



***Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)***  
***Illinois Valley Community College***  
***Executive Summary***  
***Spring, 2022***

***Office of Institutional Research***  
***November, 2022***

**Abstract**

Illinois Valley Community College utilizes the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) to assess the level of student involvement, as measured by engagement criteria, within and across five academically related benchmarks. Each benchmark is comprised of multiple statements designed to assess how intensely Illinois Valley Community College students engage with their collegiate environment. The CCSSE has been administered every three-years, in the spring semester, to a random sample of on-campus students. This longevity helps Illinois Valley measure CCSSE's long-term effectiveness at measuring both academic and social engagement criteria.

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**CCSSE 2022 Background**

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) is designed to provide high quality, evidence-based survey data, detailing *Student Engagement* which is often used as a proxy measure of institutional excellence. Research has demonstrated that student engagement, or the amount of time and energy students invest in their educational activities, is the cornerstone of student success. Previous research indicates that the more connected a student feels to the college, the faculty, the staff, other students, and the subject matter, the more likely the student will achieve their educational goals. Illinois Valley's goal is to measure that engagement and use knowledge gained from this survey to improve students' chances of academic success. IVCC last administered the CCSSE student survey in spring, 2018, in keeping with its three-year administrative cycle. However, the scheduled spring, 2021 survey was rescheduled to spring, 2022 due to Covid-19 disruptions forcing a reshuffling of Institutional Research's yearly institutional-wide survey schedule.

During the spring, 2022 semester, IVCC successfully administered the CCSSE student survey to approximately 509 (554, 2018) students. Sixty-nine randomly selected courses were chosen by CCSSE for participation. Students in these classes, therefore, had a random chance of being selected for inclusion. However, a student could only participate once even if more than one of their classes was selected. This happened on multiple occasions. The 509 students that completed valid surveys represent 85 percent (92%, 2018) of the targeted 600 student sample, the same size as 2018. CCSSE over-samples courses, and consequentially students, in hopes of reaching CCSSE's desired sample size goal of 600 students for institutions as large as Illinois Valley. A good portion of this sample size discrepancy is due to duplicate students being removed from the final sample. Many students self-select out of the second course administration while other students are removed for giving incomplete or demonstrably false responses.

Students absent from class on the day the survey is administered are not given the opportunity to retake the survey which impacts the total number of participating students thus accounting for the smaller number of participants. On this measure, Illinois Valley significantly outperformed its small

college cohort, which only managed to achieve 53 percent (62%, 2018) of its target population size. Nationally, over 49,993 students provided usable data from 438 institutions which participated in the 2022 survey. This is significantly down from the 122,000 students that responded in 2018. The 2022 CCSSE National Cohort (consisting of two-years data), used for comparison purposes, includes 438 institutions (537, 2018) from 46 states (48, 2018), many of them on a three-year survey cycle similar to Illinois Valley. However, the Pandemic's spring, 2020 onset caused many schools to readjust their planned spring 2020 survey schedule due to campus closures thus forcing a reshuffling to their normal survey cycle. The Pandemic's lingering after-effects most likely contributed to the smaller sample size.

### **CCSSE 2022 Benchmarks**

The cornerstone of the CCSSE Survey is its ability to benchmark student *Engagement measures* against local and national comparison groups. In Illinois Valley's case, the local group consists of a contingent of 21 Illinois community colleges that administered the CCSSE in either 2021 or 2022 (see **Appendix A** for complete list of Illinois institutions). The CCSSE benchmarks are classified into five separate categories based on the combined results of 48 primary survey items and multiple sub-questions (177 data points in total) theoretically related to each benchmark. The following summaries explain what benchmarks consists of and the rationale for item inclusion in each category.

**Active and Collaborative Learning:** Students learn more when they are actively involved in their education and have opportunities to think about and apply what they are learning in different settings. Through collaboration with other students to solve problems or master challenging content, students develop valuable skills that prepare them to deal with real-life situations and problems when they work with others.

**Student Effort:** Students' own behaviors contribute significantly to their learning and the likelihood that they will successfully attain their educational goals. This benchmark asks students a variety of questions meant to quantify how much effort is put into their studies and interactions with fellow students, faculty and support staff.

**Academic Challenge:** Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. These survey items address the nature and amount of assigned academic work, the complexity of cognitive tasks presented to students, and the rigor of examinations used to evaluate student performance.

**Student-Faculty Interaction:** In general, the more contact students have with their teachers, the more likely they are to learn effectively and to persist toward achievement of their educational goals. Through such interactions, faculty members become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, lifelong learning.

**Support for Learners:** Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that provide important support services, cultivate positive relationships among groups on campus, and demonstrate commitment to their success.

According to CCSSE, each benchmark consists of “groups of conceptually related survey items that address key areas of student engagement. The five benchmarks denote areas that educational research has shown to be important to students’ college experiences and educational outcomes. Therefore, they provide colleges with a useful starting point for looking at institutional results and allow colleges to gauge and monitor their performance in areas that are central to their work.” Illinois Valley has the opportunity to incorporate survey findings from each benchmark in order to promote institutional strengths as well as identify problems and target solutions that are achievable and meaningful. The CCSSE also permits informative comparisons to be made from its findings. CCSSE states that “participating colleges have the opportunity to make appropriate and useful comparisons between their performance and that of groups of other colleges. Performing as well as the national average or a peer-group average may be a reasonable initial aspiration, but it is important to recognize that these averages are sometimes unacceptably low. Aspiring to match and then exceed high performance targets is the stronger strategy.”

Context is important when comparing results among schools. Simply surpassing the comparison groups’ numbers will not help if the numbers are low to begin with. It may be a good initial starting point but striving for more is always better. With that said, CCSSE adds a word of caution: “Community colleges can differ dramatically on such factors as size, location, resources, enrollment patterns, and student characteristics. It is important to take these differences into account when interpreting benchmark scores—especially when making institutional comparisons.” It is important to note that four of the 21 participating Illinois institutions are large suburban schools that differ in size, location, demographic makeup and most importantly, resources. Large suburban colleges will most likely skew the comparison statistics. This does not invalidate them; it just requires acknowledgement that differences may exist that put Illinois Valley’s ability to surpass them beyond reach. Therefore, keep in

mind that the following results should be used as a guide and compared to what we know about IVCC vis-à-vis its small, rural student population.

### **CCSSE 2022 Survey Demographics**

Participating students in CCSSE are selected at random based on the class they happen to be enrolled in. Each class is in turn randomly selected by CCSSE based on a stratified selection process that ensures a broad-based section of courses are represented in the sample. In community colleges, this is particularly important. By their nature and academic charter, community colleges offer a wide variety of programs, both traditional academic and those more focused on skilled trades such as auto mechanics, truck driving, welding, electrical, and increasingly tech programs such as cybersecurity which is now offered at Illinois Valley.

In spring, 2022, 69 classes out of 265 on-campus courses were chosen at random by CCSSE for participation. This represents an increase from the 59 classes selected in 2018. Illinois Valley's decline in enrollment since 2018 meant that more classes needed to be selected in 2022 in order to meet CCSSE's 600 student sample size target. Encouragingly, 66 classes, or 96 percent, of sampled classes surveyed participated in the spring, 2022 administration. Non-participating classes included one course that switched to online format after the semester's start while another two classes contained only students who had already completed the survey in another class thus making them ineligible.

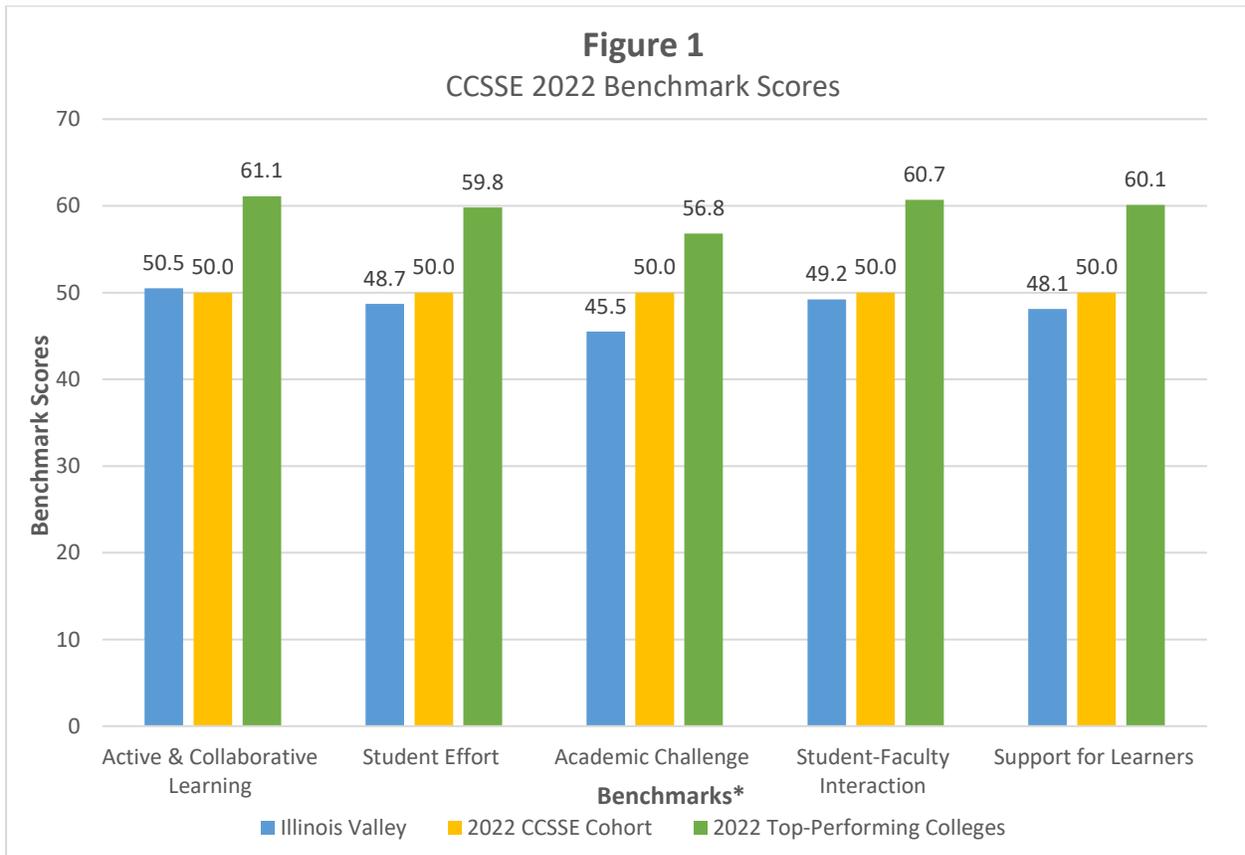
An unexpected problem arose from courses with a high percentage of students attending in hybrid/remote learning status on days when in-class surveys were administered. This happened in many classes in the spring, 2022 semester. Despite these challenges, 53 percent of the surveys sent to Illinois Valley and 57 percent of *Within-Class* surveys were completed by students. Because of these high participation rates, Illinois Valley can be confident in the validity of its 2022 CCSSE findings.

Nearly 90 percent of survey respondents began their college journey at Illinois Valley. In comparison, the Small Colleges and CCSSE 2022 Cohorts each reported 71.6 and 70.5 percent, respectively. Females represent 55 percent of completers which closely matches the percent found in the overall enrollment (58 percent). Hispanic students make up roughly 13 percent of respondents. Not surprisingly, 70 percent of respondents are less than 21 years of age. And finally, 68 percent of respondents identified as Full-time students.

## Illinois Valley CCSSE 2022 Benchmarks

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) combines results from 48 survey items, containing multiple subitems (177 data points in total, five special-focus items on *Dual Enrollment at Illinois Valley* plus 15 items on *Students in Need*) into five benchmark categories which, theoretically, contribute directly to students’ collegiate success. Each benchmark is then normed to a national scale with 50 as the mean score for group comparison purposes. Scores above and below the *National Mean* help gauge a college’s success relative to the CCSSE Cohorts. The first analysis presented compares Illinois Valley’s Benchmark Results with the 2022 CCSSE Cohort and the 2022 Top-Performing Colleges.

**Figure 1** graphically depicts Illinois Valley’s Benchmark Scores relative to the CCSSE Cohorts and reveals that Illinois Valley ranks below the 2022 CCSSE Cohort on three benchmarks (*Student Effort, Academic Challenge, and Support for Learners*), nearly matches on a fourth (*Student-Faculty Interaction*) and surpasses on the fifth benchmark, *Active and Collaborative Learning*. Given these moderately lower rankings, Illinois Valley ranks well below the 2022 Top-Performing Colleges across all five benchmarks.



\*Top-Performing colleges are those that scored in the top 10 percent of the cohort by benchmark.

Comparative benchmarks are important but they do not tell the full story at Illinois Valley. For that, it is best to look at Illinois Valley’s historical data to see what the benchmark trends reveal. When compared to previous survey years, a slightly different and more consistent picture emerges. According to **Table 1**, Illinois Valley’s benchmarks have fluctuated within a small range from year-to-year. The spring, 2022 results reveal an uptick in just one of the five benchmarks since the 2018 administration. The first benchmark (*Active & Collaborative Learning*) increased by 5.0 points over its 2018 score. Next, *Student Effort* and *Student-Faculty Interaction* declined in nonsignificant amounts, -0.2 and -0.9, respectively. *Academic Challenge* declined less than two points (-1.7) while *Support for Learners* dropped five points (-4.8 to be exact). However, the benchmarks have shown an overall consistent +/- range (+1 to -3) since 2009. *Support for Learners* has dropped to its lowest level since 2009, down 1.8 points. The on-going Pandemic, with all of its associated on-campus restrictions most likely contributed to this benchmark’s decline.

**Table 1**  
**Illinois Valley Community College**  
**CCSSE Historical Benchmarks**

Benchmark	2009	2012	2015	2018	2022	Change*
Active & Collaborative Learning	49.9	49.3	48.3	45.5	50.5	5.0
Student Effort	50.1	51.1	48.0	48.9	48.7	-0.2
Academic Challenge	47.0	47.3	46.7	47.2	45.5	-1.7
Student-Faculty Interaction	51.8	49.8	48.4	50.1	49.2	-0.9
Support for Learners	49.9	49.5	50.1	52.9	48.1	-4.8

*CCSSE is administered every three years in spring term. Due to Pandemic cancelations, the spring, 2021 administration was moved to spring, 2022*

*\*2018-22 change*

As established in Table 1, the only benchmark that demonstrates an increase from the 2018 CCSSE administration is *Active and Collaborative Learning* which posted a healthy 5.0-point increase. Having only one benchmark increase is not encouraging given the multiple benchmark increases in recent years. In 2018, four of five benchmarks increased their engagement benchmark scores. The most noticeable increases occurred in the *Student-Faculty Interaction (+1.7)* and *Support for Learners (+2.8)*. *Student Effort (+0.9)* and *Academic Challenge’s (+0.5)* relatively small increases helped reverse several years of decline. Prior to 2018, four of the five benchmarks experienced declines with *Student Effort* dropping just over three points. To put this decline in perspective, in 2009, four of Illinois Valley’s

benchmarks were at or just below the CCSSE Cohort mean (50.0). Now, in 2022, only one, *Active and Collaborative Learning*, achieves the highest mean rating at 50.5.

When compared alongside the 2022 *Illinois Community College Consortium* and the 2022 CCSSE general college cohort, Illinois Valley’s benchmark scores reveal a mixed bag of success along with areas in continued need for attention (**Table 2**). Just one of Illinois Valley’s and its Illinois Consortium’s contingent scores are above the national cohort scores (50.0) on their measures. Illinois Valley outranks both cohorts on the *Active and Collaborative Learning* benchmark by 5.0 and 0.5, respectively. Compared to its Illinois Consortium’s score, Illinois Valley’s *Academic Challenge* results fall significantly below at -4.4 which is similar to its 2018 benchmark score of -3.2.

**Table 2**  
**IVCC Comparison vis-à-vis Illinois and National Cohorts**

Benchmark Score	IVCC	Illinois Consortium*		2022 Cohort	
	Score	Score	Difference	Score	Difference
Active & Collaborative Learning	50.5	45.6	5.0	50	0.5
Student Effort	48.7	46.6	2.0	50	-1.3
Academic Challenge	45.5	49.9	-4.4	50	-4.5
Student-Faculty Interaction	49.2	50.4	-1.2	50	-0.8
Support for Learners	48.1	49.8	-1.7	50	-1.9

\* See Appendix A for complete list of Illinois institutions

While the overall magnitude of the difference in scores is relatively small, the persistent lower score in *Academic Challenge* is an area the College needs to concentrate its efforts on by improving the specific environmental and academic factors which may be impacting this score. Specifically, what factor items within this benchmark can be identified that lead to these lower scores and what if anything can the College do to improve them?

Next, a closer look at Illinois Valley’s individual *General Experience Indicators* may add context to what’s revealed in IVCC’s benchmark scores. The statements in **Table 3** examine *Illinois Valley’s General Experience Indicators* which tell us how students feel about IVCC. The three overarching questions evoke generally favorable responses over the long-term despite showing little to no improvement on any of these important points of concern. This lack of change may not be a problem as it would initially suggest

as Illinois Valley’s numbers are relatively high to begin with and haven’t changed dramatically over the last five CCSSE survey administrations going back to spring, 2009.

**Table 3**  
**Illinois Valley General Experience Indicators**

	2009	2012	2015	2018	2022
When do you plan to take classes at IVCC again? ( <i>within the year*</i> )	84%	75%	76%	62%	59%
Would you recommend IVCC to a friend or family member? ( <i>Yes</i> )	96%	94%	95%	95%	95%
How would you evaluate your overall educational experience at IVCC? ( <i>good or excellent</i> )	88%	81%	83%	88%	88%

*\* excluding students who have reached their goal*

For instance, asked when they next plan to take classes at Illinois Valley, 59 percent of Illinois Valley students answered within the year or next 12 months. This number has declined steadily since 2009 despite holding firm at around 76 percent between 2012 and 2015. Despite this decline, Illinois Valley’s rating is higher than the Small College Cohort (57 percent) and just below the 2022 CCSSE Cohort (60 percent) ratings indicating a general, across the board decline attributed with this statement.

An essential test of the College’s continuing appeal, CCSSE asks whether students would recommend Illinois Valley to a friend or family member. In 2022, the number agreeing with this statement held firm at 95 percent. It appears the trend is holding stable within the 94 to 96 percent range since 2009. Overall, Illinois Valley students are happy with and would recommend the College to friends and family.

When asked to evaluate their overall educational experience at Illinois Valley, a surprisingly stable 88 percent (*Good or Excellent*) indicate as such. In fact, since 2009, this percentage has remained consistent within the 83 to 88 percent range. Illinois Valley’s percentage slightly exceeds both the Small College and CCSSE 2022 Cohort which measure roughly 87 percent each.

Based on the findings of the three *General Experience Indicators*, Illinois Valley is held in relatively high esteem by its students going back to at least 2009.

Next, **Table 4** contains ten individual questions which cover areas of interest to the College and the Small 2022 College Cohort. These questions represent a sample and are highlighted to help the

audience, who may be interested, in examining individual CCSSE ratings closer in order to get a better understanding of the complexities involved when analyzing individual student engagement measures below the benchmark level. For comparison purposes, the 2018 values are included in the table.

**Table 4**  
**Select Individual Student Engagement Indicators Mean Survey Items**

<b>Item*</b>  (calculated Individual Mean Item values)	<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>IVCC 2022 (2018 Value)</b>	<b>Small 2022 Cohort (2018 Value)</b>
Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in (4c). (Mean, 1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often).	Student Effort	2.36 (2.39)	2.45 (2.51)
Worked with other students on projects during class (4f). (Mean, 1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often).	Active or Collaborative Learning	<b>2.43</b> <b>(2.52)</b>	<b>2.27</b> <b>(2.62)</b>
Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary) (4h). (Mean, 1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often).	Active or Collaborative Learning	1.29 (1.34)	1.34 (1.41)
Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations (4o). (Mean, 1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often).	Academic Challenge	2.55 (2.68)	2.72 (2.67)
Number of written papers or reports of any length (6c). (Mean, 0=None, 1=1-4, 2=5-10, 3=11-20, More than 20).	Academic Challenge	1.56 (1.60)	1.79 (1.81)
Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds (9c). (Mean, 1=Very little, 2=Some, 3=Quite a bit, 4=Very much).	Support for Learners	2.67 (2.61)	2.71 (2.65)
How many hours preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, or other activities related to your program) (10a). (Mean, 0=None, 1=1-4, 2=5-10, 3=11-20, More than 20).	Student Effort	2.15 (1.80)	2.24 (1.99)
Frequency: Academic Advising/Planning (12.1a). (Mean, 0=Never, 1= 1 time, 2=2-4 times, 3=5 or more).	Support for Learners	1.47 (1.61)	1.61 (1.62)
Frequency: Career Counseling (12.1b). (Mean, 0=Never, 1= 1 time, 2=2-4 times, 3=5 or more).	Support for Learners	<b>0.72</b> <b>(0.96)</b>	<b>0.58</b> <b>(0.60)</b>
Frequency: Computer Lab (12.1h). (Mean, 0=Never, 1= 1 time, 2=2-4 times, 3=5 or more).	Student Effort	<b>0.97</b> <b>(1.48)</b>	<b>0.85</b> <b>(1.56)</b>

\* Selected for perceived relevance

Overall, there is little variation between Illinois Valley and the Small 2022 College Cohort on these ten engagement indicators. In fact, Illinois Valley outscores the cohort in just three areas: *Worked with other students on projects during class*, *Career Counseling*, and *Computer Lab* use. Despite this observation, the overall differences are negligible. The data in Table 4 are important when individual questions are compared with their associated benchmarks. For instance, when one compares the results of, “*Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in*” to the benchmark for

Student Effort and then compares that over time and notices the benchmark's decline, one can get a sense how individual components impact benchmark scores.

Compare that with the lower frequency of "*Computer lab*" use and one may get the sense that students may not be pushing themselves to fully engage with their studies by using available campus resources to their advantage. Interestingly, this may also be an indicator of the changing nature of computer lab usage on campus and not a true indicator of student effort engagement. As more students bring their personal laptop to campus, they may no longer need to take advantage of on-campus access to computer labs as students previously did. The comparable decline in the Small 2022 Campus Cohort's usage percentage supports this assertion. Now, the availability of reliable campus Wi-Fi frees students to work almost anywhere on campus. Students can now work on their laptops in the newly opened Eagles Point Café while interacting with fellow students in a way that actually enhances their overall collegiate engagement experience.

#### **CCSSE 2022 Students in Need Special Focus Items**

In 2021, CCSSE introduced a special focus items section dedicated to exploring "Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness of Community College Students." It was named appropriately, the *Students in Need in Community Colleges* project. According to CCSSE, this special section was designed to address the emerging phenomena of food insecurity among college students in general and community college students in particular. As far back as 2018, Illinois Valley Community College began to notice and take steps to address food insecurity among its students. In response to this growing awareness, Illinois Valley created its first emergency food micro pantry to assist students who may be suffering with temporary food insecurity issues. The Micro Food Pantry offers a simple, but limited supply of basic food items that most college students enjoy such as snacks, Ramen Noodles and other Pick-and-Go items. These staples are meant to get students through their school day and not intended as a long-term solution. Since its introduction in 2018 by *Illinois Valley's Student Government*, the Micro Food Pantry serves students' basic needs on a daily basis.

Separately, the *Student Emergency Living Needs Fund (SELN)*, managed by Illinois Valley's *Foundation Office*, established in 2013, helps students with their immediate and short-term needs by providing items such as gas and grocery cards as well as public transit cards to be used on NCAT (North Central Area Transit) which provide transportation to/from campus on a daily basis.

For students experiencing homelessness, Illinois Valley's **Office of Special Students Populations** (administered by *Crystal Credi*) assists students, who for personal and other reasons, require assistance finding shelter or need additional financial assistance by connecting them with community organizations or funding through grant assistance or **Illinois Valley's Foundation Office**. This program was started through an interim Transition and Completion Specialist role in November, 2020 and turned into a full-time Special Populations Transition Specialist role in January, 2022. This program served approximately nine (9) students from January, 2022 to present. According to Crystal Credi, "The number of students that identify as homeless vary per semester due to the stigma surrounding the term or lack of knowledge as to what the definition of homeless is."

The *Students in Need* section consists of 15 statements/questions covering topics such as hunger, ability to make rent/mortgage payments, paying utility bills, and homelessness. For instance, according to students that completed the first statement, "*In the last 30 days, the food that I bought just didn't last, and I didn't have money to get more,*" 4.1 percent of respondents indicated this statement was "*Often true.*" Additionally, 20.5 percent indicated it was "*Sometimes true.*" For both the Small Colleges and the Students in Need cohort, 7.0 percent indicated this was "*Often true.*" Using a 30-day time frame as the starting point, a second statement inquires, "*did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?*" In Illinois Valley's case, 14.9 percent of respondents answered "*Yes.*" For the Small Colleges and Students in Need cohorts, 20.7 and 21.4 answered, "*Yes,*" respectively. When asked, "*In the last 30 days, did your college ever help you get food when you could not afford to purchase it?*" approximately 4.4 percent of Illinois Valley students responded "*Yes.*" Interestingly, a larger number, 9.2 percent, answered "*No, and I needed this kind of help,*" indicating unmet need is greater than what is being provided. For the Small Colleges and Students in Need cohorts, 9.1 and 9.6 answered, "*No, and I needed this kind of help,*" respectively.

When addressing students' ability to pay utility bills, "*In the last 12 months, were you ever unable to pay your utility bill(s) in full?*" 10.8 percent of Illinois Valley students answered "*Yes*" while the comparison groups indicated "*Yes*" by roughly 17.0 percent of respondents. For those students unable to pay rent and utilities the prospect of losing their homes is very real. In a small percentage of Illinois Valley students, this is an all too real occurrence. When asked, "*In the last 12 months, were you ever homeless?*" eight students or 1.7 percent of respondents answered "*Yes*" indicating this is a small, yet real problem for some Illinois Valley students. This figure (eight) matches the number (nine) served by the **Office of Special Students Populations in 2022**, as mentioned previously. When inquiring if

assistance was available to students, such as, “*In the last 12 months, did your college ever help you obtain or maintain secure and affordable housing?*” 1.8 percent responded “Yes” while a larger number (16.2 percent) responded “No, and I needed this kind of help,” indicating unmet need in this area as well.

The struggles students experience with hunger, rent and housing, while small in number and percent, still present real, inescapable hardship for some Illinois Valley students. The College has taken the initiative to address these interrelated problems, and for the past few years has begun taking the necessary steps to ameliorate them where it can. Combined with what we already know, the results of 2022 CCSSE help reveal the extent of these problems. The results of the *Students in Need* section provide the College with actionable data, data it needs to know in order to refine its approach to further address this persistent problem that has only been made worse by the ongoing Pandemic.

Addressing these problems will also help address one of the main reasons students drop out of college in general and Illinois Valley in particular. As cited by CCSSE in their rationale for launching the Students in Need in Community Colleges project, the *Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice*, found that, “Too many students leave college without credential because life, logistics, and a lack of money got in the way.” The CCSSE does not answer how many of Illinois Valley’s students leave because of a lack of money but the Students in Need section gives clues to how many are at risk of leaving due to hunger, housing insecurity and homelessness.

### **CCSSE 2022 Executive Summary**

The 2022 CCSSE findings includes an *Executive Summary* compiled by CCSSE. Included in **Appendix B** is a two-page summary which briefly compares Illinois Valley’s Standardized Benchmark Scores against the average Top 10 Percent of Cohort scores in an easy to compare graph. This data is the same as Figure 1 but presented in a different, yet appealing graphic format. Illinois Valley’s scores hover at or below the 50 percent line while the Top 10 Percent of Cohort scores hang around the 60 percent threshold. Interestingly, both Illinois Valley and the Top 10 Percent Cohort have similarly low scores on the *Academic Challenge Benchmark*. Both are roughly four points below each group’s highest score. Community colleges are often viewed as being less academically rigorous and these low scores may be an indicator of how strongly community college students view the academic challenges they encounter while attending community college in general.

The Executive Summary’s second piece examines the *Highest and Lowest Aspects of Student Engagement*. This presentation is similar to Table 4 in that it explores a subset of Illinois Valley’s five

highest and lowest individual benchmark items. It compares the College's scores relative to the 2022 CCSSE Cohort. Illinois Valley's **Highest Aspect** relative score, at 46.6 percent, "Worked with other students on projects during class" (Item 4f). This item is located in the *Active and Collaborative Learning* benchmark. The second highest item, at 24.5 percent, "Frequency: Career counseling" (12.1b), falls under *Support for Learners*. The three final items fall under *Student Effort*. They include, "Frequency: [use of] Peer or other tutoring" (12.1d), at 9.8 percent. "Frequency: [use of] Skills labs (writing, math, etc.)" (12.1e), at 17.3 percent. And finally, "Frequency: [use of] Computer lab" (12.1h), at 16.7 percent.

The five **Lowest Aspects** of Student Engagement relative to the 2022 CCSSE Cohort as measured by Item scores are represented by four of five Benchmarks: *Active and Collaborative Learning*, *Student Effort*, *Academic Challenge* and *Support for Learners*. The lowest item resides in *Active and Collaborative Learning* space represented by "Made a class presentation" (Item 4b) at 16.8 percent compared to 27.5 percent for the 2022 CCSSE Cohort. The lowest Item with the highest percent is found in *Academic Challenge* represented by, "Extent: examinations challenged you to do your best work" (Item 7) with 61.1 percent. The 2022 CCSSE Cohort achieved 78.1 percent on this Item.

Please refer to *Appendix B: CCSSE 2022 Executive Summary of Results*, for specific Items and detailed footnotes which explain the methodology used to calculate these comparisons.

### **CCSSE 2022 Survey Findings & Recommendations**

The *IVCC CCSSE 2022 Executive Summary's* findings indicate that Illinois Valley Community College's student engagement rates, while in decline across most benchmarks, still maintain their relative standing when compared to the contingent of Illinois community colleges and the CCSSE 2022 National Cohort. These comparisons, while statistically close, only tell part of the story. The recent uptick in the long-term trend of declining benchmark scores, as seen in the 2018 CCSSE, indicate where past improvements have been made and where future actions should be focused. Having benchmarks similar to the comparison groups is reassuring but not necessarily adequate for Illinois Valley's purposes.

The benchmark numbers, some of which appear to have stabilized, if not risen slightly, still contain two areas of concern for the College. The lower benchmark scores in *Active and Collaborative Learning* and *Academic Challenge* are areas Illinois Valley should concentrate its efforts on by improving the underlying academic and collegiate factor items and/or environmental challenges which negatively impact these scores.

A closer examination of the individual components, as found in Table 4, represent components that IVCC should take active measures to address and improve, and may yield insights into the necessary steps that can be taken to improve these critical benchmark scores and hence students' academic experience and success at IVCC over the next three years before the CCSSE is administered again.

This last section outlines recommendations that Illinois Valley audiences may benefit from by exploring CCSSE 2022 Findings in greater detail. It is hoped that those wishing to integrate CCSSE results into their academic areas will benefit from a more in-depth review:

**Academic Affairs** administrators may review CCSSE Benchmarks and individual items for greater insight into what is driving Illinois Valley's students' engagement measures.

**Deans** along with program coordinators may want to review individual faculty related survey items to better understand areas where their faculty excel at engaging students and the areas in need of improvement.

**Dual Credit Committee** members may benefit from reviewing the *Dual Credit Special-Focus Items* (1-6) in order to better understand how former Dual Credit students, who are now on-campus college students, reflect back on their experience with Illinois Valley's Dual Credit program while enrolled in high school.

**Faculty** leaders may review items that pertain directly to faculty while building on their success as well as exploring areas in need of improvement. (See the *2022 CCSSE Executive Summary - Faculty Addendum* for additional faculty findings).

**Marketing & Alumni Relations** may benefit by reviewing items that are potentially useful for promoting the positive aspects of students' academic life at IVCC.

**Student Affairs** may want to review the *Students in Need* section to better understand the struggles some Illinois Valley students experience while attending college. Important issues from food insecurity to homelessness are covered in this section.

The 2022 CCSSE's usefulness, beyond just what is covered in the *IVCC CCSSE 2022 Executive Summary*, has the potential to inform IVCC, when explored in full by interested parties. All are encouraged to dig deeper in the findings to better understand exactly how much the complete report contains and how more of it can be helpful for enhancing the College's educational mission.

The response rate to the CCSSE student survey is high and quite impressive. The College can be confident that the findings from this survey are sound and accurately reflect the viewpoints that students experienced in the spring, 2022 semester when the CCSSE survey was administered over the second-half of the spring semester.

However, a word of caution when interpreting the results is appropriate. During the spring, 2022 semester, the Illinois Valley campus was still operating in the late stages of the Covid-19 pandemic. Students, faculty and staff were emerging from the overwhelming and long-term effects of a two-year Pandemic. While the campus was considered fully operational, some restrictions were still in place and not all services were operating at full capacity. These restrictions, while fewer in number, most likely continued to affect students the most. As a consequence, how students perceived their ability to engage with the college environment may have been altered thus effecting how they answered the CCSSE.

Faculty most likely experienced some of the same issues, thus affecting how they viewed their students' engagement. The results of the **2022 CCFSSSE Faculty Survey of Student Engagement**, a companion engagement survey administered in the latter half of spring, 2022, are discussed in a follow-up report, **2022 CCFSSSE Executive Summary - Faculty Addendum** which briefly highlights relevant faculty engagement findings. Readers can be confident that each surveys' large sample size and high participation rates lends confidence that extremes in survey responses are mitigated by the large number of respondents thus leading to what is hoped is an accurate picture of student and faculty engagement at Illinois Valley Community College as of the spring, 2022 semester.

## Endnotes

For those interested in exploring more about *CCSSE's Students in Need Special Focus Items* please refer to the following 2022 National Report published by CCSSE, ***Mission Critical: The Role of Community Colleges in Meeting Students' Basic Needs***. It details findings and recommendations from the 2021 Students in Need Special Focus Items administration as well as offering suggestions for communicating the availability of student support services that address critical issues facing students in need. [https://cccse.org/sites/default/files/Mission\\_Critical.pdf](https://cccse.org/sites/default/files/Mission_Critical.pdf)

**Appendix A**  
**Participating Institutions in the 2021/2022 Illinois Consortium**  
**Since 2013, approximately 31 Illinois institutions have Participated in CCSSE**

**CCSSE 2021/2022 Comparison Group**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Most Recent Cohort Year of Participation (21 total) *</b>
College of DuPage	Glen Ellyn	2021
College of Lake County	Grayslake	2021
Danville Area Community College	Danville	2021
Elgin Community College	Elgin	2021
Harper College	Palatine	2021
Heartland Community College	Normal	2021
Illinois Central College	East Peoria	2021
<b>Illinois Valley Community College</b>	<b>Oglesby</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Joliet Junior College</b>	<b>Joliet</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Kaskaskia College</b>	<b>Centralia</b>	<b>2022</b>
Lincoln Land Community College	Springfield	2021
McHenry County College	Crystal Lake	2021
Moraine Valley Community College	Palos Hills	2021
<b>Morton College</b>	<b>Cicero</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Olive - Harvey College</b>	<b>Chicago</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Rend Lake College</b>	<b>Ina</b>	<b>2022</b>
Rock Valley College	Rockford	2021
<b>Shawnee Community College</b>	<b>Ullin</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Spoon River College</b>	<b>Canton</b>	<b>2022</b>
Triton College	River Grove	2021
<b>Waubonsee Community College</b>	<b>Sugar Grove</b>	<b>2022</b>

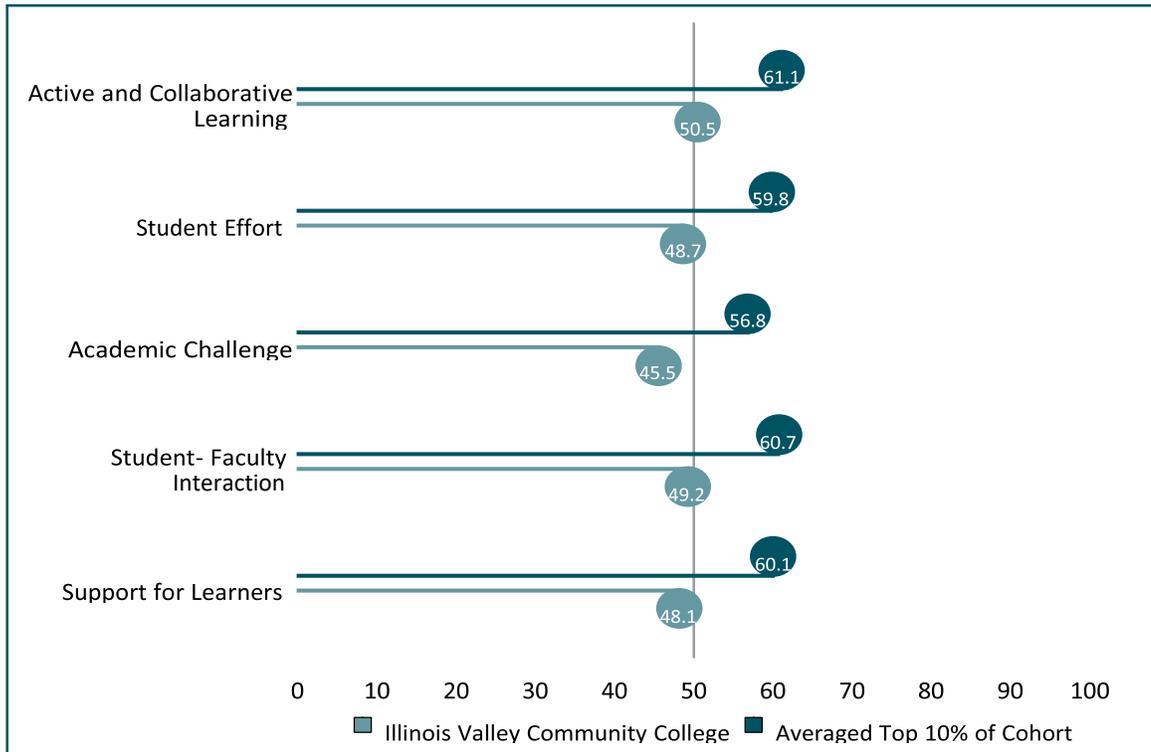
*\*9 Illinois Institutions, including IVCC, participated in spring 2022 administration.*

## Appendix B

### CCSSE 2022 Executive Summary of Results

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

## Standardized Benchmark Scores



The *CCSSE* benchmarks are groups of conceptually related survey items that address key areas of student engagement. The five benchmarks denote areas that educational research has shown to be important to students' college experiences and educational outcomes. Therefore, they provide colleges with a useful starting point for looking at institutional results and allow colleges to gauge and monitor their performance in areas that are central to their work. In addition, participating colleges have the opportunity to make appropriate and useful comparisons between their performance and that of groups of other colleges.

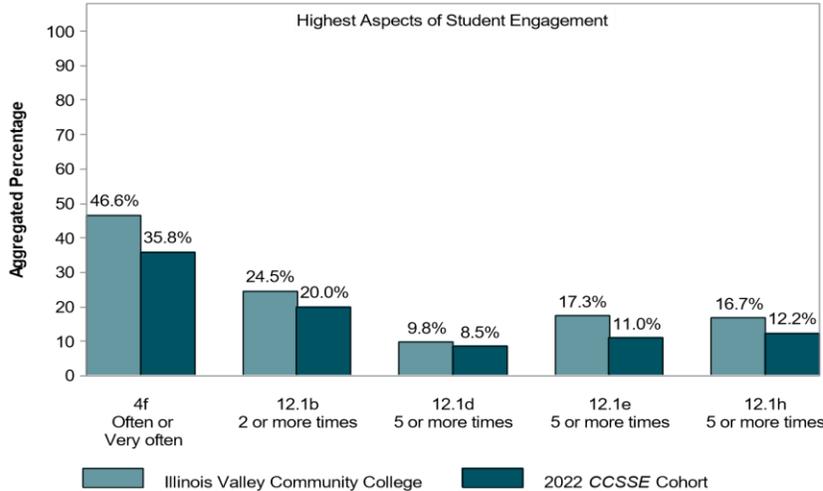
Performing as well as the national average or a peer-group average may be a reasonable initial aspiration, but it is important to recognize that these averages are sometimes unacceptably low. Aspiring to match and then exceed high-performance targets is the stronger strategy.

Therefore, provided above is a comparison of your college's standardized benchmark scores with the averaged benchmark scores from the top 10% of the current three-year cohort.

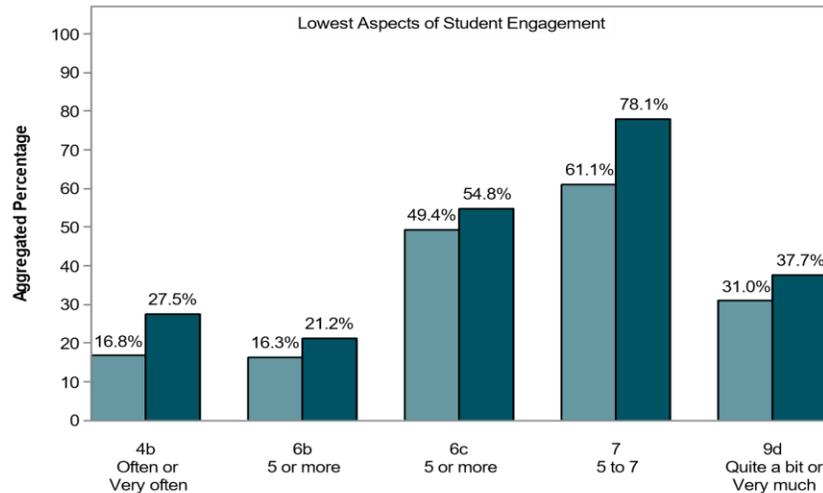
For further information about *CCSSE* benchmarks and how they are computed, please visit [www.ccsse.org](http://www.ccsse.org)

Note: Benchmark scores are standardized to have a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 25 across all respondents.

# Highest and Lowest Aspects of Student Engagement



Item	Benchmark
4f. Worked with other students on projects during class	Active and Collaborative Learning
12.1b. Frequency: Career counseling	Support for Learners
12.1d. Frequency: Peer or other tutoring	Student Effort
12.1e. Frequency: Skill labs (writing, math, etc.)	Student Effort
12.1h. Frequency: Computer lab	Student Effort



Item	Benchmark
4b. Made a class presentation	Active and Collaborative Learning
6b. Number of books read on your own (not assigned)	Student Effort
6c. Number of written papers or reports of any length	Academic Challenge
7. Extent: examinations challenged you to do your best work	Academic Challenge
9d. Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	Support for Learners

One way to dig more deeply into benchmark scores is to analyze those items that contribute to the overall benchmark score. This section features the five items across all benchmarks on which the college scored highest and the five items on which the college scored lowest relative to the 2022 *CCSSE* Cohort. It is important to note that some colleges' highest mean scores may be lower than the cohort mean, and conversely, some colleges' lowest mean scores may be higher than the cohort mean.

While examining these data, keep in mind that the selected items may not be those that are most closely aligned with the college's goals; thus, it is important to review all institutional reports on the *CCSSE* online reporting system at [www.ccsse.org](http://www.ccsse.org).

**Notes:**

- For Item(s) 4 (except 4e), *often* and *very often* responses are combined.
- For Item(s) 6, 5–10, 11–20 and *more than 20* responses are combined.
- For Item 7, 5, 6, and 7 responses on the 1–7 challenge scale are combined.
- For Item(s) 9, *quite a bit* and *very much* responses are combined.
- For Item(s) 12.1a and 12.1b, 2–4 *times* and 5 or *more times* responses are combined because these services are typically used less frequently.