

# National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

What is the NSSE and why does it matter?



Amplifying the voices of our students.



**WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY**  
Office of  
Institutional Effectiveness

# What is the NSSE?

The National Survey of Student Engagement, (NSSE), is a trusted and widely used instrument for assessing the quality of undergraduate education. It provides institutions like WMU with diagnostic, actionable information that fosters and catalyzes evidence-based improvement efforts.

The survey is sent to all first-year students and seniors and asks them to share information about their college experiences, the extent to which they participate in educationally effective activities, and their perceptions of facets of the institutional environment that support their learning and development.

The NSSE doesn't assess student learning directly, but the survey results can point to areas where we are excelling and aspects of the undergraduate experience that could be improved.



## Select WMU NSSE Highlights - 2025

72% of WMU seniors reported participating in 2 or more High Impact Practices compared to 60% of seniors attending our Carnegie Peer institutions (the ones closest in all categories).

95% of WMU FY students responded with 'Yes' when asked if they intend to return to WMU the next year compared to 88% of our Carnegie Peers and 89% of our Carnegie Class (Res. 2: High Research spending and doctorate production).

By spring of their senior year, 37% of WMU students had held a formal leadership role in a student organization or group compared to 29% of seniors at our Carnegie Peer institutions and 31% of our Carnegie Class institutions.

76% of WMU FY students chose 'Quite a bit' or 'Very much' when asked if WMU provided support for their overall well-being compared to 70% of FY students at our Carnegie Peer institutions and 69% at our Carnegie Class institutions.

By the spring semester of their senior year, 18% of WMU students participated in a study abroad program compared to 8% of seniors at our Carnegie Peer institutions, and 11% of seniors at our Carnegie Class institutions.

19% of WMU FY students participated in a learning community (or other formal group learning program) compared to 11% of the FY students at our Carnegie Peer and Carnegie Class institutions.



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