



**EMBARGOED**  
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## **INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM PRACTICES LINKED TO HIGHER-ORDER LEARNING AND GREATER GAINS DURING COLLEGE, SURVEY FINDS**

Students in courses with more inclusive practices reported greater learning and engagement, according to new survey results released by the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). About 3 in 5 college students said their courses emphasized sharing their own perspectives and experiences or respecting the expression of diverse ideas, while only half said their courses emphasized learning about other cultures or discussing issues of equity or privilege. Students in courses with more inclusive classroom practices reported greater emphasis on higher-order learning, engaged more in reflective and integrative learning, perceived greater institutional contributions to their learning and development, and had more favorable perceptions of institutional support.

“Although bachelor’s-granting colleges and universities have historically served a privileged and predominantly White student body, the last half decade has witnessed diversification along many dimensions as well as heightened attention to many forms of diversity,” said NSSE Director Alexander C. McCormick. “Institutions are working to provide inclusive environments and the time is right to ask how well we’re doing.”

The 2017 release of NSSE’s annual report, ***Engagement Insights: Survey Findings on the Quality of Undergraduate Education***, presents findings from the most recent administration of NSSE and its companion surveys, the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) and the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), to first-year and senior students attending more than 630 bachelor’s degree-granting institutions across the United States in spring 2017. This report provides responses to new survey questions about inclusiveness and engagement with cultural diversity as well as findings offering fresh insights into the experiences of first-generation college students; students of color; gender-variant students; and LGBQ+ students, those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other non-heterosexual orientation.

Reflecting the national attention on issues of racial equity, social justice, and political polarization, the report also investigates student activism and its relationship to engagement in educationally purposeful activities. Rather than a threat to the ideals of higher education, student activism appears to signal reflection, critical thinking, and engagement with ideas—combined with a vision for change.

Other noteworthy findings from NSSE, BCSSE, and FSSE include:

- Seniors from traditionally underrepresented groups gave higher ratings than the average senior to the quality of interactions with others and campus support.
- First-generation seniors were less likely than their peers with college-educated parents to participate in five of six educationally beneficial High-Impact Practices.
- Gender-variant first-year students rated their interactions with peers, advisors, and faculty as high as cisgender students did, but their interactions with administrative staff and offices garnered lower ratings relative to other students.
- LGBTQ+ students were more engaged than their straight peers in reflective and integrative learning activities.
- Results from BCSSE on students' expectations for student-faculty interaction compared to NSSE results on their actual experiences indicate that unmet expectations may be a predictor for student departure.
- Comparison of results from a special question set in FSSE 2007 and 2017 found little change in the incorporation of diversity in courses over the last decade.
- Analysis of FSSE results on the time faculty allocate to teaching, research, and service revealed five distinct patterns accounting for 9–33% of faculty.

The report also features examples of the use of NSSE results to inform improvement efforts at Biola University, California State University San Bernardino, Keene State College, University of Minnesota Duluth, Southern Connecticut State University, Winthrop University, and Youngstown State University. According to Sally M. Johnstone, President of National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, “NSSE results are a great starting point to understand what is, or is not, working well in your institution. It’s like a flashlight shining a path toward improving your students’ success.”

NSSE’s annual survey provides colleges and universities with rich data about the undergraduate experience to help them improve student learning and success in an ever-shifting higher education context. Summary results for all survey questions, Engagement Indicators, and High-Impact Practices by sex, major field, and institution type are available on the NSSE website: [nsse.indiana.edu/links/summary\\_tables](https://nsse.indiana.edu/links/summary_tables).

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*Engagement Insights: Survey Findings on the Quality of Undergraduate Education—Annual Results 2017* can be downloaded from the NSSE website or ordered for \$20.

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