

2017 Topical Module: Development of Transferable Skills

Profile of Participating Institutions and Respondents and All Bachelor's-Granting U.S. Institutions and Students

Topical modules are short sets of questions on a topic related to current issues in higher education and student engagement that may be appended to the core survey. The **Development of Transferable Skills** module examines engagement in activities that develop useful and transferable skills for the workplace such as verbal and written fluency and analytic inquiry. In 2017, 71 U.S. institutions elected to append these items to the core survey. Of these, 66 belonged to one of the eight Carnegie classifications shown in the table below.^a

The institutions and respondents participating in a given module are only a subset of all NSSE participating institutions and respondents. The table below displays the characteristics for module participants alongside NSSE 2017 participants as well as all bachelor's-granting U.S. institutions and students (all limited to the eight indicated Carnegie Classification categories).

| | Institutions | | | Students | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| | Trans. Skills Module (%) | NSSE 2017 (%) | U.S. ^b (%) | Trans. Skills Module (%) | NSSE 2017 (%) | U.S. ^b (%) |
| Carnegie Basic Classification^c | | | | | | |
| R1: Doctoral Universities - Highest research activity | 9 | 5 | 7 | 27 | 18 | 26 |
| R2: Doctoral Universities - Higher research activity | 2 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 13 | 14 |
| R3: Doctoral Universities - Moderate research activity | 14 | 7 | 7 | 15 | 9 | 11 |
| M1: Master's Colleges and Universities - Larger programs | 26 | 29 | 24 | 29 | 32 | 28 |
| M2: Master's Colleges and Universities - Medium programs | 14 | 13 | 13 | 6 | 8 | 7 |
| M3: Master's Colleges and Universities - Smaller programs | 2 | 8 | 9 | 0 | 5 | 3 |
| Baccalaureate Colleges: Arts & Sciences Focus | 24 | 16 | 15 | 11 | 8 | 4 |
| Baccalaureate Colleges: Diverse Fields | 11 | 15 | 19 | 5 | 7 | 5 |
| Control | | | | | | |
| Public | 41 | 44 | 35 | 57 | 67 | 66 |
| Private | 59 | 56 | 65 | 43 | 33 | 34 |
| Undergraduate enrollment | | | | | | |
| Fewer than 1,000 | 15 | 15 | 21 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| 1,000 – 2,499 | 30 | 32 | 33 | 14 | 14 | 10 |
| 2,500 – 4,999 | 21 | 18 | 17 | 15 | 14 | 11 |
| 5,000 – 9,999 | 18 | 19 | 14 | 21 | 21 | 19 |
| 10,000 – 19,999 | 6 | 9 | 9 | 11 | 18 | 24 |
| 20,000 or more | 9 | 7 | 6 | 35 | 30 | 34 |

a. All numbers are unweighted and based on U.S. postsecondary institutions that award bachelor's degrees and belong to one of the eight Carnegie Classification categories in the table. Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

b. U.S. percentages are based on the 2015 IPEDS Institutional Characteristics file.

c. For information on the Carnegie Foundation's Basic Classification, see carnegieclassifications.iu.edu

NSSE 2017 Topical Modules

U.S. Summary Frequencies by Class and Sex

Development of Transferable Skills

First-Year Students

Seniors

| Item wording or description | Variable name | Response options | Female | | Male | | Total | | Female | | Male | | Total | |
|--|------------------|------------------|--------|-----|-------|-----|--------|-----|--------|-----|-------|-----|--------|-----|
| | | | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| 1. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you done the following? | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. Discussed or debated an issue of social, political, or philosophical importance | TRN01a | Never | 1,107 | 12 | 451 | 9 | 1,558 | 11 | 1,473 | 12 | 762 | 11 | 2,235 | 11 |
| | | Sometimes | 3,621 | 37 | 1,883 | 36 | 5,504 | 36 | 4,465 | 33 | 2,402 | 32 | 6,867 | 33 |
| | | Often | 3,235 | 32 | 1,923 | 34 | 5,158 | 33 | 4,080 | 30 | 2,376 | 31 | 6,456 | 30 |
| | | Very often | 2,134 | 20 | 1,156 | 21 | 3,290 | 20 | 3,455 | 25 | 2,038 | 26 | 5,493 | 26 |
| | | Total | 10,097 | 100 | 5,413 | 100 | 15,510 | 100 | 13,473 | 100 | 7,578 | 100 | 21,051 | 100 |
| b. Made a speech to a group | TRN01b | Never | 3,089 | 33 | 1,244 | 26 | 4,333 | 30 | 3,195 | 25 | 1,402 | 19 | 4,597 | 22 |
| | | Sometimes | 4,353 | 42 | 2,478 | 45 | 6,831 | 43 | 5,190 | 38 | 3,052 | 40 | 8,242 | 39 |
| | | Often | 1,848 | 17 | 1,240 | 22 | 3,088 | 19 | 3,166 | 23 | 1,937 | 25 | 5,103 | 24 |
| | | Very often | 801 | 8 | 450 | 8 | 1,251 | 8 | 1,922 | 14 | 1,174 | 16 | 3,096 | 15 |
| | | Total | 10,091 | 100 | 5,412 | 100 | 15,503 | 100 | 13,473 | 100 | 7,565 | 100 | 21,038 | 100 |
| c. Worked in a group with people who differed from you in terms of background, political orientation, points of view, etc. | TRN01c | Never | 686 | 8 | 322 | 7 | 1,008 | 8 | 708 | 6 | 405 | 5 | 1,113 | 6 |
| | | Sometimes | 3,511 | 35 | 1,819 | 34 | 5,330 | 34 | 4,280 | 31 | 2,245 | 29 | 6,525 | 30 |
| | | Often | 3,904 | 38 | 2,226 | 40 | 6,130 | 39 | 5,030 | 37 | 2,988 | 39 | 8,018 | 38 |
| | | Very often | 2,001 | 20 | 1,040 | 19 | 3,041 | 19 | 3,450 | 26 | 1,933 | 26 | 5,383 | 26 |
| | | Total | 10,102 | 100 | 5,407 | 100 | 15,509 | 100 | 13,468 | 100 | 7,571 | 100 | 21,039 | 100 |
| d. Discussed the ethical consequences of a course of action | TRN01d | Never | 1,444 | 15 | 580 | 12 | 2,024 | 14 | 1,300 | 10 | 745 | 11 | 2,045 | 10 |
| | | Sometimes | 3,965 | 39 | 2,192 | 41 | 6,157 | 40 | 4,732 | 35 | 2,774 | 37 | 7,506 | 36 |
| | | Often | 3,324 | 32 | 1,909 | 34 | 5,233 | 33 | 4,724 | 35 | 2,662 | 34 | 7,386 | 34 |
| | | Very often | 1,353 | 13 | 731 | 13 | 2,084 | 13 | 2,717 | 20 | 1,391 | 18 | 4,108 | 19 |
| | | Total | 10,086 | 100 | 5,412 | 100 | 15,498 | 100 | 13,473 | 100 | 7,572 | 100 | 21,045 | 100 |
| e. Creatively thought about new ideas or about ways to improve things | TRN01e | Never | 472 | 5 | 260 | 6 | 732 | 5 | 387 | 3 | 270 | 4 | 657 | 4 |
| | | Sometimes | 3,216 | 32 | 1,677 | 32 | 4,893 | 32 | 3,300 | 25 | 1,819 | 24 | 5,119 | 25 |
| | | Often | 4,167 | 41 | 2,318 | 41 | 6,485 | 41 | 5,567 | 41 | 3,224 | 42 | 8,791 | 41 |
| | | Very often | 2,229 | 22 | 1,152 | 21 | 3,381 | 21 | 4,210 | 31 | 2,258 | 30 | 6,468 | 31 |
| | | Total | 10,084 | 100 | 5,407 | 100 | 15,491 | 100 | 13,464 | 100 | 7,571 | 100 | 21,035 | 100 |
| f. Critically evaluated multiple solutions to a problem | TRN01f | Never | 508 | 5 | 237 | 5 | 745 | 5 | 402 | 3 | 236 | 3 | 638 | 3 |
| | | Sometimes | 3,312 | 33 | 1,689 | 32 | 5,001 | 33 | 3,200 | 24 | 1,678 | 22 | 4,878 | 23 |
| | | Often | 4,267 | 42 | 2,352 | 42 | 6,619 | 42 | 5,752 | 42 | 3,244 | 42 | 8,996 | 42 |
| | | Very often | 1,990 | 20 | 1,126 | 21 | 3,116 | 20 | 4,111 | 30 | 2,403 | 32 | 6,514 | 31 |
| | | Total | 10,077 | 100 | 5,404 | 100 | 15,481 | 100 | 13,465 | 100 | 7,561 | 100 | 21,026 | 100 |
| g. Discussed complex problems with others to develop a better solution | TRN01g | Never | 702 | 8 | 335 | 7 | 1,037 | 7 | 595 | 5 | 336 | 5 | 931 | 5 |
| | | Sometimes | 3,583 | 36 | 1,816 | 34 | 5,399 | 35 | 3,571 | 27 | 1,888 | 25 | 5,459 | 26 |
| | | Often | 3,917 | 38 | 2,232 | 40 | 6,149 | 39 | 5,464 | 40 | 3,029 | 40 | 8,493 | 40 |
| | | Very often | 1,864 | 18 | 1,015 | 19 | 2,879 | 19 | 3,815 | 28 | 2,285 | 31 | 6,100 | 29 |
| | | Total | 10,066 | 100 | 5,398 | 100 | 15,464 | 100 | 13,445 | 100 | 7,538 | 100 | 20,983 | 100 |

Note: Results weighted by institution-reported sex, enrollment status, and institution size. Counts are not weighted.

NSSE 2017 Topical Modules

U.S. Summary Frequencies by Class and Sex

Development of Transferable Skills

| Item wording or description | Variable name | Response options | First-Year Students | | | | | | Seniors | | | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|---------------------|-----|-------|-----|--------|-----|---------|-----|-------|-----|--------|-----|
| | | | Female | | Male | | Total | | Female | | Male | | Total | |
| | | | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| 2. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you written something (paper, report, article, blog, etc.) that: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. Used information from a variety of sources (books, journals, Internet, databases, etc.) | TRN02a | Never | 386 | 4 | 233 | 5 | 619 | 5 | 413 | 3 | 366 | 5 | 779 | 4 |
| | | Sometimes | 2,732 | 28 | 1,694 | 33 | 4,426 | 30 | 2,398 | 18 | 1,873 | 26 | 4,271 | 21 |
| | | Often | 3,901 | 38 | 2,216 | 40 | 6,117 | 39 | 4,486 | 33 | 2,641 | 34 | 7,127 | 34 |
| | | Very often | 3,058 | 29 | 1,259 | 22 | 4,317 | 26 | 6,163 | 45 | 2,671 | 35 | 8,834 | 41 |
| | | Total | 10,077 | 100 | 5,402 | 100 | 15,479 | 100 | 13,460 | 100 | 7,551 | 100 | 21,011 | 100 |
| b. Assessed the conclusions of a published work | TRN02b | Never | 1,346 | 15 | 608 | 13 | 1,954 | 14 | 1,485 | 12 | 937 | 14 | 2,422 | 13 |
| | | Sometimes | 3,628 | 37 | 2,175 | 40 | 5,803 | 38 | 3,894 | 29 | 2,451 | 33 | 6,345 | 31 |
| | | Often | 3,332 | 32 | 1,849 | 33 | 5,181 | 32 | 4,187 | 31 | 2,367 | 30 | 6,554 | 31 |
| | | Very often | 1,744 | 17 | 752 | 13 | 2,496 | 15 | 3,865 | 28 | 1,767 | 23 | 5,632 | 26 |
| | | Total | 10,050 | 100 | 5,384 | 100 | 15,434 | 100 | 13,431 | 100 | 7,522 | 100 | 20,953 | 100 |
| c. Included ideas from more than one academic discipline | TRN02c | Never | 1,176 | 13 | 520 | 11 | 1,696 | 12 | 1,022 | 8 | 631 | 9 | 1,653 | 9 |
| | | Sometimes | 3,658 | 37 | 2,062 | 38 | 5,720 | 37 | 3,972 | 29 | 2,400 | 32 | 6,372 | 31 |
| | | Often | 3,466 | 33 | 1,990 | 36 | 5,456 | 34 | 4,533 | 33 | 2,661 | 35 | 7,194 | 34 |
| | | Very often | 1,748 | 17 | 815 | 15 | 2,563 | 16 | 3,904 | 29 | 1,839 | 24 | 5,743 | 27 |
| | | Total | 10,048 | 100 | 5,387 | 100 | 15,435 | 100 | 13,431 | 100 | 7,531 | 100 | 20,962 | 100 |
| d. Presented multiple viewpoints or perspectives | TRN02d | Never | 809 | 9 | 395 | 8 | 1,204 | 9 | 841 | 7 | 617 | 9 | 1,458 | 8 |
| | | Sometimes | 3,667 | 37 | 2,036 | 38 | 5,703 | 37 | 4,315 | 32 | 2,459 | 33 | 6,774 | 32 |
| | | Often | 3,783 | 37 | 2,087 | 38 | 5,870 | 37 | 4,817 | 35 | 2,764 | 36 | 7,581 | 35 |
| | | Very often | 1,804 | 17 | 861 | 16 | 2,665 | 17 | 3,479 | 26 | 1,711 | 22 | 5,190 | 24 |
| | | Total | 10,063 | 100 | 5,379 | 100 | 15,442 | 100 | 13,452 | 100 | 7,551 | 100 | 21,003 | 100 |

Note: Results weighted by institution-reported sex, enrollment status, and institution size. Counts are not weighted.

NSSE 2017 Topical Modules

U.S. Summary Means and Standard Deviations by Class and Sex

Development of Transferable Skills

| Item wording or description | Variable name | First-Year Students | | | | | | Seniors | | | | | |
|--|------------------|---------------------|-----|------|-----|-------|-----|---------|-----|------|-----|-------|-----|
| | | Female | | Male | | Total | | Female | | Male | | Total | |
| | | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| 1. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you done the following? | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. Discussed or debated an issue of social, political, or philosophical importance | TRN01a | 2.59 | .94 | 2.66 | .91 | 2.62 | .92 | 2.68 | .98 | 2.72 | .97 | 2.70 | .97 |
| b. Made a speech to a group | TRN01b | 1.99 | .90 | 2.11 | .88 | 2.05 | .89 | 2.26 | .98 | 2.37 | .96 | 2.31 | .98 |
| c. Worked in a group with people who differed from you in terms of background, political orientation, points of view, etc. | TRN01c | 2.69 | .88 | 2.71 | .85 | 2.70 | .87 | 2.84 | .88 | 2.86 | .87 | 2.85 | .87 |
| d. Discussed the ethical consequences of a course of action | TRN01d | 2.44 | .90 | 2.48 | .87 | 2.46 | .89 | 2.64 | .91 | 2.60 | .90 | 2.62 | .91 |
| e. Creatively thought about new ideas or about ways to improve things | TRN01e | 2.80 | .84 | 2.78 | .84 | 2.79 | .84 | 3.00 | .83 | 2.98 | .84 | 2.99 | .83 |
| f. Critically evaluated multiple solutions to a problem | TRN01f | 2.76 | .83 | 2.79 | .82 | 2.77 | .83 | 3.00 | .82 | 3.03 | .82 | 3.01 | .82 |
| g. Discussed complex problems with others to develop a better solution | TRN01g | 2.67 | .86 | 2.70 | .85 | 2.69 | .86 | 2.92 | .86 | 2.96 | .86 | 2.93 | .86 |
| 2. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you written something (paper, report, article, blog, etc.) that: | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. Used information from a variety of sources (books, journals, Internet, databases, etc.) | TRN02a | 2.92 | .87 | 2.80 | .84 | 2.86 | .86 | 3.20 | .85 | 2.98 | .91 | 3.11 | .88 |
| b. Assessed the conclusions of a published work | TRN02b | 2.51 | .94 | 2.46 | .88 | 2.49 | .91 | 2.75 | .99 | 2.64 | .98 | 2.70 | .99 |
| c. Included ideas from more than one academic discipline | TRN02c | 2.54 | .92 | 2.54 | .88 | 2.54 | .90 | 2.83 | .94 | 2.73 | .93 | 2.79 | .94 |
| d. Presented multiple viewpoints or perspectives | TRN02d | 2.63 | .87 | 2.61 | .85 | 2.62 | .86 | 2.80 | .90 | 2.71 | .91 | 2.76 | .91 |

Notes: Results weighted by sex, enrollment status, and institution size. See codebook for variable ranges. Categorical items are not listed.

Not for re-use without permission. Copyright 2017 The Trustees of Indiana University