

**Results of the National Survey of Student
Engagement (NSSE) Report**

Adelphi University
Office of Research, Assessment and Planning
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INTRODUCTION—DESCRIPTION OF NSSE REPORT

In the spring of 2000, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) was administered to Adelphi freshmen and senior undergraduates as part of a nationwide survey. The annual survey is designed to help institutions assess their educational practices by asking students a variety of questions about their undergraduate experiences.

The NSSE is distributed and analyzed by the Center for Post-Secondary Research & Planning at Indiana University and is supported by a grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts. In Spring 2000, 63,226 students (30,823 freshmen and 32,403 seniors) from 276 colleges and universities responded to the survey. Responses of Adelphi students are compared not only to all national responses but also to a smaller sample of similar institutions, based on Carnegie classification. Adelphi has been grouped in a category with 23 other institutions, “Doctoral Universities I and II,” which includes such schools as American University, George Mason University, Polytechnic University in Brooklyn, and Seton Hall University. Excluding Adelphi responses, a total of 6,216 students (3,035 freshmen and 3,181 seniors) in the Doctoral Universities I and II group responded to the survey. Adelphi is also participating in the 2001 National Survey of Student Engagement. Responses from the up-coming survey can be used to assess the validity of the 2000 findings.

The information provided in the NSSE report was not weighted; that is, the data were not adjusted to more accurately reflect the actual demographics of the student population or to compensate for different response rates between institutions participating in the survey. This may be problematic since, as will be seen below, women and seniors at Adelphi disproportionately responded to the survey.

In this report, we are mainly concerned with the differences between Adelphi respondents and respondents at comparable schools, as well as national averages. Special attention has been devoted to differences of .2 or greater in the means. Mention also has been made if Adelphi respondents are consistently below or above the mean on a question. NSSE administrators also tested for the statistical significance of results through two-tailed t-tests of the means. The significance level was set deliberately high ($>.001$). Most comparisons between Adelphi students and the control group students are therefore not statistically significant. When a significant relationship does exist, it has been mentioned as such in the text and marked with an asterisk (*) in the table. An effect size is also reported when the comparisons are significant. The effect size is determined by dividing the difference in the means by the standard deviation of the comparison group (either the comparable institutions or nationally). Essentially, then, the effect size will be larger when the average Adelphi response is much different from most of the responses in the control group. The size of the effect is considered small when it is between 0.2 and 0.5, medium when between 0.5 and 0.8, and large when greater than 0.8.

REPRESENTATIVENESS OF SURVEY

NSSE administrators determine how many surveys to conduct at each school based on the institution’s total undergraduate enrollment. NSSE administrators randomly selected 450 students from lists of freshmen and seniors provided by institutions with fewer than 4,000 enrolled undergraduates, including Adelphi; the sample selected to receive the survey was split equally between freshmen and seniors. An additional 250 Adelphi students were added as part of an oversample we requested. Adelphi’s overall response rate was 35%, or a total of 247 respondents; the response rate was lower than that of comparable schools or nationally, which were 39% and 42%, respectively.

Overall, the degree to which the respondents reflect the actual Adelphi population of freshmen

and seniors in the spring of 2000 was mixed. The correspondence for enrollment status (full-time vs. part-time) and place of residence was fairly similar while that for ethnicity was a little less so. In comparison to the student population, a slightly larger percentage of Asians and Hispanics and a lower percentage of Blacks returned surveys. (See Table 1.)

Women were much more likely to complete the survey than men. Seventy percent of Adelphi seniors and freshmen are women, but females accounted for 81% of the Adelphi NSSE participants. Similarly, although there are more freshmen than seniors enrolled (790 versus 733), more seniors responded to the survey. Fifty-six percent of the respondents were seniors. One possible explanation for this is that freshmen are “surveyed out” and reluctant to deal with yet more questions.

Table 1—Comparison of NSSE Respondents with Freshmen and Senior Adelphi Students

	NSSE—Adelphi	Adelphi Spring 2000
Gender		
Women	80.6%	70.1%
Men	19.4%	29.9%
Race/Ethnicity*		
White	69.8%	69.2%
Black	13.4%	16.3%
American Indian	1.3%	0.2%
Hispanic	8.0%	7.6%
Asian	7.5%	6.7%
Class Level		
Freshmen	43.7%	51.9%
Senior	56.3%	48.1%
Enrollment Status		
Full-time	71.5%	70.5%
Part-time	28.5%	29.5%
Place of Residence		
On-campus	24.8%	23.1%
Off-campus	75.2%	76.9%
Total Students	247	1523

*Missing information has been excluded. International students have been included when ethnicity is known.

COMPARISON AREAS

Technology/Internet—In the last twenty years or so, computers and the internet have played a much larger role in society. The vast majority of people now use computers—a survey of recent Adelphi graduates found that about 90% use a computer at work. How well does Adelphi prepare its students to use technology?

Several questions asked about how “wired” the university is (e.g., do students use e-mail to communicate with a professor or other students). The responses of Adelphi students were consistently below the mean on these questions; in most cases, the differences were significant (at the .001 level) and in many cases the effect size was considered at least “medium” (>.5). Seniors at Adelphi especially lagged behind students at other universities. On each of the three questions, their mean was significantly lower than the mean of both the peer schools and the national average.

One encouraging sign was that first-year Adelphi students tended to use e-mail more often than seniors at Adelphi. In contrast, at comparable institutions and nationally, senior students used e-mail more often than freshmen.

Table 2—Technology/Internet Usage, Mean Scores

	<u>Adelphi</u>		<u>Adelphi Peers</u>		<u>National</u>	
	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Senior</u>	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Senior</u>	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Senior</u>
	<i>1=never, 2=occasionally, 3=often, 4=very often</i>					
Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor or other students	2.36	2.08	2.80*	2.94*	2.74*	2.83*
Used an electronic medium (e-mail, chat group) for an assignment	2.01	1.86	2.22	2.31*	2.15	2.23*
	<i>1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much</i>					
Using computing and information technology	2.56	2.58	2.75	3.00*	2.74	2.98*

*Significant at the .001 level.

Faculty Availability—The survey included questions about the availability and helpfulness of faculty outside of the classroom. Compared to other schools, Adelphi freshmen generally reported a slightly more responsive and open faculty. However, Adelphi seniors believed it was slightly less open than did seniors at other institutions. Notably, all Adelphi students reported a more helpful and available relationship with the faculty than at the peer institutions. Furthermore, Adelphi freshmen described their professors as more “open” than did freshmen nationally. Adelphi freshmen also felt that their professors and advisors were more likely to talk to them about their career plans and to give them prompt feedback on their academic work than freshmen elsewhere. Seniors rated Adelphi professors as slightly lower on these two categories than did seniors at other schools.

Adelphi seniors were slightly less likely than seniors at similar institutions or nationally to work with faculty on a research project and much less likely to work with faculty on activities other than coursework; in fact, the difference between Adelphi seniors and the responses of national seniors was

significant. Adelphi faculty were also less likely to discuss grades with either seniors or freshmen.

Among Adelphi students, seniors reported more interactions with the faculty outside the classroom than freshmen did. One anomaly, however, was that freshmen claimed a slightly more friendly and supportive relationship with the faculty than did seniors. The difference between the two classes and the number of students surveyed were both small, however.

Table 3—Faculty Availability, Mean Scores

	<u>Adelphi</u>		<u>Adelphi Peers</u>		<u>National</u>	
	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Senior</u>	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Senior</u>	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Senior</u>
	<i>1=never, 2=occasionally, 3=often, 4=very often</i>					
Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	2.40	2.42	2.44	2.59	2.47	2.63
Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor	2.23	2.22	1.99	2.26	2.09	2.38
Discussed ideas from classes with faculty members outside of class	1.80	1.78	1.64	1.90	1.71	1.99
Received prompt feedback from faculty on your academic performance	2.48	2.62	2.37	2.62	2.48	2.71
Worked with a faculty member on a research project	1.28	1.46	1.27	1.52	1.28	1.58
Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework	1.38	1.41	1.32	1.56	1.40	1.66*
	<i>1=unavailable, unhelpful, unsympathetic to 7=available, helpful, sympathetic</i>					
Relationships with faculty members	5.34	5.32	4.96	5.15	5.22	5.39

*Significant at the .001 level.

University Environment—Adelphi students both in their first-year and as seniors tended to have less contact with people from other ethnicities or with different viewpoints than students at comparable schools or students nation-wide. The differences between Adelphi students and the two comparison groups were not very large, however.

There were two disappointing findings. First, Adelphi seniors were significantly less likely to have engaged in a serious conversation with students who had vastly different religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values than were their counterparts. Second, all Adelphi students reported less friendly and supportive relationships with other students compared to national respondents. Though the differences were not significant, the means for Adelphi freshmen were much lower and those of seniors moderately lower than those of national students. Even so, seniors were more likely than seniors at comparable institutions to say that their college education has increased their understanding of people of different ethnic and racial backgrounds.

Table 4—University Environment, Mean Scores

	Adelphi		Adelphi Peers		National	
	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior
	<i>1=never, 2=occasionally, 3=often, 4=very often</i>					
Discussed ideas from classes with others outside of class	2.81	2.72	2.62	2.77	2.74	2.88
Had serious conversations with other students whose beliefs were very different from yours	2.37	2.17	2.48	2.42	2.51	2.49*
Had serious conversations with students of a different ethnicity than your own	2.62	2.45	2.53	2.48	2.53	2.52
	<i>1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much</i>					
Working effectively with others	2.66	3.00	2.75	3.03	2.82	3.21
Understanding people of other ethnic backgrounds	2.61	2.87	2.52	2.59	2.57	2.66
Encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds	2.37	2.12	2.44	2.22	2.49	2.28
	<i>1=unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation to 7=friendly, supportive, sense of belonging</i>					
Relationships with other students	5.20	5.28	5.32	5.25	5.48	5.44

*Significant at the .001 level.

Academic Workload—Interestingly, in contrast to the comparison groups, Adelphi freshmen had a larger workload and seniors had a smaller one. Freshmen at Adelphi reported a larger number of course readings and of papers (both of more than and less than 20 pages) than did their contemporaries at other institutions. Seniors, on the other hand, had a smaller number of course readings and of papers less than 20 pages. Compared to national seniors, both these responses were significant, though the effect was small.

In general, Adelphi students worked less on class assignments than all other students. Seniors were significantly less likely to have made a class presentation or to work with classmates on an assignment during or outside of class than seniors at other institutions. Adelphi students were also less likely than all other students to rewrite papers several times; freshmen at Adelphi were more likely than seniors to do this, though. On the other hand, all Adelphi students were significantly less likely to come to class unprepared than their peers or students nationally.

The workload difference appeared in the nature of the exams taken as well. Freshmen at Adelphi reported that the exams they had taken tended to consist of more essay and open-ended problems than freshmen at comparable institutions or students nationally. The difference between Adelphi freshmen and each comparison group was significant. Adelphi freshmen also reported that their tests involved a greater proportion of essays and open-ended problems than Adelphi seniors did. This was in stark

contrast to students at comparable schools and nationally; in both of these groups, seniors took more essay tests than freshmen had.

Table 5—Academic Workload, Mean Scores

	Adelphi		Adelphi Peers		National	
	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior
	<i>1=never, 2=occasionally, 3=often, 4=very often</i>					
Made a class presentation	2.10	2.42	2.10	2.68*	2.14	2.76*
Rewrote a paper or assignment several times	2.13	1.83	2.43	2.05	2.39	2.07
Came to class unprepared	1.50	1.46	1.77*	1.87*	1.72*	1.84*
Worked with other students on projects during class	2.29	2.20	2.41	2.45*	2.42	2.49*
Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	2.13	2.29	2.34	2.70*	2.39	2.71*
Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's expectations	2.67	2.67	2.53	2.58	2.57	2.65
	<i>1=none, 2=less than 5, 3= 5 to 10, 4=11 to 20, 5= more than 20</i>					
Number of assigned textbooks, books, or packs of course readings	3.74	3.06	3.55	3.33	3.54	3.40*
Number of written papers of 20 pages or more	1.33	1.76	1.20	1.68	1.23	1.67
Number of written papers of fewer than 20 pages	3.67	3.00	3.62	3.28	3.58	3.35*
	<i>1=mostly multiple choice to 7=mostly essay or open-ended problems</i>					
Nature of examinations taken this year	4.73	4.12	3.46*	4.27	3.78*	4.42

*Significant at the .001 level.

Weekly Activities—Like all people, college students have a limited number of hours per week to get things done. Some students do not really have to concern themselves about college funding and can devote more time to studying or involvement in campus organizations; others, though, must worry about paying for college themselves or supporting a family and may therefore work.

How much time each week do Adelphi students spend on different activities? In comparison with all other students, Adelphi students spent more time each week supporting themselves and their families. Adelphi freshman reported working about 11-15 hours off campus for pay each week while seniors worked between 16 and 25 hours a week off campus. Freshmen spent an additional 6-10 hours a week providing care for their dependents. Seniors spent almost 11-15 hours a week doing the same. In both cases, Adelphi students were significantly more likely to work than students at comparable institutions.

Probably because of the time spent earning a living and time spent commuting, Adelphi students

devoted less time each week to ‘traditional’ college activities. Both freshmen and seniors allotted less time to participating in co-curricular activities and to relaxing and socializing, but also dedicated fewer hours to preparing for classes. In fact, seniors spent a significantly smaller amount of time each week preparing for class than did seniors at either the peer schools or nationally.

Table 6—Weekly Activities, Mean Scores

	Adelphi		Adelphi Peers		National	
	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior
	<i>1=5 or fewer hours per week, 2=6-10 hours, 3=11-15 hours, 4=16-20 hours, 5=21-25 hours, 6=26-30 hours, 7=more than 30 hours</i>					
Preparing for class	2.95	2.88	3.38	3.37*	3.40	3.43*
Working for pay on campus	1.60	1.34	1.43	1.61	1.43	1.65
Working for pay off campus	2.86	4.55	2.11*	3.39*	2.07*	3.16*
Participating in co-curricular activities	1.72	1.34	1.75	1.68	1.84	1.77*
Relaxing and socializing	3.23	2.51	3.43	2.96	3.24	2.88
Providing care for dependents living with you	1.81	2.99	1.33*	1.91*	1.44	2.03*

*Significant at the .001 level.

Personal Development—One of the explicit goals of Adelphi, and other institutions, is the development of citizens who are well-rounded and contribute to their community.

The responses at Adelphi followed a definite pattern: seniors believed that an Adelphi education contributed more to their community involvement and becoming a well-rounded person than seniors at comparable schools. Freshmen, on the other hand, said that Adelphi placed less emphasis on these goals than did freshmen at other schools. None of the differences were significant, however.

Interestingly, the difference between the responses of seniors and freshmen at Adelphi was always larger than (and in many cases, more than double) that at the comparable institutions. In fact, when students at comparison institutions were asked about the emphasis placed on being honest and truthful, the difference in the responses of freshmen and seniors was .02. At Adelphi, the difference was .24.

Table 7—Personal Development, Mean Scores

	Adelphi		Adelphi Peers		National	
	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior
	<i>1=never, 2=occasionally, 3=often, 4=very often</i>					
Tutored or taught other students	1.64	1.68	1.67	1.84	1.68	1.88
Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course	1.21	1.63	1.33	1.52	1.35	1.58
	<i>1=none, 2=less than 5, 3=5 to 10, 4=11 to 20, 5=more than 20</i>					
Number of books read on your own	2.04	2.23	1.98	2.23	2.03	2.21
	<i>1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much</i>					
Working effectively with others	2.66	3.00	2.75	3.03	2.82	3.12
Voting in elections	1.55	1.69	1.55	1.64	1.65	1.72
Learning effectively on your own	2.74	3.14	2.89	3.07	2.94	3.12
Understanding yourself	2.68	3.00	2.77	2.93	2.87	3.03
Being honest and truthful	2.57	2.81	2.63	2.65	2.77	2.78
Contributing to the welfare of your community	1.98	2.34	2.08	2.28	2.21	2.41

Attitudes about the Institution—How much do students enjoy their overall experiences at their institutions? If they had to make the choice again, would they choose the same institution or someplace new?

Compared to their peers nationally, a larger proportion of Adelphi students reported that they would not choose Adelphi again if given the choice, but it is difficult to determine why this was so. Both freshmen and seniors rated their experience at Adelphi as ‘good’ on average; their ratings were about the same as comparable institutions, but lower than those at national institutions (although none of the differences was significant). For whatever reason, Adelphi students did not feel that their overall educational experience was as satisfying as their counterparts did.

It is not clear why the students rated the school so low compared to the other two groups. Generally, students gave similar ratings to Adelphi as did students at peer institutions on the ability to acquire a broad education and to acquire job-related knowledge. Students reported that Adelphi also placed a slightly greater emphasis on helping students cope with non-academic responsibilities than students at comparable institutions.

One difference did emerge, however: both seniors and freshmen believed that Adelphi placed less emphasis on providing the support needed to thrive socially in comparison with peer schools. As stated above, Adelphi students spent less time each week socializing and relaxing than their peers.

Table 8—Attitudes about the Institution, Mean Scores

	Adelphi		Adelphi Peers		National	
	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior
	<i>1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much</i>					
Acquired a broad general education	3.06	3.31	3.03	3.25	3.11	3.34
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	2.40	3.04	2.43	2.98	2.47	3.00
Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	2.87	3.04	3.07	3.05	3.14*	3.12
Providing the support you need to help you succeed	2.92	2.62	2.84	2.68	2.99	2.82
Helping you cope with non-academic responsibilities	2.07	1.80	1.94	1.76	2.09	1.87
Providing the support you need to thrive socially	2.21	1.88	2.24	1.98	2.38	2.11
	<i>1=unhelpful, inconsiderate, rigid to 7=helpful, considerate, fair</i>					
Relationships with administrative personnel and offices	4.23	4.31	4.32	4.11	4.58	4.30
	<i>1=poor, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=excellent</i>					
How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?	3.04	3.05	3.04	3.08	3.17	3.21
	<i>1=definitely no, 2=probably no, 3=probably yes, 4=definitely yes</i>					
If you could start over, would you go to the same institution you are attending now?	2.92	2.88	3.06	2.99	3.18	3.11

*Significant at the .001 level.

Intellectual Activities—What types of intellectual processes are used in college and teaching? Do students learn mainly by rote memorization, analysis or some other method? Has education improved students’ thinking skills?

The survey asked students about five types of intellectual activities and how much of each was involved in their class work. In comparison with students at peer universities, freshmen said they spent more time analyzing, synthesizing, making judgments or evaluation, and applying theories to new situations and less time memorizing facts. Seniors reported more time on memorization and evaluation and slightly less time on synthesizing, analyzing, and applying theories.

Despite the greater number of papers Adelphi freshmen had to write, they believed that their education has contributed less to their ability to write clearly than other freshmen. Notably, though, the

only significant difference was that Adelphi freshmen said that Adelphi contributed less to their ability to analyze quantitative problems than did freshmen at comparable institutions and nationally. Seniors, on the other hand, generally rated these categories similarly to their counterparts in both groups.

Table 9—Intellectual Activities, Mean Scores

	Adelphi		Adelphi Peers		National	
	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior
	<i>1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much</i>					
Memorizing facts or ideas from your courses so you can repeat them in the same form	2.73	2.64	2.85	2.62	2.81	2.57
Analyzing the basic elements of idea or theory	2.94	3.03	2.89	3.06	2.93	3.10
Synthesizing and organizing ideas and information into new, more complex interpretations	2.62	2.72	2.58	2.74	2.61	2.82
Making judgments about the value of information or arguments	2.63	2.69	2.48	2.61	2.53	2.69
Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	2.78	2.84	2.75	2.97	2.79	3.01
Writing clearly and effectively	2.71	3.05	2.82	3.02	2.88	3.09
Speaking clearly and effectively	2.53	2.89	2.52	2.92	2.60	2.98
Thinking critically and analytically	2.97	3.28	2.98	3.26	3.05	3.32
Analyzing quantitative problems	2.25	2.82	2.60*	2.87	2.62*	2.90

*Significant at the .001 level.

Other Educational Experiences—In addition to coursework, students have the opportunity to further their educational experience through other academic endeavors. Some students choose to study abroad while others decide to stay at home and perform an internship or community service. Finally, some students elect an independent study or a thesis on a topic that interests them.

Again, there seemed to be a marked difference in the activities of freshmen and seniors at Adelphi. In comparison to their peers at other universities, Adelphi freshmen were at least as likely to engage in educational experiences outside of coursework. Meanwhile, seniors were substantially less likely to have these experiences than their peers, with one exception. Adelphi seniors were slightly more likely than seniors at comparable universities to have undertaken or to plan to undertake a culminating senior experience such as a comprehensive exam or a thesis.

Table 10—Other Educational Experiences

	Adelphi		Adelphi Peers		National	
	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior
	<i>Percentage yes</i>					
Practicum, internship, or clinical assignment	85.0%	65.4%	81.1%	72.4%	78.3%	73.5%
Community service or volunteer work	66.4%	48.5%	64.0%	57.8%	68.0%	63.0%
Interdisciplinary coursework	43.8%	34.6%	40.3%	51.8%	43.4%	55.3%
Foreign language coursework	37.4%	20.6%	38.1%	37.7%	44.3%	42.7%
Study abroad	20.6%	7.4%	28.9%	15.3%	32.2%	0.2%
Independent study or self-designed major	22.9%	19.9%	14.1%	27.8%	15.9%	30.2%
Culminating senior experience (comprehensive exam or thesis)	39.6%	59.4%	40.3%	52.8%	40.0%	55.0%

ANALYSIS WITHIN ADELPHI

Breakdown by school. Information from the NSSE report can be analyzed by school by matching respondents with information from Adelphi’s administrative database. This allows a more detailed examination of how the responses of students from different schools varied. However, looking at the results by school further diminishes an already small sample size and should be read cautiously. For example, only 11 IAPS students and 13 General Studies students filled out the survey. Generalizations based on the on the results of these schools are likely to be unreliable.

Table 11 lists the respondents’ schools by their class level. About twice as many freshmen in the College of Arts & Sciences filled out the survey as did seniors. Only freshmen made up the General Studies students. Seniors accounted for the vast majority of Business, Nursing, Social Work, and ABLE respondents. Responses for Education and IAPS were evenly represented across class level.

Table 11—Adelphi Respondents' School by Class

	Freshmen	Seniors	Total
Honors	11	17	28
Arts & Sciences	49	20	69
Business	7	12	19
Nursing	3	29	32
Social Work	1	15	16
IAPS	5	4	9
General Studies	13	0	13
ABLE	6	33	39
Education	13	9	22
Total	108	139	247

An examination of the responses by schools reveals several interesting trends (see Table 12). Again, though, these findings should be interpreted cautiously, given the small sample size involved. Nursing and IAPS students exhibited the greatest dissatisfaction with their Adelphi experiences. Fifty-six percent of Nursing and IAPS students said they definitely or probably would not return to Adelphi if they could make the choice again. Also, 9% of Nursing students and 11% of IAPS students rated their educational experience at Adelphi as 'poor.' The problems perceived by Nursing students stemmed largely from their relationships with faculty and administrators. Nursing students consistently rated faculty responsiveness below the mean for all Adelphi respondents. For example, when asked to place their relationship with faculty members on a scale from 1 to 7 with 7 representing an available, helpful, and sympathetic relationship, the mean placement for Nursing students was 4.22. None of the other schools had a mean lower than 5. Also, Nursing students did not feel that Adelphi provided them the support they needed to succeed academically or to cope with their non-academic problems. One large source of frustration for the IAPS students, on the other hand, seemed to arise out of their relationship with the administration. IAPS students reported by far the worst relationship with administrative personnel of students from any Adelphi school. The rating of IAPS students was 1.6 points below the mean of all Adelphi students.

General Studies students reported having the largest average workload of the Adelphi schools. They had a higher average number of assigned textbooks and had to write more papers under 20 pages than students from other schools. This bigger workload did not translate into more time studying, however. General Studies students were below the mean of all Adelphi students in the time spent preparing for class, but above the mean in the time spent socializing and relaxing.

Even though Honors students had the second highest workload after General Studies students, they evaluated their educational experience at Adelphi more favorably than the average student. The examinations taken by Honors students were more apt to include essays and open-ended questions than those in other Adelphi programs. Honors students also had a much higher number of assigned course readings and papers of less than 20 pages than the average Adelphi student. Unlike the General Studies students whose higher workload did not translate into more time studying, Honors students spent by far the most time studying. Although they worked less off-campus than the average student, Honors students worked more on-campus for pay each week.

Despite their more onerous workload, 90% of Honors students rated their experience at Adelphi as 'good' or 'excellent.' Part of the contentment of the Honors students seems to stem from their relationship with faculty members. The average rating of faculty availability and helpfulness by Honors students was 6.09, two-thirds of a point higher than the Adelphi mean. They were also more likely to interact with faculty members outside of class.

Finally, ABLE students were the most satisfied with their experience overall. Ninety percent said that they would probably or definitely return to Adelphi if they had to choose again. Further, 97% rated their experiences at Adelphi as 'good' or 'excellent.'

Table 12—Adelphi Responses by School, Selected Results

	Arts & Sciences	Bus.	Educ.	Honors	IAPS	Nursing	Social Work	ABLE	General Studies
	<i>1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much</i>								
Acquired a broad general education	3.04	2.89	3.09	3.39	3.56	3.03	3.38	3.38	3.67
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	2.57	2.58	3.09	2.64	2.89	3.25	3.13	2.62	2.42
Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	2.90	2.89	3.00	3.18	2.89	3.16	3.19	2.72	3.00
Providing the support you need to help you succeed	2.91	3.05	2.91	3.07	2.56	2.00	2.63	2.64	3.00
Helping you cope with non-academic responsibilities	2.09	1.95	2.00	1.93	2.11	1.56	1.81	1.71	2.33
Providing the support you need to thrive socially	2.27	2.16	2.23	2.11	2.22	1.62	1.88	1.66	2.17
Writing clearly and effectively	2.74	2.74	2.45	3.29	3.22	2.69	3.13	3.13	3.33
Speaking clearly and effectively	2.56	2.63	2.50	3.18	2.89	2.66	2.94	2.74	3.08
Thinking critically and analytically	2.97	3.00	2.86	3.50	3.33	3.16	3.25	3.15	3.75
Analyzing quantitative problems	2.38	2.79	2.18	2.64	2.67	2.75	2.88	2.69	2.50
	<i>1=unhelpful, inconsiderate, rigid to 7=helpful, considerate, fair</i>								
Relationships with other students	5.12	4.95	5.45	5.50	4.78	5.41	5.13	5.64	4.25
Relationships with faculty members	5.41	5.11	5.27	6.07	4.89	4.22	5.07	5.92	5.25
Relationships with administrative personnel and offices	4.22	4.89	4.23	4.14	2.67	3.81	4.07	5.15	3.83
	<i>1=none, 2=less than 5, 3= 5 to 10, 4=11 to 20, 5= more than 20</i>								
Number of assigned textbooks, books, or packs of course readings	3.33	3.16	3.82	4.04	3.33	3.06	3.06	2.76	4.42
Number of written papers of 20 pages or more	1.48	1.42	1.64	1.64	2.00	1.55	1.25	1.92	1.08
Number of written papers of fewer than 20 pages	3.26	2.84	3.91	4.21	3.56	2.74	2.75	2.74	4.67
	<i>1=mostly multiple choice to 7=mostly essay or open-ended problems</i>								
Nature of examinations taken this year	4.83	4.18	4.80	5.69	3.75	1.78	4.07	4.51	5.18
	<i>1=5 or fewer hours per week, 2=6-10 hours, 3=11-15 hours, 4=16-20 hours, 5=21-25 hours, 6=26-30 hours, 7=more than 30 hours</i>								
Preparing for class	2.86	2.63	2.95	4.11	2.67	3.06	2.44	2.41	2.83
Working for pay on campus	1.63	1.37	1.15	2.11	1.29	1.17	1.23	1.00	1.91
Working for pay off campus	3.06	3.47	3.05	2.85	3.22	4.90	5.33	5.53	2.73
Participating in co-curricular activities	1.69	1.84	2.18	1.41	1.25	1.07	1.57	1.09	1.42
Relaxing and socializing	3.19	3.00	3.09	2.89	2.89	2.32	1.73	2.39	3.91
Providing care for dependents living with you	1.79	2.00	2.48	1.39	1.88	2.90	2.80	4.82	1.25
	<i>1=poor, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=excellent</i>								
How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?	2.96	3.21	3.05	3.29	2.78	2.63	3.13	3.33	3.00
	<i>1=definitely no, 2=probably no, 3=probably yes, 4=definitely yes</i>								
If you could start over, would you go to the same institution you are attending now?	2.69	2.68	3.27	3.14	2.44	2.44	3.00	3.42	2.92

Attending Adelphi again—Logit analysis. One important finding is that compared to students at other universities, Adelphi students were more likely to indicate an unsatisfying college experience and felt that, if they could make the decision again, they would not enroll at Adelphi. Thirty percent of the respondents (27% of freshmen and 32% of seniors) said that they would definitely or probably not choose Adelphi again, about 8% more than respondents at the comparison schools and 11% more than national respondents. Can we determine why Adelphi students are less likely than their counterparts to reenroll at Adelphi if given the choice of school again?

One way to answer this question is to perform a logit regression. Linear regression can be performed when a dependent variable is continuous (i.e., they may take on a wide variety of values). If the dependent variable is constrained to only a couple of values, linear regression is no longer appropriate. When the dependent variable can be classified as dichotomous, logit regression is appropriate. Logit analysis calculates the log-odds probability that an event will occur. To convert the log-odds probabilities into probabilities that are easier to understand, we simply take the antilog of the probability.

Answers to the question “Would you go to the same institution you are now attending” have been converted into a dichotomous variable. If the respondent said that he/she “probably would not” or “definitely would not” return, the variable has been coded as 0. A response of “probably” or “definitely would” return has been coded 1.

Several factors may influence a respondent’s answer. Questions from the survey and characteristics from the Adelphi database were included in the analysis to determine what influences whether a student would re-select Adelphi. One important group of factors is the academic workload of students. Students who have a heavy academic workload may feel overwhelmed by an institution and wish they had gone someplace else. Second, students who spend most of their time working for pay off-campus might feel less satisfied with the college experience. Also, relationships with other students, faculty, and administrators may exert some influence.

A few variables are significantly related to the likelihood of choosing Adelphi, if the students had to choose again. The strongest effects are shown in two of the relationship variables. Students who feel that other students are more open and friendly are more likely to choose Adelphi again, as are students who view the faculty as friendly and supportive. Both are significant at above the .01 level. The number of hours worked off-campus for pay during the week is highly significant, but also negative. That is, the more students work off-campus, the less likely they would be to choose Adelphi again. It appears then that the more time students devote to making a living, the less happy they are with their choice of Adelphi. (Results are presented in Table 13.)

An example of the strength of the variables asking about a student’s relationship with other students and with faculty members appears in Graph 1. The graph shows the probability that an average student (a student with the mean value on all variables except one) would choose Adelphi again. In the top half of Graph 1, the student’s relationship with other students is presented. If the student reported that feeling alienated from other students, he/she had only a 25% chance of choosing Adelphi again. As relationships with other students become more friendly and supportive, the probability of opting for Adelphi again increases until, at the highest level, the chance of choosing Adelphi again was 92%. Similar results are found for the relationship with the faculty. One way to influence the decision to choose Adelphi again would be to improve relationships between students and between students and the faculty.

Table 13—Logit Estimates of Decision to Choose Adelphi Again

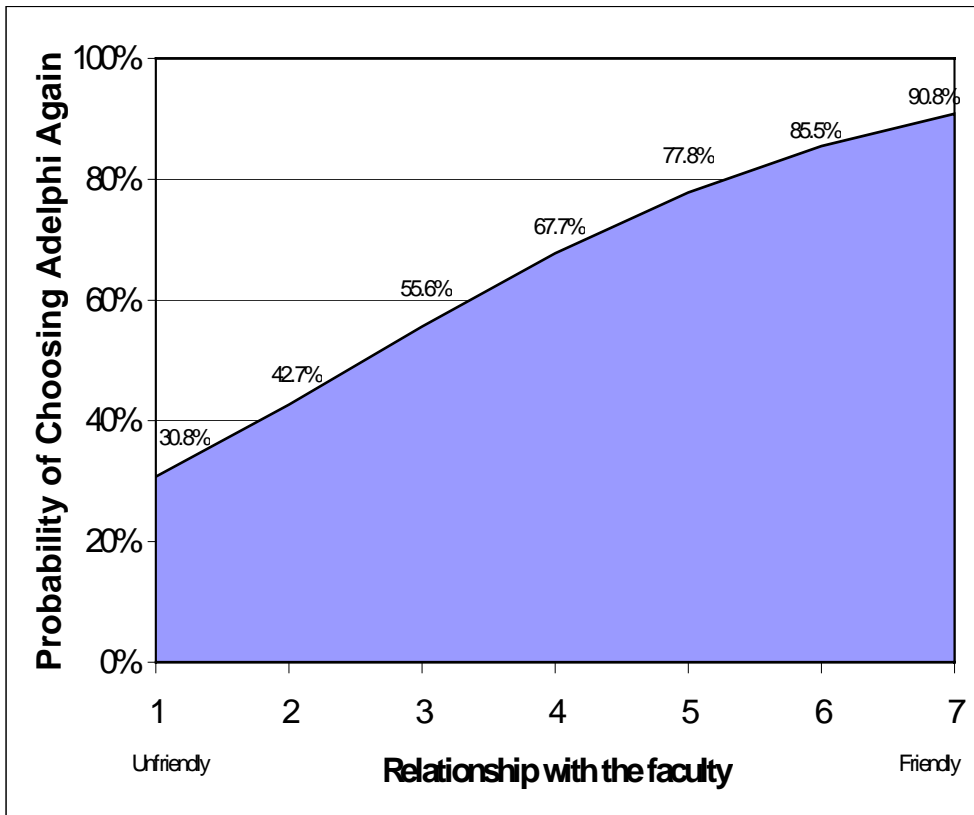
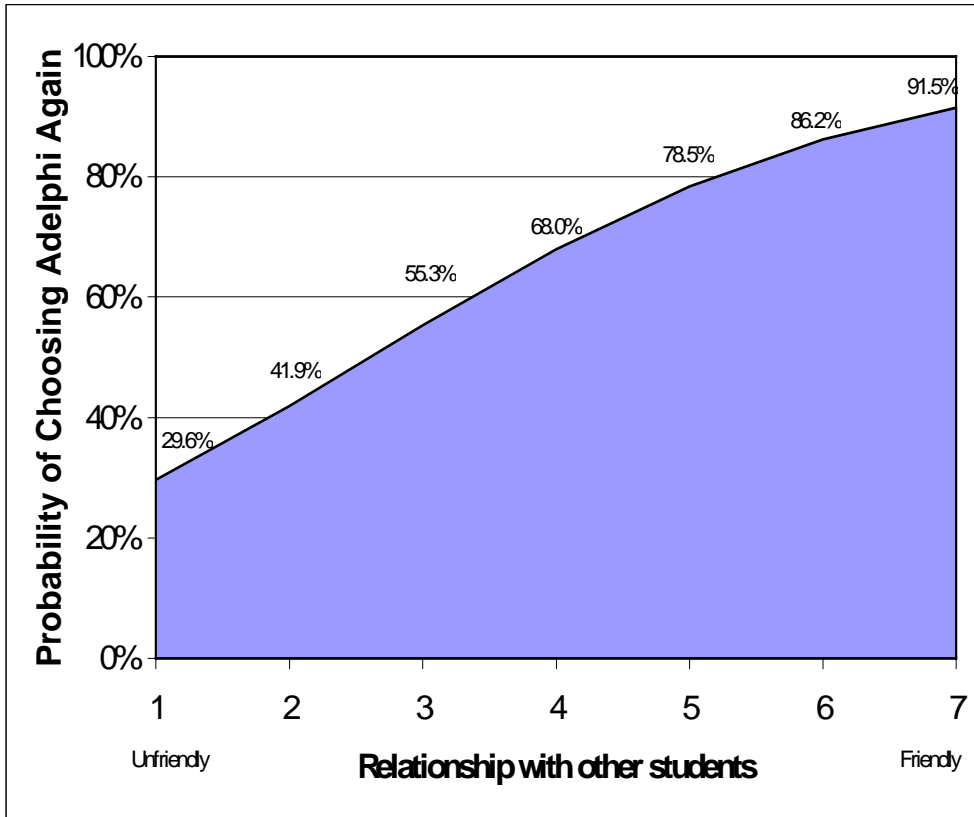
	Coefficient (B)	Standard Error	Exp(B)
Constant	-3.65	1.342	0.026
Number of assigned textbooks, books, or packs of course readings	0.205	0.214	1.228
Number of written papers of 20 pages or more	0.297	0.292	1.346
Number of written papers of fewer than 20 pages	-0.175	0.197	0.839
Preparing for class	0.009	0.129	1.009
Working for pay off campus	-0.169 *	0.086	0.845
Participating in co-curricular activities	-0.248	0.155	0.780
Relaxing and socializing	-0.074	0.117	0.928
Providing care for dependents living with you	-0.033	0.089	0.968
Relationship with other students	0.540 **	0.133	1.716
Relationship with faculty members	0.517 **	0.164	1.677
Relationship with administrative personnel and offices	0.046	0.144	1.048
Senior	-0.392	0.437	0.676
Number of cases		218	
Chi-squared		55.10***	
Log-likelihood ratio		-99.74	
-2*Log-likelihood ratio		199.48	

*Significant at the .05 level.

**Significant at the .01 level.

A logit regression was also run controlling for different ethnic groups. Overall, whites, Hispanics, and Blacks reported similar probabilities of returning to Adelphi if they had the choice again. However, whites were the most likely and Blacks the least likely to return. Asians were by far the least likely to choose Adelphi again if given the option. Because of the small numbers of Asians and Blacks in the survey, though, the results should be read with caution.

Graph 1—The Probability of Choosing Adelphi Again



CONCLUSIONS

Several conclusions can be drawn from the NSSE results.

First, Adelphi students, especially seniors, seem to be behind their peers technologically. Students consistently reported a lower level of e-mail usage for class and to communicate with professors or other students.

A second conclusion is that there is a large difference in the perceptions of seniors and freshmen at Adelphi in terms of their academic experiences. Compared to students at other schools, Adelphi freshmen tended to have a larger workload; seniors at Adelphi, on the other hand, had a lighter workload than their peers. Similarly, freshmen at Adelphi believed that their courses involved more synthesis and analysis than their peers and less rote memorization; while seniors' perceptions of the amount of synthesis and analysis was equal to their peers, they also felt they spent more time on memorization.

Third, compared to students at other universities, Adelphi students spent much more time during the week working off-campus and taking care of their families. This trend was not confined to seniors; freshmen at Adelphi also worked for pay significantly more than students at other schools. So, in conformity with the results of other national surveys such as the CIRP (which surveys entering freshmen), Adelphi is a "blue-collar" university, aimed at first-generation college goers or full-time workers who want to earn a college degree.

Finally, it is very important to retain students. If the assumption is made that students who would not choose Adelphi again, if they had the choice are also more willing to transfer or drop out, then the logit results point to a couple of areas that can be improved to influence the decision of students to stay at Adelphi. Two factors in particular stand out. First, the more positive a student's relationship with other students, the more likely he/she will be satisfied with Adelphi. One way Adelphi may be able to improve the relationships between students is to foster a more social environment. As discussed above, Adelphi students believed that their school placed less emphasis on offering students the support they need to thrive socially than did students from other schools.

Second, the more students feel the faculty is available and sympathetic, the more likely they are to value their Adelphi experience. While, overall, Adelphi students believe they have a pretty good relationship with faculty members, differences between the schools are large. By encouraging professors to be even more available to students, the administration may be able to increase the retention rate of Adelphi students.