

NSSE 2017 Summary Report

Prepared by the Office of Institutional Analysis

Administration Details

A link to the NSSE survey instrument was emailed to all first-year and final year undergraduate students in February 2017. Over a six week window, a series of four reminders was sent to non-responders. At the survey closing, 3,227 students from a possible 5,481 had completed the survey yielding an overall response rate of 59%. This level of response compares favourably to both the Ontario universities rate of 33% and the 2014 NSSE UWindsor response rate of 29%. The response rate

| by year of study | # | First-Year Response rate | MOE | # | Final Year Response rate | MOE |
|------------------|-------|--------------------------------|----------|-------|--------------------------------|----------|
| 2017 | 1,510 | 60% | +/- 1.6% | 1,677 | 58% | +/- 1.6% |
| 2014 | 876 | 27% | +/- 2.8% | 896 | 32% | +/- 2.7% |

Table 2: Response Rate by Faculty, 2017

| | First-Year | | Final Year | |
|--------|------------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| | # | Response rate | # | Response rate |
| FAHSS | 617 | 55% | 658 | 57% |
| BUS | 174 | 62% | 177 | 54% |
| ENG | 210 | 59% | 191 | 58% |
| HK | 137 | 74% | 123 | 64% |
| NURS | 86 | 79% | 186 | 53% |
| SCIENC | 326 | 63% | 342 | 61% |

As noted in past administrative surveys, females are slightly over-represented in that 58% of first-year and 61% of final year respondents are female compared to the UWindsor population rates of 50% in first year and 55% in final year. Other demographic variables specifically Domestic/Visa, Full-Time/Part-Time, living on campus/not are generally reflective of our student population.

Overall Satisfaction

NSSE asks respondents two summative questions:

- How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?
- If you could start over, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?

Seventy-nine percent (79%) of UWindsor first-year respondents evaluate their entire educational experience as excellent or good. This is higher than in the 2014 NSSE when the corresponding result was 72%. Figures 1 and 2 show there is no marked change in overall satisfaction from the 2014 results for final year students. UWindsor respondents in their final year continue to report lower levels of overall satisfaction than those in the Ontario comprehensive universities group (listed at end of the report).

Figure 1:

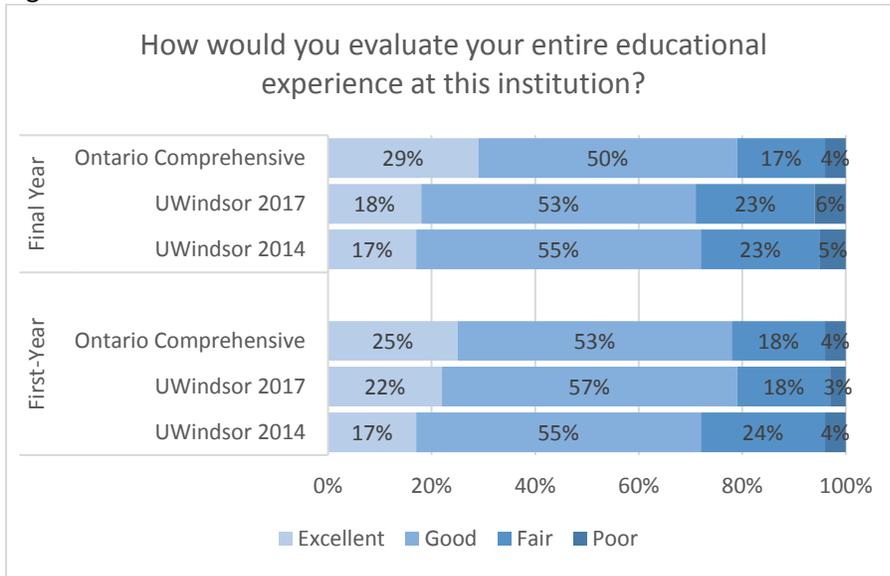
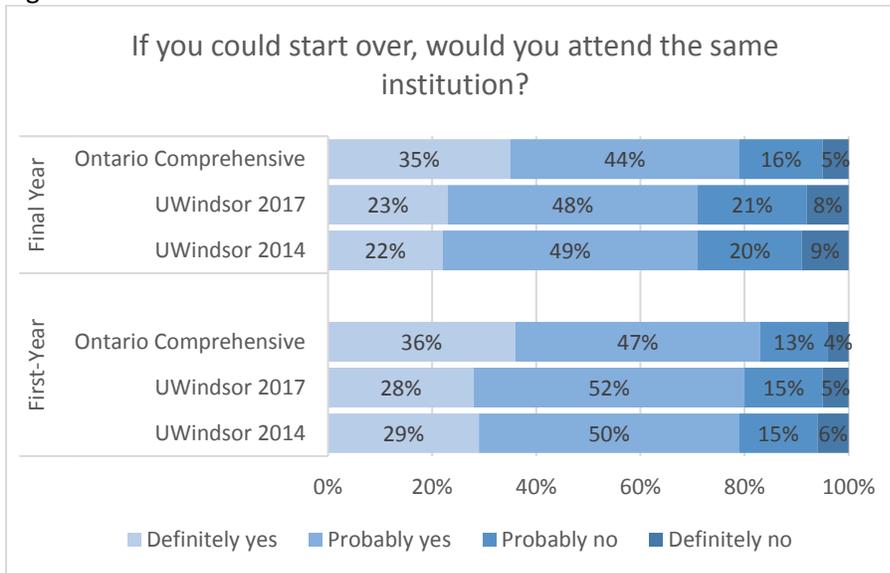


Figure 2:



High-Impact Practices (HIPs)

NSSE asks students about their participation in six HIPs. These practices are opportunities provided by universities which are positively associated with student learning and retention. The NSSE Institute recommends that students participate in at least two HIPs during their undergraduate studies - one in their first year and one that is connected to their major (NSSE, 2007). The six practices are participation in:

- Formal learning community where students take 2 or more courses together
- Courses that included a community-based project or service-learning

- Work with a faculty member on a research project
- Internship, co-op, field experience, student teaching or clinical placement
- Study abroad
- Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project, thesis, portfolio etc.)

Note that first-year respondents are only asked about their experiences in the first three HIPs while final year respondents are asked about all six opportunities.

In 2017, 50% of first-year and 80% of final year students said they participated in at least one HIP during their undergraduate program of study. This measure of participation has increased from 2014 particularly for first-year students when the corresponding rates were 44% and 78%.

The HIP that has grown the most since 2014 is having the opportunity to take a course that includes a community-based project or a service-learning component as shown in the following table.

Table 3: HIP Participation

| | First-Year | | Final Year | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|------|------------|------|
| | 2017 | 2014 | 2017 | 2014 |
| Service-learning | 47% | 39% | 58% | 52% |
| Learning community | 9% | 10% | 19% | 17% |
| Research with faculty | 4% | 5% | 22% | 22% |
| Internship or field experience | - | - | 43% | 43% |
| Study abroad | - | - | 6% | 6% |
| Culminating senior experience | - | - | 30% | 30% |
| <i>Participated in at least one</i> | 50% | 44% | 80% | 78% |
| <i>Participated in two or more</i> | 7% | 8% | 51% | 50% |

Engagement Indicators (EIs)

NSSE uses ten EIs to summarize different aspects of student engagement with each EI based on three to eight related survey items. The EI scores are produced by converting each component item to a 60-point scale (0=Never, 20= Sometimes, 40=Often, 60=Very often) and then calculating an average of the rescaled components. Thus, higher EI scores indicate greater levels of student engagement.

A detailed description of the ten EIs are included at the end of the report.

Table 4 shows the change in mean EI scores from the 2014 NSSE to 2017. With the exception of three EIs, there has been no meaningful change. The Collaborative Learning EI which represents the extent to which students collaborate with peers in learning situations has significantly increased for both first-year and final year students. As well, first-year students have seen a significant increase in the Quantitative Reasoning EI and final year students have a significantly lower Quality of Interactions score than in 2014.

Table 5 shows the UWindsor mean EI scores compared to those of the Ontario comprehensive group of universities. First-year UWindsor students have significantly higher scores on five of the ten EIs while final year students have significantly lower scores on five.

Table 4: EI Mean Scores 2017 and 2014

| Theme | EI | First-Year | | | Final Year | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|------|-----|------------|------|-----|
| | | 2017 | 2014 | Sig | 2017 | 2014 | Sig |
| Academic Challenge | Higher-Order Learning | 36.4 | 36.2 | | 37.0 | 37.2 | |
| | Reflective & Integrative Learning | 33.5 | 33.9 | | 35.5 | 36.6 | |
| | Learning Strategies | 36.9 | 38.0 | | 34.9 | 36.1 | |
| | Quantitative Reasoning | 25.3 | 22.9 | ↑ | 25.6 | 26.3 | |
| Learning with Peers | Collaborative Learning | 34.6 | 32.1 | ↑ | 33.5 | 31.0 | ↑ |
| | Discussions with Diverse Others | 39.5 | 38.9 | | 38.9 | 40.7 | |
| Experiences with Faculty | Student-Faculty Interaction | 16.1 | 15.4 | | 22.1 | 21.1 | |
| | Effective Teaching Practices | 34.9 | 34.4 | | 34.5 | 35.0 | |
| Campus Environment | Quality of Interactions | 36.5 | 37.4 | | 36.3 | 39.0 | ↓ |
| | Supportive Environment | 31.9 | 30.5 | | 26.9 | 27.2 | |

↑: 2017 EI significantly higher than 2014, $p < .05$

↓: 2017 EI significantly lower than 2014, $p < .05$

Table 5: NSSE 2017 EI Mean Scores for UWindsor & Ontario Comprehensive Universities Group

| Theme | EI | First-Year | | | Final Year | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|-------------|-----|------------|-------------|-----|
| | | UWindsor | Ont. Compr. | Sig | UWindsor | Ont. Compr. | Sig |
| Academic Challenge | Higher-Order Learning | 36.4 | 36.1 | | 37.0 | 37.3 | |
| | Reflective & Integrative Learning | 33.5 | 33.3 | | 35.5 | 36.2 | ↓ |
| | Learning Strategies | 36.9 | 34.1 | ↑ | 34.9 | 33.6 | ↑ |
| | Quantitative Reasoning | 25.3 | 24.9 | | 25.6 | 27.6 | ↓ |
| Learning with Peers | Collaborative Learning | 34.6 | 33.4 | ↑ | 33.5 | 33.6 | |
| | Discussions with Diverse Others | 39.5 | 39.6 | | 38.9 | 40.8 | ↓ |
| Experiences with Faculty | Student-Faculty Interaction | 16.1 | 13.7 | ↑ | 22.1 | 18.6 | ↑ |
| | Effective Teaching Practices | 34.9 | 33.6 | ↑ | 34.5 | 34.6 | |
| Campus Environment | Quality of Interactions | 36.5 | 37.4 | ↓ | 36.3 | 38.4 | ↓ |
| | Supportive Environment | 31.9 | 30.5 | ↑ | 26.9 | 27.8 | ↓ |

↑: 2017 UWindsor EI significantly higher than Ontario Comprehensive Universities, $p < .05$

↓: 2017 UWindsor EI significantly lower than Ontario Comprehensive Universities, $p < .05$

Student Experiences

Nearly nine in ten (88%) respondents report experiencing a sense of community on campus, most commonly in a class (50%) or in their academic program (36%). Only about four in ten respondents (43%) say they are encouraged by the university to attend campus activities and events (athletic events, performing arts, etc.).

The most frequently cited obstacles to academic progress are financial pressures or work obligations (78% for first-year and 84% for final year) and academic performance (72% for first-year and 69% for final year). While the average number of weekly hours worked by UWindsor students is estimated to be the same as in the Ontario comprehensive universities group (14.5 for first year and 17 for final year), UWindsor students are more likely to work; 58% of UWindsor first-year students and 65% of final year UWindsor students work for pay off campus compared with 37% and 50% respectively.

Twenty-three percent of first-year students seriously considered leaving UWindsor primarily due to personal reasons (35%) or academics being too difficult (29%). Two-thirds of first-year students are having quite a bit of difficulty managing their time and 47% have struggled to learn course materials. Nearly four in ten first-year students (37%) have experienced difficulty getting help with school work.

Nearing completion of their degree, more than 95% of final year students are confident in their critical thinking skills, creative thinking and ability to problem solve, research skills, ability to write clearly and think persuasively, technological skills and network and relationship building skills. Thirty-one percent have immediate plans to attend graduate or professional school and nearly eight in ten (79%) intend to work eventually in a field related to their major.

In the current year, 57% of final year students worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.) while 39% worked with a faculty member on a research project. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of students in their final year agree that their professors attempt to make students aware of their research and apply it to their teaching.

Seventy-one percent of respondents say their instructors are very clear about course goals and learning outcomes. Nearly all (96%) said their professors are mostly organized in their teaching with 74% frequently using examples or illustrations to explain difficult concepts. Fifty-seven percent regularly receive prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments and 66% have discussed their academic performance with a faculty member.

Ontario Comprehensive Universities (N=7)

Brock University
Carleton University
Ryerson University
University of Guelph
University of Waterloo
Wilfrid Laurier University
York University

Engagement Indicator Descriptions and Component Items

Theme: Academic Challenge

Higher-Order Learning

Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by calling on students to engage in complex cognitive tasks requiring more than mere memorization of facts. This Engagement Indicator captures how much students' coursework emphasizes challenging cognitive tasks such as application, analysis, judgment, and synthesis. Items include:

During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following:

- Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations
- Analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts
- Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source
- Forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information

Reflective & Integrative Learning

Personally connecting with course material requires students to relate their understandings and experiences to the content at hand. Instructors emphasizing reflective and integrative learning motivate students to make connections between their learning and the world around them, reexamining their own beliefs and considering issues and ideas from others' perspectives. Items include:

During the current school year, how often have you:

- Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments
- Connected your learning to societal problems or issues
- Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments
- Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue
- Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective
- Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept
- Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge

Learning Strategies

College students enhance their learning and retention by actively engaging with and analyzing course material rather than approaching learning as absorption. Examples of effective learning strategies include identifying key information in readings, reviewing notes after class, and summarizing course material. Knowledge about the prevalence of effective learning strategies helps colleges and universities target interventions to promote student learning and success. Items include:

During the current school year, how often have you:

- Identified key information from reading assignments
- Reviewed your notes after class
- Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials

Quantitative Reasoning

Quantitative literacy—the ability to use and understand numerical and statistical information in everyday life—is an increasingly important outcome of higher education. All students, regardless of major, should have ample opportunities to develop their ability to reason quantitatively—to evaluate, support, and critique arguments using numerical and statistical information. Items include:

During the current school year, how often have you:

- Reached conclusions based on your own analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics, etc.)
- Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)
- Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information

Theme: Learning with Peers

Collaborative Learning

Collaborating with peers in solving problems or mastering difficult material deepens understanding and prepares students to deal with the messy, unscripted problems they encounter during and after college. Working on group projects, asking others for help with difficult material or explaining it to others, and working through course material in preparation for exams all represent collaborative learning activities. Items include:

During the current school year, how often have you:

- Asked another student to help you understand course material
- Explained course material to one or more students
- Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students
- Worked with other students on course projects or assignments

Discussions with Diverse Others

Colleges and universities afford students new opportunities to interact with and learn from others with different backgrounds and life experiences. Interactions across difference, both inside and outside the classroom, confer educational benefits and prepare students for personal and civic participation in a diverse and interdependent world. Items include:

During the current school year, how often have you had discussions with people from the following groups:

- People from a race or ethnicity other than your own
- People from an economic background other than your own
- People with religious beliefs other than your own
- People with political views other than your own

Theme: Experiences with Faculty

Student-Faculty Interaction

Interactions with faculty can positively influence the cognitive growth, development, and persistence of college students. Through their formal and informal roles as teachers, advisors, and mentors, faculty members model intellectual work, promote mastery of knowledge and skills, and help students make connections between their studies and their future plans. Items include:

During the current school year, how often have you:

- Talked about career plans with a faculty member
- Worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.)
- Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class
- Discussed your academic performance with a faculty member

Effective Teaching Practices

Student learning is heavily dependent on effective teaching. Organized instruction, clear explanations, illustrative examples, and effective feedback on student work all represent aspects of teaching effectiveness that promote student comprehension and learning. Items include:

During the current school year, to what extent have your instructors done the following:

- Clearly explained course goals and requirements
- Taught course sessions in an organized way
- Used examples or illustrations to explain difficult points
- Provided feedback on a draft or work in progress
- Provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments

Theme: Campus Environment

Quality of Interactions

College environments characterized by positive interpersonal relations promote student learning and success. Students who enjoy supportive relationships with peers, advisors, faculty, and staff are better able to find assistance when needed, and to learn from and with those around them. Items include:

Indicate the quality of your interactions with the following people at your institution:

- Students
- Academic advisors
- Faculty
- Student services staff (career services, student activities, housing, etc.)
- Other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid, etc.)

Supportive Environment

Institutions that are committed to student success provide support and involvement across a variety of domains, including the cognitive, social, and physical. These commitments foster higher levels of student performance and satisfaction. This Engagement Indicator summarizes students' perceptions of how much an institution emphasizes services and activities that support their learning and development. Items include:

How much does your institution emphasize the following:

- Providing support to help students succeed academically
- Using learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, etc.)
- Encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ethnic, religious, etc.)
- Providing opportunities to be involved socially
- Providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counseling, etc.)
- Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
- Attending campus activities and events (performing arts, athletic events, etc.)
- Attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues