

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Quest University Canada's Unique Educational Model Underscored in Independent Survey

National Survey of Student Engagement confirms Quest's leadership position in delivering exceptional undergraduate education

SQUAMISH, BC, November 1, 2011 – North American schools are once again combing through results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) to understand how students rank their level of engagement in their university studies. This year, both first-year and fourth-year students at Quest University Canada completed the survey, and the results were again notably higher than the scores of other universities.

"Our first NSSE results with both first- and fourth-year students confirms the leading position we have gained in undergraduate education in North America," says Dr. David Helfand, President of Quest. "In a sense, this is unsurprising, as our educational model is built around fostering active and collaborative learning within a challenging curriculum created by a faculty with an unwavering commitment to undergraduate students. The independent assessment NSSE provides is invaluable as we continue to improve on our unique educational model."

More than 280,000 students at 673 US institutions and 67 Canadian universities participated in the 2011 survey. The NSSE organization provides average scores for all 740 institutions, for all Canadian universities and, at Quest's request, for the 112 US undergraduate liberal arts institutions surveyed this year. The individual scores of Canadian universities are expected to appear in the February student survey issue of Maclean's Magazine.

The survey results are aggregated to highlight five overall measures of educational quality. In each of the five measures, Quest's results are far above the averages of the three comparison groups. The five measures are:

1. Level of Academic Challenge
2. Inclusion of Enriching Educational Experiences
3. Intensity of Student-Faculty Interaction
4. Use of Active and Collaborative Learning
5. Existence of a Supportive Campus Environment.

Highlights of Quest's results versus the average include:

- 84% of Quest seniors report they "very often" ask a question in class or contribute to class discussion versus an average of 38% of seniors at other North American universities.
- 91% of Quest first-year students gave in-class presentations "very often" and "often", versus 30% at other North American universities. For seniors, the number rose to 58% for other North American universities, whereas 100% of Quest seniors reported such participation "often" or "very often".

More...

- 62% of Quest seniors reported receiving "prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on assignments" versus 19% at other North American institutions.
- 41% of Quest's seniors "discussed ideas from [their] readings and classes with faculty members outside of class" compared with 10% at other North American institutions.
- 70% of Quest first-years report the university provides "the support [they] need to succeed academically "very much" with 97% reporting "quite a bit" or "very much"; only 34% of first years and 27% of seniors report "very much" support at other North American universities.

Quest provides both opportunities and vigorous institutional encouragement for students to explore the world:

- 53% of Quest seniors had already studied abroad whereas only 14% of seniors at other North American universities have done so.

Quest focuses on creating a diverse campus that celebrates the globalized world of the twenty-first century; these efforts were reflected in the response to the question asking how often students had "had a serious conversation with students of different race or ethnicity than your own":

- 52% of first-years at Quest had such conversations "very often" versus 25% at other North American universities; only 6% of Quest seniors said they had either never, or only "sometimes" had such conversations compared with 45% of students at other North American campuses.

The liberal arts and sciences degree that all Quest students obtain is sometimes viewed as less relevant to the real world of work than more narrowly focused degree programs. However:

- 58% of Quest seniors report their education "very much" equipped them to "solve complex, real-world problems" versus 27% of other North American graduates. 51% of Quest seniors also expected to use their education to "contribut[e] to the welfare of [their] community" "very much" versus 20% of other North American graduates.

The depth of student engagement at Quest is exemplified by an incident in a Foundation class in mathematics last year. The tutor, Dr. Glen van Brummelen, who is writing a book on the development of spherical trigonometry, was teaching a course in that arcane subject to 17 first and second-year students, none of whom planned a future in mathematics. At the end of the second week, he showed them a proof of a foundational theorem of the discipline first published in 1807 and repeated in textbooks since then. The students found a logical flaw in the way the proof was used in the textbooks, a flaw which had not been uncovered to van Brummelen's knowledge. "I stopped and thought, 'this can't possibly be right'; but the students were right. It showed how deeply the students had internalized the spirit of mathematics," van Brummelen said.

Quest holds Preview Events throughout the year for prospective students and their families. For details visit <http://www.questu.ca/AdmissionsEvents>.

About NSSE

The National Survey of Student Engagement is an instrument designed over a decade ago in the US to measure the quality of undergraduate education at a wide variety of institutions. The survey, administered by an outside independent research group and consisting of over a hundred questions probing the undergraduate experience, has been taken at over 1500 institutions of higher education in the US and Canada; some provinces require their post-secondary schools to participate. The spring of 2011 was the first time Quest had both seniors and first-year students, the two cohorts on which the survey focuses. A total of 673 US institutions and 67 Canadian universities participated in the 2011 survey. The NSSE organization provides average scores for all 740 institutions, all Canadian universities and, at Quest's request, the mean scores for the 112 US liberal arts colleges involved this year.

About Quest University Canada:

Quest University Canada, the country's first independent, not-for-profit, secular university opened its doors in September 2007 with a vision to build a new kind of university focused on excellence in undergraduate education. Its simple philosophy – that education, in its truest sense, comes not from providing the right answers, but from learning how to ask insightful questions – has driven the development of a campus and a curriculum focused on producing broadly educated individuals with an informed perspective on the problems of the twenty-first century and the integrative abilities to address them. Quest's unique approach to learning offers all seminar classes with a maximum of 20 students, a Block-Plan style of learning in which students focus on just one subject at a time for a month, unprecedented access to faculty mentors, a rigorous Foundation program that spans the arts and sciences, and the ability for each student to shape his or her course of study by posing a unique "Question" that directs the final two years of work. <http://www.questu.ca/>