

Bridget Yuhas & Allison BrckaLorenz

Interactions with faculty can positively influence the cognitive growth, development, and persistence of college students. Through their formal and informal roles as teachers, advisors, and mentors, faculty members model intellectual work, promote mastery of knowledge and skills, and help students make connections between their studies and their future plans. This document provides basic findings for the FSSE Scale Student-Faculty Interaction.

## 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 and 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](http://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

Student-Faculty Interaction 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  
Student-Faculty Interaction Item Descriptives

**During the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following with the undergraduate students you teach or advise?**

*Response options: 4=Very often, 3=Often, 2=Sometimes, 1=Never*

	Count	Mean	Std. Dev.	Factor Loading
Talked about their career plans ( <i>fSFcareer</i> )	38,900	2.95	.850	.807
Worked on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.) ( <i>fSFotherwork</i> )	38,528	2.31	.983	.738
Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts outside of class ( <i>fSFdiscuss</i> )	38,754	2.80	.839	.819
Discussed their academic performance ( <i>fSFperform</i> )	38,649	2.92	.760	.726

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Table 2  
Student-Faculty Interaction Item Frequencies

During the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following with the undergraduate students you teach or advise?	Very often (%)	Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)
Talked about their career plans ( <i>fSFcareer</i> )	31.5	33.8	32.6	2.1
Worked on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.) ( <i>fSFotherwork</i> )	15.7	21.3	41.1	21.9
Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts outside of class ( <i>fSFdiscuss</i> )	23.6	36.8	35.9	3.7
Discussed their academic performance ( <i>fSFperform</i> )	24.6	43.9	30.7	.8

## Scale Information

The individual items within Student-Faculty Interaction are combined together to create the Student-Faculty Interaction 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 Student-Faculty Interaction Scale can be found in Table 3.

Table 3  
Student-Faculty Interaction Scale Descriptives

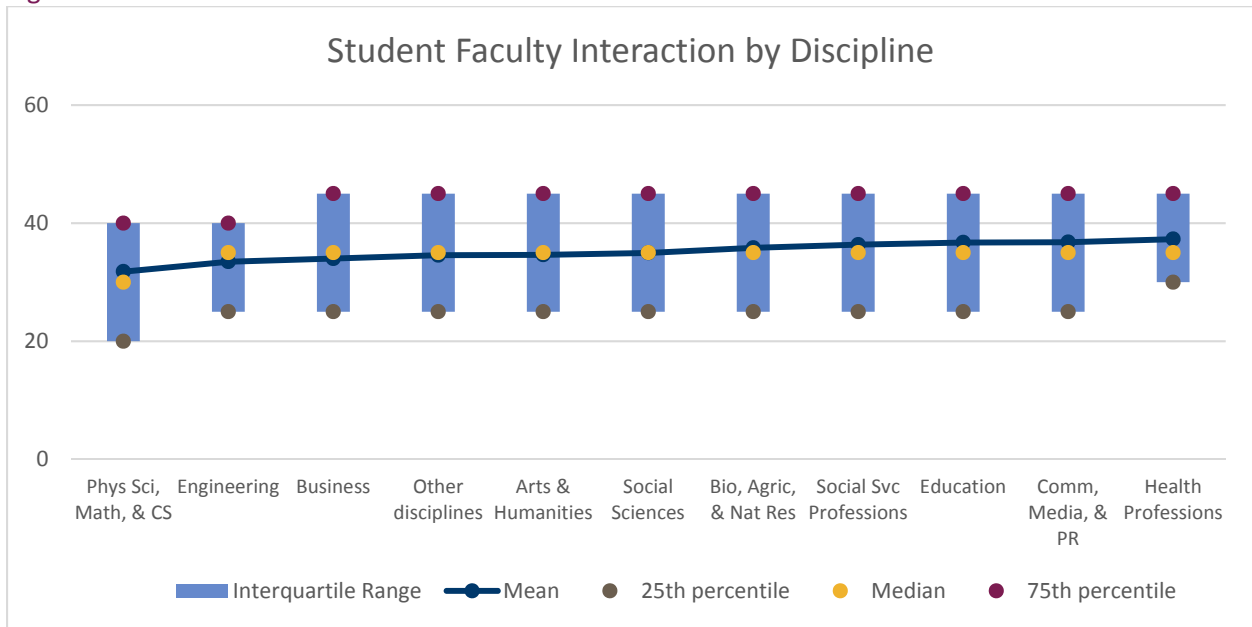
Count	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.	Cronbach's Alpha	ICC
38,048	0	60	34.91	13.262	.771	.066

## Disciplinary Differences

Student-Faculty Interaction varies greatly by faculty's disciplinary area appointment. Faculty that display the greatest levels of importance for Student-Faculty Interaction are in the fields of Health Professions; Education; and Communications, Media and Public Relations. Faculty that display the lowest levels of importance for Student-Faculty Interaction are in the fields of Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Computer Science; Engineering, and Business. There is some, though not a great amount, of variation within disciplinary areas as well. For example, Engineering and Health Professions faculty have a relatively small interquartile range suggesting that these faculty more consistently value Student-Faculty Interaction within their field. All other fields have a slightly larger interquartile range, suggesting that faculty in these fields have a slightly greater diversity in their levels of importance placed on aspects of Student-Faculty Interaction.

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Figure 1



## Correlations

Table 4 presents correlations between Student-Faculty Interaction and the remaining FSSE Scales. Faculty who place greater importance on aspects of Student-Faculty Interaction emphasize more Collaborative Learning, Higher-Order Learning, and Reflective and Integrative Learning activities in their courses, perceive that they display more effective teaching practices, and emphasize Learning Strategies to help students master course material.

Table 4

Correlations between Student-Faculty Interaction and other FSSE scales ( $p < .001$ )

Higher-Order Learning ( $r = .269$ )	Collaborative Learning ( $r = .289$ )	Effective Teaching Practices ( $r = .282$ )
Quantitative Reasoning ( $r = .146$ )	Discussions with Diverse Others ( $r = .166$ )	Quality of Interactions ( $r = .099$ )
Learning Strategies ( $r = .257$ )	Reflective & Integrative Learning ( $r = .256$ )	Supportive Environment ( $r = .225$ )

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## Our Related Papers

For more information about FSSE and Student-Faculty Interaction see the following publications, conference papers and presentations, research reports:

- BrckaLorenz, A., Garvey, J. C., Hurtado, S. S., & Latopolski, K. (April, 2016). [High-impact practices and student-faculty interactions for gender variant students](#). Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Washington, DC.
- Fosnacht, K., & Zilvinskis, J. (November, 2016) [Employing quasi-experimental methods to relate first-year student participation in research with faculty to desired outcomes](#). Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education Annual Conference, Columbus, IN.
- Wheatle, K. I. E., Davis, L. P., & BrckaLorenz, A. (November, 2016) [Examining student-faculty interaction among Black/African American female undergraduates: An in-depth analysis of NSSE 2008–2012 data](#). Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education Annual Conference, Columbus, OH.

## Predictors

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

Table 5  
Significant Faculty Characteristics Predictors for Student-Faculty Interaction

	Unstd. B	Std. Error
Course load	0.094	0.006
Part-Time	-0.553	0.025
Tenured ( <i>On tenure track but not tenured or not on tenure track as reference</i> )	0.089	0.019
New to teaching	-0.107	0.017
Doctoral degree	-0.069	0.015
Age	-0.093	0.007
Woman/Female ( <i>Man/Male as reference</i> )	0.176	0.012
U.S. citizen	0.148	0.039
Race/Ethnic Identification ( <i>White as reference</i> )		
Black or African American	0.447	0.026
Hispanic or Latino	0.215	0.032
American Indian, Alaska Native, Other, and Multiracial	0.233	0.027

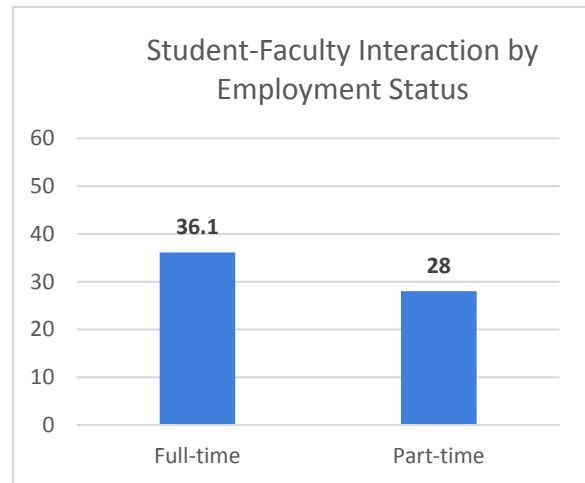
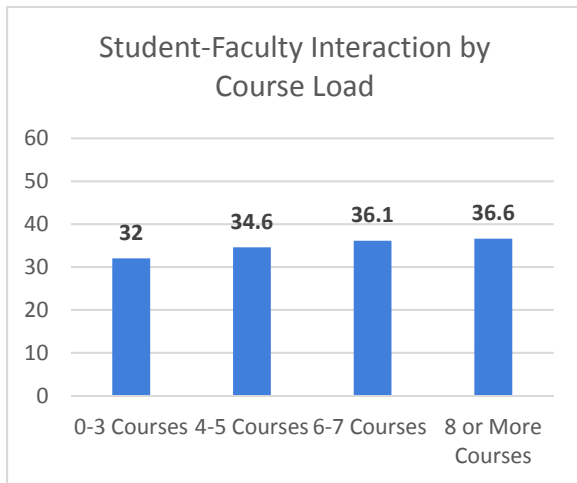
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Disciplinary area ( <i>Arts &amp; Humanities as reference</i> )	Biological Sciences, Agriculture, & Natural Resources	0.095	0.024
	Physical Sciences, Mathematics, & Computer Science	-0.176	0.020
	Communications, Media, & Public Relations	0.168	0.030
	Education	0.180	0.022
	Health Professions	0.208	0.022
	Social Service Professions	0.219	0.034
	Undergraduate enrollment size	-0.067	0.007
Private institution	-0.088	0.013	
Baccalaureate-granting arts & sciences institution ( <i>Mid-sized Master's granting as reference</i> )	0.185	0.026	

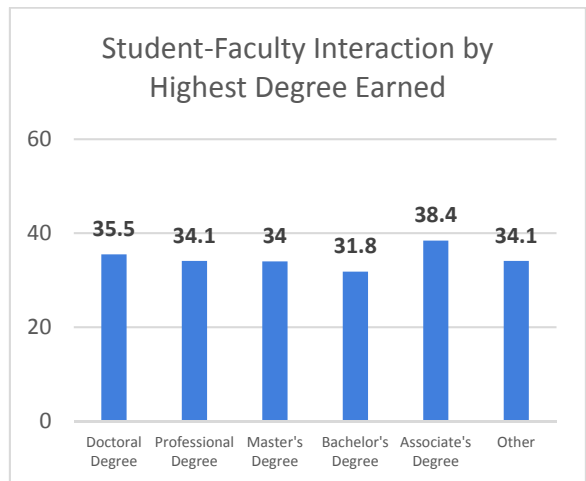
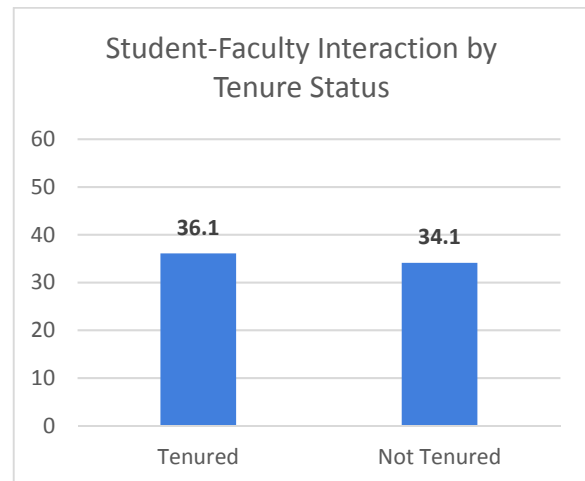
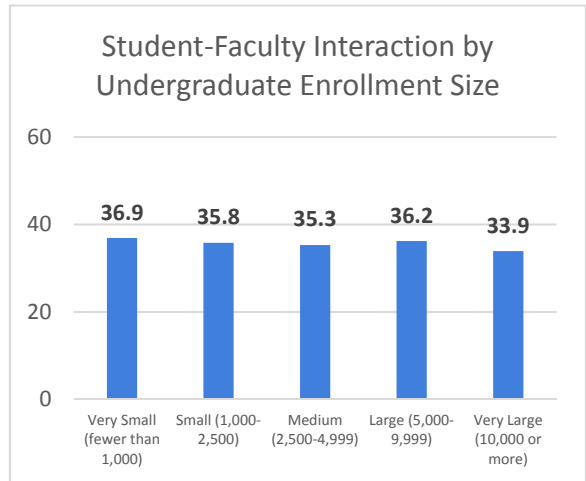
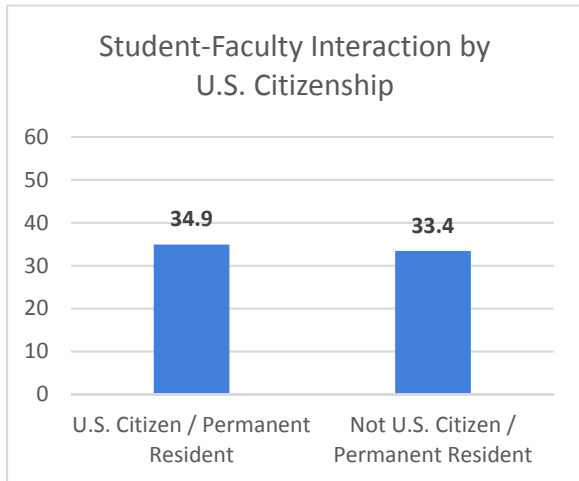
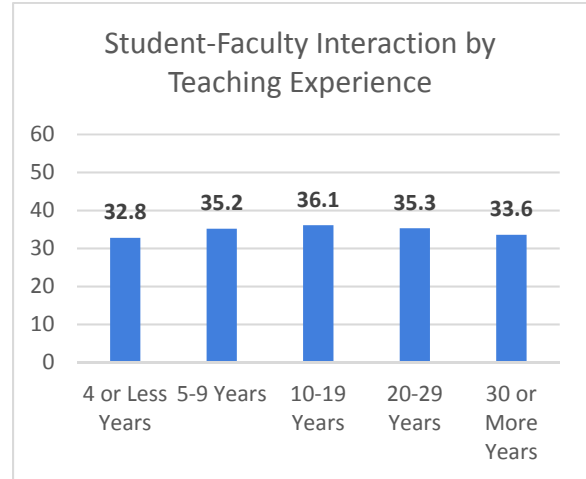
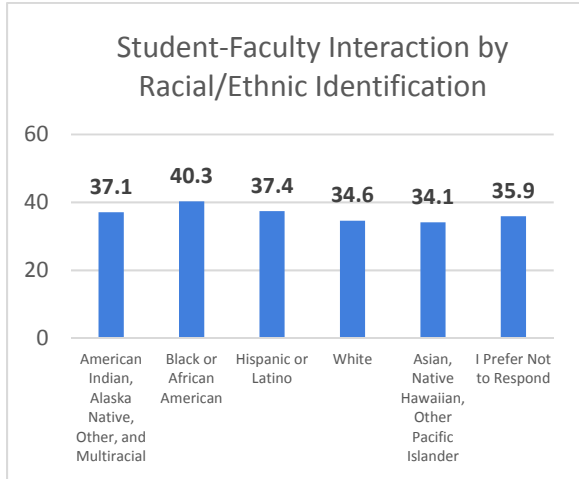
Notes: All continuous variables were standardized before entry in the model so that unstandardized coefficients can be interpreted similar to effect sizes. The following faculty-level independent variables were included in the model but were not significant ( $p < .001$ ): faculty academic rank, sexual orientation, faculty who preferred to not respond to the gender identity, racial/ethnic identification, or sexual orientation items; faculty who identify as Asian, Native Hawaiian, or other Pacific Islander, and faculty in Social Sciences, Business, Engineering, Communications, and all other disciplines.

## Predictor Follow-up

The following figures represent the average Student-Faculty Interaction scores by the faculty and institutional characteristics found to be predictive of Student-Faculty Interaction in Table 5.



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