

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
NSSE 2008 REPORT
FIRST-YEAR POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJORS

Department N = 11
University N = 551 (Response rate = 22 percent)

Table 1
Academic and Intellectual Experiences

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

Mean range: 1=never, 2=sometimes, 3=often, 4=very often	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Carnegie Class Mean
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	3.00	2.70	2.67
Made a class presentation	2.09	2.14	2.15
Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	3.27	2.78	2.60
Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	3.27	3.21	3.01
Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments	3.09	3.09	2.74
Come to class without completing readings or assignments	2.09	2.19	2.06
Worked with other students on projects DURING CLASS	1.82	2.30	2.41
Worked with classmates OUTSIDE OF CLASS to prepare class assignments	1.82	2.22	2.43
Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions	3.33	2.72	2.62
Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	1.50	1.66	1.74
Participated in a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of a regular course	1.50	1.69	1.64
Used an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment	2.80	2.66	2.64
Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor	3.30	3.19	3.10
Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	2.60	2.60	2.57
Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor	1.90	1.93	2.15
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class	1.90	1.88	1.86
Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance	2.80	2.63	2.60
Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations	2.50	2.54	2.61
Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.)	1.60	1.62	1.61
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	2.60	2.76	2.68
Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own	2.70	2.88	2.58
Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	2.60	2.82	2.68

Table 2
Mental Activities

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

Mean range: 1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much

	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Carnegie Class Mean
MEMORIZING facts, ideas, or methods from your courses and readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form	2.80	2.92	2.94
ANALYZING the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components	3.40	3.09	3.09
SYNTHESIZING and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	3.20	2.87	2.86
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	3.10	3.00	2.86
APPLYING theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	3.22	2.99	3.03

Table 3
Reading and Writing

During the current school year, about how much reading and writing have you done?

Mean range: 1=none, 2=1-4, 3=5-10, 4=11-20, 5=more than 20

	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Carnegie Class Mean
Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings	3.30	3.19	3.16
Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment	2.70	2.14	2.04
Number of written papers or reports of 20 PAGES OR MORE	1.20	1.21	1.26
Number of written papers or reports BETWEEN 5 AND 19 PAGES	2.50	2.16	2.23
Number of written papers or reports of FEWER THAN 5 PAGES	3.50	3.02	3.01

Table 4
Problem Sets

In a typical week, how many homework problem sets do you complete?

Mean range: 1=none, 2=1-2, 3=3-4, 4=5-6, 5=more than 6

	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Carnegie Class Mean
Number of problem sets (problem-based homework assignments) that take you MORE than an hour to complete	3.20	2.73	2.71
Number of problem sets (problem-based homework assignments) that take you LESS than an hour to complete	3.56	2.85	2.80

Table 5

Mean range: 1=very little to 7=very much

	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Carnegie Class Mean
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.	5.40	5.36	5.43

Table 6
Additional Collegiate Experiences

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

	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Carnegie
			Class Mean
Attended an art exhibit, play, dance, music, theater, or other performance	1.80	2.02	2.21
Exercised or participated in physical fitness activities	1.90	2.59	2.83
Participated in activities to enhance your spirituality (worship, meditation, prayer, etc.)	2.20	1.97	2.18
Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	3.00	2.65	2.61
Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	2.80	2.86	2.76
Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	2.80	2.93	2.83

Table 7
Enriching Educational Experiences

	Dept.								Univ.							
	Have not decided		Do not plan to do		Plan to do		Done		Have not decided		Do not plan to do		Plan to do		Done	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment	0	.0	0	.0	8	80.0	2	20.0	60	14%	22	5%	338	73%	36	8%
Community service or volunteer work	0	.0	0	.0	5	50.0	5	50.0	58	13%	25	6%	186	41%	183	39%
Participate in a learning community	3	33.3	2	22.2	1	11.1	3	33.3	82	19%	129	29%	79	18%	162	35%
Work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements	3	30.0	3	30.0	4	40.0	0	.0	154	34%	119	26%	153	34%	27	6%
Foreign (additional) language coursework	0	.0	0	.0	8	80.0	2	20.0	69	16%	66	15%	220	48%	98	21%
Study abroad	1	10.0	2	20.0	7	70.0	0	.0	131	30%	90	21%	217	46%	14	3%
Independent study or self-designed major	1	10.0	6	60.0	3	30.0	0	.0	154	34%	205	44%	78	18%	18	4%
Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam)	2	20.0	2	20.0	6	60.0	0	.0	204	46%	59	13%	182	41%	0	.0

Table 8

Mean range: 1=unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation to 7=friendly, supportive, sense of belonging

	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Carnegie Class Mean
Quality: Your relationships with other students	4.22	5.06	5.47

Table 9

Mean range: 1=unavailable, unhelpful, unsympathetic to 7=available, helpful, sympathetic

	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Carnegie Class Mean
Quality: Your relationships with faculty members	4.11	5.03	5.05

Table 10

*Mean range: 1=unhelpful, inconsiderate, rigid to 7=helpful, considerate, flexible

	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Carnegie Class Mean
Quality: Your relationships with administrative personnel and offices	3.11	4.15	4.55

**Table 11
Time Usage**

About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following?

Mean range: 1=0hrs/wk, 2=1-5 hrs/wk, 3=6-10 hrs/wk, 4=11-15 hrs/wk, 5=16-20 hrs/wk, 6=21-25 hrs/wk, 7=26-30 hrs/wk, 8=more than 30 hrs/wk

	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Carnegie Class Mean
Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, and other academic activities)	3.89	3.69	4.06
Working for pay ON CAMPUS	1.25	1.43	1.54
Working for pay OFF CAMPUS	5.00	3.03	2.12
Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)	2.00	1.88	2.29
Relaxing and socializing (watching TV, partying, etc.)	3.11	3.83	3.91
Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse, etc.)	2.33	1.92	1.53
Commuting to class (driving, walking, etc.)	2.56	2.69	2.31

Table 12
Institutional Environment

To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following?

Mean range: 1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Carnegie Class Mean
Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	2.78	3.04	3.14
Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	2.22	2.92	3.06
Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	2.44	2.85	2.67
Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	1.78	2.17	2.25
Providing the support you need to thrive socially	1.67	2.40	2.51
Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)	2.00	2.72	2.90
Using computers in academic work	2.89	3.33	3.33

Table 13
Educational and Personal Growth

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

Mean range: 1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Carnegie Class Mean
Acquiring a broad general education	2.78	3.16	3.19
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	2.00	2.54	2.79
Writing clearly and effectively	2.78	3.03	2.95
Speaking clearly and effectively	2.67	2.80	2.75
Thinking critically and analytically	2.78	3.15	3.19
Analyzing quantitative problems	2.56	2.89	2.98
Using computing and information technology	2.44	2.92	3.06
Working effectively with others	2.33	2.86	2.97
Voting in local, state (provincial), or national (federal) elections	2.56	2.31	2.27
Learning effectively on your own	2.33	2.87	2.95
Understanding yourself	2.44	2.73	2.78
Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	2.56	2.89	2.65
Solving complex real-world problems	1.88	2.63	2.68
Developing a personal code of values and ethics	2.00	2.61	2.70
Contributing to the welfare of your community	2.00	2.38	2.51
Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	2.00	2.04	2.21

Table 14
Academic Advising

Mean range: 1=poor, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=excellent	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Carnegie Class Mean
Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution?	2.22	2.85	2.98

Table 15
Satisfaction

Mean range: 1=poor, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=excellent	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Carnegie Class Mean
How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?	2.78	3.07	3.20

Table 16
Satisfaction

Mean range: 1=definitely no, 2=probably no, 3=probably yes, 4=definitely yes	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Carnegie Class Mean
If you could start over again, would you go to the SAME INSTITUTION you are now attending?	2.78	3.12	3.26

University System of Georgia Consortium Questions

Table 17

Mean range: 1=0, 2=1, 3=2, 4=3, 5=4 or more times	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Univ. System Mean
During the academic year, how many times have you participated in academic advising at this college?	2.13	2.33	2.88

Table 18

Respond to the following statements based on the academic advising you have participated in at this college this year.

Mean range: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, 4=strongly agree	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Univ. System Mean
The academic advising I received on course requirements, selection, and scheduling was helpful.	2.50	3.10	3.16
The academic advising I received on selecting, changing, or modifying my major field of study was helpful.	2.80	3.02	3.07
The academic advising I received on my career preparation, employment opportunities, and/or graduate school was helpful.	2.75	2.92	2.97
The academic advising I received helped me overcome academic difficulties.	2.60	2.77	2.86

Table 19

Mean range: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, 4=strongly agree	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Univ. System Mean
Courses at this college are offered in such a way that I can take them in the recommended sequence and still complete my degree in a timely manner.	2.75	3.10	2.99

Table 20***Since entering this college, how often have you felt:***

Mean range: 1=not at all, 2=rarely, 3=occasionally, 4=frequently

	Dept. Mean	Univ. Mean	Univ. System Mean
That your job responsibilities interfered with your coursework	3.40	2.60	2.59
That your family responsibilities interfered with your coursework	3.20	2.25	2.24
That financial difficulties interfered with your coursework	3.00	2.46	2.32
That your social life interfered with your coursework	1.75	2.39	2.33
That you lacked the computer skills necessary to complete your assignments	1.38	1.46	1.48
That you lacked the math skills necessary to complete your assignments	1.38	1.79	1.85
That you lacked the writing skills necessary to complete your assignments	1.63	1.68	1.70