FSSE 2018 Overview

The Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) complements the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). FSSE (pronounced "fessie") measures faculty members' expectations of student engagement in educational practices that are empirically linked with high levels of learning and development. The survey also collects information about how faculty members spend their time on professorial activities, such as teaching and scholarship, and what kinds of learning experiences their institutions emphasize.

FSSE results can be used to identify areas of institutional strength, as well as aspects of the undergraduate experience that may warrant attention. The information can be a catalyst for productive discussions related to teaching, learning, and the quality of students' educational experiences.

This overview provides general information about the institutions and faculty members that participated in the 2018 FSSE administration, and highlights ways institutions can use their results. In the first section, we compare the characteristics of FSSE-participating institutions to those of NSSE-participating institutions and the U.S. profile of bachelor's-granting institutions. We also compare the characteristics of FSSE respondents to those of faculty members at U.S. bachelor's-granting institutions and provide general information about response rates. In the second section, we provide guidelines for using and interpreting FSSE 2018 results, and highlight resources for analyzing and presenting FSSE findings. Resources intended to help with the use of FSSE data are also on the FSSE website.
fsse.indiana.edu

FSSE 2018 Institutions and Respondents

In the 2018 administration of FSSE, 13,823 faculty members responded from 113 bachelor's-granting colleges and universities in the United States. All participating institutions select their own faculty samples. Faculty members at participating institutions were sent email invitations asking them to respond to the online survey.

Nearly all FSSE institutions (106) also administered NSSE to their students in 2018; the remainder administered NSSE in previous years. Having recent data from NSSE allows participating institutions to examine how faculty members and students respond to similar questions.

Institutions could choose to add Topical Modules and consortium items to the end of the core FSSE instrument. The module on Academic Advising was appended by 34 institutions, Inclusiveness and Engagement with Cultural Diversity by 23, Development of Transferable Skills by 17, Experiences with Writing by 14, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning by 11, Teaching Professional Development by 10, Learning with Technology by 10, Civic Engagement by 6; and 2 institutions appended consortium questions. Institutions could append up to two modules or a module and a set of consortium questions.

Tables 1 through 3 on the following pages provide more information about the participating institutions and faculty members who responded to the survey in the US.

Profile of FSSE 2018 Institutions

FSSE 2018 institutions were similar in many ways to the profile of U.S. bachelor's-granting colleges and universities, while differing in a few respects (Table 1). Although slight differences exist between these profiles, the distribution of FSSE 2018 institutions reflects a wide range of U.S. institutions, which helps ensure that FSSE results represent a broad cross-section of U.S. faculty members.

Nicholls State University

Table 1

Profile of FSSE and NSSE 2018 U.S. Institutions and All U.S. Bachelor's-Granting Institutions

Institution Characteristics	FSSE 2018 (%)	NSSE 2018 (%)	U.S.[a] (%)
Carnegie Basic Classification[b]			
Doc/Highest: Doctoral Universities (Highest Research Activity)	3	5	7
Doc/Higher: Doctoral Universities (Higher Research Activity)	11	8	6
Doc/Moderate: Doctoral Universities (Moderate Research Activity)	10	8	7
Master's L: Master's Colleges and Universities (larger programs)	28	27	24
Master's M: Master's Colleges and Universities (medium programs)	13	17	13
Master's S: Master's Colleges and Universities (smaller programs)	13	8	8
Bac/A&S: Baccalaureate Colleges— Arts & Sciences Focus	10	16	15
Bac/Diverse: Baccalaureate Colleges—Diverse Fields	14	11	19
Control			
Public	53	39	35
Private	47	61	65
Undergraduate Enrollment			
Fewer than 1,000	12	12	22
1,000–2,499	25	33	32
2,500–4,999	30	23	18
5,000–9,999	19	16	14
10,000–19,999	9	9	9
20,000 or more	6	6	6
Region			
New England	5	7	8
Mid East	13	18	18
Great Lakes	14	14	15
Plains	11	8	10
Southeast	31	29	25
Southwest	12	11	8
Rocky Mountains	4	4	3
Far West	8	8	10
Outlying Areas	3	< 1	2
Locale			
City	47	48	47
Suburban	20	22	26
Town	27	26	21
Rural	6	3	6

Notes: Percentages are based on U.S. postsecondary institutions that award baccalaureate degrees and belong to one of the eight Carnegie classifications in the table. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

a. U.S. percentages are based on the 2016 IPEDS Institutional Characteristics data.

b. For information on the Carnegie Foundation's 2015 Basic Classification, see carnegieclassifications.iu.edu.

Profile of FSSE 2018 Respondents

Tables 2 and 3 show selected characteristics of the U.S. faculty who completed FSSE 2018 alongside those of the faculty population at all U.S. bachelor's-granting institutions. Percentages for the U.S. bachelor's-granting population are based on the most recent data from the National Center for Education Statistics and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Table 2

Characteristics of FSSE 2018 Respondents and Faculty Population at All U.S. Bachelor's-Granting Institutions

Respondent Characteristics	FSSE 2018 Respondents (%)	U.S. Bachelor's-Granting Population[a] (%)
Gender Identity[b]		
Man	45	52
Woman	49	48
Racial/Ethnic Identification		
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	< 1
Asian	5	8
Black or African American	8	6
Hispanic or Latino	4	6
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Isl.	< 1	< 1
White	68	70
Multiracial	2	1
Other[c]	3	–
Preferred not to respond[c]	10	5
Employment Status		
Full-time	83	58
Part-time	17	42
Rank of Full-Time Faculty		
Professor	25	28
Associate Professor	26	24
Assistant Professor	27	26
Instructor or Lecturer	17	16
Other[d]	4	5

Notes: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

a. U.S. percentages are from the 2016 IPEDS Human Resources Survey component and are based on instructional staff at U.S. postsecondary institutions that award bachelor's degrees.

b. FSSE respondents were able to select "I prefer not to respond" or "Another gender identity" as response options.

c. The "Other" category did not exist in the 2016 IPEDS Human Resources Survey component. U.S. percentage for "Preferred not to respond" is for faculty whose race was "unknown."

d. Includes instructors with alternate appointment types (e.g., administrators and researchers).

Table 3

Percentage of Faculty by Disciplinary Area

Disciplinary Area	FSSE[a] (%)	U.S.[b] (%)
Arts and Humanities	23	22
Biological Sciences, Agriculture, and Natural Resources	8	7
Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Computer Science	13	10
Social Sciences	12	12
Business	10	8
Communications, Media, and Public Relations	4	3
Education	10	7
Engineering	5	4
Health Professions	12	23
Social Service Professions	4	4

a. FSSE distributions based on 12,047 U.S. respondents from these disciplinary areas.

b. U.S. percentages are from the 2017 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment Statistics and are based on faculty at U.S. postsecondary institutions that award bachelor's degrees.

University of North Texas

Response Rates

A response rate is the number of respondents divided by the number of faculty members contacted, adjusted for sample members who could not be reached (usually because of incorrect email addresses). In 2018, 36% of invited faculty responded to the survey. The response rate of individual institutions ranged from 6% to 75%, while the average was 43%.

Using FSSE Results

Before sharing FSSE results on campus, users should become familiar with the nature of the data, the reports, and the "story line" of their institution's performance.

Becoming Familiar with FSSE Reports and Resources

Each institution receives several reports and a data file that help them better understand their FSSE results. Reports are delivered in the *Institutional Report 2018* binder and are available electronically on the NSSE and FSSE websites through the Institution Interface, which can be accessed by up to three campus representatives using their own unique username and password. The data file, codebook, list of participating institutions, this overview, and other supporting materials are also available via the Institution Interface. Institution-specific resources include:

- A *Snapshot* summarizing key FSSE findings in an easy to digest two-page report
- A *FSSE-NSSE Combined Report* presenting faculty results side by side with student results, allowing institutions to identify areas of correspondence
- A *FSSE Frequencies* report providing the response percentages for each survey item broken down by the level of the students taught by faculty members
- A *FSSE Respondent Profile* summarizing demographic information from faculty respondents
- A *FSSE Administration Summary* highlighting important administration details about the sample, response rates, survey customization choices, and recruitment message schedule
- A data file allowing for additional analyses and a codebook with details about each survey question, including variable names and response options
- Topical Module and consortium reports, if applicable, providing results for those additional questions

In addition, the FSSE website (**fsse.indiana.edu**) includes several important documents and resources:

- Facsimiles of the core FSSE questionnaire and Topical Modules
- An interactive tool for visualizations of aggregate FSSE data
- Summary reports based on faculty responses from all participating U.S. institutions
- Sample analyses that illustrate different ways to use FSSE
- A *FSSE Data User's Guide* to assist in presentations of FSSE findings to campus audiences

- A psychometric portfolio presenting evidence of validity, reliability, and other indicators of data quality

Checking Data Quality

An essential early step in reviewing a campus's results is comparing the *FSSE Respondent Profile* with institutional data on faculty. The more closely the characteristics match, the more confidence an institution can have that respondents represent the faculty surveyed.

Another way to gauge data quality is through sampling error, an estimate of the margin by which the "true" score for an institution on a given item could differ from the reported score for one or more reasons, such as differences in important characteristics between respondents and the population. For example, if 60% reply "Very often" to a particular item and the sampling error is +/- 4%, there is a 95% chance that the true value is between 56% and 64%.

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Communicating FSSE Results

We offer the following suggestions for communicating FSSE results to interested parties:

- Examine representativeness as described previously.
- Check the respondent count and sampling error since questions often arise as to whether a small number of respondents adequately represents the population from which it is drawn.
- Use student and faculty matched items to stimulate discussion about student engagement, its relationship to learning, and which engagement activities to emphasize on campus. Faculty and student responses can differ for many reasons. For example, questions for students and faculty may be framed differently (e.g., over an academic year or in a particular course), or FSSE and NSSE response options for a specific item may not match exactly. A strong understanding of the instruments as well as one's institutional context should help in interpreting differences.
- Meet with those responsible for faculty development and undergraduate improvement initiatives to begin sharing results and discussing ways in which FSSE data can be used to enhance teaching and learning. Use the worksheets in the *FSSE Data User's Guide* to help focus these discussions (see the Tools & Services tab on the FSSE website).
- Consult *Using FSSE Data* and *Using NSSE Data* (found online or in the User Resources section of the *Institutional Report 2018* binder) for examples of how other institutions use FSSE and NSSE in professional development and assessment initiatives.
- Contact the FSSE team (**fsse@indiana.edu**) or the NSSE Institute for Effective Educational Practice (**nsse.indiana.edu/institute**) for additional ideas about making the best use of FSSE and NSSE results.