

NSSE 2010 Summary of Findings

Penn College, along with 595 other colleges and universities, participated in the 2010 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) as one element of its assessment program. A random sample of first-year and senior-year baccalaureate students – a total of 561 respondents - completed the survey. The results, tabulated by NSSE, included a comparison with six peer institutions as well as a comparison with all 595 institutions.

Summary of Findings/peer comparisons

In three metrics of student engagement, Penn College first-year and senior-year students scored significantly higher than the national benchmark:

- Supportive campus environment
- Student-faculty interaction
- Active and collaborative learning

Specific measures are those items on the survey that constitute the metrics noted above. Representing the higher performance (i.e., higher than both the peers and national comparison groups) are the following for both first- and senior-year students:

- Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills
- Using computing and information technology
- Asked questions in class or contributed to class
- Discussed grades or assignments with instructors

Summary of Findings/comparisons with 2006 and 2008 NSSE results

For both first- and senior-year students, the following items have a higher mean:

- Used higher-order skills of analyzing, synthesizing, making judgments, and applying theories or concepts
- Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources
- Included diverse perspectives in class discussions or writing assignments
- Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments
- Worked harder than expected to meet an instructor's standards or expectations

A noteworthy item (not only higher than peers but also higher than the College's 2006 and 2008 NSSE results) is *Working for pay off campus*. In addition to the implications for students' commitment of time to study and to campus activities, the data also underscore the importance of assisting students in gaining time management skills.

The NSSE report is compiled for internal use by the office of Assessment, Research, and Planning; the results are discussed and studied across campus so as to capitalize on the strengths and respond to the areas for improvement identified by the report.