NSSE/FSSE Discussion
(2006 and 2007 administrations)

A Report by the SubGroup:

Meghan Loghry
Susan Neufeld
Ron Noble
Lee Renner (convenor)

Committee Charge: To read both surveys and make observations and develop additional questions for consideration.

Discussion and Recommendations: We reviewed a draft of a comparison between the FSSE 2007 and the NSSE 2006 survey responses. It was observed that there were marked differences between faculty perceptions and student responses in first-year and senior students.

The committee recommends conducting a thorough gap analysis, utilizing faculty and student focus groups and other assessment means. This will help determine what specific steps we can take to narrow these gaps and improve student and faculty engagement and student success. The expectations do not match up between the teacher and the learner.

It was also seen as important to determine what faculty and students think is missing from the surveys in order to allow us to add additional questions.

Both the NSSE and FSSE seem to be purposeful and important survey instruments.

A trend analysis of the NSSE is needed in order to observe changes or patterns over time.

The NSSE response rates were small, and the committee felt it was important to market the survey more effectively. Perhaps provide incentives for students (i.e., extra credit) if they take the survey.

It was also suggested that the NSSE NOT be administered too often, perhaps every other year would be more cost effective.
Suggestions for future Student Success Committee meetings:

- Discuss how to improve survey response rate.
- Review questions on campus surveys to determine possible changes from faculty and students.
- Discuss how to direct faculty to information available online/providing departments with information.
- Introduce as possible Campus Dialogue topic/possible student senate presentations/possible student organization presentations at club presidents’ meeting, department chairs meeting, etc.
- Share information with all first-time freshmen students.
- Faculty and professional advisors could share information during advising appointments.
- Create an information sheet to be distributed at new student orientations.
- Recommend mandatory 3-unit E-1/GE course.
- Conduct focus groups with students that have completed the survey.
- Faculty Development Center could conduct faculty focus groups.
- Conduct Senior student focus groups to determine how students could receive assistance sooner.

Closing The Gap: Nine Sample Questions To Consider/Review

1. There was a 60-point difference between faculty perception and the first-year student response to the following statement:

   Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in.

   **Suggestion:** Discuss ideas about ways to narrow the gap regarding the perception of time spent and effort made on writing assignments.

   **Note:** This same question gap narrows significantly over time to only 18-points for students who are seniors.

2. There was a 51-point difference between faculty perception and first-year student response to the following statement:

   Come to class without completing readings or assignments.
**Suggestion:** First-year students and faculty significantly disagree on the students’ level of preparation for class. Determine what needs to be done to close the gaps between the faculty perceptions and first-year student responses regarding class reading and assignment preparedness.

**Note:** This same question gap narrowed over time to only 9-points for students who are seniors.

3. There was a 47-point difference between faculty perception and first-year students and a 34-point difference between faculty perception and senior students to the following statement:

   Discussed ideas from his or her readings or classes with others outside class (other students, family members, co-workers, etc.)

**Suggestion:** Even over time, there does not seem to be much congruence regarding out of classroom discussion of in classroom readings. We need to establish some creative ways to improve this gap. How does the Summer Reading Program influence this? What can be done to increase academic engagement outside the classroom?

4. There was a 44-point gap between faculty perception and first-year student response to the following statement:

   Worked harder than usual to meet the instructor’s standards and expectations.

**Suggestion:** We need to effectively reduce the gap between the faculty perception of the students’ motivation and ability to meet the instructors’ learning standards and classroom expectations. How can orientation be a useful tool here?

**Note:** This gap was reduced to only one point difference for senior students.

5. There was a 41-point difference between faculty perceptions and first-year student responses on the following statement. This gap was narrowed to only 28-points for senior students.

   Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources.

**Suggestion:** We should continue to encourage students to utilize a wide variety of information sources for classroom papers and projects. What specific activities will help students integrate diverse ideas into their assignments?
6. There was a 38-point difference between faculty perceptions and first-year student responses to the following statement. This gap narrowed to only 19-points for senior students.

   Put together ideas and concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions.

**Suggestion:** In what ways can we encourage students to integrate ideas and concepts they have learned in other courses into both oral discussion and written assignments? How do departments work in multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary modes?

7. The faculty perception of the following statement was 34-points different than the first-year student response. This gap was narrowed to only 9 points for senior students.

   Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussion.

**Suggestion:** How do we increase the level and quality of classroom discussion and participation? How can orientation contribute toward narrowing this gap?

8. The faculty perception for the following question differs 34-points for first-year students and 29-points for seniors:

   Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on his or her academic performance.

**Suggestion:** How can we improve the response time regarding faculty feedback on student performance? Are expectations and reality aligned?

9. The faculty perception and students response gap between first-year students was 33-points and 28-points for seniors for the following statement:

   Tried to better understand someone else’s views by imagining how an issue looks from that person’s perspective.

**Suggestion:** How do you suggest we narrow the gap in the perception of the development of empathy? How do General Education goals address empathy and diversity? What experiences contribute toward developing this characteristic?