

NSSE and Orientation Summary and Highlights

George Kuh, author of NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement), describes five benchmarks issues that institutions should understand and measure for working toward improvement in student learning and student engagement. He believes that it is the responsibility of all members of the institution to be clear on these issues, and to have our policies and practices -- of boards, administrators, and faculty -- reflect how we will increase student time and effort on these engaging benchmark activities. As a result, retention and graduation rates will improve, and most important, student learning will increase.

NSSE comparisons based on 5 benchmark issues:

- 1) **Academic Challenge** – measures the time students spend preparing for class, including reading and writing; how much students apply more advanced thinking skills in their classes; and the amount of time that students think their school emphasizes studying and academic work.
- 2) **Active and collaborative learning** – measures student participation in class, and working collaboratively with peers both in and out of the classroom.
- 3) **Student interaction with faculty, in and out of the classroom.**
- 4) **Enriching educational experiences** – measures diversity experiences, technology usage, internships, community service, international experiences, co-curricular experiences and culminating senior experiences.
- 5) **Supportive campus environment** – measures student perception of the university's assistance with academic, social and logistical issues, as well as supportive relationships with peers, faculty, and administrative offices.

Highlights of significant differences for URI comparisons with peers:

1) In terms of **academic challenge**, we found that both freshmen and seniors are on par with comparison groups for “meeting instructors’ expectations.” However URI freshmen spend significantly fewer hours preparing for class than other doctoral-extensive schools. Though a t-test was not run, it appears URI Seniors spend slightly more hours preparing for class than do freshmen. Also, URI students work at the same level of higher thinking (analyzing, synthesizing, and applying theories) as do students in other Doctoral-Extensive schools.

In terms of reading and writing, almost 50% of URI freshmen are assigned to read between 5 and 10 books a year. This is significantly fewer than first years at other doctoral-extensive schools and our peer schools. These first year students at URI also write fewer papers than students from our peer schools.

2) Highlights concerning **active and collaborative learning** show that both freshmen and seniors at URI are more actively engaged in class than students from comparable schools. However, freshmen spend significantly less time talking about ideas outside of the class than those in comparative institutions. Freshmen at URI are much more likely to participate in community based projects as part of their course work, while URI seniors spend comparable time as seniors from other schools in this regard.

3) Measures of how well and how much **students interact with faculty** show that both URI first years and seniors interact with faculty at the same levels as students in most other doctoral-extensive programs and our selected peer group.

4) **Enriching educational experiences** show significant difference in several areas. We find that seniors at URI report being more challenged to move outside of their comfort zone and interact with people of different ethnicities, class backgrounds and views on life, than do seniors at other institutions. At URI, 53% of first years have participated in community service or volunteer work, which is significantly greater than students from our peer group and from other doctoral-extensive programs. Also, 61% of seniors have participated in hands-on experiences, which is significantly greater than students from other doctoral-extensive schools. Sixty-four percent of our seniors have studied a foreign language, which is significantly greater than both our peer schools and other doctoral-extensive schools. Finally, 56% of our first years and 40% of our seniors have participated in a learning community, which is significantly more than students from comparable schools.

5) **Supportive campus environment** shows that most of the students sampled at URI have positive relationships with their peers and the faculty, which is on par with our peer and doctoral-extensive schools. However, URI students, mainly seniors, perceive the relationships they have with administrative personnel and offices to be significantly more negative than students from other schools.

While URI Freshmen feel that the school environment is as supportive of both their academic and non-academic success, as first years in other schools feel, they perceive there to be less support to survive socially. And while no t-tests were done to compare seniors to first years, it appears that the seniors find the school environment less supportive in all areas: academically, non-academically and socially. They also feel they have less support than do their peers at other schools.

NSSE asked additional questions about **how students use their time**. It turns out that URI first year students and URI seniors spend many more hours than do students from other schools caring for dependents. And 50% of URI seniors spend 6 or more hours commuting a week, significantly more than seniors at comparable schools.

Measures of **academic advising** show that more than 2/3^{rds} of first years sampled found the quality of academic advising at URI to be “good” or “excellent,” whereas less than 50% of the seniors found the quality to be “good” or “excellent” -- significantly less than seniors in other comparable schools.

Questions concerning **student satisfaction** show that while 83% of freshmen found their first year to be “good” or “excellent,” only 33% said they would definitely come to URI if they could do it over again. Forty-five percent of students from other doctoral-extensive programs said they would definitely return. As for seniors, 74% said they had a “good” or “excellent” experience, significantly fewer than seniors at other comparable schools. Only 25% said they would definitely return, which is significantly fewer than those at other schools.

Some questions asked of incoming students during **Summer Orientation 2005**, reveal interesting facts on which to build upon the NSSE results. When asked about **study habits**, incoming students indicate that more than 50% of freshmen studied between 1-4 hours per week in their last year of high school, while more than 40% expected to study between 5-10 hours/week in their first year in college. When compared with NSSE results for what students actually do in their first year, we find that while about only 6% *expected* to study more than 20 hours per week, in *reality* about 17% report spending more than 20 hours per week preparing for class. And while about 10% *expected* to study between 1-4 hours per week, in *reality* 26% prepared between 1-5 hours per week. So more students will study more than they expected, and more students will study less than expected!

75% of students said they plan to **work** while in school, with 44% planning to work 11 or more hours per week. However, data from the NSSE show that after one year, 26% of URI first years worked on campus and 41% worked off campus, with 26% working 11 or more hours - significantly more than first year students at other schools.

When asked about **confidence in academics**, more than half the students said they would need help in math, and 40% expected to need help in foreign languages, science, and writing. We found that 2005 incoming freshmen anticipate needing more help than students who came in 2004, 2003, and 2001. We also found that fewer than 50% of the students coming in this year rate their skills as “very good” or “excellent,” showing less confidence in their skills this year than in previous years.

Students coming to URI in 2005 (56%) said they feel it is “very important” to discuss their choice of major with their **academic advisor**. After one year in college URI first year students reported that their academic advising was good or excellent (67% - on par with comparison schools), while only 48% of seniors rated it as such (significantly fewer than seniors at comparable schools). Students expect that this relationship will be important and sustained, but their expectations are not being met.

When asked how important factors are in **helping students to be successful** at URI, first years said they believe that finding the right major is the most important aspect to being successful, followed closely by being prepared academically, and having an academic advisor who knows them and who cares about them. But these students do not feel prepared and their academic advising expectations have not been met – not a good recipe for success.

Finally, when asked how confident students are that **URI is the right choice**, we found that for incoming students, 91% are either “confident” or “very confident” they made the right choice in coming to URI. Compared with NSSE data, 74% of first year students said they would “probably” or “definitely” come back to URI if they could do it again, comparable with other institutions. However, 72% of seniors said they would “probably” or “definitely” come back to URI if they could do it again, which is significantly fewer than seniors at comparable schools. So as they progress through school fewer students are satisfied.

*Note: The 2002 NSSE data reveal that students reporting the highest degree of satisfaction with the quality of their academic advising were most likely to demonstrate the highest levels of student engagement. Since high levels of student engagement (involvement) have been found to be empirically associated with higher rates of student retention, the strong relationship between

level of student engagement and quality of academic advisement revealed in the latest NSSE research may be interpreted as providing additional evidence of an empirical link between academic advisement and student retention. (John Gardner, 2003)

**I recommend conducting this survey every other year. We are now instituting a common e-mail address system, and that, along with a reward system for participating (perhaps a raffle or other prizes) may increase response rates- boosting reliability. Also, we will add our own questions and follow up in this next year with some qualitative information concerning student responses in this report.

NSSE Highlights 2005

<i>Sample Size</i>	First Years (FY) N= 276	Seniors (SR) N= 296
	1400 sent e-mails 70% received the survey 28% of those answered it	1400 sent e-mails 40% received the survey 52% of those answered it
Representation of URI students	10% of freshmen class	24% of senior class
<i>Gender</i>	Female = 65% Male = 35%	Female = 61% Male = 39%
<i>Race/Ethnicity:</i>		
Am. Indian/Native American	0%	0%
Asian Am./Native American	2%	2%
Black/African Am.	3%	3%
White (non-Hispanic)	78%	76%
Mexican/Mexican American	0%	0%
Puerto Rican	2%	0%
Other Hispanic/Latino	5%	4%
Multiracial	2%	1%
Other	0%	2%
I prefer not to respond	6%	11%
<i>Enrollment Status:</i>		
Full-time	92%	77%
Less than full-time	8%	23%
<i>Place of Residence:</i>		
On-Campus	68%	10%
Off-Campus	32%	90%
<i>Transfer Students</i>	12%	33%
<i>Age:</i>		
Non-Traditional (24+)	11%	30%
Traditional (less than 24)	89%	70%

Comparison Groups:

Peer Group:

Bridgewater State College
Pennsylvania State University-Penn State Altoona
Plymouth State University
Providence College
University of Connecticut
University of Delaware
University of Maine at Farmington
University of Massachusetts Amherst
University of Vermont

Doctoral-Extensive Schools:

These are schools with a wide range of baccalaureate programs as well as graduate programs through the doctoral level. They award more than 50 doctoral degrees a year in 15 or more disciplines

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. (2005). Website:
<http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/Classification/CIHE2000/defNotes/Definitions.htm>

Data for the peer group and/or doctoral extensive schools are presented only when the data is significantly different from URI data

*() denotes the difference was significant but with a magnitude not even considered small.
The numbers are presented but not discussed

** denotes the data was significantly different from URI data

Level of Academic Challenge

- This looks at the time students spend preparing for class including reading and writing.
- How much students apply more advanced thinking skills in their classes.
- The amount students think their school emphasizes studying and academic work

Question		Frequency of Response				Mean
		Never = 1	Sometimes	Often	Very Often = 4	
Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations.	URI FY	9	45	30	16	2.53
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	11	36	36	17	2.60
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					

- 46% of the freshmen worked “often” or “very often” to meet instructors’ expectations
- 53% of the senior class put this much effort in.
- This is on par with comparison schools

		Frequency of Hours of Work done in a week								Mean
		0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	30+	
Amount of time spent preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, hw, lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, other academic activities)	URI FY	0	26	21	25	10	11	2	4	3.80
	Peer									
	Doc-Ext	1	16	25	23	16	10	6	5	** 4.13
	URI SR	0	23	28	14	16	8	5	5	3.93
	Peer									
	Doc-Ext									*(4.18)

- About _ of the first years spend between 1 and 5 hrs/wk preparing for class
- _ of the first years prepare between 11 to 15 hrs/wk
- 1/5 of the first years spend between 6 to 10 hrs/wk doing schoolwork.
- URI first years spend significantly fewer hours preparing for class than other doctoral-extensive schools.
- Though a t-test was not run, it appears URI Seniors spend slightly more hours preparing for class than freshmen.

During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities?

		Frequency of Response				Mean
		Very Little = 1	Some	Quite a bit	Very Much = 4	
Analyzing (basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components)	URI FY	2	23	45	30	3.03
	Peer Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	1	20	46	33	3.11
	Peer Doc-Ext					* (3.22)
Synthesizing (organizing ideas, information, experiences into new, more complex interpretations or relationships)	URI FY	6	30	44	20	2.78
	Peer Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	4	29	40	26	2.88
	Peer Doc-Ext					
Making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods, such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions	URI FY	7	35	38	20	2.71
	Peer Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	8	28	39	25	2.81
	Peer Doc-Ext					
8. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	URI FY	3	25	41	30	2.99
	Peer Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	4	19	37	40	3.12
	Peer Doc-Ext					

To what extent does your school emphasize spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work?	URI FY	4	20	45	31	3.04
	Peer Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	3	20	51	26	2.99
	Peer Doc-Ext					* (3.09)

- It appears that most URI students, both freshmen and seniors, are using higher levels of thinking/learning “quite a bit.”
- Though no t-tests were run, this higher level of work, thinking critically and analytically, is seen even more so with the seniors than with first year students as is expected.
- It appears that URI students are working the same amount at this higher level of thinking as students in other Doctoral-Extensive schools.

During the current school year how much reading and writing have you done?

		Frequency of Assigned Books/Papers					Mean
		None	1-4	5-10	11-20	20+	
Assigned textbooks, books, course readings	URI FY	2	20	48	23	7	3.12
	Peer	1	18	39	29	13	**3.36
	Doc-Ext	1	19	41	28	12	**3.31
	URI SR	1	30	37	19	13	3.12
	Peer	1	23	37	23	17	**3.32
	Doc-Ext						
Written papers/reports of 20+ pages	URI FY	82	14	2	1	0	1.23
	Peer						
	Doc-Ext						
	URI SR	43	47	7	3	1	1.73
	Peer						
	Doc-Ext						*(1.61)
Written papers/reports between 5 and 19 pages	URI FY	16	62	17	4	0	2.11
	Peer	11	48	30	9	2	**2.43
	Doc-Ext	14	50	26	8	2	**2.32
	URI SR	8	42	34	10	6	2.65
	Peer						
	Doc-Ext						
Written papers/reports less than 5 pages	URI FY	4	33	36	17	10	2.94
	Peer	3	26	34	25	13	**3.20
	Doc-Ext						
	URI SR	5	34	24	22	15	3.08
	Peer	4	26	26	25	20	**3.33
	Doc-Ext						

- Almost 50% of URI freshmen are assigned to read between 5 and 10 books a year. This is significantly fewer than first years at other doctoral-extensive schools and our peer schools.
- 82% of freshmen do not write papers longer than 19 similar to students at other schools.
- 62% write between 1-4 papers of 5 to 19 pages.
- About 1/3 write between 1- 4 short papers and 1/3 write 5 -10 short papers (fewer than 5 pages).
- First years at URI write fewer papers than students from our peer schools.

Active and collaborative learning

- Participating in class, working collaboratively with other students inside and outside of class, tutoring, etc.

How often have you:

Question		Frequency of Response				Mean
		Never = 1	Sometimes	Often	Very Often = 4	
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions?	URI FY	6	45	33	16	2.59
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	2	26	36	36	3.06
Made a class presentation?	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	4	36	35	24	2.80
	Peer					
Worked with other students on projects during class?	Doc-Ext					
	URI FY	6	47	38	9	2.50
	Peer	12	51	30	7	**2.31
	Doc-Ext	14	48	29	9	**2.32
Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments?	URI SR	11	40	34	15	2.54
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI FY	13	46	31	10	2.37
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)?	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	8	34	30	28	2.77
	Peer					
Participated in a community-based project (e.g. service learning) as part of a regular course?	Doc-Ext					
	URI FY	10	42	34	14	2.51
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext	7	38	36	20	**2.68
Tutored or taught other students (paid/voluntary)?	URI SR	7	37	32	23	2.71
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI FY	42	47	6	4	1.73
Tutored or taught other students (paid/voluntary)?	Peer	74	19	5	2	**1.36
	Doc-Ext	69	20	8	3	**1.45
	URI SR	49	36	10	5	1.70
	Peer					
Tutored or taught other students (paid/voluntary)?	Doc-Ext					
	URI FY	59	30	9	3	1.55
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext	48	36	12	5	**1.74
Tutored or taught other students (paid/voluntary)?	URI SR	47	32	11	9	1.83
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI FY					

- Based on the amount of times students ask questions, make presentations, and work with each other during class, it appears both first years and seniors spend significantly more time actively engaged in class than students from comparable schools
- URI first years, though, spend significantly less time talking about these ideas outside of the class.

- URI first years are much more likely to participate in community based projects as part of their course work
- URI seniors spend as much time as seniors in other schools participating in these activities.

Student interactions with faculty members

- Ways students interact with faculty and how much they interact with faculty.

Question		Frequency of Response				Mean
		Never = 1	Sometimes	Often	Very Often = 4	
Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	URI FY	10	47	28	15	2.49
	Peer Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	4	37	34	25	2.79
	Peer Doc-Ext					
Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor	URI FY	32	46	13	9	1.98
	Peer Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	20	42	22	16	2.35
	Peer Doc-Ext					*(2.51)
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class	URI FY	45	37	13	4	1.76
	Peer Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	36	39	15	10	1.98
	Peer Doc-Ext					
Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life, activities, etc.)	URI FY	62	26	10	2	1.52
	Peer Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	49	31	12	8	1.78
	Peer Doc-Ext					
Received prompt feedback from faculty on your academic performance (oral or written)	URI FY	5	37	46	12	2.65
	Peer Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	5	34	44	17	2.73
	Peer Doc-Ext					*(2.87)

Question		Frequency of Response				Mean (Done =1; All Other responses =0)
		Have not decided	Do not plan to	Plan to do	Done	
Worked with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements	URI FY	44	21	29	6	.06
	Peer Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	15	56	8	21	.21
	Peer Doc-Ext					

- Both URI first years and seniors interact with faculty at the same levels as students in most other doctoral-extensive programs and our selected peer group.
 - 2/3rds received prompt feedback from faculty on performance in class “often” or “very often”
 - 22% of first years and 38% of seniors have talked about career plans with faculty/advisors “often” or “very often”
 - 17% of first years and 25% of seniors have discussed ideas/readings with faculty outside of class “often” or “very often”
 - As first years 62% have never worked with faculty on activities other than coursework and only 6% have actually worked on a research project with faculty.
 - As seniors 49% still have not worked on non-course related projects with faculty while only 21% have done a research project with faculty.

Enriching educational experiences

- Interacting with students of different racial or ethnic backgrounds or with different political opinions/values
- Using electronic technology
- Participating in such activities as internships, community service, study abroad, co-curricular activities, or a culminating senior experience

Question		Frequency of Response				Mean
		Never = 1	Sometimes	Often	Very Often = 4	
How often have you used an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment?	URI FY	11	32	33	24	2.70
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	10	28	31	31	2.85
Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own?	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	12	33	31	25	2.69
	Peer	19	39	22	20	**2.42
Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values?	Doc-Ext					
	URI FY	14	35	28	23	2.61
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext	9	31	31	30	**2.81
To what extent do students feel their institute encourages contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds?	URI SR	9	35	28	27	2.73
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI FY	14	37	35	14	2.49
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	31	39	21	9	2.08
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext	22	38	27	14	**2.32

- About 90% of our freshmen and senior students have used electronic media as a method for completing assignments.
- More than half of our students have been challenged to move outside of their comfort zone and interact with people of different ethnicities, class backgrounds and views on life.
- URI senior do this significantly more than seniors at other institutions

		Frequency of Hours spent on this activity a week								Mean
		0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	30+	
Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, social fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)	URI FY	46	29	8	7	4	2	2	2	2.15
	Peer									
	Doc-Ext									
	URI SR	49	25	13	5	4	3	0	2	2.06
	Peer									
	Doc-Ext									

- Almost 50% of the students do not participate in any extra-curricular activity on a weekly basis and of those that do it, they spend between 1 and 5 hrs/wk.
- Though no t-test was performed it appears that seniors are less involved than first year students.

Question		Frequency of Response				Mean (Done =1; All Other responses =0)
		Have not decided	Do not plan to	Plan to do	Done	
Study abroad	URI FY	33	23	44	0	.00
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					*(.02)
	URI SR	8	73	3	15	.15
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment	URI FY	16	3	73	9	.09
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	5	16	18	61	.61
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					*(.54)
Community service or volunteer work	URI FY	15	5	27	53	.53
	Peer	19	8	42	31	** .31
	Doc-Ext	14	6	38	41	** .41
	URI SR	8	23	10	60	.60
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
Independent study or self- designed major	URI FY	35	47	13	6	.06
	Peer	34	49	15	2	** .02
	Doc-Ext	33	51	13	2	** .02
	URI SR	10	61	8	21	.21
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
Culminating senior experience (capstone course, thesis, project, comprehensive exam, etc.)	URI FY	47	10	41	2	.02
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	11	37	21	30	.30
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
Foreign language coursework	URI FY	15	15	47	23	.23
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	4	28	5	64	.64
	Peer	7	45	4	45	** .45
	Doc-Ext	6	38	7	48	** .48

- 53% of first years have participated in community service or volunteer work, which is significantly greater than students from our peer group and from other doctoral-extensive programs.
- 6% of our first year students, significantly more students than from our peer schools, complete an independent study or have a self-designed major
- 21% of our senior students have done the same.
- 61% of seniors have participated in hands-on experiences, which is significantly great than students from other doctoral-extensive schools.
- 64% of our seniors have studied a foreign language, which is significantly greater than both our peer schools and other doctoral-extensive schools.

(Following question is not part of the benchmark questions but relevant)

Question		Frequency of Response				Mean (Done =1; All Other responses =0)
		Have not decided	Do not plan to	Have not decided	Do not plan to	
Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together	URI FY	19	14	12	56	.56
	Peer	38	30	20	12	**.12
	Doc-Ext	33	31	19	17	**.17
	URI SR	9	46	5	40	.40
	Peer	13	57	5	25	**.25
	Doc-Ext	12	57	6	25	**.25

- 56% of our first years and 40% of our seniors have participated in a learning community.
- A significantly larger number of our students have been involved in this type of learning experience than students from comparable schools.

Supportive campus environment

- Looks at the extent to which students perceive that the University helps them succeed academically, socially, assists them in coping with non-academic responsibilities, and promotes supportive relations among students and their peers, faculty members, and administrative personnel and offices.

		Frequency of Response							Mean
		1 (Unfriendly, unsupportive, alienation)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (Available, helpful, sympathetic)	
Relationships with other students	URI FY	1	2	8	15	25	24	24	5.29
	Peer Doc-Ext								*(5.47)
	URI SR	0	2	8	15	21	31	22	5.38
Relationships with faculty members	URI FY	1	3	7	22	33	23	10	4.94
	Peer Doc-Ext								
	URI SR	0	3	8	16	22	32	18	5.26 *(5.47)
Relationships with administrative personnel and offices	URI FY	4	12	15	29	18	15	7	4.18
	Peer Doc-Ext								*(4.43) *(4.44)
	URI SR	8	17	13	25	15	11	11	3.98
	Peer	6	8	14	25	21	16	10	**4.36
	Doc-Ext	6	10	14	22	20	17	10	**4.32

- It appears that most of the students sampled at URI have positive relationships with their peers and the faculty, which is about on par with our peer and doctoral-extensive schools.
- On the other hand, URI students, mainly seniors, perceive the relationships they have with administrative personnel and offices more negatively than students from other schools.

To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following?

Question		Frequency of Response				Mean
		Very little = 1	Some	Quite a bit	Very much = 4	
Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	URI FY	3	25	49	23	2.91
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	11	32	41	16	2.61
Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	Peer	6	28	44	22	**2.82 *(2.75)
	Doc-Ext					
	URI FY	36	34	21	9	2.04
	Peer					
Providing the support you need to thrive socially	Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	49	34	13	4	1.73 *(1.86)
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
Providing the support you need to thrive socially	URI FY	24	40	28	8	2.18 *(2.32) *(2.35)
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	40	37	15	5	1.88 **2.13 **2.11
Providing the support you need to thrive socially	Peer	26	42	25	7	
	Doc-Ext	29	41	23	8	

- URI Freshmen feel that the school environment is somewhat supportive of both their academic and non-academic success, which is similar to first years at other schools.
- On the other hand, relative to their peers, they perceive there to be less support at URI to survive socially.
- Though no t-tests were done to compare seniors to first years, it appears that the seniors find the school environment less supportive in all areas: academically, non-academically and socially.
- They also feel they have less support than their peers do in other schools.

Additional Data:

1. How students use their time

		Frequency of Hours spent on this activity a week								Mean
		0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	30+	
Amount of time spent preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, hw, lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, other academic activities)	URI FY	0	26	21	25	10	11	2	4	3.80
	Peer									
	Doc-Ext	1	16	25	23	16	10	6	5	**4.13
	URI SR	0	23	28	14	16	8	5	5	3.93
	Peer									
	Doc-Ext									*(4.18)
Working for pay on campus	URI FY	74	4	12	5	3	0	0	0	1.63
	Peer									
	Doc-Ext									
	URI SR	66	3	7	8	10	3	1	2	2.18
	Peer									
	Doc-Ext									
Working for pay off campus	URI FY	59	7	7	7	7	4	3	5	2.49
	Peer	73	5	5	4	4	4	3	2	**1.94
	Doc-Ext	75	5	4	5	4	3	2	2	**1.89
	URI SR	37	4	11	10	9	7	7	16	3.75
	Peer	48	5	8	8	10	6	4	10	**3.10
	Doc-Ext	48	5	7	7	10	8	4	10	**3.19
Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, social fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)	URI FY	46	29	8	7	4	2	2	2	2.15
	Peer									
	Doc-Ext									
	URI SR	49	25	13	5	4	3	0	2	2.06
	Peer									
	Doc-Ext									
Relaxing and socializing (watching TV, partying, etc.)	URI FY	2	24	29	19	12	4	3	7	3.70
	Peer									
	Doc-Ext									
	URI SR	2	27	27	19	13	4	1	6	3.60
	Peer									
	Doc-Ext									
Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse, etc.)	URI FY	73	12	4	3	3	0	0	3	1.70
	Peer	84	8	4	1	1	1	0	1	**1.35
	Doc-Ext	84	8	3	2	1	1	0	1	**1.36
	URI SR	61	14	8	5	2	2	1	8	2.20
	Peer	76	9	3	3	1	1	1	6	**1.81
	Doc-Ext									*(1.89)
Commuting to class (driving, walking, etc.)	URI FY	9	68	15	4	2	1	0	1	2.32
	Peer									*(2.15)
	Doc-Ext									
	URI SR	2	48	32	13	3	1	1	0	2.74
	Peer	11	66	17	4	1	0	0	1	**2.26
	Doc-Ext	5	68	18	6	2	0	0	1	**2.39

- 25% of URI first year students care for dependents with 9% spending over 11hr/wk doing it
- URI first year student spend many more hours than students from other schools caring for dependents
- 39 % of URI seniors care for dependents with 18% spending over 11hr/wk doing it
- URI seniors spend significantly more time caring for dependents than seniors at our peer schools

- 68% of URI first years spend between 1 and 5 hours commuting to class each week
- 50% of URI seniors spend 6 or more hours commuting a week, significantly more than seniors at comparable schools
- See Orientation Survey Frequency Results 2005 for further discussion of the other questions in this table

2. Academic Advising

Question		Frequency of Response				Mean
		Poor =1	Fair	Good	Excellent = 4	
Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution?	URI FY	6	27	48	19	2.81
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					
	URI SR	22	30	34	14	2.40
	Peer	12	22	39	27	**2.80
	Doc-Ext	13	26	39	22	**2.71

- More than 2/3rds of first years that were sampled found the quality of academic advising at URI to be “good” or “excellent”
- Almost 50% of the seniors found the quality to be “good” or “excellent” which is significantly less than seniors in other comparable schools.

3. Student Satisfaction

Question		Frequency of Response				Mean
		Poor =1	Fair	Good	Excellent = 4	
How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?	URI FY	1	17	59	24	3.05
	Peer					
	Doc-Ext					*(3.18)
	URI SR	2	22	51	24	2.97
	Peer	2	12	50	36	**3.20
	Doc-Ext	2	13	50	35	**3.17

Question		Frequency of Response				Mean
		Definitely No = 1	Probably No	Probably yes	Definitely yes = 4	
If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?	URI FY	6	20	41	33	3.01
	Peer					*(3.16)
	Doc-Ext	4	12	39	45	**3.26
	URI SR	7	20	47	25	2.91
	Peer	6	15	39	41	**3.15
	Doc-Ext	5	13	39	43	**3.19

- 83% of freshmen found their first year to be “good” or “excellent” but only 33% said they would definitely come to URI if they could do it over again.
- In other doctoral-extensive programs 45% said they would definitely return
- As for seniors, 74% said they had a “good” or “excellent” experience, significantly fewer seniors than at other comparable schools.
- Only 25% said they would definitely return, significantly less than those at other schools.

Orientation Survey Frequency Results 2005

How Students Plan to Spend Their Time

1. Preparing for Class:

	Number of hours/week					
	< 1	1-4	5-10	11-15	16-20	20+
How many hours a week did you study outside of class during your last year of high school?	20.2	52.8	20.2	4.7	1.5	0.7
How many hours a week do you believe you will need to study in college to earn the grades you want?	0.2	10.1	42.4	29.8	11.7	5.8

NSSE results for URI FY	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
Amount of time spent preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, hw, lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, other academic activities)	0	26	21	25	10	17

- More than 50% of freshmen studied between 1-4 hours in high school.
- And more than 40% expected to study between 5-10 hours/week.
- 5.8 % *expected* to study more than 20 hrs/wk but in *reality* 17% prepared more than 21 hrs/wk
- 10% *expected* to study between 1-4 hrs/wk but in *reality* 26% prepared between 1-5 hrs/wk

2. Working Outside of School:

How many hours do you plan to work during your first semester at URI?	%
I do not plan to work	25.0
Less than 10 hours/wk	31.2
11-20 hours/wk	40.0
More than 20 hours/wk	3.7

- 75% of students plan to work while in school
 - 43.7% plan to work 11 or more hours/week
 - NSSE data said:
 - 26% of URI first years worked on campus
 - 12% worked 6-10 hours on campus, 8% worked 11 or more hours on campus,
 - 41% of URI first years worked off campus
 - 26 % worked 11 or more hours off campus
- (Significantly more than first years at other schools)

3.Extra-Curricular Activities:

Freshmen who are interested in participating in the following activities	2005	2004	2003
Community service/volunteering	45.3	32.7	37
Internships for credit	60.8	49.6	65
International study abroad	55.9	42.3	47
Leadership programs	34.7	16.0	20
Greek organizations (fraternity/sorority)	36.7	22.9	23
Intramural/clubs sports/varsity sports	66.7		

- Students in 2005 appear most interested in athletics
 - 60.8% are interested in completing an internship
 - 55.9% are interested in going abroad
- Students appear more interested in being involved on campus than students who came in 2004
- NSSE data said;
 - 46% of the URI first years (last year) did not participate in any activity
 - 29% spent 1-5 hours in extra-curricular activities

How Prepared Students Think They are for College

Overall, how prepared do you feel you are to succeed during your first year at URI?	%
Very prepared	28.6
Prepared	58.7
Somewhat prepared	12.4
Not prepared at all	0.4

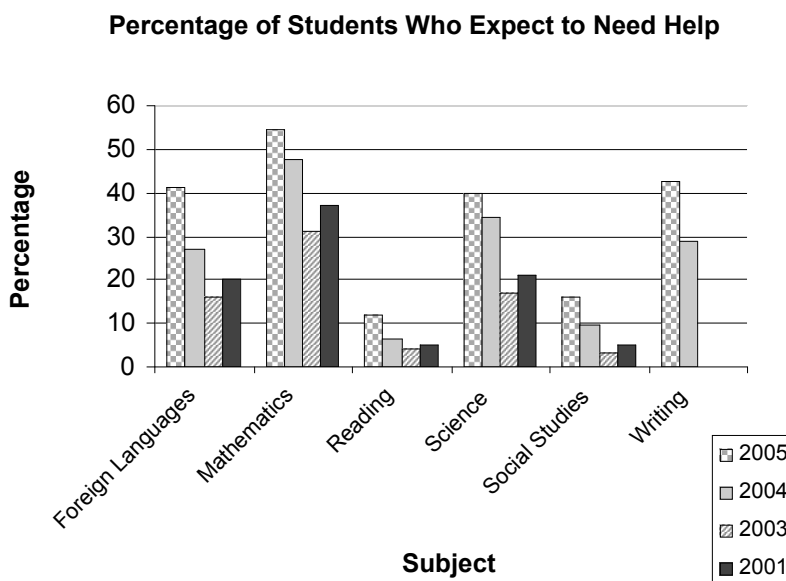
- 87.3% say they are either “very prepared” or “prepared” enough to succeed in college

1. Expectation for Needing Help:

Do you believe you will need extra help or tutoring in any of the following college-level subjects?	YES	NO	Expectations for needing help in previous years		
			2004	2003	2001
Foreign Languages	41.2	58.8	27	16	20
Mathematics	54.5	45.5	47.8	31	37
Reading	12.1	87.9	6.4	4	5
Science	40	60	34.4	17	21
Social Studies	16.3	83.7	9.8	3	5
Writing	42.6	57.4	29.0		

* This questions was not worded exactly the same in each year:

- More than half the students feel they will need help in math.
- 40% of the students feel they will need help in foreign languages, science, and writing.
- 2005 incoming freshmen anticipate needing more help than did 2004, 2003 and 2001 incoming freshmen in all subjects
 - 41% anticipate needing help this year in “foreign languages” while only 27% expected to need help last year, 16% in 2003 and 20% in 2001.
 - This year 40% believe they will need help in “science” while only 34.4% thought they would need help in this subject last year, 17% in 2003 and 21% in 2001.



2. Rating their Own Skills:

How would you rate your skills in the following areas?	Year	Frequency of Response					Mean
		0 = Poor/ Not at all Confident	Fair/ Somewhat Confident	Good/ Mostly Confident	Very Good/ Mostly Confident	5 = Excellent/ Very Confident	
Test Taking	2005	5.4	20.9	42.7	25.1	5.9	2.05
	2004	2.9	14.1	42.8	32.6	7.6	
	2003	4.6	13.3	37.5	32.5	12.1	
Note Taking	2005	2.3	13.5	34.6	36.6	13.0	2.44
	2004	1.3	9.8	30.4	40.0	18.5	
	2003	1.1	7.8	24.7	38.6	27.8	
Learning from Textbooks	2005	2.9	18.8	44.3	28.3	5.6	2.15
	2004						
	2003						
Creating your own study guides or self-tests	2005	7.8	28.6	35.0	21.4	7.3	1.92
	2004						
	2003						
Time management	2005	7.3	25.8	36.1	23.4	7.3	1.98
	2004	3.8	16.4	35.9	31.0	12.9	
	2003	3.5	16.6	33.4	32.5	14.0	
Using the library effectively	2005	5.9	25.2	39.7	22.4	6.7	1.99
	2004	3.5	19.0	36.9	28.2	12.4	
	2003	.6	5.3	21.1	43.0	30.1	
Conducting research and/or developing your own ideas	2005	2.5	15.0	42.7	29.9	9.9	2.30
	2004						
	2003						

* This questions was not worded exactly the same in each year:

- Fewer than 50% of the students coming in this year rate their skills as “very good” or “excellent”
- Students appear less confident in their skills this year than students who came to URI last year
 - 30% of students this year, as compared to 42% in 2004 and 44.6% in 2003, feel they have “very good” or “excellent” test taking skills.
 - 49.6% of students this year, as compared to 58.5% in 2004 and 66.5% in 2003, feel they have “very good” or “excellent” note taking skills.
 - 30.7% of students this year, as compared to 43.9% in 2004 and 46.5% in 2003, feel they have “very good” or “excellent” time management skills.
 - 29.1% of students this year, as compared to 40.6% in 2004 and 73.1% in 2003, feel they will be able to use the library effectively

3. Motivation:

Overall, how motivated are you to succeed at URI?	%
Very Motivated	78.4
Motivated	20.7
Somewhat motivated	0.8
Not motivated at all	0

- Almost all of the incoming students say they are motivated to work

Ingredients for Success

1. What students need to succeed:

How important do you believe the following factors are in helping you to be successful at URI?	3 = Very Important	Important	Somewhat important	0 = Not important at all	Mean
Receiving adequate financial aid	44.8	27.7	16.5	11.0	2.06
Finding the right major	71.8	24.1	3.1	1.0	2.67
Having an academic advisor who knows you	56.7	34.6	8.4	0.3	2.48
Fitting in	38.9	41.9	16.2	3.0	2.17
Taking challenging classes	20.3	55.6	22.9	1.2	1.95
Being prepared to meet academic challenges	60.4	35.9	3.7	0	2.57

- First years feel that finding the right major is the most important aspect to being successful
- 96.3 % feel being prepared academically is “important” or “very important” to succeed
- 91.3% feel having an academic advisor is as important to being successful

2. Topics to be discussed with Academic Advisors:

How important is it for you to discuss the following with your academic advisor?	3 = Very Important	Important	Somewhat important	0 = Not important at all	Mean
Choice of major	56.2	30.4	10.1	3.3	2.4
Academic requirements	65.7	28.8	5.1	0.4	2.6
Your academic abilities	39.8	44.0	14.2	1.9	2.22
Adjustment to college	20.5	35.2	36.3	8.0	1.68
Study skills	30.0	40.8	25.1	4.0	1.97
Career plans	53.8	34.8	10.1	1.3	2.41
Personal problems	8.1	15.6	44.3	32.0	1.00

- More than 56% of incoming students feel it is “very important” to discuss their choice of major with their academic advisor
- 65.6% want to discuss academic requirements
- 53% want to discuss career plans
- NSSE data said:
 - 67% of URI first years thought their academic advising was “good” or “excellent”
 - 48% of seniors thought their academic advising was “good” or “excellent,” significantly fewer than seniors at comparable schools

Overall, how confident are you that URI is the right choice for you?	%
Very confident	45.8
Confident	45.2
Somewhat confident	8.2
Not confident at all	0.8

- 91% are either “confident” or “very confident” they made the right choice in coming to URI
- NSSE data:
 - 74% of first years said they would “probably” or “definitely” come back to URI if they could do it again
 - 72% of seniors said they would “probably” or “definitely” come back to URI if they could do it again, significantly fewer than seniors at comparable schools

** Note:
NSSE2005 Sampling Method

NSSE randomly selected 1400 first year and 1400 senior students from all undergraduates enrolled in the Fall 2004 semester for participation in the online survey. Attempts were made to contact these students by email during Feb-Apr 2005 and a total of 575 submitted surveys (276 by first year and 296 by senior students) produced an overall response rate of 20.5%. Non-responses were divided between declined/ignored (35.5%, 993 individuals) and undeliverable email (44%, 1232 individuals). The high number of undeliverable messages results from difficulties with maintaining an accurate and up-to-date email address list in a dynamic environment where accounts are easily created and abandoned.

The distribution of respondents by demographic characteristics of gender, race/ethnicity, full-time credit load, age (under or over 24 years), place of residence (on-campus or off-campus), and major compares well to the overall undergraduate population and represents a reasonable sampling. The number of responses for both the first year and senior groups is sufficient to provide an acceptable margin of error for evaluating results.