



2020-2021 Institutional Assessment: BCSSE/NSSE/FSSE and HEDS Alumni Survey Results September 2021

Executive Summary

During the 2020-21 academic year, St. Olaf administered four institution-level surveys: the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE), the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), and the Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) Alumni Survey.

Of the incoming class of first-year students, 73% responded to the BCSSE in the Fall of 2020. The NSSE was administered in the Spring of 2021 to all first-years and seniors, and 53% of first-years and 38% of seniors responded. The FSSE was administered in the Spring to all faculty who taught or were currently teaching a course in 2020-21, and 47% responded to the survey. For the HEDS Alumni Survey, 21% of the alumni surveyed from the classes of 2015 and 2016 responded. The summary of findings below contains links to the relevant sections of the main report for further reading and additional contextual details.

Key Findings: BCSSE, NSSE, and FSSE

Student respondents perceived a stronger emphasis on [equity and inclusion in the classroom](#) than from the institution as a whole.

- Within their courses, student respondents were most likely to have experienced an emphasis on respect for the expression of diverse ideas and sharing of their own perspectives and experiences, and fairly likely to report an emphasis on recognizing their biases, discussing issues of equity or privilege, and learning about other cultures. Compared to student respondents at other institutions, senior respondents answered similarly, whereas first-year respondents were equally or more likely to report an emphasis in all of these areas in the classroom.
- By contrast, only a small majority or even a minority of student respondents perceived an institutional emphasis on various areas of diversity and inclusion. Only 56% of first-year respondents and 42% of senior respondents indicated that St. Olaf demonstrates a commitment to diversity or ensures they are not stigmatized because of their identity. Both cohorts of respondents reported significantly less emphasis in these areas compared to student respondents at other institutions.

- In general, student respondents felt that St. Olaf provides a more supportive environment for those of different sexual orientations, gender identities, and religious affiliations than those of different ability status, economic backgrounds, racial/ethnic identities, and political affiliations.

In several areas, student respondents from marginalized identities had less favorable experiences than their majority-identity peers.

- In [academic advising](#), senior domestic students of color, students with disabilities, and those who identify as LGBTQ+ were less likely than their counterparts to say that those in academic advising actively listened to their concerns and/or cared about their overall well-being. Domestic students of color, first-generation students, and senior students with disabilities were less likely to feel that those in advising respected their identity and culture.
- Domestic students of color, first-generation students, LGBTQ+ identifying students (especially first-years), and senior students with disabilities were less likely than their counterparts to feel a [sense of belonging](#) at the College.
- Domestic students of color, first-generation students, and senior students with disabilities were less likely than their counterparts to rate their [overall educational experience](#) as “good” or “excellent.” To some extent, these students were also less likely to say they’d choose St. Olaf again if given the chance to start over.

However, there were also several examples where experiences did not differ or were more frequent for respondents from marginalized identities.

- On many of the [NSSE Engagement Indicators](#), which cover the major themes of the survey from academic experiences to interactions with others to perceived support students feel from the College, there were no major differences when disaggregating by various demographic groups. This was especially true for first-year respondents.
- Among first-year respondents, both domestic students of color and international students scored significantly higher than domestic White, non-Hispanic students on the [Student-Faculty Interaction Engagement Indicator](#), meaning that they tended to interact with faculty on a more frequent basis.
- The majority of LGBTQ+ identifying student respondents rated their [overall experience](#) at the College positively, and a similar proportion did so compared to student respondents who do not identify within this community.
- First-year respondents with disabilities were equally likely to feel a [sense of belonging](#) and have an [overall positive experience](#) compared to student respondents without disabilities.

First-year and senior student respondent experiences differed in some key ways.

- First-year respondents were less likely than senior respondents to indicate that those in [academic advising](#) actively listened to their concerns or cared about their overall well-being.
- First-year student respondents were more likely than senior respondents to feel that St. Olaf places an emphasis on various aspects of [diversity and inclusion](#) and provides support for individuals from different identity groups.
- Senior respondents tended to be less likely than first-year respondents to report strong institutional emphasis on various areas of [academic and personal support](#) (e.g., using learning support services, providing support for students' overall well-being, providing opportunities to be involved socially or attend events on campus).
- First-year respondents rated the [quality of their interactions](#) with other students, their academic advisor, and faculty lower than senior respondents. Compared to respondents at other institutions, first-year respondents at St. Olaf had significantly lower ratings for all groups of individuals (including student service and administrative staff), especially academic advisors and faculty. This is somewhat of a trend reversal from past NSSE administrations.

In some areas, we have seen similar patterns of student responses over the years.

- As in past survey administrations, incoming first-year respondents' expectations about the frequency of their [interactions with faculty](#) exceeded their actual experiences during their first year, and faculty respondents also tended to report more frequent interactions with students than students reported experiencing. St. Olaf student respondents scored significantly lower on the Student-Faculty Interaction Engagement Indicator than student respondents at other institutions.
- Incoming first-year respondents expected more frequent [discussions with students who differed from them](#) (in racial/ethnic background, economic background, or religious or political beliefs) than they actually experienced during their first year. Compared to respondents at other institutions, senior respondents were less likely to engage with people with different political views. First-year respondents were less likely to engage across all of these categories of difference except with those holding different religious beliefs.

Key Findings: HEDS Alumni Survey

- Alumni respondent engagement in [serious discussions](#) with faculty, staff, and students about difference (in lifestyle, custom, and religious, political, and social views) and their frequency of attendance at various diversity or cultural awareness events tended to be infrequent.

- 33% of alumni respondents indicated that St. Olaf helped them “quite a bit” or “very much” to develop their ability to [challenge instances of discrimination](#) or harassment. Comparatively, 57% of first-year respondents and 34% of senior respondents answered similarly to an almost identical question on the NSSE.
- Alumni respondents were generally positive about their [experiences with faculty](#) at St. Olaf, and their response patterns were very similar to alumni respondents at other institutions.
- Overall, 88% of respondents indicated they were [“satisfied” or “very satisfied”](#) with their undergraduate education at St. Olaf, and 85% of alumni respondents felt “some” or a “very strong” connection to St. Olaf, similar to alumni respondents at other institutions.
- 77% of alumni respondents felt like they [belonged](#) as part of the St. Olaf community during their time at the College. Behaviors from others (students, staff, and/or faculty) that helped alumni respondents feel like part of the community included: personal relationships with friends, professors, or staff; feeling genuinely supported both academically and personally; participating in social events or groups; and being explicitly invited into a group, organization, or other space.

Full Report

During the 2020-21 academic year, St. Olaf administered four institution-level surveys: the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE), the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), and the Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) Alumni Survey.

Of the incoming class of first-year students, 73% responded to the BCSSE in the Fall of 2020. The NSSE was administered in the Spring of 2021 to all first-years and seniors, and 53% of first-years and 38% of seniors responded. The FSSE was administered in the Spring to all faculty who taught or were currently teaching a course in 2020-21, and 47% responded to the survey. For the HEDS Alumni Survey, 21% of the alumni surveyed from the classes of 2015 and 2016 responded.

Two of these surveys (the NSSE and the HEDS Alumni Survey) also provided comparison data from other institutions that administered these surveys in 2020-21 or recent years. For the NSSE, institutions had the opportunity to select up to three custom comparison groups from the list of participating institutions. See [Appendix A](#) for more information about St. Olaf's comparison groups as well as a list of institutions in these groups. For the HEDS Alumni Survey, the report summarizes responses from alumni at other institutions who received the survey within the past three years. The specific institutions included are listed in [Appendix B](#).

This report has been divided into five sections based on themes addressed by the four surveys: [Experiences with Diversity and Inclusion](#), [Experiences with Faculty](#), [Campus Climate and Sense of Belonging](#), [Academic Engagement](#), and [High-Impact Practices](#). Most sections begin with a discussion of relevant NSSE Engagement Indicators (EIs), scales created by combining student responses on a set of survey items.¹ Student scores on these EIs are presented separately for first-years and seniors, and further disaggregated by select student demographics.² If parallel items exist on the BCSSE and FSSE surveys, these data are presented to provide context around student expectations for college or experiences during their last year of high school (BCSSE) and faculty perspectives on student engagement (FSSE). As noted in the report, some additional detailed data tables and figures can be found in [Appendix E](#). Finally, HEDS Alumni Survey data also provide related information from recent alumni, though due to the lower response rate, these data are not further disaggregated beyond the overall response summaries.

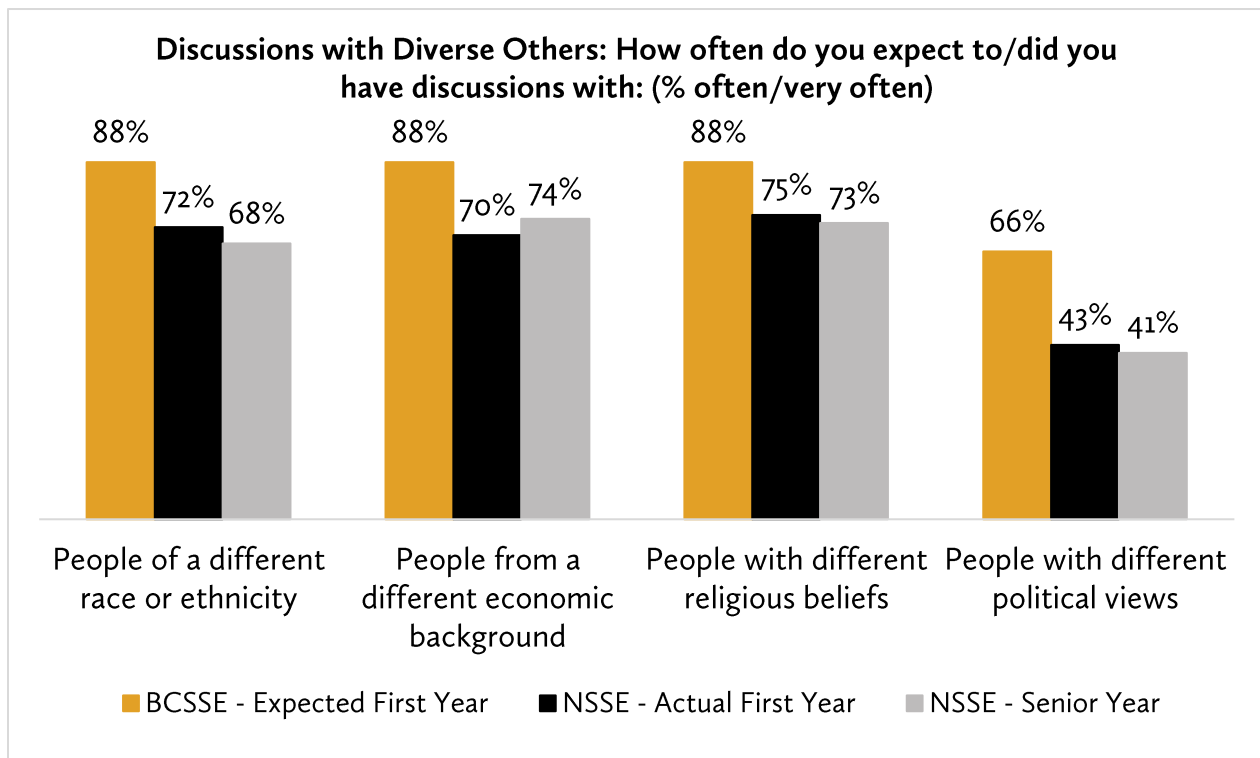
¹ The EIs are described in further detail in [Appendix C](#).

² Demographics of survey respondents were generally representative of the full population invited to complete the survey. See [Appendix D](#) for more details.

Experiences With Diversity and Inclusion

NSSE Engagement Indicators

The NSSE Discussions with Diverse Others Engagement Indicator (EI) asked students about their interactions with people of different races/ethnicities, economic backgrounds, and those who hold different religious beliefs or political views.



This EI had parallel versions on both the BCSSE and FSSE surveys.

- As in past survey administrations, incoming first-year respondents expected more frequent discussions with students who differed from them than they actually experienced during their first year.³
- Similar proportions of first-year and senior respondents reported engaging in these discussions “often” or “very often.”
- As in past survey administrations, respondents were more likely to have frequent discussions with those of a different race/ethnicity or economic background and those with different religious beliefs than those with different political views.

³ When incoming students’ responses on the BCSSE are compared to first-years’ responses on the NSSE, the sample is limited to those students who completed both surveys (263 students), so that their expectations and first-year experiences can be directly compared. Elsewhere, data summaries utilize the full sample of first-year NSSE respondents (389 students).

- Compared to respondents at other institutions, senior respondents were less likely to engage with people with different political views. First-year respondents were less likely to engage across all of these categories of difference except with those holding different religious beliefs.
- Also similar to previous administrations, faculty respondents were less likely to indicate that students had opportunities to engage in discussions across difference in their classrooms (25-40% felt that students had “quite a bit” or “very much” opportunity for each type of engagement), suggesting that these conversations were happening frequently outside of the classroom for students as well.
- When disaggregating by various student demographics (see [Appendix E](#) for more details):
 - First-year respondents: Domestic White, non-Hispanic students scored significantly lower on this EI than international students, and somewhat lower than domestic students of color. Students without disabilities scored significantly lower on this EI than students with disabilities
 - Senior respondents: No significant differences for any demographic group.

NSSE Topical Module: Inclusiveness and Engagement with Cultural Diversity

In 2021, St. Olaf chose to administer the optional Inclusiveness and Engagement with Cultural Diversity Topical Module alongside the base NSSE instrument. This is a relatively new module that St. Olaf administered for the first time in 2021. The questions focused on four different areas: experiences with inclusivity and cultural diversity in the classroom, institutional emphasis on inclusivity and diversity, supportive environments for different identities, and participation in events or activities related to cultural diversity.

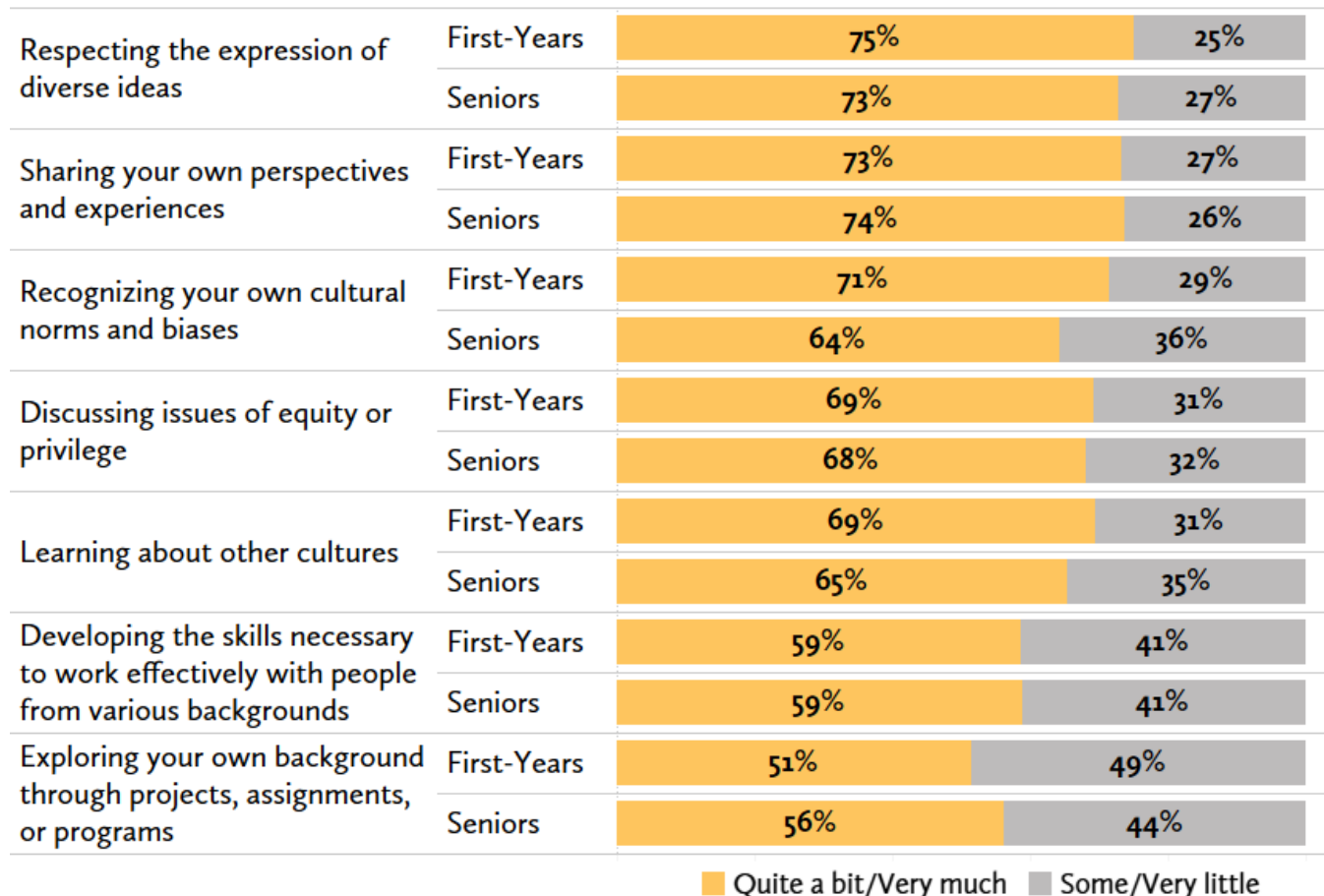
Classroom Experiences

First-year and senior respondents had similar responses overall related to experiences with inclusivity and cultural diversity in the classroom.

- Respondents were most likely to have experienced an emphasis on respect for the expression of diverse ideas and sharing of their own perspectives and experiences. They were least likely to report that their classes emphasized developing skills to work effectively with people from different backgrounds or exploring their own background through class activities and assignments.
- Compared to respondents at other institutions (institutions could select one of their three comparison groups for each topical module; St. Olaf chose the Carnegie comparison group for this module and the one on advising discussed in the next section), senior respondents answered similarly, whereas first-year respondents were equally or more likely to have had these experiences in the classroom.

- Faculty responded similarly to students regarding whether their classes emphasized respect for the expression of diverse ideas, but in all other cases were less likely than students to believe their courses emphasized these areas.

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



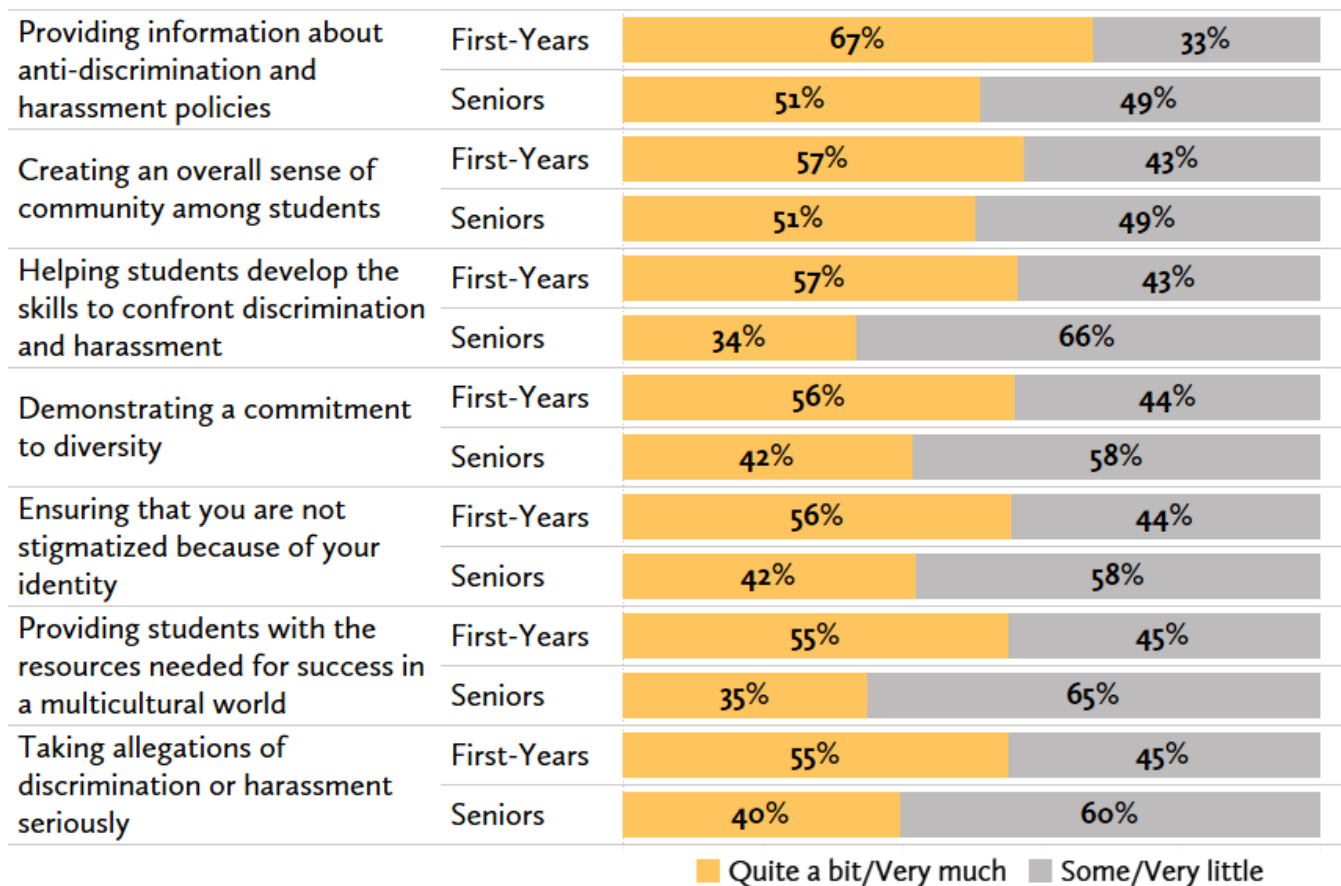
Institutional Emphasis

First-year respondents were more likely than senior respondents to feel that St. Olaf places an emphasis on various aspects of diversity and inclusion, though even among first-year respondents only a slight majority responded affirmatively to any item aside from “providing information about anti-discrimination and harassment policies.” Both cohorts of respondents reported significantly less emphasis in these areas compared to respondents at other institutions.

Faculty respondents were also most likely, and more likely than students, to indicate that St. Olaf places an emphasis on providing anti-discrimination and harassment policy information (77% responded quite a bit/very much), but they were also more likely than students to believe St. Olaf demonstrates a commitment to diversity (75% responded quite a bit/very much) and takes allegations of discrimination or harassment seriously (66% quite a bit/very much). Faculty

respondents felt much less emphasis on creating a community among faculty (26% responded quite a bit/very much). For the remaining items, faculty response patterns were similar to students.

How much does your institution emphasize the following?



Supportive Environment

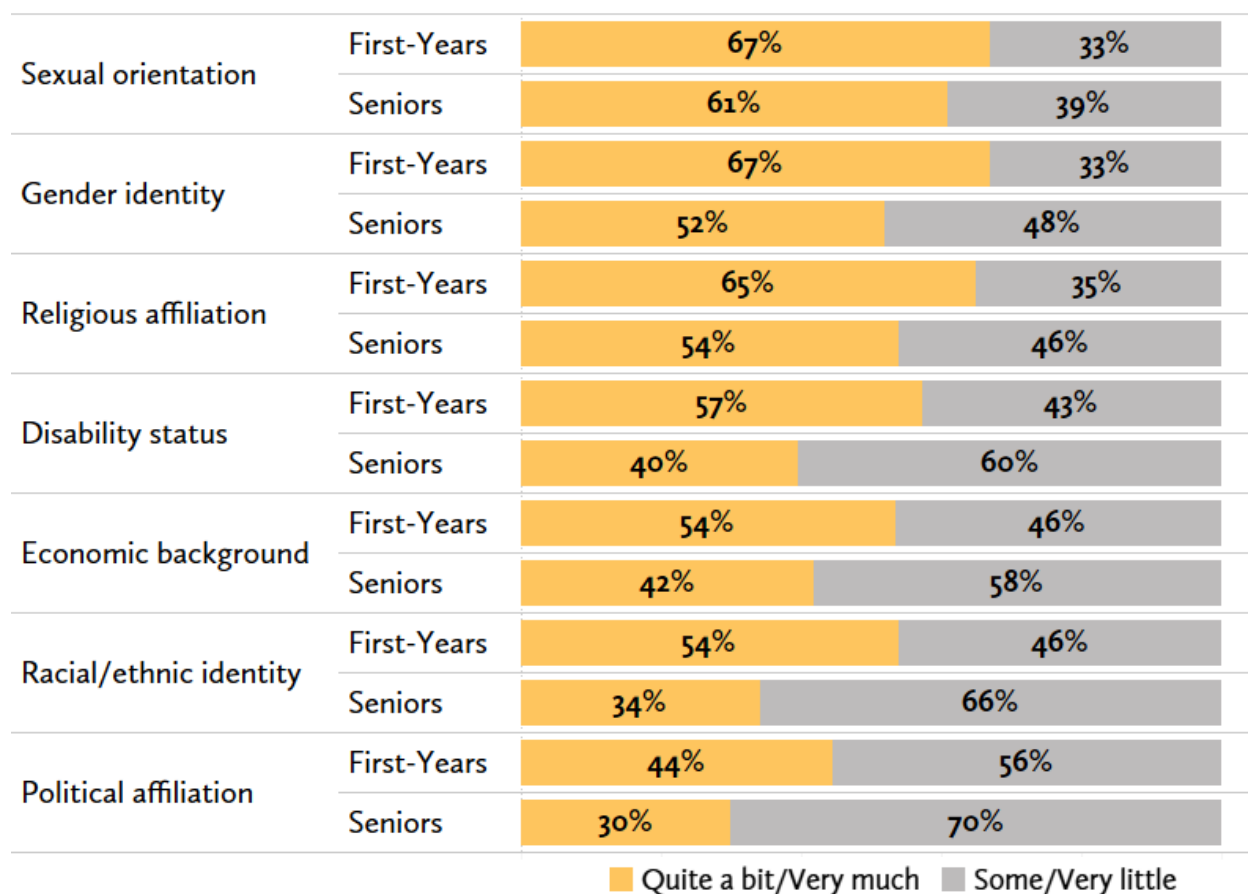
In general, student respondents felt that St. Olaf provides a more supportive environment for those of different sexual orientations, gender identities, and religious affiliations than those of different ability status, economic backgrounds, racial/ethnic identities, and political affiliations.

- Similar to the questions related to institutional emphasis on diversity and inclusion, first-year respondents were more likely than senior respondents to hold a favorable view of St. Olaf in these areas.
- Both groups of respondents were significantly less likely than respondents at other institutions to feel institutional support for those of diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds.
- In several cases, those who hold marginalized identities in each of these demographic categories tended to respond less favorably, although both domestic students of color and domestic White, non-Hispanic student respondents were equally less likely than

international student respondents to believe St. Olaf provides a supportive environment for those of different racial/ethnic identities; across first-year and senior respondents, 44% of both domestic students of color and domestic White students felt St. Olaf provides “quite a bit” or “very much” support to these individuals, compared to 64% of international students.

- Faculty respondents were generally less likely than students to feel that St. Olaf provides a supportive environment for each of these forms of diversity, though their response patterns across items were similar to students.

How much does your institution provide a supportive environment for the following forms of diversity?



Cultural Diversity-Related Activities

These items generally had the lowest proportion of responses at the top end of the scale among the four categories of questions in this module. Aside from reflecting on their cultural identity, student respondents were very unlikely to have frequently engaged in other activities or events related to cultural diversity. Still, they were generally equally or more likely to have engaged in these activities compared to student respondents at other institutions. And in this case, senior respondents were more likely than first year respondents to indicate that they

frequently engaged in these activities. Faculty did not have a question related to this area on the parallel FSSE module.

During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?

Reflected on your cultural identity	First-Years	47%	53%
	Seniors	65%	35%
Attended events, activities, or presentations that reflect an appreciation for diverse groups of people	First-Years	31%	69%
	Seniors	44%	56%
Participated in the activities of centers related to specific groups (racial-ethnic, cultural, religious, gender, LGBT, etc.)	First-Years	24%	76%
	Seniors	36%	64%
Participated in a demonstration for a diversity-related cause (rally, protest, etc.)	First-Years	24%	76%
	Seniors	31%	69%
Participated in a diversity-related club or organization	First-Years	21%	79%
	Seniors	27%	73%

■ Often/Very often
 ■ Sometimes/Never

HEDS Alumni Survey Findings

Similar to the NSSE, the HEDS Alumni Survey contains several scale indicators created from sets of survey questions. The response options are assigned a number (e.g., 1-5 for “Never” to “Very often”) and responses are averaged across the questions in the scale. The Interactions with Diversity Indicator asked alumni how often they engaged with others—faculty, staff, and students—in serious discussions about difference (in lifestyles, customs, and religious, political, or social views) and their frequency of attendance at diversity or cultural awareness events.

- For the 2021 survey, alumni respondents averaged 3.1 on a 5-point scale in response to these items. This was identical to the average for alumni respondents at other institutions.
- Thus, their engagement in these activities generally tended to be infrequent, with discussions with other students the most frequently cited activities among alumni (see [Appendix E](#) for more details).

Two additional questions on the HEDS Alumni Survey were also related to this area.

- One asked alumni to indicate the extent to which their undergraduate education at St. Olaf contributed to their development of intercultural knowledge and competence. Among survey respondents, 60% reported “quite a bit” (28%) or “very much” (32%)

development in this area, a slightly smaller proportion compared to alumni respondents at other institutions (66% reported “quite a bit/very much”)

- St. Olaf added a supplemental question to the HEDS Alumni survey: “How much did St. Olaf help you develop your ability to challenge instances of discrimination or harassment?”
 - 33% of respondents indicated “quite a bit” or “very much”
 - Comparatively, 57% of first-year respondents and 34% of senior respondents responded similarly to a nearly identical question on the NSSE survey (“How much does your institution emphasize helping students develop the skills to confront discrimination and harassment?”)

Reflections on all Survey Findings

The stronger emphasis student respondents perceived on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the classroom is likely attributable in large part to recent efforts, most notably *To Include is To Excel*, to transform curriculum and teaching. This should, of course, be evidence of the institution’s broader commitment in these areas as well, suggesting that respondents may have taken a narrower view of what constitutes “the institution” when answering questions related to institutional emphasis on diversity and inclusion.

Given that student respondents, and to some extent faculty respondents, perceived a more supportive environment for those of different sexual orientations, gender identities, and religious affiliations than other forms of diversity points to the potential to apply strategies for supporting the former to bolster support for the latter.

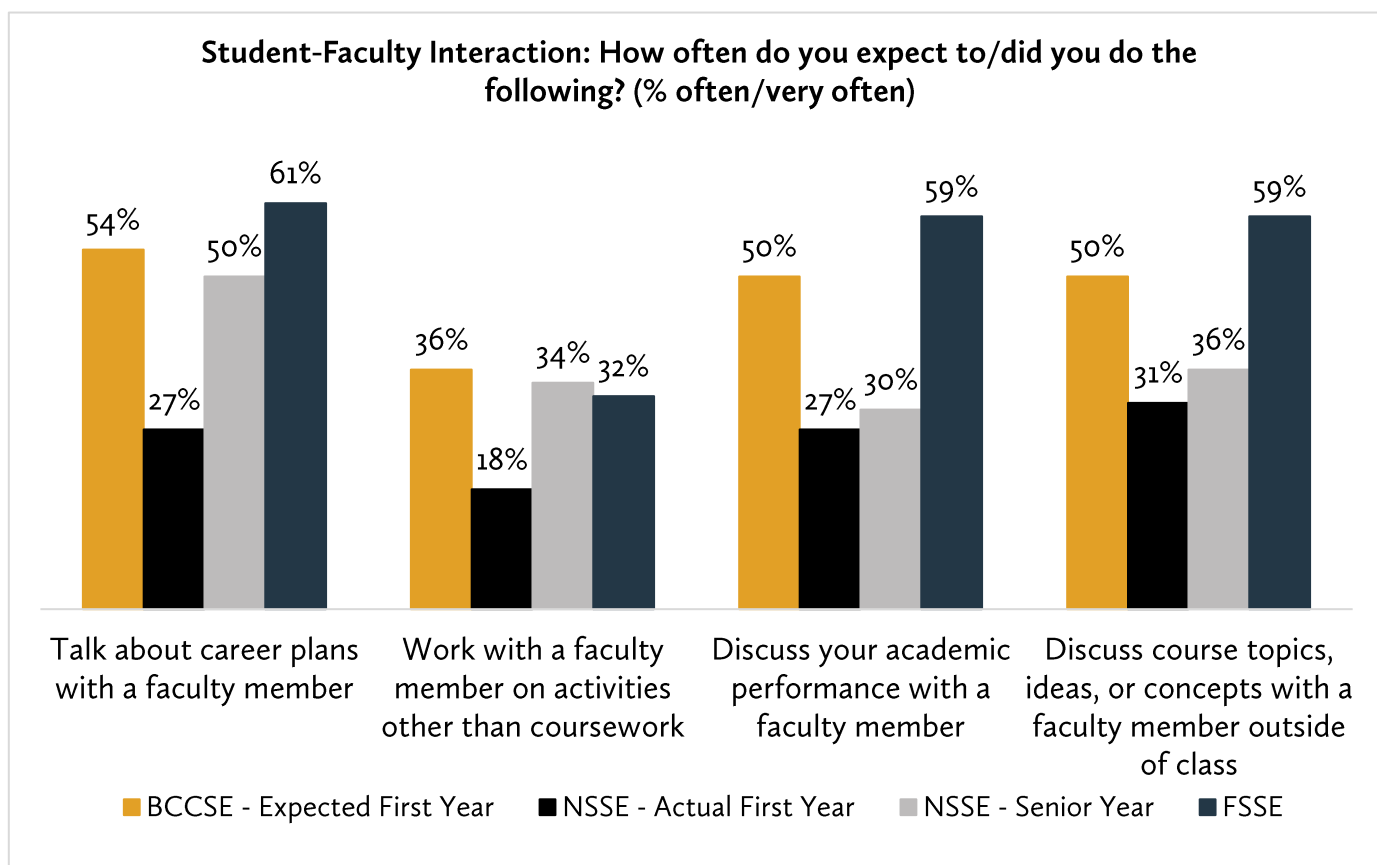
Finally, although it’s difficult to make direct comparisons between alumni responses to the HEDS survey and current students’ responses on the NSSE due to differences in question phrasing and response options, it appears that engagement in discussions and activities related to diversity and inclusion is becoming more frequent among more recent cohorts of students. This is an encouraging trend that will hopefully continue.

Experiences With Faculty

NSSE Engagement Indicators

The NSSE provided data on two Engagement Indicators (EIs) related to students’ experiences with faculty: Student-Faculty Interaction and Effective Teaching. The first, Student-Faculty Interaction, was also replicated on the BCSSE, which asked incoming students about their expectations for interactions with faculty during their first year. The FSSE also contained similar questions asking faculty about their frequency of interactions with students.

The graph below shows responses across these three surveys, comparing student expectations to actual experiences in their first year, and providing insight on how this compares to senior students' experiences and faculty's interactions⁴ with students.

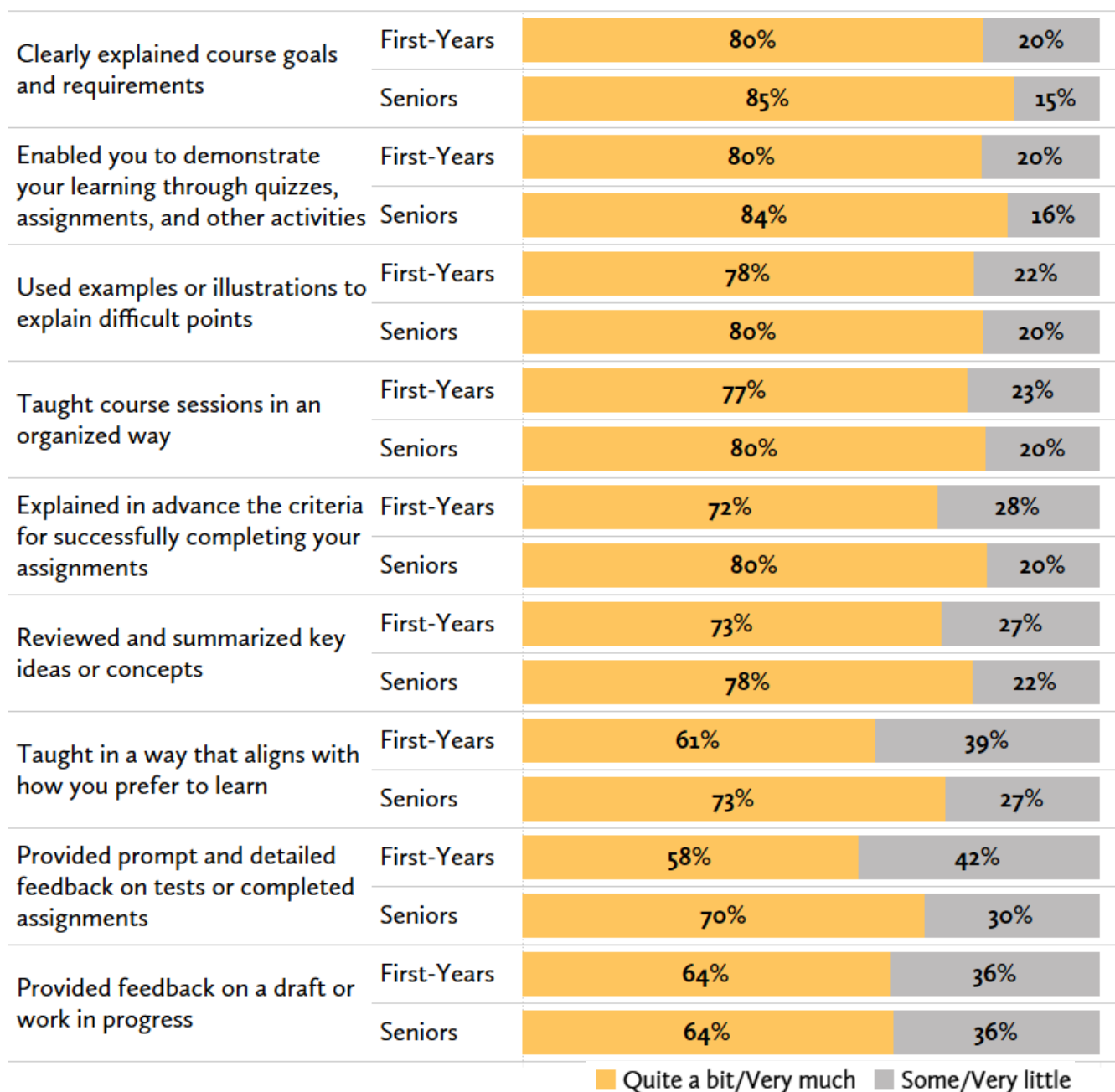


- As in past survey administrations, incoming first-year respondents' expectations about the frequency of their interactions with faculty exceeded the frequency of their actual interactions during their first year.
- First-year and senior respondents both scored significantly lower on the Student-Faculty Interaction EI compared to all three of St. Olaf's comparison groups, which has generally been the case in past years as well.
- As in past NSSE administrations, faculty respondents tended to report more frequent interactions with students than students reported experiencing.

The figure on page 14 shows response summaries for all question items in the Effective Teaching EI, as well as some additional items that were added since the 2018 administration.

⁴ Faculty were asked how often they engaged in these types of discussions with students; percentages represent those responding often/very often.

During the current school year, to what extent have your instructors done the following?



- First-year and senior respondents had a similar pattern of responses, with a vast majority of students experiencing most of these practices on a regular basis.
 - Still, both cohorts of respondents scored significantly lower on this EI compared to respondents at institutions in all three of St. Olaf's comparison groups. For seniors, this was driven mostly by the items related to feedback, but first-years scored lower in nearly all areas of the EI compared to those at other institutions.

- Fewer, though still the majority, of respondents felt that instructors taught in a way that aligned with how they preferred to learn or provided prompt and detailed feedback on completed work or work in progress.
 - 84% of faculty respondents felt that they provided sufficiently prompt and detailed feedback on completed work, and 73% of faculty respondents indicated that they regularly provided feedback on work in progress, suggesting somewhat of a mismatch with student experiences (the FSSE did not ask about teaching aligned with students' preferred learning styles).
- The general proportion of student respondents reporting emphasis on the areas that existed on past surveys has remained similar or slightly decreased across years.

When disaggregating by various student demographics (see [Appendix E](#) for more details):

- First-year respondents: Both domestic students of color and international students scored significantly higher than domestic White, non-Hispanic students on the Student-Faculty Interaction EI.
- Senior respondents: International students scored significantly higher than both domestic White students and domestic students of color on the Student-Faculty Interaction EI.
- There were no significant differences between any groups on the Effective Teaching EI.

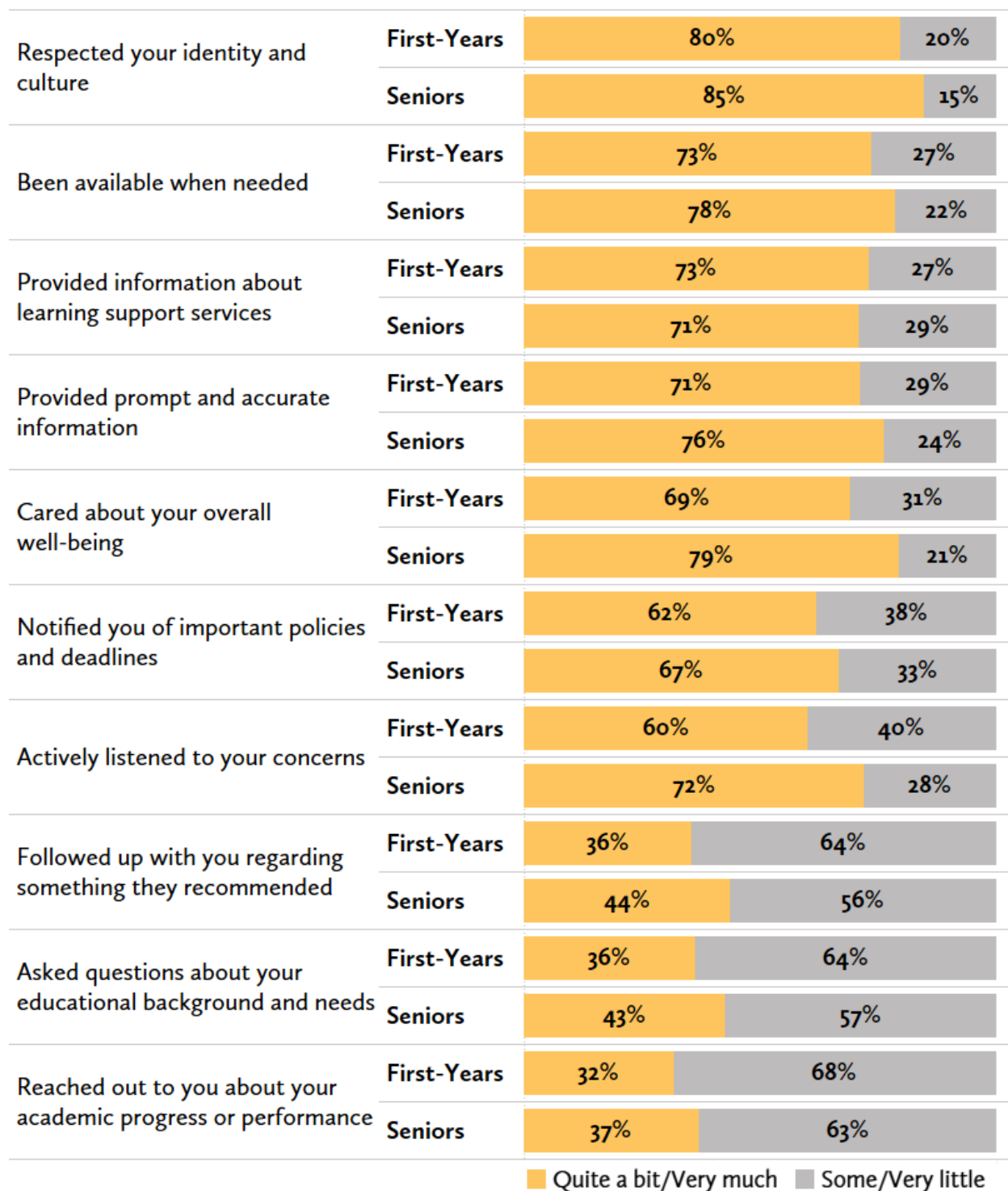
NSSE Topical Module: Academic Advising

The other topical module St. Olaf selected in 2021 was the Academic Advising Topical Module, to learn more detailed information about students' experiences with their academic advisors. St. Olaf has administered this Topical Module for the past three NSSE administrations. The content of the module changed significantly with this most recent administration, so unfortunately comparisons with past student responses are not possible. However, the results from the 2021 NSSE module are discussed in more detail below.

The main NSSE instrument contained a question on the quality of a student's interaction with their academic advisor (based on a 7-point scale from 1-Poor to 7-Excellent).

- St. Olaf first-year respondents gave an average rating of 5.0, significantly lower than first-year respondents at institutions from all three comparison groups (Criterion: 5.5, ACM/GLCA: 5.6, Carnegie: 5.5).
- St. Olaf senior respondents gave an average rating of 5.8, similar to senior respondents at other institutions.

Thinking about academic advising, how much have people and resources at your institution done the following?



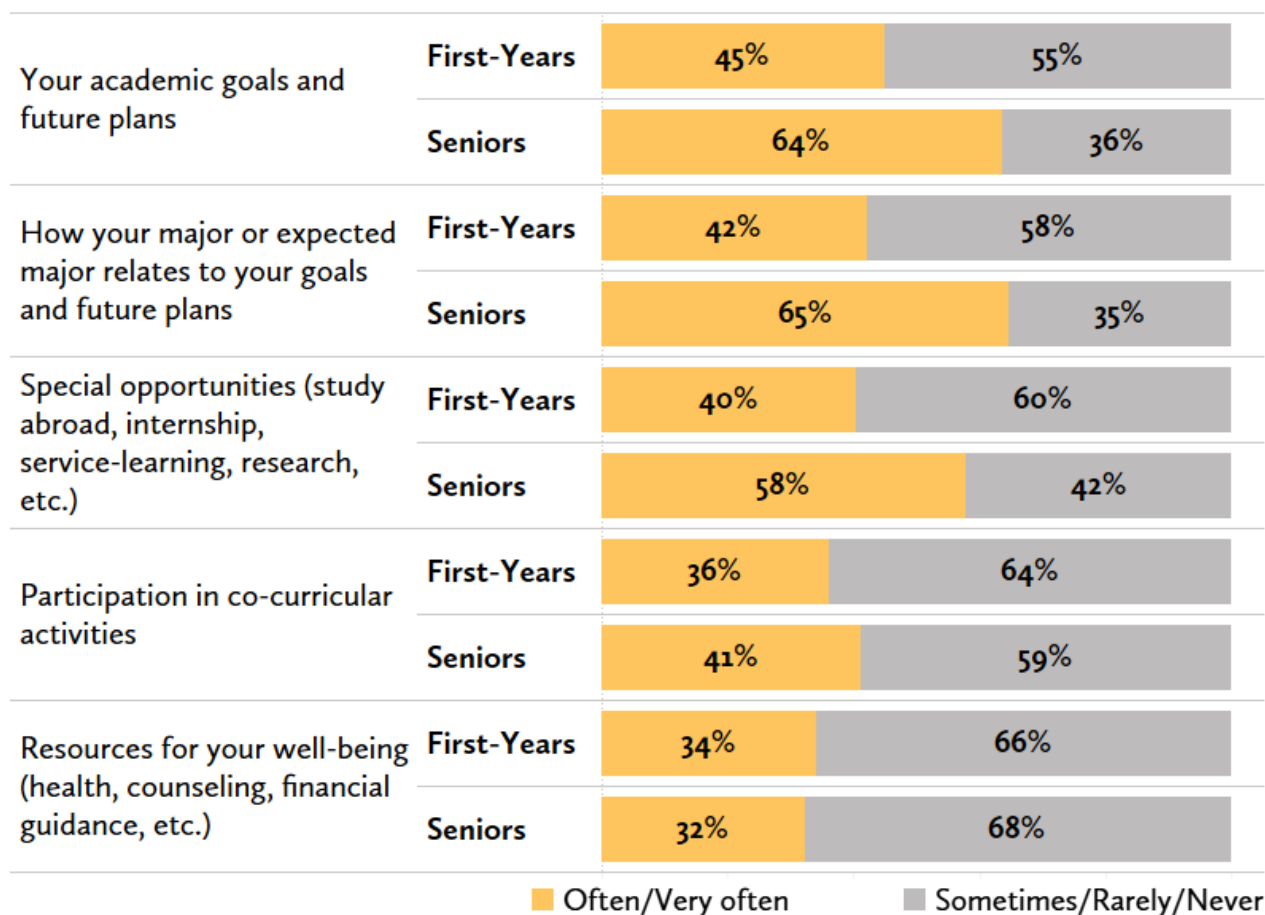
The Academic Advising Topical Module asked a series of additional questions about students' experiences with academic advising. See [Appendix E](#) for more details on disaggregated data.

- Senior respondents were generally more likely than first-year respondents to indicate that their advisor or others in academic advising engaged in the behaviors shown in the figure on page 16.
 - They also responded more similarly to senior respondents at other institutions, whereas first-year respondents at St. Olaf reported significantly less emphasis in these areas compared to first-year respondents at other institutions.
- In particular, first-year respondents at St. Olaf were less likely than senior respondents to feel that those in academic advising cared about their overall well-being or actively listened to their concerns.
 - However, among senior respondents, domestic students of color at St. Olaf were less likely than their peers to endorse these items, while there were no major differences in response patterns among these groups for first-year respondents.
 - Among respondents, students with disabilities (particularly seniors) were also generally less likely to feel supported in these areas, and the same was true for students who identify as LGBTQ+.
- Across both cohorts, respondents were highly likely to say that their advisor respected their identity and culture.
 - However, domestic students of color (especially seniors), first-generation students, and senior students with disabilities were less likely than their peers to endorse this item.
- Nearly all faculty advisors surveyed (99-100%) indicated that the above areas (caring about students' well-being, actively listening to their concerns, and respecting their identities and cultures) were "important" or "very important."
 - 22% of faculty respondents felt they had not received adequate training for their role as an advisor, and only 40% of respondents believed they had the time they needed to do their best work as an advisor. Additionally, 31% of respondents did not understand the advising needs of majority and minority student populations, although most (97%) felt they were able to build rapport with students whose personal backgrounds were different from their own.
- Student respondents were least likely to say that those in academic advising followed up with them regarding something they recommended, asked questions about their educational background and needs, or reached out about their academic progress or performance.
 - This was true of respondents at other institutions as well, though first-year respondents at these institutions were more likely to endorse these items than St. Olaf first-year respondents.
 - While only 56% of faculty advisors surveyed believed follow-up on recommendations was important, 67% felt it was important to ask questions

about students’ educational background and needs and 76% thought it was important to reach out about students’ academic performance.

Additional questions in this module asked about the frequency of discussions students had with those in academic advising on a variety of topics.

Thinking about academic advising, about how often did someone at your institution discuss the following with you?



- Senior respondents were more likely than first-year respondents to have discussions with their advisor or others in academic advising about:
 - Their academic goals and future plans
 - How their major relates to their goals and future plans
 - Opportunities for experiences such as internships and study abroad
- This is perhaps not so surprising given that these types of conversations may be less relevant to first-years, especially if they have not yet declared a major. However, first-year respondents were less likely than those at other institutions to have these conversations.

- Across both cohorts, respondents were unlikely to discuss participation in co-curricular activities or resources for overall well-being with those in academic advising, matching faculty advisor respondents' answers as well.

When students were asked how much various individuals helped them develop their academic goals and future plans, respondents were more likely to indicate family members or friends than academic advisors or other faculty and staff (see [Appendix E](#) for more details). However, senior respondents were more likely than first-year respondents to say that faculty advice was helpful to them in these areas, and St. Olaf first-year respondents were significantly less likely than first-year respondents at other institutions to indicate that faculty had helped them in these areas.

HEDS Alumni Survey Findings

On the Good Teaching and High-Quality Interactions with Faculty Indicator, alumni responses averaged 4.2 on a 5-point scale (identical to alumni at other institutions). Overall, alumni were generally positive about their experiences with faculty at St. Olaf, and their response patterns were very similar to alumni at other institutions (see [Appendix E](#) for more details).

Reflections on all Survey Findings

The gap between student respondents' reported frequency of interactions with faculty and faculty respondents' reports of the same may be due to the fact that faculty meet with many students, while students' individual interactions with faculty are perceived by them as less frequent. Resetting first-year expectations, as well as offering students suggestions for how to proactively seek meetings with faculty, may help mitigate this persistent gap. The SOAR⁵ component of the new OLE Core may be one method for doing this.

Faculty advisors may require additional training and/or support to carry out the important aspects of their role related to caring for and actively listening to students, as well as serving students from different identity groups. Tailoring training and support to these areas may improve students' experiences with their academic advisor.

Campus Climate and Sense of Belonging

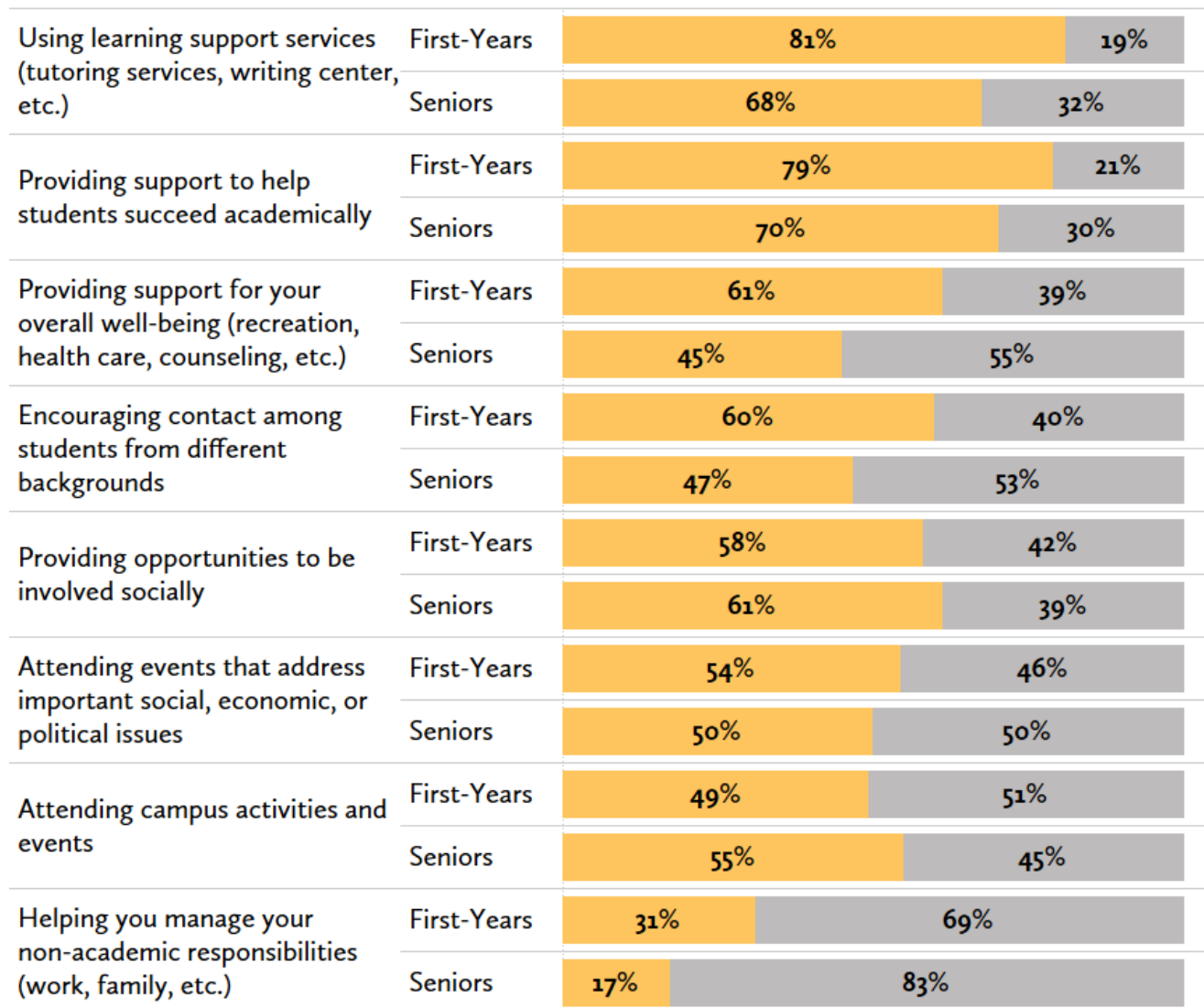
NSSE Engagement Indicators

Two NSSE Engagement Indicators included items about campus climate: Supportive Environment (with related items on the BCSSE and FSSE) and Quality of Interactions.

⁵ St. Olaf Orientation to Academics and Resources: Students participate in sessions throughout the Fall semester on topics such as study habits, how and where to ask for help, and balancing academic studies and co-curriculars.

The Supportive Environment EI asked students about the emphasis St. Olaf places on support across a variety of academic and personal dimensions. The figure below shows overall responses to the NSSE Supportive Environment items.

How much does your institution emphasize the following?



■ Quite a bit/Very much ■ Some/Very little

- Senior respondents tended to be less likely to report strong institutional emphasis on these areas than first-year respondents.
- Student respondents were most likely to say that St. Olaf emphasized using learning support services and providing support to help students succeed academically. They were least likely to say the College placed emphasis on helping them manage non-academic responsibilities.
- Overall, St. Olaf respondents (especially first-years) scored significantly lower on the Supportive Environment EI than respondents at comparison schools.

- Some areas that many incoming student respondents rated as highly important on the BCSSE were not as frequently endorsed by these same students at the end of their first year (note that the following percentages are based on the smaller sample of first-years who completed both surveys).
 - 73% of incoming first-year respondents rated “encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds” as important (5 or 6 on a six-point scale from 1-Not important to 6-Very important), but only 59% indicated that this area was emphasized “quite a bit” or “very much” during their first year.
 - Similarly, 73% rated “providing opportunities to be involved socially” as important, but only 58% indicated that St. Olaf placed emphasis on this area.
 - Finally, 70% of incoming student respondents thought that institutional emphasis on attending campus activities and events was important, but only 49% felt such an emphasis during their first year.
 - Respondents were also less likely to note an emphasis on “attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues” (not included on the BCSSE), and across these three items related to social opportunities and events, there was a 10-20 percentage point drop from the 2018 administration in the proportion of students perceiving emphasis in these areas.
- The majority of faculty respondents thought it was “important” or “very important” for St. Olaf to increase its emphasis on all of the Supportive Environment EI areas, especially encouraging interactions among students from different backgrounds (93%), providing support for students’ overall well-being (88%), and providing academic support to students (81%).

The Quality of Interactions EI asked students to rate their overall interactions with students, faculty, and staff on a 7-point scale (from 1-Poor to 7-Excellent).

- Both first-year and senior respondents had average ratings ranging from 5.0 to 5.8 for all groups of individuals on campus, indicating that their interactions were generally positive. However, first-year respondents rated their interactions with other students, faculty, and their academic advisor lower than senior respondents.
- For first-year respondents, these average ratings decreased over the past two or three administrations in three areas:
 - Interactions with other students: 6.0 in 2015, 5.6 in 2018, and 5.3 in 2021
 - Interactions with faculty: 5.8 in 2015, 5.7 in 2018, and 5.4 in 2021
 - Interactions with other administrative staff/offices (e.g., registrar, financial aid, etc.): 5.4 in 2015 and 2018, 5.1 in 2021
 - First-year respondents had significantly lower ratings compared to first-year respondents at other institutions for all groups of individuals, especially

academic advisors and faculty. This is somewhat of a trend reversal from past NSSE administrations.

- Senior respondents had significantly lower ratings of their interactions with faculty compared to senior respondents at other institutions, but otherwise gave ratings similar to their peers.

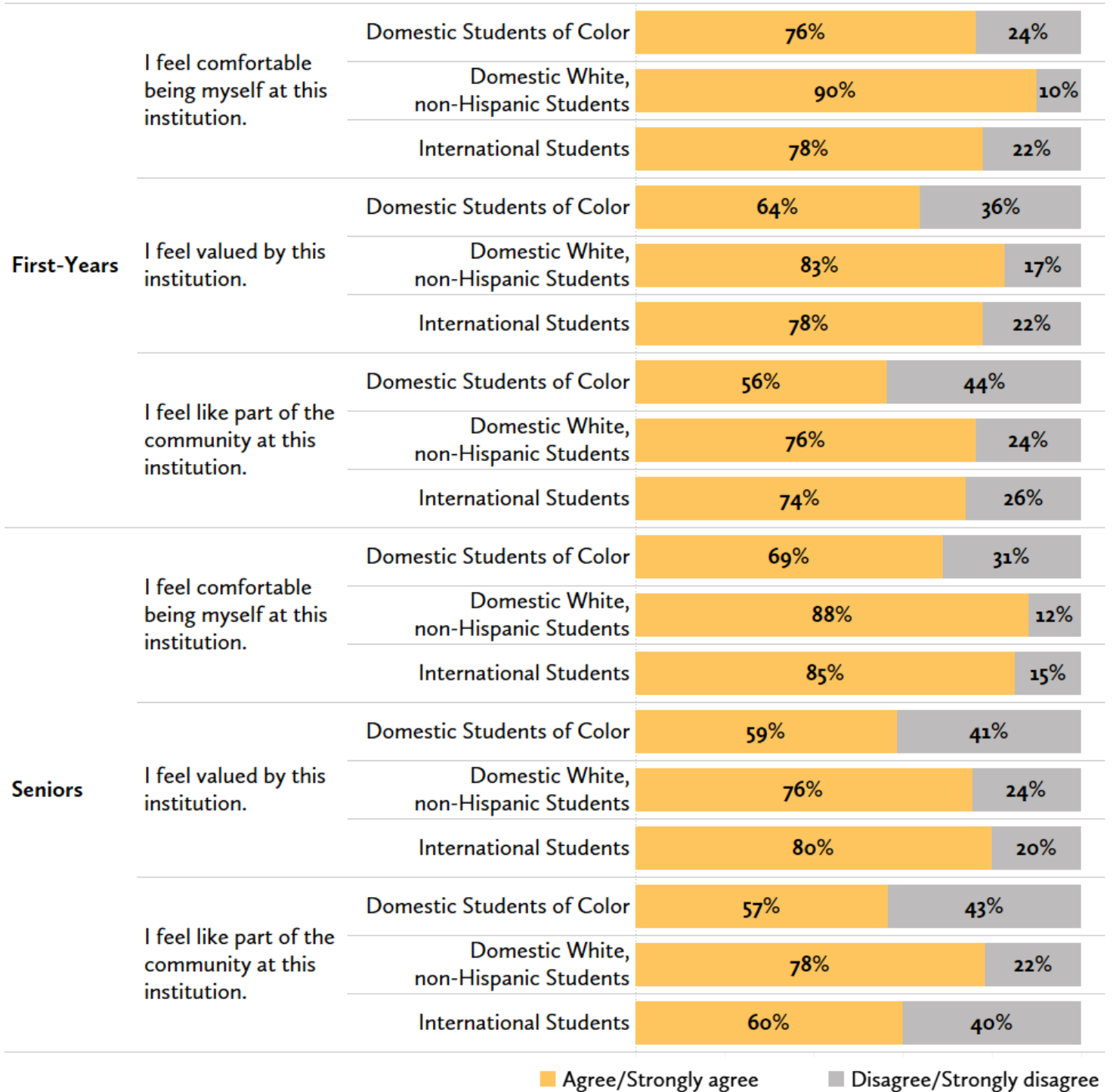
When disaggregating by student demographics (see [Appendix E](#) for more details):

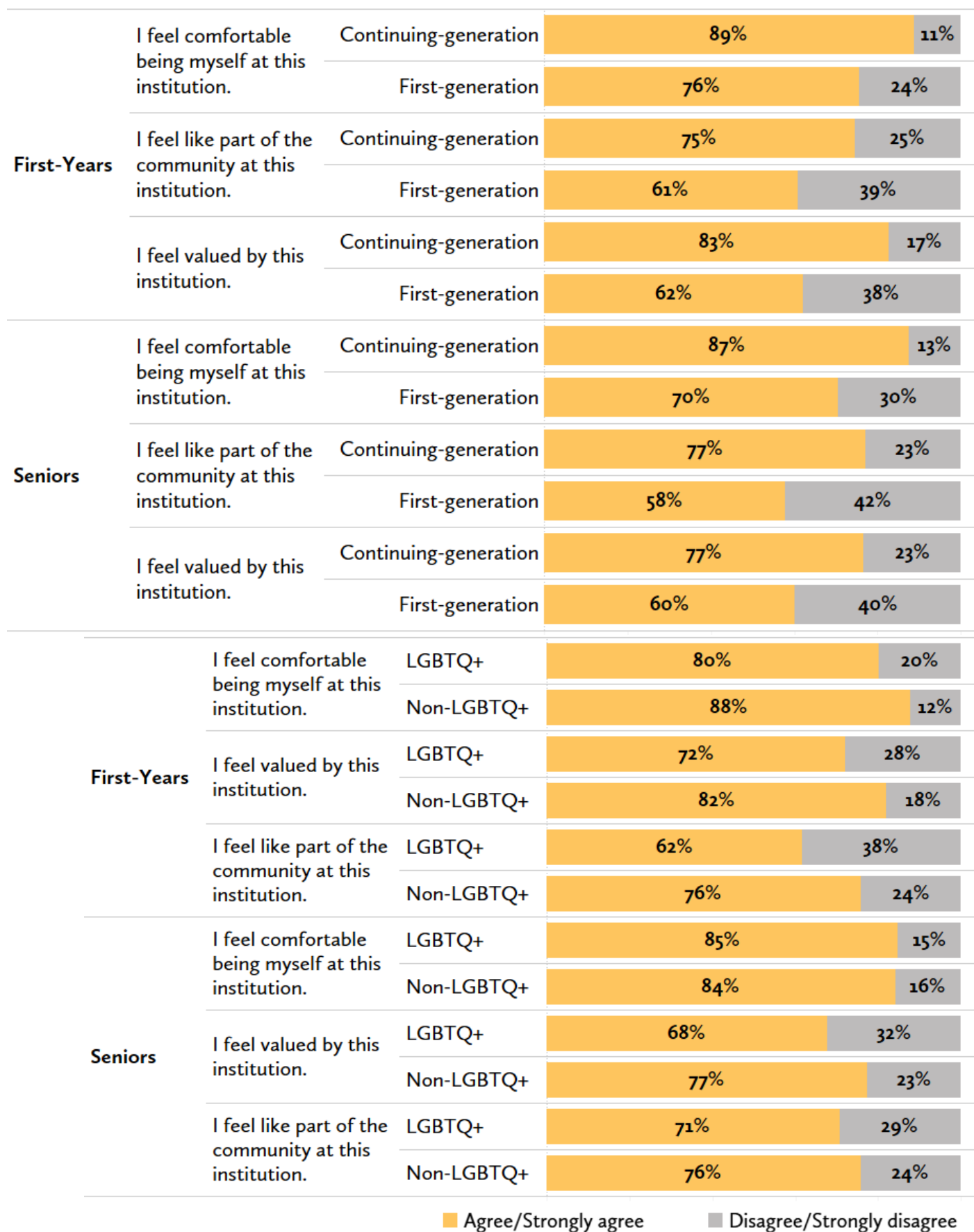
- Among first-year respondents, there were no significant differences between any demographic groups for either EI.
- Senior respondents: Domestic students of color had significantly lower ratings on the Quality of Interactions EI compared to both domestic White, non-Hispanic students and international students. LGBTQ+ students had significantly lower ratings on the Supportive Environment EI compared to non-LGBTQ+ students. Students with disabilities had significantly lower ratings on both EIs compared to students without disabilities.

Sense of Belonging

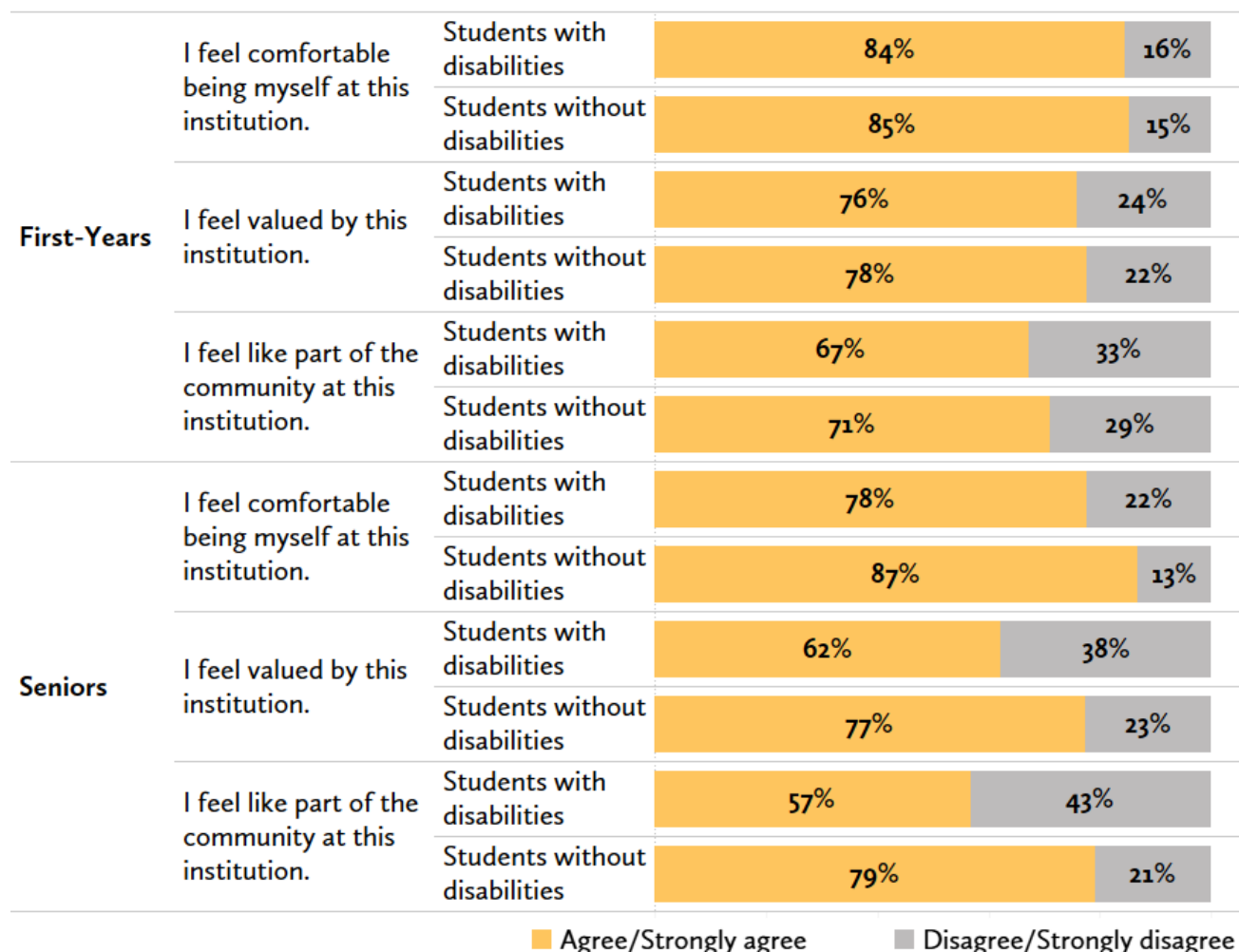
Three questions about students' sense of belonging were recently added to the NSSE survey. Overall, student respondents felt comfortable being themselves at St. Olaf, valued by the institution, and like part of the St. Olaf community, with greater than 70% of first-year and senior respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with each of these statements. However, on average, St. Olaf student responses were significantly lower on these questions compared to student respondents at other institutions. Additionally, differences emerged when disaggregating responses by various demographic groups:

- A smaller proportion of domestic students of color respondents, and occasionally international respondents, agreed with these statements compared to domestic White, non-Hispanic respondents.
- Similarly, first-generation respondents were less likely to feel a sense of belonging, as measured by these survey items, compared to continuing-generation respondents.
- To some extent, especially among first-year respondents, LGBTQ+ identifying students were also less likely to feel a sense of belonging compared to respondents who do not identify this way.
- Among senior respondents, students with disabilities were less likely than students without disabilities to respond affirmatively to these statements about belonging.





■ Agree/Strongly agree ■ Disagree/Strongly disagree



Overall Experience

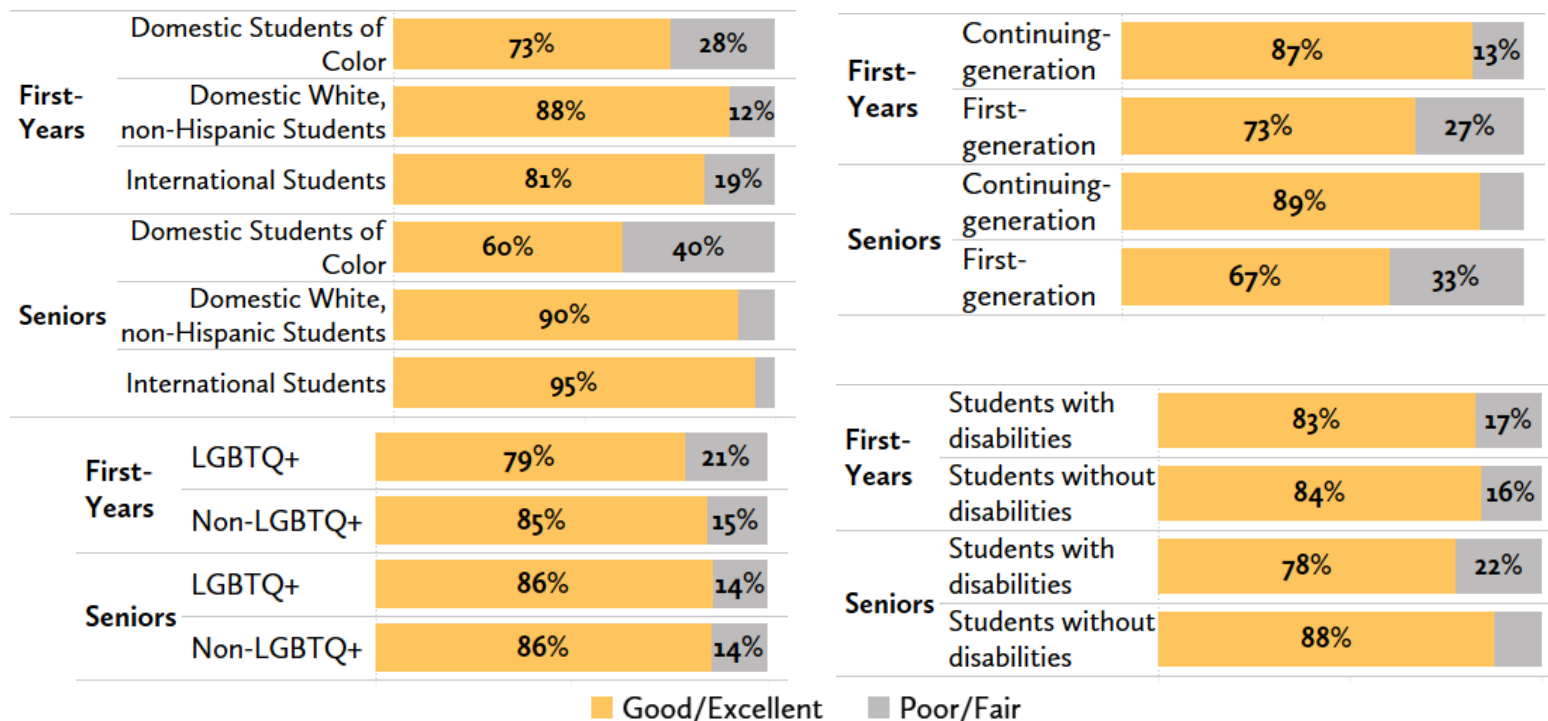
At the end of the main NSSE survey, two questions asked about students' overall experience at St. Olaf. One asked them to rate their entire educational experience as "poor," "fair," "good," or "excellent." The second asked whether they would choose St. Olaf again if they had a chance to start over.

Overall, 84% of first-year respondents and 85% of senior respondents rated their experience as "good" or "excellent." At other institutions, these proportions were closer to 90%. Again, however, responses differed for different student groups.

- Among first-year respondents, domestic students of color, and to some extent international students, were less likely to rate their educational experience so far as "good" or "excellent" compared to domestic White, non-Hispanic students. This was also true to an even greater extent for senior domestic respondents of color.
- Similarly, first-generation respondents were less likely to provide these higher ratings compared to continuing-generation respondents.

- There were no substantial differences between LGBTQ+ identifying respondents and non-LGBTQ+ respondents in their overall ratings.
- Among senior respondents, students with disabilities were less likely to give higher ratings than students without disabilities.

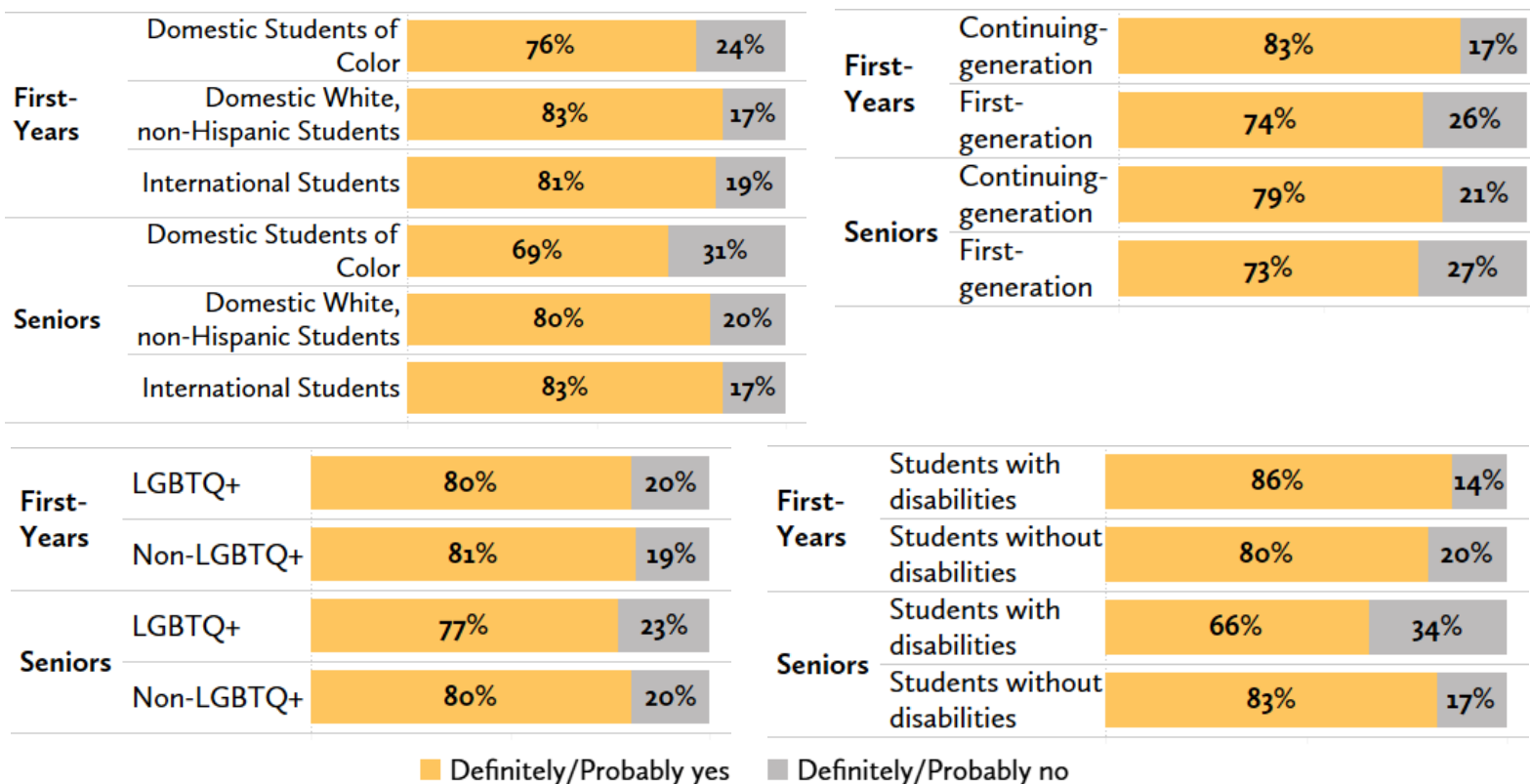
How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?



The majority of student respondents (82% of first-years and 78% of seniors) indicated that they would “definitely” or “probably” choose St. Olaf again if given the chance. These responses were similar to student respondents at other institutions.

- These responses were more similar among different student demographic groups, though domestic respondents of color (especially seniors), first-year first-generation respondents, and senior respondents with disabilities still tended to be less likely than their peers to indicate that they would choose St. Olaf again.

If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?



HEDS Alumni Survey Findings

On the HEDS Alumni Survey, there were three questions related to respondents’ overall experience and connection to St. Olaf.

- Overall, 88% of respondents indicated they were “satisfied” (37%) or “very satisfied” (51%) with their undergraduate education at St. Olaf.
- 85% of alumni respondents felt “some” (47%) or a “very strong” (38%) connection to St. Olaf.
- Both of these were similar to alumni responses at other institutions.
- In a supplemental question St. Olaf added to the survey, 77% of alumni respondents indicated that they felt like they belonged as part of the St. Olaf community during their time at the College (30% responded “quite a bit” and 47% responded “very much”; only 8% responded “very little” or “not at all”).

In a follow-up supplemental question to the one on sense of belonging, alumni were asked to indicate which physical or social spaces on campus helped them develop a sense of belonging at the College. While spaces outside of the classroom (dorms and dining spaces) topped the list, classrooms were not too far behind. Fewer alumni chose specific groups such as athletic teams

or music ensembles, though this likely reflects the fact that not all alumni participated in these activities as students (see [Appendix E](#) for more details).

Alumni were then asked an additional, open-ended follow-up question about their sense of belonging at the college: “What behaviors did individuals on campus (students, staff, and/or faculty) exhibit that helped you feel included as part of the campus community?” Seventy-seven alumni answered this question, and their responses can be categorized as follows (note that several responses fell into more than one category):

- **Personal relationships with friends, professors, or staff (52%).** Several alumni described how having staff or faculty who knew them by name was particularly important.
- **Feeling genuinely supported (38%).** In addition to learning-related support, many alumni also valued the personal support that students, staff, and faculty offered.
- **Other social events or groups (29%).** This included campus events, student clubs and organizations, and study groups.
- **Being explicitly invited into a group, organization, or other space (21%).** Several alumni specifically mentioned invitations to meals as an important factor in their sense of belonging.
- **Other (9%).** These most commonly included mentions of specific spaces on campus that made alumni feel part of the campus community.

Reflections on all Survey Findings

The mismatch between the importance incoming student respondents gave to various social engagements, compared to the emphasis they felt St. Olaf placed on these types of experiences during their first year, may well reflect the impact of the pandemic on St. Olaf’s ability to provide the types of social experiences students desired.

Student respondents from more marginalized identities, especially domestic students of color, first-generation students, and senior students with disabilities felt a lower sense of belonging and did not have as favorable a view of their college experience compared to their peers. However, these student respondents did still seem to exhibit a similar institutional commitment to their peers, given the smaller gaps in the proportion who indicated they would likely choose St. Olaf again when comparing across these same groups.

Encouragingly, the majority of LGBTQ+ identifying respondents rated their overall experience at the College positively, and a similar proportion did so compared to student respondents who do not identify within this community. Additionally, first-year respondents with disabilities were equally likely to feel a sense of belonging and have an overall positive experience compared to student respondents without disabilities. This is especially notable given that their entire college experience thus far occurred during a global pandemic where many individuals from marginalized groups experienced particular challenges.

Academic Engagement

NSSE Engagement Indicators

Several NSSE EIs described students' academic experiences along different dimensions: Collaborative Learning, Higher-Order Learning, Learning Strategies, Quantitative Reasoning, and Reflective & Integrative Learning.

The BCSSSE included the Collaborative Learning, Learning Strategies, and Quantitative Reasoning EI items asking incoming students about their high school experiences (Learning Strategies and Quantitative Reasoning) or college expectations (Collaborative Learning). Faculty were also asked about the importance of students engaging in these behaviors or how much they encouraged students to do so in their courses.

- Incoming student respondents' high school engagement in the activities in the Learning Strategies EI generally matched their first-year experiences, which were similar to senior student respondents' experiences.
- Within Collaborative Learning, incoming student respondents were more likely to expect frequent interaction with peers in preparing for exams than they actually engaged in during their first year. Senior respondents worked more frequently with other students on course projects or assignments than first-year respondents (see [Appendix E](#) for more details). This was similar to students' response patterns for past NSSE administrations.
 - On the FSSE, faculty respondents were most likely to say that they encourage students to ask peers for help understanding material (68% responded quite a bit/very much) or work with students on course projects or assignments (64%) and least likely to report encouraging students to explain course material to each other (56%) or work together to prepare for exams (57%).
- For the Quantitative Reasoning EI items, incoming first-year respondents were more likely to have "reached conclusions based on analysis of numerical information" during their last year of high school compared to their first year at St. Olaf, where their engagement was similar to senior student respondents (see [Appendix E](#) for more details). This was true for past NSSE administrations as well.
 - The majority of faculty respondents (50-70%) rated the Quantitative Reasoning areas as less important in their courses.

On all five of the academic-related engagement indicators, student respondents scored similarly to those at other institutions, and first-year respondents scored significantly higher on the Quantitative Reasoning EI. When disaggregating by student demographics (see [Appendix E](#) for more details):

- First-year respondents: First-generation students scored significantly lower on the Collaborative Learning EI than continuing-generation students.
- Senior respondents:
 - For the Collaborative Learning EI, domestic students of color scored significantly lower than domestic White, non-Hispanic students, and first-generation students scored significantly lower than continuing-generation students.
 - First-generation students also scored significantly lower than continuing-generation students on the Quantitative Reasoning EI.
 - LGBTQ+ students scored significantly lower than non-LGBTQ+ students on the Learning Strategies EI.
 - Students with disabilities scored significantly lower than students without disabilities on the Quantitative Reasoning EI, but significantly higher on the Reflective & Integrative Learning EI.

HEDS Alumni Survey Findings

The HEDS Alumni Survey contained several items related to higher-order learning and reflective and integrative learning, two of the EIs in the NSSE survey. There were also questions related to faculty expectations and teaching strategies (see [Appendix E](#) for more details).

- Though the vast majority of alumni respondents (87%) indicated that faculty frequently posed challenging ideas in class, a smaller proportion felt that their own ideas were frequently challenged by either faculty (59%) or other students (63%). This was true for other alumni respondents as well, though they were slightly more likely to say faculty challenged their ideas in class (St. Olaf: 59%; other institutions: 67%).
- Most alumni respondents had frequent experiences applying their learning within their courses and connecting learning across courses, but much fewer applied what they learned to address a problem not presented in the course, and fewer did so compared to alumni respondents at other institutions (St. Olaf: 38%; other institutions: 45%).

Reflections on all Survey Findings

Most of these findings point to continuing current practices, with some potential room for improvement around collaborative learning and quantitative reasoning. These are also areas where efforts might be made to increase equity of student outcomes.

High-Impact Practices (HIPs)

The table below shows student respondent participation in high-impact practices. As in past survey years, first-year respondents were more likely than those at other institutions to have participated in a learning community, and somewhat less likely to have completed an internship or similar experience or held a leadership role in a student organization.

Table 5. High-Impact Practice Participation⁶				
High-Impact Practice	St. Olaf	Criterion Group	ACM/GLCA Group	Carnegie Group
First-Years				
Internship, field experience, student teaching, etc.	4%	7%*	7%*	8%*
Leadership role in a student organization	8%	14%*	13%*	13%*
Learning community	21%	6%*	6%*	7%*
Study abroad	1%	2%	2%	2%
Undergraduate research	4%	5%	5%	5%
Service-learning	42%	39%	40%	47%*
<i>Participated in at least 1 HIP</i>	54%	44%	45%	51%
<i>Participated in 2 or more HIPs</i>	12%	6%	6%	7%
Seniors				
Internship, field experience, student teaching, etc.	66%	72%*	71%*	69%
Leadership role in a student organization	66%	69%	68%	64%
Learning community	39%	25%*	23%*	28%*
Study abroad	61%	50%*	45%*	41%*
Undergraduate research	51%	51%	54%	45%
Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior thesis, portfolio, etc.)	56%	76%*	81%*	75%*
Service-learning	66%	58%*	60%	63%
<i>Participated in at least 1 HIP</i>	97%	97%	98%	96%
<i>Participated in 2 or more HIPs</i>	87%	88%	89%	86%

* Indicates a statistically significant differences as calculated by NSSE

⁶ Aside from service-learning, all percentages reflect those who indicated the experience was “Done or in progress.” For service-learning, the percentage indicates those who stated at least “some” of their classes included this component. Disaggregated demographic data are not shown here for High-Impact Practices, as this is tracked [separately](#) for all students (not only those who responded to the NSSE) as part of St. Olaf’s strategic plan goals. Thus, the NSSE data on student participation in high-impact practices in this report are discussed only in the context of the institutional comparison data.

Senior respondents were more likely than those at other institutions to have participated in a learning community or studied abroad, and less likely to have completed a capstone or similar experience, matching previous years.

Reflections on the Findings

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on these students' educational experiences, reported participation in internships, student organizations, and study abroad decreased from the previous NSSE administration. Encouragingly, participation in undergraduate research and learning communities remained about the same, while students' self-reported involvement in service-learning-based courses increased. Thus overall, the proportion of students participating in at least one high-impact practice, and those participating in two or more, remained relatively stable since 2018. Additionally, one goal of the new OLE Core requirement "The OLE Experience in Practice" is to ensure all students have at least one of these types of high-impact experiences during their time at St. Olaf.

Methodological Details

During the 2020-21 academic year, St. Olaf administered four institution-level surveys: the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE), the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), and the Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) Alumni Survey.

The BCSSE, NSSE, and FSSE surveys are administered through the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research, and are designed to complement one another. First-year students complete the BCSSE prior to the start of classes in the fall. The survey measures first-years' experiences in high school as well as their expectations for college. The NSSE is administered to first-years (from the same cohort who completed the BCSSE) and seniors in the spring, and provides longitudinal data on students' engagement with a variety of educational experiences as well as their interactions with other students, faculty, and staff. Several questions on the BCSSE are paralleled on the NSSE. The FSSE is administered to current teaching faculty in the spring and asks similar questions about student engagement, faculty perceptions of students' academic experiences, and approaches to teaching. In addition to the core NSSE and FSSE instruments, St. Olaf added two additional topical modules in 2021: Academic Advising and Inclusiveness & Engagement with Cultural Diversity.

Finally, the HEDS Alumni Survey is administered by the HEDS (Higher Education Data Sharing) Consortium to which St. Olaf belongs. This survey asks alumni who graduated from St. Olaf five to six years earlier to reflect back on the impact of their experiences at the college. Alumni from the classes of 2015 and 2016 completed the 2021 HEDS Alumni Survey.

Of the incoming class of first-year students, 73% responded to the BCSSE in the Fall of 2020. The NSSE was administered in the Spring of 2021 to all first-years and seniors, and 53% of first-

years (389 students) and 38% of seniors (289 students) responded. The FSSE was administered in the Spring to all faculty who taught or were currently teaching a course in 2020-21, and 47% responded to the survey. For the HEDS Alumni Survey, 21% of the alumni surveyed from the classes of 2015 and 2016 responded to the survey last May.

Two of these surveys (the NSSE and the HEDS Alumni Survey) also provided comparison data from other institutions that administered these surveys in 2020-21 or recent years (1 year prior for NSSE, 1-3 years prior for the HEDS Alumni Survey). For the NSSE, institutions had the opportunity to select up to three custom comparison groups from the list of participating institutions. St. Olaf selected the following three comparison groups for 2021: a criterion-based comparison group (referred to as “Criterion” in this report), composed of 35 institutions similar in type to St. Olaf (private, Baccalaureate, more selective, highly residential colleges with enrollments under 5,000); an ACM/GLCA comparison group (referred to as “ACM/GLCA” in this report), composed of 15 institutions belonging to the Associated Colleges of the Midwest or the Great Lakes Colleges Association; and a Carnegie classification comparison group (referred to as “Carnegie” in this report), composed of 91 private, not-for-profit institutions with the same Carnegie classification as St. Olaf (Baccalaureate Colleges – Arts & Sciences). See [Appendix A](#) for more information as well as a list of institutions in these groups.

For the HEDS Alumni Survey, the report summarizes responses from alumni at other institutions who received the survey within the past three years. In total, 9,463 alumni from 61 different institutions were included in this comparison group. The specific institutions included are listed in [Appendix B](#).

The official NSSE data report provides both frequency distribution information and mean responses for St. Olaf students as well as students from the three comparison groups. Means are calculated by assigning a number to each response option (e.g., 1-Very little, 2-Some, 3-Quite a bit, 4-Very much) and finding the average. The NSSE data report also provides statistical comparisons between St. Olaf students and students at the comparison institutions. All differences between St. Olaf and comparison groups identified as significant in this report are statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level.

Appendix A: NSSE Comparison Groups

St. Olaf selected the following comparison groups for the NSSE:

Group 1: St. Olaf's [Criterion-Based Comparison Group](#)

A group of institutions selected based on the criteria defined by the PLT and Board of Regents, altered slightly where necessary to match the NSSE categories available and include a decent sample size:

- IPEDS: Sector – Private, not-for-profit
- Baccalaureate – Arts & Sciences focus/Arts & Sciences plus professions, no or some graduate coexistence (according to the [Carnegie Classification definitions](#))
- More selective (four-year, full-time, more selective, lower transfer-in)
- Highly residential
- Enrollment: 1000 - 5000

35 of these institutions administered the NSSE in 2020-21 or the previous year:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Albright College (Reading, PA) | • Lewis & Clark College (Portland, OR) |
| • Allegheny College (Meadville, PA) | • Luther College (Decorah, IA) |
| • Beloit College (Beloit, WI) | • Macalester College (Saint Paul, MN) |
| • Bucknell University (Lewisburg, PA) | • Muhlenberg College (Allentown, PA) |
| • Colby College (Waterville, ME) | • Pitzer College (Claremont, CA) |
| • Colgate University (Hamilton, NY) | • Rhodes College (Memphis, TN) |
| • College of the Holy Cross (Worcester, MA) | • Sarah Lawrence College (Bronxville, NY) |
| • Connecticut College (New London, CT) | • Southwestern University (Georgetown, TX) |
| • Cornell College (Mount Vernon, IA) | • The College of Wooster (Wooster, OH) |
| • Denison University (Granville, OH) | • The University of the South (Sewanee, TN) |
| • DePauw University (Greencastle, IN) | • Vassar College (Poughkeepsie, NY) |
| • Furman University (Greenville, SC) | • Washington and Lee University (Lexington, VA) |
| • Gettysburg College (Gettysburg, PA) | • Westmont College (Santa Barbara, CA) |
| • Grinnell College (Grinnell, IA) | • Wheaton College (Wheaton, IL) |
| • Hamilton College (Clinton, NY) | • Wheaton College (Norton, MA) |
| • Hanover College (Hanover, IN) | • Whitman College (Walla Walla, WA) |
| • Hendrix College (Conway, AR) | |
| • Illinois College (Jacksonville, IL) | |
| • Kenyon College (Gambier, OH) | |

Group 2: ACM/GLCA membership group

These institutions belong to the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (of which St. Olaf is a member) or the Great Lakes Colleges Association (which is often combined with ACM to form a larger comparison group).

15 of these institutions administered the NSSE in 2020-21 or the previous year:

- Albion College (Albion, MI)
- Allegheny College (Meadvville, PA)
- Beloit College (Beloit, WI)
- Cornell College (Mount Vernon, IA)
- Denison University (Granville, OH)
- DePauw University (Greencastle, IN)
- Grinnell College (Grinnell, IA)
- Hope College (Holland, MI)
- Kenyon College (Gambier, OH)
- Knox College (Galesburg, IL)
- Luther College (Decorah, IA)
- Macalester College (St. Paul, MN)
- Ripon College (Ripon, WI)
- The College of Wooster (Wooster, OH)
- Wabash College (Crawfordsville, IN)

Group 3: Carnegie - All private, Bac/A&S institutions

Criteria:

- IPEDS: Sector – Private not-for-profit
- Carnegie Classification: Baccalaureate Colleges – Arts & Sciences focus

91 of these institutions administered the NSSE in 2020-21 or the previous year:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Albion College (Albion, MI) | • Kenyon College (Gambier, OH) |
| • Albright College (Reading, PA) | • Knox College (Galesburg, IL) |
| • Allegheny College (Meadvville, PA) | • Lane College (Jackson, TN) |
| • Aquinas College (Grand Rapids, MI) | • Lewis & Clark College (Portland, OR) |
| • Beloit College (Beloit, WI) | • Linfield University (McMinnville, OR) |
| • Bennington College (Bennington, VT) | • Luther College (Decorah, IA) |
| • Bethany College (Bethany, WV) | • Lycoming College (Williamsport, PA) |
| • Bethany Lutheran College (Mankato, MN) | • Lyon College (Batesville, AR) |
| • Bethune-Cookman University (Daytona Beach, FL) | • Macalester College (Saint Paul, MN) |
| | • Marymount California University (Rancho Palos Verdes, CA) |

- Bridgewater College (Bridgewater, VA)
- Bryn Athyn College of the New Church (Bryn Athyn, PA)
- Bucknell University (Lewisburg, PA)
- Centenary College of Louisiana (Shreveport, LA)
- Chowan University (Murfreesboro, NC)
- Colby College (Waterville, ME)
- Colgate University (Hamilton, NY)
- College of the Atlantic (Bar Harbor, ME)
- College of the Holy Cross (Worcester, MA)
- Concordia College at Moorhead (Moorhead, MN)
- Connecticut College (New London, CT)
- Cornell College (Mount Vernon, IA)
- Covenant College (Lookout Mountain, GA)
- Denison University (Granville, OH)
- DePauw University (Greencastle, IN)
- Doane University (Crete, NE)
- Drew University (Madison, NJ)
- Elizabethtown College (Elizabethtown, PA)
- Furman University (Greenville, SC)
- Georgetown College (Georgetown, KY)
- Gettysburg College (Gettysburg, PA)
- Gordon College (Wenham, MA)
- Goucher College (Baltimore, MD)
- Grinnell College (Grinnell, IA)
- Guilford College (Greensboro, NC)
- Hamilton College (Clinton, NY)
- Hanover College (Hanover, IN)
- Harvey Mudd College (Claremont, CA)
- Hendrix College (Conway, AR)
- Hollins University (Roanoke, VA)
- Hope College (Holland, MI)
- Houghton College (Houghton, NY)
- Illinois College (Jacksonville, IL)
- Judson College (Marion, AL)
- Juniata College (Huntingdon, PA)
- Meredith College (Raleigh, NC)
- Moravian College (Bethlehem, PA)
- Muhlenberg College (Allentown, PA)
- Pitzer College (Claremont, CA)
- Presbyterian College (Clinton, SC)
- Randolph College (Lynchburg, VA)
- Randolph-Macon College (Ashland, VA)
- Rhodes College (Memphis, TN)
- Ripon College (Ripon, WI)
- Saint Anselm College (Manchester, NH)
- Saint Michael's College (Colchester, VT)
- Saint Norbert College (De Pere, WI)
- Saint Vincent College (Latrobe, PA)
- Sarah Lawrence College (Bronxville, NY)
- Simpson College (Indianola, IA)
- Southwestern University (Georgetown, TX)
- Stillman College (Tuscaloosa, AL)
- Stonehill College (Easton, MA)
- Susquehanna University (Selinsgrove, PA)
- Sweet Briar College (Sweet Briar, VA)
- The College of Wooster (Wooster, OH)
- The University of the South (Sewanee, TN)
- University of Pikeville (Pikeville, KY)
- University of Puget Sound (Tacoma, WA)
- University of Richmond (Richmond, VA)
- Vassar College (Poughkeepsie, NY)
- Wabash College (Crawfordsville, IN)
- Warren Wilson College (Swannanoa, NC)
- Washington and Lee University (Lexington, VA)
- Wesleyan College, Macon, Georgia (Macon, GA)
- Westminster College (Fulton, MO)
- Westmont College (Santa Barbara, CA)
- Wheaton College (Wheaton, IL)
- Wheaton College (Norton, MA)
- Whitman College (Walla Walla, WA)
- Willamette University (Salem, OR)
- Young Harris College (Young Harris, GA)

Academic Advising module comparison: All private, Bac/A&S institutions (34) who administered the module:

- Albright College (Reading, PA)
- Aquinas College (Grand Rapids, MI)
- Beloit College (Beloit, WI)
- Bethany College (Bethany, WV)
- Bethany Lutheran College (Mankato, MN)
- Bethune-Cookman University (Daytona Beach, FL)
- Bridgewater College (Bridgewater, VA)
- Bucknell University (Lewisburg, PA)
- Chowan University (Murfreesboro, NC)
- Cornell College (Mount Vernon, IA)
- Denison University (Granville, OH)
- DePauw University (Greencastle, IN)
- Doane University (Crete, NE)
- Elizabethtown College (Elizabethtown, PA)
- Gettysburg College (Gettysburg, PA)
- Goucher College (Baltimore, MD)
- Grinnell College (Grinnell, IA)
- Hanover College (Hanover, IN)
- Hope College (Holland, MI)
- Houghton College (Houghton, NY)
- Judson College (Marion, AL)
- Knox College (Galesburg, IL)
- Meredith College (Raleigh, NC)
- Muhlenberg College (Allentown, PA)
- Pitzer College (Claremont, CA)
- Randolph-Macon College (Ashland, VA)
- Rhodes College (Memphis, TN)
- Saint Norbert College (De Pere, WI)
- Southwestern University (Georgetown, TX)
- Susquehanna University (Selinsgrove, PA)
- University of Pikeville (Pikeville, KY)
- Westminster College (Fulton, MO)
- Westmont College (Santa Barbara, CA)
- Young Harris College (Young Harris, GA)

Inclusiveness and Engagement with Cultural Diversity module comparison: All private, Bac/A&S institutions (25) who administered the module:

- Centenary College of Louisiana (Shreveport, LA)
- Colgate University (Hamilton, NY)
- Cornell College (Mount Vernon, IA)
- Denison University (Granville, OH)
- DePauw University (Greencastle, IN)
- Drew University (Madison, NJ)
- Furman University (Greenville, SC)
- Hope College (Holland, MI)
- Illinois College (Jacksonville, IL)
- Kenyon College (Gambier, OH)
- Lewis & Clark College (Portland, OR)
- Linfield University (McMinnville, OR)
- Macalester College (St. Paul, MN)
- Presbyterian College (Clinton, SC)
- Randolph-Macon College (Ashland, VA)
- Simpson College (Indianola, IA)
- Stonehill College (Easton, MA)
- Sweet Briar College (Sweet Briar, VA)
- The College of Wooster (Wooster, OH)
- The University of the South (Sewanee, TN)
- University of Richmond (Richmond, VA)
- Wabash College (Crawfordsville, IN)
- Wesleyan College, Macon, Georgia (Macon, GA)
- Wheaton College (Wheaton, IL)
- Whitman College (Walla Walla, WA)

Appendix B: HEDS Alumni Comparison Institutions

- Agnes Scott College
- Albertus Magnus College
- Alma College
- Arkansas State University
- Augustana College
- Baldwin Wallace University
- Beloit College
- Benedictine College
- Bucknell University
- Concordia College (MN)
- Cornell College
- Dickinson College
- Dominican University of California
- Earlham College
- George Fox University
- Goshen College
- Grinnell College
- Hamilton College
- Hampden-Sydney College
- Hanover College
- Harvey Mudd College
- Haverford College
- Hood College
- Illinois Wesleyan University
- Kalamazoo College
- Kenyon College
- Knox College
- Lewis & Clark College
- Loyola University Maryland
- Luther College
- Macalester College
- Manhattan College
- Mills College
- Olivet College
- Ouachita Baptist University
- Principia College
- Quinnipiac University
- Reed College
- Saint Anselm College
- Saint Leo University
- Saint Martin's University
- Scripps College
- Southwestern University
- St. Edwards University
- St. Norbert College
- Susquehanna University
- The American University of Paris
- The College of New Jersey
- The College of St. Scholastica
- Trinity University
- Trinity University (TX)
- Union College
- University of California - Irvine
- University of Redlands
- University of Saint Katherine
- Wake Forest University
- Washburn University
- Whittier College
- William Woods University
- Wofford College
- Xavier University

Appendix C: NSSE Engagement Indicators

The NSSE Engagement Indicators (EIs) group sets of similar items together to provide a summary of ten distinct aspects of student engagement. Each Engagement Indicator is based on three to eight survey questions. The response sets for each question item included in the EI are converted to a 60-point scale (e.g., Never = 0, Sometimes = 20, Often = 40, Very often = 60). A student score of 0 on an EI means that the student responded at the bottom end of the scale on every item in the EI, while a score of 60 means the student responded at the top of the scale on every item. Individual student scores are averaged to produce the mean score for all students on each EI. The NSSE report contains mean scores for all comparison groups as well, along with statistical comparisons between St. Olaf and the comparison groups. The table below shows the NSSE question items included in each Engagement Indicator.

Engagement Indicator	NSSE Question Items⁷
Higher-Order Learning	<p>4. During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations c. Analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts d. Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source e. Forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information
Reflective & Integrative Learning	<p>2. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments b. Connected your learning to societal problems or issues c. Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments d. Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue e. Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective

⁷ EIs do not always include all sub-items within a question (e.g., Higher-Order Learning only includes items 4b through 4e)

Table A1. NSSE Engagement Indicator Items	
Engagement Indicator	NSSE Question Items⁷
Reflective & Integrative Learning (cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> f. Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept g. Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge
Learning Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identified key information from reading assignments b. Reviewed your notes after class c. Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials
Quantitative Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reached conclusions based on your own analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics, etc.) b. Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.) c. Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information
Collaborative Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Asked another student to help you understand course material c. Explained course material to one or more students d. Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students e. Worked with other students on course projects or assignments
Discussions with Diverse Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8. During the current school year, about how often have you had discussions with people from the following groups? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. People from a race or ethnicity other than your own b. People from an economic background other than your own

Table A1. NSSE Engagement Indicator Items	
Engagement Indicator	NSSE Question Items⁷
Discussions with Diverse Others (cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. People with religious beliefs other than your own d. People with political views other than your own
Student Faculty Interaction	<p>3. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Talked about career plans with a faculty member b. Worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.) c. Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class d. Discussed your academic performance with a faculty member
Effective Teaching Practices	<p>5. During the current school year, to what extent have your instructors done the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Clearly explained course goals and requirements b. Taught course sessions in an organized way c. Used examples or illustrations to explain difficult points d. Provided feedback on a draft or work in progress e. Provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments
Quality of Interactions	<p>13. Indicate the quality of your interactions with the following people at your institution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Students b. Academic advisors c. Faculty d. Student services staff (career services, student activities, housing, etc.) e. Other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid, etc.)

Table A1. NSSE Engagement Indicator Items	
Engagement Indicator	NSSE Question Items ⁷
Supportive Environment	14. How much does your institution emphasize the following? b. Providing support to help students succeed academically c. Using learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, etc.) d. Encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ethnic, religious, etc.) e. Providing opportunities to be involved socially f. Providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counseling, etc.) g. Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.) h. Attending campus activities and events (performing arts, athletic events, etc.) i. Attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues

Appendix D: St. Olaf Survey Respondent Demographics

Table A2. Respondent demographics for the 2021 BCSSE, NSSE, FSSE, and HEDS Alumni Surveys		
Survey	Survey Respondents ⁸	Survey Population ⁹
BCSSE		
Total	550	754
Domestic Students of Color	125 (23%)	177 (23%)
Domestic White, non-Hispanic Students	372 (68%)	501 (66%)
International Students	40 (7%)	49 (6%)
Unknown/Did not disclose	13 (2%)	27 (4%)
Continuing-Generation	442 (80%)	606 (80%)
First-Generation	108 (20%)	148 (20%)
NCSSE		
First-Years		
Total	389	752
Domestic Students of Color	94 (24%)	185 (25%)
Domestic White, non-Hispanic Students	259 (67%)	507 (67%)
International Students	34 (9%)	53 (7%)
Unknown/Did not disclose	2 (<1%)	7 (1%)
Continuing-Generation	307 (79%)	604 (80%)
First-Generation	82 (21%)	148 (20%)
LGBTQ+ ¹⁰	86 (22%)	Not available
Non-LGBTQ+	227 (58%)	Not available
Unknown/Did not disclose	76 (20%)	Not available
Students with disabilities ¹⁰	58 (15%)	Not available
Students without disabilities	265 (68%)	Not available
Unknown/Did not disclose	66 (17%)	Not available
Seniors		
Total	289	755
Domestic Students of Color	52 (18%)	151 (20%)
Domestic White, non-Hispanic Students	211 (73%)	515 (68%)
International Students	22 (8%)	81 (11%)
Unknown/Did not disclose	4 (1%)	8 (1%)

⁸ Includes those who responded to at least one question; response counts varied somewhat for each question.

⁹ All individuals invited to complete the survey.

¹⁰ Available for students who took the survey but not the full population, as IE&A does not have access to disability information and we do not systematically collect information on students' gender identities/sexual orientations.

Continuing-Generation	244 (84%)	619 (82%)
First-Generation	45 (16%)	136 (18%)
LGBTQ+	65 (22%)	Not available
Non-LGBTQ+	178 (62%)	Not available
Unknown/Did not disclose	46 (16%)	Not available
Students with disabilities	58 (20%)	Not available
Students without disabilities	196 (68%)	Not available
Unknown/Did not disclose	35 (12%)	Not available
FSSE		
Total	123	264
Tenured/Tenure Track	73 (59%)	163 (62%)
Term/Special/Other	34 (28%)	101 (38%)
Unknown	16 (13%) ¹¹	0 (0%)
HEDS Alumni Survey		
Total	282	1,326
Domestic Persons of Color	40 (14%)	201 (15%)
Domestic White, non-Hispanic	228 (81%)	1,043 (79%)
International	14 (5%)	81 (6%)
Unknown	0 (0%)	1 (<1%)

¹¹ The FSSE was anonymous, and not all faculty disclosed their tenure status

Appendix E: Additional Data Details

NSSE Engagement Indicators

The following tables show the NSSE Engagement Indicators, organized by each section of the main report, with data disaggregated to compare scores between domestic students of color, domestic White, non-Hispanic students, and international students; first-generation and continuing-generation students; LGBTQ+ identifying students¹² and non-LGBTQ+ students; and students with disabilities¹³ compared to those without.

In general, these indicators convert question response items (such as Never, Sometimes, Often, and Very Often) into scores of 0, 20, 40, and 60, respectively, and then average student responses across all questions in the EI. Thus, an average of 0-20 indicates that students are having experiences or engaging in a particular behavior very infrequently, while averages of 40-60 indicate that they are frequently encountering or engaging in these behaviors and experiences. Scores in the middle range (20-40) indicate somewhat frequent engagement.

For all tables, a * indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) between one or more groups; see report narrative for more details.

Table A3. Discussions with Diverse Others: Disaggregation by Student Demographics	
NSSE Engagement Indicator:	Discussions with Diverse Others
First-Year Respondents	
All respondents	38.4
Domestic students of color ¹⁴	40.5
Domestic White, non-Hispanic Students	36.8*
International students	44.4*
Continuing-generation students	37.8
First-generation students	40.2
LGBTQ+ students	36.9
Non-LGBTQ+ students	38.8
Students with disabilities	41.8*
Students without disabilities	37.4*

¹² Those who responded “Another gender identity” (aside from “Man” or “Woman”) to the question “What is your gender identity?” and/or selected a sexual orientation other than “straight (heterosexual).” Excludes those who selected “I prefer not to respond” or didn’t answer.

¹³ Those who answered “yes” to the question “Do you have a disability or condition that impacts your learning, working, or living activities?” Excludes those who selected “I prefer not to respond” or didn’t answer.

¹⁴ Not all students disclosed this information.

Table A3. Discussions with Diverse Others: Disaggregation by Student Demographics

NSSE Engagement Indicator:	Discussions with Diverse Others
Senior Respondents	
All respondents	38.5
Domestic students of color	38.6
Domestic White, non-Hispanic Students	38.1
International students	40.8
Continuing-generation students	38.0
First-generation students	40.8
LGBTQ+ students	35.6
Non-LGBTQ+ students	39.1
Students with disabilities	40.2
Students without disabilities	37.6

Table A4. Experiences with Faculty: Disaggregation by Student Demographics

NSSE Engagement Indicator (EI):	Student-Faculty Interaction	Effective Teaching
First-Year Respondents		
All respondents	21.3	38.4
Domestic students of color	23.7*	37.9
Domestic White, non-Hispanic Students	19.7*	38.4
International students	27.3*	40.9
Continuing-generation students	20.7	38.2
First-generation students	23.4	39.2
LGBTQ+ students	21.1	37.2
Non-LGBTQ+ students	21.3	39.5
Students with disabilities	22.5	36.6
Students without disabilities	20.5	38.7
Senior Respondents		
All respondents	27.0	40.1
Domestic students of color	23.0*	37.1
Domestic White, non-Hispanic Students	23.9*	40.7
International students	35.7*	40.0

Table A4. Experiences with Faculty: Disaggregation by Student Demographics		
NSSE Engagement Indicator (EI):	Student-Faculty Interaction	Effective Teaching
Continuing-generation students	27.0	40.5
First-generation students	26.7	37.8
LGBTQ+ students	24.6	38.6
Non-LGBTQ+ students	27.3	40.6
Students with disabilities	24.6	38.3
Students without disabilities	27.1	40.6

Table A5. Campus Climate: Disaggregation by Student Demographics		
NSSE Engagement Indicator:	Supportive Environment	Quality of Interactions
First-Year Respondents		
All respondents	33.6	42.0
Domestic students of color	34.3	41.8
Domestic White, non-Hispanic Students	32.9	42.4
International students	38.0	40.0
Continuing-generation students	33.6	42.4
First-generation students	33.6	40.2
LGBTQ+ students	32.5	42.1
Non-LGBTQ+ students	34.7	42.1
Students with disabilities	31.1	43.1
Students without disabilities	34.1	41.5
Senior Respondents		
All respondents	30.9	44.2
Domestic students of color	29.2	39.2*
Domestic White, non-Hispanic Students	31.3	44.9*
International students	31.6	47.9*
Continuing-generation students	31.3	44.8
First-generation students	28.7	40.7
LGBTQ+ students	28.0*	43.0
Non-LGBTQ+ students	32.0*	45.0
Students with disabilities	25.2*	41.0*
Students without disabilities	32.5*	45.2*

Table A6. Academic Engagement: Disaggregation by Student Demographics

NSSE Engagement Indicator:	Collaborative Learning	Higher-Order Learning	Learning Strategies	Quantitative Reasoning	Reflective & Integrative Learning
First-Year Respondents					
All respondents	32.2	40.9	37.5	30.5	37.7
Domestic students of color	31.6	41.1	37.5	29.7	38.5
Domestic White, non-Hispanic Students	32.9	40.7	38.4	30.2	37.3
International students	31.5	43.3	34.3	29.7	39.2
Continuing-generation students	33.3*	41.2	38.3	30.0	38.1
First-generation students	29.6*	40.1	36.1	30.5	36.9
LGBTQ+ students	31.1	41.9	39.3	29.1	39.1
Non-LGBTQ+ students	33.3	41.0	37.5	31.0	37.9
Students with disabilities	32.8	42.0	39.4	28.4	39.1
Students without disabilities	33.1	40.9	37.4	30.6	37.8
Senior Respondents					
All respondents	34.9	43.2	37.8	31.6	40.7
Domestic students of color	30.7*	41.6	37.2	27.9	38.2
Domestic White, non-Hispanic Students	36.1*	43.6	38.5	32.4	41.5
International students	34.3	43.8	37.0	28.7	40.8
Continuing-generation students	35.8*	43.6	38.5	32.4*	40.9
First-generation students	30.2*	41.0	35.3	26.2*	40.5
LGBTQ+ students	34.1	42.5	34.3*	28.2	43.1
Non-LGBTQ+ students	35.0	43.7	38.9*	32.4	40.2
Students with disabilities	34.8	42.2	37.3	27.5*	43.6*
Students without disabilities	35.0	43.4	37.9	32.7*	40.0*

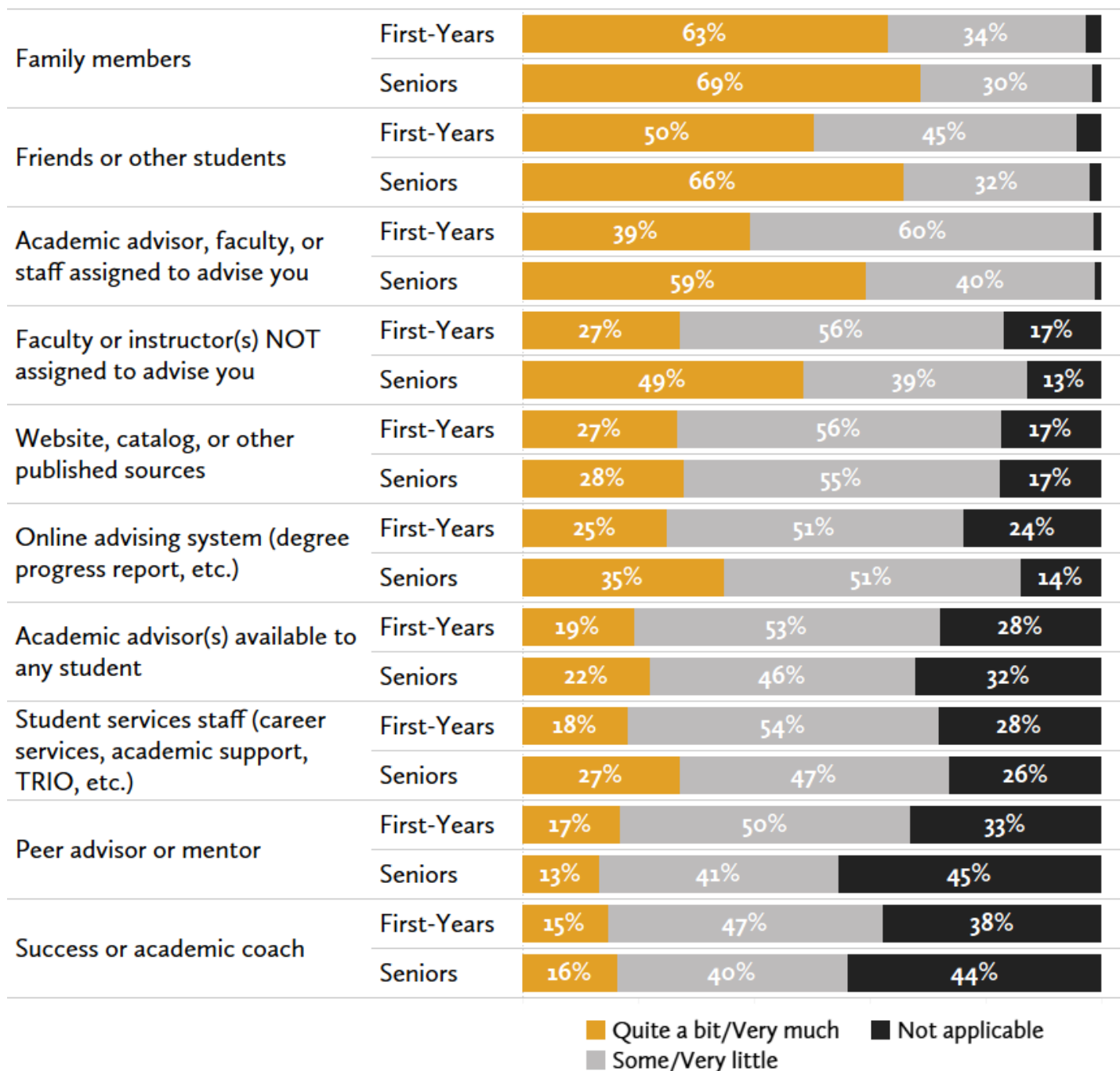
Academic Advising

The table below shows disaggregated response patterns for items related to advisors' care for students' overall well-being, whether they actively listen to students' concerns, and their level of respect for students' identities and cultures.

Table A7. Academic Advising: How much have people and resources at your institution done the following?			
	Cared about your overall well-being	Actively listened to your concerns	Respected your identity and culture
First-Year Respondents			
All respondents	69%	60%	80%
Domestic students of color	72%	59%	73%
Domestic White, non-Hispanic Students	69%	60%	83%
International students	68%	67%	76%
Continuing-generation students	70%	60%	82%
First-generation students	65%	58%	72%
LGBTQ+ students	53%	65%	76%
Non-LGBTQ+ students	76%	60%	81%
Students with disabilities	61%	61%	83%
Students without disabilities	70%	59%	79%
Senior Respondents			
All respondents	79%	72%	85%
Domestic students of color	64%	55%	65%
Domestic White, non-Hispanic Students	82%	76%	88%
International students	79%	74%	89%
Continuing-generation students	80%	73%	86%
First-generation students	73%	67%	77%
LGBTQ+ students	70%	62%	90%
Non-LGBTQ+ students	82%	76%	83%
Students with disabilities	64%	57%	76%
Students without disabilities	84%	77%	88%

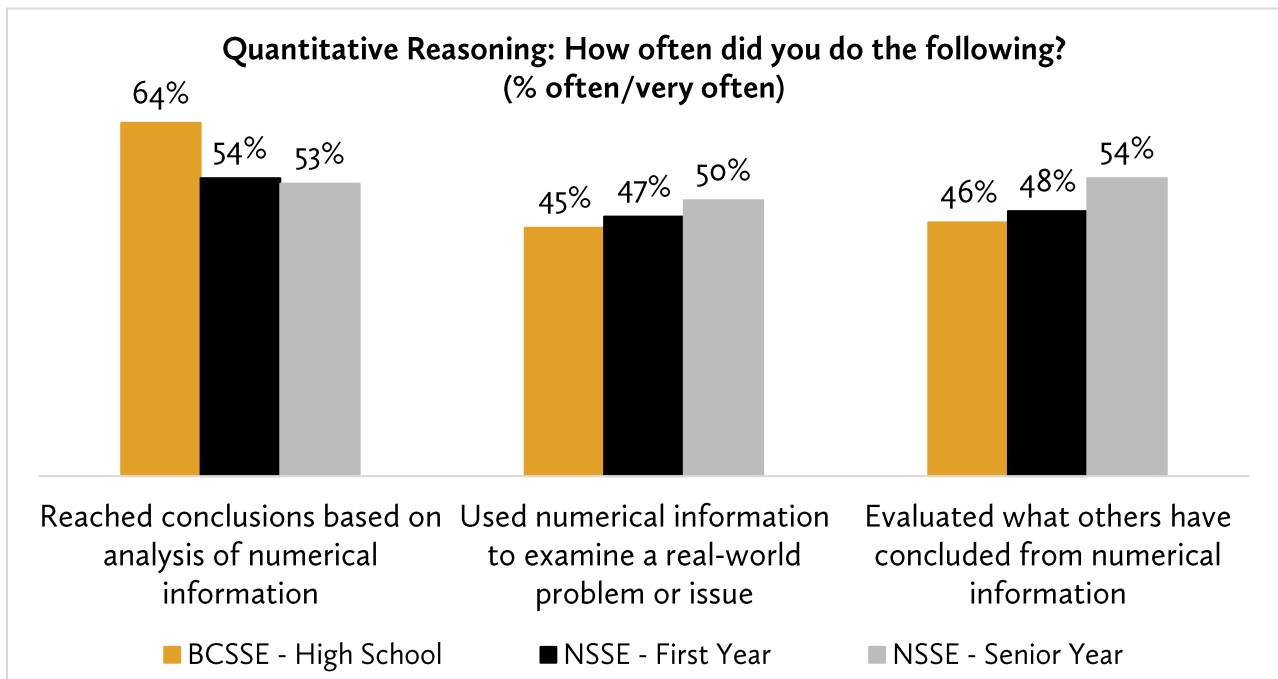
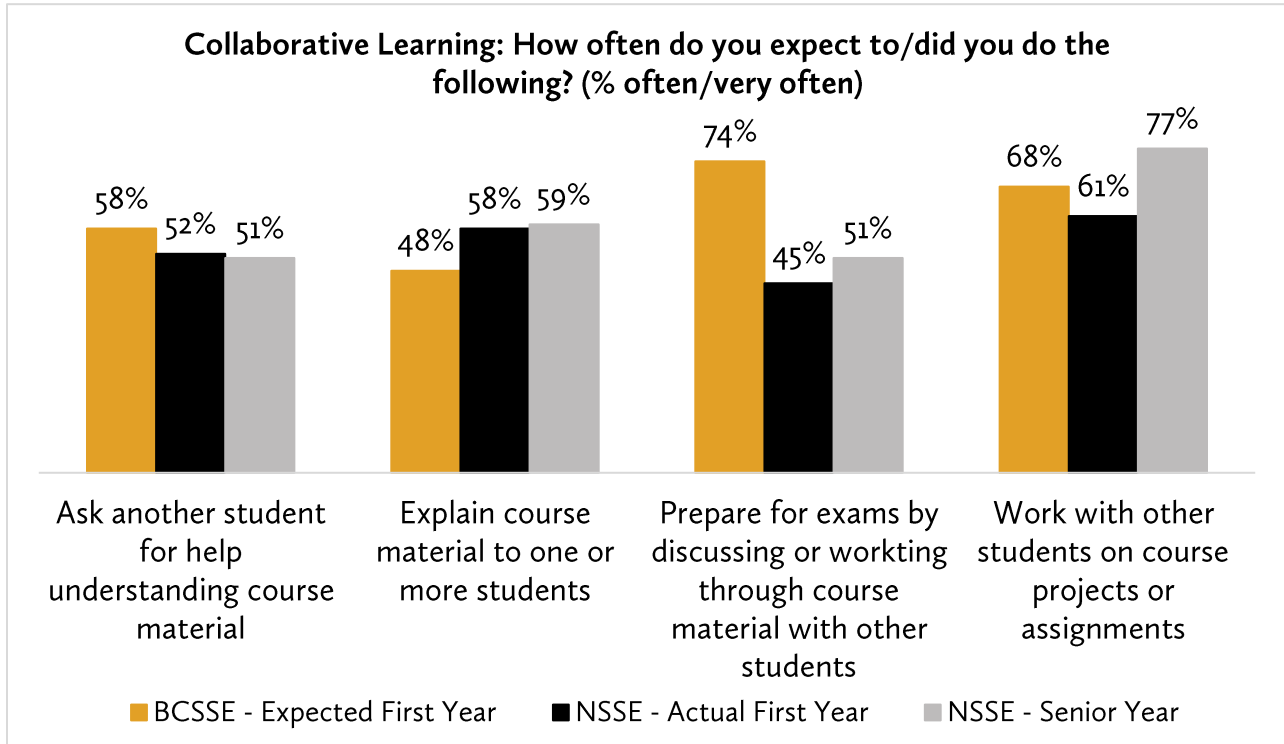
The figure below shows additional details about the types of individuals students turned to for advice on their academic plans and goals.

How much have each of the following helped you develop your academic goals and future plans?



Collaborative Learning and Quantitative Reasoning

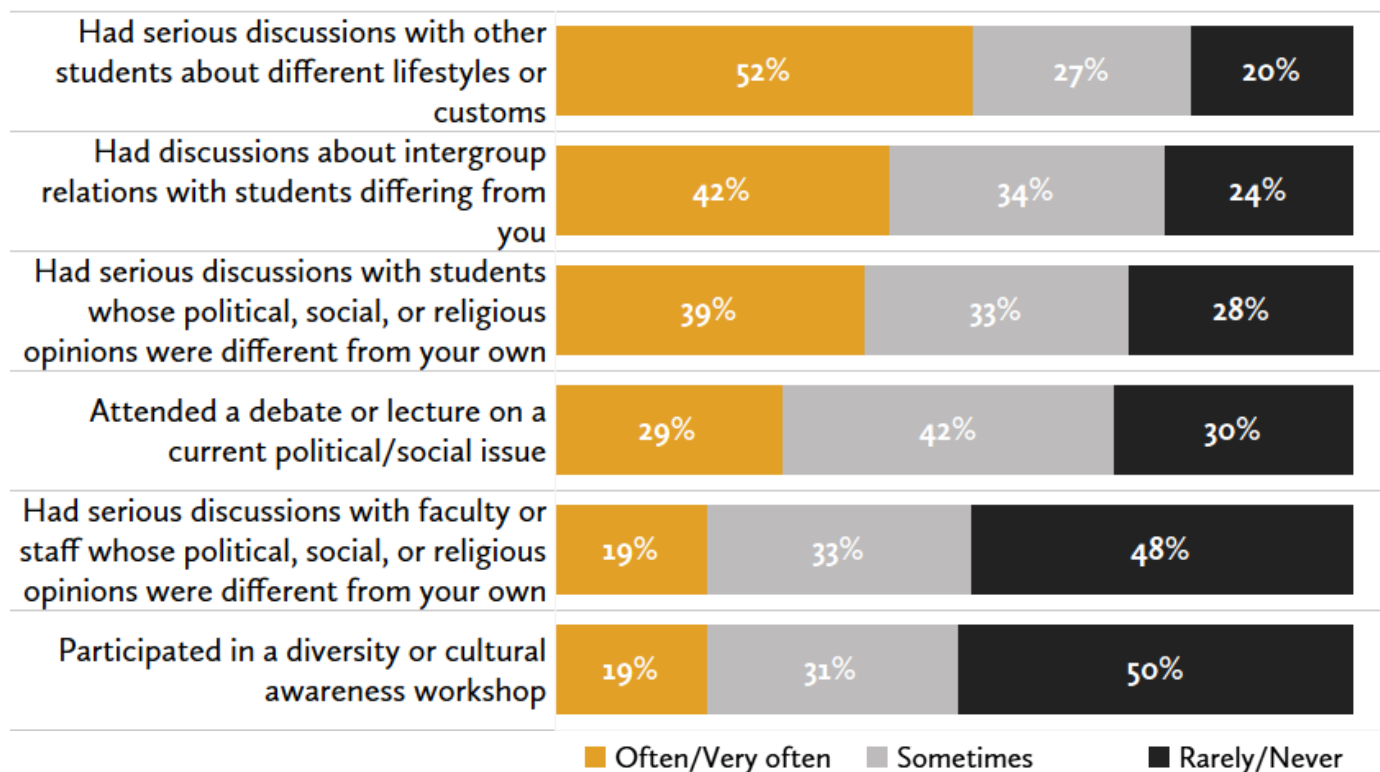
The graphs below show student responses from the BCSE and NSSE on the Collaborative Learning and Quantitative Reasoning Engagement Indicators.



HEDS Alumni Survey Data

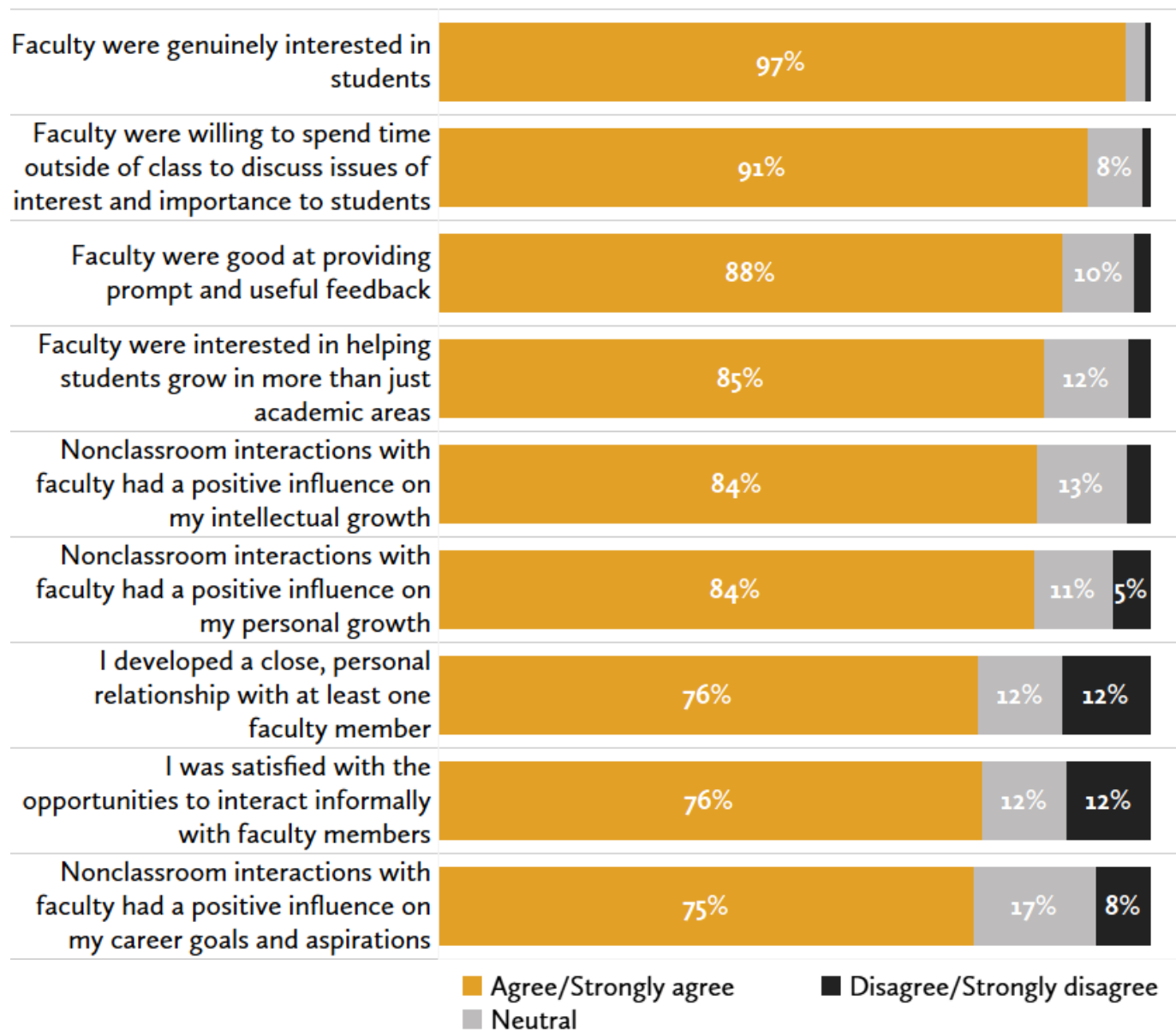
The following figure shows how frequently alumni engaged in various discussions about different customs or views, and how frequently they attended various events.

How often did you have the following experiences as an undergraduate?



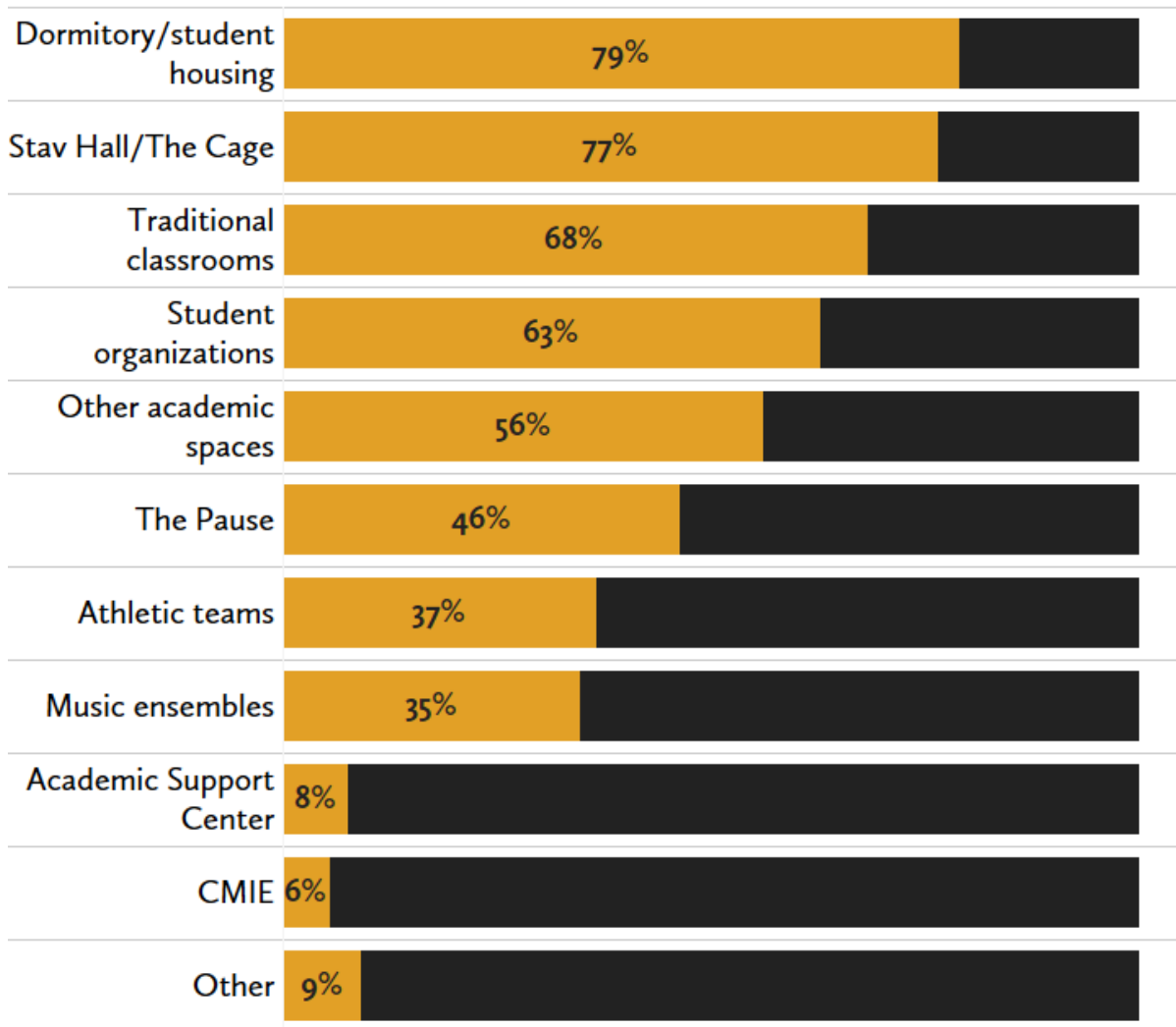
The figure below shows alumni responses to questions about their interactions with faculty during their time at St. Olaf.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following:



In a follow-up supplemental question to the one on sense of belonging, alumni were asked to indicate which physical or social spaces on campus helped them develop a sense of belonging at the College. Respondents could select any number of campus spaces from the list. The following figure shows the percentage of respondents who selected each choice.

Which of the following spaces helped you develop a sense of belonging at the college?



The figure below shows alumni responses to questions related to experiences in the classroom, faculty expectations, and teaching strategies.

