
NSSE 2026 Topical Module Report

First-Year Experiences & Senior Transitions

Grand Valley State University

This module includes two distinct sets of items: one for first-year students and one for seniors, based on institution-reported class level. The first-year questions ask students to report on academic support, goals, and institutional commitment. The senior items explore confidence in skill development, post-graduation plans, and student loan debt.

Comparison group details are in the Selected Comparison Groups report, available in PDF format in your report download folder.

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NSSE 2026 First-Year Experiences & Senior Transitions

Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons: First-Year Experiences

Grand Valley State University

First-Year Students

				Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				GVSU		Public - 1st-yr & Sr		GVSU	Public - 1st-yr & Sr	
Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d
1. During the current school year, how often were you successful:										
a. Learning course material	FYsuccesslearn	1	Never	2	0	53	0	3.2	3.2	.07
		2	Sometimes	66	12	2,023	14			
		3	Often	306	52	7,667	51			
		4	Very often	212	36	5,086	34			
		Total	586	100	14,829	100				
b. Managing your time	FYsuccesstime	1	Never	15	3	417	3	2.9	2.8	.07
		2	Sometimes	172	30	4,860	34			
		3	Often	260	43	6,244	41			
		4	Very often	139	24	3,297	22			
		Total	586	100	14,818	100				
c. Getting help with school work	FYsuccesshelp	1	Never	37	7	1,024	8	2.6	2.6	-.01
		2	Sometimes	235	40	5,788	39			
		3	Often	225	39	5,500	36			
		4	Very often	88	15	2,497	17			
		Total	585	100	14,809	100				
d. Interacting with faculty	FYsuccessfac	1	Never	17	3	815	6	2.7	2.7	.04
		2	Sometimes	244	40	5,823	39			
		3	Often	229	40	5,580	37			
		4	Very often	96	17	2,592	18			
		Total	586	100	14,810	100				
e. Interacting with peers	FYsuccesspeer	1	Never	17	3	446	3	3.0	3.0	-.04
		2	Sometimes	149	25	3,610	25			
		3	Often	264	45	6,111	41			
		4	Very often	155	27	4,655	30			
		Total	585	100	14,822	100				
2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?										
a. I am clear in what I want to major in.	FYclearmaj	1	Strongly disagree	9	1	313	2	3.3	3.3	-.01
		2	Disagree	61	11	1,383	9			
		3	Agree	236	41	6,090	41			
		4	Strongly agree	279	47	7,038	47			
		Total	585	100	14,824	100				
b. I am clear about my career goals.	FYcleargoals	1	Strongly disagree	13	2	367	3	3.2	3.2	.05
		2	Disagree	80	14	2,213	15			
		3	Agree	238	41	6,255	42			
		4	Strongly agree	254	43	5,980	40			
		Total	585	100	14,815	100				
c. I am clear about who I want to become.	FYclearbecome	1	Strongly disagree	8	2	330	2	3.3	3.2	.04
		2	Disagree	75	14	1,995	14			
		3	Agree	240	40	6,187	41			
		4	Strongly agree	262	44	6,304	43			
		Total	585	100	14,816	100				
d. At least one instructor or staff member is genuinely interested in me as a person.	FYinstperson	1	Strongly disagree	30	5	868	7	3.0	2.9	.07
		2	Disagree	106	18	3,231	22			
		3	Agree	307	52	7,082	47			
		4	Strongly agree	141	24	3,611	24			
		Total	584	100	14,792	100				

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Grand Valley State University

First-Year Students

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Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d
e. At least one of my peers or classmates is genuinely interested in me as a person.	FYpeerperson	1	Strongly disagree	14	3	532	4	3.2	3.2	.03
		2	Disagree	60	10	1,462	11			
		3	Agree	297	50	6,760	46			
		4	Strongly agree	214	37	6,043	39			
		Total	585	100	14,797	100				
f. My instructors support my learning.	FYinstlearn	1	Strongly disagree	2	0	94	1	3.3	3.2	.02
		2	Disagree	18	3	650	5			
		3	Agree	395	67	9,434	64			
		4	Strongly agree	169	29	4,623	31			
		Total	584	100	14,801	100				
g. Other students support my learning.	FYstudlearn	1	Strongly disagree	7	1	281	2	3.0	3.1	-.06
		2	Disagree	76	13	1,576	11			
		3	Agree	387	67	9,511	64			
		4	Strongly agree	114	19	3,421	23			
		Total	584	100	14,789	100				
h. My instructors are open to my ideas and contributions to class discussions.	FYinstopen	1	Strongly disagree	0	0	131	1	3.2	3.2 *	.08 △
		2	Disagree	26	4	876	6			
		3	Agree	394	67	9,691	65			
		4	Strongly agree	163	28	4,084	27			
		Total	583	100	14,782	100				
i. Other students are open to my ideas and contributions to class discussions.	FYstudopen	1	Strongly disagree	4	1	186	2	3.1	3.1	.01
		2	Disagree	46	8	1,099	8			
		3	Agree	408	70	10,142	68			
		4	Strongly agree	125	22	3,341	22			
		Total	583	100	14,768	100				
j. There are students at my institution with backgrounds, identities, and cultures similar to mine.	FYsimculture	1	Strongly disagree	6	1	150	1	3.3	3.3	.01
		2	Disagree	23	4	735	5			
		3	Agree	355	61	8,705	58			
		4	Strongly agree	198	34	5,173	35			
		Total	582	100	14,763	100				
k. There are students at my institution with interests similar to mine.	FYsiminterest	1	Strongly disagree	4	1	121	1	3.3	3.3	-.04
		2	Disagree	26	5	594	4			
		3	Agree	364	61	8,771	59			
		4	Strongly agree	189	33	5,289	35			
		Total	583	100	14,775	100				
3. During the current school year, how often have you sought support from the following?										
a. Faculty members, academic advisors, or learning support services (tutoring, writing center, etc.)	FYsupfac	0	Never	33	6	1,319	10	2.0	2.0	.03
		1	Rarely	116	20	3,213	22			
		2	Sometimes	272	46	5,555	37			
		3	Often	101	17	2,826	19			
		4	Very often	58	10	1,647	11			
		—	Not available/Not applicable	2	0	189	1			
		Total	582	100	14,749	100				

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Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons: First-Year Experiences

Grand Valley State University

First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				GVSU		Public - 1st-yr & Sr		GVSU	Public - 1st-yr & Sr	Effect size ^d
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
b. Student support services (residence life staff, success coaches, peer mentors, etc.)	FYsupserv	0	Never	158	27	3,423	25	1.4	1.5 ***	-.13
		1	Rarely	176	30	3,781	25			
		2	Sometimes	149	25	4,044	26			
		3	Often	58	10	1,820	12			
		4	Very often	32	6	1,165	8			
		—	Not available/Not applicable	9	2	522	4			
		Total		582	100	14,755	100			
c. Counseling/health center	FYsupcounsel	0	Never	326	57	6,232	43	0.8	1.1 ***	-.24
		1	Rarely	106	18	3,145	21			
		2	Sometimes	70	12	2,644	17			
		3	Often	38	6	1,163	8			
		4	Very often	28	4	977	7			
		—	Not available/Not applicable	12	2	586	4			
		Total		580	100	14,747	100			
d. Career services office	FYsupcareer	0	Never	299	52	6,336	43	0.9	1.0 ***	-.15
		1	Rarely	126	21	3,438	23			
		2	Sometimes	84	15	2,649	18			
		3	Often	42	7	974	7			
		4	Very often	17	3	740	5			
		—	Not available/Not applicable	14	2	596	4			
		Total		582	100	14,733	100			
e. Financial Aid office	FYsupfinaid	0	Never	179	30	3,491	24	1.3	1.5 ***	-.18
		1	Rarely	166	29	4,021	27			
		2	Sometimes	155	27	4,188	28			
		3	Often	49	9	1,691	12			
		4	Very often	24	5	1,007	7			
		—	Not available/Not applicable	9	2	335	2			
		Total		582	100	14,733	100			
f. Your cultural community (identity-based, faith-based, hometown group, etc.)	FYsupcomm	0	Never	229	40	5,264	36	1.4	1.4	-.03
		1	Rarely	96	16	2,368	16			
		2	Sometimes	105	18	2,961	20			
		3	Often	76	14	1,861	12			
		4	Very often	59	10	1,529	10			
		—	Not available/Not applicable	16	2	743	5			
		Total		581	100	14,726	100			

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Grand Valley State University

First-Year Students

				Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				GVSU		Public - 1st-yr & Sr		GVSU	Public - 1st-yr & Sr	
Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d
4. During the current school year, did you take a course or seminar intended for first-year students?										
	FYseminar	Yes		165	30	8,394	54	30%	54% *** ▼	-.49
(Means indicate the percentage who responded "Yes.")		No		323	54	4,823	35			
		Unsure		92	16	1,511	12			
		Total		580	100	14,728	100			
4a. [If answered "yes"] What topics did this course cover? (Select all that apply.)										
	FYsem_orient	—	Additional orientation information relevant to your campus	40	20	4,570	50			
	FYsem_skills	—	College success skills (study skills, time management, communication skills, reading skills, goal setting, etc.)	135	64	6,999	76			
	FYsem_specmajor	—	Specialized academic content related to your major	79	38	3,768	42			
	FYsem_theme	—	A specialized theme or academic content that emphasizes discussion	52	23	3,730	39			
5. During the current school year, have you seriously considered leaving this institution?^j										
	FYleaveinst	No		418	72	10,900	74	28%	26%	.05
(Means indicate the percentage who responded "Yes.")		Yes		163	28	3,824	26			
		Total		581	100	14,724	100			

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Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons: First-Year Experiences

Grand Valley State University

First-Year Students

				Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				GVSU		Public - 1st-yr & Sr		GVSU	Public - 1st-yr & Sr	Effect size ^d
Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
5a. [If answered "yes"] Why did you consider leaving? (Select all that apply.)										
	FYleave_pers	—	Personal reasons (family issues, physical or mental health, homesickness, stress, etc.)	91	54	2,034	52			
	FYleave_acad	—	Academics (major not offered, academic difficulty, course availability, advising, etc.)	50	31	1,279	37			
	FYleave_finan	—	Financial concerns	59	38	1,480	39			
	FYleave_job	—	Job or military service	2	1	84	3			
	FYleave_manage	—	Difficulty managing demands of school and other personal obligations	28	19	753	20			
	FYleave_social	—	Not enough opportunities to socialize and have fun	47	29	714	19			
	FYleave_expfac	—	Experiences with faculty and staff	24	14	468	12			
	FYleave_expstud	—	Experiences with other students	38	23	699	17			
	FYleave_expdisc	—	Experiences with discrimination	12	7	172	4			
	FYleave_climate	—	Campus climate or culture	34	21	626	16			
	FYleave_instloc	—	Institution's location	36	23	602	16			
	FYleave_safety	—	Personal safety	16	9	258	7			
	FYleave_belong	—	Feeling that you don't fit in or belong at your institution	62	37	1,358	34			
	FYleave_inaccess	—	Educational materials or campus space are inaccessible	5	3	121	4			
	FYleave_worth	—	College just doesn't seem worth it	21	15	565	15			
	FYleave_oth	—	A reason not listed above, please specify:	12	7	361	10			

6. What has most helped you succeed at this institution?

This question asked students to respond in an open text box. Responses are provided in your "NSSE Student Comments" report and in a separate SPSS data file.

These open-ended responses appear exactly as respondents entered them and may not be suitable for distribution without prior review.

First-Year Students

Variable name	N	Mean		Standard error ^f		Standard deviation ^g		DF ^h	Sig. ⁱ	Effect size ^d
	GVSU	GVSU	Public - 1st-yr & Sr	GVSU	Public - 1st-yr & Sr	GVSU	Public - 1st-yr & Sr	Comparisons with: Public - 1st-yr & Sr		
FYsuccesslearn	587	3.24	3.19	.027	.005	.66	.68	631	.108	.07
FYsuccesstime	587	2.88	2.82	.033	.006	.81	.81	628	.075	.07
FYsuccesshelp	586	2.62	2.63	.034	.007	.82	.86	630	.818	-.01
FYsuccessfac	587	2.70	2.66	.032	.006	.78	.84	634	.278	.04
FYsuccesspeer	586	2.95	2.98	.033	.006	.81	.83	629	.377	-.04
FYclearmaj	586	3.33	3.34	.030	.006	.72	.73	627	.851	-.01
FYcleargoals	586	3.24	3.20	.032	.006	.78	.78	627	.220	.05
FYclearbecome	586	3.28	3.24	.031	.006	.76	.77	628	.295	.04
FYinstperson	586	2.95	2.89	.033	.007	.80	.84	631	.062	.07
FYpeerperson	586	3.22	3.19	.030	.006	.73	.80	634	.404	.03
FYinstlearn	586	3.26	3.25	.021	.004	.52	.57	635	.626	.02
FYstudlearn	585	3.03	3.07	.025	.005	.61	.65	631	.154	-.06
FYinstopen	584	3.24	3.19	.022	.005	.52	.59	635	.026	.08
FYstudopen	584	3.12	3.12	.023	.005	.56	.59	628	.770	.01
FYsimculture	582	3.28	3.27	.024	.005	.59	.61	626	.841	.01
FYsiminterest	584	3.26	3.29	.025	.005	.59	.60	625	.296	-.04
FYsupfac	582	2.04	2.01	.042	.009	1.01	1.12	631	.500	.03
FYsupserv	574	1.35	1.51	.048	.010	1.16	1.23	620	.001	-.13
FYsupcounsel	569	0.81	1.11	.048	.010	1.16	1.25	617	.000	-.24
FYsupcareer	569	0.87	1.04	.047	.009	1.11	1.18	615	.000	-.15
FYsupfinaid	574	1.29	1.51	.047	.009	1.13	1.19	618	.000	-.18
FYsupcomm	568	1.37	1.41	.059	.011	1.40	1.38	607	.474	-.03
FYseminar	580	30%	54%	.019	.004	--	--	--	.000	-.49
FYleaveinst	581	28%	26%	.019	.003	--	--	--	.192	.05

NSSE 2026 First-Year Experiences & Senior Transitions

Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons: Senior Transitions

Grand Valley State University

Seniors

				Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				GVSU		Public - 1st-yr & Sr		GVSU	Public - 1st-yr & Sr	Effect size ^d
Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
1. How much confidence do you have in your ability to complete tasks requiring the following skills and abilities?										
a. Critical thinking and analysis of arguments and information	SRskillcritical	1	Very little	0	0	120	1	3.4	3.4	.04
		2	Some	28	7	1,534	9			
		3	Quite a bit	175	44	6,404	39			
		4	Very much	191	50	8,097	51			
		Total		394	100	16,155	100			
b. Creative thinking and problem solving	SRskillcreative	1	Very little	0	0	97	1	3.5	3.4	.06
		2	Some	19	5	1,364	9			
		3	Quite a bit	174	43	6,210	38			
		4	Very much	200	52	8,483	53			
		Total		393	100	16,154	100			
c. Research skills	SRskillres	1	Very little	6	1	295	2	3.2	3.2	-.03
		2	Some	65	17	2,697	17			
		3	Quite a bit	183	46	6,822	41			
		4	Very much	142	36	6,341	40			
		Total		396	100	16,155	100			
d. Clear writing	SRskillwrite	1	Very little	0	0	192	1	3.3	3.3	.01
		2	Some	44	11	2,183	14			
		3	Quite a bit	199	50	6,767	41			
		4	Very much	153	39	7,022	43			
		Total		396	100	16,164	100			
e. Communication for specific audiences or purposes	SRskillcomm	1	Very little	3	1	251	2	3.2	3.2	-.01
		2	Some	46	12	2,424	16			
		3	Quite a bit	204	51	6,673	41			
		4	Very much	143	36	6,812	42			
		Total		396	100	16,160	100			
f. Leadership skills	SRskilllead	1	Very little	0	0	418	3	3.2	3.2	.07
		2	Some	57	15	2,826	18			
		3	Quite a bit	177	45	5,867	36			
		4	Very much	162	40	7,054	43			
		Total		396	100	16,165	100			
g. Technological skills	SRskilltech	1	Very little	2	0	367	2	3.1	3.1	-.03
		2	Some	89	21	3,337	20			
		3	Quite a bit	182	45	6,732	40			
		4	Very much	122	33	5,726	37			
		Total		395	100	16,162	100			
h. Financial, business management, or entrepreneurial skills	SRskillfinan	1	Very little	77	19	2,598	16	2.3	2.5 *** ▽	-.21
		2	Some	171	43	5,829	36			
		3	Quite a bit	94	24	4,492	28			
		4	Very much	52	14	3,237	20			
		Total		394	100	16,156	100			
i. Networking and relationship building	SRskillnetwork	1	Very little	15	4	1,107	8	2.8	2.9	-.03
		2	Some	120	32	4,448	28			
		3	Quite a bit	164	41	5,832	35			
		4	Very much	95	24	4,789	29			
		Total		394	100	16,176	100			

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Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d
2. To what extent has your coursework in your major(s) emphasized the following?										
a. Generating new ideas or brainstorming	SRcrsideas	1	Very little	11	3	439	3	3.1	3.2	-.04
		2	Some	65	16	2,714	18			
		3	Quite a bit	182	46	6,549	40			
		4	Very much	137	35	6,448	39			
		Total	395	100	16,150	100				
b. Taking risks in your coursework without fear of penalty	SRcrsrisks	1	Very little	82	21	2,875	19	2.5	2.6	-.04
		2	Some	101	25	4,759	30			
		3	Quite a bit	130	33	4,702	28			
		4	Very much	82	20	3,813	23			
		Total	395	100	16,149	100				
c. Evaluating multiple approaches to a problem	SRcrsproblem	1	Very little	9	2	549	4	3.1	3.1	.00
		2	Some	72	19	3,058	19			
		3	Quite a bit	176	44	6,338	39			
		4	Very much	138	35	6,193	38			
		Total	395	100	16,138	100				
d. Inventing new methods to arrive at unconventional solutions	SRcrsinvent	1	Very little	51	13	1,759	12	2.6	2.7 *	-.12
		2	Some	125	32	4,663	29			
		3	Quite a bit	135	35	5,318	32			
		4	Very much	83	21	4,394	27			
		Total	394	100	16,134	100				
3. Which of the following types of honors have you achieved or are you currently participating in at your institution? (Select all that apply.)										
SRhon_deans	—	Dean's list or other recognition for high GPA	309	76	11,716	71				
SRhon_curr	—	Honors program with a special honors curriculum or honors program/college completion requirements	38	9	2,024	13				
SRhon_dept	—	Honors track in your major or department	8	2	1,063	7				
SRhon_disc	—	College honor society specific to your major or discipline	29	7	1,352	9				
SRhon_gen	—	Collegiate honor society for leadership or general academic achievement outside of your major or discipline (Mortar Board, Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi, etc.)	23	6	1,245	8				
SRhon_oth	—	Other, please specify:	6	1	299	2				
SRhon_none	—	You have not been involved in or received any of these	69	20	3,387	23				

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Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d
4. Do you expect to graduate this spring or summer?										
	SRexpectgrad		No	144	38	5,510	38	62%	62%	.00
	(Means indicate the percentage who responded "Yes.")		Yes	251	62	10,613	62			
			Total	395	100	16,123	100			
5. After graduation, what best describes your immediate plans? (Select all that apply.)										
	SRplan_fulltime	—	Full-time employment	296	75	11,667	73			
	SRplan_parttime	—	Part-time employment	63	15	2,906	18			
	SRplan_grad	—	Graduate or professional school (Master's degree, J.D., Ph.D., M.D., veterinary school, nursing, post-baccalaureate program, etc.)	133	33	6,195	38			
	SRplan_uged	—	Continuing undergraduate education (second major, minor, pre-requisites, etc.)	13	3	431	3			
	SRplan_vocdeg	—	Pursue a vocational degree/AA (trade school, certification exam, certificate, etc.)	3	1	304	2			
	SRplan_intern	—	Internship (paid or unpaid)	43	11	2,723	18			
	SRplan_selfemp	—	Start my own business or self-employment	17	5	898	6			
	SRplan_military	—	Military service	1	0	289	2			
	SRplan_service	—	Service or volunteer activity (AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, Teach for America, etc.)	6	1	275	2			
	SRplan_care	—	Caregiver for family and/or others	15	4	592	4			
	SRplan_travel	—	Travel	43	11	2,410	15			
	SRplan_unsure	—	Unsure	25	6	1,520	10			
	SRplan_oth	—	Other, please specify:	5	1	272	2			
6. Do you already have a job for after graduation?										
	SRjobafter		No, I am still searching	206	62	8,113	62	38%	38%	.00
	(Means indicate the percentage who responded "Yes.")		Yes, I will start a new job	53	17	1,946	15			
			Yes, I will continue in my current job	66	21	2,891	23			
			Total	325	100	12,950	100			
7. To what extent have courses in your major(s) prepared you for your post-graduation plans?										
	SRmajorprep	0	Not at all	7	2	357	3	2.9	2.8	.08
		1	Very little	22	6	1,004	7			
		2	Some	86	23	3,957	25			
		3	Quite a bit	147	36	5,778	35			
		4	Very much	134	33	4,986	30			
		Total		396	100	16,082	100			

NSSE 2026 First-Year Experiences & Senior Transitions

Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons: Senior Transitions

Grand Valley State University

Seniors

				Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				GVSU		Public - 1st-yr & Sr		GVSU	Public - 1st-yr & Sr	
Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	Effect size ^d
8. How closely related are your post-graduation plans to your major?										
	SRmajorclose	0	Not at all	4	1	309	2	3.4	3.2 ***	.19
		1	Very little	9	2	593	4			
		2	Some	51	14	2,535	16			
		3	Quite a bit	87	22	4,169	26			
		4	Very much	238	61	8,428	51			
		Total		389	100	16,034	100			
9. Do you plan to be self-employed, an independent contractor, a freelance worker, or start your own business someday?										
	SRownbus	Yes		56	15	3,023	20	15%	20% **	-.15
	(Means indicate the percentage who responded "Yes.")	No		252	63	8,784	52			
		Unsure		87	22	4,218	27			
		Total		395	100	16,025	100			
10. How much loan debt will you graduate with after completing your undergraduate degree(s)?										
	SRloandebt	0	None	108	27	6,641	42	\$22,444	\$14,848 ***	.37
	(Means are from the derived variable SRloandebtnum using the midpoints of dollar amount ranges and an estimate for unbounded options.)	1	\$10,000 or less	39	10	1,800	11			
		2	\$10,001 to \$20,000	47	12	1,621	10			
		3	\$20,001 to \$30,000	50	12	1,581	9			
		4	\$30,001 to \$40,000	35	9	1,018	6			
		5	\$40,001 to \$50,000	20	5	645	4			
		6	\$50,001 to \$60,000	23	6	541	3			
		7	More than \$60,000	34	9	794	5			
		—	I have loan debt but don't know the amount	16	4	741	4			
		—	I prefer not to respond	24	6	742	5			
		Total		396	100	16,124	100			
11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?										
a. Considering the <i>total cost</i> of my undergraduate education, attending my institution was a good investment.	SRinvestment	1	Strongly disagree	19	6	519	4	2.9	3.2 ***	-.33
		2	Disagree	71	18	1,718	11			
		3	Agree	224	56	8,451	52			
		4	Strongly agree	82	20	5,400	34			
		Total		396	100	16,088	100			
b. My post-graduation plans and decisions have been impacted by student loan debt.	SRimpactdebt	1	Strongly disagree	62	16	3,779	25	2.5	2.3 ***	.18
		2	Disagree	137	35	5,365	33			
		3	Agree	121	31	4,329	26			
		4	Strongly agree	73	18	2,578	16			
		Total		393	100	16,051	100			
c. I worry about making enough money to cover my cost of living (including any student loan payments) after graduation.	SRcostliving	1	Strongly disagree	27	7	1,779	12	3.0	2.9 ***	.18
		2	Disagree	78	21	3,619	22			
		3	Agree	132	33	5,455	34			
		4	Strongly agree	159	39	5,214	32			
		Total		396	100	16,067	100			
d. I have experienced difficulty in paying for my college or university expenses.	SRdiffpaying	1	Strongly disagree	43	11	2,909	19	2.7	2.5 ***	.21
		2	Disagree	126	33	5,527	34			
		3	Agree	126	32	4,470	28			
		4	Strongly agree	98	24	3,149	20			
		Total		393	100	16,055	100			

NSSE 2026 First-Year Experiences & Senior Transitions

Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons: Senior Transitions

Grand Valley State University

Seniors

				Frequency Distributions ^a				Statistical Comparisons ^b		
				GVSU		Public - 1st-yr & Sr		GVSU	Public - 1st-yr & Sr	Effect size ^d
Item wording or description	Variable name	Values ^c	Response options	Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
12. If you could start over again, would you:										
a. Choose a different major (or field)?	SRagainmajor	1	Definitely no	138	35	5,661	34	1.9	2.0	-.05
		2	Probably no	170	42	6,437	40			
		3	Probably yes	64	16	2,924	19			
		4	Definitely yes	23	6	1,053	7			
		Total		395	100	16,075	100			
b. Pursue a bachelor's degree?	SRagainbach	1	Definitely no	2	0	239	2	3.7	3.7	.04
		2	Probably no	15	4	597	4			
		3	Probably yes	87	23	3,440	22			
		4	Definitely yes	290	72	11,763	72			
		Total		394	100	16,039	100			
c. Pursue <i>any</i> postsecondary education (including community college, associates degrees, certificate programs)?	SRagainpostsec	1	Definitely no	24	6	1,094	7	3.0	3.0	.03
		2	Probably no	93	24	3,755	23			
		3	Probably yes	117	30	4,999	32			
		4	Definitely yes	160	40	6,181	38			
		Total		394	100	16,029	100			

Seniors

Variable name	N	Mean		Standard error ^f		Standard deviation ^g		DF ^h	Sig. ⁱ	Effect size ^d
	GVSU	GVSU	Public - 1st-yr & Sr	GVSU	Public - 1st-yr & Sr	GVSU	Public - 1st-yr & Sr	Comparisons with: Public - 1st-yr & Sr		
SRskillcritical	392	3.43	3.40	.031	.005	.62	.69	412	.379	.04
SRskillcreative	391	3.47	3.43	.030	.005	.59	.68	412	.183	.06
SRskillres	394	3.16	3.19	.037	.006	.74	.78	411	.485	-.03
SRskillwrite	394	3.27	3.26	.033	.005	.65	.75	415	.777	.01
SRskillcomm	394	3.22	3.23	.034	.006	.68	.77	414	.912	-.01
SRskilllead	394	3.25	3.19	.035	.006	.70	.83	416	.106	.07
SRskilltech	393	3.11	3.13	.037	.006	.74	.80	411	.576	-.03
SRskillfinan	392	2.32	2.53	.047	.007	.94	.98	409	.000	-.21
SRskillnetwork	393	2.84	2.87	.042	.007	.83	.92	412	.578	-.03
SRcrsideas	393	3.13	3.15	.040	.006	.79	.82	410	.472	-.04
SRcrsrisk	393	2.52	2.56	.053	.008	1.04	1.04	409	.466	-.04
SRcrsproblem	393	3.11	3.11	.040	.006	.79	.85	411	.948	.00
SRcrsinvent	393	2.63	2.75	.048	.007	.95	.98	409	.012	-.12
SRexpectgrad	393	62%	62%	.024	.003	--	--	--	.952	.00
SRjobafter	323	38%	38%	.027	.004	--	--	--	.983	.00
SRmajorprep	394	2.92	2.83	.050	.007	.99	1.01	410	.091	.08
SRmajorclose	387	3.39	3.21	.045	.007	.89	1.00	406	.000	.19
SRownbus	393	15%	20%	.018	.003	--	--	--	.006	-.15
SRloandebt	354	\$22,444	\$14,848	\$1,227	\$153	\$23,091	\$20,272	364	.000	.37
SRinvestment	394	2.91	3.16	.039	.005	.77	.75	409	.000	-.33
SRimpactdebt	391	2.52	2.34	.049	.007	.97	1.02	408	.000	.18
SRcostliving	394	3.04	2.85	.047	.007	.94	1.00	412	.000	.18
SRdiffpaying	391	2.69	2.48	.048	.007	.96	1.01	408	.000	.21
SRagainmajor	393	1.93	1.98	.044	.006	.87	.90	410	.287	-.05
SRagainbach	393	3.68	3.65	.029	.005	.57	.63	412	.446	.04
SRagainpostsec	392	3.04	3.01	.048	.007	.94	.95	408	.600	.03

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..
- 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.

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.