

NSSE
General Education Data

The NSSE is a survey given in the Winter 2005 to a range of students in writing courses that provided a diverse and random sample. The survey is a report of student attitudes and perceptions. The following material is abstracted from the full report which also includes responses to a number of other questions as well as cross –institutional comparisons and standard deviations.

Students seem to identify the institution as making a strong contribution to acquiring a broad general education. More than 80% of seniors recognize the institution to making a significant contribution. Juniors and Seniors show an increase in such recognition over first year students and Sophomores.

Institutional Contribution Acquiring a Broad General Education

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	3.4%	2.7%	2.4%	1.0%
Some	25.8%	24.6%	24.4%	16.5%
Quite a bit	50.2%	55.1%	49.6%	56.9%
Very much	20.6%	17.7%	23.6%	24.5%
Mean	2.88	2.88	2.94	3.05

Writing clearly and effectively

Students, especially Juniors and Seniors, see Ferris as making a significant contribution to their writing clearly and effectively, with 70.5% of seniors seeing the institution as making a significant contribution. We should be concerned that 29.4% of seniors see the institution as only making some or very little contribution. Still consistent with the writing areas goals, most students at least sometimes prepare two or more drafts of a paper or assignment. Most students indicate that they have often written papers that have integrated material from a variety of sources.

Institutional contribution: writing clearly and effectively.

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	6.9%	4.1%	1.6%	2.9%
Some	27.5%	27.9%	29.9%	26.5%
Quite a bit	45.9%	55.8%	45.7%	48.0%
Very much	17.2%	12.2%	22.8%	22.5%
Mean	2.79	2.76	2.90	2.90

Presented two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	10.4%	8.7%	11%	10.8%
Sometimes	31.2%	34.9%	39.4%	38.2%
Often	35.1%	35.6%	24.4%	27.5%
Very often	23.4%	20.8%	35.3%	23.5%
Mean	2.71	2.68	2.64	2.64

Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	3.9%	1.3%	0%	0%
Sometimes	36.5%	33.6%	18.1%	17.6%
Often	43.3%	40.9%	49.6%	49.0%
Very often	16.3%	24.2%	32.3%	33.3%
Mean	2.72	2.88	3.14	3.16

Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
None	82.2%	82.3%	67.2%	60.2%
1-4	10.4%	12.9%	28.8%	28.2%
5-10	4.3%	1.4%	1.6%	8.7%
11-20	1.7%	.7%	.8%	1.9%
More than 20	1.3%	2.7%	1.6%	1.0%
Mean	1.30	1.29	1.41	1.55

Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
None	23.7%	13.6%	11.1%	6.9%
1-4	53.4%	58.5%	51.6%	49.0%
5-10	16.4%	21.8%	31.7%	30.4%
11-20	5.2%	4.8%	3.2%	11.8%
More than 20	1.3%	1.4%	2.4%	2.0%
Mean	2.07	2.22	2.34	2.53

Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
None	2.6%	2.7%	1.6%	1.9%
1-4	30.5%	26.5%	31.0%	28.2%
5-10	38.6%	34.0%	31.7%	28.2%
11-20	20.6%	27.2%	21.4%	26.2%
More than 20	7.7%	9.5%	14.3%	15.5%
Mean	3.00	3.14	3.16	3.25

Speech Communication

Similar to writing, 67.7% of Seniors see Ferris as making a significant contribution to their ability to speak clearly and effectively. There should be some concern that 32.3% see Ferris as making some or very little contribution. Most students also have participated in a class or made a presentation at least sometimes. Some consideration needs to be given to the fact that approximately 50% have only sometimes or never contributed or made a presentation.

Institutional contribution: Speaking clearly and effectively

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	8.6%	4.1%	4.8%	6.9%
Some	29.2%	33.3%	31.2%	25.5%
Quite a bit	45.1%	50.3%	46.4%	41.2%
Very much	17.2%	12.2%	17.6%	26.5%
Mean	2.71	2.71	2.77	2.87

Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussion

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	3.4%	6.0%	3.9%	2.9%
Sometimes	45.4%	42.3%	40.9%	50.5%
Often	35.2%	34.2%	36.2%	27.2%
Very often	15.9%	17.4%	18.9%	19.4%
Mean	2.64	2.63	2.70	2.63

Made a class presentation

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	21.5%	14.8%	4.7%	5.8%
Sometimes	48.5%	49.7%	49.6%	46.6%
Often	24.5%	28.9%	34.6%	34.0%
Very often	5.6%	6.7%	11.0%	13.6%
Mean	2.14	2.28	2.52	2.55

Reading

Ferris is not a strong reading culture. Most students (74.8%) only sometimes or never come to class without completing readings or assignments. However, we do need to have some concern that more than 20% of First Year students and Seniors indicate that often or very often they come to class without completing readings or assignments. Most significantly, except for Seniors, more than 40% of Ferris students declare that they never read a book for their personal enjoyment or academic enrichment.

Come to class without completing readings or assignments

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	20.7%	22.1%	25.4%	16.5%
Sometimes	56.5%	61.7%	57.9%	58.3%
Often	19.4%	12.1%	12.7%	18.4%
Very often	3.4%	4.0%	4.0%	6.8%
Mean	2.06	1.98	1.95	2.16

Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
None	3.9%	1.4%	3.2%	2.9%
1-4	33.2%	40.1%	39.6%	34.0%
5-10	37.1%	41.5%	33.3%	33.0%
11-20	14.2%	10.2%	16.7%	17.5%
More than 20	11.6%	6.8%	7.1%	12.6%
Mean	2.97	2.81	2.85	3.03

Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
None	42.5%	46.3%	40.5%	30.1%
1-4	33.2%	42.9%	45.2%	50.5%
5-10	9.9%	8.2%	7.1%	9.7%
11-20	3.4%	2.7%	7.1%	8.7%
More than 20	2.6%	0%	0%	1.0%
Mean	1.82	1.67	1.81	2.00

Cultural Enrichment

While the available NSSE data does not directly address the objectives of Cultural Enrichment, there are some grounds for concern. While students do recognize an institutional emphasis on attending campus events, the fact that more than 1/3 of Ferris students indicated they never attended an art exhibit, gallery, play, dance or theater performance may be a reason for concern. While most students indicate that Ferris played some role in promoting self understanding, close to 50% see Ferris as playing only some or very little role in this area. Similarly more than 50% see Ferris as playing only some or very little role in their developing a personal code of values and ethics.

Institutional emphasis: Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	6.5%	8.9%	13.5%	12.6%
Some	31.9%	38.4%	33.3%	35.0%
Quite a bit	43.5%	41.8%	38.9%	39.8%
Very much	18.1%	11.0%	14.3%	12.6%
Mean	2.73	2.55	2.54	2.52

Attended an art exhibit, gallery, play, dance or other theater performance

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	38.6%	39.5%	44.1%	36.9%
Sometimes	45.5%	47.6%	35.4%	51.5%
Often	14.2%	10.9%	13.4%	7.8%
Very often	1.7%	2.0%	7.1%	3.9%
Mean	1.79	1.76	1.83	1.79

In contrast, exercised or participated in physical fitness activities:

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	11.2%	14.3%	14.2%	12.6%
Sometimes	27.0%	26.5%	22.8%	35.0%
Often	27.9%	29.9%	29.1%	23.3%
Very often	33.9%	29.3%	33.9%	29.1%
Mean	2.85	2.74	2.83	2.69

Institutional contribution: Understanding yourself

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	16.7%	11.0%	18.4%	18.8%
Some	29.2%	36.3%	28.8%	37.6%
Quite a bit	35.2%	41.1%	37.6%	25.7%
Very much	18.9%	11.6%	15.2%	17.8%
Mean	2.56	2.53	2.50	2.43

Institutional contribution: Developing a personal code of values and ethics

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	22.9%	17.7%	19.8%	20.6%
Some	40.3%	40.8%	36.5%	34.3%
Quite a bit	24.2%	34.0%	31.7%	35.3%
Very much	12.6%	7.5%	11.9%	9.8%
Mean	2.26	2.31	2.36	2.34

R.E.G.

While Ferris is having an impact on student response to diversity, the institutional effort might be in need of enhancement. It is heartening that there is steady improvement in the number of students who have spoken with and would include the perspective of those different from themselves. However, more than 50% of students saw Ferris as having only some or very little emphasis on contact among students from different economic backgrounds and similarly slightly more than 50% saw Ferris as making only some or very little contribution to their understanding of people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Institutional emphasis: Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds.

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very Little	16.5%	24.0%	23.6%	16.5%
Some	36.8%	39.7%	37.0%	42.7%
Quite a big	30.7%	30.8%	29.1%	29.1%
Very Much	16.0%	5.5%	10.2%	11.7%
Mean	2.46	2.18	2.26	2.36

Institutional contribution: Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	24.9%	19.2%	17.7%	14.7%
Some	35.5%	45.9%	45.2%	37.3%
Quite a bit	28.8%	26.0%	25.8%	36.3%
Very much	12.9%	8.9%	11.3%	11.8%
Mean	2.30	2.25	2.31	2.45

Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments.

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	10.0%	13.4%	11.0%	9.7%
Sometimes	54.5%	51.7%	48.8%	47.6%
Often	24.7%	26.8%	23.6%	31.1%
Very often	10.8%	8.1%	16.5%	11.7%
Mean	2.36	2.30	2.46	2.45

Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own.

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	30.5%	27.5%	24.6%	14.6%
Sometimes	36.1%	41.6%	36.5%	42.7%
Often	25.8%	22.8%	21.4%	21.4%
Very often	7.7%	8.1%	17.5%	21.4%
Mean	2.11	2.11	2.32	2.50

Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values.

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	18.0%	16.1%	16.7%	7.8%
Sometimes	42.5%	47.7%	29.4%	41.7%
Often	29.6%	24.8%	32.5%	25.2%
Very often	9.9%	11.4%	21.4%	25.2%
Mean	2.31	2.32	2.59	2.68

Global Consciousness

While NSSE data does not directly address global consciousness, surprisingly more than a 1/3 of Juniors and Seniors have had some foreign language coursework.

However, only 12.6% of Seniors have engaged in study abroad. The institution needs to consider how much of an emphasis on study abroad is needed given our competitors and the increasingly international character of all marketplaces.

Foreign language coursework

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Have not decided	20.8%	17.9%	13.5%	3.9%
Do not plan to do	41.6%	48.3%	40.5%	47.6%
Plan to do	19.9%	9.7%	12.7%	10.7%
Done	17.7%	24.1%	33.3%	37.9%

Study abroad

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Have not decided	26.3%	26.2%	18.1%	11.7%
Do not plan to do	49.1%	57.2%	63.0%	67.0%
Plan to do	22.0%	10.3%	14.2%	8.7%
Done	2.6%	6.2%	4.7%	12.6%

Life Long Learning

Computer competency

Students recognize a strong emphasis on Ferris campus on computing and information technology and believe Ferris has made a contribution to their skills in this area. Most Seniors have used e-mail often or very often to communicate with their instructors. However, there is some reason for concern that 40.8% only sometimes or never used the internet, chat, or other electronic forums to complete a class assignment. Given the wording of the question, it is hard to determine, however, whether the respondents consistently considered WebCT as being included by the question.

Institutional emphasis: Using computers in academic work

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	4.3%	5.5%	4.7%	1.9%
Some	20.3%	20.5%	18.9%	16.5%
Quite a bit	50.2%	55.1%	49.6%	56.9%
Very much	20.6%	17.7%	23.6%	24.5%
Mean	3.03	3.03	3.05	3.21

Institutional contribution: Using computing and information technology

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	7.3%	3.4%	6.3%	5.9%
Some	26.2%	25.9%	29.4%	14.9%
Quite a bit	39.1%	46.9%	34.9%	46.5%
Very much	27.5%	23.8%	29.4%	32.7%
Mean	2.87	2.91	2.87	3.06

Used an electronic medium (listserve, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc) to discuss or complete an assignment

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	23.2%	20.8%	18.1	13.6%
Sometimes	36.9%	27.5%	29.1%	27.2%
Often	23.6%	32.9%	26.0%	21.4%
Very often	16.3%	18.8%	26.8%	37.9%
Mean	2.33	2.50	2.61	2.83

Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	18.5%	10.7%	1.6%	3.9%
Sometimes	41.6%	28.9%	32.6%	24.3%
Often	27.9%	39.6%	42.9%	41.7%
Very often	12.0%	20.8%	23.0%	30.1%
Mean	2.33	2.70	2.87	2.98

Critical Thinking

Students identify Ferris as making a significant contribution in their ability to think critically and analytically, and to a slightly lesser extent, solve complex real-world problems. It is heartening that more than 60% of Seniors saw Ferris courses as quite a bit or very much emphasizing higher order critical thinking such as synthesizing, making

judgments, or applying theories. However, there may be some reason for concern that more than 50% of students reported that only sometimes or never did they examine their own views. Similarly approximately 50% of Ferris students only sometimes or never learned something that changed their previously held views.

Institutional contribution: Thinking critically and analytically

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	3.9%	3.4%	1.6%	2.9%
Some	24.5%	25.9%	24.4%	19.6%
Quite a bit	49.4%	52.4%	47.2%	47.1%
Very much	22.3%	18.4%	26.8%	30.4%
Mean	2.90	2.86	2.99	3.05

Institutional contribution: Solving complex real-world problems

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	18.0%	15.6%	9.5%	12.7%
Some	35.2%	40.8%	38.9%	31.4%
Quite a bit	31.8%	33.3%	36.5%	41.2%
Very much	15.0%	10.2%	15.1%	14.7%
Mean	2.44	2.38	2.57	2.58

Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussion

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	9.5%	7.4%	4.7%	2.9%
Sometimes	50.0%	48.3%	45.7%	44.7%
Often	33.2%	37.6%	38.6%	38.8%
Very often	7.3%	6.7%	11.0%	13.6%
Mean	2.38	2.44	2.56	2.63

Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	21.5%	23.8%	21.4%	9.7%
Sometimes	51.5%	46.9%	39.7%	43.7%
Often	20.6%	22.4%	27.8%	34.0%
Very often	6.4%	6.8%	11.1%	12.6%
Mean	2.12	2.12	2.29	2.50

Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	16.3%	15.1%	11.0%	6.8%
Sometimes	45.1%	51.4%	40.2%	42.7%
Often	31.3%	26.0%	31.5%	33.0%
Very often	7.3%	7.5%	17.3%	17.5%
Mean	2.30	2.26	2.55	2.61

Learned something that changed the way you understood an issue or concept

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	8.2%	6.1%	5.6%	7.8%
Sometimes	51.1%	51.0%	42.9%	44.7%
Often	31.3%	32.0%	38.9%	36.9%
Very often	9.4%	10.9%	12.7%	10.7%
Mean	2.42	2.48	2.59	2.50

Coursework emphasized MEMORIZING facts, ideas or methods from your courses and readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form.

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	2.2%	2.7%	7.1%	2.9%
Some	22.4%	29.5%	20.6%	19.4%
Quite a bit	48.7%	45.6%	34.9%	44.7%
Very much	26.7%	22.1%	37.3%	33.0%
Mean	3.00	2.87	3.02	3.08

Coursework emphasized: ANALYZING the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	3.4%	3.4%	3.2%	1.9%
Some	22.8%	24.2%	20.6%	21.4%
Quite a bit	54.3%	55.0%	39.7%	42.7%
Very much	19.4%	17.4%	36.5%	34.0%
Mean	2.90	2.87	3.10	3.09

Coursework emphasized SYNTHESIZING and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	5.6%	5.4%	4.0%	5.8%
Some	40.5%	35.6%	31.0%	29.1%
Quite a bit	40.5%	51.0%	43.7%	44.7%
Very much	13.4%	8.1%	21.4%	20.4%
Mean	2.62	2.62	2.83	2.80

Coursework emphasized MAKING JUDGMENTS about the values of information, arguments, or methods such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	6.0%	4.7%	4.0%	4.9%
Some	37.3%	37.2%	38.4%	33.0%
Quite a bit	42.5%	44.6%	32.0%	41.7%
Very much	14.2%	11.5%	25.6%	20.4%
Mean	2.65	2.65	2.79	2.78

Coursework emphasized APPLYING theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	2.1%	2.0%	2.4%	2.9%
Some	24.9%	24.8%	17.5%	21.4%
Quite a bit	48.9%	51.7%	39.7%	42.7%
Very much	24.0%	21.5%	40.5%	33.0%
Mean	2.95	2.93	3.18	3.06

Working Collaboratively

Ferris is an institution that is seen by students as fostering collaborative skills.

76.5% of Seniors saw Ferris as contributing significantly to their ability to work effectively with others. Consistently more than 60% of students equally report working with others on projects during class either quite a bit or very much.

Institutional contribution: Working effectively with others

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	6.4%	6.8%	4.8%	3.9%
Some	27.5%	21.2%	23.8%	19.6%
Quite a bit	43.3%	54.8%	49.2%	46.1%
Very much	22.7%	17.1%	22.2%	30.4%
Mean	2.82	2.82	2.89	3.03

Worked with others on projects DURING CLASS

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	8.6%	2.0%	3.1%	1.9%
Sometimes	41.2%	35.6%	37.8%	35.9%
Often	35.6%	41.6%	40.9%	40.8%
Very often	14.6%	20.8%	18.1%	21.4%
Mean	2.56	2.81	2.74	2.82

Worked with classmates OUTSIDE OF CLASS to prepare class assignments

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Never	20.6%	11.4%	9.5%	3.9%
Sometimes	45.1%	43.0%	35.7%	35.0%
Often	27.5%	36.2%	40.5%	38.8%
Very often	6.9%	9.4%	14.3%	22.3%
Mean	2.21	2.44	2.60	2.80

Independent Learner

Most students see Ferris as contributing significantly to their ability to learn effectively on their own. However, some consideration may need to be given to the approximately 30-40% of students who saw Ferris as only making some or very little contribution to their ability to learn effectively on their own.

Institutional contribution: Learning effectively on your own

	First Year	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Very little	8.6%	6.8%	7.1%	3.9%
Some	30.6%	35.4%	34.9%	27.5%
Quite a bit	36.6%	42.2%	40.5%	48.0%
Very much	24.1%	15.6%	17.5%	20.6%
Mean	2.76	2.67	2.68	2.85