

Report of the Results of the National Survey of Student Engagement

Office of Institutional Research
November 2000

CONTENTS

- Abstract
- Background and Methodology
- Results:
 - General Learning Activities
 - Reading, Writing, and Examinations
 - Coursework Emphasis
 - Hours/Week Spent in Various Tasks
 - Academic Enrichment Activities
 - Educational and Personal Growth
 - Opinions about Your School
 - Institutional Engagement Index
- Summary and Conclusions
- NSSE Item Responses (BGSU only)

ABSTRACT

This report describes the results of the Spring 2000 administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) to BGSU's freshmen and seniors. The NSSE is designed by national assessment experts to gather information about collegiate quality. Survey items represent empirically confirmed "good practices" in undergraduate education. That is, they reflect behaviors by students and institutions that are associated with desired outcomes of college. An Institutional Engagement Index which compares BGSU's students' academic engagement as measured by their responses to the NSSE with predicted responses based upon student and institutional characteristics is included in the report. The results of NSSE could be used to assist in BGSU's assessment and institutional improvement efforts.

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

The Office of Institutional Research conducts annual surveys among undergraduate students at BGSU to assess the extent to which they engage in a variety of educational practices and what they gain from their college experiences. One of the office's principal means of data collection since 1997 has been the BGSU Undergraduate Experiences Questionnaire (BUEQ), which was constructed in the IR office from a variety of sources. This year the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) has been used instead of BUEQ to collect data. The advantage of the NSSE is that it provides a vehicle not only

for longitudinal comparison of students' experiences at BGSU, but also for comparison of those experiences with those from comparable institutions across the country. The NSSE was developed at the Indiana University Center for Post-Secondary Research & Planning two years ago. It is designed to provide institutional and national information about undergraduates' characteristics, college activities, opinions about their institution, and their learning and personal development as the outcomes of their college education. The results from the NSSE project will produce a set of national benchmarks of good educational practice that can be used by individual schools to estimate the efficacy of their institutional improvement efforts (Kuh, 2000)*.

This spring 62,981 students representing 276 four-year public/private institutions participated in the NSSE. The BGSU sample was comprised of 500 first-year and 500 senior students who were randomly selected by the NSSE project staff from electronic data files provided by BGSU. Students had the option of responding either via a traditional paper survey or via the World Wide Web. The overall response rate for BGSU was 41%, which is close to the 42% response rate for all NSSE institutions and is higher than the 37% response rate for three of the four other participating public Doctoral I universities*. There was a high degree of similarity between the respondents and the population at BGSU in terms of race, colleges, class level, and enrollment status (full-time vs. part-time). The largest difference was the overrepresentation of women respondents (71%) compared with 57% of female undergraduates at BGSU. These limitations require that results from the survey be interpreted with some caution.

NSSE results were analyzed by noting the percentages of participants who provided various responses to the survey items. Responses were compared with those of participants from three of the four other participating public Doctoral I universities (peer universities). Internal group differences (e.g., class level, enrollment status, gender, race, and college) were also examined and significant differences are noted where they occurred.

A complete listing of the survey responses is included at the end of this report. Unless otherwise stated, all numbers in the report indicate percentages of survey participants. Percentages may not always sum to 100 due to rounding.

* Kuh, G. D. (2000). The national survey of student engagement: Conceptual framework and overview of psychometric properties. Institutional Report 2000. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and Planning.

* Miami University of Ohio, Northern Illinois University, and University of Missouri-Kansas City

GENERAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

In Your Overall Experience at This Institution So Far, About How Often Have You Done Each of the Following? (Percent Very Often or Often)	BGSU		Peer Universities	
	Freshmen	Seniors	Freshmen	Seniors
	%	%	%	%
Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor or other students	74	62	54	51
Rewrote a paper or assignment several times	60	20	48	30
Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	53	58	43	51
Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards	53	55	52	52
Discussed ideas from your reading or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	50	57	48	68
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	49	67	55	69
Worked with other students on projects during class	49	50	40	45
Had serious conversations with students who differ from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	43	43	48	42
Had serious conversations with students of a different race than your own	40	38	50	44
Received prompt feedback from faculty on your academic performance	39	51	45	63
Used an electronic medium (e-mail, list-serve, chat group, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment	37	33	33	33
Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	35	58	38	56
Made a class presentation	25	60	30	54
Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor	23	39	21	34
Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course	11	15	3	11
Discussed ideas from your reading/classes	11	15	9	18

with faculty members outside of class				
Tutored or taught other students	10	18	11	18
Came to class unprepared	8	10	8	11
Worked with a faculty member on a research project	7	10	3	11
Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student-life activities, etc.)	7	14	5	13

About 50% or more of BGSU respondents (both freshmen and seniors) reported that they often or very often use e-mail to communicate with others, discuss grades/assignments with an instructor, ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions, discuss ideas from their reading/classes with others outside of class, and work with other students on projects during class.

Like the undergraduates at peer universities, the majority of BGSU undergraduates came to class prepared. More than half of them often work harder than they thought they could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations. More than 80 percent of the respondents, however, indicated that they never or only occasionally participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course, discussed ideas from their reading or classes with faculty members outside of class, worked with a faculty member on a research project or on activities other than coursework, and tutored or taught other students.

Difference between BGSU and Peer Universities:

Comparing with the undergraduates at peer universities, BGSU undergraduates more often used e-mail to communicate with instructors/other students and discussed grades/assignments with instructors, but less often had serious conversations with students of a different race than their own. BGSU freshmen rewrote a paper or assignment several times and worked with other students on projects during class more often than freshmen at peer universities. BGSU seniors reported that they received prompt feedback from faculty on their academic performance, discussed ideas from their reading or classes with others outside of class, and rewrote a paper or assignment several times less often than did the seniors at peer universities.

Differences between Internal Groups:

Forty percent more freshmen than seniors reported that they often rewrite a paper or assignment several times. Freshmen were also more likely than seniors to use e-mail to communicate with others. Seniors, on the other hand, were more likely than freshmen to ask questions in class, make a class presentation, work with classmates outside of class preparing assignments, receive prompt feedback from faculty on their academic performance, and talk about their career plans with a faculty member or advisor.

Full-time students more often than part-time students rewrote a paper or assignment, discussed grades or assignments with an faculty member, and had serious conversations with other students whose religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values were very different from theirs. Part-time students, on the other hand, more often than full-time students made a class presentation, worked with other students on projects outside of class, received prompt feedback from faculty on their academic performance, and discussed ideas from their reading or classes with others outside of class.

Female students were more likely than male students to use e-mail to communicate to others, talk about their career plans with a faculty member or advisor, and receive prompt feedback from faculty.

Students of color were more likely than Caucasians to ask questions in class, make a class presentation, work with other students on assignments during/after class, tutor or teach other students, discuss grades/assignments/ideas/career plans with an faculty member, receive prompt feedback from faculty, and have serious conversations with other students whose race, beliefs and personal values were different from theirs.

Students in Academic Enhancement and Musical Arts more frequently rewrote a paper or assignment several times than did the students in other colleges. Comparing with the students in other colleges, Technology students were most likely to work with other students on projects during class. Musical Arts students were most likely to use e-mail to contact others, ask questions in class, discuss ideas from their reading/class with faculty/others outside of class, talk about their career plans with a faculty member or advisor, receive prompt feedback from faculty, work with a faculty member on a research project, and have serious conversations with other students whose background were very different from theirs. Musical Arts students, however, were least likely to use an electronic medium to discuss or complete an assignment. Business Administration students were least likely to talk about their career plans with a faculty member or advisor. Academic Enhancement students were least likely to participate in class discussions and to make a class presentation.

READING, WRITING, AND EXAMINATIONS

About How Much Reading and Writing Did You Do During the Last Academic Year?	BGSU						Peer Universities					
	Freshmen			Seniors			Freshmen			Seniors		
	<5	5-20	>20	<5	5-20	>20	<5	5-20	>20	<5	5-20	>20
Number of assigned textbooks/books/book-length packs of course readings	12%	74%	14%	25%	62%	14%	11%	74%	15%	22%	66%	12%
Number of books read on your own (not assigned)	86%	13%	1%	74%	21%	5%	84%	15%	1%	69%	26%	5%

Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more	97%	1%	1%	94%	5%	1%	97%	2%	1%	90%	9%	1%
Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 20 pages	5%	75%	20%	28%	54%	17%	12%	62%	26%	23%	56%	22%

Difference between BGSU and Peer Universities:

There is no significant difference between BGSU and peer universities in terms of the amount of reading and writing students did last year . Like the respondents at peer universities, the majority of BGSU respondents (>70%) read 5 or more *assigned* books, and wrote 5 or more papers/reports of *fewer than 20 pages* last academic year. Only a small portion (<=31%) of the respondents read 5 or more *unassigned* books, and wrote 5 or more papers/reports of *20 pages or more* last academic year.

Difference between Internal Groups:

Freshmen/full-time students/Musical Arts students read more *assigned books* and wrote more papers/reports of *fewer than 20 pages* per year than did seniors/part-time students/students in other colleges. Seniors and part-time students read more *unassigned books* than did freshmen and full-time students. Part-time students also tended to write more papers or reports of *20 pages or more* than did full-time students. Comparing with the students in other colleges, Technology students were least likely to read 5 or more assigned books a year. There is no significant gender and race difference in the amount of reading or writing students did last year.

What Is the Nature of the Examinations You Have Taken at This Institution?	BGSU		Peer Universities	
	Freshmen	Seniors	Freshmen	Seniors
Mostly multiple-choice or short-answer , 1	12%	9%	15%	7%
2	23%	17%	24%	11%
3	22%	19%	22%	15%
4	31%	26%	26%	20%
5	8%	10%	7%	18%
6	4%	13%	7%	18%
Mostly essay or open-ended problems, 7	1%	6%	0%	12%

In terms of the nature of examinations, BGSU undergraduates (both freshmen and seniors) were more likely to take mostly multiple-choice or short-answer examinations rather than mostly essay or open-ended problem ones. Although fewer seniors than freshmen at BGSU have taken mostly multiple-choice/short-answer examinations during the past academic year, seniors at BGSU were still more likely to take mostly multiple-choice/short-answer examinations, especially when we compare them with the seniors at peer universities.

There is no significant gender, race, and enrollment status difference in the nature of examinations students took at BGSU. Comparing with the students in other colleges, Musical Arts students were most likely to have essay or open-ended problems for their examinations.

COURSEWORK EMPHASIS

About How Much Has Your Coursework Up to Now Emphasized the Following Mental Activities? (Percent Quite a Bit or Very Much)	BGSU		Peer Universities	
	Freshmen	Seniors	Freshmen	Seniors
Memorizing facts, ideas or methods from your courses and reading so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form	73%	62%	70%	49%
Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory	65%	67%	67%	77%
Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	60%	69%	60%	66%
Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	58%	55%	49%	60%
Making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods	49%	49%	43%	53%

Difference between BGSU and Peer Universities:

Most of the respondents, either at BGSU or peer universities, reported that their coursework emphasized most of the activities listed above. BGSU freshmen were more likely to indicate that their coursework emphasized *synthesizing and organizing* information into new, more complex interpretations and relationships than did the freshmen at peer universities. Comparing with the seniors at peer universities, BGSU seniors were more likely to report that their coursework emphasized *memorization* activities, but less likely to report that their coursework emphasized *analysis* activities.

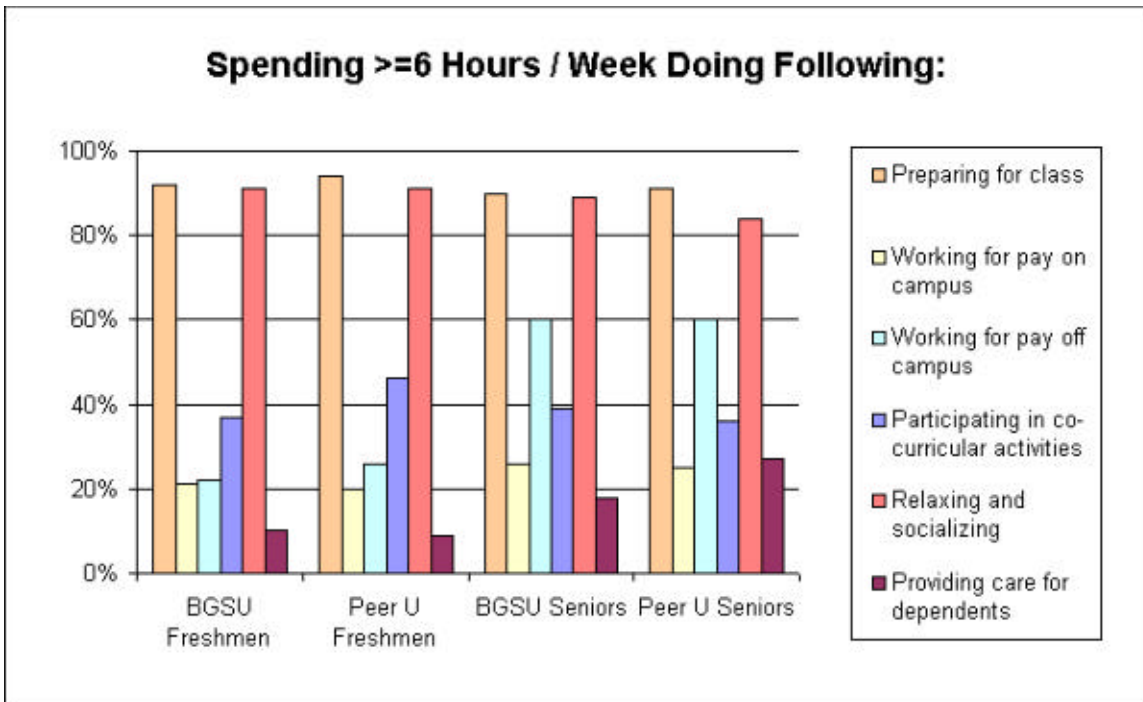
Differences between Internal Groups:

Freshmen were more likely than seniors to report that their coursework emphasized *memorizing* facts, ideas or methods. Seniors, on the other hand, were more likely to report that their coursework emphasized *applying theories* or concepts to practical problems or in new situations than did freshmen.

Students of color/Technology students were more likely to indicate that their coursework emphasized *making judgments* than did Caucasians/students in other colleges. Students in Musical Arts and Health & Human Services were more likely than the students in other colleges to indicate that their coursework emphasized *synthesizing and organizing* ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships.

HOURS/WEEK SPENT IN VARIOUS TASKS

About How Many Hours Do You Spend in a Typical Week Doing Each of the Following?	BGSU						Peer Universities					
	Freshmen			Seniors			Freshmen			Seniors		
	<=5	6~25	>=26	<=5	6~25	>=26	<=5	6~25	>=26	<=5	6~25	>=26
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Preparing for class	8	82	11	10	78	12	6	80	14	9	78	14
Working for pay on campus	80	20	1	75	24	2	81	19	1	75	22	3
Working for pay off campus	78	21	1	40	40	20	74	21	5	40	35	25
Participating in co-curricular activities	63	33	4	61	34	5	55	43	3	64	32	4
Relaxing and socializing	9	76	16	11	79	11	9	75	16	16	76	8
Providing care for dependents living with you	91	7	3	83	13	5	92	7	2	74	15	12



Difference between BGSU and Peer Universities:

As indicated in the table and chart above, there is no significant difference between BGSU students and students at peer universities in terms of the number of hours per

week spent on preparing for class, working for pay on/off campus, and relaxing/socializing. Freshmen at peer universities, however, spent more hours per week participating in co-curricular activities than did BGSU freshmen; and seniors at BGSU spent less hours per week providing care for dependents than did the seniors at peer universities.

Differences between Internal Groups:

Full-time students were more likely than part-time students to spend time preparing for class, participating in co-curricular activities, and relaxing/socializing, but less likely to spend time working and taking care for dependents. Male students and students of color were more likely to spend more hours per week participating in co-curricular activities than did Caucasian and female students. Comparing with the students in other colleges, Musical Arts students were most likely to spend more hours per week preparing for class.

Sixty percent of the senior respondents reported spending 6 hours or more per week working off campus, compared to 22% of freshmen respondents. Male and Caucasian students were more likely to spend more hours working off campus rather than on campus. Females and students of color, on the other hand, were more likely to spend more hours working on campus instead of off campus. Compared with the students in other colleges, Technology students were most likely to spend more than 30 hours per week working off campus.

ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

In Thinking about Your Undergraduate Program as a Whole, Which of the Following Have You Done or Plan to Do Before Your Graduation? (Percent Yes)	BGSU		Peer Universities	
	Freshmen	Seniors	Freshmen	Seniors
	%	%	%	%
Practicum, internship, field exp., co-op experience, or clinical assignment	83	80	82	69
Community service or volunteer work	72	61	70	57
Interdisciplinary coursework	32	50	43	53
Culminating senior experience	30	42	49	61
Foreign language coursework	19	34	42	48
Study abroad	18	8	30	17
Independent study or self-designed major	9	25	13	31

Difference between BGSU and Peer Universities:

Like the undergraduates at peer universities, most of the undergraduates at BGSU have done or plan to do a practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, and volunteer work before their graduation. Comparing with 69% of seniors at peer universities, more BGSU seniors (80%) have done or plan to do a practicum, internship, field experience, and co-op experience/clinical assignment. A smaller proportion of

BGSU students (both freshmen and seniors), however, have done or plan to do a culminating senior experience, to study abroad, and to take foreign language coursework than did the students at peer universities. Only 32% of BGSU freshmen have taken or plan to take interdisciplinary coursework, compared to 43% of freshmen at peer universities.

Differences between Internal Groups:

Freshmen were more likely to have done or plan to do volunteer work and study abroad than were seniors. Seniors, on the other hand, were more likely than freshmen to have done or plan to do independent study and a culminating senior experience. They were also more likely than freshmen to have taken or plan to take interdisciplinary and foreign language coursework before their graduation.

Full-time students were more likely to have done or plan to do community service/volunteer work, studying abroad, and a culminating senior experience than were part-time students. Female students were more likely than male students to have done or plan to do community service/volunteer work. Students of color were more likely than Caucasian students to have done or plan to do studying abroad, to take foreign language coursework, and to do a practicum, internship, field experience, and co-op or clinical assignment.

Across the colleges, Arts and Sciences students were most likely to have taken or plan to take foreign language courses; Musical Arts students were most likely to have done or plan to do independent study; Students in Technology and Education and Human Development were more likely to have done or plan to do a practicum, internship, and field/co-op experience; Technology students were less likely to have done or plan to do volunteer work and a culminating senior experience.

EDUCATIONAL AND PERSONAL GROWTH

Fourteen survey items asked students to indicate to what extent their college education has contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development. The results are summarized below.

To What Extent Has Your College Education Contributed to Your Knowledge, Skills, and Personal Development in the Following Areas? (Percent Quite a Bit or Very Much)	BGSU		Peer Universities	
	Freshmen	Seniors	Freshmen	Seniors
	%	%	%	%
Acquiring a broad general education	80	85	75	81
Writing clearly and effectively	78	79	64	77
Working effectively with others	75	76	65	70
Thinking critically and analytically	73	83	74	84

Being honest and truthful	73	53	55	53
Learning effectively on your own	72	79	71	76
Understanding yourself	68	74	62	69
Using computing and information technology	63	70	57	62
Speaking clearly and effectively	55	73	54	72
Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	55	50	51	48
Analyzing quantitative problems	51	60	50	62
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	45	77	42	69
Contributing to the welfare of your community	37	33	30	31
Voting in elections	13	10	13	15

Difference between BGSU and Peer Universities:

Most of the undergraduates, either at BGSU or peer universities, indicated that their college education contributed considerably to most aspects of educational and personal development listed on the table above. BGSU freshmen were more likely than the freshmen at peer universities to report that their college education contributed to being honest and truthful, writing clearly, and working effectively with others. BGSU seniors were more likely than the seniors at peer universities to indicate that their college education contributed to using computing and information technology and acquiring job/work-related knowledge and skills.

Difference between Internal Groups:

Compared with freshmen, seniors were less likely to report that their college education contributed quite a bit or very much to their being honest and truthful, but were more likely to indicate that their college education contributed to speaking clearly, thinking critically, analyzing quantitative problems, and acquiring job/work-related knowledge and skills. Female students were more likely than male students to report that their college education contributed to their working effectively with others.

Full-time students were more likely than part-time students to indicate that they gained quite a bit in being honest and in working effectively with others as a result of their college education. Part-time students and students at College of Technology were more likely to report that they gained quite a bit in acquiring job-related knowledge and skills, in analyzing quantitative problems, and in using computing and information technology than did full-time students and students in other colleges. Musical Arts students and students of color were more likely to report that their college education contributed quite a bit in causing them to vote in elections, and in their understanding of people of different racial backgrounds than did students in other colleges and Caucasians. Students of color were also more likely than Caucasians to report that they gained considerably in analyzing quantitative problems. Musical Arts students, however, were least likely to say

that they gained a lot in acquiring a broad general education and in analyzing quantitative problems compared with the students in other colleges.

OPINIONS ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL

Another portion of the survey asked students to express their opinions about the institution they are attending. Specifically, students were asked about 1) the extent to which they perceived that several aspects of students' development are emphasized, 2) the nature of their relationships with other people on campus, and 3) their overall experience at school and whether they would go to the same institution again if they could. Results are summarized below.

To What Extent Does Your Institution emphasize Each of the Following? (Percent Quite a Bit or Very Much)	BGSU		Peer Universities	
	Freshmen	Seniors	Freshmen	Seniors
Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	77%	72%	78%	80%
Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	73%	57%	68%	60%
Encouraging contact among students from different economic/social/ethnic backgrounds	49%	31%	50%	32%
Providing the support you need to thrive socially	47%	35%	37%	23%
Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	32%	18%	21%	18%

Like the students at peer universities, most of BGSU students reported that their university emphasized spending significant amounts of time studying and providing the support they needed to help them succeed academically. Only a small portion of the students ($\leq 32\%$), either at BGSU or the peer universities, reported that their university emphasized helping them cope with their non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.).

Difference between BGSU and Peer Universities:

Compared with the students at the peer universities, BGSU students (both freshmen and seniors) were more likely to indicate that their institution emphasized providing the support they needed to thrive socially. Freshmen at BGSU were more likely to indicate that their institution emphasized helping them cope with their non-academic responsibilities than did the freshmen at peer universities.

Difference between Internal Groups:

Freshmen and Musical Arts students were more likely to report that BGSU emphasized providing the support they needed to help them succeed academically and thrive socially than did seniors and students in other colleges. Freshmen were also more likely than

seniors to indicate that BGSU emphasized encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds, and helping them cope with their non-academic responsibilities. Students of color were more likely than Caucasians to report that BGSU emphasized spending significant amounts of time studying and providing the support they need to thrive socially.

The Quality of the Relationships Among People That Are Typical at Your Institution:	BGSU		Peer Universities	
	Freshmen	Seniors	Freshmen	Seniors
	%	%	%	%
Relationships with other students:				
Unfriendly, Unsupportive, Sense of Alienation, 1	1	1	3	1
2	3	4	5	4
3	6	3	6	8
4	6	8	13	16
5	23	22	20	22
6	34	39	33	33
Friendly, Supportive, Sense of Belonging, 7	27	23	20	17
Relationships with faculty members:				
Unavailable, Unhelpful, Unsympathetic, 1	0	0	2	1
2	0	3	4	4
3	7	10	8	6
4	20	15	20	15
5	35	30	29	29
6	29	32	30	33
Available, Helpful, Sympathetic, 7	9	11	7	12
Relationships with administrative personnel and offices:				
Unhelpful, Inconsiderate, Rigid, 1	2	9	5	7
2	13	11	10	10
3	11	14	12	18
4	23	21	29	24
5	31	22	23	18
6	13	18	15	17
Helpful, Considerate, Flexible, 7	6	6	6	6

How Would You Evaluate Your Entire Educational Experience at Your Institution?	BGSU		Peer Universities	
	Freshmen	Seniors	Freshmen	Seniors
Excellent	24%	28%	26%	25%
Good	65%	59%	57%	58%
Fair	11%	13%	15%	14%
Poor	1%	1%	3%	2%

If You Could Start Over Again, Would You Go to the Same Institution You Are Now Attending?	BGSU		Peer Universities	
	Freshmen	Seniors	Freshmen	Seniors
Definitely Yes	39%	38%	37%	27%
Probably Yes	45%	42%	44%	50%
Probably No	11%	15%	14%	17%
Definitely No	5%	5%	6%	6%

The majority of students, both at BGSU and peer universities, felt that their fellow students were friendly and supportive, and their faculty members were available, helpful, and sympathetic. In terms of their relationships with administrative personnel and offices, more students chose helpful, considerate, and flexible rather than unhelpful, inconsiderate, and rigid. More than 80% of the BGSU and peer university students evaluated their entire educational experience as good or excellent, and the majority of them would go to the same institution again if they could.

Difference between BGSU and Peer Universities:

There is no significant difference between BGSU students and students at peer universities in rating their relationships with others on campus and in evaluating their experience at their institution. BGSU seniors (38%), however, were more likely to give the answer **Definitely Yes** to the question "if you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?" than did the seniors at peer universities (27%).

Difference between Internal Groups:

Part-time students/students of color/Musical Arts students were more likely to rate their relationships with faculty and administrative personnel as helpful than did full-time students/Caucasians/students in other colleges. Seventy-five percent of the students in Musical Arts gave the answer **Definitely Yes** to the question "if you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?", compared 26%-47% of students in other colleges.

INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT INDEX

The NSSE staff provided the Office of Institutional Research with an Institutional Engagement Index for BGSU based upon responses of BGSU students to the NSSE 2000 survey. Students' responses were grouped into five categories representing effective educational practice: Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student Interactions with Faculty Members, Enriching Educational Experiences, and Supportive Campus Environment. NSSE responses were formed into five summative scales along these dimensions and the five average institutional engagement scores for BGSU students were compared with predicted scores based upon several student and institutional characteristics for BGSU: public/private, admissions selectivity, undergraduate enrollment, urbanicity, full-time vs. part-time student distribution, student gender and racial/ethnic composition, educational and general expenses per student, endowment, distribution of student majors, distribution of student ages, and the percentage of students who completed the NSSE via the World Wide Web vs. the paper and pencil version. Results are shown below.

BENCHMARK SCORES*, BGSU

Benchmark	Actual	Predicted	Difference
First Year Students			
Level of Academic Challenge	49.8	45.5	4.3
Active and Collaborative Learning	39.6	36.5	3.1
Student Interactions with Faculty Members	30.1	25.3	4.8
Enriching Educational Experiences	43.1	42.4	0.7
Supportive Campus Environment	58.3	57.9	0.4
Seniors			
Level of Academic Challenge	48.6	49.9	-1.3
Active and Collaborative Learning	48.4	48.4	0.0
Student Interactions with Faculty Members	35.9	36.2	-0.3
Enriching Educational Experiences	38.7	41.0	-2.3
Supportive Campus Environment	53.1	53.3	-0.2

* Each benchmark was put on a 100-point scale.

Source: National Survey of Student Engagement, The College Student Report, Indiana University Center for Post-Secondary Research & Planning

First year students' reported levels of academic engagement were clearly greater on average than predicted in all areas, while seniors' reported average academic engagement was lower than or equal to predicted levels. While caution should be used in interpreting these results taken from the first-ever administration of the NSSE at BGSU, a preliminary implication is that the University appears to be adding considerable value to the educational experiences of first year students but not, on average, to those of seniors.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This is the first time that the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) has been used by BGSU to gather information about undergraduates' experiences, their opinions of BGSU, and their educational and personal growth during their college years. The advantage of using the NSSE instead of a locally developed questionnaire is that it provides a vehicle not only for longitudinal comparison of students' experiences at BGSU, but also for comparison of those experiences with those of comparable institutions across the country. The results of the NSSE are provided by the Office of Institutional Research to assist in BGSU's assessment and institutional improvement efforts. Descriptive analysis of the questionnaire results revealed some interesting findings.

The Major Tendencies at BGSU:

The majority of BGSU undergraduates spent 6-25 hours per week preparing for class, and they came to class prepared. Most of them often used e-mail to communicate with others, discussed grades/assignments with an instructor, discussed ideas with students/family members after class, and often worked harder than they thought they could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations. More than 80% of them, however, indicated that they never or only occasionally discussed ideas from their reading or classes with faculty members outside of class, participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course, and worked with a faculty member on a research project or on activities other than coursework.

BGSU undergraduate students were more likely to read assigned books than unassigned books and to write shorter papers (<20 pages) than longer papers (>20 pages). They were also more likely to have done or plan to do a practicum, internship, co-op experience, and volunteer work than to do a self-designed major, independent study, and study abroad. The examinations BGSU undergraduates have taken were mostly multiple-choice or short-answer rather than mostly essay or open-ended problem. Besides study and other activities, most of the undergraduate students spent 6-25 hours per week relaxing and socializing.

More than half of the BGSU undergraduates reported that their coursework emphasized most of the activities listed on the survey, and BGSU emphasized spending significant amounts of time studying and providing the support they needed to help them succeed academically. Most of them agreed that their college education contributed quite a bit or very much to most of the aspects of educational and personal development listed on the survey, especially acquiring a broad general education, writing clearly, working effectively with others, thinking critically and analytically, learning effectively on their own, understanding themselves, and using computing and information technology.

The majority of BGSU undergraduates described other students as friendly, supportive, and providing a sense of belonging, and their faculty members as available, helpful, and sympathetic. In terms of the relationships with administrative personnel and offices, more students chose helpful, considerate, and flexible as descriptors rather than unhelpful, inconsiderate, and rigid. More than 85% of the undergraduate students evaluated their entire educational experience at BGSU as good or excellent. The majority of the students would go to BGSU again if they could start over again.

An Institutional Engagement Index computed for BGSU by the NSSE staff based upon NSSE responses compared students' scores among several categories of survey responses (Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student Interactions with Faculty Members, Enriching Educational Experiences, and Supportive Campus Environment) with the level of BGSU students' academic engagement which was predicted based upon several student and institutional characteristics. The results revealed that first year students' reported levels of academic engagement were greater than predicted in all areas, but seniors' reported academic engagement was lower than or equal to predicted levels.

Considering differences between BGSU and peer universities, and the diversity of student experiences and views, an examination of group differences in the survey results is at least as interesting and relevant as a summary of majority tendencies. Below is a summary of some differences that are equal or greater than 10% across the groups.

Difference between BGSU Students and Students at Peer Universities:

Compared with Freshmen at Peer Universities (differences that are equal or greater than 10%):

- BGSU freshmen more often used e-mail to communicate with instructors/other students, rewrote a paper or assignment several times, and discussed grades or assignments with instructors. They were more likely to indicate that BGSU emphasized providing the support they needed to thrive socially, and helped them cope with their non-academic responsibilities. A greater proportion of them felt that their college education contributed quite a bit or very much in being honest and truthful, writing clearly, and working effectively with others.
- BGSU freshmen were less likely to have done or plan to do a culminating senior experience, study abroad, and to have taken or plan to take foreign language and interdisciplinary coursework. Freshmen at BGSU were also less likely to have serious conversations with students of a different race than their own.

Compared with Seniors at Peer Universities (differences that are equal or greater than 10%):

- BGSU seniors more frequently used e-mail to communicate with others, and participated in activities such as practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, and clinical assignment. They were more likely to report that their coursework emphasized memorization activities, and that the examinations they have taken were mostly multiple-choice or short-answer rather than mostly essay or open-ended problems. A greater proportion of them felt that BGSU emphasized providing the support they needed to thrive socially. To the question "if you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending,?" more BGSU seniors gave the answer "Definitely Yes."
- BGSU seniors less often rewrote a paper or assignment several times, discussed ideas from their reading or classes with others outside of class, and received prompt feedback from faculty on their academic performance. They were less likely to indicate that their coursework emphasized analysis activities, and that they have done or plan to do a culminating senior experience and have taken or plan to take foreign language coursework before their graduation.

Among BGSU undergraduate students several differences existed between class level, enrollment status, gender, race, and college groups.

Difference between Internal Groups:

Freshmen vs. Seniors (differences that are equal or greater than 15%)

- Compared with seniors, freshmen wrote more short papers (< 20 pages per year, and they more often rewrote a paper several times. They were more likely to report that BGSU emphasized providing the support they needed academically and encouraged contact among students from different backgrounds. Their college education so far has contributed quit a bit in their being honest and truthful.
- Seniors, on the other hand, more often made a class presentation, asked questions in class, worked with classmates outside of class preparing assignments, talked about their career plans with a faculty member or advisor, and spent more time working off campus. They were more likely have taken or plan to take an interdisciplinary course, a foreign language course, and a independent study course. More seniors than freshmen reported that their college experience contributed quite a bit to acquiring job or work-related knowledge/skills, and to speaking clearly and effectively.

Full-time vs. Part-time Students (differences that are equal or greater than 15%)

- Full-time undergraduate students were more likely to do community service/volunteer work, rewrite a paper or assignment several times, and read 5 or more assigned books and write 5 or more short papers (< 20 pages) per year. They spent more hours per week participating in co-curricular activities than did part-time students
- Part-time undergraduate students spent more hours per week working and taking care of dependents. They were more likely to report that their college education contributed toward analyzing quantitative problems and acquiring job or work-related knowledge. They were also more likely to describe their relationships with administrative personnel as helpful, considerate, and flexible.

Male vs. Female (differences that are equal or greater than 10%):

- Male undergraduates spent more hours per week participating in co-curricular activities than did female students.
- Female undergraduates more often used e-mail to communicate with others, participated in community service work, and talked about their career plans with a faculty member or advisor. They were more likely to report that they received prompt feedback from faculty on their academic performance and that their college education contributed quite a bit toward their working effectively with others.

Students of Color vs. Caucasian Students (differences that are equal or greater than 20%):

- Students of color more frequently asked questions in class, tutored other students, participated in co-curricular activities, discussed grades/assignments/career plans with a faculty member, received prompt feedback from faculty, and had serious conversations with other students whose race is different from theirs. They were more likely to report that BGSU emphasized providing the support they needed to thrive socially. Students of color spent more time working on campus rather than off campus
- Caucasian Students were more likely to spend more time working off campus instead of on campus.

Students in different Colleges (differences that are equal or greater than 15%):

- Students at Academic Enhancement were least likely to ask questions in class or to contribute to class discussion.
- Undergraduates in Musical Arts were most likely to spend 26 hours or more per week preparing for class, read/write 11 or more assigned books/papers (fewer than 20 pages) a year, and to have done or plan to do independent study. They more often asked questions in class, used e-mail to contact others, talked about their career plans with a faculty member or advisor, discussed ideas from their reading or class with students/family members outside of class, and received prompt feedback from faculty on their academic performance. They were more likely to indicate that BGSU emphasized providing the support they needed academically. Seventy-five percent of the students in Musical Arts gave the answer Definitely Yes to the question "if you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending,?" compared to 26%-47% of students in other colleges.
- Technology students were most likely to indicate that their college education contributed quite a bit to their use of computer and information technology. But they were least likely to read 11 or more assigned books a year and to participate in volunteer work. Forty-one percent of Technology undergraduates spent more than 30 hours a week working off campus compared with less than 10% of the undergraduates in other colleges.

The major limitation of this study is the relatively low response rate (41%), and the overrepresentation of women respondents (71%) compared with about 57% of female undergraduates at BGSU. Some caution must be taken when interpreting the results.

The Office of Institutional Research welcomes feedback concerning this and other studies and how they can continue to be improved.

NSSE ITEM RESPONSES (BGSU ONLY)

In your overall experience at BGSU so far, about how often have you done each of the following?

	Freshmen				Seniors			
	Never	Occas- ionally	Often	Very Often	Never	Occas- ionally	Often	Very Often
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	4	47	34	15	2	32	33	34
Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor or other students	1	25	37	37	7	31	25	37
Made a class presentation	14	61	19	6	2	39	39	21
Rewrote a paper or assignment several times	12	29	34	26	25	55	12	8
Came to class unprepared	35	57	7	1	27	63	7	3
Worked with other students on projects during class	4	48	39	10	6	44	36	14
Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	10	55	29	6	4	38	35	23
Tutored or taught other students	52	37	8	2	40	42	11	7
Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course	63	26	9	2	59	26	10	5
Used an electronic medium (e-mail, list-serve, chat group, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment	22	40	23	14	19	48	22	11
Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	5	42	40	13	1	42	44	14
Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor	17	61	18	5	12	48	23	16
Discussed ideas from your reading or classes with faculty members outside of class	45	44	9	2	34	51	11	4
Received prompt feedback from faculty on your academic performance	11	51	34	5	5	43	42	9
Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations	3	44	38	15	4	41	44	11
Worked with a faculty member on a research project	67	25	6	1	70	20	7	3
Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student-life activities, etc.)	75	18	4	3	59	26	10	4

Discussed ideas from your reading or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	8	43	33	17	7	36	39	18
Had serious conversations w/students w/relig. beliefs, polit. opinions, or pers. values very different from yours	20	37	29	14	18	39	30	13
Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own	22	38	26	14	21	40	27	11

About how much reading and writing did you do during the last academic year at BGSU?

	Freshmen					Seniors				
	None	<5	5-10	11-20	>20	None	<5	5-10	11-20	>20
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings	1	11	40	34	14	2	22	39	22	14
Number of books read on your own (not assigned)	35	51	12	1	1	21	53	14	7	5
Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more	91	7	1	1	1	58	36	4	1	1
Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 20 pages	1	4	26	49	20	2	27	24	31	17

What is the nature of the examinations you have taken at BGSU?

	Freshmen:	Seniors:
Mostly multiple-choice or short-answer , 1	12%	9%
2	23%	17%
3	22%	19%
4	31%	26%
5	8%	10%
6	4%	13%
Mostly essay or open-ended problems, 7	1%	6%

About how much has your coursework up to now emphasized the following mental activities?

	Freshmen				Seniors			
	Very Little	Some	Quite a Bit	Very Much	Very Little	Some	Quite a Bit	Very Much
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Memorizing facts, ideas or methods from your courses and reading so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form	4	24	44	29	7	31	39	23
Analyzing the basic elements of an idea,	5	30	47	18	4	29	47	20

experience or theory								
Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	7	35	39	19	10	35	39	16
Making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods	14	37	37	12	12	39	35	14
Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	11	29	40	20	5	25	34	35

About how many hours do you spend in a typical week doing each of the following?

	Freshmen							Seniors						
	<=5 hours	6-10 hours	11-15 hours	16-20 hours	21-25 hours	26-30 hours	>30 hours	<=5 hours	6-10 hours	11-15 hours	16-20 hours	21-25 hours	26-30 hours	>30 hours
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Preparing for class	8	28	22	19	13	5	6	10	27	20	17	14	5	7
Working for pay on campus	80	9	8	2	1	0	1	75	7	7	7	3	1	1
Working for pay off campus	78	4	6	9	2	1	0	40	9	7	13	11	6	14
Participating in co-curricular activities	63	18	8	5	2	2	2	61	20	8	4	2	3	2
Relaxing and socializing	9	23	23	18	12	7	9	11	30	29	12	8	3	8
Providing care for dependents living with you	91	6	0	1	0	1	2	83	7	2	2	2	0	5

In thinking about your undergraduate program as a whole (including your major or expected major), which of the following have you done or plan to do before you graduate from BGSU?

	Freshmen			Seniors		
	Undecided	No	Yes	Undecided	No	Yes
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment	12	6	83	4	16	80
Community service or volunteer work	16	12	72	5	33	61
Interdisciplinary coursework	48	20	32	10	40	50
Foreign language coursework	19	62	19	3	64	34
Study abroad	30	52	18	3	89	8
Independent study or self-designed major	28	63	9	5	70	25

Culminating senior experience (comprehensive exam, capstone course, thesis, project, etc.)	49	22	30	5	53	42
--	----	----	----	---	----	----

To what extent has your college education contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?

	Freshmen				Seniors			
	Very Little	Some	Quite a Bit	Very Much	Very Little	Some	Quite a Bit	Very Much
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Acquiring a broad general education	1	18	54	26	2	14	38	47
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	14	41	31	14	5	19	34	43
Writing clearly and effectively	4	18	45	33	3	18	45	34
Speaking clearly and effectively	12	33	42	13	2	26	48	25
Thinking critically and analytically	1	26	52	21	2	16	44	39
Analyzing quantitative problems	12	38	39	12	11	28	39	21
Using computing and information technology	7	29	40	23	3	27	34	36
Working effectively with others	3	21	51	24	2	22	39	37
Voting in elections	61	26	7	6	67	23	6	4
Learning effectively on your own	4	24	47	25	3	19	46	33
Understanding yourself	7	24	36	32	9	16	35	39
Understanding people of other ethnic backgrounds	12	32	35	20	16	33	34	16
Being honest and truthful	10	17	44	29	19	28	30	23
Contributing to the welfare of your community	26	38	26	11	28	39	19	14

Thinking about your overall experience at BGSU so far, to what extent does your college emphasize each of the following?

	Freshmen				Seniors			
	Very Little	Some	Quite a Bit	Very Much	Very Little	Some	Quite a Bit	Very Much
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	3	20	48	29	6	22	44	28
Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	4	23	46	27	11	31	37	20
Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, & ethnic backgrounds	18	34	34	15	32	38	20	11
Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	34	35	23	9	53	29	14	4
Emphasize: Providing the support you need to thrive socially	16	37	34	13	32	34	22	13

Again, thinking about your overall experience at BGSU so far, indicate the quality of the relationships among people that are typical at BGSU using the rating scale below:

Relationships with other students	Freshmen:	Seniors:
Unfriendly, Unsupportive, Sense of Alienation, 1	1%	1%
2	3%	4%
3	6%	3%
4	6%	8%
5	23%	22%
6	34%	39%
Friendly, Supportive, Sense of Belonging, 7	27%	23%
Relationships with faculty members	Freshmen:	Seniors:
Unavailable, Unhelpful, Unsympathetic, 1	0%	0%
2	0%	3%
3	7%	10%
4	20%	15%
5	35%	30%
6	29%	32%
Available, Helpful, Sympathetic, 7	9%	11%
Relationships with administrative personnel and offices	Freshmen:	Seniors:
Unhelpful, Inconsiderate, Rigid, 1	2%	9%
2	13%	11%
3	11%	14%
4	23%	21%
5	31%	22%
6	13%	18%
Helpful, Considerate, Flexible, 7	6%	6%

How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at BGSU?

	Freshmen:	Seniors:
Poor	1%	1%
Fair	11%	13%
Good	65%	59%
Excellent	24%	28%

If you could start over again, would you go to BGSU?

	Freshmen:	Seniors:
Definitely No	5%	5%
Probably No	11%	15%
Probably Yes	45%	42%
Definitely Yes	39%	38%

Age

19 or Younger	52%
20 - 23	37%
24 - 29	6%
30 - 39	3%
40 - 55	1%
Over 55	0%

Gender:

Male	29%
Female	71%

What is your racial or ethnic identification?

American Indian/other Native American	0%
Asian or Pacific Islander	1%
Black or African American	4%
White	94%
Mexican American	0%
Puerto Rican	0%
Other Hispanic	0%
Other	2%

Which is your current classification in college?

Freshman first-year	54%
Sophomore	0%
Junior	0%
Senior	46%
Unclassified	0%

Which of the following types of schools have you attended since high school excluding the one you are attending now?

Vocational-technical school	3%
Community College	14%
4-year college other than this one	8%
none	72%
other	3%

Did you begin college at your current institution or elsewhere?

Started here (BGSU) 85%
Started elsewhere 15%

How would you characterize your enrollment during the current academic term?

Full-time 92%
Almost full-time (3-4 courses/term) 4%
About half-time (about 2 courses/term) 3%
Less than half-time (less than 2 courses/term) 2%

Are you a member of a social fraternity or sorority?

Yes 17%
No 83%

Which of the following best describes where you are living this year while attending BGSU?

Dormitory or other campus housing (not fraternity/sorority house) 55%
Residence (house, apartment, etc.) within walking distance of the institution 22%
Residence (house, apartment, etc.) within driving distance 21%
Fraternity or sorority house 2%

With whom are you living while attending BGSU this year?

No one. I live alone. 8%
With one or more roommates who are students attending this college 75%
With family members (parents, spouse, children, other relatives) 14%
With others not attending this college 3%

Which of these fields best describes your major, or your extended major? You may indicate more than one if applicable.

Major	Count*
Agriculture	0
Biological/life sciences (biology, biochemistry, botany, zoology, etc.)	22
Business (accounting, business administration, marketing, management, etc.)	72
Communication (speech, journalism, television/radio, etc.)	40
Computer and information sciences	16
Education	117
Engineering	10
Ethnic, cultural studies, and are studies	2
Foreign languages and literature (French, Spanish, etc.)	6
Health-related fields (nursing, physical therapy, health technology, etc.)	26
Humanities (English, literature, philosophy, religion, etc.)	9
Liberal/general studies	3
Mathematics	6
Multi/interdisciplinary studies (international relations, ecology, environmental studies, etc.)	5
Parks, recreation, leisure studies, sports management	7

Physical sciences (physics, chemistry, astronomy, earth sciences, etc.)	1
Public administration (city management, law enforcement, etc.)	6
Social sciences (anthropology, economics, history, political science, psychology, sociology, etc.)	36
Visual and performing arts (art, music, theater, etc.)	32
Undecided	29
Other	50
* one major checked: 322	
multiple majors checked: 79	