
NSSE 2024 Topical Module Report

Experiences with Writing

Brenau University

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.

Comparison group details are in the online Selected Comparison Groups report, linked in the Data & Reports table on the Institution Interface. A PDF copy is also saved in your report download folder.

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First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				Brenau		Writing Experiences		Brenau	Writing Experiences	Effect size ^d
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
1. During the current school year, for how many writing assignments have you done the following?										
a. Talked with a classmate, friend, or family member to develop your ideas before starting your assignment	WRI01a	1	No writing assignments	3	6	477	12	3.0	3.0	.04
		2	Few writing assignments	10	19	819	22			
		3	Some writing assignments	27	50	1,386	35			
		4	Most writing assignments	12	22	903	23			
		5	All writing assignments	2	4	373	9			
		Total		54	100	3,958	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	5	9	477	12	3.0	3.0	-.04
		2	Few writing assignments	11	21	733	20			
		3	Some writing assignments	19	36	1,209	32			
		4	Most writing assignments	15	28	1,043	26			
		5	All writing assignments	3	6	476	11			
		Total		53	100	3,938	100			
c. Given feedback to a classmate about a draft or outline	WRI01c	1	No writing assignments	5	9	591	15	3.0	2.9	.04
		2	Few writing assignments	13	24	752	20			
		3	Some writing assignments	18	33	1,328	33			
		4	Most writing assignments	15	28	872	22			
		5	All writing assignments	3	6	401	9			
		Total		54	100	3,944	100			
d. Summarized material you read such as articles, books, or online publications	WRI01d	1	No writing assignments	1	2	301	7	3.6	3.3 *	.27
		2	Few writing assignments	5	9	573	15			
		3	Some writing assignments	18	34	1,329	35			
		4	Most writing assignments	21	40	1,225	31			
		5	All writing assignments	8	15	512	13			
		Total		53	100	3,940	100			
e. Analyzed or evaluated something you read, researched, or observed	WRI01e	1	No writing assignments	2	4	195	5	3.8	3.5	.20
		2	Few writing assignments	5	9	409	11			
		3	Some writing assignments	11	20	1,096	29			
		4	Most writing assignments	22	41	1,490	37			
		5	All writing assignments	14	26	756	19			
		Total		54	100	3,946	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	9	17	628	15	3.0	3.0	.02
		2	Few writing assignments	7	13	731	19			
		3	Some writing assignments	20	38	1,230	32			
		4	Most writing assignments	10	19	922	24			
		5	All writing assignments	7	13	429	11			
		Total		53	100	3,940	100			
g. Argued a position using evidence and reasoning	WRI01g	1	No writing assignments	3	6	509	12	3.4	3.2	.19
		2	Few writing assignments	6	11	548	14			
		3	Some writing assignments	18	33	1,214	32			
		4	Most writing assignments	20	37	1,127	30			
		5	All writing assignments	7	13	528	13			
		Total		54	100	3,926	100			

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

First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				Brenau		Writing Experiences		Brenau	Writing Experiences	Effect size ^d
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
h. Explained in writing the meaning of numerical or statistical data	WRI01h	1	No writing assignments	12	22	959	23	2.5	2.6	-.10
		2	Few writing assignments	18	33	906	23			
		3	Some writing assignments	11	20	1,125	29			
		4	Most writing assignments	10	19	628	17			
		5	All writing assignments	3	6	319	8			
		Total		54	100	3,937	100			
i. Written in the style and format of a specific field (engineering, history, psychology, etc.)	WRI01i	1	No writing assignments	7	13	774	19	3.3	2.9 *	.29
		2	Few writing assignments	8	15	725	19			
		3	Some writing assignments	13	24	1,087	29			
		4	Most writing assignments	15	28	829	21			
		5	All writing assignments	11	20	517	13			
		Total		54	100	3,932	100			
j. Addressed a real or imagined audience such as your classmates, a politician, non-experts, etc.	WRI01j	1	No writing assignments	4	7	737	18	3.4	2.9 **	.42
		2	Few writing assignments	8	15	738	19			
		3	Some writing assignments	17	31	1,189	31			
		4	Most writing assignments	12	22	806	21			
		5	All writing assignments	13	24	461	11			
		Total		54	100	3,931	100			
2. During the current school year, for how many of your writing assignments have your instructors done the following?										
a. Provided clear instructions describing what they wanted you to do	WRI02a	1	No writing assignments	1	2	132	3	4.0	3.9	.10
		2	Few writing assignments	3	6	291	8			
		3	Some writing assignments	10	19	795	22			
		4	Most writing assignments	23	43	1,384	36			
		5	All writing assignments	17	31	1,340	32			
		Total		54	100	3,942	100			
b. Explained in advance what they wanted you to learn	WRI02b	1	No writing assignments	1	2	185	4	3.8	3.7	.10
		2	Few writing assignments	3	6	386	10			
		3	Some writing assignments	17	31	943	25			
		4	Most writing assignments	16	30	1,149	30			
		5	All writing assignments	17	31	1,267	30			
		Total		54	100	3,930	100			
c. Explained in advance the criteria they would use to grade your assignment	WRI02c	1	No writing assignments	2	4	165	4	4.1	3.9	.15
		2	Few writing assignments	2	4	281	8			
		3	Some writing assignments	10	19	750	20			
		4	Most writing assignments	16	30	1,191	31			
		5	All writing assignments	24	44	1,548	38			
		Total		54	100	3,935	100			

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

Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				Brenau		Writing Experiences		Brenau	Writing Experiences	Effect size ^d
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
1. During the current school year, for how many writing assignments have you done the following?										
a. Talked with a classmate, friend, or family member to develop your ideas before starting your assignment	WRI01a	1	No writing assignments	10	12	429	12	2.9	3.0	-.06
		2	Few writing assignments	18	20	789	21			
		3	Some writing assignments	33	39	1,232	34			
		4	Most writing assignments	19	22	904	23			
		5	All writing assignments	5	6	338	9			
		Total		85	100	3,692	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	15	18	561	17	2.7	2.8	-.08
		2	Few writing assignments	24	27	867	25			
		3	Some writing assignments	23	28	1,139	31			
		4	Most writing assignments	17	21	782	20			
		5	All writing assignments	5	6	331	9			
		Total		84	100	3,680	100			
c. Given feedback to a classmate about a draft or outline	WRI01c	1	No writing assignments	15	18	633	18	2.7	2.7	-.03
		2	Few writing assignments	26	29	878	25			
		3	Some writing assignments	22	26	1,243	34			
		4	Most writing assignments	17	21	672	17			
		5	All writing assignments	5	6	264	7			
		Total		85	100	3,690	100			
d. Summarized material you read such as articles, books, or online publications	WRI01d	1	No writing assignments	5	6	228	6	3.6	3.3 *	.22 △
		2	Few writing assignments	8	9	511	15			
		3	Some writing assignments	21	24	1,120	31			
		4	Most writing assignments	36	44	1,280	34			
		5	All writing assignments	15	17	539	14			
		Total		85	100	3,678	100			
e. Analyzed or evaluated something you read, researched, or observed	WRI01e	1	No writing assignments	2	2	129	4	3.9	3.7	.19
		2	Few writing assignments	5	6	333	10			
		3	Some writing assignments	16	19	860	24			
		4	Most writing assignments	42	51	1,549	41			
		5	All writing assignments	20	22	807	21			
		Total		85	100	3,678	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	10	12	441	12	3.2	3.1	.04
		2	Few writing assignments	13	15	595	17			
		3	Some writing assignments	23	27	1,051	28			
		4	Most writing assignments	27	32	1,091	29			
		5	All writing assignments	12	13	503	13			
		Total		85	100	3,681	100			
g. Argued a position using evidence and reasoning	WRI01g	1	No writing assignments	5	6	398	11	3.4	3.2	.12
		2	Few writing assignments	14	16	591	15			
		3	Some writing assignments	27	32	1,090	29			
		4	Most writing assignments	24	29	1,067	29			
		5	All writing assignments	15	17	530	15			
		Total		85	100	3,676	100			

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

Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				Brenau		Writing Experiences		Brenau	Writing Experiences	Effect size ^d
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
h. Explained in writing the meaning of numerical or statistical data	WRI01h	1	No writing assignments	20	23	559	15	2.7	2.9	-.19
		2	Few writing assignments	19	22	794	21			
		3	Some writing assignments	24	27	1,122	31			
		4	Most writing assignments	14	19	845	23			
		5	All writing assignments	8	9	353	10			
		Total		85	100	3,673	100			
i. Written in the style and format of a specific field (engineering, history, psychology, etc.)	WRI01i	1	No writing assignments	12	15	475	14	3.2	3.3	-.07
		2	Few writing assignments	15	17	518	14			
		3	Some writing assignments	19	22	825	23			
		4	Most writing assignments	21	25	1,037	27			
		5	All writing assignments	18	21	820	21			
		Total		85	100	3,675	100			
j. Addressed a real or imagined audience such as your classmates, a politician, non-experts, etc.	WRI01j	1	No writing assignments	13	15	661	18	2.9	2.9	.05
		2	Few writing assignments	20	24	727	20			
		3	Some writing assignments	25	30	1,078	30			
		4	Most writing assignments	13	15	803	22			
		5	All writing assignments	14	16	402	10			
		Total		85	100	3,671	100			
2. During the current school year, for how many of your writing assignments have your instructors done the following?										
a. Provided clear instructions describing what they wanted you to do	WRI02a	1	No writing assignments	2	2	95	3	3.9	3.9	.03
		2	Few writing assignments	4	4	229	7			
		3	Some writing assignments	20	24	706	20			
		4	Most writing assignments	32	38	1,486	39			
		5	All writing assignments	27	31	1,161	31			
		Total		85	100	3,677	100			
b. Explained in advance what they wanted you to learn	WRI02b	1	No writing assignments	5	6	152	4	3.9	3.7	.13
		2	Few writing assignments	5	6	341	10			
		3	Some writing assignments	16	18	843	23			
		4	Most writing assignments	32	39	1,244	34			
		5	All writing assignments	27	31	1,087	28			
		Total		85	100	3,667	100			
c. Explained in advance the criteria they would use to grade your assignment	WRI02c	1	No writing assignments	3	3	126	4	4.1	3.9	.10
		2	Few writing assignments	5	6	231	7			
		3	Some writing assignments	13	16	631	18			
		4	Most writing assignments	28	33	1,268	34			
		5	All writing assignments	36	42	1,416	37			
		Total		85	100	3,672	100			

First-Year Students

Variable name	N	Mean		Standard error ^f		Standard deviation ^g		DF ^h	Sig. ⁱ	Effect size ^d
	Brenau	Brenau	Writing Experiences	Brenau	Writing Experiences	Brenau	Writing Experiences	Comparisons with: Writing Experiences		
WRI01a	54	3.00	2.95	.121	.013	.89	1.13	54	.692	.04
WRI01b	53	3.00	3.05	.145	.014	1.06	1.17	7,551	.760	-.04
WRI01c	54	2.96	2.92	.145	.014	1.06	1.18	7,560	.777	.04
WRI01d	53	3.57	3.27	.128	.012	.93	1.08	7,555	.050	.27
WRI01e	54	3.76	3.55	.145	.012	1.06	1.05	7,567	.136	.20
WRI01f	53	2.98	2.96	.171	.014	1.25	1.20	7,555	.890	.02
WRI01g	54	3.41	3.19	.141	.014	1.04	1.18	7,534	.170	.19
WRI01h	54	2.52	2.64	.162	.014	1.19	1.23	7,549	.484	-.10
WRI01i	54	3.28	2.90	.178	.015	1.31	1.29	7,534	.033	.29
WRI01j	54	3.41	2.88	.166	.014	1.22	1.24	7,531	.002	.42
WRI02a	54	3.96	3.86	.129	.012	.95	1.04	7,548	.482	.10
WRI02b	54	3.83	3.72	.137	.013	1.00	1.13	7,526	.475	.10
WRI02c	54	4.07	3.91	.144	.013	1.06	1.10	7,524	.281	.15

Seniors

Variable name	N	Mean		Standard error ^f		Standard deviation ^g		DF ^h	Sig. ⁱ	Effect size ^d
	Brenau	Brenau	Writing Experiences	Brenau	Writing Experiences	Brenau	Writing Experiences	Comparisons with: Writing Experiences		
WRI01a	86	2.89	2.96	.116	.014	1.07	1.15	7,027	.559	-.06
WRI01b	85	2.70	2.79	.126	.014	1.16	1.18	7,000	.480	-.08
WRI01c	86	2.68	2.71	.127	.014	1.18	1.14	7,021	.814	-.03
WRI01d	86	3.59	3.35	.114	.013	1.06	1.09	6,999	.040	.22
WRI01e	86	3.86	3.66	.098	.012	.91	1.03	88	.050	.19
WRI01f	86	3.19	3.14	.132	.015	1.22	1.21	7,007	.734	.04
WRI01g	86	3.35	3.21	.120	.015	1.11	1.21	7,000	.266	.12
WRI01h	86	2.68	2.91	.137	.014	1.27	1.20	6,996	.074	-.19
WRI01i	86	3.19	3.28	.146	.016	1.35	1.32	6,997	.531	-.07
WRI01j	86	2.94	2.87	.139	.015	1.29	1.24	6,981	.615	.05
WRI02a	86	3.91	3.88	.104	.012	.97	1.02	6,994	.790	.03
WRI02b	86	3.85	3.71	.119	.013	1.10	1.11	6,983	.247	.13
WRI02c	86	4.05	3.94	.114	.013	1.06	1.08	6,971	.345	.10

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. Comparison group details are in the Selected Comparison Groups report, linked in the Data & Reports table on the Institution Interface.
- 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; z-tests use Cohen's h.
- 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 Ns due to weighting and whether equal variances were assumed.
- i. Statistical comparisons are two-tailed independent t-tests or z-tests. Statistical significance represents the probability that the difference between your students' mean and that of the students in the comparison group is due to chance.
- j. Statistical comparison uses z-test to compare the proportion who responded (depending on the item) "Done or in progress" or "Yes" with all who responded otherwise.
- k. Mean represents the proportion who responded (depending on the item) "Done or in progress" or "Yes."

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. You may not see all of these symbols in your report.