

# NSSE 2002



## Retention Committee Presentation

October 16, 2002

Prepared by:

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Research and Policy Studies

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# What is NSSE?

*(pronounced “nessie”)*

## ***National Survey of Student Engagement***

- 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



# What Good Educational Practices\* Does NSSE Try to Measure?

- 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)**

# **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%**

# Student Selection Parameters

- **First Year Students** are students who were enrolled at UMass Boston during the fall semester 2001, and were expected to begin the spring 2002 semester with fewer than 30 accumulated credits
- **Seniors** are students who were enrolled at UMass Boston during the fall semester 2001, and were expected to begin the spring 2002 semester with more than 95 accumulated credits
- **NSSE** takes a random sample of 350 of each group from a data set we send them that includes all traditional, CCDE, full time, or part time students who were enrolled in fall 2002 and meet the credit criteria

# **UMass Boston NSSE 2002**

## **Selected Results**

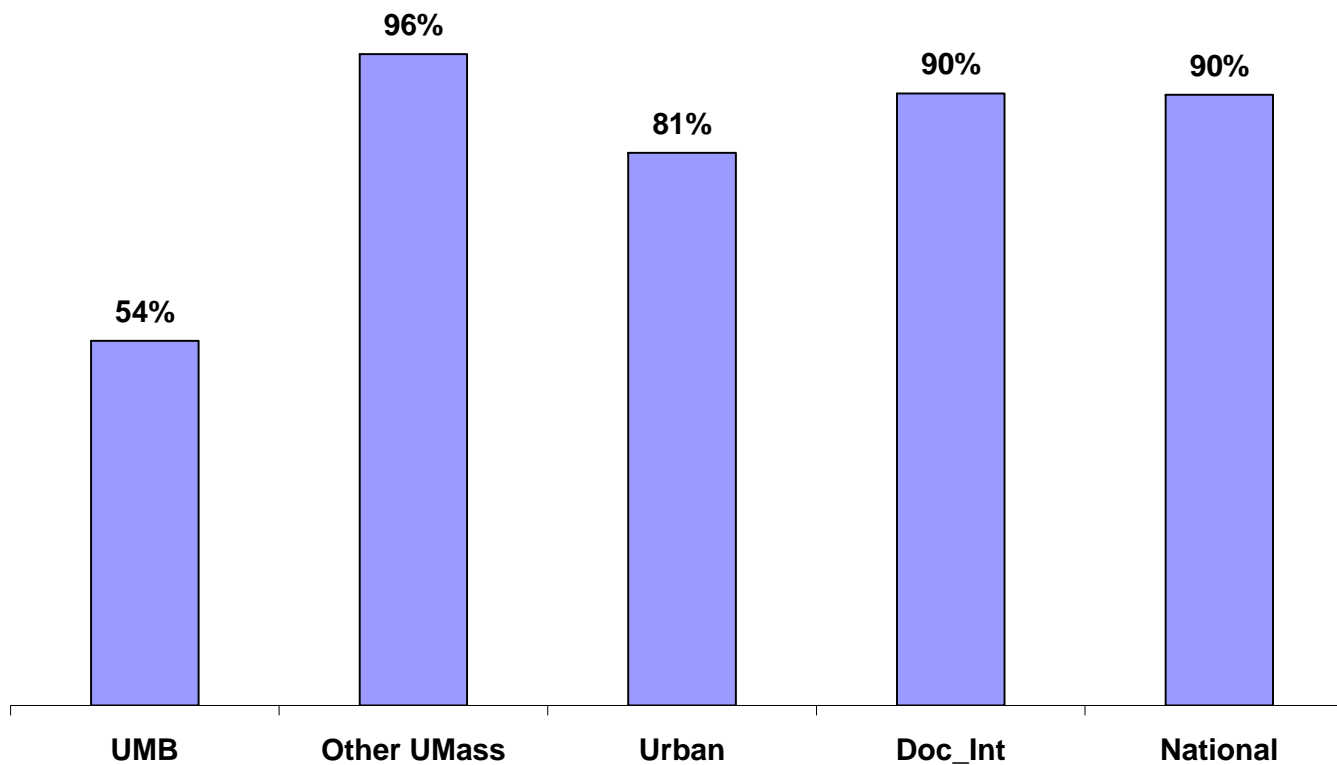


### **Focusing on:**

- 1) Student Background Characteristics**
- 2) Factors that May Affect Retention**

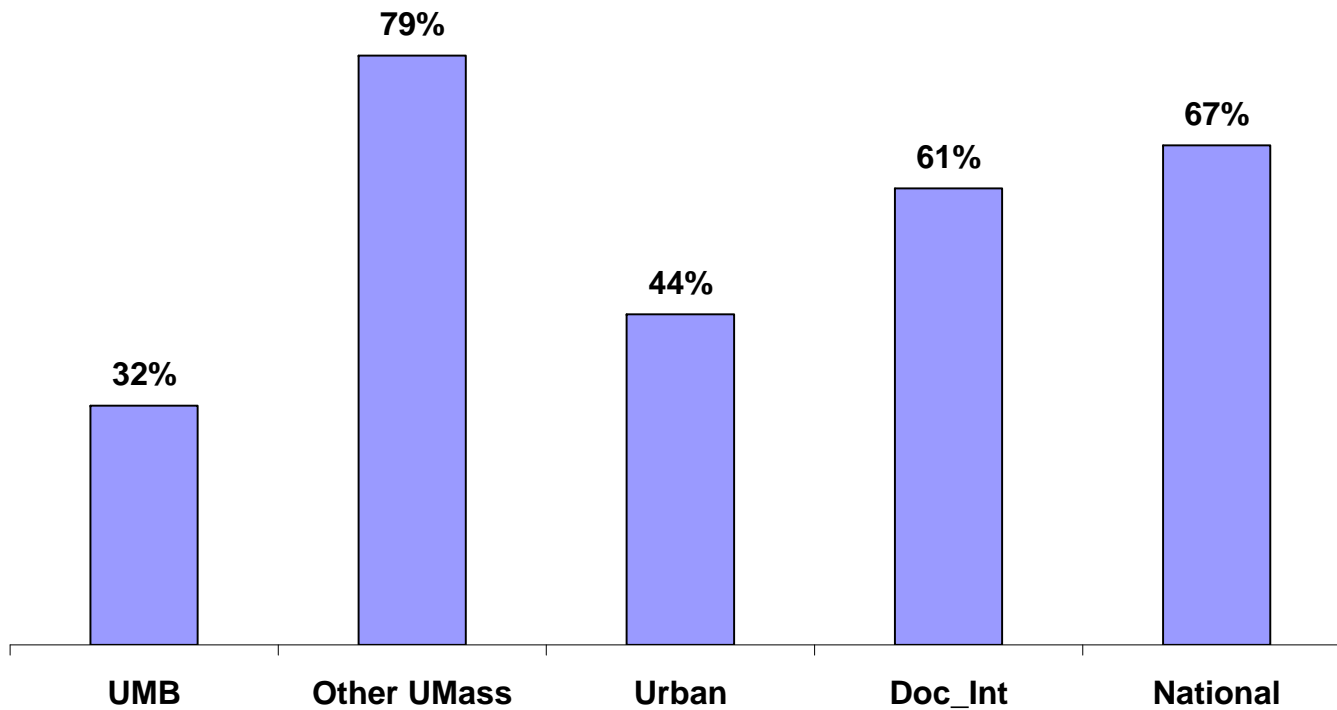
# UMass Boston Students Tend to Be Older than Their Colleagues at Other Institutions

Percent of First Year Respondents Reporting That They Are Age 19 or Younger



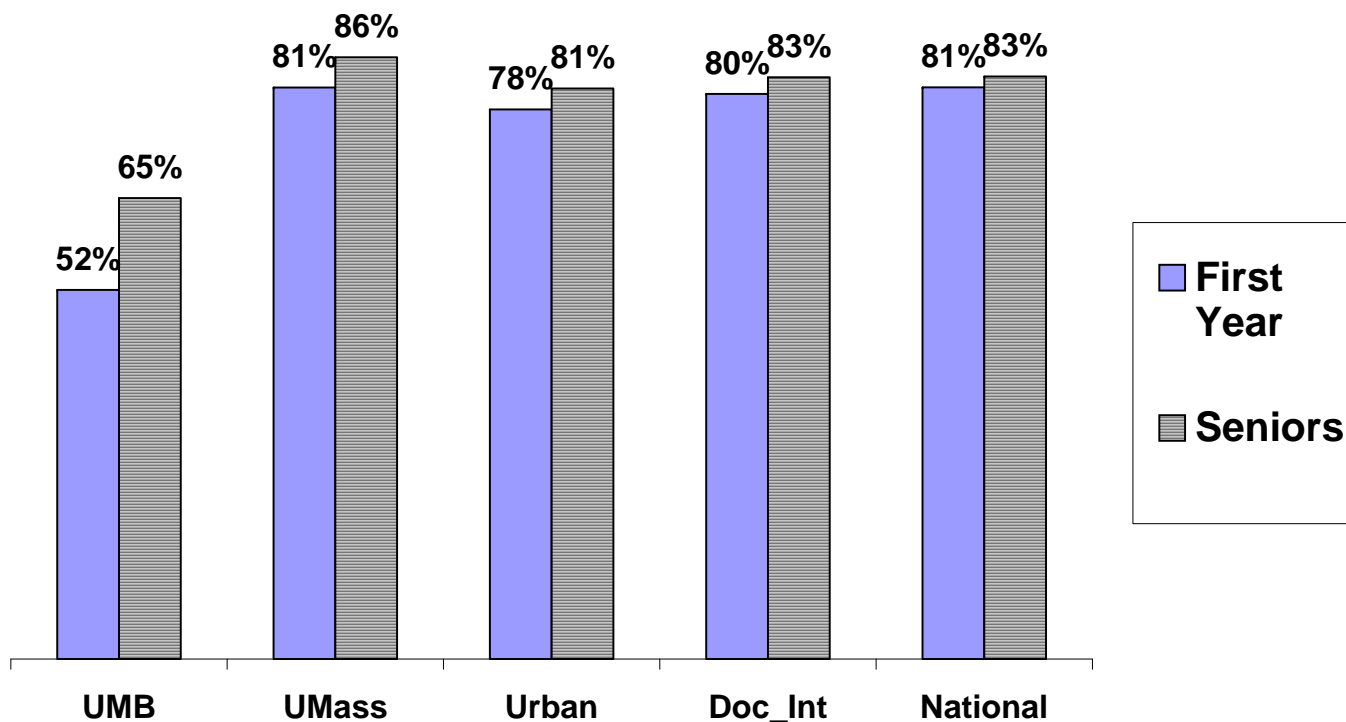
## This Is Also True of Seniors

Percent of Senior Respondents Reporting That They Are Age 23 or Younger



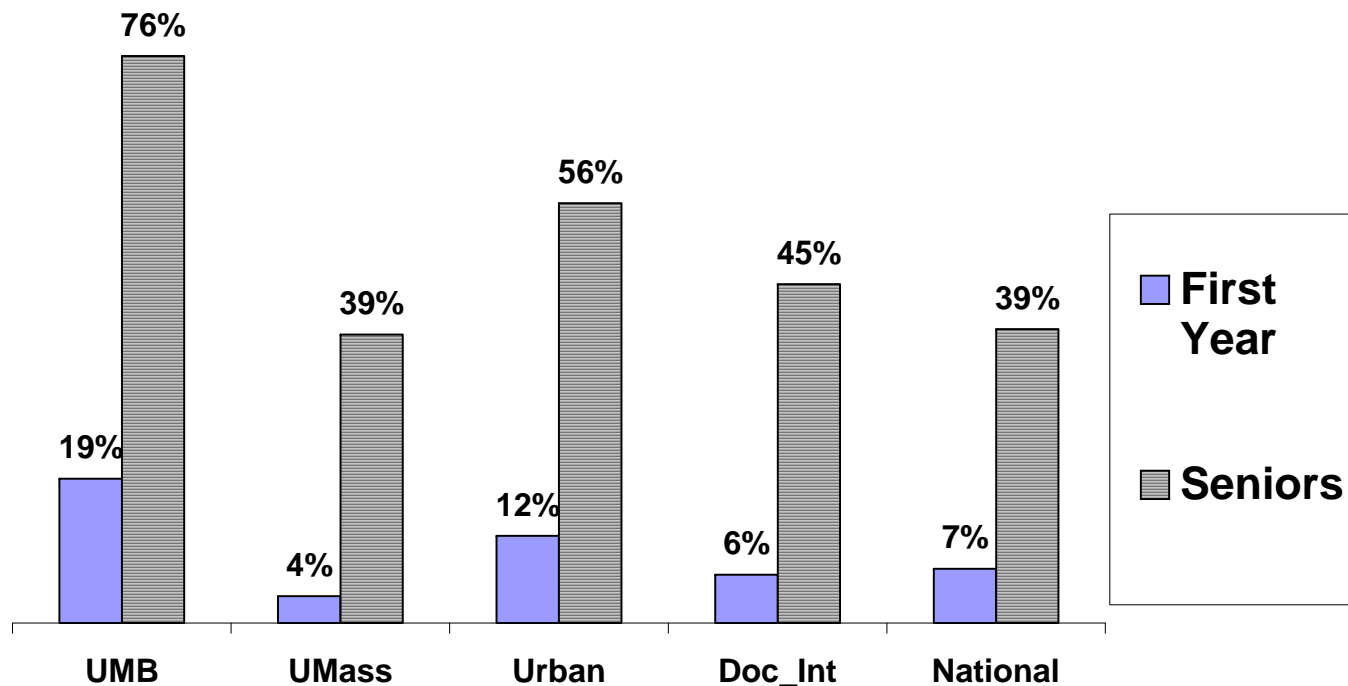
## UMass Boston Students Are Racially Diverse with a Smaller Percentage of Students Who Self-Identify as White

Percent of Respondents Self-Identifying as White  
(Includes Hispanics)



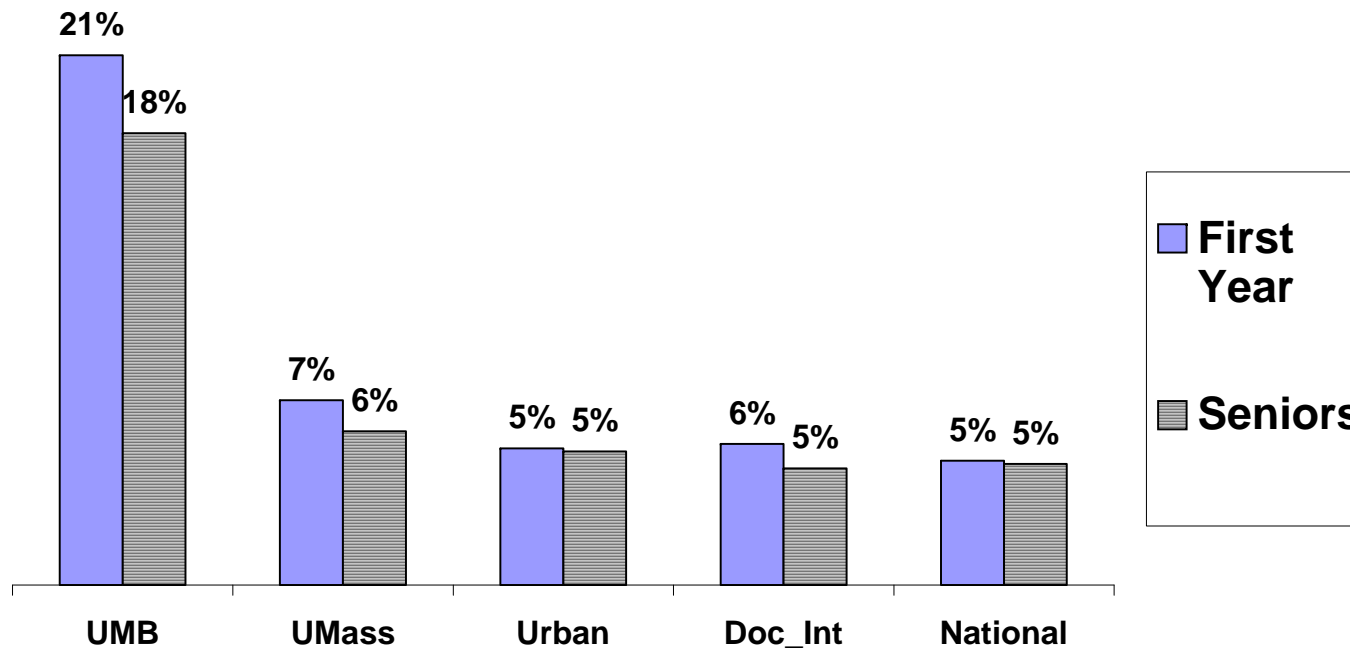
# UMass Boston Students Are More Likely to Have Come Here from other Colleges

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

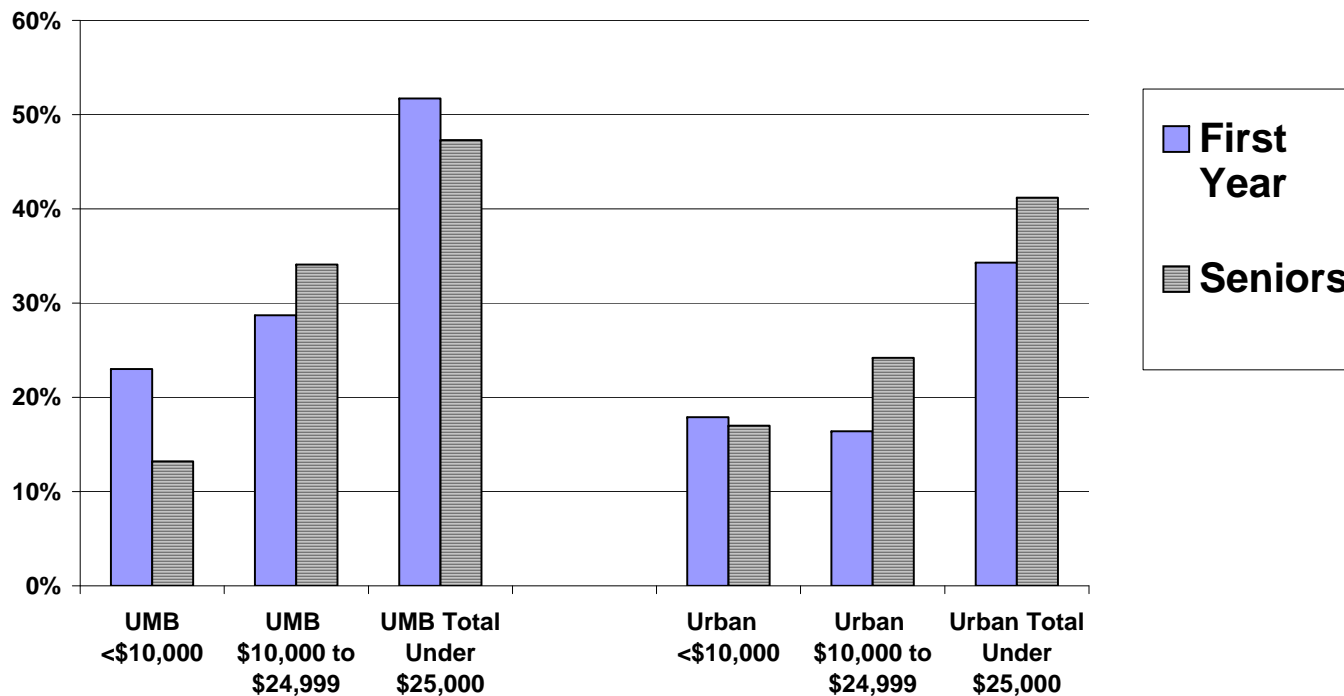
## Percentage of Respondents Who Report Being International Students or Foreign Nationals



# UMass Boston Students Reported Lower Levels of Family Income Than Did Their Colleagues at Other Urban Institutions.

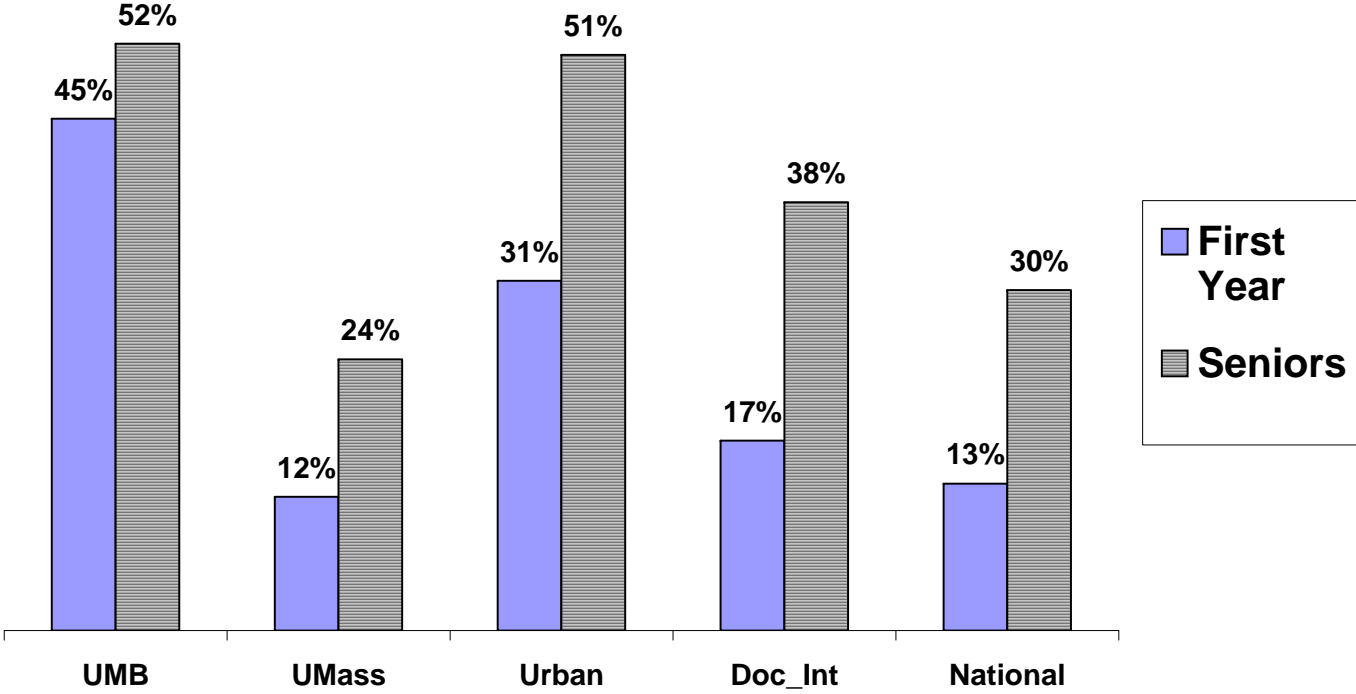
## First Year UMass Boston Students Reported Lower Levels than Seniors

Percentage of Respondents Reporting Low Total Annual Before Tax Income or Low Combined Parental Income If a Dependent on Parent's Taxes



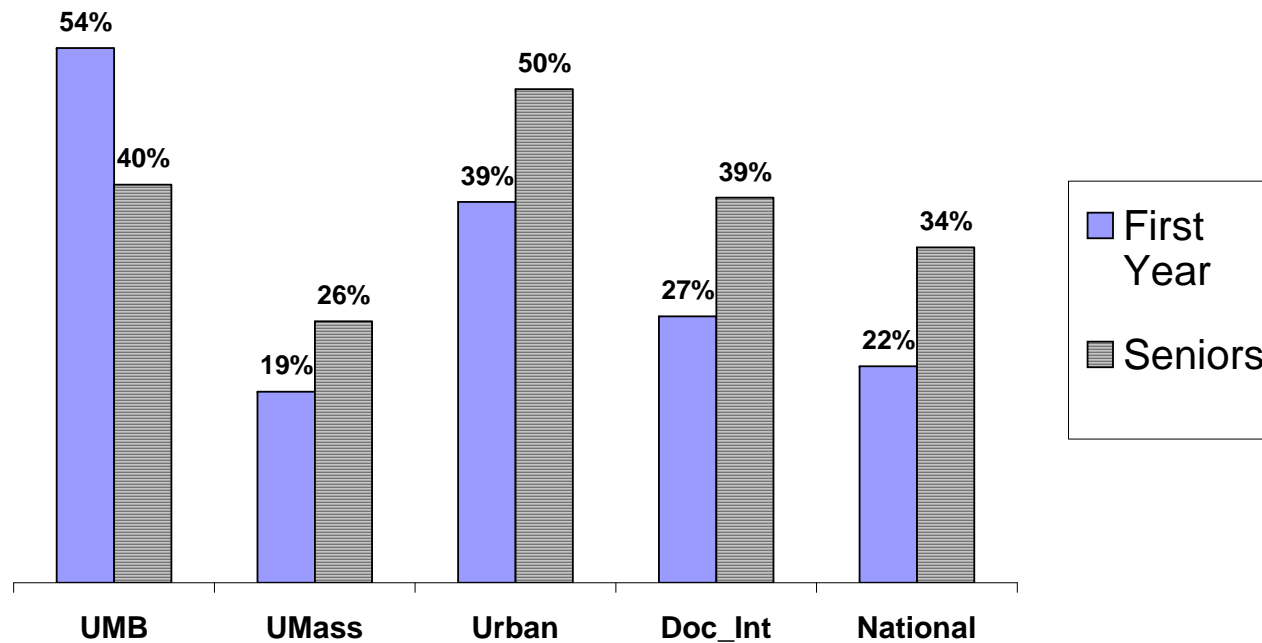
# UMass Boston Students Reported Working More Hours Off Campus Each Week than Did Their Counterparts. The Disparity Is Not as Marked for Seniors

Percent of Respondents Reporting Working More than 20 Hours Off Campus Each Week



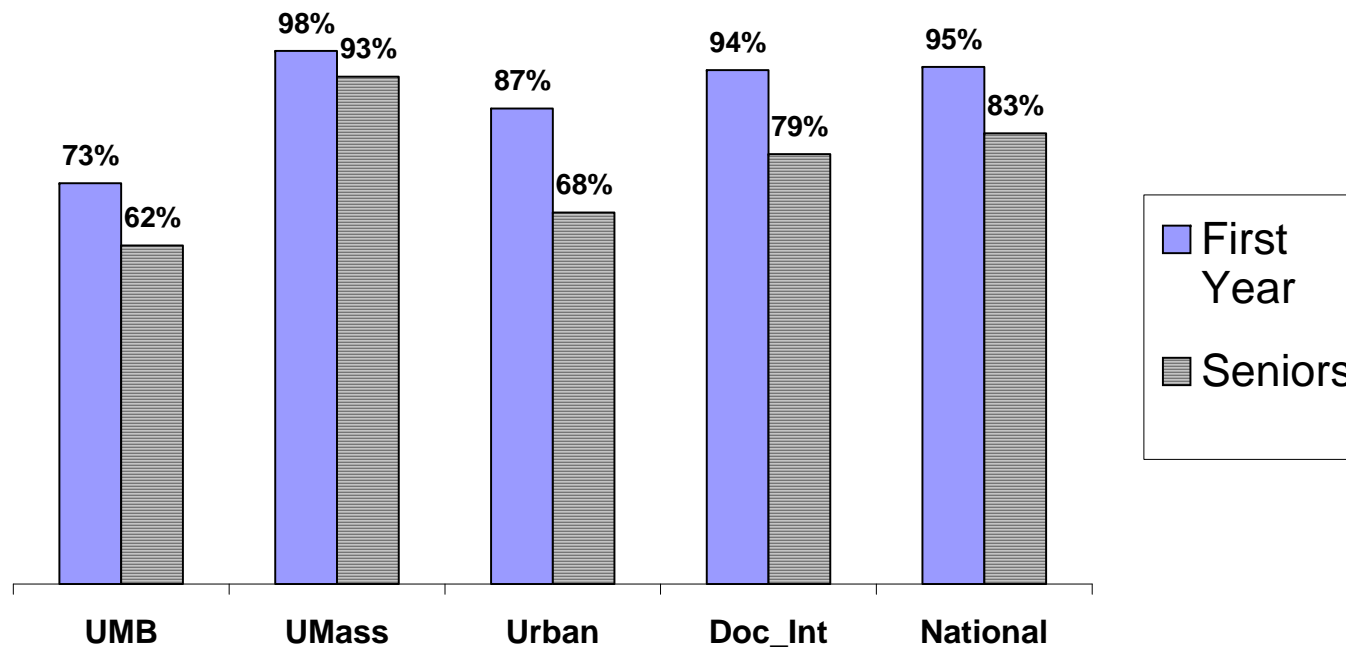
**More UMass Boston First Year Students Reported Spending Some Time Caring For Dependents than Did any of the Comparison Groups. More First Year Students at UMass Boston than Seniors had Such Responsibility. This Pattern Differs from all Comparison Groups**

**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



## **UMass Boston First Year Students Tend to Have More Demands On Their Time, to Be Poorer, and to More Likely Be Immigrants Than Are UMass Boston Seniors.**

- **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%**
- **They are more likely to report low family incomes**
  - **First Year = 52% below \$25,000**
  - **Seniors = 47% below \$25,000**
- **First year students are less likely to be U.S. citizens (UMB records)**
  - **First Year = 34% non-U.S. citizens**
  - **Seniors = 24% non-U.S. citizens**
  - **Therefore, they are more likely to speak a language other than English at home**

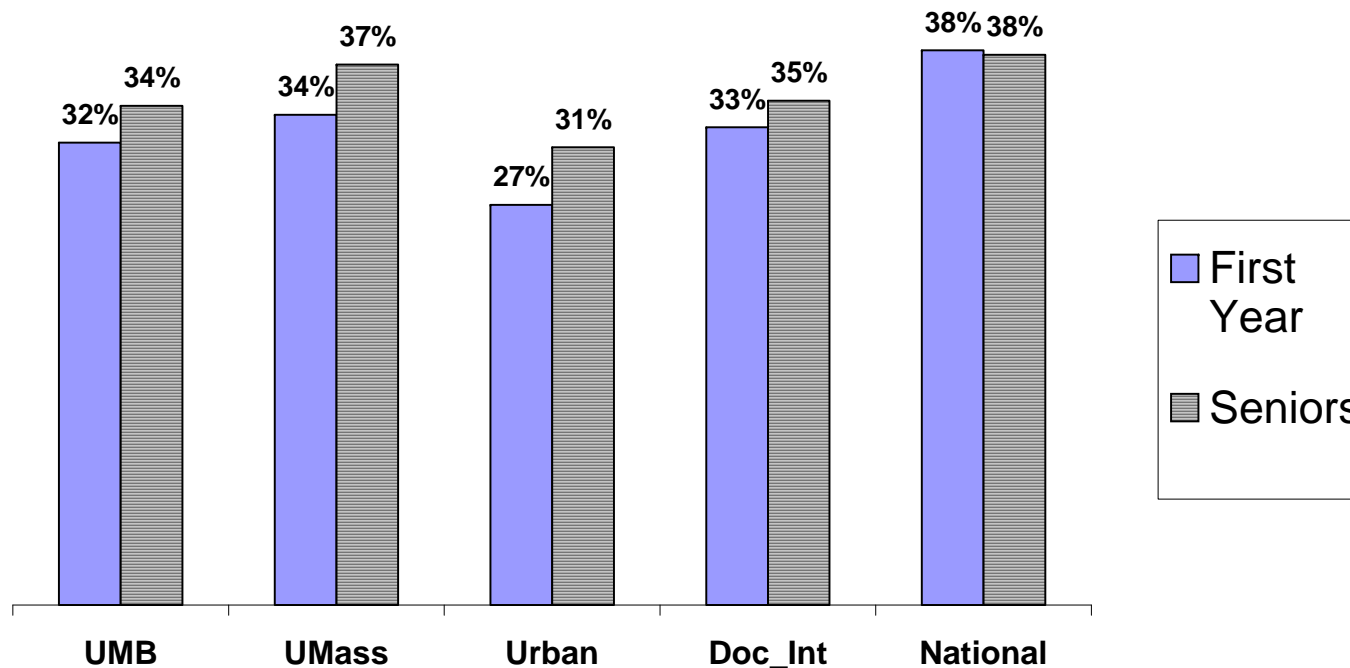
## **According to Retention Literature, Academic Integration is Positively Related to Retention**

While many UMass Boston students reported behavior that indicated that they were academically involved/integrated when they were in class, this integration doesn't seem to carry over outside of class. Our students focus on what they may perceive as the “nuts and bolts” of academic life; they study and are prepared when they show up for class, and they participate actively in class. It seems to be activities that could be characterized as “fringe”, but are nonetheless important to developing a sense of integration, that may suffer from the students' time constraints.

**The following sections will focus on differences between UMass Boston and other Doctoral Intensive first year students, although results for seniors and the comparison groups will also be reported.**

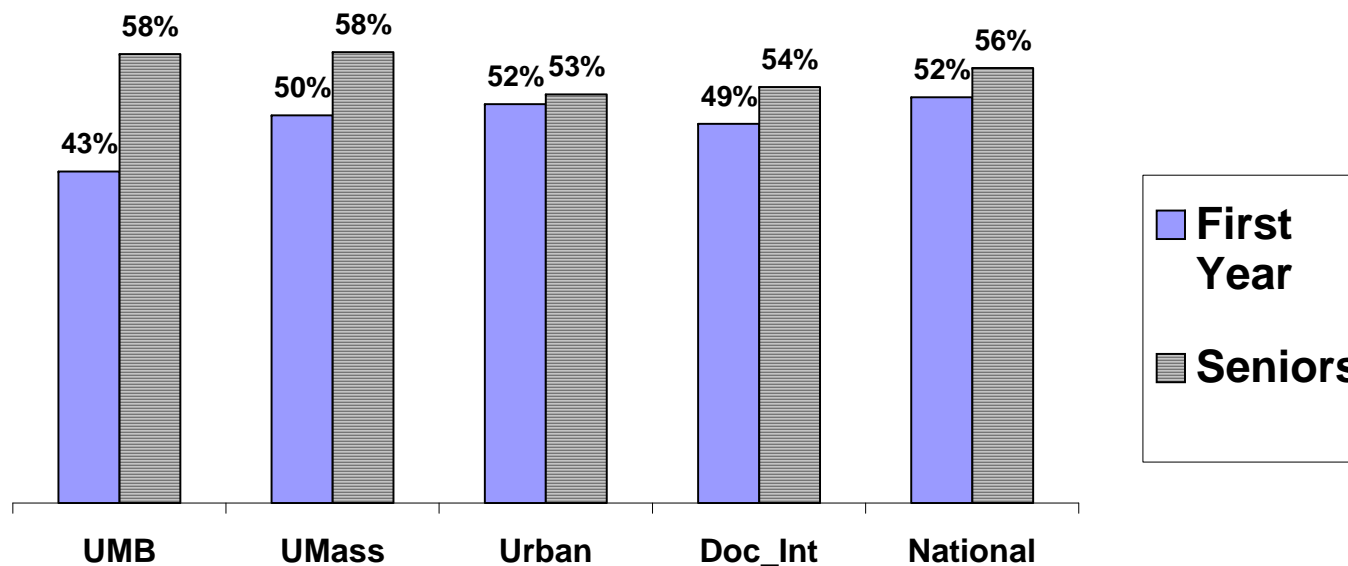
# Both UMass Boston First Year Students and Seniors Reported Spending about as Much Time Studying as Their Colleagues In all of the Comparison Groups

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



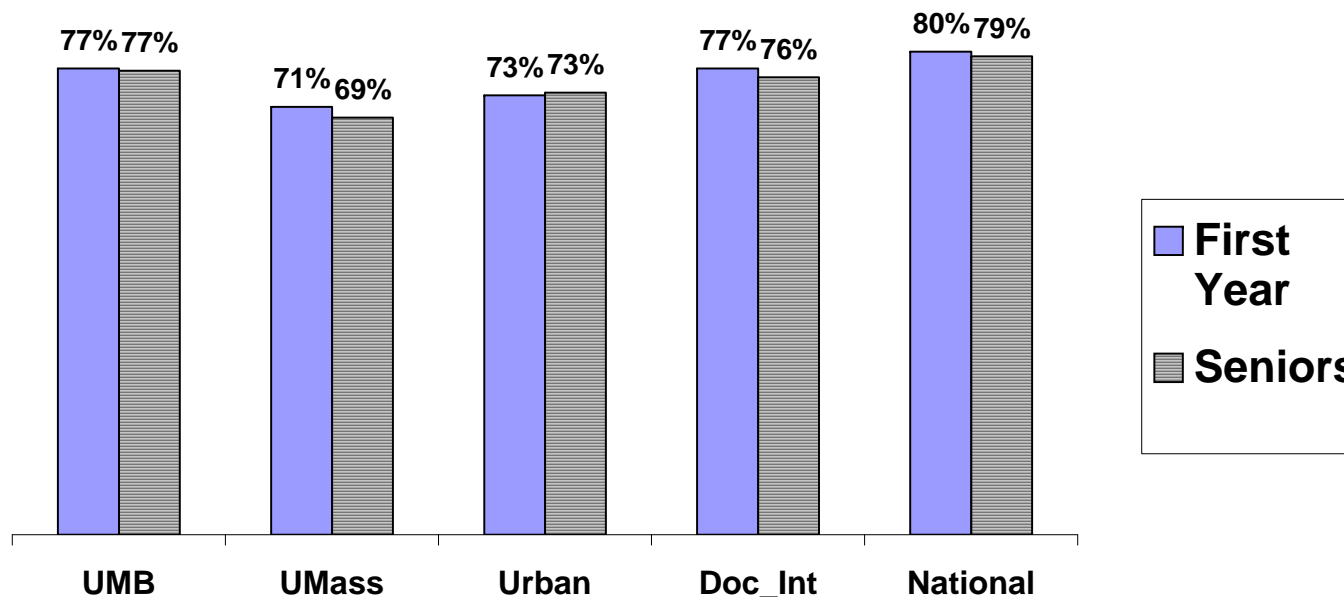
# Many UMass Boston Respondents Reported that They Worked Harder than They Thought They Could, although First Year Students Didn't Report it as Often as Some of Their Counterparts

Percent of Respondents Reporting that They "Often" or "Very Often" Worked Harder than They Thought They Could to Meet an Instructor's Standards or Expectations



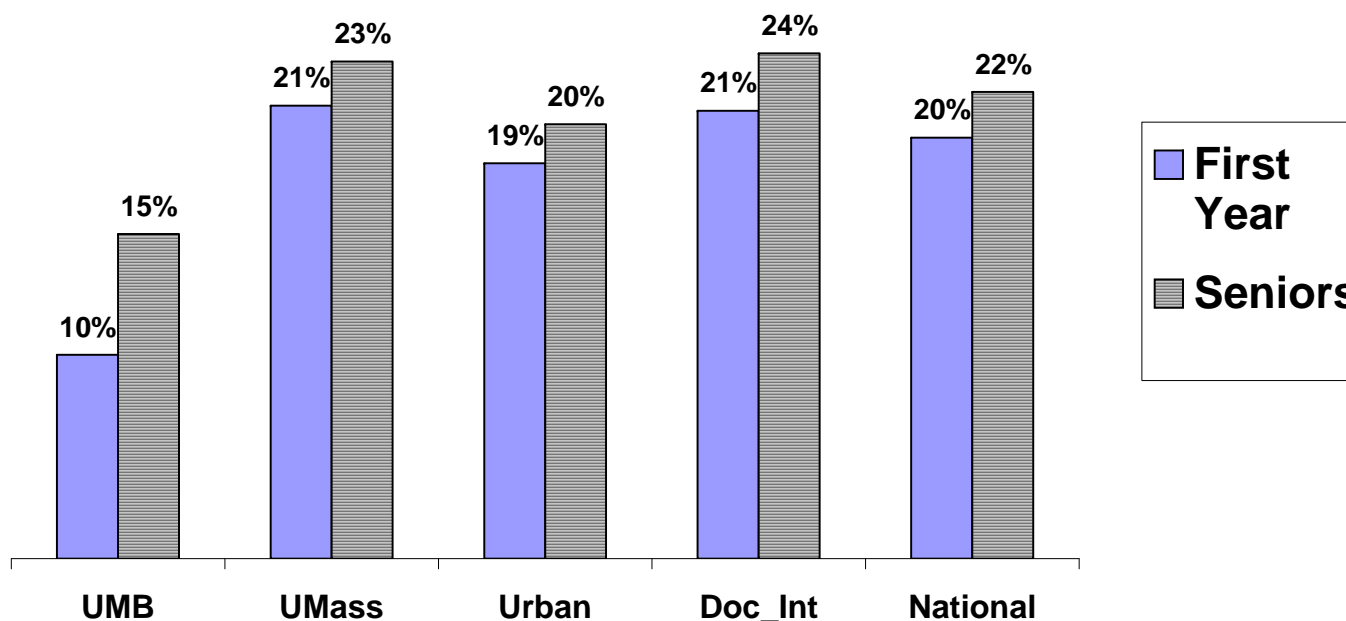
# Both Groups of UMass Boston Respondents Were as Likely As Their Counterparts to Report that Their School Emphasized Studying and Academic Work

Percentage of Respondents Reporting that Their Institutions Emphasize Spending Significant Amounts of Time Studying and on Academic Work "Quite a Bit" or "Very Much"



# UMass Boston Students Responded to that Expectation and Came To Class Unprepared Less Often than Their Colleagues at The Doctoral Intensives or any other Comparison Group.

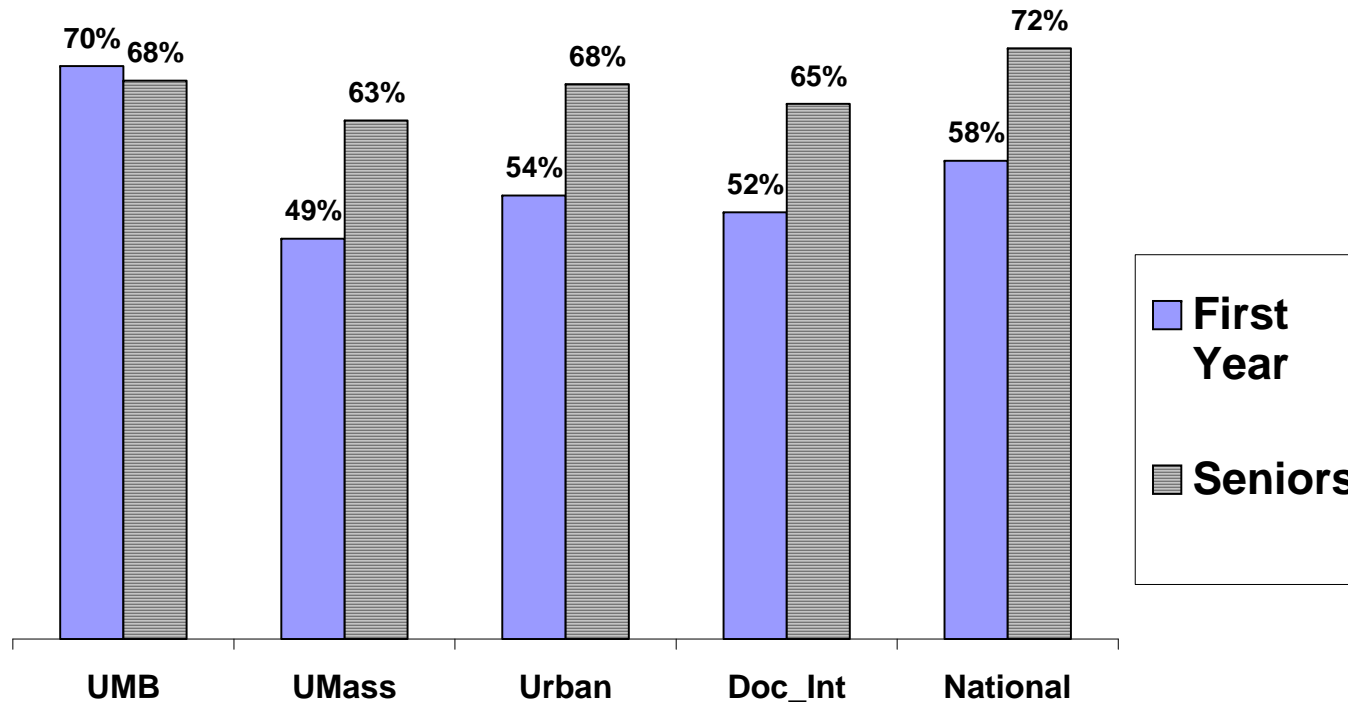
Percentage of Respondents Who Reported That They Came to Class without Completing Reading or Assignments "Often" or "Very Often"



# UMass Boston First Year Students Asked More Questions in Class Than Did Their Colleagues at the Doctoral Intensives Or in any other Comparison Group.

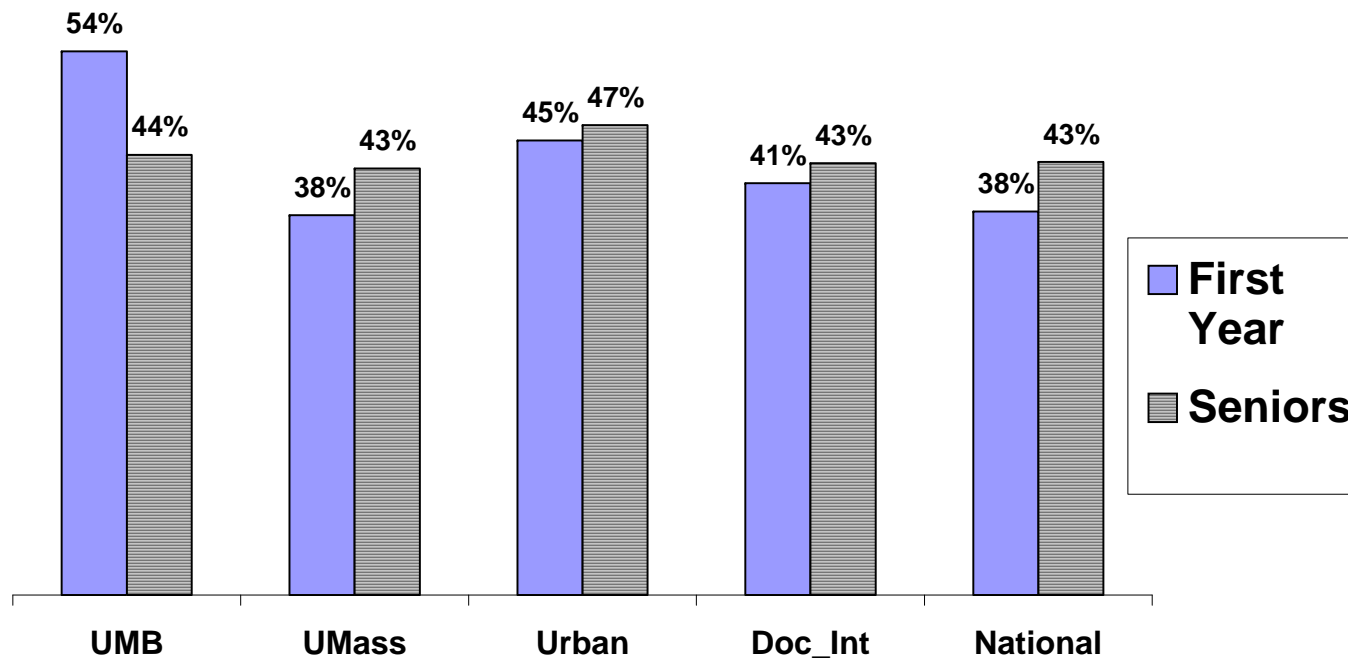
The Mean for Seniors is Comparable to those of all other Groups.

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



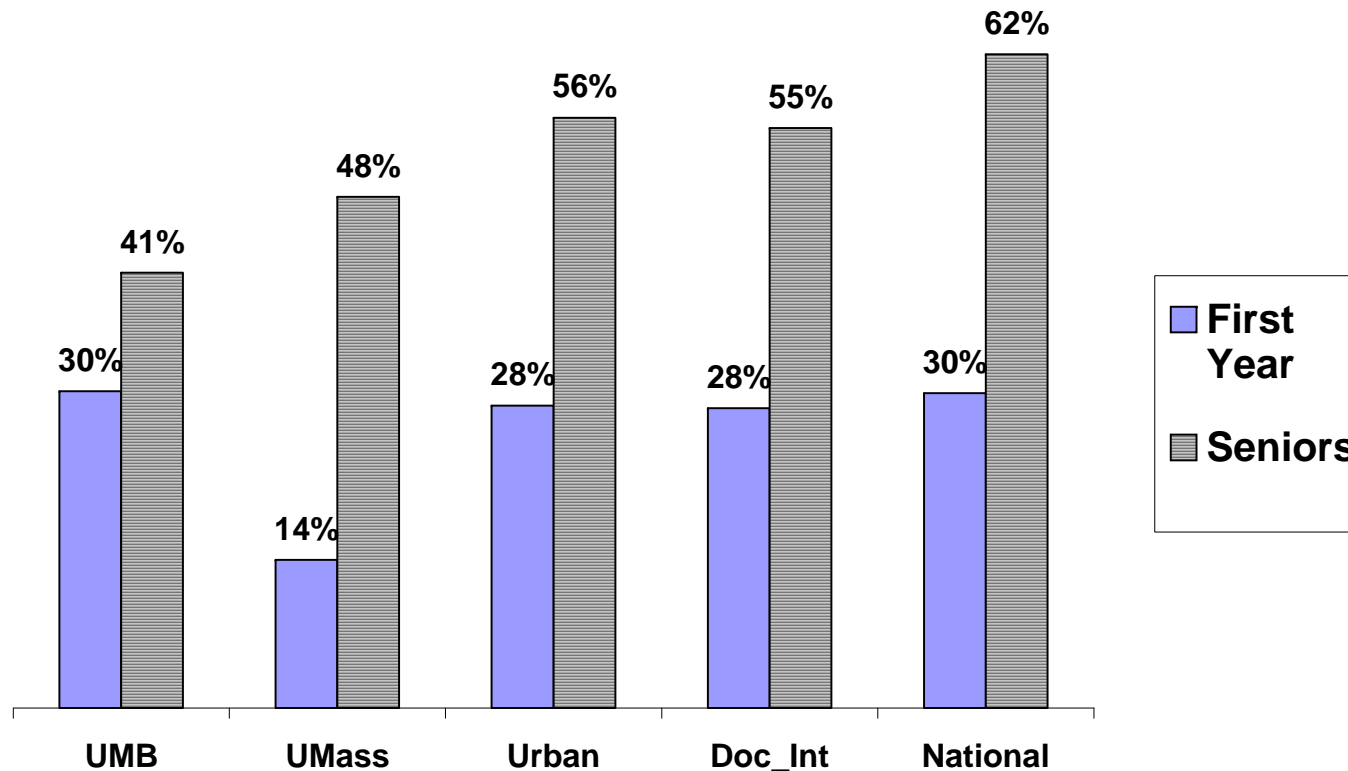
**UMass Boston First Year Students Worked on Projects with Other Students During Class More Often than Their Colleagues at The Doctoral Intensives or any other Comparison Group.  
The Mean for Seniors is Comparable to those of the other Groups.**

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



**UMass Boston First Year Students Were About as Likely to Make Frequent Class Presentations as Their Colleagues at the Doctoral Intensives or any other Comparison Group. The Mean for Seniors Trailed Those of the other Groups.**

**Percentage of Respondents Who Reported Making A Presentation in Class "Often" or "Very Often"**

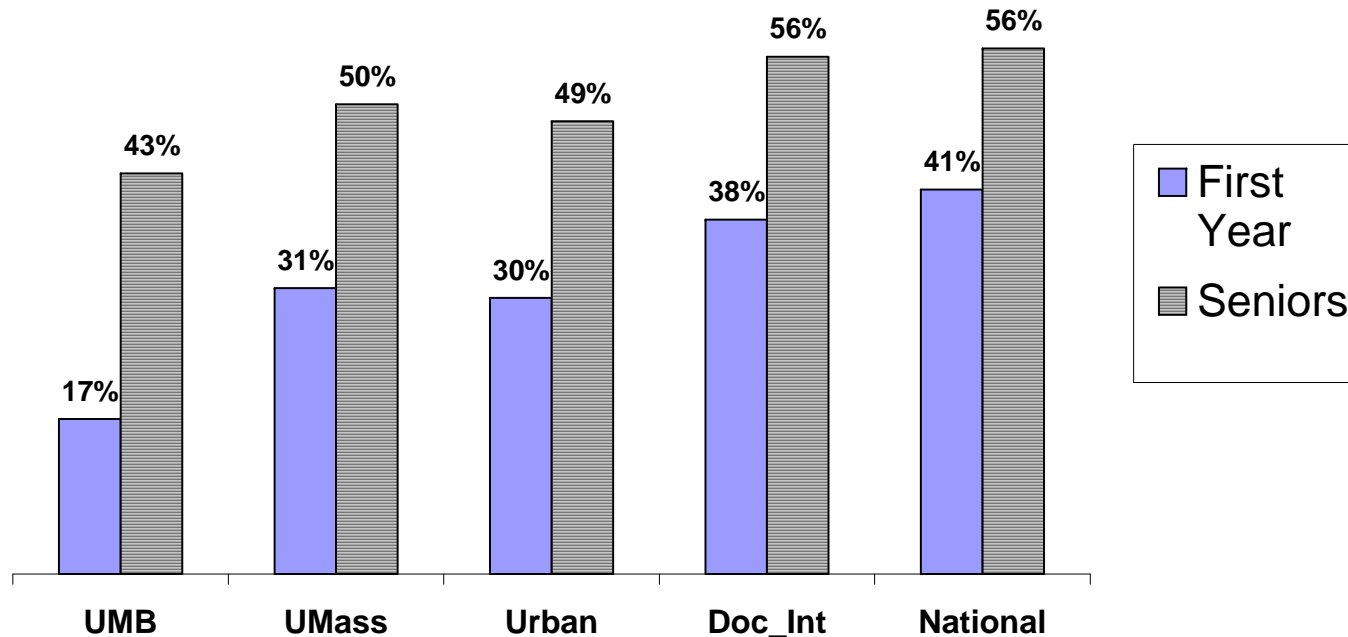


**As we saw in the student background section, UMass Boston students have significant outside responsibilities, such as working for pay off campus and caring for dependents.**

**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 some other activities outside of regular school hours. In the following pages we see that differences in responses to questions about out of class activities are particularly pronounced for first year students.**

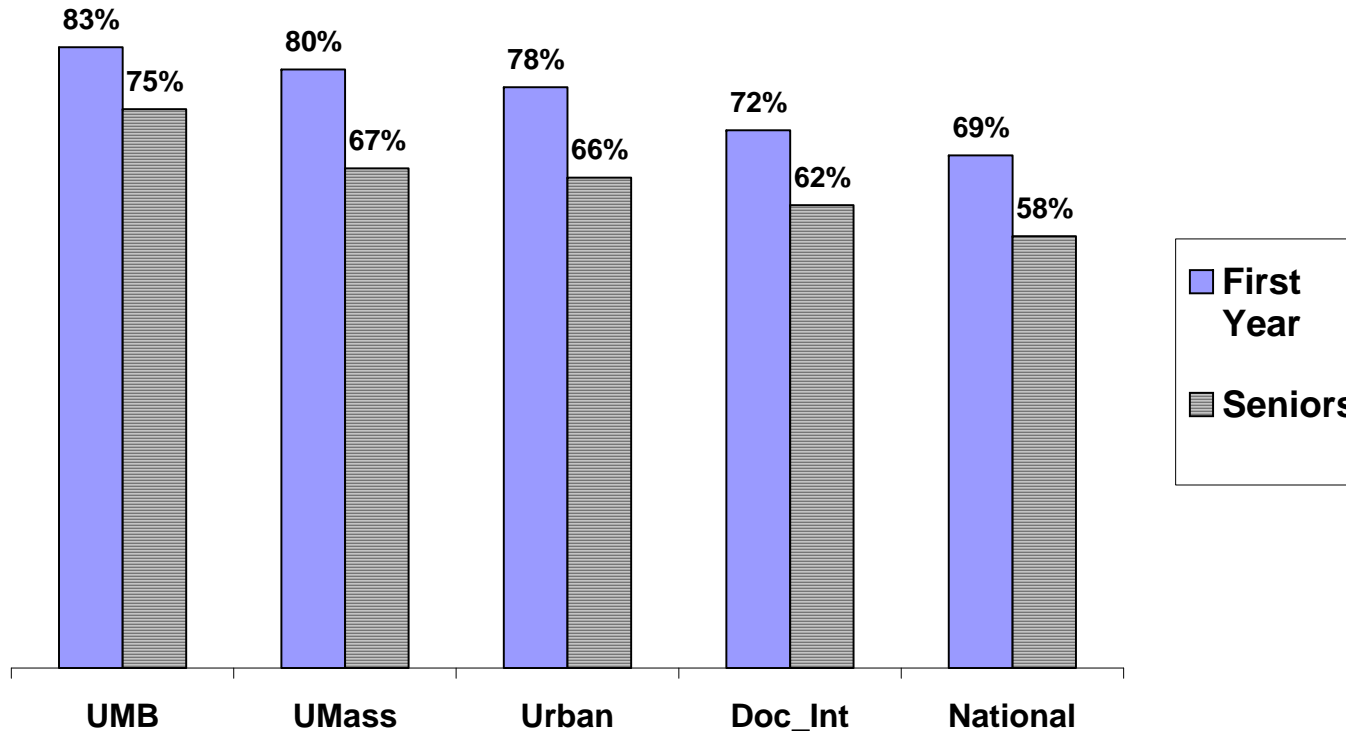
**UMass Boston First Year Students and Seniors Spend Much Less Time Working with other Students outside of Class Than Do Their Colleagues at the other Doctoral Intensives Or in any other Comparison Group.**

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



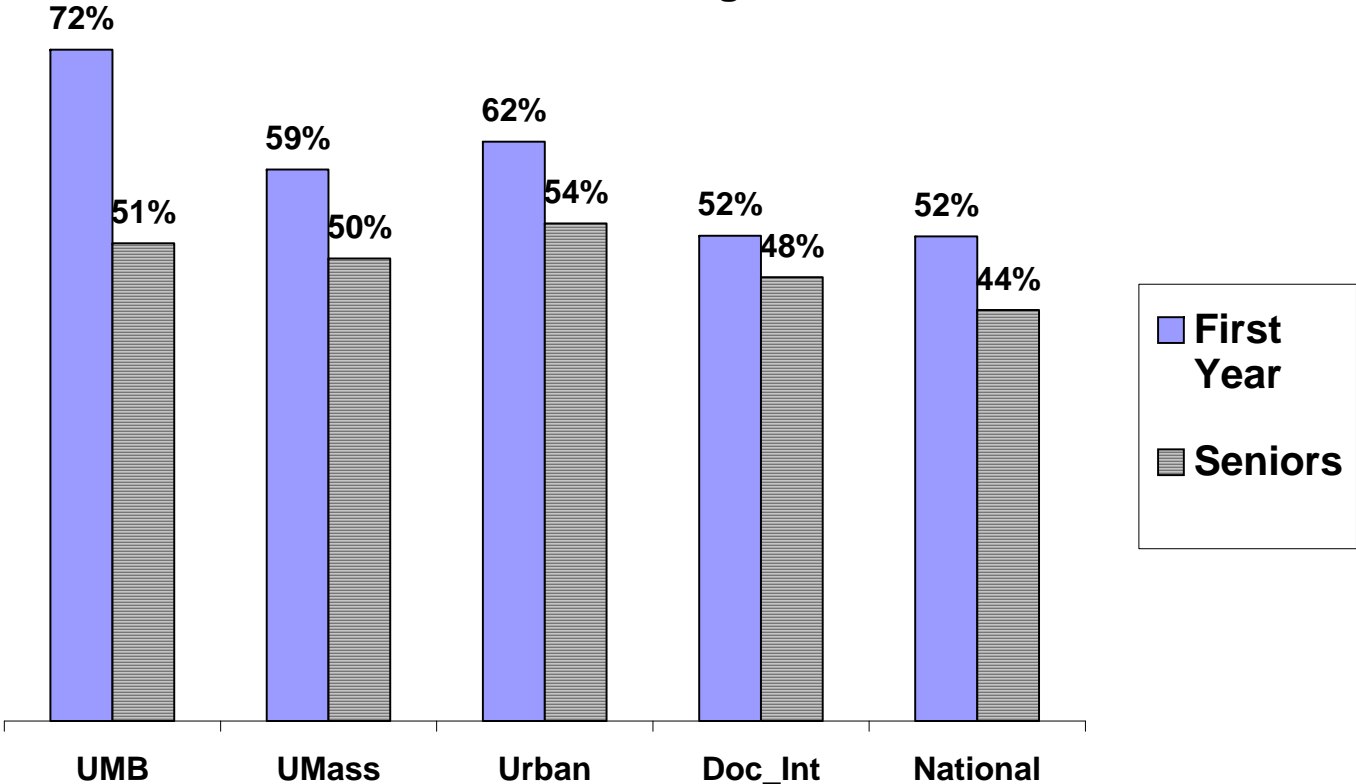
# UMass Boston First Year Students and Seniors are More Likely To Have Never Participated in a Community Based Project as Part Of Course Work than are Their Colleagues at the other Doctoral Intensives or in the National Comparison Group.

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 Were Least Likely to Have Tutored or Taught Other Students for Pay or Voluntarily. Seniors Were Similar to the Comparison Groups

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



# Faculty Relationships

**In General, UMass Boston Respondents Reported that Their Relationships with Faculty were Comparable to those Of Students at the other Doctoral Intensive Universities**

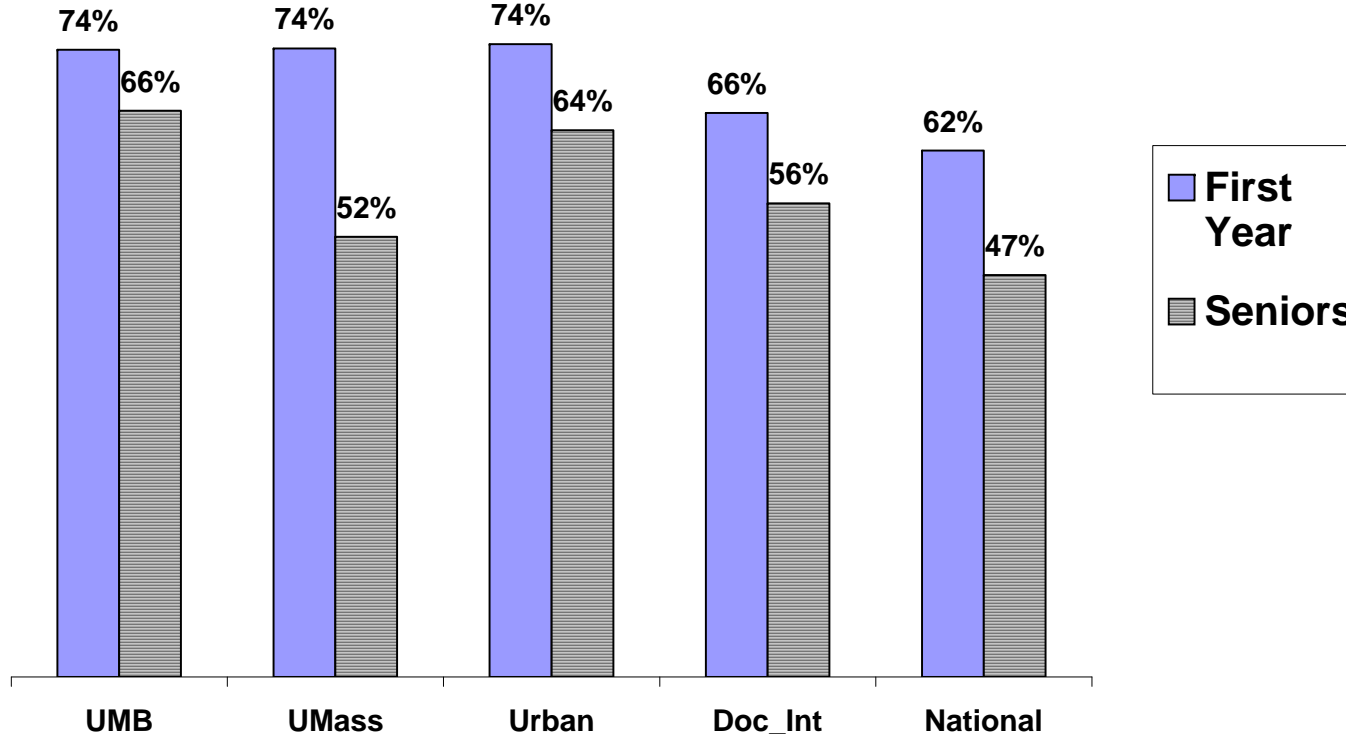
Specifically, there were no statistically significant differences between UMass Boston first year students and the mean responses of the first year students at the other doctoral intensive universities in these areas:

- Discussing ideas from reading or classes with faculty outside of class
- Discussing grades or assignments with an instructor
- Working on research projects with faculty outside of course or program requirements
- The overall quality of the relationships between students and faculty
- Receiving prompt feedback on performance

**However, there were two questions with significant differences.**

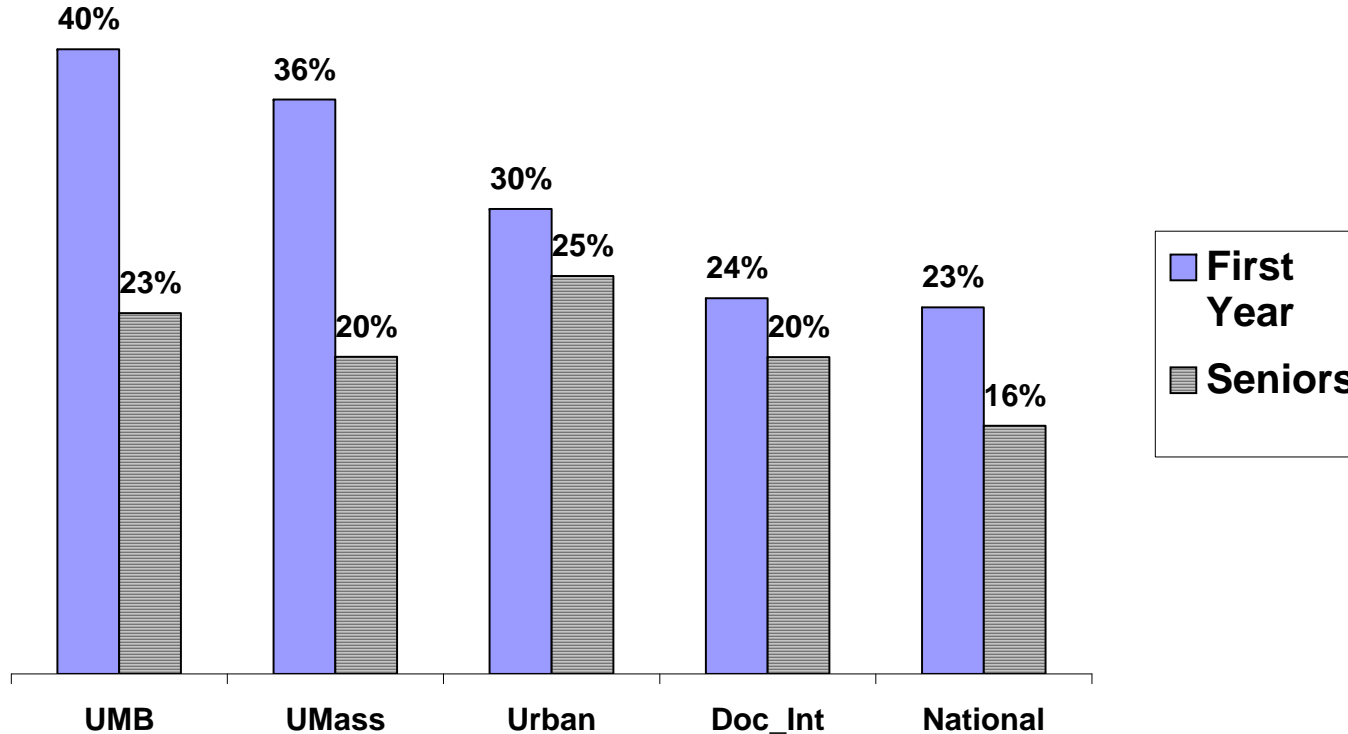
# UMass Boston Respondents Were Less Likely than Their Doctoral Intensive or National Counterparts to have Worked with Faculty On Activities other than Coursework

Percent of Respondents Who Reported "Never" Working With Faculty Members on Activities other than Coursework



# UMass Boston First Year Students Were Significantly Less Likely To Have Talked with a Faculty Member about Career Plans Than Were First Year Students in the Comparison Groups Seniors Were Similar to the Comparison Groups

Percentage of Respondents Who Reported that They "Never" Discussed Career Plans with a Faculty Member or Advisor

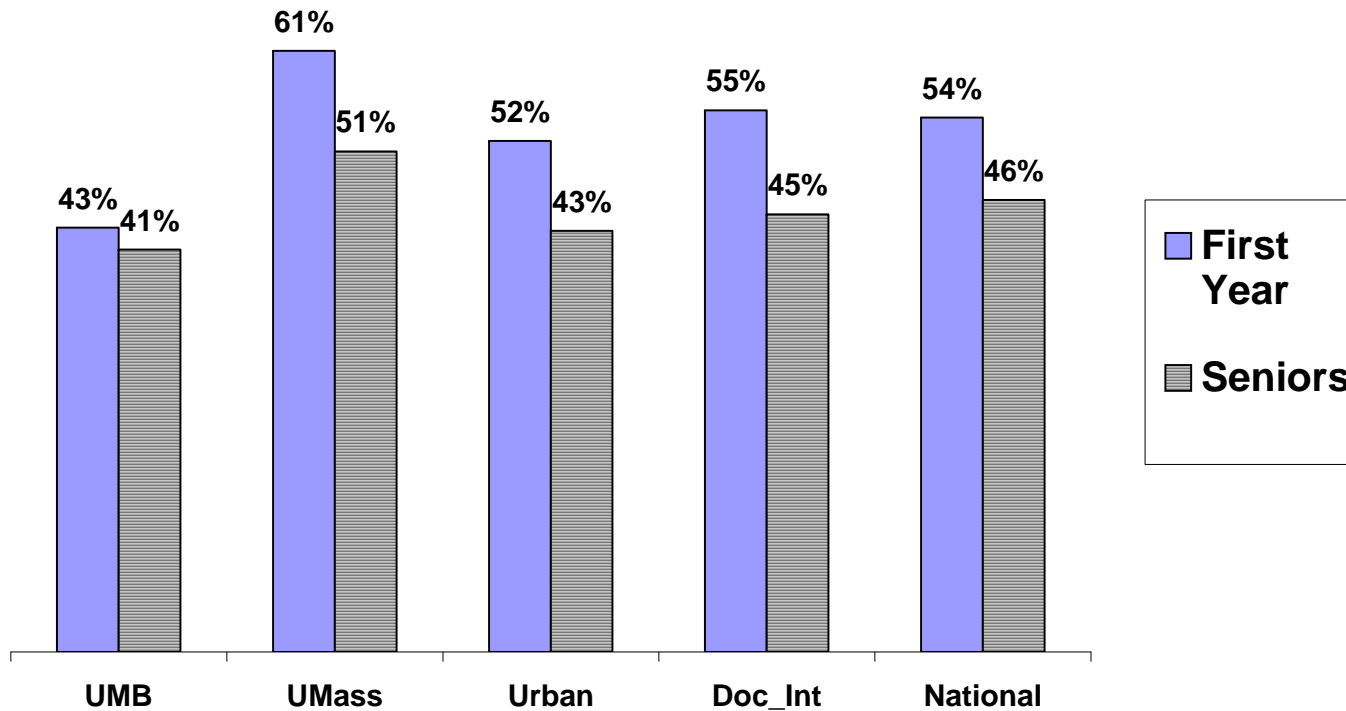


## **According to Retention Literature, Social Integration Is Also Positively Related to Retention**

The mean responses to several questions that might indicate social integration were significantly lower for UMass Boston first year students than for first year students at the other doctoral intensive universities.

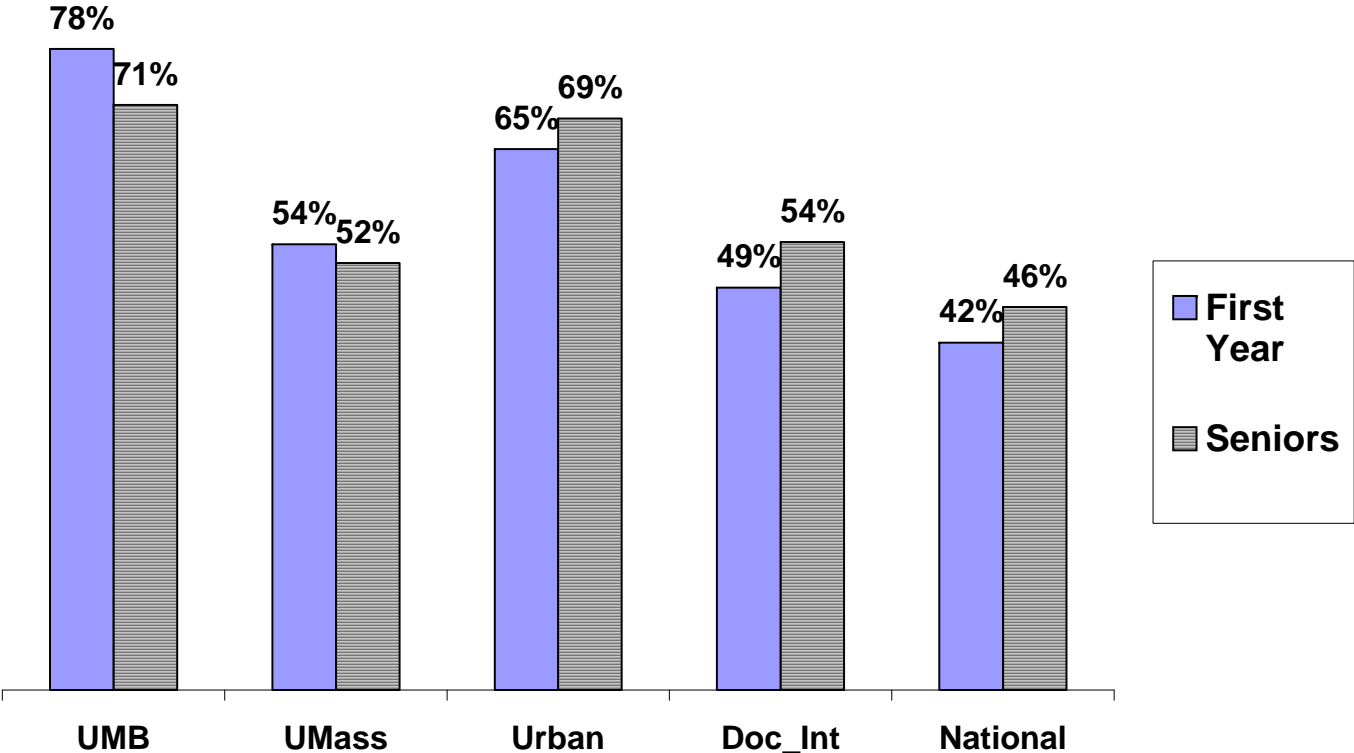
# UMass Boston First Year Students Spent Significantly Less Time Relaxing and Socializing than other First Year Students. Seniors Were Similar to the Comparison Groups

Percent of Respondents Who Reported Spending More Than 10 Hours Weekly Relaxing and Socializing



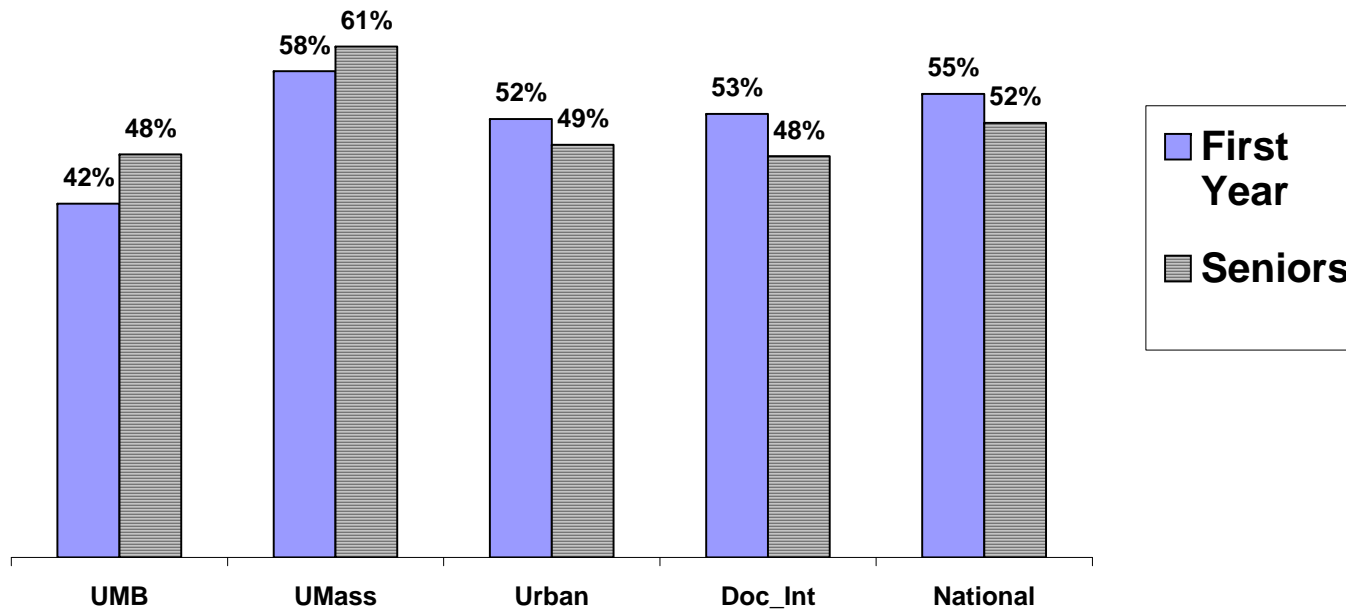
# UMass Boston First Year Students Were the Least Likely to Spend Any Time in Co-Curricular Activities. Seniors Were Similar only to the other Urban Seniors

Percent of Respondents Who Reported Spending No Time in Co-Curricular Activities



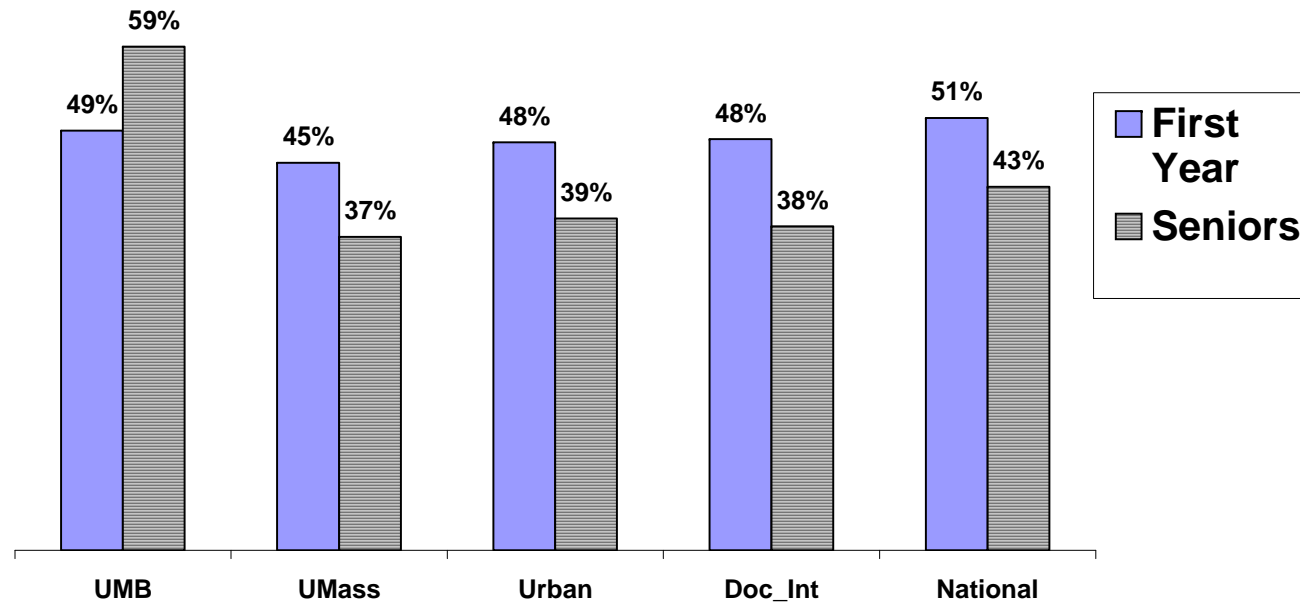
# UMass Boston First Year Students Were Also Significantly Less Likely to Have Had Serious Conversations With Students Who Had Different Attitudes or Beliefs Seniors Were Similar to the Comparison Groups

Percentage of Respondents 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"



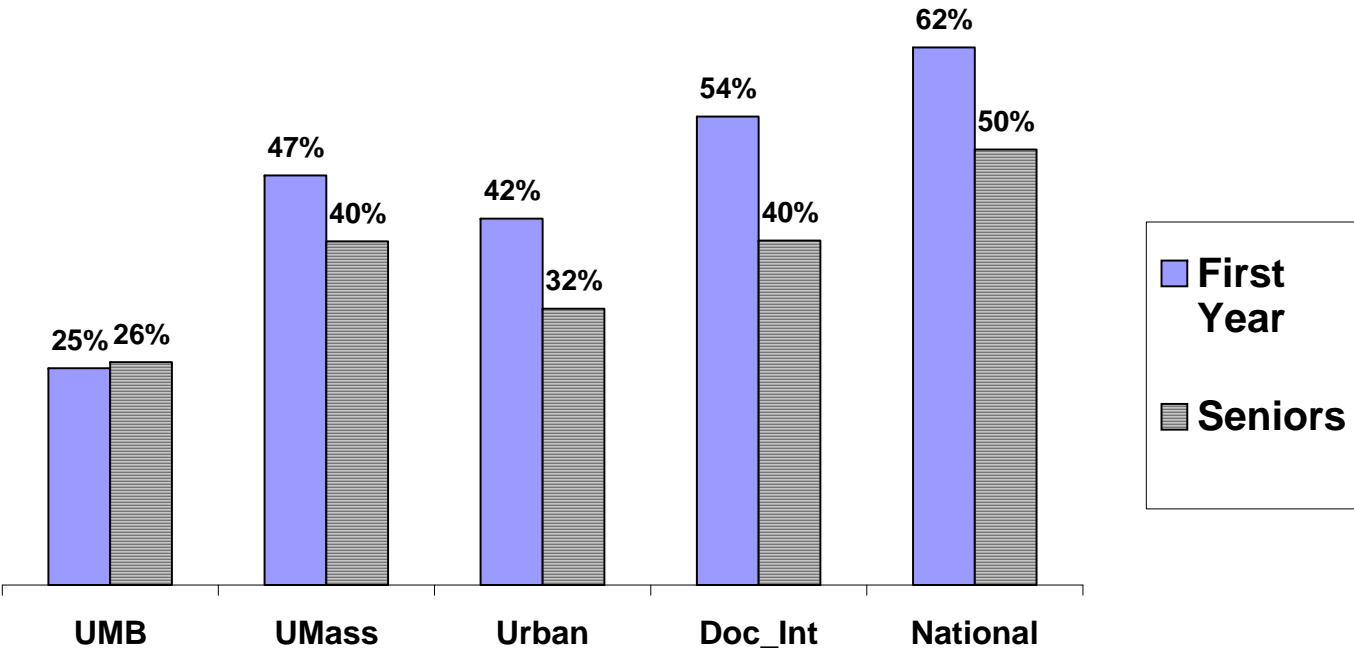
**However, UMass Boston Respondents Were as Likely to Report That Their Institution Emphasized Contact Among Students of Different Backgrounds. The Pattern of Responses Between First Year Students And Seniors Differs from those of the other Groups**

**Percent of Respondents Reporting that Their Institution Emphasizes Contact Among Students from Different Economic, Social, and Racial or Ethnic Backgrounds "Quite a Bit" or "Very Much"**



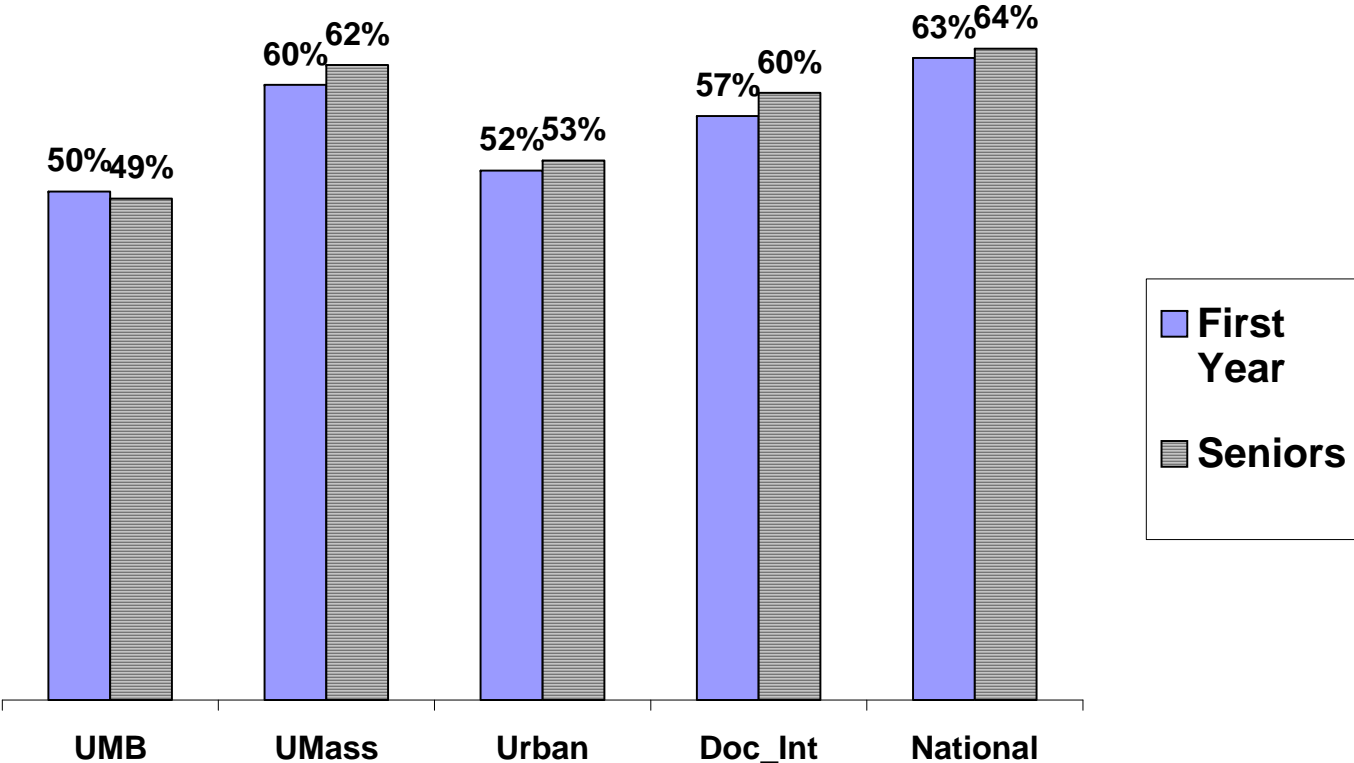
# UMass Boston Respondents Were Significantly Less Likely To Report That Their Institution Emphasized Attending Campus Events than Were Their Counterparts in any of the Comparison Groups

Percent of Respondents Reporting that Their Institution Emphasizes Attending Campus Events and Activities "Quite a Bit" or "Very Much"



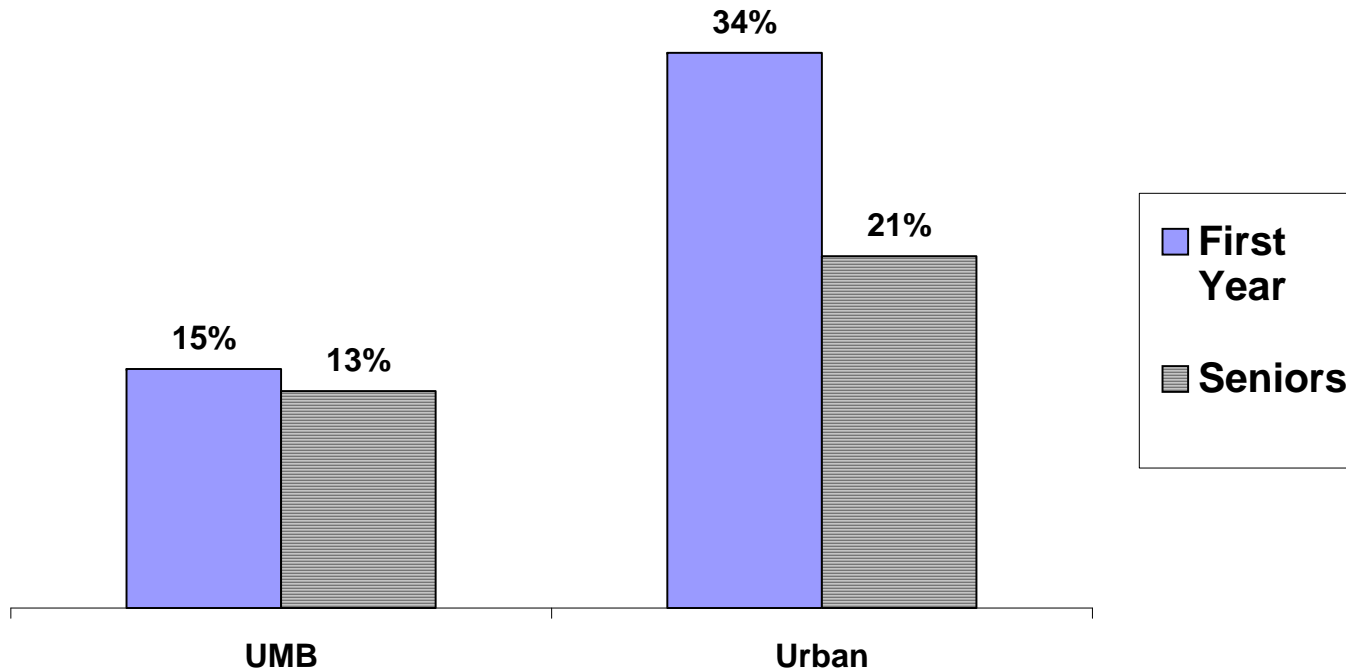
# UMass Boston Respondents Rated Their Relationships with Other Students Significantly Lower than Their Counterparts in any Of The Comparison Groups Except for the Urban Consortium

Percent of Respondents Rating Their Relationships With other Students as a 6 or 7 on a 7 Point Scale



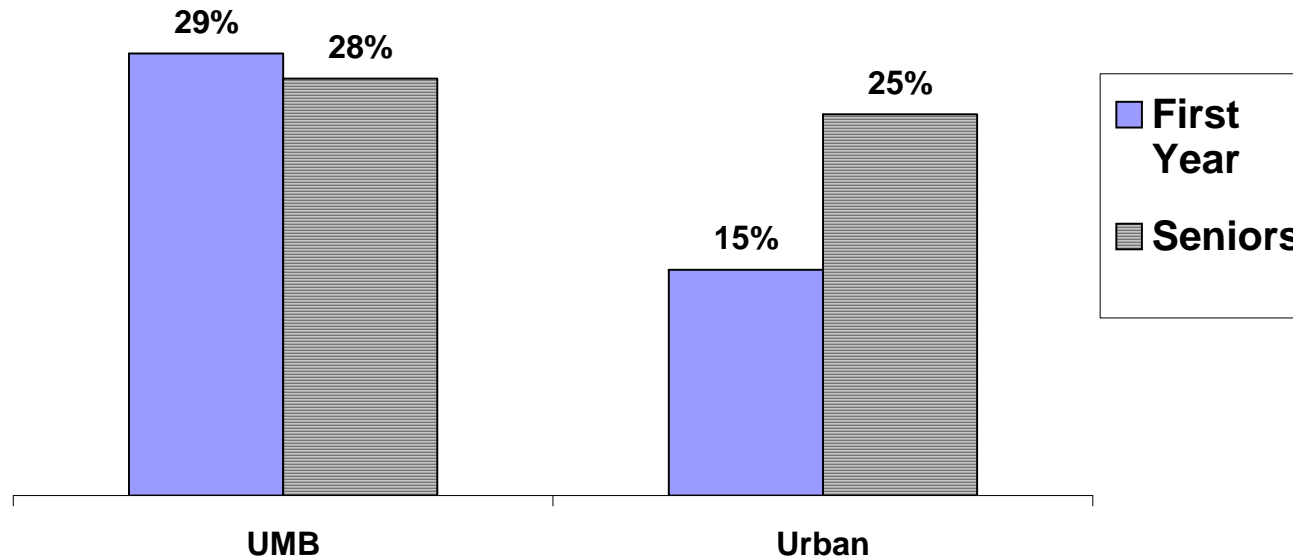
**UMass Boston Respondents Reported Spending Significantly Less Time on Campus outside of Class Than Did other Respondents in the Urban Consortium.**

**Percent of Respondents Reporting Spending More Than 10 Hours per Week on Campus Aside from Class Time**



**UMass Boston First Year Students Were Twice as Likely to Expect To Be Delayed in Completing their Undergraduate Education Than Were Their Counterparts in the Urban Consortium. Seniors Were Similar to the other Urban Respondents**

**Percent of Respondents Reporting That it Was "Somewhat Likely" or "Very Likely" that Work or Family Commitments Would Delay Them in Completing Their Undergraduate Education**



# Conclusions

- UMass Boston students differ from their colleagues on a number of background measures.
- 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. This may adversely impact their ability to become academically and socially integrated into the life of the university, and therefore may adversely affect retention and persistence.
- These stresses are actually more pronounced for first year students than for seniors.