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# NSSE 2022 Topical Module Report

## Experiences with Writing

University of New Hampshire at Durham

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This module is the result of an ongoing collaboration between NSSE and the Council of Writing Program Administrators. The questions touch on three aspects of good writing assignments—interactivity, meaning-making, and clarity. It complements questions on the core survey about how much writing students do, the nature of their course assignments, and perceived gains in written expression.

Comparison group details are in the online Selected Comparison Groups report, linked in the Data & Reports table on the Institution Interface. A PDF copy is also saved in your report download folder.

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## 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>		
				UNH		Public Instns		UNH	Public Instns	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
<b>1. During the current school year, for how many writing assignments have you done the following?</b>										
a. Talked with a classmate, friend, or family member to develop your ideas before starting your assignment	WRI01a	1	No writing assignments	23	8	368	12	<b>3.0</b>	2.8 *	.15
		2	Few writing assignments	70	23	853	25			
		3	Some writing assignments	120	38	1,188	36			
		4	Most writing assignments	71	24	738	22			
		5	All writing assignments	22	7	188	5			
		Total		306	100	3,335	100			
b. Received feedback from a classmate, friend, or family member about a draft before turning in your final assignment	WRI01b	1	No writing assignments	12	4	395	12	<b>3.2</b>	2.9 ***	.30
		2	Few writing assignments	59	19	796	24			
		3	Some writing assignments	105	35	1,094	33			
		4	Most writing assignments	107	34	782	23			
		5	All writing assignments	22	7	253	7			
		Total		305	100	3,320	100			
c. Given feedback to a classmate about a draft or outline	WRI01c	1	No writing assignments	10	4	474	14	<b>3.2</b>	2.8 ***	.35
		2	Few writing assignments	61	20	799	24			
		3	Some writing assignments	124	40	1,173	36			
		4	Most writing assignments	97	32	704	21			
		5	All writing assignments	14	5	175	5			
		Total		306	100	3,325	100			
d. Summarized material you read such as articles, books, or online publications	WRI01d	1	No writing assignments	8	3	203	7	<b>3.2</b>	3.2	.02
		2	Few writing assignments	51	17	565	17			
		3	Some writing assignments	122	40	1,166	36			
		4	Most writing assignments	115	36	1,086	32			
		5	All writing assignments	10	3	300	8			
		Total		306	100	3,320	100			
e. Analyzed or evaluated something you read, researched, or observed	WRI01e	1	No writing assignments	4	2	134	5	<b>3.5</b>	3.5	.01
		2	Few writing assignments	38	12	375	12			
		3	Some writing assignments	93	31	975	29			
		4	Most writing assignments	147	47	1,380	42			
		5	All writing assignments	24	8	453	13			
		Total		306	100	3,317	100			
f. Described your methods or findings related to data you collected in lab or field work, a survey project, etc.	WRI01f	1	No writing assignments	49	15	549	16	<b>2.8</b>	2.9	-.03
		2	Few writing assignments	67	22	674	20			
		3	Some writing assignments	91	31	1,044	32			
		4	Most writing assignments	88	28	819	26			
		5	All writing assignments	12	4	224	6			
		Total		307	100	3,310	100			
g. Argued a position using evidence and reasoning	WRI01g	1	No writing assignments	17	6	247	8	<b>3.2</b>	3.3	-.06
		2	Few writing assignments	51	16	460	14			
		3	Some writing assignments	111	36	1,021	31			
		4	Most writing assignments	108	36	1,170	36			
		5	All writing assignments	20	7	410	11			
		Total		307	100	3,308	100			

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

## 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>		
				UNH		Public Instns		UNH	Public Instns	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
h. Explained in writing the meaning of numerical or statistical data	WRI01h	1	No writing assignments	68	21	723	20	<b>2.6</b>	2.6	-.01
		2	Few writing assignments	72	24	820	25			
		3	Some writing assignments	87	30	977	30			
		4	Most writing assignments	68	22	613	20			
		5	All writing assignments	11	4	172	5			
		Total		306	100	3,305	100			
i. Written in the style and format of a specific field (engineering, history, psychology, etc.)	WRI01i	1	No writing assignments	49	16	575	18	<b>2.9</b>	2.9	.07
		2	Few writing assignments	62	20	665	21			
		3	Some writing assignments	83	28	963	29			
		4	Most writing assignments	85	27	795	24			
		5	All writing assignments	28	9	297	8			
		Total		307	100	3,295	100			
j. Addressed a real or imagined audience such as your classmates, a politician, non-experts, etc.	WRI01j	1	No writing assignments	67	20	561	17	<b>2.7</b>	2.8	-.11
		2	Few writing assignments	68	23	706	21			
		3	Some writing assignments	89	29	1,023	32			
		4	Most writing assignments	66	22	742	23			
		5	All writing assignments	17	5	264	7			
		Total		307	100	3,296	100			
<b>2. During the current school year, for how many of your writing assignments have your instructors done the following?</b>										
a. Provided clear instructions describing what they wanted you to do	WRI02a	1	No writing assignments	3	1	100	3	<b>3.9</b>	3.7 **	.15
		2	Few writing assignments	19	6	270	8			
		3	Some writing assignments	65	21	797	24			
		4	Most writing assignments	152	49	1,384	43			
		5	All writing assignments	68	23	745	22			
		Total		307	100	3,296	100			
b. Explained in advance what they wanted you to learn	WRI02b	1	No writing assignments	5	2	139	4	<b>3.6</b>	3.5 *	.13
		2	Few writing assignments	37	11	409	13			
		3	Some writing assignments	88	28	991	31			
		4	Most writing assignments	120	39	1,150	34			
		5	All writing assignments	57	19	614	18			
		Total		307	100	3,303	100			
c. Explained in advance the criteria they would use to grade your assignment	WRI02c	1	No writing assignments	6	2	101	4	<b>3.9</b>	3.8	.10
		2	Few writing assignments	18	6	278	9			
		3	Some writing assignments	64	21	756	23			
		4	Most writing assignments	137	45	1,218	36			
		5	All writing assignments	83	27	951	29			
		Total		308	100	3,304	100			

## Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values <sup>c</sup>	Response options	Frequency Distributions <sup>a</sup>				Statistical Comparisons <sup>b</sup>		
				UNH		Public Instns		UNH	Public Instns	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
<b>1. During the current school year, for how many writing assignments have you done the following?</b>										
a. Talked with a classmate, friend, or family member to develop your ideas before starting your assignment	WRI01a	1	No writing assignments	40	9	477	12	<b>2.9</b>	2.9	.02
		2	Few writing assignments	120	26	941	25			
		3	Some writing assignments	179	38	1,403	34			
		4	Most writing assignments	114	23	863	22			
		5	All writing assignments	21	4	279	7			
		Total		474	100	3,963	100			
b. Received feedback from a classmate, friend, or family member about a draft before turning in your final assignment	WRI01b	1	No writing assignments	49	11	625	15	<b>2.8</b>	2.8	.03
		2	Few writing assignments	122	27	982	25			
		3	Some writing assignments	167	35	1,230	31			
		4	Most writing assignments	115	23	839	21			
		5	All writing assignments	18	4	267	7			
		Total		471	100	3,943	100			
c. Given feedback to a classmate about a draft or outline	WRI01c	1	No writing assignments	48	10	751	18	<b>2.7</b>	2.7	.07
		2	Few writing assignments	136	29	1,002	25			
		3	Some writing assignments	189	40	1,327	34			
		4	Most writing assignments	92	19	691	17			
		5	All writing assignments	9	2	199	5			
		Total		474	100	3,970	100			
d. Summarized material you read such as articles, books, or online publications	WRI01d	1	No writing assignments	18	4	269	7	<b>3.3</b>	3.3	.02
		2	Few writing assignments	67	15	566	15			
		3	Some writing assignments	157	34	1,300	33			
		4	Most writing assignments	193	39	1,341	34			
		5	All writing assignments	38	8	480	12			
		Total		473	100	3,956	100			
e. Analyzed or evaluated something you read, researched, or observed	WRI01e	1	No writing assignments	13	3	164	4	<b>3.6</b>	3.6	-.03
		2	Few writing assignments	40	9	381	9			
		3	Some writing assignments	120	26	1,013	26			
		4	Most writing assignments	239	50	1,650	42			
		5	All writing assignments	58	12	747	19			
		Total		470	100	3,955	100			
f. Described your methods or findings related to data you collected in lab or field work, a survey project, etc.	WRI01f	1	No writing assignments	49	10	504	12	<b>3.1</b>	3.1	-.05
		2	Few writing assignments	94	20	714	18			
		3	Some writing assignments	143	30	1,143	29			
		4	Most writing assignments	152	32	1,151	30			
		5	All writing assignments	34	7	434	11			
		Total		472	100	3,946	100			
g. Argued a position using evidence and reasoning	WRI01g	1	No writing assignments	35	8	417	10	<b>3.3</b>	3.2	.01
		2	Few writing assignments	68	15	606	15			
		3	Some writing assignments	159	34	1,155	30			
		4	Most writing assignments	157	32	1,226	31			
		5	All writing assignments	53	12	544	14			
		Total		472	100	3,948	100			

## Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values <sup>c</sup>	Response options	Frequency Distributions <sup>a</sup>				Statistical Comparisons <sup>b</sup>		
				UNH		Public Instns		UNH	Public Instns	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
h. Explained in writing the meaning of numerical or statistical data	WRI01h	1	No writing assignments	57	12	652	15	<b>3.0</b>	3.0	.01
		2	Few writing assignments	104	22	789	19			
		3	Some writing assignments	148	31	1,213	31			
		4	Most writing assignments	125	27	960	27			
		5	All writing assignments	36	8	334	9			
		Total	470	100	3,948	100				
i. Written in the style and format of a specific field (engineering, history, psychology, etc.)	WRI01i	1	No writing assignments	29	6	484	11	<b>3.6</b>	3.4 ***	.17
		2	Few writing assignments	64	14	541	13			
		3	Some writing assignments	96	21	964	25			
		4	Most writing assignments	178	37	1,176	31			
		5	All writing assignments	106	22	775	20			
		Total	473	100	3,940	100				
j. Addressed a real or imagined audience such as your classmates, a politician, non-experts, etc.	WRI01j	1	No writing assignments	88	19	683	17	<b>2.6</b>	2.9 ***	-.19
		2	Few writing assignments	116	25	826	21			
		3	Some writing assignments	152	32	1,182	30			
		4	Most writing assignments	99	21	851	21			
		5	All writing assignments	15	3	400	10			
		Total	470	100	3,942	100				
<b>2. During the current school year, for how many of your writing assignments have your instructors done the following?</b>										
a. Provided clear instructions describing what they wanted you to do	WRI02a	1	No writing assignments	8	2	123	3	<b>3.8</b>	3.8	-.03
		2	Few writing assignments	26	5	300	8			
		3	Some writing assignments	104	23	814	21			
		4	Most writing assignments	257	53	1,660	43			
		5	All writing assignments	78	16	1,044	25			
		Total	473	100	3,941	100				
b. Explained in advance what they wanted you to learn	WRI02b	1	No writing assignments	17	4	174	4	<b>3.5</b>	3.6 *	-.10
		2	Few writing assignments	53	11	429	12			
		3	Some writing assignments	146	32	993	26			
		4	Most writing assignments	190	40	1,385	36			
		5	All writing assignments	67	14	957	23			
		Total	473	100	3,938	100				
c. Explained in advance the criteria they would use to grade your assignment	WRI02c	1	No writing assignments	10	2	144	4	<b>3.8</b>	3.9	-.05
		2	Few writing assignments	28	6	268	7			
		3	Some writing assignments	112	24	797	21			
		4	Most writing assignments	205	43	1,416	37			
		5	All writing assignments	116	24	1,316	32			
		Total	471	100	3,941	100				

## First-Year Students

Variable name	N		Mean		Standard error <sup>f</sup>		Standard deviation <sup>g</sup>		DF <sup>h</sup>	Sig. <sup>i</sup>	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
	UNH	Public Instns	UNH	Public Instns	UNH	Public Instns	UNH	Public Instns			
	Comparisons with:										
Public Instns											
WRI01a	308	2.99	2.83	.059	.019	1.03	1.06	377	.013	.15	
WRI01b	306	3.22	2.89	.056	.020	0.98	1.11	392	.000	.30	
WRI01c	308	3.15	2.78	.052	.020	0.91	1.08	402	.000	.35	
WRI01d	307	3.20	3.18	.049	.019	0.86	1.03	404	.645	.02	
WRI01e	307	3.48	3.46	.049	.019	0.86	1.01	400	.817	.01	
WRI01f	308	2.83	2.86	.064	.021	1.12	1.15	3,234	.643	-.03	
WRI01g	308	3.22	3.28	.056	.020	0.98	1.09	392	.316	-.06	
WRI01h	307	2.64	2.65	.065	.021	1.14	1.15	3,230	.909	-.01	
WRI01i	308	2.94	2.85	.069	.022	1.21	1.21	3,221	.231	.07	
WRI01j	308	2.70	2.83	.067	.022	1.18	1.18	3,224	.073	-.11	
WRI02a	308	3.86	3.71	.050	.019	0.88	1.00	396	.006	.15	
WRI02b	308	3.63	3.49	.056	.020	0.98	1.07	388	.019	.13	
WRI02c	309	3.88	3.78	.053	.020	0.94	1.06	397	.067	.10	

## Seniors

Variable name	N		Mean		Standard error <sup>f</sup>		Standard deviation <sup>g</sup>		DF <sup>h</sup>	Sig. <sup>i</sup>	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
	UNH	Public Instns	UNH	Public Instns	UNH	Public Instns	UNH	Public Instns			
	<i>Comparisons with:</i>									<i>Public Instns</i>	
WRI01a	470	2.89	2.86	.046	.018	1.01	1.10	610	.650	.02	
WRI01b	467	2.82	2.79	.048	.018	1.03	1.14	610	.576	.03	
WRI01c	470	2.73	2.65	.044	.018	0.95	1.11	634	.112	.07	
WRI01d	469	3.32	3.29	.044	.017	0.96	1.06	615	.593	.02	
WRI01e	466	3.59	3.62	.042	.016	0.92	1.02	609	.446	-.03	
WRI01f	468	3.05	3.11	.051	.019	1.11	1.17	599	.336	-.05	
WRI01g	468	3.25	3.25	.050	.019	1.09	1.17	603	.902	.01	
WRI01h	466	2.98	2.96	.053	.019	1.14	1.18	4,392	.828	.01	
WRI01i	469	3.56	3.36	.053	.020	1.15	1.24	606	.000	.17	
WRI01j	466	2.65	2.87	.051	.019	1.11	1.22	4,389	.000	-.19	
WRI02a	470	3.77	3.80	.040	.016	0.86	1.00	632	.427	-.03	
WRI02b	470	3.50	3.61	.046	.017	0.99	1.09	613	.021	-.10	
WRI02c	468	3.82	3.87	.044	.017	0.95	1.05	612	.241	-.05	



## Endnotes

- a. Column percentages are weighted by institution-reported sex 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. Comparison group details are in the Selected Comparison Groups report, linked in the Data & Reports table on the Institution Interface.
- b. All statistics are weighted by institution-reported sex 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*; *z*-tests use Cohen's *h*.
- e. Statistics are weighted by institution-reported sex 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 *N*s due to weighting and whether equal variances were assumed.
- i. Statistical comparisons are two-tailed independent *t*-tests or *z*-tests. Statistical significance represents the probability that the difference between your students' mean and that of the students in the comparison group is due to chance.
- j. Statistical comparison uses *z*-test to compare the proportion who responded (depending on the item) "Done or in progress" or "Yes" with all who responded otherwise.
- k. Mean represents the proportion who responded (depending on the item) "Done or in progress" or "Yes."

### 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.

Note: It is important to interpret the direction of differences relative to item wording and your institutional context. You may not see all of these symbols in your report.