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Providing students with opportunities and support across a variety of domains including the cognitive, interpersonal, and physical, is a trait of institutions committed to student success. Instructors are able to give insight into the extent to which institutions emphasize services and activities that support student learning and development. This document provides basic findings for the FSSE Scale Supportive Environment.

Data Description

The data from this brief come from the 2013-2015 administrations of the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE). FSSE collects information annually at hundreds of four-year colleges and universities from faculty who teach at least one undergraduate course in the current academic year. The results provide information about faculty expectations for student engagement in educational practices that are empirically linked with student learning in development. Institutions use their data to identify aspects of the undergraduate experience that can be improved through changes in policy and practice. For more information, visit the FSSE website: fsse.indiana.edu. The sample of faculty in this data consist of 43,932 faculty responses from 327 four-year colleges and universities. In instances where institutions participated in more than one administration, the most recent year's data was used.

Item Information

Supportive Environment consists of eight items on the FSSE survey. Information on these eight items can be found in Tables 1 and 2. Table 1 contains counts, means, standard deviations, and factor loadings for all seven items. Table 2 contains frequency percentages for all of the items' response options.

Table 1

Support Environment Descriptives

How important is it to you that your institution *increase* its emphasis on each of the following?

Response options: 4=Very Important, 3=Important, 2=Somewhat, 1=Not important

	Count	Mean	Std. Dev.	Factor Loading
Providing support to help students succeed academically (<i>fSEacademic</i>)	42,641	3.42	.734	.637
Student using learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, etc.) (<i>fSElearnsup</i>)	42,706	3.27	.778	.652
Encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ethnic, religious, etc.) (<i>fSEdiverse</i>)	42,878	3.15	.873	.715
Providing opportunities for students to be involved socially (<i>fSEsocial</i>)	42,880	2.72	.933	.772
Providing support for students' overall well-being (recreation, health care, counseling, etc.) (<i>fSEwellness</i>)	42,741	3.10	.850	.787
Helping students manage their non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.) (<i>fSEnonacad</i>)	42,766	2.71	.880	.718
Students attending campus activities and events (performing arts, athletic events, etc.) (<i>fSEactivities</i>)	42,594	2.61	.893	.714

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Students attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues (fSEevents)	42,578	2.83	.871	.699
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Table 2
Supportive Environment Learning Item Frequencies

How important is it to you that your institution <i>increase</i> its emphasis on each of the following?				
	Very important (%)	Important (%)	Somewhat (%)	Not important (%)
Providing support to help students succeed academically (<i>fSEacademic</i>)	55.5	33.0	9.9	1.6
Student using learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, etc.) (<i>fSElearnsup</i>)	45.3	38.1	14.7	1.9
Encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ethnic, religious, etc.) (<i>fSEdiverse</i>)	42.4	35.1	17.9	4.6
Providing opportunities for students to be involved socially (<i>fSEsocial</i>)	22.8	36.9	29.6	10.6
Providing support for students' overall well-being (recreation, health care, counseling, etc.) (<i>fSEwellness</i>)	37.8	38.6	19.5	4.0
Helping students manage their non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.) (<i>fSEnonacad</i>)	20.5	38.3	33.2	8.0
Students attending campus activities and events (performing arts, athletic events, etc.) (<i>fSEactivities</i>)	17.0	38.0	34.1	11.0
Students attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues (fSEevents)	23.9	41.6	27.7	6.8

Scale Information

The individual items within Supportive Environment are combined together to create the Supportive Environment scale. First, the individual response are recoded to a 0 to 60 scale: Very important=4 is recoded to 60, Important=3 is recoded to 40, Somewhat=2 is recoded to 20, and Not important=1 is recoded to 0. Individual faculty responses on this 0-60 scale are then averaged together to create an aggregate scale score. Information on the Supportive Environment Scale can be found in Table 3.

Table 3
Supportive Environment Scale Descriptives

Count	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.	Cronbach's Alpha	ICC
36,288	0	60	39.54	12.170	.862	.0672

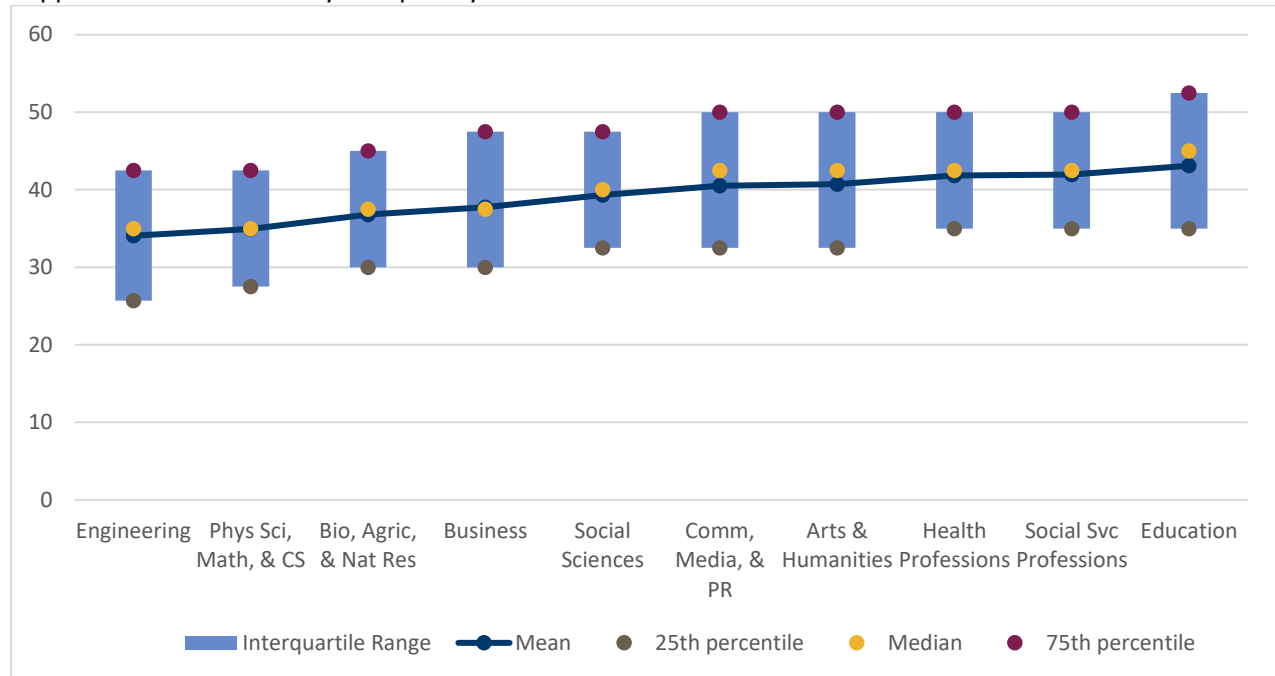
Disciplinary Differences

Supportive Environment varies greatly by faculty's disciplinary area appointment. Faculty that display the greatest levels of importance for Supportive Environment are in the fields of Education; Social Service Professions; and Health Professions. Faculty that display the lowest levels of importance for

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Supportive Environment are in the fields of Engineering; Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Computer Science; and Biology, Agriculture, and Natural Resources. There is noticeable variation within disciplinary areas as well. For example, Social Service Professions faculty have a relatively small interquartile range suggesting that faculty in this field more consistently value Supportive Environment within their field. Other fields, such as Business, have a larger interquartile range suggesting that faculty in this field have a greater diversity in their levels of importance placed on aspects of Supportive Environment.

Figure 1
Supportive Environment by Disciplinary Area



Correlations

Table 4 presents correlations between Supportive Environment and the remaining FSSE Scales. Faculty who place greater importance on aspects of Supportive Environment emphasize more Reflective and Integrative Learning, perceive that they display more Effective Teaching Practices, and incorporate more Higher-Order Learning activities in their courses.

Table 4

Correlations between Supportive Environment and other FSSE scales ($p < .001$)

Higher-Order Learning ($r = .229$)	Collaborative Learning ($r = .208$)	Effective Teaching Practices ($r = .264$)
Quantitative Reasoning ($r = .123$)	Discussions with Diverse Others ($r = .195$)	Quality of Interactions ($r = .082$)
Learning Strategies ($r = .232$)	Student-Faculty Interaction ($r = .225$)	Reflective and Integrative Learning ($r = .398$)

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Our Related Papers

For more information about FSSE and Supportive Environment see the following publications, conference papers and presentations, research reports or other FSSE investigations focused on Supportive Environment:

- National Survey of Student Engagement. (2015). [Faculty perceptions of safety and support](#). In *Engagement Insights: Survey Findings on the Quality of Undergraduate Education-Annual Results 2015*. Bloomington, IN Indiana Center for Postsecondary Research.

Predictors

Some types of faculty and types of courses are more or less likely to place greater importance on aspects of Supportive Environment. Table 5 presents significant ($p < .001$) predictors increased importance placed on Supportive Environment by faculty and institutional characteristics. Following Table 5 are figures representing the average Supportive Environment differences by these faculty and institutional characteristics.

Table 5
Significant Faculty and Institutional Characteristics Predictors for Supportive Environment

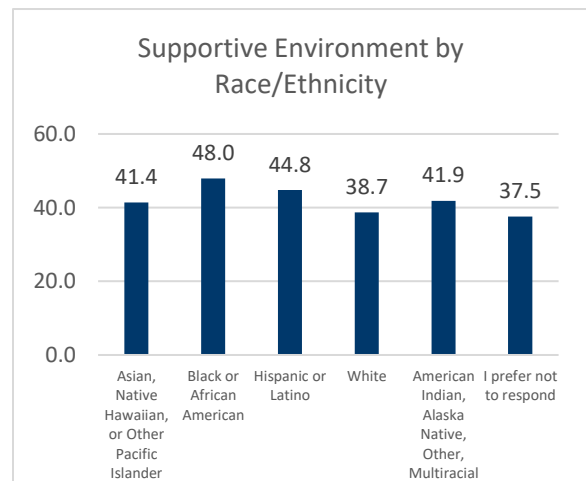
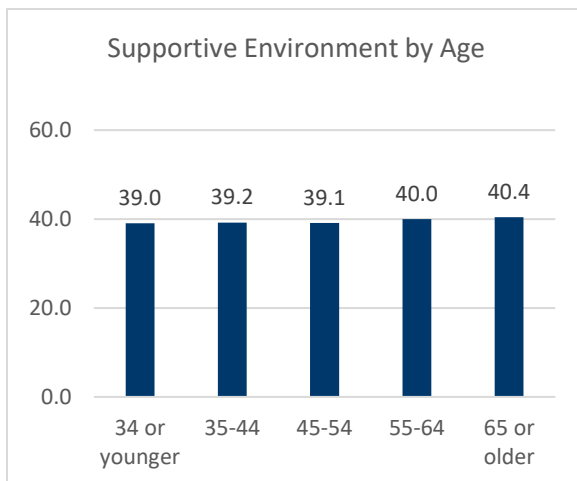
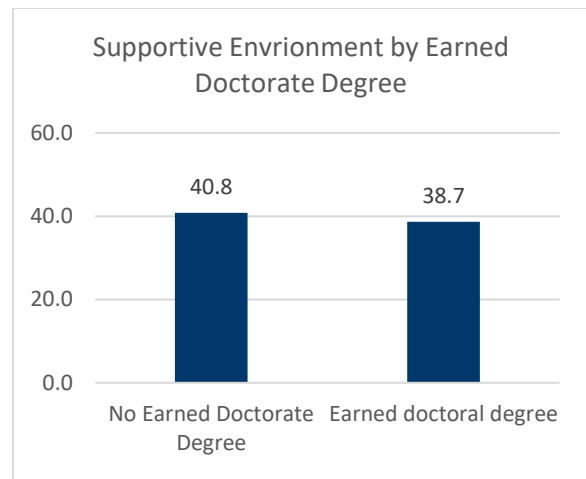
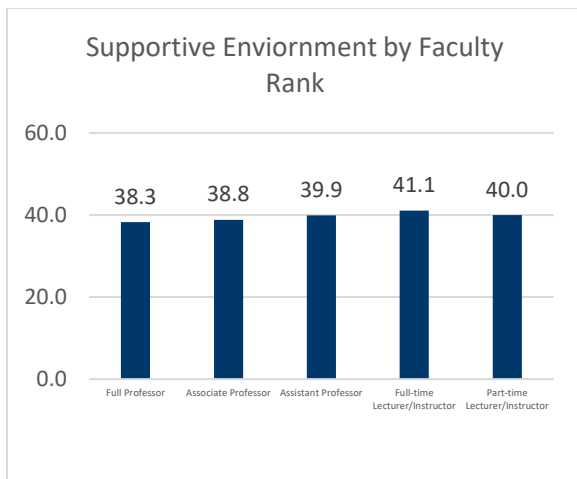
		Unstd. B	Std. Error
Faculty Rank (<i>full professor as reference</i>)	Full-time Lecturers/Instructors	.105	.024
Earned Doctorate		-.063	.014
Age		.075	.006
Woman/Female (<i>Man/Male as reference</i>)		.230	.011
Citizenship		-.138	.037
Racial/Ethnic identification (<i>White as reference</i>)	Asian, Native Hawaiian, or other Pacific Islander	.394	.026
	Black of African American	.709	.025
	Hispanic or Latino	.473	.030
	American Indian, Alaska Native, other, or multiracial	.262	.026
Gay, lesbian, bisexual, another orientation, questioning or unsure (<i>Heterosexual as reference</i>)		.169	.026
Disciplinary Area (<i>Communications, Media, & Public Relations as reference</i>)	Biological Sciences, Agricultural, & Natural Resources	-.263	.034
	Business	-.227	.033
	Education	.144	.033
	Engineering	-.457	.040
Enrollment size		-.083	.006
Control (<i>Public as reference</i>)		-.091	.012
Carnegie Classification (<i>Masters Large as reference</i>)	RU/VH	-.085	.023
	RU/H	-.087	.019
	Bacc A&S	-.091	.021

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Notes: All continuous variables were standardized before entry in the model so that unstandardized coefficients can be interpreted similar to effect sizes. The following faculty-level independent variables were included in the model but were not significant ($p < .001$): Faculty who are Associate professors, Assistant professors, or part-time lecturers; teaching experience; tenure status; faculty who preferred to not respond to the gender identity, racial/ethnic identification, or sexual orientation items; and faculty in Social Sciences, Humanities, Health Professions, Social Service Professions, and Other Disciplines. The following institution-level independent variables were included in the model but were not significant ($p < .001$): Carnegie classification Doctoral Research Universities, Masters Medium institutions, Masters Small institutions, Baccalaureate Diverse institutions, and other institutions.

Predictor Follow-up

In the following figures represent the average Supportive Environment scores by the faculty and institutional characteristics found to be predictive of Supportive Environment in Table 5.



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