

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

Summary of Key Findings

August 2015

Overview

The NSSE is administered to freshmen and seniors at WCU every 3rd year. The NSSE attempts to measure students' self-reported levels of enriching academic activities and engagement. This report summarizes key findings from the 2006, 2009, and 2012 NSSE administrations. NSSE questions are provided at the end of this report.

Response Rates

Year	Freshmen	Seniors
2006	391 (27%)	369 (27%)
2009	252 (21%)	356 (24%)
2012	184 (14%)	261 (18%)

NSSE Comparison Groups

WCU NSSE results were compared to results of selected Carnegie peers and all participating institutions for a particular year. Carnegie classification peers were selected as the point of reference for the peer comparison findings in this report. Refer to the attached appendix for additional information.

Methodology

Cohort analysis was evaluated by comparing the results of first year (FY) cohorts (2006 and 2009) to the same cohort in the senior year (2009 and 2012, respectively). Significant and meaningful differences in response means displaying at least a medium effect size (per NSSE's recommended reference values) were noted in the key findings section of this report.

Peer comparison focused on the 2009 FY cohort for both first year students (2009) and seniors (2012). In comparison to Carnegie peers, mean response differences estimating at least a medium effect size were noted in the key findings section.

KEY FINDINGS: Differences within a cohort (survey item shown in parentheses)

1. WCU Seniors report significantly higher rate than WCU FY students

- (1i) Putting together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussion.
- (3d) Writing papers or reports of 20 pages or more.
- (9b) Working for pay on campus.
- (9c) Working for pay off campus.
- (9f) Providing care for dependents living with them.
- (11b) Experiences at WCU contributed to acquiring job or work-related knowledge or skill.

2. WCU Seniors report significantly lower rate than WCU FY students

- (1c) Prepared two or more drafts of papers/assignments.
- (3e) Writing papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages.
- (4b) Numbers of problem sets that take less than an hour to complete.
- (6a) Attending an art exhibit, play, dance, music, theater, or other performance.
- (11p) Experiences at WCU contributed to developing a deepened sense of spirituality.

KEY FINDINGS: Differences compared to Carnegie peers (survey item shown in parentheses)

1. WCU students report significantly higher rate than peer students

- (1b) Class presentations (*FY students*).
- (1c) Prepare two or more drafts of papers/assignments (*FY students*).
- (1d) Worked on a paper or project requiring the integration of ideas and information from various sources (*FY students*)
- (1e) Diverse perspectives included in class discussions or writing assignments (*FY students*).
- (1h) Working with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments in (*FY students*).
- (1k) Participating in community-based projects (*FY students*).
- (1o) Talking about career plans with a faculty member or advisor (*FY students*).
- (1s) Working with faculty members on activities other than coursework (*FY students*).
- (3e) Writing papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages (*FY students*).
- (6a) Attending an art exhibit, play, dance, music, theater, or other performance (*FY students*).

- (7b) Community service or volunteer work (*FY students*).
- (8b) Higher quality of relationships with faculty members (*Seniors*).
- (9b) Working for pay on campus (*Seniors*).
- (9c) Working for pay off campus (*Seniors*).
- (9f) Providing care for dependents living with you (*Seniors*).
- (11b) Experiences at WCU contributed to acquiring job or work-related knowledge or skills (*Seniors*).
- (11g) Experiences at WCU contributed to using computing and information technology (*Seniors*).
- (12) Quality of academic advising (*FY students*).

2. WCU students report significantly lower rate than peer students

- (9c) Working for pay off campus (*FY students*).
- (9f) Providing care for dependents living with you (*FY students*).

KEY FINDINGS: No growth/trending down (survey item shown in parentheses)

For the following items, WCU student responses remain similar to, or higher than peer student responses, but reflect limited to no growth from first year to senior year, or are trending down, when comparing the 2006 and 2009 student cohorts.

- (1b) Made a class presentation (*Seniors*).
- (1d) Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources (*Seniors*).
- (1k) Participated in a community-based project (*Seniors*).
- (1n) Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor (*FY students*).
- (1p) Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class (*FY students*).
- (1q) Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on academic performance (*Seniors*).
- (6d) Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue (*FY students*).
- (7c) Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together (*FY students*).
- (10d) Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities.
- (10g) Using computers in academic work (*FY students*).

(11d) Speaking clearly and effectively (*FY students*).

(11n) Developing a personal code of values and ethics (*FY students*).

(11o) Contributing to the welfare of your community (*FY students*).

(11p) Developing a deepened sense of spirituality.

APPENDIX

NSSE Comparison Groups (2006)

(1) *Carnegie Peers (N = 7)*

Central Missouri State University
Central Washington University
Georgia College and State University
Montclair State University
Southern Connecticut State University
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

(2) *All U.S. NSSE 2006 Institutions (N = 523)*

NSSE Comparison Groups (2009)

(1) *Carnegie Peers (N = 23)*

Central Connecticut State University	Radford University
Eastern Kentucky University	Southeast Missouri State University
Eastern Michigan University	Southern Connecticut State University
Eastern University	Stephen F. Austin State University
Eastern Washington University	Tarleton State University
Fort Hays State University	University of Central Arkansas
Frostburg State University	University of Denver
Indiana University Southeast	University of North Carolina
Indiana Wesleyan University	Wilmington
McNeese State University	University of Northern Iowa
Middle Tennessee State University	Western Kentucky University
Morehead State University	
Murray State University	

(2) *All U.S. NSSE 2009 Institutions (N = 616)*

NSSE Comparison Groups (2012)

(1) *Carnegie Peers (N = 6)*

Morehead State University
Murray State University
Pittsburg State University
Salisbury University
Southeast Missouri State University
University of Central Missouri

(2) *All U.S. NSSE 2012 Institutions (N = 565)*



Item #

Variable Label

Response Values and Labels

Question 1. In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?

- 1a. Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
- 1b. Made a class presentation
- 1c. Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in
- 1d. Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources
- 1e. Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments
- 1f. Come to class without completing readings or assignments
- 1g. Worked with other students on projects **during class**
- 1h. Worked with classmates **outside of class** to prepare class assignments
- 1i. Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions
- 1j. Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)
- 1k. Participated in a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of a regular course
- 1l. Used an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment
- 1m. Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor
- 1n. Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- 1o. Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- 1p. Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
- 1q. Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance

1 = Never
2 = Sometimes
3 = Often
4 = Very often



<i>Item #</i>	<i>Variable Label</i>	<i>Response Values and Labels</i>
1r.	Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations	
1s.	Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.)	1 = Never
1t.	Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	2 = Sometimes
		3 = Often
		4 = Very often
1u.	Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own	
1v.	Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	
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Question 2. During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities?		
2a.	Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your courses and readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form	
2b.	Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components	1 = Very little
2c.	Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	2 = Some
		3 = Quite a bit
		4 = Very much
2d.	Making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods, such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions	
2e.	Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	



Item #

Variable Label

Response Values and Labels

Question 3. During the current *school year* , about how much reading and writing have you done?

3a.	Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings	
3b.	Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment	1 = None 2 = 1-4
3c.	Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more	3 = 5-10 4 = 11-20
3d.	Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages	5 = More than 20
3e.	Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages	

Question 4. In a *typical week* , how many homework problem sets do you complete?

4a.	Number of problem sets that take you more than an hour to complete	1 = None 2 = 1-2 3 = 3-4
4b.	Number of problem sets that take you less than an hour to complete	4 = 5-6 5 = More than 6
5.	Select the circle that best represents the extent to which your examinations during the current school year have challenged you to do your best work.	1 = Very little 7 = Very much



Item #

Variable Label

Response Values and Labels

Question 6. During the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 6a. | Attended an art exhibit, play, dance, music, theater, or other performance | |
| 6b. | Exercised or participated in physical fitness activities | |
| 6c. | Participated in activities to enhance your spirituality (worship, meditation, prayer, etc.) | 1 = Never
2 = Sometimes
3 = Often
4 = Very often |
| 6d. | Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue | |
| 6e. | Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective | |
| 6f. | Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept | |

Question 7. Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 7a. | Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment | |
| 7b. | Community service or volunteer work | |
| 7c. | Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together | |
| 7d. | Work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements | 1 = Have not decided
2 = Do not plan to do
3 = Plan to do
4 = Done |
| 7e. | Foreign language coursework | |
| 7f. | Study abroad | |
| 7g. | Independent study or self-designed major | |
| 7h. | Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.) | |



<i>Item #</i>	<i>Variable Label</i>	<i>Response Values and Labels</i>
Question 8. Select the circle that best represents the quality of your relationships with people at your institution.		
8a.	Relationships with other students	1 = Unfriendly, Unsupportive, Sense of alienation 7 = Friendly, Supportive, Sense of belonging
8b.	Relationships with faculty members	1 = Unavailable, Unhelpful, Unsympathetic 7 = Available, Helpful, Sympathetic
8c.	Relationships with administrative personnel and offices	1 = Unhelpful, Inconsiderate, Rigid 7 = Helpful, Considerate, Flexible
Question 9. About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following?		
9a.	Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, and other academic activities)	
9b.	Working for pay on campus	1 = 0 hours per week
9c.	Working for pay off campus	2 = 1-5 3 = 6-10 4 = 11-15 5 = 16-20 6 = 21-25 7 = 26-30 8 = More than 30 hours
9d.	Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)	
9e.	Relaxing and socializing (watching TV, partying, etc.)	
9f.	Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse, etc.)	
9g.	Commuting to class (driving, walking, etc.)	



Item #

Variable Label

Response Values and Labels

Question 10. To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following?

10a.	Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	
10b.	Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	
10c.	Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	
10d.	Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	1 = Very little
10e.	Providing the support you need to thrive socially	2 = Some
10f.	Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)	3 = Quite a bit
10g.	Using computers in academic work	4 = Very much

Question 11. To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?

11a.	Acquiring a broad general education	
11b.	Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	
11c.	Writing clearly and effectively	
11d.	Speaking clearly and effectively	
11e.	Thinking critically and analytically	1 = Very little
11f.	Analyzing quantitative problems	2 = Some
11g.	Using computing and information technology	3 = Quite a bit
11h.	Working effectively with others	4 = Very much
11i.	Voting in local, state, or national elections	
11j.	Learning effectively on your own	



**National Survey
of Student Engagement**

**The College Student Report
NSSE 2009 Codebook**

<i>Item #</i>	<i>Variable Label</i>	<i>Response Values and Labels</i>
11k.	Understanding yourself	
11l.	Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	
11m.	Solving complex real-world problems	1 = Very little 2 = Some 3 = Quite a bit 4 = Very much
11n.	Developing a personal code of values and ethics	
11o.	Contributing to the welfare of your community	
11p.	Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	
12.	Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution?	1 = Poor 2 = Fair 3 = Good 4 = Excellent
13.	How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?	1 = Poor 2 = Fair 3 = Good 4 = Excellent
14.	If you could start over again, would you go to the <i>same institution</i> you are now attending?	1 = Definitely no 2 = Probably no 3 = Probably yes 4 = Definitely yes