

NATIONAL SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

(NSSE 2005 Results)

**Perspectives from USM First-Year
and Senior Students**

**Office of Academic Assessment
University of Southern Maine
Portland Campus
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Fall 2005

NSSE: Report of USM Student Responses

Overview

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) has been collecting information (since year 2000) annually from undergraduates at four-year colleges and universities across the country to assess the extent to which students engage in a variety of good educational practices. This is the fourth year that USM has participated in the NSSE survey along with 528 other colleges and universities during the spring 2005 semester. The NSSE Institute assists higher institutions by being responsible for coordinating and conducting the national survey. The NSSE Institute is housed at the Center for Postsecondary Research and Planning at Indiana University and is co-sponsored by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and The Pew Forum for Undergraduate Learning. This institutional report consists of the results from the NSSE 2005 survey regarding student engagement on the USM campus.

The report is organized into five sections including the introduction to the NSSE, the sample of students, national benchmarks, and both the first-year and senior-year student responses. A summary of the NSSE results for both freshmen and seniors is categorized by specific topic areas, such as academic (coursework) activities, non-academic activities, social activities, technology and diversity issues, and personal growth. In addition, both USM data and data from peer institutions are included in a series of tables that covers each item on the survey. Please see the Table of Contents for the areas of your interest (by first-year or senior-year). Also, the Appendices consist of some recent examples of how other institutions are using the NSSE results to change the teaching and learning environment on their campuses, suggestions in using the NSSE data, as well as the listing of our peer institutions (i.e. urban comprehensive universities) who participated in the NSSE 2005 survey.

USM is dedicated and committed to using the NSSE survey as a way to get the campus community involved in assessment activities. It is our hope that the collection of student's responses will be used internally in all academic departments and administrative offices for the purposes of improving both in-class and out-of-class student learning and to enhance teaching practices on the campus.

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INTRODUCTION

*** What do we know about college student engagement?**

The voluminous research on college student development indicates that the single best “predictor of a student’s learning and personal development is connected to how engaged and devoted students are to their college activities.” According to the research literature on four-year institutions, students who are actively involved in both academic and out-of-class activities gain more from the college experience than those who are not so involved (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) was designed specifically in the late 90’s to assist institutions of higher education in assessing the level of student engagement at their campuses. Based upon Chickering and Gamson’s research on the good practices of undergraduate education (1987), this tool was clearly developed for the purpose of helping colleges improve their teaching and learning environment.

*** What does the NSSE Survey measure?**

The NSSE survey, The College Student Report, measures student engagement of first-year and senior students in many important activities that are positively related to high levels of learning and personal development. About 40 questions from the survey are assigned to five clusters of similar activities and conditions to make up the national benchmarks of effective educational practice. These benchmarks are: level of academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student interactions with faculty members, enriching educational experiences, and supportive campus environment. A copy of the survey instrument is on the NSSE website (<http://www.iub.edu/~nsse>).

*** When and how was the NSSE survey administered to USM students?**

A random sample (N = 2689) of first-year and senior USM students were emailed a letter during the end of the spring 2005 semester asking them to complete the NSSE survey. The overall response rate was 26% (N = 692), which consisted of 337 freshmen and 355 senior students who responded and submitted their survey responses on the web.

USM SAMPLE OF STUDENTS

*** What was the demographic profile of USM students who completed the NSSE survey?**

<u>Demographic Information</u>	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
Males	26%	30%
Females	74%	70%
Full-time	86%	58%
Part-time	14%	42%
Reside on-campus	50%	8%
Reside off-campus	50%	92%
23 yrs & younger	82%	29%
24 yrs & older	18%	71%
Caucasian white	85%	83%
Ethnic background	15%	17%

*** What was the overall breakdown of the majors of the students who responded to the NSSE survey?**

	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
Arts & Humanities	17%	12%
Biological Science	3%	6%
Business-related	9%	12%
Education	7%	3%
Engineering/Computer Science	2%	2%
Physical Sciences/Environment	2%	2%
Professional	10%	20%
Social Sciences	20%	24%
Other	17%	18%
Undecided	15%	0%

NATIONAL BENCHMARKS

1. Overall, how did students rate the USM campus based upon the national benchmarks of effective educational practices?

According to the overall analysis completed by the NSSE Institute, each institution received a benchmark score (a mean score using a 100-point scale) for each of the national benchmarks. USM had slightly lower scores for freshmen when compared with other similar (peer) institutions and at the national level (i.e. all master's level participating institutions). See chart below for our benchmark scores (FR = freshmen, SR = seniors).

<u>Benchmark</u>	<u>USM</u>		<u>Peer Institutes</u>		<u>Master's Level</u>	
	FR	SR	FR	SR	FR	SR
Level of Academic Challenge	49.9	54.6	51.5	54.9	51.7	56.1
Active & Collaborative Learning	36.5	49.3	40.3	47.8	42.5	52.2
Student-Faculty Interaction	30.5	38.6	32.3	38.6	34.0	43.7
Enriching Educational Experiences	20.4	32.4	26.4	36.7	26.8	40.4
Supportive Campus Environment	53.4	53.1	54.9	52.5	60.2	57.5

2. During the 2004-05 academic year, what was the “level of academic challenge” at USM?

- a. How much reading did students do in the first year? ...in the senior year?

<u>Number of readings assigned</u>	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
1 – 4	22%	31%
5 – 10	43%	42%
11 – 20	27%	16%
21+	6%	10%

- b. What percentage of students had written assignments between 5 – 19 pages?

<u># of writing assignments between 5 – 19 pages</u>	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
1 – 4	48%	49%
5 – 10	27%	26%
11 – 20	12%	13%
21+	2%	3%

- c. What percentage of students had written assignments less than 5 pages?

<u># of writing assignments less than 5 pages</u>	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
1 – 4	24%	38%
5 – 10	32%	28%
11 – 20	26%	14%
21+	14%	15%

- d. What was the nature of assignments in various courses?

<u>Nature of Assignments</u>	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
Memorizing Facts	61%	58%
Analyzing Ideas	79%	84%
Synthesizing Information	58%	72%
Making Judgments	60%	65%
Applying Theories	62%	77%

- e. How much time did students spend preparing for classes?

<u>Preparation Time</u>	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
10 or less hours/wk	52%	49%
11 – 20 hrs/wk	34%	34%
21+ hrs/wk	14%	17%

- f. To what extent were students encouraged to spend significant amount of times studying and on academic work?

% of students who responded	Freshmen:	72%
“quite a bit or very much”	Senior:	72%

- g. What percentage of students felt very challenged and worked harder than expected in their academic work?

	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
On class assignments	49%	54%
On course exams	45%	54%

3. During the 2004-05 academic year, what kind of “active and collaborative learning” took place at USM?

- a. What percentage of students worked with their classmates to complete assignments, solve problems, or apply course content?

	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
During class:	38%	47%
Outside of class:	25%	47%

- b. What percentage of students engaged in service learning or took part in a community-based project as part of a regular course?

Freshman: 6% Seniors: 22%

- c. What percentage of students made a class presentation?

Freshman: 23% Seniors: 55%

- d. What percentage of students asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions?

Freshman: 60% Seniors: 77%

- e. What percentage of students discussed ideas from their classes with others outside of class (i.e. friends, family, co-workers, etc.)?

Freshman: 51% Seniors: 63%

4. During the 2004-05 academic year, how much “student-faculty interaction” took place at USM?

- a. What percentage of students often met with faculty members outside of class?

	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
On activities other than coursework:	9%	16%
Discussed grades or assignments:	43%	55%
Discussed ideas from readings/class discussions	15%	23%

- b. What percentage of students reported that they often received prompt feedback on academic performance?

Freshman: 63% Seniors: 73%

- c. What percentage of students reported that they talked often with faculty about their career plans?

Freshman: 23% Seniors: 32%

- d. What percentage of students reported that they worked with a faculty member on a research project?

Freshman: 25% Seniors: 26%

5. During the 2004-05 academic year, what kind of “enriching educational experiences” have students had at USM?

- a. Did students often experience conversations with others who are different in:

	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
Race or ethnicity	28%	36%
Belief, values, opinions (religion, political, etc.)	46%	47%

- b. Did students attend or participate in events?

	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
Attend a performance in the arts	26%	21%
Participated in spirituality activity	17%	26%
Attended campus events	72%	72%

- c. Does USM encourage frequent contact among students from different backgrounds; economic, social, racial, or ethnic?

Freshman: 31% Seniors: 34%

- d. Does USM encourage students to frequently use electronic technology to:

	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
Communicate with instructor	70%	83%
Discuss and complete assignments	48%	64%
Using computers in academic work	82%	89%

- e. How much time do students spend participating in co-curricular activities each week?

	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
5 hours or less/week	81%	90%
6 – 10 hours/week	15%	6%
11+ hours/week	4%	4%

- f. Have USM freshmen/seniors planned/experienced the following activities at USM?

	<u>Freshmen</u>		<u>Seniors</u>	
	<u>Plan To</u>	<u>Done</u>	<u>Plan To</u>	<u>Done</u>
Internship or field experience	70%	7%	29%	44%
Independent study	16%	2%	8%	15%
Community Service	43%	28%	16%	55%
Participated in learning community	20%	11%	11%	23%
Study abroad	36%	1%	5%	10%
Capstone or thesis senior experience	38%	1%	34%	19%

6. During the 2004-05 academic year, what did USM do to provide a “supportive campus environment” for students?

- a. What percentage of students reported that the campus environment:

	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
Provides them with academic support to succeed:	59%	61%
Provides support to thrive socially:	30%	19%
Helps them cope with non-academic responsibilities: (i.e. work, family, ect.)	24%	21%

- b. What percentage of the students felt that their campus relationships were “friendly or helpful” in regard to:

	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
Administrative personnel/offices	30%	37%
Faculty members	38%	54%
Other Students	42%	50%

- c. What percentage of students believe that they received “good or excellent” academic advising overall?

	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
Good	41%	36%
Excellent	21%	22%

- d. What percentage of students reported a “good or excellent” experience in the past year?

	<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
Good	53%	52%
Excellent	21%	28%

Summary of the data

Overall, in regard to our national benchmark scores, our institutional data did reveal that we are similar to our peer institutions with respect to the level of academic challenge and supportive campus environment. In regard to the freshmen survey responses, USM received slightly lower scores on all five national benchmarks compared to our peer institutions. Seniors, on the other hand, had responses on the NSSE 2005 survey, which were slightly higher (but not significant) benchmark scores than our peer institutions on two national benchmarks; i.e. active and collaborative learning and supportive campus. The benchmark, enriching educational experiences, had the lowest scores for both freshmen and seniors.

According to the results, a large percentage (over 70%) of both first-year and senior students reported that their instructors encouraged them to spend significant amounts of time studying on academic work. Over half of the student respondents reported that they contributed to class discussions, and that they discussed ideas from their classes with others outside of class. In addition, over 60% also reported that they received prompt feedback from instructors on their academic performance, and over 70% of the students communicated with their instructors through electronic mail.

Regarding collaborative learning, there were low percentages of students who participated in working with classmates on projects, or who were engaged in a community-based activity during the past academic year. Over 80% of the students reported that they spent less than 5 hours a week on co-curricular or out-of-class activities.

With respect to diversity at USM, approximately one-third of the students reported that USM encourages frequent contact among students with various backgrounds. Less than half of the students reported having serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity. Also, not many students reported that they often spend time talking with others with different religious beliefs or political opinions.

Overall, most students reported that their academic advising and their general educational experience at USM was of good or excellent quality.

FIRST-YEAR STUDENT RESPONSES / Demographic Profile

USM Freshmen Sample and Freshmen at Peer Institutions

<u>Demographics</u>	<u>USM Freshmen</u> (N = 337)	<u>Other Freshmen</u> (N = 1672)
Gender		
Males	26%	35%
Females	74%	65%
Enrollment Status		
Full-time	86%	90%
Part-time	14%	10%
Residence		
On-campus	50%	32%
Off-campus	50%	68%
Age		
19-23 yrs	82%	87%
24-39 yrs	11%	11%
40+ yrs	7%	3%
Admission Status		
New Students	88%	88%
Transfers	12%	12%
Ethnicity		
White	85%	55%
Other	15%	45%
Student Athletes (on a team)	9%	3%
Completed survey by:		
Paper survey	0%	25%
Web survey	100%	75%

NSSE Results: First-Year Student Perspectives (N = 337)

Academic and Intellectual Experiences % of respondents who reported ‘often’
or ‘very often’ on the survey

<u>Have done at my institution:</u>	<u>USM</u>	<u>Peer Institutes</u>
a. Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	60	61
b. Made a class presentation	23	31 *
c. Prepared 2 or more drafts of a paper before turning it in	60	61
d. Worked on a paper that integrated ideas from various sources	73	79
e. Included diverse perspectives in class discussions/assignments	61	66
f. Came to class without completing readings/assignments	19	20
g. Worked with other students on projects during class	39	48 *
h. Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare assignments	26	32 *
i. Put together ideas from different courses when completing papers	47	49
j. Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	8	13 *
k. Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course	6	9
l. Used electronic medium to discuss or complete assignments	48	52
m. Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor	70	68
n. Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	43	51 *
o. Talked about career plans with a faculty member/advisor	24	27
p. Discussed ideas from readings with faculty outside of class	15	20
q. Received prompt feedback from faculty on your acad. Performance	63	58
r. Worked harder than you thought to meet instructor’s expectations	48	53
s. Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (student life activities, committees, orientation)	9	10
t. Discussed ideas from classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers)	52	56
u. Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity	29	57 *
v. Had serious conversations with students of different beliefs, values, opinions	46	57 *

* Significant difference at .01 level between USM and peer institutions.

NSSE Results: First-Year Perspectives (N = 337)

Mental Activities

% of respondents who reported
'quite a bit' or 'very much'

<u>My coursework emphasized:</u>	<u>USM</u>	<u>Peer Institutes</u>
a. Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your courses and readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form	61	67
b. Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components	80	76
c. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	58	65 *
d. 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	60	66
e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	62	69 *

Reading and Writing Assignments

% of respondents who reported number of:

		<u>None</u>	<u>1-4</u>	<u>5-10</u>	<u>11+</u>
a. Number of assigned textbooks, books or book-length packs of course readings	USM: (Peer Institutes):	2 1	22 25	43 41	33 34
b. Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment	USM: (Peer Institutes):	22 23	54 53	14 16	10 8
c. Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more	USM: (Peer Institutes):	85 82	10 13	4 2	1 2
d. Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages	USM: (Peer Institutes):	11 12	48 50	27 27	14 10
e. Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages	USM: (Peer Institutes):	3 5	24 32	32 32	41 * 31

NSSE Results: First-Year Student Perspectives (N = 337)

Time Usage	% of usage/ typical hours each week						
		<u>0</u>	<u>1-5</u>	<u>6-10</u>	<u>11-15</u>	<u>16-20</u>	<u>21+</u>
a. Prepare for class	USM:	1	24	28	20	14	14
	(Peer Institutes):	1	27	27	18	12	15
b. Working for pay on campus	USM:	74	4	7	9	5	1 *
	(Peer Institutes):	86	2	4	4	3	2
c. Working for pay off campus	USM:	46	7	5	8	10	24
	(Peer Institutes):	42	5	7	7	11	28
d. Participating in co-curricular activities	USM:	64	17	9	6	2	3
	(Peer Institutes):	62	22	7	4	2	2
e. Relaxing and socializing	USM:	2	24	32	17	11	15
	(Peer Institutes):	2	29	29	16	10	14
f. Providing care for dependents	USM:	65	12	7	3	2	12
	(Peer Institutes):	58	16	9	5	3	9
g. Commuting to class	USM:	7	64	22	4	2	1 *
	(Peer Institutes):	8	56	21	8	3	4

Institutional Environment	% of students who reported 'quite a bit' or 'very much'	
<u>My institution emphasized:</u>	<u>USM</u>	<u>Peer Institutes</u>
a. Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	72	72
b. Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	59	53
c. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	31	27 *
d. Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	24	33
e. Providing the support you need to thrive socially	30	51
f. Attending campus events and activities	46	51
g. Using computers in academic work	82	83

NSSE Results: First-Year Student Perspectives (N = 337)

Educational and Personal Growth

% of students who reported
'quite a bit' or 'very much'

<u>My institution has contributed to:</u>	<u>USM</u>	<u>Peer Institutes</u>
a. Acquiring a broad general education	72	76
b. Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	52	52
c. Writing clearly and effectively	71	71
d. Speaking clearly and effectively	56	59
e. Thinking critically and analytically	75	78
f. Analyzing quantitative problems	60	64
g. Using computing and information technology	65	70
h. Working effectively with others	55	65
i. Voting in local, state or national elections	51	47
j. Learning effectively on your own	62	66
k. Understanding yourself	49	57 *
l. Understanding people of other backgrounds	36	59 *
m. Solving complex real-world problems	36	49 *
n. Developing a personal code of values and ethics	40	47 *
o. Contributing to the welfare of your community	29	34
p. Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	19	26 *

NSSE Results: First-Year Student Perspectives (N = 337)

Activities done in the past school year	% of responded “often or very often”	
	<u>USM</u>	<u>Peer Institutes</u>
a. Attend an art exhibit, gallery, play, dance or other theater performance	26	26
b. Exercised or participated in physical fitness activities	52	46
c. Participated in activities to enhance your spirituality (worship, meditation, prayer, etc.)	17	26 *
d. Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	47	48
e. Tried to better understand someone else’s view by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	57	62
f. Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	58	61

Enriching Educational Experiences	% of students who reported ‘yes’ or ‘undecided’			
	<u>USM</u>		<u>Peer Institute</u>	
	<u>Done/Plan to</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Done/Plan to</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
a. Practicum, internship, field experience, etc.	77	17	80	15
b. Community service or volunteer work	71	20	70	20
c. Participate in learning community	31	36	38	36
d. Work on research project with a faculty member	25	45	33	41
e. Foreign language coursework	22	22	57	18 *
f. Study abroad	43	33	37	32
g. Independent study	18	38	22	37
h. Culminating senior experience (capstone, thesis, project, etc.)	40	46	49	39

NSSE Results: First-Year Student Perspectives (N = 337)

% of respondents who reported
'quite a bit' or 'very much'

Quality of Relationships		<u>Unfriendly/ Not helpful</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Friendly/ Helpful</u>
a. Relationships with other students	USM:	4	53	42 *
	(Peer Institutes):	5	43	52
b. Relationships with faculty members	USM:	3	59	38
	(Peer Institutes):	4	56	40
c. Relationships with office staff/admin.	USM:	10	60	30
	(Peer Institutes):	14	58	29

Satisfaction		<u>Poor</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>
a. Evaluating of entire educational experience	USM:	3	22	53	21
	(Peer Institutes):	3	18	55	25
			<u>NO</u>		<u>YES</u>
b. If you could start over, would you come here	USM:		23		77
	(Peer Institutes):		21		79

Quality of Advising		<u>Poor</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>
Quality of advising received	USM:	9	28	41	21
	(Peer Institutes):	9	24	46	21

NSSE Results: First-Year Student Perspectives (N = 337)

		% of respondents who reported 'quite a bit' or 'very much'					
		<u>None</u>	<u>1-2</u>	<u>3-4</u>	<u>5-6</u>	<u>7+</u>	
<hr/>							
Homework/Problems							
a.	Number of problem-sets that took <u>more than 1 hour</u> to complete	USM: (Peer Institutes):	18 17	35 39	30 29	9 8	7 7
b.	Number of problem-sets that took <u>less than 1 hour</u> to complete	USM: (Peer Institutes):	19 16	35 37	24 23	10 12	12 12
<hr/>							

		<u>Very Little</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Very Much</u>	
		<hr/>			
	During the past year, the extent of exams that challenged you to do your best work	USM: (Peer Institutes):	3 3	52 51	45 47
<hr/>					

		<u>A's</u>	<u>B's</u>	<u>C's</u>	
		<hr/>			
	Current Grades	USM: (Peer Institutes):	30 37	58 51	12 11

SENIOR YEAR STUDENT RESPONSES / Demographic Profile

USM Senior Sample and Seniors at Peer Institutions

<u>Demographics</u>	<u>USM Seniors</u> (N = 355)	<u>Other Seniors</u> (N = 2084)
Gender		
Males	30%	36%
Females	70%	64%
Enrollment Status		
Full-time	58%	75%
Part-time	42%	25%
Residence		
On-campus	7%	4%
Off-campus	93%	96%
Age		
19-23 yrs	29%	49%
24-39 yrs	45%	39%
40+ yrs	26%	13%
Admission Status		
New Students	38%	37%
Transfers	62%	63%
Ethnicity		
White	83%	62%
Other	17%	38%
Student Athletes (on a team)	1%	1%
Completed survey by:		
Paper survey	0%	30%
Web survey	100%	70%

NSSE Results: Senior Year Student Perspectives (N = 355)

Academic and Intellectual Experiences % of respondents who reported ‘often’ or ‘very often’ on the survey

<u>Have done at my institution:</u>	<u>USM</u>	<u>Peer Institutes</u>
a. Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	77	70 *
b. Made a class presentation	55	57
c. Prepared 2 or more drafts of a paper before turning it in	53	49
d. Worked on a paper that integrated ideas from various sources	86	84
e. Included diverse perspectives in class discussions/assignments	57	60
f. Came to class without completing readings/assignments	20	21
g. Worked with other students on projects during class	47	47
h. Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare assignments	48	49
i. Put together ideas from different courses when completing papers	67	65
j. Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	17	18
k. Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course	22	14 *
l. Used electronic medium to discuss or complete assignments	64	59
m. Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor	83	78
n. Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	55	56
o. Talked about career plans with a faculty member/advisor	33	34
p. Discussed ideas from readings with faculty outside of class	23	23
q. Received prompt feedback from faculty on your acad. Performance	73	67
r. Worked harder than you thought to meet instructor’s expectations	54	59
s. Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (student life activities, committees, orientation)	16	16
t. Discussed ideas from classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers)	63	62
u. Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity	36	56 *
v. Had serious conversations with students of different beliefs, values, opinions	47	54 *

* Significant difference at .01 level between USM and peer institutions.

NSSE Results: Senior Year Student Perspectives (N = 355)

Mental Activities

% of respondents who reported
'quite a bit' or 'very much'

<u>My coursework emphasized:</u>	<u>USM</u>	<u>Peer Institutes</u>
a. Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your courses and readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form	58	58
b. Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components	85	84
c. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	72	73
d. 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	66	71
e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	77	77

Reading and Writing Assignments

% of respondents who reported number of:

		<u>None</u>	<u>1-4</u>	<u>5-10</u>	<u>11+</u>
a. Number of assigned textbooks, books or book-length packs of course readings	USM: (Peer Institutes):	1 2	31 32	42 36	27 31
b. Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment	USM: (Peer Institutes):	20 21	51 53	18 16	11 10
c. Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more	USM: (Peer Institutes):	53 51	40 39	4 6	2 4
d. Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages	USM: (Peer Institutes):	9 10	49 44	26 30	16 16
e. Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages	USM: (Peer Institutes):	5 8	38 36	28 24	29 32

NSSE Results: Senior Year Student Perspectives (N = 355)

Time Usage		% of usage/ typical hours each week					
		<u>0</u>	<u>1-5</u>	<u>6-10</u>	<u>11-15</u>	<u>16-20</u>	<u>21+</u>
a. Prepare for class	USM:	0	22	27	16	18	16
	(Peer Institutes):	0	24	25	18	13	20
b. Working for pay on campus	USM:	79	4	4	5	4	5
	(Peer Institutes):	83	2	4	3	5	3
c. Working for pay off campus	USM:	27	4	5	5	11	49
	(Peer Institutes):	28	4	6	6	11	45
d. Participating in co-curricular activities	USM:	71	19	3	3	2	3
	(Peer Institutes):	65	23	6	3	1	2
e. Relaxing and socializing	USM:	3	38	32	13	6	8
	(Peer Institutes):	3	39	30	14	7	8
f. Providing care for dependents	USM:	45	8	10	7	3	27 *
	(Peer Institutes):	49	15	9	5	4	19
g. Commuting to class	USM:	2	60	26	7	1	3
	(Peer Institutes):	3	57	27	8	3	3

Institutional Environment	% of students who reported 'quite a bit' or 'very much'	
<u>My institution emphasized:</u>	<u>USM</u>	<u>Peer Institutes</u>
a. Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	72	77
b. Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	62	63
c. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	34	46 *
d. Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	21	20
e. Providing the support you need to thrive socially	19	25
f. Attending campus events and activities	35	38
g. Using computers in academic work	88	87

NSSE Results: Senior Year Student Perspectives (N = 355)

Educational and Personal Growth

% of students who reported
'quite a bit' or 'very much'

<u>My institution has contributed to:</u>	<u>USM</u>	<u>Peer Institutes</u>
a. Acquiring a broad general education	78	81
b. Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	66	66
c. Writing clearly and effectively	75	72
d. Speaking clearly and effectively	67	66
e. Thinking critically and analytically	83	85
f. Analyzing quantitative problems	70	70
g. Using computing and information technology	75	77
h. Working effectively with others	70	72
i. Voting in local, state or national elections	39	35
j. Learning effectively on your own	69	70
k. Understanding yourself	52	55
l. Understanding people of other backgrounds	42	55 *
m. Solving complex real-world problems	52	56
n. Developing a personal code of values and ethics	40	48
o. Contributing to the welfare of your community	37	37
p. Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	18	20

NSSE Results: Senior Year Student Perspectives (N = 355)

Activities done in the past school year	% of responded “often or very often”	
	<u>USM</u>	<u>Peer Institutes</u>
	a. Attend an art exhibit, gallery, play, dance or other theater performance	21
b. Exercised or participated in physical fitness activities	48	45
c. Participated in activities to enhance your spirituality (worship, meditation, prayer, etc.)	26	31
d. Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	58	55
e. Tried to better understand someone else’s view by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	64	63
f. Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	67	62

Enriching Educational Experiences	% of students who reported ‘yes’ or ‘undecided’			
	<u>USM</u>		<u>Peer Institutes</u>	
	<u>Done/Plan to</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Done/Plan to</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
a. Practicum, internship, field experience, etc.	72	11	71	10
b. Community service or volunteer work	72	11	66	13
c. Participate in learning community	34	14	32	18
d. Work on research project with a faculty member	26	21	30	19
e. Foreign language coursework	31	14	48	10 *
f. Study abroad	15	18	18	17
g. Independent study	23	17	28	15
h. Culminating senior experience (capstone, thesis, project, etc.)	53	17	65	14 *

NSSE Results: Senior Year Student Perspectives (N = 355)

% of respondents who reported
'quite a bit' or 'very much'

Quality of Relationships

		<u>Unfriendly/ Not helpful</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Friendly/ Helpful</u>
a. Relationships with other students	USM:	5	45	50
	(Peer Institutes):	3	43	53
b. Relationships with faculty members	USM:	3	42	54
	(Peer Institutes):	4	46	50
c. Relationships with office staff/admin.	USM:	11	52	37 *
	(Peer Institutes):	18	54	28

Satisfaction

		<u>Poor</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>
a. Evaluating of entire educational experience	USM:	4	16	52	28
	(Peer Institutes):	2	16	55	27
			<u>NO</u>		<u>YES</u>
b. If you could start over, would you come here	USM:		21		79
	(Peer Institutes):		24		76

Quality of Advising

		<u>Poor</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>
Quality of advising received	USM:	16	26	36	22
	(Peer Institutes):	15	24	39	21

NSSE Results: Senior Year Student Perspectives (N = 355)

		% of respondents who reported 'quite a bit' or 'very much'					
		<u>None</u>	<u>1-2</u>	<u>3-4</u>	<u>5-6</u>	<u>7+</u>	
Homework/Problems							
a.	Number of problem-sets that took <u>more than 1 hour</u> to complete	USM: (Peer Institutes):	20 19	38 33	24 28	7 8	10 12
b.	Number of problem-sets that took <u>less than 1 hour</u> to complete	USM: (Peer Institutes):	35 31	32 36	15 18	11 7	8 8

		<u>Very Little</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Very Much</u>	
	During the past year, the extent of exams that challenged you to do your best work	USM: (Peer Institutes):	1 3	45 45	54 53

Current Grades		<u>A's</u>	<u>B's</u>	<u>C's</u>	
	Current Grades	USM: (Peer Institutes):	46 42	48 51	6 7

Appendix A

Uses of the NSSE Data: Examples from other institutions

Colleges and universities have found many different and productive ways to use their NSSE results. Here are some examples from institutions who have shared their progress (i.e. reported from the NSSE 2005 National Report).

- **Iowa State University** incorporated their NSSE data to inform accreditation reviews; such as whether participation in a learning community is linked with student engagement, gains in educational outcomes, and overall student satisfaction.
- **Kentucky State University** uses NSSE results to take action to improve relations between their college students and the local community. A community campaign was launched to streamline ways for students to obtain information about important services on campus.
- **Washington State University** shaped the “new” freshmen experience based upon NSSE data, by expanding the student leadership program, refocusing on residential learning communities, and reexamining undergraduate experiences.
- **William Wood University** scheduled a number of focus group sessions to get additional feedback from students about increasing academic challenges. Students discussed what kinds of assignments contributed to their learning and which courses prepare them for real-world experiences.
- **California State University at Dominguez Hills** used NSSE results to address the key student development outcomes and sponsored a series of faculty development workshops and activities.

Appendix B

Suggestions collected by the NSSE Institute for incorporating NSSE data in institutional change efforts.

1. Make sure faculty and staff understand and endorse the concept of student engagement. The value of NSSE results can help institutions improve teaching and learning.
2. Collect results from enough students so that the information is useable at the departmental level.
3. Understand what student engagement data represent and use the results wisely. Examining the perspectives and experiences of students is the best use of the NSSE results.
4. Report student engagement results in a responsible way. NSSE encourages institutions to engage in conversation with other institutions to promote improvement efforts and to discuss strategic uses of the NSSE data.
5. Don't allow the numbers to speak for themselves. Use the data for dialogue among the college community to fully interpret the data.
6. Examine the results from multiple perspectives. Challenge assumptions about performance quality and examine the school's mission.
7. Link the results to other information that is collected on the campus about the student experience. Using other methods of assessment along with the NSSE can create a positive impact of improvement.

Appendix C: Peer Institutions

List of Urban Universities Participating in the NSSE 2005 Survey (N = 17)

DePaul University
New Jersey City University
Northeastern Illinois University
Portland State University
Purdue University-Calumet Campus
Roosevelt University
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Temple University
University of Arkansas at Little Rock
University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado at Denver & Health Sciences Center
University of Illinois at Chicago
University of Missouri-Kansas City
University of Missouri-St. Louis
Wayne State University
Wichita State University
William Paterson University of New Jersey

Appendix D

Additional Questions Asked to Students Attending an Urban University

NSSE Results: First-Year Student Perspectives (N = 337)

		<u>None</u>	<u>1-5</u>	<u>6+</u>
1. Number of hours typically spent in community service	USM:	67	29	4
	(Peer Institutes):	64	31	6
		<u>11+</u>	<u>1-5</u>	<u>6-10</u>
2. Number of hours spent on university campus outside of class	USM:	42	11	47 *
	(Peer Institutes):	50	18	32
		<u>4 Yrs</u>	<u>5-6 Yrs</u>	<u>7+ Yrs</u>
3. Length of time to complete your undergraduate degree	USM:	43	48	10 *
	(Peer Institutes):	54	41	7
		<u>USM</u>	<u>Peer Institutes</u>	
4. “Very Likely” or “Somewhat Likely” that Family commitments delay graduation		24	20 *	
5. “Very Likely” or “Somewhat Likely” that Financial problems delay graduation		36	33	
6. “Very Likely” or “Somewhat Likely” that Remain living around the community after graduating		44	46	
7. Undergraduate education impact on life:	Improve Career:	75	74	
8. Speak more than 1 the English language (Yes):		7	23 *	
9. “Very Satisfied” or “Satisfied” with academic support		46	52	

NSSE Results: First-Year Student Perspectives (N = 337)

	<u>USM</u>	<u>Peer Institutes</u>
It is “very important” or “moderately important” ...		
10. To acquire a broad general education	85	86
11. To acquire a job or work-related knowledge and skills	92	95
12. In writing clearly and effectively	91	93
13. In thinking critically and analytically	91	94 *
14. In developing computer and information technology skills	82	89 *
15. To work effectively with others	90	94 *
16. To develop the ability to make informed decisions as a citizen?	87	91
17. To understand people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds?	85	85
18. The support I received for going to college from friends and family was “very supportive” or “somewhat supportive”	94	93
19. If you take less than a full term for course load, more important reason was ...		
Improve Acad. Perf.	19	20
Work more Hours	19	16
Cost of Additional Courses	10	9
Scheduling Problems	10	6
Course Availability	4	5
Course Load Limit	2	3
20. Best estimate of current annual income.		
less than \$10,000	27	24 *
\$10,000 – \$24,999	17	14
\$25,000 – \$49,999	24	20
\$50,000 – \$74,999	18	19
\$75,000 - \$99,999	8	9
\$100,000 or more	5	13

NSSE Results: Senior Year Student Perspectives (N = 355)

		<u>None</u>	<u>1-5</u>	<u>6+</u>
1. Number of hours typically spent in community service	USM: (Peer Institutes):	49 57	43 36	8 6
		<u>11+</u>	<u>1-5</u>	<u>6-10</u>
2. Number of hours spent on university campus outside of class	USM: (Peer Institutes):	65 61	17 19	18 19
		<u>4 Yrs</u>	<u>5-6 Yrs</u>	<u>7+ Yrs</u>
3. Length of time to complete your undergraduate degree	USM: (Peer Institutes):	27 26	38 42	34 31
		<u>USM</u>	<u>Peer Institutes</u>	
4. “Very Likely” or “Somewhat Likely” that Family commitments delay graduation		35	27 *	
5. “Very Likely” or “Somewhat Likely” that Financial problems delay graduation		31	26	
6. “Very Likely” or “Somewhat Likely” that Remain living around the community after graduating		64	59	
7. Undergraduate education impact on life: Improve Career:		19	22	
8. Speak more than 1 the English language (Yes):		9	21 *	
9. “Very Satisfied” or “Satisfied” with academic support		58	56	

NSSE Results: Senior Year Student Perspectives (N = 355)

	<u>USM</u>	<u>Peer Institutes</u>
It is “very important” or “moderately important” ...		
10. To acquire a broad general education	83	88
11. To acquire a job or work-related knowledge and skills	96	95
12. In writing clearly and effectively	94	96
13. In thinking critically and analytically	96	97
14. In developing computer and information technology skills	90	92 *
15. To work effectively with others	92	94
16. To develop the ability to make informed decisions as a citizen?	84	89
17. To understand people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds?	84	86
18. The support I received for going to college from friends and family was “very supportive” or “somewhat supportive”	90	93
19. If you take less than a full term for course load, more important reason was ...		
Improve Acad. Perf.	13	14
Work more Hours	34	26
Cost of Additional Courses	9	8
Scheduling Problems	9	12
Course Availability	7	8
Course Load Limit	1	2
20. Best estimate of current annual income.		
less than \$10,000	23	19 *
\$10,000 – \$24,999	31	24
\$25,000 – \$49,999	23	24
\$50,000 – \$74,999	15	15
\$75,000 - \$99,999	4	9
\$100,000 or more	4	9