



Improvement through Feedback

Published by the Center for Community College Student Engagement

The Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE) is committed to continually improving its services to better meet member colleges' needs. This document provides responses to feedback we received from member colleges after the 2010 administration of the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (*SENSE*) and 2010 administration of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (*CCSSE*). Below are the most often cited issues identified through evaluations received from college presidents and contacts, along with responses to each of those issues.

General

Issue: Sometimes I need to find a document quickly on the CCCSE website. Can the Center add a Search button to the website for an easier way to locate information?

Response: The Center's web team is currently working on creating a Search button function for the CCCSE website. Once available, member colleges can enter any search term and review all web pages and documents that match the search request.

Issue: Why can't I change my password to one of my choosing?

Response: Your unique Center-issued username and password are associated with all historical institutional data for your college, making it necessary for your password to remain unchanged.

In addition, Center usernames and passwords must fulfill specific format requirements to meet security regulations of The University of Texas at Austin.

Sampling and Administration

Issue: A large number of our students are dual enrollment (i.e., high school students taking courses for college credit). Why are we required to include these students in our reported enrollment figures that determine our pricing if they aren't eligible to be surveyed?

Response: We understand your concerns regarding this issue and know that many colleges are experiencing growth in this area of their student populations.

For a number of purposes related to the work of the Center, it is important that we rely on publicly reported data that will ensure a degree of consistency and reliability across highly diverse institutions. To ensure that your college has a target sample size that is representative of your total student population, the Center bases sample size and corresponding membership fees on enrollment data as reported by IPEDS.

In addition, the Center uses IPEDS data on certain variables describing college student populations, including age, race/ethnicity, enrollment status, etc. for reporting purposes.

Issue: Can the Center leave a space on the course packet labels so that we can write additional information for our survey administrators?

Response: Yes. Course packet labels will now contain all of the following information if it is provided in the colleges' CMDF and/or CSF: Packet Number, College, Instructor, Course Name, Course Number, Section, Meeting Days, Course Time, Course Dates (or Survey Administration Date Range for *SENSE*), Building, Campus, Number Enrolled, as well as a blank section for notes.

Issue: Why are *CCSSE* and *SENSE* not offered as online surveys?

Response: The Center has conducted two pilot tests of an online version of the survey; while the survey technology worked very well, response rates were extremely low. Thus, the sample of students who responded to the survey was not representative of the population. At this point, the paper survey still proves to be the best method for collecting and analyzing student engagement data.

CCCSE is continuing to develop and enhance the Survey of Online Student Engagement (*SOSE*), which is a web-based instrument that will help community and technical colleges assess the engagement of distance learning students. As we review results from pilot testing, we will learn more about the feasibility of providing this type of assessment option to colleges. Further, it is our hope that this project will inform the practicality of moving toward online versions of *CCSSE* and *SENSE*.

Issue: What assistance can the Center provide in ensuring that students with disabilities are able to participate in Center surveys?

Response: As both *CCSSE* and *SENSE* are paper-and-pencil surveys, we understand that there may be accessibility issues for some students. The Scheduling Letter to faculty whose courses are to be surveyed asks faculty to inform the survey administrator or institutional contact of any students with special needs. If there are students with special needs in a class to be surveyed, the survey administrator or institutional contact should then work with the college's Office of Disability Resources or Access Center to determine how students in sampled courses may be appropriately accommodated during survey administration.

Issue: Can I receive immediate confirmation of when my return survey shipments arrive at the Center?

Response: The Center has streamlined its production process and will now send automatic email confirmation within 2 days of receiving boxes of returned surveys from colleges.

Reporting

Issue: Does the Center publish information about the statistics used throughout the reporting system?

Response: Presently, colleges can review information on the statistics used in Center reports on the Institutional Reports tab of the Members Only website. The Understanding Results section of the Institutional Reports tab includes details on Benchmarks, Frequencies and Means, Standards for Interpreting Mean Differences, and Weights and Local Student Characteristics. Additionally, the Center is developing a "Data Analysis and Interpretation Guide" to assist colleges in interpreting their results.

Issue: Are instructions available for running custom reports?

Response: The Center provides telephone training for the online reporting system. If an institution is interested in receiving a "walk through" of the reporting site, please contact your college liaison. Depending on the nature of the assistance needed, your liaison will ensure that the appropriate Center staff member leads the training. The Center is also developing a "Data Analysis and Interpretation Guide" that will include instructions for running custom reports.

Issue: Can the Center provide detail on the weighting procedure that it uses?

Response: Due to the Center's classroom level sampling methodology, full-time students, who by definition are enrolled in more classes than part-time students, are more likely to be sampled. To adjust for this sampling bias, a

statistical weighting procedure—based on the most recent publicly available IPEDS data—is applied to the college's results. This procedure accounts for the sampling bias when student groups contain both full- and part-time students.

Colleges can choose to produce custom reports with statistical weighting disabled if they feel this is appropriate. For example, if the vast majority of the college's students are either full-time or part-time (e.g., 92% full-time), the college may want to look at the unweighted results for the majority group of students to guide campus discussions.

Issue: Can I create and save a list of peer institutions to use when running custom reports?

Response: Center research staff is currently developing this functionality for the online reporting system. Once the feature is added to the system, member colleges will be informed. In the interim, all custom reports include a table that lists the colleges included in the custom comparison group. As a reminder, all custom searches can be saved using the "Save this Search" feature.

Issue: Why can't I download my reports in Excel so I can more easily work with the data?

Response: Starting with 2011 *CCSSE* reporting, colleges will have the option of downloading results in either PDF or Excel format. This will enable colleges to create print-friendly documents using Adobe as well as edit and work with their data using Excel.

Issue: When will the Center report trend data for colleges that are multi-year participants?

Response: The Center recognizes that trend analysis is both useful and important when working with data. However, due to the temporal variance in which colleges participate in Center surveys, a trend analysis report is complicated. The Center certainly encourages colleges to locally conduct item-level analyses using multiple years of data and is in the process of creating a guide that will include tools to assist colleges in this process.

Additionally, the Center does have the capacity to conduct specialized data analysis. If institutions are interested in this type of special reporting, or would simply appreciate guidance for conducting this type of analysis, please contact the Center's Associate Director of Operations, Jeff Crumpley, at crumpley@cccse.org.