

2008 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

Introduction

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is a national data collection directed at measuring the extent to which students are engaged with faculty, with each other, and with their studies. It examines the extent to which they read and write, make use of technology, and engage in a broad range of learning activities. NSSE is typically administered to freshmen and seniors at a college or university to assess differences in level of engagement between first year and fourth year students.

In developing the data analysis for NSSE, mean scores are calculated for each variable for freshman and senior respondents at the University of Delaware. Those mean scores are then compared to the national benchmark for freshman and senior respondents in two groupings:

1. Student respondents at universities with the Carnegie classification “Research University – Very High Research Activity.”
2. Student respondents at universities identified as either actual or aspirational peer institutions for the University of Delaware.

Within the first grouping, i.e., the Carnegie Classification “Research University – Very High Research Activity,” the following institutions are included in the respondent pool:

Colorado State University	University of Tennessee
Emory University	University of Texas at Austin
Florida State University	University of Colorado at Denver
Georgia Institute of Technology	University of Florida
Indiana University at Bloomington	University of Hawaii at Manoa
Iowa State University	University of Illinois at Champagne/Urbana
Montana State University at Bozeman	University of Iowa
Pennsylvania State University – Main Campus	University of Massachusetts at Amherst
Rutgers University at New Brunswick	University of Minnesota at Twin Cities
SUNY University at Albany	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
SUNY University at Buffalo	University of Virginia at Charlottesville
SUNY University at Stony Brook	University of Wisconsin at Madison

Within the second grouping, i.e., actual and aspirational peers for the University of Delaware, the following institutions are included in the respondent pool:

American University	SUNY University at Stony Brook
Clemson University	University of Texas at Austin
Drexel University	University of Florida
Georgia Institute of Technology	University of Illinois at Champagne/Urbana
Indiana University at Bloomington	University of Iowa

Iowa State University
 James Madison University
 Pennsylvania State University – Main Campus
 Rutgers University
 SUNY University at Albany
 SUNY University at Binghamton
 SUNY University at Buffalo

University of Massachusetts at Amherst
 University of Minnesota at Twin Cities
 University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
 University of Richmond
 University of Vermont
 University of Virginia at Charlottesville
 University of Wisconsin at Madison

Respondent Pool Versus Peer Groupings

In comparing University of Delaware scores to each of the two benchmark categories, it is fair to ask about the representativeness of the University of Delaware students compared to students in those two peer groupings:

	<u>UD</u>		<u>Research - High Activity</u>		<u>Actual-Aspire Peers</u>	
	Freshmen	Seniors	Freshmen	Seniors	Freshmen	Seniors
Response Rate						
Overall	32%		31%		34%	
By Class	33%	31%	31%	31%	35%	34%
NSSE Sample Size	1,996	1,995	64,560	64,749	58,124	56,930
Sampling Error						
Overall	2.5%		0.4%		0.4%	
By Class	3.5%	3.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%
Student Characteristics						
<i>Mode of Completion</i>						
Paper	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Web	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Enrollment Status</i>						
Full Time	98%	92%	98%	93%	99%	93%
Part Time	2%	8%	2%	7%	1%	7%
<i>Gender</i>						
Female	70%	65%	60%	57%	59%	57%
Male	30%	35%	40%	43%	41%	43%

	UD		Research - High Activity		Actual-Aspire Peers	
	Freshmen	Seniors	Freshmen	Seniors	Freshmen	Seniors
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>						
Native American	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	4%	4%	12%	10%	11%	9%
Black/African American	4%	2%	5%	4%	4%	4%
White, Non-Hispanic	78%	82%	70%	72%	71%	73%
Mexican/Mexican-American	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Puerto Rican	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Other Hispanic or Latino	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Multiracial	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
I Prefer Not To Respond	6%	5%	5%	6%	5%	6%
<i>International Student</i>	3%	4%	5%	5%	6%	5%
<i>Place of Residence</i>						
On-Campus	90%	17%	86%	15%	90%	17%
Off-Campus	10%	83%	14%	85%	10%	83%
<i>Transfer Status</i>						
Transfer Students	3%	18%	4%	28%	3%	24%
<i>Age</i>						
Non-Traditional (24 or Older)	1%	11%	1%	15%	1%	12%
Traditional (Less than 24)	99%	89%	99%	85%	99%	88%

With the exception that the University of Delaware respondent pool is somewhat more female, white, and less likely to be a transfer student than the comparator pools, the University's respondents are generally quite representative in comparison with the two benchmark groups.

Results

In examining the data in the tables that follow, the University of Delaware score is displayed along with the benchmark for High Activity Research Universities and that for UD Actual and Aspirational Peers. There is also a column following each of the two benchmarks scores that asks if the respective benchmark score is statistically significantly different from the University of Delaware mean score, with a "Yes" or "No" appearing in the column. Where the University of Delaware score is statistically significantly higher than the benchmark score, the "Yes" is highlighted in green. Where the University of Delaware score is statistically significantly lower than the benchmark score, the "Yes" is highlighted in red.

Where the University of Delaware score is statistically significantly different from the benchmark score, significance is reported at one of three levels: $p < .05$, $p < .01$, or $p < .001$. The smaller the significance level, the less likely the difference could be attributed to chance. The reader should know that, while we are reporting only that change to when a difference is statistically significant, the backup information on level of significance can be provided to interested parties.

Discussion

While the data are generally self-explanatory, it is worth noting the following general observations:

Academic and Intellectual Experiences

- Both University of Delaware freshmen and seniors contribute to class discussions significantly *more* frequently than those in the two benchmark groups.
- Both University of Delaware freshmen and seniors come to class without completing readings or assignments significantly *less* frequently than those in the two benchmark groups.
- Both University of Delaware freshmen and seniors use e-mail to communicate with instructors significantly *more* frequently than those in the two benchmark groups.

Problem Sets

- Both University of Delaware freshmen and seniors report *more* problem sets that take more than one hour to complete than those in the two benchmark groups.

Additional College Experiences

- Both University of Delaware freshmen and seniors engage in activities that enhance spirituality significantly *less* frequently than those in the two benchmark groups.

Enriching Educational Experience

- University of Delaware seniors are significantly *more likely* than those in the two benchmark groups to have worked with a faculty member on a research project outside of a course or program requirement.
- Both University of Delaware freshmen and seniors are significantly *more likely* than those in the two benchmark groups to have done foreign language coursework *and* participated in a study abroad program.

- University of Delaware seniors are significantly *more likely* than those in the two benchmark groups to experience an independent study or self-designed major.

Quality of Relationships

- Both University of Delaware freshmen and seniors are significantly *more likely* than those in the two benchmark groups to have had a quality relationship with faculty.

Institutional Environment

- Freshmen at the University of Delaware report that UD as an institution encourages interaction with students from diverse backgrounds *significantly higher* than those in the two benchmark groups. On the other hand, University of Delaware seniors report that UD as an institution encourages interaction with students from diverse backgrounds *significantly lower* than those in the two benchmark groups.

Educational and Personal Growth

- Both University of Delaware freshmen and seniors report that their university experiences contributed *significantly less* than was the case for those in the two benchmark groups with regard to preparing them to solve real-world problems and in developing a personal code of values or ethics.

Please feel free to contact the Office of Institutional Research and Planning with questions or comments concerning the contents of the NSSE analysis.