

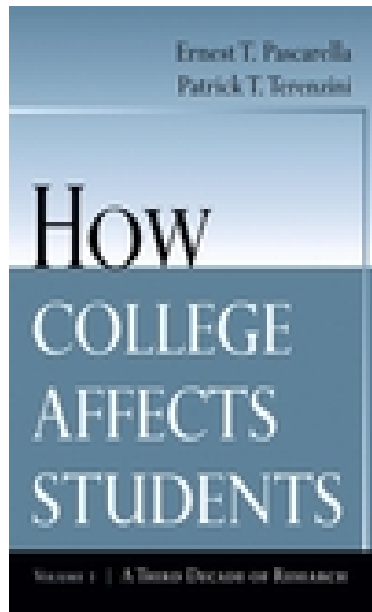
**Santa Clara  
University**

**Student Engagement at SCU:  
How can we put NSSE results to  
good use?**

**Administrative Leadership Group**

**April 7, 2009**

# What Really Matters in College: Student Engagement



Because individual effort and involvement are the critical determinants of impact, institutions should focus on the ways they can shape their academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular offerings to encourage *student engagement*.

Pascarella & Terenzini, *How College Affects Students*, 2005, p. 602

# Goals for this Presentation

- **Brief overview of the NSSE survey**
- **Longitudinal Results since 2001**
- **Focal Area: Student-Faculty Interaction**
- **Interesting differences by ethnicity and gender**
  - Engaging Academically
  - Engaging Socially / Co-Curricular
  - Evaluation of Educational Experience
- **Discussion**
  - How can we use what we learning?
  - How can we better communicate results?

# What is the NSSE?

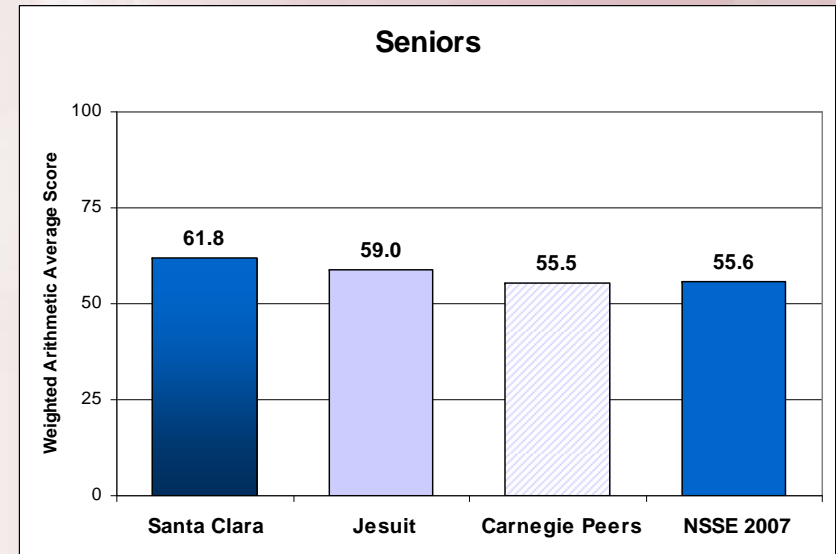
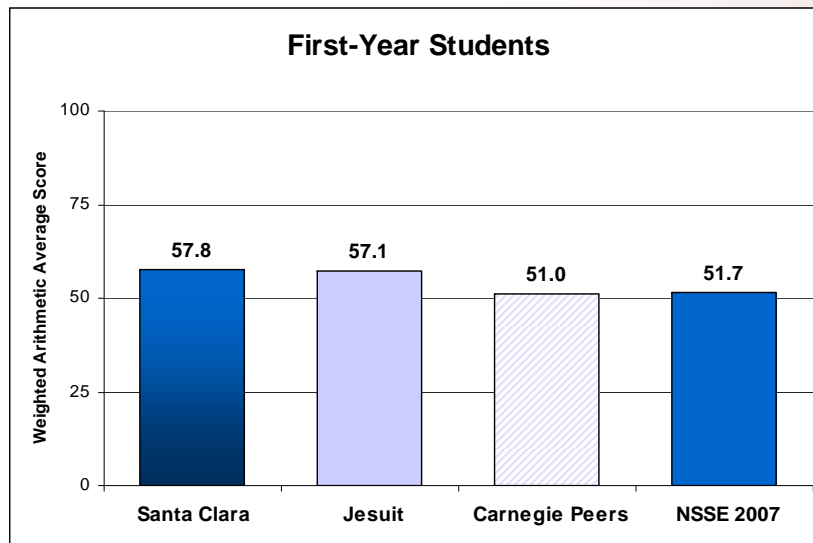
- A national effort to assess student behavior and effective educational practice (four-year institutions)
- 769 colleges and universities participated in the spring 2008 administration (up from 610 in 2007).
- SCU: Random sample of 300 first-year and 300 graduating seniors surveyed each spring (2000-2002). All first-year and graduating seniors since 2003;
- Peer comparison group of other NSSE-participating Jesuit universities (i.e. the Jesuit consortium) selected in 2005. Consortium-specific questions administered starting in 2006.
- USA Today: Can get NSSE results to make comparisons  
[http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2007-11-04-nsse-how-to\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2007-11-04-nsse-how-to_N.htm)

# Scales and Benchmarks

- **Level of Academic Challenge**
- **Active and Collaborative Learning**
- **Enriching Educational Experiences**
- **Supportive Campus Environment**
- **Student – Faculty Interaction**
- **Jesuit Consortium**
- **Carnegie Peers**
- **NSSE 2008**
- **“Above Average”:**  
**Benchmarks in top 50%**  
**of all NSSE Institutions**
- **“High Performing”:**  
**Benchmarks in top 10%**  
**of all NSSE Institutions**

# Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)

The promotion of high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance.

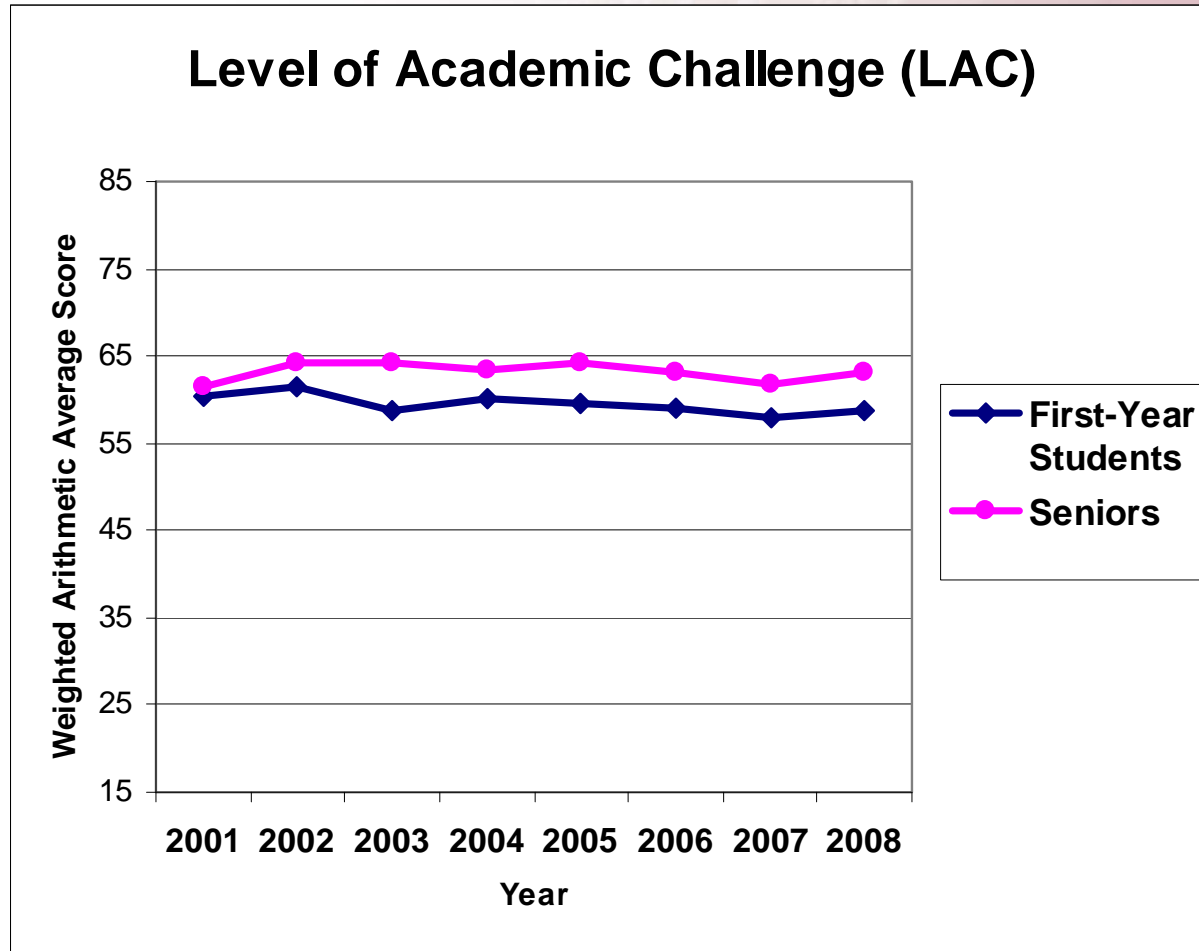


**Area of strength!**

**Significantly higher than comparison groups**



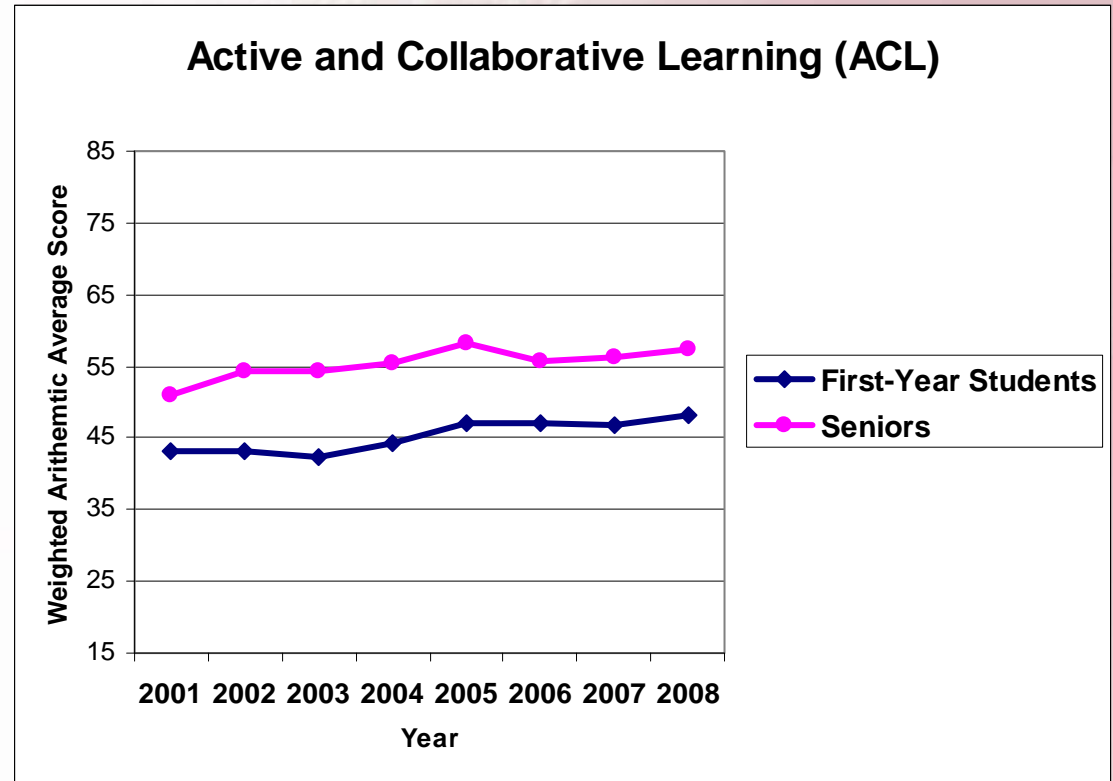
# Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)



**Stable across time since 2001**

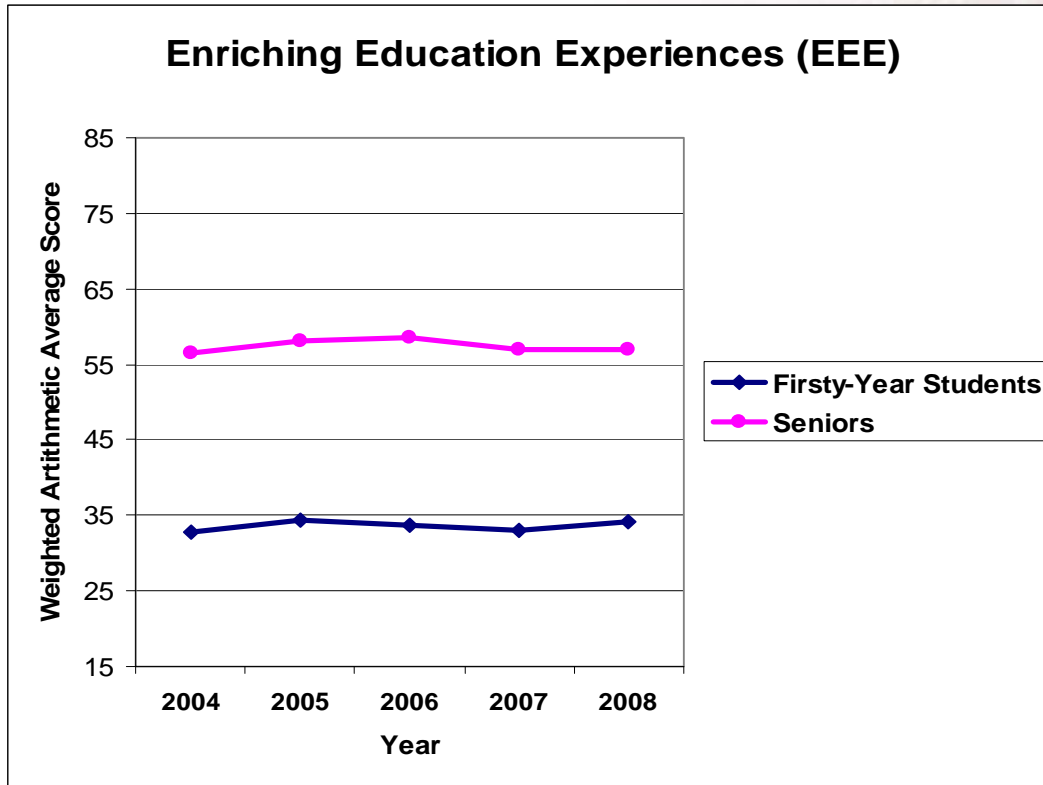
# Active & Collaborative Learning (ACL)

Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material.



- ~ Slight increase since 2001
- ~ First Year and Seniors higher than comparison groups\*\*\*

# Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE)

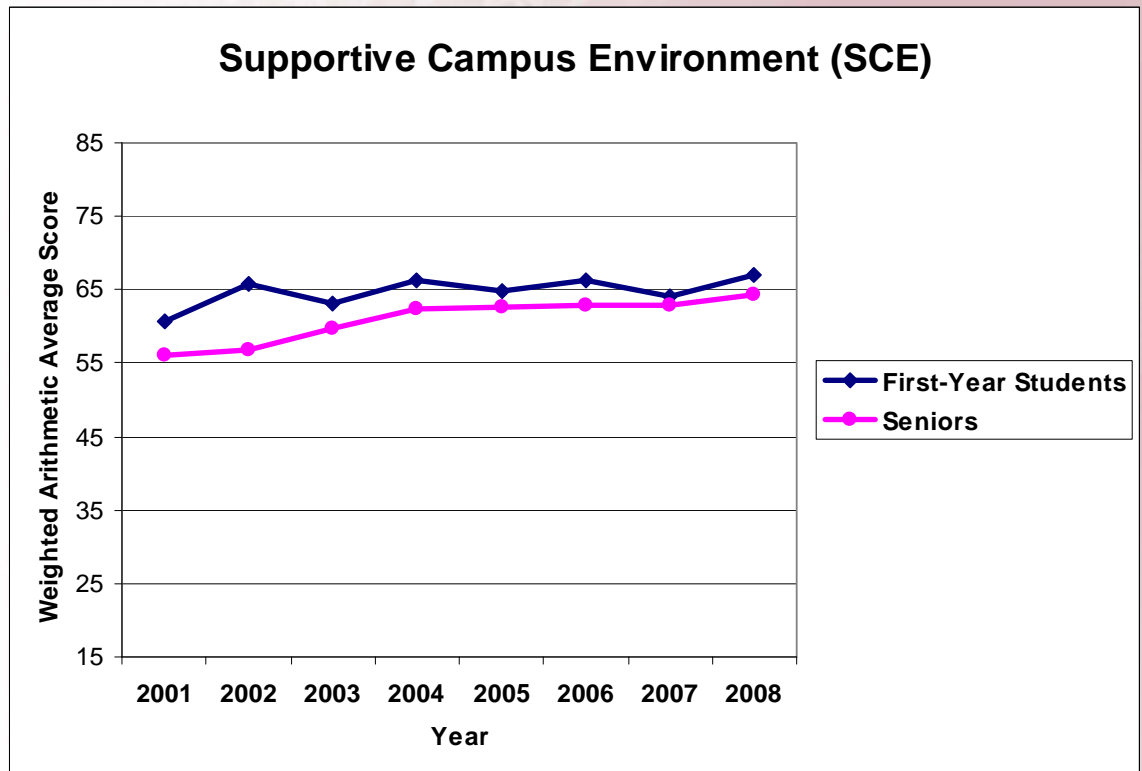


Complementary learning opportunities to enhance academic programs, provide experience with diversity, and opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge.

- ~ **Stable since 2001**
- ~ **First Year and Seniors higher than comparison groups\*\*\***

# Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)

Satisfaction with university's commitment to student success; positive working and social relations among different groups on campus.



**Area of strength!**

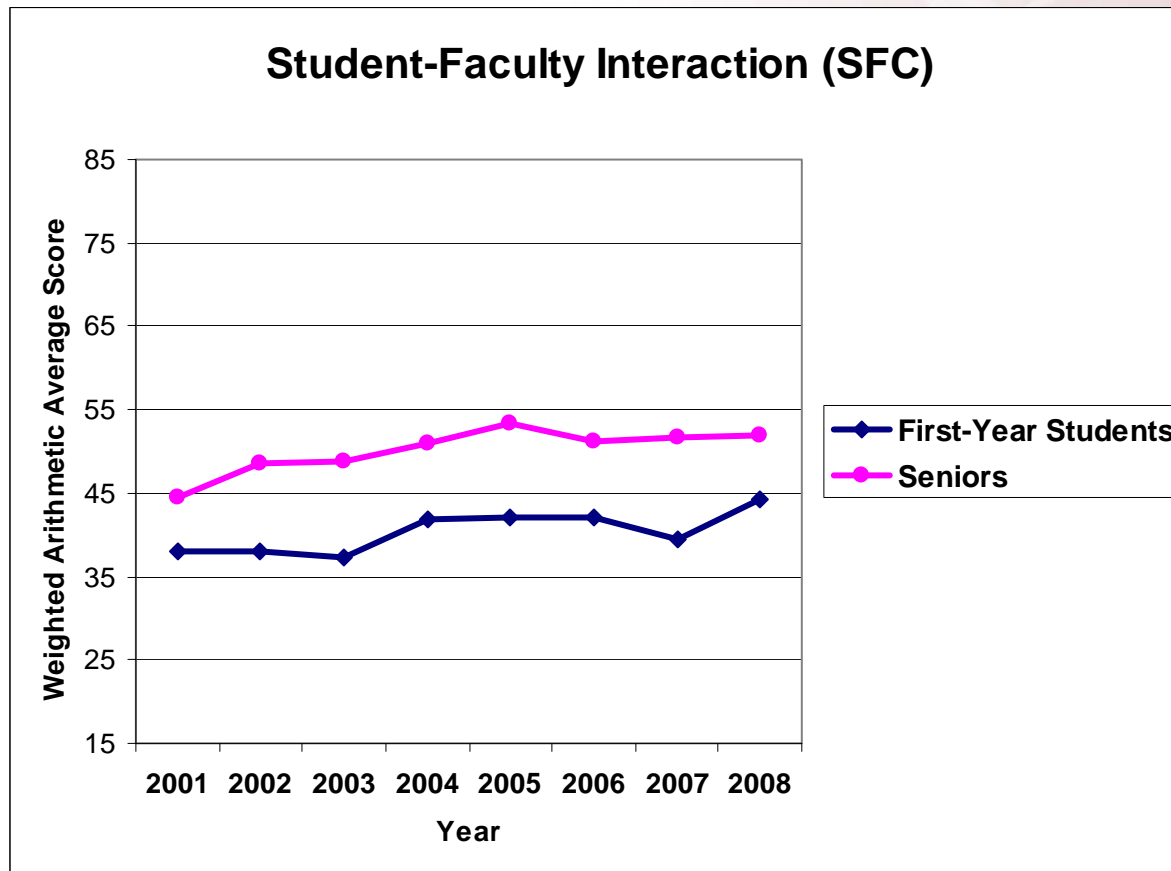
**~ High and stable results since 2003**

**~ Higher than comparison groups\*\*\***

# Student – Faculty Interaction (SFI)

SFI increasing since 2001...

by senior year score is higher than comparison groups\*\*\*

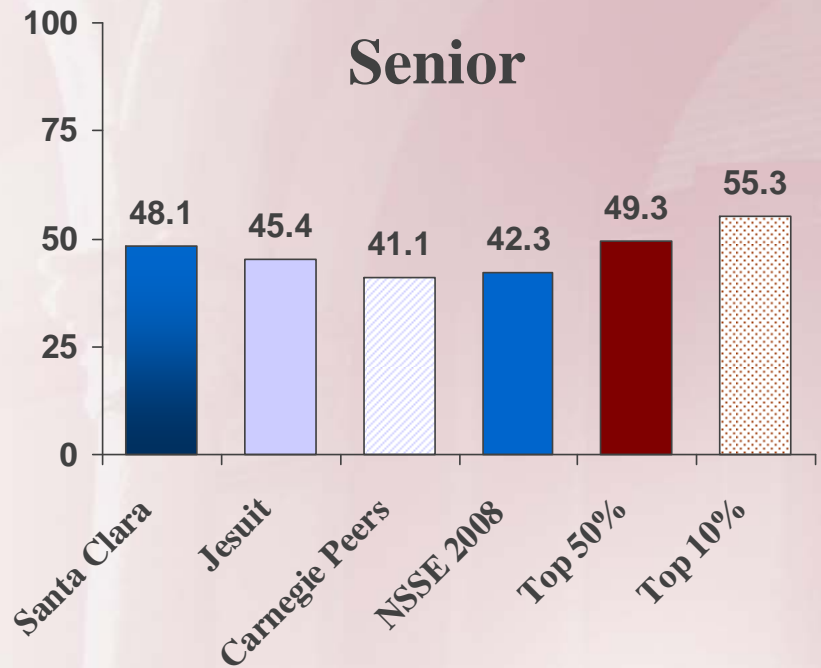
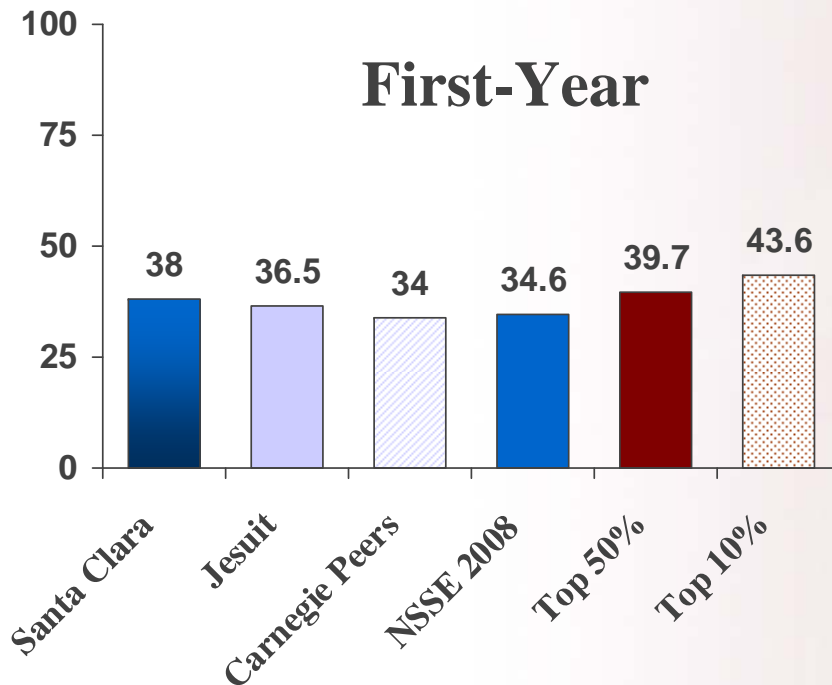


Interactions with faculty inside and outside of the classroom

**An area for Improvement!**

# Student – Faculty Interaction (SFI)

## *Benchmark Comparisons*



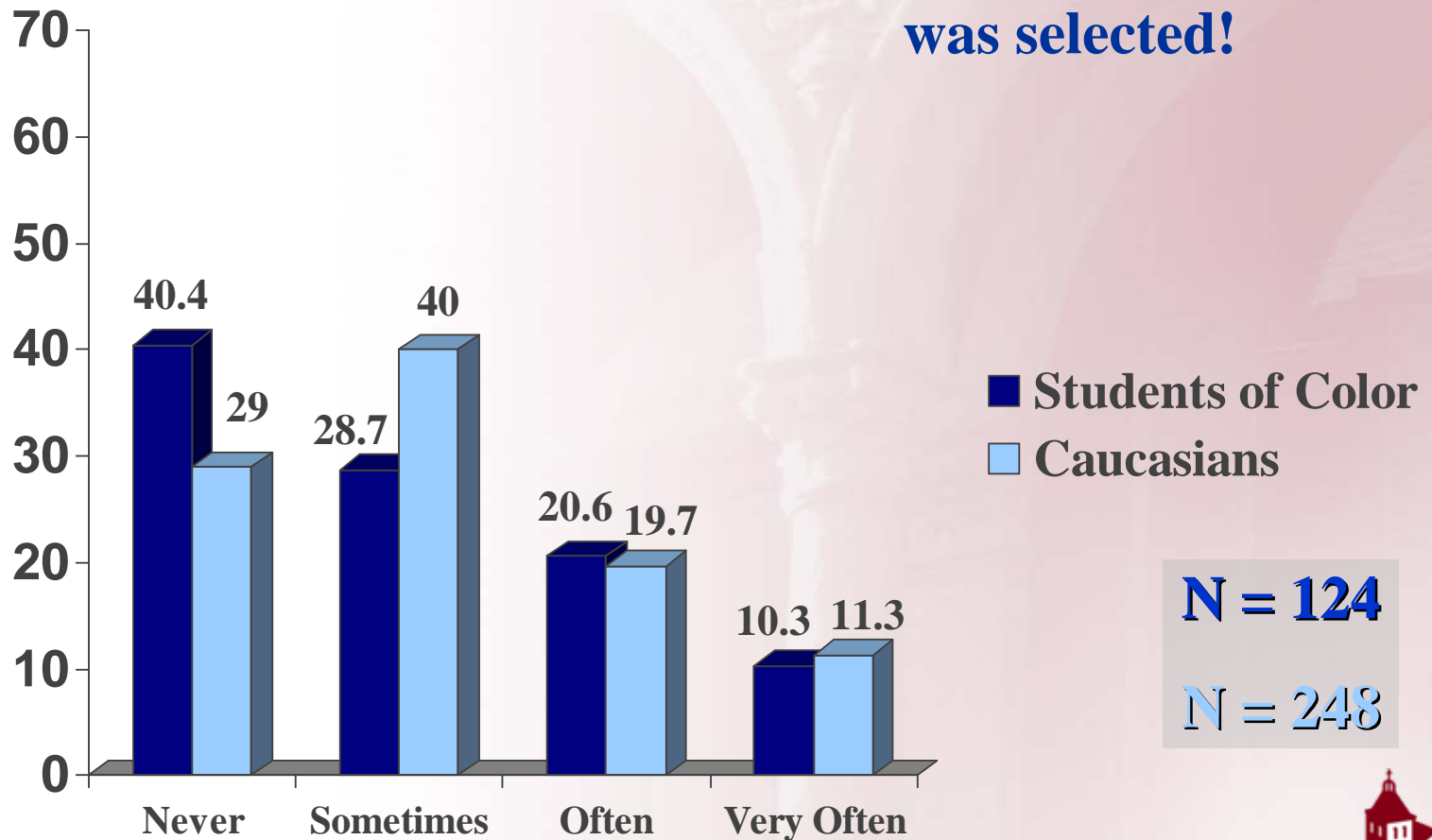
~ SCU scores over the "50" mark on all other NSSE scales ...

# Questions on the SFI Scale

- 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 faculty members outside of class
- Worked with faculty members on an activity other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.)
- Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance
- Worked with a faculty member on a research project outside of a course or program requirements

# Worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework

Look how often “NEVER” was selected!

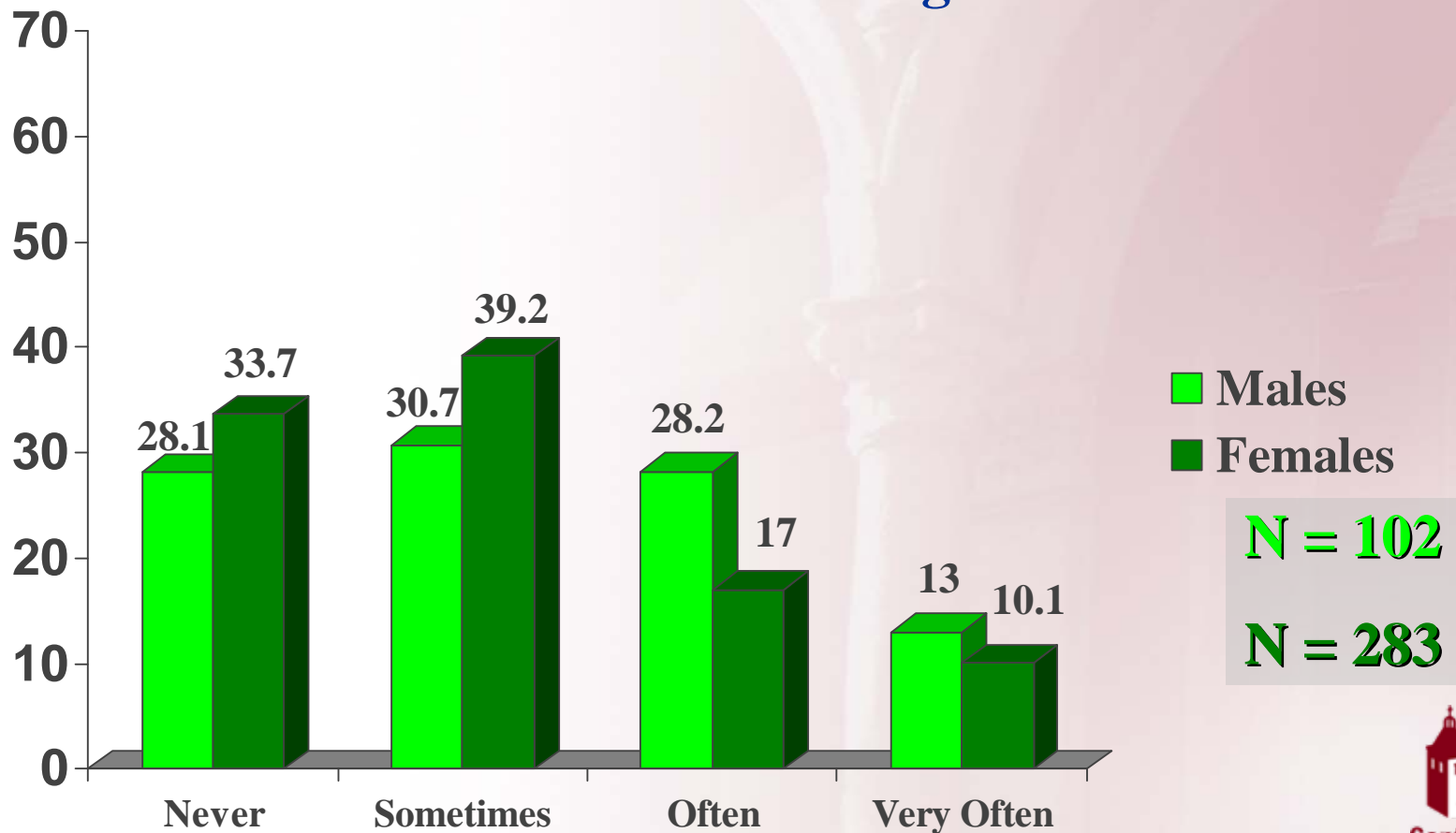


N = 124

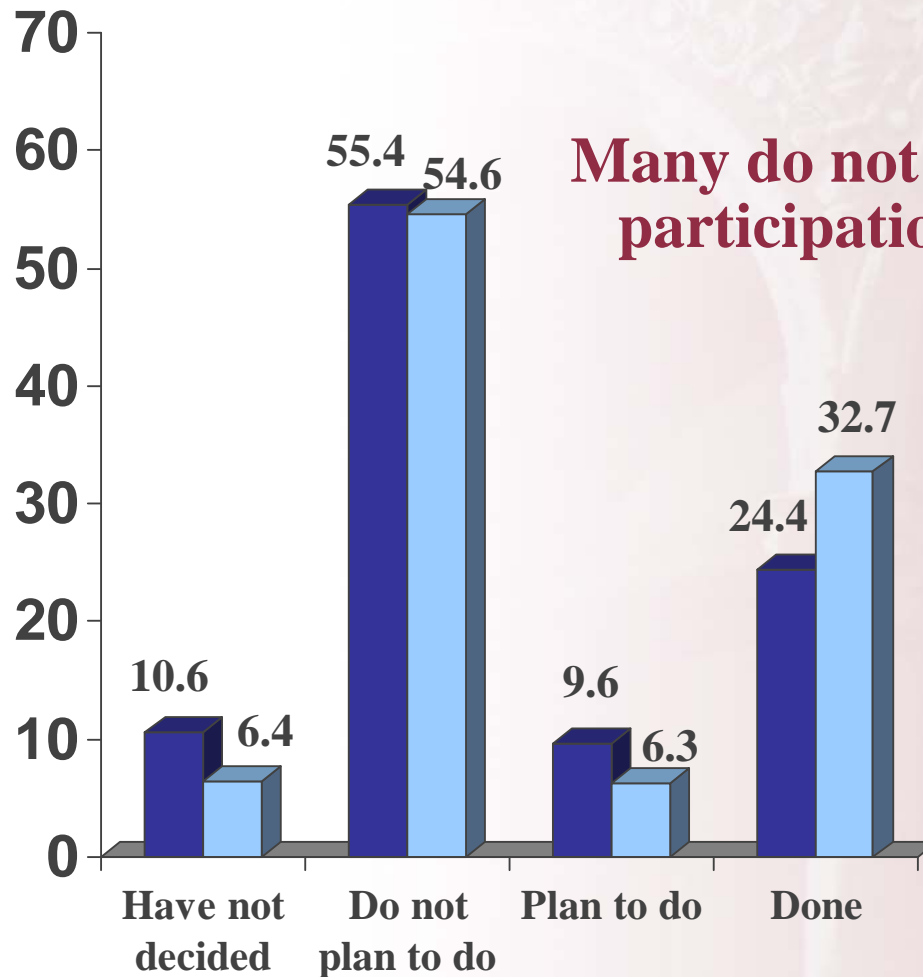
N = 248

# Worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework

What might explain this gender difference?



# Work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program



Many do not plan to do research, and participation in research is uneven

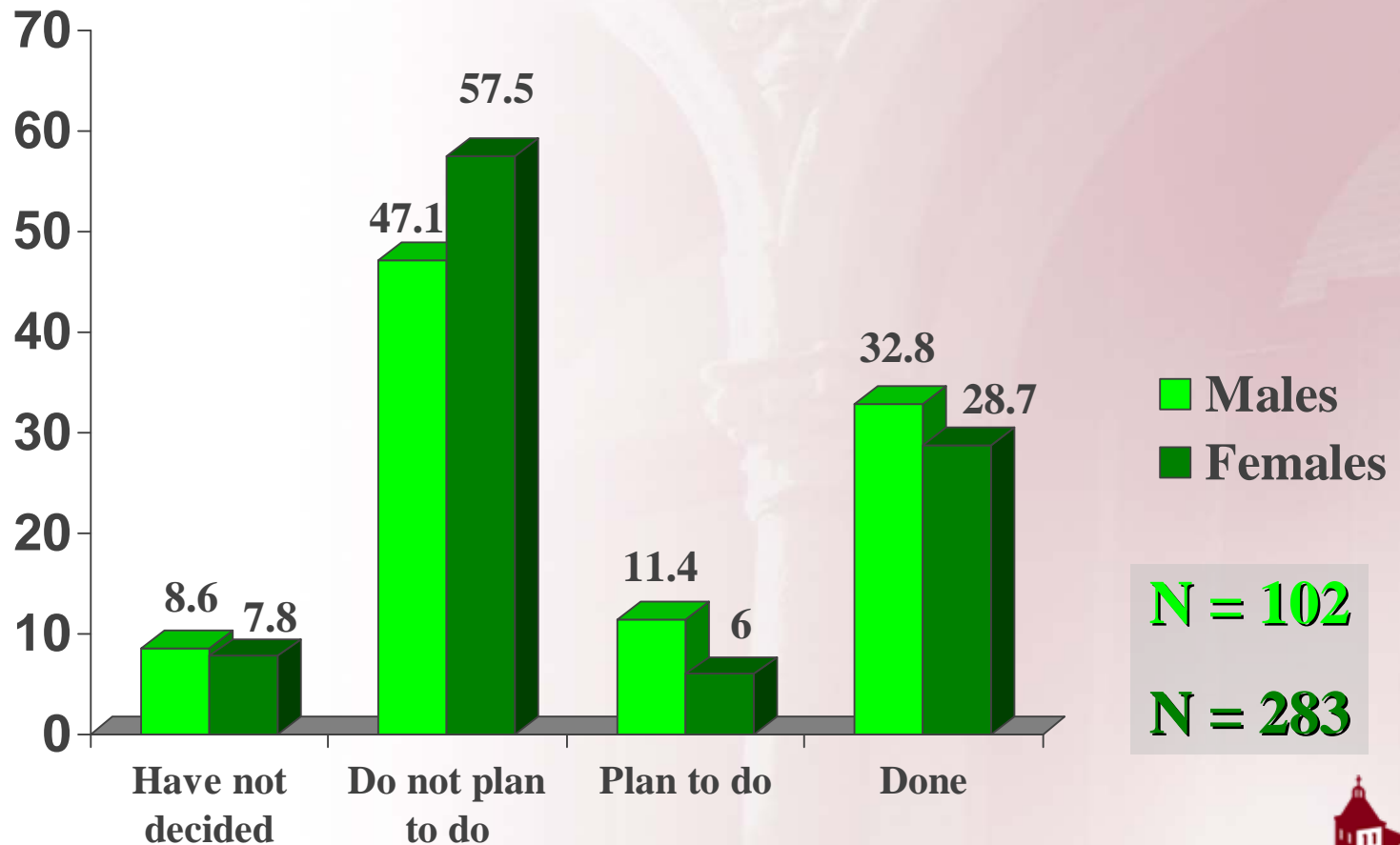
■ Students of Color  
■ Caucasians

**N = 124**

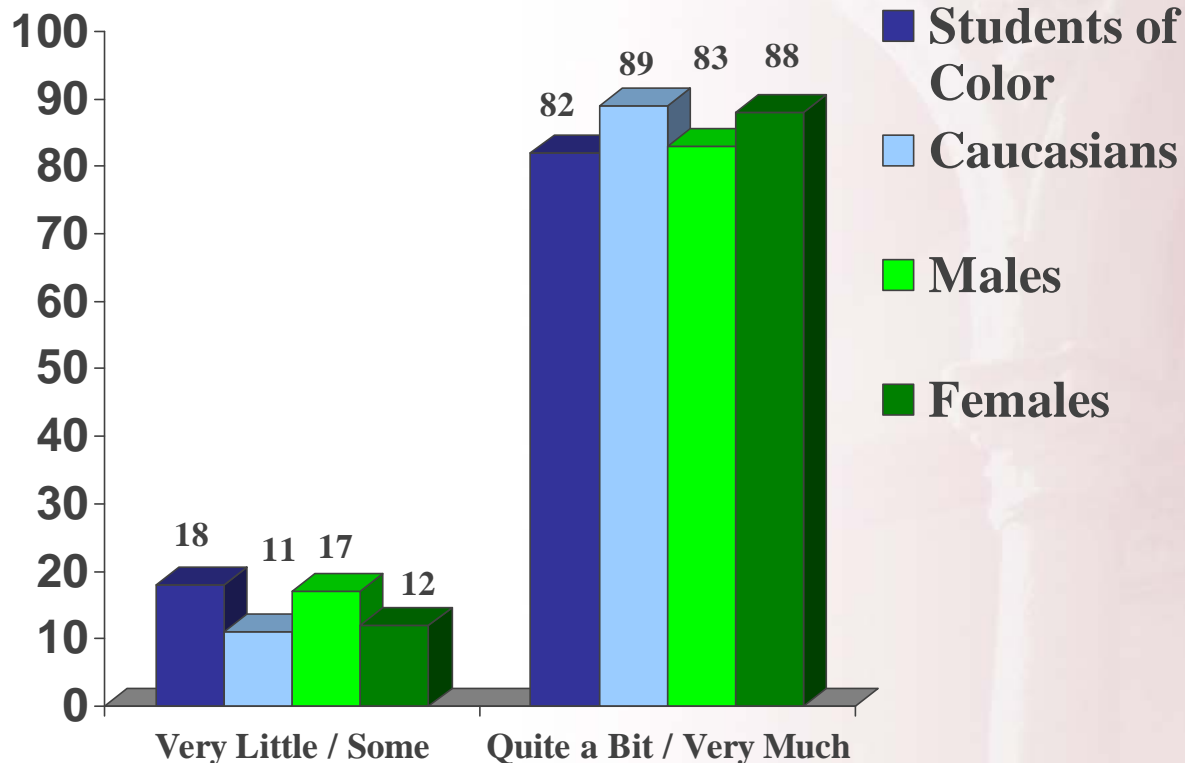
**N = 248**

# Work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements

Note the difference in the plan to do research...



# Perceptions of Institutional “Emphases”

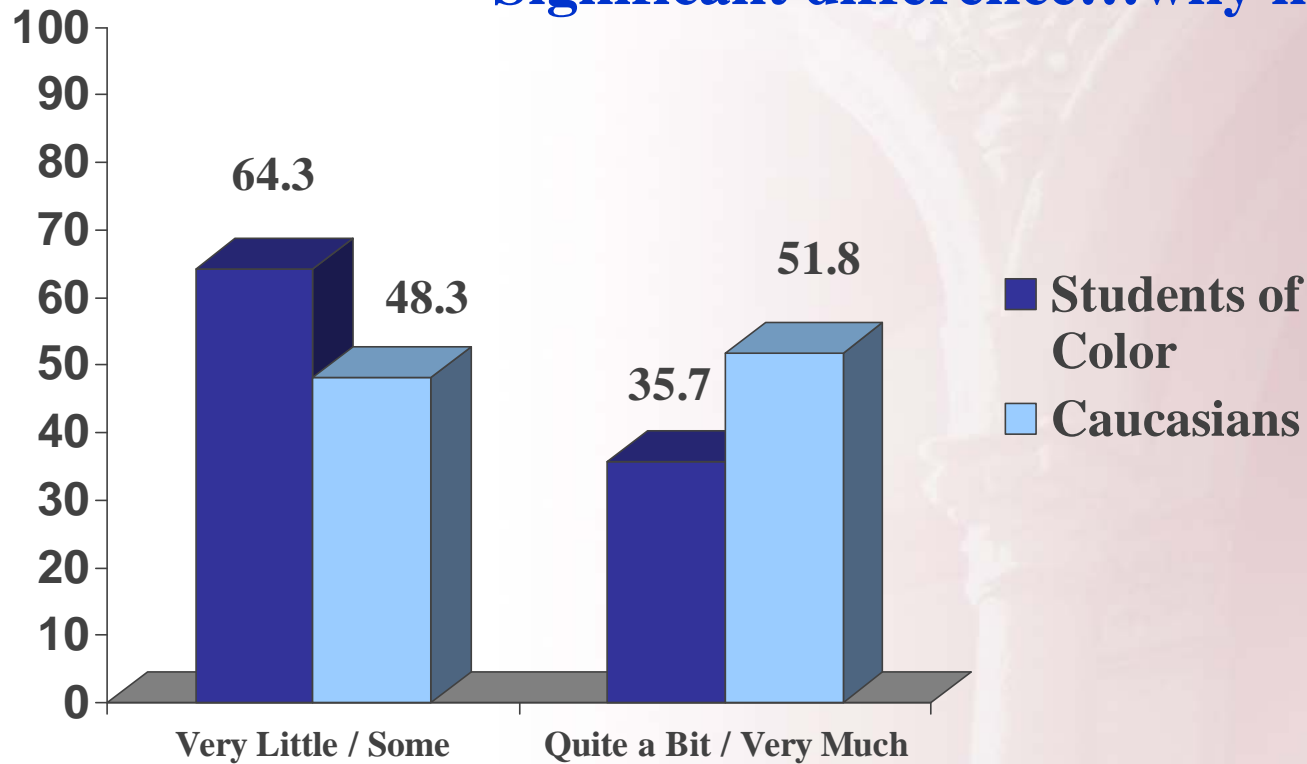


The perception of academic support is high and similarly proportioned.

Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically

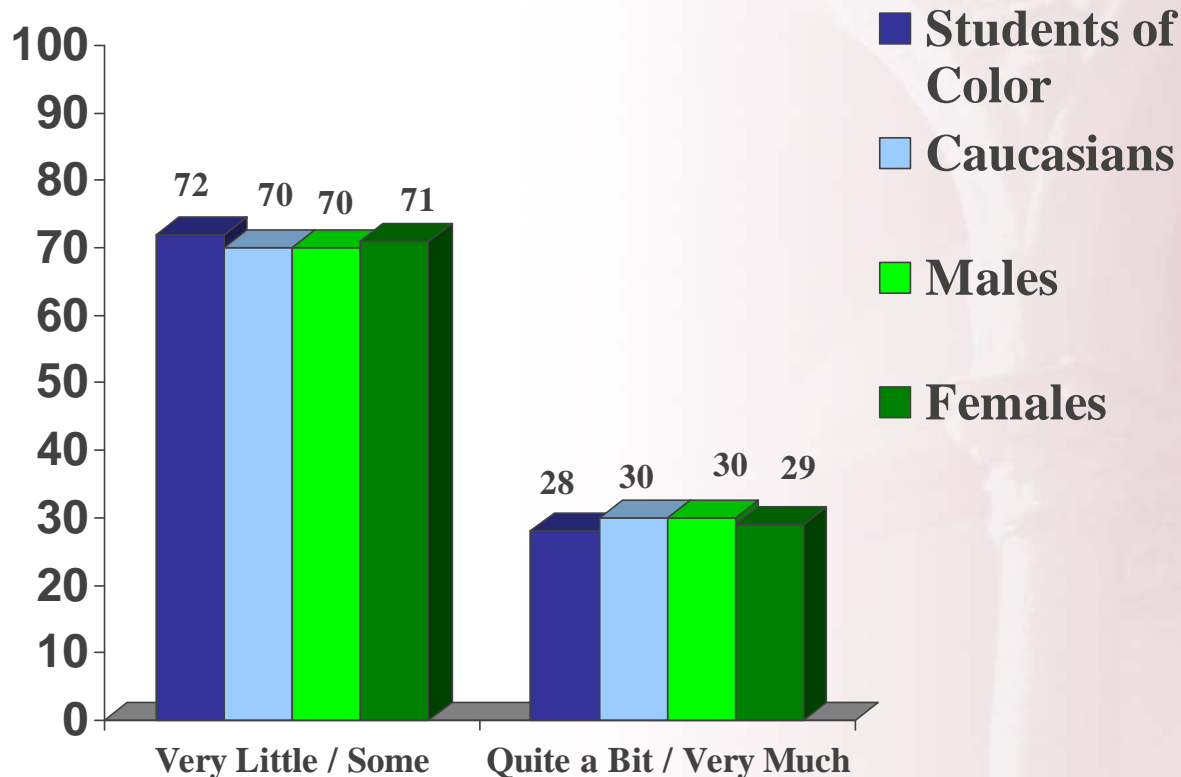
# Perceptions of Institutional “Emphases”

Significant difference...why might this be?



Providing the support you need to thrive socially.

# Perceptions of Institutional “Emphases”

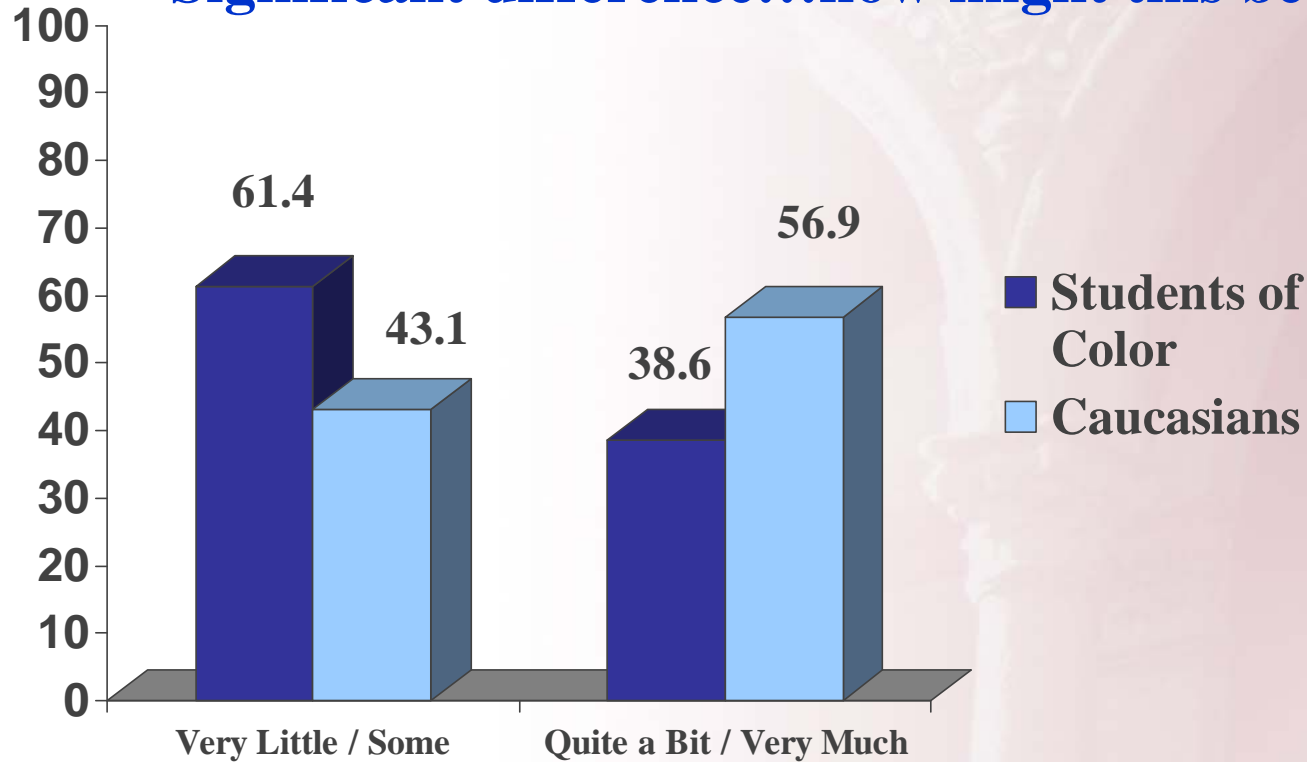


**Surprisingly similar perceptions ~ how might this be addressed?**

Providing the support you need to cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)

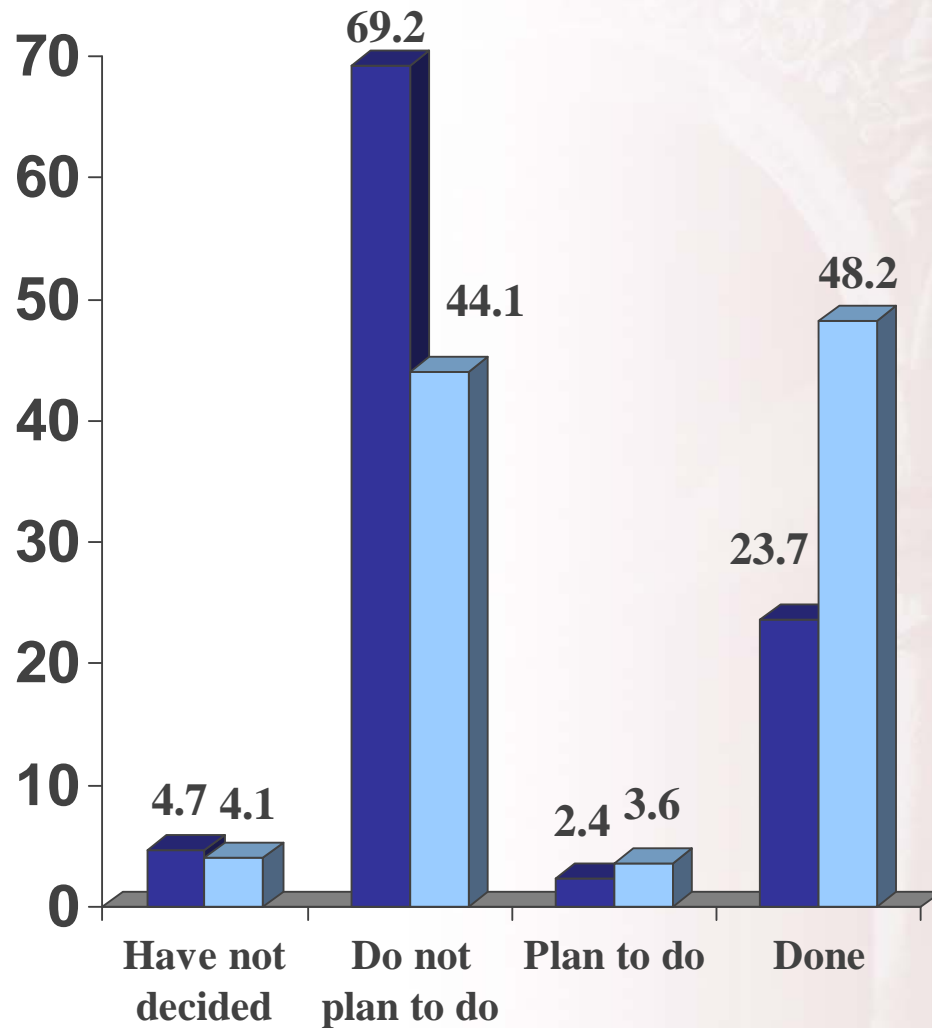
# Two other findings of interest...

**Significant difference...how might this be improved?**



**Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds**

# Another interesting difference: Study Abroad



Note the dramatic difference in participation...

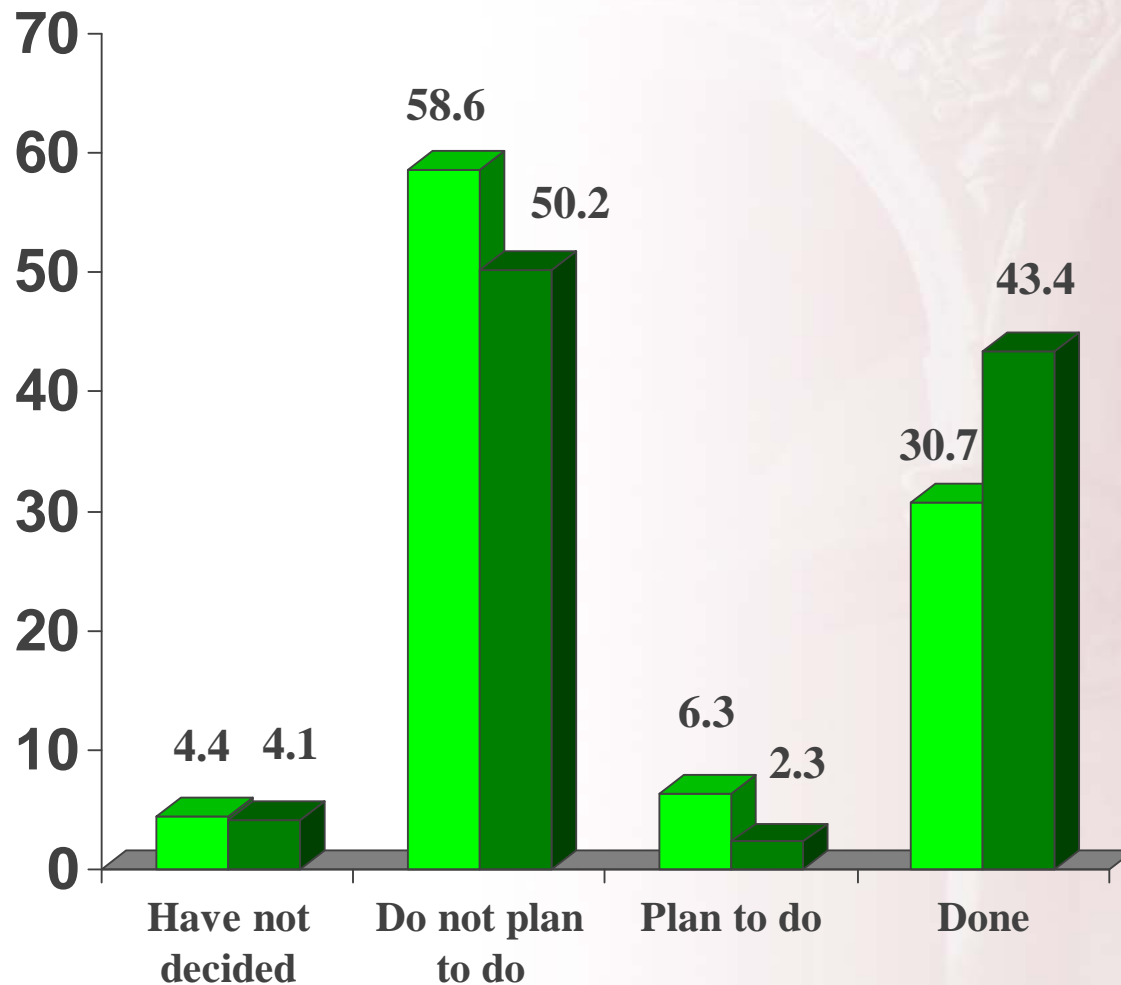
(data from seniors only)

■ Students of Color  
■ Caucasians

**N = 124**

**N = 248**

# A gender difference too: Study Abroad



We see a gender difference in participation as well...

(data from seniors only)

■ Males  
■ Females

**N = 102**

**N = 283**

# SCU's Contribution to Personal Development

**“Quite a Bit” or “Very Much”:**

	<b>Students of Color</b>	<b>Caucasians</b>
<b>Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds</b>	<b>54.3%</b>	<b>62.9%</b>
<b>Solving complex real-world problems</b>	<b>60.5%</b>	<b>64.9%</b>
<b>Developing a personal code of values and ethics</b>	<b>72.7%</b>	<b>76.2%</b>
<b>Working effectively with others</b>	<b>78.8%</b>	<b>84.7%</b>
<b>Developing a sense of spirituality</b>	<b>47.5%</b>	<b>50.8%</b>
<b>Learning effectively on your own</b>	<b>75.9%</b>	<b>77.6%</b>
<b>Understanding yourself</b>	<b>65.7%</b>	<b>72.7%</b>

**Not significantly different – any opportunities to nurture?**

# Table Discussion Questions

- In what ways could the campus community **increase student engagement** and address the findings that we are seeing?
- What suggestions do you have for increasing the **communication of NSSE results** on and off campus?

*~ Please write down your table's ideas on the note pads provided.*

*Thank you!*



## **SCU website resources:**

<http://www.scu.edu/provost/assessment/>

<http://www.scu.edu/nsse/>

**Dr. Carol Gittens  
Director of Assessment  
AssessmentOffice@scu.edu**