

# NSSE 2003 Results

## University of Nevada, Reno

John Mahaffy  
Steve Cavote  
Office of University Assessment  
<http://www.unr.edu/assess>



# What is



<http://www.iub.edu/~nsse/>

- An **alternative view** of collegiate quality that focuses on teaching and learning.
- A **research-based tool** that provides usable information for institutional improvement.
- A **survey** that provides information about the quality of the undergraduate experience.
- A **proxy** for student achievement and institutional effectiveness.

# NSSE 2003 Response Rates

- **UNR response rate = 48% (651 of 1344)**
  - 291 First Year (FY=43%)
  - 360 Seniors (SR=54%)
- 2003 institutional response rates ranged from 15% to 78%
  - 135,000 respondents from 430 4-year institutions
- 43% overall response rate for all NSSE 2003 institutions

# Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)

- UNR participated in the **Pilot** of the FSSE instrument in 2003
- **FSSE measures faculty expectations and perceptions about student engagement**
- Over 600 UNR faculty (& LOAs) teaching undergraduate courses were invited to participate
  - **35% (237) of UNR faculty completed the FSSE**
  - Nationally, over 16,000 faculty from 147 institutions participated in the FSSE pilot

# NSSE BENCHMARK AREAS

- **Level of Academic Challenge**
- **Active and Collaborative Learning**
- **Student-Faculty Interactions**
- **Enriching Educational Experiences**
- **Supportive Campus Environment**

# Level of Academic Challenge

*(description of construct)*

Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality.

Colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance.

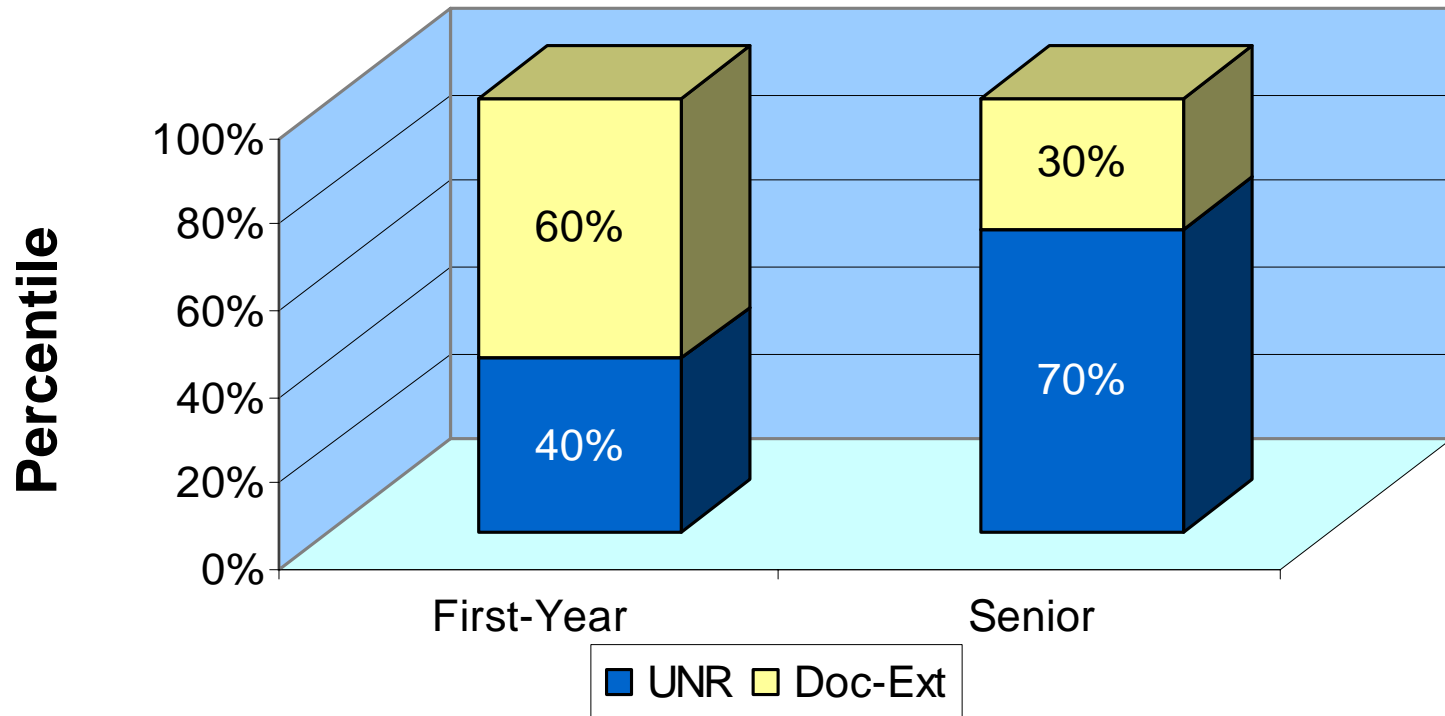
# Level of Academic Challenge

(sample items)

- Time spent preparing for class
- Number of assigned textbooks . . .
- Number of written papers or reports
- Coursework emphasizing the analysis of the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory
- Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards
- Campus environment emphasizing time studying on academic work

# Level of Academic Challenge

**Benchmark Score Percentile  
UNR/Doc-Ext Comparisons for First-Year & Seniors**



# FINDINGS

1. Students and faculty agree that most of their coursework emphasized analysis, synthesis and making judgments.
2. Significantly more students (especially seniors) than faculty thought most coursework also emphasized memorizing facts, ideas or methods.
3. More students indicated the University emphasized spending significant amounts of time on academic work than do faculty.
4. Approximately half of students worked harder than they thought they could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations.

# Active and Collaborative Learning

*(description of construct)*

Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and asked to think about what they are learning in different settings.

Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material prepares students for the messy unscripted problems they will encounter daily during and after college.

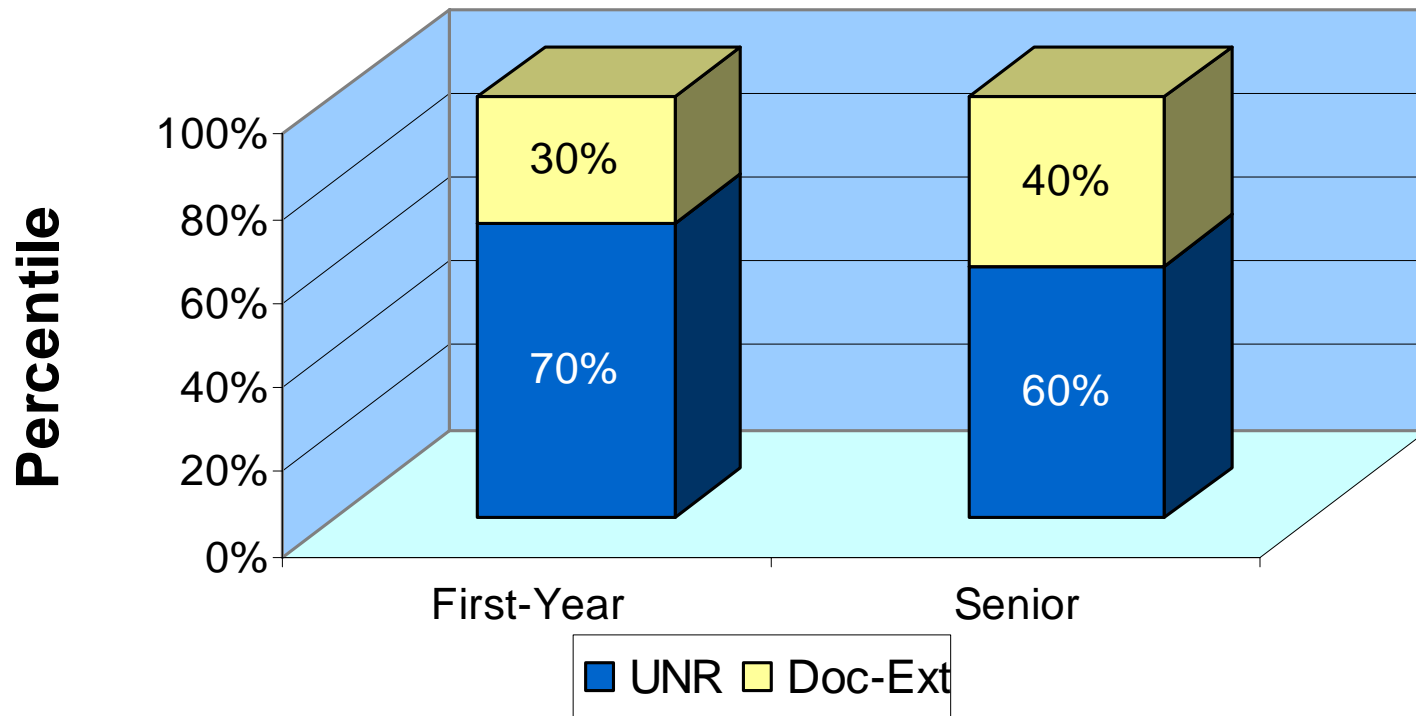
# Active and Collaborative Learning

## (sample items)

- Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
- Made a class presentation
- Worked with other students on projects during class
- Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments
- Tutored or taught other students
- Participated in a community-based project as part of a class
- Discussed ideas from classes with other students outside of class

# Active & Collaborative Learning

**Benchmark Score Percentile**  
**UNR/Doc-Ext Comparisons for First-Year & Seniors**



# FINDINGS

1. Very few students participate in community-based projects as part of a course.
2. Significantly more students than faculty state that students ask questions and participate in class discussion.
3. The vast majority of students report making class presentations.
4. Students tutoring other students (paid or voluntary) is uncommon.
5. However, it is fairly common for students to discuss ideas from class or readings outside of class with students, family members, co-workers, etc.

# Student-Faculty Interactions

*(description of construct)*

Students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside the classroom.

As a result, their teachers become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, life-long learning.

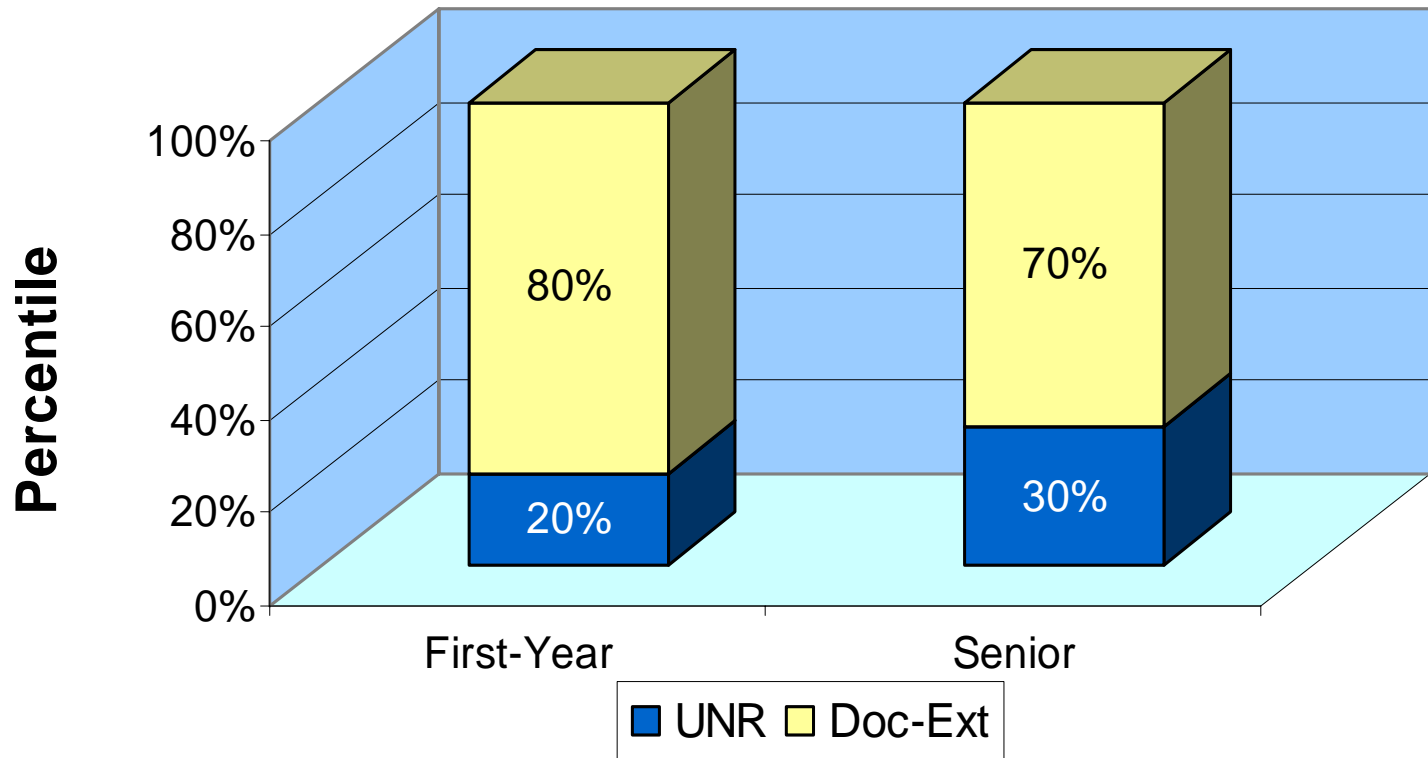
# Student-Faculty Interactions

(sample items)

- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with a faculty member outside of class
- Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework
- Worked with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements
- Received prompt feedback from faculty on your academic performance

# Student Faculty Interaction

**Benchmark Score Percentile**  
**UNR/Doc-Ext Comparisons for First-Year & Seniors**



# FINDINGS

1. Approximately half of first year and senior students said they talk with faculty about their grades and assignments. The proportion of faculty reporting such discussions, however, is far smaller.
2. Almost half of first-year students and over a third of seniors said they **NEVER** discussed ideas from a class or readings with faculty.
3. More than half of faculty teaching both lower division and upper division classes indicated they are very good about giving prompt feedback to students on their academic performance; **however**, students reported otherwise.

# Enriching Educational Experiences

*(description of construct)*

Complementary learning opportunities in and out of the classroom augment academic programs. Diversity experiences teach students valuable things about themselves and others.

Technology facilitates collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community service, and senior capstone courses provide opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge.

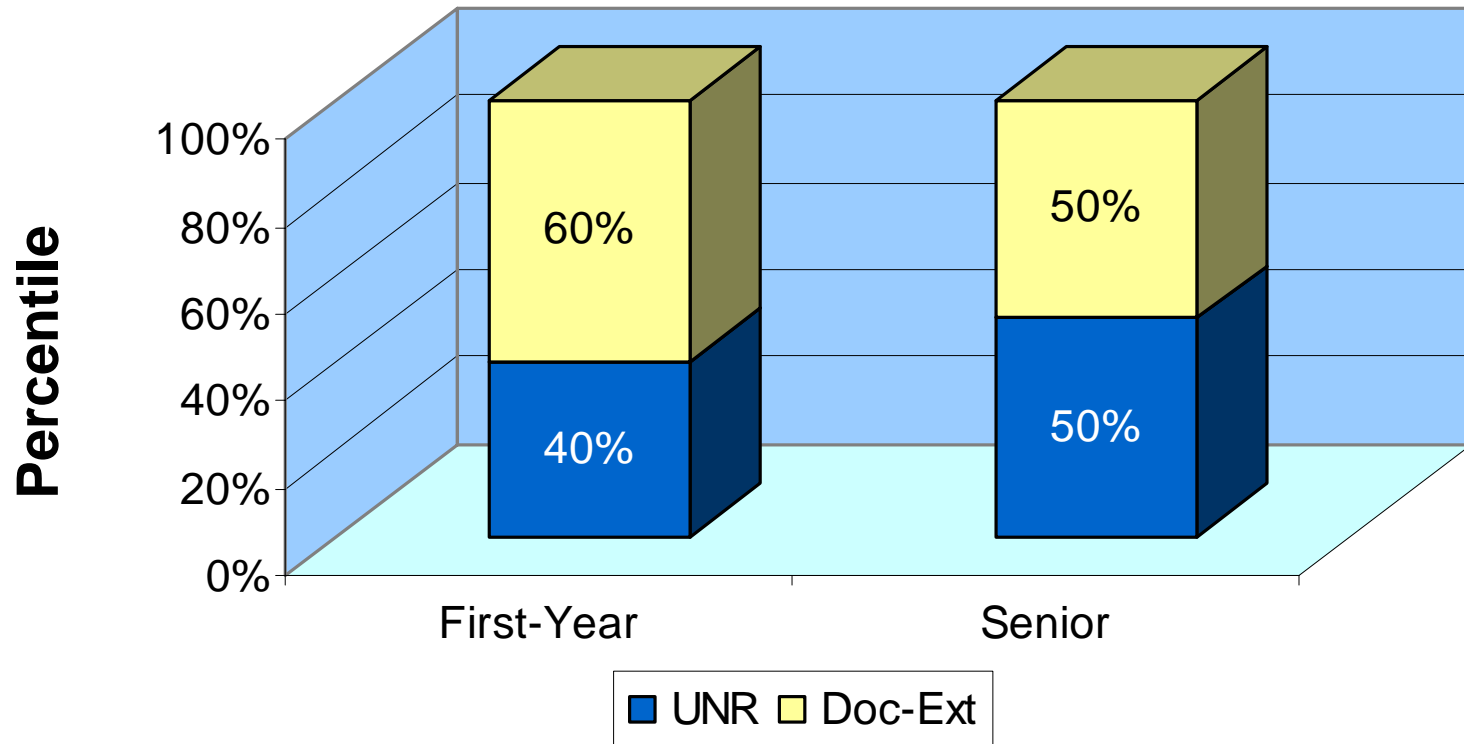
# Enriching Educational Experiences

(sample items)

- Participating in co-curricular activities
- Practicum, internship field-experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment
- Community service or volunteer work
- Independent study
- Culminating senior experience
- Serious conversations with students of different race or ethnicity, religious beliefs, political opinions, personal values
- Using electronic technology to discuss or complete and assignment

# Enriching Educational Experiences

**Benchmark Score Percentile**  
**UNR/Doc-Ext Comparisons for First-Year & Seniors**



# FINDINGS

1. Compared with faculty perceptions, a much higher proportion of students report having serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than their own, and with students who differ from them in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions or personal values.
2. The vast majority of students reported to have participated in an internship or field experience, and most students participate in community service or volunteer work (significantly fewer faculty believed students did).
3. Fewer than half the students reported having taken or plan to take any foreign language coursework.
4. Although fewer than half of first year students believe the University encourages contact among students from different economic, social and racial or ethnic backgrounds; the proportion seniors seeing such encouragement is significantly smaller.

# Supportive Campus Environment

*(description of construct)*

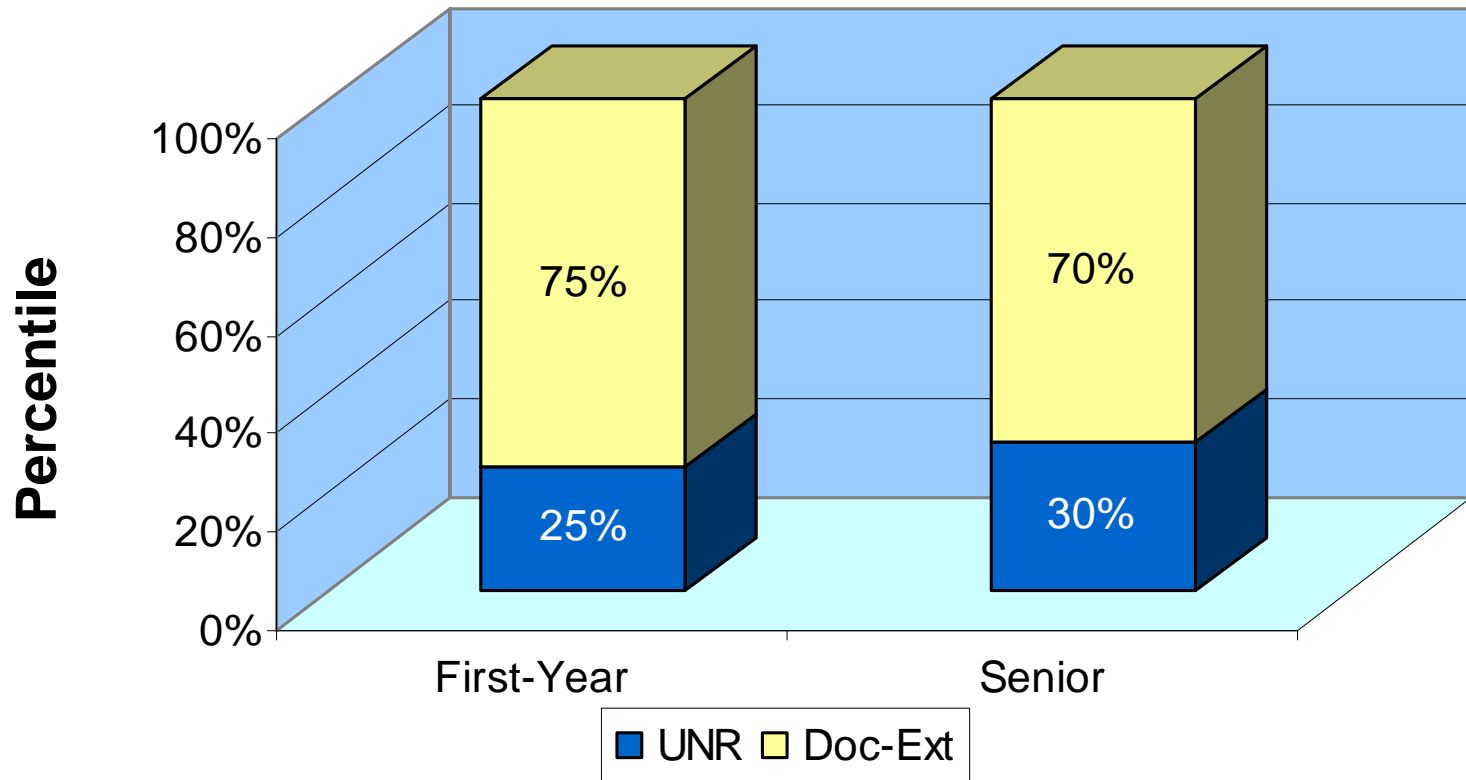
Students perform better and are more satisfied *at colleges* that are committed to their success as well as to the working and social relations among different groups on campus.

# Supportive Campus Environment (sample items)

- **Campus** provides the support you need to help you succeed academically
- . . . helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities
- . . . provides the support you need to thrive socially
- **Quality of relationships with:**
  - . . . Other students
  - . . . Faculty members
  - . . . Administrative personnel and offices

# Supportive Campus Environment

**Benchmark Score Percentile**  
**UNR/Doc-Ext Comparisons for First-Year & Seniors**



# FINDINGS

1. Students reported having good relationships overall with faculty, administrative staff and other students.
2. How helpful is the University in helping students thrive and succeed? Students said:
  - a) UNR does a **good** job with academic support.
  - b) UNR does **NOT** offer much non-academic or social support.

# “Peer Group” Comparison

University of Arizona  
Colorado State University  
University of Nebraska, Lincoln  
Washington State University

University of Colorado, Boulder  
Iowa State University  
University of Utah  
UC Davis (non-NSSE participant)

**ENGAGE**

