What is NSSE?

- The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is a self-supporting auxiliary unit within the Center for Postsecondary Research (CPR) in the Indiana University School of Education.

- NSSE surveys undergraduate students regarding their engagement in a variety of academic and non-academic activities which have been empirically linked to desired educational outcomes.

- The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is administered annually at participating postsecondary institutions to first-year (FY) and senior (SR) students.
What is NSSE - continued

• The five benchmarks to be considered “good practice” captured by NSSE are:
  ➢ Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)
  ➢ Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)
  ➢ Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)
  ➢ Enriching Educational Experience (EEE)
  ➢ Supportive Campus Environment (SCC)

Level of Academic Challenge

• Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Campuses promote high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance.
• Activities & conditions:
  ➢ Time spent preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, and other activities related to your academic program)
  ➢ Worked harder than that you could to meet an instructor’s standards or expectations
  ➢ Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings
Level of Academic Challenge - continued

• More activities & conditions:
  ➢ Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more
  ➢ Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages
  ➢ Number of written papers or reports fewer than 5 pages
  ➢ Coursework emphasizes analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory
  ➢ Coursework emphasizes synthesizing and organizing ideas, information or experiences
  ➢ Coursework emphasizes making judgments about the value of information, arguments or methods
  ➢ Coursework emphasizes applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations
  ➢ Campus environment emphasizes spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work

Active & Collaborative Learning

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

• Activities:
  ➢ Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
  ➢ Made a class presentation
Active & Collaborative Learning – cont.

• More activities:
  – Worked with other students on projects during class
  – Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments
  – Tutored or taught other students
  – Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course
  – Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)

Student-Faculty Interaction

• Students see first-hand 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.

• Activities:
  – Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
  – Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
  – Discussed ideas or readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
  – Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.)
  – Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance
  – Worked with a faculty member on a research project
Enriching Educational Experiences

- Complementary learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom augment the academic program. Experiencing diversity teaches students valuable things about themselves and other cultures. Used appropriately, technology facilitates learning and promotes collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community service, and senior capstone courses provide students with opportunities to synthesize, integrate, and apply their knowledge. Such experiences make learning more meaningful and, ultimately, more useful because what students know becomes a part of who they are.

Enriching Educational Experiences – cont.

- Activities & conditions:
  - Talking with students with different religious beliefs, political opinions, or values
  - Talking with students of a different race or ethnicity
  - An institutional climate that encourages contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
  - Using electronic technology to discuss or complete assignments
  - Participating in:
    - Internships or field experiences
    - Community service or volunteer work
    - Foreign language coursework
    - Study abroad
    - Independent study or self-assigned major
    - Culminating senior experience
    - Co-curricular activities
    - Learning communities
Supportive Campus Environment

- 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.

- **Conditions:**
  - Campus environment provides support you need to help you succeed academically
  - Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
  - Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially
  - Quality of relationships with (1) other students; (2) faculty members; and (3) administrative personnel & offices

Sample Questions on the NSSE

The NSSE asks specific questions in each of the five “Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice” areas.

- In your experience at your institution during the current year, about how often have you done each of the following?
  - Made a class presentation (ACL)
  - Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor (SFI)
  - Come to class without completing readings or assignments (LAC)

- About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following?
  - Preparing for class (studying, reading, etc.) (LAC)
  - Participating in co-curricular activities (EEE)
  - Commuting to class (driving, walking, etc.)
**Sample Questions on the NSSE – cont.**

- To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following?
  - Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically (LAC)
  - Providing the support you need to thrive socially (SCE)
  - Help you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.) (SCE)

- During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities?
  - Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods...so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form (LAC)
  - Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory (LAC)
  - Making judgments about the value of information... (LAC)

---

**University of Hawai‘i at Hilo Participation Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>NSSE 2005</th>
<th>NSSE 2007</th>
<th>NSSE 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total surveyed</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respondents (n)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY</td>
<td></td>
<td>271</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR</td>
<td></td>
<td>229</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY</td>
<td>(F)144; (M) 100</td>
<td>(F)125; (M) 66</td>
<td>(F)146; (M) 62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR</td>
<td>(F)135; (M) 76</td>
<td>(F)151; (M) 67</td>
<td>(F)196; (M) 91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence (on-campus)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY</td>
<td></td>
<td>83</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time enrollment status</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>FY</td>
<td></td>
<td>228</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR</td>
<td></td>
<td>172</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started college at UH Hilo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY</td>
<td></td>
<td>195</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR</td>
<td></td>
<td>56</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who is UH Hilo being compared to?

- There are three (3) main groups that University of Hawai‘i at Hilo is being compared to:
  - Far West Public
    - University of Hawai‘i at Hilo selected the default group of all institutions with the same geographic region and sector
  - Selected Peers II
    - Specific institutions from a list of NSSE 2009 participants with similar mission/makeup
  - NSSE 2009

Who are these groups comprised of?

- Far West Public
  - Cal State Univ-Los Angeles
  - Cal State Univ -Stanislaus
  - Cal State Univ, Fullerton
  - Cal State Univ, Northridge
  - Eastern Oregon University
  - Eastern Washington Univ
  - Nevada State College at Henderson
  - Oregon Institute of Technology
  - Portland State University
  - Southern Oregon University
  - The Evergreen State College
  - University of Alaska Anchorage
  - University of Alaska Fairbanks
  - University of California-Merced
  - University of California-Santa Cruz
  - University of Hawaii-West Oahu
  - University of Hawaii at Manoa
  - University of Nevada-Las Vegas
  - University of Nevada, Reno
  - University of Oregon
  - University of Washington-Seattle
  - University of Washington Tacoma
Who are these groups comprised of?

- **Selected Peers II**
  - Alcorn State University, MS
  - Bemidji State University, MN
  - Kentucky State University, KY
  - Lincoln University of Pennsylvania, PA
  - University of Guam, GU
  - Winston-Salem State University, NC

### Comparable Benchmark Scores 2005-2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>NSSE 2005</th>
<th>NSSE 2007</th>
<th>NSSE 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>49.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td>57.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>52.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>46.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enriching Educational Experience (EEE)</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2009 Benchmark Scores in Comparison to Peers

The ‘+’ symbol indicates that your campus score is higher than the respective comparison group; the ‘‐’ symbol indicates a score lower than the comparison group; and a blank space indicates no significant difference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>UH Hilo</th>
<th>Far West Public</th>
<th>Select Peers II</th>
<th>NSSE 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How challenging is your institution’s intellectual and creative work?</td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are your students actively involved in their learning, individually and working with others?</td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do your students work with faculty members inside and outside the classroom?</td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enriching Educational Experience (EEE)</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do your students take advantage of complementary learning opportunities?</td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do your students feel the institution is committed to their success?</td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2009 Benchmark Scores: Freshmen vs. Seniors

- **Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)**: FY 49, Senior 57
- **Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)**: FY 40, Senior 52
- **Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)**: FY 31, Senior 47
- **Enriching Educational Experience (EEE)**: FY 25, Senior 40
- **Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)**: FY 62, Senior 60

- **First-Year**
- **Senior**
### Highest Performing Benchmark Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Percent of students who...</th>
<th>UH Hilo</th>
<th>Far West</th>
<th>Select Peers</th>
<th>NSSE 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-Year Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEE</td>
<td>Said the institution substantially encourages contacts among diverse peers</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCE</td>
<td>Positively rated their relationships with faculty members</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCE</td>
<td>Positively rated their relationships with administrative personnel &amp; offices</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCE</td>
<td>Said the institution substantially helps students cope with non-academic matters</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCE</td>
<td>Said the institution provides substantial support for students’ social needs</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFI</td>
<td>Discussed ideas from classes with faculty outside of class</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFI</td>
<td>Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFI</td>
<td>Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEE</td>
<td>Had serious conversations with students of another race/ethnicity</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEE</td>
<td>Said the institution substantially encourages contacts among diverse peers</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Lowest Performing Benchmark Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Percent of students who...</th>
<th>UH Hilo</th>
<th>Far West</th>
<th>Select Peers</th>
<th>NSSE 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-Year Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>Read more than 10 assigned books or book-length packs of readings</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>Wrote more than 4 papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>Spent more than 10 hours/week preparing for class (studying, etc)</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACL</td>
<td>Discussed ideas from reading or classes with others outside of class</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEE</td>
<td>Had serious conversations with students of other religions/political beliefs/values</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>Said courses emphasized analyzing ideas, experiences, or theories</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>Spent more than 10 hours/week preparing for class (studying, etc)</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>Said the institution emphasizes studying and academic work</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEE</td>
<td>Completed foreign language coursework</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEE</td>
<td>Completed a culminating senior experience (capstone, thesis, comprehensive exam)</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Student Experience in Brief

The following responses were provided by 575 randomly selected University of Hawai‘i at Hilo students on the 2009 NSSE Survey.

Academic Challenge (LAC)

- 26% of FY students spend more than 15 hours per week preparing for class; 27% spend 5 hours or less.
- 50% of FY students and 55% of SY students report that their exams strongly challenge them to do their best work.
- 71% of FY students feel that this institution places substantial emphasis on academics.

The Student Experience in Brief – cont.

Active Learning (ACL)

- 47% of FY students sometimes asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions, while 49% of SY students claimed to have asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions very often.
- 62% of FY students and 39% of SY students have never participated in a community based project (e.g. service learning) as part of a regular course.
- 24% of seniors frequently assist their fellow students by tutoring or teaching them.
The Student Experience in Brief – cont.

Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)

- 32% of FY students have never talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor, whereas 42% of SY students have discussed career plans often or very often with a faculty member or advisor.
- 91% of FY students and 94% of SY students have discussed grades or assignments with an instructor.
- 56% of FY students indicate that they frequently get prompt verbal or written feedback from faculty members.

The Student Experience in Brief – cont.

Enriching Educational Experience (EEE)

- 38% of FY students plan to do foreign language coursework. 30% of SY students report to have done foreign language coursework.
- 41% of FY students plan to do a culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc), whereas 29% of SY students report to have done a culminating senior experience.
- 24% of FY students frequently engage in spiritually enhancing activities such as worship, meditation, or prayer.
The Student Experience in Brief – cont.

Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)

• 88% of FY students report a favorable image of this institution; 83% of seniors would choose this school again if they could start their college career over.
• 36% of the students find the administrative personnel and office helpful, considerate, and flexible.
• 51% of FY students find that faculty members are helpful, considerate, and flexible.

Documenting Effective Educational Practice (DEEP) Project

• Study by Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research of 20 exemplary institutions of higher education that demonstrated higher-than-predicted graduation rates & better-than-predicted student engagement scores on the NSSE relative to the campus’ student & institutional characteristics

DEEP Institutions

- Alverno College
- California State University at Monterey Bay
- Evergreen State College
- Fayetteville State University
- George Mason University
- Gonzaga University
- Longwood University
- Macalester College
- Miami University
- Sewanee, University of the South
- Sweet Briar College
- University of Kansas
- University of Maine at Farmington
- University of Michigan
- University of Texas at El Paso
- Ursinus College
- Wabash College
- Wheaton College (MA)
- Winston-Salem State University
- Wofford College

Features of DEEP Campuses

- A “living” mission & “lived” educational philosophy
- An unshakeable focus on student learning
- Environments clearly adapted for educational enrichment
- Clearly marked pathways to student success
- An improvement-oriented ethos
- Shared responsibility for educational quality & student success
“Living” Mission & “Lived” Philosophy

- Stable mission focused on student success with sufficient elasticity to respond to change
- Espoused institutional values are enacted
- Key leaders frequently are “on message”
- Mission, values & aspirations are made transparent
- Space created for difference & public discussion of tensions/disagreements to sharpen institutional focus
- Policies & practices tailored to mission & student profile & earmarked by focus on student learning

Unshakeable Focus on Student Learning

- Authentic commitment to student learning & personal development
- Recruitment/retention of faculty/staff who prioritize student learning & experiment with engaging pedagogies
- Faculty/staff make a lot of time for students & do no substitute for human contact
- Recognition & accommodation of multiple learning styles, as well as provide active & collaborative learning approaches
- Faculty/staff challenge students to raise their aspirations, provide timely feedback, & support student needs
- Belief that every student can learn & succeed under the right conditions
Educationally Enriching Environments

- Build long-term relationships with the local community for mutual benefit
- Believe their location is a “good place for a college” & are “place conscious”
- Create learning environments from natural & constructed settings and through pedagogical approaches which foster strong attachments to the “place
- Maximize educational potential of residence halls
- Adapt interior/exterior spaces to reduce the psychological size of the campus & encourage participation in campus life

Clear Pathways to Student Success

- Mark clear routes to student success within academic programs (e.g., required first-year seminar, advising sessions, capstone courses) & beyond (e.g., convocation, traditions)
- Accurately describe what students experience
- Do not prescribe restrictive pathways to success yet also offer resources & services to foster student success
- Set standards based on what is reasonable for students’ experience & aspirations, then provide support (remedial, supplemental or enrichment) to help students achieve those standards
Improvement-Oriented Ethos

- Demonstrate confidence to question if performance matches potential
- Continually revisit/rework policies & practices to improve
- Experiment & invest in new ideas even when human & fiscal resources are limited
- Desire to provide challenging undergraduate curriculum fosters innovation
- Champion learning communities & create a campus-wide intellectual community
- Collect & use data to inform decision-making
- Improvement/innovation are embedded in the mission

Shared Responsibility for Student Success

- Leaders clearly & consistently articulate & role model core operating values & principles, as well as carefully select diverse faculty/staff who will honor them
- Educators are found everywhere on campus & practice the “power of one”
- Climate is one in which people from different backgrounds can survive & thrive
- Academic & student affairs colleagues exhibit collaborative spirit & positive attitude
- Students are expected to exercise responsibility for their own affairs & are held accountable for doing so
- Large numbers of caring, supportive individuals perform countless daily acts of kindness & thoughtfulness that make students feel wanted & important
Questions?

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Source:
Center for Post-Secondary Research
School of Education
Indiana University at Bloomington
National Survey of Student Engagement
Web: http://www.nsse.iub.edu

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