

## Senate Memorial to Encourage a Campus-Wide Increase in Student Effort/Class Preparation

### Rationale:

There is a traditional recommendation that students spend two hours of study and preparation for every hour of a college class. Following this formula, a full-time student taking 15 credit hours would spend 12.5 hours in class and 25 hours of study, for a total of 37.5 hours devoted to academics. Studies of the practices of American students show that across the board, time spent preparing for class has declined between 1961 and 2000, with the majority of that decline occurring before the advent of time-saving computer technology.

As it stands now, we have evidence from the NSSE that the average student preparation time for each NMSU class is close to one hour.<sup>1</sup> The NMSU Senate acknowledges that the recommendation of 2-3 hours of study time outside of class per hour in class, as currently advocated by NMSU's Student Affairs & Enrollment Management department, is a worthy goal when preparation is devoted to pedagogically sound course requirements. The Senate recognizes that there will be some variation in how much study time is required per credit hour depending on a number of variables including the nature of the course, individual pedagogical philosophies, and technological advances. The benefits to students, when students prepare adequately for pedagogically well-designed classes, include the following:

1. **Increased Learning.** There is a well-established causal relation between effort and achievement. Other things being equal, increased time on task leads to increased achievement. As A. C. McCormick writes: "A substantial body of research affirms the commonsense notion that involvement in academic work and quality of effort pay off: the more students engage in educationally purposeful activities, the more they learn..."<sup>2</sup> As professional educators, the professoriate at NMSU are well qualified to set educationally purposeful activities commensurate with increased time on task. Hence, there is substantive empirical support for increased student learning.

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<sup>1</sup> The most recent data concerning NMSU students indicates that the average study time for students is 13.8 hours, based on NSSE data collected from freshmen and seniors, spring 2014. See appendix for data.

<sup>2</sup> A. C. McCormick, "It's about Time: What to Make of Reported Declines in How Much College Students Study," Text, *Association of American Colleges & Universities*, (January 24, 2011), <http://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/its-about-time-what-make-reported-declines-how-much-college>. McCormick cites two comprehensive review studies to back up this assertion: George D. Kuh et al., *Piecing Together the Student Success Puzzle: Research, Propositions, and Recommendations* (Jossey-Bass, 2007). Ernest T. Pascarella, Patrick T. Terenzini, and Kenneth A. Feldman, *How College Affects Students*, vol. 2 (Jossey-Bass San Francisco, 2005). To the objection that we should not measure student effort at all, and *only* measure performance, see the white paper by Mark Walker <http://philos.nmsu.edu/files/2014/07/white-paper-on-student-effort-1.2.docx>.

2. **Increased Wages.** There is a well-established correlation between study time in college and future earnings.<sup>3</sup>
3. **A path to retention.** Currently, between 42 and 46 percent of NMSU students complete their degrees in a 6-year timeframe. Students who are encouraged to improve their study skills and have appropriate expectations about class preparation may be more likely to finish their degrees in a timely manner.<sup>4</sup>

Professors, departments or colleges that ask more of their students may face negative consequences in terms of lower student evaluations or fewer credit hours taught, which in turn may affect things like tenure and promotion, raises, new positions, etc, making collective action paramount. Thus, the purpose of the following memorial is twofold:

- (1) To grant freedom to professors, departments and colleges, to set the appropriate standards for students without fear of negative consequences.
- (2) To assist students with meeting the challenges of more appropriate academic standards.

## Memorial

The Faculty Senate calls on the administration to endorse the goal of bringing student effort levels to the two hour recommendation within a decade. Administration assistance may include, but not be limited to the following:

1. **Publicity:** The administration should publicize to students, donors and legislators that NMSU is pursuing the goal of helping students to achieve recommended study hour goals. Recommendations for study time outside of class should also be noted in the undergraduate catalog.
2. **Measurement:** The administration should pledge institutional support to measure the degree to which students are investing appropriate amounts of time preparing for classes, and to identify the challenges that may interfere with adequate class preparation. .
3. **Evaluation:** The administration should recognize that the effort that faculty require of students can impact student evaluations. Senior administration should permit measures of teaching effectiveness to include measures of how much effort is required, and that this be included as a determinant of teaching effectiveness. A faculty task force comprising accomplished teachers should formulate university-wide recommendations for student evaluations that put greater emphasis on course rigor and effort, while providing more useful tools for instructors to improve pedagogy.

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<sup>3</sup> See Phillip Babcock and Mindy Marks, "Leisure College USA: The Decline in Student Study Time." *American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research* vol. 7 (August 2010): 1-7.

<sup>4</sup> George D. Kuh, Ty M. Cruce, Rick Shoup, Jillian Kinzie and Robert M. Gonyea, "Unmasking the Effects of Student Engagement on First-Year College Grades and Persistence," *Journal of Higher Education* vol. 49 no. 5 (2008): 540-563.

4. **Collaborative Assistance:** The administration should work together with other units on campus, including ASNMSU, to recognize and work toward overcoming some of the issues that may prevent our particular students from being able to study effectively, and better publicize currently-available support mechanisms.

## **APPENDIX: NSSE SUMMARY AND DATA**



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# **NSSE 2014**

## **Administration Summary**

New Mexico State University

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### Administration Summary

This report provides an overview of your NSSE administration, including details about your population and sample, response rates, representativeness of your respondents, survey customization choices, and recruitment message schedule. This information can be useful for assessing data quality and planning future NSSE administrations.

### Population and Respondents

The table at right reports your institution's population sizes, how many students were sampled (whether census-administered or randomly selected), and how many completed the survey.

Survey completions	<i>First-year</i>	<i>Senior</i>
Submitted population	2,527	3,785
Adjusted population <sup>a</sup>	2,109	3,440
Survey sample <sup>b</sup>	2,109	3,440
Total respondents <sup>b</sup>	639	1,191
Full completions <sup>c</sup>	542	1,064
Partial completions	97	127

- a. Adjusted for ineligible students and those for whom survey requests were returned as undeliverable.  
 b. Targeted and locally administered oversamples were not included.  
 c. Completed at least one demographic question after the core engagement items on the survey.

### Response Rate and Sampling Error<sup>a</sup>

The table below summarizes response rates and sampling errors for your institution and comparison groups. For more information see NSSE's Response Rate FAQ: [nsse.iub.edu/pdf/Resp\\_Rate\\_FAQ.pdf](http://nsse.iub.edu/pdf/Resp_Rate_FAQ.pdf)

	<i>First-year</i>				<i>Senior</i>			
	NMSU	Southwest Public	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2013 & 2014	NMSU	Southwest Public	Carnegie Class	NSSE 2013 & 2014
Response rate	30%	14%	18%	22%	35%	18%	22%	26%
Sampling error <sup>b</sup>	+/- 3.2%	+/- 0.9%	+/- 0.5%	+/- 0.2%	+/- 2.3%	+/- 0.6%	+/- 0.4%	+/- 0.1%

- a. Comparison group response rate and sampling error were computed at the student level (i.e., they are not institution averages).  
 b. Also called "margin of error," sampling error is an estimate of the amount the true score on a given item could differ from the estimate based on a sample. For example, if the sampling error is +/- 5.0% and 40% of your students reply "Very often" to a particular item, then the true population value is most likely between 35% and 45%.

### Representativeness and Weighting

The first table at right reports on variables submitted in your population file. Respondent and population percentages are listed side by side as a convenience to see how well the characteristics of your respondents reflect your first-year and senior populations.

Because females and full-time students are consistently overrepresented among respondents, NSSE weights results by institution-reported sex and enrollment status so institutional estimates reflect the population with respect to these characteristics. The second table at right provides the respondent and population proportions used to calculate your 2014 weights. For more information, see

[nsse.iub.edu/html/weighting.cfm](http://nsse.iub.edu/html/weighting.cfm)

#### Representativeness

	<i>First-year</i>		<i>Senior</i>	
	Respondent %	Population %	Respondent %	Population %
Female	59	52	59	55
Full-time	98	98	88	84
First-time, first-year	84	79	N/A	N/A
Race/ethnicity <sup>a</sup>				
Am. Indian or Alaska Native	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Asian	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Black or African American	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hispanic or Latino	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Native Hawaiian/Other Pac. Isl.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
White	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Foreign or nonresident alien	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Two or more races/ethnicities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Unknown	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

- a. Based on the IPEDS categories (not available for Canadian institutions) submitted in the population file. Results not reported for institutions without full (at least 90%) race/ethnicity information in the population file.

#### Weighting

	<i>First-year</i>		<i>Senior</i>	
	Respondent %	Population %	Respondent %	Population %
Full-time, female	59	51	51	45
Full-time, male	40	46	37	39
Part-time, female	1	1	8	9
Part-time, male	1	2	4	7

### Population File

Your institution provided a population file for survey administration and was afforded an opportunity to update it.

#### Population file options

Included "group" variables <sup>a</sup>	No
Identified an oversample <sup>b</sup>	No
Updated to identify ineligible students <sup>c</sup>	Yes
Identified students who completed BCSSE 2013 <sup>d</sup>	BCSSE not administered

a. Institutions had the option to include additional variables in their population files for oversampling or for their own post hoc analyses. Up to five "group" variables were allowed; If formatting specifications were met, Group 1 can be used in the Report Builder–Institution Version.

b. Institutions that did not survey all first-year and senior students (census) had the option to oversample a segment of their population. Oversamples may also be used to survey students in other class years.

c. Institutions had the option to update their population file to identify students who did not return to campus in the spring or otherwise did not meet NSSE eligibility criteria.

d. Institutions that participated in the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) can identify BCSSE survey respondents in their NSSE population file. This information is required to receive the longitudinal results in the *BCSSE-NSSE Combined Report*.

### Survey Options

The options at right were available to customize the content of your NSSE survey and to collect complementary data from companion surveys.

#### Administration features

Sample type	Census
Recruitment method	Email
Incentive offered	Yes
Survey version	U.S. English
Institution logo used in survey	Yes

#### Additional question sets and companion surveys

Asked optional sexual orientation question	Yes
Topical module(s)	Transferable Skills, Writing Experiences
Consortium	None
BCSSE 2013	No
FSSE 2014	No

### Recruitment Messages

Students received up to five direct contacts. Your institution had the option to customize message content and timing.

#### Message schedule

	Date	Cumulative response rate	
		<i>First-year</i>	<i>Senior</i>
Invitation	02/18/2014	11%	10%
Reminder 1	02/26/2014	19%	19%
Reminder 2	03/06/2014	24%	26%
Reminder 3	03/12/2014	28%	30%
Final reminder	03/18/2014	30%	35%

### Report Customization

Your institution had the option to customize the comparison groups used in reports. The group selected for the *Snapshot* comparisons is identified with an asterisk.

#### Comparison groups for NSSE core survey reports

Group 1	Southwest Public* (default)
Group 2	Carnegie Class (default)
Group 3	NSSE 2013 & 2014 (default)

#### Comparison groups for additional question set report(s)

Topical Module: Transferable Skills	Transferable Skills (default)
Topical Module: Writing Experiences	Writing Experiences (default)



**Student Reflections on Time Use**  
**National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)**  
**New Mexico State University, Las Cruces**

**NSSE Time Use Questions:**

15. About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing the following?

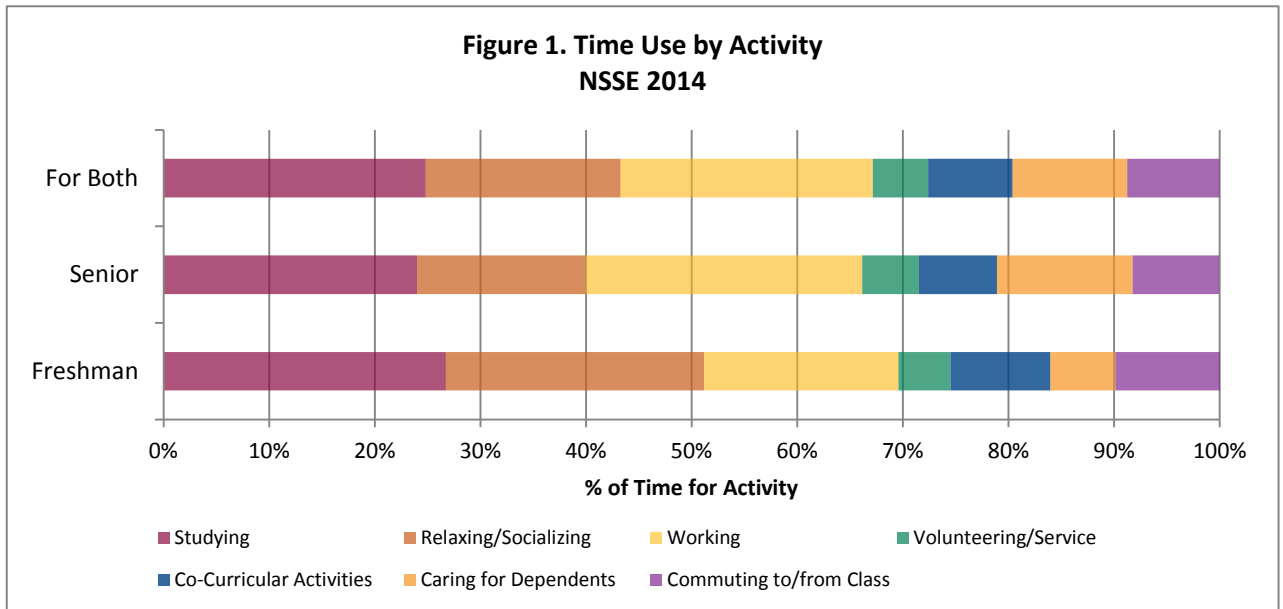
- a. Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, and other academic activities)
- b. Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)
- c. Working for pay on campus
- d. Working for pay off campus
- e. Doing community service or volunteer work
- f. Relaxing and socializing (time with friends, video games, TV or videos, keeping up with friends online, etc.)
- g. Providing care for dependents (children, parents, etc.)
- h. Commuting to campus (driving, walking, etc.)

**Section I. Fall 2014 Responses**

**Table 1: Time Use by Activity**

Activity	Freshman		Senior		For Both	
	Hours /Week	% of Time	Hours /Week	% of Time	Hours /Week	% of Time
Studying	13.2 ▽	27%	14.1 ▽	24%	13.8	25%
Relaxing/Socializing	12.1 ▽	24%	9.4 ▽	16%	10.3	18%
Working	9.1 ▲	18%	15.4	26%	13.3	24%
Volunteering/Service	2.4	5%	3.1	5%	2.9	5%
Co-Curricular Activities	4.7 ▽	9%	4.3	7%	4.4	8%
Caring for Dependents	3.0 ▲	6%	7.5 ▲	13%	6.0	11%
Commuting to/from Class	4.9 ▲	10%	4.8	8%	4.8	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>49.4</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>58.6</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>55.6</b>	<b>2%</b>

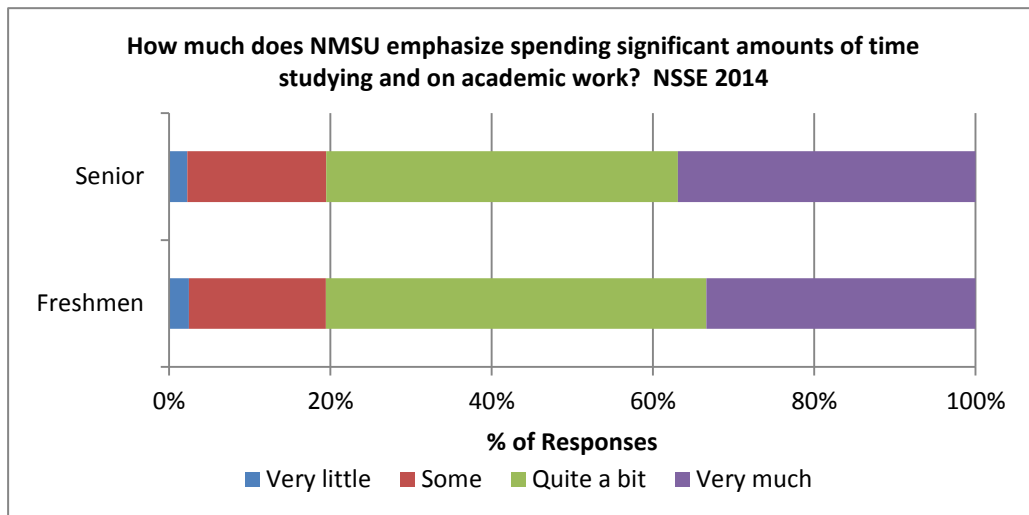
▽ = significantly LESS than Carnegie peers; ▲ = significantly MORE than Carnegie peers



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**Table 2: Average Study Hours per Week, by Discipline**

Discipline	Freshman		Senior		For Both	
	Hours/Week	# of Students	Hours/Week	# of Students	Hours/Week	# of Students
Arts & Humanities	11.9	40	14.7	82	13.7	122
Bio Sci., Agri., & Natural Resources	15.4	71	13.9	102	14.5	173
Business	11.9	53	12.4	152	12.3	205
Comm., Media, & PR	12.6	11	11.6	28	11.9	39
Education	13.5	30	14.7	88	14.4	118
Engineering	15.7	93	15.4	194	15.5	287
Health Professions	12.8	120	14.6	147	13.8	267
Other	7.3	7	13.0	5	9.7	12
Physical Sci., Math, & Computer Sci.	14.2	29	15.9	29	15.1	58
Social Sci.	12.9	22	13.5	84	13.4	106
Social Service Professions	9.8	30	14.0	58	12.6	88



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**Section II. Responses for Past NSSE Administrations**

