

Comparing Senior Agriculture and Non-Agriculture Students' Use of Time

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Introduction

There are 168 hours in one week. Assuming students only spend 16 hours in formal academics and sleep eight hours per night, there are still approximately 96 unaccounted for hours. So what do students do with this time?

The purpose of this study was to describe time use (in seven specific areas) for senior agriculture and non-agriculture students and determine if the two groups differed significantly.

Methods

Data for this study were obtained from responses to selected items on the 2013 *National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)* administered at the University of Arkansas.

The data included responses from all colleges at the university, with 115 responses from senior agriculture students and 909 responses from non-agriculture senior students.

Independent t-tests were used to determine significant differences ($p < .05$) between the two groups of students.

Findings

Agriculture and Non-Agriculture Students' Use of Weekly Time

Hours Spent:	Agriculture seniors	Non-agriculture seniors
Preparing for class	11.66*	13.63
Paid work	15.5	13.96
Relaxing	12.03	11.88
Caring for dependents	4.91	4.65
Commuting	4.61	4.56
Co-curricular activities	3.92	4.82
Community service	2.38	2.81
Productive (studying, co-curricular activities, and working) hours	31.08	32.41

Note. * $p < 0.05$

Discussion

Despite the often negative portrayal of college students, if one assumes an additional 16 hours of in-class time, senior agriculture and non-agriculture students both exceed the traditional 40-hour work week.

The finding that agriculture seniors spent significantly less time preparing for class compared to non-agriculture seniors is a concern and should be further investigated to better understand the causes and implications of this difference.