To focus public awareness on what constitutes quality in the college experience, NSSE developed *A Pocket Guide to Choosing a College*. This helpful brochure gives prospective students and their families key questions to ask during their campus visits, allowing them to actively consider student engagement during the college choice process.


**Who can use this report?**

*A Pocket Guide to Choosing a College: NSSE 2017 Answers from Students* is a summary of student engagement on your campus. It may be of special interest to admissions professionals, particularly those distributing the NSSE pocket guide to visiting students. The results can also be used as a resource for orientation staff, advisors, faculty, and others who work regularly with first-year students.

**How can an institution customize and distribute results?**

*A Pocket Guide to Choosing a College: NSSE 2017 Answers from Students* is designed for sharing NSSE results. The report is delivered in both PDF and Excel formats so that institutions can easily insert logos, campus photos, or additional information. Institutions are encouraged to post copies of the report and other results from their NSSE Institutional Report 2017 on their websites.

**How can I get a copy of this report for my institution?**

Each participating institution designates a staff member to serve as the primary liaison for NSSE correspondence and reports. Known as the Campus Project Manager (CPM), the primary liaison may assist you in obtaining a copy. Contact NSSE for help identifying your CPM.

**How can I get copies of the NSSE pocket guide?**

College and university admissions officers may request up to 300 free NSSE pocket guides per year. Additional quantities are available for a small fee. A Spanish version of the NSSE pocket guide, *Una Guía de Bolsillo Para Escoger una Universidad: Preguntas a Hacer en Tus Visitas Universitarias*, is also available.

The QR code at left can be used to access a mobile version of the NSSE pocket guide. It is available on the NSSE website for institutions to include in their recruitment, college fair, and campus tour materials.

[nsse.indiana.edu/html/pocket_guide.cfm](http://nsse.indiana.edu/html/pocket_guide.cfm)

If you have questions about these resources, contact the NSSE Institute at nsse@indiana.edu or toll-free at 866-435-6773.
How do students rate their interactions with faculty?
45% of FY students rated the quality of their interactions with faculty as "high."

How often do students talk with faculty members or advisors about their career plans?
38% of FY and 41% of seniors "frequently" discussed career plans with faculty.

Do faculty members clearly explain course goals and requirements?
78% of FY students said instructors clearly explained course goals and requirements "quite a bit" or "very much."

How do students rate their interactions with faculty?
48% of FY students reported that their courses "highly" challenged them to do their best work.

How much writing is expected?
In an academic year, FY students estimated they were assigned an average of 48 pages of writing and seniors estimated an average of 69 pages.

How much reading is expected?
FY students estimated they spent an average of 6 hours per week on assigned reading, and seniors read 6 hours per week.

How often do students make course presentations?
54% of FY students and 56% of seniors "frequently" gave course presentations.

Do class discussions and assignments include the perspectives of diverse groups of people?
63% of FY students "frequently" included diverse perspectives in course discussions or assignments.

Are students expected to use numbers or statistics throughout their coursework?
41% of FY students "frequently" used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue; 56% of seniors "frequently" reached conclusions based on their own analysis of numerical information.

VCSU NSSE 2017 Survey Summary:

- First-year (FY) students spent an average of 16 hours per week preparing for class while seniors spent an average of 14 hours per week.
- 45% of FY students rated the quality of their interactions with faculty as "high."
- 48% of FY students reported that their courses "highly" challenged them to do their best work.
- 41% of FY and 56% of seniors "frequently" reached conclusions based on their own analysis of numerical information.
- 54% of FY students and 56% of seniors "frequently" gave course presentations.
- 63% of FY students "frequently" included diverse perspectives in course discussions or assignments.
- 41% of FY students "frequently" used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue; 56% of seniors "frequently" reached conclusions based on their own analysis of numerical information.
Learning with Peers

How often do students work together on class projects and assignments?\(^b\)
63% of FY students and 65% of seniors "frequently" worked with their peers on course projects and assignments.

Do students help each other learn?\(^b\)
63% of seniors "frequently" explained course material to one or more students.

How often do students work together to prepare for exams?\(^b\)
53% of FY students "frequently" prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students.

How often do students interact with others who have different viewpoints or who come from different backgrounds?\(^b\)
Among FY students, 65% "frequently" had discussions with people with different political views, 82% "frequently" had discussions with people from a different economic background, and 86% "frequently" had discussions with people from a different race or ethnicity.

Rich Educational Experiences

What types of honors courses, learning communities, and other distinctive programs are offered?
During their first year, 15% of students participated in a learning community. By spring of their senior year, 60% of students had done (or were doing) a culminating senior experience.

How many students study in other countries?
By their senior year, 12% of students had studied abroad.

How many students get practical, real-world experience through internships or field experiences?
By spring of their senior year, 52% of students had participated in some form of internship, co-op, field experience, student teaching, or clinical placement.

How many courses include community-based service-learning projects?\(^c\)
46% of FY students and 56% of seniors said "at least some" of their courses included a community-based service-learning project.

Notes
a. "Highly" is a 6 or 7 on a seven-point scale where 1 is "Not at all" and 7 is "Very much."
b. "Frequently" is "Often" or "Very often."
c. A "High" rating is a 6 or 7 on a seven-point scale where 1 is "Poor" and 7 is "Excellent."
d. "Substantially" is "Quite a bit" or "Very much."
e. "At least some" is defined by combining responses of "Some," "Most," and "All."

Campus Environment

Are students encouraged to use learning support services (tutors, writing center)?\(^d\)
77% of FY students said the institution "substantially" emphasized the use of learning support services.

How do students rate their interactions with academic advisors?\(^e\)
43% of FY students and 39% of seniors gave the quality of their interactions with academic advisors a "high" rating.

How well do students get along with each other?\(^f\)
51% of FY students gave the quality of their interactions with their peers a "high" rating.

How satisfied are students with their educational experience?
85% of FY and 84% of seniors rated their entire educational experience at this institution as "excellent" or "good."