

**National Survey of Student Engagement:  
The “NSSE” Assessment Project**

**WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY’S  
FIRST-YEAR PARTICIPATION REPORT**

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## Preface

This report contains the results of Western Michigan University's first year of participation in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), a research project on undergraduate student engagement at colleges and universities in the United States. There is a great deal of information and material presented in the report, including information about our undergraduate students, that is both revealing and informative, especially the institutional benchmark data, where WMU student responses are contrasted with responses from students at other doctoral/research universities - extensive. Some readers may be fascinated by the data while others may find the report technical and tedious. Nonetheless, another sample of WMU undergraduate students is currently (February 2003) participating in the national NSSE research project for the second year. And again next year we will consider WMU's results separately and with the results of students matriculating at other doctoral/research universities – extensive.

Given the complex and substantial amount of information contained in the report, there will be different interpretations about the data and, perhaps, about the policy implications that should be undertaken — especially if the 2003 data parallel the 2002 data reported here. Thus, colleagues will be invited, including students, faculty, academic officers, and other staff, to serve as a readers' panel for serious review and study of the NSSE data. Panel members will be asked to consider the report carefully, and then in small group discussions and or in targeted interviews, to help define and articulate an action agenda for improvement. This campus-wide NSSE review panel strategy will help strengthen undergraduate academic engagement across the University. Moreover, the NSSE information in this report will support and reinforce the first-year student program discussions already underway in the Office of the Provost and in the Division of Student Affairs.

When assessment information is distributed, there is a natural concern about its potential misinterpretation or misrepresentation. All individuals at Western Michigan University, from faculty and staff colleagues to the president, are working to build and support more scholarly assessment of issues across the campus with personnel, funds, and leadership attention to the results. Balanced scholarship in assessment requires self-reflection and critical discussion about specific strengths as well as any weaknesses. By making information like the NSSE report publicly available, such assessment information can then serve as one additional mechanism for directing internal improvement. As you read and reflect on this first NSSE report, and others that will follow, please think creatively about the significance of the information and how it can best be used to strengthen undergraduate education at Western Michigan University.

**Your comments and advice are always welcome.**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**A. NSSE Overview:** For the past four years, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) project ([www.iub.edu/~nsse](http://www.iub.edu/~nsse)) has collected information from freshmen and seniors at four-year colleges and universities across the United States to assess the extent to which undergraduate students engage in educational practices empirically linked to high levels of learning and development. The project is grounded in the proposition that the frequency with which students engage in certain effective educational practices is a good proxy for collegiate quality. NSSE is supported by the Pew Charitable Trust and administered by the Center for Postsecondary Research and Planning at the University of Indiana, and seeks to foster discussion about student learning, collegiate quality, and institutional improvement. In 2002, WMU students participated for the first time in the national mail and Web-based NSSE research survey. As a doctoral-extensive institution, WMU's survey scores were contrasted to those of other institutions in the same Carnegie classification. The direct institutional cost to WMU for its 2002 NSSE participation was approximately \$7,000.

In *The College Student Report* specific NSSE questions are examined individually and clustered into five national benchmark categories of effective education practice with each institution's benchmark scores compared to schools in their respective Carnegie classification. The five benchmarks of effective educational practice are "level of academic challenge," "active and collaborative learning," "student interaction with faculty members," "enriching educational experiences," and "supportive campus environment." One section of the report is devoted to the benchmarked categories, and the questions in each benchmark category also are examined individually with individual question responses considered later in the report.

**B. Findings:** There are three major findings based on WMU's participation in the 2002 NSSE report:

1. The academic participation and engagement of WMU's first-year and senior student scores are within data reported for other doctoral-extensive institutions, although on the low side of the doctoral-extensive average score.

2. WMU's senior student engagement scores are, in general, comparatively more favorable than scores for WMU's first-year students. The data in the report suggest that WMU may need to take additional steps to support its first-year students. The data also suggest that while WMU students lack in educational engagement prior to matriculation, their academic participation and engagement increases during their years of attendance.

3. Two areas may warrant institutional attention: (a) active support for diversity and (b) increasing the degree of academic challenge for most students. Specifically with regard to support for diversity, WMU students scored lower than other doctoral-extensive student averages concerning issues of diversity. Further, first-year student opinions about WMU's encouragement of contact among different groups was considerably lower than the average reported by students at other doctoral-extensive institutions. However, WMU senior opinions about the issue of diversity revolved around the doctoral-extensive average for seniors. With regard to the degree of academic challenge, both WMU first-year and senior students spend less time preparing for class than was reported as average for students at other doctoral-extensive institutions. Likewise, WMU student opinion of WMU's emphasis on academic work is somewhat lower than that reported by students at other doctoral-extensive institutions.

**C. Limitations:** One criticism of the 2002 NNSE report is the need for a more representative WMU sample to more accurately reflect gender differences among undergraduate students (i.e., 48 percent of WMU students were male in 2001-2002 although only 35 percent in the WMU sample were men). The WMU sample could also be more representative of different undergraduate majors, and of campus minorities, who are 8.5 percent of WMU students but were only 5 percent in the sample. Internal differences among students in the WMU sample were usually small. In particular, differences between racial and ethnic groups were mainly limited to differences of perception concerning relationships with others. Gender differences, although slight, were evident in the majority of the data fields and some such differences are noted in the discussion section for individual questions. The issue of sample representativeness in the 2002 NSSE report has been addressed with an over-sampling request for both men and minorities in the upcoming NSSE 2003 WMU student sample.

**D. Future Steps:** Several steps should be taken to strengthen WMU's participation in the NSSE assessment research study. Among those steps are: (1) to over-sample males and minorities in the 2003 WMU student sample to increase the response rates of those under-represented 2002 groups, (2) to establish a NSSE readers panel at WMU to discuss implications from the NSSE Reports, (3) to ask a sample of WMU faculty to participate in the 2004 NSSE survey, *Faculty Survey of Student Engagement*, in order to identify specific gaps between faculty and student data and thus further inform campus academic engagement discussions, and (4) to customize relevant comparison groups that are more specific than the general "doctoral/research - extensive" institutional category.

**E. Report Format:** This report has four major parts: (1) WMU’s institutional benchmark scores and its comparison with other doctoral/research universities - extensive scores and national NSSE norms; (2) a comparison of means, which is a more comprehensive and reliable method of comparing survey data, with notes about areas where WMU scores deviate most from the overall average; (3) comparative frequency distributions for individual questions with brief narrative descriptions of WMU’s standing in relationship to other doctoral-extensive institutions, and (4) the complete list of WMU student responses for survey questions in Appendix 1. This report provides two ways of considering the results – first by comparing means between WMU students and students at other doctoral/research universities - extensive, and second by comparing relative frequencies. Unless otherwise stated, all numbers in this report represent percentages (note that percentages may not always sum up to 100 due to rounding).

## **METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE**

**A. Methodology:** The NSSE 2002 national mail and Web sample consisted of 206,844 first-year and senior students, randomly selected by registrars from 366 participating four-year colleges and universities. Western Michigan University participated in the survey with 389 students of which 53 percent were first-year students and 47 percent senior students responding from a sample of 1,000 undergraduate students. Since the Carnegie Foundation classifies WMU as a doctoral/research - extensive institution (*hereafter referred to as “doctoral-extensive” for readability*), this report generally compares WMU results with the reported averages for students from like institutions.

**B. Sample Demographics:** The WMU sample was of 389 students comprised of 65 percent<sup>1</sup> female and 34.4 percent male although males comprise 48 percent of undergraduate students at WMU. The majority of first-year students who responded were between 18 and 19 years of age (50.9 percent). The majority of the participants indicated their race to be white (88.9 percent) while 5.4 percent reported they were Black/African American; 3.1 percent reported they were of Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin; 2.6 percent reported being American Indian/other Native American; and 2.1 percent reported being Asian American/Pacific Islander. Almost 4 percent (3.6 percent) reported identification with more than a single racial or ethnic category. Overall, in the 2002 WMU NSSE sample only 5 percent of students reported being an ethnic minority while 8.5 percent of all undergraduate students in 2001-2002 were ethnic minorities. Additionally, a small proportion (3.6

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<sup>1</sup> The percentages may not add up to 100 percent as a result of missing data. Respondents may have omitted a response to some of the survey questions,

percent) of the students reported that they were international students or foreign nationals who comprise about 4 percent of all WMU undergraduate students.

Additional characteristics of the WMU sample were:

- Eighty-five percent were full-time students.
- Forty-nine percent lived in a residence hall or other campus housing; 36.5 percent lived in a private residence, such as a house or apartment, within driving distance; and 13.1 percent lived in a private residence within walking distance.
- Five point nine percent indicated they were a member of social fraternity or sorority; however, only one respondent currently lived in a fraternity or sorority house.
- Seventy-six percent indicated that they had begun higher education at WMU.
- Twenty-seven percent had attended a community or a junior college, 15.2 percent had attended a four-year college other than WMU, 3.6 percent indicated they had also attended a vocational-technical school, 2.3 percent indicated they had attended some other school (e.g., Air Force Technical School, Art School in Italy, etc.).
- Eighty percent indicated they do **not** work for pay **on** campus, while 7.2 percent reported that they work 16 or more hours per week for pay on campus.
- Fifty-two percent indicated they do **not** work for pay **off** campus, while 30.3 percent reported that they work off campus for pay for 16 or more hours per week.
- Eighteen percent indicated that A's were the largest percentage of their grades, followed by 34.2 percent reporting A-/B+, 26.8 percent reporting B's, 14.9 percent reporting B-/C+, and 4.1 percent reporting C/C- or lower for the majority of their grades.
- Education at 23.9 percent was the largest category of academic majors reported followed by business at 16.5 percent and others at 9.7 percent.

There is a potential problem with the academic major categories indicated on the NSSE survey. The survey response choices include "education" as one choice for an undergraduate major. However, WMU has only an elementary education major. Secondary education students at WMU major in a subject matter (e.g., history, geography, mathematics) with an emphasis on secondary education. Thus, there is the possibility that some students emphasizing secondary education report their major as "education," even though this is technically inaccurate. Since we cannot determine from the data if students who indicated "education" for their major were only elementary education majors, the comparison of reported sample with majors across the WMU undergraduate population should be viewed cautiously. The primary purpose in noting this anomaly is to propose the possibility that certain majors may have been underrepresented in the 2002 WMU sample. We think that this was the case but have no means of isolating and verifying the majors' data as reported by WMU students.

**C. Response Rate:** Of the 1000 individuals sampled, a total of 389 WMU students participated in the NSSE survey, representing a 38.9 percent response rate. This is comparable to the 41 percent response rate for all NSSE participants, and above the 36 percent response rate for participating universities. This is a common response rate for mail questionnaires. However, there is

likely to be some bias in these data. For example, those students who are more engaged, who see more opportunities provided through institutional programs, and students who have more positive assessments about the value of specific activities are more likely to respond, thus inflating the positive values. However, since the response rates for WMU students, the comparison groups, and the NSSE sample were nearly the same, any comparisons made should be valid.

The vast majority of WMU participants completed the paper version (71 percent), compared to those who completed the survey on the Web (29 percent). In this respect, WMU is quite different from the other doctoral-extensive, where 47 percent completed the survey via paper and pencil and 53 percent completed it on the Web. Additionally, for the total NSSE 2002 sample, 55 percent completed the survey on paper and 45 percent via the Web.

## **INSTITUTIONAL BENCHMARK REPORT**

The NSSE *Institutional Benchmark Report* (November 2002) provides perhaps the most significant measure of comparison between WMU and its peer universities — those classified as doctoral-extensive by the Carnegie Foundation. The benchmarks represent clusters of questions from the NSSE survey and are reported in 100-point scales. The 2002 analysis is based on more than 135,000 randomly selected students at 613 four-year colleges and universities. The students represent a broad cross-section of first-year and senior students from every region of the country.

The *Benchmark Report* is a comprehensive report about WMU's benchmark scores and compares them to first-year and senior students at other doctoral/research universities - extensive (see Table 1 on the next page). There are five-benchmark categories: level of academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student-faculty interactions, enriching educational experiences, and a supportive campus environment. WMU senior scores are well above the doctoral-extensive average for the "active and collaborative learning" benchmark category. WMU seniors also scored a "supportive campus environment" slightly higher than did other doctoral-extensive students. However, in the other three categories senior scores are below those reported for other doctoral-extensive university students. Disconcertingly, the scores for first-year WMU students were somewhat below the doctoral-extensive average scores for all five benchmark categories, and substantially below in two categories, "active and collaborative learning" and "enriching educational experiences." In statistical terms, the columns titled "standard score" represent  $z$  scores – the standardized magnitude of the difference between WMU's benchmark score and the mean of the comparison group. A positive score indicates that students are more engaged in the respective educational practice (and likely benefiting more) in relation to the overall doctoral-extensive

distribution of scores. A negative score indicates that students are doing comparatively less in these areas of effective educational practice.

Additionally, Table 2 identifies categories with the greatest positive and negative deviations between WMU’s actual and predicted benchmark scores in comparison to other NSSE colleges and universities, after statistically adjusting for the types of students that attend WMU and other institutional characteristics. The standardized measure of comparison (the standardized residual columns) provides a general view of where WMU stands in comparison to other universities. In particular, this “residual” is the difference between the actual and the predicted scores, and is an estimate of the degree to which institutions exceed or fall short of their predicted score for each benchmark category relative to all other NSSE institutions.

Standardized residuals in Table 2 show that, although WMU first-year student scores are somewhat lower than expected, senior scores revolve around the predicted score for WMU relative to all other NSSE institutions. Again, the one exception concerns “active and collaborative learning,” where WMU senior student scores were significantly higher than predicted.

WMU scores in both Tables 1 and 2 indicate that WMU first-year student responses are below the doctoral-extensive average and are at about the bottom 20 percent of scores reported for all such institutions. Conversely, senior responses place WMU at around the top of the second quartile of scores (i.e., with 40 to 50 percent of other doctoral-extensive institutions scoring below WMU).

**TABLE 1**  
**Institutional Benchmarks**

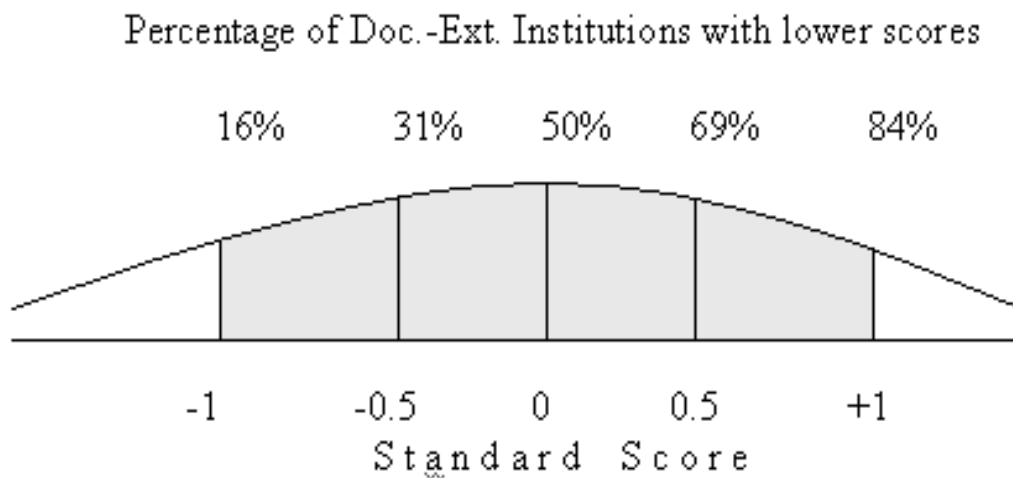
<b>Benchmark Category</b>	<b>First-Year Students</b>			<b>Senior Students</b>		
	<b>WMU %</b>	<b>Doc-Ext %</b>	<b>Standard Score</b>	<b>WMU %</b>	<b>Doc-Ext %</b>	<b>Standard Score</b>
Level of Academic Challenge*	49.1	51.8	-0.8	53	54.9	-0.8
Active and Collaborative Learning	34.9	37.6	-1	48	46	0.8
Student-Faculty Interactions	30.4	33	-0.8	38.1	39.1	-0.3
Enriching Educational Experiences	50.8	55.7	-1	41.6	46.1	-1.1
Supportive Campus Environment	54	56.6	-0.7	52.2	51.9	0.1

**TABLE 2**  
**Institutional Engagement**

Specific Institutional Benchmark Comparison	First-Year Students				Senior Students			
	Benchmark Score				Benchmark Score			
	Actual	Predicted	Difference	Standard. Residual	Actual	Predicted	Difference	Standard. Residual
Level of Academic Challenge*	49.0	50.2	-1.2	-0.4	51.5	51.2	0.4	0.1
Active and Collaborative Learning	34.9	36.5	-1.6	-0.5	48.0	44.8	3.2	1.0
Student-Faculty Interactions	30.4	32.3	-1.9	-0.5	38.1	37.1	1.0	0.3
Enriching Educational Experiences	50.8	53.3	-2.5	-0.6	41.6	42.4	-0.7	-0.2
Supportive Campus Environment	54.0	57.2	-3.2	-0.8	52.2	51.6	0.6	0.1

\*Note that WMU scores for Level of Academic Challenge differ slightly due to NSSE adjustments (see NSSE Institutional Benchmark Report, p. 8).

The following graph of standard scores shows the relative position of WMU in comparison to other NSSE institutions. The shaded area indicates WMU's placement according to its scores in the five benchmark areas. For example, with reference to the "enriching educational experience" category, about 40% of other institutions had lower student scores than did WMU students. Marked percentages indicate how many institutions scored lower than WMU.



## NSSE COMPARISON OF MEANS RESULTS

The comparison of means report provides an overall evaluation of the potential value of the survey. The means comparison suggests that: (1) there is a need for a larger and more representative WMU sample to more accurately reflect gender distribution, ethnic minorities, and the various majors of WMU's undergraduate student body; (2) WMU's NSSE scores place it within data reported for other doctoral - extensive universities although in several cases on the low side of the overall doctoral-extensive average; and (3) identifies areas where WMU scores deviate the most from other doctoral/research universities - extensive.

### **A. WMU Student Mean Scores Compared to Doctoral-Extensive Institutions**

First, the comparison of WMU's mean scores does not exhibit any statistically significant deviation from the national average of doctoral-extensive institutions even though the majority of WMU scores were slightly lower than mean scores reported for other doctoral-extensive. It must also be noted that WMU's senior student scores are, in general, comparatively more favorable than WMU's first-year student scores. Much of the data suggest that WMU should consider additional steps to help its first-year students.

Second, the NSSE institutional report states that for all but one question, positive scores reflect favorable status. This is true when questions are considered separately but this is not necessarily the case when questions are considered together. For example, when question 7e – “Relaxing and socializing” (watching TV, partying, exercising, etc.) is considered with the relatively negative scores of both first-year and senior WMU students on question 9a (Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work), it may be that WMU is less academically challenging for its students than are other institutions represented in the doctoral-extensive average scores.

Overall, the highest positive WMU scores (please see Table 3 – WMU's Highest Positive and Negative Mean Scores) in comparison with the overall average for doctoral/research universities - extensive involved questions in three categories: academic and intellectual experiences (category 1), reading and writing (category 3), and time usage (category 7). Conversely, the highest negative scores for WMU student responses involve questions in five categories: academic and intellectual experiences (category 1), enriching educational experiences (category 6), educational and personal growth (category 8), institutional environment (category 9), and overall educational experience satisfaction (category 11).

**TABLE 3**

**WMU’s Highest Positive and Lowest Negative Mean Scores  
Compared to Scores for Other NSSE Doctoral/Research Universities - Extensive<sup>1</sup>**

POSITIVE SCORES		NEGATIVE SCORES	
First-Year Students	Senior Students	First-Year Students	Senior Students
Q 1g: Worked with other students on projects during class ** .21	Q 7c: Working for pay off-campus *** .39	Q 6e: Foreign language coursework *** -.36	Q 6e: Foreign language coursework *** -.28
Q 3e: Number of written pages or reports of fewer than 5 pages ** .20	Q 1b: Made a class presentation ** .23	Q 9a: Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work *** -.34	Q 8f: Learning effectively on your own *** -.26
Q 7e: Relaxing and socializing (watching TV, partying, exercising, etc.) ** .19	Q 1g: Worked with other students on projects during class ** .23	Q 6d: Worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements *** -.32	Q 1u: Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own *** -.25
	Q 3e: Number of written pages or reports of fewer than 5 pages ** .21	Q 9b: Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically *** -.31	Q 9a: Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work ** -.23
<b>1. Confidence level is: ** = .01 level and *** = .001 Level</b>		Q 11: Satisfaction (evaluate your entire educational experience) *** -.30	Q 8b: Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills ** -.23
<b>Question Categories:</b> (1) academic and intellectual experiences, (3) reading and writing, (6) enriching educational experiences, (7) time usage, (8) educational and personal growth, (9) institutional environment, (11) satisfaction (evaluate your entire educational experience).			

On the “negative” side, the mean comparisons reported in Table 3 above may indicate a relative lack of diversity at WMU. This is reflected in questions about having “conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own” and having “had conversations with students who differ from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values” (1u and 1v). It is interesting to note that diversity questions (1u and 1v) are two rare occasions where WMU seniors scored lower than first-year WMU students, and in terms of the overall doctoral-extensive university average score. And, finally, WMU first-year and senior student averages about “foreign language coursework” (6e) were reported as the highest negative scores when compared to the average score for students at all doctoral-extensive.

Additional findings from the means score comparisons were:

- The average score of WMU seniors was higher than the score for students at all doctoral-extensive institutions concerning **off-campus work** for pay, while WMU students scored about the same as students at other NSSE institutions for on-campus work. This may suggest several things. For example, it may suggest that WMU students have higher than average occupational opportunities off-campus, which are academically more enriching. It could also suggest that WMU students struggle to “juggle” school and work, especially when the off-campus work score is considered in combination with the question about “acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills,” where WMU seniors scored below the doctoral-extensive institutional average.
- In two aspects of student academic and intellectual experiences (category 1), WMU students scored higher than students for the doctoral-extensive average, notably concerning collaborative class work (“worked with other students on projects during class,” 1g), where both first-year and senior WMU students scored higher than the overall doctoral-extensive average. WMU seniors also made more class presentations than the overall average.
- Another question where both first-year and senior WMU student scores were higher than the doctoral-extensive average concerned the “number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages” (question 3e). The data report that WMU first-year students wrote more papers that were fewer than five pages in length than students elsewhere. This question about papers under five pages in length is related to another question concerning papers or reports of 5-19 pages in length, and another related question about papers of 20 pages or longer. WMU first-year students fared slightly better than was reported for all other the doctoral-extensive averages for the three aspects of paper-length questions, while WMU seniors scored slightly lower than the average with regard to papers longer than five pages. Additionally, more WMU students “made a class presentation” (1b) more frequently than other students reporting for other doctoral/research universities - extensive.
- Another characteristic suggested from the survey data is that both first-year and senior WMU students spend less time studying and on academic work than is reported for students at the other doctoral-extensive universities. This is supported by the score for the question “spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work” (9a).
- First-year WMU students also had a lower average score than was reported for the doctoral-extensive average score on the question about “providing the support you need to help you succeed academically.” This score may suggest that WMU should consider providing more academic and social support to its first-year students.
- Category 8 (educational and personal growth) also deserves comment. Here, WMU seniors scored slightly lower than the overall average score for seniors at other doctoral-extensive institutions on questions involving “thinking critically and analytically” (8a), “analyzing quantitative problems” (8b), “using computing and information technology” (8c), “learning effectively on your own” (8f), “understanding

yourself” (8g), and “solving complex real-world problems” (8i).<sup>2</sup> Finally, it is worth mentioning that WMU seniors scored lower than the doctoral-extensive average for the question concerning “acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills” (8b).

Some of the slight differences between WMU student scores and the doctoral-extensive average may be attributed to errors in sample representativeness as was noted earlier in the report. For example, the under-representation of WMU male students in the sample may have been an influencing factor in some instances. Although cross-tabulations controlling for gender yield only slight variations, in some instances, these may have been significant enough to produce the observed differences. Note that in some instances (e.g., diversity questions) the under-representation of male students decreases the potential difference from the doctoral-extensive average rather than increasing differences. Still, the most pronounced differences are produced when controlling for majors.

Given that the NSSE sample did not exactly represent the various WMU majors, we may assume that some of the variation exhibited by WMU scores in comparison to the overall average may be explained by this lack of representativeness. Given the sometimes pronounced, differing experiences, as well as responses, of various racial/ethnic groups, the over-representation of “Caucasian/white” students in the WMU NSSE sample also may be an influencing factor. Concerning the question “had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own,” the ratio of the response “never” varied significantly by major (6.3 percent for students majoring in visual and performing arts, to 23.4 percent for business majors, to 50 percent for computer and information services majors).

## INDIVIDUAL QUESTION ANALYSES

This section of the report presents the results for individual scores of WMU students for the questions contained in the 2002 NSSE survey instrument.

**A. Use of Time** items asked students to estimate how many hours per week they spend in various activities. The 2002 NSSE results are reported in Table 4 following and some observations from that data are:

- WMU students (both first-year and senior students) spend fewer hours in class preparation than do students at other doctoral-extensive institutions. Slightly more

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<sup>2</sup> Note that category 8 has (presumably by mistake) two sets of ‘a’ through ‘d’ responses. The discussion here refers to the second set.

than half of WMU students spend up to 10 hours per week preparing for class, while another third spend 11-20 hours per week in class preparation.

- Slightly more than 18 percent of WMU seniors spend more than 20 hours per week preparing for class, and 12 percent of first-year WMU students spend more than 20 hours per week preparing for class. The doctoral-extensive institutional average for first-year students is 22 percent and for seniors is 23 percent spending more than 20 hours per week in class preparation.
- Thirty-two percent of first-year WMU students spend more than 20 hours per week relaxing and socializing, compared to 26 percent for other first-year doctoral-extensive students. Only one in six WMU seniors devotes that much time to relaxation, which is almost identical to seniors at other doctoral-extensive institutions.
- Eight percent of female WMU students, in contrast to 18 percent of WMU male students, spend more than 30 hours a week relaxing and socializing.
- About 40 percent of WMU students participate in co-curricular activities with the majority of those who participate spending 5 hours per week or less, which is less time spent than the average for other doctoral-extensive students.
- The majority of WMU students spend five hours per week or less commuting to class. Male students spend somewhat more time than females commuting to school – only 12 percent of male students spent no time commuting in contrast to 25 percent of female students.
- The majority of WMU seniors (62.2 percent) work from 11 to 20 hours per week off-campus. A higher proportion of WMU seniors (38 percent) work more than 20 hours per week for pay off-campus while the same average for other doctoral-extensive seniors is reported to be 25 percent.
- The majority of WMU students (as is true for the majority of students at other doctoral-extensive institutions) do not spend time providing care for dependents. In particular, 84 percent of male and 74 percent of female students spend no time caring for dependents. However, 7 percent of WMU females, as opposed to 1.5 percent of WMU males, spend more than 30 hours per week caring for dependents.

**TABLE 4**  
**Students' Use Of Time**

In an average 7-day week, how many hours per day do you typically spend doing the following:	Hours/Week	First-Year Students		Senior Students	
		WMU%	Doc-Ext%	WMU%	Doc-Ext%
Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, and other activities related to your academic program)	0-10	52.2	41.5	54.7	45.1
	11-20	35.6	36.6	27.1	32.1
	>20	12.2	21.9	18.2	22.9
Working for pay on campus	0-10	91.7	90.5	85.1	81.1
	11-20	7.3	8.2	9.9	13.7
	>20	1	1.3	5	5.1
Working for pay off campus	0-10	82.9	83.6	37.8	59.2
	11-20	12.2	8.8	23.9	16.2
	>20	4.9	7.6	38.3	24.6
Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, etc.)	0-10	92.7	87.5	90.6	87.9
	11-20	3.9	8.8	7.2	8.5
	>20	3.4	3.6	2.2	3.6
Relaxing and socializing (watching TV, partying, exercising, etc.)	0-10	32.7	38.3	51.1	49
	11-20	35.6	36.2	31.1	33.3
	>20	31.7	25.5	17.8	17.8
Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse, etc.)	0-10	96.1	96.5	84.1	86.6
	11-20	2.5	1.8	3.3	5
	>20	1.5	1.7	12.6	8.3

**B. General Learning Activities** asks students how often they have engaged in various general learning activities in the current (2001-2002) academic year. Table 5 reports the results for items in this category and combines the “often” and “very often” response categories for ease of reading and discussion. Although statistically insignificant, WMU scores were generally slightly lower than the doctoral-extensive institutional average in several cases noted below.

- More than two thirds (68-74 percent) of all WMU students have “often” or “very often” used e-mail to communicate with an instructor; and worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources. Still, the proportion of WMU students using e-mail is slightly lower than at other doctoral-extensive schools.

- About half (47-57 percent) of WMU students indicated they have “often” or “very often” discussed ideas from their readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, coworkers, etc.), asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions, used an electronic medium (list-serv, chat group, Internet, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment, put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions, included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs) in class discussions or assignments, received prompt feedback from faculty on their academic performance (written or oral), discussed grades or assignments with an instructor, prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in, worked harder than they thought they could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations, had serious conversations with students different from themselves (religious beliefs, political opinions, or values), and worked with other students on projects during class.
- About a quarter (24-29 percent) of WMU students indicated that they had “often” and “very often” talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor, and came to class without completing readings or assignments.
- Slightly more than one in ten (12-14 percent) of WMU students indicated that they had “often” or “very often” tutored or taught other students, discussed ideas from their readings or classes with faculty members outside of class, and worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.).
- Only six percent of WMU students indicated that they have “often” or “very often” participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course.
- WMU first-year students were noticeably less engaged (28 percent) than the doctoral-extensive institutional average (37 percent) in terms of work with classmates outside of class in preparation of class assignments. However, at 60 percent, WMU senior students are almost identical with the doctoral-extensive student average of 59 percent.
- Female WMU students (47 percent) work with classmates outside of class on class assignments slightly more than their male counterparts at 37 percent. Conversely, 53 percent of females and 68 percent of males stated that they have “never” or “sometimes” worked with classmates outside of class.
- Fifteen percent of WMU female students, in contrast to only six percent of males, reported that “very often” they worked harder than they thought they could to meet an instructor’s standards or expectations.
- WMU participants in general (43 percent first-year and 52 percent seniors) worked more with “other students on projects during class” than do students at other doctoral-extensive universities (35 percent and 40 percent respectively).
- WMU students were in general less engaged (43 percent first-year and 40 percent seniors) in serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than their own than were students at other doctoral-extensive universities.

Student responses to the last two questionnaire items in this section of the survey – “had conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own” and “had conversations with students who differ from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values” - may point to a relative lack of involvement among diverse students at WMU. Responses to these two questions comprise the two rare occasions where WMU seniors actually scored lower than first-year students in relation to the overall doctoral-extensive reported averages.

The data reported from questions in the learning activities section suggest that WMU senior students are generally more engaged in learning than are first-year WMU students. It is illustrative that in 18 of 22 indicators for this category, WMU senior student responses indicate higher engagement (higher “often” and “very often”) average scores than first-year students except in four cases. Of the four exceptions, three items had scores that were more or less equal between WMU first-year and senior students. The only learning activity indicator in which first-year WMU students were significantly more engaged was the preparation of “two or more drafts of a paper before turning it in,” in which 59 percent of first-year students (as opposed to only 38 percent of seniors) indicated that they had “often” or “very often” done so.

**TABLE 5**  
**General Learning Activities**

About how often have you done each of the following? (The “often and “very often” responses were combined.)	First-Year Students		Senior Students	
	WMU	Doc-Ext	WMU	Doc-Ext
	%	%	%	%
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	46	47	67	63
Made a class presentation	18	18	62	51
Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	59	54	38	42
Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	67	69	80	82
Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs) in class discussions or assignments	48	55	53	51
Came to class without completing readings or assignments	22	26	25	30
Worked with other students on projects during class	43	35	52	40
Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	28	37	60	59

<b>Table 5 General Learning Activities Continued</b>				
Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions	37	43	67	64
Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	9	14	19	18
Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course	1	7	11	10
Used an electronic medium (list-serv, chat group, Internet, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment	51	55	60	61
Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor	64	69	71	78
Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	45	46	54	57
Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor	23	27	34	37
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class	5	13	20	21
Received prompt feedback from faculty on your academic performance (written or oral)	43	49	58	58
Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations	49	48	48	51
Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.)	4	8	20	16
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, coworkers, etc.)	53	57	62	62
Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own	43	51	40	52
Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you (religious beliefs, political opinions, or values)	50	56	47	54

### **C. Reading, Writing, and Examinations**

#### ***Reading and Writing***

This portion of the survey asked students to estimate how much reading and writing they had done during the current (2001-2002) academic year. Much like students from other doctoral/research universities - extensive, about 80 percent of first-year and 70 percent of senior WMU students indicated that they had read five or more assigned books. Conversely, about 90 percent of all WMU students read 20 *assigned* books or less per year. The vast majority of all students indicated that they read 10 or fewer *non-assigned* books per year.

**TABLE 6**  
**Reading And Writing**

During the current school year, about how much reading and writing have you done?	First-Year Students		Senior Students		
	WMU %	Doc-Ext %	WMU %	Doc-Ext %	
Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings	0	0	1	1	1
	1-4	18	15	29	23
	5-10	39	37	36	35
	11-20	32	33	25	26
	>20	11	14	9	14
Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment	0	36	28	22	20
	1-4	51	55	53	54
	5-10	10	11	14	16
	11-20	2	4	7	6
	>20	0	2	4	5
Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more	0	79	86	54	50
	1-4	19	11	40	41
	5-10	1	2	3	6
	11-20	1	1	1	2
	>20	0	0	1	1
Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages	0	10	13	8	9
	1-4	52	49	52	42
	5-10	27	27	27	31
	11-20	10	9	11	13
	>20	1	2	2	4
Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages	0	2	3	7	6
	1-4	20	27	20	31
	5-10	31	32	28	27
	11-20	31	24	26	20
	>20	17	14	20	16

***Examinations***

This portion of the survey asked students to estimate the extent to which examinations have challenged them to do their best work. More than 75 percent of student responses from all institutions, including WMU, found the extent to which examinations have challenged them to do their best work to be high (categories 5, 6, and 7 combined). However, for most rankings, WMU senior students were somewhat less challenged by their exams than was reported for senior students at the other doctoral/research universities - extensive.

**TABLE 7**  
**Examinations**

Evaluate the extent to which your exams have challenged you to do your best work	First-Year Students		Senior Students	
	WMU %	Doc-Ext %	WMU %	Doc-Ext %
1 – Very Little	0	0	1	1
2	1	1	1	2
3	4	2	4	4
4	12	8	16	10
5	35	30	30	33
6	35	38	33	33
7 - Very much	14	20	14	17

***Coursework Emphasis***

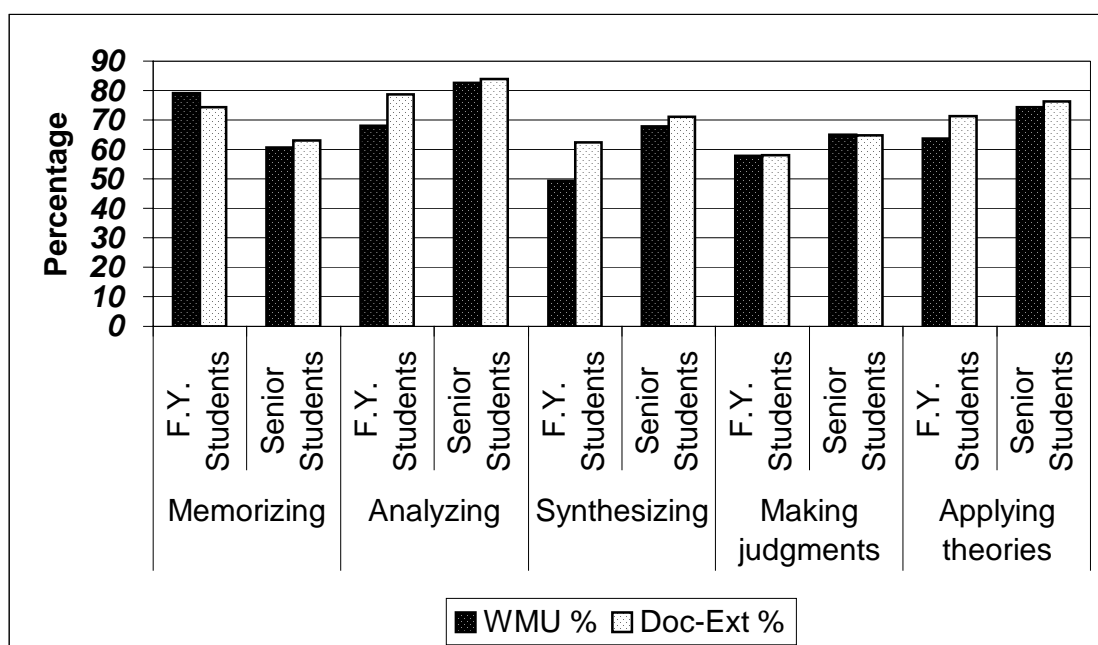
This portion of the NSSE survey asked students to estimate the extent to which their coursework emphasized various mental activities. In general, WMU participant responses were similar to the doctoral-extensive university average. The majority of both WMU and peer institution students indicated that their institution emphasized all indicators in this category “quite a bit” or “very much” (combined).

**TABLE 8**  
**Coursework Emphasis**

During the current school year, to what extent has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities?		First-Year Students		Senior Students	
		WMU %	Doc-Ext %	WMU %	Doc-Ext %
Memorizing facts, ideas or methods from your courses and readings	Very little	3	4	12	9
	Some	18	22	27	28
	Quite a bit	47	41	34	36
	Very much	32	34	27	27
Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory	Very little	3	2	3	2
	Some	29	19	15	15
	Quite a bit	44	45	46	41
	Very much	24	34	37	43
Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences	Very little	8	6	3	5
	Some	43	32	29	24
	Quite a bit	35	40	44	39
	Very much	14	22	24	32
Making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods	Very little	10	8	4	7
	Some	32	34	31	28
	Quite a bit	43	38	39	37

	Very much	15	21	26	28
<b>Table 8 Coursework Emphasis Continued</b>					
Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	Very little	7	4	4	4
	Some	29	24	21	20
	Quite a bit	42	38	38	34
	Very much	22	33	36	42

**To what extent has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities?**  
 ("Quite a bit" and "Very Much" responses combined)



**D. Academic Enrichment Activities:** This part of the NSSE survey asked students to state whether they have done, or intend to do, a variety of academically enriching activities. In general, WMU student responses were somewhat comparable to those of the doctoral-extensive institutional averages with noted exceptions.

- The majority of WMU participants indicated that they have either done or intend to undertake practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment (78 percent); and community service or volunteer work (59.5 percent).
- WMU students – both first-year and seniors – are less likely to study foreign language than their counterparts at other doctoral/research universities - extensive.
- Only about one in five WMU participants has done, or expressed interest in, studying abroad or working “on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements.” While only 14 percent of seniors studied (or intend to study) abroad, 29 percent of first-year students expressed their intent on doing so (or already did). Male students

are less inclined than females to study abroad, with only 14 percent of men responding favorably in contrast to a 26 percent favorable response from female students.

- Female WMU students seem less inclined to work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements. In particular, 54 percent of females, in contrast to 41 percent of males, responded negatively to this question.
- Female WMU students seem somewhat more engaged than their male counterparts in community service or volunteer work. Sixty-six percent of females, as opposed to 49 percent of males, have either been engaged, or plan to engage, in community service or volunteer work.
- Twelve percent of WMU first-year students undertook or intend to undertake independent study or self-designed major compared with 20 percent of WMU seniors.

**TABLE 9**  
**Academic Enrichment Activities**

Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?		First-Year Students		Senior Students	
		WMU %	Doc-Ext %	WMU %	Doc-Ext %
Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment	Undecided	19	14	5	8
	No	3	3	19	23
	Yes	79	82	77	70
Community service or volunteer work	Undecided	26	19	10	10
	No	11	8	33	28
	Yes	63	73	56	62
Participate in a learning community where groups of students take 2 or more classes together	Undecided	47	38	13	10
	No	29	31	62	68
	Yes	24	31	25	22
Worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements	Undecided	45	48	13	12
	No	34	23	67	61
	Yes	22	28	20	27
Foreign language coursework	Undecided	25	22	8	6
	No	45	33	64	53
	Yes	30	45	28	41
Study abroad	Undecided	37	34	7	7
	No	34	29	80	77
	Yes	29	37	14	17
Independent study or self-designed major	Undecided	40	37	9	7
	No	48	50	70	68
	Yes	12	13	20	25
Culminating senior experience (comprehensive exam, capstone course, thesis, project, etc.)	Undecided	51	50	14	9
	No	20	15	43	43
	Yes	30	35	43	48

### **E. Institutional Contributions to Knowledge, Skills, and Personal**

**Development:** Questions in this part of the NSSE survey asked students to estimate the extent to which their institutional experiences contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in various areas. The majority of WMU students indicated that WMU contributed significantly (with “quite a bit” and “very much” responses combined) to most items in this category. Two exceptions involved voting, where the majority of WMU students felt that WMU had made “very little” contribution, and in “contributing to community welfare,” where the majority felt that WMU had had “very little” or “some” contribution. Nevertheless, some conspicuous internal differences between WMU’s first-year and senior students were noted.

- Forty-one percent of first-year students and 75 percent of senior students indicate that WMU’s contributions to their acquisition of work-related knowledge and skills was significant when the categories of “quite a bit” and “very much” are combined.
- Seventy-two percent of male students and 59 percent of female students perceive that WMU contributes to their use of computing and information technology when the combined responses of “quite a bit” and “very much” for this item are considered. Conversely, 27.5 percent of males and 42 percent of females felt that WMU’s contribution in this area is “very little” or “some” when responses are combined.
- Twenty-seven percent of female students and 16 percent of male students felt that WMU contributed “very much” to development of “a personal code of values and ethics.”

**TABLE 10**  
**Institutional Contributions**

To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?		First-Year Students		Senior Students	
		WMU %	Doc-Ext %	WMU %	Doc-Ext %
Acquiring a broad general education	Very little	1	3	3	3
	Some	18	19	23	16
	Quite a bit	57	47	39	42
	Very much	24	31	35	39
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	Very little	20	16	5	8
	Some	39	37	20	24
	Quite a bit	27	31	42	34
	Very much	14	16	33	34
Writing clearly and effectively	Very little	9	9	4	5
	Some	23	30	24	25
	Quite a bit	50	40	49	41
	Very much	18	21	23	29
Speaking clearly and effectively	Very little	16	18	4	8
	Some	40	37	32	28
	Quite a bit	31	31	46	39
	Very much	13	14	18	25

Thinking critically and analytically	Very little	3	3	2	2
	Some	24	19	14	13
	Quite a bit	49	44	55	40
	Very much	25	33	30	45
Analyzing quantitative problems	Very little	9	10	6	6
	Some	48	33	36	27
	Quite a bit	34	38	38	37
	Very much	9	19	20	31
Using computing and information technology	Very little	10	12	4	6
	Some	30	30	28	22
	Quite a bit	34	33	42	34
	Very much	25	25	27	38
Working effectively with others	Very little	7	8	4	4
	Some	32	33	17	21
	Quite a bit	39	38	42	38
	Very much	22	21	37	37
Voting in local, state, or national elections	Very little	73	64	57	55
	Some	19	23	28	27
	Quite a bit	7	9	12	11
	Very much	1	4	3	7
Learning effectively on your own	Very little	5	5	7	5
	Some	30	21	25	18
	Quite a bit	43	42	42	40
	Very much	22	32	26	37
Understanding yourself	Very little	11	9	10	9
	Some	22	24	28	22
	Quite a bit	41	37	36	35
	Very much	26	29	26	34
Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	Very little	12	13	11	14
	Some	31	33	35	31
	Quite a bit	37	33	33	31
	Very much	20	21	21	24
Solving complex real-world problems	Very little	12	15	13	11
	Some	43	39	36	30
	Quite a bit	29	32	40	36
	Very much	15	15	11	22

Developing a personal code of values and ethics	Very little	16	16	19	17
	Some	26	30	29	28
	Quite a bit	33	31	31	30
	Very much	25	23	20	26
(Your) contributing to the welfare of your community	Very little	41	29	29	26
	Some	37	40	39	36
	Quite a bit	17	21	22	24
	Very much	5	10	10	14

**F. Opinions About Your School:** This section of the NNSE survey asked students to express their opinions about the institution they are currently attending and whether they would attend again the institution again if starting over.

***(1) Institutional Emphasis***

In general, WMU responses in this category are somewhat lower than the other doctoral-extensive institutional averages as indicated in Table 11. The majority of WMU students felt that their institution strongly emphasizes (“quite a bit” and “very much” combined) spending time on academic work (67 percent) and on providing the support they need to succeed academically (58 percent). On the other hand, the majority of WMU students felt that their institution does not strongly emphasize (“very little” and “some” combined) helping them cope with their non-academic responsibilities, nor with providing the support they need to thrive socially. In particular, first-year students scored lower than the doctoral-extensive counterparts on the question “providing the support you need to help you succeed academically.” However, it is interesting to note that WMU seniors fared considerably better than first-year students in terms of the doctoral-extensive averages. Similarly, although WMU first-year student opinions concerning the promotion of diversity by WMU are lower than the first-year doctoral-extensive average, WMU senior student opinions are similar to the comparable doctoral-extensive average.

**TABLE 11**  
**Institutional Emphasis**

To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following?		First-Year Students		Senior Students	
		WMU %	Doc-Ext %	WMU %	Doc-Ext %
Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	Very little	4	3	5	3
	Some	28	19	29	21
	Quite a bit	51	46	42	46
	Very much	17	32	23	30
Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	Very little	11	5	9	10
	Some	30	26	36	33
	Quite a bit	46	44	43	39
	Very much	14	25	13	18
Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	Very little	21	17	23	24
	Some	41	34	44	37
	Quite a bit	27	30	19	25
	Very much	11	19	13	14
Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	Very little	42	34	50	46
	Some	37	39	38	35
	Quite a bit	17	19	8	13
	Very much	4	7	4	5
Providing the support you need to thrive socially	Very little	22	21	37	32
	Some	41	38	40	40
	Quite a bit	31	29	17	20
	Very much	7	12	5	8
Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)	Very little	13	9	23	16
	Some	32	29	34	34
	Quite a bit	37	37	32	32
	Very much	18	25	10	17

**(2) Relationships With Others**

This portion of the survey asked students to rate the quality of their relationship with other students, faculty, and administrative personnel at the institution they are attending. Again, there are some conspicuous internal differences among WMU student data.

- The majority of WMU students indicated a positive relationship with others at WMU (response categories 5, 6, 7). However, 23 percent of WMU students indicated a negative relationship (response categories 1, 2, 3) with administrative personnel with about 10 percent indicating a negative relationship with other students or faculty members.
- Sixty-seven percent of African American students stated that their relationship with other students was friendly (categories 5, 6, 7 combined) in contrast to 84 percent of Caucasian students.

- Similarly, 43 percent of African American students felt that their relationship with administrative personnel was helpful or considerate (categories 5, 6, 7 combined), in contrast to 57 percent of Caucasian students.
- Sixty-two percent of African American students graded their overall educational relationships at WMU as “good” or “excellent” (combined) in contrast to 84 percent of Caucasian students.

**TABLE 12**  
**Quality Of Relationships**

Choose the option that best represents the quality of your relationship with people at your institution.		First-Year Students		Senior Students	
		WMU %	Doc-Ext %	WMU %	Doc-Ext %
Your relationships with other students	1 - Unfriendly, Unsupportive, Sense of Alienation	0	1	0	1
	2	3	2	2	2
	3	7	4	5	4
	4	6	10	9	10
	5	19	20	18	21
	6	35	32	40	33
	7- Friendly, Supportive, Sense of Belonging	29	32	26	30
Your relationships with faculty members	1 - Unavailable, Unhelpful, Unsympathetic	0	1	0	1
	2	4	2	1	3
	3	9	6	7	6
	4	20	17	16	15
	5	37	33	25	28
	6	24	29	39	32
	7 - Available, Helpful, Sympathetic	5	11	12	16
Your relationships with administrative personnel and offices	1 - Unhelpful, Inconsiderate, Rigid	4	3	5	6
	2	8	6	5	10
	3	11	11	13	13
	4	20	21	22	20
	5	28	28	23	24
	6	24	22	25	18
	7 - Helpful, Considerate, Flexible	5	9	7	9

***(3) Quality of Academic Advising***

Sixty-four percent of WMU first-year students and 60 percent of WMU seniors evaluated the quality of academic advising as “good” or “excellent” when their responses are combined. However, substantially fewer WMU students rated the academic advising as “excellent” when compared to the

average in the “excellent” category for all doctoral/research universities - extensive. Twelve percent of both first-year and senior WMU students reported a “poor” quality of academic advising.

**TABLE 13**  
**Quality Of Academic Advising**

Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution?	First Year Students		Senior Students	
	WMU %	Doc-Ext %	WMU %	Doc-Ext %
Poor	12	9	12	15
Fair	24	24	28	27
Good	51	45	47	37
Excellent	13	22	13	21

**(4) Overall Evaluation**

These two NSSE questions seek an aggregate assessment of students’ educational experience as well as some indication of their overall institutional satisfaction. Most WMU student responses are similar to those for other doctoral/research universities - extensive.

- More than 80 percent of WMU students reported that their entire educational experience at WMU was either “good” or “excellent” with responses combined. Only 4 percent of first-year students and 2 percent of seniors evaluated their educational experience as “poor.” These scores are roughly comparable to the doctoral-extensive institutional average although WMU’s first-year student responses are notably higher except for the “excellent” category.
- Eighty percent of WMU students indicated that they would attend the same institution with the “probably yes” and “definitely yes” responses combined. Only 8 percent of WMU first-year students and 3 percent of seniors responded “definitely no” to this question with the first-year student response higher again than for other doctoral-extensive schools.
- About 82 percent of Caucasian students at WMU stated that they either “probably” or “definitely” would go to the same institution if they could start over again. This is a similar rate as for other, smaller minority groups that range from 70 to 82 percent. Yet the Caucasian student response is considerably higher than the 57 percent favorable response from WMU’s African American students.

**TABLE 14**

**Entire Educational Experience**

<b>How would you evaluate your entire education experience at this institution?</b>	<b>First-Year Students</b>		<b>Senior Students</b>	
	<b>WMU %</b>	<b>Doc-Ext %</b>	<b>WMU %</b>	<b>Doc-Ext %</b>
Poor	4	1	2	2
Fair	14	12	14	13
Good	63	55	59	52
Excellent	19	32	25	33

**TABLE 15**

**Attend Same Institution**

<b>If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?</b>	<b>First-Year Students</b>		<b>Senior Students</b>	
	<b>WMU %</b>	<b>Doc-Ext %</b>	<b>WMU %</b>	<b>Doc-Ext %</b>
Definitely no	8	3	3	5
Probably no	12	12	17	14
Probably yes	46	42	46	43
Definitely yes	34	43	34	38

## **APPENDIX 1**

## Appendix 1

This appendix contains WMU student responses in the form of percentages for all questions included in the survey. Demographics of student respondents are found at the end of this appendix.

### **About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following?**

		First-Year Students		Seniors	
		WMU %	Doc-Ext %	WMU %	Doc-Ext %
Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, and other activities related to your academic program)	0 hours/week	0	1	1	0
	1-5 hours/week	28	17	29	20
	6-10 hours/week	24	24	25	24
	11-15 hours/week	21	21	13	17
	16-20 hours/week	15	16	14	15
	21-25 hours/week	6	10	11	9
	26-30 hours/week	4	7	3	6
	More than 30 hours/week	2	5	4	8
Working for pay on campus	0 hours/week	82	81	78	70
	1-5 hours/week	3	3	2	4
	6-10 hours/week	6	6	4	8
	11-15 hours/week	4	5	4	7
	16-20 hours/week	3	3	6	7
	21-25 hours/week	1	1	2	2
	26-30 hours/week	0	0	1	1
	More than 30 hours/week	0	0	2	2
Working for pay off campus	0 hours/week	72	75	31	48
	1-5 hours/week	6	4	2	5
	6-10 hours/week	4	4	5	7
	11-15 hours/week	6	4	9	7
	16-20 hours/week	6	4	14	9
	21-25 hours/week	2	3	13	7
	26-30 hours/week	1	2	9	5
	More than 30 hours/week	1	2	16	12
Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, etc.)	0 hours/week	59	41	57	46
	1-5 hours/week	26	34	24	31
	6-10 hours/week	8	12	9	11
	11-15 hours/week	2	6	5	5
	16-20 hours/week	2	3	2	3
	21-25 hours/week	1	2	1	2
	26-30 hours/week	1	1	0	1
	More than 30 hours/week	0	1	2	1

**About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following? (continued from previous page).**

		First-Year Students		Seniors	
		WMU %	Doc-Ext %	WMU %	Doc-Ext %
Relaxing and socializing (watching TV, partying, exercising, etc.)	0 hours/week	0	1	1	1
	1-5 hours/week	8	15	23	20
	6-10 hours/week	24	23	27	28
	11-15 hours/week	20	21	19	19
	16-20 hours/week	16	16	12	14
	21-25 hours/week	9	10	7	7
	26-30 hours/week	10	6	1	4
	More than 30 hours/week	13	10	9	6
Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse, etc.)	0 hours/week	84	86	70	72
	1-5 hours/week	10	8	12	9
	6-10 hours/week	2	2	2	5
	11-15 hours/week	1	1	1	3
	16-20 hours/week	1	1	2	2
	21-25 hours/week	0	0	2	1
	26-30 hours/week	0	0	2	1
	More than 30 hours/week	1	1	9	6
Commuting to class	0 hours/week	29	36	12	18
	1-5 hours/week	61	51	68	61
	6-10 hours/week	6	8	16	14
	11-15 hours/week	1	3	2	4
	16-20 hours/week	0	1	1	1
	21-25 hours/week	1	0	1	1
	26-30 hours/week	0	0	0	0
	More than 30 hours/week	0	0	1	1

**In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?**

	First-Year Students				Senior Students			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very often
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	6	49	33	13	3	29	34	33
Made a class presentation	31	51	16	2	5	34	36	26
Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	16	25	31	28	17	44	22	16
Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	2	31	48	19	2	19	39	41

Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs) in class discussions or assignments	10	43	31	17	9	38	32	21
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	First-Year Students				Senior Students			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very often
Came to class without completing readings or assignments	12	66	17	5	17	58	19	6
Worked with other students on projects during class	6	51	36	7	9	39	36	16
Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	19	53	23	5	7	33	39	21
Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions	8	56	30	7	4	30	43	24
Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	60	31	8	1	49	32	11	8
Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course	86	12	1	0	61	29	7	4
Used an electronic medium (list-serv, chat group, Internet, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment	15	34	29	22	10	30	30	30
Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor	5	30	36	28	1	28	37	34
Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	8	47	34	11	4	43	30	24
Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor	32	45	18	5	16	50	26	8
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class	49	45	3	2	34	46	14	6
Received prompt feedback from faculty on your academic performance (written or oral)	9	48	33	10	3	40	42	16
Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations	8	43	38	11	5	47	36	12
Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.)	80	15	4	0	58	22	14	6
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, coworkers, etc.)	5	42	37	16	3	35	43	19
Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own	19	38	24	19	16	44	25	15
Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you (religious beliefs, political opinions, or values)	10	40	25	25	15	38	32	15

**During the current school year, to what extent has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities?**

	First-Year Students				Senior Students			
	Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much	Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much
Coursework emphasizes: Memorizing facts, ideas or methods from your courses and readings	3	18	47	32	12	27	34	27
Coursework emphasizes: Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory	3	29	44	24	3	15	46	37
Coursework emphasizes: Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences	8	43	35	14	3	29	44	24
Coursework emphasizes: Making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods	10	32	43	15	4	31	39	26
Coursework emphasizes: Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	7	29	42	22	4	21	38	36

**During the current school year, about how much reading and writing have you done?**

	None	1-4	5-10	11-20	>20	None	1-4	5-10	11-20	>20
Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings	0	18	39	32	11	1	29	36	25	9
Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment	36	51	10	2	0	22	53	14	7	4
Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more	79	19	1	1	0	54	40	3	1	1
Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages	10	52	27	10	1	8	52	27	11	2
Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages	2	20	31	31	17	7	20	28	26	20

**Evaluate the extent to which your examinations during the current school year have challenged you to do your best work.**

	First-Year Students	Senior Students
Very little	0	1
2	1	1
3	4	4
4	12	16
5	35	30
6	35	33
Very much	14	14

**Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution?**

	First-Year Students	Senior Students
Poor	12	12
Fair	24	28
Good	51	47
Excellent	13	13

**Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?**

	First-Year Students			Senior Students		
	Undecided	No	Yes	Undecided	No	Yes
Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment	19	3	79	5	19	77
Community service or volunteer work	26	11	63	10	33	56
Participate in a learning community where groups of students take 2 or more classes together	47	29	24	13	62	25
Worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements	45	34	22	13	67	20
Foreign language coursework	25	45	30	8	64	28
Study abroad	37	34	29	7	80	14
Independent study or self-designed major	40	48	12	9	70	20
Culminating senior experience (comprehensive exam, capstone course, thesis, project, etc.)	51	20	30	14	43	43

**To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?**

	First-Year Students				Senior Students			
	Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much	Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much
Contributed to:								
Acquiring a broad general education	1	18	57	24	3	23	39	35
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	20	39	27	14	5	20	42	33
Writing clearly and effectively	9	23	50	18	4	24	49	23
Speaking clearly and effectively	16	40	31	13	4	32	46	18
Thinking critically and analytically	3	24	49	25	2	14	55	30
Analyzing quantitative problems	9	48	34	9	6	36	38	20
Using computing and information technology	10	30	34	25	4	28	42	27

**To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas? (continued from previous page).**

	First-Year Students				Senior Students			
	Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much	Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much
Contributed to:								
Working effectively with others	7	32	39	22	4	17	42	37
Voting in local, state, or national elections	73	19	7	1	57	28	12	3
Learning effectively on your own	5	30	43	22	7	25	42	26
Understanding yourself	11	22	41	26	10	28	36	26
Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	12	31	37	20	11	35	33	21
Solving complex real-world problems	12	43	29	15	13	36	40	11
Developing a personal code of values and ethics	16	26	33	25	19	29	31	20
(Your) contributing to the welfare of your community	41	37	17	5	29	39	22	10
Emphasize:								
Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	4	28	51	17	5	29	42	23
Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	11	30	46	14	9	36	43	13
Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	21	41	27	11	23	44	19	13

Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	42	37	17	4	50	38	8	4
Providing the support you need to thrive socially	22	41	31	7	37	40	17	5
Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)	13	32	37	18	23	34	32	10

**(Choose the option) that best represents the quality of your relationship with people at your institution.**

		First-Year Students	Senior Students
Quality: Your relationships with other students	Unfriendly, Unsupportive, Sense of Alienation	0	0
	2	3	2
	3	7	5
	4	6	9
	5	19	18
	6	35	40
	Friendly, Supportive, Sense of Belonging	29	26

**(Choose the option) that best represents the quality of your relationship with people at your institution.**

		First-Year Students	Senior Students
Quality: Your relationships with faculty members	Unavailable, Unhelpful, Unsympathetic	0	0
	2	4	1
	3	9	7
	4	20	16
	5	37	25
	6	24	39
	Available, Helpful, Sympathetic	5	12

**(Choose the option) that best represents the quality of your relationship with people at your institution.**

		First-Year Students	Senior Students
Quality: Your relationships with administrative personnel and offices	Unhelpful, Inconsiderate, Rigid	4	5
	2	8	5
	3	11	13
	4	20	22
	5	28	23
	6	24	25
	Helpful, Considerate, Flexible	5	7

**How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?**

		First-Year Students	Senior Students
	Poor	4	2
	Fair	14	14
	Good	63	59
	Excellent	19	25

**If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?**

		First-Year Students	Senior Students
	Definitely no	8	3
	Probably no	12	17
	Probably yes	46	46
	Definitely yes	34	34

**B. WMU Student Frequencies for Demographics:** (Note that population figures are estimates, inferred from a variety of sources contained in the 2001 WMU Fact Book where some figures vary from table to table in the WMU Fact Book.)

**Gender**

	Sample		Population
	First-Year Students	Senior Students	All Students
	Col %	Col %	Col %
<b>Male</b>	34	36	47
<b>Female</b>	66	64	53

**Racial/ethnic identification**

	Sample		Population	
	First-Year Students %	Senior Students %	First-Year Students	All Students %
<b>Are you an international student?</b>	1.9	2.7	2	4
<b>Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?</b>	1.9	3.3	2	2
<b>American Indian or other Native American</b>	0.0	1.1	0	0
<b>Asian American or Pacific Islander</b>	1.0	0.5	1	1
<b>African American/Black</b>	4.4	4.4	4	5
<b>Caucasian/White</b>	90.8	88.0	90 *	87 *
<b>Other race/ethnicity</b>	0.0	0.0	N/a	N/a
<b>Multiple racial or ethnic identifications</b>	0.0	0.0	N/a	N/a

\* Note that this percentage refers to "White or Unknown" (<http://www.wmich.edu/apid/factbook/demoug.htm>, accessed on Jan 24, 2003)

### College classification (First-Year or Senior)

	Sample	Population
First-Year Students	55.4%	17%
Senior Students	44.6%	25%

### Enrollment status: Full time vs. part time

	Sample		Population
	First-Year Students (%)	Senior Students (%)	All Students (%)
Less than full-time	5	25	14
Full-time	95	75	86

### Fraternity/sorority membership

	First-Year Students (%)	Senior Students (%)
No	95	93
Yes	5	7

### Academic Major

Major	Sample		Population
	First-Year %	Seniors %	All Students %
Education	21	28	17
Business	17	16	21
Social sciences	11	6	N/a
Engineering	8	7	9
Communications	5	4	5
Health-related fields	4	9	4
Visual and performing arts	4	4	5
Biological/life sciences	4	4	N/a
Computer and information sciences	2	1	1
Humanities	2	2	N/a
Public administration	1	0	N/a
Two or more primary majors selected	1	2	N/a
Liberal/general studies	0	1	N/a
Foreign languages and literature	0	4	N/a
Mathematics	0	2	1
Physical sciences	0	3	N/a
Other	10	9	N/a
Undecided	6	0	N/a

Which of the following best describes where you are living now while attending college?

	First-Year. %	Seniors %
<b>Dormitory or other campus housing (not fraternity/sorority)</b>	88	7
<b>Residence (house, apt, etc) w/in walking distance</b>	4	23
<b>Residence (house, apartment, etc.) within driving distance</b>	8	69
<b>Fraternity or sorority house</b>	0	1
	100	100

Did either of your parents graduate from college?

	First-Year. %	Seniors %
<b>No</b>	39	46
<b>Yes, father only</b>	18	14
<b>Yes, mother only</b>	13	12
<b>Yes, both parents</b>	28	27
<b>Don't know</b>	2	1