

Graduating Students' Reflections on Keene State College's Mission Statement

The 2010 Graduating Student Survey asked students to respond to the following prompt:

The KSC Mission states that Keene State College prepares promising students to think critically and creatively, to engage in active citizenship, and to pursue meaningful work.

Do you feel that this statement accurately reflects your experiences at KSC? Please explain.

The contents of students' substantive responses were analyzed and are reported in this document, which supplements the Graduating Student Survey 2010 report.

In spring 2010, 961 students completed the Graduation Student Survey, as they prepared for their Commencement ceremonies. Seventy-four percent (710) responded to the open ended prompt. After the first reading of the responses, students who answered with a simple yes (116) or no (49) or who responded generally with statements like "*Keene State College was a remarkable experience!*" and "*I feel as if KSC has done a good job*" (49), were set aside, leaving 536 individual responses. These were re-read, coded, and sorted into related topics. This analysis produced 691 substantive comments. Those that were specifically directed towards the students' programs of study have been organized separately and will be shared with the appropriate Deans and Department Chairs. This report presents the results of the analysis of the remaining 534 comments. Table 1 lists the topics, in the order of their frequency. Each heading in the table is an active hyperlink to that topic.

One final note: students' comments, which are italicized, are presented as they were written, and have not been edited for grammar or spelling.

Table 1. Graduating Students' Comments by Topic

Topic	Frequency
Critical and Creative Thinking	103
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The academic environment influenced the development of critical and creative thinking skills • Outside the box thinking • Lack of thinking skill development • Academic environment supports critical, but not creative, thinking 	
Student Engagement	69
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student participation in clubs, organizations, on-campus work opportunities, sports and voluntary community service • Social interactions and relationships • Non-participants • Campus diversity 	
Student Effort	66
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction between self effort and the college environment • Students' lack of effort in a non-demanding academic environment • Academic success due to own self effort, independent of the college environment 	
Faculty	61
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty praises • Faculty inconsistencies 	
Academic Environment	56
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive aspects of the academic environment • Appeal for higher academic standards • Inconsistencies in the academic environment 	
Service Learning	43
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus sponsored community service • Mandatory service learning • Academic service learning • College's focus on community service 	
Controversial Mission Concepts	37
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promising students • Active citizenship • Meaningful work 	
Student Preparation	32
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who felt prepared • Students who felt unprepared 	
Areas of Concern	28
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advising and Orientation • Administration 	
Student Maturity	23
"Non-Typical" Students	14
Mason Library	2

Critical and Creative Thinking

Nearly one out of every five students wrote about how their college experiences engaged them to think critically and creatively. Most of these students recognized the role that the academic environment played in the development of these skills. About one-quarter of them described the development of these attributes as *'out of the box'* thinking. The few dissenters either *'wished'* that they had encountered more opportunities for this type of thinking in their coursework; felt that their thinking skills developed independently of the academic environment; or, felt that while opportunities for critical thinking were present, opportunities for creative thinking were not.

The academic environment influenced the development of critical and creative thinking skills. The majority of students were pleased with the critical and creative thinking skills that they developed throughout their coursework. They felt the *"strive for continuous improvement"*, and recognized the emphasis on critical and creative thinking skills throughout their courses, *"I had to think creatively and critically in all different kinds of ways"*. Students' engagement in critical thinking resulted in broadening and opening *"horizons on many different areas of life"*. It helped them to *"think of the big picture"*, and *"discover how I learn"*. They learned to *"solve problems and use alternative approaches"*, recognize *"many ways of looking at the world"* keep *"an open mind"*, and express their thoughts and opinions with *"no judgments"*. They felt that the academic environment encouraged them to *"respond to the call"* to think creatively and to put *"a lot of effort behind those thoughts"*.

Outside the box thinking. One quarter of the students who wrote positively about the development of critical and creative thinking wrote in terms of learning to think *"outside the box"*. Students described the *"challenge to think out of the box"* as solving *"problems critically"*, *"gaining insight"*, using *"every possible resource around us in reaching our objective"*, using a *"well rounded perspective on how to approach problems"*, and solving *"in-depth complicated problems"*.

Lack of thinking skill development. This small group of students *"wished"* that they had learned to think more critically and creatively. They attributed their lack to not enough integration of *"real world"* opportunities in the curriculum. Students felt that the emphasis on critical thinking was inconsistent, some classes required it, others required just *"average"* thinking, and still others were *"simply boring"*.

Academic environment supports critical, but not creative thinking. These students recognized the development of their critical thinking skills, but did not feel that the academic environment had helped to advance their creative thinking. They found themselves *"feeling as though my creative efforts were not appreciated"*, they were met

“with lots of opposition”, and strict coursework guidelines that prevented them from being “more creative”.

Student Engagement

Students, who wrote on this topic, valued their involvement in campus organizations and activities, and their social interactions and relationships, and, related these to their development of the qualities expressed in Keene State’s mission statement

Student participation in clubs, organizations, on-campus work opportunities, sports and voluntary community service. These students credited their campus engagement to the development of their critical and creative thinking skills, and their preparation for active citizenship and meaningful work:

- *Getting involved in multiple clubs/organizations along with being a student worker and taking classes, has helped me to become active, meet new people, be more outgoing and learn how to balance homework and social life.*
- *My classes, on-campus job, and participation in clubs has encouraged me to think critically and creatively, and be an active citizen.*
- *Working on campus, and being active in student organizations, I have definitely increased my critical and creative thinking abilities, engaged in active citizenship, and pursued work meaningful to me.*

Students listed the clubs, organizations and activities that contributed to their development:

- *Working at Bodyworks... I was able to think creatively, get more involved in my community, and work harder in my field of study.*
- *The Equinox staff and Kappa Beta Gamma sorority... have helped me do meaningful things both on and off campus.*
- *As part of a LLC, I have also engaged in active citizenship in promoting education, tolerance and acceptance of GLBT issues and people.*
- *All of the clubs and honor societies that I was in encouraged community service and working with others.*
- *I was able to get involved in the community, join Greek life*
- *Pumpkin Labotamy, Walk a Mile, Cinderella Project, the graphics that a class of mine did with for the DVD jacket of the documentary being done by the film department are just a few examples that come to mind.*
- *I was involved in Student Government, the Education Honor Society, Mentors in Violence Prevention, a member of Alternative Spring Break and was employed at the Mason Library.*
- *there have been political groups that help me become more aware of what is going on in the world as well as the student newspaper.*
- *I have been able to join and be president of clubs and honors societies.*
- *If I had not joined WKNH Keene I would not of picked my major.*
- *Working as an RA has contributed to these values in my own life.*

- *I have learned through being an officer on the SAC e-board, Alternative Spring Break programs and my academics and college community how to be an active citizen, a critical thinker and that pursuing a career that will be meaningful to me is critical.*

Students also listed the recreational, intramural, and collegiate sports that contributed to the development of the qualities identified in KSC's mission statement:

- *I have engaged in numerous activities (rugby) that enable me to connect with other students.*
- *Playing softball and participating in sporting events across campus has helped mold many of the students here at KSC.*
- *I have learned alot about myself through my 3 three years of playing College basketball and balancing, school,practice, family and a social life.*
- *Swimming for KSC all 4 years has been a huge experience.*
- *I personally have been involved in the Keene State Men's Soccer Team for all 4 years. I believe that this has helped me in becoming a strong and mature individual.*
- *Being an athlete I feel that I've done meaningful work as a leader and set a good example.*
- *Being on an Athletic team at the college allowed me to think critically and creatively, gain excellent time management skills and allowed me to pursue what I am passionate about.*

Social interactions and relationships. These students valued their social interactions and relationships, and related them to the College's mission:

- *The relationships and things that I have done while I have attended KSC taught me more and more everyday.*
- *Keene is a great environment for both academics and social life.*
- *There is so much of a social life involved with this school that is has brodened my horizoins into knowing more about the everyday person and the real world outside of school".*

Non-participants. These three students were dismayed by the number of students who do not take advantage of the opportunities available to them because they are too distracted by "partying".

Campus diversity. Students appreciated the "diverse college atmosphere", their interactions "with all sorts of people in interesting ways", and the "warm and welcoming community that supports a diverse community and is constantly finding ways to break barriers and overcome inequality".

Student Self-Effort

Students described how their own self-efforts contributed to their development. Their views fell into three categories; students reflected: 1) on the interaction between their own efforts and the college environment, 2) their disappointment in the lack of effort displayed by other students in response to a non-demanding academic environment; and, 3) their feelings that their academic success was due to their own efforts, independent of the college environment.

Interaction between self-effort and the college environment. These students reflected on the interaction between their own self efforts and the college environment. These students wrote *“we all learn about our selves and make our own paths for the future”,* and *“your college experience is what you make of it”,* but realized that their success was *“a combination of my personal ambition and the enriching environment of Keene State”*. They expanded on the theme, saying:

- *You determine how much you get out of your education; but Keene does a great job supplying the tools needed.*
- *The school provided many opportunities for students to engage in such behavior, but the individual has to be willing and wanting to be an active citizen and pursue meaningful work,*
- *What the mission statement describes is accessible to all students, if students are willing to take advantage of what is offered at KSC”.*

They also wrote about their preparation for the future: *“My experience here at Keene State has encouraged me to better myself and work hard for the best education possible so I can be a positive and influential person in the world once I graduate”.*

Students’ lack of effort in a non-demanding academic environment. Students wrote at length about the lack of effort displayed by ‘other’ Keene State students. These students were *“surprised to learn how many students at KSC just dont CARE about, well, being students”*. While recognizing their own involvement on campus, they were dismayed by students who were *“ill-prepared as they do not take the college seriously”*, and they recognized many students *“who do not apply themselves”,* and *“who came to college because they're supposed to...I know a lot of people here that aren't critical thinkers and are not creative and are not active citizens”*. They also viewed the academic environment as not demanding enough:

- *I have put hard work into my program. . . but I have seen other slide through their courses with very little work or knowledge. KSC should increase the level of accountability that students are held to.*
- *Keene State College could push students to think more creatively and engage in more activities with the community.*
- *Keene State College may prepare students to do these things, but it also allows many students to graduate without having accomplished any of them”.*

These students also advocated for higher admission standards: *"there could be MORE emphasis on getting students to think MORE critically and creatively...I think the college should make it a bit harder to be accepted"*, and felt that they could have accomplished more, if more had been expected of them:

- *KSC did not push me at all. I could have gotten through these four years and be graduating without really doing much work.*
- *The atmosphere has no competitiveness and as much as I consider myself non-competitive sometimes its necessary to foster growth and produce leaders.*
- *It's very easy to just go though the motions here. Very few professors expected a lot from me.*
- *Perhaps at other schools the innate need to strive for academic excellence is campus-wide. that is certainly not the case at keene state.*

Academic success due to own self-efforts, independent of the academic environment. These students attributed their success to their own efforts, independent of the college environment: *"my success at KSC has stemmed primarily from my own effort"*. They felt they had worked independently to *"seek answers to questions on my own and to solve problems on my own"*. They held the philosophy that *"any kind of self-improvement can onlu be achieved as an individual and no matter how many classes and lectures and groups council meetings you attend you will never learn anything unless you sit down by yourself and read a book"*. These students felt that if a student *"trully applies themselves to their studies they will be rewarded by the knowledge they gain for themselves"*. They also wrote about their inner motivation and passion for learning: *"I felt compelled to suceed on my own merit"*; and, *"even with the most bland subjects, I was still able to make the class interesting and was able to be creative while learning"*.

Faculty

These students either praised the faculty, universally, or felt that the positive qualities, displayed by certain faculty members, were not consistent throughout the body as a whole.

Faculty praises. These students universally praised the faculty, as a body, who they felt had encouraged them, cared for them, and helped them reach their goals. They described Keene State College faculty as interested in *"increasing the likelihood of success for each student"*, and willing to *"work one on one with anyone willing to put in the effort and time"*. They felt the faculty were approachable, assessable and provided them with the support they needed to *"head them in the right direction"* and *"pursue meaningful work"*. The faculty were viewed as encouraging, pushing students to do their *"absolute best"* and to think *"deeply and critically"*. They provided guidance to students about their post-graduation plans and challenged them to *"to pursue knowledge outside the*

classroom". To these students the faculty *"have really proven they are here for the students" and were "always available and willing to help students with anything and everything"*. Finally, KSC faculty were described as inspirational: they *"go above and beyond to help their students become as prepared as they possibly can be"*, helping students to *"reach the fullest"* and to *"think critically about how I spend my time and what I contribute to my community"*.

Faculty inconsistencies. While many students recognized the positive qualities of individual faculty members, they felt that these qualities were inconsistent throughout the faculty body as a whole:

- *Some teachers... really care about teaching you and offering up challenging lessons and experiences....others can make you feel like you're wasting your money.*
- *There are very few teachers that are actually able to reach the students in a way that actually makes you want to learn.*
- *I have dealt with a lot of teachers that do not care to help me understand the information I'm struggling with.*

Other students did not feel they had been academically challenged often enough in the classroom:

- *I was often very bored with courses because they all seemed to be a repeat of the previous classes.*
- *"If I could change one thing about KSC it would be the degree of difficulty and amount of work expected by professors"*

One student commented that faculty should model Keene States' mission for its students, saying *"Keene State College has ideals that are not upheld by all professors and that it is more important that the staff realizes these ideals and values....students only gain these values if the professors and other staff model and share and inspire those values upon them"*.

Academic Environment

Students' reflections on the academic environment were divided. About a third of these comments addressed the positive aspects of the academic environment. Another third felt that academic standards at Keene State College are not set high enough. And, the final group felt that there were inconsistencies in the academic environment.

Positive aspects of the academic environment. Students wrote about the positive aspects of the academic environment and felt that *"the values Keene State wishes to portray are definitely seen through the work students do"*. Students contributed their development to this focus which helped them to become *"better communicators"*, taught them *"to be proactive in their academic efforts"*, and helped them to *"work with others and interact professionally"* and *"relate their class work to real life experiences"*. Throughout

their coursework, students were encouraged to work in groups, make presentations, integrate their own thoughts and ideas into their assigned work, and provided them with *"lot's of hands on experiences"*. Students were positive about their *"exposure to different subject areas"* and the opportunities they had to explore *"different lifestyles and aspects of life"*. Students valued the courses that they took in their major field of study and felt they had *"learned a great deal"*. They felt they had gained from working in teams which made them *"more motivated towards a team-culture"* and taught them how to *"work best as a leader within a team"*.

Appeal for higher academic standards. For these students, academic standards are not *"set high enough at KSC and it reflects strongly in the class room"*. They felt they had not been challenged *"to think very much"* in their courses, and that *"there needs to be higher expectations of students"*. They added that *"it can be a little disheartening... a lot of us are talented and capable and should be encouraged to pursue the same goals as students at big name universities"*, and that *"although the teachers are very helpful and supportive, the work isn't that demanding"*. They wrote about being *"frustrated with busy work"*, and by *"professors holding your hand"*. They were aware of being unmotivated *"even though there was a lot of work it was not challenging"*. Students added that the school *"is a little to lenient and it's easy to get a way only putting in half the effort"*. Others wrote:

- *Keene could challenge its students more.*
- *A lot of students I see get off easy.*
- *Keene State college, also known as kinda sorta college didnt challenge me at all... high school was more challenging.*

Inconsistencies in the academic environment. These students focused on the inconsistencies in the content and rigor of the curriculum: *"some of the experiences have been fulfilling and enriching, but others have taken away more than I gained"*. Some students complained that their lower level courses had been *"dumbed down"* and a *"waste of time"*. Others were disappointed that the courses in their major had not been *"challenging enough"*. and that the instructors had not helped them *"build up their resumes"* and *"pursure coursework that will help them in the job market"*. Overall, these students felt that the *"focus"* of the curriculum was *"too narrow"*, and that there was *"too much busy work"*, and *"too much homework"*.

Service Learning

Students wrote about the enriching and eye-opening experiences they had and the learning they gained as a result of their participation in campus sponsored community service activities. A second group thought that a service learning experience should be mandatory for all students. Others praised the service learning components of their coursework, and the College's integrated focus on service learning.

Campus Sponsored Community Service. Students talked about the positive experiences, and the broadened “global perspectives” they gained through voluntary community service: *“I have engaged in community service, taken on tasks bigger than myself and given back to the world”*; *“Keene State College has provided me with ample opportunities to contribute to the community around me”*; and, *“I went to Costa Rica for our soccer trip and we were able to attend a center where children have been left by their parents. The faces on all of the children as soon as we walked in, changed my life forever”*.

Students wrote about the learning and values they gained during their Alternative Spring Break and Habitat for Humanity trips. Through these experiences students gained insight into what it means to engage in *“meaningful work”*, and *“become a better citizen”*. The communities that they worked in helped them to shape their *“outlook on life”*, learn how to *“communicate better”*, and develop *“a higher sense of self awareness”*. Students who became group leaders, and were *“in charge”* of their fellow students discovered that *“mission statement is really empowering and does reflect myself”*.

Students pointed out the economy of these trips compared to other opportunities offered in their courses: *“In my opinion, there needs to be more service learning classes that are affordable. To go to Guatemala and travel the entire country for two weeks I paid \$850 with Habitat for Humanity and KSC, but service learning courses are double that and not something the entire student body has the opportunity to experience”*.

Mandatory Service Learning. These students, who valued their service learning experiences, and who were aware that others had not had the opportunity to participate, recommended that KSC make service learning mandatory. They wrote that: *“all majors should require internships”*; and, *“a freshman reading community service in the Keene area should be required in order to pass the freshman orientation class”*. They felt that the mission would apply more if *“all degrees required a practicum or in the field type work so that students can get more out of their courses”*; and, that *“having a required internship on one's resume would only help the student”*.

Academic Service Learning. Students discussed their experiences in practicums and internships, and described the learning they gained. They were appreciative of how their experiences had made them *“aware of community/global challenges”*, helped them *“prepare for the field that I hope to go into”*, *“learn what I want to do when I graduate”*, *“engage with the community and to further my understanding of the course work”*, *“build my self-confidence in terms of working in a hectic environment”*, and *“see if that is what I want to do in life”*.

College's focus on community service. These students were attuned to the College's commitment to community service. They recognized that the College places a *“strong emphasis on community involvement and makes it easy for all students to participate in those rewarding activities”*, and that it *“believes in community involvement, and teaches its*

students to help others while at the same time getting to know themselves better". They wrote about learning *"what it was like to be part of a political campaign, volunteer in the community kitchen, help the needy, and "work with children of all ages"*. They understood how their experiences had helped them *"figure out that I would like to do more volunteer work and be an advocate for others"*, and they reminisced about how *"the volunteering and service that I have done while at Keene has made my college career something that will stick with me forever and helped shaped who I am today"*.

Controversial Mission Concepts

Students were aware that the mission statement *"casts a broad net"* and that anyone should be able to *"incorporate at least some form of it into their experiences at KSC"*, but they were uncertain about the meaning of the terms: 'promising students', 'active citizenship', and 'meaningful work'.

Promising Students. This phrase made the students uncomfortable. They wondered whether Keene State College prepares *"only promising students, or are only the promising accepted?"* As a publicly funded institution, they were *"unsure if KSC's admissions process can be this selective"*. They felt that a focus on promising students could *"miss the promise in the students who were overlooked"*. The following quote summarizes these students sentiments, and that as an institution, *"we should want to help those who we do not see as promising, perhaps more so than anyone else"*.

Active Citizenship. There were a few students who related active citizenship to the larger roles and responsibilities of informed participation in a democratic, interdependent world. These students, however, felt that either KSC did not prepare *"students for active citizenship"* or that *"there could be more incentives for students to become effective, active citizens at the local, state, and federal levels"*. The remaining students were either unsure about the meaning, or narrowed the concept to its community service aspect, and felt that it had been missing from their studies:

- *I was never in any course that encouraged to participate in active citizenship...I'm not even sure what it means.*
- *A sizable community of promising participants is required to engage in active citizenship... I feel that this type of community is lacking from Keene State College's campus and hope that it can be established in the future*
- *My classes never once engaged me in active citizenship*
- *The only thing missing at this school for me was that connection*
- *KSC could do more to engage students in active citizenship. Maybe requiring an amount of community service for all students?*
- *KSC does not enforce active citizenship...there should be more opportunities in classes for service learning*

- *KSC needs to incorporate more active citizenship, and provide a variety of service learning courses where students can apply their studies to the real world.*

Meaningful Work. Students questioned whether there could ever be agreement between their own definitions of meaningful work and the definition held by the institution. They asked whether it means that *“students strive for progress in learning and become more educated”*, or that *“you make a difference in someone’s life”*.

Student Preparation

There were a few students who questioned their preparation, but the majority who wrote on this topic were confident about the knowledge and skills they had developed while attending Keene State College.

Students who felt prepared. These students were proud of their accomplishments. They were confident that *“KSC gave me the skills that I need to succeed in my field of work”*. They wrote about their plans to pursue work that they had *“become passionate about”*. They felt prepared:

- *I feel confident that KSC gave me the skills that I need to succeed in my field of work*
- *I learned a lot about my major and was well prepared to go out into the job world with my certifications and get the job I deserve.*
- *I have gained many experiences... that will help me become a successful individual.*

Students also related the knowledge and skills they had attained to preparation for their life goals:

- *My plan has always been to go out into the world after college and enter a career that works toward helping other people.*
- *Graduating from Keene State College will help my holistic development of my mind and future.*
- *The things that I have learned...have certainly contributed to my self awareness as an individual and will continue to assist me after college.*
- *Being educated in a broad range of areas helped make me aware of the things that I wanted to get involved with and those I hope to change.*

Students who felt unprepared. These students questioned how their learning connected to the *“job world”*:

- *I have learned a lot from the diverse courses I was able to take, but I don't really feel prepared for a real world job*
- *I'm not sure that I have been fully prepared for my field of study.*
- *There needs to be a stronger connection between what we've learned and how to use it in the job market.*

Areas of Concern

The two areas addressed under this topic are 1) advising and orientation; and 2) campus administration.

Advising and Orientation. These students were frustrated with advising and orientation and felt that these were areas where there was considerable “room for improvement”. They felt that the College could do better to “help new students” and get them “pointed in the right direction” so they know “where to go when they need help”.

They wrote:

- *Keene State College has no real guide for students.*
- *It would have been nice to get a little more guidance as a freshman. We were mostly forced to do everything on our own.*
- *The majority of the information we got about registration and campus activities came all at once during orientation ...I was so overwhelmed by the whole experience. . . the way I found out about important school requirements later on was mostly from other students.*

They wished they had received clearer guidance in planning their programs:

- *The planning and advising offices were unclear and ended up advising incorrectly so that I had to take a severely hard course load for my senior year*
- *There needs to be an improvement in planning and guiding students along through course work...it is difficult for students to receive a straightforward path to graduation.*
- *I had NO GUIDANCE” and VERY OFTEN received misleading information on courses I needed to graduate in resulting wasting my time in classes I shouldn't have taken!*

Students addressed the difficulties they had “trying to get into classes” which “makes it pretty difficult, and might I add stressful for someone trying to graduate”. They also expressed frustration with career advising:

- *I wish that KSC had offered more career/job seminars, resume building opportunities and more broad job fairs (not just NH companies). . . I am uncertain as to what type of jobs to apply for with my degree.*
- *I have little to no help with support in finding a job. There needs to be more teachers in the career center, it took me a whole month to make an appointment.*
- *Job fairs should include more companies from outside of NH. That would have been helpful in the job search.*

Campus Administration. Students wrote about the cost of tuition and fees: “The more i step back and look at how much my education has cost me, I should have just started at a community college. I strongly believe i could of be guaranteed the same education”; and how they saw their dollars being spent:

- *The college's facilities help very minimally, to say the least. . . It's a shame we have such amazing teachers, but the facilities in which they have to teach are sub-par.*

- *Keene State is a nice looking college and it seems that it only invests its money in a nice appearance.*

The size of the student body was also an area of concern: *"KSC has been admitting so many more students than the school can afford that I believe the quality of some classes has suffered from over-enrollment"*, as well as the helpfulness of some administrative offices: *"I have been misguided in many offices on this campus that I sought help from"*.

Student Maturity

Students described how their own maturity – physical, emotional, and intellectual, contributed to their academic achievement. They were aware of their own development and cognizant about how it had helped them discover what they were *"passionate about"* and *"what direction"* they wanted *"to head in"*. They attributed their development to *"living on their own"*, explaining that through *"living on my own...I have enhanced my ability to think on my feet, interact with others, and forge new relationships"*. They wrote about the independence they developed, and how they learned to recognize their own *"strengths and weaknesses"*, become *"well rounded"*, *"broaden"* their *"horizons"*, *"become much more open minded and confident"* and develop *"self-understanding"* and *"confidence in myself and my abilities"*.

'Non-Typical' Students

Students who either waited, instead of entering college directly out of high school, had their college studies disrupted; or are attending part-time because they have full-time jobs, are a growing demographic at Keene State College. These students, who identified themselves in the survey, discussed the barriers that inhibit them from benefiting from the *"promise of the mission and values"*:

- *I have had a job since I was 14 years old and needed to work on average 25-30 hours a week...professors need to acknowledge that.*
- *I was unable to live on campus, which I feel hindered me from engaging in an active citizenship, like volunteer work and being involved in group organizations.*
- *I could not be able to have active citizenship on campus*
- *My being a non-traditional student has affected my ability to recognize the benefits of critical and creative thinking along with being an active citizen.*

These students recommended:

- *There needs to be a program from counselors to degrees, requirements and classes that are more focused on the older non-traditional students*
- *Convenience of class times is necessary to fit full time day work schedules, i.e. later in the day or evening availability and better counseling for older students in general.*

Mason Library

Students were grateful for the help they received from the Mason Library staff and the availability of the facility:

- *I have spent so much time in the library during the past 4 years, and without it I do not feel like I would have had a shot in hell at making it through college.*
- *The people in Library are very helpful even @ 01:00. That is so hard sometimes.*

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