



NSSE 2010 Executive Summary

Dalton State College – Senior Students

This summary identifies Dalton State College’s seniors’ perceptions of the education they have received at Dalton State. All statements are derived from the 2010 NSSE survey, with a particular emphasis on strengths, weaknesses, and comparisons between Dalton State’s survey results and the mean results from comparative institutions. The survey results from approximately 269 respondents suggest the following:

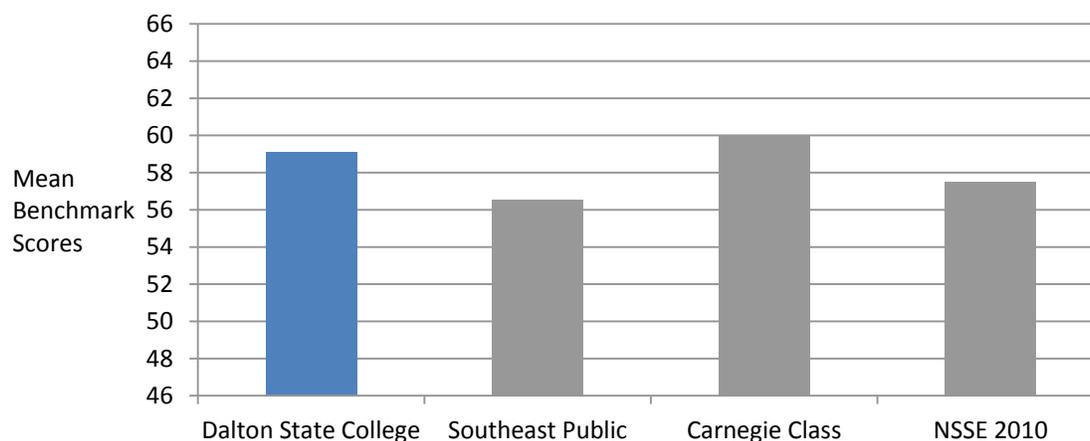
• Level of Academic Challenge

“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.”

Overall, Dalton State seniors perceived the college as more challenging than seniors at other southern institutions and seniors in the survey as a whole but slightly less challenging than seniors of the Carnegie Class institutions.

- Our senior students write fewer papers than other colleges—especially papers greater than five pages long.
- Our seniors prepare two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in more often than do students from comparative institutions.
- They also frequently include diverse perspectives in class discussions and writing assignments.
- Seniors at Dalton State report that they often work harder than they thought they could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations.
- Seniors feel that the College emphasizes analyzing ideas, experiences, or theories, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components.
- Seniors feel that our exams push them to do their best work.
- Seniors believe that the College puts a heavy emphasis on spending time studying and doing classwork.
- Seniors also believe that the College has helped them write and speak clearly and effectively.
- Our seniors feel the College has made them more capable of thinking critically, analyzing quantitative problems, and using computing and information technology.

Overall Level of Academic Challenge Compared with Other Institutions



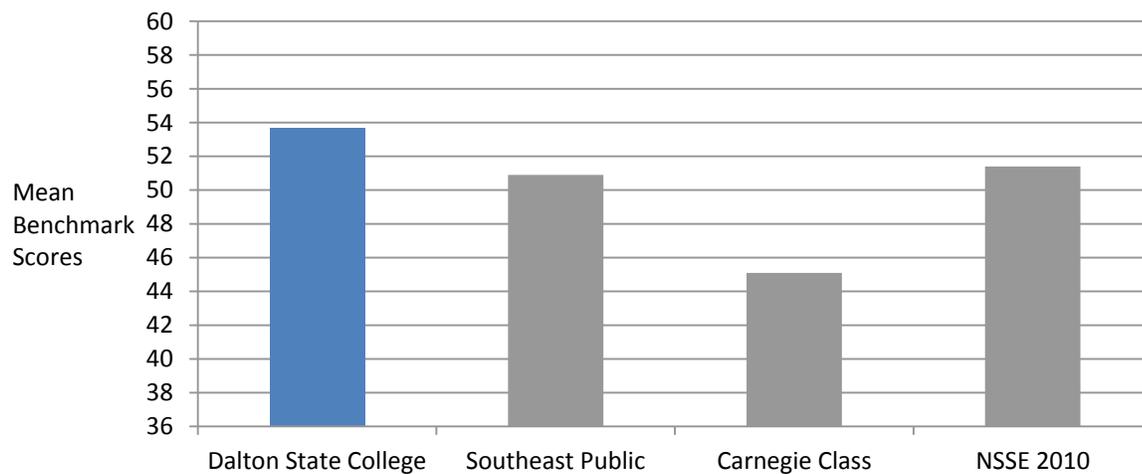
● Active and Collaborative Learning

“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 complex, unscripted problems they will encounter daily during and after college.”

Overall, Dalton State ranked higher than all of the other institutions on active and collaborative learning and markedly above the Carnegie Class institutions.

- Seniors felt they participated in class and contributed to class discussions.
- Our seniors often work with other students on projects *during* class, but they do little work together *outside* of class.
- The College effectively teaches seniors to work in groups to accomplish projects.
- Seniors frequently discuss ideas from readings or classes with others outside of class.

Overall Active and Collaborative Learning Compared with Other Institutions



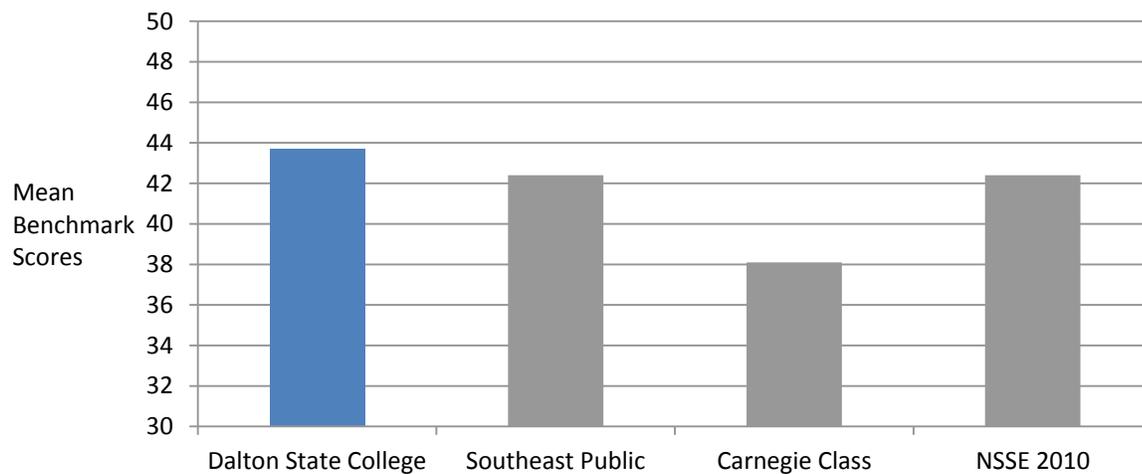
● Student-Faculty Interactions

“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.”

In comparison with the other institutions in this study, Dalton State ranked above on student-faculty interactions.

- Our seniors discuss grades or assignments with instructors more often than do seniors at other colleges.
- They also frequently receive prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on academic performance.
- However, our seniors work on research projects with faculty members outside of course or program requirements less often than do seniors at other institutions.
- The quality of senior relationships with faculty members is slightly above average in comparison with other institutions in this study.

Overall Student-Faculty Interactions Compared with Other Institutions



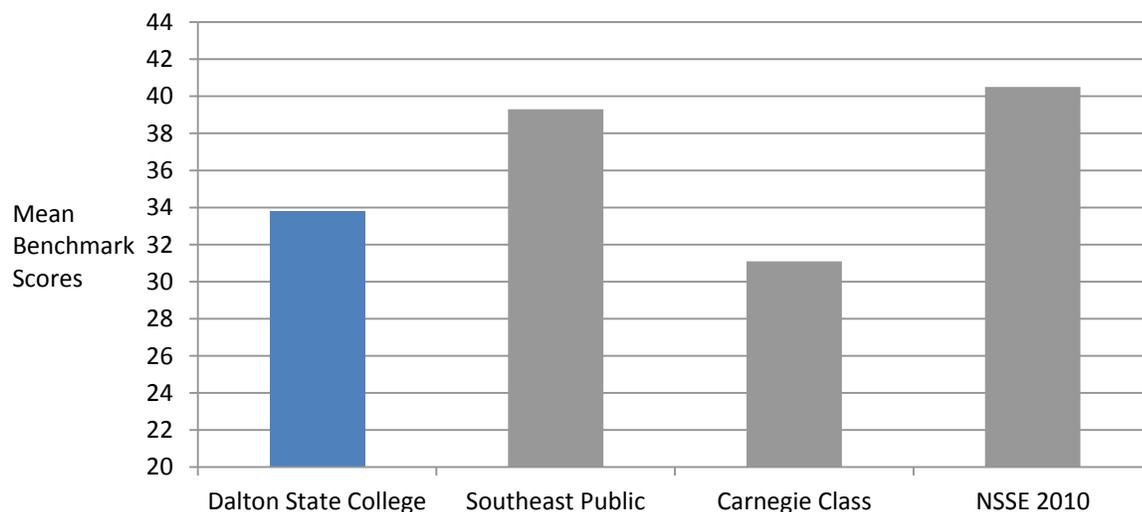
● Enriching Educational Experiences

“Complementary learning opportunities in and out of class augment 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.”

Overall, Dalton State ranked considerably lower than seniors at other southern institutions and seniors in the survey but higher than the seniors of the Carnegie Class institution.

- Our senior students vote in state, local, and national elections more often than do seniors in other schools.
- Seniors don't often attend art exhibits, plays, dances, music, theater, or other performances.
- They also seldom participate in physical fitness activities.
- Seniors do not participate much in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.).
- The percentage of seniors who have not done any community service or volunteer work is greater than at other institutions.
- A greater-than-average percentage of our seniors have not taken any foreign language coursework.
- They also have not engaged in Study Abroad as often as at other schools.
- A higher percentage of our seniors report that they have not completed a culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.) than do seniors of other institutions.
- Our students also spend less time relaxing and socializing than do students at other schools.
- A major factor in our seniors' extracurricular inactivity is that our seniors work off-campus much more often than do seniors at other institutions. The percentage of seniors who care for dependents is also far greater than the percentage at other institutions.
- They also commute more often than other institutions' seniors.

Overall Enriching Educational Experiences Compared with Other Institutions



● Supportive Campus Environment

“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.”

Dalton State matched the Carnegie Class institution on the overall supportive campus environment category.

- Our seniors have better than average relationships with their fellow students.
- They also find our faculty members available, helpful, and sympathetic.
- Senior responses place the College’s administrative personnel and offices as slightly more helpful, considerate, and flexible than the average institution’s administration.
- The senior students think the College provides adequate support to succeed academically.

Overall Supportive Campus Environment Compared with Other Institutions

