

## **TIME SPENT ON TASK**

### **Background**

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) (pronounced “sessie”) was distributed in 93 colleges across the United States in spring 2003. Mt. San Antonio College (Mt. SAC) was one of the participating colleges. Some 1,103 Mt. SAC students’ surveys were returned.

CCSSE is a survey that examines different aspects of students’ educational activities (e.g., ask questions in class). These educational activities have been shown to be related to student success. The survey was developed based on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) at Indiana University. The project is supported by grants from The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Lumina Foundation for Education.

The following excerpt from the main report will outline one of many aspects of the survey useful for accreditation and planning purposes. The main report can be found at <http://research.mtsac.edu/factbook.html> under Student Engagement Survey.

### **Critical Assessment**

As a College, Mt. SAC needs to decide two factors with all results/items in this report:

1. Which of the items are relevant to Mt. SAC and its students?
2. Of those items that are relevant, what are the percentage benchmarks for deciding if the results are acceptable or not. For example, if 60% or more of the students are satisfied with their learning experiences, does that mean that Mt. SAC should be proud of that outcome or should interventions be suggested?

### **Time spent on task**

Students were asked how much time they typically spent on certain tasks or aspects of their school life in a typical seven-day week (table 1). Almost half the students (47%) spend one to five hours a week preparing for class. Few students (8%) work on campus. Those who work off campus, tend to work 31 or more hours per week (36%). Only 15% of the group participate in college-sponsored activities in a typical seven-day week. Fifty-one percent (51%) are providing care for dependents living with them. Most students (69%) spend one-to-five hours a week commuting to and from classes.

Table 1. Time on task (survey question #7)

		Hours per week					
About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following?		None (%)	1-5 (%)	6-10 (%)	11-20 (%)	21-30 (%)	31+ (%)
a.	Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing or other activities related to your program)	1	47	31	15	5	2
b.	Working for pay on campus	92	3	1	2	1	1
c.	Working for pay off campus	26	5	5	11	18	36
d.	Participating in college-sponsored activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)	85	11	2	1	0	0
e.	Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse, etc.)	49	16	9	8	4	14
f.	Commuting to and from classes	10	69	15	4	1	1

The most salient findings to each department of the College should be celebrated if it is a success and addressed with an intervention process if it is a barrier to success for students. Formative evaluation should be done throughout the next year to determine if the intervention is successful.

