

Degrees of Preparation Spring 2009

(First-Year and Senior Students)



Administered online along with Smith and Hampshire Colleges through an agreement with the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU)

Response Rates:

First-Year Students (162/377 or 43%); Seniors (168/362 or 46%)

Degrees of Preparation

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Change Type Size

When making decisions that affect the future of higher education, legislators and policy makers value information about what students learn in the classroom and the experiences that prepare them for the workplace and their communities.

This questionnaire addresses these important concerns. Participation is completely voluntary. Responses will be kept confidential, and only summarized responses will be reported.

This questionnaire will be administered in the fall to first-year students and in the spring to seniors as they prepare to graduate. This questionnaire takes about 15 minutes to complete.

This questionnaire is being distributed to students in many types of colleges and universities across the country. Your responses are important to develop a portrait of the broad range of experiences students have while in college. Please take the time to complete this questionnaire in a thoughtful way.

Informed Consent

- Change Type Size +

The institution's review board that approves survey use for the campus requires evidence that participation is voluntary. Please review this information and indicate whether your participation is voluntary and that you understand your rights with regard to taking this survey.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

You are asked to complete this survey as part of a national study conducted by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities because you are a freshman or senior. This study is designed to determine what changes occur in student preparation for success in the workplace and preparation for civic engagement during the course of an undergraduate baccalaureate program. This is the first field test of this survey. The data gathered will be used in studies designed to better understand student growth and to help improve the quality of an undergraduate college experience. Your participation in this research study (or decision not to participate) will not affect your relationship with your college nor your grades.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to complete the survey and submit it via the Internet. Most respondents can complete this questionnaire in about 15 minutes, although individual

Decline

Agree

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Information Sources about Current World Events

Change Type Size

Please indicate how often you use the following sources to inform yourself about current world events (for example, political, environmental, social, economic, or other issues).

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
U.S.-based media (internet, cable/TV, radio/podcasts, print)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Non-U.S.-based media (Telemundo, BBC, Al Jazeera, CBC, The Economist, Financial Times)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blogs, social networking sites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conversations (face-to-face, emailing)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate the importance of the following people in informing you about current world events.

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
Family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Friends, co-workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Religious leaders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professors, teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Politicians	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New Media (e.g., blogosphere, citizen journalists)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mainstream Media (e.g., newspapers, radio, cable TV)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Scientists, researchers, other professionals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Global and International Activities

Change Type Size

Have you ever done the following?

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Developed friendship(s) with individuals from outside the United States | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Taken a class that included international or global issues | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Studied a foreign language | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Attended international or global events on campus | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Participated in international clubs or activities | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Traveled outside the United States with my family | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Served as a host family for an international student | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Lived outside the United States with my family | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Traveled outside the United States by myself or with friends | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Participated in a volunteer service outside the United States | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Participated in a study abroad or an exchange program | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Participated in workplace experiences outside the United States | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |

12%

Language Learning

Change Type Size

How many languages other than English do you know? (ex: 2) If none, skip to the next section

Which non-English language do you know best? (ex: Spanish)

Have your skills with that language improved since you started college?

- Yes
 No

Please indicate how well you can understand the language you listed above

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Can understand the language professor in class | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Can understand radio/television/podcasts | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Can follow an analysis or speech with complex ideas and idiomatic phrases | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Have near-native or native abilities, for example, can understand most forms of discussion | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |

Please indicate how well you can read the language you listed above

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Can understand a menu or the headlines in a newspaper | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Can get the gist of an entire newspaper article | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Can use original language sources for college papers | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Have near-native or native abilities, for example, can read complex reports and data important in a professional environment | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |

Please indicate how well you can communicate in the language you listed above

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Can answer questions in language class, order a meal, ask directions | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Can participate in general conversation, although I have difficulty expressing myself at times | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Can explain complex ideas with few grammatical mistakes | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| Have near-native or native abilities, for examples, can participate effectively in most | | |

settings

Yes No

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Political Involvement

Change Type Size

Are you registered to vote?

- Ineligible
- Yes
- No

Please indicate whether you have EVER DONE any of following for each of the columns below.

	Student Government (Student Body representatives)	Local Government (Mayor, Commissioner, School Board, etc.)	State/Provincial Government (Governor, State Legislator, Judges, etc.)	Federal/National Government (President, Senator, Representative)
Informed myself about (Read or watched news, watched debates, attended rallies, etc.)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Discussed political issues about (Joined a political organization, blogged, etc.)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Promoted a candidate for (Wore a campaign button, gave money, joined a Facebook group, displayed a bumper sticker, etc.)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Worked on a campaign in (Registered voters, volunteered, canvassed a neighborhood, etc.)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Voted	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

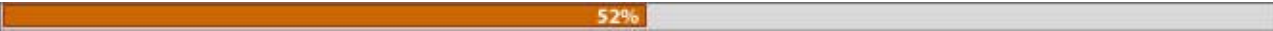


Group Skills

Change Type Size

The statements in the left and right columns below are intended to represent ends of a scale. Please click the button that most accurately reflects your feelings, beliefs, or behaviors related to each item.

I do not have skills to facilitate change on my campus or in the local community	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	I have skills to facilitate change on my campus or in the local community
I am not skillful at resolving conflicts with people	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	I am skillful at resolving conflicts with people
I am not skillful at resolving conflicts that involve bias, discrimination, and prejudice	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	I am skillful at resolving conflicts that involve bias, discrimination, and prejudice
I do not have the skills to create an environment where members feel included	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	I have the skills to create an environment where members feel included



Beliefs about Community

Change Type Size

The statements in the left and right columns below are intended to represent ends of a scale. Please click the button that most accurately reflects your feelings, beliefs, or behaviors related to each item.

People should not try to make a contribution to their community

People should try to make a contribution to their community

People cannot play an important role in making the world better

People can play an important role in making the world better

By working together, people cannot influence decisions that affect their community

By working together, people can influence decisions that affect their community

Communicating with decision makers does not help people solve problems facing their community

Communicating with decision makers helps people solve problems facing their community

55%

Helping Others

Change Type Size

We are interested in knowing about your participation in activities to help others. You may have volunteered for an activity, or you may have been a member of an organization that adopted the activity. The activity may have been an assignment in a course you took.

During the past 12 months, did you participate in activities to help others ?

(for example, tutor students in elementary or secondary schools, help at a senior citizens' center, lead a recycling program)

Yes

No

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59%

Workplace Experience with Careers

Change Type Size

We are interested in knowing about your experiences over the past year with careers in business, industry, government, health, and education.

Examples include interning at a marketing agency, preparing a business plan for an engineering firm as part of a class assignment, assisting at a law office, doing a clinical practicum at a hospital, and being a research assistant on a professor's project.

Have you had similar workplace experiences in the past 12 months?

- Yes
 No

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62%

Critical Thinking and Communication Skills

Change Type Size

For each of the items below, please indicate how often you have engaged in each activity *either in or out of the classroom* and indicate how effectively you do each activity.

HOW FREQUENTLY				ACTIVITY	HOW EFFECTIVELY				
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often		Not able to do effectively	Able to do somewhat effectively	Able to do effectively	Able to do effectively	Able to do effectively
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Participate in a debate or discussion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Make a speech to a group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Use numerical data to make decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Use information from a variety of different resources (books, journals, magazines, internet, data bases, etc.) to write a report	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Write a paper or report that presents a point of view	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Incorporate feedback from others in revising a report or presentation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Reconsider my point of view about an important issue based on information that I gather	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Critical Thinking and Communication Skills

Change Type Size

For each of the items below, please indicate how often you have engaged in each activity *either in or out of the classroom* and indicate how effectively you do each activity.

HOW FREQUENTLY				ACTIVITY	HOW EFFECTIVELY				
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often		Not able to do effectively	Able to do somewhat effectively	Able to do effectively		
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Lead a group project	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Work in groups of people who differ from me in terms of education, political orientation, points of view, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Evaluate the credibility of information sources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Discuss the ethical consequences of a course of action	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Creatively think about new ideas or ways to improve things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Critically evaluate different approaches to a problem	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Discuss complex problems with others to develop a better solution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Civic Engagement

Change Type Size

For each of the items below, please indicate how often you have engaged in each activity and indicate how effectively you do each activity.

HOW FREQUENTLY				ACTIVITY	HOW EFFECTIVELY				
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often		Not able to do effectively	Able to do somewhat effectively	Able to do effectively		
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Create a plan to address an issue or a problem in your community (campus, local, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Raise awareness about an issue or a problem	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Organize a group to address an issue or problem	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Identify others who could help deal with an issue or a problem in your community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Present your opinion about an issue in the media (for example, blog, email, radio call-in, letter to editor)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Organize a petition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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