

# National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) 2001-2005: Trends, Highlights, and Use of NSSE Performance Indicators

## Introductory facts:

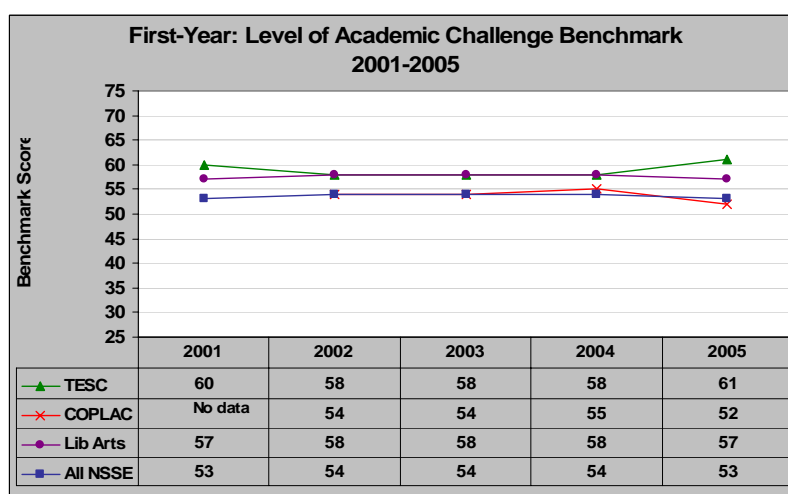
- Evergreen first-year and senior students have participated in NSSE annually since Spring 2000.
- 529 colleges and universities participated in NSSE 2005, 101 of which were Baccalaureate-Liberal Arts Colleges.
- 212 Evergreen students completed the NSSE 2005; the response rate of the random sample was 33%.
- Evergreen's 2005 survey responses represented 15% of all first-year students and 12% of all seniors enrolled.
- The comparison groups presented in the following benchmark charts include "COPLAC" (a consortium of Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges), "Lib Arts" (all 101 of the participating Baccalaureate-Liberal Arts colleges), and "All NSSE" (all 529 participating institutions).

## Level of Academic Challenge

### High performing (top 10% compared to all NSSE schools)

Compared to other first-year students, Evergreen first-year students:

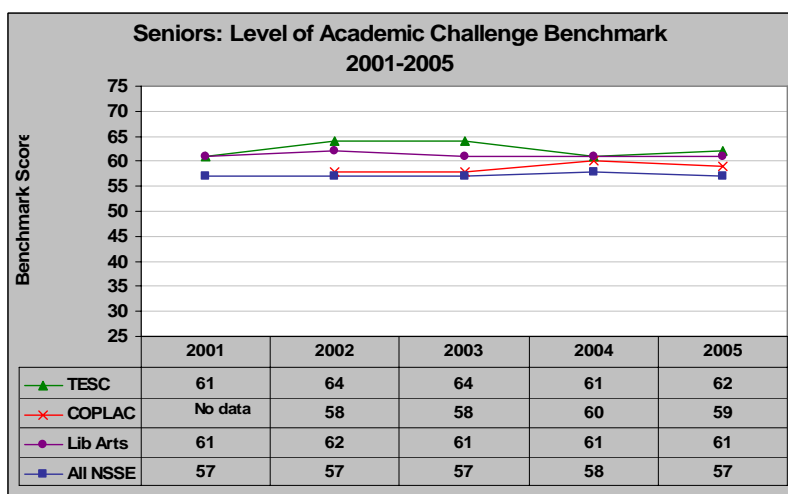
- Spend more time preparing for class, synthesizing, analyzing, and making judgements about the value of information
- Read more assigned texts
- Write more papers under 5 pages and those 20 or more pages
- Perceive a lower campus emphasis on spending significant time on academic work



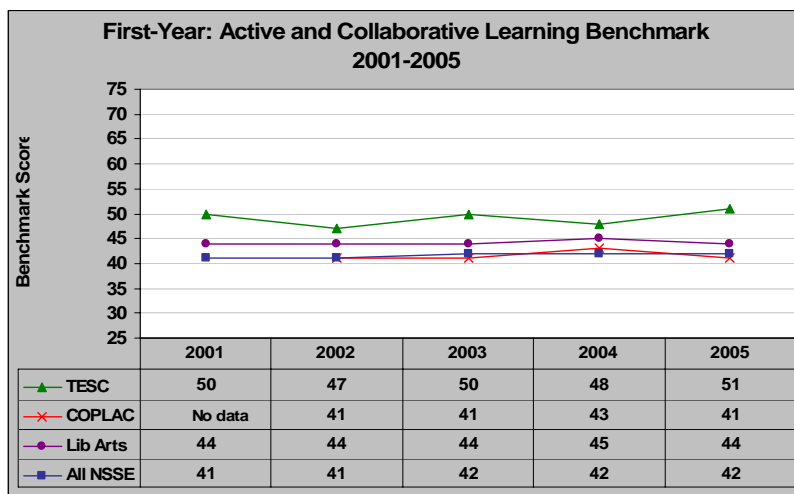
### Above average (above 50<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to all NSSE schools)

Compared to other seniors, Evergreen seniors:

- Spend more time preparing for class and analyzing basic elements of an idea or experience
- Read more assigned texts
- Write more papers under 5 pages
- Are less likely to write mid-length papers (5-19 pages) and those over 20 pages.



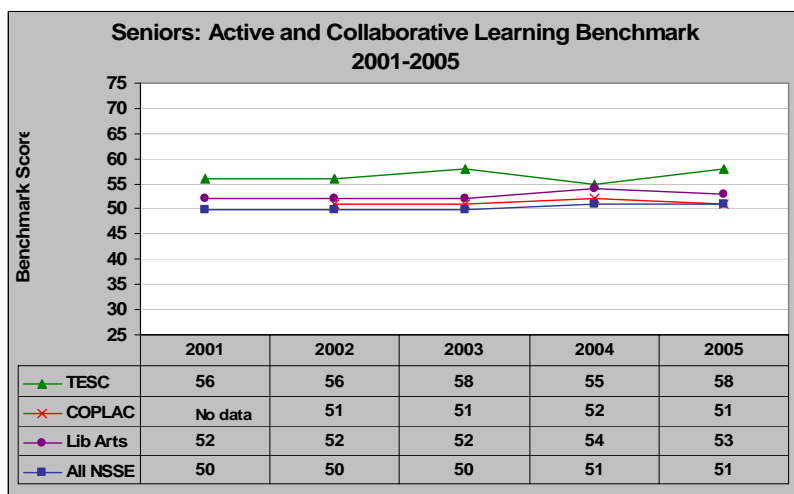
## Active and Collaborative Learning



### High performing (top 10% compared to all NSSE schools)

Compared to other first-year students, Evergreen first-year students:

- Are more likely to ask questions in class, contribute to class discussions and make class presentations
- More often work with other students on projects during class and outside of class
- More often discuss ideas from class with others outside of class.
- More often participated in community-based projects as part of a regular course
- Are less likely to tutor or teach other students



### Above average (above 50<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to all NSSE schools)

Compared to other seniors, Evergreen seniors:

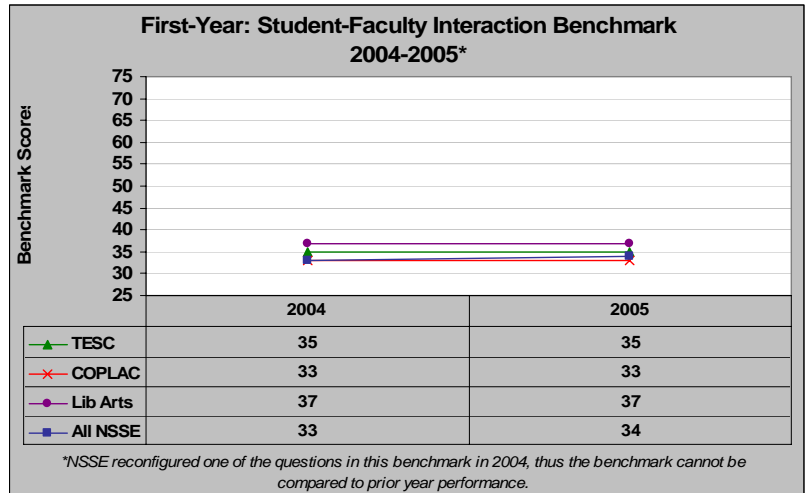
- More often work with other students on projects during class
- More often discuss ideas from class with others outside of class

## Student-Faculty Interaction

**Above average (above 50<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to all NSSE schools)**

Compared to other first-year students, Evergreen first-year students:

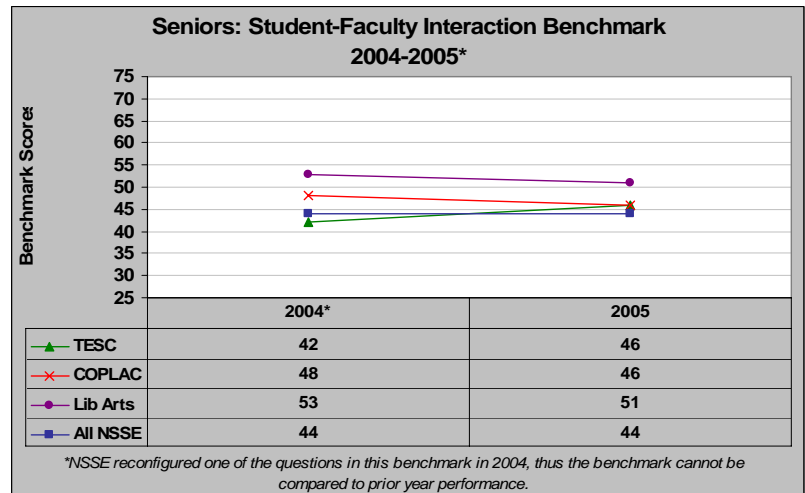
- **More often discuss ideas from class with faculty members outside of class**
- Are less likely to work with faculty on activities other than coursework.



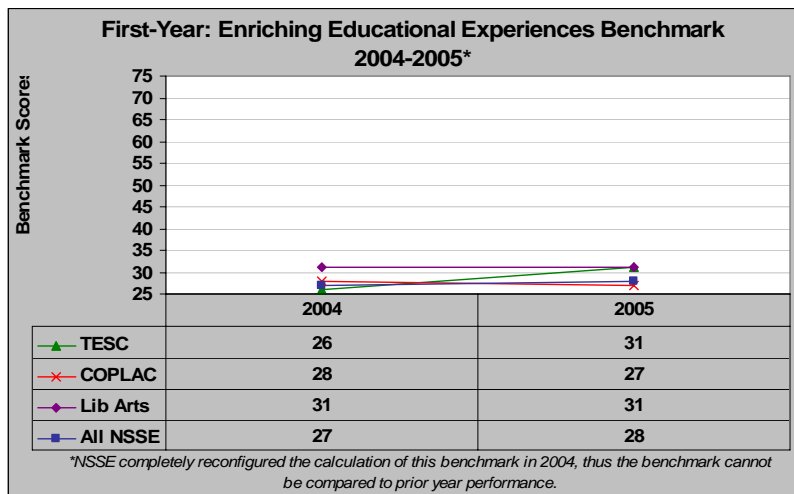
**Above average (above 50<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to all NSSE schools)**

Compared to other seniors, Evergreen seniors:

- Less frequently talk about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- Are less likely to work with faculty on activities other than coursework.



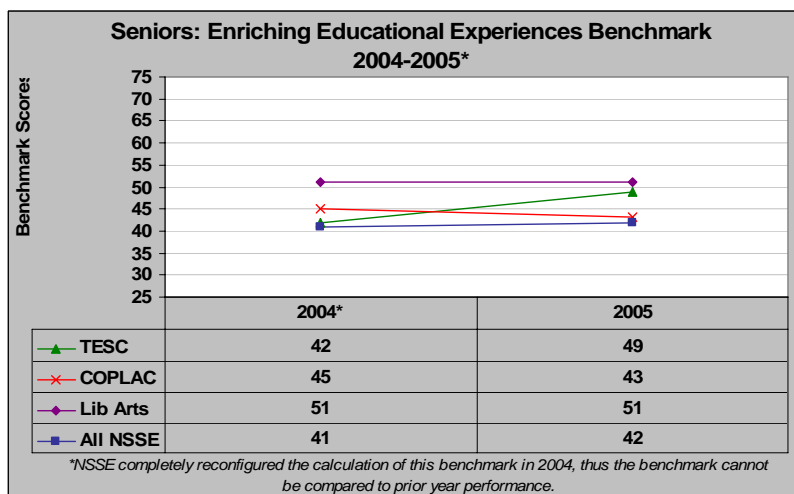
## Enriching Educational Experiences



### Above average (above 50<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to all NSSE schools)

Compared to other first-year students, Evergreen first-year students:

- **Are more likely to have participated in a learning community**
- **More often have serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity**
- **Are more likely to feel the campus encourages contact among students from different backgrounds**
- Are less likely to have participated in co-curricular activities, foreign language studies or a culminating senior experience.



### Above average (above 50<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to all NSSE schools)

Compared to other seniors, Evergreen seniors:

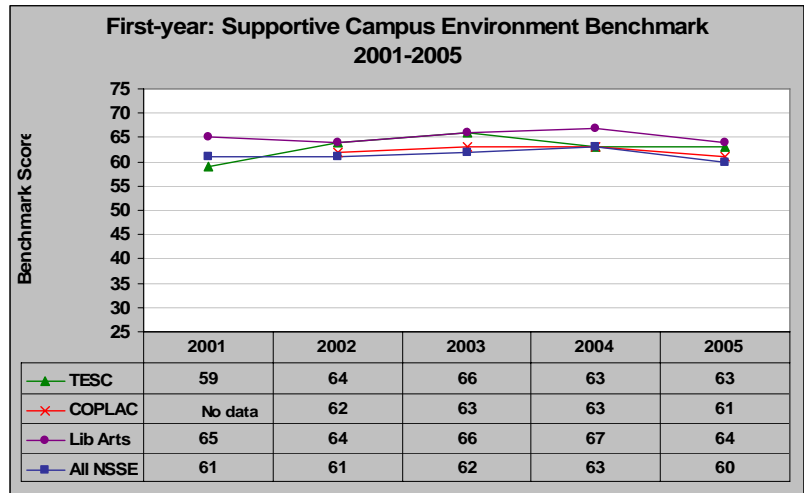
- **Are more likely to have participated in a learning community and independent study.**
- **Perceive a stronger campus emphasis on encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial backgrounds.**
- **More frequently have serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity**
- Are less likely to have participated in co-curricular activities, foreign language studies or a culminating senior experience.

## Supportive Campus Environment

Above average (above 50<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to all NSSE schools)

Compared to other first-year students, Evergreen first-year students:

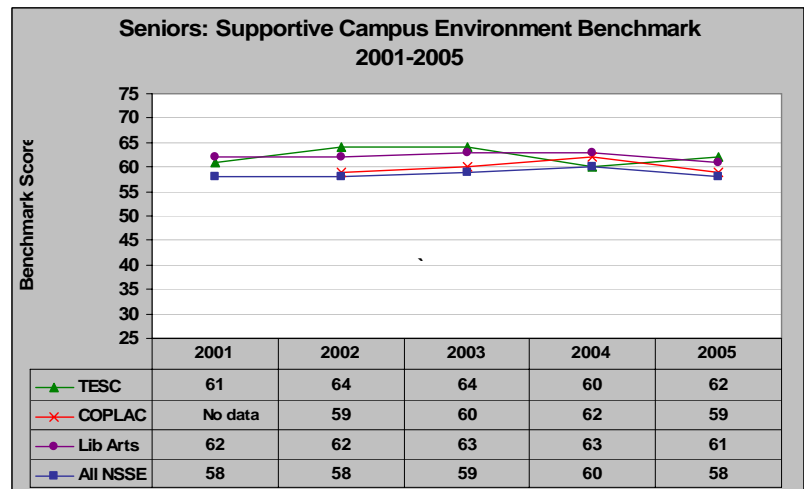
- Report a higher quality of relationships with faculty members



Above average (above 50<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to all NSSE schools)

Compared to other seniors, Evergreen seniors:

- Are more likely to feel their campus environment helps them to cope with non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)



## Institutional Assessment Using NSSE Data

### Institutional Assessment and Accreditation

The annual NSSE administration, analysis, and subsequent campus dialogue are an integral part of Evergreen's institutional assessment plan as required by our accrediting organization. The NSSE reports are made available on the college web site annually, with an all-campus email announcing their posting and highlights from the results. Each year different members of our campus community have engaged in dialogue about the results and implications for their own practice.

A number of NSSE items are tracked as part of ongoing assessment of general education at Evergreen. Survey items include the quality of academic advising and growth in various learning areas that correspond to the Expectations of an Evergreen Graduate. The general education indicators of Teaching and Learning are being compiled into a scorecard format to simplify presentation of results in preparation for writing the accreditation self-study next academic year.

In addition, several workgroups have been reviewing NSSE results alongside other assessment data this year to investigate problems, identify successes, and select indicators for their own strategic plans. Groups known to be using NSSE data this year include the Diversity DTF, the Information Technology Collaborative Hive, the First-Year DTF, faculty development institutes, and the ongoing strategic planning process. Last summer 2005, a successful Scholarship of Teaching and Learning faculty institute was framed around the NSSE benchmarks.

### **HECB Accountability**

As part of the ongoing revision of statewide HECB accountability performance for higher education, Evergreen proposed to use the following two NSSE survey items as indicators of Evergreen's contribution to the community and state economy.

- Percent of seniors who have done practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment
- Percent of seniors who have done community service or volunteer work

As of February 2006, the HECB has proposed another revision to the new accountability framework. At this time, it appears they will allow institutions to pick up to three institution-specific indicators related to *quality* instead of restricting the institutions to indicators of economic contribution and degree-production. It is likely that the specific indicators proposed by Evergreen in 2005 will be replaced with other NSSE indicators of educational quality and student success. Selecting indicators from the NSSE allows Evergreen to understand student experience in the context of other similar colleges and national trends.

### **Faculty Survey of Student Engagement**

In spring 2005 Evergreen's faculty participated in the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement, a companion survey to the NSSE. The results of this survey are being analyzed and will be distributed to the campus community once the results are compiled. The aggregate results will allow us to compare faculty perceptions of their program activities and their expectations of their students with how students experience the learning environment. Thus far, the First-year DTF faculty subgroup has been reviewing the first completed compilation of results which compares the expectations of faculty teaching lower division programs to the experiences of first-year students.

### **Highlights of 2005 Results Compared to Previous Year**

Compared to the results of NSSE 2004, the NSSE 2005 survey showed improvement for three of the five benchmark scores for first-year students: Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, and Enriching Educational Experiences. The other two first-year benchmarks, Student-Faculty Interaction and Supportive Campus Environment, remained stable from 2004.

Benchmark scores for seniors improved for all five benchmarks in 2005, with strongest improvement in Enriching Educational Experiences. Evergreen seniors reported a much greater participation in community service and internship activities in 2005. Seniors and first-year students reported greater frequency of serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity in 2005.