

INTRODUCTION

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) collects information from first-year and senior students about their participation in activities and programs that promote their learning and development. Marquette administers this survey every three years. In 2019, 1,332 students participated in NSSE, for a response rate of 38%¹.

The following pages summarize information in each of four distinct aspects of student engagement: Academic Challenge, Learning with Peers, Experiences with Faculty, and Campus Environment. Each Engagement Indicator (EI) is scored on a 60-pt. scale corresponding to frequency of reported participation in that activity. Included with the results are comparison data from Marquette's 2016 administration, Marquette's 2013 administration, Private-Doctoral Peers, Jesuit-Catholic Peers, and all 2019 NSSE institutions². High Impact Practices participation rates are also included.

HOW YOU SHOULD ENGAGE

We are all part of providing the Marquette experience and share the responsibility for improving student engagement and success. Please review the key findings and reflect on the following guiding questions. Send your responses to heba.ali@marquette.edu. Responses will be shared with senior leadership.

- From your perspective, why did students respond as they did and what might be an explanation?
- Given your understanding of the findings, how do they inform the work you do? What actions could you take in your own department or classroom to address them, particularly those identified as concerns?

KEY FINDINGS

CHEERS *These are areas that particularly stand out as strengths for Marquette:*

- **Campus Environment:** MU first-years, report **higher rates** in their quality of interactions and having a supportive environment compared to their Private-Doctoral and Jesuit-Catholic peers.
- **Collaborative Learning:** MU students, both first-years and seniors, report consistently **higher participation** in collaborative learning than their comparison groups. Collaborative learning has remained a cheer from 2016 findings.
- **High-Impact Practices:** Senior MU students report significantly **higher participation** in high-impact practices, such as research with faculty, internships, and study abroad.

CONCERNS *These areas have consistently scored lower than comparison groups and merit further investigation:*

- **Learning Strategies:** MU seniors report **lower rates** of engagement in learning strategies than their comparison groups.
- **Service Learning:** MU students, both first-years and seniors, report significantly **lower participation** in service learning compared to their Jesuit-Catholic peers. Service learning has remained a concern from 2016 results.

CAUTIONS *These areas show smaller differences from peers and don't reflect a trend, but merit monitoring:*

- **Quantitative Reasoning:** MU seniors experienced a **drop** in the use of quantitative reasoning compared to 2016 results, and this area has remained a caution.
- **Supportive Environment:** MU students perception of having a supportive environment on campus staff is **trending down** from 2013 to present.
- **Effective Teaching Practices:** There was a **drop** in MU first-years that report effective teaching practices compared to 2016 data.
- **Discussions with Diverse Others:** There has been a **steady decline** in MU students that report having discussions with people from a different race, ethnicity, economic or religious background from 2013 to 2019.

¹ See the [Appendix](#) for responses rates for past years and for the comparison groups.

² See [2019 Comparison Groups](#)

RESULTS

ACADEMIC CHALLENGE

Engagement Indicator (EI)	Marquette 2019	Difference between Marquette 2019 and ...				
		Marquette 2016	Marquette 2013	Private Doctoral	Jesuit-Catholic Peer	All 2019 NSSE
Higher Order Learning						
First Year	41.2	-0.6	-0.7	+2.0	+2.0	+3.2
Senior	40.5	-0.6	-1.5	+0.4	0.0	+0.4
Reflective & Integrative Learning						
First Year	36.9	+1.0	-0.2	+0.3	+0.3	+1.6
Senior	39.4	-0.7	-1.5	-0.1	-0.1	+1.3
Learning Strategies						
First Year	41.0	+0.7	+1.1	+2.0	+2.0	+2.8
Senior	36.1	-1.0	-1.3	-1.1	-2.2	-2.5
Quantitative Reasoning						
First Year	31.1	+2.8	+1.1	+2.4	+2.4	+3.1
Senior	31.8	-2.3	0.0	+1.3	+0.5	+1.8

60 = Very often 40 = Often 20 = Sometimes 0 = Never

Of the 4 engagement indicators, the highest percentages of both MU first-years and seniors reported that their coursework emphasized *Higher Order Learning* as compared to other Engagement Indicators. *Higher Order Learning* encompasses application, analysis, and evaluation of information.

MU students’ experience of *Reflective & Integrative Learning* is not significantly different from comparison groups. This area encompasses “connecting learning to societal problems or issues” and “including diverse perspectives in discussions.”

Learning Strategies includes items like reviewing notes after class, summarizing learning, and identifying key information from readings. As might be expected, first-years engage in these behaviors more frequently than seniors.

Among the engagement indicators in this area of Academic Challenge, first-years and seniors were least likely to report using *Quantitative Reasoning*. MU first-years significantly outscore peers in quantitative reasoning, which includes three items about the analysis and use of numerical information. Seniors in 2019 reported less frequent engagement in quantitative reasoning activities compared to seniors in 2016.

CAMPUS LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Engagement Indicator (EI)	Marquette 2019	Difference between Marquette 2019 and ...				
		Marquette 2016	Marquette 2013	Private Doctoral	Jesuit-Catholic Peer	All 2019 NSSE
Quality of Interactions						
First Year	43.8	-0.7	+0.7	+2.6	+1.9	+0.6
Senior	41.9	-0.4	+0.1	+1.3	+0.8	-1.4
Supportive Environment						
First Year	38.3	-0.4	-1.9	+3.3	+1.4	+2.3
Senior	33.3	-2.3	-1.9	+1.5	+0.6	+1.0

60 = Very often 40 = Often 20 = Sometimes 0 = Never

The *Quality of Interactions* indicator includes interactions with students, advisors, faculty, student services staff and other administrative staff. MU first-years rate the quality of interactions higher than their comparison groups. MU seniors' rating of the quality of interactions with academic advisors, faculty, and staff is significantly lower compared to all 2019 NSSE respondents.

The *Supportive Environment* indicator includes eight items covering a wide range of services and activities. MU students were much more likely than their Jesuit Catholic peers to report that the institution emphasized attending campus activities and events, including athletic events. They were less likely to report that the institution emphasized attending events that address important social, economic or political issues. MU seniors reported less encouragement of contact among students from different backgrounds. Overall, there was a drop in 2019 for MU seniors reporting on activities related to a supportive environment on campus compared to 2016 data and to a lesser extent 2013 data.

EXPERIENCES WITH FACULTY

Engagement Indicator (EI)	Marquette 2019	Difference between Marquette 2019 and ...				
		Marquette 2016	Marquette 2013	Private Doctoral	Jesuit-Catholic Peer	All 2019 NSSE
Student Faculty Interaction						
First Year	22.4	+2.2	+2.0	+0.1	+0.6	+0.7
Senior	26.6	+0.8	+0.3	+0.6	+1.1	+2.5
Effective Teaching Practices						
First Year	38.3	-2.1	-0.8	-0.1	-0.4	-0.1
Senior	40.0	+0.4	-0.6	+0.5	+0.5	+0.4

60 = Very often 40 = Often 20 = Sometimes 0 = Never

In the *Student-Faculty Interaction* indicator, MU students' report of the frequency of their discussions with faculty about career plans, other activities, and course topics were comparable to that reported by their comparison groups. MU seniors reported significantly higher rates of student-faculty interactions compared to the overall 2019 NSSE data. As would be expected, the frequency of interactions with faculty overall increased from first-year to senior year.

Effective Teaching Practices include course organization, explanations of course goals and requirements, using examples to explain difficult points, and providing prompt and detailed feedback on tests, assignments and work in progress. MU students' ratings were comparable to their comparison groups overall for this area. First-year students reported lower ratings in each area in 2019 compared to 2016 data.

LEARNING WITH PEERS

Engagement Indicator (EI)	Marquette 2019	Difference between Marquette 2019 and ...				
		Marquette 2016	Marquette 2013	Private Doctoral	Jesuit-Catholic Peer	All 2019 NSSE
<i>Collaborative Learning</i>						
First Year	38.7	+1.3	+0.8	+4.3	+5.0	+6.2
Senior	38.0	0.0	+1.6	+3.1	+3.6	+6.5
<i>Discussions with Diverse Others</i>						
First Year	40.4	-1.7	-2.9	-0.4	-0.5	+1.0
Senior	39.8	-1.4	-2.1	-1.3	-1.3	-0.2

60 = Very often 40 = Often 20 = Sometimes 0 = Never

Collaborative Learning includes asking other students to help you understand course material, explaining material to other students, and preparing for exams by working through course material with other students. Marquette’s scores for Collaborative Learning are significantly higher than the comparison groups and similar to the 2016 and 2013 results.

Diverse Others includes discussions with people from a race/ethnicity, economic background, religious beliefs, or political views other than your own. Scores for *Discussions with Diverse Others* are comparable to comparison groups overall. MU students are more likely than other groups to have discussions with people with political views different from their own, but less likely to have discussions with people from a different race, ethnicity, economic or religious background. There has been a steady decline in MU students’ reports about having discussions with people from a different race, ethnicity, economic or religious background from 2013 to 2019.

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES (HIP) PARTICIPATION RATES³

	Marquette 2019 (%)	Difference between Marquette 2019 and ...			
		Marquette 2016	Marquette 2013	Private Doctoral	Jesuit-Catholic Peer
First-year					
Learning Community	20	+0.5	+6.0	+4.0	+4.0
Service-Learning	52	+14.1	+18.0	+2.0	-8.0
Research with Faculty	5	+0.8	+2.0	0.0	+1.0
<i>Participated in at least one</i>	62	+12.9	+19.0	+5.0	-3.0
<i>Participated in two or more</i>	13	+1.5	+6.0	+1.0	0.0
Senior					
Learning Community	26	-0.1	-4.0	-2.0	-1.0
Service-Learning	60	-6.5	-6.0	0.0	-13.0
Research with Faculty	28	+2.9	+2.0	-2.0	+3.0
Internship or Field Exp.	76	-3.9	+5.0	+11.0	+18.0
Study Abroad	28	+3.8	-2.0	-1.0	+2.0
Culminating Senior Exp.	61	+6.9	+5.0	+4.0	+6.0
<i>Participated in at least one</i>	98	+1.8	+1.0	+5.0	+5.0
<i>Participated in two or more</i>	86	+2.9	+2.0	+10.0	+11.0

Participation rates reflect students who responded “Done or in progress” except for service-learning, which is the percentage who responded at least “some” courses included a community-based project.

A larger proportion of Marquette first-year students participated in at least one high impact experience compared to previous years, due primarily to an increase in participating in service-learning as a result of changes to Marquette’s core curriculum requirements. Over time, this figure has become closer in comparison to Jesuit-Catholic peers.

More Marquette seniors reported participating in at least one high impact experience compared to Private-Doctoral and Jesuit-Catholic peers, with a substantially larger percentage participating in an internship or field experience, and a larger percentage participating in a culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, portfolio, etc.). Marquette seniors report lower participation rates in a learning community and service-learning compared to Jesuit-Catholic peers as well as previous years’ results.

³ Only Private Doctoral and Jesuit-Catholic peer groups have been included for a more meaningful comparison as these tend to be institutions that also focus on High Impact Practices (HIPS).

OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE

At the end of the survey, students were invited to share their comments or feedback related to the quality of their educational experience at Marquette. In total, 139 students (10% of responders) responded to this question; themes for the most commonly cited responses, in order of greatest frequency, are shown below, along with comment examples from responses categorized within each theme.

- **Diversity and Inclusion – 22%**

“As a minority, there were many times where I felt that there is unfair treatment on campus towards minorities and a lack of understanding towards the issues they may face. What is more alarming is that there seems to be a lack of interest in trying from Marquette students to improve that”

“I do wish that there was more diversity- racial, socioeconomic, regional, gender identities- in my classes. When I sit in class, I am so often surrounded by students that look the same, are from the same region, and have similar perspectives. Everyone, including faculty, would greatly benefit from greater diversity of thought and background that would push people to experience more than what they are used to.”

- **Student Support (advising, counseling, mental health services) – 19%**

“The amount of support I have received from the institution is unspeakable. Whenever I had an issue I could always be sure to find the right resource or the right person to guide me. I will forever be grateful.”

“Marquette needs to increase its available resources for students with mental health issues. I found that in my own case and in the cases of others that I have met that they are severely lacking in this area of supporting their students.”

- **Cost of Attendance – 19%**

“The price is the only thing that would likely keep me from coming back here for grad school/recommending school to others. I love my education and all of my experience, but I have had to take out loans that will last me a life time to pay off so that is not something I appreciate.”

“While I love Marquette and all of the wonderful opportunities it has to offer, I can't help but live in the constant anxiety that if the tuition continues to go up that I will not be able to attend this University that I love so much and am doing well in.”

- **Faculty/Instructor Quality – 19%**

“The faculty that I've met at Marquette are outstanding, incredibly bright, driven and care so much about their work and their students. In the classroom, I feel like my professors care about my development and future. They take the time to get to know their students and guide them professionally if need be.”

“I also have had some influential professors, but I think they could be more understanding when it comes to students and the heavy load they have to bear. Checking in with students and playing more of an active role in class as a role model or adult would be beneficial for many students struggling with larger issues.”

- **Facilities (dorm quality, food options, recreation center) – 12%**

“The check-in systems for the dorms are too strict and the RAs are too harsh, we're in college we should be able to make our own decisions and have responsibility”

“Make a new rec center. It is somewhat embarrassing that our rec center is what it is. Not a positive staple of student well being”

“Marquette needs to have more food options for students outside of the dining halls. There are very few restaurants non-university related food options on campus. We need a strip mall of sorts (like the one by MSOE) with multiple food options like Chipotle, Chick-fil-A, etc. My biggest issue with the university is that we live in a food desert and the university almost makes it impossible for students who don't have cars or don't have a meal plan.”

- **Coursework Satisfaction/Availability– 11%**

“My one request would be to put more emphasis on the arts. Music used to be a huge part of my life, but there are very few opportunities to express myself in this way at the school.”

“I wish I could have had more class options and fewer requirements as there are so many classes I was interested in but never able to take. I also was not able to continue on to grad school in time (and am now forced to take a year off) due to senior residency and my advisor never mentioning it- and the school be less than cooperative.”

DISCUSSION

Reports from these surveys are distributed to many campus constituency groups (including students, faculty, and administrators) for analysis and action. The NSSE is repeated every 3 years and results are reviewed by the Institutional Survey Steering Committee, the University Assessment Committee, and the Division of Student Affairs Assessment Team.

More detailed survey results are available at <http://www.marquette.edu/oira/studentsurveys.shtml#NSSE>

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APPENDIX

NSSE Response Rates

Group	First-Years	Seniors
Marquette 2019	40%	35%
Marquette 2016	25%	24%
Marquette 2013	36%	37%
Private Doctoral	23%	19%
Jesuit-Catholic Peer	21%	21%
All 2019 NSSE	23%	22%