Assessment of Outcomes from the Community College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CCSEQ)

For the 2010 Graduating Class

Institutional Research Office

August 2010

SNOW COLLEGE

Assessment of Outcomes from the CCSEQ

Description:

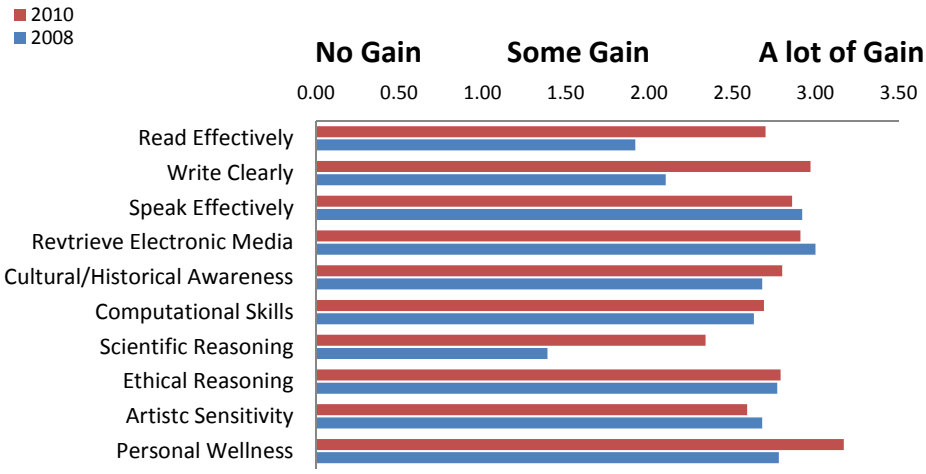
The CCSEQ (Community College Student Experience Questionnaire) is an instrument that looks at how community college students spend their time as well as how well they perceive personal gains from their community college experience. At Snow College the CCSEQ is administered to every other graduating class, alternating with ACT's CAAP survey. The data presented in this document represents student responses on questions related to Snow College's general education and applied education outcomes. This report presents comparative analysis for the 1997, 2008 and 2010 administrations.

For the 2010 CCSEQ administration, 306 students completed the instrument. With a prospective graduating class of 700 students, the sample more than satisfies that required for a 95% confidence interval, and serves as an adequate representation of the entire graduating class.

Snow College has 10 specific general education outcomes and 4 outcomes focused on applied and/or technical education. This document presents each outcome and the CCSEQ data related to that outcome.

Summary

Using the CCSEQ data to measure student improvement with Snow College's general education and applied education outcomes from 1997 to the most current administration, presents mixed results of significant improvement and areas that need attention. The following report card table presents a brief summary of the results for each outcome.



Outcome	Comments:
1. Read effectively, constructively, and critically	The CCSEQ reports increases in student completing extra readings outside of class, asking questions about points made in reading assignments, and critically thinking about the credibility and accuracy of information. However, overall gain in seeing relationships and dissimilarities between ideas has decreased since 1997.
2. Write clearly, informatively, and persuasively	Students remained consistent with prior data (2008 administration), however, students also reported some improvement in gaining "quite a bit" of experience to write clearly and effectively.

3. Speak effectively in a variety of contexts	Any gains in the students' perceived ability to speak effectively were offset by a significant decrease in the "quite a bit" category (down 9% points).
4. Retrieve, evaluate, interpret, and deliver information through a variety of traditional and electronic media	Where it appears the use of modern technology has rapidly replaced the use of traditional means for obtaining information, the 2010 students reported a decrease in gaining "very much" progress using the internet and other electronic media. Perhaps the college fails to challenge the technological skills students bring with them upon matriculation.
5. Apply cultural and historical awareness to a variety of phenomena	Where there are some gains in cultural and historical learning, its application to an appreciating other peoples and cultures is lacking. This is best evidenced by the significant decrease reported by students who gained "very much" understanding and ability to get along with diverse populations—down 10% points since 2008.
6. Apply computational skills in a variety of contexts	There is a positive shift in students reporting "quite a bit" and "very much" progress in being able to understand mathematical concepts and their applications. However a 10% points decrease for students with "some" gain suggests that students continue to struggle to understand and confidently apply mathematical concepts.
7. Apply scientific reasoning to a variety of contexts	More students reported "never" having completed an experiment using scientific methods as well as "never" having used scientific information to explain an aspect of the world. There was some improvement with students "often" being able to explain the scientific basis for a global condition (i.e. pollution, global warming, etc). There was also some improvement with students "occasionally" using scientific concepts in out-of-class situations.
8. Apply ethical reasoning to a variety of contexts	There was trend among students reporting the development of personal values and ethical standards while at Snow College, complimented by gains in being able to use personal strategies to make ethical and/or moral decisions. However, such a trend is similar to the 2008 administration resulting in little or no change from the 2008 to 2010 graduating classes.
9. Respond with sensitivity to an artistic work or experience	This category indicated less overall gain in the ability to assess an artistic work with informed sensitivity or educated appreciation.
10. Apply personal fitness and wellness management principles to lifestyle choices	With a 16% point increase among students who gained "very much" improvement developing a healthy lifestyle, it appears that courses focused on personal fitness and health are addressing this outcome effectively.

Applied Outcomes:	Comments:
1. Acquire entry-level skills specific to and appropriate for employment in their chosen field of study	There were significant increases among students who felt they gained "very much" information to successfully acquire an entry-level job offset those who felt only "some" gain.
2. Become aware of industry specific conditions and develop skills sufficient to acquire the same.	Overall, there appears to be little or no change among students' perceived gains regarding industry specific conditions and required skills.
3. Demonstrate safe practices and awareness of potential hazards in a specific field of expertise	This outcome is not measured by the CCSEQ.
4. Demonstrate interpersonal skills specific to the skills and environment in their field.	Compared to 2008, students reported a drastic decrease in their ability to get along with others in a variety of settings (down 24% points).

Conclusion and Recommendations

As detailed by the report card table some general education outcomes are doing fairly well while others need improvement. Since the CCSEQ measures a student's perception of their experience while at Snow College, this analysis does not imply non-exposure of such outcomes in general education courses. For this report, exposure is not as important as student perception of such exposure. In fact, it is known that students are exposed to each outcome multiple times during their tenure at Snow College (see *Graduation Outcomes* report, 2007). However, the students' perception of Snow College's general and applied education outcomes is minimal--they largely remain unaware of the outcomes or their exposure to them. Hence, it is the continued recommendation of this report that the College aggressively pursue methods and/or programs that clearly educate new and continuing students on the general education outcomes at the same empowering students to recognize these outcomes in their curricular and co-curricular experiences.

It is noted that since 2008 the Start Smart Orientation program has attempted such an enterprise. This attempt is manifested by an educational PowerPoint and lecture time dedicated to outcomes education as well as the strategic application of the outcomes through student portfolios. The following points suggest improvements to this singular attempt:

1. The educational delivery and strategic application lacks consistency across all orientation sections. It is recommended that Start Smart Orientation provide better training and materials to all instructors regarding the content delivery and instructional application of the general education outcomes. Specifically,

    a. All instructors should use the same PowerPoint and assignments related to outcome understanding and recognition.

   b. All Start Smart Orientation students should develop an e-portfolio using the 10 GE Outcomes as organizational "guideposts". Each student can establish this e-portfolio via Google sites using a pre-designed template created by the TTC and the Office of Institutional Research.

2. Not all entering students participate in the orientation program. As a result, instruction is limited by student self-selection. In addition, follow-up instruction and/or application on the outcomes is non-existent after the six-week orientation course. It is recommended that the development of the e-portfolio be established throughout the student's tenure at Snow College and serve as a required assignment in a capstone or other similar course prior to graduation.

3. The majority of course outlines/syllabi provided to students regarding course expectations fail to communicate the general education outcomes associated with the course. Outside of Start Smart, general education outcomes associated with course content are not clearly or consistently communicated to students, even in general education specified courses.

4. This final recommendation suggests the development of a pre-test/post-test administration on the outcomes as associated with an orientation course and a pre-graduation capstone course/experience. Faculty with expertise in specific general education outcomes would design acceptable questions by which the college can more effectively measure the growth and/or improvement of students given their educational experience at Snow. Currently the CCSEQ and CAAP serve as the only measures of outcome exposure and gain. Such assessments provide valuable information with which an internal assessment would only provide more course and instructor-specific feedback.

The use of any and/or all of these recommendations simply augments the college's ability to use relevant and evidence-based information to continually plan and improve, which is critical to the academic integrity and program development of the college.

General Education Outcomes

The total number of credits required to complete General Education at Snow College (GE) is 31. General Education completion is required for all the Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), and Associate of Science, Business (ASB) degrees.

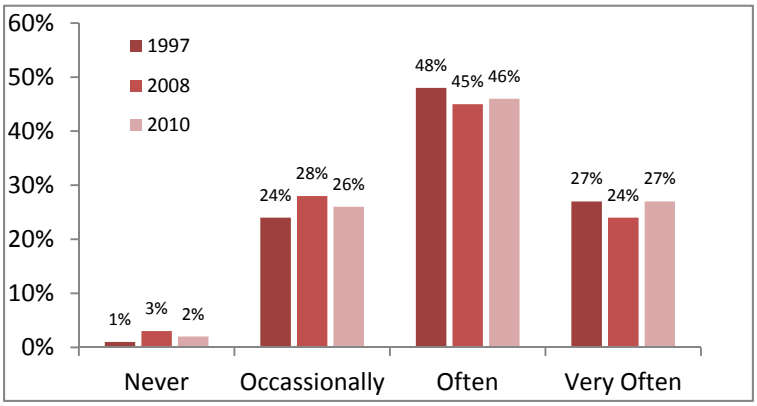
This reports proceeds to detail trend information for CCSEQ questions as they related to the Snow College's General Education outcomes. A brief description is provided for each outcome followed by those questions from the CCSEQ that effectively narrate students' experiences associated with each outcome.

1. Read effectively, constructively, and critically

Students develop strategies for reading, synthesizing, and criticizing a variety of written materials related to the subject. The CCSEQ addresses this outcome through a variety of questions related to course activities and the overall student experience.

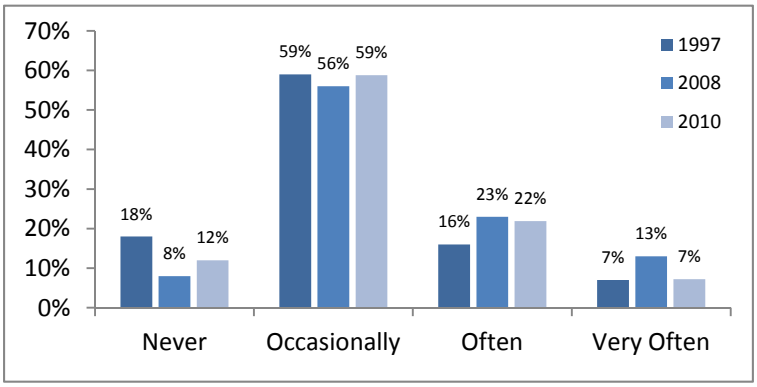
Summarized major points and information from readings or notes

The graph to the right indicates stability for students who "occasionally", "often" or "very often" summarized major points/information from readings or notes. The frequency of students who incorporated this activity into their study activities increased slightly from 2008 to 2010. Over the last two years students have positively recognized this course activity as part of their academic experience.



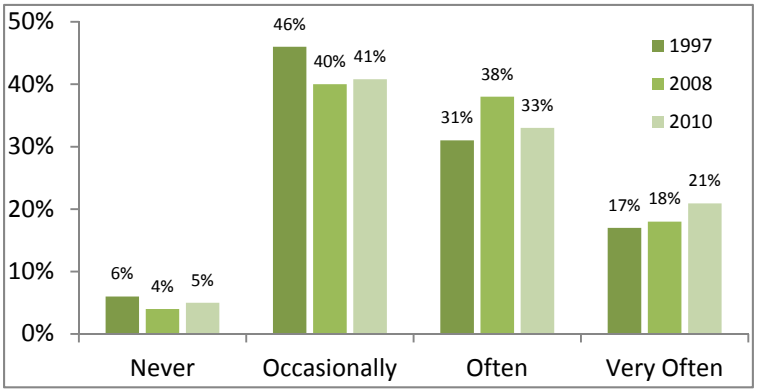
Did additional readings on topics that were introduced and discussed in class

There is a negative trend with more students reporting "never" and less students responding with "often" and "very often" to have had this academic experience. This trend indicates that since 2008, students are doing less outside reading as a part of their in-class discussion and learning.



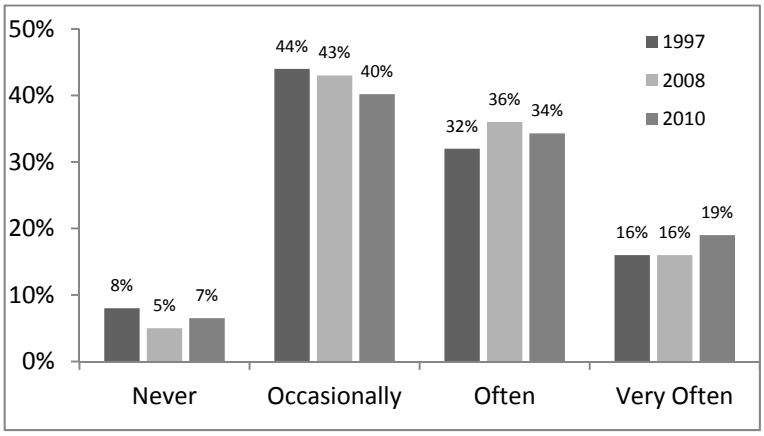
Asked questions about points made in class discussions or readings

These data show a marked decrease in students who "often" asked questions about points made in class discussions or readings. However, there is an increase in students who "very often" experienced this course activity, which may or may not be related to the fact that they failed to complete assigned out-of-class reading.



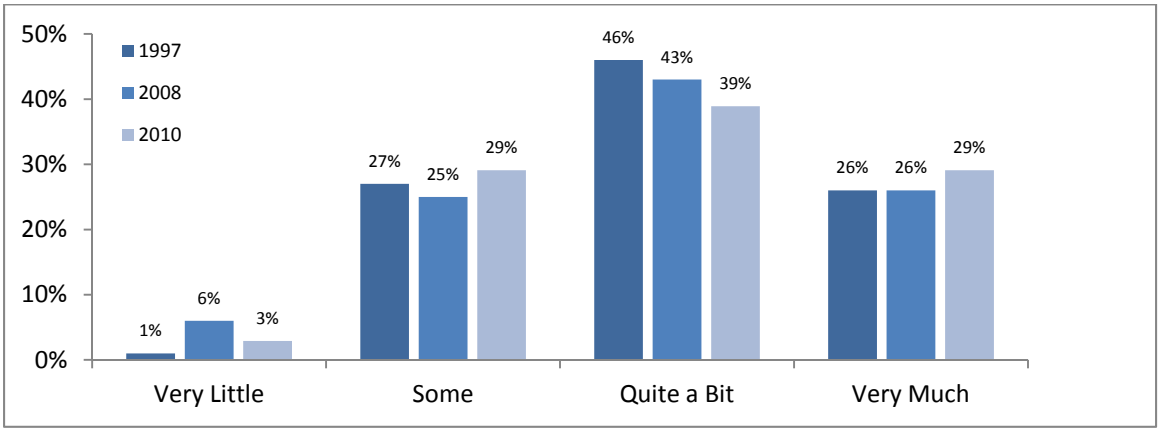
Considered the accuracy and credibility of information from difference sources

This question specifically addressed the exposure of students to be critical of their reading and other learning assignments. The chart indicates a decrease in students who "often" experienced this course activity and an increase in students who "very often" experienced the need to read critically (3% increase). All other categories remained stable since 1997.



Putting ideas together to see relationships, similarities, and differences between ideas.

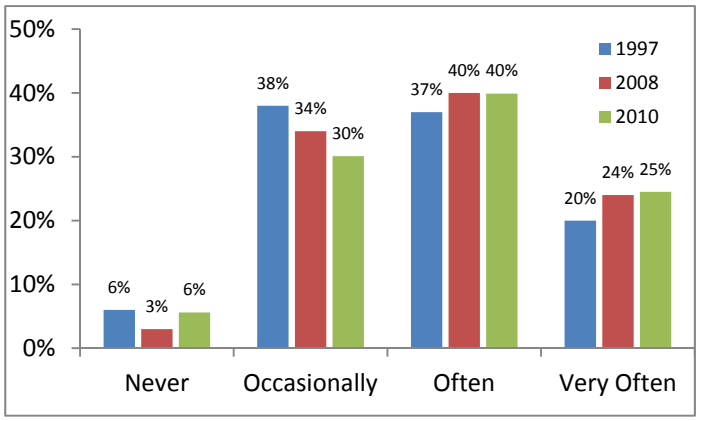
This statement was part of a section where students estimated their "gain" or how much they made progress toward synthesizing different ideas by indicating "very little", "some", "quite a bit", or "very much" growth. The decreases in the "very little" and "quite a bit" categories are offset by increases among students who felt they had gained "some" or "very much" ability to synthesize different ideas and/or relationships.



2. Write clearly, informatively, and persuasively.

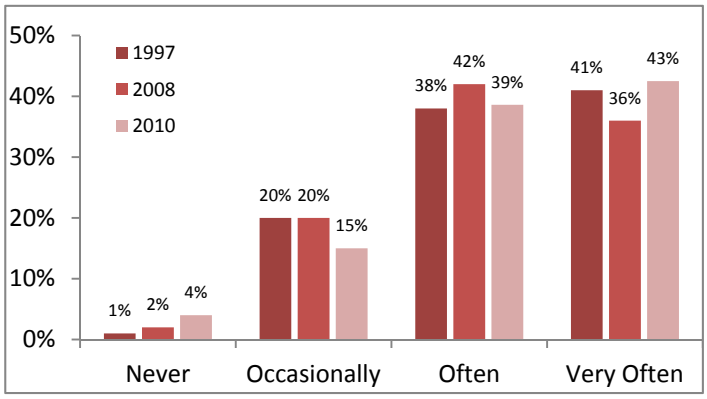
For this outcome, students learn strategies for writing a variety of materials related to a subject. Students should have also experienced multiple opportunities to practice their writing skills and receive suggestions for improving them.

Prepared an outline to organize the sequence of ideas and points in a paper you were writing



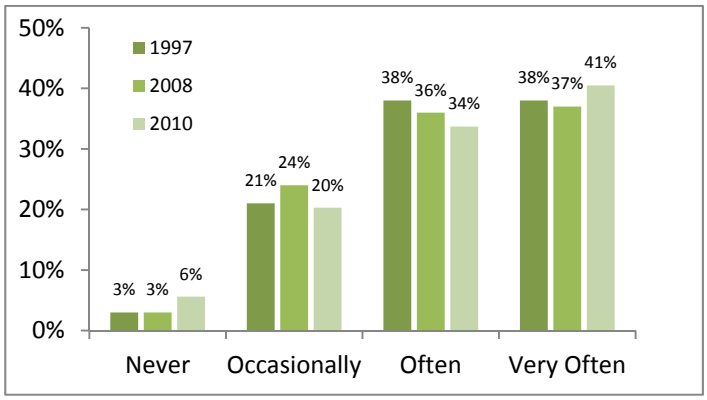
Overall, this chart shows no significant changes in the percentages of students who prepared an outline as a part of their writing activities.

Thought about grammar, sentence structure, paragraphs, and word choice as you were writing



Improvement in this area is only expressed with students "very often" thinking about grammar and word choice during writing exercises. The increase in this area took away and subsequently resulted in a decrease of students who "often" and "occasionally" thought about grammar, paragraph structure, and word choice while writing.

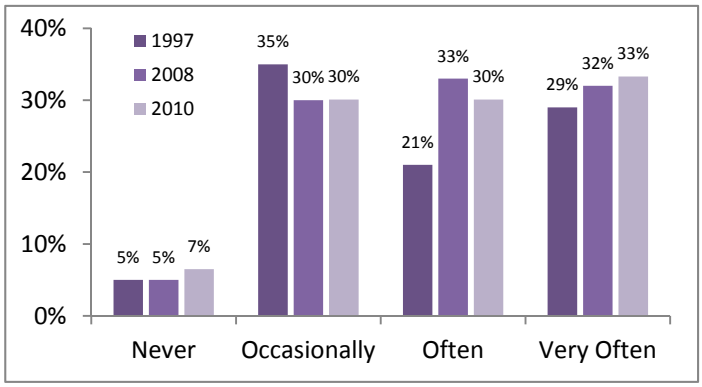
Wrote a rough draft of a paper or essay and revised it before handing it in



This question identified whether or not students practiced their writing in order to achieve a better result. Despite the 4% increase in students who "very often" revised a rough draft, there is a negative trend as indicated by students who "never" (up 6%), "occasionally" (down 4%), and "often" (down 2%) used a rough draft as a part of their writing experience.

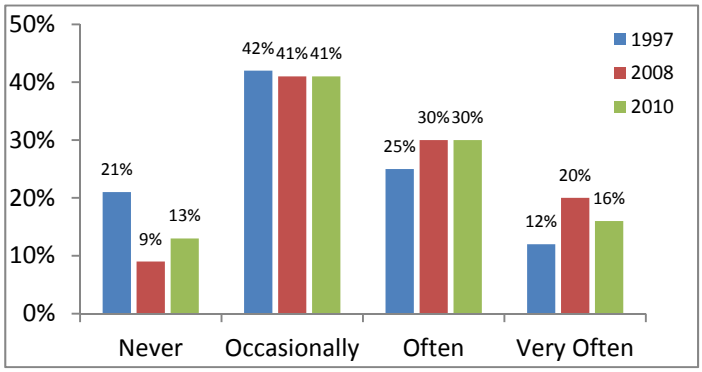
Asked other people to read something you wrote to see if it was clear to them

From these data, it generally appears that students are asking for peer feedback in their writing process with little change in their peer review experience from 2008.



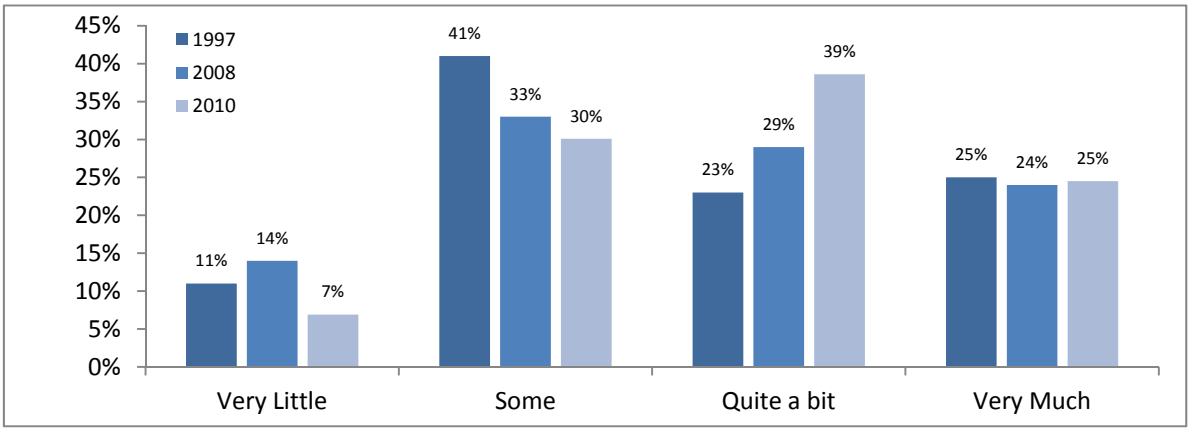
Asked an instructor for advice and help to improve your writing or about a comment he/she made on a paper you wrote.

There exists a positive trend among students who "very often" asked for faculty assistance on a paper, which is further supported by a significant decrease in students who "never" asked for such instructional assistance.



Writing clearly and effectively

This statement was part of a section where students estimated their "gain" or personal development in being able to write clearly and/or effectively. Students indicated whether the statement represented "very little", "some", "quite a bit"' or "very much" personal progress. For this question, there was a marked decrease in students that felt they "never" gained effective writing abilities while at Snow College. Students who felt they gained "some" with their writing skills also declined from 2008; whereas, the students who felt they had gained "quite a bit" increased significantly.

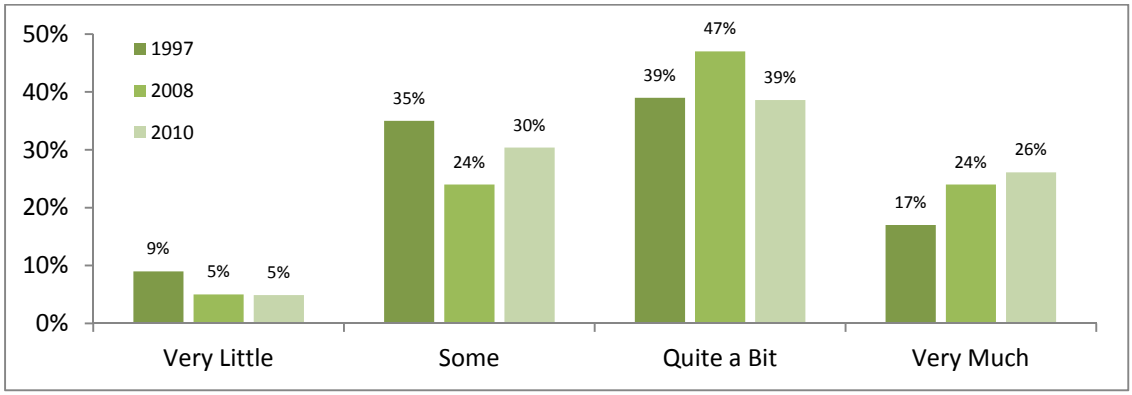


3. Speak effectively in a variety of contexts.

For this outcome students learn strategies for making oral presentations on a subject. Students also have multiple opportunities to practice their speaking skills and receive suggestions for improving them. This outcome is required for all Oral Communication courses.

Presenting ideas and information effectively in speaking to others

This statement was part of a section where students estimated their "gain" or achievement to successfully communicate ideas to others. Of note is the significant increase for students who had gained “very much” improvement in their oral communication skills. The slight decrease in the “some” category is mitigated by the “very little” and “quite a bit” categories, which have remained relatively stable.

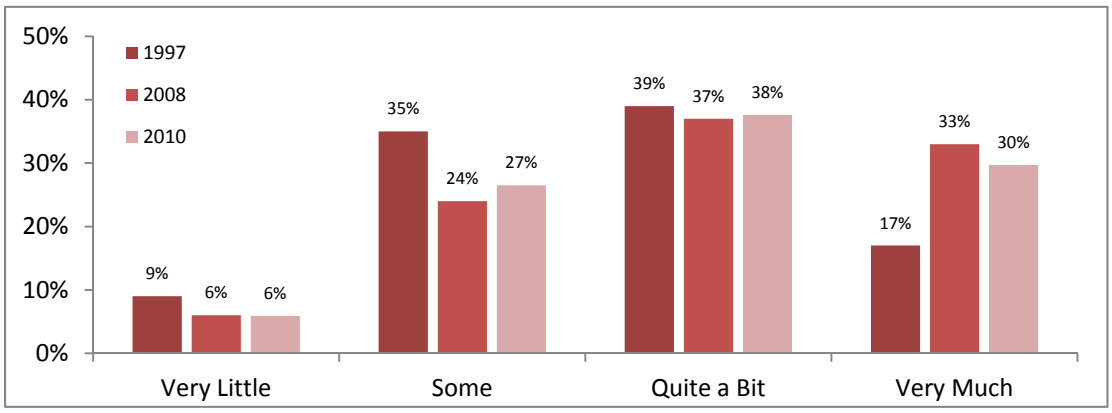


4. Retrieve, evaluate, interpret, and deliver information through a variety of traditional and electronic media.

This outcome posits that Snow College students should develop the skills and strategies necessary to retrieve, interpret, synthesize and deliver information on a subject using traditional and appropriate electronic research media and methods.

Acquiring skills needed to use computers to access the INTERNET, the World Wide Web, or other computer networks as well as the skills to produce papers, reports, graphs, charts, tables or data analysis

There is not much change among students' perceptions since the 2008 administration. However, given the fact that exposure to high-tech media has exploded since 1997, it is significant that students do recognize some improvement in this area while at Snow College.



In 2005, the CCSEQ added a section to the instrument specific to the use of computer technology in collegiate learning experiences. Snow College's first administration of these questions occurred in 2006. In lieu of Snow College's general education outcomes, it is important to note increases for students who "very often" used computer tutorials or remedial programs (14% to 18%), used computers for group learning situations (15% to 20%), used computers in database management (15% to 19%), used technology to analyze data for a project (15% to 17%), and used computers to create graphs or charts for a class paper or project (15% to 17%).

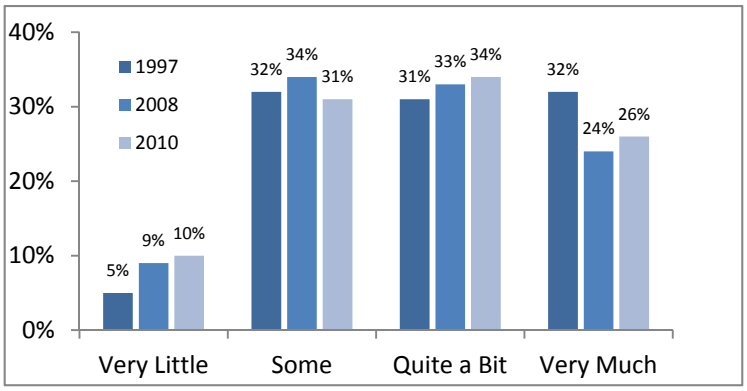
Overall, the data suggest that students are accepting and using technology in the form of computers and the internet more and more in concert with their learning experiences. In fact, separate statements on library activities showed significant increases in the percentage of students who "never" read a newspaper, magazine, or journal located in the library (15% to 31%). There was also a moderate increase for students who "never" used a card catalogue or computer to find materials in the library on a specific topic (10% to 26%). Finally, the majority of students (92%) indicated they positively communicated with an instructor or other students about a course using email or similar technology ("very often", 34%; "often", 24%; and "occasionally", 34%).

5. Apply cultural and historical awareness to a variety of phenomena.

Students should be able to interpret aspects of a subject from a cultural or historical perspective. This outcome is required for all social science general education courses.

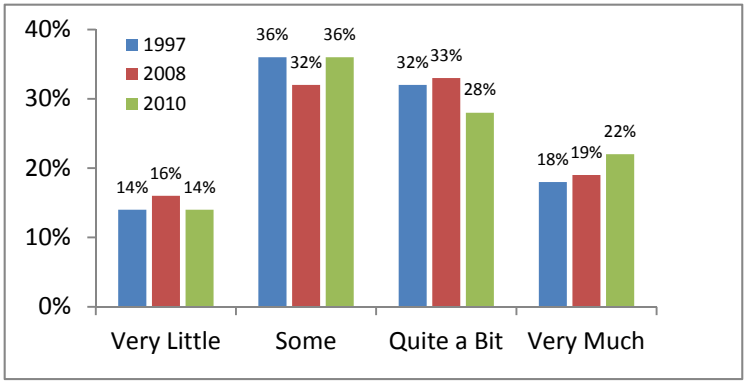
Becoming aware of different philosophies, cultures, and ways of life

This statement shows minimal improvement among students who recognize "some" to "very little" appreciation for diversity. Even with increases for those students who experienced "quite a bit" and "very much" multi-cultural development, there remains insignificant acknowledgment of experiences that introduced or influenced students to address subjects through an historical or cultural lens.



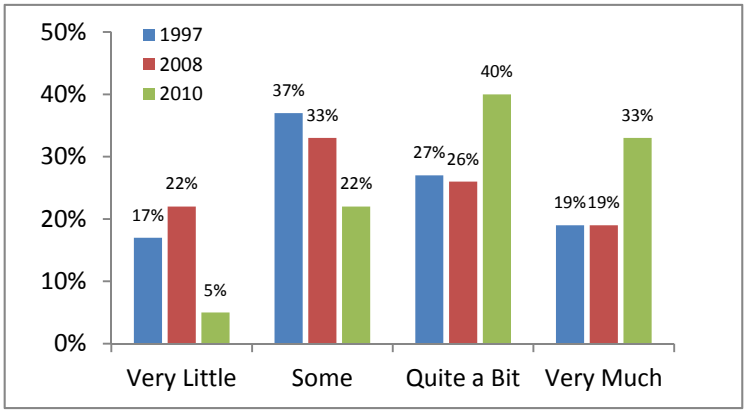
Seeing the importance of history for understanding the present as well as the past

With reported increases for "some" and "very much" and decreases for "very little" and "quite a bit", the data show little improvement for students seeing the importance of history in context as well as in reference to current events.



Learning more about other parts of the world and other people (Asia, Africa, South America, etc.)

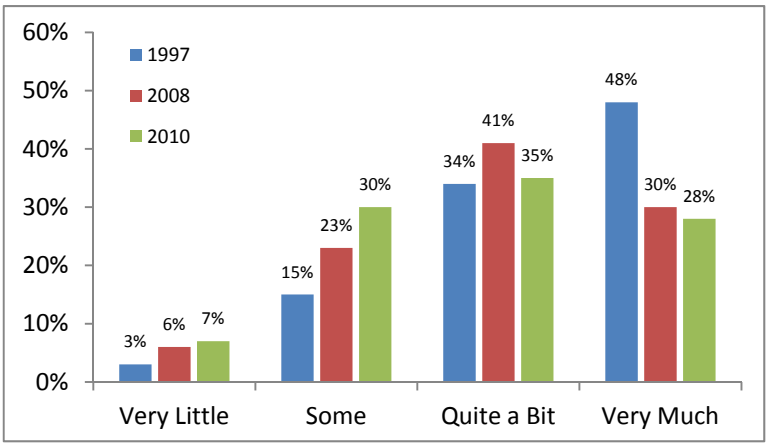
Significant gains were made for students indicating "very much" and "quite a bit" improved understanding of other parts of the world, suggesting that while at Snow College, students are learning about different peoples and cultures.



Understanding other people and the ability to get along with different kinds of people.

Data on this statement indicates a decrease in student understanding and/or acceptance of other people.

This indicates that the cultural and historical awareness as expressed in GE outcome 5 has not improved as the majority of students graduate with little or no perceived improvement to understand and/or accept other people through different cultural, philosophical, or historical contexts. Certainly, students are learning about other countries and cultures however it is void of developing an appreciation for such diversity and multiculturalism.

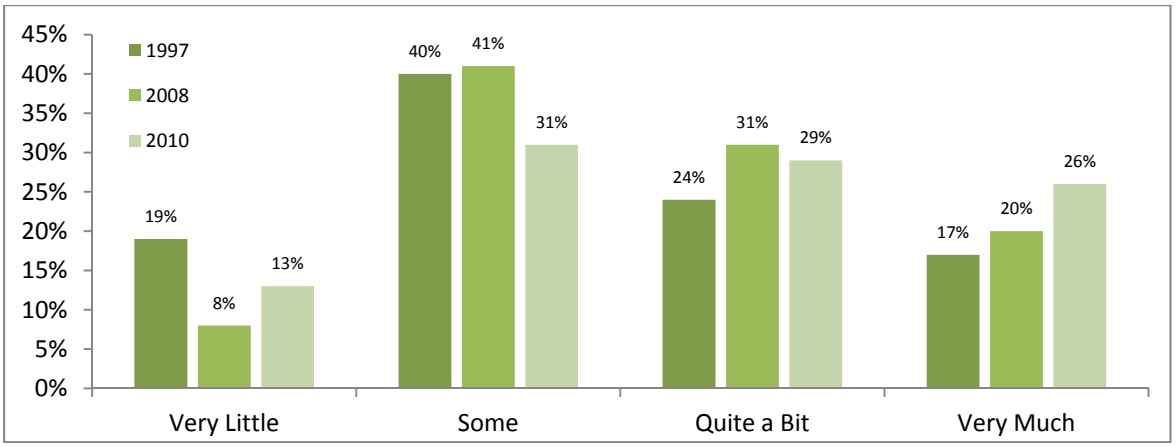


6. Apply computational skills to a variety of contexts.

Students gain strategies to apply mathematical and other computational skills in addressing and understanding a subject. This outcome is required of all general education mathematics courses.

Understanding mathematical concepts such as probabilities, proportions, etc.

For this area, students reporting gains for "very much" are offset by decreasing gains for students who understood mathematical concepts "quite a bit" and "some". In addition, the increase of 5% for undergraduates who indicated "very little" gain suggests that students either do not have or do not recognize they have computation skills at levels indicative of personal improvement.

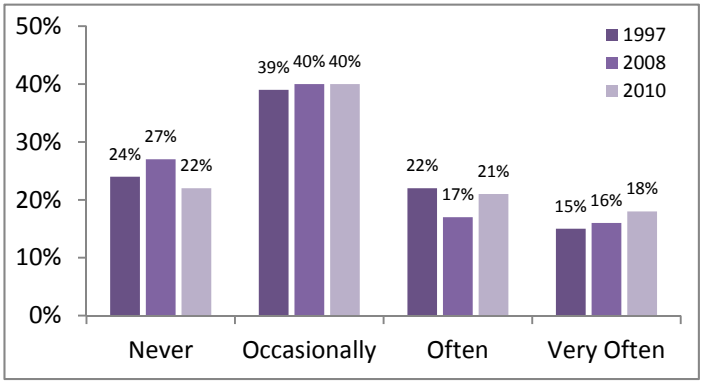


7. Apply scientific reasoning to a variety of contexts.

Students gain strategies that apply scientific reasoning, either deductive or inductive, to a subject. This outcome is required of all general education physical science courses and life science courses.

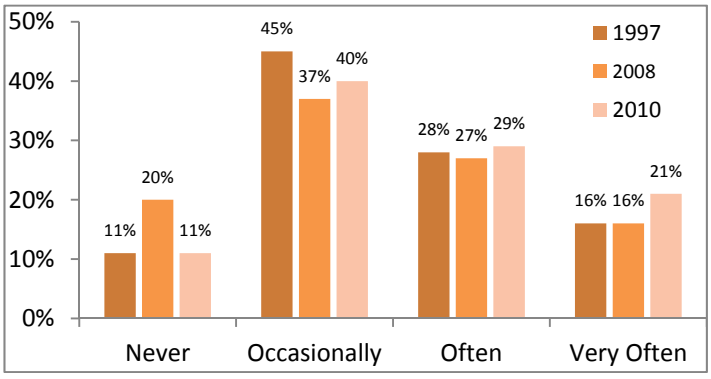
Completed an experiment/project using scientific methods.

A slight improvement was made since 2008 in which students were able to complete an experiment using scientific methods.



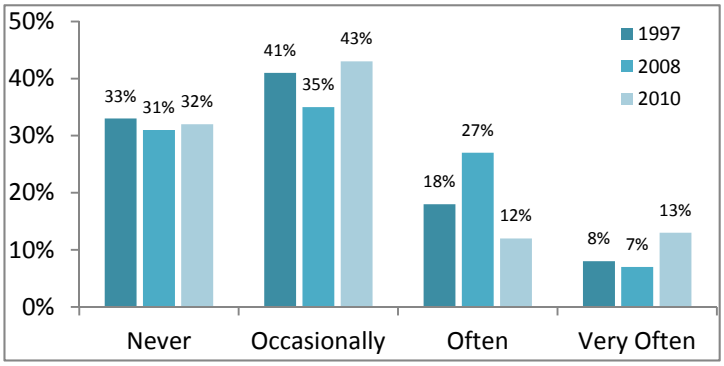
Used information you learned in a science class to understand some aspect of the world around you.

Data on this statement indicates an increase for all categories in which students had an opportunity to apply scientific information in the context of world conditions. The most significant change was a decrease for students who "never" applied scientific principles globally.

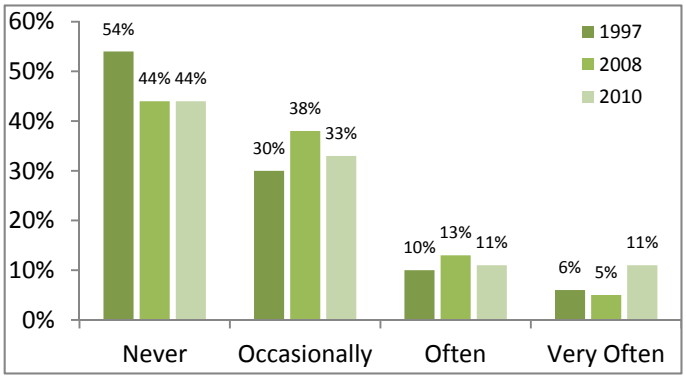


Tried to explain to someone the scientific basis for environmental concerns about pollution, recycling, alternative forms of energy, etc.

Responses to this statement improved for those students who "occasionally" and "very often" tried to explain to someone the scientific basis for environmental concerns about pollution, recycling, or alternative forms of energy.



Applied information or skills you learned in science class to work (either paid or volunteer) outside of class.

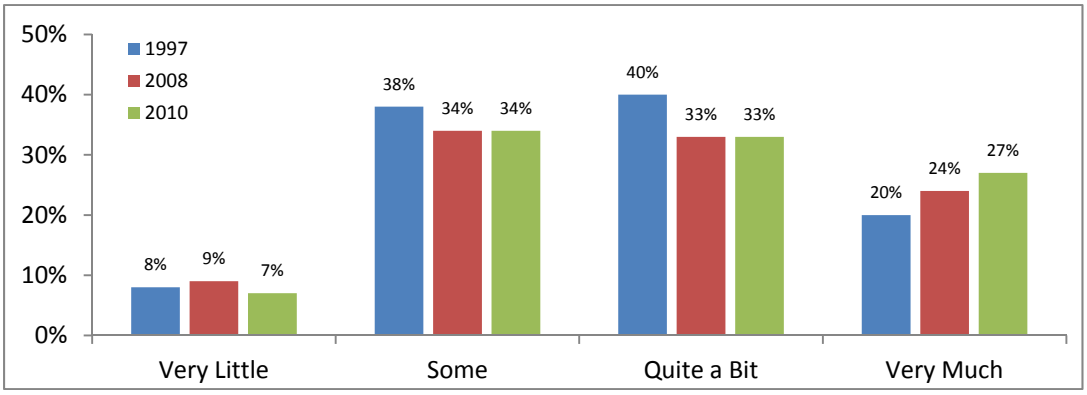


Since 2008, there is a downward trend among those students who in "occasionally" and "often" applied scientific learning to outside situations. However, those students who "very often" used science concepts to solve work or volunteer circumstances improved.

Understanding the role of science and technology in society

There was slight change expressed in the "very much" and a decrease of the "very little" categories regarding students' ability to understand of the role of science and technology in society. All other gains remained consistent with the 2008 CCSEQ administration.

In lieu of all the questions regarding scientific concepts and applications, the data from this present assessment indicate improvement among students' comprehension of scientific inquiry and reasoning as well as that applied to a variety of settings and contextual frameworks.

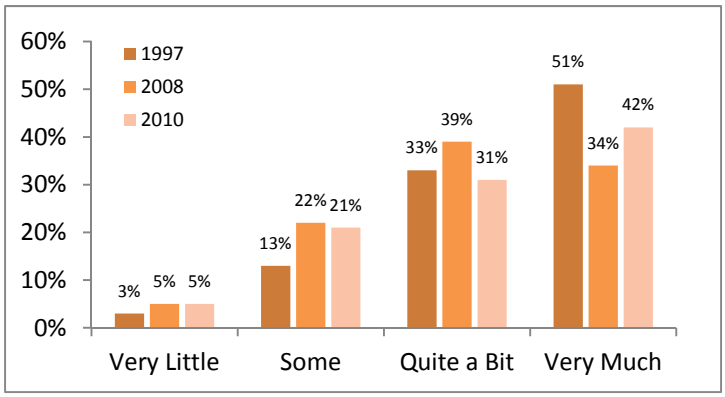


8. Apply ethical reasoning to a variety of contexts.

Students developed strategies that evaluate behaviors, policies, or cultural artifacts, according to an appropriate set of principles. The emphasis for this general education outcome is not necessarily to advocate one set of principles above another but rather to emphasize the importance of the evaluative process.

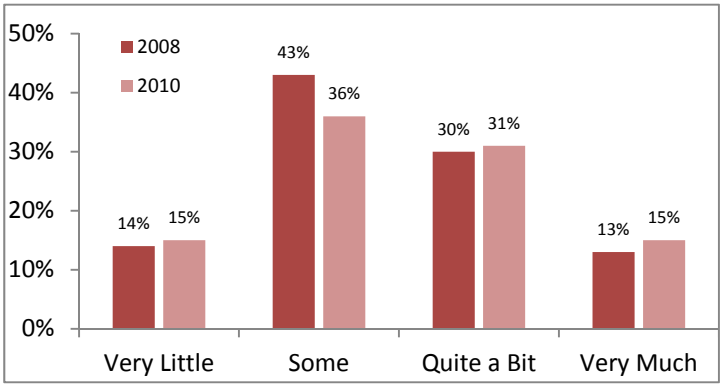
Becoming clearer about my own values and ethical standards

Interestingly, there was an increase for students responding "very much" in the area of personal values and ethical development since 2008. This is countered, however, by students reporting decreases in "quite a bit" and "some" personal improvement. Because "very little" remained unchanged, the results suggest that since 2008 the students' use of values and ethics while at Snow College has improved slightly.



I developed strategies for evaluating behaviors, policies, or cultural artifacts according to an appropriate set of principles

These data propose the number of students developing strategies for evaluating behaviors, policies, or cultural artifacts have improved since 2008.

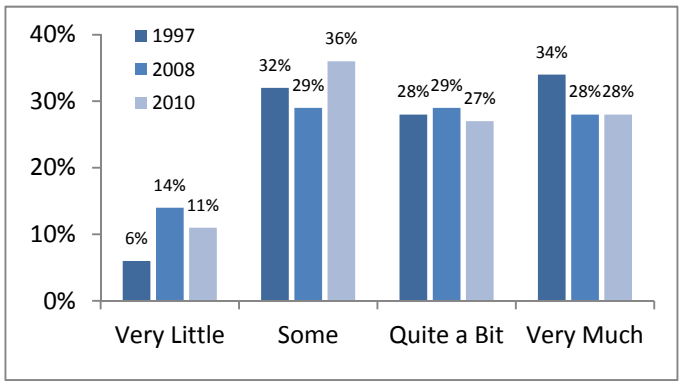


9. Respond with informed sensitivity to an artistic work or experience

Students gain strategies to respond to an artistic work or experience with informed sensitivity. This outcome is required for all fine art and humanities general education courses.

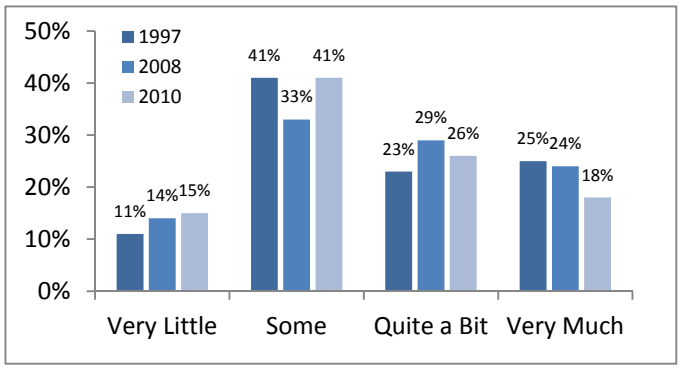
Developing an understanding and enjoyment of art, music, and theater.

This chart suggests a minimal improvement in students' understanding and enjoyment of the visual, theatrical, and musical arts. "Very much" remained unchanged while "some" had a minimal increase and "very little" decreased by 3% points.



Developing an understanding and enjoyment of literature (novels, stories, essays, poetry, etc)

This chart demonstrates a decline in students' appreciation of literature and written art.

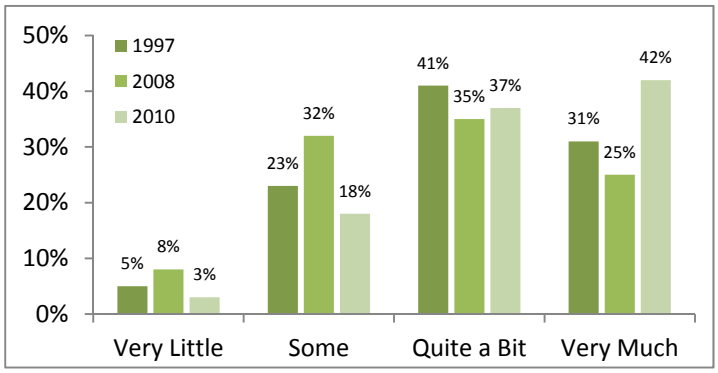


10. Apply personal fitness and wellness management principles to lifestyle choices.

Students develop strategies for using personal fitness and wellness management values to personal behavior and life style choices. This outcome is required of all general education fitness courses.

Developing good health habits and physical fitness

The data indicate much improvement in the health habits and physical fitness of the Snow College students. Those students with "very little" improvement decreased while weighty progress occurred among those students indicating "quite a bit" and "very much" gain in establishing a fit and healthy lifestyle.



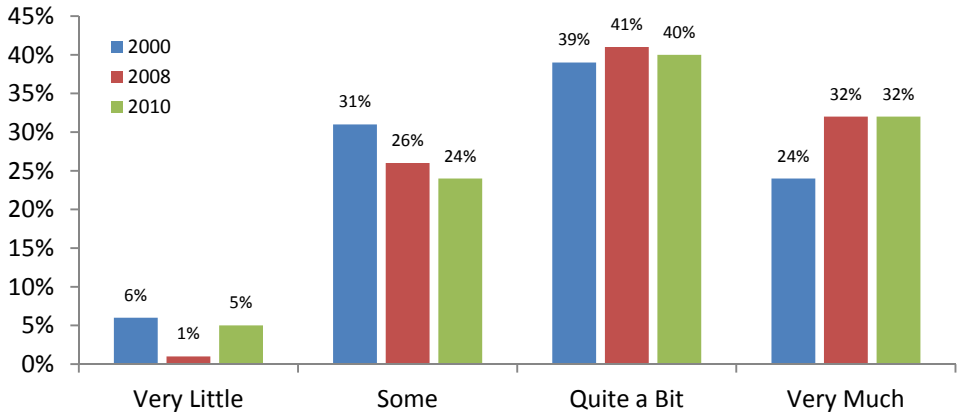
Applied Education Outcomes

An applied education serves all communities and fulfills the needs of a society. These skills are the foundation of our society without which we as a nation would not be able to function. A student who completes an Associate of Applied Science degree at Snow College (A.A.S.) or Certificate of Completion in a career or technical education program should have fulfilled the following four educational outcomes. Beginning in 2000, Snow College's Richfield campus has served as the central location for the delivery of applied educational degrees and courses.

1. Students will acquire entry-level skills specific to and appropriate for employment in their chosen field of study.

Acquiring knowledge and skills applicable to a specific job or type of work.

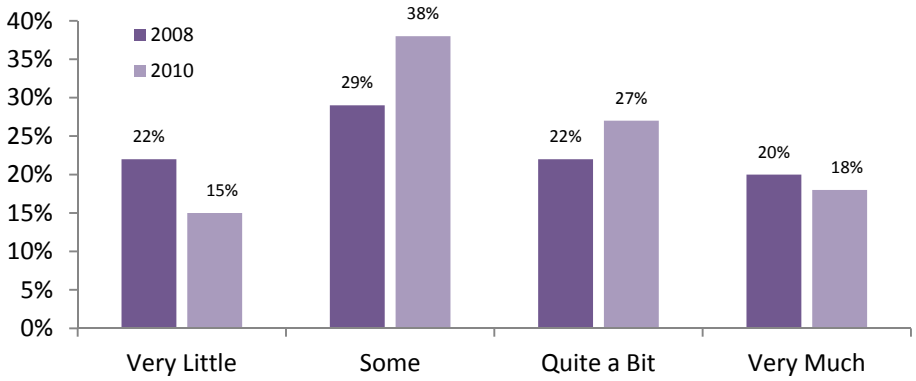
From 2008 to 2010, the percentage of students who experienced any gain in applicable work or job skills remained relatively the same. This suggests a need for the College to improve efforts to better communicate and connect students with job and/or career relevant skills, particular to those students in applied education majors.



2. Students will become aware of industry specific conditions and develop skills sufficient to acquire the same.

Acquired industry –relevant knowledge and/or skills for job certification

This question was added as local question to the 2008 CCSEQ administration. Current responses showed improvements over the 2008 data. The most substantial improvement consisted of fewer students reporting "very little" acquired industry-relevant knowledge complimented by increases among students who felt they had gained "some" or "quite a bit" knowledge and/or skills germane to industry or job certification.



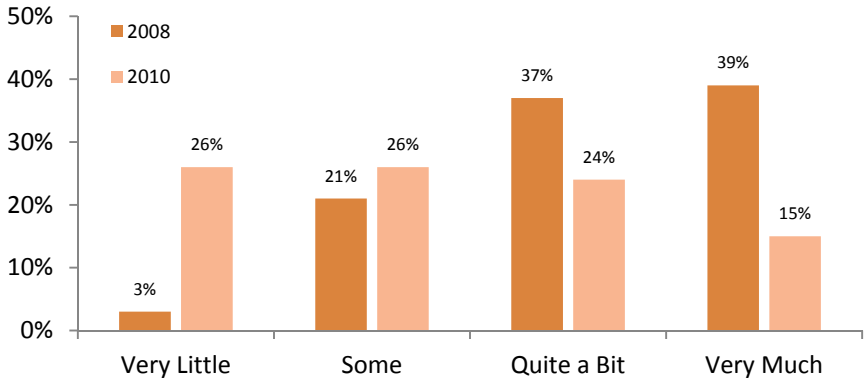
3. Students will demonstrate safe practices and awareness of potential hazards in their field of expertise.

Because these conditions are so industry specific this outcome was not measured by the CCSEQ.

4. Students will demonstrate interpersonal skills specific to the skills and environment inherent in their field.

Developing the ability to get along with others in different kinds of situations

This question/statement was first administered as a part of the CCSEQ in 2008. The responses showed radical changes from 2008 to 2010. The decline in the "very much" and "quite a bit" categories is accompanied by a significant increase in the "very little" category. This suggests that substantially fewer students are gaining the interpresonal skills specific to their work enviroment. Such a trend is indicative of the current cohort of students who are entering and attending college. These are students with extensive social networks that are interpersonally isolated by modern technology (text messaging, Facebook, etc.).



Additional Tables

Most important reason for attending college at this time

To prepare to for transfer to a four-year college or university	86%
To gain skills necessary to retrain, remain current, or advance in a current job or occupation	1%
To gain skills necessary to enter a new job or occupation	7%
To satisfy personal interest (cultural, social)	5%
To improve English, reading, and math skills	0%

College Courses: Percentages of Responses

	All Students	Transfer	Vocational
Number of courses taken in the following areas			
College Math			
None	9	7	10
One	34	33	30
More than one	58	55	60
Computer Literacy			
None	49	49	47
One	40	41	37
More than one	12	11	17
English Class (Preparatory)			
None	33	31	37
One	18	19	23
More than one	49	51	40
English Composition			
None	27	27	37
One	38	38	40
More than one	25	34	23
Fine Arts			
None	18	17	33
One	41	41	27
More than one	42	42	40
Foreign Language			
None	64	63	73
One	16	15	10
More than one	20	21	17
Humanities			
None	17	15	37
One	36	36	27
More than one	47	48	37
Math Class (Preparatory)	All Students	Transfer	Vocational
None	52	51	60
One	25	24	27
More than one	23	24	13

	All Students	Transfer	Vocational
Physical or Health Education			
None	6	8	10
One	42	42	37
More than one	49	50	53
Science			
None	3	2	13
One	17	17	20
More than one	80	81	67
Social Sciences			
None	16	16	17
One	39	38	30
More than one	45	46	53
Speech, Communications			
None	26	26	10
One	56	57	63
More than one	17	17	27