Student Engagement and the Updated NSSE: Exploring Leadership, Learning Support, and Persistence
ACPA Tampa 2015

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Agenda

• First, a little context
• Briefly introduce NSSE and updates
• New NSSE content
  ▪ Learning Strategies
  ▪ Leadership
• Student Engagement & Persistence
• Q & A
21st Century: Turning Point for Higher Education

- Getting students in the front door is only the first step—we also have to help them reach the graduation stage.
- Need students to have high quality educational experiences—and be better prepared for 21st century workforce.

Sources of Evidence about Educational Quality

Source: Ellen Chaffee, Trusteeship, 2014
We know a lot about What Matters to Student Learning & Success

The challenge is using what we know. Aligning resources, removing impediments, to optimize success for all students.

One Approach: Focus on Student Engagement

Student engagement is the time and energy students devote to educationally purposeful activities – practices shown to be related to desired educational outcomes.
What is NSSE?

- Yes, an annual survey
  - More than 1,500 colleges & universities since 2000
  - Hundreds participated multiple years

- Diagnostic information to support the improvement of undergraduate education
  - Actionable information based on valid & reliable measures
  - Meaningful comparisons

### Participation of NSSE 2014 institutions (N=716)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1x</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3x</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5x</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-7x</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-12x</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Updated NSSE

Higher education is constantly changing, and it is important for NSSE to stay relevant to the most salient issues and priorities of institutional assessment and research.
The Updated NSSE

- Retains NSSE's focus on diagnostic & actionable information
- New & updated items
- Engagement Indicators
- High-Impact Practices
- Topical Modules
- Redesigned reports
- FSSE & BCSSE updates

Transitioning to the Updated Survey

For NSSE 2013, nine of new, confining, and updated items (see reverse side) have been grouped within several Engagement Indicators. These indicators are organized within five engagement themes adapted from the former Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice. Forty-seven survey items are included in these Engagement Indicators. In addition, six former Kicking Educational Experiences items are reported separately as High-Impact Practices.
Transitioning to the Updated Survey

**NSSE Benchmarks 2000–2012**
- Student-Faculty Interaction
- Supportive Campus Environment
- Enriching Educational Experiences

**Key Changes**
- The updated Student-Faculty Interaction indicator is joined by a second measure about effective teaching practices.
- Expanded to focus separately on interactions with key people at the institution and perceptions of the institution’s learning environment.
- Selected items are reported separately as High-Impact Practices. Interactions with diverse others have been moved to Learning with Peers.

**Engagement Indicators**
- Student-Faculty Interaction
- Effective Teaching Practices
  - Theme: Experiences with Faculty
- Quality of Interactions
  - Theme: Campus Environment
- Learning with Technology
  - Research with Faculty
  - Capstone Experience
  - Service Learning

**High-Impact Practices**
- Learning Community
- Internship, Field Experience, etc.
- Study Abroad

**NSSE – New Topical Modules**
- Academic Advising
- Experiences with Writing
- Civic Engagement
- Development of Transferable Skills
- Experiences with Diverse Perspectives
- Learning with Technology
- Experiences with Information Literacy
- Global Perspectives—Cognitive and Social
- First Year and Senior Experiences

Summary Tables: [www.nsse.iub.edu/html/summary_tables.cfm](http://www.nsse.iub.edu/html/summary_tables.cfm)
New NSSE Content

Learning Strategies
*During the current school year, how often have you:*
- Identified key information from reading assignments
- Reviewed your notes after class
- Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials

Who would be interested in these results?

Along with High Impact Practice items:
*Which of the following have you done or plan to do before you graduate?*

“Hold a formal leadership role in a student organization or group”

Assessing Students Learning Experiences

**national results 2014 – First Year Students**

- During the current school year, about how often have you... [% never or sometimes]
  - Identified key information from reading and assignments 20%
  - Reviewed your notes after class 35%
  - Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials 36%
Assessing Students Learning Experiences

“NSSEville State”: What do you notice about LS results?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement Indicators</th>
<th>Your students compared with Peer State Public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher-Order Learning (HO)</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Challenge</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective &amp; Integrative Learning (RI)</td>
<td>△</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Strategies (LS)</td>
<td>△</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative Reasoning (QR)</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Learning (CL)</td>
<td>△</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions with Diverse Others (DD)</td>
<td>△</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Faculty Interaction (SF)</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Teaching Practices (ET)</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences with Faculty</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Environment</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Interactions (QI)</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive Environment (SE)</td>
<td>△</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:
- ▲ Your students’ average was significantly higher (p < .05) with an effect size of at least .3 in magnitude.
- △ Your students’ average was significantly higher (p < .05) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- -- No significant difference.

A Closer Look at Learning Strategies

“NSSEville State” Results...

9. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSSEville</th>
<th>Peer State Public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identified key information from reading assignments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Occasionally</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Often</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Very often</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Reviewed your notes after class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Never</td>
<td>11 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sometimes</td>
<td>58 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Often</td>
<td>32 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Very often</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Never</td>
<td>11 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sometimes</td>
<td>42 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Often</td>
<td>30 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Very often</td>
<td>17 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Considering Learning Strategy Results

- Who might be interested in these results?
- What do NSSEville results suggest for first year student learning experiences?
- What action could be taken on results?

NSSE and Leadership Experiences

*Which of the following have you done/plan to do before you graduate?*  
“Hold a formal leadership role in a student organization or group”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSSEville State Results...</th>
<th>First Year Students</th>
<th>peer state public</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
<th>peer state public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hold a formal leadership role in a student</td>
<td>Have not decided</td>
<td>24 %</td>
<td>25 %</td>
<td>3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not plan to do</td>
<td>18 %</td>
<td>21 %</td>
<td>38 %</td>
<td>43 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan to do</td>
<td>45 %</td>
<td>40 %</td>
<td>2 %</td>
<td>6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Done or in progress</strong></td>
<td>13 %</td>
<td>14 %</td>
<td><strong>57 %</strong></td>
<td>44 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yellow = signif. difference

What do you make of these results? Who would be interested?
Leadership: Engagement and Gains

What is the relationship between being in a formal leadership role and student engagement? And perception of educational gain?

Leadership and Engagement Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSSE Engagement Indicators</th>
<th>First Year Students</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HO Higher-Order Learning</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI Reflective and Integrative Learning</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QR Quantitative Reasoning</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS Learning Strategies</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>(-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CL Collaborative Learning</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DD Discussions with Diverse Others</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SF Student-Faculty Interaction</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>+++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ET Effective Teaching Practices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QI Quality of Interactions</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Symbols represent Cohen's d effect size (ES) of the difference on each Engagement Indicator between participants and non-participants according to the following key: + ES > .1, ++ ES > .3, +++ ES > .5.

All differences were positive for participants.
Leadership Role and Educational Gains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERCEIVED EDUCATIONAL GAINS</th>
<th>First Year Students</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pgwrite Perceived gains: Writing clearly &amp; effectively</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pgspeak Perceived gains: Speaking clearly &amp; effectively</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pgthink Thinking critically &amp; analytically</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pganalyze Analyzing numerical &amp; stat info.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pgwork Acquiring job- or work-related knowledge and skills</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pgothers Working effectively with others</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pgvalues Developing/clarifying personal code of values &amp; ethics</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pgdiverse Understanding people of other backgrounds (econ., racial/ethnic, political, relig., nationality, etc.)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pgsolve Solving complex real-world problems</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pgcitizen Being informed &amp; active citizen</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Symbols represent Cohen’s d effect size (ES) of the difference on each Engagement Indicator between participants and non-participants according to the following key: + ES > .1, ++ ES > .3, +++ ES > .5. All differences were positive for participants.

NSSE Leadership Item and Your Campus

- NSSE results suggest value of holding formal leadership experience and student engagement – particularly student-faculty interaction, collaborative learning
  - FY & SR - First-generation students *significantly underrepresented* in leadership positions; leaders disproportionately white
- Could you examine leadership results for your campus (NSSE 2013 - 2015)? What might you want to explore?
Some Educational Activities are Unusually Effective

“High-impact practices” provide substantial educational benefits to students


High Impact Activities

- First-Year Seminars and Experiences
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing-Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Assignments and Projects
- Undergraduate Research
- Diversity/Global Learning
- Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- Internships
- Capstone Courses/

Association of American Colleges and Universities
The Challenge with HIPs: How to Make them More Widespread?

Not all student take part in HIPs...

Across ALL institutions...
- 15% Learning Communities
- 48% Internships

**HIPs: Differences by Race-Ethnicity**

Source: "Assessment of High-Impact Practices: Using Findings to Drive Change in the Compass Project," by Ashley Finley, Spring 2011, Peer Review.
### High Impact Practices by Race/Ethnicity
**NSSE 2014 results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First-Year</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Senior</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>-Learning</td>
<td>-Faculty</td>
<td>-Learning</td>
<td>-Faculty</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>-Learning</td>
<td>-Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign or nonresident alien</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races/ethnicities</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NSSE 2013 & 2014 Civic Engagement Module**
(adapted from AASCU Degrees of Preparation Survey)

**Topical Module: Civic Engagement**

Adapted from a self-report survey that was developed by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the module also asks students to assess their comfort in solving problems and to consider how often they have engaged in cultural, political, or social activities that have influenced their views and values. The module is designed to measure students' knowledge and skills in civic engagement in the areas of community service, campus engagement, and voting.

1. Select the option that best represents your ability to do the following:

   a. Help people resolve their disagreements with each other
   b. Encourage that everyone, from diverse backgrounds, has
   c. Learn a group in which people from different backgrounds
   d. Contribute to the well-being of your community

2. During the current school year, whether you lived at or not, about how often have you done the following?

   a. Helped another person with a local, national, or global issue
   b. Listened to someone who came to you with a problem
   c. Discussed local, national, or global issues with others
   d. Helped another person with a local or national issue
   e. Encouraged other to work on local or national issues
   f. Helped others to address local or national issues
   g. Engaged others to work on local, national, or global issues
   h. Organized others to work on local, national, or global issues

3. About the experience you/your family had with local, national, or global issues. What about these experiences has been most meaningful to you? (Up to 1000 characters)

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3/11/2015
NSSE Civic Engagement Module Results

Percentage Who Have “Done” civic experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Informed yourself about local/campus issues</th>
<th>Informed yourself about state, national, global issues with...</th>
<th>Discussed local/campus issues with others</th>
<th>Discussed state, national, global issues with...</th>
<th>Raised awareness about local/campus issues</th>
<th>Raised awareness about state, national/global issues with...</th>
<th>Asked others to address local/campus issues</th>
<th>Asked others to address state, national/global issues with...</th>
<th>Organized others to work on local/campus issues</th>
<th>Organized others to work on state, national/global issues with...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First Years

Seniors

The Student Success Agenda: NSSE and Persistence

New Student Orientation

All First-Time Freshmen are expected to attend.
Student Retention Rate Concerns

As many as 1 in 3 students will not return to the same institution for their sophomore year

*Retention rate is the % of students who return to the same institution for their second year.

What to Do?

93% Your Campus FY Retention Rate

??% 79%

68% 56%
Focus on the First Year

The first year presents a unique opportunity to engage students in the habits of learning.

— John Gardner, Senior Fellow of the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience

Refreshing Engagement: NSSE at 13

by Alexander C. McCormick, Robert M. Gonyea and Jillian Kinzie

Summarize 13 years of lessons...

• Engagement had stronger effects on first-year grades and persistence for underprepared and historically underserved students — the very populations most in need of improved outcomes
Engaging Practices That Matter To Persistence

- Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
- Made a class presentation
- Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment
- Worked with other students on projects during class
- Worked with classmates outside of class on assignments
- Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)
- Participated in a community-based project as part of course
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- Discussed ideas from classes with faculty outside class
- Received prompt feedback on your academic performance
- Worked harder than you thought
- Worked with faculty on activities outside coursework (committees, student life, etc.)
- Discussed ideas from readings/classes with others
- Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity and those who differ from you - religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values

Research: Strong Relationship Between Quality of Interactions (QI) and Persistence

Quality of Interactions
Indicate the quality of your interactions with the following people at your institution:
- Students
- Academic Advisors
- Faculty
- Student services staff (career services, student activities, housing, etc.)
- Other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid, etc.)

For NSSE analysis....Explore relationship between Quality of Interaction and students’ rating of their “entire educational experience” & “start over” items
Analysis: NSSE & FY Persistence at Potsdam

- SUNY Potsdam merged 5 yrs. data to examine FY student retention & attrition patterns
- Identified areas problematic for “non-persisters”
- Retained students more likely to display higher levels of engagement in FY - item level differences:
  - Participating in class discussions; serious conversations with diverse peers; exams challenged them to do best work; more positive experiences with advising; working less off campus; higher quality relationships with peers, faculty and admin; feel support to thrive socially & attend campus events;
  - Difference in start over item

Caveats, Cautions, Questions?

- Review literature on retention and use of NSSE in analysis – it’s a mixed bag.
  - Item level analysis, decent sample size useful
  - New Engagement Indicators likely to perform better in analysis than former Benchmarks
- Triangulate retention findings using NSSE with other studies; at least use NSSE results to identify aspects of your students experience not in line with your institution’s claims or effective practice.
THANK YOU!!

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- How can you use NSSE data to address concerns about student success and educational quality?