Agenda

Brief Overview of CCSSE and NSSE

Key Terms
- Process Indicators
- Benchmarking
- Between/Within Variance

Using Engagement Data
- Criterion-referencing
- Five Strategies for Achieving Excellence

Q & A
What constitutes quality in undergraduate education?

What evidence of quality would be helpful in guiding improvement efforts?
“We can tell people almost anything about education except how well students are learning.”

Patrick M. Callan, President, National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education
What matters most is what students do, not who they are.

Educationally effective institutions channel student energy toward the right activities.
National Survey of Student Engagement (pronounced “nessie”)

Community College Survey of Student Engagement (pronounced “sessie”)

College student surveys that assess the extent to which students engage in educational practices associated with high levels of learning and development.
CCSSE/NSSE Overview

Based on effective educational practices

Items have face and content validity

Stable over time

Self-reported data are credible

Students will participate

Actionable data
Key Terms

Process Indicators
Benchmarking
Within and Between Variance
Key Terms

Process indicators

We often assess the *products* of education (grades, persistence, graduation rates…)

We also need to know HOW were such outcomes achieved. What programs, policies, student efforts produced those outcomes?

*Process indicators* are measurable markers along the educational route, *associated with desirable outcomes.*
Key Terms

Process indicators

Examples:

• The amount courses emphasize higher-order thinking activities (e.g., analysis, synthesis, evaluation).

• The number of hours students spend in academic preparation

• The amount and quality of writing students are asked to submit
Benchmarking

A method by which organizations evaluate various aspects of their processes in relation to best practice, usually within their own sector.

Used to establish “industry standards” based on external and internal comparisons

Comparisons to similar institutions establish benchmarks
Key Terms

NSSE/CCSSE Benchmarks are Process Indicators

- Academic Challenge
- Active and Collaborative Learning
- Student-Faculty Interaction
- Enriching Educational Experiences*
- Supportive Campus Environment*
- Student Effort**
- Support for Learners**

*NSSE only  **CCSSE only
Within variance is at the student level –

*How widely dispersed are students’ engagement scores?*

Between variance is at the institutional level –

*How widely dispersed are institutions’ engagement scores?*

*(Your institution’s score is the mean of your students’ scores)*
Within and Between Variance

Student engagement varies more *within* than between institutions.
Supportive Campus Environment:
Seniors at Master's Institutions
Key Terms

Within and Between Variance

Who is more engaged?

Women
Fraternity & sorority members
Full-time students
Students who live on campus
Learning community students
Students with diversity experiences
Worth Pondering:

How do we reach our least engaged students?
Using Engagement Data

Normative- and Criterion-Referenced Benchmarking

**Normative**

Compare your college with the mean

**Criterion**

Compare your college with a predetermined value
Normative Benchmarking

Provide context

Determine what the mean you would like to be compared with is

Situate Your Results

What does it mean to have 80% of your students satisfied?

A good place to start, but not necessarily the end point
Using Engagement Data

Criterion Benchmarking with NSSE/CCSSE

- What is the college mission?
- What are the college’s accreditation goals?
- Are all students equally engaged?
Five ways to reach for excellence using NSSE/CCSSE Benchmarks:

- Compare themselves to national average
- Compare themselves to high-performing colleges
- Measure their performance against their least-engaged group
- Gauge work in areas most strongly valued
- Compare now to where they want to be
Using Engagement Data

Compare yourself to high performers
Measure performance against least-engaged group

- Breakout by race, gender, enrollment status, parental education, traditional vs. non-traditional age
- At risk students vs. other students. Defining at-risk at your college
Using Engagement Data

Gauge work in areas most strongly valued

- Focus On Current College Initiatives
- Sharing thoughts about how to use NSSE/CCSSE data to evaluate different programs.
- Juxtapose NSSE/CCSSE data and college mission statement
Using Engagement Data

Compare now to where you want to be

CCSSE Benchmarks

- Students
- Faculty

- Active and Collaborative Learning
- Student Effort
- Academic Challenge
- Student-Faculty Interaction
- Support for Learners
Using Engagement Data

Gauge work in areas most strongly valued

• Focus On Current College Initiatives
• Sharing thoughts about how to use NSSE/CCSSE data to evaluate different programs.
• Complications of this approach and how you, as college researchers, can enhance what you can do with the data (e.g., student tracking).
Northwest Vista College (TX)

- CCSSE results are used in the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) at Northwest Vista College (NVC).

- NVC’s QEP concentrates on assessing student learning outcomes for the core curriculum by serving as a focused area of NVC’s Attitude, Skills, and Knowledge (ASK) model.

- CCSSE survey items directly and indirectly relate to many of the 12 student learning outcomes identified as important by NVC faculty.
Using Engagement Data

Estrella Mountain (AZ)

- Conducted three improvement sessions with students, faculty and staff; discussed the implications of CCSSE at the annual strategic planning retreat, and identified five improvement strategies for increasing student engagement.
  - Developing a freshmen institute (with learning communities),
  - Improving publicity of workshops and services available to students (through the use of electronic kiosks),
  - Developing student life activities to increase contact with faculty in non-academic settings,
  - Creating facilities to improve adjunct faculty interaction with students, and;
  - Integrating student support services into the course curriculum
Questions?

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