

National Survey of Student Engagement

Highlights of the
2023 Survey Results

Toronto
Metropolitan
University



About the Survey

- Since 2005, Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) has participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) – a survey that examines student involvement in active learning and engagement. The survey is administered every three years.
- 61 Canadian institutions participated in 2023, including 21 Ontario universities. The survey was conducted in winter 2023.
- First-year and fourth-year students who were in full-time undergraduate programs were asked about academic experiences, learning with peers, interactions with faculty, and the campus environment during the current school year.
- 2,934 students in first year and 3,872 students in fourth year participated in the survey. The overall survey response rate was 34%. Results are considered to be accurate within 0.96 points, 19 times out of 20.

Engagement indicators

Engagement Indicators

The NSSE questionnaire includes more than 100 items. The information is summarized into 10 engagement indicators covering four major themes:

Academic Challenge

Higher Order Learning (HO), Reflective & Integrative Learning (RI), Learning Strategies (LS), Quantitative Reasoning (QR)

Learning with Peers

Collaborative Learning (CL), Discussions with Diverse Others (DDO)

Experiences with Faculty

Student-Faculty Interaction (SF), Effective Teaching Practices (ET)

Campus Environment

Quality of Interactions (QI), Supportive Environment (SE)

Engagement Indicator: Academic Challenge (17 survey questions)

- According to NSSE, challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning, and universities should challenge and support students to engage in various forms of deep learning.
- This theme is measured using four indicators (each comprising multiple questions):
 - **Higher-Order Learning (HO):** Do students apply, analyze, evaluate, and form new ideas?
 - TMU's score was slightly lower than other Ontario universities.
 - **Reflective & Integrative Learning (RI):** Do students connect ideas across courses and to broader issues?
 - TMU's score was on par with other Ontario universities.
 - **Learning Strategies (LS):** How often do students review and summarize information from class?
 - TMU's score was slightly lower than other Ontario universities.
 - **Quantitative Reasoning (QR):** Do students use numerical information to evaluate arguments and reach conclusions?
 - TMU's score was slightly lower than other Ontario universities.

Engagement Indicator: Learning with Peers (8 survey questions)

- NSSE states that collaborating with others in problem-solving and interacting with peers from different backgrounds prepares students for real-world challenges.
- This theme is comprised of two indicators:
 - **Collaborative Learning (CL):** Do students have sufficient opportunities to work with others?
 - TMU's score was on par with the Ontario average.
 - **Discussions with Diverse Others (DDO):** Do students interact with people whose backgrounds differ from their own?
 - TMU's score was on par with the Ontario average for first-year students. Scores for fourth-year students were slightly higher than the Ontario average.

Engagement Indicator: Experiences with Faculty (9 survey questions)

- According to NSSE, students learn how experts approach and solve problems through their exposure to faculty, both inside and outside the classroom.
- Effective teaching also requires that faculty deliver course material and provide feedback in student-centered ways.
- This theme is measured using two indicators:
 - **Student-Faculty Interaction (SF):** How often do students discuss various topics with faculty members or work with faculty outside lectures?
 - TMU's score was slightly lower than the Ontario average.
 - **Effective Teaching Practices (ET):** Did professors explain material in organized ways, or provide examples for difficult concepts?
 - TMU's score was slightly lower than the Ontario average.

Engagement Indicator: Campus Environment (13 survey questions)

- NSSE states that students benefit from environments that foster positive relationships among students, faculty, and staff.
- This theme is comprised of two indicators:
 - **Quality of Interactions (QI):** Do students rate interactions with other students, academic advisors, faculty, and staff well?
 - TMU's score was slightly lower than the Ontario average.
 - **Supportive Environment (SE):** Does the campus foster an environment that encourages students to ask for help, attend events, and manage non-academic responsibilities?
 - TMU's score was on par with the Ontario average.

How would you rate your interactions with the following groups?
Average rating from 1 (poor) to 7 (excellent)

Group evaluated	First-year respondents	Fourth-year respondents
Students	5.3	5.4
Academic advisors	4.9	4.8
Faculty	4.8	4.9
Student services staff	4.9	4.8
Other administrative staff	4.7	4.7

Engagement Indicators Summary

- Results for the four engagement indicators are shown below for TMU students, Ontario universities, and US peer universities*.
- On indicators related to learning with peers, TMU fourth-year results were higher than those for Ontario. The university matched or was behind in other categories.
- Fourth-year students generally reported higher satisfaction than first-year students.

Theme	Indicator	First-year			Fourth-year		
		TMU	ON	US	TMU	ON	US
Academic Challenge	HO	36.6	38.0	37.7	37.3	39.2	40.4
	RI	34.2	34.6	35.2	35.9	37.1	38.0
	LS	35.5	36.3	37.2	35.5	35.6	39.7
	QR	26.0	27.7	29.9	28.2	28.9	31.7
Learning with Peers	CL	31.7	31.9	29.5	32.0	31.3	30.9
	DDO	38.9	38.9	36.9	40.1	38.5	39.3
Experiences with Faculty	SF	13.5	14.8	18.3	16.8	18.3	20.6
	ET	32.2	34.1	37.8	32.8	35.6	39.3
Campus Environment	QI	39.0	39.8	41.3	39.3	39.7	41.8
	SE	30.0	30.5	33.9	27.4	26.8	32.4

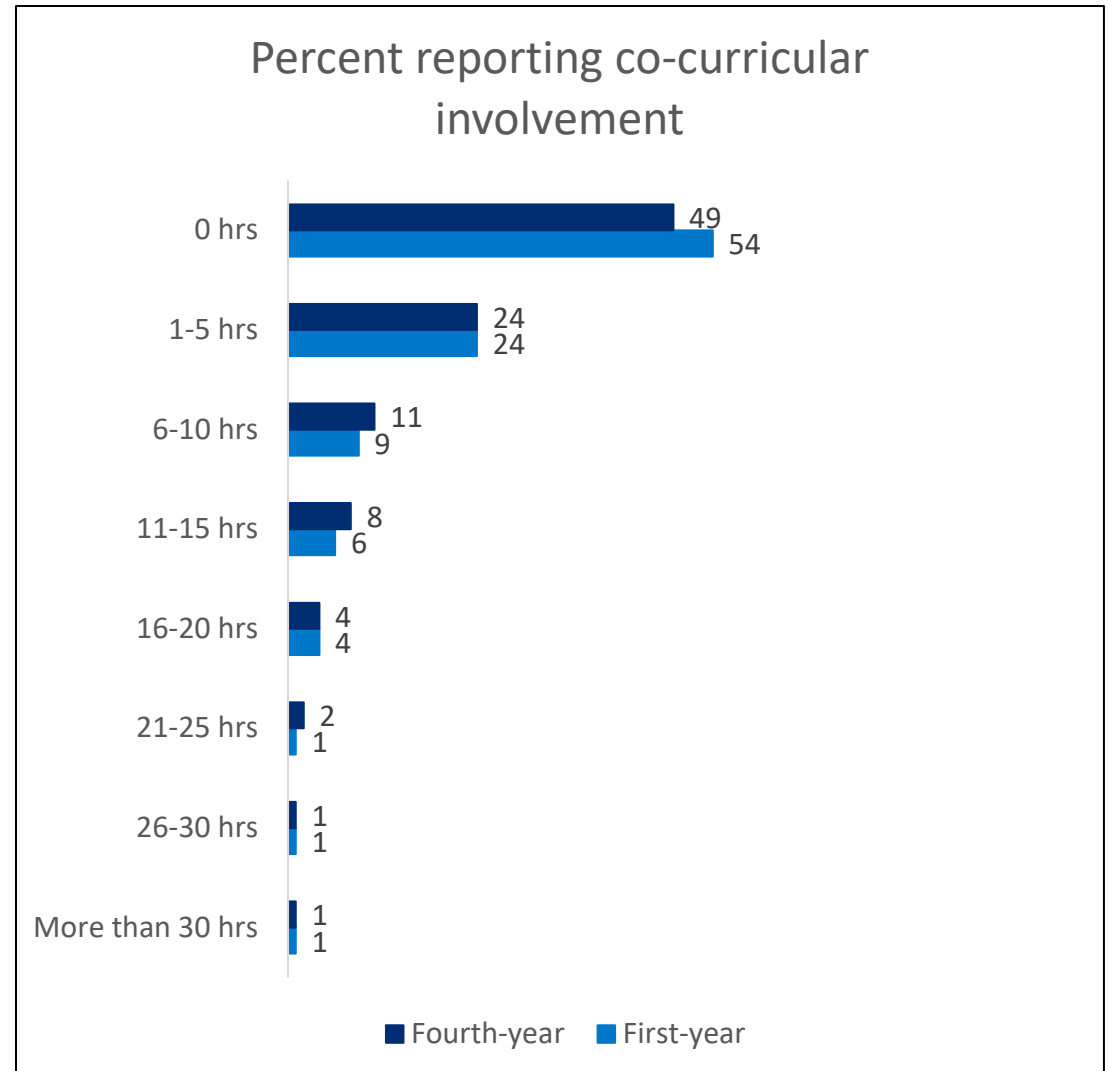
Note: Each indicator is scored on a 60-point scale going from 0 (bottom of the scale) to 60 (top of the scale). The rescaled items are then averaged to produce the scores shown in the table above.

* Public, urban, commuter universities with more than 20,000 students, that are in the Doctoral Universities or Master's Colleges & Universities: Larger Universities Carnegie categories

Other results

Co-curricular Activity

- While not an official engagement indicator, an important feature of the university experience is involvement in co-curricular activities (e.g., student newspaper, intramural sports).
- 46 percent of first-year students and 51 percent of fourth-year students reported engaging in some co-curricular activity.
- These values were lower than the Ontario average (although higher than US peers). Results were very similar to those reported in the previous survey (2020).



High-Impact Practices

- High-impact practices are opportunities that students can undertake during their time at the university, shown to be associated strongly with student learning and retention.
- NSSE has identified six high-impact practices and recommends that students participate in at least two over the course of their academic program. NSSE evaluates three practices in first year and six practices in fourth year.
- Over 85 percent of TMU fourth-year students reported participating in at least one high-impact practice, higher than Ontario and US peers.
- 52 percent reported engaging in two or more high-impact practices. This rate is on par with Ontario peers and above US peers.

Proportion of students engaging in each high-impact practice

	First-year respondents (%)			Fourth-year respondents (%)		
	TMU	ON	US	TMU	ON	US
Service Learning	46	44	56	53	47	45
Learning Community	6	8	7	15	17	15
Research with Faculty	3	3	4	11	23	13
Internship	n/a	n/a	n/a	54	47	32
Study Abroad	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	6	4
Culminating Senior Experience	n/a	n/a	n/a	36	33	30

Priorities for Improvement

- The 21 Ontario universities included a customized set of 9 questions concerning various aspects of the university experience, which were given to all survey respondents.
- Students were asked to identify up to two priorities for improvement inside the classroom and then two priorities for improvement outside the classroom.
- The top three priorities selected by students for both inside and outside the classroom are shown on the next page. (Note: because students could select up to two options, proportions will not add to 100.)

Priorities for Improvement (top 3)

- Inside the classroom

1. Improving quality of course instruction by professors
 - First-year: 41%
 - Fourth-year: 40%
2. Ensuring a better fit between course content, assignments, and tests/exams
 - First-year: 31%
 - Fourth-year: 25%
3. Increasing the number or variety of course offerings in your major
 - First-year: 19%
 - Fourth-year: 32%

- Outside the classroom

1. Improving the quality/availability of study spaces
 - First-year: 36%
 - Fourth-year: 32%
2. Expanding and/or improving the quality of academic support services (e.g., study skills, academic advising)
 - First-year: 29%
 - Fourth-year: 28%
3. Working to provide a better social environment for students
 - First-year: 29%
 - Fourth-year: 25%

Respondent profile

Profile of Survey Respondents

- Generally, survey respondents were representative of the TMU student population.
- Female students were slightly overrepresented.
- TRSM students were slightly underrepresented. Community Services was somewhat overrepresented at fourth year.

Response	First-year Survey	First-year Population	Fourth-year Survey	Fourth-year Population
Male	40%	46%	40%	47%
Female	58%	52%	59%	52%
Another gender identity/not reported	2%	2%	1%	1%
Full-time	93%	93%	62%	59%
Part-time	7%	7%	38%	41%
Arts	15%	16%	12%	11%
The Creative School	18%	17%	13%	14%
Community Services	13%	11%	19%	15%
Engineering & Architectural Science	15%	15%	19%	18%
Science	14%	11%	10%	9%
Ted Rogers School of Management	25%	29%	26%	33%

Demographics



Grades: Most students reported having a B average or better.

First-year: A- or better: 36% | B- to B+: 48% | C to C+: 12% | C- or lower: 4%

Fourth-year: A- or better: 45% | B- to B+: 49% | C to C+: 5% | C- or lower: <1%



Racial and ethnic diversity: TMU continues to be a highly diverse learning environment.

Indigenous: 1% | White: 28% | Chinese: 12% | South Asian: 27% | Black: 9% | Filipino: 7% | Latin American: 4% | Southeast Asian: 6% | Arab: 6% | West Asian: 4% | Japanese: <1% | Korean: 2% | Another: 5%

Note that percentages will add to more than 100, since respondents could self-identify in more than one group.



Disability: 18 percent of first-year respondents and 21 percent of fourth-year respondents self-identified with a disability (an increase from 2020).

Demographics continued



Commuting: 84 percent of students reported taking public transportation to campus, while 10 percent walked or cycled. The remainder used a car (private or shared) to get to campus. The median one-way travel time was between 41 and 60 minutes.

20 minutes or fewer: 13% | 21-40 minutes: 17% | 41-60 minutes: 32% | 61-80 minutes: 27% |
More than 80 minutes: 12%



Family education background: 26 percent of students came from a family where no family member had attended a post-secondary institution.

High school or less: 26% | Some or completed college or CEGEP: 16% | Some university: 4% |
Bachelor's degree: 34% | Master's degree: 15% | PhD or professional degree: 5%



Employment: 63 percent of students reported working for pay. Of those who worked, 78 percent worked off-campus, 5 percent worked on-campus, and 17 percent worked both on- and off- campus.

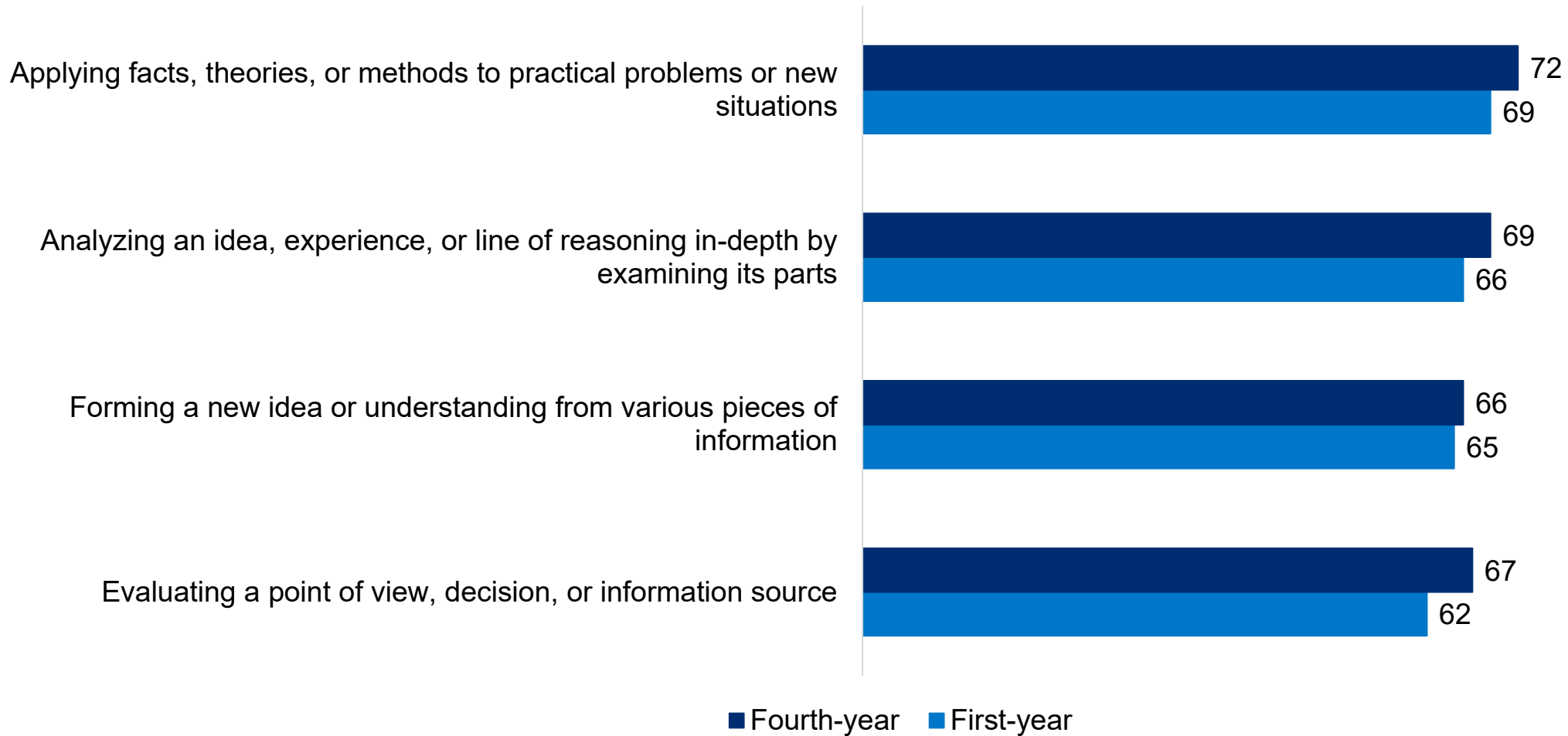
Questions or comments

- Please direct any questions or comments on these survey results to the University Planning Office: upo@torontomu.ca

Appendix: detailed results

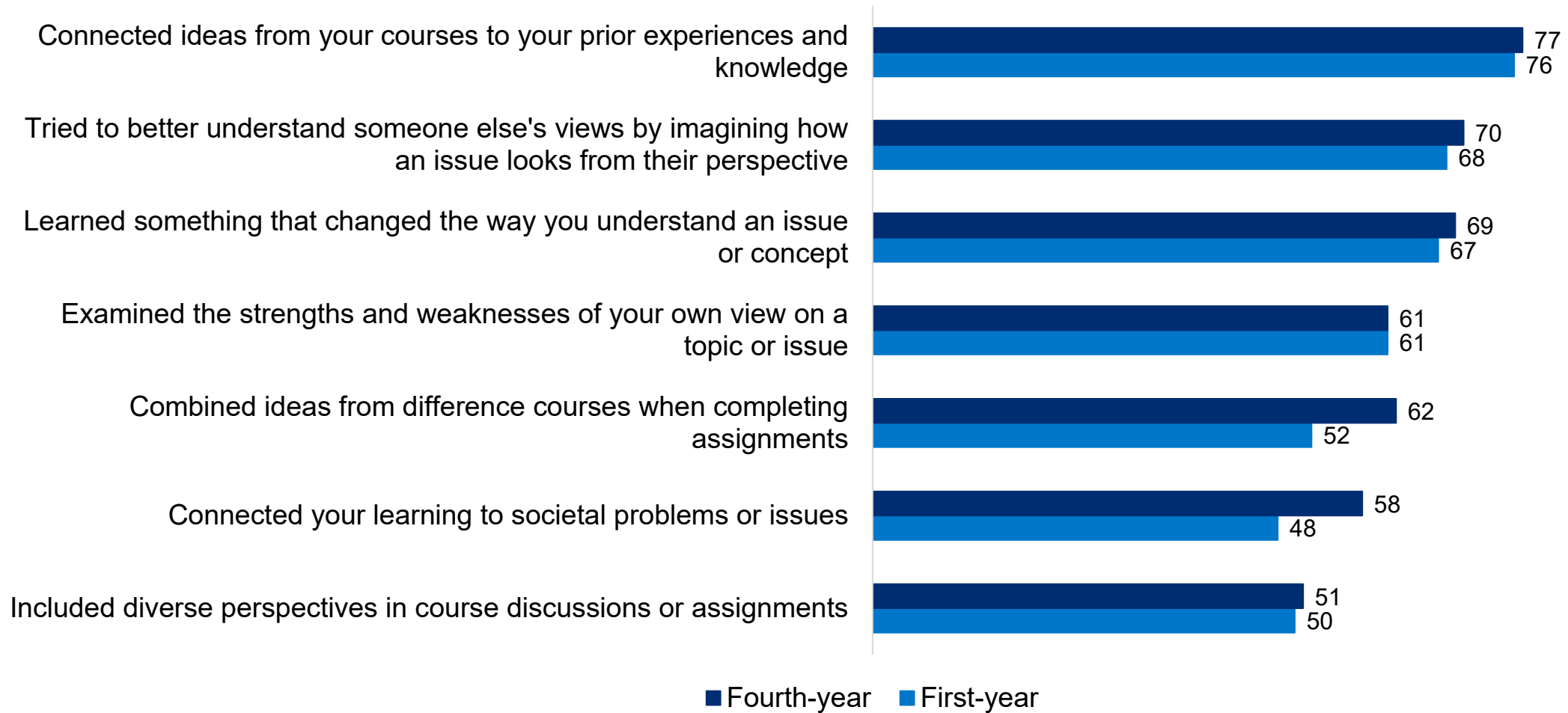
Academic Challenge – Higher-Order Learning

Percent reporting coursework emphasized factor ‘quite a bit’ or ‘very much’



Academic Challenge – Reflective & Integrative Learning

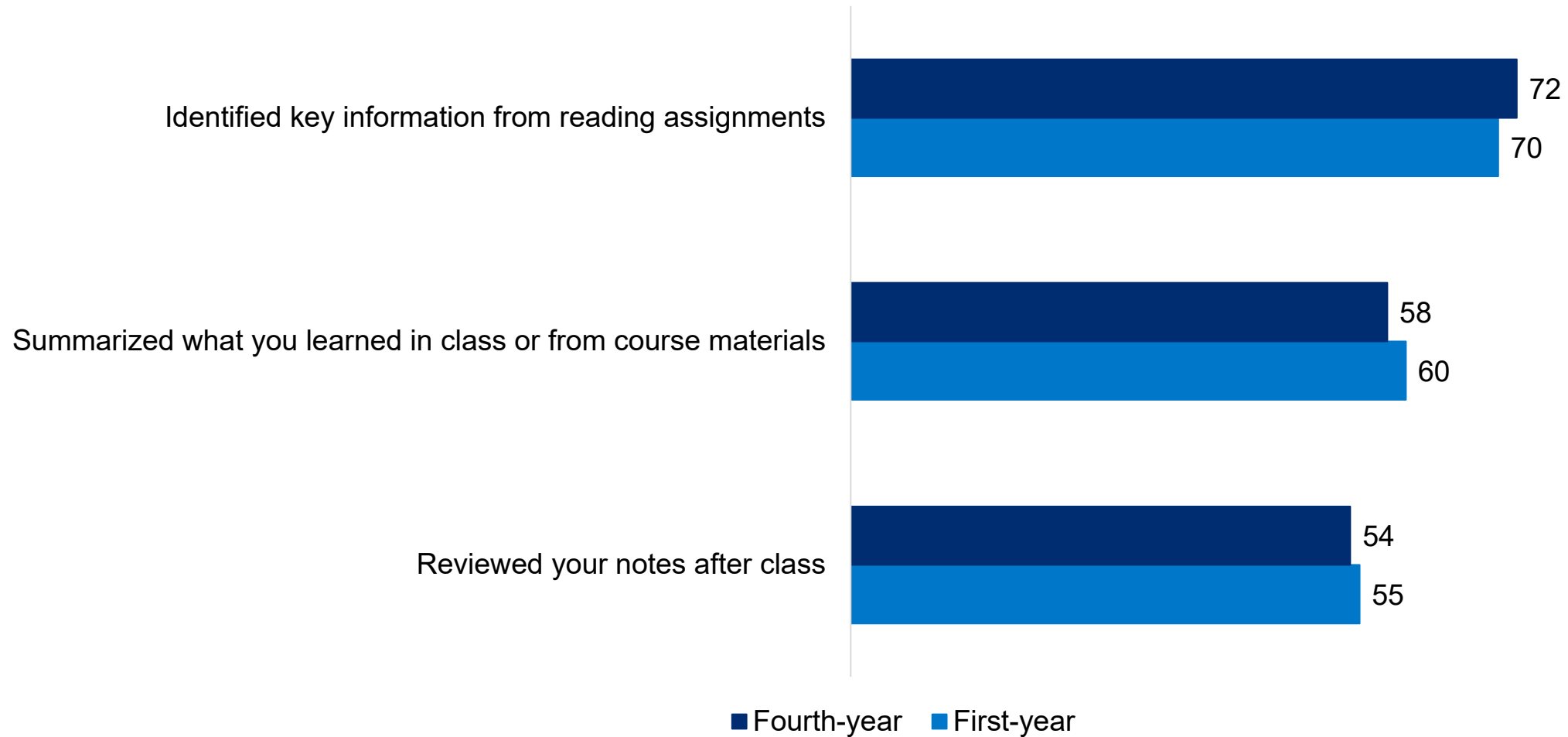
Percent reporting they have done this ‘often’ or ‘very often’



Please note: the results shown above will differ from the results shown in the main slides. These show the proportion of students who responded with either of the two most positive response options (in this case, “often” or “very often”). The results on the main slides show the mean score as calculated by NSSE.

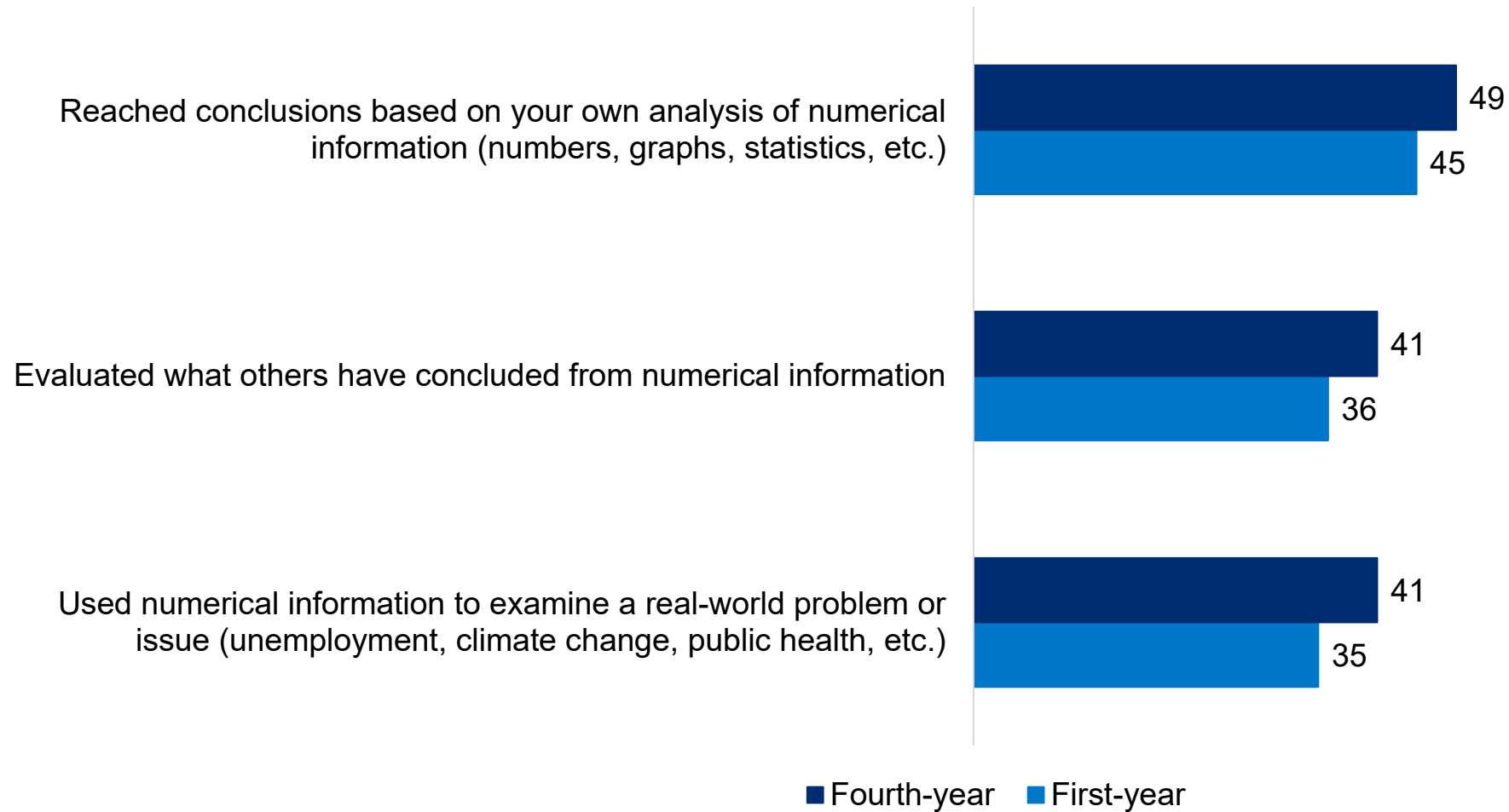
Academic Challenge – Learning Strategies

Percent reporting they have done this 'often' or 'very often'



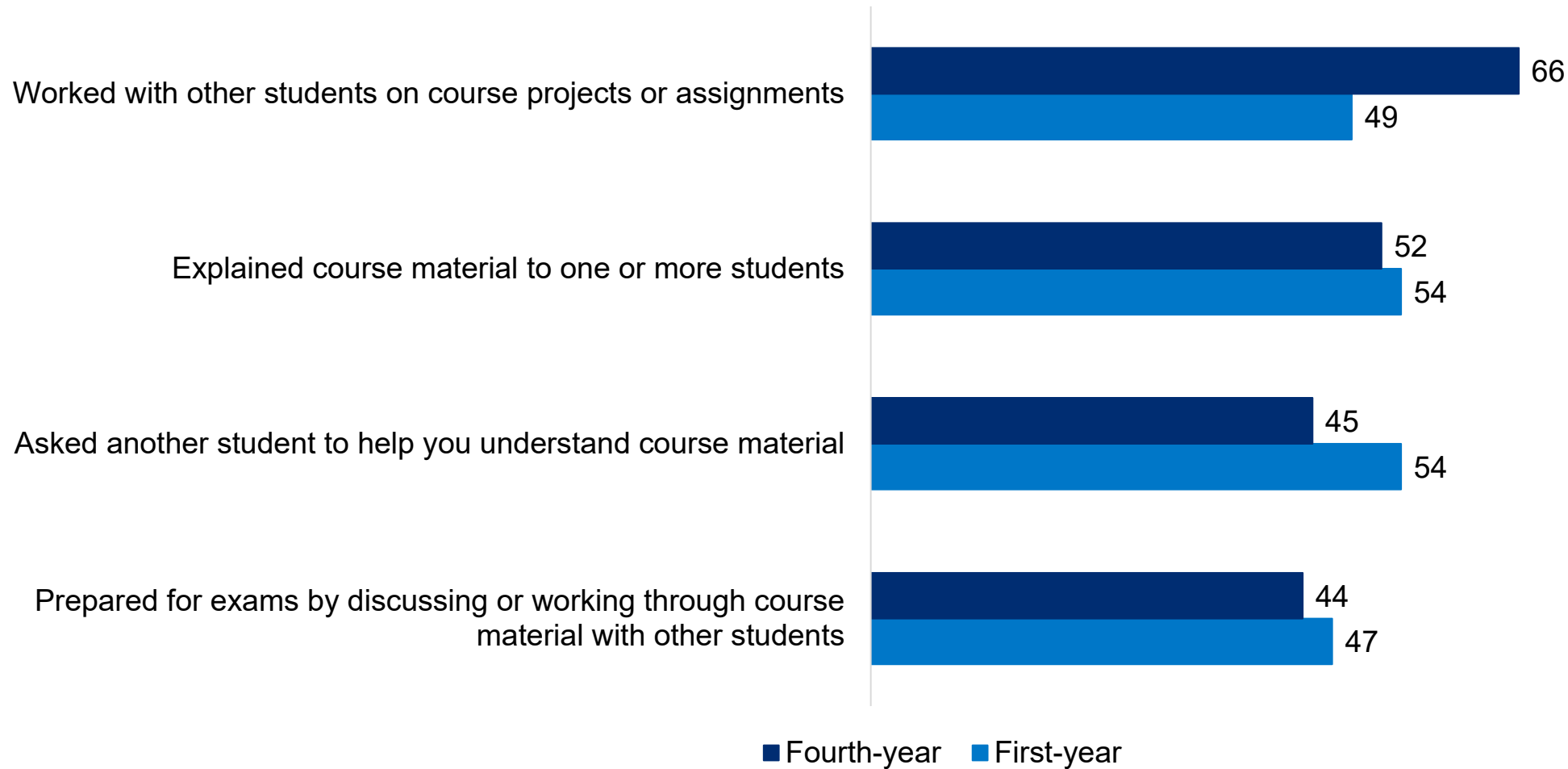
Academic Challenge – Quantitative Reasoning

Percent reporting they have done this ‘often’ or ‘very often’



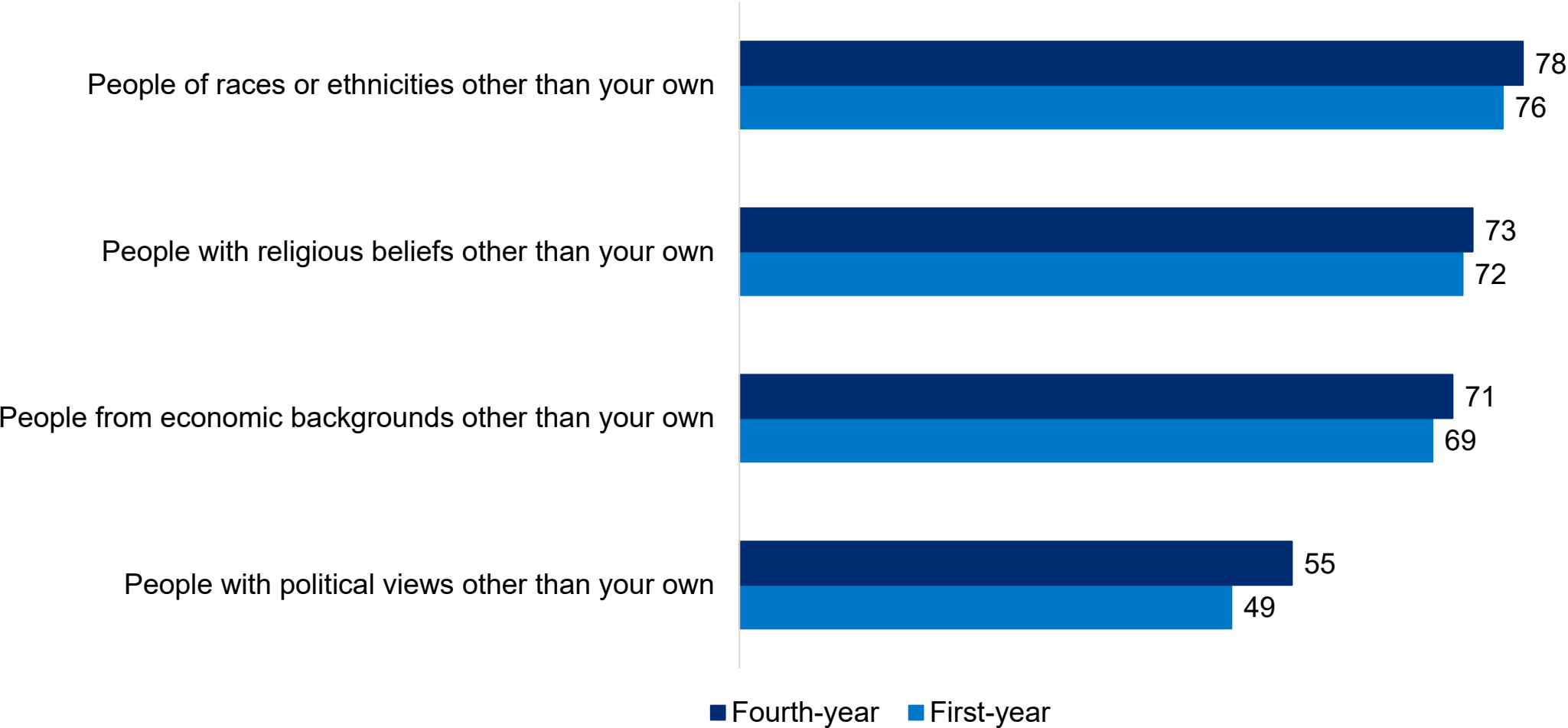
Learning with Peers – Collaborative Learning

Percent reporting they have done this 'often' or 'very often'



Learning with Peers – Discussions with Diverse Others

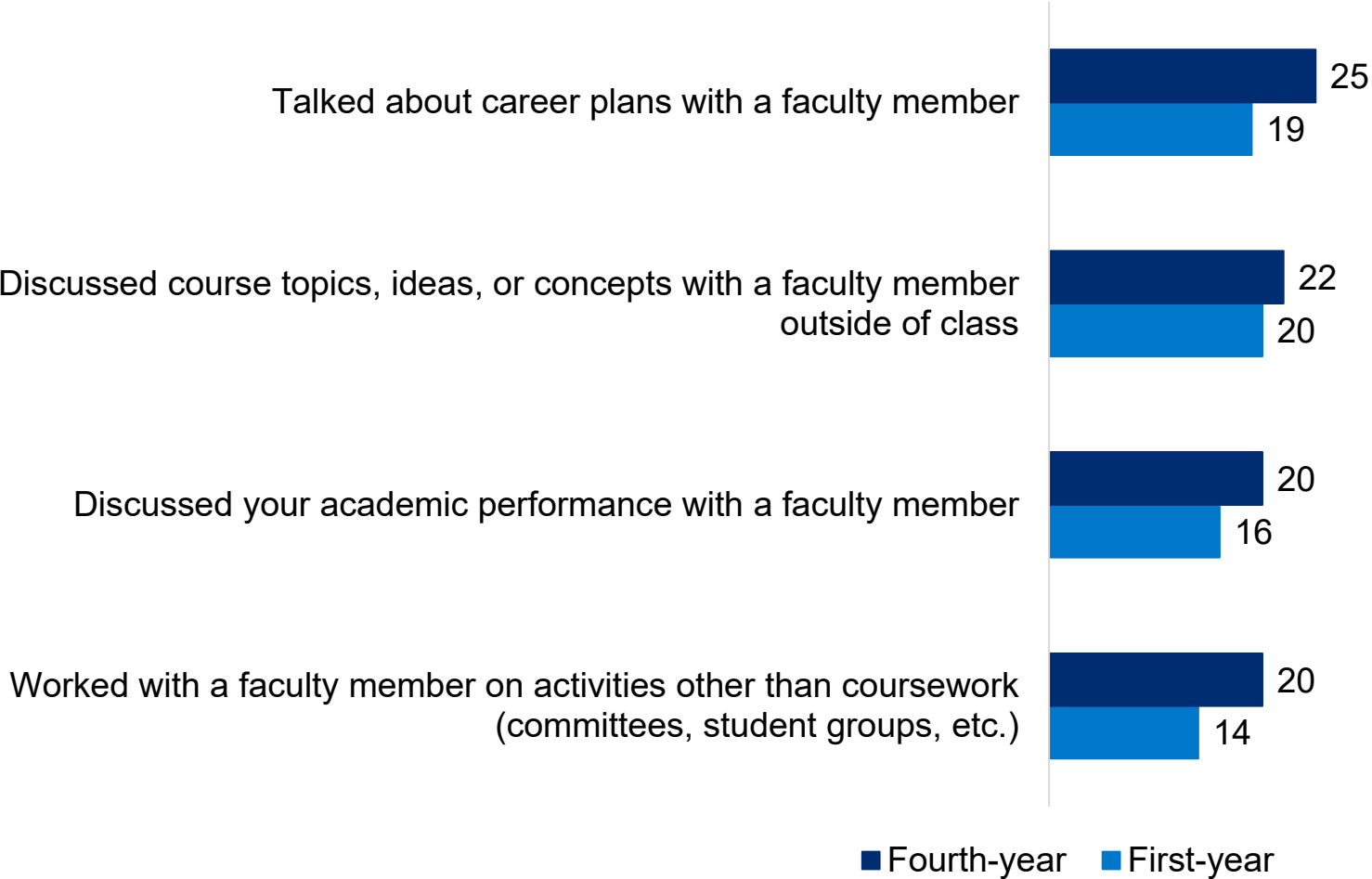
Percent reporting they have done this 'often' or 'very often'



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Experiences with Faculty – Student-Faculty Interaction

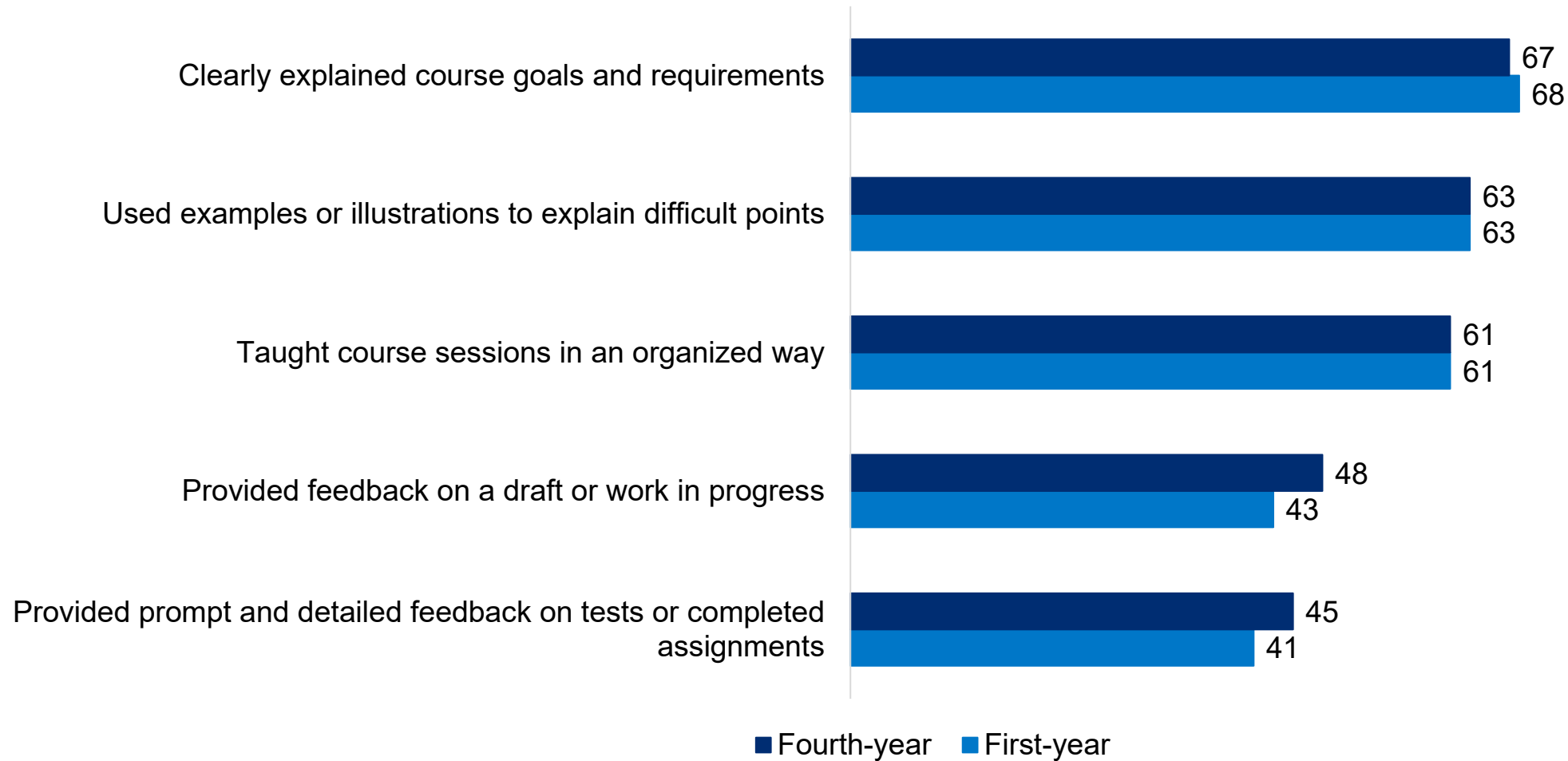
Percent reporting they have done this ‘often’ or ‘very often’



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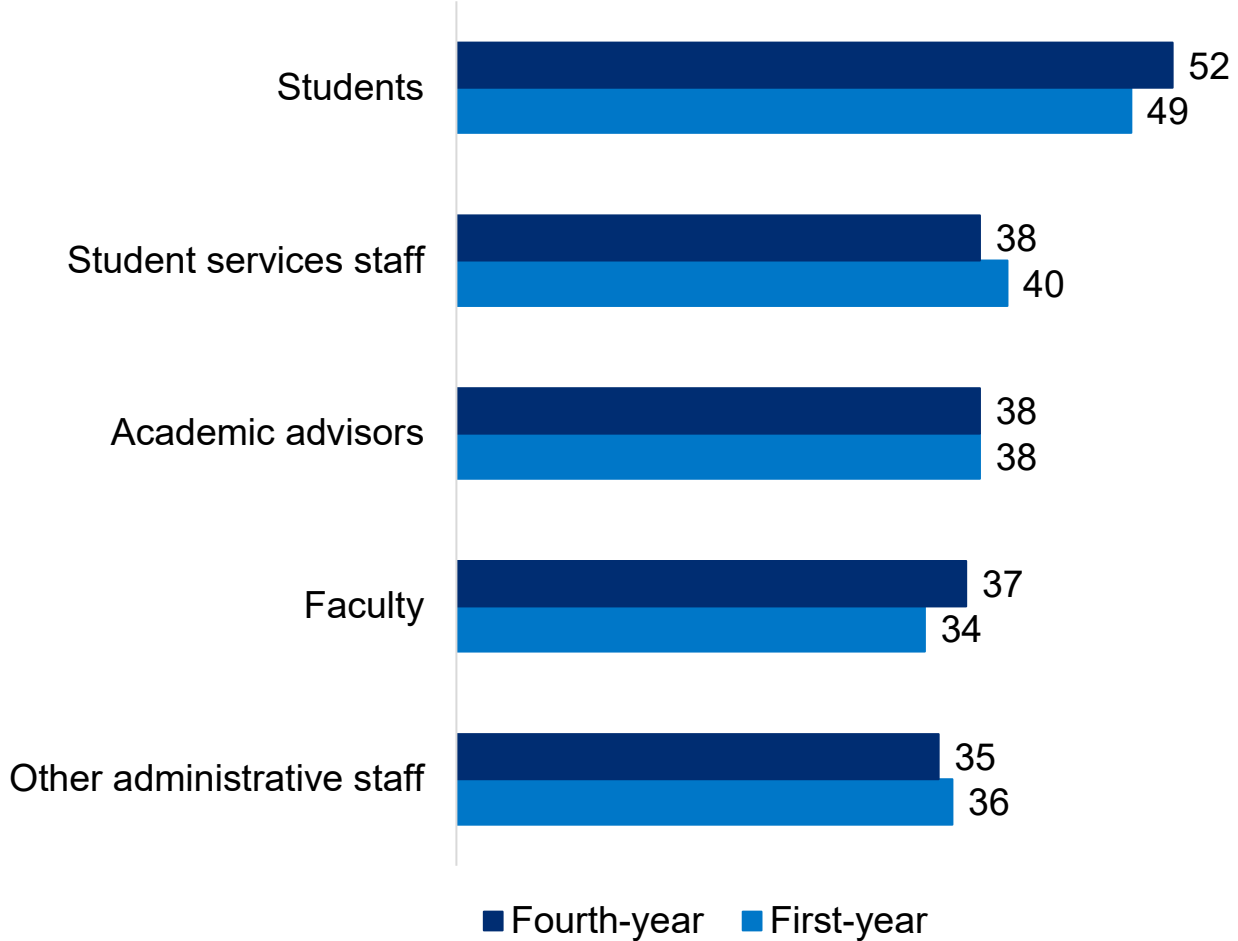
Experiences with Faculty – Effective Teaching Practices

Percent reporting they have experienced this ‘quite a bit’ or ‘very much’



Campus Environment – Quality of Interactions

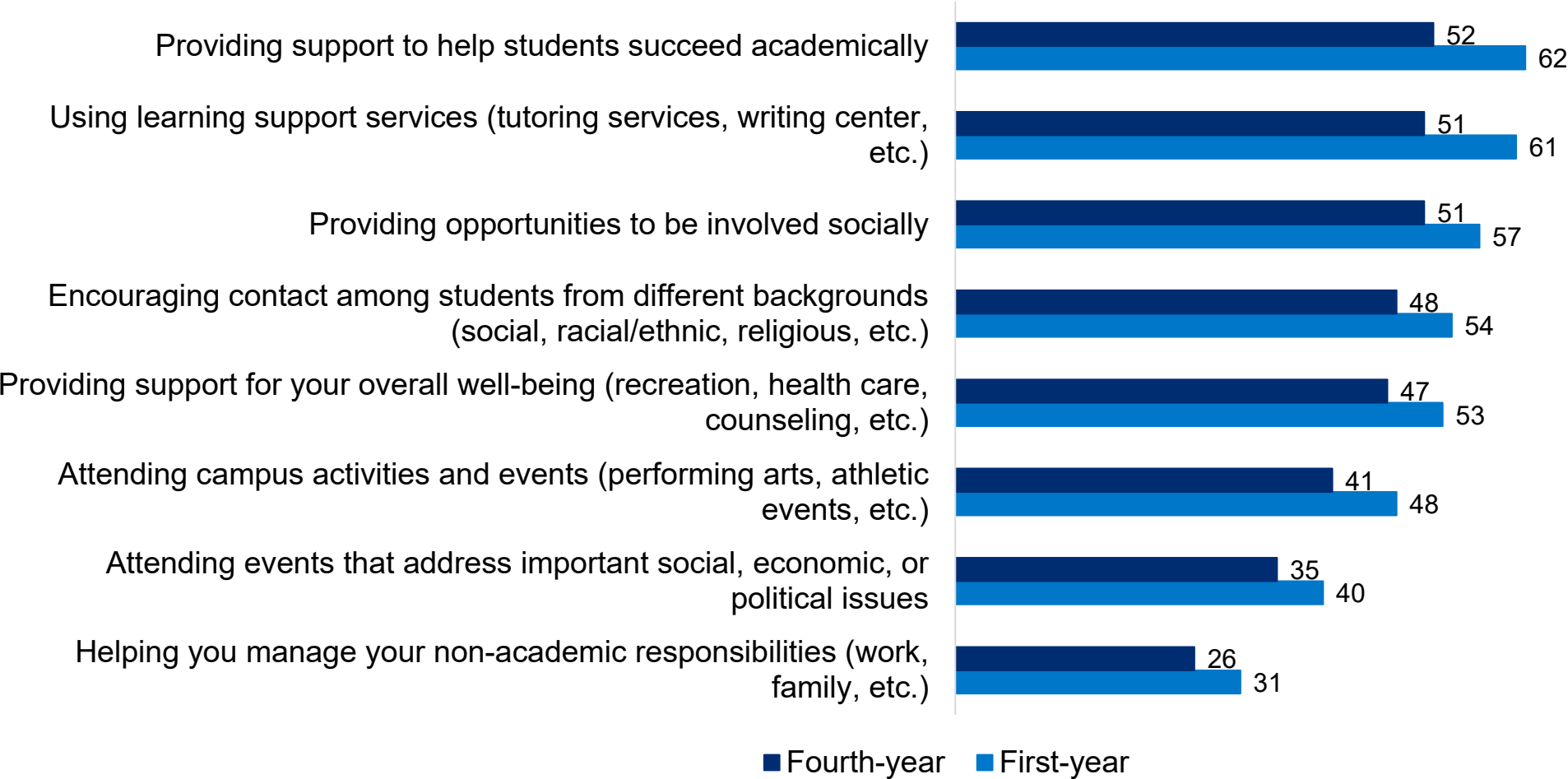
Percent reporting 6 or 7 on a scale from 1 (poor) to 7 (excellent)



Please note: the results shown above will differ from the results shown in the main slides. These show the proportion of students who responded with either of the two most positive response options (in this case, 6 or 7 on the 7-point scale). The results on the main slides show the mean score as calculated by NSSE.

Campus Environment – Supportive Environment

Percent reporting they had experienced this ‘quite a bit’ or ‘very much’



Please note: the results shown above will differ from the results shown in the main slides. These show the proportion of students who responded with either of the two most positive response options (in this case, “quite a bit” or “very much”). The results on the main slides show the mean score as calculated by NSSE.

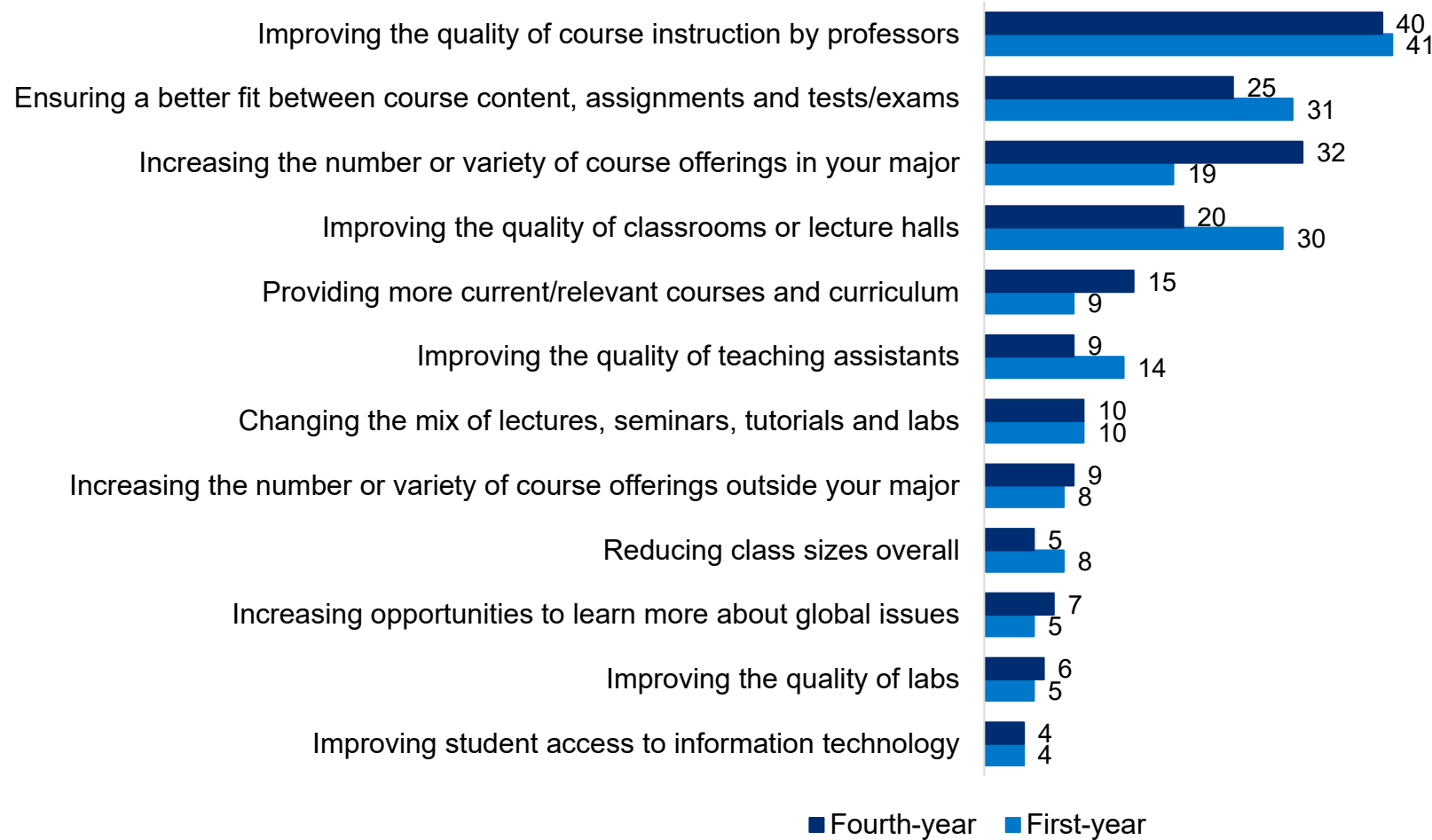
Skills Development

Percent reporting skills were developed 'quite a bit' or 'very much'



Priorities for Improvement – Inside the Classroom

Percent selecting the option



Priorities for Improvement – Outside the Classroom

Percent selecting the option

