National Survey of Student Engagement
Executive Report
University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Office of Institutional Research

The NSSE gauges the extent to which colleges are providing educational experiences associated with important learning and personal development outcomes for their students. A cross-section of institutions from the Carnegie Classification of four-year institutions have participated in NSSE each year allowing institutions to benchmark their results with other institutions in their peer group, to create special comparison groups, and to make comparisons to all NSSE-participating institutions.

By comparing UMBC with (1) NSSE-participating universities and (2) NSSE-participating public Sci-Tech universities on items comprising each benchmark of Effective Educational Practices we can highlight UMBC's strengths and specific areas for improvement at UMBC.

Overview –Performance Across UMBC's Benchmarks (2001, 2004, 2005, and 2008)
- UMBC first-year students' benchmark scores remained consistent over time with two *notable increases*:
    - Level of Academic Challenge from 2004 to 2008 (49.7% vs. 52.7%)
    - Student-Faculty Interaction from 2004 to 2008 (27.6% vs. 31.0%)
- UMBC seniors' benchmark scores saw improvement in all five of the benchmarks with two *notable increases*:
    - Active and Collaborative Learning (39.3% vs. 46.5%)
    - Supportive Campus Environment (44.9% vs. 52.1%)

Benchmark Item Highlights: UMBC vs. Peer Institutions
- UMBC students perceived greater institutional emphasis on academics than their peers. (A10)
- UMBC students perceived greater institutional emphasis regarding studying and academics than their peers. (A11)
- UMBC students were more likely than their peers to perceive that the institution encouraged contact among groups of diverse students. (D2)
- UMBC students were also more likely than their peers to engage with students who were different from themselves. (D3)

Benchmark Item Specific Areas of Improvement: UMBC vs. Peer Institutions

- Across both peer comparison groups, UMBC first-year students were significantly more likely to report writing *fewer* papers than average (5 – 19 pages or < 5 pages). (A8)
- UMBC seniors were significantly more likely than peers to be writing *fewer* papers shorter than 5 pages. (A9)
- UMBC first-year and senior-level students did not practice oral communication skills as frequently as their peers. (B2)
- UMBC first-year and senior-level students reported participating less in a community-based project as part of a regular course than their peers. (B6)
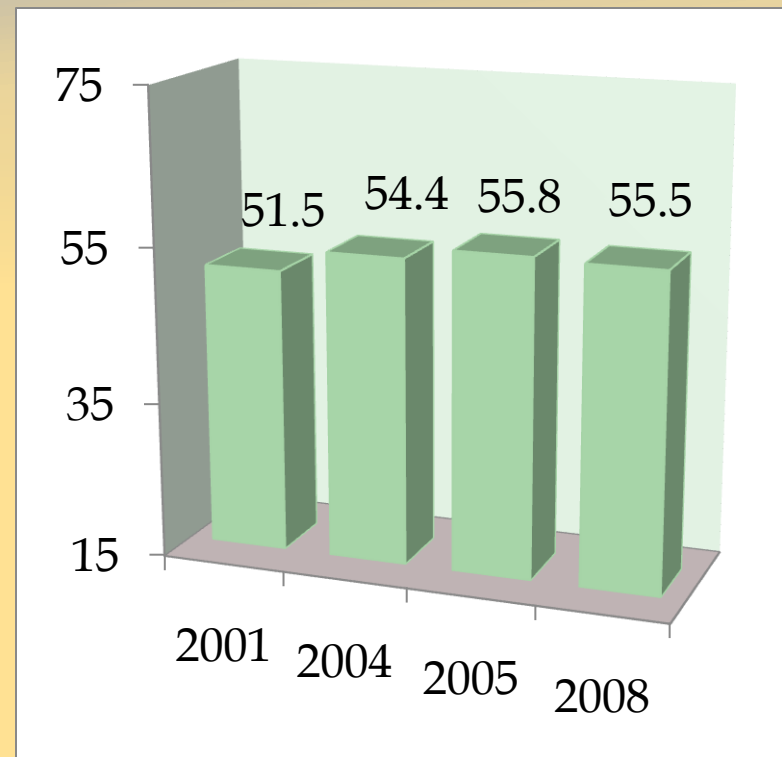
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(A) LEVEL OF ACADEMIC CHALLENGE (LAC)-*STUDENTS LEARN MORE WHEN THEY ARE INTENSELY INVOLVED IN THEIR EDUCATION AND ASKED TO THINK ABOUT WHAT THEY ARE LEARNING IN DIFFERENT SETTINGS. COLLABORATING WITH OTHERS IN SOLVING PROBLEMS OR MASTERING DIFFICULT MATERIAL PREPARES STUDENTS FOR THE MESSY, UNSCRIPTED PROBLEMS THEY WILL ENCOUNTER DAILY DURING AND AFTER COLLEGE.*

FIRST –YEAR STUDENTS UMBC

Year	Value
2001	49.7
2004	51.2
2005	50.4
2008	52.7
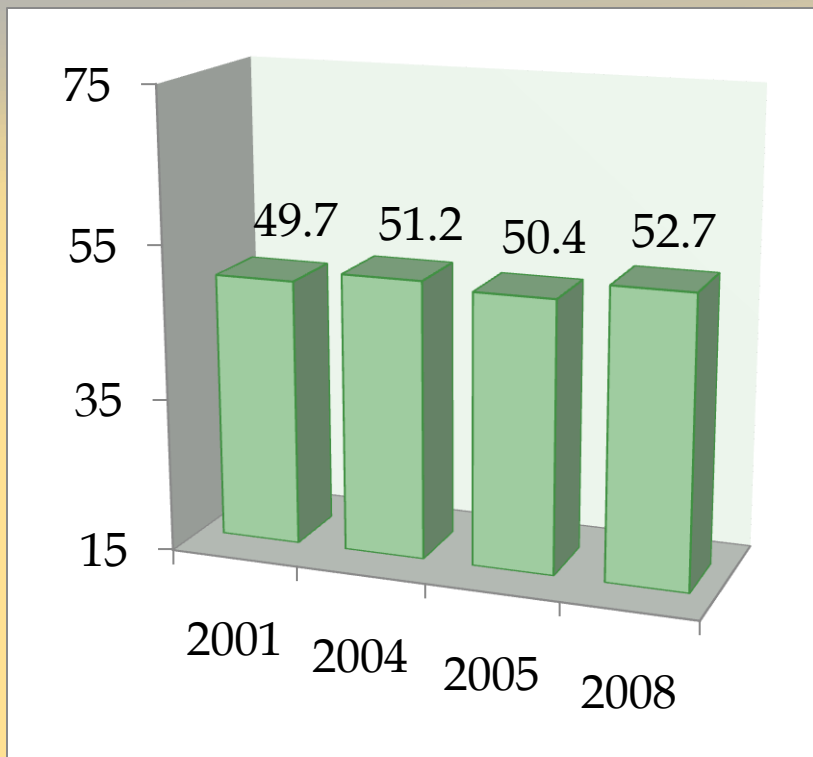
**Peer Comparison 2008
SCI–TECH 52.2   NSSE 52.9**

SENIORS UMBC

Year	Value
2001	51.5
2004	54.4
2005	55.8
2008	55.5

**Peer Comparison 2008
SCI–TECH 55.0   NSSE 56.5**

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LEVEL OF ACADEMIC CHALLENGE (LAC)

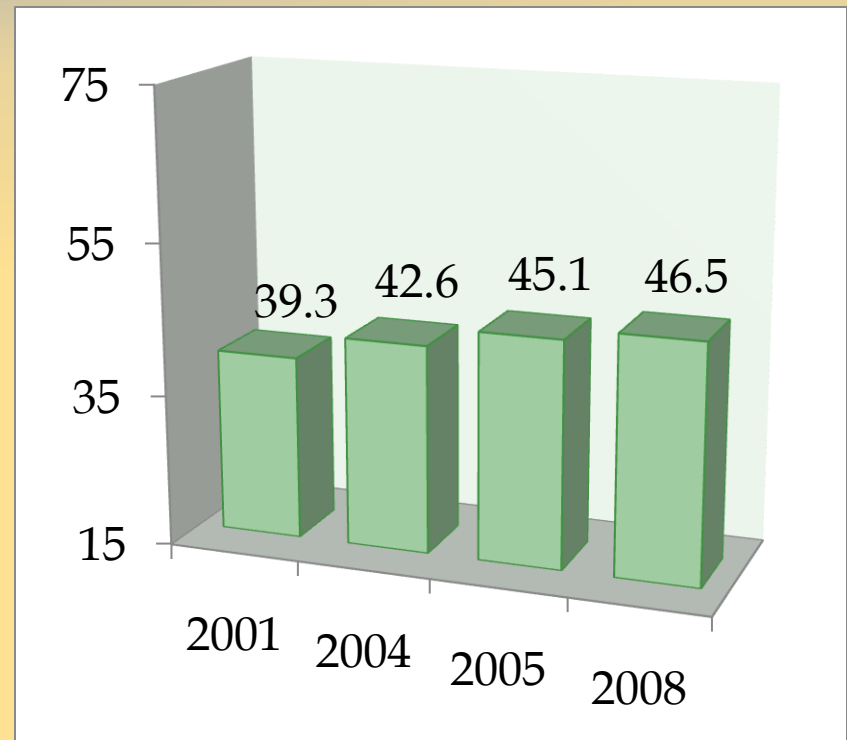| Benchmark Items	First-Year Students		Peer	Seniors		Peer
	FY-2008	% Change 2001 to 2008	Sci-Tec & Overall	SR-2008	% Change 2001 to 2008	Sci-Tec & Overall
A1 ● Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations	2.58	4.89%	2.55 2.65	2.63	-2.39%	2.59 2.73
A2 ● Coursework emphasizes: **Analysis** of the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory	3.17	5.16%	3.10 3.10	3.25	0.95%	3.22 3.24
A3 ● Coursework emphasizes: **Synthesis** and organizing of ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	2.97	6.11%	2.85 2.89	2.99	1.51%	2.98 3.05
A4 ● Coursework emphasizes: **Making of judgments** about the value of information, arguments, or methods	2.88	10.58%	2.81 2.90	2.90	7.58%	2.93 3.01
A5 ● Coursework emphasizes: **Applying** theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	3.06	2.55%	3.04 3.03	3.11	0.01%	3.16 3.19
A6 ● Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings	3.17	1.46%	3.22 3.24	3.10	-2.41%	3.10 3.20
A7 ● Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more	1.26	9.84%	1.23 1.28	1.58	17.40%	1.61 1.64
A8 ● Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages	2.14	2.50%	2.28 2.29	2.56	8.91%	2.51 2.58
A9 ● Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages	2.70	1.93%	2.94 3.04	2.75	7.97%	2.95 3.00
A10 ● Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, etc. related to academic program)	4.36	2.55%	4.32 4.04	4.37	3.77%	4.32 4.14
A11 ● Campus environment emphasizes: Spending significant amount of time studying and on academic work.	3.37	0.48%	3.20 3.14	3.40	5.84%	3.16 3.14

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(B) ACTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING (ACL)-*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.*

FIRST –YEAR STUDENTS UMBC

Year	Value
2001	38.1
2004	36.0
2005	36.2
2008	40.5
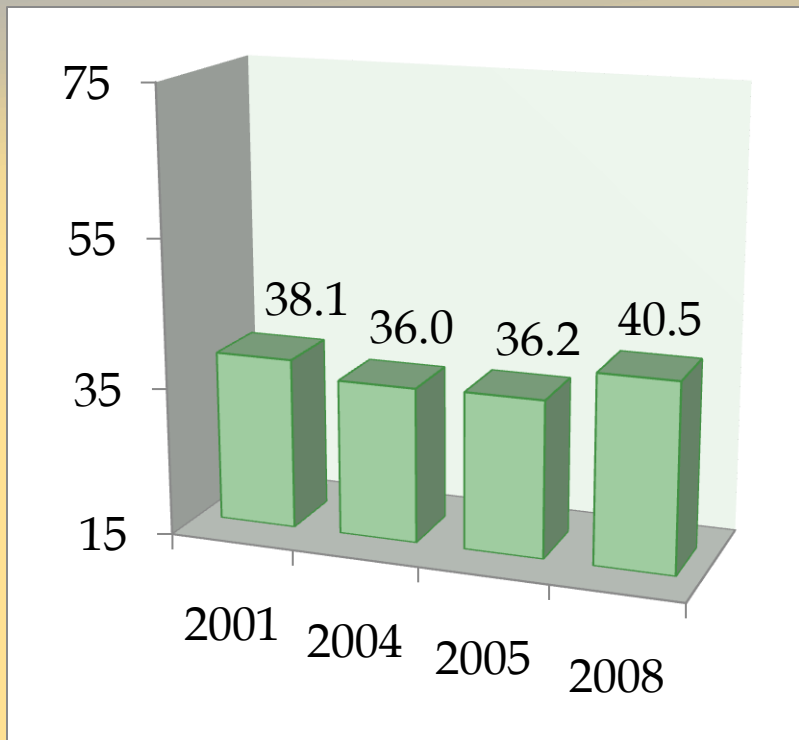
Peer Comparison 2008
SCI–TECH 40.0   NSSE 42.5

SENIORS UMBC

Year	Value
2001	39.3
2004	42.6
2005	45.1
2008	46.5

Peer Comparison 2008
SCI–TECH 47.9   NSSE 50.8

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ACTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING (ACL)

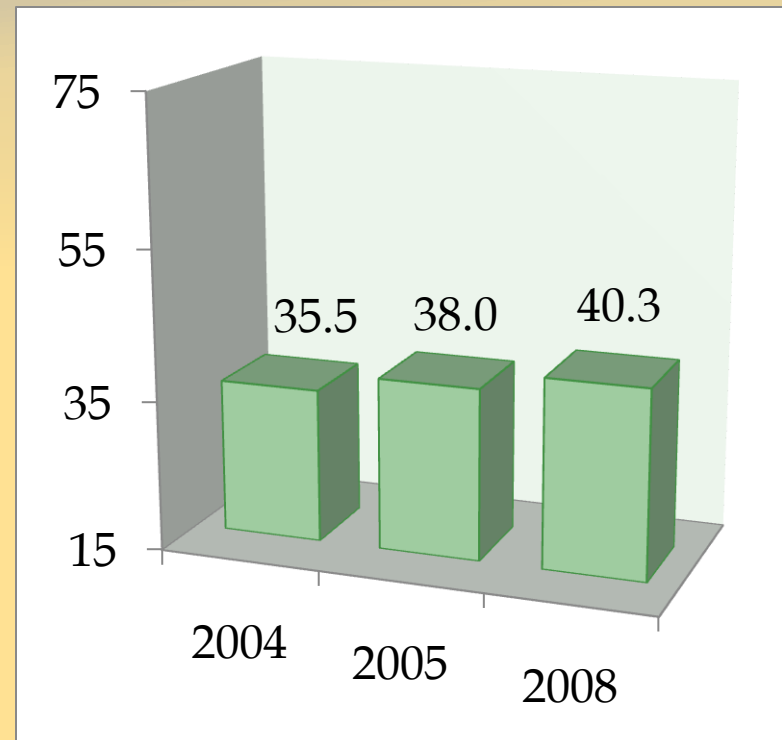| Benchmark Items	First-Year Students		Peer	Seniors		Peer
	FY-2008	*% Change 2001 to 2008*	Sci-Tec & Overall	SR-2008	*% Change 2001 to 2008*	Sci-Tec & Overall
B1 ● Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	2.63	1.80%	2.57 2.78	2.98	9.49%	2.83 3.07
B2 ● Made a class presentation	1.84	7.00%	2.06 2.27	2.49	8.77%	2.59 2.80
B3 ● Worked with other students on projects **during class**	2.33	0.84%	2.36 2.41	2.34	-5.33%	2.43 2.52
B4 ● Worked with classmates **outside of class** to prepare class assignments	2.55	11.62%	2.43 2.40	2.67	9.67%	2.86 2.75
B5 ● Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	1.86	4.53%	1.75 1.89	1.89	14.77%	1.70 1.88
B6 ● Participated in a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of a regular course	1.52	9.05%	1.55 1.60	1.52	11.49%	1.59 1.74
B7 ● Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	2.74	-0.66%	2.61 2.69	2.80	4.64%	2.78 2.84

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(C) STUDENT-FACULTY INTERACTION (SFI) -*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.*

FIRST –YEAR STUDENTS UMBC

	2004	2005	2008
	27.6	28.9	31.0

SENIORS UMBC

	2004	2005	2008
	35.5	38.0	40.3
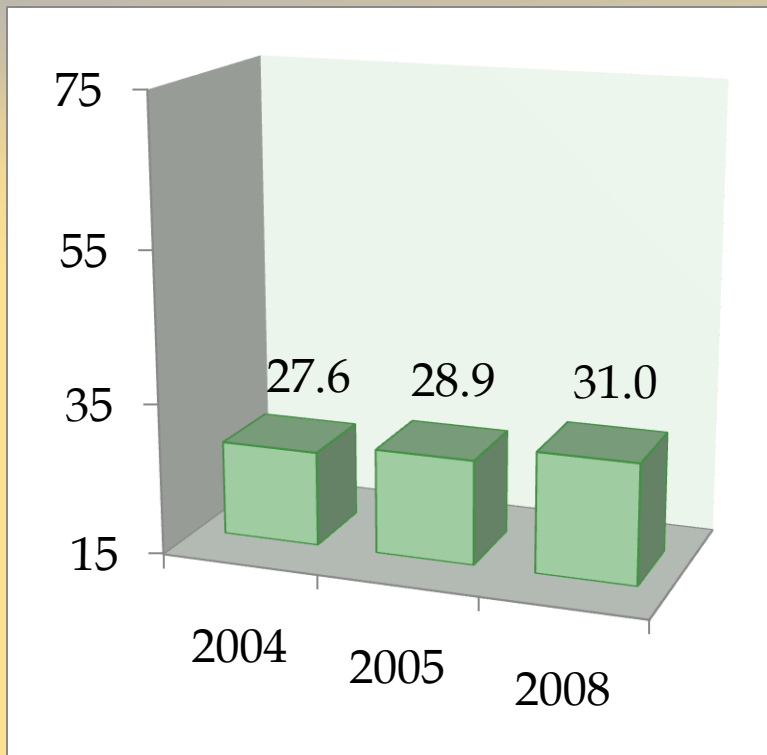
**Peer Comparison 2008
SCI–TECH 31.6   NSSE 34.6**

**Peer Comparison 2008
SCI–TECH 40.7   NSSE 42.3**

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## STUDENT-FACULTY INTERACTION (SFI)

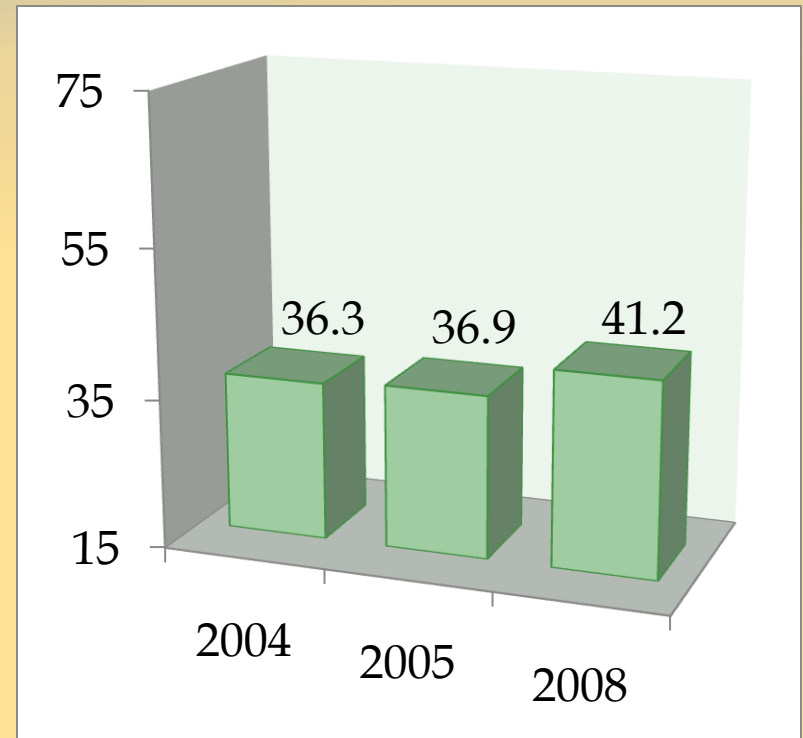|	Benchmark Items	First–Year Students		Peer	Seniors		Peer
		2008	% Change 2001 to 2008	Sci–Tec & Overall	SR–2008	% Change 2001 to 2008	Sci–Tec & Overall
C1	● Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	2.49	7.03%	2.48 2.69	2.64	1.23%	2.62 2.81
C2	● Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor	2.03	6.96%	2.12 2.19	2.40	20.99%	2.34 2.42
C3	● Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class	1.82	11.72%	1.79 1.91	2.10	20.09%	2.01 2.12
C4	● Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student-life activities, etc.)	1.67	15.59%	1.59 1.65	1.79	27.13%	1.80 1.84
C5	● Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance	2.41	-2.26%	2.52 2.63	2.61	6.56%	2.65 2.80
C6	● Worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements	.05	N/A	.05 .05	.23	N/A	.28 .20

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(D) ENRICHING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES (EEE)- *COMPLEMENTARY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES ENHANCE 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.*

FIRST –YEAR STUDENTS UMBC

Year	Value
2004	28.6
2005	30.7
2008	29.3
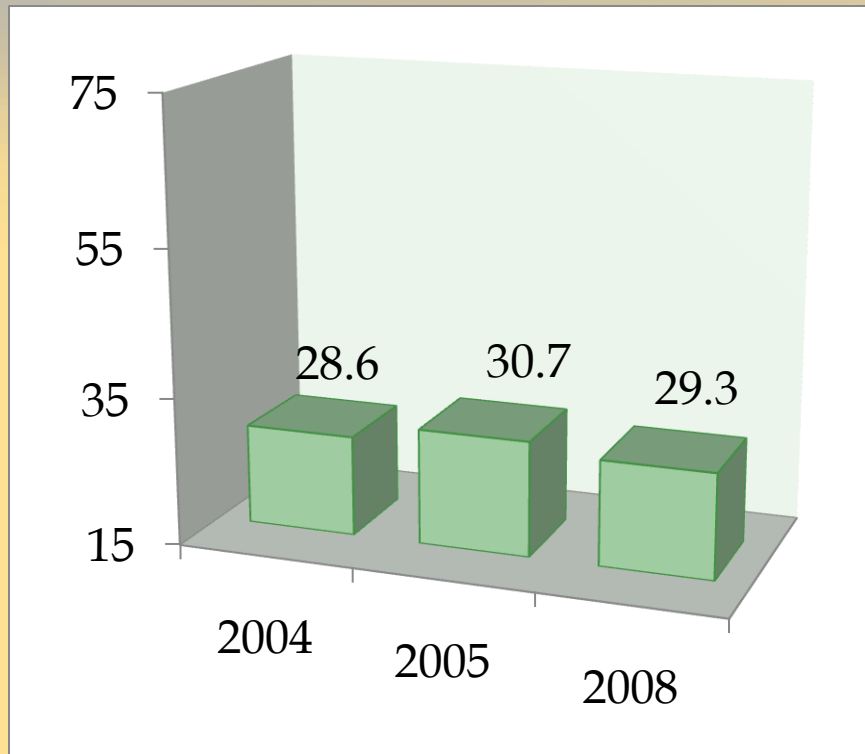
**Peer Comparison 2008
SCI–TECH 27.8   NSSE 27.5**

SENIORS UMBC

Year	Value
2004	36.3
2005	36.9
2008	41.2

**Peer Comparison 2008
SCI–TECH 42.0   NSSE 40.4**

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ENRICHING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES (EEE)

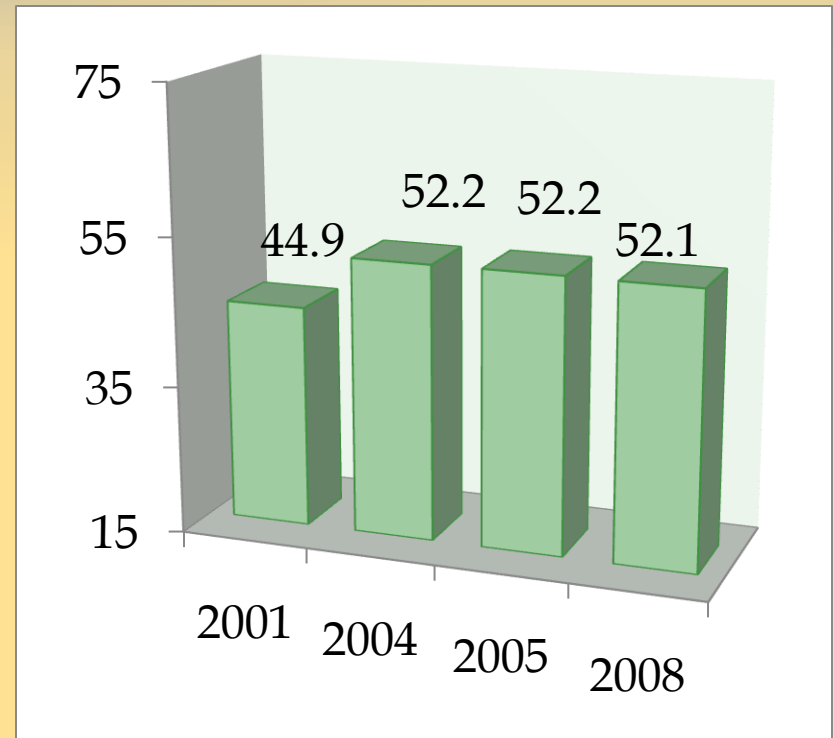|	Benchmark Items	First-Year Students		Peer	Seniors		Peer
		2008	% Change 2001 to 2008	Sci-Tec & Overall	SR-2008	% Change 2001 to 2008	Sci-Tec & Overall
D1	● Using electronic medium (e.g., listserv, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment	2.74	4.60%	2.62 / 2.59	2.86	10.30%	2.78 / 2.82
D2	● Serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own	2.90	-6.26%	2.59 / 2.60	2.97	-2.09%	2.66 / 2.67
D3	● Serious conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	2.89	-6.77%	2.59 / 2.60	2.88	-1.43%	2.66 / 2.67
D4	● Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment	.11	N/A	.06 / .08	.54	N/A	.59 / .53
D5	● Community service or volunteer work	.30	N/A	.37 / .38	.51	N/A	.64 / .60
D6	● Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together	.19	N/A	.17 / .16	.22	N/A	.25 / .26
D7	● Foreign language coursework	.23	N/A	.26 / .22	.61	N/A	.46 / .41
D8	● Study abroad	.02	N/A	.02 / .03	.12	N/A	.19 / .15
D9	● Independent study or self-designed major	.02	N/A	.02 / .19	.13	N/A	.04 / .18
D10	● Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.)	.02	N/A	.02 / .02	.21	N/A	.31 / .33
D11	● Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, social fraternity or sorority, etc.)	2.26	10.16%	2.51 / 2.26	2.04	11.32%	2.39 / 2.11
D12	● Campus environment encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	2.91	-1.27%	2.72 / 2.69	2.63	4.57%	2.43 / 2.50

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(E) SUPPORTIVE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT (SCE)- *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.*

FIRST –YEAR STUDENTS UMBC

Year	Value
2001	59.3
2004	58.6
2005	55.6
2008	59.2
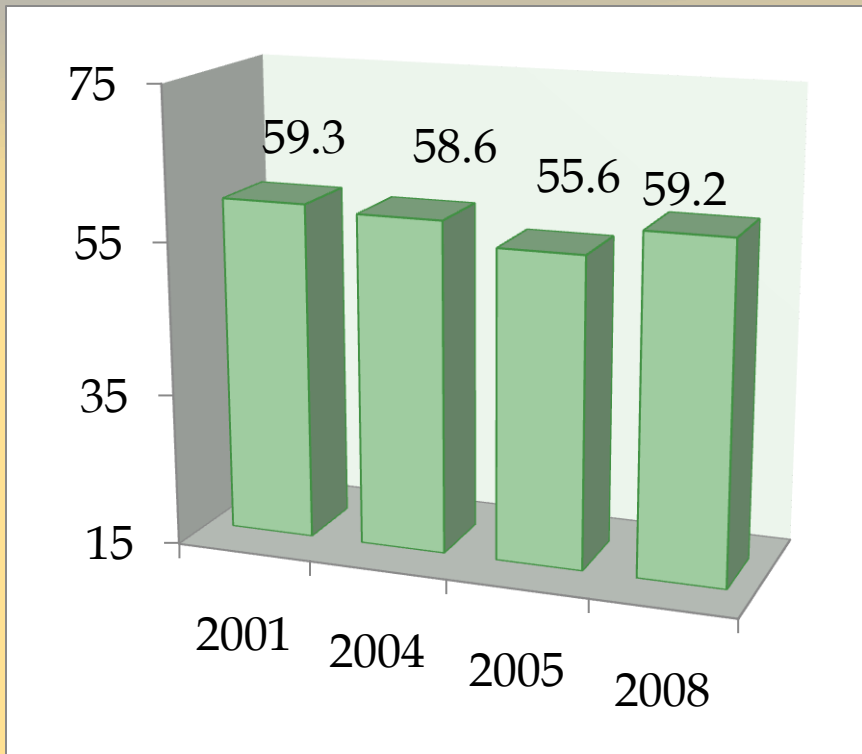
**Peer Comparison 2008
SCI–TECH 59.8   NSSE 61.1**

SENIORS UMBC

Year	Value
2001	44.9
2004	52.2
2005	52.2
2008	52.1

**Peer Comparison 2008
SCI–TECH 56.3   NSSE 58.0**

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SUPPORTIVE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT (SCE)

		First–Year Students		Peer	Seniors		Peer
	Benchmark Items	*2008*	*% Change 2001 to 2008*	Sci–Tec & Overall	*SR–2008*	*% Change 2001 to 2008*	Sci–Tec & Overall
E1	● Quality of relationships with other students	5.31	-5.43%	5.55 / 5.47	5.27	-0.33%	5.60 / 5.59
E2	● Quality of relationships with faculty members	5.02	-1.08%	4.87 / 5.19	5.11	1.56%	5.14 / 5.41
E3	● Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices	4.56	0.82%	4.57 / 4.47	4.07	0.01%	4.65 / 4.53
E4	● Campus environment provides the support you need to help you succeed academically	3.13	0.18%	3.03 / 3.07	2.82	6.92%	2.85 / 2.93
E5	● Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	2.19	2.46%	2.21 / 2.27	1.80	9.27%	1.91 / 1.99
E6	● Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially	2.38	5.77%	2.53 / 2.49	2.02	16.31%	2.25 / 2.23