



# National Survey of Student Engagement

## Executive Snapshot 2008

University of West Georgia

### Dear Colleague:

This is a summary of some key findings from your institution's performance on the 2008 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 West Georgia.

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

### Are All Students at University of West Georgia Equally Engaged?

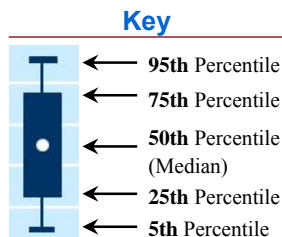
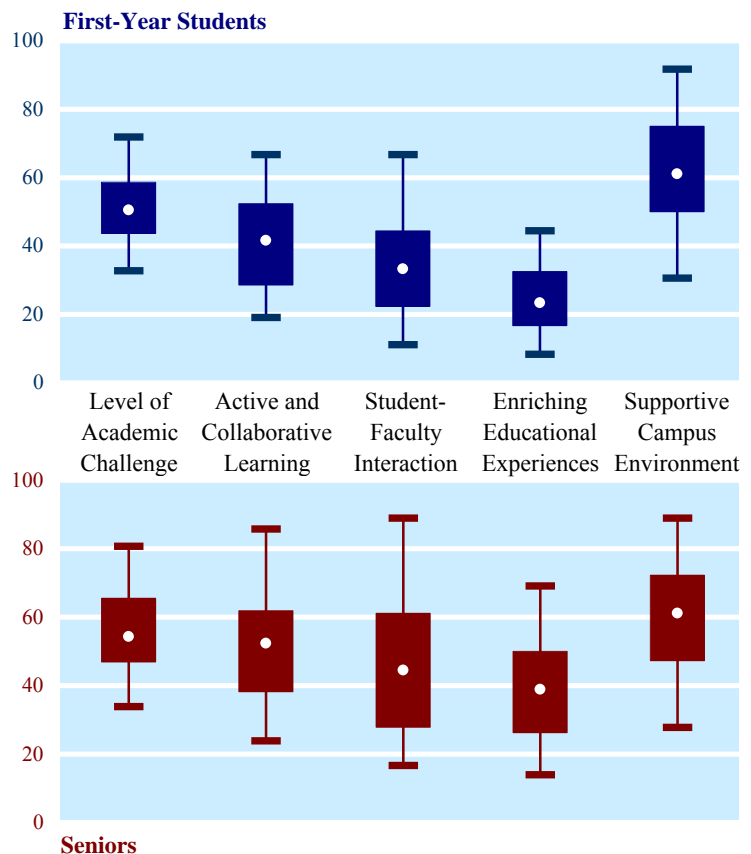
Quality in U.S. higher education is often considered an institutional attribute, as if one college offers a uniformly better or worse education than another. Yet, a robust finding from decades of research on college students holds that student experiences and outcomes are more varied among students *within* institutions than *between* institutions.

In this year's annual report NSSE urges institutions to "look within," calling attention to the need to examine variation in the student experience at your institution. Your (hypothetical) average student does not describe all students and groups on your campus.

The adjacent figures illustrate this phenomenon. We plotted your students' NSSE benchmark scores in a "box and whiskers" chart (see key). Here you can see the range and variation of your scores (whiskers), as well as where the mid-range or normal scores fell (box). Note the dispersion of your scores. The greater the range, the more varied the student experience is at your institution.

Improving the experience of your least engaged students may be the most effective way to raise your benchmark scores and improve your overall institutional quality. Even high-performing institutions have much to learn by examining variation in student engagement – by looking within.

### Variation in NSSE Benchmark Scores by Class at University of West Georgia



The dot signifies the median – the score that divides all students' scores into two equal halves (means are reported on page 4). The box shows the middle 50% of your scores (from the 25th to 75th percentiles) and the whiskers show the range of scores excluding outliers (from the 5th to the 95th percentile).

## NSSE 2008 Question Comparisons

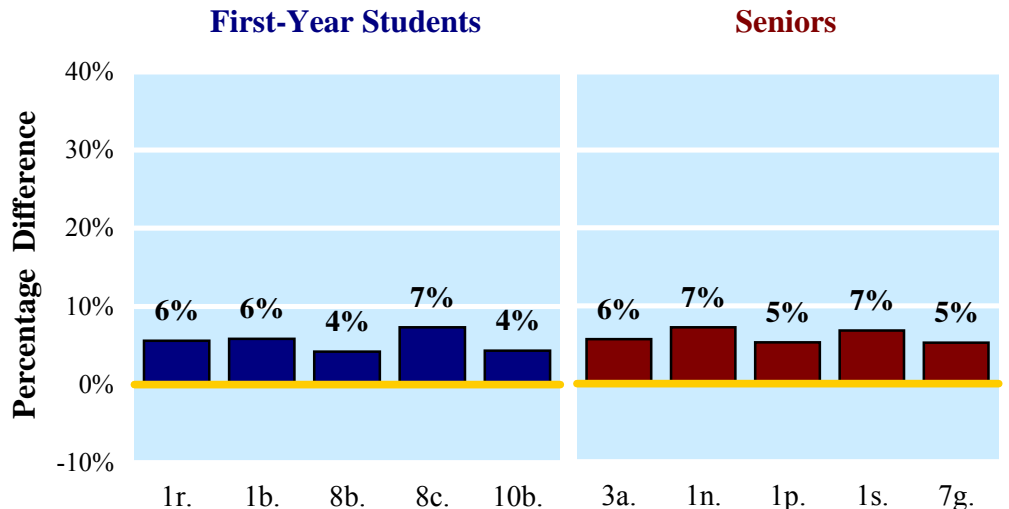
By examining individual NSSE questions, you can better understand what contributes to your institution's overall benchmark scores. This section features the five questions on which your first-year and senior students scored the highest and the five questions on which they scored the lowest, relative to students at your first selected comparison group (listed in your *NSSE 2008 Selected Comparison Groups* report).

While these questions were chosen 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 2008* for additional results of particular interest to your campus.

### Highest Performing Areas

Ques- tion	Bench- mark <sup>1</sup>	Percent of students who...	Comparison Groups			
			UWG	Georgia System	Peer/Aspirational	NSSE 2008
<b>First-Year Students</b>						
1r.	LAC	Worked harder than you expected to meet an instructor's expectations <sup>2</sup>	<b>63%</b>	57%	53%	55%
1b.	ACL	Made a class presentation <sup>2</sup>	<b>40%</b>	34%	34%	33%
8b.	SCE	Positively rated their relationships with faculty members <sup>3</sup>	<b>72%</b>	68%	69%	71%
8c.	SCE	Positively rated their relationships with admin. personnel and offices <sup>3</sup>	<b>58%</b>	50%	51%	54%
10b.	SCE	Said the institution provides substantial support for academic success <sup>4</sup>	<b>80%</b>	76%	75%	77%
<b>Seniors</b>						
3a.	LAC	Read more than 10 assigned books or book-length packs of readings	<b>36%</b>	30%	32%	35%
1n.	SFI	Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor <sup>2</sup>	<b>70%</b>	63%	64%	59%
1p.	SFI	Discussed ideas from classes with faculty outside of class <sup>2</sup>	<b>36%</b>	30%	31%	29%
1s.	SFI	Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework <sup>2</sup>	<b>29%</b>	22%	23%	22%
7g.	EEE	Did an independent study or self-designed major	<b>21%</b>	15%	15%	18%

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



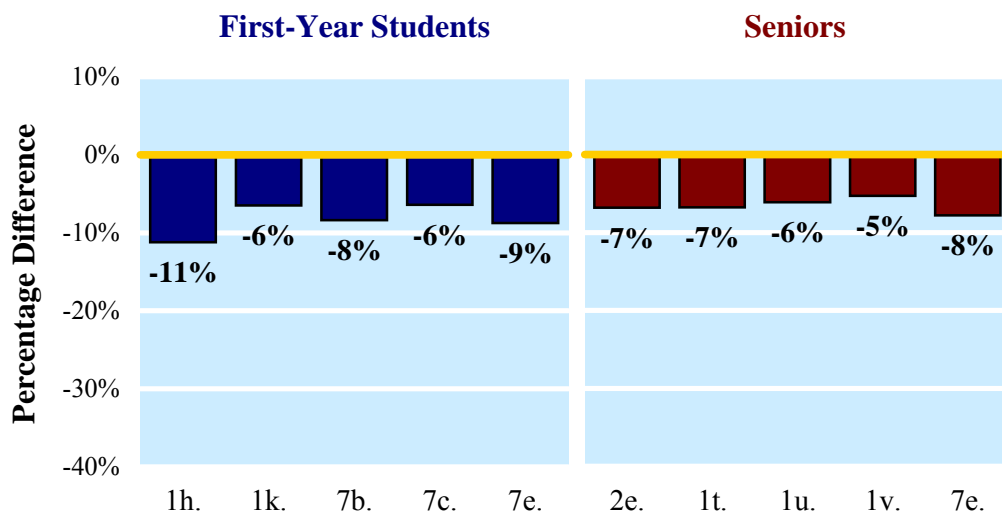


## Lowest Performing Areas

## Comparison Groups

Ques- tion	Bench- mark <sup>1</sup>	Percent of students who...	UWG	Georgia System	Peer/Aspiratio nal	NSSE 2008
<b>First-Year Students</b>						
1h.	ACL	Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments <sup>2</sup>	<b>33%</b>	44%	42%	42%
1k.	ACL	Did a community-based project as part of a regular course <sup>2</sup>	<b>9%</b>	16%	14%	14%
7b.	EEE	Participated in community service or volunteer work	<b>33%</b>	41%	38%	38%
7c.	EEE	Participated in a learning community	<b>14%</b>	20%	18%	16%
7e.	EEE	Completed foreign language coursework	<b>9%</b>	18%	15%	22%
<b>Seniors</b>						
2e.	LAC	Said courses emphasized <b>applying</b> theories or concepts to new situations <sup>4</sup>	<b>75%</b>	82%	80%	80%
1t.	ACL	Discussed ideas from readings or classes with others outside of class <sup>2</sup>	<b>61%</b>	67%	63%	63%
1u.	EEE	Had serious conversations w/ students of another race or ethnicity <sup>2</sup>	<b>56%</b>	62%	52%	54%
1v.	EEE	Had serious conversations w/ students of other relig./politics/values <sup>2</sup>	<b>55%</b>	60%	55%	56%
7e.	EEE	Completed foreign language coursework	<b>33%</b>	41%	34%	41%

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



### 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	458	19%	+/-4.3%
Seniors	313	19%	+/-5%

## 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 2008 Benchmark Comparisons* report.

		UWG	Comparison Groups		
Class			Georgia System	Peer/Aspirational	NSSE 2008
<b>Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)</b>					
<i>How challenging is your institution's intellectual and creative work?</i>	First-Year	<b>51</b>			-
	Senior	<b>56</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>52</b>			
<b>Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)</b>					
<i>Do your students work with faculty members inside and outside the classroom?</i>	First-Year	<b>35</b>			
	Senior	<b>47</b>	+	+	+
<b>Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE)</b>					
<i>Do your students take advantage of complementary learning opportunities?</i>	First-Year	<b>25</b>	-	-	-
	Senior	<b>39</b>			
<b>Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)</b>					
<i>Do your students feel the institution is committed to their success?</i>	First-Year	<b>61</b>			
	Senior	<b>60</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 Melanie McClellan, Vice President for Student Services. Reports used in this Executive Snapshot included the: NSSE 2008 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](mailto:nsse@indiana.edu)  
Web: [www.nsse.iub.edu](http://www.nsse.iub.edu)