

The Wright State Experience:

Selected Responses from the 2009 National Survey of Student Engagement

Each year the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) asks students at hundreds of colleges and universities to reflect on the time they devote to various learning activities. The topics explored are linked by previous research on student success in college.

The following responses were provided by 777 randomly selected Wright State students on the 2009 NSSE survey.

Academic Challenge

To what degree is studying and spending time on academic work emphasized?

78% of first-year students and 76% of seniors feel that this institution places substantial emphasis on academics.¹

Do faculty hold students to high standards?

54% of first-year students and 58% of seniors frequently work harder than they thought they could to meet faculty expectations.²

How much time do students spend on homework each week?

35% of first-year students and 38% of seniors spend more than 15 hours per week preparing for class. 17% of first-year students and 16% of seniors spend 5 hours or less.

What types of thinking do assignments require?

First-year students report substantial emphasis on the following activities:

- Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods: 68%
- Analyzing basic elements of an idea or theory: 77%
- Synthesizing and organizing ideas: 64%
- Making judgments about value of information: 66%
- Applying theories or concepts: 76%

Seniors report substantial emphasis on the following activities:

- Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods: 64%
- Analyzing basic elements of an idea or theory: 85%
- Synthesizing and organizing ideas: 72%
- Making judgments about value of information: 72%
- Applying theories or concepts: 82%

How much writing is expected?

6% of first-year students and 4% of seniors write more than 10 papers between 5 and 19 pages and 16% of first-year students and 52% of seniors have written a paper more than 20 pages in length.

How much reading is expected during the school year?

42% of first-year students and 40% of seniors read more than 10 assigned books and packs of course readings. 24% of first-year students and 23% of seniors read fewer than 5.

Do exams require students to do their best work?

49% of first-year students and 59% of seniors report that their exams strongly challenge them to do their best work.³

Active Learning

How often are topics from class discussed outside of the classroom?

57% of first-year students and 66% of seniors frequently discuss readings or ideas from coursework outside of class.

Do students work together on projects – inside and outside of class?

40% of first-year students and 47% of seniors frequently work with other students on projects in class. 34% of first-year students and 53% of seniors work with peers on assignments outside of class.

How often do students make class presentations?

23% of first-year students and 64% of seniors report that they make frequent presentations in class.

How many students participate in community-based projects in regular courses?

12% of first-year students and 15% of seniors frequently participate in service-learning or community-based projects during a given year. 62% of first-year students and 58% of seniors never took part in such activities.

How many students apply their classroom learning to real life through internships or off-campus field experiences?

By their senior year, 46% of students have participated in some form of practicum, internship, field experience, co-op, or clinical assignment. Only 7% of first-year students have done so.

Do students have opportunities to tutor or teach other students?

19% of seniors and 17% of first-year students frequently assist their fellow students by tutoring or teaching them.

Student-Faculty Interaction

Are faculty members accessible and supportive?

37% of first-year students and 49% of seniors say their faculty are available, helpful and sympathetic.

How many students work on research projects with faculty?

By their senior year, 16% of students have done research with a faculty member. Only 8% of first-year students have done so.

Do students receive prompt feedback on academic performance?

51% of first-year students and 62% of seniors indicate that they frequently get prompt verbal or written feedback from faculty members.

Note: FY= First-Year Student SR=Senior Student

How often do students talk with advisors or faculty members about their career plans?

81% of seniors and 76% of first-year students at least occasionally discuss career plans with faculty.⁴ 19% of seniors and 24% of first-year students never talk with faculty members about career plans.

Do students and faculty members work together on committees and projects outside of course work?

36% of first-year students and 42% of seniors at least occasionally spend time with faculty members on activities other than coursework.

Enriching Educational Experiences

What types of honors courses, learning communities, and other distinctive programs are offered?

During their first year, 44% of students participate in a learning community. By their senior year, 15% of students have taken an independent study class.

How often do students interact with peers with different social, political, or religious views?

55% of first-year students and 57% of seniors say they frequently have serious conversations with students who are different from themselves in terms of their religious, political, or personal beliefs.

How often do students interact with peers from different racial or ethnic backgrounds?

52% of first-year students and 56% of seniors frequently have serious conversations with those of a different race.

How many students study in other countries?

By their senior year, 9% of students have studied abroad and only 3% of first-year students have.

Do students participate in activities that enhance their spirituality?

30% of first-year students and 36% of seniors frequently engage in spiritually enhancing activities such as worship, meditation, or prayer.

What percentage of students participate in community service?

By the time they are seniors, 50% of students have participated in community service or volunteer work. Only 32% of first-year students report having participated in community service or volunteer work.

Supportive Campus Environment

How well do students get along with other students?

46% of first-year students and 56% of seniors report that their peers are friendly, supportive, and help them feel as if they belong.

Are students satisfied with their overall educational experience?

89% of first-year students and 82% of seniors report a favorable image of this institution; 76% of seniors and 81% of first-year students would choose this school again if they could start their college career over.

How much time do students devote to co-curricular activities?

10% of first-year students and 17% of seniors spend more than 15 hours a week participating in co-curricular activities. 50% of first-year students and 61% of seniors spend no time participating in co-curricular activities.

How well do students get along with administrators and staff?

28% of first-year students and 36% of the seniors find the administrative personnel and offices helpful, considerate, and flexible.

To what extent does the school help students deal with their academic and social needs?

75% of first-year students and 69% of seniors feel that this institution has a substantial commitment to their academic success. 47% of first-year students and 37% of seniors feel well-supported by the institution regarding their social needs.

Notes:

1. "Substantial" emphasis is defined by combining the responses to values of "Very much" and "Quite a bit."
2. "Frequently" is defined by combining the responses to values of "Very often" and "Often."
3. "Strongly challenge" is defined by combining response values of "6" and "7" on a one-to-seven point scale where 1 is "Very little" and 7 is "Very much."
4. "Occasionally" is defined by combining the responses to values of "Very often," "Often," and "Sometimes."

Data source: National Survey of Student Engagement 2009

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