
NSSE 2024 Topical Module Report

Development of Transferable Skills

University of New Hampshire at Durham

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 and beyond (such as verbal and written fluency, critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving, project management, and time management). 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.

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

				Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				UNH		2024 institutions		UNH	2024 institutions	
Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d
1. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you done the following?										
a. Discussed or debated an issue of social, political, or philosophical importance	TRNdebate	1	Never	28	17	924	19	2.4	2.3	.04
		2	Sometimes	61	42	2,116	42			
		3	Often	38	28	1,335	26			
		4	Very often	19	13	655	13			
		Total		146	100	5,030	100			
b. Made a speech to a group	TRNspeech	1	Never	55	38	1,012	21	1.8	2.3 ***	-.55
		2	Sometimes	68	48	2,077	41			
		3	Often	17	11	1,287	26			
		4	Very often	5	3	650	13			
		Total		145	100	5,026	100			
c. Worked in a group with people who differed from you in terms of background, political orientation, points of view, etc.	TRNgroup	1	Never	8	6	280	6	2.5	2.7 ***	-.30
		2	Sometimes	68	47	1,677	34			
		3	Often	59	41	2,076	41			
		4	Very often	11	7	989	20			
		Total		146	100	5,022	100			
d. Discussed the ethical consequences of a course of action	TRNethical	1	Never	28	18	692	14	2.3	2.4	-.12
		2	Sometimes	58	40	2,069	41			
		3	Often	47	33	1,606	32			
		4	Very often	13	9	657	13			
		Total		146	100	5,024	100			
e. Evaluated the credibility of information sources	TRNcred	1	Never	7	4	278	6	2.7	2.8	-.14
		2	Sometimes	60	41	1,603	32			
		3	Often	55	40	2,048	40			
		4	Very often	24	15	1,091	22			
		Total		146	100	5,020	100			
f. Discussed complex problems with others to develop a better solution	TRNcomplex	1	Never	10	7	348	7	2.6	2.7	-.08
		2	Sometimes	53	35	1,750	35			
		3	Often	64	46	1,956	38			
		4	Very often	17	12	963	19			
		Total		144	100	5,017	100			
g. Generated multiple solutions to a problem or task	TRNsolution	1	Never	10	6	251	5	2.6	2.7	-.14
		2	Sometimes	52	36	1,693	35			
		3	Often	67	47	2,097	41			
		4	Very often	17	11	979	19			
		Total		146	100	5,020	100			
h. Combined dissimilar concepts to create a novel idea	TRNcreate	1	Never	36	23	911	18	2.2	2.3	-.14
		2	Sometimes	59	43	2,124	42			
		3	Often	36	27	1,418	29			
		4	Very often	12	8	559	11			
		Total		143	100	5,012	100			
i. Adapted a previously used solution to a new situation	TRNadapt	1	Never	17	11	447	9	2.4	2.6 *	-.21
		2	Sometimes	62	45	1,910	38			
		3	Often	49	35	1,885	38			
		4	Very often	13	9	762	15			
		Total		141	100	5,004	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 ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				UNH		2024 institutions		UNH	2024 institutions	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d
j. Referred to online content (tutorial, forum, webpage, etc.) to solve a problem	TRNnonsolve	1	Never	4	3	191	4	3.1	3.0	.14
		2	Sometimes	29	20	1,300	27			
		3	Often	64	44	2,002	39			
		4	Very often	47	33	1,503	30			
		Total		144	100	4,996	100			
k. Referred to online content (tutorial, forum, webpage, etc.) to learn a new skill or procedure	TRNnonskill	1	Never	4	2	194	4	3.0	2.9	.09
		2	Sometimes	35	25	1,437	29			
		3	Often	64	46	1,957	39			
		4	Very often	40	27	1,414	28			
		Total		143	100	5,002	100			
l. Used project management tools to plan, organize, or schedule tasks	TRNproject	1	Never	16	12	473	11	2.5	2.6	-.12
		2	Sometimes	54	36	1,714	34			
		3	Often	56	40	1,835	36			
		4	Very often	18	12	976	19			
		Total		144	100	4,998	100			
m. Used a daily or weekly "to do" list	TRNtodo	1	Never	14	11	433	10	2.9	2.9	.04
		2	Sometimes	33	23	1,307	27			
		3	Often	38	26	1,264	25			
		4	Very often	59	39	1,999	37			
		Total		144	100	5,003	100			
n. Prioritized what tasks need to be accomplished	TRNtasks	1	Never	1	1	90	2	3.2	3.2	.02
		2	Sometimes	25	18	827	17			
		3	Often	53	38	1,800	36			
		4	Very often	64	44	2,264	44			
		Total		143	100	4,981	100			
o. Worked longer hours than usual to meet deadlines (i.e., after midnight, before dawn)	TRNhours	1	Never	16	12	371	8	2.8	2.9	-.10
		2	Sometimes	37	25	1,444	30			
		3	Often	50	36	1,540	31			
		4	Very often	41	26	1,649	31			
		Total		144	100	5,004	100			
p. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that used information from a variety of sources (books, journals, Internet, databases, etc.)	TRNwrsources	1	Never	4	3	163	3	3.0	3.0	.05
		2	Sometimes	42	29	1,339	28			
		3	Often	44	33	1,877	37			
		4	Very often	53	35	1,623	32			
		Total		143	100	5,002	100			
q. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that assessed the conclusions of a published work	TRNwrassess	1	Never	12	8	544	11	2.6	2.7	-.06
		2	Sometimes	60	42	1,687	34			
		3	Often	45	31	1,637	33			
		4	Very often	27	18	1,113	22			
		Total		144	100	4,981	100			

First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				UNH		2024 institutions		UNH	2024 institutions	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d
r. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that included ideas from more than one academic discipline	TRNwrideas	1	Never	15	9	556	11	2.6	2.6	-0.07
		2	Sometimes	57	41	1,764	36			
		3	Often	48	34	1,645	33			
		4	Very often	23	16	1,027	21			
		Total	143	100	4,992	100				
s. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that presented multiple viewpoints or perspectives	TRNwrviews	1	Never	23	15	365	7	2.5	2.7 **	-0.25
		2	Sometimes	51	35	1,774	35			
		3	Often	47	35	1,810	36			
		4	Very often	22	15	1,043	21			
		Total	143	100	4,992	100				

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

Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				UNH		2024 institutions		UNH	2024 institutions	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d
1. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you done the following?										
a. Discussed or debated an issue of social, political, or philosophical importance	TRNdebate	1	Never	27	16	1,059	21	2.5	2.3 **	.21
		2	Sometimes	65	34	2,077	40			
		3	Often	54	30	1,209	23			
		4	Very often	35	20	800	16			
		Total		181	100	5,145	100			
b. Made a speech to a group	TRNspeech	1	Never	43	24	1,099	22	2.2	2.3	-.04
		2	Sometimes	77	42	2,219	42			
		3	Often	35	19	1,162	22			
		4	Very often	25	14	668	13			
		Total		180	100	5,148	100			
c. Worked in a group with people who differed from you in terms of background, political orientation, points of view, etc.	TRNgroup	1	Never	3	1	289	6	2.7	2.8 *	-.19
		2	Sometimes	86	47	1,608	31			
		3	Often	60	35	1,960	38			
		4	Very often	29	16	1,289	25			
		Total		178	100	5,146	100			
d. Discussed the ethical consequences of a course of action	TRNethical	1	Never	15	11	627	12	2.6	2.5	.10
		2	Sometimes	68	37	1,955	39			
		3	Often	58	30	1,658	32			
		4	Very often	39	22	903	18			
		Total		180	100	5,143	100			
e. Evaluated the credibility of information sources	TRNcred	1	Never	7	4	310	6	3.0	2.8	.13
		2	Sometimes	46	27	1,494	29			
		3	Often	71	38	1,958	38			
		4	Very often	57	31	1,377	27			
		Total		181	100	5,139	100			
f. Discussed complex problems with others to develop a better solution	TRNcomplex	1	Never	6	4	311	6	2.9	2.9	.10
		2	Sometimes	50	28	1,462	29			
		3	Often	74	40	2,038	39			
		4	Very often	51	28	1,323	26			
		Total		181	100	5,134	100			
g. Generated multiple solutions to a problem or task	TRNsolution	1	Never	3	2	237	5	3.0	2.9	.09
		2	Sometimes	55	31	1,481	29			
		3	Often	66	36	2,102	41			
		4	Very often	56	30	1,311	26			
		Total		180	100	5,131	100			
h. Combined dissimilar concepts to create a novel idea	TRNcreate	1	Never	31	17	899	17	2.3	2.4	-.08
		2	Sometimes	88	48	2,257	44			
		3	Often	43	24	1,322	26			
		4	Very often	19	11	652	13			
		Total		181	100	5,130	100			
i. Adapted a previously used solution to a new situation	TRNadapt	1	Never	11	6	403	8	2.7	2.7	.02
		2	Sometimes	70	39	1,858	36			
		3	Often	65	36	1,918	38			
		4	Very often	34	20	948	19			
		Total		180	100	5,127	100			

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

Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				UNH		2024 institutions		UNH	2024 institutions	Effect size ^d
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
j. Referred to online content (tutorial, forum, webpage, etc.) to solve a problem	TRNnonsolve	1	Never	2	1	180	4	3.2	3.1	.14
		2	Sometimes	33	18	1,096	21			
		3	Often	70	39	1,846	36			
		4	Very often	76	42	2,010	39			
		Total		181	100	5,132	100			
k. Referred to online content (tutorial, forum, webpage, etc.) to learn a new skill or procedure	TRNnonskill	1	Never	2	1	194	4	3.1	3.1	.05
		2	Sometimes	35	21	1,212	24			
		3	Often	84	45	1,844	36			
		4	Very often	59	33	1,870	37			
		Total		180	100	5,120	100			
l. Used project management tools to plan, organize, or schedule tasks	TRNnproject	1	Never	18	10	508	10	2.7	2.7	-.09
		2	Sometimes	58	34	1,543	30			
		3	Often	68	36	1,832	36			
		4	Very often	37	20	1,241	24			
		Total		181	100	5,124	100			
m. Used a daily or weekly "to do" list	TRNtodo	1	Never	6	5	421	8	3.2	3.1	.11
		2	Sometimes	34	23	1,084	22			
		3	Often	37	20	1,260	25			
		4	Very often	104	51	2,367	45			
		Total		181	100	5,132	100			
n. Prioritized what tasks need to be accomplished	TRNtasks	1	Never	0	0	80	2	3.6	3.4 **	.23
		2	Sometimes	12	9	631	13			
		3	Often	46	26	1,604	32			
		4	Very often	123	65	2,810	54			
		Total		181	100	5,125	100			
o. Worked longer hours than usual to meet deadlines (i.e., after midnight, before dawn)	TRNhours	1	Never	19	10	317	6	2.9	3.0	-.15
		2	Sometimes	52	32	1,372	27			
		3	Often	38	20	1,381	27			
		4	Very often	72	38	2,061	40			
		Total		181	100	5,131	100			
p. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that used information from a variety of sources (books, journals, Internet, databases, etc.)	TRNwrsources	1	Never	2	2	224	4	3.3	3.1 ***	.28
		2	Sometimes	27	16	1,205	24			
		3	Often	57	32	1,673	33			
		4	Very often	95	50	2,005	39			
		Total		181	100	5,107	100			
q. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that assessed the conclusions of a published work	TRNwrassess	1	Never	15	10	632	12	2.8	2.7	.14
		2	Sometimes	53	31	1,645	33			
		3	Often	51	27	1,482	29			
		4	Very often	62	33	1,355	26			
		Total		181	100	5,114	100			

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

Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				UNH		2024 institutions		UNH	2024 institutions	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d
r. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that included ideas from more than one academic discipline	TRNwrideas	1	Never	13	8	580	12	2.8	2.7 *	.17
		2	Sometimes	54	30	1,791	35			
		3	Often	61	33	1,523	30			
		4	Very often	53	28	1,231	24			
		Total		181	100	5,125	100			
s. Written something (paper, report, article, etc.) that presented multiple viewpoints or perspectives	TRNwrviews	1	Never	21	13	560	11	2.7	2.6	.02
		2	Sometimes	60	34	1,878	36			
		3	Often	54	29	1,553	31			
		4	Very often	46	25	1,130	22			
		Total		181	100	5,121	100			

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

First-Year Students

Variable name	N	Mean		Standard error ^f		Standard deviation ^g		DF ^h	Sig. ⁱ	Effect size ^d
	UNH	UNH	2024 institutions	UNH	2024 institutions	UNH	2024 institutions			
TRNdebate	148	2.37	2.34	.076	.019	.92	.93	2,549	.671	.04
TRNspeech	147	1.80	2.31	.063	.019	.76	.94	175	.000	-.55
TRNgroup	148	2.49	2.75	.059	.017	.71	.84	173	.000	-.30
TRNethical	148	2.33	2.44	.073	.018	.88	.89	2,547	.167	-.12
TRNcred	148	2.66	2.78	.065	.017	.79	.85	2,545	.097	-.14
TRNcomplex	146	2.62	2.69	.065	.018	.79	.86	2,541	.351	-.08
TRNsolution	148	2.63	2.75	.063	.017	.77	.82	2,546	.102	-.14
TRNcreate	145	2.20	2.32	.073	.018	.88	.90	2,534	.112	-.14
TRNadapt	143	2.41	2.59	.067	.018	.80	.86	2,531	.017	-.21
TRNnonsolve	146	3.07	2.95	.066	.017	.80	.85	2,532	.114	.14
TRNnonskill	145	2.98	2.90	.065	.017	.78	.85	165	.266	.09
TRNproject	146	2.52	2.63	.071	.019	.85	.91	2,532	.163	-.12
TRNtodo	146	2.93	2.90	.086	.021	1.04	1.03	2,535	.677	.04
TRNtasks	145	3.25	3.23	.064	.016	.76	.80	2,523	.829	.02
TRNhours	146	2.77	2.86	.081	.019	.97	.95	2,535	.253	-.10
TRNwrsource	145	3.01	2.97	.072	.018	.87	.86	2,533	.597	.05
TRNwrassess	146	2.60	2.65	.073	.019	.88	.94	2,524	.501	-.06
TRNwrideas	145	2.56	2.62	.072	.019	.87	.93	2,527	.435	-.07
TRNwrviews	145	2.49	2.70	.077	.018	.93	.88	2,531	.004	-.25

Seniors

Variable name	N	Mean		Standard error ^f		Standard deviation ^g		DF ^h	Sig. ⁱ	Effect size ^d
	UNH	UNH	2024 institutions	UNH	2024 institutions	UNH	2024 institutions			
TRNdebate	180	2.55	2.34	.074	.022	.99	.98	2,165	.007	.21
TRNspeech	179	2.24	2.27	.073	.021	.98	.95	2,166	.652	-.04
TRNgroup	177	2.66	2.83	.057	.020	.76	.88	2,162	.017	-.19
TRNethical	179	2.64	2.55	.071	.021	.95	.92	2,163	.192	.10
TRNcred	180	2.96	2.85	.064	.020	.86	.89	2,162	.104	.13
TRNcomplex	180	2.94	2.85	.063	.020	.84	.87	2,160	.218	.10
TRNsolution	179	2.95	2.87	.062	.019	.83	.85	2,158	.225	.09
TRNcreate	180	2.28	2.35	.065	.021	.88	.91	2,157	.318	-.08
TRNadapt	179	2.69	2.68	.064	.019	.85	.87	2,158	.835	.02
TRNnonsolve	180	3.22	3.11	.057	.019	.77	.86	2,159	.080	.14
TRNnonskill	179	3.10	3.06	.057	.019	.76	.87	222	.489	.05
TRNproject	180	2.65	2.74	.068	.021	.91	.93	2,154	.245	-.09
TRNtodo	180	3.17	3.07	.072	.022	.96	1.00	2,158	.168	.11
TRNtasks	180	3.55	3.38	.049	.017	.66	.77	225	.001	.23
TRNhours	180	2.87	3.01	.078	.021	1.04	.95	207	.082	-.15
TRNwrsource	180	3.31	3.06	.060	.020	.80	.90	2,149	.000	.28
TRNwrassess	180	2.83	2.69	.074	.022	1.00	.99	2,151	.068	.14
TRNwrideas	180	2.82	2.66	.070	.022	.94	.97	2,155	.030	.17
TRNwrviews	180	2.66	2.64	.074	.021	.99	.94	2,154	.834	.02

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

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 Ns 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.