



NSSE 2017 Topical Module Report

First-Year Experiences and Senior Transitions

Ohio University

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About This Topical Module

This module includes a set of items only for first-year students and a set only for seniors, with questions adapted from the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement and the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project, respectively. The first-year items focus on academic perseverance, help-seeking behaviors, and institutional commitment, while the senior items explore post-graduation plans, links between the academic major and future plans, and confidence with skills developed during college.

Comparison Group

This section summarizes how this module's comparison group was identified, including selection criteria and whether the default option was taken. This is followed by the resulting list of institutions represented in the 'Carnegie Class' column of this report.

Group label	Carnegie Class
Date submitted	5/16/17
How was this comparison group constructed?	Your institution customized this group by selecting institutional characteristics as follows: Basic Classification (Doc/Higher)
Group description	Carnegie Classification Institutions

Carnegie Class (N=19)

Binghamton University (State University of New York) (Binghamton, NY)
Bowling Green State University (Bowling Green, OH)
Florida Institute of Technology (Melbourne, FL)
Illinois Institute of Technology (Chicago, IL)*
Kent State University (Kent, OH)
Missouri University of Science & Technology (Rolla, MO)*
New Mexico State University (Las Cruces, NM)
New School, The (New York, NY)*
Northern Arizona University (Flagstaff, AZ)
Nova Southeastern University (Fort Lauderdale, FL)
Stevens Institute of Technology (Hoboken, NJ)
Texas Christian University (Fort Worth, TX)*
University of Alabama in Huntsville (Huntsville, AL)*
University of Colorado Denver (Denver, CO)*
University of Maine (Orono, ME)
University of Montana (Missoula, MT)*
University of Rhode Island (Kingston, RI)*
University of Texas at El Paso, The (El Paso, TX)
University of Tulsa (Tulsa, OK)*

First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				OU		Carnegie Class		OU	Carnegie Class	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d
1. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?										
a. Studied when there were other interesting things to do	FYSfy01a	1	Never	13	4	277	4	2.8	2.8	.02
		2	Sometimes	134	33	2,414	35			
		3	Often	155	40	2,629	37			
		4	Very often	92	23	1,650	23			
		Total		394	100	6,970	100			
b. Found additional information for course assignments when you didn't understand the material	FYSfy01b	1	Never	7	2	193	3	2.9	2.9	.01
		2	Sometimes	122	31	2,008	30			
		3	Often	179	45	3,197	46			
		4	Very often	84	22	1,542	22			
		Total		392	100	6,940	100			
c. Participated in course discussions, even when you didn't feel like it	FYSfy01c	1	Never	32	8	612	9	2.5	2.6	-.04
		2	Sometimes	169	43	2,835	40			
		3	Often	139	35	2,461	36			
		4	Very often	53	14	1,048	15			
		Total		393	100	6,956	100			
d. Asked instructors for help when you struggled with course assignments	FYSfy01d	1	Never	46	12	763	11	2.5	2.5	-.01
		2	Sometimes	171	42	3,053	43			
		3	Often	125	32	2,161	32			
		4	Very often	52	14	967	14			
		Total		394	100	6,944	100			
e. Finished something you have started when you encountered challenges	FYSfy01e	1	Never	4	1	70	1	3.1	3.1	.01
		2	Sometimes	77	20	1,364	20			
		3	Often	189	48	3,379	49			
		4	Very often	123	31	2,135	30			
		Total		393	100	6,948	100			
f. Stayed positive, even when you did poorly on a test or assignment	FYSfy01f	1	Never	18	5	297	4	2.9	2.9	.06
		2	Sometimes	108	26	2,135	30			
		3	Often	165	42	2,885	42			
		4	Very often	102	27	1,626	24			
		Total		393	100	6,943	100			
2. During the current school year, how difficult have the following been for you?										
a. Learning course material	FYSfy02a	1	Not at all difficult	17	5	282	4	3.5	3.5	.06
		2	2	63	16	1,064	16			
		3	3	102	25	1,981	29			
		4	4	135	35	2,506	36			
		5	5	64	16	862	12			
		6	Very difficult	13	4	265	4			
		Total		394	100	6,960	100			
b. Managing your time	FYSfy02b	1	Not at all difficult	20	6	339	5	3.7	3.8	-.10
		2	2	60	14	913	13			
		3	3	95	23	1,553	22			
		4	4	120	31	1,995	29			
		5	5	67	18	1,333	19			
		6	Very difficult	32	9	823	12			
		Total		394	100	6,956	100			

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Refer to the endnotes page for the key to triangle symbols.

First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				OU		Carnegie Class		OU	Carnegie Class	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d
c. Getting help with school work	FYSfy02c	1	Not at all difficult	60	16	898	13	2.9	2.9	-.03
		2	2	105	25	1,810	26			
		3	3	106	28	2,054	29			
		4	4	76	19	1,391	20			
		5	5	33	8	554	8			
		6	Very difficult	14	3	248	4			
		Total		394	100	6,955	100			
d. Interacting with faculty	FYSfy02d	1	Not at all difficult	73	19	1,060	16	2.8	2.9	-.04
		2	2	103	27	1,808	26			
		3	3	96	25	1,885	27			
		4	4	69	17	1,281	18			
		5	5	35	8	636	9			
		6	Very difficult	18	5	283	4			
		Total		394	100	6,953	100			
3. During the current school year, about how often have you sought help with coursework from the following sources?										
a. Faculty members	FYSfy03a_16	1	Never	71	17	1,295	19	2.2	2.2	.01
		2	Sometimes	215	55	3,697	52			
		3	Often	84	22	1,536	23			
		4	Very often	22	6	409	6			
			Total	392	100	6,937	100			
b. Academic advisors	FYSfy03b_16	1	Never	192	49	3,424	48	1.7	1.7	.01
		2	Sometimes	135	34	2,514	37			
		3	Often	54	14	796	12			
		4	Very often	12	3	194	3			
			Total	393	100	6,928	100			
c. Learning support services (tutoring, writing center, success coaching, etc.)	FYSfy03c_16	1	Never	176	44	2,564	38	1.8	1.9 *	-.13 ▽
		2	Sometimes	137	35	2,586	37			
		3	Often	58	15	1,208	17			
		4	Very often	22	6	563	8			
			Total	393	100	6,921	100			
d. Friends or other students	FYSfy03d_16	1	Never	13	4	310	5	3.0	2.9	.08
		2	Sometimes	101	25	1,716	25			
		3	Often	153	39	2,832	41			
		4	Very often	125	33	2,074	29			
			Total	392	100	6,932	100			
e. Family members	FYSfy03e_16	1	Never	145	39	3,021	43	2.0	1.9	.09
		2	Sometimes	129	32	2,230	33			
		3	Often	86	22	1,149	17			
		4	Very often	30	8	533	8			
			Total	390	100	6,933	100			
f. Other persons or offices	FYSfy03f_16	1	Never	245	62	4,219	60	1.5	1.5	-.06
		2	Sometimes	114	29	1,936	29			
		3	Often	25	7	594	9			
		4	Very often	8	2	167	3			
			Total	392	100	6,916	100			

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Refer to the endnotes page for the key to triangle symbols.

First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				OU		Carnegie Class		OU	Carnegie Class	Effect size ^d
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
4a. During the current school year, have you seriously considered leaving this institution?^j										
	FYSfy04a	No		261	67	4,814	70	33%	30%	.05
	(Means indicate the percentage who responded "Yes.")	Yes		129	33	2,127	30			
		Total		390	100	6,941	100			
4b. [If answered "yes"] Why did you consider leaving? (Select all that apply.)										
	FYSfy04b_1_16	—	Academics are too difficult	22	18	406	18			
	FYSfy04b_2_16	—	Academics are too easy	12	9	129	6			
	FYSfy04b_3_16	—	Other academic issues (major not offered, course availability, advising, credit transfer, etc.)	16	13	374	18			
	FYSfy04b_4_16	—	Financial concerns (costs or financial aid)	38	28	906	43			
	FYSfy04b_5_16	—	To change your career options (transfer to another school or program, military service, etc.)	24	19	422	21			
	FYSfy04b_6_16	—	Difficulty managing demands of school and work	12	10	330	16			
	FYSfy04b_7_16	—	Too much emphasis on partying	35	26	200	9			
	FYSfy04b_8_16	—	Not enough opportunities to socialize and have fun	13	9	430	19			
	FYSfy04b_9_16	—	Relations with faculty and staff	11	9	197	9			
	FYSfy04b_10_16	—	Relations with other students	38	28	476	22			
	FYSfy04b_11_16	—	Campus climate, location, or culture	44	34	570	26			
	FYSfy04b_12_16	—	Unsafe or hostile environment	17	13	111	5			
	FYSfy04b_13_16	—	Personal reasons (family issues, physical or mental health, homesickness, stress, etc.)	59	44	829	39			
	FYSfy04b_14_16	—	A reason not listed above, please specify:	18	14	317	16			
5. How important is it to you that you graduate from <i>this institution</i>?										
	FYSfy05	1	Not important	21	6	289	5	4.9	5.0	-.09
		2	2	14	4	241	4			
		3	3	25	6	409	6			
		4	4	57	15	846	12			
		5	5	61	15	1,120	16			
		6	Very important	207	54	3,997	57			
		Total		385	100	6,902	100			

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First-Year Students

Variable name	N	Mean		Standard error ^f		Standard deviation ^g		DF ^h	Sig. ⁱ	Effect size ^d
	OU	OU	Carnegie Class	OU	Carnegie Class	OU	Carnegie Class			
FYSfy01a	387	2.81	2.79	.04	.01	0.84	0.84	3,580	.704	.02
FYSfy01b	385	2.87	2.86	.04	.01	0.77	0.78	3,566	.859	.01
FYSfy01c	386	2.54	2.57	.04	.02	0.83	0.85	3,572	.500	-.04
FYSfy01d	387	2.48	2.49	.04	.02	0.87	0.87	3,570	.894	-.01
FYSfy01e	386	3.09	3.08	.04	.01	0.74	0.73	3,570	.872	.01
FYSfy01f	386	2.91	2.85	.04	.01	0.85	0.83	3,568	.237	.06
FYSfy02a	387	3.53	3.46	.06	.02	1.18	1.13	3,576	.241	.06
FYSfy02b	387	3.66	3.79	.07	.02	1.32	1.35	3,575	.074	-.10
FYSfy02c	387	2.90	2.94	.07	.02	1.31	1.27	3,574	.520	-.03
FYSfy02d	387	2.84	2.90	.07	.02	1.39	1.34	3,573	.460	-.04
FYSfy03a_16	385	2.17	2.16	.04	.01	0.78	0.80	3,565	.889	.01
FYSfy03b_16	386	1.70	1.69	.04	.01	0.82	0.79	3,561	.781	.01
FYSfy03b_16	386	1.83	1.95	.05	.02	0.90	0.93	3,558	.014	-.13
FYSfy03b_16	384	3.01	2.93	.04	.02	0.86	0.86	3,561	.119	.08
FYSfy03e_16	382	1.98	1.90	.05	.02	0.96	0.95	3,560	.099	.09
FYSfy03f_16	384	1.50	1.54	.04	.01	0.73	0.76	3,553	.305	-.06
FYSfy04a ^k	382	.327	.304	.0240	.0082	--	--	--	.357	.05
FYSfy05	378	4.90	5.03	.08	.03	1.50	1.42	462	.119	-.09

Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				OU		Carnegie Class		OU	Carnegie Class	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d
1. Do you expect to graduate this spring or summer?										
	FYSsr01_16	No		103	32	2,655	35			
		Yes		235	68	5,092	65			
		Total		338	100	7,747	100			
1a. [Excludes those who answered "No," not expecting spring/summer graduation] After graduation, what best describes your immediate plans?										
	FYSsr01a	—	Full-time employment	131	58	2,934	57			
		—	Part-time employment	12	5	165	3			
		—	Graduate or professional school	50	20	1,157	22			
		—	Military service	3	2	58	1			
		—	Service or volunteer activity (AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, Teach for America, etc.)	4	2	50	1			
		—	Internship (paid or unpaid)	9	4	253	5			
		—	Travel or gap year	7	3	200	4			
		—	No plans at this time	13	5	196	4			
		—	Other, please specify:	6	2	124	3			
		Total		235	100	5,137	100			
1b. [If immediate plans included full- or part-time employment] Do you already have a job for after graduation?^j										
	FYSsr01b	No		75	53	1,868	60	47%	40%	.15
		Yes, I will start a new job		52	37	769	24			
		Yes, I will continue in my current job		16	11	452	16			
		Total		143	100	3,089	100			
		<i>(Means indicate the percentage who responded "Yes.")</i>								
2. [Excludes those who answered "No," not expecting spring/summer graduation] To what extent have courses in your major(s) prepared you for your post-graduation plans?										
	FYSsr02	1	Very little	13	6	381	8	3.0	2.9	.09
		2	Some	55	23	1,198	23			
		3	Quite a bit	82	35	1,987	39			
		4	Very much	86	36	1,561	31			
		Total		236	100	5,127	100			
3. Do you intend to work eventually in a field related to your major(s)?^j										
	FYSsr03	Yes		288	85	6,668	86	85%	86%	-.01
		No		15	4	351	5			
		Unsure		35	10	745	10			
		Total		338	100	7,764	100			
		<i>(Means indicate the percentage who responded "Yes.")</i>								
4. Do you plan to be self-employed, an independent contractor, or a freelance worker someday?^j										
	FYSsr04	Yes		50	15	1,580	21	15%	21% **	-.16
		No		182	52	3,955	50			
		Unsure		107	33	2,213	29			
		Total		339	100	7,748	100			
		<i>(Means indicate the percentage who responded "Yes.")</i>								

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Refer to the endnotes page for the key to triangle symbols.

Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b			
				OU		Carnegie Class		OU	Carnegie Class		
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d	
5. Do you plan to start your own business (nonprofit or for-profit) someday?¹											
	FYSsr05		Yes	58	19	1,854	25	19%	25% **	-0.15	
			No	175	50	3,494	44				
			Unsure	106	31	2,417	31				
			Total	339	100	7,765	100				
6. How much confidence do you have in your ability to complete tasks requiring the following skills and abilities?²											
a. Critical thinking and analysis of arguments and information	FYSsr06a		1	Very little	2	0	68	1	3.4	3.5	-0.03
			2	Some	31	9	620	8			
			3	Quite a bit	125	37	2,894	36			
			4	Very much	179	53	4,171	55			
				Total	337	100	7,753	100			
b. Creative thinking and problem solving	FYSsr06b		1	Very little	1	0	58	1	3.5	3.5	.04
			2	Some	28	8	588	7			
			3	Quite a bit	117	34	2,848	36			
			4	Very much	192	58	4,252	56			
				Total	338	100	7,746	100			
c. Research skills	FYSsr06c		1	Very little	12	3	177	2	3.1	3.2 **	-0.17
			2	Some	76	23	1,383	18			
			3	Quite a bit	127	38	3,097	40			
			4	Very much	122	35	3,087	40			
				Total	337	100	7,744	100			
d. Clear writing	FYSsr06d		1	Very little	12	3	140	2	3.3	3.3	.02
			2	Some	44	14	1,188	15			
			3	Quite a bit	120	36	3,096	40			
			4	Very much	163	47	3,326	44			
				Total	339	100	7,750	100			
e. Persuasive speaking	FYSsr06e		1	Very little	18	5	339	4	3.0	3.0	.01
			2	Some	81	24	1,951	25			
			3	Quite a bit	122	37	2,958	38			
			4	Very much	117	35	2,498	33			
				Total	338	100	7,746	100			
f. Technological skills	FYSsr06f		1	Very little	15	4	277	4	3.0	3.1	-0.02
			2	Some	84	23	1,784	23			
			3	Quite a bit	125	38	3,027	39			
			4	Very much	115	35	2,649	35			
				Total	339	100	7,737	100			
g. Financial and business management skills	FYSsr06g		1	Very little	60	16	1,352	17	2.5	2.5	.02
			2	Some	127	37	2,798	35			
			3	Quite a bit	85	26	2,222	29			
			4	Very much	65	21	1,367	19			
				Total	337	100	7,739	100			

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Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				OU		Carnegie Class		OU	Carnegie Class	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d
h. Entrepreneurial skills	FYSSr06h	1	Very little	95	26	1,899	24	2.3	2.3	-.05
		2	Some	127	38	2,933	37			
		3	Quite a bit	65	20	1,790	24			
		4	Very much	50	16	1,107	15			
		Total		337	100	7,729	100			
i. Leadership skills	FYSSr06i	1	Very little	8	2	247	3	3.3	3.2 *	.14
		2	Some	45	14	1,288	17			
		3	Quite a bit	113	33	2,795	36			
		4	Very much	172	51	3,401	44			
		Total		338	100	7,731	100			
j. Networking and relationship building	FYSSr06j	1	Very little	17	5	475	6	3.1	3.0 **	.18
		2	Some	62	18	1,885	24			
		3	Quite a bit	117	35	2,795	36			
		4	Very much	142	42	2,559	34			
		Total		338	100	7,714	100			
7. To what extent has your coursework in your major(s) emphasized the following?										
a. Generating new ideas or brainstorming	FYSSr07a	1	Very little	15	4	372	5	3.1	3.0	.10
		2	Some	58	18	1,725	22			
		3	Quite a bit	135	40	2,998	38			
		4	Very much	130	38	2,639	35			
		Total		338	100	7,734	100			
b. Taking risks in your coursework without fear of penalty	FYSSr07b	1	Very little	78	23	1,979	25	2.5	2.4	.06
		2	Some	98	30	2,377	30			
		3	Quite a bit	91	27	1,965	26			
		4	Very much	70	21	1,398	19			
		Total		337	100	7,719	100			
c. Evaluating multiple approaches to a problem	FYSSr07c	1	Very little	13	4	444	6	3.1	3.0	.10
		2	Some	66	20	1,799	23			
		3	Quite a bit	138	41	3,001	39			
		4	Very much	119	35	2,462	33			
		Total		336	100	7,706	100			
d. Inventing new methods to arrive at unconventional solutions	FYSSr07d	1	Very little	34	11	1,067	14	2.7	2.6	.10
		2	Some	101	30	2,479	32			
		3	Quite a bit	113	34	2,388	31			
		4	Very much	86	25	1,751	23			
		Total		334	100	7,685	100			

8. Is there anything your institution could have done better to prepare you for your career or further education? Please describe.

This final question asked students to respond in an open text box. Comments were recorded for 113 seniors. Responses are provided in your "NSSE17 Topical Module - Senior Transitions Student Comments" report and in a separate SPSS data file.

These open-ended responses appear exactly as respondents entered them and may not be suitable for distribution without prior review.

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Refer to the endnotes page for the key to triangle symbols.

Seniors

Variable name	N	Mean		Standard error ^f		Standard deviation ^g		DF ^h	Sig. ⁱ	Effect size ^d
		OU	Carnegie Class	OU	Carnegie Class	OU	Carnegie Class			
		Comparisons with: Carnegie Class								
FYSsr01b ^k	146	.472	.397	.0415	.0126	--	--	--	.078	.15
FYSsr02	232	3.01	2.92	.06	.02	0.91	0.91	2,717	.174	.09
FYSsr03 ^k	338	.854	.857	.0192	.0057	--	--	--	.898	-.01
FYSsr04 ^k	339	.153	.213	.0196	.0067	--	--	--	.009	-.16
FYSsr05 ^k	339	.186	.249	.0212	.0070	--	--	--	.010	-.15
FYSsr06a	336	3.43	3.45	.04	.01	0.68	0.68	4,114	.580	-.03
FYSsr06b	338	3.49	3.47	.04	.01	0.65	0.66	4,113	.537	.04
FYSsr06c	337	3.05	3.19	.05	.01	0.85	0.79	4,112	.003	-.17
FYSsr06d	339	3.27	3.25	.04	.01	0.82	0.77	4,117	.706	.02
FYSsr06e	338	3.02	3.00	.05	.01	0.88	0.86	4,113	.793	.01
FYSsr06f	339	3.04	3.05	.05	.01	0.86	0.85	4,109	.778	-.02
FYSsr06g	337	2.51	2.49	.05	.02	0.99	0.98	4,110	.729	.02
FYSsr06h	337	2.26	2.30	.06	.02	1.02	1.00	4,104	.402	-.05
FYSsr06i	338	3.33	3.21	.04	.01	0.79	0.83	4,106	.015	.14
FYSsr06j	338	3.14	2.97	.05	.01	0.88	0.91	4,098	.001	.18
FYSsr07a	338	3.12	3.03	.05	.01	0.84	0.87	4,106	.078	.10
FYSsr07b	337	2.45	2.39	.06	.02	1.06	1.05	4,098	.297	.06
FYSsr07c	335	3.07	2.99	.05	.01	0.85	0.89	4,092	.090	.10
FYSsr07d	334	2.74	2.65	.05	.02	0.95	0.99	4,080	.078	.10

Endnotes

- a. Column percentages are weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups). Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Counts are unweighted; column percentages cannot be replicated from counts.
- b. All statistics are weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups). Unless otherwise noted, statistical comparisons are two-tailed independent t -tests. Items with categorical response sets are left blank.
- c. These are the values used to calculate means. For the majority of items, these values match the codes in the data file and codebook.
- d. Effect size for independent t -tests uses Cohen's d ; z -tests use Cohen's h .
- e. Statistics are weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups). Categorical items are not listed.
- f. The 95% confidence interval for the population mean is equal to the sample mean plus or minus 1.96 times the standard error of the mean.
- g. A measure of the amount individual scores deviate from the mean of all the scores in the distribution.
- h. Degrees of freedom used to compute the t -tests. Values differ from N s due to weighting and whether equal variances were assumed.
- i. Statistical comparisons are two-tailed independent t -tests or z -tests. Statistical significance represents the probability that the difference between your students' mean and that of the students in the comparison group is due to chance.
- j. Statistical comparison uses z -test to compare the proportion who responded (depending on the item) "Done or in progress" or "Yes" with all who responded otherwise.
- k. Mean represents the proportion who responded (depending on the item) "Done or in progress" or "Yes."

Key to symbols:

- ▲ **Your students' average** was significantly higher ($p < .05$) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.
- △ **Your students' average** was significantly higher ($p < .05$) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- ▽ **Your students' average** was significantly lower ($p < .05$) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- ▼ **Your students' average** was significantly lower ($p < .05$) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.

Note: It is important to interpret the direction of differences relative to item wording and your institutional context.