

Guidelines for Reviewing the School Results of the National Survey of Student Engagement

Introduction

The accompanying document provides a summary of responses to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) from a sample of Spring 2004 Seniors in your school. IUPUI was among over 400 institutions that participated in this survey in Spring 2004. We will participate again in Spring 2006.

NSSE is intended to capture student perceptions of undergraduate experiences that are most closely associated with academic success and degree completion. The survey was designed by a panel of leading higher education scholars and is administered by colleagues at the Indiana University School of Education and the IU Survey Research Center.

The survey is administered to samples of Freshmen and Seniors at each participating institution. IUPUI participated in an earlier pilot and national sample study (Fall 1999 and Spring 2000—results at: <http://www.imir.iupui.edu/infore/ar/nsse00/nsse00ent.htm>) and again in 2002—results at: <http://www.imir.iupui.edu/infore/ar/nsse02/nsse.asp>.) For the 2002 survey, we provided a sufficient “over sample” to allow us to develop school-level summaries and have done the same in 2004. Because of budget constraints associated with 2004 administration of the NSSE we are making school reports available on a cost recovery basis this time around.

Structure of the Report

The results are presented in two parts. The first section, pages 1 through 7, summarizes responses to each item presented in the same order as in the survey instrument. Like the questionnaire, the responses are divided into the following sections:

- Academic and intellectual experiences (pp. 1-2)
- Mental activities (patterned after Bloom’s taxonomy – p. 3)
- Reading and writing (p. 3)
- Challenge of examinations (one item, p. 4)
- Quality of advising (one item, p. 4)
- Enriching educational experiences (p. 4)
- Time usage (p. 5)
- Educational and personal growth (i.e., perceived learning outcomes, pp. 5-6)
- Institutional environment (p. 7)
- Quality of relationships (with students, faculty, and staff – p. 7)
- Overall satisfaction (two items, p. 8).
- Problem Sets (two items, p. 8).
- Additional Collegiate Experiences (three items, p. 8).

Starting on page 9, a selection of items from the survey are re-presented and organized into sections that reflect a set of “Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice.” These benchmarks were determined through a combination of theoretical and empirical analyses of the national data. Grouping them together allows particular patterns in student responses within these benchmark areas to emerge. The benchmarks include:

- Level of academic challenge (p. 9)
- Active and collaborative learning (p.10)
- Student-faculty interactions (p.10)
- Enriching educational experiences (p. 11)
- Supportive campus environment (p. 12)

Interpreting the Tables

All of the results are reported using a common format. For each item, you are provided the average response for the responding Seniors from your school, followed by the average response for four different comparison groups: responding Seniors from all other IUPUI schools, Seniors from a group of other participating urban universities, Seniors from institutions that are in the same Carnegie Institutional Classification category as IUPUI (Doctoral-Intensive), and finally, the entire national Senior sample. The response scale for each set of items is shown at the beginning of each section.

Next to each comparison group average are two indicators to help you judge the importance of the difference. First is an indicator of statistical significance, represented by one, two, or three asterisks. More asterisks indicate that the difference is more significant (i.e., you can more confidently conclude that it reflects a meaningful difference between your Seniors and the comparison group). Because the comparison groups become increasingly large as you move toward the entire sample, a statistically significant difference can sometimes be small in size. The “effect size” measure listed with each comparison provides an index that allows you to judge the relative significance of the difference. Generally, an effect size above 0.80 is considered to be a large effect, below 0.20 is considered to be a small effect, and the range in between is considered a medium effect.

Using the Results

Faculty in your school may find these results useful for assessing the impact of your school programs and the campus climate more generally. We offer the following ideas to stimulate your thinking:

- Ask the school representatives to the Program Review and Assessment Committee to prepare a brief summary of some ways in which the findings might inform school and program assessment and improvement efforts. Consider presenting this summary at a general faculty meeting.
- Encourage department chairs, program coordinators, and other faculty leaders to discuss these results with the faculty in their programs.
- Incorporate the findings into your annual assessment and planning reports

- Hold discussion groups with current seniors to get their impressions about the reasons for some of the results.
- Prepare to use prior results from the 2002 survey and the forthcoming results from the 2006 NSSE survey to monitor changes in student perceptions of their educational experiences.

Further Steps

As always, we encourage you to contact the Office of Information Management and Institutional Research if you have any questions or would like some assistance in following up on this report.