

Residence and Student Learning

March 2000

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Purpose

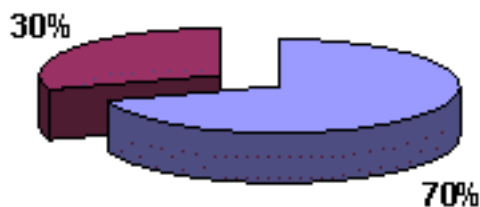
The goal of this survey was to learn more about the relationship between the special educational programs in the residence halls and student learning outcomes at the end of their first year.

Highlights

Students report that the quality of their first year was enhanced by making their own decisions (87%), living on campus (75%), meeting others from backgrounds different than their own (73%), and having newspapers available in their residence halls (73%).

Participation Rate

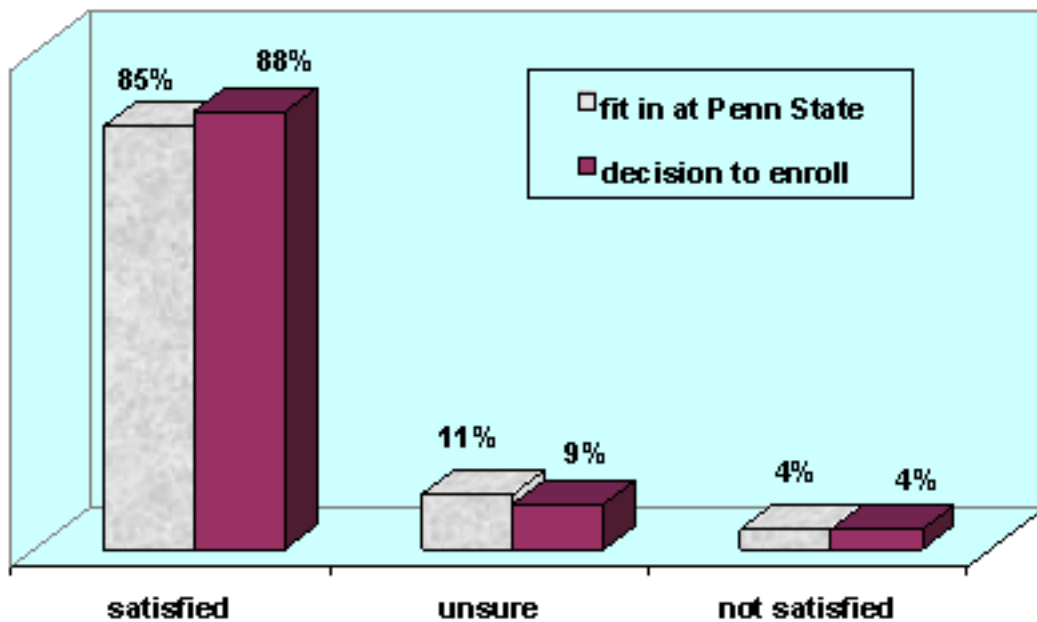
- N = 822 (70%) agreed to participate
- N = 355 (30%) did not agree to participate



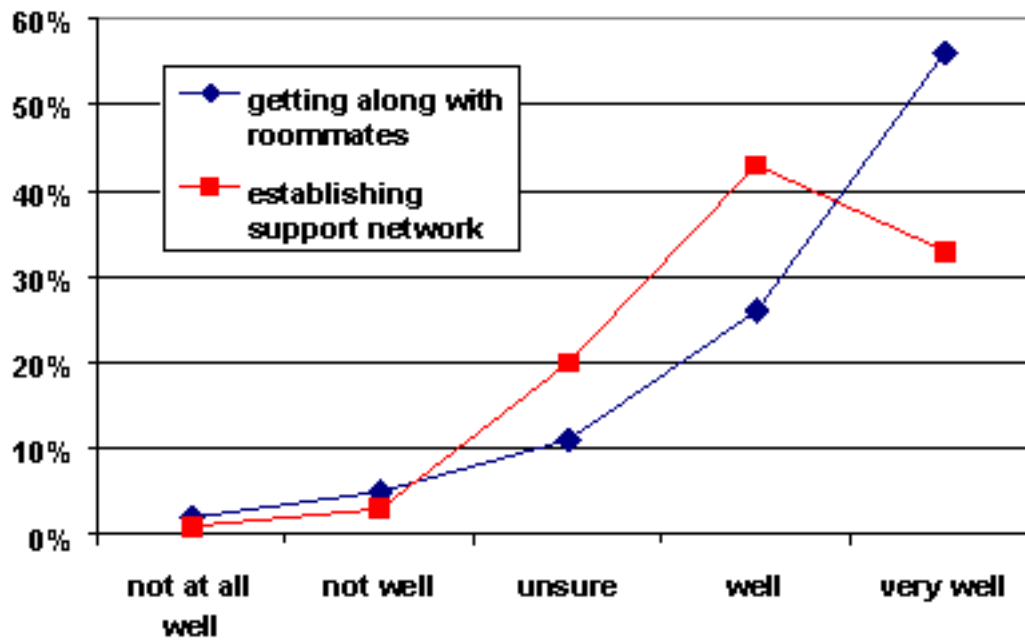
Findings

- Near the end of their first year, most of the students report they feel they fit into the Penn State community and are satisfied with their decision to enroll.

Satisfaction



● Three-fourths of the students said they are doing well or very well getting along with their roommates and establishing a good support network at college.

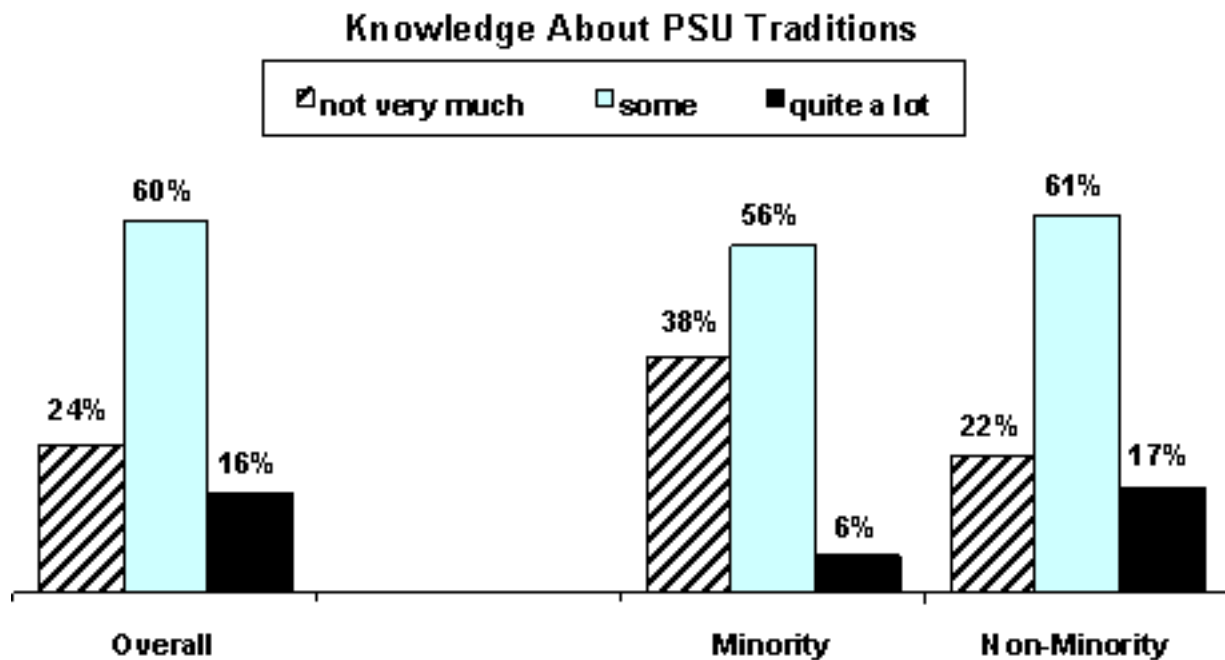


● Students reported making progress on most personal learning skills during their first year. By the end of the first year, students had more trouble managing their time, finances and keeping physically fit.

Students Report Doing Well First Year

Personal Learning Outcomes	Start of Year	End of Year
being on your own	90%	92%
acquiring productive study skills	61%	65%
getting satisfactory grades	65%	68%
being involved in campus life	45%	52%
making/maintaining new friendships	79%	91%
making decisions	79%	86%
understanding your own strengths	69%	80%
managing your free time	61%	48%
managing your finances	63%	60%
keeping fit physically	68%	67%
keeping fit emotionally	76%	81%
expressing opinions to leaders	44%	46%
establishing career goals	54%	57%
establishing personal goals	71%	73%

Overall, fewer than a fifth of first year students 'knew quite a lot' about Penn State traditions. More non-minority students than minority students felt they knew about PSU traditions.

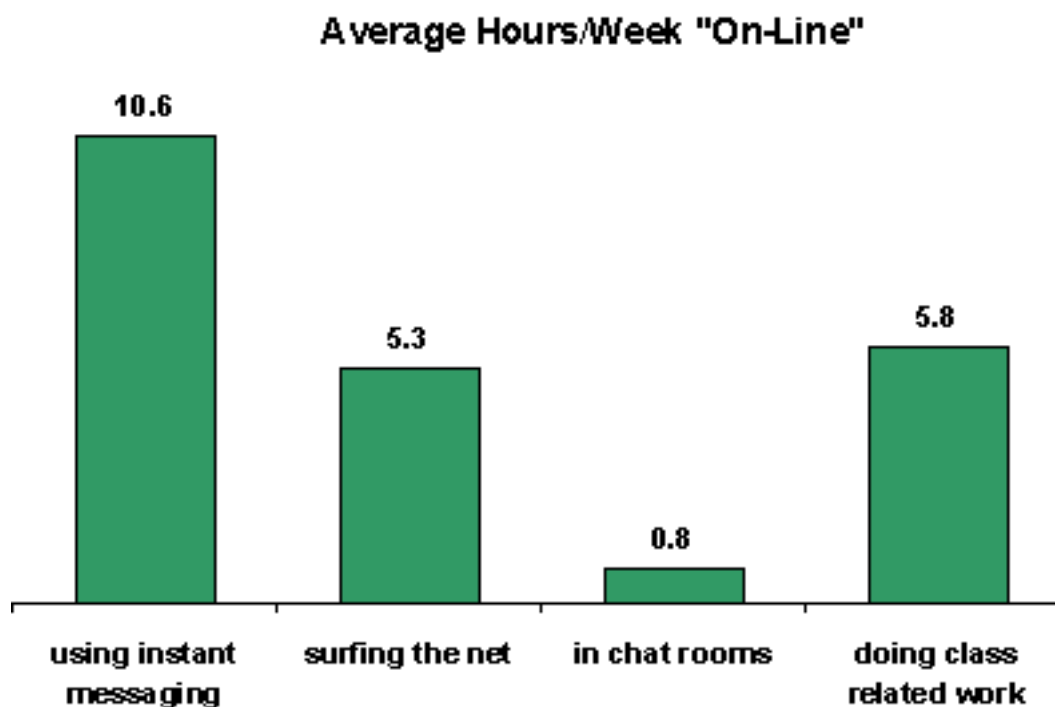


- For the most part, students do not feel well informed.

<i>How much do you know about:</i>	<u>not much</u>	<u>some</u>	<u>quite a lot</u>
opportunities to get involved	14%	52%	35%
the Academic Support Center	32%	42%	25%
community standards	33%	51%	16%
PSU traditions	24%	60%	16%
PSU offices/procedures	34%	57%	10%

- Students reported spending 1.3 hours per week on average 'volunteering' and 4.2 hours per week being involved in student organizations.

Students also reported spending 10.6 hours a week "on-line" using instant messaging.

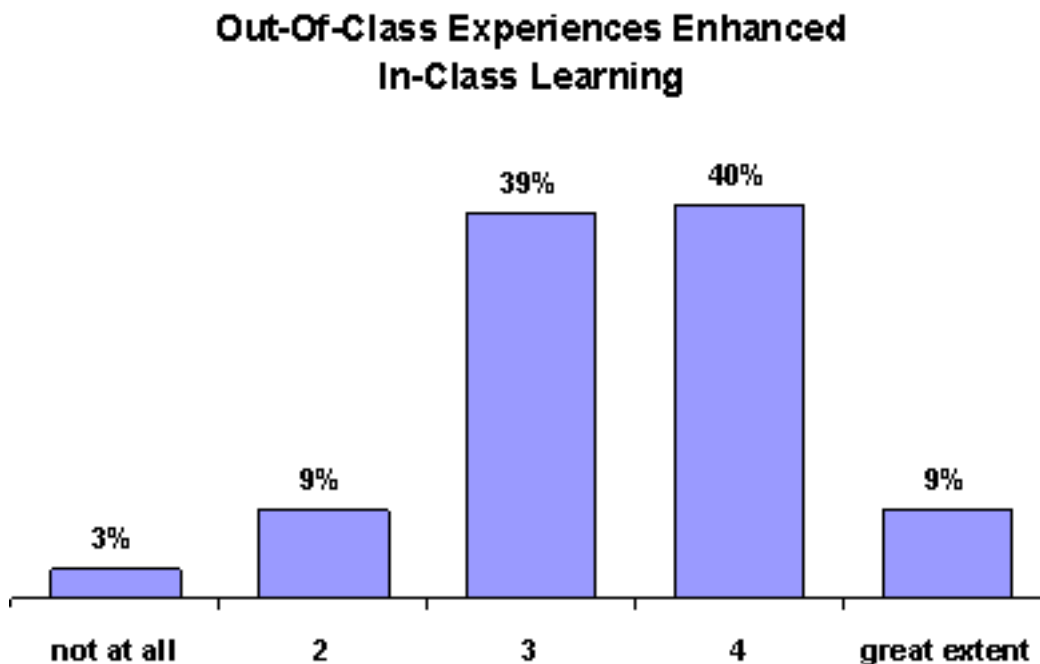


- There were some significant differences among student sub groups:

- Minority students spent more hours a week on-line doing class related work than did non-minority students.*
- Those with lower grades spent more time in chat rooms than those with higher grades.*
- Men spent more hours per week surfing the net than did women.*

* Statistically significant at the .05 level

● Half (49%) of the first year students said that their out-of-class experiences enhanced their in-class learning.



● Most students (87%) state that 'making their own decisions' contributed positively to the quality of their first year experiences.

Contributed to Quality of First Year:

	not much	unsure	great deal
making own decisions	3%	11%	87%
living on campus	7%	17%	75%
meeting others from backgrounds different from own	8%	19%	73%
availability of newspapers in the residence halls	9%	19%	73%
'Stall Stories' information	29%	35%	36%
attending programs sponsored by the residence halls	44%	36%	20%

● There were some significant differences among women and men::

- Women were more likely than men to say that: living in the residence halls,* making their own decisions,* and getting to know others from diverse backgrounds* added to their first year.
- Men were more likely than women to report that attending programs sponsored by the residence halls contributed to their first year experiences.*

● One of the five residence areas has a disproportionate percentage of first year students which is matched by this survey response sample. First year students from this area report that they are doing better keeping physically fit,* developing a support network,* and getting along with their roommates,* but having less success establishing their personal goals* than first year students in the other four residence areas.

* Statistically significant at the .05 level

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