Pitzer College
National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Report 2014
About the Survey

NSSE is a national survey conducted by the Indiana University School of Education. The survey is open to all higher education institutions that grant undergraduate degrees. First-year and senior students are eligible to participate in the survey to offer institutions a comparison between these two groups of students that bookend the educational experience of students at a given institution. The 2014 administration of the survey was conducted during the Spring Semester of the 2013-14 Academic Year.

NSSE recommends that institutions keep comparisons internal to an individual institution as the variability between institutions can be quite drastic. However, NSSE does provide comparative data based on geographical location and Carnegie classification. Within the contents of this report two groups generally appear for comparison to the Pitzer data: “Far West Private” and “Carnegie Class”. The “Far West Private” group consists of all institutions that participated in the survey that are from the West Coast. The “Carnegie Class” group represents all liberal arts colleges that participated in the survey across the country.

This report contains examples of data related to Pitzer College Educational Objectives and Graduation Guidelines. This is not meant to be an exhaustive review of all the data available from NSSE. Questions about this report and the Pitzer NSSE data can be directed to the Pitzer College Office of Institutional Research & Assessment.

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Pitzer Respondent Demographics

First-Year
- Female: 66%
- Male: 34%
- Asian: 5%
- Black/African American: 2%
- Hispanic/Latino: 17%
- White: 46%
- International: 8%
- Two or more races/ethnicities: 13%
- Unknown: 9%

Senior
- Female: 71%
- Male: 29%
- Asian: 8%
- Black/African American: 5%
- Hispanic/Latino: 17%
- White: 51%
- International: 4%
- Two or more races/ethnicities: 6%
- Unknown: 9%

Response Rate
- First-Year: 38%
  o Full completions: 91%
  o Partial completions: 9%
- Senior: 47%
  o Full completions: 89%
  o Partial completions: 11%

The samples for both First-Year and Senior students is representative of the overall Pitzer population in terms of race/ethnicity. However, both samples have a higher percentage of females than is present in the population.
Higher-Order Learning refers to experiences where students needed to demonstrate understanding a topic in depth and being able to communicate the depth of their understanding. This is very much like Pitzer’s own educational objectives of Understanding in Depth and Critical Thinking. The Reflective & Integrative Learning component includes experiences that map well onto the Social Responsibility, Intercultural Understanding, and Interdisciplinary Perspective educational objectives at Pitzer College.
High-Impact Practices (HIP)

**First-Year**

HIPs are activities that NSSE finds are likely to assist student retention because students become connected to the institution and its mission.

**Senior**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Pitzer</th>
<th>Far West Private</th>
<th>Carnegie Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Community</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research with Faculty</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship/Field Experience</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culminating Senior Experience</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Participation rates are given for each category.*
NSSE has found that the more HIPs and earlier engagement with HIPs are related to higher retention and graduation rates at an institution. The growth over time for Pitzer shows strong initial engagement in First-Year students (71% with at least one HIP) and continued interest and growth with Senior students (97% with at least one HIP). Pitzer also compares favorably to students from other institutions.
Students were asked about the quantity of writing assignments and the lengths of those assignments in the NSSE survey. Pitzer shows a strong commitment to student writing assignments of varying length throughout an academic year. This is a strong demonstration of the Critical Thinking, Formal Analysis, and Effective Expression educational objective.
General Satisfaction for Senior Respondents

Start Over if You Could

- Pitzer: 3.5
- Far West Private: 3.3
- Carnegie Class: 3.2

Educational Experience

- Pitzer: 3.5
- Far West Private: 3.4
- Carnegie Class: 3.4