



## National Survey of Student Engagement 2010 Executive Summary

Dear Colleague:

This document presents some key findings from Viterbo University's participation in the 2010 National Survey of Student Engagement. This information is presented to stimulate discussion about how to strengthen the undergraduate experience at Viterbo University. The information in this summary adapted from NSSE reports and is extracted from Viterbo's NSSE data.

Sincerely,

Naomi Stennes-Spidahl, Director  
Office of Assessment and Institutional Research



### NSSE 2010 Overview

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) collects information annually from samples of first-year and senior students about the nature and quality of their undergraduate experience. The survey focuses on what students do—the time and energy they devote to studies and other educationally purposeful activities—and on student perceptions about educational practices. To represent the multi-dimensional nature of student engagement, NSSE developed five indicators or benchmarks of effective education practice:

Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)  
Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)  
Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)

Enriching educational Experiences (EEE)  
Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)

Viterbo University participated in the NSSE survey in 2006 and 2007. Participation in 2010 provided an opportunity to understand the changes in perception for students who participated in the 2007 survey as first-year students and in the 2010 survey as seniors. The decision to administer the NSSE survey was predicated upon a commitment to utilize the information for targeted improvements in undergraduate education. In Spring 2010, all first-year and senior undergraduate student at Viterbo were invited to participate in the web-based survey.

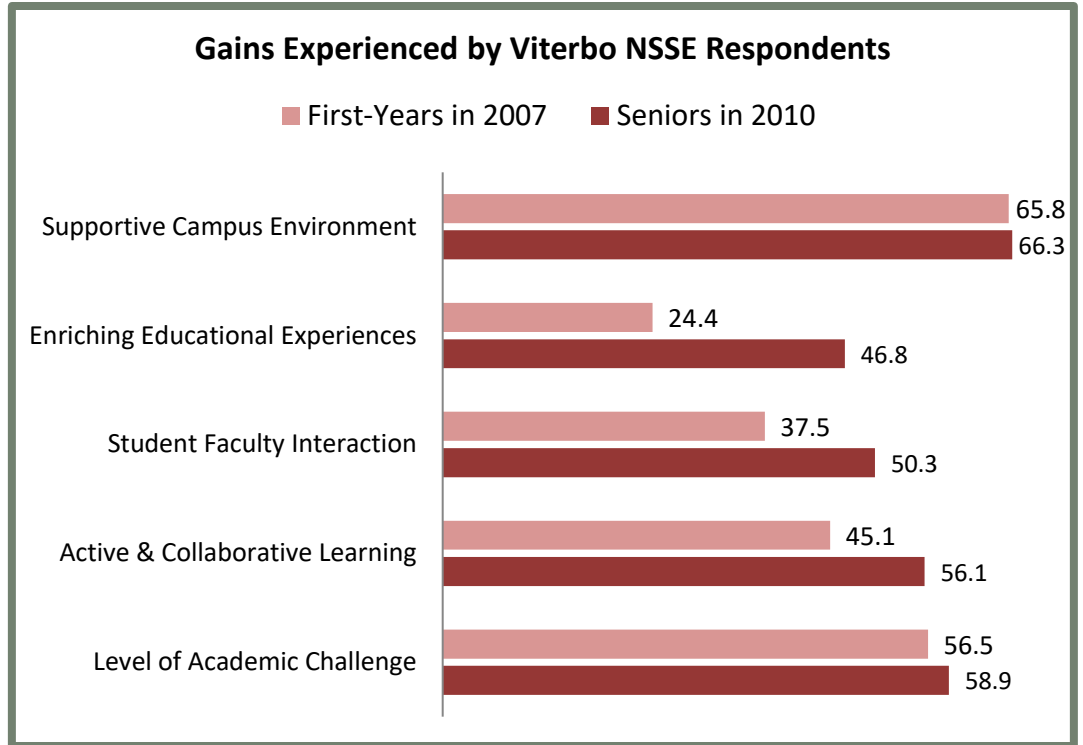
Response Rate	Viterbo			CC&U	Carnegie	NSSE 2010
	N	Sampling Error	Resp. Rate	Resp. Rate	Resp. Rate	Resp. Rate
<b>First-Year Student</b>	316	=/-3.4%	61%	38%	28%	30%
<b>Seniors</b>	350	+/-3.3%	61%	43%	33%	33%

## Key Findings for Viterbo University

### Viterbo Seniors: The Value-Added Dimension of a Viterbo Education

Viterbo students reported gains in all five indicators of engagement between their first year and their senior year.

The responses of Viterbo’s seniors in 2010 who had also participated in the NSSE survey as first-year students in 2007 demonstrate their perceptions of the value a Viterbo education provided them.



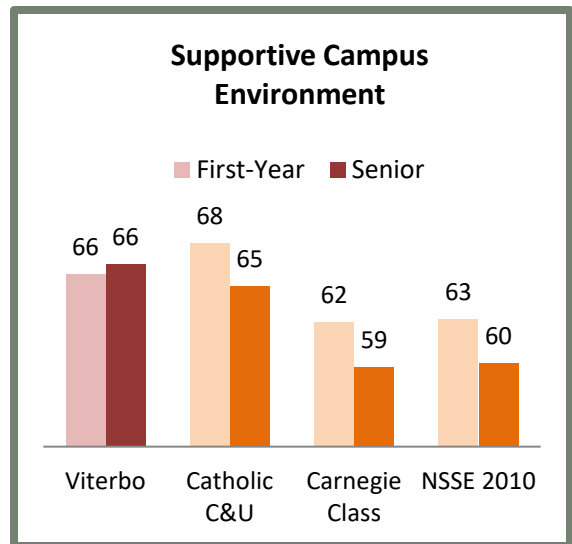
### Overall Satisfaction with Viterbo University

	Percent rating their overall undergraduate education experience as good or excellent		Percent indicating the likelihood they would attend the same institution if they could start over again.	
	Good	Excellent	Probably Yes	Definitely Yes
<b>Viterbo</b> FY students	49%	41%	40%	43%
<b>NSSE</b> FY students	49%	38%	40%	44%
<b>Viterbo</b> Seniors	37%	53%	36%	52%
<b>NSSE</b> Seniors	46%	40%	37%	45%

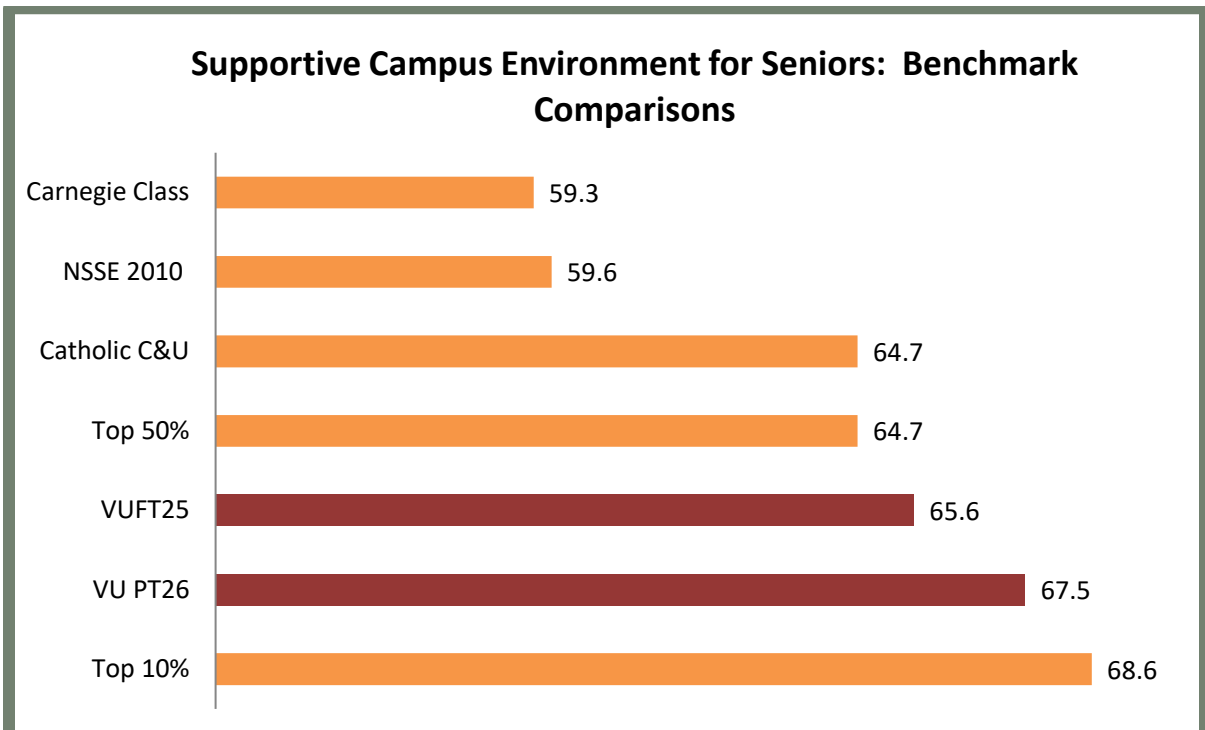
### Supportive Campus Environment: A Strength for Viterbo

Research shows that students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus. The particular NSSE questions for Supportive Campus Environment (SCE) are:

- To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following:
  - Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically
  - Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
  - Providing the support you need to thrive socially
- Select the circle that best represents the quality of your relationship with people at your institution: unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation to, friendly, supportive, sense of belonging:
  - Relationships with other students
  - Relationships with faculty members
  - Relationships with administrative personnel and offices



Further analysis shows that the SCE mean for Viterbo seniors—both part-time, non-traditional students and full-time, traditional students—is higher than our three benchmark groups and in the top 50% of all institutions which participated in the NSSE in 2010. For part-time adult learners, the mean of 67.5 is very close to the top ten percent, 68.6. Furthermore, the category of supportive campus environment has increased from 64.1 in 2006 overall to 66.2 in 2010 overall.



**Viterbo Seniors rank high in Mission Perception relative to Catholic Colleges & Universities**

Catholic Colleges & Universities Consortium added a Mission Perception Inventory, with the following three subscales: Sense of Mission (9 items), Respect for Diversity (7 items), and Values Development (3 items).

Viterbo's Ranking	Values Development		Sense of Mission		Respect for Diversity	
	First Year:	8/25	First Year:	16/25	First Year:	7/25
	Senior Year:	3/25	Senior Year:	3/25	Senior Year:	3/25

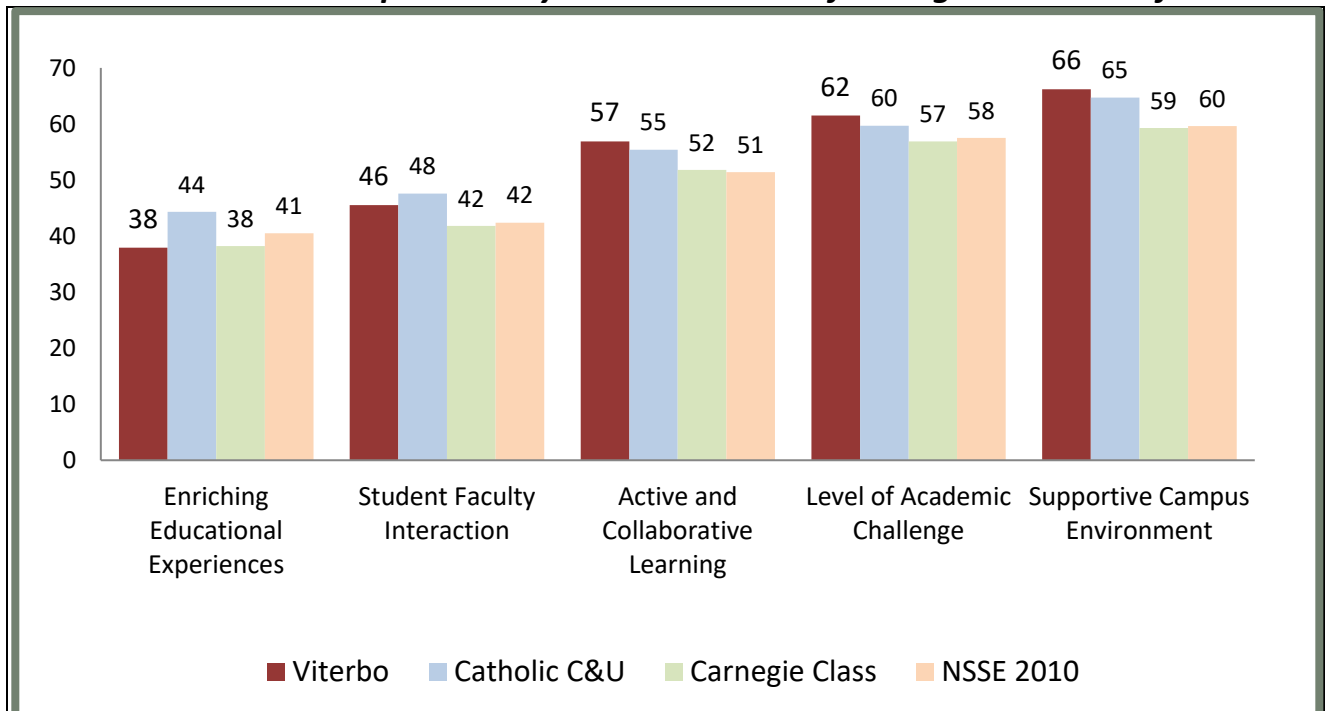
NSSE 2010 Catholic College Consortium—MPI Report Participants (25)

Assumption College  
 Belmont Abbey College  
 Chaminade University - Honolulu  
 Chestnut Hill College  
 Clarke University  
 Dominican University  
 La Roche College  
 Madonna University

Marywood University  
 Mount Marty College  
 Newman University  
 Niagara University  
 Notre Dame de Namur University  
 Saint Bonaventure University  
 Saint Josephs College – IN  
 Mary's University -MN  
 Saint Xavier University

Siena College  
 Saint Mary's University – Texas  
 The College of Saint Scholastica  
 Thomas More College  
 University of Dallas  
 University of Saint Thomas – Texas  
 Viterbo University  
 Walsh University

**Viterbo Benchmark Comparisons by Seniors: Areas of Strength and Areas for Focus**



### ***Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE) Items***

Complementary learning opportunities enhance 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.

### ***Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI) Items***

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.

### ***Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL) Items***

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.

### ***Level of Academic Challenge (LAC) Items***

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.

### ***Supportive Campus Environment (SCE) Items***

Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus.

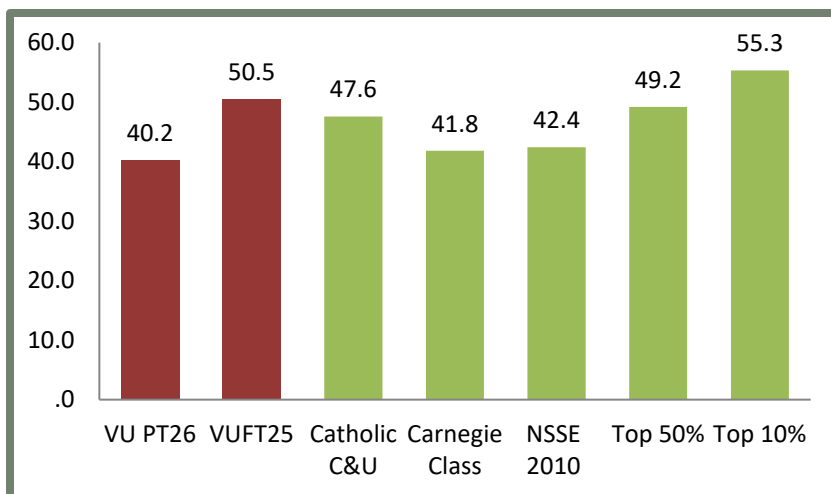
## ***Student Faculty Interaction: Benchmark Comparisons for Seniors***

A separation of Viterbo seniors by their enrollment status and age provides further information about Student Faculty Interaction. The difference between the mean of 40.2 for part-time adults and the mean of 50.5 for traditional-aged full-time students is statistically significant. The mean for part-time adults is below all three benchmark groups and is in the bottom 50% of the NSSE 2010. The mean for traditional students exceeds the three benchmark groups and is in the top 50%. The multi-year analysis for Viterbo seniors overall reveals a fairly constant level of engagement from the 2006 mean of 44.7 to the 2010 mean of 45.5.

How does this information translate into specific objectives for improvement? An analysis of the particulars of student-faculty

interaction indicates some possibilities:

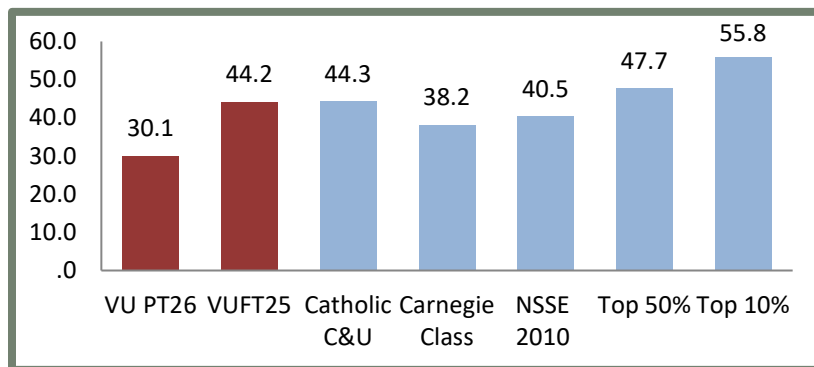
- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
- Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on academic performance
- Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student-life activities, etc.)
- Worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements



## Enriching Educational Experiences: Benchmark Comparisons for Seniors

The Enriching Educational Experiences mean for Viterbo's seniors who are part-time and non-traditional was 30.1, while it was 44.2 for traditional-aged seniors. This is the most divergent of responses for the two student groups. For part-time adult students, 30.1 is well below the benchmark groups. For full-time traditional students, 44.2 is above Carnegie Class and NSSE 2010, just below Catholic Colleges and Universities, and in the bottom fiftieth percentile. The multi-year analysis reveals that this indicator decreased from 38.7 overall in 2006 to 37.9 overall in 2010.

How does this information translate into specific objectives for improvement? An analysis of the particulars of enriching educational engagement indicates some possibilities:



- Hours spent participating in co-curricular activities
- Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment
- Community service or volunteer work
- Foreign language coursework and study abroad
- Independent study or self-designed major
- Independent study or self-designed major
- Culminating senior experience
- Serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own
- Serious conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values
- Using electronic medium
- Campus environment encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
- Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together

A point of discussion for the Viterbo University community is the nature of enriching educational experiences for adult students who are primarily interested in completing their degrees, often while working full-time and caring for dependents. The question might be articulated this way: is it realistic to expect adult students to study abroad, participate in co-curricular activities, or participate in campus volunteer work? Indeed, the NSSE 2006 Annual Report corroborates Viterbo's results: 7% of adult learners participated in study abroad compared to 21% of traditional seniors; 27% of adults participated in co-curricular activities while 69% of traditional age students did. While campus life and experiences such as study abroad contribute powerfully to the intellectual and social development of young adults, it can be argued that returning students have different needs for intellectual development. Other elements of enriching educational experiences—diversity and use of technology—are equally applicable to both groups.

NSSE results and studies are available from the Office of Assessment and Institutional Research. Reports used in this Executive Summary include: NSSE 2010 Mean Comparisons, Frequency Distributions, Benchmark Comparisons, and Respondent Characteristics; Catholic College Consortium Mission Perception Inventory; OAIR Multi-Year Analysis: 2007-2010; OAIR Longitudinal Analysis; OAIR Analysis of Part-time, Non-Traditional Students with Full-time, Traditional Students. Additionally, NSSE Major Field Reports are available to schools and departments.



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