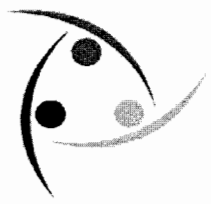
NSSE Benchmark Report
November 2005

University of Kentucky



National Survey
of Student Engagement

To focus discussions about the importance of student engagement and guide institutional improvement efforts, NSSE created five clusters or benchmarks of effective educational practice: (1) Level of academic challenge, (2) Active and collaborative learning, (3) Student-faculty interaction, (4) Enriching educational experiences, and (5) Supportive campus environment. Using approximately 225,000 randomly selected students from 518 institutions that participated in NSSE 2005, this Benchmark Report compares the performance of your institution with its selected peer group, Carnegie group, and the 2005 national norms. In addition, page 8 provides two other comparisons between your school and above-average institutions with benchmarks in the top 50% nationally and high-performing institutions with benchmarks in the top 10% nationally. These displays allow you to determine if the engagement of your typical student differs in a statistically significant, meaningful way from the average student in these comparison groups. More detailed information about how benchmarks are created can be found in the 2005 annual report and on the NSSE website at nsse.iub.edu.

Guide to Your Benchmark Report

Statistical Significance
Benchmarks with mean differences that are larger than would be expected by chance alone are noted with one, two, or three asterisks, denoting one of three significance levels ($p<.05$, $p<.01$, and $p<.001$). The smaller the significance level, the smaller the likelihood that the difference is due to chance. Please note that statistical significance does not guarantee that the result is substantive or important. Large sample sizes (like those seen with NSSE data) tend to produce more statistically significant results even though the magnitude of mean differences may be inconsequential.

Class
Means are reported for first-year students and seniors. Only students who were part of the base random sample or random oversample are included in these analyses. Students in targeted oversamples are not included.

Effect Size
Effect size indicates the "practical significance" of the mean difference. It is calculated by dividing the mean difference by the standard deviation of the group with which the institution is being compared (selected peers, Carnegie type, or 2005 national norm). In practice, an effect size of .2 is often considered small, .5 moderate, and .8 large. A positive sign indicates that your institution's mean was greater, thus showing an affirmative result for the institution. A negative sign indicates the institution lags behind the comparison group. Look for patterns of effect sizes that point to areas of student or institutional performance that warrant attention.

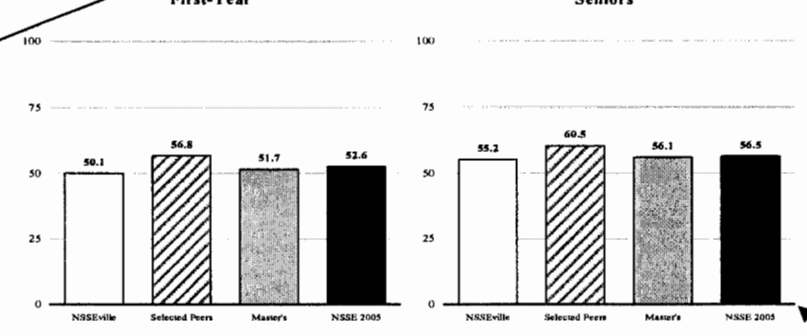
Mean
The mean is the weighted arithmetic average of student level benchmark scores. Although institutional benchmark score calculations have not changed from prior years, reference group calculations were revised in 2005.

Level of Academic Challenge

Benchmark Mean Comparisons

	NSSEville	Selected Peers			Master's			NSSE 2005		
Class	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Sig.*	*Effect Size*	*Mean*	*Sig.*	*Effect Size*	*Mean*	*Sig.*	*Effect Size*
First-Year	50.1	56.8	***	-.51	51.7	***	-.17	52.6	***	-.24
Seniors	55.2	60.5	***	-.42	56.1	**	-.12	56.5	***	-.15

NSSEville compared with:



Level of Academic Challenge Items

Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance.

- Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, etc. related to academic program)
- Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings
- Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more; number of written papers or reports of between 5 and 19 pages; and number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages
- Coursework emphasizing analysis of the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory
- Coursework emphasizing synthesis and organizing of ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships
- Coursework emphasizing the making of judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods
- Coursework emphasizing application of theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations
- Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations
- Campus environment emphasizing time studying and on academic work

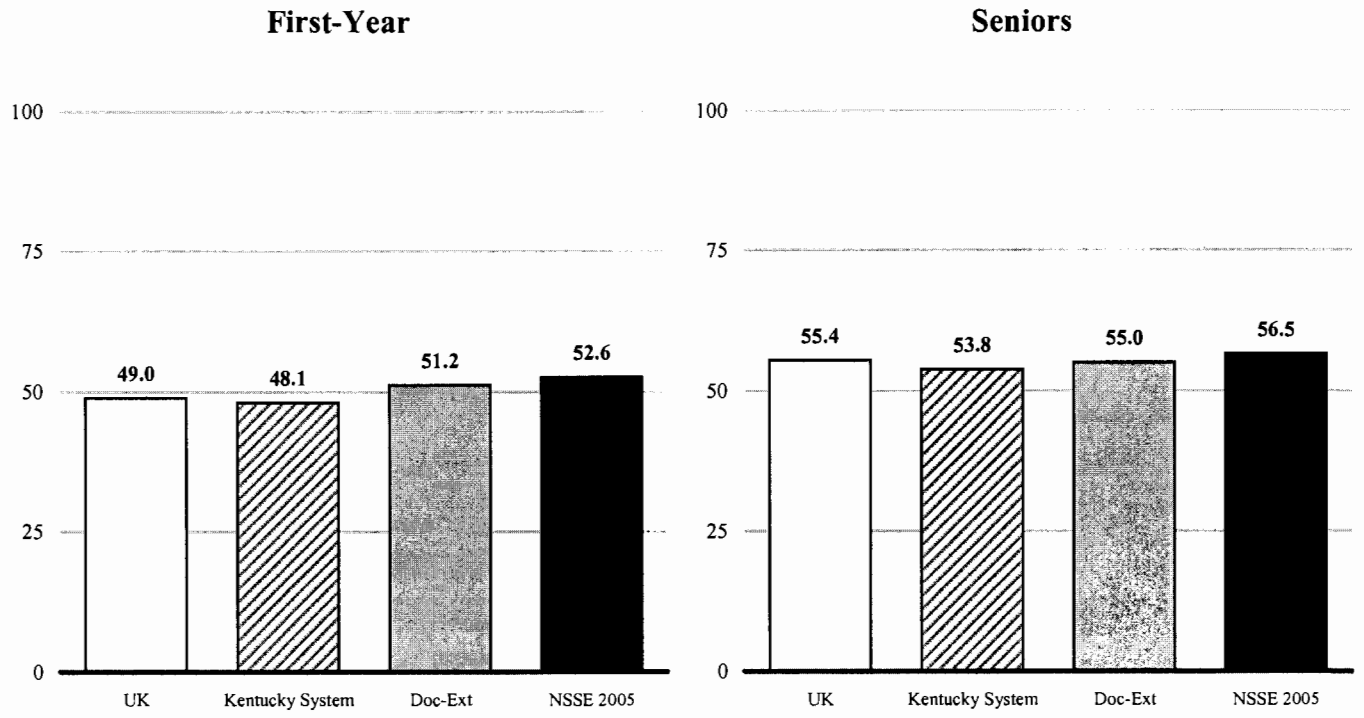
Benchmark Description & Survey Items
A theoretical rationale for measuring the benchmark and the individual items used in its creation are summarized.

Bar Charts
A visual display of first-year and senior mean benchmark scores for your institution and three reference groups.

Level of Academic Challenge

Benchmark Mean Comparisons

	UK	Kentucky System			Doc-Ext			NSSE 2005		
					UK compared with:					
Class	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Sig [a]*	*Effect Size [b]*	*Mean*	*Sig [a]*	*Effect Size [b]*	*Mean*	*Sig [a]*	*Effect Size [b]*
First-Year	49.0	48.1		.06	51.2		-.17	52.6	**	-.27
Seniors	55.4	53.8		.11	55.0		.03	56.5		-.08



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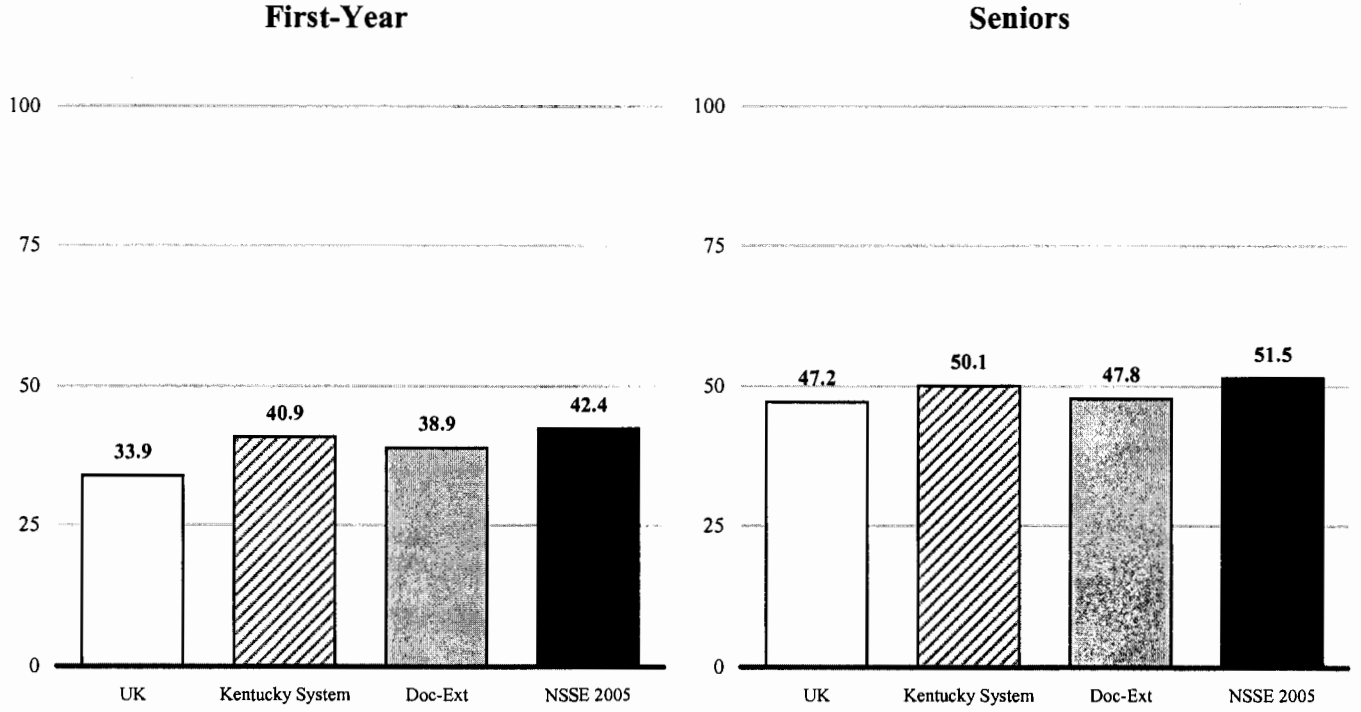
- Coursework emphasizing application of theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations
- Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations
- Campus environment emphasizing time studying and on academic work

a * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed).
b Effect size = mean difference divided by comparison group standard deviation.

Active and Collaborative Learning

Benchmark Mean Comparisons

	UK	UK compared with: Kentucky System			Doc-Ext			NSSE 2005		
Class	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Sig [a]*	*Effect Size [b]*	*Mean*	*Sig [a]*	*Effect Size [b]*	*Mean*	*Sig [a]*	*Effect Size [b]*
First-Year	33.9	40.9	***	-.44	38.9	***	-.33	42.4	***	-.54
Seniors	47.2	50.1		-.17	47.8		-.04	51.5	*	-.25



Active and Collaborative Learning Items

Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and asked to think about what they are learning in different settings. Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material prepares students for the messy, unscripted problems they will encounter daily during and after college.

- Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
- Made a class presentation
- Worked with other students on projects during class
- Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments
- Tutored or taught other students
- Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)

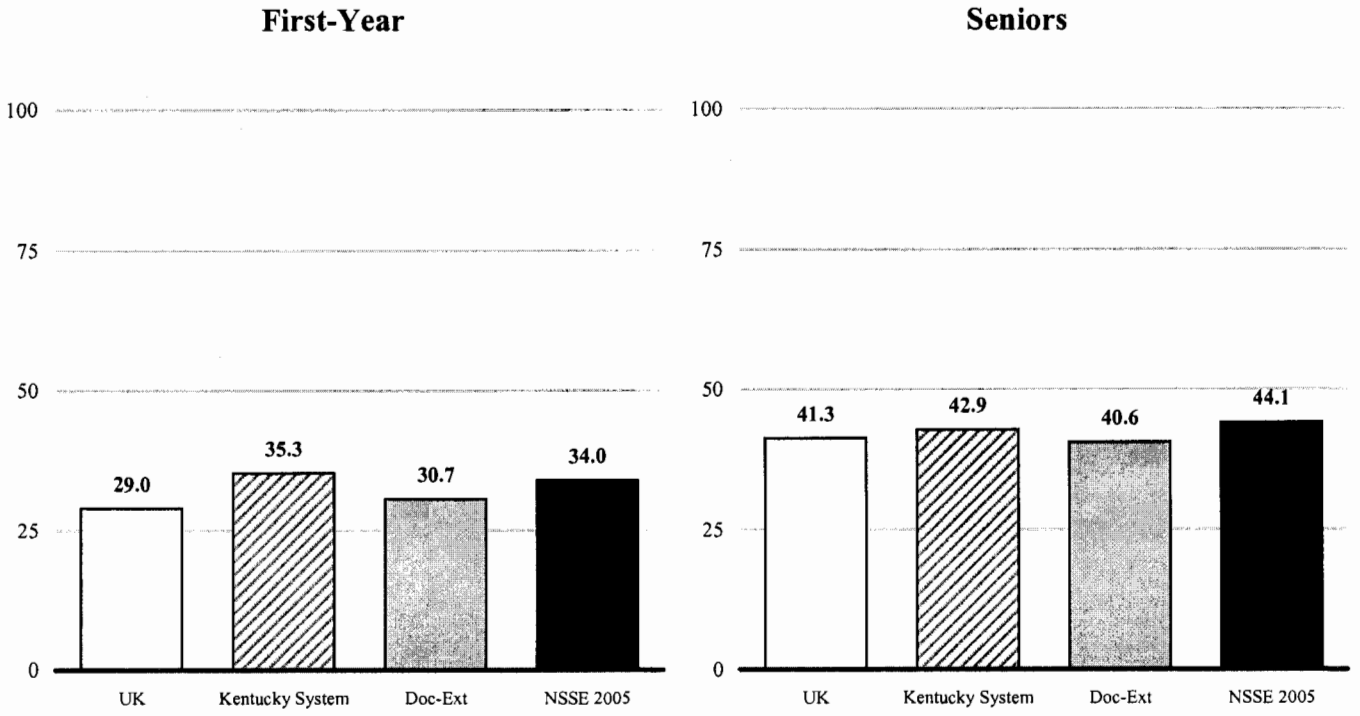
a * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed).
b Effect size = mean difference divided by comparison group standard deviation.

Student-Faculty Interaction

Benchmark Mean Comparisons

UK compared with:

Class	UK Mean	Kentucky System Mean	Kentucky System Sig [a]	Kentucky System Effect Size [b]	Doc-Ext Mean	Doc-Ext Sig [a]	Doc-Ext Effect Size [b]	NSSE 2005 Mean	NSSE 2005 Sig [a]	NSSE 2005 Effect Size [b]
First-Year	29.0	35.3	***	-.34	30.7		-.10	34.0	***	-.28
Seniors	41.3	42.9		-.07	40.6		.04	44.1		-.13



Student-Faculty Interaction Items

Students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside the classroom. As a result, their teachers become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, life-long learning.

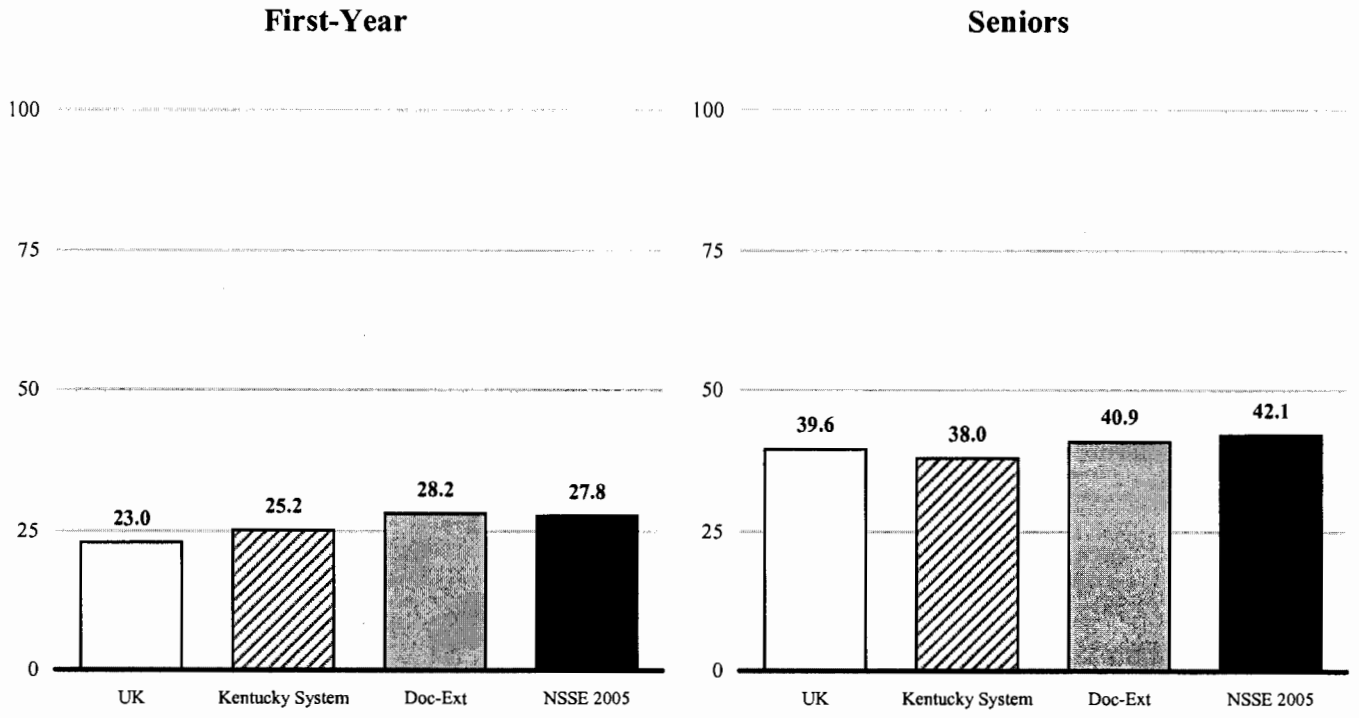
- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
- Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student-life activities, etc.)
- Received prompt feedback from faculty on your academic performance (written or oral)
- Worked with a faculty member on a research project outside of course or program requirements

a * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed).
b Effect size = mean difference divided by comparison group standard deviation.

Enriching Educational Experiences

Benchmark Mean Comparisons

	UK	Kentucky System			Doc-Ext			NSSE 2005		
					UK compared with:					
Class	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Sig [a]*	*Effect Size [b]*	*Mean*	*Sig [a]*	*Effect Size [b]*	*Mean*	*Sig [a]*	*Effect Size [b]*
First-Year	23.0	25.2		-.17	28.2	***	-.41	27.8	***	-.38
Seniors	39.6	38.0		.10	40.9		-.07	42.1		-.14



Enriching Educational Experiences Items

Complementary learning opportunities in and out of class augment academic programs. Diversity experiences teach students valuable things about themselves and others. Technology facilitates collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community service, and senior capstone courses provide opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge.

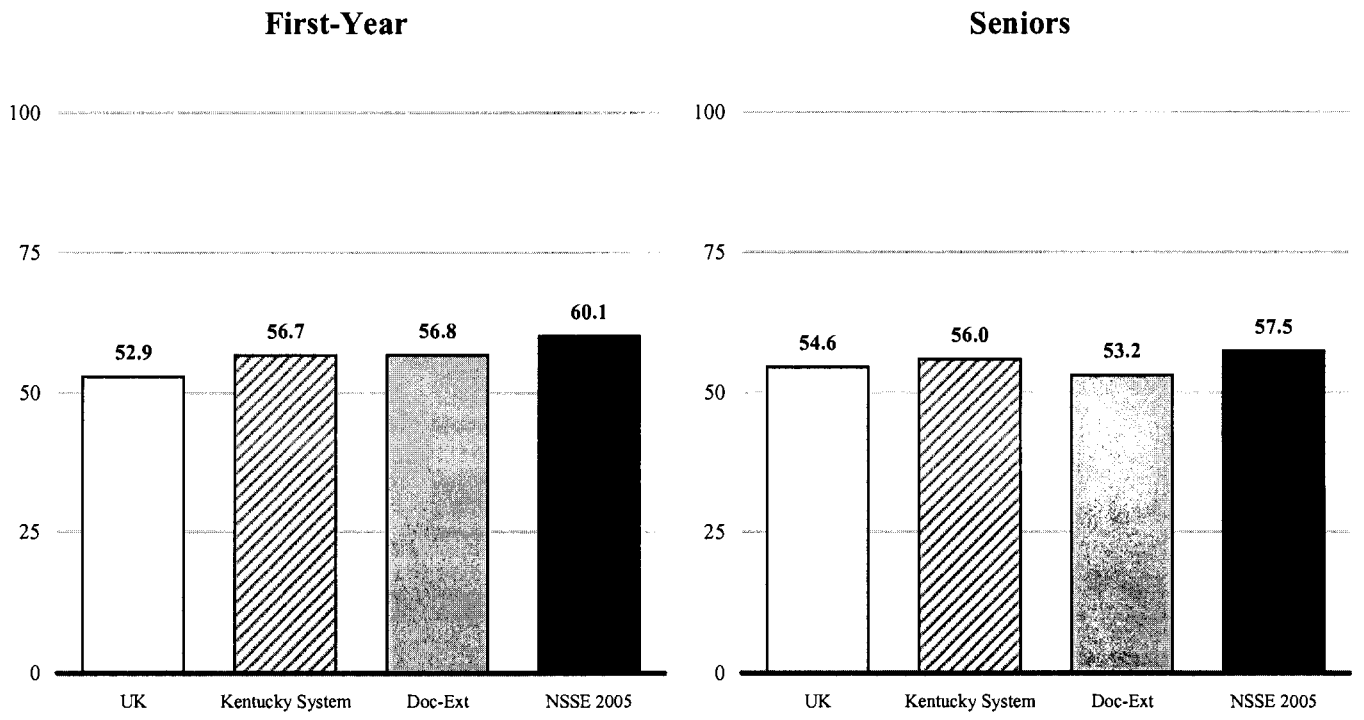
- Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, publications, student government, sports, etc.)
- Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment
- Community service or volunteer work
- Foreign language coursework & study abroad
- Independent study or self-designed major
- Culminating senior experience (comprehensive exam, capstone course, thesis, project, etc.)
- Serious conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values
- Serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity
- Using electronic technology to discuss or complete an assignment
- Campus environment encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
- Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together

a * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed).
b Effect size = mean difference divided by comparison group standard deviation.

Supportive Campus Environment

Benchmark Mean Comparisons

	UK	Kentucky System			Doc-Ext			NSSE 2005		
		UK compared with:								
Class	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Sig [a]*	*Effect Size [b]*	*Mean*	*Sig [a]*	*Effect Size [b]*	*Mean*	*Sig [a]*	*Effect Size [b]*
First-Year	52.9	56.7	*	-.21	56.8	*	-.22	60.1	***	-.40
Seniors	54.6	56.0		-.08	53.2		.08	57.5		-.16



Supportive Campus Environment Items

Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus.

- Campus environment provides the support you need to help you succeed academically
- Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
- Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially
- Quality of relationships with other students
- Quality of relationships with faculty members
- Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices

a * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed).
b Effect size = mean difference divided by comparison group standard deviation.

In 2004, changes were made in the process for calculating the NSSE benchmarks of effective educational practice. The changes were a result of our continuing efforts to provide institutions with the best information possible. By revising our calculation process, we enhanced the usability of the information for intra-institutional comparisons. For example, institutions can now calculate scores using the benchmark items at the school, college, or department level. This was not previously possible because the benchmarks were only constructed at the institution level. In addition, using the student-level scores, the precursors to the benchmarks, institutions can compare groups of students (e.g., seniors from two different years). For more information about the benchmark construction process and to download syntax that calculates student-level scores, please see the NSSE Web site: nsse.iub.edu.

Recalculated Benchmarks

While individual institutions now have more options to reconstruct NSSE benchmark scores for their own purposes, the changes in the benchmark calculation procedures require that benchmarks prior to 2004 also be recalculated to more accurately interpret changes in institutional performance over the years. Table 1 provides all of your institution's scores for four of the five benchmarks based upon this revised process, allowing you to compare benchmark scores from two or more years using the same metric. Note that the Student Faculty Interaction benchmark[c] has been computed in a way to make possible accurate year-to-year comparisons. In contrast, no adjustment could be made to allow for comparisons between the 2004 and 2005 Enriching Educational Experiences benchmarks[d] and earlier years.

Table 1
Recalculated Benchmarks for All Years of NSSE Participation[a]

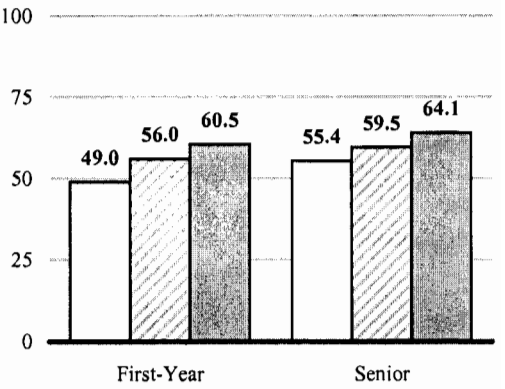
Benchmark	*Class*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004[b]*	*2005[b]*
Level of Academic Challenge	FY	52		52		49
	SR	53		55		55
Active and Collaborative Learning	FY	36		35		34
	SR	45		46		47
Student-Faculty Interaction[c]	FY	35		36		34
	SR	42		44		46
Supportive Campus Environment	FY	53		59		53
	SR	48		54		55

Note: Due to changes in the response set for survey items that comprise the Enriching Educational Experiences[d] benchmark, it is not possible to compare 2004 and 2005 results to earlier years, hence its omission from the table above.

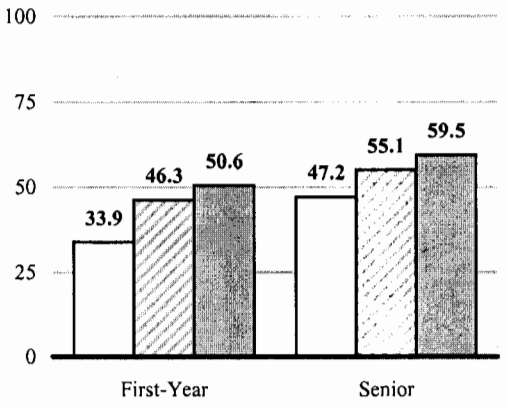
UK compared with

		UK	NSSE 2005 Top 50%			NSSE 2005 Top 10%		
		mean	*mean*	*sig* [a]	*effect size* [b]	*mean*	*sig* [a]	*effect size* [b]
First-Year	LAC	49.0	56.0	***	-.55	60.5	***	-.96
	ACL	33.9	46.3	***	-.79	50.6	***	-1.06
	SFI	29.0	37.8	***	-.48	42.4	***	-.72
	EEE	23.0	30.4	***	-.59	33.9	***	-.88
	SCE	52.9	64.5	***	-.67	69.5	***	-1.00
Senior	LAC	55.4	59.5	**	-.30	64.1	***	-.68
	ACL	47.2	55.1	***	-.48	59.5	***	-.74
	SFI	41.3	49.6	***	-.39	56.9	***	-.73
	EEE	39.6	47.8	***	-.47	55.9	***	-1.00
	SCE	54.6	62.5	***	-.45	67.0	***	-.72

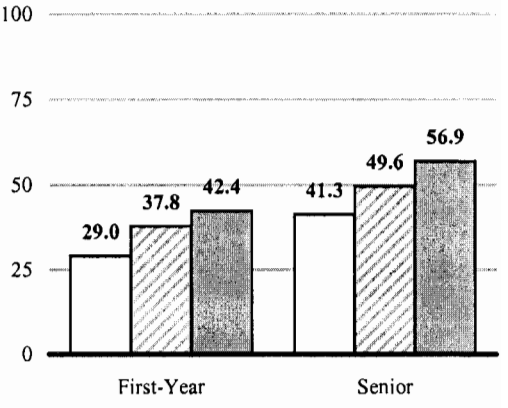
Level of Academic Challenge



Active and Collaborative Learning



Student-Faculty Interaction

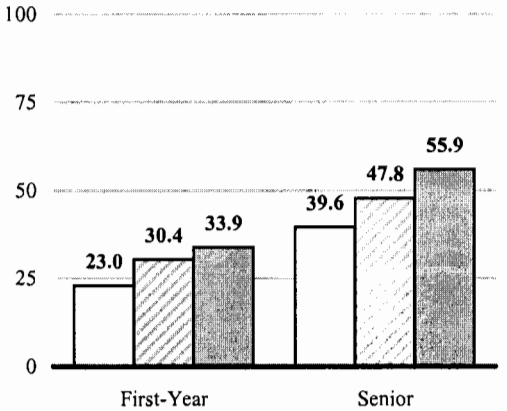


Legend

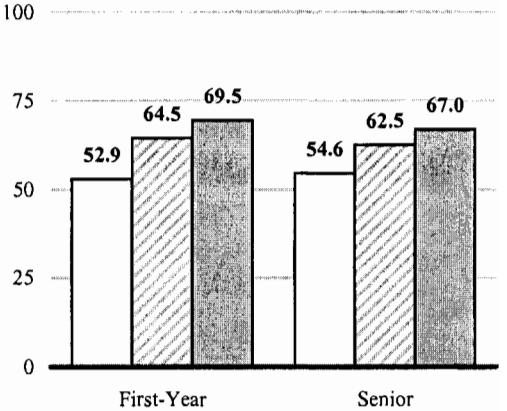
- UK
- Top 50%
- Top 10%

This display compares your students with those attending schools that scored in the top 50% and top 10% of all NSSE 2005 institutions on the benchmark.

Enriching Educational Experiences



Supportive Campus Environment



a * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed).
b Effect size = mean difference divided by comparison group standard deviation.

First-Year Students

		Mean Statistics					Distribution Statistics					Reference Group Comparison Statistics							
					Conf. Interval		Percentile Distribution					Mean		Conf. Interval			Effect	Conf. Interval	
	N	Mean	SD	SE	Lower	Upper	5	25	50	75	95	Diff.	SE	Lower	Upper	Sig.	size	Lower	Upper
LEVEL OF ACADEMIC CHALLENGE																			
UK	119	49.0	13.8	1.3	46.5	51.5	28	40	48	58	70								
Kentucky System	1,273	48.1	13.9	.4	47.4	48.9	26	38	48	58	71	.9	1.3	-1.7	3.5	.519	.06	-.13	.25
Doc-Ext	22,055	51.2	13.2	.1	51.0	51.4	30	42	51	60	73	-2.2	1.2	-4.6	.2	.067	-.17	-.35	.01
NSSE 2005	106,288	52.6	13.4	.0	52.5	52.7	31	44	53	62	75	-3.6	1.2	-6.0	-1.2	.003	-.27	-.45	-.09
Top 50%	52,055	56.0	12.8	.1	55.9	56.1	35	47	56	65	77	-7.1	1.2	-9.4	-4.7	.000	-.55	-.73	-.37
Top 10%	12,161	60.5	12.0	.1	60.3	60.7	40	52	61	69	80	-11.5	1.1	-13.7	-9.4	.000	-.96	-1.14	-.78
ACTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING																			
UK	124	33.9	15.1	1.4	31.2	36.5	14	24	33	43	62								
Kentucky System	1,404	40.9	15.8	.4	40.0	41.7	19	29	38	52	67	-7.0	1.5	-9.9	-4.1	.000	-.44	-.63	-.26
Doc-Ext	24,118	38.9	15.5	.1	38.7	39.1	17	29	38	48	67	-5.0	1.4	-7.8	-2.3	.000	-.33	-.50	-.15
NSSE 2005	114,298	42.4	15.8	.0	42.3	42.5	19	33	43	52	71	-8.5	1.4	-11.3	-5.7	.000	-.54	-.71	-.36
Top 50%	49,532	46.3	15.6	.1	46.1	46.4	24	33	43	57	75	-12.4	1.4	-15.2	-9.7	.000	-.79	-.97	-.62
Top 10%	10,896	50.6	15.9	.2	50.3	50.9	29	38	48	62	76	-16.7	1.4	-19.5	-13.9	.000	-1.06	-1.23	-.88
STUDENT-FACULTY INTERACTION																			
UK	119	29.0	15.0	1.4	26.3	31.7	11	22	28	33	61								
Kentucky System	1,303	35.3	18.5	.5	34.3	36.4	11	22	33	44	72	-6.3	1.5	-9.2	-3.4	.000	-.34	-.50	-.18
Doc-Ext	22,295	30.7	16.6	.1	30.5	30.9	11	17	28	39	61	-1.7	1.4	-4.4	1.0	.231	-.10	-.26	.06
NSSE 2005	107,413	34.0	17.6	.1	33.9	34.1	11	22	33	44	67	-5.0	1.4	-7.7	-2.3	.000	-.28	-.44	-.13
Top 50%	44,956	37.8	18.2	.1	37.7	38.0	11	22	33	50	72	-8.8	1.4	-11.5	-6.1	.000	-.48	-.63	-.33
Top 10%	8,844	42.4	18.5	.2	42.0	42.8	17	28	39	56	78	-13.4	1.4	-16.1	-10.6	.000	-.72	-.87	-.57
ENRICHING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES																			
UK	113	23.0	13.0	1.2	20.6	25.4	6	15	20	31	41								
Kentucky System	1,219	25.2	13.4	.4	24.5	26.0	8	17	23	33	48	-2.3	1.3	-4.8	.3	.086	-.17	-.36	.02
Doc-Ext	21,488	28.2	12.7	.1	28.0	28.4	10	19	27	36	50	-5.2	1.2	-7.6	-2.9	.000	-.41	-.60	-.23
NSSE 2005	103,703	27.8	12.8	.0	27.7	27.9	8	19	26	36	50	-4.9	1.2	-7.2	-2.5	.000	-.38	-.56	-.19
Top 50%	55,533	30.4	12.7	.1	30.3	30.5	11	22	30	38	52	-7.4	1.2	-9.8	-5.1	.000	-.59	-.77	-.40
Top 10%	10,423	33.9	12.4	.1	33.7	34.2	15	25	33	42	55	-11.0	1.2	-13.3	-8.7	.000	-.88	-1.07	-.70
SUPPORTIVE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT																			
UK	113	52.9	18.3	1.7	49.5	56.3	22	42	53	67	83								
Kentucky System	1,196	56.7	18.4	.5	55.7	57.8	28	44	56	69	89	-3.8	1.8	-7.3	-.3	.036	-.21	-.40	-.01
Doc-Ext	21,070	56.8	17.8	.1	56.5	57.0	28	44	58	69	86	-3.9	1.7	-7.2	-.6	.021	-.22	-.40	-.03
NSSE 2005	101,978	60.1	18.1	.1	60.0	60.3	31	47	61	72	89	-7.2	1.7	-10.6	-3.9	.000	-.40	-.59	-.22
Top 50%	46,610	64.5	17.3	.1	64.3	64.6	36	53	64	78	92	-11.6	1.6	-14.8	-8.4	.000	-.67	-.85	-.48
Top 10%	8,245	69.5	16.5	.2	69.1	69.8	42	58	69	81	97	-16.6	1.6	-19.7	-13.5	.000	-1.00	-1.19	-.82

Senior Students

		Mean Statistics					Distribution Statistics					Reference Group Comparison Statistics							
					Conf. Interval		Percentile Distribution					Mean		Conf. Interval			Effect	Conf. Interval	
	N	Mean	SD	SE	Lower	Upper	5	25	50	75	95	Diff.	SE	Lower	Upper	Sig.	size	Lower	Upper
LEVEL OF ACADEMIC CHALLENGE																			
UK	98	55.4	12.1	1.2	53.0	57.8	35	48	56	63	77								
Kentucky System	1,721	53.8	14.7	.4	53.1	54.5	29	44	54	64	77	1.6	1.3	-.9	4.1	.215	.11	-.06	.28
Doc-Ext	22,140	55.0	13.9	.1	54.8	55.2	32	46	55	65	78	.4	1.2	-2.0	2.8	.741	.03	-.15	.20
NSSE 2005	104,997	56.5	14.1	.0	56.4	56.6	33	47	57	67	79	-1.1	1.2	-3.5	1.3	.378	-.08	-.25	.09
Top 50%	46,242	59.5	13.6	.1	59.3	59.6	37	50	60	69	81	-4.0	1.2	-6.4	-1.6	.001	-.30	-.48	-.12
Top 10%	9,096	64.1	12.7	.1	63.8	64.3	42	56	65	73	84	-8.6	1.3	-11.2	-6.1	.000	-.68	-.88	-.48
ACTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING																			
UK	99	47.2	15.6	1.6	44.1	50.3	24	38	43	57	81								
Kentucky System	1,788	50.1	17.1	.4	49.3	50.9	24	38	48	62	81	-3.0	1.8	-6.4	.5	.094	-.17	-.37	.03
Doc-Ext	23,275	47.8	16.6	.1	47.6	48.0	24	38	48	57	76	-.6	1.7	-3.9	2.6	.703	-.04	-.24	.16
NSSE 2005	109,037	51.5	16.9	.1	51.4	51.6	24	38	52	62	81	-4.3	1.7	-7.6	-.9	.012	-.25	-.45	-.06
Top 50%	45,628	55.1	16.5	.1	55.0	55.3	29	43	52	67	86	-7.9	1.7	-11.2	-4.7	.000	-.48	-.68	-.28
Top 10%	9,597	59.5	16.6	.2	59.2	59.8	33	48	57	71	86	-12.3	1.7	-15.6	-9.0	.000	-.74	-.94	-.54
STUDENT-FACULTY INTERACTION																			
UK	98	41.3	18.7	1.9	37.6	45.0	17	28	39	56	78								
Kentucky System	1,740	42.9	20.7	.5	41.9	43.8	11	28	39	56	83	-1.5	2.1	-5.7	2.7	.475	-.07	-.28	.13
Doc-Ext	22,311	40.6	20.4	.1	40.3	40.9	11	28	39	56	78	.7	2.1	-3.3	4.8	.720	.04	-.16	.23
NSSE 2005	105,778	44.1	21.0	.1	44.0	44.2	17	28	39	56	83	-2.7	2.1	-6.9	1.4	.196	-.13	-.33	.07
Top 50%	42,492	49.6	21.1	.1	49.4	49.8	17	33	50	67	89	-8.3	2.1	-12.5	-4.1	.000	-.39	-.59	-.19
Top 10%	7,126	56.9	21.4	.3	56.4	57.4	22	39	56	72	94	-15.6	1.9	-19.3	-11.9	.000	-.73	-.91	-.55
ENRICHING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES																			
UK	97	39.6	17.2	1.7	36.2	43.1	8	29	39	53	65								
Kentucky System	1,695	38.0	16.9	.4	37.2	38.8	11	25	37	50	68	1.6	1.8	-1.9	5.1	.362	.10	-.11	.30
Doc-Ext	21,737	40.9	17.4	.1	40.7	41.2	14	28	40	53	71	-1.3	1.8	-4.8	2.2	.467	-.07	-.27	.13
NSSE 2005	103,454	42.1	18.1	.1	42.0	42.2	14	28	42	55	73	-2.5	1.8	-6.1	1.1	.181	-.14	-.34	.06
Top 50%	49,935	47.8	17.5	.1	47.7	48.0	18	36	48	60	76	-8.2	1.8	-11.7	-4.7	.000	-.47	-.66	-.27
Top 10%	9,212	55.9	16.3	.2	55.6	56.3	28	46	57	67	82	-16.3	1.7	-19.6	-13.0	.000	-1.00	-1.20	-.80
SUPPORTIVE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT																			
UK	97	54.6	18.1	1.8	51.0	58.2	25	42	53	67	89								
Kentucky System	1,676	56.0	18.6	.5	55.1	56.9	25	44	56	69	86	-1.4	1.9	-5.2	2.4	.473	-.08	-.28	.13
Doc-Ext	21,451	53.2	18.4	.1	52.9	53.4	22	42	53	67	83	1.4	1.9	-2.3	5.1	.451	.08	-.12	.28
NSSE 2005	102,265	57.5	18.5	.1	57.4	57.6	28	44	58	69	89	-2.9	1.9	-6.6	.8	.122	-.16	-.36	.04
Top 50%	39,784	62.5	17.6	.1	62.3	62.7	33	50	64	75	92	-7.9	1.8	-11.4	-4.4	.000	-.45	-.65	-.25
Top 10%	7,281	67.0	17.1	.2	66.6	67.4	36	56	67	78	94	-12.4	1.8	-15.8	-9.0	.000	-.72	-.92	-.52

University of Kentucky IPEDS: 157085

How comparable are benchmark scores from year to year?

This report is a brief introduction to how to compare institutional performance over time, not an exhaustive treatment of all the pertinent issues that need to be considered. We recommend that you do further analysis and investigation to better understand the changes in relation to your institutional context. It is important to keep in mind three issues before comparing benchmark scores from year to year:

4) Drawing a random sample from a population results in a certain amount of sampling error – an estimate of the degree to which the characteristics of the sample do not match those of the population. Smaller samples relative to the size of the population risk larger sampling errors. Thus, relatively small benchmark differences could be attributed to random sampling fluctuation.

5) In addition to sampling error, you should examine the demographic characteristics of the samples to be sure that similar groups of students are represented among the respondents in various years. If respondent characteristics are different, and these differences likely could affect engagement scores, these differences should be acknowledged and taken into account when attributing reasons for benchmark differences. A more sophisticated approach would be to weight the samples so they more closely resemble the student population, and then recalculate the benchmark scores using the formulas provided by NSSE.

6) Some questions and response options were changed over the years based on psychometric analyses to improve the survey's validity and reliability. Most notably, response options for the 'enriching' items (question 7 on the survey) were revised in 2004.[d] Our analysis shows that these items are not comparable with prior years. *For most institutions, this change will produce a substantially lower Enriching Educational Experiences score in 2004 and 2005 compared to prior years, particularly for first-year students*. See the NSSE website for specific changes to these and other items.

What constitutes a real change in a benchmark score?

One way to estimate the magnitude of change in a benchmark score over time is to combine your institutional data from all participating years and run statistical analyses between students from the respective years. For example, t-tests can be computed between first-year students in 2003 and first-year students in 2004 to see if the differences between benchmark scores are statistically significant. Effect sizes can also be computed by dividing the difference of the benchmark scores by the standard deviation of the entire distribution. The t-tests can also be weighted according to statistical weights provided by NSSE (based on gender and enrollment status), or institutions can create their own weights based on school records.

Institutions can also conduct regression analyses using this multi-year data and include a dummy variable for the year of participation as an independent variable. With this approach, the regression model could control for student demographic variables or other independent variables to see what the unique effect of the year of administration might be.

Notes

a. Scores from NSSE 2000 are not included because several significant changes were made to the survey instrument after that year, thus making year-to-year comparisons less suitable.

b. Student weights prior to 2004 were computed exclusively using the most recent IPEDS data available. In 2004, institutional population files were used for class rank and gender because these files provide more recent and accurate data. Beginning in 2005, enrollment status information (full-time/part-time) was also taken from institutional population files rather than IPEDS.

c. All items in question 7 on the 2004 instrument were rescaled in 2004. One of these items, "Work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements," contributes to the Student-Faculty Interaction benchmark. The old response set (NSSE 2000-2003) was 'yes,' 'no,' or 'undecided' whereas the new response set is 'done,' 'plan to do,' 'do not plan to do,' or 'have not decided.' Our analysis shows that these items are not comparable across years. Therefore the Student-Faculty Interaction scores on this report do not include the 'research' item. This also means that the score on this report will not match benchmarks reported on previous year reports.

d. All items in question 7 on the 2004 instrument were rescaled in 2004. The old response set (NSSE 2000-2003) was 'yes,' 'no,' or 'undecided' whereas the new response set is 'done,' 'plan to do,' 'do not plan to do,' or 'have not decided.' Our analysis shows that these items are not comparable across years. Therefore, it is not possible to compare the 2004 and 2005 Enriching Educational Experiences benchmark with prior years (2001 – 2003).

National Survey of Student Engagement

NSSE 2005 Selected Peer Institutions

University of Kentucky

This report displays the 2005 comparison institutions for University of Kentucky. The institutions listed below are represented in the 'Kentucky System' column of the Respondent Characteristics, Mean Comparisons, Frequency Distributions, and Benchmark reports.

Institution Name	City	State
Eastern Kentucky University	Richmond	KY
Morehead State University	Morehead	KY
Murray State University	Murray	KY
Northern Kentucky University	Highland Heights	KY
University of Louisville	Louisville	KY
Western Kentucky University	Bowling Green	KY