

Seminole State College
GENERAL EDUCATION EVALUATION
2012-13

SEMINOLE STATE COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT

Seminole State College empowers people for academic success, personal development and lifelong learning.

GENERAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES

SSC has established four general education outcomes that students are expected to demonstrate as the result of their diligent participation in coursework and campus activities. As such, all courses offered for college credit should accomplish one or more of the following student outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate college level communication skills;
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding and application of scientific principles;
3. Students will demonstrate knowledge related to functioning in society;
4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the roles of history, culture, and the arts within civilization.

METHODS FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF GENERAL EDUCATION

In order to assess the achievement of the above desired outcomes, assessment of general education utilizes a number of direct indicators including course-embedded assessment of the general education component of all SSC courses, student performance on the *ACT College Assessment of Academic Proficiency*, and analysis of the success of students that transfer to four-year institutions. The College also employs a number of indirect assessments of general education including the *Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)* and the *AACC/ACT Faces of the Future Survey* on an alternating annual basis to provide relevant student data. Similarly, institutional surveys such as the *Graduate Exit Survey* and *Student Feedback On Instruction* provide a wealth of information that contributes to the assessment process, institutional decision-making and the improvement of student learning.

The following assessment reports were prepared from data collected during the 2012-13 academic year and provide the basis for the outline of this report:

Direct Assessments

- Course-embedded assessment.....(pages 2-3)
- *ACT College Assessment of Academic Proficiency*.....(pages 4-6)

Indirect Assessments

- *Community College Survey of Student Engagement*.....(page 7)
- *Student Feedback on Instruction*.....(pages 8-10)

COURSE-EMBEDDED ASSESSMENT

The most prominent type of assessment employed by Seminole State College faculty to assess the General Education Outcomes listed on page one is Course-Embedded Assessment. Course-Embedded Assessment is designed to foster the continued improvement of teaching methods that lead directly to measurable increases in student learning. A variety of Course-Embedded Assessment methods are available for use by SSC faculty. The most common type of Course-Embedded Assessment traditionally utilized at SSC is pre- and post-tests that contain a set of locally developed questions intended to measure specific student learning outcomes. Ideally, questions used for assessment purposes measure competence beyond knowledge and comprehension and require the demonstration by students of higher order cognitive functions such as application, synthesis and analysis. Detailed descriptions of the different forms of Course-Embedded Assessment in use may be viewed in the *SSC Assessment of Student Learning Procedure* which is available on the SSC Assessment webpage.

As the name implies, all methods of Course-Embedded Assessment have in common the fact that the assessment process is built into the course delivery and individual student evaluation process. Instructors are required to choose the form of Course-Embedded Assessment that best suits the assessment of each particular course. The appropriate Division Chair must approve the choices prior to the beginning of the semester. However, instructors are asked to consider that one goal of this procedure is to use common assessments for common courses. Faculty members are responsible for collecting, analyzing and reporting the appropriate data.

The campus-wide completion of Course-Embedded Assessment of General Education Outcomes facilitates the accumulation of a wealth of data and recommendations for the improvement of student learning as it pertains to General Education. What follows is a brief presentation of the Course-Embedded Assessment Results for the 2011-12 academic year which were compiled as per the *SSC Assessment of Student Learning Procedure* during the fall of 2012.

2011-12 Course-Embedded Assessment Results

Course-Embedded Assessment results were aggregated from five academic divisions for the 2011-12 academic year. These assessments quantified student achievement of the four General Education Outcomes previously specified. The assessments were completed in conjunction with the assessment all of the courses contributing to sixteen SSC degree programs. Of those sixteen assessments, eleven employed only pre- and post-tests, while five of the reports employed a combination of assessment options as permitted by the *SSC Assessment of Student Learning Procedure*.

There were a total of 9,371 Course-Embedded Assessments of General Education Outcomes reported for 2011-12. As shown in Table 1, the aggregate percentages for each outcome showed increases reflecting student learning across the curriculum when comparing pre-test performance to post-test performance. The aggregate percentage increases were: 42.8 for Outcome 1; 39.1 for Outcome 2; 41.7 for Outcome 3; and 24.3 for Outcome 4.

Outcome Assessed	Number Assessed	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Difference
Outcome 1	5,503	38.1%	81.0%	42.8%
Outcome 2	2,129	36.2%	75.3%	39.1%
Outcome 3	813	23.4%	64.5%	41.1%
Outcome 4	926	38.8%	63.1%	24.3%

2011-12 Course-Embedded Assessment Analysis

Analysis of the data at hand focuses on two primary areas for each outcome, the percentage of increase from pre-test to post-test and the magnitude of the post-test percentage. Percentage improvements range from 24.3% on outcome four to 42.8% on outcome one. Three of the four outcomes showed percentage increases in the 40% range, which is a significant indicator of student learning. However, the improvement of only 24.3% for outcome four is insufficient and is cause for concern.

A review of the post-assessment percentages may provide a clearer understanding of how much students have learned from the start of the semester to the end. On the whole, the post-assessment results seem satisfactory with a range of 63.1% to 81.0% and substantiate that student learning occurred in all General Education Outcomes assessed. All four of the post-test percentages were above the 60% threshold typically considered passing in letter grade assessments. Two of the four were above the 70% mark and one was above 80%. The fact that two of the outcomes were achieved at a rate below 65% requires the attention of the Assessment of Student Learning Committee, the faculty and the academic leadership at SSC. Specifically, the Assessment of Student Learning Committee needs to establish future performance goals and minimum thresholds for the achievement of General Education Outcomes. Specifically, goals and minimum standard should be set for both the expected percentage increases pre- to post-test and for the magnitude of post-test percentage. Additionally, mechanisms for focused, long-term improvement when thresholds are not met should be established.

Division chairs will continue to require all faculty to participate in the course-embedded assessment process and to identify assessment data related to each of the General Education Outcomes. They will continue to provide suggestions to the Assessment of Student Learning Coordinator in regard to the reporting format.

ACT COLLEGIATE ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC PROFICIENCY (CAAP) TEST

The College uses the *ACT Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP)* as a component of its Assessment of General Education. This assessment is a nationally recognized academic test designed to measure general education foundational skills typically attained in the first two years of college. Each fall the College uses five objective test modules of the CAAP Test—Writing Skills, Mathematics, Reading, Critical Thinking, and Science—to assess students with 45 or more credit hours. Approximately 200 students typically take the exam in late October or early November. ACT provides demographic information for the participants as well as mean scores for each module for both Seminole State College students and the national database. ACT also provides information for the following groups: sophomore students, students planning to transfer to another institution, female students, and male students.

Fall 2012 CAAP Test Assessment Results

The CAAP Test was administered to 200 students the morning of Wednesday, October 31, 2012. The students were chosen based upon their anticipated completion of 45 or more credit hours at the completion of the fall 2012 semester and their having classes scheduled during the morning testing period. Each student was administered two randomly selected test modules from the pool of modules consisting of Writing Skills, Mathematics, Reading, Critical Thinking, and Science. Consequently, a total of 400 test modules were taken during the testing period consisting of 80 in each of the five subject areas. The test was administered in the Foundation Hall of the SSC Haney Center. The test was administered according to ACT guidelines under the supervision of the Dean of Instructional Compliance, members of the Assessment of Learning Committee and other SSC faculty and staff volunteers.

Demographics

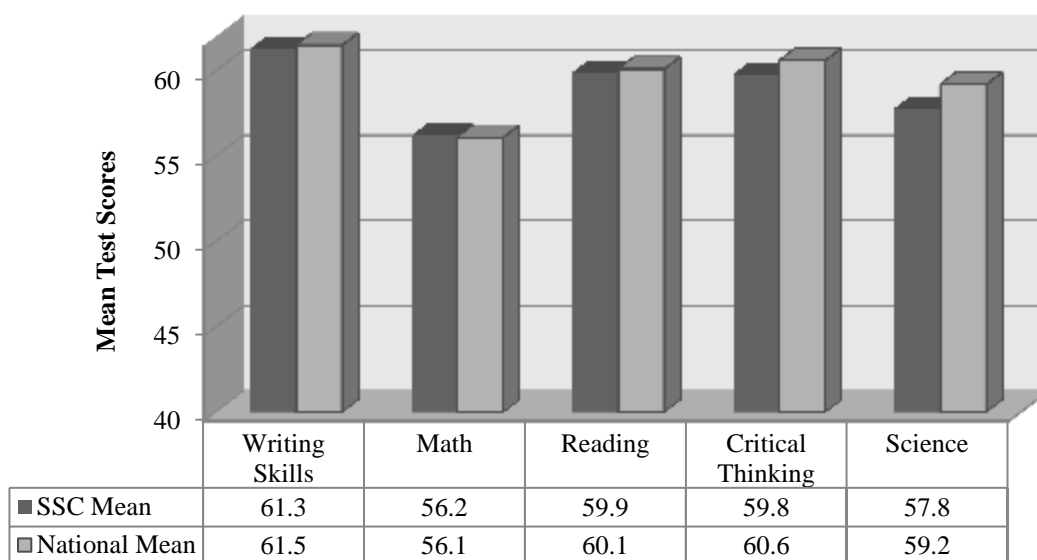
Table 2 shown on the right summarizes the self-reported demographic information for the 200 examinees. As shown in the table, students representing at least seven ethnic groups participated in testing. Caucasian students accounted for 62% of the examinees, while Native Americans accounted for 19%. About 66% of the examinees were female and about 32% were male. Four examinees registered no response for gender. More than 87% of the students considered themselves to be full-time students. Ninety-six percent of the students tested listed English as their first language and 80% replied that they began their freshman year of college as an SSC student.

Table 2. CAAP Test Examinee Demographic Information		Student Count
Ethnicity	African American/Black	6
	Amer. Indian/Alaskan Nat.	38
	White/Caucasian	124
	Mexican	
	American/Chicano	3
	Asian/Pacific Islander	3
	Puerto Rico/Cuban/Hisp.	-
	Filipino	1
	Other	2
	Prefer not to respond	4
No response	19	
Gender	Male	64
	Female	132
	No response	4
Age	18 and under	10
	19-20	87
	21-25	43
	26-30	29
	31-39	19
	40 and older	12
No response	-	
English	First Language	192
	Not First Language	2
	No response	6
Enrolled at SSC as Freshman?	Yes	160
	No (Transfer Students)	36
	No response	4
Enrollment Status	Full-time	175
	Part-time	21
	No response	4

Test Scores

The tests were scored based on a scale that ranges from 40 to 80. National means for two-year institutions are provided for each test subject and are shown in Table 3. As shown in the table, Seminole State students scored near national means in all five subject areas. For example SSC students averaged a score of 61.3 on the writing skills test, which is within 0.2 of the national mean. In math, SSC students performed slightly above the national mean with a score of 56.2 compared to the national mean of 56.1. In reading, critical thinking and science, SSC students were slightly below national means with scores 0.2, 0.8 and 1.4 below their counterparts with 45+ credit hours at other two-year institutions nationwide.

Table 3. 2012 CAAP Test Results



In terms of individual student performance, SSC had students whose performances placed them in the 99th percentile nationally in both writing skills and reading. In all five subject areas, SSC had students whose scores placed them above the 90th percentile nationwide. ACT awarded Certificates of Achievement to students who scored at or above the national mean on a test module. Of the 400 tests administered, 201 were at or above the national average. A number of students earned certificates in more than one module. A total of 124 of the 200 students that were tested, received Certificates of Achievement for their performance in at least one subject area.

Fall 2012 CAAP Test Analysis

As per the *2013-13 SSC Assessment of Student Learning Procedure*, performance thresholds for short-term and long-term CAAP Tests are shown below.

- Short-Term Thresholds (Effective Fall 2007)
SSC mean test scores will fall within ± 0.5 points of the national mean scores.
- Long-Term Thresholds
SSC mean test scores will be at least 1.0 point above the national mean scores.

Based on the above criteria, SSC students are not performing at the minimum threshold levels established as "long-term" in 2007 in any of the five subject areas assessed. If the previously employed "short-

term" thresholds are employed on this year's results, SSC students performed within what were considered acceptable levels in writing skills, mathematics and reading. However, they performed below what were acceptable "short-term" threshold levels in critical thinking and science. The Assessment of Student Learning Committee will present this data to the SSC faculty for discussion and formulation of an appropriate plan of improvement and evaluation of performance thresholds.

Cumulative Data

Data has now been collected for five test administrations spanning a seven year period. As shown in Table 4 on the right, SSC's five-test average is slightly above the national mean in Reading and equal to the national mean for the same period in Writing Skills. In Science, SSC students earned a 5-test average of 59.1 which is only slightly below the national mean of 59.2. SSC students performed at levels which were 0.8 and 0.9 below the national mean in Mathematics and Critical Thinking. As a whole, the five-test averages covering a seven-year span all fell within 1.0 of the national mean for those tests in that period. This indicates that SSC students are performing at levels consistent with but not generally superior to students in the national database for these areas of general education.

The Assessment of Student Learning Committee will continue to review both single year and cumulative results each spring following a CAAP Test administration and recommend appropriate expectations for improvement.

Table 4. Cumulative CAAP Test Results		SSC Mean	National Mean	Over/Under National Mean
Writing Skills	2006	62.1	62.2	-0.1
	2007	62.3	62.1	+0.2
	2008	61.6	62.0	-0.4
	2011	62.2	61.6	+0.6
	2012	61.3	61.5	-0.2
	5-test average	61.9	61.0	0.0
Mathematics	2006	55.6	56.1	-0.5
	2007	55.4	56.2	-0.8
	2008	55.1	56.2	-1.1
	2011	54.8	56.2	-1.4
	2012	56.2	56.1	+0.1
	5-test average	55.4	56.2	-0.8
Reading	2006	61.5	60.5	+1.0
	2007	59.7	59.7	0.0
	2008	59.8	60.4	-0.7
	2011	60.4	60.2	+0.2
	2012	59.9	60.1	-0.2
	5-test average	60.3	60.2	+0.1
Critical Thinking	2006	59.7	60.9	-1.2
	2007	60.6	60.9	-0.3
	2008	59.5	60.8	-1.3
	2011	na	60.4	na
	2012	59.8	60.6	-0.8
	4-test average	59.9	60.8	-0.9
Science	2006	58.9	59.1	-0.2
	2007	59.9	59.2	+0.7
	2008	59.9	59.2	+0.7
	2011	59.0	59.2	-0.2
	2012	57.8	59.2	-1.4
	5-test average	59.1	59.2	-0.1

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT (CCSSE)

SSC students participate biannually in the *Community College Survey of Student Engagement* (CCSSE), a tool created and administered by the Center for Community College Student Engagement. It is used by community colleges to improve student learning, student experience, retention and degree completion. The survey results are benchmarked against community college national norms on educational practice and performance. In addition to surveying the student experience and level of student engagement, the survey also quantifies some student demographics. This spring more than 500 students from 56 randomly chosen class sections were surveyed following the CCSSE guidelines.

Spring 2013 Community College Survey of Student Engagement Key Findings Synopsis

The Center for Community College Student Engagement compiles and analyzes survey results and makes them available to SSC. Readers will find here a brief synopsis of the key findings provided by CCSSE. The more detailed *2013 Key Findings* report supplied by CCSSE is available on the SSC Assessment webpage. CCSSE employs nationally-normed benchmarks for groups of conceptually-related survey items that educational research has shown to be important to students' experiences and educational outcomes.

CCSSE Benchmarks

- ❖ Active and Collaborative Learning
- ❖ Student Effort
- ❖ Academic Challenge
- ❖ Student-Faculty Interaction
- ❖ Support for Learners

SSC student responses placed the College at or near the 2013 national cohort averages in all five benchmarked categories. The College was above the 2013 national cohort in Student Effort, Academic Challenge, Student-Faculty Interaction and Support for Learners. SSC students were slightly below the national cohort for Active and Collaborative Learning. CCSSE also highlights data on items across all of the benchmarks on which the College scored highest and five items on which the College scored lowest.

Aspects of HIGHEST Student Engagement at SSC

- Used email to communicate with an instructor
- Discussion of grades or assignments with an instructor
- Providing the support you need to thrive socially
- Providing the financial support you need to afford your education
- Frequency of skill lab use (writing, math, etc.)

Aspects of LOWEST Student Engagement at SSC

- Made a class presentation
- Participated in community-based project as a part of a regular course
- Using information you have read or heard to perform new skill
- Number of assigned textbooks, manuals, books or book-length packs of course readings
- Frequency of computer lab use

Graphical representations of all of the above items that include numerical data can be found in the *2013 Key Findings* report available on the SSC Assessment webpage. Special focus and faculty survey results may also be found therein. Additional survey data is available upon request to the SSC Dean of Instructional Compliance.

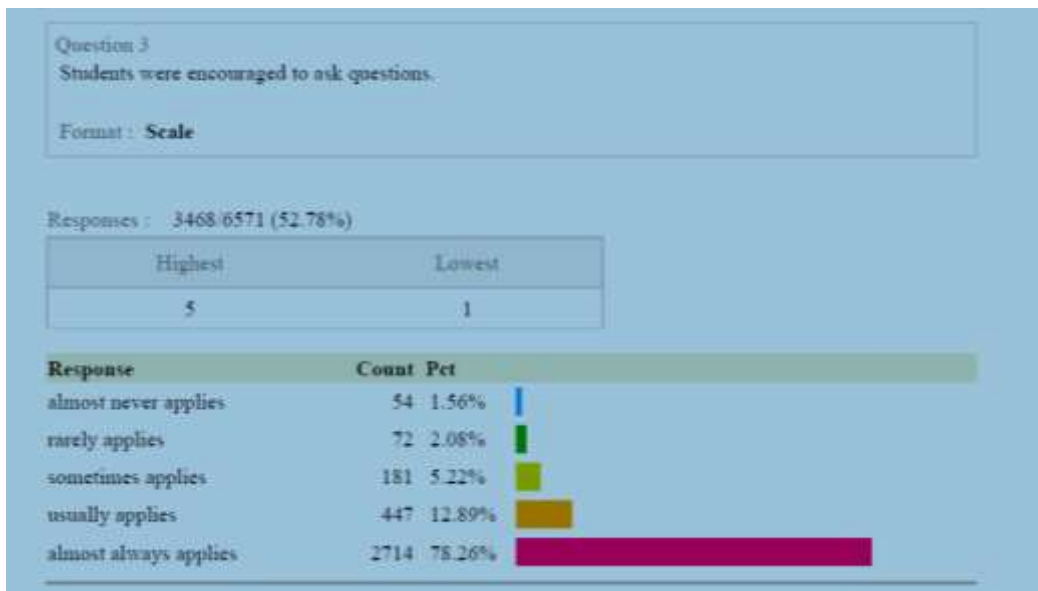
STUDENT FEEDBACK ON INSTRUCTION

Each fall semester all students in all classes are given the opportunity to provide assessment input via the *SSC Student Feedback On Instruction* process. The information is gathered anonymously via electronic means through Campus Cruiser. The survey generates data that includes student opinions on instructor and course quality and effectiveness. Students are directed to complete the survey via emails through Campus Cruiser and in-class announcements by instructors. The survey consists of the combination of rated scale and essay/short answer questions. Rated scale questions allow students to affirm or disagree to differing degrees with statements describing desired course attributes and instructor behaviors. The essay/short answer question provide students the opportunity to submit personal observations and suggestions for improvement for the course and instructor. Each instructor has access to his/her feedback following the completion of the semester. The data can be aggregated by instructor and by course and may be manipulated for analysis in a number of ways. Appropriate supervisory and administrative personnel also have access to the feedback for the purpose of mentoring instructors and improving courses.

Fall 2012 Student Feedback On Instruction Results

One thousand, eight hundred, fifty-eight students completed a total of 3,468 surveys during the fall 2012 semester. With 6,571 potential respondents, the rate of participation was 52.8%. Three hundred and eighty classes were surveyed which resulted in redundant evaluations of 92 different faculty members. The survey consisted of thirty rated scale questions and one essay/short answer question. The rated scale questions used a five point scale (1-5) with the questions phrased in such a way that 5 was always the most desirable answer. Eight of the rated scale questions were answered only by students in online courses.

The shaded figure below show an example of one of the rated scale questions and the coinciding results. The graphs indicated both the number and percentage of respondents that registered each of the scaled responses.



An average response or score can be calculated for each question based on the number and value of each scaled answer and the total number of respondents. For example, the average response score for question

no. 3. "Students were encouraged to ask questions," was 4.64. Table 5 shows the average response scores for all of the rated scale answers across the survey. The lower section of the table shows the same data for questions that applied only to online courses.

Table 5. Rated Scale Questions and Results	
Rated Scale Questions That Applied to All Courses	Average Score
<i>Answer Options: (1) almost never applies (2) rarely applies (3) sometimes applies (4) usually applies (5) almost always applies</i>	
The student syllabus for this course clearly outlined objectives for the course and the manner in which I will be graded.	4.70
The student syllabus clearly defined the attendance policy and my responsibilities for this class.	4.73
Students were encouraged to ask questions.	4.64
Help was available during posted office hours.	4.61
The course materials, textbook, Internet, handouts, etc., helped me prepare for the graded class assignments.	4.58
The course-related activities lectures, discussions, projects, exercises, etc. increased my skills or knowledge about this subject.	4.55
Exams or other testing methods covered the topics discussed in this class.	4.60
The instructor was timely in providing feedback and returning examinations and/or assignments	4.56
The audiovisual aids, overheads, slides, films, whiteboard, etc., increased my skills and/or knowledge about the subject matter.	4.51
The instructional methods used in this course handouts, reviews, etc. helped me understand this subject at a new or deeper level.	4.52
Class presentations were well prepared, organized, and used class time wisely.	4.54
Students were treated fairly and respectfully in this course.	4.69
Sufficient meeting time was allotted in the class schedule to cover course content.	4.62
Test papers were graded fairly and accurately.	4.71
Pertinent information about student progress in the course was routinely provided to the students.	4.55
Course content compared favorably with my expectations for the course.	4.53
The instructor demonstrated enthusiasm about the subject and teaching in general.	4.62
The instructor seemed to have adequate knowledge about the subject matter and is able to communicate this knowledge of the class.	4.67
As a result of taking this course my confidence in my ability to learn the subject matter increased.	4.53
The instructor demonstrated a genuine concern for the student progress in the course.	4.40
The instructor indicated a willingness to help students outside of regular class time.	4.55
What is your overall perception of this course? [<i>Answers: (1) poor (2) below average (3) average (4) above average (5) excellent</i>]	4.33
Rated Scale Questions That Applied Only to Online Courses	Average Score
<i>Answer Options: (1) almost never applies (2) rarely applies (3) sometimes applies (4) usually applies (5) almost always applies</i>	
The technology used in this course supported the goals of the course.	4.58
The technology facilitated my interactions with the instructor.	4.50
The technology facilitated my interactions with classmates.	4.37
It was easy to use technology for this course.	4.57
The technology in this course worked well.	4.54
I received adequate technical support when necessary.	4.50
The technology part of the course was well organized, easy to navigate and logical.	4.53
Technology provided multiple opportunities for student input throughout the course.	4.50

The average response scores ranged from 4.33 to 4.73 for the rated scale questions. Therefore, all of the averaged responses fell between "usually applies" and "almost always applies" with those responses describing desired attributes or behaviors. The average response score for all the rated scale questions was 4.56. The average response score for rated scale questions pertaining only to online courses was 4.52.

The essay/short answer question "What did you like about the course?" drew 2,022 responses campus-wide. Due in part to the phrasing of the question, the vast majority of these responses were positive in nature.

Fall 2012 Student Feedback On Instruction Analysis

The fact that the College average on the rated scale questions was 4.56 on a 5.0 scale is taken as an indicator of overall positive feedback from students on classroom instruction. The average for questions pertaining only to online courses was 4.52 and is taken as evidence that student satisfaction in online courses very closely mirrors that in classes in overall. These averages fall close to the midpoint between the answers "usually applies" and "almost always applies" and were offered as positive affirmations to twenty-nine different statements regarding course effectiveness and classroom instruction. On all of these rated scale questions, the most common answer was "almost always applies." Depending on the question, the "almost always applies" answers ranged between comprising 66.21% and 82.7% of the responses with an aggregate average of 74.63% for the whole survey. On all of the these rated scale questions, at least 85% of students responded either "almost always applies" or "usually applies" to each question and in many cases their combined total exceeded 90% of the answers on a given question. Table 6 shows the aggregate percentages of the rated scale responses to questions offering the "almost always applies" type answers. It seems notable that the "almost always applies" and the "usually applies responses comprise 89.06% of the aggregated responses for SSC.

Table 6. Aggregate Rated Scale Response Percentages	
(1) almost never applies	2.38%
(2) rarely applies	2.36%
(3) sometimes applies.	6.21%
(4) usually applies	14.43%
(5) almost always applies	74.63%

The single rated scale question that used the scaled answers (1) poor, (2) below average, (3) average, (4) above average, and (5) excellent was the question "What was your overall perception of this course?". It may seem concerning that this question scored the lowest average (4.33) of all of the rated scale questions and that the question as phrased may be the broadest and most informative question on the survey. This would seem to conflict with the results from the other rated scale questions. However, close inspection of the available answer selections leads to the speculation that the answer with a value of (3), "average," was perceived as a more positive response than its counterpart "sometimes applies" on the other rated scale questions. Thereby, skewing the average on this one question closer to three. The Assessment of Student Learning Committee will address this possibility and may consider rephrasing and recalibrating the answers to be more equivalent across the survey. The addition of one or two more essay/short answer questions in the hope of improving the variability and usefulness of the responses will also be considered.