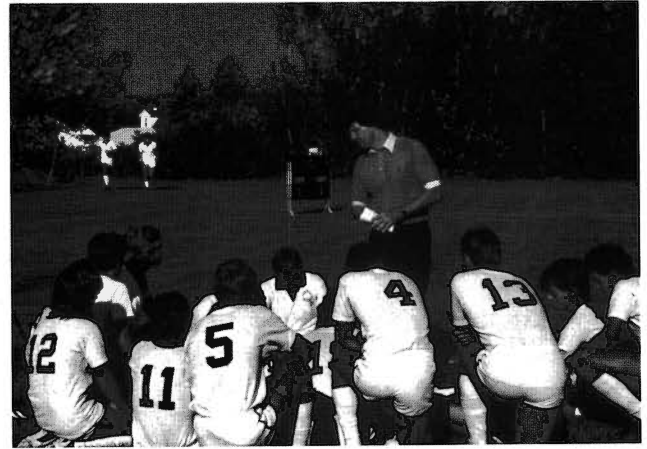


Penn State

Undergraduate Education Across the Commonwealth

FERN K. WILLITS, THOMAS J. SEIFRIED, AND LINDA C. HIGGINSON
WITH AN EPILOGUE BY DIANE M. ENERSON



This publication is available in alternative media on request.

The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. The Pennsylvania State University does not discriminate against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Director, The Pennsylvania State University, 201 Willard Building, University Park, PA 16802-2801: tel. (814) 863-0471; TDD (814) 865-3175.

© The Pennsylvania State University 1998

Penn State

Undergraduate Education Across the Commonwealth

5

Preface

by Fern K. (Bunny) Willits

7

Penn State as a Multi-Campus University

by Fern K. Willits, Linda C. Higginson, and Thomas J. Seifried

11

The Campuses Today

by Thomas J. Seifried, Fern K. Willits, and Linda C. Higginson

25

Surveying Students and Teachers

by Fern K. Willits and Thomas J. Seifried

31

Community of Learning

by Fern K. Willits and Thomas J. Seifried

45

Quality of Instruction

by Fern K. Willits and Thomas J. Seifried

65

Epilogue

by Diane M. Enerson

An Alumni Teaching Fellow Project



Preface

Fern K. (Bunny) Willits

This is the third in a series of reports dealing with the views of students and faculty about undergraduate education at Penn State. The work was initiated when, as the 1995-96 Alumni Teaching Fellow, I was given support by the Penn State Alumni Association to carry out one or more pedagogical projects of my choosing. My long-term experience in applied opinion polling had underscored the usefulness of scientifically designed surveys to obtain information on members' views as a means of informing decision makers of the felt needs of their constituencies. In 1996, in collaboration with the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, I surveyed students and teachers at University Park seeking their opinions of the nature of the campus learning environment and the quality of instruction. Findings from these studies were made available to interested persons through the following publications:

Willits, Fern K., Jeanette O. Janota, Betty L. Moore, and Diane M. Enerson (1996) *Penn State as a Community of Learning: Faculty and Student Views*. University Park, PA: Instructional Development Program.

Willits, Fern K., Betty L. Moore, and Diane M. Enerson (1996) *Penn State Quality of Instruction: Surveys of Students and Teachers at University Park*. University Park, PA: Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching.

While I, like most members of the University Park Community, realized that there were other Penn State campuses "out there," I had little personal experience with these other locations and only a partial awareness of their contributions to meeting the University's commitments to the citizens of the Commonwealth. Two forces came together to alter my views. First, Tom Seifried, a doctoral student in Adult Education who had served as my teaching assistant and who was familiar with the University Park studies described above, began to raise questions about the extent to which these findings provided an adequate picture of the Penn State undergraduate situation. He argued that, since a majority of all PSU graduates take at least a portion of their coursework at campuses other than University Park, it was important to assess the views of students and teachers at these other sites as well. Second, I encountered Linda Higginson, a long time acquaintance whom I had not seen in years. As assistant to Senior Vice President Robert E. Dunham, then head of the Commonwealth Education System, Linda endorsed Tom's views and offered her assistance in the project.

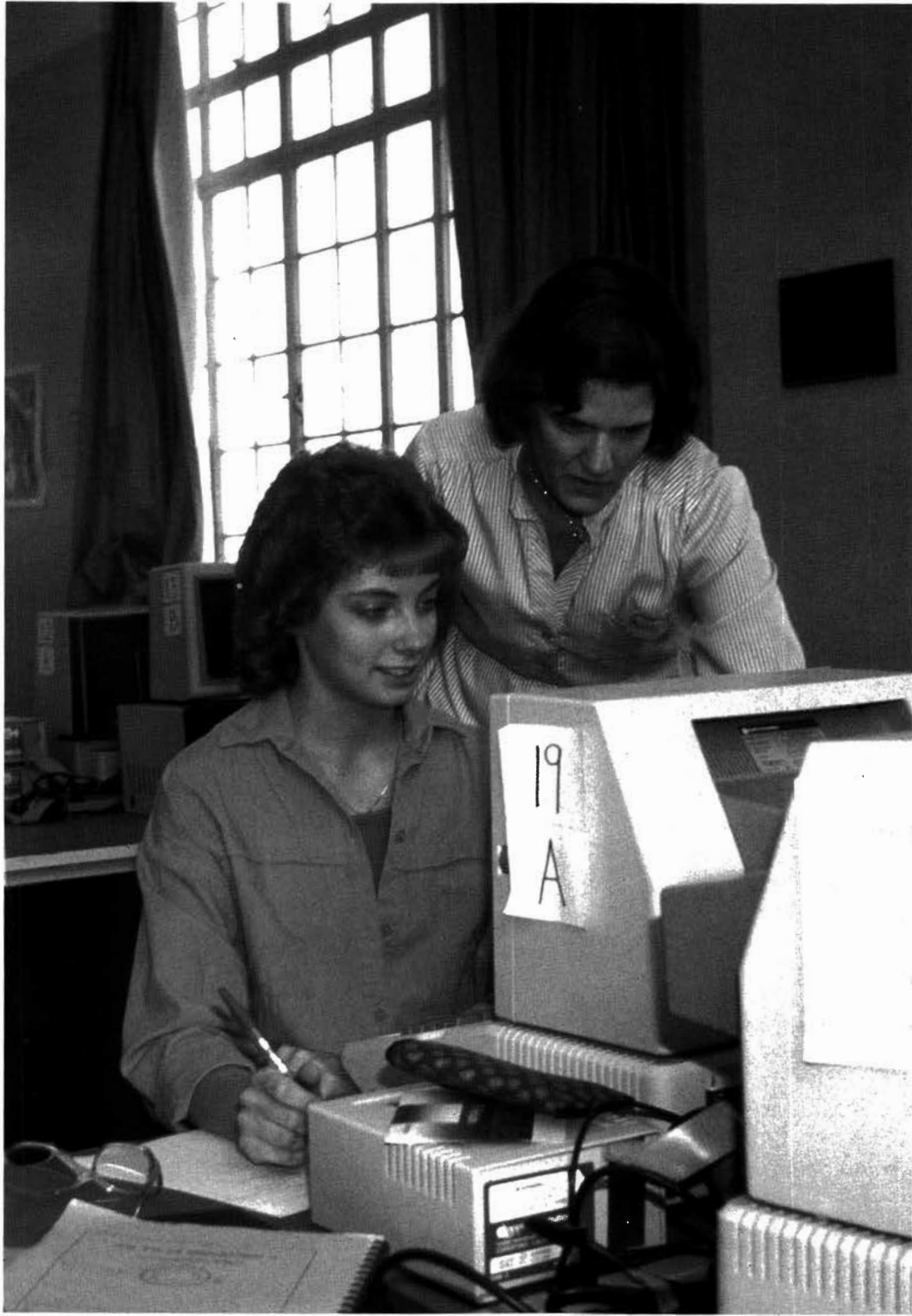
During Spring Semester 1997, we surveyed students and teachers at 19 "other" Penn State locations concerning their perceptions of the learning environments and the

instructional quality on their campuses. This report summarizes the findings of these surveys

In writing the current document we found that there was no generally accepted collective term to refer to the campuses located away from University Park. At various times these units had been called "centers," "branch campuses," "Commonwealth Campuses," or "affiliated campuses." However, with their increasing autonomy and the establishment of the "Commonwealth College" (which includes just 12 of the locations), none of these designations seemed appropriate. The term "campus colleges" seemed even less descriptive. In the absence of a widely agreed upon label, we have sometimes used the term "non-UP" to refer to the surveyed campuses. The designation should not be construed in a negative sense—the campuses are not here viewed as residual or leftover pieces of Penn State but as important components of the whole, which have for many years contributed extensively to the University's threefold mission of teaching, research, and service.

Special thanks go to my co-authors: Thomas Seifried who bullied me into undertaking this project and provided unflagging enthusiasm, insight, and hours of unremunerated work; Linda Higginson who collaborated on the design of the surveys, served as a valuable source of information and contributed to the content and form of the current report; and Diane Enerson whose comments and observations provided useful perspectives for understanding the study's findings. Appreciation is also expressed for the support of the Penn State Alumni Association and the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology.

It is hoped that these publications will contribute in some small way to stimulating contemplation, discussion, and action focused on enhancing the teaching-learning environment of all of Penn State's campuses. To that end, material in this report may be reproduced without permission of the authors or the University. However, a credit line would be appreciated. A suggested citation is: Fern K. Willits, Thomas J. Seifried, and Linda C. Higginson (1998) *Penn State Undergraduate Education: Across the Commonwealth*, University Park, PA: Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching. Additional copies of this and the previous publications, can be obtained by contacting the authors or The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, 401 Grange Building, University Park, PA 16802 (<http://www.psu.edu/celt>).



Penn State as a Multi-Campus University

Fern K. Willits, Linda C. Higginson, and Thomas J. Seifried

Penn State today includes almost two dozen campus locations geographically distributed across the Commonwealth. In fact, it has been estimated that nine out of every ten Pennsylvanians live within 30 miles of a Penn State campus. While some of these campuses serve special purposes—such as the College of Medicine, Great Valley Graduate Center, The Dickinson School of Law, and The Pennsylvania College of Technology—most locations emphasize undergraduate education as their central mission. These campuses have historically provided an opportunity for students to begin their undergraduate studies “close to home,” often with the goal of moving to University Park for completion of their degrees. Currently, about 60% of all Penn State undergraduates begin their studies at a campus other than University Park. However, recent changes in the administrative structure and academic organization of some of the campus units may affect the nature of their responsibilities in the years ahead.

History

By the early 1900s, The Pennsylvania State College (renamed The Pennsylvania State University in 1953), had begun to offer a variety of extension classes in agriculture and engineering at locations throughout the Commonwealth. The first “branch school” offering courses on a continuing basis was established in Allentown in 1912 to train engineering technicians. A second branch location was added during the 1920s with the merging of the program at Mont Alto State Forestry Academy with Penn State’s forestry curriculum and the subsequent acquisition of the Mont Alto property.

During the economic depression of the 1930s, at the request of local residents, temporary “freshman extension centers” were opened at several locations to meet the needs of students who could not afford to attend the campus in State College. The success of these freshman centers led President Hetzel in

1934-35 to propose the establishment of temporary “undergraduate centers.” with instructors of faculty rank employed to offer both freshman and sophomore level education. Of the fourteen communities asking to be considered as sites for the undergraduate centers, Uniontown, Hazelton, Pottsville and Sayre-Towanda were chosen. Sayre-Towanda was replaced two years later by DuBois.

Although ostensibly established to prepare students for upper-division studies at any institution in the Commonwealth, from the very beginning the undergraduate centers operated largely as “feeders” to The Pennsylvania State College. As their popularity and attendance increased, local citizens petitioned to make the centers permanent extensions of Penn State. This community sentiment is part of the Board of Trustees record:

The character of the need has changed, but the need remains. Because of improved economic conditions, some young men and women who a few years ago could not attend college away from home can now do so. Their places, however, are more than filled by others who, although capable of doing college work, cannot afford to attend college away from home for four years even during prosperous times . . . communities are urging that the centers be continued to meet the educational needs of these young men and women.¹

In 1937 the Trustees approved a recommendation that the undergraduate centers be continued, though no sites were to be considered permanent, and the needs of the relevant communities were to be continually monitored. In 1939 a fifth Penn State undergraduate center was established at Altoona. In addition to the centers, Penn State General Extension operated technical institutes which provided short courses and continuing education to help meet the

¹ Board of Trustees of the Pennsylvania State College meeting January 16, 1937; Minutes dated and approved April 12, 1937, p. 49.

increasing need for skilled and technically trained workers.

At the onset of World War II, the Board of Trustees considered suspending the work of the distant campuses, but an outpouring of local and legislative objections prevailed. Penn State was contracted to provide training in engineering, science, and defense-related skills for the war effort, and classes for more than 140,000 military and civilian students were provided in over 200 communities across the Commonwealth.

As the war drew to a close, returning veterans seeking education supported by the GI Bill flooded higher education institutions across the country, including Penn State. Additional educational sites were established in response to local citizens' requests. Although some of these new locations were limited-purpose and short-lived, others grew in size and curricular offerings. A policy statement issued by the Board of Trustees in January 1953 justified this expanding outreach:

By virtue of its charter, and of subsequent acts of the federal and state governments, The Pennsylvania State College is required to provide liberal and practical education in the several pursuits and professions of life . . . at convenient times and places, for all citizens of the Commonwealth who desire such instruction and who are capable of profiting from it.²

In 1953, full-time two-year programs to train engineering technicians were begun at several undergraduate centers and technical institutes. Students who completed the requirements were awarded "associate degrees"—a designation giving academic status to their achievement. These programs proved to be extremely popular, and other two-year degree offerings in a variety of fields were quickly initiated. Associate degrees were a novelty in higher education at the time, and Penn State's development of these programs provided impetus for their growth in other institutions throughout the nation. Associate degree programs continue to represent an important part of the educational offerings at Penn State's campuses today.

² Board of Trustees of the Pennsylvania State College meeting January 24, 1953; Minutes dated and approved June 6, 1953, p. 101.

The demand for higher education continued to increase during the 1950s, and the geographically dispersed campuses were seen as a viable means of helping to meet this expanding need. Shifting a higher proportion of freshmen and sophomores to these sites would relieve pressure on the facilities at the State College campus, where more attention could then be given to specialized upper division undergraduate and graduate instruction. In 1959, the Board of Trustees adopted guidelines for the development and operation of the undergraduate centers under the new term of "Commonwealth Campuses." This new designation was accompanied by closer ties between the smaller campuses and the larger University. Uniform admission and fee policies were adopted, academic integration with the campus at State College (now University Park) was emphasized, administrative supervision of physical facilities was centralized, and faculty at all locations were listed as members of their respective academic departments at University Park. Except for University Park, all locations were to have local advisory boards to direct area support for capital financing and to facilitate communication with the University's administration. New campuses continued to be added to the system in response to local community requests.

As time went by it became apparent that not all students completing the first two years of their baccalaureate degree programs at the outlying campuses could be accommodated at University Park to complete their studies. In 1966 Capital Campus (now Penn State Harrisburg) was established to offer junior and senior level studies and several graduate programs. Behrend Campus, in Erie, had experienced steady growth in enrollment and physical plant, and in 1970 began offering four-year programs; shortly thereafter it was renamed "Behrend College."

By 1975, in addition to Behrend College and the Capital Campus, there were 17 Commonwealth Campuses located throughout Pennsylvania. These campuses offered baccalaureate courses, continuing education classes, and associate degree programs. In 1980 the Commonwealth Campus system was merged with the Division of Continuing Education to form the Commonwealth Educational System (CES).

Continuing Education became a separate unit in 1991, and the CES, headed by a Senior Vice-President, continued as the administrative organization for the commonwealth campuses. Penn State Erie, The Behrend College and Penn State Harrisburg were more autonomous in their operations and reported directly to the Provost of the University.

Reorganization and Change

Under the leadership of University President Graham Spanier and then Senior Vice President Robert Dunham, a major reorganization of the the campuses was instituted in 1997. The restructuring was undertaken to encourage greater responsiveness to community/regional needs and promote an appropriate balance of enrollments between University Park and the other campuses. Effective July 1, 1997, the following organizational structure was approved:

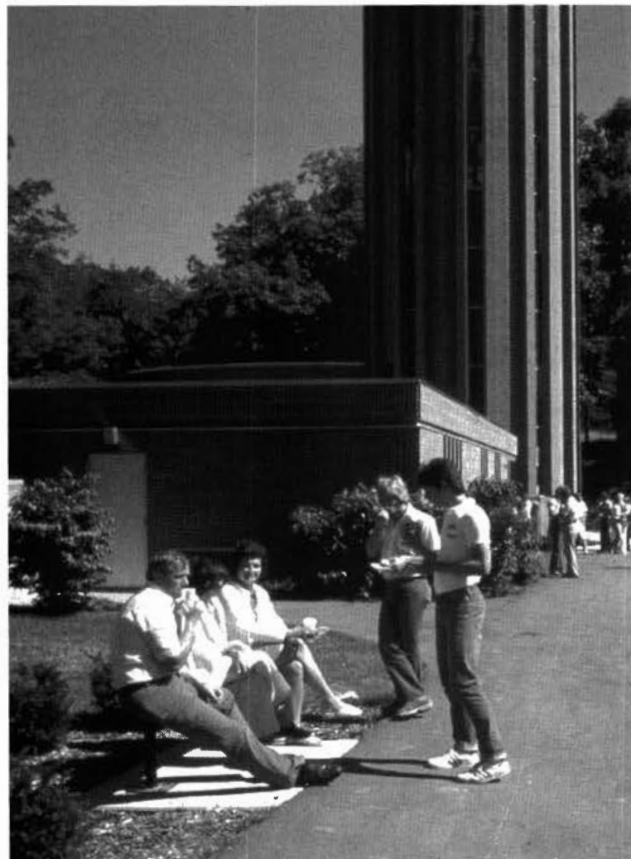
- Schuylkill Campus joined with Penn State Harrisburg as the Capital College, with two campus sites.
- Lehigh Valley (formerly Allentown) and Berks Campuses combined to form the Berks-Lehigh Valley College, with two campus sites.
- Altoona Campus became the Altoona College.
- Abington-Ogontz Campus became the Abington College.
- Twelve separate campus locations—Beaver, Delaware County, DuBois, Fayette, Hazleton, McKeesport, Mont Alto, New Kensington, Shenango, Wilkes-Barre, Worthington Scranton, and York—were united to form the Commonwealth College.
- Penn State Erie, The Behrend College, continued under its earlier designation.

Each of the six colleges now receives the same types of budgetary, curricular, and programmatic responsibility as other colleges in the University. While their primary mission to offer lower division undergraduate courses and associate degree programs continues, these new colleges are also expected to expand their offerings in continuing and distance

education and, eventually, to provide a limited number of baccalaureate degree programs.

Under the reorganization, newly appointed faculty hold positions in their local colleges, with tenure and promotion decisions originating within these units. Extant faculty of the former CES have been given the option of retaining their appointments within their respective University Park colleges or transferring to the appropriate local college.

Although the University Park Campus remains the University's administrative hub and the primary site for graduate education, many of Penn State's undergraduates will continue to be enrolled at other campus locations. Moreover, while the current flow of students to University Park is expected to be maintained, future enrollment goals project an increase in the number of students remaining at these other sites to complete baccalaureate programs. The reorganization was initiated with the purpose of more effectively carrying out the University's educational mission by enhancing the quality of academic opportunities available throughout the Commonwealth. The impacts of these changes have yet to be realized.





The Campuses Today

Thomas J. Seifried, Fern K. Willits, and Linda C. Higginson

Campuses comprising the six colleges designated by the 1997 reorganization are scattered across the Commonwealth. They differ widely in history, size, physical setting, programming, campus facilities, and student/faculty characteristics. Some, as described in the previous section, began as undergraduate centers to provide the first two years of instruction for baccalaureate degree students; others were initially established as technical institutes to offer continuing education classes and short programs largely in science and engineering technology; still others evolved as mergers with existing institutions. Regardless of the circumstances surrounding their origins, almost all of these units were established in response to local initiatives; Penn State was *asked* by local business people, community leaders and citizens to develop a facility. Reflecting the close ties between the local community and the campus, these units are heavily involved in continuing education activities within their respective geographical areas. However, undergraduate instruction remains a major commitment.

This section presents a brief vignette of each of the six colleges. No effort has been made to provide detailed data on any of the units, but some general descriptive information may be useful in setting the stage for the materials that follow.¹

Penn State Abington

Penn State Abington (formerly the Abington-Ogontz Campus) has an enrollment of more than 3,200 students with nearly 160 full-time and part-time faculty. The campus consists of 45 acres of rolling hills and woodlands. A picturesque duck pond, spring house and Georgian architecture are juxtaposed with modern buildings and high-tech laboratories. Formerly the Ogontz School for Girls, an elite female seminary and finishing school, the

¹ Historical materials in this section were drawn largely from Bezilla, Michael (1985) *Penn State: An Illustrated History*. University Park: Penn State Press.

property was donated to Penn State by Abby A. Sutherland, then principal and owner of the school upon her retirement in 1950. The campus is located just twelve miles north of Philadelphia in suburban Abington Township. Proximity to the city means that students can readily access the cultural advantages of a major metropolitan center and the historical attractions available in the area. The nearby urban environs also contribute to the diversity of the student body. More than one in every six students is identified as belonging to a racial/ethnic minority group. The College provides four-year programs in six different majors (Administration of Justice; American Studies; Business; Letters, Arts, and Sciences; Integrative Arts; and Science). However, most students take only the first two years of their baccalaureate degrees at Abington, usually completing their programs at University Park, The Behrend College, or Penn State Harrisburg. Also offered are two-year associate degree programs in Business Administration and Letters, Arts, and Sciences, as well as certificate programs and continuing and distance education classes. While emphasizing teaching, the campus points with pride to its faculty's involvement in research and the opportunities for undergraduate participation in research projects. Although there is no on-campus housing, there are opportunities for student involvement with ten varsity sports, intramural sports programs and more than two dozen student organizations.

Penn State Altoona

Penn State Altoona is situated on the outskirts of the city of Altoona in south central Pennsylvania, just 45 miles from the University Park (UP) Campus. In 1933, Juniata College in Huntington had established a freshman center in Altoona. Through the local board of education and the chamber of commerce Altoona citizens requested that the

Selected characteristics of 19 Penn State campuses.

College/Campus	Number of Full-time Faculty (1997)	Number of Part-time Faculty (1997)	Student Enrollment (Fall 1997)	Average Class Size ^a	University-owned Housing ^a	% Minority Enrollment ^b	Number of Programs (1997)	
							4 yr.	2 yr.
Abington College	87	65	3,218	24	none	16.9	6	2
Altoona College	107	125	3,727	31	900	6.1	4	6
Behrend College	152	80	3,327	26	1,230	7.9	23	5
Berks-Lehigh Valley College	75	98	2431					
Berks	53	62	1,817	24	390	8.4	1	7
Lehigh	22	36	614	22	none	10.7	0	2
Capital College	180	75	4,447					
Harrisburg	145	50	3,466	21	349	8.5	26	3
Schuylkill	35	25	981	19	176	8.8	0	6
Commonwealth College	524	501	13,757					
Beaver	35	38	811	22	320	8.0	0	4
Delaware County	52	53	1,546	24	none	15.4	5	2
DuBois	44	33	1,071	24	none	2.0	2	10
Fayette	46	39	872	24	none	4.5	4	6
Hazleton	53	29	1,280	29	485	7.4	0	6
McKeesport	34	38	836	20	220	18.2	0	6
Mont Alto	54	26	1,140	30	440	6.6	3	7
New Kensington	39	30	846	21	none	3.3	2	8
Shenango	30	59	1,017	25	none	8.8	1	7
Wilkes-Barre	34	41	795	19	none	7.9	2	7
Worthington Scranton	51	47	1,516	23	none	2.2	2	6
York	52	68	2,027	21	none	6.7	1	5

^aPenn State Campus Locations 1998. University Park, PA: Penn State Department of University Publications, U.Ed. EMA 97-76.

^bFACT FILE: 1995 Enrollment by Race at 3,300 Institutions of Higher Education," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* vol. XLIII (37). May 23, 1997, A47.

center expand its offerings to include sophomore level work. When Juniata refused, Penn State was asked to establish an undergraduate center. Classes were first held in 1939 in a public school building and later in the downtown YMCA and adjacent buildings. By 1946, the center had become so overcrowded that the local advisory board raised money to purchase the old Ivyside Amusement Park in the northwest section of the city. Closed since the early 1940s, the park contained more than a dozen buildings on 53 acres of land. A shortage of materials and money delayed the needed renovations until a community "do-it-yourself" campaign, using largely donated supplies and volunteer labor, succeeded in refurbishing the buildings in time for the 1948 school year. The campus continues to enjoy strong support from the surrounding area.

Today the campus contains 115 acres, with the landscape dominated by an impressive water

fountain, a duck pond, the chapel tower and a modern student union. Four residence halls accommodate about 900 of the more than 3,500 students. There are approximately 240 full-time and part-time faculty. Besides classrooms, the campus boasts a number of science and engineering laboratories, a community arts center, ceramics/sculpture studios, and an athletic complex. Although many students complete only the first two years of their baccalaureate programs at the campus, complete four year-programs are also offered in: Letters, Arts, and Sciences; Electro-Mechanical Engineering Technology; Nursing; and Business. Associate degrees in Electrical Engineering Technology; Mechanical Engineering Technology; Business Administration; Letters, Arts, and Sciences; Science (General Option); and Nursing are also available. Varsity sports teams, an extensive intramural program and about 35 student clubs and

organizations provide opportunities to develop leadership and social skills, make friends, and have fun. Particularly during the last few years, the campus has sought to increase the diversity of the student body.

Penn State Erie, The Behrend College

Penn State had maintained a technical institute in Erie (the state's third largest city) since 1920. However, it was not until the late 1940s that a group of civic leaders asked that an undergraduate center be established in the city. When their request to use several vacant school buildings to house the center was rejected, Mary Behrend donated her family's estate, Glenhill Farm, to Penn State in memory of her husband Ernst Behrend, a founder of the Hammermill Paper Company and a strong supporter of education. The center grew rapidly. In 1970 it began to offer four-year programs and was renamed Behrend College. Today, the campus consists of 700 acres located on a hilltop overlooking Lake Erie and Presque Isle State Park. With approximately 3,300 students, 23 four-year baccalaureate programs in various fields of business, the

humanities, social studies, engineering, engineering technology, and science; five associate degree programs; and an MBA program in Business Administration, the College is one of the largest of Penn State's campuses located away from University Park. More than 60 percent of the 235 faculty members are full-time. Many of the original buildings on the Behrend estate remain; but they have been joined by modern structures, including a library/academic building, a new engineering complex, a computer center, and research laboratories. More than 1,200 students live in residence halls or apartment complexes on campus. Over 70 student clubs and organizations, a student-run AM radio station, fraternities and sororities, honor societies, Division III intercollegiate athletic programs, intramural sports, and other programs and organizations provide a wide variety of student participation options. The College is involved extensively in cultural programming and outreach activities for the benefit of residents in the surrounding areas. As a Land and Sea Grant institution the College's research contributes to the economic and social well-being of the region.



Berks-Lehigh Valley College

The Berks Campus, just outside the city of Reading, and the Lehigh Valley Campus located near Allentown were combined administratively to form Berks-Lehigh Valley College under the 1997 reorganization. Both locations have a long history of providing technical training and educational programming to local residents.

PENN STATE LEHIGH VALLEY, formerly the Allentown Campus, was the site of Penn State's first permanent technical center. Classes have been held there continuously since 1912 when an engineering branch school was opened. Even today, most of the 600-plus students are drawn from the surrounding area.

Across the years, classes met in various public school buildings and a former cigar factory. In 1968, Mohr Orchards presented a gift of 40 acres of land near Fogelsville west of Allentown for the development of the Allentown Campus. Campus facilities are located primarily in one building designed to encourage student-faculty interaction. The campus offers associate degree programs in Business Administration and Letters, Arts, and Sciences. In addition to pride in its Learning Resource Center with its state-of-the-art computer and audio visual center, the campus is also proud of its nationally and internationally renowned cycling team. The cam-

pus maintains close ties with the local community including participation in pre-college programs for local at-risk youth and inter-cultural programs for the growing local Hispanic population. More than 10 percent of the students come from racial/ethnic minority groups.

PENN STATE BERKS traces its origin to the Wyomissing Trade School founded in 1927 by the Textile Machine Works to give practical instruction to workers in the Reading area. When the school closed in 1958, the facility was offered to Penn State. Designated the Wyomissing Center, it provided associate degree and continuing education classes. In 1968 a million dollar fund was launched and a 104-acre tract in suburban Reading was purchased the following year as the site of the new Berks Campus with building construction undertaken that year. The campus today consists of 241 acres with more than 20 buildings, including an agricultural center, a conference center, library, computer labs, a learning center, and specialized laboratories in engineering and the sciences. More than 1,800 students are enrolled. In addition to the general courses of the first two years of study for most of Penn State's baccalaureate degree programs, the Berks Campus has specialized offerings in agricultural sciences. It also offers a junior-senior program leading to a bachelor's degree in Electro-Mechanical Engineer-





ing Technology (for students holding appropriate 2-year degrees) and associate degrees in Agricultural Business; Business Administration; Electrical Engineering Technology; Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management; Letters, Arts, and Sciences; Mechanical Engineering Technology; and Occupational Therapy. A bachelor of science program in Business is planned to begin in 1998.

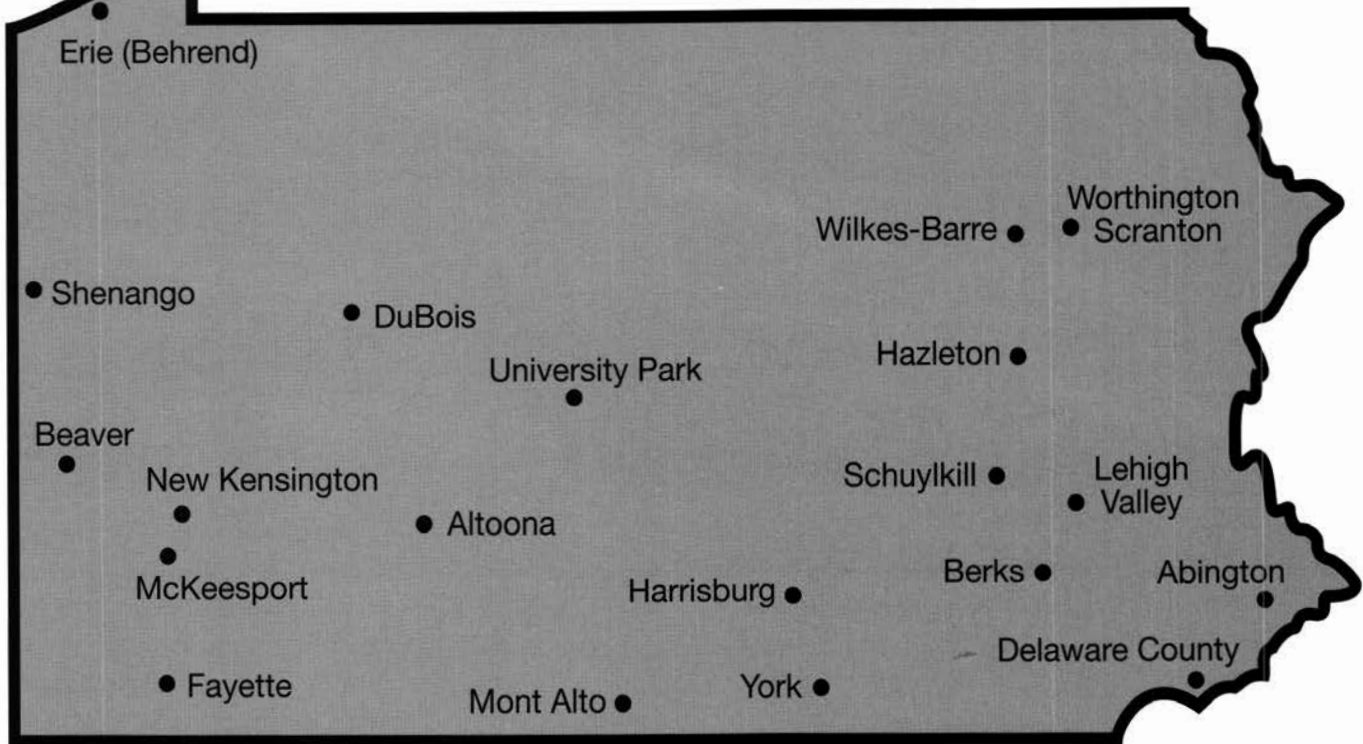
Capital College

The Capital College includes two separate campuses located about 30 minutes apart. Considered together, these two locations have nearly 4,500 students with approximately 9 percent of the student body comprised of minority and international students. However, the two campuses differ markedly in their history, setting, and current offerings.

PENN STATE HARRISBURG came into being when the federal government phased out Olmsted Air Force Base, located a few miles south of Harrisburg near Middletown. Governor Scranton secured a legislative appropriation to convert Olmsted to educational use. In 1966, the new campus was officially designated "The Capitol Campus," and a limited number of classes began that fall. The old headquarters and fifteen other major buildings saw their first full class of Penn State students in the fall of 1967. Unlike most of the other campuses, this location was developed primarily to offer upper division and graduate work. The Capitol Campus

was permitted considerable operational independence and received encouragement to experiment in curricular development with baccalaureate programs in Engineering Technology and American Studies among the earliest innovations. It was the first institution in Pennsylvania to admit graduates of any accredited community college with full junior standing. In 1986, the name was changed to The Pennsylvania State University at Harrisburg—"The Capital College." As an upper division campus, it continues to provide junior and senior courses for students in 26 different baccalaureate majors. It also offers three associate degrees and 19 graduate programs. The campus boasts 40 clubs and organizations, fourteen professional and honor societies, six intramural athletic sports, and a variety of cultural offerings. On-campus housing is available for about 350 of its approximately 3,500 students. The campus emphasizes both applied and basic research and receives approximately \$2 million annually in research grants and contracts. Both undergraduate and graduate students, working under faculty supervision, participate in many of these projects. Outreach and extension programs serve the region and state through a variety of efforts, including the Pennsylvania State Data Center which provides demographic and economic statistics to businesses, organizations, and governmental units across the Commonwealth to assist in planning and development activities.

The Campus Locations



PENN STATE SCHUYLKILL, formerly known as Pottsville Center, traces its origin back to 1934 when it was one of the four original “undergraduate centers” established by Penn State to offer freshman and sophomore level instruction. The Pottsville Center, originally located in a former public school, was moved downtown in 1948 to a remodeled twelve-room residential building. In January 1967, the re-named Schuylkill Campus moved from its crowded quarters in Pottsville to the former county home and sanatorium in Schuylkill Haven. The county commissioners had deeded the facility to Penn State several years earlier and had shared the costs of renovation. The University also acquired the federal government’s former anthracite coal research laboratory situated across the highway from the campus and converted it to a residence hall. Today’s 1,000 students include baccalaureate and associate degree candidates, as well as members of the surrounding community who take advantage of courses available through

Continuing and Distance Education. For baccalaureate degree candidates, the campus offers the first two years of most of the University’s programs. For several years, a baccalaureate degree in Nursing has been available for Schuylkill students through Harrisburg. Plans are underway for baccalaureate programs in business, criminal justice, and psychology. The campus offers associate degree programs in Business Administration; Letters, Arts, and Sciences; Computer Science; Electrical Engineering Technology; Human Development and Family Studies; and Science (Radiologic Technologist Radiographer option). About 85 percent of the students are commuters, but University operated housing provides apartment-style living accommodations for approximately 200 resident students. The campus is proud of its quiet rural setting, committed and student-oriented faculty, Campus Learning Center, new Multi-Purpose Building, and position as a civic and cultural center for the surrounding area.

The Commonwealth College

On July 1, 1997, twelve of the seventeen campuses of the Commonwealth Educational System were joined to form the Commonwealth College. Taken together, the 12 campuses have over 500 full-time and 500 part-time faculty and approximately 14,000 students. The campuses are located throughout the state, from Pittsburgh to Philadelphia and Uniontown to Scranton. They range in physical size from the 14-acre urban campus of Shenango, to the 208-acre rural Fayette campus, with an average size of almost 50 acres. While most of the twelve campuses serve largely commuter students and do not have University-owned student housing, a few locations (Hazleton, Mont Alto, Beaver, and McKeesport) do provide such facilities. The student body averages about 1,000 at each location, with a high of just over 2,000, (York) to a low of about 800 (Beaver and Wikes-Barre). Overall, the percentage of minority and foreign students is about 8 percent, but this statistic ranges from a high of more than 18 percent (McKeesport) to a low of just 2 percent (DuBois).

The Commonwealth College continues to have as a major function the transfer of about 60 percent of its students to other Penn State locations to complete their baccalaureate degree programs. However, many of the campuses offer at least one complete four-year program in addition to various two-year programs. The histories of the twelve campuses comprising the Commonwealth College are as varied as the campuses themselves. A central theme, a legacy of the past and sustained today, is that of serving the needs of the particular area of Pennsylvania in which each is located.

PENN STATE BEAVER was established in 1965. At first, the campus was confined to a remodeled county hospital annex in Monaca, about 30 miles northwest of Pittsburgh. The facilities had been donated by the county commissioners who voted to allocate an additional \$600,000 toward construction of more buildings on a larger site. Work on the new facility began in 1967, and the first of several new buildings was opened a year later. The current ninety-acre campus provides a picturesque setting with a duck pond and gazebo. A cultural center and an 800-seat amphitheater enriches campus activities and also contributes to the entire surrounding area. The Beaver Campus has special offerings for communications majors with a campus newspaper and radio station and internships with Pittsburgh-based media organizations. Four associate degrees are offered: Electrical Engineering Technology; Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management; Letters, Arts, and Sciences; and Science (General option). Public transportation provides access to the cultural and entertainment advantages of Pittsburgh, while varsity and intramural sports programs and more than twenty student organizations provide on-campus participation opportunities.

PENN STATE DELAWARE COUNTY was the last Penn State campus founded in the 1960s. In 1966, the county commissioners invited the University to establish a campus and promised to provide land plus at least one million dollars for construction. The Board of Trustees accepted the offer in September of that year and construction began on a 100-acre tract near Media, south of Philadelphia. Classes initially were held in temporary facilities in





the nearby city of Chester. There was some controversy about establishing a Penn State campus near the location of the new Delaware County Community College, but the county's representatives argued that the area needed both institutions and that different student needs would be met by each. The first building at the new campus site was occupied in January 1978. In addition to the first two years of study for nearly all Penn State baccalaureate majors, the Delaware County campus offers several baccalaureate programs that can be completed at the campus. Urban Early and Middle Childhood Education prepares students to teach in preschool and the elementary grades in large metropolitan settings. Other four-year offerings include Speech Communication, American Studies, and newer programs in Business, and Letters, Arts, and Sciences. Human Development/and Family Studies (with a Community Human Services option) will be offered beginning in 1998. Two associate degree programs (Business Administration and Letters, Arts, and Sciences) are also available. An agreement with Thomas Jefferson University provides the option for baccalaureate degrees in occupational therapy, nursing, and laboratory sciences and a bachelor's/master's degree in physical therapy. The campus serves nearly 1,600 students, with over 100 full- and part-time faculty members. One semester every other year the campus organizes academic offerings and campus activities to provide an integrated learning experience focusing on a specific culture. A student

exchange program with Thames Valley College in London provides study-abroad opportunities.

PENN STATE DUBOIS, the third oldest operating Penn State campus, was initially located in a vacant public school building, but in 1937 moved to the mansion and surrounding grounds of John DuBois, lumber magnate and founder of the town bearing his name. The heirs to the DuBois estate had deeded the property to the community's board of education for use in any worthy educational project; the board leased the mansion and four acres of ground to Penn State. Initially called an "extension center," the campus primarily served the needs of the residents in the local industries of pulp and paper manufacturing, and later wildlife conservation. Today the campus offers four-year degrees in Letters, Arts, and Sciences; and Human Development and Family Studies (Community Human Services option). A baccalaureate degree program in Business is planned to begin in fall 1998. DuBois Campus offers the only two-year degrees in Wildlife Technology and Materials Engineering Technology available anywhere in the Penn State system. Other associate degrees are Business Administration; Electrical Engineering Technology; Human Development and Family Studies; Letters, Arts, and Sciences; Mechanical Engineering Technology; Occupational Therapy; Physical Therapist Assistance; and Science. Approximately 1,000 students, mostly commuters, attend classes on the 30-acre campus which includes on-campus computer labs; an academic development center; an advising center;

modern chemistry, biology, and engineering labs; a gymnasium; and fitness facilities. Nearby hiking trails and scenic areas provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and for environmental study and research.

PENN STATE FAYETTE took the place of an undergraduate center operated by Waynesburg College of Washington, PA. Waynesburg College officials were the first to suggest that a Penn State branch be established, as they considered further operation of their own center economically unfeasible but did not wish to leave the local area without direct access to higher education. Community leaders endorsed the proposal, and eventually \$1.2 million was raised to help support development costs. Temporary quarters were obtained in Uniontown, pending completion of new buildings at a permanent site between Uniontown and Connellsville. The first of these buildings was opened for classes in the fall of 1968. The Fayette Campus is primarily a commuter campus serving the needs of 900 students. It is the only Penn State location where students can specialize in private sector security as well as civil security in a baccalaureate program in the Administration of Justice. Other four-year programs include Nursing (for those holding an RN license); Business; Letters, Arts, and Sciences. Two-year associate degree programs in Architectural Engineering Technology; Business Administration;

Electrical Engineering Technology; Human Development and Family Studies; Nursing; and Letters, Arts, and Sciences are available. An Administration of Justice lab serves as a research, teaching, and demonstration facility, and a new Biomedical Technology Center promises to enrich the nursing program. Clubs and organizations, intramural sports, and a variety of cultural events, including the Annual Shakespeare Festival, International Festival, and Coal Festival enhance the educational experiences of students and local residents.

PENN STATE HAZLETON began in 1934 as one of the first four undergraduate centers established to provide freshman and sophomore offerings to residents desiring to undertake baccalaureate degree study. Originally located in an old bank building on Broad Street in downtown Hazleton, the facility was moved in 1949 to Highacres, the 66-acre mountaintop estate of the late Alvin Markle, Sr. Its owner at the time, Luzerne County bus company executive Eckley V. Markle, donated a part of the estate and the Hazleton Center advisory board purchased the remainder. The estate provided a spacious mansion and other buildings which today house administrative and faculty offices and classrooms. The original buildings have been supplemented by new classrooms, laboratories, and other facilities. A 60,000 volume library, an amphitheater, and campus bookstore are recent additions. Nearly 1,300 students



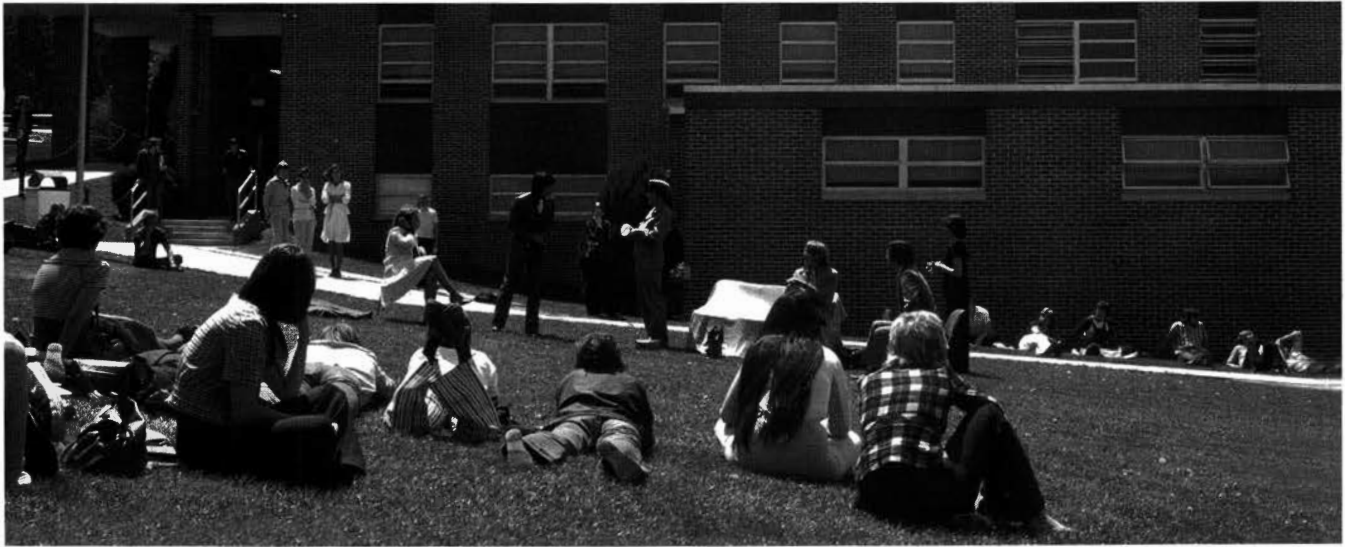
attend the Hazleton campus, of which 485 reside in University-owned housing. The campus offers special course and internship opportunities in journalism, telecommunications, and education. Associate degree programs are available in Business Administration; Electrical Engineering Technology; Letters, Arts, and Sciences; Mechanical Engineering Technology; Medical Laboratory Technology; and Physical Therapy Assistance.

PENN STATE MCKEESPORT was founded as a technical institute after World War II. There was insufficient space to meet the community's request for baccalaureate work until 1956, when a local realtor and philanthropist, William L. Buck, donated ten acres of land as the site for a new campus. A fund drive was organized, two new buildings were erected, and undergraduate instruction began in 1959. The McKeesport Campus is located in a suburban setting approximately 15 miles southeast of Pittsburgh between the residential community of White Oak and a 258-acre park with gardens, hiking trails, and tennis courts. The campus now encompasses more than 50 acres, and has approximately 40 full-time and 40 part-time faculty members and 900 students. University housing provides living accommodations for about 200 students. Once the center of the nation's steel industry, the surrounding area has suffered downsizing. The campus seeks to contribute to the development of the region through continuing and distance educa-



tion, and associate degree programs in Business Administration; Electrical Engineering Technology; Letters, Arts, and Sciences; Mechanical Engineering Technology; Science (General option); and Telecommunications Technology. A Women in Science and Technology program encourages women students to train in these nontraditional fields. Linkages between the local community and the campus are emphasized. Through the Penn State Educational Partnership Program the campus is joined with local schools and community organizations to help disadvantaged children work toward pursuing higher education. The campus prides itself on its diverse student body (18 percent are from racial and ethnic minority groups) and on its guidance and student support activities. A "Best Fit" program helps students who are undecided about a major explore various options by creating portfolios and observing alumni on the job.

PENN STATE MONT ALTO has its roots in the Mont Alto State Forestry Academy, founded in 1903 by then Governor Gifford Pinchot, one of America's first professional foresters, who also helped to establish the U.S. Forest Service. Enrollments in the Academy began to decline in the 1920s and there was a question whether the school was any longer fulfilling the purpose for which it had been established. Meanwhile, Penn State had developed a forestry program of its own at the main campus. In 1929, with urging from the governor's office, arrangements were made by Penn State and Mont Alto administrators to have students spend their freshman year at Mont Alto to gain practical experience, and then spend the remaining three years at the main campus to acquire more theoretical knowledge and a general education. The final vestige of Mont Alto's autonomy disappeared in 1937 when the Commonwealth officially deeded the forestry school's property to Penn State. In 1963, the Mont Alto campus began to offer four-year undergraduate programs. Today, bachelor's degree programs in Nursing (for registered nurses), Human Development and Family Studies (Community Human Services option), and Occupational Therapy are offered as well as associate degrees in such fields as Forest Technology; Business Administration; Nursing; Human Development and



Family Studies; Occupational Therapy; Physical Therapist Assistance; and Letters, Arts, and Sciences. The two-year associate degree program in Forest Technology is not available at any other Penn State location. The 90-acre campus is located in Fulton County between Chambersburg and Waynesboro. About 50 full-time and 25 part-time faculty work with nearly 1,200 students. More than a third of the students live in University housing. The campus emphasizes small group activities through its programs such as Project Vision which combines hands-on learning with current computer and information technology, and other activities such as the Ski Club, a student theater (MASK) and the TimberSports Team.

PENN STATE NEW KENSINGTON was established in 1958 to offer associate degrees and continuing education to help meet local business demands for highly trained technical workers. In 1964 it began to offer baccalaureate studies. Originally housed in public school buildings, it soon outgrew those facilities and in 1966 a new campus was established on land donated by ALCOA, a major industry in the community. The local advisory board raised three-quarters of a million dollars as the community's share of the \$3.5 million needed for the initial buildings. Most of the 900 students are local commuters, although some come from other regions of the state and the nation. Associate degree programs are offered in Biomedical Engineering Technology; Business Administration; Electrical Engineering

Technology; Mechanical Engineering Technology; Letters, Arts and Sciences; Medical Laboratory Technology; Science (General option and Radiologic Technologist Radiographer Option). Junior-senior programs are available for students with appropriate previous education to complete baccalaureate degrees in Electro-Mechanical Engineering Technology and Nursing (for those with an RN license). The campus works closely with the local community in preparing students to meet the needs of the modern world. The Penn State TechPrep program, designed in conjunction with area high schools and industries, provides courses to prepare high school students to make the transition to advanced schooling.

PENN STATE SHENANGO, located in downtown Sharon near the Ohio state line is unique for its urban setting. An agreement with the State of Ohio, allows nearby Ohio residents to attend Shenango campus at the in-state tuition rate. In 1964, a committee of civic leaders solicited proposals for a campus in Sharon; The University of Pittsburgh, Penn State, and Edinboro State College all competed for the opportunity. Nearly 10,000 Shenango Valley residents subsequently signed petitions asking that Penn State be selected and these petitions were presented to the civic leaders as proof of the grass roots enthusiasm for the venture. The Shenango Valley campus initially was quartered in a new but temporarily vacant Catholic high school in Sharon. A permanent 11-acre site, which included a renovated

junior high school building, was acquired in the downtown area in 1967. With 90 full- and part-time faculty members, the campus now serves over 1,000 students. There is no campus housing. A four-year Nursing degree is currently available for persons who hold the RN license. A new baccalaureate degree offering in Human Development and Family Studies (Community Services option) is planned for fall, 1998. Continuing and distance education courses developed for adult learners are offered along with associate degree programs in Business Administration; Human Development and Family Studies; Letters, Arts, and Sciences; Mechanical Engineering Technology; Occupational Therapy; Physical Therapist Assistance; and Science (General option). Under the guidance of faculty members, students publish a literary magazine (*Polyphon*) and a journal of local history. An adult student organization and Shenango Students for Cultural Diversity are among the campus clubs and organizations, while several varsity and intramural sports teams and a Nautilus Center cater to the students' physical well-being.

PENN STATE WILKES-BARRE served the educational needs of the people and industry in the Wyoming Valley for fifty-two years mainly as a technical institute, using rented space. In 1968, permanent facilities were acquired in Lehman, when fifty acres of land and the palatial manor of the late coal magnate John N. Conyngham were presented to the University. The gift, valued at \$1 million, included the 50-room mansion (Hayfield House), and a 19-car garage. Local contributions underwrote most of the remodeling costs, and undergraduate instruction began in 1970. Today, Hayfield House is home to the administrative offices and serves as a center for campus and community events. Across campus, the Bell of Pennsylvania/Bell Atlantic Center for Technology provides state-of-the-art engineering and telecommunication laboratories. Adjacent to the center is the Friedman Astronomy Dome. A \$3.7 million Athletic and Recreation Building and an expanded library are important campus resources. Approximately 800 students are enrolled with about 75 full-time and part-time faculty members. Associate degree programs are offered in Biomedical Engineering Technology; Business Administra-

tion; Electrical Engineering Technology; Mechanical Engineering Technology; Surveying Technology; Telecommunications Technology; and Letters, Arts, and Sciences. A baccalaureate degree in Surveying which can be completed entirely at the Wilkes-Barre campus is not available at any other Penn State location. A second 4-year degree in Electrical Engineering Technology is available for those holding an associate degree in this field.

A student newspaper, multi-ethnic cultural association, and veterans club are among the extra-curricular student organizations.

PENN STATE WORTHINGTON SCRANTON is named in honor of Worthington Scranton (1876-1955), an industrialist who dedicated his life to improving the lives of the citizens in northeastern Pennsylvania. In 1923, the then Pennsylvania State College began offering engineering courses to residents of the region at the Scranton Center. The Center became a technical institute after World War II. Public support grew on behalf of adding baccalaureate studies, but lack of space prevented the establishment of additional programs. In the mid-1960s, the advisory board purchased a 45-acre tract in suburban Dunmore and established a building fund. Classes began at the new location high above the Wyoming Valley in the fall of 1968. The approximately 1,500 students commute from the surrounding region; the campus has no University-operated housing. Several career-oriented associate degree programs are offered, including Architectural Engineering Technology; Business Administration; Human Development and Family studies; Letters, Arts, and Sciences; Nursing; and Occupational Therapy. In addition to the first two years of study toward most Penn State baccalaureate degrees, the campus offers four-year programs in Nursing (for students who hold an RN license), Business, and (beginning fall, 1998) Human Development and Family Studies (with the Community Human Services option). The campus emphasizes its role in providing for returning adult learners, as well as for those who have just completed high school. Students are encouraged to give back to their community through participation in such activities as the United Way Campaign, Toys for Tots, blood drives, and visits to children's hospitals and nursing homes.

PENN STATE YORK began as a technical institute in 1949. Four years later, associate degree studies were inaugurated. The school proved to be so successful that, in 1956, the campus was moved from its rented quarters in a public school building to a permanent site. By popular request, undergraduate work was introduced in 1966, and more buildings were constructed within a few years. Penn State York has the largest student body (2,027) within the Commonwealth College and has an extended branch location at the Greenfield Corporate Center in Lancaster. While many of the students commute from York, Harrisburg, and Lancaster, privately owned housing is available off campus for students who come from outside the region. In addition to continuing and distance education and the first two years of most Penn State baccalaureate degrees, the campus offers two-year associate degrees in Business Administration; Computer Science; Electrical Engineering Technology; Mechanical Engineering Technology; and Letters, Arts, and Sciences and a four-year program in Business. The campus takes pride in providing an innovative learning environment, including participation in Project Vision, which gives students the opportunity to learn via computers. It also emphasizes its diversity by flying nearly three dozen flags on campus representing the home countries of students, faculty and staff and by the presence of clubs such as the Black Student Union, Hispanic Student Association, and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Student Union. Internships are available in the Governor's office, social service agencies, and area industries, and student groups contribute to the surrounding communities by working with local high school students, and involvement in other community projects.

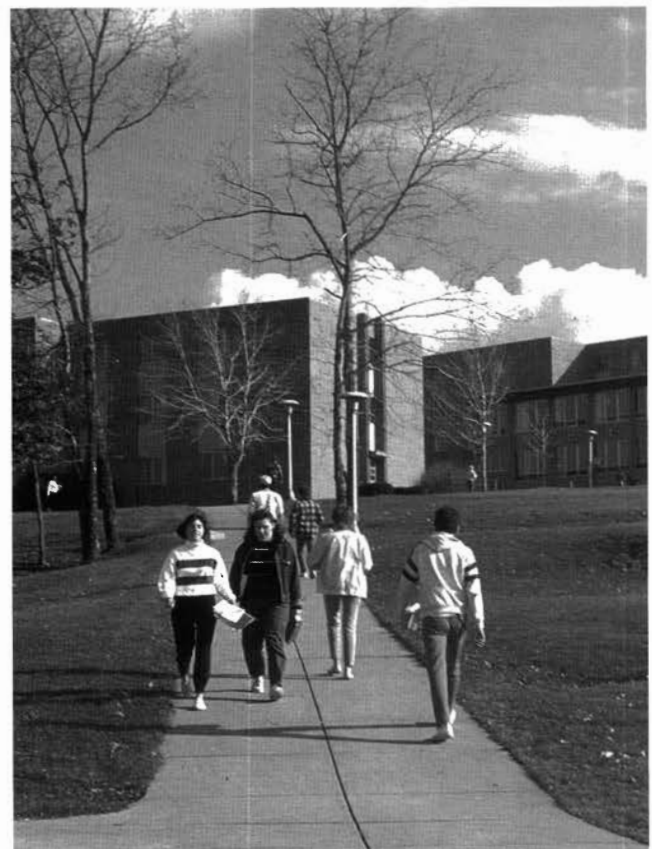
Conclusion

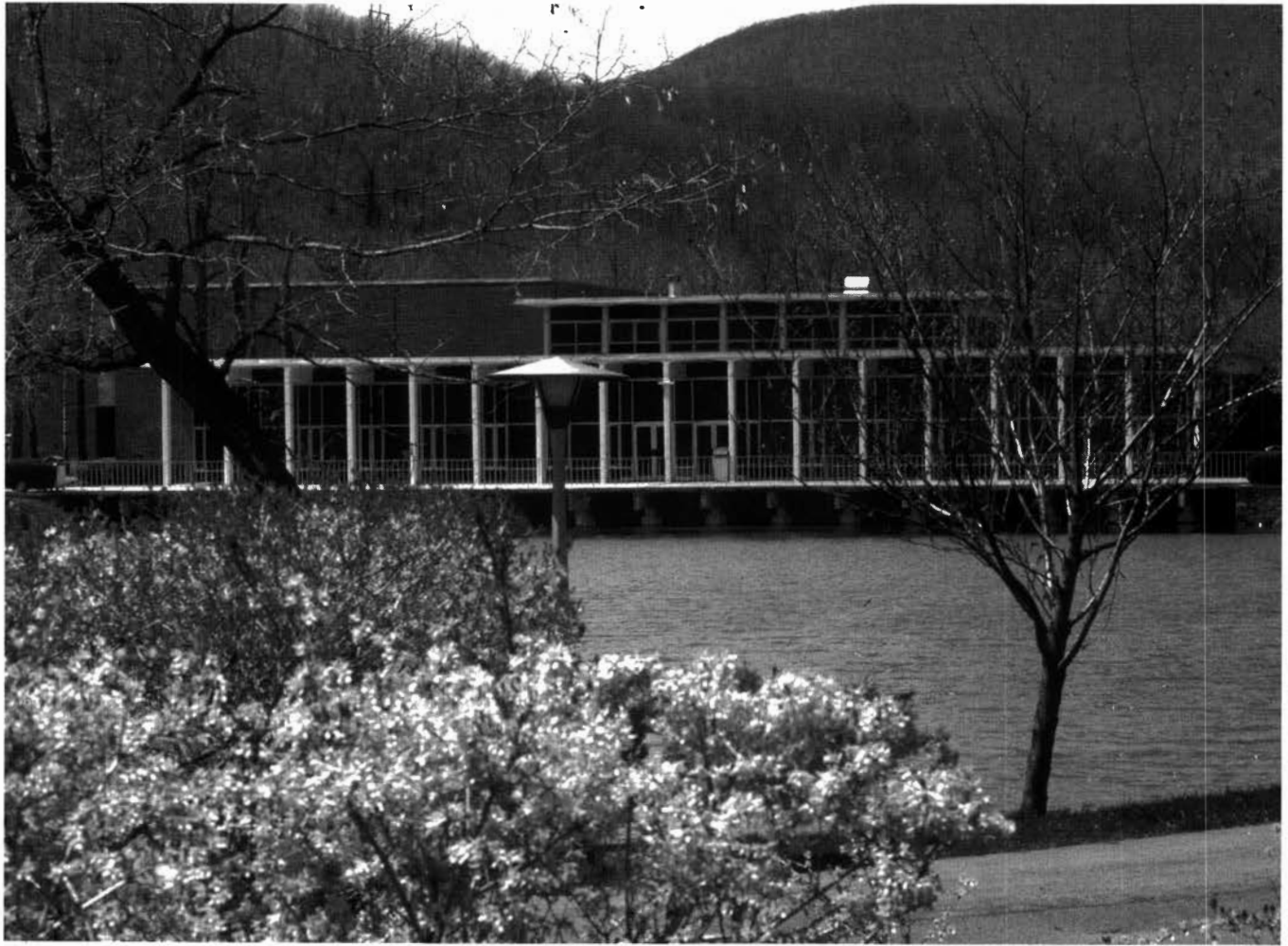
Despite their differing histories, settings and program offerings, all of these colleges and their component campuses stress several common themes. All emphasize that they are a part of Penn State and that their faculty and students benefit from being part of one of the nation's premier teaching and research universities. At the same time, all underscore the advantages of being small units with small college atmospheres, where the

student-to-teacher ratio is low, classes are small, students and faculty interact daily, and teachers are scholars who are committed to sharing knowledge and helping students to reach their potentials.

All point with pride to their support services for students and extracurricular offerings. Learning and advising centers provide individualized assistance in selecting courses, developing study habits, obtaining financial support, and locating needed academic assistance. Clubs and organizations, sports activities, student publications, internship experiences, and work/study assignments provide opportunities for leadership, skill development, comraderie, and fun.

Finally, all demonstrate their commitment to serving their local communities, not only by providing formal educational programs so that residents can obtain baccalaureate and/or associate degrees, but also by offering continuing and distance education opportunities for citizens in all walks of life, serving as cultural centers for their areas, and participating in various service activities to enhance the well-being of their communities.





Surveying Students and Teachers

Fern K. Willits and Thomas J. Seifried

*The fulfillment of Penn State's instructional mission is expressed through many forms of teaching and learning . . . Yet undergraduate education continues to occupy a special position at Penn State. Superb resident education should always be a priority, an intensive form of teaching and learning that sustains personal growth and intellectual development as no other approach can.*¹

Background

But how can one determine the quality of a Penn State education? In an institution as large, complex, and geographically dispersed as this University, it is often difficult to arrive at measures of success. Enrollment statistics and requests for admission applications, the accomplishments of alumni, the financial contributions of graduates and friends, and the level of legislator support all provide some clues for assessing the extent to which the University has achieved its goal of providing a rich learning environment and quality instruction. Also important to any such evaluation are the views of current students and faculty concerning their experiences and perceptions of the academic and social climate of the campus and the classroom.

While the judgments of participants in the teaching/learning process are clearly relevant to understanding the quality of education, most of the public sources of information on such matters—the expressed views of a few individuals, editorials, pronouncements of special interest groups, demonstrations, and mass media presentations—provide only limited and often distorted perspectives, emphasizing the views of the most articulate, best organized, or highly emotional individuals or

groups. Although student evaluations of specific Penn State courses and instructors are collected each semester using the Student Rating of Teacher Effectiveness (SRTE) forms, and information from these evaluations has been used in faculty tenure, promotion, and merit evaluations for a decade, until recently, there has been virtually no public access to these data.² Surveys, based on samples scientifically drawn to represent the total population are more likely to obtain an accurate picture of participants' opinions and thus provide better indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of current programs and policies. During the 1995-96 school year, random samples of undergraduate students and teachers at the University Park campus of Penn State were surveyed to obtain information concerning their perceptions of the campus as a community of learning and the quality of instruction at that location.³ However, given the nature of Penn State as a multi-campus university, examination of the University Park situation provided only partial information about the nature of Penn State's undergraduate experience. To obtain a more complete picture, similar information from the University's other undergraduate campuses was needed.

The Surveys

In March 1997, a random sample was drawn from University records of undergraduate students who had been enrolled the previous semester at the campuses of the Commonwealth Education System, Penn State Harrisburg, and Penn State Erie, The

² See Dooris, Michael J. "An Analysis of the Penn State Student Rating of Teaching Effectiveness", A report presented to the University Faculty Senate of The Pennsylvania State University, September 9, 1997.

³ For information on these surveys, see: Willits, F. K., J. O. Janota, B. L. Moore, and D. M. Enerson, (1996) *Penn State as a Community of Learning: Faculty and Student Views*, University Park, PA: Instructional Development Programs and Willits, F. K., B. L. Moore and D. M. Enerson, (1997) *Penn State Quality of Instruction: Surveys of Students and Teachers at University Park*, University Park, PA: Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching.

¹ Spanier, G. (1996) *State-of-the-University Address*, September 6, 1996, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA.



Behrend College. Also, a list was obtained of all persons who had, during that same semester (fall 1996), taught one or more undergraduate courses at the same locations. Survey forms were mailed to the home addresses of the sample of students and to the campus addresses of the teachers, along with a cover letter requesting their participation in the study. Two follow-up letters were used in an effort to increase the number of responses. Of 2,313 students contacted, 993 returned completed questionnaires (a 43% response rate). A total of 1,730 teachers were contacted, with 1,028 returning completed survey forms (a 59% response rate).

Respondents were requested to indicate, in general, how they viewed their campus as a community of learning, their feelings about their general experiences as members of that community, and the elements they believed were most important in determining the quality of instruction in a college course. In addition, for one course in which they were enrolled during the previous semester (fall 1996), students were requested to rate the quality of instruction and indicate how frequently

each of a list of attributes generally believed to be relevant to good teaching occurred in that class. The specific course was selected by having students list all of their courses for that semester. They were then instructed to select the *second* one on the list to reduce the chance that they might choose to answer systematically in terms of either their “best” or “worst” courses. Similarly, teachers were asked to reflect upon their own teaching during the previous semester and to provide self-evaluations of the quality of their teaching and the frequency with which they believed they had evidenced the same list of “desirable” attributes in a specific class offered that semester. Those teaching more than one course, were asked to respond in terms of the *second* class to meet each week. Asking both students and teachers to focus these evaluations on a specific course rather than “teaching in general” served to concretize their responses and lessened the likelihood that their answers would reflect simply generalized stereotyping. Asking for information from the previous semester meant that they would have had some time to reflect somewhat upon those experiences.

Analysis

This report details the findings of the student and teacher surveys. The analysis is presented in two sections. First, the student and teacher evaluations of the general campus environment as a community of learning are described. Second, information is presented concerning the respondents' views of the importance of various elements to achieving quality teaching and their perceptions of the frequency with which these characteristics occurred in the evaluated course.

Variations in response rates for the various campuses led to significant differences between the distribution of the population of students enrolled in fall semester 1996 and those included in the sample. As a result, data from the various campus

locations were weighted by the expected frequencies to more accurately reflect the total population when describing the overall response patterns. Unweighted data were used for the remaining analyses. The distribution of teachers who answered the survey did not differ significantly by campus location from the population of teachers.

Differences were examined in the students' responses by their personal attributes (gender, class standing, etc.). For student course ratings, the associations of class characteristics (e.g. size, perceived difficulty, workload, etc.) were also examined. The relationships of teachers' attitudes/perceptions to their part-time/full-time status, academic rank and gender were also addressed. Relationships were tested for statistical significance using contingency chi square analysis and the .05 significance level.

Distributions of the student population and sample by campus location and the 1997 college designations.

<i>College/Campus</i>	<i>Population Percent</i>	<i>Sample</i>	
		<i>Number of Cases</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Abington College Abington-Ogontz Campus	11.1	105	10.6
Altoona College Altoona Campus	11.8	143	14.4
Behrend College Behrend Campus	10.4	130	13.1
Berks-Lehigh Valley College Lehigh Valley Campus	2.1	22	2.2
Berks Campus	6.2	59	6.0
Capital College Penn State Harrisburg	7.0	74	7.5
Schuylkill Campus	3.4	27	2.7
Commonwealth College Beaver Campus	2.7	30	3.0
Delaware Campus	5.3	44	4.4
DuBois Campus	3.5	39	3.9
Fayette Campus	3.2	34	3.4
Hazleton Campus	4.8	63	6.4
McKeesport Campus	3.0	29	2.9
Mont Alto Campus	4.1	35	3.5
New Kensington Campus	3.1	18	1.8
Shenango Campus	3.5	20	2.0
Wilkes-Barre Campus	2.8	22	2.2
Worthington Scranton Campus	4.9	43	4.3
York Campus	7.1	56	5.7
TOTAL	100.0	993	100.0

Only statistically significant differences are discussed.

It is noteworthy that the surveys were carried out during spring semester 1997—the last semester of operation under the former CES administrative structure. On July 1, 1997, administrative and programming shifts were initiated to provide greater autonomy to the various campus locations

and enable expansion of program offerings. Thus, data from the surveys present a “pre-change” look at these campuses in terms of student and teacher views and provide baseline information that may be useful to administrators and teachers concerned with strengthening the teaching/learning offerings of Penn State.



Distributions of the teacher population and sample by campus location and the 1997 college designation.

<i>College/Campus</i>	<i>Population Percent</i>	<i>Sample</i>	
		<i>Number of Cases</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Abington College Abington-Ogontz Campus	8.8	88	8.7
Altoona College Altoona Campus	9.4	103	10.1
Behrend College Behrend Campus	10.5	91	9.0
Berks-Lehigh Valley College Lehigh Valley Campus	2.7	26	2.6
Berks Campus	5.6	58	5.7
Capital College Penn State Harrisburg	11.1	118	11.6
Schuylkill Campus	3.4	31	3.1
Commonwealth College Beaver Campus	3.0	26	2.6
Delaware Campus	5.0	43	4.2
DuBois Campus	3.0	35	3.5
Fayette Campus	3.9	39	3.8
Hazleton Campus	3.4	47	4.6
McKeesport Campus	3.8	31	3.1
Mont Alto Campus	4.1	48	4.7
New Kensington Campus	3.2	30	3.0
Shenango Campus	3.8	47	4.6
Wilkes-Barre Campus	3.5	34	3.4
Worthington Scranton Campus	4.7	54	5.3
York Campus	7.1	65	6.4
TOTAL	100.0	1014^a	100.0

^a Campus location was unknown for 14 teachers in this sample.



Community of Learning

Fern K. Willits and Thomas J. Seifried

In his 1997 *State of the University Address*, Penn State President Dr. Graham Spanier, described several of what he termed simple, but fundamental goals to guide the University's future. Among these were:

- To enrich the educational experience of students.
- To build a more considerate and civil University community.¹

What do these ideas imply in terms of Penn State as a multi-campus university?

The multiple campuses and colleges located at University Park and throughout the Commonwealth which together form The Pennsylvania State University evidence both individual autonomy and unity. Each has its own identity, history, and traditions. However, all share formal institutional ties, common objectives, and overarching loyalties. If the goals of enriching the educational experiences of students and of building a more considerate and civil community of learning are to be fully realized, they need to apply to *all* Penn State students, regardless of where they are located. To what extent is there a sense of community within and among the respective campus sites? What are the important elements of community that can contribute to the central missions of higher education? How much, if at all, do the various colleges and campuses evidence these elements? These are questions which are of concern to administrators, teachers, students and the public all of whom have a stake in the quality of the University's educational programs and their effectiveness in meeting the demands of modern life and the needs of the future.

¹ Excerpted from Spanier, G. (1997) *State of the University Address*, September 12, 1997, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA.

Characteristics of a Community of Learning

During the last 50 years, colleges and universities throughout the nation have experienced profound changes. Gone is the relatively homogeneous student body composed largely of young, middle- and upper-income white males. Gone are the days when institutions of higher education saw as their charge the teaching of morality through a rigid set of rules and restrictions on the behavior of students. Gone are the days when colleges and universities served as *in loco parentis*. Gone is the isolation of the academy from daily life and public accountability.

Greater diversity in the student body, enhanced freedom in intellectual and social actions, and a growing emphasis on individual growth and exploration have all enriched campus learning environments. However, these changes have also often been associated with undercurrents of hostility, tension, frustration, apathy, alcohol abuse, racial and ethnic strife, and acts of intolerance. Spurred by the incidence of these issues on college and university campuses, and the concerns of many both within and outside the academic setting that the ability of educational institutions to function as vital communities of learning was being threatened, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in cooperation with the American Council on Education sought to define the enduring values and principles that should characterize a civil community of learning—the kind of community every college and university should strive to be. They suggested the following:

- First, a college or university should be an *educationally purposeful* community, a place where faculty and students share academic goals and work together to strengthen teaching and learning on the campus.

- Second, a college or university should be an *open* community, a place where freedom of expression is uncompromisingly protected and where civility is powerfully affirmed.
- Third, a college or university should be a *just* community, a place where the sacredness of the person is honored and where diversity is aggressively pursued.
- Fourth, a college or university should be a *disciplined* community, a place where individuals accept their obligations to the group and where well-defined governance procedures guide behavior for the common good.
- Fifth, a college or university should be a *caring* community, a place where the well-being of each member is sensitively supported and where service to others is encouraged.
- Sixth, a college or university should be a *celebrative* community, one in which the heritage of the institution is remembered and where rituals affirming both tradition and change are widely shared.²

To what extent do students and teachers at the various colleges and campuses of Penn State located throughout the Commonwealth feel that their campus communities embody these elements? It seems likely that their perceptions will be affected both by local elements and an awareness that their campus is part of the larger institution called The Pennsylvania State University.



² The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Campus Life: In Search of Community*. Princeton, NJ. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1990: 7-8.

General Perceptions

To obtain information on how the Penn State campuses and colleges located away from University Park, were viewed relative to the six elements described above, 993 students and 1,028 teachers at these sites responded to a mail survey in which they were asked:

How well do you believe each of the following statements characterizes your Penn State campus community?

It is an *educationally purposeful* community where faculty and students work together and share academic goals.

It is an *open* community where freedom of expression is protected and where civility is embraced.

It is a *just* community where each person is honored and diversity is pursued.

It is a *disciplined* community where obligations and behaviors are regulated for the good of the group.

It is a *caring* community where service to others is encouraged and the well-being of each individual is important.

It is a community whose history is remembered and whose traditions and rituals are *celebrated*.

Responses were recorded on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 meant that the description "didn't fit at all" and 5 meant that "it was a perfect fit."

Differences among students' responses by age, gender, semester standing, grade point average, part-time/full-time status, and off/on campus residence were tested for statistical significance using chi squares for contingency. Only relationships found to be significant at the .05 level were discussed in this report. Age was measured in terms of three categories--less than 20 years (50%), 20-23 years (30%), and 24 years or more (20%). Semester standing was also indexed by three categories, 1st and 2nd semester (43%), 3rd and 4th semester (34%), and 5th semester or higher (23%). Grade point average was treated as: less than 2.65 (33%), between 2.65 and 3.24 (34%), and 3.25 and higher (33%). Part-time students were defined as those

who were enrolled in 11 credits or fewer (14%), 12 credits or more defined a full-time student (86%).

Differences in the teachers' views by faculty status and gender were also explored. Teachers were classified as either full-time (58%) or part-time (42%). Academic rank was treated as three categories: 1) associate or full professors (20%), 2) assistant professors (20%), and 3) instructors or "other" (60%). While the full-time teachers were almost evenly divided among the three academic rank categories, 98% of the part-time teachers fell in the "instructor and other" category. To analytically separate the effects of full-time/part-time status and academic rank, part-time teachers were eliminated from the analysis involving academic rank. Sixty-one percent of the teachers who responded were male; 39% were female.

Percentages of students indicating that the characteristics of a community of learning "fit" their campus, by GPA, part-time/full-time status, gender, on/off campus residence and semester.

Community Characteristic	Respondent attributes		
	GPA <2.65	GPA 2.65-3.24	GPA 3.25+
Educationally purposeful	50.8	52.4	60.4
Open	55.0	53.9	65.5
Just	53.9	46.6	57.9
Caring	51.1	48.2	59.0
	Part-time	Full-time	
Disciplined	41.4	51.4	
	Males	Females	
Caring	47.5	57.0	
	On-Campus	Off-Campus	
Open	51.1	59.5	
	1st-2nd Semester	3rd-4th Semester	5th+ Semester
Just	57.3	51.5	45.9

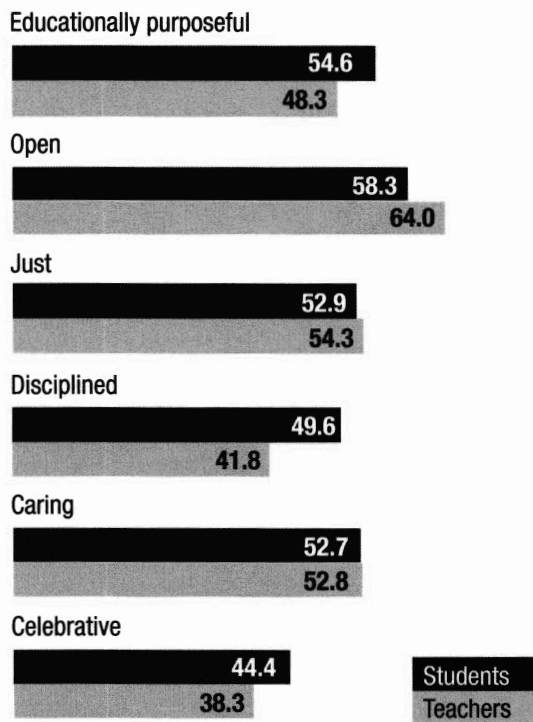
STUDENT VIEWS

Overall, a majority of the students surveyed reported that the descriptions of five of the six characteristics of a civil community of learning were "a perfect fit" or nearly a perfect fit (ratings of 4 or 5 on the scale).

- Half or more of the student respondents gave 4 or 5 ratings to their campuses as *educationally purposeful* (55%), *open* (58%), *just* (53%), *disciplined* (50%), and *caring* (53%).
- Much smaller percentages reported that these descriptions did *not* fit their communities (ratings of 1 or 2). For *educationally purposeful*, only 9% reported such a poor fit between the description and their campuses; 10% indicated that their campus was not *open*; 12% indicated that they were not *just*; 13% reported these low ratings for *disciplined*; and 14% said that the description of a *caring* community did not fit their campuses.
- Less than half (44%) reported that their campus communities were *celebrative*. Nearly 1 in 4 (24%) answered that the description of a celebrative community did not fit their campuses at all or was a poor fit (ratings of 1 or 2 on the scale).

Students' grade point averages (GPA) were significantly related to their views of their campuses as civil communities of learning. Those with GPAs of 3.25 or more were the most likely and those with averages less than 2.65 were the least likely to report that their campuses were *educationally purposeful*. Students with averages between 2.65 and 3.24 were less likely than those with either higher or lower averages to see their campuses as *open*, *just* and *caring*. Full-time students (those carrying 12 or more credits) were somewhat more likely than part-time students to indicate that their campuses were *disciplined* (51% vs 41%). Women students were more likely than men to report that their campuses were *caring*. Off-campus students were more likely than those living on-campus to answer that their campuses were *open*. As semester standing increased, students were somewhat less likely to view their campuses as *just*. Apart from these differences the student characteristics of age, gender, semester standing, grade point average, full-time vs part-time status, and off/on campus residence were not statistically related to their responses to these items.

Percentages of students and teachers who felt that the characteristics of a community of learning "fit" Penn State



TEACHERS' VIEWS

Teachers were somewhat less likely than students to answer that their campus communities were *educationally purposeful*, *disciplined* and *celebrative*; they were more likely than students to report that these were *open* communities.

- 48% of the teachers surveyed indicated that the description of an *educationally purposeful* community fit their campuses perfectly or nearly perfectly. Approximately 42% reported that their campus communities were *disciplined*, and 38% answered that they were *celebrative*.
- 64% of the teachers gave 4 or 5 ratings to the description of an *open* community, suggesting that they believed this described their campuses.
- There was little difference between students and teachers in the proportion reporting that their campus communities were *just* or *caring*. A total of 54% of the teachers gave 4 or 5 ratings to their campuses as *just* and 53% reported that the des-

cription of a *caring* community was a perfect or nearly perfect characterization of their campuses.

There were differences in the views expressed by teachers depending upon whether they were full-time or part-time. Full-time teachers were less likely than part-time to indicate that the descriptions of a civil community of learning fit their campuses.

- 43% of the full-time faculty and staff members gave 4 or 5 ratings to their campus communities as *educationally purposeful*; 55% of those who were part-time did so.
- 57% of the full-time and 74% of the part-time faculty/staff reported that their campuses were *open*.
- 46% of the full-time and 66% of those who were part-time viewed their campuses as *just*.
- 36% of the full-time vs 49% of the part-time sample members indicated the communities were *disciplined*.
- 47% of the full-time compared with 60% of the part-time faculty/staff said their communities were *caring*.
- 33% of the full-time and 45% of those who were part-time reported that the description of a *celebrative* community fit their campuses.

Among those who were full-time, academic rank was associated with the likelihood that these teachers viewed the characteristic of a civil community of learning as describing their communities.

- Professors, associate professors, and assistant professors were less likely (38%) to report that their campuses were *educationally purposeful* than were those who were instructors or who held other positions (56%).
- Assistant professors were the least likely to report that their communities were *just* (38%), followed by associate and full professors (49%) and others (52%).
- Identification of the campuses as *caring* was reported by 39% of the assistant professors, 50% of the associate and full professors, and 55% of those designated as instructors or "other".

- Only 21% of the assistant professors and 37% of the associate and full professors, but 44% of those who were full-time but did not hold any of these academic ranks, said that their campus communities were *celebrative*.
- There were no significant differences by faculty status concerning the teacher's views of their campuses as *open*.

Women teachers were more likely than their male counterparts to report that they believed their campuses were *educationally purposeful*, *caring* and *celebrative*.

- 54% of the women, compared to 45% of the men, gave 4 or 5 to their campus communities as *educationally purposeful*.
- 59% of the women teachers, but just 49% of the men, reported that the description of a *caring* community fit their campuses.
- 44% of the female teachers reported that their campuses *celebrated* history and traditions; only 35% of the male teachers did so.
- There were no significant gender differences in responses to the items dealing with the characterization of the campuses as *open*, *just*, and *disciplined*.

Personal Experiences

The students and teachers surveyed were also asked about their experiences and feelings concerning various characteristics of their campuses. Respondents were requested to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, were undecided, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with each of 13 statements related to aspects of a civil community of learning.

STUDENT RESPONSES

The extent to which students viewed the campus as *educationally purposeful* was addressed by focusing on their own orientations toward college attendance, perceptions they held of their teachers' commitment to teaching, whether they interacted with faculty outside the classroom, and the amount they indicated they studied.

- Nearly three-fourths of the students either agreed (47%) or strongly agreed (27%) that the primary reason they were attending college was for the intellectual pursuit of learning; the remaining 26% were undecided or disagreed with the statement.



- When asked whether the main reason they were in college was so they could get a good job after graduation, 59% strongly agreed and 24% agreed; only 17% were undecided or disagreed.
- A sizeable majority (70%) of the students surveyed either strongly agreed (22%) or agreed (48%) that most of the teachers from whom they had taken classes were strongly committed to teaching; 12% disagreed, and the remaining 18% were undecided.
- Nearly half (48%) of the students reported that they frequently interacted with faculty outside the classroom; 39% disagreed; 13% were undecided.
- A majority of the students either disagreed (38%) or strongly disagreed (24%) with the statement "I study just enough to get by," and an additional 16% were undecided. However, more than one in five (22%) either agreed or strongly agreed that they worked just enough to "get by."

Information on their experiences concerning the campus as an *open* community was sought by asking students to indicate their response to the following item: I do not feel free to state controversial views on campus.

- Fewer than one in five (18%) agreed with this item, compared with 45% who disagreed.
- An additional 37% reported that they were undecided.



The idea of a *just* community was addressed by asking students whether they had been unjustly excluded from some opportunities available on campus.

- More than two-thirds (69%) reported that they did *not* feel they had been unjustly excluded.
- 17% were undecided; only 14% indicated they believed that they had been excluded unjustly.

Whether students reported that they strictly abided by campus policies defining appropriate academic and social behavior was believed to provide information on the extent to which they viewed themselves as part of a *disciplined* community.

- Nearly three of every four students (74%) agreed that they adhered to behavior in keeping with campus policies.
- 12% disagreed, with the remaining 14% being undecided.

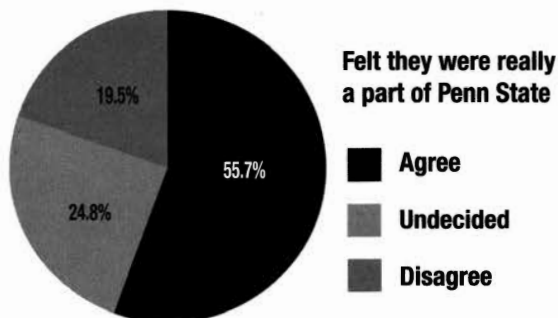
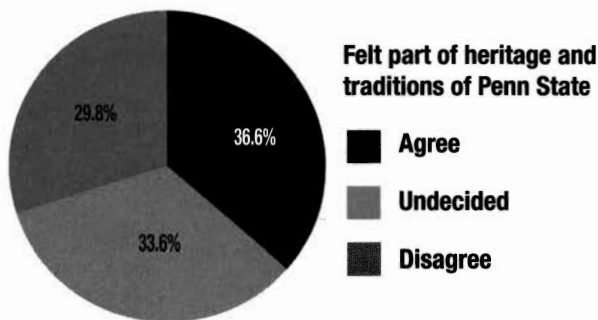
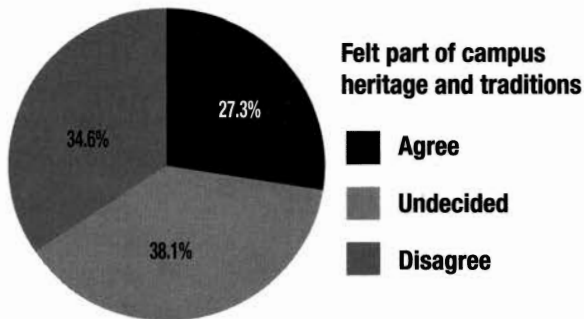
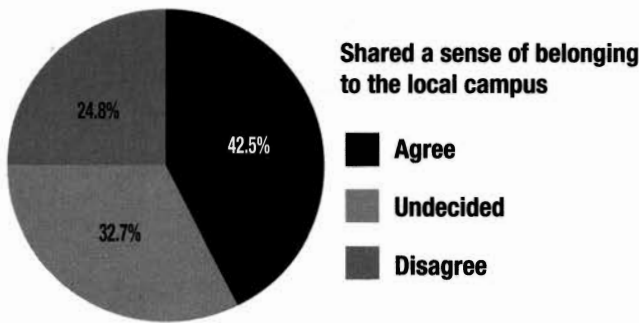
Two items elicited the respondents' personal views about their campuses as *caring* communities: "I am just a number on this campus"; and "I share a sense of belonging to this campus community."

- Half of the students surveyed disagreed with the statement that they "were just a number" on the campus, compared with 27% who agreed; the remainder (23%) were undecided.
- 42% reported that they had a sense of belonging to their campus communities; just 25% disagreed. The remainder (33%) were undecided.

The extent to which respondents agreed that they felt a part of the history and traditions of their campuses and of the larger University dealt with the *celebrative* element of a community of learning. Students were slightly more likely to report that they identified with Penn State than with their local campuses.

- Only 27% of the students agreed that they felt a part of the heritage and traditions of their local campus. More than a third (35%) reported that they did not, and 38% were undecided.
- 37% of the students indicated that they felt a part of the heritage and traditions of Penn State, while 30% disagreed, and 34% were undecided.
- 56% reported that they were "really a part of Penn State University;" 19% disagreed, and the remainder (25%) were undecided.

Students' identification with their campuses and Penn State



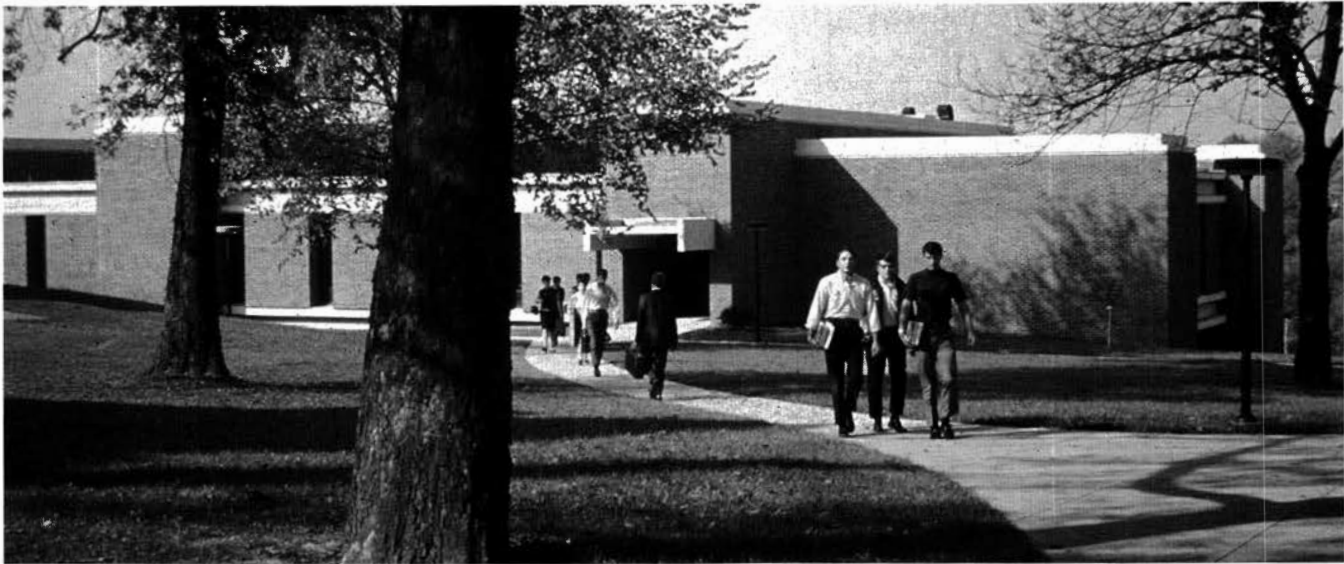
DIFFERENCES IN STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES

There were differences in how students responded to the items dealing with their personal experiences depending upon their gender, on- or off-campus residence, part-time/full-time status, age, grade point average (GPA), and semester standing. Of the thirteen items, there were significant (.05 level) differences between male and female students in regard to eight items; three showed significant differences between on- and off-campus residents; three were associated with part-time versus full-time status; age was significantly related to only two items; GPA and semester standing related to only one item each. Female students were significantly more likely than males to:

- Report that the primary reason they were attending college was for the intellectual pursuit of learning (77% vs 70%).
- Indicate that they frequently interacted with faculty outside the classroom (44% vs 33%).
- Answer that they felt free to state controversial views on campus (74% vs 66%).
- Disagree that they had been unjustly excluded from campus opportunities (73% vs 64%).
- Agree that they strictly abided by campus academic and behavioral policies (77% vs 70%).
- Disagree that they were "just a number" on the campus (53% vs 46%).
- Report that they shared a sense of belonging to the local campus community (47% vs 38%).
- Indicate that they were really a part of Penn State University (57% vs 54%).

On-campus residents differed from off-campus residents in that:

- Students living off-campus were more likely (72%) than their on-campus counterparts (59%) to agree that most of their teachers were strongly committed to teaching.
- Off-campus students were more likely than on-campus students to indicate that they strictly abided by campus rules and policies (77% vs 56%).
- Off-campus students were less likely (41%) than those living on-campus (51%) to report that they shared a sense of belonging to the local campus community.



Full-time students were more likely than part-time students to:

- Report that the main reason they were in college was so that they could get a good job after graduation (86% vs 67%).
- Indicate that they frequently interacted with faculty members outside the classroom (41% vs 28%).
- Agree that they studied just enough to “get by” (22% vs 15%).

Those students over 24 years of age were less likely than younger students to:

- Report that the main reason they were in college was to get a good job (69% vs 86%).
- Indicate that they studied only enough to “get by” (12% vs 24%).

Semester standing and student’s grade point average were each associated with responses to only a single item.

- As semester standing increased, the proportion of students reporting that the main reason they were in college was so they could get a good job declined from 86% for first and second semester students to 83% for those in their third and fourth semesters, and to 77% for those of fifth semester or higher.
- As student grade point average increased, the percentage of those indicating that they studied only enough to “get by” declined.

TEACHERS’ RESPONSES

Teachers were asked about their perceptions of the primary reasons why most of their students were attending college, the commitment of the campus faculty to teaching, their own interaction with students outside of class, and their views about the intensity of their students’ study habits. These ideas were all believed to provide information about the extent to which the campus was viewed as an *educationally purposeful* environment.

- Only 20% of the teachers agreed that most of their students were attending college for the intellectual pursuit of learning; 61% disagreed; and the remainder (19%) were undecided.
- 91% indicated that their students’ main reason for going to college was so they could get a good job after graduation.
- 53% of the teachers believed that most of their students studied only enough to “get by”; 29% disagreed and the remainder (18%) were undecided.
- 78% of the teachers indicated their belief that most of campus faculty members were strongly committed to teaching; only 8% disagreed and 14% were undecided.
- More than two thirds (68%) reported that they frequently interacted with students outside the classroom; 18% disagreed and 14% were undecided.

A majority of the teachers saw their campuses as *open* communities where they could speak their minds.

- 53% of the teachers reported that they felt free to state controversial views on campus.
- 23% were uncertain about whether they were free to be outspoken on controversial issues, and 24% reported that they did not feel free to express such views.

Most teachers reported that they had experienced at least some aspects of a *just* community.

- 70% of the teachers indicated that they had not been unjustly excluded from opportunities available on campus.
- 15% replied that they had been treated unjustly; the remaining 15% were undecided.

Participation in a *disciplined* community, as reflected in their adherence to the policies and norms of the community, was reported by the overwhelming majority of the teachers.

- 87% of the teachers agreed that they strictly abided by campus policies that define appropriate academic and social behavior.
- Only 7% disagreed with the statement, and the remainder were undecided.

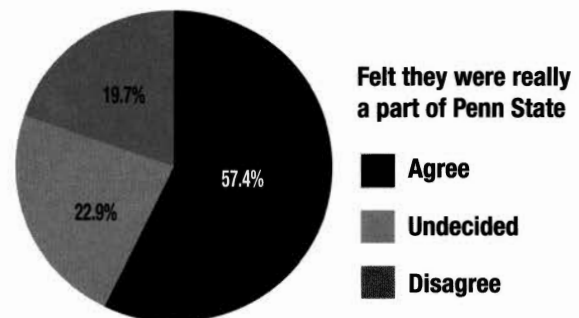
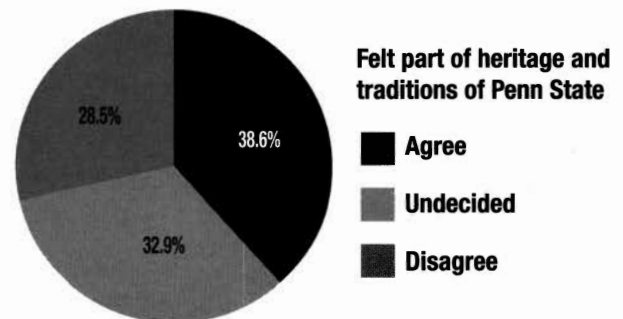
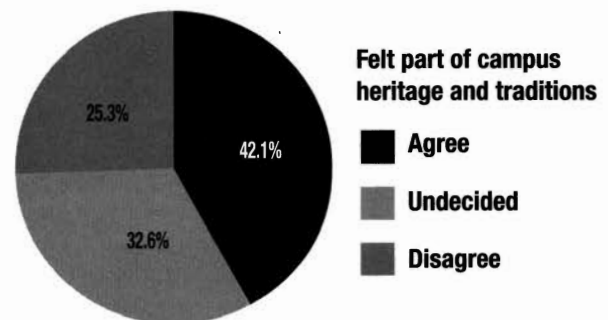
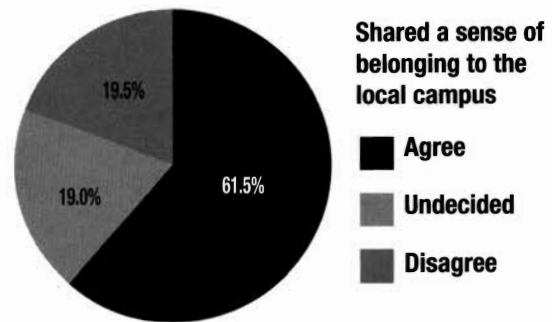
Teachers were likely to report that they had experienced some sense of *caring*.

- 68% of the teachers disagreed that they were “just a number” on the campus; only 18% agreed.
- 62% expressed a sense of belonging to the campus community; 20% indicated that they did not feel that they belonged.

Teachers were slightly more likely to identify with the *celebrative* community of the local campus than they were with Penn State, although a majority saw themselves as part of the larger institution.

- 42% of the teachers agreed that they felt a part of the heritage and traditions of the local campus; 25% disagreed.
- 39% agreed that they felt a part of the heritage and traditions of Penn State; 29% disagreed.
- 57% reported that they felt they were really a part of Penn State; just 20% did not.

Teachers' identification with their campuses and Penn State





DIFFERENCES IN TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES

The experiences and perceptions of the teachers who participated in the survey differed depending upon their status or position on the campus and in the University and their gender.

Full-time teachers were *more* likely than part-time teachers to:

- Indicate that they frequently interacted with students outside the classroom (79% vs 53%).
- Believe that their students studied just enough to "get by" (57% vs 46%).
- Report that they did not feel free to state controversial views on campus (30% vs 16%).
- Agree that they had been unjustly excluded from some opportunities available on campus (18% vs 11%).
- Feel a sense of belonging to the campus community (65% vs 60%).
- Report that they felt a part of the heritage and traditions of their campus (44% vs 39%).

- Disagree that they were "just a number on this campus" (71% vs 64%).

Full-time were *less* likely than part-time teachers to:

- Believe that the primary reason their students were attending college was for the intellectual pursuit of learning (14% vs 27%).
- Feel a part of the heritage and traditions of Penn State (35% vs 44%).

Among the full-time teachers there were significant differences by academic rank to four items:

- Only 10% of those holding assistant professor rank or higher indicated that the primary reason most of their students were attending college was for the intellectual pursuit of learning; 23% of the full-time faculty and staff who did not hold these academic ranks indicated that they held this view.
- Instructors and those not holding academic rank were most likely (87%) to report that they frequently interacted with students outside the classroom. That percentage declined to 79% for assistant professors and to 74% for those of associate professor rank or higher.

- Full professors and associate professors (83%) were more likely than assistant professors (70%) to indicate that most teachers on their campus were strongly committed to teaching; 79% of those classified as instructor or other held this view.
- Full/associate professors (53%) were more likely than assistant professors (37%) to feel a part of the heritage and traditions of their campus; 44% of the instructors/others reported that they felt a part of these traditions.

Female teachers differed from their male counterparts in their responses to three items:

- Women teachers were more likely (70%) than men (67%) to report that they frequently interacted with students outside the classroom.
- Women were more likely than men to disagree that most of their students studied "just enough to get by" (34% vs 26%).
- Women were somewhat more likely (15%) than men (13%) to report that they had been unjustly excluded from some opportunities available on campus.

Conclusion

The idea that colleges and universities are, or ought to be, communities where members experience personal growth through formal and informal interactions within and outside the classroom is not new. However, in recent years, educators and administrators throughout the nation have sought to delineate the characteristics of an ideal community of learning and to seek ways to facilitate the development of these attributes within their institutions. For a university such as Penn State, with its structure of geographically dispersed campuses, this goal involves not only the need for an overarching community of learning that encompasses the entire institution, but also the fostering of individual sub-communities at all locations that are *educationally purposeful, open, just, disciplined, caring, and celebrative*.

When Penn State students enrolled at nineteen campuses located away from University Park were asked to evaluate how well each of six attributes of an ideal community of learning characterized their campuses, most reported that the descriptions of an

educationally purposeful, open, just, disciplined, and caring community were "a perfect fit" or "nearly a perfect fit." A somewhat smaller percentage reported that their campuses were *celebrative*. Although most students viewed their local campus positively in terms of these characteristics, a sizeable minority were either ambivalent or negative in their judgments, indicating the need to continue to strive for a more civil and educationally supportive learning environment.

Overall, the teachers' responses were similar to those of the students, although teachers were somewhat less likely to report that the campus was *educationally purposeful, disciplined* and *celebrative*, and more likely to indicate that it was *open*. The relatively high percentages of students and teachers who did not view their campuses as *celebrative* suggests the need for programs focusing on local heritage and campus traditions. Rituals, ceremonies, and celebrations can help to unite a campus, give students a sense of belonging to something worthwhile and enduring, instill a greater sense of community spirit among the members, and enhance student (and faculty) retention. In the current study, only 27% of the students reported that they felt a part of the heritage and traditions of their local campus; 42% of the teachers indicated that they did so.

When the findings from the current study were compared with those obtained a year earlier from students and teachers at University Park (UP), marked similarities were found between students at UP and those at other locations in regard to their perceptions of their local campus as *educationally purposeful, open, just, disciplined, and caring*; although they did differ in that 70% of the UP students but only 44% of those from non-UP locations reported that their campus community was *celebrative*.

In contrast, the responses of teachers at these other campuses differed sharply from those teachers surveyed at University Park a year earlier. The non-UP teachers were significantly more likely than their UP counterparts to characterize their campuses as *educationally purposeful* (48% vs 25%), *open* (64% vs 40%), *just* (54% vs 29%), *disciplined* (42% vs 29%), and *caring* (53% vs 23%).

The similarity in responses between students and teachers at these nineteen smaller campuses



was not found in the previous study at University Park, where teachers were much *less* likely than students to report that the characteristics of a civil community of learning described their campus. Perhaps the smaller sites, with their emphasis on undergraduate instruction, resulted in greater sharing of experiences and perspectives between teachers and their students than was the case at the larger University Park campus where faculty responsibilities were more likely to be divided and where rewards have traditionally flowed from research activities and graduate teaching.

There was little variation by personal characteristics such as gender, full-time/part-time status, grade point average, semester standing, or on/off campus residence in the responses of students in the present study to the general descriptions of the attributes of a community of learning.

Unlike students, the teachers varied significantly in their views of the campus environment, depend-

ing upon their part-time or full-time status, gender, and rank. Part-time teachers were more likely than full-time faculty/staff to see their campuses positively in terms of the six characteristics of a community of learning. Among the full-time teachers, those holding the academic ranks of assistant, associate, or full professor were less likely than those listing themselves as instructors or "other" to report that their campus was *educationally purposeful, just, caring, and celebrative*. Women were more likely than men to rate the campus community as *educationally purposeful, caring, and celebrative*.

When asked more directly about their own experiences, teachers and students at these campuses differed in their perceptions of one another in regard to their commitment to educational purposefulness. Students overwhelmingly reported that they were attending college *both* for the intellectual pursuit of learning *and* to ensure a good job following graduation. They apparently viewed these goals

as singular, rather than as mutually exclusive alternatives. On the other hand, the teachers were nearly unanimous in reporting their perceptions that students were attending college so that they could get a good job after graduation; few believed that these students attended college for the intellectual pursuit of learning. Moreover, while only about one in five of the students reported that they studied just enough to "get by", more than half of the teachers indicated their belief that most of their students studied "just enough to get by." Overall, 70% of the students and 78% of the teachers agreed that the campus faculty was strongly committed to teaching. Teachers were somewhat more likely than students to report that they frequently interacted with students outside of class, that they felt free to state controversial views on campus, that they abided by campus policies, that they had a sense of belonging on the campus.

Several of the questions dealing with personal experiences had also been asked of University Park students in the earlier survey. The non-UP students were equally as likely as students at University Park to indicate that most of their teachers were strongly committed to teaching. However, the non-UP students were more likely than those at University Park to report frequent out-of-class interaction with their teachers (39% vs 26%), and more likely to indicate that they studied "just enough to get by" (21% vs 15%). They were less likely than their UP peers to say that they felt free to state controversial views (44% vs 61%), and less likely to indicate that they had never been unjustly excluded from campus opportunities (66% vs 83%). Some of these distinctions may reflect real differences in the campus environments; others likely result from the differences in the age, class standing, and general orientations of the students themselves.

If Penn State is to be characterized as a community of learning—one that is *educationally purposeful, open, just, disciplined, caring, and celebrative*—it is important that these adjectives describe the environment of each of its colleges and campuses regardless of location. While many of the students and teachers reported a good fit between the description of an ideal community of learning and their local campus communities, there was by no

means unanimity among all respondents that the desired attributes were present.

It is also important that the members of these communities evidence commitment to and identification with the larger University of which they are a part. That affiliation is underscored by the inclusion of the words "Penn State" in the official title of each college and campus, and the prominence of the University's logo and other symbols on buildings, student supplies, and campus signs. While a majority of both students (56%) and teachers (57%) at the non-UP locations reported that they felt they were a part of Penn State, a sizeable minority did not share this feeling and most did not identify with the heritage and traditions of either their local campus or the University as a whole. Teachers were slightly more likely to report that they identified with the heritage and traditions of their campuses than with those of Penn State. For students, the reverse was true—they were somewhat more likely to identify with the larger institution than with their local campus.

Building a true University community of learning involves both strengthening the separate campus and college communities and enhancing the linkages with the larger whole:

It is likely to be a gradual process that is nurtured by the interests and efforts of many people who come to share the vision. To be effective, the process needs to recognize and call into account the diversity of perspectives, needs, and individual goals of the University's constituent members. This report has focused on student and faculty views, but the perceptions of administrators and support staff, as well as alumni and others are also relevant. Achieving the goal of making Penn State truly an educationally purposeful, open, just, disciplined, caring, and celebrative community requires the concentrated effort of all of these stake holders. WE ARE . . . ALL . . . PENN STATE!³

³ Willits, F. K., Janota, J.O., Enerson, D.M. (1996) *Penn State as a Community of Learning*. University Park, PA: Instructional Development Program



Quality of Instruction

Fern K. Willits and Thomas J. Seifried

Teaching has always been a part of Penn State's mission, and the need for excellence in this area has been frequently affirmed. Nowhere is the importance of quality teaching more clearly underscored than in the network of Penn State colleges and campuses situated in communities away from University Park. These units were established to provide close-to-home educational opportunities for individuals interested in pursuing college degrees or increasing their scientific, technical, or cultural knowledge; teaching and learning activities remain their primary responsibility today. The majority of Penn State alumni have received part of their education from campuses away from University Park. Because these sites provide so many students with their initial higher education experiences, they lay the foundation on which many students build their subsequent educational decisions and pursuits. Moreover, under the 1997 reorganization, these campuses are projected to assume even more important roles in carrying out the educational mission of the University in the future.

One statement outlining the University's strategic goals asserts:

*The quality of teaching and learning at Penn State ultimately determines the University's impact. Academic quality, therefore, is our highest priority.*¹

How "good" is the teaching at the Penn State campuses? What elements are believed to contribute to the quality of instruction and to what extent are these realized in the classroom? A 1996 study assessed the views of students and teacher at University Park concerning these issues.² The present report extends those findings using data from surveys

of students and teachers at nineteen other Penn State campuses carried out during spring semester 1997. These latter studies were completed prior to implementation of the reorganization plan on July 1, 1997; hence they provide benchmark data against which changes associated with the reorganization can be assessed in the future. A total of 993 students and 1,028 teachers responded to a mail survey asking about their perceptions of various aspects of their teaching/learning experiences during the previous semester (Fall 1996).

Elements of Quality Teaching

Previous research has suggested that various elements of the instructors' behavior are associated with teaching quality. Good or excellent teachers have been characterized as those who are stimulating, clear/understandable in their presentations, knowledgeable, well-prepared, enthusiastic, fair, accessible, and able to manage the classroom environment to facilitate learning. Recently, educators have also emphasized that quality teaching involves a commitment to and use of active and collaborative learning approaches.

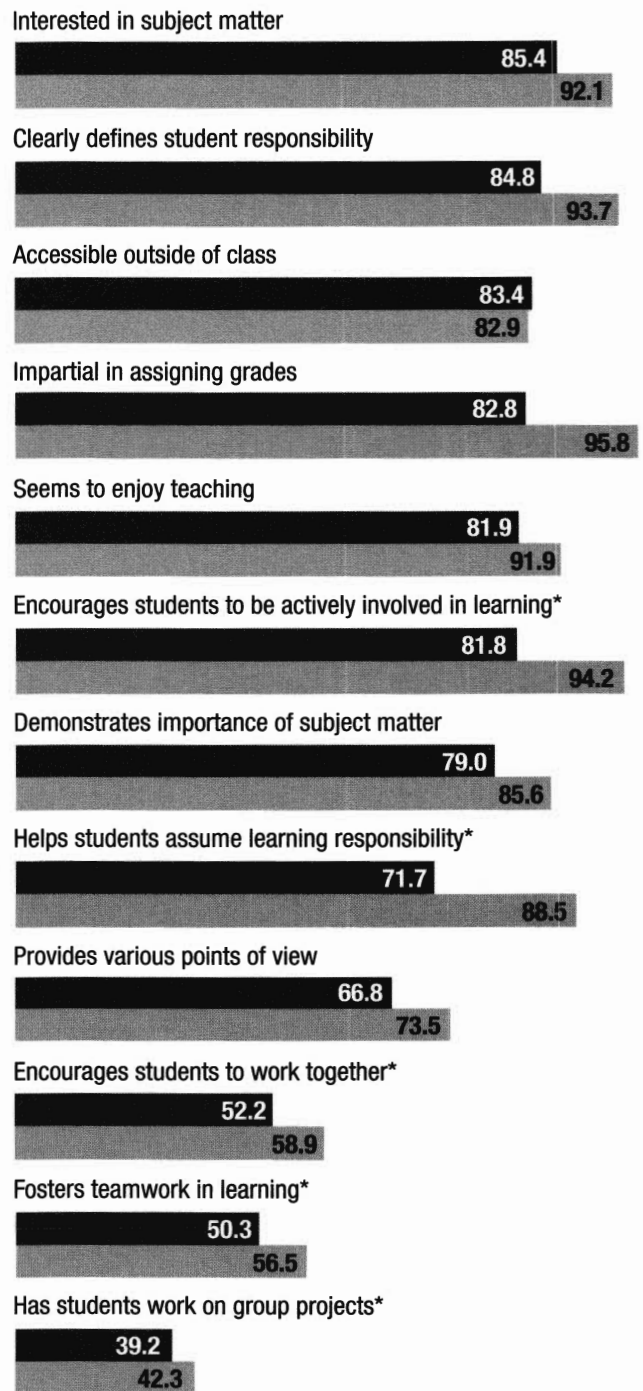
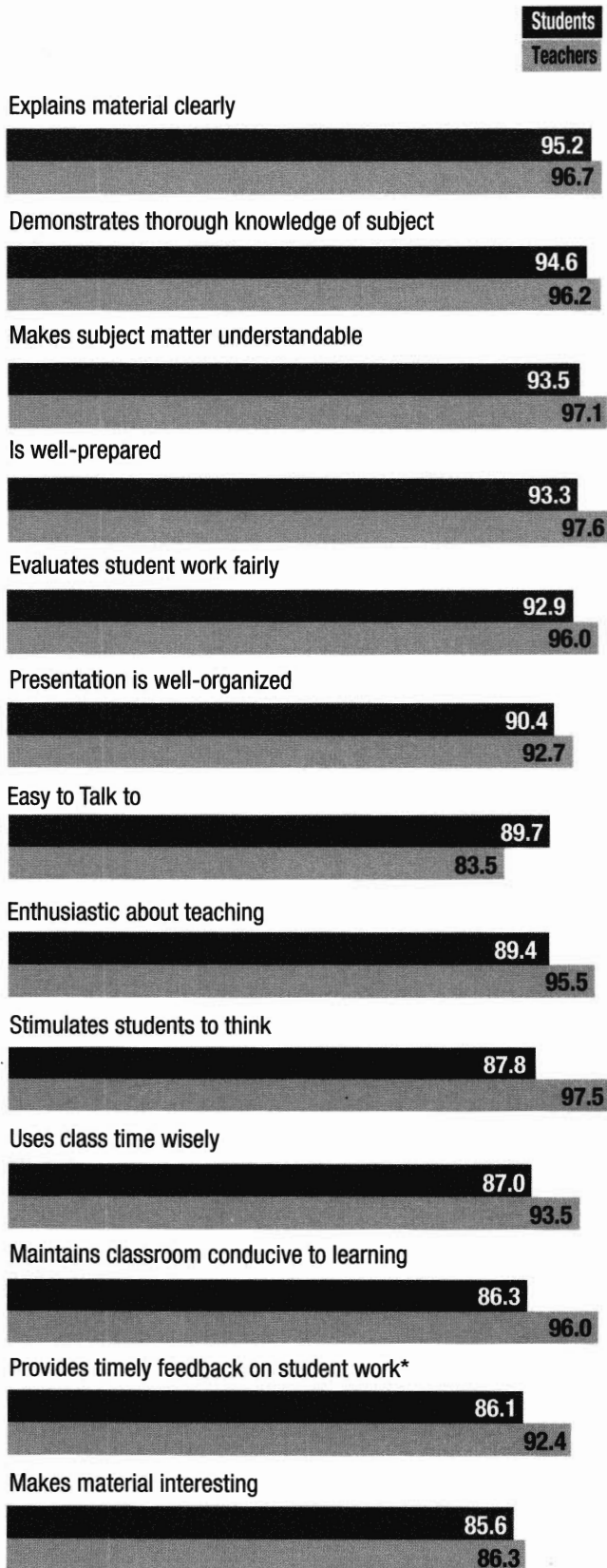
The surveys asked students and teachers to indicate the importance of 25 elements of instructor behavior in determining the quality of college instruction. Many of the elements on the list were drawn from teaching evaluation forms developed and used at various colleges and universities across the country; many had also been included in the University Park survey carried out the previous year. Hence, it was expected that most of the elements would be viewed as of at least "some" importance by most subjects.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of each element in determining the quality of instruction in a college course using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 meant "not important" and 5 meant "extremely important."

¹ *Intercom*, April 18, 1996, p. 4.

² Willits, F.K., B.L. Moore, and D.M. Enerson (1997) *Penn State Quality of Instruction: Surveys of Students and Teachers at University Park*. University Park, PA: Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching.

Percentages of students and teachers rating various elements of instructor behavior as “very” or “extremely” important for quality teaching.



* These items were not included in the surveys of students and teachers at University Park.

More than two-thirds of the students surveyed endorsed 22 of the 25 behaviors as "very important" or "extremely important" by giving them "4" or "5" ratings on the importance scale. Those receiving the largest proportion (more than 90%) of such favorable ratings dealt with the instructor explaining the material clearly, demonstrating thorough knowledge of the subject matter, making the subject matter understandable, being well-prepared, evaluating student work fairly, and giving presentations that were well-organized. Thirteen elements were given "4" or "5" ratings by 80% to 90% of the students. For only six of the behavioral elements was the proportion of "very" or "extremely" important ratings less than 80%. These elements included: demonstrates importance of the subject matter (79%), helps students assume responsibility for their own learning (72%), provides various points of view (67%), encourages students to work together to learn (52%), fosters teamwork in learning (50%), and has students work together on group projects (39%).

More than 90% of the teachers rated 16 of the 25 elements as "very" or "extremely" important; an additional five elements were given the same high ratings by 80% to 89% of the teachers. Only four elements received less than 80% endorsements as

"very" or "extremely" important: provides various points of view (74%), encourages students to work together to learn (59%), fosters teamwork in learning (56%), and has students work together on group projects (42%).

In general, teachers were significantly more likely than students to report that each of the behaviors was "very" or "extremely" important in determining the quality of teaching. The largest such differences between teachers and students were found in the proportions giving high importance ratings to five specific elements: helps students assume responsibility for their own learning (88% for teachers vs 72% for students); is impartial in assigning grades (96% vs 83%); encourages students to be actively involved in learning (94% vs 82%); seems to enjoy teaching (92% vs 82%); and maintains a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning (96% vs 86%). The only statistically significant reversal to the pattern of teachers being more likely than students to give high importance ratings was for the item dealing with the instructor being easy to talk to, where 90% of the students compared with 84% of the teachers rated this element as important. For six items (explains material clearly, demonstrates thorough knowledge of the subject



matter, is accessible outside of class, makes material interesting, gives well-organized presentation, and has students work together on group projects) the differences between students and teachers were not statistically significant.

While there were differences in the response patterns of students and teachers, there were also similarities. Both groups emphasized the importance of the instructor being knowledgeable, clear, organized, fair, and well-prepared. They were somewhat less likely to feel that teacher accessibility outside of class and the presentation of various points of view were critical. Also, for both students and teachers, the items dealing with encouraging students to work together to learn, fostering teamwork in learning, and having students work together on group projects were the least likely of the 25 elements to be endorsed as important contributors to teaching quality.

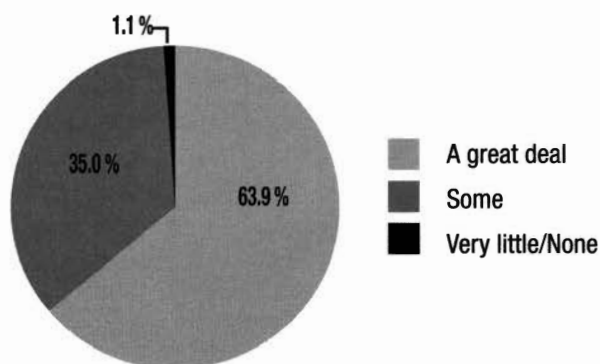
When the responses of these students and teachers were compared with those of their University Park counterparts obtained the previous year, many of the importance rating distributions were similar, but there were also some significant differences. The greatest differences were as follows: students at the other campuses were more likely than those at University Park to indicate that it was important for a teacher to be accessible outside of class (83% of the non-UP students vs 78% of the UP students), easy to talk to (90% vs 81%), and genuinely interested in the subject matter (85% vs 81%). They were less likely than were their UP counterparts to report that it was important for instructors to provide various points of view (67% vs 72%). Teachers at the other campuses were more likely than those at University Park to judge the following instructor characteristics as important components of quality teaching: easy to talk to (84% of the non-UP teachers vs 73% of the UP teachers), accessible outside of class (83% vs 74%), enjoy teaching (92% vs 82%), be genuinely interested in the subject matter (92% vs 84%), to clearly define student responsibilities (94% vs 85%), and to use class time wisely (94% vs 85%). The questions dealing with active/collaborative learning and providing timely feedback were not used in the University Park surveys.

Student Perceptions of Quality

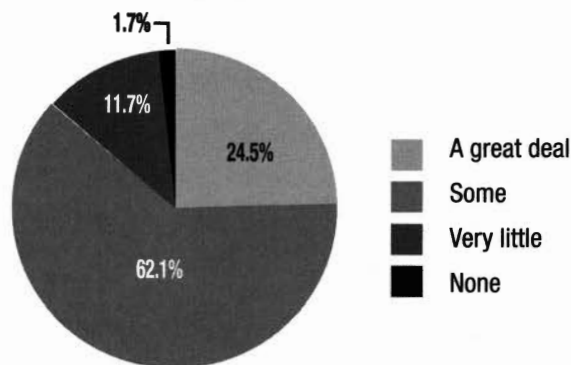
Asking students to provide evaluations of the quality of the instruction they receive in specific courses has long been a common means for evaluating the teaching proficiency of faculty members at colleges and universities nationwide. At Penn State, current teaching evaluations include the routine collection of student opinions about individual courses using the Student Rating of Teaching Effectiveness (SRTE) Forms. The mean scores for each class are tabulated and included in faculty dossiers used in tenure and promotion decisions and merit evaluations.

How much weight should be given to student opinions in evaluating the teaching effectiveness of faculty members?

% of Students' Responses



% of Teachers' Responses



Despite (or perhaps because of) their widespread use, student evaluations are often viewed with distrust by faculty. In the present study, both students and teachers were asked how much weight should be given to student opinions in evaluating the teaching effectiveness of faculty members. While 64% of students answered that a great deal of weight should be given to student opinions, only 25% of the faculty responded in this way. The distributions of responses to this question by students and teachers were very similar to those obtained previously from University Park students and teachers. Critics of giving weight to student evaluations argue that students lack the knowledge and experience to accurately judge the quality of a course; that student ratings represent popularity contests that reward warm, friendly, "easy", or humorous teachers with high scores while downgrading serious or difficult courses, regardless of how well they are taught; and that class size, time of day, course level and instructor's rank strongly impact the obtained evaluations. Some of these issues were addressed in the analysis of the student data from this study.

OBTAINING STUDENT EVALUATIONS

Students were asked to list all of the courses in which they had been enrolled the previous semester, and to answer a series of questions focusing on the *second* one they had listed. First, the survey form asked each student to rate how often, on a scale of 1 (never or almost never) to 5 (always or nearly always) the teacher in the selected course had demonstrated each of the 25 elements described in the previous section. Second, they were asked to evaluate the overall quality of the course as either "excellent," "good," "fair," or "poor."

RATING THE 25 ELEMENTS

At least seven out of every ten students gave "4" (often) or "5" (always or nearly always) ratings to 15 of the 25 elements. These were: demonstrated thorough knowledge of the subject matter (87%), was genuinely interested in the subject matter (85%), was well prepared (79%), evaluated student work fairly (77%), seemed to enjoy teaching (77%), maintained a classroom conducive to learning (76%), used class time wisely (75%), was impartial in assigning grades (75%), clearly defined student

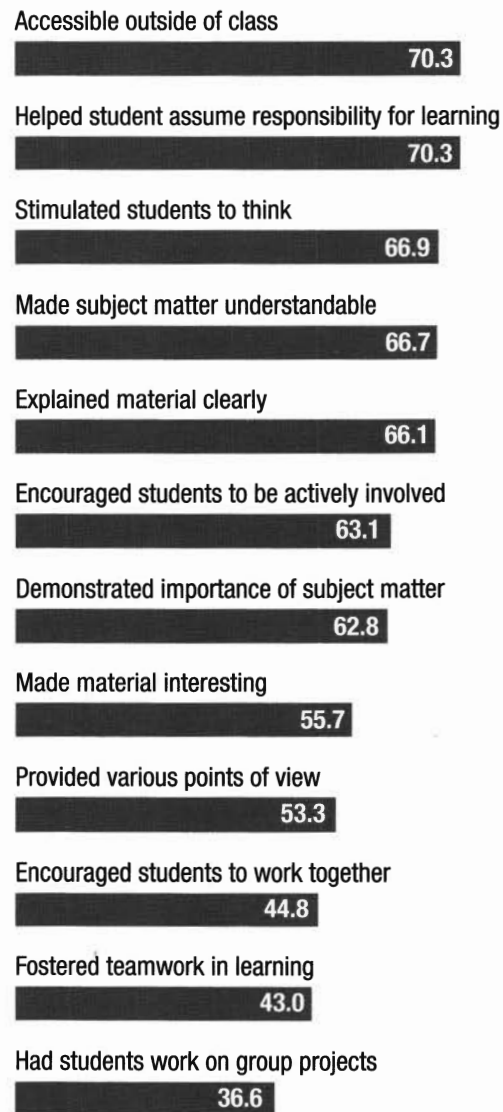
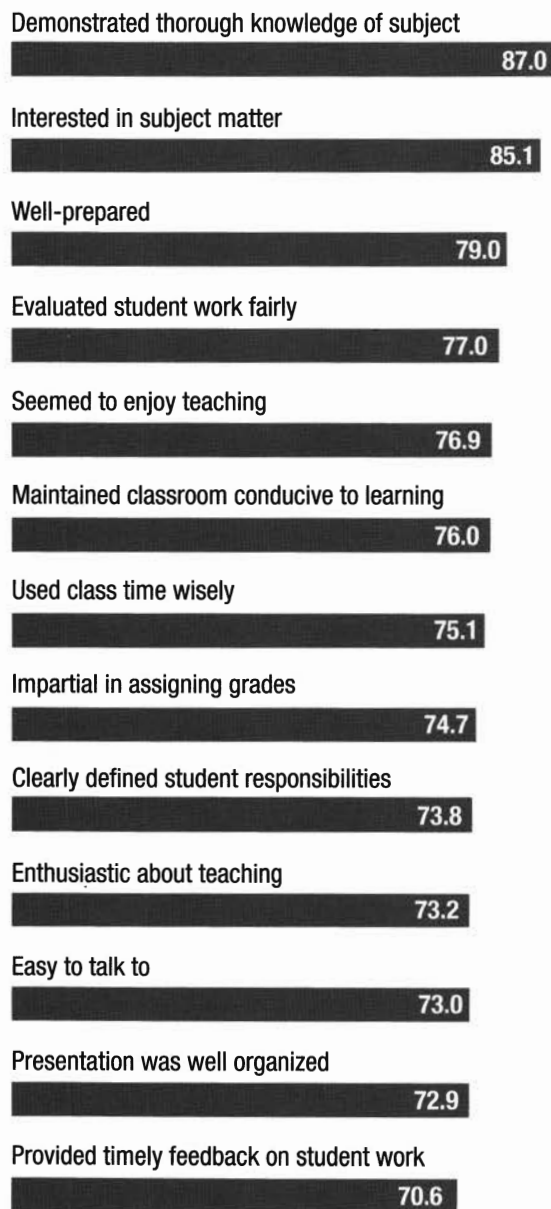


responsibilities (74%), was enthusiastic about teaching (73%), was easy to talk to (73%), presentation was well organized (73%), provided timely feedback on student work (71%), was accessible outside of class (70%), and helped students assume responsibility for their own learning (70%). Only three elements received less than a majority of “4” or “5” ratings—the instructor encouraged students to work together to learn (45%), fostered teamwork in learning (43%), and had students work together

on group projects (37%). These last three items were all concerned with collaborative learning; they were also the least likely elements to be judged by either students or teachers as very important to quality teaching.

When these responses were compared with those of students at University Park, there were significant differences between the percentages of “4” and “5” ratings given by students to 15 of the 19 items asked in both surveys. The only elements

Percentages of students reporting the instructor “always” or “often” demonstrated various behaviors





which did not demonstrate significant differences in responses were those dealing with the instructor behaviors of demonstrating thorough knowledge of the subject matter, being well-prepared, being impartial in assigning grades, and clearly defining student responsibilities. For all of the other items, teachers at the smaller Penn State campuses were more likely than were teachers at University Park to be seen by their students as "often" or "always" evidencing the various behaviors judged to be important to quality teaching. The most pronounced differences between the non-UP and UP student views of their teachers in regard to: Instructor stimulated students to think (67% of the non-UP students vs 51% of the UP students), instructor was easy to talk to (73% vs 61%), instructor provided various points of view (53% vs 43%), instructor maintained a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning (76% vs 67%), instructor seemed to enjoy teaching (77% vs 68%), instructor made material interesting (56% vs 47%), instructor demonstrated the importance of the subject matter (63% vs 54%), and instructor was genuinely interested in the subject matter (85% vs 79%).

COURSE CHARACTERISTICS AND RATINGS

Class size was significantly related to the students' responses concerning how often instructors evidenced 13 of the 25 elements. As class size increased, teachers were seen as less likely to stimulate students to think, foster teamwork in learning, provide various points of view, help students assume responsibility for their own learning, make the material interesting, have students work together on group projects, encourage students to work together to learn, demonstrate the importance of the subject matter, and provide timely feedback. Class size was also related to four other items, but the pattern of differences was inconsistent for classes of less than fifty students. However, in each of the four cases, classes with more than 50 students were significantly less likely than those with fewer students to report that the instructor was easy to talk to, explained material clearly, was enthusiastic about teaching, or encouraged students to be actively involved in learning. The reported frequencies of the remaining twelve behaviors were not significantly related to class size.



Students were asked whether the instructor in the evaluated course was a full-time faculty or staff member. Fourteen percent of the students did not know the status of their teachers. Full-time were more likely than part-time teachers to be seen as accessible outside of class (73% vs 60%); and less likely to be rated as easy to talk to (70% vs 79%). Apart from these differences, full-time/part-time status of the teacher was unrelated to students' ratings regarding the frequencies with which these elements of quality teaching were reported.

Time of day in which the class took place was significantly related to the incidence of only two of the behaviors. Students reporting on afternoon or evening classes were less likely to indicate that the teachers were often accessible outside of class than were students meeting earlier in the day. Perhaps reflecting different types of students, evening class instructors were more likely to be seen as providing various points of view in their teaching than were day-time teachers.

GRADES, WORK, LEARNING AND RATINGS

The grade that a student received in the course was significantly related to the proportion of "4" or "5" ratings for every one of the twenty-five instructor behaviors. As grade level increased, the frequency of positive evaluations of the teacher's behaviors also increased. To determine whether these positive evaluations reflected a tendency of students to rate less demanding courses most highly, the questionnaire also asked students to indicate whether the course they were evaluating was "higher," "about the same," or "lower" than most other classes they had taken in regard to the amount of work required, the degree of difficulty, and the amount they had learned.

Amount of work was significantly related to twenty of the twenty-five items. However, in every instance, courses described as having less work than other courses received the lowest proportion of positive evaluations, and in all but three cases, courses judged to have had higher work loads than

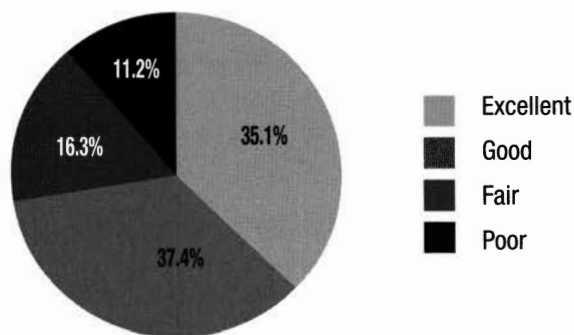
other courses received the highest proportion of positive evaluations.

Perceived degree of difficulty relative to other courses was significantly related to twelve of the twenty-five items. In almost every one of the cases, courses ranked as "the same" as most other classes received the highest proportion of "4" or "5" ratings, but the pattern of the differences was inconsistent. For those courses judged as relatively more difficult than others, students were somewhat less likely to indicate that instructors explained the material clearly, evaluated student work fairly, made the subject matter understandable, and provided various points of view. For courses judged to be less difficult than most other classes, students were less likely to report the instructor stimulated students to think, was well prepared, demonstrated the importance of the subject matter, presented well-organized materials, and used class time wisely.

The amount that students felt they had learned in the course was significantly and positively related to all twenty-five elements. That is, the more students reported they had learned in the course, the greater the proportion of "4" or "5" ratings given to every one of the 25 instructor behaviors often viewed as important to teaching quality. Moreover, these relationships were all much stronger than any of the other associations observed, including those involving course grade.

Students' overall ratings of the quality of instruction in the course

% of Students' Responses



OVERALL EVALUATION OF COURSE

When asked to evaluate the overall quality of instruction in the course as "excellent," "good," "fair," or "poor," 35% of the students indicated that it was "excellent;" an additional 37% reported that the course was "good," 16% replied that the instruction was "fair," and 11% gave it a "poor" rating. These positive evaluations were somewhat higher than those obtained from the University Park students surveyed the previous year: 25% "excellent," 36% "good," 23% "fair," and 15% "poor." Further, the higher evaluations at the non-UP campuses did not result from any tendency of freshmen and sophomore students to rate courses more positively than their upper-division counterparts. When fifth semester and higher students were removed from the University Park sample, the same pattern of responses to the course evaluation question was found.

All of the 25 elements believed to be associated with quality of instruction were positively and significantly related to the overall evaluation of the course, with correlations ranging from +.24 to +.70. The highest correlations between the ratings of the separate elements and the overall course evaluation were associated with: explaining the material clearly ($r = .70$), making the subject matter understandable ($r = .68$), making the material interesting ($r = .63$), stimulating students to think ($r = .60$), encouraging students to be actively involved in learning ($r = .60$), using class time wisely ($r = .60$), being enthusiastic about teaching ($r = .59$), maintaining a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning ($r = .59$), enjoying teaching ($r = .58$), being well prepared ($r = .56$), evaluating student work fairly ($r = .56$), and well-organized presentations ($r = .56$). Only three items yielded correlations less than +.4: encouraging students to work together to learn ($r = .34$), fostering teamwork in learning ($r = .33$), and having students work together on group projects ($r = .24$). These last three items were the least likely to be judged by as important to quality teaching by both students and teachers. It was noteworthy that all three are aspects of what has been termed "collaborative learning."

COURSE CHARACTERISTICS AND OVERALL EVALUATION

Class size was significantly related to the overall instructional evaluation of the course, although the relationship was not strong. Moreover, the relationship was not linear. Classes of 20 to 29 students were somewhat more likely to receive "excellent" or "good" ratings (77%) than were smaller classes (73%), courses with 30 to 49 students (69%) or those with over 50 enrollees (64%).

Neither the full-time/part-time status of the instructor nor the time of day the class met was statistically associated with the overall course evaluation.

Percentages of student giving "excellent" or "good" course evaluations by size of class

	Good	Excellent	Total
Class size <20	35.9	36.9	72.8%
Class size 20-29	38.5	38.2	76.7%
Class size 30-49	33.1	35.7	68.8%
Class size 50+	43.3	21.0	64.3%

GRADES, WORK, LEARNING, AND OVERALL EVALUATION

The grade a student received was strongly related to how he/she evaluated the course. Thus, the proportion of "excellent" responses increased from 10% for students with D-or F-grades or lower to 49% for those with A-grades.

The amount of work relative to other courses (higher, the same, lower) was significantly related to the overall course evaluation. Those courses requiring more work were the most likely to be given "excellent" ratings (42%), followed by those that were "the same" as other courses (35%); those courses designated as having "lower" work requirements were the least likely (20%) to be rated as excellent.

Perceived degree of difficulty relative to other courses was also related to overall evaluations. Those courses seen as being "about the same" degree of difficulty as other courses were the most likely to receive "excellent" ratings (37%), followed closely by those that were perceived as being of "higher" difficulty (34%). Courses described as being of "lower" difficulty were the least likely to receive "excellent" evaluations (29%).

By far the most powerful predictor of the students' overall evaluations, however, was the amount they felt they had learned. Where learning was perceived to be "lower" than other courses, almost no one (less than 3%) rated the course as "excellent"; 30% of those who saw the learning as "the same" as most other classes reported that the course was "excellent"; but for those who reported that the class resulted in "higher" learning than most other classes, 64% reported the course was "excellent."

Teachers' Perceptions of Instructional Quality

Some have argued that self-evaluations should be included in the formal faculty review process, both because structured self appraisal may contribute to personal development and because the individual is in a unique position to understand his/her performance. Certainly self evaluation represents a continuous process for most people. Teachers gauge their success by observing the reactions of students, by evaluating tests and assignments, and by reflecting upon their feelings about the methods they have used and the materials they have covered. However, for many individuals, self appraisals may present a less than objective performance evaluation. Not only may individuals tend to view their own efforts in positive terms, but they may also be unwilling to be completely honest in describing weaknesses. Nevertheless, self evaluation by teachers provides an important and unique additional perspective for viewing the quality of instruction.

OBTAINING TEACHERS' EVALUATIONS

The teachers surveyed in this study were asked to indicate on a scale from 1 (never or almost never) to 5 (always or nearly always) how frequently the 25 behavior elements discussed previously occurred

Percentages of students giving "excellent" or "good" course evaluations by grade received

	Good	Excellent	Total
Grade A	37.6	48.6	86.2%
Grade B	39.5	37.5	77.0%
Grade C	37.2	16.3	53.5%
Grade D/F	26.1	10.1	36.2%

Percentages of students giving "excellent" or "good" course evaluations by reported amount of work relative to other courses

	Good	Excellent	Total
Amount of work compared to other courses			
Lower	36.6	20.4	57.0%
Same	38.2	35.2	73.4%
Higher	34.2	41.9	76.1%

Percentages of students giving "excellent" or "good" course evaluations by reported degree of difficulty relative to other courses

	Good	Excellent	Total
Difficulty compared to other courses			
Lower	40.4	28.8	69.2%
Same	38.6	37.0	75.6%
Higher	33.7	34.0	67.7%

Percentages of students giving "excellent" or "good" course evaluations by reported amount learned relative to other courses

	Good	Excellent	Total
Amount learned compared to other courses			
Lower	19.3	2.3	21.6%
Same	50.8	29.7	80.5%
Higher	30.7	63.8	94.5%

in their teaching of one course that they had offered during fall semester 1997. Individuals teaching more than one course that semester, were asked to focus on the one that was the *second* class to meet each week. In addition, the teachers were asked to evaluate the overall quality of their teaching in that course by choosing one of the following descriptors: "excellent," "good," "fair," or "poor."

RATING THE 25 ELEMENTS

More than 80% of the teachers who responded to these questions gave ratings of "4" or "5" to 18 of the 25 items, indicating that they they believed that they frequently or always engaged in these behaviors in the specific course identified for evaluation. However, fewer than half reported that they were "always or nearly always" successful in: stimulating students to think (16%), fostering teamwork in



learning (19%), making material interesting (23%), encouraging students to work together to learn (26%), helping students to assume responsibility for their own learning (28%), providing various points of view (29%), making the subject matter understandable (40%), explaining material clearly (41%), demonstrating the importance of the subject matter (43%), and encouraging students to be actively involved in learning (48%). Overall, the teachers reported that they usually engaged in most of the desirable behaviors. Nevertheless, for many of the survey items there appeared to be a belief that there was room for improvement in their performance.

INSTRUCTOR/COURSE CHARACTERISTICS AND RATINGS

Many of the campuses rely upon community members with appropriate expertise to teach courses on a part-time basis. This practice both extends the instructor pool and links the campus or college

with the local community. Full-time teachers differed from part-time teachers in regard to the frequency with which they reported always or usually engaging in 9 of the 25 elements. Part-time teachers were somewhat more likely than full-time to indicate that they enjoyed teaching the course (97% for part-time vs 90% for full-time), were successful in maintaining an atmosphere conducive to learning (96% vs 91%), encouraged students to be actively involved in learning (90% vs 83%), provided various points of view (74% vs 65%), were genuinely interested in the subject matter (98% vs 95%), were enthusiastic about teaching the course (98% vs 95%), succeeded in making the materials interesting (83% vs 77%), and made the materials understandable (94% vs 90%). However, part-time teachers were considerably less likely to report that they were accessible to students outside of class (76% vs 93%).

The number of years as a teacher at the campus was significantly related to teachers' responses to three items. Teachers with over ten years experience were less likely than those with less experience to report that they had provided various points of view (62% of the more experienced teachers vs 72% of the less experienced) and that they had stimulated students to think (66% vs 74%). Those teaching more than five years were somewhat less likely than those with fewer years of teaching to report that they were successful in maintaining a classroom atmosphere that was conducive to learning (92% vs 96%). For the remaining 22 items there were no significant differences in instructor's responses in terms of the amount of teaching experience.

As was expected, subjects were most likely to answer in terms of introductory or lower-division (less than 400-level) courses, though nearly 12% of the teachers reported on upper-division or graduate courses (400- and 500-level). Those teaching 400- and 500-level courses were significantly more likely than those teaching lower level courses to indicate that they were successful in stimulating students to think (84% of the upper level teachers vs 68% of lower division teachers), providing various points of view (82% vs 67%), demonstrating the impor-

tance of the subject matter (94% vs 84%), maintaining a classroom atmosphere that was conducive to learning (98% vs 92%), making the material interesting (87% vs 78%), and clearly defining student responsibilities in the course (99% vs 94%).

As class size increased, the instructors' perceived success in encouraging students to be actively involved in learning, in encouraging students to work together to learn, and in fostering teamwork declined. With class sizes above 50 students, instructors were somewhat less likely to report that they were successful in maintaining a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning than were teachers of smaller sections. Teachers of classes with between 20 and 40 students were less likely than either those with larger or smaller classes to report that they were successful in making the material interesting.

OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE COURSE

A majority (52%) of the teachers surveyed evaluated the overall quality of instruction in the course as "good", and an additional 46% considered it was "excellent."

The smaller the class size and the longer a faculty member had been teaching, the more likely he/she was to rate the course as excellent. However, there were no significant differences between

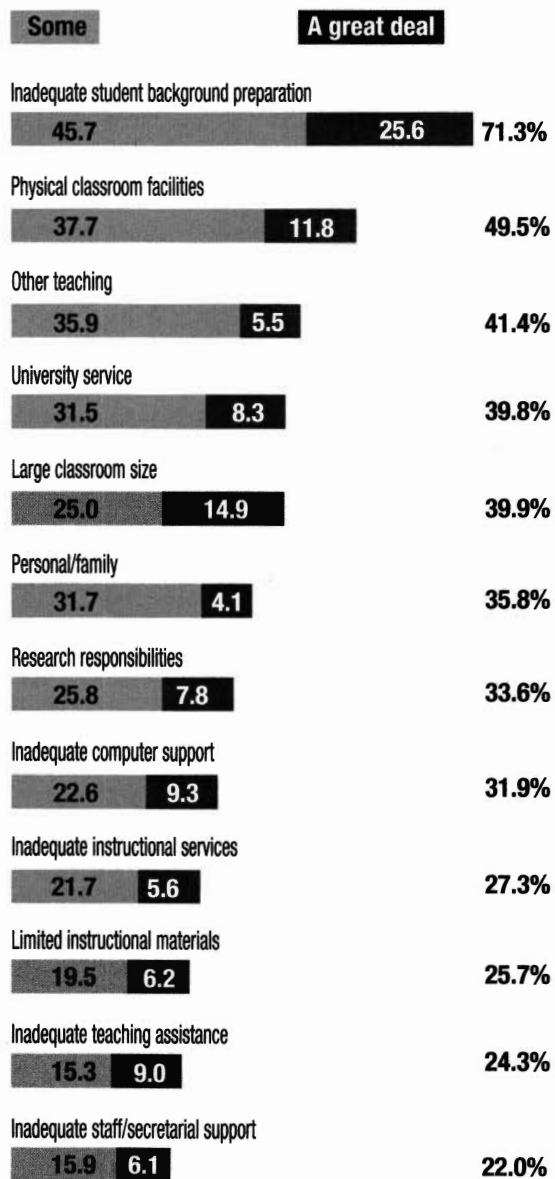


teachers of upper division (400-level) courses and others, between full-time and part-time teachers, or by academic rank for full-time faculty.

INTERFERENCE WITH TEACHING QUALITY

To ascertain the extent to which the teachers surveyed felt that various responsibilities or circumstances interfered with the quality of their teaching, respondents were asked whether each of a series of

Percentages of teachers reporting that various things interfered "some" or "a great deal" with the quality of their teaching.



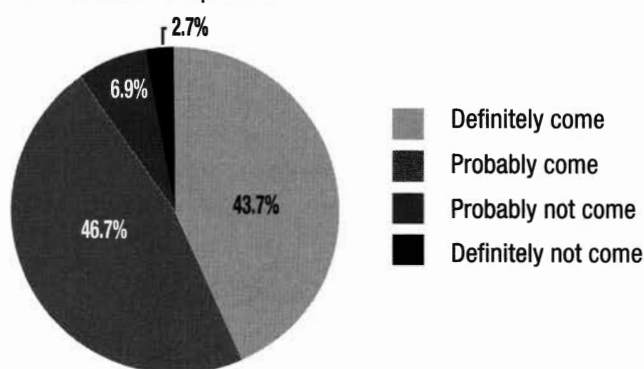
factors presented "no interference," "some interference" or "a great deal of interference." Inadequacy of student background preparation was by far the most likely to be seen as interfering a great deal (26%) or some (46%). About half of the teachers reported that the physical facilities in the classroom interfered with the quality of their teaching a great deal (12%) or some (38%). Other factors reported as interfering at least some were: other teaching responsibilities (41%), University service responsibilities (40%), large class sizes (40%), personal or family situations (36%), research responsibilities (34%), inadequate computer technology support (32%), inadequate instructional services (27%), limited instructional materials (26%), inadequate teaching assistance (24%), and inadequate staff/secretarial support (22%).

Part-time teachers were significantly less likely than their full-time counterparts to report that the quality of their teaching was affected by other teaching responsibilities, research, University service, inadequate staff/secretarial assistance, instructional service, computer and teaching assistance, and inadequate student background preparation. There were no significant differences in the responses of full-time and part-time teachers to the interference by personal/family situations, physical classroom facilities, or limited instructional materials.

When these responses were compared with those of the University Park teachers in the earlier study, non-UP teachers were more likely than their UP counterparts to report that inadequate student background preparation interfered at least somewhat with the quality of their teaching (71% of the non-UP teachers vs 62% of the UP teachers). They were less likely than UP teachers to report interference from research responsibilities (34% vs 67%), University service (40% vs 52%), limited teaching materials (26% vs 39%), inadequate teaching assistance (24% vs 32%), and inadequate staff/secretarial support (22% vs 27%). The two groups of teachers did not differ significantly in the proportions reporting that other teaching responsibilities, personal/family situations, physical facilities in the classroom, and large class sizes interfered with the quality of their teaching.

Student responses to whether they would attend college at Penn State if they could make their decision over again

% of Students' Responses



General Views of Penn State

How favorably do students at the various campuses at locations other than University Park view their overall Penn State educational experiences? To address this question, the student survey included items concerning the decision to attend PSU, the University's desirability as a place to be educated, and the quality of the Penn State experience in preparing students for life after college.

Almost all of the students reported that they would definitely (44%) or probably (47%) choose Penn State if they were making their college choice again. Only 9% reported that they would probably or definitely *not* come. There were no significant differences in student responses by age, gender, semester standing, grade point average, part-time vs full-time status, or on/off campus residence.

Using a scale from 1 (very undesirable) to 7 (very desirable), more than two-thirds (68%) of these students gave Penn State "6" or "7" ratings as a place to get a college education; an additional 19% gave it a "5" rating. Only 13% rated it midway on the scale or lower. Although students were somewhat less likely to report that their Penn State education was preparing them for life, still more than half (54%) rated the University as a "6" or "7" on a scale ranging from 1 (very unprepared) to 7 (very prepared). Responses to these two items did not differ significantly by age, gender, semester standing, GPA, part-time/full-time status, or on/off

campus residence.

Students at these campuses were slightly more likely than their University Park counterparts to respond favorably to these questions. Thus, 90% of the non-UP students and 87% of those at University Park reported that they would definitely or probably choose to attend Penn State if they had the opportunity to relive that decision. For the items asking respondents to rate PSU as a place to get a college education and whether that education was preparing students for life after college, the proportions of "6" or "7" ratings for Non-UP and UP students respectively were 68% versus 62% for the first item and 54% versus 48% for the second.

Using the same seven-point scale, teachers were also asked to rate Penn State as a place for students to get a college education and to indicate how well a Penn State education prepares students for life after graduation. The pattern of responses for teachers was similar to those for students on the campuses, and decidedly more favorable than were the answers given by teachers at University Park. While 63% of the non-UP faculty gave "6" or "7" ratings to the question concerning Penn State's desirability as a place to get an education, only 43% of the University Park teachers did so. Concerning how well a Penn State education prepared students for life, 50% of the non-UP teachers compared to only 31% of the UP teachers gave such highly favorable ratings.

Conclusions

The evaluations of students at the nineteen Penn State campuses located across the Commonwealth varied little from similar assessments reported by students at University Park. When there were differences, students at the non-UP locations were more positive about the overall quality of instruction they received. They were also more likely to report that Penn State was a desirable place to get a college education, and that their education was preparing them for life after college. Thus, when students at these Penn State campuses expressed different views than did University Park students, they were more favorable in their evaluation of their educational experiences and the quality of teaching they received. Despite such positive assessments,

there was also some evidence of dissatisfaction. More than 27% of the students rated the evaluated course as only "fair" or "poor"; one in eight did not report that Penn State was a good place to get a college education, and nearly one in ten would not choose again to attend Penn State for their college education.

Respondents were invited to provide written comments on the survey forms, and many did so. Some praised or criticized individual instructors. Others suggested areas of concern that cut across specific courses and individuals. A number of students complained that they found it difficult to understand teachers who spoke with accents or those whose command of English was less than complete. Some students appeared to hold their teachers responsible for any academic difficulties they encountered. Others reported that their teachers were caring and committed to helping them to learn. A surprising number of students indicated that the course was neither difficult nor challenging; that students needed to do only a minimal amount of work to pass. One student wrote:

A general grade of C is given to students, instead of the D or F they deserve. Teachers are reluctant to fail even those students who do not meet minimum standards.

Some students also commented that their campuses had inadequate laboratory space/equipment or classroom facilities. Several felt that the larger University did not do enough to provide services and facilities for its many campuses. Part-time and adult learners expressed concerns about limited availability of evening course offerings, and problems with accessing student services after hours. Nevertheless, most students reported general satisfaction with their educational experiences at these campuses.

Teachers at the 19 campuses surveyed were more likely to view the quality of their teaching positively than were their University Park colleagues, both in overall terms and in regard to the frequency with which they engaged in the list of positive teaching behaviors. However, these teachers were not, in general, so satisfied with their performances that



they failed to see room for improvement. For many of the 25 items dealing with elements of quality teaching, the majority of the non-UP campus teachers indicated that they did not "always or nearly always" act in the desired ways. Combined with the views of a third or more of the students that instructors did not always explain material clearly, make material interesting, provide various points of view, encourage students to be actively involved in the learning process or stimulate students to think, these perceptions suggest that there is room for improvement. To that end, it is important that the University make available opportunities to nurture the professional growth of teachers at these campuses and, when possible, seek to minimize the impact of factors interfering with the quality of instruction that teachers can offer. These teachers were less likely than those at University Park to report that other activities and circumstances such as research, other teaching, University service responsibilities, and inadequacies in staff support and materials interfered with their teaching. Nevertheless, one-third to one-half felt that inadequate classroom facilities, large classes, and competition from research, University service, and other teaching responsibilities did interfere in some measure with the quality of instruction they were able to offer.

More than 70% of the teachers reported that inadequate student background preparation interfered with the quality of their teaching. Does this mean that Penn State's admission standards allow for enrollment of large numbers of students who are ill-prepared for college work? Does it mean that these teachers hold unrealistic expectations about the academic proficiencies of freshman and sophomore college students in general? Do teachers always long for the opportunity to work with only the best and the brightest? Whatever the reasons, some teachers commented on the need to provide what they regarded as extensive remedial work so that their students could meet the class requirements and be prepared for future course work. Others reported that they simply diluted the content of their subject matter because their students were unable or unwilling to meet their expectations of college-level work.

Teachers frequently commented on the importance of obtaining favorable student evaluations of their teaching. However, the focus of these concerns did not seem to be on using student evaluations to monitor and improve their own teaching effectiveness. Rather, the acquisition of high SRTE scores appeared to be an end in itself to be pursued solely to document one's teaching prowess to administrators who hold the keys to salary increases, promotions, and continued employment. A number of teachers from various campuses reported that they had been advised to "dumb down" their courses if they expected to get the high student ratings that were considered necessary for positive merit evaluations! Taken in the context of student comments that many of the classes were less than challenging, the perception that the cost of positive evaluations is to reduce the depth and coverage of their courses seems paradoxical.

Part of the dilemma here may reflect the dual educational functions these campuses serve. First, these sites provide at least the first two years of undergraduate instruction leading to a Penn State bachelor's degree. Second, they serve the educational needs of their local areas by offering technical training, enrichment, associate degree programs and continuing education for community members. The former function means there is *selectivity* of students based on previous and presumed future academic performance; the latter implies a more *open* admission policy which accepts most applicants. As a result, the student body in general, and even enrollees in specific courses can vary markedly in background, motivation and ability. The challenge of working with such heterogeneous groups of students can be daunting, but it represents a fact-of-life in the context of most of these Penn State campuses. Teachers at these locations need to recognize the importance of meeting the varying instructional needs of their diverse student populations, Open discussion and collegial sharing of experiences concerning the effectiveness of different pedagogical practices can contribute to faculty members' knowledge and skill in this area.

It is also imperative that administrators and peer review committees reinforce the efforts of faculty to provide quality instruction by calling into

account a wider range of evaluative data than simply end-of-year SRTE scores. In this regard, the University Faculty Senate recently endorsed the recommendations of a Special Committee on Faculty Teaching Development and Evaluation that teaching evaluations include: 1) information from faculty peers (e.g. classroom visitations and impressions gained from informal discussions about pedagogical techniques with the individual); 2) information from the faculty member under review (e.g. teaching portfolios); 3) information from students (e.g. SRTE scores, written student evaluations, end of semester interviews with students, and exit interviews); 4) information from other sources such as alumni, former graduate students, national associations, and professional groups.³

Like their UP colleagues, teachers at the non-UP locations were somewhat wary of the practice of giving a great deal of weight to student opinions for evaluating faculty members' teaching effectiveness. These misgivings reflected widespread expectations that students would reward "easy" instructors with high evaluation scores, while downgrading teachers who taught difficult subjects or required high levels of work. However, data from this student survey and the previous one at University Park found no support for these expectations. While the grade that a student received in a class was positively related to the various indicators of teaching quality, this did not mean that instructors who taught "easy" courses or were "easy" graders were given high teaching evaluations. On the contrary, courses that were seen as difficult or involved more than usual workloads were more likely to receive "excellent" evaluations than were those with less than usual difficulty or work levels. The most powerful predictor of high course evaluations was the student's own perception of how much he/she had learned.

One aspect of instructional quality that was not addressed in the University Park surveys concerned the role of collaborative learning and its place in education. Collaborative learning involves engaging students more fully in the learning process by encouraging them to work together on team projects and other collective experiences. Several items on

the survey used in the studies of students and teachers at the non-UP campuses sought information on the importance given to these ideas and the extent to which collaborative modes of instruction are used at these sites. The philosophical positions that teachers should encourage students to be actively involved in learning and help students assume responsibility for their own learning were endorsed by large majorities of students and teachers as being important to quality teaching. However, more specific actions dealing with teachers fostering teamwork, encouraging students to work together, and having students do group projects were not widely seen as important elements of quality teaching, and they were among the least likely behaviors to occur frequently in the evaluated classes. Moreover, the use of teamwork and group projects was criticized by a number of student respondents who took the time to write comments on their survey forms. A major complaint was the difficulty of commuter and returning adult students in coordinating schedules for the extra-class work sessions required for collaborative group projects. Such constraints may need to be considered by teachers requiring such activities in their classes. Other students voiced concerns about the fairness of giving individual students grades based on the quality of the collective work.

Several issues related to the nature of the faculty at the various campuses were underscored in written comments provided by some of the teachers. Many of these campuses utilize a sizable number of part-time teachers drawn from the local community. Data from the present studies have suggested that part-time teachers are often enthusiastic and committed teachers. In the eyes of the students, the quality of the instruction they offer is equivalent to that of full-time faculty members in regard to all of the measures used in this study except two—part-time teachers were more likely to be rated as easy to talk to than were full-time teachers, but somewhat less accessible outside of class. While the use of part-time teachers extends the resource base for faculty recruitment and further links the campus and the community, it can also mean that many teachers have limited ties to the University system. Many part-time teachers

³ The Pennsylvania State University, *The Senate Record*, vol. 31, number 7 (April 28, 1998).

wrote comments on the survey forms expressing their frustrations and discontent with the extent to which they were treated as contributing members of the campus community by administrators and full-time faculty. One listed the "personal resistance from full-time faculty" as the greatest impediment to the quality of teaching he was able to offer.

Others noted similar criticisms:

I've asked for help in understanding how the courses I teach fit into the total curriculum, but my requests have been ignored.

I feel like a visitor and an outsider although I have taught at this campus for more than a decade.

There is little effort to make me feel part of the campus team.

I enjoy teaching, but I would enjoy it more if even the smallest courtesies were extended.

I certainly do not feel a part of Penn State. I've never been invited to a faculty meeting, have no office or phone, no space to meet with students outside of class, not even a mailbox.

If these comments are indicative of the feelings of estrangement of a large proportion of these part-time teachers, it may be appropriate for the University to explore means for integrating these individuals more fully into the educational programming of their campuses. As a minimum, these part-time teachers should be provided with information and guidance concerning appropriate content and methods for the courses they teach, and simple amenities to increase their effectiveness and satisfaction.

Although both full-time and part-time teachers wrote critical comments concerning the monetary compensation they received, the part-time teachers were more outspoken in their dissatisfaction:

When you count class preparation, grading, and student conferences, the rate of pay [a reported \$600 per credit] is less than minimum wage.

Despite some concerns, the generally positive views of these students and faculty members

concerning the teaching-learning experiences on their campuses suggests that the quality of undergraduate instruction at these locales represents some of the best of Penn State's educational traditions. Nevertheless, it is important for teachers, administrators, and students to work toward strengthening University and campus cultures that emphasize excellence in instruction as well as excellence in research/creative accomplishments and service. This goal requires developing opportunities for continuing personal and professional growth of members through such activities as mentoring programs, peer coaching, seminars, discussion groups and workshops; it means comprehensively and fairly evaluating the quality of the teaching performance of individual instructors; and it means recognizing and rewarding excellence in the classroom as well as in the research laboratory. It also means understanding and meeting the unique needs of students and teachers at the various Penn State campuses located across the Commonwealth which play such an important role in carrying out the University's educational mission.





Epilogue

Diane M. Enerson

So what do we make of these data? What policy implications if any do they contain? On the whole, the news regarding the instructional quality at non-UP locations is good. As was true of UP faculty and students, faculty and students at these non-UP locations clearly agree about the most critical elements of quality instruction—good teachers are knowledgeable about the subject matter, they can explain material clearly and at a level appropriate to those who sit before them, they are well organized, they prepare for class, and they are fair. Further, the non-UP students are on the whole at least as satisfied—and maybe even somewhat more so—with the instruction they have received as are their UP counterparts. More important, the instructors they have had seem to fit their own descriptions of good teaching. It is also reaffirming to find that the most powerful predictor of these students' overall evaluations of their courses was the amount they felt they had learned. It is again disconcerting to see that only a minority of the faculty feel that student opinion should represent an important part of teaching evaluation.

The real surprises in these data come not from the reports about the quality of instruction but rather from reports about community. When we consider that each of these campus locations is of a small enough scale that community might be expected to develop as a natural accompaniment to the educational process, it does indeed seem surprising that only a slim majority was confident (and 9-10% were decidedly not confident) that the descriptions of community fit their experience of Penn State. That the part-time instructors, in particular, tend to feel excluded from the community in which they work also was noteworthy, especially considering that: 1) there were no reported differences in the quality of the instruction they provide; 2) at many locations there are as many part-time as full-time instructors; and 3) many part-time instructors have taught at these

locations for years or even decades. There is a lot we do not know about what makes for quality instruction, but there is a lot we do. We know that it doesn't happen in a vacuum, or without all parties being a part of a larger community. The data reported here suggest we may need to be asking ourselves a number of questions about the role that part-time instructors can and should play within each unit and in the institution as a whole. By what means are they being included in the community? In what ways are they being excluded? What special contribution can they make? Are there ways they could be included more fully? What would be the cost for us to do this? What will be the costs if we do not?

A second rather curious finding was the faculty response to what interferes with the quality of instruction they provide. That the vast majority of faculty cited *the background of their students* as a significant source of interference with the quality of instruction they can provide seems odd if not shocking. After all, good teaching must, by definition, take into account who the students are, what they already know, what interests they may already have, and what they will need to know. So how can it be that students are a source of interference to teaching? What might faculty have been trying to express when selecting this response? For some, such a response may reflect nothing more than a fairly common discovery many faculty make relatively early in their careers when they learn that the students sitting before them are not the students they were expecting and prepared to teach; they are not the students they think they themselves were in graduate school, or even in college. To a certain extent this discovery may be unavoidable. The remedy is always the same: they need to get to know their students. They need to listen to their students' concerns and help them connect what they are learning in the class with what they already know. Ultimately, they need to tailor the courses they will teach to the background and

needs of the students who will be taking those courses. While this is a fairly common problem, it is generally not a persistent one. It also cannot fully explain the data presented here.

Alternatively, other faculty may have been trying to express the frustration that occurs not because of a failure to communicate or a mismatch of expectations between student and teacher but because of a mismatch on a larger scale that occurs when teachers are asked to teach courses that the students—or at least some of the students—are simply not prepared to take. This can obviously pose a serious dilemma for teachers. If they adapt to students, they have not met the demands of the course. But if they teach the course as prescribed, then they have not met an even more fundamental demand of teaching and reaching those who sit before them. It is a Catch-22 that results, ultimately, in frustration for everyone and has some serious policy implications for the unit as well as the institution as a whole. Again, what is obviously needed is feedback and reflection on a different set of questions: What does this course expect the students should already know? Who are the students who will be taking this course? What process will help get students from where they are to where they need to be? These are good questions and ones each unit must begin to ask itself. They are also questions that if addressed in genuine and open discussion could go a long way toward helping to build community.

Finally, there is the finding that it is a decided minority of the faculty who value student input. Although this finding emerges in the survey about instructional quality, what seems to be at stake here may have at least as much to do with community as with instruction. That faculty might not value student input suggests possible causes such as fear, cynicism, lack of respect, and/or lack of communication. All of these are issues directly related to community and again suggest a somewhat different set of questions to ask: Would it help if students were asked to provide feedback about different aspects of the educational process. Would it help if student data were viewed as only one part of a complex assessment process? Are there different kinds of data we could collect from students—from others—that faculty could agree would give a more balanced view of their teaching and its impact on

students? If faculty could define sources of student input they felt were more useful, would they be less likely to see student background and characteristics as an obstacles to teaching? What would it take for a significant proportion, or even all, of the faculty to value student input about teaching?

A recent recommendation of the Faculty Teaching Development and Evaluation Committee Faculty Senate Report is that every unit should make serious discussions about teaching an expected and integral part of its everyday functioning. Critical discussion of these surveys and the fundamental questions they raise makes an excellent starting point for such discussion. Ultimately, the goal should be less one of answering the questions than one of setting up the conditions for talking about teaching as a regular, ongoing, and expected part of the daily activities for all those who teach in a given unit or at a particular location. Much can be learned about how to improve nearly anything by sharing ideas with others. Much can be accomplished in building a stronger and more effective community by simply coming together and listening—really listening—to one another.

Finally, it is also critical to keep in mind that these are aggregate data about an “aggregate campus” that in reality exists in no one place. Inferences about an individual or a particular campus are not warranted; indeed, they would be inherently flawed. When interpreting data such as these that have been collapsed over a variable such as geographic location (which is itself likely linked with local mission), critical reason, prudence, and good judgment must prevail. Just as it is possible to drown in water that is on average three feet deep, we may make an equally fatal error if we assume these data describe a single campus location. They may describe them all, they may describe some, or they may describe none. What is of greatest importance is not whether the descriptions do or do not match a particular location. Rather, this and the previous reports in this series are most significant in the occasion they provide for academic units and individual faculty members to reflect critically on the quality of their teaching and to ponder questions concerning the means for enhancing it.

Suggested Readings

Arreola, Raoul A. (1995). *Developing a Comprehensive Faculty Evaluation System*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing Co.

Astin, Alexander W. (1997). "Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education," pp. 199-211 in Whitt, Elizabeth J. (Ed.), *College Student Affairs Administration*, ASHE Reader Series. Needham Heights, MA: Ginn Press.

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1990). *Campus Life: In Search of Community*. Princeton, NJ: The Foundation.

Enerson, Diane, R. Neill Johnson, Susannah Milner, and Kathryn M. Plank (1997). *The Penn State Teacher II: Learning to Teach, Teaching to Learn*. University Park, PA: Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching.

Feldman, Kenneth A. (1989). "Instructional effectiveness of college teachers as judged by teachers themselves, current and former students, colleagues, administrators, and external (neutral) observers." *Research in Higher Education* 30: 137-194.

Marsh, Herbert M. (1987). "Students' evaluations of university teaching: Research findings, methodological issues, and directions for future research," *International Journal of Educational Research* 11: 253-388.

Spitzberg, Irving J. and Virginia V. Thorndike (1992). *Creating Community on College Campuses*. Albany, NY: University of New York Press.

Strange, C. Carney (1993). "Developmental impacts of campus living environments," pp. 134-166 in Winston, Roger B., Scott Anchors & Associates, *Student Housing and Residential Life*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

PENNSTATE

