DISCIPLINARY AREA

SUMMARY: A review of data in this section of the report shows that students' participation in academic-related activities, their relationships with other students, faculty, and administrators, and their estimate of gains vary substantially based on their major field of study. Variability in response patterns by disciplinary area was to be expected given the model on which the CSEQ is based (i.e., student outcomes are influenced more by what students *do* in college than by who they are). In the Estimate of Gains section of the CSEQ, for example, students are asked how much gain or progress they have made "in college up to now". The credibility of data obtained in this part of the instrument rests on whether students' responses match what we know about student achievement and progress and from analysis of internal consistencies in the responses. For example, the activities in which students engage and their estimate of gains *should be* highest in those areas that are closely related to their major field of interest. And, they are. As in past administrations of the CSEQ, we found that students who major in Engineering and Science/Math, for example, participate at a higher rate of frequency in science/quantitative-related activities than students who major in the arts. It should follow, and it does, that Engineering and Science/Math majors gain the most in Science/Technology development while students majoring in the Arts gain the least. As another example, Humanities majors, who report the greatest degree of involvement in course related and writing activities report the greatest gain in general education development (e.g., writing clearly and effectively, broadening one's understanding and enjoyment of literature).

I. The Academic and Co-curricular Experiences of Undergraduates by Disciplinary Area

- The amount of time and effort devoted to academic-related activities varies significantly by major field of study. For the most part, Humanities majors report the highest degree of involvement in Course-related and Writing activities, Library use and Interactions with Faculty; Engineering and Science/Math majors report the greatest degree of involvement in Science/Quantitative and Computer-related activities.

- Similar to academic-related activities, experiences within the co-curricular life of the campus vary significantly based on one's major field of study. Not surprisingly, participation in Art/Music/Theater activities is greater for students who major in the Arts than for students who major in other disciplinary areas. On the other hand, use of campus facilities for recreational purposes and participation in clubs and organizations is significantly lower among Arts majors than among other students in general.

II. Perceptions of the Campus Environment by Disciplinary Area

- **Emphasis on the academic, personal, social, and career development of students:** There are significant differences in students' views regarding the campus environment and its emphasis on various aspects of student development. Engineering majors, for example, are significantly more likely than non-engineering majors to view the campus environment as one that facilitates or supports the career development and information literacy skills of students. On the other hand, Arts majors are significantly less likely than students in general to characterize the campus environment as one that emphasizes the academic, scholarly, critical, and evaluative qualities of students.

- **Quality of relationships between students, faculty, and administrative personnel:** Based on major field of interest, we found no substantial differences in the reported quality of student relationships. We did find a significant difference in the reported quality of faculty and administrative personnel relationships, however. Compared to other major areas, a significantly larger proportion of Humanities majors characterize their relationships with faculty and administrative personal as being "approachable", "helpful" and "considerate".

III. Student Development Gains by Disciplinary Area

- Students' self-estimate of gains reflect their major field or area of interest. General Education development gains are reported to be significantly higher among Humanities majors (67%) than among other majors in general (i.e., 44%). Science/Technology development gains are reported to be significantly higher among Engineering (60%) and Science/Math (60%) majors than students in general (48%). And, as one might expect, Science/Technology gains are the lowest among Arts majors (11%). Lastly, Vocational/Career development gains are significantly higher for Engineering majors (64%) than for Arts (31%), undeclared majors (40%) or students in general (52%).

IV. Student Satisfaction Ratings by Disciplinary Area

- We found no significant differences between disciplinary groups in their satisfaction ratings with the university in general (see Table 6C). Compared to the proportion found in the general population at large (53%), however, we found that Humanities and Arts majors are significantly more satisfied with their major department's academic advising.