Guide to Online Resources

This document provides a snapshot of user resources that are available for download from the NSSE Web site. It is included with active links in the Web version of the Institutional Report 2009.

www.nsse.iub.edu/2009_Institutional_Report

Accreditation Toolkits

NSSE Accreditation Toolkits offer guidelines for incorporating NSSE into accreditation self-studies and suggest ways to map specific items from the NSSE instrument to accreditation standards.

www.nsse.iub.edu/links/accred_toolkits

2009 Regional Accreditation Toolkits

The toolkits include sample timelines to help you decide when and how often to collect student engagement data for integration into your accreditation process. We share examples of how other institutions in your region have used NSSE in their accreditation efforts.

Regional toolkits available:

• Higher Learning Commission - North Central Association (HLC-NCA)
• Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)
• New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)
• Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
• Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)
• Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)

Specialized Accreditation Toolkits

Specialized Accreditation Toolkits provide suggestions on how institutions can incorporate NSSE results into the processes and products that support specialized and professional accreditation. Guidelines map survey items to specific accreditation standards.

Specialized toolkits available:

• ABET: Applied Sciences, Computer Science, Engineering, Engineering Technology, Information Systems
• Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB): Business, Accounting
• National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE): Teacher education
• Teacher Accreditation Education Council (TEAC): Teacher education

Publications to Enhance Educational Practice

Project DEEP Publications

NSSE carried out Project DEEP (Documenting Effective Educational Practice) from 2002 through 2007. With support from Lumina Foundation for Education and the Center of Inquiry in the Liberal Arts at Wabash College, this initiative examined the everyday workings of a variety of educationally effective colleges and universities to learn what they do to promote student success. Three publications produced in conjunction with Project DEEP are helpful resource materials for institutions concerned about enhancing student learning:


www.nsse.iub.edu/links/assessing_conditions


www.nsse.iub.edu/links/assessing_conditions


www.nsse.iub.edu/links/one_size
Project DEEP Briefs
www.nsse.iub/links/practice_briefs

NSSE has also created a series of 16 practice briefs based on the Project DEEP schools. The briefs summarize educationally purposeful activities that matter to student learning and provide useful suggestions for promoting student success to a wide range of audiences including university administrators and leaders, faculty, students and the general public.

Building Engagement and Attainment of Minority Students (BEAMS)

The Building Engagement and Attainment of Minority Students (BEAMS) project was a partnership between the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) and NSSE and more than 100 four-year institutions in the Alliance for Equity in Higher Education. Having administered NSSE at least once, these institutions committed to implementing action plans to improve the quality of the undergraduate experience on their campus and conducting another NSSE administration to assess success.

The results of the study have been published in the monograph, Increasing Student Success at Minority-Serving Institutions: Findings from the BEAMS Project, and in a series of 10 topical briefs based on BEAMS Project outcomes:

- Aligning Multiple Campus Initiatives
- Collecting Survey Data for Assessment
- Cultivating Generative Connections, Commitment, and Engagement Among Campus Constituencies
- First-Year Programs
- Gaining Support from Campus Leaders
- Increasing Student Engagement Through Faculty Development
- Leveraging Technology in Campus Change Initiatives
- Purposeful Co-Curricular Activities Designed to Increase Engagement
- Strengthening Writing Across the Curriculum
- Student Support Services


Connecting the Dots
www.nsse.iub/links/ctd

The Connecting the Dots (CTD) project, funded by the Lumina Foundation and the Center of Inquiry in the Liberal Arts at Wabash College, examined the relationships between student engagement and selected measures of success in college for students attending different types of four-year colleges and universities.

Researchers found that student engagement during college had a positive effect on students’ first-year grades and persistence to the second year of college while controlling for a variety of pre-college and first-year experience variables such as pre-college GPA and number of hours per week working off-campus. Although student engagement during college benefits students of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, this study found that for historically underserved students, the gains may be greater. Findings also support the validity of the NSSE instrument for minority students.

www.nsse.iub.edu/links/high_impact_practices

In a recent report from AAC&U’s Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) initiative, High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter, author George Kuh, Director of the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and founding director of NSSE, discusses 10 educational practices that research has shown correlate with higher levels of student performance. NSSE data are used to examine practices such as first-year seminars, common intellectual experiences, learning communities, service-learning, undergraduate research, study abroad, experiences with diversity, internships, and capstone courses and projects. The study shows the positive effects of six high-impact activities on first-year and senior student self-reported gains in relation to learning outcomes and personal development. Results are also correlated with NSSE deep approaches to learning scales.

The report can be ordered on the AAC&U via the link provided above.
Related Publications and Presentations

www.nsse.iub.edu/links/publications_presentations

We recommend the following publications and presentations as resources for more detailed information on how NSSE, FSSE, and BCSSE data can inform institutional improvement, accountability, and effective educational practice.

Publications


Conference Papers and Presentations


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**Additional Resources**

**Contextualizing NSSE Effect Sizes: Empirical Analysis and Interpretation of Benchmark Comparisons**

[www.nsse.iub.edu/pdf/effect_size_guide.pdf](http://www.nsse.iub.edu/pdf/effect_size_guide.pdf)

NSSE staff are often asked to help interpret the size of an effect for institutions. Is .3 a small effect? Is .5 a really large effect? The widely accepted definition for interpreting effect size is associated with Cohen’s d: “small, d=.2, medium, d=.5, and large, d=.8.” However, Cohen’s interpretation suggests that researchers create decision rules based on the context of the data. This new resource analyzes actual effect sizes from NSSE Benchmark Comparisons reports and proposes new reference values to interpret effect sizes based on the distribution of actual benchmark scores.

**Encouraging Student Participation in NSSE and Disseminating Survey Results**

[www.nsse.iub.edu/links/survey_promo](http://www.nsse.iub.edu/links/survey_promo)

Find examples on the NSSE Web site of how colleges and universities have promoted the NSSE survey on campus. We have collected sample flyers, posters, and screen savers used by institutions to encourage student participation in the NSSE survey. Also provided are examples of slide presentations and print brochures that inform internal and external audiences of NSSE results.

**Examples of NSSE Data Use**

[www.nsse.iub.edu/links/use_examples](http://www.nsse.iub.edu/links/use_examples)

NSSE has assembled brief examples of how participating institutions have used their NSSE results in student affairs, first-year program planning, general education program evaluation, strategic planning, accreditation efforts, and other initiatives.

- Using NSSE Data in Student Affairs
- Using NSSE to Assess the First-Year Experience
- Assessing General Education Learning Outcomes: NSSE Benchmarks and Institutional Practice
- American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU): Examples of NSSE Use
- How the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) Institutions are Using NSSE Data
Facilitator’s Guides

**Working with NSSE Data:**
*A Facilitator’s Guide*
[www.nsse.iub.edu/links/facilitators_guide](www.nsse.iub.edu/links/facilitators_guide)

**Working with FSSE and NSSE Findings:**
*A Facilitator’s Guide*

Two guides have been designed to help institutional leaders facilitate workshops, presentations, and discussions with campus stakeholders on using NSSE and FSSE data. The guides provide step-by-step instructions for leading a workshop or session on understanding, interpreting, and taking action on NSSE and FSSE survey results.

Each guide includes:
- Preparation notes for facilitators
- Outlines for addressing topics related to NSSE and FSSE data
- Exercises and worksheets

**A Guide to Contextualizing Your NSSE Data: Cognitive Interviews and Focus Groups**
[www.nsse.iub.edu/links/cognitive_interviews](www.nsse.iub.edu/links/cognitive_interviews)

The NSSE Institute developed a step-by-step guide for conducting cognitive interviews and focus groups to help institutional users develop a deeper understanding of their students’ responses to NSSE. The guide describes cognitive interview and focus group methodologies, the three stages of a cognitive interview, and provides suggestions for the coding of responses. Detailed instructions are provided for planning, conducting, and gathering data from interviews and focus groups.

**Multi-Year Data Analysis Guide**
[www.nsse.iub.edu/links/mydag](www.nsse.iub.edu/links/mydag)

For institutions that have participated in NSSE over multiple years, this publication helps with the analysis of NSSE data over time for trends or stability. NSSE survey items, the construction of benchmarks, and the production of institutional reports have been adjusted over the years. These improvements make multi-year analysis of NSSE data more complex. Thus, this guide provides resources, information and suggestions for suitable approaches to multi-year analysis, and may strengthen the validity of conclusions. The guide aligns with the *NSSE 2009 Multi-Year Benchmark Report* which provides recalculated and comparable benchmark scores and related statistics for all years of NSSE participation.

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NSSE SPSS Syntax Library
[www.nsse.iub.edu/html/syntax_library.cfm](www.nsse.iub.edu/html/syntax_library.cfm)

The syntax library has a variety of SPSS syntax files that can be used to further explore your data. The syntax found here can help create student-level benchmark scores, dichotomize engagement variables, and create and recode a variety of variables that NSSE uses in its reports. It also can be used to create additional scales such as for measuring deep learning activities, student satisfaction, and self-reported gains.

NSSE Users Workshops
[www.nsse.iub.edu/links/workshop_presentations](www.nsse.iub.edu/links/workshop_presentations)

Over 60 representatives from institutions in Kentucky, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and from as far as Mexico, participated in the Spring 2009 NSSE Users Workshop hosted by Northern Kentucky University. The workshop took place in NKU’s new Student Union building which features state-of-the-art conference and meeting facilities.

Highlights of the workshop included a plenary by NSSE Director, Alex McCormick, entitled, “Accountability and Improvement: Don’t Let Proving You’re Good Interfere with Getting Better,” and a featured presentation by Robert Springer, Director of Institutional Research at Elon University, on “Practical Applications for Using BCSSE-NSSE Data.” All presentations from the NKU workshop and previous user workshops are posted on the NSSE Web site.

NSSE Webinars
[www.nsse.iub.edu/webinars](www.nsse.iub.edu/webinars)

In 2008, NSSE began a series of live, interactive Webinars for faculty, administrators, institutional researchers, and student affairs professionals who want to better use and understand their NSSE, BCSSE, and FSSE data. Each hour-long Webinar includes a PowerPoint presentation and a question and answer period. All Webinars are recorded and available on the NSSE Web site for later or repeated viewing at your convenience.

The 2009 schedule of NSSE Tuesday Webinars includes new topics which focus on how to integrate NSSE data with institutional data, use NSSE in accreditation, move beyond benchmark results, and dig deeper into your institutional results - a three-part series presented by NSSE research analysts.

Webinars from last year’s series remain available for viewing on topics such as accountability, the first-year experience, the basics of using NSSE data, an introduction to BCSSE, and using NSSE-FSSE data. Please visit the NSSE Webinar archives:
[www.nsse.iub.edu/webinars/archives.cfm](www.nsse.iub.edu/webinars/archives.cfm)
Overall Results

www.nsse.iub.edu/html/overall_results.cfm

The NSSE Overall Results page reports overall means, frequencies, and benchmark descriptives by gender, major, and institutional Carnegie classification for all first-year and senior students that have participated in NSSE in a given year. Additional information such as overall response rates, lists of participating institutions, and comparisons of NSSE institutions to all four-year institutions is also provided.

A Pocket Guide to Choosing a College and The Student Experience in Brief

www.nsse.iub.edu/html/pocket_guide_intro.cfm

NSSE has revised and updated its pocket guide to exploring colleges. A Pocket Guide to Choosing a College: Are You Asking the Right Questions? was created as part of an ongoing public awareness campaign to refocus the national conversation about what constitutes quality in the college experience. Designed to help prospective college students and their parents in the college decision-making process, the pocket guide is also a useful resource for college admissions staff.

Questions drawn from the guide, along with responses from the students on your campus, are provided in The Student Experience in Brief under the Pocket Guide & Report tab in the Institutional Report 2009 binder.

A Spanish version of the pocket guide, Una Guia de Bolsillo Para Escoger una Universidad, is also available.

Using NSSE to Assess and Improve Undergraduate Education: Lessons from the Field 2009

www.nsse.iub.edu/links/lessons

Assessment is a worthwhile undertaking when meaningful data are generated, evidence-based improvement initiatives are thoroughly considered and discussed, and results are used to improve educational effectiveness. NSSE results are oriented toward such practical use. Each year, more campuses use their NSSE results in innovative ways to improve the undergraduate experience. In this new publication we highlight the approaches different types of institutions have taken to move from data to action.

In the spring and summer of 2008, NSSE Institute staff and NSSE graduate assistants conducted in-depth interviews with more than 40 representatives from participating colleges and universities to examine how institutions were using their NSSE data. Institutions encompassed a range in size, Carnegie type, region, locale, and private-public control. This volume captures the emerging lessons from the field, providing instructive accounts and inspirational examples of how colleges and universities are using NSSE results to enhance undergraduate teaching and learning. A print copy of the report is included in the pocket at the back of the Institutional Report 2009 binder.

Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA)

NSSE has been selected as one of four assessment instruments about students’ experiences and perceptions for the AASCU and APLU Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA). The VSA College Portrait features 24 NSSE items that measure group learning, active learning, experiences with diverse groups of people and ideas, student satisfaction, institutional commitment to student learning and success, and student interactions with faculty and staff.

About 301 of the 313 institutions registered for the VSA (as of December 2008) have participated in NSSE. To facilitate institutions’ use of NSSE results in the College Portrait, we created a promotional handout on NSSE and VSA, a dedicated Web page for VSA-NSSE information, www.nsse.iub.edu/html/vsa.cfm and also a NSSE page that institutions can link to for general information about the survey, www.nsse.iub.edu/html/vsaep.cfm. We also added SPSS (statistical software) syntax to our online syntax library to simplify assembling NSSE data for reporting in the College Portrait template, www.nsse.iub.edu/html/syntax_library.cfm.

Resources in the Institutional Report 2009 Binder

All resources and institution-specific reports provided in the NSSE Institutional Report 2009 binder are also available in electronic format via the password-protected Institution Interface on the NSSE Web site.