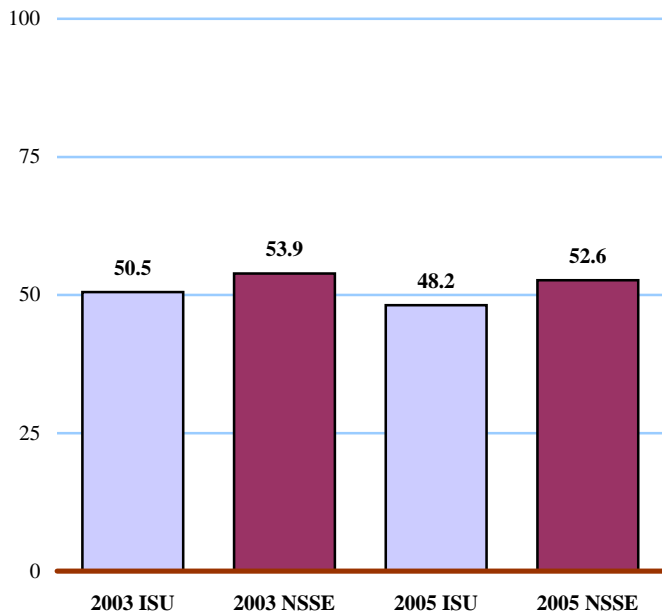


Level of Academic Challenge

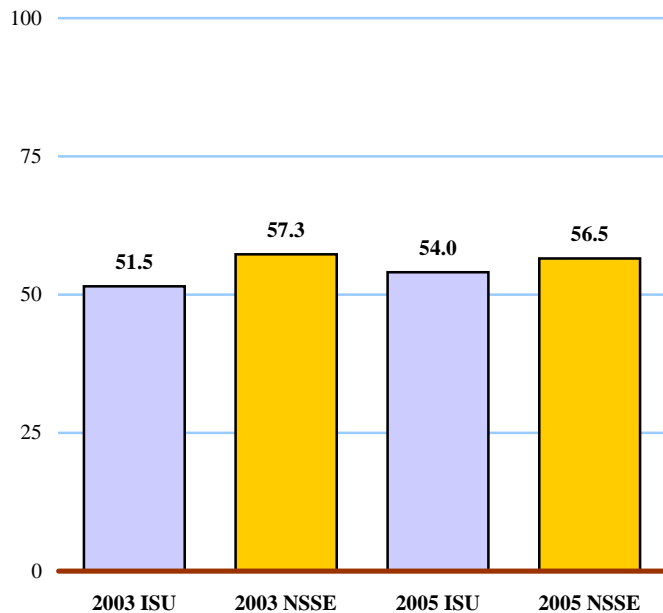
Benchmark Mean Comparisons

Class	2003	2003	2005	2005
	ISU	NSSE	ISU	NSSE
First-Year	50.5	53.9	48.2	52.6
Seniors	51.5	57.3	54.0	56.5

First-Year



Seniors



Level of Academic Challenge Items

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

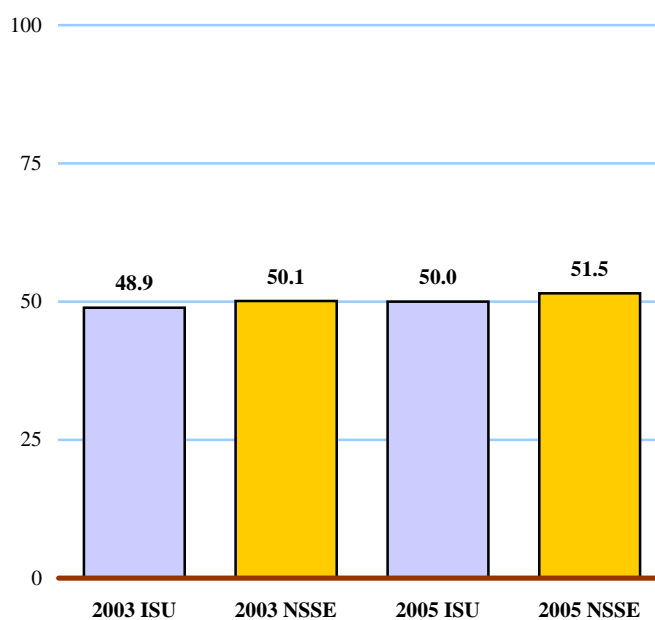
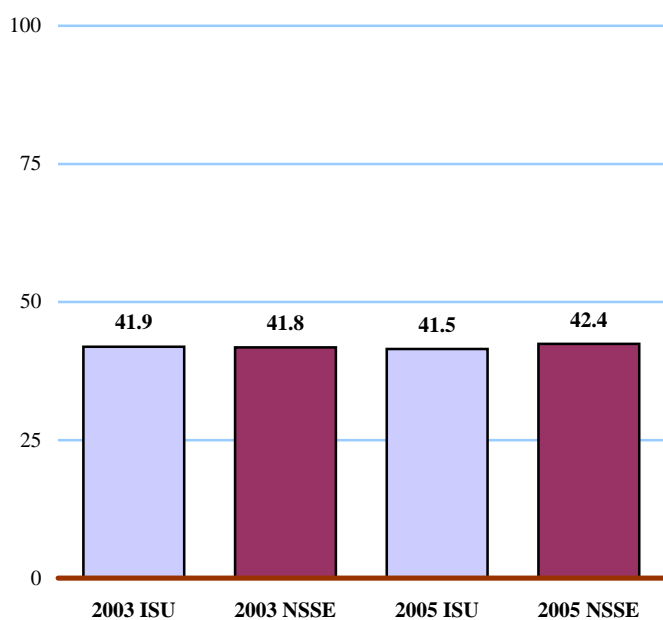
Active and Collaborative Learning

Benchmark Mean Comparisons

Class	2003	2003	2005	2005
	ISU	NSSE	ISU	NSSE
First-Year	41.9	41.8	41.5	42.4
Seniors	48.9	50.1	50.0	51.5

First-Year

Seniors



Active and Collaborative Learning Items

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.)

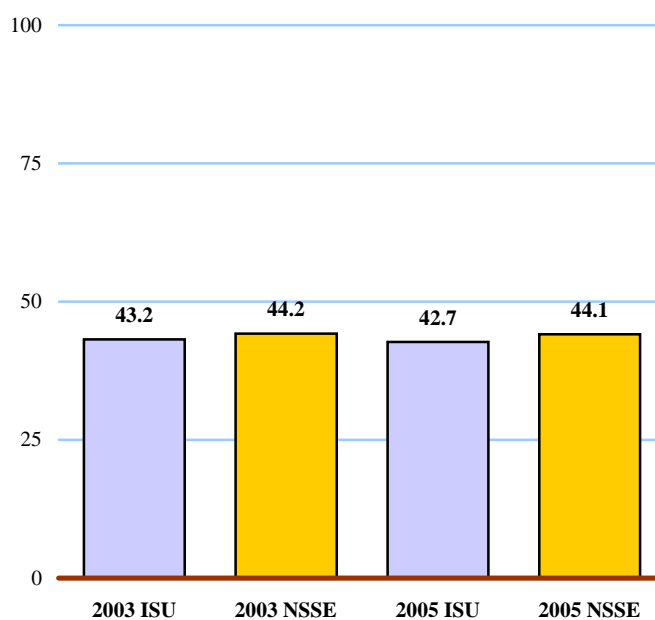
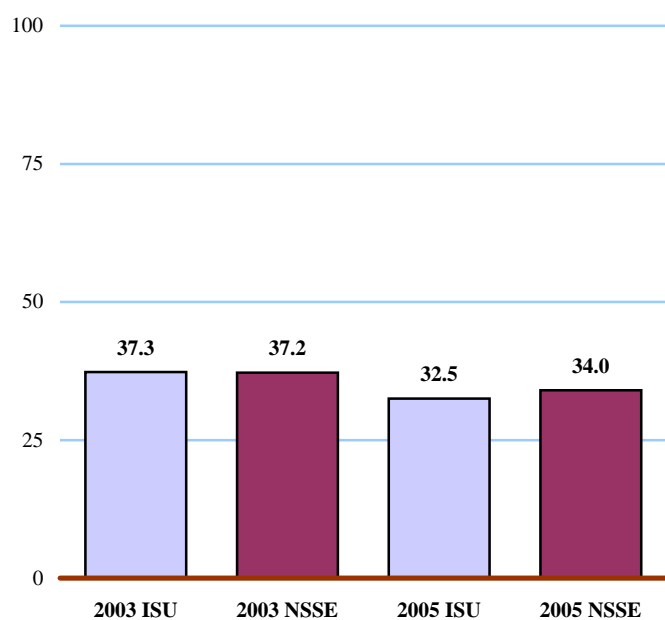
Student-Faculty Interaction

Benchmark Mean Comparisons

Class	2003	2003	2005	2005
	ISU	NSSE	ISU	NSSE
First-Year	37.3	37.2	32.5	34.0
Seniors	43.2	44.2	42.7	44.1

First-Year

Seniors



Student-Faculty Interaction Items

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 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

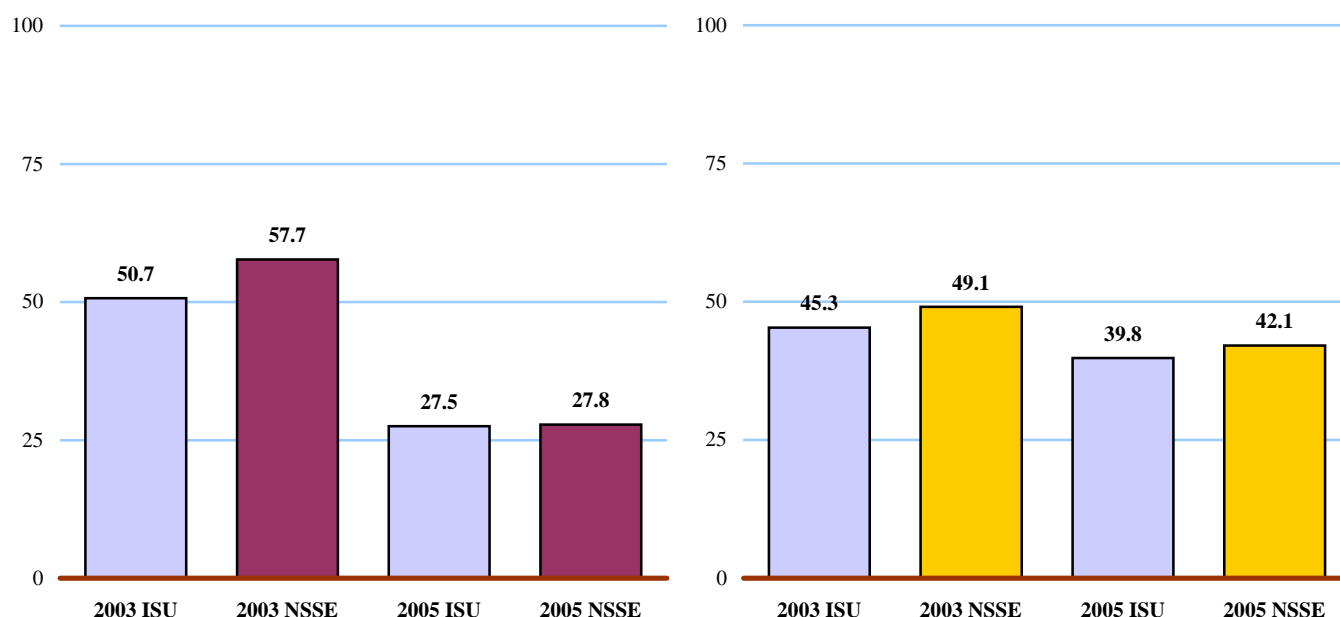
Enriching Educational Experiences

Benchmark Mean Comparisons

Class	2003	2003	2005	2005
	ISU	NSSE	ISU	NSSE
First-Year *	50.7	57.7	27.5	27.8
Seniors	45.3	49.1	39.8	42.1

First-Year

Seniors



Enriching Educational Experiences Items

* Large discrepancies in scores between 2003 and 2005 were largely due to the changes in score scales made by NSSE.

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.

- 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 (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
- 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

