

2019

NSSE 2019 Topical Module Report Development of Transferable Skills

National Survey of Student Engagement

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National Survey of Student Engagement, "NSSE 2019 Topical Module Report Development of Transferable Skills" (2019). *NSSE*. 27.

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NSSE 2019 Topical Module Report

Development of Transferable Skills

University of Nebraska at Omaha

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About This Topical Module

Adapted from a pilot survey that was developed by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, this module examines activities that develop useful and transferable skills for the workplace (such as verbal and written fluency and analytic inquiry). The module complements questions on the core survey about higher-order learning, reflective and integrative learning, and students' perceptions of their development in a variety of areas. Complementary FSSE set available.

Comparison Group

This section summarizes how this module's comparison group was identified, including selection criteria and whether the default option was taken. This is followed by the resulting list of institutions represented in the 'Transferable Skills' column of this report.

| | |
|--|---|
| Group label | Transferable Skills |
| Date submitted | Not applicable; comparison group not customized. |
| How was this comparison group constructed? | Your institution did not customize this comparison group; the default group (all module participants) was used. |
| Group description | Default comparison group |

Transferable Skills (N=64)

| | |
|--|--|
| Agnes Scott College (Decatur, GA) | Mount St. Mary's University (Emmitsburg, MD) |
| American InterContinental University-Online (Schaumburg, IL) | Murray State University (Murray, KY)* |
| ASU Online (Scottsdale, AZ) | Nichols College (Dudley, MA)* |
| Austin Peay State University (Clarksville, TN) | North Carolina Central University (Durham, NC)* |
| Bellevue University (Bellevue, NE) | Northern Arizona University (Flagstaff, AZ)* |
| Bentley University (Waltham, MA) | Purdue University Global (Davenport, IA) |
| Brenau University (Gainesville, GA)* | Quest University Canada (Squamish, BC) |
| Cameron University (Lawton, OK) | Reinhardt University (Waleska, GA) |
| Carson-Newman University (Jefferson City, TN) | Roanoke College (Salem, VA)* |
| Catawba College (Salisbury, NC) | Saint Francis Medical Center College of Nursing (Peoria, IL) |
| Clemson University (Clemson, SC)* | Savannah College of Art and Design (Savannah, GA) |
| Columbia College (Columbia, MO) | Southeast Missouri State University (Cape Girardeau, MO)* |
| Covenant College (Lookout Mountain, GA)* | Southwestern Assemblies of God University (Waxahachie, TX)* |
| CUNY Hunter College (New York, NY) | Tennessee Technological University (Cookeville, TN) |
| Drury University (Springfield, MO)* | Truman State University (Kirksville, MO) |
| Eastern Connecticut State University (Willimantic, CT) | Tyndale University College (Toronto, ON) |
| Emmanuel College (Boston, MA)* | Union College (Barbourville, KY) |
| Ferris State University (Big Rapids, MI)* | Union College (NE) (Lincoln, NE) |
| Florida International University (Miami, FL)* | Universidad Adventista de las Antillas (Mayaguez, PR) |
| Goucher College (Baltimore, MD)* | University of Houston-Clear Lake (Houston, TX) |
| Harrisburg University of Science and Technology (Harrisburg, PA) | University of Illinois Springfield (Springfield, IL)* |
| Lakehead University (Thunder Bay, ON) | University of Missouri-Kansas City (Kansas City, MO) |
| Liberty University (Lynchburg, VA) | University of New England (Biddeford, ME)* |
| Lourdes University (Sylvania, OH)* | University of New Hampshire at Manchester (Manchester, NH) |
| Lynn University (Boca Raton, FL)* | University of Phoenix - Arizona/ONLINE (Tempe, AZ) |
| Lyon College (Batesville, AR) | University of Pittsburgh-Bradford (Bradford, PA)* |
| Miami University-Hamilton (Hamilton, OH) | University of Providence (Great Falls, MT)* |
| Miami University-Middletown (Middletown, OH) | University of Southern Indiana (Evansville, IN) |
| Missouri State University (Springfield, MO) | University of the Cumberland (Williamsburg, KY) |

*2018 participant

Transferable Skills (N=64), continued

Utica College (Utica, NY)*

Washington Adventist University (Takoma Park, MD)

Wesleyan College, Macon, Georgia (Macon, GA)

Wilkes University (Wilkes-Barre, PA)

First-Year Students

| Item wording or description | Variable name | Values ^c | Response options | Frequency Distributions ^a | | | | Statistical Comparisons ^b | | |
|--|---------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|-----|---------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| | | | | UNO | | Transferable Skills | | UNO | Transferable Skills | |
| | | | | Count | % | Count | % | Mean | Mean | Effect size ^d |
| 1. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you done the following? | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. Discussed or debated an issue of social, political, or philosophical importance | TRN01a | 1 | Never | 71 | 19 | 1,910 | 16 | 2.3 | 2.5 ** | -0.15 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 148 | 41 | 4,624 | 39 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 98 | 28 | 3,470 | 28 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 43 | 12 | 2,173 | 18 | | | |
| | | Total | | 360 | 100 | 12,177 | 100 | | | |
| b. Made a speech to a group | TRN01b | 1 | Never | 120 | 34 | 3,681 | 35 | 2.1 | 2.1 | .05 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 120 | 33 | 4,584 | 36 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 81 | 22 | 2,623 | 20 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 40 | 11 | 1,294 | 10 | | | |
| | | Total | | 361 | 100 | 12,182 | 100 | | | |
| c. Worked in a group with people who differed from you in terms of background, political orientation, points of view, etc. | TRN01c | 1 | Never | 28 | 8 | 1,110 | 10 | 2.7 | 2.7 | .03 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 125 | 34 | 4,182 | 34 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 135 | 36 | 4,391 | 34 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 73 | 21 | 2,495 | 21 | | | |
| | | Total | | 361 | 100 | 12,178 | 100 | | | |
| d. Discussed the ethical consequences of a course of action | TRN01d | 1 | Never | 58 | 17 | 1,810 | 15 | 2.4 | 2.4 | -0.08 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 147 | 41 | 4,867 | 40 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 123 | 33 | 3,757 | 30 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 33 | 10 | 1,733 | 15 | | | |
| | | Total | | 361 | 100 | 12,167 | 100 | | | |
| e. Creatively thought about new ideas or about ways to improve things | TRN01e | 1 | Never | 17 | 6 | 650 | 6 | 2.7 | 2.8 ** | -0.16 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 142 | 39 | 3,915 | 32 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 141 | 38 | 4,838 | 38 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 59 | 17 | 2,775 | 24 | | | |
| | | Total | | 359 | 100 | 12,178 | 100 | | | |
| f. Critically evaluated multiple solutions to a problem | TRN01f | 1 | Never | 22 | 7 | 646 | 5 | 2.7 | 2.8 * | -0.12 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 123 | 32 | 4,008 | 32 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 158 | 43 | 4,931 | 39 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 57 | 17 | 2,586 | 23 | | | |
| | | Total | | 360 | 100 | 12,171 | 100 | | | |
| g. Discussed complex problems with others to develop a better solution | TRN01g | 1 | Never | 28 | 9 | 990 | 8 | 2.6 | 2.7 ** | -0.13 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 147 | 40 | 4,380 | 36 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 140 | 39 | 4,505 | 36 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 45 | 13 | 2,291 | 20 | | | |
| | | Total | | 360 | 100 | 12,166 | 100 | | | |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Refer to the endnotes page for the key to triangle symbols.

First-Year Students

| Item wording or description | Variable name | Values ^c | Response options | Frequency Distributions ^a | | | | Statistical Comparisons ^b | | |
|--|---------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|-----|---------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| | | | | UNO | | Transferable Skills | | UNO | Transferable Skills | |
| | | | | Count | % | Count | % | Mean | Mean | Effect size ^d |
| 2. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you written something (paper, report, article, blog, etc.) that: | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. Used information from a variety of sources (books, journals, Internet, databases, etc.) | TRN02a | 1 | Never | 16 | 4 | 408 | 3 | 3.0 | 3.1 | -.10 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 92 | 26 | 2,892 | 24 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 139 | 39 | 4,719 | 38 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 114 | 31 | 4,139 | 36 | | | |
| | | Total | | 361 | 100 | 12,158 | 100 | | | |
| b. Assessed the conclusions of a published work | TRN02b | 1 | Never | 42 | 11 | 1,517 | 13 | 2.6 | 2.6 | -.03 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 134 | 37 | 4,264 | 34 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 125 | 35 | 3,992 | 32 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 59 | 17 | 2,348 | 21 | | | |
| | | Total | | 360 | 100 | 12,121 | 100 | | | |
| c. Included ideas from more than one academic discipline | TRN02c | 1 | Never | 35 | 9 | 1,151 | 9 | 2.7 | 2.7 | .03 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 122 | 34 | 4,274 | 35 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 124 | 34 | 4,291 | 35 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 77 | 23 | 2,414 | 21 | | | |
| | | Total | | 358 | 100 | 12,130 | 100 | | | |
| d. Presented multiple viewpoints or perspectives | TRN02d | 1 | Never | 20 | 6 | 806 | 7 | 2.7 | 2.7 | .01 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 126 | 35 | 4,346 | 36 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 137 | 38 | 4,486 | 35 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 75 | 21 | 2,491 | 22 | | | |
| | | Total | | 358 | 100 | 12,129 | 100 | | | |

Seniors

| Item wording or description | Variable name | Values ^c | Response options | Frequency Distributions ^a | | | | Statistical Comparisons ^b | | |
|--|---------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|-----|---------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| | | | | UNO | | Transferable Skills | | UNO | Transferable Skills | |
| | | | | Count | % | Count | % | Mean | Mean | Effect size ^d |
| 1. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you done the following? | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. Discussed or debated an issue of social, political, or philosophical importance | TRN01a | 1 | Never | 35 | 17 | 3,253 | 15 | 2.4 | 2.6 * | -0.17 ▽ |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 83 | 43 | 7,912 | 35 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 47 | 25 | 6,627 | 28 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 30 | 16 | 4,804 | 21 | | | |
| | | Total | | 195 | 100 | 22,596 | 100 | | | |
| b. Made a speech to a group | TRN01b | 1 | Never | 36 | 18 | 6,395 | 30 | 2.4 | 2.2 ** | .19 △ |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 83 | 43 | 8,218 | 36 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 47 | 24 | 4,816 | 20 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 29 | 15 | 3,193 | 14 | | | |
| | | Total | | 195 | 100 | 22,622 | 100 | | | |
| c. Worked in a group with people who differed from you in terms of background, political orientation, points of view, etc. | TRN01c | 1 | Never | 8 | 4 | 1,865 | 8 | 2.8 | 2.8 | .00 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 62 | 33 | 6,988 | 30 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 79 | 40 | 7,934 | 35 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 46 | 23 | 5,818 | 27 | | | |
| | | Total | | 195 | 100 | 22,605 | 100 | | | |
| d. Discussed the ethical consequences of a course of action | TRN01d | 1 | Never | 21 | 11 | 2,574 | 12 | 2.6 | 2.6 | -.05 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 78 | 41 | 7,682 | 34 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 59 | 30 | 7,662 | 33 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 37 | 19 | 4,692 | 21 | | | |
| | | Total | | 195 | 100 | 22,610 | 100 | | | |
| e. Creatively thought about new ideas or about ways to improve things | TRN01e | 1 | Never | 7 | 4 | 898 | 5 | 2.9 | 3.0 | -.14 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 57 | 29 | 5,397 | 24 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 86 | 44 | 9,323 | 40 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 45 | 23 | 6,976 | 31 | | | |
| | | Total | | 195 | 100 | 22,594 | 100 | | | |
| f. Critically evaluated multiple solutions to a problem | TRN01f | 1 | Never | 4 | 2 | 842 | 4 | 2.9 | 3.0 | -.07 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 58 | 28 | 5,395 | 24 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 83 | 43 | 9,374 | 41 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 51 | 26 | 6,990 | 32 | | | |
| | | Total | | 196 | 100 | 22,601 | 100 | | | |
| g. Discussed complex problems with others to develop a better solution | TRN01g | 1 | Never | 6 | 3 | 1,418 | 7 | 2.8 | 2.9 | -.04 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 61 | 30 | 6,078 | 27 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 91 | 47 | 8,771 | 38 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 38 | 20 | 6,310 | 29 | | | |
| | | Total | | 196 | 100 | 22,577 | 100 | | | |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (2-tailed); Refer to the endnotes page for the key to triangle symbols.

Seniors

| Item wording or description | Variable name | Values ^c | Response options | Frequency Distributions ^a | | | | Statistical Comparisons ^b | | |
|--|---------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|-----|---------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| | | | | UNO | | Transferable Skills | | UNO | Transferable Skills | |
| | | | | Count | % | Count | % | Mean | Mean | Effect size ^d |
| 2. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you written something (paper, report, article, blog, etc.) that: | | | | | | | | | | |
| a. Used information from a variety of sources (books, journals, Internet, databases, etc.) | TRN02a | 1 | Never | 5 | 3 | 745 | 4 | 3.2 | 3.2 | -.02 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 35 | 19 | 3,774 | 17 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 65 | 34 | 7,118 | 31 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 90 | 45 | 10,936 | 48 | | | |
| | | Total | | 195 | 100 | 22,573 | 100 | | | |
| b. Assessed the conclusions of a published work | TRN02b | 1 | Never | 22 | 11 | 2,432 | 12 | 2.7 | 2.8 | -.04 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 65 | 32 | 6,414 | 29 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 53 | 28 | 6,948 | 30 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 56 | 28 | 6,721 | 29 | | | |
| | | Total | | 196 | 100 | 22,515 | 100 | | | |
| c. Included ideas from more than one academic discipline | TRN02c | 1 | Never | 8 | 5 | 1,671 | 8 | 2.9 | 2.9 | .02 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 62 | 32 | 6,269 | 28 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 64 | 33 | 7,559 | 33 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 60 | 30 | 7,021 | 31 | | | |
| | | Total | | 194 | 100 | 22,520 | 100 | | | |
| d. Presented multiple viewpoints or perspectives | TRN02d | 1 | Never | 10 | 5 | 1,420 | 7 | 2.8 | 2.9 | -.03 |
| | | 2 | Sometimes | 57 | 29 | 6,645 | 29 | | | |
| | | 3 | Often | 83 | 43 | 8,187 | 36 | | | |
| | | 4 | Very often | 45 | 23 | 6,296 | 28 | | | |
| | | Total | | 195 | 100 | 22,548 | 100 | | | |

First-Year Students

| Variable name | N | Mean | | Standard error ^f | | Standard deviation ^g | | DF ^h | Sig. ⁱ | Effect size ^d |
|---------------|-----|------|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| | UNO | UNO | Transferable Skills | UNO | Transferable Skills | UNO | Transferable Skills | | | |
| TRN01a | 354 | 2.33 | 2.47 | .049 | .009 | 0.92 | 0.96 | 375 | .004 | -.15 |
| TRN01b | 355 | 2.11 | 2.06 | .053 | .009 | 1.00 | 0.97 | 12,940 | .323 | .05 |
| TRN01c | 355 | 2.69 | 2.67 | .047 | .008 | 0.89 | 0.93 | 12,939 | .631 | .03 |
| TRN01d | 355 | 2.36 | 2.44 | .046 | .008 | 0.87 | 0.92 | 377 | .103 | -.08 |
| TRN01e | 353 | 2.67 | 2.81 | .044 | .008 | 0.83 | 0.87 | 12,940 | .003 | -.16 |
| TRN01f | 354 | 2.71 | 2.81 | .044 | .008 | 0.83 | 0.86 | 12,932 | .032 | -.12 |
| TRN01g | 354 | 2.56 | 2.67 | .044 | .008 | 0.83 | 0.89 | 377 | .008 | -.13 |
| TRN02a | 355 | 2.97 | 3.05 | .046 | .008 | 0.86 | 0.85 | 12,915 | .076 | -.10 |
| TRN02b | 354 | 2.58 | 2.61 | .048 | .009 | 0.90 | 0.96 | 376 | .526 | -.03 |
| TRN02c | 352 | 2.70 | 2.68 | .049 | .008 | 0.92 | 0.91 | 12,887 | .623 | .03 |
| TRN02d | 352 | 2.75 | 2.73 | .046 | .008 | 0.86 | 0.88 | 12,888 | .788 | .01 |

See the endnotes on the last page of this report.

Seniors

| Variable name | N | | Mean | | Standard error ^f | | Standard deviation ^g | | DF ^h | Sig. ⁱ | Effect size ^d |
|---------------|--|---------------------|------|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| | UNO | Transferable Skills | UNO | Transferable Skills | UNO | Transferable Skills | UNO | Transferable Skills | | | |
| | Comparisons with: Transferable Skills | | | | | | | | | | |
| TRN01a | 194 | 2.39 | 2.56 | .068 | .008 | 0.95 | 0.99 | 16,058 | .018 | -.17 | |
| TRN01b | 194 | 2.36 | 2.17 | .068 | .008 | 0.94 | 1.01 | 16,071 | .009 | .19 | |
| TRN01c | 194 | 2.82 | 2.81 | .060 | .007 | 0.83 | 0.93 | 198 | .968 | .00 | |
| TRN01d | 194 | 2.57 | 2.62 | .066 | .008 | 0.92 | 0.95 | 16,062 | .507 | -.05 | |
| TRN01e | 194 | 2.86 | 2.98 | .058 | .007 | 0.81 | 0.86 | 16,058 | .052 | -.14 | |
| TRN01f | 194 | 2.94 | 2.99 | .057 | .007 | 0.79 | 0.85 | 16,065 | .344 | -.07 | |
| TRN01g | 194 | 2.85 | 2.89 | .055 | .007 | 0.77 | 0.90 | 200 | .476 | -.04 | |
| TRN02a | 194 | 3.21 | 3.23 | .060 | .007 | 0.84 | 0.86 | 16,028 | .744 | -.02 | |
| TRN02b | 194 | 2.73 | 2.77 | .072 | .008 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 15,991 | .594 | -.04 | |
| TRN02c | 193 | 2.89 | 2.87 | .065 | .008 | 0.90 | 0.94 | 16,003 | .807 | .02 | |
| TRN02d | 194 | 2.83 | 2.86 | .060 | .007 | 0.84 | 0.91 | 198 | .640 | -.03 | |

Endnotes

- a. Column percentages are weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups). Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Counts are unweighted; column percentages cannot be replicated from counts.
- b. All statistics are weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups). Unless otherwise noted, statistical comparisons are two-tailed independent t -tests. Items with categorical response sets are left blank.
- c. These are the values used to calculate means. For the majority of items, these values match the codes in the data file and codebook.
- d. Effect size for independent t -tests uses Cohen's d ; z -tests use Cohen's h .
- e. Statistics are weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups). Categorical items are not listed.
- f. The 95% confidence interval for the population mean is equal to the sample mean plus or minus 1.96 times the standard error of the mean.
- g. A measure of the amount individual scores deviate from the mean of all the scores in the distribution.
- h. Degrees of freedom used to compute the t -tests. Values differ from N s due to weighting and whether equal variances were assumed.
- i. Statistical comparisons are two-tailed independent t -tests or z -tests. Statistical significance represents the probability that the difference between your students' mean and that of the students in the comparison group is due to chance.
- j. Statistical comparison uses z -test to compare the proportion who responded (depending on the item) "Done or in progress" or "Yes" with all who responded otherwise.
- k. Mean represents the proportion who responded (depending on the item) "Done or in progress" or "Yes."

Key to symbols:

- ▲ **Your students' average** was significantly higher ($p < .05$) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.
- △ **Your students' average** was significantly higher ($p < .05$) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- ▽ **Your students' average** was significantly lower ($p < .05$) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- ▼ **Your students' average** was significantly lower ($p < .05$) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.

Note: It is important to interpret the direction of differences relative to item wording and your institutional context.