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# **NSSE 2015 Topical Module**

## **Experiences with Writing**

University of West Georgia

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## About This Topical Module

This module is the result of an ongoing collaboration between NSSE and the Council of Writing Program Administrators. The questions touch on three aspects of good writing assignments—interactivity, meaning-making, and clarity. It complements questions on the core survey about how much writing students do, the nature of their course assignments, and perceived gains in written expression. Complementary FSSE set available.

## Comparison Group

This section summarizes how this module's comparison group was identified, including selection criteria and whether the default option was taken. This is followed by the resulting list of institutions represented in the 'Comparison' column of this report.

Group label	Comparison
Date submitted	6/15/15
How was this comparison group constructed?	Your institution customized this group by selecting institutional characteristics as follows: Sector (Pub); UG Enrollment (5-10K)
Group description	National, UG Enrollment 5001-10000, Public

## Comparison (N=8)

Bridgewater State University (Bridgewater, MA)\*  
 Missouri Southern State University (Joplin, MO)\*  
 Southern Connecticut State University (New Haven, CT)  
 SUNY College at Oneonta (Oneonta, NY)\*  
 University of Arkansas - Fort Smith (Fort Smith, AR)  
 University of Colorado Colorado Springs (Colorado Springs, CO)  
 University of Massachusetts Dartmouth (North Dartmouth, MA)\*  
 University of Wisconsin-La Crosse (La Crosse, WI)\*

## First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values <sup>c</sup>	Response options	Frequency Distributions <sup>a</sup>				Statistical Comparisons <sup>b</sup>		
				UWG		Comparison		UWG	Comparison	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
<b>1. During the current school year, for how many writing assignments have you done the following?</b>										
a. Talked with a classmate, friend, or family member to develop your ideas before starting your assignment	WRI01a	1	No writing assignments	11	8	199	11	<b>3.4</b>	3.0 ***	.37
		2	Few writing assignments	19	14	444	22			
		3	Some writing assignments	37	29	647	32			
		4	Most writing assignments	37	28	505	25			
		5	All writing assignments	27	22	184	9			
		Total		131	100	1,979	100			
b. Received feedback from a classmate, friend, or family member about a draft before turning in your final assignment	WRI01b	1	No writing assignments	10	8	126	7	<b>3.6</b>	3.3 *	.24
		2	Few writing assignments	13	10	322	16			
		3	Some writing assignments	32	25	561	29			
		4	Most writing assignments	42	32	685	33			
		5	All writing assignments	33	26	283	15			
		Total		130	100	1,977	100			
c. Gave feedback to a classmate about a draft or outline he or she had written	WRI01c	1	No writing assignments	10	7	126	7	<b>3.5</b>	3.2 *	.23
		2	Few writing assignments	15	11	331	17			
		3	Some writing assignments	42	33	676	33			
		4	Most writing assignments	36	28	642	32			
		5	All writing assignments	28	21	193	10			
		Total		131	100	1,968	100			
d. Summarized material you read, such as articles, books, or online publications	WRI01d	1	No writing assignments	2	1	69	4	<b>3.6</b>	3.4 *	.21
		2	Few writing assignments	18	13	271	15			
		3	Some writing assignments	34	26	673	33			
		4	Most writing assignments	52	41	710	36			
		5	All writing assignments	23	18	248	13			
		Total		129	100	1,971	100			
e. Analyzed or evaluated something you read, researched, or observed	WRI01e	1	No writing assignments	4	3	50	3	<b>3.9</b>	3.6 ***	.32
		2	Few writing assignments	5	4	174	9			
		3	Some writing assignments	29	22	567	28			
		4	Most writing assignments	50	39	830	42			
		5	All writing assignments	42	32	344	18			
		Total		130	100	1,965	100			
f. Described your methods or findings related to data you collected in lab or field work, a survey project, etc.	WRI01f	1	No writing assignments	25	19	344	18	<b>3.0</b>	2.9	.07
		2	Few writing assignments	24	18	386	19			
		3	Some writing assignments	35	27	586	29			
		4	Most writing assignments	26	21	488	25			
		5	All writing assignments	20	16	161	9			
		Total		130	100	1,965	100			
g. Argued a position using evidence and reasoning	WRI01g	1	No writing assignments	1	1	97	5	<b>3.9</b>	3.4 ***	.42
		2	Few writing assignments	14	11	271	13			
		3	Some writing assignments	31	24	620	31			
		4	Most writing assignments	41	31	705	36			
		5	All writing assignments	43	34	277	15			
		Total		130	100	1,970	100			

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001 (2-tailed); Refer to the Endnotes page for a key to the triangle symbols.

## First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values <sup>c</sup>	Response options	Frequency Distributions <sup>a</sup>				Statistical Comparisons <sup>b</sup>		
				UWG		Comparison		UWG	Comparison	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
h. Explained in writing the meaning of numerical or statistical data	WRI01h	1	No writing assignments	48	35	515	26	<b>2.3</b>	2.5	-.14
		2	Few writing assignments	35	28	510	25			
		3	Some writing assignments	16	13	506	26			
		4	Most writing assignments	19	15	317	17			
		5	All writing assignments	10	8	102	6			
		Total		128	100	1,950	100			
i. Wrote in the style and format of a specific field (engineering, history, psychology, etc.)	WRI01i	1	No writing assignments	32	24	330	17	<b>3.0</b>	3.0	.03
		2	Few writing assignments	19	15	381	19			
		3	Some writing assignments	25	19	564	29			
		4	Most writing assignments	28	21	468	24			
		5	All writing assignments	27	21	228	12			
		Total		131	100	1,971	100			
j. Addressed a real or imagined audience such as your classmates, a politician, non-experts, etc.	WRI01j	1	No writing assignments	21	16	268	14	<b>3.1</b>	3.1	.02
		2	Few writing assignments	23	18	351	17			
		3	Some writing assignments	33	26	594	30			
		4	Most writing assignments	27	20	477	23			
		5	All writing assignments	25	20	276	15			
		Total		129	100	1,966	100			
<b>2. During the current school year, for how many of your writing assignments has your instructor done the following?</b>										
a. Provided clear instructions describing what he or she wanted you to do	WRI02a	1	No writing assignments	1	1	27	2	<b>4.3</b>	4.0 *	.24
		2	Few writing assignments	2	1	74	4			
		3	Some writing assignments	20	15	289	14			
		4	Most writing assignments	50	39	981	48			
		5	All writing assignments	58	44	606	32			
		Total		131	100	1,977	100			
b. Explained in advance what he or she wanted you to learn	WRI02b	1	No writing assignments	9	7	51	3	<b>4.0</b>	3.8 *	.20
		2	Few writing assignments	6	4	181	8			
		3	Some writing assignments	21	15	479	24			
		4	Most writing assignments	43	34	749	38			
		5	All writing assignments	52	41	513	27			
		Total		131	100	1,973	100			
c. Explained in advance the criteria he or she would use to grade your assignment	WRI02c	1	No writing assignments	2	1	35	2	<b>4.3</b>	4.0 **	.28
		2	Few writing assignments	5	3	103	5			
		3	Some writing assignments	14	10	330	16			
		4	Most writing assignments	44	35	795	39			
		5	All writing assignments	66	51	709	37			
		Total		131	100	1,972	100			

## Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values <sup>c</sup>	Response options	Frequency Distributions <sup>a</sup>				Statistical Comparisons <sup>b</sup>		
				UWG		Comparison		UWG	Comparison	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
<b>1. During the current school year, for how many writing assignments have you done the following?</b>										
a. Talked with a classmate, friend, or family member to develop your ideas before starting your assignment	WRI01a	1	No writing assignments	15	11	315	13	<b>3.1</b>	2.9	.16
		2	Few writing assignments	27	20	575	23			
		3	Some writing assignments	47	33	858	33			
		4	Most writing assignments	34	26	592	23			
		5	All writing assignments	15	11	179	7			
		Total		138	100	2,519	100			
b. Received feedback from a classmate, friend, or family member about a draft before turning in your final assignment	WRI01b	1	No writing assignments	21	15	367	16	<b>3.0</b>	2.9	.08
		2	Few writing assignments	28	20	590	23			
		3	Some writing assignments	41	30	745	29			
		4	Most writing assignments	33	24	601	24			
		5	All writing assignments	15	11	212	8			
		Total		138	100	2,515	100			
c. Gave feedback to a classmate about a draft or outline he or she had written	WRI01c	1	No writing assignments	26	19	397	17	<b>2.8</b>	2.7	.10
		2	Few writing assignments	26	18	625	25			
		3	Some writing assignments	46	33	878	34			
		4	Most writing assignments	28	21	490	20			
		5	All writing assignments	12	9	114	5			
		Total		138	100	2,504	100			
d. Summarized material you read, such as articles, books, or online publications	WRI01d	1	No writing assignments	8	6	144	6	<b>3.4</b>	3.4	-.02
		2	Few writing assignments	22	16	298	12			
		3	Some writing assignments	36	26	785	31			
		4	Most writing assignments	52	38	928	36			
		5	All writing assignments	20	14	353	14			
		Total		138	100	2,508	100			
e. Analyzed or evaluated something you read, researched, or observed	WRI01e	1	No writing assignments	6	5	94	4	<b>3.7</b>	3.7	.05
		2	Few writing assignments	15	11	183	8			
		3	Some writing assignments	25	18	616	25			
		4	Most writing assignments	54	39	1,089	42			
		5	All writing assignments	38	27	523	21			
		Total		138	100	2,505	100			
f. Described your methods or findings related to data you collected in lab or field work, a survey project, etc.	WRI01f	1	No writing assignments	23	17	369	16	<b>3.0</b>	3.0	.03
		2	Few writing assignments	30	22	462	18			
		3	Some writing assignments	24	17	736	29			
		4	Most writing assignments	41	29	698	27			
		5	All writing assignments	20	14	246	10			
		Total		138	100	2,511	100			
g. Argued a position using evidence and reasoning	WRI01g	1	No writing assignments	15	11	273	11	<b>3.4</b>	3.3	.11
		2	Few writing assignments	20	15	366	14			
		3	Some writing assignments	29	21	725	29			
		4	Most writing assignments	41	30	770	31			
		5	All writing assignments	30	23	371	15			
		Total		135	100	2,505	100			

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001 (2-tailed); Refer to the Endnotes page for a key to the triangle symbols.

## Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values <sup>c</sup>	Response options	Frequency Distributions <sup>a</sup>				Statistical Comparisons <sup>b</sup>		
				UWG		Comparison		UWG	Comparison	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
h. Explained in writing the meaning of numerical or statistical data	WRI01h	1	No writing assignments	45	33	555	23	<b>2.6</b>	2.7	-.09
		2	Few writing assignments	29	20	593	23			
		3	Some writing assignments	20	15	666	27			
		4	Most writing assignments	27	21	487	20			
		5	All writing assignments	14	11	181	8			
		Total		135	100	2,482	100			
i. Wrote in the style and format of a specific field (engineering, history, psychology, etc.)	WRI01i	1	No writing assignments	20	15	284	12	<b>3.7</b>	3.5	.13
		2	Few writing assignments	12	9	301	12			
		3	Some writing assignments	15	11	477	19			
		4	Most writing assignments	37	27	762	30			
		5	All writing assignments	53	39	676	27			
		Total		137	100	2,500	100			
j. Addressed a real or imagined audience such as your classmates, a politician, non-experts, etc.	WRI01j	1	No writing assignments	23	17	415	18	<b>3.1</b>	2.9	.16
		2	Few writing assignments	18	13	503	20			
		3	Some writing assignments	33	24	680	27			
		4	Most writing assignments	42	31	561	22			
		5	All writing assignments	21	15	332	13			
		Total		137	100	2,491	100			
<b>2. During the current school year, for how many of your writing assignments has your instructor done the following?</b>										
a. Provided clear instructions describing what he or she wanted you to do	WRI02a	1	No writing assignments	7	6	68	3	<b>3.9</b>	4.0	-.09
		2	Few writing assignments	7	5	99	4			
		3	Some writing assignments	29	22	390	16			
		4	Most writing assignments	44	30	1,227	47			
		5	All writing assignments	51	37	730	30			
		Total		138	100	2,514	100			
b. Explained in advance what he or she wanted you to learn	WRI02b	1	No writing assignments	8	6	112	5	<b>3.8</b>	3.7	.07
		2	Few writing assignments	11	10	252	10			
		3	Some writing assignments	27	19	590	23			
		4	Most writing assignments	45	32	930	37			
		5	All writing assignments	46	33	627	26			
		Total		137	100	2,511	100			
c. Explained in advance the criteria he or she would use to grade your assignment	WRI02c	1	No writing assignments	7	6	79	4	<b>3.9</b>	4.0	-.05
		2	Few writing assignments	9	7	143	6			
		3	Some writing assignments	22	16	401	16			
		4	Most writing assignments	44	32	958	37			
		5	All writing assignments	56	40	921	37			
		Total		138	100	2,502	100			

# NSSE 2015 Experiences with Writing

## Detailed Statistics<sup>e</sup>

### University of West Georgia

#### First-Year Students

Variable name	N	Mean		Standard error <sup>f</sup>		Standard deviation <sup>g</sup>		DF <sup>h</sup>	Sig. <sup>i</sup>	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
	UWG	UWG	Comparison	UWG	Comparison	UWG	Comparison	Comparisons with: Comparison		
WRI01a	133	3.42	2.99	.10	.04	1.20	1.14	171	.000	.37
WRI01b	132	3.59	3.32	.10	.04	1.19	1.12	965	.011	.24
WRI01c	133	3.45	3.20	.10	.04	1.16	1.07	962	.013	.23
WRI01d	131	3.61	3.39	.09	.04	0.97	1.02	961	.023	.21
WRI01e	131	3.94	3.62	.09	.03	0.98	0.98	959	.001	.32
WRI01f	132	2.96	2.87	.12	.04	1.34	1.23	960	.488	.07
WRI01g	131	3.86	3.42	.09	.04	1.03	1.06	962	.000	.42
WRI01h	129	2.34	2.50	.12	.04	1.33	1.20	952	.148	-.14
WRI01i	133	3.01	2.96	.13	.04	1.47	1.26	164	.740	.03
WRI01j	131	3.10	3.08	.12	.04	1.34	1.25	959	.841	.02
WRI02a	133	4.25	4.04	.07	.03	0.80	0.89	965	.011	.24
WRI02b	133	3.98	3.77	.10	.04	1.15	1.04	964	.035	.20
WRI02c	133	4.30	4.03	.08	.03	0.88	0.97	963	.003	.28

# NSSE 2015 Experiences with Writing

## Detailed Statistics<sup>e</sup>

### University of West Georgia

## Seniors

Variable name	N	Mean		Standard error <sup>f</sup>		Standard deviation <sup>g</sup>		DF <sup>h</sup>	Sig. <sup>i</sup>	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
	UWG	UWG	Comparison	UWG	Comparison	UWG	Comparison	Comparisons with: Comparison		
WRI01a	139	3.06	2.88	.10	.03	1.15	1.13	1,743	.064	.16
WRI01b	139	2.96	2.86	.10	.03	1.22	1.19	1,740	.355	.08
WRI01c	139	2.83	2.72	.10	.03	1.22	1.11	1,733	.236	.10
WRI01d	139	3.38	3.39	.09	.03	1.10	1.07	1,736	.851	-.02
WRI01e	139	3.73	3.68	.09	.03	1.11	1.02	1,733	.580	.05
WRI01f	139	3.02	2.99	.11	.03	1.33	1.22	159	.766	.03
WRI01g	136	3.39	3.25	.11	.03	1.29	1.20	1,730	.202	.11
WRI01h	136	2.55	2.66	.12	.03	1.41	1.24	153	.385	-.09
WRI01i	138	3.66	3.49	.12	.03	1.44	1.32	1,730	.142	.13
WRI01j	138	3.14	2.94	.11	.03	1.31	1.28	1,724	.071	.16
WRI02a	139	3.88	3.97	.10	.02	1.14	0.95	155	.366	-.09
WRI02b	138	3.75	3.68	.10	.03	1.19	1.10	1,737	.460	.07
WRI02c	139	3.93	3.98	.10	.03	1.16	1.05	1,731	.584	-.05

## Endnotes

- a. Column percentages are weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups). Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Counts are unweighted; column percentages cannot be replicated from counts.
- b. All statistics are weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups). Unless otherwise noted, statistical comparisons are two-tailed independent  $t$ -tests. Items with categorical response sets are left blank.
- c. These are the values used to calculate means. For the majority of items, these values match the codes in the data file and codebook.
- d. Effect size for independent  $t$ -tests uses Cohen's  $d$ .
- e. Statistics are weighted by institution-reported sex and enrollment status (and institution size for comparison groups). Categorical items are not listed.
- f. The 95% confidence interval for the population mean is equal to the sample mean plus or minus 1.96 times the standard error of the mean.
- g. A measure of the amount individual scores deviate from the mean of all the scores in the distribution.
- h. Degrees of freedom used to compute the  $t$ -tests. Values differ from  $N$ s due to weighting and whether equal variances were assumed.
- i. Statistical comparisons are two-tailed independent  $t$ -tests. Statistical significance represents the probability that the difference between your students' mean and that of the comparison group is due to chance.

### **Key to symbols:**

- ▲ **Your students' average** was significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.
- △ **Your students' average** was significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- ▽ **Your students' average** was significantly lower ( $p < .05$ ) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- ▼ **Your students' average** was significantly lower ( $p < .05$ ) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.

Note: It is important to interpret the direction of differences relative to item wording and your institutional context.