

University of Nebraska – Lincoln Summary National Survey of Student Engagement 2002

Executive Summary

In the Spring 2002, a sampling of UNL students participated for the first time in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). The NSSE project is an annual survey of undergraduates at four-year colleges and universities. It is cosponsored by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and The Pew Forum for Undergraduate Learning and is supported by a grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts.

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is specifically designed to assess the extent to which students are engaged in empirically derived good educational practices and what they gain from their college experience. The main content of the NSSE instrument, *The College Student Report*, represents student behaviors that are highly correlated with many desirable learning and personal development outcomes of college. Responding to the questionnaire requires that students reflect on what they are putting into and getting out of their college experience. Thus, completing the survey itself is consistent with effective educational practice.

The NSSE offers a tool for gathering information with a wide range of uses and provides an important occasion to re-frame local conversations about collegiate quality. In particular, results are expected to be useful to institutions themselves in improving undergraduate education. For example, the data will be useful to UNL in gauging the degree to which we foster practices to improve performance consistent with characteristics and commitments. This first administration of the NSSE at UNL is considered a benchmark of student engagement. Comparisons between this benchmark administration and future participation will provide UNL better identification of strengths as well as areas for improvement.

This report summarizes the survey results according to seven themes:

- I. Active and Collaborative Learning
- II. Student-Faculty Interactions
- III. Academic Challenge
- IV. Enriching Educational Experiences
- V. Academic Support
- VI. Social Support
- VII. Overall Perceptions of Educational Experience/Quality

These results are discussed both in terms of how UNL first-year and senior undergraduates responded in comparison to each other and in comparison to their peers at other AAU institutions.

University of Nebraska – Lincoln Summary National Survey of Student Engagement 2002

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Introduction

In the Spring 2002, a sampling of UNL students participated for the first time in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). The NSSE project is an annual survey of undergraduates at four-year colleges and universities. It is cosponsored by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and The Pew Forum for Undergraduate Learning and is supported by a grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts.

Survey Overview

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is specifically designed to assess the extent to which students are engaged in empirically derived good educational practices and what they gain from their college experience. The main content of the NSSE instrument, *The College Student Report*, represents student behaviors that are highly correlated with many desirable learning and personal development outcomes of college. A copy of the 2002 survey can be found at http://www.iub.edu/~nsse/acrobat/NSSE02_survey.pdf. Responding to the questionnaire requires that students reflect on what they are putting into and getting out of their college experience. Thus, completing the survey itself is consistent with effective educational practice.

Peer Comparisons

For the 2002 NSSE UNL participated in the American Association of Universities Data Exchange (AAU) consortium. A consortium is a group of eight or more participating NSSE colleges or universities that wish to share comparative, aggregated data among their institutions. In addition, consortiums are allowed to ask an additional 20 questions that address unique characteristics of the member schools. The ten additional peer institutions that participated in the 2002 AAU Consortium can be found in Appendix A. It is notable that four of these AAU peers are also established by the UNL Board of Regents as peer institutions.

In addition to the AAU peer group, UNL also has comparison information with other Research I peers that participated in the 2002 NSSE survey. Both the AAU peer group and the Research I peer group are referred to in the following discussion of NSSE results. Information from the Research I peer group is used when information from the AAU peer group is not available or not sufficient.

Survey Methodology

NSSE selected a random sample of 500 first year students and 500 senior students from a UNL student population data file based upon undergraduate enrollment. In February 2002, this sample of 1000 students received a personalized letter on UNL letterhead, a copy of *The College Student Report* and postage-paid reply envelope. When students finished completing the survey (typically 10 minutes or less), they submitted their responses directly to NSSE.

The Center for Survey Research (CSR) at Indiana University collected all of the data using techniques based on best practices in large-scale survey research. The CSR sends (1) an initial packet including an individualized invitation to participate letter to the student on institutional letterhead, a copy of *The College Student Report*, and a postage-paid return envelope, (2) a follow-up postcard to non-respondents, (3) a second packet with another letter from the institution to non-respondents, and (4) additional written reminders.

Potential Use of Survey Results

The NSSE offers a tool for gathering information with a wide range of uses and provides an important occasion to re-frame local conversations about collegiate quality. In particular, results are expected to be useful to institutions themselves in improving undergraduate education. For example, the data will be especially useful to UNL in gauging the degree to which they foster practices consistent with its particular institutional characteristics and commitments, in order to improve performance.

Under the terms of the NSSE participation agreement, NSSE provided UNL with a confidential report comparing our institution's performance on the survey with aggregated information from AAU consortium institutions, Research I institutions, and all institutions participating in the 2002 NSSE survey. NSSE has also issued national reports on the overall findings. However, how UNL uses its institutional data, is entirely in our hands.

This first administration of the NSSE at UNL is considered a benchmark of student engagement. Comparisons between this benchmark administration and future participation will provide UNL better identification of strengths as well as areas for improvement.

Response Rates and Demographics

UNL's response rate of 41% was slightly above the national survey response rate. For the UNL first-year sample, 43% or 217 students responded. For the UNL senior sample, 37% or 183 senior students responded. Female respondents were slightly overrepresented in comparison to the total population of respondents. Of UNL first-year survey respondents 64% were female, whereas females only comprise 46% of the first-year UNL undergraduate population in 2001-02. For UNL senior respondents, 61% were female. Females comprised 47% of the UNL senior undergraduate population in 2001-02. On all other demographics (race/ethnicity, enrollment status, place of residence, and undergraduate major) the percentage of UNL students responding was roughly parallel to the percentage of students in each of those groups in the undergraduate population. The nature of the responding sample should be kept in mind when reviewing results.

Summary of Results

The following summary highlights by theme the responses of UNL undergraduates to this benchmark administration of the NSSE. UNL plans to participate in the survey every two years. Those subsequent administrations will give UNL a better sense of our strengths and challenges as possible areas for campus dialogue. The following summary will highlight the results by seven themes:

- VIII. Active and Collaborative Learning
- IX. Student-Faculty Interactions
- X. Academic Challenge
- XI. Enriching Educational Experiences
- XII. Academic Support
- XIII. Social Support
- XIV. Overall Perceptions of Educational Experience/Quality

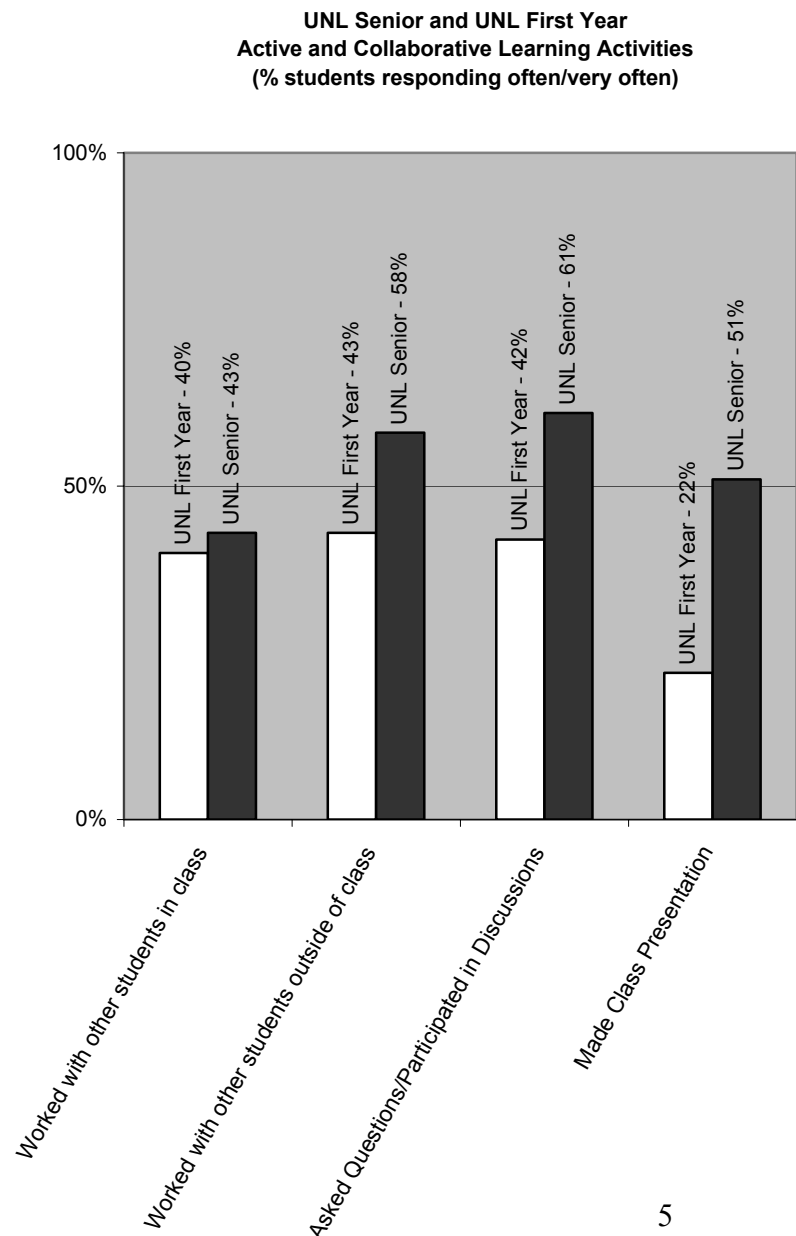
The first six of these themes were empirically established by NSSE.

I. Active and Collaborative Learning

On survey items concerning Active and Collaborative Learning, UNL First-Year and Senior students responded more positively than their Research I peer average. Working with other students in/out of class, making a class presentation, asking questions/participating in class discussions, and tutoring/teaching other students are some of the items where either UNL students responded significantly higher than their peers or at least a high percentage of UNL respondents said that they engaged in these activities often or very often in the current school year. A few of the significant results are highlighted below. [Table I](#) in Appendix B gives response percentages and statistical differences.

Active and Collaborative Learning: UNL Senior and UNL First Year Responses

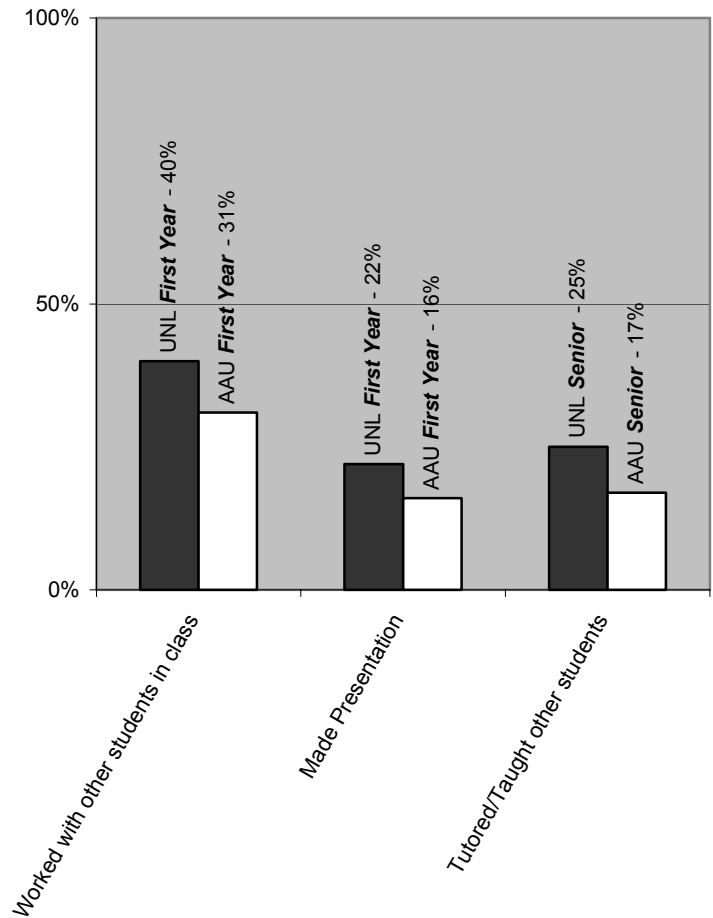
- ❖ UNL seniors responded that they engaged more frequently in **active and collaborative learning activities** than UNL first-year respondents.
- ❖ Slightly less than half of UNL first year and slightly more than half of UNL senior respondents report **working with other students either in or outside of class**.
- ❖ Over half of UNL seniors and slightly less than half of UNL first year respondents say they **asked questions or participated in class discussions** in the 2001-02 academic year.
- ❖ Almost half of UNL senior respondents reported **making a class presentation** in the 2001-02 academic year.



Active and Collaborative Learning: UNL and AAU Comparisons

- ❖ UNL First Year respondents said that they **worked with other students in class** more often than their AAU peers.
- ❖ Although only a quarter of UNL first year respondents say they **made a class presentation** in the 2001-02 academic year, they report engaging in this activity slightly more often than their AAU peers.
- ❖ UNL Seniors responded slightly more often than their AAU peers that they **tutored/taught other students**.

**UNL and AAU Comparison
Active and Collaborative Learning Activities
(% students responding often/very often)**

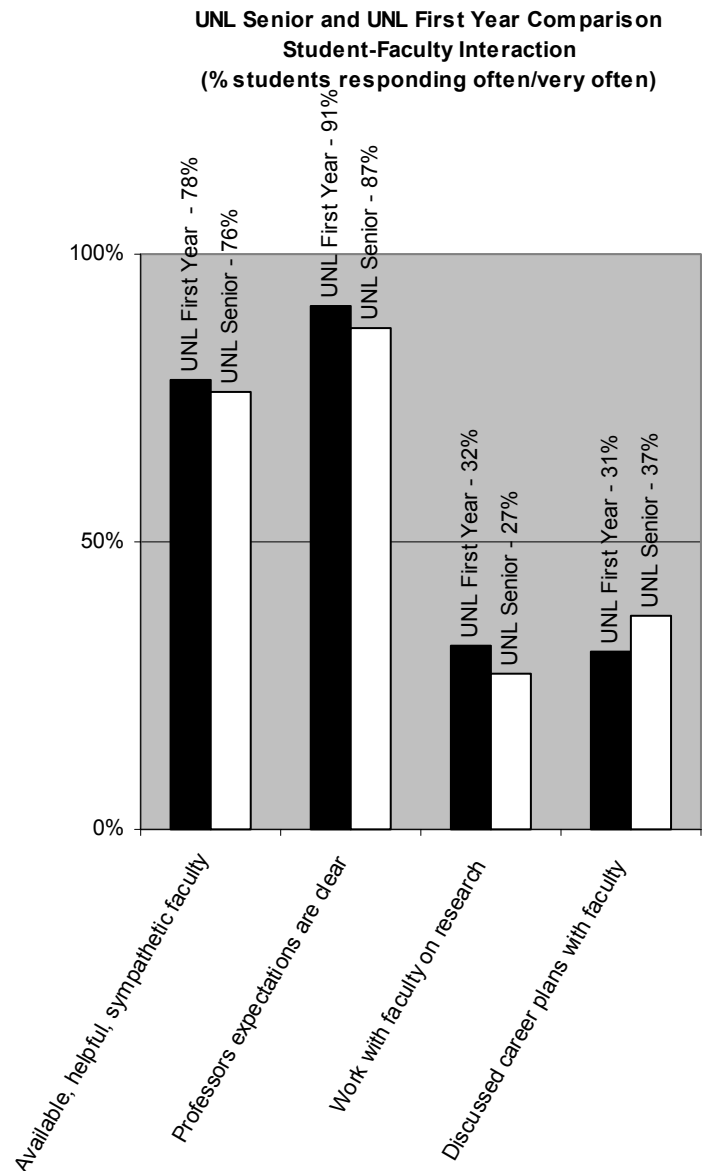


II. Student – Faculty Interaction

On survey items concerning Student – Faculty Interaction, UNL First-Year and Senior students responded more positively than their Research I peer average. UNL respondents say they find their professors’ expectations clear and find faculty available, helpful, and sympathetic. Reported interactions with faculty often involve the discussion of career plans and working on research. A few of the significant results are highlighted below. [Table II.A.](#) and [Table II.B.](#) in Appendix B gives response percentages and statistical differences.

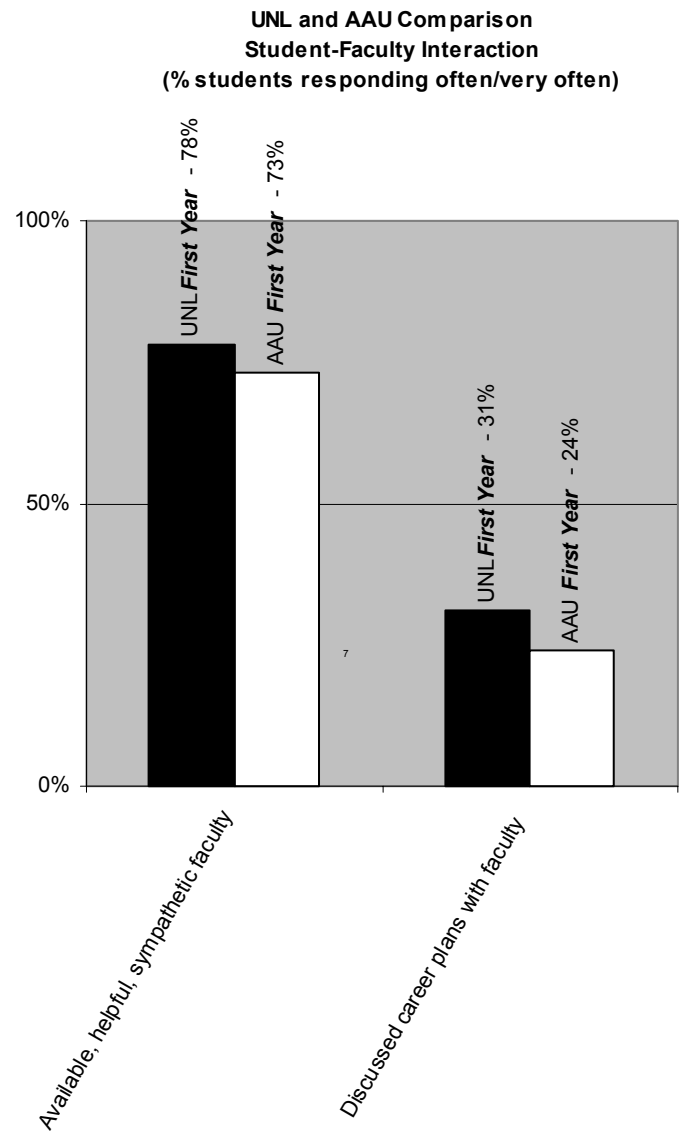
Student – Faculty Interaction: UNL Senior and UNL First Year Responses

- ❖ Most UNL first-year and senior respondents report **faculty are available, helpful, and sympathetic.**
- ❖ Most UNL first year and senior respondents believe that their **professors’ expectations are clear.**
- ❖ About a third of all UNL first-year and senior respondents have **worked with (or plan to work with) faculty on research outside of class** before they graduate.
- ❖ About a third of UNL’s first year and senior respondents have **discussed career plans with faculty** during the 2001-02 academic year.



Student-Faculty Interaction: UNL and AAU Comparisons

- ❖ UNL first-year respondents feel slightly more positive about their **relationship with faculty** than their AAU peers.
- ❖ A slightly higher percentage of UNL first-year respondents **discussed their career plans with faculty** than their AAU peers.

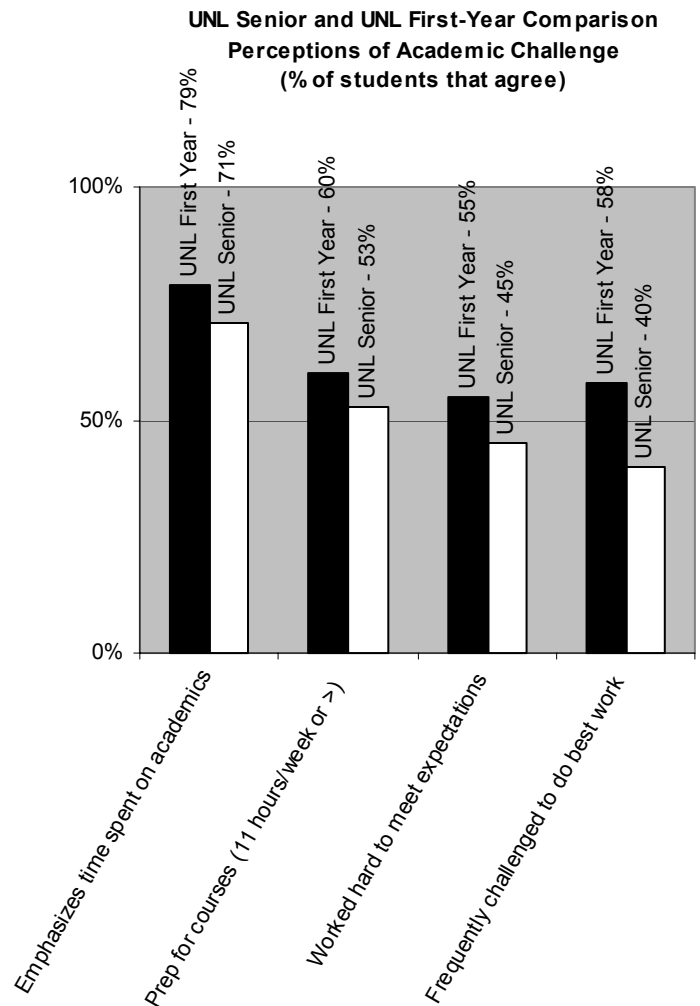


III. Academic Challenge

There is a bit more variety among the survey items constituting the academic challenge theme. Students are asked about their perceptions of academic expectations and challenge, amount of reading and writing they are asked to do, and the cognitive complexity of the tasks given in their courses. For some subsets UNL students responded more positively than their Research I peer average, and for other subsets they did not. Overall, UNL first-year respondents report that they experienced more academic challenge in comparison to their Research I peers. However in comparison to Research I peers, UNL senior respondents report they experience less academic challenge. A few of the significant results are highlighted below. [Table III.A.](#), [Table III.B.](#), and [Table III.C.](#) in Appendix B gives response percentages and statistical differences.

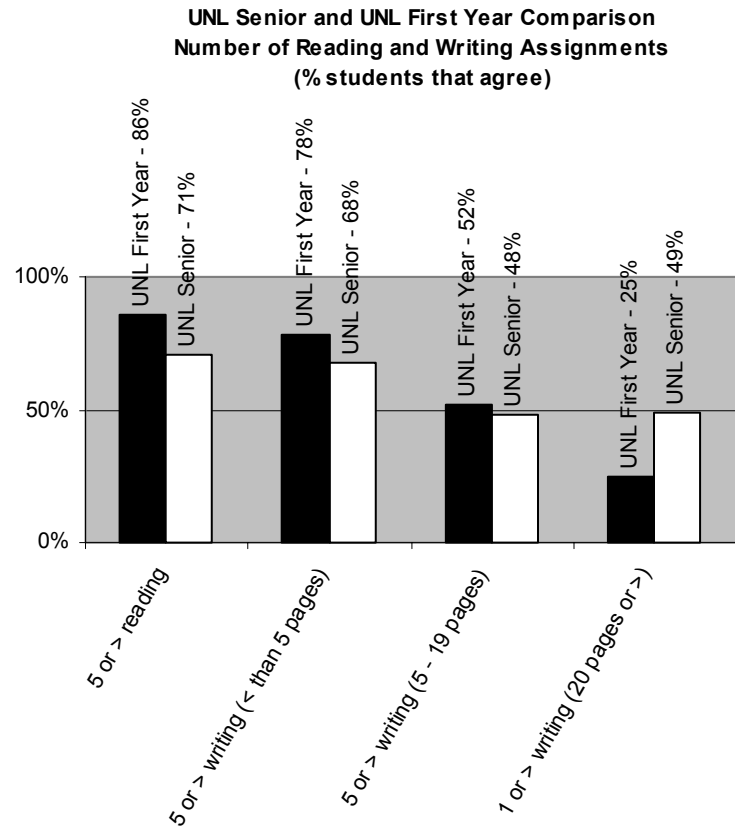
Academic Challenge: UNL Senior and UNL First Year Responses

- ❖ A large majority of first year and senior respondents believe UNL **emphasizes spending a significant amount of time on academic work.**
- ❖ More than half of UNL first-year respondents and almost half of UNL senior respondents say they **spend at least 11 hours/week preparing for courses.**
- ❖ Slightly more than half of UNL first-year respondents say they **work hard to meet expectations** and are **frequently challenged to do their best work.**
- ❖ Slightly less than half of UNL senior respondents believe they often **work hard to meet expectations** or are **frequently challenged to do their best work.**

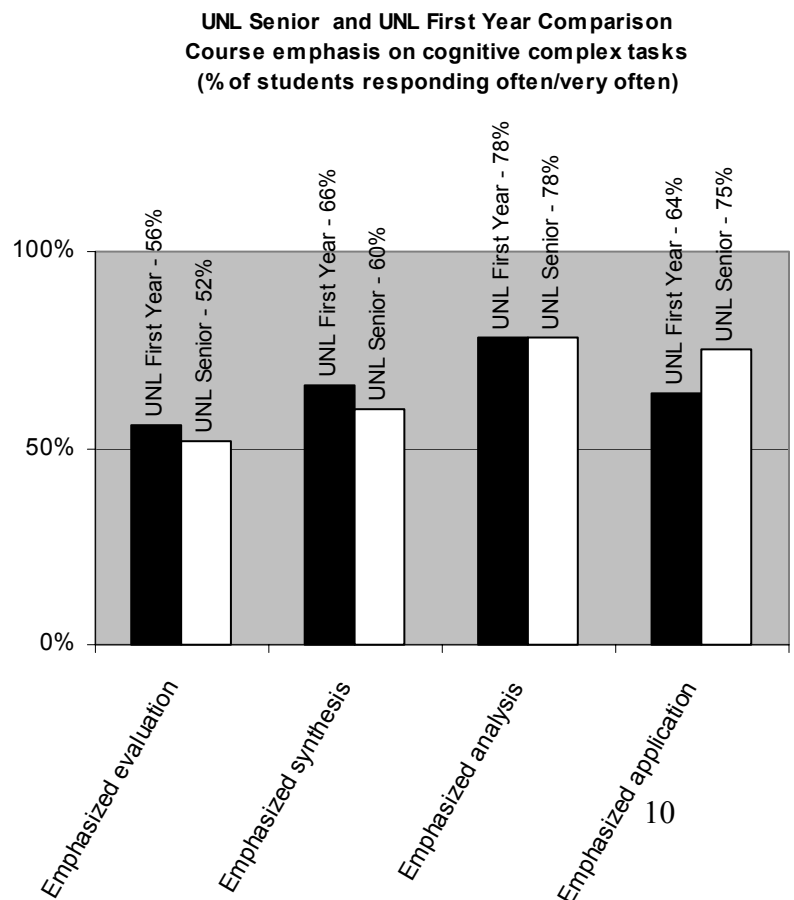


Academic Challenge: UNL Senior and UNL First Year Responses

- ❖ Most UNL First-Year and Senior respondents reported **receiving 5 or more reading and writing assignments of 19 pages or less** in the 2001-02 academic year.
- ❖ About half First Year and Senior respondents **received 5 or more writing assignments of 5-19 pages** in the 2001-02 academic year.
- ❖ Except for writing assignments of 20 pages or more, UNL senior respondents say they **received fewer reading and writing assignments** than UNL first-year respondents.



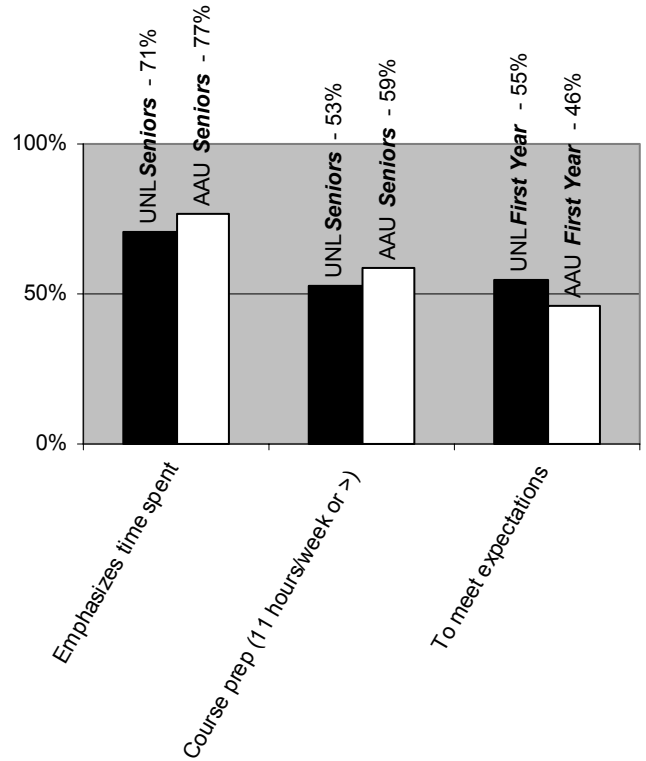
- ❖ Over half of UNL first-year and senior respondents say their courses often emphasize tasks that require the highest level of cognitive thinking skills, **evaluation and synthesis**.
- ❖ Most UNL first-year and senior respondents say their courses often emphasize tasks that require cognitive thinking skills like **application and analysis**.



Academic Challenge: UNL and AAU Comparisons:

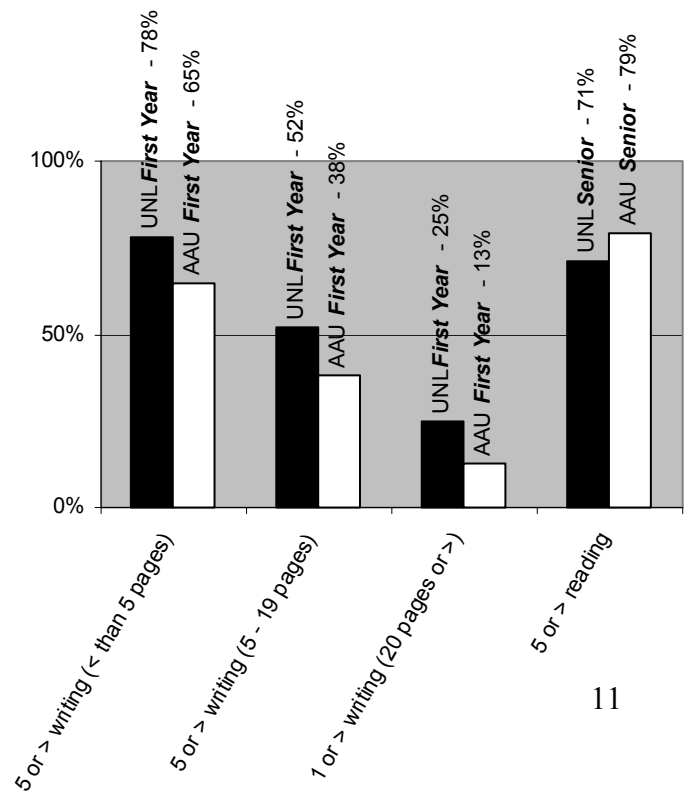
- ❖ Slightly fewer UNL senior respondents believe their **institution emphasizes time spent on academic work** than their AAU peers.
- ❖ UNL seniors report spending slightly **less time preparing for courses** than their AAU peers.
- ❖ In comparison to first-year AAU peers, slightly more UNL first-year students responded that they often **work hard to meet expectations**.

**UNL and AAU Comparison
Perceptions of Academic Challenge
(% of students that agree)**



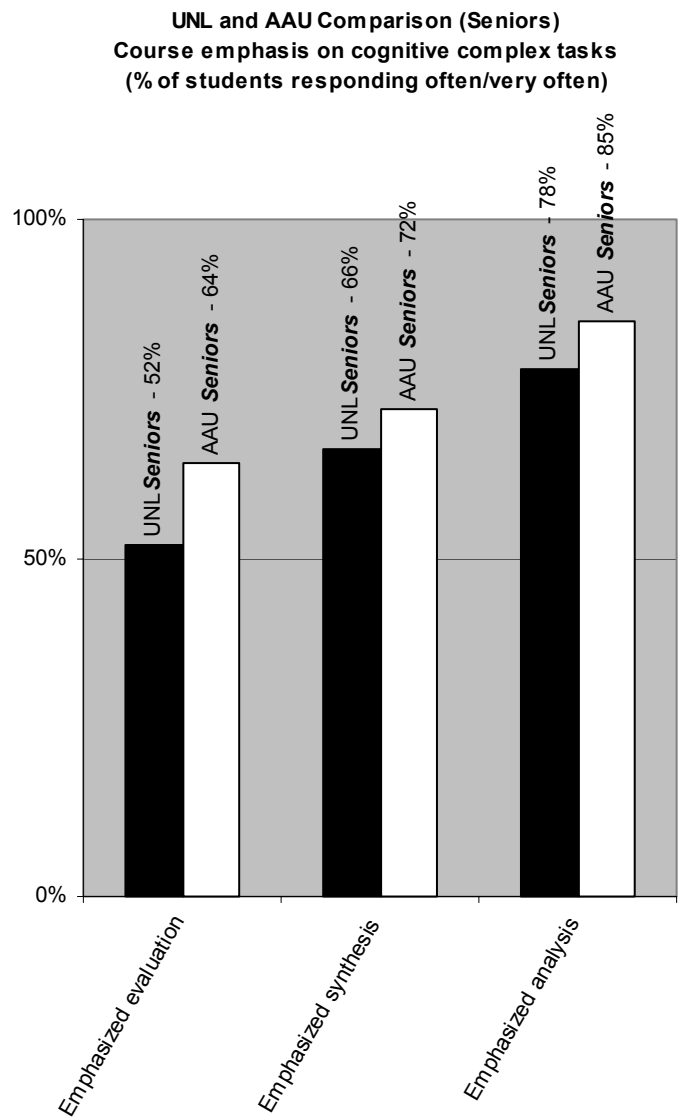
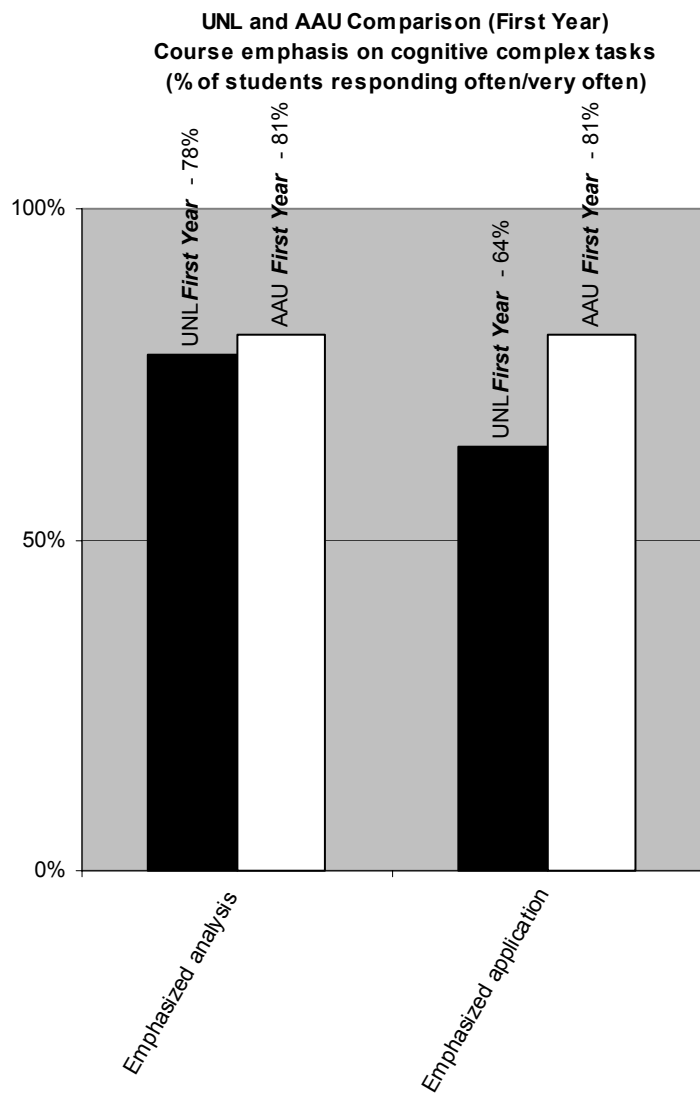
- ❖ In comparison to first-year AAU peers, significantly more of UNL's first-year respondents say they **received more writing assignments** at all levels.
- ❖ In comparison to senior AAU peers, fewer UNL seniors say they **received 5 or more reading assignments** in the 2001-02 academic year.

**UNL and AAU Comparison
Number of Reading and Writing Assignments
(% of students that agree)**



Academic Challenge: UNL and AAU Comparisons (continued)

- ❖ In comparison to first-year AAU peers, fewer UNL first-year respondents say their **courses emphasize application and analysis**.
- ❖ In comparison to AAU seniors, fewer UNL seniors say that their **courses emphasize evaluation, synthesis, analysis tasks**.



ADDITIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON ACADEMIC CHALLENGE:

Because student responses for this theme were in some cases less positive than our AAU peers, an additional analysis was conducted. This analysis revealed that those UNL students who responded that they worked hard to meet expectations and were frequently challenged were more likely to respond the following ways than UNL students who responded that they did not work hard to meet expectations and/or were frequently challenged.

Students who felt challenged were also more likely to respond that they:

- ❖ Believe the institution emphasizes spending significant time on academic work.
- ❖ Believe the institution encourages academic success
- ❖ Have courses that frequently emphasize cognitive tasks involving evaluation, synthesis, and analysis
- ❖ Have had a positive educational experience and believe the institution is of high academic quality.

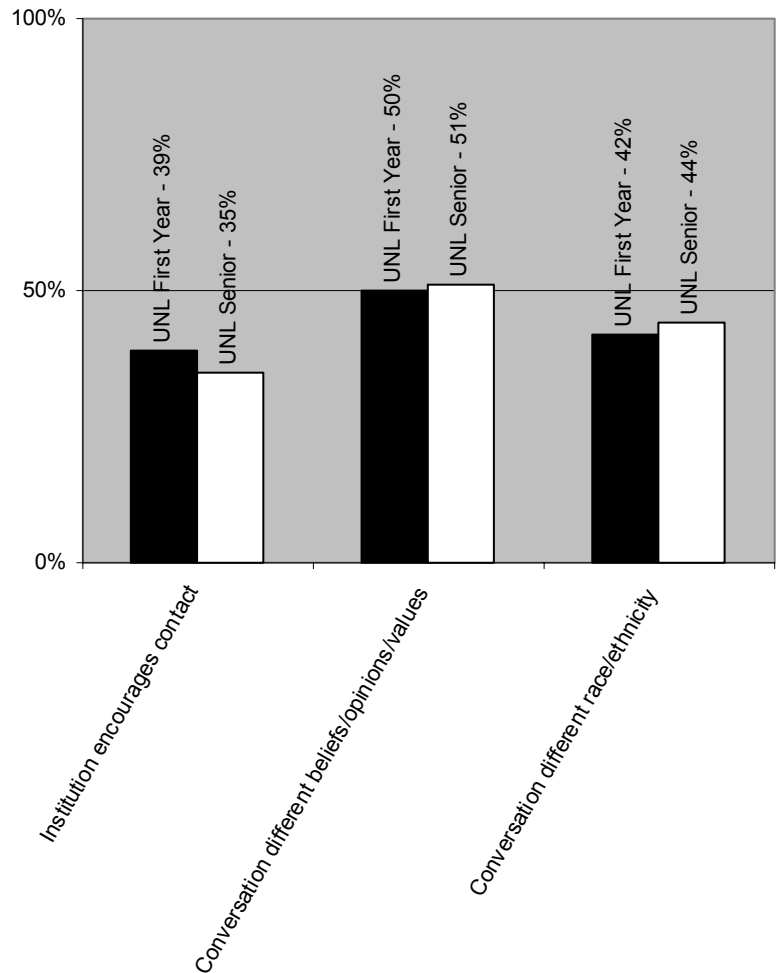
IV. Enriching Educational Experiences

For the Enriching Educational Experiences theme, UNL First-Year and Senior students responded less positively than their Research I peer average. Two items contributed primarily to this result. Both items asked students about their interactions with students from different backgrounds. A few of the significant results are highlighted below. [Table IV](#) in Appendix B gives response percentages and statistical differences.

Enriching Educational Experiences: UNL Senior and UNL First Year Responses

- ❖ Slightly more than a third of UNL first-year and senior respondents say they believe the **institution encourages their contact with students of different backgrounds**.
- ❖ Half of UNL first-year and senior respondents say they had a **serious conversation with students of different beliefs, opinions, or values** during the 2001-02 academic year.
- ❖ Less than half of UNL first-year and senior respondents say they had a **serious conversation with students of a different race or ethnicity** during the 2001-02 academic year.

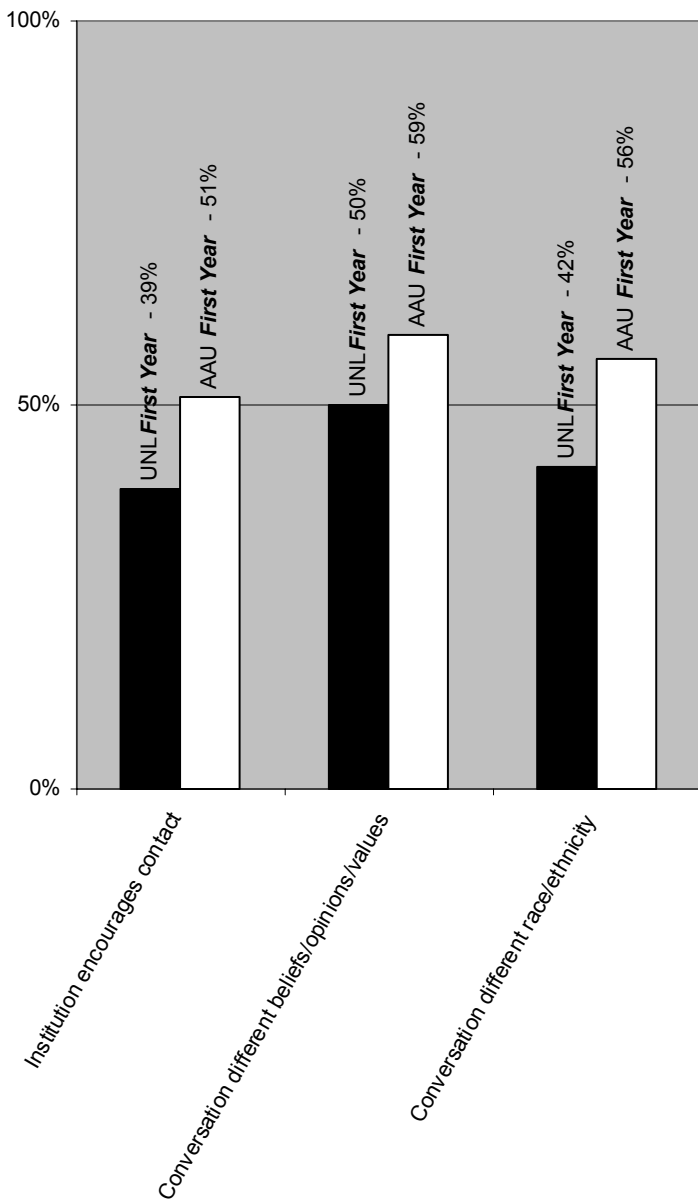
**UNL Senior and UNL First Year Comparison
Interactions with students from different backgrounds
(% of students responding often/very often)**



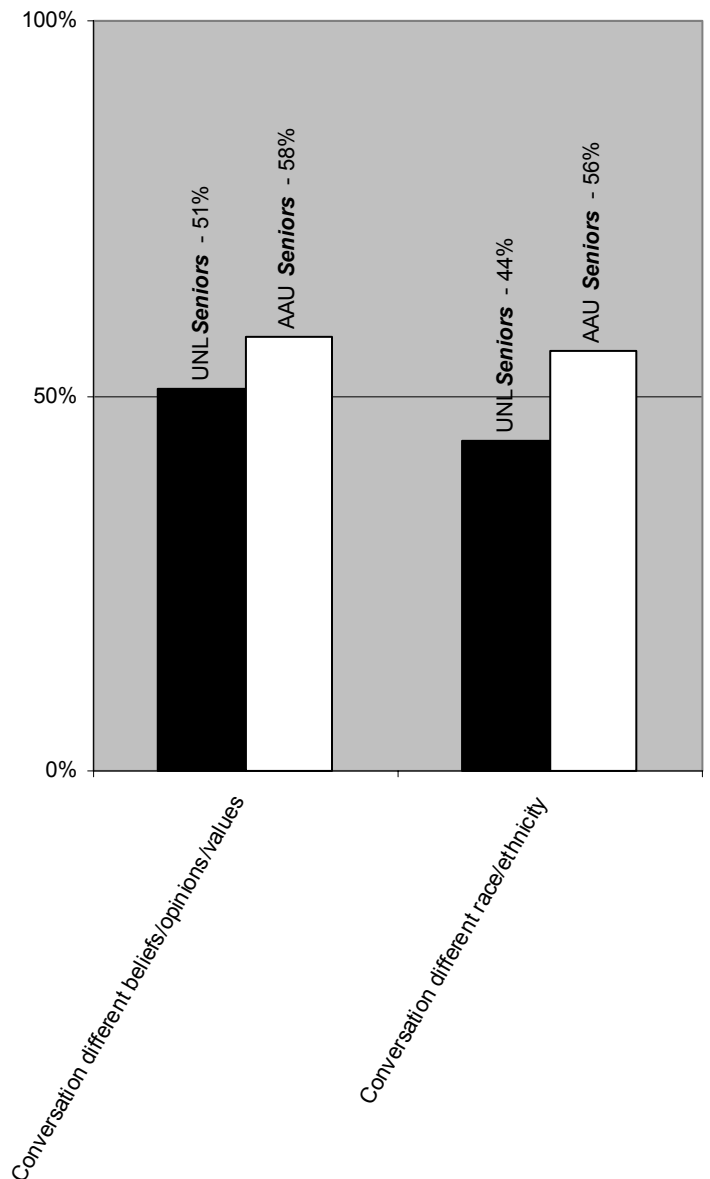
Enriching Educational Experiences: UNL and AAU Comparisons

- ❖ Significantly fewer UNL first-year respondents believe their **institution encourages contact with students of different backgrounds** than their first-year AAU peers.
- ❖ In comparison to first-year and senior AAU peers, UNL first-year and seniors respondents report that they had significantly fewer **conversations with students of different backgrounds** (race, ethnicity, beliefs, opinions, or values).

UNL and AAU Comparison (First Year)
Interactions with students of different backgrounds
(% students responding often/very often)



UNL and AAU Comparison (Seniors)
Interactions with students of different backgrounds
(% students responding often/very often)



ADDITIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON ENRICHING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES:

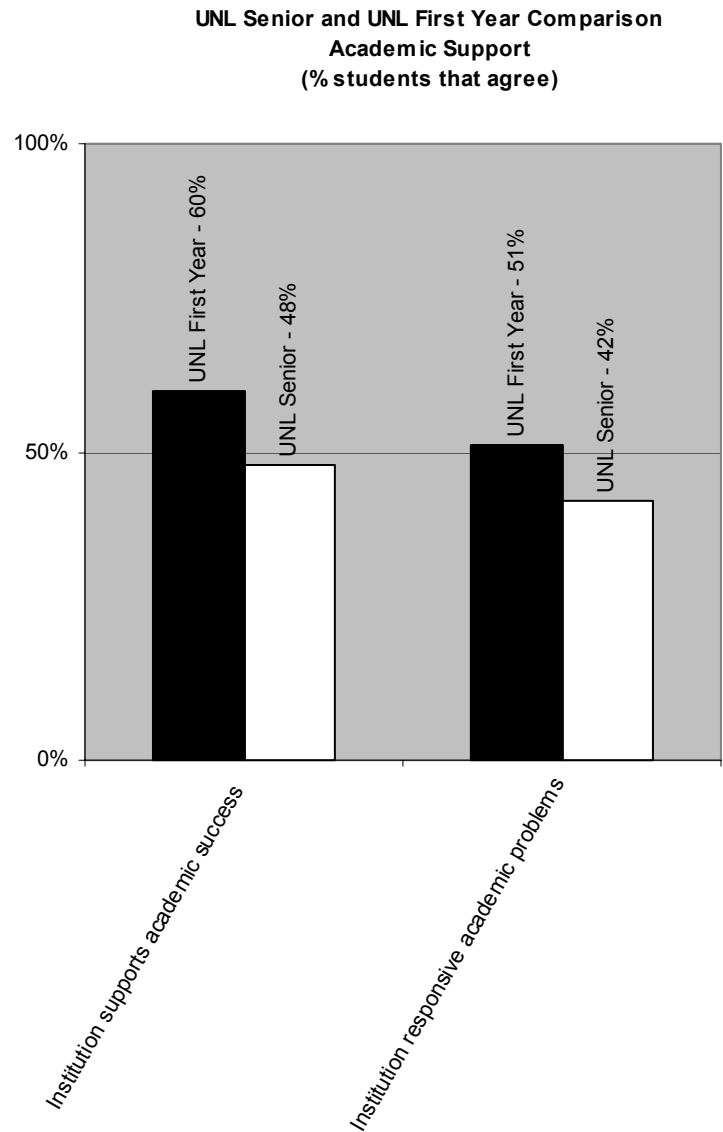
Because the outcome for this theme is based on students' interactions with students of different backgrounds a comparison of UNL's demographics with peer demographics is relevant. Of UNL seniors responding to the 2002 NSSE survey 94% categorized themselves as caucasian/white while 90% of UNL's first year respondents did so. For AAU peers, response percentages for caucasian/white were 71% for seniors and 65% for first-year. UNL response demographics for race parallel UNL's population demographics. This parallel most likely also exists for the AAU institutions. As additional evidence of these demographic differences, UNL's 2001 first-year student population was 87% caucasian/white. The 2001 first-year student population average for six of the AAU peer institutions was 72% caucasian/white. This clearly indicates our peers have more diverse student populations, which, in turn, most likely influences student responses to the frequency of interactions with student from different backgrounds.

V. Academic Support

On survey items related to Academic Support, UNL Seniors responded about the same as their Research I peer average and UNL First Year students responded slightly below their Research I peer average. Survey items included perceptions about academic expectations, support and feedback, as well as perceived obstacles to academic success. A few of the significant results are highlighted below. [Table V.A.](#) and [Table V.B.](#) in Appendix B gives response percentages and statistical differences.

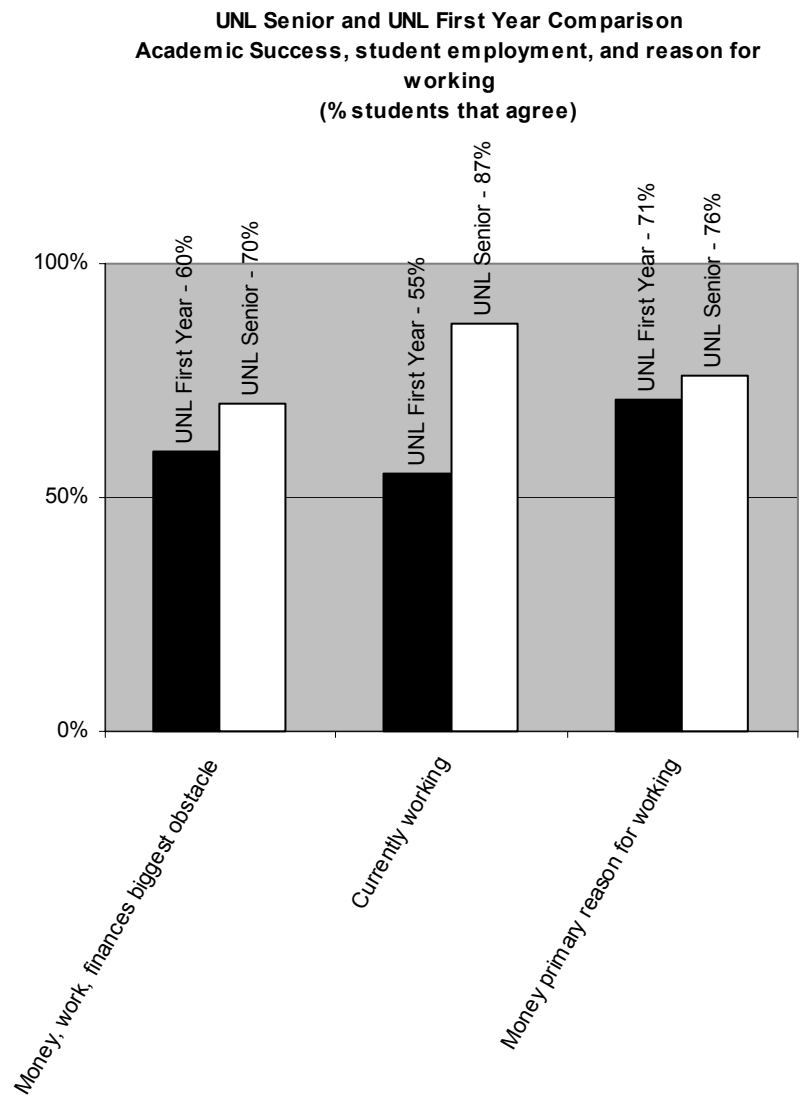
Academic Support: UNL Senior and UNL First Year Responses

- ❖ Slightly more than half of UNL first-year respondents agree that their **academic success and problems are supported**.
- ❖ Slightly less than half of responding UNL seniors agree that their **academic success and problems are supported**.
- ❖ Slightly fewer UNL senior respondents agree that they had **support for academic success and support for academic problems** than UNL first-year respondents.



Academic Support: UNL Senior and UNL First Year Responses (continued)

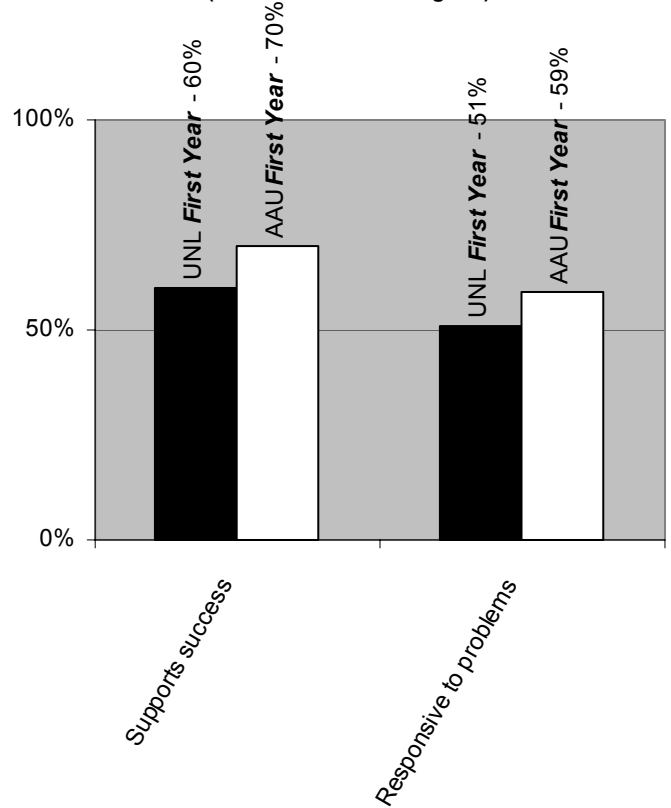
- ❖ Most UNL first-year and senior respondents say that **money, work, and finances are the biggest obstacles to their academic success.**
- ❖ Most UNL Seniors and slightly over half of first-year respondents **worked either on or off campus.**
- ❖ Most UNL first-year and senior respondents **primary reason for working is money for basic expenses.**



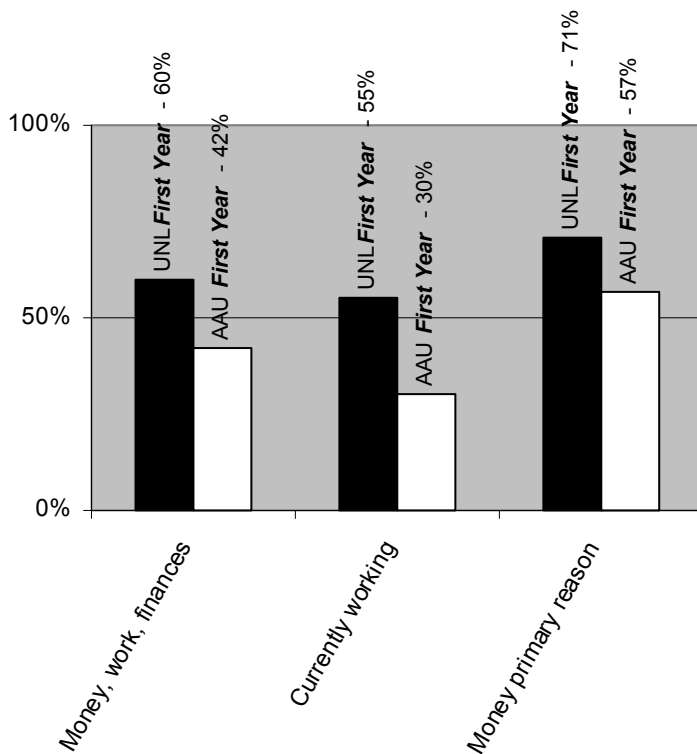
Academic Support: UNL and AAU Comparisons

- ❖ Although half of UNL first-year respondents agree that their **academic success** and **problems are supported**, fewer of these first-year respondents agree than their AAU peers.
- ❖ In comparison to AAU peers, UNL first-year and senior respondents are significantly more likely **to work**, to respond their primary reason for working is **need of basic expenses**, and to respond that **money, work and finances is the biggest obstacle to their academic success**.

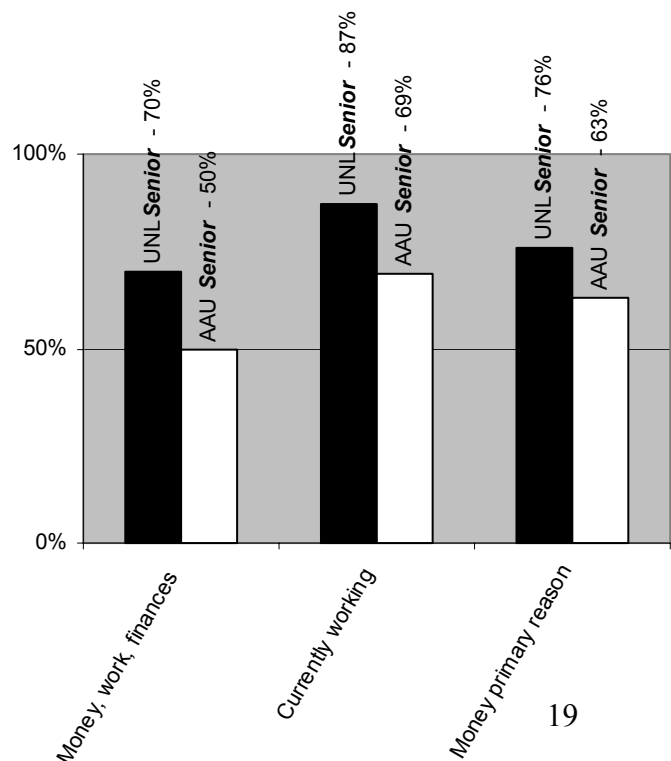
**UNL and AAU Comparison
Academic Support
(% of students that agree)**



**UNL and AAU Comparison (First Year)
Academic success, student employment, and
reason for working
(% students that agree)**



**UNL and AAU Comparison (Seniors)
Academic success, student employment, and
reason for working
(% students that agree)**



ADDITIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON ACADEMIC SUPPORT:

To better understand UNL responses to questions about academic support additional analysis was done to determine how respondents who felt academically supported replied to other survey questions in comparison to those respondents who did not feel academically supported. Students who felt academically supported were also more likely to respond that they:

- ❖ Felt socially supported
- ❖ Believed their institution encourages contact with students of different backgrounds
- ❖ Feel they receive quality advising
- ❖ Believe their institution is a student friendly environment.

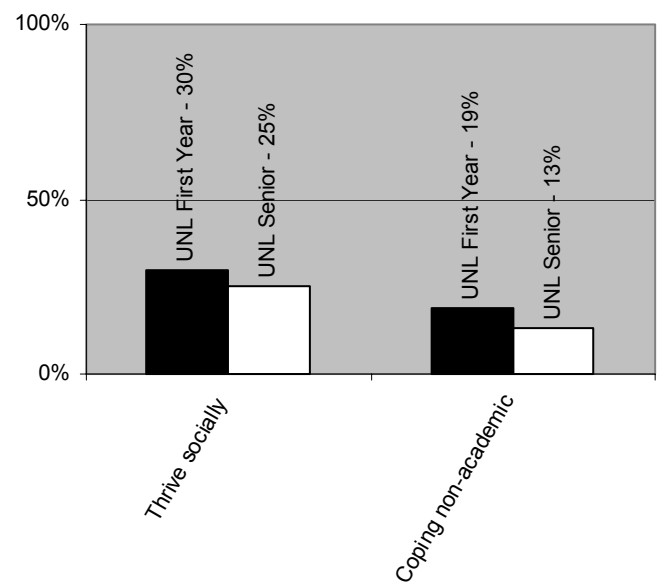
VI. Social Support

On survey items related to Social Support, UNL Seniors typically responded above their Research I peer average and UNL first-year responded below their Research I peer average. A few of the significant results are highlighted below. [Table VI](#) in Appendix B gives response percentages and statistical differences.

Social Support: UNL Senior and UNL First Year Responses

- ❖ A small percentage of UNL first-year and senior respondents say that the institution has **supported their need to thrive socially or cope with non-academic responsibilities**.

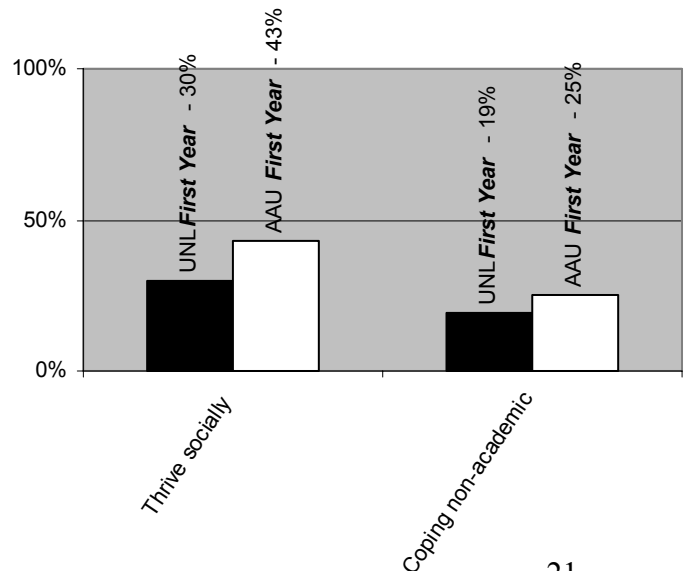
**UNL Senior and UNL First Year Comparison
Social Support**
(% students responding often/very often)



Social Support: UNL and AAU Comparisons:

- ❖ In comparison to first-year AAU peers, UNL first-year respondents say they are receiving **less social support** than their peers.

**UNL and AAU Comparison
Social Support**
(% of students responding often/very often)



ADDITIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON SOCIAL SUPPORT:

To better understand UNL responses to questions about social support, an additional analysis helped to determine how respondents who felt socially supported responded differently to other survey questions in comparison to those respondents who did not feel socially supported. Students who felt socially supported were also more likely to respond that they:

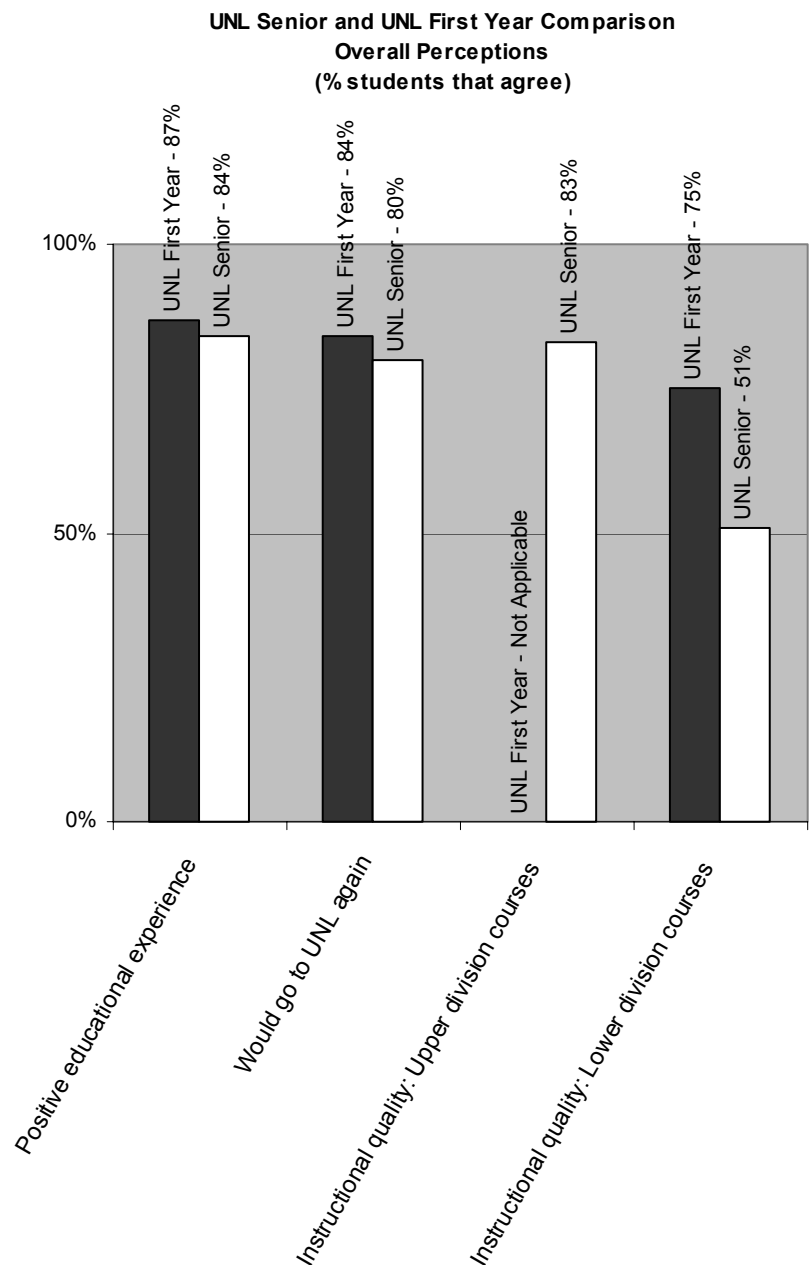
- ❖ Feel academically supported
- ❖ Believe their institution encourages contact with students of different backgrounds
- ❖ Believe their education has contributed to working effectively with others
- ❖ Believe their education has contributed to developing a personal code of ethics.

VII. Overall Perceptions of Educational Experience and Quality

There were several survey items asking students about their overall perception of their educational experience, the academic quality of their institution, and instructional quality. Because NSSE did not establish this theme as a national benchmark there is not an overall comparison to Research I peers. However, the results below suggest a positive educational experience for most students with some room for improvement. A few of the significant results are highlighted below. [Table VII](#) in Appendix B gives response percentages and statistical differences.

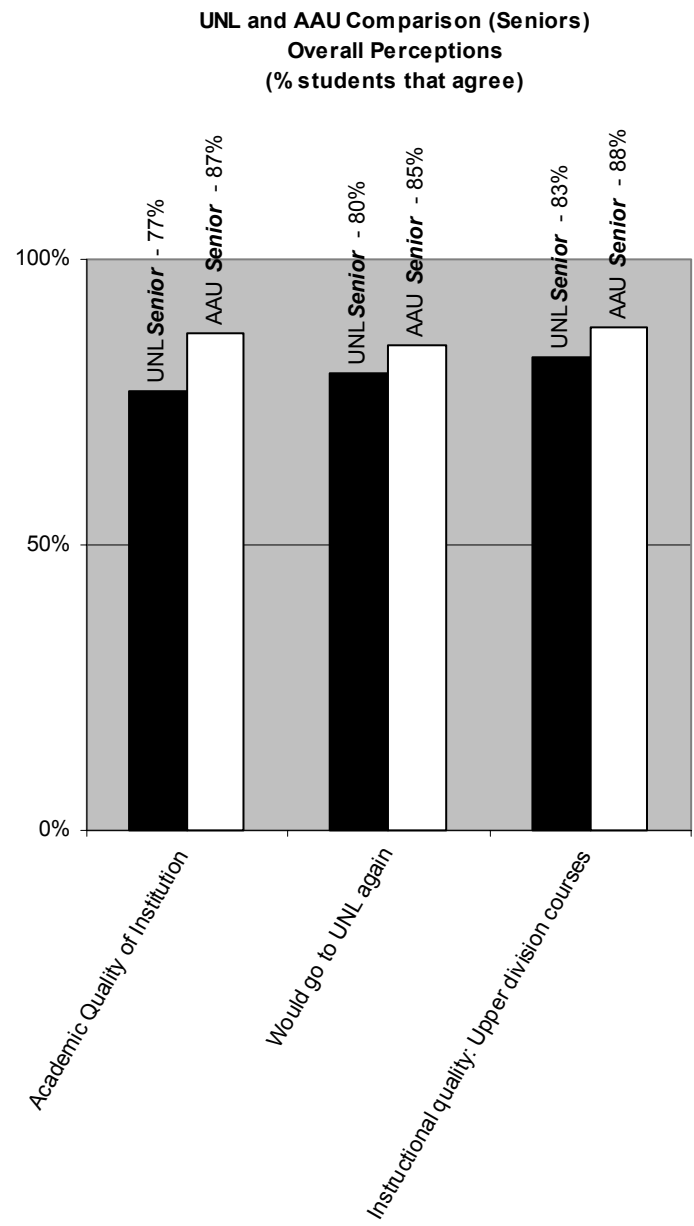
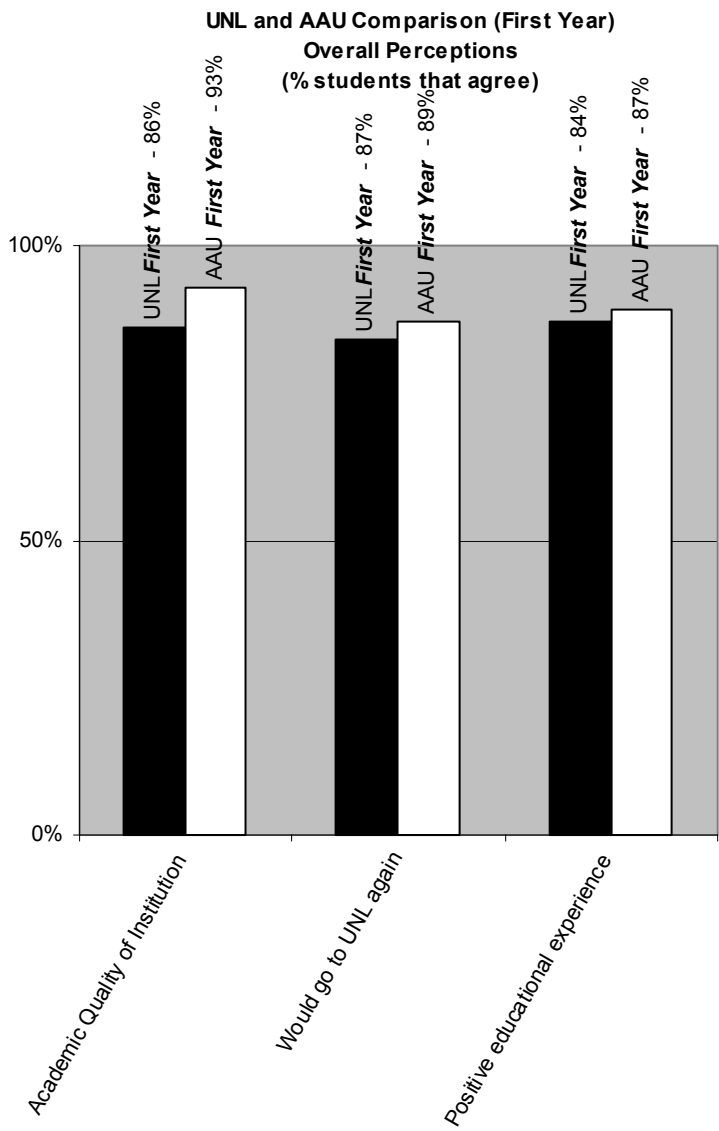
Overall Perceptions: UNL Senior and UNL First Year Responses

- ❖ Most UNL first-year and senior respondents have had a **positive educational experience** and **would go to UNL again**.
- ❖ Most UNL senior respondents say the **instructional quality in upper division courses** is good.
- ❖ Most UNL first-year respondents say the **instructional quality in their lower division courses** is good.
- ❖ About half of the UNL senior respondents say the **instructional quality in their lower division courses** is good.



Overall Perceptions: UNL and AAU Comparisons

- ❖ Although most UNL respondents believe the **academic quality of the institution** is good and **would go to UNL again**, UNL student responses were significantly less positive than AAU peers.
- ❖ UNL first-year respondents rate their **educational experience** as slightly less positive than their AAU peers.
- ❖ UNL senior respondents rate the **instructional quality of their upper division courses** slightly lower than their AAU peers.



Conclusion

The preceding discussion of the NSSE results highlights themes where UNL scored favorably in comparison to their peers and themes where comparisons were less favorable. Although peer comparison is an important benchmark for UNL to use in discussing the NSSE results, how UNL students respond to survey items that reflect UNL priorities for undergraduate education is a more critical comparison to institutional efforts to improve. Comparison of the NSSE results with UNL goals for undergraduate education will be facilitated through future participation in the NSSE, and will determine to what extent the strengths and challenges highlighted in the 2002 NSSE continue to emerge in these future administrations. Although the NSSE does give UNL some sense of the educational experiences undergraduates are having, much of it reflects the quantity of those experiences and not necessarily the quality. The following strengths and challenges are outlined as considerations for future exploration:

1. The survey responses suggest that UNL's faculty members frequently engage undergraduates in the classroom through active and collaborative activities. The degree to which these activities are enhancing learning for undergraduates might be a question for further consideration. In addition, the question might be asked, which active and collaborative learning activities are more likely to help UNL undergraduates achieve UNL's goals for general education?
2. Most undergraduate respondents feel positive about their relationship with UNL faculty. There appears to be some variety in the type of student-faculty interactions that extend beyond the classroom. Establishing how and why these interactions outside the classroom enhance the undergraduate experience at UNL might be an area for future study.
3. The survey results suggest that UNL is challenging its first-year students adequately but could improve the challenge for its senior students. However, there is much the NSSE still does not tell us about academic challenge. For example, are student perceptions of academic challenges related to time on task or the kinds of cognitive activities required of them in their courses? What expectations and understandings do faculty and students have about the undergraduate education and the kind of challenge it does and should provide? How are these academic expectations communicated? Lastly, what is the connection between academic challenge and academic support?
4. Survey results suggest that students may value interactions with students of different backgrounds (e.g. race/ethnicity, values, opinions, beliefs). Respondents who felt academically and socially supported also believe that UNL encourages contact with students of different backgrounds.
5. The academic and social support of first-year students may be an area UNL should explore further. Better understanding why students may not feel academically or socially supported and what they expect or need in this support could be meaningful. One particular focus might be on the financial needs of students and impact of those needs on academic success.

6. Although students' overall perceptions suggest some possibilities for improvement it shouldn't be overlooked that a large majority of survey respondents felt positive about their educational experience and academic quality of the institution. Because there are many factors that could influence these perceptions, exploring some of the questions raised by the first six themes would indirectly lead to improvements in overall perception.
7. Future participation in the NSSE might involve over sampling selected groups of students and the provision of longitudinal data. Increasing the number of students surveyed by college, major, or participation in a specific program (e.g. Learning Communities) could contribute to some breakdown and reflection of those results at those levels. In addition, the NSSE administrators provide the opportunity to sample seniors who were previously surveyed as first-year students. Collecting longitudinal data from the same sample could provide a more stable measure of educational perceptions and experiences over time.

A P P E N D I X A

American Association of Universities Data Exchange (AAUDE) Consortium Institutions (2002 NSSE)

Institution

State

Ohio State University, The *	Columbus, OH
Pennsylvania State University	University Park, PA
University of Colorado at Boulder *	Boulder, CO
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign *	Champaign, IL
University of Maryland College Park	College Park, MD
University of Missouri – Columbia *	Columbia, MO
University of Nebraska – Lincoln	Lincoln, NE
University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Campus	Pittsburgh, PA
University of Texas at Austin, The	Austin, TX
University of Virginia	Charlottesville, VA
University of Washington	Seattle, WA

* The UNL Board of Regents has established the noted institutions as peer institutions.

APPENDIX B

Each table provides response percentages for UNL first-year and senior respondents. Response percentages for AAU first-year and senior respondents are also given.

To identify those survey items where differences between UNL responses and its AAU peers are statistically significant, statistical probability values and effect sizes have been provided. Statistical probability values include .05, .01, and .001. The smaller the statistical probability the smaller the likelihood the differences in response are due to chance.

To further enhance statistical probability values, effect sizes have also been included. Effect sizes give a better indication of the magnitude of response differences without the influence of sample sizes. Effect sizes with a positive sign indicate survey items where UNL's response was more positive than the AAU peer response. Effect sizes with a negative sign indicate survey items where UNL's response was less positive than the AAU peer response. The magnitude of the effect size falls into three categories. Effect sizes of .2 or smaller indicate small differences between responses. Effect sizes between .3 and .5 indicate moderate differences between responses. Effect sizes .8 and greater indicate large differences between responses.

Table I. Frequency of Involvement in Active and Collaborative Learning Activities during 2001-02 academic year

<i>Item</i>	<i>Class Level</i>	<i>Very Often/ Often</i>		<i>Sometimes/ Never</i>		<i>Statistical Difference (Probability, Effect Size)</i>
		<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	
Work with other students in class	Seniors	43%	36%	57%	64%	p < .001, ES = +.25
	First Year	40%	31%	60%	69%	
Work with other students outside of class	Seniors	58%	58%	42%	42%	
	First Year	43%	40%	57%	60%	
Made a Class Presentation	Seniors	51%	45%	49%	55%	p < .05, ES = +.16
	First Year	22%	16%	78%	84%	
Asked questions/participated in discussion	Seniors	61%	58%	39%	42%	
	First Year	42%	46%	58%	54%	
Tutored/Taught other students	Seniors	25%	17%	75%	83%	p < .05, ES = +.18
	First Year	12%	15%	88%	85%	

Table II.A. Quality of student-faculty relationship

<i>Item</i>	<i>Class Level</i>	<i>Agree</i>		<i>Disagree</i>		<i>Statistical Difference (Probability, Effect Size)</i>
		<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	
Find faculty available, helpful, and sympathetic	Seniors	76%	74%	24%	26%	p < .05, ES = +.15
	First Year	78%	73%	22%	27%	

Table II.B. Student interactions with faculty

<i>Item</i>	<i>Class Level</i>	<i>Very Often/ Often</i>		<i>Sometimes/ Never</i>		<i>Statistical Difference (Probability, Effect Size)</i>
		<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	
Find professors expectations clear	Seniors	87%	90%	13%	10%	
	First Year	91%	89%	9%	11%	
Discussed career plans with faculty	Seniors	37%	34%	63%	66%	p < .05, ES = +.16
	First Year	31%	24%	69%	76%	
Worked (or plan to work) with faculty on research	Seniors	27%	30%	73%	70%	
	First Year	32%	32%	68%	68%	

Table III.A. Perceptions of Academic Expectations and Challenge

<i>Item</i>	<i>Class Level</i>	<i>Agree</i>		<i>Disagree</i>		<i>Statistical Difference (Probability, Effect Size)</i>
		<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	
Institution emphasizes time spent on academic work	Seniors	71%	77%	29%	23%	p < .05, ES = -.19
	First Year	79%	80%	21%	20%	
Spend 11 hours/week or more preparing for courses	Seniors	53%	59%	47%	41%	p < .05, ES = -.16
	First Year	60%	66%	40%	34%	
Often worked hard to meet expectations	Seniors	45%	46%	55%	54%	p < .05, ES = +.16
	First Year	55%	46%	45%	54%	
Frequently challenged to do best work	Seniors	40%	44%	60%	56%	
	First Year	58%	57%	42%	43%	

Table III.B. Amount of reading and writing required in courses during the 2001-02 academic year

<i>Item</i>	<i>Class Level</i>	<i>Agree</i>		<i>Disagree</i>		<i>Statistical Difference (Probability, Effect Size)</i>
		<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	
Received 5 or more reading assignments	Seniors	71%	79%	29%	21%	p < .01, ES = - .23
	First Year	86%	86%	14%	14%	
Received 5 or more writing assignments of fewer than 5 pages	Seniors	68%	64%	32%	36%	p < .01, ES = + .45
	First Year	78%	65%	22%	35%	
Received 5 or more writing assignment of 5 to 19 pages	Seniors	48%	52%	52%	48%	p < .001, ES = +.35
	First Year	52%	38%	48%	62%	
Received at least 1 writing assignment of 20 pages or more	Senior	49%	51%	51%	49%	p < .01, ES = +.31
	First Year	25%	13%	75%	87%	

Table III.C. Course emphasis on cognitive complex tasks during the 2001-02 academic year

<i>Item</i>	<i>Class Level</i>	<i>Very Often/ Often</i>		<i>Sometimes/ Never</i>		<i>Statistical Difference (Probability, Effect Size)</i>
		<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	
Course emphasizes evaluation and synthesis tasks	Seniors	59%	68%	41%	32%	P < .001, ES = -.27
	First Year	58%	61%	42%	39%	
Course emphasizes application and analysis tasks	Seniors	76%	81%	24%	19%	P < .05, ES = -.21
	First Year	71%	78%	29%	22%	P < .05, ES = -.16

Table IV. Interactions with students from different backgrounds.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Class Level</i>	<i>Very Often/ Often</i>		<i>Sometimes/ Never</i>		<i>Statistical Difference (Probability, Effect Size)</i>
		<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	
Institution encourages contact with students of different backgrounds	Seniors	35%	37%	65%	63%	p < .001, ES = -.33
	First Year	39%	51%	61%	49%	
Had a serious conversations with students of a different race/ethnicity	Seniors	44%	56%	56%	44%	p < .001, ES = -.30
	First Year	42%	56%	58%	44%	p < .001, ES = -.34
Had a serious conversations with students of different beliefs/opinions/values	Seniors	51%	58%	49%	42%	p < .05, ES = -.16
	First Year	50%	59%	50%	41%	p < .05, ES = -.18

Table V.A. Academic support

<i>Item</i>	<i>Class Level</i>	<i>Agree</i>		<i>Disagree</i>		<i>Statistical Difference (Probability, Effect Size)</i>
		<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	
Institution supports academic success	Seniors	48%	57%	52%	43%	p < .001, ES = -.24
	First Year	60%	70%	40%	30%	
Institution is responsive to academic problems	Seniors	42%	46%	58%	54%	p < .05, ES = -.20
	First Year	51%	59%	49%	41%	
Professors' have clear expectations	Seniors	87%	91%	13%	9%	
	First Year	91%	89%	9%	11%	
Received prompt feedback on performance	Seniors	61%	55%	39%	45%	
	First Year	47%	48%	53%	52%	

Table V.B. Academic success, student employment, and reason for working

<i>Item</i>	<i>Class Level</i>	<i>Agree</i>		<i>Disagree</i>		<i>Statistical Difference (Probability, Effect Size)</i>
		<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	
Money, work, finances are biggest obstacles to academic success	Seniors	70%	50%	30%	50%	
	First Year	60%	42%	40%	58%	
Currently working either on/off campus	Seniors	87%	69%	13%	31%	p < .001, ES = -.45
	First Year	55%	30%	45%	70%	p < .001, ES = -.50
Money for basic expenses is primary reason for working	Seniors	76%	63%	24%	37%	
	First Year	71%	57%	29%	43%	

Table VI. Social Support

<i>Item</i>	<i>Class Level</i>	<i>Very Much/ Quite a Bit</i>		<i>Very Little/ Some</i>		<i>Statistical Difference (Probability, Effect Size)</i>
		<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	
Institution supports need to thrive socially	Seniors	25%	29%	75%	71%	
	First Year	30%	43%	70%	57%	p < .001, ES = -.27
Institution helps coping with non-academic responsibilities	Seniors	13%	17%	87%	83%	
	First Year	19%	25%	81%	75%	p < .001, ES = -.25

Table VII. Overall perceptions

<i>Item</i>	<i>Class Level</i>	<i>Agree</i>		<i>Disagree</i>		<i>Statistical Difference (Probability, Effect Size)</i>
		<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	<i>UNL</i>	<i>AAU</i>	
Have had a positive educational experience	Seniors	84%	87%	16%	13%	
	First Year	87%	89%	13%	11%	p < .05, ES = -.16
Would go to UNL again	Seniors	80%	85%	20%	15%	p < .01, ES = -.25
	First Year	84%	87%	16%	13%	p < .01, ES = -.20
Academic quality of institution is good	Seniors	77%	87%	23%	13%	p < .001, ES = -.43
	First Year	86%	93%	14%	7%	p < .001, ES = -.41
Good instructional quality in upper division courses	Seniors	83%	88%	17%	12%	p < .05, ES = -.18
	First Year	Not Applicable		Not Applicable		
Good instructional quality in lower division courses	Seniors	51%	55%	49%	45%	
	First Year	75%	72%	25%	28%	