



FSSE - NSSE Comparison Report

University of Louisville

Institutional Effectiveness
Office of Academic Planning & Accountability
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About this FSSE Report

Introduction

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), coordinated by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research, is administered to first-year students and seniors to collect information about the nature and quality of their undergraduate experience. The Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) complements NSSE and measures faculty members' expectations of undergraduate student engagement both in and out of the classroom. The University of Louisville administered the NSSE in spring 2009 and the FSSE in spring 2011. Because the surveys were designed to be complementary, some items in both NSSE and FSSE allow institutions to examine how faculty and students respond to similar questions. The data from both the NSSE and FSSE are critical to determining where students' and faculty members' perceptions on engagement align and differ. This report is intended to be a catalyst for productive discussions related to teaching, learning, and the quality of our undergraduates' educational experience.

Methodology

The standard NSSE sampling scheme called for an equal number of randomly sampled first-year and senior students to comprise the institution's sample, with the sample size based on the total number of undergraduate students enrolled at the institution. Approximately 4,000 UofL students received the online survey in spring 2009 and 32% of the students responded. The FSSE sample required identifying faculty who taught at least one undergraduate course during the fall semester prior to the administration of the survey. Institutions had the option to choose whether some of the questions on FSSE were either "course-based" or "typical student" questions. UofL submitted the names and email address of the approximately 800 faculty to be surveyed in spring 2011. Graduate teaching assistants were excluded from the sample. All other aspects of the survey administration were handled by FSSE. Faculty responses to the survey remain anonymous to the university. UofL chose the course-based survey option to help align the responses from first-year students to lower division faculty perceptions and senior responses to those of upper level faculty. The university had a 36% response rate, which placed UofL at the national average for FSSE participating institutions (from 2007-2011) in our Carnegie classification.



94% of faculty respondents indicated that their particular undergraduate course was taught on-campus, in a classroom. 72% of lower division (100-200 level courses) faculty indicated their course fulfilled a general education requirement whereas 22% of upper division (300-400 level courses) faculty indicated their course fulfilled a general education requirement.

About this FSSE Report (Continued ...)



56% of faculty reported teaching or were scheduled to teach between 4 to 6 courses, undergraduate or graduate, during the 2010-2011 academic year. 51% of our faculty respondents reported teaching 15 or more years, while only 9% reported being 34 years of age or younger. 68% of UofL faculty indicated spending 4 hours or less a week reflecting on ways to improve their teaching.

perspective. Thus a negative difference (red) between responses indicates the faculty had a lower perceptual response than their student counterparts. Conversely, a positive difference (green) would indicate the faculty had a higher perceptual response percentage than their corresponding student group.

“84% of UofL faculty reported spending 4 hours or less a week on working with undergraduates on research, 85% reported spending 4 hours or less a week on advising undergraduate students, and more than 90% reported spending 4 hours or less on working with students on activities other than course work (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.). 51% of our faculty reported spending 9 or more hours a week participating in research and scholarly activities.”

The Report

FSSE provided UofL with an institutional report identifying items from both the FSSE and NSSE aligning faculty and students responses. From this, the following report has been produced to guide discussions in four themed areas:

- Perceptions of Classroom Practices,
- Levels of Cognitive Activities in Coursework,
- Institutional Support and Engagement, and
- Perceptions of High Impact Areas of Engagement

The tables align responses between corresponding faculty (lower and upper division) and students (first-year students and seniors). The left side of each table outlines the faculty questions and their wording and the right side provides the corresponding student questions and wording.

Combined response percentages are provided for each level of faculty and students. A center comparison column has been provided to illustrate differences in percentage points between the two group responses. The differences between percentage points are derived from the faculty

FSSE Respondent Characteristics¹



	FSSE Respondents (n=287)	FSSE Population File ³ (n=804)
Course-Based²		
Lower Division	34%	52%
Upper Division	56%	48%
Other ⁴	10%	0%
Gender		
Female	53%	44%
Male	47%	56%
Full-time/Part-time		
Full-time	77%	65%
Part-time	23%	35%
Rank		
Professor	22%	20%
Associate Professor	21%	17%
Assistant Professor	25%	22%
Instructor	19%	8%
Lecturer	11%	33%
Graduate Assistant	0%	0%
Other	2%	0%
Tenure Status		
Tenured	41%	36%
On tenure track, but not tenured	19%	16%
Not on tenure track	37%	49%
No tenure system ⁴	2%	0%

	FSSE Respondents (n=287)	FSSE Population File ³ (n=804)
Unit		
College of Arts & Sciences	57%	59%
College of Business	7%	9%
School of Dentistry	2%	1%
College of Education	13%	12%
School of Music	6%	8%
School of Nursing	4%	3%
Speed School of Engineering	8%	6%
Kent School of Social Work	3%	2%
Race/Ethnicity⁵		
Am. Indian/Native American	0%	*
Asian/Asian Am./Pacific Isl.	4%	*
Black/African American	9%	*
White (non-Hispanic)	74%	*
Mexican/Mexican American	0%	*
Puerto Rican	1%	*
Other Hispanic or Latino	1%	*
Multiracial	1%	*
Other	1%	*
I prefer not to respond	9%	*

¹ FSSE respondent characteristics, except for unit information, were self reported and provided to the UofL in aggregated form to protect faculty anonymity.

² UofL participated in the course-based FSSE assessment asking faculty to self selected either a lower (100-200 level courses) or upper (300-400 level courses) division course.

³ FSSE population file was reduced down to 795 faculty who were extended invitations. Institutional data were used to create the population file characteristics.

⁴ Responses such as “Other” and “No tenure system” were provided as options on the FSSE and thus, are being reported out.

⁵ Faculty self-reported race/ethnicity data on the survey. No race/ethnicity reporting provided for the population file due to the changes in institutional (IPEDS) race/ethnicity reporting requirements beginning in the fall of 2010.

NSSE Respondent Characteristics¹

	First-Year (n=643)	Seniors (n=616)
Gender		
Female	55%	54%
Male	45%	46%
Enrollment Status		
Full-time	95%	80%
Less than full-time	5%	20%
Race/Ethnicity²		
Am. Indian/Native American	1%	1%
Asian/Asian Am./Pacific Isl.	3%	5%
Black/African American	7%	6%
White (non-Hispanic)	81%	74%
Mexican/Mexican American	0%	1%
Puerto Rican	0%	0%
Other Hispanic or Latino	1%	2%
Multiracial	2%	2%
Other	1%	2%
I prefer not to respond	4%	8%
Place of Residence		
On-campus	52%	5%
Transfer Status		
Transfer Student	5%	43%
Unit		
College of Arts & Sciences	48%	45%
College of Business	18%	17%
School of Dentistry	2%	1%
College of Education	7%	12%
School of Music	4%	2%
School of Nursing	6%	4%
Speed School of Engineering	15%	19%
Kent School of Social Work	0%	1%



In February of 2009, a randomly selected group of freshman and seniors received an email invitation encouraging their participation in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). The NSSE is a nationally recognized survey designed to capture the types of involvement and experiences that contribute to students' learning and development. Series of reports were generated and distributed across campus. With the administration of the 2011 Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), UofL plans on examining faculty perceptions of student engagement as well as their own perceptions of engagement in various academic, campus, and student activities. More importantly, examining areas where students and faculty perceptions align and disconnect will provide guided opportunities for dialogue and program improvements. UofL will be administering the NSSE once again in the spring of 2012 and updated comparative reports will be developed for various program assessments.

¹ NSSE respondent characteristics, except for academic class, gender, enrollment status, and unit information, were self reported by the student.

² Students self-reported race/ethnicity data on the survey and the categorizations are consistent with the FSSE survey. Please note race/ethnicity reporting requirements changed beginning in the fall of 2010 and this listing does not accurately reflect the updated changes.

Perceptions of High Impact Areas of Engagement

Fall 2011

Percentages provided below reflect combined responses of "Very Important" and "Important"

Percentages provided below reflect combined responses of "Done" and "Plan to do"

Faculty
were asked:
"How important is it to you that undergraduates at your institution do the following?"

75% LD	Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment	-8	Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment	FY 83%
80% UD		+6		SR 74%
58% LD	Community service or volunteer work	-12	Community service or volunteer work	FY 70%
58% UD		-17		SR 75%
45% LD	Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together	+11	Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together	FY 34%
50% UD		+17		SR 33%
53% LD	Work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements	+22	Work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements	FY 31%
54% UD		+21		SR 33%
46% LD	Study abroad	+11	Study abroad	FY 35%
41% UD		+20		SR 21%
83% LD	Culminating senior experience (capstone course, thesis, project, comprehensive exam, etc.)	+41	Culminating senior experience (capstone course, thesis, project, comprehensive exam, etc.)	FY 42%
88% UD		+25		SR 63%

Students
were asked:
"Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduated from your institution?"

Abbreviations

LD = Lower division faculty (taught 100-200 level courses)
UD = Upper division faculty (taught 300-400 level courses)
FY = First-year students (0 to 29 credit hours)
SR = Seniors (90 hours or more)

Percentage point differences are generated from the faculty perspective. Negative differences indicate values lower than the corresponding student group; Positive differences indicate faculty values higher than their corresponding student group.

FSSE Response Values and Labels
 1 = Not important, 2 = Somewhat important,
 3 = Important, 4 = Very Important

NSSE Response Values and Labels
 1 = Have not decided, 2 = Do not plan to do,
 3 = Plan to do, 4 = Done

Perceptions of Classroom Practices

Fall 2011

Percentages provided below reflect combined responses of “Very Often” and “Often”

Faculty
were asked:
“How often do students in your selected course section engage in the following?”

51% LD	Have class discussions or writing assignments that include diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.)	-12	Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments	FY 63%
51% UD		-11		SR 62%
42% LD	Work with other students on projects during class	0	Worked with other students on projects during class	FY 42%
51% UD		+2		SR 49%
9% LD	Participate in a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of your course	+2	Participated in a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of a regular course	FY 7%
15% UD		0		SR 15%
53% LD	Use an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment	-3	Used an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment	FY 56%
47% UD		-15		SR 62%
90% LD	Receive prompt written or oral feedback from you on their academic performance	+31	Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance	FY 59%
94% UD		+27		SR 67%
45% LD	Have serious conversations in your course with students of a different race or ethnicity than their own	-8	Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own	FY 53%
37% UD		-20		SR 57%
40% LD	Have serious conversations in your course with students who are very different from them in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	-19	Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	FY 59%
39% UD		-18		SR 57%

Students
were asked:
“In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?”

Abbreviations

LD = Lower division faculty (taught 100-200 level courses)
UD = Upper division faculty (taught 300-400 level courses)
FY = First-year students (0 to 29 credit hours)
SR = Seniors (90 hours or more)

Percentage point differences are generated from the faculty perspective. Negative differences indicate values lower than the corresponding student group; Positive differences indicate faculty values higher than their corresponding student group.

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FSSE and NSSE Response Values and Labels
1 = Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often, 4 = Very often



Levels of Cognitive Activities in Coursework



Fall 2011

Percentages provided below reflect combined responses of “Very Much” and “Quite a Bit”

Faculty
were asked:
“In your selected course section, how much emphasis do you place on engaging students in each of these mental activities?”

41% LD	Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your course and readings so students can repeat them pretty much in the same form	-34	Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your course and readings so students can repeat them pretty much in the same form	FY 75%
14% UD		-51		SR 65%
91% LD	Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth, and considering it's components	+6	Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth, and considering it's components	FY 85%
94% UD		+7		SR 87%
83% LD	Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	+14	Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	FY 69%
94% UD		+19		SR 75%
70% LD	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 conclusion	0	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 conclusion	FY 70%
75% UD		+3		SR 72%
78% LD	Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	0	Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	FY 78%
86% UD		+5		SR 81%

Students
were asked:
“During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities?”

Abbreviations

- LD** = Lower division faculty (taught 100-200 level courses)
- UD** = Upper division faculty (taught 300-400 level courses)
- FY** = First-year students (0 to 29 credit hours)
- SR** = Seniors (90 hours or more)

Percentage point differences are generated from the faculty perspective. Negative differences indicate values lower than the corresponding student group; Positive differences indicate faculty values higher than their corresponding student group.

FSSE and NSSE Response Values and Labels
1 = Very little, 2 = Some,
3 = Quite a bit, 4 = Very much

Institutional Support and Engagement



Fall 2011

Percentages provided below reflect combined responses of “Very Much” and “Quite a Bit”

Faculty
were asked:
“To what
extent does
your
institution
emphasize
the
following?”

57% LD	Requiring students to spend significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	-26	Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	FY 83%
59% UD		-21		SR 80%
75% LD	Providing students the support they need to help them succeed academically	+7	Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	FY 68%
75% UD		+6		SR 69%
56% LD	Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social and racial or ethnic backgrounds	-13	Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social and racial or ethnic backgrounds	FY 69%
54% UD		+1		SR 53%
32% LD	Helping students cope with their non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	-8	Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	FY 40%
39% UD		+18		SR 21%
39% LD	Providing students the support they need to thrive socially	-13	Providing the support you need to thrive socially	FY 52%
31% UD		-2		SR 33%
59% LD	Encouraging students to attend campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)	-8	Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)	FY 67%
53% UD		+6		SR 47%
83% LD	Encouraging students to use computers in their academic work	-3	Using computers in academic work	FY 86%
90% UD		+4		SR 86%

Students
were asked:
“To what
extent does
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Abbreviations

LD = Lower division faculty (taught 100-200 level courses)
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FY = First-year students (0 to 29 credit hours)
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Percentage point differences are generated from the faculty perspective. Negative differences indicate values lower than the corresponding student group; Positive differences indicate faculty values higher than their corresponding student group.

FSSE and NSSE Response Values and Labels
1 = Very little, 2 = Some,
3 = Quite a bit, 4 = Very much



FSSE - NSSE Report Limitations

Limitations

Several limitations should be acknowledged when interpreting the data presented in this report.

- The perspectives of students and faculty are different and their understanding of the questions may vary, especially in some cases where the NSSE and FSSE wording is slightly different. For example: faculty were asked to rate the importance level of various activities whereas students are asked to rate the frequency of those activities. We recognize the inconsistency in wording may limit the degree to which the results can be compared.
- Students are asked to respond to the questions based on their overall experience in the courses taken during the academic year while faculty members were focused on students in a particular course they have selected as representative.
- Student responses were obtained from separate populations identified by UofL as either first-year students or seniors. Faculty responses were divided by their self-selection of either a lower division or upper division course. These divisions allow a pairing of responses for first-year students with lower division courses and seniors with upper division courses. The overlap may be imprecise, but generally considered to be comparable.
- Since the two instruments, NSSE and FSSE, were not identical in content and administration, there were no attempts made in conducting inferential statistical analysis in determining statistical differences or correlations between the two groups.



Next Steps

- Review of the report by members of the core group of the Persistence to Graduation committee
- Share findings with Deans and Associate Deans
- Begin discussions with faculty about perceptual alignment and differences regarding undergraduate educational experiences
- Conduct further descriptive and inferential statistical analysis on FSSE data only, as appropriate
- Compare FSSE 2011 data with NSSE 2012 data (to be administered in spring 2012)



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