

ORAP Research Bulletin

*Office of Research, Assessment & Planning
Adelphi University*

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2008 Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)

The Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) is designed to measure faculty expectations of student engagement in educational practices that are empirically linked with high levels of learning and development. Last administered to Adelphi University faculty in spring 2004, FSSE asks faculty members about a variety of educational topics that mimic the questions asked of students in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)¹. FSSE also asks how faculty members spend their time on professorial activities, and on the kinds of learning experiences their institution emphasizes. In spring 2008, web-based questionnaires were sent to all full-time faculty at Adelphi. The overall response rate at Adelphi was 39 percent (the average response rate for all FSSE participating institutions was 41%). In this bulletin, faculty's responses are compared to those from other doctoral peer institutions (Adelphi's Carnegie Classification), and to all national respondents. NSSE results are also presented, when the comparisons are noteworthy.

Respondents' Characteristics and Representativeness

- ❖ Close to 50 percent of Adelphi's FSSE respondents were either untenured faculty or assistant professors. Eighty-eight percent of them earned doctoral degrees; more than 55 percent of them were females; 70 percent of them identified themselves as White/Caucasian, slightly more than 10 percent were members of a minority group, and close to 20 percent preferred not to respond.
- ❖ Compared to Adelphi's full-time faculty population, more of Adelphi's FSSE respondents were assistant professors, untenured faculty, doctoral degree holders, and females.
- ❖ Compared to the doctoral and all national peers, more Adelphi respondents were assistant professors, untenured faculty, doctoral degree holders, and females.
- ❖ As noted above, Adelphi chose to administer the survey to full-time faculty only; however, among all FSSE participating institutions, 19 percent of respondents were part-time.

¹ NSSE measures the extent to which students engage in a variety of educational practices that are empirically linked to positive learning and development outcomes. Adelphi University has participated in the NSSE survey since its inception in 2000 (with the exception of 2006).

Meeting Strategic Planning Goals

Survey data provide useful tools for gauging Adelphi University’s success in reaching important goals laid out in its strategic plan and for identifying additional institutional priorities. Three of the four strategic goals (*Academic Program Improvement, Faculty Development, Student Recruitment and Retention*) were reflected in FSSE and using relevant survey results, are briefly addressed below.

Strategic Goal: Academic Program Improvement

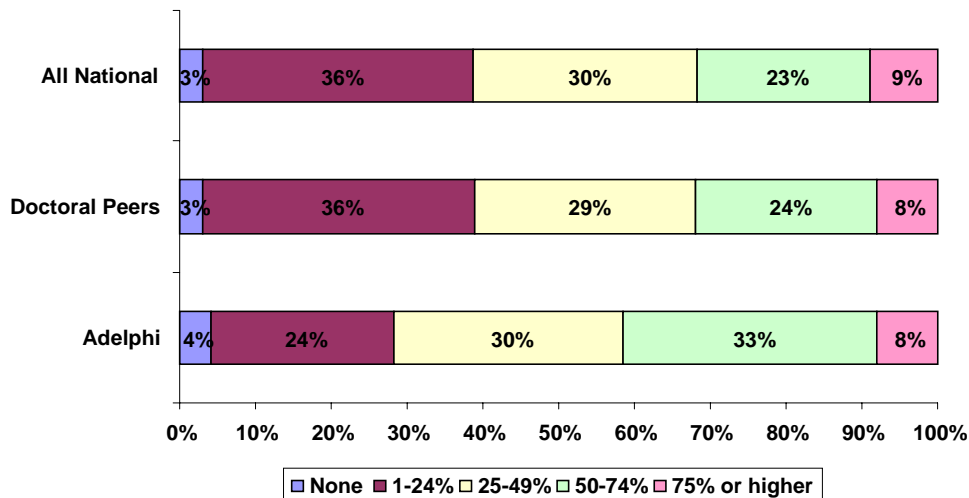
Objective: Provide academic programs that are challenging and rigorous

- ❖ Adelphi faculty reported placing emphasis on “higher-level learning” (e.g., applying theories, synthesizing information) as often as or slightly more often than their peers.

Percent of faculty who emphasized the following mental activities ‘quite a bit’ or ‘very much’		
Adelphi	Doctoral Peers	All FSSE
Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations		
86%	82%	72%
Synthesizing information into new, more complex interpretations and relationships		
83%	84%	85%

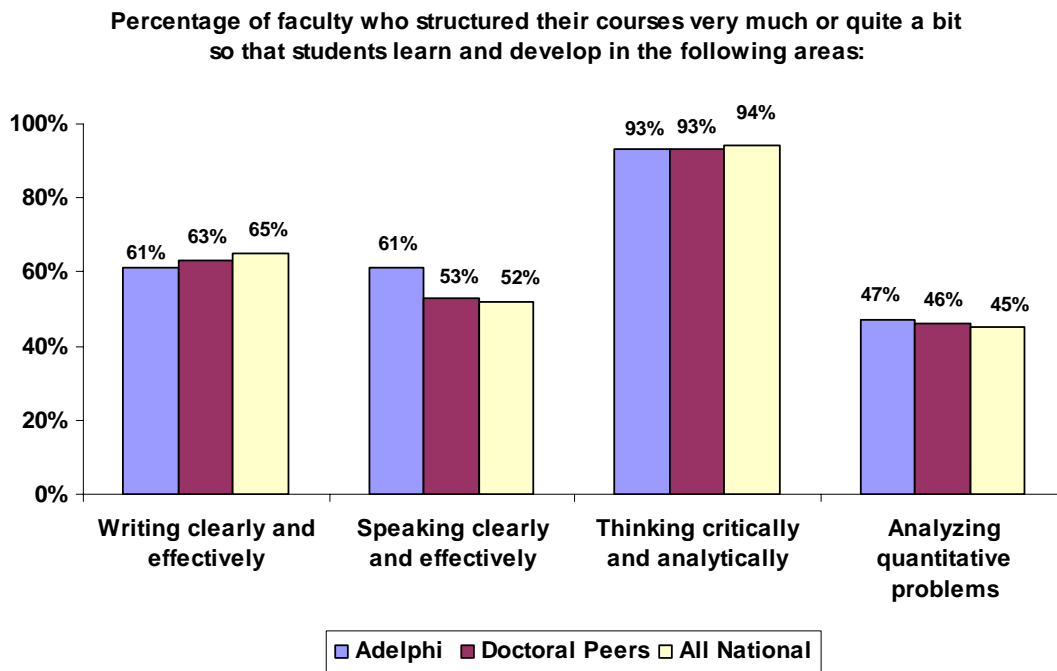
- ❖ Compared to the peer institutions, a higher percentage of Adelphi faculty indicated students frequently work harder than they usually do to meet their standards.

Proportion of students who frequently work harder than they usually do in order to meet faculty’s standards



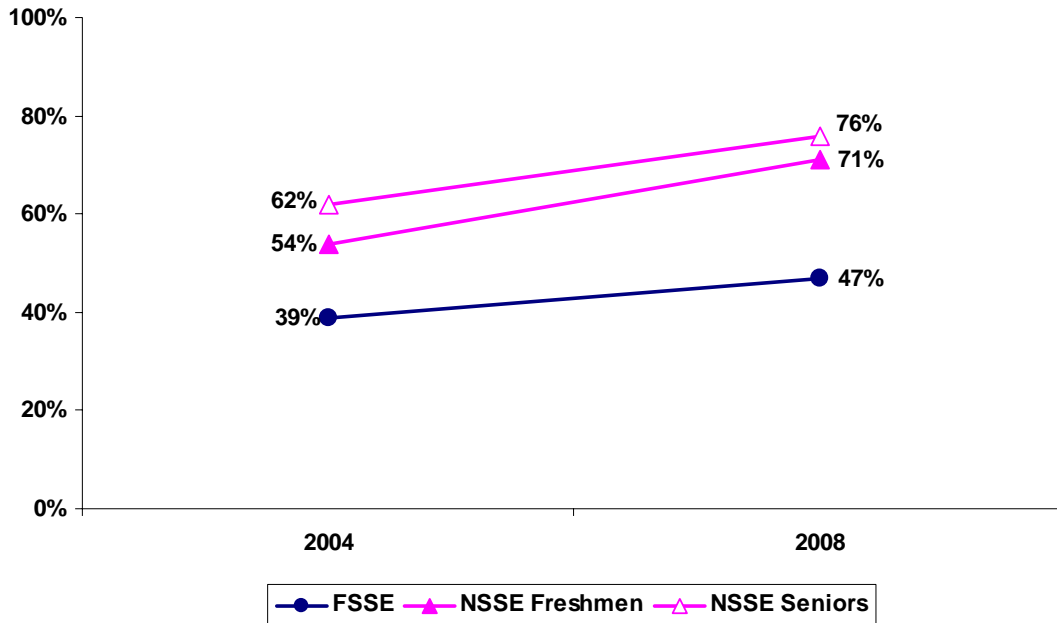
Objective: Provide a broad-based General Education Program

- ❖ Compared to peer institutions, a similar proportion of Adelphi faculty reported structuring their selected courses sections so that students learn and develop “writing clearly and effectively,” “thinking critically and analytically,” and “analyzing quantitative problems.”
- ❖ Positively, a larger proportion of Adelphi faculty reported structuring the course for students to develop “speaking clearly and effectively” when compared with the peers.



- ❖ In the past, both current students and recent graduates have reported weak institutional emphasis on analyzing quantitative problems. Encouragingly, based on the trends data from both NSSE and FSSE, a stronger institutional emphasis has been observed.

Emphasis on analyzing quantitative problems: Adelphi FSSE-NSSE Trend



Objective: Improve Information Literacy

- ❖ Compared with the peer institutions, a smaller proportion of Adelphi faculty reported that they engaged students in using an electronic medium (e.g., listserv, chat group, internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment.

Percentage of faculty who engaged students in using an electronic medium to discuss or complete an assignment 'very often' or 'often'		
Adelphi	Doctoral Peers	All FSSE
43%	48%	47%

- ❖ Overall, Adelphi faculty reported less institutional emphasis on encouraging students to use computers in their academic work, compared with the peer institutions.

Percentage of faculty who reported their institution emphasize 'very much' or 'quite a bit' in encouraging students to use computers in their academic work		
Adelphi	Doctoral Peers	All FSSE
85%	92%	89%

- ❖ Although Adelphi faculty reported less institutional emphasis on encouraging students to use computers in their academic work than did their peers, there is a slight upward trend in Adelphi's efforts to increase computer use in academic work based on FSSE and NSSE trend data.

Emphasis on using computers in academic work: Adelphi FSSE-NSSE Trend			
	FSSE	NSSE-Freshmen	NSSE-Seniors
2004	81%	80%	85%
2008	85%	85%	90%

Objective: Build Global and Participatory Citizenship

- ❖ Compared to their peers, Adelphi faculty reported a similar institutional level of importance on undergraduate participation in community service or volunteer work.

Percentage of faculty who reported it's 'very important' or 'important' for the undergraduates at their institutions to do community service or volunteer work		
Adelphi	Doctoral Peers	All FSSE
61%	60%	57%

- ❖ Encouragingly, compared to peer institutions, a higher proportion of Adelphi faculty reported structuring their courses so that students learn and develop an “understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds.”

Percentage of faculty who structured their courses 'very often' or 'often' so that students learn and develop an understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds		
Adelphi	Doctoral Peers	All FSSE
59%	48%	44%

- ❖ A larger proportion of Adelphi faculty reported that they frequently engaged students in discussion or writing assignments that include diverse perspectives, than did their peers. The institutional emphasis on diverse perspectives was also reported by students in NSSE.

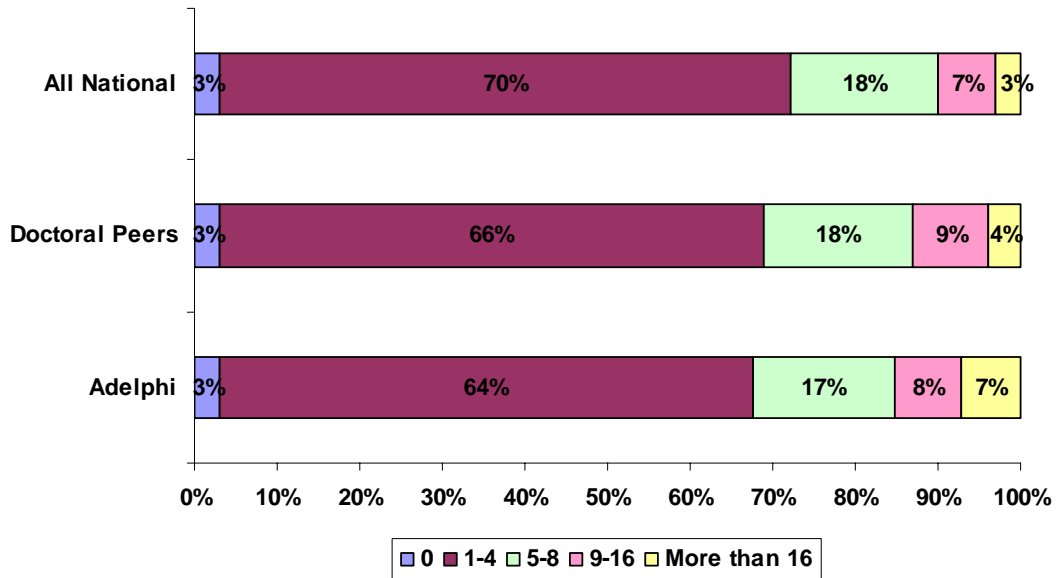
Percentage of faculty who engaged students 'very often' or 'often' in discussions or writing assignments that include diverse perspectives		
Adelphi	Doctoral Peers	All FSSE
56%	48%	47%

Strategic Goal: Faculty Development

Objective: Support/Improve Faculty Teaching, Scholarship, and Service

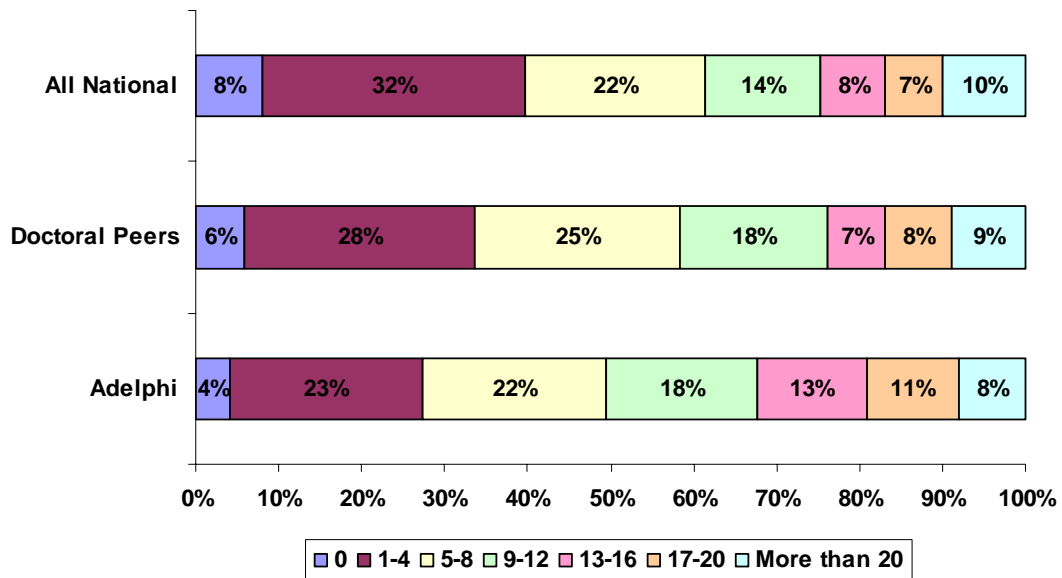
- ❖ Adelphi faculty reported spending a comparable amount of time reflecting on ways to improve teaching as that of their peers at other institutions.

**Hours Spent in a Typical 7-day Week
Reflecting on Ways to Improve Teaching**



- ❖ Compared with peer institutions, a higher proportion of Adelphi faculty reported spending at least thirteen hours each week engaging in research and scholarly activities.

**Hours Spent in a Typical 7-day Week
Engaging in Research and Scholarly Activities**



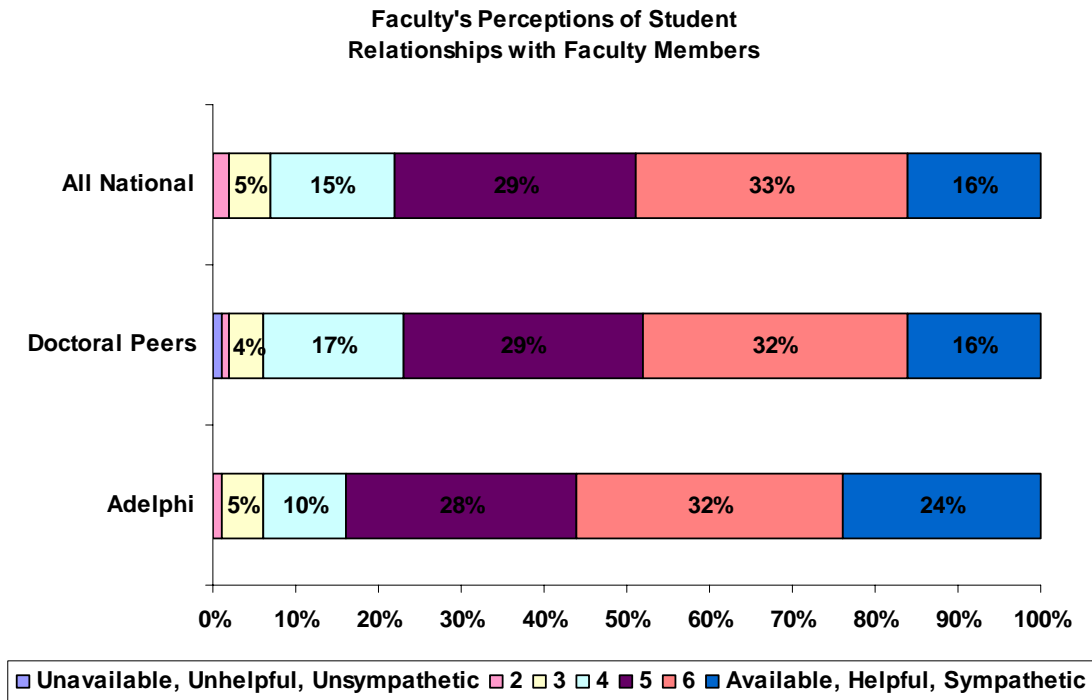
Strategic Goal: Student Recruitment and Retention

Objective: Enhance the overall quality of students' experience

- ❖ Compared to their peers at other institutions, a larger proportion of Adelphi faculty reported providing students with the support they need to succeed academically. Also, the proportion of Adelphi faculty who helped students to cope with non-academic responsibilities was similar to that of their peer groups.

Percentage of faculty who reported their institution emphasized 'quite a bit' or 'very much'...		
Adelphi	Doctoral Peers	All FSSE
Providing students the support they need to succeed academically		
79%	70%	74%
Helping students cope with non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)		
32%	32%	33%

- ❖ Adelphi faculty described their relationships with students as more positive (i.e., available, helpful, sympathetic) than did their peers. Encouragingly, these similar positive interactions were also reported by students in NSSE.



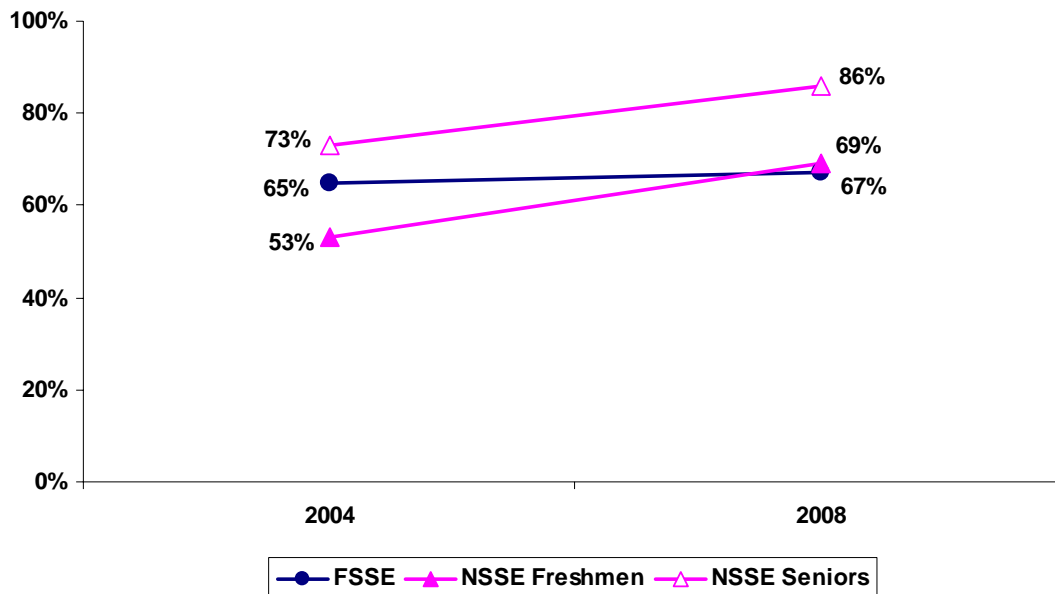
Objective: Assist students in career and life planning

- ❖ A slightly smaller proportion of Adelphi faculty structured their courses so that students learn and develop job or work-related knowledge and skills, as compared to their peers.

Percentage of faculty who structured their courses 'quite a bit' or 'very much' so that students learn and develop job or work-related knowledge and skills		
Adelphi	Doctoral Peers	All FSSE
67%	72%	69%

- ❖ Adelphi students reported a notable increase in institutional emphasis on acquiring job-related knowledge and skills although the proportion of Adelphi faculty who reported they structured their courses to include work-related knowledge and skills did not increase as much. The most likely explanation for this discrepancy is that students were asked to report on their overall college experience while faculty were asked to report on one specific, self-selected course.

Emphasis on acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills:
Adelphi FSSE-NSSE Trend



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