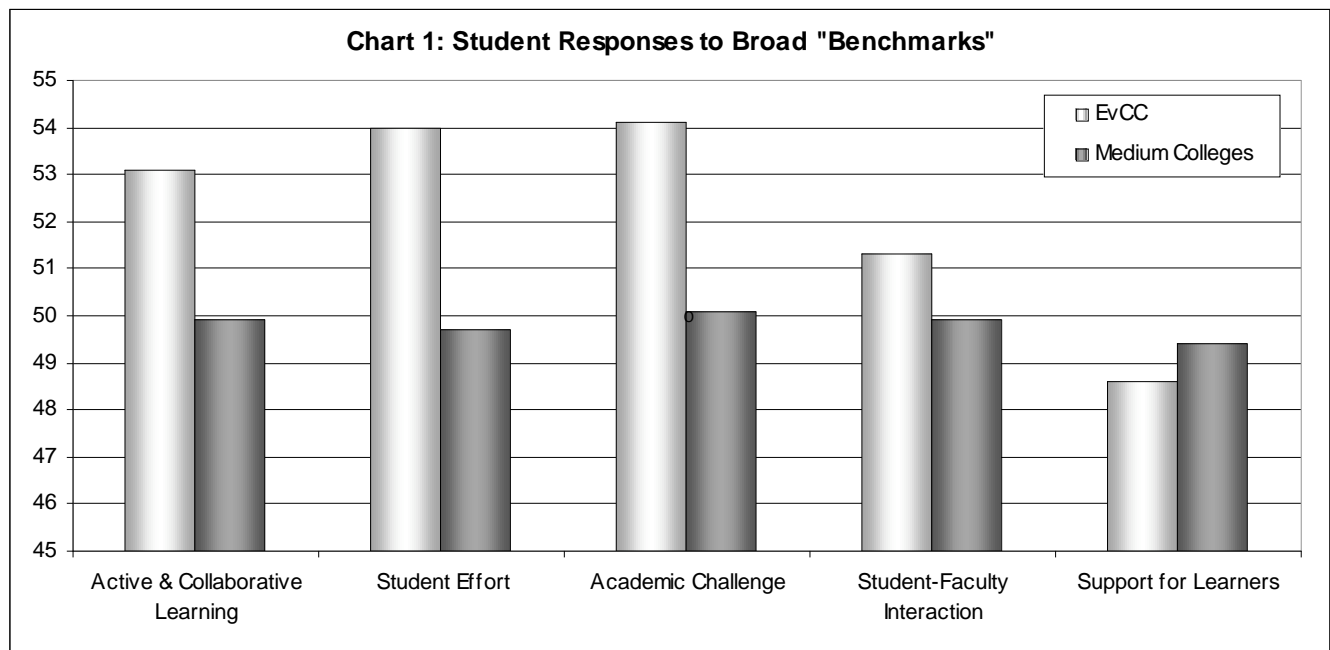


## THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

In Spring 2006, EvCC administered the CCSSE, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, which asks students about their participation in a variety of activities and their perception of institutional practices. The survey focuses on these things because they are highly correlated with student success and retention. The CCSSE is administered nationally to over 240,000 students, allowing our college's results to be compared to the results of other colleges with similar enrollment numbers. This issue of *Insight* presents some data from the students' responses.

A total of 558 EvCC students responded to the survey and they are compared to nearly 66,000 students at other similarly sized colleges.<sup>1</sup>

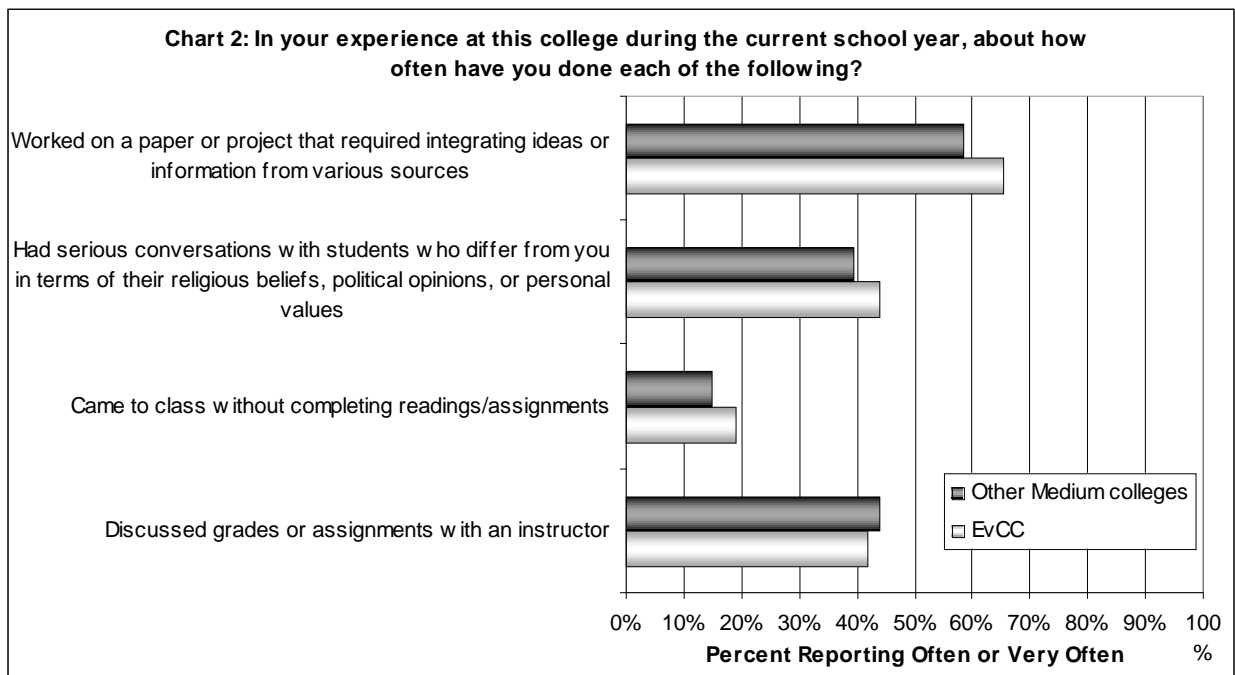
We begin with the presentation of data that tracks student responses to a variety of questions. Each group of questions is known as a "benchmark" which represents an grouping of between six and ten questions from the survey (see Chart 1). These scores are "standardized," meaning that the average score for all students is 50. A score above 50 indicates a benchmark above average; anything below 50 indicates the opposite. EvCC student scores are compared to other, similarly--sized community colleges.



<sup>1</sup> Feel free to contact Darryl Dieter at x9392 if you would like to see the complete results report.

On the benchmark of Active and Collaborative Learning, EvCC student responses yielded a standardized score of 53.1 compared to 49.9 to other medium-sized colleges. Our students report being more highly engaged in active and collaborative learning than do students at other medium sized community colleges who completed the survey. While the scores vary somewhat, students from Everett Community College also report higher levels of engagement when compared to other medium colleges in three other benchmarks: Student Effort, Academic Challenge and Student-Faculty Interaction. Student Effort is self-explanatory: how much effort does a student put into his or her academic work? Academic Challenge is the perception of the level of rigor in a student’s classes, and Student-Faculty Interaction is precisely as it states. Support for Learners involves such things as advising, counseling, financial aid support, general institutional support for students and the encouragement of student-to-student interaction. On this measure EvCC students report a lower level of support compared to students of other medium-sized colleges. Each of these categories is an important indicator of student engagement, and previous research has demonstrated the relationship between this and student retention and success. Overall, EvCC students self-report better than average levels of engagement. Only in the category of Support for Learners do our students fare less well than the comparison medium colleges. As such, we should see comparatively high levels of student retention and success.

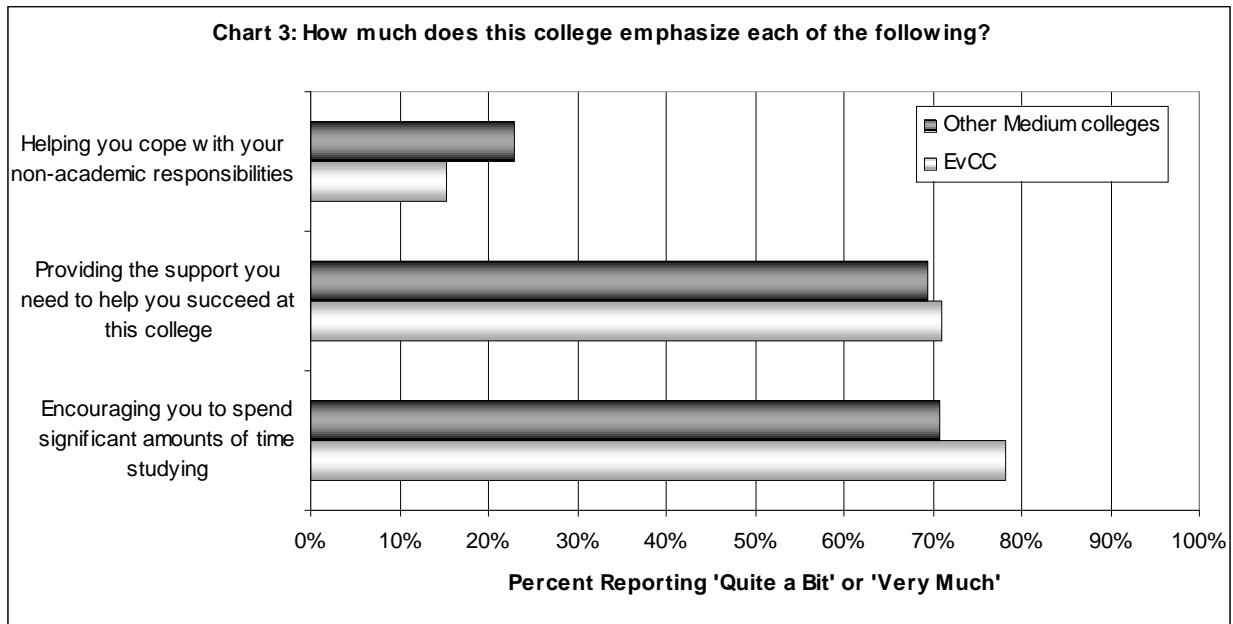
We next take a look at some of the specific questions that contribute to the broad category scores found in Chart 1. In Chart 2 the scores are reported for four questions in which students were asked about the frequency with which they have engaged in a variety of activities. Writing a paper that requires the integration of information from different sources is an indication of student effort as well as being a critical thinking skill. Students at EvCC are more likely to engage in this activity than are their peers in medium sized colleges.



Having conversations with students different from oneself is not tied to one of the benchmarks above, but it does represent a broadening of one’s horizons and an interest in and tolerance for differences, a value that the College hopes to promote. Here again EvCC students report a greater tendency to engage in this activity than do their peers at other medium colleges. It is difficult to identify whether this is the natural tendency of our students or whether the EvCC has induced this activity. Either way, it is a desirable trait that results in a more fulfilling experience for EvCC students.

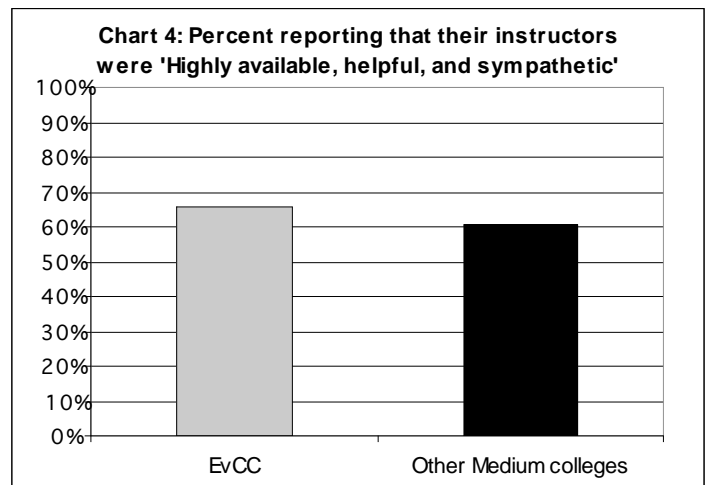
In some other areas, EvCC students did not compare so favorably. While the percentages for both groups were small, Everett students were more likely to say that they came to class unprepared than were students at other medium sized colleges. Additionally, EvCC students were slightly less likely to report that they discussed grades or assignments with instructors than were students in the comparison group. On these two issues of engagement, ideally we will work toward improvement.

In another part of the survey, students were asked about their perceptions of the degree to which the College emphasizes certain things that are likely to assist in their retention and success. Responses are reported in Chart 3. Students from Everett are less likely to say that EvCC helps them to cope with non-academic issues than are students from other medium colleges. However, they are slightly more likely to say in general that the College



provides the support necessary to succeed when compared to other students. And finally, EvCC students are more likely to report that instructors encourage them to spend a significant amount of time studying when compared to students of other colleges. On two of these three indicators, Everett students perceive the College to be doing a good job. On the third item—help in coping with non-academic issues—the College may want to re-evaluate its efforts in this area.

Instructors who are helpful and available to their students promote student engagement, and in so doing, make it more likely that students will be retained and will be more likely to succeed. Students were asked about their instructors and the degree to which they were helpful, available and sympathetic. Sixty-six percent of EvCC students said that their instructors were somewhat to very helpful and sympathetic (see Chart 4). By comparison, 61 percent of students at other medium colleges reported the same. This is not simply a nice piece of information that reflects positively on the College. Instructors who behave in this fashion are more likely to engage their students who are, in turn, more likely to be successful.



## CURRENT FTES

	Final Fall 2002	Final Fall 2003	Final Fall 2004	Final Fall 2005	Final Fall 2006
State FTES	4366	4234	4018	4266	4492
State Heads	6632	6437	6180	6290	6506

## RANDOM STATISTICS

- Minimum number of Chinese censors who monitor Internet activity: 100,000
- Minimum number of different U.S. government agencies that mine the personal data of citizens: 42
- Percentage of Republicans and Democrats, respectively, in October 1994 who said they were excited to vote that year: 45, 30
- Percentage who said this in June about the 2006 midterm election: 30, 46
- Estimated number of Americans who get degrees each year from nonaccredited “diploma mills”: 100,000
- Number of Pentagon employees who had such degrees on their résumés, in a recent congressional study: 257
- Chance that a British veterinarian says he or she has treated a drunk dog: 1 in 4
- Minimum number of books in Harvard’s libraries that are bound in human flesh: 2



These statistics come from Harper’s Magazine Index, September 2006