What Really Matters in College: Student Engagement

Because individual effort and involvement are the critical determinants of impact, institutions should focus on the ways they can shape their academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular offerings to encourage student engagement.

The Student Engagement Trinity

- What students do -- time and energy devoted to educationally purposeful activities

- What institutions do -- using effective educational practices to induce students to do the right things

- Educationally effective institutions channel student energy toward the right activities
NSSE Survey Content

- Student Behaviors in College
- Institutional Actions And Requirements
- Student Reactions to College
- Student Background Information

Resulting in Student Learning & Development
Seven Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education  
(Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005)

- Student-faculty contact
- Active learning
- Prompt feedback
- Time on task
- High expectations
- Experiences with diversity
- Cooperation among students
NSSE Indicators of Effective Educational Practice

- Level of Academic Challenge
- Active & Collaborative Learning
- Enriching Educational Experiences
- Student - Faculty Interaction
- Supportive Campus Environment
Why a National Survey?

- Refocus conversations about undergraduate quality to what matters most
- Enhance institutional improvement efforts
- Foster comparative and consortium activity
- Inform accountability efforts
- Provide systematic national data on “good educational practices”
NSSE Project Scope

- Over 1,400 different colleges and universities
- 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Canada
- Data from more than 2,000,000 students
- Institutions include Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges, and single-gender colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>595</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Administration

- Administered to random samples of first-year & senior students (or census when on-line)
- Paper & Web-based survey
- Flexible to accommodate consortium questions
- Multiple follow-ups to increase response rates

National Survey of Student Engagement 2007
The College Student Report

1. How often did you meet with instructors to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
   - Very Often
   - Sometimes
   - Never

2. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
   - Very Often
   - Sometimes
   - Never

3. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
   - Very Often
   - Sometimes
   - Never

4. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
   - Very Often
   - Sometimes
   - Never

5. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
   - Very Often
   - Sometimes
   - Never

6. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
   - Very Often
   - Sometimes
   - Never

7. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
   - Very Often
   - Sometimes
   - Never

8. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
   - Very Often
   - Sometimes
   - Never

9. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
   - Very Often
   - Sometimes
   - Never

10. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
    - Very Often
    - Sometimes
    - Never

11. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
    - Very Often
    - Sometimes
    - Never

12. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
    - Very Often
    - Sometimes
    - Never

13. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
    - Very Often
    - Sometimes
    - Never

14. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
    - Very Often
    - Sometimes
    - Never

15. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
    - Very Often
    - Sometimes
    - Never

16. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
    - Very Often
    - Sometimes
    - Never

17. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
    - Very Often
    - Sometimes
    - Never

18. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
    - Very Often
    - Sometimes
    - Never

19. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
    - Very Often
    - Sometimes
    - Never

20. How often did you work with your classmates to discuss your work in each of the following classes?
    - Very Often
    - Sometimes
    - Never
How Valid is Self-Reported Data?

Research Confirms Self-Reported Data Validity When Following Conditions Exist…

- Requested information is known to respondents
- Questions are clear and unambiguous
- Respondents take questions seriously and thoughtfully
- Answering does not threaten, embarrass, or violate privacy or compel a socially desirable response

The NSSE survey instrument was designed to meet these conditions

For more details, see: NSSE Psychometric Portfolio at http://nsse.iub.edu/html/NSSE_Psychometric_Portfolio.cfm
NSSE 2010 & Selected
Florida Atlantic University
Results
NSSE 2010 Survey
Population and Respondents

- 1.2 million students were invited to participate in NSSE 2010, with 393,630 responding
- 7,020 FAU students were invited to participate, with 2,483 responding
NSSE 2010 Institution Response Rates

- FAU’s response rate = 35%

Average Institutional Response Rates

- 32% for all NSSE 2010 institutions
- 33% for Paper mode institutions
- 38% for Web-only institutions
- 35% for Web+ institutions
Box and Whiskers Key

- 95th Percentile
- 75th Percentile
- 50th Percentile/Median (Bar)
- Mean (Dot)
- 25th Percentile
- 5th Percentile
Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)

Benchmark Comparisons

First-Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FAU Writing Consortium</th>
<th>Carnegie Clss Public</th>
<th>NSSE 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Senior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FAU Writing Consortium</th>
<th>Carnegie Clss Public</th>
<th>NSSE 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE)

Benchmark Comparisons

First-Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FAU</th>
<th>Writing Consortium</th>
<th>Carnegie Clss Public</th>
<th>NSSE 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Senior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FAU</th>
<th>Writing Consortium</th>
<th>Carnegie Clss Public</th>
<th>NSSE 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>40.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE)

First-Year

- FAU
- Top 50%
- Top 10%

Senior

- FAU
- Top 50%
- Top 10%
Supportive Campus Environment
(SCE)
Attended an art exhibit, play, dance, music, theater, or other performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Freshman</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Often</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercised or participated in physical fitness activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Freshman</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Often</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participated in activities to enhance your spirituality (worship, meditation, prayer, etc.)

Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue
Hours spent working on class preparation & co-curricular activities (Freshman)

- 0%: Zero Hrs/Wk
- 10%: 1-5 hrs/wk
- 20%: 6 to 10
- 30%: 11 to 15
- 40%: 16-20
- 50%: 21-25
- 60%: 26-30
- 70%: 30+

- Red: Fresh. Prep. Class
Hours spent working on class preparation & co-curricular activities (Seniors)

- Zero Hrs/Wk
- 1-5 hrs/wk
- 6 to 10 Hrs/Wk
- 11 to 15 Hrs/Wk
- 16-20 Hrs/Wk
- 21-25 Hrs/Wk
- 26-30 Hrs/Wk
- 30+ Hrs/Wk

- Seniors Prep. Class
Fresh. Hrs/Wk. Work Off-campus, Socializing, Commuting
Seniors Hrs/Wk. Work Off-campus, Socializing, Commuting

![Bar chart showing the distribution of hours worked by seniors for pay off-campus, socializing, and commuting across different time ranges.](chart.png)
Thinking about your overall experience at this institution, how would you rate the quality of relationships with faculty and administrative personnel and offices? (Freshman)
Thinking about your overall experience at this institution, how would you rate the quality of relationships with faculty and administrative personnel and offices? (Seniors)

- Unhelpful: Administrative Personnel: 5% | Faculty: 10%
- 2: Administrative Personnel: 10% | Faculty: 5%
- 3: Administrative Personnel: 15% | Faculty: 15%
- 4: Administrative Personnel: 20% | Faculty: 25%
- 5: Administrative Personnel: 25% | Faculty: 30%
- 6: Administrative Personnel: 30% | Faculty: 35%
- Helpful: Administrative Personnel: 35% | Faculty: 35%
Institutional Emphasis:
Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work

Freshman

Seniors

Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically

Freshman

Seniors
Institutional Emphasis:
Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial backgrounds

Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
Institutional Emphasis:
Providing the support you need to thrive socially

Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)
Institutional Contribution:
Working effectively with others

- **Freshman**
  - Very little: 10%
  - Some: 30%
  - Quite a bit: 40%
  - Very much: 20%

- **Seniors**
  - Very little: 5%
  - Some: 30%
  - Quite a bit: 40%
  - Very much: 25%

Voting in local, state, (provincial) or national (federal) elections

- **Freshman**
  - Very little: 20%
  - Some: 20%
  - Quite a bit: 30%
  - Very much: 30%

- **Seniors**
  - Very little: 15%
  - Some: 15%
  - Quite a bit: 30%
  - Very much: 40%
Institutional Contribution:
Learning effectively on your own

- **Freshman**
  - Very little: 20%
  - Some: 30%
  - Quite a bit: 35%
  - Very much: 25%

- **Seniors**
  - Very little: 30%
  - Some: 30%
  - Quite a bit: 25%
  - Very much: 15%

Understanding yourself

- **Freshman**
  - Very little: 20%
  - Some: 30%
  - Quite a bit: 35%
  - Very much: 15%

- **Seniors**
  - Very little: 30%
  - Some: 30%
  - Quite a bit: 25%
  - Very much: 15%
Institutional Contribution:
Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds

Freshman

Seniors

Solving complex real-world problems
Institutional Contribution:
Developing a personal code of values and ethics

Freshman

Seniors

Contribution to the welfare of your community

Freshman

Seniors
How would you rate your entire educational experience at this institution?

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Excellent

[Bar chart showing student ratings by year]
If you could start over again, would you go to the SAME INSTITUTION you are attending?

- Seniors
- Freshman