RESULTS FROM NEW CITIZENSHIP SURVEY

In AY12, a CASL subcommittee revised the citizenship survey administered through the senior seminars and Debut to more closely align with the global citizenship definition in the undergraduate catalog. The new survey was piloted in several undergraduate courses in SP12 and given in senior seminars and at freshman orientation for the first time in summer 2012.

In order to ascertain their level of interaction with people of diverse races and cultures before their attendance at EIU, students were asked if they were raised in a community that was predominantly one race, two races, or multiracial. Fifty-seven percent of freshmen and sixty-nine percent of seniors indicated they were raised in a community that was predominantly one race while 9% of freshmen and 8% of seniors chose two races, and 34% of freshmen and 24% of seniors indicated their hometown communities were multiracial. These freshman to senior differences may be indicative of the number of transfer students included in the senior numbers many of whom come from central Illinois communities.

Overall, holding a leadership position declines from high school to college. Sixty-five percent of seniors indicated they had not held an elected position in college; 77% of seniors had

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2013 NSSE DATA

Eastern participates in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA), and as part of this participation gives the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) every three years. The most recent administration of this on-line survey was in Spring 2013. Emails are sent to freshmen and seniors asking for their participation; 199 freshmen and 381 seniors responded.

Many of the questions are related to academics, and quite a few of these questions coincide with Eastern’s undergraduate learning goals.

When asked how much the institution has contributed to their abilities to speak clearly and effectively, 75% of EIU freshmen indicated “quite a bit” or “very much” compared to 59% of all NSSE freshmen, which is a 16% difference. Seventy percent of EIU seniors chose these two answers compared to 68% of all seniors. These percentages, however, are lower than they were in 2010 when 78% of EIU seniors and 77% of EIU freshmen gave these same answers.

Students were also asked how much the institution had contributed to their writing skills; 77% of EIU freshmen indicated “quite a bit” or “very much” compared to 72% of EIU seniors. Sixty-seven percent of all NSSE

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not held a leadership position in athletics, and 83% had not in a church group. Seniors were also not likely to have had an internship in a government office (96% no) or with an organization dedicated to social change (88% no).

More participation was indicated for the co-curriculum and volunteer work, but again, freshmen were more likely to have participated in high school than Eastern’s seniors were during their time as college students. Forty-six percent of EIU seniors indicated they had not participated in intramurals or athletics, but 25% had participated for four or more years in college compared to 56% of freshmen who participated in four years of high school.

Only 29% of seniors and 24% of freshmen admitted they had never volunteered time or service to a non-profit while 26% of freshmen and 19% of seniors had participated for four years.

Over half of the seniors (53%) had not been a member of an RSO while one 20% of freshmen had not been members of a school club.

Eighty-four percent of seniors, however, were registered to vote, and 47% indicated they voted on a regular basis in local, state, and national elections. Forty percent of EIU seniors listed their political party affiliation as independent, 24% as Republican, 30% as Democrat, and 5% as other.

Seniors were more likely to stay informed concerning local, state, national and international events than freshmen with 42% of seniors indicating they “always” or “frequently” stay informed compared to 28% of freshmen. Nineteen percent of seniors acknowledged reading a daily newspaper compared to 7% of freshmen. Receiving news via computer or other electronic devices was more common for both levels of students with 37% of freshmen and 45% of seniors receiving daily updates.

Ninety-six percent of freshmen and 98% of seniors agreed or strongly agreed that they could articulate why they hold certain positions on social issues.

Eighty-two percent of seniors agreed or strongly agreed that their college education had encouraged exploration and “going outside my comfort zone” while 90% of seniors agreed or strongly agreed that their college education had taught them to consider multiple perspectives when making decisions; 90% of freshmen also agreed or strongly agreed when assessing their high school education.

Seventy-six percent of seniors agreed or strongly agreed that citizens should respect their government’s decision while 91% of seniors also agreed or strongly agreed that citizens should actively question government decisions. Students clearly did not see “respect” and “active questioning” to be contradictory but complementary to their roles as citizens.

All questions and comparisons can be found on the assessment web site under global citizenship.

freshmen chose these answers compared to 74% of all NSSE seniors.

When asked how many papers they had written that year of varying lengths, 80% of EIU freshmen and 43% of EIU seniors indicated they had written no papers over 11 pages. Up to 5 pages was the most common answer for each level.

Several of the questions relate to critical thinking skills. For example, 80% of EIU freshmen (78% in 2010) and seniors (83% in 2010) indicated “quite a bit” or “very often” they were asked to apply theories or methods to practical problems compared to 74% of all NSSE freshmen and 80% of all NSSE seniors.

The percentages for these same answers were comparable for the amount of times students had been asked to analyze something in-depth with 78% of EIU freshmen (73% all freshmen) responding in the top two answers and 74% of EIU seniors (77% all seniors).

Seventy-four percent of EIU freshmen indicated they had quite a bit or very much evaluated a point of view or information source compared to 70% of all freshmen and 71% of EIU seniors (72% all seniors). In 2010, 86% of seniors indicated they had been asked quite a bit or very much to analyze an idea, theory, experience, etc.; this shows a 12% drop in EIU seniors reporting they were asked to perform these skills. Freshmen in 2010 answered this way at 75% for only a 1% difference.

There is also a 6% difference for EIU seniors from 2010 in how often they were asked to make judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods with 73% of 2010 seniors answering “quite a bit” or “very much” compared to 73% of 2010 freshmen.

A number of questions provide information on responsible citizenship. About half of the EIU freshmen (52%) and seniors (55%) indicated that often or very often their course discussions included diverse perspectives compared to 50% of all freshmen and 56% of all seniors. These percentages show a 10% and 13% decrease from the 2010 EIU freshman (62%) and senior (68%) answers.

When asked how often in the current year, they had had discussions with people of a race or ethnicity other than their own, 80% of EIU freshmen said “often” or “very often,” which is 9% higher than all the other freshmen. This is a 30% increase from the answers EIU freshmen gave in 2010 (50%). Seventy-two percent of EIU seniors answered this way, which is the same percentage as all NSSE seniors.

In 2010, 45% of EIU seniors gave answers in these categories, which is a 27% increase. In answer to how often they had had discussions with people from a different economic background than their own, 82% of EIU freshmen and 73% of EIU seniors replied “often” or “very often” compared to 73% of all freshmen and 75% of all seniors.