



UNIVERSITY OF
SAN FRANCISCO

Office of Assessment
and Accreditation Support

NSSE 2020 Overview

November 2021

Table of Contents

ABOUT THE SURVEY	3
DEMOGRAPHICS	3
KEY TAKEAWAYS	4
ENGAGEMENT INDICATORS	4
HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES	4
ACADEMIC ADVISING MODULE.....	4
ENGAGEMENT INDICATORS	5
SUMMARY OF 2020 COMPARISON TO JESUIT, PEER & NSSE 2019/2020 INSTITUTIONS	5
COVID-19 – ENGAGEMENT INDICATOR ANALYSIS	6
HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES	6
SUMMARY OF 2020 COMPARISON TO JESUIT, PEER & NSSE 2019/2020 INSTITUTIONS	7
COVID-19 – HIP ANALYSIS	8
ACADEMIC ADVISING MODULE	9
COMPARISON TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS	9
COVID-19 – ACADEMIC ADVISING MODULE ANALYSIS	10
JESUIT CONSORTIUM	15
COMPARISON TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS	15
COVID-19 – JESUIT CONSORTIUM MODULE ANALYSIS.....	16

About the Survey

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is a nationwide survey administered to first-year and senior students at four-year colleges and universities across the US and Canada about the extent to which students engage in educational practices associated with high levels of learning and development. NSSE examines two features: the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and other educational activities (**engagement indicators**) and how an institution uses its resources and curriculum to promote educationally-meaningful activities (**high-impact practices**). The questionnaire collects information across five categories: (1) participation in dozens of educationally purposeful activities, (2) institutional requirements and the challenging nature of coursework, (3) perceptions of the college environment, (4) estimates of educational and personal growth since starting college, and (5) background and demographic information.

In 2020, USF also participated in the Jesuit consortium and the Academic Advising module.

The results of the survey are compared to other Jesuit institutions, USF peer groups that participated in the 2020 survey, and all 2019/2020 NSSE participants.

The survey was conducted between March 2, 2020 and May 22, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a “COVID” indicator was included in the data file that identifies those who completed the survey after the university’s initial COVID disruptions occurred in mid-March.

Demographics

USF			
	USF First-year	USF Senior	Total USF First-Year & Senior
Population surveyed	1,222	1,293	2515
Respondents prior to COVID response:	71	70	141
Respondents after COVID response:	315	262	577
Total respondents:	386	332	718
Response rate	32%	26%	29%

The 2020 USF total response rate of 29% was 14% higher than the 2018 response rate and 13% higher than the 2017 response rate. USF did not participate in NSSE in 2019.

RESPONSE RATES FOR ALL OTHER PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS					
Jesuit First-year	Jesuit Senior	Peer First-year	Peer Senior	NSSE 2019 & 2020 First-year	NSSE 2019 & 2020 Senior
32%	29%	25%	21%	25%	23%

Key Takeaways

ENGAGEMENT INDICATORS

- USF first-year students' average scores were significantly higher than their counterparts at peer institutions, other Jesuit institutions, and all NSSE 2019 & 2020 participant institutions on more engagement indicators than USF seniors.
- USF first-year students' average scores were either significantly higher or there was no significant difference from their counterparts at peer institutions and all NSSE 2019 & 2020 participant institutions on all engagement indicators.
- Average scores of both first-year and seniors on *Collaborative Learning* and *Student-Faculty Interactions* were significantly lower than their counterparts at other Jesuit institutions.

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES

- The percentage of USF seniors who indicated they participated in service learning was overwhelmingly greater than their counterparts at peer institutions, other Jesuit institutions, and all NSSE 2019 & 2020 participant institutions. While the percentage of USF first-year students who indicated they participated in service learning was lower than USF seniors, as expected, it was higher than first-year students at peer institutions, other Jesuit institutions, and all NSSE 2019 & 2020 participant institutions.

ACADEMIC ADVISING MODULE

- In general, first-year USF students' responses to questions in this module were significantly more favorable than their counterparts at other institutions or there was no significant difference. Only how much first-year students indicated family members helped them develop their academic goals and future plans was significantly lower.
- In general, there was no significant difference between USF seniors' responses to questions in this module and their counterparts at other institutions. Only the frequency with which seniors discussed their academic interests, course selections, or academic performance with a success or academic coach was significantly higher and only the frequency with which seniors indicated a website, catalog or other published sources helped them develop their academic goals and future plans was lower.

Engagement Indicators

NSSE included 47 survey questions related to ten engagement indicators (EIs), organized into four themes as follows:

Theme	Engagement Indicators
Academic Challenge	Higher-order Learning Reflective & Integrative Learning Learning Strategies Quantitative Reasoning
Learning with Peers	Collaborative Learning Discussions with Diverse Others
Experiences with Faculty	Student-Faculty Interaction Effective Teaching
Campus Environment	Quality of Interactions Supportive Environment

Engagement indicators are scored on a 60-pt. scale, with 0 = *Never*, 20 = *Sometimes*, 40 = *Often*, and 60 = *Very Often*. Institutional scores are weighted averages of the student-level scores for each class level.

SUMMARY OF 2020 COMPARISON TO JESUIT, PEER & NSSE 2019/2020 INSTITUTIONS

First-year students

First-year students’ average scores were significantly higher than first-year students at **peer institutions** and all **NSSE 2019 & 2020** participant institutions in nearly all EIs, with the exception of *Collaborative Learning*, *Student-Faculty Interaction*, and *Quality of Interactions*, which showed no significant difference.

When compared to other **Jesuit institutions**, first-year students’ average scores were significantly higher on the *Reflective & Integrative Learning*, *Discussions with Diverse Others*, and *Effective Teaching Practices* EIs; significantly lower on the *Collaborative Learning* and *Student-Faculty Interaction* EIs; and there was no significant difference on the remaining EIs.

Senior students

For the most part, there was not a significant difference in scores of USF seniors compared to **peer institutions**; though, seniors’ average score in the *Higher-Order Learning* EI was significantly higher and the average score in the *Quality of Interactions* EI was significantly lower.

USF seniors’ average scores were significantly higher than **NSSE 2019 & 2020** participant institutions in the *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective and Integrative Learning*, and *Collaborative Learning* EIs; however, the average score in the *Quality of Interactions* EI was significantly lower. There was no significant difference on the remaining EIs.

When compared to other **Jesuit institutions**, there was no significant difference in most EIs; however, USF seniors' average scores in *Collaborative Learning*, *Student-Faculty Interaction*, *Quality of Interactions* and the *Supportive Environment* EIs were significantly lower.

COVID-19 – ENGAGEMENT INDICATOR ANALYSIS

The following data indicate the greatest differences between responses of USF students who took the survey before the COVID-19 indicator date (pre-COVID) and those who took the survey after the COVID-19 indicator date (post-COVID) in each of the four engagement indicator themes and is disaggregated by first-year and senior status. Additional analysis can be found in Appendix A.

Academic Challenge

- 47% of first-year students, pre-COVID, indicated that during the current school year they *Very often* or *Often* reached conclusions based on their own analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics, etc.), compared to 58% post-COVID, an 11% difference.
- 53% of seniors, pre-COVID, indicated that during the current school year they *Very often* or *Often* reviewed notes after class, compared to 66% post-COVID, a 13% difference.

Learning with Peers

- 37% of first-year students, pre-COVID, indicated that during the current school year they *Very often* or *Often* prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students, compared to 55% post-COVID, an 18% difference.
- 40% of seniors, pre-COVID, indicated that during the current school year they *Very often* or *Often* had discussions with people with political views other than their own, compared to 51% post-COVID, an 11% difference.

Experiences with Faculty

- 15% of first-year students, pre-COVID, indicated that during the current school year they *Very often* or *Often* talked about career plans with a faculty member, compared to 31% post-COVID, a 16% difference.
- 18% of seniors, pre-COVID, indicated that during the current school year they *Very often* or *Often* discussed their academic performance with a faculty member, compared to 32% post-COVID, a 14% difference.

Campus Environment

- 23% of first-year students, pre-COVID, indicated that USF emphasizes helping them manage their non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.) *Very much* or *Quite a bit*, compared to 43% post-COVID, a 20% difference.
- 40% of seniors, pre-COVID, indicated that USF emphasizes providing opportunities to be involved socially *Very much* or *Quite a bit*, compared to 63% post-COVID, a 23% difference.

High-Impact Practices

NSSE included questions related to six high-impact practices (HIPs). HIPs are opportunities that have a positive association with student learning and retention. These questions are not limited to the current year; therefore, senior responses include participation in prior years.

HIP	Engagement Indicators
Service Learning*	Courses that include a community-focused project
Learning Communities*	A formal program where a group of students take two or more classes together
Research with Faculty*	Work with a faculty member on a research project
Internship or Field Experience	Internship, co-op, field experience, student teaching or clinical placement
Study Abroad	Pursuing educational opportunities in a country other than one's own
Culminating Senior Experiences	Engaging in a senior capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, or portfolio

*First-year students are only asked to report their participation in these HIPs.

SUMMARY OF 2020 COMPARISON TO JESUIT, PEER & NSSE 2019/2020 INSTITUTIONS

There is little difference between USF first-year students' overall participation in HIPs and student participation at **Jesuit institutions** and **NSSE 2019 & 2020** participant institutions. Overall participation in HIPs of USF first-year students and **peer institutions** was the same. USF senior students' overall participation in HIPs was higher than students at **Jesuit, peer, and NSSE 2019 & 2020** participant institutions

The below refers to the difference between USF students and comparison institutions in a given HIP.

Service Learning

- A higher percentage of USF first-year students and seniors reported participating in service learning than first-year and senior students at **Jesuit, peer, and NSSE 2019 & 2020** participant institutions.

Learning Community

- A smaller percentage of first-year students at USF reported participating in learning communities than at other **Jesuit and peer institutions**, but a slightly higher proportion reported participating in learning communities than first-year students at **NSSE 2019 & 2020** participant institutions.
- A smaller percentage of USF seniors reported participating in learning communities than seniors at other **Jesuit institutions**, but the percentage was about the same as seniors at **peer institutions** and slightly higher than seniors at **NSSE 2019 & 2020** participant institutions.

Research with Faculty

- A smaller percentage of both first-year and senior students at USF reported participating in research with faculty than first-year and seniors at other **Jesuit, peer, and NSSE 2019 & 2020** participant institutions.

Questions regarding the following HIPs were only asked of senior students.

Internship or Field Experience

- A smaller percentage of seniors at USF reported participating in internships or field experience than seniors at other Jesuit institutions, but a higher percentage participated in these than at peer or NSSE 2019 & 2020 participant institutions.

Study Abroad

- A smaller percentage of seniors at USF reported participating in study abroad than seniors at both other Jesuit and peer institutions, but a slightly higher percentage reported participating than seniors at NSSE 2019 & 2020 participant institutions.

Culminating Senior Experience

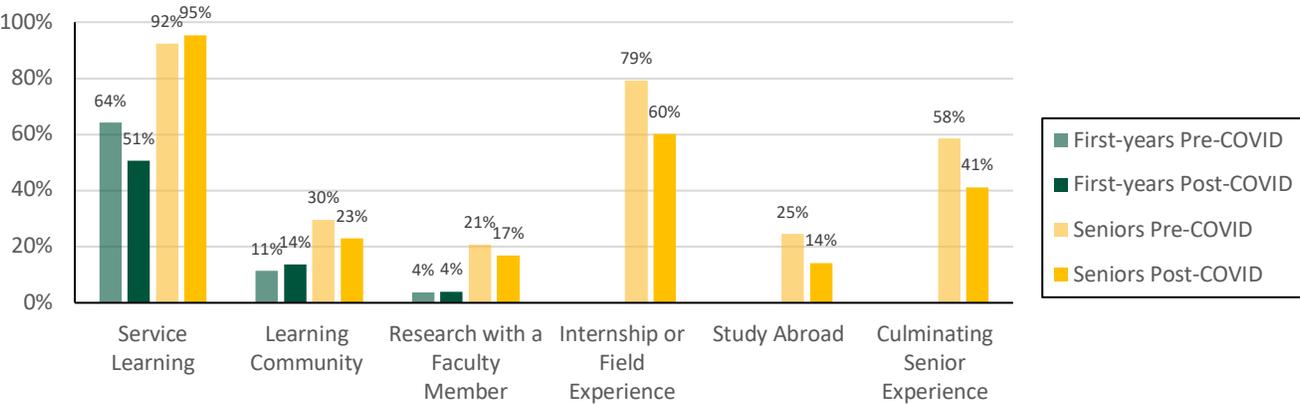
- A smaller percentage of seniors at USF reported participating in a culminating senior experience than at both other Jesuit and peer institutions, but the percentage was about the same as seniors at NSSE 2019 & 2020 participant institutions.

COVID-19 – HIP ANALYSIS

The following data indicate the greatest differences between responses of USF students who took the survey before the COVID-19 indicator date (pre-COVID) and those who took the survey after the COVID-19 indicator date (post-COVID).

- The greatest difference between the HIPs of first-year students pre-COVID and post-COVID was in Service Learning, with 64% of first-year students, pre-COVID, indicated that some of their courses include a community-based project (service-learning), compared to 51% post-COVID, a 13% difference.
- The greatest difference between the HIPs of seniors pre-COVID and post-COVID was in Internships and Field Experiences, with 79% indicating they had done an internship or field experience or that it was in progress pre-COVID, compared to 60% post-COVID, a 19% difference.

The figure below indicates the percentage of USF students who participated in a given HIP. The data is disaggregated by those who took the survey before the COVID-19 indicator date (pre-COVID) and those who took the survey after the COVID-19 indicator date (post-COVID) and by first-year and senior status.



Academic Advising Module

NSSE offers institutions the opportunity to participate in Topical Modules, which are short sets of questions on designated topic areas. In 2020, USF chose to participate in the Academic Advising module which included 5 questions related to students' experiences with academic advising, including frequency of interaction with advisors and advising practices that reflect NACADA core values. USF student responses are compared to the responses of all students at all other institutions that participated in this module.

COMPARISON TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS

Discussions Regarding Academic Interests, Course Selection, and Academic Performance

The average frequency with which both USF first-year and senior students reported discussing their academic interests, course selections, or academic performance with the following individuals was not significantly different than other institutions:

- academic advisors available to any student
- faculty or instructors not assigned to advise them
- student services staff (career services, academic support, TRIO, etc.)
- peer advisors or mentors

However, USF first-year students' average frequency of these discussions with academic advisors, faculty, or staff assigned to them was significantly higher than the average frequency of first-year students at other institutions (seniors were not significantly different) and both USF first-year and senior students' average frequency of these discussions with success or academic coaches were significantly higher than students at other institutions.

Interactions Pertaining to Academic Advising

On average, USF first-year students rated how much people and resources at USF have done the following significantly higher than other institutions:

- been available when needed
- provided prompt and accurate information
- provided information about learning support services (tutoring, writing center, success skills, etc.)
- notified them of important policies and deadlines reached out to them about their academic progress or performance
- followed up with them regarding something they recommended
- asked questions about their educational background and need
- actively listened to your concerns; respected their identity and culture
- cared about their overall well-being

USF first-year students rated how much people and resources at USF asked questions about their educational background and needs and respected their identity and culture about the same as at other institutions.

There was no significant difference between the average rating of USF seniors compared to those at other institutions in any of the above academic advising areas.

Discussions Regarding Academic Goals, Future Plans, Activities, and Well-being

The average frequency with which USF first-year students reported discussing the following with someone at their institution was significantly higher than first-year students at other institutions:

- how their major or expected major related to their goals and future plans
- special opportunities (study abroad, internships, service learning, research, etc.)
- participation in co-curricular activities (organizations or clubs, performing arts, sports, etc.)
- resources for their well-being (health, counseling, financial guidance, etc.)

The frequency with which USF first-year students reported discussing their academic goals and plans with someone at their institution was not significantly different than those at other institutions.

There was no significant difference in how frequently USF seniors discussed these areas with someone at their institutions compared to other seniors at other institutions.

Help with Development of Goals and Academic Plans

First-year and senior students rated the extent to which the following helped them develop their academic and future goals:

- academic advisors, faculty, or staff assigned to advise them
- academic advisors available to any student
- faculty or instructors not assigned to advise them
- online advising system (degree progress report, etc.)
- website, catalog, or other published sources
- student services staff (career services, academic support, trio, etc.)
- success or academic coach
- peer advisor or mentor
- friend or other students
- family members
- other

USF first-year students rated online advising system (degree progress report, etc.) and success or academic coach significantly higher than first-year students at other institutions and rated family members significantly lower. There was no significant difference in the rating of all other categories.

USF seniors rated website, catalog, or other published sources significantly lower than seniors at other institutions. There was no significant difference in rating of all other categories.

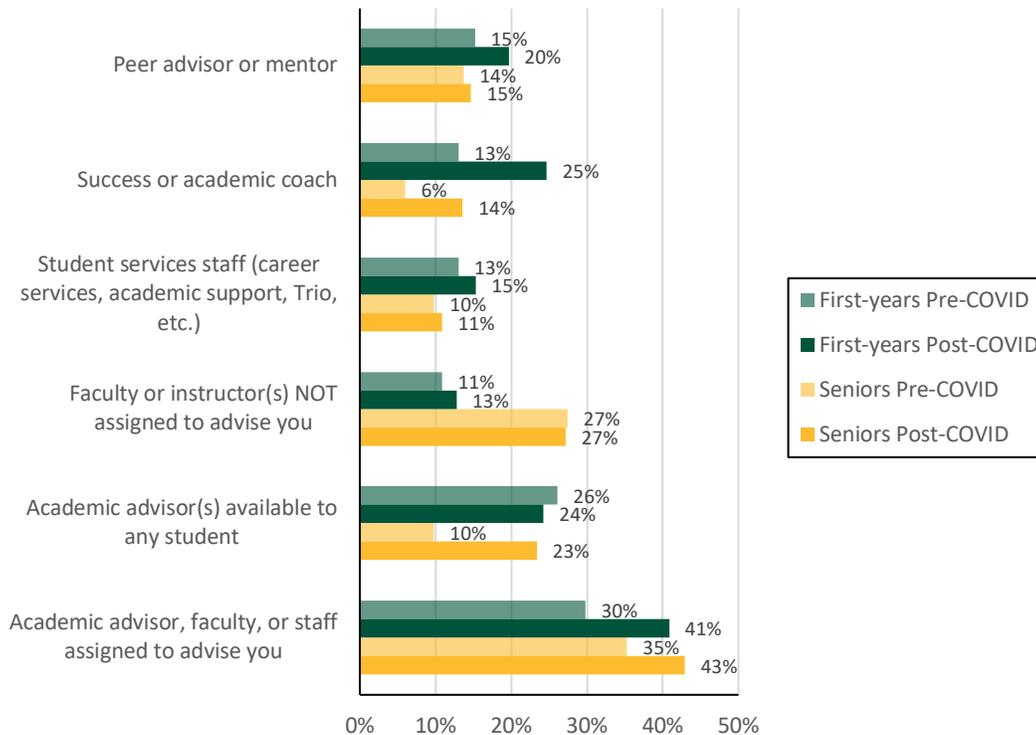
COVID-19 – ACADEMIC ADVISING MODULE ANALYSIS

The data below indicate the greatest differences between responses of USF students who took the survey before the COVID-19 indicator date (pre-COVID) and those who took the survey after the COVID-19

Discussions Regarding Academic Interests, Course Selection, and Academic Performance

- 13% of first-year students, pre-COVID, discussed their academic interests, course selections, or academic performance 3 or more times during the current school year with a *success or academic coach*, compared to 25% post-COVID, a 12% difference.
- 10% of seniors, pre-COVID, discussed their academic interests, course selections, or academic performance 3 or more times during the current school year with an *academic advisor available to any student*, compared to 23% post-COVID, a 13% difference.

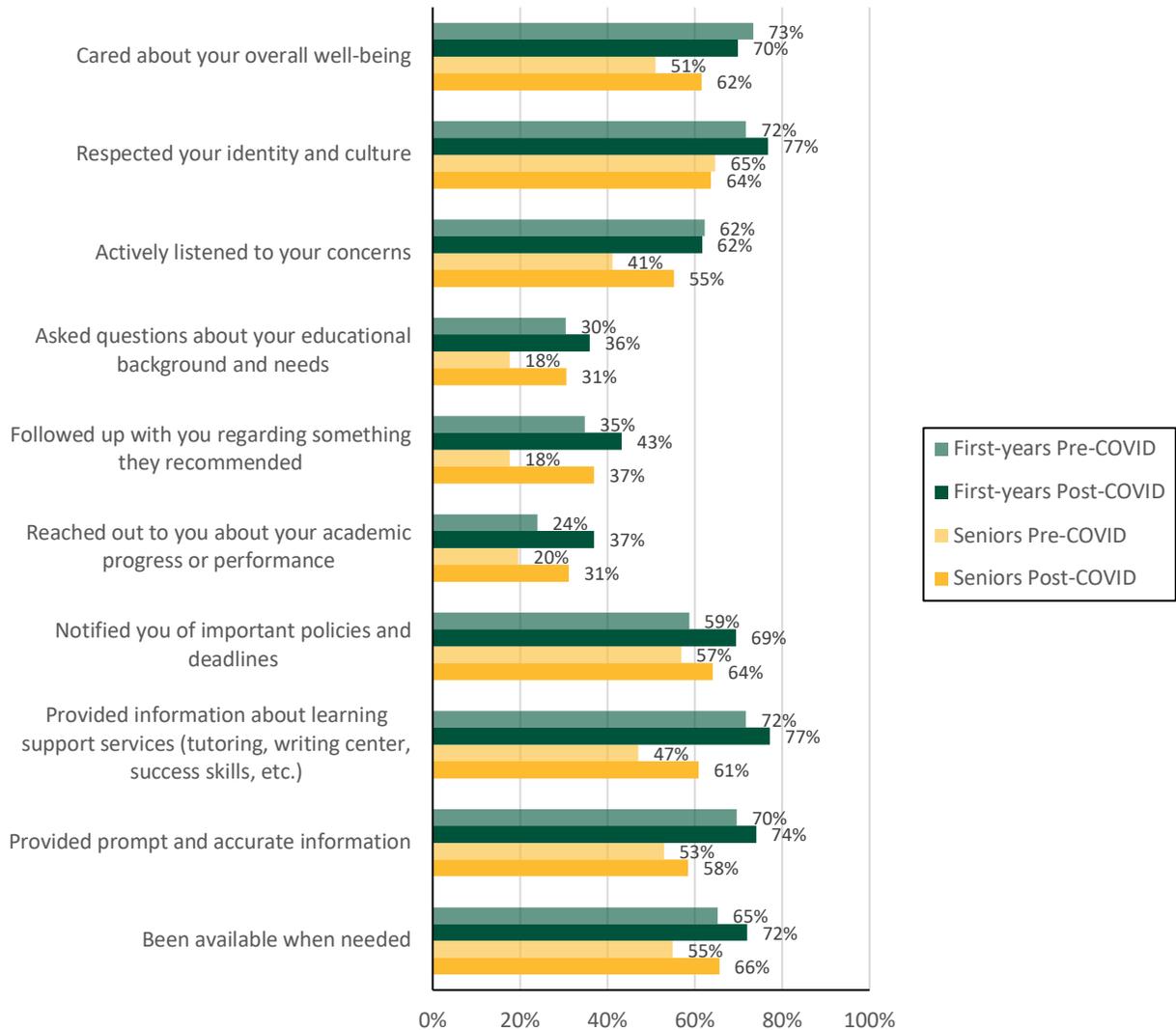
The figure below details the percentage of participants who indicated they have discussed their academic interests, course selections, or academic performance 3 or more times with each category of individual.



Interactions Pertaining to Academic Advising

- 24% of first-year students, pre-COVID, indicated that people and resources at USF have reached out to them about their academic progress or performance *Very much* or *Quite a bit*, compared to 37% post-COVID, a 13% difference.
- 18% of seniors, pre-COVID, indicated that people and resources at USF have followed up with them regarding something they recommended *Very much* or *Quite a bit*, compared to 37% post-COVID, a 19% difference.

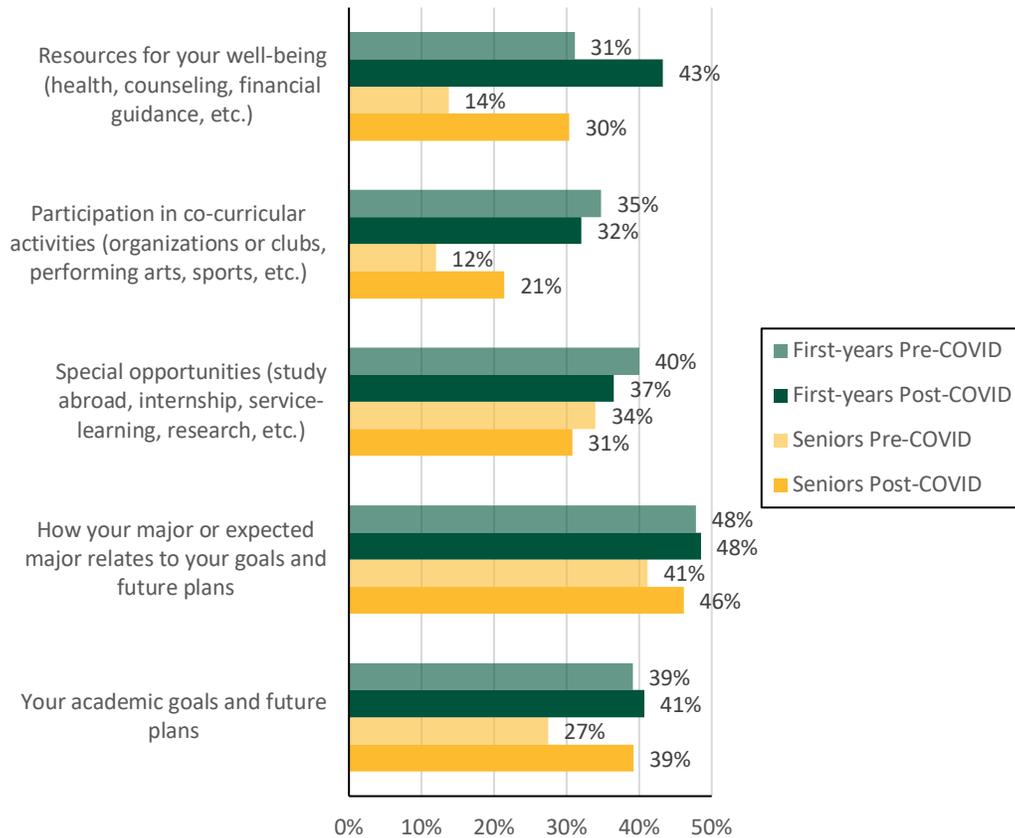
The figure below details the percentage of participants who indicated people and resources at USF have done the following *Very much* or *Quite a bit*.



Discussions Regarding Academic Goals, Future Plans, Activities, and Well-being

- 31% of first-year students, pre-COVID, indicated they *Very often* or *Often* discussed resources for their well-being (health, counseling, financial guidance, etc.) with someone at USF, compared to 43% post-COVID, a 12% difference.
- 14% of seniors, pre-COVID, indicated they *Very often* or *Often* discussed resources for their well-being (health, counseling, financial guidance, etc.) with someone at USF, compared to 30% post-COVID, a 16% difference.

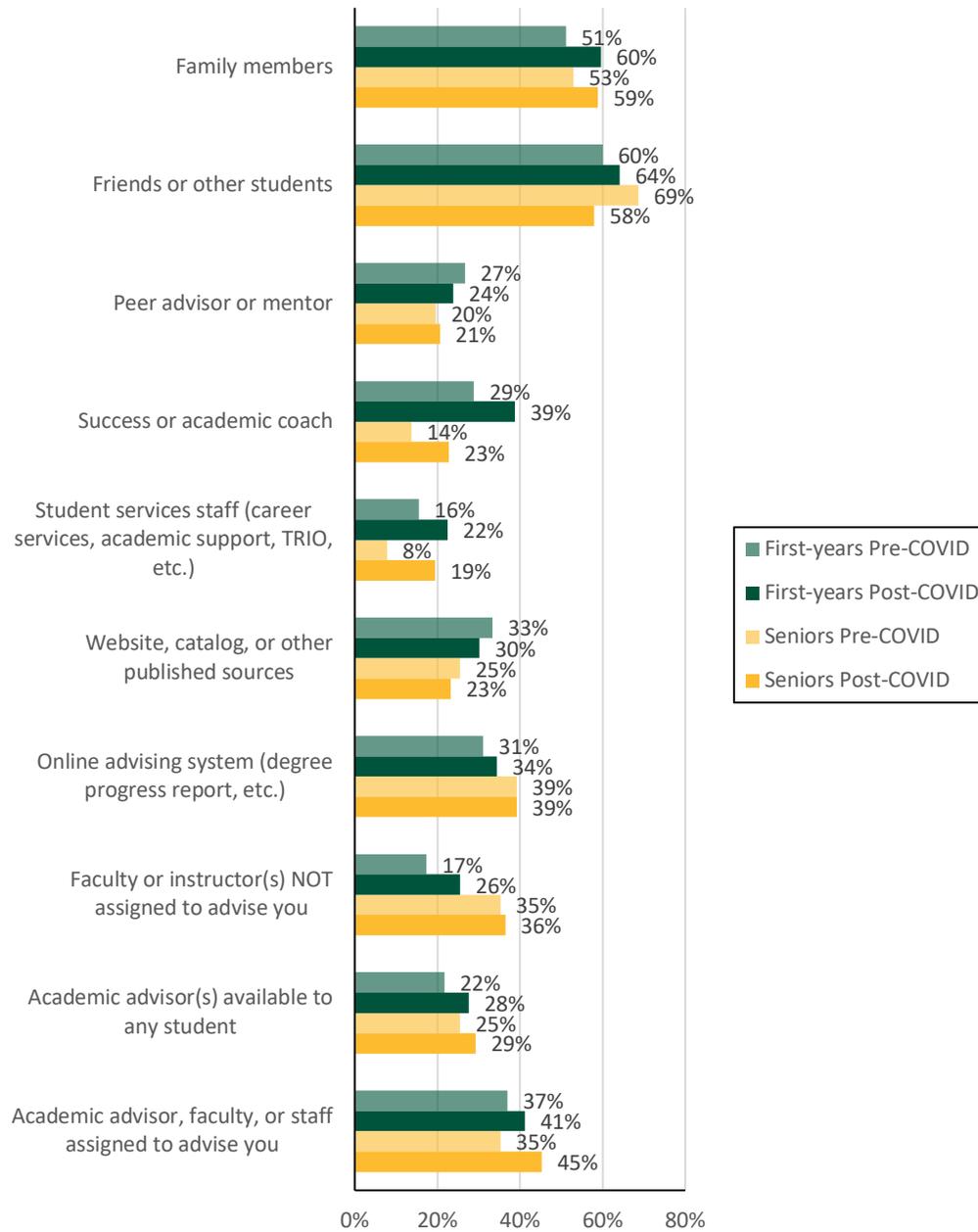
The figure below details the percentage of participants who indicated they have *Very often* or *Often* discussed the following with someone at USF.



Help with Development of Goals and Academic Plans

- 29% of first-year students, pre-COVID, indicated that a success or academic coach has helped them develop their academic goals and future plans *Very much* or *Quite a bit*, compared to 39% post-COVID, a 10% difference.
- 69% of seniors, pre-COVID, indicated that friends or other students helped them develop their academic goals and future plans *Very much* or *Quite a bit*, compared to 58% post-COVID, an 11% difference.
- 8% of seniors, pre-COVID, indicated that student services staff (career services, academic support, TRIO, etc.) helped them develop their academic goals and future plans *Very much* or *Quite a bit*, compared to 19% post-COVID, an 11% difference

The figure below details the percentage of participants who indicated each of the following have helped them develop their academic goals and future plans *Very much* or *Quite a bit*.



Jesuit Consortium

NSSE provides the opportunity to join a consortium to explore a topic of mutual interest. USF chose to participate in the Jesuit consortium. USF student responses are compared to the responses of all students at NSSE institutions who participated in this consortium in 2020 and 2019.

Students rated the extent to which their institution contributed to their development in multiple areas.

COMPARISON TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS

First-year students

First-year USF students rated the following areas significantly higher than students at other institutions who participated in the Jesuit consortium:

- Increasing your awareness of the relationship between global and local issues
- Actively working to further social justice
- Defining your own values and beliefs
- Demonstrating respect for others' differences
- Actively working toward a more inclusive community
- Ability to look critically at society and its institutions

There was no significant difference in how USF first-year students rated the following areas compared to students at other institutions who participated in the Jesuit consortium:

- Understanding the mission of your institution
- Devoting effort to help others in need
- Leading by example
- Making ethical decisions in personal situations
- Making ethical decisions in professional situations
- Understanding the Jesuit principle of being "men and women for others"
- Making connection between your intellectual and spiritual life

No first-year student responses were significantly lower than student responses at other institutions who participated in the Jesuit consortium.

Senior students

There was no significant difference in how USF senior students rated the following areas compared to students at other institutions who participated in the Jesuit consortium:

- Devoting effort to help others in need
- Increasing your awareness of the relationship between global and local issues
- Actively working to further social justice
- Demonstrating respect for others' differences
- Actively working toward a more inclusive community
- Ability to look critically at society and its institutions
- Making ethical decisions in personal situations

- Making ethical decisions in professional situations

Senior students rated the following areas significantly lower than students at other institutions who participated in the Jesuit consortium:

- Understanding the mission of your institution
- Leading by example
- Defining your own values and beliefs
- Understanding the Jesuit principle of being “men and women for others”
- Making connection between your intellectual and spiritual life

No senior student responses were significantly higher than student responses at other institutions who participated in the Jesuit consortium.

COVID-19 – JESUIT CONSORTIUM MODULE ANALYSIS

The data below indicate the greatest differences between responses of USF students who took the survey before the COVID-19 indicator date (pre-COVID) and those who took the survey after the COVID-19 indicator date (post-COVID) and is disaggregated by first-year and senior status.

- 53% of first-year students, pre-COVID, indicated that USF contributed to their understanding of the Jesuit principle of being “men and women for others”, compared to 69% post-COVID, a 16% difference.
- 35% of first-year students, pre-COVID, indicated that USF contributed to making connections between their intellectual and spiritual life, compared to 58% post-COVID, a 23% difference.

The figure below details the percentage of participants who indicated each of the following have contributed to their development *Very much* or *Quite a bit*.

