USM Participation in the 2011 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)

Background Information. The NSSE and FSSE surveys were developed by the Center for Post-Secondary Research and Planning at Indiana University to assist colleges and universities assess their institutional effectiveness. The items on the surveys were designed based upon twenty years of published research on effective educational practices in higher education. The assumption was that if institutions had a tool to examine the student engagement on their campus, it could be used internally for improving the overall quality of undergraduate education (i.e. teaching and learning).

Survey Administration. During the spring 2011 semester, beginning in February, the NSSE online survey will be administered to all freshmen and senior students. The students will be asked to give their feedback about their educational experiences in the past year (2010-11 academic year). In addition, the FSSE online survey will be administered in March to all faculty and instructors who are teaching at least one class. The faculty will be asked to give their feedback about the typical student engagement in their classes in the past year. The data are collected by the NSSE Institute at Indiana University and then given to the participating institutions by early fall for further analysis.

Participation. USM has been IRB approved to participate in the 2011 year and we highly encourage faculty to complete the survey. In addition, it would be helpful if faculty would encourage students in their classes (freshmen and seniors only) to complete the online survey, since high response rates lead to a better understanding of the data and contributes to more effective improvements.


*The Office of Academic Assessment usually receives the NSSE and FSSE survey results by late September by the NSSE Institute; therefore, breakdown reports for the 2011 survey will most likely be available by mid-semester in fall 2011.
National Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice

The NSSE survey results fall into five key clusters of activities that research studies show are linked to desired outcomes in college. The description of each benchmark is listed below.

LEVEL OF ACADEMIC CHALLENGE

Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. College and universities promote high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance.

STUDENT INTERACTIONS WITH FACULTY MEMBERS

Students learn first hand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside the classroom. As a result, their teachers become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous lifelong learning.

ACTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and are asked to think about and apply what they are learning in different settings. Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material prepares students to deal with the messy, unscripted problems they will encounter daily, during and after college.

ENRICHING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom enhance academic programs. Experiencing diversity teaches students valuable things about themselves and others. Technology facilitates collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community services, and senior capstone courses provide opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge.

SUPPORTIVE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT

Students perform better and are more satisfied at college that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus.