

Engaged Learning of Entering Students at Edison State College Survey of Entering Student Engagement (*SENSE*)¹

Edison’s strategic plan contains two priorities specifically focused on student success. They are:

- **Develop and Maintain a Learning-Centered Culture.**
- **Provide an Array of Effective Student Support Services.**

To learn more about the experiences and success of new students at Edison State College, last fall Edison participated in an exciting research field test, the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (*SENSE*). The survey was administered within the fourth and fifth weeks of the fall academic term, and focused on institutional practices and student behaviors in the earliest weeks of college. This survey data is being used to further support our institution’s efforts to understand the critical early student experience and to improve practices in ways that will increase student success in the first college year. Research shows that student engagement is strongly related to student success in colleges. Understanding students’ earliest experiences can help us enhance student learning, retention, and success.

In this *FocalPoint* we share what *SENSE* respondents told us about their engagement in learning during the early weeks of their first term at Edison. Of the 1,158 Edison students who completed the *SENSE*, 693 were classified as “entering” students. Edison students’ experiences are similar to those of students at other colleges participating in the *SENSE*. More important than how we compare with other colleges is whether Edison is satisfied with the experiences we are providing for our entering students.

What do our survey results indicate? Entering students tell us during the first few weeks they experience some classroom activities that foster engaged learning, but not many. Edison State College is intent on being a leader in education, and this survey can assist us to improve student support services and student engagement in the classroom.

How often did you...	4+ times	2-3 times	Once	Never
Ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions during the first three weeks of your first semester	22%	48%	22%	8%
Prepare at least two drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in during the first three weeks of your first semester	6%	27%	38%	29%
Participate in supplemental instruction during the first three weeks of your first semester	6%	9%	16%	69%
Work with classmates outside of class on class projects or assignments during the first three weeks of your first semester	5%	13%	19%	63%
Participate in a required study group outside of class during the three weeks of your first semester	4%	8%	12%	76%
Use an electronic tool to communicate with another student about course work during the first three weeks of your first semester	14%	17%	25%	44%
Use an electronic tool to communicate with an instructor about course work during the first three weeks of your first semester	14%	23%	28%	35%
Discuss an assignment or grade with an instructor during the first three weeks of your first semester	5%	24%	34%	37%
Ask for help from an instructor regarding questions or problems related to a class during the first three weeks of your first semester	10%	29%	35%	26%
Discuss ideas from readings or classes with instructors outside of class during the first three weeks of your first semester	3%	9%	19%	69%
Receive prompt written or oral feedback from instructors on your performance during the first three weeks of your first semester	8%	27%	30%	35%
Discuss ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class during the first three weeks of your first semester	17%	26%	23%	33%

¹The *SENSE* asks students to indicate the number of terms they have enrolled at Edison and identifies students as “entering” if they indicate they are in their first term. Students may have attended another college or university before enrolling at Edison. Surveys were distributed in randomly selected academic success and first-level college English and Math courses because these courses enroll a significant number of entering students.