

2003 ENROLLED STUDENT SURVEY
BRIEF REPORT

Prepared by Marin Clarkberg
Institutional Research and Planning
mec30@cornell.edu

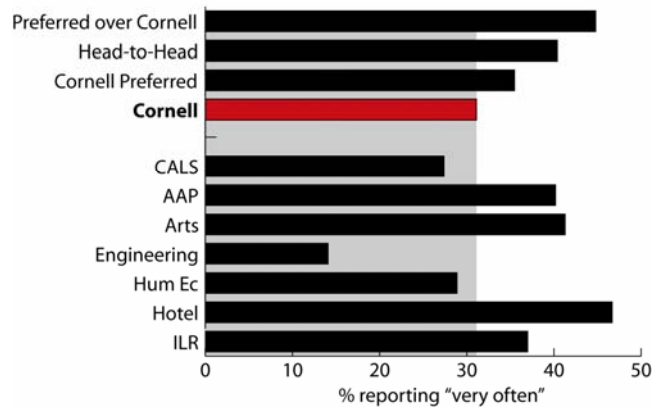
Introduction to the 2003 Enrolled Student Survey

- ▶ The ESS instrument was developed in consortium with a group of other selective colleges and universities for a first administration in the Spring of 2003. The survey is administered through the web. Plans at Cornell are to administer the ESS every other year.
- ▶ The 2003 ESS response rate was 47% at Cornell. Other consortium institutions surveying full populations had responses rates between 38% and 66%. Readers should keep in mind that the data presented herein pertain to survey respondents only.
- ▶ Through the consortium of institutions mentioned above, it is possible to compare Cornell students to students at a handful of institutions grouped into three “norm groups.” In this report, the three “norm groups” are referred to as:
 - “Preferred over Cornell” institutions: a small group of institutions which generally “beats” Cornell when in direct competition for commonly admitted undergraduates.
 - “Head-to-Head” institutions: the group of schools which compete with Cornell on a relatively even basis for commonly admitted undergraduates
 - “Cornell Preferred” institutions: a group of institutions which more often “lose” when in direct competition with Cornell for commonly admitted undergraduates.
- ▶ The findings described in this brief report were culled from comprehensive tables, running over 114 pages, included in Appendix A. These tables present frequencies for all variables by norm group, and among Cornell students: year at Cornell, sex, race, and college.

Academic Engagement

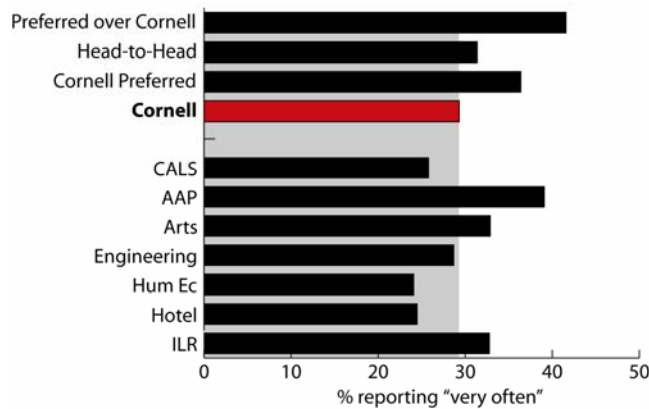
- ▶ **Class discussions.** Compared with their counterparts in the three norm groups, Cornell students were somewhat less likely to report that they had participated in class discussions (see Table A-1.3). This varied by college within Cornell: while only 14% of students in Engineering reported such participation “very often”, approximately 40% of students in Architecture, Art & Planning and in Arts & Sciences reported such a high level of participation. The levels in these two colleges are more consistent with the levels reported within norm groups (with 36-45% reporting “very often”).

Figure 1. Participating in Class Discussions: Percentage Reporting “Very Often”



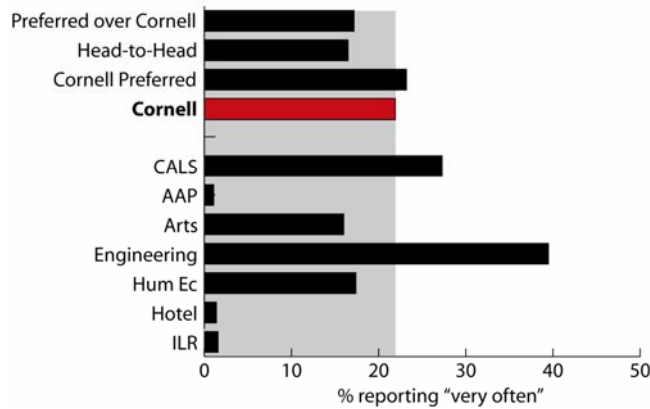
- ▶ **Intellectual discussions outside of class.** Cornell students were also less likely to have reported discussing intellectual ideas outside of class (Table A-1.9), with only 29% saying they happened “very often” as compared to 31%-42% among students in the norm groups. Differences by college at Cornell were important, with students from Architecture, Art and Planning and in Arts & Sciences reporting more intellectual discussions. These patterns diverge somewhat from those found for a related item concerning “intellectual discussions with a faculty member outside of class” (for details, see Table A-1.31).

Figure 2. Discussing Intellectual Ideas with Students Outside of Class: Percentage Reporting “Very Often”



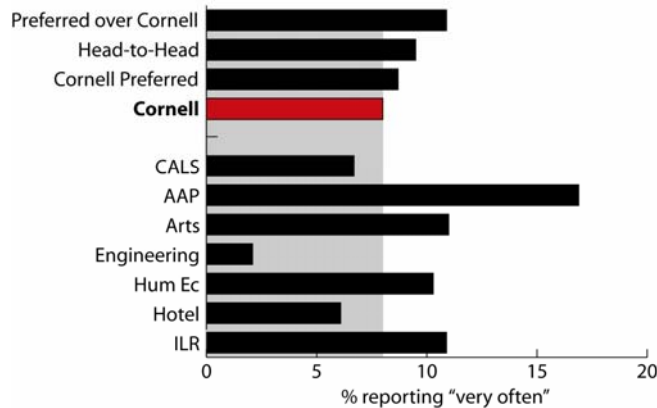
- ▶ **Scientific method.** Nearly 40% of students in Engineering had completed a project using the scientific method “very often” (see Table A-1.18). This figure was 27% in CALS, and 16-17% in the colleges of Arts & Sciences and Human Ecology. In the other three colleges, fewer than 2% of students reported using the scientific method so often. Only a third of Cornell students had “never” used the scientific method; this compared to 38-47% of students in the three norm groups.

Figure 3. Completing a Project Using the Scientific Method: Percentage Reporting “Very Often”



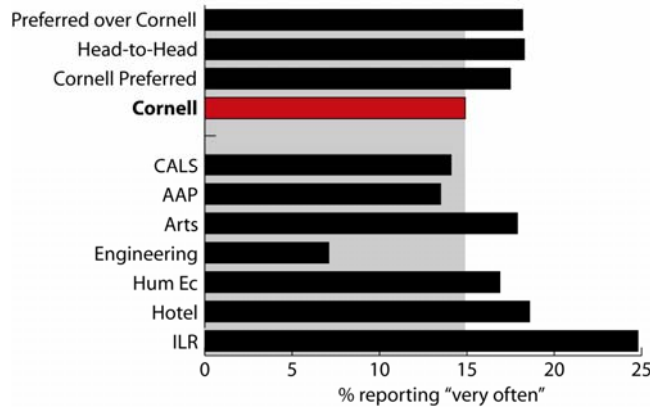
- ▶ **Social scientific research experiences.** The percentage of Cornell students who had “conducted research using historical archives, surveys, field work, or other primary sources on a project” varied substantially across colleges (see Table A-1.10). Only 2% of students in Engineering responded that they had done such research “very often”, as compared to 10-11% of students in Arts & Sciences, Human Ecology and ILR. The highest percentage was among students in Architecture, Art & Planning, where 17% had done this kind of research “very often.”

Figure 4. Conducted Research using Archives, Surveys, Field Work: Percentage Reporting “Very Often”



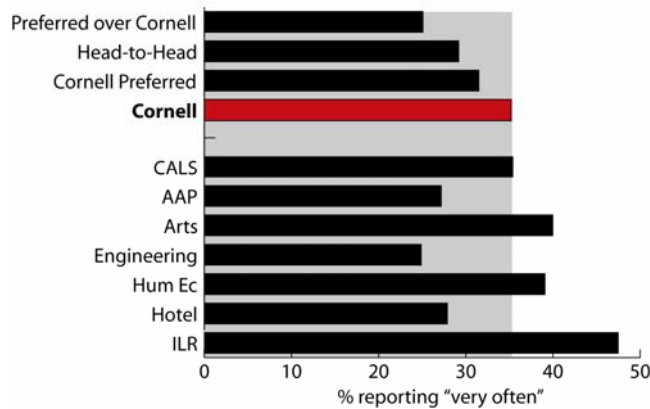
- ▶ **Revising papers.** Approximately 18% of students in all three of the norm groups reported revising papers two or more times “very often” (see Table A-1.11). At Cornell, the percentages were lower overall and within three of the colleges in particular: the analogous figures were 7% for Engineering, 14% for Architecture, Art & Planning and 14% for CALS.

Figure 5. Revised a Paper Two or More Times Before Satisfied: Percentage Reporting “Very Often”



- ▶ **Use of library study space.** Compared to students within the norm groups, Cornell students are more likely to use “the library as a quiet place to read or study materials you brought with you” (see Table A-1.36). Thirty-five percent of Cornellians use library study spaces “very often”, as compared to 25-32% within norm groups. The tendency is stronger among students in ILR (where the figure is 48%), Arts & Sciences (40%) and Human Ecology (39%).

Figure 6. Used Library as Quiet Place to Study: Percentage Reporting “Very Often”



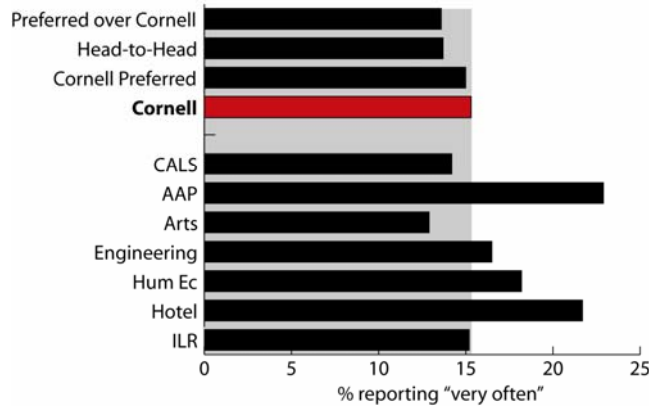
- ▶ **Grades.** Cornell students were more likely than students in the norm groups to report grade point averages below a B+ (see Tables A-27.1 and A-27.2).

Intellectual development

- ▶ **Worked hard for faculty.** A slightly higher percentage of Cornell students as compared to students in the norm groups reported that they had “very often” worked harder than they thought they could “to meet the instructor’s standards or expectations” (see Table A-1.25). This figure was highest in the colleges of Architecture, Art & Planning and

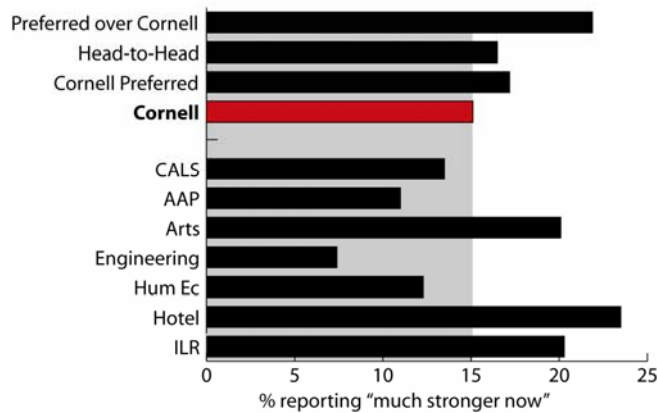
Hotel, at approximately 22% in each of those colleges. The figure was lowest in the college of Arts & Sciences, where only 13% reported “very often” for this item. The analogous figures for our norm groups were 14-15%.

Figure 7. Worked Harder than Thought Could for Faculty: Percentage Reporting “Very Often”



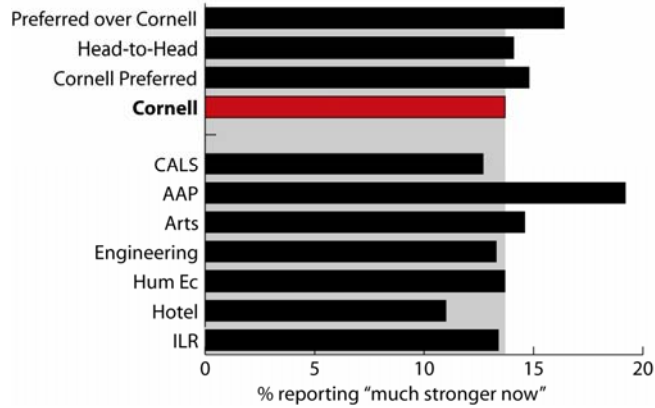
- **Ability to write and speak.** Only 15% of Cornell students described their ability to “write effectively” as “much stronger now” as compared to when they first enrolled (see Table A-9.1). This compares to 17-22% among students in the three norm groups. Among Cornellians, the percentages varied substantially by college, with as few as 7% of Engineering students and as many as 24% of students in Hotel reporting that their writing ability as “much stronger now.” Cornell students were slightly more likely than norm group students to indicate that their ability to “communicate well orally” was much stronger.

Figure 8. Change in Ability to Write Effectively Since Enrolling: Percentage Reporting “Much Stronger Now”



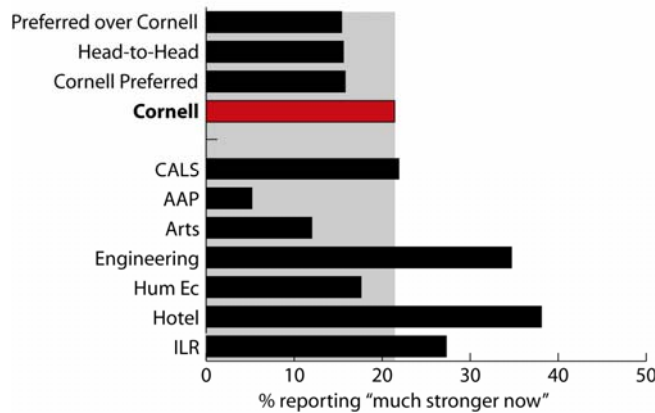
- ▶ **Ability to synthesize ideas.** Cornell students were less likely than norm groups students to note great strides in their ability to “synthesize and integrate ideas and information” (see Table A-9.23). Students in Hotel and in CALS were least likely to report large strides in their ability to synthesize.

Figure 9. Change in Ability to Synthesize Ideas Since Enrolling: Percentage Reporting “Much Stronger Now”



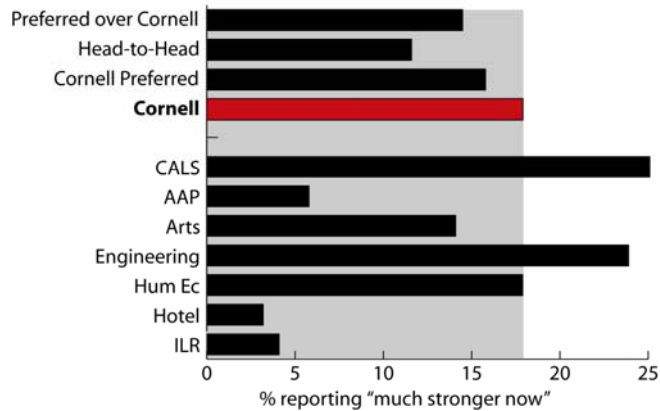
- ▶ **Ability to use quantitative tools.** Cornell students were more likely than norm group students to note that they were “much stronger now” in their ability to “use quantitative tools (e.g., statistics, graphs)”, with 21% of Cornellians noting such big strides in this area, as compared to 15-16% in the norm groups (Table A-9.10). Differences by colleges were very large, with over a third of students in Engineering and in Hotel experiencing such growth, but only 5% of students in Architecture, Art & Planning and 12% of students in Arts & Sciences reporting this.

Figure 10. Change in Ability to use Quantitative Tools Since Enrolling: Percentage Reporting “Much Stronger Now”



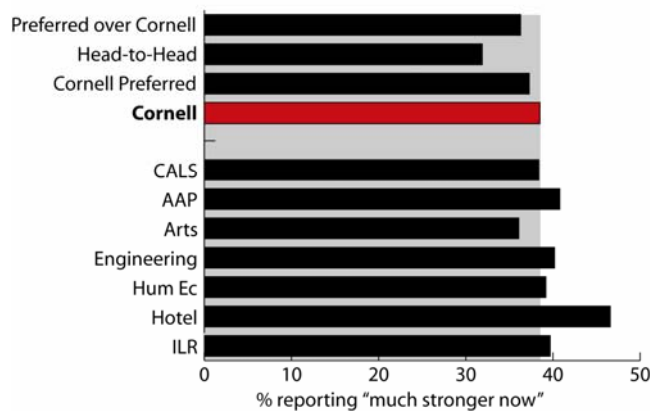
- ▶ **Ability to understand science.** Cornell students noted larger gains in their ability to “understand the process of science and experimentation” than did students in the three norm groups, with 18% of Cornellians as compared to 12-16% of norm group students noting that they are “much stronger now” in that area (Table A-9.24). Engineering students and students from CALS were especially likely to note significant gains in that area.

Figure 11. Change in Ability to Understand Science Since Enrolling: Percentage Reporting “Much Stronger Now”



- ▶ **Ability to master a field.** A larger proportion of Cornell students felt that they had made large gains in their ability to master a field, such as an academic major or an occupational field: 39% of Cornellians as compared to 32-37% of norm group students reported that they were “much stronger now” in this area (Table A-9.15). Differences across colleges were important, with 36% of students in Arts & Sciences reporting this, as compared to over 40% in Architecture, Art & Planning, Engineering, and Hotel. This pattern is echoed in responses to a similar item regarding the ability to “prepare for a career” (see Table A-9.26).

Figure 12. Change in Ability to Master a Field: Percentage Reporting “Much Stronger Now”

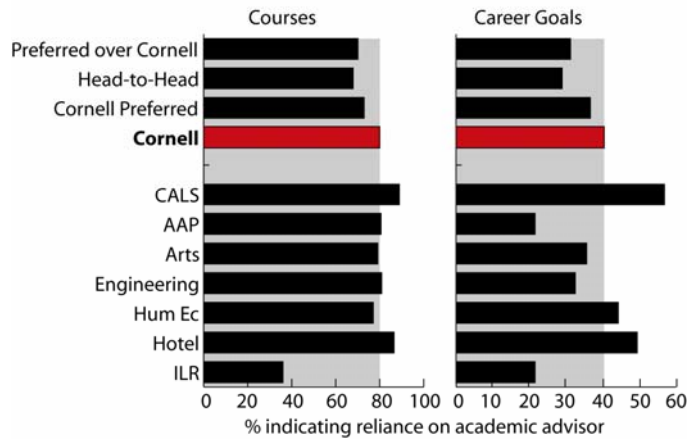


Personal Development

- ▶ **Academic and career advice.** Compared to students in norm group institutions, Cornell students – with the exception of students in ILR – were more likely to look to their academic advisors for advice regarding courses and career goals (Table A-2.1). Cornell students were also more likely rely on career services for advice on career goals. In

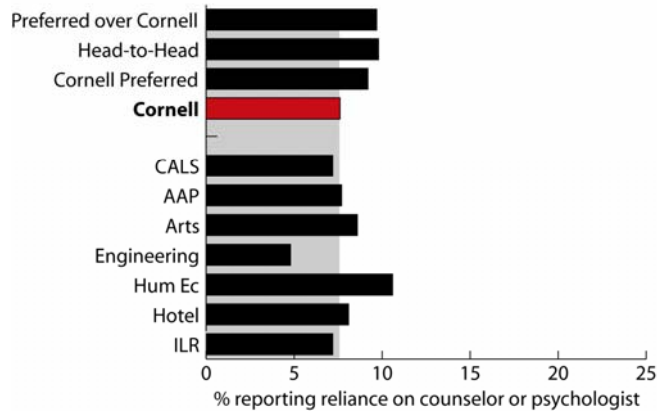
contrast, norm group students seemed to be more likely to rely on their academic deans (Table A-2.4) in both these areas.

Figure 13. Advice Regarding Courses and Career Goals: Percentage Reporting Reliance on Academic Advisor



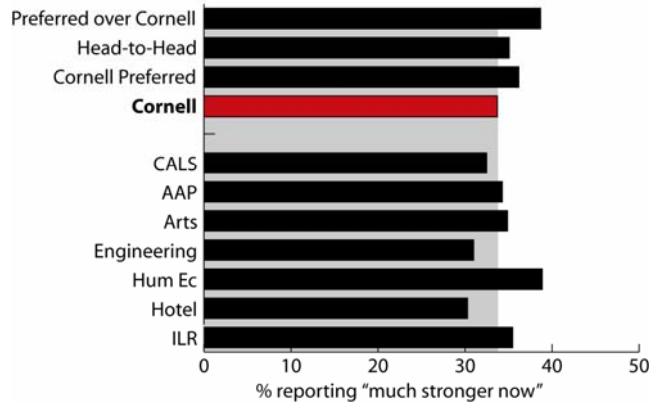
- **Advice for personal problems.** Cornell students were somewhat less likely to rely on a “campus counselor or psychologist” for advice regarding personal problems (Table A-2.6). Indeed, more Cornell students than norm group students reported that they had “no one to talk to about these topics” (Table A-2.13), though the numbers are quite small (at less than 2% across norm groups). Among colleges at Cornell, the figures for having no one to look to are highest for students in Engineering (2.6%) and ILR (2.8%).

Figure 14. Advice Regarding Personal Problems : Percentage Reporting Reliance on Campus Counselor or Psychologist



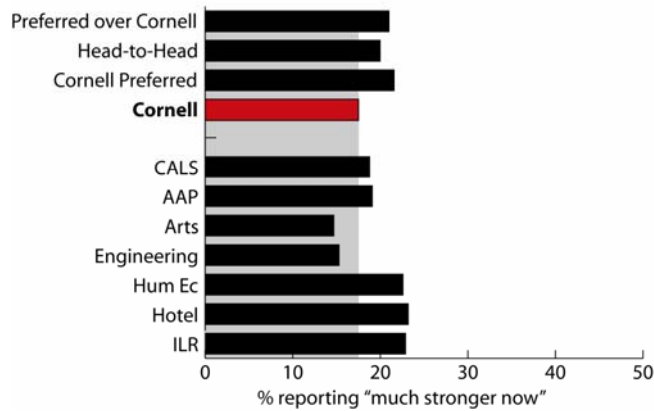
- ▶ **Ability to understand self.** Cornell students were slightly less likely than students in the norm groups to report great strides in their ability to “understand myself: abilities, interests, limitations, personality” (see Table A-9.13).

Figure 15. Change in Ability to Understand Self Since Enrolling: Percentage Reporting “Much Stronger Now”



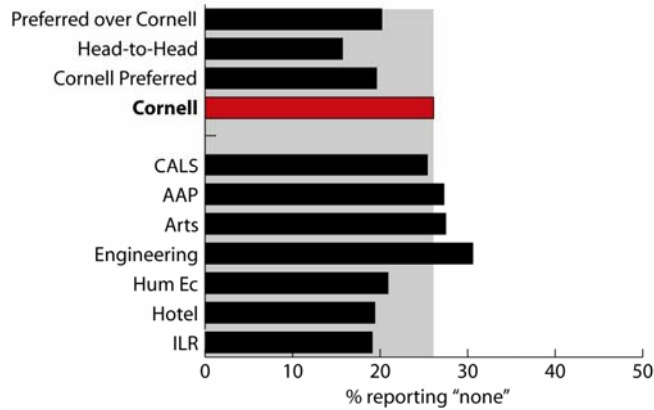
- ▶ **Ability to relate to different types of people.** Cornell students were slightly less likely than students in the norm groups to report great strides in their ability to “relate well to people of different races, nations, and religions” (see Table A-9.8).

Figure 16. Change in Ability to Relate Well to Different People Since Enrolling: Percentage Reporting “Much Stronger Now”



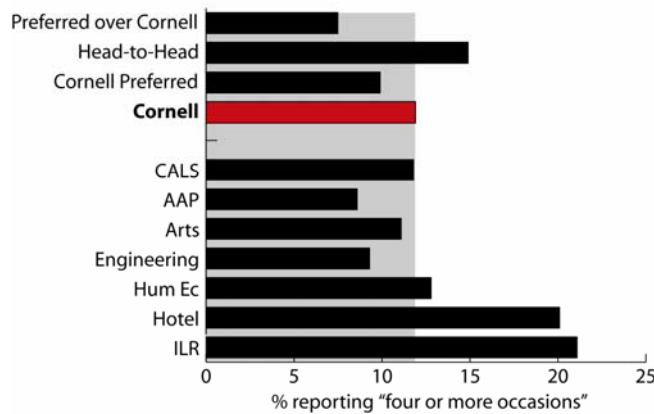
- ▶ **Athletics and fitness.** Eighty-five percent of Cornell students report that they spent no time on intercollegiate athletics during the past academic year (Table A-3.5); this compares to 77-80% of students within the three norm groups. It is also the case that Cornell students spend less time “exercising or using a fitness or weight room” (see Table A-3.8) with 26% of Cornellians reporting that they had not spent any time exercising, as compared to 16-20% of students within the norm groups. Participation in informal “pick-up” games is also less at Cornell (see Table A-3.9).

Figure 17. Time Spent per Week Exercising During Academic Year: Percentage Reporting “None”



- ▶ **Binge drinking.** There are substantial differences in the prevalence of binge drinking by college: over 20% of students in Hotel and in ILR reported that they had consumed five or more drinks on four or more occasions over the last two weeks (Table A-4). The percentages were under 13% in the other five colleges, and as low as 9% in Architecture, Art & Planning.

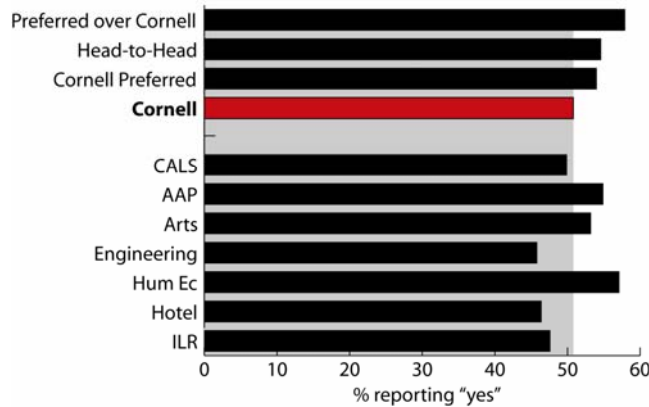
Figure 18. Drinking Five or More Drinks in the Past Two Weeks: Percentage Reporting “Four or more occasions”



- ▶ **Personal health and self-improvement meetings.** Cornell students were less likely than students in the norm groups to have attended meetings for any of the following purposes (see Table A-5): racial/cultural awareness (25% at Cornell, as compared to 28-32% in norm groups), sexual harassment (6% versus 14-15%), alcohol use or abuse (9% versus 17-18%), and sexually transmitted diseases (8% versus 9-11%).

- ▶ **Questioning beliefs.** Cornell students were less likely than norm group students to report that they had “ever seriously questioned or rethought”: political beliefs/values; religious beliefs; moral/ethical beliefs; beliefs about the nature of humans or society; beliefs about a race or ethnic group other than your own; and beliefs about people with sexual orientations other than your own (see Table A-11).

Figure 19. Questioning Moral or Ethic Beliefs: Percentage Reporting “Yes,” Seriously Questioned



- ▶ **Volunteering.** Sixty-one percent of Cornellians spent no time volunteering in the community during the academic year. This percentage is higher than the 56-59% reported among students in the three norm groups (see Table A-3.17).

Overall Evaluation of Education Experience

- ▶ **Overall Evaluation.** When asked “how would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?,” 36% of Cornell students replied “excellent.” This compares to 40-54% among students in the three norm groups (see Table A-17). Percentages vary by college at Cornell, with 30% of students in Engineering, 36% in Arts & Sciences, 42% in Architecture, Art & Planning, and 48% in Hotel responding with such a high level of satisfaction. Echoing these patterns, a smaller percentage of Cornell students than norm group students responded “Definitely yes” when asked “If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution?” (Table A-18).

Figure 20. Evaluation of Entire Educational Experience: Percentage Reporting “Excellent”

