

Presentation at the 2014 AIR Annual Forum, Orlando, FL

What Have We Learned? Using NSSE Data 2001-2013: Lessons From The Field



NSSE
national survey of
student engagement

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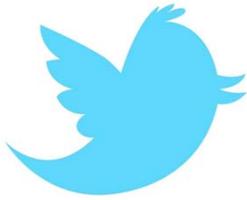
What are You Going to Learn Today?

Participants in this session will:

- Gain familiarity with the range of NSSE data use topics of featured institutional examples
- Learn about specific practices and strategies utilized by institutions
- Stimulate ideas for data use and encourage reflection on effective data use strategies employed in relation to campus data use

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What is NSSE?

- **Yes, an annual survey**
 - More than 1,500 colleges & universities since 2000
 - Hundreds participated multiple years
- **Diagnostic information** to support the improvement of undergraduate education
- **Actionable information based on valid & reliable measures**
 - Meaningful comparisons

Participation of NSSE 2014 institutions (N=716)		
1x	20	3%
2-3x	117	16%
4-5x	214	30%
6-7x	137	19%
8-12x	228	32%



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What Data Were Used for This Study?

120 Institutional Accounts in “Using NSSE Data” section of Annual Results 2003 – 2013



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What Methods Were Used for This Study?

- Content analysis of a curated collection of institutional data use examples
- In-depth accounts were categorized in Excel by type of application of results, units and institutional actors involved, analyses conducted, and outcomes
- Common themes across examples were identified
- Multiple researchers = multiple calibrations

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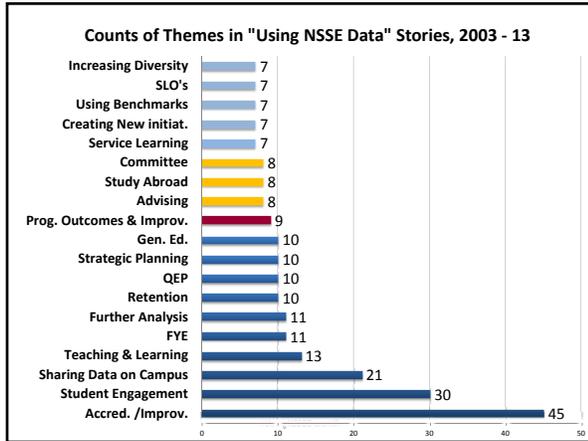
FINDINGS



Themes in "Using NSSE Data" Stories, 2003 - 2013

- 30 different themes
- Co-occurrence possible

Count	Theme
6	Critical thinking
6	Transfer Student Success
6	Curriculum
5	Faculty Development
4	Student-Faculty Interaction
2	Building community support
2	Student Services
2	Performance indicators
1	Non-declared students
1	Board of Regents
1	Response Rates



Themes in "Using NSSE Data" Stories, 2003 - 2013

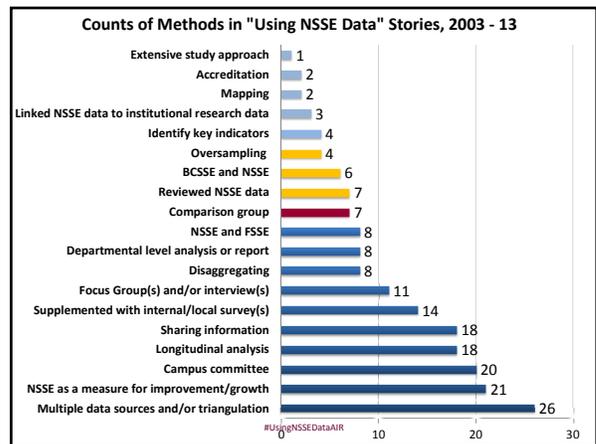
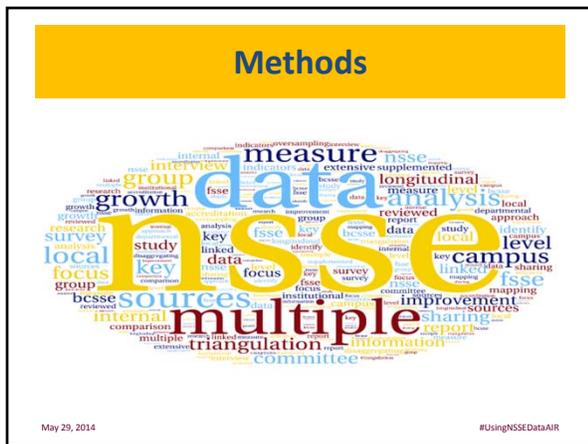
"The goal is to make appropriate changes in areas where students are under-engaged and where satisfaction can be enhanced. And the University is taking action and allocating resources to address its concerns." (p. 22) **2003, University of Charleston**

"One of the most important predictors of whether students in the cohort persisted to their junior year was the NSSE supportive Campus Environment benchmark. Knowing students' scores on the items in this cluster can help predict if they are likely to persist at SCSU or leave" (p.. 23-24) **Southern Connecticut State University, 2009**

"BCSSE data showed that students were coming in well prepared. They had positive attitudes and were ready and excited to work in the classroom. However, NSSE data showed a mismatch between entering student attitudes and behaviors during the first year." (p. 23) **Black Hills State University, 2009**

"NSSE has helped to encourage faculty interest in student learning processes and effective ways to contribute to student learning, as well as how faculty can further measure student engagement in the classroom", **Norfolk State University 2011**

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Methods: Examples

"The first part of a multi-layered process was the release of the report *Student Engagement Project-Statistical Summary (2010)*, a composite review of 2007 & 2008 NSSE results along with other information sources. The report outlines the beginning of a three-year Student Engagement Action Plan written by U of C's NSSE Action Team. The plan provides a blueprint to move student engagement issues forward throughout the institution and represents a concerted effort to translate NSSE results into actionable steps" (p. 25).
University of Calgary, 2010

"Following NSSE's recommendations for predictive validity studies (see NSSE's Psychometric Portfolio), Wagner linked NSSE data with student SAT scores, enrollment records, and GPAs. Results revealed that for most students across all five benchmarks, higher levels of engagement were associated with higher rates of retention after one year. For students with SAT scores in the low to middle ranges, engagement was a better predictor of retention than SAT scores" (p. 26).
Wagner College, 2012

"For example, student responses to NSSE over several years consistently indicated an excessive emphasis on memorization compared to peer institutions in the Council on Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC). This finding, combined with UCLA Higher Education Research Institute survey data indicating that faculty were increasingly relying on lecture in their courses, prompted the university to undertake a comprehensive review of classroom teaching methods and student learning strategies" (p. 25).
Truman State University, 2006

"Assessment staff followed students who left the university over the course of four years through the National Student Clearinghouse's StudentTracker, comparing BCSE and NSSE responses of students who persisted at the university to those who left. Their analyses indicated that the non-returning students had a different level of relationships with faculty members, peers, and administrative personnel and offices than did the returning students" (p. 23).
Southern Connecticut State University, 2009

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Who Gets to See & Use Results?



With whom do you share NSSE results on your campus?

Data Sharing With and Use by Internal Institutional Audiences		Results shared with	Results explicitly used by
Institutional Stakeholders		96%	96%
President/Senior Administration		96%	96%
Department Chairs/Deans		90%	90%
Faculty		91%	91%
Student Affairs Staff		91%	91%
Advising Staff		90%	90%
Admissions Staff		92%	92%
Public Affairs/News Office		97%	97%
Governing Board		95%	95%
Students		90%	90%
Campus Newspaper		94%	94%
Targeted Committees/Groups			
Accreditation		85%	85%
First-Year Experience		89%	89%
Teaching and Learning		88%	88%
General Education		90%	90%
Diversity		95%	95%
Writing Program		88%	88%
Technology		98%	98%

Note: Data were collected from 124 institutional respondents to the NSSE 2013 Report Card, an assessment of the spring 2013 NSSE survey administration.

What Motivated Data Use?*

MOTIVATION

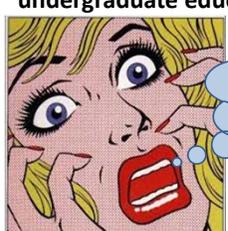


1. Data concerning to campus, usually lower than expected/in comparison
2. Accreditation
3. Quality improvement, program evaluation
4. New goals, priorities, strategic plan
5. Triangulation of results
6. Demonstrate distinction
7. State mandate/performance indicators
8. Interest in trend analysis
9. Grant application

*In order of most (1) to least (9) frequent

Is NSSE Making a Difference?

Assertion: A central objective of the NSSE project is to encourage the use of student engagement results to assess and improve quality in undergraduate education.



Gads, how were NSSE results used and to what meaningful end????

What Resulted from Data Use?



1. Created professional position (across IR & CTL, faculty development)
2. Influenced adoption of engaging pedagogies (FY, in departments, large enrollment courses)
3. Increased expansion of diversity experiences
4. Refined learning community program features
5. Justified value of New Student Seminar to retention and transition goals
6. Identified strengths & where programs fall short
7. Helped revamp FY experience, FY course and curriculum
8. Data discussions advanced collaboration between AA & SA
9. Justified need for more academic advisors and changes in advising practices
10. Identified areas for additional state funding
11. Shortcomings in FY guided creation of Sophomore experience
12. Benchmarking for quality improvement projects
13. Norming student and parent behaviors at Orientation
14. Informed redesign of senior capstone
15. Supported funds to incentivize HIPs (study abroad, undergrad research)
16. Trend analysis on student success
17. Performance indicators for additional state funding
18. Justified need for more academic advisors and changes in advising practices
19. Informed campus initiative to examine intellectual climate and supports for students to study
20. Established priorities in campus strategic planning
21. Included in Title III grant proposals, evidence of Carnegie Engaged Campus criteria
22. Signaled concern in advising
23. Justified enhancements to transfer student orientation
24. Informed faculty development workshop agenda
25. Warranted greater support services for online learners
26. Evidence of program impact
27. Informed renovations to student center
28. Supported investment in service-learning and faculty development in SL
29. Established priorities in campus strategic planning
30. Signaled concern in advising
31. Informed faculty development workshop agenda
32. Evidence of program impact

Conclusion: Use Definitely Amounts to Something!!!

A Shorter List of What Resulted from Data Use...



1. Justified creation of positions
2. Influenced adoption of engaging pedagogies
3. Increased expansion of diversity experiences, HIPS, learning supports, etc.
4. Refined, revamped, expanded FYE, LC, capstones, writing, transfer, online learner supports, transfer transition, etc.
5. Identified strengths & where programs fall short
6. Advanced collaboration between AA & SA
7. Warranted resource allocation
8. Informed revisions to general education curriculum & experiences
9. Provided prompts for focus groups & input on educational quality
10. Informed campus studies
11. Included in accreditation (regional & program)
12. Included in Title III grant proposals, evidence of Carnegie Engaged Campus criteria
13. Informed renovations to student center
14. Guided new program creation (Sophomore, transfer experience)
15. Benchmarking (quality improvement, program review)
16. Norming student & parent behaviors at Orientation
17. Trend analysis on student success
18. Performance indicators for state funding
19. Evidence of program impact (LC, FYE, HIPS, Service learning, Writing)
20. Established priorities in strategic planning
21. Informed faculty development workshop agenda

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What Resulted from Data Use?

Informed Transfer Student Transition Project...

“Findings showed that transfer students were less likely to work with faculty outside of class, complete a field-based experience, carry out community service, or complete a culminating senior project—important goals of WMU’s strategic plan. Furthermore, transfer students were less likely to participate in co-curricular activities due to family responsibilities and time spent commuting to campus. These were important considerations for University programs and practices that support the nonacademic responsibilities of students. Recommendations included a range of initiatives to support transfer student transition, including more evening course offerings and expansion of WMU offerings at local community colleges to ensure smooth transfer.”

(p. 24) 2012, Western Michigan University

Recommendations for Using NSSE Data



❖ Create a clear plan of action and follow through



❖ Form questions about target areas of inquiry before you begin analysis



❖ Include multiple constituents from the start

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Recommendations for Using NSSE Data

- ❖ Combine multiple data sources
 - ❖ Don’t rely solely on NSSE data
- ❖ Contextualize your results by supplementing with internal surveys and student focus groups or interviews



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Recommendations for Using NSSE Data

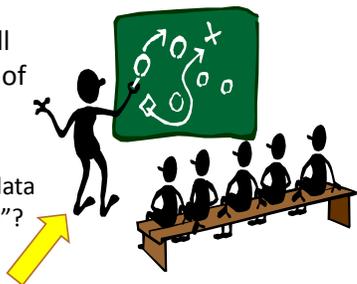


❖ Create a sufficiently comprehensive plan of analysis that fits what you are trying get from your data

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Recommendations for Using NSSE Data

- ❖ Identify who will oversee the use of results across campus
 - ❖ Who are your data use “champions”?



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Recommendations for Using NSSE Data



❖ Take advantage of all possible motivators



❖ Connect NSSE to conversations on issues of concern on your campus

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What is Your NSSE Data Use Story?

www.nsse.iub.edu/html/institutionStory.cfm

What is Your Institution's NSSE Story?

Do you have a NSSE data use story to tell? NSSE is interested in gathering information on innovative practices surrounding student success and engagement in a variety of areas. These include methods for communicating results across institutions and using survey (and other) data to create more effective educational practices, (e.g., promoting active learning, integrating student support in the classroom, improving teaching and learning, quality improvement projects for regional accreditation)

Check out NSSE data use accounts in the **Lessons from the Field** series!

Name:

Email:

Institution:

What NSSE Data Use Story do you have to tell?

Resources

Moving From Data to Action: Lessons from the Field-Volume 2



Download PDF

(tell your story)

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