



**2012 National Survey of Student Engagement
Mapping NSSE Data to Middle States
Standards**

With Comparison to 2008-09

Office of Institutional Research
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Mapping NSSE Data to Middle States Standards**

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2012 National Survey of Student Engagement Mapping NSSE Data to Middle States Standards

Introduction

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is annually administered to baccalaureate-granting institutions by the Indiana University Center for Post-Secondary Research. NSSE provides data on time use, intellectual and personal development, and overall satisfaction for first-year students and seniors. Results from the survey offer valuable tools for assessing overall student engagement, specific aspects of student learning, and institutional effectiveness.

These NSSE results provide a particularly useful tool for preparing for an accreditation review from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Middle States reviews institutions on 14 accrediting standards, and grants accreditation to those deemed to be successfully engaged in the assessment of student learning and institutional effectiveness within the context of their specific mission.

This report maps NSSE scales to 5 Middle States standards related to student learning (1, 9, 10, 12, and 14). These items can be used as tools to support the College's upcoming Middle States review. Additionally, trends of these scales provide useful assessment information. Data for mapping NSSE items to Middle States accrediting standards are drawn from John Jay student responses to the spring 2012 administration of NSSE.

Appendix A provides the list of NSSE items comprising each scale and the Middle States standard to which they apply. Appendix B lists the definition for each of the 14 Middle States standards.

Table 1 provides a profile of 2012 John Jay NSSE respondents.

Table 1. Profile of 2012 John Jay NSSE respondents.

Student Characteristics¹	First Year Students (N = 253) %	Seniors (N = 236) %
Gender		
Male	31%	40%
Female	69%	60%
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian/Alaska Native	1%	0.4%
Asian, Asian American or Pacific Islander	15%	8%
Black or African American	15%	15%
Hispanic or Latino	46%	24%
White or Caucasian	15%	26%
Other	1%	0%
Unknown	6%	27%
Age²		
19 or younger	90%	0.4%
20 - 23	4%	46%
24 - 29	5%	29%
30 - 39	2%	10%
40 - 55	0%	12%
Over 55	0%	2%
Admission Status²		
Entering Freshmen	95%	52%
Transfer Student	5%	48%
Enrollment Status²		
Full-time	94%	66%
Part-time	6%	34%
Time Use²		
Work for pay off campus 16 or more hrs/week	38%	68%
Spend 6 or more hrs/week commuting to class	70%	59%
Spend 6 or more hrs/week caring for dependents	42%	52%

¹ Data on gender and race/ethnicity are reported by the Office of Institutional Research. Data on age, admission status, enrollment status and time use are reported from students' survey responses.

² % values are calculated from NSSE's John Jay raw data. Women were overrepresented for both first-year students and seniors. As a result, the given % values are weighted so that women and men are represented in proportion to their presence in the John Jay student population in the term in which they took the survey. Missing responses are excluded from the calculation of % values.

NSSE scales mapped to Middle States Standards Related to Student Learning

Seven scales developed by NSSE, related to student learning, are reported here. The scales' means were calculated by converting the item mean scores to a 0 to 100 point scale. Then an overall mean was calculated. Scale means range from 0 to 100, with higher scores indicating greater student learning. Table 2 maps each of the NSSE scales to the related Middle States Standard. For more information on these scales see Appendix A.

Table 2. NSSE scales mapped to Middle States Standards related to student learning.

Scale ¹	No. Survey Items	Middle States Standard
Gains in Personal and Social Development	7	Mission and Goals (1)
Support for Student Learning	6	Student Support Services (9)
Student-Faculty Interaction ²	6	Faculty (10)
Higher Order Thinking	4	General Education (12)
General Education Skills	4	General Education (12)
Practical Competence Skills	5	Assessment of Student Learning (14)
Integrative Thinking	4	Assessment of Student Learning (14)

¹ Scales are based on item clusters suggested by NSSE. Not all items included in NSSE are included in these scales.

² This scale is identical to the NSSE Student-Faculty Interaction Benchmark.

It should be noted that one of the 6 items measuring Student-Faculty Interaction, "Have you, or do you plan to: Work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements," is a percentage. These percentages are extremely low for first year students and low for seniors. They are rescaled differently than the other items and their lower magnitude has the effect of significantly reducing the scale average.

The following section presents the results of each of the scales listed in Table 2. In addition, a comparison of the scales from the current administration to the 2008-09 administrations is made.

Mean scores for three groups of comparison institutions who participated in the 2012 administration of NSSE are provided as context. These groups are:

- *Regional Peers* - 9 public colleges in a major urban setting from the eastern US mid-coastal region. Three CUNY colleges are included.
- *Carnegie Peers* - 71 public, four-year institutions with the same Carnegie Classification as John Jay.
- *All NSSE* - all 547 US colleges participating in NSSE 2012.

Although the data for First Year students and Seniors are presented together, the reader is discouraged from comparing them. The two groups have distinct contexts and learning experiences, and both first-year students and seniors may be maximally engaged. A fairer comparison would be the First Year students' mean scores for 2008-09 to Seniors' mean scores, 2012. That analysis is not performed here.

Results

The NSSE 2012 administration reports that First Year students' and Seniors' mean scores for

- Gains in Personal and Social Development are higher than all comparison groups,
- Gains in General Education are higher than all comparison groups, and
- Integrative Thinking are higher than all comparison groups.

First Year students also showed higher mean scores for

- Gains in Practical Competence are higher than all comparison groups,
- Higher Order Thinking are higher than all comparison groups,
- Support for Student Learning are higher than Regional and Carnegie Peers, and
- Student-Faculty Interaction are comparable to Regional and Carnegie Peers

Seniors' mean scores for

- Support for Student Learning are higher for Regional Peers,
- Higher Order Thinking are comparable to Regional Peers,
- Student-Faculty Interaction are lower than all comparison groups, and
- Gains in Practical Competence are lower than all comparison groups.

Comparison of NSSE 2012 results to the 2008-09 administration show an increase in mean scores for First Year students and Seniors in

- Support for Student Learning, and
- Student-Faculty interaction, significantly so.

First Year students also showed an increase in mean scores for Gain in Personal and Social Development; Seniors in Higher Order Thinking, Gains in Practical Competence, and Integrative Thinking.

Gains in Personal and Social Development

The Gains in Personal and Social Development scale is mapped to the Middle States Standard Integrity (Standard 6). This scale includes items measuring student gains in moral judgment and in experiencing personal and social growth. John Jay students' mean scores are higher than all comparison groups for both First Year students and Seniors. First Year students' mean scores increased over the prior administration.

Figure 1. Mean Score for John Jay students on Gains in Personal and Social Development.

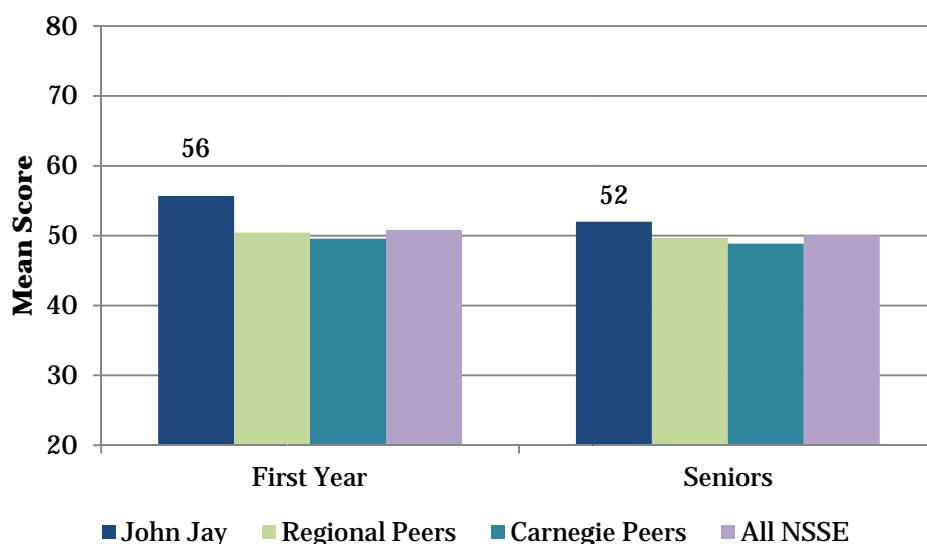
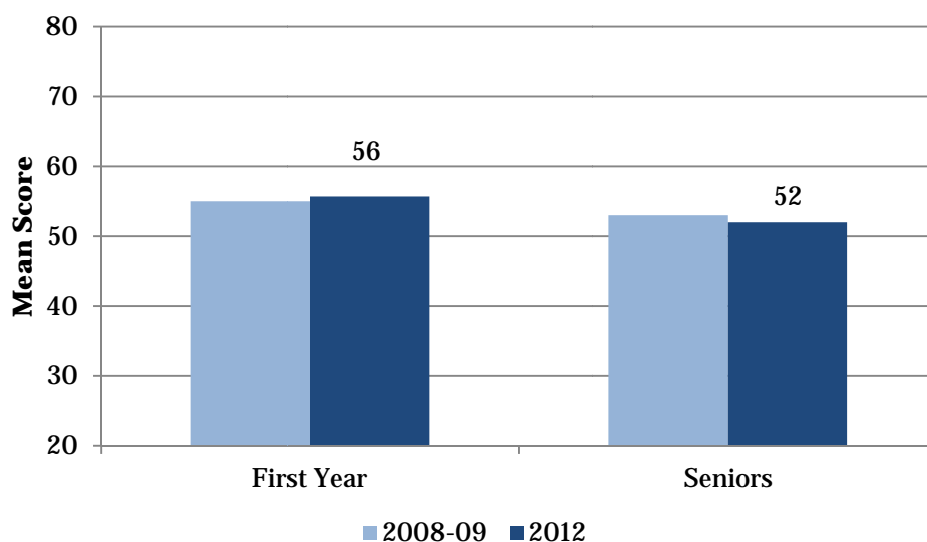


Figure 2. Change in Mean Score for John Jay students on Gains in Personal and Social Development



Support for Student Learning

The Support for Student Learning scale maps to the Middle States Standard Student Support Services (Standard 9). This scale includes items measuring promotion of student comprehensive development and strengthening of student learning outcomes. First Year students' mean scores are higher than Regional Peers and in line with the other two comparison groups. Seniors' mean scores are higher than their Regional Peers. Both First Year students' and Seniors' mean scores increased over the prior administration.

Figure 3. Mean scores for John Jay students on Support for Student Learning.

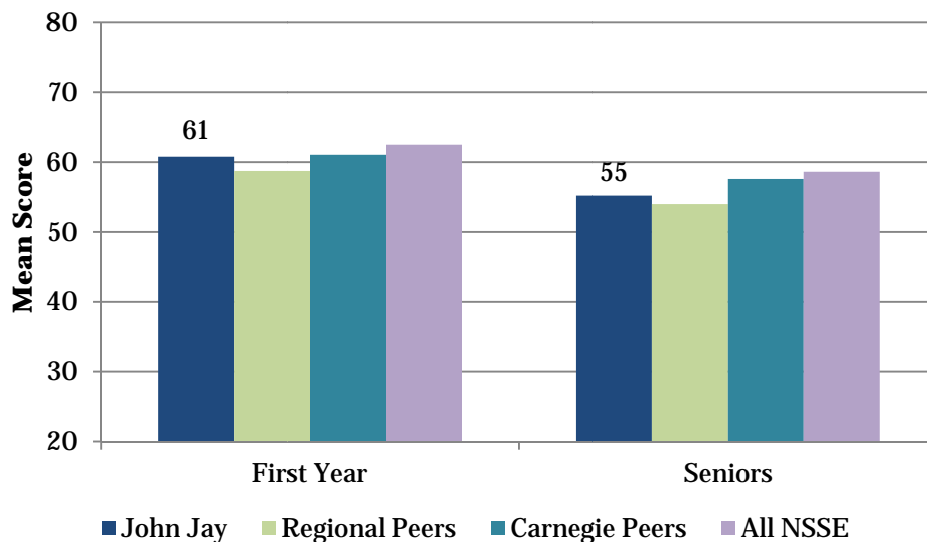
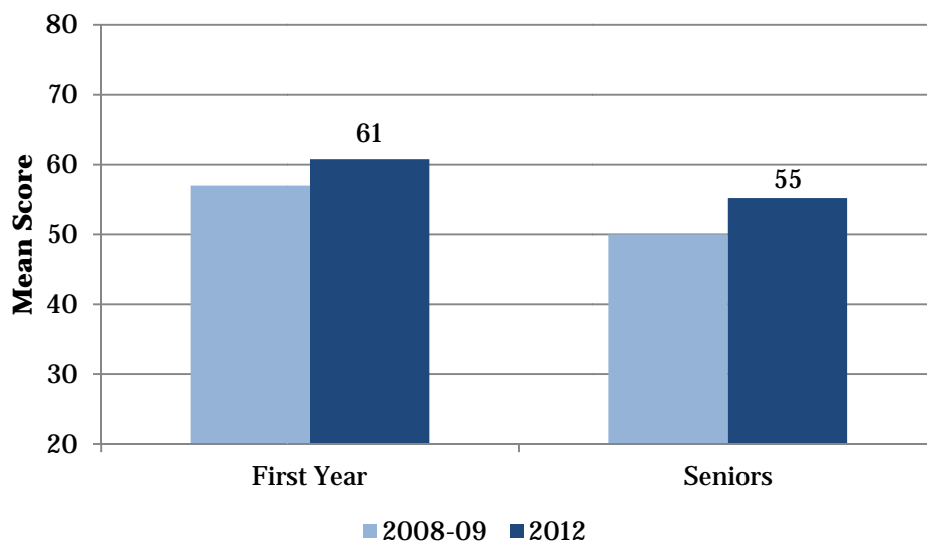


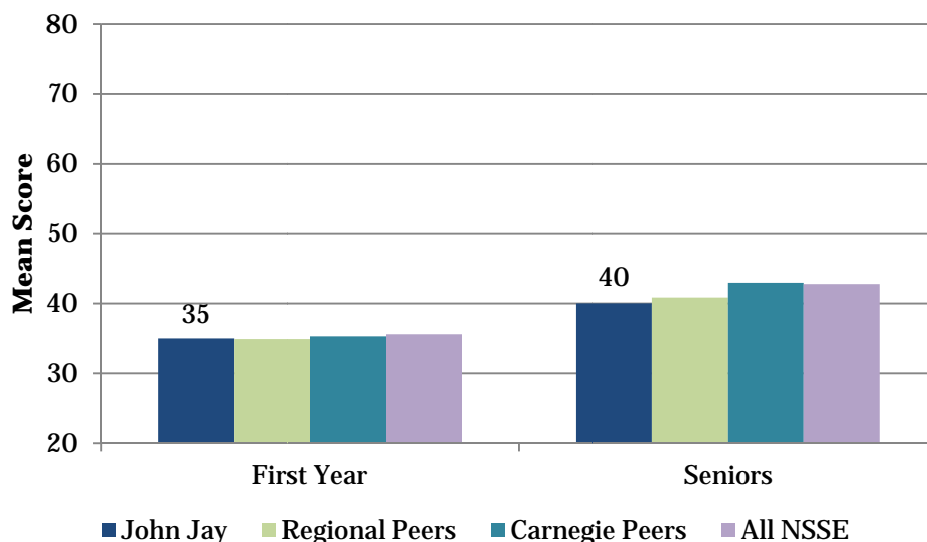
Figure 4. Change in mean scores for John Jay students on Support for Student Learning.



Student-Faculty Interaction

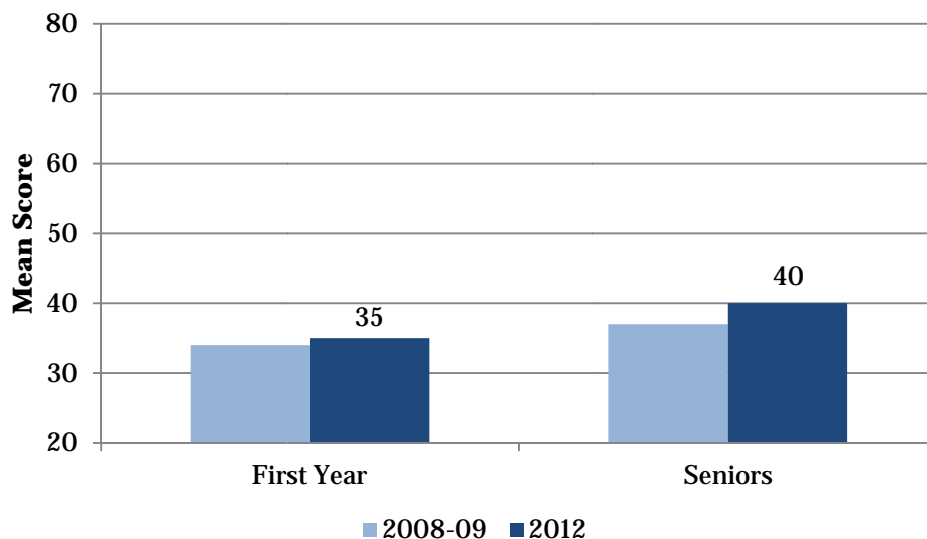
The Student-Faculty Interaction scales maps to the Middle States Standard Faculty (Standard 10). This scale includes items measuring the students' relationship and engagement with faculty inside and outside of class. John Jay First Year students' mean scores are in line with their comparison groups. Seniors' mean scores are lower than their comparison groups. However, Seniors' mean scores increased over the prior administration.

Figure 5. Mean scores for John Jay students on Student-Faculty Interaction.



Alternately, the means for SFI *excluding* the research item for First Year students are: John Jay, 41; Regional Peers, 41, Carnegie Peers, 41 and All NSSE, 42. For Seniors: John Jay, 45; Regional Peers, 45, Carnegie Peers, 48 and All NSSE, 47.

Figure 6. Change in mean scores for John Jay students on Student-Faculty Interaction.



Alternately, the means for SFI *excluding* the research item for First Year students are: 2008-09, 39; 2012, 41. For Seniors: 2008-08, 46, 2012, 45.

Higher-Order Thinking

The Higher-Order Thinking scale maps to the Middle States Standard General Education (Standard 12). This scale contains items measuring development of critical analysis and reasoning skills. John Jay First Year students' mean scores are higher than their comparison groups. Seniors' mean scores are in line with Regional and Carnegie Peers. Seniors' mean scores increased from the prior administration.

Figure 7. Mean scores for John Jay students Higher-Order Thinking.

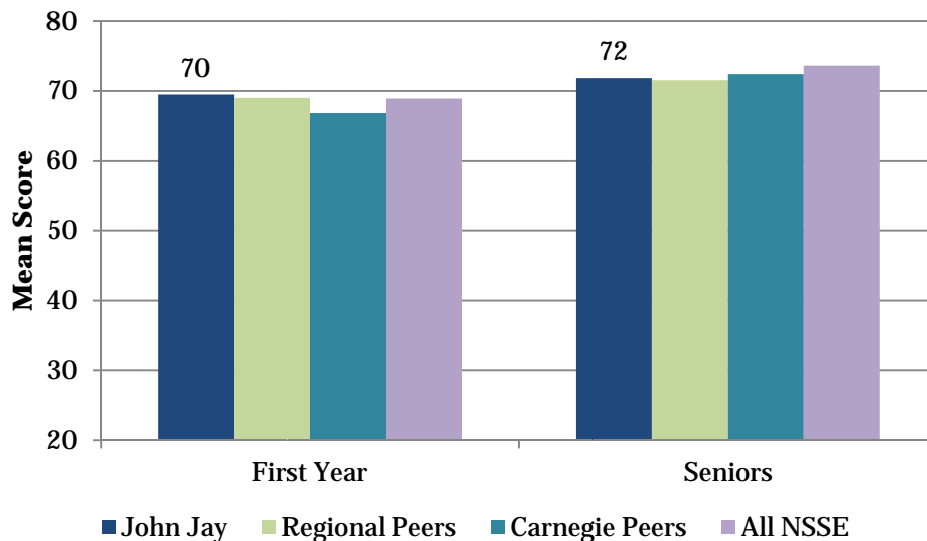
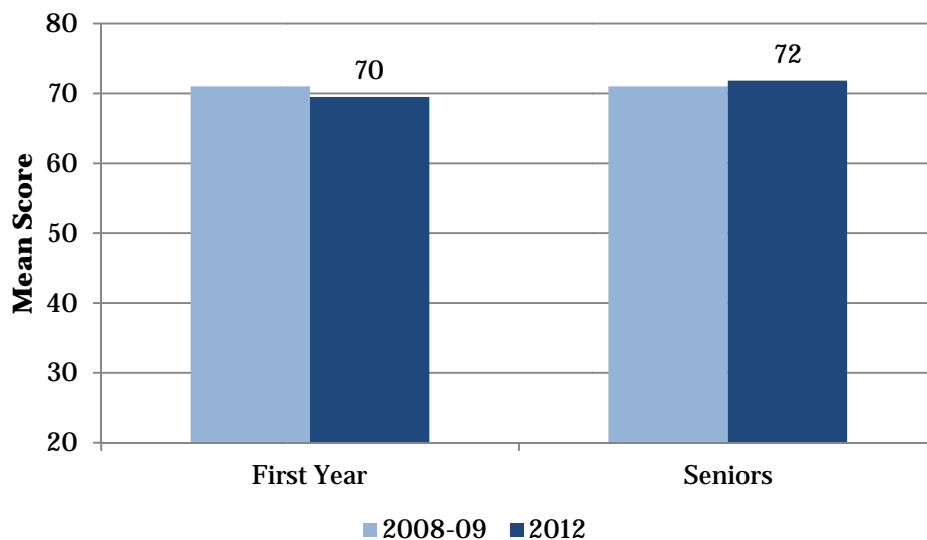


Figure 8. Change in mean scores for John Jay students Higher-Order Thinking.



General Education Skills

The General Education Skills scale maps to the Middle States Standard General Education (Standard 12). This scale contains items measuring development of students’ essential skills in oral and written communication as well as valuable skills in critical analysis through their general education. Both First Year students’ and Seniors’ mean scores are higher than their comparison groups. Seniors’ mean scores increased over the prior administration.

Figure 9. Mean scores for first-year student and seniors on General Education Skills.

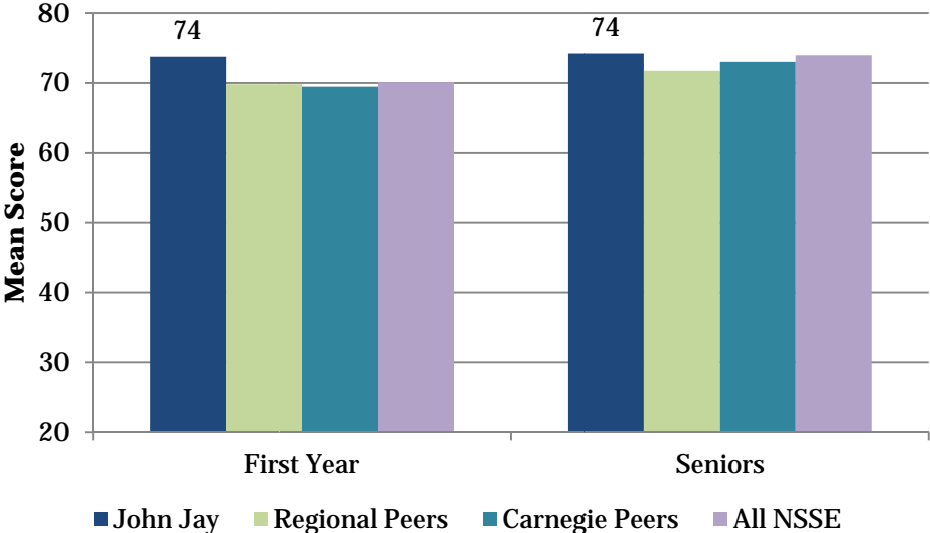
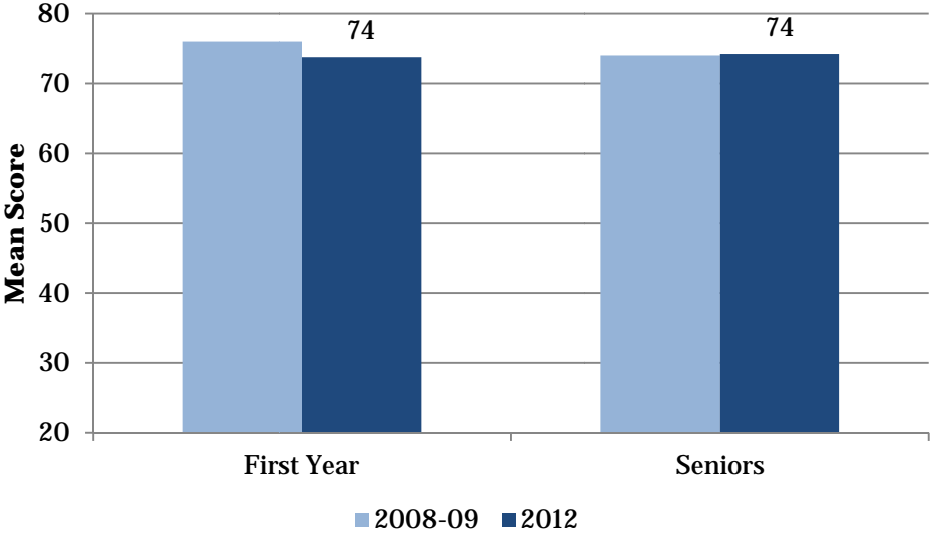


Figure 10. Change in mean scores for first-year student and seniors on General Education Skills.



Practical Competence Skills

The Practical Competence Skills scale maps onto the Middle States Standard Assessment of Student Learning (Standard 14). This scale includes items measuring the development of essential skills in quantitative reasoning, technological competence, and problem-solving. John Jay First Year students' mean scores are higher than their comparison groups. Seniors' mean scores are lower than their comparison groups. Seniors' mean scores increased over the prior administration

Figure 11. Mean scores for John Jay students on Practical Competence Skills.

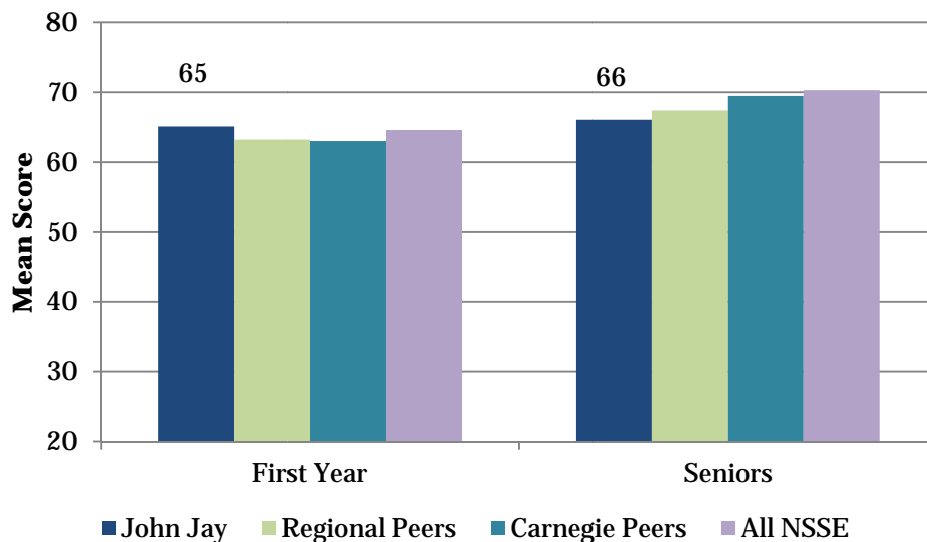
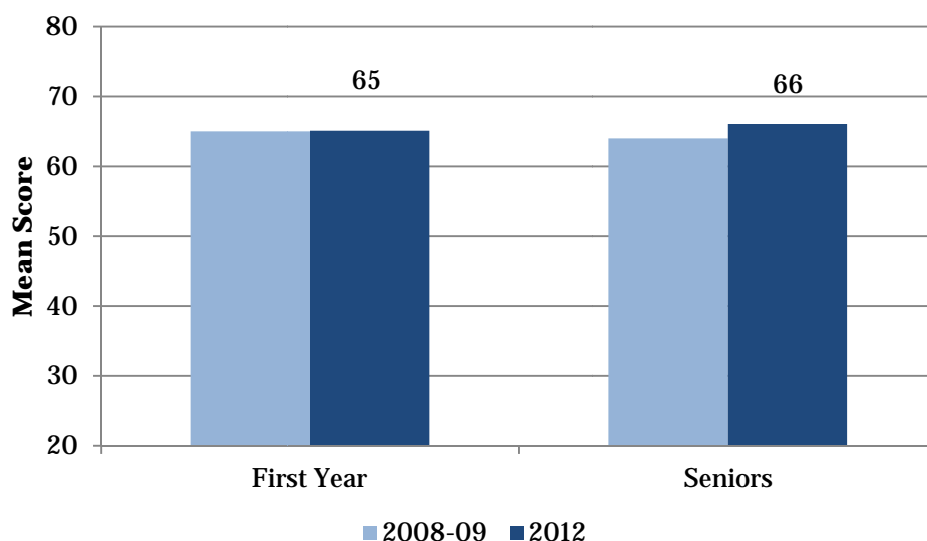


Figure 12. Change in mean scores for John Jay students on Practical Competence Skills.



Integrative Thinking

The Integrative Thinking scale maps to the Middle States Standard Assessment of Student Learning (Standard 14). This scale contains items measuring student development of competencies requiring the synthesis of diverse information and ideas. Both the First Year students' and Seniors' mean scores are higher than their comparison groups. Seniors' mean scores increased over the prior administration.

Figure 13. Mean scores John Jay students on Integrative Thinking.

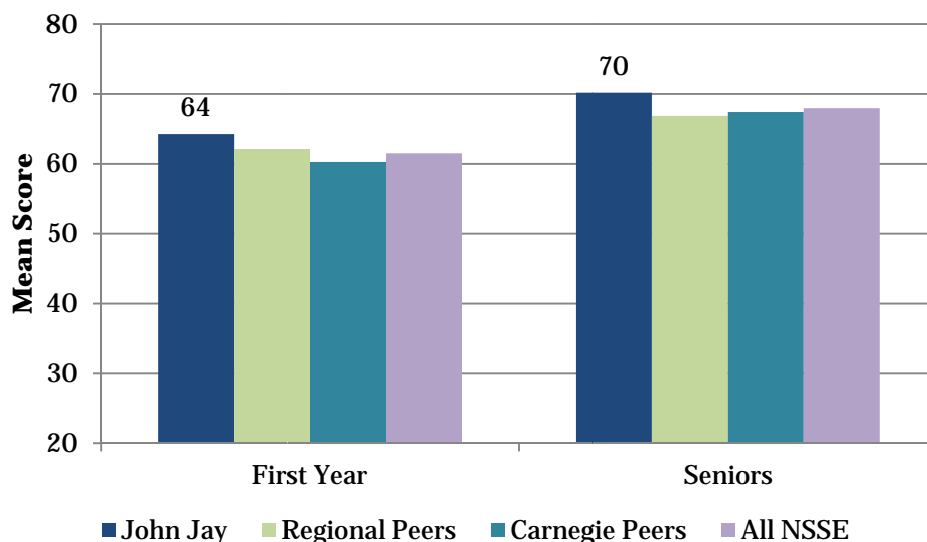
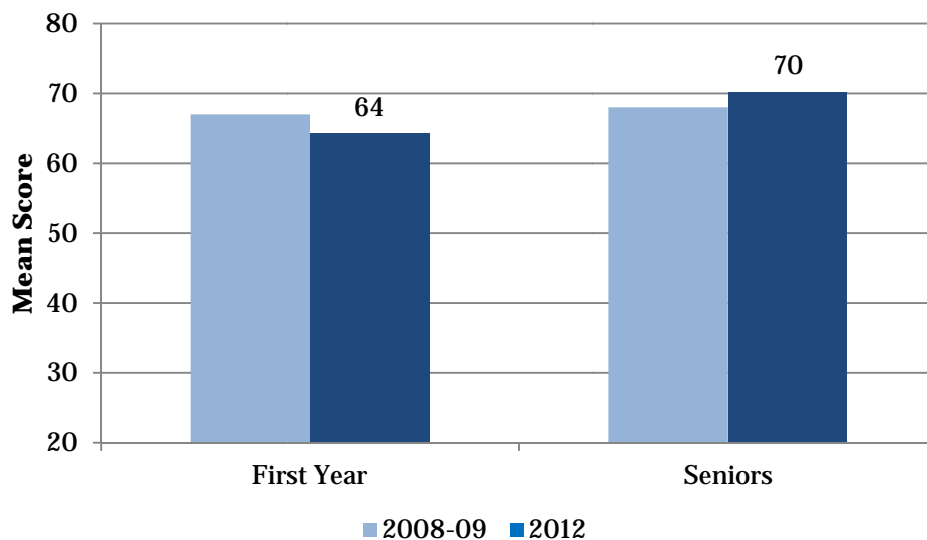


Figure 14. Change in mean scores John Jay students on Integrative Thinking.



Conclusion

After the 2009 NSSE administration the reader was encouraged to consider potential implications of those data for the then upcoming Middle States review. Questions of interest included, but were not limited to:

- Is the college adequately promoting student learning?
- Are John Jay students learning at a level consistent with the Colleges' mission and goals?
- Could student learning at John Jay be improved?

On five of the NSSE scales, John Jay First Year students' mean scores exceeded those of all comparison groups in 2012. On the remaining, two John Jay First Year students' mean scores were higher than both the Regional and Carnegie Peers. For John Jay Seniors, three of the seven scale means exceeded all comparison groups; two of the scale means were higher than only the Regional Peers, and two were lower than all comparison groups.

The 2012 gains in mean scores for Support for Student learning and Student-Faculty Interaction from the 2009 to the 2012 administrations indicate that the college has made significant improvement in these areas. The other changes in scores showed mixed results for First Year versus Seniors. That is, one groups' mean scores increased while the other decreased. From the 2012 results, it is clear that student learning is occurring to a higher degree for First Year students than for Seniors when compared to their peers.

Follow up considerations going forward include:

- What accounts for the difference in mean scores between First Year students and Seniors?
- Can those differences be addressed to continue to improve student learning?

Appendix A

Items Composing NSSE Scales Mapped to Middle States Standards

NSSE Scale	Middle States Standard
<p>Gains in Personal and Social Development</p> <p>To what extent has your experience at your institution contributed to your voting in local, state, or national elections</p> <p>To what extent has your experience at your institution contributed to your understanding your self</p> <p>To what extent has your experience at your institution contributed to your understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds</p> <p>To what extent has your experience at your institution contributed to you developing a personal code of values and ethics</p> <p>To what extent has your experience at your institution contributed to your contributing to the welfare of your community</p> <p>To what extent has your experience at your institution contributed to your developing a deepened sense of spirituality</p>	<p>Integrity (6)</p>
<p>Support for Student Learning</p> <p>To what extent does your institution emphasize: Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically</p> <p>To what extent does your institution emphasize: Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)</p> <p>To what extent does your institution emphasize: Providing the support you need to thrive socially</p> <p>Overall how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution</p> <p>Quality of your relationships with faculty members</p> <p>Quality of your relationships with administrative personnel and offices</p>	<p>Student Support Services (9)</p>
<p>Student-Faculty Interaction ¹</p> <p>How often have you: Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor</p> <p>How often have you: Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class</p> <p>How often have you: Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance</p> <p>How often have you: Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor</p> <p>How often have you: Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.)</p> <p>Have you, or do you plan to: Work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements</p>	<p>Faculty (10)</p>
<p>Higher Order Thinking</p> <p>How much has your coursework emphasized: Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory</p> <p>How much has your coursework emphasized: Synthesizing and organizing ideas into new, more complex interpretations and relationships</p>	<p>General Education (12)</p>

¹ This scale is identical to the NSSE Student-Faculty Interaction Benchmark.

NSSE Scale	Middle States Standard
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How much has your course work emphasized: Making judgments about the value of information, arguments or methods
 How much has your coursework emphasized: Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in a new situations

Gains in General Education

- Writing clearly and effectively
- Speaking clearly and effectively
- Acquiring a broad general education
- Thinking critically and analytically

General Education (12)

Gains in Practical Competence

- Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills
- Working effectively with others
- Using computers and information technology
- Analyzing quantitative problems
- Solving complex real-world problems

General Education (12)

Integrative Thinking

- Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources
- Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, gender, political beliefs, etc.) in class assignments
- Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions
- Discussed ideas from you reading or classes with others (students, family members, co-workers, etc.) outside of class

Assessment of Student Learning (14)

Additional Scale Considered but Not Included for Lack of Measurement Reliability in John Jay Responses, 2012

Academic Challenge

- Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations
- Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more
- Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages
- Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages
- Number of problem sets that take more than an hour to complete
- Number of problem sets that take less than an hour to complete
- The extent to which your examinations during the current school year have challenged
- Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)
- Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)

Educational Offerings (11)

Appendix B
Middle States Commission on Higher Education
Standards at a Glance¹

Institutional Context

Standard 1: Mission and Goals

The institution's mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education and indicates who the institution serves and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals, consistent with the aspirations and expectations of higher education, clearly specify how the institution will fulfill its mission. The mission and goals are developed and recognized by the institution with the participation of its members and its governing body and are used to develop and shape its programs and practices and to evaluate its effectiveness.

Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

An institution conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its mission and goals, develops objectives to achieve them, and utilizes the results of its assessment activities for institutional renewal. Implementation and subsequent evaluation of the success of the strategic plan and resource allocation support the development and change necessary to improve and to maintain institutional quality.

Standard 3: Institutional Resources

The human, financial, technical, physical facilities, and other resources necessary to achieve an institution's mission and goals are available and accessible. In the context of the institution's mission, the effective and efficient uses of the institution's resources are analyzed as part of ongoing outcomes assessment.

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

The institution's system of governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision-making. The governance structure includes an active governing body with sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the mission of the institution.

Standard 5: Administration

The institution's administrative structure and services facilitate learning and research/scholarship, foster quality improvement, and support the institution's organization and governance.

Standard 6: Integrity

In the conduct of its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies, providing support for academic and intellectual freedom.

¹ Middle States Commission on Higher Education. (2006). *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education*. (12th ed.)

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

The institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.

Educational Effectiveness

Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention

The institution seeks to admit students whose interests, goals, and abilities are congruent with its mission and seeks to retain them through the pursuit of the students' educational goals.

Standard 9: Student Support Services

The institution provides student support services reasonably necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution's goals for students.

Standard 10: Faculty

The institution's instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored, and supported by qualified professionals.

Standard 11: Educational Offerings

The institution's educational offerings display academic content, rigor, and coherence appropriate to its higher education mission. The institution identifies student learning goals and objectives, including knowledge and skills, for its educational offerings.

Standard 12: General Education

The institution's curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency.

Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

The institution's programs or activities that are characterized by particular content, focus, location, mode of delivery, or sponsorship meet appropriate standards.

Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution's students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.