



Student Affairs Information and Research Office

A department of Student Affairs

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University of California Undergraduate Experiences Survey (UCUES) Summary of 2006 UCUES Student Development Module

The Student Affairs Information and Research Office (SAIRO) is the research and assessment office within UCLA's Student Affairs organization. Our purpose is to use data-driven approaches to help the many Student Affairs offices that serve students by: keeping Student Affairs staff up to date about the backgrounds, experiences, and needs of UCLA students, assisting Student Affairs offices in assessing their services, and contributing to campus-wide and UC system-wide research and assessment efforts.

In all our activities, we support Student Affairs' continual efforts to promote the academic and personal success of UCLA students, to contribute to their development and learning, and to enhance the quality of campus life.

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Executive Summary

The 2006 UCUES Student Development module addressed various aspects of students' self-perceptions, experiences, and expectations. This module provides a more holistic understanding of students in terms of parental involvement, students' goals and aspirations, self-perceived identities, personal growth, time allocation, obstacles to academic success, and perceptions of campus climate. The purpose of this report is to compare UCLA's findings to seven other UC campuses in order to identify aspects of the undergraduate experience that are unique to UCLA students versus those that represent a larger system-wide trend. Significant findings from the UCUES Student Development module include:

- UCLA UCUES respondents were overwhelmingly satisfied with their parents' current level of involvement in their life although approximately one-fifth wanted their parents to be more involved, which is significantly greater than their UC peers.
- When asked to choose from a list of college identities, UCLA respondents were significantly more likely to identify with students of their racial/ethnic background, students involved in their campus organization, and transfer students.
- UCLA respondents were significantly more likely to report spending time performing community service or volunteering, participating in student clubs or organizations, or with family on a weekly basis.
- The majority of students at all UC campuses rated their campus climates as being generally friendly, caring, intellectual, tolerant of diversity, safe, and too hard academically, although UCLA respondents were significantly more likely than their UC peers to rate the campus as safe and academically challenging.

Data from this module inform many of the goals outlined in the strategic plan for Student Affairs, including ensuring an educationally productive and supportive campus climate, promoting healthy student development and wellness, promoting development and learning through the co-curriculum, and developing new parent programs.

Parental Involvement

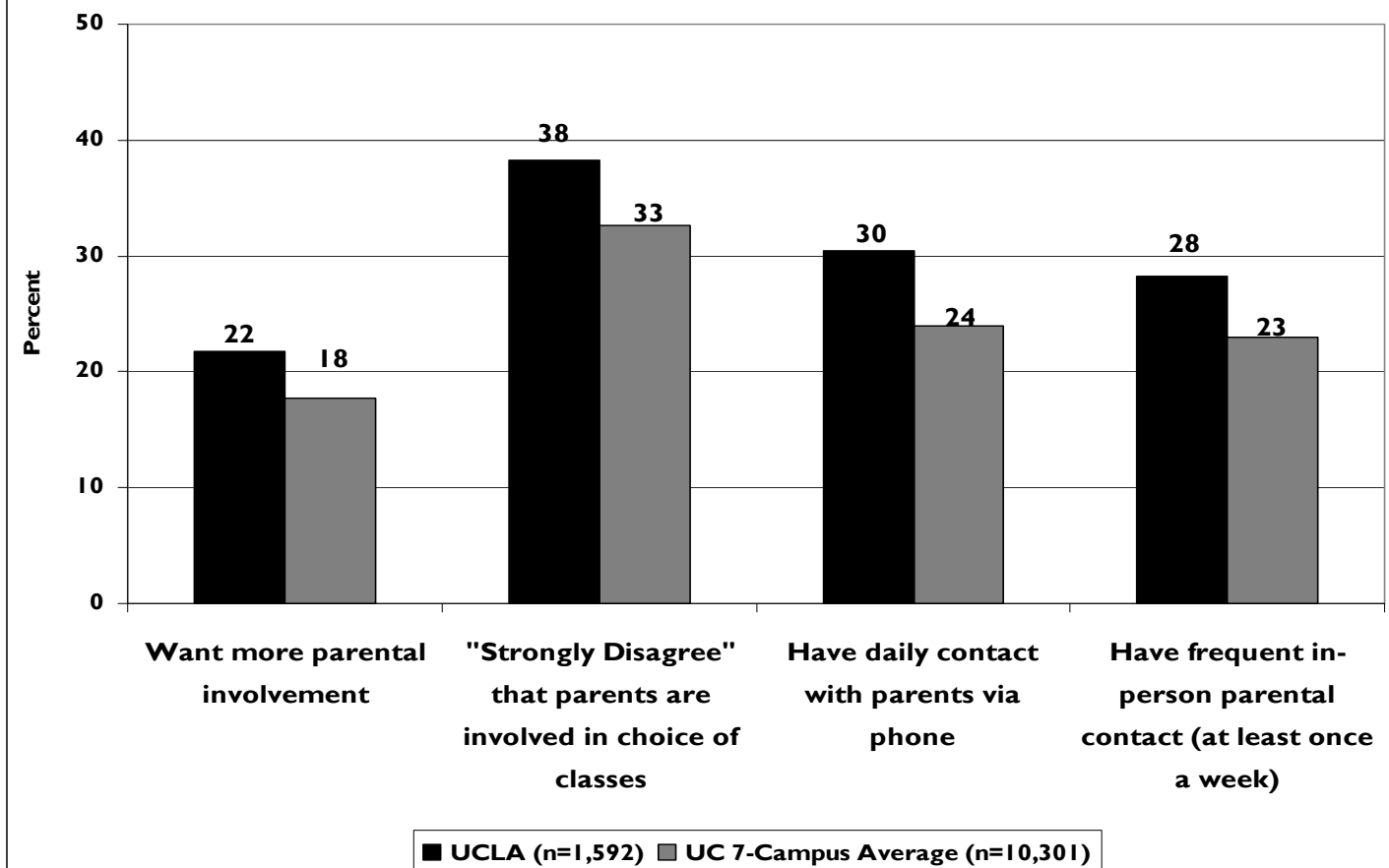
The survey asked students about the extent to which parents have been involved in students' lives over the academic year. For example, the 2006 UCUES asked if the student would like current levels of parental involvement to continue as they are or change (Figure 1). The vast majority of all respondents wanted their parents to maintain their current levels of involvement (70% vs. 74% for the UC average—not pictured graphically). Further, a slightly larger proportion of UCLA respondents wanted their parents to be more involved in their life as a college student (22% vs. 18%).

The survey also asked about specific types of parental involvement and frequency of contact. A greater proportion of UCLA respondents strongly disagreed that their parents are involved in the choice of classes. Almost one-third of UCLA respondents have daily contact with parents via phone, and 28 percent have in-person parental contact at least once a week.

Background of UCUES

The 2006 University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) is the fourth in a series of surveys of undergraduates at the University of California undergraduate campuses. As part of a larger collaborative project entitled 'The Student Experience in the Research University-21st Century' (SERU21), UCUES offers a rare in-depth examination of the undergraduate experience at the University of California. As such, it offers UCLA administrators, faculty, and students an opportunity both to closely examine campus life at UCLA and to compare it to the UC system as a whole. Results can be viewed through many lenses, such as by major, by college or school, by class standing, by entry status (direct/transfer), and by student characteristics (gender, race/ethnicity, first language).

Figure 1. Parental Involvement

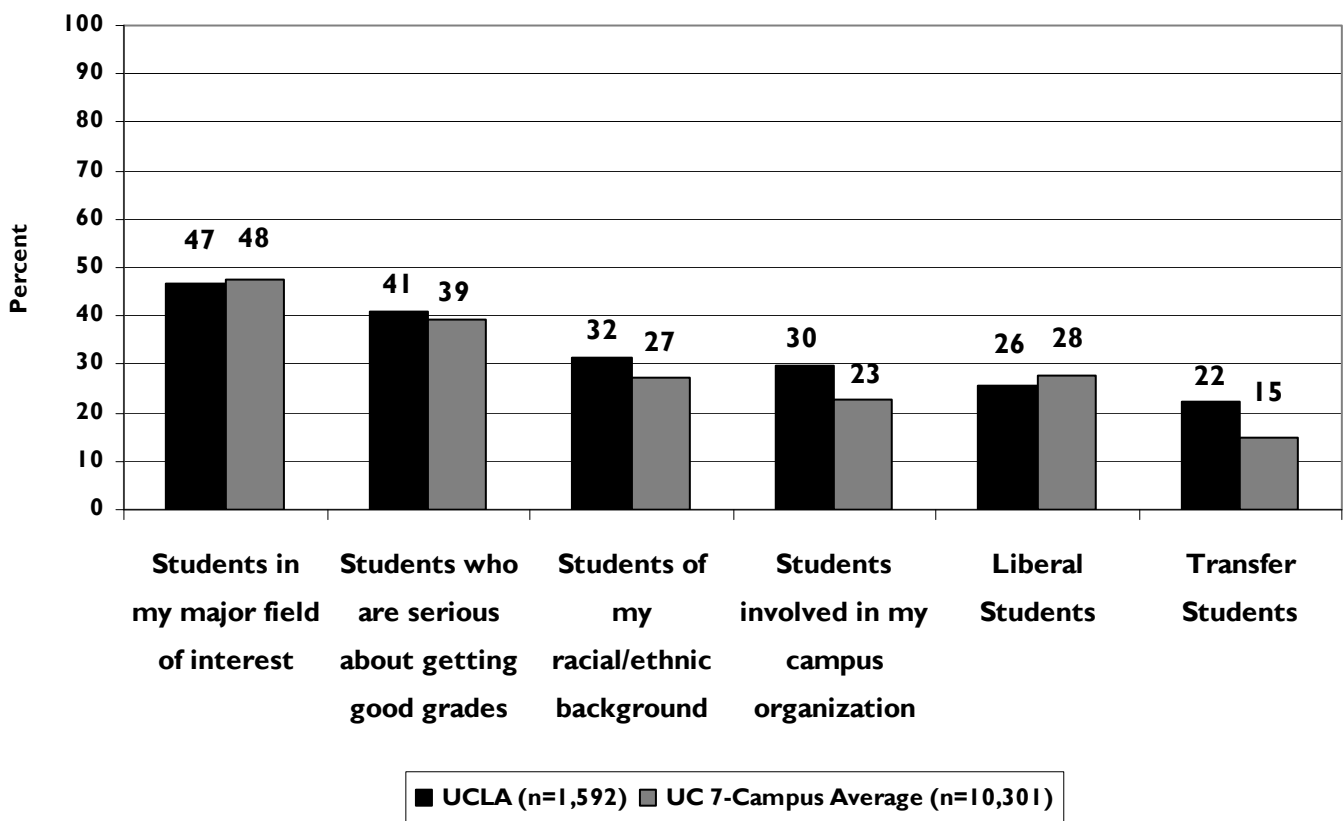


Identities

In order to get a sense of how UC undergraduates perceive themselves, students were provided a list of 17 college identities that might describe the types of students on campus with whom they most identify. They were asked to respond “yes” or “no” to each identity. The six most cited identities by UCLA’s respondents are provided in Figure 2. Nearly half of all UC respondents reported that they identified with students in their major field of interest, and approximately two-fifths identified with students who are serious about getting good grades. These two identities were also the most frequently chosen when respondents were asked to select the one identity with which they most strongly identified.

A significantly greater proportion of UCLA respondents, in comparison to those at the other seven UC campuses, identify with students of their racial/ethnic background, students involved in their campus organization, and transfer students. A slightly greater proportion of those within the UC 7-campus average identified with liberal students, although this difference was not significant. Between 10 and 20 percent of UCLA’s respondents identified with the following identities: partier, artsy, religious/spiritual, slacker, fraternity/sorority, immigrant, or from very poor background. Ten percent of the sample or less identified with: athlete/jock, feminist, from very rich background, or lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender.

Figure 2. UCLA's Most Cited Student Identities



Time Allocation

Although the UCUES Core contained time allocation items related to classes, studying, and work, the Student Development module contained items focusing on an array of co-curricular experiences. Significant differences between UCLA and students at the other seven UC campuses emerged regarding students' use of time in four areas (see Figure 3).

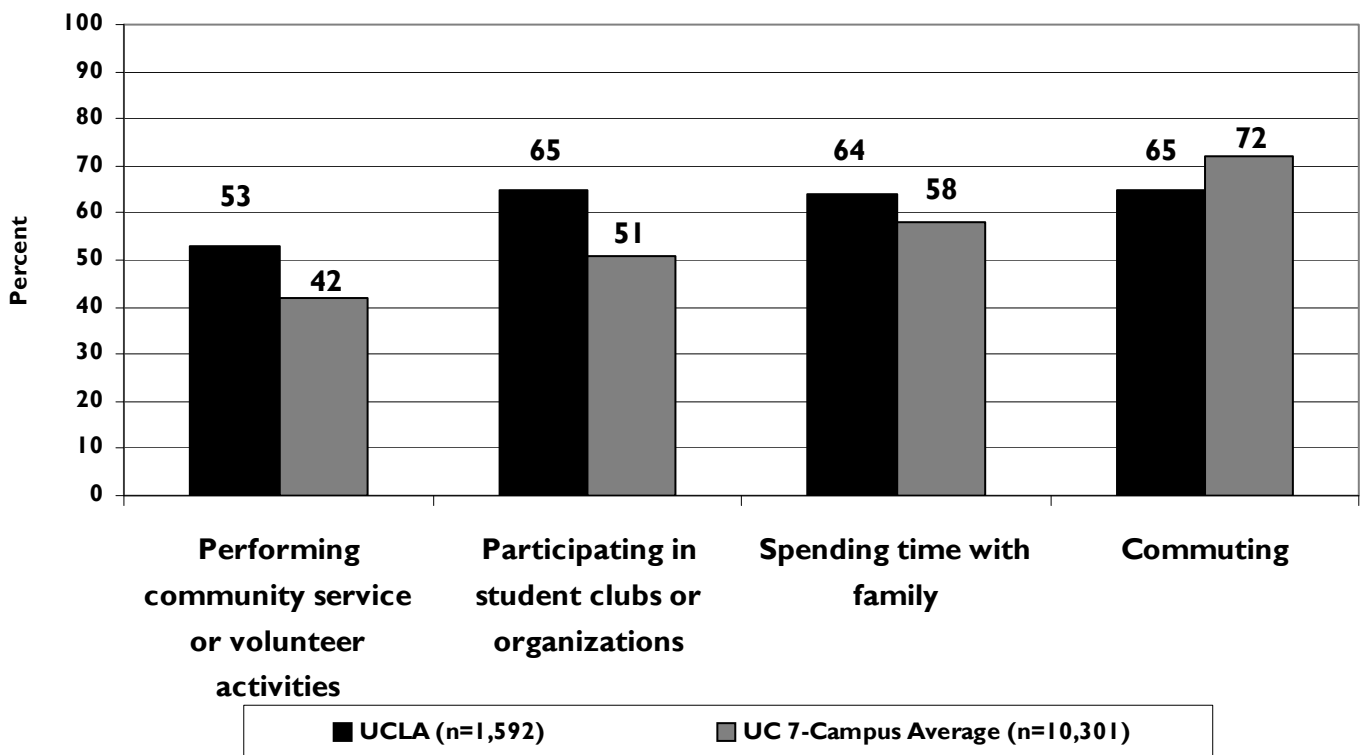
UCLA's respondents tend to be more involved on campus and with their family, which may help explain the finding that they also tend to get fewer hours of sleep on week-nights. A greater proportion of UCLA's respondents reported spending time each week: performing community service or volunteering, participating in student clubs or organizations, or with family. Although the majority of students at all UCs reported commuting to school and work, UCLA respondents were less likely to report spending any time commuting.

Obstacles to Academic Success

In an effort to assess the experiences that may have interfered with students' school work or academic success, respondents were asked how frequently they were affected by eleven different potential obstacles to academic success. These items included personal feelings (e.g., distress, depression, stress, sleep deprivation, illness) and activities (e.g., campus-related involvement, family and job responsibilities, political involvement, having a difficult living situation, or having an over-active social life). Table 1 summarizes these figures according to which were most often reported by UCLA's respondents.

UCLA's respondents did not significantly differ from those at the other seven UC campuses on most items (see Table 1). However, the most significant difference was that UCLA respondents were more likely than students at other UCs to say that participation in campus activities had interfered with their success at least "occasionally" (52% vs. 40% for the UC 7-campus average). (*Continued on page 5*)

Figure 3. Time Allocation: Percent Spending Any Time on the Following Activities



(Continued from page 4)

A significant difference was also detected in the proportion of respondents who expressed that having to fulfill job responsibilities created obstacles to success, which was reported by a slightly greater proportion of respondents at UCLA (46% vs. 43%). Although more

than 80 percent of respondents at all UC campuses reported that "being stressed" had created barriers to success at least "occasionally," a slightly smaller proportion of UCLA's respondents reported this obstacle (81% vs. 84%).

Table I. Obstacles to Academic Success

	UCLA (n=1,592)	UC System (n=10,301)	Difference
Barriers to success experienced "occasionally," "frequently," or "all the time":			
Being too sleep deprived	83.6	82.1	1.5
Being stressed	80.6	84.1	-3.5 *
Feeling emotional distress	54.8	54.8	0.0
Participating in campus activities	52.0	40.0	12.0 **
Being depressed	46.5	47.8	-1.3
Fulfilling job responsibilities	46.1	42.5	3.6 *
Dealing with difficult living situation	45.3	44.7	0.6
Family responsibilities or obligations	44.4	45.2	-0.8
Having an active social life/excessive partying	40.4	37.8	2.6
Being ill, injured, or in poor physical health	34.1	33.0	1.1
Supporting political activities or causes	16.6	15.4	1.2

*p<.05, **p<.01

2006 UCUES Survey Administration and Sample Representativeness: Student Development Module

All undergraduate students, at eight of the UC campuses, were invited to participate in the Student Development module of the 2006 UCUES. This report focuses on UCLA's results, but also provides comparisons to the other seven UC campuses. An e-mail was sent to all UCLA undergraduates in the spring quarter 2006 inviting them to complete the survey. The on-line instrument was divided into five modules, the Core module and one of the following: 1) academic engagement, 2) civic engagement, 3) student development, or 4) student service utilization and satisfaction. The UCUES Student Development module was administered to selected participants and included items about academic experience, parental involvement and goals and aspirations. A total of 1,592 undergraduates responded to the UCUES Student Development module of the UCLA administration of the 2006 UCUES. While this only represents a 33% response rate, the sample generated by the 2006 UCUES was generally representative of the population of UCLA undergraduates. However, it is important to note that the UCLA UCUES Core sample slightly over-represents females and Asian or Pacific Islander undergraduates and slightly under-represents freshmen. Other characteristics of the UCLA UCUES Core sample, such as entry status (i.e., direct entry or transfers), academic standing, geographic location, and the distribution across racial/ethnic groups are representative of the UCLA population. Thus, this sample has a great deal of utility for campus-based assessment and research efforts.

Perceptions of Campus Climate

The survey assessed campus climate with two types of questions. In the first approach, respondents were asked to reflect on their experiences and observations when reporting whether the general climate for students was: friendly vs. hostile, caring vs. impersonal, intellectual vs. not intellectual, tolerant of diversity vs. intolerant, safe vs. dangerous, and too easy academically vs. too hard academically (each of these pairs represented opposite end points of a six-point scale). The majority of students at all UC campuses rated their campus climates as being generally friendly, caring, intellectual, tolerant of diversity, safe, and too hard academically. Table 2 summarizes these figures according to which were most often reported by UCLA's respondents. UCLA respondents were more likely than their peers at the other seven UC campuses to rate the campus as academically challenging (72% vs. 64% for the 7-campus UC average), safe (96% vs. 89%) and intellectual (90% vs. 87%).

In the second approach to assessing campus climate, respondents were asked whether students are free to express their political and religious beliefs, and whether students are respected regardless of their personal demographic characteristics (e.g., social class, gender, race or ethnicity, religious beliefs, political beliefs, sexual orientation). UCLA's respondents did not significantly differ from students at the other UC campuses on any of these items; the vast majority of all respondents agreed that the campus climate supports freedom of expression and that students of various backgrounds are respected.

Table 2. Campus Climate

	UCLA (n=1,592)	UC System (n=10,301)	Difference
Percent rating their campus as (on 6-point scale):			
Safe	96.0	88.8	-7.2 **
Intellectual	89.9	87.2	-2.7 *
Tolerant of Diversity	88.6	87.2	-1.4
Friendly	88.1	87.2	-0.9
Too Hard Academically	71.7	63.5	-8.2 **
Caring	65.7	67.6	1.9

*p<.05, **p<.01