

Community College Survey of Student Engagement

Somerset Community College

2018 Key Findings

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Key Findings: A Starting Point

The Key Findings report provides an entry point for reviewing results from your administration of the 2018 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). The report provides college-specific data in an easy-to-share format including benchmark comparisons between the college, top-performing colleges, and the CCSSE cohort. It also highlights aspects of highest and lowest student engagement at the college, as well as results from five CCSSE special-focus items. Select faculty survey data are also highlighted.

Colleges participating in CCSSE 2018 received a survey instrument that was refreshed starting with the 2017 administration. Most of the items on the survey did not change at all, and the majority of those items that were revised underwent only minor adjustments to wording or response categories. Items that were no longer providing relevant data (e.g., outdated technology items) were eliminated, and the updated instrument includes several high-impact practices items that were not previously on the core survey. The refreshed survey also includes items about library and active military/veteran services, as well as new demographic items about active military/veteran and college athlete status.

This year, reporting is based on a two-year cohort; 2019 reporting will use the standard three-year cohort of participating colleges in survey analyses.

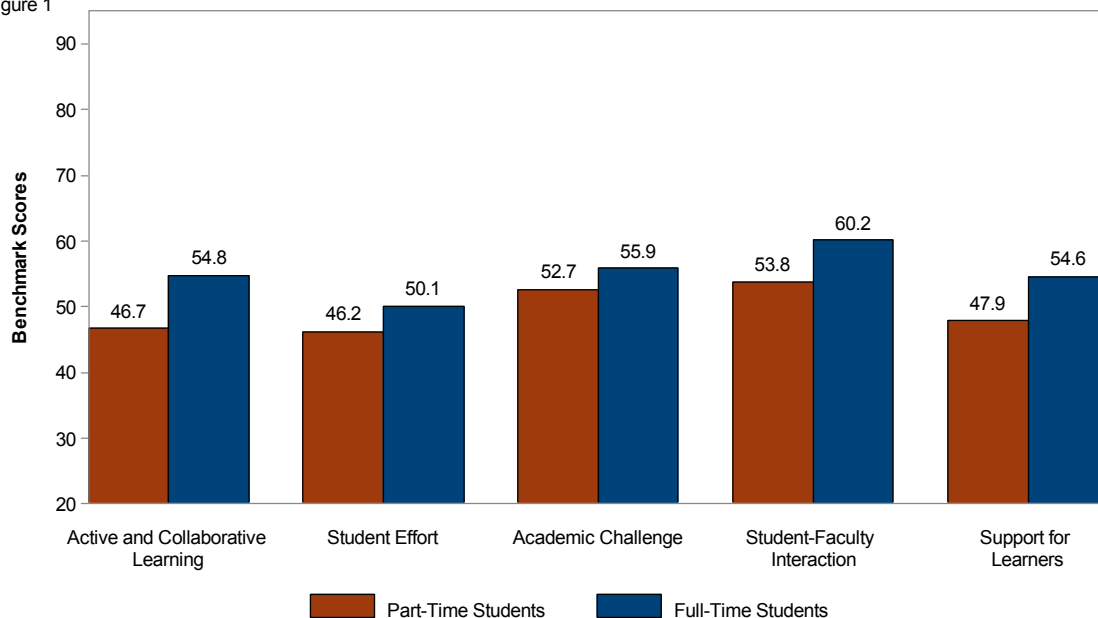
Academic Mindset

In each annual administration, the Center for Community College Student Engagement (the Center) has included special-focus items on CCSSE to allow participating colleges and national researchers to delve more deeply into student experiences and areas of institutional performance of greatest interest to the field. Five items designed to elicit information about academic mindset among community college students were added to the 2018 CCSSE administration. The results of these findings are on pages 6–7 of this report.

Benchmark Overview by Enrollment Status

Figure 1 below represents your institution's CCSSE benchmark scores by student enrollment status.

Figure 1



Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice

The *CCSSE* benchmarks are groups of conceptually related survey items that address key areas of student engagement. The five benchmarks denote areas that educational research has shown to be important to students' college experiences and educational outcomes. Therefore, they provide colleges with a useful starting point for looking at institutional results and allow colleges to gauge and monitor their performance in areas that are central to their work. In addition, participating colleges have the opportunity to make appropriate and useful comparisons between their performance and that of groups of other colleges.

Performing as well as the national average or a peer-group average may be a reasonable initial aspiration, but it is important to recognize that these averages are sometimes unacceptably low. Aspiring to match and then exceed high-performance targets is the stronger strategy.

Community colleges can differ dramatically on such factors as size, location, resources, enrollment patterns, and student characteristics. It is important to take these differences into account when interpreting benchmark scores—especially when making institutional comparisons. The Center has adopted the policy “Responsible Uses of Center Data,” available at www.ccsse.org.

The current two-year cohort for the refreshed *CCSSE* is referred to as the 2018 *CCSSE* Cohort (2017–2018) throughout all reports.

CCSSE Benchmarks

★ Active and Collaborative Learning

Students learn more when they are actively involved in their education and have opportunities to think about and apply what they are learning in different settings. Through collaborating with others to solve problems or master challenging content, students develop valuable skills that prepare them to deal with real-life situations and problems.

★ Student Effort

Students' own behaviors contribute significantly to their learning and the likelihood that they will successfully attain their educational goals.

★ Academic Challenge

Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. These survey items address the nature and amount of assigned academic work, the complexity of cognitive tasks presented to students, and the rigor of examinations used to evaluate student performance.

★ Student-Faculty Interaction

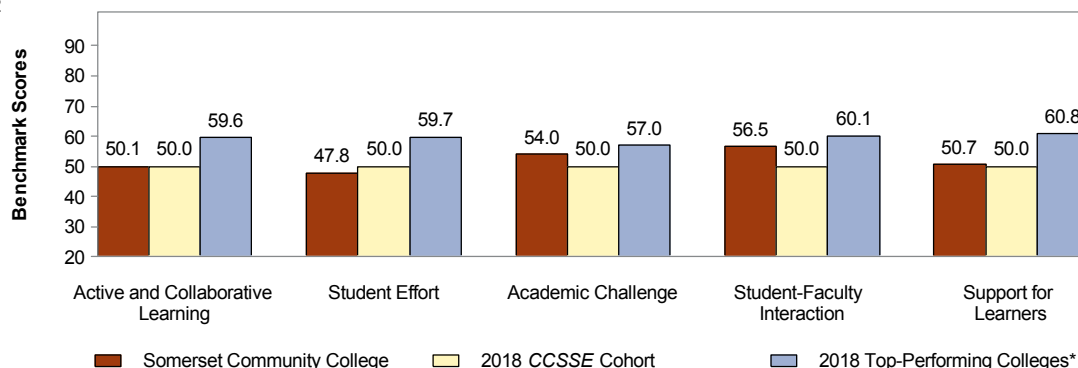
In general, the more contact students have with their teachers, the more likely they are to learn effectively and to persist toward achievement of their educational goals. Through such interactions, faculty members become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, lifelong learning.

★ Support for Learners

Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that provide important support services, cultivate positive relationships among groups on campus, and demonstrate commitment to their success.

For further information about *CCSSE* benchmarks, please visit www.ccsse.org.

Figure 2



*Top-Performing colleges are those that scored in the top 10 percent of the cohort by benchmark.

Notes: Benchmark scores are standardized to have a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 25 across all respondents. For further information about how benchmarks are computed, please visit www.ccsse.org.

Aspects of Highest Student Engagement

Benchmark scores provide a manageable starting point for reviewing and understanding *CCSSE* data. One way to dig more deeply into the benchmark scores is to analyze those items that contribute to the overall benchmark score. This section features the five items across all benchmarks (excluding those for which means are not calculated) on which the college scored highest and the five items on which the college scored lowest relative to the 2018 *CCSSE* Cohort.

The items highlighted on pages 4 and 5 reflect the largest differences in mean scores between the institution and the 2018 *CCSSE* Cohort. While examining these data, keep in mind that the selected items may not be those that are most closely aligned with the college’s goals; thus, it is important to review all institutional reports on the *CCSSE* online reporting system at www.ccsse.org.

Figure 3 displays the aggregated frequencies for the items on which the college performed most favorably relative to the 2018 *CCSSE* Cohort. For instance, 45.5% of Somerset Community College students, compared with 34.7% of other students in the cohort, responded *often* or *very often* on item 4l. It is important to note that some colleges’ highest mean scores might be lower than the cohort mean.

Figure 3

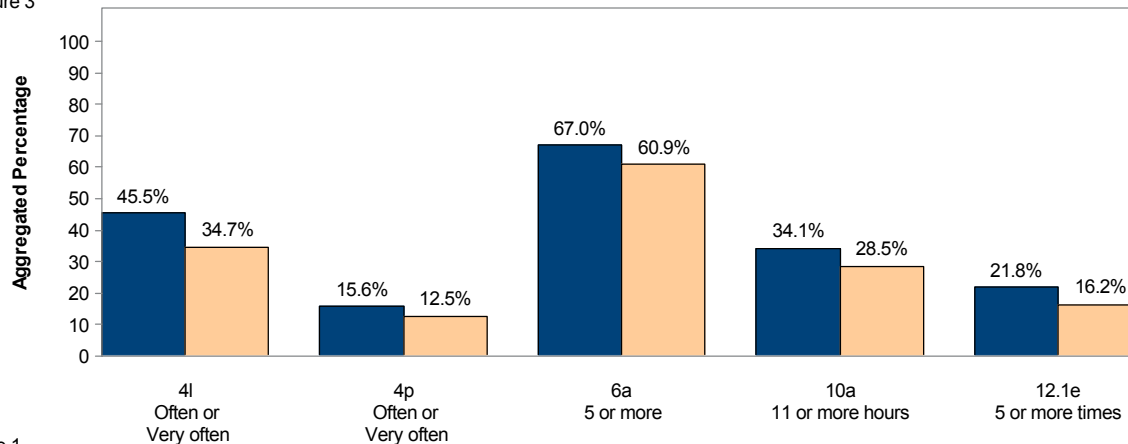


Table 1

Benchmark	Item Number	Item
Student-Faculty Interaction	4l	Talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor
Student-Faculty Interaction	4p	Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework
Academic Challenge	6a	Number of assigned textbooks, manuals, books, or book-length packs of course readings
Student Effort	10a	Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, or other activities related to your program)
Student Effort	12.1e	Frequency: Skill labs (writing, math, etc.)

Notes:

- For Item(s) 4 (except 4e), *often* and *very often* responses are combined.
- For Item(s) 6, 5–10, 11–20, and *more than 20* responses are combined.
- For Item 10a, 11–20, 21–30, and *more than 30* responses are combined.

Aspects of Lowest Student Engagement

Figure 4 displays the aggregated frequencies for the items on which the college performed least favorably relative to the 2018 CCSSE Cohort. For instance, 17.4% of Somerset Community College students, compared with 34.7% of other students in the cohort, responded *often* or *very often* on item 4b. It is important to note that some colleges' lowest mean scores might be higher than the cohort mean.

Figure 4

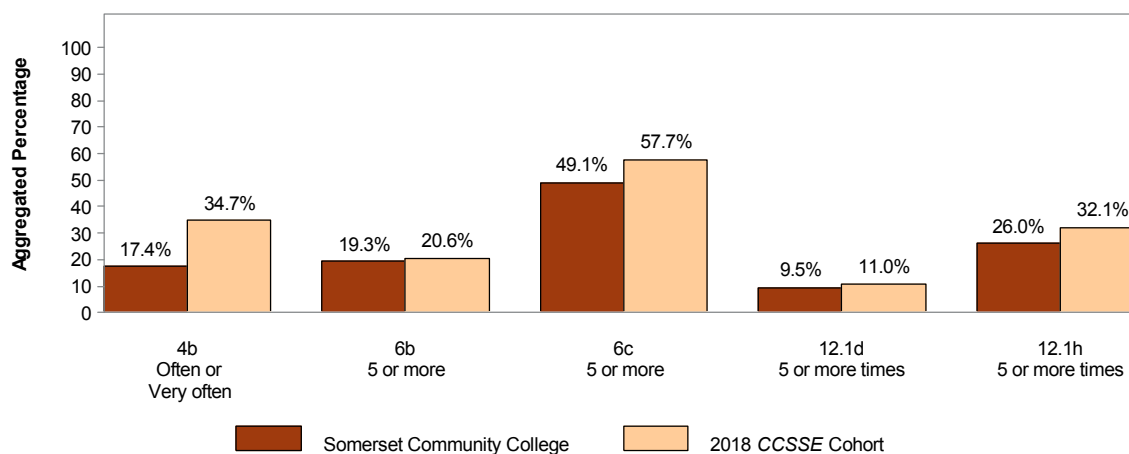


Table 2

Benchmark	Item Number	Item
Active and Collaborative Learning	4b	Made a class presentation
Student Effort	6b	Number of books read on your own (not assigned)
Academic Challenge	6c	Number of written papers or reports of any length
Student Effort	12.1d	Frequency: Peer or other tutoring
Student Effort	12.1h	Frequency: Computer lab

Notes:

For Item(s) 4 (except 4e), *often* and *very often* responses are combined.
 For Item(s) 6, 5–10, 11–20, and *more than 20* responses are combined.

2018 CCSSE Special-Focus Items

The Center adds special-focus items to *CCSSE* each year to augment the core survey, helping participating colleges and the field at large to further explore fundamental areas of student engagement. The 2018 special-focus items elicit new information around the topic of academic mindset, such as whether students feel welcome and respected at the college, whether they believe they can learn all of the material being presented in their courses, and whether they feel like they can change their intelligence by working hard on their studies. Frequency results from the first five special-focus items for your college and the 2018 *CCSSE* Academic Mindset item-set respondents are displayed across pages 6 and 7.

Figure 5: I feel welcome and respected at this college.

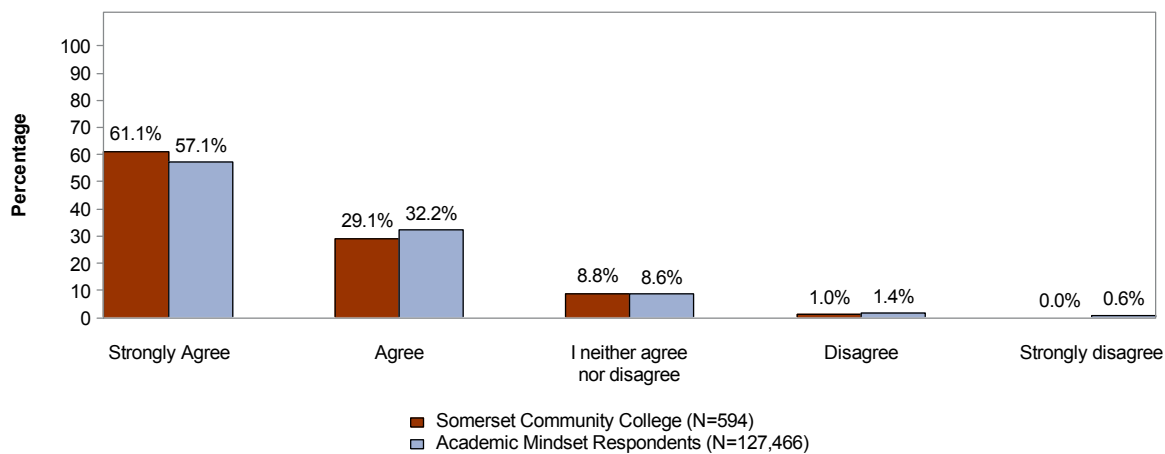


Figure 6: This college is preparing me for what I plan to do in life.

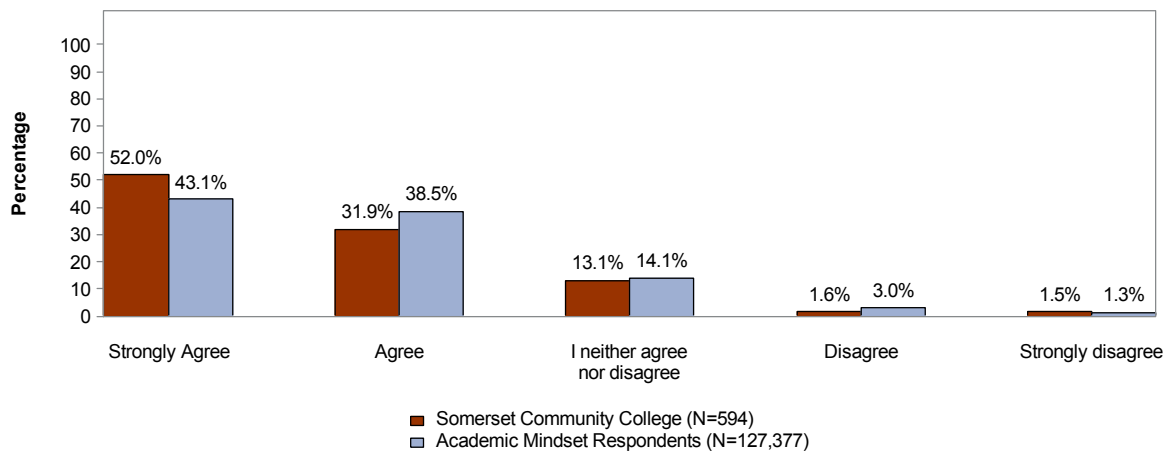


Figure 7: I can learn all of the material being presented in my courses this academic term.

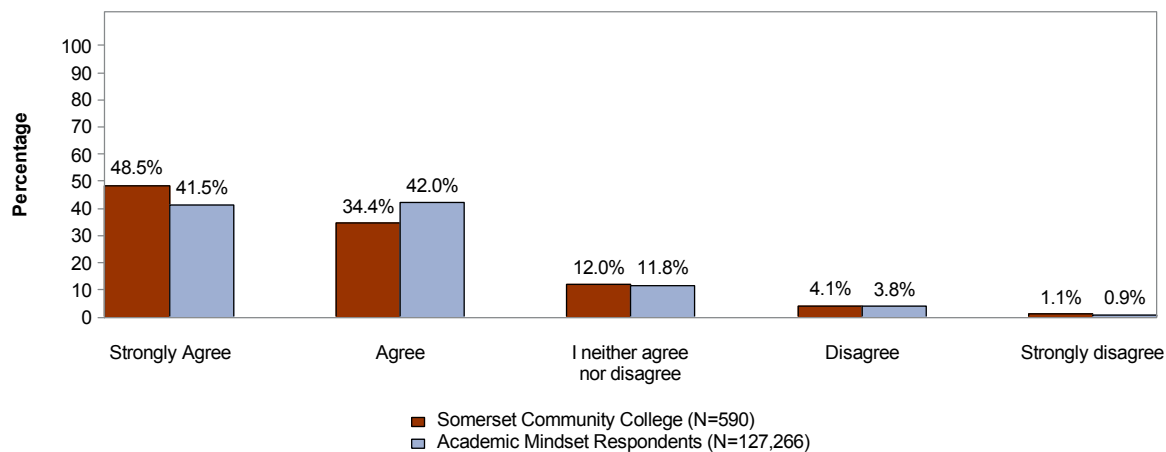


Figure 8: I have good relationships with others at this college.

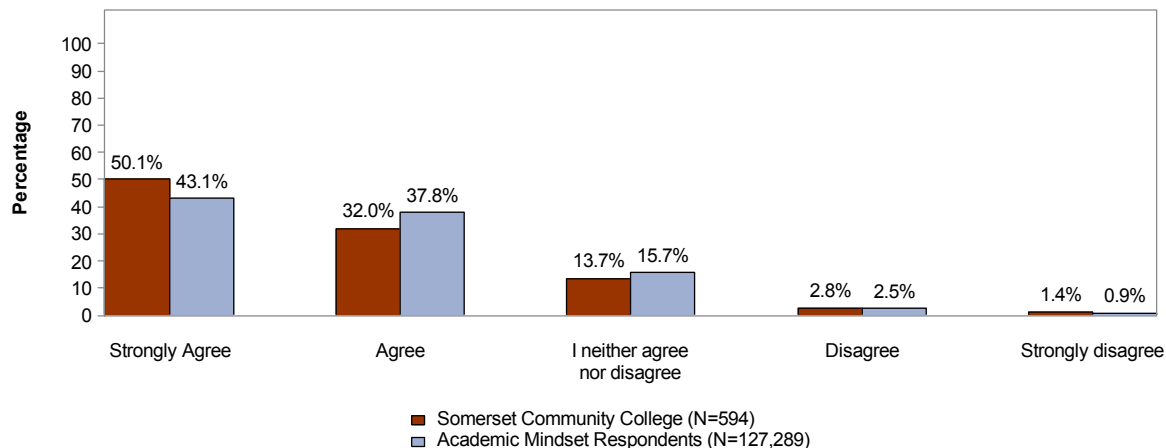
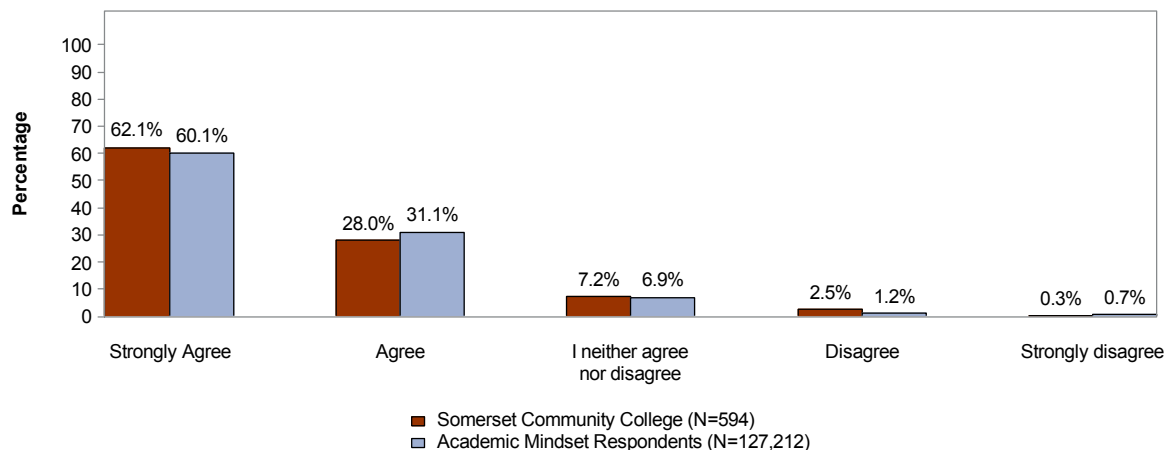


Figure 9: I can become more intelligent by working hard on my studies.



CCFSSE

The Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (*CCFSSE*), designed as a companion survey to *CCSSE*, elicits information from faculty about their perceptions regarding students' educational experiences, their teaching practices, and the ways they spend their professional time—both in and out of the classroom.

Forty percent of all *CCFSSE* respondents reported teaching in a part-time capacity, while 60% reported teaching full-time. Below are frequency results for your college's part- and full-time faculty based on their responses to special-focus items on the topic of academic mindset, such as whether they think the students in their selected course sections can learn all of the material being presented and whether they think their students can change their basic intelligence.

Figure 10: Do you think the students in your selected course section can learn all the material being presented?

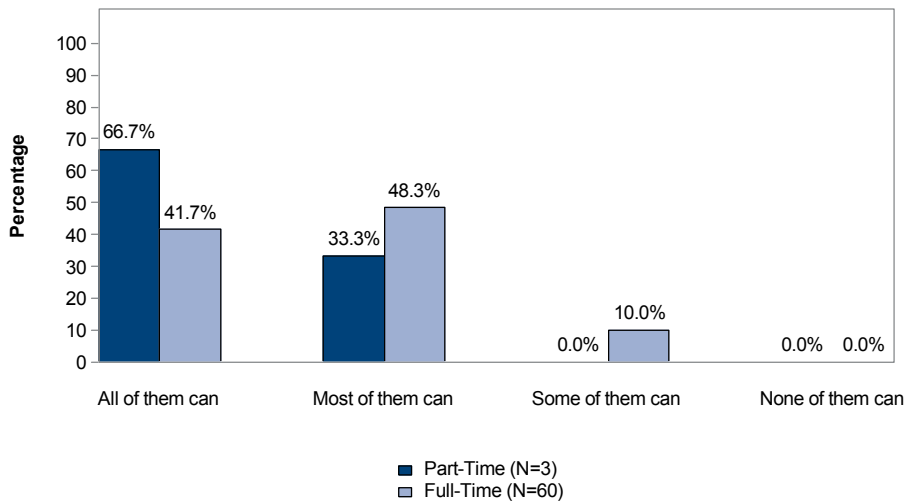


Figure 11: Do you think the students in your selected course section can change their basic intelligence?

