

Xavier University of Louisiana  
National Survey of Student Engagement Assessment Report  
2001-2008



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March 2009

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## Introduction

Each year National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) collects information from freshmen and seniors at four-year colleges and universities across the country to assess the extent to which students are engaged in a variety of educational practices. NSSE is grounded in the theoretical framework that student engagement, measured by the frequency with which students participate in activities that represent effective educational practices, is a meaningful proxy for measuring general collegiate engagement. Xavier University of Louisiana has been participating in NSSE administration periodically since 2001 (2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, and 2008).

This report is a summary of selected results divided into several sections. These sections are:

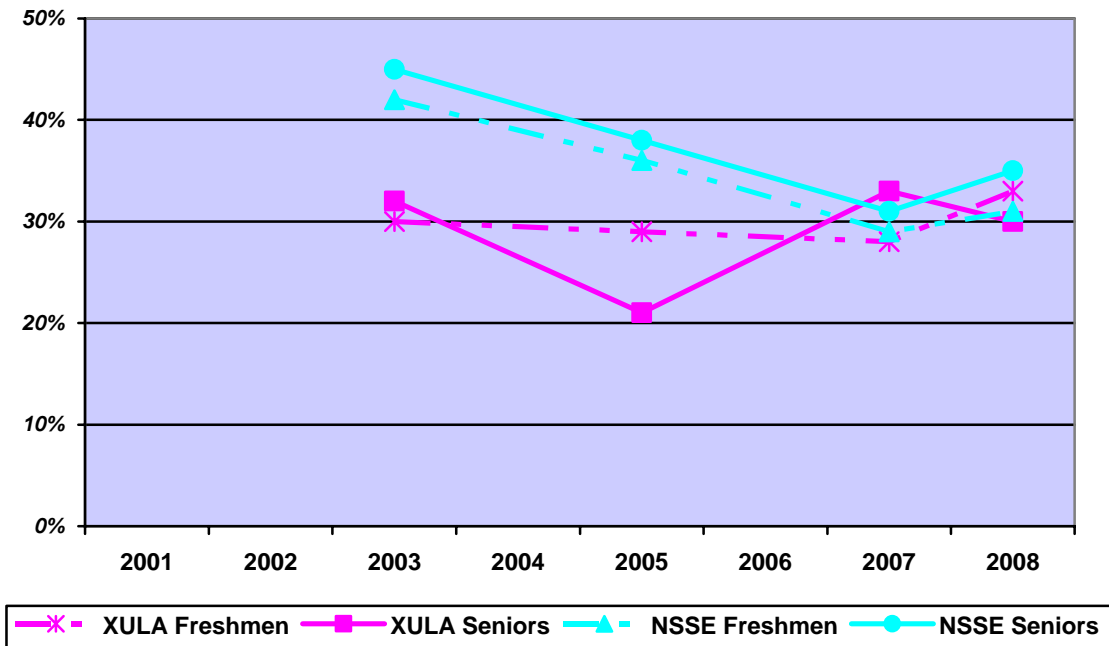
1. Respondents Characteristics
2. Institutional Benchmark
3. Overview of Student Engagement
4. Comparisons of Mean Scores
5. Institutional Contributions
6. Overall Satisfaction with Educational Experiences
7. NSSE and FSSE scores comparisons

## Respondents Characteristics

NSSE provides a number of demographic statistics to get a sense of how Xavier University respondents are in relation to the respective freshmen and senior populations. Randomly selected first-year and senior students at Xavier University were sampled. The selected students were surveyed either or both via traditional paper questionnaire and via web.

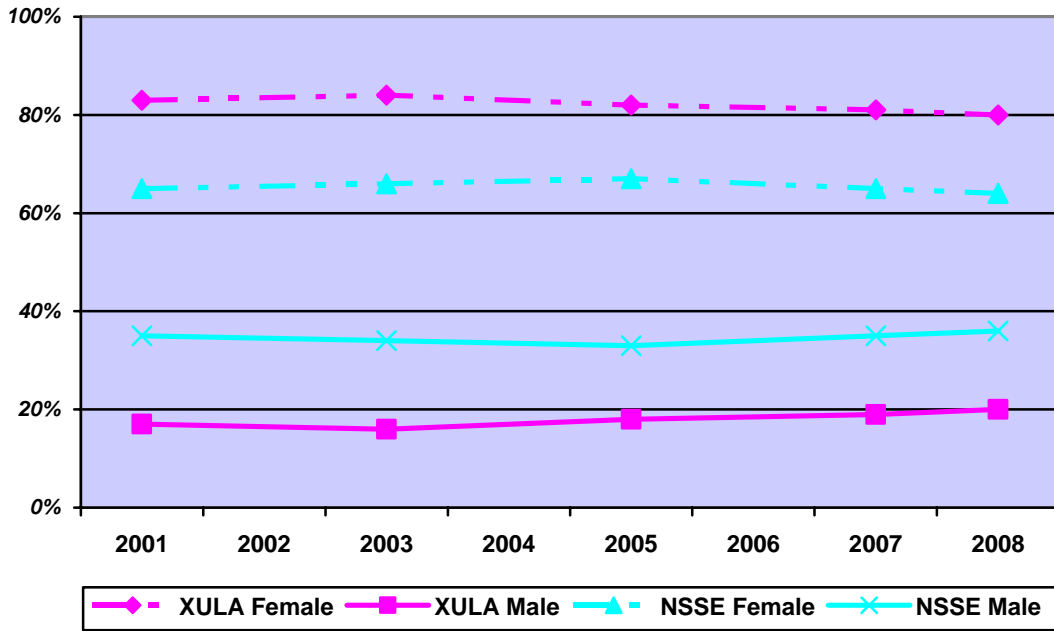
This section provides information students' response rate, gender, and student's place or residence in relation to national profile. It should be noted here that comparisons have been made throughout this document between Xavier University data and NSSE national data instead of peer group institutions data because of the lack of consistency in peer group institutions. For instance, in 2003, comparisons were conducted between Xavier University scores and HBCU scores while in 2007 the comparisons were conducted between Xavier University scores and selected peer institutions score and in 2008 Xavier University scores and Southeast Private scores.

*Student Response Rate*

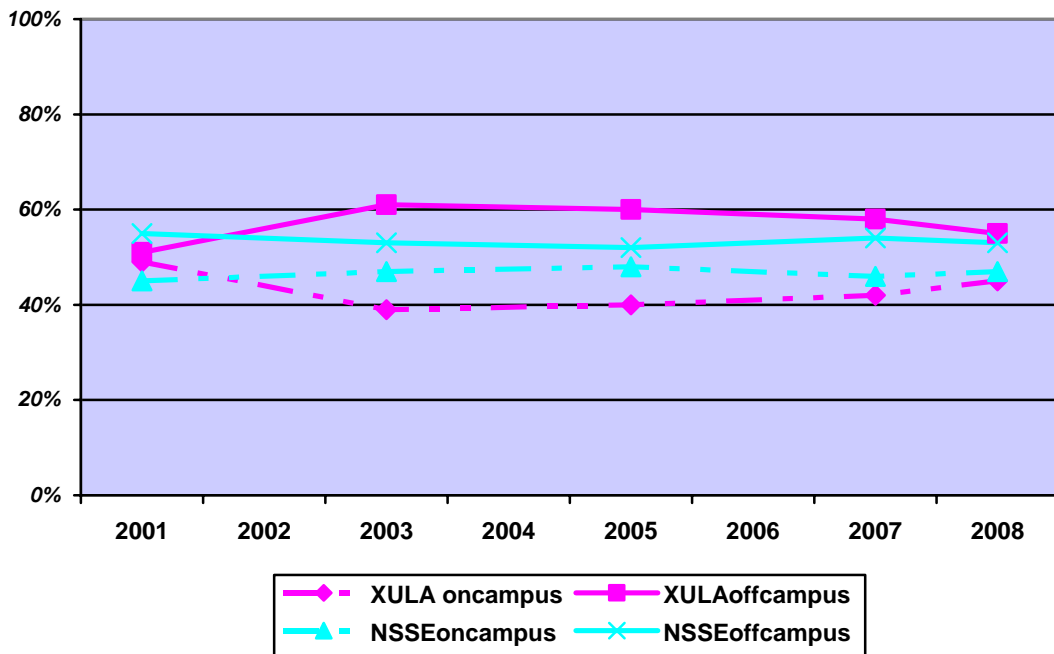


*Note: In 2001, student response rate has not been categorized by class level.*

*Student Gender*



*Student Place Residence*



## Institutional Benchmark

NSSE created five cluster or benchmarks of effective educational practice to make it easier to understand student engagement productively. The five benchmarks are: Level of Academic Challenge; Active and Collaborative Learning; Student-Faculty Interactions; Enriching Educational Practices; and Supportive Campus Environment. The Institutional Benchmark Report provides perhaps the most significant measure of comparison between Xavier University and national scores.

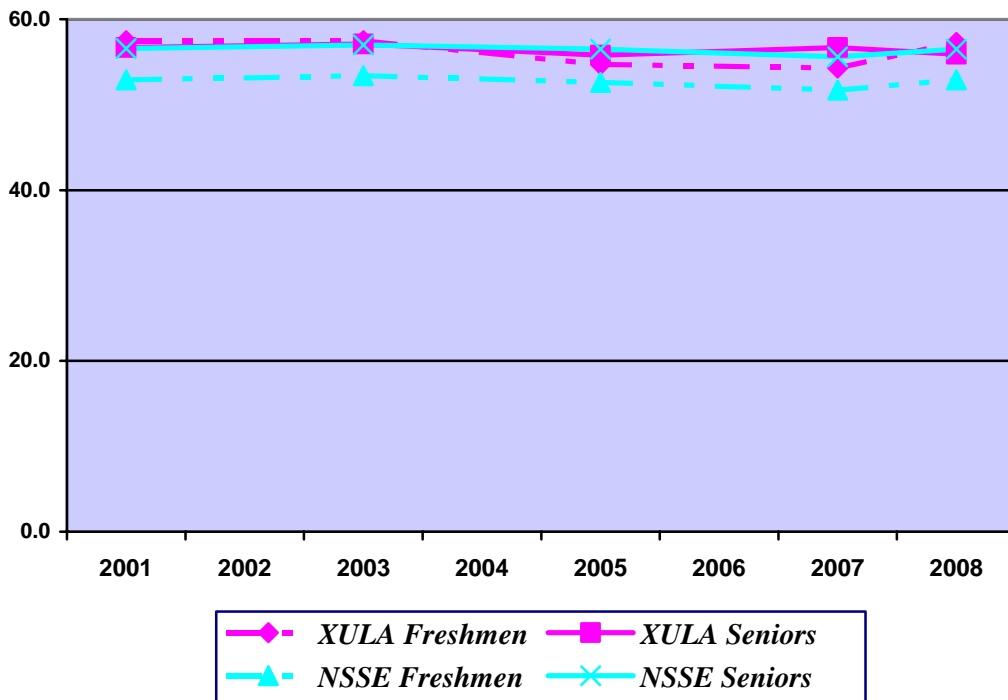
### ***Level of Academic Challenge (LAC) Items***

Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance.

Items included in Level of Academic Challenge include the following:

1. Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work etc. related to academic program)
2. Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings
3. Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more; number of written papers or reports of between 5 and 19 pages; and number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages
4. Coursework emphasizes: Analysis of the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory
5. Coursework emphasizes: Synthesis and organizing of ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships
6. Coursework emphasizes: Making of judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods
7. Coursework emphasizes: Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations
8. Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations
9. Campus environment emphasizes: Spending significant amount of time studying and on academic work.

*Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)*

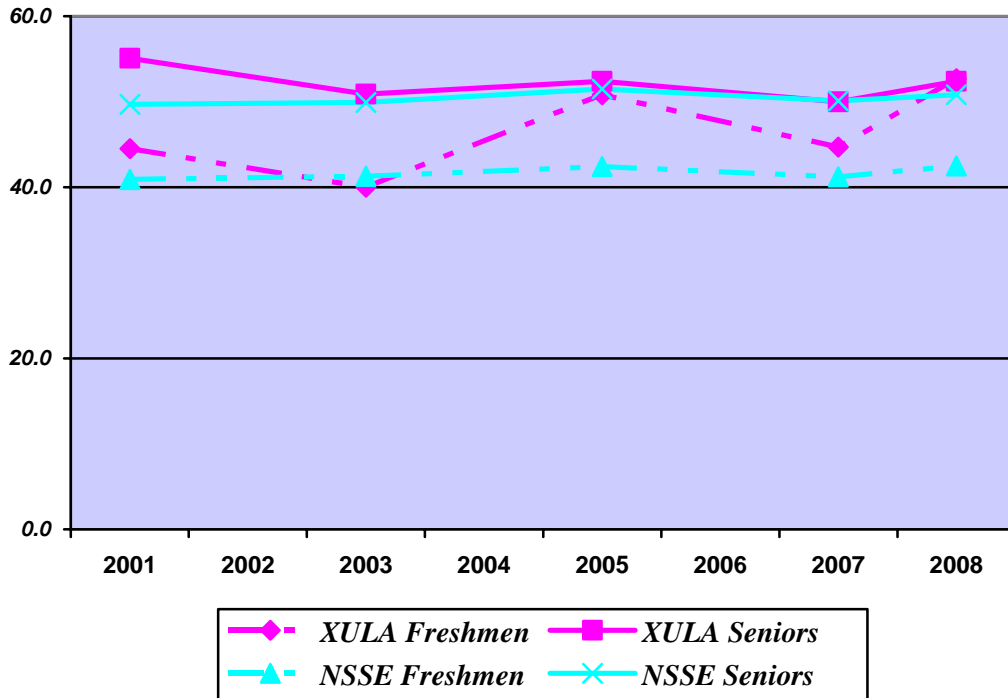


**Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL) Items**

Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and asked to think about what they are learning in different settings. Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material prepares students for the messy, unscripted problems they will encounter daily during and after college. Items in Active and Collaborative Learning include:

1. Asked questions 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 a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of a regular course
7. Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)

*Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)*

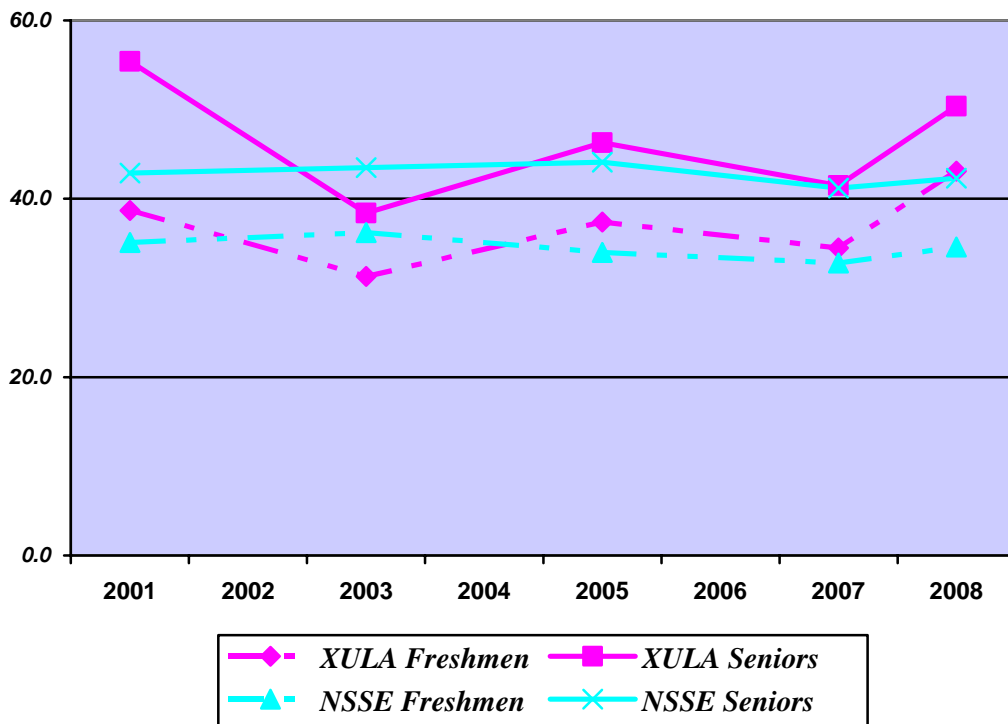


### **Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI) Items**

Students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside the classroom. As a result, their teachers become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, life-long learning. Items in Student-Faculty Interaction include the following:

1. Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
2. Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
3. Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
4. Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student-life activities, etc.)
5. Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance
6. Worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements

***Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)***



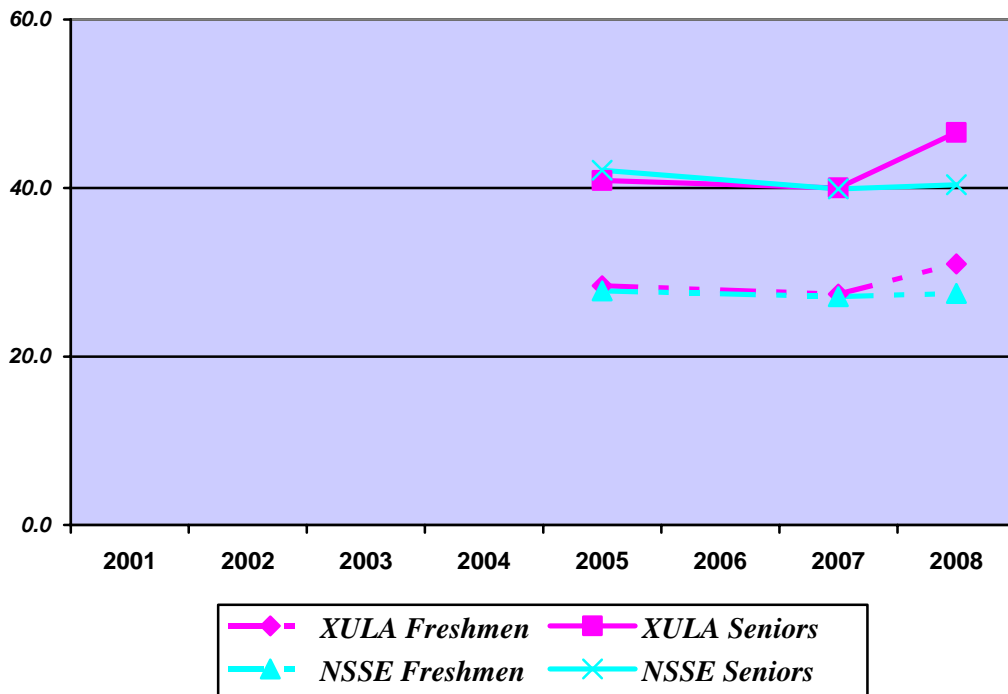
### **Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE) Items**

Complementary learning opportunities enhance academic programs. Diversity experiences teach students valuable things about themselves and others. Technology facilitates collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community service, and senior capstone courses

provide opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge. All items in this section were re-scaled in 2004, making it untenable to compare new results on these items with those of 2003 and earlier. Therefore, it was not possible to compare 2005-2007-2008 Enriching Educational Experiences benchmark with prior results (2001 and 2003). Rescaled items in Enriching Educational Experiences include:

1. Participating in co-curriculum activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, social fraternity/sorority etc.)
2. Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment
3. Community service or volunteer work
4. Foreign language coursework / Study abroad
5. Independent study or self-designed major
6. Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.)
7. Serious conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values
8. Serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own
9. Using electronic medium (e.g., listserv, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment
10. Campus environment encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
11. Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together

***Enriching Educational Environment (EEE)***

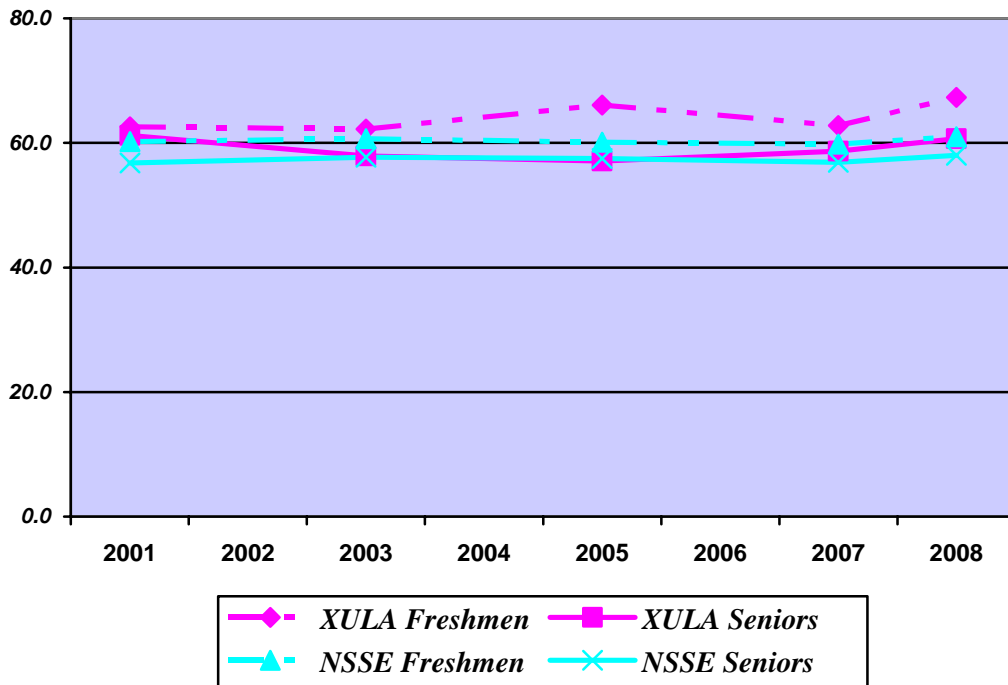


### Supportive Campus Environment (SCE) Items

Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus. Items in Supportive Campus Environment include:

1. Campus environment provides the support you need to help you succeed academically
2. Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
3. Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially
4. Quality of relationships with other students
5. Quality of relationships with faculty members
6. Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices

*Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)*



## Overview of Student Engagement

This section provides an overview of the nature and frequencies of student engagement at Xavier University at highest and lowest levels. The percent represents the number of students reportedly participated in the activities at highest and lowest levels on a four point scale (Never = 1, Sometimes = 2, Often = 3, Very often = 4).

### ***Activities of Highest Level of Participations***

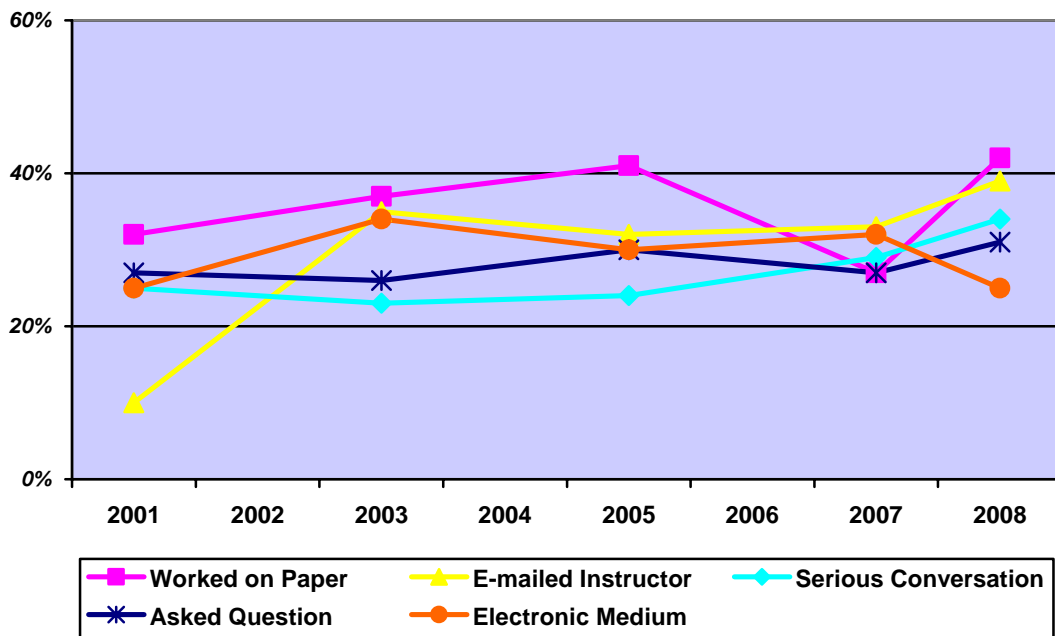
The following charts include five activities/behaviors that students reportedly participated in very often during the current school year. The five activities/behaviors were selected using the following steps:

1. Select 10 activities/behavior with highest scores at highest level (***Very often = 4***) in each year
2. Select top 5 most recurring activities/behaviors at highest level

The top five most recurring selected activities/behaviors for freshmen are:

1. Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources
2. Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor
3. Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values
4. Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
5. Used an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, internet, instant messaging etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment

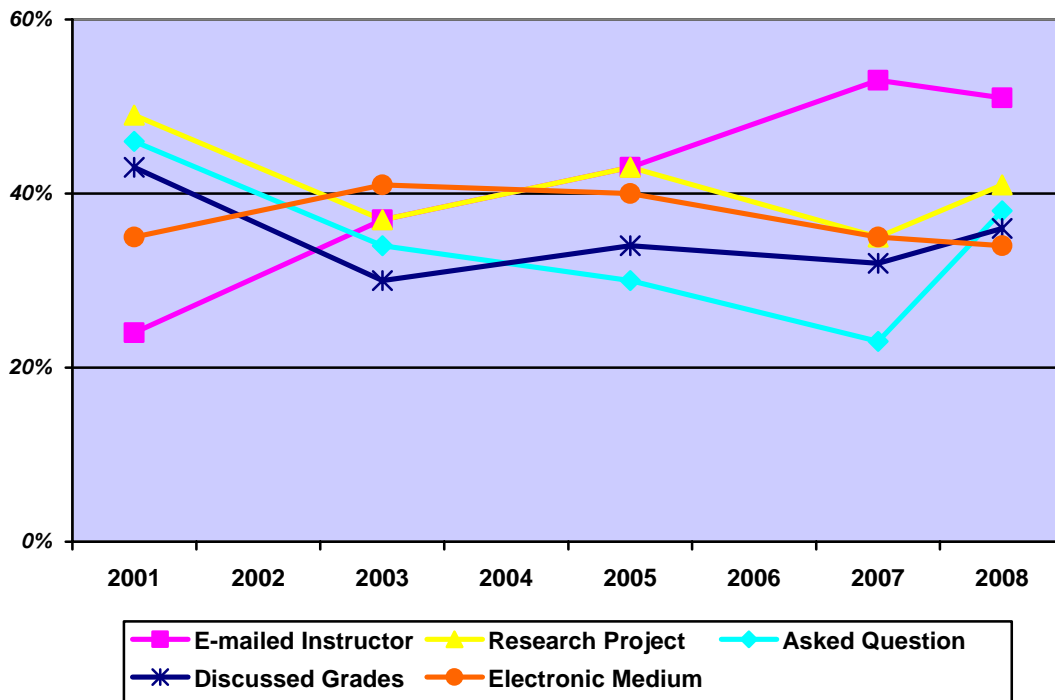
*Freshmen: Top Five Activities with Very Often Scores*



The five selected activities/behaviors for seniors are:

1. Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor
2. Worked on research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements
3. Asked questions or contributed to class discussions
4. Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
5. Used an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, internet, instant messaging etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment

*Seniors: Top Five Activities with Very Often Scores*



**Activities of Lowest Level of Participations**

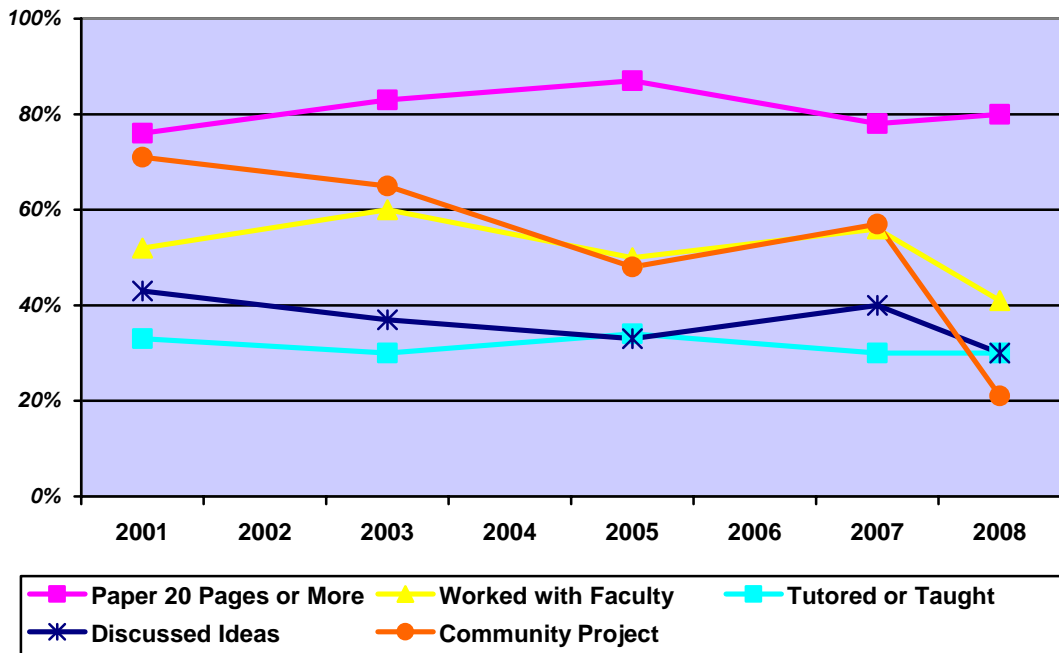
The following charts include five activities/behaviors that students reportedly never participated in during the current school year. The five activities/behaviors were selected using the following steps:

1. Select 10 activities/behavior with highest scores at lowest level (*Never = 1*) in each year
2. Select top 5 most recurring activities/behaviors at lowest level

The five selected activities/behaviors for freshmen are:

1. Number of written papers or report of 20 pages or more
2. Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committee, orientation, student life activities, etc.)
3. Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)
4. Discussed ideas from readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
5. Participated in a community based project (e.g. service learning) as part of a regular course

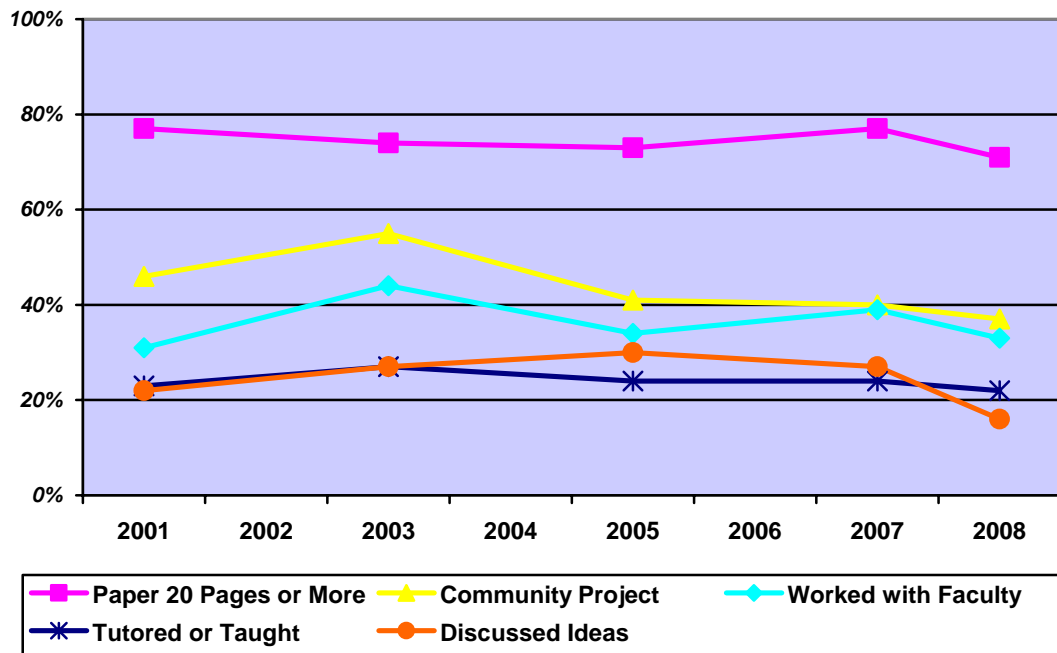
*Freshmen: Top Five Activities with "Never" Response*



The five selected activities/behaviors for seniors are:

1. Number of written papers or report of 20 pages or more
2. Participated in a community based project (e.g. service learning) as part of a regular course
3. Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committee, orientation, student life activities, etc.)
4. Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)
5. Discussed ideas from readings or classes with faculty members outside of class

*Seniors: Top Five Activities with "Never" Responses*



## Comparisons of Mean Scores

The comparison of means report provides an overall evaluation of the potential value of the survey. This section identifies areas where Xavier University scores deviate the most from national mean scores. All mean score gaps exhibit statistically significant deviation from national average scores.

### ***Highest Positive Mean Difference***

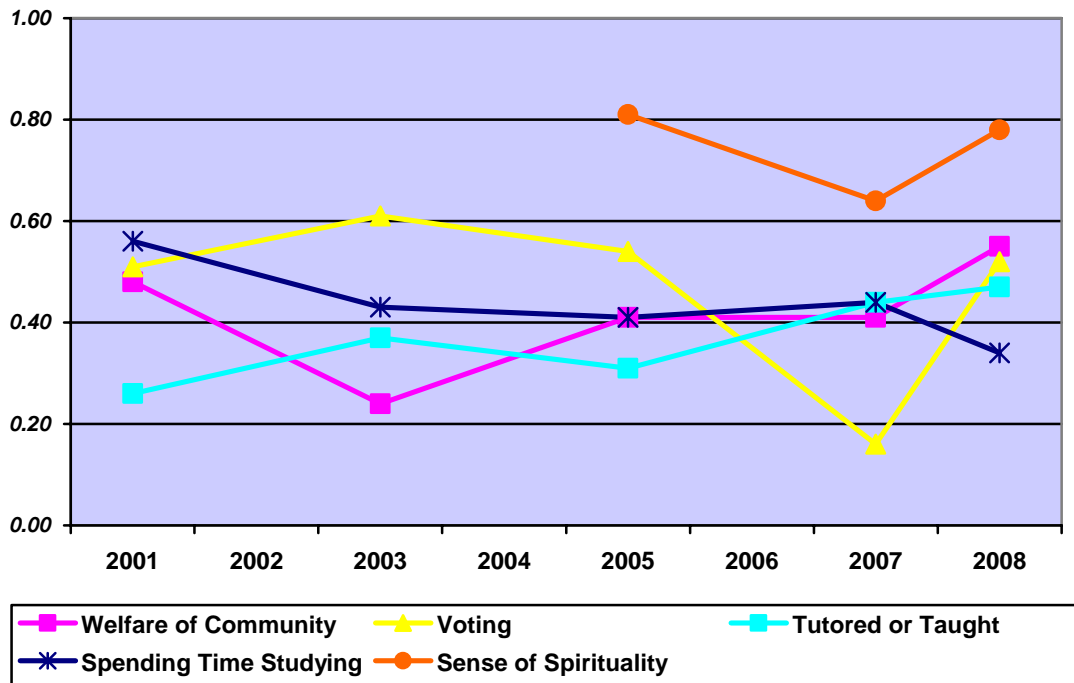
The following charts include five areas that have highest positive mean differences between Xavier University scores and NSSE national mean scores. The positive mean score differences indicate that Xavier University students are doing better than NSSE national average on the selected areas. The five areas are selected using the following steps:

1. Select 10 highest positive mean score differences in each year
2. Select top five recurring positive scores

The five selected areas with highest positive mean differences for freshmen are:

1. Contributing to the welfare of your community (Institutional Contribution)
2. Voting in local, state, or national elections (Institutional Contribution)
3. Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)
4. Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work (Institutional Emphasis))
5. Developing a sense of spirituality (Institutional Contribution)

***Freshmen: Top Five Areas in Which Positive Mean Difference Between Xavier and NSSE is Highest***

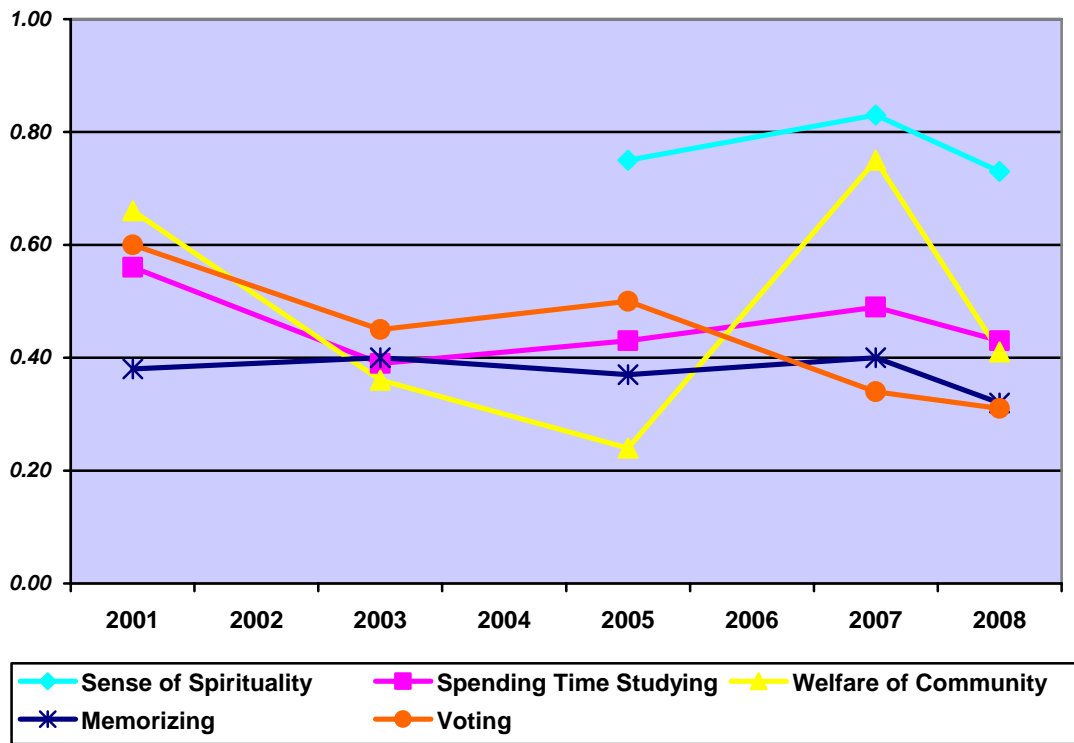


*Note: “Developing a sense of spirituality” was not included 2001 and 2003 survey questionnaires*

The five selected areas with highest positive mean differences for seniors are:

1. Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work (Institutional Emphasis)
2. Contributing to the welfare of your community (Institutional Contribution)
3. Developing a sense of spirituality (Institutional Contribution)
4. Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your courses and readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form (Coursework Emphasis)
5. Voting in local, state, or national elections (Institutional Contribution)

*Seniors: Top Five Areas in Which Positive Mean Difference Between Xavier and NSSE is Highest*



*Note: Developing a sense of spirituality was not included 2001 and 2003 survey questionnaires*

**Lowest Negative Mean Difference**

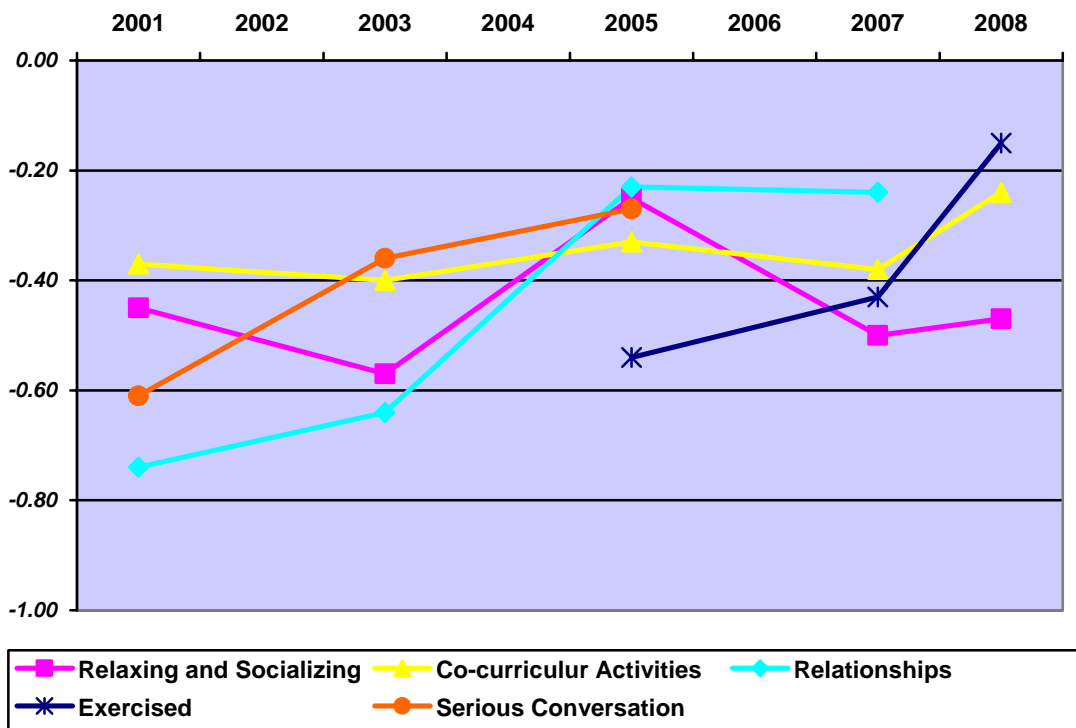
The following charts include five areas that have lowest negative mean differences between Xavier University scores and NSSE national mean scores. The negative mean score differences indicate that Xavier University students are doing poorer than NSSE national scores on the selected areas. The five areas are selected using the following steps:

1. Select 10 lowest negative mean score differences in each year
2. Select bottom five recurring negative scores

The five selected areas with lowest negative mean differences for freshmen are:

1. Relaxing and socializing (watching TV, partying, etc.) (Time Usage)
2. Participated in co-curricular activities (organizations, fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)
3. Relationships with administrative personnel and office (Relationships)
4. Exercised or participated in physical fitness activities
5. Had a serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own

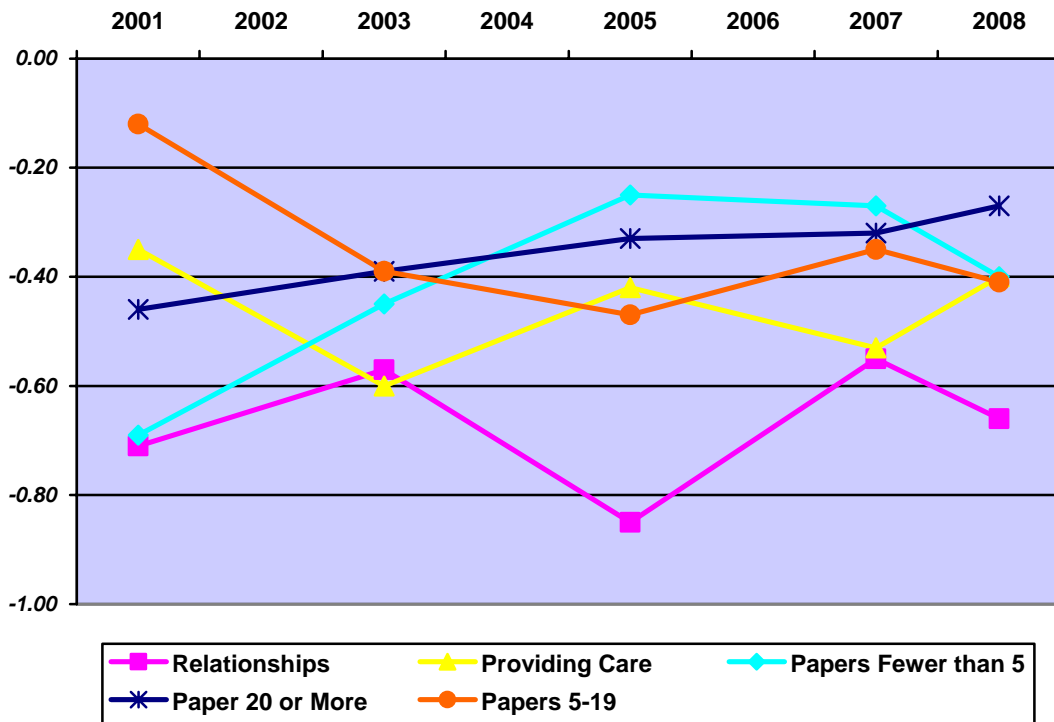
*Freshmen: Top Five Areas in Which Negative Mean Difference Between Xavier and NSSE is Most*



The five selected areas with lowest negative mean differences for seniors are:

1. Relationships with administrative personnel and office (Relationships)
2. Providing care for dependents living with you (parent, children, spouse, etc.) (Time Usage)
3. Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages (Reading and Writing)
4. Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more (Reading and Writing)
5. Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages (Reading and Writing)

*Seniors: Top Five Areas In Which Negative Mean Difference Between Xavier and NSSE is Most*



## Institutional Contributions

NSSE survey asks students to estimate the extent to which their institutional experiences contribute to their knowledge, skills, and personal development. This section provides information about the nature and frequencies of the institutional contributions to students' knowledge, skills, and personal development.

### ***Highest Contributions***

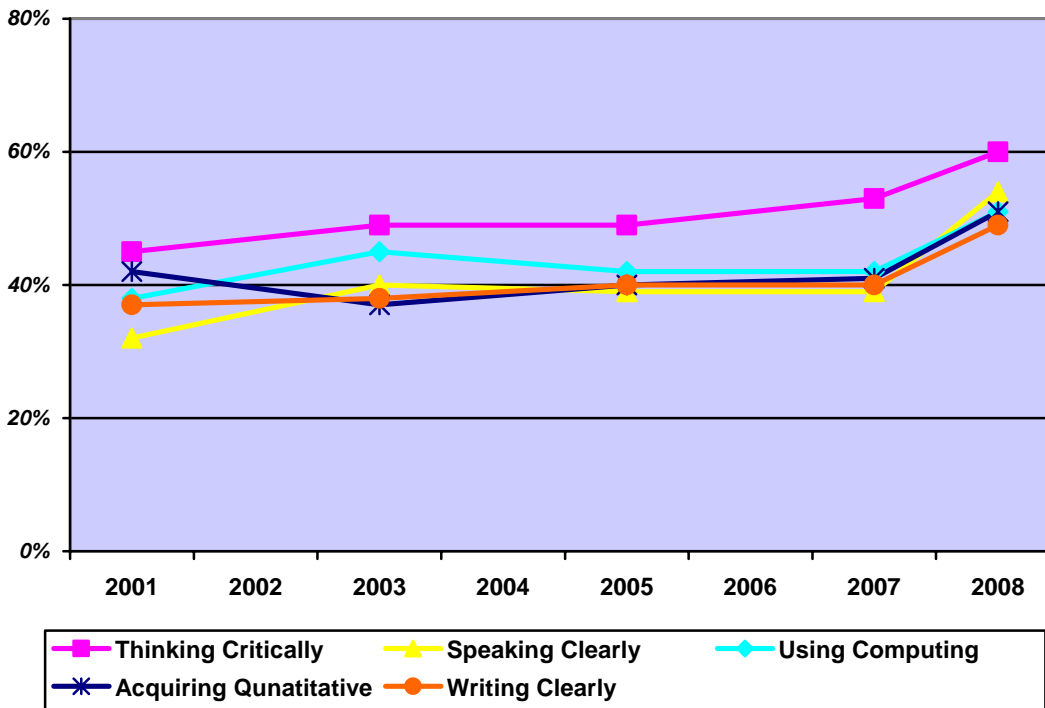
The following charts include top five areas where students' institutional experiences contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development at highest level on a four point scale (Very little = 1, Some = 2, Quite a bit = 3, Very much = 4). The five activities/behaviors were selected using the following steps:

1. Select 10 areas with highest scores at highest level (***Very much = 4***) in each year
2. Select top 5 most recurring areas at highest level

The top five selected areas for freshmen are:

1. Thinking critically and analytically
2. Speaking clearly and effectively
3. Using computing and information technology
4. Acquiring quantitative problems
5. Writing clearly and effectively

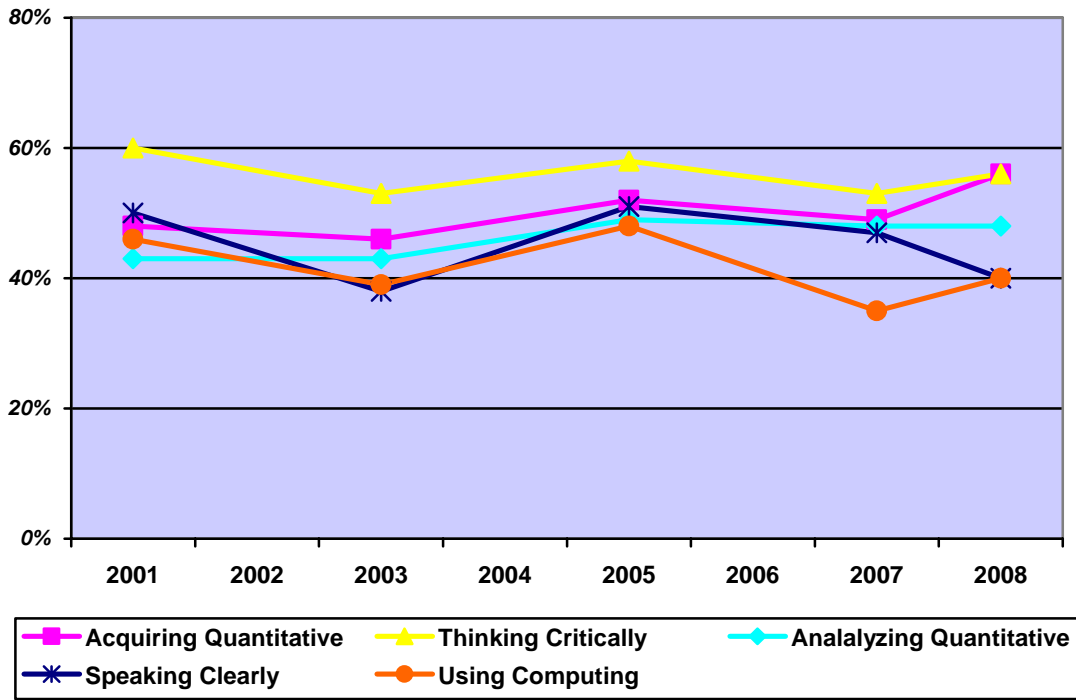
*Freshmen: Top Five Areas in Which Xavier Students Respond "Very Much" to Institutional Contributions*



The top five selected areas for seniors are:

1. Acquiring quantitative problems
2. Thinking critically and analytically
3. Analyzing quantitative problems
4. Speaking clearly and effectively
5. Using computing and information technology

*Seniors: Top Five Areas in Which Xavier Students Response "Very Much" to Institutional Contributions*



**Lowest Contributions**

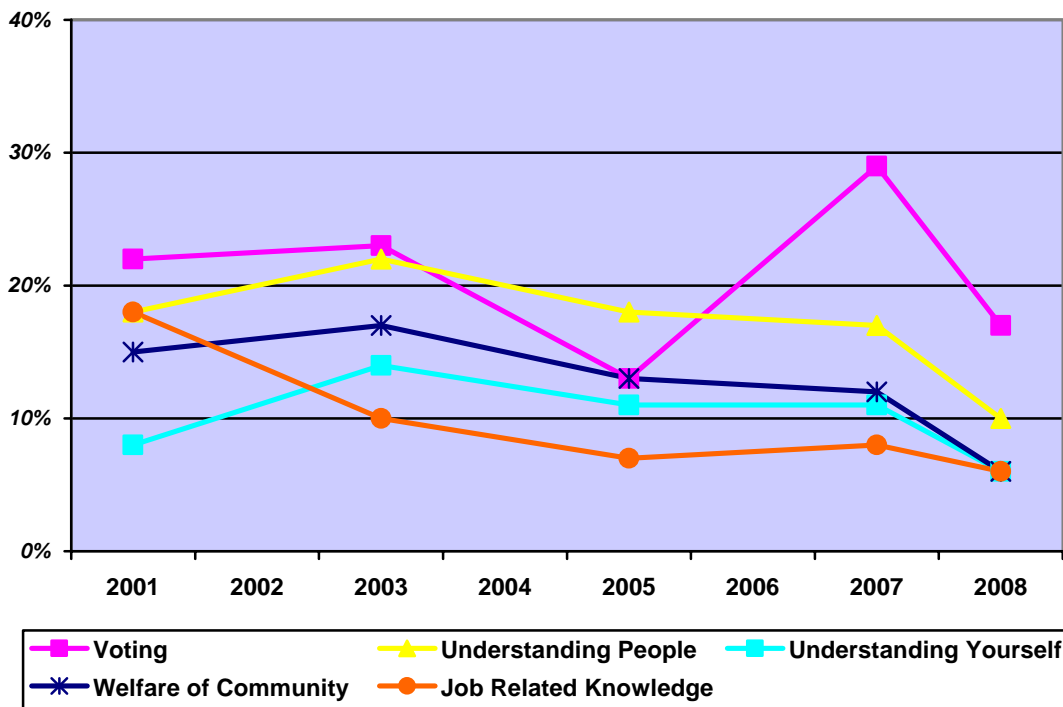
The following charts include five areas where students’ institutional experiences contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development at lowest level on a four point scale (Very little = 1, Some = 2, Quite a bit = 3, Very much = 4). The five activities/behaviors were selected using the following steps:

1. Select 10 areas with highest scores at lowest level (*Very little = 1*) in each year
2. Select top 5 most recurring areas at lowest level

The top five selected areas for freshmen are:

1. Voting in local, state, or national elections
2. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic background
3. Understanding yourself
4. Contributing to the welfare of your community
5. Acquiring job related knowledge and skills

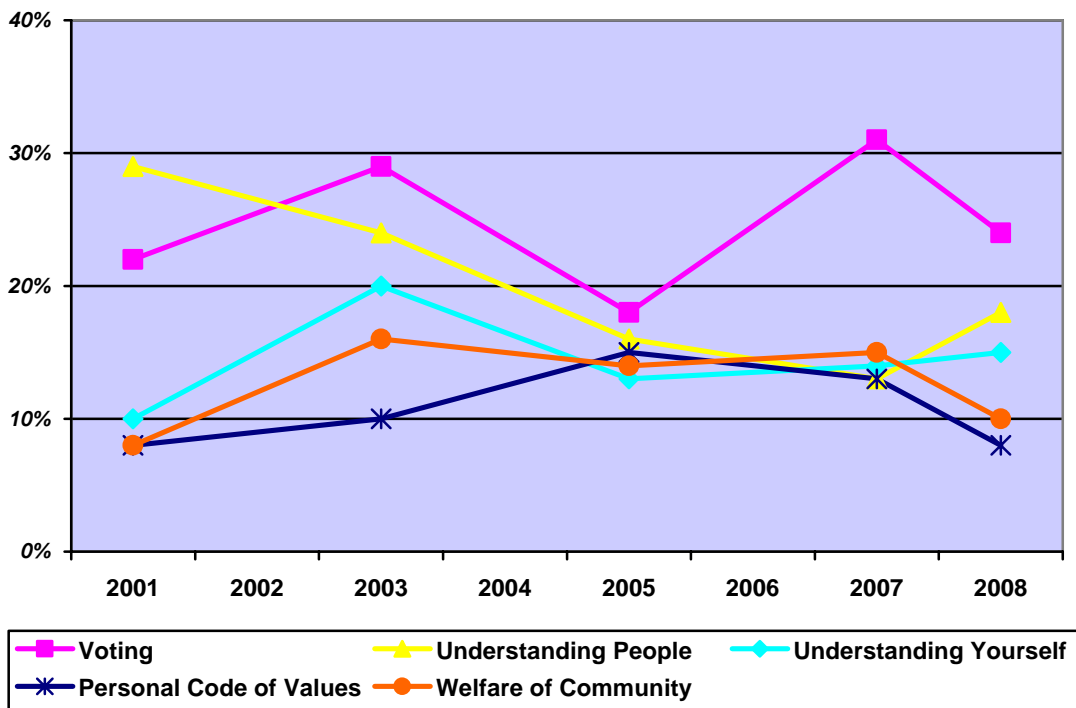
*Freshmen: Top Five Areas in Which Xavier Students Respond "Very Little" to Institutional Contributions*



The least contributing five selected areas for seniors are:

1. Voting in local, state, or national elections
2. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic background
3. Understanding yourself
4. Developing a personal code of values and ethics
5. Contributing to the welfare of your community

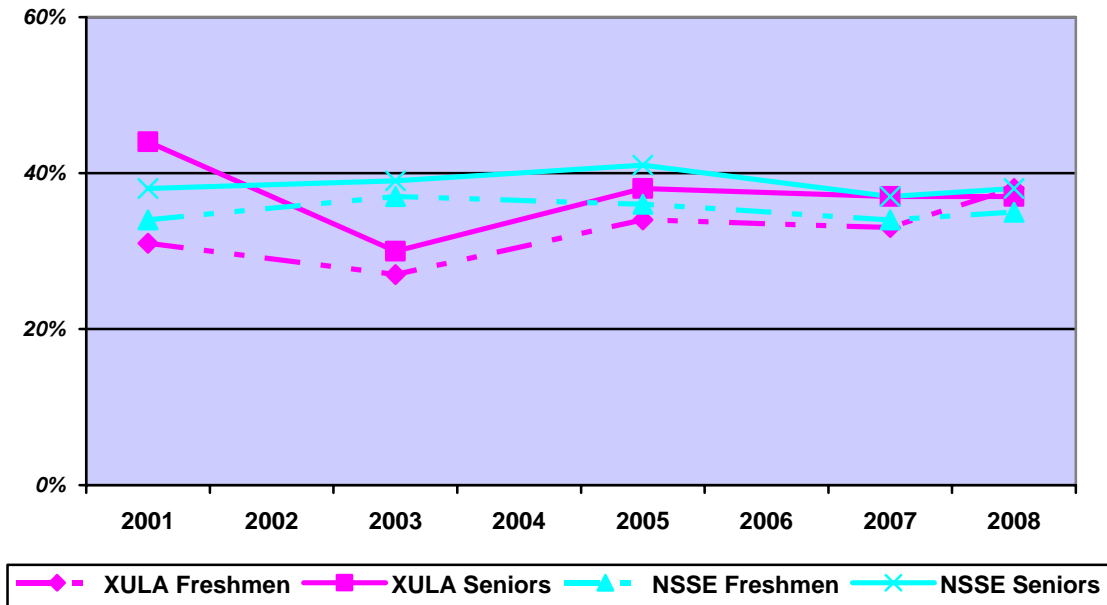
*Seniors: Top Five Areas in Which Xavier Students Response "Very Little" to Institutional Contributions*



## Overall Satisfaction of Educational Experience

This section provides information regarding students' overall evaluation of their educational experience at the institution. The following chart indicates students' satisfaction at the highest level (**Excellent = 4**) in a four point scale (Poor = 1, Fair = 2, Good = 3, Excellent = 4).

*Students' Satisfaction with Overall Educational Experience as "Excellent"*



## NSSE and FSSE: A Comparative Look

The Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) is designed to complement the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and is coordinated by the Indiana University center for Postsecondary Research. FSSE measures faculty members' perceptions as well as expectations of student engagement in educational practices that are empirically linked with high levels of learning and development. The survey also collects data about how faculty members spend their time on professional activities, such as teaching and scholarship, and the kinds of learning experiences their institution emphasizes. Xavier University of Louisiana participated in the national FSSE administration during 2008. This section provides an overview of the five areas where gaps between student and faculty responses are highest. The percent represents the number of students reportedly participated and faculty perceptions of the student participations in the activities at high level on a four point scale (Never = 1, Sometimes = 2, Often = 3, Very often = 4).

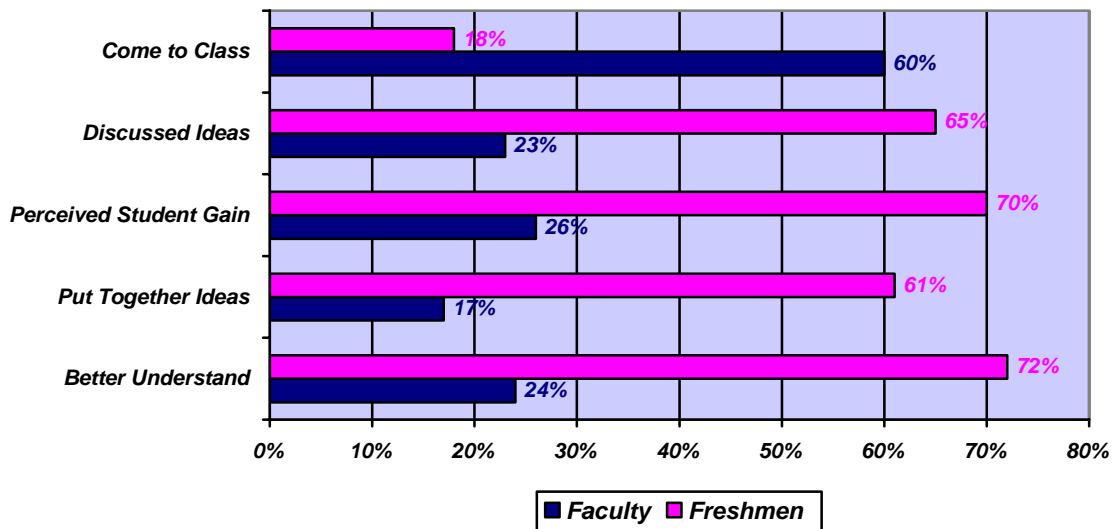
### ***Faculty and Freshmen***

The following charts include five activities/behaviors where gaps between freshmen and faculty responses during the 2008-2009 school year. The five activities/behaviors were selected using the highest gaps between freshmen and faculty responses at high level (***Often = 3 and Very Often = 4***)

The top five areas in which the gaps between freshmen and faculty are highest:

1. Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from that person's perspective
2. Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions
3. Perceived student gain: Solving complex real-world problems
4. Discussed ideas from his or her readings or classes with others outside of class (other students, family members, co-workers, etc.)
5. Come to class without completing readings or assignments

**Top Five Areas in Which Gap Between Freshmen and Faculty Responses with "Often" and "Very Often" is Highest**



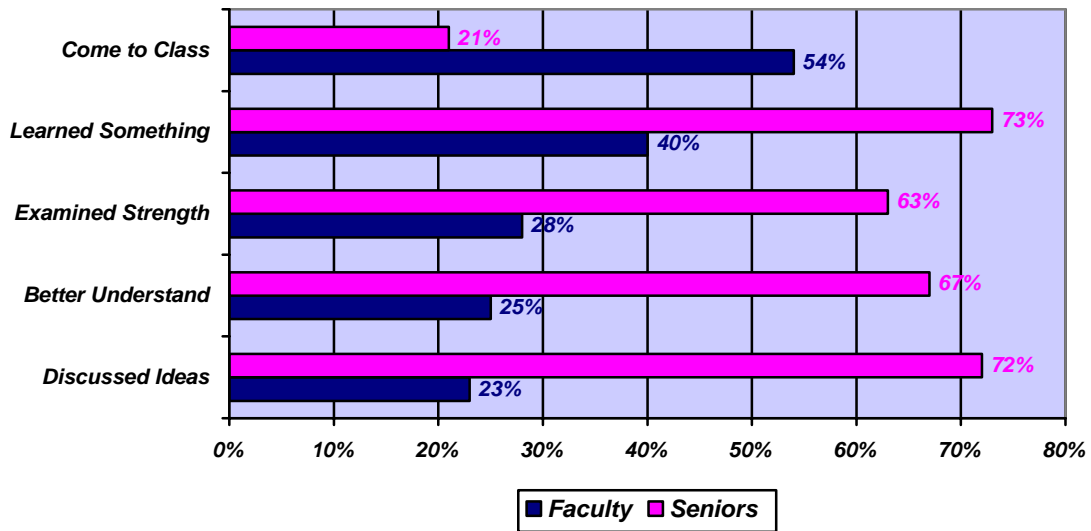
### **Faculty and Seniors**

The following charts include five activities/behaviors where gaps between seniors and faculty responses during the 2008-2009 school year. The five activities/behaviors were selected using the highest gaps between seniors and faculty responses at high level (*Often = 3 and Very Often = 4*).

The top five areas in which the gaps between seniors and faculty are highest:

1. Discussed ideas from his or her readings or classes with others outside of class (other students, family members, co-workers, etc.).
2. Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from that person's perspective
3. Examined the strengths and weaknesses of his or her views on a topic or issue
4. Learned something that changed the way he or she understood an issue or concept
5. Come to class without completing readings or assignments

**Seniors: Top Five Activities in Which Gap Between Seniors and Faculty Responses with "Often" and "Very Often" is Highest**



## Key Findings

There are several key findings based on Xavier University of Louisiana participation in the 2001-2008 reports:

### **Strengths**

- Regarding Institutional Benchmarks of effective educational practice, on an average both Xavier freshmen and seniors score either equal or higher in all five clusters
- In recent year (2005-2007-2008), Xavier University Freshmen and Seniors scored significantly higher average than was reported for the national average regarding institutional contributions very much to students' development of a sense of spirituality
- More than 50% of Xavier freshmen and seniors reported that Xavier University experiences have contributed very much to their skills in thinking critically and analytically

### **Concerns**

- Both Xavier Freshmen and Seniors scored significantly lower average than was reported for the national average regarding the quality of students' relationships with administrative personnel and office
- On an average 81% of Xavier Freshmen and 74% of Xavier Seniors have never written a paper or report of 20 pages or more
- On an average 52% of the Xavier Freshmen and 44% of Xavier Seniors never participated in a community project as part of a regular course
- On an average 52% of Xavier Freshmen never worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committee, Orientation, student life activities, etc.)