
NSSE 2007 Benchmarks

Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice

Level of Academic Challenge

Active & Collaborative Learning

Student Faculty Interaction

Enriching Educational Experiences

Supportive Campus Environment

NSSE developed five indicators, or benchmarks, of effective educational practices to represent the multi-dimensional nature of student engagement at the institutional, sector, and national levels

NSSE Benchmarks

- The following information summarizes how Samford performed with regard to the 5 NSSE Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice
- It compares Samford to 85 Carnegie peer institutions in the Doctoral/Research Category
- Examples of Doctoral/Research level institutions participating in NSSE include: American University, Pepperdine University, Southern Methodist University, University of the Pacific, University of San Diego
- Information is broken out by first-year students and seniors

Level of Academic Challenge

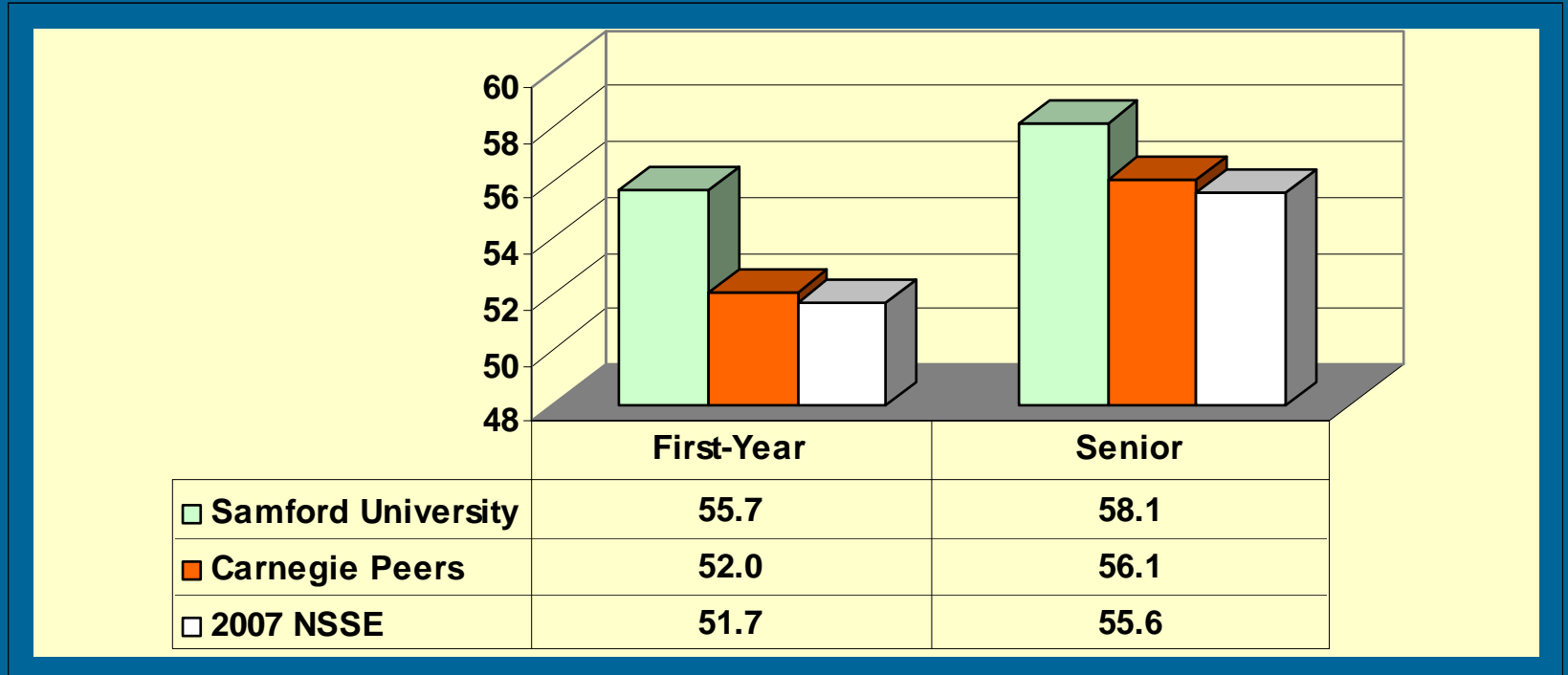
■ **Definition:**

- Challenging intellectual and creative to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance.

■ **Survey Items Included in Benchmark:**

- Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, etc. related to academic program)
- Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings
- Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more; number of written papers or reports of between 5 and 19 pages; and number of written papers or reports fewer than 5 pages.
- Coursework emphasizing synthesis and organizing of ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships
- Coursework emphasizing the making of judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods
- Coursework emphasizing application of theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations
- Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations
- Campus environment emphasizing time studying and on academic work

Level of Academic Challenge



Samford's benchmark score for Level of Academic Challenge was higher for both freshmen and seniors. This was in comparison to all Carnegie peer institutions and the NSSE 2007 average.

Active and Collaborative Learning

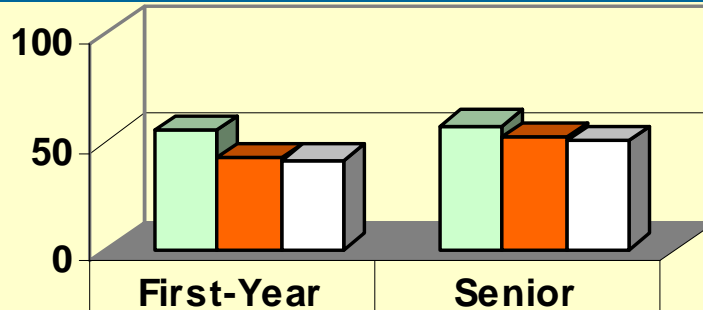
■ ***Definition:***

- Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and asked to think about what they are learning in different settings. Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material prepares students for the messy, unscripted problems they will encounter daily during and after college.

■ ***Survey Items Included in Benchmark:***

- Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
- Made a class presentation
- Worked with other students on projects during class
- Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments
- Tutored or taught other students
- Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)

Active and Collaborative Learning



| | First-Year | Senior |
|----------------------|------------|--------|
| ■ Samford University | 54.7 | 57.2 |
| ■ Carnegie Peers | 41.9 | 51.7 |
| □ 2007 NSSE | 41.2 | 50.1 |

Samford's benchmark score for Active and Collaborative Learning was higher for both freshmen and seniors. This was in comparison to all Carnegie peer institutions and the NSSE 2007 average.

Student-Faculty Interaction

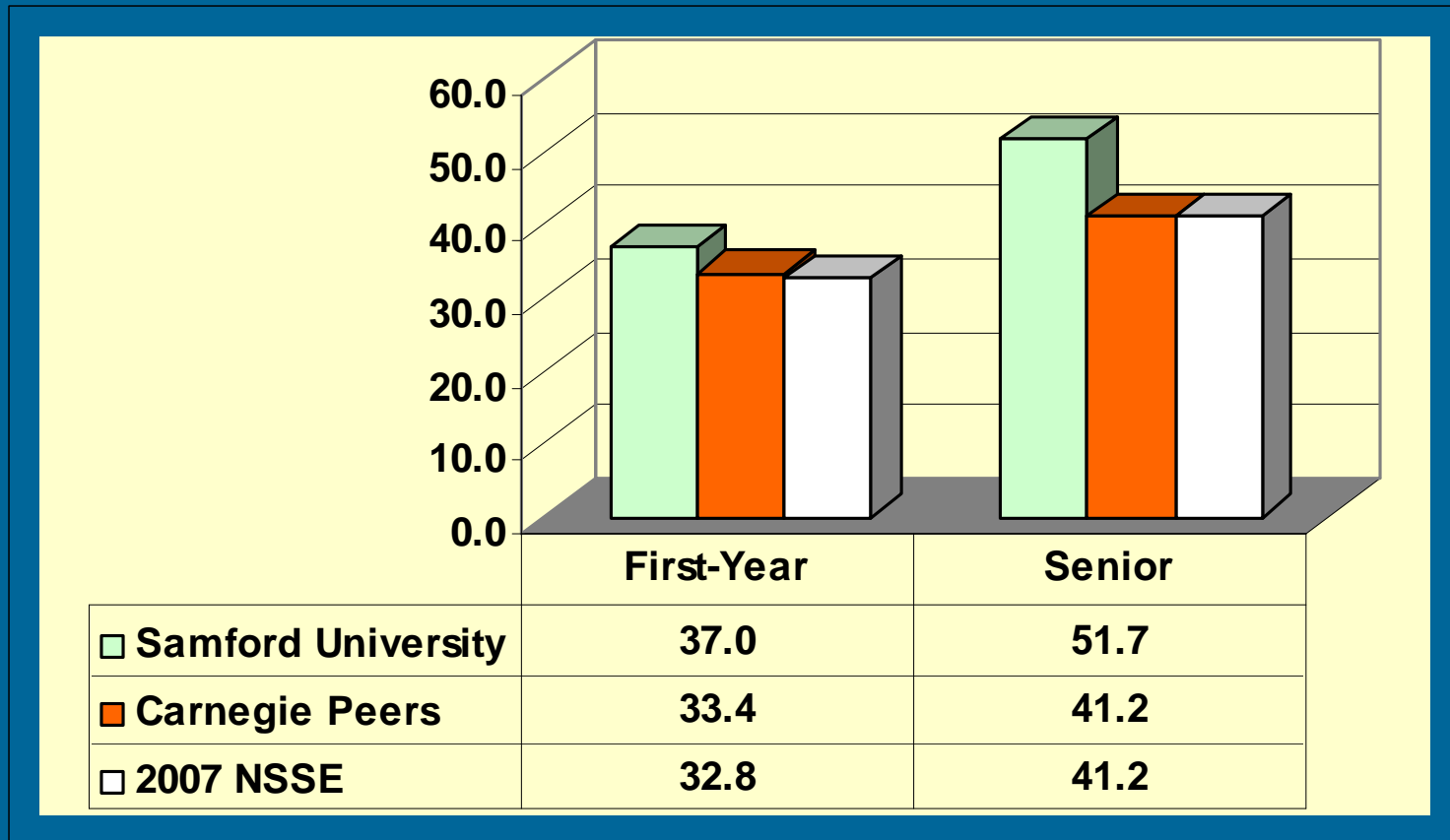
■ ***Definition:***

- Students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside the classroom. As a result, their teachers become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, life-long learning.

■ ***Survey Items Included in Benchmark:***

- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
- Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student-life activities, etc.)
- Received prompt feedback from faculty on your academic performance (written or oral)
- Worked with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements

Student-Faculty Interaction



Samford's benchmark score for Student Faculty Interaction was higher for both freshmen and seniors. This was in comparison to all Carnegie peer institutions and the 2007 NSSE average.

Enriching Educational Experiences

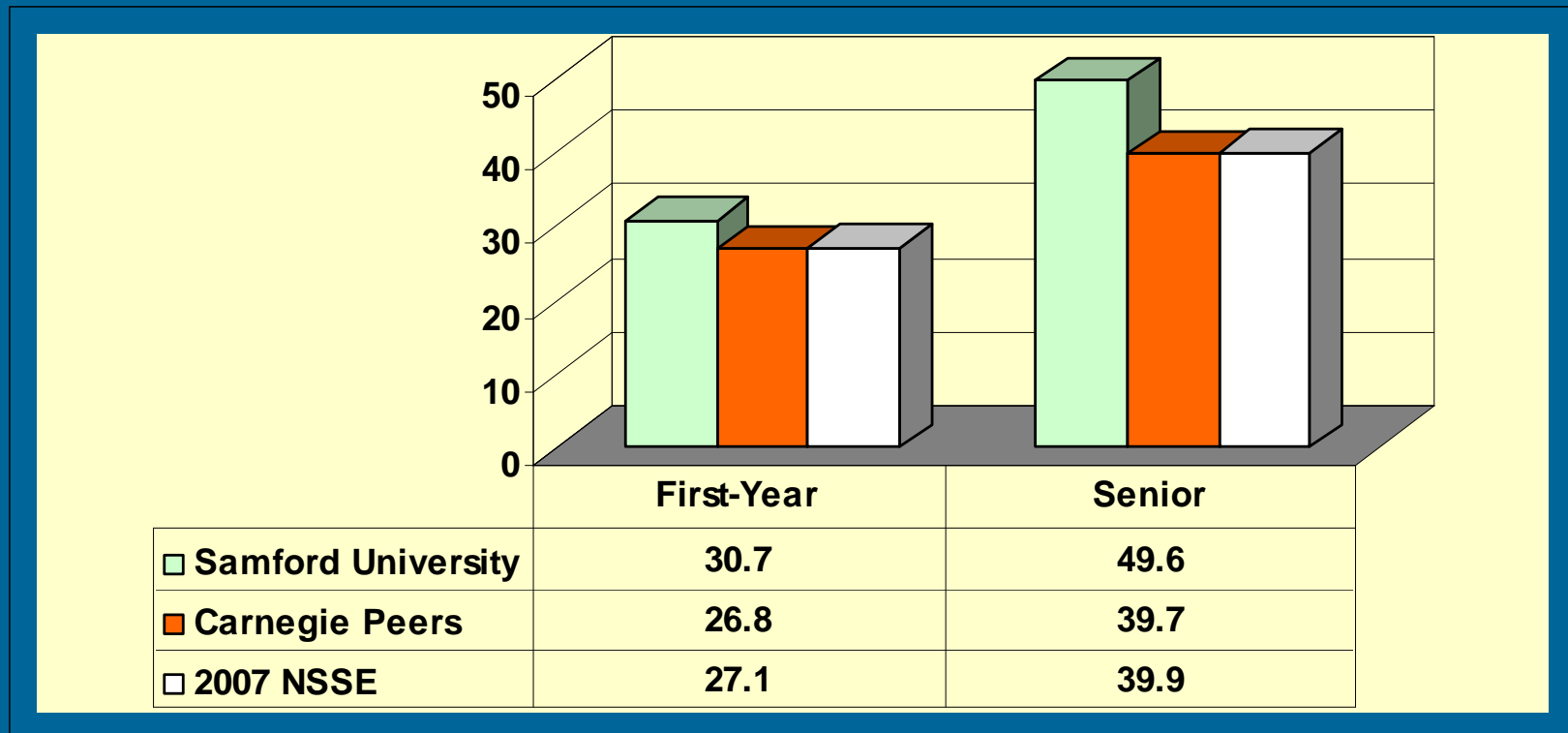
■ **Definition:**

- Complementary learning opportunities in and out of class augment academic programs. Diversity experiences teach students valuable things about themselves and others. Technology facilitates collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community service, and senior capstone courses provide opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge.

■ **Survey Items Included in Benchmark:**

- Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, publications, student government, sports, etc.)
- Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment.
- Community service or volunteer work
- Independent study or self-designed majors
- Culminating senior experience (comprehensive exam, capstone course, thesis project, etc.)
- Serious conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values
- Serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity
- Campus environment encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
- Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together

Enriching Educational Experiences



Samford's benchmark score for Enriching Educational Experiences was higher for both freshmen and seniors. This was in comparison to all Carnegie peer institutions and the 2007 NSSE average.

Supportive Campus Environment

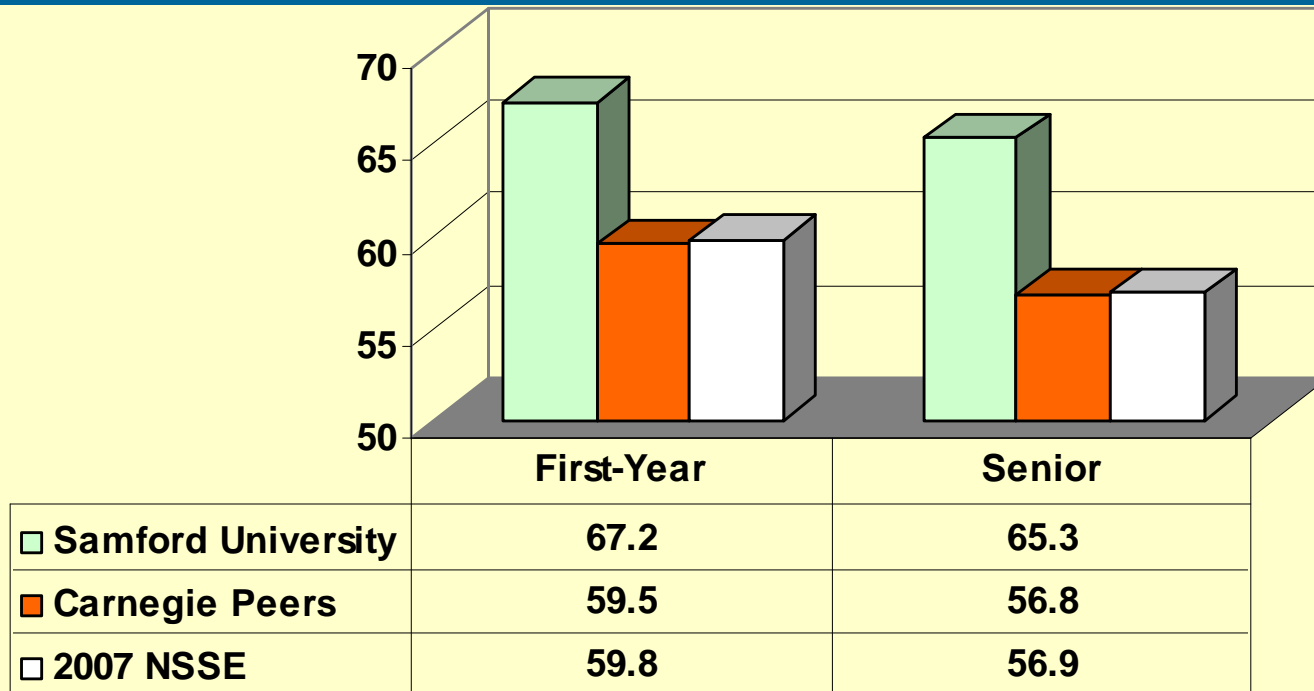
- ***Definition:***

- Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus.

- ***Survey Items Included in Benchmark:***

- Campus environment provides the support you need to help you succeed academically
- Campus environment helps you cope with your nonacademic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
- Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially
- Quality of relationships with other students
- Quality of relationships with faculty members
- Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices

Supportive Campus Environment



Samford's benchmark score for Supportive Campus Environment was higher for both freshmen and seniors. This was in comparison to all Carnegie peer institutions and the 2007 NSSE average.