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# **NSSE 2014 Topical Module**

## **Development of Transferable Skills**

Washington State University

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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 'Carnegie - RU/VH' column of this report.

Group label	Carnegie - RU/VH
Date submitted	6/11/14
How was this comparison group constructed?	Your institution customized this comparison group by selecting institutions from all module participants.
Group description	Carnegie Classification - Research University/Very High Research Activity

### 'Carnegie - RU/VH' institutions (N=7)

Florida State University (Tallahassee, FL)  
 Iowa State University (Ames, IA)\*  
 Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College (Baton Rouge, LA)\*  
 Mississippi State University (Mississippi State, MS)  
 University at Buffalo, State University of New York (Buffalo, NY)  
 University of Maryland (College Park, MD)  
 University of Nebraska at Lincoln (Lincoln, NE)\*

\* 2013 participant

## First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values <sup>c</sup>	Response options	Frequency Distributions <sup>a</sup>				Statistical Comparisons <sup>b</sup>		
				WSU		Carnegie - RU/VH		WSU	Carnegie - RU/VH	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
<b>1. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you done the following?</b>										
a. Discussed or debated an issue of social, political, or philosophical importance	TRN01a	1	Never	63	10	550	13	<b>2.5</b>	2.5	.01
		2	Sometimes	250	41	1,660	39			
		3	Often	187	32	1,229	30			
		4	Very often	92	16	738	18			
		Total		592	100	4,177	100			
b. Made a speech to a group	TRN01b	1	Never	174	29	1,217	29	<b>2.1</b>	2.0	.05
		2	Sometimes	264	44	1,985	47			
		3	Often	117	20	718	17			
		4	Very often	37	7	235	6			
		Total		592	100	4,155	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	37	6	278	7	<b>2.7</b>	2.7	.00
		2	Sometimes	222	38	1,624	39			
		3	Often	237	39	1,497	36			
		4	Very often	94	16	769	19			
		Total		590	100	4,168	100			
d. Discussed the ethical consequences of a course of action	TRN01d	1	Never	78	13	594	14	<b>2.4</b>	2.4	.03
		2	Sometimes	254	43	1,839	44			
		3	Often	197	33	1,238	30			
		4	Very often	61	11	494	12			
		Total		590	100	4,165	100			
e. Creatively thought about new ideas or about ways to improve things	TRN01e	1	Never	36	6	258	7	<b>2.7</b>	2.8	-.02
		2	Sometimes	200	34	1,440	34			
		3	Often	242	41	1,560	37			
		4	Very often	112	20	902	23			
		Total		590	100	4,160	100			
f. Critically evaluated multiple solutions to a problem	TRN01f	1	Never	29	4	258	7	<b>2.7</b>	2.7	-.05
		2	Sometimes	220	37	1,438	34			
		3	Often	245	42	1,616	38			
		4	Very often	95	16	849	21			
		Total		589	100	4,161	100			
g. Discussed complex problems with others to develop a better solution	TRN01g	1	Never	52	9	359	9	<b>2.6</b>	2.6 *	-.09 ▽
		2	Sometimes	236	41	1,551	37			
		3	Often	213	36	1,453	35			
		4	Very often	83	14	773	19			
		Total		584	100	4,136	100			

# NSSE 2014 Development of Transferable Skills

## Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons

### Washington State University

## First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values <sup>c</sup>	Response options	Frequency Distributions <sup>a</sup>				Statistical Comparisons <sup>b</sup>		
				WSU		Carnegie - RU/VH		WSU	Carnegie - RU/VH	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
<b>2. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you written something (paper, report, article, blog, etc.) that:</b>										
a. Used information from a variety of sources (books, journals, Internet, databases, etc.)	TRN02a	1	Never	5	1	246	7	<b>3.3</b>	2.8 ***	.51
		2	Sometimes	94	17	1,248	30			
		3	Often	208	36	1,539	36			
		4	Very often	286	47	1,145	27			
			Total	593	100	4,178	100			
b. Assessed the conclusions of a published work	TRN02b	1	Never	50	8	698	17	<b>2.8</b>	2.4 ***	.36
		2	Sometimes	195	34	1,583	39			
		3	Often	191	32	1,260	29			
		4	Very often	155	26	631	15			
			Total	591	100	4,172	100			
c. Included ideas from more than one academic discipline	TRN02c	1	Never	33	6	543	14	<b>2.9</b>	2.5 ***	.37
		2	Sometimes	172	29	1,556	37			
		3	Often	222	38	1,341	32			
		4	Very often	164	27	719	17			
			Total	591	100	4,159	100			
d. Presented multiple viewpoints or perspectives	TRN02d	1	Never	37	6	439	11	<b>2.8</b>	2.6 ***	.28
		2	Sometimes	179	31	1,582	38			
		3	Often	223	37	1,397	33			
		4	Very often	151	26	736	17			
			Total	590	100	4,154	100			

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



## Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values <sup>c</sup>	Response options	Frequency Distributions <sup>a</sup>				Statistical Comparisons <sup>b</sup>		
				WSU		Carnegie - RU/VH		WSU	Carnegie - RU/VH	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
<b>1. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you done the following?</b>										
a. Discussed or debated an issue of social, political, or philosophical importance	TRN01a	1	Never	119	11	742	12	<b>2.6</b>	2.6	-.01
		2	Sometimes	445	38	2,156	36			
		3	Often	365	31	1,707	29			
		4	Very often	243	21	1,274	22			
		Total		1,172	100	5,879	100			
b. Made a speech to a group	TRN01b	1	Never	202	18	860	15	<b>2.3</b>	2.4 ***	-.11
		2	Sometimes	498	43	2,478	42			
		3	Often	307	26	1,575	27			
		4	Very often	156	13	946	16			
		Total		1,163	100	5,859	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	32	3	300	5	<b>2.9</b>	2.9	.00
		2	Sometimes	348	31	1,702	29			
		3	Often	467	39	2,226	38			
		4	Very often	319	27	1,633	28			
		Total		1,166	100	5,861	100			
d. Discussed the ethical consequences of a course of action	TRN01d	1	Never	112	11	704	12	<b>2.6</b>	2.5	.06
		2	Sometimes	439	38	2,374	40			
		3	Often	398	33	1,781	30			
		4	Very often	218	18	993	17			
		Total		1,167	100	5,852	100			
e. Creatively thought about new ideas or about ways to improve things	TRN01e	1	Never	23	2	204	4	<b>3.0</b>	3.0	-.01
		2	Sometimes	286	25	1,448	24			
		3	Often	492	42	2,217	38			
		4	Very often	367	31	1,974	34			
		Total		1,168	100	5,843	100			
f. Critically evaluated multiple solutions to a problem	TRN01f	1	Never	23	2	204	4	<b>3.0</b>	3.0	-.02
		2	Sometimes	293	25	1,417	23			
		3	Often	494	43	2,318	39			
		4	Very often	359	30	1,918	34			
		Total		1,169	100	5,857	100			
g. Discussed complex problems with others to develop a better solution	TRN01g	1	Never	35	3	293	5	<b>2.9</b>	2.9	-.01
		2	Sometimes	327	29	1,612	27			
		3	Often	459	40	2,142	36			
		4	Very often	335	28	1,788	31			
		Total		1,156	100	5,835	100			

## Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values <sup>c</sup>	Response options	Frequency Distributions <sup>a</sup>				Statistical Comparisons <sup>b</sup>		
				WSU		Carnegie - RU/VH		WSU	Carnegie - RU/VH	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
<b>2. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you written something (paper, report, article, blog, etc.) that:</b>										
a. Used information from a variety of sources (books, journals, Internet, databases, etc.)	TRN02a	1	Never	29	3	310	5	<b>3.2</b>	3.0 ***	.26
		2	Sometimes	203	19	1,538	26			
		3	Often	347	30	1,923	32			
		4	Very often	591	48	2,101	37			
			Total	1,170	100	5,872	100			
b. Assessed the conclusions of a published work	TRN02b	1	Never	114	10	843	14	<b>2.8</b>	2.6 ***	.22
		2	Sometimes	324	29	2,057	34			
		3	Often	350	29	1,647	28			
		4	Very often	382	31	1,308	23			
			Total	1,170	100	5,855	100			
c. Included ideas from more than one academic discipline	TRN02c	1	Never	81	7	648	11	<b>2.9</b>	2.7 ***	.18
		2	Sometimes	333	29	1,983	33			
		3	Often	391	33	1,846	32			
		4	Very often	363	30	1,382	24			
			Total	1,168	100	5,859	100			
d. Presented multiple viewpoints or perspectives	TRN02d	1	Never	74	7	625	11	<b>2.8</b>	2.7 ***	.12
		2	Sometimes	380	34	2,081	35			
		3	Often	397	33	1,863	32			
		4	Very often	315	26	1,284	22			
			Total	1,166	100	5,853	100			

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

## Endnotes

- a. Column percentages are weighted by gender 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 gender 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*.
- e. Statistics are weighted by gender 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 *Ns* due to weighting and whether equal variances were assumed.
- i. Statistical comparisons are two-tailed independent t-tests. Statistical significance represents the probability that the difference between your students' mean and that of the comparison group is due to chance.

### **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.