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NSSE
PULSE
SURVEY

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YOUR SEMESTER IS GOING!**

**COURSES • INTERACTIONS & ENGAGEMENT
SUPPORT SERVICES • SAFETY & HEALTH**

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TAKE SURVEY

Northern Michigan
University

NSSE Pulse Survey
Fall 2020

Institutional Research, Planning
and Assessment



PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment (IRPA) office conducted a short survey to understand students' experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Pulse survey was developed by the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). This short 3-minute survey was sent to all degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolled in the fall 2020 semester. Data collection began on October 5th 2020 and closed October 11th 2020. A total of 819 responses were received for an overall survey response rate of 12.2%. This is the first year NSSE has offered this Pulse survey, therefore, comparative data from previous collections is not available.

When possible, comparisons within groups such as gender, course delivery experience, and race are offered when statistically significant.

The survey collected information about the quality of campus community interactions, sentiments about a supportive campus environment, a student's sense of belonging, effects of the pandemic on health and wellbeing, and general satisfaction with the college experience. The survey also collected basic background and demographic information on respondents. (Full survey found in Appendix A)

Overall, the sample of respondents represented the population adequately with the exception of gender where females had more than double the responses compared to males.

Not all questions utilized the same Likert scale response options. Three main formats were used including a 7-point scale with the high and low options labeled and options in between unlabeled. A second option included a 5-point Likert scale including options from 0-5 and labeled *not at all, very little, some, quite a bit, and very much*. The final options included a 4-point scale with options offered to match the question content. In the *Key Highlights* section below, at the end of each bullet, the scale utilized is included in parentheses (e.g. 4-point, 5-point, 7-point).

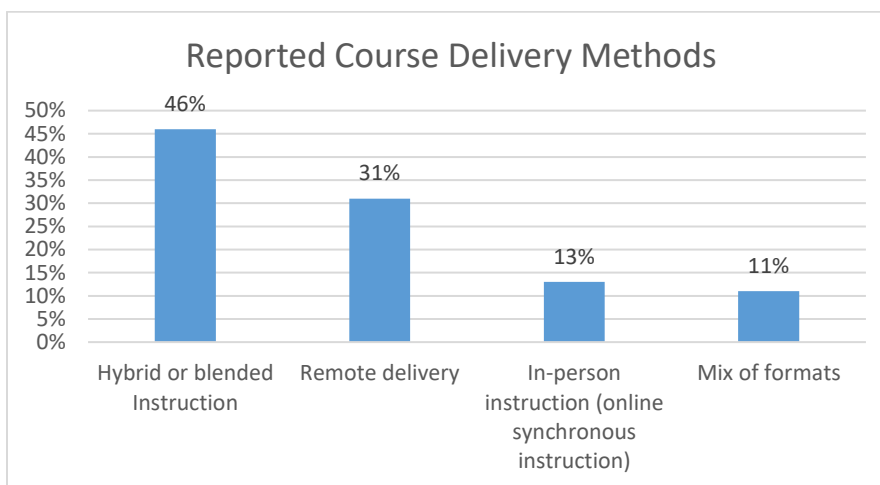
Along with this summary, an interactive dashboard has been created to share additional results providing comparison across class levels and course type. The interactive dashboard can be accessed on the IRPA website at nmu.edu/institutionalresearch/nsse-pulse-survey.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

NSSE Pulse utilized multiple scale formats. For clarity, the scale is included in parentheses at the end of each bullet.

COURSE DELIVERY

- Students were asked to select the option that best represents the way they are experiencing their courses this semester. The results from this question is displayed below and has been used for comparative analysis in subsequent sections.



COURSE CHALLENGE

For the items below, a higher score indicates respondents being challenged to do their best work on a 7-point Likert scale

- When asked if students are being challenged to do their best work in their courses, students in an in-person instruction setting rated the course more challenging (M=5.40, 80% agree) than the other course delivery methods. (7-point)
- Females (M=5.07, 70% agree) rated courses more challenging compared to males (M=4.78, 62% agree). (7-point)

CONDITIONS FOR ONLINE LEARNING

For the items below, "agree" is defined as selecting either option 3 or 4 on the 4-point Likert scale

- On average, students agree that they have sufficient support when asked about services needed for online

learning including: internet service (M=3.04, 78% agree), hardware and software (M=3.27, 89% agree), and study spaces (M= 2.95, 77% agree). (4-point)

SUPPORT

For the items below, "agree" is defined as selected either option 3 or 4 on the 4-point Likert scale

- Students taking in-person courses agree that the university is providing support to help students succeed academically (M=2.98, 70% agree) compared to other course delivery methods (M=2.77, 61% agree). (4-point)
- Students disagree (M=1.94, 22% agree) that the institution emphasizes support for helping with non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.). (4-point)
- Overall, students agree (M=2.61, 52% agree) that the institution is supporting students' overall well-being (recreation, health care, and counseling); new freshmen are the most agreeable (M=2.93, 65% agree). (4-point)

QUALITY OF INTERACTIONS

For the items below, a higher mean indicates increased quality of interactions with members of this institution on a 7-point Likert scale

- When asked about interactions with students, advisors, faculty, or staff, respondents rated them all positively (M=5.08, 61% excellent). (7-point)
- When describing their Quality of Interactions with groups of other students, academic advisors, faculty, student services staff, or other administrative staff: (7-point)
 - All students rated interactions with advisors, faculty and staff at least 5 out of 7 (M=5.11, 61% excellent)
 - The highest reported ratings across all interaction types were with student service staff by freshman (M=5.63, 71% excellent) and senior (M=5.50, 56% excellent) class levels
 - Freshmen rated interactions with faculty the highest (M=5.43, 74% excellent) compared to other class levels (M=4.95 65% excellent)
 - The least positive rating was interactions with other students (M=4.91, 63% excellent)

- Females reported more positive interactions (M=5.35, 68% excellent) with faculty and student service staff compared to males (M=4.98, 57% excellent). (7-point)
- Students who selected "white" as their race reported higher-level quality of interactions with students, faculty, service, and other administrative staff (M=5.14, 63% excellent) compared to their non-white peers (M=4.80, 54% excellent). (7-point)

SENSE OF BELONGING

For the items below, "agree" is defined as selection either option 3 or 4 on the 4-point Likert scale

- Students in general agree that they feel comfortable being themselves at NMU (M=3.21, 88% agree). (4-point)
- Students in remote instruction format feel the least a part of the community (M=2.69, 65% agree) as compared to students taking other course delivery methods (M=2.93, 75% agree). (4-point)
- Respondents generally agree or strongly agree that they feel valued by the institution (M=2.71, 65% agree). New freshmen were slightly more agreeable (M=2.92, 76% agree) compared to other class levels (M=2.66, 62% agree). (4-point)
- Respondents who selected "white" as their race are more agreeable that they feel comfortable being themselves at this institution (M=3.24, 90% agree) as compared to their non-white peers (M=3.13, 81% agree). (4-point)
- Females are more agreeable that they valued by the institution (M=2.78, 69% agree) as compared to males (M=2.62, 61% agree). (4-point)

IMPORTANCE OF GRADUATING

For the items below, a higher average indicates increased importance in graduating from NMU on a 7-point Likert scale

- Respondents participating in in-person instruction indicated the highest importance to graduate from this institution (M=6.57, 94% very important) compared to other course delivery methods (M=6.23, 87% very important). (7-point)
- There were slight differences based on course level and class standing, but nearly 80% (M=6.25 very important) of

all students said it was important to graduate from NMU.
(7-point)

OVERALL EVALUATION

For the items below, "good" is defined as selecting either option 3 or 4 on the 4-point Likert scale

- 73% rate their entire educational experience as *good* or *excellent* (M=2.86 good); only 4% *poor*. (4-point)
- Respondents participating in an in-person setting rated their educational experience as good (M=3.06, 81% good) compared to respondents engaging in other course delivery methods (M=2.87, 73% good). (4-point)
- Females rated their educational experience (M=2.93, 76% good) more positively compared to males (M=2.77, 69% good). (4-point)

HEALTH AND SAFETY

For the items below, "high agreement" is defined as selecting either option 4 or 5 on the 5-point Likert scale

- 77% of students in high agreement that the institution has kept them safe and healthy during the current year (M=3.95 high agreement); 6% very little or not at all.
- The freshman class agreed the most that the institution has kept them safe and healthy during the current school year at the highest rate (M=4.18, 87% high agreement). As class level increased, sentiments about health and safety decreased with the senior class agreeing the least (M=3.81, 70% high agreement). (5-point)

PANDEMIC CONCERNS

For the items below, "high agreement" is defined as selecting either option 4 or 5 on the 5-point Likert scale

- Students are slightly more concerned about others' compliance with health policies (M=2.40, 50% high agreement) in comparison to complying with health policies themselves (M=2.07, 45% high agreement). (5-point)
- Females rated that they more concerned about complying with the institution's health policies (M=2.16, 48% high agreement) compared to males (M=1.82, 37% high agreement). (5-point)

APPENDIX A

NSSE Pulse Survey Fall 2020 Questions

Which of the following best describes the courses you are taking this term?

Response options: Mostly remote instruction; Mostly in-person instruction; Mostly hybrid or blended instruction (a combination of remote and in-person instruction); A balanced mix of formats

During the current school year, to what extent have your courses challenged you to do your best work?

Response options: 1=Not at all to 7=Very much

How much does this institution emphasize the following?

Response options: Very much, Quite a bit, Some, Very little

- a. Providing support to help students succeed academically
- b. Providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counseling, etc.)
- c. Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)

Indicate the quality of your interactions with the following people at this institution.

Response options: 1=Poor to 7=Excellent, Not applicable

- a. Students
- b. Academic advisors
- c. Faculty
- d. Student services staff (career services, student activities, housing, etc.)
- e. Other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid, etc.)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Response options: Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree

- a. I feel comfortable being myself at this institution.
- b. I feel valued by this institution.
- c. I feel like part of the community at this institution.

How important is it to you that you graduate from this institution?

Response options: Not important (1) to Very important (7)

How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at

this institution so far?

Response options: Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor

To what extent has this institution kept students safe and healthy during the current school year?

Response options: Very much; Quite a bit; Some; Very little; Not at all; Don't know/Unsure

How concerned have you been about the following?

Response options: Very much, Quite a bit, Some, Very little, Not at all

- a. Complying with health policies (mask wearing, physical distancing, etc.)
- b. Others' compliance with health policies (mask wearing, physical distancing, etc.)

Open ended: What has been most satisfying about your experience so far at this institution, and what has been most disappointing?

What is your class level?

Response options: Freshman/first-year, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, Other/Unclassified

Which of the following best describes where you currently live?

Response options: Campus housing other than a fraternity or sorority house; Fraternity or sorority house; House, apartment, or other residence within walking distance to campus; House, apartment, or other residence within commuting distance to campus; House, apartment, or other residence farther than commuting distance to campus; Homeless or in transition; A living situation not listed above

[Students reporting mostly remote, mostly hybrid, or a balanced mix of instruction with Q1 receive the following three questions.]

Considering your experience taking partly or entirely online courses during the current school year, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Response Options: Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree

- a. Internet service (availability, speed, reliability, etc.) where you live has been sufficient to participate in the course.
- b. The hardware (computer, tablet, mobile phone, printer, etc.) and software where you live have been sufficient to participate

in the course.

c. Study spaces where you live have been sufficient for your needs.

Did either of your parents (or those who raised you) complete a Bachelor's degree (B.A., B.S., etc.) or higher?

Response options: Yes, No, Don't know

How would you describe yourself? (Select all that apply.)

Response options: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latina/o, Middle Eastern or North African, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White, Another race or ethnicity, I prefer not to respond

What is your gender identity?

Response options: Man; Woman; Another gender identity, please specify: __ ; I prefer not to respond

Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

Response options: Straight (heterosexual); Bisexual; Gay; Lesbian; Queer; Questioning or unsure; Another sexual orientation, please specify: __; I prefer not to respond

Have you been diagnosed with any disability or impairment?

Response options: Yes, No, I prefer not to respond

[If answered "yes"] Which of the following has been diagnosed? (Select all that apply.)

Response options: A sensory impairment (vision or hearing), A mobility impairment, A learning disability (e.g., ADHD, dyslexia), A mental health disorder, A disability or impairment not listed above