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# **NSSE 2017 Topical Module Report Development of Transferable Skills**

Queen's University

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## About This Topical Module

Adapted from a pilot survey that was developed by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, this module examines activities that develop useful and transferable skills for the workplace (such as verbal and written fluency and analytic inquiry). The module complements questions on the core survey about higher-order learning, reflective and integrative learning, and students' perceptions of their development in a variety of areas. 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 'TransSkills group' column of this report.

Group label	TransSkills group
Date submitted	5/10/17
How was this comparison group constructed?	Your institution customized this comparison group by selecting institutions from all module participants.
Group description	Transferable skills group excl online and special purpose/tech. 10K+ enrolment

## TransSkills group (N=13)

Boston University (Boston, MA)\*  
 Clemson University (Clemson, SC)\*  
 Kaplan University (Davenport, IA)  
 Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College (Baton Rouge, LA)  
 Missouri State University (Springfield, MO)\*  
 Rochester Institute of Technology (Rochester, NY)  
 Texas State University (San Marcos, TX)  
 Texas Tech University (Lubbock, TX)  
 University of Cincinnati (Cincinnati, OH)  
 University of Delaware (Newark, DE)  
 University of Mississippi (University, MS)  
 University of North Carolina at Charlotte (Charlotte, NC)\*  
 University of Wisconsin-Madison (Madison, WI)

\*2016 participant

## 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>		
				Queen's		TransSkills group		Queen's	TransSkills group	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
<b>1. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you done the following?</b>										
a. Discussed or debated an issue of social, political, or philosophical importance	TRN01a	1	Never	84	10	936	10	<b>2.7</b>	2.6	.01
		2	Sometimes	281	35	3,306	36			
		3	Often	262	33	3,052	32			
		4	Very often	174	22	2,062	21			
		Total		801	100	9,356	100			
b. Made a speech to a group	TRN01b	1	Never	316	38	2,876	31	<b>1.8</b>	2.0 ***	-.24
		2	Sometimes	377	48	4,097	43			
		3	Often	77	10	1,671	18			
		4	Very often	28	4	702	7			
		Total		798	100	9,346	100			
c. Worked in a group with people who differed from you in terms of background, political orientation, points of view, etc.	TRN01c	1	Never	34	4	585	7	<b>2.7</b>	2.7	.02
		2	Sometimes	285	35	3,111	33			
		3	Often	336	42	3,691	39			
		4	Very often	144	19	1,961	20			
		Total		799	100	9,348	100			
d. Discussed the ethical consequences of a course of action	TRN01d	1	Never	100	12	1,215	13	<b>2.5</b>	2.5	.02
		2	Sometimes	319	40	3,710	40			
		3	Often	285	35	3,123	33			
		4	Very often	97	12	1,292	13			
		Total		801	100	9,340	100			
e. Creatively thought about new ideas or about ways to improve things	TRN01e	1	Never	38	5	483	5	<b>2.8</b>	2.8	.05
		2	Sometimes	258	31	2,939	32			
		3	Often	329	41	3,858	41			
		4	Very often	176	23	2,044	21			
		Total		801	100	9,324	100			
f. Critically evaluated multiple solutions to a problem	TRN01f	1	Never	38	5	465	5	<b>2.9</b>	2.8 ***	.12
		2	Sometimes	238	29	3,006	32			
		3	Often	329	41	3,894	42			
		4	Very often	194	26	1,953	21			
		Total		799	100	9,318	100			
g. Discussed complex problems with others to develop a better solution	TRN01g	1	Never	45	5	635	7	<b>2.8</b>	2.7 ***	.16
		2	Sometimes	248	30	3,241	35			
		3	Often	312	39	3,590	39			
		4	Very often	192	26	1,832	19			
		Total		797	100	9,298	100			
<b>2. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you written something (paper, report, article, blog, etc.) that:</b>										
a. Used information from a variety of sources (books, journals, Internet, databases, etc.)	TRN02a	1	Never	20	3	425	5	<b>3.1</b>	2.8 ***	.36
		2	Sometimes	150	19	2,785	32			
		3	Often	320	40	3,556	38			
		4	Very often	307	38	2,573	25			
		Total		797	100	9,339	100			
b. Assessed the conclusions of a published work	TRN02b	1	Never	76	10	1,309	15	<b>2.7</b>	2.5 ***	.23
		2	Sometimes	275	35	3,508	38			
		3	Often	283	35	2,996	31			

\*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 <sup>c</sup>	Response options	Frequency Distributions <sup>a</sup>				Statistical Comparisons <sup>b</sup>		
				Queen's		TransSkills group		Queen's	TransSkills group	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
		4	Very often	162	20	1,504	15			
			Total	796	100	9,317	100			
c. Included ideas from more than one academic discipline	TRN02c	1	Never	89	11	1,065	13	<b>2.6</b>	2.5 **	.10
		2	Sometimes	276	35	3,458	38			
		3	Often	276	35	3,213	34			
		4	Very often	153	19	1,584	16			
			Total	794	100	9,320	100			
d. Presented multiple viewpoints or perspectives	TRN02d	1	Never	87	11	755	9	<b>2.6</b>	2.6	-.06
		2	Sometimes	294	37	3,397	37			
		3	Often	303	38	3,519	37			
		4	Very often	110	14	1,638	16			
			Total	794	100	9,309	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 <sup>c</sup>	Response options	Frequency Distributions <sup>a</sup>				Statistical Comparisons <sup>b</sup>		
				Queen's		TransSkills group		Queen's	TransSkills group	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
<b>1. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you done the following?</b>										
a. Discussed or debated an issue of social, political, or philosophical importance	TRN01a	1	Never	39	6	1,475	12	<b>2.9</b>	2.7 ***	.18
		2	Sometimes	230	32	4,240	32			
		3	Often	220	31	4,116	30			
		4	Very often	222	31	3,492	26			
		Total		711	100	13,323	100			
b. Made a speech to a group	TRN01b	1	Never	121	17	3,212	23	<b>2.3</b>	2.3	.04
		2	Sometimes	317	45	5,242	40			
		3	Often	189	26	3,054	23			
		4	Very often	83	12	1,798	14			
		Total		710	100	13,306	100			
c. Worked in a group with people who differed from you in terms of background, political orientation, points of view, etc.	TRN01c	1	Never	24	3	738	5	<b>2.7</b>	2.9 ***	.14
		2	Sometimes	273	39	4,099	30			
		3	Often	281	39	4,986	38			
		4	Very often	130	19	3,491	26			
		Total		708	100	13,314	100			
d. Discussed the ethical consequences of a course of action	TRN01d	1	Never	57	8	1,386	11	<b>2.6</b>	2.6	.02
		2	Sometimes	264	38	4,906	37			
		3	Often	285	40	4,481	33			
		4	Very often	105	15	2,528	18			
		Total		711	100	13,301	100			
e. Creatively thought about new ideas or about ways to improve things	TRN01e	1	Never	18	2	454	4	<b>3.0</b>	3.0	.00
		2	Sometimes	175	25	3,184	24			
		3	Often	314	44	5,415	40			
		4	Very often	204	29	4,245	31			
		Total		711	100	13,298	100			
f. Critically evaluated multiple solutions to a problem	TRN01f	1	Never	11	2	448	4	<b>3.1</b>	3.0 *	.10
		2	Sometimes	143	20	2,999	23			
		3	Often	327	45	5,567	42			
		4	Very often	227	33	4,281	32			
		Total		708	100	13,295	100			
g. Discussed complex problems with others to develop a better solution	TRN01g	1	Never	17	2	608	5	<b>3.0</b>	2.9 *	.08
		2	Sometimes	173	24	3,379	26			
		3	Often	301	42	5,242	39			
		4	Very often	217	31	4,030	30			
		Total		708	100	13,259	100			
<b>2. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you written something (paper, report, article, blog, etc.) that:</b>										
a. Used information from a variety of sources (books, journals, Internet, databases, etc.)	TRN02a	1	Never	17	3	605	5	<b>3.3</b>	3.1 ***	.25
		2	Sometimes	113	17	2,964	23			
		3	Often	219	31	4,356	33			
		4	Very often	360	50	5,366	39			
		Total		709	100	13,291	100			
b. Assessed the conclusions of a published work	TRN02b	1	Never	53	8	1,715	14	<b>2.9</b>	2.7 ***	.24
		2	Sometimes	172	25	4,027	31			
		3	Often	251	35	3,986	30			

## Seniors

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values <sup>c</sup>	Response options	Frequency Distributions <sup>a</sup>				Statistical Comparisons <sup>b</sup>		
				Queen's		TransSkills group		Queen's	TransSkills group	
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
		4	Very often	233	32	3,531	26			
			Total	709	100	13,259	100			
c. Included ideas from more than one academic discipline	TRN02c	1	Never	36	5	1,229	10	<b>2.9</b>	2.8 **	.10
		2	Sometimes	221	31	4,063	31			
		3	Often	259	37	4,381	33			
		4	Very often	194	27	3,594	26			
			Total	710	100	13,267	100			
d. Presented multiple viewpoints or perspectives	TRN02d	1	Never	38	6	1,121	9	<b>2.8</b>	2.7	.04
		2	Sometimes	246	34	4,344	33			
		3	Often	268	37	4,579	34			
		4	Very often	159	22	3,246	24			
			Total	711	100	13,290	100			

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



### 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>
		Queen's	TransSkills group	Queen's	TransSkills group	Queen's	TransSkills group			
	Comparisons with: TransSkills group									
TRN01a	798	2.65	2.64	.03	.01	0.93	0.93	9,867	.694	.01
TRN01b	795	1.80	2.01	.03	.01	0.78	0.89	9,856	.000	-.24
TRN01c	796	2.75	2.73	.03	.01	0.80	0.86	964	.508	.02
TRN01d	798	2.48	2.46	.03	.01	0.86	0.89	9,851	.626	.02
TRN01e	798	2.83	2.79	.03	.01	0.84	0.84	9,834	.206	.05
TRN01f	796	2.89	2.78	.03	.01	0.85	0.83	9,830	.001	.12
TRN01g	794	2.84	2.70	.03	.01	0.87	0.86	9,814	.000	.16
TRN02a	794	3.14	2.83	.03	.01	0.81	0.86	958	.000	.36
TRN02b	794	2.66	2.45	.03	.01	0.91	0.92	9,821	.000	.23
TRN02c	791	2.62	2.53	.03	.01	0.91	0.90	9,822	.006	.10
TRN02d	792	2.56	2.61	.03	.01	0.86	0.86	9,814	.107	-.06

### 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>
	Queen's	TransSkills group	Queen's	TransSkills group	Queen's	TransSkills group	Queen's	TransSkills group			
	Comparisons with:										
TRN01a	707	2.87	2.70	.03	.01	0.92	0.98	798	.000	.18	
TRN01b	707	2.33	2.29	.03	.01	0.89	0.97	801	.260	.04	
TRN01c	704	2.73	2.85	.03	.01	0.80	0.87	13,410	.000	-.14	
TRN01d	707	2.61	2.59	.03	.01	0.83	0.91	803	.630	.02	
TRN01e	707	3.00	3.00	.03	.01	0.80	0.84	796	.925	.00	
TRN01f	704	3.10	3.02	.03	.01	0.76	0.83	13,394	.014	.10	
TRN01g	704	3.02	2.95	.03	.01	0.81	0.87	795	.020	.08	
TRN02a	705	3.28	3.06	.03	.01	0.83	0.90	13,388	.000	.25	
TRN02b	705	2.91	2.67	.04	.01	0.94	1.00	795	.000	.24	
TRN02c	707	2.85	2.76	.03	.01	0.88	0.95	801	.006	.10	
TRN02d	707	2.76	2.72	.03	.01	0.87	0.92	799	.258	.04	

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## 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  $d$ ;  $z$ -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  $N$ s 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.