

Understanding Learners through the National Survey of Student Engagement

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Center for Instruction, Research,
and Technology

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Challenging perspectives on teaching and learning

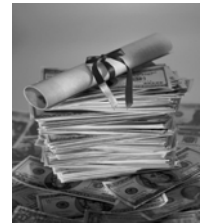
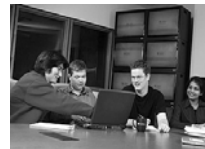
1. Too few students are getting the most out of their college education.
2. Not an option to admit only the most talented and well-prepared.
3. Move from teacher-centered, lecture-oriented, to learning-centered environment.
4. Shift focus from "how I teach", to "how students learn".
5. Invite students in to the community of learners.

Advance Organizers

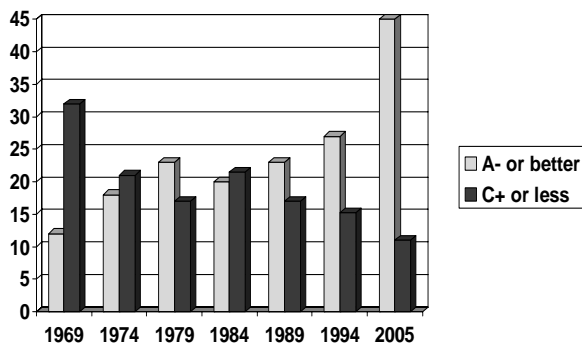
- ❖ To what extent do your students engage in productive learning activities, inside *and* outside the classroom?
- ❖ How do you know?
- ❖ What must you do differently -- or better -- to enhance student success?

Students Today Who are they? What are they telling us?

- An entitlement mentality



Trends in High School Grades



Students Today



- Cumulative deficit re: attitudes, study habits, academic skills
- More diverse than previous cohorts
- Techno-savvy "NetGens"

What To Do?!?

Student success in college may require that professors explain more things to students today that were once taken for granted –

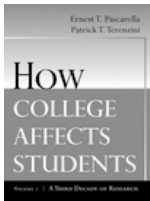
“You must buy the book, you must read it and come to class, you must observe deadlines or make special arrangements when you miss one”

Prof. Richard Turner (1998, p.4)

Some Conclusions....

- Conclusion: A pretty complicated scenario to manage
- *The times require reflective, student-centered educators, expert in their respective disciplines but also knowledgeable and skilled in areas required by these challenges*
- Must be familiar with policies and practices linked to student success

What Really Matters in College: Student Engagement



Because individual effort and involvement are the critical determinants of impact, institutions should focus on the ways they can shape their academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular offerings to encourage *student engagement*.

Pascarella & Terenzini, *How College Affects Students*, 2005, p. 602

Foundations of Student Engagement

Time on task (Tyler, 1930s)

Quality of effort (Pace, 1960-70s)

Student involvement (Astin, 1984)

Social, academic integration (Tinto, 1987, 1993)

Good practices in undergraduate education (Chickering & Gamson, 1987)

College impact (Pascarella, 1985)

Student engagement (Kuh, 1991, 2005)



The Student Engagement Trinity

- What students do -- time and energy devoted to educationally purposeful activities
- What institutions do -- using effective educational practices to induce students to do the right things
- Educationally effective institutions channel student energy toward the right activities

Good Practices in Undergraduate Education


(Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005)

- ✓ Student-faculty contact
- ✓ Active learning
- ✓ Prompt feedback
- ✓ Time on task
- ✓ High expectations
- ✓ Experiences with diversity
- ✓ Cooperation among students

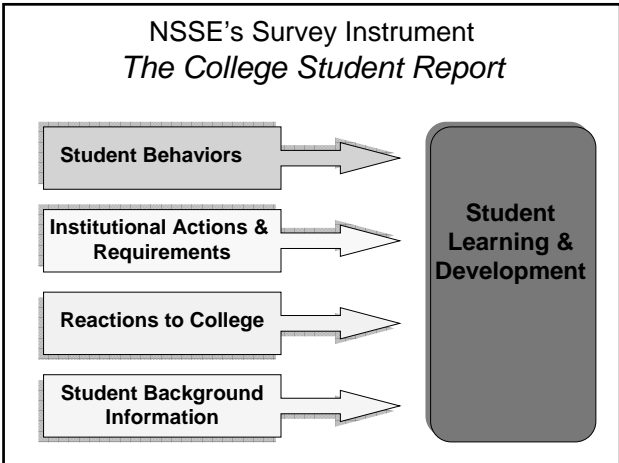


National Survey of Student Engagement
(pronounced "nessie")

Community College Survey of Student Engagement
(pronounced "cessie")



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



NSSE Project Scope

- One million+ students from 1,000+ different schools
- Random sample of First-year and Seniors surveyed spring term
- 50 states, Puerto Rico, Canada
- 70+ consortia



ISU & NSSE:
NSSE 2003 & 2005 & 2007

American Democracy Project (2005)
(Auburn University-Montgomery; Bemidji State University; Colorado State University - Pueblo; Cuny Medgar Evers College; Eastern Oregon University; Fort Hays State University; Illinois State University; Indiana State University; Indiana University-Kokomo; Indiana University-South Bend; Middle Tennessee State University; Missouri Western State College; Norfolk State University; Salisbury University; Southern Oregon University; Stephen F Austin State University; Suny College At Fredonia; Suny College At Potsdam; The Richard Stockton College Of New Jersey; The University Of Tennessee-Martin; The University Of West Florida; University Of Alaska Anchorage; University Of Alaska Southeast; University Of Central Florida; Western Illinois University)

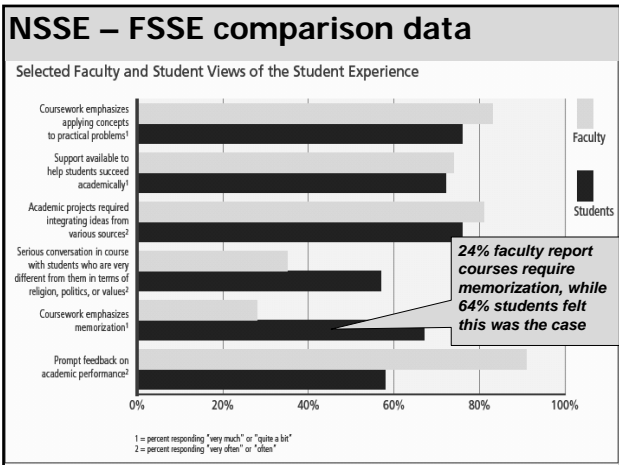
What have we learned from NSSE so far?

- The single best predictor of student satisfaction with college is the degree to which they perceive the college environment to be supportive of their academic and social needs.
- At institutions where faculty members use effective educational practices more frequently in their classes, students are more engaged over all and gain more from college.
- Grades, persistence, student satisfaction, and engagement go hand in hand.

Student Engagement Quiz

What percent of full-time seniors study, on average, more than 20 hours per week?

(a) 14% (b) 23% (c) 32% (d) 41% (e) 50%



NSSE Disappointing Findings

- New students studied fewer hours during their first year than they expected to when they started college.
- Between 40% and 50% of first-year students *never* used career planning, financial advising, or academic tutoring services.
- Compared with other students, part-time students who are working had less contact with faculty and participated less in collaborative learning activities and enriching educational experiences

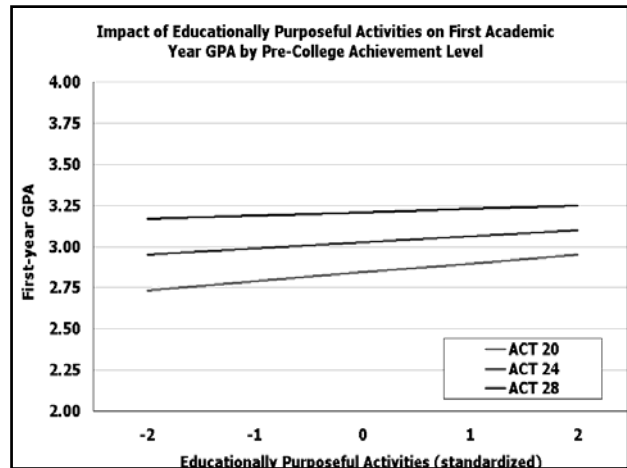
What have we Learned from NSSE?



- 45% first-years and 30% seniors never discussed ideas with faculty outside class
- Faculty spend 42% of class time lecturing (FSSE data)

What have we Learned from NSSE?

- Adult and distance learners engaged as often in rewarding educational activities as did traditional-aged students taking classes on the campus.
- Among first-year students, women spent more time than men preparing for class and were more likely to write multiple drafts of an assignment before turning it in but were less likely than men to interact with faculty members outside of class.



ISU and NSSE Benchmarks

(compared to ADP, Doctoral Intensive Peers)

50% response rate; sampling error 2.2%; 705 FY – 671 SR

Strengths

Solid scores in Active Learning & Student Faculty Interaction; Enriching Experiences

Challenges

Does this show ISU distinctions?

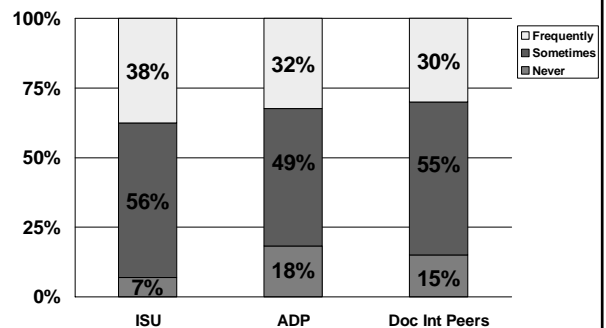
How to address Academic Challenge and Support?

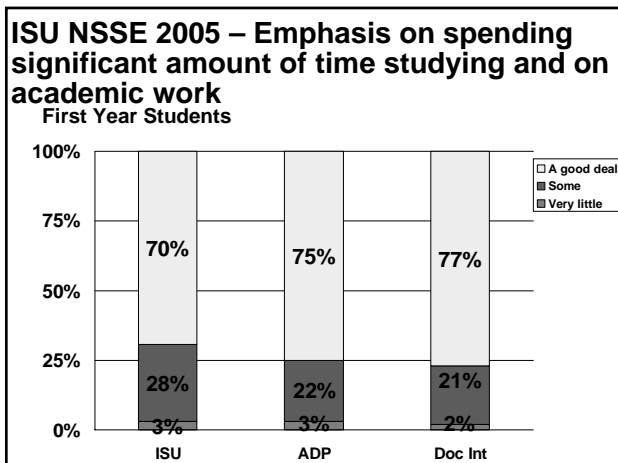
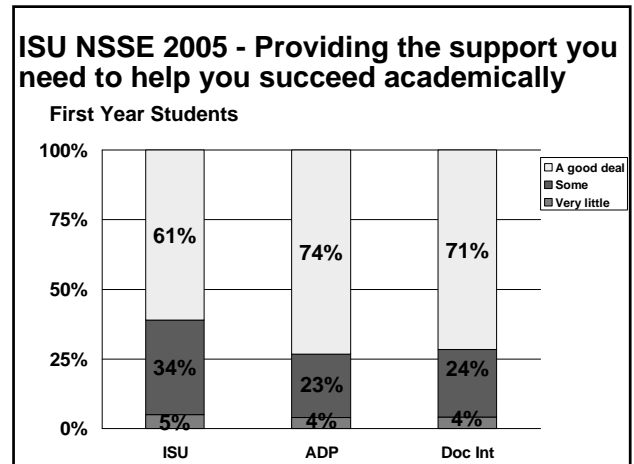
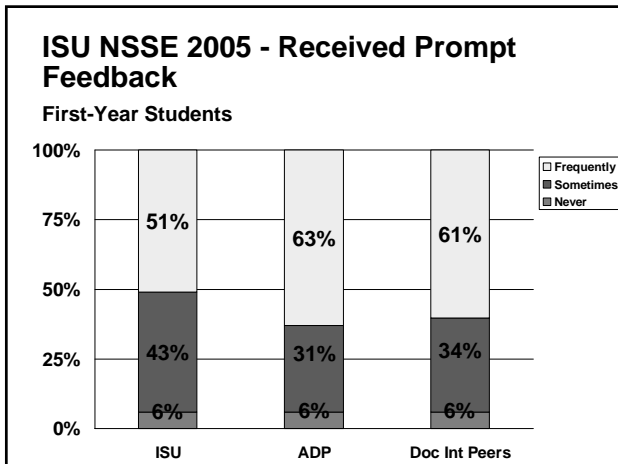
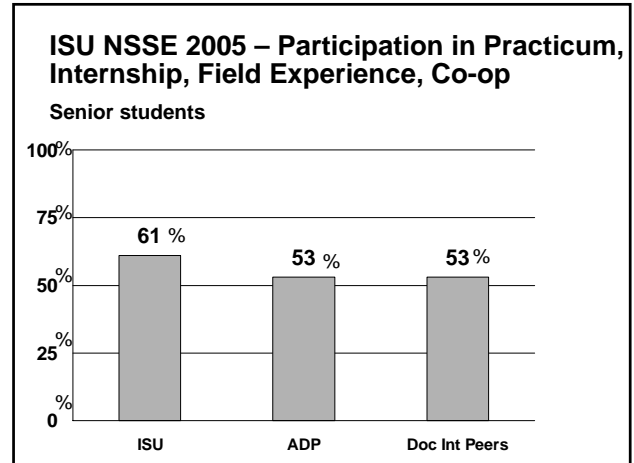
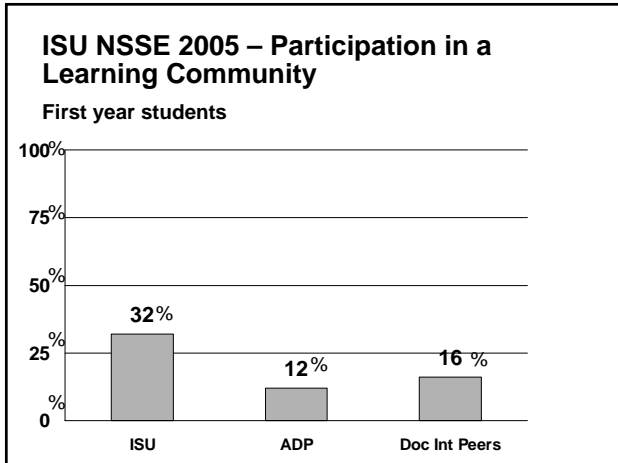
		ISU	ADP	Doc Int
Acad. Chal.	FY	48	-	-
	SR	54	=	-
Active Learn'g	FY	41.5	=	=
	SR	50	=	=
Student -Fac	FY	32.5	=	=
	SR	43	=	=
Enrich	FY	27.5	+	=
	SR	40	+	=
Support Enviro.	FY	54	-	-
	SR	54	-	-

+ signif. above; = on par; - signif. below peers

ISU NSSE 2005 - Made a class presentation

First-Year Students





- ### A Closer Look at Academic Challenge and Support at ISU
- How would you characterize the “academic climate” at ISU?
 - FY & SR report less emphasis on “higher order mental activities” (analyzing ideas, synthesizing) than peers
 - FY & SR worked *less* on paper or project that required integrating ideas, & putting together concepts from different courses than peers at comparison schools
 - Quality of relationship with faculty less than ideal

Institutional Examples: Improving Teaching & Learning



- First-year students less involved in service learning than JMU desired. Workshops conducted to encourage faculty to adapt courses to include service learning
- Faculty advisors increased emphasis on helping students understand value of general education and faculty-student interaction

Institutional Examples: Improving Teaching & Learning



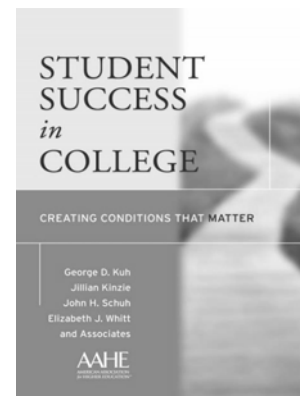
- Teaching & Learning Center at **University of Wisconsin-Stout** interviewed students to develop a more contextualized understanding of student engagement
- TLC staff distilled a list of effective educational practices from the interview data, particularly around the most important factor to students: student-faculty relationships.

Institutional Examples: Improving Teaching & Learning



- Created engagement agenda on campus
- NSSE introduced to New Faculty Teaching Scholars
- Workshops held with academic leaders to link results with University's strategic indicators
- NSSE items in course evaluations
- Open forum to get student input about ways to improve learning environment

What does an educationally effective college look like at the turn of the 21st century?



Project DEEP Schools*

*Higher-than-predicted NSSE scores and graduation rates

Doctoral Extensives

University of Kansas
University of Michigan

Doctoral Intensives

George Mason University
Miami University (Ohio)
University of Texas El Paso

Master's Granting

Fayetteville State University
Gonzaga University
Longwood University

Liberal Arts

California State, Monterey Bay
Macalester College
Sweet Briar College
The Evergreen State College
Sewanee: University of the South
Ursinus College
Wabash College
Wheaton College (MA)
Wofford College

Baccalaureate General

Alverno College
University of Maine at Farmington
Winston-Salem State University

Framework from DEEP: Conditions to Promote Student Success

1. "Living" Mission and "Lived" Educational Philosophy
2. Unshakeable Focus on Student Learning
3. Environments Adapted for Educational Enrichment
4. Clearly Marked Pathways to Student Success
5. Improvement-Oriented Ethos
6. Shared Responsibility for Educational Quality



DEEP Lessons for Teaching and Learning



DEEP Lessons: Teaching & Learning

1. Embrace undergraduates and their learning

- Senior faculty send a strong message to their colleagues when they experiment with engaging pedagogies
- believe: every student can learn under the right conditions
- Cultivate relationships with students – “get in their way” (Richard Light, 2001)

SOURCE: Kinzie, J. (2005). What faculty members can do. Occasional Paper No. 6. and Cambridge, B.L. (2005). What new faculty need to know. Occasional Paper No. 12.

Embrace Undergraduates & Their Learning



- CSUMB faculty act on “**Three R’s**” -- **Recognize, Respect, and Respond** to, the wide-ranging individual differences among diverse learners
- Students prior knowledge and experience used as bridge to connect students to curriculum

DEEP Lessons for Faculty

2. Set, communicate, & maintain high expectations for student performance

- Academic challenge is not just about piling on academic work, rather it’s the appropriate calibration of reading & writing assignments to student ability

-- **FSSE data corroborates:** faculty with higher-than-average expectations have students with higher level of involvement in educational practices & greater gains from college experiences

High Expectations & Accountability



- Fayetteville State University faculty: “**You must teach the students you have, not the ones you wish you had.**” The philosophy is, “**We will meet you where you are, but we will tell you where we want you to go**”.
- Faculty concerned about their total personal development – academic and personal, intellectual and social. The Center for Teaching and Learning helps faculty learn to assess the abilities of individual students.

DEEP Lessons: Teaching & Learning

3. Clarify what students need to do to succeed

- Students will better manage academic challenges if they have an idea of what to expect and when and how to deal with these issues
- Do not leave students to discover on their own what it takes to be successful
- If activity or experience is valuable, consider requiring it (e.g., must revise assignment with a writing tutor)

Clarify What Students Need to do to Succeed



- Ursinus College mission claims a distinct mission to develop “independent learners.” All students now required to complete an “Independent Learning Experience (ILE)” to graduate.

ILEs = independent research, internship, field experience; department committee approves what satisfies requirement

DEEP Lessons: Teaching & Learning

4. Use engaging pedagogical approaches

- students benefit from: peer teaching opportunities; concrete applications of coursework to their lives outside the classroom; variation in teaching approaches; all forms of active learning...games; simulations; presentations; quizzes
- Faculty who experiment are supported by Teaching and Learning Centers, Teaching Awards (KU); Faculty Salons (Ursinus)

Engaging Pedagogies



- UTEP learning communities (3 clustered courses) emphasize active and collaborative learning, structured group presentations, peer evaluation, and meetings outside of class
- Clustering insures that their mostly commuter population see some of their peers regularly, facilitates studying other peer learning
 - **Build continuity across semesters**

DEEP Lessons: Teaching & Learning

5. Provide meaningful feedback to students

- timeline, formative assessment & feedback vital to maximize students’ learning
- peer evaluation enhances responsibility to students’ study and/or work group & self assessment encourages reflection on quality of their own effort.
- Model importance of giving and using feedback by asking students about the helpfulness of your feedback and telling them how you’re using their ideas to improve your own teaching

Meaningful Feedback



- Alverno College well known for integrated approach to assessment. Feedback comes from variety of sources: “external assessors,” and peer and self assessment **[92% FY & 89% Seniors at Alverno report frequent feedback!!]**
- Sewanee and Sweet Briar faculty are expected to provide meaningful, extensive and encouraging feedback to students; students expect to be in dialogue with faculty around feedback

DEEP Lessons: Teaching & Learning

6. Value diversity

- students exposed to diverse perspectives report higher levels of academic challenge, more active & collaborative learning, & supportive campus environment.
- Crucial for a school where racial/ethnic diversity ratios may be smaller

Cross-cultural experiences



- Alverno and George Mason intentionally craft shorter study abroad experiences that meet the needs of their non-traditional population. Similarly, Kansas and University of Maine, Farmington arrange class-based trips that are more accessible to their first generation students

DEEP Lessons: Teaching & Learning

7. Make time for students

- no substitute for human contact: face-to-face, or e-mail
- Involve students in all committees, shared governance increases likelihood of out of class contact with faculty
- Electronic office hours, invite students to email drafts, post to discussion boards

Why stay the course??

The good-to-great-transformations never happened in one fell swoop. There was no single defining action, no grand program, no one killer innovation, no solitary lucky break, no miracle moment. Sustainable transformations follow a predictable pattern of buildup and breakthrough... (Collins, 2001, p. 186)

Finally, *Make Something Special Happen*

“My dream is that faculty will be encouraged to embrace their dreams about teaching and learning. But I hope they will not only dream of something special happening, they will also come to believe it is possible to make it happen.”

(Fink, 2003, p. 26, *Creating Significant Learning Experiences*)

To Consider:

- Consider you NSSE results - What might you emphasize in your teaching to address academic challenge and supportive campus environment?
- What are 1-2 steps you can take to cultivate educational practices and campus conditions that promote student success?
- *What might you do differently in your own practice based on DEEP findings?*



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Discussion and Comments

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