Innovative Use of NSSE Results in Student Affairs: Lessons from the Field
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slides available: www.nsse.iub.edu (see, papers & presentations)

Opening Assessment

- 1,300 colleges & universities have NSSE data – Does your institution participate?
  - If yes, who keeps the data? Have you seen the reports?
  - If no, see NSSE website for list of participating schools
- To what extent have you used NSSE results?
  - A LOT
  - Moderate
  - Very little
  - Not at All

What percent of your work is currently dedicated to assessment activities?

5 or less 6-20 21-50 more than 50

Assessment in Student Affairs

- The use of assessment data should emerge out of a desire to **know more about** and improve the quality and effectiveness of higher education.
- **External demands for accountability and internal commitments to enhancing student learning** amplify the need for comprehensive assessment practices emphasizing student success.

Assessment in Student Affairs

A Comprehensive Assessment Model includes:
- Tracking—who uses services
- Needs assessment—assessing student needs
- Satisfaction—assessing student satisfaction
- Student cultures and campus environment perceptions
- Outcome assessment, particularly learning goals
- Comparable institutions, benchmarking
- Standards assessment
- Cost effectiveness assessment
- Application of data to build models, inform practice

(Upcraft & Schuh, 1996)

Session Objectives

- Briefly introduce NSSE as a tool for assessment in student affairs
- Understand potential applications of results to examine quality in undergraduate education, promote collaboration between student & academic affairs
- Highlight innovative institutional examples of using NSSE results in student affairs
- Discuss challenges and insights to using data

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
What does NSSE capture?

NSSE Results

• A window into the undergraduate experience
• Discover strengths and weaknesses in educational program
• Identify areas that need attention to improve student learning and success
• Help pinpoint aspects not in line with mission, or what institution expects
• Link with other institutional data

Student Life Questions Answered with NSSE Data

• Indicators about the quality of the learning environment.
  – How many hours per week do first-year students spend studying? Do women study more than men?
  – Do our FY students work more frequently with classmates on assignments outside of class than their counterparts at peer institutions? Do they spend enough time in co-curriculars?
• Description of student-faculty interaction outside of class.
  – What % of seniors work with faculty members on activities other than coursework? How frequently do students discuss ideas with faculty outside of class? Does this differ by major?

General Lessons for Using NSSE in Student Affairs

1. Get started – Take advantage
2. Increase relevance to units and committees
3. Triangulate results and take action
General Lessons for Using NSSE in Student Affairs

2. Make data relevant

- What items and scales are relevant to units? committees?
- Share results in bits and pieces, and then as a whole with these units

NSSE Measures and Student Affairs

- Items salient to Functional Areas
  - Residential Life
  - Student Activities/Greek Life
  - Career Services/Advising
  - First Year Programs/Orientation

What other survey items might pertain to your area of interest?

- Explore experiences of different groups
  - Greeks vs. non-greeks
  - Residential students vs. off-campus
  - FY students by FY GPA, or retention
  - Racial-Ethnic groups

Residential Life Items of Interest

- About how often have you...
  - 1u. ‘Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own’ [Very often, Often, Sometimes, Never]
- Mark the box that best represents the quality of your relationships with people at your institution ...
  - 8a. ‘Relationships with other students’ [1=Unfriendly, Unsupportive, Sense of alienation, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7=Friendly, Supportive, Sense of belonging]
- To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following ...
  - 10b. ‘Providing the support your need to help your succeed academically’ [Very much, Quite a bit, Some, Very little]
  - 10d. ‘Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities’ [Very much, Quite a bit, Some, Very little]
  - 10e. ‘Providing the support you need to thrive socially’ [Very much, Quite a bit, Some, Very little]

Student Activities/Greek Life Items of Interest

- About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following ...
  - 9b. ‘Working for pay on-campus’ [Hours per week 0, 1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 15-20, 21-25, 26-30, 30+]
  - 9c. ‘Working for pay off-campus’ [Hours per week 0, 1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 15-20, 21-25, 26-30, 30+]
  - 9d. ‘Participating in co-curricular activities’ [Hours per week 0, 1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 15-20, 21-25, 26-30, 30+]
  - 9e. ‘Relaxing and socializing’ [Hours per week 0, 1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 15-20, 21-25, 26-30, 30+]
- To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following ...
  - 10f. ‘Attending campus events and activities’ [Very much, Quite a bit, Some, Very little]

Career Services/Advising Items of Interest

- About how often have you...
  - 1o. ‘Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor’ [Very Often, Often, Sometimes, Never]
- Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution ...
  - 7a. Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment’ [Done, plan to do, Do not plan to do, Have not decided]
- To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in ...
  - 11b. ‘Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills’ [Very much, Quite a bit, Some, Very much]
- 12. Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution? [Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor]

First-Year Programs/Orientation Items of Interest

- Mark the box that best represents the quality of your relationships with people at your institution ...
  - 8a. ‘Relationships with other students’ [1=Unfriendly, Unsupportive, Sense of alienation, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7= Friendly, Supportive, Sense of belonging]
- About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following ...
  - 9a. ‘Preparing for class’ [Hours per week 0, 1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 15-20, 21-25, 26-30, 30+]
- To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following ...
  - 10b. ‘Providing the support your need to help your succeed academically’ [Very much, Quite a bit, Some, Very little]
  - 10d. ‘Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities’ [Very much, Quite a bit, Some, Very little]
  - 10e. ‘Providing the support you need to thrive socially’ [Very much, Quite a bit, Some, Very little]
General Lessons for Using NSSE in Student Affairs

3. Triangulate, Take Action

- Multiple data points make a stronger case
- Use data to leverage action
- Monitor results and make improvements

Example: Civic Engagement important to campus mission – What is quality of students’ experience?

What percent of full-time first-year students have participated in a *service-learning* course?

(a) 18%  (b) 28%  (c) 34%  (d) 46%

d. 46% NSSE FY; vs. 62% among top 10% schools

Civic Engagement and Service, cont’d

- **38%** FY students have “done” community service and **40%** FY report they “plan to do” service
- CIRP data show moderate pre-college service; interest among FY
- FY & SRs living on campus; women; Education & Business students do more service than others...
- Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) results show 55% faculty teaching FY think “community service” is “important” but, **less than 25%** do “service-learning” in their FY courses.

Check-In: What do you make of these Results?

- What do these data suggest about service-learning and civic engagement?
- What do these data suggest for student affairs units?
  - Advising?
  - Residence Life?
  - Orientation?
- What might this suggest for student - academic affairs partnerships?

Lessons: Using NSSE in Student Affairs

(Ahren, Ryan, Massa-McKinley in About Campus)

- Collaborate and communicate results to create a shared vision
  - Relationship with IR and faculty pivotal
- Triangulate data sources to corroborate and deepen initial impressions
  - Inventory all data sources, combine to review NSSE in tandem with other results; Link NSSE data to student information & outcomes
- Use NSSE results to learn more about your students
  - Examine subpopulations, use results to challenge assumptions
- Use data to set targets and monitor progress

Gail A. DiSabatino
Vice President for Student Affairs

NSSE Lessons from the Field

March 9, 2009
Clemson University

- Land-grant, research intensive
- 17,000 students (13,000 undergraduate)
- 90% Freshman retention rate
- 41% undergrads live on campus
- 14 to 1 student/faculty ratio
- Division IA athletics

CU Student Affairs

- Recreation
- Health Services
- Counseling
- Dean of Students
- Housing
- Judicial affairs
- Transition programs
- Intercultural Center
- Student Involvement
- SA Publications

- Police
- Parking
- Fire/EMS
- Municipal Court
- Post Office
- Major events
- and facilities
- Career Services
- Development
- SA Operations

STUDENT AFFAIRS VISION

To have the nation’s most engaged, satisfied and successful student body.

STRATEGIC GOALS

1. Increase undergraduate retention and student engagement
2. Prepare all students to be global citizens
3. Promote graduate student satisfaction and success
4. Develop all students as ethical leaders and agents of positive change
5. Provide services and facilities that enrich the student experience
6. Ensure a healthy, safe and well campus for all members of the Clemson community

GETTING STARTED

- Identified items in NSSE related to Student Affairs
- Analyzed data to create baseline

ASSESSMENT MAPPING

1. In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?: (1=never, 2=sometimes, 3=often, 4=very often)
   u. Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSSE: 2008/</th>
<th>Clemson</th>
<th>Selected Peers</th>
<th>Carnegie Peers</th>
<th>NSSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.56&quot;</td>
<td>2.54&quot;</td>
<td>2.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SY</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>2.66&quot;</td>
<td>2.64&quot;</td>
<td>2.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   | NSSE 2009 |
   | FY         | 2.41    | 2.55"          | 2.55"          | 2.55 |
   | SY         | 2.61    | 2.65"          | 2.64"          | 2.54 |

   | NSSE 2000 |
   | FY         | 2.84    | 2.86"          | 2.86"          | 2.60 |
   | SY         | 2.64    | 2.71"          | 2.71"          | 2.66 |
BENCHMARKING

BASELINE DATA - October 2007
- Obtain baseline data for retention and graduation rates and scores on NSSE and EBI for analysis to set annual targets for improvement by December 2007

SET TARGETS - February 2008
- Maintain or continually improve NSSE engagement scores related to:
  - Clemson University encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
- Continually improve NSSE engagement scores related to: 1) having serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity and socio-economic backgrounds, and 2) understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds

BALANCED SCORECARD

CASCADING GOALS SHOW CLEAR LINKAGES

Goal:
- Increase undergraduate retention and student engagement

Objective:
- Improve engagement scores (NSSE)

Measure:
- Continually improve NSSE engagement scores related to: 1) having serious conversations with students of different race or ethnicity and socio-economic backgrounds, and 2) understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds

Priority Accomplishments:
- 53% of students believed the event exposed them to different perspectives regarding diverse situations, activities or disciplines; and 65% agreed/strongly agreed that the event encouraged them to have serious conversations with others regarding issues of diversity, oppression and social justice

TRIANGULATION OF DATA

Focus Groups and Program Evaluations
Observation and Indicator Data

Successful
Engaged
Satisfied

NSSE IS PART OF A BIGGER PICTURE

EBI, ACT Student Satisfaction Inventory, Core Survey, ACHA (administered on annual or bi-annual basis)

A BODY OF EVIDENCE - DEMONSTRATING SUCCESS

NSSE Lessons from the Field:
University of Minnesota, Morris

Sandy Olson-Loy
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
University of Minnesota, Morris

The hallmarks of the liberal arts in a public setting.
- Rigorous integrated student experience
- ‘Not so big’ human-scaled campus ≈ 1700 students
- Nationally distinctive niche
  - Baccalaureate Colleges - Arts and Sciences Carnegie Classification
  - 274 institutions • 37 are public colleges
- High portion of first generation students, PELL eligible students, American Indian students.

NSSE - A Collaboration: Student Affairs & Academic Affairs

- Focus on student learning and engagement.
- Bringing the Morris experience to life.
  - Board of Regents, and others
- Strategic positioning: advancing core engagement areas for transformational student learning.
  - Baseline information
  - A strong vision for the future
- Organizational change efforts.
- Accreditation – NSSE mapping.

University of Minnesota, Morris

UM Strategic Positioning: Exceptional Students

Recruit, educate, challenge, and graduate outstanding students who become highly motivated lifelong learners, leaders, and global citizens.

Morris Student Experience
Exceptional Students: Engaged Learning

UM Board of Regents - Faculty, Staff & Student Affairs Committee

- Morris is recognized as a leader among public liberal arts colleges.
- NSSE shows that UMM seniors rate their ‘entire educational experience’ significantly higher than seniors across the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) consortium.

Morris Seniors: Key Engagement Areas

Morris seniors significantly exceed COPLAC seniors in:
- Attending art exhibits, galleries, music, dance, or theatre performances.
- Working with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, etc.)
- Completing foreign language coursework.
- Studying abroad.
- Voting in local, state, or national elections.
- Tutoring or teaching other students.
- Working with a faculty member on a research project outside course/program requirements
- Participating in co-curricular activities.

Accreditation: Peer Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement Area</th>
<th>Morris 2008 Seniors</th>
<th>COPLAC 2008 Seniors</th>
<th>Morris to COPLAC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Service</td>
<td>69%Done</td>
<td>63%Done</td>
<td>+6% - 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering</td>
<td>8% Plan to Do</td>
<td>12% Plan to Do</td>
<td>+2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>+7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research with a faculty</td>
<td>43%Done</td>
<td>37%Done</td>
<td>+20% - 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>member</td>
<td>7% Plan to Do</td>
<td>11% Plan to Do</td>
<td>+10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad</td>
<td>42%Done</td>
<td>17%Done</td>
<td>+25% - 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6% Plan to do</td>
<td>7% Plan to Do</td>
<td>+24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Accreditation: Broader Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement Area</th>
<th>Morris 2008 Seniors</th>
<th>Morris To Bac LA</th>
<th>Morris To NSSE All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Service Volunteering</td>
<td>69% Done 8% Plan to Do 77%</td>
<td>+1% -2% +9% -7% +2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>+8% +8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research with a faculty member</td>
<td>43% Done 7% Plan to Do 50%</td>
<td>+14% -2% +23% -5% +17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad</td>
<td>42% Done 6% Plan to do 48%</td>
<td>+9% 0% +27% -3% +24%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Morris: Growing Student Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement Area</th>
<th>2004 Seniors</th>
<th>2008 Seniors</th>
<th>Change 04–08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Service Volunteering</td>
<td>66% Done 8% Plan to Do 74%</td>
<td>69% Done 8% Plan to Do 77%</td>
<td>+3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research with a faculty member</td>
<td>33% Done 7% Plan to Do 44%</td>
<td>43% Done 7% Plan to Do 50%</td>
<td>+10 +6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad</td>
<td>34% Done 6% Plan to Do 40%</td>
<td>42% Done 6% Plan to Do 48%</td>
<td>+8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Collaboration: Student Affairs & Academic Affairs

- VC for Student Affairs, VC for Academic Affairs, and Institutional Research lead presentations
- Governance Committee: Assessment of Student Learning, Curriculum, Student Services, Student Government; open meeting for faculty and staff.
  - Benchmarks, strengths, concerns, opportunities for growth
  - Strong results for Seniors historically; First Year Students not at desired levels.
  - Disappearing Task Force on the First Year

Innovative Uses of NSSE in Student Affairs

- Blur organizational boundaries – data helps illustrate shared responsibility for student learning
- Use FY data to examine FYE, and look ahead to create a distinctive Sophomore experience
- Involve students in interpretation of results, seek more detail via focus groups, interviews
- Review data to reveal “points of light” or, “high-impact” practices. Connect to key programs.

Discussion and Comments: NSSE and Student Affairs

- Do you have access to NSSE and other institutional data? If yes, how do you use it in conjunction with other internal/national data to advocate for change, assess organization, program, project? How do you use it as development tool for area, division, collaboration with academic affairs?
- Share an example of NSSE use on your campus?
- What questions do you have about using NSSE for assessment, accreditation, on your campus?
- What action might you take with your NSSE data?

To Ponder:

Far more student affairs units can use their NSSE data to more productively guide student affairs practice, partner with IR and Academic Affairs, and promote student learning and success.

How will you put your data to use?
Resources


Discussion and Comments

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