

# NSSE 2002



Prepared by:

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# What is NSSE?

*(pronounced “nessie”)*

- Survey that assesses the extent to which first-year and senior students engage in educational practices associated with high levels of learning and development
- Supported by grants from Lumina Foundation for Education and The Pew Charitable Trusts
- Co-sponsored by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Pew Forum on Undergraduate Learning



# Why a National Survey?

- **Refocus conversations about undergraduate quality to what matters most**
- **Foster comparative & consortial activity**
- **Inform accountability**
- **Systematic national data on “good educational practices”**
- **Most importantly to us at UMB to enhance institutional improvement efforts**

# What *Really* Matters Most in College?

## Engagement



The research is unequivocal: students who are actively involved in both academic and out-of-class activities gain more from the college experience than those who are not so involved

Pascarella & Terenzini,  
*How College Affects Students*

# What Are Good Educational Practices?

- Student-faculty contact
- Active learning
- Prompt feedback
- Time on task
- High expectations
- Cooperation among students
- Respect for diverse talents and ways of learning

**“Seven principles of good practice in undergraduate education” (Chickering and Gamson, 1987)**

# NSSE Project Scope

Project Year	Colleges/Universities
NSSE 2000	276
NSSE 2001	321
NSSE 2002	366

- **618 different colleges/universities**
- **49 states, DC & Puerto Rico**
- **250 institutions in 30 consortia**
- **Data from more than 267,000 students**

# **UMass Boston Has a History Of NSSE Participation**

- **UMB was part of both of the NSSE pilot studies in 1999.**
- **UMass Boston and the UMass System have participated in NSSE 2000 and in NSSE 2002.**
  - **The 2000 data are available for comparison. With the exception of the other UMass campuses, the participants in the comparison groups have changed.**

# UMB Has 2002 Comparative Statistics Reported for Several Groups

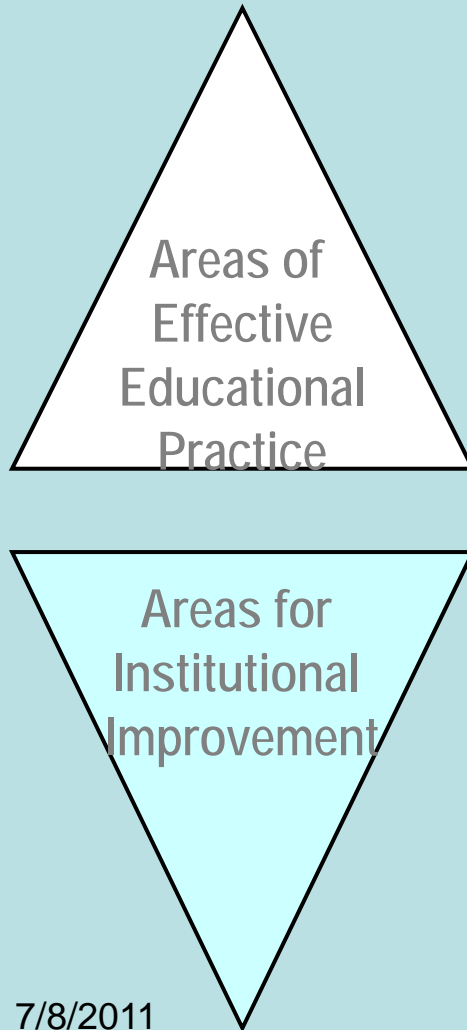
- **The National Group**
  - 366 Institutions
  - 80,497 Respondents
- **All Doctoral Intensive University NSSE 2002 Participants**
  - 34 Institutions
  - 8,170 Respondents
- **An Urban Consortium**
  - 20 Institutions
  - 5,535 Respondents
- **The Other UMass Campuses**
  - 3 Campuses
  - 850 Respondents

# 270 UMass Boston Students Responded To NSSE 2002

- **144 Seniors**
- **126 First Year Students**
  - **We can identify these students, and we have accessed institutional data on them.**
- **The UMass Boston response rate was 39%.**
- **The average national response rate was 41%**

# How Do Institutions Use *The College Student Report?*

## Internal Uses



- **Discover current levels of engagement (institution, major field, year in school)**
- **Determine if current levels are satisfactory (criterion reference, normative or peer comparison)**
- **Target areas for improvement**
- **Modify programs and policies accordingly**
- **Teach students what is required to “succeed”**
- **Monitor student & institutional performance**

# External Uses



- **NSSE is part Of The UMass President's Office Performance Management System**
- **Assess status vis-à-vis peers, competitors**
- **Identify, develop, market distinctive competences**
- **Encourage collaboration in consortia (e.g., state-wide NSSE conference)**
- **Provide evidence of accountability for good processes (while awaiting improvement in outcomes)**

# **UMass Boston NSSE 2002**

## **Selected Results**



### **Focusing on:**

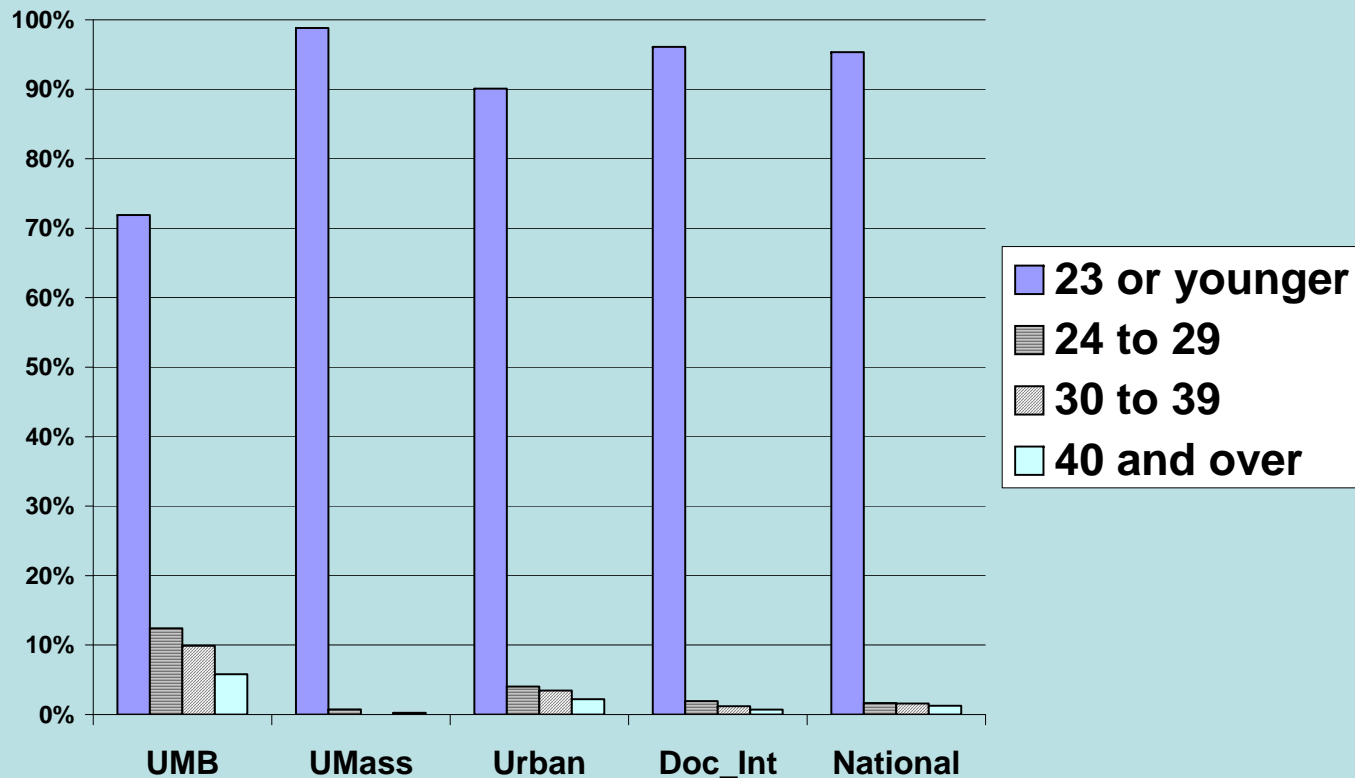
- 1) Student Background Characteristics**
- 2) Academic and Intellectual Experiences**

# UMass Boston Students Differed From Students in the Comparison Groups On A Number of Background Characteristics

- **Age**
- **Race/Ethnicity**
- **Entrance Status**
- **Foreign Citizenship**
- **Family Income**
- **Hours Worked Off Campus Weekly for Pay**
- **Hours Spent Weekly Caring for Dependents**
- **Part Time Attendance**

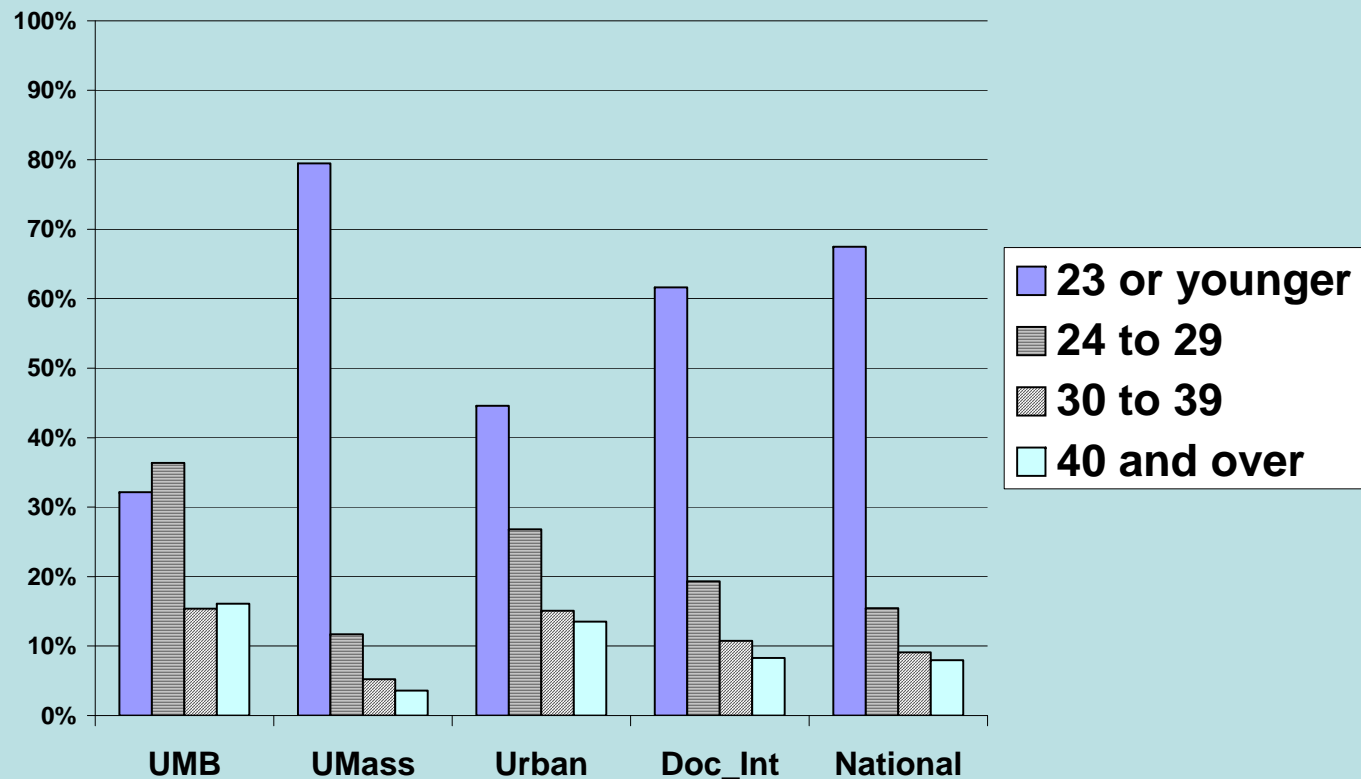
# UMass Boston Students Tend to Be Older Than Their Colleagues at Other Institutions

## Age Distribution of First Year Respondents



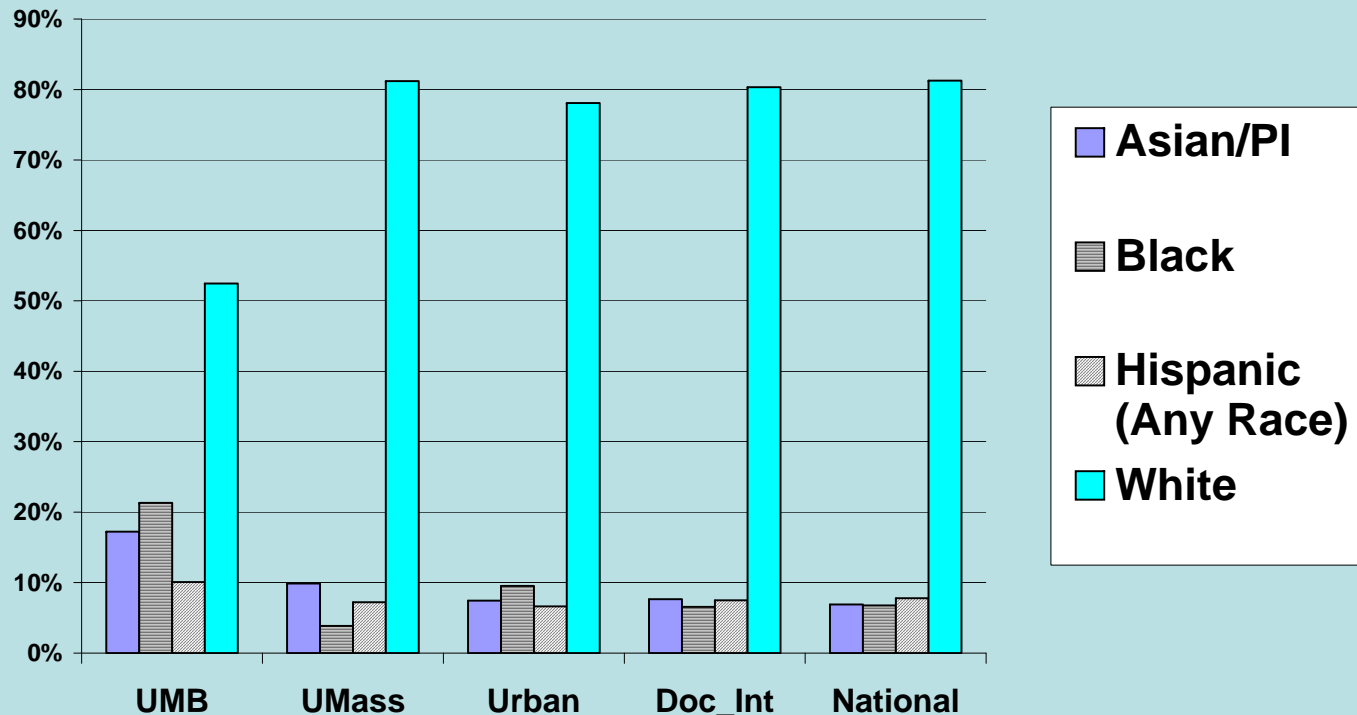
## This Is Especially True of Seniors

### Age Distribution of Senior Respondents



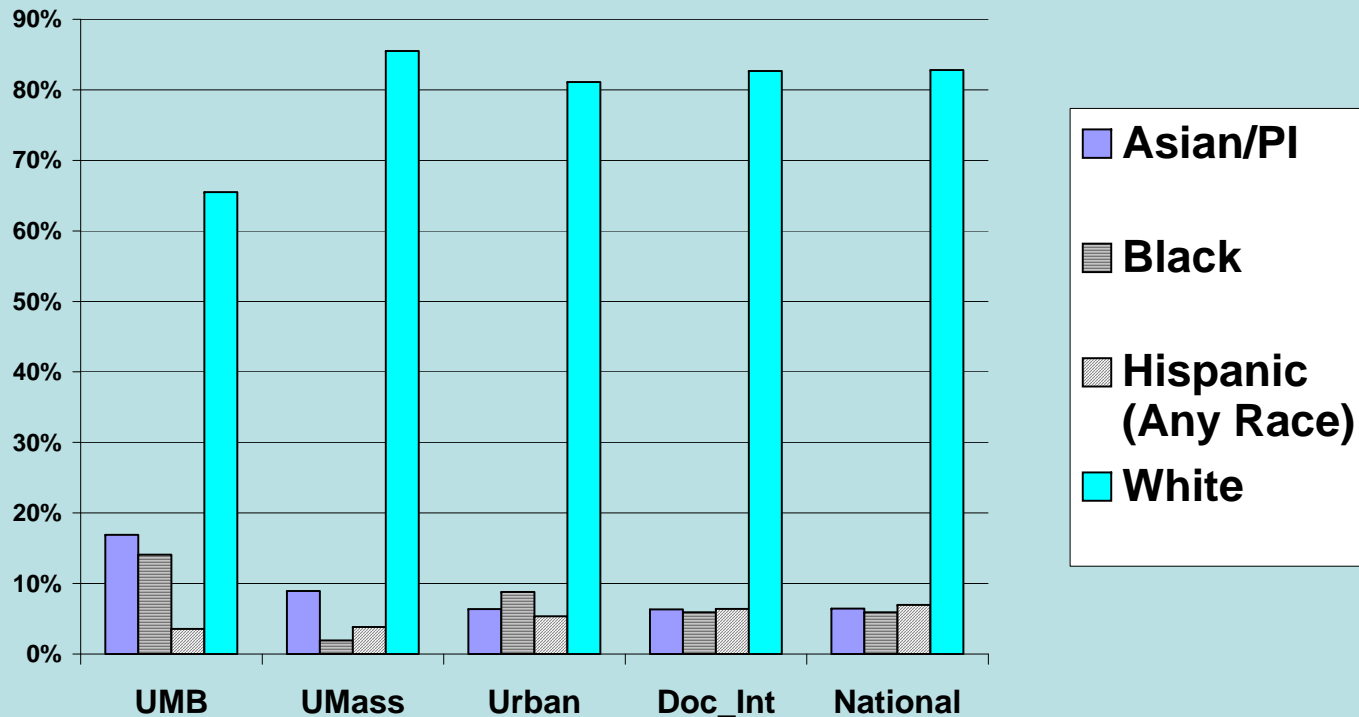
# UMass Boston Students Are Racially And Ethnically Diverse

Percentage of First Year Students Self Identifying In Various Racial/Ethnic Groups



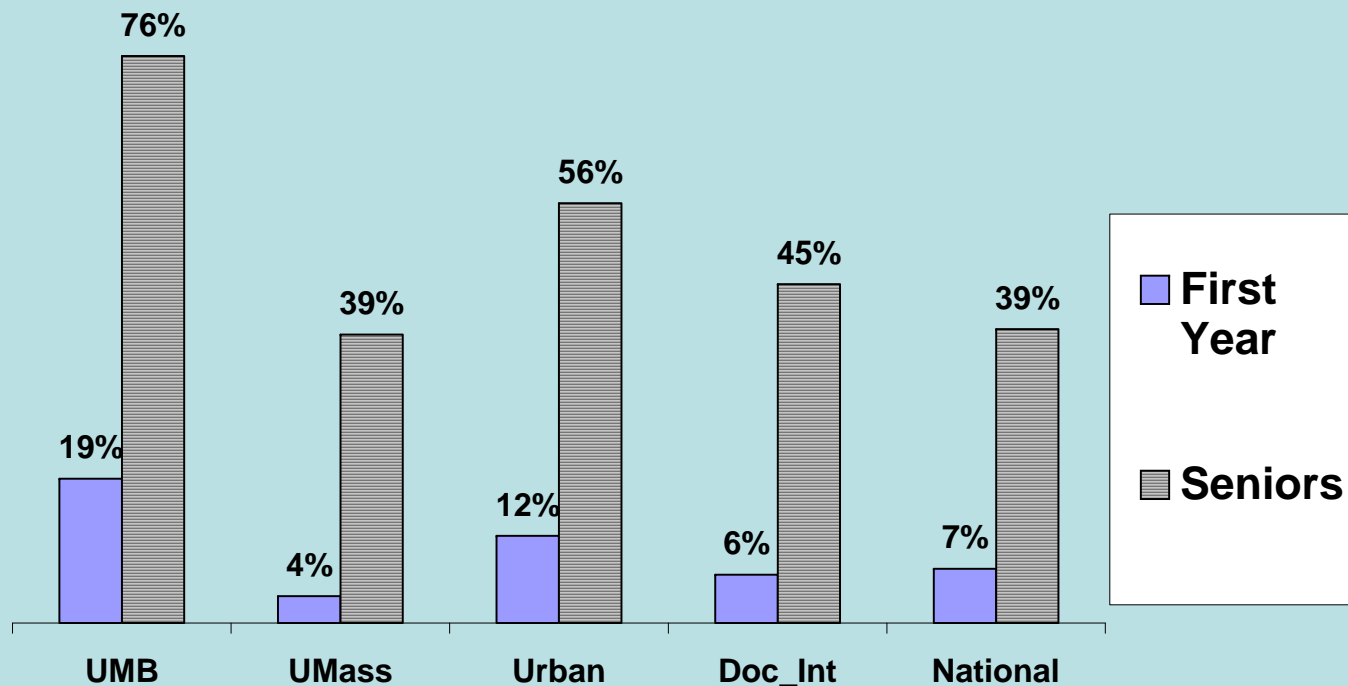
# This Diversity Is Less Pronounced For Senior Respondents

## Percentage of Seniors Self Identifying In Various Racial/Ethnic Groups



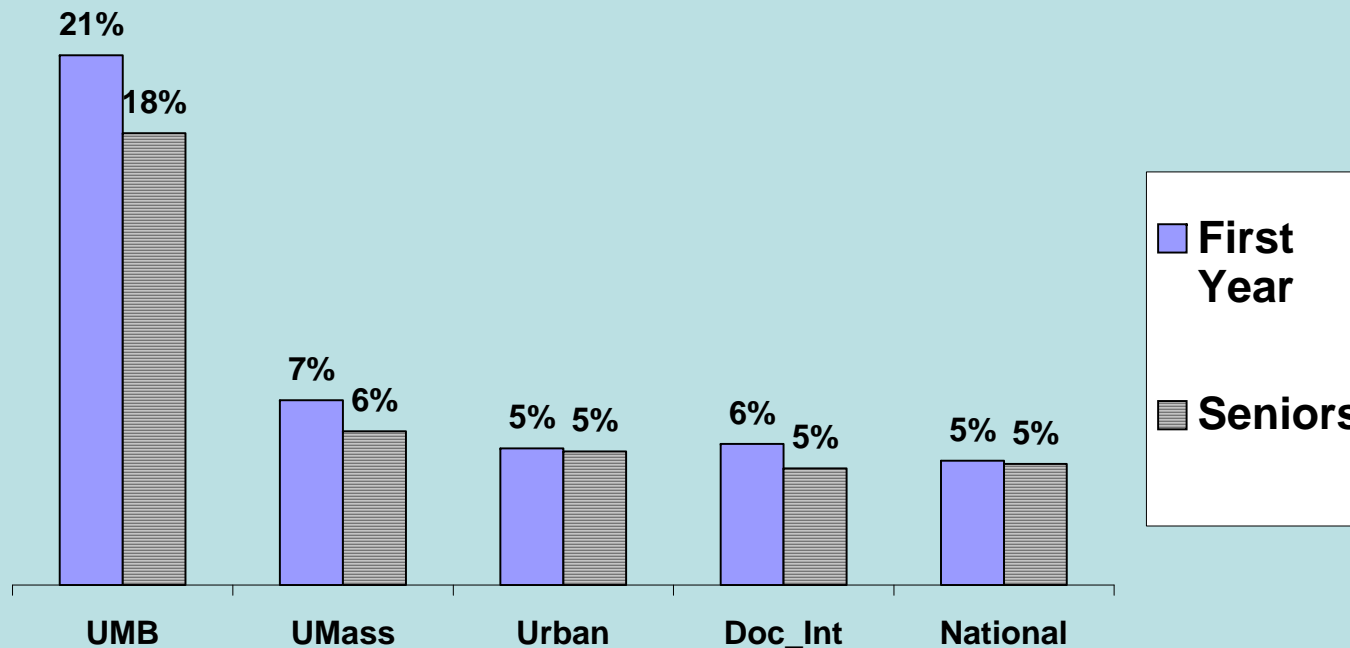
# UMass Boston Students Are More Likely To Have Come Here From Other Colleges

Percentage of Respondents Reporting That They Began College at a Different Institution



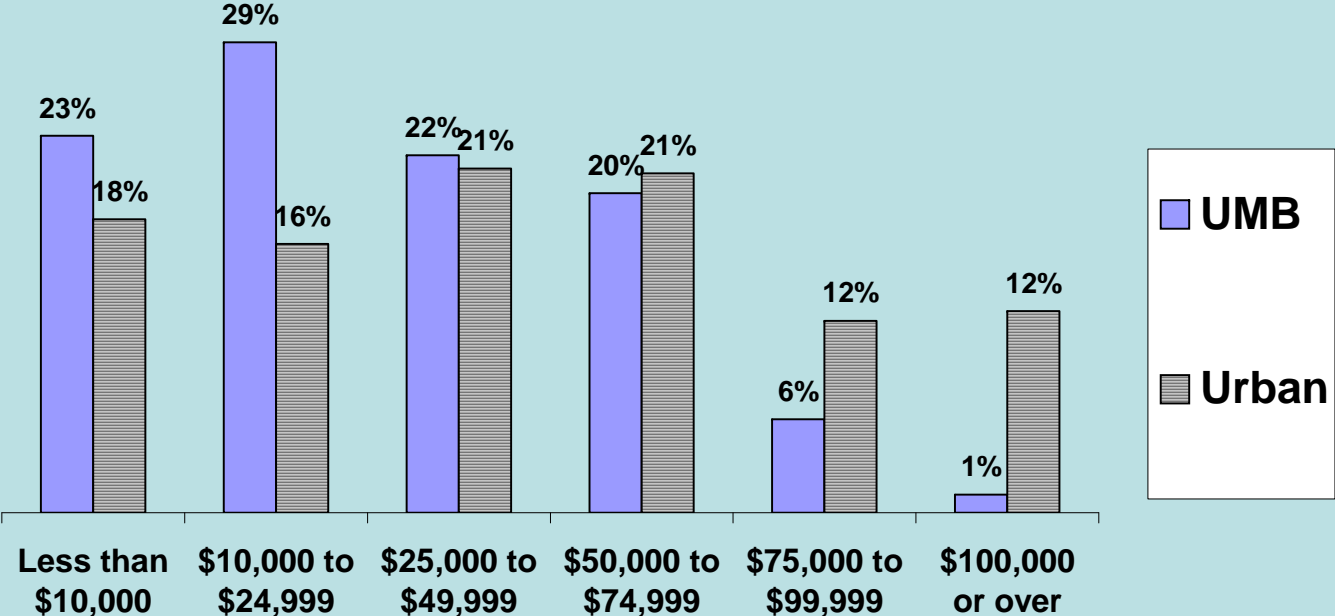
# UMass Boston Students Are Also More Likely To Have Come Here from Other Countries

Percentage of Respondents Who Report Being International Students or Foreign Nationals



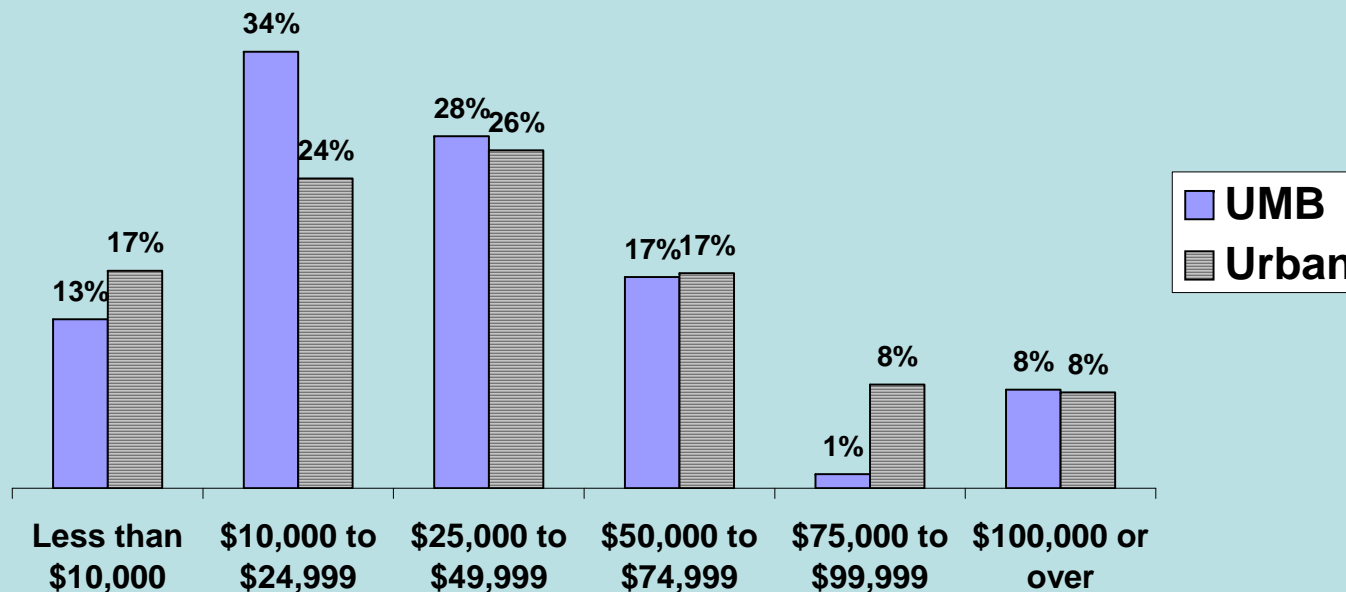
# UMass Boston Students Reported Lower Levels Of Family Income than Did Their Colleagues at Other Urban Institutions

First Year Students' Best Estimates of Their Total Annual Income (Before Taxes) or the Combined Income of Their Parents if They Are Listed as A Dependent on Their Parents' Taxes



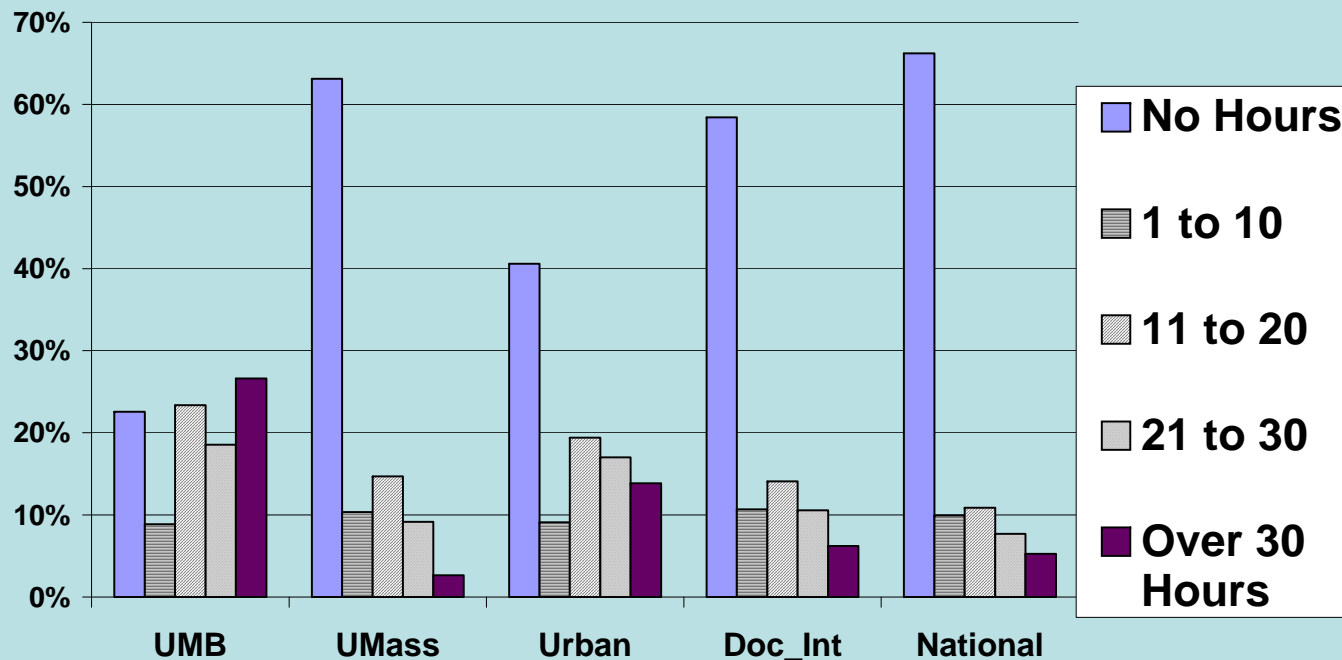
# This Income Disparity Is Not as Marked For Seniors

Senior's Best Estimates of Their Total Annual Income (Before Taxes) or the Combined Income of Their Parents If They Are Listed as a Dependent On Their Parents' Taxes



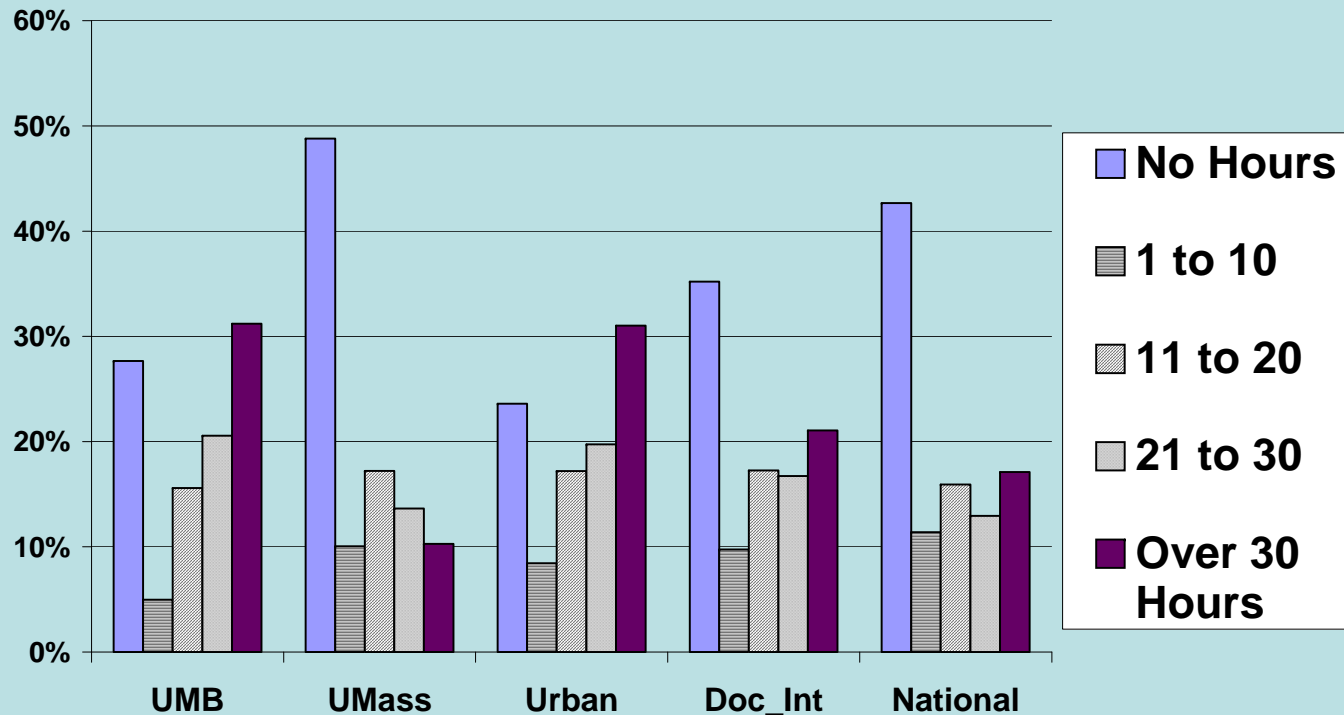
# UMass Boston Students Tend To Work More Hours Off Campus Each Week

## Percentage of First Year Students Reporting Hours Worked Off Campus



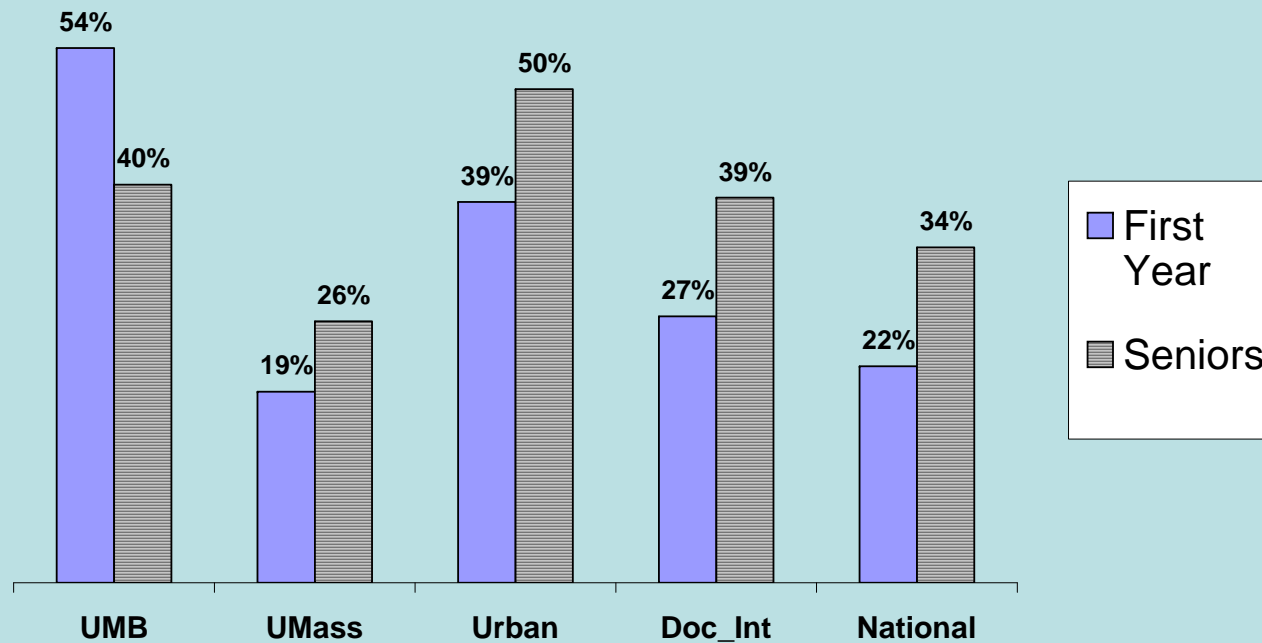
# Again, the Disparity Is Not As Marked For Seniors

## Percentage of Seniors Reporting Hours Worked Off Campus



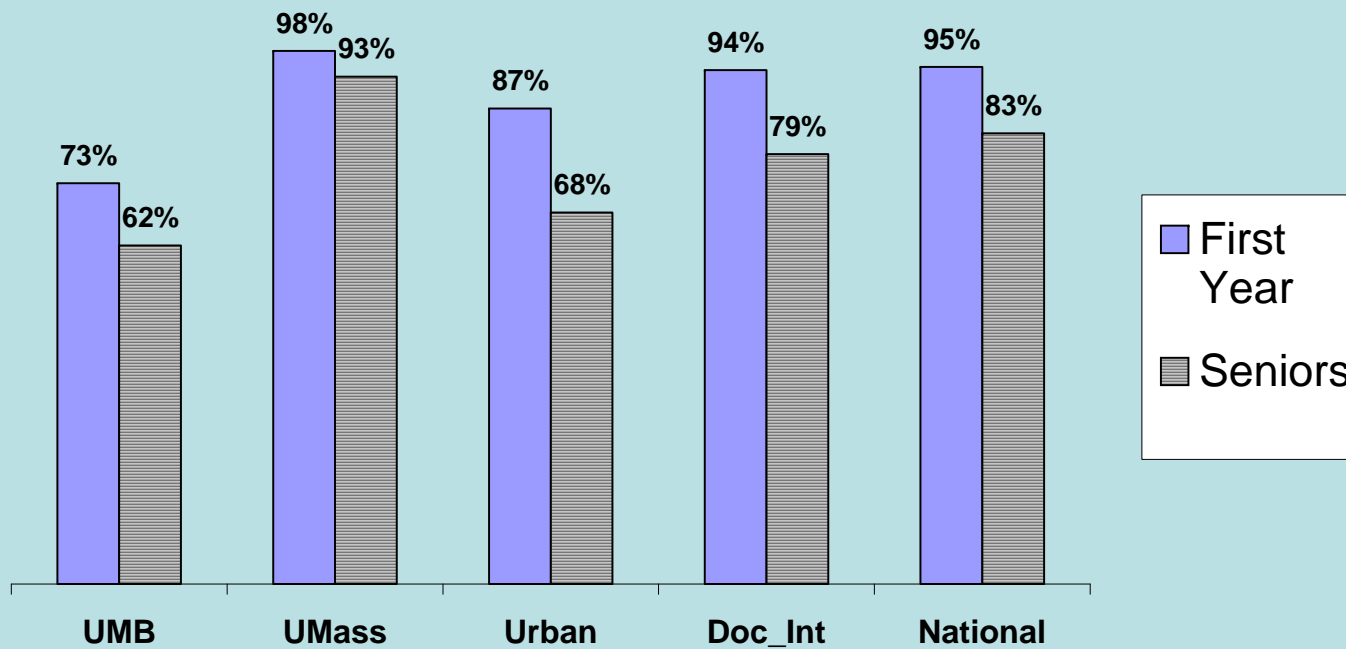
# UMass Boston First Year Students Reported Higher Levels of Spending Time Caring for Dependents Than Did Any Of the Comparison Groups or UMass Boston Seniors

Percentage of Respondents Reporting Spending Some Time Each Week Caring for Dependents



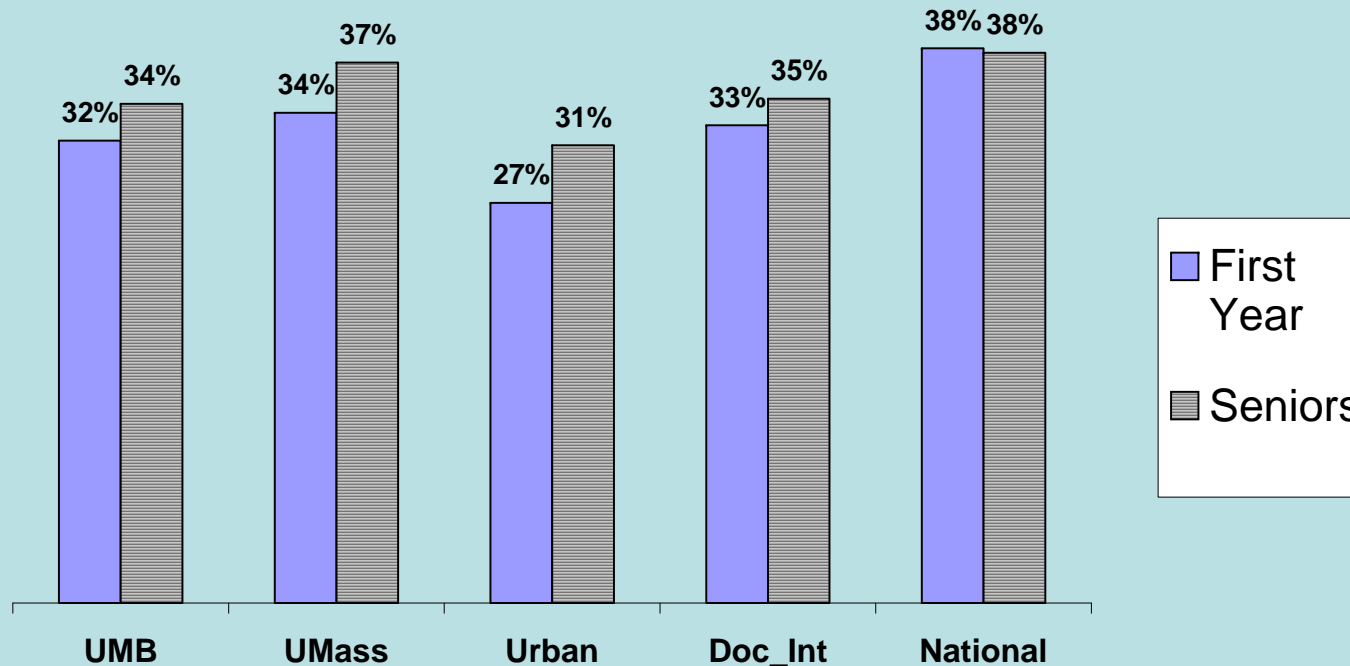
# UMass Boston Students Are Less Likely to Attend School Full Time

## Percentage of Respondents Who Attend School Full Time



**Given the Differences in outside Responsibilities and in Full Time/Part Time Status, It Is Remarkable that both UMass Boston First Year Students and Seniors Report about as Much Time Studying As Their Colleagues in all of the Comparison Groups**

**Percent of Respondents Who Reported Spending 16 or More Hours per Week Studying and Preparing for Class**



# **The Academic and Intellectual Experiences Reported by UMass Boston Students Were Quite Similar to Those of Their Colleagues At Other Doctoral Intensive Universities**

**In future reports from NSSE, most of these experiences will be listed under the Active and Collaborative Learning Benchmark or the Enriching Educational Experiences Benchmark.**

**For a number of NSSE questions, there were no significant differences between the means of the answers of UMass Boston students and those of their colleagues at the other Doctoral Intensive universities for either first year students or seniors. Specifically, these questions were about how often the student:**

- Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources
- Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions
- Worked harder than they thought they could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations
- Discussed ideas from their readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, coworkers, etc.)

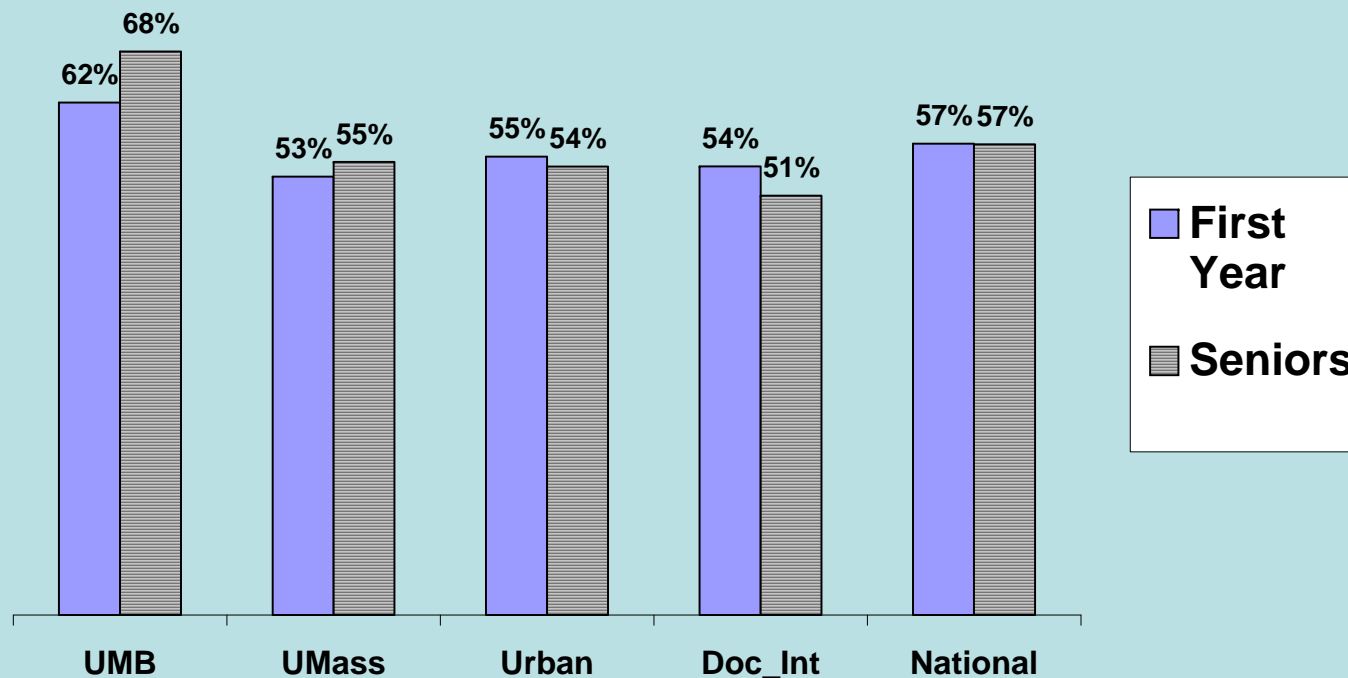
**For several other questions, there were statistically significant differences in the means of the answers for either first year students or seniors, but the effect sizes were .2 or lower. This means that the differences were of small practical significance. These questions were about how often the student:**

- Received prompt feedback from faculty on their academic performance (written or oral)
- Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than their own
- Discussed ideas from their reading or classes with faculty members outside of class
- Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor
- Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in

**For Some of the Questions That  
Involved Behavior in the Classroom Or  
Preparation for the Classroom, UMass  
Students Had Mean Responses that Were  
Significantly Higher than Those of Their  
Colleagues at the Other Doctoral Intensives**

# UMass Boston First Year Students and Seniors Included Diverse Perspectives More Often than Their Colleagues At The Doctoral Intensives or in any other Comparison Group

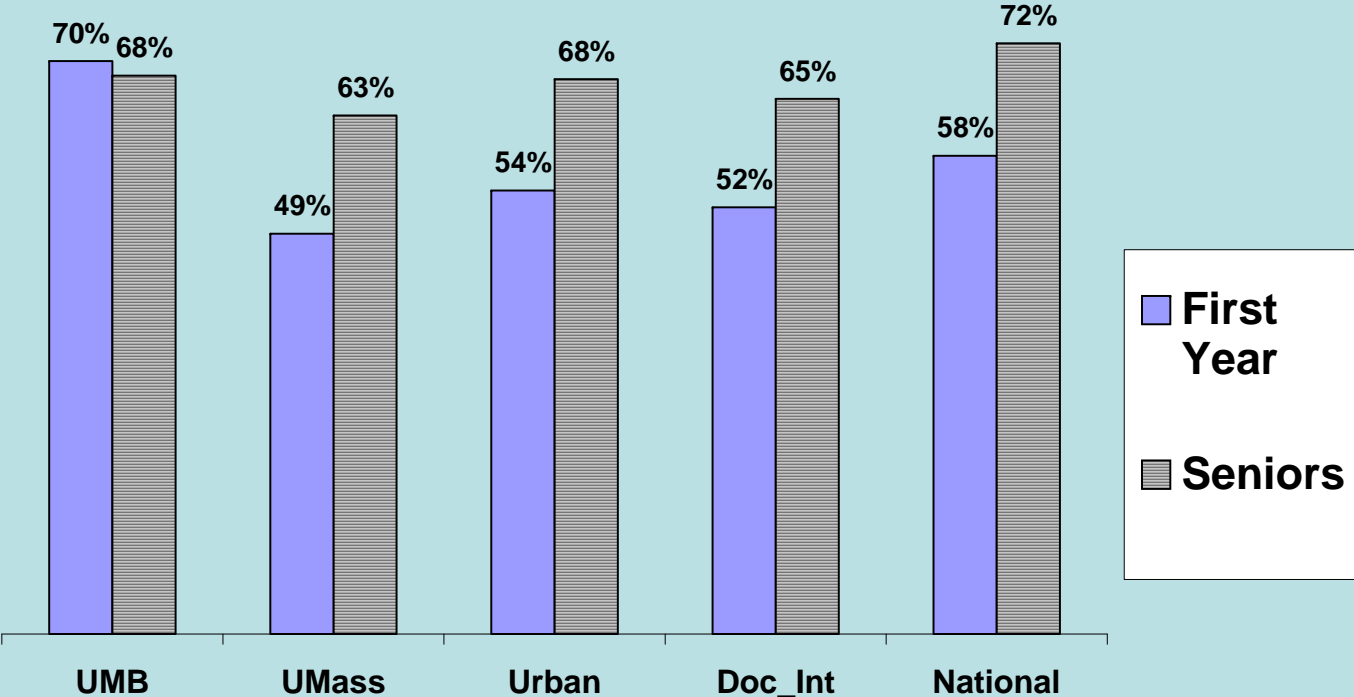
Percentage of Respondents Who Reported Including Diverse Perspectives in Class Discussions or Writing Assignments "Often" or "Very Often"



# UMass Boston First Year Students Ask More Questions In Class than Their Colleagues at the Doctoral Intensives or in any Other Comparison Group.

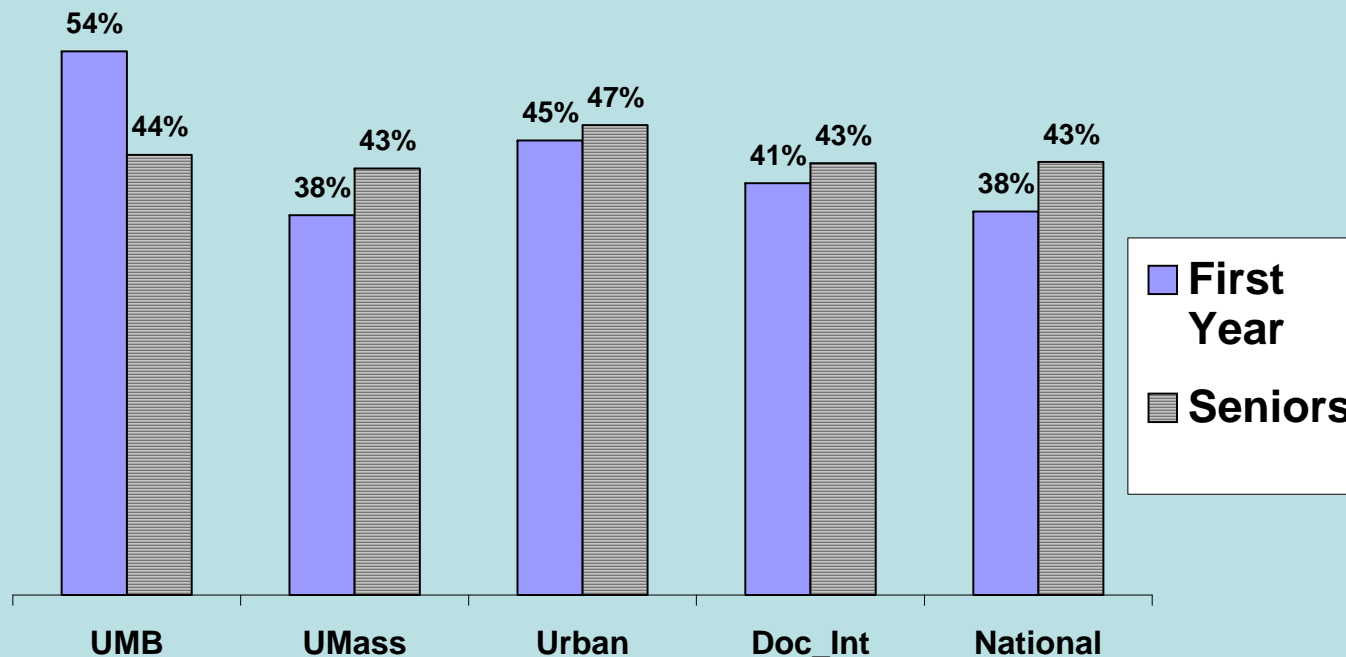
The Mean for Seniors is Comparable to Those of All Groups.

Percentage of Respondents Who Reported Asking Questions in Class "Often" or "Very Often"



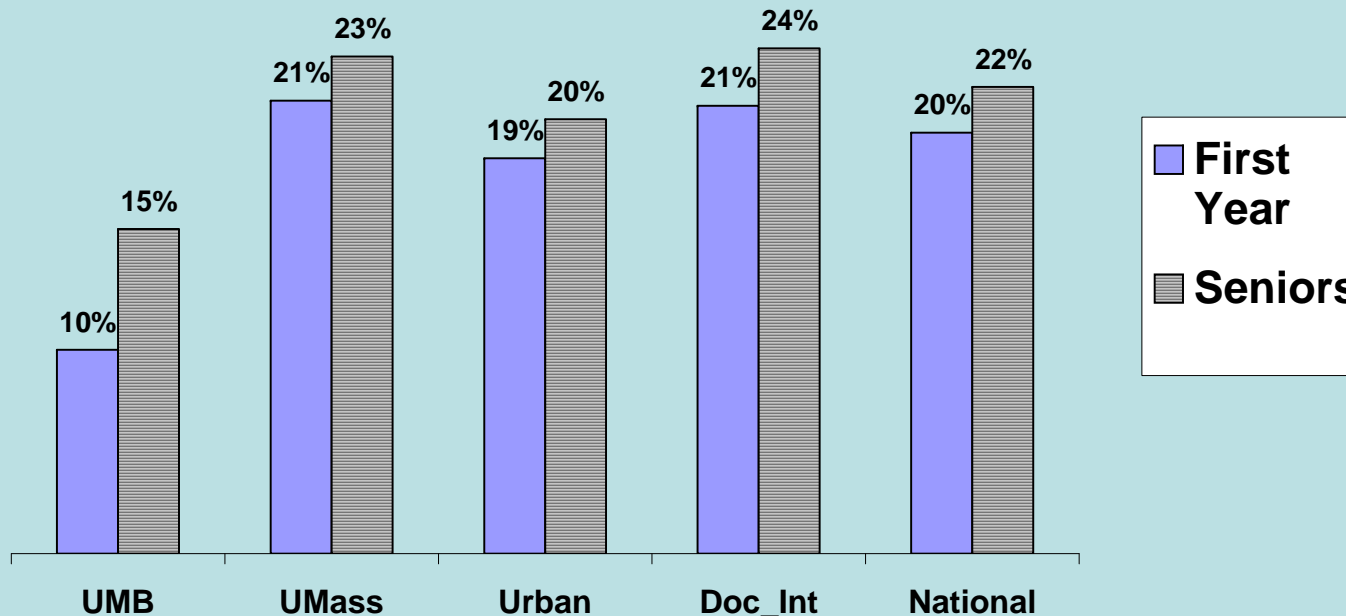
**UMass Boston First Year Students Work on Projects with Other Students During Class More Often than Their Colleagues At the Doctoral Intensives or any other Comparison Group. The Mean for Seniors is Comparable to Those of All Groups.**

**Percentage of Respondents Who Reported Working with Other Students on Projects During Class "Often" or "Very Often"**



**UMass Boston First Year Students Came to Class Unprepared  
Less Often than Did Their Colleagues at the Doctoral Intensives  
Or in any other Comparison Group.  
The Mean for Seniors is Comparable to Those of All Groups.**

**Percentage of Respondents Who Reported That They Came to  
Class without Completing Reading or Assignments  
"Often" or "Very Often"**

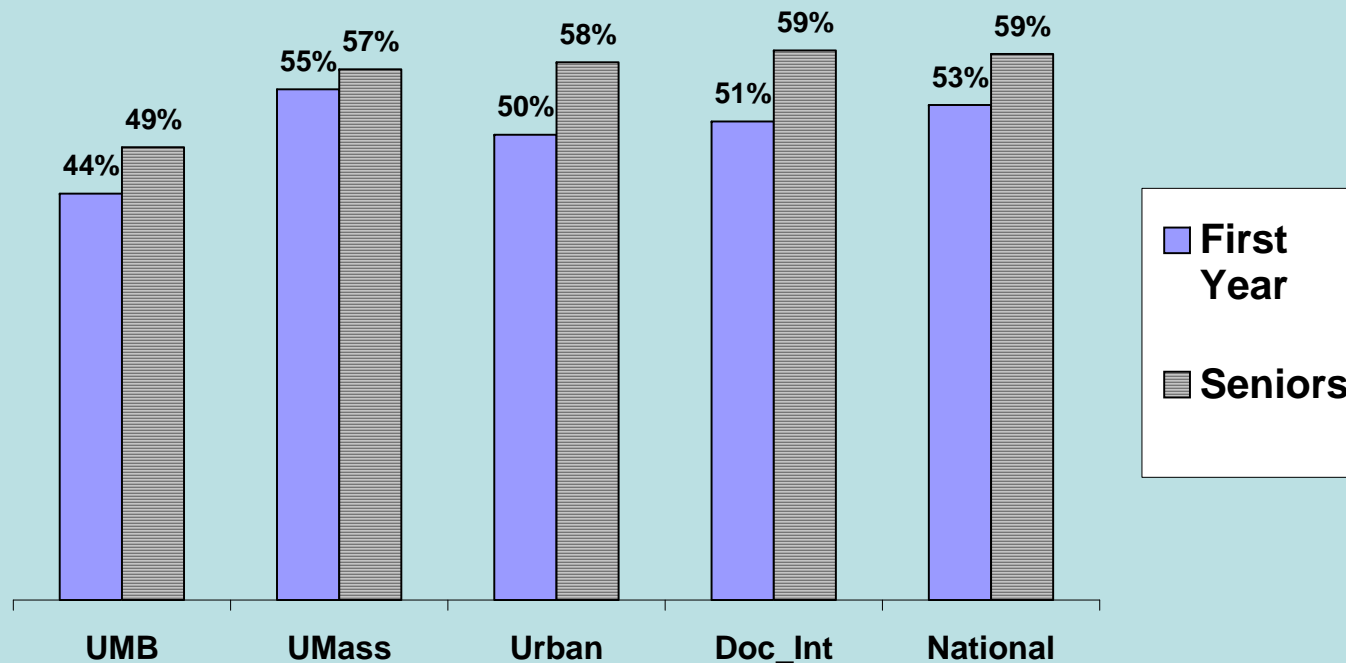


**However, there were also areas where UMass Boston Student responses were not as positive as we would like them to be.**

One of these areas was the use of technology. However, UMass Boston has experienced much improvement in these areas since NSSE 2000.

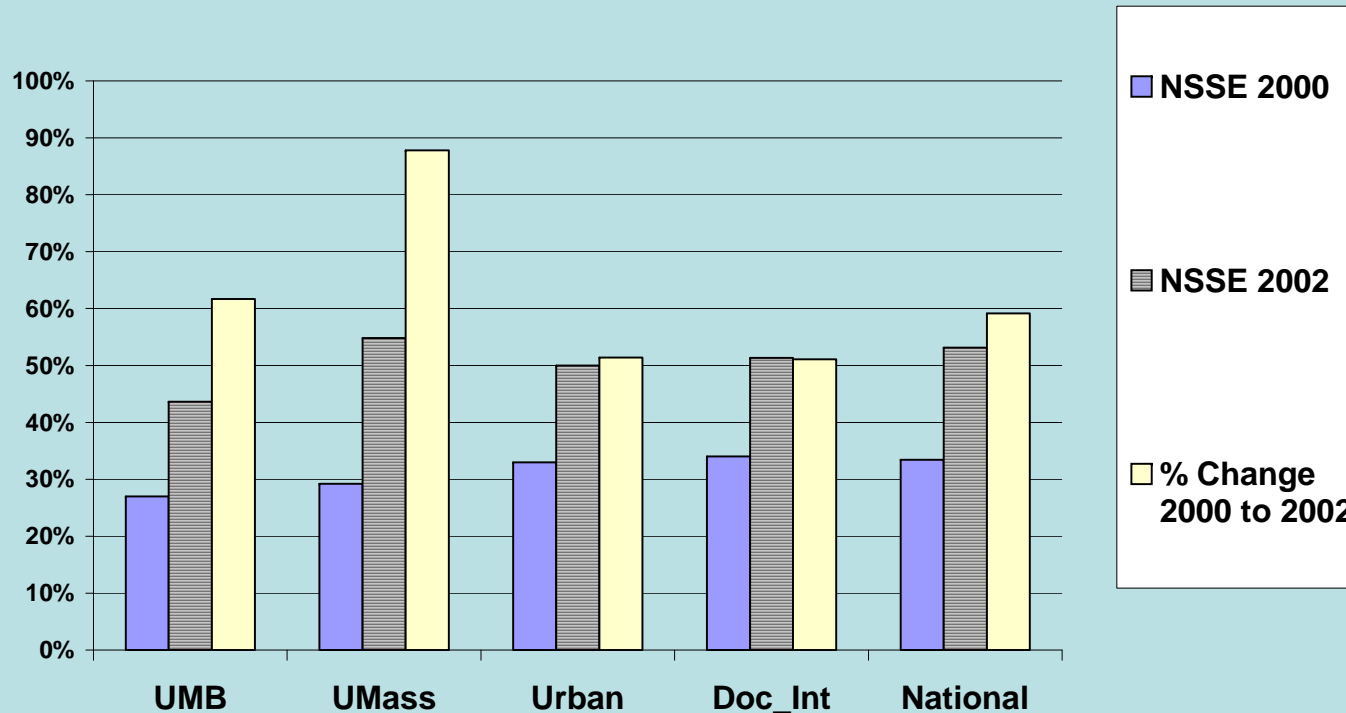
# UMass Boston First Year Students and Seniors Use Technology To Complete Assignments Less Often than Their Colleagues At the Doctoral Intensives or in any other Comparison Group.

Percentage of Respondents Who Reported Using An Electronic Medium to Discuss or Complete An Assignment "Often" or "Very Often"



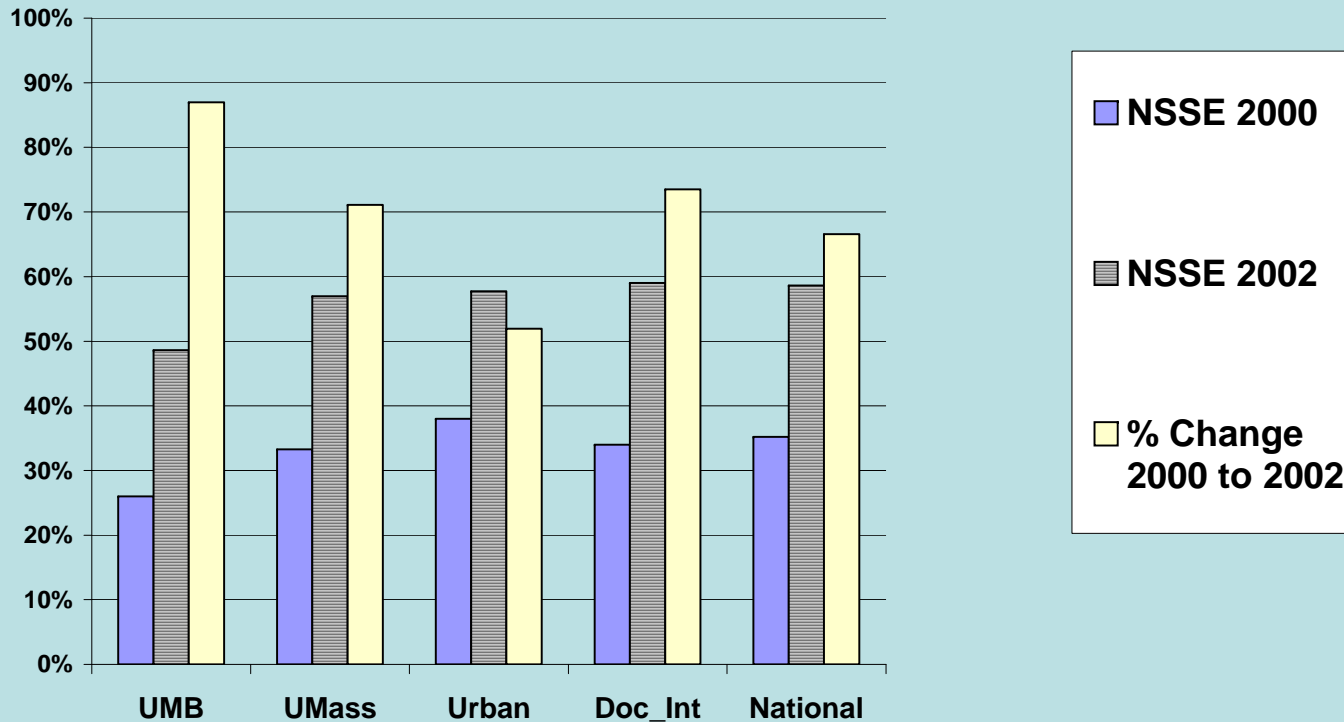
# However, UMass Boston First Year Students and Their Other UMass Colleagues Have Improved More Since NSSE 2000 Than Their Colleagues at the Doctoral Intensives or Urban Institutions

Percentage of First Year Students Who Reported Using An Electronic Medium to Discuss or Complete An Assignment "Often" Or "Very Often" with Percentage Change Since NSSE 2000



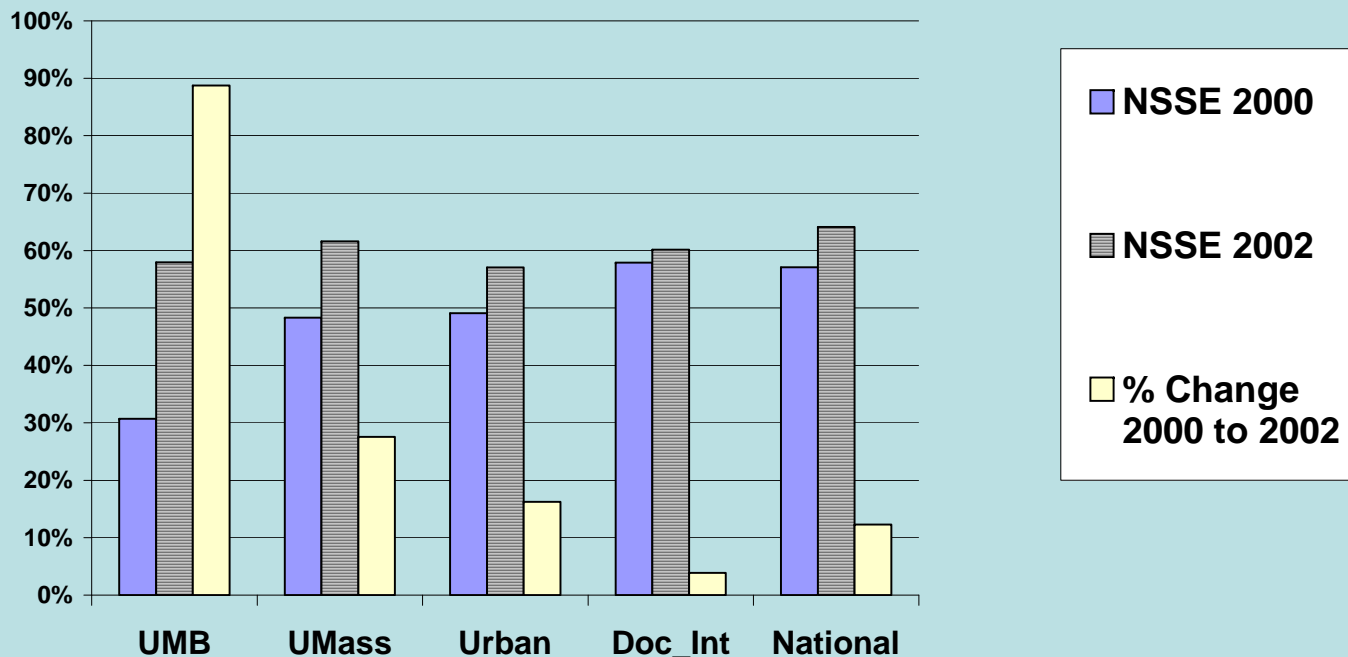
# UMass Boston Seniors Have Improved More Since NSSE 2000 Than Their Colleagues in any of the Comparison Groups

Percentage of Seniors Who Reported Using an Electronic Medium to Discuss or Complete An Assignment "Often" Or "Very Often" with Percentage Change Since NSSE 2000



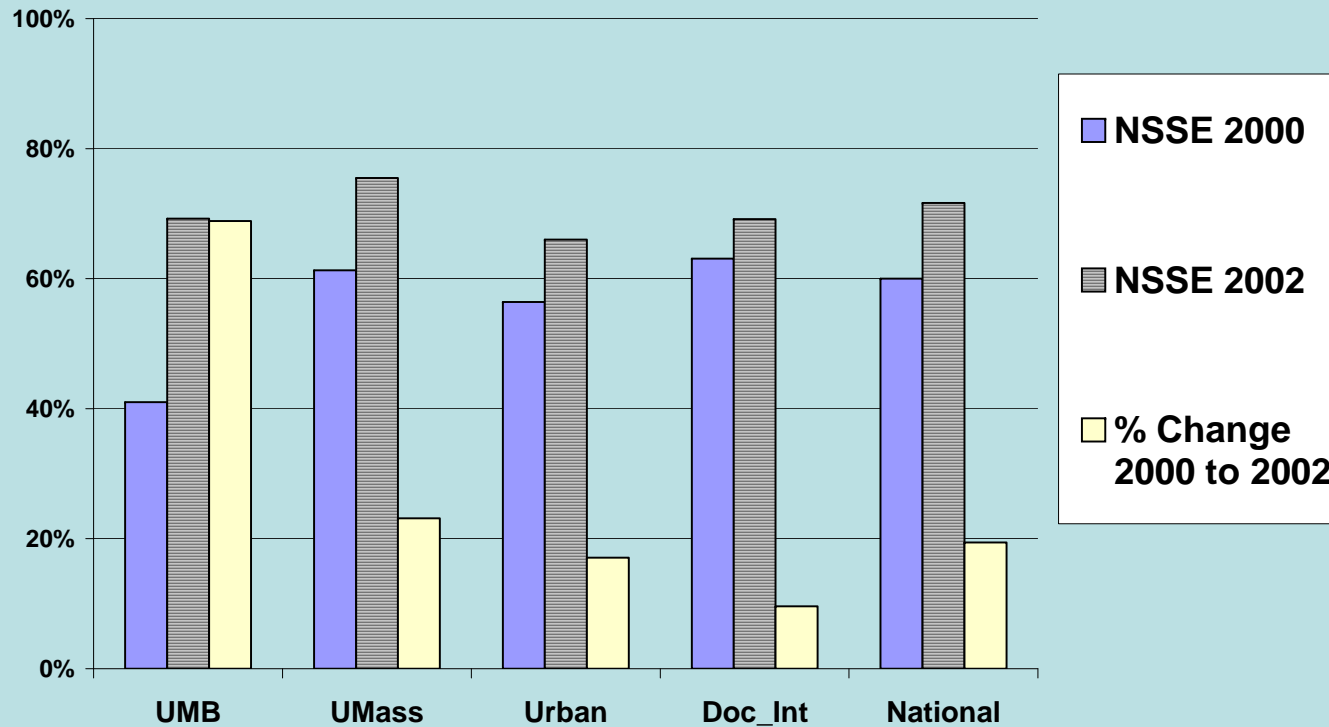
# In Another Area of Technology Use, Where UMass Boston First Year Students Were Similar to Their Colleagues This Year, There Has Been Much Improvement Since NSSE 2000

Percentage of First Year Students Who Reported Using E-Mail to Communicate with an Instructor "Often" or "Very Often"



# UMass Boston Seniors Also Improved More in this Area than Did Their Colleagues in any of the Comparison Groups

## Percentage of Seniors Who Reported Using E-Mail To Communicate with an Instructor "Often" or "Very Often"



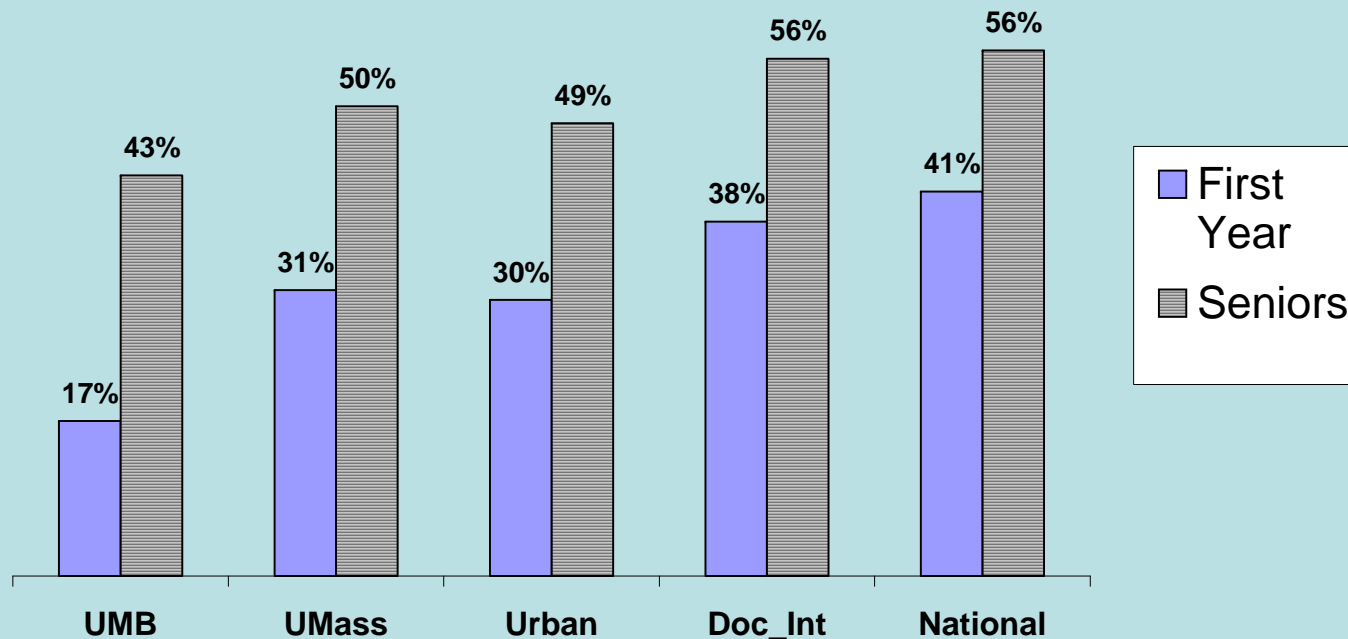
**There was a common thread for several other questions where UMass Boston students reported behavior that was significantly different from their colleagues at the Doctoral Intensive universities. That thread involves time.**

As we saw in the student background section, UMass Boston students have significant outside responsibilities, such as working for pay off campus and caring for dependents.

While this doesn't seem to affect study time or in class activities, it may have an effect on the time they have available for other activities outside of regular school hours. Differences in responses to these time related questions are particularly pronounced for first year students.

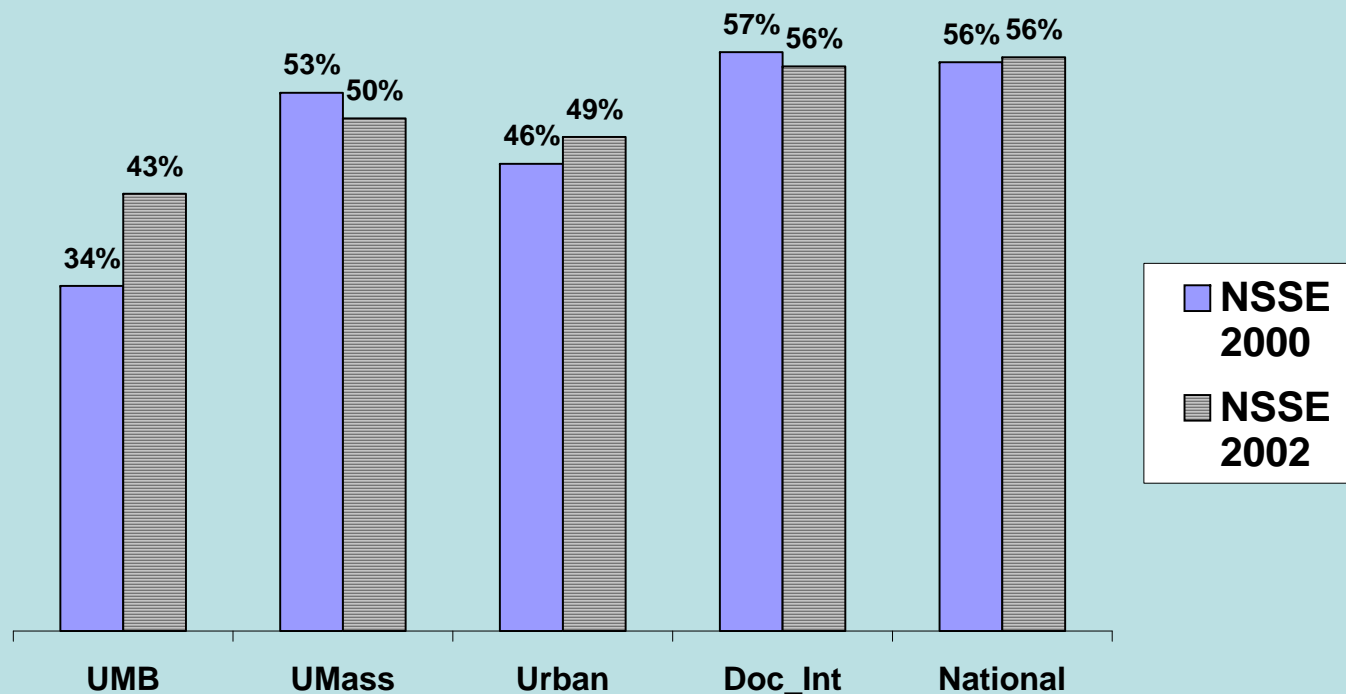
**UMass Boston First Year Students and Seniors Spend Much Less Time Working with other Students outside of Class Than do Their Colleagues at the other Doctoral Intensives Or in any other Comparison Group.**

**Percentage of Respondents Who Reported Working with Other Students Outside of Class To Prepare Class Projects "Often" or "Very Often"**



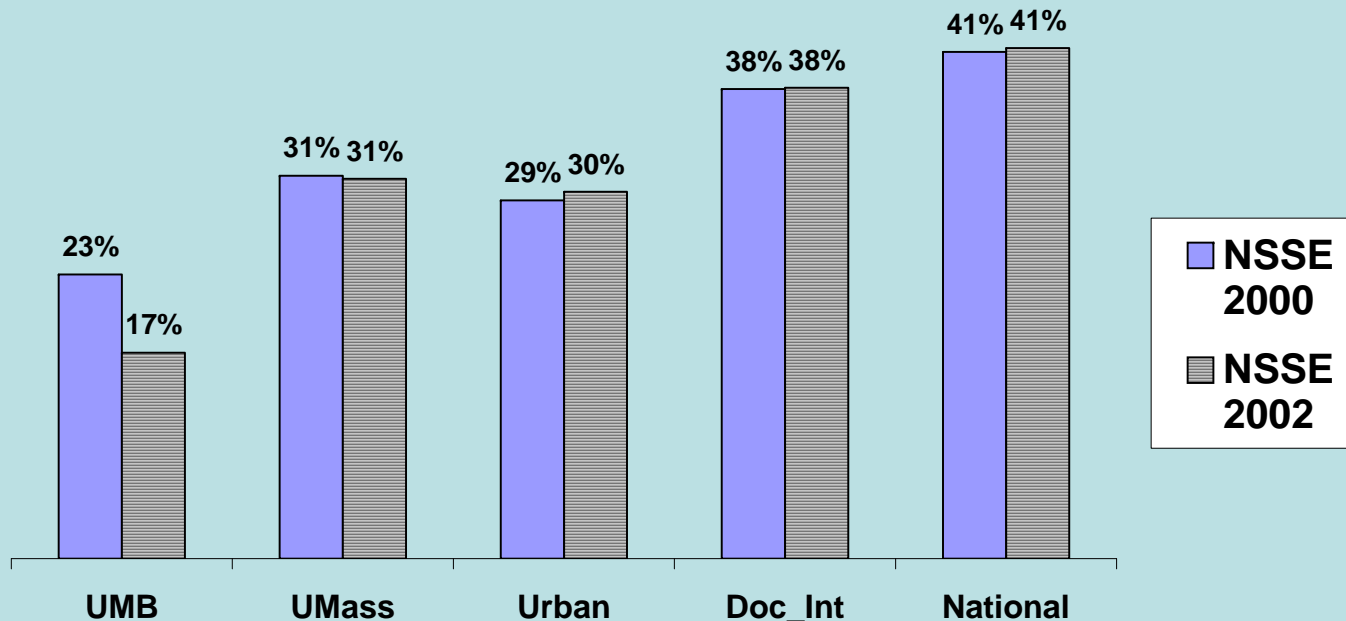
## UMass Boston Seniors Have Improved Considerably Since NSSE 2000 Compared to Their Colleagues in All Of the Comparison Groups

Percentage of Seniors Who Reported Working With Classmates outside of Class to Prepare Class Assignments "Often" or "Very Often"



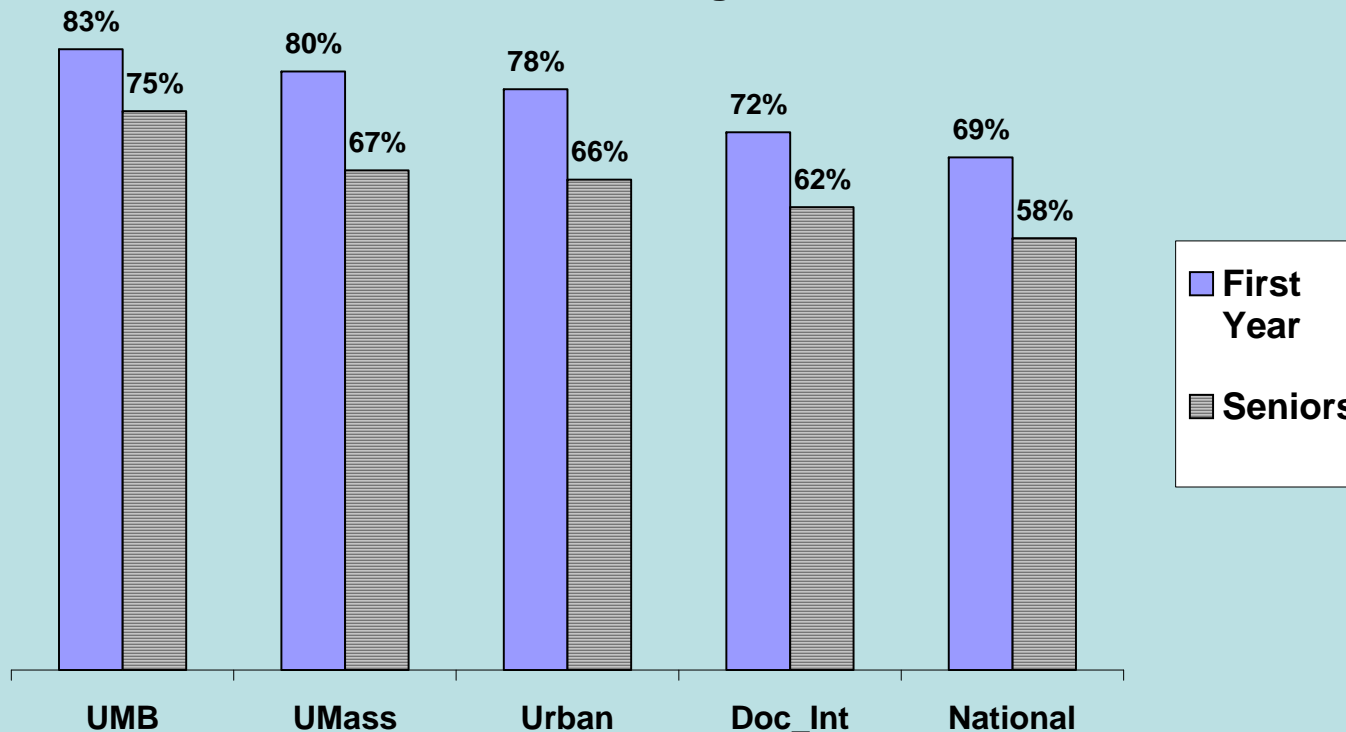
# However, UMass Boston First Year Students Actually Reported Lower Levels of Time Spent Working with Other Students outside of Class than They Did in NSSE 2000

Percentage of First Year Students Who Reported Working with Classmates outside of Class To Prepare Class Assignments "Often" or "Very Often"



# UMass Boston First Year Students and Seniors are More Likely To Have Never Participated in a Community Based Project as Part of Course Work Than Their Colleagues at the other Doctoral Intensives Or any in other Comparison Group.

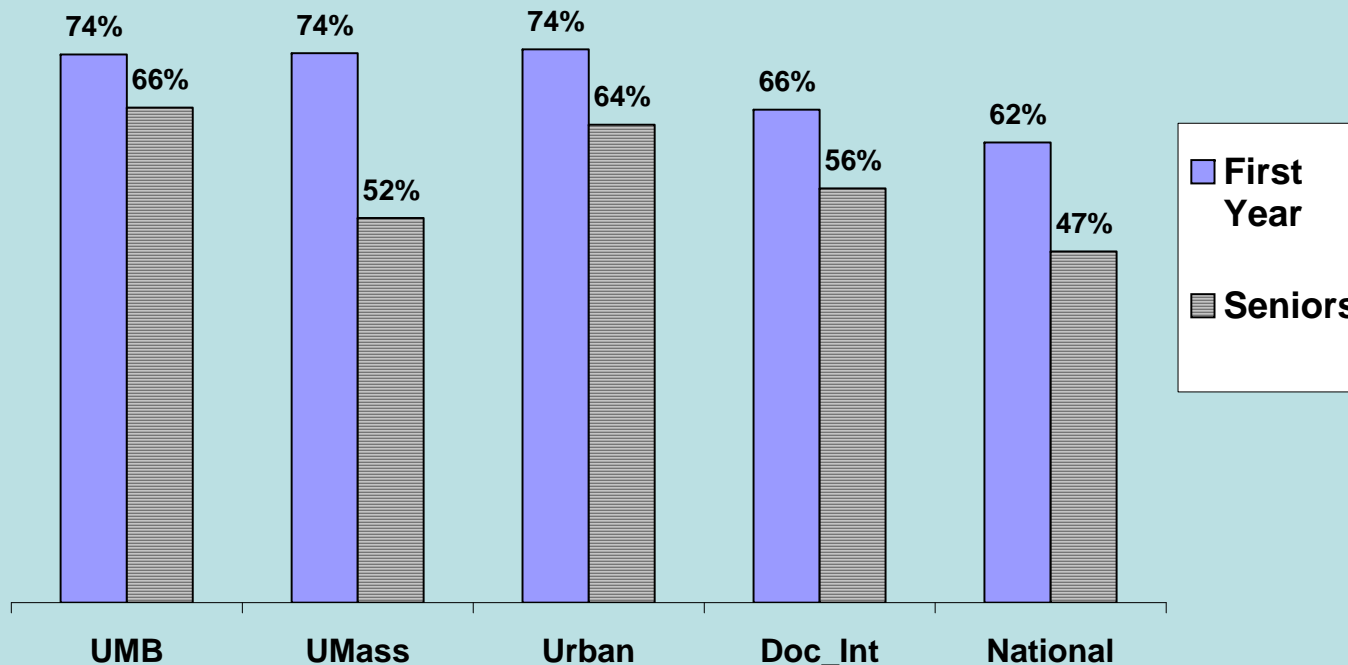
Percentage of Respondents Who Reported That They "Never" Participated in a Community Based Project As Part of a Regular Course



# UMass Boston First Year Students and Seniors are More Likely To Have Never Worked with Faculty on outside Activities than Are Their Colleagues at the other Doctoral Intensives.

First Year Students are Comparable to the Urban and UMass Groups.  
Seniors Trail All Comparison Groups in this Area of Faculty Contact.

Percentage of Respondents Who Reported "Never" Working with Faculty on Activities Other than Coursework

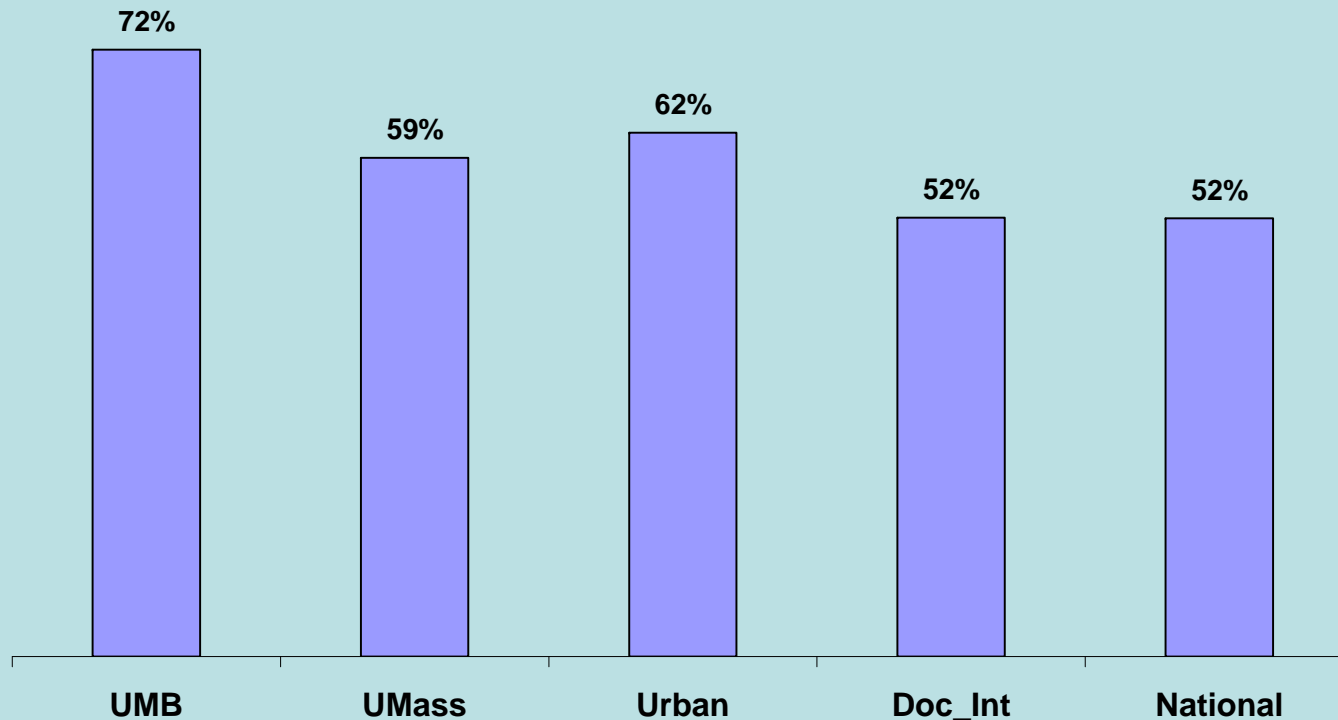


**UMass Boston First Year Students Also Had Mean Scores That Are Significantly Below Those of Their Colleagues at the Other Doctoral Intensives on Three other Questions That Are Related to Time.**

**The questions involved informal and/or unstructured activities that students might do while “hanging out” on campus.**

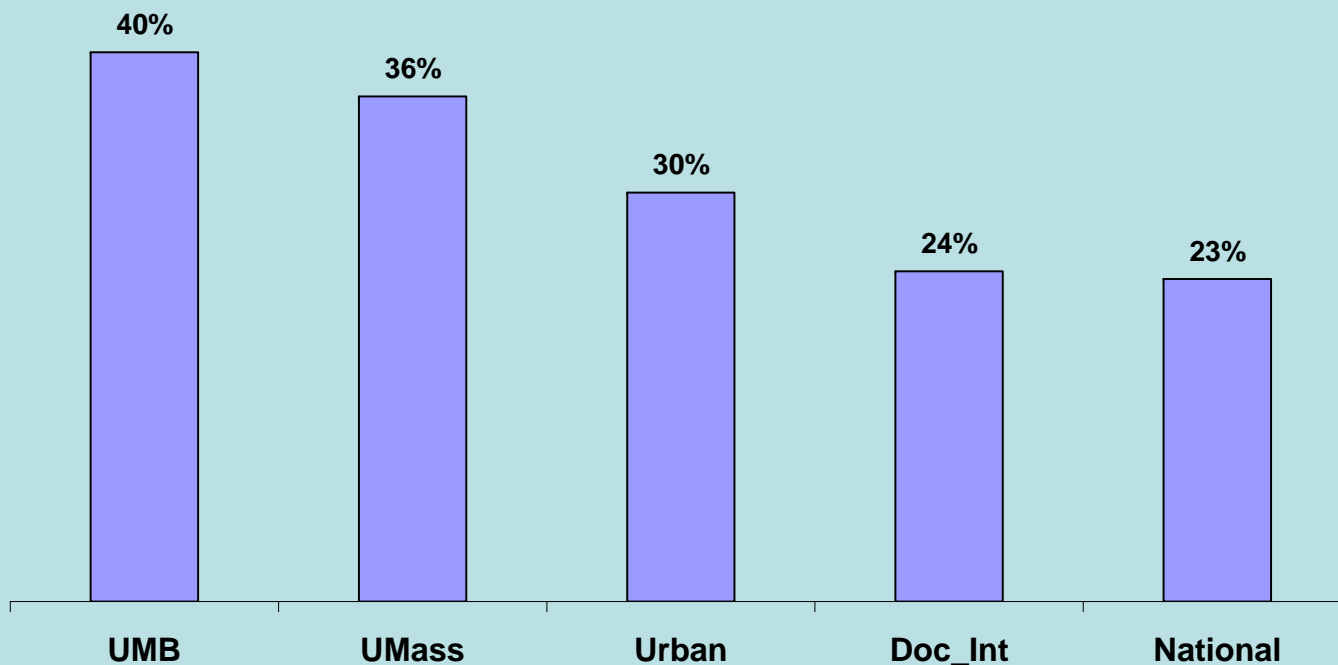
## Among These Was Tutoring or Teaching Other Students For Pay or Voluntarily.

Percentage of First Year Students Who Reported That They "Never" Tutored or Taught Other Students



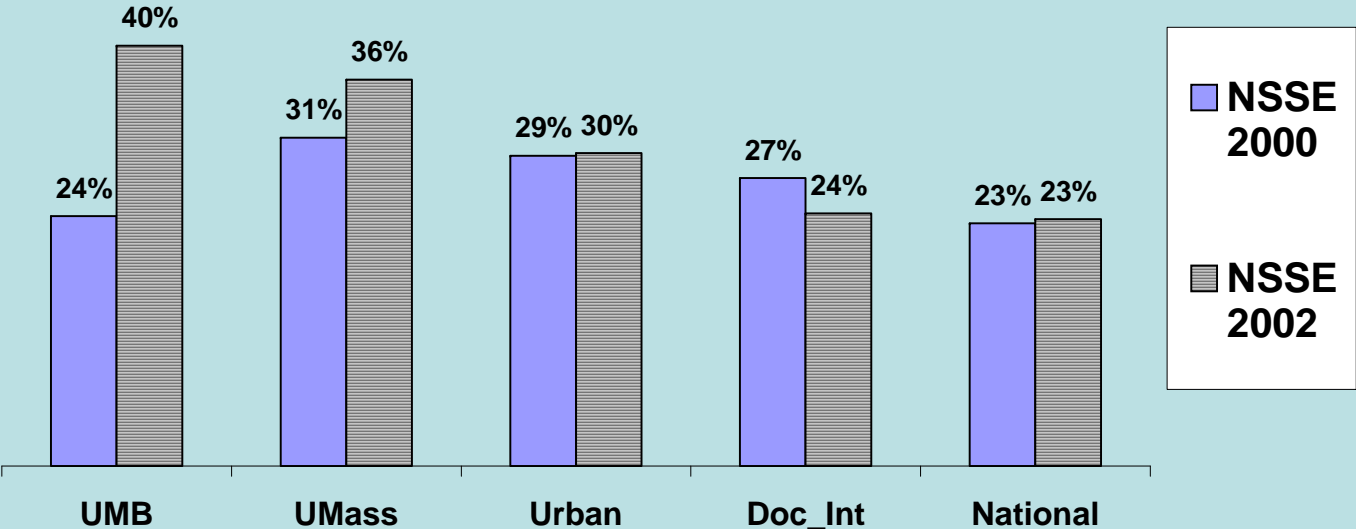
# UMass Boston First Year Students Were Also Significantly Less Likely to Have Talked with a Faculty Member about Career Plans

Percentage of First Year Students Who Reported That They "Never" Talked about Career Plans with a Faculty Member or Advisor



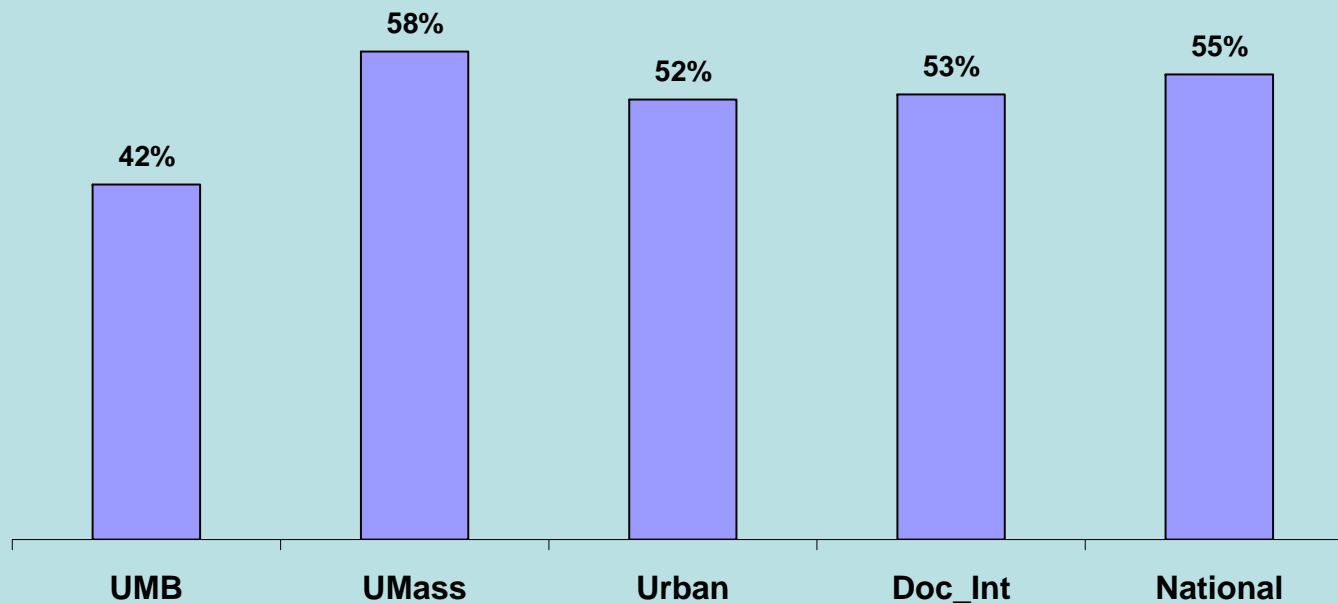
# This Marks a Decline in Contact Since NSSE 2000 When 24% Of UMass Boston Students Reported that They Had Never Spoken About Career Plans with a Faculty Member or Advisor

Percentage of First Year Students Who Reported That They "Never" Talked about Career Plans with a Faculty Member or Advisor NSSE 2000 and NSSE 2002



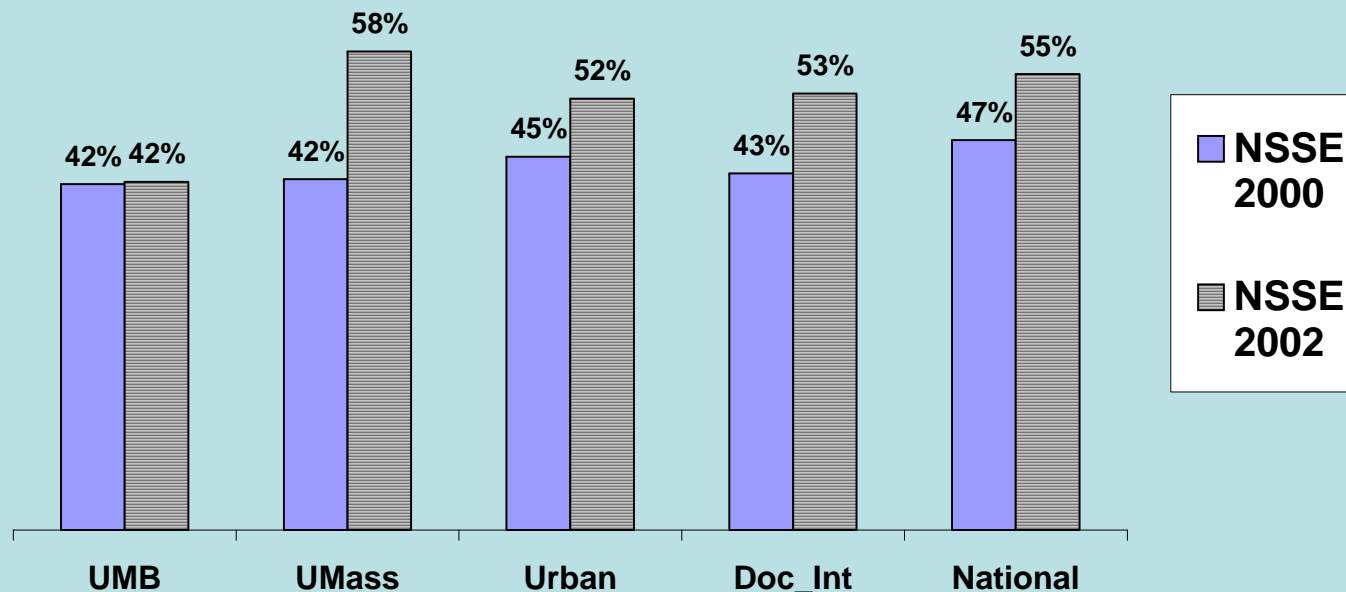
## UMass Boston First Year Students Were Also Significantly Less Likely to Have Had Serious Conversations With Students Who Had Different Attitudes or Beliefs

Percentage of First Year Students Who Reported that They Had Serious Conversations with Students Who Were Very Different From Them in Terms of Their Religious Beliefs, Political Opinions, or Personal Values "Often" or "Very Often"



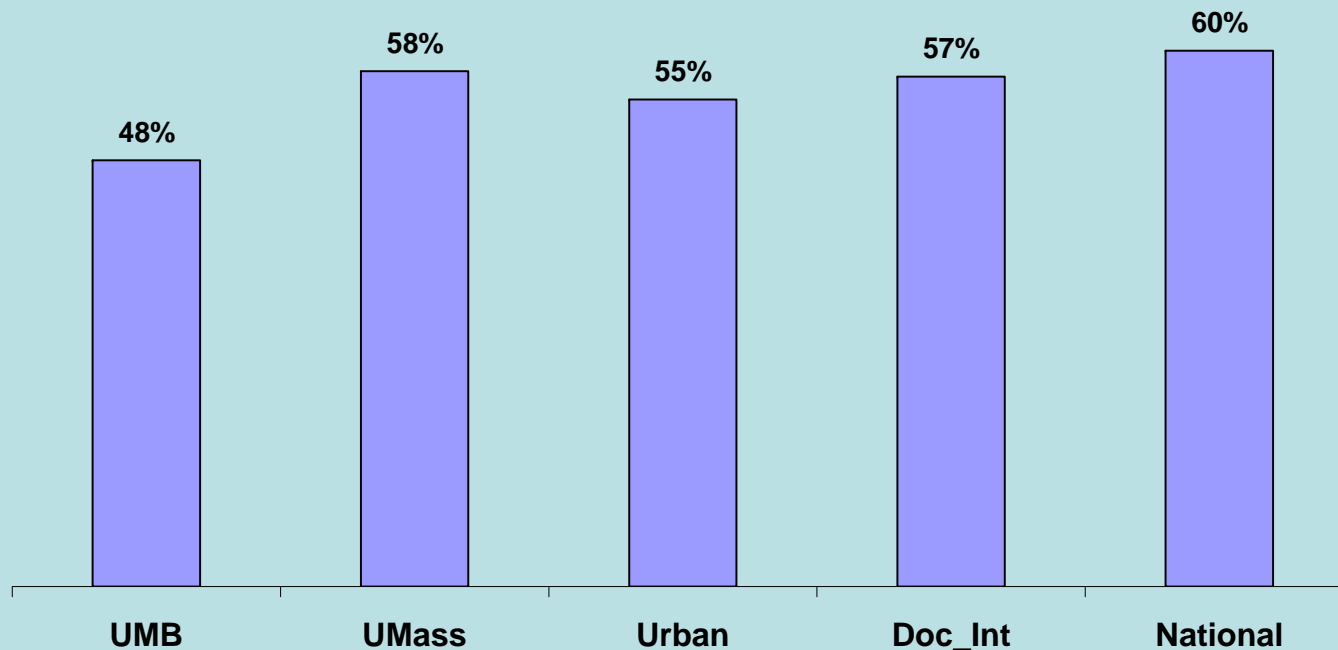
## For this Question, UMass Boston Responses Stayed About the Same as in NSSE 2000, while all of the Comparison Groups Improved Their Scores in NSSE 2002

Percentage of First Year Students Who Reported that They Had Serious Conversations with Students Who Were Very Different From Them in Terms of Their Religious Beliefs, Political Opinions, or Personal Values "Often" or "Very Often"  
NSSE 2000 and NSSE 2002



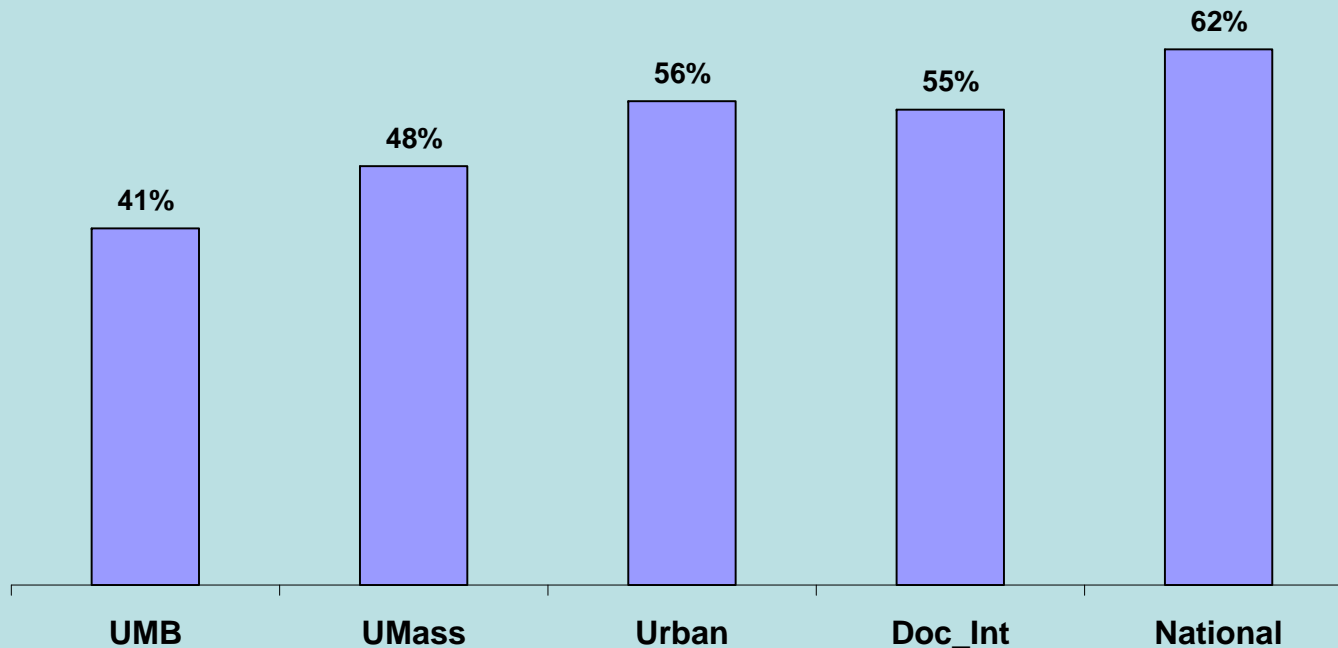
## The Seniors Also Had One Significant Difference That May Be Related to Informal or Unstructured Time.

Percentage of Seniors Who Reported that They "Often" or "Very Often" Discussed Grades Or Assignments with an Instructor



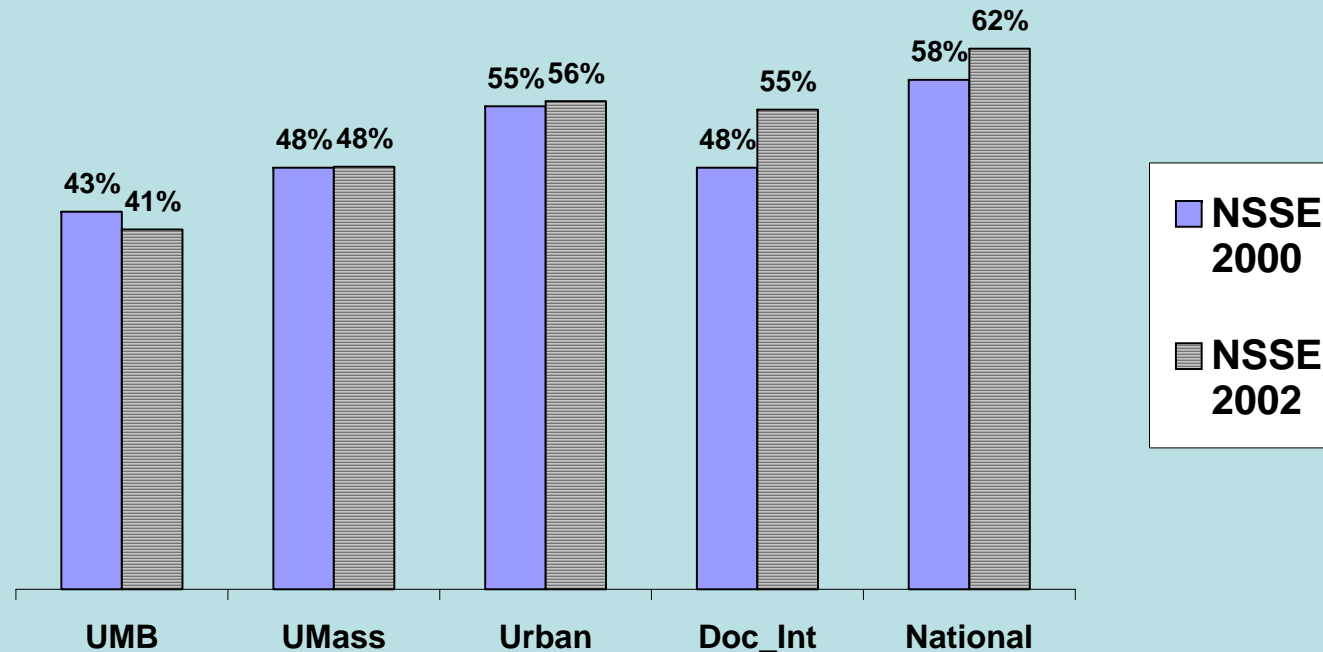
## The Only Other Significant Difference for Seniors Was Related to How Often They Did Class Presentations

Percentage of Seniors Who Reported Making a Presentation In Class "Often" or "Very Often"



**For this Question, UMass Boston Responses Declined Slightly,  
While the Doctoral Intensives Improved from NSSE 2000.**

**Percentage of Seniors Who Reported  
Making a Presentation In Class  
"Often" or "Very Often" NSSE 2000 and NSSE 2002**



# Conclusions

- **UMass Boston students differ from their colleagues on a number of background measures.**
- **UMass Boston Students are quite similar to their colleagues on a number of measures of academic and intellectual experiences.**
- **However, several of the background characteristics seem to involve stresses that may impose time constraints on UMass Boston students that limit their participation in activities outside of class time or aside from directly preparing for class.**
- **These stresses are actually more pronounced for first year students than for seniors.**

## **Some Differences Between UMass Boston First Year Students and Seniors**

- **First year students are less likely to be U.S. citizens (UMB records)**
  - **First Year = 31% non-U.S. citizens (not counting international students)**
  - **Seniors = 15% (same note)**
  - **Therefore, they are more likely to speak a language other than English at home**
- **They are more likely to report low family incomes**
  - **First Year = 52% below \$25,000**
  - **Seniors = 47% below \$25,000**
- **They are more likely to work some hours each week off campus**
  - **First Year = 77%**
  - **Seniors = 72%**
- **They are more likely to have some dependent care responsibilities**
  - **First Year = 54%**
  - **Seniors = 40%**

# **Pending Information from NSSE**

**NSSE Measures a Number of Behaviors and Will Soon  
Provide Benchmark Scores in 5 Areas:**

- 1) Level of Academic Challenge**
- 2) Active and Collaborative Learning**
- 3) Student Interactions with Faculty Members**
- 4) Enriching Educational Experiences**
- 5) Supportive Campus Environment**

Some adjustments to the scores are made based on the part time/full time status of the respondents.

## **NSSE Also Will Calculate and Report what It Calls An Institutional Engagement Index (IEI).**

- **It will report the actual score received for each benchmark for both first year students and seniors**
- **It then will report a predicted score based on institutional and student characteristics such as public/private status, urbanicity, racial/ethnic composition, commuter status, etc.**
- **Finally, It reports a residual and a standardized residual**
  - **A large standardized residual indicates that the school exceeded its predicted score by more than most other schools**
- **The IEI was considered exploratory in NSSE 2000**