

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

MEASURING WHAT WE VALUE:

- INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION
- LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION
- TEACHING AND LEARNING
 - STUDENT SUCCESS
 - COMMUNITY SERVICE

DataBytes
Office of Institutional
Effectiveness

Spring 2017

BITE-SIZE DATA FOR YOUR PERUSAL, EVALUATION, AND PLANNING

IN THIS ISSUE: FACULTY INVOLVEMENT

Faculty Involvement

by JD Hogue, Assessment Coordinator

Goal 1 of MSSU's Strategic Plan is to *achieve student success through quality academic programs*, such as undergraduate programs, graduate programs, distance-learning education, programs with high impact practices, and programs with professional accreditation. As the Strategic Plan states, "Steeped in our University Mission, Vision, and Values is a commitment to outstanding undergraduate academic programs that prepare students for the world of work and graduate school." We monitor the quality of our educational programs through both indirect and direct measures. Faculty interaction, faculty assessment of student learning, and faculty evaluations provide data that inform teaching and learning at Missouri Southern.

Faculty engagement in student success is central to our institution's mission. Last spring, 44% of MSSU faculty participated in the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE, 2016). Eighty-five percent of respondents indicated that it was *important* or *very important* to them that MSSU *increase its emphasis on providing support to help students succeed academically*.

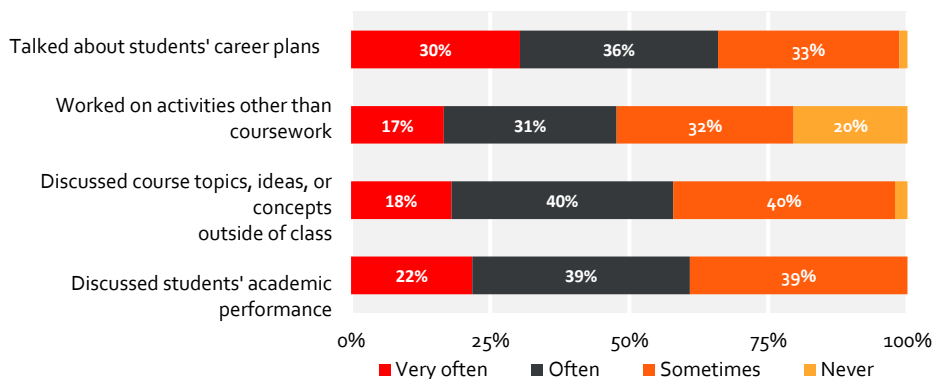
Faculty Interaction with Students

The figure below reflects faculty self-report of interaction with students across several domains. The majority of faculty (66%) said they talk with students about their career plans often or very often. They also reported that they often or very often work with students on activities other than coursework (48%), and discuss course topics outside of class (58%),

According to FSSE 2016 data, on average, faculty spend time teaching each week (23 hours), advising students (4.6 hours), conducting research (6.2 hours,) and

Strategic Plan Goal 1: Achieve Student Success through Quality Academic Programs

The majority of faculty (61%) said they discuss students' academic performance with the students often or very often.



engaging in service activities (6.9 hours). The 2017 edition of MSSU's *Focus on Faculty* highlights faculty achievements in publishing articles and books, receiving awards and grants, conducting professional and community service, reviewing publications, presenting research, and contributing to student engagement. Faculty's self-report of interaction with students was confirmed by students. According to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, 2016), faculty-student interaction and quality of interactions were rated significantly higher by senior and first-year students at Missouri Southern respectively when compared with ratings of these engagement indicators at our peer institutions.

Faculty Assessment of Student Learning

Assessment of student learning is conducted at Missouri Southern as a means of informing faculty about what is working and not working inside and outside of the classroom as they advise students and pave their trajectories toward timely completion and graduation.

Ensuring quality teaching and student learning can take a variety of forms, but many academic programs on campus engage in a major field test or licensure exam to determine how well their students have learned the material. Major Field Tests (MFT) are nationally normed, and Missouri Southern has operationally defined success as scoring at or above the 50th percentile nationally. **Combining pass rates for all tests across all majors, MSSU had 60.9% of its students score in the 50th percentile nationally or higher for 2015 - 2016. Sociology (89%), Engineering Technology (89%), and Computer Information Science (91%) were the three programs on campus with the highest percentages of students who scored in the 50th percentile nationally or higher.**

Licensure and Certification exams are scored differently. Students must earn a certain score, which depends on the exam, to pass and demonstrate mastery of the material. **Combining pass rates for all tests across all majors, MSSU showed a 97.9% licensure and certificate pass rate in 2015 – 2016.** These licensures and certificates include Dental Hygiene, Nursing, Radiologic Technology, Respiratory Care, and Law Enforcement Academy.

Faculty collect these and similar data on their students and make data-informed decisions about how to improve the programs. For

example, Criminal Justice faculty reviewed their major field test results and saw that their scores consistently hovered around the 50th percentile. They decided to create a senior seminar, add a pretest for the major field test, and add a critical thinking test. Likewise, music faculty concluded that MFT scores were lower than they would like. Although faculty agreed that the rigor of the courses was high, their students might not have taken the test seriously and/or were having trouble retaining the information. The Music faculty decided to discuss ways to encourage the students to take the test seriously and to undergo a curriculum review to develop cross-class and cross-discipline teaching methods of reinforcing music history and music theory concepts.

Once faculty make data-informed decisions on how to improve their programs, they document these improvements to teaching and learning in their assessment reports. Across campus curricular and co-curricular units enter their program-level assessment reports into WEAVE, our assessment management software. Reports are submitted to the Assessment Advisory Committee (AAC), which is composed of faculty members, department chairs, members from Academic Affairs, and a co-curricular director. The committee invites academic departments to meet together with the committee to discuss both the assessment findings and the process of assessment at MSSU. As the committee evaluates each component of the report including Student Learning Outcomes, Measures, Results, and Use of Results, departmental faculty address any questions or concerns raised by the committee, ask questions about best practices in assessment, and provide the committee with feedback as to what is working or not working to promote student success at our institution. Committee members learn about student achievement across campus and offer advice about development and measurement of learning outcomes as well as analysis of data and use of results.

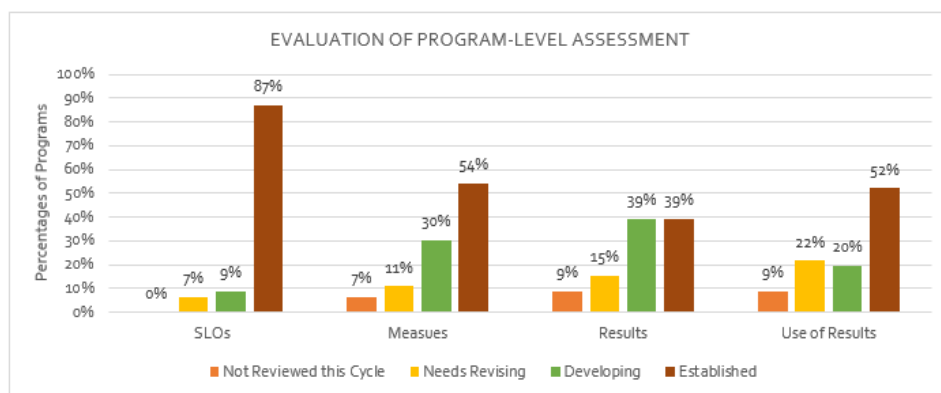
Historically, reports have been due every two years. In the fall semester of 2016, reports were due on October 31st. The Assessment Advisory Committee reviewed 46 reports during Academic Year (AY) 2017. A rubric is used to determine whether elements of an assessment report need revising, are developing, or are established. For Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), Measures, and Use of Results, "established" was the most frequently given distinction. The figure below shows a summary of the overall review for each component. For units with outside professional accreditation, the AAC accepts results of the accreditors' evaluation of the assessment standard as final feedback for the academic program. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) compiles the results and submits to Academic Affairs semester reports on the maturity of the process of academic assessment at MSSU.

Following the review process, the Assessment Advisory Committee instructs departments to submit follow-up reports in six months, one year, or two years, depending on results for each unit. For AY2017, 43% of the reports earned a 2-year reporting cycle; 37% of the reports earned a 1-year reporting cycle, and 20% of the reports earned a 6-month reporting cycle. Review is ongoing, and Institutional Effectiveness publishes the review schedule on its website:

<http://www.mssu.edu/academics/institutional-effectiveness/processandproduct.php>.

Departments can check the status of their reports on the What's Due When page of the IE website:

<http://www.mssu.edu/academics/institutional-effectiveness/whats-due-when.php>.

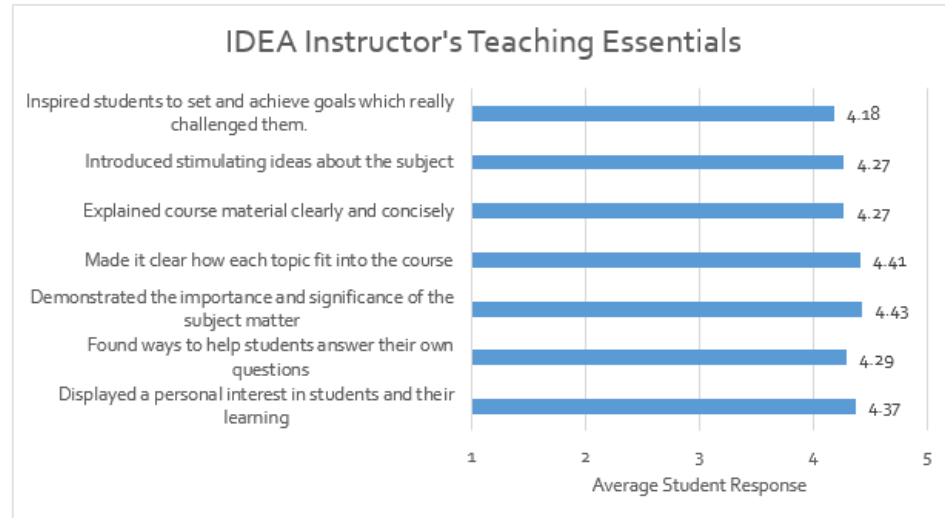


Faculty are responding positively to this new assessment process. According to minutes from a post-mortem of the Fall 2016 review season, faculty members on the committee said they learned more about the university and how various programs engage in assessment differently. The faculty members attending the review stated that they prefer the new process. They like the WEAVE software better than templates they had completed in prior years. Additionally, faculty members said they enjoy having a chance to explain their assessment processes. The AAC was particularly encouraged when faculty who had not attended the reviews stated that they wished they had attended because they would have learned much more about assessment.

High-Impact Learning Experiences

High impact practices include involvement in learning communities, community-based projects or service-learning, internships, study abroad, research with a faculty member, and culminating or capstone senior experiences or projects.

According to NSSE 2016, 80% of senior students participated in at least one high-impact experience. Comparing 2016 NSSE scores against other institutions, MSSU students engaged in high impact practices at levels similar to peer and similar Carnegie-class institutions. **MSSU had a higher percentage of senior students study abroad than our peer or Carnegie institutions did. However, only 36% of**



faculty teaching primarily upper-level courses viewed studying abroad as important or very important.

Faculty reported that participating in an internship (88% of faculty teaching primarily upper-level courses) and completing a culminating senior experience (77% of faculty teaching primarily upper-level courses) were important or very important.

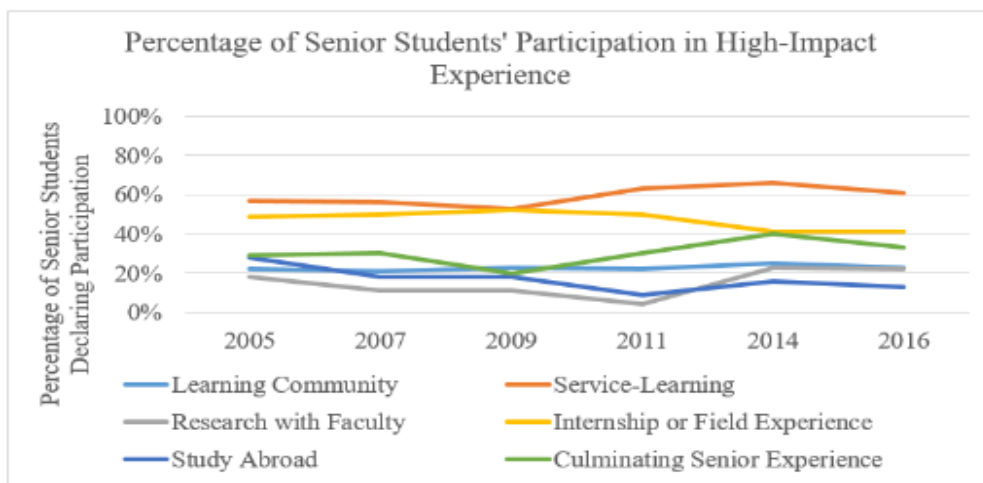
The figure below shows the percentage of seniors participating in each high impact practice over time. In 2016, more seniors said that they had participated in a service-learning experience than seniors had reported in recent years, but fewer seniors said that they had studied abroad.

Faculty and Course Evaluations

Across campus, faculty also use instructor and course evaluations to help determine if the students view their teaching as high quality. MSSU used the IDEA *Teaching Essentials* survey for faculty evaluations in the fall 2016 semester. The results from 1126 classes indicated that students (32.85% response rate) most often said that the faculty *frequently* engaged the students, explained the material clearly, and inspired the students. Response averages are in the figure above. **When paired with the "Overall, I rate this instructor an excellent teacher" (M = 4.36) and "Overall, I rate this course as excellent" (M = 4.18) questions, the scores indicate that students view the MSSU faculty as high quality educators.**

Chairs have already started using these data for promotion and program improvement purposes. One department compared its scores against the school's and the university's scores. This program scored higher than the school and the university in every item but one. Their students believed that they put in more effort than their peers, did not believe their background prepared them for their classes, and reported that they wanted to be in their classes. When asked about the extent to which their faculty members displayed a personal interest in students and their learning, this department scored lower than university averages. As a result, the department has implemented changes to the curriculum and strategies for increased faculty interaction with students.

NSSE and FSSE data corroborate results of the IDEA teacher evaluations. Not only did the majority of faculty respond that they



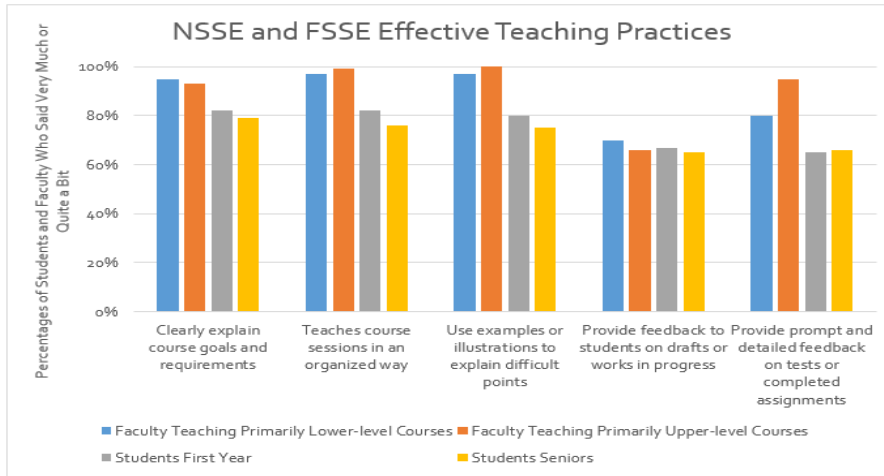
engaged in best teaching practices very much or quite a bit (on a scale from 1 (*very little*) to 4 (*very much*), but also the majority of students stated that the faculty engaged in best teaching practices very much or quite a bit. In fact, compared to all other Missouri institutions that administered NSSE 2016 and FSSE 2016, MSSU faculty scored higher

for providing feedback on a draft or work in progress *and* for providing prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments. All other comparisons showed MSSU was similar to Carnegie, peer, and Missouri institutions with regard to effective teaching practices. See the figure below.

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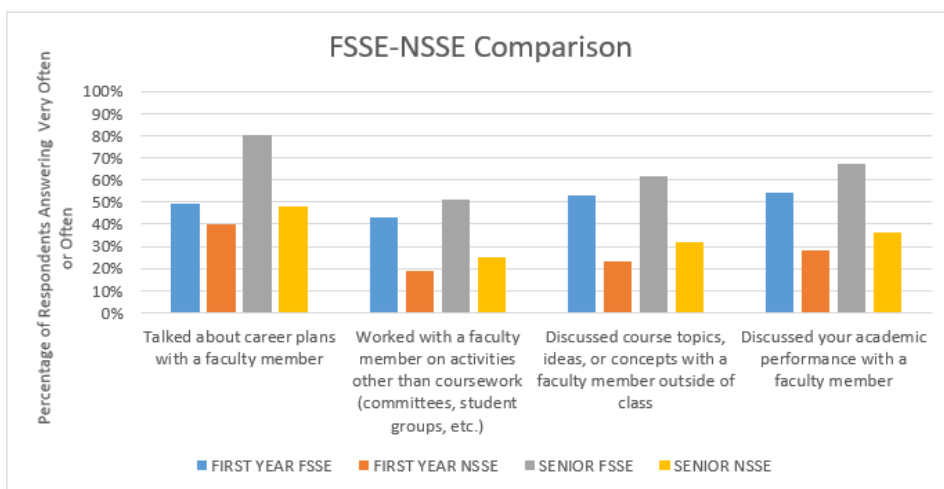
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Conclusion

Faculty are ensuring student learning through effective teaching practices and ongoing assessment of student learning outcomes. Students think very highly of their professors. Faculty regularly engage with students through talking about academic performance, talking about course topics outside of class, and talking to students about career plans, but students and faculty are in disagreement about how much time they spend with each other. Faculty believe they spend more time with students than students believe they spend with faculty. See figure below. Faculty prioritize participation in an internship or culminating senior experience over participation in a study abroad experience, but students are still participating in a study abroad experience more frequently than students from other institutions. Overall, faculty are doing a lot for their students, and the students recognize these efforts.



STAFF

Josephine Welsh, PhD
Director

Josie is responsible for oversight of institutional research and assessment. She manages data collection and dissemination for federal and state reporting, Missouri performance-based funding, faculty and course evaluations, academic program review, accreditation reports, campus climate, surveys, and the University's strategic plan. Josie teaches Honors 400, Thesis

JD Hogue, MTBC, MM, MS
Assessment Coordinator

JD is responsible for program-level assessment, consultations with faculty, research compliance administration through IRBnet, and management of our assessment software, Weave. He also serves the university as an adjunct faculty member.

Michael Pyle, MS
Research Analyst

Michael is responsible for general education and co-curricular assessment. He administers and analyzes data from national and local tests and surveys focused on general education competencies, student engagement, and campus experience. Michael disseminates University-level findings through our semester newsletter, *DataBytes*.