Cornell University

2002 SENIOR SURVEY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND EXTENDED REPORT

Prepared by: Marne Einarson
Office of Institutional Research and Planning
Cornell University

2002 Senior Survey Executive Summary

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION TO SURVEY AND REPORT

- The 2002 Senior Survey was administered via the web in spring 2002. A total of 31 highly selective colleges and universities, including Cornell University, participated in the survey.
- The overall response rate among Cornell seniors was 50%; response rates varied by seniors' gender (females had a higher response rate), race/ethnicity (under-represented minority seniors were less likely to participate) and undergraduate college affiliation (AAP students had a lower response rate than seniors from other colleges).
- In addition to internal comparisons on the basis of gender, race/ethnicity and undergraduate college, we compare our survey results to those of seniors within three external groups of colleges and universities: those against whom, when in direct competition for commonly-admitted undergraduate students, Cornell more often "loses" (Norm Group 1), competes relatively evenly (Norm Group 2) and more often "wins" (Norm Group 3)

CHAPTER 2. BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

Parental Income

- Seniors' estimates of parental income varied significantly by norm group (Cornell seniors reported the lowest parental income while Norm Group 1 and 2 seniors reported the highest), race (white seniors reported the highest parental income while URM seniors reported the lowest) and college (HO seniors reported the highest parental income while ALS, AAP and EN seniors reported the lowest).

Parental Education

- Parental educational attainment varied significantly by norm group (Cornell seniors reported the lowest parental attainment while Norm Group 1 seniors reported the highest) and race (white seniors reported the highest attainment and URM seniors reported the lowest).

Legacy Status

- The likelihood of having had a parent who attended the same institution as the graduating senior varied significantly by norm group (Cornell and Norm Group 1 seniors were more likely to report having a parent as a legacy than seniors in Norm Groups 2 and 3), race (white and multi-race seniors were most likely to be legacy admits) and by college (AS and HO seniors were most likely to be legacy admits while EN and ILR seniors were least likely).

CHAPTER 3. ASSESSMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE

Overall Satisfaction

- 82% of Cornell seniors reported they were either "very" or "generally" satisfied with their undergraduate education.
- The proportion of "very satisfied" seniors has increased since the 1994 and 1998 administrations of the Senior Survey.
- Overall satisfaction varied significantly across norm groups (Norm Group 1 seniors were more satisfied), and by race (white and international seniors were more satisfied), undergraduate college (seniors in HO, ILR and AS reported the highest overall satisfaction), and admission status (early decision admits were more satisfied than regular decision admits).

Endorsement of Institution to Prospective Seniors

- More than two-fifths (43%) of seniors would "definitely" recommend Cornell to high school seniors similar to themselves.
- Endorsement ratings have increased from 1994 to 2002.
- Endorsement varied significantly across norm groups (Norm Group 1 seniors reported the strongest endorsement), and by race (white and international seniors reported stronger endorsements than seniors of other races) and admission status (early decision admits were more likely to endorse Cornell than regular admits)

Satisfaction with Aspects of Undergraduate Experience

- Seniors were most satisfied with the academic and extracurricular aspects of their undergraduate experience. More than 40% were "very" satisfied with: independent study, off-campus study, quality of instruction in courses in major field, library facilities, feeling of security on campus, extracurricular events on campus, opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities, and recreational and intramural athletic opportunities.
- Seniors were less satisfied with other facilities and services, and community on campus. Less than 20% of seniors were "very" satisfied with: advising before declaring a major, quality of instruction in engineering courses, quality of instruction in science and math courses, classrooms, financial services, housing facilities, housing office and services, financial aid office, career counseling, health services, administration responsiveness to student concerns, campus climate for minority students, sense of community on campus, and student government.
- There were significant differences in satisfaction across norm groups. On the whole, Cornell fared well, relative to its peers, on measures of off-campus study, quality of instruction in science and math courses, food services, library and computer facilities, and measures of the quality of campus life. Cornell seniors were comparatively less satisfied with class size, faculty availability outside the classroom, instruction in arts and humanities courses, financial aid awards and services, and the quality of classrooms.
- There were significant differences in satisfaction with specific aspects of the undergraduate experience by gender (typically favoring female seniors), race (generally speaking, international and

white seniors were more satisfied than seniors of other races), and undergraduate college (patterns varied across satisfaction items).

Relationship Between Overall Satisfaction and Satisfaction with Specific Aspects of Undergraduate Education

- Aspects of the undergraduate experience with strong associations to overall satisfaction and the highest satisfaction ratings were: overall quality of instruction, quality of instruction in the major, and extracurricular opportunities.
- Aspects of the undergraduate experience with strong associations to overall satisfaction and with comparatively low satisfaction ratings were: sense of community on campus and administration's responsiveness to student concerns.

Opinions About Academic Policies and Practices

- 80% of seniors agreed with the existing policy of not scheduling classes between 4:30 and 7:30 p.m.
- Three-quarters of seniors preferred having preliminary examinations scheduled during class time rather than in the evening.
- Seniors gave stronger support to including race-related content as part of the Cornell learning experience than requiring a diversity course as a graduation requirement. Both practices received stronger agreement from female than male seniors, URM than white seniors, and HE than EN seniors.

CHAPTER 4. ASSESSMENT OF MAJOR

Overall Satisfaction

- 76% of Cornell seniors were either "very" or "generally" satisfied with their major.
- Satisfaction with the major varied significantly by gender (women were more satisfied than men) and race (URM and White seniors reported the highest satisfaction and Asian American seniors reported the lowest).

Importance of Aspects of Major

- Cornell seniors gave the highest importance ratings to the following aspects of the major: quality of instruction, intellectual excitement and availability of courses. Faculty availability outside office hours, availability of tutoring, and other contact with faculty outside of class received the lowest importance ratings.
- Female seniors gave higher importance ratings to all aspects of the major than men; differences were largest for aspects concerning interaction with faculty.
- URM and international seniors rate the quality of instruction, availability of tutoring, faculty availability outside office hours and other out-of-class contact with faculty as being more important than other groups of students.
- Seniors' evaluations of the importance of various aspects of the major varied significantly across the undergraduate colleges.

Satisfaction with Aspects of Major

- Cornell seniors were most satisfied with aspects of the major related to faculty – faculty availability during office and outside office hours, helpfulness outside class – and with quality of instruction and the undergraduate department office. Cornell seniors were less satisfied with other faculty contact outside class, opportunities for class discussion and the quality of advising in the major.
- There were significant differences in satisfaction with various aspects of the major by gender (typically favoring female seniors), race (generally speaking, URM were most satisfied followed by White and international seniors; Asian American and multiracial seniors reported lower satisfaction), and undergraduate college (HO and ALS seniors tended to report higher satisfaction ratings, and AAP seniors tended to report lower satisfaction).

Relationship Between Importance of and Satisfaction with Aspects of Major

- Aspects of the major receiving high importance and satisfaction ratings from seniors were: quality of instruction, flexibility of the major, and faculty availability during office hours.
- Aspects of the major receiving comparatively high importance ratings and comparatively low satisfaction ratings were: quality of advising and opportunities for class discussion.

CHAPTER 5. FINANCING COLLEGE

Sources of Financial Support

- 75% of Cornell seniors relied on parental resources as a major source of funding for their undergraduate education. Institutional aid was a major source of funding for 42% of seniors, while 40% reported receiving no financial aid from Cornell.
- Sources of funding varied significantly by gender, college, and more substantially, by norm group and race. Cornell seniors made significantly greater use of institutional financial aid than Norm Group 2 peers and significantly less use than Norm Group 3 peers.
- Compared to white seniors at Cornell, URM seniors made significantly greater use of institutional aid and significantly less use of parental resources. This is partly a function of race-associated differences in parental income (URM seniors reported significantly lower parental incomes than white seniors).
- Parental income was significantly associated with sources of funding. Cornell seniors from lower-income families made significantly greater use of institutional aid while those from higher-income families made significantly greater use of parental resources.

College-Related Debt

- 42% of Cornell seniors reported accruing no personal debt as a consequence of paying for college. For those who reported debt, the average debt level was $17,645.
- Compared to peers in norm group institutions, a smaller proportion of Cornell seniors incurred personal debt as a result of financing their undergraduate education, but of those who borrowed, a significantly larger proportion of Cornell seniors had personal debts of $25,000 or more.
- Within Cornell, URM and multi-race seniors were significantly more likely than seniors of other races to have borrowed money to pay for college, while international seniors were significantly less

likely. However, there were no significant race differences in the average debt level of borrowers. This pattern was consistent across parental income categories.

- Within Cornell, student indebtedness was strongly associated with parental income. Seniors from lower-income families (less than $50,000) were much more likely to be borrowers than seniors from higher-income families ($150,000 or more). Further, seniors from low-income families also tended to borrow significantly more ($18,883) than seniors from higher-income families ($14,718).

Impact of Paying for College on Family

- Almost half (48%) of Cornell seniors thought paying for their college education had created considerable or severe impacts for their families. A comparison of matched senior-parent pairs suggests seniors perceived slightly greater family impacts than their parents.
- Seniors' perceptions of the family impact of paying for college rose progressively with levels of accumulated personal debt. This held true across parental income categories.
- Seniors from the middle ranges of family incomes ($50,000 to $99,999) were significantly more likely to report negative impacts on their families than seniors in other income categories, both lower and higher. This finding was consistent across levels of student indebtedness.

Impact of Paying for College on Student Experiences

- 77% of Cornell seniors who worked during the academic year reported this experience had given them valuable skills; one-third felt their work schedules had restricted their opportunities for studying or socializing. One-third of seniors reported they would be seriously burdened by loan payments after graduating.
- Due to a lack of funds, Cornell seniors were most likely to have foregone traveling during breaks or vacations (48%) and non-paying research and internship opportunities (35%). Seniors were more likely than their parents to report having missed out on specific college experiences due to money concerns.

CHAPTER 6. ACTIVITIES AND INTERACTIONS

Residence During College

- Cornell seniors' housing choices changed progressively over their undergraduate years, from virtually all living on campus as freshmen to only 13% living on campus in their senior year.
- Housing choices also varied significantly across norm groups (with significantly fewer Cornell seniors living on campus after the freshman year) and, within Cornell, by race/ethnicity (with URM seniors making significantly greater use of on-campus housing, and white and multirace seniors more likely to live in Greek-based housing) and across the undergraduate colleges (AS, EN and HE seniors were more likely to live on campus beyond the freshman year than seniors in other colleges).

Participation Academically-Oriented Activities

- Cornell seniors were most likely to have participated in independent study (38%) and least likely to have published or presented research off campus (10%). Cornell seniors' participation in

research/scholarship activities was significantly lower than that of their Norm Group 1 peers but higher than seniors in Norm Group 2 institutions. Within Cornell, participation in research/scholarship activities varied significantly across the undergraduate colleges; ALS and AS seniors were more likely to have completed independent study than EN and HO seniors, while HE seniors were most likely to have participated in research with a faculty member for credit.

- In terms of off-campus study activities, Cornell seniors were most likely to have participated in an internship in the U.S. (54%), a participation rate equal to or greater than that of their peer institutions. Cornell seniors were much less likely to have participated in a study abroad program (21%), particularly in relation to Norm Group 2 seniors (45%), or to have participated in off-campus study or an internship abroad. Within Cornell, the largest difference in off-campus study participation rates was associated with the undergraduate colleges; for example, EN, HO and ILR seniors were more likely to have participated in a U.S.-based internship than seniors from other colleges, while AAP seniors were much more likely than their Cornell peers to have studied abroad.
- About one-quarter of Cornell seniors had participated in an alcohol awareness program, one-fifth had participated in a racial/cultural awareness program, and one-tenth had participated in a sexual harassment seminar. These participation rates were significantly lower than those of seniors in Norm Groups 3 and 2. Within Cornell, there were significant differences in awareness program participation rates by gender (with women participating more than men), by race/ethnicity (with URM seniors participating more than seniors of other races), and by undergraduate college (with ILR seniors reporting the highest participation rates, and AAP and EN seniors reporting the lowest participation rates).

Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities

- About half of Cornell seniors had participated in volunteer activities or intramural athletics during at least one of their undergraduate years; Cornell seniors were least likely to have participated in student government or student-run magazines or newspapers. Compared to our peer institutions, Cornell seniors were significantly more likely to have participated in an honor or Greek society and less likely to have participated in intercollegiate athletics or musical/theater groups.
- Within Cornell, seniors' extracurricular participation varied significantly by gender (women reported higher participation in volunteer service and men reported higher participation in athletics), by race (for example, URM seniors were more likely to have participated in volunteer service and cultural/ethnic organizations than their white peers, but less likely to have participated in a Greek society or intercollegiate athletics), and by college (for example, HE seniors had comparatively high participation rates in volunteer service, HO seniors were more likely to have been involved in a Greek society, and ILR seniors were more likely to have participated in a political group as an undergraduate).

Time Allocated to Activities

- Cornell seniors reported spending the most hours per week on academically-related activities (i.e., attending classes or lab, doing course-related work, and using the computer for academic work) and the fewest hours per week on sports, volunteer work and talking to faculty outside the classroom. Compared to their peers in norm institutions, Cornell seniors reported significantly higher senior year course loads.
- Within Cornell, white and multiracial seniors reported spending significantly fewer hours on academic and recreational computer use, and more hours partying than their Asian American and

international peers. Seniors in AAP and EN reported spending significantly more hours per week in classes and labs, and doing course-related work than their peers in other undergraduate colleges.

Interactions with Other Students

- About two-thirds of non-Asian seniors enrolled at Cornell and Norm Group 1 institutions had substantial interaction with Asian American students, significantly more than was reported by their non-Asian American peers in Norm Groups 2 and 3. Beyond that, Cornell seniors reported less extensive interaction with students of other races/ethnicities (particularly with African American and Latino seniors) than their peers in norm institutions.
- Within Cornell, seniors reported the most extensive interaction with members of their own racial/ethnic group. Two clusters of diverse interaction were apparent: among white, Asian American and international seniors; and between African American and Latino seniors. The extent of diverse interactions varied across the undergraduate colleges; for example, non-Asian American and U.S. citizen seniors in EN reported more extensive interactions with Asian American and international students, and non-white seniors enrolleded in ALS report more extensive interactions with white seniors.

Interactions with Faculty Members

- More than 90% of Cornell seniors reported being satisfied with opportunities for out-of-class interaction with faculty; more than three-quarters were satisfied with the opportunity to be taught by faculty who are experts in their field, and agreed that students and faculty work together to enhance student learning; more than two-thirds agreed that two or more faculty members know them well enough to provide a professional recommendation, and agreed that it was easy for them to be taken seriously by professors.
- There were significant differences in seniors' evaluations of faculty interactions by gender (females reported greater ease being taken seriously and were more likely to agree that students and faculty work together), by race (e.g., URM seniors were less satisfied with their access to faculty experts in the field but more likely to agree that students and faculty work together at Cornell, and that they know two or more faculty well enough to obtain a professional recommendation from them), and across the undergraduate colleges (e.g.., EN and ILR senior found it less easy to be taken seriously by faculty, and AAP and EN seniors voiced less agreement that Cornell students and faculty work together).

CHAPTER 7. STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Importance of Skills and Abilities

- More than half of Cornell seniors felt that nine skills were "essential" in their lives including: think analytically and logically, communicate well orally, acquire new skills and knowledge on own, write effectively, function independently, understand self, formulate original ideas and solutions, develop self-esteem and function effectively as a member of a team.
- Less than one-quarter of Cornell seniors thought the following skills were "essential" to them: understand the scientific process, place current problems in historical/cultural/philosophical perspective, evaluate the role of science and technology in society, appreciate the arts, foreign language skills, and acquire broad knowledge in the arts and sciences.

Gains in Skills and Abilities

- Cornell seniors were most likely to report these abilities were "much stronger now" compared to when they first entered college: gain in-depth knowledge of field, understand self, think analytically and logically, acquire new skills on own, function independently, and lead and supervise tasks and people.
- Cornell seniors were least likely to report the following skills were "much stronger now": place current problems in historical/cultural/philosophical perspective, evaluate the role of science and technology in society, appreciate the arts, foreign language skills, and acquire broad knowledge of the arts and sciences.
- There was generally strong correspondence between the skills that were rated as "essential" by Cornell seniors and those they rated as "much stronger now." A few notable exceptions were: formulate original ideas and solutions and function effectively as a team member which had high importance ratings but comparatively low change ratings.

Patterns of Importance Scores for Broad Outcomes

- Using factor analysis, 26 individual skills and abilities were clustered into five broad outcomes. Cornell seniors gave skills related to "creative and analytic thinking" and "leadership" the highest importance ratings, and skills related to "broad knowledge" (i.e., general or liberal education) the lowest importance ratings.
- Compared to their peers in norm group institutions, Cornell seniors placed more importance on leadership skills and less importance on acquiring broad knowledge.
- There were substantive differences in importance ratings for broad outcomes across the undergraduate colleges at Cornell; the largest of these was associated with acquiring broad knowledge with AAP and AS seniors placing the most importance on this outcome and EN seniors placing the least.

Patterns of Gains Scores for Broad Outcomes

- Cornell seniors reported the greatest gains in broad outcomes related to "creative and analytic thinking" and "self-awareness" and the fewest gains in "broad knowledge."
- Compared to their peers in norm institutions, Cornell seniors reported greater gains in their "leadership skills" and substantially smaller gains in "broad knowledge."
- Within Cornell, the largest differences in seniors' reports of gains since entering college were associated with the undergraduate colleges. Seniors in AS and AAP reported the most improvement on this outcome and seniors in ALS, EN and HO reported the least.

Questioning Values and Beliefs

- Cornell seniors were most likely to have seriously questioned their beliefs about the nature of humans or society, and about other religions; they were least likely to have seriously questioned their own beliefs about other sexual orientations and their own religion.
- Compared to their peers in norm institutions, Cornell seniors were less likely to have seriously questioned their own beliefs and values.

- Within Cornell, seniors enrolled in ALS, HE and ILR were more likely to have seriously questioned their own beliefs while seniors in AAP, EN and HO were less likely to have done so.

CHAPTER 8. FUTURE PLANS

Principal Activity in Fall 2002

- Seniors were most likely to report plans for full-time paid employment in fall 2002, followed by plans for full-time enrollment in graduate or professional school.
- Compared to peers in our norm group institutions, Cornell seniors were less likely to be planning full-time employment in fall 2002 and more likely to be planning to pursue graduate or professional education.
- Within Cornell, expected fall 2002 activities varied significantly by gender (females were more likely than males to plan full-time employment and less likely to plan full-time graduate studies) and across the undergraduate colleges (HO seniors were more likely to report plans for full-time employment and less likely to report plans for full-time graduate or professional education).

Job Search Success

- Of Cornell seniors who expected full-time employment to be their primary activity in fall 2002, almost one-third had accepted a position and half were still searching. Compared to Norm Group 1 seniors, Cornell seniors were significantly less likely to have accepted a full-time position at the time of taking the survey.
- Within Cornell, male seniors were significantly more likely than females to have already accepted a full-time position for fall 2002 while female seniors were more likely to still be searching for a position. Seniors enrolled in EN, HO and ILR were most likely to have accepted a full-time position for fall 2002 while AAP seniors were more likely than seniors in other colleges to be searching for a position.

Plans for Further Education

- The majority (86%) of Cornell seniors who expected that full-time attendance at graduate or professional school would be their principal activity in fall 2002 were accepted into a program; more than half (58%) were attending their first choice institution.
- Compared to seniors enrolled in Norm Group 1 and 2 institutions, Cornell seniors were less likely to have received an acceptance for a program in the fall and less likely to be attending their first choice institution.
- Across Cornell and our peer institutions, the most frequent reason given for not attending one's first choice institution was 'not admitted to first choice institution." However, Norm Group 1 seniors were significantly more likely to identify this reason for attending an institution other than their first choice, while Cornell and Norm Group 3 seniors were significantly more likely than their peers to cite financial reasons (financial aid, education costs) for attending another institution.
- Almost all seniors expected to pursue further education – if not in fall 2002 then at some point in the future. Compared to their norm group peers, Cornell seniors were significantly more likely to aspire

to a master's degree in a professional field and less likely to expect to pursue a master's degree in the arts and science, or a law or medical degree.

- Within Cornell, there were significant differences in degree aspirations across the undergraduate colleges. Seniors enrolled in EN, HO and ILR were more likely to expect to pursue a master's degree in a professional field; ALS, AS and HE seniors were more likely than seniors in other colleges to expect to pursue a medical degree; and ILR and AS seniors were significantly more likely than their peers to aspire to a law degree.

Chapter 1. Introduction to Survey and Report

This report summarizes findings from the 2002 Senior Survey. This survey was administered via the web in spring 2002. All graduating seniors at Cornell (3,267) were invited to participate in the survey; of these, 1,647 responded to the survey for an overall response rate of 50%. The likelihood of responding to the survey varied by seniors' gender, race/ethnicity and undergraduate college affiliation. The population and respondents for the survey are shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. 2002 Senior Survey Population and Respondents at Cornell

	2002 Senior Class		Survey Respondents		Response Rate
	N	as % of class	N	as % of respondents	respondents as % of class
Overall					
	3,267	100.0	1,647	100.0	50.4
By Gender					
Female	1,554	47.6	908	55.1	58.4
Male	1,713	52.4	739	43.1	43.1
By Race/Ethnicity					
Asian-American	506	15.5	262	15.9	51.8
African-American+	145	4.4	52	3.2	35.9
Hispanic/ Latino+	178	5.4	63	3.8	35.4
White	2,034	62.3	1,087	66.0	53.4
Native-American+	14	0.4	2	0.1	14.3
International	263	8.1	114	6.9	43.3
Multiracial	n/ a	n/ a	63	3.8	n/ a
Unknown	127	3.9	4	0.2	3.1
By College					
ALS	733	22.4	369	22.4	50.3
AAP	123	3.8	50	3.0	40.7
AS	982	30.1	527	32.0	53.7
EN	735	22.5	364	22.1	49.5
HE	341	10.4	169	10.3	49.6
HO	173	5.3	74	4.5	42.8
ILR	180	5.5	94	5.7	52.2

Source: Registrar's files and 2002 Senior Survey.

Female seniors were more likely to respond to the survey than male seniors. Likewise, survey participation was highest among Asian-American and white seniors and lower among under-represented minority (URM) seniors. Seniors graduating from Art, Architecture and Planning were less likely to respond to the survey than their peers in other undergraduate colleges at Cornell.

A total of 31 highly selective colleges and universities participated in the 2002 Senior Survey. From this group, we created three "norm groups" to provide an external point of comparison for our survey results. Each group is comprised of a minimum of three universities. In the text of this report, these external groups are referred to as follows:

Norm Group 1: universities against whom Cornell more often "loses" when in direct competition for cross-admitted undergraduates

Norm Group 2: universities with whom Cornell competes on a fairly even basis for cross-admitted undergraduates

Norm Group 3: universities against whom Cornell more often "wins" when in direct competition for cross-admitted undergraduates

The remaining chapters summarize results from the 2002 Senior Survey. Detailed tables of survey results – showing responses by gender, race/ethnicity, undergraduate college, and norm group – are compiled in a separate appendix.

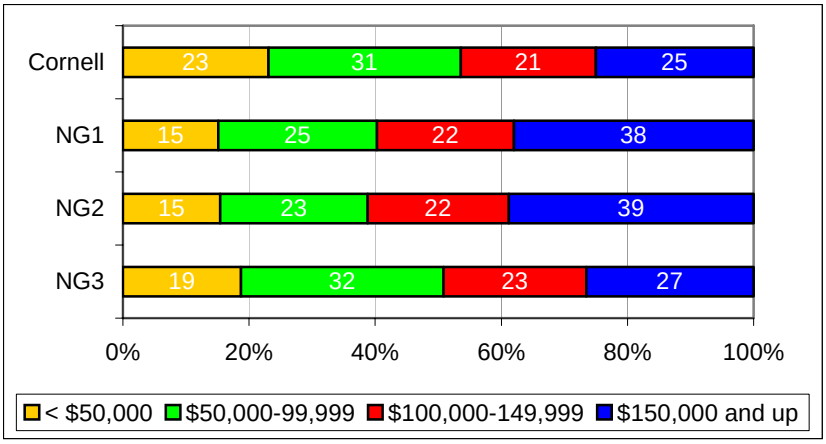
Chapter 2. Background Characteristics

When considering seniors' experiences, achievements and ambitions, it is important to take into account sociodemographic characteristics. In addition to considering the distinctions of gender and race/ethnicity, the Senior Survey included three measures of seniors' socioeconomic background: parental income (Q27), parental education (Q28) and legacy status (Q29).

ESTIMATED PARENTAL INCOME

Seniors were asked to give their best estimate of their parents' total annual income before taxes. Cornell seniors reported significantly lower parental incomes than their norm group peers, particularly those enrolled in Norm Group 1 and 2 institutions.

Figure 2.1. Estimated Parental Income by Norm Group



As shown in Figure 2.1, almost one-quarter of Cornell seniors estimated their parents' income to be less than $50,000, compared to only 15% of Norm Group 1 and 2 seniors. Conversely, only 25% of Cornell seniors reported parental income of $150,000 or more, compared to almost two-fifths of Norm Group 1 and 2 seniors.

Among Cornell seniors, there were significant differences in estimated parental income by race/ethnicity and undergraduate college. The largest differences were associated with race/ethnicity.

Figure 2.2. Estimated Parental Income of $150,000 and Above by Race

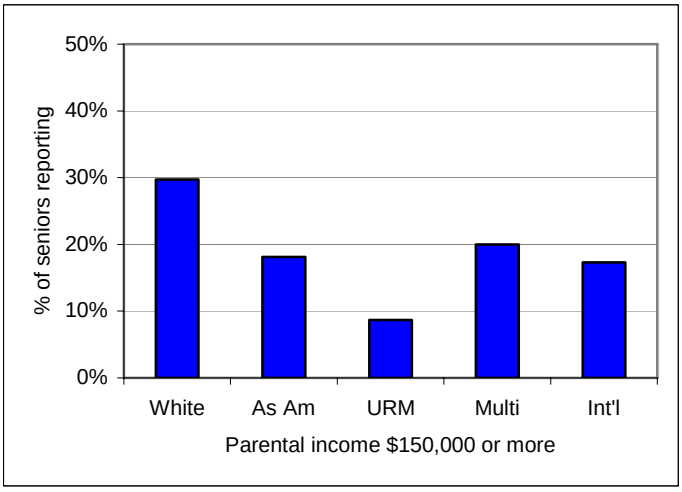


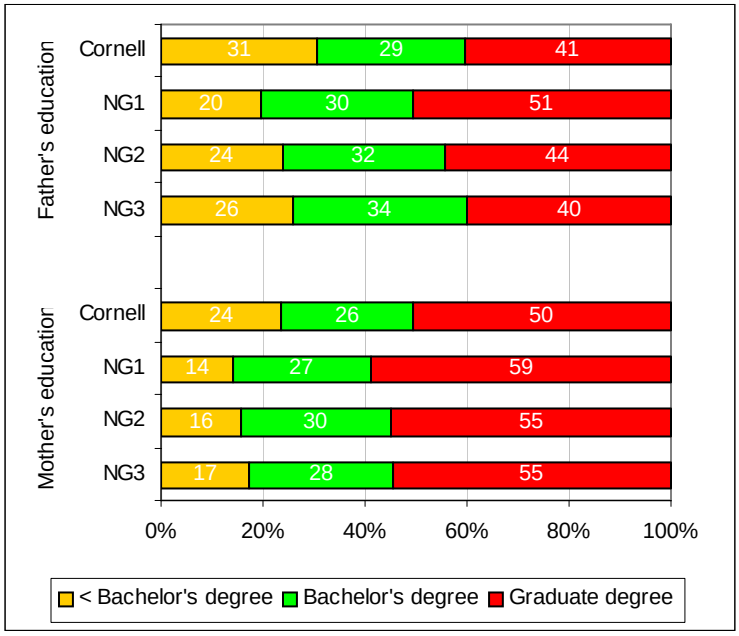
Figure 2.2 shows the percentage of seniors who estimated their parents' annual income to be $150,000 and above. Almost 30% of white seniors reported parental incomes of $150,000 or more, compared to less than 10% of URM seniors.

Significant differences were also evident across the colleges. HO seniors reported the highest parental income (45% earning $150,000 or more) while seniors enrolled in ALS, AAP and EN reported the lowest (20% or less earned $150,000 a year or more).

PARENTAL EDUCATION

Seniors were asked to report the level of education completed by each of their parents.

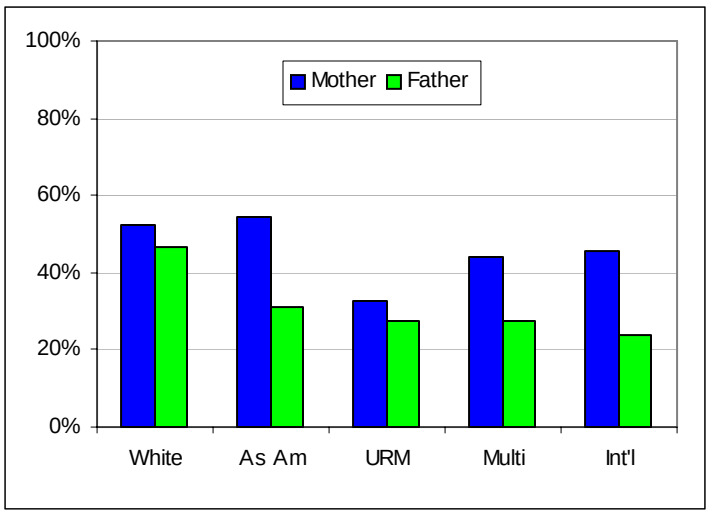
Figure 2.3. Parental Education by Norm Group



Consistent with their estimates of parental income, Cornell seniors reported lower levels of education attainment by their parents than their norm group peers. Almost one-third of Cornell fathers had attained less than a bachelor's degree compared to one-fifth of Norm Group 1 fathers and one-quarter of Norm Group 2 and 3 fathers. One-quarter of Cornell mothers had attained less than a bachelor's degree, compared to 17% or less of mothers from our peer group institutions. Similarly, parents of Cornell seniors were significantly less likely to have a graduate degree than parents of seniors from our norm groups.

Within Cornell, parental education varied significantly by seniors' race/ethnicity. Figure 2.4 shows the percentage of seniors, by race, reporting that their mother or father had completed a graduate degree.

Figure 2.4. Cornellians' Parental Attainment of Graduate Degree by Race



Maternal education was highest among white and Asian American seniors, while paternal education was highest among white seniors. URM seniors reported the lowest levels of parental educational attainment. More than half of URM seniors reported that their parents had attained less than a bachelor's degree; one-third or less had parents with a graduate degree.

LEGACY STATUS

Seniors were asked “Did either of your parents attend the institution from which you will graduate this spring?” For Cornell seniors, these data were also available from our institutional files. A comparison of the two sources of data showed a relatively high degree of correspondence; 10% of Cornell Senior Survey respondents reported legacy status compared to 13% designated as legacy admits in institutional files. For subsequent analyses of this measure, we used institutional data for Cornell seniors.

The likelihood of having a parent who attended the same institution as the graduating senior varied significantly by norm group, race and college.

- Cornell and Norm Group 1 seniors were significantly more likely to report that one or both parents had attended their institution (13% and 12%, respectively) than Norm Group 2 and 3 seniors (9% and 6%, respectively).
- Within Cornell, white and multi-race seniors were significantly more likely to be legacy admits than were students of other races/ethnicities.
- Across Cornell colleges, AS and HO had the highest proportion of seniors who were legacy admits while EN and ILR had the lowest.

Chapter 3. Assessment of Undergraduate Experience

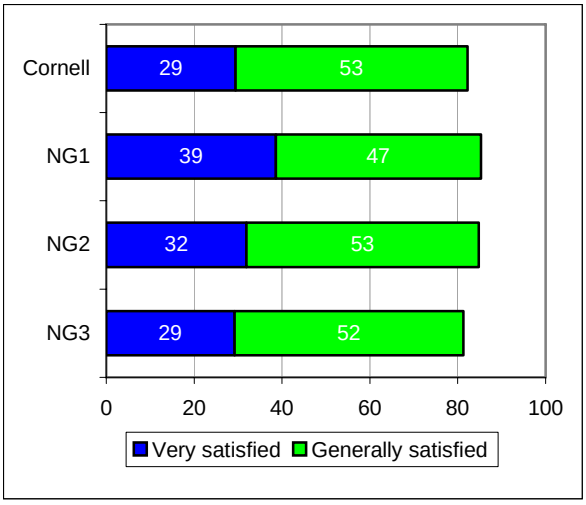
Student satisfaction has been identified as an important outcome of undergraduate education (Astin, 1993; Bean, 1983; Gielow & Lee, 1988; Spady, 1970). In fact, Astin asserts, "it is difficult to argue that student satisfaction can be legitimately subordinated to any other educational outcome" (1993, p. 273). This may be particularly true in academically selective institutions in which students' academic performance is of less institutional concern (i.e., grade achievement, retention and graduation rates are generally high) than are noncognitive aspects of the undergraduate experience. Results of COFHE's 2000 Alumni Survey show that alumni satisfaction with their undergraduate experience is significantly related to higher giving levels. In addition, satisfied alumni are more likely to encourage prospective students to attend their alma mater.

The Senior Survey included a number of measures of seniors' satisfaction with their undergraduate experience. This chapter examines seniors' overall satisfaction with their undergraduate education (Q6), likelihood that they would recommend high school seniors to attend Cornell[1] (Q7), satisfaction with specific aspects of the undergraduate experience such as academics, services and facilities, and campus life (Q8), and seniors' opinions on selected academic policies (supplemental questions 44 through 49).

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

The Senior Surveys asked, "Overall, how satisfied have you been with your undergraduate education?" Response options were: very dissatisfied, generally dissatisfied, ambivalent, generally satisfied, and very satisfied.

Figure 3.1. Overall Satisfaction with Undergraduate Education by Norm Group



On the whole, seniors graduating from Cornell and its peer institutions assessed their undergraduate experience very positively. More than 80% of the Class of 2002 respondents were satisfied with their undergraduate education while less than 8% were dissatisfied. However, Norm Group 1 seniors reported significantly greater satisfaction with their overall education than their peers. Almost two-fifths (39%) of Norm Group 1 seniors were "very satisfied" overall with their undergraduate education compared to 32% of Norm Group 2 seniors, and 29% of Cornell and Norm Group 3 seniors.

While overall satisfaction was generally high, significant differences in satisfaction were also evident among subsets of Cornell seniors from the Class of 2002. The largest differences were associated with race/ethnicity.

- White and international seniors were significantly more likely to report being "very satisfied" than seniors of other races/ethnicities.

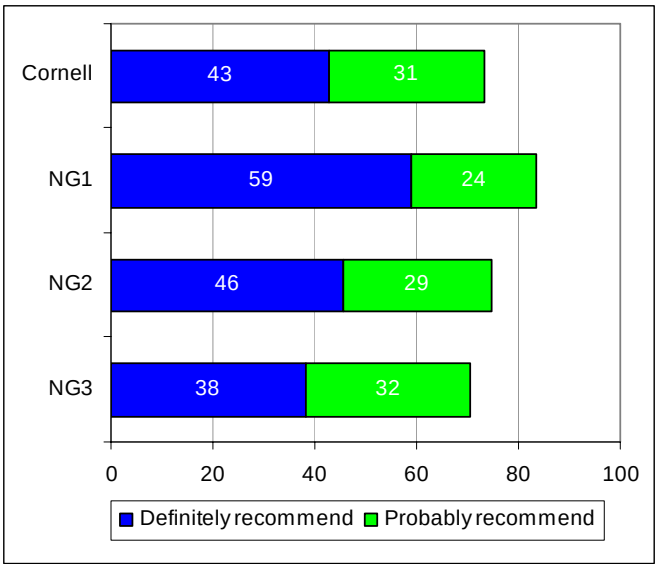
[1] The terms "recommendation," "endorsement" and "loyalty" are used interchangeably to refer to seniors' reported probability that they would encourage a high school senior similar to themselves to attend their college.

- HO seniors had the highest proportion of "very satisfied" respondents, followed by seniors in ILR and AS. Conversely, EN students were the least likely to report being "very satisfied."
- Seniors who were admitted via early decision were significantly more likely than regular admits to report being "very satisfied" with their overall education at Cornell.

ENDORSEMENT OF CORNELL TO PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

The likelihood that seniors will recommend their college or university to prospective students is highly correlated with their overall satisfaction. Therefore, consistent with the high level of overall satisfaction observed among Class of 2002 seniors, a large proportion of seniors said they would recommend their institution to a high school student who resembles them when they entered college.

Figure 3.2. Endorsement of Institution by Norm Group



Forty-three percent of Cornell seniors "definitely would" recommend a similar high school senior to attend Cornell. Another 31% "probably would" recommend Cornell. Compared to our peer institutions, the level of endorsement reported by Cornell seniors was on par with seniors enrolled in Norm Group 2 institutions, and higher than that of seniors in Norm Group 3 institutions. However, seniors in Norm Group 1 institutions expressed the strongest endorsement. Fully 59% "definitely would" recommend and almost one-quarter would "probably recommend" their institutions to a similar high school senior. (See Figure 3.2)

The likelihood that seniors would encourage high school seniors to attend Cornell varied significantly by seniors' race/ethnicity and admission status.

- White seniors were most likely to endorse Cornell to prospective students, followed by international seniors. Asian-American, URM and multi-racial seniors were significantly less likely to endorse Cornell. Race/ethnicity differences were most pronounced in seniors' likelihood of "definitely" recommending Cornell.
- Seniors who were admitted via early decision were significantly more likely to "definitely" recommend Cornell than regular decision admits.

SATISFACTION WITH ASPECTS OF UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE

The Senior Survey asked seniors to rate their satisfaction with the quality of specific aspects of their undergraduate experience, grouped in four broad categories: academic experience, course instruction, campus services and facilities, and campus life. Satisfaction with each aspect was rated using a four-point scale: 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = generally dissatisfied, 3 = generally satisfied, and 4 = very satisfied. Students could also indicate that a specific aspect was "not relevant" to them. In the following discussion, students rating an aspect as "not relevant" have been excluded from the analysis of that aspect.

Highest Rated Aspects of Undergraduate Experience at Cornell

The majority of Cornell seniors were "very satisfied" with the quality of two aspects of their undergraduate experience: library facilities and resources (61%), and study off-campus or abroad (50%). The following ten aspects received the highest satisfaction ratings (listed in descending order of highest percentage of "very satisfied"):

- library facilities and resources (61%)
- study off-campus or abroad (50%)
- computer facilities and resources (47%)
- independent study or self-designed courses (44%)
- quality of instruction – courses in major field (43%)
- feeling of security on campus (41%)
- opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities (41%)
- food services (39%)
- opportunities to participate in research with a faculty member (37%)
- extracurricular speakers, cultural offerings, and events (37%)

Lowest Rated Aspects of Undergraduate Experience at Cornell

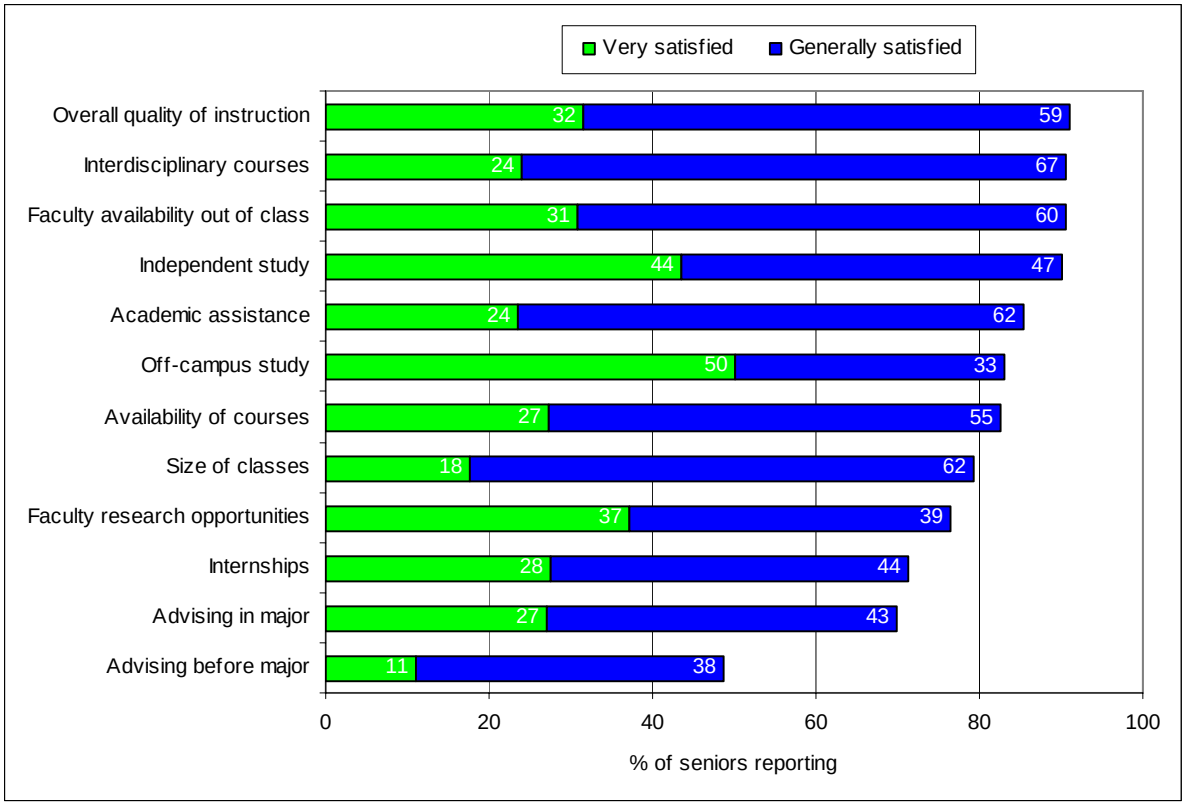
Conversely, seniors were least likely to report being "very satisfied" with the following ten aspects of their undergraduate experience at Cornell (listed in ascending order of lowest percentage of "very satisfied"):

- student government (5%)
- administration's responsiveness to student concerns (9%)
- student housing office and services (10%)
- academic advising before declaring a major (11%)
- financial services (Bursar's office, student accounts, etc.) (14%)
- financial aid office (14%)
- student health services (14%)
- climate for minority students on campus (14%)
- sense of community on campus (15%)
- student housing facilities (15%)

Satisfaction with Quality of the Academic Experience

Figure 3.3 shows the percentage of seniors who were "generally satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the various aspects of their academic experience at Cornell.

Figure 3.3. Cornellians' Satisfaction with Quality of Academic Experience

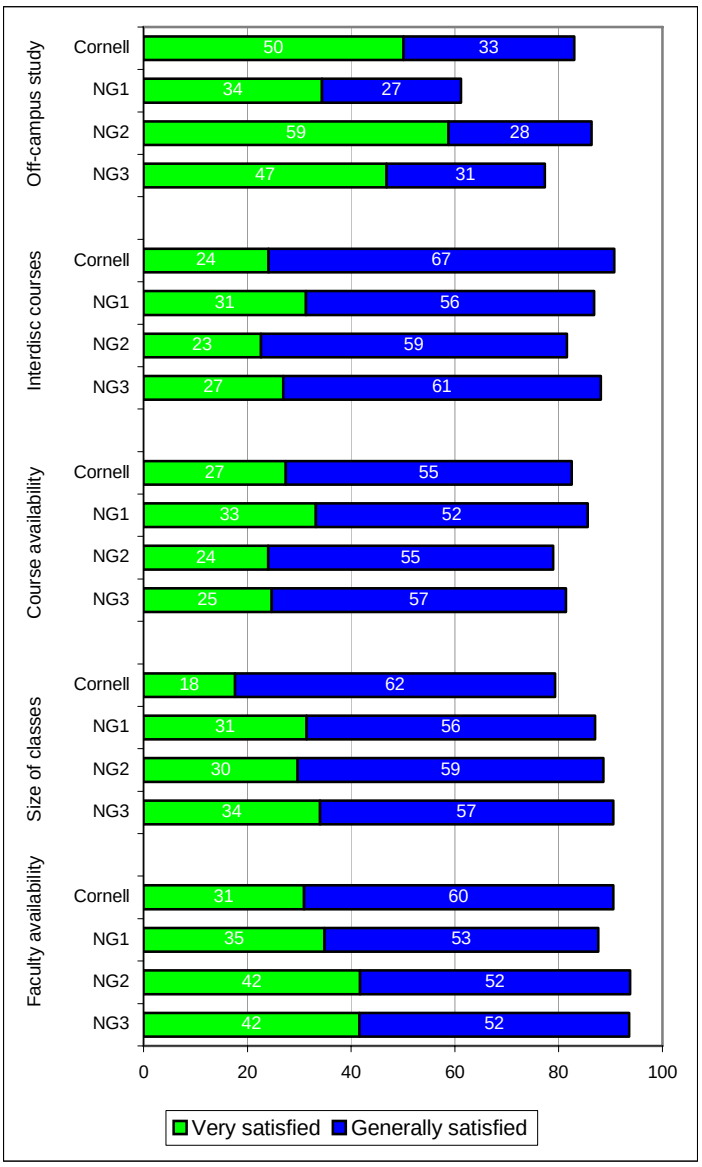


On the whole, most Cornell seniors were satisfied with the quality of their academic experience. More than three-quarters were either "generally satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the overall quality of instruction, course availability, faculty availability and research opportunities. Seniors were notably satisfied with interdisciplinary courses and off-campus study; more than 40% reported being "very satisfied" with each of these aspects. They were least satisfied with the quality of academic advising and, more specifically, with the quality of academic advising before declaring a major.

There were statistically significant differences across the norm groups in seniors' satisfaction with all of the above measures of the quality of the academic experience. However, the most substantive differences were associated with five aspects: off-campus study, size of classes, faculty availability out of class, interdisciplinary courses and availability of courses. For these measures, the greatest variation in satisfaction related to the percentage of seniors who reported being "very satisfied."

Compared to its peer institutions, Cornell fared reasonably well with respect to seniors' satisfaction with curricular experiences (see Figure 3.4). For example, fully half of Cornell seniors reported being "very satisfied" with study off-campus or abroad; while this was significantly lower than the percentage of "very satisfied" seniors in Norm Group 2 institutions (59%), it was roughly equivalent to the associated percentage in Norm Group 3 institutions (47%) and significantly higher than the associated percentage in Norm Group 1 institutions (34%). Similarly, Cornell seniors were less satisfied with interdisciplinary courses and course availability than Norm Group 1 Seniors, but were equally or more satisfied than Norm Group 2 and 3 seniors. However, Cornell seniors were significantly less likely to report being "very satisfied" with size of classes and faculty availability outside the classroom than their counterparts in peer institutions.

Figure 3.4. Satisfaction with Selected Measures of Quality of Academic Experience by Norm Group



Satisfaction with the academic experience at Cornell varied significantly among subsets of seniors.

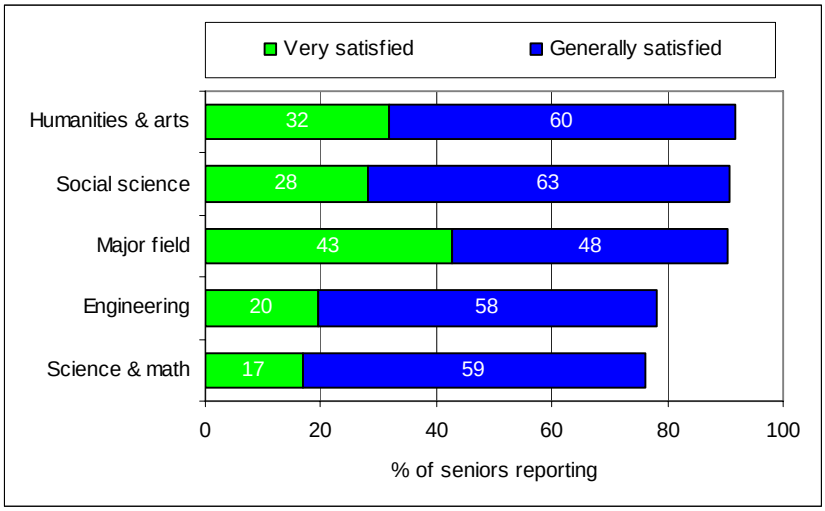
- Females were more likely to report satisfaction with their academic experience than males. Gender differences, favoring females, were statistically significant for out of class availability of faculty, study off-campus or abroad and course availability. Males reported significantly more satisfaction with the quality of academic advising before declaring a major.
- White, URM and international seniors were generally more satisfied with their academic experience than Asian American and multi-racial seniors. Reflecting this pattern, statistically significant differences in satisfaction were observed for: overall quality of instruction, interdisciplinary courses, tutorial help, course availability, size of classes and internships.
- The most and largest differences in satisfaction with the academic experience were associated with the undergraduate colleges. Statistically significant differences were observed for eight of the twelve aspects; patterns of differences varied across specific aspects. For example, compared to seniors enrolled in other colleges, HO seniors reported the highest satisfaction with faculty availability, class size, internships and academic advising in the major but the lowest satisfaction with independent study and academic advising before declaring a major. AAP seniors reported significantly higher satisfaction with off-campus study and class size but were significantly less satisfied with independent study, faculty availability, and academic advising both within and before the major.

Satisfaction with Quality of Course Instruction

Figure 3.5 shows the percentage of seniors who were “generally satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the quality of course instruction in various subject areas.

Fully 90% of Cornell seniors were either “generally satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the quality of instruction in the humanities and arts, social science, and in their major field; of these, instruction in the

Figure 3.5. Cornellians' Satisfaction with Quality of Course Instruction



major field had the highest proportion of "very satisfied" seniors. Satisfaction was comparatively lower in engineering, and science and math courses. Even so, more than three-quarters of seniors were satisfied with instruction in these fields.

Compared to their counterparts in norm group institutions, Cornell seniors reported higher satisfaction with the quality of instruction in science and math courses; 76% of Cornell seniors were either "generally" or "very" satisfied compared to 70% or less of seniors in the norm groups. Although more than 90% of seniors enrolled at Cornell and in the norm group institutions reported being satisfied with the quality of instruction in arts and humanities courses, Norm Group 1 and 2 seniors were more likely to report being "very satisfied" (45% and 40%, respectively) than seniors from Norm Group 3 institutions and Cornell (35% and 32%, respectively). Norm group differences in satisfaction with the quality of instruction in other subject areas were significantly significant but substantively small.

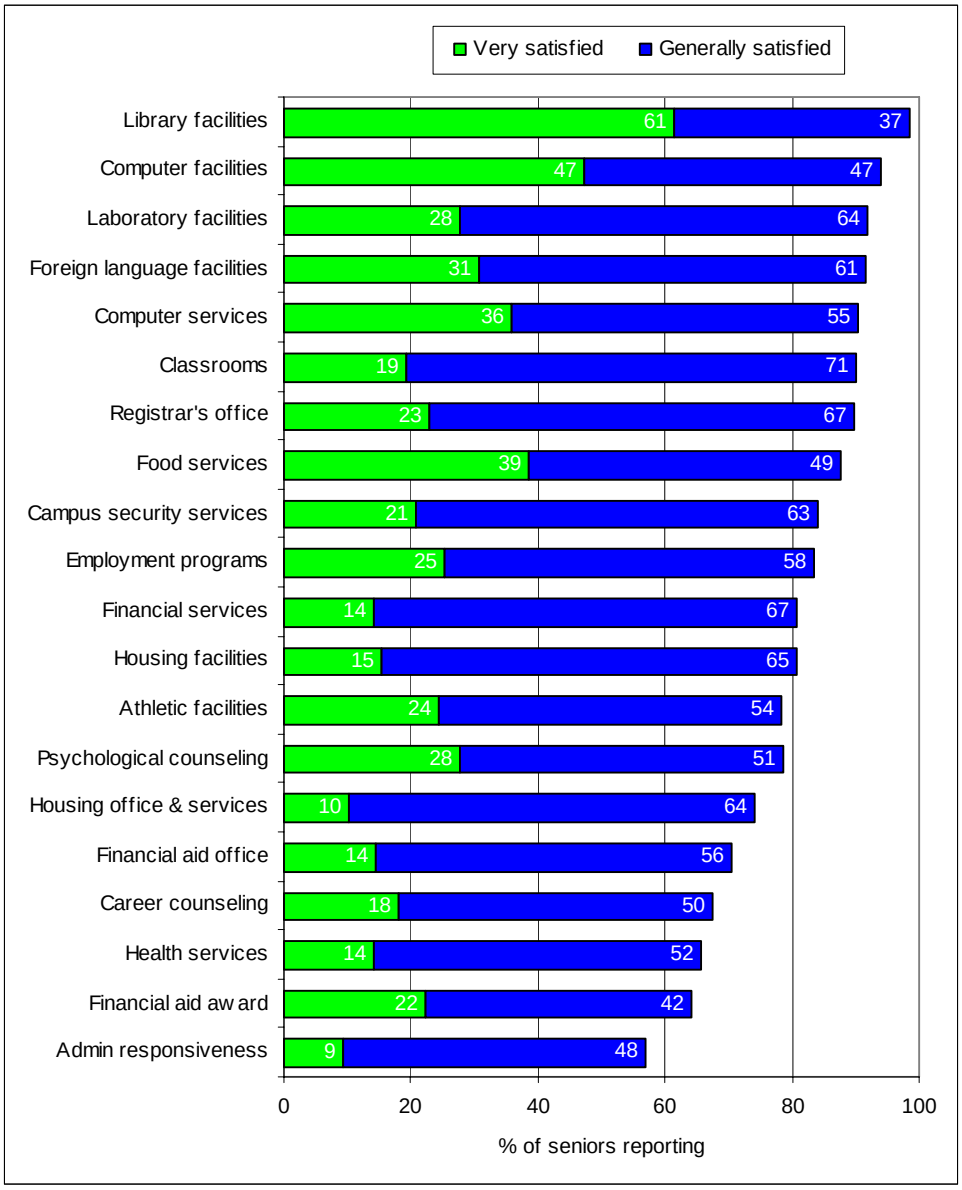
There were significant differences in satisfaction with the quality of course instruction across subgroups of Cornell students. Differences were largest across the undergraduate colleges.

- Compared to males, female seniors were significantly more satisfied with instruction in social science courses and less satisfied with instruction in engineering courses.
- In general, international seniors were most satisfied with the quality of course instruction while multi-racial seniors were least satisfied. Differences were largest for courses in the major field and engineering.
- There were statistically significant differences by college for all subject areas except natural science and math courses. On average, AAP and AS seniors were most satisfied with instruction in humanities and arts, and social science courses while HO seniors were least satisfied. HO seniors were most satisfied with instruction in the major field while ILR and AAP seniors were least satisfied. HO seniors were also most satisfied with instruction in engineering courses; ALS and AS seniors were least satisfied.

Satisfaction with Quality of Campus Services and Facilities

Figure 3.6 (next page) shows the percentage of seniors who were "generally satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the quality of campus services and facilities.

Figure 3.6. Cornellians' Satisfaction with Quality of Campus Services and Facilities



Seniors reported the highest satisfaction with academic facilities and resources at Cornell. More than 90% were satisfied with the quality of the following services and facilities: library facilities and resources, computer facilities and resources, laboratory facilities and equipment, foreign language facilities, computer services and support, and classrooms. Seniors were comparatively less satisfied with the student housing office and services, financial aid office and financial aid award, career counseling and placement, student health services, and particularly with administration's responsiveness to student concerns.

On the whole, Cornell seniors reported greater satisfaction with campus services and facilities than their peers in the norm group institutions. The largest norm group differences in satisfaction, all favoring Cornell, were associated with: the quality of food services (88% of Cornell seniors were "generally" or "very" satisfied compared to 63% or less of norm group seniors); library facilities (99% of Cornell seniors were "generally" or "very" satisfied compared to 95% of Norm Group 1 seniors, 92% of Norm Group 2 seniors, and 89% of Norm Group 3 seniors); and computer facilities (94% of Cornell seniors were "generally" or "very" satisfied compared to 92% of Norm Group 1 seniors, 89% of Norm Group 3 seniors, and 83% of Norm Group 2 seniors). However, compared to their norm group counterparts, Cornell seniors were less satisfied with their financial award, office and services; and with the quality of classrooms. For example, only 64% of Cornell seniors were "generally" or "very satisfied" with their financial aid award compared to 70% of Norm Group 1 seniors and 71% of Norm Group 3 seniors.

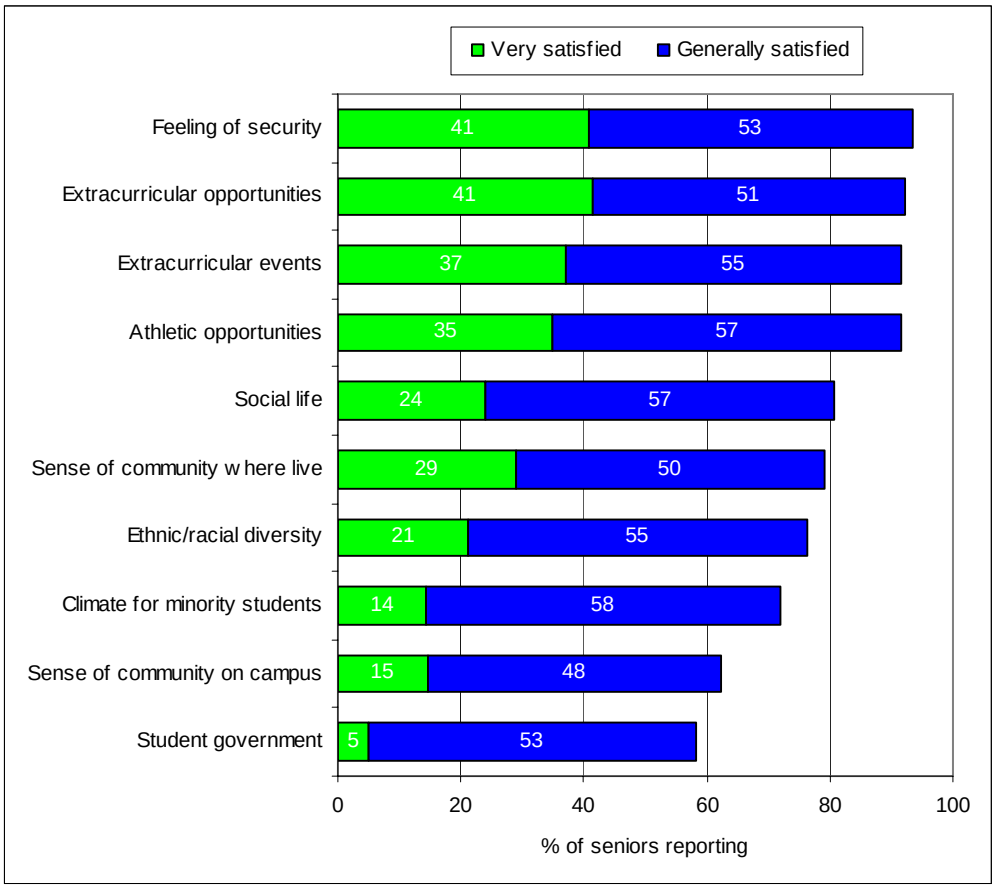
There were significant differences in satisfaction with services and facilities by gender, race and college.

- Female seniors were generally more satisfied with the quality of campus services and facilities than male seniors. The largest differences were observed for food services and administration's responsiveness to student concerns.
- Race differences varoed across specific services and facilities. The largest differences were associated with campus security (international seniors were most satisfied and URM seniors were least satisfied); psychological counseling services (URM seniors were most satisfied and Asian American seniors were least satisfied); financial aid office (URM, international and Asian American seniors were most satisfied while multi-racial seniors were least satisfied); and administration's responsiveness to student concerns (international seniors were most satisfied and multi-racial seniors were least satisfied).

Quality of Campus Life

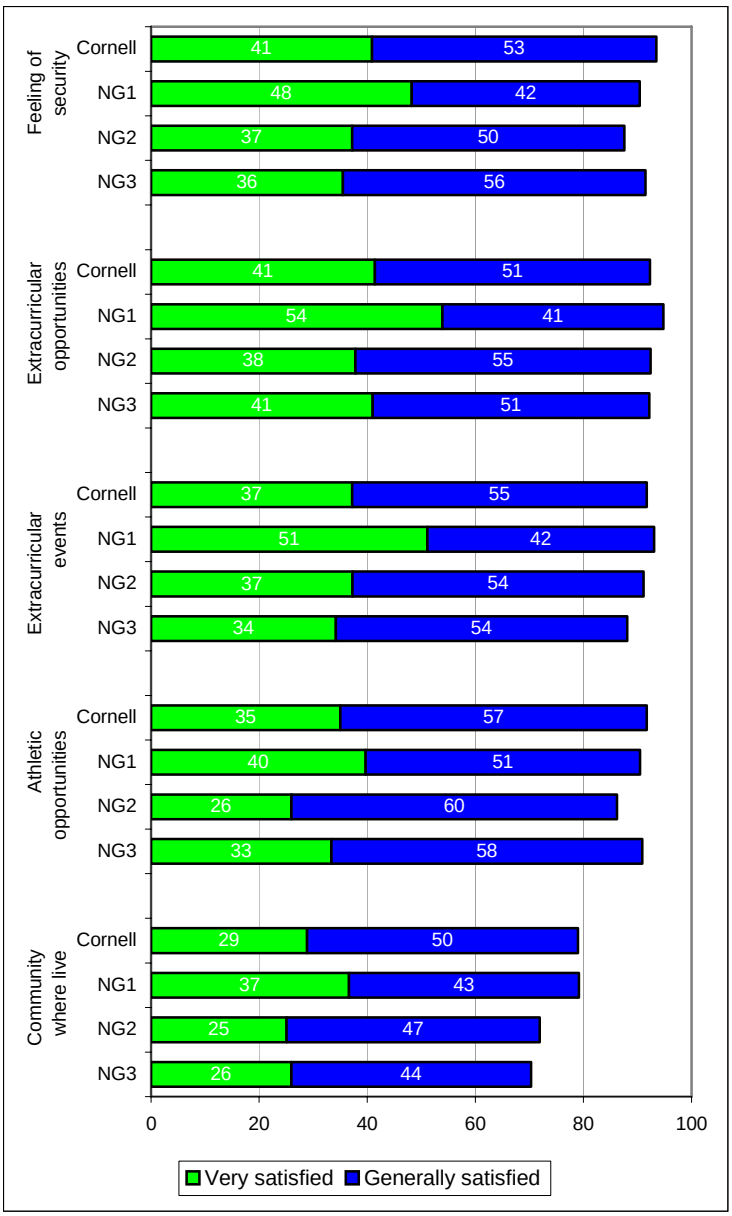
Figure .7 shows the percentage of seniors who were "generally satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the quality of campus life at Cornell.

Figure 3.7. Cornellians' Satisfaction with Quality of Campus Life



Overall, Cornell seniors were most satisfied with how secure they felt on campus, extracurricular speakers, cultural offerings, and events; opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities, and opportunities to participate in recreational and intramural athletic activities.

Figure 3.8 Satisfaction with Selected Measures of Quality of Campus Life by Norm Group



There were significant differences in students' satisfaction with quality of campus life measures across norm groups. Considering the proportions of students who reported being "very satisfied" and "generally satisfied" together, Cornell did well relative to its peers – having the highest combined "satisfaction" percentages for security on campus, recreational and intramural athletic opportunities, and social life on campus, and ranking roughly equal to Norm Group 1 institutions for highest "satisfaction" percentages for sense of community where student lives, ethnic/racial diversity and student government.

Figure 3.8 displays the campus life measures associated with the largest differences across norm groups. This shows that Norm Group 1 institutions had a significantly larger proportion of "very satisfied" students than Cornell and other peer institutions.

There were also significant differences in satisfaction with campus life across subgroups of Cornell seniors. These were most pronounced by gender and race.

- Compared to their male peers, female seniors were significantly less satisfied with their feeling of security on campus. They were significantly more satisfied with extracurricular offerings, social life on campus, sense of community on campus and student government.
- International seniors were generally the most satisfied with various aspects of campus life, followed by white and Asian American seniors, while URM and multi-racial seniors were generally the least satisfied. Race differences were largest for the following aspects of campus life: feeling of security on campus, social life on campus, ethnic/racial diversity of the campus, climate for minority students on campus, and sense of community on campus.

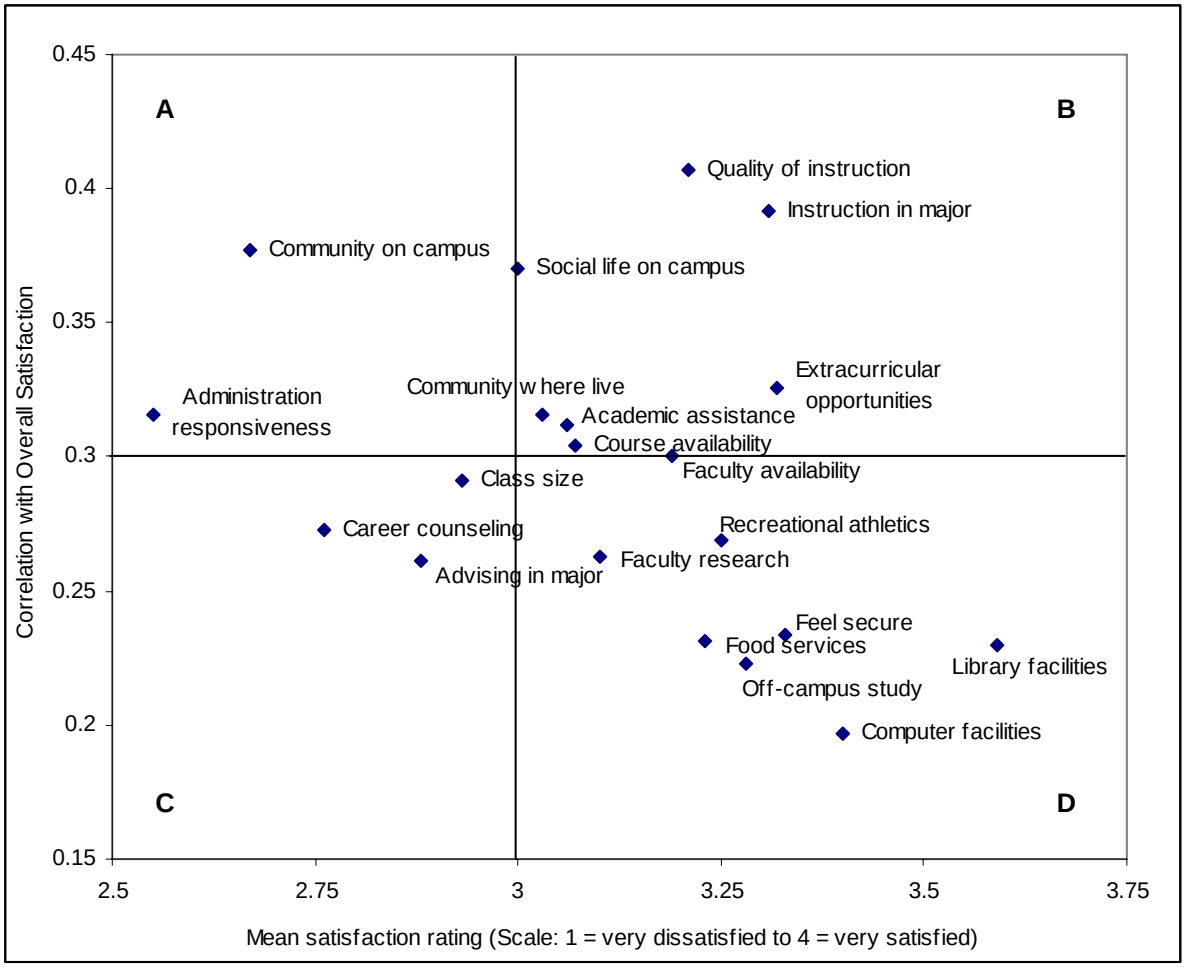
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OVERALL SATISFACTION AND SATISFACTION WITH SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

In this chapter, we have summarized findings concerning seniors' overall satisfaction with their undergraduate education at Cornell and their satisfaction with specific aspects of their undergraduate education. How are these two measures of senior satisfaction – global and more specific – related? In particular, are some aspects of the undergraduate experience more strongly related to overall satisfaction than others? One method for comparing the strength of the association between overall satisfaction and specific satisfaction measures – quadrant analysis – is shown below.

Quadrant Analysis of Overall and Specific Satisfaction Measures

Figure 3.9 plots the mean scores of specific satisfaction measures against their correlation with overall satisfaction. This chart uses "3" as the dividing line between dissatisfaction and satisfaction with specific aspects of undergraduate education, and ".3" as the dividing line for weaker and stronger correlations between specific satisfaction measures and overall satisfaction. This creates four quadrants.

Figure 3.9. Quadrant Analysis of Cornellians' Overall Satisfaction

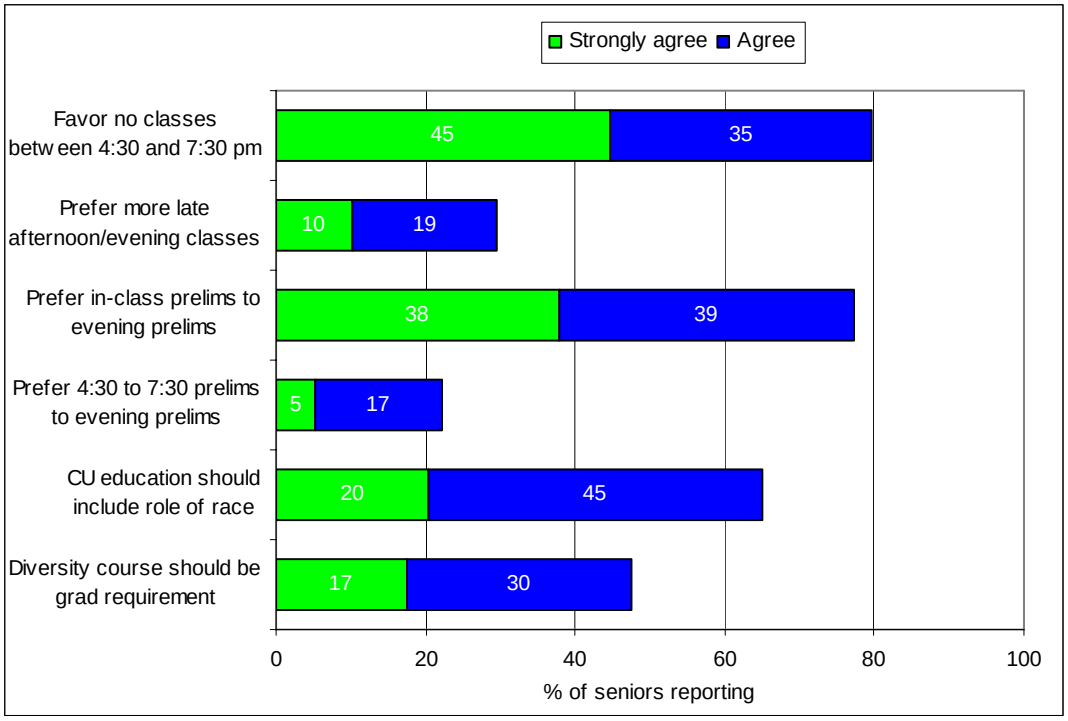


The right side of the chart (quadrants B and D) displays those aspects of the undergraduate experience with which seniors were satisfied. As is evident in quadrant B, seniors were quite satisfied with aspects such as quality of instruction overall and in their major, and extracurricular opportunities on campus, and these aspects were also strongly related to their overall satisfaction. Seniors were also very satisfied with aspects such as computer and library facilities, but these measures had a weaker association with overall satisfaction (see quadrant D). The left side of the chart (quadrants A and B) shows aspects of the undergraduate experience with which seniors were less satisfied. Quadrant C shows that seniors were comparatively less satisfied with class size, career counseling and advising in the major; these aspects did not have a strong association with overall satisfaction. Quadrant A displays two aspects – sense of community on campus and administration's responsiveness to student concerns – which have both comparatively low satisfaction ratings and strong associations with overall satisfaction. These aspects are potentially important levers for enhancing seniors' overall satisfaction with their undergraduate experience. That is, to the extent that Cornell is able to strengthen campus community and administrative responsiveness to students, we would expect associated increases in overall satisfaction.

OPINIONS ABOUT ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PRACTICES

The 2002 Senior Survey included supplemental questions concerning academic policies and practices at Cornell. Seniors were asked their opinions about the scheduling of classes, preliminary examinations, and diversity-related curriculum. Figure 10 shows the percentage of seniors who agreed with these statements.

Figure 3.10. Cornellians' Opinions on Academic Policies and Practices



Overall, seniors voiced strong support for retaining the existing policy of not scheduling classes between 4:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Fully 80% were in favor of this policy compared to only 30% who would have preferred more late afternoon and evening classes. Similarly, seniors reported a strong

preference for having preliminary examinations scheduled during class time rather than during the evening (77% agreed). Only 22% would have preferred to have preliminary examinations scheduled during 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. rather than in the evening. Almost two-thirds (65%) of seniors agreed that the Cornell learning experience should include gaining a better understanding of the role of race and racism in American life. Support was somewhat less (48%) for making completion of a course about diversity in the U.S. a graduation requirement.

There were significant differences in opinions on academic policies across subgroups of seniors:

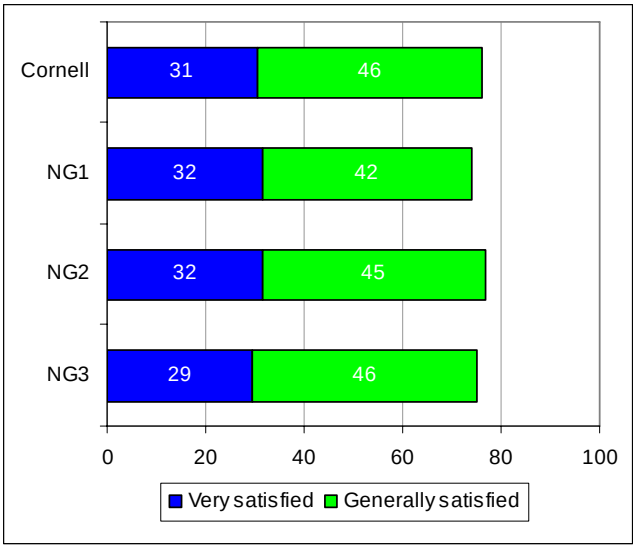
- Female seniors were more likely than male seniors to agree that race-related curricula should be a part of the Cornell learning experience as well as a graduation requirement.
- White and Asian American seniors were less supportive of holding classes and preliminary examinations in the late afternoon and evening classes, while multi-race seniors reported comparatively higher levels of support for these policies. URM seniors were most likely to agree with including race-related content in the Cornell learning experience and as a graduation requirement while white seniors reported less agreement.
- College-associated differences were varied across the questions concerning the scheduling of classes and preliminary examinations. Seniors enrolled in HE reporedt the highest support for including race-related content as part of the learning experience and graduation requirements, while EN seniors reported the lowest support.

Chapter 4. Assessment of Major

The 2002 administration of the Senior Survey included a new series of questions concerning seniors' evaluation of their major. This chapter examines seniors' overall satisfaction with their major (Q20), their views of the importance of various aspects of their major (Q21 Part I), and their satisfaction with various aspects of their major (Q21 Part II). As is customary, we will use the undergraduate colleges as the unit of analysis for comparing seniors' evaluations of their major.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH MAJOR

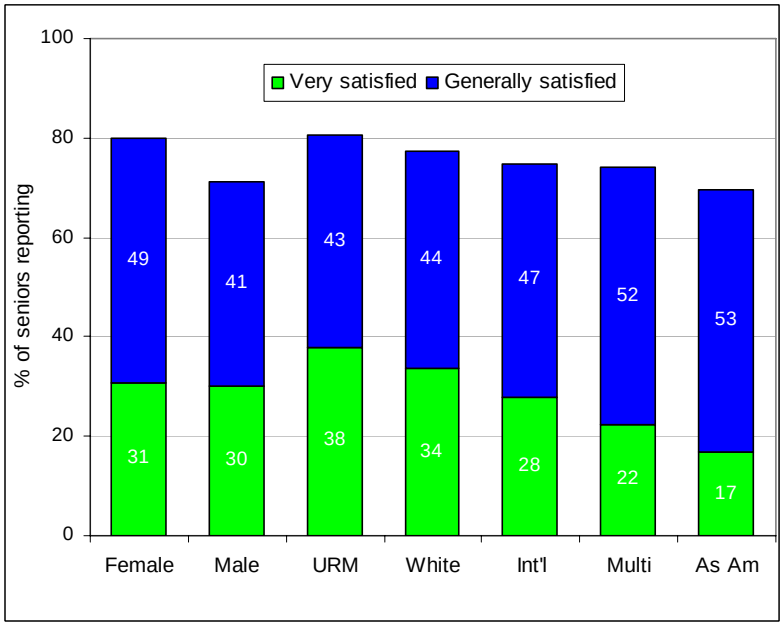
Figure 4.1. Overall Satisfaction with Major by Norm Group



Cornell seniors and those graduating from our peer institutions assessed their major very positively. As shown in Figure 4.1, approximately three-quarters of seniors reported being either "very satisfied" or "generally satisfied" with their major, on the whole. Unlike the pattern observed for satisfaction with the undergraduate experience as a whole, there was little variation in seniors' satisfaction with their major across norm groups.

Within Cornell, satisfaction with major varied significantly by gender and race/ethnicity. Figure 4.2 shows the percentage of Cornell seniors who were "generally satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their major by gender and race/ethnicity.

Figure 4.2. Cornellians' Overall Satisfaction with Major by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

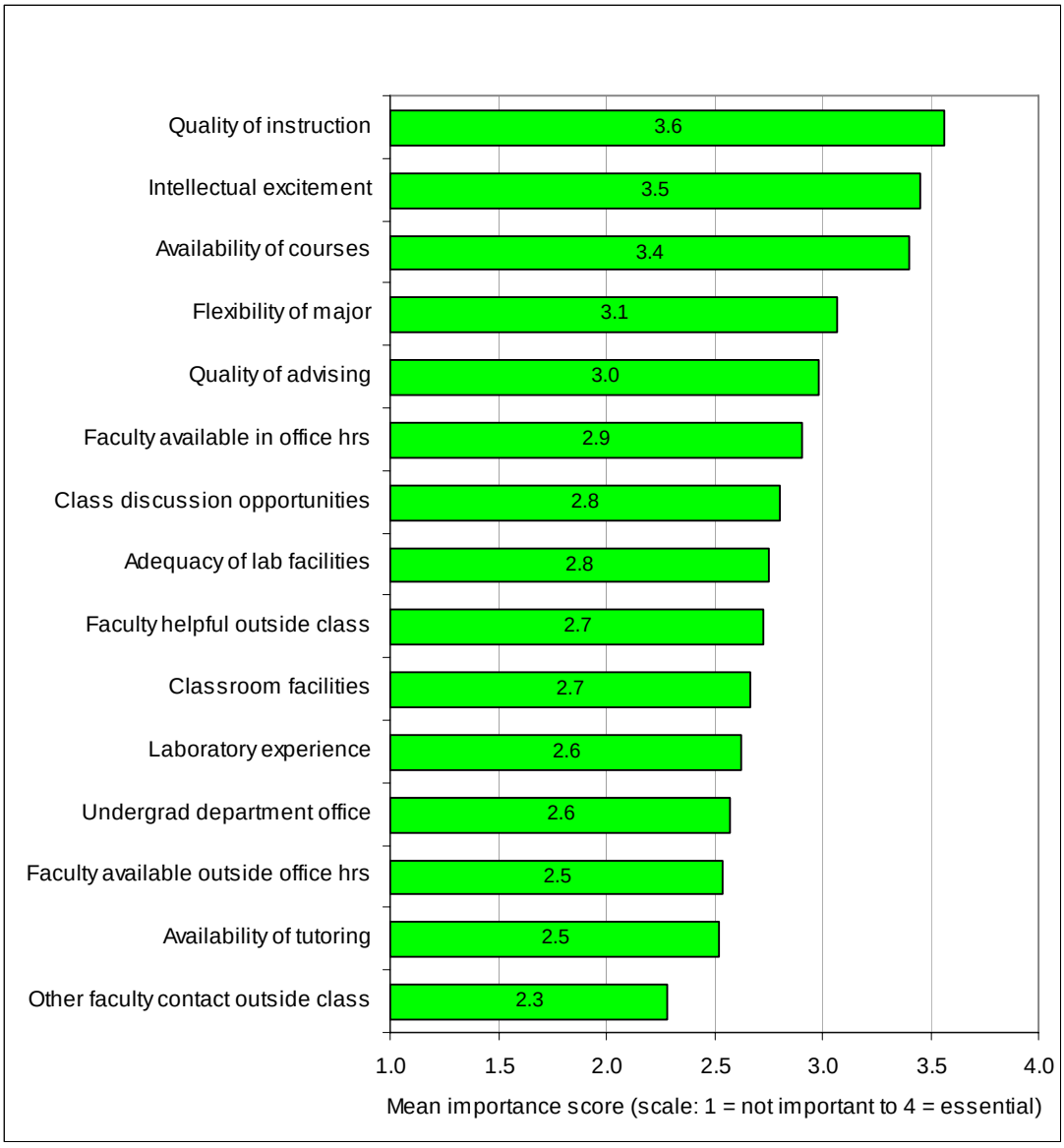


Female and male seniors were equally likely to report being "very satisfied" with their major, but females were significantly more likely than males to report being "generally satisfied." Compared to seniors of other races/ethnicities, URM seniors were most satisfied with their major, followed by White seniors. Asian American seniors reported comparatively lower satisfaction. Specifically, Asian American seniors were much less likely to report being "very satisfied" with their major.

IMPORTANCE OF ASPECTS OF MAJOR

Seniors were asked to rate the importance of 15 aspects of their major. The response scale provided was: 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, 4 = essential and 5 = not applicable. For these analyses, we have excluded seniors who reported an aspect as "not applicable." Figure 4.2 shows these aspects arranged in descending order of importance rating based on mean importance scores for Cornell seniors.

Figure 4.3. Cornellians' Ratings of Importance of Aspects of Major



Cornell seniors gave the highest importance ratings to academic aspects of their major (i.e., quality of instruction, intellectual excitement, course availability, and flexibility of the major). Advising, faculty availability in office hours and helpfulness outside class, lab and classroom facilities, and opportunities for class discussion were of moderate importance. Other types of contact with faculty outside the classroom or office hours and tutoring were rated as comparatively less important aspects of their major.

There were no substantive variance in seniors' importance ratings of major aspects across norm groups; although differences in ratings were statistically significant, this stems from the large sample sizes being considered. Within Cornell, seniors' ratings of the importance of aspects of the major differed significantly by gender, race and college:

- Female seniors consistently gave higher importance ratings to aspects of the major than male seniors. Differences in importance ratings were most pronounced for aspects concerning interactions with faculty – quality of advising, availability of instructors during office hours, and helpfulness of faculty outside the classroom – and the availability of tutoring and other help.
- There were significant race/ethnicity differences in the importance attributed to the quality of instruction in the major, availability of tutoring, availability of instructors outside office hours, and other out-of-class contact with instructors. URM and international seniors generally rated these aspects as being more important than did white, Asian American and multiracial seniors.
- Differences in importance ratings among the undergraduate colleges appear to reflect differences in curricular focus and size of enrollment. For example, flexibility of the major and quality of advising were rated as being significantly more important by seniors in ALS and HE, and comparatively less important by seniors in HO and ILR. Laboratory facilities and experiences were more important to seniors in AAP and EN and less important to seniors in other colleges. Classroom facilities and opportunities for class discussions were significantly more important to seniors in AAP and HO than to seniors in AS and EN.

SATISFACTION WITH ASPECTS OF MAJOR

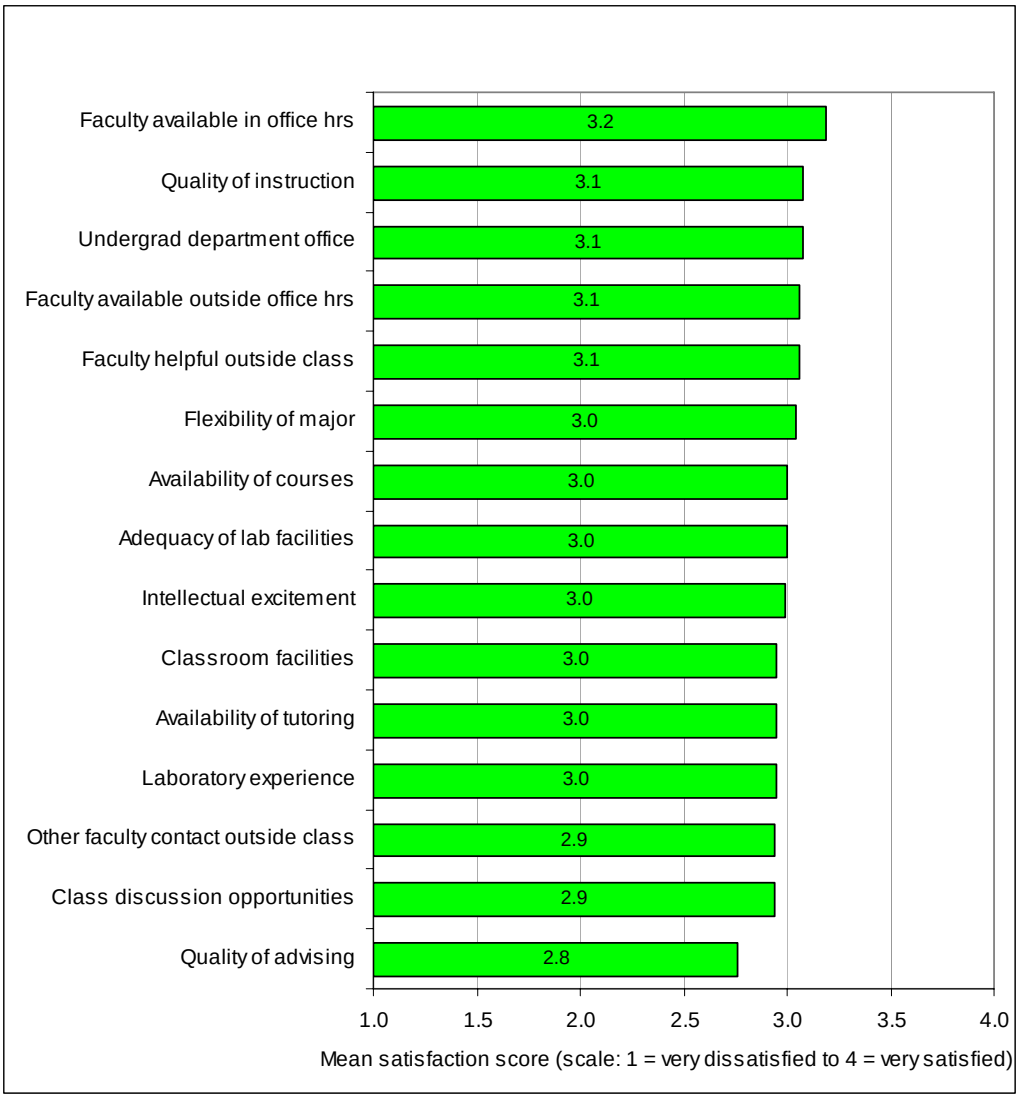
Seniors were also asked to report their satisfaction with the same 15 aspects of their major. Satisfaction with each aspect was rated using a four-point scale: 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = generally dissatisfied, 3 = generally satisfied, 4 = very satisfied and 5 = not applicable. For these analyses, we have excluded seniors who reported an aspect as "not applicable." Figure 4.4 (shown next page) displays these aspects arranged in descending order of satisfaction based on mean satisfaction scores for Cornell seniors.

As shown in Figure 4.4, Cornell seniors were quite satisfied with most aspects of their major. They reported the highest satisfaction with aspects related to faculty – availability in and outside office hours, helpfulness outside of class, quality of instruction – and with their undergraduate department office and flexibility of their major. They reported comparatively less satisfaction with the quality of advising. Satisfaction with aspects of the major varied significantly among Cornell and its peer institutions, and among subsets of Cornell seniors.

- The aspects of the major associated with the largest differences in satisfaction across norm groups were flexibility of the major (Cornell seniors were significantly more satisfied than seniors in peer institutions), classrooms and classroom facilities, and intellectual excitement (Norm group 1 seniors were significantly more satisfied with these latter two aspects than seniors in other institutions).
- As was observed with importance ratings, females reported higher satisfaction with aspects of their major than males. Gender differences, favoring females, were largest for availability of faculty during and outside office hours, intellectual excitement and flexibility of the major.
- On average, URM seniors were most satisfied with aspects of their major, followed by white and international seniors; Asian American and multiracial seniors generally report the lowest satisfaction. Race differences were largest for: availability of instructors during office hours, quality of instruction, availability of courses to study, class discussion opportunities, flexibility of the major and quality of advising.

- There were significant differences in satisfaction across the undergraduate colleges on all but one aspect of the major: instructor availability during office hours. HO seniors generally reported the highest satisfaction with various aspects of the major, followed by ALS seniors. With the exception of two aspects of the major, undergraduate departmental office and laboratory, AAP seniors reported the lowest satisfaction.

Figure 4.4. Cornellians' Satisfaction with Aspects of Major



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IMPORTANCE OF AND SATISFACTION WITH SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF MAJOR

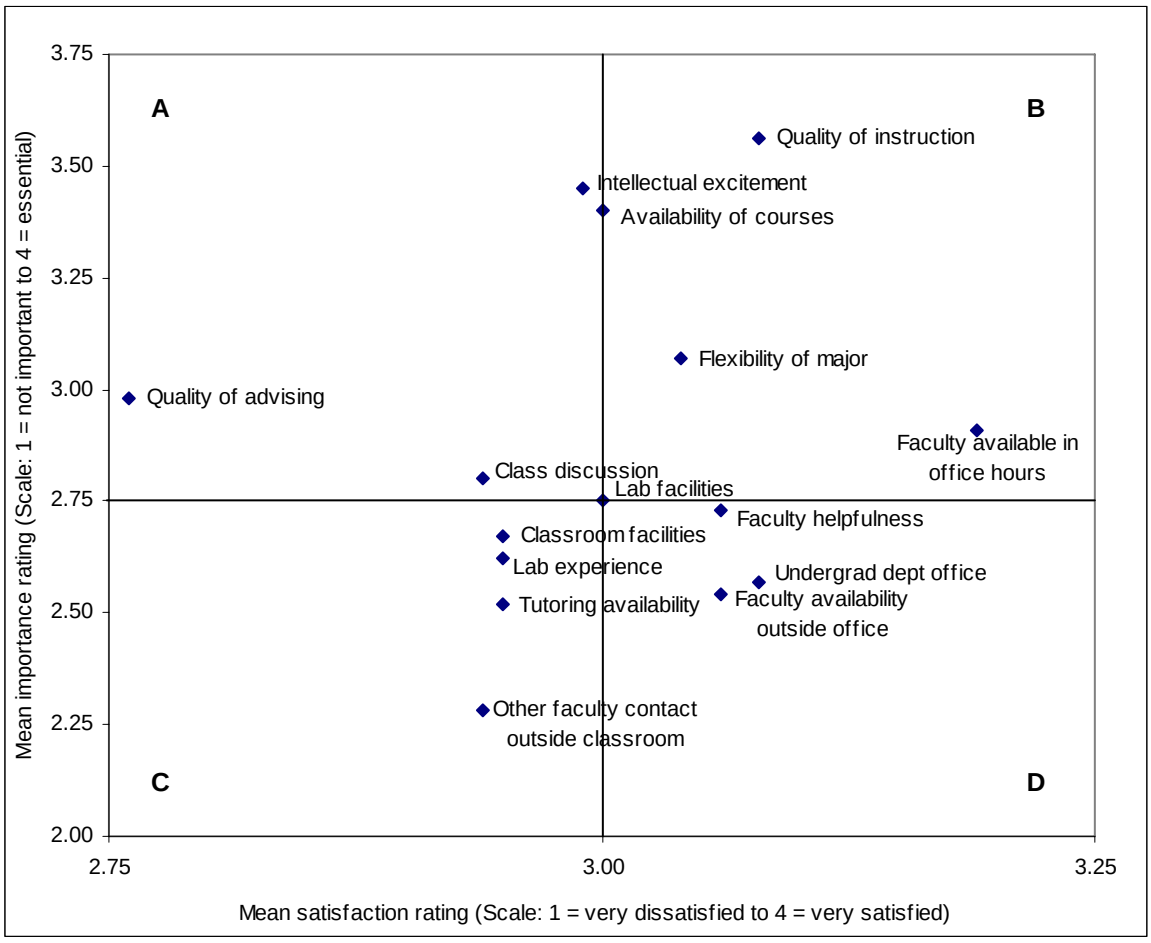
One way to assess the quality of the undergraduate experience at Cornell is by examining the relationship between seniors' ratings of the importance of specific aspects of their major and their satisfaction with those aspects. Aspects of the major that seniors deem to be of higher importance and with which they are more satisfied might be considered institutional strengths. Conversely, aspects of the

major rated as more important and with which seniors are less satisfied might be considered institutional challenges. Quadrant analysis was used to examine these relationships.

Quadrant Analysis of Importance and Satisfaction Ratings for Aspects of Major

Figure 4.5 plots the mean importance score for each aspect of the major against its associated mean satisfaction score. This chart uses 2.75 as the median between higher and lower importance of specific aspects, and 3.00 as the median between higher and lower satisfaction with specific aspects. This creates four quadrants of importance/satisfaction.

Figure 4.5. Quadrant Analysis of Importance and Satisfaction Ratings for Aspects of Major



Quadrant B displays those aspects of the major deemed more important by seniors and with which they are comparatively more satisfied. Using the categorization suggested above, quality of instruction, flexibility of the major and faculty availability during office hours emerge as strengths in the undergraduate experience at Cornell. Quadrant A shows those aspects of the major rated more important by seniors and with which they were comparatively less satisfied. Quality of advising and opportunities for class discussion surface as challenges for Cornell. Given the discrepancy between their associated importance and satisfaction ratings, these aspects of the major may be worthy of additional institutional consideration.

Chapter 5. Financing College

The 2002 Senior Survey asked seniors several questions about financing their undergraduate education. This chapter examines seniors' sources of financial support (Q12), personal debt levels (Q13); and their perceptions of the impact of paying for college on their family (Q14) and their college experiences (Q15). The 2002 Parent Survey included some parallel measures of financing college. Where available, we compare seniors' and parents' reports.

SOURCES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Seniors were asked the extent to which they funded their educational expenses through institutional aid, parental resources, their own personal resources, or other sources. As shown in Table 5.1, the majority of seniors relied upon parental support to pay for college. Fully 75% of Cornell seniors reported that parental resources were a major source of funding; only 8% said their parents were not a source of financial support. Financial aid was the next largest funding source. Institutional aid was a major source of financing for 42% of seniors, and a minor source for an additional 19%. Two-fifths of seniors reported receiving no financial contribution from Cornell. To a lesser extent, seniors relied on their own personal resources to finance college; this was a major source for 20% and minor source for 42% of seniors. Only 10% of seniors reported other sources of funds for financing college.

Table 5.1. Cornellians' Sources of Financial Support for Undergraduate Education

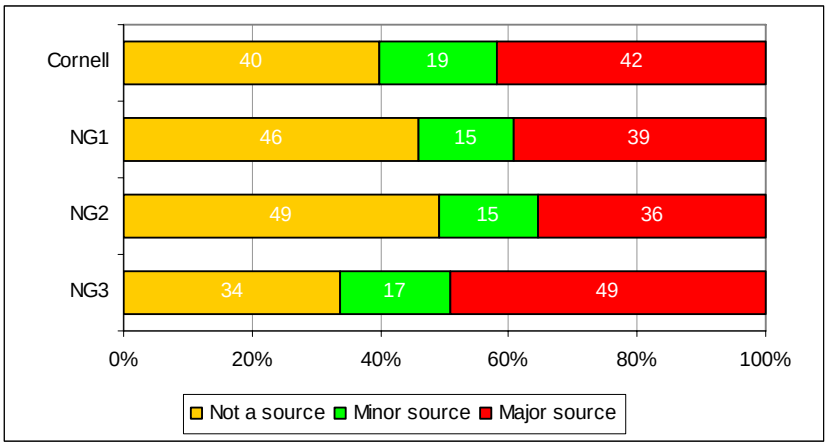
	Not a source[a]	Minor source	Major source
Financial aid from institution	39.7	18.5	41.7
Parental resources	7.6	17.1	75.3
Own personal resources	37.6	42.2	20.2
Other sources	89.4	3.8	6.8

Source: 2002 Senior Survey.

[a] Includes seniors who reported "don't know."

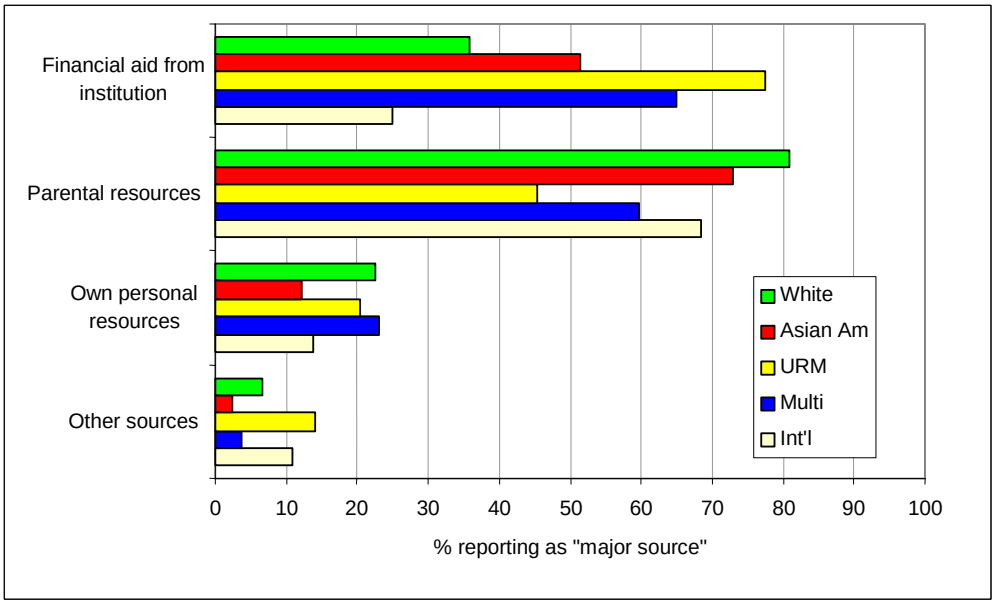
Seniors' reliance upon various source of financial support to pay for college varied significantly by gender and college, but more substantially by norm group and race/ethnicity.

Figure 5.1. Use of Institutional Aid to Finance Education by Norm Group



Norm group differences were most pronounced for reliance on institutional financial aid. Figure 5.1 shows the percentage of seniors,by norm group, reporting use of this source of funds. Cornell seniors were more likely than Norm Group 2 peers and less likely than Norm Group 3 peers to report major use of institutional financial aid.

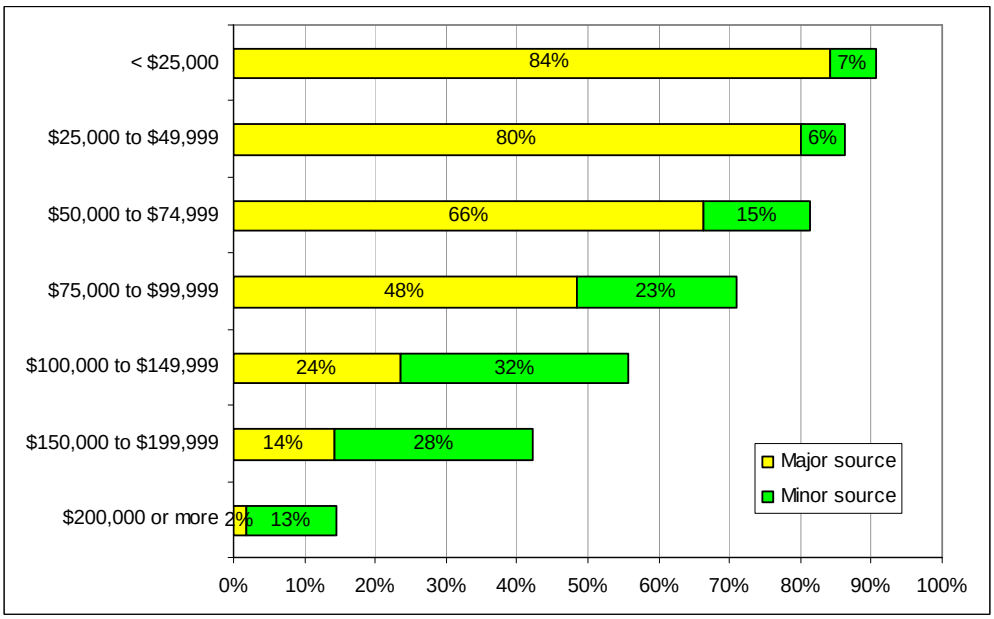
Figure 5.2. Major Sources of Financial Support for Undergraduate Education by Race



Within Cornell, the largest race-related differences in funding sources were associated with the use of institutional aid and parental resources. URM seniors were significantly more likely to report major use of institutional aid (78%) than white (36%) and international (25%) seniors. In contrast, URM seniors were least likely to report major use of parental resources to pay for college (45%) while white seniors were most likely to report major use (81%).

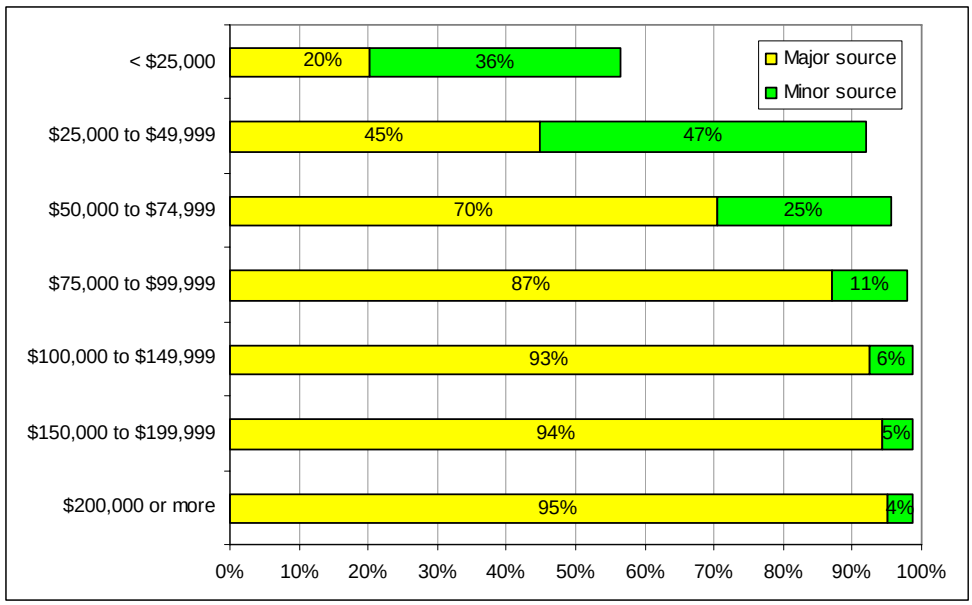
As was noted in Chapter 2, "Background Characteristics", seniors' estimates of parental income differ significantly by norm group and race/ethnicity. Cornell seniors reported significantly lower parental incomes than their peers in Norm Groups 1 and 2. Within Cornell, URM seniors were significantly overrepresented in the lower parental income ranges, while white seniors were overrepresented in the upper income ranges. Parental income, in turn, was significantly associated with seniors' reliance on institutional and parental resources.

Figure 5.3. Cornellians' Use of Institutional Resources to Pay for College by Parental Income



As Figure 5.3 shows, parental income is negatively associated with use of institutional aid; that is, seniors with lower family incomes make greater use of financial aid.

Figure 5.4. Cornellians' Use of Parental Resources to Pay for College by Parental Income



Conversely, parental income is positively associated with seniors' use of parental resources to pay for educational expenses; that is, seniors with higher family incomes reported making greater use of parental resources. The patterns observed in Figures 6.3 and 6.4 were consistent across all norm groups.

COLLEGE-RELATED DEBT

Seniors were asked to estimate the total amount they had borrowed personally for their undergraduate education. Response categories ranged from zero to $30,000 or more. Average debt levels were calculated by interpreting each debt category at its midpoint (e.g., the midpoint of $5,000 to $9,999 of debt was recoded as $7,500) and the top category as $30,000. Table 5.2 shows average indebtedness reported by seniors across norm groups.

Table 5.2. Seniors' Indebtedness by Norm Group

	% of students with debt	% with debts of $25k or more	Average debt (all students)	Average debt (students with debt)
Cornell	41.7	17.3	$10,179	$17,465
Norm Group 1	50.1	8.7	$7,091	$14,576
Norm Group 2	52.1	11.4	$7,980	$17,098
Norm Group 3	45.1	13.8	$8,224	$17,273

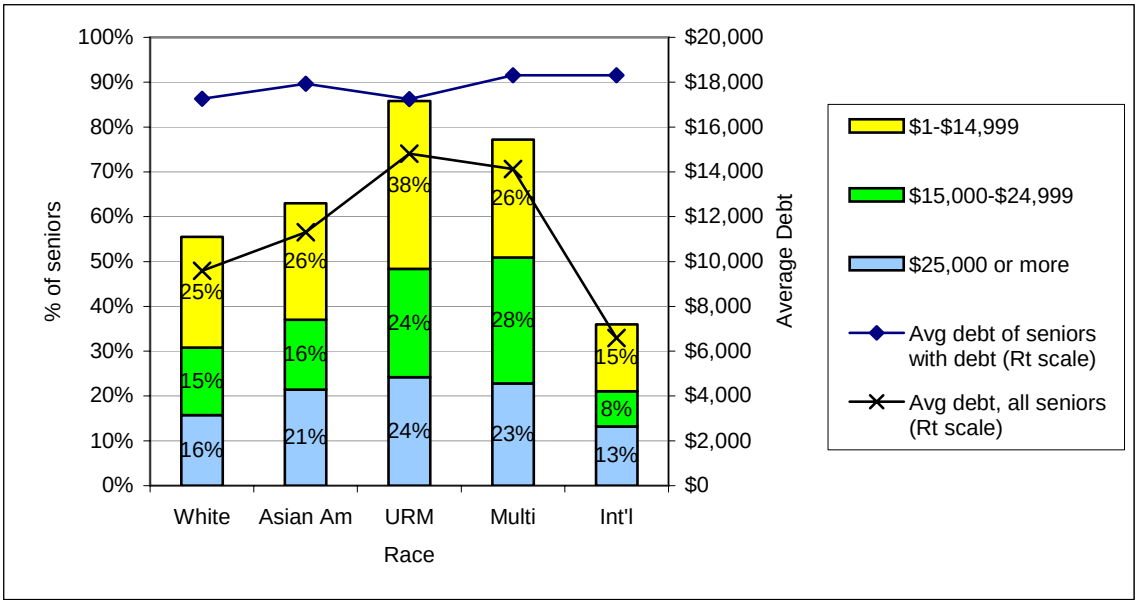
Source: 2002 Senior Survey.

All comparisons across norm groups are significant at $p < .001$

Compared to seniors in norm institutions, a significantly smaller proportion of Cornell seniors reported incurring personal debt (42%) but a significantly larger proportion reported having personal debts of $25,000 or more (17%). The average personal debt load of all Cornell seniors (including those who reported no debt) was $10,179, an amount significantly higher than that reported by peers in norm institutions. Restricting consideration to borrowers, seniors in Norm Group 1 institutions reported significantly lower average debt levels ($14,576) than their peers at Cornell and Norm Group 2 and 3 institutions.

Within Cornell, personal debt levels were not uniformly distributed across survey respondents. The largest differences in indebtedness were associated with seniors' race/ethnicity and parental income.

Figure 5.5. Cornellians' Personal Debt by Race



The columns in Figure 5.5 show the proportions of Cornell seniors within each race group reporting debts of $25,000 or more (the bottom segment), $15,000 to $24,999 (the middle segment), and $1 to $14,999 (the top segment). The lines represent the average debt for all students in the race group (lower line) and all borrowers in the race group (upper line). URM seniors reported the highest incidence of personal debt (86%) followed by multi-race seniors (77%). International seniors were least likely to have incurred any personal debt, with only 36% reporting education-related loans. Likewise, when non-borrowers are included in the calculation, URM and multi-race seniors had significantly higher average debt levels ($14,808 and $14,131, respectively) while international students had the lowest average debt level ($6,588). However, when we restrict our analysis to seniors who borrowed some amount, race differences in personal debt diminish and are no longer statistically significant. In this calculation, URM borrowers amassed $17,252 in personal debt, slightly lower than that of white seniors at $17,268; international borrowers had accrued the highest average loan level ($18,318) followed by multi-race borrowers ($18,307).

As shown in Figure 5.6 (next page), student indebtedness is strongly associated with parental income. Seniors from lower income families were much more likely to be borrowers. Fully 86% of Cornell seniors who reported parental income of less than $50,000 borrowed some amount, compared to only 20% of seniors who reported parental income of $150,000 or more. The average debt for all seniors (non-borrowers included) with parental income of less than $50,000 was $16,123 while that of seniors with parental income of $150,000 or more was $3,061. Further, when they borrow, seniors from low income families also tend to borrow significantly more than seniors from high income families. Considering only those seniors who borrowed some amount, the average personal debt for borrowers with parental incomes of $50,000 or less was $18,883. The average debt for borrowers with parental incomes of $150,000 or more was $14,718.

Figure 5.6. Cornellians' Personal Debt by Parental Income

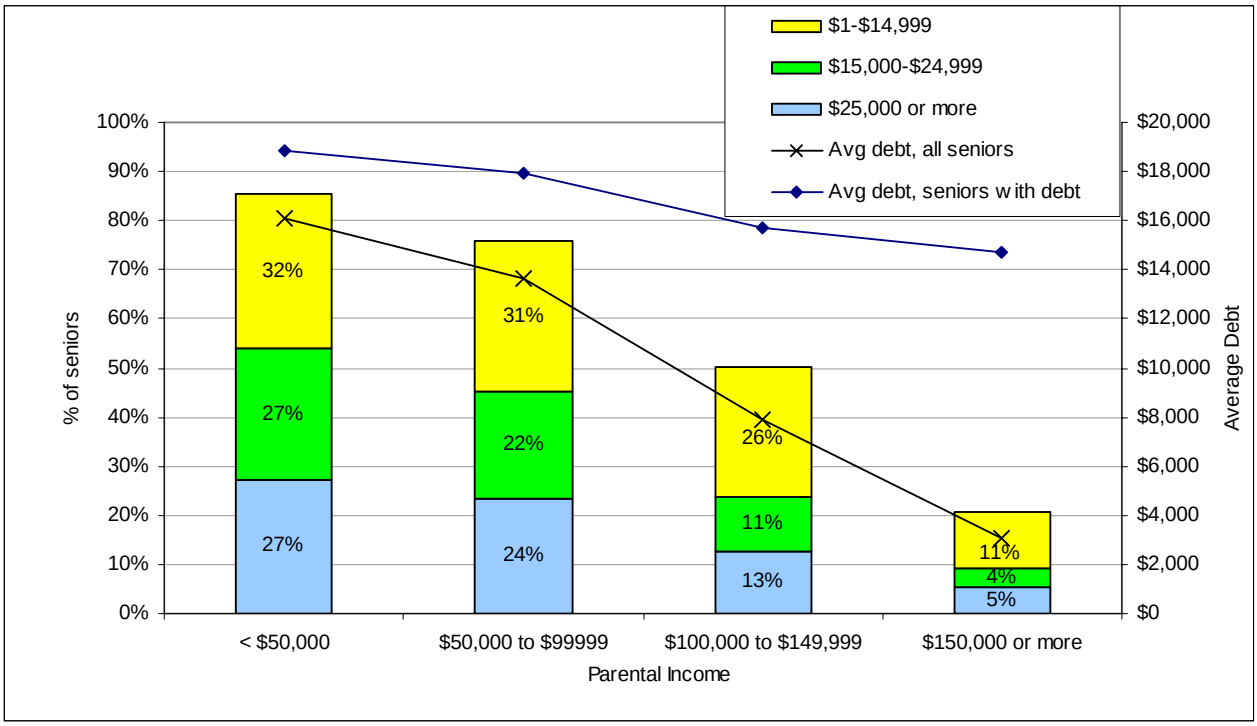


Figure 5.7. Cornellians' Average Personal Debt (including non-borrowers) by Race within Parental Income

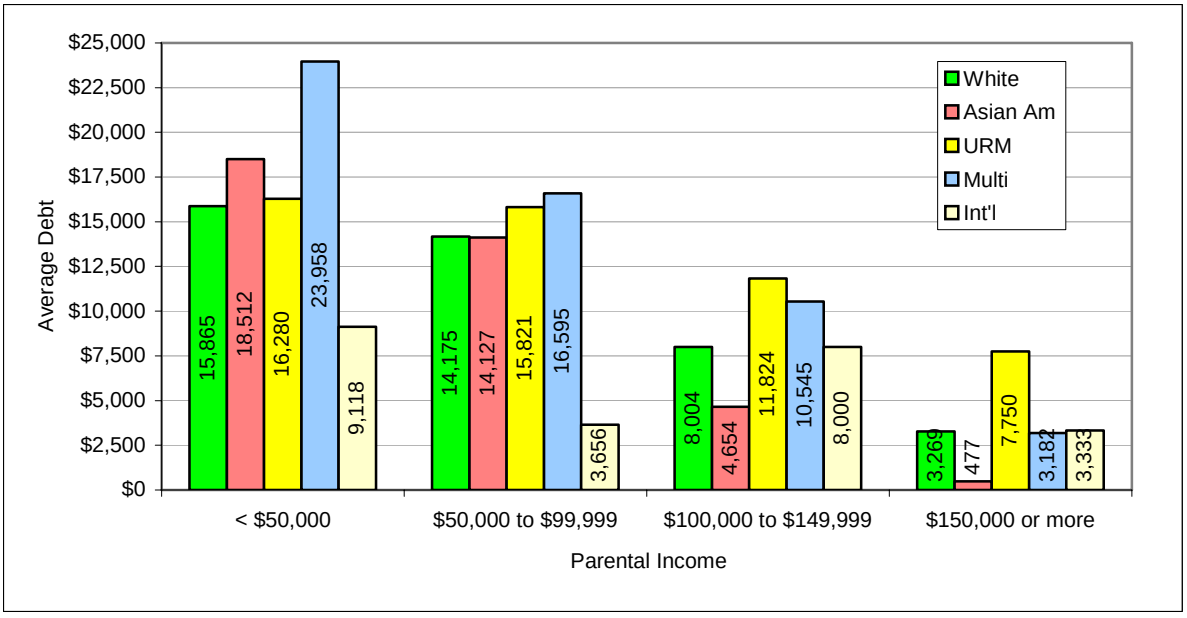
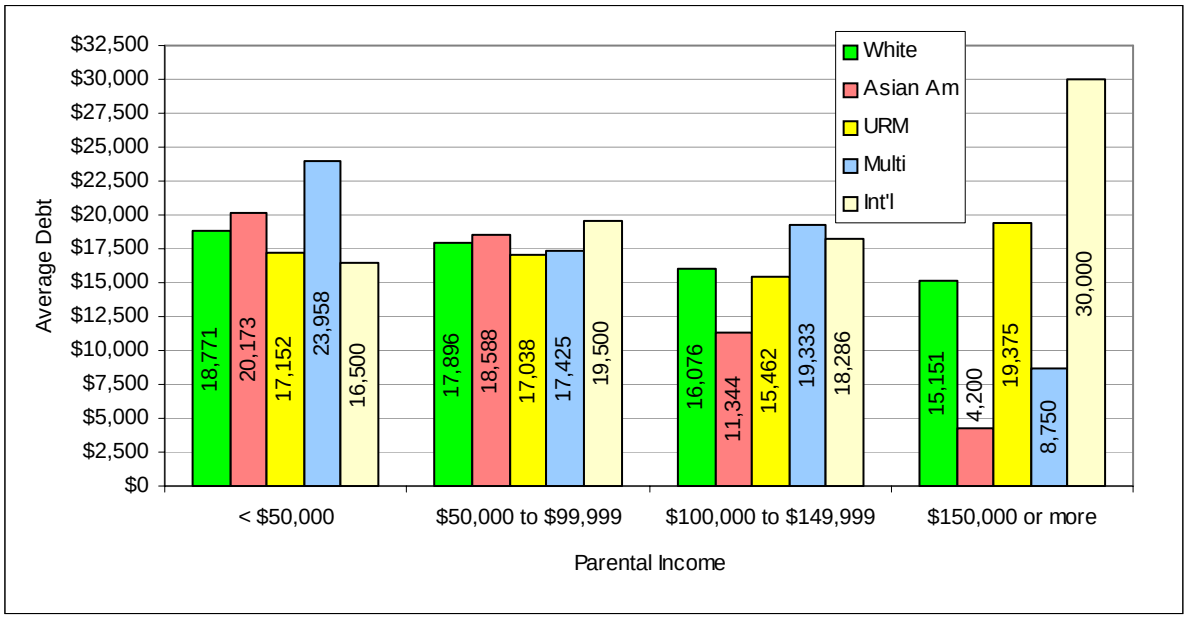


Figure 5.7 shows the average debt level of Cornell seniors (including non-borrowers) by race within parental income groups. Given the small number of non-white seniors, particularly within the two highest income groups, results must be interpreted with great caution. Across all income groups, URM and multi-race seniors tended to report higher debt levels than white, Asian-American and international seniors.

Differences were most pronounced in the lowest income group (multi-race seniors had the highest average debt) and highest income group (URM seniors had the highest average debt). International seniors and, in the two highest income ranges, Asian American seniors tended to have the lowest average personal debt levels.

Figure 5.8. Cornellians' Average Personal Debt of Borrowers by Race within Parental Income



Once again, when we restrict our consideration to Cornell students who borrowed some amount, race variations in personal debt levels diminish. White and Asian American seniors from lower income families borrowed more than their counterparts from higher income families. The association between family income and amount borrowed was not as linear for seniors of other races. Across all income categories, the debt levels of URM and multi-race seniors did not differ significantly from those of other seniors. While international students were much less likely to be borrowers (as shown in Figure 5.7), they tend to accrue personal debt loads roughly equivalent to those of American students when they do borrow; the exception to this pattern is observed in the highest income range, where international students had significantly higher average debt, but this is based on very small numbers of non-American students.

IMPACT OF PAYING FOR COLLEGE ON FAMILY

The Senior Survey asked seniors to judge how much impact paying for their college education had on their family.

Table 5.3. Seniors' Perceptions of Family Impact of Paying for College by Norm Group

	% reporting impact on family as			
	None/slight[a]	Moderate	Considerable	Severe
Cornell	19.7	32.7	35.9	11.7
Norm Group 1	20.8	33.6	36.3	9.4
Norm Group 2	21.2	31.0	34.4	13.4
Norm Group 3	20.8	32.9	36.3	10.0

Source: 2002 Senior Survey.

[a]Includes seniors who reported "My family does not contribute funds for my education."

Comparisons across norm groups are significant at $p < .001$

Across all institutions, almost half of seniors thought paying for their college education had produced substantial ("considerable" or "severe") financial impacts on their families. Norm Group 2 seniors were

significantly more likely to report “severe” family impacts while those in Norm Groups 1 and 2 were least likely to do so.

A parallel question concerning family impact was asked of parents in the 2002 Parent Survey. This gives us the opportunity to examine the relationship of Cornell seniors’ and parents’ perceptions of the family impact of paying for college.

Table 5.4. Cornell Seniors’ and Parents’ Perceptions of Family Impact of Paying for College

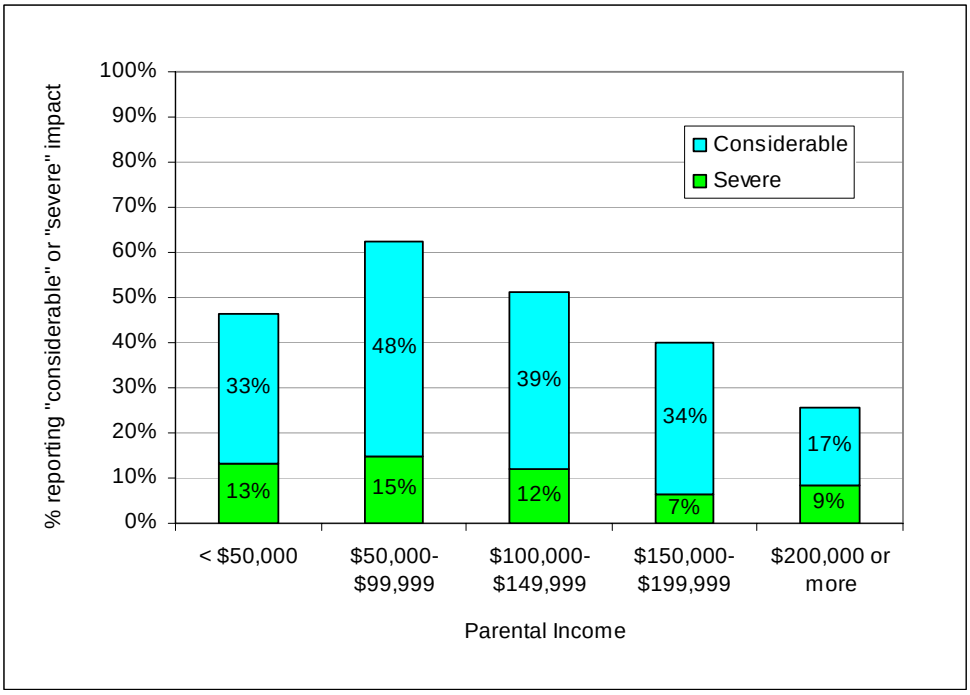
	% reporting	
Impact on Family	Seniors	Parents
None/slight[a]	18.0	17.5
Moderate	30.3	30.4
Considerable	40.1	43.7
Severe	11.6	8.4

Source: Matched 2002 Senior and Parent Survey data file.

[a] For seniors, includes 2.4% who reported "My family does not contribute funds for my education."

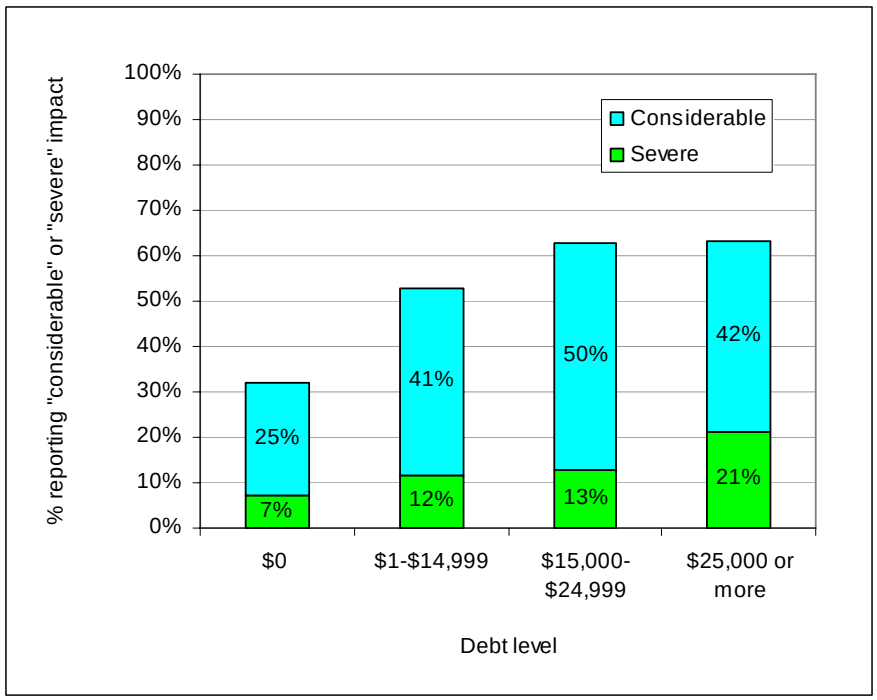
Table 5.4 shows results from 502 matched senior/parent pairs at Cornell. Compared to the population of Senior Survey respondents, this subset of seniors was more likely to report “considerable” financial impacts on their family. Within this subset of paired seniors and parents, there was general congruence between their respective perceptions of family impacts. Seniors were somewhat less likely than parents to report “considerable” impact on the family, and somewhat more likely to report “severe” impact.

Figure 5.9. Cornell Seniors’ Perceptions of Family Impact of Paying for College by Parental Income



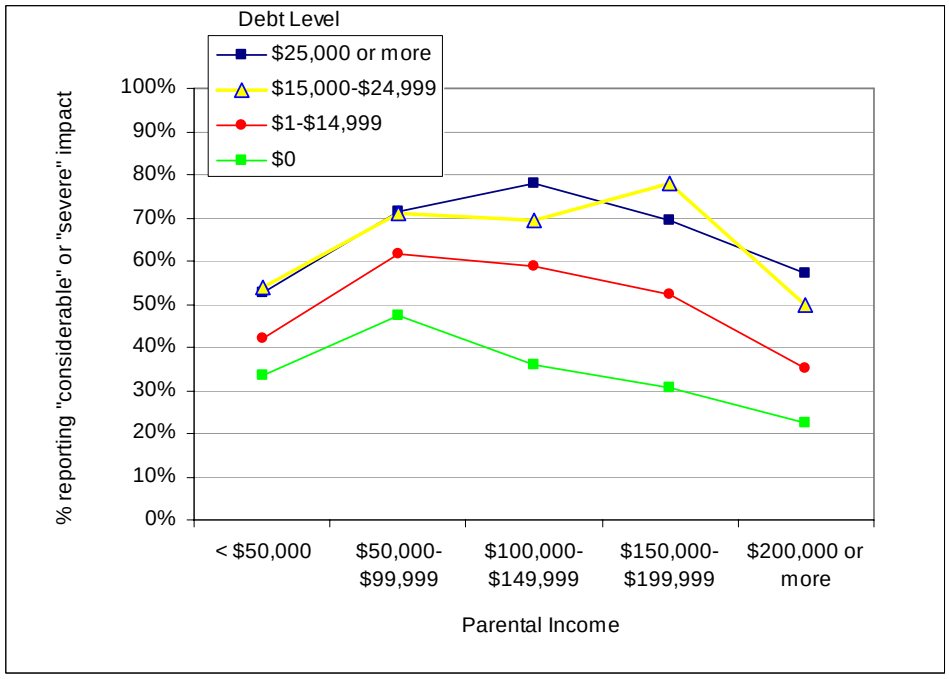
Cornell seniors’ perceptions of family impacts varies significantly by family income. Seniors who reported parental incomes between $50,000 and $100,000 were more likely than seniors in other income categories, both lower and higher, to report their families had experienced substantial negative impacts from paying for college. We note that compared to seniors reporting parental income of less than $50,000, seniors with family incomes between $50,000 and $100,000 were significantly less likely to use institutional financial aid (see Figure 5.3) and more likely to rely on parental resources (see Figure 5.4) to finance their college education. Thus, this appears to be the income range in which families are both expected to contribute more to educational costs but have comparatively less financial capacity to do so.

Figure 5.10. Cornell Seniors' Perceptions of Family Impact of Paying for College by Personal Debt



Cornell seniors' perceptions of the family impact of paying for college also vary significantly with levels of student indebtedness. As shown in Figure 5.10, seniors' perceptions of the family impact of paying for college rose progressively with associated levels of personal debt. The biggest increment in perceived impact was associated with taking on some debt (the difference between having no debt and $1 to $14,999 of debt).

Figure 5.11. Cornell Seniors' Perceptions of Family Impact of Paying for College by Parental Income and Personal Debt

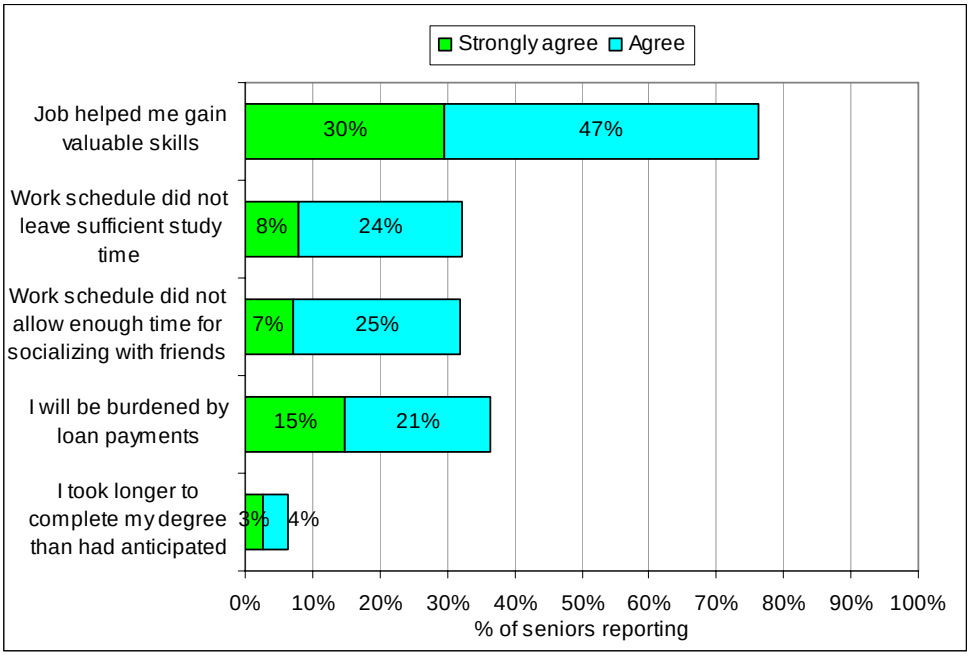


Finally, Figure 5.10 portrays the relationship between Cornell seniors' perceptions of family impact and student indebtedness within categories of parental income. As was apparent in Figure 5.10, there is a consistent positive relationship between perceived family impact and student debt; across all parental income categories, as their debt levels rise, so do seniors' perceptions of how much their family has been affected by paying for college. In addition, we see the same general pattern emerge between perceived impacts and parental income across debt ranges. That is, across levels of student indebtedness, seniors from the middle ranges of family income ($50,000 to $99,999, and to a lesser extent, $100,000 to $149,999) tend to report the greatest impacts on their families of paying for college.

IMPACT OF PAYING FOR COLLEGE ON STUDENT EXPERIENCES

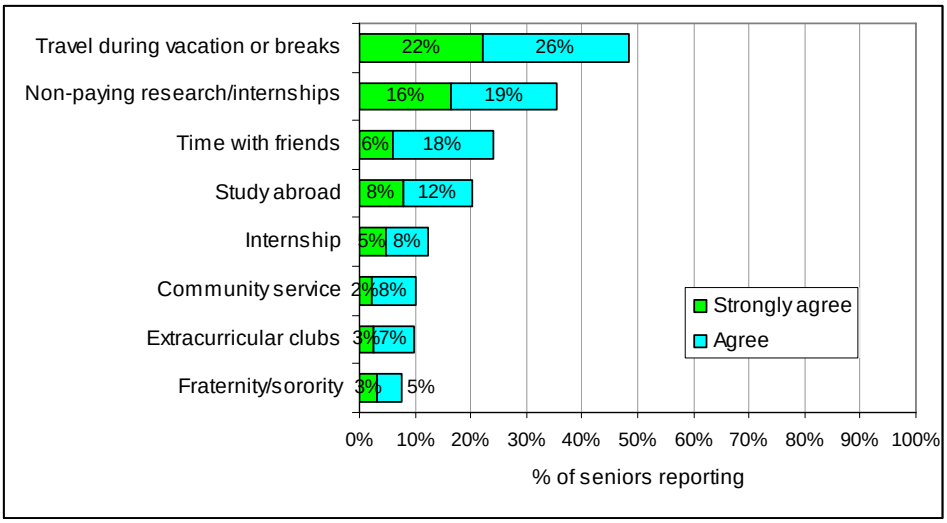
A second set of survey measures asked seniors how paying for college had affected their college experiences. The first three questions in this series concerned the effect of students' work schedules on their college experience. In the analyses of these items we excluded students who reported the questions were "not applicable," the majority of whom reported elsewhere on the survey that they had not worked for pay during the academic year. All survey respondents were included in the analyses of the remaining two items.

Figure 5.12. Effect of Paying for College on Cornell Students' Experiences



Cornell students who worked during the academic year generally perceived positive effects from this employment. More than three-quarters of seniors felt their academic year job had helped them gain valuable skills and experience. In contrast, less than one-third reported their work schedules had curtailed time for studying or socializing with friends. One-third of seniors agreed they would be seriously burdened by loan payments after graduation. However, very few (7%) agreed that paying for college had lengthened their time to degree.

Figure 5.13. Foregone Experiences Due to Lack of Money



A final set of measures of the impact of paying for college asked seniors whether they had foregone certain activities while in college "due to lack of money." Seniors were most likely to report having traveled less because of lack of funds. One-third said they had foregone non-paying research

and internship opportunities because of money concerns. Seniors were least likely to have curtailed involvement in community services activities, extracurricular clubs or fraternities/sororities because of a lack of money.

Parents were asked a similar question in the 2002 Parent Survey, which again gives us the opportunity to examine the relationship of seniors' and parents' perceptions of the impact of paying for college. Table 5.5 compares the responses from 502 matched pairs of seniors and parents.

Table 5.5. Cornell Seniors' and Parents' Perceptions of Foregone Experiences Due to Lack of Money

Q. Due to lack of money, I have had to forego:

	% reporting	
	Seniors[a]	**Parents[b]**
Travel during vacation or breaks	51.1	34.7
Non-paying research/internships	35.2	21.3
Study abroad	20.4	20.7
Internship	13.7	8.2
Community service	10.1	5.2
Extracurricular clubs	9.3	8.4
Fraternity/sorority	8.8	5.6

Source: Matched 2002 Senior and Parent Survey data file.

[a] For seniors, this table combines "agree" and "strongly agree."

[b] Parents were asked whether their child had to forego any of these activities.

Seniors and parents were congruent in the ranked order of foregone experiences. However, seniors were more likely than their parents to report having missed specific experiences due to lack of money. These differences were most pronounced for the curtailment of travel, and non-paying research and internship opportunities. This suggests that seniors either do not always tell their parents about missed experiences during college or, at least, are more acutely aware of these missed experiences.

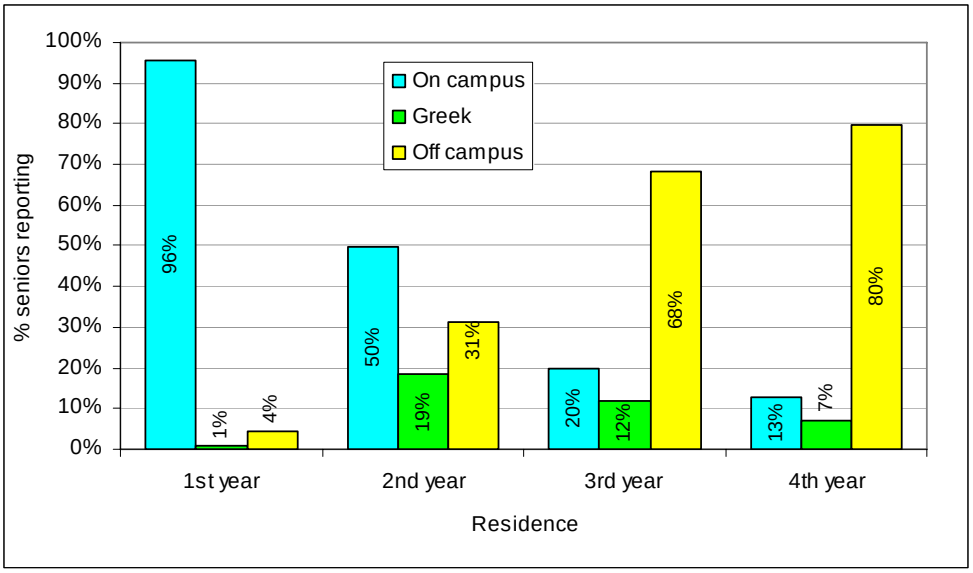
Chapter 6. Activities and Interactions

Seniors from the Class of 2002 were asked to report on their participation in a variety of activities and programs during college, and their interactions with students and faculty. Together, these measures shed light on the nature and extent of seniors' academic, co-curricular and interpersonal involvement in college. This chapter examines seniors' residence during college (Q24), their participation in intellectually-oriented activities and awareness programs (Q16), and extracurricular clubs and organizations (Q17), and time spent on various aspects of college life (Q18). It also summarizes seniors' interactions with other students (Q11A) and faculty members (supplementary Qs 31, 35, 36, 42 and 43).

RESIDENCE DURING COLLEGE

Seniors were asked where they lived during each of their four years of college. For our analyses, we collapsed response options into three categories of housing: on campus (includes residence hall, interest house or other campus housing, and on-campus apartment), Greek (fraternity or sorority), and off campus (includes off-campus apartment or room, with parents or relatives, and studying abroad or another off-campus program).

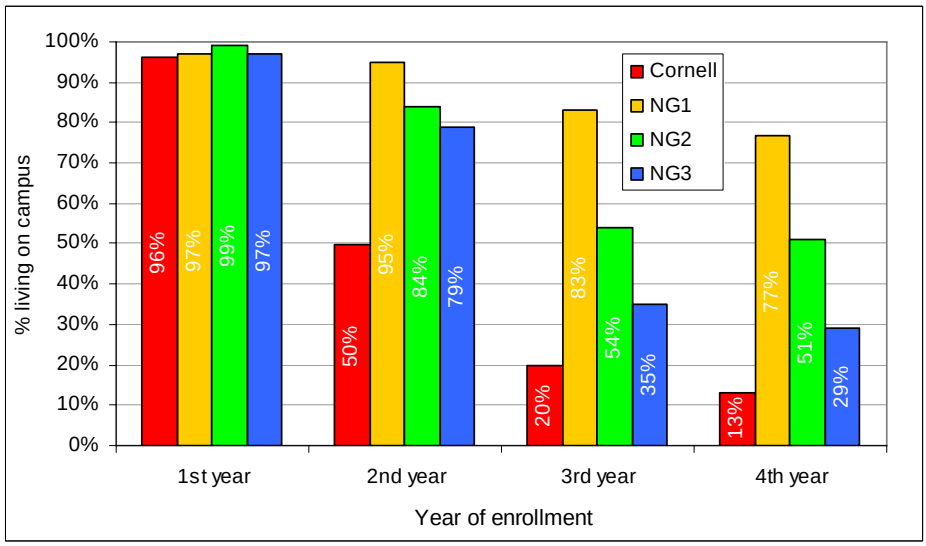
Figure 6.1. Residence by Class Year



Where Cornell seniors lived during college varies significantly across the undergraduate years. Virtually all respondents (97%) lived on-campus in their freshman year at Cornell, as did half (50%) as sophomores. One-fifth of students continued to live on campus in their junior and only 13% reported doing so in their senior year. In turn, the likelihood of living off-campus increased progressively over the undergraduate years. Approximately one-third of seniors lived off-campus in their sophomore year, while more than two-thirds did so in their junior year. And 80% did so as seniors. The Greek system comprises the third component of housing options at Cornell. Seniors were most likely to have lived in a fraternity or sorority as sophomores (19%).

Cornell seniors' housing choices varied significantly from those of their peers in norm institutions. The largest differences were associated with living on campus. Figure 6.2 shows the proportion of seniors who reported living in on-campus housing in each of four years of enrollment for Cornell and its peer institutions.

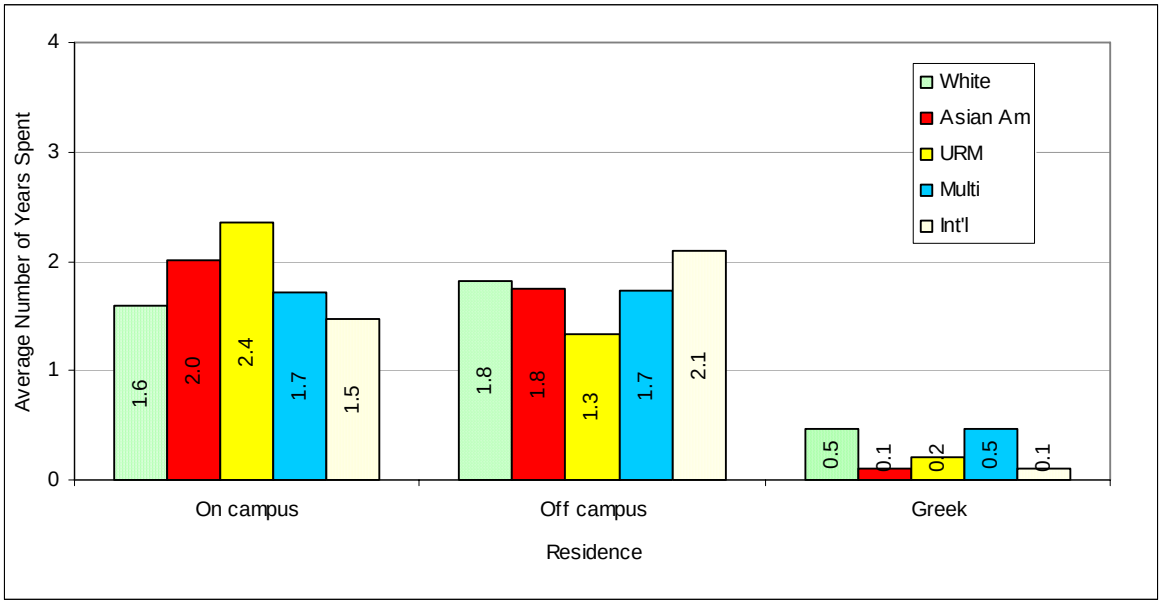
Figure 6.2. On Campus Residence by Class Year and Norm Group



Virtually all seniors reported living on campus during their freshman year, across Cornell and its peer institutions. The proportion of seniors living on campus declined over each successive year of enrollment, but the drop was much larger for Cornell seniors, particularly in comparison to Norm Group 1 seniors.

Within Cornell, seniors' housing choices also varied significantly by race/ethnicity. Figure 6.3 shows the average number of years lived on-campus, in Greek residences, and off-campus for all seniors and by race/ethnicity. URM seniors made significantly greater use of on-campus housing than seniors of other races, followed by Asian American seniors. International seniors spent significantly more time living off-campus than seniors of other races, particularly URM seniors. White and multirace seniors made significantly greater use of Greek-based housing than Asian American, URM and international seniors.

Figure 6.3. Cornellians' Average Years in Residence Type by Race/Ethnicity

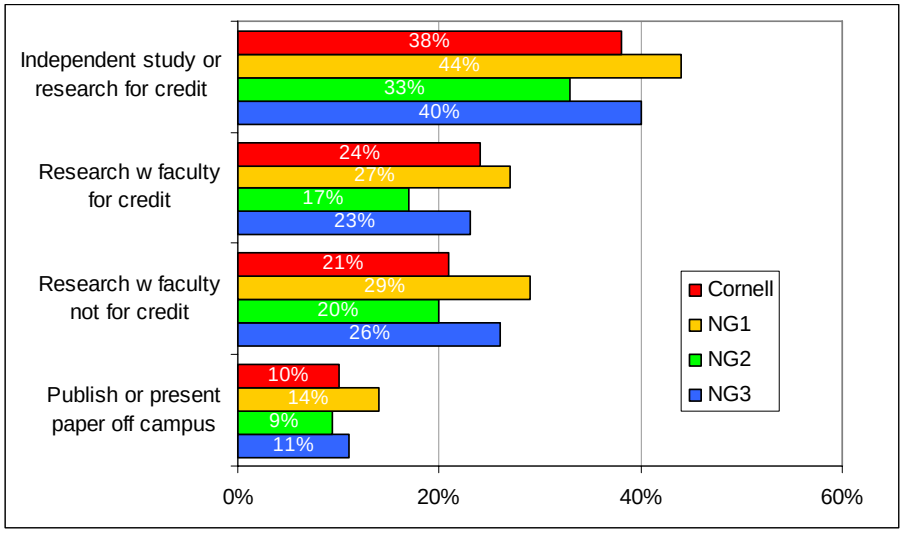


Cornell seniors' housing choices also varied significantly across the undergraduate colleges. These differences may reflect corresponding differences in enrollments by race/ethnicity. For example, compared to other colleges, AS and EN seniors spent significantly more time living on-campus. AS has a comparatively higher proportion of URM seniors while EN has a comparatively higher proportion of Asian American seniors.

PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMICALLY-ORIENTED ACTIVITIES

Seniors were asked whether they had participated in two general types of academically-oriented activities during college: research and scholarship, and off-campus study. Figure 6.4 shows the percentage of seniors, within Cornell and our peer institutions, who participated in each of four research/scholarship activities during college: independent study/research for credit, research with a faculty member for credit, research with a faculty member not for credit, and publishing or presenting a paper off campus.

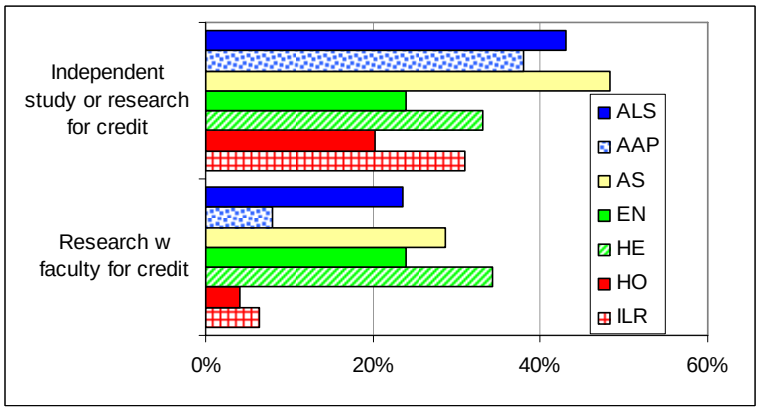
Figure 6.4. Participation in Research/Scholarship Activities by Norm Group



Across institutions, seniors were most likely to have participated in independent study or research for credit, and least likely to have published or presented a paper off campus. Norm Group 1 seniors consistently reported the highest level of research participation while Norm Group 2 seniors reported the lowest. Cornell seniors' participation fell between these two extremes.

Within Cornell, there were two significant differences in research/scholarship participation by race. Compared to seniors of other races/ethnicities, URM seniors were significantly more likely to have completed independent study or research for credit while Asian American seniors were significantly less likely. White seniors were most likely to have published or presented research off-campus , while international and Asian American seniors were least likely.

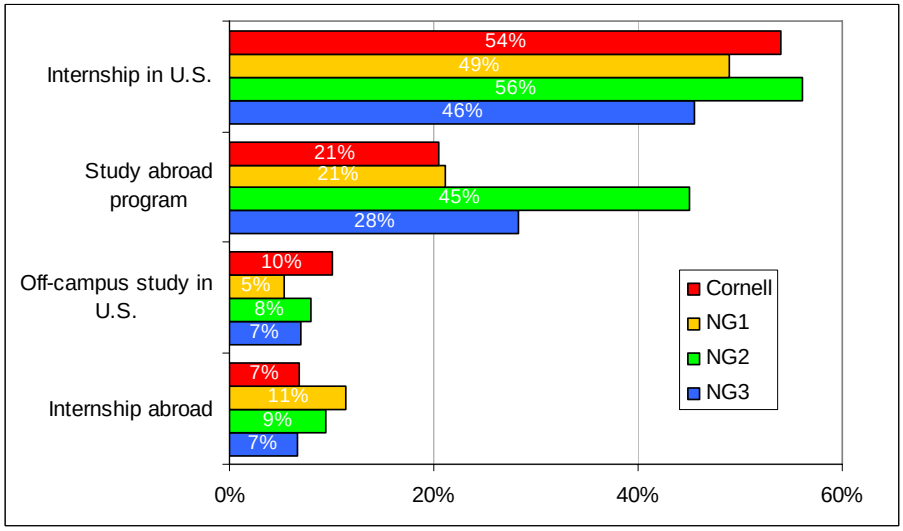
Figure 6.5. Cornellians' Participation in Research/Scholarship Activities by Undergraduate College



The greatest within-institution variance in research/scholarship participation was associated with undergraduate college affiliation. ALS and AS seniors were most likely to have completed independent study or research for credit (more than 40% in each college) while EN and HO seniors were least likely to have done so (less than 25% in each). HE seniors were most likely to have participated in research with a faculty member for academic credit (38%), while AAP, HO and ILR seniors were least likely (less than 10%).

Seniors were asked whether they had participated in four types of off-campus study activities: study abroad program, internship abroad, off-campus study in the U.S., and internship in the U.S.

Figure 6.6. Participation in Off-Campus Study Activities by Norm Group



Across institutions, seniors were most likely to have participated in an internship experience within the United States, followed by a study abroad program. The largest between-institution differences were associated with these two forms of off-campus study activity. Cornell and Norm Group 2 seniors reported the highest participation rates in U.S. internships, while Norm Group 2 seniors were significantly more likely to have participated in study abroad than their peers at Cornell and in the other norm institutions. Across all institutions, seniors were much less likely to have participated in an internship abroad or off-campus study in the U.S.

Within Cornell, female seniors reported significantly higher participation in study abroad programs than male seniors; there were no other significant gender differences. Participation in off-campus study activities varied significantly by race. Most notably, international students were much more likely than seniors of other races to have participated in an internship abroad, but less likely to have participated in an internship in the U.S. Once again, the largest differences in participation rates within Cornell were associated with undergraduate college.

Figure 6.7. Cornellians' Participation in Off-Campus Study Activities by College

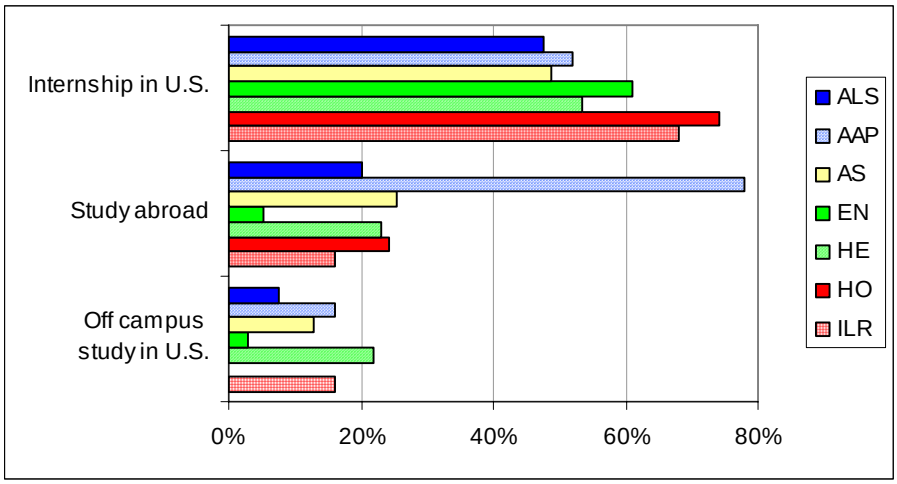
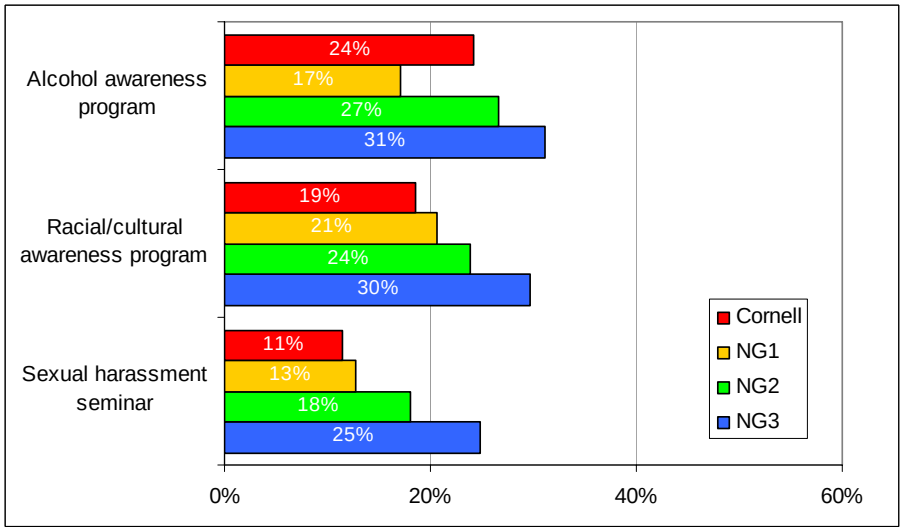


Figure 6.7 shows the off-campus study activities with the largest variance across colleges. Seniors enrolled in EN, HO and ILR were more likely than seniors enrolled in other colleges to have participated in a U.S.-based internship. More than three-quarters of AAP seniors had studied abroad compared to only 5% of EN seniors. Compared to seniors in other colleges, HE seniors were most likely to have studied off-campus in the U.S. while seniors in EN and HO were least likely.

The survey also asked seniors about their participation in three types of awareness programs and workshops: racial/cultural, alcohol, and sexual harassment. Figure 6.8 shows the percentage of seniors, within Cornell and our peer institutions, who participated in each of these awareness programs.

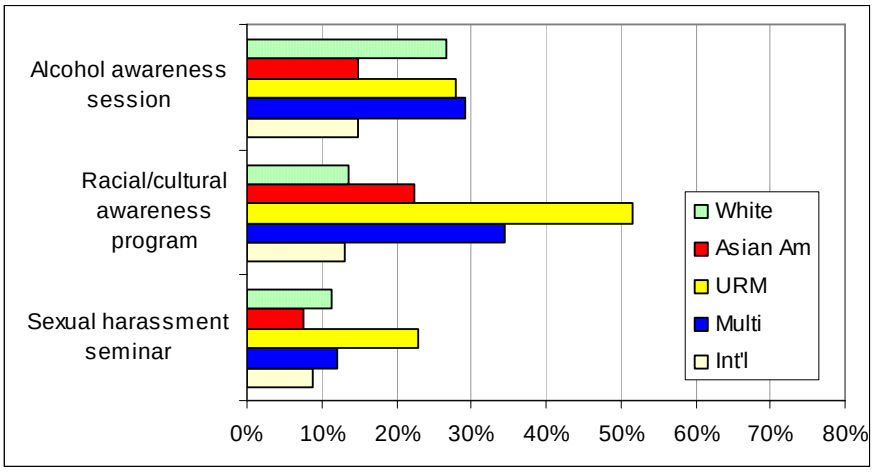
Figure 6.8. Participation in Awareness Programs by Norm Group



Seniors across all institutions were most likely to have participated in awareness sessions related to alcohol or racial/cultural issues, and were comparatively less likely to have participated in seminars regarding sexual harassment. Norm Group 3 seniors reported the highest rates of participation in awareness sessions followed by Norm Group 2 seniors; Cornell and Norm Group 1 seniors reported comparatively lower participation in these sessions.

Within Cornell, women were more likely than men to have attended awareness sessions, particularly programs concerning racial/cultural awareness. There were more, and larger, differences in awareness program participation within Cornell by race and by college.

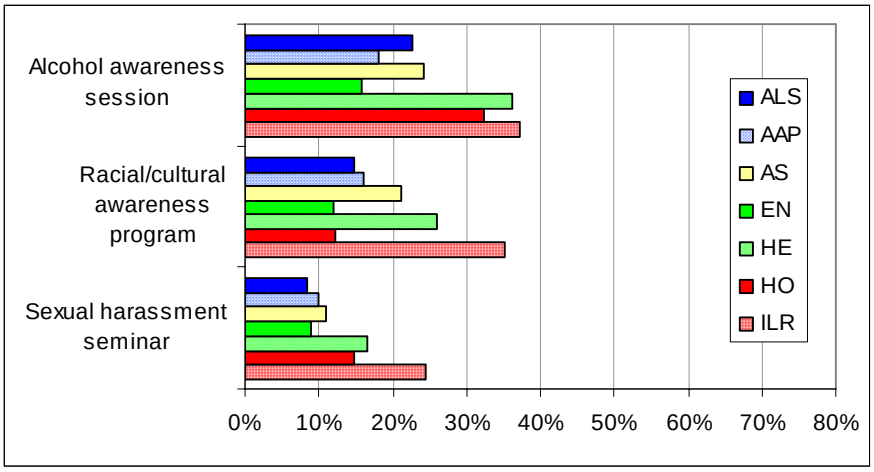
Figure 6.9. Cornellians' Participation in Awareness Programs by Race



URM seniors at Cornell reported the highest participation rates in awareness programs, followed by seniors reporting multiple races. White, Asian American and international seniors reported comparatively lower participation. Differences were largest for attendance at racial/cultural awareness programs.

Figure 6.10 (next page) shows the percentage of Cornell seniors who participated in each type of awareness session by undergraduate college. On the whole, seniors enrolled in ILR were most likely to have attended an awareness program, followed by HE seniors. Conversely, seniors from AAP and EN reported the lowest participation rates. However, participation rates also varied with the type of session. For example, HO seniors reported comparatively high participation in alcohol awareness sessions and low participation in racial/cultural awareness programs.

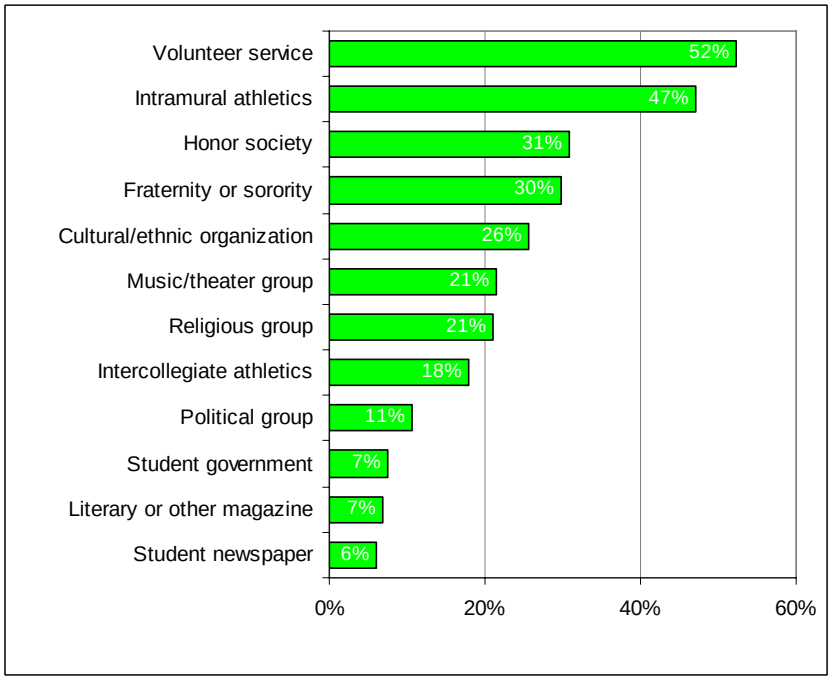
Figure 6.10. Participation in Awareness Programs by College



PARTICIPATION IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Seniors were asked if they had actively participated in twelve types of extracurricular activities during their undergraduate years. Figure 6.11 shows the percentage of Cornell seniors who reported participating in each of these activities; activities are listed in descending order of participation rates.

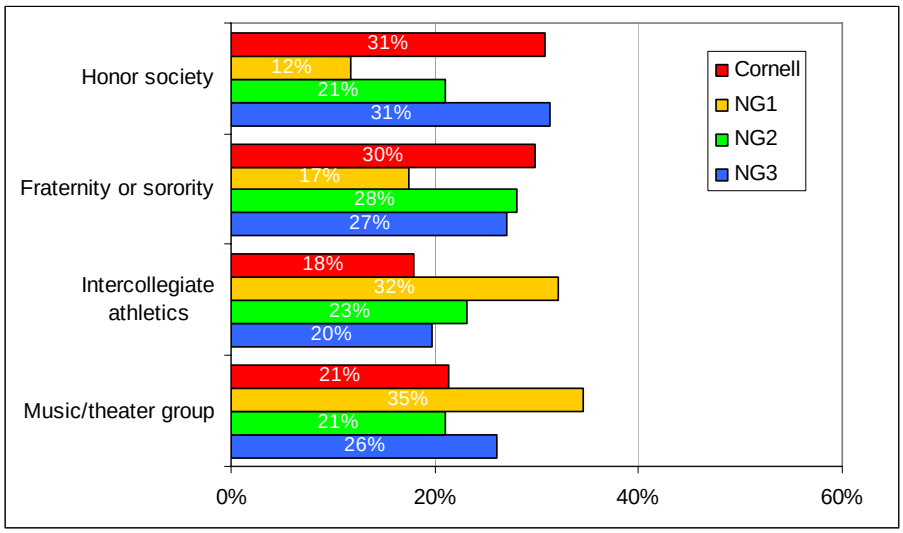
Figure 6.11. Cornellians' Participation in Extra-curricular Activities



Fully half (52%) of Cornell seniors had participated in volunteer activities during at least one of their undergraduate years. Almost as many (47%) had participated in intramural athletics. Cornell seniors were least likely to have participated in student government, or in student magazines or newspapers.

While this pattern of highest and lowest participation rates across activities was generally consistent with findings among our peers, there were significant differences across norm groups in the participation rates associated with specific types of extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities with the largest norm group-related differences in participation are shown in Figure 6.12 (next page).

Figure 6.12. Participation in Selected Extra-curricular Activities by Norm Group

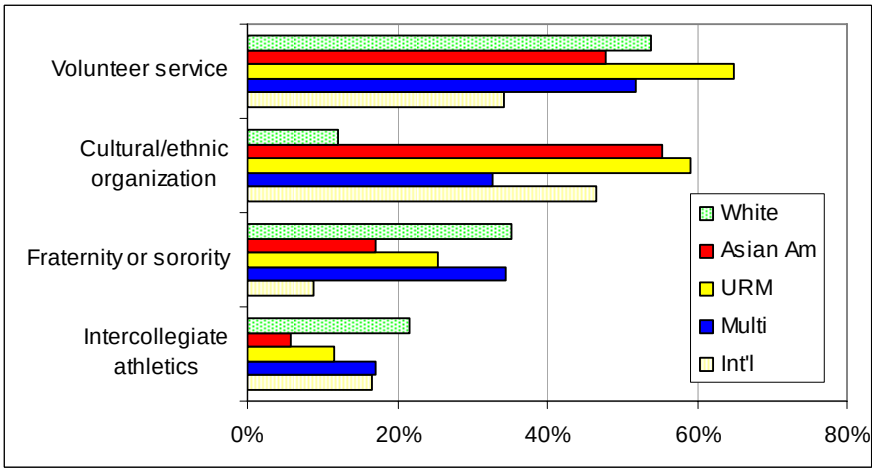


Cornell seniors reported comparatively high participation rates in honor societies and in fraternities or sororities, particularly in relation to seniors enrolled in Norm Group 1 institutions. A significantly smaller proportion of Cornell seniors had participated in intercollegiate athletics and in music/theatre groups, again, particularly in comparison to Norm Group 1 seniors.

Within Cornell, a few significant gender differences in extracurricular participation were observed. Female seniors were significantly more likely than male seniors to have participated in volunteer service at some point in their undergraduate years (59% of females versus 44% of males). Conversely, male seniors were significantly more likely than female seniors to have participated in intramural athletics (59% of males versus 38% of females) and intercollegiate athletics (21% of males versus 15% of females).

Differences in participation rates were also observed across race groups and undergraduate colleges at Cornell. Figure 6.13 shows the extracurricular activities with the largest race-associated differences in participation.

Figure 6.13. Cornellians' Participation in Selected Extracurricular Activities by Race



Under-represented minority seniors reported the highest rate of participation in volunteer service activities (65%) while international seniors reported the lowest (34%). Asian American (55%), URM (59%) and international (47%) seniors were significantly more likely to have participated in a cultural or ethnic organization for at least one year during college than their white (12%) peers. White (35%) and multiracial (35%) seniors were significantly more likely to have participated in a fraternity or sorority than Asian American (17%) or international (9%) seniors. Compared to Cornell seniors of other races/ethnicities, Asian American seniors reported the lowest rate of participation in intercollegiate athletics (6%).

Figure 6.14. Cornellians' Participation in Selected Extra-curricular Activities by College

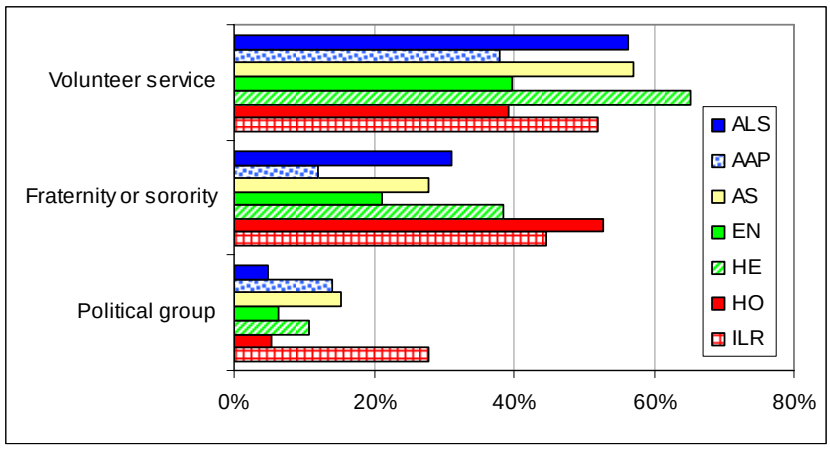
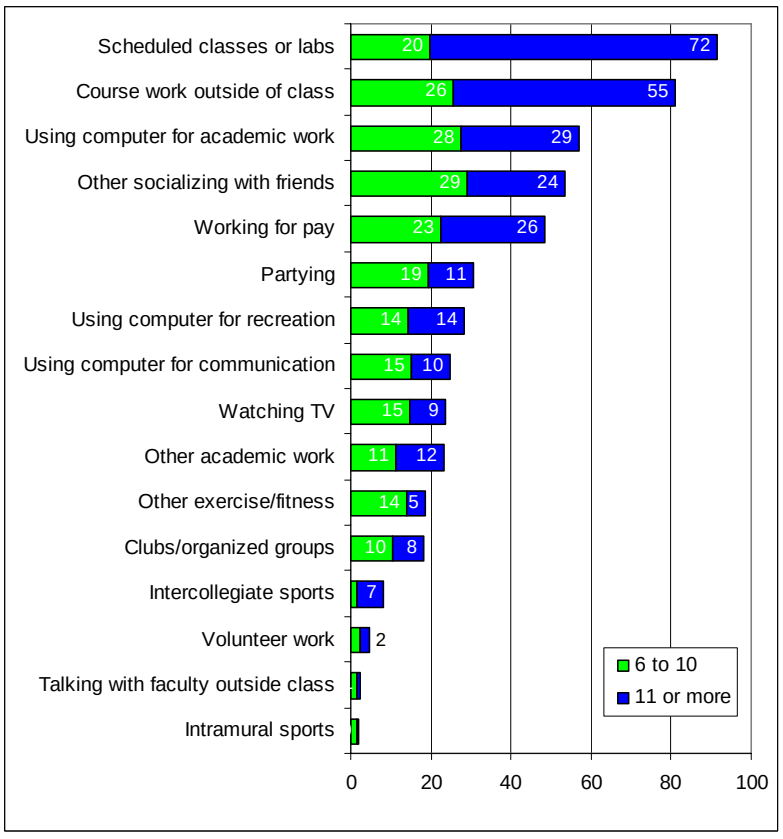


Figure 6.14 shows the extracurricular activities with the largest differences in participation rates across the undergraduate colleges at Cornell. Seniors enrolled in HE were most likely to have participated in volunteer activities (65%) while AAP, EN and HO seniors were least likely to have done so (less than 40% in each). Seniors enrolled in HO (52%) and ILR (45%) reported the most involvement in fraternities or sororities while AAP (12%) and EN (21%) reported the least. ILR seniors were significantly more likely to have participated in a political group as an undergraduate than their peers in other colleges at Cornell.

TIME ALLOCATED TO ACTIVITIES

The survey asked seniors to report how many hours they spent on various activities during a typical week in the fall term of their senior year. Figure 6.15 shows the percentage of Cornell seniors, in descending order, who reported spending six hours per week or more on each of the 16 activities listed.

Figure 6.15. Percentage of Cornellians' Spending Six or More Hours per Week on Activities

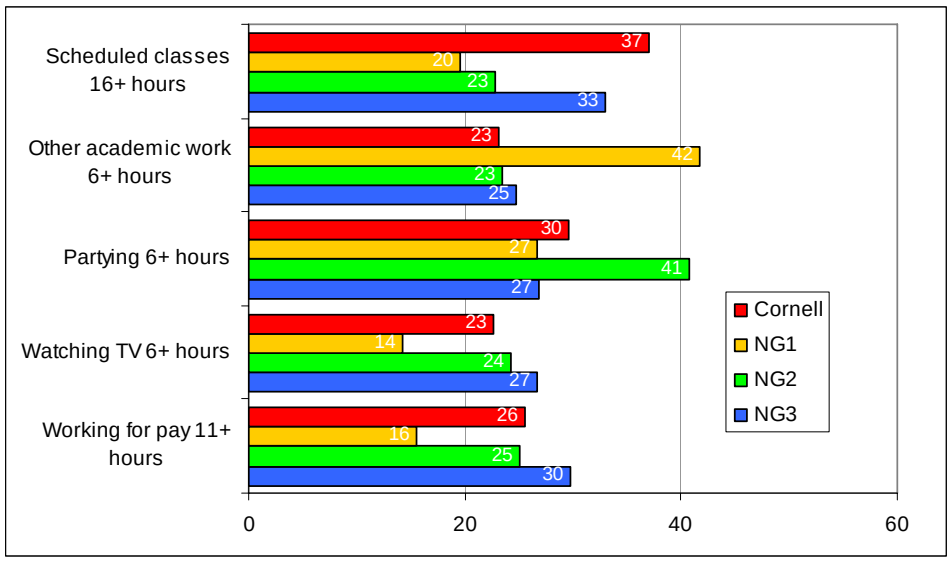


As would be expected, seniors reported spending the most time on academically-related activities. Seventy-two percent spent more than 11 hours per week attending scheduled classes or labs and 55% spent more than 11 hours per work working on tasks related to their classes and labs. Other activities consuming a substantial portion of seniors' time were using a computer for academic work, socializing with friends in a form other than partying, and working for pay. Cornell seniors reported spending the least amount of time on the following activities: participating in intercollegiate and intramural sports, doing volunteer work, and talking with faculty outside the classroom.

For the remaining findings concerning seniors' weekly time allocations, we restricted our analyses to seniors who reported attending scheduled classes or labs for six or more hours per week. We employed this restriction with the understanding that students with comparatively light course loads also report very different patterns of other activities such as studying, partying and working for pay.

Although many commonalities were observed, there were also statistically significant differences in Cornell seniors' weekly time allocations compared to those of seniors in our peer institutions. The activities with the largest differences across norm groups are pictured in Figure 6.16.

Figure 6.16. Hours per Week Spent on Selected Activities by Norm Group



Cornell seniors and their peers in Norm Group 3 reported significantly larger course loads in the fall term of their senior year than seniors in Norm Groups 1 and 2. Compared to Norm Group 1, Cornell seniors (and their peers in Norm Groups 2 and 3) reported spending significantly fewer hours per week on other academic work (such as a thesis or research) but significantly more hours watching television and working for pay. Norm Group 2 seniors were significantly more likely to report partying for six or more hours per week than seniors at Cornell and in Norm Groups 1 and 3.

Within Cornell, there were few substantial differences in female and male seniors' allocation of hours. The largest gender-related differences were associated with intramural athletics and recreational computer use; in both instances, males reported spending significantly more hours per week than females. There were greater differences in seniors' time allocation by race/ethnicity and undergraduate college.

Figure 6.17. Hours per Week Spent on Selected Activities by Race/Ethnicity

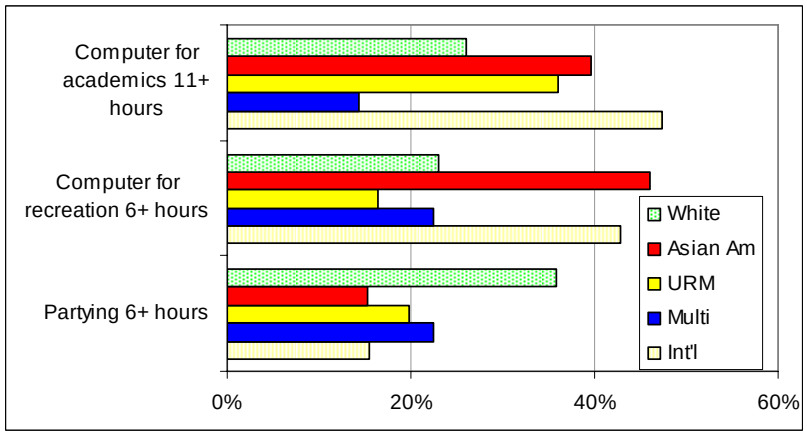
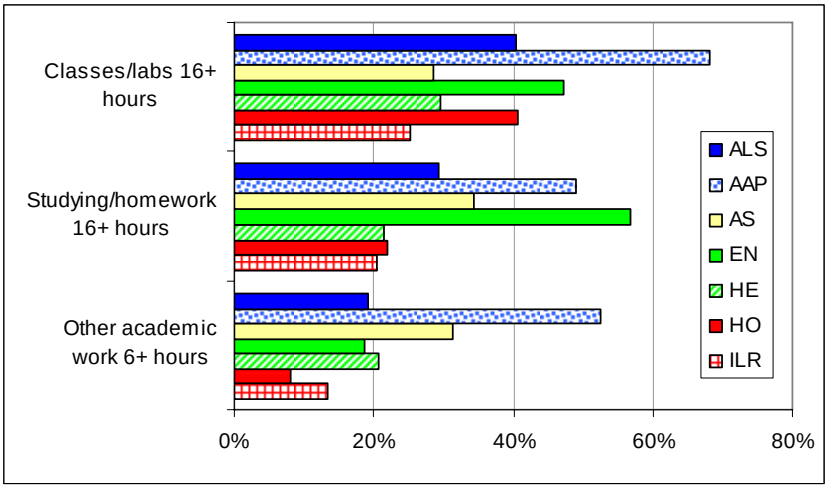


Figure 6.17 shows those activities with the largest race-associated differences. Compared to Asian American and international seniors, white and multi-racial seniors reported spending significantly fewer hours per week using the computer for academic and recreational purposes, and significantly more hours partying.

Figure 6.18. Hours per Week Spent on Selected Activities by College



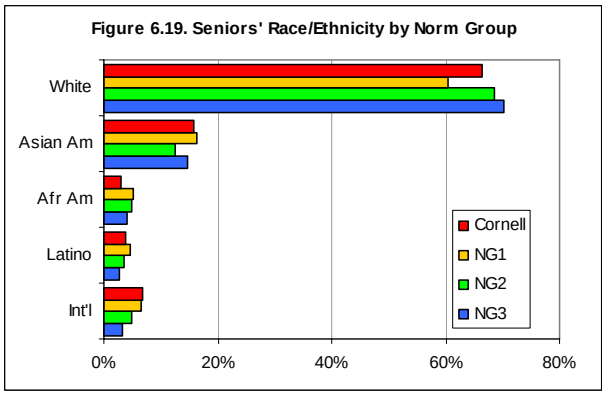
The largest differences in weekly time allocation across the colleges were related to academic activities. Seniors enrolled in AAP and EN reported spending the most hours per week attending classes and labs, and doing course-related work outside of class or labs. AAP seniors also reported spending significantly more hours per on other types of academic work than their peers in other colleges.

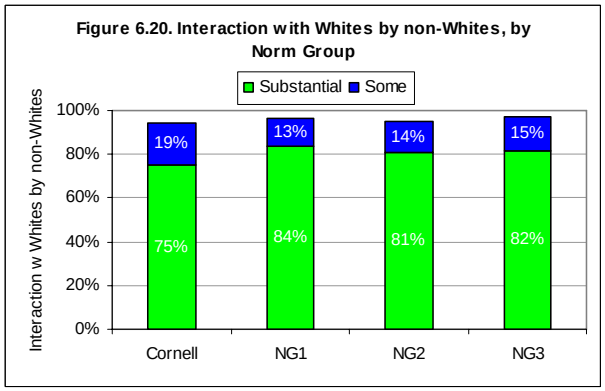
INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER STUDENTS

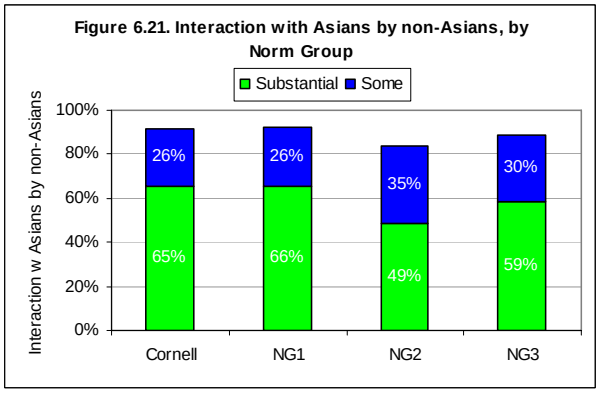
The Senior Survey explored the extent of diverse interactions among students, asking seniors how much they had interacted with students from various racial/ethnic groups, and from different religions and economic backgrounds than their own. The charts on the following page (Figures 6.19 to 6.24) compare the extent of students' interactions with students of other races/ethnicities within Cornell and its norm groups. For these comparisons, we use students' race/ethnicity as reported on the survey instrument and restrict our consideration to students reporting membership in one of the following race/ethnic groups: White, Asian American, African American, Hispanic or Latino, and non-citizen.

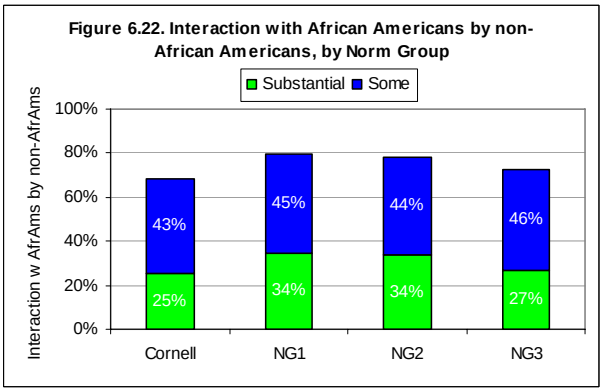
Figure 6.19 shows the percentage of seniors reporting membership in each of these race/ethnic groups at Cornell and within our peer institutions. Cornell and Norm Group 1 institutions had significantly higher percentages of Asian American seniors than Norm Group 2 (16% versus 12%), and a significantly higher percentage of international seniors than Norm Groups 2 and 3 (7% versus 5% and 3%, respectively). Overall, Norm Group 1 institutions had a more racially diverse senior population (as reflected in Senior Survey respondents) with a significantly lower proportion of white seniors than Cornell and its other peers (61% versus 66% to 70%) and a higher proportion of African American and Latino seniors.

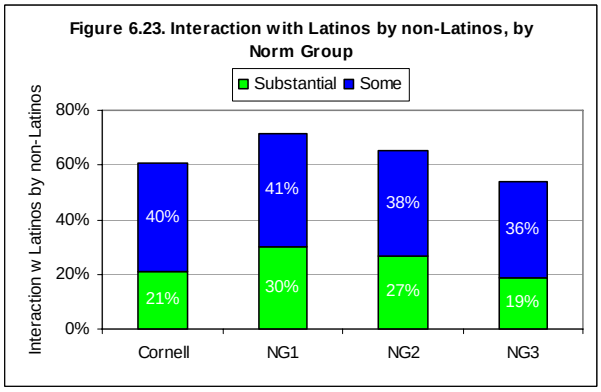
About two-thirds of non-Asian seniors enrolled at Cornell and in Norm Group 1 institutions reported having substantial interaction with Asian American students, a significantly greater extent of interaction than was reported by their non-Asian peers in Norm Group 3 and particularly in Norm Group 2 institutions (see Figure 6.21). Beyond this, Cornell seniors generally reported having had less extensive interaction with students of other races/ethnicities than their peers in Norm Groups 1 and 2. This was most pronounced in relation to interactions with African Americans (see Figure 6.22) and with Latinos (see Figure 6.23) by seniors who were not affiliated with these racial/ethnic groups. For example, only a quarter of Cornell and Norm Group 3 non-African American seniors reported having substantial interaction with African American students compared to a third of their non-African American peers in Norm Groups 1 and 2. About one-fifth of Cornell and Norm Group 3 non-Latino seniors reported having substantial interaction with Latino students compared to 30% of non-Latino seniors in Norm Group 1 institutions and 27% of non-Latino seniors in Norm Group 2 institutions. Differences in the representation of various races/ethnicities within Cornell and its peers may contribute to these patterns of diverse interactions; for example, the higher representation of Asian American students at Cornell may increase the likelihood of non-Asian American seniors having interactions with Asian Americans.











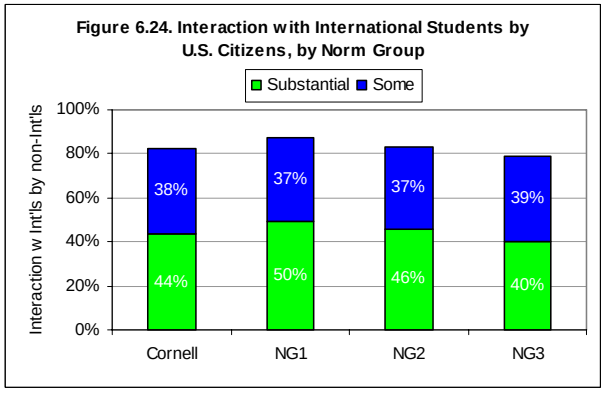


Table 6.1. Cornellians' Interactions with Students of Other Races

Some or substantial contact with	Respondents' Race/Ethnicity: White	Asian Am	Afr Am	Latino	Int'l
White***	**100**	95	90	94	93
Asian Am***	92	**97**	82	87	88
Black/African Am***	71	53	**98**	89	59
Hispanic/Latino***	62	47	94	**84**	60
International***	83	85	75	71	**96**

*** difference in extent of interaction among respondent race groups significant at $p < .001$

Within Cornell, the extent of diverse interactions differed significantly across racial/ethnic groups. The most extensive interaction occurred between members of the same racial/ethnic group. Beyond that, two

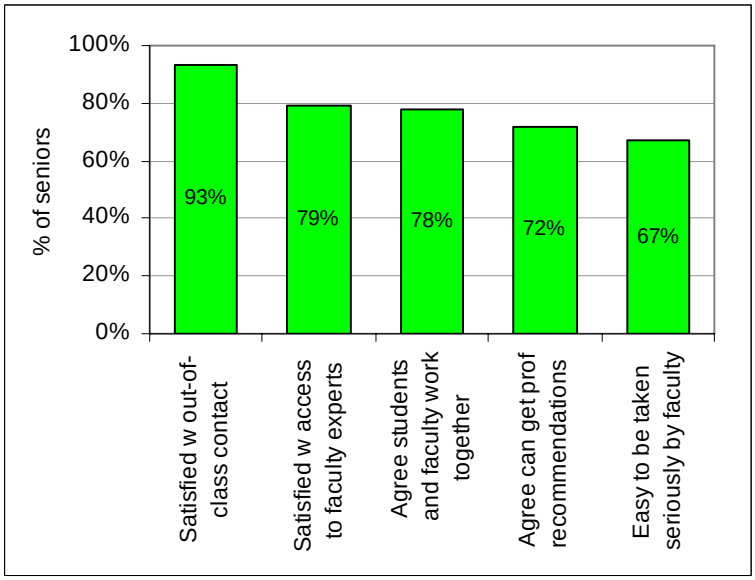
general clusters of diverse interaction emerged: among white, Asian American and international seniors; and between African American and Latino seniors.

There were few and generally small differences in the extent of diverse interactions reported by female and male Cornell seniors. There were significant differences in racially diverse interactions reported across the undergraduate colleges; these differences largely mirror differences in the representation of various races/ethnicities within the colleges, and hence, may result from within-college opportunities for diverse interactions. For example, Asian American and international seniors are overrepresented in the College of Engineering, while African American seniors are underrepresented. Consistent with this, non-Asian American and U.S. citizen seniors enrolled in Engineering reported significantly more extensive interactions with Asian Americans and international students, respectively, than their peers in other undergraduate colleges at Cornell. Similarly, white seniors are overrepresented in CALS; CALS non-white seniors reported significantly greater interaction with white seniors than did non-white seniors enrolled in other colleges.

INTERACTIONS WITH FACULTY MEMBERS

Among the questions posed exclusively to Cornell seniors were several measures of their interactions with faculty members: perceived ease of being taken seriously by professors (Q31); satisfaction with opportunities to be taught by faculty members who are experts in their field of study (Q35) and with opportunities to have discussions with faculty outside the classroom (Q36); and extent of agreement that students and faculty at Cornell work together to increase student learning (Q42) and that two or more faculty members know them well enough to provide a professional recommendation for a job or advanced degree work (Q43). On the whole, Cornell seniors reported quite favorable perceptions and attitudes concerning their interactions with faculty (see Figure 6.25).

Figure 6.25. Cornellians' Perceptions of Interactions with Faculty Members

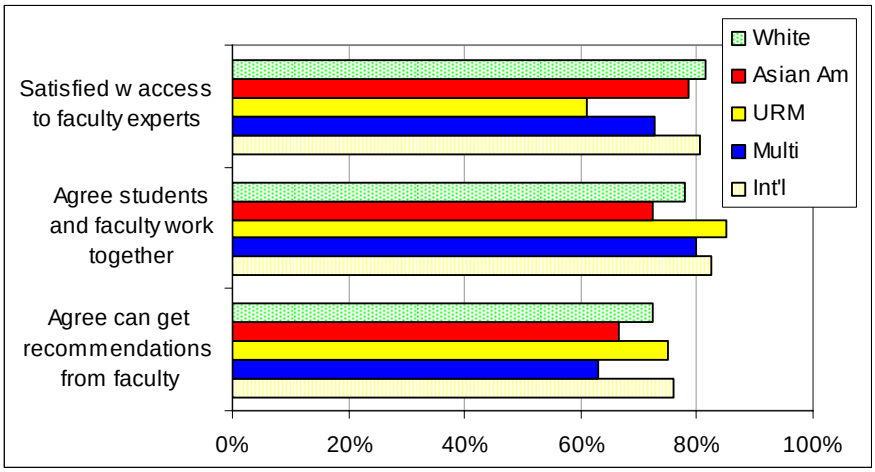


More than 90% of seniors were either "generally" or "very" satisfied with opportunities for out-of-class discussions with faculty. More than three-quarters were satisfied with opportunities to be taught by faculty experts, and agreed that students and faculty worked together to increase student learning. Just less than three-quarters either agreed or "strongly" agreed that two or more faculty members knew them well enough to provide professional recommendations. Of those seniors who said it was important to them, two-thirds reported it was "fairly" or "very" easy to be taken seriously by professors at Cornell.

There were few gender differences in students' perceptions of faculty interactions. Compared to male seniors, females reported significantly greater ease in being taken seriously by professors and significantly greater agreement that students and faculty work together at Cornell. A few significant differences were evident across the undergraduate colleges; for example, seniors enrolled in EN and ILR

found it significantly less easy to be taken seriously by professors, seniors enrolled in HO reported significantly greater satisfaction with their access to faculty experts in the field, and AAP and EN seniors reported significantly less agreement that Cornell students and faculty worked together to further student learning. The largest differences in reports of faculty interactions at Cornell were associated with seniors' race/ethnicity. Figure 6.26 shows the three interaction measures for which race-associated differences were largest.

Figure 6.26. Cornellians' Perceptions of Interactions with Faculty Members by Race



Compared to seniors of other races, URM seniors were significantly less satisfied with opportunities to be taught by faculty who are experts in their field. However, together with white and international seniors, URM seniors were significantly more likely than Asian American and multiracial seniors to agree that students and faculty work together at Cornell, and that they knew two or more faculty members well enough to obtain a professional recommendation from them.

Chapter 7. Student Development

Clearly an important measure of the quality of the undergraduate experience is the extent to which students feel they have made gains in various aspects of learning and personal development. This chapter summarizes seniors' ratings of the importance they placed on a variety of types of knowledge and abilities, and the extent to which they felt their abilities in these areas had changed since first entering college (Q9, parts I and II). The chapter also examines seniors' reports of having questioned or rethought their beliefs or values in a number of areas (Q11B).

IMPORTANCE OF SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Using a four-point scale from "not important" to "essential," seniors rated the importance "in their life" of each of 26 skills and abilities that may be developed during college.

Figure 7.1. Cornellians' Ratings of Importance of Skills and Abilities

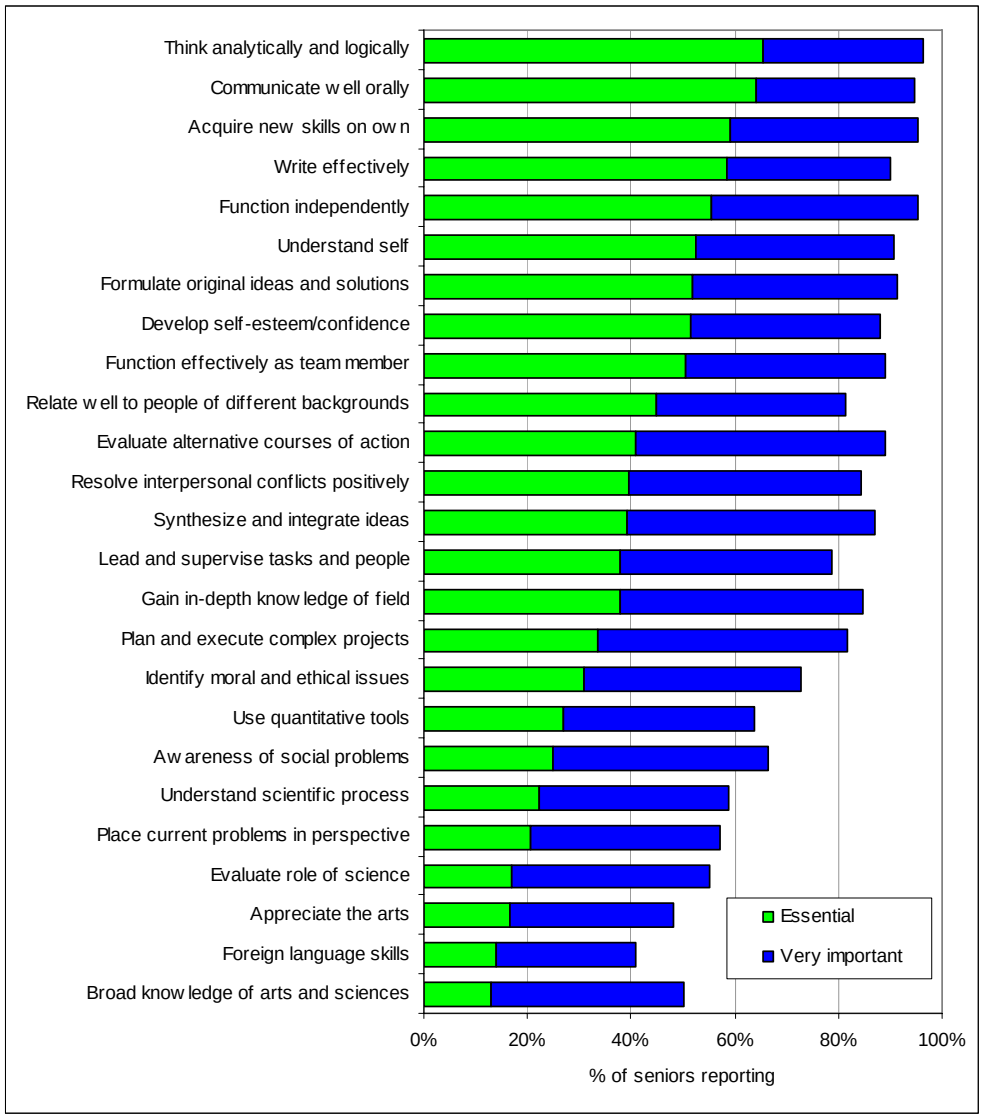


Figure 7.1 shows these skills and abilities in descending order of importance based on the percentage of seniors reporting a skill was "essential".

More than half of Cornell seniors thought nine skills were "essential." These encompassed higher-order cognitive skills such as thinking analytically and formulating original ideas, oral and written communication skills, self-development (self understanding and self confidence), and teamwork skills.

Interpersonal and sociocultural

skills (e.g., relating well to people from different backgrounds, conflict resolution, developing awareness of social problems) and skills related to planning and decision making (e.g., evaluate and choose among alternative courses of action, plan and execute complex projects) fell in the mid-range of seniors' importance ratings. The remaining skills were rated as "essential" by less than one-quarter of Cornell seniors. For the most part, these are skills that are differentially associated with specific disciplines or fields of inquiry – such as understanding the scientific process; appreciating art, literature, music and drama; and reading or speaking a foreign language – and may therefore be considered more or less important depending upon a students' major.

GAINS IN SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Using a four-point scale from "weaker now" to "much stronger now," seniors indicated how much they had changed in relation to each of these skills and abilities since entering college.

Figure 7.2. Cornellians' Ratings of Change in Skills and Abilities

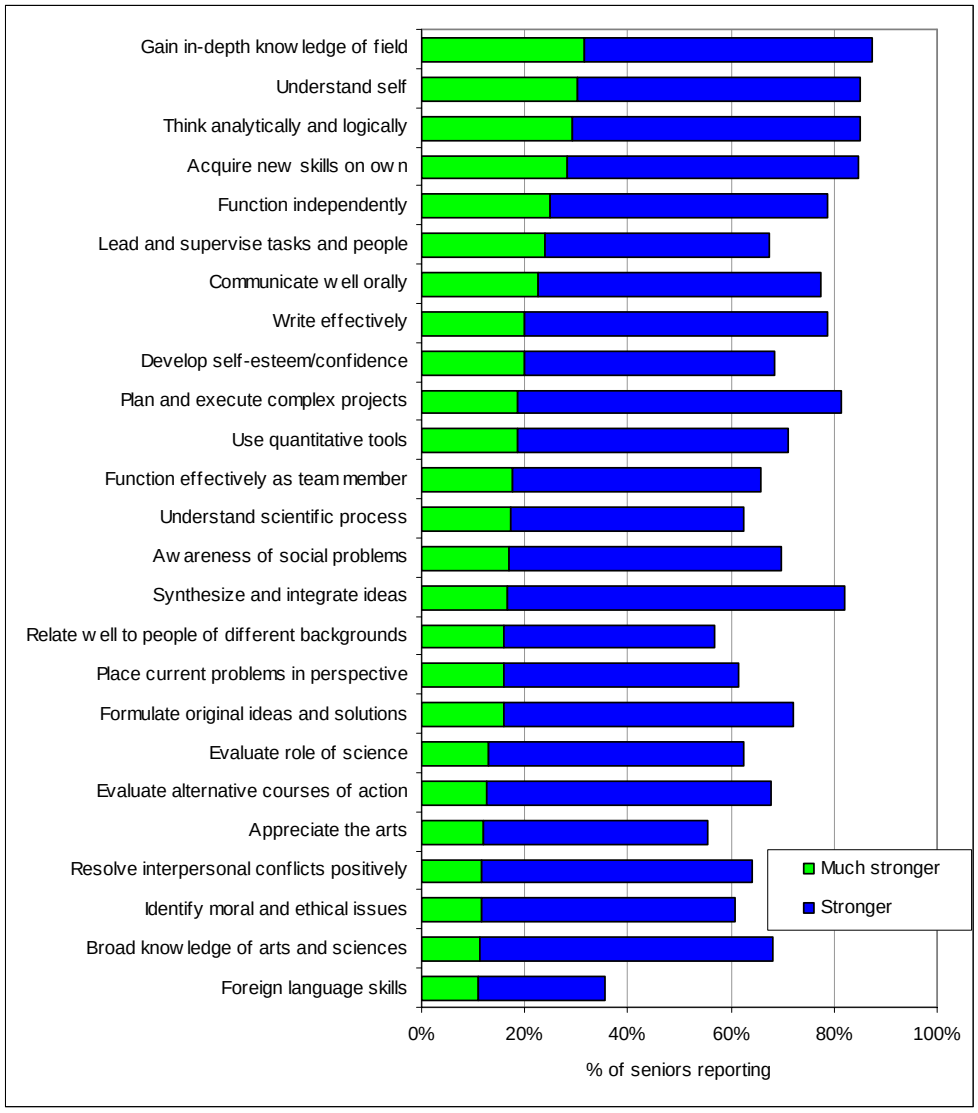


Figure 7.2 shows these skills and abilities in descending order of change based on the percentage of seniors reporting their ability was "much stronger now".

The range of change scores was much lower than the importance ratings. Nine skills were rated "much stronger now" by one-fifth or more of Cornell seniors. Seniors felt they had made the greatest gains in acquiring in-depth knowledge of a field (such as their major or occupational field), in self development (understanding self and developing self-esteem), in several higher-order cognitive abilities (e.g., thinking analytically, acquiring new skills on own), and in

oral and written communication skills. Looking at the top nine skills from Figures 8.1 and 8.2 reveals considerable correspondence between the types of skills and abilities rated as most important by seniors and those in which they feel they have made the greatest gains. In fact, only two skills – "formulate original ideas and solutions" and "function effectively as a team member" were among the highest importance ratings but had comparatively lower change ratings. These discrepancies may signal areas of the curriculum deserving of greater attention at Cornell.

Seven skills were reported as being "much stronger now" by less than 15% of Cornell seniors – from "evaluate role of science and technology" to "foreign language skills." Consistent with the types of skills/abilities rated least frequently as being "very important," a number of these were skills that may be differentially associated with specific fields of study (i.e., evaluate the role of science and technology, acquire broad knowledge of arts and sciences, and foreign language skills). However, three skills – "evaluate alternative courses of action," "resolve interpersonal conflicts positively," and "identify moral and ethical issues" – fell in the mid-range of importance scores but had comparatively low change ratings. Again, in view of the apparent value placed on these outcomes by Cornell seniors, these may be aspects of the curriculum deserving of greater attention.

Many of these skills and abilities are closely related which suggests that they may reflect broader themes or outcomes of undergraduate education. We used factor analysis to identify five clusters or "scales" of related skills. These scales are listed below. We use these scales of broad outcomes of college for the comparative analyses that follow.

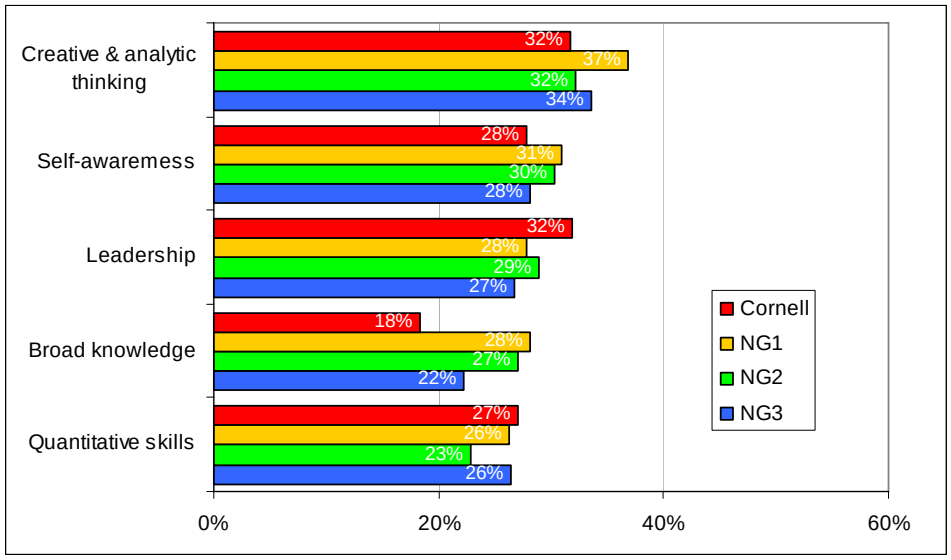
Table 7.1. Scales of Broad Outcomes of College

Broad Outcome	Specific Components
Creative and analytic thinking	Acquire new skills and knowledge on own
	Think analytically and logically
	Formulate, create original ideas and solutions
	Evaluate and choose between alternative courses of action
	Plan and execute complex projects
Self-awareness	Develop self-esteem/confidence
	Understand own abilities, interests, limitaitons, personality
	Resolve interpersonal conflicts positively
Leadership	Lead and supervise tasks and groups of people
	Function effectively as a member of a team
Broad knowledge	Place current problems in historical, cultural, philosophical perspective
	Identify moral and ethical issues
	Read or speak a foreign language
	Appreciate art, literature, music, drama
	Acquire broad knowledge in the arts and sciences
	Develop an awareness of social problems
Quantitative skills	Use quantitative tools
	Understand the process of science and experimentation
	Evaluate the role of science and technology in society

PATTERNS OF IMPORTANCE SCORES FOR BROAD OUTCOMES

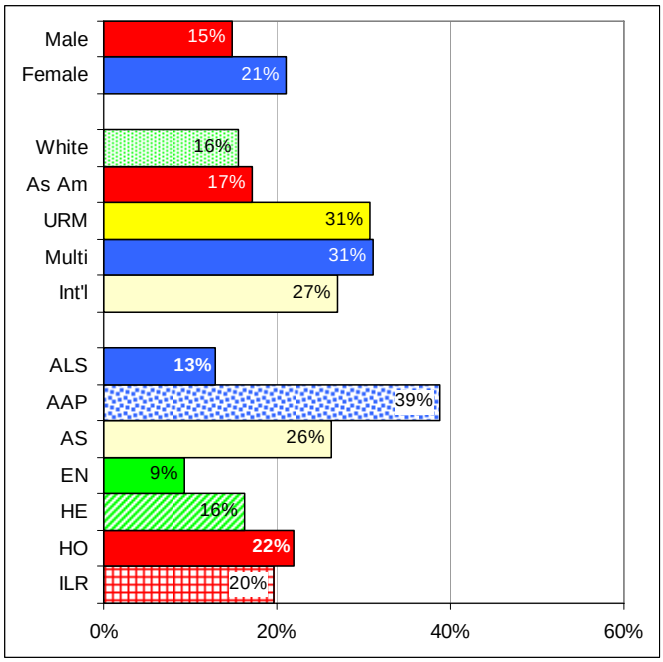
Mean importance ratings for each of the five outcome scales varied significantly among seniors at Cornell and seniors enrolled in our peer institutions. Figure 7.3 shows the percentage of seniors whose mean importance score on each of the five broad outcome scales was in the "high importance" range. For creative and analytic thinking, "high importance" includes seniors scoring 3.8 or higher (on a scale from 1 to 4). For self-awareness, "high importance" is based on the percentage of seniors scoring 3.4 or higher. For quantitative skills, "high importance" includes seniors scoring 3.3 or higher. For self-awareness and leadership skills, "high importance" includes seniors scoring a 4.0 on the respective outcome scales.

Figure 7.3. Importance of Broad Outcome Scales by Norm Group



Cornell seniors' placed more importance on leadership skills than their norm group peers. Their ratings of creative and analytic thinking, quantitative skills and self-awareness were either generally equivalent to or only slightly lower than our peer institutions. The greatest discrepancy in importance ratings was associated with the acquisition of broad knowledge – a scale reflective of liberal arts or general education measures. Cornell seniors' placed substantially less importance on these skills than did their norm group peers.

Figure 7.4. Cornellians' Ratings of Importance of Broad Knowledge Scale

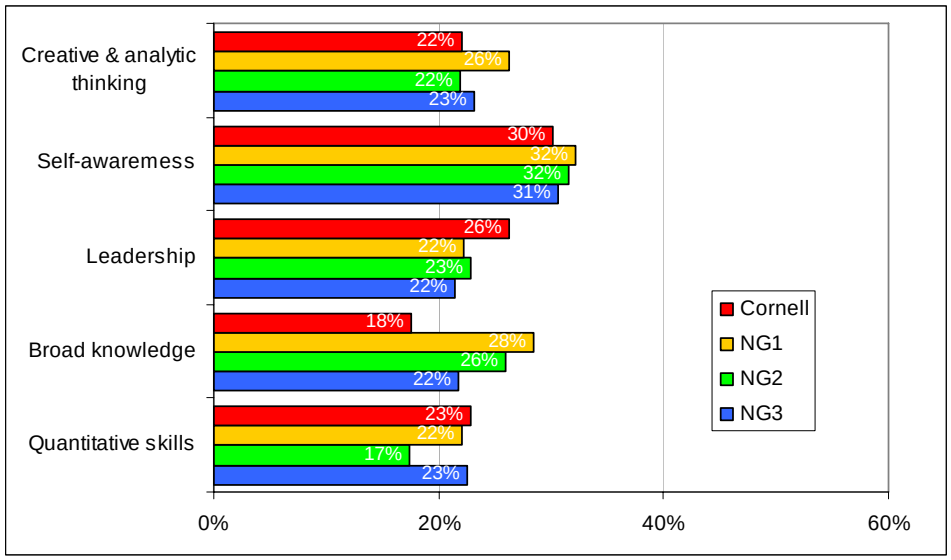


Within Cornell, there was considerable variability in the importance given to broad knowledge outcomes. Figure 7.4 shows the percentage of Cornell seniors who placed "high importance" on this broad outcome by gender, race/ethnicity and undergraduate college. Females placed greater importance on broad knowledge than males, while white and Asian American seniors placed significantly less importance on broad knowledge than seniors of other races. However, the most substantive differences in importance ratings were associated with the undergraduate colleges. AAP seniors were much more likely than seniors in other colleges to find broad knowledge to be important, while EN seniors were the least likely.

PATTERNS OF GAINS SCORES FOR BROAD OUTCOMES

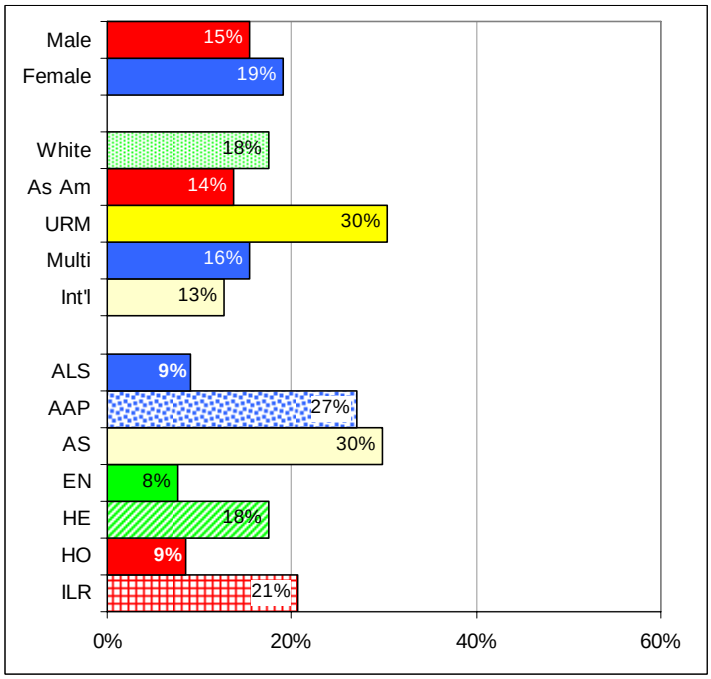
Figure 7.5 shows the percentage of seniors at Cornell and our peer institutions whose mean gain score on the five broad outcome scales was in the "stronger/much stronger" range. For creative and analytic thinking, this includes seniors scoring 3.4 or higher. For self-awareness and quantitative skills, "stronger/much stronger" is based on the percentage of seniors scoring 3.3 or higher. For leadership skills, this includes seniors scoring 3.5 or higher, and for broad knowledge, seniors scoring 3.2 or higher.

Figure 7.5. Gains on Broad Outcome Scales by Norm Group



Patterns of reported gains on the broad outcome measures largely parallel those seen for importance ratings. Cornell seniors' reported greater gains in leadership skills than their norm group peers. Their self-reported gains in creative and analytic thinking, quantitative skills and self-awareness were either generally equivalent to or only slightly lower than those of seniors in our peer institutions. The greatest discrepancy in reported gains was associated with broad knowledge outcomes. Overall, Cornell seniors' reported substantially smaller gains in these skills than did their norm group peers.

Figure 7.6. Cornellians' Reports of Gains on Broad Knowledge Scale

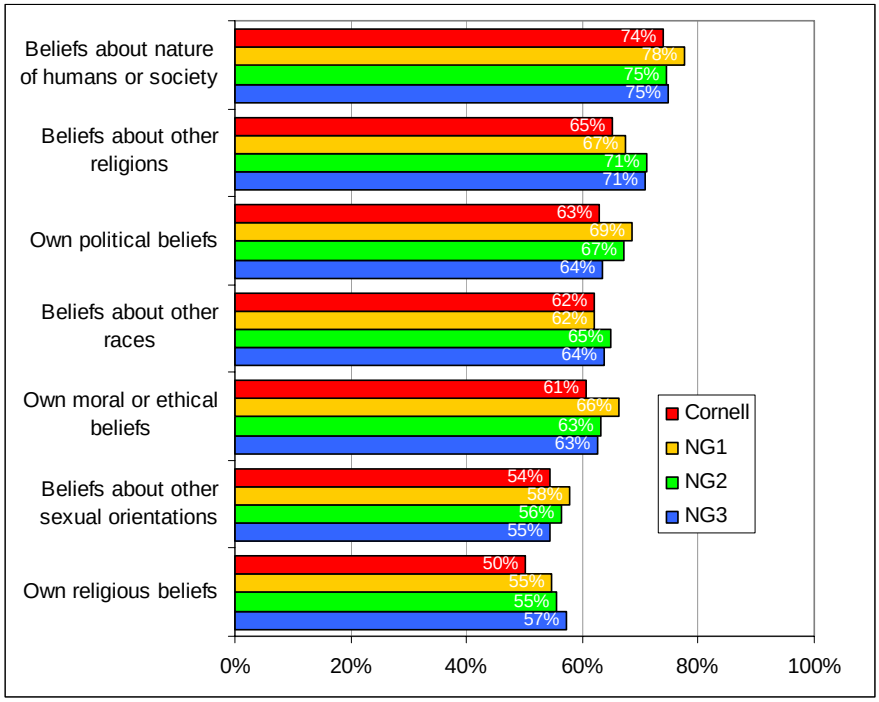


Within Cornell, reported gains in broad knowledge varied considerably among subsets of seniors. Figure 7.6 shows the percentage of Cornell seniors who reported their broad knowledge skills were now "stronger or much stronger" by gender, race/ethnicity and undergraduate college. Females reported greater gains than males, while URM seniors reported significantly more change in broad knowledge than seniors of other races. The largest differences were, again, associated with the undergraduate colleges. Seniors enrolled in AS and AAP reported the most improvement on this outcome while seniors in ALS, EN and HO reported the least.

QUESTIONING PERSONAL VALUES AND BELIEFS

One of the aims of undergraduate education is to strengthen students' abilities to critically consider a diverse range of perspectives concerning broad societal and personal issues . In this process, students may be encouraged to reflect upon their own beliefs and values. Figure 7.7 shows the percentage of seniors, within Cornell and our peer institutions, who reported they had seriously questioned or rethought their personal beliefs or values in a variety of areas.

Figure 7.7. Percentage of Seniors Who Seriously Rethought Beliefs or Values by Norm Group

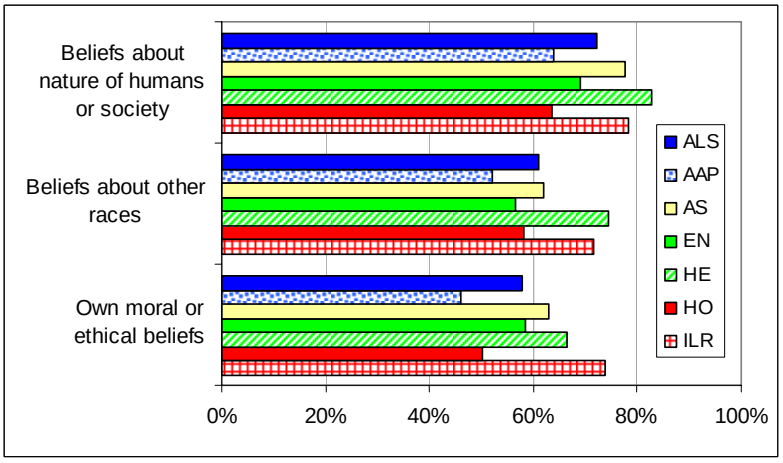


Across all institutions, seniors were most likely to have seriously questioned their beliefs about the nature of humans or society, and other religions; they were least likely to have questioned their beliefs about other sexual orientations or their own religion. In general, Cornell seniors were slightly less likely than their peers in norm group institutions to have engaged in serious re-evaluation of their personal beliefs and values.

That being said, the likelihood of Cornell seniors questioning their beliefs and values varied significantly across the undergraduate colleges. Figure 7.8 shows the types of beliefs/values for which there were the largest cross-college differences in "serious questioning."

Figure 7.8. Cornellians' Who Seriously Rethought Beliefs or Values by Undergraduate College

Seniors enrolled in colleges aligned with the humanities and social sciences – CALS, AS, HE, and ILR – were significantly more likely to report having seriously questioned or rethought their beliefs about humans and society, other races, and their own morals and ethics than seniors enrolled in the more applied or hard science-oriented colleges – AAP, EN, and HO.



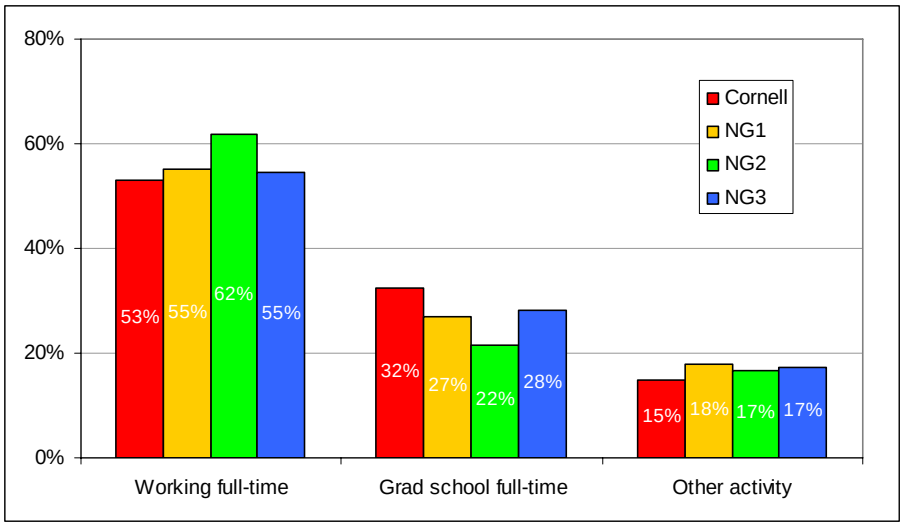
Chapter 8. Future Plans

The 2002 Senior Survey asked seniors a variety of questions concerning their future plans – both more immediate and longer-term. This chapter summarizes seniors' plans for their principal activity in fall 2002 (Q1A) and, more specifically, the nature of their plans for employment (Q1B) and further education (Qs 3A, 3B and 4).

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY IN FALL 2002

Seniors were asked what was most likely to be their principal activity in fall 2002. Figure 8.1 shows the plans reported by Cornell seniors and their peers in our norm group institutions.

Figure 8.1. Expected Principal Activity in Fall 2002 by Norm Group



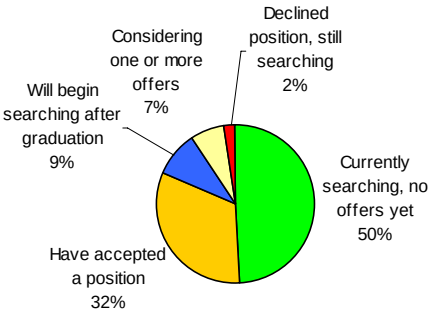
Across all institutions, seniors were most likely to report plans for full-time paid employment in the upcoming fall, followed by full-time enrollment in graduate or professional school. The remaining seniors expected to be engaged in other activities, including volunteer activity, traveling, and military service, or were completely undecided about their fall plans.

Compared to their peers in our norm group institutions, Cornell seniors were less likely to be planning full-time employment in the upcoming fall and more likely to be planning to pursue graduate education. Within Cornell, female seniors were significantly more likely than males to report plans for full-time employment and less likely to report plans for full-time graduate studies. Expected fall plans varied significantly across the undergraduate colleges at Cornell – reflecting field-specific variations in degree and work experience requirements. Most notably, seniors graduating from Hotel Administration were significantly more likely their peers in other colleges to report plans for full-time employment in the fall and significantly less likely to report plans for graduate studies.

JOB SEARCH SUCCESS

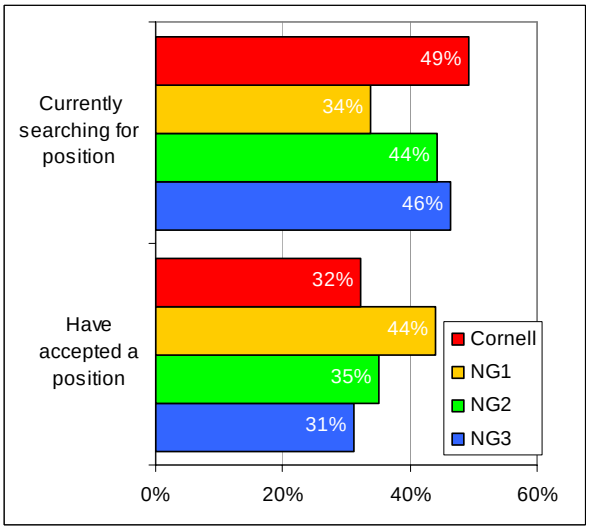
Figure 8.2 (next page) shows the status of employment plans for Cornell seniors who expected full-time employment to be their primary activity in fall 2002. Half were searching for a position at the time of the survey but had yet to receive an offer while almost one-third had accepted a position. Almost 10% were considering (7%) or had declined (2%) an offer of employment. The remaining 9% had not yet begun their job search.

Figure 8.2. Cornellian's Job Search Success



Includes only those planning to work full-time as their primary activity in fall 2002.

Figure 8.3. Seniors' Job Search Success by Norm Group



As shown in Figure 8.3, there were significant differences in the success of seniors' job search efforts across norm group institutions. Compared to seniors enrolled in Norm Group 1 institutions, Cornell and Norm Group 2 and 3 seniors were significantly more likely to report they were still searching for full-time employment and, conversely, were less likely to report having already accepted a full-time position.

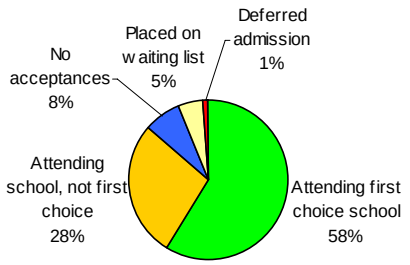
Among Cornell seniors who reported that full-time employment would be their principal activity in fall 2002, there were significant differences in job search results by gender and undergraduate college. Male seniors were significantly more likely to report having accepted a position than female seniors (43% versus 24%) while female seniors were significantly more likely than males to still be searching for a position (56% versus 40%). Seniors graduating from Engineering, Hotel Administration and ILR were most likely to report having accepted a position while seniors graduating from Art, Architecture and Planning were significantly more likely than seniors from other colleges to report still searching for a position.

PLANS FOR FURTHER EDUCATION

Figure 8.4 (next page) provides further detail about the education plans of Cornell seniors who expected full-time attendance at graduate or professional school to be their principal activity in fall 2002. The majority of these seniors, 86%, were accepted into a program and were planning to attend in the fall; 58% were attending their first choice institution and 28% were planning to attend an institution that was not their first choice. Less than 10% had not yet received an acceptance, and fewer still were either on a waiting list or had deferred admission.

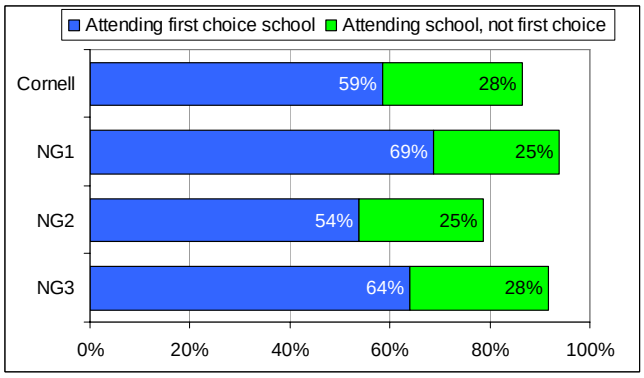
As shown in Figure 8.5 (next page) there were significant differences in the status of seniors' education plans between Cornell and its peer institutions (again, focusing on the subset of seniors who reported that full-time attendance at graduate or professional school would be their principal activity in fall 2002). Compared to seniors enrolled in Norm Group 1 and 2 institutions, a significantly smaller proportion of Cornell seniors had received an acceptance and planned to attend school in the fall. Further, compared to their Norm Group 1 and 2 peers, Cornell seniors were significantly less likely to be attending their first choice institution in the fall.

Figure 8.4. Cornellian's Education Plans



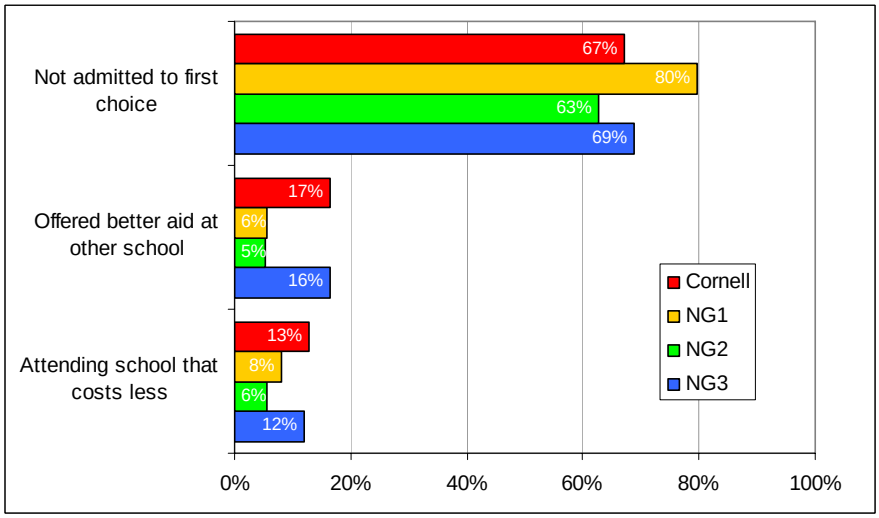
Includes only those planning to attend graduate school full-time as their primary activity in fall 2002.

Figure 8.5. Seniors' School Placement by Norm Group



For seniors with fall plans to attend an institution that was not their first choice, the chief reason given for this decision was that they had not been accepted at their first choice institution. The frequency of seniors' reported reasons for attending an institution other than their first choice varied significantly across norm groups.

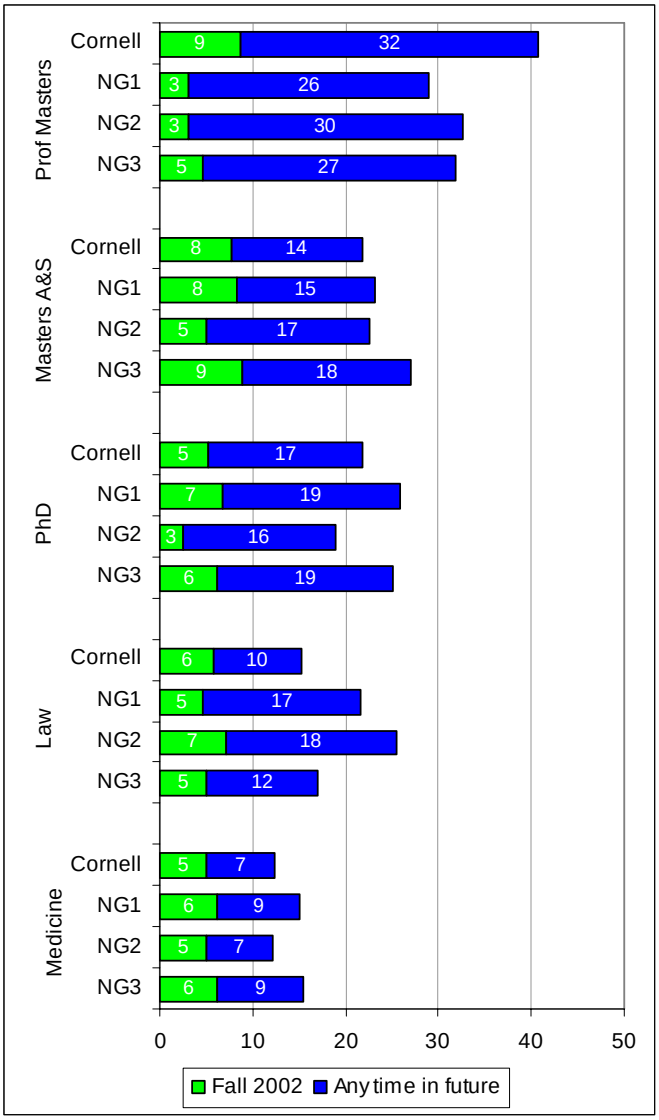
Figure 8.6. Reasons for Attending School That Was Not First Choice by Norm Group



While "not admitted to first choice institution" was the most common reason given by seniors for attending another institution in the fall, Norm Group 1 seniors were significantly more likely to cite this reason than seniors enrolled at Cornell and our other peer institutions. Compared to Norm Group 1 and 2 seniors, seniors enrolled at Cornell and in Norm Group 3 institutions were significantly more likely to cite financial reasons for choosing to attend an institution that was not their first choice – either because they were offered better aid at the other school or it cost less to attend than their first choice school.

Seniors reported which degrees they planned to pursue in fall 2002 and at any time in the future. Seniors were able to indicate multiple degrees. While only a third or less of seniors planned to be enrolled in school in fall 2002 (see Figure 8.1), a considerably larger proportion expected to pursue a degree at some point in the future. Most commonly, seniors at Cornell and our peer institutions expected to pursue a master's degree in the arts and sciences. There were significant differences in seniors' degree aspirations across Cornell and our norm groups. Figure 8.7 (next page) shows the five degrees toward which seniors most frequently reported aspiring.

Figure 8.7. Seniors' Fall 2002 and Future Degree Aspirations by Norm Group



Compared to their peers in other institutions, Cornell seniors were significantly more likely to aspire to a master's degree in a professional field (e.g., MBA, MPA or MSW). Fully 42% of Cornell respondents indicated such intent, either for fall 2002 or at some point in the future. Other differences in degree aspirations were also statistically significant but smaller in practical terms. Cornell seniors were less likely than their norm group peers to intend to earn a master's degree in the arts and sciences, or a degree in law or medicine, and less likely than Norm Group 1 and 3 peers to expect to pursue a PhD.

Within Cornell, there were significant differences in degree aspirations across the undergraduate colleges. The largest differences were associated with plans to pursue a master's degree in a professional field (EN seniors were most likely to aspire to this degree in fall 2002, while more HO and ILR seniors expected to pursue this degree at some point in the future); a medical degree (ALS, AS and HE seniors were significantly more likely than seniors in other colleges to report aspirations for this degree in fall 2002 and the future); and a law degree (ILR seniors were significantly more likely to plan to pursue this degree in fall 2002 than seniors enrolled in other Cornell colleges, and ILR and AS seniors were more likely than others to plan this degree at some point in the future).