

Research & Analysis

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DID I LEARN? - A STUDENT ASSESSMENT: RESULTS OF THE 2006 CCSSE ADMINISTRATION

CCSSE attempts to measure 'student engagement.' The survey is based on research demonstrating an association between educational engagement and learning outcomes. The survey does not, however, measure student outcomes intrinsically.

However, unique to the instrument, survey question #12 asks that respondents rate the level of knowledge gained as a consequence of their engagement. Though this does not constitute direct evidence of learning outcomes, self-assessment does provide an important indirect measure; that is - do students think they learned.

Question #12, a Self-Assessment of Student Learning

A subset of items within question #12 include self-assessments of general education learning outcomes. The importance of attaining general education competencies is evident in Comprehensive Standard 3.5.1 of the SACS Principles of Accreditation:

The institution identifies college-level competencies within the general education core and provides evidence that graduates have attained those competencies.

Question #12 asks "how much has YOUR EXPERIENCE AT THIS COLLEGE contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?" The question is followed by 15 items which include general education outcomes similar to those defined by HCC (2006-07 College Catalog, p. 91). The respondent is asked to rate each item using the following scale:

1 = very little, 2 = some, 3 = quite a bit, 4 = very much

This brief will examine the mean college response to each item within question #12. Comparisons will be made to the 12 Achieving the Dream (AtD) colleges, the 38 "Extra-large" colleges, and the 447 national cohort participants. The latter is a category defined by CCSSE as those institutions with an enrollment exceeding 15,000 credit (Fall headcount) students of which HCC belongs. Furthermore the results will be disaggregated by HCC student ethnicity and campus location.

The Results

The following table displays the 2006 mean results of all items for question #12, with the 2004 results also shown for HCC.

**Mean Ratings of 15 Items Addressing CCSSE Question #12,
Comparisons of HCC to Achieving the Dream Colleges, Extra-Large Community Colleges,
and the National Cohort, 2006**

Survey Item	HCC		AtD (12)	XL (38)	Nation (447)
	2004	2006			
1. Acquiring a broad general education	2.87	2.93	2.97	2.91	2.91
2. Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	2.18	2.26	2.53*	2.44	2.54*
3. Writing clearly and effectively	2.59	2.69	2.80	2.65	2.66
4. Speaking clearly and effectively	2.51	2.59	2.73	2.56	2.56
5. Thinking critically and analytically	2.78	2.76	2.92	2.80	2.83
6. Solving numerical problems	2.57	2.61	2.65	2.54	2.55
7. Using computing and information technology	2.59	2.60	2.77	2.63	2.67
8. Working effectively with others	2.50	2.56	2.80*	2.62	2.68
9. Learning effectively on your own	2.80	2.80	2.95	2.84	2.86
10. Understanding yourself	2.42	2.52	2.73*	2.53	2.54
11. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	2.26	2.41	2.55	2.36	2.31
12. Developing a personal code of values and ethics	2.16	2.26	2.47*	2.27	2.29
13. Contributing to the welfare of your community	1.80	1.91	2.09	1.91	1.95
14. Developing clearer career goals	2.41	2.46	2.67*	2.57	2.60
15. Gaining information about career opportunities	2.19	2.30	2.55*	2.46	2.49

* Mean differences are significant at $p < 0.001$ and an effect size equal to or greater than 0.2 with HCC responses.

The mean responses for all groups fall between 2 “some” and 3 “quite a bit,” with one exception (item #13, contributing to the welfare of the community).

In all instances the scores of HCC fall below the AtD colleges. Of those, six were statistically significant below the mean. These items include:

1. Item #2 “Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills”
2. Item #8 “Working effectively with others”
3. Item #10 “Understanding yourself”
4. Item #12 “Developing a personal code of values and ethics”
5. Item #14 “Developing clearer career goals”
6. Item #15 “Gaining information about career opportunities”

It is important to note that four of these six items (Item #2, Item #8, Item #14, and Item #15) pertain to work preparedness.

In five instances the scores of HCC exceed the means of the extra-large colleges and the nation:

1. Item #1, “Acquiring a broad general education”
2. Item #3, “Writing clearly and effectively”
3. Item #4, “Speaking clearly and effectively”
4. Item #6, “Solving numerical problems”
5. Item #11, “Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds”

Notably, these five relate to general education outcomes. This is an increase from two items exceeding the means in 2004.

Trendline 2005, the college Fact Book, reveals that 41% of the student body consists of minority racial/ethnic groups (p. 24). CCSSE respondents are closely representational of the student body as a whole with 39% reflecting minority populations.

Hillsborough Community College's participation in the Achieving the Dream initiative has included the College in a national initiative focused on improving success rates for community college students—particularly low-income students and students of color, specifically of African-American and Hispanic backgrounds. Attainment of education by the under-represented is the desired outcome of access. The table below displays the mean scores of self-assessed learning attainment from students sampled at HCC by ethnicity.

**Mean Ratings of 15 Items Addressing CCSSE Question #12,
Comparisons by Ethnicity Within Hillsborough Community College, 2006**

Survey Item	HCC (n=1221)	Black (n=225)	Hispanic (n=274)	Asian (n=49)	White (n=593)	Other (n=80)
1. Acquiring a broad general education	2.93	3.19	3.07	2.69	2.97	2.98
2. Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	2.26	2.51	2.37	2.22	2.24	2.24
3. Writing clearly and effectively	2.69	2.98	2.91	2.73	2.70	2.65
4. Speaking clearly and effectively	2.59	2.85	2.84	2.67	2.54	2.68
5. Thinking critically and analytically	2.76	3.01	2.93	2.88	2.76	2.73
6. Solving numerical problems	2.61	2.75	2.76	2.71	2.64	2.59
7. Using computing and information technology	2.60	2.91	2.84	2.67	2.55	2.56
8. Working effectively with others	2.56	2.79	2.76	2.55	2.57	2.49
9. Learning effectively on your own	2.80	2.93	2.95	2.84	2.78	2.71
10. Understanding yourself	2.52	2.90	2.68	2.77	2.42	2.38
11. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	2.41	2.57	2.76	2.65	2.31	2.27
12. Developing a personal code of values and ethics	2.26	2.50	2.55	2.44	2.22	2.16
13. Contributing to the welfare of your community	1.91	2.04	2.07	2.22	1.85	1.85
14. Developing clearer career goals	2.46	2.84	2.60	2.55	2.43	2.50
15. Gaining information about career opportunities	2.30	2.72	2.46	2.40	2.24	2.31

In general, the Black respondent group had the highest scores in assessing the degree to which the college contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development.

- The scores for all 15 items exceeded the college means
- 10 scores exceeded the means of all other ethnic groups within the college

