

# The Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE)

## Overview of 2014 Survey Results El Camino College

### Introduction

The Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE), provides information about effective educational practice in community colleges and assists institutions in using that information to promote improvements in student learning and persistence.

The Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE), designed as a companion to the CCSSE, elicits information from faculty about their teaching practices, the ways they spend their professional time, both in and out of class, and their perceptions regarding students' educational experiences.

CCFSSE reports enable participating institutions to view faculty expectations and perceptions of student engagement alongside student responses. However, it is important to remember that the side-by-side tables, while illustrative, are not entirely equivalent—that is, CCSSE asks students to report about their experiences across the period of the current academic year. In contrast, faculty are asked to describe their practices in a specific selected course, as well as to indicate their perceptions of student experiences in the college more generally.

The CCFSSSE was administered through the internet. To view a sample of the faculty survey, visit: <http://www.ccsse.org/facsamp.cfm>.

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### CCFSSE Member Colleges

CCFSSE utilized a 3-year cohort of 262 participating colleges (2012 through 2014) in all of its data analyses, including the computations of benchmark scores. This cohort is referred to as the 2014 CCFSSSE Cohort. This approach increases the total number of institutions and faculty contributing to the national dataset; this in turn increases the reliability of the overall results.

The college summary is divided into two sections and that is organized to provide a general understanding of survey administration and of selected findings from the 2014 CCFSSSE Cohort. In the first section, a profile of El Camino College faculty respondents is provided. This is followed by a summary of selected findings from the engagement and professional activity questions found in the remainder of the survey.

## Faculty Respondents and Sampling of Course Sections

Faculty teaching at least one credit, non-lower-level-ESL course on campus in Spring 2014 were selected to participate in the CCFSSSE. Out of 801 faculty invited to participate in the online survey, 256 responded (32% response rate,  $\pm 5.4\%$  margin of error with 95% confidence). A total of 124 (48%) full-time and 132 (52%) part-time faculty responded to the survey, similar to the 2014 CCFSSSE cohort.

On many survey items, faculty were asked to respond considering one selected course they were currently teaching. For all faculty meeting the above criteria, one class was randomly selected from their Spring 2014 teaching load to serve as the focus. For faculty who taught sections selected for the student survey, this course section may or may not have been the same one selected for the student survey.

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## 2014 Faculty Respondent Profile

### Total Number of Credit Hours

The total number of credit hours taught by our faculty during the academic year ranges from 1 to 3 hours to more than 30 hours. During the 2013-2014 academic year, 33% of full-time respondents taught 15 credit hours or less, 35% taught between 16 and 30 credit hours, and 32% taught more than 30 credit hours, while 72% of part-time respondents taught 15 credit hours or less, 39% taught between 16 and 30 credit hours, and 9% taught more than 30 credit hours.

### Tenure Status

42% of faculty respondents at our college are tenured. Of full-time faculty respondents, 80% are tenured while 19% are on track for tenure. Of part-time faculty respondents, 5% are tenured or on track for tenure.

### Gender

42% of our college's faculty respondents are male and 59% are female.

### Racial Identification

65% of our faculty respondents identify themselves as White, Non-Hispanic; 13% as Hispanic, Latino, Spanish; 5% as Black or African American, Non-Hispanic; and 12% as Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander. About 1% of the faculty respondents are American Indian or other Native American. 5% marked "Other" when responding to the question, "What is your racial identification?"

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## Selected Findings

This section of the overview features selected findings from El Camino College faculty about their perceptions of student engagement and how faculty spend their professional time both inside and outside the classroom. Many responses are sub-grouped by employment status.

## Faculty Perceptions and Student Engagement

On the CCFSSSE survey, faculty members are asked how often their students participate in activities that encourage engagement, mirroring similar questions asked of students. In the CCFSSSE frequency reports available online, responses from both faculty and students are set side by side to compare perceptions from each group.

Tables 1 through 4 summarize these comparisons grouped under 4 of the 5 CCSSE benchmarks of effective educational practice: Active and Collaborative Learning, Academic Challenge, Student-Faculty Interaction, and Support for Learners. Each table shows the percentages of faculty and students who indicated that the activity occurred *Often* or *Very Often*. Frequency percentages with larger gaps between faculty and student are highlighted in bold italics.

### Active and Collaborative Learning

Table 1 highlights response percentages on items related to Active and Collaborative Learning. Students learn more when they are actively involved in their education and have opportunities to think about and apply what they are learning in different settings. Through collaboration with others to solve problems or master challenging content, students develop valuable skills that prepare them to deal with the kinds of situations and problems they will encounter in the workplace, community, and their personal lives.

On most of the items, faculty perceived higher frequencies of active learning inside and outside the classroom. Items with larger gaps include asking questions in classes, working on projects with students in class, and tutoring or teaching other students. Faculty and students yielded the same response rate when asked how often students made a class presentation.

Table 1: Active and Collaborative Learning (Responses of *Often* or *Very Often*)

<b>Active &amp; Collaborative Learning Items</b>	<b>Faculty Responses</b>	<b>Student Responses</b>
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	<b>88%</b>	58%
Made a class presentation	31%	31%
Worked with other students on a project during class	<b>60%</b>	50%
Worked with other students outside of class to prepare class assignments	34%	27%
Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	<b>20%</b>	9%
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class	33%	<b>51%</b>

## Academic Challenge

Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Items related to academic challenge showed a similar pattern with faculty indicating higher frequency of academically challenging activities than students (see Table 2 and further discussion below).

Although differences between faculty and student responses are large on some items, most students consider ECC courses to be academically rigorous. In fact, El Camino College students indicated higher frequencies of academic challenge than other colleges in the 2014 CCSSE student cohort.

Table 2: Academic Challenge (Responses of *Often* or *Very Often*)

Academic Challenge Items	Faculty Responses	Student Responses
Worked harder than they thought they could to meet your standards or expectations	64%	58%
Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory	<b>87%</b>	75%
Synthesized and organized ideas, information, or experiences in new ways	<b>82%</b>	70%
Made judgments about the values or soundness of information, arguments or methods	71%	62%
Applied theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	<b>76%</b>	67%
Used information they have read or heard to perform a new skill	71%	72%

In addition to the items above, students and faculty were both queried about the volume of work asked of students. In question 6, when asked about the number of assigned textbooks, manuals, books and reading packets, most faculty (80%) indicated that they typically assigned 1 to 3. However, about 44% of students indicated that they read 4 or fewer textbooks, books or reading packets during the entire school year. This breaks out by educational status as 49% of part-time students and 31% of full-time students; 69% of full-time students read between 0 and 10 books per year. Similar results were found in terms of the number of papers students were asked to write.

Another indicator of academic challenge is the perceived difficulty of examinations in terms of challenging students to do their best work. On a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is easy and 7 is extremely challenging, the mean faculty rating was 5.5, while the mean student rating was 5.0. Students tended to find their current-year exams slightly easier than faculty evaluating their selected course.

Finally, both faculty and students were asked how much El Camino College encourages students to “spend significant amounts of time studying.” Sixty-eight percent of faculty and 80% of students indicated “Quite a bit” or “Very much.”

## Student-Faculty Interaction

The more contact students have with their teachers, the more likely they are to learn effectively and to persist toward achievement of their educational goals. Personal interaction with faculty members strengthens students' connections to the college and helps them focus on their academic progress.

As Table 3 highlights, on every item listed, faculty reported higher rates of interaction than students did, most notably with respect to communicating via email, discussing grades, receiving prompt feedback (written and oral), and discussing grades or assignments.

Table 3: Student-Faculty Interaction (Reponses of *Often* or *Very Often*)

<b>Student-Faculty Interaction Items</b>	<b>Faculty Responses</b>	<b>Student Responses</b>
Used email to communicate with you	<b>78%</b>	57%
Discussed grades and assignments with you	<b>80%</b>	48%
Worked with other students on a project during class	60%	50%
Talked about grades and assignments with you	<b>80%</b>	48%
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class	<b>35%</b>	18%
Received prompt feedback (written or oral) from you about their performance	<b>92%</b>	59%
Worked with you on activities other than coursework	14%	11%

## Support for Learners

Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relationships among different groups on campus. Community college students also benefit from services targeted to assist them with academic and career planning, academic skill development, and other issues that may affect both learning and retention.

Table 4 highlights faculty and student evaluations of El Camino College's support for learners. Although some gaps are much wider than others, a much larger percentage of faculty than students on many items felt that the college emphasized activities and services that support learners. ECC student ratings on items in this category were, overall, above the national average.

Table 4: Support for Learners (Responses of “Quite a bit” or “Very Much”)

How much does ECC emphasize...	Faculty Responses	Student Responses
Providing students the support they need to help them succeed at this college	81%	73%
Encouraging contact among students from different econ., social and racial backgrounds	<b>67%</b>	59%
Helping students cope with their non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc)	38%	29%
Providing students the support they need to thrive socially	40%	37%
Providing the financial support students need to afford their education	<b>63%</b>	51%

### How Students Spend Their Time

Faculty and students also were queried about the number of hours students spend, on average, doing a variety of tasks. Students indicated that they spent only slightly more time preparing for class than faculty thought.

A more dramatic difference was found in terms of working for pay. Nearly all faculty thought that students worked at some kind of job, with 43% indicating that students worked 6 to 20 hours per week and 52% that they worked 21 hours or more. Thirty-seven percent of students reported not working at all (37% of part-time, 44% of full-time), while 22% indicated they worked 6 to 20 hours and 35% worked more than 20 hours. Similarly, most faculty (97%) perceived that students spend at least some hours per week providing care for dependents (parent, child, spouse, etc). In comparison, 48% of students indicated that they provide some level of care to a dependent in a typical week. Twenty-one percent of students indicated heavier obligations of 11 or more hours per week, while 43% faculty perceived that students were so involved. Faculty and student perceptions on weekly commute times were more similar to each other with the majority of faculty indicating that the majority of students commute between 1 to 10 miles per week.

Finally, a much larger percentage of faculty thought students spent more time participating in college-sponsored activities, such as clubs, campus publications, student government and sports. Ninety-two percent of faculty thought students were involved on campus at some level, while only 19% of students indicated any involvement. However, most faculty (72%) thought that the involvement was low (1 to 5 hours per week).

### How Faculty Spend Their Time

Faculty were queried about how they spend their time in a typical week both inside and outside the classroom. Table 5 summarizes time spent on teaching-related and other professional tasks, while Table 6 examines in-class activities.

Question 15 highlights the teaching-related and other professional activities on which full- and part-time faculty reported spending their time in a typical 7-day week (Table 5). As expected, full-time faculty reported spending more hours teaching students than their part-time counterparts. Interestingly, though, roughly equal percentages of both groups spent 1 and 12 hours a week on preparing for class

and reflecting and working on ways to improve their teaching. However, a much larger percentage of full-time faculty spent between 1 and 12 hours on other professional activities such as advising students and interacting with students outside the classroom.

**Table 5: Hours Spent on Selected Activities in a Typical 7-day Week**

Hours per week spent on...	Part-time			Full-time		
	1-12	13-20	20+	1-12	13-20	20+
<b><i>Teaching-related Activities</i></b>						
Teaching students in class	69%	20%	11%	16%	58%	27%
Grading papers	88%	7%	4%	78%	17%	5%
Giving other forms of written and oral feedback to students	90%	5%	0%	86%	7%	7%
Preparing for class	89%	9%	3%	89%	11%	1%
Reflecting and working on ways to improve my teaching	93%	6%	0%	92%	6%	2%
<b><i>Other Professional Activities</i></b>						
Research and scholarly activities	81%	3%	1%	73%	6%	3%
Working with honors projects	11%	0%	0%	14%	1%	0%
Advising students	75%	0%	0%	85%	6%	2%
Supervising internships or field experience	17%	0%	0%	25%	3%	1%
Working with students on activities other than course work	29%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Involvement in other interactions with students outside the classroom	53%	3%	1%	79%	2%	1%
Conducting service activities	18%	0%	0%	40%	1%	0%

Question 16 asks faculty to report the percentage of class time spent on activities such as lecture, student computer use, and small group activities. The highest percentage for each activity is in bold italics. Thirty-six percent of faculty respondents revealed spending 50% or more of their class time lecturing, slightly higher than the 2014 CCFSSSE cohort. El Camino College faculty tend to spend more time on small group activities compared to faculty at other participant colleges, with 59% of ECC faculty devoting 10% of class time or more compared to 54% at other colleges. A greater percentage of ECC faculty also spend class time with hands on practice and experiential activities such as lab and field work, performances, clinical placements, and internships; 42% devote at least some time to experiential activities compared with 35% nationally. ECC faculty spent slightly more time on teacher-led discussion than the cohort average.

**Table 6: Percent of Class Time Spent on Various Activities (All Faculty)**

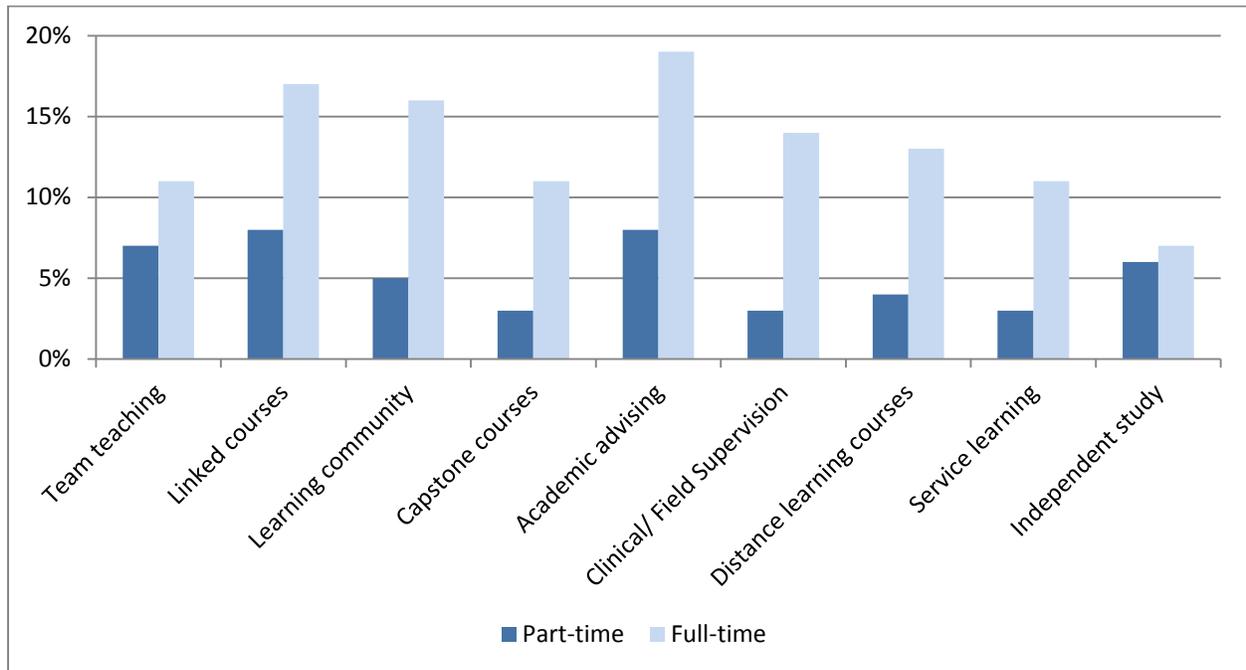
Percent spent on...	0%	1-9%	10-19%	20-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-74%	75-100%
Lecture	1%	5%	11%	16%	15%	16%	<b>28%</b>	8%
Teacher-lead discussion	3%	18%	<b>27%</b>	23%	10%	7%	9%	4%
Teacher-student shared responsibility	<b>24%</b>	23%	22%	16%	6%	4%	5%	1%
Small group activities	14%	<b>28%</b>	26%	13%	7%	6%	4%	3%
Student presentations	<b>38%</b>	29%	16%	7%	5%	3%	3%	0%
In-class writing	<b>42%</b>	29%	15%	6%	3%	2%	2%	1%
Testing and Evaluation	5%	34%	<b>43%</b>	12%	2%	1%	3%	1%
Performances in applied and fine arts	<b>85%</b>	6%	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%
Experiential (labs, field work, art exhibits, clinical)	<b>59%</b>	17%	7%	4%	4%	4%	5%	1%
Hands-on practice	<b>28%</b>	13%	16%	13%	7%	7%	11%	4%

Finally, question 19 asked faculty about aspects of their teaching role that further support student engagement. Figure 1 highlights the percentage of participation in each area by employment status.

Full-time faculty were more likely to than their part-time colleagues to participate in team teaching and, but less likely to participate in such activities compared to the 2014 CCFSSSE cohort (16% vs. 10%). Part-timers were less likely than full-timers to participate in other engagement activities.

Full-time faculty were much more likely to provide students with academic advising than part-time faculty, but at a much lower rate when compared to the CCFSSSE cohort. This may be partially due to the fact that some colleges provide departmental-based academic advising. Full-timers were more likely to teach linked courses (17%) and within communities (16%) than the national cohort (12% and 11%, respectively). However, they were much less likely to teach a capstone course (11% vs. 16% nationally). In addition, full-time faculty were less than half as likely to participate in distance education (13%) compared to the national average (37%).

**Figure 1: Aspects of Teaching Role (% participation)**



## Conclusion and Future Directions

In general, faculty at El Camino College (as at other institutions) perceive that students participate in engagement activities more often than students perceive they do themselves. The survey also revealed important information on students' lives outside the classroom, which found them working and supporting families much less, on average, than faculty perceived they did. Finally, faculty reported on the current levels of engagement activities they pursue in a variety of questions. Responses revealed that ECC is at the vanguard in some areas (part-time faculty involvement, team teaching, learning communities), but less involved than average in others (capstone courses, distance learning courses).

The evidence is strong and often unequivocal that increasing engagement of students improves academic success and persistence. This can be achieved in a variety of ways both inside and outside the classroom. Since engagement research guided the development of questions for both the CCSSE student survey and CCFSSSE faculty survey, local responses and their comparison within the campus and to other survey participants can suggest areas where El Camino College might expand its successes or benefit from greater focus.