

Survey of Entering Student Engagement

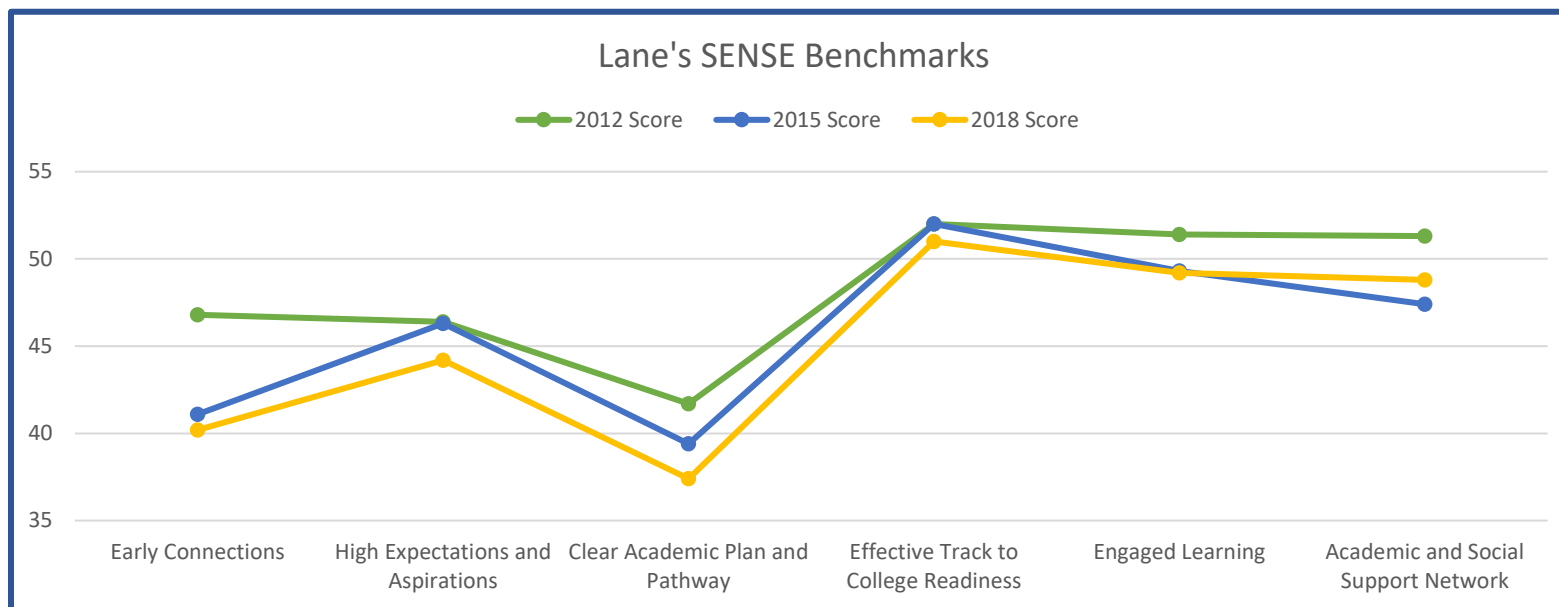
SENSE BENCHMARKS

How Benchmarks are Calculated?

SENSE creates two types of benchmark scores based on member colleges' data: raw and standardized. Both types of benchmarks are useful, but for different purposes. The standardized benchmark scores SENSE provides are useful for comparing any given college to the cohort at one point in time. Standardized benchmark scores can also be used to compare subgroups within each college: a subgroup (e.g., full-time students) with a standardized benchmark of 52 will be more engaged on that benchmark than a subgroup (e.g., part-time students) with a standardized score of 47.

For colleges wishing to conduct longitudinal analyses of trends at their campus, the raw benchmark scores are the appropriate measures to use. The standardized benchmark scores are not appropriate for longitudinal analysis as they are recalculated every year and are based on the distribution of responses for each annual 3-year cohort. The raw benchmark scores, on the other hand, are always on a 0-1 scale and are not affected by fluctuations in the distribution of national responses from year to year.

Creating both types of benchmark scores involves several steps, including reverse coding items as necessary and converting all responses to the same scale. After these initial steps are taken, raw benchmark scores are computed for each respondent. Based on the raw benchmark scores, SENSE then computes standardized benchmark scores for each respondent. Please note that individual colleges cannot compute standardized benchmark scores as this process can only be completed using the complete 3-year cohort data set. However, precalculated standardized benchmark and raw benchmark scores for each student record are included in the college raw data file. Once the benchmark scores are created (either raw or standardized), college, campus, and group-level benchmarks can be calculated. The steps used to create these benchmark scores are explained in detail below.



Benchmark	2018 Score	2015 Score	2012 Score
Early Connections	40.2	41.1	46.8
High Expectations and Aspirations	44.2	46.3	46.4
Clear Academic Plan and Pathway	37.4	39.4	41.7
Effective Track to College Readiness	51.0	52.0	52.0
Engaged Learning	49.2	49.3	51.4
Academic and Social Support Network	48.8	47.4	51.3

Early Connections

When students describe their early college experiences, they typically reflect on occasions when they felt discouraged or thought about dropping out. Their reasons for persisting almost always include one common element: a strong, early connection to someone at the college.

High Expectations and Aspirations

Nearly all students arrive at their community colleges intending to succeed and believing that they have the motivation to do so. When entering students perceive clear, high expectations from college staff and faculty, they are more likely to understand what it takes to be successful and adopt behaviors that lead to achievement. Students then often rise to meet expectations, making it more likely that they will attain their goals. Often, students' aspirations also climb, and they seek more advanced credentials than they originally envisioned.

Clear Academic Plan and Pathway

When a student, with knowledgeable assistance, creates a road map — one that shows where he or she is headed, what academic path to follow, and how long it will take to reach the end goal— that student has a critical tool for staying on track. Students are more likely to persist if they not only are advised about what courses to take, but also are helped to set academic goals and to create a plan for achieving them.

Effective Track to College Readiness

Nationally, more than six in 10 entering community college students are underprepared for college-level work. Thus, significant improvements in student success will hinge upon effective assessment, placement of students into appropriate courses, and implementation of effective strategies to ensure that students build academic skills and receive needed support.

Engaged Learning

Instructional approaches that foster engaged learning are critical for student success. Because most community college students attend college part-time, and most also must find ways to balance their studies with work and family responsibilities, the most effective learning experiences will be those the college intentionally designs.

Academic and Social Support Network

Students benefit from having a personal network that enables them to obtain information about college services, along with the academic and social support critical to student success. Because entering students often don't know what they don't know, colleges must purposefully create those networks.

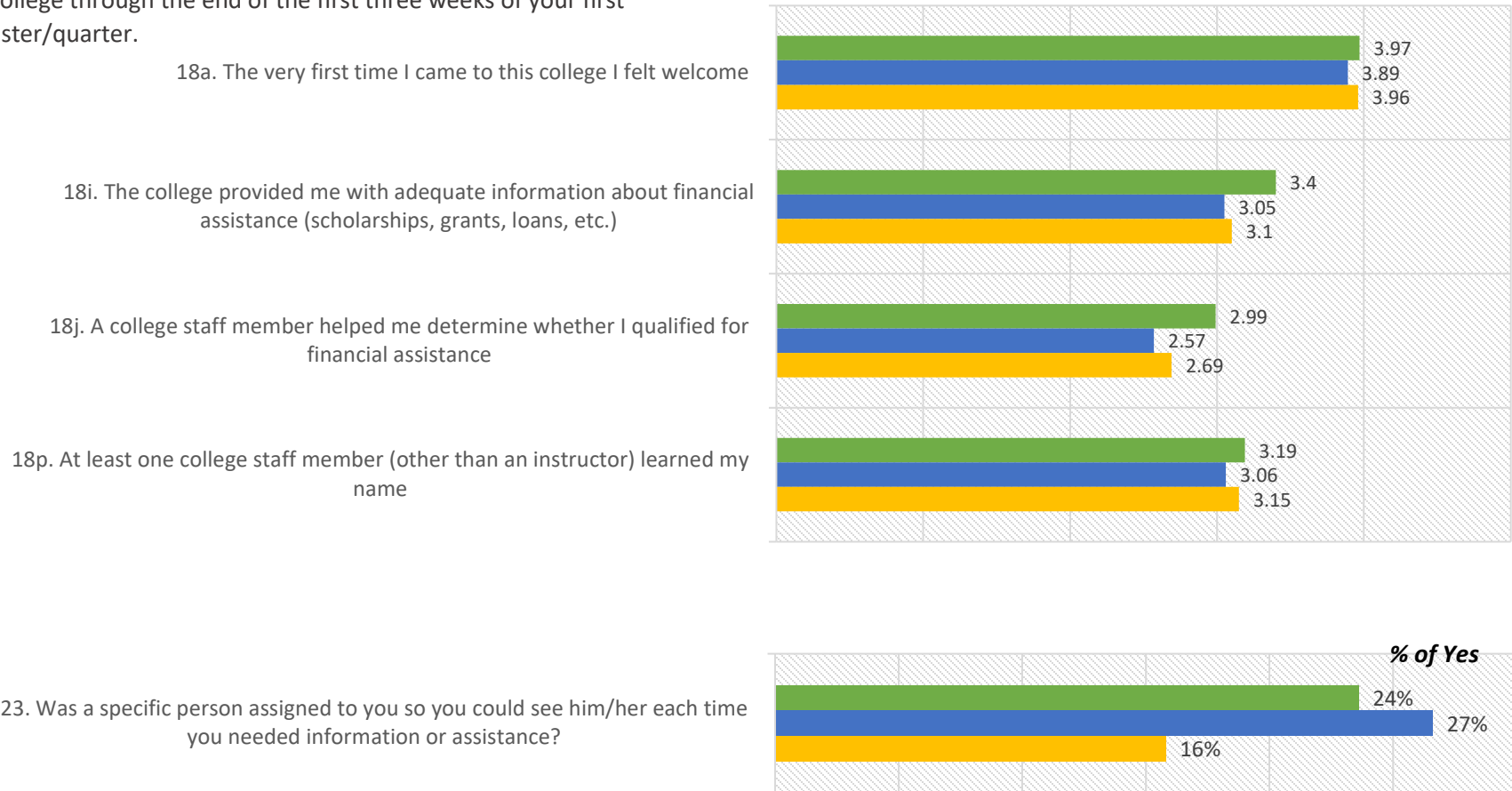
Early Connections

Mean scores across time

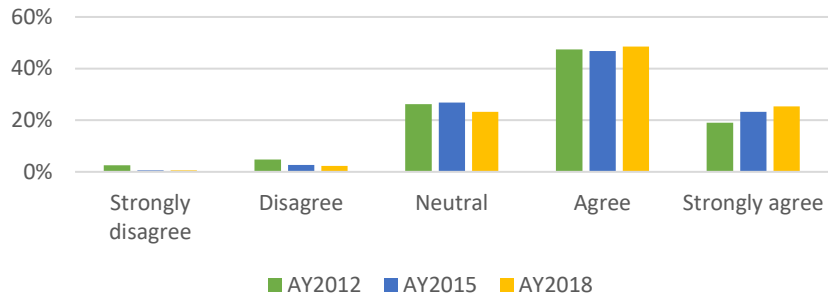
Strongly agree (5) to Strongly disagree(1)

■ AY2012 ■ AY2015 ■ AY2018

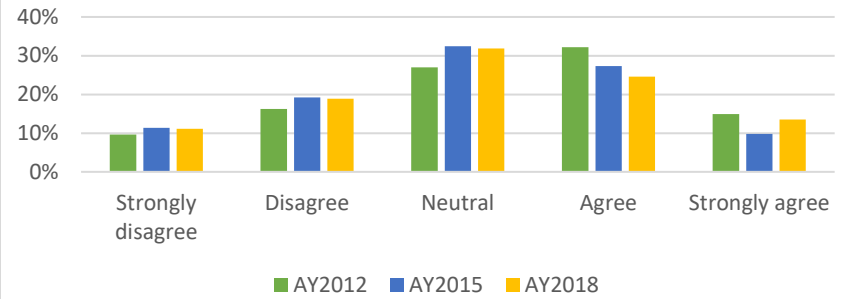
18: Think about your experiences from the time of your decision to attend this college through the end of the first three weeks of your first semester/quarter.



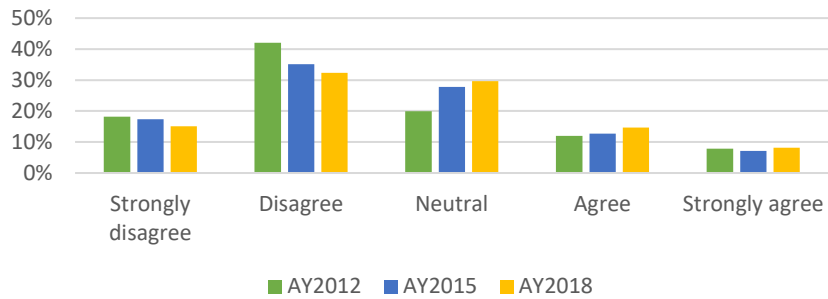
18a. The very first time I came to this college I felt welcome



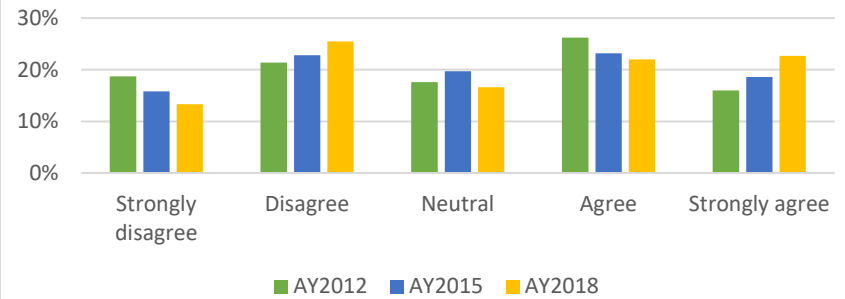
18i. The college provided me with adequate information about financial assistance



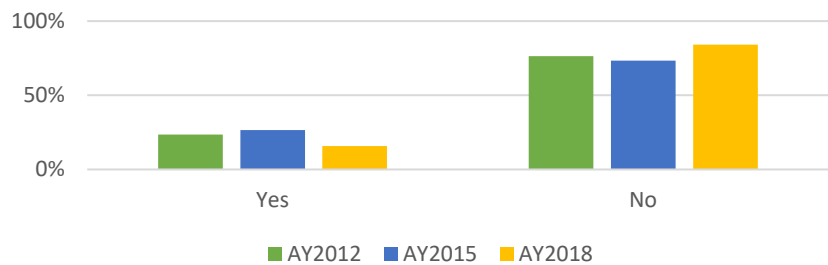
18j. A college staff member helped me determine whether I qualified for financial assistance



18p. At least one college staff member (other than an instructor) learned my name



23. Was a specific person assigned to you so you could see him/her each time you needed information or assistance?



High Expectations and Aspirations

Mean scores across time

Strongly agree (5) to Strongly disagree(1)

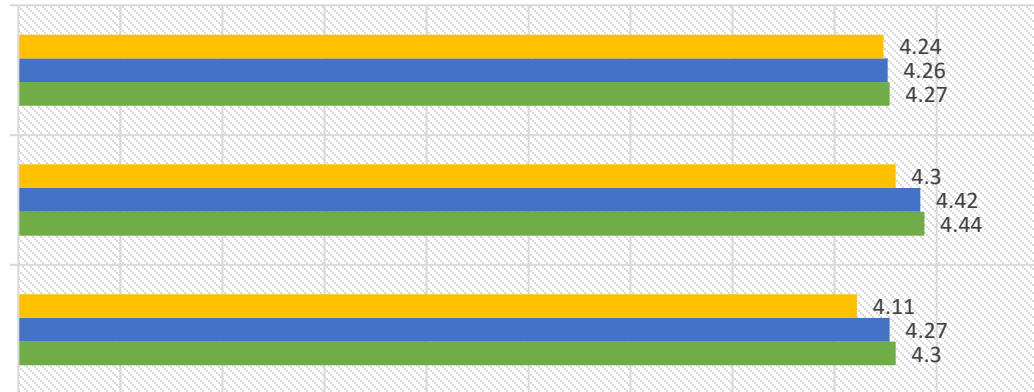
18: Think about your experiences from the time of your decision to attend this college through the end of the first three weeks of your first semester/quarter.

18b. The instructors at this college want me to succeed

18t. I have the motivation to do what it takes to succeed in college

18u. I am prepared academically to succeed in college

■ AY2018 ■ AY2015 ■ AY2012



High Expectations and Aspirations

Mean scores across time

1 = Never; 2 = Once; 3 = Two or three times; 4 = Four or more times

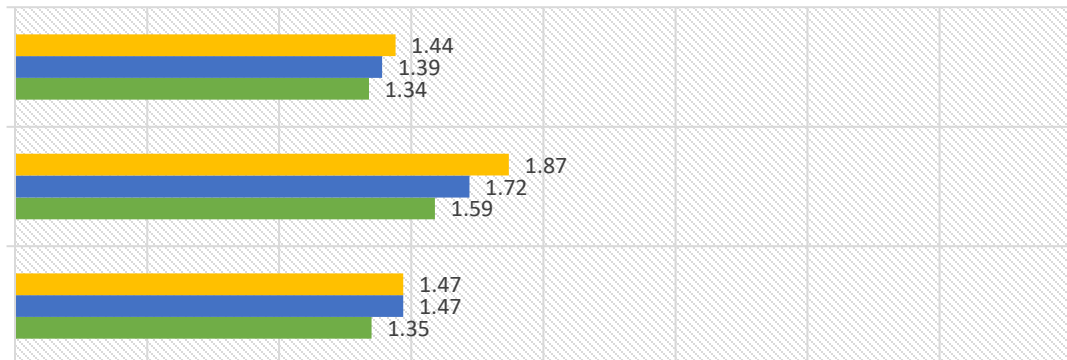
19: During the first three weeks of your first semester/quarter at this college, about how often did you do the following?

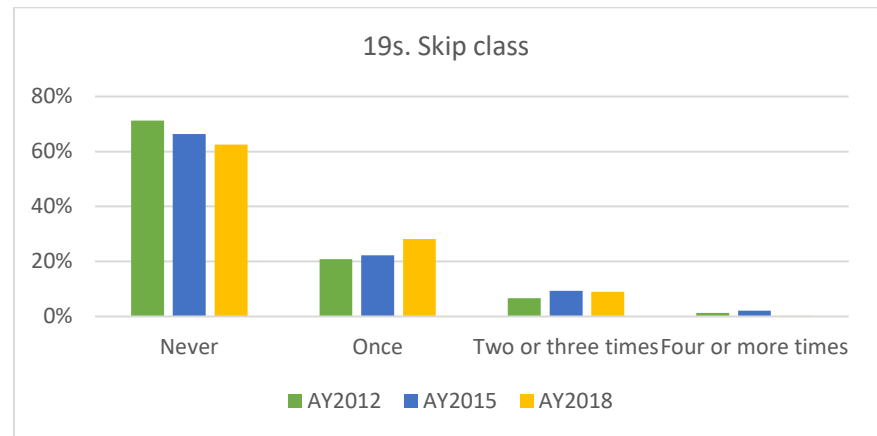
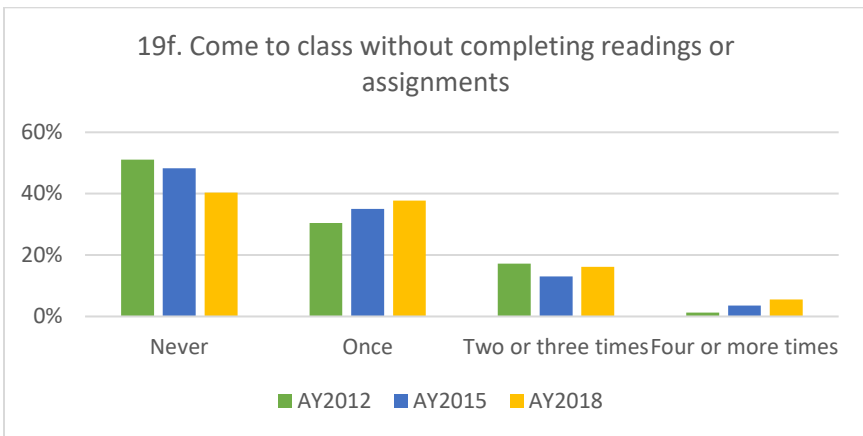
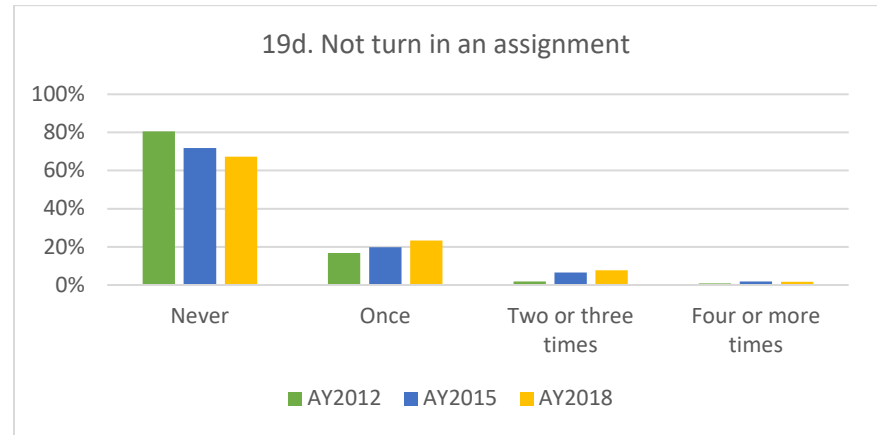
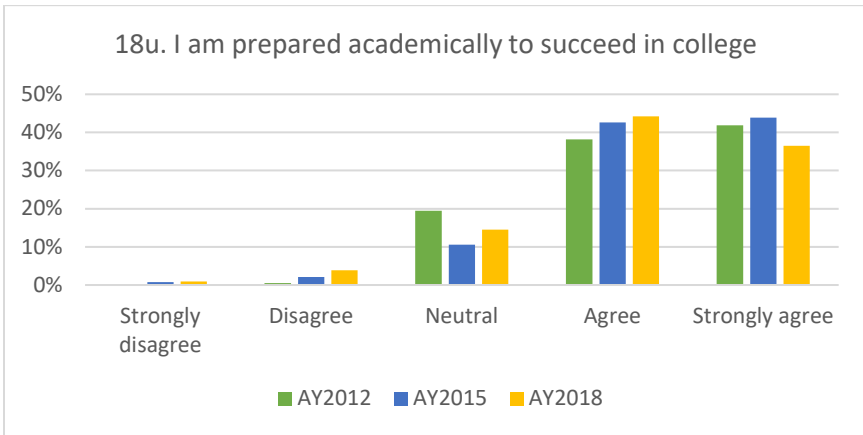
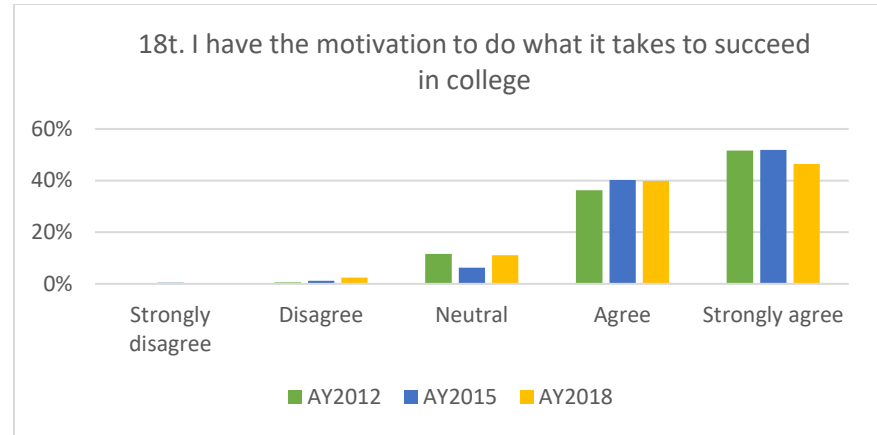
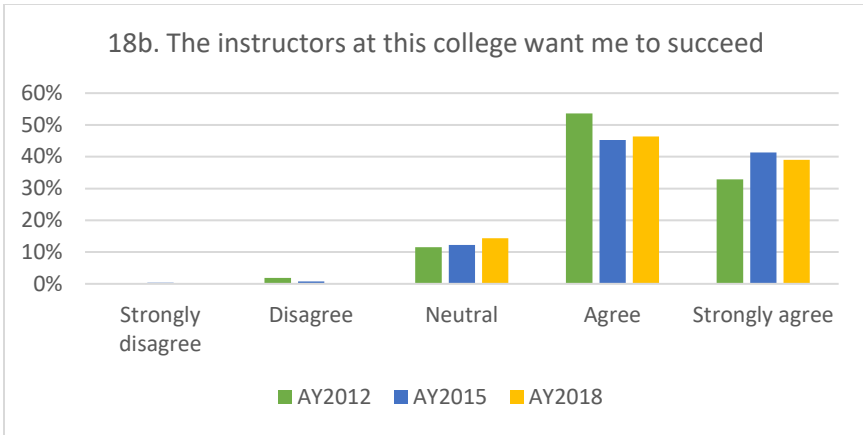
19d. Not turn in an assignment

19f. Come to class without completing readings or assignments

19s. Skip class

■ AY2018 ■ AY2015 ■ AY2012



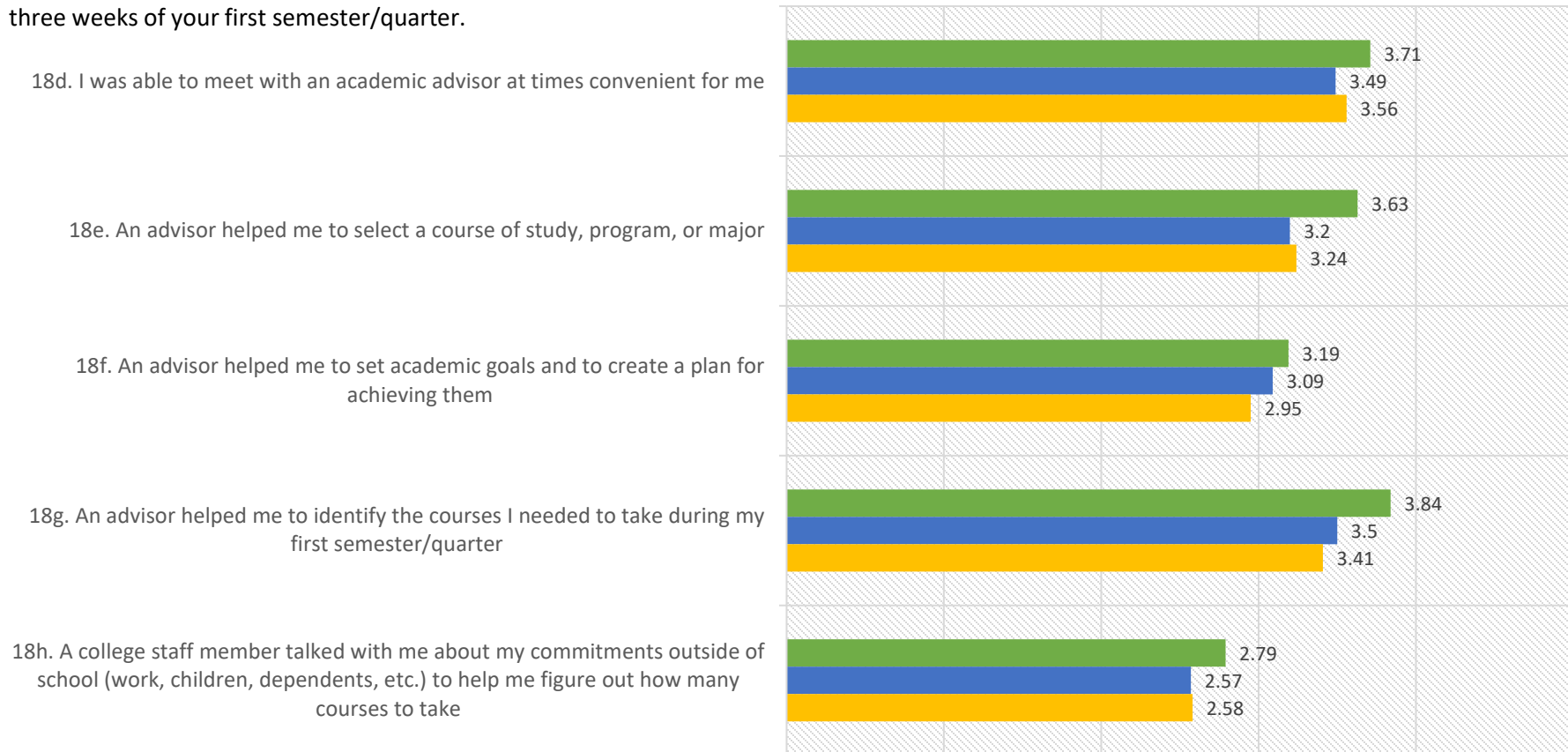


Clear Academic Plan and Pathway

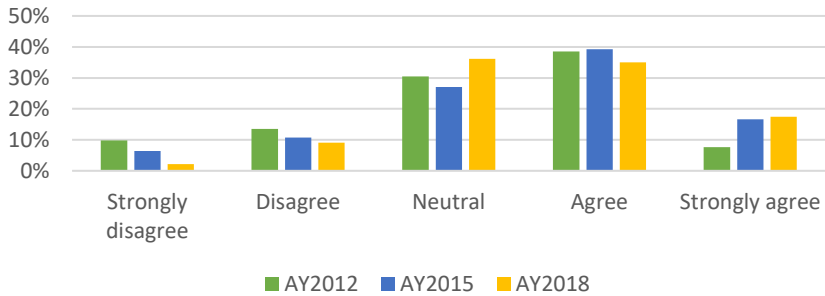
Mean scores across time
Strongly agree (5) to Strongly disagree(1)

■ AY2012 ■ AY2015 ■ AY2018

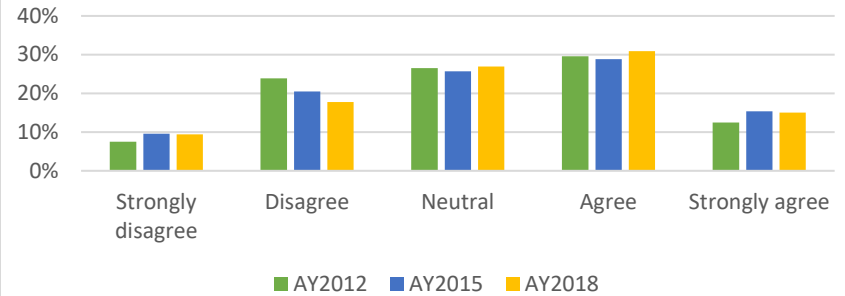
18: Think about your experiences from the time of your decision to attend this college through the end of the first three weeks of your first semester/quarter.



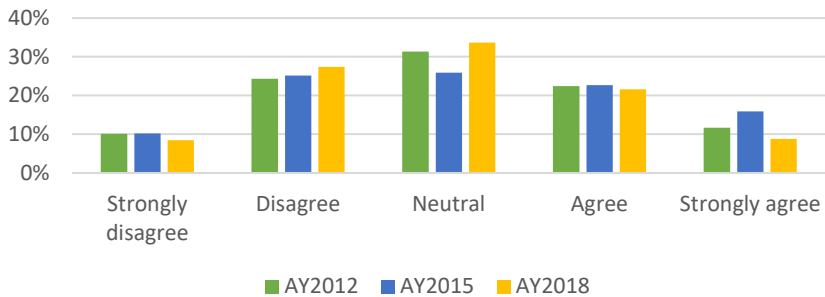
18d. I was able to meet with an academic advisor at times convenient for me



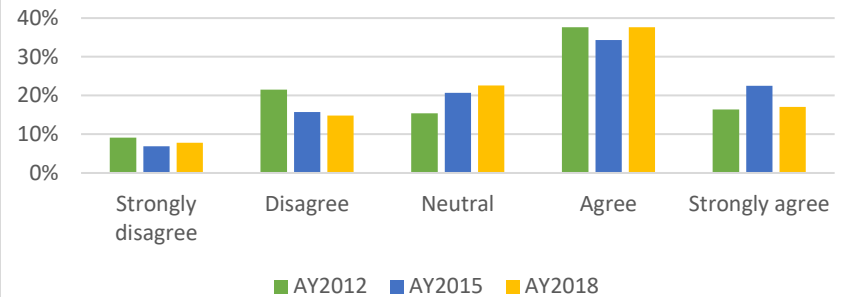
18e. An advisor helped me to select a course of study, program, or major



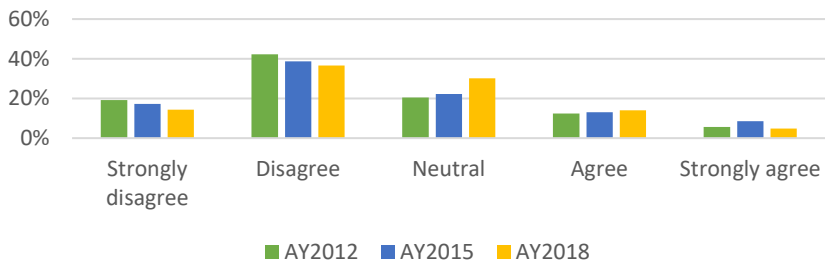
18f. An advisor helped me to set academic goals and to create a plan for achieving them



18g. An advisor helped me to identify the courses I needed to take during my first semester/quarter



18h. A college staff member talked with me about my commitments outside of school to help me figure out how many courses to take



Effective Track to College Readiness

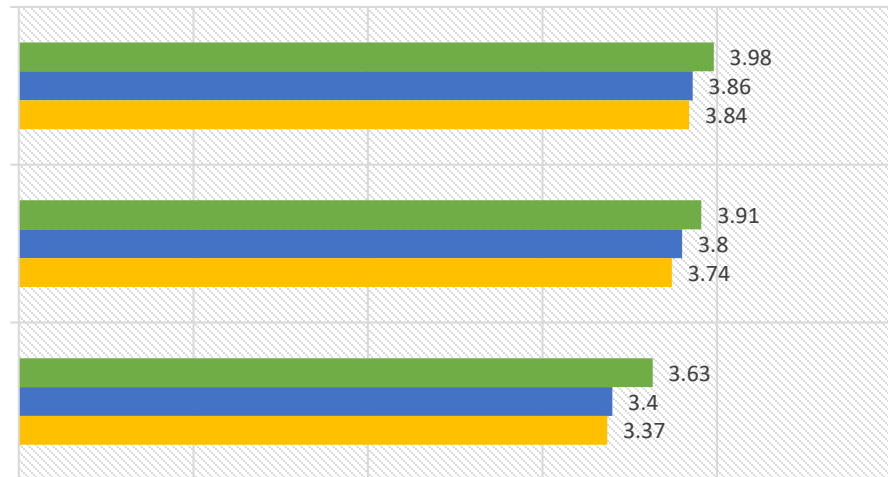
Mean scores across time

Strongly agree (5) to Strongly disagree(1)

■ AY2012 ■ AY2015 ■ AY2018

21: Think about your experiences from the time of your decision to attend this college through the end of the first three weeks of your first semester/quarter. Within a class, or through another experience at this college:

21a. I learned to improve my study skills (listening, note taking, highlighting readings, working with others, etc.)



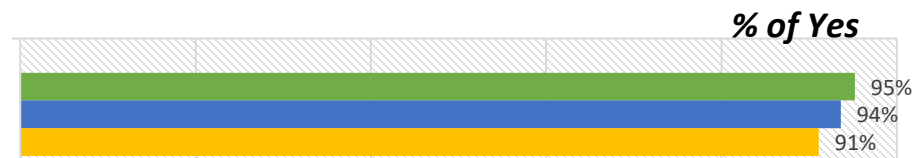
21b. I learned to understand my academic strengths and weaknesses



21c. I learned skills and strategies to improve my test-taking ability



12a. Before I could register for classes, I was required to take a placement test (COMPASS, ASSET, ACCUPLACER, SAT, ACT, etc.) to assess my skills in reading, writing, and/or math



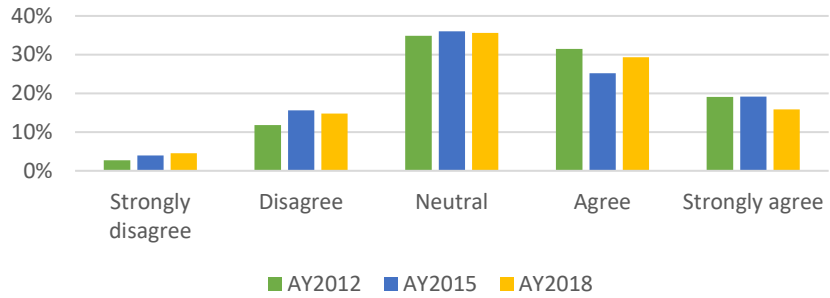
12b. I took a placement test (COMPASS, ASSET, ACCUPLACER, SAT, ACT, etc.)



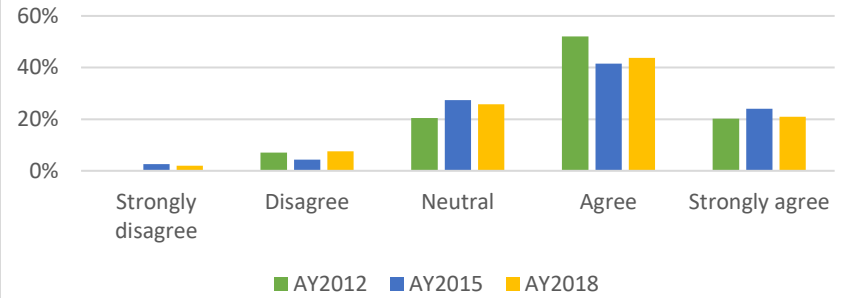
14. This college required me to enroll in classes indicated by my placement test scores during my first semester/quarter



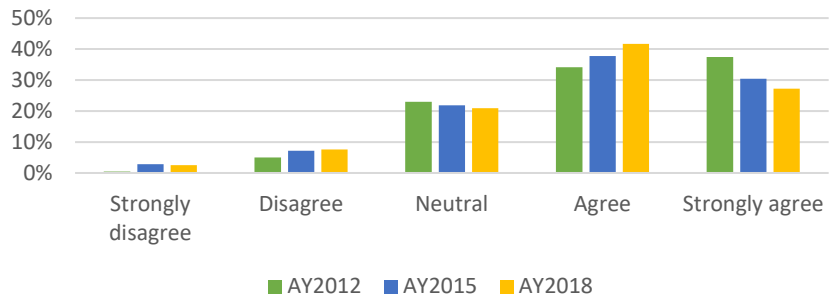
21c. I learned skills and strategies to improve my test-taking ability



21b. I learned to understand my academic strengths and weaknesses



21a. I learned to improve my study skills (listening, note taking, highlighting readings, working with others, etc.)



Engaged Learning

Mean scores across time

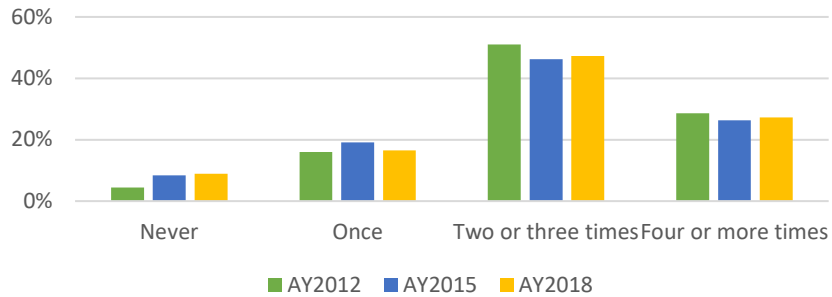
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■ AY2012 ■ AY2015 ■ AY2018

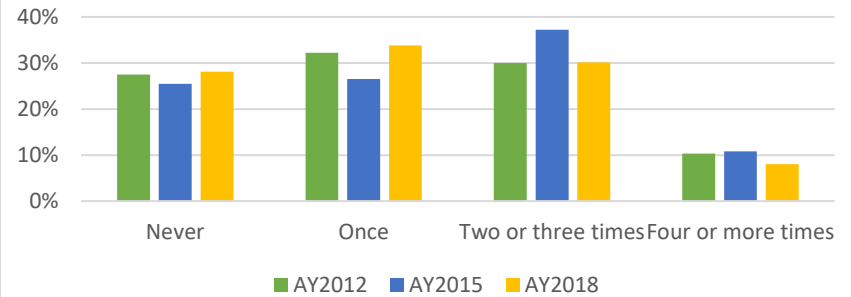
19: During the first three weeks of your first semester/quarter at this college, about how often did you do the following?



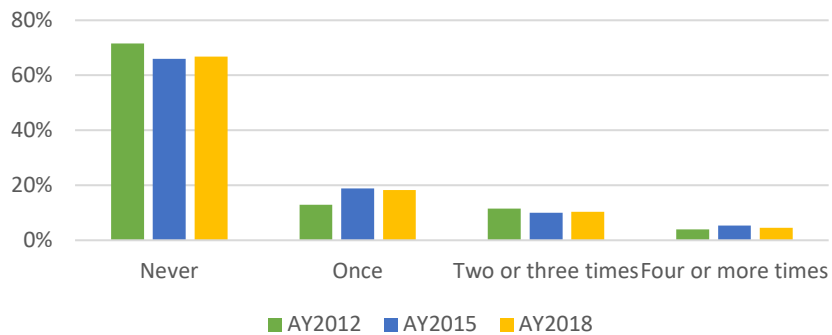
19a. Ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions



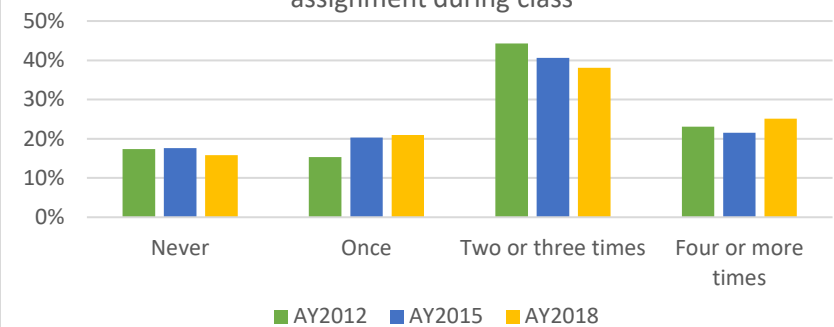
19b. Prepare at least two drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in



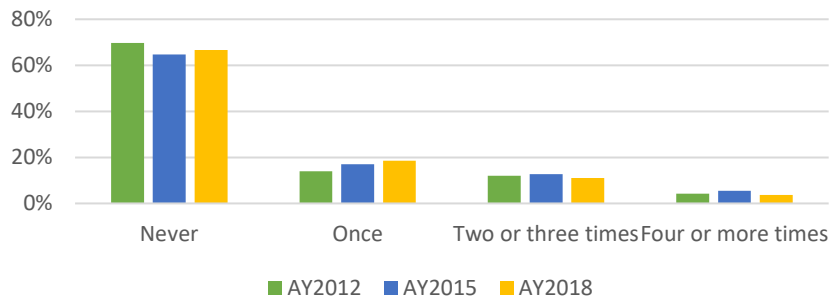
19e. Participate in supplemental instruction



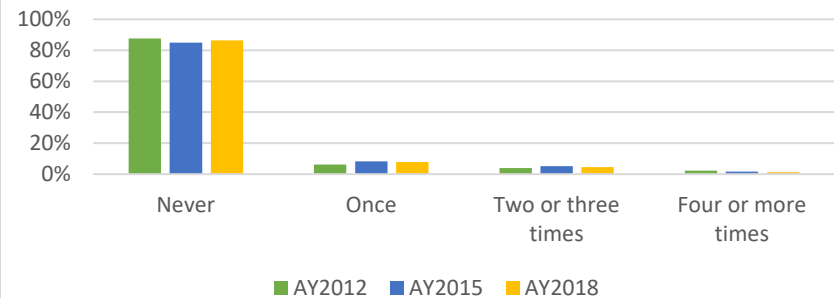
19g. Work with other students on a project or assignment during class



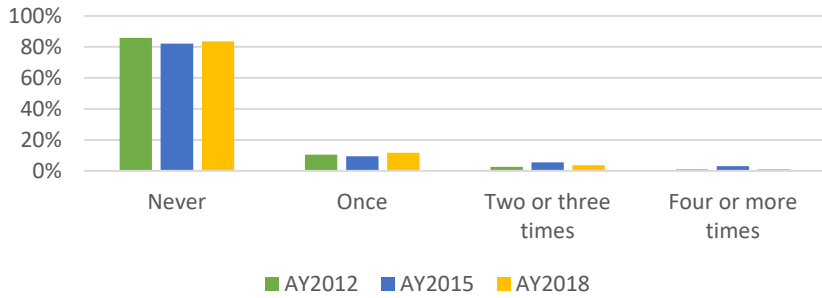
19h. Work with classmates outside of class on class projects or assignments



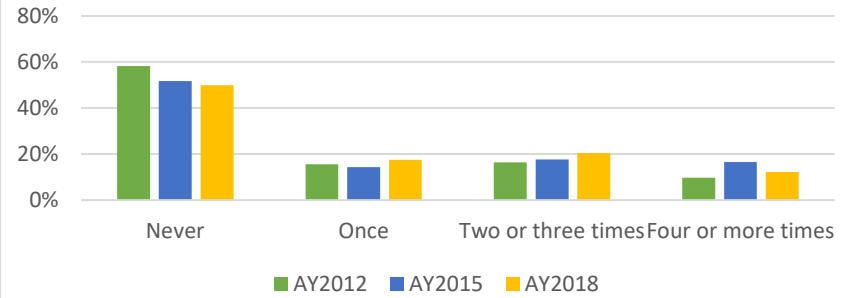
19i. Participate in a required study group outside of class



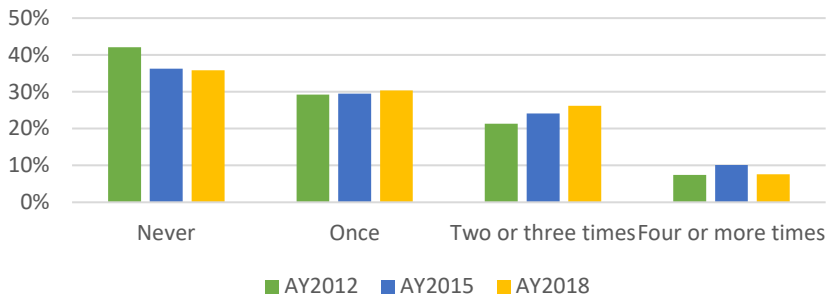
19j. Participate in a student-initiated (not required) study group outside of class



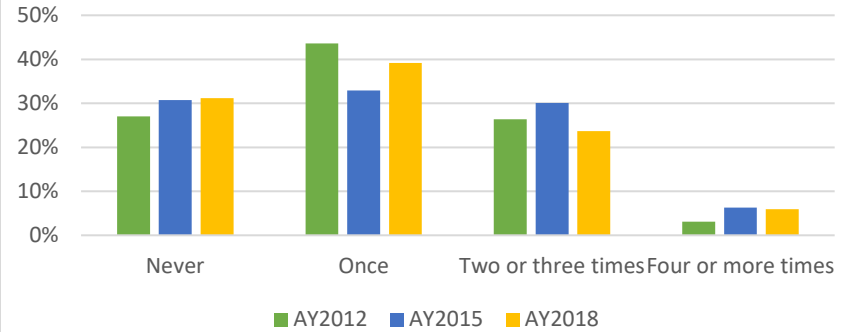
19k. Use an electronic tool to communicate with another student about coursework



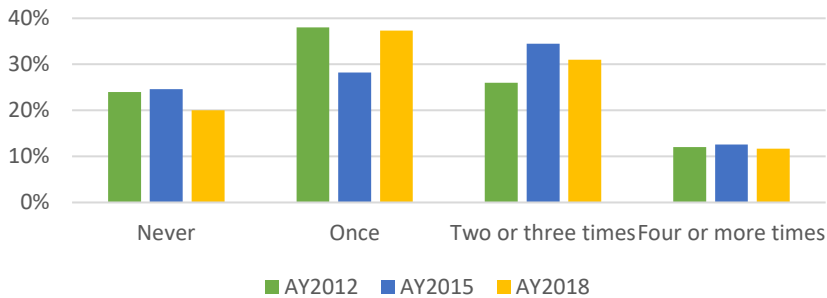
19l. Use an electronic to communicate with an instructor about coursework



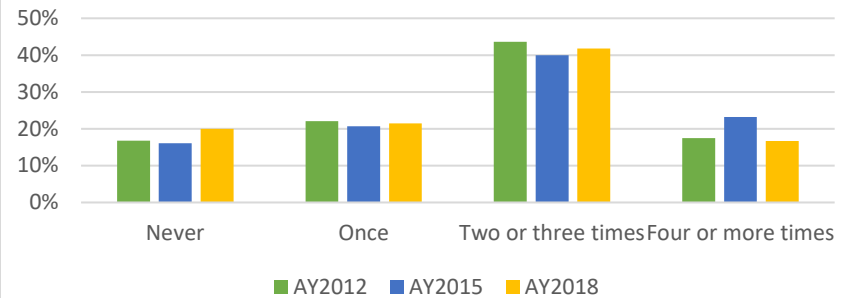
19m. Discuss an assignment or grade with an instructor



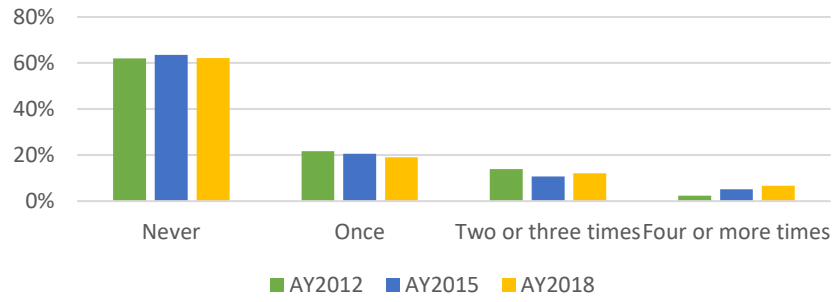
19n. Ask for help from an instructor regarding questions or problems related to a class



19o. Receive prompt written or oral feedback from instructors on your performance



19q. Discuss ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class



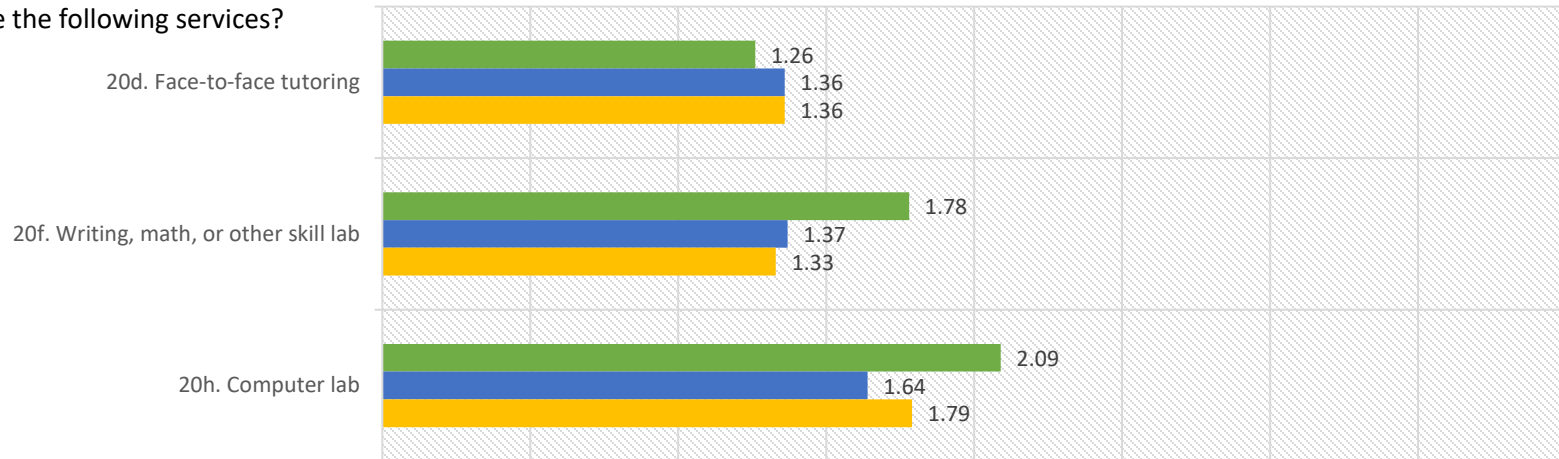
Engaged Learning

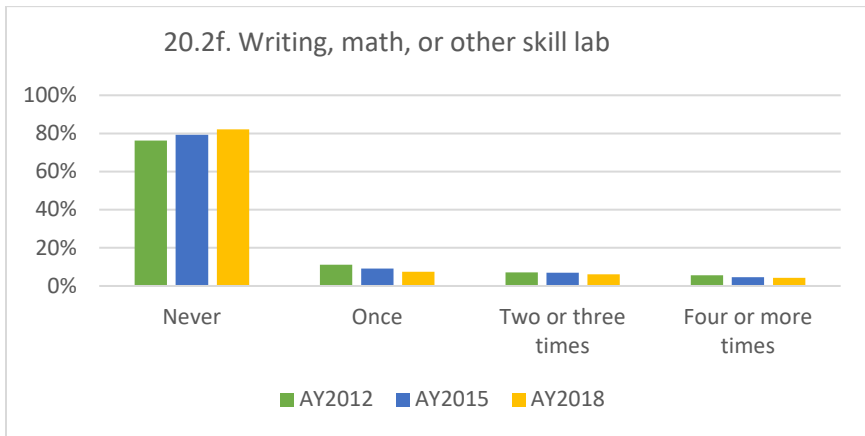
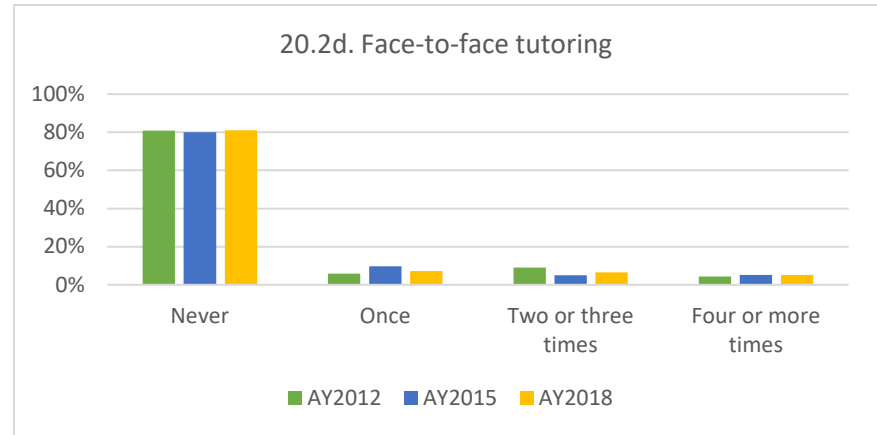
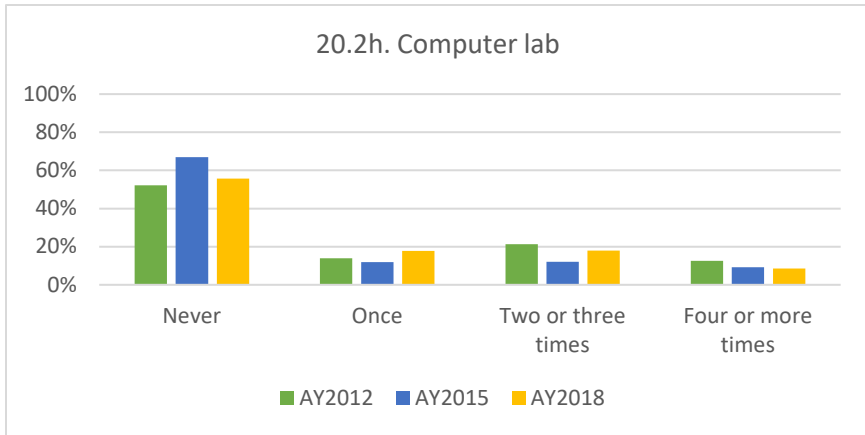
Mean scores across time

1 = Never; 2 = Once; 3 = Two or three times; 4 = Four or more times

■ AY2012 ■ AY2015 ■ AY2018

20: Think about your experiences from the time of your decision to attend this college through the end of the first three weeks of your first semester/quarter. How often did you use the following services?





Academic and Social Support Network

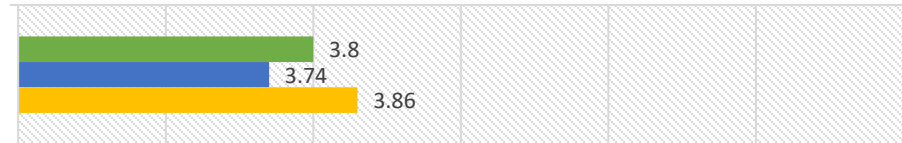
Mean scores across time

Strongly agree (5) to Strongly disagree(1)

■ AY2012 ■ AY2015 ■ AY2018

18: Think about your experiences from the time of your decision to attend this college through the end of the first three weeks of your first semester/quarter.

18l. All instructors clearly explained academic and student support services available at this college



18m. All instructors clearly explained course grading policies



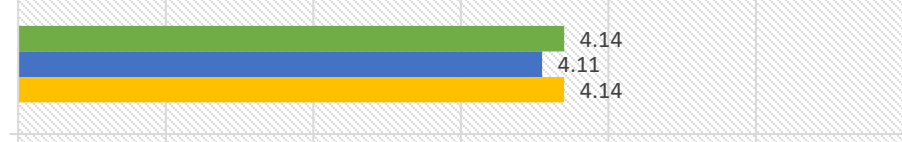
18n. All instructors clearly explained course syllabi (syllabuses)



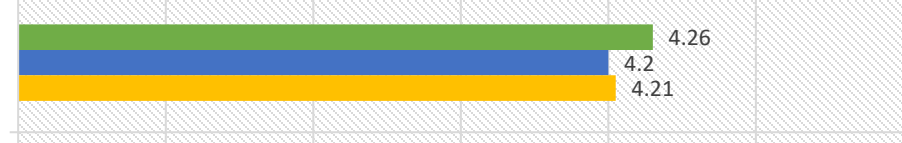
18o. I knew how to get in touch with my instructors outside of class



18q. At least one other student whom I didn't previously know learned my name



18r. At least one instructor learned my name



18s. I learned the name of at least one other student in most of my classes



