

National Survey of Student Engagement Summary

Survey Background

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) was conducted for the first time at UNC in the Spring of 2019. A total of 1,256 students responded to the survey (38% response rate); 505 were first-year students (34% response rate) and 751 were seniors (41% response rate). The sample was largely representative of UNC's population, however, female students were more likely than male students to participate. Hundreds of institutions participate in the NSSE each year, thus we are able to obtain comparison data from three groups of institutions whose students also completed the NSSE in 2018 or 2019.

Comparison Groups

Carnegie Comparable (n = 11): Public 4-year U.S. institutions that met the Doctoral Professional Universities Carnegie and High Undergraduate Enrollment profile classifications

NCHEMS 27 Comparable (n = 13): Institutions identified in the NCHEMS 27 report

Peer Benchmark Comparable (n = 9): Institutions identified in the Peer Benchmarking Taskforce report

Synthesis of Findings

First-year and senior students are both challenged and supported at UNC. Our students show strengths in multiple areas of learning, report positive interactions with faculty, students, and staff, and report numerous high impact educational experiences. Our students' development is fostered through UNC's strengths in providing numerous engagement opportunities and high impact practices such that they graduate career-ready with a unique capacity to make meaningful contributions to the communities in which they belong. However, efforts to increase access to and use of academic support services could help to address weaknesses in both first-year students' use of effective learning strategies and all students' perceptions that UNC provides a supportive environment. Efforts to increase social, mental health, and recreational programming at UNC could also help improve students' perceptions that UNC provides a supportive environment.

Seniors

Strengths

UNC leads peer institutions in student engagement and high impact educational experiences reported by seniors. Our seniors report more:

1. positive interactions with staff, faculty and students
2. experiences with effective teaching practices (e.g., organized instruction, clear explanations, illustrative examples, and prompt feedback on submitted work or exams)
3. collaborative learning (e.g., group projects, working with others to prepare for exams, and asking for or providing assistance to others when learning course material)
4. higher-order learning (e.g., challenging cognitive tasks like application, analysis, judgment, and synthesis)



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5. reflective and integrative learning (e.g., connecting learning to the world around them, re-examining own beliefs, considering others' perspectives)

UNC also leads peer institutions in high impact educational experiences reported by seniors. Our seniors report more experiences with:

6. learning communities
7. service learning
8. internships or field experiences

Opportunities for improvement

UNC's seniors are less likely to perceive UNC as a supportive environment. Specifically, seniors report UNC does not emphasize (as much as peer institutions) the importance of:

1. using learning support services
2. providing support for students' overall well-being
3. providing opportunities to be involved socially
4. helping students manage their non-academic responsibilities

First-Year Students

Strengths

UNC leads peer institutions in student engagement reported by first-year students. Our first-year students report more:

1. positive interactions with faculty
2. collaborative learning (e.g., group projects, working with others to prepare for exams, and asking for or providing assistance to others when learning course material)
3. reflective and integrative learning (e.g., connecting learning to the world around them, re-examining own beliefs, considering others' perspectives)

Opportunities for improvement

UNC's first-year students are less likely to plan to engage in high impact educational experiences including:

1. completing an internship or field experience
2. a culminating senior experience
3. conducting research with faculty

UNC's first-year students are less likely to indicate they:

4. use effective learning strategies (e.g., identify key information in readings, review notes after class, and summarize course material)
5. perceive UNC as a supportive environment (e.g., believe that UNC emphasizes attending campus activities and events and helps students manage their non-academic responsibilities)

