Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) 2010
Executive Summary

Nathan Dickmeyer
Institutional Research and Assessment
September 2, 2010

Benchmark Report
LaGuardia students rate the college very highly when it comes to academic challenge. The largest differentiator appears to be the number of papers assigned by our faculty. Our students also partake of support at much higher levels than other students, using tutoring, math and writing labs, and computer labs at significantly higher levels than students at the other colleges in the survey.

Our rating for student-faculty interaction was quite good compared to other extra large institutions (more than 15,000 students), but less impressive when compared to all institutions in the survey.

LaGuardia is not strongly distinguished by its support for learning (unless the comparison is limited to extra large institutions), except for encouragement to contact other students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds. Interestingly, only students marking either White or Other ethnicity indicated significantly higher levels of diversity encouragement than peers when student responses were examined by ethnic category.

Our rating for active and collaborative learning slipped from previous years and we are now rated barely above average.

Benchmark Findings
1) LaGuardia challenges its students. Within the entire CCSSE cohort our students put LaGuardia in the 9th decile for Student Effort and Academic Challenge. Among extra-large colleges, LaGuardia students rated their Student Effort higher than students at all other such colleges, but LaGuardia’s Academic Challenge was rated only in the 8th decile among urban college students.
2) Student-Faculty interaction was good for an extra large college. Among extra large colleges LaGuardia students placed us in the 8th decile for student-faculty interaction. Among urban colleges we were rated in the 7th decile, but among colleges in the entire sample, we were rated in the 6th decile.
3) Support for learners was good for an extra large college. Among extra large colleges LaGuardia students placed us in the 8th decile for support for learners. Among urban colleges we were rated in the 7th decile, but among colleges in the entire sample, we were rated in the 6th decile.
4) Active & collaborative learning was good for an extra large college. Among extra large colleges LaGuardia students placed us in the 8th decile for active & collaborative learning. Among urban colleges and the sample as a whole, however, we were rated in the 6th decile. This is the only area in which LaGuardia declined from the 2007 results, dropping from the 9th percentile to the 6th. Similar comparative declines occurred against the two peer groups. While the scores of each of the comparison groups crept upward since 2007, LaGuardia’ score fell markedly. Most of the decline thus cannot be attributed to other institutions “catching up” to LaGuardia.
Items of Significance Report: Question by Question Analysis

In this section we are looking at the CCSEE survey responses in which our students answered significantly differently than their peers at other CCSSE community colleges, and we look at changes in these significantly different responses since 2007. In general, students rate everything lower than they did in 2007: their overall experience, relationships with the people at the college, the quality and workload of their academic experience and the quality of the services they receive. Many responses that differentiated LaGuardia in 2007, no longer differentiate. Almost no responses demonstrating our students' belief that LaGuardia was different than its peers in a statistically significant way appeared in 2010 that were not also significant in 2007. Many such differences from 2007 fell back toward the mean of the overall sample in 2010, losing their statistical significance.

The following list shows how the 2010 survey results differ or stay the same from 2007 on those questions where the LaGuardia student response mean differs significantly from the entire CCSSE community college response mean for that question.

- Our students still evaluate their entire education experience more poorly than other students.
- Our students still consider their relationships with faculty, administrative personnel and offices to be worse than do students at other colleges, and, for the first time, they consider their relationships with other students to be worse than do students at other colleges.
- Our students are no longer (between 2007 and 2010):
  - preparing more drafts of papers than other students.
  - integrating ideas or information more than other students.
  - working harder than they thought they could to meet instructor demands to a degree greater than other students.
  - analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory than other students.
  - synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways than other students.
  - making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods than other students.
  - speaking more clearly and effectively than other students.
  - understanding themselves better than students at other colleges.
  - believing that the college provides more support to thrive socially than students at other colleges.
- Our students still believe that they:
  - are writing more clearly and effectively than students at other colleges.
  - have been helped to understand people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds more than students at other colleges.
  - are developing a personal code of values and ethics better than students at other colleges.
- Our students are less satisfied with academic advising, career counseling, financial aid advising, and transfer credit assistance than students at other colleges.
- Our students believe they skip class less than students at other colleges.
- Our students still spend less time working for pay and more time commuting than students at other colleges.
- Our students still feel more likely than other students that they will drop out because they are academically unprepared than other students.
- For the first time, our students feel significantly less supported by friends and family in their attendance at LaGuardia than students at other colleges.
Special Focus and Custom Items Report

In 2010 students were asked two sets of in-depth questions that had not previously been asked on CCSSE surveys. One set was prepared by CCSSE research staff and the other set was prepared by the college. Bret Eynon and Sam Michalowski and their colleagues were largely responsible for the second set.

The five special focus items were asked of all students in the CCSSE participant population. As such comparative data can be presented on these questions. CCSSE did not prepare significance tests for these items. The 15 custom items were asked of LaGuardia students only. No comparative analysis is possible.

Impact on students

The special focus questions examined the college experience and its impact on students: integrating ideas from different courses, included diverse perspectives in class discussions and assignments, examined strengths and weaknesses of own views, looking at issues from another’s perspective, and learned something that changed the student’s viewpoint. From a simplistic point of view, we can look at whether a majority of LaGuardia students underwent the experience (citing either “Often” or “Very often” as answers) and whether a majority of CCSSE participants nationally also underwent the experience.

In the points below, when we say “a majority,” we mean that more than 50% answered “Often” or “Very often.” This language does not demonstrate a statistical finding. It is only intended to stimulate discussion.

- Both a majority of LaGuardia students and a majority of all CCSSE participants put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions.
- Neither a majority of LaGuardia students, nor a majority of all CCSSE participants included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or assignments.
- Both a majority of LaGuardia students and a majority of all CCSSE participants examined the strengths and weaknesses of “your own” views on a topic or issue.
- Both a majority of LaGuardia students and a majority of all CCSSE participants tried to better understand someone else’s views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective.
- Neither a majority of LaGuardia students, nor a majority of all CCSSE participants learned something that changed their viewpoint about an issue or concept.

The first six LaGuardia custom questions can be examined in roughly the same manner and pertain to the student’s college experience and its impact on him or her.

- Fewer than two students in ten felt that their LaGuardia experience had contributed “very much” to learning how to explore and solve complex, real world problems “such as those you might face in your life, including your career.”
- Fewer than 15% of the students felt that their LaGuardia experience had contributed “very much” to using mathematics to address real world problems, “including those you might face in your career.”
- Nearly 57% of the respondents did not agree that LaGuardia “cares for me as a person.”
• Nearly two-thirds of the respondents agreed that LaGuardia has helped to change the way “I see myself and my life.”
• More than three-quarters of the respondents agreed that the skills and knowledge “I develop in one course helps me succeed in other courses.”

Student Disengagement
• One-third of the students who had decided to attend part-time cited a scheduling conflict with his or her job as a reason.
• One-quarter of the students who had decided to attend part-time cited lack of course availability.
• One-quarter of the students who had stopped out for a semester or more did so because they could not afford to attend.
• Students cited four other reasons for stopping out for a semester or more. Each reason was cited by approximately one student in five: 1) Scheduling conflict with a job; 2) Lack of course availability; 3) Personal or family crises (e.g., illness, incarceration, loss of child care); and 4) Personal or family reason (e.g., hobby, travel).

Work
• The majority of LaGuardia survey respondents worked fewer than 21 hours per week.
• The majority of those who worked were employed in either 1) service (e.g., health care, food service, transportation); or 2) retail, sales or customer service jobs.
• The primary reason for working was to “support myself.”

CCSSE Background
CCSSE is a national survey intended to measure the level of student engagement and provide inter-collegiate comparisons. The theory, with some basis in research, especially for four-year colleges, is that greater engagement leads to higher retention. In the 2010 survey, 658 community colleges participated, gathering over 400,000 student responses. LaGuardia randomly sampled among all classes where English proficiency could be assumed and had over 850 students responding. LaGuardia has participated in the 2003, 2005 and 2007 CCSSE surveys.

Two peer groups within the 658 community colleges are cited in the results. There were 63 community colleges in the study with enrollments greater than 15,000 (extra large), and there were 126 community colleges located in large, urban areas (urban).

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Findings
1) LaGuardia challenges its students. Within the entire CCSSE cohort our students put LaGuardia in the 9th decile for Student Effort and Academic Challenge. Among extra-large colleges, LaGuardia students rated their Student Effort higher than students at all other such colleges, but LaGuardia’s Academic Challenge was rated only in the 8th decile among urban college students.

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4) Active & collaborative learning was good for an extra large college. Among extra large colleges LaGuardia students placed us in the 8th decile for active & collaborative learning. Among urban colleges and the sample as a whole, however, we were rated in the 6th decile. This is the only area in which LaGuardia declined from the 2007 results, dropping from the 9th percentile to the 6th. Similar comparative declines occurred against the two peer groups. While the scores of each of the comparison groups crept upward since 2007, LaGuardia’s score fell markedly. Most of the decline cannot be attributed to other institutions “catching up” to LaGuardia.
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CCSSE has organized the response to a handful of questions on the survey into five “Benchmarks.” This report concentrates only on the Benchmarks. The five benchmark aggregations are: 1) Active & Collaborative Learning; 2) Student Effort; 3) Academic Challenge; 4) Student-Faculty Interaction; and 5) Support for Learners.

(Note: in all cases where we use the words “significant or significantly,” the phrase “statistical significance” alone is implied. CCSSE uses a 2-tailed T-test at the 95% level to determine statistical significance.)

Analysis
In each of the five benchmark areas, very few individual questions significantly differentiated LaGuardia from its peers. Nevertheless, this question-by-question analysis is inadequate when a large number of the mean values of our students’ responses to questions are higher than those of our peers, but none or few are higher by a statistically significant amount. In some cases, LaGuardia reached the 80th or 90th percentile on the general strength among all items in the benchmark area, not on the depth of individual questions.

1) Active and Collaborative Learning
All of the differences between LaGuardia and the means of the other three cohorts (all schools, extra large colleges and urban colleges) were not statistically significant on all seven questions that made up this benchmark.

In your experiences at this college during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the follow? (Never, Sometimes, Often, Very often)

1) Asked question in class or contributed to class discussions
2) Made a class presentation
3) Worked with other students on projects during class
4) Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments
5) Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)
6) Participated in community-based project as a part of a regular course
7) Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class

2) Student Effort
On four of the eight items used in this benchmark, LaGuardia showed no statistically significant difference from its peers in the three groups.

In your experiences at this college during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? (Never, Sometimes, Often, Very often)

...
1) Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in
2) Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources
3) Came to class without completing readings or assignments

During the current school year, about how much reading and writing have you done at this college?
(None, Between 1 and 4, Between 5 and 10, Between 11 and 20, More than 20)
4) Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment

On one of the eight items used in this benchmark, LaGuardia was higher than extra-large colleges by a statistically significant amount, but not so when compared to the cohort as a whole.

About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following? (None, 1-5 hours, 6-10 hours, 11-20 hours, 21-30 hours, more than 30 hours)
5) Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, or other activities related to your program)

On three of the eight items LaGuardia’s scores were higher by a statistically significant margin than those of its peer groups.

How often do you use the following services? (Rarely/never, Sometimes, Often)
6) Frequency: Peer or other tutoring
7) Frequency: Skill labs (writing, math, etc.)
8) Frequency: Computer lab

- Peer tutoring had the most important differences with 33% of our students answering “sometimes” and 13% “often,” while for the whole cohort only 19% said “sometimes” and 8% said “often.”
- Writing and math labs also showed a large differential with 37% of our students answering “sometimes” and 22% answering “often,” while the cohort as a whole answered “sometimes” 24% of the time and answered “often” only 15% of the time.
- Both male and female, as well as traditional and non-traditional aged students used these services significantly more than similar students at other colleges.
- Both developmental and non-developmental students used tutoring at significantly higher levels than their peers.
- Developmental, but not non-developmental students used writing and math labs, as well as computer labs, at significantly higher levels than their peers.
- White and Asian students drove the higher significance levels for tutoring.
- Asian students were the only ethnic group to show significantly higher use of writing and math labs.
- Hispanic students were the only ethnic group to show significantly higher use for computer labs.
- Both first generation and non-first generation students used these services significantly more than similar students at other colleges with the exception of first-generation students and writing/math labs where student frequency of use was no different than at other colleges.
3) **Academic Challenge**

Nine of the ten items that were combined to rate academic challenge showed **no statistically significant difference** between the LaGuardia mean and the means of the three peer groups.

*In your experiences at this college during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? (Never, Sometimes, Often, Very often)*

1) **Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor’s standards or expectations**

During the current school year, how much has your coursework at this college emphasized the following mental activities? (Very little, Some, Quite a bit, Very much)

2) **Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory**

3) **Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways**

4) **Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods**

5) **Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations**

6) **Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill**

During the current school year, about how much reading and writing have you done at this college? (None, Between 1 and 4, Between 5 and 10, Between 11 and 20, More than 20)

7) **Number of assigned textbooks, manuals, books, or book-length packs of course readings**

(Extremely easy...Extremely challenging)

8) **Mark the box that best represents the extent to which your examinations during the current school year have challenged you to do your best work at this college**

How much does this college emphasize each of the following? (Very little, Some, Quite a bit, Very much)

9) **Encouraging you to spend significant amounts of time studying**

One of the ten items rating academic challenge demonstrated that LaGuardia students felt more challenged by a **statistically significant amount** than the other peer groups.

During the current school year, about how much reading and writing have you done at this college? (None, Between 1 and 4, Between 5 and 10, Between 11 and 20, More than 20)

10) **Number of written papers or reports of any length**

- 5% of LaGuardia students said that they wrote no papers, while 10% of the other students answered “none.”
- Both male and female LaGuardia students reported writing significantly more papers than their peers.
- Only Hispanic LaGuardia students of all ethnic groups reported writing significantly more papers than their peers.
- Non-traditional, but not traditional age LaGuardia students reported writing significantly more papers than their peers.
- Non-first generation, but not those reported as first generation, answered that they wrote significantly more papers than their peers.

4) **Student-Faculty Interaction**

All of the six items in this benchmark category showed **no statistically significant difference** between LaGuardia student ratings and those from the other peer groups.

*In your experiences at this college during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? (Never, Sometimes, Often, Very often)*

1) **Used email to communicate with an instructor**

2) **Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor**

3) **Talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor**

4) **Discussed ideas from your reading or classes with instructors outside of class**
5) Received prompt feedback (written or oral) from instructors on your performance
6) Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework

5) Support for Learners
Five of the seven items in this benchmark category showed **no statistically significant** difference between LaGuardia student ratings and those from the other peer groups.

How much does this college emphasize each of the following? (Very little, Some, Quite a bit, Very much)
1) Providing the support you need to help you succeed at this college
2) Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
3) Providing the support you need to thrive socially
4) Providing the financial support you need to afford your education

How often do you use the following services? (Rarely/never, Sometimes, Often)
5) Frequency: Academic advising/planning

One item had a **statistically significant** mean above that of the whole 2010 cohort (but not different than that of the extra-large college cohort).

6) Frequency: Career counseling

One item demonstrated support for learners at a **statistically significant** level above that of the other cohorts.

How much does this college emphasize each of the following? (Very little, Some, Quite a bit, Very much)

7) Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds

- 28% of LaGuardia students answered “Very much,” while only 20% of the entire 2010 cohort answered similarly.
- Except for the ethnic subgroups, all other sub-categories of students showed significantly higher encouragement to contact different people than their peers at other institutions: both males and females; both developmental and non-developmental; both traditional and non-traditional age; and both first and non-first generation subgroups.
- Among ethnic groups, only white students and those indicating “other” showed significantly higher encouragement to contact different people from their peers at other institutions.

Caveats
CCSSE is a product of the Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas. Some of the research support for the usefulness of the survey comes from the same program.

National surveys like CCSSE have come under criticism recently for being too susceptible to small variations in responses. An apparently important finding showing a statistically significant difference in one year disappears in the next.

Finally, in our own survey work we have noticed that students answer early questions more carefully (if at all) than later questions and that they tend to give more socially acceptable answers than is always true. For example, many more students are certain that they will be on the Dean’s list than actually happens.
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Changes in Student Assessment of LaGuardia

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- Our students still consider their relationships with faculty, administrative personnel and offices to be worse than do students at other colleges, and, for the first time, they consider their relationships with other students to be worse than do students at other colleges.
- Our students are no longer:
  - preparing more drafts of papers than other students.
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  - analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory than other students.
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  - speaking more clearly and effectively than other students.
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Survey Items on Overall Reactions and Relationships

How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this college? (1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Good, 4=Excellent)

LaGuardia continues to be rated just a shade below “Good,” while students at all other institutions rate their colleges just a shade above. The difference between the LaGuardia rating and the rating of other institutions remains statistically significant. In 2007 the mean response for LaGuardia was 2.90. In 2010 the mean response was 2.89.

Mark the number that best represents the quality of your relationships with people at this college. (1=Unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation... 7=Friendly, supportive, sense of belonging)

Other students
Instructors
Administrative personnel and offices

As at other institutions, LaGuardia students rate the quality of their relationships with instructors (5.19) above that with their peers (5.13) and much higher than that with administrative personnel and offices (4.03). LaGuardia students, however, rated their relationships with instructors and administrative personnel and offices significantly lower than students at other colleges. In 2010 students also rated their relationships with other students significantly lower than that of their peers (the difference from the mean for extra-large colleges, however, was not significant).
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<th>LaGuardia 2010 Mean</th>
<th>CCSSE 2010 Cohort Mean</th>
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**Quality of the Academic Experience or Workload**

*No Longer Showing a Significant Difference between LaGuardia and Other Colleges*

The following items significantly differentiated LaGuardia from the other institutions in 2007, but no longer do so in 2010. In these areas our students no longer perceive that LaGuardia makes stronger or higher quality demands on them, compared with the average institution in the survey or the average extra-large community college.

*In your experiences at this college during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? (Never, Sometimes, Often, Very Often)*

- Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in
- Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources
- Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor’s standards or expectations
- Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity other than your own

*During the current school year, how much has your coursework at this college emphasized the following mental activities? (Very little, Some, Quite a bit, Very much)*

- Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory
- Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways
- Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods

*How much does this college emphasize each of the following? (Very little, Some, Quite a bit, Very much)*

- Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.) (significant against large colleges only, not against CCSSE sample as a whole in 2007)
- Providing the support you need to thrive socially

*How much has your experience at this college contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas? (Very little, Some, Quite a bit, Very much)*

- Speaking clearly and effectively
- Thinking critically and analytically (significant against large colleges only, not against CCSSE sample as a whole in 2007)
- Using computing and information technology (significant against large colleges only, not against CCSSE sample as a whole in 2007)
- Understanding yourself
- Developing clearer career goals (significant against large colleges only, not against CCSSE sample as a whole in 2007)
- Gaining information about career opportunities (significant against large colleges only, not against CCSSE sample as a whole in 2007)

**Quality of the Academic Experience or Workload**

*Still Showing a Significant Difference between LaGuardia and Other Colleges*
The following items showed a significant difference in the responses of LaGuardia students and those of students from other community colleges in 2007 and still do in 2010.

**During the current school year, about how much reading and writing have you done at this college?**
(None, Between 1 and 4, Between 5 and 10, Between 11 and 20, More than 20)

**Number of written papers or reports of any length**

**How much does this college emphasize each of the following?** (Very little, Some, Quite a bit, Very much)
- Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds

**How much has your experience at this college contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?** (Very little, Some, Quite a bit, Very much)
- Writing clearly and effectively
- Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds
- Developing a personal code of values and ethics

There were no new items in 2010 where LaGuardia differentiated itself from other colleges with regard to the academic experience or workload.

**Service Centers: Frequency of Use, Satisfaction, Importance**

Eleven service centers were rated on frequency of use, satisfaction and importance by students in the CCSSE survey. The questions were:

**How often do you use the following services?** (1=Rarely/never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often)

**How satisfied are you with the services?** (1=Not at all, 2=Somewhat, 3=Very)

**How important are the services to you?** (1=Not at all, 2=Somewhat, 3=Very)

**Academic advising/planning**

Students at LaGuardia used academic advising as frequently as students at other schools in the survey in both 2007 and 2010.

Students at LaGuardia were less satisfied with academic advising than their peers at other schools in both 2007 and 2010 (except there was no significant difference between LaGuardia and large schools in 2007)

Students at LaGuardia found academic advising to be as important as students at other schools in both years.

**Career counseling and Job placement assistance**

Since 2007, frequency of use statistics for career counseling and job placement assistance give a mixed signal. Career counseling use was significantly more frequent compared to other colleges in 2007. In 2010 the difference was still significant when compared against the sample as a whole, but not against the extra-large college peer group. The same thing is true for job placement assistance, except that in 2010 the significant difference in use against the sample as a whole disappeared, while that for extra-large colleges remained.
In 2010 student satisfaction with Career Counseling was significantly lower than peers. Whereas, no significant difference existed in 2007. No significant differences in satisfaction existed in either year with Job Placement Assistance.

In 2010 students rated the importance of Career Counseling significantly higher than did students at other schools. They did not do so in 2007. In 2010 students rated the importance of Job Placement Assistance significantly higher than their peers, just as they did in 2007.

Peer or other tutoring
Students at LaGuardia used peer or other tutoring more frequently than students at other schools in both years.

Students at LaGuardia were as satisfied with peer or other tutoring as students at other schools in both years.

Students at LaGuardia rated peer or other tutoring as significantly more important than did students at other schools in both years.

Skill labs (writing, math, etc.) and Computer labs
Students at LaGuardia used writing and math labs as well as computer labs more frequently than students at other schools in both years.

Students at LaGuardia were as satisfied with writing and math labs as were students at other schools in both years.

Students at LaGuardia were as satisfied with computer labs as were students at other schools in 2010, which is an improvement over 2007 when our students were significantly less satisfied than other students.

Our students rated writing and math labs as significantly more important than did students at other schools in both years. Our students rated computer labs as significantly more important than did students in large community colleges in both 2007 and 2010, but not more important than students in the CCSSE sample as a whole in either year.

Child care
Our students did not use child care more frequently in 2010 than students at other, but they did indicate that they used it more frequently in 2007 against both the whole CCSSE and the large college groups.

Our students did not rate satisfaction with child care higher and did not see child care as more important than students at other colleges in either 2007 or 2010.

Financial aid advising
LaGuardia students did not utilize financial aid advising more frequently than students at other colleges.

LaGuardia students were significantly less satisfied with financial aid advising than students at other CCSSE community colleges in both 2007 and 2010 and were significantly less satisfied than students at extra-large colleges (in 2010 only).
LaGuardia students did not rate financial aid advising as significantly more important than students at other colleges in either 2007 or 2010.

**Student organizations**
LaGuardia students did not utilize student organizations more frequently than students at other colleges (except in 2007 when they utilized them significantly more frequently than students at other large community colleges).

LaGuardia students were no less satisfied with student organizations and found student organizations to be no more important than students at other CCSSE community colleges in all peer groups in both 2007 and 2010.

**Transfer credit assistance**
LaGuardia students did not utilize transfer credit assistance more frequently than students at other colleges.

LaGuardia students were significantly less satisfied with transfer credit assistance compared to students at other CCSSE community colleges and compared to students at extra-large colleges in both 2007 and 2010.

LaGuardia students did not rate transfer credit assistance as significantly more important than students at other colleges in either 2007 or 2010.

**Services for people with disabilities**
Our students did not use services for people with disabilities more frequently, did not rate satisfaction with services for people with disabilities higher and did not see services for people with disabilities as more important than students at other colleges in either 2007 or 2010.

The table on the next page gives the mean scores for 2010 for LaGuardia, Extra-large Colleges, and the 2010 CCSSE cohort as a whole. In addition, the 2007 mean score for LaGuardia is given.

The questions were
**Frequency:** How often do you use the following services? (1=Rarely/never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often)

**Satisfaction:** How satisfied are you with these services? (1=Not at all, 2=Somewhat, 3=Very)

**Importance:** How important are the services to you? (1=Not at all, 2=Somewhat, 3=Very)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>95% 2-tailed t-test</th>
<th>LaGuardia 2007 Mean</th>
<th>LaGuardia 2010 Mean</th>
<th>Ex-Large Colleges 2010 Mean</th>
<th>CCSSE Cohort 2010 Mean</th>
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<td>1.56</td>
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</table>
Background and behavior

Skipped class
In 2007 our students did not report skipping class any more than those reported by students in the cohort as a whole or by students only at large colleges. In 2010, however, our students reported skipping classes at a significantly lower rate than students at both extra-large colleges and when compared to the 2010 CCSSE cohort as a whole. The mean for our students in 2010 was 1.43 (1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often), while the mean for CCSSE 2010 was 1.56 and for extra-large colleges it was 1.58.

Spending time
About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following? (0=None, 1=1-5 hours, 2=6-10 hours, 3=11-20 hours, 4=21-30 hours, 5=More than 30 hours)

Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, or other activities related to your program)
The 2010 mean answer for LaGuardia students was 2.15 against 1.95 for CCSSE as a whole and 1.91 for students at extra-large colleges. Only the 2010 difference against extra-large colleges was significant.

Working for pay
The 2010 mean answer for LaGuardia students was 2.44 against 2.94 for CCSSE as a whole and 3.02 for students at extra-large colleges. In both 2007 and 2010, and against both groups LaGuardia students worked significantly less than students at other colleges.

Commuting to and from classes
The 2010 mean answer for LaGuardia students was 1.62 against 1.32 for CCSSE as a whole and 1.31 for students at extra-large colleges. In both 2007 and 2010, and against both groups, LaGuardia students spent significantly more time commuting than students at other colleges.

Participating in college-sponsored activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)
Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse, etc.)
In both 2010 and 2007 LaGuardia students spent about the same time on both these activities as students at other colleges.

Issues that might cause dropping classes or out
How likely is it that the following issues would cause you to withdraw from class or from this college? (1=Not likely, 2=Somewhat likely, 3=Likely, 4=Very likely)

Working full-time (2010 mean 2.39)
Caring for dependents (2010 mean 2.10)
Lack of finances (2010 mean 2.61)
LaGuardia students indicated no greater likelihood that any of these three areas would cause them to drop out than students in the CCSSE cohort as a whole or the extra-large college cohort in both 2007 and 2010.

Transfer to a 4-year college (2010 mean 2.66)
LaGuardia students indicated no greater likelihood in 2010 that transferring to a 4-year college would cause them to drop out than students in the CCSSE cohort as a whole or than students in the extra-large
cohort. In 2007, however, our students were significantly more likely to rate this as a possible reason than students in the CCSSE cohort as a whole (but not against the large college cohort).

*Academically unprepared (2010 mean 1.99)*

LaGuardia students believed they were significantly more likely to drop out for this one reason than students in the CCSSE cohort as a whole and than students in the extra-large college cohort in both 2010 and 2007.

**Support of friends and family**

(1=Not very, 2=Somewhat, 3=Quite a bit, 4=Extremely)

*How supportive are your friends of your attending this college? (LaGCC 2010 mean 3.01, CCSSE mean 3.24)*

*How supportive is your immediate family of your attending this college? (LaGCC 2010 mean 3.30, CCSSE mean 3.51)*

In 2010, but not in 2007, LaGuardia students felt significantly less support by friends and family than students in the whole CCSSE cohort and than students in the extra-large college cohort.

**Caveats**

CCSSE is a product of the Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas. Some of the research support for the usefulness of the survey comes from the same program.

National surveys like CCSSE have come under criticism recently for being too susceptible to small variations in responses. An apparently important finding showing a statistically significant difference in one year disappears in the next.

Finally, in our own survey work we have noticed that students answer early questions more carefully (if at all) than later questions and that they tend to give more socially acceptable answers than is always true. For example, many more students are certain that they will be on the Dean’s list than actually happens.
Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) 2010
Analysis of Special-Focus and Custom Survey Items

Nathan Dickmeyer
Institutional Research and Assessment
September 2, 2010

Executive Summary
In 2010 students were asked two sets of in-depth questions that had not previously been asked on CCSSE surveys. One set was prepared by CCSSE research staff and the other set was prepared by the college. Bret Eynon and Sam Michalowski and their colleagues were largely responsible for the second set.

The five special focus items were asked of all students in the CCSSE participant population. As such comparative data can be presented on these questions. CCSSE did not prepare significance tests for these items. The 15 custom items were asked of LaGuardia students only. No comparative analysis is possible.

Impact on students
The special focus questions examined the college experience and its impact on students: integrating ideas from different courses, included diverse perspectives in class discussions and assignments, examined strengths and weaknesses of own views, looking at issues from another’s perspective, and learned something that changed the student’s viewpoint. From a simplistic point of view, we can look at whether a majority of LaGuardia students underwent the experience (citing either “Often” or “Very often” as answers) and whether a majority of CCSSE participants nationally also underwent the experience.

In the points below, when we say “a majority,” we mean that more than 50% answered “Often” or “Very often.” This language does not demonstrate a statistical finding. It is only intended to stimulate discussion.

- Both a majority of LaGuardia students and a majority of all CCSSE participants put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions.
- Neither a majority of LaGuardia students, nor a majority of all CCSSE participants included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or assignments.
- Both a majority of LaGuardia students and a majority of all CCSSE participants examined the strengths and weaknesses of “your own” views on a topic or issue.
- Both a majority of LaGuardia students and a majority of all CCSSE participants tried to better understand someone else’s views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective.
- Neither a majority of LaGuardia students, nor a majority of all CCSSE participants learned something that changed their viewpoint about an issue or concept.

The first six LaGuardia custom questions can be examined in roughly the same manner and pertain to the student’s college experience and its impact on him or her.
• Fewer than two students in ten felt that their LaGuardia experience had contributed “very much” to learning how to explore and solve complex, real world problems “such as those you might face in your life, including your career.”
• Fewer than 15% of the students felt that their LaGuardia experience had contributed “very much” to using mathematics to address real world problems, “including those you might face in your career.”
• Nearly 57% of the respondents did not agree that LaGuardia “cares for me as a person.”
• Nearly two-thirds of the respondents agreed that LaGuardia has helped to change the way “I see myself and my life.”
• More than three-quarters of the respondents agreed that the skills and knowledge “I develop in one course helps me succeed in other courses.”

Student Disengagement
• One-third of the students who had decided to attend part-time cited a scheduling conflict with his or her job as a reason.
• One-quarter of the students who had decided to attend part-time cited lack of course availability.
• One-quarter of the students who had stopped out for a semester or more did so because they could not afford to attend.
• Students cited four other reasons for stopping out for a semester or more. Each reason was cited by approximately one student in five: 1) Scheduling conflict with a job; 2) Lack of course availability; 3) Personal or family crises (e.g., illness, incarceration, loss of child care); and 4) Personal or family reason (e.g., hobby, travel).

Work
• The majority of LaGuardia survey respondents worked fewer than 21 hours per week.
• The majority of those who worked were employed in either 1) service (e.g., health care, food service, transportation); or 2) retail, sales or customer service jobs.
• The primary reason for working was to “support myself.”

Background
CCSSE is a national survey intended to measure the level of student engagement and provide inter-collegiate comparisons. The theory, with some basis in research, especially for four-year colleges, is that greater engagement leads to higher retention. In the 2010 survey, 658 community colleges participated, gathering over 400,000 student responses. LaGuardia randomly sampled among all classes where English proficiency could be assumed and had over 850 students responding. LaGuardia has participated in the 2003, 2005 and 2007 CCSSE surveys.

Two peer groups within the 658 community colleges are cited in the results. There were 63 community colleges in the study with enrollments greater than 15,000 (extra large), and there were 126 community colleges located in large, urban areas (urban).
### Tables of Results
#### 2010 Special Focus Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>LaGuardia</th>
<th>Ex-Large Colleges</th>
<th>All 2010 Participants</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1--In your experience at this college during the current school year, about how often have you put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions?</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>157</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>254</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>188</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3--In your experience at this college during the current school year, about how often have you examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>38.5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Often</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Often</td>
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### LaGuardia Custom Questions 2010

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| **6**-To what extent has your college experience contributed to learning how to explore and solve complex, real world problems such as those you might face in your life, including your career? | Very Much: 115 (18.2%)  
Some: 270 (42.9%)  
Very Little: 190 (30.2%)  
Not at all: 54 (8.7%)  
Total: 629 (100.0%) |
| **7**-To what extent has your college experience contributed to learning how to use mathematics to address real world problems, including those you might face in your career? | Very Much: 92 (14.7%)  
Some: 230 (36.8%)  
Very Little: 203 (32.5%)  
Not at all: 100 (16.0%)  
Total: 625 (100.0%) |
| **8**-In your experience at this institution during the current school year, about how often have you applied information or experience from other areas of your life (work, friends, family, community) in class discussions or assignments? | Often: 115 (18.5%)  
Sometimes: 267 (43.0%)  
Rarely: 184 (29.6%)  
Never: 56 (9.0%)  
Total: 622 (100.0%) |
| **9**-The faculty and staff of this institution care about me as a person. | Strongly agree: 80 (13.0%)  
Agree: 187 (30.2%)  
Neutral: 231 (37.2%)  
Disagree: 75 (12.2%)  
Strongly disagree: 47 (7.5%)  
Total: 620 (100.0%) |
| **10**-My experience at this college has helped to change the way I see myself and my life. | Strongly agree: 131 (21.9%)  
Agree: 249 (41.5%)  
Disagree: 117 (19.5%)  
Strongly disagree: 61 (10.3%)  
Not applicable: 41 (6.9%)  
Total: 599 (100.0%) |
| **11**-As I go through college, the skills and knowledge I develop in one course helps me succeed in other courses. | Strongly agree: 141 (23.5%)  
Agree: 338 (56.3%)  
Disagree: 78 (13.0%)  
Strongly disagree: 34 (5.6%)  
Not applicable: 10 (1.6%)  
Total: 601 (100.0%) |
| **12**-If you were born in another country, what is your current status? | Citizen: 282 (53.9%)  
Green card: 145 (27.6%)  
Student visa (F-1, J-1, M-1): 52 (9.9%)  
Other visitor visas: 21 (4.0%)  
Undocumented: 24 (4.5%)  
Total: 524 (100.0%) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13 - How old were you when you began residence in the United States?</th>
<th>Born here</th>
<th>263</th>
<th>46.4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under age 6</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between ages 6-12</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between ages 13-18</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over 18 years old</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14 - For high school diploma recipients, where did you earn your high school diploma?</th>
<th>A New York city public high school</th>
<th>282</th>
<th>51.2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A New York City private or parochial high school</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A New York state public high school</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An out-of-state public or private high school</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A high school in another country</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15 - For GED recipients, where did you earn your GED? If you have ever gone part-time for a semester or more at this college, please indicate the best and/or most common reason why:</th>
<th>This college</th>
<th>27</th>
<th>8.3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A New York City or State GED program</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An out-of state public GED program</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A private GED program</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>16 - If you have ever gone part-time for a semester or more at this college, please indicate the best and/or most common reason why:</th>
<th>Dropped classes to make better grades</th>
<th>69</th>
<th>15.5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scheduling conflict with job</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of course availability</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal or family crises (e.g., illness, incarceration, loss of child care)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal or family reason (e.g., hobby, travel)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>17 - If you have ever stopped-out for a semester or more at this college, please indicate the best and/or most common reason why:</th>
<th>Scheduling conflict with job</th>
<th>68</th>
<th>18.4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Couldn't afford to attend</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of course availability</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal or family crises (e.g., illness, incarceration, loss of child care)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal or family crises (e.g., illness, incarceration, loss of child care)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>18 - How much do you work on average per week?</th>
<th>I do not work</th>
<th>163</th>
<th>29.1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-10 hours</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-20 hours</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21-35 hours</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36 or more hours</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
19-Please choose the best category that describes your current job:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manual labor (e.g., construction, maintenance, cleaning)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service (e.g., health care, food service, transportation)</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail, sales or customer service</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (e.g., teaching, tutoring)</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative support (e.g., clerical accounting)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>400</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20-If you have a job, what is the primary reason you work while in school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To gain knowledge, skills and/or experience</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To support myself</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To support my parents</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For spending money</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To finance my college tuition and expenses</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>404</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>