The 2004 University of California
Undergraduate Experiences Survey:
Academic Engagement and Academic Satisfaction

By Kathy Davis
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

More than 45,000 University of California undergraduate students, including more than 5,000 students at UC Davis, participated in the 2004 administration of the University of California Undergraduate Experiences Survey. Results of this survey allow a broad assessment of the level of academic engagement of undergraduates at UC Davis and a comparison of UC Davis students to other students in the UC system. Students at UC Davis consistently indicated lower engagement and satisfaction with teaching assistants than did other UC students. In most other respects, students at UC Davis did not differ significantly from students at all other UCs combined, although some exceptions are noted in the text. It is also interesting to compare responses of freshmen at UC Davis to those of seniors. In general, seniors scored higher than freshmen for academic engagement.

At UC Davis …

- Almost 75% of students had at least occasionally developed their own point of view and supported it with facts and about 70% had put together ideas from different classes, two positive indications of academic engagement.

- On average, students spent less than one hour studying for each hour spent in class, and only 25% felt they had devoted enough time to coursework.
• The average amount of assigned course reading completed was less than 70%, and almost 25% of students had completed less than one-half of assigned course reading. Similarly, about 70% of students had at least occasionally gone to class without completing assignments while more than 30% had done so often or very often.

• About 85% of students were at least somewhat satisfied with their overall academic experience and more than 50% were satisfied or very satisfied.

• Students were most satisfied with their ability to get into their major of choice and least satisfied with their access to small classes and with their GPA.

Overview

In the spring of 2004, the University of California Undergraduate Experiences Survey (UCUES) was administered electronically with an internet-based questionnaire to all 154,000 undergraduates at the eight general campuses of the University, including 22,000 undergraduate students at UC Davis. The UC Davis response rate and the response rate across the University of California were both 30%. Demographic differences between respondents and non-respondents are described in the UCUES appendix.

This report focuses on the elements of the questionnaire that addressed measures of student academic engagement and the related topic of student academic satisfaction. In the first section of the report, responses of students at UC Davis are compared to those of all other University of California students combined. The second section of the report contrasts the academic engagement of freshmen at UC Davis to that of seniors.

Students rated most items on a 5-point or 6-point scale. The mean rating for each item and the percentage of students who responded at or above the midpoint of the scale are reported. A difference in mean rating of 0.2 or more and/or a difference in percentage of 5% or more are considered to be of practical significance and are flagged in the results, with “+” indicating a positive difference and “-” indicating a negative difference. These conventions are generally observed in analysis of the UCUES data. A few exceptions are noted in the text. Detailed response frequency distributions for each of the relevant survey items are available in the appendix to this report.

Results

Comparison of UC Davis Students and Other UC Students

Table 1 (p.3) shows student-reported allocation of time to attending class and studying, and average percent of assigned course reading completed. Note that, on average, students spent less than one hour per week studying for each hour spent in class. The average amount of course reading completed was less than 70% and only about 80% of students had completed at least one-half of assigned course reading. Students at UC Davis were similar to other UC students in these regards, although they spent about one-
half hour more in class or labs each week. Only 25% of UC Davis students felt they had spent enough or more than enough time on their coursework, compared to about 30% of students at the other UCs.

### Table 1. Student-reported allocation of time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Other UCs</th>
<th>UC Davis</th>
<th>Davis – Other UCs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong>: Hours/week spent attending class or labs</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong>: Hours/week spent studying or in other academic activities</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong>: Percent assigned course reading completed</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>-2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Respondents: Completed 50% or more of assigned course reading</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>-3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Respondents: Spent enough or should have spent <em>less</em> time on coursework</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note that these are not mean ratings, as elsewhere in this report, but weighted means. The 0.2 standard established for significant differences does not apply here.*

Source: SARI Report # 348

Tables 2-4 (pp.4-6) show student responses to a collection of questions concerning the frequency of various experiences or activities that relate to academic engagement. Items are shown in order of decreasing UC Davis percentage or mean rating. Negatively worded indicators are shown in red; for these items, a higher percentage or mean rating indicates a lower level of engagement. In general, more than one-half of responding students reported at least *occasional* occurrence of the positive academic experiences, as shown in Table 2. Almost 75% of responding students had at least occasionally developed their own point of view and used facts to support it and a similar number had put together concepts from different courses, two important measures of intellectual growth. However, only 40% of students had made a class presentation and only 30% had discussed ideas with a faculty member outside of class while 70% had at least occasionally gone to class without completing assignments. Although 70% of responding students had written a paper longer than five pages, only 40% indicated they had at least occasionally prepared two or more drafts of a paper before turning it in, i.e., more than one-half of all students generally turned in their first draft. Students at UC Davis differed from other UC students in several areas. UC Davis students were more likely to have had a class where the professor grades or evaluates the work and were less likely to have met with or exchanged email with a teaching assistant. UC Davis students were also less likely to have written a paper longer than five pages or taken an exam that required substantial written response. Perhaps most importantly, UC Davis students were less likely to have asked questions in class or contributed to a class discussion.

Table 3 shows the percent of students reporting *frequent* occurrence of these academic experiences. Fewer students at UC Davis than at the other UCs reported frequently writing papers longer than five pages or frequently taking exams with substantial written responses. UC Davis students were also less likely to have frequently exchanged email with a teaching assistant.
Table 4 (p.6) shows the mean response to this same collection of questions on a scale of 1 (never) to 5 (very often). The mean responses of UC Davis students were similar to those of other UC students.

Table 2. Percent students reporting *at least occasional* occurrence of selected academic experiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occasionally, Often or Very Often</th>
<th>Other UCs</th>
<th>UC Davis</th>
<th>Davis-Other UCs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developed your own point of view about an issue and used facts and examples to support it</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>-2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written a paper longer than 5 pages</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>-5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put together ideas or concepts from different courses</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went to class without completing readings or assignments</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taken an exam that required substantial written responses</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>-5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked questions in class or contributed to a class discussion</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>-5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examined how others gathered and interpreted data and assessed the soundness of their conclusions</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>-3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchanged email with a faculty member</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked harder than you ever thought you could to meet an instructors standards or expectations</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>-1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met with faculty in person</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had class with professor who knows your name</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went to library to do research</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchanged email with a teaching assistant</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>-8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had class where professor grades or evaluates your work</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met with teaching assistant in person</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>-7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipped class for other reasons</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>-3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Found a course so interesting you did more work than required</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made a class presentation</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussed ideas from readings or classes with faculty member outside of class</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipped class because lectures were available on-line or on the Web</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipped class because of your work (paid employment) schedule</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turned in a course assignment late</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not turned in a course assignment at all</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a* Difference exceeds threshold established for practical significance.

Source: SARI Report # 348
Table 3. Percent students reporting frequent occurrence of selected academic experiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
<th>&gt;5%*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other UCs</td>
<td>UC Davis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written a paper longer than 5 pages</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taken an exam that required substantial written responses</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed your own point of view about an issue and used facts and examples to support it</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went to class without completing readings or assignments</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put together ideas or concepts from different courses</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked questions in class or contributed to a class discussion</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had class with professor who knows your name</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examined how others gathered and interpreted data and assessed the soundness of their conclusions</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked harder than you ever thought you could to meet an instructors standards or expectations</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchanged email with a faculty member</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met with faculty in person</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went to library to do research</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchanged email with a teaching assistant</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had class where professor grades or evaluates your work</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met with teaching assistant in person</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipped class for other reasons</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made a class presentation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Found a course so interesting you did more work than required</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussed ideas from readings or classes with faculty member outside of class</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipped class because lectures were available on-line or on the Web</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipped class because of your work (paid employment) schedule</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turned in a course assignment late</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not turned in a course assignment at all</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Difference exceeds threshold established for practical significance.

Source: SARI Report # 348
Tables 5-7 (pp.7-8) show student responses to a collection of questions concerning their satisfaction with academic elements of their university experience, in order of decreasing UC Davis percentage or mean rating. Note that for some of these questions, students with a declared major were asked to rate these aspects of their major while students without a declared major were asked to rate these aspects of their overall UC experience. In general, most students were at least somewhat satisfied with these aspects of their academic experience (Table 5). About 85% were at least somewhat satisfied and almost
60% were satisfied or very satisfied with their overall academic experience (Table 6). UC Davis students were less likely to be at least somewhat satisfied with their GPA than other UC students. Consistent with the trend previously noted with regard to teaching assistants, UC Davis students were less likely to be satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of teaching by TAs. However, UC Davis students were more likely to be satisfied with academic advising by faculty and staff. Students were most satisfied with the ability to get into the major they wanted and with their overall experience and least satisfied with access to small classes and with their overall GPA. Table 7 shows the mean response to this same collection of questions. Mean responses of UC Davis students did not differ significantly from those of other UC students.

Table 5. Percent students at least somewhat satisfied with selected aspects of their academic experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Somewhat Satisfied, Satisfied or Very Satisfied</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
<th>&gt;5%&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other UCs</td>
<td>UC Davis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to get into major that you want</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your overall UC experience</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your overall academic experience</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility of faculty outside of class&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of faculty instruction&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising by faculty on academic matters&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising by staff on academic matters&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of courses for general ed/breadth requirements</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of teaching by TAs&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of your education given the cost</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of courses needed for graduation&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to small classes&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your overall UC GPA</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Difference exceeds threshold established for practical significance.

<sup>b</sup> Students with a declared major were asked to rate these aspects of their major; students without a declared major were asked to rate these aspects of their overall UC experience.

Source: SARI Report # 348
Table 6. Percent students *satisfied or very satisfied* with selected aspects of their academic experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfied or Very Satisfied</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
<th>&gt;5%&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other UCs</td>
<td>UC Davis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to get into major that you want</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your overall UC experience</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your overall academic experience</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of faculty instruction&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility of faculty outside of class&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising by faculty on academic matters&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising by staff on academic matters&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of courses for general ed/breadth requirements</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of your education given the cost</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of teaching by TAs&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of courses needed for graduation&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to small classes&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your overall UC GPA</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Difference exceeds threshold established for practical significance.

<sup>b</sup> Students with a declared major were asked to rate these aspects of their major; students without a declared major were asked to rate these aspects of their overall UC experience.

Source: SARI Report # 348

Table 7. Mean satisfaction rating for selected aspects of the academic experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Satisfied?</th>
<th>Mean Response</th>
<th>&gt;0.2&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1=very dissatisfied, 2=dissatisfied, 3=somewhat dissatisfied, 4=somewhat satisfied, 5=satisfied, 6=very satisfied)</td>
<td>Other UCs</td>
<td>UC Davis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to get into major that you want</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your overall UC experience</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your overall academic experience</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of faculty instruction&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility of faculty outside of class&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising by faculty on academic matters&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising by staff on academic matters&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of courses for general ed/breadth requirements</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of teaching by TAs&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of your education given the cost</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of courses needed for graduation&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to small classes&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your overall UC GPA</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Difference exceeds threshold established for practical significance.

<sup>b</sup> Students with a declared major were asked to rate these aspects of their major; students without a declared major were asked to rate these aspects of their overall UC experience.

Source: SARI Report # 348
Table 8 shows the relationship between GPA and student satisfaction with GPA. Student satisfaction increased as mean GPA increased. On average, students with a GPA of less than 3.0 were not satisfied with their GPA, a positive indication of academic engagement. Students at UC Davis tended to have slightly lower GPAs than students at the other UCs, although it is unclear whether this is sufficient to account for differences in overall satisfaction.

### Table 8. Relationship between GPA and satisfaction with GPA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction with GPA</th>
<th>Mean GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other UCs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Dissatisfied (1)</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied (2)</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Dissatisfied (3)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Satisfied (4)</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied (5)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Satisfied (6)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note that these are not mean ratings, as elsewhere in this report, but mean GPAs. The 0.2 standard established for significant differences does not apply here.*

Source: SARI Report #348

### Comparison of UC Davis Freshmen and Seniors

It is interesting to compare the responses of freshmen at UC Davis to those of seniors. As shown in Table 9 (p.10), although seniors did not spend significantly more time in class or studying and completed somewhat less of the assigned course reading than freshmen, they were much more likely to report that they had spent enough or more than enough time on their coursework.

In virtually all measures of academic engagement and satisfaction the mean response of seniors was higher than that of freshmen, as shown in Tables 10 and 11 (pp.11-12). Items are shown in order of decreasing senior student percentage or mean rating. Negatively worded indicators are shown in red. The exceptions to the otherwise positive trend are that seniors were more likely to have gone to class without completing assignments and more likely to have skipped class because of their work schedule.
### Table 9. Student-reported allocation of time: comparison of freshmen and seniors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UC Davis Freshmen</th>
<th>UC Davis Seniors</th>
<th>UC Davis Seniors-Freshmen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong>: Hours/week spent attending class or labs</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong>: Hours/week spent studying or in other academic activities</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong>: Percent assigned course reading completed</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>-2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% of Respondents</strong>: Completed 50% or more of assigned course reading</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>-2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% of Respondents</strong>: Spent enough or should have spent less time on coursework</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note that these are not mean ratings, as elsewhere in this report, but weighted means. The 0.2 standard established for significant differences does not apply here.*

Source: SARI Report # 348
Table 10. Mean frequency rating for selected academic experiences: comparison of freshmen and seniors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Often?</th>
<th>Mean Response</th>
<th>UC Davis Seniors-UC Davis Freshmen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(1=never, 2=rarely, 3=occasionally, 4=often, 5=very often)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written a paper longer than 5 pages</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed your own point of view about an issue and used facts and examples to support it</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taken an exam that required substantial written responses</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went to class without completing readings or assignments</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put together ideas or concepts from different courses</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had class with professor who knows your name</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked questions in class or contributed to a class discussion</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examined how others gathered and interpreted data and assessed the soundness of their conclusions</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchanged email with a faculty member</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met with faculty in person</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had class where professor grades or evaluates your work</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went to the library to do research</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked harder than you ever thought you could to meet an instructors standards or expectations</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchanged email with a teaching assistant</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met with teaching assistant in person</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made a class presentation</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipped class for other reasons</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Found a course so interesting you did more work than required</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepared two or more drafts of a paper/assignment before turning in</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussed ideas from readings or classes with faculty members outside of class</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipped class because the lectures were available on-line or on the Web</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipped class because of your work (paid employment) schedule</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turned in a course assignment late</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not turned in a course assignment at all</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Difference exceeds threshold established for practical significance.

Source: SARI Report # 348
Table 11. Mean Satisfaction rating for selected aspects of the academic experience: comparison of freshmen and seniors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Satisfied?</th>
<th>Mean Response</th>
<th>&gt;0.2&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1=very dissatisfied, 2=dissatisfied, 3=somewhat dissatisfied,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4=somewhat satisfied, 5=satisfied, 6=very satisfied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to get into a major that you want</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your overall UC experience</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your overall academic experience</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of faculty instruction&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility of faculty outside of class&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising by faculty on academic matters (courses, requirements, etc.)&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising by staff on academic matters (courses, requirements, etc.)&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of courses for general education or breadth requirements</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of the education you are getting given how much you have to pay for it</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of courses needed for graduation&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of teaching by TAs&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to small classes&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your overall UC GPA</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Difference exceeds threshold established for practical significance.  
<sup>b</sup> Students with a declared major were asked to rate these aspects of their major; students without a declared major were asked to rate these aspects of their overall UC experience.

Source: SARI Report # 348

Table 12 shows the relationship between GPA and student satisfaction with GPA. The average GPA of seniors was higher than that of freshmen, and seniors were more likely to be dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with a higher GPA.
Table 12. Relationship between GPA and satisfaction with GPA: comparison of freshmen and seniors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction with GPA</th>
<th>Mean GPA UC Davis Freshmen</th>
<th>Mean GPA UC Davis Seniors</th>
<th>UC Davis Seniors - Freshmen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Dissatisfied (1)</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied (2)</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Dissatisfied (3)</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Satisfied (4)</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied (5)</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Satisfied (6)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note that these are not mean ratings, as elsewhere in this report, but mean GPAs. The 0.2 standard established for significant differences does not apply here. Source: SARI Report # 348

Conclusions

Students at UC Davis and at the other UCs responded to a number of UCUES questions concerning their level of academic engagement, measured in terms of the frequency of various academic experiences, and their satisfaction with their academic experience. Students seem to be generally satisfied with the academic elements of their UC experience and their responses do not raise any particular concerns. Students were most satisfied with their ability to get into the major they want and least satisfied with their access to small classes and their GPA. Of course, larger class sizes are consistent with more open majors so these two responses are not surprising. Student satisfaction with GPA was positively correlated with GPA, with students expressing dissatisfaction with GPA less than 3.0, so this is actually a positive indicator for academic engagement.

Student responses concerning the frequency of certain academic experiences were more mixed. Most had at least occasionally contributed to class discussion, met with or exchanged email with a faculty member, and gone to the library to do research. Most students had also put together ideas from different courses, developed their own point of view and used facts to support it, and critically examined the conclusions of others. Another very positive indicator is that more than half of the students indicated they had risen to the challenge and worked harder than they ever thought they could to meet an instructor’s expectations. However, although most students had written a paper longer than five pages, it also appears that most students turned in the first draft. The most troubling indicators of low academic engagement relate to student study habits. Students spent only about 13 hours/week studying or in other academic activities, less than one hour for each hour spent in class. The average amount of assigned course reading completed was less than 70%, and almost 25% of students had completed less than one-half of assigned course reading. Similarly, 70% of students had at least occasionally gone to class without completing assignments while more than 30% had done so often or very
often. This is true despite the fact that only 25% of UC Davis students felt they had devoted enough or more than enough time to their coursework.

Students at UC Davis did not differ significantly or systematically from students at the other UCs, except in their level of interaction and satisfaction with teaching assistants. Students at UC Davis were less likely to meet with or exchange email with teaching assistants and were less satisfied with the quality of instruction by teaching assistants.

One final positive observation is that UC Davis seniors consistently reported higher levels of academic engagement and satisfaction than freshmen.