

*National Survey of Student
Engagement 2006:*

Results for Queen's University



Description of NSSE

- Survey Overview
- Engagement Benchmarks and Component Items
- Statistics and Interpretation



Survey Overview

- NSSE measures student involvement and institutional practice in numerous (40+) areas known to be associated with desirable learning and personal development outcomes
- 550+ university participants in Canada and US; 400,000 first and senior year undergraduate respondents
- 125+ questions (core, contextual, experimental, consortium) and 5 composite engagement benchmarks
- Results presented for participating university and numerous comparator groups
- All Ontario universities participate as part of new accountability arrangements
- Additional info at <http://nsse.iub.edu>

Engagement Benchmarks and Component Items

- **Level of Academic Challenge** amount of studying, reading, writing; course/campus emphasis on synthesis, analysis, application of theory, academic effort
- **Active and Collaborative Learning** questions, presentations, teamwork in-class; homework, discussions, learning activities out-of-class
- **Student-Faculty Interaction** grades, career, course discussions with faculty; committee, research involvement with faculty
- **Enriching Educational Experiences** student participation in co-curricular, field experience, volunteer work, independent study, etc.
- **Supportive Campus Environment** student, staff, faculty relationships; campus services

Statistics & Interpretation

- Most survey responses are reported in the form of both means (of Likert scales) and frequencies. When comparing means across comparator groups, effect sizes of $< -.20$ or $> +.20$ indicate “meaningful” differences. When comparing frequencies, differences of more than (about) 5% can be considered “of interest”, and of more than (about) 8% as being “very meaningful”.
- Survey results can be viewed through various lenses:
 - Against goals, priorities, expectations
 - Against comparator groups
 - First year vs. senior year
 - Opportunities for action
 - Benchmark vs. benchmark

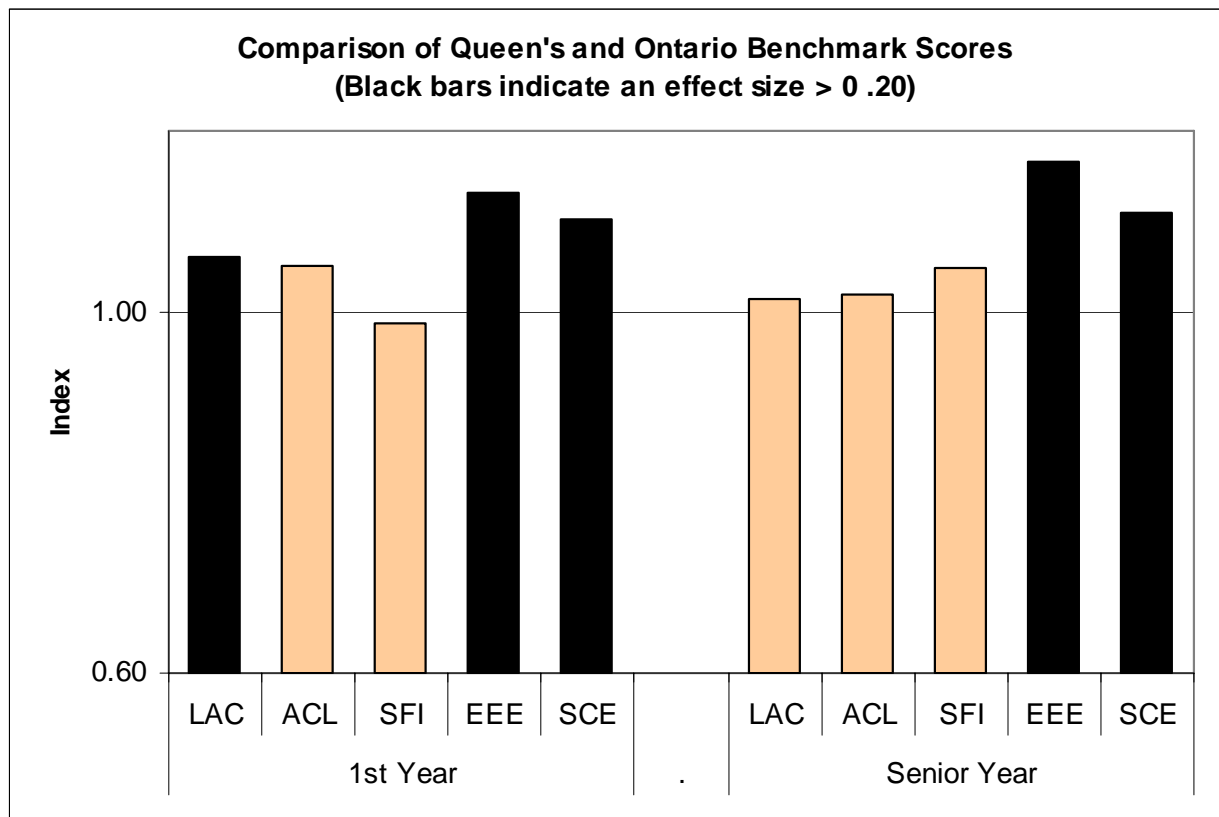
Summary of Findings

- Queens vs. Ontario (Benchmarks)
- Queen's vs. US Carnegie Peers (Benchmarks)
- Looking Inside the Benchmarks
- Strengths, Weaknesses and Issues of Interest
- 2004 vs. 2006 Results
- Longer-Term Goals: US Carnegie Peers
- Addressing Student Priorities
- The Broader Learning Environment
- NSSE and the Strategic Plan
- Focusing our Responses



Queen's vs. Ontario (Benchmarks)

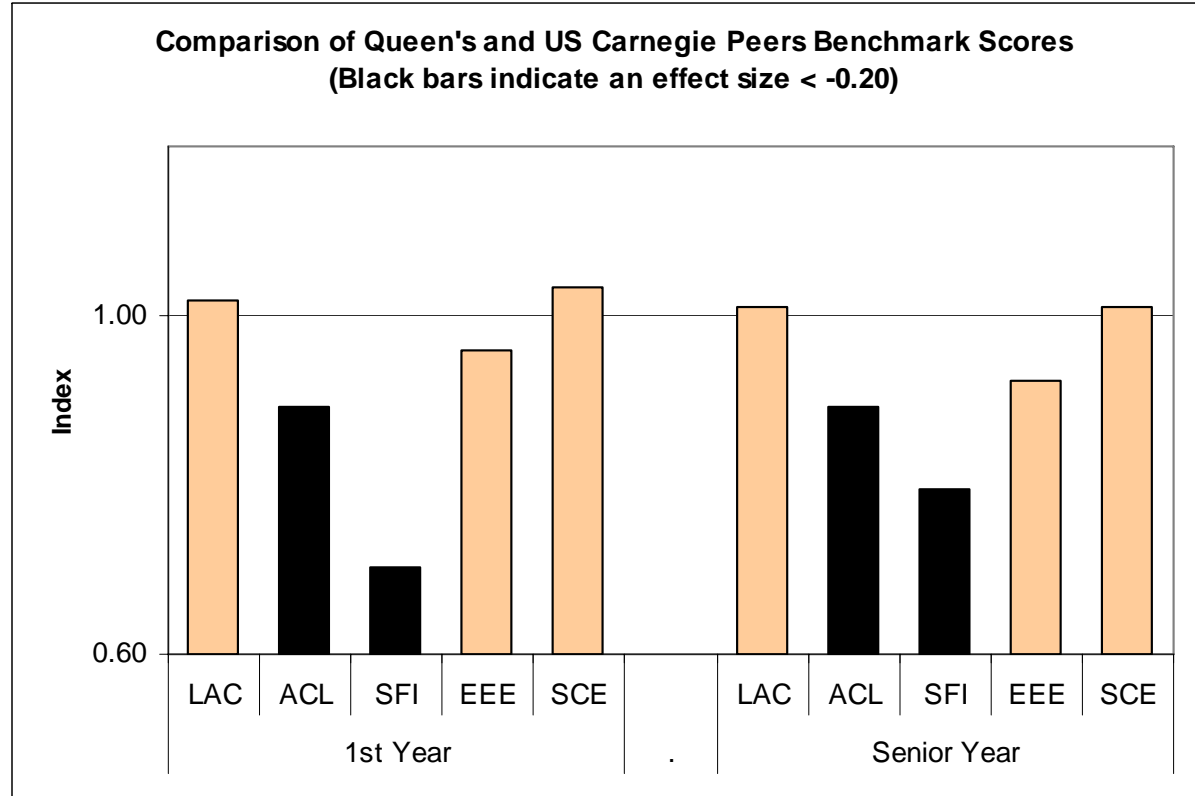
- Queen's benchmark scores are generally comparable to, or higher than, those at other Ontario universities.



- Queen's scores are higher than provincial average on
 - Enriching Educational Experiences (1st, senior year)
 - Supportive Campus Environment (1st, senior year)
 - Level of Academic Challenge (1st year)
- These results are consistent with the perceived culture and character of Queen's – as an institution offering a unique academic and social environment to highly qualified students
- Queen's scores compare to provincial average on
 - Active and Collaborative Learning (1st, senior year)
 - Student-Faculty Interaction (1st, senior year)
 - Level of Academic Challenge (senior year)
- ACL and SFI results may reflect system-wide funding constraints on classroom/instructional activities

Queen's vs. US Carnegie Peers (Benchmarks)

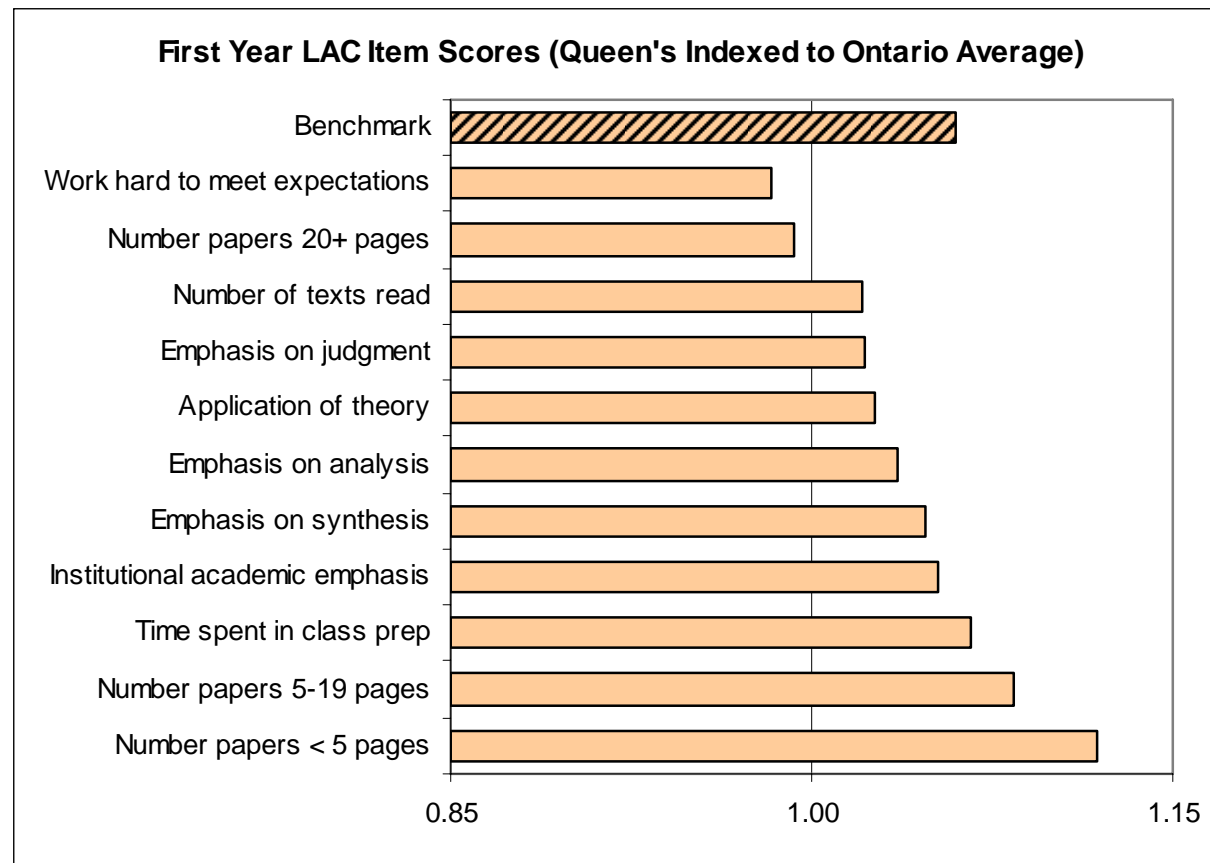
- Queen's does not perform as well against US primarily residential doctoral-extensive universities.



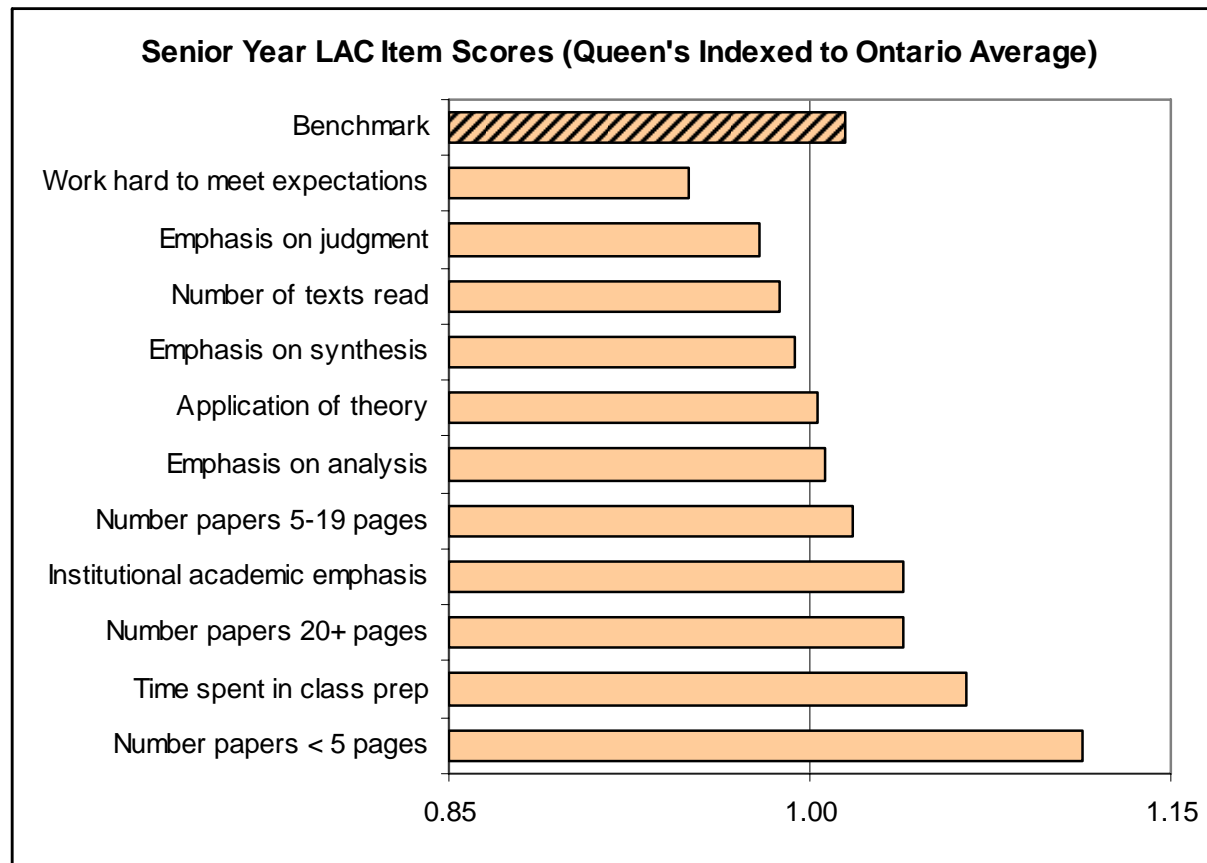
- Queen's scores are comparable to US peers in terms of
 - Level of Academic Challenge
 - Enriching Educational Experiences
 - Supportive Campus Environment
- This may reflect local “culture” (academic rigour, program and curriculum, campus-wide supports) that is maintained despite Canada vs. US funding differences
- Queen's scores are significantly lower than US peers on
 - Active and Collaborative Learning
 - Student-Faculty Interaction
- These almost certainly reflect Canada vs. US funding differences

Looking Inside the Benchmarks: LAC

- In 1st year, the amount of writing and time spent in class prep drive the benchmark score up; effort to meet expectations drives the benchmark score down.

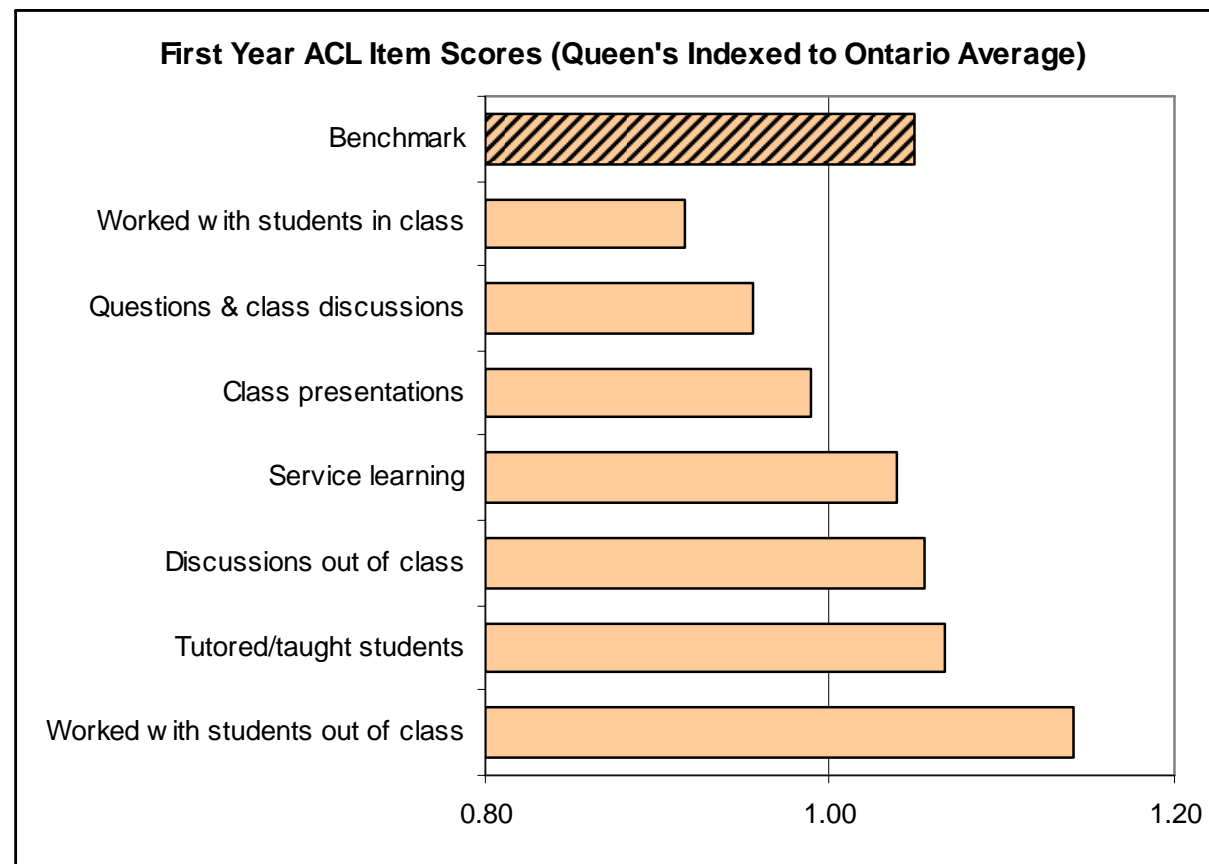


- In senior year, a generally comparable ordering of items occurs, but the Queen's vs. Ontario differences are less pronounced

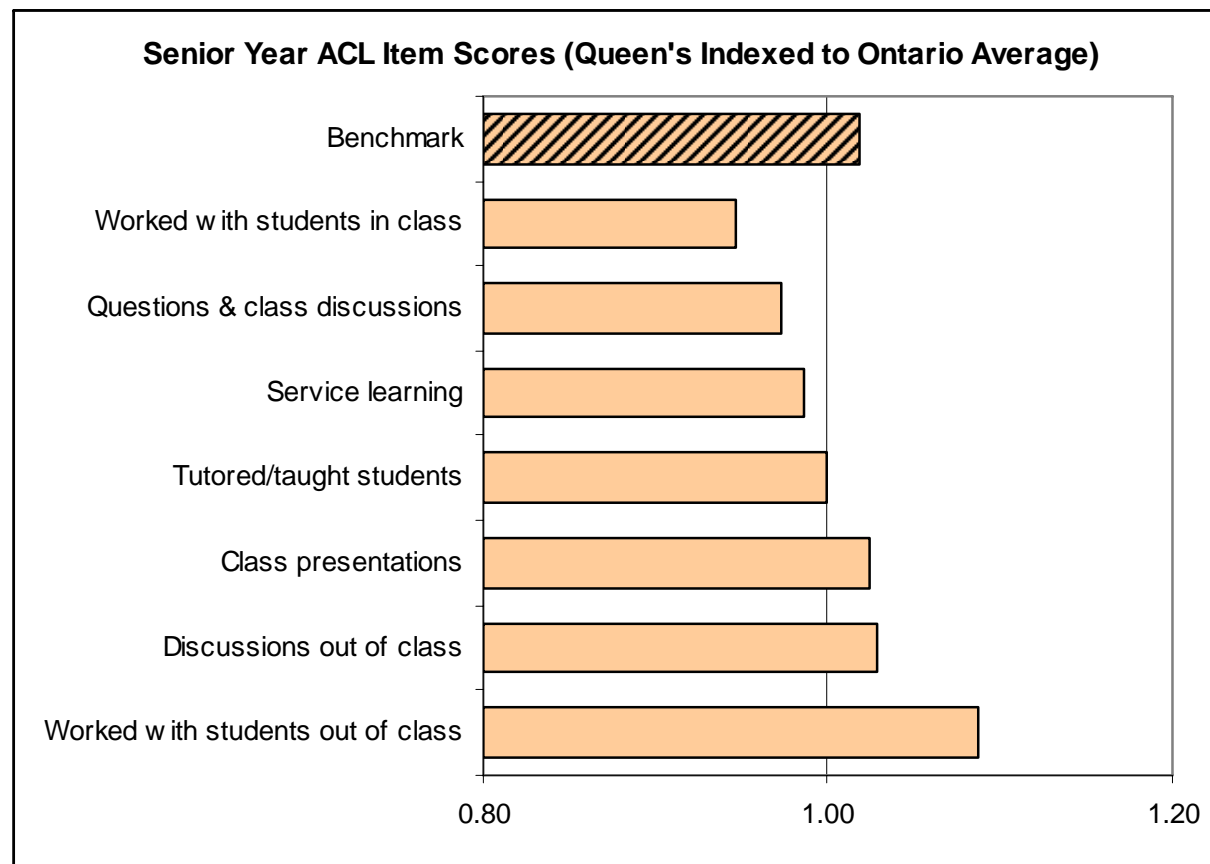


Looking Inside the Benchmarks: ACL

- In 1st year, good benchmark performance reflects lower in-class activity and higher out-of-class activity

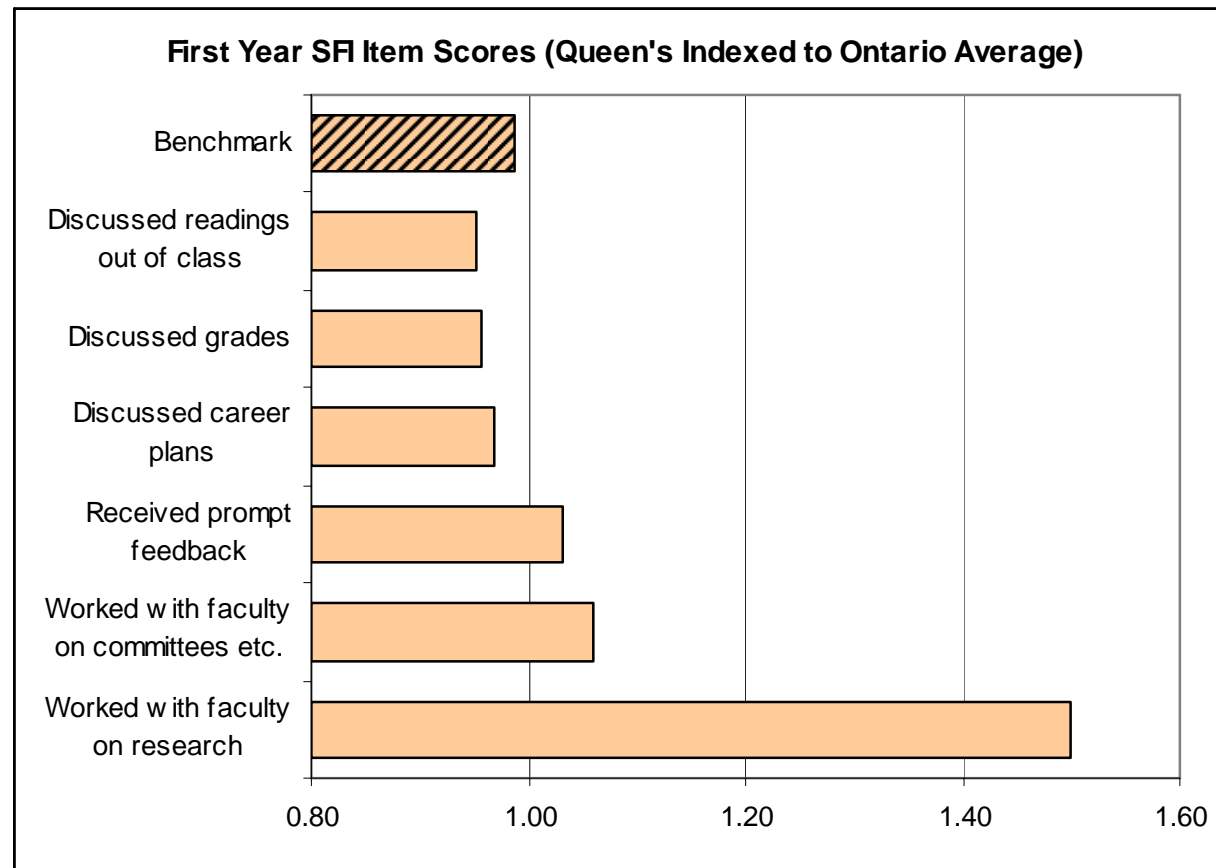


- In senior year, benchmark performance Queen's vs. Ontario is more similar, and some in-class activity (presentations) becomes more frequent

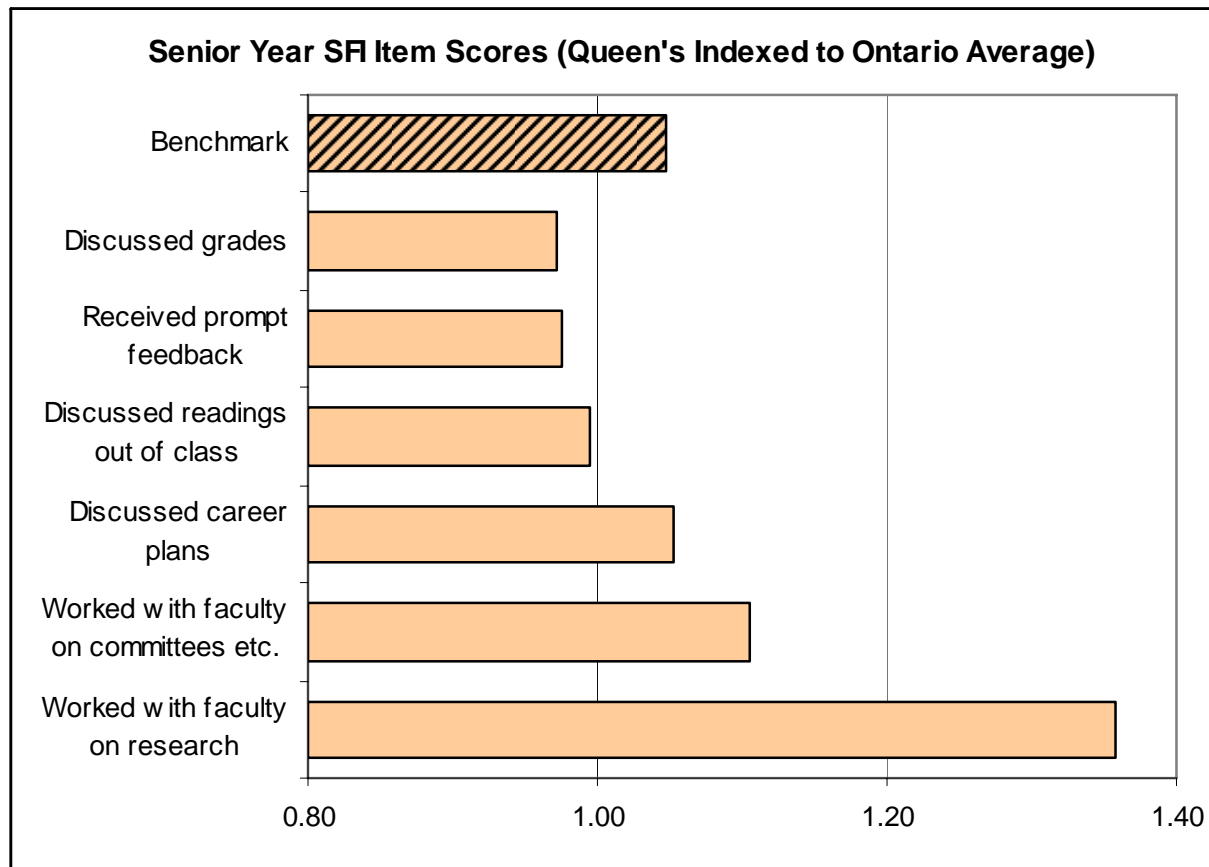


Looking Inside the Benchmarks: SFI

- In 1st year, Queen's benchmark score is lower than the Ontario average, despite higher out-of-class contact with faculty

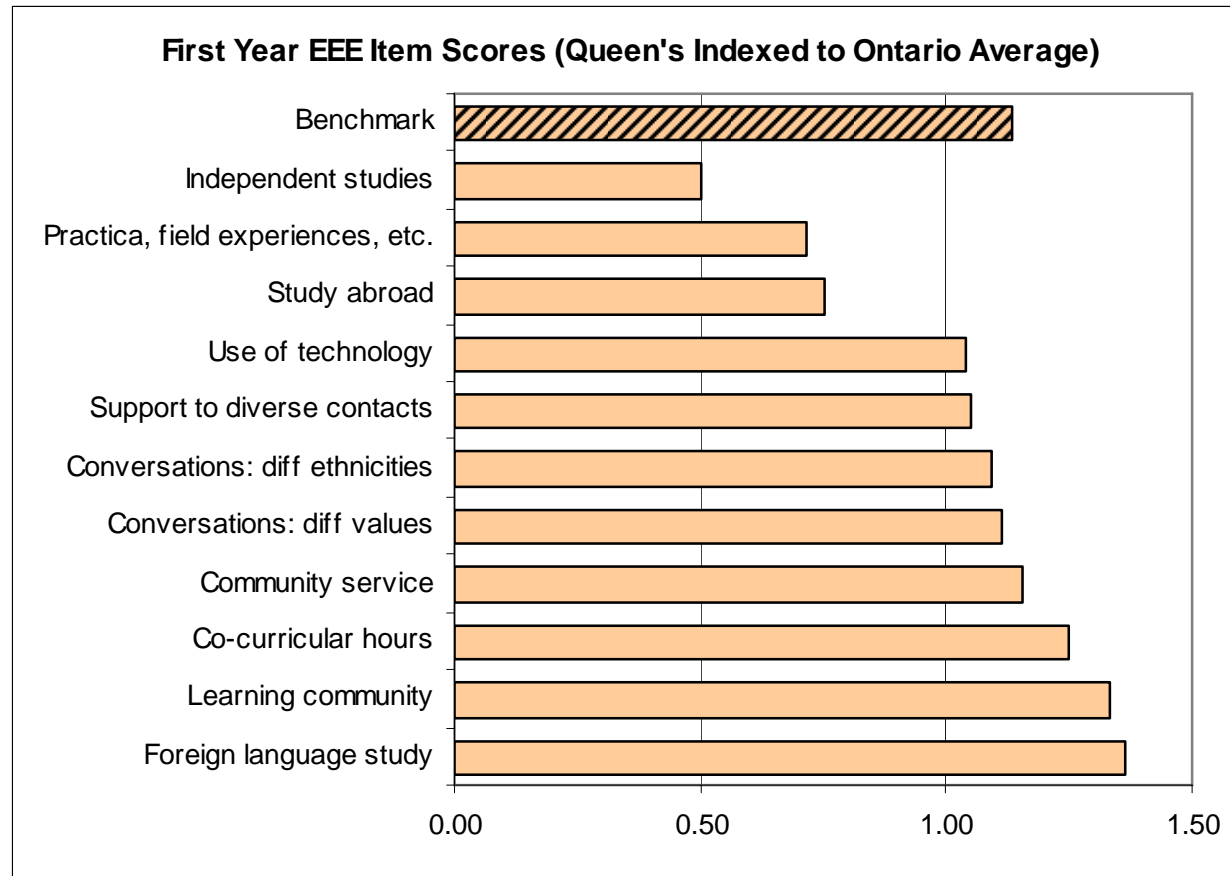


- In senior year, a similar pattern emerges but overall (benchmark) performance is improved

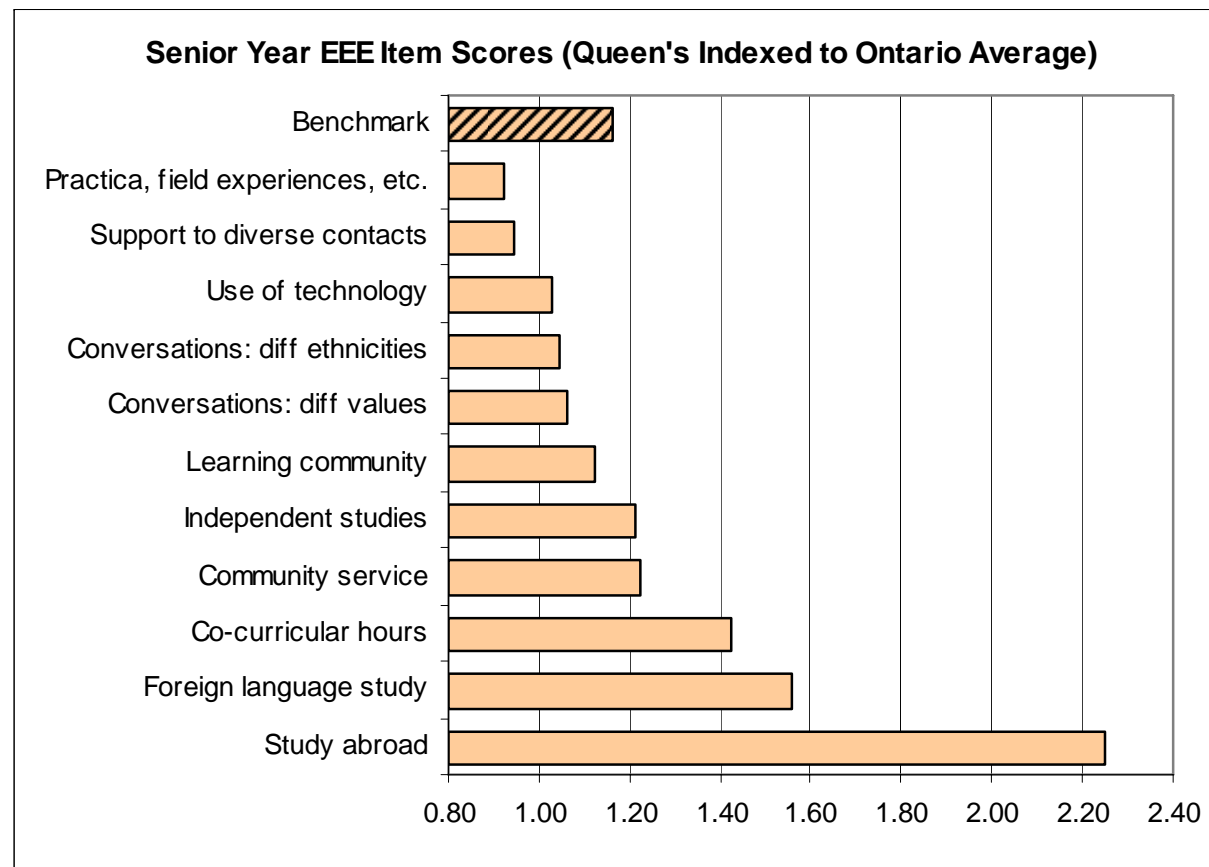


Looking Inside the Benchmarks: EEE

- In 1st year, strong benchmark performance masks relatively low scores in independent study, practicum/field experiences and study abroad

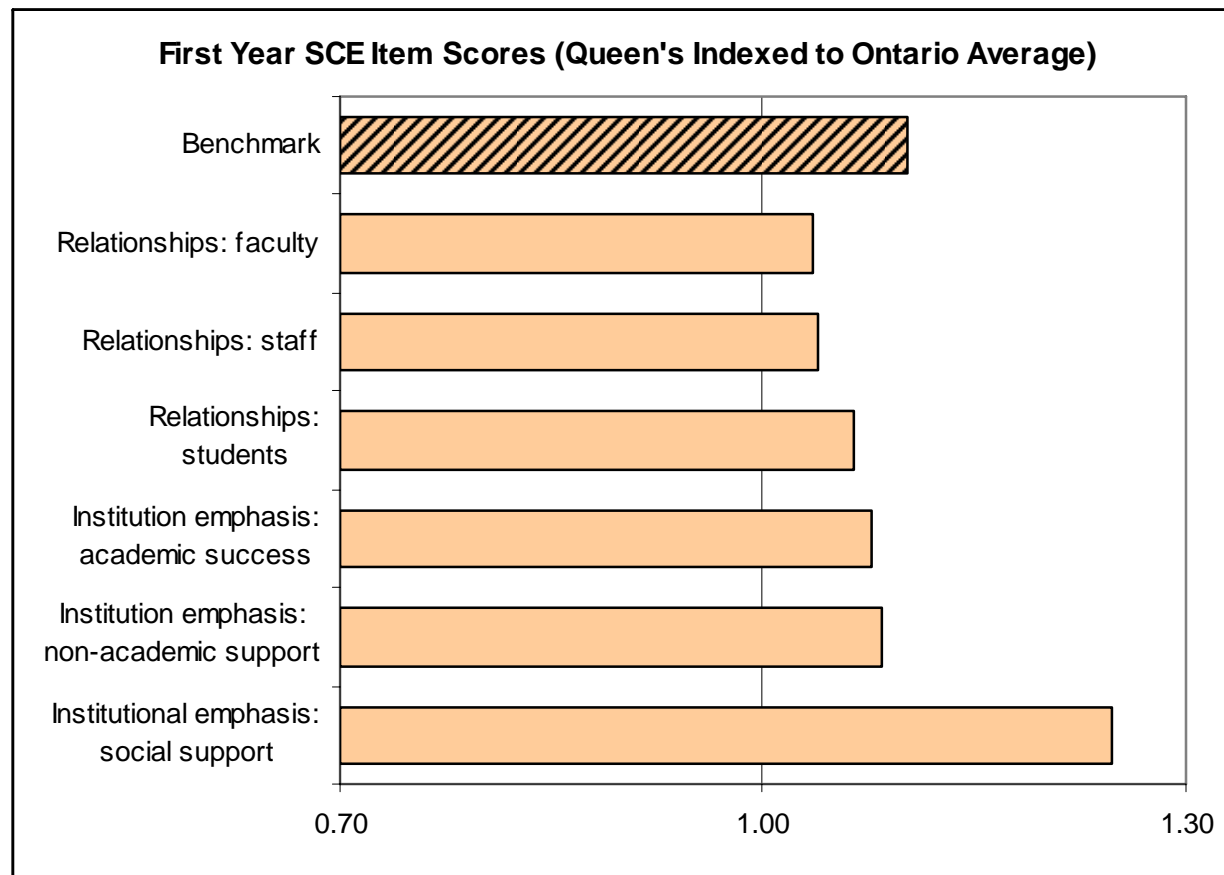


- In senior year, with few exceptions, involvement of Queen's students in enriching experiences is very high

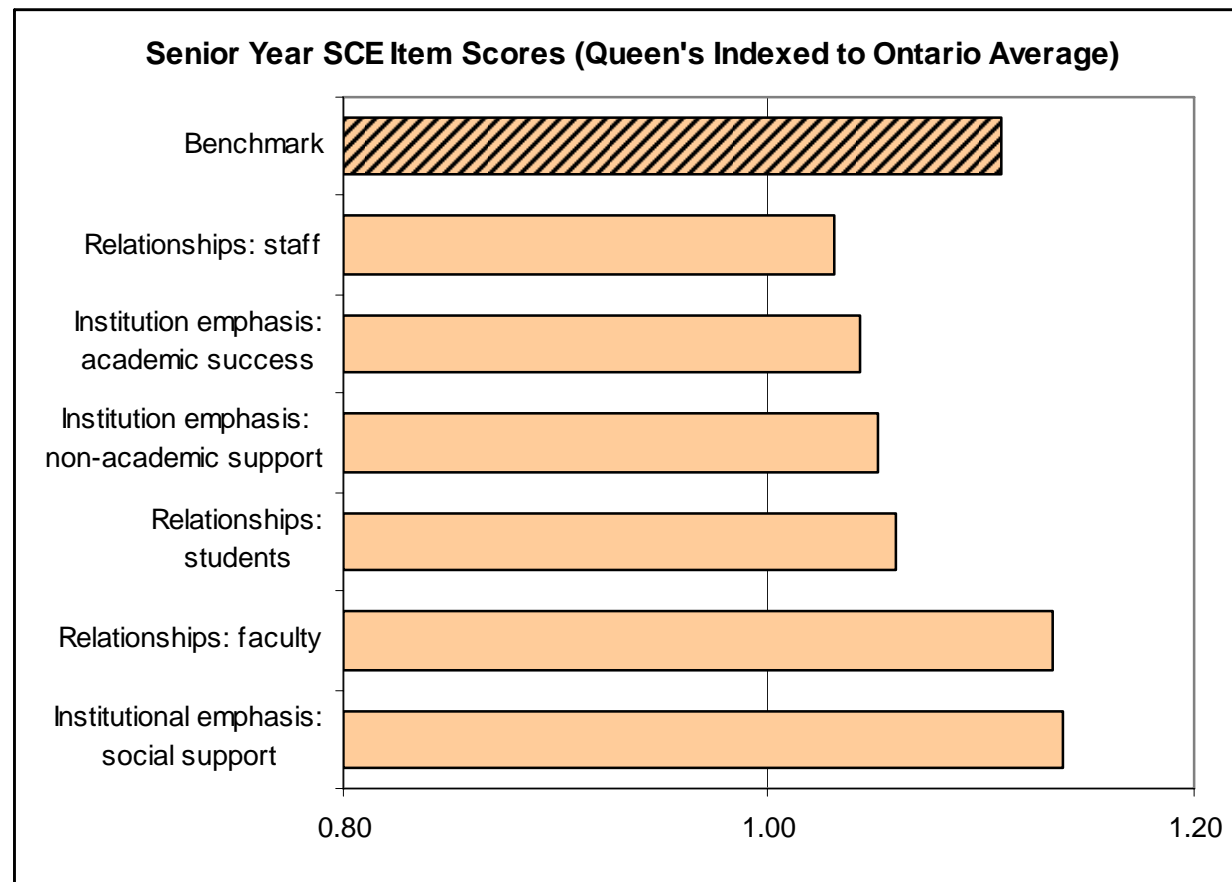


Looking Inside the Benchmarks: SCE

- In 1st year, better-than-average scores across the board; particularly strong in “social support”



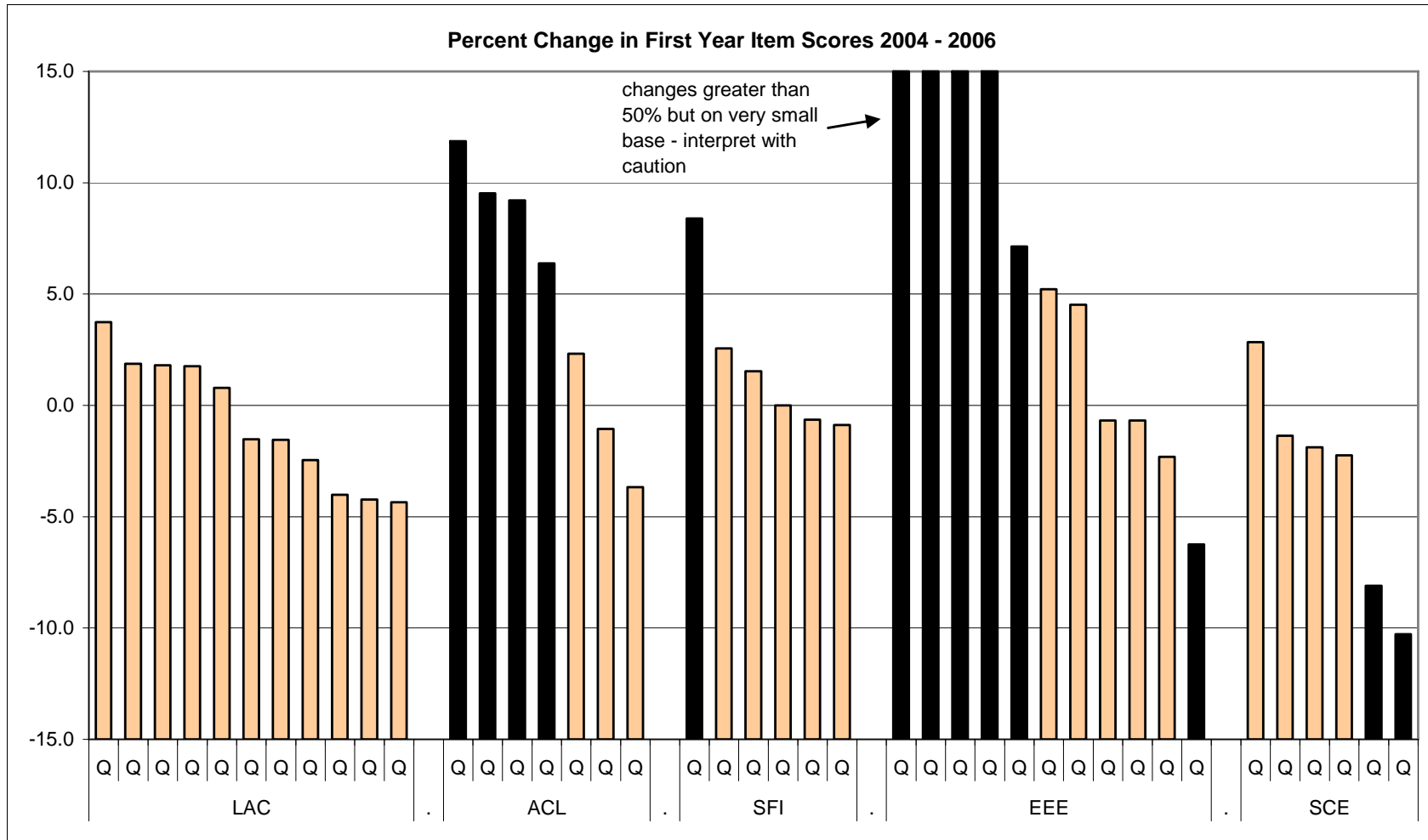
- In senior year, similar to first year, with “faculty relationships” emerging as a strength



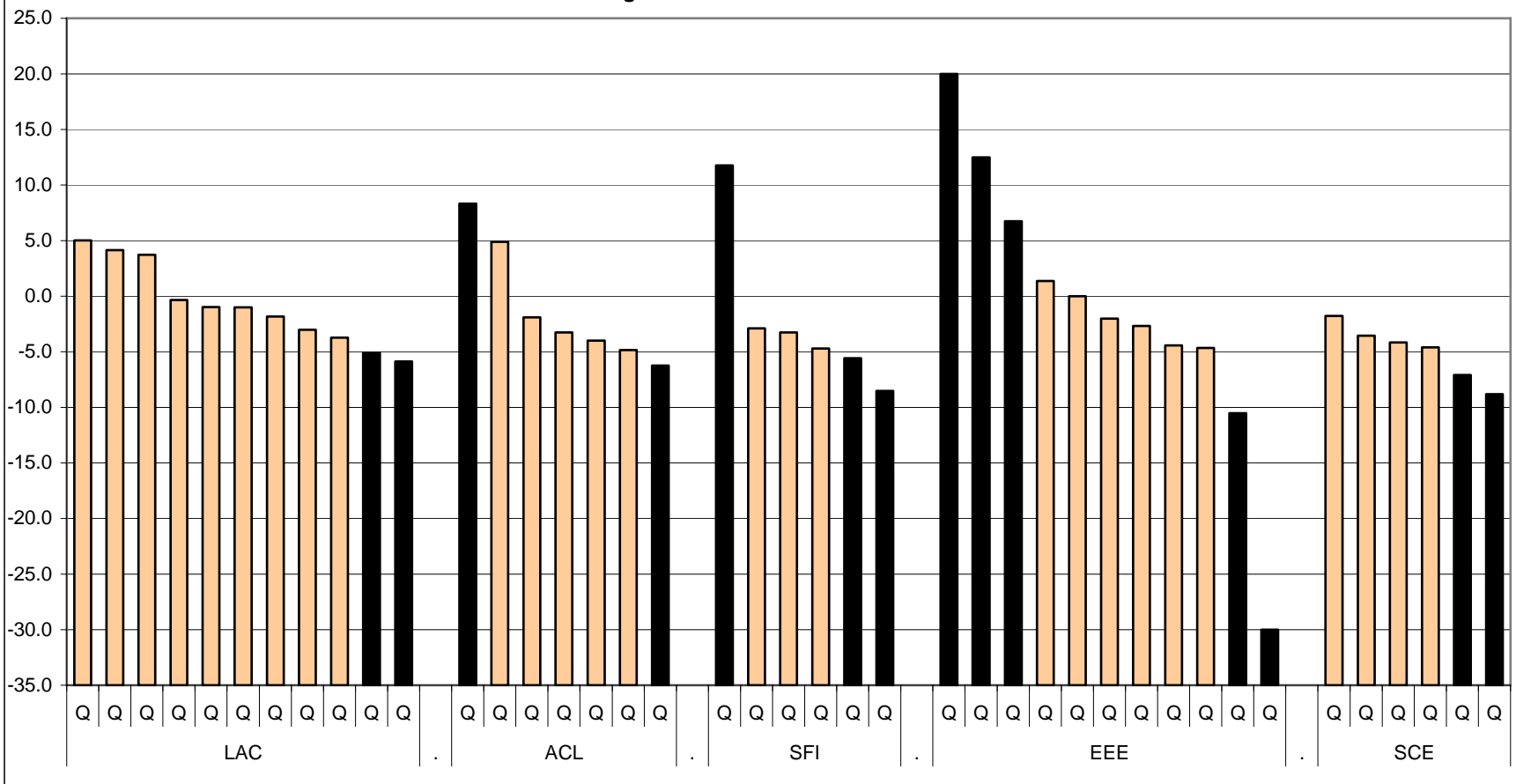
Looking Inside the Benchmarks: Summary

- Strengths:
 - Amount of student writing
 - Time spent preparing for class
 - Out-of-class learning and collaboration
 - Non-course faculty interactions
 - Institutional support/emphasis on academic success
 - Institutional support/emphasis on non-academic/social
- Potential Concerns:
 - Student effort to meet expectations
 - Level of in-class activity/collaboration
 - Course-based faculty interactions
 - Emphasis on judgment & synthesis (senior year)

Engagement Changes 2004 vs. 2006



Percent Change in Senior Year Item Scores 2004 - 2006



- Areas of improvement 2004 – 2006:
 - (ACL) Community-based project as part of course (1st)
 - (ACL) Worked with students on projects in class (1st, senior)
 - (ACL) Made class presentation (1st)
 - (ACL) Asked questions in class (1st)
 - (SFI) Worked with faculty – non-course (1st)
 - (SFI) Worked with faculty – research (senior)
 - (EEE) Community service work (1st)
 - (EEE) Co-curricular activity (1st, senior)
 - (EEE) Study abroad (senior)
 - (EEE) Practicum, internship, field (senior)

- Areas of decline 2004 – 2006:
 - (LAC) Worked hard to meet expectations (senior)
 - (LAC) Number of texts read (senior)
 - (ACL) Community-based project as part of course (senior)
 - (SFI) Discussed readings with faculty (senior)
 - (SFI) Received prompt feedback (senior)
 - (EEE) Foreign language coursework (1st, senior)
 - (EEE) Independent study (senior)
 - (SCE) Relationships with faculty (1st, senior)
 - (SCE) Relationships with staff (1st, senior)

Long-Term Goals: US Carnegie Peers

Clemson

Indiana Bloomington

Iowa State

Loyola Chicago (private)

Tennessee

Arkansas

Miami

Michigan – Ann Arbor

Mississippi

Missouri - Columbia

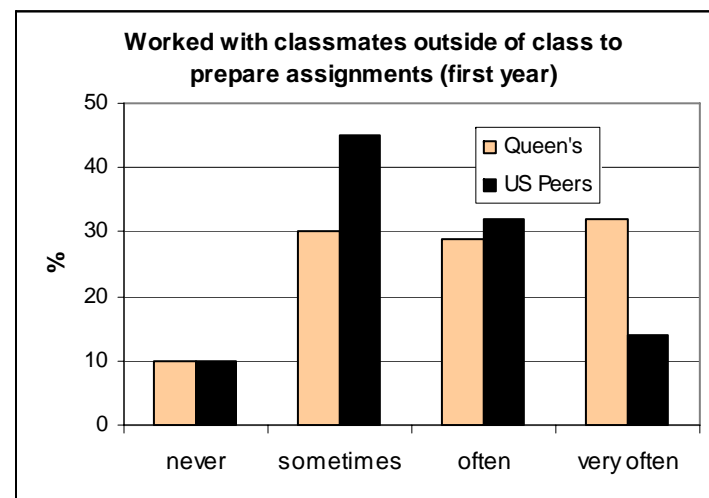
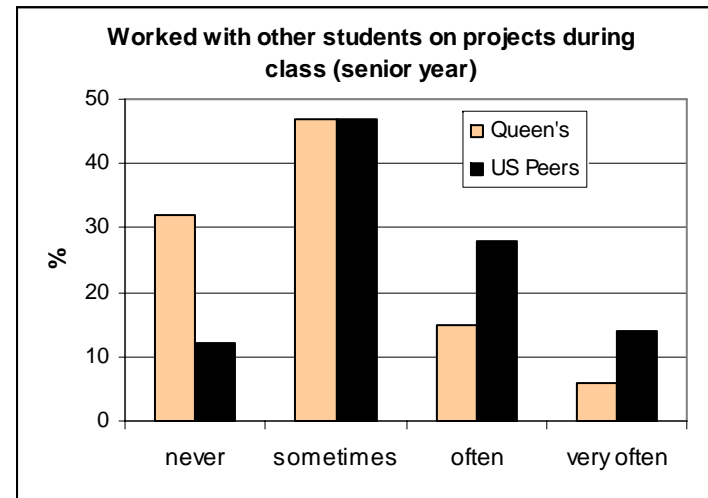
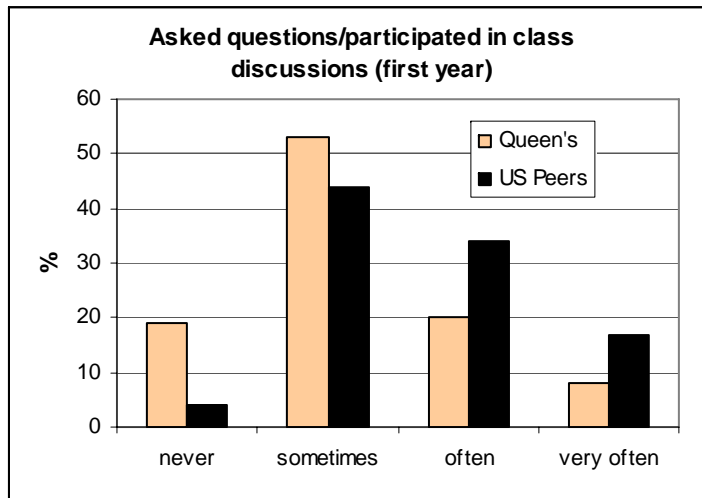
Southern Mississippi

Virginia Polytech and State U

Washington State

All doctoral-extensive; primarily residential (25% - 50% in residence); average enrolment 23,000; average sponsored research \$150 million; 8 of the 14 in metropolitan areas 160,000 or less; operating funding at least 30% - 50% higher than Queen's

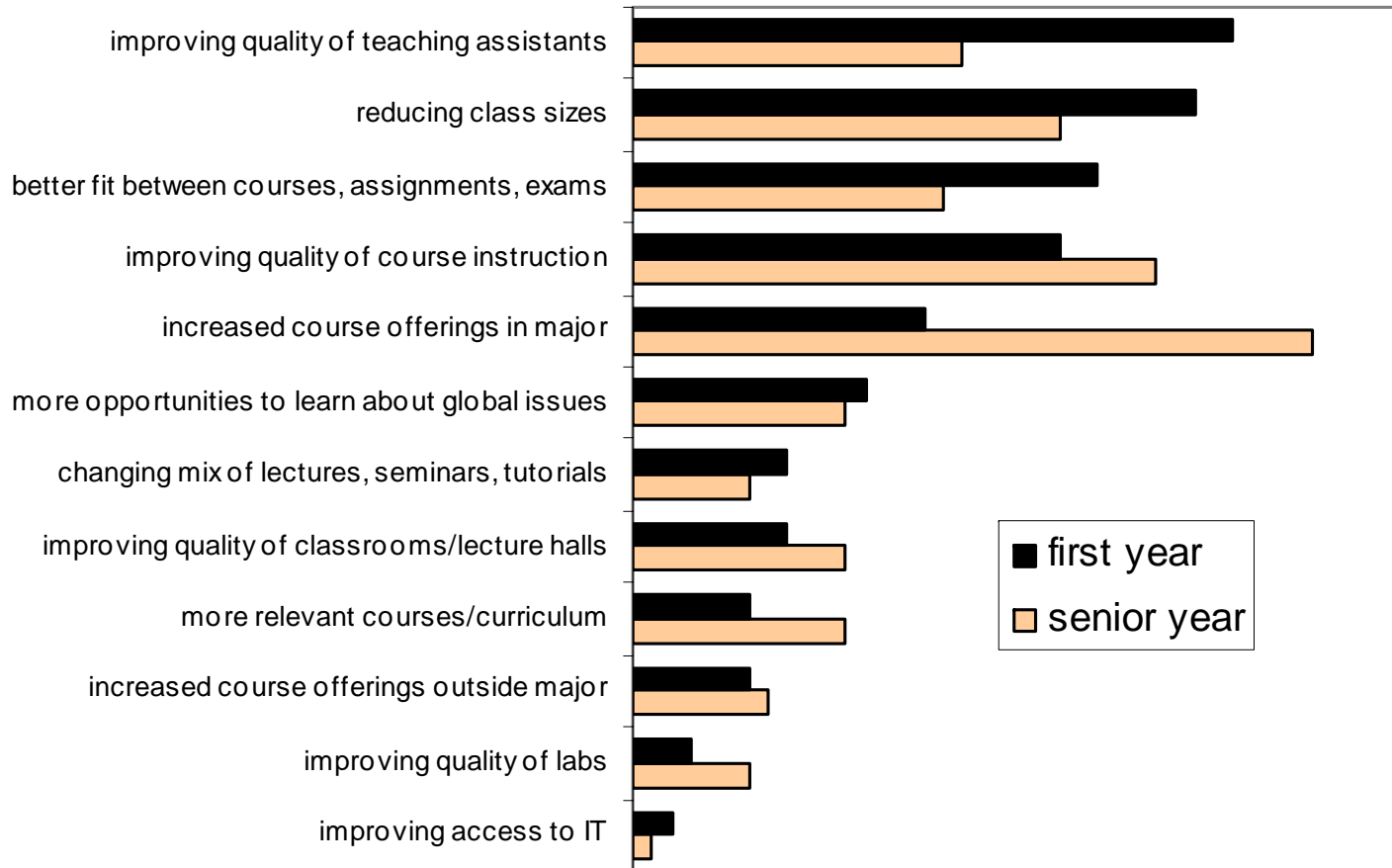
- Queen's ACL and SFI benchmark scores are lower than those of the US peers; both appear to be resource dependent
- Comparing selected ACL items:



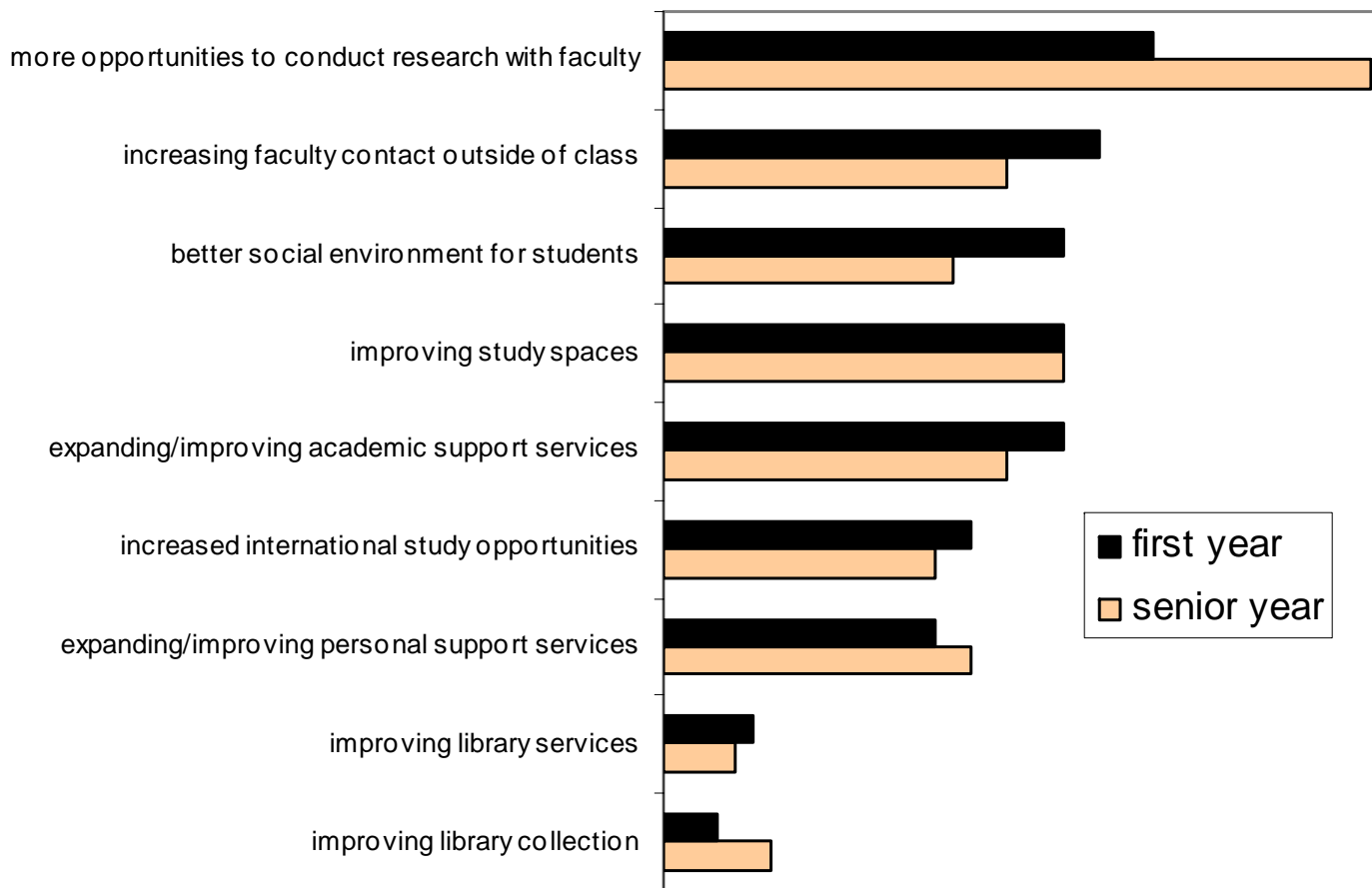
Addressing Student Priorities

- The survey provides two avenues for assessing the university experience in relation to student priorities:
 - Customized (additional) questions constructed and asked by all Ontario consortium members (first and senior year)
 - Relationships between activity frequency as reported in NSSE and activity importance as reported in BCSSE (first year)
- BCSSE is the “Before College Survey of Student Engagement”, a companion survey to NSSE that explores the secondary school experiences and university expectations/priorities of admitted applicants during the summer prior to university entrance; Queen’s administered the survey in summer 2005; the same 1st year students completed NSSE in spring 2006

Issues Queen's Needs to Address in the Classroom (Ontario Consortium Questions - up to 2 responses per student)

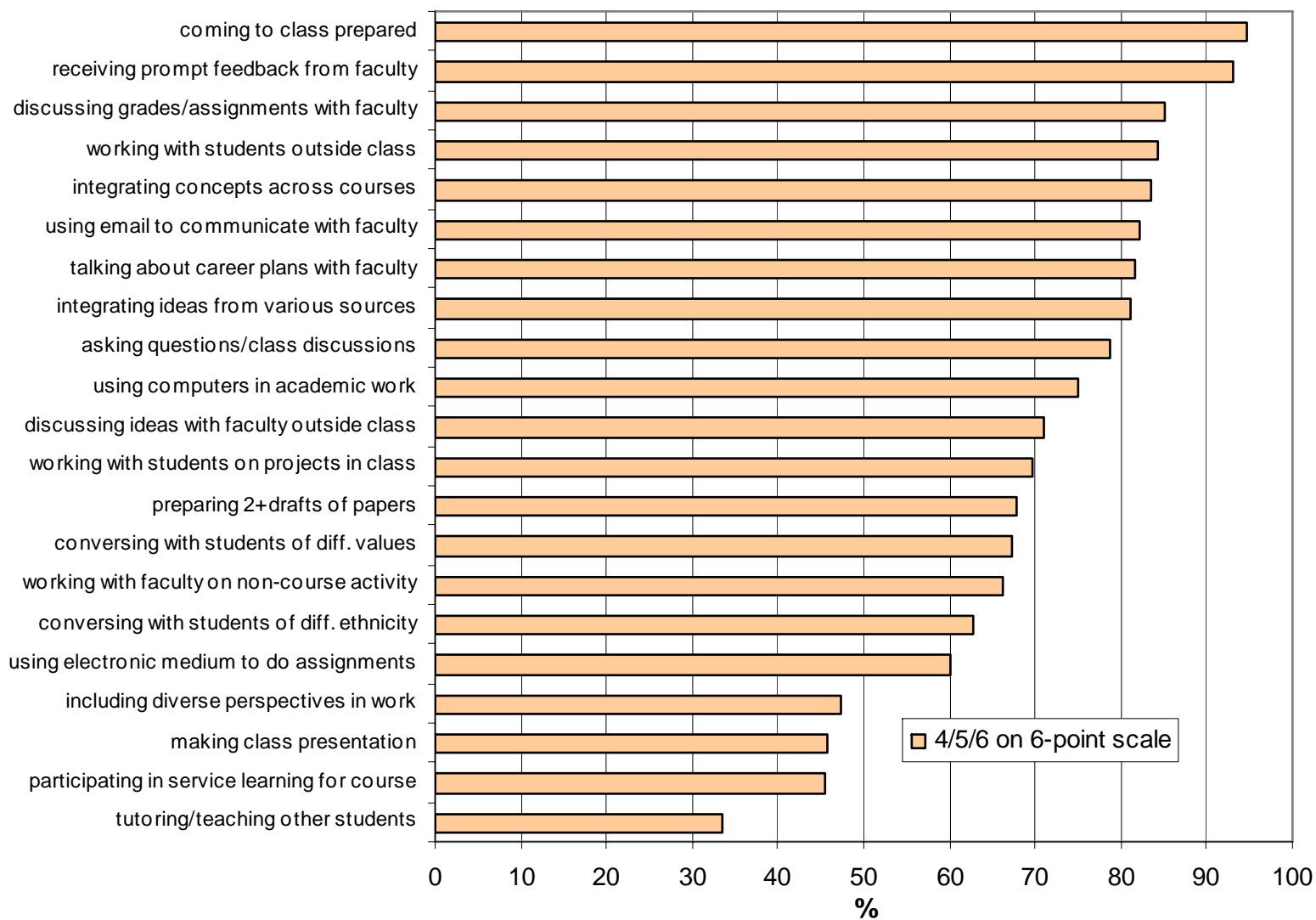


Issues Queen's Needs to Address Outside the Classroom (Ontario Consortium Questions - up to 2 responses per student)

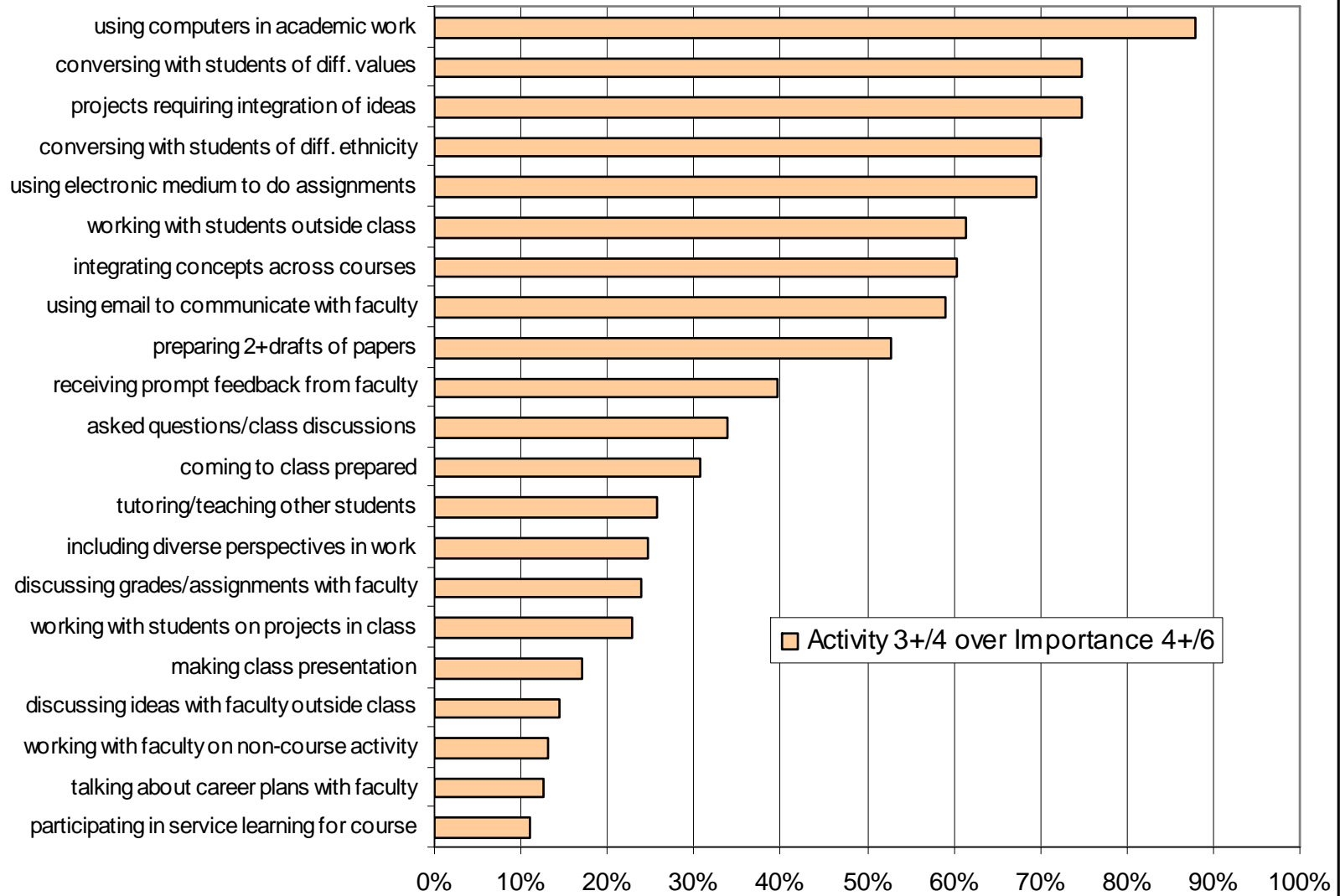


- BCSSE results indicate
 - That pre-university students assign relatively high importance (4/5/6 on a 6-point scale) to numerous academic activities
 - That varying levels of actual involvement in these activities during first year result in significantly different “fulfillment” rates (i.e. proportion of students rating importance 4+ out of 6 and achieving activity level 3+ out of 4)

Entering Student Importance Ratings for Selected Activities



First Year Priority Fulfillment Rate for Selected Activities



The Broader Learning Environment

- In addition to the 41 questions that comprise the benchmarks, NSSE asks more than 40 additional questions that explore other aspects of the academic and non-academic student experience, student satisfaction, etc.
- Several of these additional questions deal with the broader learning environment
- The following table presents a selection of these questions, and the proportion of senior year students who responded in the top response categories (often and very often; quite a bit and very much; good and excellent; probably yes and definitely yes; etc.)

Selected Aspects of the Broader Learning Environment
Percentage of Senior Year Student Responses in the Top Response Categories

	Queen's	Ontario Average
How often have you included diverse perspectives ... in class discussions or assignments?	43%	53%
How many books have you read on your own for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment?	11%	10%
To what extent have your examinations challenged you to do your best work?	40%	44%
How would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received?	65%	60%
How often have you attended an art exhibit, gallery, play or other performance?	21%	17%
How often have you tried to better understand someone else's views ...?	64%	60%
To what extent does your institution emphasize attending campus events and activities?	61%	44%
How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?	86%	78%
If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution ...?	83%	76%
To what extent has your experience contributed to acquiring a broad general education?	78%	79%
To what extent has your experience contributed to your writing clearly and effectively?	69%	69%
To what extent has your experience contributed to your speaking clearly and effectively?	63%	62%
To what extent has your experience contributed to your thinking critically and analytically?	88%	85%
To what extent has your experience contributed to your working effectively with others?	69%	65%
To what extent has your experience contributed to your learning effectively on your own?	83%	77%
To what extent has your experience helped you contribute to the welfare of your community?	44%	35%

NSSE and the Strategic Plan

- Draft strategic plan contains five goals:
 - ... university of choice for faculty and students ... employer of choice for staff
 - ... engaged teaching and learning ... academic quality and currency
 - ... international distinction and impact in research
 - ... secure financial, technological and physical resources
 - ... engagement with governments, private sector, alumni and friends
- While NSSE is certainly not the key reference point, several NSSE items present potential avenues for plan benchmarking and monitoring:

- Curricula/programs incorporating diverse perspectives
- Community-based projects, service learning and volunteer activity
- Contact with students of diverse ethnic and personal/values backgrounds
- Self-assessment/discovery and understanding others' perspectives
- Global exposure through international experiences
- Personal relationship development (staff, student and faculty) and effective interaction
- Analysis, communication and professional skills coupled with broad general education

Focusing our Responses

- NSSE plays a role in the new Ontario accountability framework
- Maximizing the usefulness of NSSE in institutional quality improvement efforts:
 - Faculty/program drilldowns (15 – 20 possible)
 - Target (approx) 20 first-year courses in which 50% or more of students are registered
 - CTL general and targeted workshops
 - Pilot projects and established programs/strategies
 - Best practices/best results inventory (through data sharing)
 - NSSE worksheets and implementation guides
 - Other approaches will emerge