Updated NSSE: New Opportunities to Assess and Improve Quality

Jillian Kinzie, PhD.

NSSE, IU Center for Postsecondary Research

April, 2013 HLC NCA Conference, Chicago, IL
Audience Survey

- Who is in NSSE 2013? Who has NSSE results from past years?
- Who has worked with their NSSE/CCSSE results?
- Who has used student engagement results in HLC accreditation?
- What questions do you have about using NSSE in your accreditation work?
Agenda

• Current Context in Higher Education – why improving quality matters
• Putting Data to Use in Accreditation
• Updated NSSE
• Discussion and Questions
College Attainment Report: The Challenge is Urgent

• ALL colleges and universities **must marshal the resources to make completion a priority**

• **Change campus culture** to boost student success
  – Create student-centered culture
  – Improve the academic experience

• **Institutions can and must take steps to increase the chances that students will be successful, and ensure that students are active, engaged participants**

ACE College Attainment Report, January 23, 2013
What We Know About Student Success:

• Student engagement in intentionally designed educationally purposeful activities is necessary to achieve desirable learning outcomes.

• Institutions need information about students experiences to deploy resources appropriately and encourage success behaviors.
What is 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?

• NSSE annually gathers valid, reliable information on the extent to which First Year and Senior students are exposed to proven educational practices that correspond to desirable learning outcomes.
  – Results provide estimates of how students spend their time and what they gain
  – NSSE items represent empirically confirmed ‘good practices’; behaviors associated with student learning and development
Student Engagement and Accreditation

One of the most common institutional uses of student engagement data is for accreditation.

Why? NSSE & CCSSE results are meaningful indicators of educational quality useful for planning, for documenting institutional effectiveness, AND results can guide improvements and assess impact.
Approaches to Using Student Engagement Data in Accreditation....
Rationale for Using NSSE in HLC Accreditation

• Measures key areas of educational effectiveness
• Helps pinpoint areas of strength and need for improvement
• Offers cross-sectional and longitudinal evidence
• Enables institutions to benchmark against similar, aspirational, and customized comparison groups
• Engagement, student success, and high-impact practices are important themes and frameworks for quality assurance and improvement!!
Using NSSE in HLC Accreditation

- NSSE as evidence, ASSURANCE [HLC Standard & Open Pathway]
  - Provides student learning process & outcomes indicators
  - Benchmarking
  - Participation demonstrates ongoing evaluation, institutional improvement, & effectiveness activities

- NSSE in QUALITY improvement efforts [HLC Open Pathway Quality Initiative; Standard & AQIP]
  - Catalyst for institutional action
  - Guide for improvement plan
  - Baseline & outcomes measures to assess improvement
NSSE Use for Improving Quality

- Concern over retention rates & education quality
- Task force retreat
- Prompted efforts to create a more supportive campus environment
  - Unified academic support center for tutoring & supplemental instruction
  - Immediate response to students at academic risk
Using Data to Demonstrate Educational Effectiveness

**Example** -- To what extent are our FY students experiencing active learning?

- Only 52% of our First-Year students report that they **frequently** (often + very often) ask questions in class, compared to 70% at similar Private LACs.

- Plus, only 42% of our First-Year students report that they **frequently** work with peers on projects in class...

- **Should this be higher given our institutional size, type, and expressed commitment to active learning in the first year experience?**
Example of Mission Effectiveness: Are students & faculty experiencing our service-learning mission?

- NSSE results show that nearly 50% of FY and 75% of Seniors do service-learning or community service – significantly more than comparable peer institutions.

- Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) results show 65% faculty teaching FY think “service-learning” is “important” and 42% do this in their courses.

- **Data provide evidence of service-learning mission.**
Percent Midwest U (MWU) Seniors “Done”

High Impact Practices: Service-Learning, Undergraduate Research, Internship

Data might make a case for and inform a Quality Initiative to Enhance & Expand HIPs at MWU
NSSE Accreditation Tool-kit

1. Background on using student engagement in accreditation

2. Customized to 6 regional accrediting bodies & specialized (ABET, AACSB...)

3. Map NSSE items to accreditation standards

4. Vignettes from institutions on using NSSE in accreditation

DOWNLOAD Toolkit: www.nsse.iub.edu
Click on: “Tools & Services”
Accreditation Toolkit: Mapped to 2006-2010 NSSE Survey Questions

Higher Learning Commission – North Central Association (HLC-NCA)

Mapping NSSE to Criteria for Accreditation:

Criterion Two: Consider using NSSE as a tool to gather evidence that is beneficial in ongoing evaluation and assessment processes. Ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching. As NSSE focuses on student engagement and effective learning, numerous items from the survey may provide evidence to support multiple Core Components under this criterion.

Mapping NSSE to AQIP
Using NSSE in Accreditation

• Always use multiple sources of data – pair indirect with direct evidence

• NSSE can be linked as evidence of quality assurance, and data can inform quality improvement

• NSSE is most meaningful when coupled with other forms of formative and summative evaluation
NSSE Updated in 2013
Why Update Now? Purpose

• After more than a decade in the field, we know more about what matters to student success, institutional improvement efforts, and properties of the NSSE survey itself

• NSSE must stay relevant to current issues

• Starting in 2005, we kept the survey largely unchanged for longitudinal comparisons with the aim of rolling out major updates at longer-term intervals
Why Update Now? Goals

- Maintain core purpose of assessing student engagement in effective educational practices to inform improvement efforts
- Stay current with movements and trends in higher education
- Improve clarity, consistency, and applicability of the survey
- Improve the properties of existing measures
- Incorporate new measures relevant to effective teaching and learning
National Survey of Student Engagement 2013
The College Student Report
This is a facsimile of the 2013 NSSE survey (available at nsse.iub.edu/links/surveys). The survey itself will be administered online.

1. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?
   Response options: Very often, Often, Sometimes, Never
   a. Asked questions or contributed to course discussions in other ways
   b. Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in
   c. Come to class without completing readings or assignments
   d. Attended an art exhibit, play or other arts performance (dance, music, etc.)
   e. Asked another student to help you understand course material
   f. Explained course material to one or more students
   g. Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students
   h. Worked with other students on course projects or assignments
   i. Gave a course presentation

2. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?
   Response options: Very often, Often, Sometimes, Never
   a. Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments
   b. Connected your learning to societal problems or issues
   c. Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments
   d. Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue
   e. Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective
   f. Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept
   g. Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge
How did the NSSE items change?

- About a quarter of NSSE items are new, about the same proportion remained unchanged.
- Of the half that changed, an equal number were modified in major or minor ways.
- Deleted items maintained the overall length.
### How did the NSSE items change?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2012 Survey</th>
<th>2013 Survey</th>
<th>Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often... Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in</td>
<td>How often... Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often... Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor</td>
<td>How often... Connected your learning to societal problems or issues</td>
<td>Del</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often... Talked about career plans with faculty member or advisor</td>
<td>How often... Talked about career plans with a faculty member</td>
<td>Min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often... Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)</td>
<td>How often... Explained course material to one or more students</td>
<td>Maj</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How can you track item changes?

• Item by Item Comparisons of NSSE 2012 and NSSE 2013:

• nsse.iub.edu/pdf/NSSE 2012-2013 Item Comparisons.pdf
What do item comparisons suggest for tracking over time?

• Many items can continue to be tracked

• Most minor and even some major modified items can be tracked (criterion reference, adopt comparison to above the average)

• Consider how new items might help enhance what you’re trying to assess in terms of effective educational practice
New Content in 2013

• Teaching Practices
  • To what extent have your instructors...
    o Clearly explained course goals and requirements
    o Taught course sessions in an organized way
    o Used examples /illustrations to explain difficult points
    o Provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments
  • Wabash National Study found that this measure had the strongest relationship with desired learning outcomes
New Content in 2013

• Quantitative Reasoning
  - *How often have you...*
    - Reached conclusions based on your own analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics, etc.)
    - Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)
    - Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information
New Content in 2013

• Learning Strategies
  • How often have you...
    o Identified key information from reading assignments
    o Reviewed your notes after class
    o Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials
New Content in 2013

• We also now offer topical modules:
  ▪ Academic advising
  ▪ Civic engagement
  ▪ Transferable skills
  ▪ Writing
  ▪ Technology
  ▪ Experiences with diversity

• Additional modules will be developed over time — send us your great ideas!
What will happen to the NSSE benchmarks?

• **Level of Academic Challenge**
  ▪ Time, effort, and coursework emphasis on intellectually challenging and creative work

• **Active and Collaborative Learning**
  ▪ Active involvement in learning and working with others

• **Student-Faculty Interaction**
  ▪ Interacting with faculty as mentors and instructors in and out of the classroom

• **Enriching Educational Experiences**
  ▪ Complementary learning activities in and out of the classroom that augment the curriculum

• **Supportive Campus Environment**
  ▪ Perceptions of support for academic and nonacademic success
## What will happen to the NSSE benchmarks?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSSE Benchmarks</th>
<th>NSSE 2013 Engagement Theme</th>
<th>NSSE 2013 Engagement Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of Academic Challenge</strong></td>
<td>Academic Challenge</td>
<td>• Higher-Order Learning&lt;br&gt;• Reflective &amp; Integrative Learning&lt;br&gt;• Learning Strategies&lt;br&gt;• Quantitative Reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active and Collaborative Learning</strong></td>
<td>Learning with Peers</td>
<td>• Collaborative Learning&lt;br&gt;• Discussions with Diverse Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student-Faculty Interaction</strong></td>
<td>Experiences with Faculty</td>
<td>• Student-Faculty Interaction&lt;br&gt;• Teaching Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supportive Campus Environment</strong></td>
<td>Campus Environment</td>
<td>• Quality of Interactions&lt;br&gt;• Supportive Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enriching Educational Experiences</strong></td>
<td>High-Impact Practices</td>
<td>Individual items: Learning Community, Culminating Experience, Study Abroad, Service Learning, Research with Faculty, Internship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What will happen to the NSSE benchmarks?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSSE Benchmarks</th>
<th>NSSE 2013 Engagement Theme</th>
<th>NSSE 2013 Engagement Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Level of Academic Challenge             | Academic Challenge        | • Higher-Order Learning  
• Reflective & Integrative Learning  
• Learning Strategies  
• Quantitative Reasoning |
| Active and Collaborative Learning       | Learning with Peers       | • Collaborative Learning  
• Discussions with Diverse Others |
| Student-Faculty Interaction             | Experiences with Faculty  | • Student-Faculty Interaction  
• Teaching Practices |
| Supportive Campus                       | Campus Environment        | • Quality of Interactions  
• Supportive Environment |
| Enriching Educational Experiences       | High-Impact Practices     | Individual items: Learning Community, Capstone Experience, Study Abroad, Service Learning, Research w/Faculty, Internship |
## Engagement Indicators and High-Impact Practices

### Reporting 10 measures plus individual high-impact practices provides more specificity and more actionability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSSE 2013 Engagement Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Higher-Order Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reflective &amp; Integrative Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learning Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Quantitative Reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaborative Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Discussions with Diverse Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Student-Faculty Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teaching Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Quality of Interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Supportive Environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### High-Impact Practices

- Learning Community
- Capstone
- Study Abroad
- Service-Learning
- Research w/Fac.
- Internship
How will this affect longitudinal comparisons?

• The NSSE Benchmark scores will no longer be calculable after 2013, but the themes addressed within the benchmarks will carry forward.
How will this affect longitudinal comparisons?

2012 Level of Academic Challenge Benchmark

- Combined measure of expectations, higher-order learning, reading, writing, study time

2013 Academic Challenge content area

- Engagement Indicators (aggregate scores):
  - Higher-Order Learning
  - Reflective & Integrative Learning
  - Learning Strategies
  - Quantitative Reasoning

- Other reported measures:
  - Reading
  - Writing
  - Study time
How will this affect longitudinal comparisons?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSSE Benchmarks</th>
<th>NSSE 2013 Engagement Content</th>
<th>NSSE 2013 Engagement Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student-Faculty Interaction</td>
<td>Experiences with Faculty</td>
<td>Student-Faculty Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching Practices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student-Faculty Interaction items changed: minor & major

To consider:

- Which items contributed to Q-College’s high SFI score?
- Have these items changed for 2013?
- What do you expect for SFI in 2013?

What might you do to prepare for transition?
Who on campus might be interested in expanded and new content?

Who might be interested?

- Teaching practices?
  - Center for T&L, faculty development committee, academic departments

- Learning strategies?
  - Academic support office, orientation, FYE staff

- Expanded content on diverse interactions, leadership, likely to be of interest to student affairs, accreditation committees, academic departments

- How might you generate interest in new results? Or, solicit interest of relevant staff and units?
How will NSSE reports change?

• Snapshot - A new dashboard of results
• New Engagement Indicator report
• New High-Impact Practice report
• Enhanced Respondent Characteristics report
• Updated frequency and means reports
• Updated guides and tools
• What would you like to see?

Share feedback:
http://nsse.iub.edu/nsse2013/
What will remain the same?

- Meaningful, actionable data about educational quality
- Updated resources (Accreditation Toolkits, Facilitators Guide)
- Updated FSSE & BCSSE
- Customizable comparison groups

What do you most want to see retained?

What NSSE data, report, or feature is most important to you and your campus?
How might you prepare???

- Re-familiarize yourself with the NSSE data you already have
  - What was most valued (items, benchmark scores, multi-year data etc.) and how will this be affected?

  - What report templates can you envision in advance of receiving results?
How might you prepare???

- Find new allies! NSSE has many new measures and features - who might be attracted?
  - How might you involve new audiences in survey promotion?
  - Who might benefit from a survey preview?
  - Who is likely interested in new measures? Modules?
Considering changes...

• How did your favorite items fare in the update?
• What questions do you have about modifications?
• What concerns do you have about assessing topics of interest to your faculty and programs?
• How will you prepare for 2013 results?

If you are concerned about the loss of specific items or content areas please contact us to discuss how to address!
What other questions do you have?

Ideas, feedback, and questions:
nsse2013@indiana.edu

Jillian: jikinzie@indiana.edu
nsse.iub.edu