

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) 2009

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November 2009

INTRODUCTION

How often do students go to class unprepared? Do first-year students party more than seniors? To what extent do ethnic minority students feel supported by faculty and administration relative to their majority peers? These are but a few of the questions that can be explored through data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).

Since 2002 the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research has invited colleges and universities to participate in its annual survey of undergraduates in the United States and Canada. The University of Washington (Seattle; UW-S) participated that inaugural year and again biennially since 2005.

This document describes the methodology of the 2009 NSSE and also serves as a compendium of several descriptive reports of UW-S results. These include frequencies and means for all items, means of aggregated scales by student major, and means by survey year.

METHOD

Instrument

Respondents completed the *College Student Report* questionnaire via the Web. The CSR's 28-multi-part items can be grouped into six categories: level of academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student-faculty interaction, enriching educational experiences, supportive campus environment, and background information (e.g., demographics and grades). Because UW participates in the Association of American Universities Data Exchange (AAUDE), UW-S participants also completed 20 closed-format consortium items.

Sampling

The target population consisted of all first-year (freshmen) and senior students who were enrolled in both Autumn 2008 and Spring 2009. Selection of the survey sample was a multi-stage process. First, the UW Office of Educational Assessment (OEA) identified all first-year and senior students enrolled as of the tenth day of Autumn quarter, 2008. From that list of 5,972 first-year and 6,354 senior students, NSSE researchers randomly selected 2,500 students from each class. Once census data were available for Spring quarter, OEA staff verified the enrollment status of each member of the initial sample, and NSSE staff then replaced any students who were not enrolled.

Recruitment

Survey recruitment consisted of a maximum of five contacts. The first contact was an announcement letter over the signature of Provost Phyllis Wise mailed in mid-April to students at their local addresses.

This letter briefly described the purpose of the survey and instructed students to watch for an invitation email from Ed Taylor, Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Academic Affairs. Included in the Vice Provost's invitation email was a unique Web URL (for tracking purposes) and notification that all survey respondents would be entered into a drawing for one of five iPod Shuffles™. Over the following three weeks, students who had not responded received up to three reminder emails. All email contacts were handled by NSSE project staff but bore the signature of the Vice Provost.

RESULTS

Response Rates

The overall response rate was 29%. Specifically, 788 of the 2,719 eligible first-year students and 668 of the 2,272 eligible senior students fully or partially completed the questionnaire. Only 1.5% of the sample explicitly declined to participate.

Women were more likely to respond than men. Among first-year students, women comprised 53% of the sample but 60% of the respondents. Among seniors, women were 50% of the sample but 58% of the respondents. Response rates did not vary by native/transfer status or under-represented minority status.

Reports

[Frequency Distributions](#)

This report presents frequencies for all standard and AAUDE consortium items, broken down by class rank. Frequencies are reported for UW-S students and for three comparison groups: American Association of Universities Data Exchange (AAUDE; 12 schools), Basic Carnegie Classification 15 – Doctoral-granting, Very High Research Universities (30 schools), and Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) peers (11 schools).

[Mean Comparisons](#)

This report presents means for all applicable items, broken down by class rank, for UW-S students and for the three comparison groups.

[Benchmarks by Survey Year](#)

This report summarizes student responses in each of three survey years on the five NSSE benchmark scales: Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interaction, Enriching Educational Experiences, and Supportive Campus Environment.

[Benchmarks by UW Student Major Group](#)

This report presents results for the five NSSE benchmarks by self-reported student major. In general, majors were grouped by UW-S college. Within the College of Arts & Sciences there were three groups: Arts/Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences. Undergraduate majors that represented medical professions (e.g., Nursing, Public Health, Dentistry, Medicine) formed a single group.