



Faculty Survey of Student Engagement

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FSSE 2006 Overview

The Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) is a project coordinated by the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) at Indiana University Bloomington. FSSE (pronounced ‘fessie’) is designed to measure faculty expectations of student engagement in educational practices that are empirically linked with high levels of learning and development. The survey also collects information about how faculty members spend their time related to professorial activities and the kinds of learning experiences their institution emphasizes.

FSSE results can be used to identify areas of institutional strength as well as aspects of the undergraduate experience that may warrant attention. The information is intended to be a catalyst for productive discussions related to teaching, learning, and the quality of students’ educational experiences.

This *Overview* provides some general information about the institutions and faculty that participated in the 2006 administration of FSSE and highlights ways institutions can and should use their results. The *Overview* is divided into two sections. First, we compare the characteristics of participating institutions and faculty with national profiles as well as provide general information about overall response rates. In the second section we provide guidelines for using and interpreting FSSE 2006 results in addition to highlighting resources available for analyzing and presenting FSSE findings. Resources intended to help with the use and interpretation of FSSE data are also available through the FSSE website: www.fsse.iub.edu.

FSSE 2006 Institutions and Respondents

The FSSE 2006 survey was completed by more than 21,000 faculty members at 131 baccalaureate degree-granting colleges and universities that selected their own sample of faculty. Most of these institutions also administered NSSE in 2006, while about 20 had participated in NSSE 2005. Having recent data from NSSE allows participating schools to examine how faculty and students respond to similar questions. A list of participating institutions is included on the CD accompanying the *Institutional Report* binder or from the FSSE website:

www.fsse.iub.edu. Faculty at participating institutions were sent an invitation email and asked to respond to the online survey.

Tables 1 and 2 on the following pages provide more information about the participating institutions and faculty members who responded to the survey. While included here and in the *Respondent Characteristics Report*, *certain demographic information is withheld from individual school data files in order to ensure that responses remain anonymous.*

Profile of FSSE 2006 Institutions

The FSSE 2006 schools are similar in many ways to the national profile of baccalaureate degree-granting colleges and universities (Table 1). Based on the Basic Carnegie Classification (from either 2000 or 2005), the distribution of FSSE institutions mirrors that of all U.S. baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. In addition, FSSE institutions mirror the national distribution in terms of location in cities, towns, and rural areas. Like NSSE 2006, there are a few places where the FSSE 2006 profile differs slightly from the national profile. For example, public institutions are overrepresented in FSSE compared to the national pool of institutions. Also, FSSE schools were somewhat overrepresented in the Great Lakes region. With a few modest exceptions, the distribution of FSSE 2006 institutions reflects that of all U.S. institutions, which insures that FSSE results reflect a broad cross-section of faculty from across the nation.



Table 1
Profile of U.S. FSSE and NSSE 2006 Institutions against all U.S. Baccalaureate Degree-Granting Colleges and Universities

	FSSE 2006	NSSE 2006	National
Carnegie Classification – Basic 2005^a			
Doc RU-VH	4%	4%	6%
Doc RU-H	10%	8%	7%
Doc RU	6%	5%	5%
Master's-L	25%	26%	22%
Master's-M	12%	16%	13%
Master's-S	8%	7%	9%
Bac-AS	18%	22%	17%
Bac-Diverse	18%	12%	22%
Carnegie Classification – Basic 2000^a			
Doc/Res – Ext	8%	9%	11%
Doc/Res – Int	11%	8%	8%
Master's I & II	42%	47%	43%
Bac – Liberal Arts	14%	21%	16%
Bac – General	21%	15%	23%
Sector			
Public 4-year	48%	37%	35%
Private 4-year	52%	63%	65%
Region			
Far West	8%	8%	10%
Great Lakes	21%	18%	15%
Mideast	17%	19%	18%
New England	6%	9%	9%
Plains	15%	11%	11%
Rocky Mountains	3%	3%	3%
Southeast	24%	25%	24%
Southwest	7%	6%	8%
Outlying Areas	1%	<1%	2%
Location			
Large city (>250,000)	20%	19%	20%
Mid-size city (<250,000)	29%	31%	28%
Urban fringe large city	19%	17%	18%
Urban fringe mid-size city	3%	7%	8%
Large town (>25,000)	6%	4%	4%
Small town (~5,000)	19%	18%	16%
Rural	4%	4%	6%

Note: Percentages are based on U.S. postsecondary institutions that award baccalaureate degrees. NSSE and FSSE-participating or other U.S. institutions that do not share these characteristics were not included. Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding error.

Source: National percentages are based on data from the 2005 IPEDS Institutional Characteristics File.

^a For information on the 2000 and 2005 Carnegie Classifications, see: www.carnegiefoundation.org/classifications.



Profile of FSSE 2006 Respondents

Table 2 shows selected characteristics of faculty members who completed FSSE in 2006. The first column represents faculty who responded to the FSSE survey and the second column represents the national profile of instructional faculty and staff at all baccalaureate degree-granting institutions based on National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) data.



Table 2
Characteristics of FSSE 2006 Respondents

	FSSE Respondents	National
Gender		
Male	54%	60%
Female	46%	40%
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian or other Native American	1%	<1%
Asian American or Pacific Islander	5%	8%
Black or African American	4%	5%
White (non-Hispanic)	84%	82%
Hispanic or Latino	4%	3%
Multiracial	1%	2%
Other	1%	-
Employment Status		
Full-time	81%	66%
Part-time	19%	34%
Rank		
Professor	23%	22%
Associate Professor	22%	18%
Assistant Professor	26%	20%
Instructor or Lecturer	22%	19%
Other	7%	21%

Note: National percentages are based on faculty at U.S. postsecondary institutions that award baccalaureate degrees.
Source: National percentages are based on the 2004 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty.



Gender

Nationally, women comprise 40% of faculty at baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. As with NSSE respondents, women are overrepresented among FSSE respondents, 46% of whom are women.

Race and Ethnicity

Respondents' race and ethnicity closely matched national faculty percentages. The NCES data used for the "Na-

tional" column in Table 2 do not contain comparable information for the "Other" category.

Employment Status

Eighty-one percent of FSSE respondents were full-time faculty members, whereas 19% were employed on a part-time basis. This departs significantly from the national figures for all public and private baccalaureate degree-granting colleges and universities, which indicate

that only two-thirds of faculty members are employed full-time. This reflects the decision of some institutions not to survey part-time faculty.

Academic Rank

Assistant and associate professors as well as instructors and lecturers are slightly overrepresented in FSSE 2006 while instructional staff and faculty that fit the “other” category are considerably underrepresented.

Discipline

Table 3 shows the percentage of faculty respondents in disciplinary areas by gender. The percentages indicate that faculty members in the arts and humanities are overrepresented, while faculty members in professional fields are underrepresented. Males outnumber females in all disciplinary areas except education and professional fields where faculty members are predominantly women.

Table 3
Percentage of Faculty by Disciplinary Area and Gender

Disciplinary Area	Male		Female		Total	
	FSSE	National	FSSE	National	FSSE	National
Arts and Humanities	26%	20%	30%	24%	28%	22%
Biological Science	6%	9%	5%	6%	6%	7%
Business	10%	9%	6%	5%	8%	8%
Education	5%	7%	11%	17%	8%	11%
Engineering	6%	7%	1%	1%	3%	5%
Physical Science	14%	11%	7%	6%	11%	9%
Professional	4%	14%	14%	20%	8%	16%
Social Science	15%	11%	14%	11%	14%	11%
Other	15%	12%	12%	11%	13%	12%

Note: National percentages are based on faculty at U.S. postsecondary institutions that award baccalaureate degrees.

Source: National percentages are based on the 2004 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty.



Response Rates

After adjusting for faculty who could not be reached (usually because of incorrect email addresses), a response rate (total number of responses divided by the total number of faculty contacted) is calculated for each FSSE institution. In 2006, the average institutional response rate was 54%, with a range from 26% to 86%. The response rate for FSSE across all institutions is 46%.



Using FSSE Results

Before sharing your FSSE results on-campus, familiarize yourself with the nature of the data, the reports, and “story line” of your institution’s performance. Here are some things to consider.

Familiarize Yourself with FSSE Reports and Resources

Institutions receive several reports and a data file that will help you better understand your FSSE results. The reports are delivered in hard copy and on the CD accompanying the *Institutional Report* binder. The data file, codebook, list of participating institutions, and this *Overview* are available on the CD.

- This *Overview* provides a profile of the FSSE institutions and respondents nationally as well as highlights how to use FSSE information and resources.
- The *Respondent Characteristics Report*

summarizes some background information from faculty members who responded. Much of this data is not contained on the institutional data file in order to protect respondents' identities. See the Protecting Respondent Anonymity section.

- The *Frequency Distributions Report* provides the response percentages to each item broken down by the level of the students taught by faculty members.
- The *FSSE-NSSE Combined Report* is a template for identifying interesting ways to look for gaps in perceptions between faculty responses and student responses.
- An institution's data file allows for additional analyses to be conducted and the *Codebook* provides details of each question, variable name, and response set (these are available on the CD).

In addition, the FSSE website, www.fsse.iub.edu, includes several important documents and resources:

- Copies of the FSSE survey instrument in multiple formats (.html and .pdf).
- Grand frequency reports by Carnegie Classification based on faculty from all participating institutions.
- Selected analyses that can be used for comparison purposes and as examples of different ways to use FSSE data on its own (e.g., examining the proportion of class time devoted to lecturing, small group work, and experiential activities by disciplinary area) or in combination with NSSE (e.g., comparing faculty expectations to faculty estimates and student self-reports of time spent studying).
- Examples of how to display FSSE results in tables and graphs.

Check the Representativeness of Your Respondents

An essential early step in reviewing your results is to compare your faculty respondents' demographic characteristics, summarized in the Respondent Characteristics Report, with your institutional data on faculty.

Another way to gauge representativeness is through sampling error, an estimate of the margin by which the "true" score for your institution on a given item could differ from the reported score for one or more reasons, such as differences in one or more important characteristics between the sample and the populations. For example, if 60% reply "very often" to a particular item and the sampling error is $\pm 4\%$, there is a 95% chance that the population value is between 56% and 64%.

Communicating FSSE Results

We offer the following suggestions to help you think about interpreting and communicating FSSE results to interested parties.

- Before disseminating results, please check the respondent characteristics to see if the faculty members who completed the survey reasonably represent your faculty as a whole. In addition, make sure you are aware of your sample size since questions often arise as to whether a small sample size actually represents the population from which it is drawn.
- Faculty and student items and responses may not match exactly and institutional context should be considered to help interpret any differences that may exist.
- Consider using student and faculty matched items as a way to begin general discussions about which engagement activities might become a greater priority on campus, and about student engagement and its relationship to learning.
- Meet with others on campus responsible for faculty development and undergraduate improvement initiatives to begin sharing results and discussing ways in which FSSE data can be used to enhance teaching and learning.
- Contact the NSSE Institute for Effective Educational Practice (www.nsse.iub.edu/institute) for additional consultation on maximizing the use of your results.





Protecting Respondent Anonymity

The FSSE project takes several measures to ensure the anonymity of those who responded to the survey.

For example:

- Your data file does not include faculty members' responses to demographic questions such as race/ethnicity, gender, age, number of years as a faculty member, appointment status, rank, and tenure status.
- To mask faculty members' particular disciplines, more than 80 disciplines have been collapsed into 9 categories (see codebook) designed to parallel major organizational units on campus.

Protecting respondent anonymity is critical to ensure that faculty members answer the survey as honestly as possible.

We invite suggestions for improving the FSSE project and the quality and utility of the information it provides. Please direct inquiries and suggestions to the project staff at fsse@indiana.edu.

