

# High Expectations Matter

## A Resource Guide



Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality—and so are the standards faculty members set for their students. Higher education scholar Vincent Tinto has said, “High expectations are a condition for student success, low expectations a receipt for failure. Simply put, no one rises to low expectations.”

*The purpose of this tool is to support your conversations about setting high expectations that students will want to meet.*

### VIDEO CONTENT: High Expectations Matter

Through the following [video clips](#), several students describe the value of their instructors having high expectations of them.



- » Which video clip stood out to you the most? Why?
- » What actions can your college take to ensure that instructors set high expectations of their students?

“My biology teacher’s classes were really tough. It was a lot of work. But it was five credits, and it’s what you signed up for. And the base of knowledge I have after making it through her class ... it’s indispensable.

— STUDENT

### TOOLS FOR SHARING CCCSE DATA

The [SENSE](#) and [CCCSE](#) Faculty Predictions Exercises can be used to jump start discussions with faculty on whether and why faculty predictions about data related to such topics as setting high expectations differ from actual student responses.

**SURVEY OF ENTERING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**  
**Faculty Predictions Exercise – Pathways**

The following are items from the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) that are aligned with the “Ensure Students are Learning” component of the Pathways Model. We invite you to predict the responses our students gave on these select items. Results from this exercise can be compared against our SENSE results. The alignments and/or gaps between student responses and faculty responses can help facilitate important discussions. Please note that for all of the following survey items, students were asked to reflect on their experiences from the time of their decision to attend this college through the end of the first three weeks of their first semester/quarter.

#19	About how often did you do the following...	Students who responded 2 Or More Times	
		Prediction (%)	Actual (%)
a.	Ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions		
b.	Prepare at least two drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in		
c.	Turn in an assignment late		
d.	Not turn in an assignment		
e.	Come to class without completing reading or assignments		
f.	Work with other students on a project or assignment during class		
g.	Work with classmates outside of class on class projects or assignments		
h.	Participate in a required study group outside of class		
i.	Participate in a student-initiated (not required) study group outside of class		
mi.	Discuss an assignment or grade with an instructor		
n.	Ask for help from an instructor regarding questions or problems related to a class		
o.	Receive prompt written or oral feedback from instructors on your performance		
p.	Receive grades or points on assignments, quizzes, tests, or papers, etc.		
q.	Discuss ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class (students, family, co-workers, etc.)		
r.	Discuss ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family, co-workers, etc.)		
s.	Skip Class		

**#24 About how many hours did you spend in a typical day...**

a.	Preparing for class	Students who responded None	
		Prediction (%)	Actual (%)

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**STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**  
**Exercise – Pathways**

... Faculty Predictions Exercise (CCCSE) that are aligned with the “Ensure Students are Learning” component of the Pathways Model. We invite you to predict the responses our students gave on these select items. Results from this exercise can be compared against our CCCSE results. The alignments and/or gaps between student responses and faculty responses can help facilitate important discussions. Please note that for all of the following survey items, students were asked to reflect on their experiences at our college through the end of the first three weeks of their first semester/quarter.

#19	About how often did you do the following...	Students who responded 2 Or More Times	
		Prediction (%)	Actual (%)
a.	Ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions		
b.	Prepare at least two drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in		
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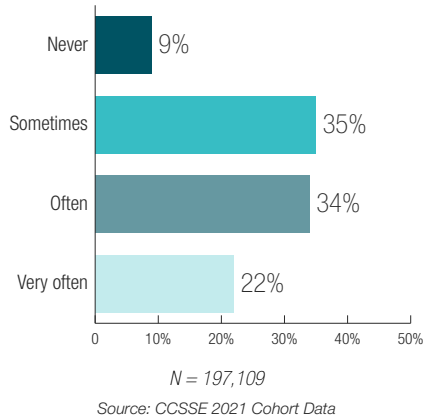
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See more resources on page 2

## DATA ABOUT HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Students' descriptions of high expectations emphasize the value of being pushed to excel. Their comments make it clear that they want to get good grades because they do strong work—and that teachers who give passing grades for substandard work are not doing them favors:

4o. In your experiences at this college during the current academic year, about how often have you worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations?

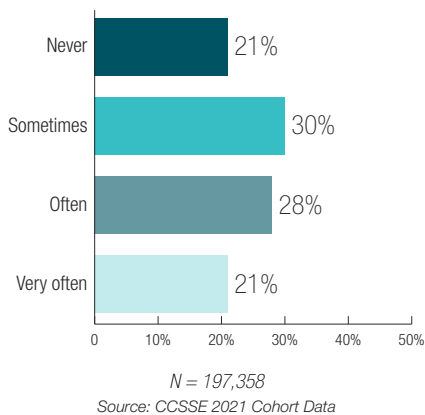


*When teachers fail me sometimes, I actually learn more in their classes because of the way they teach than I would learn from teachers that are friendly and pass you just to be cool.*

— STUDENT

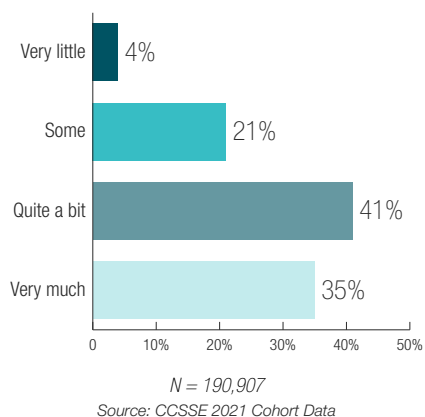
### QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

4c. In your experiences at this college during the current academic year, about how often have you prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in?



- › What does it mean to go to our college? Do our students see college merely as registering for and attending classes? Or do they see it as a coherent academic and personal development experience that prepares them for successful outcomes, including meaningful lives and productive careers?
- › Do faculty members encourage students to put in their best effort rather than do the minimum work needed?
- › Do faculty members set clear expectations for their coursework? Do they tell students that the work may be challenging but they are confident that the students can learn it?
- › What kind of professional development can we provide for faculty members so they can help students around their fears of failure with new and intimidating content?
- › What kinds of support services can be integrated within a student's first year of college (and beyond) to ensure they have the tools and resources needed to meet the high expectations set by their instructors and by the college in general?

9. How much does your college emphasize encouraging you to spend significant amounts of time studying?



Interested in hosting a CCCSE workshop or a presentation on this topic? Contact [info@cccse.org](mailto:info@cccse.org) for more information.

The mission of CCCSE is to provide “aha” moments about the student experience.

Connect with us!

