

2009 National Survey of Student Engagement

Sue Erickson

Carmen Williams

Office of Institutional Research

October 26, 2009



Executive Summary

The National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE) is the best known national project for measuring student engagement. The survey, administered by the Indiana Center for Postsecondary Research, measures the extent to which students engage in practices understood to be effectively linked with learning outcomes, personal development, student satisfaction, and graduation. Students actively involved in both academic and out-of-class activities have been found to gain more from the college experience than those who are not involved. In the spring of 2009, 1,873 first-year (FY) students and 1,452 senior (SR) students were invited to participate in NSSE at UND. 528 FY students and 425 SR students responded to the survey, for a response rate of 29%. This was the fifth time UND has participated in NSSE. NSSE summarizes results into 5 benchmarks:

- 1. Level of Academic Challenge** – an institution’s ability to establish a challenging intellectual and creative environment for students.
- 2. Active and Collaborative Learning** – The level at which students are asked to collaborate with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material.
- 3. Student Interactions with Faculty Members** – The extent to which students interact with faculty members inside and outside of the classroom.
- 4. Enriching Educational Experiences** – An institution’s ability to foster complementary learning opportunities both inside and outside of the classroom to augment academic programs.
- 5. Supportive Campus Environment** – The extent to which institutions cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus.

UND results in 2009 show promise, as increases are seen in the raw score for each of the five benchmark areas over the scores recorded in 2007. UND results, however, lag the benchmark means scored by respondents from research universities with high activity (RU/H) for all categories with the lone exception of *Supportive Campus Environment*.

UND FY respondents score means statistically significantly lower than their peers at RU/H institutions for four of the benchmark means; the exception is UND’s FY mean of 60.2 on *Supportive Campus Environment* which ties the benchmark scored by RU/H FY respondents. The largest gap between UND and RU/H FY students is in the area of *Enriching Educational Experiences*, with UND FY students scoring 22.7 compared to 28.1 scored by FY students at RU/H institutions.

UND SR respondents score higher than their peers at RU/H institutions on the *Student-Faculty Interaction* benchmark, however the difference is not statistically significant (41.3 for UND SR respondents compared to 40.9 for RU/H SR respondents). UND SR respondents are statistically significantly behind their peers on just one of the five benchmarks – *Enriching Educational Experiences* – where their mean score of 37.1 lags that of RU/H institutions who score a mean of 40.8.