A Fresh Look at Student Engagement for Accreditation and Improvement

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What Questions Do You Have??

• Who has NSSE data? 2013? 2014?
• Who has used data in accreditation?
• What questions do you have about NSSE use in accreditation?

A Fresh Look at Student Engagement

“Authentic, extensive student engagement is essential for both quality and the scale required for widespread affordable attainment”

– Paul Lingenfelter, Former President SHEEO Association

NSSE results respond to current interest in:

- Completion
- Quality
- Student Success

Updated NSSE: A Fresh Look on Student Engagement

NSSE Survey Updated in 2013!

NSSE Updated in 2013 with new content, Engagement Indicators, HIPS, modules, redesigned reports

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>Del</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>New</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often... Talked about career plans with a 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>

### New Content in 2013

- **Learning Strategies**
  - How often have you...
  - Identified key information from reading assignments
  - Reviewed your notes after class
  - Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials

### The Updated NSSE

**From Benchmarks to Engagement Indicators and High-Impact Practices**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSSE Benchmarks 2000–2012</th>
<th>Key Changes</th>
<th>Engagement Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of Academic Challenge</strong></td>
<td>Expanded to focus on distinct dimensions of academic effort, including any topics of interest to students, courses, activities, and study time will be reported in this space.</td>
<td>Higher-Order Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active and Collaborative Learning</strong></td>
<td>Modified to emphasize student-student collaborations, expanded include teams formed in faculty-led educational experiences have been named faces.</td>
<td>Reflective &amp; Integrative Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaborative Learning</strong></td>
<td>Discussions with diverse others</td>
<td>Learning Strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**10 Engagement Indicators (FY & SR)**

- Student-Faculty Interaction
- Effective Teaching Practices
- Student-Faculty Interaction
- Supportive Campus Environment
- Quality of Interactions
- Supportive Environment

### A Fresh Look: Re-Designed Reports

The updated NSSE item overview includes reports that are designed to highlight the impact of various engagement indicators, such as student-faculty interaction, effective teaching practices, and supportive environment. The redesign focuses on providing a fresh look at the data, making it easier for institutions to understand and implement high-impact practices.
A Fresh Look: Student Engagement Findings

- **Academic Challenge Theme**: results for deep learning — higher order, reflection & integration – related to challenge revealed emphasis on higher order learning was doubled for seniors who indicated high course challenge vs. those with low challenge.

- **Notable differences by majors for key academic challenge items**:
  - Engineering = preparing for class
  - Arts & Hum & Social Sciences = time reading

NSSE and Accreditation

- **The most commonly reported use of NSSE results is for accreditation.**
- **Accreditation committees are group that results are most shared with and used by.**

Rationale for Using NSSE in Accreditation

- Measures effectiveness in key areas
- Systematically identifies areas of strength & for improvement
- Enables benchmarking against similar & aspirational peer groups
- Results reveal how students use institutional resources
- Participation in survey demonstrates ongoing evaluation, institutional improvement, and effectiveness activities
- Results are accessible and understandable by various internal & external stakeholders

Types of Measures

**Process Measures (Indirect)**
- Evidence of effective educational activity by students and institutions

**Outcome Measures (Direct)**
- Evidence of what students have learned or can do

Most Salient for Accreditation...

- Student engagement results are a direct indicator of students’ exposure to effective practice
- And, because survey measures participation in effective educational practices, it provides an indirect measure of student learning
- NSSE results indicate areas for improvement and are “actionable” – thus, appropriate for inclusion in quality improvement plans
Importance of Process & Outcomes Measures

- Need both process and outcome measures
  - Process measures identify what contributes to outcomes, and where action is needed
  - Outcome measures provide evidence of goal, but alone don’t suggest what to improve
- Combine process and outcome data to tell the most complete story about educational effectiveness and/or how to improve
- NSSE results are “proxy” for learning outcomes
  (Pascarella, et al, Change magazine)

Using NSSE Data in Self-Studies and Quality Improvement Plans

- Institutional Reflection
  - Establishing a baseline
    - “Where we started…”
  - Strengths & Weaknesses
  - Examining trends over time
- Starting a New Project
  - A Tool to look within student feedback
  - Examining specific student populations
- Looking Forward
  - Establishing a baseline
  - Setting future goals
  - Evaluate institutional improvement efforts

NSSE and accreditation: Concerns

- Failing to make use of NSSE results
  - Years of results are simply not referenced
  - Data only partially presented, revealing faults is feared
  - Worries about validity, or “self-report” as evidence, limit use
- Data lack contextualization, or are not supported with relevant discussion or complementary evidence
  - Data don’t speak for themselves, engagement must be explained in the context of institutional mission and educational effectiveness, and combined with direct evidence

The Updated Accreditation Toolkits

Each regional toolkit includes:
- Introduction and rationale
- Notes about the 2013 update
- Mapped NSSE Items to the criteria or standards
- Institutional examples
- Accreditation Tips
- And more!

NSSE Accreditation Toolkits

Guide to Help Maximize the Use of NSSE Data in Accreditation

- Background information on using student engagement in accreditation
- Customized to each of the six regional accrediting bodies and several program accreditors
- NSSE items mapped to accreditation standards
- Institutional vignettes on using NSSE in accreditation

http://nsse.iub.edu/html/accredToolkits.cfm
Approaches to using NSSE-Accreditation standard maps

- **Caution** -- it's not a formula, map is a guide!!!
- Create short reports of NSSE results specific to components and provide to your campus accreditation team or units responsible for compiling evidence and invite their interpretation
- Weave NSSE results with other direct and indirect evidence in narrative about standards

Accreditation and Discussions with Diverse Others Items

- Assess institutional commitment to diverse learning experiences, measure of climate
- Assess multicultural affairs, diversity component in curriculum
- Deeper examination -- Where do diverse discussion levels vary? by student characteristics? Majors? Housing status...

Accreditation and Academic Challenge Theme

- Course challenge item plus time studying, support to succeed academically, and higher order learning results responds to...
- HLC Core Components - 3 B, E
  - B. Institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to educational programs.
  - E. The institution fulfills claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

EXAMPLE: Engagement Indicators and Accreditation -- Document & Improve

- **EVIDENCE**: NSSEville EI scores SFI and ET scores comparatively high, evidence that University is achieving mission of high student-faculty contact & support for learning
- Item level results suggest specific strengths
**EXAMPLE: Engagement Indicators and Accreditation: Document & Improve**

**EVIDENCE:** NSSEville ET scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Comparison</th>
<th>NSSEville State</th>
<th>Public Research U.</th>
<th>Public Teaching U.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement Indicators</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Faculty Interaction</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Teaching Practices</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*SI and ET scores are comparatively high, evidence that University is achieving mission of high student-faculty contact & support for learning.

**ACTION:** Examine individual item scores within ET to identify where improvement may be warranted

**EVIDENCE:** NSSEville EI scores

SFI and ET scores are comparatively high, evidence that University is achieving mission of high student-faculty contact & support for learning.

**Additional New Content**

- **Topical modules:**
  - Academic advising
  - Civic engagement
  - Transferable skills
  - Writing
  - Technology
- Experiences with diversity
- Global Perspectives
- Information literacy experiences

**Additional modules** will be developed over time—**send us your great ideas!**

**Using NSSE for Accreditation**

**Institutional Example**

Case Western Reserve University

- Annually compile data from multiple sources and metrics from across campus, merging over 30 data sets to prepare reports specific to each academic department
- Prepared "The College Outcomes Report" in part for their 2015 HLC site visit
  - In the report they looked specifically at benchmarks longitudinally, across all past NSSE reports
  - Assembled NSSE data according to where it fit within each HLC Criteria
  - Their HLC special project focuses on interdisciplinary research

Using NSSE for Accreditation: Institutional Example

- **Argument for 4.B.2:** commitment to educational achievement & improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.
  - Using CLA & NSSE results, highlighted participation in HIPs, and related to BGSU ULOs (quantitative literacy, collaborative learning, learning strategies).
  - Writing module questions used with classroom-based assessments within General Studies Writing, to inform ULO, and improvements to instructional practice.

**Assessment must ultimately be used to help improve teaching and learning and, student success...**

Thank you!
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