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.

Georgia Southern University’s enriching educational experiences:

- for first-year students were slightly lower than those in the comparison groups
- for senior students equaled or exceeded other institutional groups
- for both first-year and senior students were lower than the national norms

At Georgia Southern, opportunities for Enriching Educational Experiences in 2005 were similar to those in 2004 for both first-year and senior students, with a small 2004-2005 increase for senior students accompanied by a very slight decrease for first-year students.

(∗Due to item content differences, the Enriching Educational Experiences benchmark measures from 2004 and 2005 cannot be accurately compared to previous measures; hence the exclusion of the 2002 values here.)

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

The supportiveness of Georgia Southern University’s campus environment:

- perceived by first-year students was generally similar to those in the comparison groups and the national norms
- perceived by senior students exceeded those in the comparison groups and the national norms

At Georgia Southern, first-year students’ perceptions of the University as a Supportive Campus Environment dropped substantially in 2005 after peaking prominently in 2004. Senior students’ perceptions, on the other hand, were stable across the three NSSE administrations.


Georgia Southern University, Office of Strategic Research and Analysis
2005 NSSE Benchmark Pamphlet
04/05/2006
Purpose

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) measures levels at which college students feel they are engaged in educationally meaningful activities associated with 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 the following five 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

These benchmarks are based on responses to key questions from the NSSE survey that capture many of the most important aspects of the student experience. Research suggests these student behaviors and institutional features are among the most powerful contributors to learning and personal development, and assist in determining the effectiveness with which the University and its environment are contributing to student learning.

In this document, Georgia Southern University’s 2005 benchmark results are presented in two distinct formats. First, the University’s benchmark scores are compared against those of: (1) a group of 20 comparison institutions from within the University System of Georgia; (2) all Carnegie-classified Master’s level institutions (Master’s) participating in NSSE 2005; and (3) NSSE 2005 national norms (National). Second, Georgia Southern’s benchmark data are depicted longitudinally across the three University NSSE administrations (2002, 2004, and 2005) to allow for examination of temporal variations and trends in student engagement behaviors and their perceptions of their undergraduate experience.

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.

At Georgia Southern, the Level of Academic Challenge declined in 2005 for both first-year and senior students, after peaking in 2004.

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.

At Georgia Southern, levels of Active and Collaborative Learning among senior students increased moderately from 2002 & 2004 to 2005 while first-year levels remained generally stable across the three NSSE administrations.

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.

In general, Georgia Southern University student-faculty interaction levels:

- for both first-year and senior students exceeded other institutional groups
- for both first-year and senior students exceeded national norms