

LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND OUTCOMES

In their responses to the Spring 2011 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), St. Olaf seniors generally reported learning experiences and outcomes that are similar to, or better than, those reported by students at other liberal arts institutions.

St. Olaf students were as engaged as their peers in some high-impact practices, such as internships and collaborative research with faculty, and were more engaged than their peers in other practices, such as studying abroad, learning a foreign language, and participating in a learning community.

Like their peers, St. Olaf seniors believe their college experience contributed substantially to their critical thinking, writing, and speaking abilities. St. Olaf seniors were more likely than seniors at other schools to say that their college experience helped them acquire a broad general education, and promoted their ethical development, ability to work with others, and capacity for community engagement.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES

“Which of the following have you done [during your time at] this institution?”

	St. Olaf	All Baccalaureate: Arts and Sciences	Peer Institutions
Engage in a practicum, internship, or other field experience	71%	66%	73%
Conduct collaborative research with faculty	37%	33%	37%
Study abroad	73%	37%	54%
Learn a foreign language	93%	66%	77%
Participate in a learning community	32%	29%	26%

HOW STUDENTS EVALUATE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF COLLEGE

“To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?”

	St. Olaf	All Baccalaureate: Arts and Sciences	Peer Institutions
Broad general education	3.70	3.53	3.63
Work-related skills	2.82	2.95	2.77
Critical thinking	3.67	3.57	3.67
Effective writing	3.41	3.37	3.47
Effective speaking	3.21	3.22	3.23
Quantitative analysis	3.15	3.11	3.04
Developing ethics/values	3.10	2.99	2.95
Working with others	3.39	3.27	3.26
Contributing to community	2.91	2.77	2.79

4 = Very much; 3 = Quite a bit; 2 = Some; 1 = Very little

Source: National Survey of Student Engagement Spring 2011 Senior Results

“All Baccalaureate: Arts and Sciences” = 103 institutions in the same Carnegie classification as St. Olaf
 “Peer Institutions” = 29 institutions that are equally or more selective and were self-chosen for comparison