

## UWL NSSE 2020: Diversity and Climate

### Background on NSSE

UW-La Crosse participates in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) every 3 years. The purpose of the NSSE is to “gain knowledge about first-year and senior students' participation in programs and activities that [UWL provides] for their learning and personal development. The results provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending college.”

UWL first-year and senior students completed the survey in February and March 2020; most responses were entered before the closing of campus due to the COVID pandemic. UWL’s NSSE results are compared to results from three other groups of institutions to identify possible strengths or areas for improvement. These groups are:

- all UW Comprehensive Campuses,
- [our self-identified IPEDS Peers](#) (institutions with similar size, type, and program array), and
- the overall NSSE national sample from all schools who administered the survey in 2019/2020.

### NSSE Sample Demographics and Representativeness

***UWL participation in the NSSE has declined over time and rates are now similar to the three comparison groups (UW System, IPEDS Peers, and NSSE Participants).*** All first-year and senior students were invited to participate.

**29%** of UWL first-years responded to the 2020 NSSE (n=684)

**22%** of UWL seniors responded to the 2020 NSSE (n=447)

***Female students responded at rates nearly 20% higher*** than their proportion of the population for both first-years and seniors (about 75% of respondents were women, compared to about 57% percent in the population of FY and senior students). NSSE then weights the responses in the data to account for this over-representation.

About 90% of UWL’s student population is White. The percentage of respondents based on race and ethnicity generally mirrors the UWL student population, as 91% of UWL NSSE respondents are White. Within individual racial and ethnic groups, Asian, Hispanic, and multiracial students’ response rates mirrored their representation in the overall group. There were no responses from students who identify as American Indian, Black, or Native Hawaiian students alone; however, students who report these racial and ethnic backgrounds as part of a multiracial background would be included in the multiracial response. The headcounts of students of color in the respective groups and their presence in the enrolled population surveyed is included below.<sup>A</sup>

*How much does your institution emphasize contact among students from different backgrounds?*

**51%** of UWL first-year students replied “quite a bit” or “very much” compared to

**37%** of UWL seniors.

## NSSE Diversity and Climate Measures

### Satisfaction with overall experience

Overall, **student respondents were very positive about their UWL experience and more than 8 in 10 students would choose to attend UWL again.** These satisfaction rates are above<sup>1</sup> UW System peers, and for seniors, above all three groups.

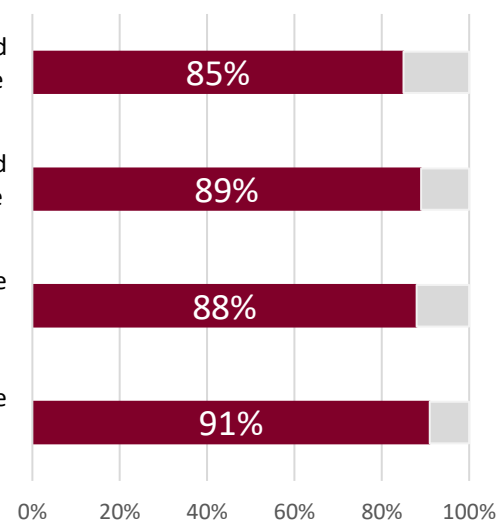
93% of UWL senior students of color and 94% of first-year students of color rated their overall education experience “good” or “excellent”, similar to the overall rates shown above; 89% of UWL senior students of color and 90% of first-year students of color would “probably” or “definitely” attend UWL again, also, similar to overall rates shown above. We do not have comparative data for students of color for peer institutions for these items.

FY: If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?

SR: If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?

FY: How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?

SR: How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?



### Quality of interaction with others

**UWL students report similar levels of ‘quality of interaction’ when compared to the peer groups.**<sup>2</sup> The table below subsets UWL’s data to examine experiences of students of color; the cells with the three highest values of difference are highlighted in yellow. Percentages within the table indicate good or excellent ratings (scores of 6 or 7) on a rating scale where 1 indicates poor and 7 equals excellent.

**UWL first-year students of color report lower levels of good or excellent interactions with other students** (negative difference of 9%) compared to overall respondents; **UWL senior students of color report more positive interactions with faculty and student services staff** (9% positive and 14% positive, respectively), compared to the overall respondent group.

Relationship Group	UWL First Year <sup>2</sup>			UWL Seniors <sup>2</sup>		
	Overall	SOC	SOC % - Overall %	Overall	SOC	SOC % - Overall %
<b>Students</b>	58%	49%	-9%	67%	63%	-4%
<b>Faculty</b>	50%	45%	-5%	63%	72%	9%
<b>Academic Advisors</b>	53%	53%	0%	47%	44%	-3%
<b>Student Services Staff</b>	46%	50%	4%	44%	58%	14%
<b>Other Administrative Staff</b>	43%	43%	0%	43%	48%	5%

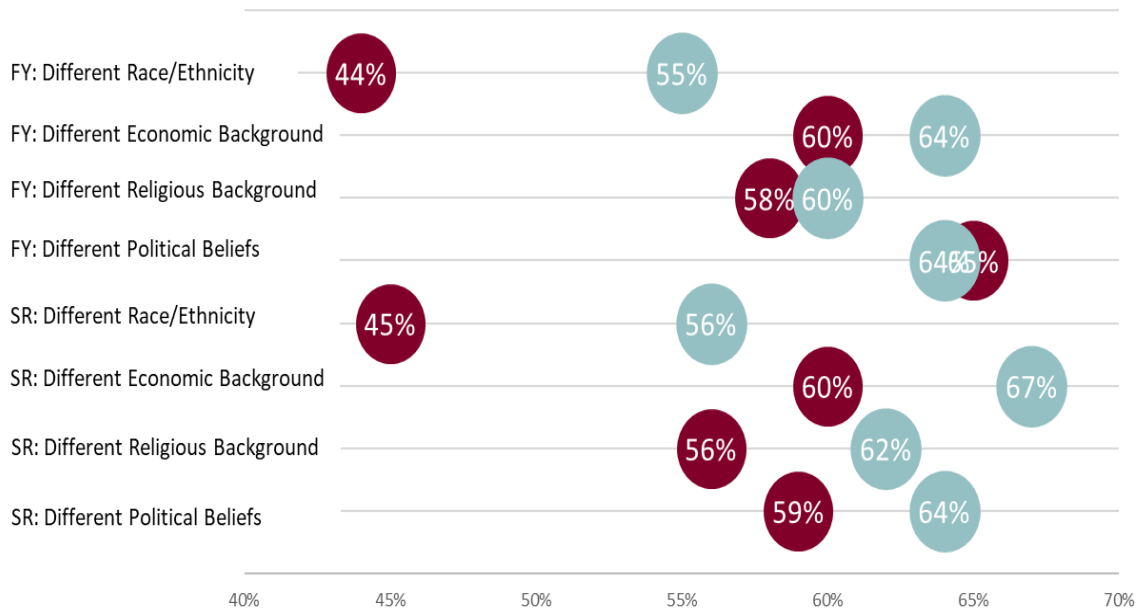
<sup>1</sup> Rates are all statistically significantly above UW System for both FY and seniors; for seniors, statistically significantly above all three peer groups.

<sup>2</sup> Percentages are based on responses of 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale.

*Discussions with students from different racial, political, economic, or religious backgrounds and understanding diverse perspectives*

Across all three comparison groups, **UWL students** report fewer discussions with people of a race or ethnicity other than their own, given that the campus is 90% White. The difference with **UW System** peers is shown here.

Over 50% of UWL students reported learning activities and skills related to understanding diverse others and diverse perspectives.



- **65%** of UWL first year and **69%** of UWL senior students reported they often tried to understand someone else’s views by imagining how an issue looked from their perspective.
- **54%** of UWL first year and **52%** of UWL senior students indicated they often included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments.
- Close to **60%** of UWL Students (first year 59%, seniors 57%) reported that their UWL experience has contributed quite a bit or very much to their understanding of people of other backgrounds (economic, racial/ethnic, political, religious, nationality, etc.).

**For Additional Information**

For more information on the NSSE and its use by higher education institutions, please go to: <https://nsse.indiana.edu/nsse/index.html> If you have questions specific to this brief or results at UW-La Crosse, please contact Patrick Barlow ([pbarlow@uwlax.edu](mailto:pbarlow@uwlax.edu)), Institutional Research, Assessment, & Planning.

**Endnotes**

<sup>A</sup> Headcounts for UWL NSSE Respondents and Student Population Identifying as Student of Color

	Respondent Headcount First-Year	Population Headcount First-Year		Respondent Headcount Senior	Population Headcount Senior
American Indian	<5	6		0	<5
Asian	16	54		7	47
Black/African American	0	13		<5	25
Hispanic	28	129		12	91
Native Hawaiian	0	<5		<5	<5
International	<5	10		<5	18
Two or more races	13	115		15	80