



## **THE 2005 COLLEGE STUDENT SURVEY**

**Office of Institutional Research  
February 2006**

## *Highlights*

- Thirty-four percent of the Graduating Seniors, who participated in the survey research, responded to the 2005 College Senior Survey.
- Seventy-four percent of the females responded to the survey.
- Sixty-five percent White, 16 percent Hispanic, 11 percent African-American and 7 percent Asian graduates responded to the survey.
- Almost 97 percent started college in the year 2000 or 2001 and 67 percent started college at MSU during the same period.
- Twenty-eight percent of the respondents transferred from a community college and 18 percent transferred from a four-year college.
- Since they entered college, MSU graduating seniors participated in a wide range of courses and programs, including ethnic studies courses, women's studies courses and study abroad courses.
- More than 50 percent of the graduating seniors indicated that they "frequently" or "occasionally" came late to class and did not have time to study due to job responsibilities or family responsibilities.
- Significant differences were observed in the responses of male and female graduates regarding their academic involvement, i.e., coming late to class, missing class, overslept and missed class, and felt asleep in class.
- Relatively more time was spent by MSU graduates in attending classes or labs than studying or doing homework.
- Over 90 percent of the graduates "frequently" or "occasionally" received and completed assignments electronically, and over 86 percent completed their assignments or research using the internet
- Over 64 percent of the graduating seniors claimed that they typically interacted with faculty during their office hours, for up to 2 hours a week. Also, 62 percent suggested that they interacted with faculty outside of class or office hours up to 2 hours per week.
- MSU graduating seniors indicated that they received ample assistance and support from their faculty especially in the following areas: respect (57 percent), intellectual challenge and stimulation (37 percent), opportunity to discuss coursework, and encouragement to pursue graduate/professional studies (54 percent each)

- MSU seniors indicated that they participated in student club/organizations (36 percent), attended racial/cultural awareness workshop (22 percent) and intramural sports (19 percent).
- Forty-four percent of the seniors chose “middle of the road” when expressing their political views and another 40 percent chose “liberal” or “far-left” as their political standpoint.
- A large proportion of the graduating seniors were consistent on their agreement regarding control of hand guns (88 percent), same sex marriage (74 percent), as well as, legalizing abortion and having wealthy pay a larger share of taxes (72 percent each).
- Over 80 percent of the graduating seniors disagreed with the fact that racial discrimination is still a problem in America. Also, they did not feel it was important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships.
- More than 80 percent of the graduating seniors cited that being very well off financially, helping others who are in difficulty and raising a family were the most important personal objectives for them.
- Compared to male graduating seniors, females indicated that they were more successful in understanding the demands of their professors, developing effective study skills and managing their time more effectively.
- More than 80 percent of the graduating seniors expressed that the following skills had strengthened since they joined MSU: knowledge of a particular field/discipline, problem solving skills, ability to think critically, and interpersonal skills.
- No change was witnessed, since the inception of their education at MSU, in the following areas: foreign language skills, skills required to understand the problems facing the community, and getting along with different race and cultures.
- Compared to an average person of their age, MSU graduating seniors rated the following traits among the highest 10 percent: cooperativeness, drive to achieve, and academic ability, while the lowest 10 percent were: artistic ability, religiousness, and spirituality.
- Graduating seniors were very satisfied with general education, humanities, and social service courses. They also expressed their satisfaction with library facilities, lab facilities and equipment, and financial aid services. Over 80 percent were satisfied with courses offered in major field, class size, and quality of instruction.
- A quarter of the respondents were dissatisfied with job placement services, computer facilities, and academic advising.

- Almost 91 percent of the female graduates indicated that they would like to earn a master's or a doctoral degree compared to 81 percent males graduates. However, a larger proportion of females (33 percent) indicated their intent to earn a doctoral degree compared to male graduates (21 percent).
- MSU seniors, who plan to pursue education, indicated Education and Business majors as their top choices. Comparatively, a higher proportion of females (26 percent) expressed their intent to graduate in education, while a higher proportion of male graduates (27 percent) intended to graduate with a degree in business
- A higher proportion of female graduates (33 percent) indicated their choice of occupation in elementary or secondary education compared to male graduates (20 percent), while 26 percent of the male graduates compared to 19 percent of the female graduates, indicated their choice of occupation in the field of business.
- Eight-four percent each of the graduating seniors were very satisfied with their overall college experience. Additionally, they would choose MSU again if they had to do so again.

## **THE 2005 COLLEGE STUDENT SURVEY**

### **Introduction**

During the fall of 2004, the Office of Institutional Research received a request from the President's Office to participate in a national survey entitled, "The College Student Survey." The College Student Survey (CSS), created in 1993 by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), is administered primarily to graduating or continuing seniors. The survey is designed to assess changes in attitudes and intentions of college students as they progress through their undergraduate career. It provides an overall profile of the senior class, an overview of student experiences at the institution, and information about future aspirations and career goals.

### **Method**

The survey research was conducted late in the spring of 2005. The Office of Institutional Research collaborated with the Bookstore and the Office of Alumni Research to survey seniors who graduated from Montclair State University during the AY 2004-05. The graduating seniors were asked to complete the survey as and when they came to collect their regalia from the bookstore. Additionally, an incentive was provided to graduates in the form of a coupon for a "free transcript," upon completion of the survey.

The survey consisted of 26 questions and it took approximately 30 minutes to complete. The survey measured the following: their satisfaction with the college experience, student and academic involvement, cognitive and affective development, student values, attitudes and goals, as well as degree aspirations and career goals.

Although MSU conferred 2,206 undergraduate degrees during the AY 2005-06, only 1,500 undergraduates showed up to collect their regalia for the commencement to be held in May 2005. Graduates were encouraged to complete the survey while in the bookstore. Although fewer graduates decided to complete the survey in the bookstore itself, a large number of them decided to mail the survey back to the IR office. Additional reminders to complete the survey were sent via e-mail and postcard.

The data was coded and analyzed by the HERI Institute and a report was provided to the IR office in the fall of 2005. The tabular report compared responses on CSS survey for MSU graduating seniors with responses from graduates and seniors from other baccalaureate degree-granting institutions along with public four-year institutions that participated in the study. For additional analyses, raw data was also purchased from HERI.

## **Findings**

Of the 1,500 graduates who received the survey, 504 responded, yielding a response rate of 34 percent. Demographics of the graduating class were compared to the sample who responded to the survey. Comparatively, a large proportion of female students responded to the survey compared to the female students who graduated from MSU in AY 2004-05. The response rate of graduates from various race/ethnicities did not differ significantly from the graduating class of 2005, indicating that the responses from the sample could be generalized to the entire population of graduating seniors from MSU.

The findings from the college student survey are provided below. Wherever necessary, comparisons are made with four-year public institutions that participated in the study. Results are not presented in the order of appearance on the survey. The report is discussed under the following sub-headings:

- Demographics
- Academic and Social Involvement
- Political and Social Attitudes
- Personal Objectives
- Perceptions and Satisfaction
- Degree Aspirations and Future Plans

### ***A. Demographics.***

Among those who responded to the survey, almost 97 percent of the graduating seniors started college in the year 2000 or 2001, and almost 60 percent started their education at MSU in 2000 - 2001. More than 28 percent of the respondents indicated that they transferred from a community college, while another 18 percent indicated that they transferred from a four-year college.

Almost two-thirds of the respondents (74 percent) were females. Among those who responded, 65 percent indicated their ethnicity as white, over 16 percent as Hispanics, 11 percent as African-American, and 7 percent as Asian. Seventy-three percent of the responding graduate seniors indicated their native language was English. Almost 50 percent of the respondents indicated their religious affiliation as Roman Catholic.

Montclair State University is a commuter campus, and it is evident from the responses of our graduating seniors that over 90 percent commuted during the week. However, close to 60 percent indicated that they commuted up to 5 hours per week. Comparatively, 19 percent of the seniors and graduates from four-year public institutions indicated that they did not commute during the week and almost 55 percent commuted up to 5 hours a week.

Almost 71 percent of the graduating seniors were enrolled as full-time students during their last semester at MSU. Compared to almost 38 percent of the respondents from public four-year institutions, 49 percent of the respondents from MSU indicated that they worked full-time since they entered college. However, during their senior year, over 40 percent of the respondents from

MSU worked full-time (over 20 hours) for pay off-campus, while less than 3 percent worked full-time for pay on-campus.

***B. Academic and Social Involvement***

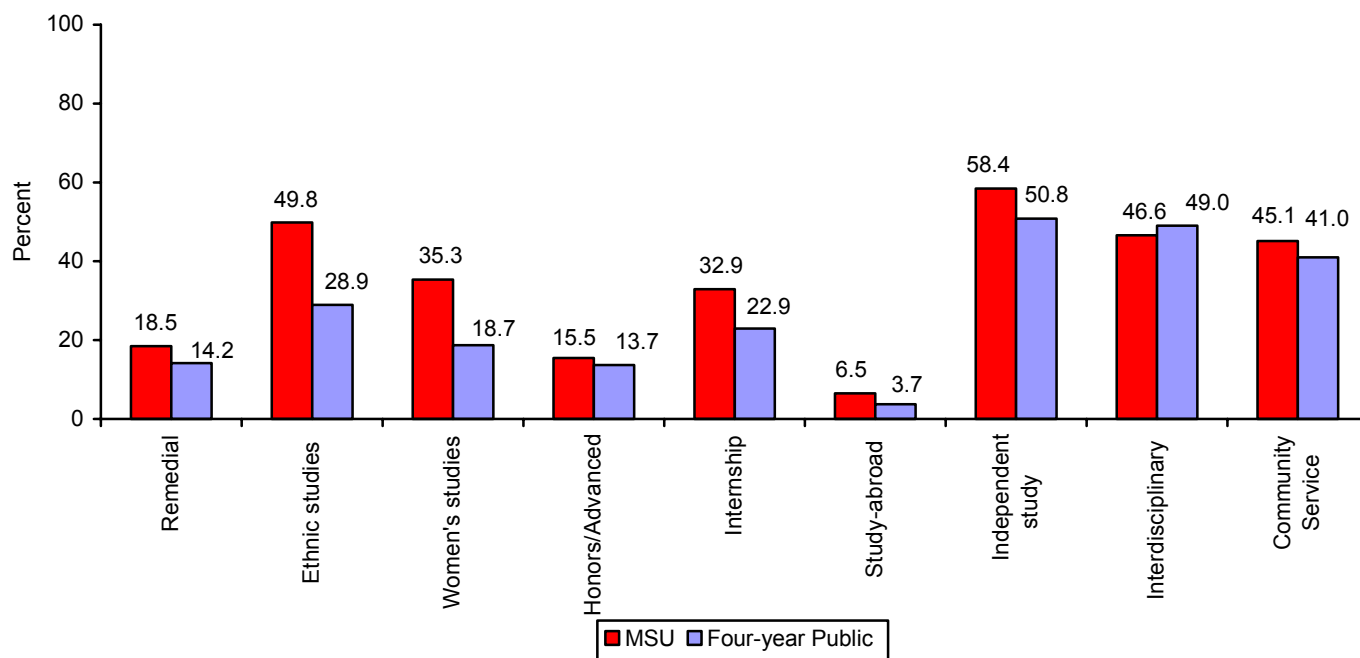
There is ample research to support that academic and social integration are significant predictors of student retention in higher education. It is expected that the results from the graduating seniors survey will provide meaningful insight regarding the social and academic involvement of graduates during their undergraduate term at MSU.

**Academic Involvement**

***a. Enrollment in Courses and Programs: MSU graduates enrolled in wide range of courses, programs, and activities during their tenure at college.***

As can be observed from figure 1.0, MSU graduates were enrolled in a broad and global array of programs offered at MSU. Compared to public four-year institutions, a large proportion of our graduating seniors enrolled in ethnic studies, women’s studies, and study abroad courses. Also, compared to graduates from other four-year institutions, a higher proportion of graduates enrolled in remedial classes during their undergraduate year at MSU.

**Figure 1.0**  
**Enrollment in Various Courses and Programs: A comparison of MSU Seniors and their Peers in four-year Public Institutions nationally**



***b. Academic Engagement: Academic Engagement was largely influenced by financial and family responsibilities for MSU graduates.***

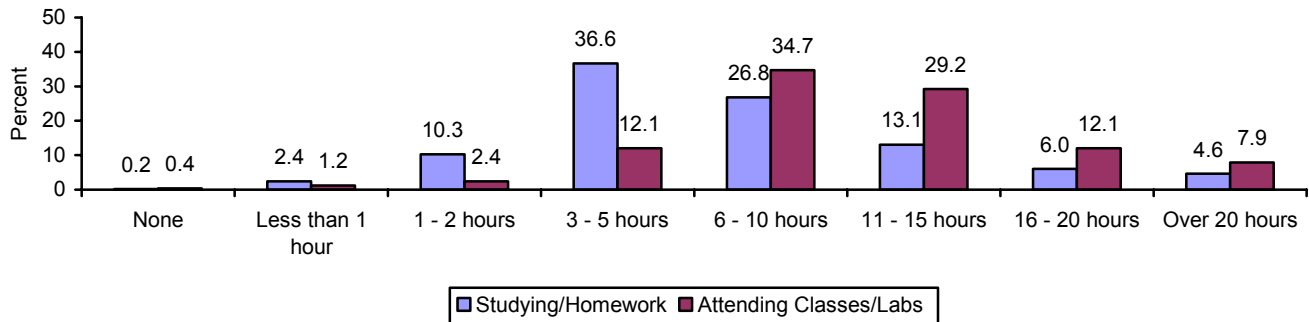
Table 1.0 indicates a significant difference between the responses of male and female graduates on various indicators for students' engagement in class. A large number of graduating seniors from MSU (57 percent) indicated that they “frequently” or “occasionally” missed their classes due to employment compared to graduates from other institutions (46 percent) and the difference is even more evident for males than females. Compared to their peers nationally, fewer seniors from MSU suggested that they felt bored in class, overslept and missed classes, fell asleep in class, or failed to complete their homework.

**Table 1.0  
Academic Engagement of Seniors Sine they Entered College**

	MSU			Four-year Public		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Came late to class	76.7	62.9	66.5	66.3	62.2	63.4
Missed classes due to employment	38.3	27.7	56.8	32.6	26.6	45.7
Did not have time to study due to job responsibilities	58.3	55.7	56.4	51.7	54.8	53.9
Did not have time to study due to family responsibilities	53.7	54.6	54.4	48.7	54.4	52.7
Failed to complete homework in time	57.8	41.9	46.0	61.0	51.7	53.0
Overslept and missed the class or appointment	51.2	41.0	43.6	58.9	49.4	52.1
Felt asleep in course	43.0	29.8	33.3	38.5	29.5	32.0
Felt bored in class	24.2	18.6	20.1	32.3	27.6	28.9

Graduates were also asked about the number of hours that they spent studying, doing homework or attending classes or labs. Although the time spent did not differ significantly between MSU graduates and their peers in national four-year public institutions, it is interesting to note that MSU graduates spent more time in classes and labs than studying or doing their homework. Although more than 63 percent indicated that they spent anywhere between 3 to 10 hours, doing home work or studying, almost 64 percent indicated that they spent anywhere from 6 to 15 hours attending classes or labs.

**Figure 2.0**  
**Number of Hours per Week Spent on Studying/Doing Homework and**  
**Attending Classes/Labs**



***c. Technology Usage: Use of Electronic Medium for assignments and internet for research work was reported by a large proportions of seniors at MSU and seniors at four-year public institutions nationally.***

Graduating seniors were asked to provide information about the use of technology in their educational career. Almost 95 percent of the MSU graduates indicated that they “frequently” or “occasionally” received their course assignments electronically, and over 92 percent suggested that they turned in their course assignments electronically. More than 86 percent indicated that they used the internet for their research or home work.

Almost 98 percent of the seniors indicated that they used their personal computer and among them, almost 53 percent used their computer about 3 to 10 hours per week. Another 25 percent used it for more than 10 hours per week.

***d. Relationship with Faculty: Higher student-faculty interaction was indicated by MSU graduates compared to their peers in other four-year public institutions.***

Research in higher education already substantiates the role of student-faculty interaction in higher education. The results of the College Student Survey reveal the importance and extent of student-faculty interaction for MSU graduating seniors.

Almost two-thirds of the MSU graduates, as well as graduates from four-year public institutions nationally, indicated that they interacted with faculty during office hours. However, compared to 19 percent of the respondents from public four year institutions, only 14 percent from MSU indicated that they never interacted with faculty during their office hours.

A higher proportion of MSU graduates (62 percent) indicated that they interacted with faculty outside of class or during office hours, compared to graduating seniors (58 percent) from four-year public institutions. Graduating seniors were also asked if they were invited as a guest in their faculty’s home since they joined the current institution. Almost 18 percent of the MSU

graduates had visited faculty in their homes, compared to 14 percent from other public institutions.

Additionally, graduating seniors were asked to rate the assistance and support that they received from their professors on a three point scale, i.e., *1 = not at all*, *2 = occasionally* and *3 = frequently*. As is evident from table 3.0, a large proportion of MSU graduates indicated that their professors frequently provided them the assistance and support during their undergraduate career compared to their peers in four-year public institutions. In general, variation was also evident by gender, i.e., a higher proportion of female graduates indicated that they received academic support than male graduates.

**Table 3.0**  
**Frequent Faculty Assistance and Support for MSU Seniors and their Peers**

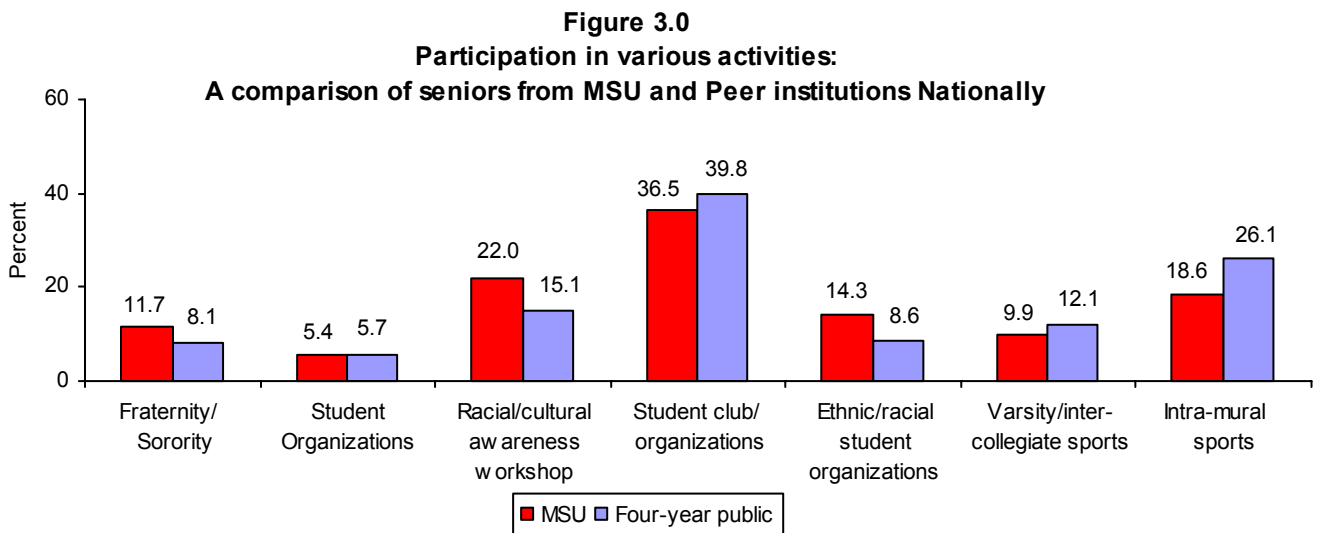
	MSU			Four-year Public		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Respect (treated like a colleague/peer)	54.8	58.0	57.1	48.0	53.6	52.0
Intellectual challenge and stimulation	33.9	37.7	36.7	30.8	34.9	33.7
An opportunity to discuss coursework outside of class	33.3	34.5	34.2	32.0	34.4	33.7
Encouragement to pursue graduate/professional study	30.2	35.2	33.9	27.5	28.6	28.3
An opportunity to apply classroom learning to “real life” issues	33.6	31.5	32.1	25.2	28.3	27.5
Advice and guidance about your educational program	26.4	29.6	28.8	23.9	24.8	24.5
A letter of recommendation	22.2	28.2	26.7	17.9	19.0	18.7
An opportunity to work on a research project	20.0	22.9	22.2	18.9	20.9	20.3
Help in achieving your professional goals	18.5	25.1	23.4	20.6	22.3	21.8
Emotional support and encouragement	15.9	19.7	18.7	16.5	20.7	19.5
Assistance to improve your study skills	13.5	15.4	14.9	12.3	13.2	12.9
Negative feedback about your academic work	7.9	3.8	4.8	7.0	5.5	5.9
An opportunity to publish	7.1	4.1	4.8	4.9	4.6	4.7

## Social Involvement

*a. Participation in Campus Activities: A higher proportion of MSU graduates participated in many of the Student activities, except for athletic activities, compared to their peers in four-year public institutions.*

As can be observed from figure 3.0, a large proportion of MSU graduates joined student clubs/organizations and participated in racial/cultural awareness workshops since they entered MSU. Compared to their peers nationally, a large number of MSU graduates joined fraternities/sororities, participated in student organizations, attended a racial/cultural awareness workshop and participated in racial/ethnic organizations during their tenure at MSU, compared to their peers nationally.

Almost two-thirds of the graduating seniors indicated that they spent anywhere up to 10 hours exercising or in sports activities, although their participation in varsity athletics and intra-mural sports was significantly less than their peers in other institutions. In general, a higher participation was evidenced for males compared to females.



*b. Interaction with Peers: MSU graduates interacted fairly well with their peers, both socially and academically.*

Over 92 percent of the MSU graduates indicated that they studied with other students, compared to 87 percent of their peers at other institutions. A relatively large proportion of students, i.e., 43 percent tutored other college students compared to 37 percent of seniors in other institutions nationally.

Compared to 46 percent of their peers from four-year public institutions nationally, 58 percent of the graduating seniors from MSU socialized with their friends for up to 10 hours a week. Also, 60 percent of our graduates indicated that they spent anywhere up to 10 hours per week partying, compared to 50 percent of their counterparts.

Almost 33 percent of the reporting graduates from MSU indicated that they had a roommate of different race or ethnicity and almost 40 percent reported that they socialized with students of other racial groups.

***C. Political and Social Attitudes: The political views of the MSU graduating seniors were similar to their peers at other four-year public institutions nationally.***

Graduating seniors were asked to rate their political views on a five point scale ranging from far left to far right. A large proportion of the graduates and seniors at MSU and in the nation chose “middle-of the road” when describing their political views. A higher proportion of males were “liberals” compared to females at MSU and the trend reversed for their peers nationally. However, compared to over 40 percent of the seniors who indicated “liberal” or “far-left,” only 17 percent indicated to have “conservative” or “far-right” political views.

**Table 4.0  
Political Views of MSU Graduates and their Peers Nationally**

	MSU			Four-year Public		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Far Left	0.8	2.8	2.3	5.0	2.9	3.5
Liberal	42.9	37.0	38.5	28.6	36.1	33.9
Middle of the road	38.1	44.2	42.6	41.7	45.1	44.1
Conservative	18.3	14.6	15.6	23.0	15.3	17.5
Far Right	0.0	1.4	1.0	1.7	0.6	0.9

More than 72 percent of the MSU graduates indicated that they had voted in the state or national election. However, less than 7 percent indicated that they worked on a local or state or a national campaign. Approximately 9 percent indicated that they voted in a student election.

Almost 81 percent indicated that they had discussed 9/11 terrorist attacks in class and about 29 percent had participated in a campus activity commemorating the victims of 9/11. However, close to 14 percent indicated that they had protested against the war. The responses were comparable or higher than for their peers in public four-year institutions nationally.

Seniors were provided with a list of political and social statements and asked to rate their agreement with the same on a four point rating scale where, 1 = disagree strongly, 2 = disagree somewhat, 3 = agree somewhat, and 4 = agree strongly. As is clear from table 5.0, the issues that were somewhat or strongly agreed upon with were: control of handguns (88 percent), same sex marriages (74 percent), and legalizing abortion and higher taxes for wealthy (72 percent each). The issues that were disagreed upon included: confining activities of married women to

home and family, and that racial discrimination is no longer a major problem in America (84 percent each), as well as prohibiting homosexual relationships (82 percent). The responses to these issues were also affected by gender of the seniors.

**Table 5.0**  
**Agreement with Social and Political Attitudes: MSU Graduating Seniors**

<b>Attitudes</b>	<b>Percent of seniors who indicated “somewhat” or “strongly” agree</b>			
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Average</b>
There is too much concern in the courts for the rights of criminal	69.8	64.4	65.8	2.72
Abortion should be legal	76.4	70.4	71.9	2.97
The death penalty should be abolished	39.8	35.6	36.7	2.26
If two people really like each other, it’s right for them to have sex even if they’ve known each other for only a very short time.	69.0	47.3	52.9	2.50
Marijuana should be legalized	46.4	36.8	39.3	2.19
It is important to have laws prohibiting homosexual relationships	22.6	16.2	17.8	1.65
The federal government should do more to control the sale of handguns	77.8	91.2	87.8	3.44
Racial discrimination is no longer a major problem in America	20.6	15.1	16.5	1.75
Realistically, an individual can do little to bring about changes in our society	36.0	33.5	34.1	2.13
Wealthy people should pay a large share of taxes than they do now	77.0	70.2	72.0	2.98
Colleges should prohibit racist/sexist speech on campus	52.8	58.0	56.7	2.68
Same-sex couples should have the right to legal marital status	69.0	75.0	73.5	3.01
Affirmative action in college admissions should be abolished	54.9	40.4	44.1	2.41
The activities of married women are best confined to the home and family	23.0	14.0	16.3	1.56
Federal military spending should be increased	37.4	29.7	31.6	2.15
The federal government should raise taxes to help reduce the deficit	31.7	19.0	22.2	1.93

***D. Personal Objectives: A large proportion of MSU graduates and their peers nationally indicate financial stability, helping others in difficulty and raising family as the most important objectives.***

The preferences of personal objectives, in terms of their importance, were quite similar for seniors graduating from MSU and to their peers at four-year public institutions. Self-sufficiency, generosity, and family surfaced as important factors, while becoming accomplished and contributing to various fields were deemed inconsequential.

**Table 6.0  
Five Most and Least Important Personal Objectives Rated by MSU Graduates**

Personal objectives	Percent indicated “ <i>very important</i> ” or “ <i>essential</i> ”		
	Male	Female	Total
<b>Most Important</b>			
Being very well off financially	78.4	81.2	80.5
Helping others who are in difficulty	73.0	81.7	79.5
Raising a family	77.8	79.6	79.1
Becoming an authority in my field	73.6	68.3	69.6
Obtaining recognition from my colleagues for contributions to my special field	55.6	62.2	60.5
<b>Least Important</b>			
Becoming accomplished in one of the performing arts	21.6	15.9	17.3
Making a theoretical contribution to science	30.4	18.4	21.5
Influencing the political structure	32.5	18.8	22.3
Creating artistic work	26.0	21.0	22.3
Writing original works	25.2	21.5	22.4

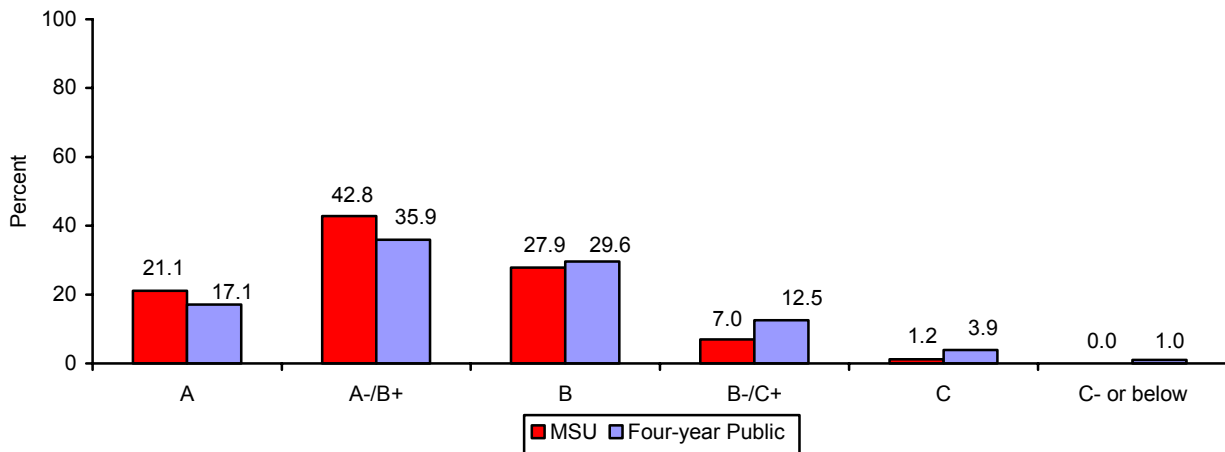
***E. Perception and Satisfaction:***

The mission statement for Montclair State University reflects its expanded role in educating the students of New Jersey, conducting research, and providing service to the community, the region, the state, and beyond. An important outcome of this survey is to evaluate the growth of the seniors, in terms of skills and abilities, since they joined MSU. It is also important to know if seniors were satisfied with these gains, and if their expectations were met at the time of their graduation.

**a. Academic Performance: Montclair graduates perceived that their performance was better than graduating seniors from other four-year public institutions**

Graduating seniors were asked to indicate the grade that best describes their undergraduate performance. Compared to their peers in four-year public institutions, a large proportion of MSU seniors perceived that they had earned A, A-, or B as their grade average in college (figure 4.0).

**Figure 4.0**  
**Self Reported GPA: A comparison of Graduating Seniors at MSU and their Peers in National Four-year Public Institutions**



Almost 22 percent of the MSU graduates indicated that they had failed in one or more courses since they entered college. Although 8 percent indicated that they took a leave of absence since they joined college, and less than 5 percent indicated that they withdrew from MSU at some point of time.

**a. Academic Expectation:**

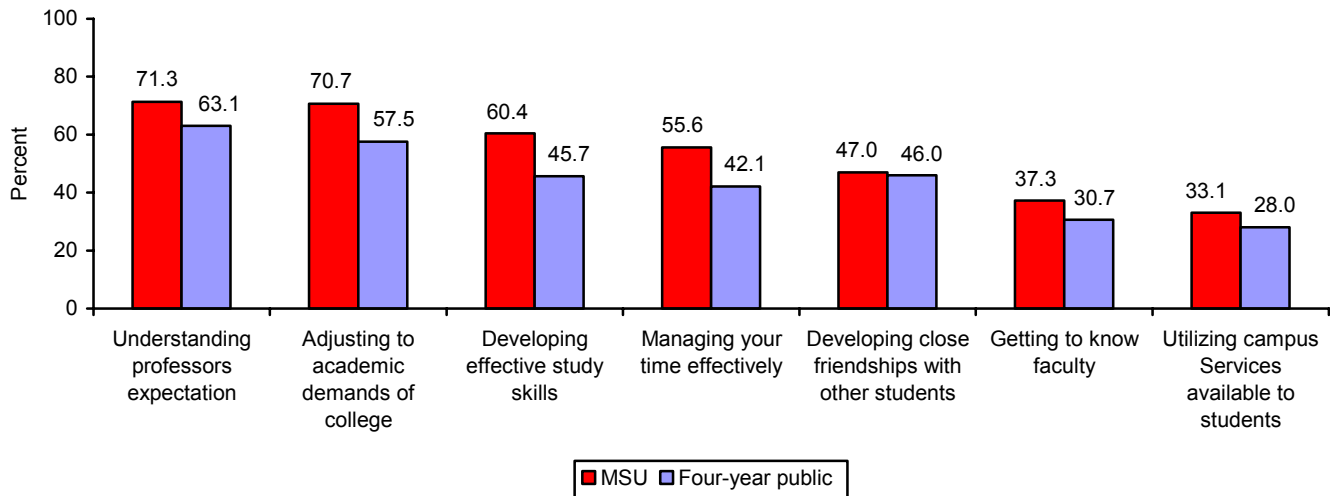
A review of literature in higher education indicates that managing demands of college and time, utilizing campus services and developing relationships with faculty are strongly correlated with a successful collegiate experience.

Seniors were asked to rate if they were successful with the same on a three point scale, where 1 = not successful, 2 = somewhat successful and 3 = very successful. It is evident from the graph below (figure 5.0) that MSU's graduating seniors were quite successful in understanding the required academic expectations, compared to their peers. A large proportion of our seniors (over 70 percent) indicated that they were successful in understanding the demands or expectation of their faculty and the institution. Comparatively, fewer students indicated that they were successful in getting to know the faculty and utilizing campus services.

In general, compared to men, a higher proportion of women indicated that they were successful in understanding the demands of their professors (73 percent vs. 68 percent), developing

effective study skills (63 percent vs. 52 percent), and managing their time more effectively (57 percent vs. 53 percent).

**Figure 5.0**  
**Success in Understanding Institution's Expectation:**  
**A comparison of Graduating Seniors at MSU and their Peers in Nationally**



Graduating seniors were asked to indicate if they witnessed any improvement in skills or abilities required for a successful collegiate experience since they joined MSU. They were asked to rate their responses on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = *much stronger*, 2 = *stronger*, 3 = *no change*, 4 = *weaker*, and 5 = *much weaker*.

More than 80 percent of the MSU graduates indicated that the following skills and abilities became “*much stronger*” or “*stronger*” since they entered MSU: knowledge of particular field/discipline and general knowledge (96 percent each), analytical and problem solving skills, ability to think critically (89 percent each), interpersonal skills, writing skills, and public speaking ability (84 percent each)

Almost 41 percent of the MSU graduates indicated that they did not witness any gains in foreign language ability and mathematical skills. Also, almost 34 percent indicated “*no change*” in their skills that are required to understand problems facing their community, and over 30 percent indicated “*no change*” in their ability to get along with people of different race/cultures. Almost a quarter of the graduating seniors indicated that they did not witness any changes in the following skills and abilities since they joined college: knowledge of people from different race/cultures, leadership abilities and understanding global issues.

Since most of our students indicated that their abilities and skills had strengthened while at MSU, it is interesting to know how they fared, in their responses, against their peers from four-year public institutions nationally. Table 7.0 indicates that, compared to their peers a higher

proportion of MSU graduating indicated that their skills were “*much stronger*” since they entered the institution.

**Table 7.0**  
**Abilities and Skills were rated “Much Stronger” by MSU and Peers**

	MSU			4-Year Public		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
General Knowledge	41.3	45.7	44.6	34.3	35.8	35.4
Analytical and problem-solving skills	30.2	32.0	31.5	25.3	22.3	23.2
Knowledge of a particular field or discipline	46.0	55.1	52.8	45.5	45.5	45.5
Ability to think critically	38.9	36.7	37.2	28.3	26.2	26.8
Foreign language ability	11.1	14.5	13.7	7.5	7.6	7.5
Knowledge of people from different race/cultures	24.8	22.9	23.4	17.6	16.4	16.7
Leadership abilities	21.4	21.0	21.1	20.1	18.5	18.9
Interpersonal abilities	22.2	33.6	30.7	24.3	23.8	23.9
Ability to get along with people of different race/cultures	23.8	26.7	26.0	19.5	16.0	17.0
Understanding of the problems facing your community	21.4	20.2	20.5	15.5	12.4	13.3
Understanding of social problems facing our nation	23.0	23.2	23.1	20.6	16.9	18.0
Understanding of global issues	19.0	20.8	20.3	20.8	15.6	17.1
Writing skills	24.6	29.1	28.0	22.9	22.7	22.8
Public speaking ability	31.0	29.8	30.1	23.9	21.3	22.0
Mathematical skills	17.6	11.6	13.1	14.1	8.8	10.3
Computer skills	25.4	26.3	26.1	28.5	21.7	23.6

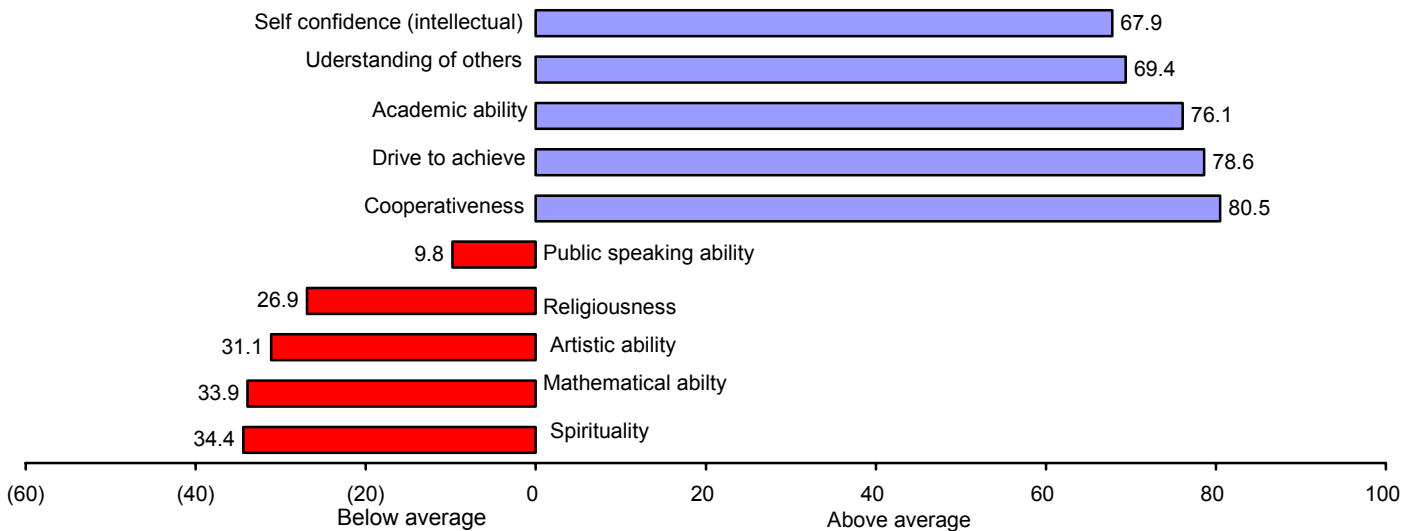
Graduating seniors were also asked to estimate their traits compared to an average person of their age. Students were asked to rate these traits on a five point scale, where, *1 = highest 10%*, *2 = above average*, *3 = average*, *4 = below average*, and *5 = lower 10%*. Overall, the rating on the perception of traits was either comparable to or higher than for their peers in other four-year public institutions. It is interesting to note from table 6.0 that the perception of males was higher or above average on most of the traits than for females.

**Table 6.0**  
**Traits Rated “Above Average” by Graduating Seniors from Montclair State University**

	Percent rating “ <i>Highest 10 percent</i> ” or “ <i>Above average</i> ”		
	Male	Female	Total
Academic ability	80.2	74.7	76.1
Artistic ability	38.9	28.5	31.1
Computer skills	49.2	42.9	44.5
Competitiveness	69.8	44.1	50.6
Cooperativeness	82.5	79.8	80.5
Creativity	69.0	55.4	58.8
Drive to achieve	76.6	79.2	78.6
Emotional health	64.3	54.6	57.0
Leadership ability	73.0	55.4	59.8
Mathematical ability	43.7	30.6	33.9
Physical health	64.3	45.0	49.9
Popularity	50.0	28.3	33.8
Public speaking ability	56.3	40.9	44.8
Religiousness	30.2	25.8	26.9
Self confidence (intellectual)	80.2	63.6	67.8
Self-confidence (social)	72.2	53.6	58.4
Self-understanding	71.4	63.6	65.6
Spirituality	40.5	32.3	34.4
Understanding of others	65.1	70.8	69.4
Writing ability	56.0	59.6	58.7

Figure 6.0 provides five traits each that were rated above average and below average by seniors graduating from Montclair State University.

**Figure 6.0**  
**Traits that were Rated "Above Average" and "Below Average" by MSU Graduates**



***a. Satisfaction: Graduating seniors from MSU were very satisfied with their collegiate experience at MSU.***

Graduating seniors were asked to rate their satisfaction with various units at MSU, with their academic aspects of campus life and with the institution in general. They were asked to rate their satisfaction on a scale ranging from 1 to 4 where, 1 = *very dissatisfied*, 2 = *neutral*, 3 = *satisfied*, and 4 = *very satisfied*.

Over two-thirds of the graduating seniors indicated their satisfaction with library facilities, general education or core curriculum courses, humanities and social science courses. Compared to their peers in four-year public institutions nationally, MSU's graduating seniors were "*very satisfied*" or "*satisfied*" with the following: general education or core curriculum, science and mathematics courses, humanities courses, social science courses, laboratory facilities and equipment, and financial aid services. In general, a higher proportion of females were satisfied with most of the services. Comparatively, a large proportion of males indicated their satisfaction with student housing, financial aid services, opportunities with community services, job placement services for students, and recreational facilities.

Almost 28 percent indicated their dissatisfaction with job placement services, 25 percent with computer facilities, and 20 percent with academic advising.

**Table 7.0**  
**Satisfaction of Graduating Seniors with Various Disciplines and Services**

<b>Areas</b>	<b>MSU</b>	<b>Four-year Public</b>
General education or core curriculum courses	75.3	66.8
Science and mathematics courses	63.3	56.4
Humanities courses	69.1	62.8
Social Science courses	69.1	65.8
Laboratory facilities and equipment	60.5	56.0
Library facilities	79.9	79.5
Computer facilities	51.0	72.1
Quality of computer training/assistance	41.4	52.8
Availability of internet access	60.9	74.7
Tutoring or other academic assistance	47.6	48.5
Academic advising	52.2	52.0
Career counseling and advising	48.3	45.9
Student housing	39.7	53.5
Financial aid services	54.4	49.3
Opportunity for community service	38.0	50.6
Job placement service for students	30.4	34.0
Campus health services	50.9	54.0
Ability to find faculty or staff mentor	59.2	59.6
Leadership opportunities	46.8	46.5
Recreational facilities	44.2	46.7

Almost 70 percent of the graduating seniors at MSU and other four-year public institutions indicated that they encountered difficulty (“*frequently*” or “*occasionally*”) in getting the courses they needed.

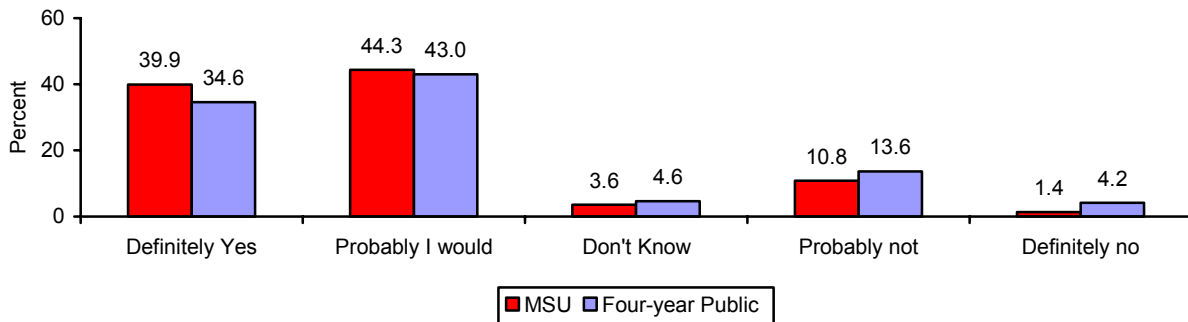
Graduating seniors were also asked to rate their satisfaction with the academic aspects of their college life on a scale of 1 to 4 where, 1 = *very dissatisfied*, 2 = *neutral*, 3 = *satisfied*, and 4 = *very satisfied*. It is encouraging to note that graduating seniors from MSU (83 percent) were very satisfied with their academic experience at Montclair State University. In general, they rated a comparable or higher satisfaction with their experience at MSU compared to their peers at other institutions nationally.

**Table 8.0**  
**Percent of MSU Graduates Satisfied with Academic and Social Activities**

<b>Areas</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Courses in their major field	89.0	89.5	89.4
Amount of contact with faculty	77.8	73.3	74.4
Class size	90.6	80.9	83.4
Interaction with other students	81.9	80.6	81.0
Relevance of coursework to everyday life	68.5	68.5	68.5
Relevance of coursework to future career plans	75.6	69.1	70.7
Overall quality of instruction	86.6	79.5	81.3
Overall sense of community among students	57.5	59.4	58.9
Availability of campus social activities	47.2	46.5	46.7
Overall college experience	84.3	83.1	83.4

Finally, graduates were also asked if they would choose enroll at MSU if they had to choose to the college all over again. Almost 40 percent of the seniors indicated that they would undoubtedly choose this institution, with an additional 44 percent indicating that they will probably choose MSU all over again. Almost 15 percent of males and 11 percent of females indicated that they would probably or definitely not choose to re-enroll at this institution if they had to.

**Figure 7.0**  
**Response of MSU and their Peer Regarding Enrolling at the Current Institution if they had the Choice Again**



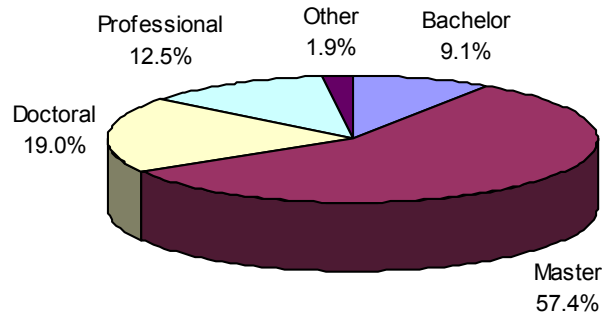
***D. Future Plans:***

Graduating seniors were also inquired about their future goals and degree aspirations upon their graduation from MSU. Almost 80 percent of the MSU graduates indicated that they had met with an advisor or a counselor regarding their career plans. A higher proportion of female students (82 percent) indicated that they had met with an advisor or a counselor regarding the same, compared to male students (71 percent).

**a. Degree aspirations: Higher proportion of female graduates from MSU plan to earn a master’s or doctoral degree compared to males**

It is encouraging to note that a large proportion of seniors who were graduating from Montclair intended to continue their studies. However, a higher proportion of females indicated an intention to pursue higher education. Compared to 15 percent of the males, who intended to earn a bachelor’s as their highest degree, only 7 percent of the females intended the same. Almost 58 percent females indicated that they planned to earn a master’s degree compared to 55 percent of the males. Another 33 percent females indicated that they planned to earn a doctoral or a professional degree compared to 26 percent of males.

**Figure 7.0**  
**Degree Aspiration of Graduating Senior from MSU**



**b. Planned major at Graduate level: A majority of seniors from MSU and in the nation intended to graduate with a degree in Education or Business majors.**

A large proportion of graduates from MSU and graduating seniors in four-year public universities indicated that they intended to major in Education, Business, Social Science and Non-technical fields. Table 9.0 indicates the variation in the responses by gender. A higher

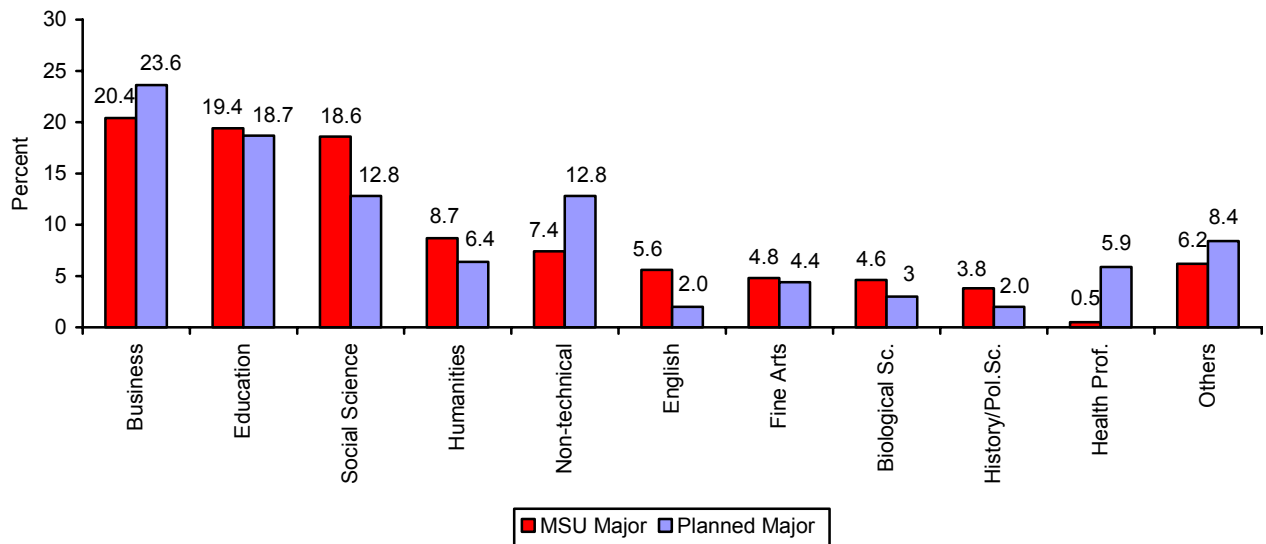
proportion of females intend education as their major for higher studies, while males intend to graduate with a degree in business.

**Table 9.0**  
**Intended Major at another Institution of Higher Education: MSU Senior Graduates**

Majors	Male	Female	Total
Education	17.3	25.8	23.6
Business	26.9	15.9	18.7
Social Science	15.4	11.9	12.8
Non-technical	13.5	12.6	12.8
Humanities	1.9	7.9	6.4
Health Professional	3.8	6.6	5.9
Undecided	3.8	4.5	4.4
Others	17.4	14.8	15.4

Figure 8 indicates a comparison of majors opted for at MSU and planned major at another institution. A relatively higher proportion of graduating seniors intend to graduate with business, health professional, and non-technical majors at other institutions.

**Figure 8.0**  
**Major at MSU and Planned Major at Other Institution of Higher Education**



**c. Probable Occupation Choices: A majority of seniors from MSU and peer institutions nationally intended to choose occupations in the field of Business or Education**

It is interesting to note that the choice of occupation for MSU graduating seniors and seniors at other public institutions nationally was very similar. A large number of MSU seniors indicated their desired occupation as “Business,” and of these almost 10 percent indicated that they would opt to become business executives in management and administrative positions. Another 6 percent intended to be in accounting or actuary positions. As indicated by table 10, a large proportion of males opted for a probable career in business, while a large number of women opted for education, especially at the secondary level.

**Table 10.0**  
**Probable Occupation Choices for MSU Seniors**

<b>Occupation Areas</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Business	26.1	19.0	20.7
Education (elementary)	5.2	21.3	17.3
Education (secondary)	14.8	11.8	12.5
Artist	9.6	5.2	6.3
Health Professions	1.7	4.0	3.5
Social, welfare or recreational workers	0.9	4.3	3.5

## **Conclusions:**

The results of the College Student Survey provided insightful information about the collegiate experience of seniors who were at the end of their undergraduate tenure. The aim of any institution of higher education is to ensure a satisfactory collegiate experience for its students and provide them with adequate skills and experience in their future endeavors.

The responses of graduating seniors from Montclair State University were comparable or better than the responses from their peers in public four year institutions, regarding their academic and social involvement, cognitive and affective development, values, attitudes, and future goals.

Although, slightly higher proportions of seniors indicated that they took remedial courses, compared to their counterparts in the nation; they also enrolled and participated in a range of courses and activities, while at MSU. MSU seniors did not feel bored or asleep in class, although, occasionally they came late to class, missed classes and failed to complete their homework. A higher proportion of male graduates indicated that they missed classes due to job responsibilities and females did the same due to family responsibilities.

It is encouraging to note that compared to their peers nationally, MSU seniors had ample opportunities to interact with faculty, both inside and outside of the classroom. They felt respected and intellectually stimulated by their professors. They were quite successful in understanding the demands of the institution and their professors, develop efficient study skills, and manage their time effectively, all of which are necessary for a successful collegiate experience. Comparatively, females were more inclined to pursue a doctoral or professional degree than males graduating from MSU.

MSU seniors were moderately integrated into the social fabric of the institution. Fewer seniors participated in student clubs or organizations, workshops, or varsity athletics. MSU is predominantly a commuter campus and a large number of MSU graduates were employed full-time off-campus. This may have impacted in a lower participation is evidenced in student activities. It is interesting to note that a large number of our seniors interacted with students of difference race or ethnicity and believed that racial discrimination is still a problem in this country.

MSU graduates had strengthened many of their skills since they joined college. They were, by and large, quite satisfied with various aspects of their collegiate experience. However, they were only moderately satisfied with job placement services, computer facilities and academic advising. Overall, four out of five students were quite satisfied with their college experience.