

Student survey and focus group findings: Academic engagement

Our students' academic engagement matters. The Academic and Student Affairs Retention Foundations Assessment initiative identified the proactive student behaviors that strengthen academic engagement. We collected survey and focus group data that can help make small but impactful changes to encourage academic engagement at NC State.

Schedule a workshop to brainstorm ways your unit can put the data into action.
go.ncsu.edu/academic_engagement

Initiating academic assistance

1 in 4 first-year students



surveyed at NC State report being **not very or not at all confident** in their ability to identify tutoring support during their first semester.¹

What can you and your unit do to steer students toward academic support resources?

Using instructors as a resource

More than half of first-year students



surveyed at NC State **developed little or no relationship with a faculty member** during their first semester.³

Half of seniors

who responded to the survey report that they **have not regularly met with faculty for academic guidance, and over half have not met with faculty regularly for professional guidance** during their time at NC State.⁴

What students shared in focus groups:

Students who were hesitant to reach out to their instructors described feeling **intimidated to approach instructors** or **feared bothering them, especially in large classes.***

What can you and your unit do to support students in building connections with faculty?

1-3. First Year First Term Survey 2018, n=1889 (38% response rate) 4. Graduating Senior Survey 2015-2016, n=2579 (54% response rate) 5. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) 2017, first-year n=625 (16% response rate), senior n=675 (17% response rate)

*All focus group results are from spring 2019 focus groups by the Office of Assessment including undergraduates of various class standings (n=25), on the topics of: using instructors as a resource, seeking out advising, and finding connections between coursework and co-curricular activities.

Seeking academic advising

1 in 3 first-year students



surveyed at NC State report having made **little or no connection with their academic advisor** halfway through their first semester.²

What students shared in focus groups:

Students who reported infrequently seeking out their advisor expressed that they were **worried about bothering their advisor**, they **felt scheduling difficulties were a barrier** to meeting with their advisor, or they **did not feel it was necessary to meet** with their advisor.*

How can you and your unit empower students to be proactive in seeking academic advice?

Engaging in independent learning opportunities

82% of first-year students



who responded to the survey report **planning to participate in an internship, co-op, or other field experience** while at NC State, but **only 66% of seniors** who responded to the survey report that they had those experiences.⁵

What students shared in focus groups:

Students **value opportunities to apply what they learn** in class to settings outside of class, both to enhance learning and build professional experience.*

How can you and your unit help students seek out opportunities to apply their learning outside of class?