

What Students Are Saying About Their EKU Experience in 2011



Each year the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) asks students at hundreds of colleges and universities to reflect on the time they devote to various learning activities. The topics explored are linked to previous research on student success in college.

Eastern Kentucky University participated in NSSE in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2011.

The following responses were provided by 1,342 randomly selected EKU students on the 2011 NSSE survey.



Academic Challenge

To what degree is studying and spending time on academic work emphasized?

83% of FY and 82% of SR students felt that this institution placed substantial emphasis on academics.¹

Do faculty hold students to high standards?

59% of FY and 65% of SR students frequently worked harder than they thought they could to meet faculty expectations.²

How much time do students spend on homework each week?

30% of FY 33% of SR students spent more than 15 hours per week preparing for class. 20% of FY and 17% of SR students spent 5 hours or less.

What types of thinking do assignments require?

First-year students reported substantial emphasis on the following activities:

- Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods: 70% FY/66% SR
- Analyzing basic elements of an idea or theory: 79% FY/85% SR
- Synthesizing and organizing ideas: 71% FY/76% SR
- Making judgments about value of information: 73% FY/75% SR
- Applying theories or concepts: 76% FY/84% SR

How much writing is expected?

5% of FY and 13% of SR students wrote more than 10 papers between 5 and 19 pages and 17% of FY and 49% of SR students wrote at least one paper more than 20 pages in length.

How much reading is expected during the school year?

27% of FY and 26% of SR students read more than 10 assigned books and packs of course readings. 31% of FY and 28% of SR students read fewer than 5.

Do exams require students to do their best work?

53% of FY and 58% of SR students reported that their exams strongly challenged them to do their best work.³

Active Learning

How often are topics from class discussed outside of the classroom?

52% of FY and 66% of SR students frequently discussed readings or ideas from coursework outside of class.

Do students work together on projects – inside and outside of class?

46% of FY and 55% of SR students frequently worked with other students on projects in class, 34% of FY and 55% of SR students worked with peers on assignments outside of class.

How often do students make class presentations?

26% of FY and 61% of SR students reported that they made frequent presentations in class.

How many students participate in community-based projects in regular courses?

13% of FY and 17% of SR students frequently participated in service-learning or community-based projects during a given year. 60% of FY and 54% of SR students never took part in such activities.

How many students apply their classroom learning to real life through internships or off-campus field experiences?

By their senior year, 47% of students participated in some form of practicum, internship, field experience, co-op, or clinical assignment.

Do students have opportunities to tutor or teach other students?

11% of FY and 15% of SR students frequently assisted their fellow students by tutoring or teaching.

Student-Faculty Interaction

Are faculty members accessible and supportive?

48% of FY and 59% of SR students said their faculty were available, helpful and sympathetic.

How many students work on research projects with faculty?

By their senior year, 17% of students had done research with a faculty member.

Do students receive prompt feedback on academic performance?

62% of FY and 75% of SR students indicated that they frequently received prompt verbal or written feedback from faculty members.

Note: FY= First-Year SR=Senior

How often do students talk with advisors or faculty members about their career plans?

86% of seniors at least occasionally discussed career plans with faculty.⁴ 14% never talked with faculty members about career plans.

Do students and faculty members work together on committees and projects outside of course work?

46% of FY and 54% of SR students at least occasionally spent time with faculty members on activities other than coursework.



Enriching Educational Experiences

What types of honors courses, learning communities, and other distinctive programs are offered?

During their first year, 18% of students participated in a learning community. By their senior year, 14% of students had taken an independent study class.

How often do students interact with peers with different social, political, or religious views?

56% of FY and 50% of SR students said they frequently had serious conversations with students who are different from themselves in terms of their religious, political, or personal beliefs.

How often do students interact with peers from different racial or ethnic backgrounds?

47% of FY and 45% of SR students frequently had serious conversations with those of a different race.

How many students study in other countries?

By their senior year, 6% of students had studied abroad.

Do students participate in activities that enhance their spirituality?

27% of FY and 36% of SR students frequently engaged in spiritually enhancing activities such as worship, meditation, or prayer.

What percentage of students participate in community service?

By the time they were seniors, 48% of students had participated in community service or volunteer work.

Supportive Campus Environment

How well do students get along with other students?

62% of FY and 67% of SR students reported that their peers were friendly, supportive, and helped them feel as if they belonged.

Are students satisfied with their overall educational experience?

89% of FY students reported a favorable image of this institution; 87% of seniors would have chosen this school again if they could start their college career over.

How much time do students devote to co-curricular activities?

8% of FY and SR students spent more than 15 hours a week participating in co-curricular activities. 48% of FY and 56% of SR students spent no time participating in co-curricular activities.

How well do students get along with administrators and staff?

34% of FY and 41% of SR students found the administrative personnel and offices helpful, considerate, and flexible.

To what extent does the school help students deal with their academic and social needs?

75% of FY and 72% of SR students felt that this institution had a substantial commitment to their academic success. 50% of FY and 39% of SR felt well-supported by the institution regarding their social needs.

To what extent does the school help students deal with their non-academic responsibilities?

38% of FY and 28% of SR students feel well-supported by the institution regarding their non-academic responsibilities.

Notes:

1. "Substantial" emphasis is defined by combining the responses of "Very much" and "Quite a bit."
2. "Frequently" is defined by combining the responses of "Very often" and "Often."
3. "Strongly challenge" is defined by combining responses of "6" and "7" on a one-to-seven point scale where 1 is "Very little" and 7 is "Very much."
4. "Occasionally" is defined by combining the responses of "Very often," "Often," and "Sometimes."



Data source: National Survey of Student Engagement 2011

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