 NSSE Data User’s Guide: Worksheet #1

Guiding Questions

By now, you have read through your institutional reports and are ready to start using your data. Knowing where to begin can be overwhelming, especially with the array of reports and data at your disposal. Before you dive into your results, take a moment to identify your main intentions for pursuing student engagement information and the most appropriate audiences for this information at your institution. The following questions are a reflection activity to help frame contexts to consider, understand what results mean, and disseminate the findings.

1. Reflect on your reasons for administering the NSSE survey. What strengths, concerns, or points of interest do you want to know about your students’ educational experiences?

2. Review your institutional *NSSE Snapshot*. Are there any Engagement Indicator scores, or item level results that you want to know more about? Do these matters require attention before results are shared with other audiences?

3. What is occupying attention at your institution? Is first-year student retention a concern? Is strategic planning on the campus agenda? Are you preparing for reaffirmation of accreditation? Is there a program that you want to improve or develop for a certain student population? What are your institution’s priorities? Jot down these ideas to keep in mind as you move forward with presenting and using your NSSE data.

4. What audiences would be interested in or could benefit from a greater understanding of your NSSE data? Identify key groups from and add to this list of offices and people to consider:

 Prospective students and parents

 Accreditation organizations

 General education assessment committees

 Alumni

 State agencies and commissions

 Faculty senates and committees

 Boards of trustees

 Student affairs offices and units

 Student retention and transfer student committees

 Internal and external media