



Service Learning Fosters Enriching Educational Experiences

Each year, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, pronounced “nessie”) asks first-year (FY) and senior (SR) students at hundreds of colleges and universities to reflect on the time they devote to various learning activities. These results provide insight to prospective students about a particular institution of higher education. These results also enlighten colleges and universities about how they can improve.

21% of first-year students and 24% of senior students frequently participated in service learning or community-based projects as part of a regular course in 2006-2007 at WCU

By the time they are seniors, 61% of WCU students have participated in community service or volunteer work

The 2007 NSSE results <<http://www.wcu.edu/assessment/NSSE2007.htm>> indicate that WCU students are active participants in service. Volunteer service and course-based community service (i.e., service learning) provide an exceptional opportunity for students to become more engaged in their own learning, to enrich their educational experiences, and to build Western’s reputation as an engaged campus.

Get involved — and stay involved!

The NSSE results are analyzed in **5** benchmark areas:

- Academic Challenge
- Active & Collaborative Learning
- Student-Faculty Interaction
- Supportive Campus Environment
- Enriching Educational Experiences

Educational research over many years has shown that the more engaged students are, the more likely they are to learn. Through these benchmarks, the NSSE helps develop a full picture of an institution by providing information on how involved the students are with their studies, their professors, and their campus community. Unlike many popular college guides, the NSSE does not focus on information like a “party school” reputation; instead, it focuses on the reputation of an institution to provide a quality student experience and an engaged campus environment.



To discuss volunteer opportunities and service learning, please contact Charli Lehman, Program Coordinator <clehman@wcu.edu> Center for Service Learning, Office of Undergraduate Studies Western Carolina University (828) 227-7184 • www.wcu.edu/studentd/service_learning

