

# NSSE BENCHMARKS OF EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

## along with relative questions asked for each specified benchmark:

### **1. Academic Challenge (LAC) Items**

Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance.

Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, etc. related to academic program)

Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings

Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more; number of written papers or reports of between 5 and 19 pages; and

number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages

Coursework emphasizes: **Analysis** of the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory

Coursework emphasizes: **Synthesis** and organizing of ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations

and relationships

Coursework emphasizes: **Making of judgments** about the value of information, arguments, or methods

Coursework emphasizes: **Applying** theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations

Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations

Campus environment emphasizes: Spending significant amount of time studying and on academic work.

### **2. Collaborative Learning (ACL) Items**

Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and asked to think about what they are learning in different settings. Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material prepares students for the messy, unscripted problems they will encounter daily during and after college.

Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions

Made a class presentation

Worked with other students on projects **during class**

Worked with classmates **outside of class** to prepare class assignments

Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)

Participated in a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of a regular course

Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)

### **3. Faculty Interaction (SFI) Items**

Students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside the classroom. As a result, their teachers become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, life-long learning.

Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor

Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor

Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class

Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student-life activities, etc.)

Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance  
Worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements

#### **4. Educational Experiences (EEE) Items**

Complementary learning opportunities enhance academic programs. Diversity experiences teach students valuable things about themselves and others. Technology facilitates collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community service, and senior capstone courses provide opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge.

Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, social fraternity or sorority, etc.)

Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment

Community service or volunteer work

Foreign language coursework / Study abroad

Independent study or self-designed major

Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.)

Serious conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values

Serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own

Using electronic medium (e.g., listserv, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment

Campus environment encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds

Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together

#### **5. Supportive Campus Environment (SCE) Items**

Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus. Campus environment provides the support you need to help you succeed academically

Campus environment helps you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)

Campus environment provides the support you need to thrive socially

Quality of relationships with other students

Quality of relationships with faculty members

Quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices