

Investing All Units and Faculty in Using Results

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

OSU is committed to finding new uses of NSSE data and to reaching a broader range of faculty with college-specific resources and support.

Like many institutions, Oklahoma State University (OSU) is challenged by decentralization. This has complicated its efforts to disseminate NSSE data and reports and to implement change. In the past, although the university's assessment office provided an executive summary report of NSSE results to various offices and academic colleges, this report was not consistently helpful because its broad findings were not specific to the units' various needs and students.

The assessment office has since prioritized providing each unit with data pertinent to that unit's work and the students it serves. The office has also developed resources to make data more accessible to faculty and staff across campus, including a new internal OSU website, dedicated to data and reports, that provides links to NSSE resources and information on accessing the NSSE Report Builder.

Getting faculty more invested in using NSSE results has also been a priority at OSU. In this effort, the assessment office has made it easier for faculty to access NSSE data for their own

research endeavors. For example, two faculty members are comparing the engagement levels of in-state students who received need-based state-sponsored scholarships and those who did not.

Additionally, working with the Institute for Teaching and Learning Excellence (ITLE), the assessment office has helped inform faculty workshops on using NSSE results. In a meeting with the ITLE's support unit of instructional designers and various faculty members, for example, the assessment office provided a two-and-a-half-hour presentation on the implications of NSSE findings for faculty practice at OSU. The presentation included an overview of NSSE, information about the university's recent NSSE response rates and respondent demographics, details about OSU's selected comparison groups, and descriptions of areas of strength and areas for potential improvement. The presentation also included findings from Topical Modules and from BCSSE. The goal of the presentation was to identify what faculty were doing in their classrooms related to student engagement and what they could do to enhance it. One critical area of faculty practice that was identified correlates with NSSE's Higher-Order Learning Engagement Indicator.

Since that presentation to ITLE, enhancing students' higher-order learning across campus has become a focus at OSU. For example, among the newly developed ITLE faculty courses, which are hybrid in-person and online workshops, one of the courses focuses on more thoughtfully matching student needs with teaching methods; more deeply engaging students in content through activities that highlight analysis, application, and evaluation skills; and more closely aligning content assessments to teaching practices so that evaluation is more relevant and reliable. As evidence of this ITLE course's impact, a chemical engineering faculty member who completed the course has converted his lecture-based course into a course incorporating guided problem-solving tasks with embedded informal, formative assessments that allow him to gauge student learning immediately and to make adjustments where necessary.

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TIPS FOR MULTI-YEAR ANALYSIS

With access to multi-year data, institutions can measure change due to campus initiatives, identify trends, and confirm stability and reliability. Now that the updated NSSE has been in the field for five years, we offer support to institutions in their multi-year analyses.

Here are some tips for effectively using the data:

- Compare cohorts from one year to another (e.g., 2013's first-years vs. 2016's first-years).
- Make longitudinal comparisons (e.g., 2013's first-years vs. 2016's seniors).

Remember that:

- Engagement is a process measure, not an achievement measure;
- The first and senior years are different contexts with different engagement patterns;
- First-years include students who will leave your institution; and
- Seniors include persisters as well as transfers.

Suggested citation: National Survey of Student Engagement. (2017). Lessons from the field—Volume 4: Digging deeper to focus and extend data use. Bloomington, IN: Center for Postsecondary Research, Indiana University School of Education.

CCSSE Fuels Positive Institutional Change

St. Petersburg College (FL) | William Law, President

The Center has helped colleges across the country become more intentional about using data to move the needle on student success. For example, **St. Petersburg College (FL)** credits its work with Center data—collecting, tracking, and using data to measure outcomes—for motivating key changes in institutional policy.

The college administered the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (*CCSSE*), the Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (*CCFSSE*), and the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (*SENSE*) consecutively in 2011, 2012, and 2013. The data collected from these survey administrations were used by the campus provosts to create The College Experience, which integrates the 13 high-impact practices identified by the Center.

St. Petersburg also participated in the 2012 Entering Student Success Institute, the 2013 High-Impact Practices Institute, and the 2013 Kresge Foundation Student Success Institute: Men of Color in Community Colleges. These institutes, all hosted by the Center, allowed the college's leadership team to dive into and work closely with *CCSSE* and *SENSE* data. The institutes revealed key differences between various student groups and provided insight into how students were affected by college policies. As a result of this data exploration, the college dramatically changed its project management approach, became more proactive in training frontline staff, and improved communication with both staff and students.

“Because the *CCSSE* benchmarks are well aligned with the Achieving the Dream (ATD) principles, *CCSSE* data help ATD institutions analyze achievement gaps, identify student success strategies, and track their progress over time. For example, **Century College (MN)** used the *CCSSE* benchmarks to develop the GPS (Goals + Plans = Success) Student Life Plan. The college is continuing to use *CCSSE* data to track the effectiveness of this initiative. Similarly, **Jefferson Community and Technical College (KY)** used *CCSSE* benchmarks to identify priorities and continues to use the data to measure progress.”

— Martha Romero, Achieving the Dream Leadership Coach

Palo Alto College (TX) | R. Michael Flores, President

Palo Alto College (TX) administers *CCSSE* every two years as one of several methods of gauging student engagement and success. The college uses *CCSSE* data to improve processes and procedures so that they better promote student success.

For example, 2009 *CCSSE* results indicated a need to increase active and collaborative learning across all disciplines. Subsequent focus groups with students and faculty reinforced the need to move away from lecture-and-repeat teaching methods—and led to the development of problem-based learning as the college's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) topic. Classes implementing problem-based learning are now oversampled as part of each *CCSSE* administration to determine whether participating students perceive this active learning strategy as more beneficial and engaging than traditional teaching methods.

CCSSE data also support general education assessments at the college. Faculty have selected specific *CCSSE* items to measure student perceptions of personal competencies in critical thinking, communication, teamwork, personal responsibility, social responsibility, and empirical and quantitative skills. Using the survey responses, faculty develop action plans to improve student outcomes in these areas.

CCSSE data have informed several other initiatives at Palo Alto College and within the Alamo Colleges District. Since fall 2012, for example, the college has expanded learning communities to include one in three first-time-in-college students, a total of more than 450 students across

38 course sections. In addition, *CCSSE* data related to student participation in tutoring services led to the college's requiring tutoring for all students in developmental math and reading courses. And responses from students regarding the advising process helped the district develop a unique AlamoAdvise process model, which now serves as the advising model for all of the Alamo Colleges.

