

# University of Wisconsin-Stevens Points Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) 2004

## **Introduction and Methods**

UWSP participated in the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) spring 2004. FSSE is designed to measure faculty expectations of student engagement in educational practices that are reported to be linked with high levels of student learning and development.<sup>1</sup> It focuses on:

- ✓ “faculty perceptions of how often their students engage in different activities;
- ✓ the importance faculty place on various areas of learning and development;
- ✓ the nature and frequency of interactions faculty have with students;
- ✓ how faculty members organize class time.”<sup>2</sup>

Invitations to participate in the survey were emailed to 421 faculty spring 2004. Surveys were submitted by 208 faculty for a response rate of 49%. This report focuses on the survey results for UWSP faculty and makes comparisons to national data for 8400 faculty in Master’s institutions. For convenience, faculty in Master’s institutions will be referred to as other faculty in the report. Comparisons will be analyzed using Chi-square or the binomial test. In both cases, the .05 probability level will be used to determine statistical significance.

## **Demographic Characteristics of UWSP Respondents**

- ✓ 36% female
- ✓ 90% Caucasian/white
- ✓ 87% full-time
- ✓ 52% tenured
- ✓ 36% professor; 17% associate professor; 32% assistant professor
- ✓ 43% arts and humanities; 16% physical science; 16% social science
- ✓ 77% doctoral degree; 15% Master’s
- ✓ 24% less than 10 years teaching; 21% 10-14 years; 55% 15 or more years

## **Findings**

### **1. Enriching Educational Experiences**

Table 1 displays data on the level of importance faculty assign to a list of in and out of class learning opportunities. Over half of UWSP faculty feel it is important or very important for undergraduate students to do the following: practicum, internship, field experience and co-op experience; community service or volunteer work; studying a foreign language; study abroad; independent study; and, a culminating senior experience. They are similar to other faculty with two exceptions. They are significantly

- more likely to feel that students should study abroad

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<sup>1</sup> National Survey of Student Engagement, Institutional Report 2004

<sup>2</sup> 2004 Faculty Survey of Student Engagement Invitation to Participate at [www.indiana.edu/~html/fsse.htm](http://www.indiana.edu/~html/fsse.htm)

- less likely to feel that students should participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together

## **2. Institutional Emphasis**

Table 2 displays data on the extent to which faculty feel the institution emphasizes a list of activities. Over half of the faculty feel that UWSP emphasizes the following quite a bit or very much: requiring students to spend significant amounts of time studying and on academic work; providing students the support they need to help them succeed academically; encouraging students to participate in co-curricular activities; encouraging students to attend campus events; and, encouraging students to use computers in their academic work. UWSP faculty are significantly more likely to feel that the university emphasizes:

- providing students the support they need to help them succeed academically
- encouraging students to participate in co-curricular activities
- encouraging students to use computers in their academic work

UWSP faculty are significantly less likely to feel that the institution emphasizes

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

## **3. Faculty Activities**

Table 3 displays data on the number of hours faculty spend on a variety of activities. UWSP faculty report spending more time than other faculty on each of the following activities:

- number of hours teaching undergraduate students
- preparing for class
- advising
- working with students on activities other than course work
- conducting service activities

## **4. Perceptions of Student Behavior**

Table 4 displays faculty perceptions of student behavior based on one particular undergraduate course section that they are teaching or have taught during the academic year. UWSP faculty are significantly less likely than other faculty to perceive that their students do the following:

- occasionally discuss assignments or grades with them
- have class discussions or writing assignments that include diverse perspectives
- use an electronic medium to discuss or complete an assignment
- have serious discussions in their course with students of a different race or ethnicity than their own
- have serious conversations in their course with students who are very different from them in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values.

## **5. Assignments**

Table 5 displays data on the amount of reading and writing that faculty assign to students in their selected course. UWSP faculty are not significantly different from other faculty in the number of textbooks, books, and/or book length packs of course readings they assign. UWSP faculty are significantly

- less likely to assign written papers or reports of more than 5 pages

They are similar to other faculty in the number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages they assign.

Table 6 shows that UWSP faculty are not significantly different from other faculty with respect to the number of homework problem sets that they assign.

Table 7 displays the importance that faculty assign to a list of student behaviors related to completing their assignments. Over half of UWSP faculty feel it is important or very important that students work on a paper or project that requires integrating ideas or information from various sources; work with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments; put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions; and, discuss ideas or readings from class with others outside of class. UWSP faculty are not significantly different from other faculty on any of these items.

## **6. Class Time**

Table 8 displays the percentage of class time that faculty spend on ten activities in their selected course. UWSP faculty are similar to other faculty on all of these activities except that they report spending significantly

- less time on student presentations

## **7. Mental Activities**

Table 9 displays the amount of emphasis faculty place on five cognitive activities in their selected course. UWSP faculty are similar to other faculty in the amount of emphasis they place on memorization, analysis, synthesis, making judgments and applying theories and concepts.

## **8. General Education**

Table 10 displays the extent to which faculty structure their selected course so that students learn and develop in 14 general education areas. Over half of UWSP faculty report that they structure their course quite a bit or very much so that students learn and develop in the following areas: writing clearly and effectively; thinking critically and analytically; working effectively with others; learning effectively on their own; solving complex real-world problems; acquiring a broad general education; and acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills.

UWSP faculty scored lower than other faculty on 12 of the 14 items and are significantly less likely to structure their course so that students learn and develop in the following areas:

- writing clearly and effectively
- speaking clearly and effectively
- using computing and information technology
- understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds
- developing a deepened sense of spirituality

### **Conclusions**

UWSP faculty are similar to other faculty on many of the FSSE items and score significantly higher on a number of others. Significantly lower scores on some of the FSSE items suggest areas for improvement. Improvement may involve increasing the importance placed on various aspects of student learning and organizing educational opportunities differently. Student engagement at UWSP may be enhanced by a variety of actions, including the following:

- ✓ increase the number of written papers or reports of more than 5 pages
- ✓ increase the amount of time spent on class presentations
- ✓ increase opportunities for students to discuss their grades and assignments
- ✓ increase opportunities for class discussions or writing assignments that include diverse perspectives
- ✓ encourage contact and communication between students of different economic, social and racial or ethnic backgrounds
- ✓ increase the opportunities for students to use an electronic medium to discuss or complete an assignment
- ✓ structure courses so that students have more opportunities to learn and develop in general education areas

Questions for reflection on and discussion of these findings:

1. How important is each of these findings to you as a faculty member? To your department/colleagues? To students?
2. Should any of these findings be addressed? If yes, what should be done?

## Faculty Survey of Student Engagement Tables, 2004

<b>Table 1: How important is it to you that undergraduates at your institution do the following? (percent responding important or very important)</b>			
	UWSP %	Master's %	sig.
Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience	84	82	
Community service or volunteer work	57	57	
Participation in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together	36	47	**
Work on a research project with you outside of course program requirements	42	44	
Study a foreign language	54	60	
Study abroad	66	46	**
Independent study	53	50	
Self-designed major	14	18	
Culminating senior experience	66	72	

<b>Table 2: To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following? (percent responding quite a bit or very much)</b>			
	UWSP %	Master's %	sig.
Requiring student to spend significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	58	60	
Providing students support they need to help them succeed academically	86	78	**
Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social and racial or ethnic backgrounds	33	45	**
Helping students cope with their non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	30	36	
Providing students the support they need to thrive socially	45	39	
Encouraging students to participate in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, social fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)	68	59	**
Encouraging students to attend campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural events, symposia, etc.)	58	56	
Encouraging students to use computers in their academic work	97	90	**

**Table 3: About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing the following? (percent responding to each category)**

	UWSP %	Master's %	sig.
Teaching undergraduate students in class			**
0-8	19	40	
9-12	46	40	
13-16	27	13	
More than 16	8	7	
Grading papers and exams			
0-4	34	40	
5-8	37	34	
More than 8	30	26	
Giving other forms of written and oral feedback to students			
0-4	58	57	
5-8	29	27	
More than 8	14	14	
Preparing for class			**
0-4	12	22	
5-8	34	38	
9-12	28	23	
More than 12	27	18	
Reflecting on ways to improve my teaching			
0-4	71	67	
5-8	18	22	
More than 8	12	11	
Research and scholarly activities			
0-4	52	47	
5-8	26	25	
More than 8	23	29	
Working with undergraduates on research			
0	39	46	
1-4	47	39	
More than 4	14	14	
Advising undergraduate students			**
0	15	20	
1-4	65	56	
More than 4	21	24	
Supervising internships or other field experiences			
0	60	58	
1-4	23	26	
More than 4	17	16	

<b>Table 3--continued: About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing the following? (percent responding to each category)</b>			
Working with students on activities other than course work (committees, organizations, student life activities, orientation, intramurals, etc.)			**
0	28	39	
1-4	64	49	
More than 4	9	13	
Other interactions with students outside of the classroom			
0	19	15	
1-4	63	62	
More than 4	19	23	
Conducting service activities			**
0	18	31	
1-4	58	43	
More than 4	25	25	

<b>Table 4: Please respond to the following questions based on one particular undergraduate course section you are teaching or have taught during this academic year. About what percent of students in your selected course section do the following? (percent responding 50% or more)</b>			
	UWSP %	Master's %	sig.
Frequently ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions	28	34	
Frequently come to class without completing readings or assignments	18	19	
Frequently work harder than they usually do to meet your standards	35	31	
Occasionally use e-mail to communicate with you	35	35	
Occasionally discuss grades or assignments with you	19	27	**
At least once, talk about career plans with you	21	20	
At least once, discuss ideas from readings or classes with you outside of class	11	14	
<b>How often do the students in your selected course section engage in the following? (percent responding often or very often)</b>			
Have class discussions or writing assignments that include diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.)	33	46	**
Work with other students on projects during class	58	57	
Participate in a community-based project as part of your course	11	16	
Use an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, Internet, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment	32	39	**
Receive prompt feedback (written or oral) from you on their academic performance	91	92	
Have serious conversations in your course with students of a different race or ethnicity than their own	12	32	**
Have serious conversations in your course with students who are very different from them in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	22	34	**

**Table 5: In your selected course section, about how much reading and writing do your students do? (percent responding to category)**

	UWSP %	Master's %	sig.
Number of assigned textbooks, books, and/or book length packs of course readings			
0	3	4	
1	50	45	
2-3	36	39	
More than 3	11	12	
Number of written papers or reports of more than 10 pages			**
0	73	61	
1	18	26	
2-3	7	9	
More than 3	2	3	
Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 10 pages			**
0	56	45	
1	18	24	
2-3	17	22	
More than 3	9	10	
Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages			
0	28	25	
1	14	14	
2-3	18	24	
More than 3	40	37	

**Table 6: In a typical week, how many homework problem sets do you require students in your selected course section to complete? (percent responding in category)**

	UWSP %	Master's %	sig.
Number of problem sets that take your students more than one hour to complete			
0	37	37	
1-2	45	43	
More than 2	18	20	
Number of problem sets that take your students less than one hour to complete			
0	52	53	
1-2	35	33	
More than 2	13	15	

**Table 7: In your selected course section, how important to you is it that your students: (percent responding important or very important)**

	UWSP %	Master's %	sig.
Prepare two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	45	49	
Work on a paper or project that requires integrating ideas or information from various sources	72	76	
Work with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	51	52	
Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions	59	61	
Discuss ideas or readings from class with others outside of class (other students, faculty, members, coworkers, etc.)	52	56	
Tutor or teach other students (paid or voluntary)	32	28	

**Table 8: In your selected course, on average, what percent of class time is spent on the following? (percent responding in each category)**

	UWSP %	Master's %	sig.
Lecture			
0	4	4	
1-29	30	38	
30-49	26	24	
50 or more	40	35	
Teacher-led discussion			
0	7	5	
1-19	48	41	
20 or more	46	53	
Teacher-student responsibility (seminar, discussion, etc.)			
0	36	30	
1-19	33	38	
20 or more	30	32	
Student computer use			
0	63	57	
1-19	29	29	
20 or more	9	14	
Small group activities			
0	26	22	
1-19	38	45	
20 or more	37	33	
Student presentations			**
0	46	33	
1-19	41	49	
20 or more	14	18	
In-class writing			
0	54	50	
1-19	40	41	
20 or more	7	8	
Testing and evaluation			
0	10	9	
1-19	82	76	
20 or more	10	14	
Performance in applied and fine arts (e.g., dance, drama, music)			
0	86	85	
1-19	6	7	
20 or more	9	8	
Experiential (labs, field work, art exhibits, etc.)			
0	54	51	
1-19	17	23	
20 or more	28	26	

<b>Table 9: In your selected course section, how much emphasis do you place on engaging students in each of these cognitive activities? (percent responding quite a bit or very much)</b>			
	UWSP %	Master's %	sig.
Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your course and readings so students can repeat them pretty much in the same form	28	26	
Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth, and considering its components	88	88	
Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	86	85	
Making judgments about the value of information, arguments or methods such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions	70	74	
Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	81	83	

<b>Table 10: To what extent do you structure your selected course section so that students learn and develop in the following areas? (percent responding quite a bit or very much)</b>			
	UWSP %	Master's %	sig.
Writing clearly and effectively	55	63	**
Speaking clearly and effectively	35	50	**
Thinking critically and analytically	92	94	
Analyzing quantitative problems	38	43	
Using computing and information technology	34	41	**
Working effectively with others	57	57	
Learning effectively on their own	85	87	
Understanding themselves	47	53	
Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	32	43	**
Solving complex real-world problems	60	64	
Developing a personal code of values and ethics	46	53	
Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	6	14	**
Acquiring a broad general education	63	63	
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	65	68	

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 October 2005