

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.

Interest in Teaching & Learning

UWL takes great lengths to ensure a quality teaching and learning environment. Resources like the Center for Advancing Teaching & Learning support faculty in the attainment of and growth in high-quality teaching skills. This brief will explore items that provide more information about what students are saying about their experiences in the classroom and with our faculty. It will also share information about the kinds of learning tasks UWL students are exposed to in their courses.

Effective Teaching Practices

UWL students reported high levels of effective teacher behaviors in the classroom at levels equal to or above our UW system peers.

- Over **75%** of UWL First-Year and over **80%** UWL Senior respondents reported our faculty:
 - Clearly explained course goals
 - Taught in an organized way^a
 - Used examples for teaching difficult concepts^a

UWL faculty are providing feedback for drafts and completed work at levels equal to our UW system peers.

- **60%** of UWL First Year and **65%** of UWL Seniors indicated getting feedback on drafts or works in progress.
- **61%** of UWL First-Year, **69%** of UWL Seniors reported receiving prompt, detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments.

Students' Studying Practices

UWL students most often report taking key information from reading assignments and less often reviewing notes or summarizing ideas from course materials. UWL First Year scores were above while UWL Seniors were on par with our UW system peers.

- **77%^b** of UWL First Year and **76%** of UWL Seniors indicated they often identified key information from reading assignments.
- **64%^b** of UWL First Year and **51%** of UWL Seniors reported they often reviewed their notes after class.
- **59%^b** of UWL First Year and **57%** of UWL Seniors identified they often summarized what they learned in class or from other course materials.

Note: Superscripts indicate items where UWL student scores are statistically above UW System Peers. a = UWL Seniors score is better. b = UWL First Year students score is better.

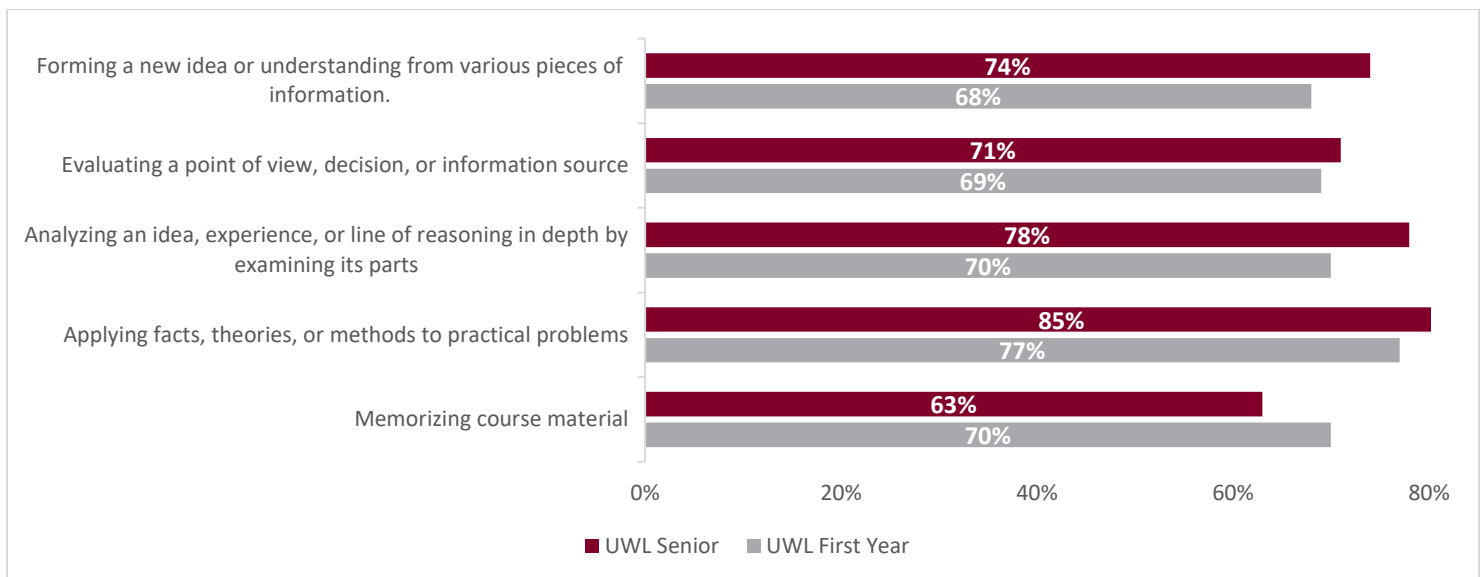
Quantitative Reasoning Exposure

UWL first-year students indicated high levels of quantitative learning tasks at levels above our UW system peers on all three items with UWL seniors raising above UW system peers on the evaluation item.

- **54%^b** of UWL First Year students and **55%** of UWL Seniors indicated having assignments involving analysis of numerical information.
- **45%^b** of UWL First Year students and **44%** of UWL Seniors reported using numerical information to examine real world problems.
- **43%^b** of UWL First Year students and **51%^a** of UWL Seniors responded they often evaluated others conclusions based on numerical information.

Higher Order Learning Tasks

UWL students utilized higher order learning tasks in courses at levels close to 70% or above. Compared to UW system peers, UWL First Year ratings were above for the analysis and application item while UWL Seniors' ratings placed them above on the analysis, application, and creating new ideas items. For insight on the value of these tasks, [see this resource from UNC](#).



Campus Emphasis on Learning Supports

UWL students indicated high levels of campus emphasis on studying, providing academic support, and use of learning supports. Ratings on encouraging use of learning support services for both UWL First Year and Seniors rose above UW system peers

- **80%** of UWL First Year and **77%** of UWL Seniors reported that UWL emphasizes spending significant amounts of time studying and academic work.
- **76%** of UWL First Year and **74%** of UWL Seniors indicated UWL emphasizes providing support to help students succeed academically.
- **81%^b** of UWL First Year and **72%^a** of UWL Seniors responded that UWL emphasizes using learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, 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), Institutional Research, Assessment, & Planning.

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