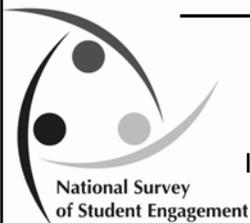


Using NSSE to Enhance Student Engagement and Success: Lessons from the Field

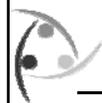
Assessment Institute, Indianapolis



Jillian Kinzie

George Kuh

IU Center for Postsecondary
Research, NSSE Institute



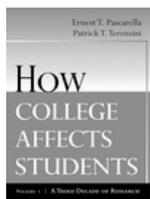
The NSSE Challenge

How might we more effectively use data about quality in undergraduate education to:

- ✓ provide evidence of student learning
- ✓ motivate and inspire effective educational practice
- ✓ strengthen the learning environment?



What Really Matters: Student Engagement

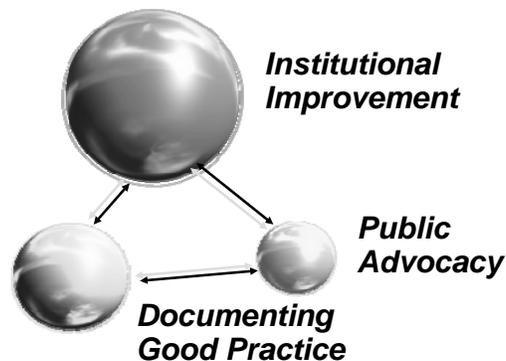


Because individual effort and involvement are the critical determinants of impact, institutions should focus on the ways they can shape their academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular offerings to encourage *student engagement*.

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

3

NSSE Core Purposes



NSSE Results

- ◆ Are diagnostic; to help institutions look holistically at undergraduate experience
- ◆ Help pinpoint aspects not in line with mission, or what institution expects
- ◆ Identify weaknesses and strengths in educational program
- ◆ Help institutions know what to focus on to improve student learning and success

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Customized Institutional Report



- ✓ Overview
- ✓ Institutional data
- ✓ Means and frequencies
- ✓ 1st year students and seniors
- ✓ Comparisons by peers, Carnegie, national
- ✓ National benchmarks
- ✓ Data use tips
- ✓ Student-level data, etc.
- ✓ And more!

Effective Educational Practices



NSSE Scalets and Modules

- Course Challenge
- Writing
- Higher-Order Thinking Skills
- Integrative Learning
- Active Learning
- Collaborative Learning
- Course Interaction
- Out-of-Class Interaction
- Information Technology
- Diversity Experience
- Support for Student Success
- Interpersonal Environment

Reminder: Recent NSSE Enhancements

- ♦ Institutions create up to 3 customized peer comparison groups (2007)
- ♦ All content of Institutional Report available for download from secure site (2007)
- ♦ New Report "*What Students are Saying...*" based on NSSE Pocket Guide questions (2007)
- ♦ Benchmark report in August Institutional Report (2006)
- ♦ New Executive Snapshot Report (2006)
- ♦ Increased sample sizes for web-based administration (2006)
- ♦ New tools – Facilitation Guide, Accreditation Toolkit (2005-2007)

NSSE Suite of Assessment Instruments

- ♦ National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
- ♦ Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)
- ♦ Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE)



Using NSSE, FSSE, BCSSE

- ♦ Problem Identification- results point to things institutions can do something about – almost immediately
- ♦ Mobilize Action
- ♦ Context Setting – paint a picture of the institution
- ♦ Evidence of outcomes & processes
- ♦ Assessment & Improvement
- ♦ Accreditation
- ♦ General Education Revisions
- ♦ Strategic Planning
- ♦ Faculty Development
- ♦ Retention studies
- ♦ Accountability (VSA)

Informing Campus Dialogue with Assessment Results

Using NSSE, FSSE, BCSSE: What Kinds of Questions?

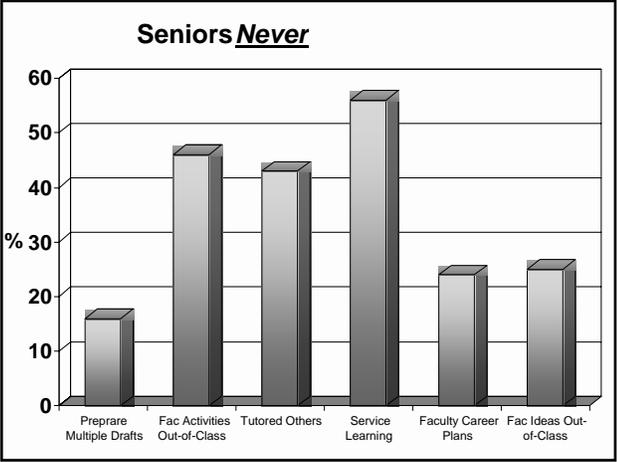
- ◆ **"Thermometer" Questions**
How many students/faculty...?
- ◆ **"How Do We Compare" Questions**
Do we score above or below institutions like us?
- ◆ **"Comparing Groups" Questions**
Do X and Y do certain things differently?
- ◆ **"Relationship" Questions**
Are those who x more likely to y?
- ◆ **"Multiple Data Source" Questions**
What do faculty and students say about...?

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Checking Your Campus's Temperature

National Survey of Student Engagement

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FSSE Quiz

- ◆ What percentage of class time does the average faculty member spend lecturing?

23% 44% 55% 63%

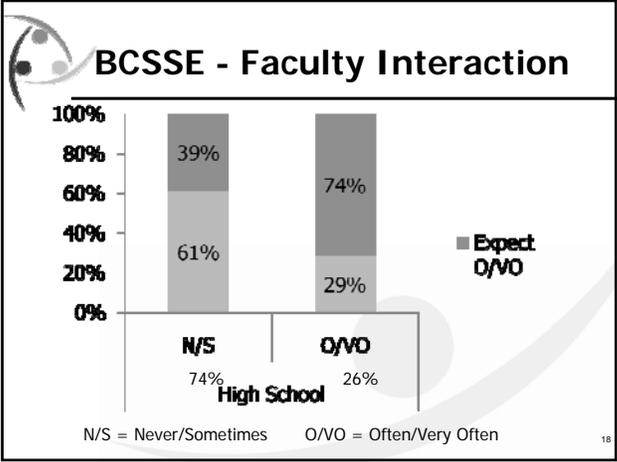
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BCSSE-Faculty Interaction

- ◆ What percent of students in high school report that they frequently (often + very often) interact with faculty outside of class?
a). 15% **b). 26%** c). 35% d). 42%
- ◆ What is the relationship between student reports of the extent to which they interact with faculty outside of class in high school and their expectation for doing this in college?

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Are We Better or Worse?

National Survey of Student Engagement

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How Do We Compare?

Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)

Benchmark Comparisons

NSSEville State compared with:

Class	NSSEville State			Selected Peers			Carnegie Peers			NSSE 2006		
	Mean*	Std. Dev.	Effect Size**	Mean*	Std. Dev.	Effect Size**	Mean*	Std. Dev.	Effect Size**	Mean*	Std. Dev.	Effect Size**
First-Year	60.9		.17	57.8	**	.17	59.4			59.1		
Senior	59.7		.21	55.8	**	.21	59.4			56.6	*	.16

Nation

NSSEville State Selected Peers Carnegie Peers NSSE 2006

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Comparing Against Other Institutions

- ◆ Unlike NSSE...
 - FSSE and BCSSE do not provide institution-versus-peer-group comparisons
- ◆ But....

National Survey of Student Engagement

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Grand Frequencies

- ◆ Find FSSE and BCSSE results that can be used as reference points at www.fsse.iub.edu and www.bcsse.iub.edu

National Survey of Student Engagement

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Comparing Groups

National Survey of Student Engagement

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FSSE-Percentage of Class Time

Men

Women

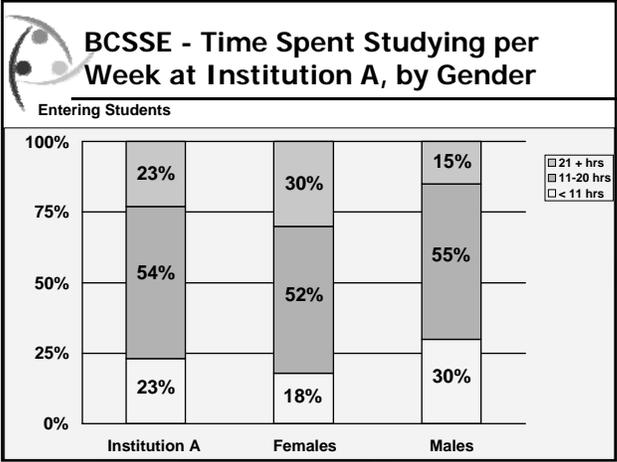
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Answering Questions with BCSSE Data

- What do we know about entering students expectations about studying?
- BCSSE asks of entering college students:

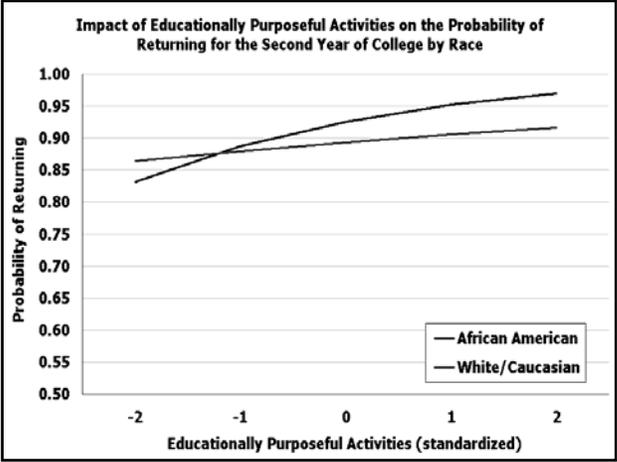
“During the coming school year, about how many hours do you think you will spend in a typical 7-day week preparing for your class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, and other academic activities)?”
- Does this differ by gender?

National Survey of Student Engagement 25



Are Those Who ... Also ...?

National Survey of Student Engagement 27



Predicting Retention at Elon University

- Students' relationship with peers predictive of retention. Elon considering programs/services to foster these relationships, checking published findings & best practice.

		Retention	If you could start over again, would you go to the SAME INSTITUTION you are now attending?	How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?	Quality: Your relationships with other students
Retention	Pearson Correlation	1	.368**	.227**	.233**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	377	351	351	369
If you could start over again, would you go to the SAME INSTITUTION you are now attending?	Pearson Correlation	.368**	1	.608**	.547**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	351	351	351	351
How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?	Pearson Correlation	.227**	.608**	1	.487**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	351	351	351	351
Quality: Your relationships with other students	Pearson Correlation	.233**	.547**	.487**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	369	351	351	369

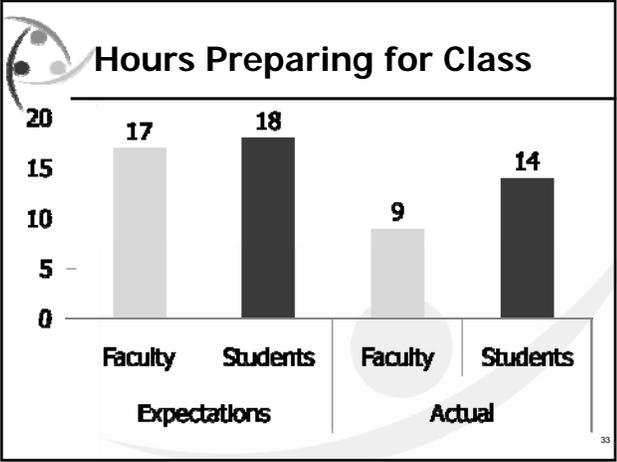
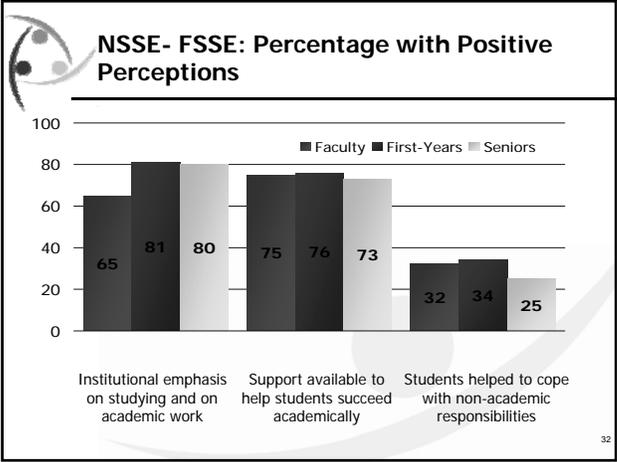
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Don't We Have Data from ... on That Too?

National Survey of Student Engagement 30

Improvement Initiative: Co-curricular Involvement in the First Year

- ♦ Interpreting NSSE results for Institution A:
"About half of our FY students spend no time on co-curricular activities. This seems really low. What did our students do in high school?"
- ✓ Institution reviews CIRP data. Their entering students are lower than the norm. Admissions confirms most new students worked part-time jobs in high school, likely limiting co-curricular involvement.



NSSE: Assessment and Accreditation

National Survey of Student Engagement

Perspectives on NSSE and Accreditation

"Our NSSE results have provided us with a very meaningful framework for organizing our data and assessing our ongoing progress for our accreditation self study."
 — Mary J. Meehan, President, Alverno College

"NSSE is used more widely today than ever as an effective way to assess what both institutions and students themselves do to foster student success."
 — Belle S. Wheelan, President, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Rationale for Using NSSE in Accreditation

- ♦ Student engagement results are a **direct indicator** of what students put into their education, and because the survey measures participation in various types of effective educational practices it provides an **indirect measure of student gains**
- ♦ NSSE results indicate areas for improvement and are "actionable" – thus, appropriate for inclusion in quality improvement plans

NSSE Accreditation Tool-kit

1. Background information on using student engagement in accreditation
2. Customized to each of the six regional accrediting bodies; AACSB, ABET, NCATE in-development
3. Complete map of NSSE items to accreditation standards
4. Vignettes from other institutions on using NSSE in accreditation

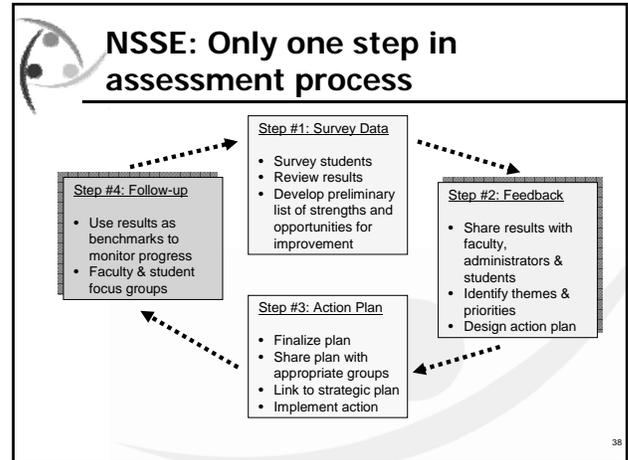
National Survey of Student Engagement

Accreditation Tool-kit

Guide to help maximize use of NSSE data for accreditation

DOWNLOAD Toolkit:
www.nsse.iub.edu
Click on: "Reports & Services"

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NSSE in your assessment plan

- ♦ How often should I administer NSSE?
 - ♦ **Every Year:** Gives you a snapshot of each class
 - ♦ **Every Three Years:** Gives you a picture of a cohort at the beginning and the end of their college experiences; time to implement initiatives in response
 - ♦ **Every Five Years:** Works well with most accreditation cycles (Accreditation and Interim Reports)
- ♦ Other factors to consider
 - ♦ Establishing a baseline
 - ♦ Costs (using all core surveys)
 - ♦ Additional Surveys/Sources of Data
 - ♦ Time to absorb results, make changes

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Using NSSE to Enhance Student Engagement and Success: Institutional Examples

National Survey of Student Engagement

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Using NSSE Data – A Small, Private Institution

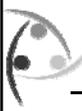
- ♦ NSSE Results:
 - ♦ The institution's first-year students indicated they wanted to participate in internships, but had largely failed to complete one by senior year.
- ♦ Action:
 - ♦ Used NSSE data to advocate for hiring staff dedicated to overseeing this area of growth.
 - ♦ Increased campus advertising and focus on the internship program.

Using NSSE Data - A Small, Private Institution

- ♦ NSSE Results:
 - ♦ NSSE data - Supportive Campus Environment benchmark scores - and other survey data indicated that upper-division students were feeling detached from the institution and peers
- ♦ Action:
 - ♦ The Dean's Coffee
 - ♦ Academic departments discussed approaches to creating more intentional group learning opportunities and events for upper division students

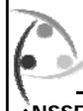


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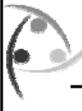
Using NSSE Data – A Large, Public Institution

- ◆ NSSE Results:
 - ◆ Residence Life staff wanted to better compare/contrast the experiences of students living in a living-learning center versus students in more traditional housing
- ◆ Action:
 - ◆ Upon registering for NSSE, the institution requested a NSSE oversample to include students living in learning communities, using the resulting data to monitor the program's success.



Using NSSE Data – A Large, Public Institution

- ◆ NSSE Results:
 - ◆ First-year students less likely than seniors to engage with faculty outside of class
- ◆ Action:
 - ◆ Trained 45 faculty freshman advisors differently to highlight the importance of student-faculty interaction. Orientation program to help students understand importance of interacting with faculty
 - ◆ Expanded first-year residential learning community to 80% of new students, involved faculty more directly in programming
 - ◆ Program and pedagogy changes in Honors College and select General Education courses to increase opportunities for students to meet with faculty outside of class in small group experiences



Institutional Example: Focus on desired pedagogy

- ◆ First-year students less involved in service learning than JMU desired.
- ◆ Workshops conducted to encourage faculty to adapt courses to include service learning
- ◆ Studied change in participation of students and instructional practice



Institutional Example: Improving teaching & learning



- ◆ NSSE and CIRP pointed to problems with first year students' academic engagement, but WTAMU desired more holistic picture of students' experience
- ◆ Conducted "Student Engagement Audit Focus Groups" – 2 focus groups per college to discover what faculty and students found educationally engaging and identify classroom experiences that were engaging and disengaging



Institutional Example: Worcester Polytechnic Institute



NSSE results showed FY students were less engaged than seniors

- ◆ New FY interdisciplinary, inquiry-based seminars; better integration of disciplines; engaging introductory courses
- ◆ Associate Dean appointed to Office for the First Year
- ◆ Assessment plan in development with NSSE indicators as key component



Institutional Example: Results Support Action



NSSE results showed need for improvement in academic advising:

- ◆ Implemented professional advisors in residence halls
- ◆ Based on NSSE and internal survey, 50% faculty were interested in advising workshop
- ◆ Recommendation to provide faculty with regular workshops and advising newsletter
- ◆ VP of Academic Affairs to carry out comprehensive assessment of advising on campus



Institutional Example: More Analysis



Three Targeted Analyses:

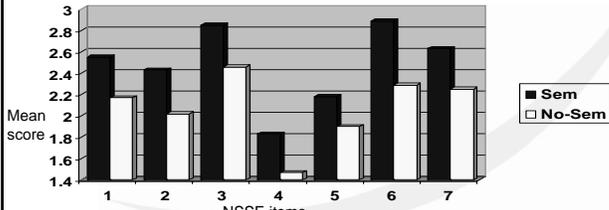
- Comparison of SR students' responses to education and personal growth items with peers at other institutions and NSSE cohort to assess performance on general learning objectives
- Comparison of responses of minority and non-minority students on items related to diversity
- Comparison of students' responses on mental activities, study abroad, undergraduate research, and capstone project with peers and NSSE cohort



Institutional Example: UW Green Bay Fall 2006 Freshman Seminar Pilot Study

Compare NSSE scores on 7 items - Freshman Seminar students VS. non-Seminar students:

1. Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions.
2. Worked with other students on projects DURING CLASS.
3. Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor.
4. Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor.
5. Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor.
6. Coursework emphasized: APPLYING theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations.
7. Coursework emphasized: 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



NSSE item	Sem (Mean score)	No-Sem (Mean score)
1	2.6	2.2
2	2.5	2.1
3	2.9	2.5
4	1.9	1.5
5	2.2	1.9
6	2.9	2.4
7	2.6	2.3

Institutional Example



- Incorporated NSSE results from students majoring in education into self-study prepared for NCATE teacher education certification
- Student affairs staff in health services and counseling use NSSE data to guide outreach programming
- Include NSSE results in proposals for external funding, such as Title III grants for expanding institutional capacity to serve low-income students



Institutional Example

CONCORDIA COLLEGE (MN)

- Faculty, administrators, and student affairs staff use NSSE to determine efficacy of new FYE programs and their impact on persistence to the second year
- NSSE has helped faculty:
 - Apply appropriate learning strategies in large classes
 - Integrate research into capstone courses and study abroad
 - Develop honors tracks in more majors
 - Expand opportunities for small groups of students to work with faculty



Institutional Example



Drake University is using its NSSE data to:

- Assess its general education curriculum, especially in the areas of service learning, multicultural understanding, and critical thinking skills
- Inform the review of capstone courses and other culminating experiences
- Combine with BCSSE results to provide insight into the review of undergraduate advising




Institutional Example

DOANE COLLEGE

Disseminating NSSE Data at Doane:

- Executive summary of scores prepared for president and vice-presidents
- Report aligning NSSE benchmarks and survey items with long-range strategic plan sent to Board of Trustees, presented to full-faculty, and posted on campus Web site
- Student learning report examining student reading experiences based on NSSE scores that contribute to student performance data. To be presented to faculty, included in general assessment report, and posted on Web site.





Using NSSE Data: Lessons Learned

1. Make sure faculty and staff understand the concept of student engagement
2. Collect enough data to use results at department/unit level
3. Understand what engagement data represent and use and report results wisely
4. Distribute responsibility for performance fairly (e.g., transfers)



Using NSSE Data: Lessons Learned

5. Examine the results from multiple perspectives
6. Link results to other information about the student experience and complementary initiatives
7. Don't allow the numbers to speak for themselves
8. Manage the message and the media

NSSE Virtues



- ❖ Research based
- ❖ Focus on educationally purposeful activities
- ❖ Results point to areas where improvement is desirable
- ❖ Compelling face validity
- ❖ Established psychometrics
- ❖ Transparent operations
- ❖ Third party administration

NSSE Virtues



- ❖ Random sampling
- ❖ Targeted sampling
- ❖ Flexibility: consortium question, modules
- ❖ Contributes to value-added estimates when linked to BCSSE, CLA, other outcomes measures
- ❖ Benchmarks for peer, national and other comparisons

NSSE Cautions



- ❖ Only one source of information
- ❖ Corroborate results
- ❖ Engagement skeptics
- ❖ Not an outcomes measure
- ❖ Denial in face of less-than-desirable results
- ❖ Eschew rankings



Discussion and Questions

- ♦ Can you share an example of NSSE use on your campus?
- ♦ What questions do you have about using NSSE for assessment, accreditation, and/or retention studies?
- ♦ What action might you take with your NSSE data?
- ♦ What other data do you have that might link to NSSE data?

For More Information
www.nsse.iub.edu