

B. UW-Stout Student Engagement and Proficiency

Overall engagement

- Since participating in the NSSE over the last 5 years, the results continue to indicate that Stout first-year students are less engaged in their education than Stout seniors. In 2005, both first-year students and senior students show a pattern of mean scores below the Master's sample on about 75% of the NSSE questions. In 2005, scores increased for the first-year students on 78% of the questions and they increased for senior students for 41% of the questions.
- Findings from a new engagement study of UW-Stout students indicate that: relationships, empowerment, application, passion of instructor, asking questions, and openness to experience are the primary factors in student engagement.

Out of class activities

- The number of hours in a 7-day week freshmen and seniors spend relaxing and socializing has decreased. Even with the decrease, Stout students are still slightly above the national and Master's average but below Stout's selected peer's average.
- Freshmen indicate they are spending less time attending campus events and activities than they did in 2002 (2.84 down to 2.65 in 2005 on a 4 point scale). Stout's rating is significantly lower than the NSSE and Master's averages.

Academic Engagement

- The EAC identified "amount of time studying and on academic work" as one of three opportunities for improvement on the NSSE survey.
- The EAC identified "making classroom presentations" and "working effectively with other students during class" and "acquiring job or work-related skills" as three of four areas of celebration on the NSSE survey.
- Every year since the 2001 NSSE, Stout seniors scored significantly *higher* than the Master's and national samples for the question, *Worked with other students on projects during class*.
- Every year since the 2001 NSSE, Stout seniors scored significantly *lower* than the master's and national samples on: *Culminating senior experience (comprehensive exam, capstone course, thesis, project, etc.)*

Student Proficiency

- The EAC identified "quantity and quality of writing" as one of three opportunities for improvement on the NSSE survey.
- UW-Stout scores on ACT-CAAP Critical Thinking are comparable to national scores in 2006, as are the scores for junior/senior students, male/female students, and enroll as freshmen/transfer students when examined individually. .
- Further analysis of the 2006 results found that both self-reported motivation and self-reported GPA were significantly and independently related to performance on the CAAP-Critical Thinking, with greater effort and higher GPA associated with higher levels of performance. Thus, on average, those who invested moderate (mean = 51.2) or best effort (mean = 58.6) performed at or above the mean of the national sample;

whereas on average, those who invested little (mean = 32.3) or no effort (mean = 9.0) fell far short of the national average. Similarly regarding GPA, students with self-reported GPA of 3.01 or higher performed at or above the mean of the national sample.

- Analysis of freshmen students completing their first English or Math course (from the academic years of 02/03, 03/04, and 04/05) determined that ACT English or Math components scores were better predictors of success in the first course than the “English, Math, and Foreign Language Placement Test” administered each spring to all college-bound senior-level high school students. However, neither the ACT test nor the placement test were good predictors of success.
- An evaluation on on-line verses face-to-face learning in a chemistry course suggests that cumulative GPA and high school percentile rank are predictors of success in the course. When these variables are statistically controlled for, students in the face-to-face section outperform students in the online section (as measured by higher grades).