

A photograph of a student walking through a field of colorful flowers at Ferris State University. The student is wearing a dark blue cap and a backpack, walking from right to left. The field is filled with a variety of flowers in shades of red, orange, yellow, and purple. In the background, other students and a building are visible, though slightly out of focus.

Ferris State University Academic Senate Retreat National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

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National Survey of Student Engagement Introduction

- Assess and illustrate characteristics of student engagement with the University
- Indicators of effective educational practice:
 1. Active & Collaborative Learning (ACL)
 2. Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE)
 3. Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)
 4. Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)
 5. Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)



National Survey of Student Engagement Method

- Random sample of freshmen (N = 636) and senior students (N = 682) enrolled on all campuses (N = 1,318)
- Administered during semester 2009; email invitation, one follow-up, and three reminders
- Data were reviewed for statistical and practical significance¹
- Results included comparative data drawn from similar Master M Carnegie Classification and six peer institutions²

¹Issac, S. & Michael, W. B. (1995). *Handbook in research and evaluation* (3rd ed.). San Diego, CA: Educational and Industrial Testing Services.

²Peer comparison group institutions included: Central Michigan University, Eastern Michigan University, University of Michigan-Flint, University of Toledo, Western Michigan University, and Wright State University.



National Survey of Student Engagement Method (cont'd)

- Results and preliminary report shared by Dr. R. Teahen in multiple settings and with faculty and administrators
- Report authored by Drs. R. Underhile, T. Stanislav, R. Cullen, and R. Teahen with member checks³ from all small group facilitation leaders

³ Member checking is method of increasing trustworthiness of data reporting. It is the process of having multiple participants in the project read, review, and make suggestions for improving accuracy of report drafts. For more information, see, Stake. R. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.



Results

- Positive Engagement
 - Active & Collaborative Learning
 - Freshmen students: class presentation assignments
 - Seniors: group activities; senior transition courses
 - Student-Faculty Interaction
 - Freshmen students: more slightly more likely to discuss career plans with faculty and or advisors
 - Seniors: more likely to discuss grades or assignments with faculty



Results

- Negative Engagement
 - Enriching Educational Experiences
 - Freshmen students: overall; activities designed to enhance one's spirituality
 - Seniors: overall; having serious conversations with students from cultures different than their own; engaging in foreign language coursework
 - Level of Academic Challenge
 - Freshmen students: fewer assigned textbooks or book-length course packs; being assigned papers between 5 and 19 pages in length
 - Supportive Campus Environment
 - While not practically significant, 70% of freshmen and 75% of seniors report that the University could be more supportive of academic success; administrative processes were prominently listed in open-field responses (e.g., financial aid, communication, enforcement of housing policies, academic advising, and curriculum planning)



Considerations

- Explicit learning outcomes
- Integration of technical with communication skills
- Increased opportunities for externships
- Additional complex and lengthy reading and writing assignments
- Additional professional development and or collaborative opportunities for faculty to assign and grade complex reading/writing assignments
- Increased opportunities for students to learn about cultures different than theirs
- Future administrations of the NSSE should consider site-specific opportunities
- Self-selected peer institutions may be reconsidered
- Academic planning and student-facing administrative processes should be reviewed for quality and accessibility





Questions & Discussion

