

## Introduction

NJCU administers the National Survey of Student Engagement every two years. The survey is administered in the Spring semester, to both first year students, and seniors. Class standing is based on credit-hours earned.

## Response Rate

Response rates for cohorts are delineated in Table 1. Because of the low response rate for first year students in 2015. Findings for that group of students for that year should be interpreted with caution.

Table 1

	2013	2015	2017
First Year Students	15%	8%	12%
Seniors	16%	12%	16%

## Quality of Interactions

Students were asked to rate the quality of interactions they have with other groups on campus. Responses were on a scale of 1 to 7, with 7 being the best. Average ratings are displayed in Table 2. Highlights:

- For both first year student and seniors, quality of interactions with other students and with faculty are rated consistently high. Ratings of first year students decreased from 2013 to 2017, but remain at least 5.0. Ratings from the 2019 NSSE administration will be reviewed carefully.
- Both groups of students have high-quality interactions with faculty, although the quality of the interactions decreased somewhat for first year students.
- The ratings of academic advisors differ by student level. Seniors rate advisors consistently high, whereas ratings by first year students declined from 2013 to 2017. Seniors are generally advised by faculty in their major; first year students are advised by professional staff advisors. The 2016-2017 year marked the beginning of a transition in the University Advising Center. The Center experienced numerous staff changes including retirements, separations, and interim appointments. A permanent leader for the Center began in Fall 2017; student ratings will be re-examined in the Spring 2019 NSSE administration.
- Interactions with administrative staff and student services staff are seen as of lower quality than with students or faculty. This is true for both level of student and has been consistent over time.

Table 2

	First Year Students			Seniors		
	2013	2015 <sup>1</sup>	2017	2013	2015	2017
Students	5.6	5.4	5.2	5.7	5.7	5.6
Faculty	5.3	5.3	5.0	5.4	5.4	5.4
Academic advisors	5.0	5.2	4.6	5.0	5.1	5.1
Other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid, etc.)	4.8	5.1	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.7
Student services staff (career services, student activities, housing, etc.)	4.6	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.6	4.5

<sup>1</sup>sample size small; caution should be used in interpreting results

### Institutional Emphasis

Students were asked the extent to which the institution emphasized various activities. Responses were on a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being the most often. Average ratings are displayed in Table 3. Highlights:

- In general, seniors rated emphasis less than first year students.
- For both first-year student and seniors, ratings are fairly consistent over time
- NJCU emphasizes studying, utilizing support services, and social involvement the most
- Attending campus events, participating in issue-focused events, and managing non-academic responsibilities are emphasized the least
- Seniors consistently rate emphasis lower than first year students on several factors including: using learning supports, support overall well-being, attending campus events, and managing non-academic responsibilities

Table 3

	First Year Students			Seniors		
	2013	2015 <sup>1</sup>	2017	2013	2015	2017
Spending time studying	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.1
Providing academic support to students	3.2	3.1	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.8
Providing opportunities to be involved socially	2.9	3.1	3.0	2.8	2.8	2.8
Using learning support services	3.1	3.2	3.1	2.8	2.8	2.7
Providing support for well-being (health, counseling, etc.)	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.6	2.7	2.6
Attending campus events	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.5	2.6	2.4
Attending events focused on social, economic, or political issues	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4
Helping manage non-academic responsibilities	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.2	2.2

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### Perceived Gains

Seniors responded to questions about perceived knowledge/skill gains in several areas related to general education learning outcomes. Table 4 displays the percentage of students indicating that they gained “quite a bit” or “very much.” Key findings:

- Critical thinking consistently ranked first in terms of perceived gains. Quantitative literacy skills was also consistently at or near the bottom in terms of perceived gains.
- Perceptions spiked for several outcomes in 2015, particularly critical thinking, written communication, oral communication, and informed citizenship. This may be due in part to the substantial attention to these outcomes on campus in preparation for the launch of the new general education program.
- Informed citizenship has maintained the increase, possibly due to the recent focus on civic engagement through NJCU’s involvement in Campus Compact.

Table 4

Percentage gaining “quite a bit” or “very much”	Seniors		
	2013	2105	2017
Thinking critically and analytically	81%	88%	84%
Speaking clearly and effectively	71%	81%	71%
Writing clearly and effectively	73%	80%	75%

Percentage gaining “quite a bit” or “very much”	Seniors		
	2013	2105	2017
Understanding people of other backgrounds	73%	77%	75%
Working effectively with others	71%	72%	72%
Developing or clarifying a personal code of values and ethics	69%	71%	70%
Being an informed and active citizen	63%	67%	68%
Acquiring job- or work-related knowledge and skills	63%	65%	65%
Solving complex real-world problems	64%	64%	66%
Analyzing numerical and statistical information	63%	63%	63%

### Academic Challenge

First year students and senior indicated the extent to which they were challenged academically by responding to items in several areas:

- Higher-Order Learning which evaluates the extent to which coursework requires application, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis. (Scale = 0 to 60)
- Reflective and Integrative Learning which explores the extent to which coursework required making connections among seemingly disparate ideas, examining strengths and weaknesses of arguments, and taking a variety of perspectives. (Scale = 0 to 60)
- Learning Strategies which students engaged in deep learning strategies such as identifying information from reading assignments, reviewing notes, and making summaries of key concepts
- Quantitative Reasoning which examines the extent to which coursework requires analysis and use of numerical information. (Scale = 0 to 60)
- Course Challenge which assesses the extent to which students indicated courses challenged them to do their best work. (Scale = 1 to 7)

Results are included in Table 5. Key findings include:

- With some notable exceptions, ratings of seniors are generally equivalent to or slightly higher than first year students
- Students consistently indicate that the emphasis on quantitative reasoning is much less than other challenging aspects
- In all cases, ratings of seniors declined from 2013 to 2017, with the largest changes in higher-order learning and learning strategies

Table 5

	First Year Students			Seniors		
	2013	2015 <sup>1</sup>	2017	2013	2015	2017
Higher-Order Learning	41.9	41.4	42.0	43.4	44.0	40.5
Reflective and Integrative Learning	37.6	37.5	38.3	39.7	40.7	38.5
Learning Strategies	43.7	41.9	41.2	43.9	43.8	41.5
Quantitative Reasoning	28.2	26.6	28.6	29.5	31.2	29.0
Course Challenge	5.6	5.5	5.4	5.8	5.9	5.7

<sup>1</sup>sample size small; caution should be used in interpreting results