

RESEARCH BRIEF

**Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) 2017:
Benchmark Comparisons by Student Demographics**

Introduction

What is CCSSE?

- Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) is an annual nationwide survey of community college students.
- CCSSE helps institutions gauge their performance in different areas of **student engagement**.
- NOVA participates in CCSSE every 2-3 years and has done so for over a decade.

What are CCSSE benchmarks?

- CCSSE identifies five **benchmarks** for assessing institutional performance in student engagement based on groups of conceptually-related items on the survey:
 - *Active and Collaborative Learning*
 - *Student Effort*
 - *Academic Challenge*
 - *Student-Faculty Interaction*
 - *Support for Learners*

CCSSE 2017 at NOVA

- At NOVA, **1,694 students** participated in the CCSSE in Spring 2017.

In This Research Brief

NOVA Student Demographics

- This Research Brief details NOVA's scores on the five CCSSE benchmarks and compares them to CCSSE national averages by the following student demographics: **enrollment status; gender; age; race/ethnicity; and first-generation college status**.
- Benchmark scores by student demographics are provided in the Appendix data tables.

Summary

At NOVA, student engagement was typically *greatest* among **female, Asian, Black, first-generation college**, and students **enrolled full-time**. NOVA benchmark scores did not notably vary from national average scores, with the exception of the *Support for Learners* benchmark for which NOVA scored below average. NOVA scores for the *Support for Learners* benchmark were markedly *lower* for **female, Hispanic, White, non-traditional college age**, and those who were **not first-generation college** students when compared to national average scores for corresponding demographic subgroups.

Key Findings

Enrollment Status

- NOVA students who **enrolled full-time** had *higher* benchmark scores for all five benchmarks than NOVA students who **enrolled part-time**.
- *Active and Collaborative Learning*, *Academic Challenge*, and *Student-Faculty Interaction* were student engagement benchmarks that demonstrated the *largest differences* between **full-time** and **part-time** student scores at NOVA.

Gender

- At NOVA, **female students** had *higher* benchmark scores than **male students** for all benchmarks with the exception of the *Support for Learners* benchmark.

Age

- Benchmark scores for four of the five benchmarks (all except the *Academic Challenge* benchmark) were markedly *lower* among NOVA's **non-traditional college age** (25 and older) students when compared to **national averages for non-traditional college age** students.

Race/Ethnicity

- At NOVA, benchmark scores were typically *higher* among **Asian** and **Black** students when compared to **Hispanic** and **White** students.
- Benchmark scores for all five benchmarks were notably *lower* among **Hispanic** students at NOVA when compared to **national averages for Hispanic** students.

First-Generation College Status

- NOVA students who were **first-generation college students** had *higher* benchmark scores for every benchmark except the *Active and Collaborative Learning* benchmark when compared to NOVA students who were **not first-generation college** students.

Data Notes

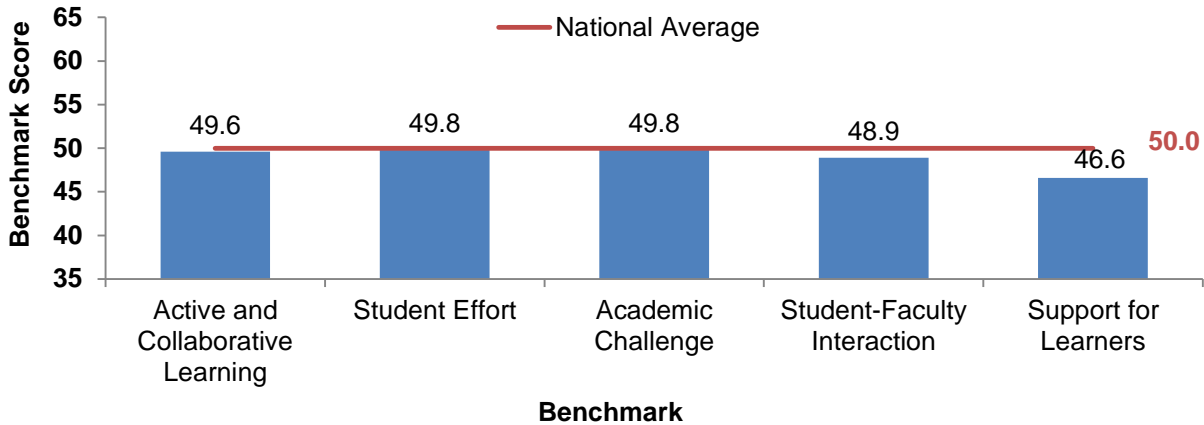
Benchmark Scores

- Each benchmark score was calculated by averaging the scores of items that comprise that benchmark. The scores were then transformed (standardized), such that the national average score was 50 for each benchmark.
- This kind of transformation provides an easy way to assess whether an institution or a group of institutions are performing above or below the mean (50) on each benchmark.
- Benchmark scores are weighted for comparisons with other institutions by adjusting for institutional differences in full-time and part-time student enrollment.
- Benchmark score standardization and weighting were done by CCSSE.

Overview

NOVA benchmark scores *did not* vary greatly from the national average. However, NOVA scores were notably *lower* than the national average for the *Student-Faculty Interaction* (48.9 compared to 50.0) and the *Support for Learners* (46.6 compared to 50.0) benchmarks. (Figure 1)

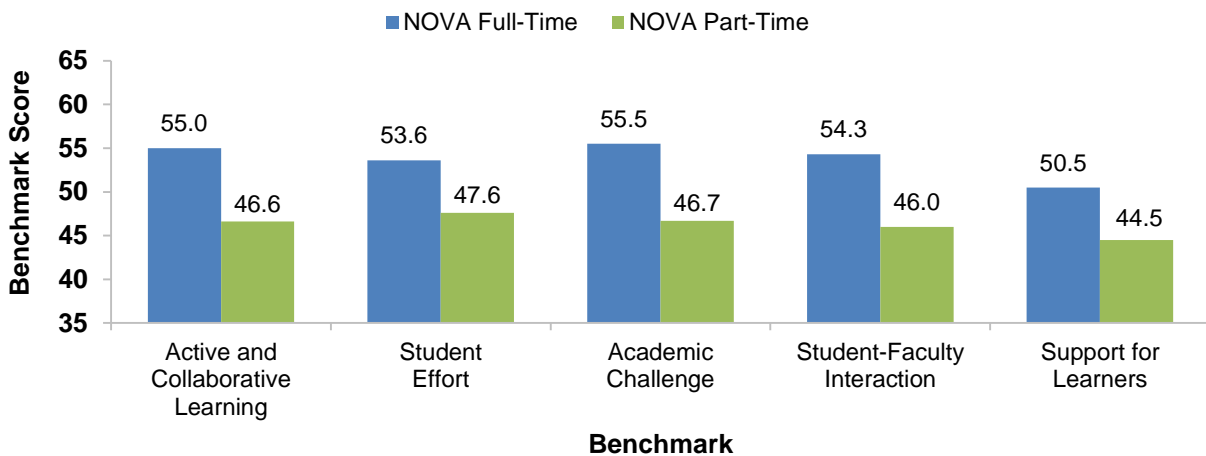
Figure 1. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Scores Compared to the National Average



Enrollment Status

NOVA students enrolled full-time had *much higher* benchmark scores on all five benchmarks when compared to their part-time student counterparts, suggesting greater student engagement among full-time students than part-time students. On average, this pattern was consistent across all colleges that participated in the Spring 2017 CCSSE. Benchmark scores between NOVA's full-time and part-time students differed by six or more points and were especially pronounced for the *Active and Collaborative Learning* (55.0 vs. 46.6), *Academic Challenge* (55.5 vs. 46.7), and *Student-Faculty Interaction* (54.3 vs. 46.0) benchmarks (Figure 2).

Figure 2. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Scores by Enrollment Status

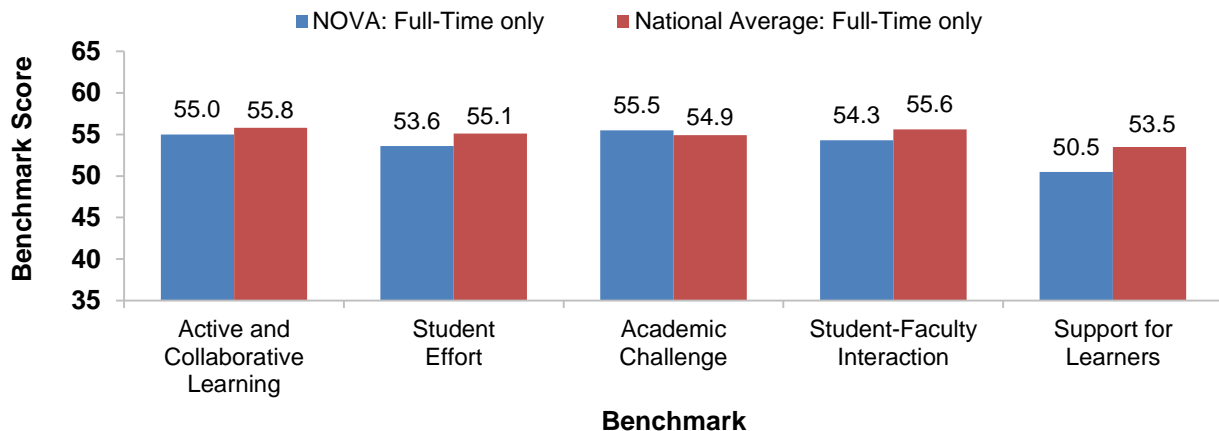


Note. Benchmark scores are not weighted for enrollment status analyses due to CCSSE analysis specifications.

Benchmark scores were disaggregated such that scores for NOVA full-time students were compared with national average scores for full-time students, and scores for NOVA part-time

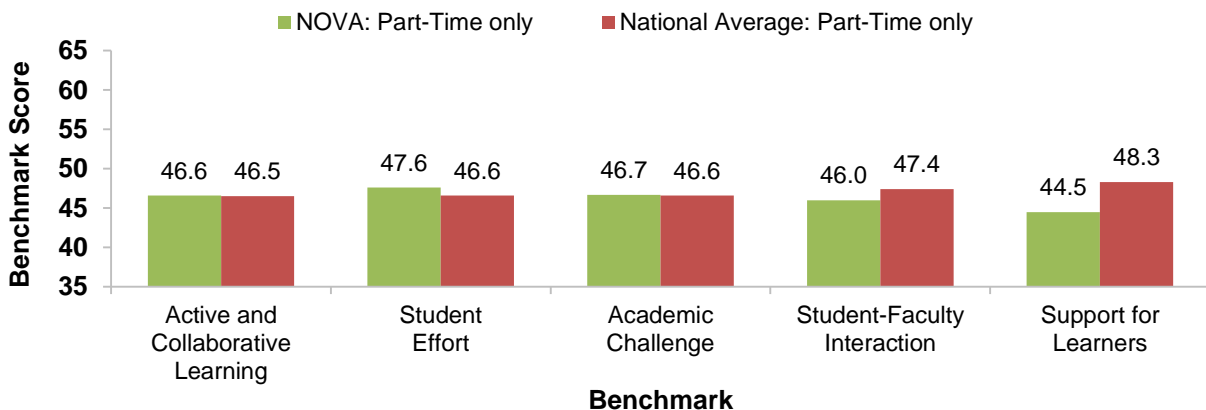
students were compared with national average scores for part-time students (see Figures 3a and 3b). These comparisons showed that benchmark scores among NOVA full-time students did not vary greatly from national averages. However, NOVA full-time students scored *notably lower* than the national average among full-time students for the *Support for Learners* (50.5 vs. 53.5) benchmark (Figure 3a). Similarly, benchmark scores among NOVA part-time students did not vary greatly from national average scores, however NOVA part-time students scored *notably lower* than the national average among part-time students for the *Support for Learners* (44.5 vs. 48.3) benchmark (Figure 3b).

Figure 3a. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Score Comparisons: Full-Time Only



Note. Benchmark scores are not weighted for enrollment status analyses due to CCSSE analysis specifications. NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Figure 3b. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Score Comparisons: Part-Time Only

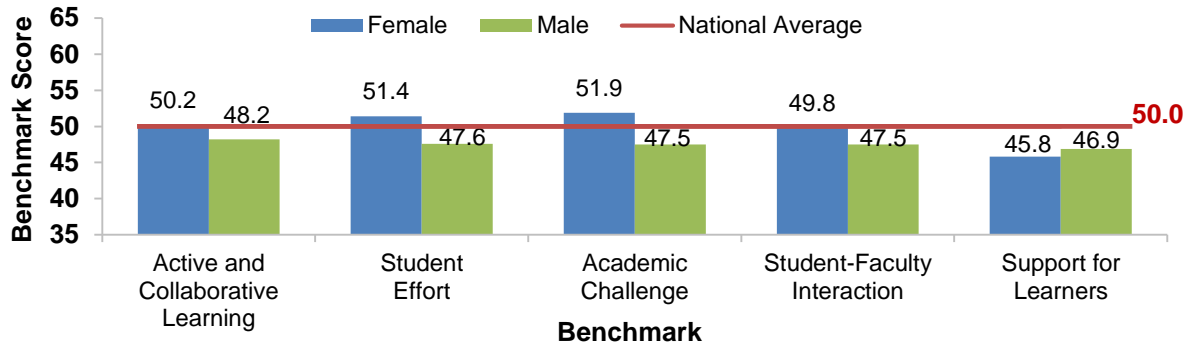


Note. Benchmark scores are not weighted for enrollment status analyses due to CCSSE analysis specifications. NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Gender

Male students at NOVA had *lower* benchmark scores than female students at NOVA on all benchmarks with the exception of the *Support for Learners* benchmark, where male scores (46.9 compared to 45.8) were slightly higher (Figure 4, next page). This differed from national average score trends which demonstrated *lower* benchmark scores among males when compared to females on all benchmarks including the *Support for Learners* benchmark (see Figures 5a and 5b, next page).

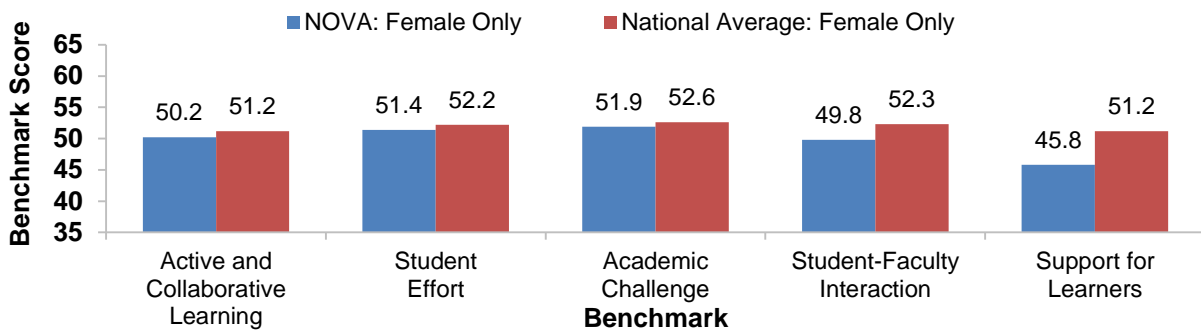
Figure 4. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Scores by Gender



Note. Less than 2% of respondents indicated 'Other' or 'I prefer not to respond'; Analysis only includes scores for students that indicated either man or woman. NOVA scores are included in national averages

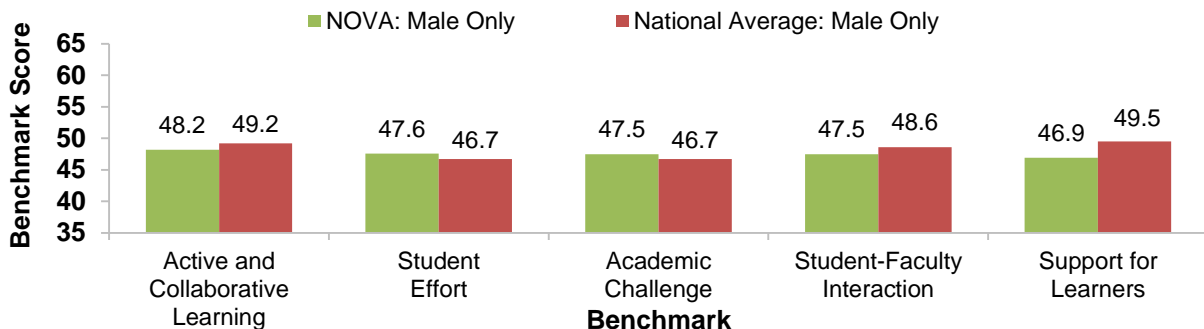
Benchmark scores were disaggregated such that scores for NOVA's female students were compared with national average scores for female students, and scores for NOVA's male students were compared with national average scores for male students (see Figures 5a and 5b). These comparisons showed that benchmark scores among NOVA's female students did not vary greatly from national average scores, however NOVA female student scores were noticeably lower than national averages for the *Student-Faculty Interaction* (49.8 compared to 52.3) and *Support for Learners* (45.8 compared to 51.2) benchmarks (Figure 5a). Benchmark scores among NOVA's male students also did not vary greatly from national average scores, however NOVA's male student scores were lower than the national average for the *Support for Learners* (46.9 compared to 49.5) benchmark (Figure 5b).

Figure 5a. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Score Comparisons: Female Only



Note. NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Figure 5b. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Score Comparisons: Male Only

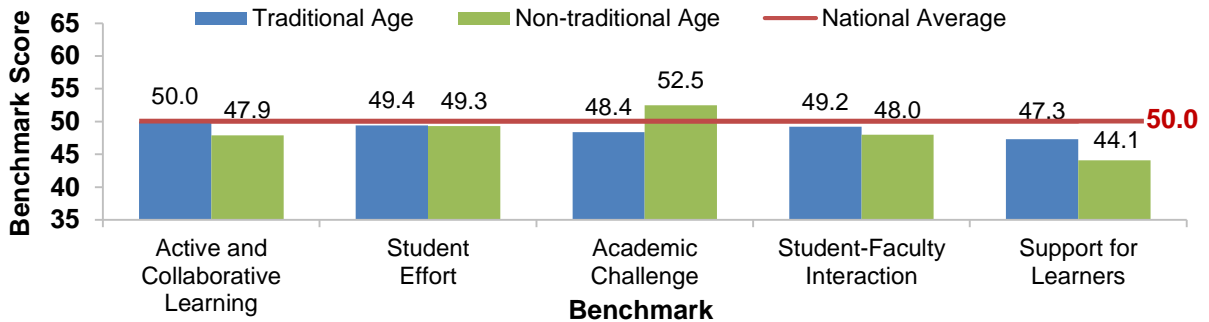


Note. NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Age Group

NOVA students of traditional college age (i.e., 24 or younger) had *slightly higher* benchmark scores than non-traditional college age students (i.e., 25 or older) for three of the five benchmarks, including the *Active and Collaborative Learning* (50.0 compared to 47.9), *Student-Faculty Interaction* (49.2 compared to 48.0), and *Support for Learners* (47.3 compared to 44.1) benchmarks. However, traditional college age students scored *lower* for the *Academic Challenge* benchmark when compared to their non-traditional college age counterparts at NOVA (48.4 compared to 52.5). Benchmark scores were essentially equal for both traditional and non-traditional age college students for the *Student Effort* benchmark. (Figure 6)

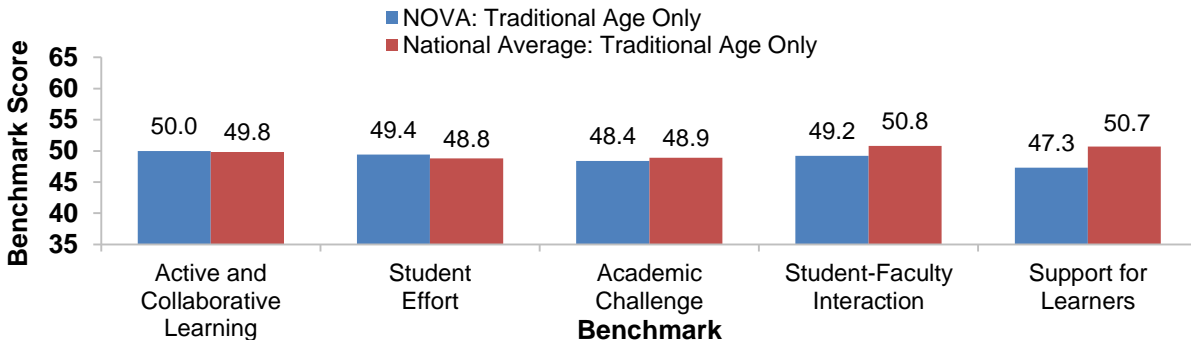
Figure 6. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Scores by Age Group



Note. NOVA scores are included in national averages.

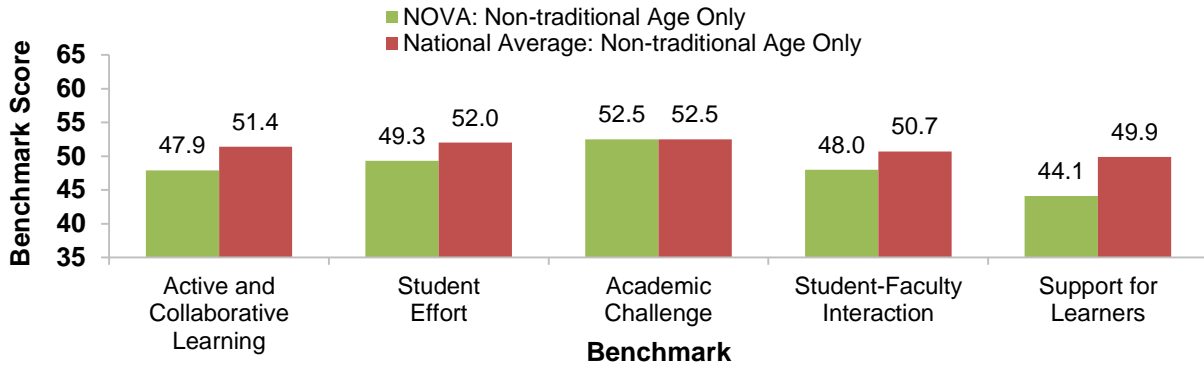
Benchmark scores were disaggregated such that scores for NOVA’s traditional college age students were compared with national average scores for traditional college age students, and scores for NOVA’s non-traditional college age students were compared with national average scores for non-traditional college age students (*see Figures 7a and 7b*). Comparisons showed that benchmark scores among NOVA’s traditional-age students did not vary greatly from national average scores. However NOVA’s traditional-age students scored *notably lower* than the national average among traditional-age students for the *Support for Learners* (47.3 vs. 50.7) benchmark (Figure 7a). Conversely, benchmark scores among NOVA’s non-traditional age students were *much lower* than national average scores among non-traditional students on all benchmarks except the *Academic Challenge* (52.5 vs. 52.5) benchmark. The average score for NOVA’s non-traditional age students was *much lower* (difference greater than 5 points) than the national average score of non-traditional age students for the *Support for Learners* (44.1 vs. 49.9) benchmark (Figure 7b, next page).

Figure 7a. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Score Comparisons: Traditional Age Only



Note. NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Figure 7b. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Score Comparisons: Non-Traditional Age Only

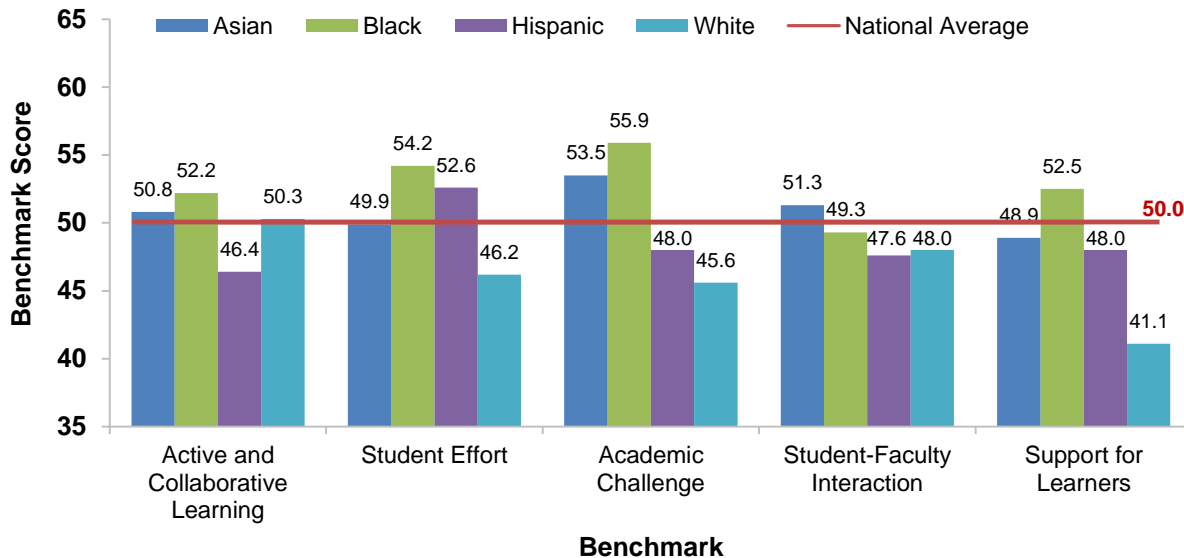


Note. NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Race/Ethnicity

Compared to other racial/ethnic groups at NOVA, benchmark scores were *highest* on four out of five benchmarks among Black students (all benchmarks except *Student-Faculty Interaction*). Similarly, Asian students had the second highest benchmark scores relative to other racial/ethnic groups on four out of five benchmarks (all benchmarks except *Student Effort*). Benchmark scores tended to be *lowest* among Hispanic and White students. (Figure 8)

Figure 8. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Scores by Race/Ethnicity¹



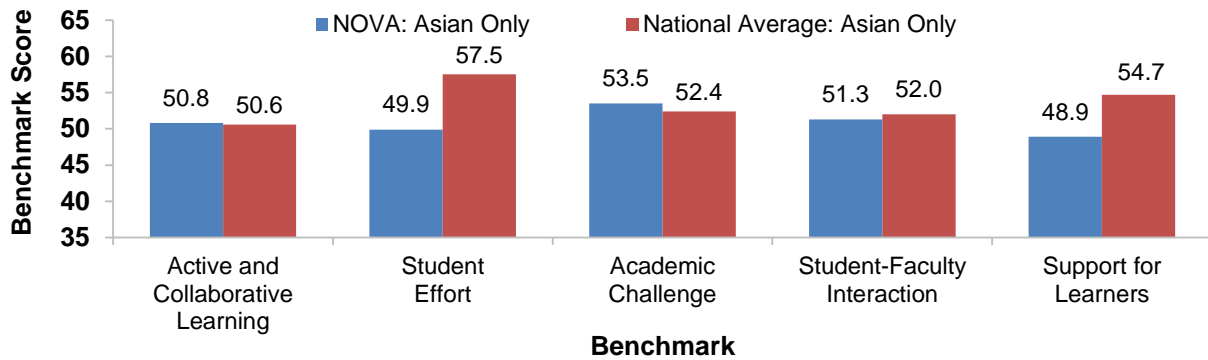
Note. NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Benchmark scores were disaggregated such that NOVA scores by student race/ethnicity subgroups were compared with national average scores for corresponding race/ethnicity subgroups (e.g., Asian students at NOVA compared to national average scores for Asian students; Black students at NOVA compared to national average scores for Black students, etc.) (see Figures 9a, 9b, 9c, and 9d). Comparisons demonstrated *much lower* scores among NOVA student subgroups when compared to national average scores for corresponding subgroups for

¹ Due to the small sample size, some racial/ethnic groups are excluded from comparisons.

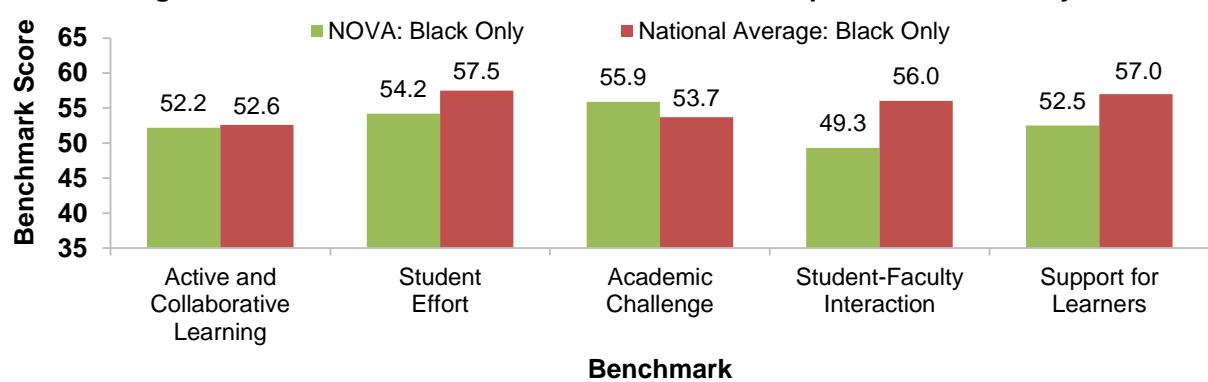
the *Student Effort*, *Student-Faculty Interaction*, and *Support for Learners* benchmarks (differences greater than 5 points). Benchmark scores among Asian students at NOVA were *lower* than national average scores among Asian students for the *Student Effort* (49.9 vs. 57.5) and *Support for Learners* (48.9 vs. 54.7) benchmarks (Figure 9a). The average benchmark score among Black students at NOVA was *lower* than the national average score among Black students for the *Student-Faculty Interaction* (49.3 vs. 56.0) benchmark (Figure 9b). *Support for Learners* benchmark scores were also *lower* among Hispanic students at NOVA (48.0 vs. 54.1) and White students at NOVA (41.1 vs. 48.3) when compared to national average scores for their corresponding race/ethnicity subgroup (Figure 9c; and Figure 9d next page).

Figure 9a. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Score Comparisons: Asian Only



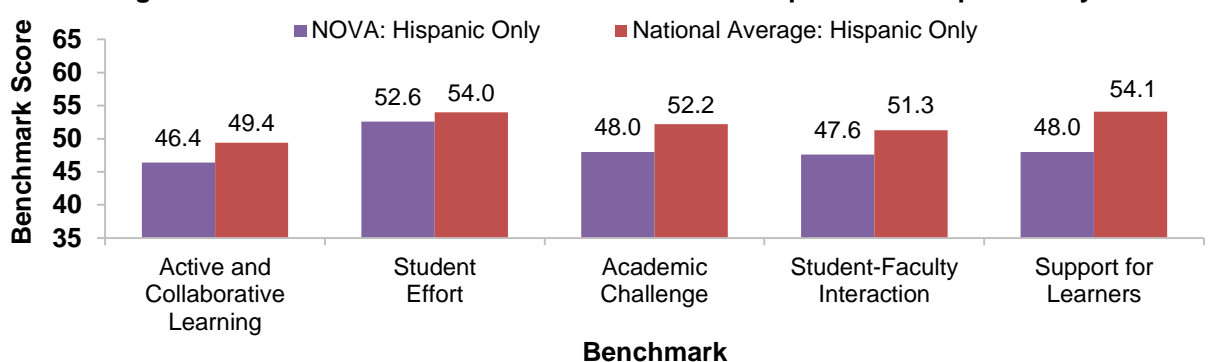
Note. NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Figure 9b. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Score Comparisons: Black Only



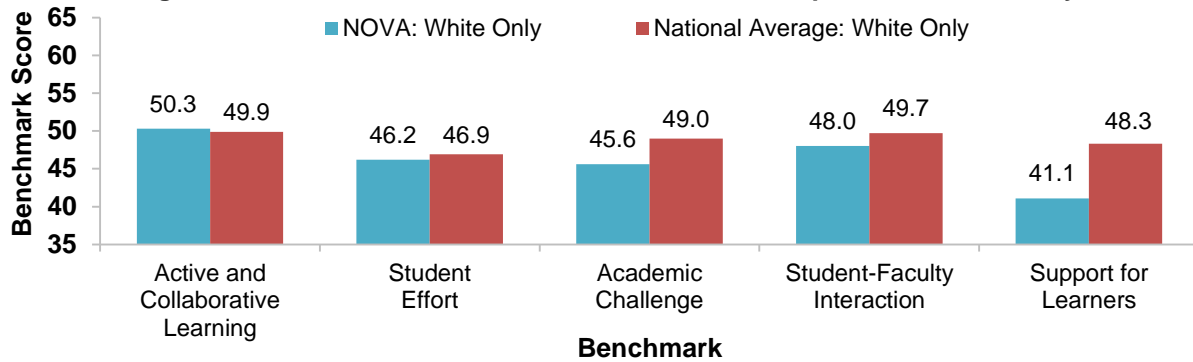
Note. NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Figure 9c. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Score Comparisons: Hispanic Only



Note. NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Figure 9d. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Score Comparisons: White Only

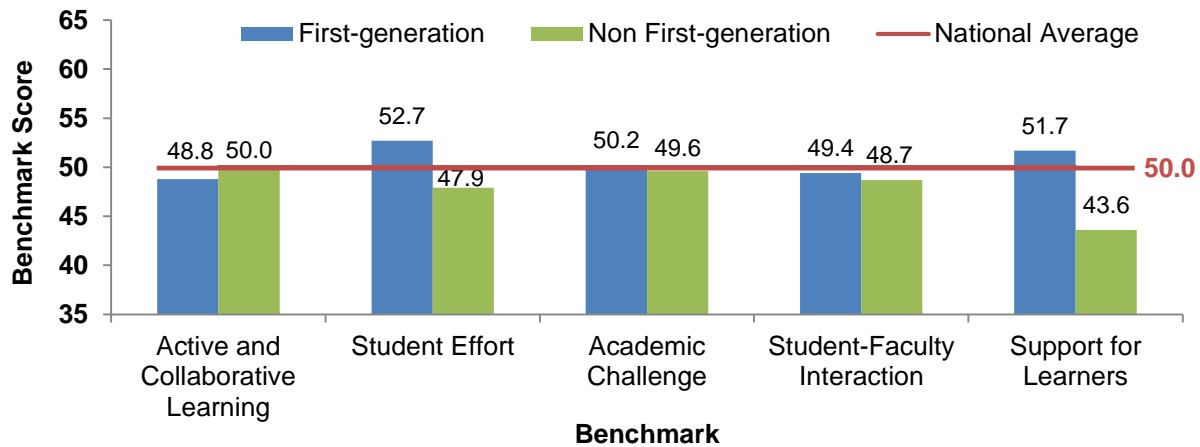


Note. NOVA scores are included in national averages.

First-Generation College Status

NOVA students who were first-generation college students (i.e., neither parent attended college) had *higher* benchmark scores when compared to students who were *not* first-generation college students for every benchmark except the *Active and Collaborative Learning* benchmark. First-generation college students' benchmark scores were *much higher* than students that were not first-generation college students for the *Student Effort* (52.7 vs. 47.9) and *Support for Learners* (51.7 vs. 43.6) benchmarks. (Figure 10)

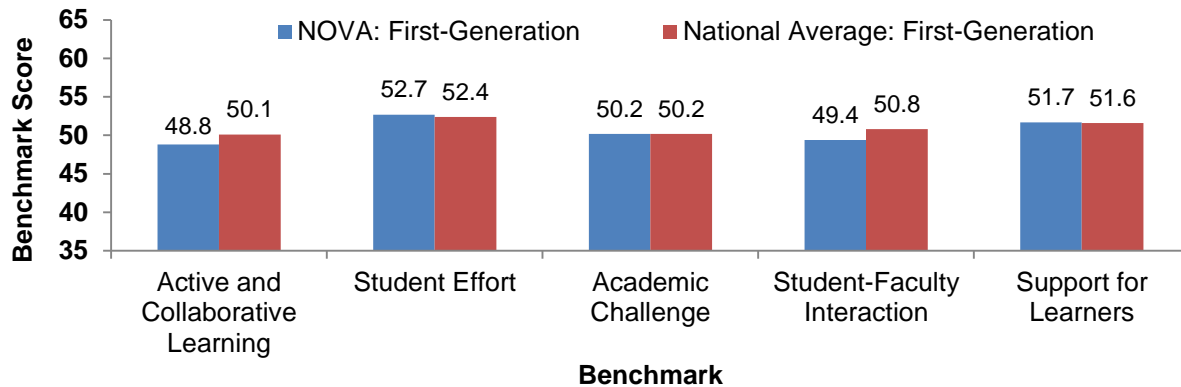
Figure 10. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Scores by First-Generation College Student Status



Note. NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Benchmark scores were disaggregated such that scores for first-generation college students at NOVA were compared with national average scores for first-generation college students, and scores for NOVA students who were *not* first-generation college students were compared with national average scores for students who were not first-generation college students (see *Figures 11a and 11b*). These comparisons showed that benchmark scores among first-generation college students at NOVA did not vary greatly from national average scores, however first-generation college student scores at NOVA were slightly *lower* than national averages among first-generation college students for both the *Active and Collaborative Learning* (48.8 vs. 50.1) and *Student-Faculty Interaction* (49.4 vs. 50.8) benchmarks (Figure 11a, next page).

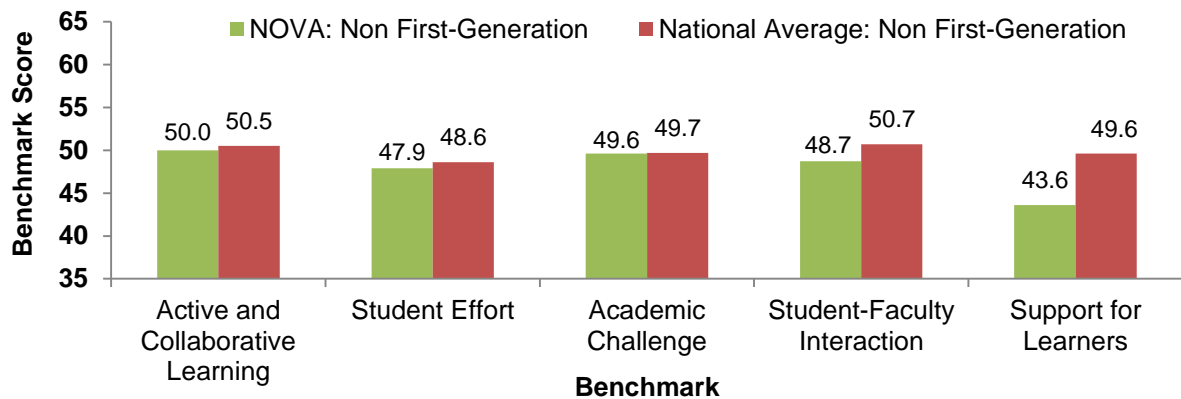
**Figure 11a. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Score Comparisons:
First-Generation College Students**



Note. NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Benchmark scores among NOVA students who were not first-generation college students also did not vary greatly from national average scores for students who were not first-generation college students. However, the average score for NOVA’s non-first-generation college students was *much lower* than the national average among non-first-generation college students for the *Support for Learners* (43.6 vs. 49.6) benchmark (Figure 11b).

**Figure 11b. CCSSE 2017 NOVA Benchmark Score Comparisons:
Non First-Generation College Students**



Note. NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Conclusion

Analysis of CCSSE 2017 benchmark scores by student demographics concludes that the overall benchmark scores for NOVA students *did not* differ greatly from national averages with the exception of scores for the *Support for Learners* benchmark, where NOVA scored lower than the national average. Differences were also apparent when comparing NOVA student demographic subgroup scores with corresponding national average subgroup scores (e.g., NOVA female scores compared to CCSSE national average scores for females). Among NOVA students, student engagement was greatest for full-time, female, Asian, Black, and first-generation college students. Results suggest that subtle disparities in student engagement exist across demographic groups at NOVA, as well as between NOVA student demographic subgroups and corresponding demographic subgroups nationally.

Appendix: CCSSE 2017 Benchmarks Scores by Student Demographics

Table A1. Overall Benchmark Scores for NOVA: CCSSE 2017

Benchmark	NOVA	National Average
Active and Collaborative Learning	49.6	50.0
Student Effort	49.8	50.0
Academic Challenge	49.8	50.0
Student-Faculty Interaction	48.9	50.0
Support for Learners	46.6	50.0

Note. Benchmark scores are weighted; NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Table A2. CCSSE 2017 Benchmark Scores by Enrollment Status

Benchmark	NOVA		National Average	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
Active and Collaborative Learning	55.0	46.6	55.8	46.5
Student Effort	53.6	47.6	55.1	46.6
Academic Challenge	55.5	46.7	54.9	46.6
Student-Faculty Interaction	54.3	46.0	55.6	47.4
Support for Learners	50.5	44.5	53.5	48.3

Note. Benchmark scores are weighted; NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Table A3. CCSSE 2017 Benchmark Scores by Gender

Benchmark	NOVA		National Average	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Active and Collaborative Learning	50.2	48.2	51.2	49.2
Student Effort	51.4	47.6	52.2	46.7
Academic Challenge	51.9	47.5	52.6	46.7
Student-Faculty Interaction	49.8	47.5	52.3	48.6
Support for Learners	45.8	46.9	51.2	49.5

Note. Benchmark scores are weighted; NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Table A4. CCSSE 2017 Benchmark Scores by Age Group

Benchmark	NOVA		National Average	
	Traditional Age	Non-Traditional Age	Traditional Age	Non-Traditional Age
Active and Collaborative Learning	50.0	47.9	49.8	51.4
Student Effort	49.4	49.3	48.8	52.0
Academic Challenge	48.4	52.5	48.9	52.5
Student-Faculty Interaction	49.2	48.0	50.8	50.7
Support for Learners	47.3	44.1	50.7	49.9

Note. Benchmark scores are weighted; NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Table A5. CCSSE 2017 Benchmark Scores by Race/Ethnicity

Benchmark	NOVA				National Average			
	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Active and Collaborative Learning	50.8	52.2	46.4	50.3	50.6	52.6	49.4	49.9
Student Effort	49.9	54.2	52.6	46.2	57.5	57.5	54.0	46.9
Academic Challenge	53.5	55.9	48.0	45.6	52.4	53.7	52.2	49.0
Student-Faculty Interaction	51.3	49.3	47.6	48.0	52.0	56.0	51.3	49.7
Support for Learners	48.9	52.5	48.0	41.1	54.7	57.0	54.1	48.3

Note. Benchmark scores are weighted; NOVA scores are included in national averages.

Table A6. CCSSE 2017 Benchmark Scores by First-Generation College Status

Benchmark	NOVA		National Average	
	First Generation College	Non First Generation College	First Generation College	Non First Generation College
Active and Collaborative Learning	48.8	50.0	50.1	50.5
Student Effort	52.7	47.9	52.4	48.6
Academic Challenge	50.2	49.6	50.2	49.7
Student-Faculty Interaction	49.4	48.7	50.8	50.7
Support for Learners	51.7	43.6	51.6	49.6

Note. Benchmark scores are weighted; NOVA scores are included in national averages.