



Taken as a whole, students and faculty had similar responses about many areas of the college with a few interesting differences. Not surprisingly, since they experience the college in different ways, students and faculty see the college somewhat differently. Interestingly, part-time faculty are sometimes closer to students and sometimes closer to full-time faculty in their views.

Tompkins Cortland Community College will be conducting the Community College Survey of Student Engagement again in spring 2012.



CCSSE SNAPSHOTS

report on the community college survey of student engagement

Students and Faculty: Different Perspectives?

TC3 – Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) 2010

Tompkins Cortland Community College
Office of Institutional Research

In 2009, TC3 surveyed 661 of our students in 53 classes as part of the national Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). This is the third in a series of reports based on our findings from the survey. To find out more about the CCSSE, why TC3 is involved, and how the results are being used by the College, see CCSSE Snapshots Spring 2010, which is available on the TC3 website at: www.TC3.edu/docs/ir/ccsse_snapshot_spring_2010.pdf

At the same time we surveyed students we also asked faculty members parallel questions in an online survey, to see if their perceptions about student engagement were generally similar. The survey was sent to all faculty; 31 part-time and 27 full-time faculty responded.

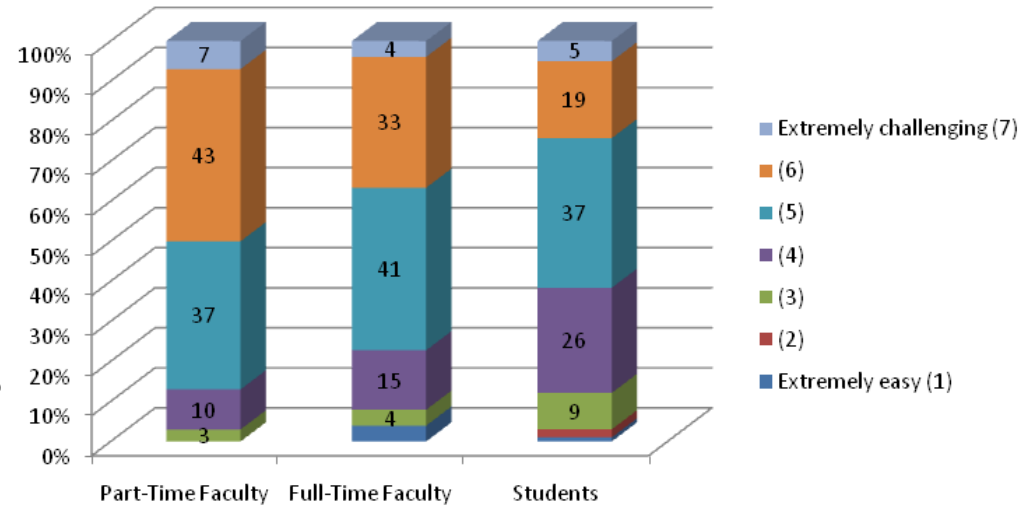
While students and faculty had a similar response to most items (see CCSSE Snapshots #1 and 2), the following charts compare the results of part-time faculty, full-time faculty, and students on several questions where there was a particularly notable difference in responses between the groups. The graphs are presented in percentages of the total of each group, keeping in mind that there were many more student respondents than faculty.”

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HOW HARD ARE THOSE EXAMS?

1. The extent to which examinations of student performance challenge students to do their best work:



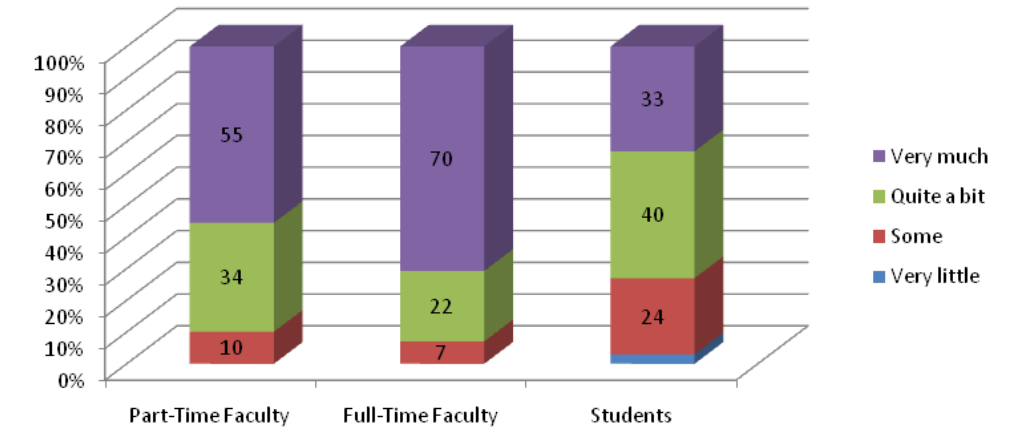
On a scale of one to seven, where one is “extremely easy” and seven is “extremely challenging,” the first table shows there is a noticeable discrepancy between faculty and student perceptions of how much examinations challenge students, as well as a smaller difference between full-time and part-time faculty perceptions. A far smaller proportion of students say that their exams are extremely challenging: 24 percent rate them in the top two levels, compared to 37 percent of full-time faculty and 50 percent of part-time faculty.

At the other end of the scale, 12 percent of student respondents said their exams were in the lowest three levels of “extremely easy,” while 8 percent of full-time faculty and 3 percent of part-time faculty agreed.

Overall, it appears that of all the groups, part-time faculty felt that exams were the most challenging, students felt they were the least challenging, and full-time faculty were in between.

GETTING THE SUPPORT NEEDED?

3. How much does this college emphasize providing students the support they need to help

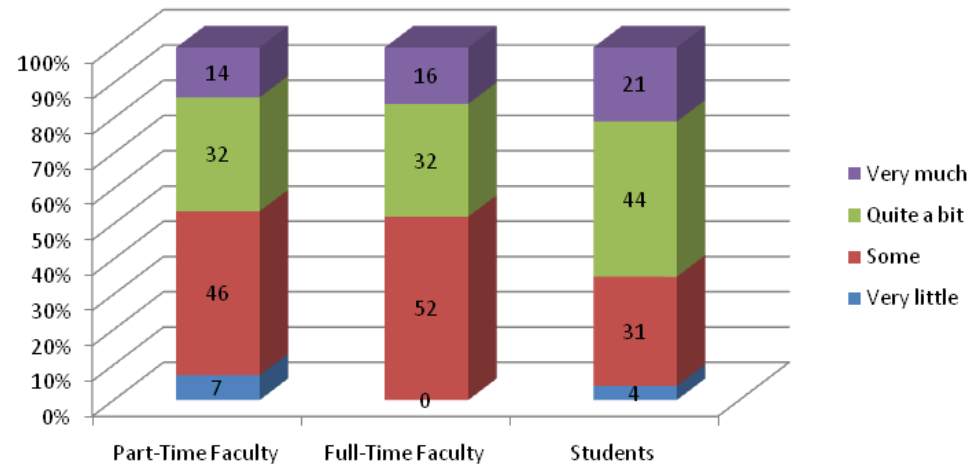


The question “How much does this college emphasize providing students the support they need to help them succeed in college?” highlighted a major difference in perceptions between students and faculty. While 70 percent of full-time faculty answered “very much” to the question, only 33 percent of students and 55 percent of part-time faculty answered that way. At the other end of the spectrum, 3 percent of the student s responding said “very little” emphasis was placed on providing support to help them succeed and no faculty concurred.

In a nutshell, faculty felt that there was a major focus at the college on providing students with the support they needed to succeed, while students had a different sense of things and thought that it was less of a focus for the college.

STUDYING HARD?

2. How much does this college emphasize encouraging students to spend significant amounts of time studying?



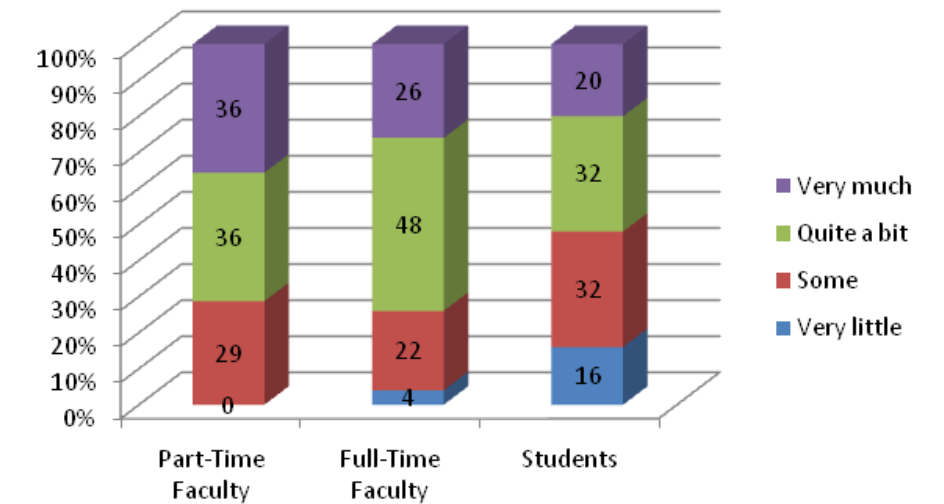
The next chart depicts how much the respondents felt the college emphasized spending a significant amount of time studying. For students, there was a wider range of answers, with “quite a bit” at 44 percent the most frequent answer given, and 21 percent saying “very much.” Full-time faculty skewed lower; with more than half (52 percent) saying the college emphasized studying “some.”

Part-time faculty responses were close to full-time faculty responses, with one notable exception: 7 percent of part-time faculty said “very little” emphasis was placed on encouraging students to study, compared to no full-time faculty giving that response.

In sum, students said that the college placed a higher emphasis on spending time studying than did either group of faculty.

GETTING TO KNOW OTHER KINDS OF PEOPLE?

4. How much does this college emphasize encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds?



When asked how much the college emphasized encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds, 16 percent of the students said there was “very little” emphasis placed on it, and equal portions (32 percent) said “quite a bit” and “some.” Faculty again had a different perception, with close to half of the full-time faculty respondents saying there was “quite a bit” of emphasis and 26 percent saying there was “very much.” Part-time faculty thought there was even more emphasis on encouraging contact between students with different backgrounds: 36 percent responded “very much” and “quite a bit” and none of them said “very little.”

On the whole, faculty said that contact among students with different backgrounds was a major emphasis of the college, meanwhile students perceived it to be less of a focus.