ) appear with an asterisk next to them. Survey items presented as percentages represent the percent of students who replied “yes” that they had participated in the experience.

There were six items for which Evergreen first-year student responses were significantly higher than those of first-year students in one or more comparison groups.

<b>First-Year Students: Enriching Educational Experiences</b> <i>*Evergreen mean significantly higher than comparison group (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Campus environment encourages contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds <sup>16</sup>	3.26	2.70*	2.70*	2.69*
Participated in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together <sup>17</sup>	30%	12%*	16%*	15%*
Have done independent study or self-designed major <sup>17</sup>	11%	4%*	5%	4%*
Serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values <sup>18</sup>	3.07	2.77*	2.66*	2.69*
Have done practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment <sup>17</sup>	16%	7%*	9%	8%*
Serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity <sup>18</sup>	2.90	2.59*	2.57*	2.60*

There were also two items for which average scores or percentages for Evergreen first-year student responses were significantly lower than those of first-year students in one or more comparison group.

<b>First-Year Students: Enriching Educational Experiences</b> <i>*Evergreen mean significantly lower than comparison group (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, publications, student government, social fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.) <sup>19</sup>	1.96	2.44*	2.30*	2.26*
Have done foreign language coursework <sup>17</sup>	13%	25%*	21%*	25%*

There were four items for which there were *no statistically significant* differences at  $p < .01$  between the responses of Evergreen first-year students and first-year students in the comparison groups.

<b>First-Year Students: Enriching Educational Experiences</b> <i>No statistically significant differences (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Used an electronic medium (list-serv, chat group, Internet, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment <sup>18</sup>	2.49	2.52	2.55	2.59
Have done study abroad <sup>17</sup>	3%	2%	3%	2%
Have done culminating senior experience (comprehensive exam, capstone course, thesis, project, etc.) <sup>17</sup>	1%	1%	2%	2%
Have done community service or volunteer work <sup>17</sup>	41%	37%	44%	40%

<sup>16</sup> 4-point scale: 1=Very little, 2=Some, 3=Quite a bit, 4=Very much

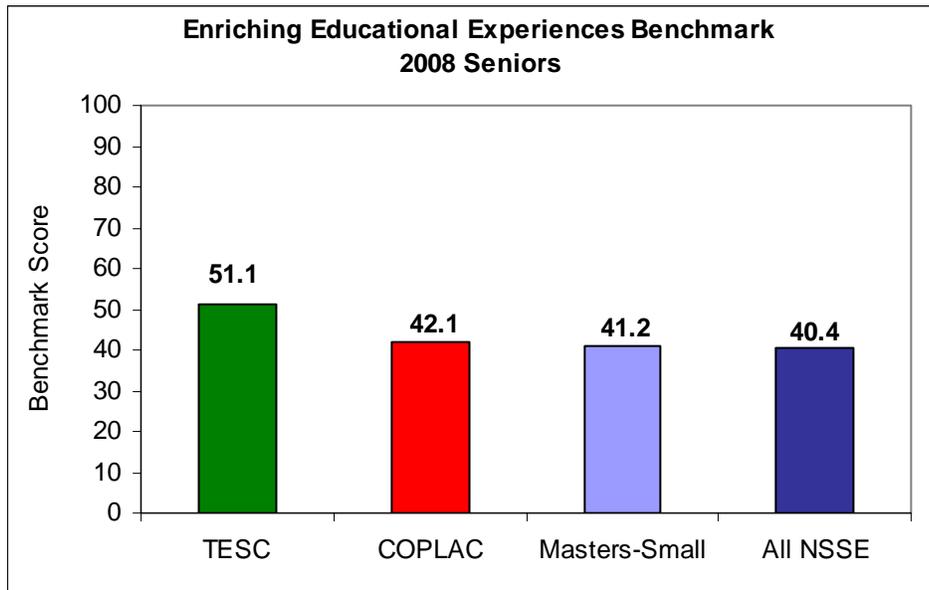
<sup>17</sup> Percent of students who replied “Yes”

<sup>18</sup> 4-point scale: 1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often

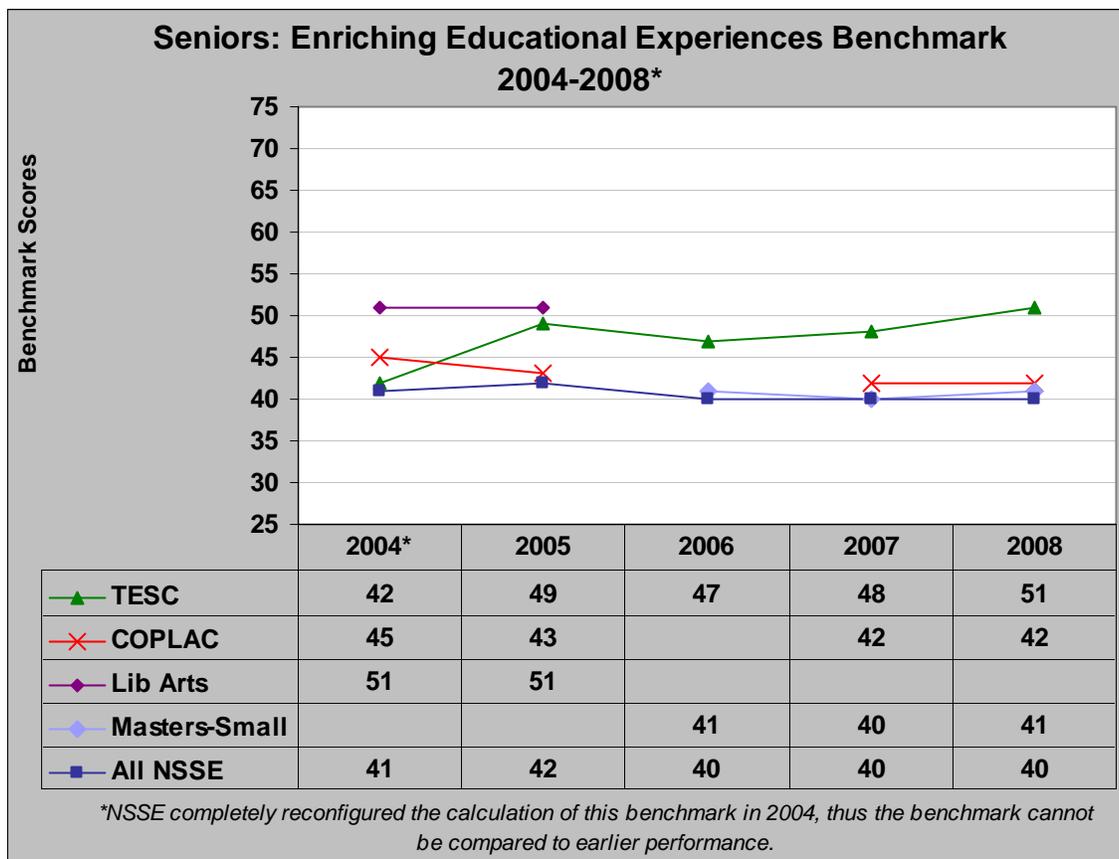
<sup>19</sup> 8-point scale: 1=0 hrs/wk, 2= 1-5 hrs/wk, 3=6-10 hrs/week, 4=11-15 hrs/wk, 5=16-20 hrs/wk, 6=21-25 hrs/wk, 7=26-30 hrs/wk, 8=more than 30 hrs/wk

## Seniors and Enriching Educational Experiences

The chart below shows the benchmark scores for the Enriching Educational Experiences benchmark for Evergreen seniors and comparison groups in 2008. Evergreen seniors were significantly more engaged in Enriching Educational Experiences than seniors in all three comparison groups ( $p < .001$ ).



Benchmark scores prior to 2004 could not be added to the trend line below, as this benchmark was completely reconfigured by NSSE in 2004. Therefore, benchmark scores from prior years are not comparable. Evergreen seniors outpace our new Carnegie classification peers, COPLAC institutions, and the national comparison group.



The tables below show means for the individual questions that make up the benchmark score. Means and percentages that were significantly different (at  $p < .01$ ) appear with an asterisk next to them. Percentages represent the percent of students who replied "yes" to questions.

There were six items for which Evergreen seniors had significantly higher means or percentages than seniors from one or more comparison groups.

<b>Seniors: Enriching Educational Experiences</b> <i>*Evergreen mean significantly <u>higher</u> than comparison group (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Campus environment encourages contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds <sup>20</sup>	3.10	2.49*	2.58*	2.50*
Serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity <sup>21</sup>	2.99	2.61*	2.62*	2.67*
Serious conversations with students who are very different in terms religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values <sup>21</sup>	2.94	2.77	2.67*	2.71*
Participated in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together <sup>22</sup>	57%	23%*	28%*	27%*
Have done study abroad <sup>22</sup>	30%	17%*	14%*	18%*
Have done independent study or self-designed major <sup>22</sup>	70%	23%*	24%*	20%*

There were two items for which Evergreen seniors had significantly lower means or percentages than seniors from one or more comparison groups.

<b>Seniors: Enriching Educational Experiences</b> <i>*Evergreen mean significantly <u>lower</u> than comparison group (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, publications, student government, sports, etc.) <sup>23</sup>	1.83	2.20*	2.08	2.11
Have done culminating senior experience (comprehensive exam, capstone course, thesis, project, etc.) <sup>22</sup>	19%	40%*	35%*	36%*

There were four items for which there were *no significant differences* between Evergreen seniors and comparison groups.

<b>Seniors: Enriching Educational Experiences</b> <i>No statistically significant differences (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Used an electronic medium (list-serv, chat group, Internet, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment <sup>21</sup>	2.92	2.75	2.82	2.82
Have done a practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment <sup>22</sup>	56%	58%	54%	57%
Have done community service or volunteer work <sup>22</sup>	60%	65%	62%	63%
Have done foreign language coursework <sup>22</sup>	43%	50%	40%	44%

<sup>20</sup> 4-point scale: 1=Very little, 2=Some, 3=Quite a bit, 4=Very much

<sup>21</sup> 4-point scale: 1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often

<sup>22</sup> Percentage of students who replied "Yes."

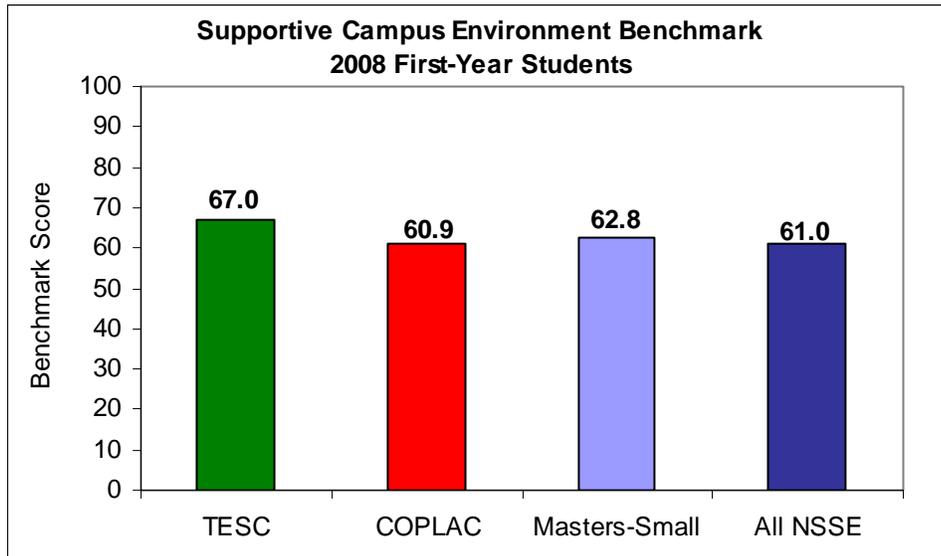
<sup>23</sup> 8-point scale: 1=0 hrs/wk, 2= 1-5 hrs/wk, 3=6-10 hrs/week, 4=11-15 hrs/wk, 5=16-20 hrs/wk, 6=21-25 hrs/wk, 7=26-30 hrs/wk, 8=more than 30 hrs/wk

## Supportive Campus Environment Benchmark

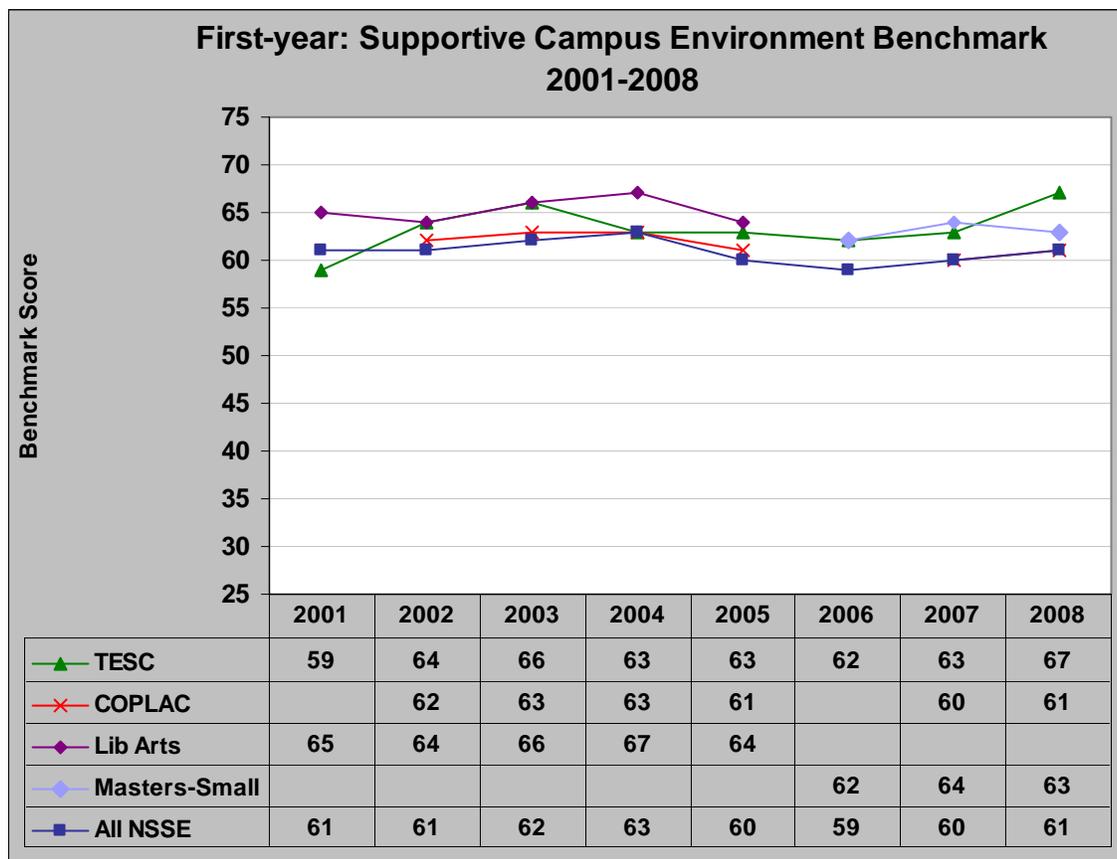
The NSSE Institutional Benchmark Report explains the Supportive Campus Environment Benchmark as follows: "Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus."

### *First-Year Students and the Supportive Campus Environment*

The chart below shows benchmark scores for the Supportive Campus Environment Benchmark for Evergreen and comparison groups, based on the responses of first-year students. The score for Evergreen first-years was significantly higher than first-years in all three comparison groups (COPLAC and All NSSE at  $p < .001$ , Masters-Small at  $p < .01$ ).



The following chart shows trends for the Supportive Campus Environment Benchmark for first-year students from 2001-2008. After a peak in 2003 and a leveling off between 2004 and 2007, the trend line shows again a peak of Evergreen's score on this benchmark. This change is due to the Evergreen first-year students' improvement on two items of the benchmark: Campus environment provides the support you need to help you succeed academically and Campus environment helps you to cope with non-academic responsibilities. These items were significantly higher for Evergreen first-year students in 2008; there was no significant difference in 2007.



The tables below show means for the individual questions that make up the benchmark score. Means that were significantly different (at  $p < .01$ ) appear with an asterisk next to them.

There were four items for which Evergreen first-year students had a significantly higher mean score than first-year students in one or more comparison groups.

First-Year Students: Supportive Campus Environment <i>*Evergreen mean significantly higher than comparison group (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Quality of relationships with faculty members <sup>24</sup>	5.80	5.24*	5.34*	5.19*
Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices <sup>25</sup>	4.99	4.63*	4.81	4.65*
Campus environment provides the support you need to help you succeed academically <sup>26</sup>	3.27	3.07*	3.09*	3.07*
Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.) <sup>26</sup>	2.51	2.24*	2.33*	2.27*

There were **no** items for which first-year students had significantly lower mean responses than first-year students in comparison groups.

<sup>24</sup> 7-point scale: 1=unavailable, unhelpful, unsympathetic to 7=available, helpful, sympathetic

<sup>25</sup> 7-point scale: 1=unhelpful, inconsiderate, rigid to 7=helpful, considerate, flexible

<sup>26</sup> 4-point scale: 1=Very little, 2=Some, 3=Quite a bit, 4=Very much

There were two items for which there were *no statistically significant differences* at  $p < .01$ .

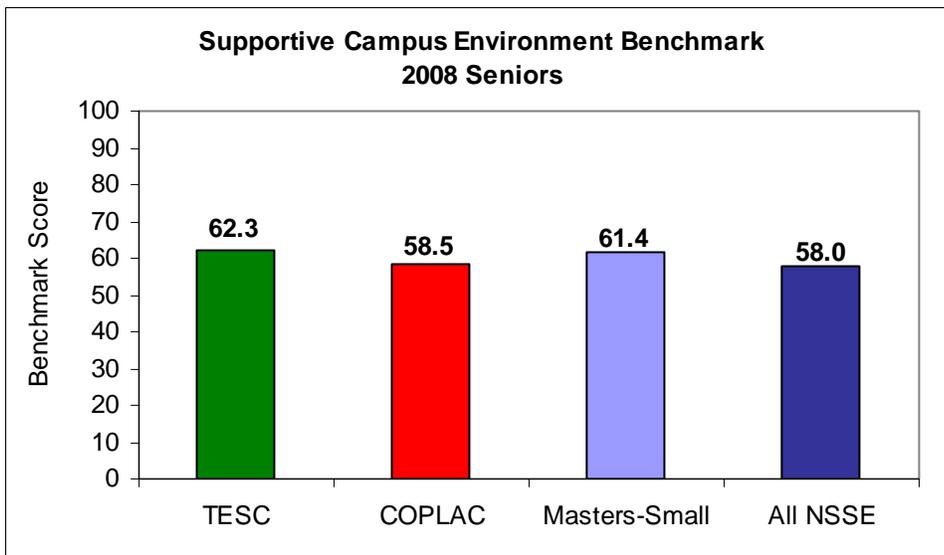
<b>First-Year Students: Supportive Campus Environment</b> <i>No statistically significant differences (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters- Small	All NSSE
Quality of relationships with other students <sup>27</sup>	5.52	5.47	5.53	5.47
Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially <sup>26</sup>	2.60	2.47	2.53	2.49

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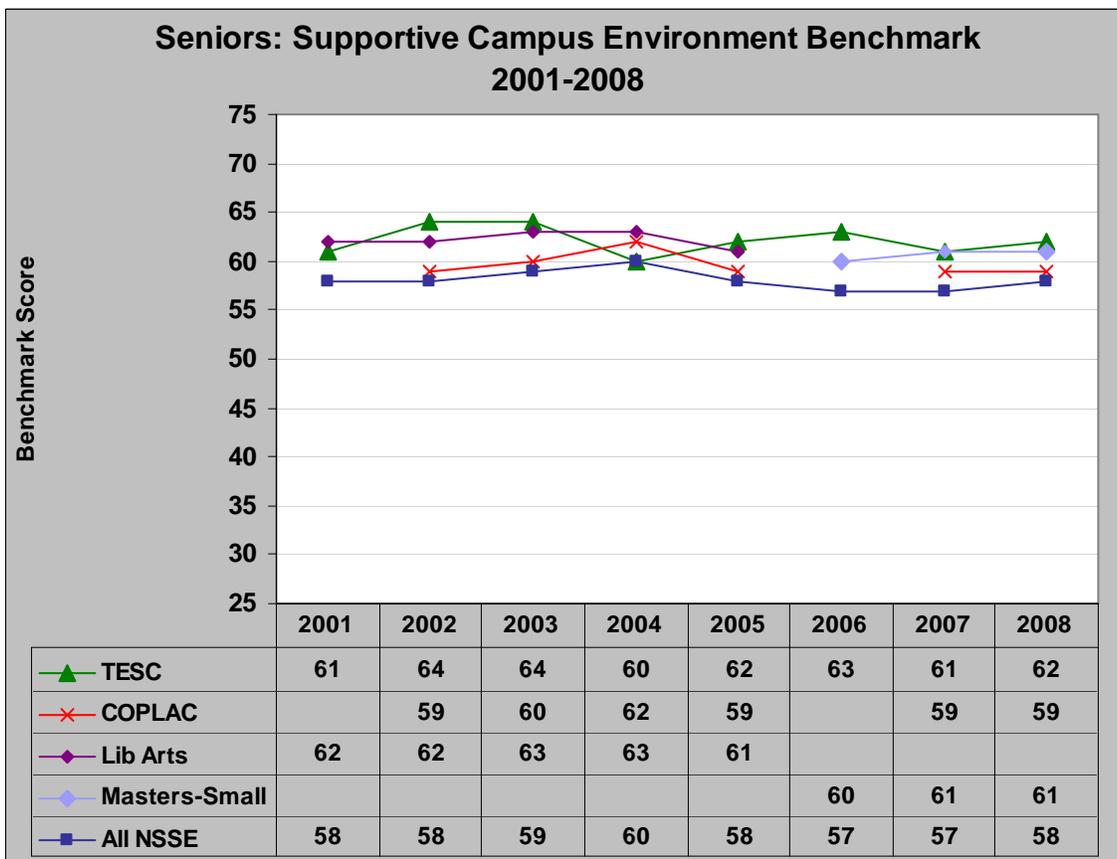
<sup>27</sup> 7-point scale: 1=unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation to 7=friendly, supportive, sense of belonging

### Seniors and the Supportive Campus Environment

The chart below shows benchmark scores for the Supportive Campus Environment Benchmark for Evergreen seniors and seniors in the three comparison groups. Evergreen seniors did not differ significantly from the Masters-Small comparison group, but they did report a significantly higher Supportive Campus Environment score than COPLAC and All NSSE national average ( $p < .01$ ).



The following chart shows trends for the Supportive Campus Environment Benchmark for Evergreen seniors from 2001-2008. This benchmark peaked in 2002 and 2003, but over all eight years there has been very little change in this measure with scores wavering over a four point range.



The tables below show means for the individual questions that make up the benchmark score. Means that were significantly different (at  $p < .01$ ) appear with an asterisk next to them.

There were two items for which Evergreen seniors had a significantly higher mean score than seniors in the all NSSE national comparison group.

<b>Seniors: Supportive Campus Environment</b> <i>*Evergreen mean significantly <u>higher</u> than comparison group (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Quality of relationships with faculty members <sup>28</sup>	5.88	5.63*	5.66	5.41*
Campus environment provides the support you need to help you succeed academically <sup>29</sup>	3.26	2.98*	3.08*	2.93*

There were **no** items for which Evergreen seniors had a significantly lower average than seniors at other Masters-Small institutions.

There were four items for which there were no statistically significant differences at  $p < .01$ .

<b>Seniors: Supportive Campus Environment</b> <i>No statistically significant differences (<math>p &lt; .01</math>)</i>	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices <sup>30</sup>	4.81	4.50	4.77	4.53
Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.) <sup>29</sup>	2.07	1.95	2.12	1.99
Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially <sup>29</sup>	2.28	2.22	2.30	2.23
Quality of relationships with other students <sup>31</sup>	5.49	5.62	5.63	5.59

<sup>28</sup> 7-point scale: 1=unavailable, unhelpful, unsympathetic to 7=available, helpful, sympathetic

<sup>29</sup> 4-point scale: 1=Very little, 2=Some, 3=Quite a bit, 4=Very much

<sup>30</sup> 7-point scale: 1=unhelpful, inconsiderate, rigid to 7=helpful, considerate, flexible

<sup>31</sup> 7-point scale: 1=unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation to 7=friendly, supportive, sense of belonging

## Overall Satisfaction Questions

The charts below show the average scores of Evergreen students and students in the comparison groups on responses to overall satisfaction questions.

Evergreen first-year students reported about the same level of satisfaction with the quality of academic advising as their counterparts in the other groups. Evergreen first-years reported significantly higher level of satisfaction with their educational experience than other comparison groups. Evergreen first-years were more likely than all three groups to report that they would choose Evergreen again if they could start over.

Overall Satisfaction Questions First-year student responses	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters- Small	All NSSE
Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution? <sup>32</sup>	3.03	2.98	3.03	3.00
How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution? <sup>33</sup>	3.47	3.20*	3.15*	3.19*
If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending? <sup>33</sup>	3.47	3.20*	3.13*	3.23*

\* Item showed significant difference for Evergreen vs. this comparison group of institutions at  $p < .01$ .

Evergreen seniors were significantly less satisfied with the quality of academic advising than their counterparts at Masters-Small, but they reported a similar level of satisfaction than their counterparts at COPLAC and All NSSE. However, they were significantly more satisfied with their entire educational experience and more likely to choose Evergreen again if they could start college over than seniors in all three comparison groups.

Overall Satisfaction Questions Senior-class responses	Evergreen	COPLAC	Masters- Small	All NSSE
Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution? <sup>32</sup>	2.84	2.88	3.02*	2.85
How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution? <sup>32</sup>	3.53	3.27*	3.24*	3.21*
If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending? <sup>33</sup>	3.60	3.22*	3.19*	3.20*

\* Item showed significant difference for Evergreen vs. this comparison group of institutions at  $p < .01$ .

<sup>32</sup> 4-point scale: 1=poor, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=excellent

<sup>33</sup> 4-point scale: 1=definitely no, 2=probably no, 3=probably yes, 4=definitely yes

## Learning and Growth Indicators

NSSE also has a series of questions which collect student perceptions of how their institution has contributed to their growth and development in a series of knowledge and skill areas. These learning indicators are not among the items that comprise the five benchmarks of effective educational practice, but they might be viewed as what students feel they are gaining from participating in such engaging practices. The question is phrased “To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?” Response options are 1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, and 4=very much.

The two tables below provide the average ratings of Evergreen students compared to the scores of students from the three comparison groups. In color versions of this document, comparison group scores that are significantly higher than Evergreen are shown in **red bold font** and those areas for which Evergreen students report higher growth are shown in **blue bold font**. Comparison group scores presented in regular black font were not significantly different from Evergreen scores. In black-and-white presentations of this report, the asterisks will denote which groups differed significantly from Evergreen as in previous sections of this report.

Evergreen first-years and seniors agree on the eight areas in which they feel Evergreen has made the greatest contribution to their growth: thinking critically and analytically; working effectively with others; voting in local, state, or national elections; learning effectively on your own; understanding yourself; understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds; solving complex real-world problems; and Contributing to the welfare of your community.

### *First-Year Students: Evergreen’s Contribution to Learning*

Evergreen first-year students perceive higher growth than students in all three comparison groups for nine of the sixteen learning domains: thinking critically and analytically; working effectively with others; voting in local, state, or national elections; learning effectively on your own; understanding yourself; understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds; solving complex real-world problems; developing a personal code of values and ethics; and contributing to the welfare of your community.

Additionally, they report higher growth than other students in at least one of the comparison groups in another four areas: acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills, writing clearly and effectively, speaking clearly and effectively, and developing a deepened sense of spirituality.

Furthermore, Evergreen first-year students reported a similar level of growth as students at all three comparison groups in two learning areas: acquiring a broad general education and analyzing quantitative problems.

Evergreen first-year students reported lower level of growth than students at all three comparison groups in only one learning domain: Using computing and information technology.

First-Year Students Average Ratings 2008 (1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much)	TESC	COPLAC	Masters-Small	All NSSE
Acquiring a broad general education	3.17	3.24	3.18	3.20
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	2.63	2.71	<b>2.83*</b>	2.80
Writing clearly and effectively	3.20	<b>3.02*</b>	3.06	<b>3.02*</b>
Speaking clearly and effectively	3.01	<b>2.82*</b>	2.91	2.85
Thinking critically and analytically	3.57	<b>3.23*</b>	<b>3.19*</b>	<b>3.21*</b>
Analyzing quantitative problems	2.92	2.92	2.94	2.96
Using computing and information technology	2.75	<b>2.95*</b>	<b>3.03*</b>	<b>3.04*</b>
Working effectively with others	3.45	<b>2.97*</b>	<b>3.03*</b>	<b>2.99*</b>
Voting in local, state, or national elections	2.60	<b>2.24*</b>	<b>2.18*</b>	<b>2.24*</b>
Learning effectively on your own	3.37	<b>2.90*</b>	<b>2.96*</b>	<b>2.96*</b>
Understanding yourself	3.25	<b>2.78*</b>	<b>2.86*</b>	<b>2.81*</b>
Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	3.00	<b>2.65*</b>	<b>2.68*</b>	<b>2.67*</b>
Solving complex real-world problems	3.07	<b>2.64*</b>	<b>2.69*</b>	<b>2.69*</b>
Developing a personal code of values and ethics	3.16	<b>2.64*</b>	<b>2.77*</b>	<b>2.70*</b>

First-Year Students Average Ratings 2008 (1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much)	TESC	COPLAC	Masters- Small	All NSSE
Contributing to the welfare of your community	3.01	2.45*	2.53*	2.47*
Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	2.51	2.01*	2.33	2.15*

\* Average rating of students in comparison group is significantly higher or lower than Evergreen at  $p < .01$ .

### Senior-class Students: Evergreen's Contribution to Learning

Evergreen seniors attribute higher growth to their experiences at Evergreen. In eight of the sixteen learning domains they report significantly more growth than all three comparison groups. As with first-years, thinking critically and analytically; working effectively with others; voting in local, state, or national elections; learning effectively on your own; understanding yourself; understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds; solving complex real-world problems; and contributing to the welfare of your community are again among the areas which differentiate Evergreen students' experiences.

Beyond those eight areas, in another five domains, Evergreen seniors perceive significantly higher growth than seniors in at least one of the comparison groups: acquiring a broad general education, writing clearly and effectively, speaking clearly and effectively, developing a personal code of values and ethics, and developing a deepened sense of spirituality.

They are neither higher nor lower than any comparison group in using computing and information technology.

In two of the sixteen areas, Evergreen seniors report less development than their peers at other institutions. They lag behind their Carnegie class peers in terms of acquiring job or work-related knowledge and analyzing quantitative problems.

Senior-class Average Ratings 2008 (1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much)	TESC	COPLAC	Masters- Small	All NSSE
Acquiring a broad general education	3.46	3.35	3.35	3.29*
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	3.00	2.96	3.16*	3.07
Writing clearly and effectively	3.34	3.15*	3.22	3.11*
Speaking clearly and effectively	3.27	3.01*	3.12	3.00*
Thinking critically and analytically	3.68	3.38*	3.40*	3.36*
Analyzing quantitative problems	2.91	3.01	3.11*	3.08
Using computing and information technology	3.20	3.12	3.25	3.22
Working effectively with others	3.48	3.13*	3.21*	3.17*
Voting in local, state, or national elections	2.48	2.17*	2.11*	2.11*
Learning effectively on your own	3.40	3.01*	3.12*	3.05*
Understanding yourself	3.25	2.81*	2.93*	2.83*
Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	3.11	2.57*	2.73*	2.64*
Solving complex real-world problems	3.10	2.68*	2.83*	2.78*
Developing a personal code of values and ethics	3.05	2.63*	2.86	2.71*
Contributing to the welfare of your community	3.03	2.45*	2.60*	2.48*
Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	2.03	1.78*	2.21	1.96

\* Average rating of students in comparison group is significantly higher or lower than Evergreen at  $p < .01$ .