

LHUP Student Engagement Results of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

Introduction and Overview

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), *The College Student Report*, gathers information from first-year and senior students regarding their participation or engagement in various educational activities. Research suggests that student involvement or engagement in the academic and social systems of the institution is a key determinant of educational outcomes (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Academic, non-academic, classroom, and out-of-class experiences may enhance student learning outcomes (Kuh, et al., 1994). NSSE assesses the extent to which first-year and senior students engage in educational practices that tend to facilitate student learning and development.

In Spring 2005, Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania (LHUP) participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). The survey was given to a sample of LHUP first-year and senior students to assess their participation in educational practices such as academic and intellectual experiences, reading and writing, homework, and enriching out-of-class experiences. The survey also asked about student perceptions of the quality of relationships with faculty, staff, and other students, academic advising, and satisfaction with the institution.

From the LHUP sample, 127 first-year students and 138 senior students completed the survey for a 41 percent overall response rate. As shown in Table 1, the majority of respondents were white, female, and full-time. Most first-year respondents lived on-campus (78%) while most senior respondents lived off-campus (83%). Forty-two percent (42%) of first-year students and forty-three percent (43%) of senior students chose to complete the paper questionnaire versus using the World Wide Web.

Overall, LHUP's first-year students reported that they were slightly less involved in educational activities than first-year students at other Master's institutions and all NSSE respondent institutions. Senior students reported that they were slightly more involved in educational activities than senior students at other institutions. LHUP seniors were particularly involved in academic and intellectual experiences and campus events.

Table 1
LHUP Respondent
Characteristics

	First-Year Students	Senior Students
Response Rate		
Overall	41%	
By Class	38%	43%
Mode of Completion		
Paper	42%	43%
Web	58%	57%
Gender		
Female	75%	73%
Male	25%	27%
Race		
White	85%	90%
Non-White	15%	10%
Class Level	48%	52%
Enrollment Status		
Full-time	97%	92%
Part-time	3%	8%
Place of Residence		
On-Campus	78%	17%
Off-Campus	22%	83%

Eighty-six percent (86%) of LHUP senior students worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources.

In the first year, LHUP students encountered more coursework that emphasized memorization, but in the senior year, students' coursework included more analyzing, synthesizing, and applying ideas, theories, and concepts.

Thirty-six percent (36%) of LHUP senior students never participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course.

Most Frequently and Least Frequently Reported College Activities

Table 2 provides LHUP data relating to the amount of student engagement in educational experiences. The first part of Table 2 includes most frequently reported activities for LHUP first-year and senior students. According to the NSSE Institutional Report, a “substantial amount of engagement” is defined to be at least 60 percent of all students reporting “often” or “very often.”

The second part of Table 2 represents least frequently reported activities for LHUP first-year and senior students. NSSE defines “least frequent activities” as those where the percentage of students responding “never” exceeds 35 percent.

<u>Most Frequent Activities</u>	First-Year Students Responding Often or Very Often	Senior Students Responding Often or Very Often
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussion	64%	80%
Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	77%	86%
Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor	71%	88%
Coursework emphasized memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from courses and readings	78%	49%
Coursework emphasized analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory	78%	84%
Coursework emphasizes: Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	74%	83%
<u>Least Frequent Activities</u>	First-Year Students Responding Never	Senior Students Responding Never
Tutored or taught other students	60%	45%
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty outside of class	42%	24%
Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (i.e., committees, orientation, student life activities)	64%	32%
Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course	69%	36%
Wrote papers or reports of 20 pages or more	84%	52%

Participation in Educationally Enriching Activities

Table 3
Seniors Who Participated in Various Educationally Enriching Activities

<u>Activity</u>	LHUP Responses	Master's Responses	All NSSE Responses
Practicum, internship, field experience	88%	77%	77%
Community service/volunteer work	77%	75%	76%
Research with faculty member	25%	29%	27%
Learning community	42%	35%	34%
Foreign language	33%	49%	53%
Study abroad	18%	21%	25%
Independent study/self-designed	19%	28%	31%
Culminating senior experience	44%	63%	65%

Table 3 provides data relating to LHUP senior students' participation in educationally enriching activities as compared to seniors at Master's institutions and all institutions completing the NSSE survey.

LHUP students participated significantly more in practicum, internships, and field experiences, but significantly less in foreign language coursework, independent study, and culminating senior experiences than all NSSE respondents.

Areas with Significantly Higher Average Responses

LHUP senior students participated in class discussion, engaged in co-curricular activities, and seemed challenged by examinations significantly more than senior students at Masters' institutions and all NSSE respondent institutions. LHUP senior students worked with faculty outside of class and had positive relationships with both faculty and administration.

Senior students were integrated in the social sphere of the institution with high attendance at campus events and activities. As compared to all respondents, LHUP seniors worked more hours on campus, less hours off-campus, and spent more time preparing for class.

Senior students expressed greater satisfaction with their educational experience than students at other Master's and all NSSE institutions.

Table 4
Areas for Seniors with Significantly Higher Average Responses than from Master's Institutions and all NSSE 2005 Respondents

	LHUP Responses	Master's Responses	All NSSE Responses
Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course (1=never, 4=very often)	2.08	1.80	1.76
Used e-mail to contact an instructor (1=never, 4=very often)	3.45	3.26	3.32
Talked about my career plans with a faculty member or advisor (1=never, 4=very often)	2.80	2.51	2.53
Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (i.e., committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.) (1=never, 4=very often)	2.17	1.89	1.93
Exercised or participated in physical activities (1= never, 4=very often)	2.87	2.65	2.74
Participated in practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment (1=very little, 7=very often)	0.62	0.56	0.58
Participated in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together (0=no, 1=yes)	0.37	0.27	0.27
Quality of relationships with administrative personnel (1=unavailable, unhelpful, 7=available, helpful)	4.74	4.67	4.63
Time spent preparing for class (1=0 hrs/wk, 8=>30 hrs/wk)	4.36	3.94	4.09
Working on campus (1=0 hrs/wk, 8=>30 hrs/wk)	2.23	1.80	1.90
Participating in co-curricular activities (1=0 hrs/wk, 8=>30 hrs/wk)	2.27	2.04	2.19
Attending campus events and activities (1=very little, 4=very much)	2.77	2.56	2.63
Working effectively with others (1=very little, 4=very much)	3.30	3.20	3.18
Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution? (1=poor, 4=excellent)	3.09	2.92	2.94

Areas with Significantly Lower Average Responses

The areas for LHUP senior students with significantly lower average responses than senior students at Master's and all other NSSE respondent institutions are included in Table 5. LHUP senior students were less likely than students nationally to tutor fellow students or participate in spiritually enriching activities. Related to coursework, seniors were less likely to have a foreign language, an independent study, prepare two or more drafts of a paper, or use an electronic medium to complete an assignment. However, the data indicate that LHUP students spent less time working off-campus, but participated in more campus activities (as shown in Table 4). LHUP senior students seem to be more engaged in the academic and social systems at the University than students from similar institutions and all NSSE respondent institutions.

Table 5
Areas for Seniors with Significantly Lower Average Responses than from Master's Institutions and all NSSE 2005 Respondents

	LHUP Responses	Master's Responses	All NSSE Responses
Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment (1=never, 4=very often)	2.36	2.55	2.51
Tutored or taught other students (1=never, 4=very often)	1.80	1.90	1.94
Used an electronic medium to complete an assignment (1=never, 4=very often)	2.66	2.81	2.82
Participated in activities that enhance you spiritually (1=never, 4=very often)	1.90	2.26	2.23
Foreign language coursework (0=no, 1=yes)	0.29	0.41	0.46
Independent study or self-designed major (0=no, 1=yes)	0.10	0.20	0.23
Working for pay off campus (1=0 hrs/wk, 8=>30 hrs/wk)	2.79	3.86	3.50

Summary Comments

First-year students tend to be less engaged in various educational activities than students nationally, however, as students progress to the senior year, they report higher levels of engagement in several categories than students at other Master's institutions and for all NSSE respondents.

Students reported that LHUP contributed to their educational and personal growth related to acquiring a general education and work-related knowledge, developing communication skills, thinking critically, and working with others. The University was less successful at encouraging students to participate in community and civic activities. Students also suggested that the institutional environment is fairly supportive and encouraging, but could improve in helping students cope with non-academic responsibilities. Overall, LHUP students reported that they are satisfied with their educational experiences.



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