
NSSE 2023 Topical Module Report

Development of Transferable Skills

Wright State University

Adapted from a pilot survey that was developed by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, this module examines activities that develop useful and transferable skills for the workplace and beyond (such as verbal and written fluency, critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving, project management, and time management). The module complements questions on the core survey about higher-order learning, reflective and integrative learning, and students' perceptions of their development in a variety of areas.

Comparison group details are in the online Selected Comparison Groups report, linked in the Data & Reports table on the Institution Interface. A PDF copy is also saved in your report download folder.

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First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				Wright State		Great Lakes Public		Wright State	Great Lakes Public	Effect size ^d
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
1. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you done the following?										
a. Discussed or debated an issue of social, political, or philosophical importance	TRNdebate	1	Never	61	24	409	16	2.3	2.4 *	-0.16
		2	Sometimes	91	38	1,015	41			
		3	Often	66	27	712	28			
		4	Very often	27	11	390	15			
		Total		245	100	2,526	100			
b. Made a speech to a group	TRNspeech	1	Never	104	44	781	30	1.8	2.1 ***	-0.31
		2	Sometimes	93	38	998	41			
		3	Often	34	13	498	20			
		4	Very often	14	5	244	10			
		Total		245	100	2,521	100			
c. Worked in a group with people who differed from you in terms of background, political orientation, points of view, etc.	TRNgroup	1	Never	18	7	127	5	2.6	2.7	-0.10
		2	Sometimes	90	39	876	35			
		3	Often	94	38	1,028	40			
		4	Very often	42	17	494	19			
		Total		244	100	2,525	100			
d. Discussed the ethical consequences of a course of action	TRNethical	1	Never	45	17	342	14	2.3	2.5	-0.12
		2	Sometimes	102	42	1,015	40			
		3	Often	71	29	833	33			
		4	Very often	27	12	337	13			
		Total		245	100	2,527	100			
e. Evaluated the credibility of information sources	TRNcred	1	Never	24	9	138	5	2.7	2.8	-0.10
		2	Sometimes	80	32	741	30			
		3	Often	90	37	1,074	42			
		4	Very often	50	22	571	22			
		Total		244	100	2,524	100			
f. Discussed complex problems with others to develop a better solution	TRNcomplex	1	Never	24	10	154	6	2.7	2.7	-0.02
		2	Sometimes	83	33	875	35			
		3	Often	87	36	1,047	41			
		4	Very often	49	20	449	17			
		Total		243	100	2,525	100			
g. Generated multiple solutions to a problem or task	TRNsolution	1	Never	17	7	104	4	2.7	2.7	-0.02
		2	Sometimes	83	34	851	35			
		3	Often	93	38	1,097	43			
		4	Very often	50	21	470	18			
		Total		243	100	2,522	100			
h. Combined dissimilar concepts to create a novel idea	TRNcreate	1	Never	66	27	526	21	2.1	2.2 *	-0.16
		2	Sometimes	109	45	1,119	45			
		3	Often	51	21	639	25			
		4	Very often	16	8	236	9			
		Total		242	100	2,520	100			
i. Adapted a previously used solution to a new situation	TRNadapt	1	Never	29	12	231	9	2.5	2.5	-0.02
		2	Sometimes	92	38	1,022	41			
		3	Often	88	37	940	37			
		4	Very often	32	13	326	12			
		Total		241	100	2,519	100			

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Refer to the endnotes page for the key to triangle symbols.

First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				Wright State		Great Lakes Public		Wright State	Great Lakes Public	Effect size ^d
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
j. Referred to online content (tutorial, forum, webpage, etc.) to solve a problem	TRNnonsolve	1	Never	8	3	83	4	3.0	2.9	.07
		2	Sometimes	63	28	679	28			
		3	Often	91	36	1,020	41			
		4	Very often	81	33	739	28			
		Total		243	100	2,521	100			
k. Referred to online content (tutorial, forum, webpage, etc.) to learn a new skill or procedure	TRNnonskill	1	Never	11	4	84	3	3.0	2.9	.12
		2	Sometimes	57	24	739	30			
		3	Often	97	40	997	40			
		4	Very often	77	32	702	27			
		Total		242	100	2,522	100			
l. Used project management tools to plan, organize, or schedule tasks	TRNproject	1	Never	29	13	259	11	2.5	2.6	-.10
		2	Sometimes	93	38	896	37			
		3	Often	80	34	895	35			
		4	Very often	38	15	472	18			
		Total		240	100	2,522	100			
m. Used a daily or weekly "to do" list	TRNtodo	1	Never	25	12	174	8	2.8	3.0 **	-.20
		2	Sometimes	70	29	553	24			
		3	Often	50	22	591	24			
		4	Very often	96	37	1,205	44			
		Total		241	100	2,523	100			
n. Prioritized what tasks need to be accomplished	TRNtasks	1	Never	4	2	24	1	3.2	3.3	-.08
		2	Sometimes	45	19	378	16			
		3	Often	76	34	845	34			
		4	Very often	112	45	1,274	48			
		Total		237	100	2,521	100			
o. Worked longer hours than usual to meet deadlines (i.e., after midnight, before dawn)	TRNhours	1	Never	22	10	198	8	2.9	2.9	-.04
		2	Sometimes	71	29	719	29			
		3	Often	67	27	715	29			
		4	Very often	82	34	891	34			
		Total		242	100	2,523	100			
p. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that used information from a variety of sources (books, journals, Internet, databases, etc.)	TRNwrsources	1	Never	15	6	92	4	2.9	3.0	-.05
		2	Sometimes	62	27	644	27			
		3	Often	87	37	957	39			
		4	Very often	77	31	823	31			
		Total		241	100	2,516	100			
q. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that assessed the conclusions of a published work	TRNwrassess	1	Never	40	18	276	11	2.5	2.6	-.13
		2	Sometimes	77	32	864	35			
		3	Often	77	32	839	34			
		4	Very often	47	19	539	20			
		Total		241	100	2,518	100			

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Refer to the endnotes page for the key to triangle symbols.

First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				Wright State		Great Lakes Public		Wright State	Great Lakes Public	Effect size ^d
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
r. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that included ideas from more than one academic discipline	TRNwrideas	1	Never	48	21	303	12	2.4	2.6 **	-0.18
		2	Sometimes	83	34	930	38			
		3	Often	72	31	805	32			
		4	Very often	38	15	478	18			
		Total		241	100	2,516	100			
s. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that presented multiple viewpoints or perspectives	TRNwrviews	1	Never	31	14	188	7	2.5	2.7 ***	-0.22
		2	Sometimes	91	38	924	37			
		3	Often	84	34	873	35			
		4	Very often	37	14	536	20			
		Total		243	100	2,521	100			

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Refer to the endnotes page for the key to triangle symbols.

Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				Wright State		Great Lakes Public		Wright State	Great Lakes Public	Effect size ^d
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
1. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you done the following?										
a. Discussed or debated an issue of social, political, or philosophical importance	TRNdebate	1	Never	59	22	428	17	2.3	2.5	-.11
		2	Sometimes	109	39	974	38			
		3	Often	63	22	696	27			
		4	Very often	47	17	473	18			
		Total		278	100	2,571	100			
b. Made a speech to a group	TRNspeech	1	Never	73	26	641	25	2.3	2.2	.06
		2	Sometimes	110	39	1,075	42			
		3	Often	52	20	548	21			
		4	Very often	45	16	308	12			
		Total		280	100	2,572	100			
c. Worked in a group with people who differed from you in terms of background, political orientation, points of view, etc.	TRNgroup	1	Never	11	4	153	6	2.8	2.8	.01
		2	Sometimes	100	36	791	31			
		3	Often	103	36	1,037	40			
		4	Very often	66	24	591	22			
		Total		280	100	2,572	100			
d. Discussed the ethical consequences of a course of action	TRNethical	1	Never	42	15	315	13	2.4	2.5 *	-.13 ▽
		2	Sometimes	124	45	950	37			
		3	Often	67	23	871	34			
		4	Very often	47	17	436	17			
		Total		280	100	2,572	100			
e. Evaluated the credibility of information sources	TRNcred	1	Never	13	5	152	6	2.9	2.9	.03
		2	Sometimes	84	31	688	27			
		3	Often	93	33	1,000	39			
		4	Very often	89	32	726	28			
		Total		279	100	2,566	100			
f. Discussed complex problems with others to develop a better solution	TRNcomplex	1	Never	15	5	172	7	2.8	2.8	-.05
		2	Sometimes	99	36	716	29			
		3	Often	100	35	1,034	40			
		4	Very often	66	24	649	25			
		Total		280	100	2,571	100			
g. Generated multiple solutions to a problem or task	TRNsolution	1	Never	11	4	112	5	2.8	2.9	-.10
		2	Sometimes	100	36	691	28			
		3	Often	103	36	1,098	42			
		4	Very often	66	24	667	25			
		Total		280	100	2,568	100			
h. Combined dissimilar concepts to create a novel idea	TRNcreate	1	Never	65	23	445	17	2.2	2.3	-.11
		2	Sometimes	115	41	1,124	44			
		3	Often	68	25	695	27			
		4	Very often	30	11	306	12			
		Total		278	100	2,570	100			
i. Adapted a previously used solution to a new situation	TRNadapt	1	Never	26	9	198	8	2.6	2.7	-.07
		2	Sometimes	113	39	915	36			
		3	Often	91	33	981	38			
		4	Very often	50	18	474	18			
		Total		280	100	2,568	100			

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Refer to the endnotes page for the key to triangle symbols.

Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				Wright State		Great Lakes Public		Wright State	Great Lakes Public	Effect size ^d
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
j. Referred to online content (tutorial, forum, webpage, etc.) to solve a problem	TRNnonsolve	1	Never	10	4	77	3	3.1	3.1	-.02
		2	Sometimes	66	23	565	22			
		3	Often	95	35	953	37			
		4	Very often	108	38	972	38			
		Total		279	100	2,567	100			
k. Referred to online content (tutorial, forum, webpage, etc.) to learn a new skill or procedure	TRNnonskill	1	Never	7	3	102	4	3.1	3.0	.04
		2	Sometimes	75	26	621	24			
		3	Often	93	34	942	37			
		4	Very often	105	37	896	35			
		Total		280	100	2,561	100			
l. Used project management tools to plan, organize, or schedule tasks	TRNproject	1	Never	33	12	244	10	2.7	2.7	-.07
		2	Sometimes	92	33	788	31			
		3	Often	88	32	911	35			
		4	Very often	66	23	620	24			
		Total		279	100	2,563	100			
m. Used a daily or weekly "to do" list	TRNtodo	1	Never	25	9	190	9	3.1	3.1	-.08
		2	Sometimes	60	23	477	20			
		3	Often	60	21	535	22			
		4	Very often	135	47	1,360	50			
		Total		280	100	2,562	100			
n. Prioritized what tasks need to be accomplished	TRNtasks	1	Never	3	1	27	1	3.4	3.4	-.02
		2	Sometimes	31	11	263	11			
		3	Often	87	32	765	31			
		4	Very often	159	56	1,510	57			
		Total		280	100	2,565	100			
o. Worked longer hours than usual to meet deadlines (i.e., after midnight, before dawn)	TRNhours	1	Never	16	6	187	7	3.1	3.0	.07
		2	Sometimes	73	27	686	27			
		3	Often	67	24	631	25			
		4	Very often	124	44	1,056	41			
		Total		280	100	2,560	100			
p. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that used information from a variety of sources (books, journals, Internet, databases, etc.)	TRNwrsources	1	Never	11	4	83	3	3.1	3.1	.01
		2	Sometimes	63	23	571	22			
		3	Often	84	31	886	35			
		4	Very often	121	42	1,027	39			
		Total		279	100	2,567	100			
q. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that assessed the conclusions of a published work	TRNwrassess	1	Never	36	13	303	12	2.6	2.7	-.04
		2	Sometimes	96	35	847	34			
		3	Often	72	26	716	28			
		4	Very often	75	26	691	26			
		Total		279	100	2,557	100			

NSSE 2023 Development of Transferable Skills

Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons Wright State University

Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				Wright State		Great Lakes Public		Wright State	Great Lakes Public	Effect size ^d
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
r. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that included ideas from more than one academic discipline	TRNwrideas	1	Never	29	10	282	11	2.7	2.7	.00
		2	Sometimes	91	34	848	33			
		3	Often	86	31	759	31			
		4	Very often	73	25	670	25			
		Total		279	100	2,559	100			
s. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that presented multiple viewpoints or perspectives	TRNwrviews	1	Never	27	10	230	9	2.6	2.7	-.06
		2	Sometimes	105	39	939	37			
		3	Often	83	29	782	31			
		4	Very often	63	22	613	23			
		Total		278	100	2,564	100			

First-Year Students

Variable name	N	Mean		Standard error ^f		Standard deviation ^g		DF ^h	Sig. ⁱ	Effect size ^d
		Wright State	Great Lakes Public	Wright State	Great Lakes Public	Wright State	Great Lakes Public			
								<i>Comparisons with: Great Lakes Public</i>		
TRNdebate	246	2.26	2.42	.060	.019	0.95	0.93	2,767	.015	-.16
TRNspeech	246	1.80	2.09	.055	.019	0.86	0.93	2,759	.000	-.31
TRNgroup	245	2.65	2.73	.053	.016	0.84	0.83	2,763	.117	-.10
TRNethical	246	2.35	2.46	.057	.018	0.90	0.88	2,771	.071	-.12
TRNcred	246	2.73	2.81	.058	.017	0.91	0.84	287	.167	-.10
TRNcomplex	245	2.67	2.69	.059	.016	0.92	0.82	283	.755	-.02
TRNsolution	245	2.73	2.75	.056	.016	0.87	0.79	284	.732	-.02
TRNcreate	244	2.09	2.23	.056	.018	0.88	0.88	2,759	.018	-.16
TRNadapt	243	2.52	2.53	.056	.017	0.87	0.83	2,756	.822	-.02
TRNnonsolve	245	2.99	2.93	.054	.017	0.85	0.83	2,762	.301	.07
TRNnonskill	244	2.99	2.90	.055	.017	0.85	0.83	2,758	.086	.12
TRNproject	242	2.51	2.60	.058	.018	0.90	0.90	2,760	.137	-.10
TRNtodo	243	2.84	3.04	.068	.020	1.06	1.01	286	.005	-.20
TRNtasks	239	3.23	3.30	.052	.016	0.81	0.78	2,757	.218	-.08
TRNhours	244	2.85	2.89	.064	.019	1.00	0.97	2,763	.538	-.04
TRNwresource	243	2.92	2.96	.058	.017	0.90	0.86	2,751	.417	-.05
TRNwrsassess	243	2.52	2.64	.064	.018	0.99	0.92	283	.073	-.13
TRNwrideas	243	2.40	2.56	.063	.018	0.98	0.92	2,754	.008	-.18
TRNwrviews	246	2.49	2.68	.057	.018	0.90	0.88	2,760	.001	-.22

Seniors

Variable name	N	Mean		Standard error ^f		Standard deviation ^g		DF ^h	Sig. ⁱ	Effect size ^d
		Wright State	Great Lakes Public	Wright State	Great Lakes Public	Wright State	Great Lakes Public			
								<i>Comparisons with: Great Lakes Public</i>		
TRNdebate	277	2.35	2.45	.060	.020	1.00	0.98	2,576	.095	-.11
TRNspeech	279	2.25	2.19	.061	.020	1.01	0.94	338	.381	.06
TRNgroup	279	2.79	2.79	.051	.018	0.85	0.86	2,579	.888	.01
TRNethical	279	2.42	2.54	.056	.019	0.94	0.91	2,580	.036	-.13
TRNcred	277	2.92	2.89	.054	.018	0.90	0.88	2,573	.613	.03
TRNcomplex	279	2.78	2.82	.052	.018	0.87	0.88	2,577	.390	-.05
TRNsolution	279	2.80	2.89	.051	.017	0.85	0.84	2,576	.106	-.10
TRNcreate	276	2.23	2.33	.056	.019	0.93	0.89	2,575	.088	-.11
TRNadapt	279	2.60	2.67	.053	.018	0.89	0.86	2,576	.250	-.07
TRNnon solve	278	3.08	3.09	.052	.018	0.87	0.84	2,572	.806	-.02
TRNnon skill	279	3.06	3.02	.051	.018	0.85	0.87	2,568	.490	.04
TRNproject	277	2.66	2.73	.058	.019	0.97	0.93	2,569	.267	-.07
TRNtodo	279	3.05	3.13	.062	.021	1.03	1.01	2,569	.215	-.08
TRNtasks	279	3.42	3.43	.044	.015	0.73	0.74	2,572	.811	-.02
TRNhours	279	3.06	2.99	.058	.021	0.97	0.98	2,568	.286	.07
TRNwresource	277	3.10	3.10	.054	.018	0.90	0.86	2,573	.920	.01
TRNw assess	277	2.65	2.68	.060	.021	1.00	0.99	2,564	.550	-.04
TRNw ideas	277	2.70	2.70	.057	.020	0.96	0.97	2,566	.983	.00
TRNw reviews	276	2.63	2.68	.056	.019	0.93	0.93	2,569	.386	-.06

Endnotes

- a. Column percentages are weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups). Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Counts are unweighted; column percentages cannot be replicated from counts. Comparison group details are in the Selected Comparison Groups report, linked in the Data & Reports table on the Institution Interface.
- b. All statistics are weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups). Unless otherwise noted, statistical comparisons are two-tailed independent t-tests. Items with categorical response sets are left blank.
- c. These are the values used to calculate means. For the majority of items, these values match the codes in the data file and codebook.
- d. Effect size for independent t-tests uses Cohen's d; z-tests use Cohen's h.
- e. Statistics are weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups). Categorical items are not listed.
- f. The 95% confidence interval for the population mean is equal to the sample mean plus or minus 1.96 times the standard error of the mean.
- g. A measure of the amount individual scores deviate from the mean of all the scores in the distribution.
- h. Degrees of freedom used to compute the t-tests. Values differ from Ns due to weighting and whether equal variances were assumed.
- i. Statistical comparisons are two-tailed independent t-tests or z-tests. Statistical significance represents the probability that the difference between your students' mean and that of the students in the comparison group is due to chance.
- j. Statistical comparison uses z-test to compare the proportion who responded (depending on the item) "Done or in progress" or "Yes" with all who responded otherwise.
- k. Mean represents the proportion who responded (depending on the item) "Done or in progress" or "Yes."

Key to symbols:

- ▲ **Your students' average** was significantly higher ($p < .05$) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.
- △ **Your students' average** was significantly higher ($p < .05$) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- ▽ **Your students' average** was significantly lower ($p < .05$) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- ▼ **Your students' average** was significantly lower ($p < .05$) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.

Note: It is important to interpret the direction of differences relative to item wording and your institutional context. You may not see all of these symbols in your report.