



# National Survey of Student Engagement: 2013

---

## The Survey

The [National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\)](#) is designed to measure the extent to which undergraduates engage in practices that research shows are predictive of grades, retention, and graduation. Questions ask students to reflect on their activities during the academic year. For example, the first question on the survey asks: *During the current school year, about how often have you asked questions or contributed to course discussions in other ways?* Results are used to identify areas in which institutional improvements might lead to changes in students' academic and personal development.

## NSSE 2013

In February 2013, first-year and senior students were invited to respond to the online NSSE instrument. More than 1,000 UM undergraduates completed the survey. Approximately 270,000 students participated nationwide. UM's results are compared to the national sample, students who are enrolled in comparable research universities (research high Carnegie classification), and students enrolled in institutions in states with a population of two million or less.

## Overall Results

Students at UM showed comparable scores on 85% of the 86 questions posed by the NSSE. Almost all differences were found for first-year students. Freshmen reported fewer interactions with faculty (e.g., *talking about career plans with a faculty member; working with a faculty member on activities other than coursework*) and less collaboration with other students (e.g., *prepared by exams by discussing or working through course material with other students*) than did their peers who attend college in small population states. Those differences disappeared for the senior students. In fact, seniors reported working with a faculty member on a research project more often than did their peers.

Both freshmen and seniors exceeded their peers in civic engagement. Freshmen reported that 56% of their coursework included a community-based project (service-learning) and seniors reported that 64% of their courses included such projects, compared to averages at other institutions of 45% and 52%, respectively.

Both freshmen and seniors reported less frequent discussions with people of a race or ethnicity other than their own. This item showed the largest difference, with 49% of freshmen responding that they *often* or *very often* have such discussions, compared to their small state peer group (58%). Only 48% of seniors responded that they have such discussions *often* or *very often*, compared to 59% of their small state peers. For the national population of students, 71% of freshmen and 72% of seniors reported such frequent discussions.

## Actions

The [results of the NSSE survey](#) will be made available to UM faculty, staff, and students by categories of responses. Recommendations for improving freshmen-faculty interaction and increasing diversity awareness on campus will be solicited.