NSSE Results Highlights
IPFW & NSSE Institutions
Spring 2006

What is the NSSE?

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) assesses the extent of student engagement in effective educational practices and provides insight into what they are gaining from their college experience. According to the NSSE, it reports “student behaviors that are highly correlated with many desirable learning and personal development outcomes of college education.” The NSSE survey is organized around five Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice: Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interaction, Enriching Educational Experiences and Supportive Campus Environment

Who Participated?

- 762 or about 29% of first-year students and 441 or about 37% of seniors responded for a total response rate of 31%  
- The overall sampling error was quite low at 2.3%  
- 79% of respondents were full-time while the full-time student population was 63%  
- 66% of respondents were female while the female student population was 56%  
- The race/ethnicity of respondents was representative of the student population  
- No age comparison between respondents and the population was possible due to differences in institutional research and the NSSE classifications

In general, full-time and female students were over-represented among those responding to the NSSE.

What Did We Learn?

IPFW students generally responded comparably to students from its strategic planning peers, less comparably to its Carnegie peers (master comprehensive institutions) and even less to all campuses participating in the NSSE. In other words, levels of statistical significance and the effect sizes are smallest, overall, when IPFW students responses are compared to its strategic planning benchmark institutions and greatest when they are compared to all institutions participating in the NSSE.

Level of Academic Challenge. Academic challenge is measured by 9 survey questions centering on coursework, class preparation and the campus environment. Compared to all institutions participating in the NSSE:

- IPFW students read fewer assigned texts
- First-year students spend less time preparing for class
Active and Collaborative Learning. Active and collaborative learning is measured by 7 survey items related to in-class activities, working with classmates and community-based learning. Compared to all institutions participating in the NSSE:

- First-year students make more class presentations and seniors make fewer
- First-year students worked with others on projects during class more
- IPFW students worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments less
- First-year students participated in community-based projects as part of a regular course less

Student-Faculty Interaction. Interaction with faculty is measured by 6 survey questions. These questions focus on interactions with faculty outside the classroom. Compared to all institutions participating in the NSSE:

- IPFW students work with faculty members on activities other than coursework less
- IPFW students received feedback on academic performance comparably promptly

Enriching Educational Experiences. Enriching educational experiences is measured by 11 items related to interactions with diverse others, use of technology to facilitate collaboration and opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge such as internships and capstone courses. Compared to all institutions participating in the NSSE:

- First-year students have fewer conversations with students from a different race or ethnicity and with different beliefs and values
- First-year students were either less engaged or planned to be less engaged in community service or volunteer work
- First-year students either took or planned to take less foreign language coursework
- IPFW students participate less in co-curricular activities

Supportive Campus Environment. Measured by 6 items on the survey, supportive campus environment involves support for succeeding academically and thriving socially. It also includes the quality of relationships with faculty, staff and other students. Compared to all institutions participating in the NSSE:

- IPFW students find relationships with other students less supportive
- IPFW students find faculty comparably available, helpful, and sympathetic
- IPFW student find administrative personnel and office comparably helpful, considerate, and flexible
- Seniors find IPFW comparably supportive in succeeding academically and coping with non-academic responsibilities

What Else?

Results of some individual items on the 2006 NSSE are noteworthy because they are not connected to a benchmark or because they differ significantly from the mean scores from other institutions. Below are some examples of how IPFW first-year and senior students compare to their NSSE peers:

Challenges:

- First-year and senior students work for pay off campus much more (effect size = .93 for first-year students and .60 for seniors)
- IPFW students spend more time providing care for dependents
- IPFW students attend fewer art exhibits and theatre performances
- IPFW students exercise less
• Students report that IPFW has supported the development of their personal code of values and ethics less
• Students indicate that IPFW supported their contribution to the welfare of their community less

Celebrations:
• Students more often prepare multiple drafts of papers before turning them in
• Overall, on a scale of 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent), first-year students report their level of satisfaction with the educational experience at IPFW as 2.98 and seniors as 3.02

The NSSE was also administered to a small sample of IPFW students in 2003. In general, responses in 2006 were more positive than those in 2003. However, any conclusions drawn from comparing data from the two administrations should be made with caution.