

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) 2001-2010: Trends, Highlights, and NSSE Accountability Performance Indicators

Introductory facts:

- 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 calculated based on the results of clusters of individual survey questions: **Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student Interaction with Faculty, Enriching Educational Experiences, and Supportive Campus Environment.**
- NSSE researchers have developed a new **Deep Learning Index** that focuses on behaviors and activities associated with deep learning. The overall Deep Learning Scale is the average of all 12 survey items that are used to generate three subscales: **Higher Order Thinking, Integrative Learning, and Reflective Learning.** This report contains a summary of a special analysis of Evergreen's deep learning index scores using results from the past five administrations.
- Evergreen **first-year and senior students** have participated in the NSSE annually since spring 2000. **Beginning with the 2010 administration of the NSSE, Evergreen transitioned to a new 2-year cycle and will participate in even-numbered years,** thus synchronizing with the COPLAC consortium schedule and permitting more time to analyze and share results.
- **497 Evergreen students completed the NSSE 2010,** compared to 425 in 2009. **The response rate of the random sample was 29%,** which was lower than participation rates for the comparison groups and slightly lower than the response rate of 31% in 2009. Evergreen participated through NSSE's "web+" administration mode, which means the first three survey contacts were via email (evergreen.edu email accounts) then non-respondents received a final outreach by mail at their home addresses.
- **Evergreen's 2010 survey responses represented 24% of all first-year students and 26% of all seniors enrolled.** On average, over the prior three administrations, 25% of all enrolled first-years and 22% of enrolled seniors participated in NSSE, so 2010 marked an increase in the proportion of the senior population represented by the results.
- 595 U.S. colleges and universities participated in NSSE 2010. The **comparison groups** presented in the following benchmark charts include "**COPLAC**" (the 16 participating Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges), "**Lib Arts**" (our historical Carnegie classification peers, not available after NSSE 2005), "**Masters-Small**" (37 participating institutions from our current Carnegie class, with data from 2006-2010), and "**All NSSE**" (all 595 participating U.S. institutions).

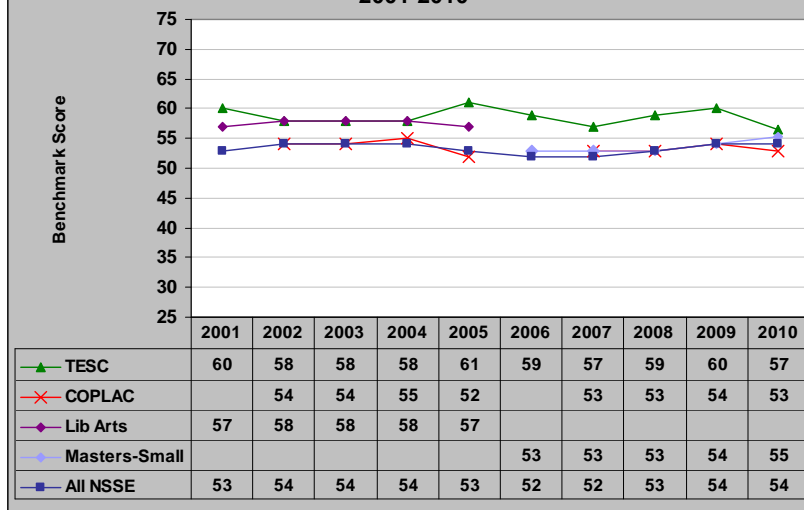
Level of Academic Challenge

Above Average (Evergreen first-years as engaged as top 50% of NSSE schools)

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

- Spend more time synthesizing, analyzing, and making judgments about the value of information
- Read more assigned texts
- Write more short papers (<5 pages)
- Write fewer medium-length papers (5-19 pages)
- Perceive lower campus emphasis on spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work
- Less often work harder than they thought they could to meet instructor's expectations

First-Year: Level of Academic Challenge Benchmark 2001-2010

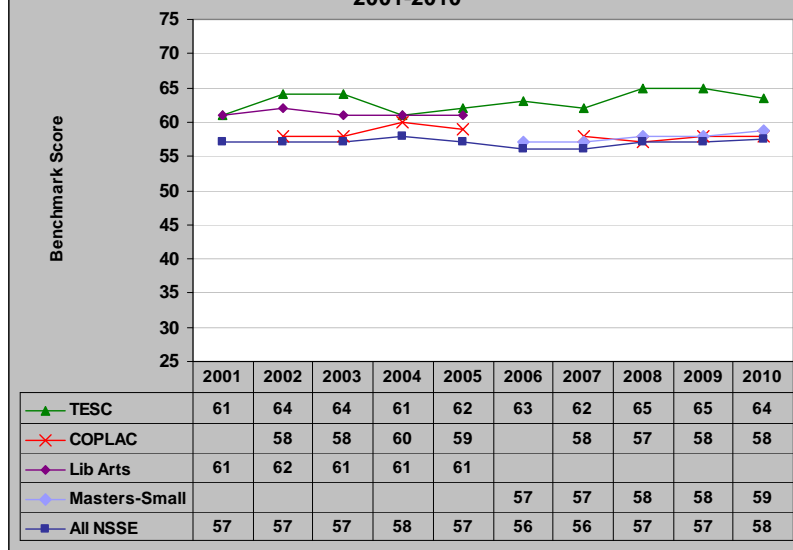


High-performing (Evergreen seniors as engaged as top 10% of NSSE schools)

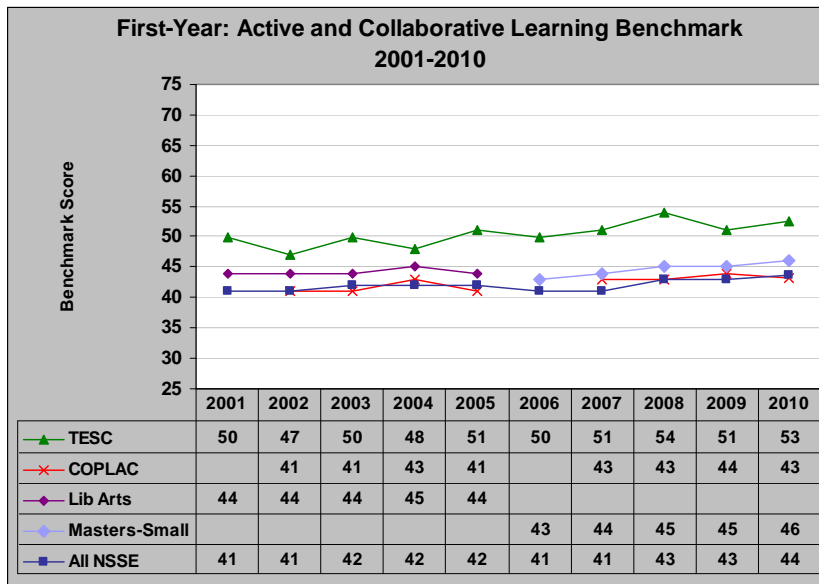
Compared to other seniors, Evergreen seniors:

- Spend more time preparing for class, synthesizing, analyzing, and making judgments about the value of information
- Read more assigned texts
- Write more short papers (<5 pages)
- More frequently work harder than they thought they could to meet instructor's expectations
- Write fewer medium-length papers (5-19 pages)

Seniors: Level of Academic Challenge Benchmark 2001-2010



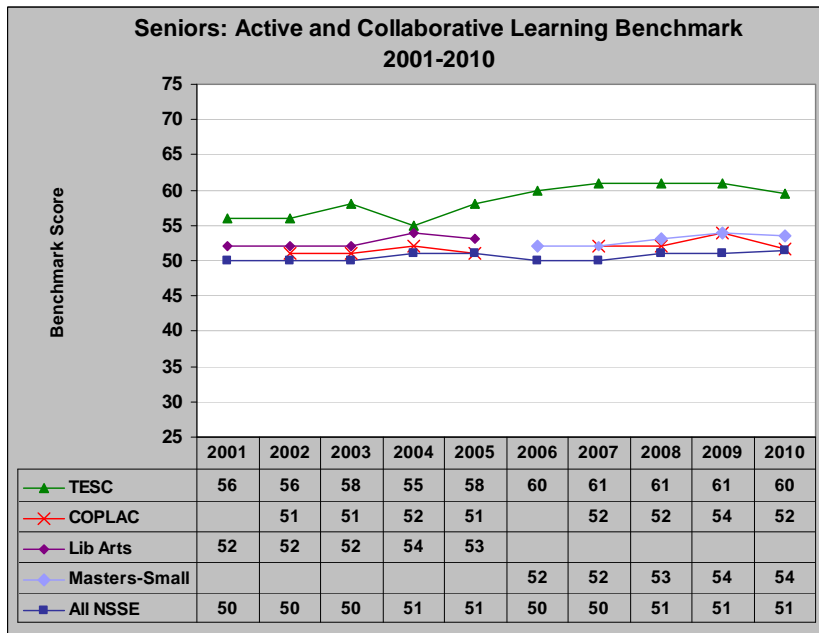
Active and Collaborative Learning



High-performing (Evergreen first-years as engaged as top 10% of NSSE schools)

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

- Are more likely to ask questions and contribute to discussions in class and give class presentations
- More often work with other students on projects during class and outside of class
- More often discuss ideas from reading and classes with others outside of class
- More frequently participate in a community-based project as part of a course
- Are less likely to have tutored or taught other students



High-performing (Evergreen seniors as engaged as top 10% of NSSE schools)

Compared to other seniors, Evergreen seniors:

- More frequently ask questions and contribute to class discussions in class
- More often work with other students on projects during class and outside of class
- Tutored or taught other students
- More often discuss ideas from class with others outside of class
- More frequently participate in a community-based project as part of a course
- There are no items for which Evergreen seniors are lower than one of our comparison groups.
- In 2010, Evergreen seniors were significantly higher than at least one comparison group on 6 out of 7 measures of active and collaborative learning; the only exception was their typical frequency of making class presentations.

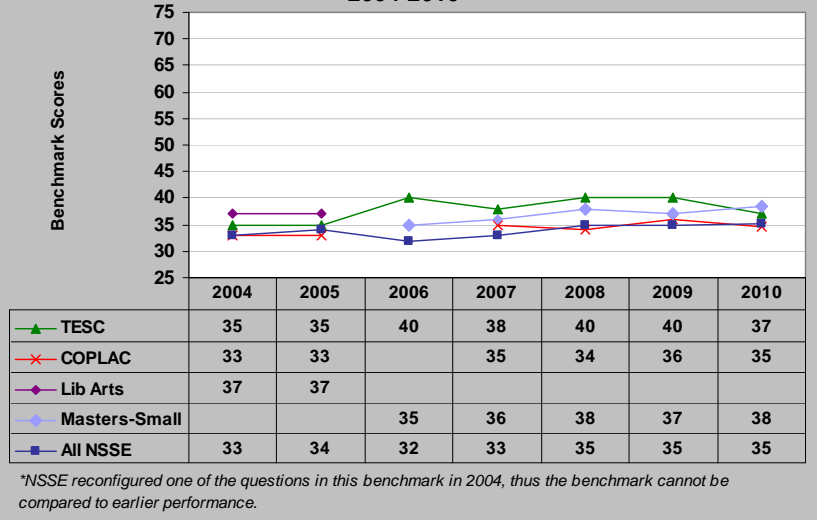
Student-Faculty Interaction

Above Average (Evergreen first-years as engaged as top 50% of NSSE schools)

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

- More often discuss ideas from class with faculty members outside of class
- More frequently receive prompt feedback on academic performance
- More often discuss grades or assignments with faculty
- Are less likely to talk about career plans with a faculty member or advisor.
- Are less likely to work with faculty on activities other than coursework

First-Year: Student-Faculty Interaction Benchmark 2004-2010*



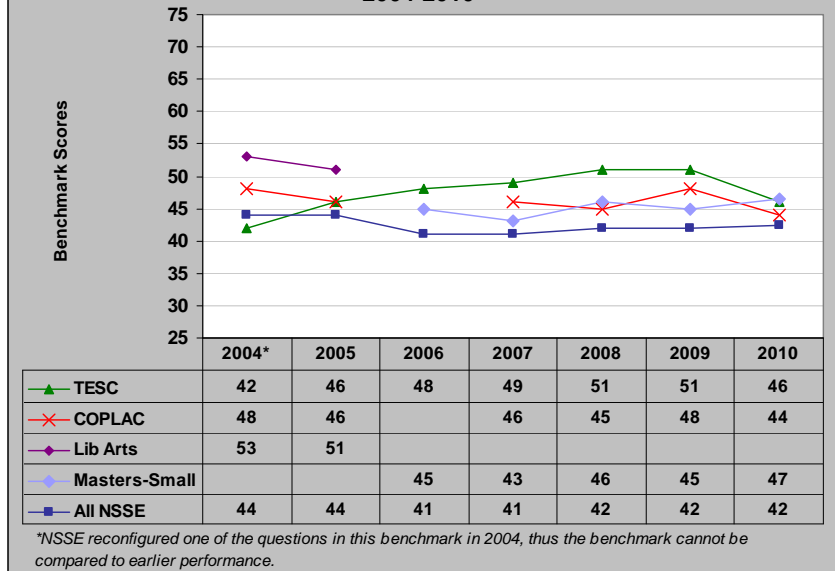
Below Average (Evergreen seniors significantly less engaged than the top 50% of NSSE schools)

Performance declined in 2010; Evergreen seniors were as engaged as the top 50% of NSSE schools from 2005-2008 and as engaged as the top 10% in 2009. The drop was a result of a decrease in five of the six measures used to calculate this benchmark.

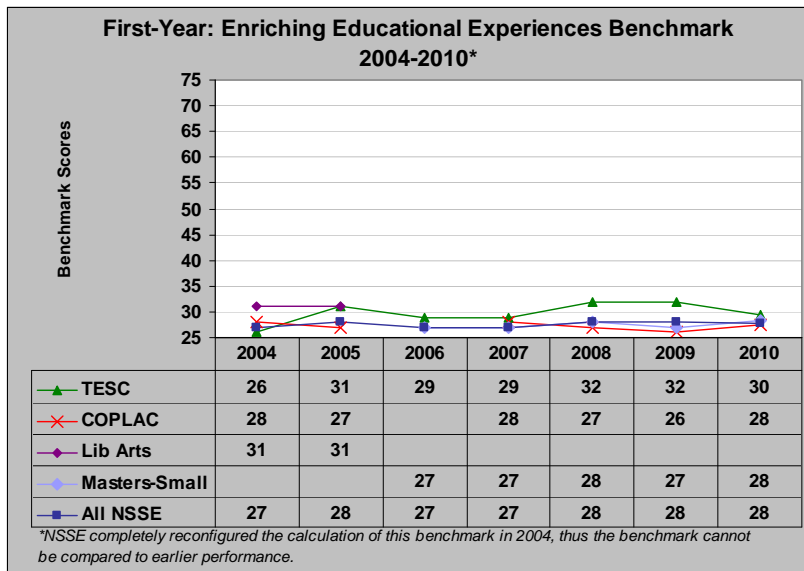
Compared to other seniors, Evergreen seniors:

- More often discuss ideas from class with faculty members outside of class
- More frequently receive prompt feedback on academic performance
- Are less likely to work with faculty on activities other than coursework

Seniors: Student-Faculty Interaction Benchmark 2004-2010*



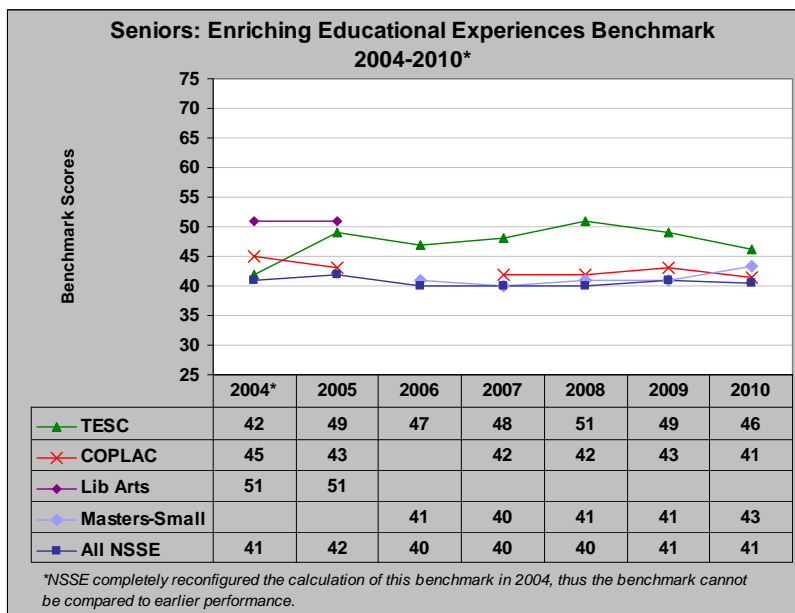
Enriching Educational Experiences



Above Average (Evergreen first-years as engaged as top 50% of NSSE schools)

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

- Perceive a stronger campus emphasis on encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds
- Are more likely to have participated in a learning community
- More frequently have serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity and with students who are very different in terms of religious beliefs, political or personal values
- Spend less time on co-curricular activities
- Are less likely to have participated in foreign language studies
- Are less likely to have done community service or volunteer work



Above Average (Evergreen seniors as engaged as top 50% of NSSE schools)

Compared to other seniors, Evergreen seniors:

- Perceive a stronger campus emphasis on encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds
- Are more likely to have participated in a learning community or independent study
- More frequently have serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity and with students who are very different in terms of religious beliefs, political or personal values
- Spend less time on co-curricular activities
- Are less likely to have participated in a culminating senior experience.
- Are less likely to have done foreign language coursework
- Are less likely to have done community service or volunteer work

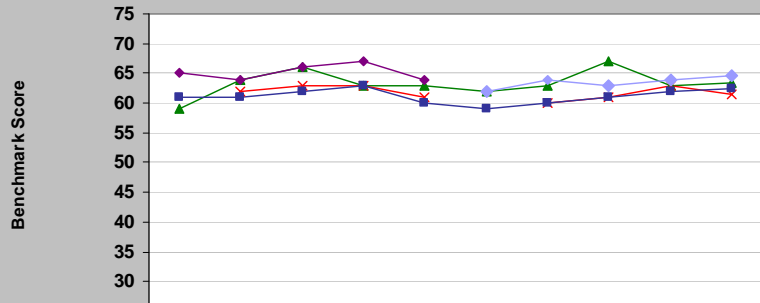
Supportive Campus Environment

Below Average (Evergreen first-years significantly less engaged than top 50% of NSSE schools)

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

- **Report a higher quality of relationships with faculty members**
- There are no items for which Evergreen first-years are lower than one of our comparison groups.

First-year: Supportive Campus Environment Benchmark 2001-2010



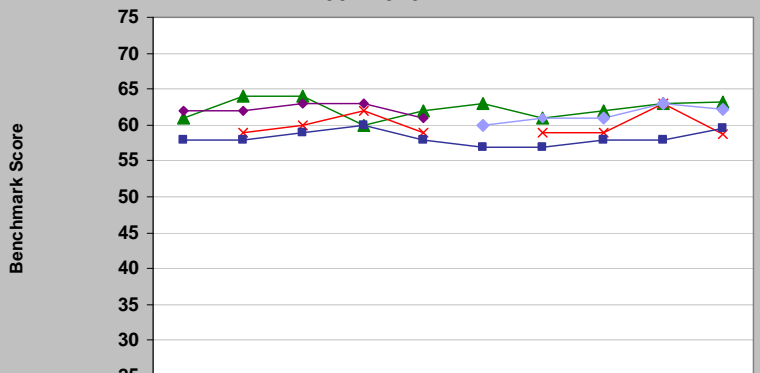
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
TESC	59	64	66	63	63	62	63	67	63	63
COPLAC		62	63	63	61		60	61	63	62
Lib Arts	65	64	66	67	64					
Masters-Small						62	64	63	64	65
All NSSE	61	61	62	63	60	59	60	61	62	63

Above Average (Evergreen seniors as engaged as top 50% of NSSE schools)

Compared to other seniors, Evergreen seniors:

- **Report a higher quality of relationships with faculty members and administrative personnel and offices**
- **Are more likely to feel their campus environment provides the support they need to succeed academically and helps them cope with non-academic responsibilities**
- Report a lower quality of relationships with other students

Seniors: Supportive Campus Environment Benchmark 2001-2010



	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
TESC	61	64	64	60	62	63	61	62	63	63
COPLAC		59	60	62	59		59	59	63	59
Lib Arts	62	62	63	63	61					
Masters-Small						60	61	61	63	62
All NSSE	58	58	59	60	58	57	57	58	58	60

Deep Learning Index

Beyond the five standard NSSE Benchmarks, NSSE researchers have also developed several new scales and constructs from the items on the survey. A new scale to assess deep learning is one such area, which relies on 12 NSSE items that focus on behaviors indicative of deep approaches to learning. The Deep Learning Scale presented here is derived from the averaging the 12 items that comprise three deep learning subscales: Higher Order Thinking, Integrative Learning, and Reflective Learning. Deep Learning scale scores were calculated from the results of the five most recent NSSE administrations. The results of this special analysis are presented below; peer comparisons are not available for the overall scale scores, but they are available for the 12 individual items that comprise the scales. Evergreen’s scores for the integrative learning subscale tend to be a bit lower than those for the reflective learning and higher order thinking subscales.

Both Evergreen first-years and seniors scored significantly higher than their peers on three of the four **Higher Order Thinking** measures:

- Analyzing the elements of an idea, experience, or theory
- Synthesizing and organizing ideas in to new more complex interpretations
- Making judgments about the value of information

They had significantly higher scores than their peers in four of the five **Integrative Learning** measures:

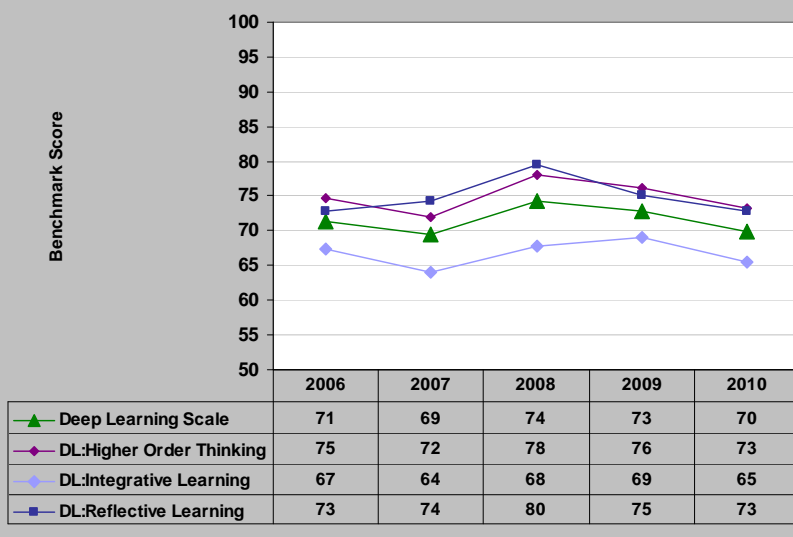
- Discussing ideas from coursework with faculty and with others (friends, family, co-workers, etc.) outside of class
- Working on assignments that require integration of ideas from various sources
- Including diverse perspectives in class discussions and assignments

And they had significantly higher scores than all peer groups on the three **Reflective Learning** measures:

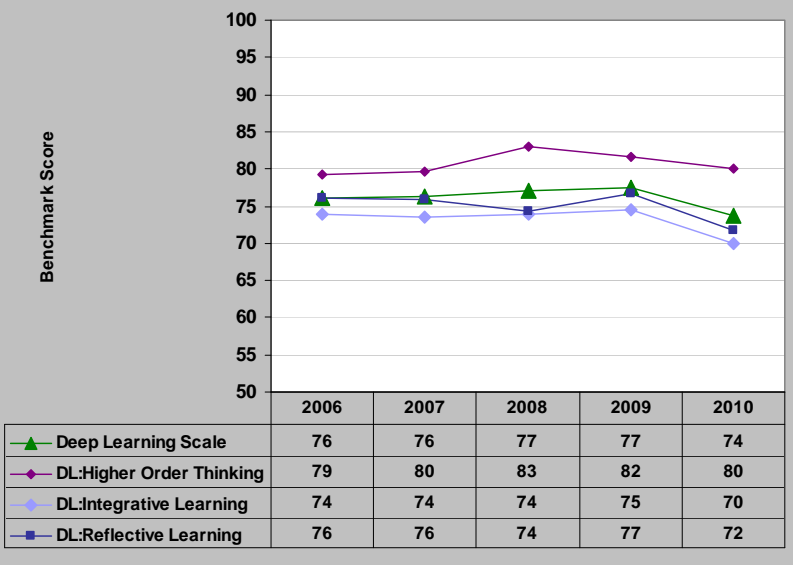
- Examining the strengths and weaknesses of their own views
- Trying to understand other people’s views and perspectives
- Learning something that changes their understanding of an issue or concept

Neither first-years nor seniors at Evergreen differed significantly from their peers in terms of applying theories to problems or in new situations, nor in terms of integrating ideas from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussion.

Evergreen First-years: Deep Learning Index 2006-2010



Evergreen Seniors: Deep Learning Index 2006-2010



Reference: Nelson Laird, T., Shoup, R., Kuh, G.D. (2005, May). *Measuring deep approaches to learning using the National Survey of Student Engagement*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Institutional Research, Chicago, IL.

Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) Accountability Indicators from NSSE

In Spring 2006, the HECB adopted another revision to the state accountability framework. At that time, they decided to allow institutions to select up to three institution-specific indicators related to *quality* instead of restricting institutions to indicators of economic contribution and degree-production. The following NSSE indicators were selected as Evergreen’s institution-specific accountability measures related to educational quality. Selecting indicators from the NSSE allows Evergreen to understand student experience in the context of other similar colleges and national trends.

Evergreen seniors lost their recent gains in terms of the percentage who participate in community service and the level to which Evergreen contributed to their development in solving complex real-world problems. Evergreen seniors in 2010 were significantly less likely to have participated in community service than seniors at other Masters-Small institutions ($p < .01$). Evergreen seniors continue to significantly outpace all three peer comparison groups in terms of the extent to which they credit Evergreen with contributing to their ability to solve real-world problems, despite the decline in this measure compared to 2009. On the other hand, the percentage of first-year students who report often or very often having serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity increased from 66% to 69%, which was the third year of improvement on a measure that had shown wide fluctuations from year to year in the past.

Evergreen-specific Quality Indicators	Five-year Average Baseline	2005-06 Performance	2006-07 Performance	2007-08 Performance	2008-09 Performance	2009-10 Performance
Percentage of seniors who have done or plan to do community service or volunteer work prior to graduation	TESC = 67% Peers: COPLAC = 71% National = 68%	TESC 06 = 76% Peers: National = 75% Carnegie Masters-Small = 75%	TESC 07 = 72% Peers: COPLAC = 74% National = 75% Carnegie Masters-Small = 76%	TESC 08 = 72% Peers: COPLAC = 76% National = 77% Carnegie Masters-Small = 76%	TESC 09 = 77% Peers: COPLAC = 78% National = 77% Carnegie Masters-Small = 77%	TESC 10 = 72% Peers: COPLAC = 76% National = 77% Carnegie Masters-Small = 78%
Percentage of seniors reporting that Evergreen contributed “quite a bit” or “very much” to their development in solving complex real-world problems	TESC = 75% Peers: COPLAC = 56% National = 58%	TESC 06 = 78% Peers: National = 60% Carnegie Masters-Small = 60%	TESC 07 = 78% Peers: COPLAC = 59% National = 61% Carnegie Masters-Small = 62%	TESC 08 = 74% Peers: COPLAC = 57% National = 62% Carnegie Masters-Small = 64%	TESC 09 = 83% Peers: COPLAC = 64% National = 64% Carnegie Masters-Small = 64%	TESC 10 = 75% Peers: COPLAC = 60% National = 65% Carnegie Masters-Small = 66%
Percentage of first-year students who report having serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity “often” or “very often.”	TESC = 60% Peers: COPLAC = 48% National = 51%	TESC 06 = 59% Peers: National = 49% Carnegie Masters-Small = 47%	TESC 07 = 53% Peers: COPLAC = 50% National = 50% Carnegie Masters-Small = 48%	TESC 08 = 62% Peers: COPLAC = 50% National = 52% Carnegie Masters-Small = 51%	TESC 09 = 66% Peers: COPLAC = 46% National = 53% Carnegie Masters-Small = 48%	TESC 10 = 69% Peers: COPLAC = 52% National = 52% Carnegie Masters-Small = 51%

Notes: Source of all institution-specific indicators is the annual administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). NSSE scores for the COPLAC comparison group represent the results for participating Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges. The national comparison group includes all participating colleges and universities. Carnegie Masters-Small were the participating colleges who share Evergreen’s 2010 Carnegie basic classification.