



## National Survey of Student Engagement 2017

### Selected Items Related to Collaboration and Communication

**Dates of Administration:** February 14, 2017 – March 28, 2017  
**Method of Administration:** Web survey (Administered through NSSE)

#### Demographics and Response Rates:

	First Years	Seniors
<b>Overall Response Rate</b>	<b>112/217 = 52%</b>	<b>94/189 = 50%</b>
% Female	55	55
% Am. Indian or AK Native	0	0
% Asian	15	16
% Black or African American	4	1
% Hispanic or Latino	21	9
% White	35	53
% International/foreign born	7	11
% Two or more races	8	7
% Unknown	8	3

#### Background:

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) asks first year and senior students about the characteristics and quality of their undergraduate experience. It includes 10 Engagement Indicators (Higher-Order Learning, Reflective and Integrative Learning, Learning Strategies, Quantitative Reasoning, Collaborative Learning, Discussions with Diverse Others, Student-Faculty Interaction, Effective Teaching Practices, Quality of Interactions, and Supportive Environment) and High Impact Practices (Learning Communities, Service-Learning, Research with Faculty, Internships, Study Abroad, and Capstones). Additionally, NSSE allows campuses to add up to two additional topical modules to their survey. In 2017, HMC participated in *Experiences with Writing* and *Inclusiveness & Engagement with Diversity*. Items from the writing module are included here. The comparison group for the overall survey is our Carnegie Class (Private More Selective Baccalaureate Arts & Sciences Focus), and our Comparison Group for the writing module in 2017 is all other institutions in our Carnegie class who participated in the writing module (9 other schools). The comparison group for the writing module in previous years was all other participating institutions.

HMC participates in the NSSE survey annually each spring and surveys all first years and graduating seniors. NSSE results are used throughout the campus in departmental program reviews to evaluate growth and development on student learning outcomes and by the college overall in its improvement efforts.

#### Highlights:

- Collaborating with others to master difficult concepts and develop interpersonal and social competence prepares our students to deal with complex, unscripted problems they will encounter during and after college. NSSE has 4 items that deal with collaborative learning (Asked another student to help you understand course material; Explained course material to one or more students; Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students; and Worked with other students on course projects or assignments). Among first years, HMC respondents were significantly higher than our peers on all of the collaborative learning items. Seniors paralleled those

results with one exception: Senior respondents at HMC were no more or less likely to prepare for exams by discussing work with their peers than respondents in our peer group. Both HMC first years and seniors report that their college experiences have contributed more to their ability to work effectively with others than did students from the comparison institutions.

- The Core NSSE survey asks questions about how much writing students do, the nature of their course assignments, and perceived gains in written expression. Respondents at Mudd in both first and senior year write less than students in the peer group. This is true whether we look at shorter assignments (up to 5 pages), or longer assignments (6-10 pages) where it is also statistically significant for seniors. Both first year and senior respondents rated their writing gains lower than their peers (for first years, 2.8 compared to 2.9, respectively, and for seniors 2.9 and 3.3 respectively—though the difference for first years was not statistically significant).
- Items on the writing module go deeper—they touch on three aspects of good writing assignments—interactivity, meaning-making, and clarity of expectations. In looking at first year respondents, we see that while first years write less than their peers, they indicate that they are more likely to give and receive feedback on drafts or outlines of their writing than respondents in the peer group. In terms of what they are being asked to do in their writing assignments, HMC first years indicate they are more likely to have assignments that asked them to: analyze or evaluate something they read, describe methods or findings related to data, argue a position using evidence, explain in writing the meaning of numerical or statistical data, write in a style and format of a discipline or address a real or imagined audience though this last difference is not statistically significant even though it is .3 of a point on a five-point scale.
- Results for seniors are not as universally positive. HMC senior respondents are more likely than those in their peer group to report that their assignments asked them to: argue a position using evidence, explain in writing the meaning of numerical and statistical data, write in a style and format of a specific field, and address a real or imagined audience—but only the last of these was statistically significantly higher. They are just as likely to have received feedback from classmates on drafts or outlines of written work, less likely to have given feedback, prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment, and they are less likely to report summarizing material they have read.

FIRST YEARS				
	HMC	Peer <sup>1</sup>	Comp	Sig
	n = 112	n = 16,740		
<b>During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?</b>				
<i>1 = never; 2 = sometimes; 3 = often; 4 = very often</i>				
Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	2.7	2.5	▲	p < .01
Asked another student to help you understand course material	3.6	2.7	▲	p < .001
Explained course material to one or more students	3.4	2.8	▲	p < .001
Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students	3.2	2.7	▲	p < .001
Worked with other students on course projects or assignments	3.5	2.8	▲	p < .001
Given a course presentation	2.0	2.4	▼	p < .001
<b>During the current school year, about how many papers, reports, or other writing tasks of the following lengths have you been assigned?</b>				
Up to 5 pages	4.7	8.3	▼	p < .001
Between 6-10 pages	1.8	2.6	▼	p < .001
11 pages or more	0.5	0.8		
Estimate of pages (NSSE Created)	35.5	56.7	▼	p < .001
<b>How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?</b>				
<i>1 = very little; 2 = some; 3 = quite a bit; 4 = very much</i>				
Working effectively with others	3.2	2.9	▲	p < .001
Speaking clearly and effectively	2.1	2.7	▼	p < .001
Writing clearly and effectively	2.8	2.9		
	HMC	Peer <sup>2</sup>	Comp	Sig
<b>Writing Module Items</b>	n = 86	n = 1598		
<b>During the current school year, for how many writing assignments have you done the following?</b>				
<i>1 = no writing assignments; 2 = few writing assignments; 3 = some writing assignments; 4 = most writing assignments; 5 = all writing assignments</i>				
Talked with a classmate, friend to develop your ideas before starting your assignment	3.3	3.0	▲	p < .05
Received feedback from a classmate, friend about a draft before turning it in	3.8	3.1	▲	p < .001
Gave feedback to a classmate about a draft or outline	3.5	2.9	▲	p < .001
Summarized material you read such as articles, books, or online publications	3.3	3.3		
Analyzed or evaluated something you read, researched, or observed	4.1	3.8	▲	p < .01
Described your methods or findings related to data you collected	3.2	2.8	▲	p < .001
Argued a position using evidence and reasoning	4.3	3.8	▲	p < .001
Explained in writing the meaning of numerical or statistical data	3.3	2.6	▲	p < .001
Wrote in the style and format of a specific field	3.4	3.1		
Addressed a real or imagined audience	3.5	2.9	▲	p < .001

<sup>1</sup> Baccalaureate Arts and Sciences, More Selective

<sup>2</sup> Baccalaureate Arts and Sciences, Full Time 4 year, More Selective, Low Transfer, Private

SENIORS				
	HMC	Peer <sup>3</sup>	Comp	Sig
	n = 94	n = 14,663		
<b>During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?</b>				
<i>1 = never; 2 = sometimes; 3 = often; 4 = very often</i>				
Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	2.1	2.3		
Asked another student to help you understand course material	3.2	2.6	▲	p < .001
Explained course material to one or more students	3.3	2.9	▲	p < .001
Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students	2.7	2.7		
Worked with other students on course projects or assignments	3.2	2.9	▲	p < .001
Given a course presentation	3.0	3.0		
<b>During the current school year, about how many papers, reports, or other writing tasks of the following lengths have you been assigned?</b>				
Up to 5 pages	7.8	9.1		
Between 6-10 pages	2.4	4.2	▼	p < .001
11 pages or more	1.7	2.3	▼	p < .01
Estimate of pages (NSSE Created)	67.2	93.8	▼	p < .001
<b>How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?</b>				
<i>1 = very little; 2 = some; 3 = quite a bit; 4 = very much</i>				
Working effectively with others	3.3	3.2	▲	p < .05
Speaking clearly and effectively	3.0	3.2	▼	p < .01
Writing clearly and effectively	2.9	3.3	▼	p < .001
	HMC	Peer <sup>4</sup>	Comp	Sig
<b>Writing Module Items</b>	n = 86	n = 1780		
<b>During the current school year, for how many writing assignments have you done the following?</b>				
<i>1 = no writing assignments; 2 = few writing assignments; 3 = some writing assignments; 4 = most writing assignments; 5 = all writing assignments</i>				
Talked with a classmate, friend to develop your ideas before starting your assignment	2.8	3.0		
Received feedback from a classmate, friend about a draft before turning it in	2.8	2.8		
Gave feedback to a classmate about a draft or outline	2.5	2.7	▼	p < .05
Summarized material you read such as articles, books, or online publications	3.1	3.4	▼	p < .01
Analyzed or evaluated something you read, researched, or observed	3.7	3.8		
Described your methods or findings related to data you collected	3.0	3.1		
Argued a position using evidence and reasoning	3.8	3.7		
Explained in writing the meaning of numerical or statistical data	3.1	2.9		
Wrote in the style and format of a specific field	3.7	3.6		
Addressed a real or imagined audience	3.4	2.9	▼	p < .001

<sup>3</sup> Baccalaureate Arts and Sciences, More Selective

<sup>4</sup> Baccalaureate Arts and Sciences, Full Time 4 year, More Selective, Low Transfer, Private