

# Summary of Key Evidence for UCORE: Student Learning at the First-Year and Senior Level 2017 National Survey of Student Engagement – WSU-wide

*Prepared by the Office of Assessment of Teaching and Learning (ATL)*

## **Introduction**

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) annually collects information at hundreds of four-year colleges and universities about first-year and senior student participation in activities and programs that promote their learning and personal development. NSSE has been in operation since 2000 and has been used at more than 1,500 colleges and universities in the US and Canada. More than 90% of participating institutions administer the survey on a periodic basis, generally every 2-3 years.

In 2017, questions on the NSSE survey provided indirect evidence of student learning on five of WSU's Seven Learning Goals of Undergraduate Education (Critical & Creative Thinking, Quantitative Reasoning, Communication, Diversity, and Depth, Breadth & Integration of Learning). This document is intended to summarize selected NSSE results related to WSU's Seven Learning Goals.

## **Assessment**

NSSE assesses the extent to which first-year and senior students engage in educational practices associated with high levels of learning and development. At WSU, NSSE is offered to all first-year and senior students on all WSU campuses every other spring. With the census administration, students receive a survey invitation and reminders by email. The Office of Institutional Research (IR) coordinates the administration of NSSE at WSU.

The NSSE instrument, updated in 2013, collects information in five categories: (1) participation in dozens of educationally purposeful activities, (2) institutional requirements and the challenging nature of coursework, (3) perceptions of the college environment, (4) estimates of educational and personal growth since starting college, and (5) background and demographic information. Participating institutions may also append up to two Topical Modules – short sets of questions on designated topics that allow for deeper exploration of important areas based on campus needs.

*Note: NSSE provides participating institutions with a variety of reports. WSU's current and historic NSSE results are available on [IR's NSSE survey webpage](#). As with any voluntary survey, response rates and the presence of non-response bias should be considered when evaluating NSSE results. Low response rates present a concern regarding the accuracy of the results as low response rates may impact how representative the results are. In other words, those who did not respond (non-respondents) may have different views than those who did respond and therefore the results may not be representative of the entire group.*

## **2017 NSSE Results**

**Context:** In 2017, 1,205 seniors and 1,175 first-year students responded to the survey at WSU. The WSU response rate was 22% for seniors and 27% for first-year students, compared to the average national response rate of 22% for participating institutions with undergraduate enrollments of 10,000 or more. Where survey results are displayed alongside a peer comparison, the peer comparison includes more than 40,000 seniors from Carnegie classified "Research Universities-Very High Research Activity" institutions participating in NSSE in 2016 or 2017 (with the exception of topical module results, which are displayed alongside other institutions that administered the module). 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.

## CRITICAL and CREATIVE THINKING

### SENIORS:

- **92%** of seniors reported having “very much” or “quite a bit” of confidence in their ability to complete tasks requiring **creative thinking and problem solving** (Figure 1)
- **91%** of seniors reported having “very much” or “quite a bit” of confidence in their ability to complete tasks requiring **critical thinking and analysis of arguments and information** (Figure 1)
- **86%** of seniors reported that their experience at WSU contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in **thinking critically and analytically** “very much” or “quite a bit” (Figure 2)

Figure 1

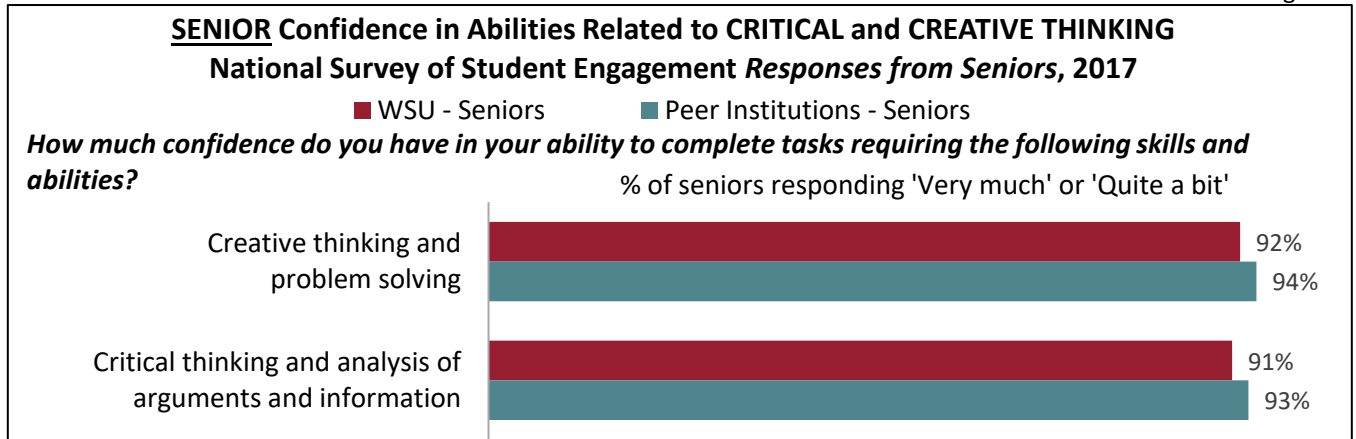
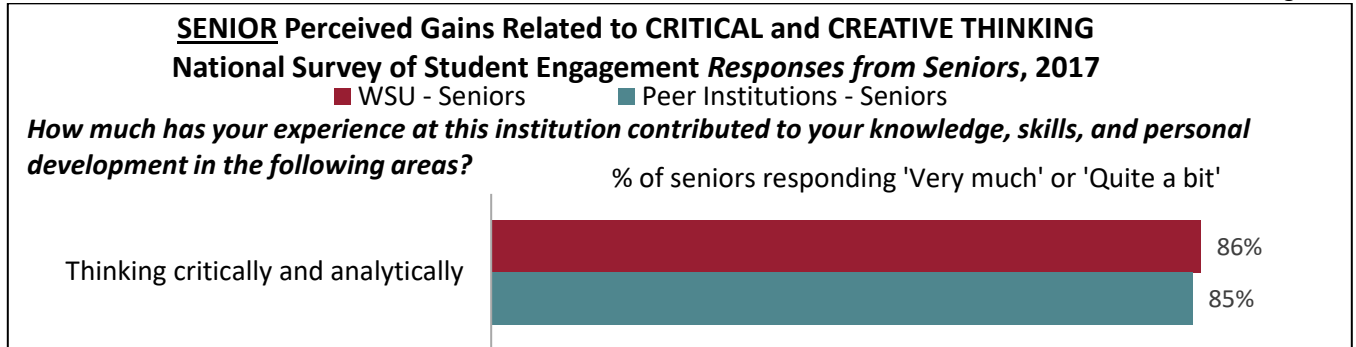


Figure 2



### FIRST-YEAR:

- **68%** of first-year students reported **forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information** “very much” or “quite a bit” during the academic year (Table 1)

Table 1

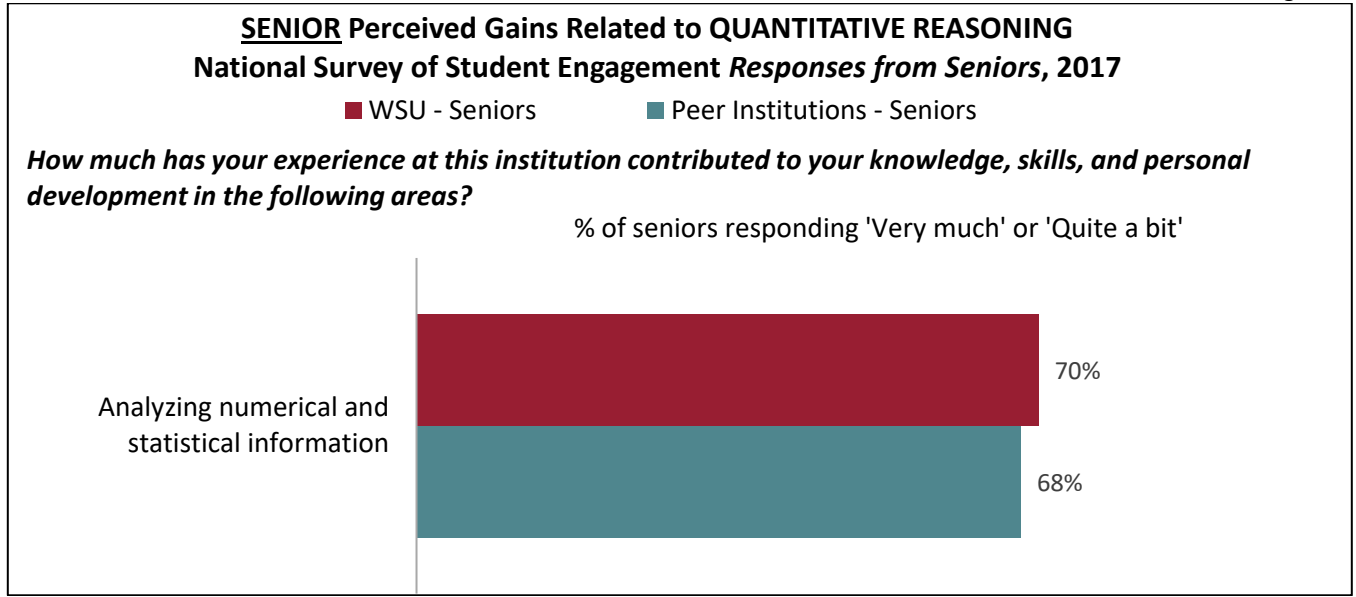
<b>FIRST-YEAR Skill Development Related to CRITICAL and CREATIVE THINKING</b>				
<b>National Survey of Student Engagement Responses from First-Year Students, 2017</b>				
<i>During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following?</i>	<b>% of first-year students</b>			
	<b>Very much</b>	<b>Quite a bit</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>Very little</b>
Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source	22%	50%	25%	3%
Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations	22%	49%	27%	2%
Analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts	21%	48%	27%	3%
Forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information	21%	47%	28%	3%

## QUANTITATIVE REASONING

### SENIORS:

- **70%** of seniors reported that their experience at WSU contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in **analyzing numerical and statistical information** “very much” or “quite a bit” (Figure 3)

Figure 3



### FIRST-YEAR:

- **92%** of first-year students reported **reaching conclusions based on their own analysis of numerical information** during the academic year (Table 2)

Table 2

<b>FIRST-YEAR Skill Development Related to QUANTITATIVE REASONING</b> <b>National Survey of Student Engagement Responses from First-Year Students, 2017</b>				
<i>During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?</i>	% of first-year students			
	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Reached conclusions based on your own analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics, etc.)	15%	41%	36%	8%
Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information	15%	42%	34%	9%

## COMMUNICATION, WRITTEN

### SENIORS:

- **84%** of seniors reported having “very much” or “quite a bit” of confidence in their ability to complete tasks requiring **clear writing** (Figure 4)
- **69%** of seniors reported that their experience at WSU contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in **writing clearly and effectively** “very much” or “quite a bit” (Figure 5)

Figure 4

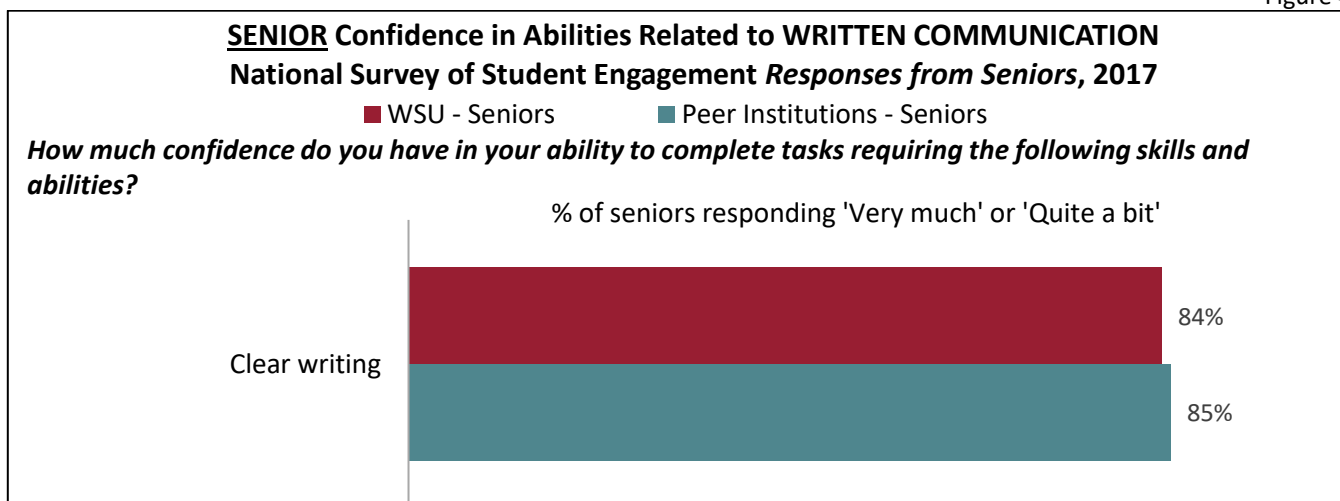
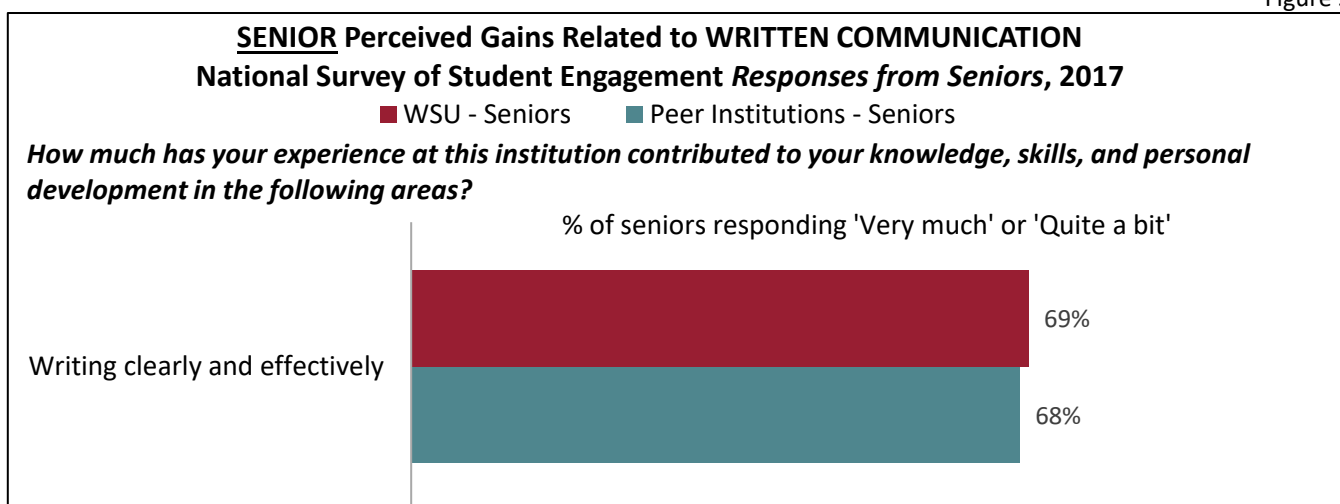


Figure 5



### FIRST-YEAR:

- **84%** of first-year students reported being assigned three or more **papers, reports, or other writing tasks** of up to 5 pages in length during the academic year (Table 3)

Table 3

<b>FIRST-YEAR Skill Development Related to WRITTEN COMMUNICATION</b> National Survey of Student Engagement <i>Responses from First-Year Students, 2017</i>				
<i>During the current school year, about how many papers, reports, or other writing tasks of the following lengths have you been assigned?</i>	% of first-year students			
	More than 10 papers	6-10 papers	3-5 papers	Less than 3 papers
Up to 5 pages	27%	27%	30%	16%
Between 6 and 10 pages	4%	7%	19%	71%
11 or more pages	1%	2%	3%	93%

## COMMUNICATION, ORAL

### SENIORS:

- 67% of seniors reported having “very much” or “quite a bit” of confidence in their ability to complete tasks requiring **persuasive speaking** (Figure 6)
- 59% of seniors reported that their experience at WSU contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in **speaking clearly and effectively** “very much” or “quite a bit” (Figure 7)

Figure 6

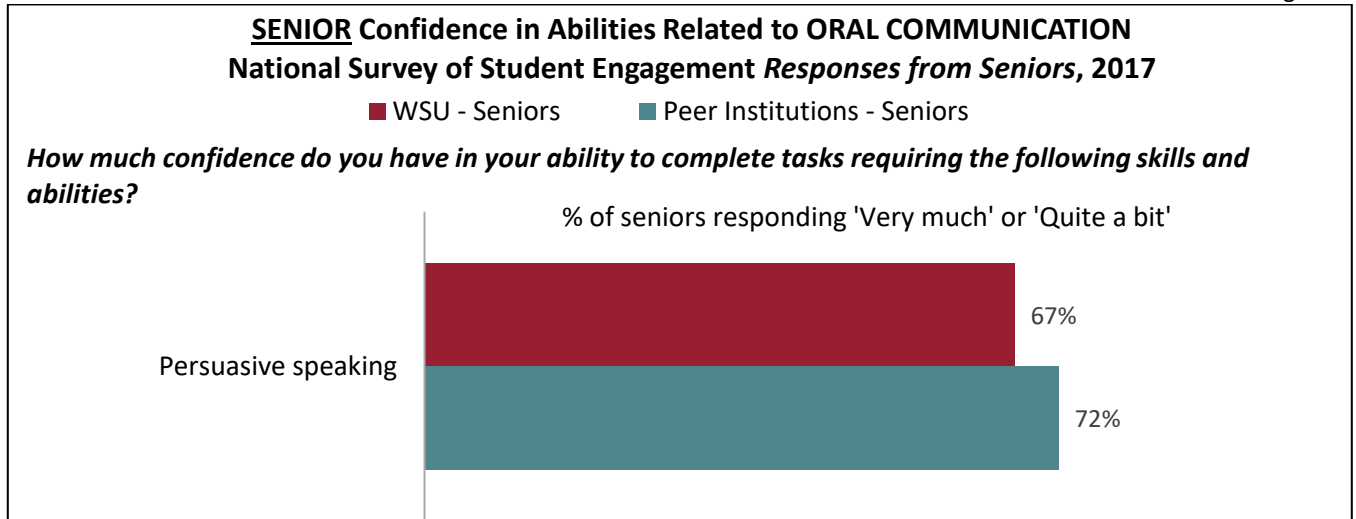
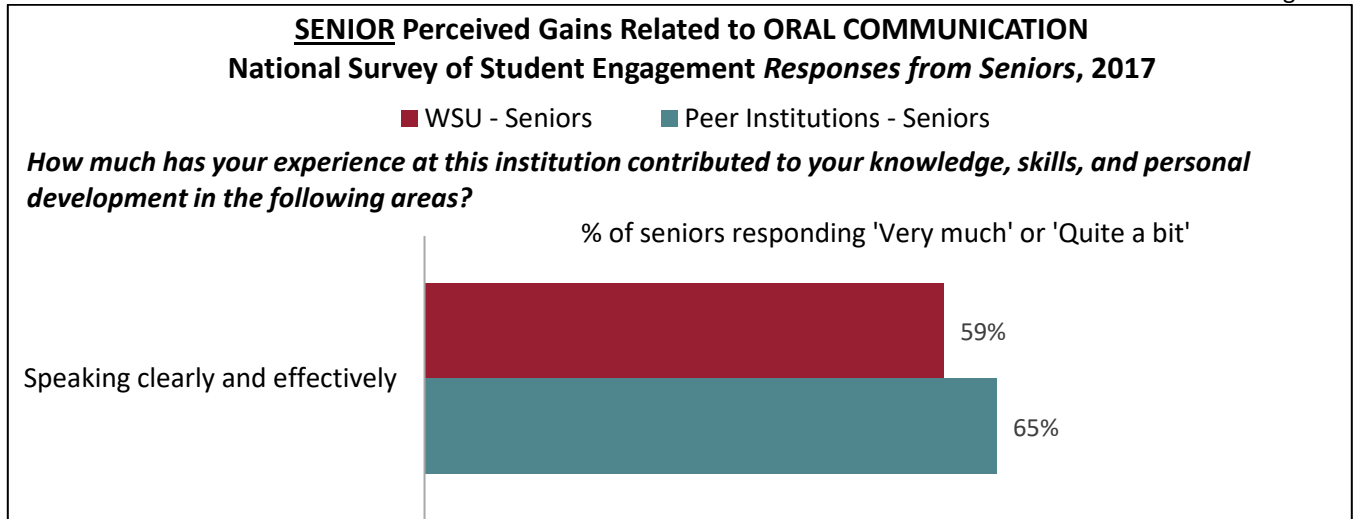


Figure 7



### FIRST-YEAR:

- 71% of first-year students reported **giving a course presentation** during the academic year (Table 4)

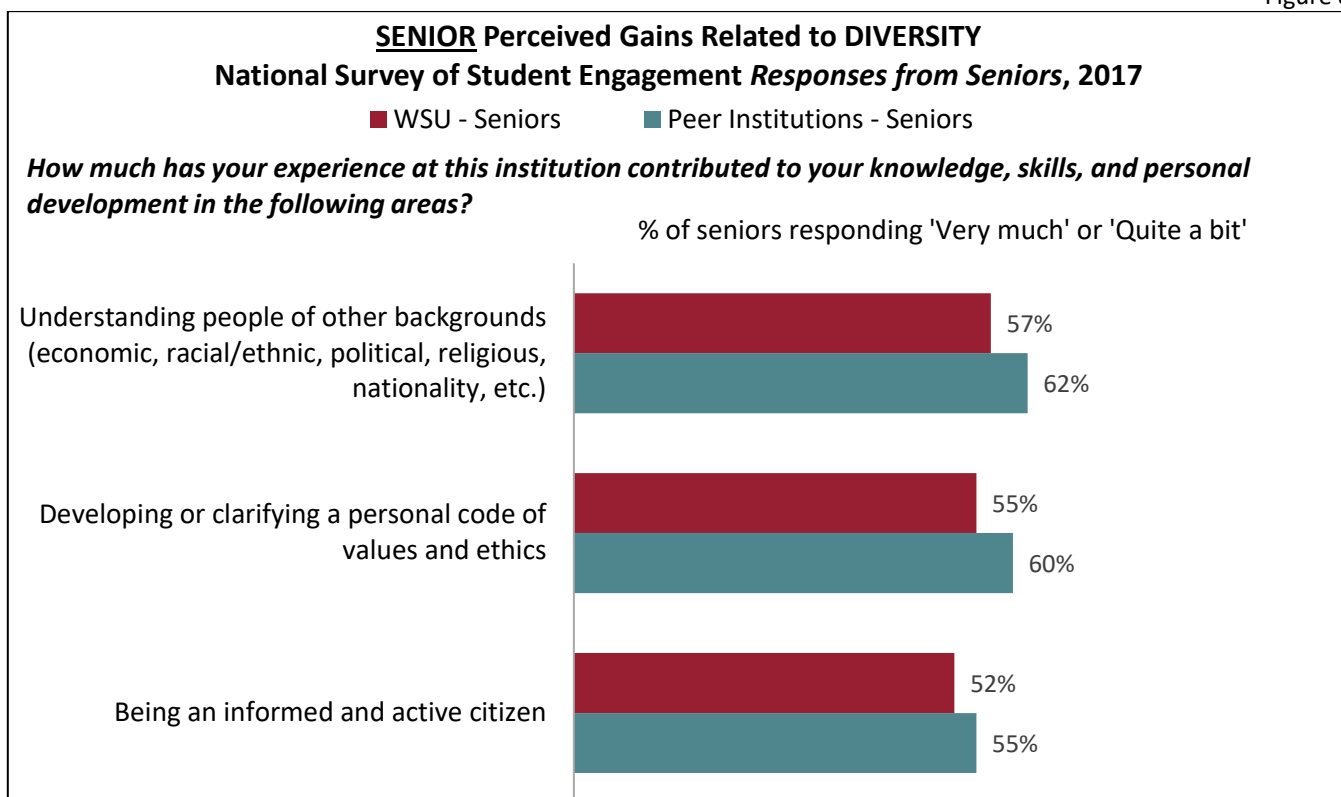
Table 4

<b>FIRST-YEAR Skill Development Related to ORAL COMMUNICATION</b>				
<b>National Survey of Student Engagement <i>Responses from First-Year Students, 2017</i></b>				
<i>During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?</i>	% of first-year students			
	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Given a course presentation	6%	18%	47%	29%

**SENIORS:**

- **57%** of seniors reported that their experience at WSU contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in ***understanding people of other backgrounds*** “very much” or “quite a bit” (Figure 8)
- **55%** of seniors reported that their experience at WSU contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in ***developing or clarifying a personal code of values and ethics*** “very much” or “quite a bit” (Figure 8)
- **52%** of seniors reported that their experience at WSU contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in ***being an informed and active citizen*** “very much” or “quite a bit” (Figure 8)

Figure 8



**FIRST-YEAR:**

- **98%** of first-year students reported ***trying to better understand someone else’s views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective*** during the academic year (Table 5)

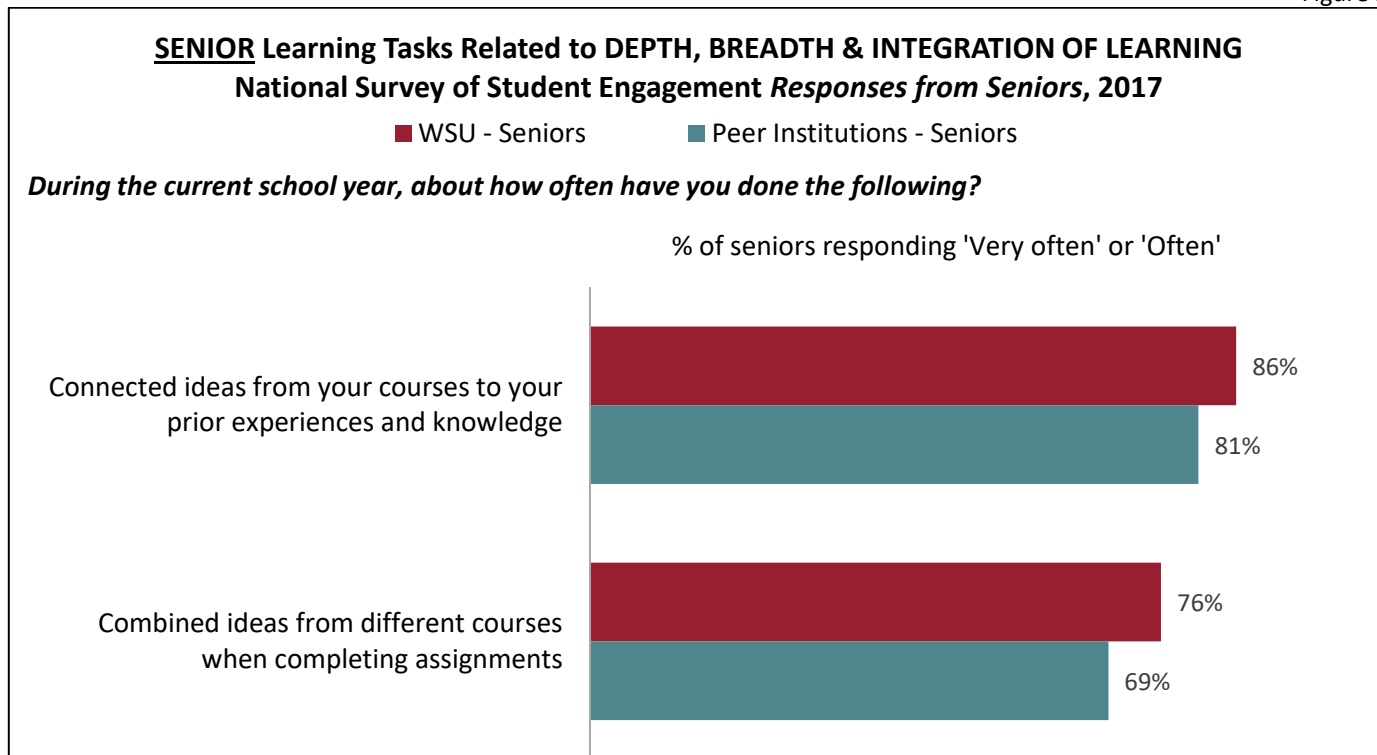
Table 5

<b>FIRST-YEAR Skill Development Related to DIVERSITY</b>				
<b>National Survey of Student Engagement Responses from First-Year Students, 2017</b>				
<b><i>During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?</i></b>	<b>% of first-year students</b>			
	<b>Very often</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>
Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	23%	48%	27%	2%
Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	18%	49%	29%	4%
Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments	15%	38%	38%	8%

**SENIORS:**

- **86%** of seniors reported **connecting ideas from their courses to prior experiences and knowledge** “very often” or “often” during the academic year (Figure 9)
- **76%** of seniors reported **combining ideas from different courses when completing assignments** “very often” or “often” during the academic year (Figure 9)

Figure 9



**FIRST-YEAR:**

- **93%** of first-year students reported **connecting their learning to societal problems or issues** during the academic year (Table 6)

Table 6

<b>FIRST-YEAR Skill Development Related to DEPTH, BREADTH and INTEGRATION OF LEARNING</b>				
<b>National Survey of Student Engagement Responses from First-Year Students, 2017</b>				
<i>During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?</i>	% of first-year students			
	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	20%	48%	29%	3%
Connected your learning to societal problems or issues	15%	40%	38%	7%