



**VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY
STRATEGIC RESEARCH & ANALYSIS
NATIONAL SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT RESULTS, 2008**

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The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) annually obtains information from hundreds of thousands of college students across the nation about their participation in educational programs and activities that increase their learning and personal development. The results indicate how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from their college experience. Since survey items reflect confirmed “good practices” in undergraduate education, students who engage in these activities are more likely to be successful and to earn a college degree. The highlights presented below for Valdosta State University represent 457 first-year students and 522 seniors who completed the NSSE survey in Spring 2008, resulting in an overall response rate of 38%. The results are displayed in five benchmark areas and compare VSU’s responses with those from other University System of Georgia (USG) institutions, Carnegie peers, all students participating in the NSSE, and the top 50% of institutions nationwide.

Highlights of NSSE 2008: What Our Students Say

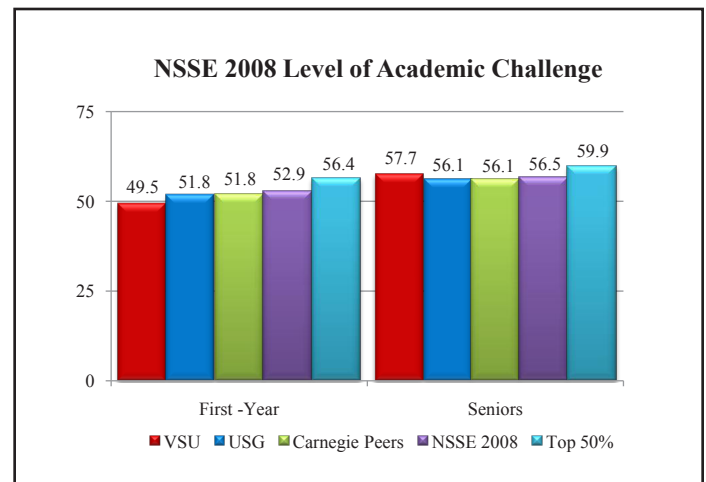
- 87% of first-year and 88% of senior students described their educational experience at VSU as “good” or “excellent.”
- 82% of first-year and 86% of senior students would “probably” or “definitely” attend VSU if they could start over again.
- 77% of first-year and 74% of senior students evaluated the quality of academic advising at VSU as “good” or “excellent.”

Benchmark: Level of Academic Challenge

Selected questions from this benchmark group

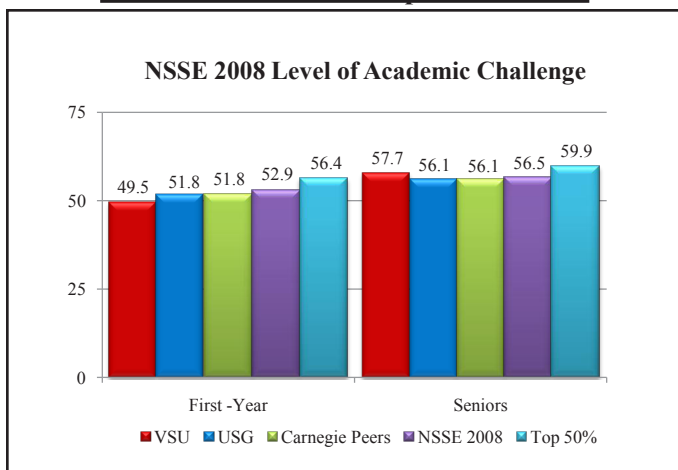
- 74% of first-year students and 85% of seniors at VSU reported that their coursework emphasizes analyzing ideas “quite a bit” or “very much.” This compares with 79% of first-year students and 85% of seniors at USG peer institutions.
- 69% of first-year students and 79% of seniors at VSU replied that their coursework emphasizes making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods “quite a bit” or “very much.” Comparable USG peer institutions’ percentages are 69% and 74%.
- 64% of first-year students and 80% of seniors at VSU said their coursework emphasizes synthesizing and organizing ideas and information “quite a bit” or “very much.” For other USG peer institutions, the corresponding percentages are 66% and 76%, respectively.

Overall benchmark comparison results



Benchmark: Active and Collaborative Learning

Overall benchmark comparison results



Selected questions from this benchmark group

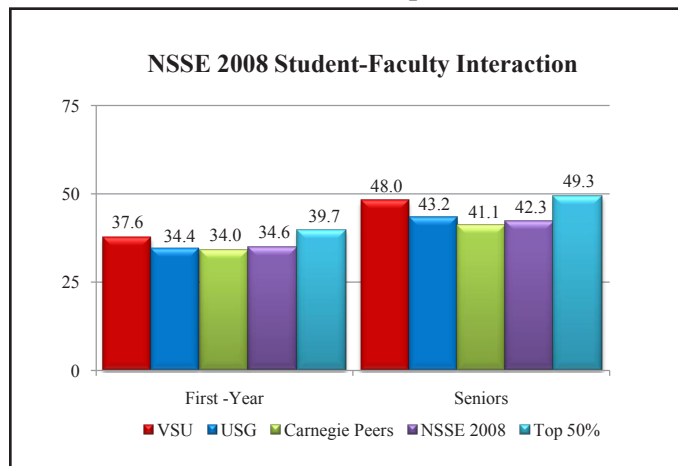
- 58% of the first-year students and 69% of the seniors responding said they “often” or “very often” discussed ideas from their readings or classes with others outside of class. This compares with 21% of first-year and 29% of senior students at USG peer institutions.
- 20% of first-year students and 22% of seniors at VSU reported participating in a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of a regular course “often” or “very often.” Comparable percentages for USG peer institutions are 15% and 19%, respectively.
- 17% of first-year students and 26% of seniors at VSU replied that they have tutored or taught other students on either a paid or voluntary basis “often” or “very often.” This corresponds to 17% of first-year students and 22% of seniors at USG peer institutions.

Benchmark: Student-Faculty Interaction

Selected questions from this benchmark group

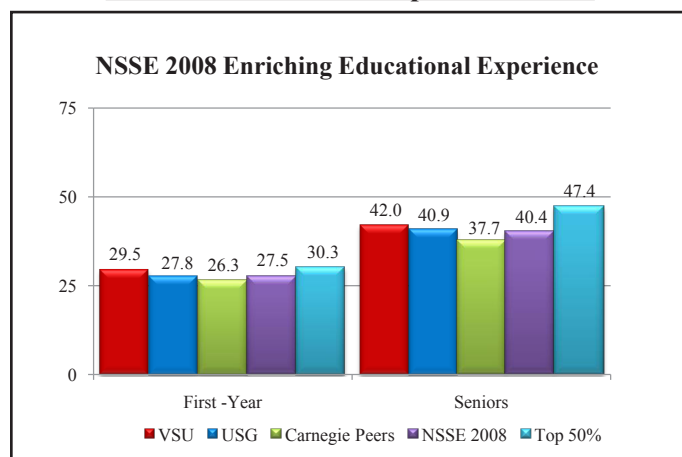
- 61% of first-year students and 75% of seniors at VSU said they received prompt feedback from faculty on their academic performance “often” or “very often.” Corresponding figures for USG peer institutions are 55% and 67%, respectively.
- 38% of first-year students and 54% of seniors at VSU reported discussing career plans with a faculty member or advisor “often” or “very often.” This compares with 30% of first-year students and 42% of seniors at USG peer institutions.
- 18% of first-year students and 25% of seniors at VSU responded that they worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework “often” or “very often.” This compares with 15% of first-year students and 22% of seniors in USG peer institutions.

Overall benchmark comparison results



Benchmark: Enriching Educational Experiences

Overall benchmark comparison results



Selected questions from this benchmark group

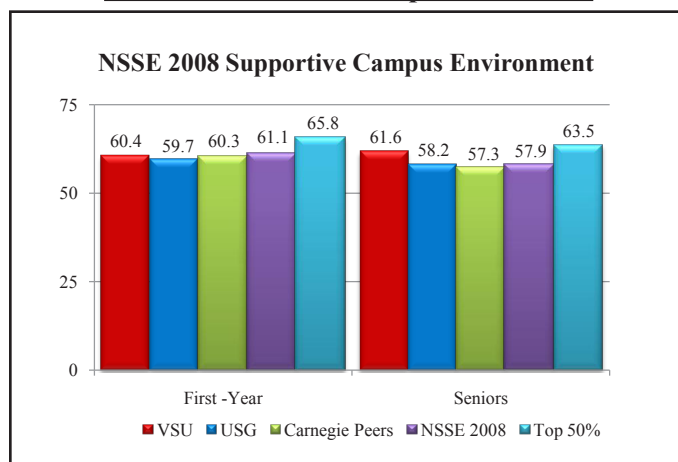
- 61% of VSU seniors reported participating in community service or volunteer work, and another 16% plan to do so. Comparable percentages for USG peer institutions are 59% and 25%.
- 61% of first-year students and 64% of seniors at VSU reported that they had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity “often” or “very often.” This compares with 56% of first-year students and 62% of seniors at USG peer institutions.
- 53% of VSU seniors responded that they have completed a practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience or clinical assignment, and another 27% said they plan to do so. This compares with 53% and 25%, respectively, at USG peer institutions.

Benchmark: Supportive Campus Environment

Selected questions from this benchmark group

- 73% of first-year and 76% of senior-level students described VSU’s institutional environment as providing the support they need to succeed academically either “quite a bit” or “very much.” Rates for USG peer institutions were 77% of first-year students and 72% of seniors.
- 60% of first-year students and 71% of seniors at VSU rated their quality of relationships with other students as a “6” or “7” on a scale of “1” (unfriendly) to “7” (friendly, supportive). Comparable percentages for USG peer institutions are 55% and 62%, respectively.
- 39% of first-year students and 60% of seniors at VSU rated their quality of relationships with faculty as a “6” or “7” on a scale of “1” (unavailable, unhelpful) to “7” (available, helpful). This compares with 40% of first-year students and 54% of seniors at USG peers.

Overall benchmark comparison results



General Education Outcomes

- 87% of VSU seniors report developing their ability to think critically and analytically “quite a bit” or “very much.”
- 87% of VSU seniors report developing their ability to use computing and information technology “quite a bit” or “very much.”
- 86% of VSU seniors report acquiring a broad, general education “quite a bit” or “very much.”
- 85% of VSU seniors report increasing their ability to work effectively with others “quite a bit” or “very much.”
- 83% of VSU seniors report developing their ability to write clearly and effectively “quite a bit” or “very much.”
- 81% of VSU seniors report acquiring job or work-related skills “quite a bit” or “very much.”
- 81% of VSU seniors report developing their ability to speak clearly and effectively “quite a bit” or “very much.”
- 78% of VSU seniors report developing their ability to analyze quantitative problems “quite a bit” or “very much.”

Source: SRA Analysis of NSSE Results, 2008.