



Academic & Institutional Projects

A RESEARCH BRIEF FOR FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS PREPARED BY THE
ACADEMIC & INSTITUTIONAL PROJECTS (AIP) OFFICE.

2009 National Survey of Student Engagement

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) collects information from samples of freshmen and senior students to determine the nature and quality of their undergraduate experience. The survey is Web based and is offered on a biannual basis. Participation in the NSSE is mandated and funded by the North Dakota University System to provide Minot State University and the NDUS with valuable data to aid in institutional improvement, accountability and related purposes.

The NSSE survey collects student-level data on how often they participate in activities that represent good educational practice. The survey also gathers students' perceptions of the college environment associated with achievement and satisfaction. In addition, students were asked to indicate their estimated educational and personal growth since beginning their college education. Finally, students provide necessary demographic information such as background, age, gender, race/ethnicity, living situation, educational status and major.

The outcomes from the NSSE survey have been proven to be consistent and valid through various validity and reliability measures. To access validity and reliability information regarding the NSSE survey: nsse.iub.edu/html/researchers.cfm

SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY

To obtain a sample for NSSE, the Office of Academic and Institutional Projects worked with the MSU Registrar's Office to obtain a list of all first-year and senior students' specific individualized data, which was then uploaded to the NSSE interface. NSSE allowed MSU to identify participating universities across the nation as comparison groups. To align data collection efforts with that of the MSU Vision 2013, the 10 Great Plains Aspirational Peers were identified as MSU's comparison group. The aspirational/comparison group had an overall response rate of 32 percent.

The MSU sample population consisted of N=635 freshmen and N=741 seniors. Of the 635 freshmen students identified and sampled, 172 (27%) responded. As for senior students, of the 741 identified, 278 (38%) responded. The overall response rate for the MSU administration was 32.7 percent.

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

A majority of freshmen (82%) and senior (84%) respondents had full-time enrollment status. A majority of respondents were female (74% freshmen; 70% seniors) and indicated their race/ethnicity as white (86% freshmen; 85% seniors). Twenty-three percent of the respondents were considered international students. When asked place of residence, 33 percent of freshmen lived on campus, while only 7 percent of seniors resided on campus. A majority of freshmen (82%) were considered traditional students (less than 24 years of age), while 53 percent of seniors were 24 years of age or older (non-traditional).

MEAN COMPARISON BY BENCHMARKS

NSSE researchers analyzed the data collected and provided a detailed report based on mean comparisons and benchmark comparisons. The mean comparison report was based on all respondents; each response was given a weighted average. The benchmark report identified "Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practices," the benchmarks were level of academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student-faculty interaction, enriching educational experiences, supportive campus environment. The AIP identified MSU's aspirational peers for a comparison group, www.minotstateu.edu/instplan/peers.shtml.

OFFICE OF ACADEMIC & INSTITUTIONAL PROJECTS

The Office of Academic and Institutional Projects serves as a resource to Minot State University by evaluating and disseminating a wide range of data and conducting institutional research to support and foster efficient campus planning and administration. The use of this information will help improve the quality of education at Minot State.

AIP has the responsibility for coordinating and integrating data and planning analytical support for the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the university as a whole.

AIP develops and maintains a campus data warehouse that serves as the source of official MSU data. It is responsible for developing systems to ensure that campus-analytical and planning-data requirements are met, as well as providing the necessary information to support executive-level decision making.

Institutional data such as the annual Factbook and College Portrait data derived from the Voluntary System of Accountability is available on the AIP Web site.



**Minot State
UNIVERSITY**

ACADEMIC AND INSTITUTIONAL PROJECTS
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LEVEL OF ACADEMIC CHALLENGE

The level of academic challenge benchmark demands intellectual and creative work to improve student learning and collegiate quality. Specifically concentrating on academic effort on behalf of the students and by faculty setting high expectations for student performance. Differences among seniors from MSU's aspirational peers was evident, MSU average mean for seniors was $\bar{x} = 53.4$, while seniors from the aspirational peer group had a mean average of $\bar{x} = 56.3$.

LEVEL OF ACADEMIC CHALLENGE	Mean*		Effect Size**	
	FY	Senior	FY	Senior
Minot State University	49.2	53.4		
Aspirational Peers	51.5	56.3	-17	-21

The active and collaborative learning benchmark follows the notion that student learn more when they are intensely involved in their education, questions under this benchmark related to whether student asked questions during class, worked on projects within and outside class time and participated in community-based activities. Under this benchmark, the mean for MSU's aspirational peers was $\bar{x} = 42.2$, while MSU was $\bar{x} = 49.2$ among first-year freshmen students. The gap between aspirational peers and MSU was evident among senior students as well, seniors reported a mean of $\bar{x} = 52.7$ for MSU's aspirational peers, while MSU seniors reported a mean of $\bar{x} = 47.2$ under the active and collaborative learning benchmark.

ACTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING	Mean*		Effect Size**	
	FY	Senior	FY	Senior
Minot State University	38.7	47.2		
Aspirational Peers	42.2	52.7	-24	-33

With respect to the student faculty interaction benchmark, minimal gaps were evident among both seniors and freshmen. NSSE indicates the importance of complementary learning opportunities and their proven ability to enhance academic programs. The enriching educational experiences benchmark consists of technology and diversity opportunities offered to students. The greatest was difference among MSU's aspirational peer group for senior respondents. Seniors among MSU's aspirational peer institutions had a mean of $\bar{x} = 38.9$, while MSU seniors reported an average mean of $\bar{x} = 31.8$.

STUDENT FACULTY INTERACTION	Mean*		Effect Size**	
	FY	Senior	FY	Senior
Minot State University	33.4	41.1		
Aspirational Peers	33.7	42.4	-.02	-.06

ENRICHING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES	Mean*		Effect Size**	
	FY	Senior	FY	Senior
Minot State University	23.1	31.8		
Aspirational Peers	25.1	38.9	-15	-43

SUPPORTIVE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT	Mean*		Effect Size**	
	FY	Senior	FY	Senior
Minot State University	57.7	56.1		
Aspirational Peers	60.6	59.1	-16	-16

Research has suggested that students perform better and are more satisfied at universities that are committed to the success of their students. MSU freshmen students had a mean score of $\bar{x} = 57.7$, while freshmen at our aspirational peers $\bar{x} = 60.6$ when asked about their perception of their campus providing a supportive campus environment. The difference among seniors respondents was similar in comparison to that of the freshmen, MSU seniors had an average mean of $\bar{x} = 56.1$, and the aspirational peers had an average mean of $\bar{x} = 59.1$.

MULTI-YEAR BENCHMARK COMPARISONS

NSSE data is used regularly among institutional research offices across the nation when assessing student learning and development. Common variables reported within the institutional research realm are: overall experiences, group-learning experiences, active learning experiences, institutional commitment to students, student interaction with faculty, student experiences with diverse groups and overall student satisfaction.

GROUP LEARNING EXPERIENCES

A 7 percent increase in seniors who worked with classmates on assignments outside of class was evident from the NSSE 2007 (82%) administration to the 2009 administration (89%). The largest area of change between the 2007 and 2009 administration was among seniors who spent at least 6 hours per week participating in co-curricular activities. An increase of 1 percent was evident among seniors reporting that other students were friendly or supportive between the 2007 and 2009 administration.

STUDENT INTERACTION WITH FACULTY

Nearly 100 percent (97%) of seniors reported that faculty members provided prompt feedback on their academic performance. A slight decrease in seniors believing that faculty were available, helpful to their issues or sympathetic was evident from the 2007 to 2009 administration (2007; 80% and 2009; 70%).

STUDENT EXPERIENCES WITH DIVERSE GROUPS

Questions regarding experiences with diverse groups showed a decrease from 2007 administration. Seniors (2009) reported that MSU contributed to their understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds (77%), the previous administration 79 percent of seniors thought MSU contributed to their understanding. Thirty-five percent of seniors reported often having conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity, the percentage decreased from 39 percent in the 2007 administration.

OVERALL EXPERIENCES

A vast majority of senior students (95%) believe that MSU provides support for student success, a 6 percent increase from the 2007 administration (89%). A decrease of 10 percent was evident among seniors who thought that MSU provided help in coping with work, family and other non-academic responsibilities (2007; 63% and 2009; 53%). Overall, 82 percent of seniors indicated that they would attend MSU if they started their academic career over again; a 2 percent increase from the 2007 administration (80%). A large majority of seniors (85%) rated their entire educational experience as "good" or "excellent," while only 82 percent of seniors indicated this in the 2007 administration.

To access the yearly comparison table of NSSE results among Great Plains peers please go to:

www.minotstateu.edu/instplan/peers.shtml

MEAN COMPARISON BY VARIABLE

MSU freshmen respondents asked more questions in class and contributed to class discussion more often than that of the aspirational peers ($\bar{x} = 2.84$ and $\bar{x} = 2.69$). MSU freshmen respondents also indicated that they had discussed grades and assignments with their instructors more so than the freshmen from the aspirational peer group ($\bar{x} = 2.70$ and $\bar{x} = 2.57$). A large gap in means was evident between freshmen respondents from MSU and the aspirational peer group who read books on their own for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment. MSU freshmen respondents indicated reading more than personal enjoyment/ academic enrichment than the aspirational peer group. Under the enriching educational experiences benchmark, MSU freshmen respondents had more opportunities to work on a research project with a faculty member ($\bar{x} = .08$) and study abroad ($\bar{x} = .06$).

ACADEMIC AND INSTITUTIONAL PROJECTS WEBSITE

The Office of Academic and Institutional Projects serves as a resource to Minot State University by evaluating and disseminating a wide range of data, as well as conducting institutional support to foster efficient campus planning and administration. Access to the specific data collected by AIP is found at www.minotstateu.edu/instplan/.