

NSSE 2014 Results

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is an annual survey sponsored by the Center for Postsecondary Research (CPR) designed to evaluate collegiate quality. The survey is administered to first year students and seniors and provides comparison results with peer colleges. Muhlenberg has been participating in NSSE since 2004.

Selected results from the 2014 NSSE are highlighted below:

Freshmen

- 88% of freshmen reported that the institution emphasizes studying and academic work
- 93% agreed that the college provided the support they needed to succeed academically
- A significant number of students reported that they often connected ideas from courses to prior experiences and knowledge (85%)
- A large majority of freshmen reported asking questions or contributing to class discussions on a regular basis (80%)
- 83% of first year students indicated that their Muhlenberg experience contributed “quite a bit” or “very much” to the development of their critical and analytical thinking skills

Seniors

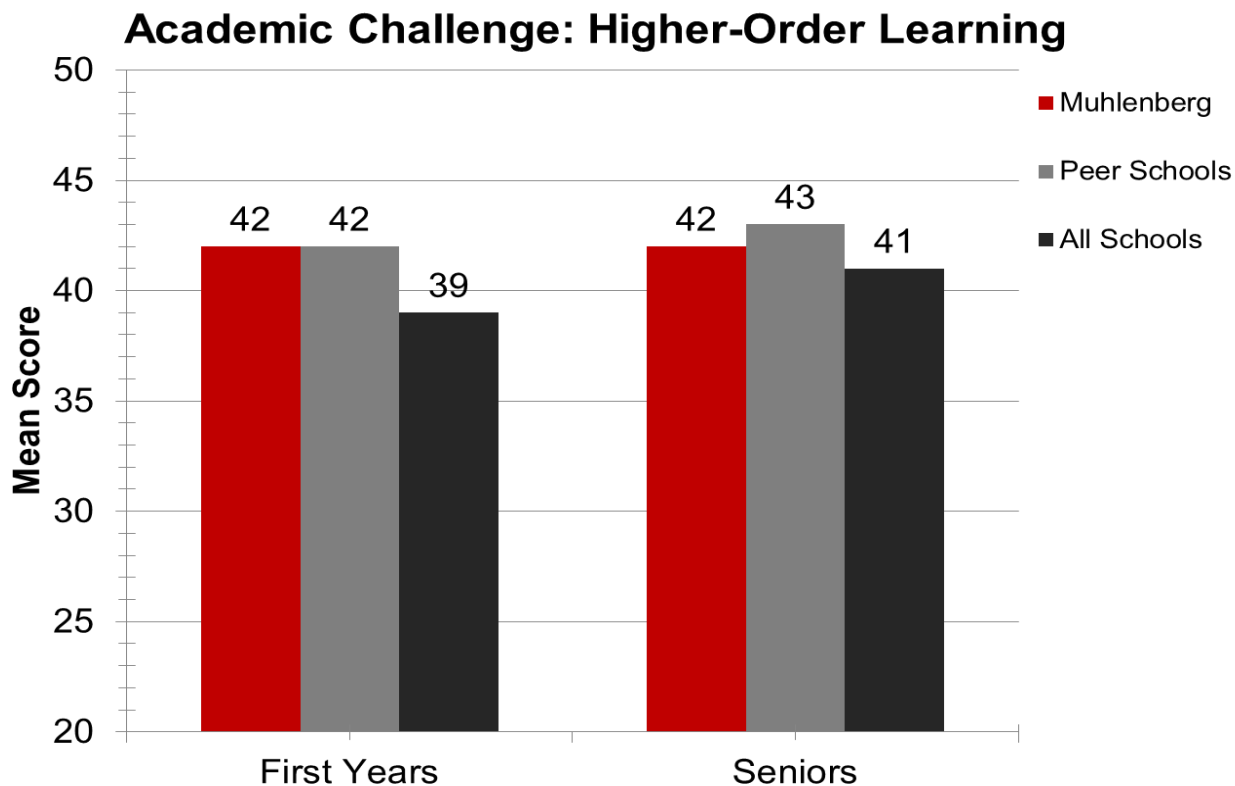
- 93% of seniors rated their overall educational experience as “good” or “excellent”
- 91% rated their relationships with faculty members positively
- A majority of seniors reported that their Muhlenberg education contributed “quite a bit” or “very much” to the development of their writing skills (84%)
- Many students work on research projects with a faculty member as a part of a class; however, one-third of seniors have also worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements.
- 70% of seniors have worked with classmates outside of class to prepare group assignments.

The NSSE Engagement Indicators are composite scores of several survey items that reflect the multi-dimensional nature of student engagement. These items measure behaviors and practices that support student learning and personal development.

The four themes of the Engagement Indicators are

- Academic Challenge
- Learning with Peers
- Experiences with Faculty
- Campus Environment

Muhlenberg's 2014 scores for each Engagement Indicator compared to scores for Peer Liberal Arts Institutions and for All Schools who administered the NSSE are below:



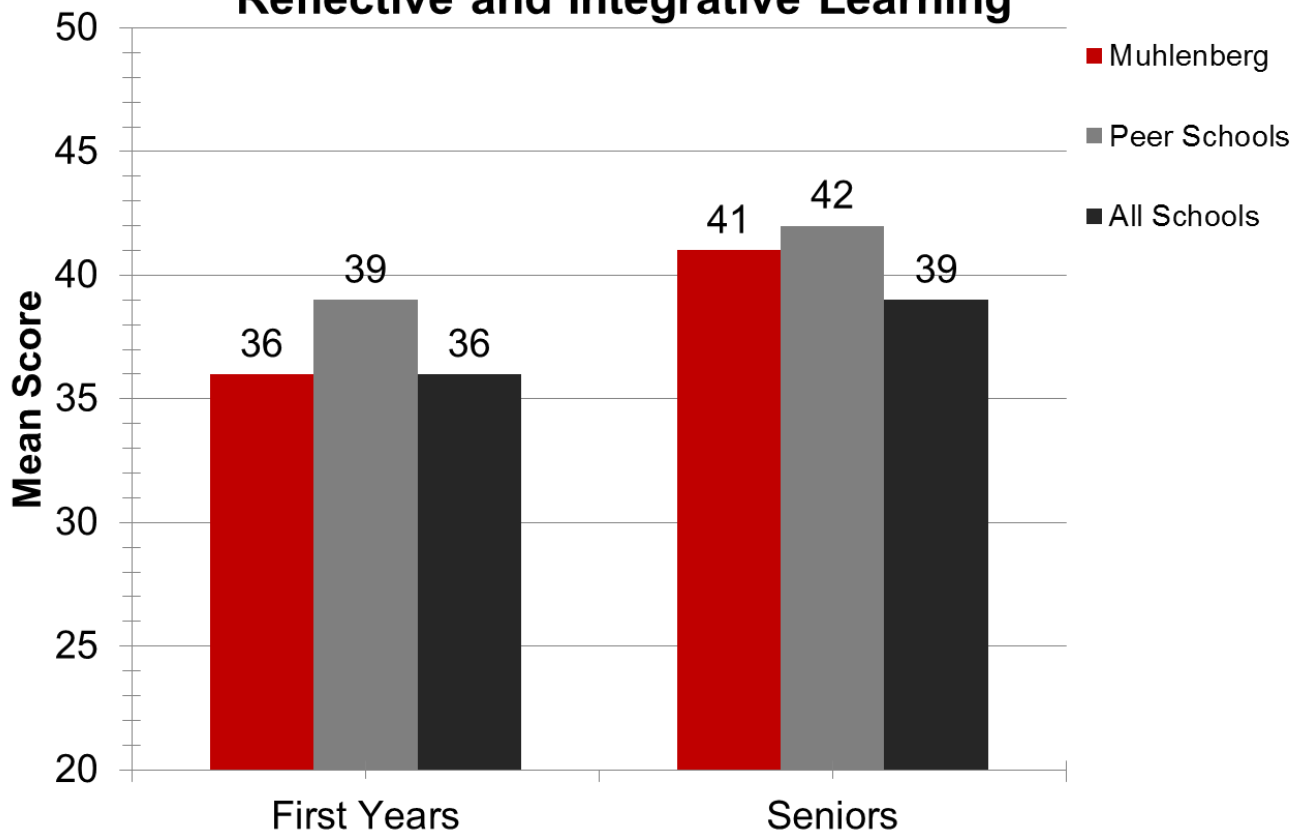
Description

Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by calling on students to engage in complex cognitive tasks requiring more than mere memorization of facts.

Items

- Coursework emphasizes applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations
- Coursework emphasizes analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts
- Coursework emphasizes evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source
- Coursework emphasizes forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information

Academic Challenge: Reflective and Integrative Learning



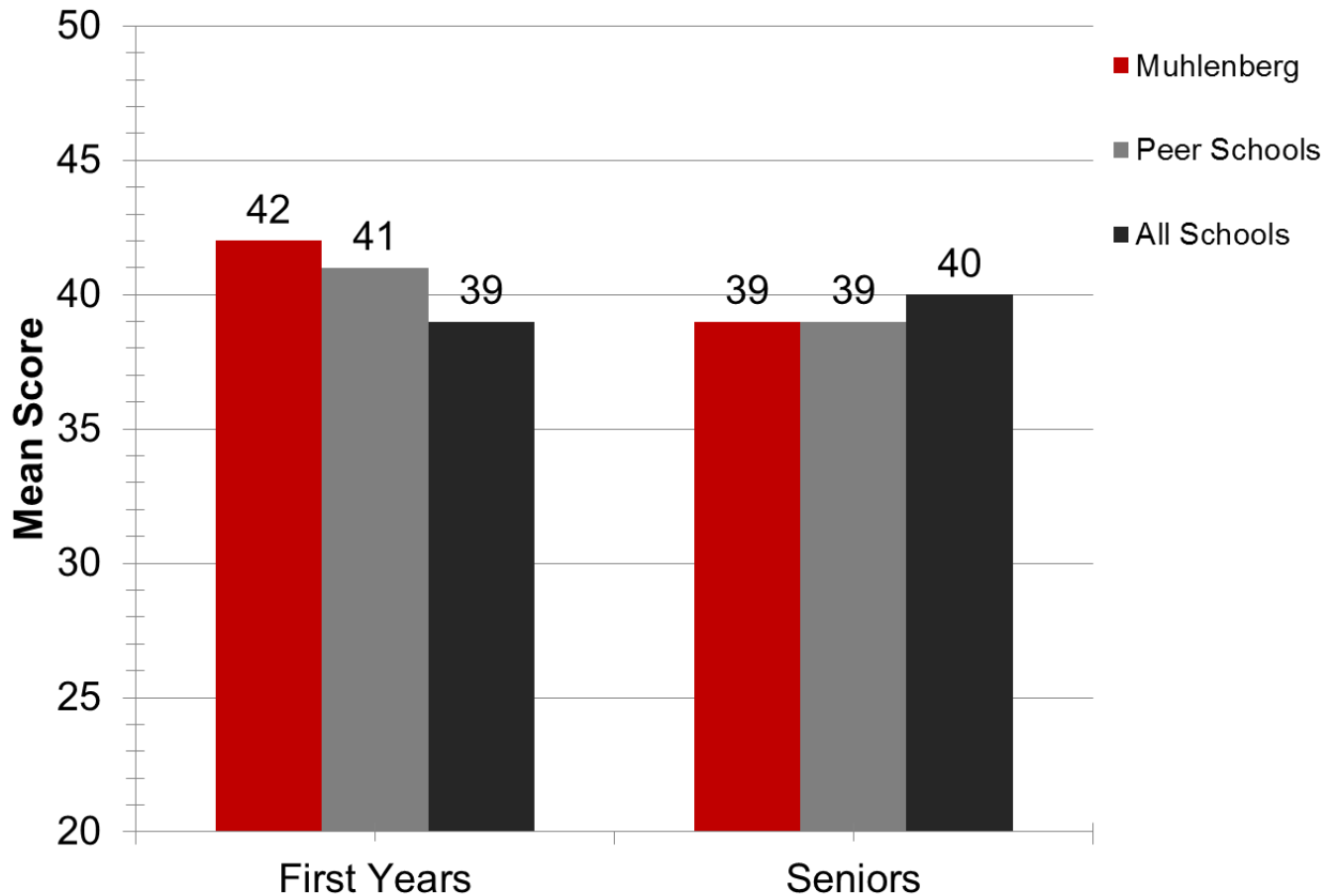
Description

Personally connecting with course material requires students to relate their understanding and experiences to the content at hand. Instructors who emphasize reflective and integrative learning motivate students to make connections between their learning and their world around them, to reexamine their own beliefs, and to consider issues and ideas from the perspectives of others.

Items

- Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments
- Connected your learning to societal problems or issues
- Included diverse perspectives in course discussions or assignments
- Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue
- Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective
- Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept
- Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge

Academic Challenge: Learning Strategies



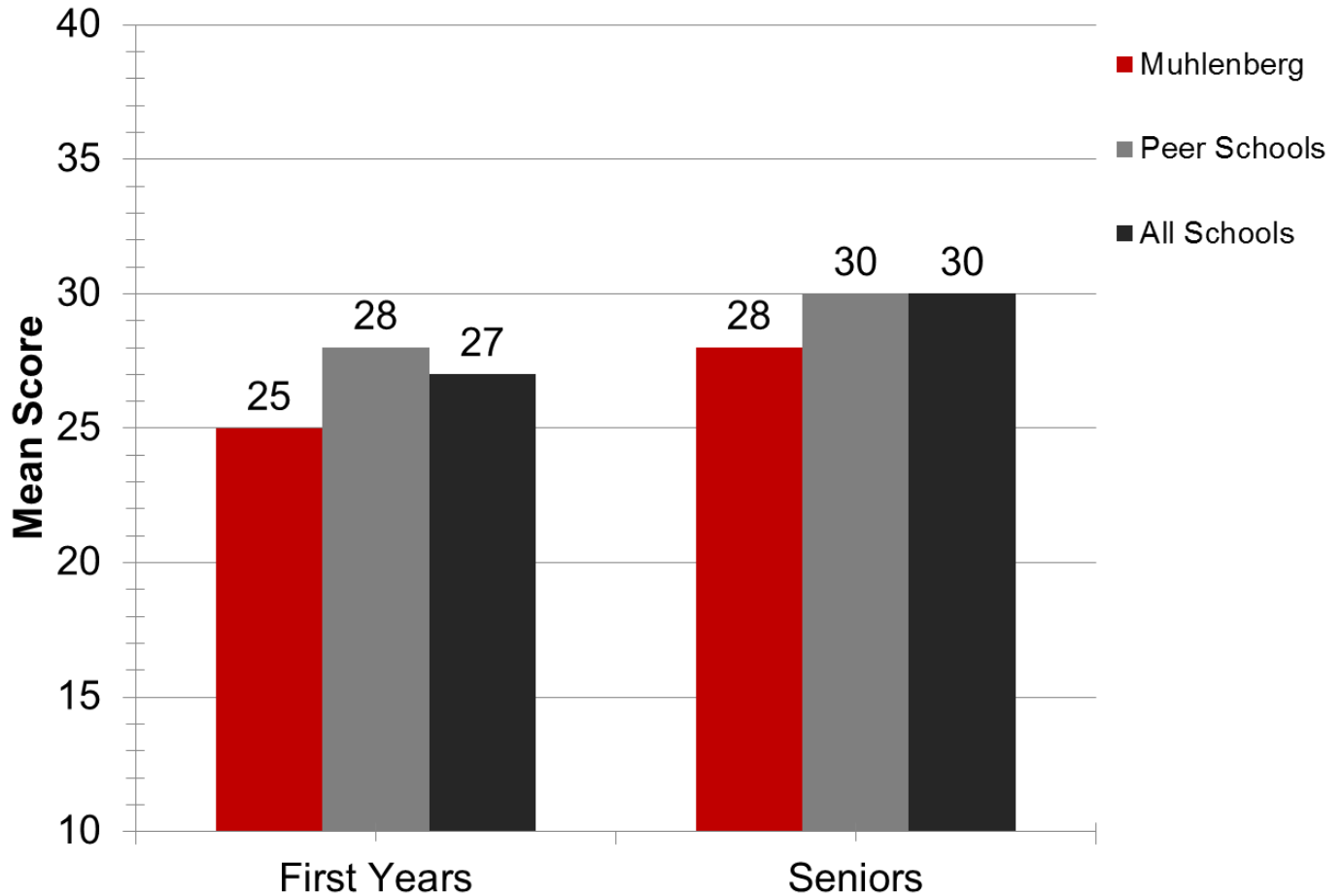
Description

College students enhance their learning and retention by actively engaging with and analyzing course material rather than approaching learning as absorption. Knowledge about the prevalence of effective learning strategies helps colleges and universities target interventions to promote student learning and success.

Items

- Identified key information from reading assignments
- Reviewed your notes after class
- Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials

Academic Challenge: Quantitative Reasoning



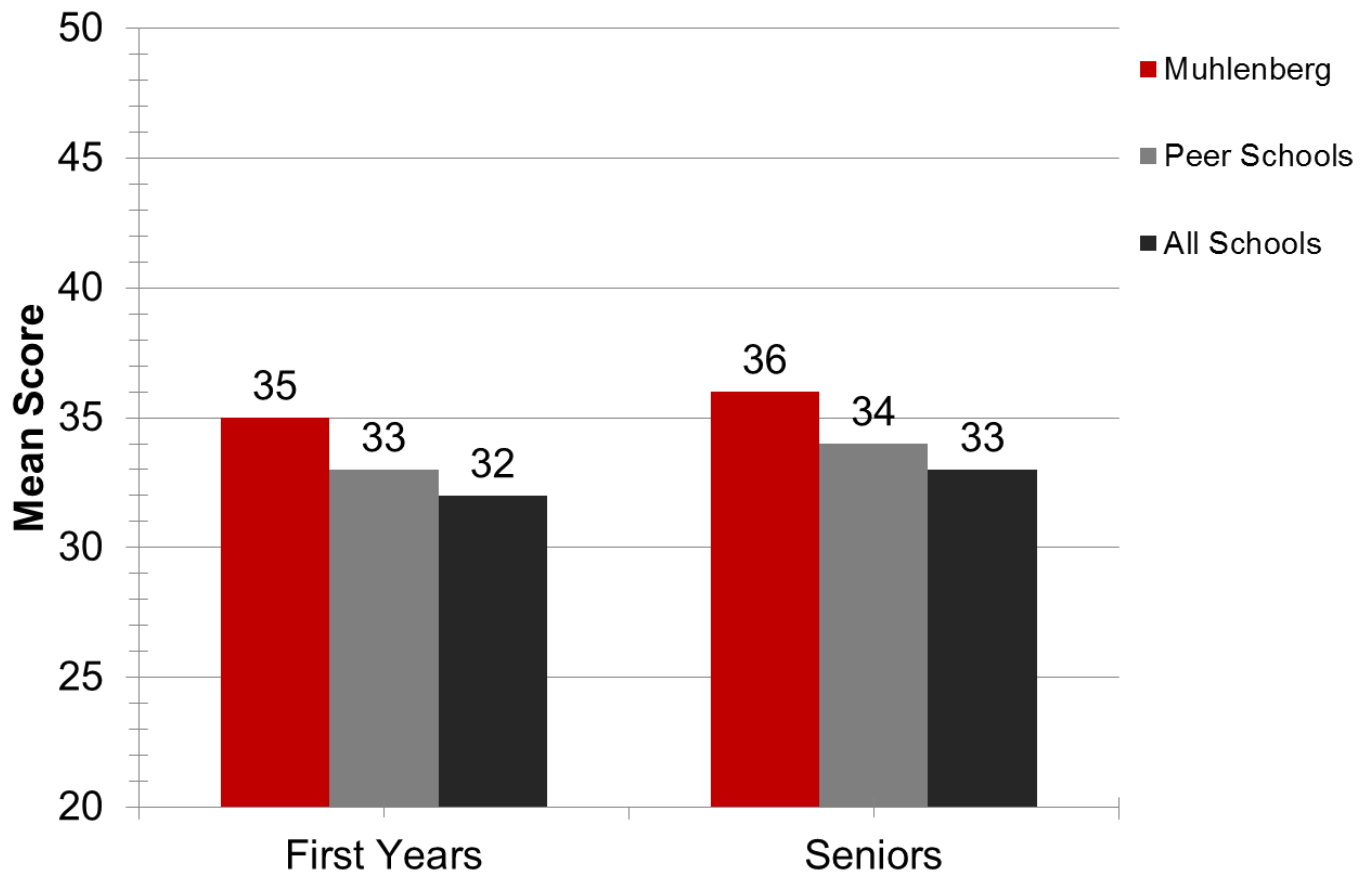
Description

Quantitative literacy – the ability to use and understand numerical and statistical information in everyday life – is an increasingly important outcome of higher education. All students, regardless of major, should have ample opportunities to develop their ability to reason quantitatively – to evaluate, support, and critique arguments using numerical and statistical information.

Items

- Reached conclusions based on your own analysis of numerical information
- Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue
- Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information

Learning with Peers: Collaborative Learning



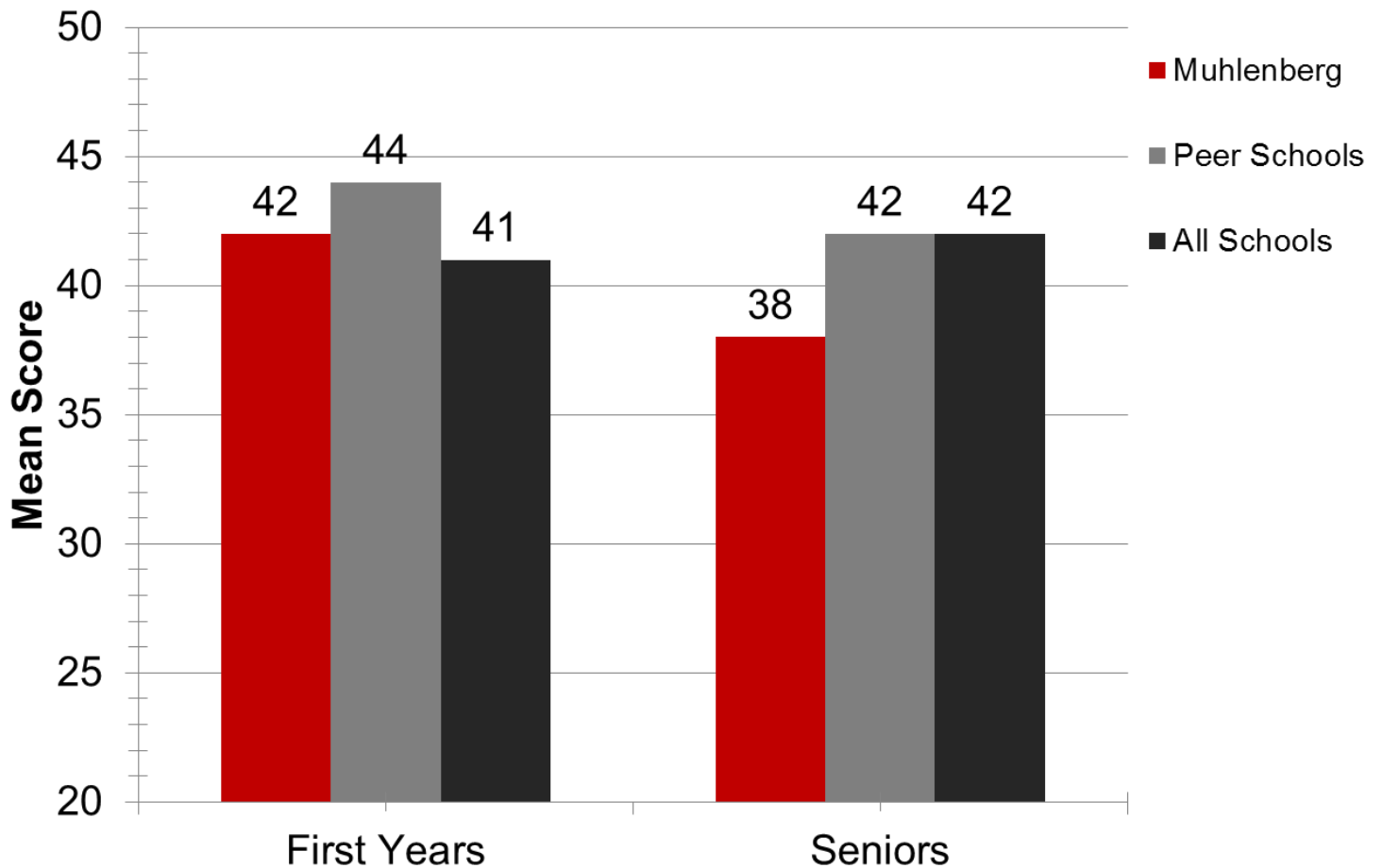
Description

Collaborating with peers in solving problems or mastering difficult material deepens understanding and prepares students to deal with the messy, unscripted problems they will encounter during and after college.

Items

- Asked another student to help you understand course material
- Explained course material to one or more students
- Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students
- Worked with other students on course projects or assignments

Learning with Peers: Discussions with Diverse Others



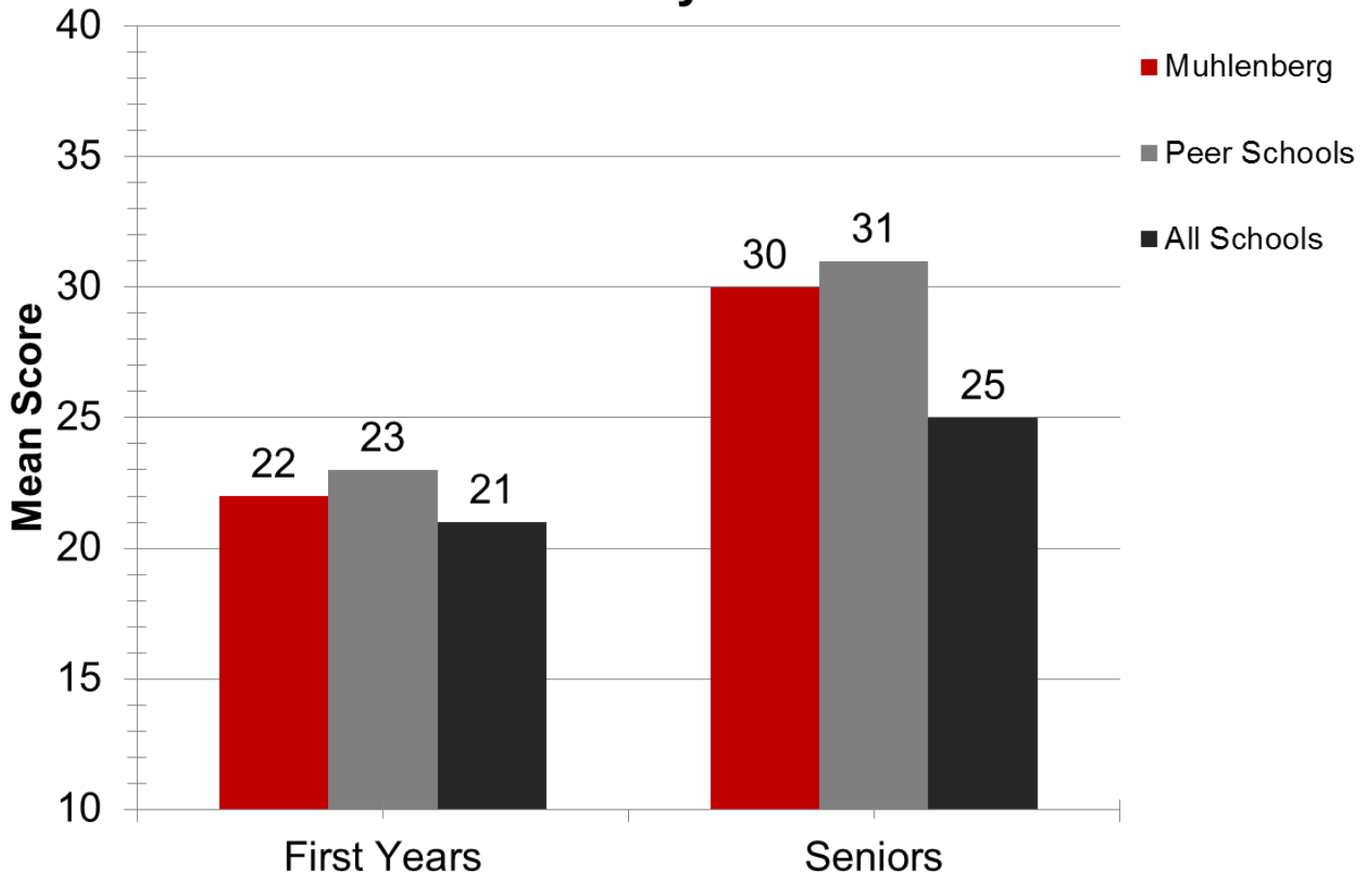
Description

Colleges and universities afford students new opportunities to interact with and learn from others with different backgrounds and life experiences. Interactions across difference, both inside and outside the classroom, confer educational benefits and prepare students for personal and civic participation in a diverse and interdependent world.

Items

- Having discussions with people from a race or ethnicity other than your own
- Having discussions with people from an economic background other than your own
- Having discussions with people with religious beliefs other than your own
- Having discussions with people with political beliefs other than your own

Experiences with Faculty: Student-Faculty Interaction



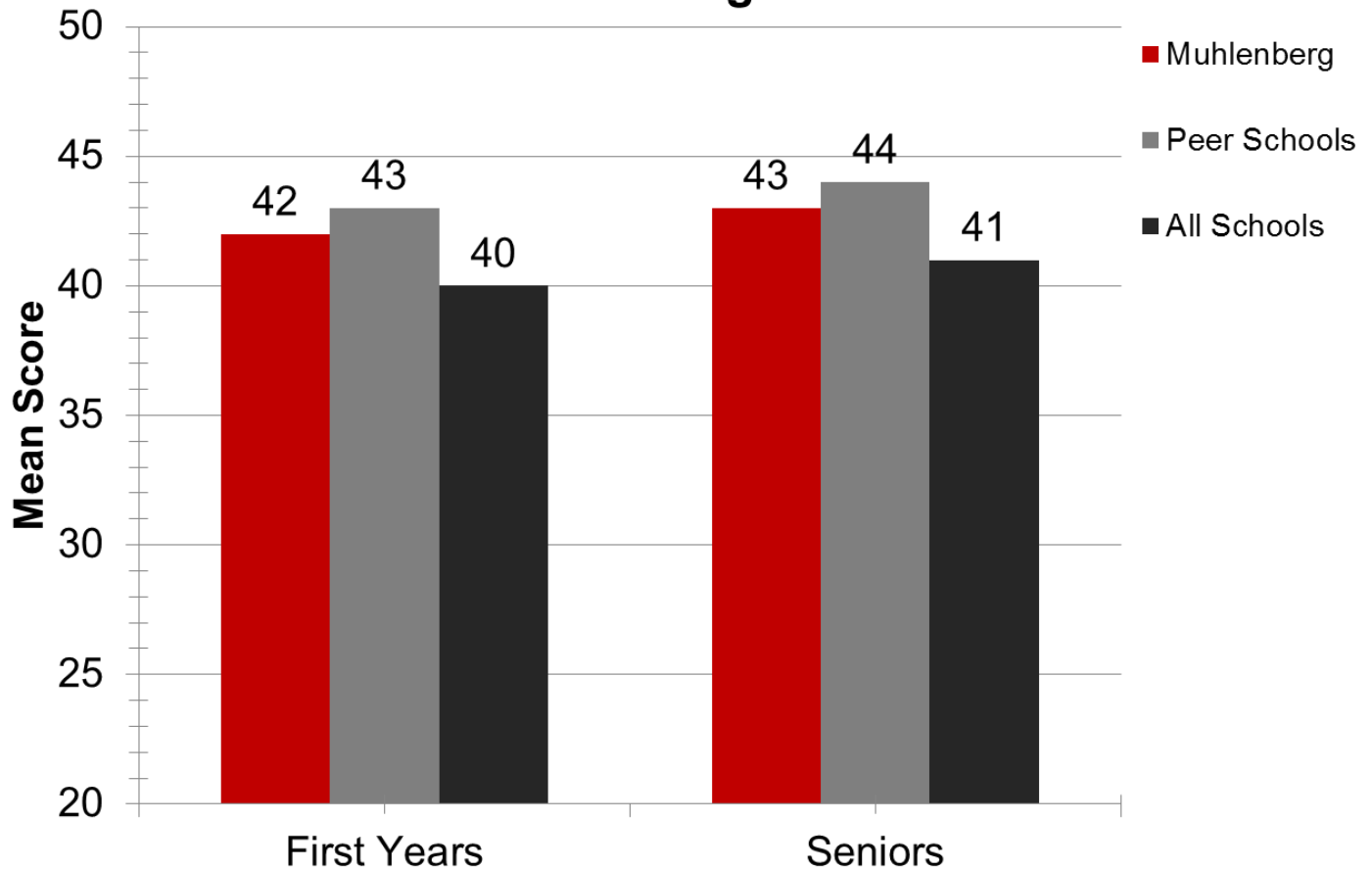
Description

Interactions with faculty can positively influence the cognitive growth, development, and persistence of college students. Through their formal and informal roles as teachers, advisors, and mentors, faculty members model intellectual work, promote mastery of knowledge and skills, and help students make connections between their studies and future plans.

Items

- Talked about career plans with a faculty member
- Worked with faculty on activities other than coursework
- Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class
- Discussed your academic performance with a faculty member

Experiences with Faculty: Effective Teaching Practices



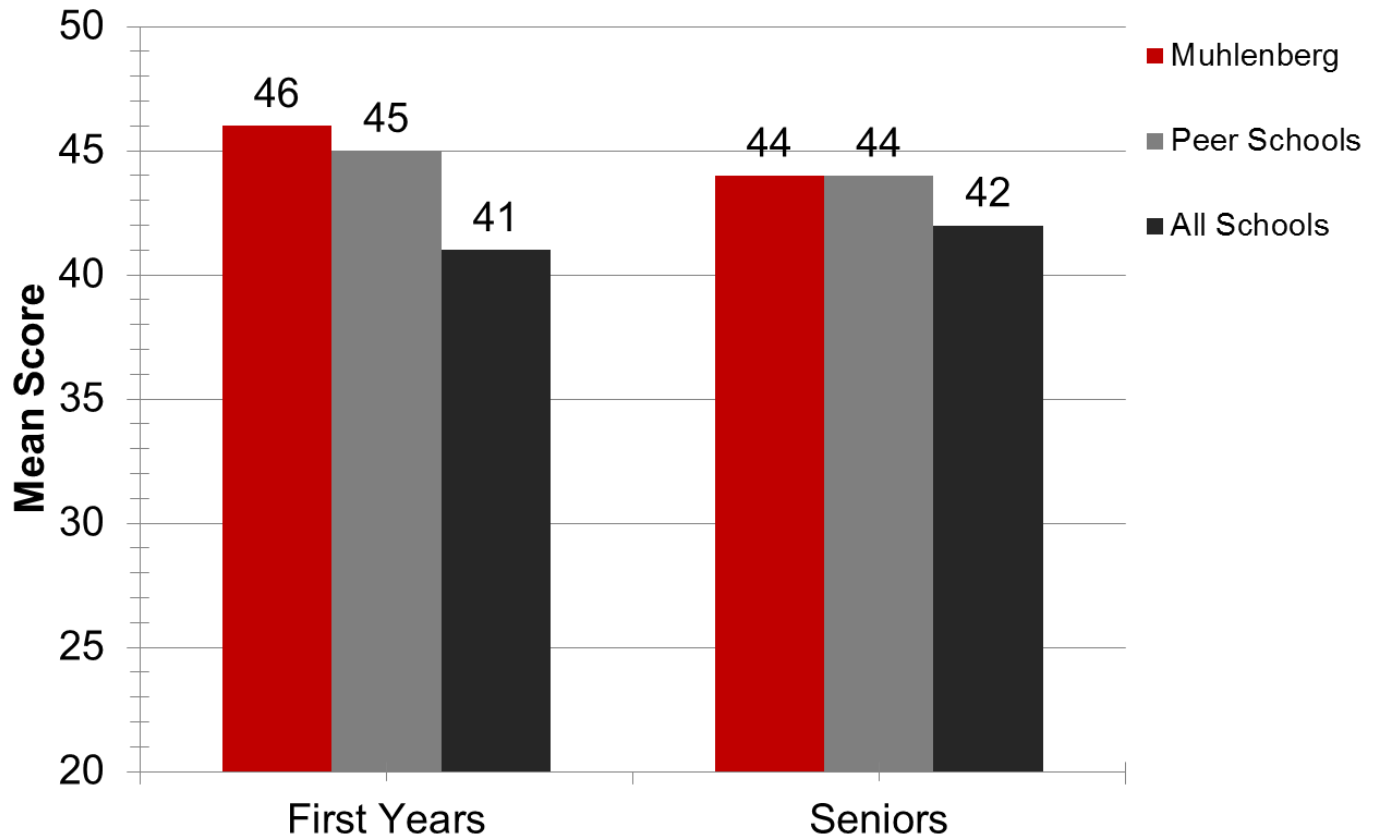
Description

Student learning is heavily dependent on effective teaching. Organized instruction, clear explanations, illustrative examples, and effective feedback on student work all represent aspects of teaching effectiveness that promote student comprehension and learning.

Items

- Clearly explained course goals and requirements
- Taught course sessions in an organized way
- Used examples or illustrations to explain difficult points
- Provided feedback on a draft or work in progress
- Provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments

Campus Environment: Quality of Interactions



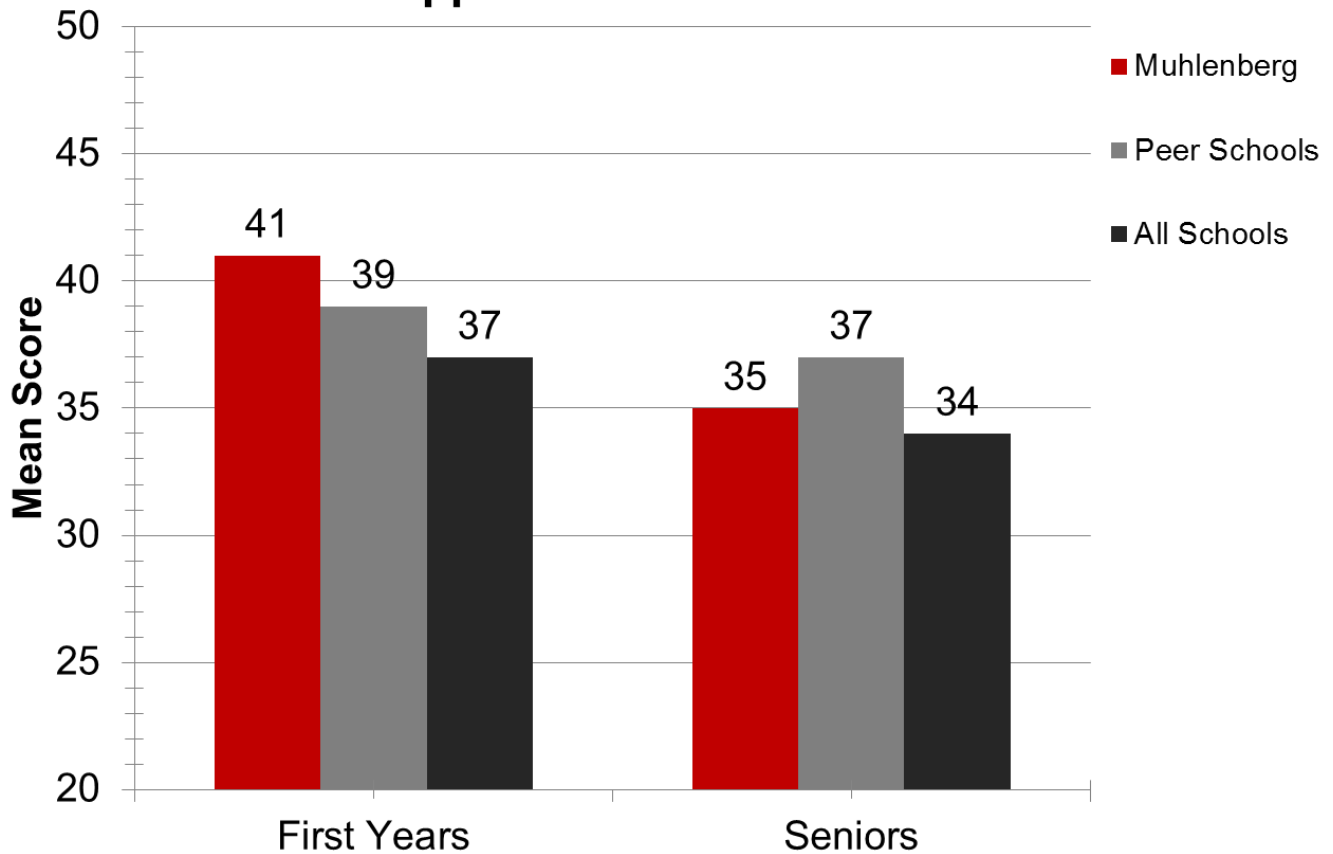
Description

College environments characterized by positive interpersonal relations promote student learning and success. Students who enjoy supportive relationships with peers, advisors, faculty, and staff are better able to find assistance when needed, and to learn from and with those around them.

Items

- High quality interactions with students
- High quality interactions with faculty
- High quality interactions with academic advisors
- High quality interactions with student services staff
- High quality interactions with other administrative staff and offices

Campus Environment: Supportive Environment



Description

Institutions that are committed to student success provide support and involvement across a variety of domains, including the cognitive, social, and physical. These commitments foster higher levels of student performance and satisfaction.

Items

- Institution emphasizes providing support to help students succeed academically
- Institution emphasizes using learning support services
- Institution emphasizes encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds
- Institution emphasizes providing opportunities to be involved socially
- Institution emphasizes providing support for your overall well-being
- Institution emphasizes helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities
- Institution emphasizes attending campus activities and events
- Institution emphasizes attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues