

2005 NUGGET FROM NSSE: EVIDENCE OF KSU’S STRONG IMPACT ON STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Producing evidence of student learning is the gold standard of accountability for institutional and program accreditation. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) provides valuable evidence of an institution’s impact on student learning in a number of fundamental and important college-level competencies.

Assessment Results for KSU’s Educational Impact on College-Level Competencies

- Undergraduate seniors evaluated the impact of the KSU experience on their educational growth in 16 general areas of knowledge, skill, and personal development (a.k.a, student learning outcomes). The results from the 2005 NSSE replicated and confirmed similar findings from the 2004 NSSE for KSU.
- Most seniors (typically three-fourths or more) reported that the KSU experience contributed substantially to their educational growth in nine of the 16 college-level competencies. Those nine learning outcomes represent fundamental areas of knowledge and skill that are commonly expected of a well-educated college graduate. KSU’s results reflected broad-based educational growth in general and specialized knowledge, critical thinking and problem solving skills, technological sophistication, effectiveness in communication and teamwork, and capacity for independent learning. (See Table 1.)

Table 1

Percent of Seniors in NSSE 2005 & NSSE 2004 Whose Educational Growth in 16 Student Learning Outcomes was Substantially Impacted by Their KSU Experience

Contribution of the KSU Experience to this Student Learning Outcome	<u>% Rating the Contribution as Substantial</u>	
	2005 NSSE	2004 NSSE

KSU’s Greatest Impact on Nine Fundamental Competencies Involving Knowledge and Skill

Thinking critically and analytically	87%	88%
Using computing and information technology	84%	81%
Acquiring a broad general education	83%	87%
Working effectively with others	81%	83%
Analyzing quantitative problems	79%	75%
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge & skills	73%	74%
Writing clearly and effectively	73%	84%
Learning effectively on your own	70%	72%
Speaking clearly and effectively	68%	78%

KSU’s Lesser Impact on Seven Learning Outcomes Involving Attitudes & Values

Understanding yourself	56%	56%
Solving complex real-world problems	56%	59%
Understanding people of other racial & ethnic backgrounds	53%	50%
Developing a personal code of values and ethics	46%	45%
Contributing to the welfare of your community	35%	31%
Voting in local, state, or national elections	32%	20%
Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	19%	9%

*The percentages for substantial contribution reflect the combined responses of “very much” and “quite a bit” for KSU’s educational impact on the learning outcomes in items 11a to 11p. of the NSSE.

- The impact of the KSU experience on the other seven learning outcomes, which tend to emphasize educational growth in personal attitudes and values, was not as broad-based. About half of the seniors reported substantial gains attributable to the KSU experience in their understanding of self, understanding of others different from themselves, solving complex real-world problems, or developing a personal code of values and ethics. Only a third or fewer of the seniors reported that their KSU experience contributed substantially to their service to their communities, participation in a democratic society or a deepened sense of spirituality.
- Significantly more KSU seniors than seniors at other master's level institutions reported having been substantially impacted by their college experience in two of the 16 college-level competencies: 1) using computing and information technology, and 2) analyzing quantitative problems. For most of the key competencies (nine out of 16), KSU's educational impact was not significantly different from the impact of other universities. Significantly fewer KSU seniors than seniors elsewhere experienced substantial educational growth in self-understanding, ethical development, community service, voting participation, and spiritual development. (See Table 2.)

Table 2

**KSU's Educational Impact on Student Learning Outcomes
Compared with Other Master's Level Institutions in NSSE 2005**

Contribution of the Institutional Experience to this Student Learning Outcome	<u>% of Seniors Rating the Contribution as Substantial</u>	
	KSU	Master's
KSU's Educational Impact was Significantly Higher*		
Using computing and information technology	84%	79%
Analyzing quantitative problems	79%	72%
KSU's Educational Impact was Comparable (Not Significantly Different)*		
Thinking critically and analytically	87%	87%
Acquiring a broad general education	83%	86%
Working effectively with others	81%	80%
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge & skills	73%	75%
Writing clearly and effectively	73%	77%
Learning effectively on your own	70%	75%
Speaking clearly and effectively	68%	74%
Solving complex real-world problems	56%	59%
Understanding people of other racial & ethnic backgrounds	53%	53%
KSU's Educational Impact was Significantly Lower*		
Understanding yourself	56%	65%
Developing a personal code of values and ethics	46%	59%
Contributing to the welfare of your community	35%	48%
Voting in local, state, or national elections	32%	40%
Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	19%	33%

*From NSSE Means Comparison Report (p<.001 two-tailed test for significance)

KSU'S UNIVERSITY-LEVEL COMPETENCIES FOR GRADUATING SENIORS

Thinking Critically and Analytically. Graduating seniors will dissect and examine information and problems in a critical and analytic manner exercising reasoned judgment.

Using Computing and Information Technology. Graduating seniors will demonstrate competence in the use of computers and other information technology.

Demonstrating a Broad General Education. Graduating seniors will demonstrate broad, basic, and general knowledge, skills and attitudes that reflect the perspectives of a variety of disciplines including the arts, humanities, social sciences, mathematics, and natural sciences.

Working Effectively with Others. Graduating seniors will work well and collaborate effectively with others in professional and social settings and on project teams.

Analyzing Quantitative Problems. Graduating seniors will solve quantitative problems using effective modes of reasoning and express mathematical solutions, concepts, and results in verbal, numeric, graphical, and symbolic form.

Demonstrating Job or Work-Related Knowledge and Skills. Graduating seniors will demonstrate proficiency in employment/career-related applications of specialized knowledge and skills.

Writing Clearly and Effectively. Graduating seniors will compose proper, understandable, and effective written materials, reports, and communications for personal and professional purposes.

Learning Effectively on Own. Graduating seniors will take initiative to structure their own learning and employ effective study skills, thereby demonstrating the skills of life-long learning.

Speaking Clearly and Effectively. Graduating seniors will make effective oral presentations that include the effective use of multimedia communication.

Understanding Yourself. Graduating seniors will acknowledge having insight into their behavior and attitudes that is useful for self-management and self-improvement.

Solving Complex Real World Problems. Graduating seniors will apply essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes to solve complicated practical problems in their professional and personal experiences.

Understanding People of Other Races and Ethnic Backgrounds. Graduating seniors will recognize and respect racial and cultural differences among people in the world.

Adhering to Accepted Codes of Values and Ethics. Graduating seniors will act in an ethical and principle-centered manner in accordance with societal and community values and the professional values of their major fields of study.

Contributing to the Welfare of the Community. Graduating seniors will express commitment to being involved in the life of their community and making contributions for the common good.

ADDITIONAL 2006 NSSE ITEMS ON THE MAJOR & GLOBAL LEARNING FOR THE URBAN CONSORTIUM'S CONSIDERATION

Rationale for Additional Items on Learning Outcomes

Item #11 in NSSE focuses on a number of important student learning outcomes of a baccalaureate education. Most of those outcomes involve basic college-level competencies (e.g., critical thinking, computer use, writing, quantitative analysis, etc.) that are advanced initially in general education and are reinforced in discipline-specific ways by courses in the major field. Several important baccalaureate outcomes are missing from that list, including the institution's educational impact in the student's major field of study and global learning. These missing collegiate learning outcomes are especially important to students and communities served by urban and metropolitan universities. Consequently, several additional items are proposed for the Urban University Consortium's consideration to address these voids.

Wording of Proposed Items

- 1) To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas (Response categories: Very Much, Quite a Bit, Some, Very Little):
 - a) Acquiring expertise in your major field of study
 - b) Gaining practical experience in your major field
 - c) Adopting the values and ethics of your major field?
 - d) Learning about the international and multicultural world?
 - e) Working effectively in diverse and cross-cultural settings?
- 2) How would you evaluate your experience in your major field of studies at this institution?
(Response categories: Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor)
- 3) If you could start your major field studies over again, would you choose to major in the same field?
(Response categories: Definitely yes, Probably yes, Probably not, Definitely not)

OTHER EDITORIAL REFINEMENTS FOR THE NSSE LIST OF COMPETENCIES

A few of NSSE's competencies are not consistently phrased like the others as learning outcomes. For example, "acquiring" or "developing" suggests that the senior is in the process of achieving the outcome. Most of the other verbs suggest that the senior has achieved the expected performance. This could be rectified with a modest editorial change to KSU's list of competencies in which "acquiring" is replaced with "demonstrating" as follows:

Demonstrating a Broad General Education Demonstrating Job or Work-Related Knowledge & Skills

In the competency that is focused on values and ethics, a similar change could be made along with some additional clarification for KSU's purposes as follows:

Adhering to Accepted Codes of Values & Ethics