



NSSE 2006 – Highlights

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is designed to provide data that colleges and universities can use to improve undergraduate education. The NSSE is a questionnaire that is used to gather information from first-year students and seniors about college experiences, skills acquired during college, and students' academic and non-academic activities. A web-based version of NSSE was administered to samples of UA first-year students and seniors in spring 2006. Seniors responded at a higher rate (n = 684 or 31% of the sample) than did first-year students (n = 684 or 29%). The following sections describe highlights of the results for UA.

UA Overall

- Students are satisfied with UA. At least three-quarters of first-year students and seniors reported they would attend UA if they were starting college again, and rated their education as positive.
- Students are actively engaged in the learning environment. Most seniors, and first-year students, reported that they ask questions in class, make class presentations, and work on group projects during class.
- Nearly all students reported that they discuss grades or assignments with faculty. Many seniors indicated that they participated in such activities as internships and volunteer work, and over half reported that they will complete a senior thesis or similar culminating project.
- Students believe that UA contributes to their academic knowledge and skills. Large percentages (78%-83%) of first-year students and seniors reported that UA enhances their critical thinking and analysis skills and contributes toward acquiring a broad general education.
- More than half of all first-year students and seniors reported that their coursework substantially emphasizes synthesizing and organizing ideas; applying theories or concepts to practical problems; and analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory.

More information on results for UA Overall (PDF)

UA vs. AAU Public Peers

Overall, UA first-year students and seniors provided ratings at or very near the average for AAU public universities on 14 summary scales assessing student experience, perceptions, and satisfaction. There are a few exceptions to this general pattern:

- UA students provided ratings noticeably below the AAU average on the measure of satisfaction with upper- and lower-division class size.
- UA seniors (but not first-year students) also provided ratings noticeably below the AAU average on the measures of perceptions about the quality and availability of academic advising.

- UA seniors provided ratings somewhat above the AAU average on the measure of practical academics (such as engaging in in-class group projects and in community-based projects).
- UA seniors reported that they more often 'had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own'.
- When asked to what extent their institution has contributed to 'acquiring a broad general education' , 'voting in local, state, or national elections, UA seniors reported less experience than AAU peer institutions.
- Compared to our peers, UA students appear to participate less in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)

More information on results for UA compared to AAU Public Peers (PDF)