

2019 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 2019, 38 U.S. institutions elected to append these items to the core survey. Of these, 36 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 2019 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 2019 (%)	U.S. ^b (%)	Trans. Skills Module (%)	NSSE 2019 (%)	U.S. ^b (%)
Carnegie Basic Classification^c						
Doctoral Universities – Very high research activity	0	6	7	0	20	27
Doctoral Universities - High research activity	11	10	6	16	18	14
Doctoral/Professional Universities	19	13	7	53	17	11
Master's Colleges and Universities - Larger programs	25	26	25	17	25	28
Master's Colleges and Universities - Medium programs	8	15	13	5	8	7
Master's Colleges and Universities - Smaller programs	11	6	9	4	3	3
Baccalaureate Colleges: Arts & Sciences Focus	11	12	15	2	5	4
Baccalaureate Colleges: Diverse Fields	14	12	18	4	4	5
Control						
Public	42	42	35	43	62	67
Private	58	58	65	57	38	33
Undergraduate enrollment						
Fewer than 1,000	22	12	21	3	3	2
1,000 – 2,499	22	33	32	8	14	10
2,500 – 4,999	11	21	17	6	14	11
5,000 – 9,999	22	17	14	21	20	18
10,000 – 19,999	11	10	9	19	21	23
20,000 or more	11	7	6	43	29	35

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 2018 IPEDS Institutional Characteristics file.

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

NSSE 2019 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	930	20	266	12	1,220	17	1,565	16	674	15	2,264	15
		Sometimes	1,936	38	788	42	2,769	39	3,663	36	1,675	33	5,382	35
		Often	1,352	26	606	28	1,984	27	2,947	28	1,589	30	4,566	29
		Very often	810	16	387	19	1,210	17	2,041	20	1,199	22	3,263	21
		Total	5,028	100	2,047	100	7,183	100	10,216	100	5,137	100	15,475	100
b. Made a speech to a group	TRN01b	Never	1,715	43	511	29	2,293	38	3,473	38	1,382	30	4,919	35
		Sometimes	1,746	30	802	38	2,575	33	3,587	34	1,778	34	5,401	34
		Often	1,059	17	495	21	1,561	18	1,935	18	1,147	21	3,091	19
		Very often	511	9	244	12	762	10	1,236	11	835	16	2,085	13
		Total	5,031	100	2,052	100	7,191	100	10,231	100	5,142	100	15,496	100
c. Worked in a group with people who differed from you in terms of background, political orientation, points of view, etc.	TRN01c	Never	557	14	175	9	770	12	957	9	474	9	1,452	9
		Sometimes	1,607	31	724	35	2,365	32	3,147	29	1,494	29	4,682	29
		Often	1,826	33	717	34	2,569	33	3,395	33	1,865	35	5,291	34
		Very often	1,043	22	433	22	1,488	22	2,710	29	1,313	27	4,051	28
		Total	5,033	100	2,049	100	7,192	100	10,209	100	5,146	100	15,476	100
d. Discussed the ethical consequences of a course of action	TRN01d	Never	827	17	257	13	1,114	16	1,147	11	557	12	1,729	12
		Sometimes	1,989	39	853	42	2,889	40	3,392	33	1,692	34	5,122	33
		Often	1,509	27	632	31	2,160	28	3,445	33	1,787	33	5,262	33
		Very often	699	16	307	14	1,019	15	2,241	22	1,106	21	3,377	22
		Total	5,024	100	2,049	100	7,182	100	10,225	100	5,142	100	15,490	100
e. Creatively thought about new ideas or about ways to improve things	TRN01e	Never	267	6	91	5	368	5	370	4	223	5	606	4
		Sometimes	1,602	31	681	32	2,317	31	2,310	22	1,139	23	3,477	23
		Often	1,947	37	792	37	2,775	37	4,182	41	2,185	41	6,405	41
		Very often	1,210	27	487	26	1,726	26	3,346	33	1,592	31	4,982	32
		Total	5,026	100	2,051	100	7,186	100	10,208	100	5,139	100	15,470	100
f. Critically evaluated multiple solutions to a problem	TRN01f	Never	285	6	85	5	379	5	350	4	195	4	552	4
		Sometimes	1,672	31	634	31	2,339	31	2,363	23	1,118	22	3,511	23
		Often	1,971	38	849	39	2,858	38	4,236	41	2,156	41	6,427	41
		Very often	1,094	25	486	26	1,607	26	3,264	32	1,677	33	4,992	33
		Total	5,022	100	2,054	100	7,183	100	10,213	100	5,146	100	15,482	100
g. Discussed complex problems with others to develop a better solution	TRN01g	Never	443	9	154	7	615	9	659	7	332	7	1,008	7
		Sometimes	1,830	36	752	37	2,610	36	2,795	27	1,256	25	4,084	26
		Often	1,800	34	745	36	2,582	34	3,874	37	2,036	39	5,940	38
		Very often	953	22	401	20	1,377	21	2,890	29	1,513	30	4,445	29
		Total	5,026	100	2,052	100	7,184	100	10,218	100	5,137	100	15,477	100

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

NSSE 2019 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	177	3	62	3	244	3	267	3	189	4	462	3
		Sometimes	1,132	21	563	26	1,732	23	1,464	14	873	17	2,347	15
		Often	1,936	36	825	38	2,799	37	3,008	29	1,745	33	4,774	30
		Very often	1,777	39	600	33	2,406	37	5,467	55	2,331	46	7,884	51
		Total	5,022	100	2,050	100	7,181	100	10,206	100	5,138	100	15,467	100
b. Assessed the conclusions of a published work	TRN02b	Never	693	14	222	11	934	13	1,049	11	536	11	1,603	11
		Sometimes	1,750	34	760	35	2,562	34	2,801	28	1,496	29	4,331	28
		Often	1,590	30	689	31	2,302	30	3,086	29	1,673	32	4,781	30
		Very often	974	22	374	22	1,362	22	3,245	32	1,417	28	4,710	30
		Total	5,007	100	2,045	100	7,160	100	10,181	100	5,122	100	15,425	100
c. Included ideas from more than one academic discipline	TRN02c	Never	509	10	146	6	685	9	721	7	367	8	1,097	7
		Sometimes	1,755	35	739	35	2,539	35	2,619	25	1,403	27	4,051	26
		Often	1,714	33	759	36	2,491	34	3,366	33	1,812	35	5,204	34
		Very often	1,030	23	401	23	1,446	23	3,463	34	1,539	30	5,060	33
		Total	5,008	100	2,045	100	7,161	100	10,169	100	5,121	100	15,412	100
d. Presented multiple viewpoints or perspectives	TRN02d	Never	349	7	117	6	477	6	576	5	299	6	880	6
		Sometimes	1,763	34	777	37	2,593	36	2,908	28	1,464	28	4,398	28
		Often	1,848	35	718	32	2,592	34	3,677	36	1,957	37	5,672	36
		Very often	1,042	24	434	25	1,495	24	3,025	31	1,414	29	4,491	30
		Total	5,002	100	2,046	100	7,157	100	10,186	100	5,134	100	15,441	100

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

NSSE 2019 Topical Modules

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

Development of Transferable Skills

First-Year Students

Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	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	2.39	.98	2.53	.92	2.44	.96	2.53	.99	2.60	.99	2.55	.99
b. Made a speech to a group	TRN01b	1.93	.99	2.15	.97	2.00	.99	2.01	.99	2.23	1.04	2.10	1.02
c. Worked in a group with people who differed from you in terms of background, political orientation, points of view, etc.	TRN01c	2.63	.98	2.70	.91	2.65	.96	2.82	.95	2.80	.94	2.81	.95
d. Discussed the ethical consequences of a course of action	TRN01d	2.42	.95	2.45	.89	2.43	.93	2.66	.95	2.64	.95	2.65	.95
e. Creatively thought about new ideas or about ways to improve things	TRN01e	2.85	.88	2.84	.86	2.85	.87	3.03	.84	2.98	.86	3.01	.85
f. Critically evaluated multiple solutions to a problem	TRN01f	2.83	.87	2.86	.86	2.84	.87	3.02	.84	3.03	.85	3.02	.84
g. Discussed complex problems with others to develop a better solution	TRN01g	2.67	.91	2.69	.88	2.68	.90	2.88	.90	2.92	.90	2.90	.90
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	3.12	.85	3.03	.83	3.08	.84	3.36	.81	3.21	.86	3.30	.84
b. Assessed the conclusions of a published work	TRN02b	2.60	.99	2.64	.95	2.61	.97	2.83	1.00	2.77	.98	2.80	.99
c. Included ideas from more than one academic discipline	TRN02c	2.68	.93	2.75	.87	2.70	.92	2.94	.94	2.88	.93	2.92	.94
d. Presented multiple viewpoints or perspectives	TRN02d	2.76	.89	2.76	.89	2.76	.89	2.91	.89	2.88	.90	2.90	.90

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