



National Survey of Student Engagement Executive Snapshot 2009

University of Alaska Fairbanks

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 University of Alaska Fairbanks.

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

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 University of Alaska Fairbanks 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 UAF

NSSE '07 '09

FSSE

BCSSE

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)
- *Multi-Year Benchmark Report* (for institutions that have participated at least twice)
- Multi-Year Data Analysis Webinar (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)



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.

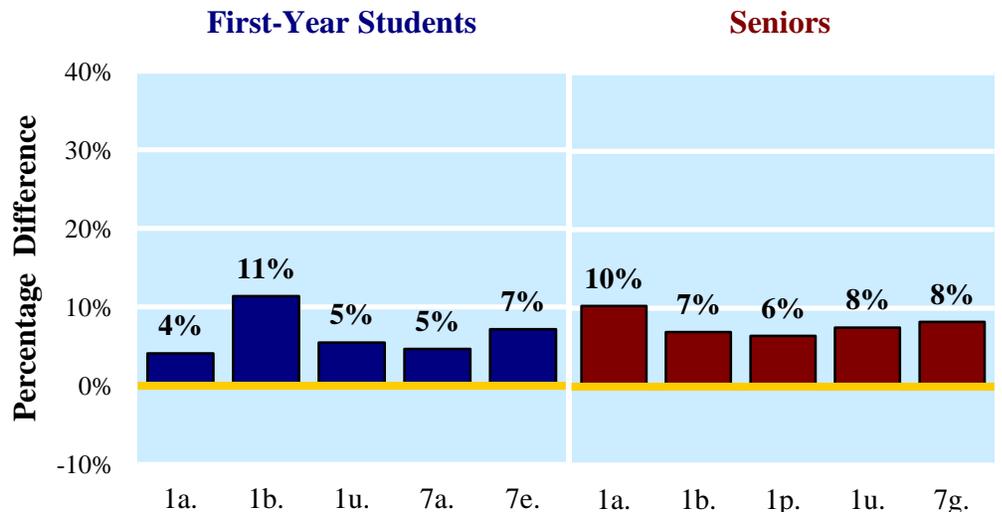
Highest Performing Benchmark Items Relative to Standard Peers

Comparison Groups

Ques- tion	Bench- mark ¹	Percent of students who...	UAF	Standard Peers	Selected Peers	Similar Universities
First-Year Students						
1a.	ACL	Asked questions/contributed to class discussions ²	57%	53%	50%	57%
1b.	ACL	Made a class presentation ²	35%	24%	20%	31%
1u.	EEE	Had serious conversations w/ students of another race or ethnicity ²	49%	43%	43%	52%
7a.	EEE	Did a practicum, internship, field experience, clinical assignment	11%	6%	6%	8%
7e.	EEE	Completed foreign language coursework	26%	19%	23%	24%
Seniors						
1a.	ACL	Asked questions/contributed to class discussions ²	77%	67%	64%	68%
1b.	ACL	Made a class presentation ²	60%	53%	52%	58%
1p.	SFI	Discussed ideas from classes with faculty outside of class ²	30%	24%	24%	26%
1u.	EEE	Had serious conversations w/ students of another race or ethnicity ²	51%	44%	43%	54%
7g.	EEE	Did an independent study or self-designed major	29%	20%	19%	18%

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:

Standard Peers





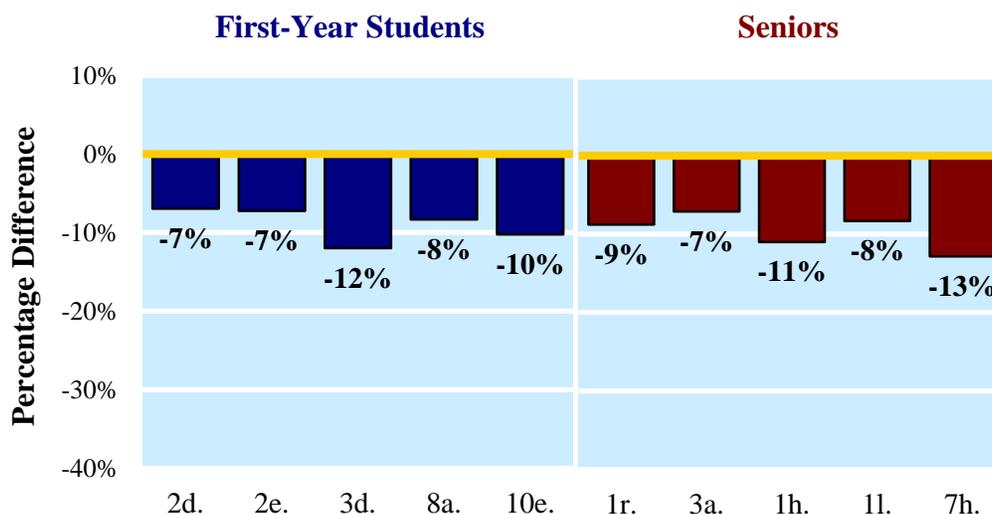
Lowest Performing Benchmark Items Relative to Standard Peers

Comparison Groups

Ques- tion	Bench- mark ¹	Percent of students who...	UAF	Standard Peers	Selected Peers	Similar Universities
First-Year Students						
2d.	LAC	Said courses emphasized making judgments about the value of information ⁴	58%	65%	65%	68%
2e.	LAC	Said courses emphasized applying theories or concepts to new situations ⁴	65%	72%	71%	74%
3d.	LAC	Wrote more than 4 papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages	20%	32%	38%	34%
8a.	SCE	Positively rated their relationships with other students ³	69%	77%	78%	76%
10e.	SCE	Said the institution provides substantial support for students' social needs ⁴	31%	41%	42%	45%
Seniors						
1r.	LAC	Worked harder than you expected to meet an instructor's expectations ²	44%	53%	52%	57%
3a.	LAC	Read more than 10 assigned books or book-length packs of readings	28%	35%	40%	37%
1h.	ACL	Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments ²	47%	58%	59%	58%
1l.	EEE	Used an electronic medium to discuss or complete an assignment ²	51%	60%	57%	61%
7h.	EEE	Completed a culminating senior experience (capstone, thesis, comp. exam)	29%	42%	38%	34%

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:

Standard Peers



Notes

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

² Combination of students responding 'very often' or 'often'

³ Rated at least 5 on a 7-point scale

⁴ 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	221	27%	+/-5.6%
Seniors	288	33%	+/-4.7%

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.

		UAF	Comparison Groups		
Class			Standard Peers	Selected Peers	Similar Universities
Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)					
<i>How challenging is your institution's intellectual and creative work?</i>	First-Year	49	—	—	—
	Senior	54	—	—	—
Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)					
<i>Are your students actively involved in their learning, individually and working with others?</i>	First-Year	40			
	Senior	48			—
Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)					
<i>Do your students work with faculty members inside and outside the classroom?</i>	First-Year	31			
	Senior	42	+	+	
Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE)					
<i>Do your students take advantage of complementary learning opportunities?</i>	First-Year	26			
	Senior	39			
Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)					
<i>Do your students feel the institution is committed to their success?</i>	First-Year	55			—
	Senior	53			—

IPEDS:102614

For More Information

A comprehensive summary of all results is contained in your institutional report, which we sent in August to Feiran Jiao, Student and Enrollment Services. Reports used in this Executive Snapshot included the: NSSE 2009 Mean Comparisons, Frequency Distributions, Benchmark Comparisons, and Respondent Characteristics.



National Survey of Student Engagement

Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research
1900 East Tenth Street, Suite 419
Bloomington, IN 47406-7512

Phone: 812-856-5824
E-mail: nsse@indiana.edu
Web: www.nsse.iub.edu