To focus public awareness on what constitutes quality in the college experience, NSSE developed *A Pocket Guide to Choosing a College.* This helpful brochure gives prospective students and their families key questions to ask during their campus visits or virtual tours, allowing them to actively consider student engagement during the college choice process.

Student responses to selected questions from the NSSE pocket guide are presented in a report entitled *A Pocket Guide to Choosing a College: NSSE 2020 Answers from Students,* part of your NSSE *Institutional Report 2020.*

Who can use this report?

A Pocket Guide to Choosing a College: NSSE 2020 Answers from Students is a summary of student engagement on your campus. It may be of special interest to admissions professionals, particularly those distributing the NSSE pocket guide to visiting students. The results can also be used as a resource for orientation staff, advisors, faculty, and others who work regularly with first-year students.

How can an institution customize and distribute results?

A Pocket Guide to Choosing a College: NSSE 2020 Answers from Students is designed for sharing NSSE results. The report is delivered in both PDF and Excel formats so that institutions can easily insert logos, campus photos, or additional information. Institutions are encouraged to post copies of the report and other results from their NSSE *Institutional Report 2020* on their websites.

How can I get a copy of this report for my institution?

Each participating institution designates a staff member to serve as the primary liaison for NSSE correspondence and reports. Known as the Campus Project Manager (CPM), the primary liaison may assist you in obtaining a copy. Contact NSSE for help identifying your CPM.

How can I get copies of the NSSE pocket guide?

College and university admissions officers may request up to 300 free NSSE pocket guides per year. Additional quantities are available for a small fee. A Spanish version of the NSSE pocket guide, *Una Guía de Bolsillo Para Escoger una Universidad: Preguntas a Hacer en Tus Visitas Universitarias,* is also available.

The QR code at left can be used to access a mobile version of the NSSE pocket guide. It is available on the NSSE website for institutions to include in their recruitment, college fair, and campus tour materials.

go.iu.edu/NSSE-pocketguide

If you have questions about these resources, contact the NSSE Institute at **nsse@indiana.edu** or toll-free at 866-435-6773.

A Pocket Guide to Choosing a College:
NSSE 2020 Answers from Students
Framingham State University

Each year the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) asks students at hundreds of colleges and universities to reflect on the time they devote to various learning activities. The topics explored are linked to previous research on student success in college.

Results from NSSE can provide prospective students with insights into how they might learn and develop at a given college. To help in the college exploration process, NSSE developed *A Pocket Guide to Choosing a College* to give students and their families key questions to ask during campus visits or virtual tours.

A Pocket Guide to Choosing a College is available at **go.iu.edu/NSSE-pocketguide**
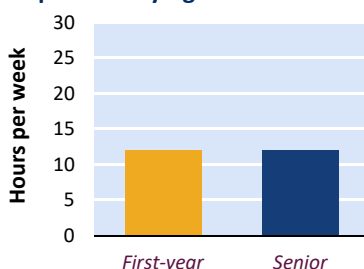
The following responses were provided by 343 FSU students on the 2020 survey.

Academics

How much time do students spend studying each week?

First-year (FY) students spent an average of 12 hours per week preparing for class while seniors spent an average of 12 hours per week.

Do courses challenge students to do their best?[a]

33% of FY students reported that their courses highly challenged them to do their best work.

How much writing is expected?

In an academic year, FY students estimated they were assigned an average of 54 pages of writing and seniors estimated an average of 75 pages.

How much reading is expected?

FY students estimated they spent an average of 6 hours per week on assigned reading, and seniors read 5 hours per week.

How often do students make course presentations?[b]

43% of FY students and 69% of seniors frequently gave course presentations.

Do class discussions and assignments include the perspectives of diverse groups of people?[b]

54% of FY students frequently included diverse perspectives in course discussions or assignments.

Are students expected to use numbers or statistics throughout their coursework?[b]

51% of FY students frequently used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue; 49% of seniors frequently reached conclusions based on their own analysis of numerical information.

Experiences with Faculty

How do students rate their interactions with faculty?[c]

38% of FY students rated the quality of their interactions with faculty as high.

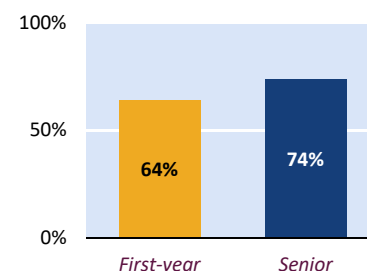### How often do students talk with faculty members or advisors about their career plans?[b]

35% of FY and 46% of seniors frequently discussed career plans with faculty.

Do faculty members clearly explain course goals and requirements?

69% of FY students said instructors clearly explained course goals and requirements "quite a bit" or "very much."

Do students receive prompt and detailed feedback?[d]

64% of FY students and 74% of seniors said instructors substantially gave prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments.

How often do students talk with faculty members outside class about what they are learning?[b]

28% of FY students frequently discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class.
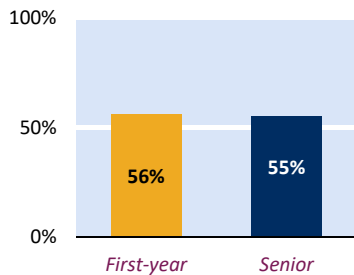
How many students work on research projects with faculty?

4% of FY students and 31% of seniors worked on a research project with a faculty member.

Learning with Peers

How often do students work together on course projects and assignments?[b]

56% of FY students and 55% of seniors frequently worked with their peers on course projects and assignments.

First-year: 56%
Senior: 55%

Do students help each other learn?[b]

60% of seniors frequently explained course material to one or more students.

How often do students work together to prepare for exams?[b]

40% of FY students frequently prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students.

How often do students interact with others who have different viewpoints or who come from different backgrounds?[b]

Among FY students, 62% frequently had discussions with people with different political views, 69% frequently had discussions with people from a different economic background, and 73% frequently had discussions with people from a different race or ethnicity.

Campus Environment

Are students encouraged to use learning support services (tutors, writing center)?[d]

73% of FY students said the institution substantially emphasized the use of learning support services.

How do students rate their interactions with academic advisors?[c]

35% of FY students and 54% of seniors gave the quality of their interactions with academic advisors a high rating.

How well do students get along with each other?[c]

30% of FY students gave the quality of their interactions with their peers a high rating.

How satisfied are students with their educational experience?

68% of FY and 82% of seniors rated their entire educational experience at this institution as "excellent" or "good."

Rich Educational Experiences

What types of honors courses, learning communities, and other distinctive programs are offered?

During their first year, 9% of students participated in a learning community. By spring of their senior year, 58% of students had done (or were doing) a culminating senior experience.

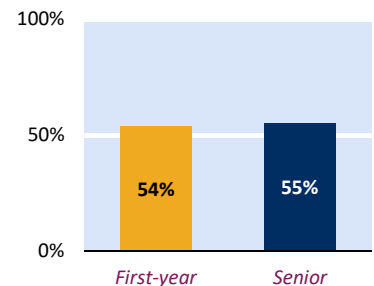### How many students study in other countries?

By their senior year, 14% of students had studied abroad.

How many students get practical, real-world experience through internships or field experiences?

By spring of their senior year, 55% of students had participated in some form of internship, co-op, field experience, student teaching, or clinical placement.

How many courses include community-based service-learning projects?[e]

54% of FY students and 55% of seniors said at least some of their courses included a community-based service-learning project.

First-year: 54%
Senior: 55%

Notes

a. "Highly" is a 6 or 7 on a seven-point scale where 1 is "Not at all" and 7 is "Very much."
b. "Frequently" is "Often" or "Very often."
c. A "High" rating is a 6 or 7 on a seven-point scale where 1 is "Poor" and 7 is "Excellent."
d. "Substantially" is "Quite a bit" or "Very much."
e. "At least some" is defined by combining responses of "Some," "Most," and "All."

NSSE
national survey of student engagement

IPEDS: 165866

NSSE 2020 Snapshot

Framingham State University

A Summary of Student Engagement Results

Student engagement represents two critical features of collegiate quality. The first is the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and other educationally purposeful activities. The second is how institutional resources, courses, and other learning opportunities facilitate student participation in activities that matter to student learning. NSSE surveys undergraduate students in their first and final years to assess their levels of engagement and related information about their experience at your institution.

This *Snapshot* is a concise collection of key findings from your institution's NSSE 2020 administration. We hope this information stimulates discussions about the undergraduate experience. Additional details about these and other results appear in the reports referenced throughout.

> **Comparison Group**
> The comparison group featured in this report is
> **MA Sister State**
> See your *Selected Comparison Groups* report for details.

Engagement Indicators

Sets of items are grouped into ten Engagement Indicators, organized under four broad themes. At right are summary results for your institution. For details, see your *Engagement Indicators* report.

Key:

▲ **Your students' average** was significantly higher ($p < .05$) with an effect size 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.

▽ **Your students' average** was significantly lower ($p < .05$) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.

▼ **Your students' average** was significantly lower ($p < .05$) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.
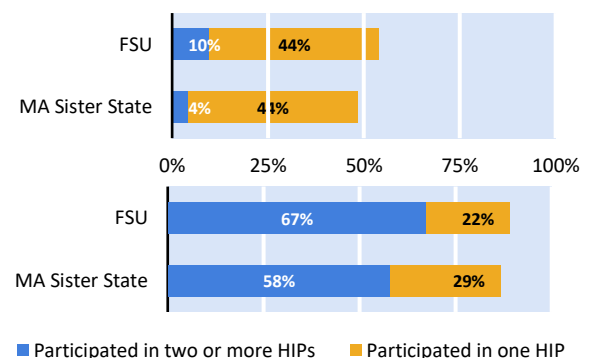
		Your students compared with MA Sister State	
Theme	Engagement Indicator	First-year	Senior
Academic Challenge	**Higher-Order Learning**	--	--
	Reflective & Integrative Learning	--	--
	Learning Strategies	--	--
	Quantitative Reasoning	△	--
Learning with Peers	**Collaborative Learning**	--	--
	Discussions with Diverse Others	--	--
Experiences with Faculty	**Student-Faculty Interaction**	--	--
	Effective Teaching Practices	--	--
Campus Environment	**Quality of Interactions**	--	--
	Supportive Environment	--	--

High-Impact Practices

Due to their positive associations with student learning and retention, special undergraduate opportunities are designated "high-impact." For more details and statistical comparisons, see your *High-Impact Practices* report.

First-year
Service-Learning, Learning Community, and Research w/Faculty

Senior
Service-Learning, Learning Community, Research w/Faculty, Internship, Study Abroad, and Culminating Senior Experience

First-year:
FSU: 10% / 44%
MA Sister State: 4% / 41%

Senior:
FSU: 67% / 22%
MA Sister State: 58% / 29%

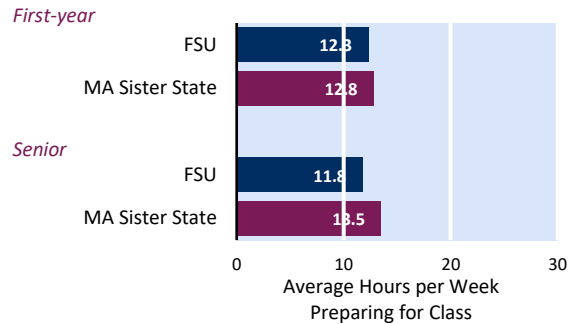■ Participated in two or more HIPs ■ Participated in one HIP

Academic Challenge: Additional Results

The Academic Challenge theme contains four Engagement Indicators as well as several important individual items. The results presented here provide an overview of these individual items. For more information about the Academic Challenge theme, see your *Engagement Indicators* report. To further explore individual item results, see your *Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons,* the *Major Field Report,* the *Online Institutional Report,* or the Report Builder.
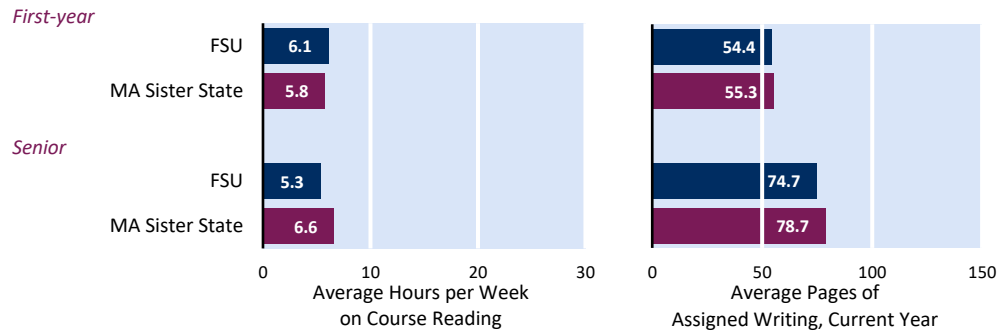
Time Spent Preparing for Class

This figure reports the average weekly class preparation time for your students compared to students in your comparison group.
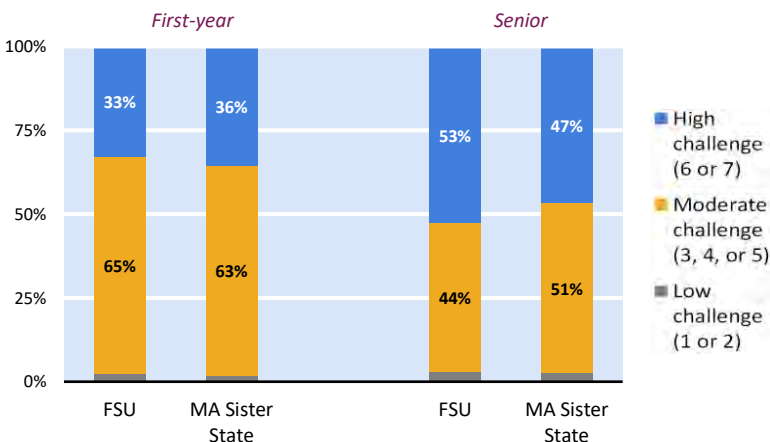
First-year

FSU — 12.8
MA Sister State — 12.8

Senior

FSU — 11.8
MA Sister State — 13.5

Average Hours per Week Preparing for Class

Reading and Writing

These figures summarize the number of hours your students spent reading for their courses and the average number of pages of assigned writing compared to students in your comparison group. Each is an estimate calculated from two or more separate survey questions.
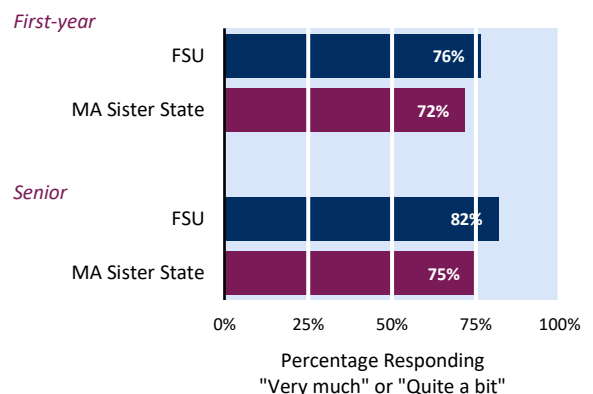
First-year

FSU — 6.1
MA Sister State — 5.8

Senior

FSU — 5.3
MA Sister State — 6.6

Average Hours per Week on Course Reading

First-year

FSU — 54.4
MA Sister State — 55.3

Senior

FSU — 74.7
MA Sister State — 78.7

Average Pages of Assigned Writing, Current Year

Challenging Students to Do Their Best Work

To what extent did students' courses challenge them to do their best work? Response options ranged from 1 = "Not at all" to 7 = "Very much."

First-year

FSU: High challenge (6 or 7) 33%, Moderate challenge (3, 4, or 5) 65%
MA Sister State: High challenge 36%, Moderate challenge 63%

Senior

FSU: High challenge 53%, Moderate challenge 44%
MA Sister State: High challenge 47%, Moderate challenge 51%

Legend:
- High challenge (6 or 7)
- Moderate challenge (3, 4, or 5)
- Low challenge (1 or 2)

Academic Emphasis

How much did students say their institution emphasizes spending significant time studying and on academic work? Response options included "Very much," "Quite a bit," "Some," and "Very little."

First-year

FSU — 76%
MA Sister State — 72%

Senior

FSU — 82%
MA Sister State — 75%

Percentage Responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit"

![NSSE - national survey of student engagement]

Item Comparisons

By examining individual NSSE questions, you can better understand what contributes to your institution's performance on the Engagement Indicators. This section displays the five questions[a] on which your students scored the highest and the five questions on which they scored the lowest, relative to students in your comparison group. Parenthetical notes indicate whether an item belongs to a specific Engagement Indicator or is a High-Impact Practice. While these questions represent the largest differences (in percentage points), they may not be the most important to your institutional mission or current program or policy goals. For additional results, see your *Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons* report.
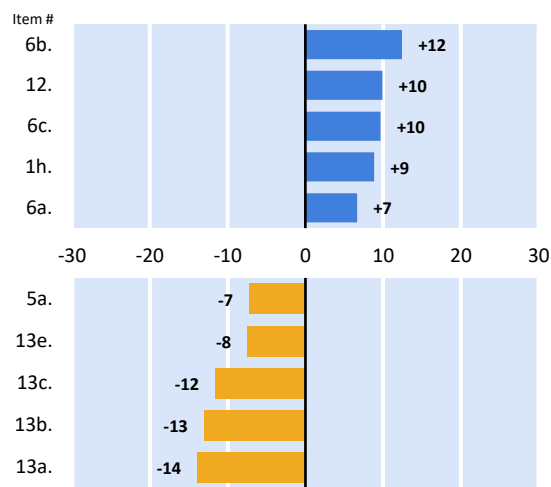
First-year

Highest Performing Relative to MA Sister State

Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (…)[b] (QR)

About how many courses have included a community-based project (service-learning)?[e] (HIP)

Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information[b] (QR)

Worked with other students on course projects or assignments[b] (CL)

Reached conclusions based on your own analysis of numerical information (…)[b] (QR)

Lowest Performing Relative to MA Sister State

Instructors clearly explained course goals and requirements[c] (ET)

Quality of interactions with other administrative staff and offices (…)[d] (QI)

Quality of interactions with faculty[d] (QI)

Quality of interactions with academic advisors[d] (QI)

Quality of interactions with students[d] (QI)

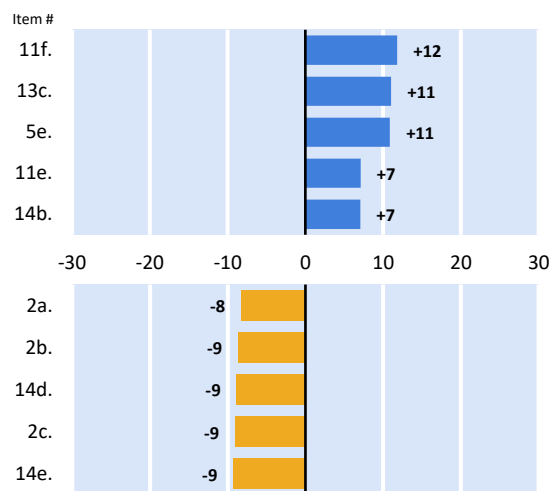| Item #	Percentage Point Difference
6b.	+12
12.	+10
6c.	+10
1h.	+9
6a.	+7
5a.	-7
13e.	-8
13c.	-12
13b.	-13
13a.	-14

Percentage Point Difference with MA Sister State

Senior

Highest Performing Relative to MA Sister State

Completed a culminating senior experience (…) (HIP)

Quality of interactions with faculty[d] (QI)

Instructors provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments[c] (ET)

Worked with a faculty member on a research project (HIP)

Institution emphasis on providing support to help students succeed academically[c] (SE)

Lowest Performing Relative to MA Sister State

Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments[b] (RI)

Connected your learning to societal problems or issues[b] (RI)

Institution emphasis on encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds…[c] (SE)

Included diverse perspectives (…) in course discussions or assignments[b] (RI)

Institution emphasis on providing opportunities to be involved socially[c] (SE)

Item #	Percentage Point Difference
11f.	+12
13c.	+11
5e.	+11
11e.	+7
14b.	+7
2a.	-8
2b.	-9
14d.	-9
2c.	-9
14e.	-9

Percentage Point Difference with MA Sister State

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a. The displays on this page draw from the items that make up the ten Engagement Indicators (EIs), six High-Impact Practices (HIPs), and the additional academic challenge items reported on page 2. Key to abbreviations for EI items: HO = Higher-Order Learning, RI = Reflective & Integrative Learning, LS = Learning Strategies, QR = Quantitative Reasoning, CL = Collaborative Learning, DD = Discussions with Diverse Others, SF = Student-Faculty Interaction, ET = Effective Teaching Practices, QI = Quality of Interactions, SE = Supportive Environment. HIP items are also indicated. Item numbering corresponds to the survey facsimile available on the NSSE website.

b. Combination of students responding "Very often" or "Often."

c. Combination of students responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit."

d. Rated at least 6 on a 7-point scale.

e. Percentage reporting at least "Some."

f. Estimate based on the reported amount of course preparation time spent on assigned reading.

g. Estimate based on number of assigned writing tasks of various lengths.

NSSE 2020 Snapshot

Framingham State University

How Students Assess Their Experience

Students' perceptions of their cognitive and affective development, as well as their overall satisfaction with the institution, provide useful evidence of their educational experiences. For more details, see your *Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons* report.
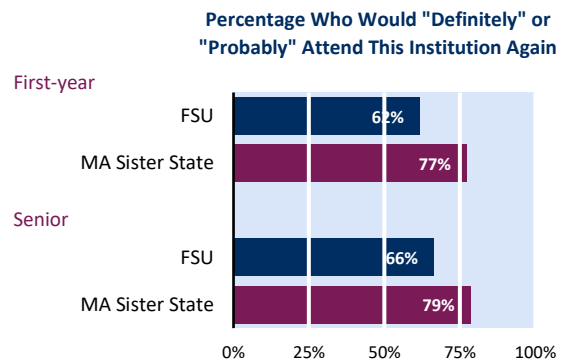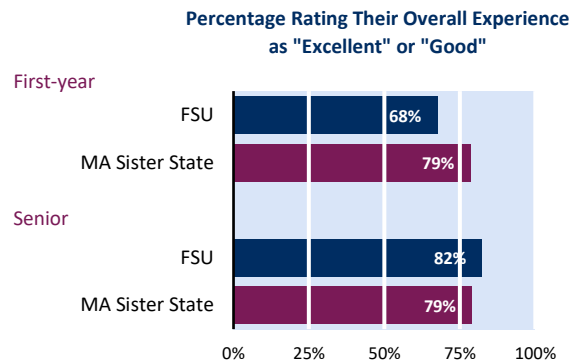
Perceived Gains Among Seniors

Students reported how much their experience at your institution contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in ten areas.

Perceived Gains (Sorted highest to lowest)	Percentage of Seniors Responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit"
Thinking critically and analytically	83%
Speaking clearly and effectively	71%
Writing clearly and effectively	71%
Working effectively with others	66%
Acquiring job- or work-related knowledge and skills	63%
Understanding people of other backgrounds (econ., racial/ethnic, polit., relig., nation., etc.)	59%
Analyzing numerical and statistical information	53%
Being an informed and active citizen	49%
Developing or clarifying a personal code of values and ethics	48%
Solving complex real-world problems	46%

Satisfaction with FSU

Students rated their overall experience at the institution, and whether or not they would choose it again.

Percentage Rating Their Overall Experience as "Excellent" or "Good"

First-year
- FSU: 68%
- MA Sister State: 79%

Senior
- FSU: 82%
- MA Sister State: 79%

Percentage Who Would "Definitely" or "Probably" Attend This Institution Again

First-year
- FSU: 62%
- MA Sister State: 77%

Senior
- FSU: 66%
- MA Sister State: 79%

Administration Details

Response Summary

	Count	Resp. rate	Female	Full-time
First-year	185	19%	63%	99%
Senior	158	24%	73%	81%

See your *Administration Summary* and *Respondent Profile* reports for more information.

Additional Questions

Your institution did not choose to administer additional questions. In future administrations, you may customize NSSE by participating in a topical module or a consortium. See our website for more information. nsse.indiana.edu

What is NSSE?

NSSE annually collects information at hundreds of four-year colleges and universities about student participation in activities and programs that promote their learning and personal development. The results provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending their college or university. Institutions use their data to identify aspects of the undergraduate experience that can be improved through changes in policy and practice.

NSSE has been in operation since 2000 and has been used at more than 1,600 colleges and universities in the US and Canada. More than 90% of participating institutions administer the survey on a periodic basis.

Visit our website: nsse.indiana.edu

IPEDS: 165866