



St. Ambrose University
Engaging and Enriching Lives
Benchmark Comparisons
2006 Evidence

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- The following slide identifies the characteristics of students who took NSSE at St. Ambrose, a consortium of Catholic Colleges and Universities, our Carnegie peers, and all NSSE schools.

	St. Ambrose		Catholic C&U		Carnegie Peers		NSSE 2006	
	FY	SR	FY	SR	FY	SR	FY	SR
Response Rate^a								
Overall	39%		38%		31%		34%	
By class	40%	37%	37%	38%	30%	33%	33%	36%
NSSE sample size ^b	457	631	10,764	10,760	118,821	116,780	392,501	360,056
Sampling Error^c								
Overall	3.8%		0.9%		0.3%		0.2%	
By class	5.6%	5.1%	1.3%	1.3%	0.5%	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%
Number of respondents ^b	184	236	4,030	4,081	35,745	38,381	131,065	128,497
Total population	460	634	13,744	12,396	181,288	170,641	590,901	551,987
Student Characteristics^d								
<i>Mode of Completion</i>								
Paper	2%	3%	7%	11%	4%	7%	4%	7%
Web	98%	97%	93%	89%	96%	93%	96%	93%
<i>Class Level^e</i>	44%	56%	50%	50%	48%	52%	50%	50%
<i>Enrollment Status^e</i>								
Full-time	99%	87%	96%	79%	94%	82%	95%	86%
Less than full-time	1%	13%	4%	21%	6%	18%	5%	14%
<i>Gender^e</i>								
Female	75%	70%	73%	75%	67%	67%	64%	64%
Male	25%	30%	27%	25%	33%	33%	36%	36%
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>								
Am. Indian/Native American	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Asian/Asian Am./Pacific Isl.	1%	2%	6%	5%	4%	4%	5%	4%
Black/African American	0%	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%
White (non-Hispanic)	91%	86%	73%	75%	73%	73%	74%	74%
Mexican/Mexican American	1%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%
Puerto Rican	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other Hispanic or Latino	1%	0%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Multiracial	4%	0%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Other	1%	0%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%
I prefer not to respond	1%	3%	5%	6%	6%	7%	6%	7%
<i>International Student</i>	3%	2%	5%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%
<i>Place of Residence</i>								
On-campus	91%	31%	64%	21%	65%	13%	71%	20%
Off-campus	9%	69%	36%	79%	35%	87%	29%	80%
<i>Transfer Status</i>								
Transfer students	4%	55%	11%	46%	11%	49%	9%	39%
<i>Age</i>								
Non-traditional (24 or older)	0%	34%	6%	33%	8%	39%	6%	31%
Traditional (less than 24)	100%	66%	94%	67%	92%	61%	94%	69%

- The following sets of slides present comparisons to Catholic Colleges and Universities and Carnegie peers in terms of a number of benchmarks. There are also notifications of where significant differences exist between St. Ambrose and the comparison groups. A description of the questions that make up each benchmark area is included before each graph.

Level of Academic Challenge: Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance.

- Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, etc. related to academic program)
- Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings
- Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more; number of written papers or reports of between 5 and 19 pages; and number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages
- Coursework emphasizing analysis of the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory
- Coursework emphasizing synthesis and organizing of ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships
- Coursework emphasizing the making of judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods
- Coursework emphasizing application of theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations
- Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations
- Campus environment emphasizing time studying and on academic work

Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)

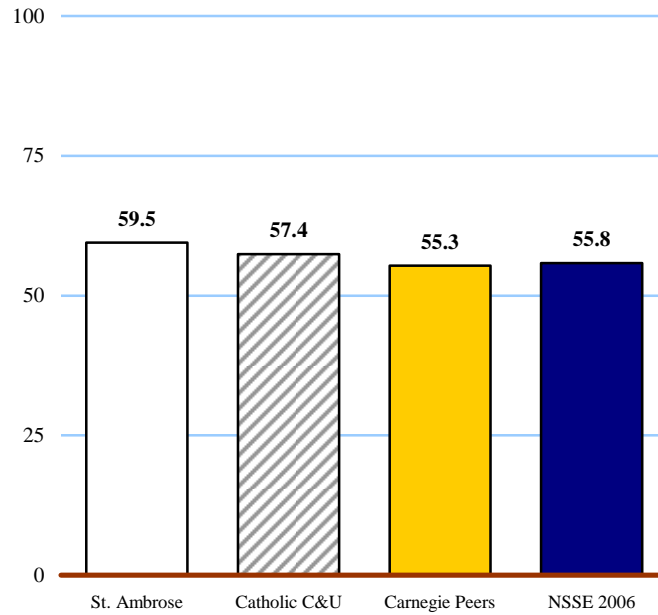
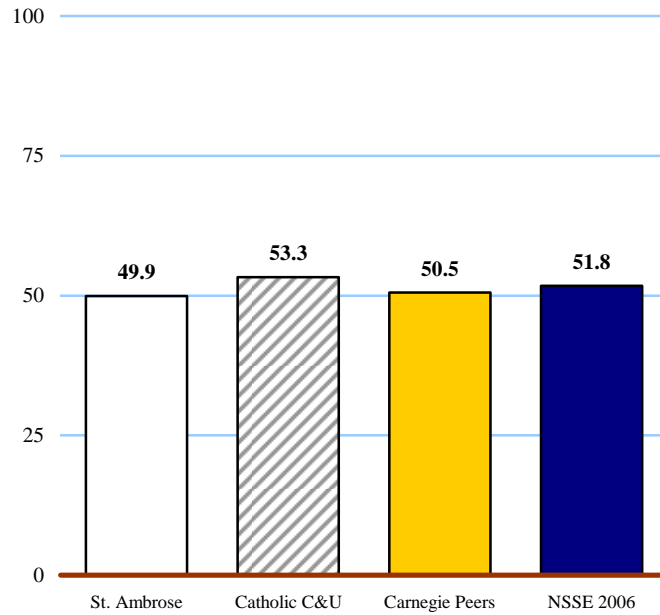
Benchmark Comparisons

St. Ambrose compared with:

Class	St. Ambrose Mean ^a	Catholic C&U			Carnegie Peers			NSSE 2006		
		Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
First-Year	49.9	53.3	*	-.26	50.5			51.8		
Senior	59.5	57.4			55.3	***	.29	55.8	**	.26

First-Year

Senior



Active and Collaborative Learning: Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and asked to think about what they are learning in different settings. Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material prepares students for the messy, unscripted problems they will encounter daily during and after college.

- Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
- Made a class presentation
- Worked with other students on projects during class
- Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments
- Tutored or taught other students
- Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)

Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)

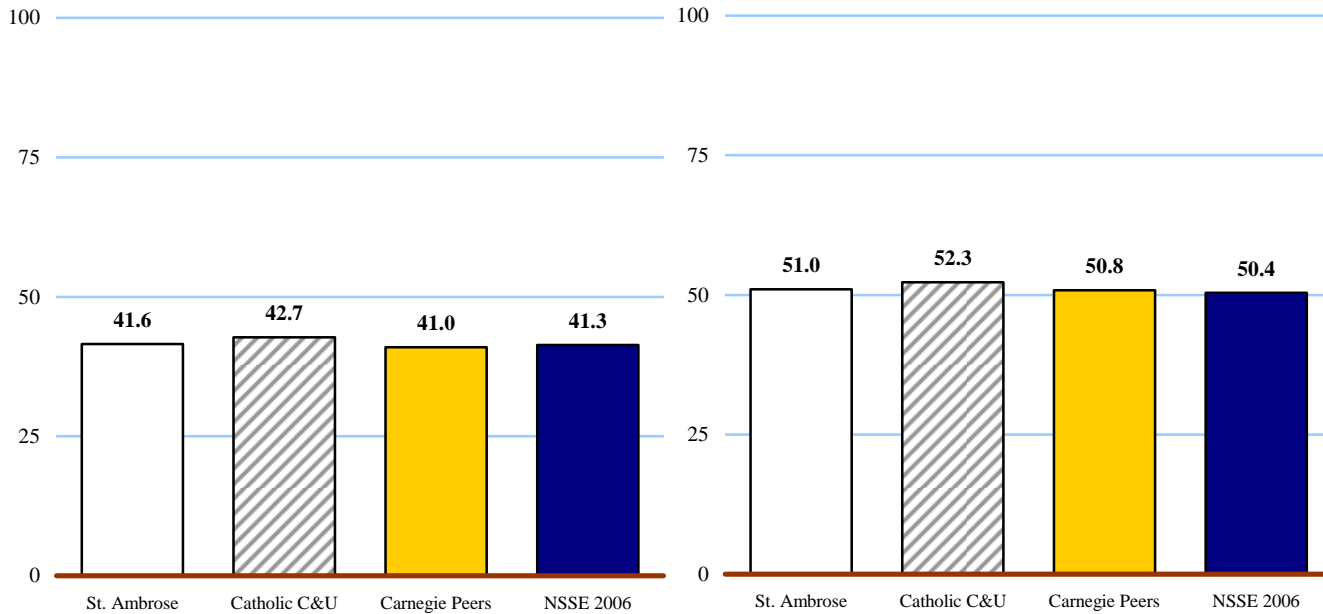
Benchmark Comparisons

St. Ambrose compared with:

Class	St. Ambrose	Catholic C&U			Carnegie Peers			NSSE 2006		
	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
First-Year	41.6	42.7			41.0			41.3		
Senior	51.0	52.3			50.8			50.4		

First-Year

Senior



Student-Faculty Interaction: Students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside the classroom. As a result, their teachers become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, life-long learning.

- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
- Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student-life activities, etc.)
- Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance
- Worked with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements



Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)

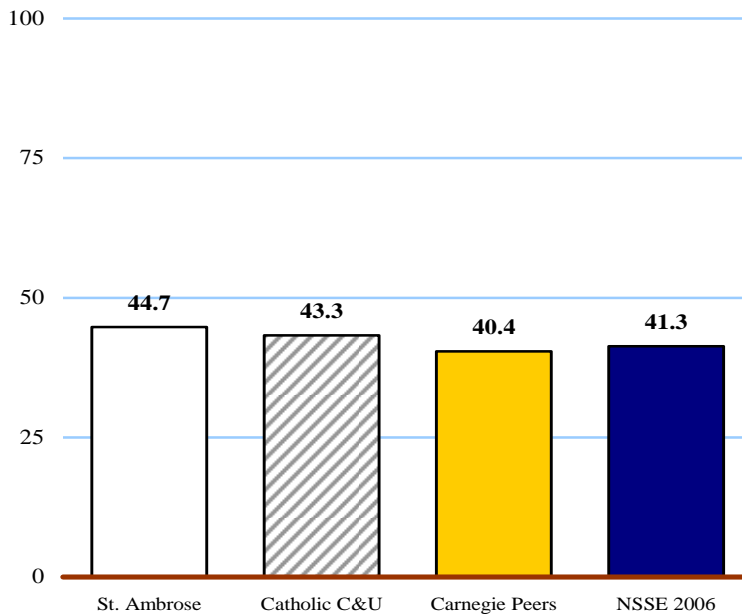
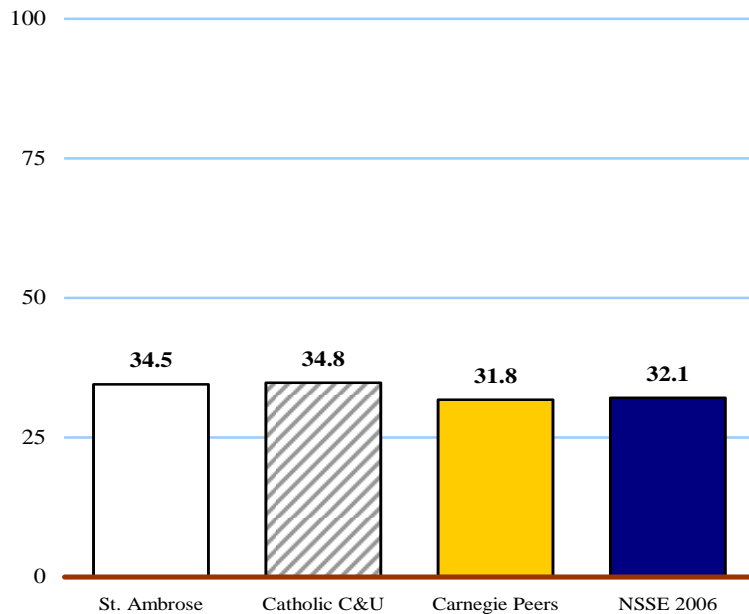
Benchmark Comparisons

St. Ambrose compared with:

Class	St. Ambrose	Catholic C&U			Carnegie Peers			NSSE 2006		
	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
First-Year	34.5	34.8			31.8			32.1		
Senior	44.7	43.3			40.4	*	.21	41.3	*	.16

First-Year

Senior



Enriching Educational Experiences: Complementary learning opportunities enhance academic programs. Diversity experiences teach students valuable things about themselves and others. Technology facilitates collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community service, and senior capstone courses provide opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge.

- Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, publications, student government, sports, etc.)
- Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment
- Community service or volunteer work
- Foreign language coursework & study abroad
- Independent study or self-designed major
- Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.)
- Serious conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values
- Serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity
- Using electronic technology to discuss or complete an assignment
- Campus environment encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
- Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together



Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE)

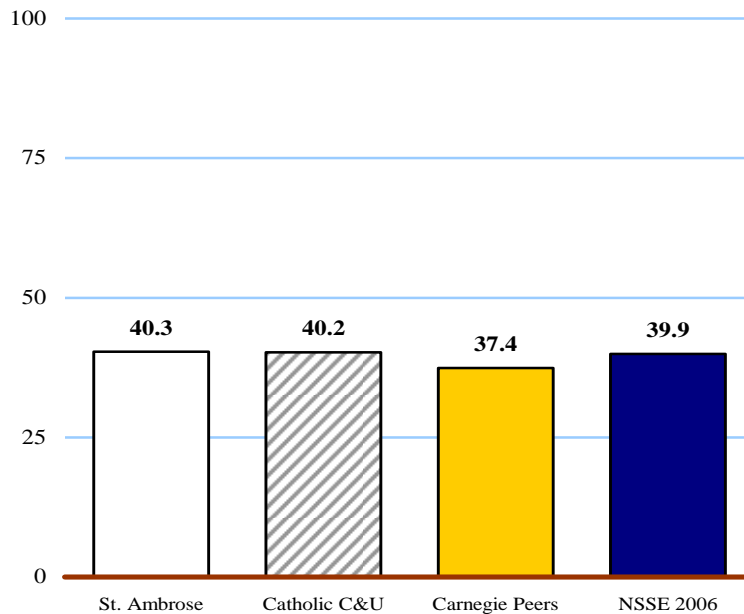
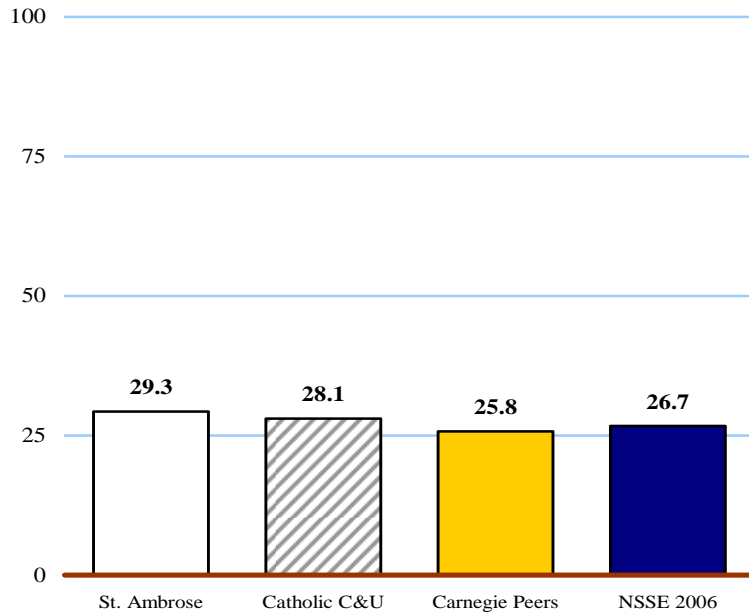
Benchmark Comparisons

St. Ambrose compared with:

Class	St. Ambrose	Catholic C&U			Carnegie Peers			NSSE 2006		
	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
First-Year	29.3	28.1			25.8	**	.27	26.7		
Senior	40.3	40.2			37.4			39.9		

First-Year

Senior



Supportive Campus Environment: Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus.

- Campus environment provides the support you need to help you succeed academically
- Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
- Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially
- Quality of relationships with other students
- Quality of relationships with faculty members
- Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices



Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)

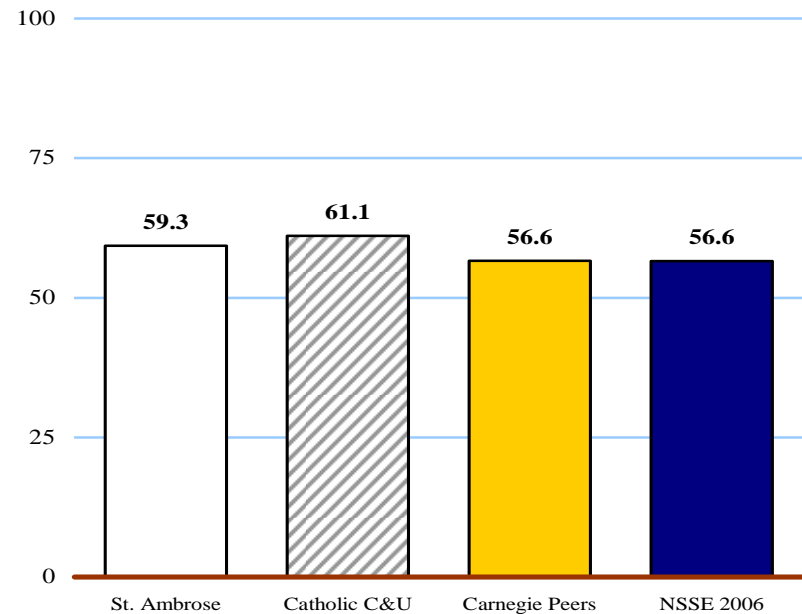
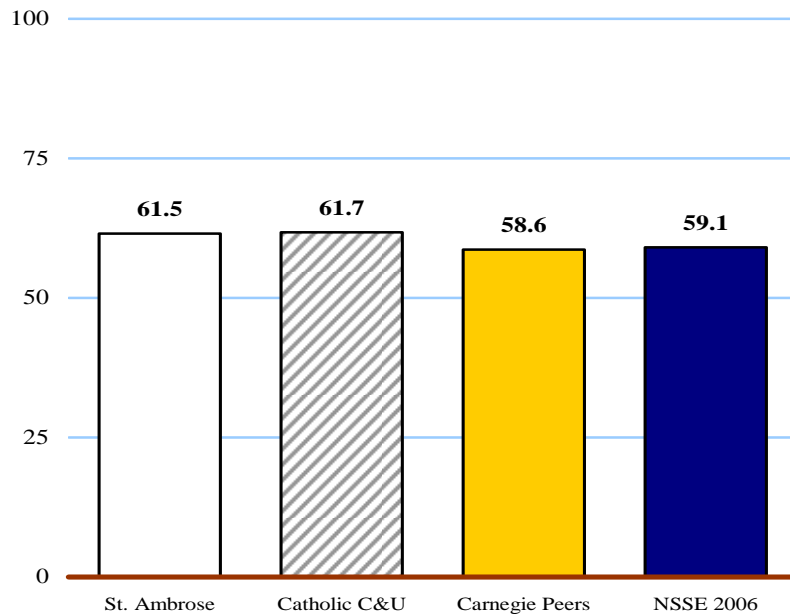
Benchmark Comparisons

St. Ambrose compared with:

Class	St. Ambrose	Catholic C&U			Carnegie Peers			NSSE 2006		
	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
First-Year	61.5	61.7			58.6			59.1		
Senior	59.3	61.1			56.6			56.6		

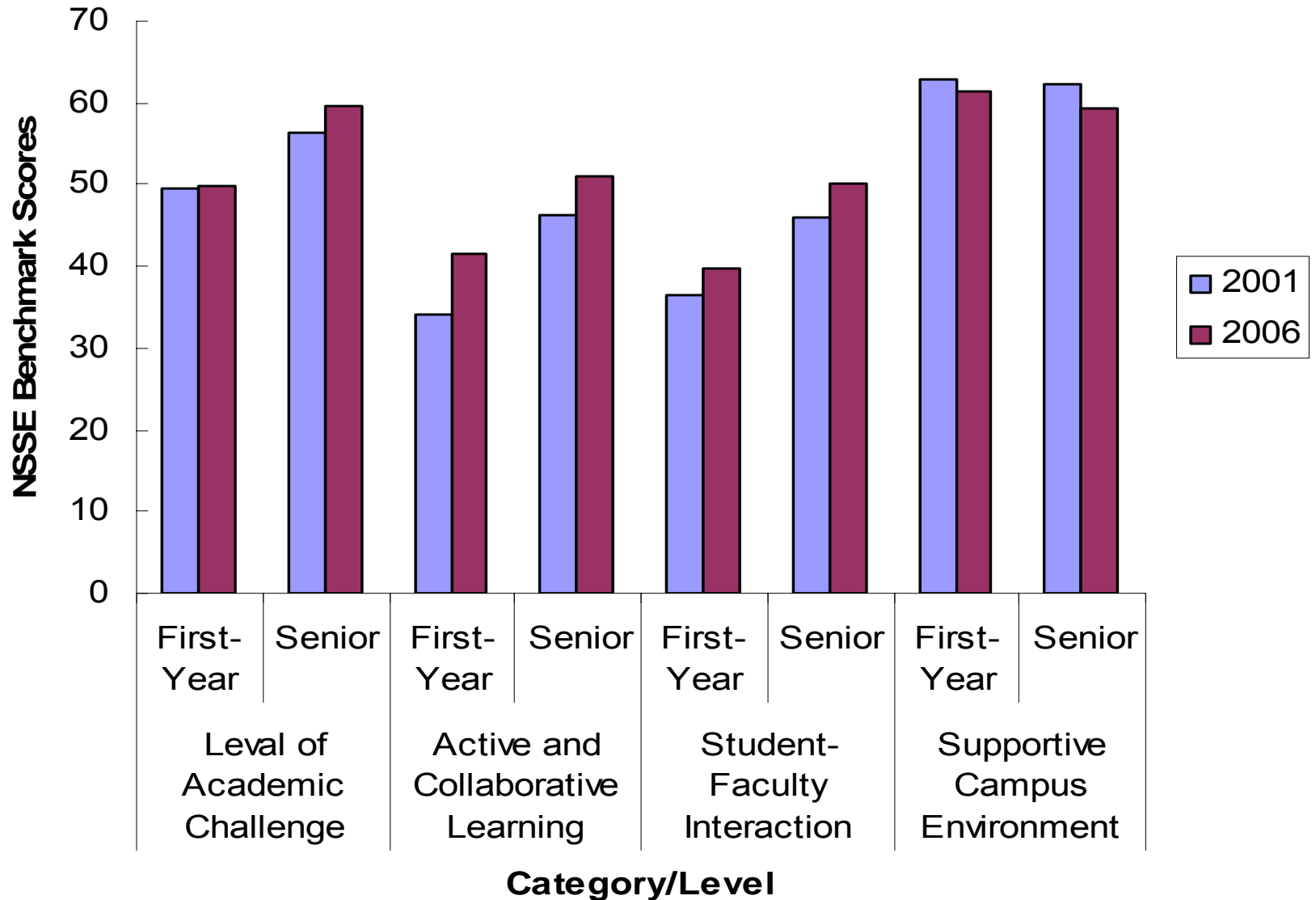
First-Year

Senior



- The following slide presents a comparison between scores for St. Ambrose University in 2001 and 2006 on the benchmark areas. It was not possible to compare Enriching Educational Experiences due to difference in the scales from 2001 to 2006.

Changes in NSSE Scores 2001 to 2006



Conclusions

- ✓ St. Ambrose University compares favorably to Catholic College and University and Carnegie peers on a majority the benchmark scores.
- ✓ St. Ambrose University seniors generally have higher scores than do first-year students indicating that there is something about the experience at St. Ambrose, along with other developmental factors, that is leading to enrichment over the undergraduate experience.
- ✓ St. Ambrose University Scores are higher with this administration than they were in 2001 in 3 out of the 4 benchmark areas compared by NSSE.
- ✓ Despite these positive indicators, St. Ambrose University is committed to further improving outcomes for its students. There are areas where we believe that we can do better based on a finer breakdown of the evidence. For example, while we pride ourselves on meeting our first-year students where they are at and providing them enriching experiences, we are not satisfied with some of the outcomes. As such, a committee appointed by the President will begin work spring 2007 to examine the entire first-year experience of our students to ensure quality outcomes. Be on the lookout for other continuing efforts to improve what we do.