

NSSE 2018: Selected Results for the Honors College

Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning | George Mason University

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The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) collects information from first-year (FY) and senior (SR) students about the characteristics and quality of their college experiences. George Mason University has participated in NSSE every three years since 2000. In 2018, NSSE was administered to all FY and SR at Mason, with a total response rate of 18%.

This report provides results for selected portions of NSSE for Honors College students overall and by gender and first-generation status. Complete NSSE results are available at <https://ira.gmu.edu>.

OVERALL RESULTS

- Table 1:
 - FY Honors students score significantly higher compared to non-Honors students on three of the ten engagement indicators:
 - *Reflective and Integrated Learning*
 - *Discussions with Diverse Others*
 - *Supportive Environment*
 - At the SR level, Honors students interacted with faculty at a significantly higher rate than non-Honors students.
- Figure 1: *Reflective and Integrated Learning* – Specific items with significantly different results for FY students included connecting learning/ideas to social issues/prior knowledge and experience, and trying to understand others' views through their perspective (63-87% vs. 49-78% for Honors and non-Honors, respectively).
- Figure 2 highlights the significant differences among FY students related to *Discussions with Diverse Others*, specifically having discussions with people with different religious beliefs (89% vs. 79% for Honors and non-Honors, respectively).
- Figure 3 illustrates the different ways SR Honors students interacted with faculty to talk about their career plans, discuss topics/ideas/concepts outside of classroom, and work on activities beyond coursework. At least 40% reported having those interactions often or very often compared to 21-37% of the non-Honors students.
- Tables 1 and 2 suggest that Honors students were more likely to perceive Mason as a supportive environment than non-Honors students, a finding consistent with both FY and SR students.
- Figures 4 and 5 highlight that, regardless of level, Honors students participated in more *High Impact Practices* (HIPs) than their non-Honors peers. For example, 75% of SR Honors students participated in two or more HIPs, a significantly higher rate compared to 52% of non-Honors seniors.

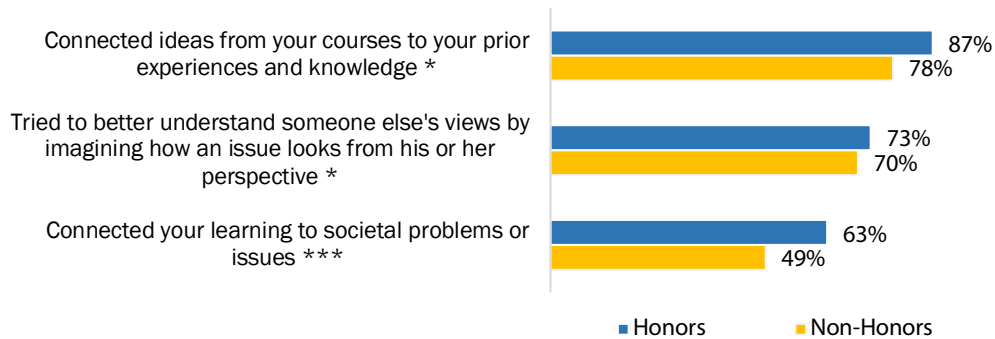
Table 1. Engagement Indicator: FY and SR Overall

Engagement Indicators	FY		SR	
	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors
Higher-Order Learning	39.4	37.1	39.2	38.7
Reflective & Integrative Learning	37.7**	34.7	38.7	36.4
Learning Strategies	39.2	37.3	37.1	37.2
Quantitative Reasoning	26.8	26.5	27.6	28.5
Collaborative Learning	31.5	30.6	31.6	31.1
Discussions with Diverse Others	46.4*	43.4	44.4	42.2
Student-Faculty Interaction	17.4	18.0	27.1**	20.8
Effective Teaching Practices	39.1	36.9	39.1	38.8
Quality of Interactions	41.3	39.6	40.3	39.4
Supportive Environment	38.3***	33.6	35.6**	30.9

Numbers represent average scores based on a scale from '0' (Never or Very Little) to '60' (Very Often or Very Much).
 FY: n=125-146 and 560-689 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. SR: n=69-76 and 806-995 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001, t-test (2-sided).

Reflective and Integrative Learning (RIL)

Figure 1. RIL Items with Significant Differences: FY Overall



Percentages are for "Very Often" and "Often" combined. N=139-145 and 639-674 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.
 * p<.05, ***p<.001, t-test (2-sided).

Discussions with Diverse Others (DDO)

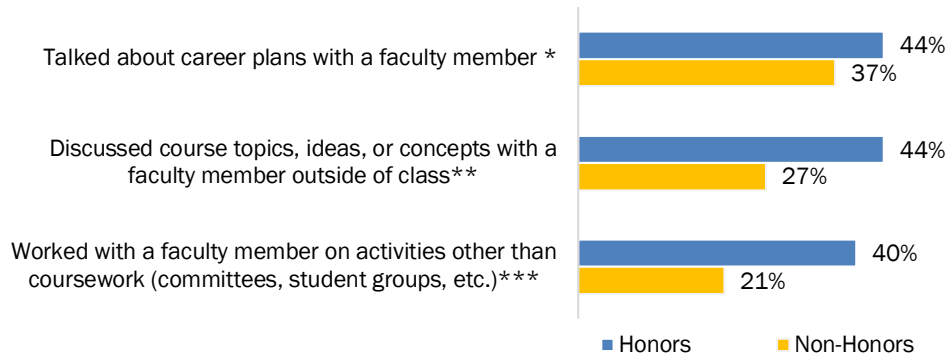
Figure 2. DDO Items with Significant Differences: FY Overall



The percentages are for "Very Often" and "Often" combined. N=134 and 602 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.
 ** p<.01, t-test (2-sided).

Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)

Figure 3. SFI Items with Significant Differences: SR Overall



Percentages are for “Very Often” and “Often” combined. $n=71-73$ and $950-961$ for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. * $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$, t-test (2-sided).

Supportive Environment (SE)

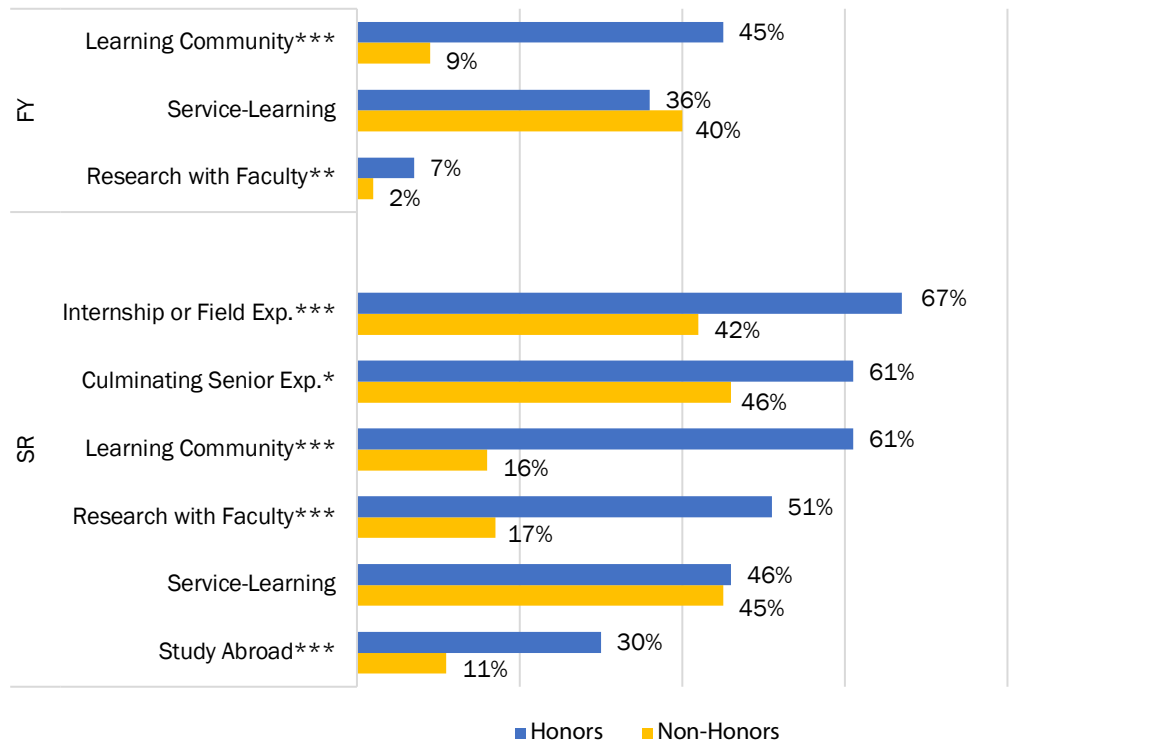
Table 2. SE Items: FY and SR Overall

<i>How much does your institution emphasize the following?</i>	FY		SR	
	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors
Providing support to help students succeed academically	81% **	70%	68%	64%
Using learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, etc.)	75%*	69%	74%*	59%
Encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ethnic, religious, etc.)	76%**	68%	72%*	61%
Providing opportunities to be involved socially	73%*	66%	62%	58%
Providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counseling, etc.)	76%**	63%	74%***	58%
Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	41%	37%	29%	28%
Attending campus activities and events (performing arts, athletic events, etc.)	70%**	58%	57%	47%
Attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues	53%**	44%	57%***	42%

Percentages are for “Quite a Bit” and “Very Much” combined. FY: $n=127-129$ and $576-581$ for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. SR: $n=68-69$ and $861-870$ for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. * $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$, t-test (2-sided).

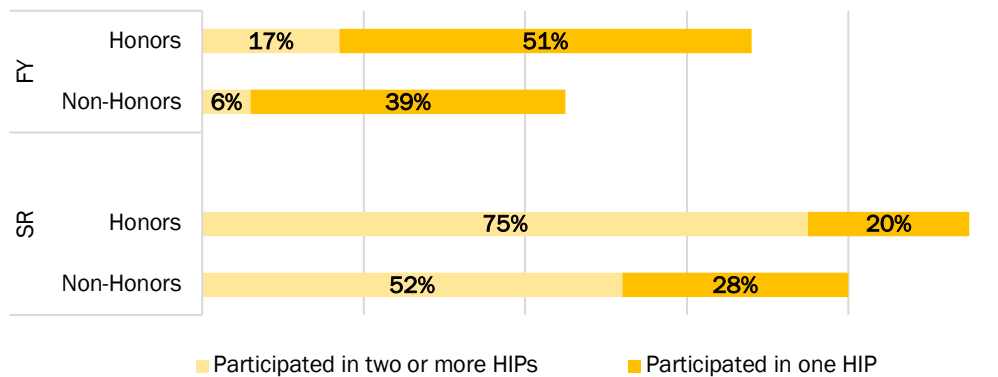
High-Impact Practices (HIP)

Figure 4. Participation in High-Impact Practices: FY and SR Overall



The percentages are for students whose “some”, “most”, or “all” courses included a community-based project for service-learning and for students who have “done or in progress” for other HIPs. FY: n=130-131 and 589-592 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. SR: n=69 and 875-889 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001, Proportion test (2-tailed) to indicate significant differences between Honors and Non-Honors.

Figure 5. Number of High-Impact Practices Participated: FY and SR Overall



FY: n=131 and 595 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. SR: n=69 and 892 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.

RESULTS BY GENDER

- Table 3:
 - At the FY level, better engagement of Honors students as measured by key indicators was mostly evident among female students. Female Honors students scored significantly higher than their non-Honors counterparts on four of the ten engagement indicators:
 - *Reflective and Integrative Learning*
 - *Discussions with Diverse Others*
 - *Effective Teaching Practices*
 - *Supportive Environment*
 - At the SR level, Honors students regardless of gender reported a significantly higher level of interactions with faculty than non-Honors seniors.
- Figure 6: *Reflective and Integrated Learning* – Specific items with significantly different results for FY female students included connecting learning/ideas to social issues/prior knowledge and experience, and trying to understand others’ views through their perspective (65-91% vs. 50-79% for Honors and non-Honors, respectively).
- Figure 7 highlights the significant differences among FY female students related to *Discussions with Diverse Others*, specifically having discussions with people with different religious beliefs (91% vs. 82% for Honors and non-Honors, respectively).
- Table 4 illustrates that SR honors students, regardless of gender, surpassed their non-Honors peers in interactions with faculty, including working on activities beyond coursework and discussing topics/ideas/concepts outside of classroom (SR Female: 37-42% vs. 22-27%; SR Male: 44-50% vs. 19-28%, for Honors and non-Honors, respectively).
- Table 5 suggests that, within the female subgroup, Honors students were more likely to perceive Mason as a supportive environment than non-Honors students, a finding true at both FY and SR levels.
- Table 6 and Figure 9 highlight that, regardless of gender, Honor students usually had higher participation rates in HIPs than their non-Honors peers, a finding true at both FY and SR levels. For example, among SR, female Honors students demonstrated a larger lead over their non-Honors counterparts in participating multiple HIPs (78% vs. 55%, respectively) than male Honors students did (67% vs. 46% for male Honors and non-Honors students, respectively).

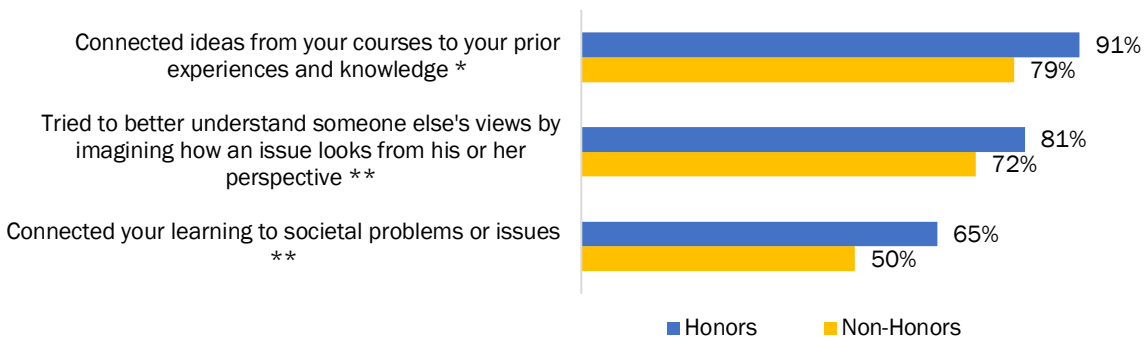
Table 3. Engagement Indicator: Honors vs. Non-Honors by Gender

Engagement Indicators	FY				SR			
	Female		Male		Female		Male	
	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors
Higher-Order Learning	40.0	37.4	37.4	36.4	40.2	39.7	35.7	37.0
Reflective & Integrative Learning	38.8**	35.1	34.4	34.0	39.6	37.8	35.4	34.1
Learning Strategies	40.6	38.4	34.8	35.3	37.9	38.7	34.2	34.9
Quantitative Reasoning	24.8	25.5	33.1	28.6	25.7	28.1	34.7	29.2
Collaborative Learning	32.8	30.9	28.1	30.1	30.9	31.0	34.1	31.2
Discussions with Diverse Others	47.2*	44.1	43.9	41.9	45.0	43.4	42.3	40.4
Student-Faculty Interaction	18.1	18.4	15.6	17.3	26.2*	21.8	30.0**	19.2
Effective Teaching Practices	40.3*	37.3	35.3	36.3	39.3	38.8	38.1	38.9
Quality of Interactions	41.9	39.5	38.9	39.6	41.0	39.7	37.7	38.8
Supportive Environment	38.8**	34.2	36.8	32.6	36.5*	31.6	32.5	29.9

Numbers represent average scores based on a scale from '0'(Never or Very Little) to '60'(Very Often or Very Much).
 FY Female: n=97-107 and 371-444 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. FY Male: n=28-39 and 189-245 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. SR Female: n=54-60 and 497-613 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. SR Male: n=15-16 and 309-382 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001, t-test (2-sided).

Reflective & Integrative Learning

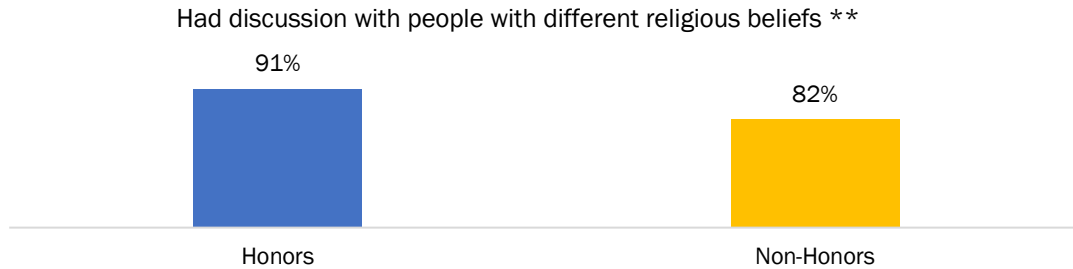
Figure 6. RIL Items with Significant Difference: Within FY Female



Percentages are for "Very Often" and "Often" combined. n=104-106 and 416-437 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. * p<.05, ** p<.01, t-test (2-sided).

Discussion with Diverse Others

Figure 7. DDO Items with Significant Difference: Within FY Female



Percentages are for “Very Often” and “Often” combined. $n=101$ and 397 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. $** p<.01$, t-test (2-sided).

Student-Faculty Interaction

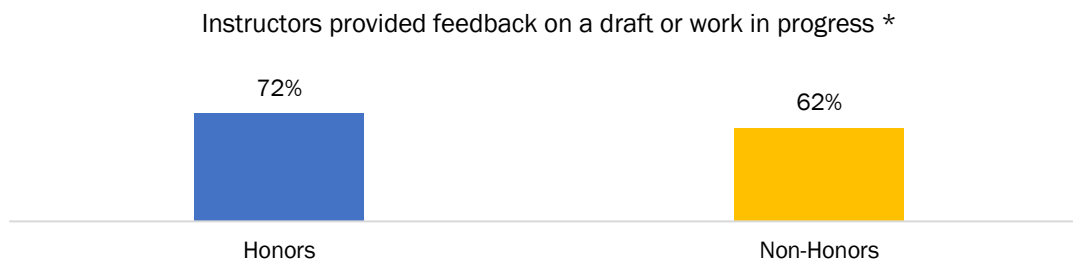
Table 4. SFI Items with Significant Difference: Within SR Female and Male, Respectively

<i>During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?</i>	SR Female		SR Male	
	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors
Worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.)	37%**	22%	50%*	19%
Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class	42%*	27%	50%*	28%
Discussed your academic performance with a faculty member			44%*	24%

Percentages are for “Very Often” and “Often” combined. SR Female: $n=55-57$ and $590-593$ for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. SR Male: $n=16$ and $359-363$ for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. Grey areas are for percentages with no significant differences. $*p<.05$, $**p<.01$, t-test (2-sided).

Effective Teaching Practices (ET)

Figure 8. ET Items with Significant Difference: Within FY Female



Percentages are for “Very Much” and “Quite a Bit” combined. $n=101$ and 402 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. $* p<.05$, t-test (2-sided).

Supportive Environment

Table 5. SE Items with Significant Difference: Within FY and SR Females, Respectively

<i>How much does your institution emphasize the following?</i>	FY Female		SR Female	
	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors
Providing support to help students succeed academically	84%**	70%		
Using learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, etc.)	77%*	69%	80%*	61%
Encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ethnic, religious, etc.)	77%**	71%	74%*	64%
Providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counseling, etc.)	72%*	67%	78%**	61%
Attending campus activities and events (performing arts, athletic events, etc.)	71%*	61%		
Attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues	54%**	47%	59%**	45%

Percentages are for "Quite a Bit" and "Very Much" combined. Grey areas are for percentages with no significant differences. FY Female: n=96-98 and 379-382 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. SR Female: n=53-54 and 526-530 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. *p<.05, **p<.01, t-test (2-sided).

High-Impact Practices

Table 6. Participation in High-Impact Practices: FY and SR by Gender

<i>Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate?</i>	FY				SR			
	Female		Male		Female		Male	
	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors
Learning community	50%***	9%	29%**	9%	63%***	17%	53%***	14%
Research with faculty	7%**	1%	6%	4%	48%***	19%	60%***	14%
Service learning	36%	39%	36%	41%	50%	47%	33%	40%
Internship or field experience					69%**	46%	60%	36%
culminating senior experience					59%*	45%	67%	49%
Study abroad					35%***	13%	13%	7%

Percentages are for students whose "some", "most", or "all" courses included a community-based project for service-learning and for students who have "Done or in progress" for other HIPs. Grey areas are for percentages with no significant differences.

FY Female: n=99 and 387-388 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.

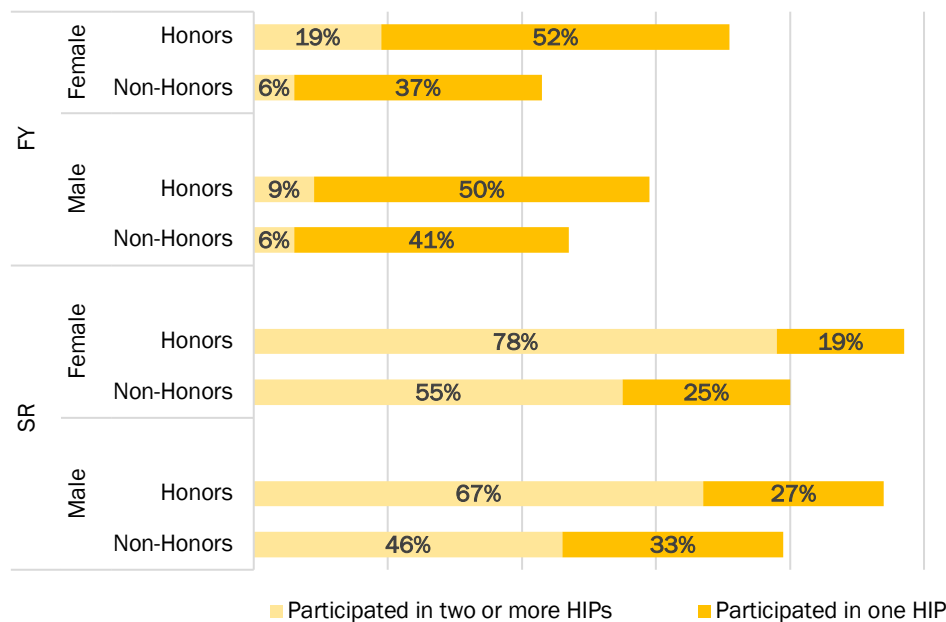
FY Male: n=31-32 and 202-204 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.

SR Female: n=54 and 538-547 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.

SR Male: n=15 and 337-342 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001, Proportion test (2-tailed) to indicate significant differences between Honors and Non-Honors.

Figure 9. Number of High-Impact Practices Participated: FY and SR by Gender



FY Female: n=99 and 391 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.
 FY Male: n=32 and 204 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.
 SR Female: n=54 and 548 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.
 SR Male: n=15 and 344 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.

RESULTS BY FIRST GENERATION STATUS

- Table 7: Better engagement of Honors students as measured by key indicators was mostly evident within the non-FG group at the FY level. FY non-FG Honors students scored significantly higher than their non-Honors counterparts on five of the ten engagement indicators:
 - *Reflective and Integrative Learning*
 - *Discussions with Diverse Others*
 - *Effective Teaching Practices*
 - *Quality of Interactions*
 - *Supportive Environment*
- Figure 10: *Reflective and Integrated Learning* items with significantly different results for FY non-FG students included connecting learning/ideas to social issues/prior knowledge and experience, and combining ideas from different courses when completing assignments (59-88% vs. 51-78% for Honors and non-Honors, respectively).
- Figure 11 highlights the significant differences among FY non-FG students related to *Discussions with Diverse Others*, specifically having discussions with people with different religious beliefs (92% vs. 82% for Honors and non-Honors, respectively).
- Figure 13 illustrates areas where FY non-FG Honors students gave higher ratings to their instructors for effective teaching practices, including using examples to explain difficulty points and providing feedback on draft/work in progress (69-79% vs. 58-67% for Honors and non-Honors, respectively).

- Figure 12 shows that, at the SR level, non-FG Honors students also worked with faculty on activities beyond coursework at a significantly higher rate than their non-Honors counterparts (44% vs. 24%, respectively).
- Table 8 reveals that, within the non-FG group, a significantly higher percentage of Honors students perceived Mason as a supportive environment than non-Honors students, a finding particularly true at the FY level.
- Figure 14 highlights that, regardless of FG status, a higher percentage of Honors students participated in more HIPs than their non-Honors peers (e.g., within SR FG: 72% vs. 51% for Honors and non-Honors, respectively; within SR non-G: 75% vs. 67% for Honors and non-Honors, respectively).

Table 7. Engagement Indicator: Honors vs. Non-Honors by FG Status

Engagement Indicators	FY				SR			
	FG		Non-FG		FG		Non-FG	
	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors
Higher-Order Learning	38.8	37.1	39.4	37.2	41.0	38.6	37.5	37.6
Reflective & Integrative Learning	37.6	35.4	37.7*	34.4	41.7	36.2	36.9	36.9
Learning Strategies	38.5	38.8	39.3	36.4	34.7	36.2	37.9	35.7
Quantitative Reasoning	25.9	26.8	27.4	26.1	27.0	27.6	27.4	29.0
Collaborative Learning	33.8	30.2	30.8	30.9	30.7	32.5	31.6	33.6
Discussions with Diverse Others	41.9	42.2	48.5**	44.9	45.3	43.0	43.9	43.5
Student-Faculty Interaction	18.5	18.2	17.1	17.8	25.0	21.6	26.9	22.5
Effective Teaching Practices	36.9	37.8	39.8*	36.2	42.6	37.9	37.3	38.3
Quality of Interactions	39.8	40.2	42.2*	39.1	38.4	38.7	41.1	37.9
Supportive Environment	35.9	34.0	39.6***	33.5	35.0	31.4	35.3	32.4

Numbers represent average scores based on a scale from '0'(Never or Very Little) to '60'(Very Often or Very Much).

FY FG: n=37-45 and 220-278 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.

FY Non-FG: n=87-100 and 314-381 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.

SR FG: n=18-21 and 179-214 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.

SR Non-FG: n=48-51 and 255-312 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.

* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001, t-test (2-sided).

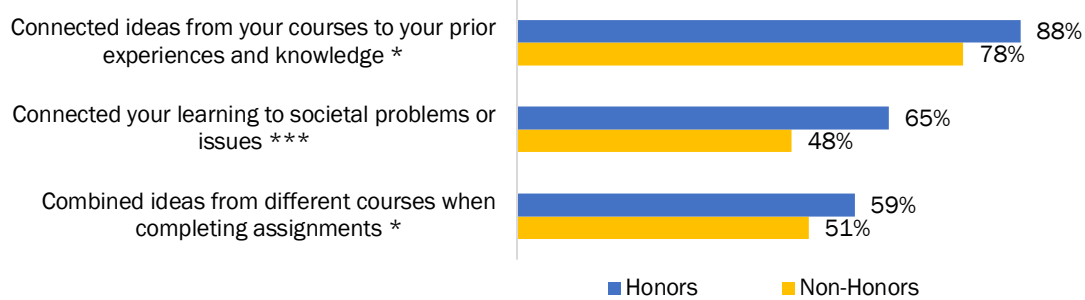
Reflective & Integrative Learning

Figure 10. RIL Items with Significant Difference: Within FY FG and Non-FG

Within FY FG



Within FY Non-FG



Percentages are for "Very Often" and "Often" combined. FY FG: n=43 and 266 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. FY Non-FG: n=95-100 and 354-372 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001, t-test (2-sided).

Discussion with Diverse Others

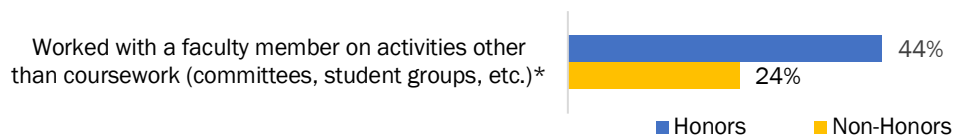
Figure 11. DDO Items with Significant Difference: Within FY Non-FG



Percentages are for "Very Often" and "Often" combined. n=92 and 338 for Honors and non-Honors, respectively. ** p<.01, t-test (2-sided).

Student-Faculty Interaction

Figure 12. SFI Items with Significant Difference: Within SR Non-FG

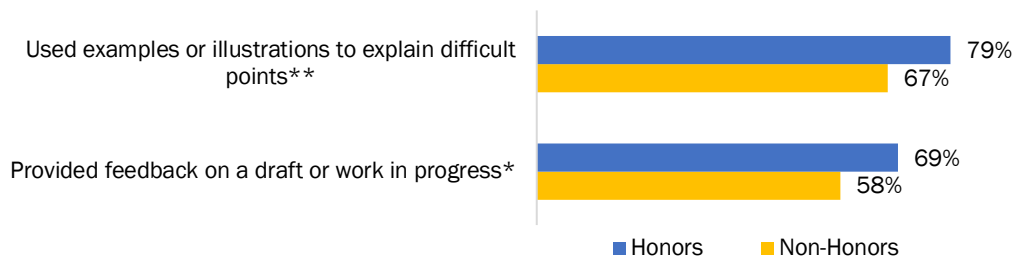


Percentages are for "Often" and "Very Often" combined. n=50 and 296 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. * p<.05, t-test (2-sided).

Effective Teaching Practices

Figure 13. ET Items with Significant Difference: Within FY Non-FG

To what extent your instructors have done the following:



Percentages are for “Very Often” and “Often” combined. $n=92$ and $342-345$ for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.
* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, t -test (2-sided).

Supportive Environment

Table 8. SE Items with Significant Difference: Within FY non-FG and SR non-FG

<i>How much does your institution emphasize the following?</i>	FY Non-FG		SR Non-FG	
	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors
Providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counseling, etc.)	82%***	64%	71%*	62%
Attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues	55%**	44%	60%*	47%
Providing support to help students succeed academically	82%**	69%		
Using learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, etc.)	76%*	69%		
Encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ethnic, religious, etc.)	81%**	67%		
Providing opportunities to be involved socially	78%**	66%		
Attending campus activities and events (performing arts, athletic events, etc.)	71%**	59%		

Percentages are for “Quite a Bit” and “Very Much” combined. Grey areas are for percentages with no significant differences. FY Non-FG: $n=88-90$ and $320-325$ for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. SR Non-FG: $n=48$ and $262-264$ for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. * $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$, t -test (2-sided).

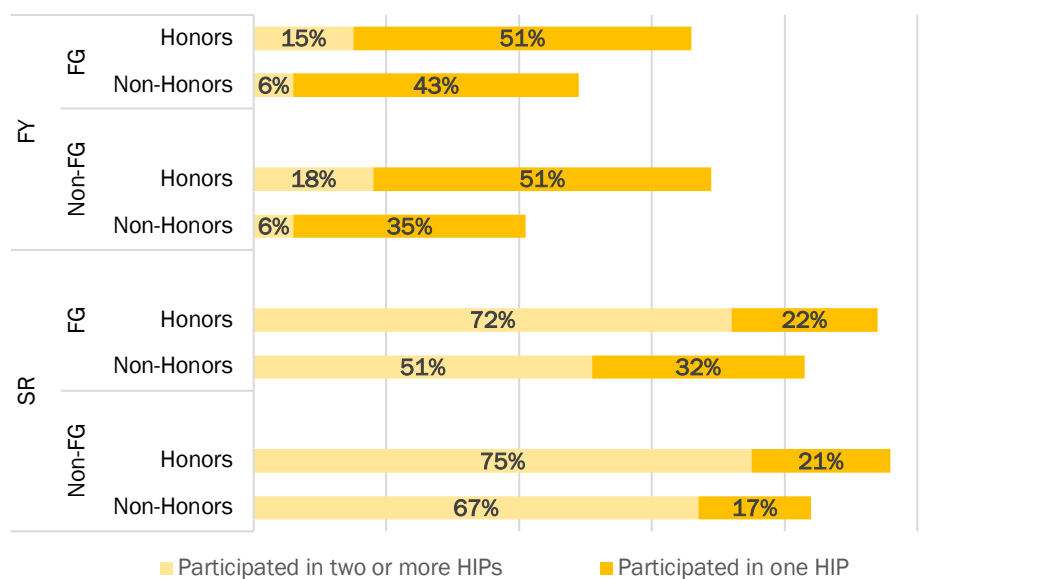
High Impact Practices

Table 9. Participation in High-Impact Practices: FY and SR by FG Status

Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate?	FY				SR			
	FG		Non-FG		FG		Non-FG	
	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors	Honors	Non-Honors
Learning community	42%***	9%	46%***	9%	72%***	14%	54%***	25%
Research with faculty	3%	3%	9%**	2%	44%***	11%	50%***	24%
Service learning	39%	44%	34%	36%	33%	50%	50%	45%
Internship or field experience					56%	40%	69%	58%
Culminating senior experience					61%	48%	58%	55%
Study abroad					28%*	10%	31%	20%

Percentages are for students whose “some”, “most”, or “all” courses included a community-based project for service-learning and for students who have “Done or in progress” for other HIPs. Grey areas are for percentages with no significant differences. FY FG: n=38-39 and 234-236 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. FY Non-FG: n=90-91 and 329-330 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. SR FG: n=18 and 191-193 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. SR Non-FG: n=48 and 270-276 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001, Proportion test (2-tailed) to indicate significant differences between Honors and Non-Honors.

Figure 14. The Number of High-Impact Practices Participated: FY and SR by FG Status



FY FG: n=39 and 236 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. FY Non-FG: n=91 and 332 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively. SR FG: n=18 and 193 for Honors and Non-honors, respectively. SR Non-FG: n=48 and 276 for Honors and Non-Honors, respectively.

IMPLICATIONS

- The findings from the study lend support to the positive impact of Honors College experiences on student engagement. While FY Honors students reported a higher level of engagement in multiple aspects from thinking approaches (more reflective and integrative) to social interaction with peers (having discussions with people of different religious background), SR Honors students benefited more from frequent interactions with faculty in activities beyond coursework, an experience so important to seniors as they prepare for transition into the workplace or further education.
- Better engagement/perception was more prominent among female Honors students and non-FG Honors students based on subgroup analyses. Given these findings, efforts should be made to attend to the needs of certain subgroups within Honors College (e.g., male, FG) to maximize the positive impact of enriching experiences on all Honors students.