



# National Survey of Student Engagement

## Executive Snapshot 2009

Western Michigan University

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### Dear Colleague:

This document presents some key findings from your institution's participation in the 2009 National Survey of Student Engagement. We hope you can use this information to stimulate discussion on your campus about how to improve the undergraduate experience at Western Michigan University.

Sincerely,  
Alexander C. McCormick  
Director, National Survey of Student Engagement

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### What Does NSSE Tell Us About Improvements in Student Engagement Over Time?

From the outset, one of NSSE's principal goals has been to provide participating colleges and universities with diagnostic, actionable information that can be used to improve undergraduate education. In recognition of NSSE's 10th anniversary, the feature story in *NSSE Annual Results 2009* is about positive trends in student engagement.

We selected a subset of 2009 participating institutions with multi-year data, to determine whether any campuses showed trends of improving performance on NSSE's Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice or in the proportion of students participating in particular high-impact practices. As detailed in *NSSE Annual Results 2009*, we found that a considerable number of institutions showed real improvement. We were also gratified to find that patterns of diminished performance were rare.

These encouraging results, from a variety of institutional types and sizes, suggest that systematic improvement efforts at some institutions have paid off. In the coming years, we will continue our program of research on educational quality and improvement by conducting in-depth inquiry into the improvement process at selected institutions, so others can benefit from what these successful campuses have learned.

### Have Student Engagement Results at Western Michigan University Changed Over Time?

We encourage institutions with results from multiple NSSE administrations to examine patterns of change in their student engagement results. Some may look for changes in the nature of student engagement, some will investigate possible trends, while others will be keen to evaluate the impact of specific campus initiatives. The adjacent table indicates what engagement data are available for these analyses at your institution, including Faculty (FSSE) and Beginning College (BCSSE) results.

#### Engagement Data Available for WMU

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NSSE	'02	'03	'06	'08	'09
FSSE	'04	'06	'08	'09	
BCSSE	'07				

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As the number of multi-year participants has grown, we have developed new resources to help our users analyze their results over time. Consider the following:

- *Multi-Year Data Analysis Guide* ([www.nsse.iub.edu/links/mydag](http://www.nsse.iub.edu/links/mydag))
- *Multi-Year Benchmark Report* (for institutions that have participated at least twice)
- Multi-Year Data Analysis Webinar ([www.nsse.iub.edu/webinars/archives.cfm](http://www.nsse.iub.edu/webinars/archives.cfm))
- Copies of your results and data files from past administrations can be accessed through the NSSE Institution Interface ([www.websurv.indiana.edu/cpr/login.cfm](http://www.websurv.indiana.edu/cpr/login.cfm))

## NSSE 2009 Question Comparisons

By examining individual NSSE questions, you can better understand what contributes to your institution's overall benchmark scores. This section features the five questions on which your first-year and senior students scored the highest and the five questions on which they scored the lowest, relative to students at the indicated comparison group (the group's members are listed in your *NSSE 2009 Selected Comparison Groups* report).

While we chose these questions to represent the largest differences (in percentage points), they may not be the most important to your institutional mission or current program or policy goals. We encourage you to review your NSSE *Institutional Report 2009* for additional results of particular interest to your campus.

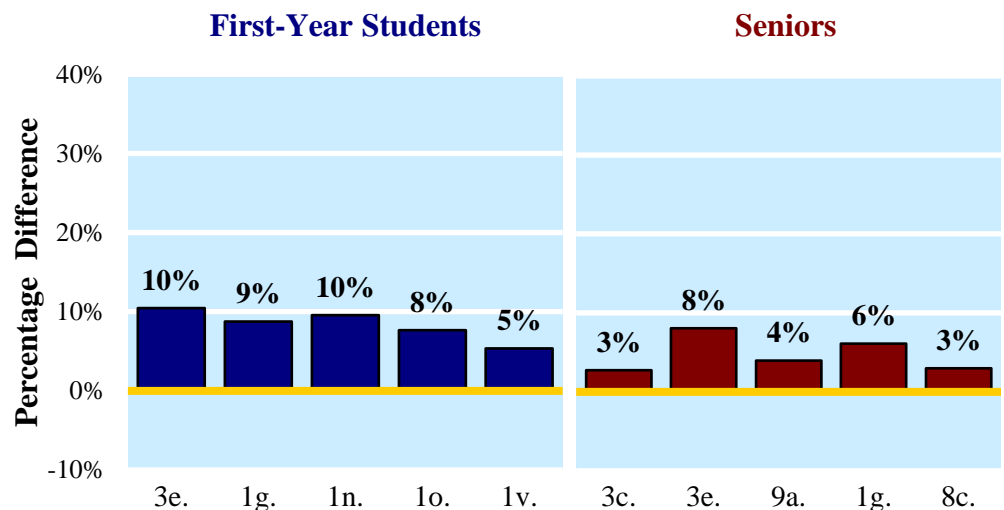
### Highest Performing Benchmark Items Relative to High Research

### Comparison Groups

Ques- tion	Bench- mark <sup>1</sup>	Percent of students who...	WMU	High Research	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2009
<b>First-Year Students</b>						
3e.	LAC	Wrote more than 10 papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages	<b>35%</b>	25%	30%	31%
1g.	ACL	Worked with other students on projects during class <sup>2</sup>	<b>51%</b>	42%	44%	45%
1n.	SFI	Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor <sup>2</sup>	<b>55%</b>	46%	49%	52%
1o.	SFI	Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor <sup>2</sup>	<b>35%</b>	27%	31%	32%
1v.	EEE	Had serious conversations w/ students of other relig./politics/values <sup>2</sup>	<b>59%</b>	53%	56%	56%
<b>Seniors</b>						
3c.	LAC	Wrote at least one paper or report of 20 pages or more	<b>47%</b>	44%	50%	50%
3e.	LAC	Wrote more than 10 papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages	<b>38%</b>	30%	31%	32%
9a.	LAC	Spent more than 10 hours/week preparing for class (studying, etc.)	<b>62%</b>	58%	59%	59%
1g.	ACL	Worked with other students on projects during class <sup>2</sup>	<b>53%</b>	47%	48%	49%
8c.	SCE	Positively rated their relationships with admin. personnel and offices <sup>3</sup>	<b>53%</b>	50%	52%	55%

The adjacent figure, based on the table above, displays the questions on which your students compare most favorably with those in your selected comparison group named:

High Research





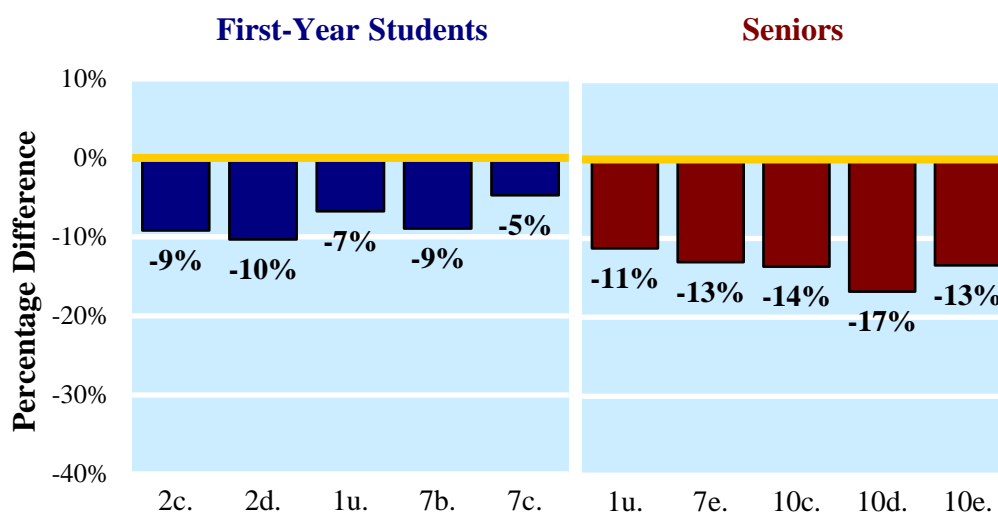
## Lowest Performing Benchmark Items Relative to High Research

### Comparison Groups

Ques- tion	Bench- mark <sup>1</sup>	Percent of students who...	WMU	High Research	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2009
<b>First-Year Students</b>						
2c.	LAC	Said courses emphasized <b>synthesizing</b> ideas into new complex relationships <sup>4</sup>	<b>62%</b>	71%	70%	70%
2d.	LAC	Said courses emphasized <b>making judgments</b> about the value of information <sup>4</sup>	<b>59%</b>	70%	69%	70%
1u.	EEE	Had serious conversations w/ students of another race or ethnicity <sup>2</sup>	<b>48%</b>	55%	52%	52%
7b.	EEE	Participated in community service or volunteer work	<b>32%</b>	41%	39%	40%
7c.	EEE	Participated in a learning community	<b>16%</b>	21%	20%	18%
<b>Seniors</b>						
1u.	EEE	Had serious conversations w/ students of another race or ethnicity <sup>2</sup>	<b>48%</b>	59%	56%	55%
7e.	EEE	Completed foreign language coursework	<b>33%</b>	46%	42%	41%
10c.	EEE	Said the institution substantially encourages contacts among diverse peers <sup>4</sup>	<b>38%</b>	52%	49%	51%
10d.	SCE	Said the institution substantially helps students cope w/ non-acad. matters <sup>4</sup>	<b>13%</b>	30%	26%	27%
10e.	SCE	Said the institution provides substantial support for students' social needs <sup>4</sup>	<b>27%</b>	40%	36%	37%

The adjacent figure, based on the table above, displays the questions on which your students compared least favorably with those in your selected comparison group named:

High Research



#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> LAC=Level of Academic Challenge; ACL=Active and Collaborative Learning; SFI=Student-Faculty Interaction; EEE=Enriching Educational Experiences; SCE=Supportive Campus Environment

<sup>2</sup> Combination of students responding 'very often' or 'often'

<sup>3</sup> Rated at least 5 on a 7-point scale

<sup>4</sup> Combination of students responding 'very much' or 'quite a bit'

## Respondent Characteristics

The adjacent table displays your number of respondents, response rate, and sampling error by class. Sampling error is an estimate of the margin by which the true percentage of your students may differ from the reported percentage on a given item (because not all of your students completed surveys).

	N	Resp. Rate	Sampling Error
First-Year Students	526	20%	+/-4%
Seniors	753	29%	+/-3.1%

## Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice

To represent the multi-dimensional nature of student engagement, NSSE developed five indicators of effective educational practice. These "benchmarks" are created from clusters of NSSE questions that best represent these practices.

The table below summarizes key benchmark results for your institution and institutions in your selected comparison groups. The '+' symbol indicates that your institution's score is higher than the respective comparison group ( $p < .05$ ), the '-' symbol indicates a score lower than the comparison group, and a blank space indicates no significant difference. For additional details, review your *NSSE 2009 Benchmark Comparisons* report.

		Comparison Groups			
		WMU	High Research	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2009
<i>Class</i>					
<b>Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)</b>					
<i>How challenging is your institution's intellectual and creative work?</i>	First-Year	<b>52</b>		-	-
	Senior	<b>55</b>		-	-
<b>Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)</b>					
<i>Are your students actively involved in their learning, individually and working with others?</i>	First-Year	<b>41</b>			-
	Senior	<b>49</b>	-	-	-
<b>Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)</b>					
<i>Do your students work with faculty members inside and outside the classroom?</i>	First-Year	<b>33</b>			
	Senior	<b>38</b>	-	-	-
<b>Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE)</b>					
<i>Do your students take advantage of complementary learning opportunities?</i>	First-Year	<b>26</b>	-	-	-
	Senior	<b>34</b>	-	-	-
<b>Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)</b>					
<i>Do your students feel the institution is committed to their success?</i>	First-Year	<b>60</b>			
	Senior	<b>53</b>	-	-	-

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## For More Information

A comprehensive summary of all results is contained in your institutional report, which we sent in August to Kristin Lagerquist, Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Reports used in this Executive Snapshot included the: NSSE 2009 Mean Comparisons, Frequency Distributions, Benchmark Comparisons, and Respondent Characteristics.



## National Survey of Student Engagement

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