Introduction

Purpose and scope of the study
This partnership between the Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA) and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) investigated how student writing experiences related to their engagement and learning. At the inter-institutional and national levels, little data affirm writing specialists’ widespread belief that writing-to-learn activities improve learning, engagement, and attainment. Therefore, in 2008, we administered 27 supplemental NSSE questions about writing practices to 23,000 students in 82 randomly selected four-year institutions, providing the broadest snapshot so far of undergraduate writing. Our findings may help us advocate more effectively for writing programs (FYW and WID/WAC) at our home institutions and nationally.

Result
This presentation focuses on students’ responses to a subset of the 27 supplemental writing questions. Data came from three clusters of questions in which students were asked how many of their writing assignments encouraged interactive writing activities (peer response, teacher response, visits to a writing center, etc.), specified “meaning-constructing writing” (synthesizing information, writing to a specific audience), and included clear explanations of the instructor’s expectations. Controlling for student characteristics (gender, race, major, and others) and the amount students wrote, results show that more work in these areas is associated with more engagement in deep learning activities and greater self-reported gains in practical competence, personal and social development, and general education. In all but one example, the amount of pages students wrote was less important for deep learning and gains than interactive writing, meaning-making, and clear expectations.

Implications
Results suggest that faculty can increase student engagement in deep learning activities and also increase student learning by including interactive activities, assigning meaning-constructing writing projects, and clearly explaining their expectations. The results also suggest that these factors contribute more to the achievement of desirable learning outcomes than does the amount of writing faculty assign.
82 Institutions that Administered the Writing Questions in Spring 2008
These schools were randomly selected from the 774 institutions that administered the 2008 NSSE.
Albright College
Bethune Cookman University
Brigham Young University
Bryant University
Cabrini College
Carroll College
Clarke College
Coker College
Colby-Sawyer College
College of the Atlantic
Colorado State University
Delaware State University
Dixie State College of Utah
Dominican University
Drew University
East Central University
Eastern New Mexico University
Elizabethtown College
Elon University
Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering
Grinnell College
Harris-Stowe State University
Hartwick College
Houghton College
Husson College
Jacksonville University
Juniata College
Kent State University
LaGrange College
Lamar University
Lasell College
Lincoln Memorial University
Lincoln University
Lindenwood University
Lipscomb University
Lyndon State College
Martin Methodist College
McDaniel College
Medaille College
Mercer University
Misericordia University
Montana State University-Bozeman
Northwestern Oklahoma State University
Ohio University
Otterbein College
Pepperdine University
Polytechnic University
Queens University of Charlotte
Roger Williams University
Rutgers University-Newark
Sacred Heart University
Shawnee State University
Southern Vermont College
Southwestern College
The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina
The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey
The University of Texas at Dallas
The University of Texas at San Antonio
Thiel College
Union College
University of Mary Hardin-Baylor
University of Michigan-Flint
University of San Diego
University of Southern Mississippi
University of the Incarnate Word
University of the Sciences in Philadelphia
University of Vermont
Utah Valley State College
Virginia Commonwealth University
Voorhees College
Washington State University
Wentworth Institute of Technology
Western Illinois University
Western Michigan University
William Jewell College
William Woods University
Wofford College
Worcester State College
Xavier University of Louisiana

75 Institutions that Administered the Writing Questions in Spring 2009
These schools have joined the Consortium for the Study of Writing in College, jointly supported by NSSE and the Council of Writing Program Administrators. These data are not available for analysis but will be soon.
Berry College
Calvin College
Carlow University
Case Western Reserve University
Central Michigan University
Chowan University
The College of New Jersey
CUNY Bernard M Baruch College
CUNY Brooklyn College
CUNY City College of New York
CUNY College of Staten Island
CUNY Herbert H. Lehman College
CUNY Hunter College
CUNY John Jay College Criminal Justice
CUNY Medgar Evers College
CUNY New York City College of Technology
CUNY Queens College
CUNY York College
Earlham College
Eastern Michigan University
The Evergreen State College
Fayetteville State University
Ferrum College
Fort Hays State University
Francis Marion University
Georgian Court University
Graceland University-Lamoni
Husson University
Indiana University Kokomo
Indiana University Purdue University-Indianapolis
Lafayette College
Limestone College
Marshall University
McNeese State University
Mercer University
Miami University-Oxford
Millsaps College
North Carolina State University
North Dakota State University
Occidental College
Oklahoma City University
Pittsburg State University
Portland State University
Salem State College
Seton Hill University
Spring Hill College
Temple University
Towson University
Trine University
University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado at Boulder
University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
University of Denver
University of Maine at Farmington
University of Michigan-Flint
University of New Mexico
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
University of North Carolina Wilmington
University of Northern Iowa
University of South Florida
University of Southern Maine
University of Southern Mississippi
The University of Texas at El Paso
The University of Texas of the Permian Basin
The University of Texas-Pan American
University of Toledo
The University of Virginia’s College at Wise
University of Washington Tacoma
University of Wyoming
Western Carolina University
Wheaton College
William Paterson University of New Jersey
Winthrop University
Woodbury University
Wright State University
The 27 Experimental Writing Questions

1. During the current school year, for how many of your writing assignments have you done each of the following?
   5=All assignments, 4=Most assignments, 3=Some assignments, 2= Few assignments, 1=No assignments.
   1A Brainstormed (listed ideas, mapped concepts, prepared an outline, etc.) to develop your ideas before you started drafting your assignment
   1B Talked with your instructor to develop your ideas before you started drafting your assignment
   1C Talked with a classmate, friend, or family member to develop your ideas before you started drafting your assignment
   1D Received feedback from your instructor about a draft before turning in your final assignment
   1E Received feedback from a classmate, friend, or family member about a draft before turning in your final assignment
   1F Visited a campus-based writing or tutoring center to get help with your writing assignment before turning it in
   1G Used an online tutoring service to get help with your writing assignment before turning it in
   1H Proofread your final draft for errors before turning it in

2. During the current school year, in how many of your writing assignments did you:
   5=All assignments, 4=Most assignments, 3=Some assignments, 2= Few assignments, 1=No assignments.
   2A Narrate or describe one of your own experiences
   2B Summarize something you read, such as articles, books, or online publications
   2C Analyze or evaluate something you read, researched, or observed
   2D Describe your methods or findings related to data you collected in lab or field work, a survey project, etc.
   2E Argue a position using evidence and reasoning
   2F Explain in writing the meaning of numerical or statistical data
   2G Write in the style and format of a specific field (engineering, history, psychology, etc.)
   2H Include drawings, tables, photos, screen shots, or other visual content into your written assignment
   2I Create the project with multimedia (web page, poster, slide presentation such as PowerPoint, etc.)

3. During the current school year, for how many of your writing assignments has your instructor done each of the following?
   5=All assignments, 4=Most assignments, 3=Some assignments, 2= Few assignments, 1=No assignments.
   3A Provided clear instructions describing what he or she wanted you to do
   3B Explained in advance what he or she wanted you to learn
   3C Explained in advance the criteria he or she would use to grade your assignment
   3D Provided a sample of a completed assignment written by the instructor or a student
   3E Asked you to do short pieces of writing that he or she did not grade
   3F Asked you to give feedback to a classmate about a draft or outline the classmate had written
   3G Asked you to write with classmates to complete a group project
   3H Asked you to address a real or imagined audience such as your classmates, a politician, non-experts, etc.

4. Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?
   4=Done, 3=Plan to do, 2=Do not plan to do, 1=Have not decided.
   4A Prepare a portfolio that collects written work from more than one class
   4B Submit work you wrote or co-wrote to a student or professional publication (magazine, journal, newspaper, collection of student work, etc.)
The 2008/2009 NSSE Survey Instrument
The 2008 and 2009 survey instruments are identical.

National Survey of Student Engagement 2008
The College Student Report

1. In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? Mark your answers in the boxes. Examples: ☐ or ☐

- a. Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
- b. Made a class presentation
- c. Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in
- d. Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources
- e. Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments
- f. Came to class without completing readings or assignments
- g. Worked with other students on projects during class
- h. Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments
- i. Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions
- j. Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)
- k. Participated in a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of a regular course
- l. Used an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment
- m. Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor
- n. Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- o. Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- p. Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
- q. Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance
- r. Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor’s standards or expectations
- s. Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.)
- t. Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)
- u. Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own
- v. Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values

2. During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities?

- a. Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your courses and readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form
- b. Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components
- c. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships
- d. Making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods, such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions
- e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations
3. During the current school year, about how much reading and writing have you done?
   a. Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings
      - None
      - 1-4
      - 5-10
      - 11-20
      - More than 20

   b. Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment
      - None
      - 1-4
      - 5-10
      - 11-20
      - More than 20

   c. Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more
      - None
      - 1-4
      - 5-10
      - 11-20
      - More than 20

   d. Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages
      - None
      - 1-4
      - 5-10
      - 11-20
      - More than 20

   e. Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages
      - None
      - 1-4
      - 5-10
      - 11-20
      - More than 20

4. In a typical week, how many homework problem sets do you complete?
   - None
   - 1-2
   - 3-4
   - 5-6
   - More than 6

5. Mark the box that best represents the extent to which your examinations during the current school year have challenged you to do your best work.
   - Very little
   - Slightly
   - Somewhat
   - Very much

6. During the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?
   - Very often
   - Often
   - Some times
   - Never

   a. Attended an art exhibit, play, dance, music, theater, or other performance
   - Unfriendly, Unsupportive, Sense of alienation

   b. Exercised or participated in physical fitness activities
   - Available, Unhelpful, Unsympathetic

   c. Participated in activities to enhance your spirituality (worship, meditation, prayer, etc.)
   - Available, Helpful, Sympathetic

   d. Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue
   - Unhelpful, Inconsiderate, Rigid

   e. Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective
   - Helpful, Considerate, Flexible

   f. Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept

7. Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?
   - Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment
   - Community service or volunteer work
   - Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together
   - Work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements
   - Foreign language coursework
   - Study abroad
   - Independent study or self-designed major
   - Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.)

8. Mark the box that best represents the quality of your relationships with people at your institution.
   - Relationships with other students
   - Relationships with faculty members
   - Relationships with administrative personnel and offices
9 About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following?

a. Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, and other academic activities)
   - 0 hours
   - 1-5 hours
   - 6-10 hours
   - 11-15 hours
   - 16-20 hours
   - 21-25 hours
   - 26-30 hours
   - More than 30 hours

b. Working for pay on campus
   - 0 hours
   - 1-5 hours
   - 6-10 hours
   - 11-15 hours
   - 16-20 hours
   - 21-25 hours
   - 26-30 hours
   - More than 30 hours

c. Working for pay off campus
   - 0 hours
   - 1-5 hours
   - 6-10 hours
   - 11-15 hours
   - 16-20 hours
   - 21-25 hours
   - 26-30 hours
   - More than 30 hours

d. Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)
   - 0 hours
   - 1-5 hours
   - 6-10 hours
   - 11-15 hours
   - 16-20 hours
   - 21-25 hours
   - 26-30 hours
   - More than 30 hours

e. Relaxing and socializing (watching TV, partying, etc.)
   - 0 hours
   - 1-5 hours
   - 6-10 hours
   - 11-15 hours
   - 16-20 hours
   - 21-25 hours
   - 26-30 hours
   - More than 30 hours

f. Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse, etc.)
   - 0 hours
   - 1-5 hours
   - 6-10 hours
   - 11-15 hours
   - 16-20 hours
   - 21-25 hours
   - 26-30 hours
   - More than 30 hours

g. Commuting to class (driving, walking, etc.)
   - 0 hours
   - 1-5 hours
   - 6-10 hours
   - 11-15 hours
   - 16-20 hours
   - 21-25 hours
   - 26-30 hours
   - More than 30 hours

10 To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following?
   - Very much
   - Quite a bit
   - Some
   - Very little

a. Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work
   -

b. Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically
   -

c. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
   -

d. Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
   -

e. Providing the support you need to thrive socially
   -

f. Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)
   -

g. Using computers in academic work
   -

11 To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?

a. Acquiring a broad general education
   -

b. Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills
   -

c. Writing clearly and effectively
   -

d. Speaking clearly and effectively
   -

e. Thinking critically and analytically
   -

f. Analyzing quantitative problems
   -

g. Using computing and information technology
   -

h. Working effectively with others
   -

i. Voting in local, state, or national elections
   -

j. Learning effectively on your own
   -

k. Understanding yourself
   -

l. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds
   -

m. Solving complex real-world problems
   -

n. Developing a personal code of values and ethics
   -

o. Contributing to the welfare of your community
   -

p. Developing a deepened sense of spirituality
   -

12 Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution?
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Fair
   - Poor

13 How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Fair
   - Poor

14 If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?
   - Definitely yes
   - Probably yes
   - Probably no
   - Definitely no
15 Write in your year of birth: 19

16 Your sex:
- Male
- Female

17 Are you an international student or foreign national?
- Yes
- No

18 What is your racial or ethnic identification? (Mark only one.)
- American Indian or other Native American
- Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- White (non-Hispanic)
- Mexican or Mexican American
- Puerto Rican
- Other Hispanic or Latino
- Multiracial
- Other
- I prefer not to respond

19 What is your current classification in college?
- Freshman/first-year
- Sophomore
- Unclassified
- Junior

20 Did you begin college at your current institution or elsewhere?
- Started here
- Started elsewhere

21 Since graduating from high school, which of the following types of schools have you attended other than the one you are attending now? (Mark all that apply.)
- Vocational or technical school
- Community or junior college
- 4-year college other than this one
- None
- Other

22 Thinking about this current academic term, how would you characterize your enrollment?
- Full-time
- Less than full-time

23 Are you a member of a social fraternity or sorority?
- Yes
- No

24 Are you a student-athlete on a team sponsored by your institution's athletics department?
- Yes
- No (Go to question 25)

On what team(s) are you an athlete (e.g., football, swimming)? Please answer below:

25 What have most of your grades been up to now at this institution?
- A
- B+
- C+
- A-
- B
- C
- B-
- C- or lower

26 Which of the following best describes where you are living now while attending college?
- Dormitory or other campus housing (not fraternity/sorority house)
- Residence (house, apartment, etc.) within walking distance of the institution
- Residence (house, apartment, etc.) within driving distance of the institution
- Fraternity or sorority house

27 What is the highest level of education that your parent(s) completed? (Mark one box per column.)

Father
- Did not finish high school
- Graduated from high school
- Attended college but did not complete degree
- Completed an associate's degree (A.A., A.S., etc.)
- Completed a bachelor's degree (B.A., B.S., etc.)
- Completed a master's degree (M.A., M.S., etc.)
- Completed a doctoral degree (Ph.D., J.D., M.D., etc.)

Mother

28 Please print your major(s) or your expected major(s).

a. Primary major (Print only one):

b. If applicable, second major (not minor, concentration, etc.):

THANKS FOR SHARING YOUR RESPONSES!
The Scales We Examined
Best Practices for Using Writing to Learn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Encourage Interactive Writing Activities</th>
<th>For how many writing assignments have you:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Brainstormed to develop your ideas before you started drafting your assignment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Talked with your instructor to develop your ideas before you started drafting your assignment</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Visited a campus-based writing or tutoring center to get help with your writing assignment before turning it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>Assign Meaning-Constructing Writing Tasks</th>
<th>In how many of your writing assignments did you:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Summarize something you read, such as articles, books, or online publications</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Analyze or evaluate something you read, researched, or observed</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Describe your methods or findings related to data you collected in lab or field work, a survey project, etc.</td>
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<td>• Argue a position using evidence and reasoning</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Write in the style and format of a specific field (engineering, history, psychology, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Explain in writing the meaning of numerical or statistical data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Include drawings, tables, photos, screen shots, or other visual content into your written assignment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create the project with multimedia (web page, poster, slide presentation such as PowerPoint, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<th>Explain Writing Expectations Clearly</th>
<th>In how many of your writing assignments has your instructor:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Provided clear instructions describing what he or she wanted you TO DO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explained in advance what he or she wanted you TO LEARN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explained in advance the criteria he or she would use to grade your assignment</td>
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<tr>
<th>NSSE Instrument Writing Questions</th>
<th>During the current school year, about how much reading and writing have you done?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Written Pages</td>
<td>Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more</td>
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<td></td>
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</table>
## Deep Learning Scales and Items

**Higher-Order Learning Activities**

*During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities?*

- ANALYZING the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components
- SYNTHESIZING and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships
- MAKING JUDGMENTS about the value of information, arguments, or methods, such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions
- APPLYING theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations

**Integrative Learning Activities**

*In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?*

- Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources
- Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments
- Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)

**Reflective Learning Activities**

*During the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?*

- Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue
- Tried to better understand someone else’s views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective
- Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept

**Deep Learning Overall**

*Sum of all twelve items in the three scales above.*
### Self-Reported Gains Scales and Items

**Practical Competence**

*To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?*

- Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills
- Working effectively with others
- Using computing and information technology
- Analyzing quantitative problems
- Solving complex real-world problems

**Personal and Social Development**

*To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?*

- Developing a personal code of values and ethics
- Understanding yourself
- Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds
- Voting in local, state (provincial), or national (federal) elections
- Learning effectively on your own
- Contributing to the welfare of your community
- Developing a deepened sense of spirituality

**General Education**

*To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?*

- Writing clearly and effectively
- Speaking clearly and effectively
- Acquiring a broad general education

- Thinking critically and analytically
Looking Ahead to Future Directions
This research will expand into new areas as the number of schools administering the writing questions increases. The CSWC, supported jointly by NSSE and the WPA, currently includes 75 schools that administered the writing questions in spring 2009 to just under 40,000 additional students, more than doubling the data set, and bringing the totals to over 65,000 students from 157 schools.

Keeping up with the CSWC
To keep up with CSWC activities and relevant publications, to learn about using these and other data at your school, and to join the CSWC listserv, please visit www.comppile.org/wpa+nsse/. We also urge you to join the Consortium listserv (instructions at the website).

Joining the Consortium for Spring 2010
You can participate in the CSWC and administer the writing questions even if your school doesn’t use NSSE, or even if they are not administering it in spring of 2010. However, WPA and NSSE ask that you request permission to use the questions beforehand. (Write to Chuck Paine, cpaine@unm.edu, or visit the website for more on requesting permission.)

If your school is administering NSSE in spring 2010, you should begin the process of urging administrators on your campus to join the CSWC at your campus soon. Institutions need to join by early October, so you should begin the process when you get back or in August. On the NSSE-WPA website, you’ll find facts about NSSE consortia, information about who to contact and what steps to take, and ideas for persuading the decision makers on your campus.

Making the Most of the Forthcoming Data
Each school will receive its NSSE reports in early August. You can learn a lot from these NSSE-generated generic reports, but you can find out a great deal more by digging a little deeper and perhaps doing your own local or program research. Or you can join with colleagues from other campuses to do multi-site research.

NSSE Webinar on the CSWC on September 22
NSSE’s Associate Directors Jillian Kinzie and Bob Gonyea will offer a webinar for consortium members titled “Considering Results from the Consortium for the Study of Writing in College.” It takes place September 22. They’ll help you make the most of your data

Using your school’s data
• Data examination: Quality indicators about writing institutionally and in programs to guide writing-program (FYW, WAC/WID/WC) initiatives and policy.
  • Compared to peer groups
  • Compared to expectations
  • Inform accreditation of courses, programs, and institution.
• Further analysis of data
  • Connect NSSE data to student records (e.g., persistence, GPA, grades in particular courses, scores for assessment portfolio, courses taken, program participation, majors, demographics).
  • Do follow-up inquiry, such as focus groups and interviews with students, faculty, and other stakeholders.
• Hire a graduate student with experience in quantitative analysis to help analyze data and use statistical packages (SPSS, SAS, etc.).
• Present to faculty and administration, including WAC workshops, scholarship of teaching and learning, and other faculty development.

Teaming with other CSWC schools
• Conduct similar focus groups on multiple campuses. This could lead to generalizable (publishable) findings. It could also allow us to better understand how students interpret the questions and possibly allow us to revise the survey.
• Share data: Agree to combine raw data from a particular group of schools in order to increase sample size or make comparisons. NSSE could be teamed with or contracted with to do these special analyses.

Other ideas for the CSWC
• Create an SPSS (or other statistical package) “code bank” shared on the web to run basic or typical analyses.
• Participate in consortium listserv. Visit www.compile.org/wpa+nsse to sign up.
• You tell us: what can we do to encourage participation?

Other Research Questions
Of the literally billions of analyses we could have conducted with just the 2008 data, we have done just a few to obtain part of a “snapshot” of student writing in America. What other questions do we want the answers to?

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