

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.

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