

# **National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)**

## **Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice**

To represent the multi-dimensional nature of student engagement, NSSE developed five indicators or *Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice*. Of the nearly 100 questions contained on the 2008 NSSE survey, 41 provide the basis of NSSE's five Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice: Level of Academic Challenge (LAC); Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL); Student-Faculty Orientation (SFI); Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE); and Supportive Campus Environment (SCE).

### **Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)**

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.

### **Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)**

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

### **Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)**

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

### **Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)**

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.

### **Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE)**

Complementary learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom enhance academic programs. Experiencing diversity experiences teaches students valuable things about themselves and other cultures. Used appropriately, technology facilitates learning and collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community service, and senior capstone courses provide 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.

# Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice

## 41 Key Items from the NSSE 2008 Survey

### Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)

- ◆ Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, etc. related to academic program)
- ◆ Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings
- ◆ Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more; number of written papers or reports of between 5 and 19 pages; and number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages
- ◆ Coursework emphasizing analysis of the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory
- ◆ Coursework emphasizing synthesis and organizing of ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships
- ◆ Coursework emphasizing the making of judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods
- ◆ Coursework emphasizing application of theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations
- ◆ Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations
- ◆ Campus environment emphasizing time studying and on academic work

### Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)

- ◆ Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
- ◆ Made a class presentation
- ◆ 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 (SFI)

- ◆ Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- ◆ Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- ◆ Discussed ideas from your 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 academic performance
- ◆ Worked with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements

### Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE)

- ◆ Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, publications, student government, sports, etc.)
- ◆ Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment
- ◆ Community service or volunteer work
- ◆ Foreign language coursework & study abroad
- ◆ Independent study or self-designed major
- ◆ Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.)
- ◆ Serious conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values
- ◆ Serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity
- ◆ Using electronic technology to discuss or complete an assignment
- ◆ Campus environment encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
- ◆ Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together

### Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)

- ◆ Campus environment provides the 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 other students
- ◆ Quality of relationships with faculty members
- ◆ Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices