

May 2011

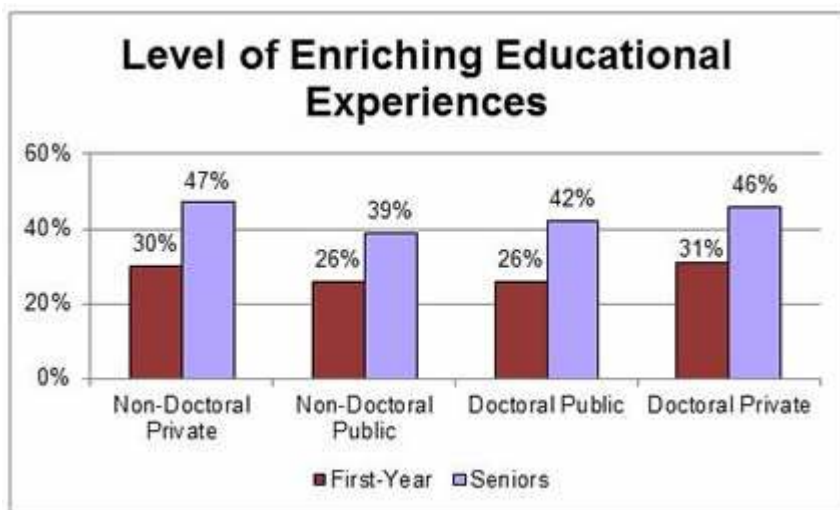


## MAKING THE CASE RESOURCES

CIC is pleased to announce the release of A Special Report on Independent Colleges and Student Engagement (included in this document). Based on analysis of data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), this report provides nearly 40 new and updated charts that document the superior performance of independent colleges and universities in engaging students in educationally purposeful activities that have been shown to foster student success. These new *Making the Case* charts compare smaller, private colleges and universities with other institutions, using a number of factors such as academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student and faculty interaction, and supportive campus environments. A sampling of the new information is provided below.

### FACT – Enriching Educational Experiences

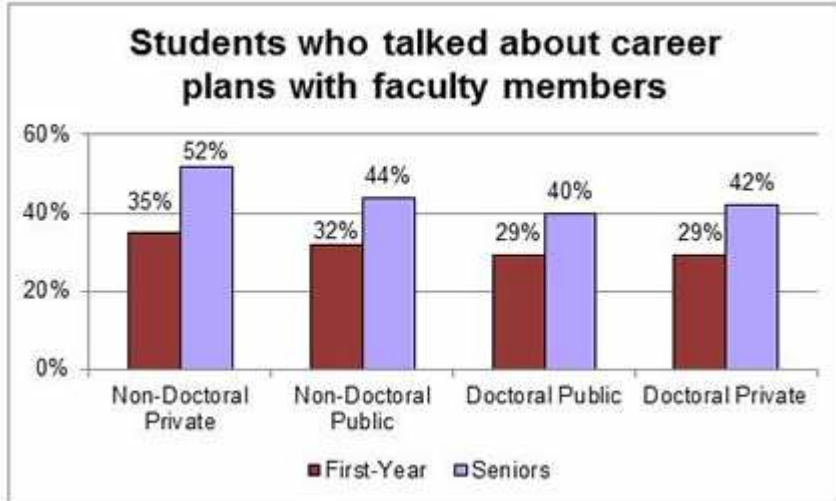
Independent colleges and universities encourage student learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom. Seniors at non-doctoral private colleges participated more frequently (47 percent) in educational enrichment experiences than seniors at public doctoral universities (42 percent). Educational enrichment experiences include conversations among students who have different religious beliefs; use of technology to complete assignments; participation in a study-abroad program, an internship, or field experience; and conversations among students of different races and ethnicities.



This chart may be found online [here](#).

### FACT – Career Advising

Seniors at independent colleges and universities benefit from frequent discussions with faculty members about career plans. A majority of seniors (52 percent) at non-doctoral private colleges talked with faculty members or advisors about their goals after college. Fewer than half of seniors (40 percent) at public doctoral universities reported that they had similar conversations.



**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very often” or “often” to the question, “How often have you talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor?”

Some of the new charts have been incorporated into the Making the Case website:  
[www.cic.edu/MakingtheCase](http://www.cic.edu/MakingtheCase). To download the full report on student engagement, please go to:  
[www.cic.edu/makingthecase/new\\_nsse\\_data.pdf](http://www.cic.edu/makingthecase/new_nsse_data.pdf).



THE COUNCIL OF  
INDEPENDENT COLLEGES



MAY 2011 • A Special Report on

# INDEPENDENT COLLEGES

and Student Engagement

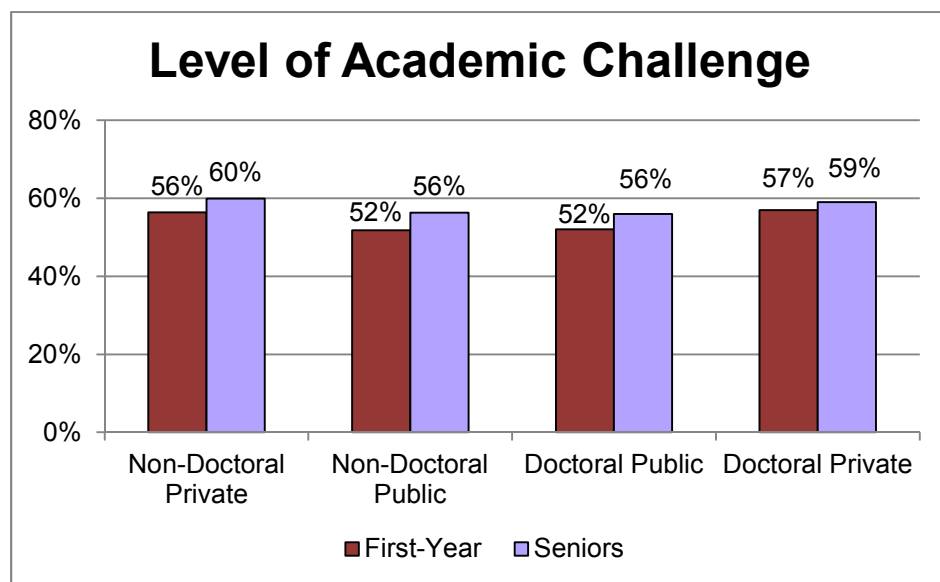
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## Academic Challenge

### FACT 1 – Academic Challenge

Independent colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by setting high expectations for student performance. On average, first-year and senior students at non-doctoral private colleges report a higher level of engagement in academically challenging work compared with their counterparts at public institutions. Seniors at non-doctoral private colleges had the highest mean score overall at 60 percent.

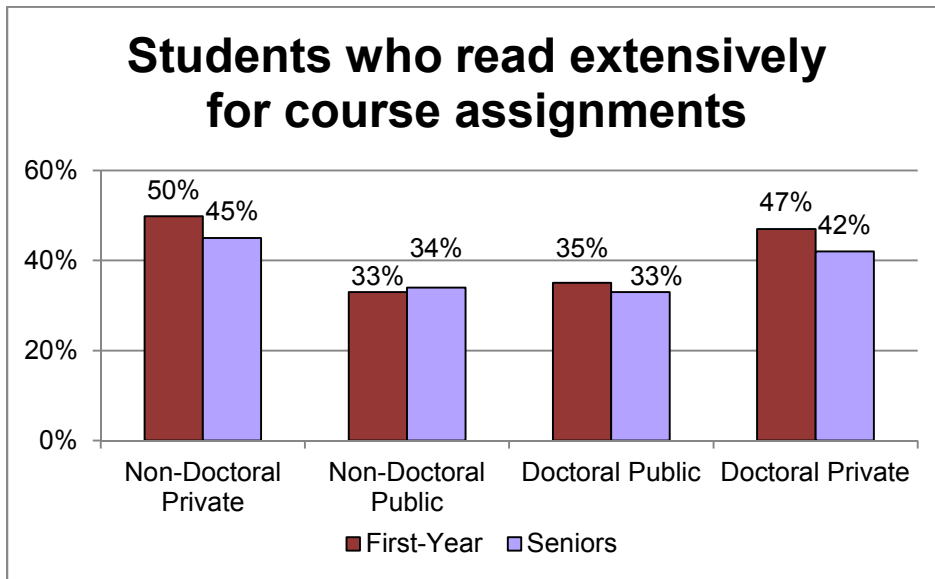


**Note:** The Level of Academic Challenge benchmark is based on 11 key questions from the NSSE survey that capture many vital aspects of the student experience. Examples of activities and conditions include: time spent preparing for class; number of assigned textbooks; number of writing assignments; and number of analytic assignments.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 2 – Extensive Reading

Students at independent colleges and universities read more for classes than their counterparts at other institutions. Half of the first-year students at non-doctoral private colleges were assigned more than ten books, textbooks, or book-length packs of course readings during the academic year. In comparison, only 33 percent of first-year students at non-doctoral public and 35 percent of first-year students at doctoral public institutions reported such extensive reading assignments.

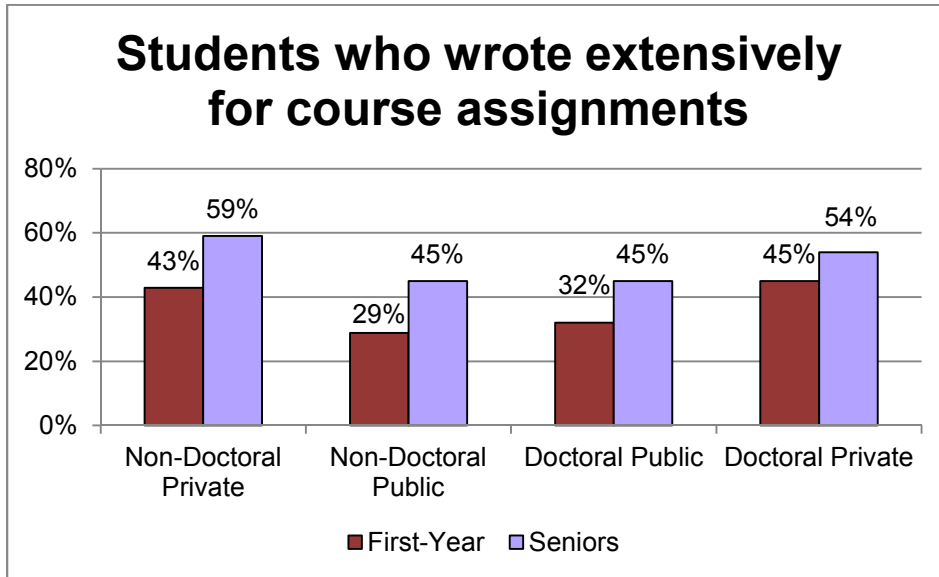


**Note:** Percentage of students who reported that they were assigned more than ten books, textbooks, or book-length packs of course readings during the academic year.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

### FACT 3 – Extensive Writing

Students at independent colleges and universities write more for course assignments than their peers at public institutions. Nearly 60 percent of seniors at non-doctoral private colleges wrote five or more papers or reports between five and 19 pages in length during the academic year. Fewer than half of seniors at public institutions did the same.

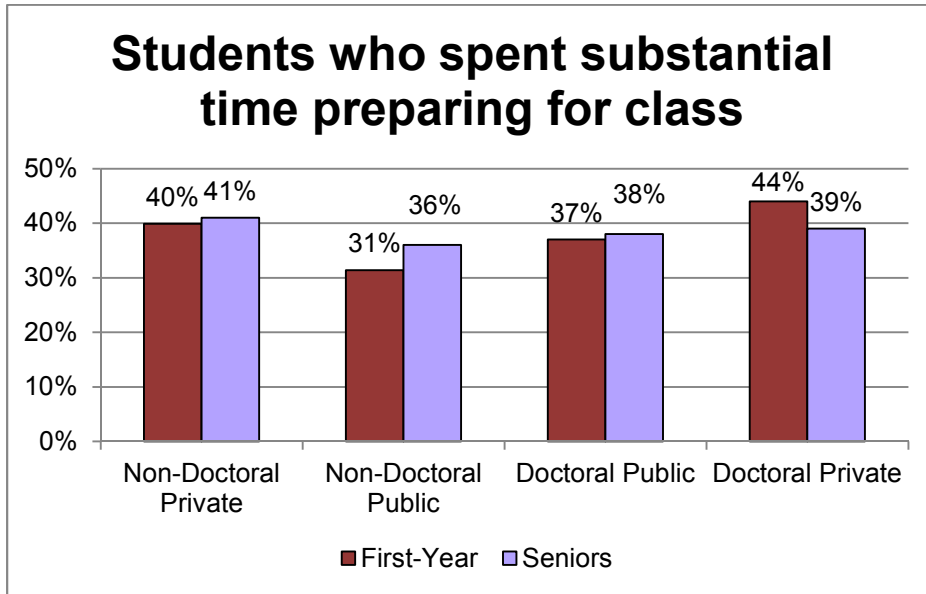


**Note:** Percentage of students who reported that they wrote five or more papers or reports between five and 19 pages in length during the academic year.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 4 – Class Preparation

Both first-year students and seniors at private colleges and universities spend a substantial amount of time preparing for class. For example, 41 percent of seniors attending non-doctoral private colleges spent more than 15 hours per week preparing for class compared with 36 percent of seniors at non-doctoral public institutions.

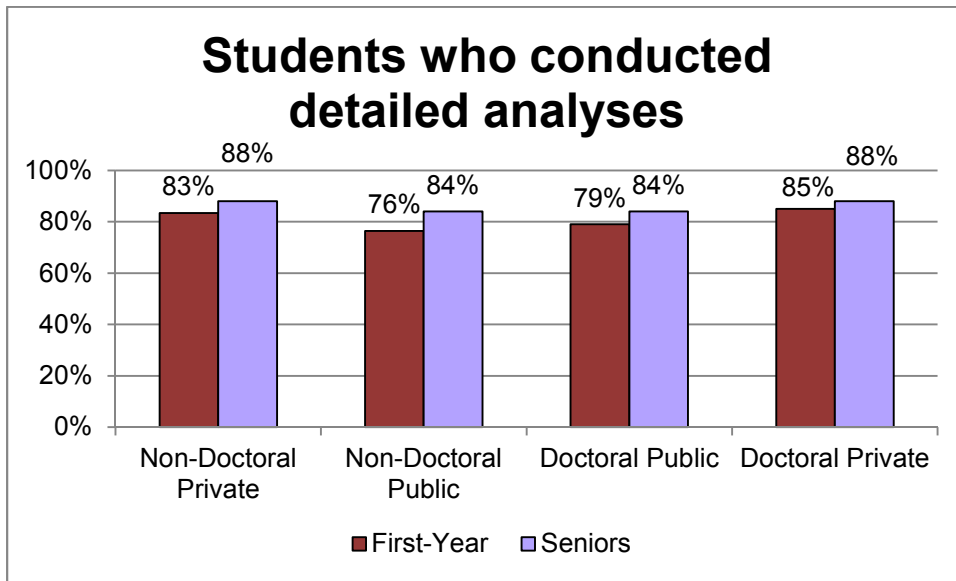


**Note:** Percentage of students who reported that they spent more than 15 hours per week preparing for class.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 5 – Analyze Coursework

Independent college and university students are more likely than their peers at public institutions to take a course where they are required to analyze the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, even in their first year of college. For example, 83 percent of first-year students enrolled at non-doctoral private colleges conducted such detailed analyses compared with 76 percent of first-year students at non-doctoral public institutions.

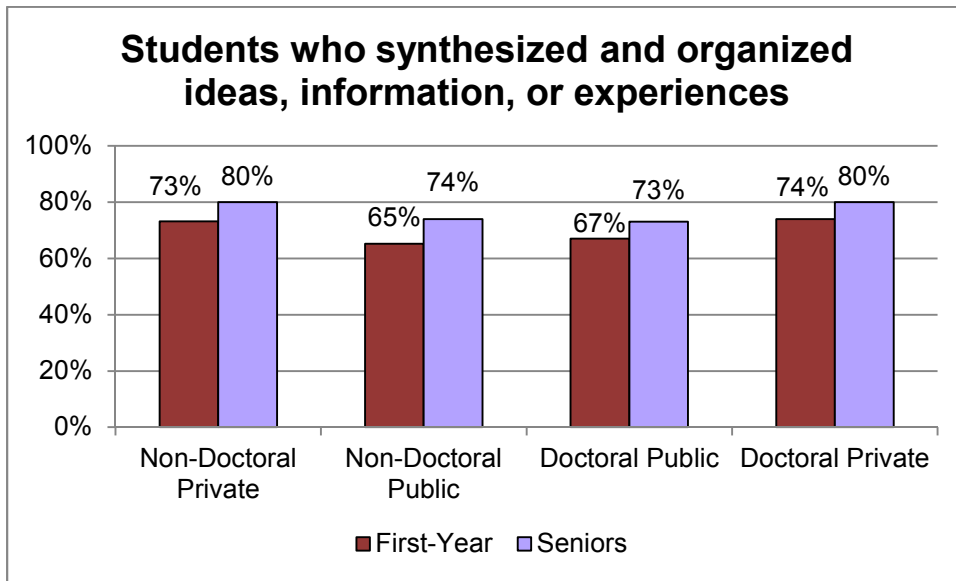


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very often” or “often” to the question, “How much has your coursework emphasized analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in-depth and considering its components?”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 6 – Synthesize Coursework

Independent college and university students are more likely to synthesize and organize ideas, information, or experiences in their courses than their public university peers. First-year students enrolled at non-doctoral private colleges were as likely as seniors at doctoral public universities (73 percent) and more likely than first-year students at doctoral public universities (67 percent) to synthesize and organize coursework.

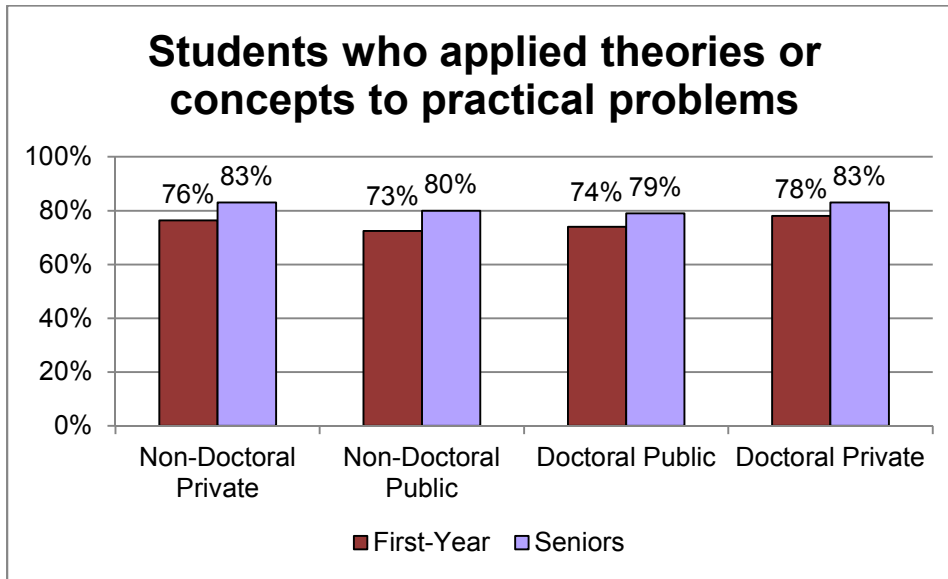


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very often” or “often” to the question, “How much has your coursework emphasized synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships?”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 7 – Apply Theories

Often considered an essential skill by employers, the ability to apply theories and concepts to practical problems is highest among students at independent colleges and universities. Seniors at non-doctoral private colleges (83 percent) scored higher than their counterparts at doctoral public universities (79 percent). In addition, more first-year students who attend non-doctoral private colleges (76 percent) applied relevant concepts than first-year students at either non-doctoral or doctoral public institutions (73 and 74 percent, respectively).

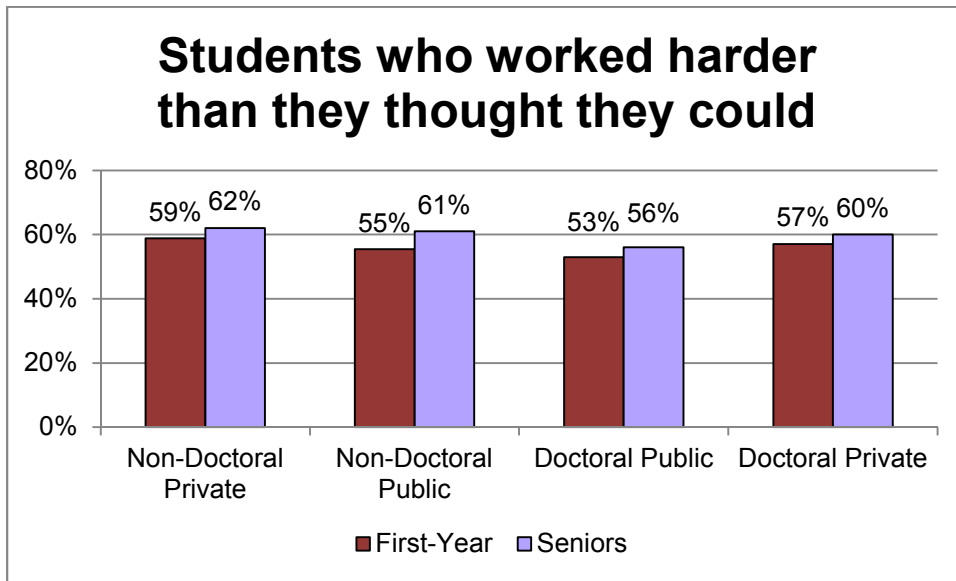


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very often” or “often” to the question, “How much has your coursework emphasized applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations?”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 8 – Work Expectations and Effort

Students who attend independent colleges and universities more often find themselves working harder than they thought they could in their classes when compared with their peers at other institutions. First-year students (59 percent) and seniors (62 percent) enrolled in non-doctoral private colleges regularly put considerable effort into their coursework. In comparison, 53 percent of first-year students and 56 percent of seniors at doctoral public institutions report frequently working harder than expected.



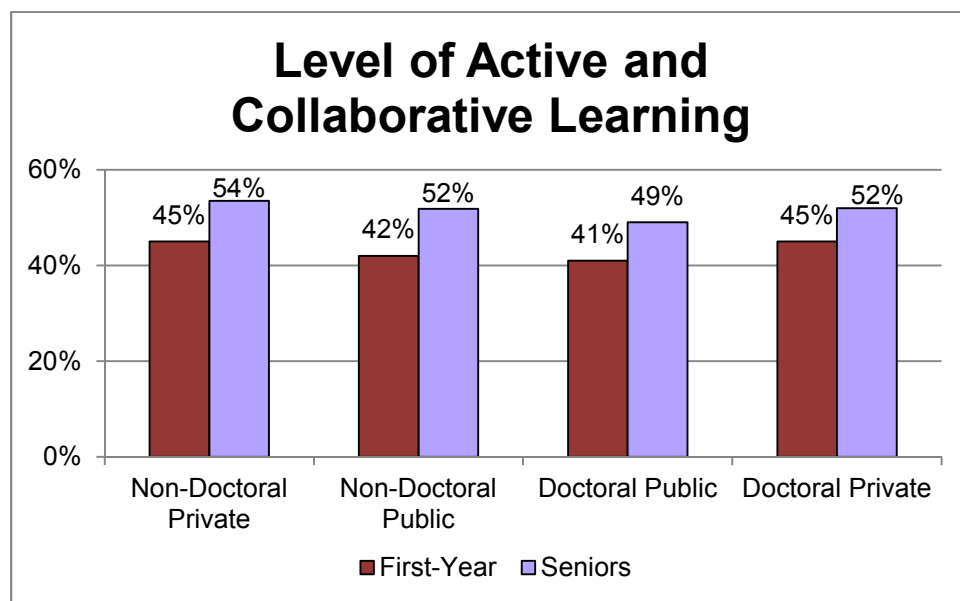
**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very often” or “often” to the question, “How often have you worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor’s standards or expectations?”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## Active and Collaborative Learning

### FACT 1 – Active and Collaborative Learning

Independent colleges and universities recognize that students learn more when they are involved in their education and are asked to think about and apply what they learn in different settings. For example, seniors enrolled in non-doctoral private colleges (54 percent) are more likely to be actively and collaboratively engaged in their learning than are seniors at doctoral public universities (49 percent). A similar difference exists for first-year students (45 percent and 41 percent, respectively).

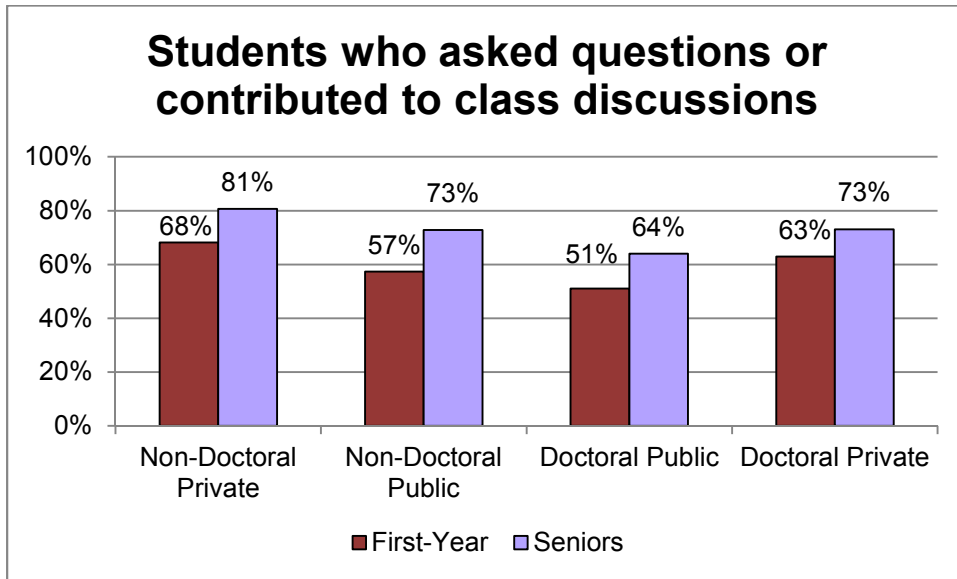


**Note:** The Active and Collaborative Learning benchmark is based on seven key questions from the NSSE survey that capture many vital aspects of the student experience. Examples of activities include: asked questions in class; made a class presentation; participated in a community-based project; and discussed ideas from readings or classes with others outside of class.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 2 – Contribution to Discussions

From a student’s first year to his or her senior year, class engagement is of high importance at independent colleges and universities. More than two-thirds (68 percent) of first-year students at non-doctoral private colleges reported that they frequently asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions, but only half (51 percent) at doctoral public universities were so engaged. Similarly, 81 percent of seniors enrolled in non-doctoral private colleges contributed to class discussions compared with 64 percent at doctoral public institutions.

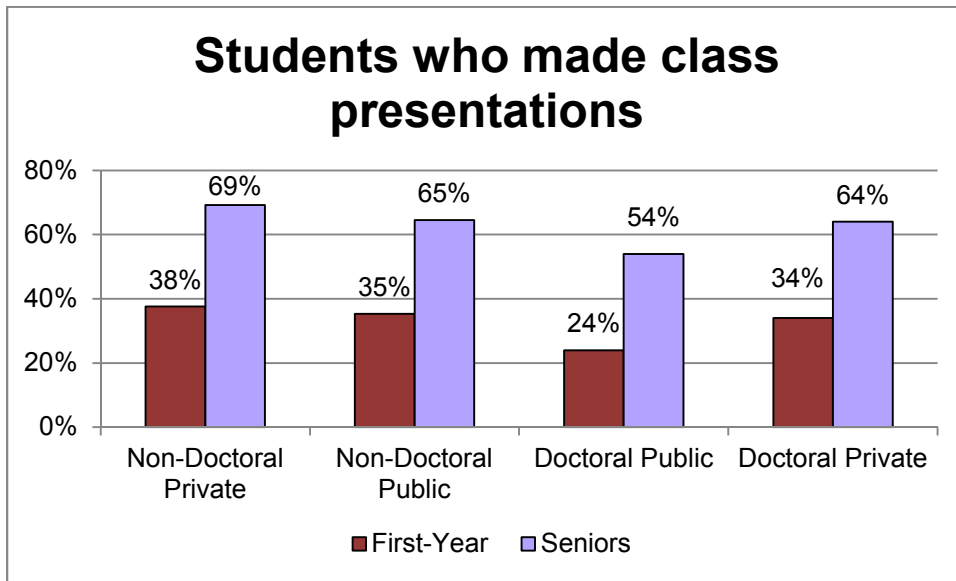


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very often” or “often” to the question, “How often have you asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions?”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

### FACT 3 – Class Presentations

Independent colleges and universities prepare students to present ideas to critical audiences. For example, 38 percent of first-year students who attend non-doctoral private colleges made class presentations, but only 24 percent of first-year students at doctoral public institutions did so. By their senior year, 69 percent of students at non-doctoral private colleges had given presentations in class while only 54 percent of seniors at doctoral public institutions did the same.

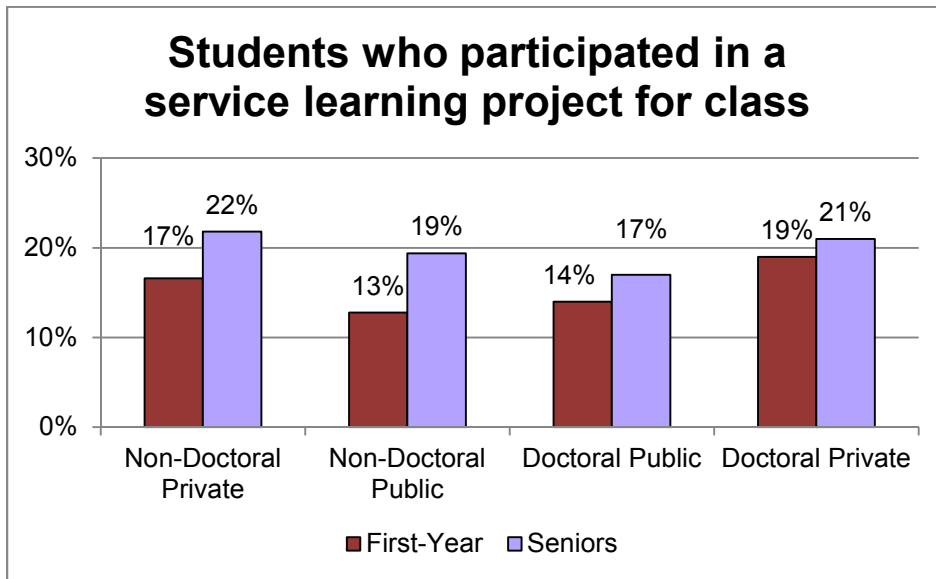


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very often” or “often” to the question, “How often have you made a class presentation?”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 4 – Service Learning

Students at independent colleges and universities participate more frequently in community-based projects as part of a formal course compared with students at other types of institutions. For example, 17 percent of first-year students and 22 percent of seniors enrolled in non-doctoral private colleges took part in course-based service learning projects. In comparison, fewer first-year students (14 percent) and seniors (17 percent) at doctoral public universities had similar experiences.

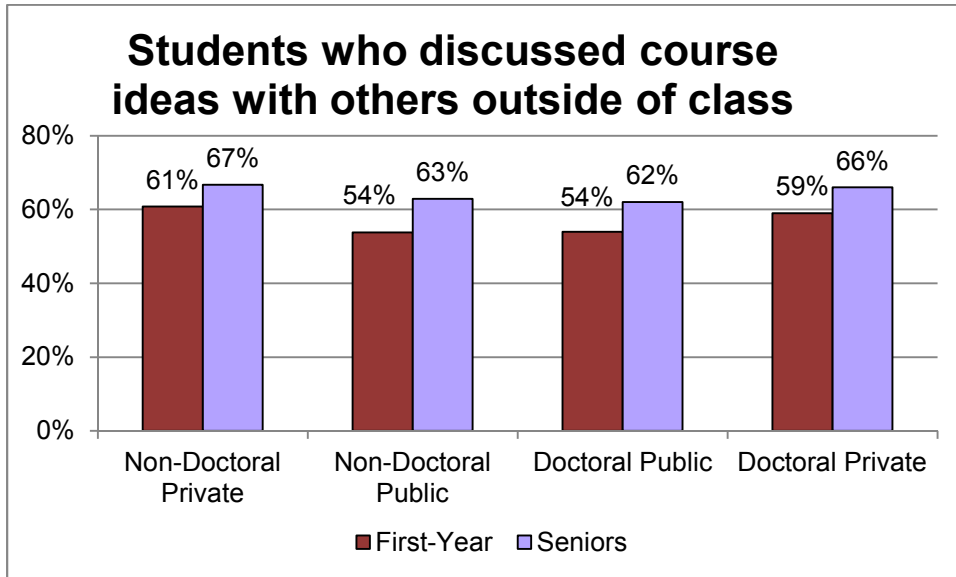


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very often” or “often” to the question, “How often have you participated in a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of a regular course?”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 5 – Outside of Class Discussions

Independent college and university students frequently discuss course ideas with family members, co-workers, and other students outside of the classroom. For example, seniors attending non-doctoral private colleges are more likely to continue to discuss course ideas after class (67 percent) than similar students at doctoral public universities (62 percent).



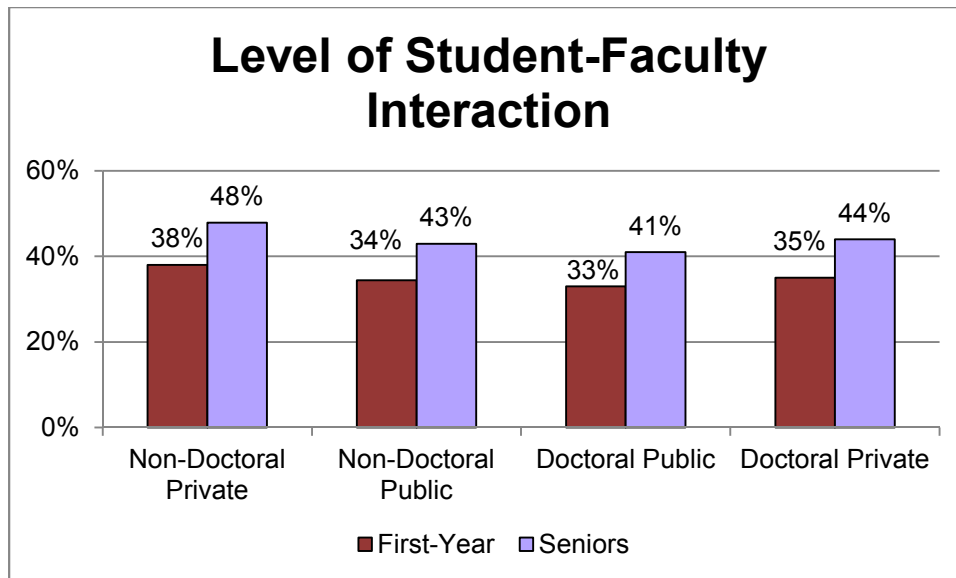
**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very often” or “often” to the question, “How often have you discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## Student and Faculty Interaction

### FACT 1 – Student-Faculty Interaction

Students enrolled in independent colleges and universities are more likely to interact with faculty members than their peers at other institutions. First-year students (38 percent) at non-doctoral private colleges are more likely to collaborate with and participate in activities with faculty members than first-year students at public and doctoral private universities (33 percent and 35 percent, respectively).

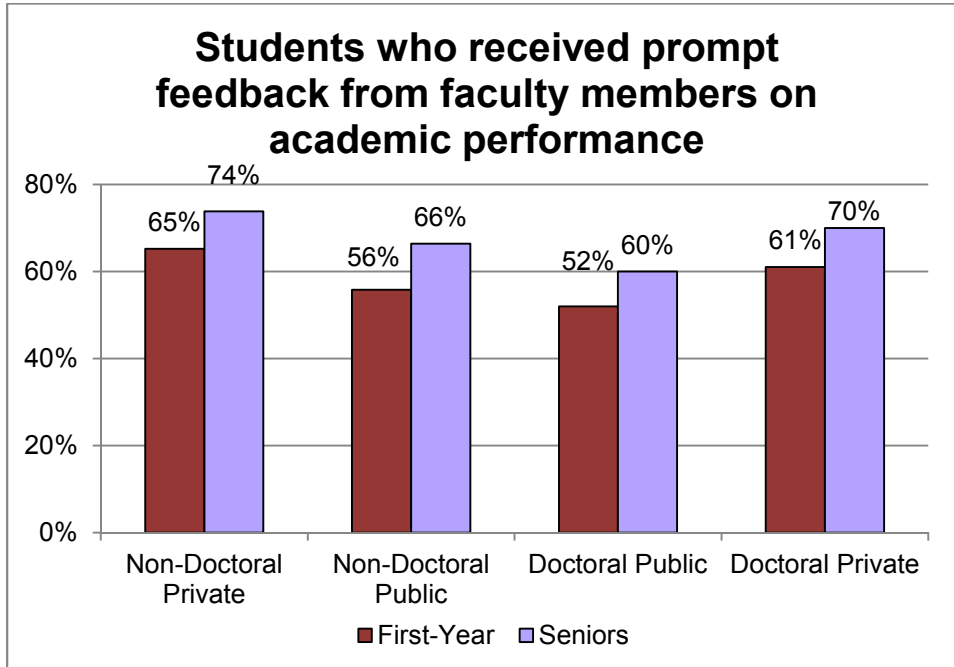


**Note:** The Student-Faculty Interaction benchmark is based on six key questions from the NSSE survey that include: discussed grades or assignments with an instructor; talked about career plans with a faculty member; received prompt written or oral feedback on academic performance from a faculty member; and worked with a faculty member on a research project.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 2 – Faculty Feedback

Faculty members at independent private colleges and universities provide timely feedback to their students regarding academic coursework. For example, nearly two-thirds (74 percent) of first-year students at non-doctoral private colleges received prompt feedback from faculty members on their academic performance. Only 52 percent of first-year students at doctoral public universities reported the same. Furthermore, seniors at non-doctoral private colleges (74 percent) were also more likely to receive prompt feedback from faculty than seniors at doctoral private universities (60 percent).

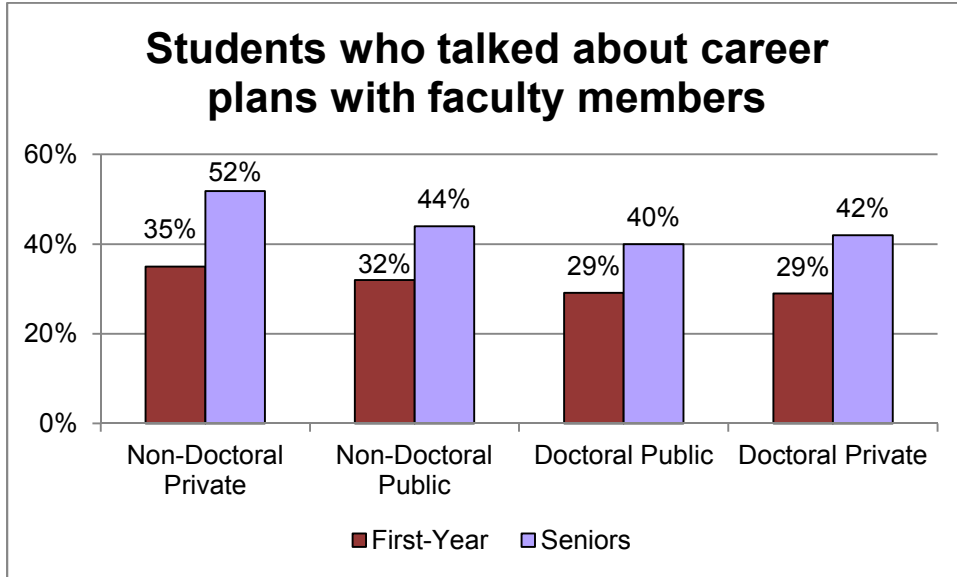


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very often” or “often” to the question, “How often have you received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty members on your academic performance?”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

### FACT 3 – Career Advising

Seniors at independent colleges and universities benefit from frequent discussions with faculty members about career plans. A majority of seniors (52 percent) at non-doctoral private colleges talked with faculty members or advisors about their goals after college. Fewer than half of seniors (40 percent) at doctoral public universities experienced this kind of faculty advising.

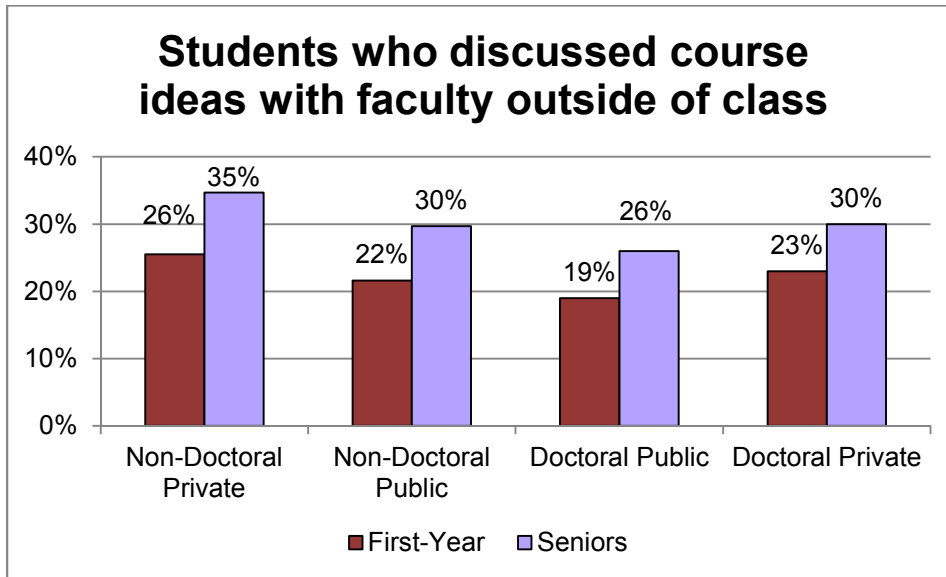


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very often” or “often” to the question, “How often have you talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor?”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 4 – After Class Discussions

At independent colleges and universities, discussion of course content with professors frequently continues after class. Seniors at non-doctoral private colleges (35 percent) reported discussing ideas from readings and classes with faculty members outside of the classroom more often than seniors at doctoral public universities (26 percent). Furthermore, 26 percent of first-year students at non-doctoral private colleges discussed course ideas with faculty members compared with 19 percent of first-year students at doctoral public universities.

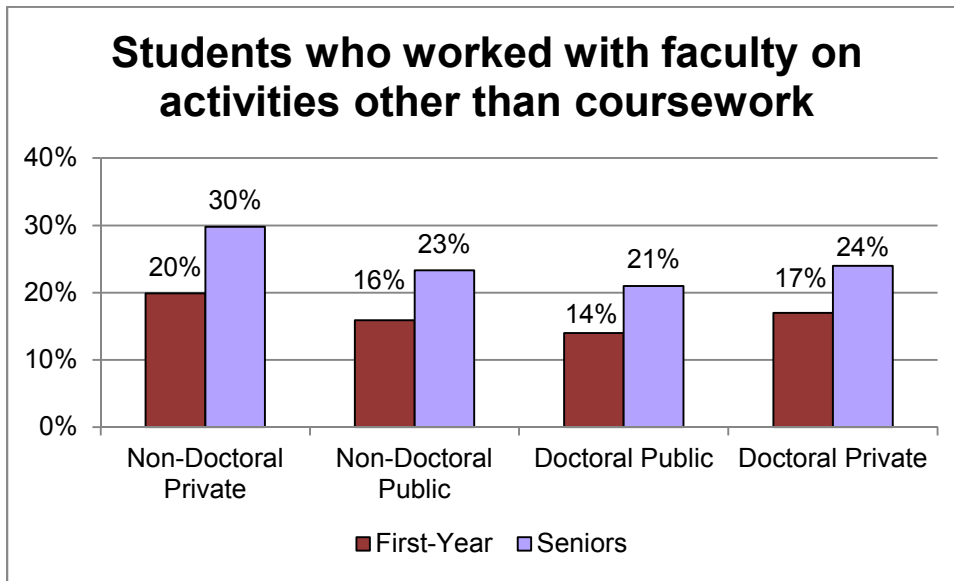


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very often” or “often” to the question, “How often have you discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class?”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 5 – Extracurricular Interactions with Faculty

Students at independent colleges and universities are more likely than their peers at public institutions to work with faculty members on activities not related to coursework, such as serving together on committees or participating in campus activities. Seniors at non-doctoral private colleges (30 percent) engaged with faculty members in activities other than coursework more frequently than seniors at doctoral public universities (21 percent).



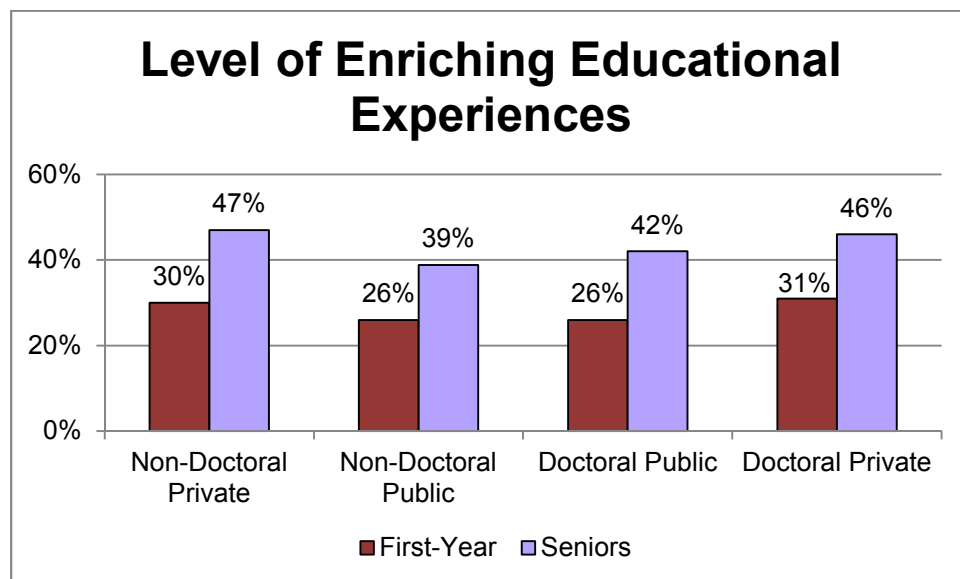
**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very often” or “often” to the question, “How often have you worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.)?”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## Enriching Educational Experience

### FACT 1 – Enriching Educational Experiences

Independent colleges and universities encourage student learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom. First-year students at non-doctoral private colleges (30 percent) participated more frequently in enriching educational experiences than first-year students at doctoral public universities (26 percent). Enriching educational experiences include talking with students with different religious beliefs, using electronic technology to discuss or complete assignments, participating in a study-abroad program, internship or field experience, and talking with students of different races and ethnicities. Additionally, 47 percent of seniors at non-doctoral private colleges engaged in enriching educational experiences compared with 42 percent of seniors at doctoral public universities.

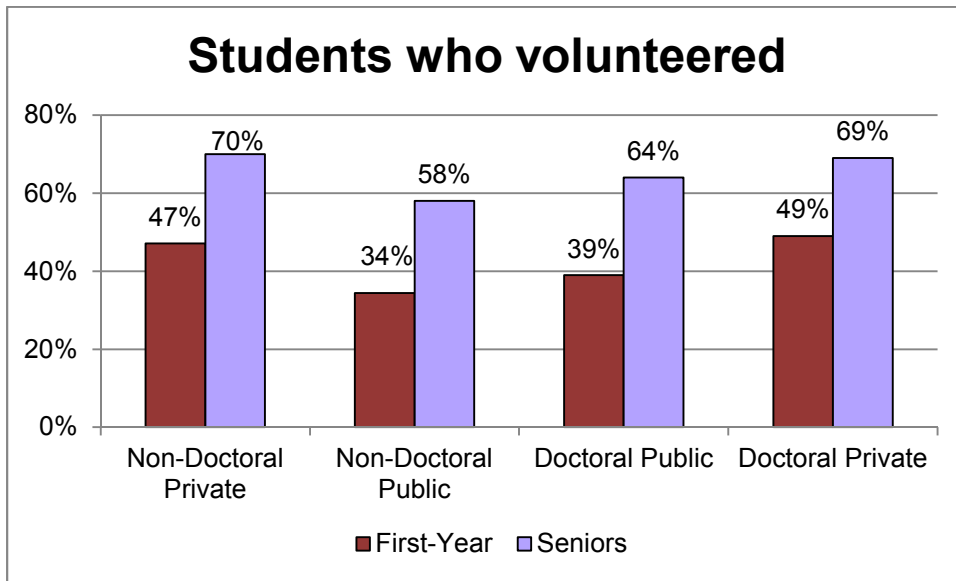


**Note:** The Enriching Educational Experiences benchmark is based on five key questions from the NSSE survey that capture activities and conditions that enrich the student experience, such as: talking with students with different religious beliefs; using electronic technology to discuss or complete assignments; participating in a study-abroad program; internships or field experiences; and talking with students of different races or ethnicities.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 2 – Community Service

Independent college and university students are more likely than their peers at public colleges and universities to participate in community service or volunteer work. For example, 70 percent of seniors at non-doctoral private colleges were engaged in community service, compared with 58 percent of seniors at non-doctoral public institutions. First-year students at independent colleges and universities were also civically engaged with nearly half (47 percent) saying that they participated in volunteer activities.

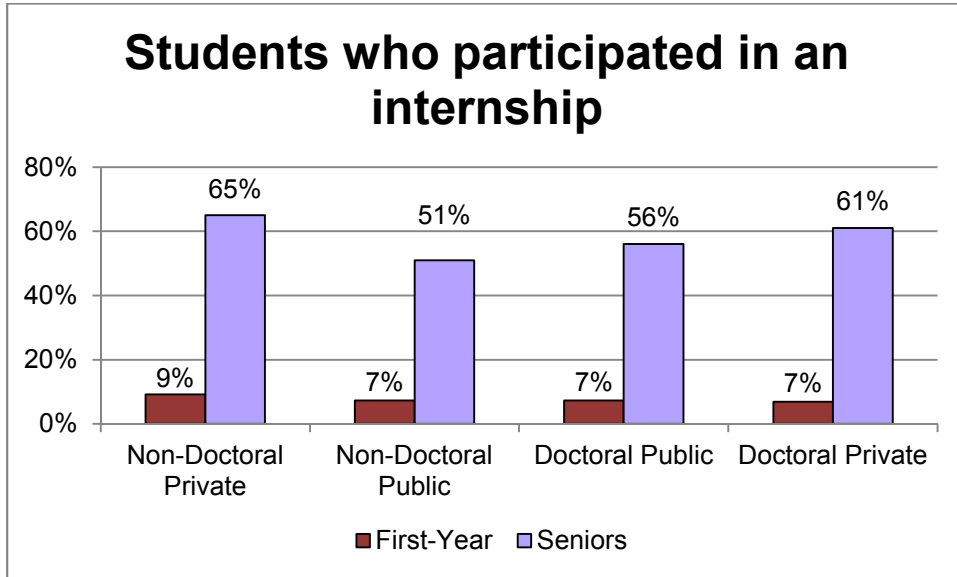


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded that they participated in community service or volunteer work before graduating from their institution.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

### FACT 3 – Internships

Independent colleges and universities provide students with opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge in meaningful and useful ways through internships, clinical assignments, or other field experiences. Over two-thirds of seniors (65 percent) at non-doctoral private colleges participated in an internship compared with 56 percent of seniors at doctoral public universities. First-year students at independent colleges (9 percent) also participated in an internship at a higher rate than their peers at public institutions (7 percent).

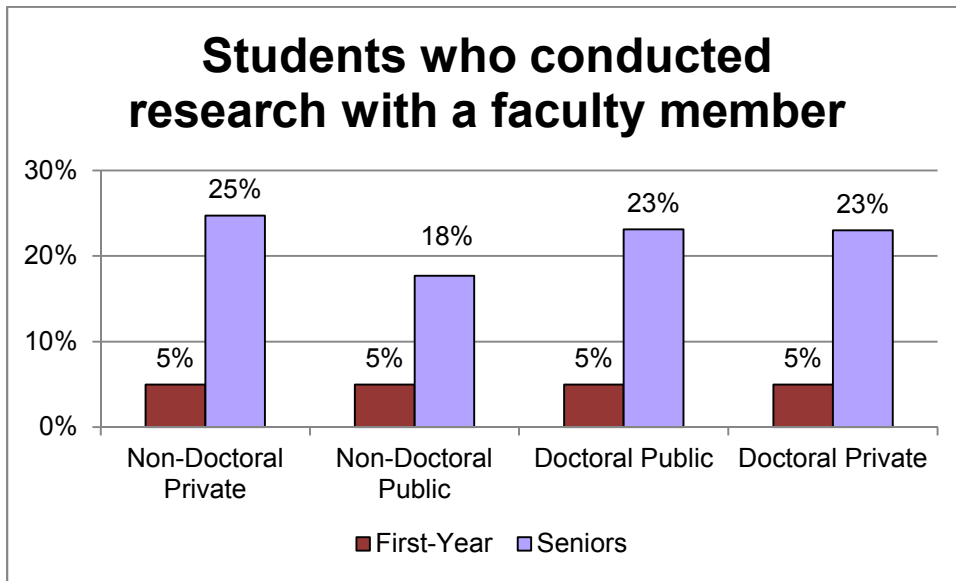


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded that they participated in a practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment before graduating from their institution.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 4 – Research with Faculty Members

Students at independent colleges and universities are more likely than their peers at public institutions to have the opportunity to work with faculty members on relevant research to their field or discipline outside of course or program requirements. Among seniors at non-doctoral private colleges, one in four (25 percent) reported working on research with a faculty member, compared with 23 percent of seniors at doctoral public universities and 18 percent at non-doctoral public institutions.

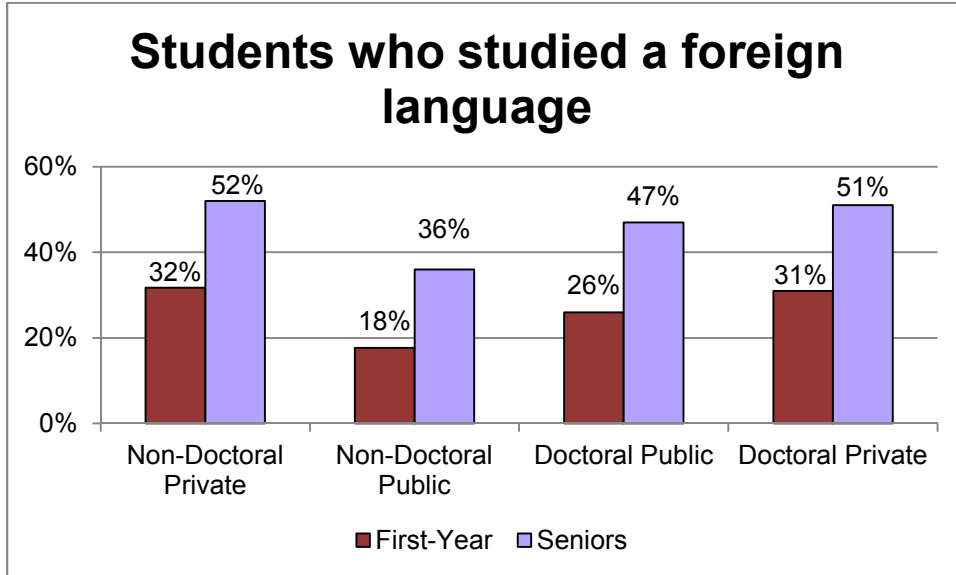


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded that they worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements before graduating from their institution.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 5 – Foreign Language

Students who attend independent colleges and universities are more likely than their peers at public institutions to study foreign languages. Over half (52 percent) of seniors at non-doctoral private colleges studied a foreign language, compared with 36 percent of seniors at non-doctoral public institutions and 47 percent of seniors at doctoral public universities.

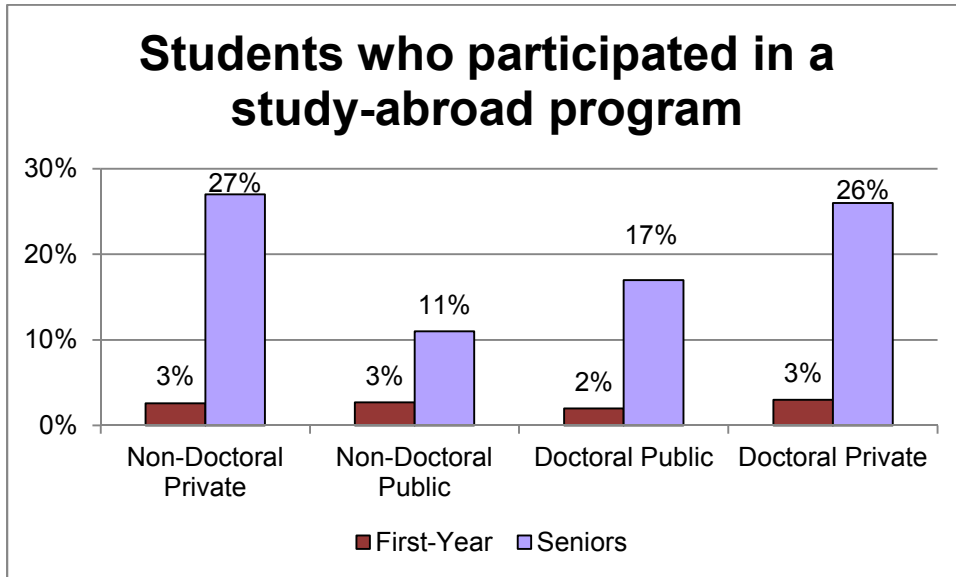


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded that they completed coursework in a foreign language.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 6 – Study-Abroad

Independent colleges and universities encourage students to experience diverse cultures and peoples through study-abroad programs. For example, 27 percent of seniors at non-doctoral private colleges participated in a study-abroad program while 11 percent of seniors at non-doctoral public colleges had similar experiences.

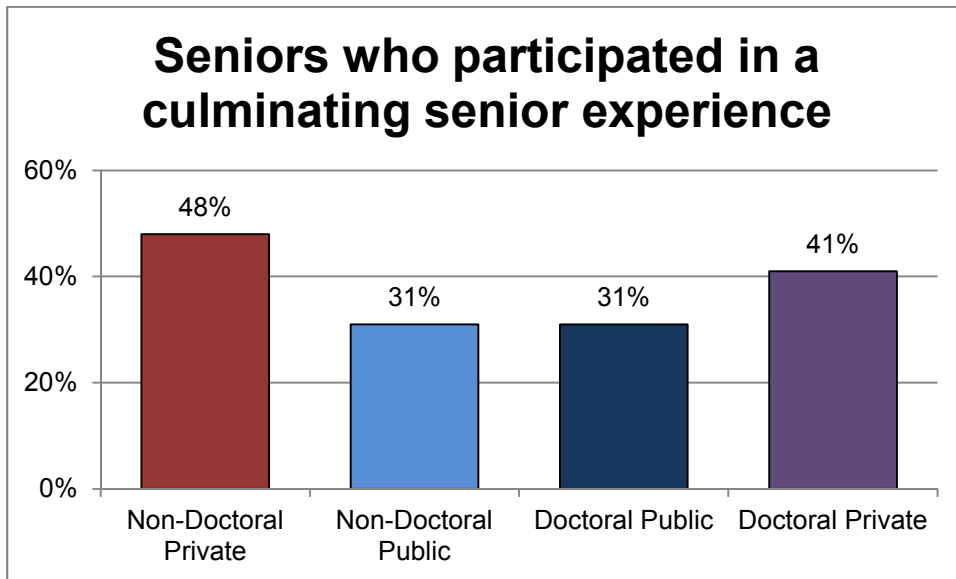


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded that they participated in a study-abroad program before graduating from their institution.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 7 – Culminating Senior Experiences

Students at independent colleges and universities are more likely to participate in a culminating senior experience than their peers at other institutions. Nearly half of seniors at non-doctoral private colleges (48 percent) completed a capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, or other culminating experience before graduating. In comparison, 31 percent of seniors at public institutions participated in similar experiences.

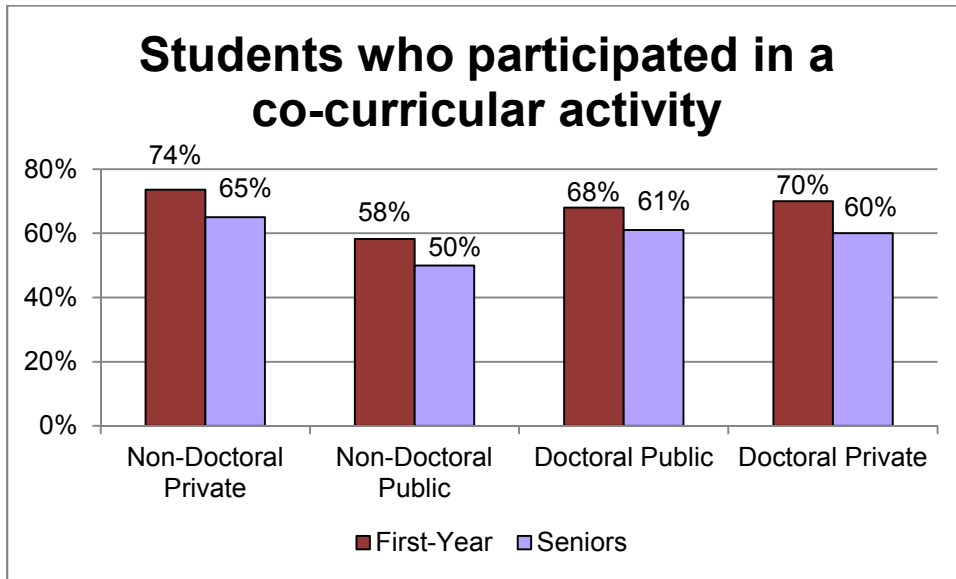


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded that they participated in a culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.) before graduating from their institution.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 8 – Co-Curricular Activities

Students at independent colleges and universities are engaged not only in academic experiences, but they also are highly involved in co-curricular activities. Nearly three-fourths of first-year students (74 percent) at non-doctoral private colleges spent at least one hour per week participating in a co-curricular activity. First-year students at non-doctoral public colleges were less involved (58 percent). Furthermore, more than two-thirds of seniors at non-doctoral private colleges (65 percent) participated in a co-curricular activity compared with half of seniors at non-doctoral public colleges (50 percent).

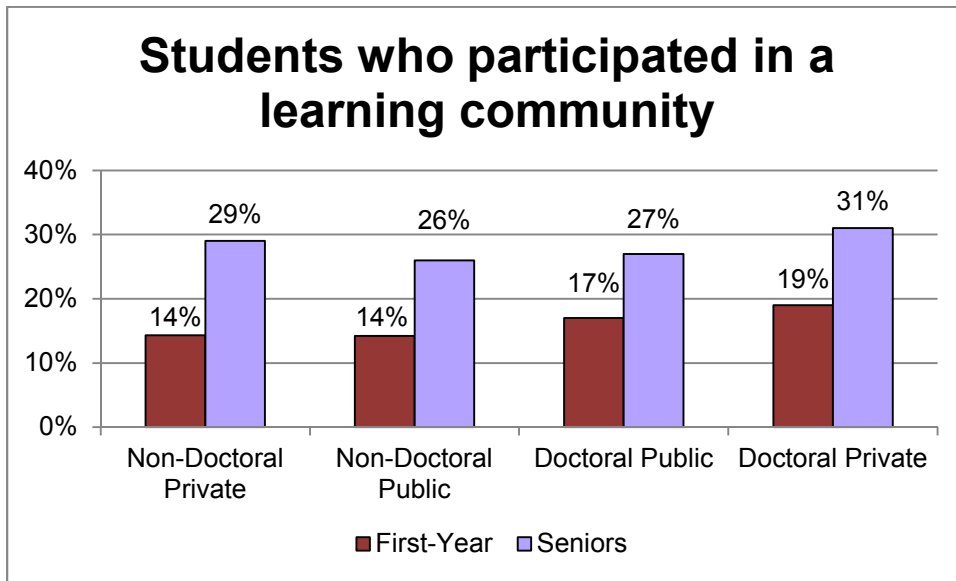


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded that they spent at least one hour per week participating in a co-curricular activity during the academic year.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 9 – Learning Community

Engaging new ideas and collaborating across multiple disciplines is a vital part of a student’s education at independent colleges and universities. Seniors at non-doctoral private colleges (29 percent) participated in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together before graduating from their institution. In comparison, 26 percent of seniors at non-doctoral public institutions had similar experiences.

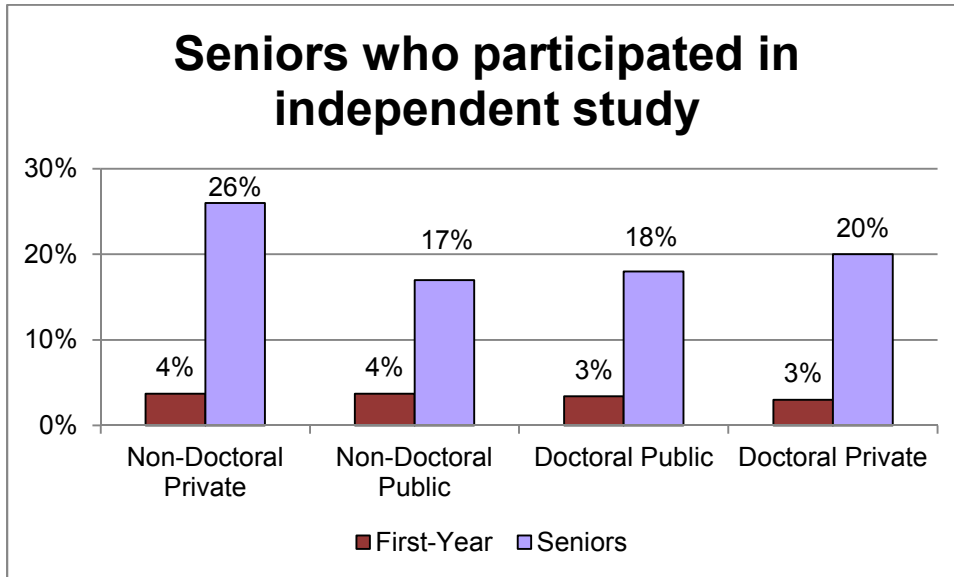


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded that they participated in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together before graduating from their institution.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 10 – Independent Study

Seniors at independent colleges and universities are more likely to engage in an independent study or design their own major than their peers at other institutions. For example, 26 percent of seniors at non-doctoral private colleges engaged in an independent study compared with 17 percent of students at non-doctoral public institutions and 18 percent at doctoral public institutions.



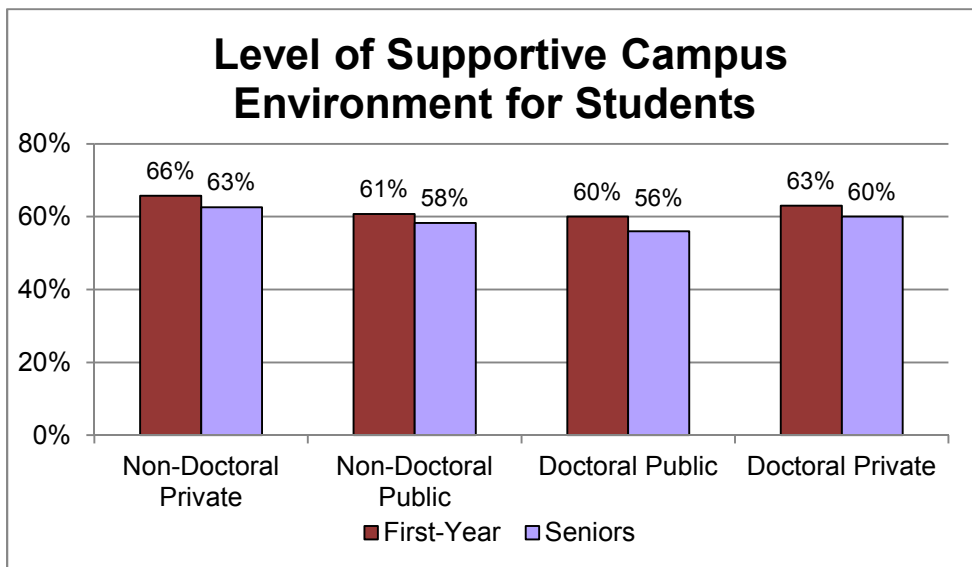
**Note:** Percentage of students who responded that they engaged in an independent study or self-designed major before graduating from their institution.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

# Supportive Campus Environment

## FACT 1 – Supportive Campus Environment

Independent colleges and universities recognize that students perform better and are more likely to succeed when campus environments support student success. Two-thirds of first-year students at non-doctoral private colleges (66 percent) indicated a supportive campus environment, which includes qualities such as the support to succeed academically and thrive socially as well as the quality of relationships with other students, faculty members, and administrative personnel.

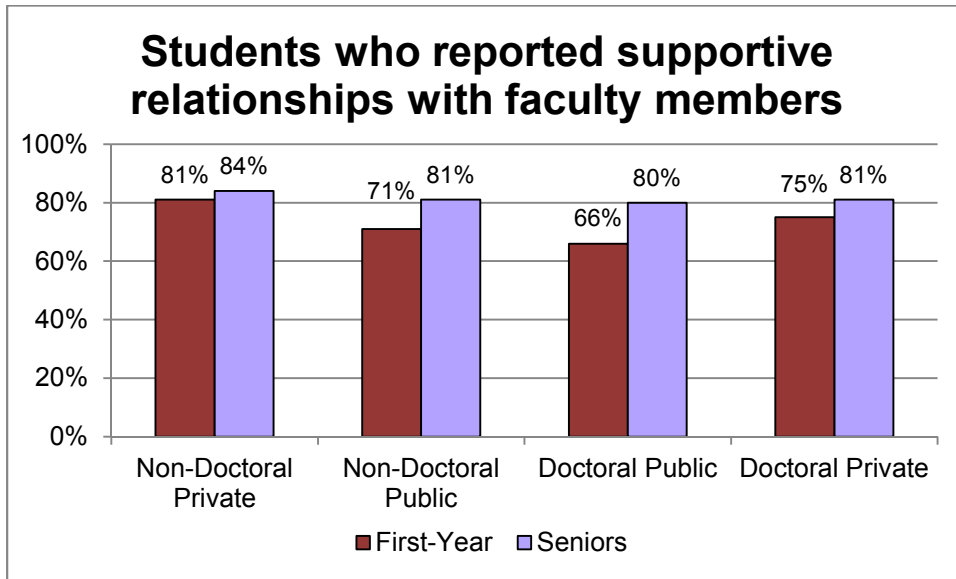


**Note:** The Supportive Campus Environment Benchmark is based on six key questions from the NSSE survey that includes: providing support to succeed academically and thrive socially; quality of relationships with other students; and quality of relationships with faculty members, administrative personnel, and office staff members.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 2 – Supportive Faculty Relationships

Students who attend independent colleges and universities are more likely than their peers at public institutions to report supportive relationships with faculty members. For example, 81 percent of first-year students at non-doctoral private colleges reported having faculty members who were available, helpful, or sympathetic, compared with 66 percent of students at doctoral public universities. Furthermore, 84 percent of seniors at non-doctoral private colleges reported supportive relationships with faculty members compared with 80 percent of seniors at doctoral public institutions.

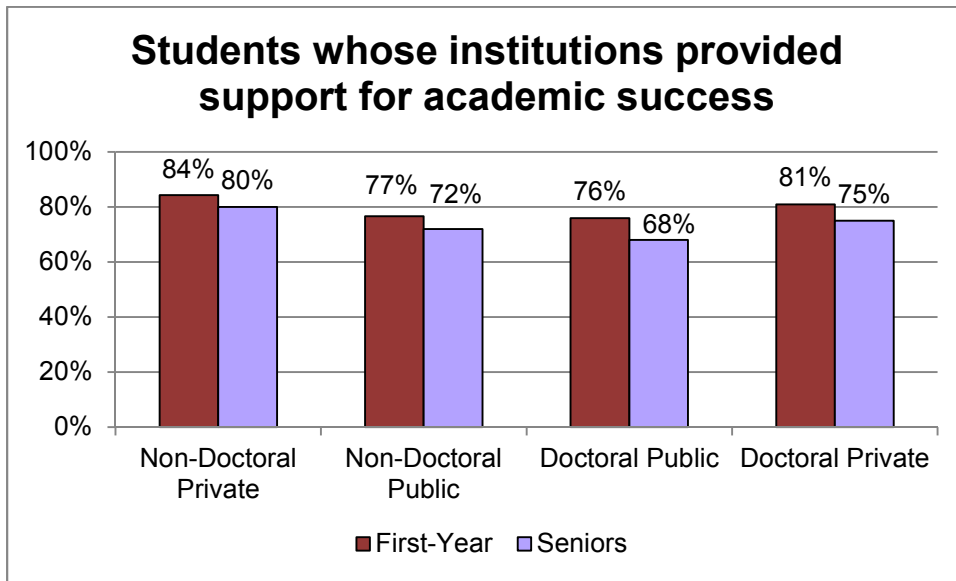


**Note:** Percentage of students who reported relationships with faculty members to be available, helpful, or sympathetic.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

### FACT 3 – Academic Support

Independent colleges and universities are more likely than other institutions to provide the support that students need to succeed academically. More than four in five first-year students (84 percent) at non-doctoral private colleges reported that they received the institutional support and encouragement they needed to succeed academically. In comparison, 76 percent of students at doctoral public universities reported benefitting from a similar environment.

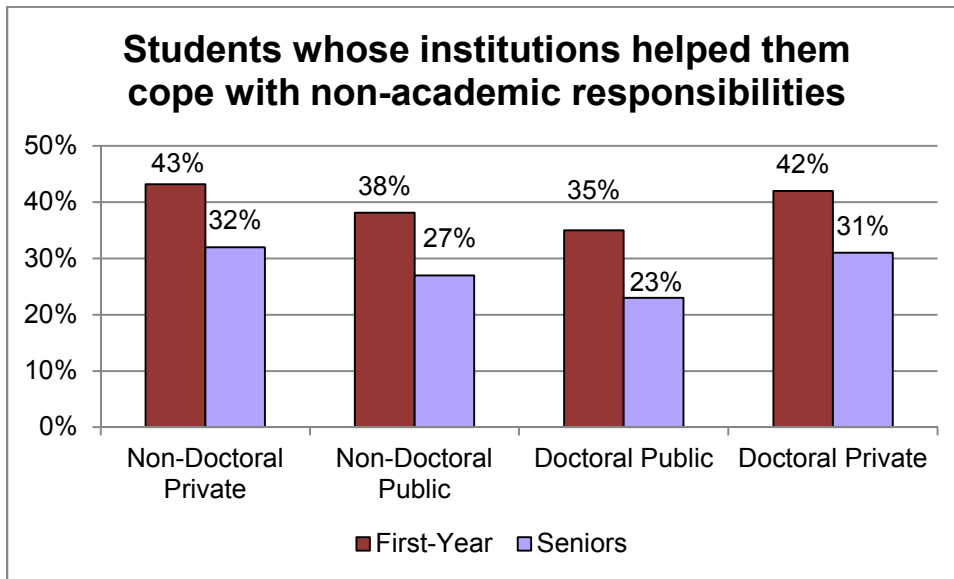


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very much” or “quite a bit” to the question, “To what extent does your institution emphasize providing the support you need to help you succeed academically?”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 4 – Support for Non-Academic Responsibilities

Independent colleges and universities are more likely than other types of institutions to provide support to their students for responsibilities not directly related to academic requirements, such as work or family obligations. First-year students at non-doctoral private colleges (43 percent) reported that their college frequently helped them cope with non-academic responsibilities. At doctoral public universities, only 35 percent of first-year students reported similar support.

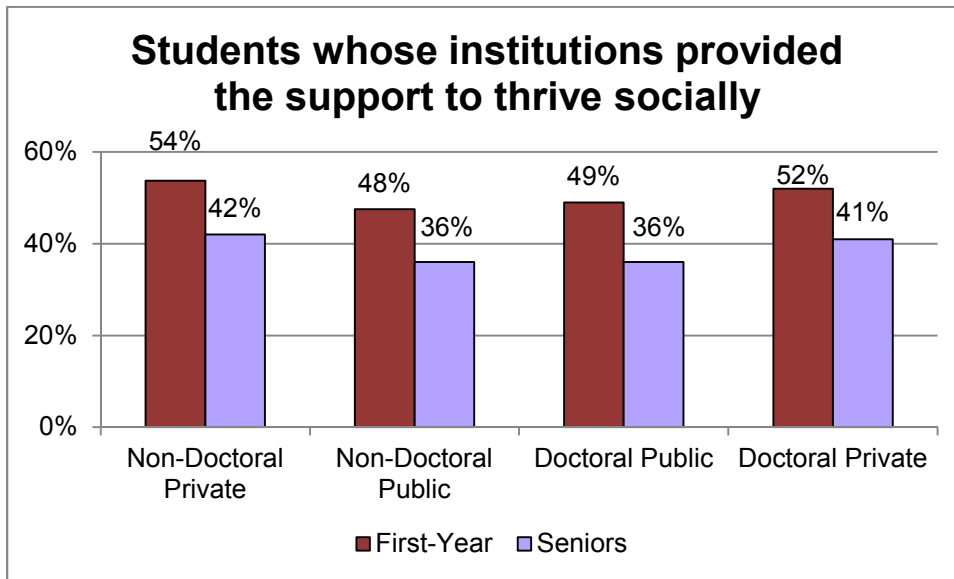


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very much” or “quite a bit” to the question, “To what extent does your institution emphasize helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)?”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 5 – Support to Thrive Socially

Students who attend independent colleges and universities are more likely than their peers at public institutions to say that their campus provides them with support to thrive socially. A majority of first-year students who attend non-doctoral private colleges (54 percent) reported an institutional emphasis on social support, while 48 percent of first-year students at non-doctoral public colleges gave the same report.



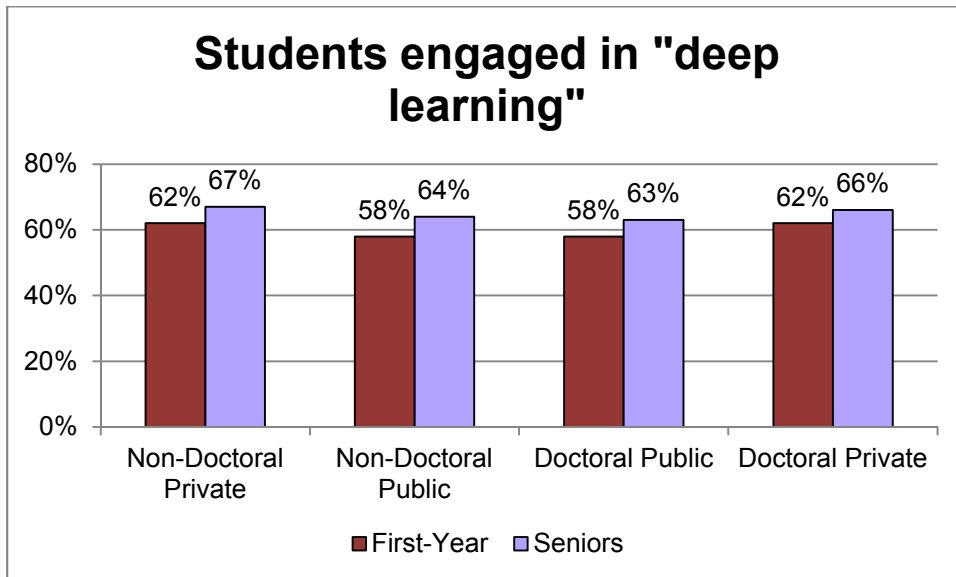
**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very much” or “quite a bit” to the question, “To what extent does your institution emphasize providing the support you need to thrive socially?”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## Higher-Level Learning

### FACT 1 – Higher-Level Learning

Students who attend independent colleges and universities are more likely than students at public institutions to engage in higher-level learning activities, or “deep learning,” such as integrating ideas and making critical judgments. For example, nearly two-thirds of first-year students at non-doctoral private colleges (62 percent) reported engaging in “deep learning” compared with 58 percent of first-year students at non-doctoral public colleges. Furthermore, 67 percent of seniors at non-doctoral private colleges engaged in higher-level learning activities, while 64 percent of students at non-doctoral public colleges reported involvement with “deep learning.”



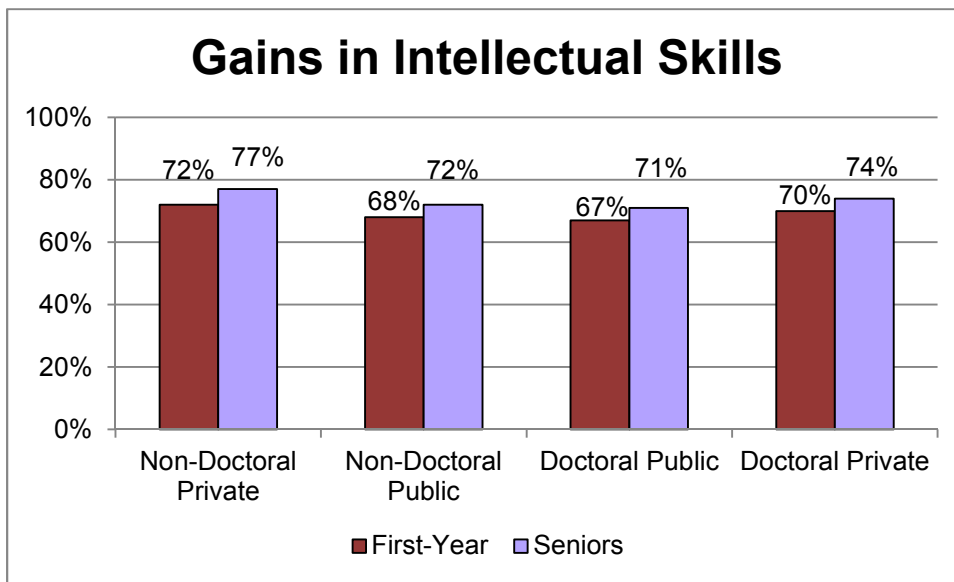
**Note:** The Deep Learning Scale is derived from eight educationally purposeful behaviors identified by researchers as contributing to a high-quality education. These include: integrating ideas and information from various sources and perspectives in written assignment; making critical judgments about the merits of information, arguments, or methods; and the extent to which students discuss ideas from their courses with faculty, peers, and others outside of the classroom.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## Individual Gains and Personal Development

### FACT 1 – Gains in Intellectual Skills

Students who attend independent colleges and universities are more likely to increase their intellectual skills than their peers at other colleges. These skills include writing and speaking clearly and effectively, acquiring a broad general education, thinking critically and analytically, and learning effectively on one's own. First-year students (72 percent) and seniors (77 percent) attending non-doctoral private colleges reported substantial improvements in the skills that they needed to succeed academically.

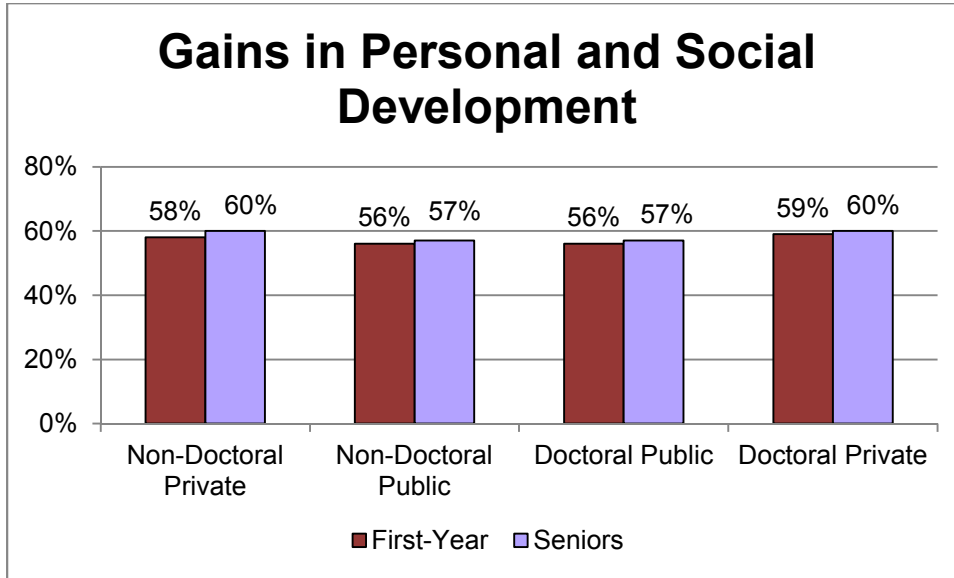


**Note:** The Intellectual Skills Scale is derived from: self-reported gains in writing; speaking clearly and effectively; acquiring a broad general education; thinking critically and analytically; and learning effectively on one's own.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 2 – Personal and Social Development

Students who attend independent colleges and universities experience larger gains in personal and social development, such as contributing to community welfare and understanding people of other backgrounds, than their counterparts who attend public institutions. Specifically, first-year students at non-doctoral private colleges (58 percent) reported slightly greater gains compared with students who attend non-doctoral public colleges (56 percent) and doctoral public universities (56 percent). Furthermore, 60 percent of seniors at non-doctoral private colleges reported gains in personal and social development, compared with 57 percent of seniors at public institutions.

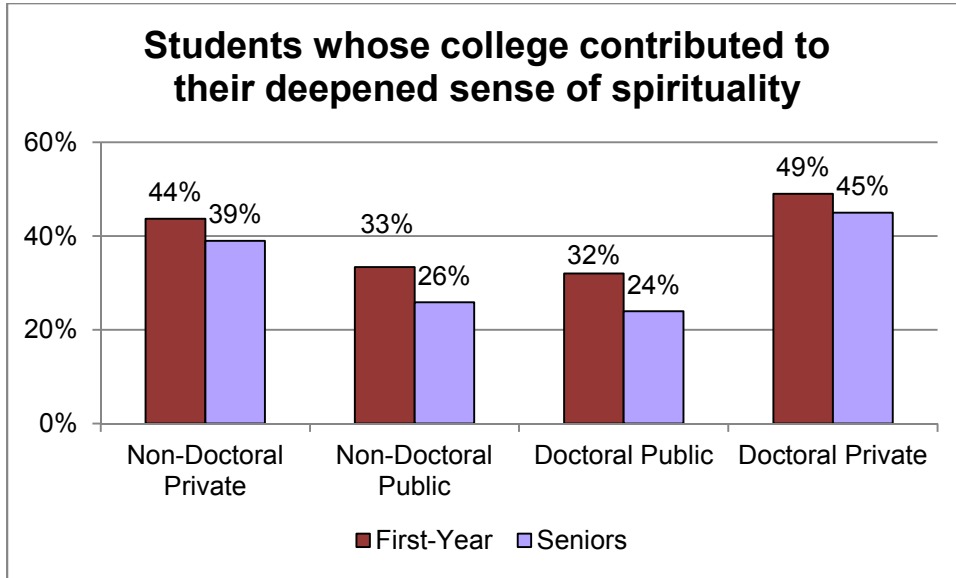


**Note:** The Personal-Social Development Scale is derived from: self-reported gains in contributing to the welfare of one’s community; understanding oneself; understanding people of other backgrounds; solving complex real-world problems; voting; learning effectively on one’s own; and working with others.

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

### FACT 3 – Spiritual Development

Students who attend independent colleges and universities are more likely than students at doctoral public universities to say that their campus experience contributes to developing a deepened sense of spirituality. For example, 44 percent of first-year students at non-doctoral private colleges reported that their college positively affected their spiritual beliefs, compared with 32 percent of first-year students at doctoral public universities. Seniors at non-doctoral private colleges (39 percent) also reported a greater contribution from their college experience to their deepened sense of spirituality than seniors at doctoral public universities (24 percent).

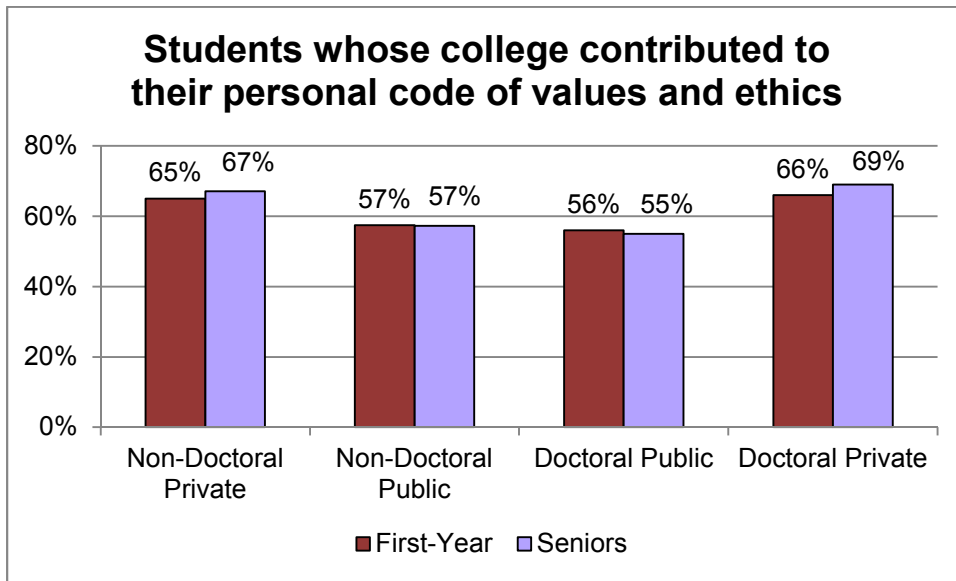


**Note:** Percentage of students who responded “very much” or “quite a bit” to the question, “To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in developing a deepened sense of spirituality?”

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## FACT 4 – Moral Development of Students

Students who attend independent colleges and universities are more likely to say that their college contributes substantially to the development of a personal code of values and ethics than students at public colleges. For example, 67 percent of seniors at non-doctoral private colleges reported that their campus experience substantially contributed to their moral development compared with 55 percent of seniors at doctoral public universities.



**Note:** Percentage of students who responded "very much" or "quite a bit" to the question, "To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in developing a personal code of values and ethics?"

**Source:** [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2009) report prepared for the Council of Independent Colleges.

## Appendix: Data Source

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). The NSSE measures the extent to which students are engaged in educational practices that correlate with high levels of learning. The Survey is designed to obtain, on an annual basis, information from hundreds of colleges and universities nationwide about student participation in programs and activities that institutions provide for their learning and personal development. The results provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending college. Survey items on *The College Student Report* represent empirically confirmed "good practices" in undergraduate education. That is, they reflect behaviors by students and institutions that are associated with desired outcomes of college. Five scales are utilized in the analysis of the NSSE data: Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student Faculty Interaction, Enriching Educational Experiences, and Supportive Campus Environment. While these scales are calculated at the student level, benchmarking comparisons are calculated at the institutional level (for additional information on the benchmarks, visit the [NSSE website](#)).

This analysis was undertaken at the request of the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) in 2009. NSSE obtained data from the survey responses of students (first-year and senior) at private and public institutions. In addition to being identified as public or private, institutions also were assigned to four categories for analysis, representing a combination of Carnegie type and control. The four resulting Carnegie/Control categories are:

1. Baccalaureate and Master's (BA/MA) private institutions
2. Baccalaureate and Master's (BA/MA) public institutions
3. Doctoral public institutions
4. Doctoral private institutions

In this analysis, *t*-tests were used to calculate differences between private and public institutions and ANOVA tests were used to compare different institutional types in addition to their control status. NSSE Benchmarks of Effective Education Practice were analyzed as well as individual items that make up the benchmarks and relevant scales. Analyses were conducted by Allison BrckaLorenz, Tony Ribera, and Robert M. Gonyea at Indiana University's Center for Postsecondary Research. For additional information about the National Survey of Student Engagement, including sample survey instruments, visit the [NSSE website](#).