



## INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS BRIEF

### CCSSE 2008 Survey Results

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) is a voluntary, national survey designed to provide knowledge about student behaviors that relate closely to student success and student retention. In 2008, the survey was administered to 343,378 students in 585 community colleges throughout the country, including Tidewater Community College (TCC). CCSSE addresses what it considers to be five key benchmarks for student engagement and success:

1. **Active and Collaborative Learning**, based on the idea that students learn more when they are actively engaged in their own learning and have opportunities to think about and apply what they are learning in different settings;
2. **Student Effort**, based on the notion that the more effort students put into their learning, the more successful they will be;
3. **Academic Challenge**, based on the idea that the more students are challenged intellectually and creatively, the better they will learn;
4. **Student-Faculty Interaction**, based on the concept that student learning will be more effective and student persistence toward educational goals will be stronger with more interaction between students and faculty; and
5. **Support for Learners**, based on the notion that students are more satisfied with, and will learn more from, colleges that actively support their learning.

Survey questions, which in 2008 totaled 37 or more, are grouped into one of these five benchmark areas, and the scores are calculated so that the mean, or average, CCSSE score for any benchmark is always 50, and the standard deviation, or spread around the mean, is always 25. This provides instant feedback to a community college as to whether it is performing at, above, or below the national average (50). This also makes it easy for an institution to compare its scores with those of other, similar institutions.

CCSSE benchmark data is provided in several different categories: national data, an aggregation of all participating colleges; data aggregated by institutional size; and consortium data for various institutional groupings such as the VCCS. For the purposes of this report, institutional size is considered the best benchmark comparison, as there is a significant difference between the institutional culture and resources available at larger colleges in comparison to smaller colleges. As can be seen in Table 1, TCC scored higher in all categories except *Active and Collaborative Learning* when compared with all extra-large community colleges in the country. Extra-large colleges are defined as those with 15,000 or more students (47 extra-large community colleges participated in the 2008 CCSSE survey). TCC scored at or above the national average (50.0) in two benchmark areas (*Academic Challenge*, 50.3, and *Student-Faculty Interaction*, 50.0) and slightly below in three (*Student Effort*, 49.6; *Support for Learners*, 49.5; and *Active and Collaborative Learning*, 47.5).

<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>TCC</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Extra-Large</b>	<b>SACS</b>	<b>VCCS</b>
Active & Collaborative Learning	47.5	50.0	49.1	50.2	48.6
Student Effort	49.6	50.0	48.9	50.5	49.9
Academic Challenge	50.3	50.0	49.4	50.1	48.9
Student-Faculty Interaction	50.0	50.0	47.9	51.3	51.9
Support for Learners	49.5	50.0	49.0	51.6	50.5

**Table 1:** CCSSE Benchmark Comparisons (2008)

In comparison to all colleges within the SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) region and the VCCS, TCC scored higher only in the category of *Academic Challenge*. In this category, though, TCC had the third highest score of all 23 VCCS institutions. In comparison to Northern Virginia Community College, the only other extra-large size institution in the VCCS, TCC's scores ranked higher in four of the five categories. The scores of all VCCS institutions are shown in Table 2.

<b>College</b>	<b>Active &amp; Collaborative Learning</b>	<b>Student Effort</b>	<b>Academic Challenge</b>	<b>Student-Faculty Interaction</b>	<b>Support for Learners</b>
BRCC	47.1	51.3	48.5	50.3	46.1
CVCC	42.4	47.1	47.8	47.5	47.5
DLCC	49.3	50.1	48.4	56.3	51.5
DCC	52.3	51.2	48.0	51.2	55.8
ESCC	50.4	60.1	52.4	55.1	60.2
GCC	50.0	51.6	48.4	48.8	47.3
JSRCC	46.4	48.8	46.8	49.9	44.8
JTCC	43.4	49.2	48.4	48.6	44.5
LFCC	48.8	49.6	49.9	47.9	50.6
MECC	50.8	46.4	49.2	56.1	51.6
NRCC	43.1	47.4	48.2	48.8	45.1
NVCC	47.1	46.7	49.2	50.4	47.6
PHCC	58.3	56.5	54.4	60.1	60.1
PDCCC	51.5	54.3	49.7	52.9	56.6
PVCC	45.5	46.7	47.7	49.7	44.4
RCC	46.9	50.3	48.2	56.4	54.1
SVCC	50.4	51.9	50.1	52.9	57.1
SWVCC	55.6	50.5	49.8	58.2	55.3
TNCC	44.5	44.2	47.2	46.5	44.7
TCC	47.5	49.6	50.3	50.0	49.5
VHCC	48.3	48.5	48.6	51.7	48.0
VWCC	44.1	44.1	44.9	49.9	49.3
WCC	54.4	51.5	49.6	53.3	49.4
<b>VCCS</b>	<b>48.6</b>	<b>49.9</b>	<b>48.9</b>	<b>51.9</b>	<b>50.5</b>

**Table 2:** CCSSE Benchmark Comparisons Among VCCS Colleges (2008)

TCC also participated in the CCSSE Survey in 2005. From Table 3, one can see that in every one of the five categories, TCC improved on its scores over the three-year period.

<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>2005 Score</b>	<b>2008 Score</b>	<b>Change</b>
Active & Collaborative Learning	45.2	47.5	+2.3
Student Effort	47.9	49.6	+1.7
Academic Challenge	48.0	50.3	+2.3
Student-Faculty Interaction	45.8	50.0	+4.2
Support for Learners	48.1	49.5	+1.4

**Table 3:** TCC Benchmark Score Comparisons 2005 and 2008

CCSSE results can be useful tools in determining how TCC retention and student success strategies and effort compare to those offered by other community colleges. Indeed, by accessing the CCSSE web site ([www.ccsse.org](http://www.ccsse.org)), members of the public can obtain scores from any of the participating schools, as well as group scores by various institutional characteristics. However, some caution should be exercised in examining all scores, as they are indirect (or self-reported) measures, and thus not as reliable as direct, or “hard” measures.