

Chapter VI: COLLEGE STUDENT EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE (CSEQ)

Who takes it?

Students enrolled in a Junior Interdisciplinary Seminar (JINS).

When is it administered?

Each semester.

How long does it take to complete?

30 minutes.

What office administers it?

Assessment and Testing via the JINS instructors.

Who originates the assessment?

CSEQ Research Program
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When are results typically available?

The semester following its administration.

What type of information is sought?

The CSEQ measures three general aspects of a student's experience: college activities, college environment, and self-reported estimate of gains.

From whom are the results available?

Assessment and Testing, Violette Hall 1130.

To whom are the results regularly distributed?

VPAA Office, and to the University community through this *Almanac*.

Are results available by division or discipline?

No.

Are results comparable to data of other universities?

Yes.

One of the charges of the Analysis and Reporting Group (ARG) of the Assessment Committee is to periodically conduct analyses regarding important issues such as explaining student retention, timely graduation and student satisfaction. One of these projects involved using the data compiled from the Continuing Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ) which the University has been using since 1999. In particular we identified several questions that relate directly to the university's mission. These statements included

- 1) Intellectual integrity, celebration of difference and diversity, informed ethical values, and courageous aspiration toward the best for oneself, one's family, one's society, and the world.
- 2) A sense of the joys and uses of creative and critical thought, including skills of intellectual problem-solving through effective reading and research, clear writing, and articulate speech.
- 3) The willingness and ability to exercise personal and intellectual leadership in his or her chosen field of endeavor.

From the CSEQ we identified several questions that relate to each of the above three statements. These questions (from the CSEQ) included a question on diverse experiences (for the first statement on diversity) where the student was asked whether they had become acquainted with students whose interests were different from their own, whether they had become acquainted with students, how family background (economic, social) was different from theirs, etc. We created a diverse experiences measure based upon the 10 items on page 5 on student acquaintances and discussions. Interestingly when running a Cronbach's alpha test on the ten items alpha was equal to .90 indicating there was a high degree of correlation among the items. We then simply created an additive index of the ten items (and divided it by 10) recoding it so the high score was often and low score was never, ranging from 1-5.

For the second statement we used questions from the CSEQ that asked students about the extent to which they felt that they have gained or made progress in the following areas? i) writing clearly and effectively, j) presenting ideas and information effectively when speaking to others, and u) thinking analytically and logically.

For the third item we used the question regarding student activities in clubs and organizations where students were asked on the CSEQ about their experiences in the past year regarding leadership in a club or organization, on or off the campus.

Finally, we also wanted to assess whether college experiences (such as positive interactions with faculty and whether students participated in campus or off campus organizations, as well as the extent of the diversity of their experiences) affected whether they (in retrospect) would have chosen to attend Truman again, if they had to decide all over again. We calculated a *Positive Interactions with Faculty Index* based on five items from the CSEQ and a Student Organization Participation Index based on four items from the CSEQ.

To address these questions we used only the CSEQ data from 2002-2003 junior reports, which were the last complete data compiled on the CSEQ for juniors. There were 1402 individual records.

Results

In sum we found the following:

- 1) The aggregate diverse experience score for all students was 1.36 (out of 3)
- 2) 32.0% of respondents said they had gained either a lot or quite a bit in terms writing clearly and effectively,
 31.2% of respondents said they had gained either a lot or quite a bit in terms thinking analytically and logically
 33.6% of respondents said they had gained either a lot or quite a bit in terms of presenting ideas and information effectively when speaking to others
- 3) 53% of respondents said they managed or provided leadership for a club or organization, on or off the campus

In addition, Table 1 reports the summary for all junior respondents across the six academic divisions.

Division	Percent Reporting Significant Gains in Speaking Ability	Percent Reporting Significant Gains in Writing Ability	Percent Reporting Significant Gains in Analytical Ability	Leadership in Organizations
Business	28.1%	34.6%	30.7%	44.4%
Fine Arts	34.1%	27.3%	22.7%	58.6%
Language and Literature	29.3%	20.4%	28.7%	54.8%
Math and Computer Science	35.9%	33.3%	20.5%	51.3%
Science	34.9%	37.2%	26.7%	48.8%
Social Science	26.1%	29.6%	31.0%	47.2%

Finally, we conducted a regression analysis that indicates that positive interactions with faculty, and participation in student organizations, and greater diverse experiences, are strong predictors of whether a student reports that they would return to Truman if given another opportunity to decide. Although it may be the case that students who stay are more predisposed to joining organizations and seek out interaction with faculty and diverse experiences, and hence these variables do not “cause” students to become more likely to want to stay at Truman State University, the results certainly suggest that the variables are, at the very least, strongly correlated.

The above results are preliminary, but provide a sense of what our group has been doing in the past year. In addition, the analysis illustrates the utility of such instruments such as the CSEQ which allow us to estimate the effects of in-college experiences of students and to identify which experiences are most important in affecting student retention, graduation and a whole host of other issues of importance to the university community.