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The College for Financial Planning **Student Engagement Survey Report**

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Introduction

Student engagement is widely considered to be an important construct for understanding the student experience and for improving educational quality (Kuh, 2009). Although there have been numerous definitions of student engagement proposed, several definitions recognize that there are three major dimensions of engagement: *affective* (emotional reactions to educational experience, such as boredom and enjoyment), *behavioral* (student actions in response to education, such as studying and finding additional resources), and *cognitive* (mental effort put forth in educational experience, such as integration and reflection) (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Kahu, 2013; Mandernach, 2015). Motivational constructs have been recognized as important antecedents of student engagement (Kahu, 2013). Autonomy support (feeling in control of ones' own actions), relatedness (feeling connected to others), and competence (feeling capable of completing tasks) are prerequisites for intrinsic (i.e., self-directed) motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and are thus antecedents of student engagement (Fredricks et al., 2004). Additionally, classroom structure and clarity of expectations, the presence of challenging course tasks, the relevance of course tasks (Fredricks et al., 2004), and useful feedback on coursework (Kuh, 2009) are also antecedents of student engagement. Student engagement can lead to positive outcomes such as retention and academic achievement (Fredricks et al., 2004; Kahu, 2013).

Many higher education institutions utilize the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) to evaluate student engagement. However, this survey is targeted toward the traditional, on-campus undergraduate student, reducing its relevance for evaluating the engagement of non-traditional, online students (Price & Baker, 2012). The College's graduate student population is composed of adult learners, many of whom are employed full-time. Additionally, these students complete their coursework entirely online. As such, it was necessary to develop a student engagement survey sensitive to the College's unique student population, rather than relying on an off-the-shelf survey.

This report documents the development and administration of the College's first student engagement survey. Results and recommendations are provided, along with a discussion of ways in which this survey and its administration could be improved in the future.

Method

A survey was written by the Assessment Manager to target the three dimensions of student engagement (affective, behavioral, and cognitive) and seven antecedents of engagement (autonomy, relatedness, competence, course structure, feedback provided, relevance of course tasks, and challenge of course tasks). The items were reviewed and revised by the Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness and the Research Analyst. After their review, the survey was sent to the College's communications committee, and changes were made based on their feedback.

As mentioned previously, the survey measured three dimensions of student engagement. Each of these dimensions was broken up into multiple subscales as follows:

- Affective engagement: flow (2 items), enjoyment (2 items), value (6 items), interest (3 items), calm (2 items)
- Behavioral engagement: communication with instructor (2 items), communication with classmates (2 items), course participation (4 items), study habits (2 items)
- Cognitive engagement: integration (5 items), reflection (3 items), effort (2 items)

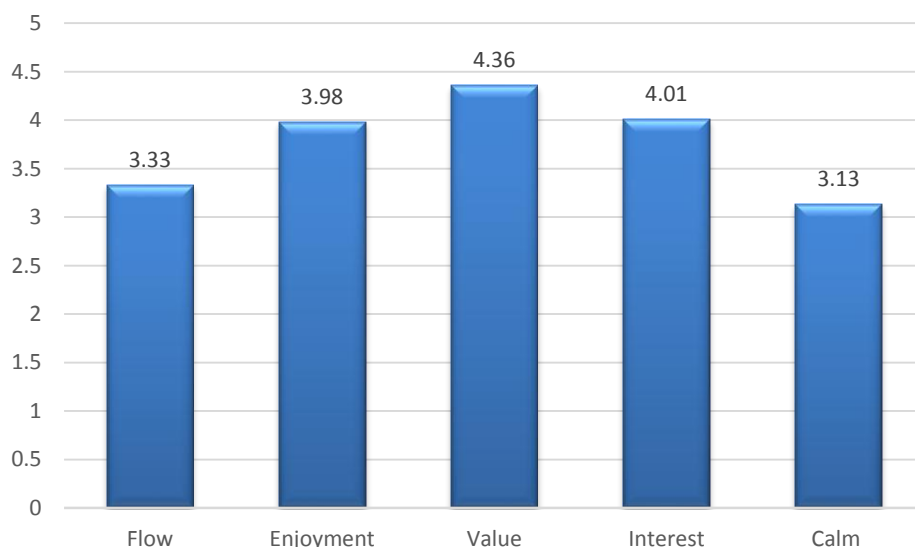
The survey was administered via SurveyMonkey to 95 active students in the College's master's programs on April 5, 2016. Reminder emails were sent on April 12 and April 21. There were a total of 25 responses (22 complete responses), representing a 26.3% response rate.

Most (79.2%) of the respondents were male, and the majority (95.8%) were White/ Caucasian.

The mean age of respondents was 42.25 years ($SD = 12.39$). More than three-quarters (79.2%) were enrolled in the M.S. in Personal Financial Planning program, while the remaining 20.8% were enrolled in the M.S. in Finance program. Respondents were experienced with the College and its courses, as they had taken an average of 5.46 courses ($SD = 3.08$) towards their degree at the College. Nearly one-third (32%) of respondents had worked in the financial services industry for less than five years, and nearly one-third (32%) had worked in the financial services industry for five to ten years. Over three-quarters (68%) spent 6-15 hours per week on course-related activities, and 68% spent at least 36 hours each week working in a job related to their field of study. Most (80%) spent between 0 and 5 hours each week participating in non-work activities related to their field of study.

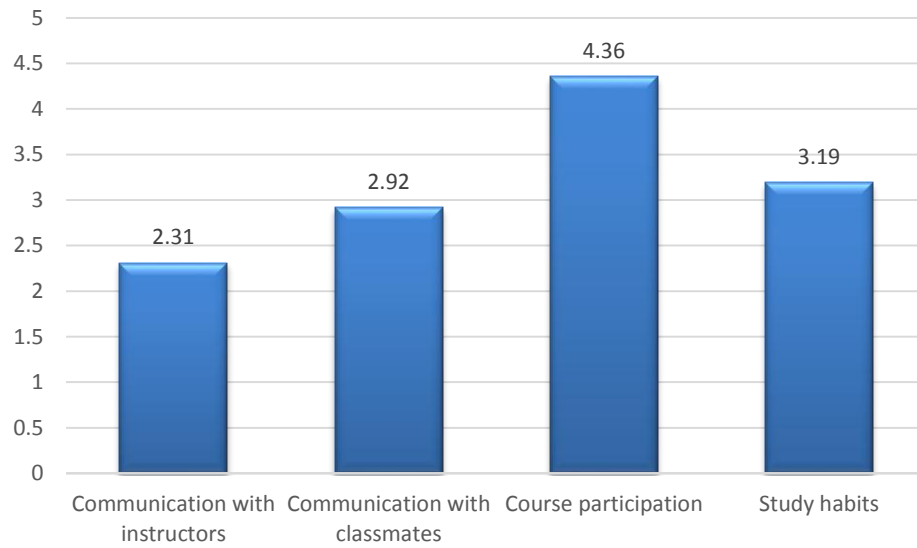
Results

Figure 1. Affective engagement scale values



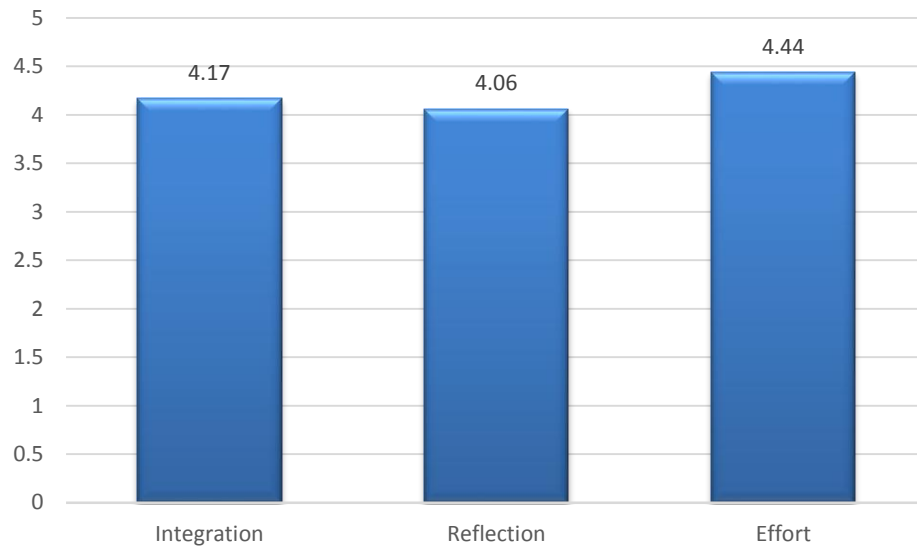
*Note. 1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Always

Figure 2. Behavioral engagement scale values



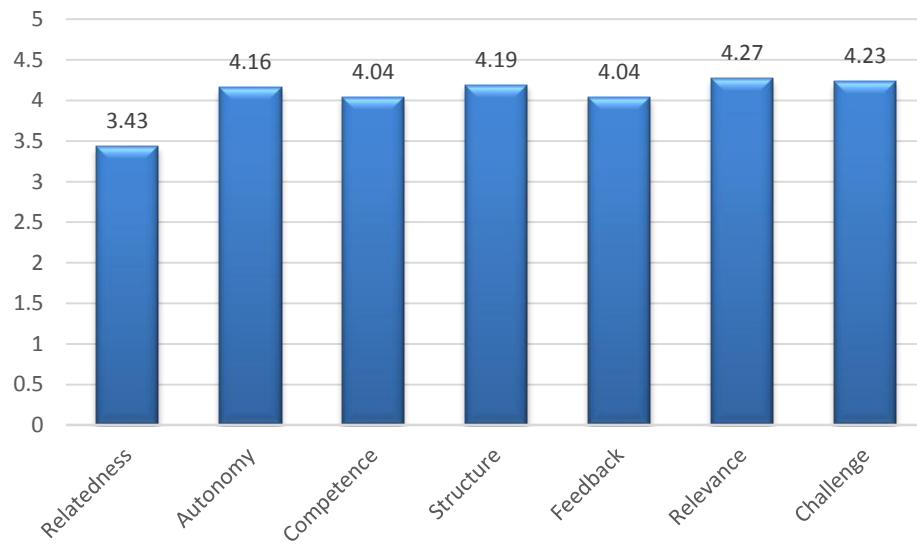
*Note. 1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Occasionally, 4 = A moderate amount, 5 = A great deal

Figure 3. Cognitive engagement scale values



*Note. 1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Occasionally, 4 = A moderate amount, 5 = A great deal

Figure 4. Antecedents of engagement scale values



*Note. 1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Always

Table 1. Scale correlations

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1. M.S. program	-																				
2. Age	-.05	-																			
3. Flow	-.17	-.32	-																		
4. Enjoyment	.18	.45	.19	-																	
5. Value	.09	.27	.19	.64	-																
6. Interest	-.14	.32	.20	.75	.65	-															
7. Calm	.17	.12	-.05	.65	.27	.50	-														
8. Instructor communication	-.14	-.08	-.26	-.08	.06	-.08	.17	-													
9. Course participation	.03	.22	.04	.31	.74	<i>.41</i>	.03	.01	-												
10. Classmate communication	.14	-.70	.09	-.21	.03	-.12	.14	<i>.44</i>	.08	-											
11. Study habits	-.12	.52	.06	.32	.56	.22	-.18	.19	<i>.41</i>	-.11	-										
12. Integration	.15	.02	.50	.39	.45	.33	.04	-.45	.05	-.08	.12	-									
13. Reflection	.19	.24	.24	.35	.57	.24	-.09	-.23	.27	-.13	.32	.75	-								
14. Effort	.30	.11	.27	.67	.72	.61	.48	-.22	.36	-.03	.06	.56	.60	-							
15. Relatedness	-.34	-.10	.12	.23	.07	.17	.17	.31	-.15	.18	.25	-.11	-.18	-.19	-						
16. Autonomy	.37	.25	.35	.59	.67	.54	.25	-.11	.25	-.11	.23	.64	.70	.77	-.12	-					
17. Competence	-.37	.11	-.09	.17	.16	.42	.28	.19	-.20	-.09	-.01	.14	.04	.14	.34	.24	-				
18. Structure	.25	-.10	.24	.45	.05	.20	.53	.10	-.17	.06	-.21	.05	.10	.33	.30	.35	.26	-			
19. Feedback	-.43	-.37	<i>.40</i>	.22	.18	.37	.17	.06	.24	.26	-.17	-.01	-.06	.22	.36	.03	.23	<i>.43</i>	-		
20. Relevance	.20	.15	.34	.54	<i>.41</i>	.46	.24	-.27	.10	.11	.24	.54	.45	.52	.14	.66	.16	.26	.12	-	
21. Challenge	-.42	.04	.50	.06	<i>.40</i>	.25	-.20	-.05	.47	-.06	.30	.34	<i>.41</i>	.12	-.10	.18	-.10	-.20	.17	.08	-

Note. Finance program coded as 1. **Bold** values indicate $p < .05$, *italicized* values indicate $p < .10$

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