



The SSI and NSSE

The **Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI)** and the **National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE)** are regularly administered on four-year colleges and universities. The two survey instruments capture different aspects of the student experience, but the items on each instrument also support each other. The combination of survey results provide a more complete perspective for institutions to consider.

The **Student Satisfaction Inventory** captures how students feel at the institution, both inside and outside of the classroom. It asks students to identify levels of importance and satisfaction with a variety of items including instruction, advising, registration, financial aid, residence life, campus climate, and others. It is administered across all class levels during any time in the academic year, as determined by the institution.

The **National Survey on Student Engagement** asks students to identify the amount of time and effort they put into their studies and other educational activities. The NSSE also captures student perceptions on the ways their institution provides resources, organizes the curriculum and encourages students to participate in activities that have been linked to student learning outcomes. The instrument is administered to first year and senior students only, in the spring of the academic year.

Using both the SSI and NSSE on your campus

Both assessments provide complementary opportunities to capture a more complete picture of the undergraduate experience which is central to promoting student learning, success, and educational attainment. Both instruments help campuses to think about how students interact with the institution.

Engagement assessments show how students invest their time, the effort they devote to various academic and co-curricular endeavors and the resulting gains they feel they achieve. Student satisfaction assessments look at satisfaction and the importance students place on various services, programs and experiences and the relative degree of satisfaction that results from their transactions. Student satisfaction assessments pinpoint areas within the institution that need immediate attention.

Student satisfaction and engagement assessments share some common characteristics as well. Both surveys examine important elements of the student experience with engagement assessments focusing more on the academic / classroom dimensions while student satisfaction assessments focus more broadly on the total experience. In addition, both instruments yield information designed to illuminate and improve student and institutional performance. Student retention results from high levels of student engagement *and* satisfaction.

Assessing both student satisfaction and student engagement is important in order to inform and guide an institution's retention efforts. Both types of assessments will provide timely, systematic, and relevant information on various facets of the undergraduate experience. Both instruments play an important role in crafting retention activities that improve student and institutional performance.

How this document can help

This document helps you to think about how the SSI and NSSE items are supportive to each other. It will help you to position the combination of items and see clearly how the survey tools complement each other. As you share the results on your campus, using this document as a guideline can assist you with explaining both sets of data to key campus constituents. It will help you to explore the student perceptions from the satisfaction and engagement perspective in similar areas on campus.

Keep in mind: Students are more likely to be satisfied if they are engaged, and more likely to be engaged if they are satisfied.

RNL Student Satisfaction Inventory™ (SSI) Four-year • Form B items (by scales) mapped to relevant items on the National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE) items

NSSE Version as of 2016

Academic Advising Effectiveness

SSI: Academic advising items

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| 10 | My academic advisor helps me set goals to work toward. |
| 16 | My academic advisor is available when I need help. |
| 21 | My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements in my major. |
| 38 | I receive ongoing feedback about progress toward my academic goals. |
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NSSE: Academic advising items

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|-----|--|
| 03a | Have you talked about career plans with a faculty member? |
| 03d | Have you discussed your academic performance with a faculty member? |
| 13b | Rate the quality of your interactions with academic advisors. |
| 13c | Rate the quality of your interactions with faculty. |
| 14b | How much as the school provided support to help students succeed academically? |
| 14c | How much as the school emphasized using learning support services (tutoring, writing center, etc.) |
| 14g | How much has the school emphasized helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)? |
| 17e | How much has your school helped your ability in acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills? |
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Campus Climate

SSI: Campus climate items

3	The campus is safe and secure for all students.
5	Administrators are available to hear students' concerns.
31	Students are made to feel welcome here.
35	I seldom get the "run-around" when seeking information on this campus.
37	There is a strong commitment to diversity on this campus.
41	Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.
42	Students are free to express their ideas on campus.
44	On the whole, the campus is well-maintained.

NSSE: Campus climate items

01d	Have you attended an art exhibit, play or other arts performance (dance, music, etc.)?
02c	Have you included diverse perspectives in course discussions or assignments?
02e	Have you tried to understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective?
02f	Have you learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept?
08a	How often have you had discussions with people of a race or ethnicity other than your own?
08b	How often have you had discussions with people from an economic background other than your own?
08c	How often have you had discussions with people with religious beliefs other than your own?
08d	How often have you had discussions with people with political views other than your own?
11b	Have you or will you hold a formal leadership role in a student organization or group?
11c	Have you or will you participate in a learning community or group where students take 2 or more classes together?
13a	Rate the quality of your interactions with other students.
13d	Rate the quality of your interactions with student services staff (career services, activities, housing, etc.)
13e	Rate the quality of your interactions with other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid, etc.)
14d	How much has the school encouraged contact among students from different backgrounds?
14e	How much has the school emphasized providing opportunities to be involved socially?
14f	How much has the school provided support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, etc.)?
14h	How much has the school emphasized attending campus activities and events (art shows, athletics, etc.)?

NSSE: Campus climate items continued

14i	How much has the school emphasized attending events that address social, economic or political issues?
15b	How much time do you spend participating in co-curricular activities (student groups, intramurals, etc.)?
17e	How much has your school helped your ability for acquiring job- or work-related knowledge and skills?
17f	How much has your school helped your ability in working effectively with others?
17g	How much has your school helped your ability in developing or clarifying personal code of value and ethics?
17h	How much has your school helped your ability in understanding people of other backgrounds?
17i	How much has your school helped your ability in solving complex real-world problems?
17j	How much has your school helped your ability in being an informed and active citizen?

Campus Life

SSI: Campus life items

13	Living conditions in the residence halls are comfortable.
19	Residence hall staff are concerned about my success as an individual.
30	There is an adequate selection of food available in the cafeteria.
39	Student disciplinary procedures are fair.
45	Student activities fees are put to good use.

NSSE Campus life items

01d	Have you attended an art exhibit, play or other arts performance (dance, music, etc.)?
11b	Have you or will you hold a formal leadership role in a student organization or group?
13d	Rate the quality of your interactions with student services staff (career services, activities, housing, etc.)
14e	How much has the school emphasized providing opportunities to be involved socially?
14f	How much has the school provided support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, etc.)
14h	How much as the school emphasized attending campus activities and events (art shows, athletics, etc.)?
14i	How much has the school emphasized attending events that address social, economic or political issues?
15b	How much time do you spend participating in co-curricular activities (student groups, intramurals, etc.)?
15f	How much time do you spend relaxing and socializing (time with friends, video games, TV, etc.)?

Campus Services

SSI: Campus services items

9	Library resources and services are adequate.
15	Computer labs are adequate and accessible.
20	Tutoring services are readily available.
22	This campus provides online access to services I need.
24	I receive the help I need to apply my academic major to my career goals.
26	Counseling services are available if I need them.
34	There are adequate career services to help me decide upon a career.
43	Mentors are available to guide my life and career goals.

NSSE: Campus services items

03a	Have you talked about career plans with a faculty member?
13d	Rate the quality of your interactions with student services staff (career services, activities, housing, etc.)
13e	Rate the quality of your interactions with other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid, etc.)
14c	How much as the school emphasized using learning support services (tutoring, writing center, etc.)
14g	How much as the school emphasized helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)?
17a	How much has your school helped your ability in writing clearly and effectively?
17b	How much as your school helped your ability in speaking clearly and effectively?
17c	How much as your school helped your ability in thinking critically and analytically?
17d	How much as your school helped your ability in analyzing numerical and statistical information?
17i	How much has your school helped your ability in solving complex real-world problems?

Instructional Effectiveness

SSI: Instructional effectiveness items

4	The content of courses within my major is valuable.
14	Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students.
17	There are sufficient courses within my program of study available each term.
29	Faculty use a variety of technology and media in the classroom.
32	Faculty provide timely feedback about my academic progress.
36	The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent.
40	Faculty are usually available to students outside of class (during office hours, by phone or by e-mail).

NSSE: Instructional effectiveness items

01a	Have you asked questions or contributed to course discussions in other ways?
01b	Have you prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in?
01c	Have you come to class without completing readings or assignments?
01e	Have you asked another student to help you understand course material?
01f	Have you explained course material to one or more students?
01g	Have you prepared for exams by discussing or working through course materials with other students?
01h	Have you worked with other students on course projects or assignments?
01i	Have you given a course presentation?
02a	Have you combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments?
02b	Have you connected your learning to societal problems or issues?
02c	Have you included diverse perspective in course discussions or assignments?
02d	Have you examined strengths and weaknesses in your own views on a topic or issue?
02e	Have you tried to understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective?
02f	Have you learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept?
02g	Have you connected ideas from your courses to prior experiences and knowledge?
03a	Have you talked about career plans with a faculty member?
03b	Have you worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework?
03c	Have you discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class?
03d	Have you discussed your academic performance with a faculty member?
04b	How much were you applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations?

NSSE: Instructional effectiveness items continued

- 04c How much were you analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts?
- 04d How much were you evaluating a point of view, decisions, or information source?
- 04e How much were you forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information?
- 05a How much did instructors clearly explain course goals and requirements?
- 05b How much did instructors teach course sessions in an organized way?
- 05c How much did instructors use examples or illustrations to explain difficult points?
- 05d How much did instructors provide feedback on a draft or work in progress?
- 05e How much did instructors provide prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments?
- 06a How much did you reach conclusions based on your own analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, etc.)?
- 06b How much did you use numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, etc.)?
- 06c How much did you evaluate what others have concluded from numerical information?
- 07 How many papers, reports or other writing tasks have you been assigned?
- 10 How much have your courses challenged you to do your best work?
- 11a Have you or will you participate in an internship, co-op, field experience, teaching or clinical experience?
- 11c Have you or will you participate in a learning community or group where students take 2 or more classes together?
- 11d Have you or will you participate in study abroad program?
- 11f Have you or will you complete a culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project, etc.)?
- 11e Have you or will you work with a faculty member on a research project?
- 13c Rate the quality of your interactions with faculty.
- 14a How much has the school emphasized spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work?
- 14b How much has the school provided support to help students succeed academically?
- 15a How much time do you spend preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, homework, rehearsing, etc.)?
- 17a How much has your school helped your ability in writing clearly and effectively?
- 17b How much as your school helped your ability in speaking clearly and effectively?
- 17c How much as your school helped your ability in thinking critically and analytically?
- 17d How much has your school helped your ability in analyzing numerical and statistical information?
- 17e How much as your school helped your ability in acquiring job- or work-related knowledge and skills?

NSSE: Instructional effectiveness items continued

17f	How much as your school helped your ability in working effectively with others?
17g	How much has your school helped your ability in developing or clarifying personal code of value and ethics?
17h	How much as your school helped your ability in understanding people of other backgrounds?
17i	How much has your school helped your ability in solving complex real-world problems?
17j	How much has your school helped your ability in being an informed and active citizen?

Recruitment and Financial Aid Effectiveness

SSI: Recruitment and financial aid items

7	Admissions staff provide personalized attention prior to enrollment.
8	Financial aid awards are announced in time to be helpful in college planning.
11	Financial aid counseling is available if I need it.
27	This institution helps me identify resources to finance my education.
33	Admissions counselors accurately portray the campus in their recruiting practices.

NSSE: Recruitment and financial aid items

13e	Rate the quality of your interactions with other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid, etc.)
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Registration Effectiveness

SSI: Registration effectiveness items

2	Registration processes and procedures are convenient.
6	Billing policies are reasonable.
23	I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.
25	I am able to take care of college-related business at times that are convenient for me.

NSSE: Registration effectiveness items

13e	Rate the quality of your interactions with other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid, etc.)
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Safety and Security

SSI: Safety and security items

3	The campus is safe and secure for all students.
12	The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.
18	Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.
28	Security staff respond quickly to calls for assistance.

NSSE: Safety and security items

No clear correlating items on the NSSE instrument.

Student Centeredness

SSI: Student centeredness items

1	The campus staff are caring and helpful.
5	Administrators are available to hear students' concerns.
31	Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.
35	I seldom get the "run-around" when seeking information on this campus.

NSSE: Student centered items

08a	How often have you had discussions with people of a race or ethnicity other than your own?
08b	How often have you had discussions with people from an economic background other than your own?
08c	How often have you had discussions with people with religious beliefs other than your own?
08d	How often have you had discussions with people with political views other than your own?
11c	Have you or will you participate in a learning community or group where students take 2 or more classes together?
13a	Rate the quality of your interactions with other students.
13b	Rate the quality of your interactions with academic advisors.
13c	Rate the quality of your interactions with faculty.
13d	Rate the quality of your interactions with student services staff (career services, activities, housing, etc.)
13e	Rate the quality of your interactions with other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid, etc.)

NSSE: Student centered items continued

14b	How much as the school provided support to help students succeed academically?
14c	How much as the school emphasized using learning support services (tutoring, writing center, etc.)
14d	How much as the school encouraged contact among students from different backgrounds?
14e	How much has the school emphasized providing opportunities to be involved socially?
14f	How much has the school provided support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, etc.)?
14g	How much has the school emphasized helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)?
17f	How much has your school helped in your ability to work effectively with others?
17j	How much has your school helped your ability in being an informed and active citizen?

Factors in the Decision to Enroll

SSI: Factors in the decision to enroll items

56	Cost as a factor in the decision to enroll.
57	Financial assistance as a factor in the decision to enroll.
58	Academic reputation as a factor in the decision to enroll.
59	Future career opportunities as a factor in the decision to enroll.
60	Personal recommendations as a factor in the decision to enroll.
61	Distance from campus as a factor in the decision to enroll.
62	Information on the campus Web site as a factor in the decision to enroll.
63	Campus visits as a factor in the decision to enroll.

NSSE: Factors in the decision to enroll items

No clear correlating items on the NSSE instrument.

Summary Items

SSI: Summary items

64	So far, how has your college experience met your expectations?
65	Rate your overall satisfaction with your experience here thus far.
66	All in all, if you had it to do over again, would you enroll here?

NSSE: Summary items

18	How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?
19	If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?

Important notes:

Keep in mind that the SSI is typically administered across all four class levels, while the NSSE is administered to first year and senior students.

The institution may want to slice the data for the SSI with target group reports or by using the raw data files to look at the results for first year and senior students separately from the group as a whole for a better point of comparison with the NSSE results by class level.

Also note: this document was prepared by Ruffalo Noel Levitz based on an initial review of the items in 2017 and organized into the current format as of October 2019. The document has been shared with the team at NSSE but not yet approved by them.

Questions:

Contact Shannon Cook (Shannon.Cook@RuffaloNL.com) or Julie Bryant (Julie.Bryant@RuffaloNL.com) with questions about this document or about using the Student Satisfaction Inventory on your campus. You may also call RNL at 800.876.1117.