Purpose

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) annually assesses the extent to which undergraduate students are involved in educational practices empirically linked to high levels of learning and development.

Faculty, administrators, governing boards, state agencies, and prospective students are interested in what students say about their educational experiences. In an effort to facilitate productive discussion about student engagement and its importance to student learning, collegiate quality, and institutional improvement, NSSE created five clusters, or benchmarks, of effective educational practice:

1. Level of academic challenge
2. Active and collaborative learning
3. Student-faculty interactions
4. Enriching educational experiences
5. Supportive campus environment.

The benchmarks are based on 41 key questions from the NSSE survey that capture many of the most important aspects of the student experience. These student behaviors and institutional features are among the most powerful contributors to learning and personal development.

In this report, Georgia Southern University’s benchmark results are accompanied by those from national norms and comparable institutional groups to assist in determining the effectiveness with which the University and its environment are contributing to student learning.

Level of Academic Challenge

Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance.

The level of academic challenge at Georgia Southern University:

- exceeded or approached other institutional groups in both first and senior years
- exceeded first-year benchmark levels at 45% of participating Master’s institutions
- exceeded senior benchmark levels at 60% of participating Master’s institutions.

Active and Collaborative Learning

Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and asked to think about what they are learning in different settings. Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material prepares students for the complex, unscripted problems they will encounter daily during and after college.

The level of active and collaborative learning at Georgia Southern University:

- equaled the national norms in the senior year
- exceeded or approached other institutional groups in both first and senior years
- exceeded first-year benchmark levels at 40% of participating Master’s institutions
- exceeded senior benchmark levels at 55% of participating Master’s institutions.

Student-Faculty Interactions

Students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside the classroom. As a result, their teachers become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, life-long learning.
At Georgia Southern University, student-faculty interaction levels:

- exceeded or equaled national norms in first and senior years
- exceeded other institutional groups in both first and senior years
- exceeded first-year benchmark levels at 85% of participating Master’s institutions
- exceeded senior benchmark levels at 55% of participating Master’s institutions.

**Enriching Educational Experiences**

Complementary learning opportunities in and out of class augment academic programs. Diversity experiences teach students valuable things about themselves and others. Technology facilitates collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community service, and senior capstone courses provide opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge.

#### Supportive Campus Environment

Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive the working and social relations among different groups on campus.

The supportiveness of Georgia Southern University’s campus environment:

- exceeded or approached national norms in first and senior years
- exceeded or equaled other institutional groups in first and senior years
- surpassed first-year benchmark levels at 75% of participating Master’s institutions
- exceeded senior benchmark levels at 55% of participating Master’s institutions.

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**Georgia Southern University’s enriching educational experiences:**

- equaled or approached national norms in first and senior years
- exceeded other institutional groups in the first year
- exceeded first-year benchmark levels at 65% of participating Master’s institutions
- exceeded senior benchmark levels at 55% of participating Master’s institutions.

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*ADP = American Democracy Project, a consortium of 144 colleges and universities that share comparative data among their member institutions. A listing of the 32 ADP institutions participating in the NSSE is available at: [http://www.iub.edu/~nsse/html/consortia-list.htm#american](http://www.iub.edu/~nsse/html/consortia-list.htm#american)

1All percentiles in this report were obtained from intervals in the NSSE 2004 National Benchmark Deciles tables. Whenever an exact percentile point could not be obtained, the midpoint value of that interval served as an estimate.


NSSE website: [www.iub.edu/~nsse](http://www.iub.edu/~nsse)