As shown in the table below, there were statistically significant differences between Caucasian students and students from other ethnicities on three of the NSSE benchmarks: Level of Academic Challenge (LAC), Student Faculty Interaction (SFI), and Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE). Only senior students differed significantly on LAC, and only first-year students differed significantly on SFI and EEE. In all cases, students from other ethnicities showed higher mean responses to items in the three benchmarks than Caucasian students. In other words, underrepresented students reported a greater level of academic challenge, more student faculty interaction, and more enriching educational experiences than their Caucasian peers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSSE Benchmarksa</th>
<th>MSU Caucasian/ White</th>
<th>MSU Other Ethnicitiesb</th>
<th>Significance Testc</th>
<th>Effect Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>50.82</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>54.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>53.76</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>57.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACL</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>41.06</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>45.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>50.95</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>52.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFI</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>33.48</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>41.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>41.32</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>43.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEE</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>27.13</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>32.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>37.45</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>39.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCE</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>60.88</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>62.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>56.43</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>59.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| a See complete descriptions below dividing line |
| b Includes the following ethnicity categories: African American/Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Foreign, Multi-racial/ethnic, and Other. Those in the Unknown category were excluded. |
| c * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed) |

Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)

Challenging intellectual and creative work is central 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.

- 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 of fewer than 5 pages
- Coursework emphasizing analysis of the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory
- 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

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.

• 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.)

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.

• 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 written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance
• Worked with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements

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.
• 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
• Foreign language coursework & study abroad
• Independent study or self-designed major
• Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.)
• Serious conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values
• Serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity
• Using electronic technology to discuss or complete an assignment
• 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

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.

• Campus environment provides the support you need to help you succeed academically
• Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic 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