

# NSSE: What students are saying about their Centre experience

Each year the **National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)** asks students at hundreds of colleges and universities to reflect on the time they devote to various learning activities. The topics explored are linked by previous research on student success in college. Results from NSSE can provide prospective students with insights into how they might learn and develop at a given college. To help in the college exploration process, NSSE developed *A Pocket Guide to Choosing a College* to provide students and parents key questions to ask during campus visits.

The following responses were provided by 308 randomly selected Centre College students on the 2007 NSSE survey. Responses that follow provide the norms for two comparison groups – Carnegie Peers, and the entire NSSE co-hort of approximately 400 institutions. Carnegie Peers make up those national liberal arts colleges used in the *U.S. News and World Report* college rankings.

## Academic challenges at Centre

### To what degree is studying and spending time on academic work emphasized?

Centre - 96% feel this institution places substantial emphasis on academics. Carnegie Peers - 84%, NSSE - 80%.

### Do faculty hold first-year students to high standards?

Centre - 71% frequently work harder than they thought they could to meet faculty expectations. Carnegie Peers - 56%, NSSE - 52%.

### How much time do first year students spend on homework each week?

Centre - 65% spend more than 15 hours per week preparing for class. Carnegie Peers - 56%, NSSE - 52%.

### What types of thinking do assignments require?

First-year students report substantial emphasis on the following activities: Centre - memorizing facts, ideas, or methods 68%. Carnegie Peers - 61%, NSSE - 67%. Centre - analyzing basic elements of an idea or theory: 92%. Carnegie Peers - 83% NSSE - 77%. Centre - synthesizing and organizing ideas 84%. Carnegie Peers - 72%, NSSE - 66%. Centre - making judgments about value of information 75%. Carnegie Peers - 71%, NSSE - 65%. Centre - applying theories or concepts (86%). Carnegie Peers - 75%, NSSE - 72%.

### How much writing is expected?

Centre - 93% of first year students write more than one paper between 5 and 19 pages. Carnegie Peers - 85%, NSSE - 85%.



### How much reading is expected?

Centre - 70% of first-year students read more than 10 assigned books and packs of course readings. Carnegie Peers - 50%, NSSE - 34%.

### Do exams require students to do their best work?

Centre - 80% of first-year students report that their exams strongly challenge them to do their best work. Carnegie Peers - 52%, NSSE - 50%.

### Do students participate in classroom discussion?

Centre - 78% of first-year students asked questions in class or contributed to class discussion. Carnegie Peers - 70%, NSSE - 67%.

## Active learning at Centre

### How much effort do students report placing toward their academic work?

Centre - 71% of first-year students report that they worked harder than they thought they could. Carnegie Peers - 56%, NSSE - 52%.

### How often are topics from class discussed outside of the classroom?

Centre - 70% of first-year students frequently discuss readings or ideas from coursework outside of class. Carnegie Peers - 61%, NSSE - 54%.

### Do students work together on projects—inside and outside of class?

Centre - 35% of first-year students frequently work with other students on projects in class. Carnegie Peers - 37%, NSSE - 49%. Centre - 64% work with peers on assignments outside of class. Carnegie Peers - 49%, NSSE - 41%.

### **How often do students make class presentations?**

Centre - 42% of first-year students report that they make frequent presentations in class. Carnegie Peers - 34%, NSSE - 30%.

### **How many students apply their classroom learning to real life through internships or off-campus field?**

Centre - By their senior year, 67% of students have participated in some form of practicum, internship, field experience, co-op, or clinical assignment. Carnegie Peers - 66%, NSSE - 53%.

## **Student/faculty interaction at Centre**

### **Are faculty members accessible and supportive?**

Centre - 70% of first-year students say their faculty are available, helpful and sympathetic. Carnegie Peers - 58%, NSSE - 44%.

### **How many students work on research projects with faculty?**

Centre - By their senior year, 40% of students have done research with a faculty member. Carnegie Peers - 58%, NSSE - 44%.

### **Do students receive prompt feedback on academic performance?**

Centre - 77% of first-year students indicate that they frequently get prompt verbal or written feedback from faculty members. Carnegie Peers - 62%, NSSE - 53%.

### **How often do students talk with advisors or faculty members about their career plans?**

Centre - 99% of seniors at least occasionally discuss career plans with faculty. 1% never talk with faculty members about career plans. Carnegie Peers - 88%, NSSE - 83%.

### **Do students and faculty members work together on committees and projects outside of course work?**

Centre - 66% of first-year students at least occasionally spend time with faculty members on activities other than coursework. Carnegie Peers - 53%, NSSE - 41%.

## **Enriching educational experiences at Centre**

### **How often do students interact with peers with different social, political, or religious views?**

Centre - 75% of first-year students say they frequently have serious conversations with students who are different from themselves in terms of their religious, political, or personal beliefs. Carnegie Peers - 60%, NSSE - 54%.

### **How often do students interact with peers from different racial or ethnic backgrounds?**

Centre - 59% of first-year students frequently have serious conversations with those of a different race. Carnegie Peers - 52%, NSSE - 50%.

### **How many students study in other countries?**

Centre - By their senior year, 84% of students have studied abroad. Carnegie Peers - 32%, NSSE - 14%.

### **How many students participate in community service?**

Centre - By the time they are seniors, 86% of students have participated in community service or volunteer work. Carnegie Peers - 72%, NSSE - 59%.

## **Supportive environment at Centre**

### **How well do students get along?**

Centre - 71% of first-year students report that their peers are friendly, supportive, and help them feel as if they belong. Carnegie Peers - 65%, NSSE - 58%.

### **Are students satisfied with their overall educational experience?**

Centre - 98% of first-year students report a favorable image of this institution. Carnegie Peers - 89%, NSSE - 86%.

### **How much time do students devote to co-curricular activities?**

Centre - 21% of first-year students spend more than 15 hours a week participating in co-curricular activities. Carnegie Peers - 12%, NSSE - 9%.

### **How well do students get along with faculty?**

Centre - 91% of first-year students report finding faculty generally available, helpful and sympathetic. Carnegie Peers - 82%, NSSE - 71%.

### **How well do students get along with administrators and staff?**

Centre - 73% of first-year students find the administrative personnel and offices helpful, considerate, and flexible. Carnegie Peers - 62%, NSSE - 55%.

### **To what extent does the school help students deal with their academic and social needs?**

Centre - 91% of first-year students feel that this institution has a substantial commitment to their academic success. Carnegie Peers - 83%, NSSE - 75%.

**For general information about Centre write, call or e-mail**

Admission Office  
**1-800-423-6236**  
admission@centre.edu  
www.centre.edu

**CENTRE**  
Personal education. Extraordinary success.