

# **Student Employment Experience (SEE): Report Using Data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)**

Center for the Study of Student Life

June 2017

## INTRODUCTION

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) surveys four-year colleges and universities around the country about “first-year and senior students' participation in programs and activities that institutions provide for their learning and personal development” (nsse.indiana.edu). Every three years, The Ohio State University participates in the NSSE. This report focuses on the 2016 NSSE administration.

NSSE was administered to first-year and senior students attending The Ohio State University, Columbus campus between February 9 and March 8, 2016. The survey was distributed via email to 6,791 first-year students and 18,486 seniors. A total of 770 first-year students and 1,686 seniors responded to the survey for an 11% percent response rate among first-year students and a 9% response rate among seniors.

This report summarizes results from analysis of NSSE data focused on comparing students' level of engagement on campus by their employment status and whether they worked as Student Life student employees at The Ohio State University. More specifically, this report compares students' engagement outcomes along 5 NSSE engagement indicators: collaborative learning, discussions with diverse others, quality of interactions, reflective and integrative learning, and supportive environment. A total of 222 Student Life student employees completed the NSSE. In the analyses, these students are compared to students who worked on campus but not in Student Life, students who worked off campus, and students who did not work.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Student Life student employees were significantly more likely to report perceived gains in acquiring job- or work-related knowledge and skills as a result of their experience at The Ohio State University compared to student employees on campus who did not work for Student Life as well as students who worked off campus and students who did not work.
- Student Life student employees were significantly more likely to report perceived gains in understanding people of other backgrounds as a result of their experience at The Ohio State University compared to student employees on campus who did not work for Student Life as well as students who worked off campus and students who did not work.
- Student Life student employees were significantly more likely to score higher than all other groups on the average cumulative Engagement Indicator for Supportive Environment which measures how supportive students perceived the institution to be during their time at OSU.
- Students who worked on campus but not for Student Life scored the highest on average Engagement Indicator measures of Reflective and Integrative Learning as well as Collaborative Learning.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

<b>Work Status</b>	<b>%</b>
Does not work	36.5%
Works off campus	27.3%
Works on campus, not in Student Life (SL)	22.9%
Works on campus, in Student Life (SL)	13.4%

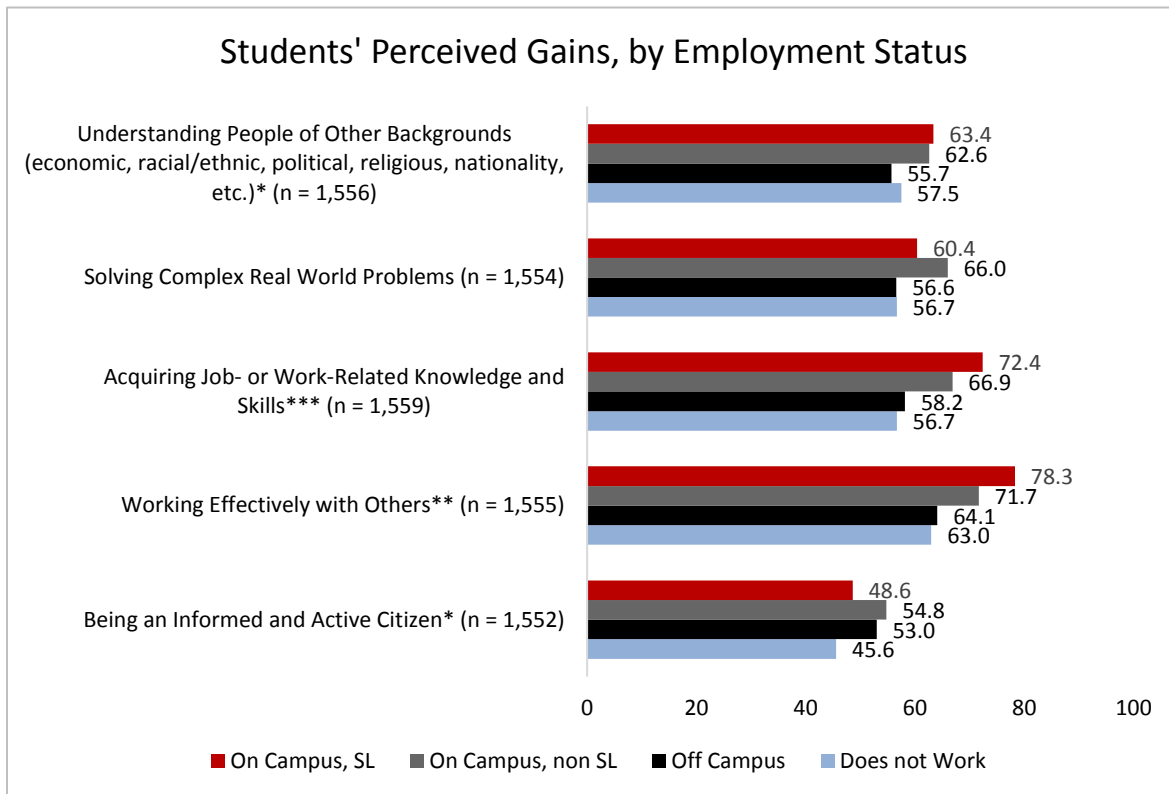
<b>Demographics</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Student-Reported Gender Identity</b>	
Man	40.5%
Woman	57.4%
Another gender identity	0.6%
Prefer not to respond	1.5%
<b>Institution-Reported Race or Ethnicity</b>	
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.1%
Asian	5.2%
Black or African American	5.5%
Hispanic or Latino	3.5%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.1%
White	71.8%
Foreign or Nonresident Alien	8.3%
Two or More Races/Ethnicities	3.3%
Unknown	2.4%
<b>Student-Reported Class Rank<sup>1</sup></b>	
1 <sup>st</sup> year	26.3%
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	4.8%
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	12.5%
4 <sup>th</sup> year	53.7%
Unclassified/Other	2.7%
<b>First-Generation Student Status</b>	
First-Generation Student	30.7%
Non-First-Generation Student	69.3%
<b>Veteran Status</b>	
Current or former member of U.S. armed forces	4.6%
Non-current or former member of U.S. armed forces	95.4%
<b>Institution-Reported Enrollment Status</b>	
Not full-time	8.8%
Full-time	91.2%
<b>Age Category</b>	
19 or younger	28.2%
20-23	53.5%
24-29	9.3%
30+	9.0%

<sup>1</sup>NSSE only surveys first-year students and seniors. This part of the demographic table shows how students self-reported their class rank as a point of comparison.

# FINDINGS

## OVERALL MEASURES

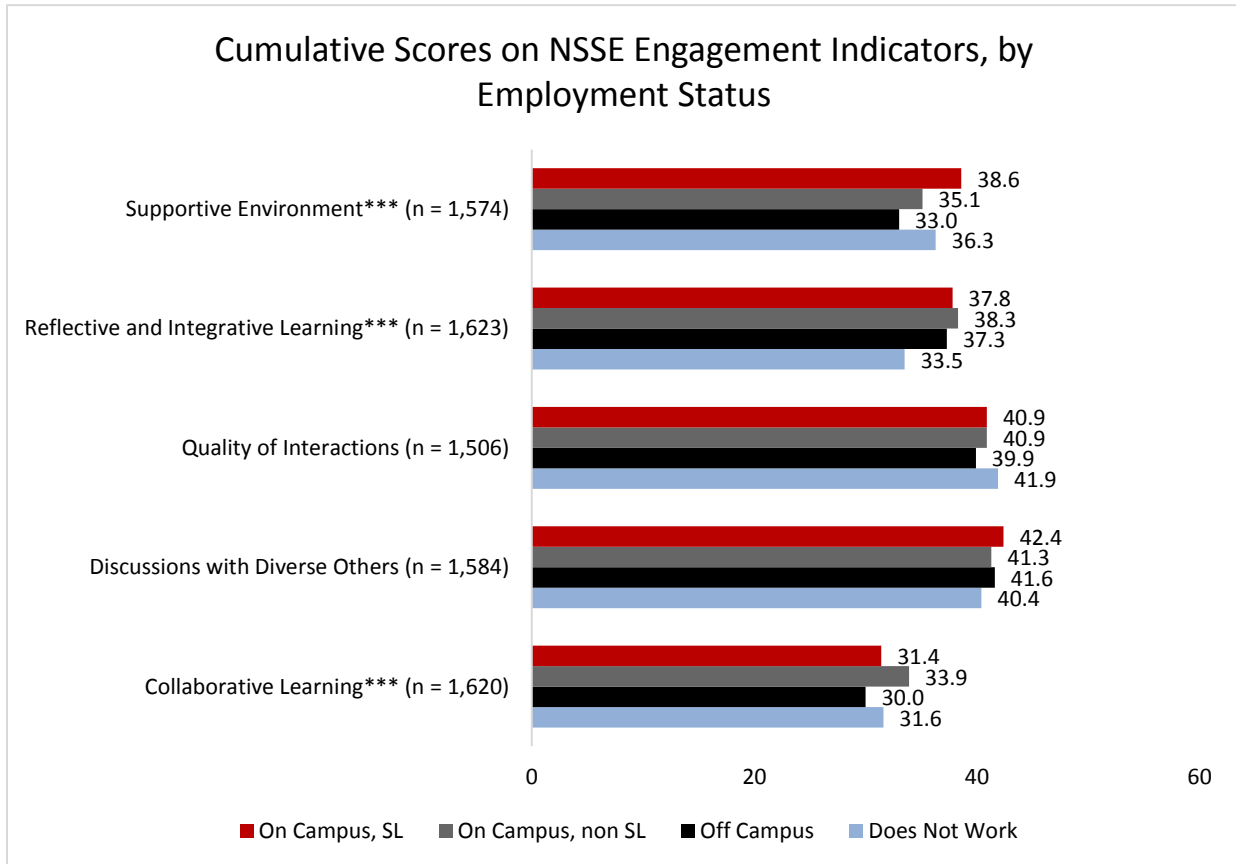
Percentage of students who report “Quite a Bit” or “Very Much” when asked “To what extent has your experience in this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in [the following content areas]?” Data organized by employment status – among employed students.



\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

## ENGAGEMENT INDICATORS – CUMULATIVE MEASURES

Average scores on cumulative Engagement Indicators in NSSE. Data organized by employment status – among employed students. Students can score between 0 and 60 on each engagement indicator.



\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

## ENGAGEMENT INDICATORS – INDIVIDUAL ITEMS

Analyses of the NSSE data reported significant differences in students' cumulative scores on NSSE Engagement Indicators by employment status in three areas: Collaborative Learning, Reflective and Integrative Learning and Supportive Environment. This section reports statistically significant findings from additional analyses of the Engagement Indicators as broken up into the individual items (questions) that make up the cumulative measures reported above. All of the items that make up the NSSE Engagement Indicators were tested for significant differences but only the items that reported significantly different results by employment status are reported in this section.

### COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

*During the current school year, how often have you asked another student to help you understand course material?\*\*\* (n = 1,645)*

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Often/Very Often	47.4%	37.2%	46.7%	46.8%

*During the current school year, how often have you worked with other students on course projects or assignments?\* (n = 1,646)*

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Often/Very Often	53.0%	57.7%	64.3%	53.6%

*During the current school year, how often have you prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with others?\* (n = 1,647)*

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Often/Very Often	41.9%	36.2%	47.5%	36.5%

### DISCUSSIONS WITH DIVERSE OTHERS

*During the current school year, how often have you had discussions with people from an economic background other than your own?\* (n = 1,599)*

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Often/Very Often	68.9%	72.4%	74.2%	74.1%

### REFLECTIVE AND INTEGRATIVE LEARNING

*During the current school year, how often have you included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments?\*\*\* (n = 1,626)*

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Often/Very Often	40.0%	51.3%	52.4%	50.0%

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$



*During the current school year, how often have you combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments?\*\*\* (n = 1,636)*

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Often/Very Often	59.0%	65.6%	67.5%	68.2%

*During the current school year, how often have you learned something that changed the way that you understand an issue or concept?\* (n = 1,620)*

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Often/Very Often	58.7%	67.3%	70.6%	68.4%

*During the current school year, how often have you examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on topics or issues?\*\*\* (n = 1,627)*

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Often/Very Often	52.5%	59.8%	67.3%	63.7%

*During the current school year, how often have you tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective?\*\*\* (n = 1,625)*

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Often/Very Often	59.1%	68.2%	72.3%	68.0%

*During the current school year, how often have you connected your learning to societal problems or issues?\*\*\* (n = 1,630)*

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Often/Very Often	46.3%	59.2%	60.4%	63.0%

## SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

*How much does your institution emphasize the following: Providing support to help students succeed academically. \*\* (n = 1,572)*

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Quite a Bit/Very Much	72.3%	64.8%	69.2%	78.9%

*How much does your institution emphasize the following: Attending campus activities and events (performing arts, athletic events, etc.)\*\* (n = 1,571)*

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Quite a Bit/Very Much	71.6%	69.5%	71.8%	80.3%

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

How much does your institution emphasize the following: Encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ethnic, religious, etc.)\*\* (n = 1,576)

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Quite a Bit/Very Much	53.8%	46.2%	50.5%	64.2%

How much does your institution emphasize the following: Using learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, etc.)\*\*\* (n = 1,574)

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Quite a Bit/Very Much	69.6%	61.0%	63.7%	76.9%

How much does your institution emphasize the following: Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)\*\*\* (n = 1,570)

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Quite a Bit/Very Much	36.0%	26.3%	32.2%	38.5%

How much does your institution emphasize the following: Providing opportunities to be involved socially.\*\* (n = 1,575)

Response	Does Not Work	Off Campus	On Campus, non SL	On campus, SL
Respondent Reported Quite a Bit/Very Much	74.6%	71.6%	75.4%	77.6%

## CONCLUSION

Student Life student employees score consistently higher on questions related to students thinking that Ohio State is a supportive environment. These students also report higher levels of agreement to having gained work-related knowledge, skills and collaboration ability than students who do not work for Student Life. Furthermore, Student Life student employees are significantly more likely to report perceived gains in understanding others from different backgrounds compared to all other work status groups. Student Life student employees, however, report similar or lower levels on every other cumulative Engagement Indicator measure than non-Student Life student employees. It is important to remember that these measures reflect student *perceptions* of their university experience and do not necessarily reflect their objective experience on campus. Students' perception of the university environment at OSU, however, does matter and these differences might indicate a need for Student Life to target Student Life student employees in their efforts to increase student engagement in areas like Reflective and Integrative Learning or Collaborative Learning at The Ohio State University.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$