



RESULTS OF THE NATIONAL SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT 2020

University of Toronto

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Introduction

This report provides an overview of the University of Toronto (U of T) findings from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) administered during February and March 2020. U of T first deployed the NSSE survey in 2004 and in 2020 more than 60 Canadian universities and 500 in the United States participated.

Understanding Undergraduate Student Experiences at the University of Toronto

Providing a high-quality undergraduate student experience is a priority at U of T. A number of institutional initiatives and changes have been implemented in this area.

First, the Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education, was established by the Vice-President & Provost in 2015 in response to President's Gertler's strategic priority to "reimagine undergraduate education." The Office works closely with first-entry academic divisions across the three campuses to enhance the undergraduate academic experience. Key elements for achieving this include expanding and enhancing research and experience-based learning opportunities, adopting and supporting new learning modes and technologies, facilitating the transition from study to work for the University's undergraduate student population and using grant and award programs to recognize and support exceptional and innovative faculty and practices.

Second, since the last NSSE Survey (2017) an Expert Panel on Undergraduate Student Educational Experience (USEE) was created (September 2018) with a tri-campus membership and mandate. The Expert Panel was tasked with "enunciating and enlivening our shared vision for the undergraduate educational experience at the University of Toronto and making recommendations towards continuous improvement that would lead to that vision's implementation across the University." The panel considered common elements of the undergraduate experience including academic rigour and educational coherence, research-informed approaches to

teaching and learning, experiential learning and international experiences. They also focused on supports and services students should expect from the institution and pathways through which students learn about and access elements of the common vision. Over the course of the 2018-19 academic year, the Panel engaged in a series of discussions with students, staff and faculty across all three campuses and in the Fall of 2019, the [Expert Panel shared back its](#) vision for the undergraduate experience.

This Vision articulated the University's commitment to creating a welcoming, diverse, caring, innovative and supportive environment for undergraduate students across the institution. It further identified the characteristics that the University aims to foster in its graduates. U of T is proud to develop graduates who are passionate learners, creative intellectuals, empathetic leaders, resilient creators, knowledge mobilisers and engaged citizens. Finally, the Vision emphasized the importance of offering undergraduate students a spectrum of rich experiences that contribute to their learning and growth and acknowledged the critical significance of building a student-centric partnership that supports students to "take ownership of their learning, increase their engagement, find their own path, unify their experiences and embrace their identity."

Third, the Presidential & Provostial Task Force on Student Mental Health delivered its [Final Report](#) in December 2019, and the University has been working towards [implementing](#) its 21 recommendations since that time. Based on a wide array of consultations with students, staff, faculty and student mental health experts, the Task

Force laid out a clear path for addressing six key areas: (a) student mental health service delivery, (b) coordinated student supports across the university, (c) partnerships with community-based organizations and hospitals, (d) physical space, (e) culture of care, and (f) institutional systems and priorities. In addition to developing a new model for service delivery to meet the increasing needs of our students, the recommendations acknowledge the importance of addressing student mental health and wellness through a range of proactive initiatives. These include efforts such as building a culture of caring and engaging the entire U of T community to support student wellness; enhancing the diversity and cultural relevance of student mental health service providers; enhancing mental health literacy amongst students, staff, and faculty; and reviewing academic policies that act as stressors for students.

Finally, [Towards 2030](#), the University's long-term planning framework, provides many recommendations, such as promoting learning communities, increasing communication between faculty and students, providing opportunities for undergraduate research, and offering possibilities for international experiences. It remains the foundational document guiding undergraduate education. The results from the NSSE survey, along with other metrics, serve as an important resource for the U of T in both understanding student experiences and identifying opportunities for growth and support.

About the National Survey of Student Engagement

The NSSE survey was developed in 1999 by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research to assess the quality of the educational experience. Since its launch in 2000, more than 1,500 four-year institutions in Canada and the US have participated in NSSE. In 2020, approximately 500,000 students completed the survey across Canada and the United States including Ontario universities and, more specifically, our peer Canadian universities in the [U15](#).

NSSE is not a satisfaction survey. Rather, it provides institutions with data on student participation and engagement in activities that support learning and personal development. The survey seeks to understand what types of academic, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities students participate in, along with understanding their relationships with faculty, staff and peers. NSSE also provides institutions with important information on how students spend their time, what influences affect their ability to participate meaningfully and how they perceive the skills and knowledge they are gaining from their university experience.

Themes & Engagement Indicators

To understand the phenomena of student engagement, the NSSE survey is designed with 10 engagement indicators, which are organized within four primary themes.

Theme	Academic Challenge			
Engagement Indicators	Higher-Order Learning	Reflective & Integrative Learning	Learning Strategies	Quantitative Reasoning

Theme	Learning With Peers	
Engagement Indicators	Collaborative Learning	Discussions with Diverse Others

Theme	Experiences With Faculty	
Engagement Indicators	Student-Faculty Interaction	Effective Teaching Practices

Theme	Campus Environment	
Engagement Indicators	Quality of Interactions	Supportive Environment

High-Impact Practices

A second major section focuses on High-Impact Practices (HIPs). These are specific activities (six in total) that are both related to student learning and retention and are also often among the most formative, and impactful experiences for students in their undergraduate program of study. In this survey students indicate whether they plan to engage in HIPs, they are undecided, they are currently participating or engaging in one of them, or they have not decided whether they want to.

Personal and Social Identities

The NSSE survey includes a range of questions about personal and social identities. These include gender identity, sexual orientation, parental education, Indigenous identity and ethno-cultural/racial identity. The latter two categories have been customized for Canadian universities.

U of T's Interpretation of Results

NSSE provides us with institutional reports that allow us to make consistent comparisons to our peers. The detailed reports contain data on each of the Themes and Engagement Indicators indicating significance and effect size, both of which are key to understanding our results when comparing with our peers. In this report we compare our results to our own data from 2017 and to the U15 results from 2017 and 2020.

The U15 is the most relevant group of institutions for our peer comparison, this is a group of 15 leading, research-intensive Canadian Universities: Dalhousie University, McGill University, McMaster University, Queen's University, Université d'Ottawa / University of Ottawa, Université de Montréal, Université Laval, University of Alberta, University of British Columbia, University of Calgary, University of Manitoba, University of Saskatchewan, University of Toronto, University of Waterloo, and Western University.

Survey Population – All First-Entry Programs

As defined by the researchers at NSSE at Indiana University, students in all first-entry Faculties were invited to participate in the 2020 NSSE survey. At U of T, students from our second-entry Nursing program were also invited to participate but their results are excluded from this report. The survey was administered online only.

The first-entry Faculties and divisions at U of T are:

Arts & Science; John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design; Applied Sciences & Engineering; Kinesiology & Physical Education; Music; University of Toronto Mississauga; and University of Toronto Scarborough.

Notes on Impact of COVID-19 on Responses & Comparisons

Like most institutions in Ontario, the NSSE survey at U of T was still in the field at the point that most instruction transitioned from face-to-face to remote methods in response to the pandemic. NSSE asked all participating institutions to determine a COVID date, signifying a point in time that significant changes to undergraduate instruction were made. We chose March 17, 2020. At that point the initial invite, plus the first reminder had already been sent out and we had received approximately 7,700 responses. The second reminder was sent March 17th, and on that day 1,376 additional students responded. At this date, most undergraduate classes had stopped meeting in person. The third reminder, planned for March 20th, was cancelled, so as to not conflict with initial messaging relating to COVID-19, and a final reminder was sent on March 23rd. From March 18th until the survey closed an additional 955 students responded for a total sample of just over 10,000 responses.

NSSE engaged in considerable research, and hosted multiple webinars to provide participating institutions insight into the impact of COVID on response patterns and responses for data collected before and after. Overall, NSSE did not detect meaningful differences before and after the COVID-date among participating institutions, with the exception of two or three questions including ‘how many courses are you currently taking online.’ For more information on this topic, the webinar ‘[NSSE & Coronavirus 2020: Preliminary Analysis Results and Recommendation](#)’ provides an in-depth look at the issue of NSSE responses and their relation to Coronavirus. We assume most institutions in Ontario, likely across Canada, chose similar ‘COVID Dates,’ but are unsure at this point where in the data collection process they may have been at that date.

2020 NSSE Results

Response Rate

The University of Toronto had 10,088 students provide full or partial information on the survey for an overall response rate of 31.5%, compared to about 30.5% in 2017 and 34.5% in 2014. For 2020, U of T also sent the initial invitation to participate in the survey through Quercus, the institutional Learning Management System. Our 2020 response rate is slightly lower than for other Ontario institutions (34%) and the U15 (34%), though this was much higher than our selected U.S. comparators (19%).

Student Respondent Characteristics

U of T continues to enroll a diverse demographic of students, especially compared to the U15 comparison group. U of T respondents were more likely to be international students or permanent residents and were less likely to be living in residence. The chart provides a snapshot of key student attributes as identified throughout the survey.

Variable	Features	U of T - First Year	U15 - First Year	U of T - Final Year	U15 - Final Year
Gender Identity	Woman	54%	57%	55%	56%
	Man	43%	41%	42%	41%
	Another identity	1%	1%	1%	1%
	Prefer not to respond	2%	1%	3%	2%
Enrollment Status	Full-time	96%	95%	80%	85%
	Part-time	4%	5%	20%	15%
Age	Less than 24	97%	94%	84%	77%
	24 or Older	3%	6%	16%	23%
Transfer Status	Started here	97%	93%	92%	85%
	Started elsewhere	3%	7%	8%	15%
Parental Education	Neither Parent holds a Bachelor's Degree	32%	32%	33%	35%
	Either Parent holds at least a Bachelor's Degree	68%	68%	67%	65%
Citizenship	Canadian	70%	81%	80%	86%
	Permanent Resident or Citizen of another country	30%	19%	20%	14%
Place of Residence	On Campus	34%	40%	4%	6%
	Off Campus (family, rental etc.)	66%	60%	96%	94%

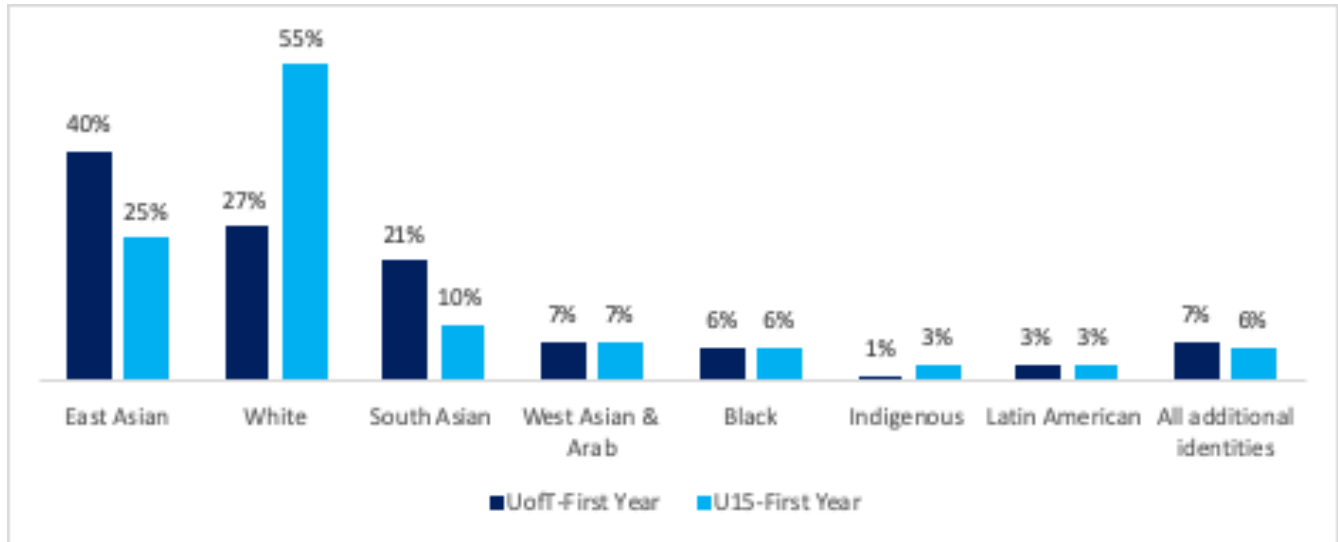
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual	7%	7%	7%	7%
	Gay	2%	2%	7%	2%
	Heterosexual	81%	81%	80%	81%
	Lesbian	1%	1%	1%	1%
	Queer	1%	1%	2%	2%
	Questioning or unsure	2%	2%	2%	2%
	Another sexual orientation	1%	1%	1%	1%
	Prefer not to respond	5%	4%	6%	5%

The most significant differences between the U of T respondents and the U15 was with respect to ethno-cultural identity. Students in the U15 comparison group are more likely to identify as White, less likely to identify as South Asian and/or Chinese. Note: The survey allowed student to select more than one response so totals may add up to more than 100%. Efforts are currently underway to improve access through the Office of Student Recruitment to increase numbers in priority populations, including Black and Indigenous prospective students. In future iterations of NSSE we may be able to compare and weight our responses with those in the [Student Equity Census](#).

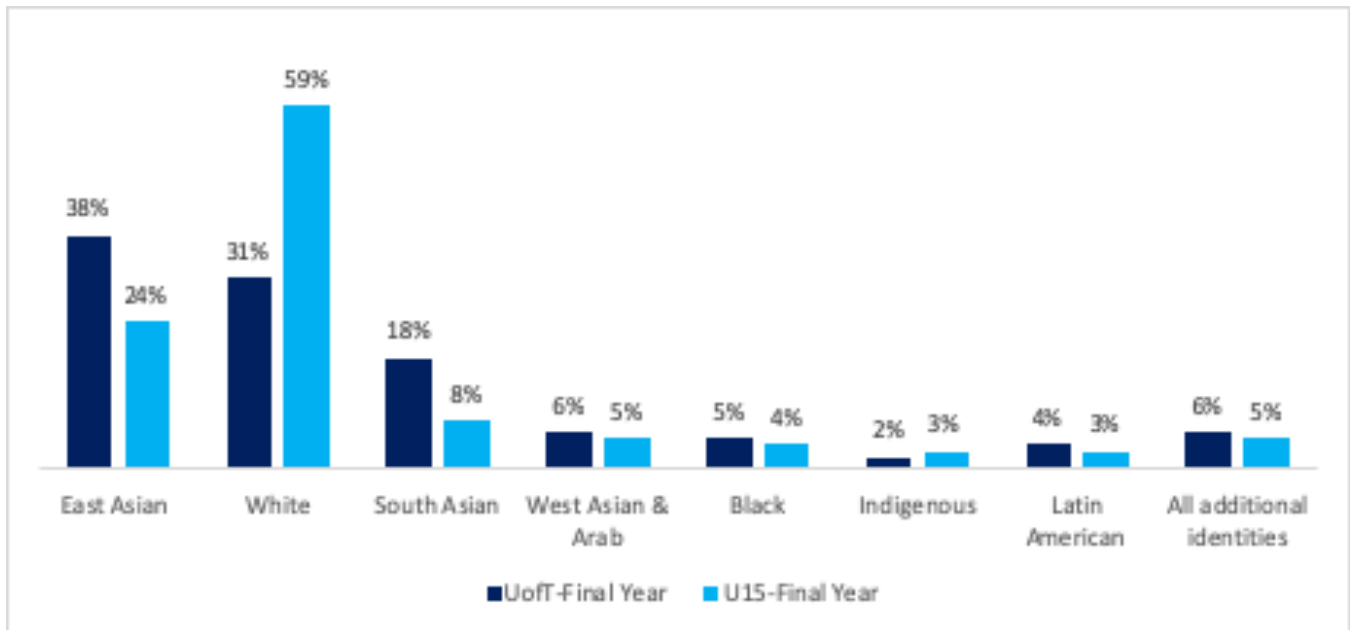
U OF T & U15 ETHNO-CULTURAL IDENTITY RESPONSES

Identity	U of T - First Year	U15 - First year	U of T - Final Year	U15 - Final Year
East Asian	40%	25%	38%	24%
White	27%	55%	31%	59%
South Asian	21%	10%	18%	8%
West Asian & Arab	7%	7%	6%	5%
Black	6%	6%	5%	4%
Latin American	3%	3%	4%	3%
Indigenous	1%	3%	2%	3%
All additional responses	7%	6%	6%	5%

First Year Student Responses to Ethno-cultural Identity Question



Final Year Student Responses to Ethno-cultural Identity Question



Themes & Engagement Indicators

Engagement Indicators are summary measures based on sets of NSSE questions examining key dimensions of student engagement. The 10 indicators are organized within four themes: Academic Challenge, Learning with Peers, Experiences with Faculty and Campus Environment.

Each Engagement Indicator groups the responses from the questions in its respective category, rescales them from 0 to 60 and averages the responses. A score of 0 means every student chose the lowest response option; 60 means every student chose the highest response. The following tables compare average scores for U of T students to those in our comparison groups. In each case we present the most recent U of T data, followed by the U of T data from 2017 and then the 2020 and 2017 U15 data.

U of T has done well relative to our peers in many categories in 2020. In particular, U of T students report statistically significant higher levels than our comparators (U15 universities) in the following Engagement Indicators:

- Higher-Order Learning (first year and final year)
- Reflective & Integrative Learning (first year)
- Quantitative Reasoning (first year)
- Discussions with Diverse Others (first year and final year)
- Student-Faculty Interaction (first year)

The data from the Engagement Indicators also suggest that many initiatives for first year students at U of T are supporting students in high-impact learning and development. As a University, we can build on this success to ensure that students throughout their programs continue to experience the University in similar positive ways.

The results in these Engagement Indicators can help support and drive institutional objectives aligned with the President's Three Priorities, the new Strategic Mandate Agreement, the results from the USEE Expert Panel, Experiential Learning initiatives and other initiatives supporting undergraduate student experiences at the University.

THEME - Academic Challenge

The four Engagement Indicators under this theme are listed below in two sections including the questions that are included in each.

Higher-Order Learning

- Applied facts, theories or methods to practical problems or new situations
- Analyzed an idea, experience or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts
- Evaluated a point of view, decision or information source
- Formed a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information

Reflective & Integrative Learning

- Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments
- Connected your learning to societal problems or issues included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender etc.) in course discussions or assignments
- Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue
- Tried to better understand someone else’s views by imagining how an issue looks from their perspective
- Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept
- Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge

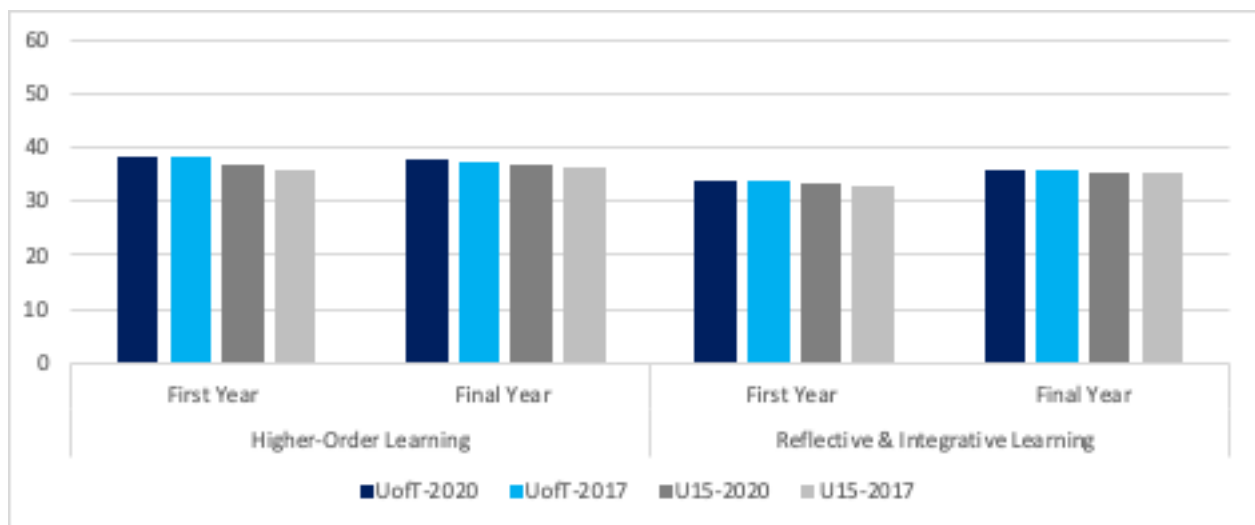
The chart illustrates U of T’s consistent performance in the Academic Challenge theme. U of T generally scores higher than our U15 Canadian peers in most areas and shows small improvements in most of these indicators when compared with 2017.

ACADEMIC CHALLENGE ENGAGEMENT INDICATORS DATA TABLE

	Higher-Order Learning		Reflective & Integrative Learning		Learning Strategies		Quantitative Reasoning	
	First Year	Final Year	First Year	Final Year	First Year	Final Year	First Year	Final Year
U of T-2020	38.2	37.6	33.9	35.7	35.8	34.6	26.9	27.4
U of T-2017	38.0	37.3	33.8	35.7	35.0	34.5	25.1	27.0
U15-2020	36.4***	36.6***	33.4**	35.3	36.3*	34.6	25.5***	27.4
U15-2017	35.6	36.3	32.9	35.4	35.8	34.5	24.4	27.2

Note: T-tests were performed to determine if there are significant differences between U of T’s NSSE 2020 results and that of U15. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$ (2-tailed)

ACADEMIC CHALLENGE INDICATORS (PART 1)



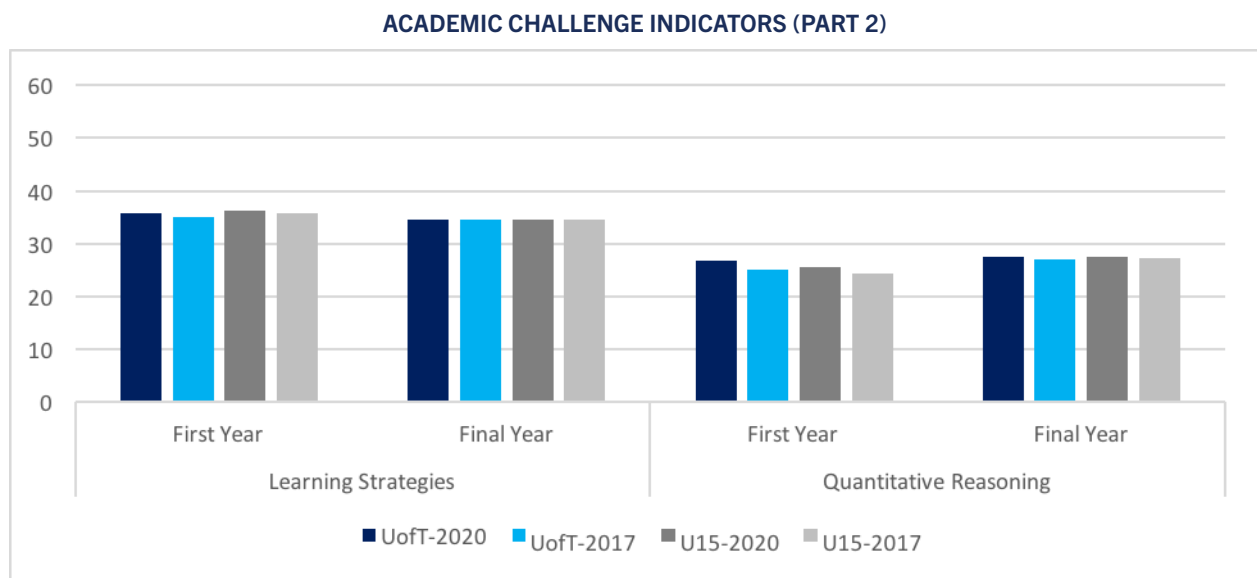
The second two indicators are Learning Strategies and Quantitative Reasoning. The specific items in each of these indicators are listed below. These are followed by a chart of the results.

Learning Strategies

- Identified key information from reading assignments
- Reviewed your notes after class
- Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials

Quantitative Reasoning

- Reached conclusions based on your own analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics etc.)
- Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health etc.)
- Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information



THEME - Learning with Peers

The theme of Learning with Peers includes two Engagement Indicators, including Collaborative Learning and Discussions with Diverse Others. The questions that make up these two Engagement Indicators are:

Collaborative Learning

- Asked another student to help you understand course material
- Explained course material to one or more students
- Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students
- Worked with other students on course projects or assignments

Discussions with Diverse Others

- People from a race or ethnicity other than your own
- People from an economic background other than your own
- People with religious beliefs other than your own
- People with political views other than your own

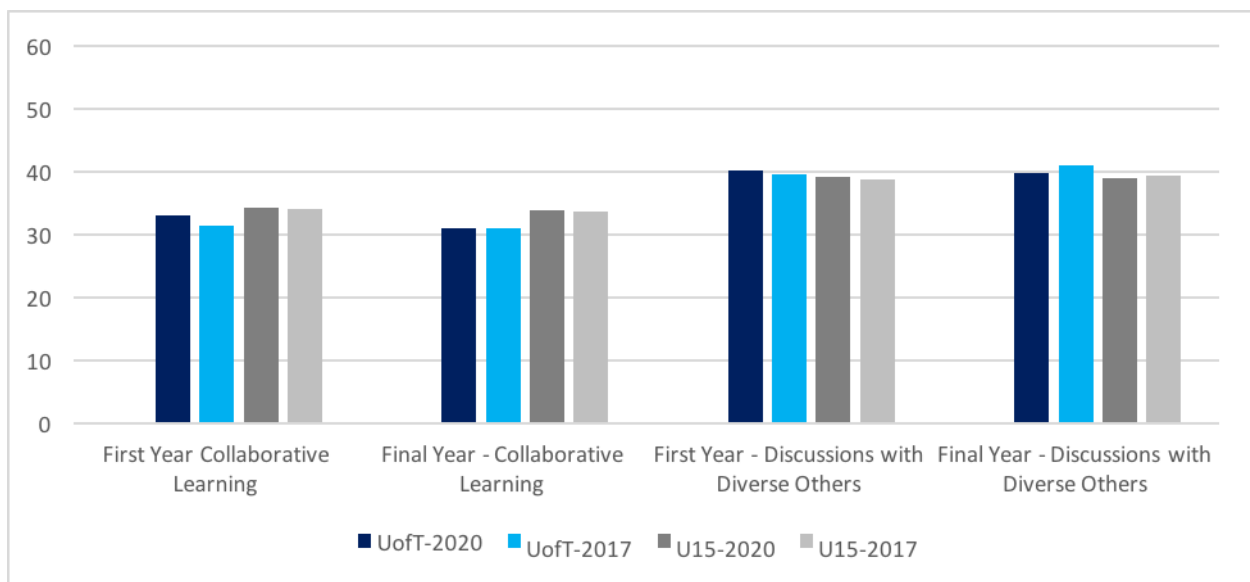
The next table and chart illustrates U of T’s performance in the Learning with Peers theme. The scores are slightly higher than they were in 2017. They are slightly lower than the U15 scores in Collaborative Learning, but slightly higher for Discussions with Diverse Others. Discussions with Diverse Others is the indicator that overall, U of T scores the highest on all ten.

LEARNING WITH PEERS ENGAGEMENT INDICATORS DATA TABLE

	Collaborative Learning		Discussions with Diverse Others	
	First Year	Final Year	First Year	Final Year
U of T-2020	33.1	31.1	40.2	39.7
U of T-2017	31.5	30.9	39.5	41.0
U15-2020	34.2***	33.8***	39.2***	39.0*
U15-2017	34.0	33.7	38.7	39.3

Note: *T*-tests were performed to determine if there are significant differences between U of T’s NSSE 2020 results and that of U15. **p* < .05, ***p* < .01, ****p* < .001 (2-tailed)

LEARNING WITH PEERS ENGAGEMENT INDICATORS



THEME - Experiences with Faculty

The theme Experiences with Faculty includes two Engagement Indicators, including Student-Faculty Interactions and Effective Teaching Practices. The questions for these Engagement Indicators are:

Student-Faculty Interactions

- Talked about career plans with a faculty member
- Worked with faculty on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups etc.)
- Discussed course topics, ideas or concepts with a faculty member outside of class
- Discussed your academic performance with a faculty member

Effective Teaching Practices

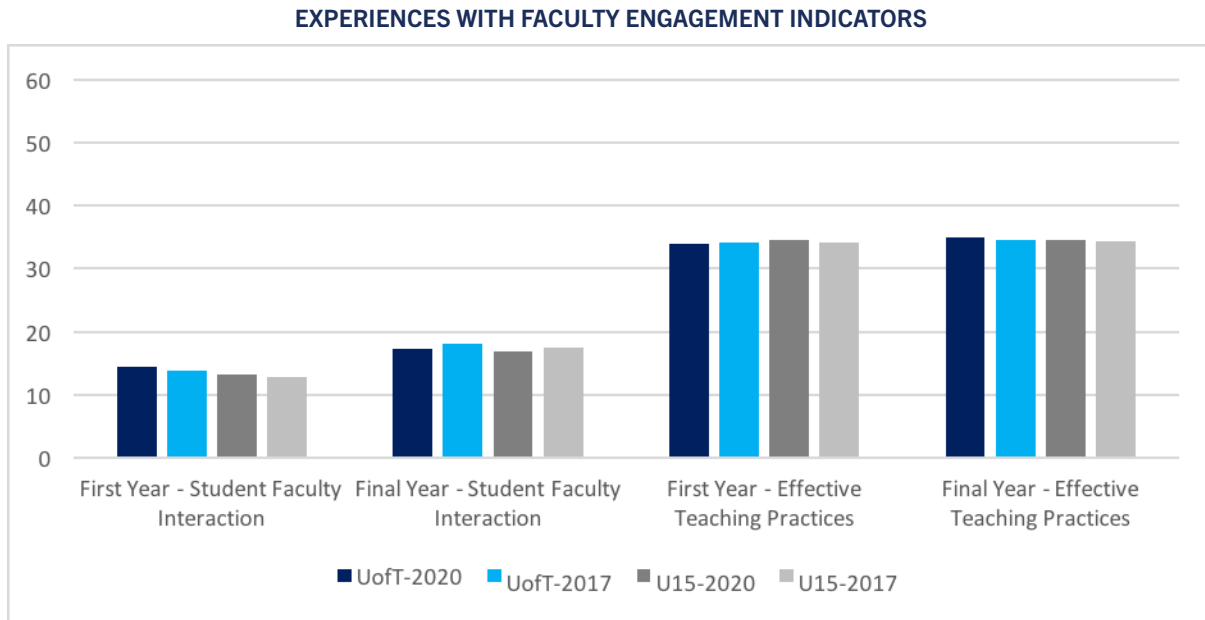
- Clearly explained course goals and requirements
- Taught course sessions in an organized way
- Used examples or illustrations to explain difficult points
- Provided feedback on a draft or work in progress
- Provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments

In Faculty Engagement, U of T scores higher than our U15 Canadian peers in Student-Faculty Interaction and the scores increased slightly from the U of T results in 2017. The results here provide positive feedback on effective teaching strategies that engage and support our students.

EXPERIENCES WITH FACULTY ENGAGEMENT INDICATORS DATA TABLE

	Student-Faculty Interaction		Effective Teaching Practices	
	First Year	Final Year	First Year	Final Year
U of T-2020	14.5	17.3	33.9	34.9
U of T-2017	13.7	18.0	34.1	34.5
U15-2020	13.2***	16.9	34.6***	34.6
U15-2017	12.8	17.4	34.1	34.4

Note: *T*-tests were performed to determine if there are significant differences between U of T's NSSE 2020 results and that of U15. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$ (2-tailed)



THEME - Campus Environment

The theme Campus Environment includes two Engagement Indicators, including Quality of Interactions and Supportive Environment. The questions that make up these Engagement Indicators are:

Quality of Interactions

Students were asked to indicate the quality of interactions with the following people at their institution:

- Students
- Academic Advisors
- Faculty
- Student services staff (career services, student activities, housing etc.)
- Other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid etc.)

Supportive Environment

- Providing support to help students succeed academically using learning support services (tutoring services, writing centre etc.)
- Encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ethnic, religious etc.)
- Providing opportunities to be involved socially
- Providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counselling etc.)
- Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family etc.)
- Attending campus activities and events (performing arts, athletic events etc.)
- Attending events that address important social, economic or political issues

The following chart illustrates U of T's performance in the Campus Environment theme. U of T scores slightly lower than our U15 Canadian peers in both of these Engagement Indicators but has seen some

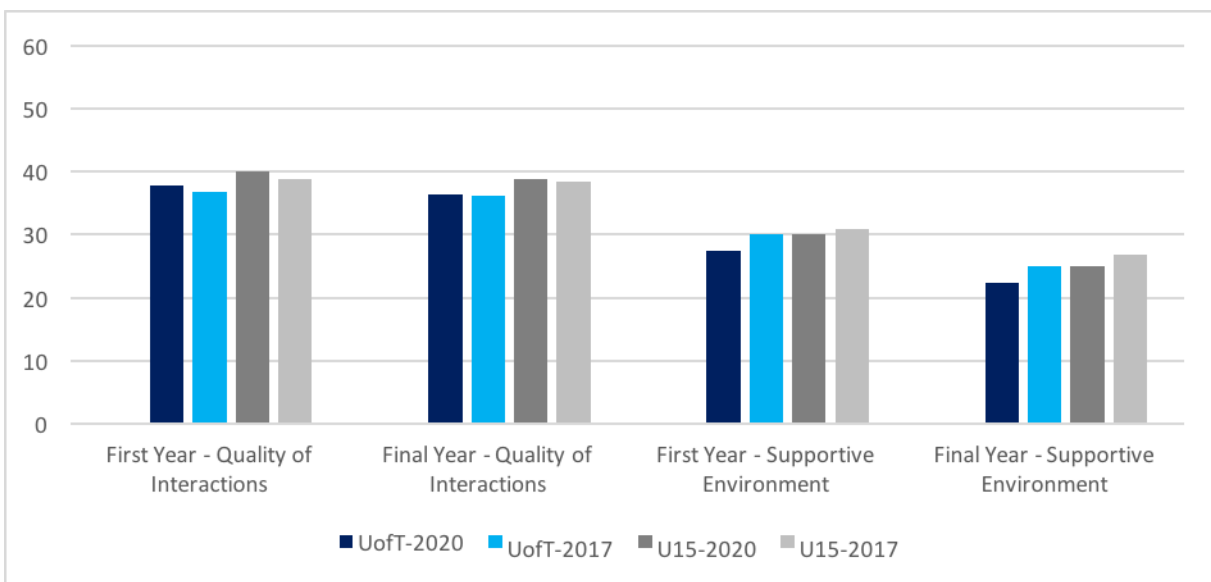
positive progress over time, along with opportunities for growth. We also see that among our U15 peers that the scores on Supportive Environment have decreased from the 2017 results. Prior to the launch of this survey, the [Presidential and Provostial Task Force on Student Mental Health](#) released its report, along with the Administrative Response. Actions and outcomes have been implemented, like the launch of [Navi](#), an anonymous tool that provides information to help navigate mental health resources. MySSP provides students with real-time and/or appointment-based confidential, 24-hour support for any school, health or general life concern with licensed counsellors at no cost to students. Additionally, during the summer of 2020, U of T launched a resiliency program in Academic Success providing a significant increase in investment of academic supports for U of T students. These initiatives, and many more, have the potential to affect the responses in the Supportive Environment engagement indicator. The results here provide valuable feedback on how students perceive their campus environment. As can be seen from some of the specific questions identified below, we can build on our existing and new programming, while leveraging the recommendations from the Vision on the Undergraduate Experience and the recommendations from the Task Force on Student Mental Health to continue to make improvements in this theme area.

CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT ENGAGEMENT INDICATORS DATA TABLE

	Quality of Interactions		Supportive Environment	
	First Year	Final Year	First Year	Final Year
U of T-2020	37.8	36.3	27.5	22.4
U of T-2017	36.9	36.2	30.1	24.9
U15-2020	40.0***	38.8***	30.0***	25.0***
U15-2017	38.8	38.4	30.9	26.9

Note: T-tests were performed to determine if there are significant differences between U of T's NSSE 2020 results and that of U15. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$ (2-tailed)

CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT ENGAGEMENT INDICATORS



High-Impact Practices

High-Impact Practices (HIPs) share several traits: They demand considerable time and effort, facilitate learning outside of the classroom, require meaningful interactions with faculty and students, encourage collaboration with diverse others and provide frequent and substantive feedback. As a result, participation in these practices can be life-changing (Kuh, 2008). “Due to their positive associations with student learning and retention, certain undergraduate opportunities are designated “high impact.” NSSE founding director George Kuh recommends that institutions should aspire for all students to participate in at least two HIPs over the course of their undergraduate experience—one during the first year and one in the context of their major (NSSE, 2007).” (See: <https://nsse.indiana.edu/nsse/survey-instruments/high-impact-practices.html>)

U of T first year students have participated in one or more High-Impact Practices to a greater extent than students at U15 universities, and than at U of T in 2017 and these results are indicative of efforts in the University to increase these opportunities. If we continue to provide opportunities for students in these areas, and communicate their importance and value, we are likely to see more positive results for our senior year students. The following activities are defined as High-Impact Practices:

- Learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together
- Courses that included a community-based project (i.e., service learning)
- Work with a faculty member on a research project
- Internship, co-op, field experience, student teaching or clinical placement
- Study abroad
- Culminating senior year experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, portfolio etc.)

Engineering Strategies & Practice (ESP) is a full-year community-based course for first-year undergraduates of the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering. An important goal of the course is to help students learn that a technical solution to a problem is only successful if it works for people, society and the environment in which it is situated.

Jackman Scholars-in-Residence (SiR) is a 4-week paid research fellowship in humanities and humanistic social-science research for upper-year undergraduates. SiR provides students with an opportunity to acquire advanced research skills and experience while collaborating with an interdisciplinary and intellectually vibrant community of peers, professors, and research professionals.

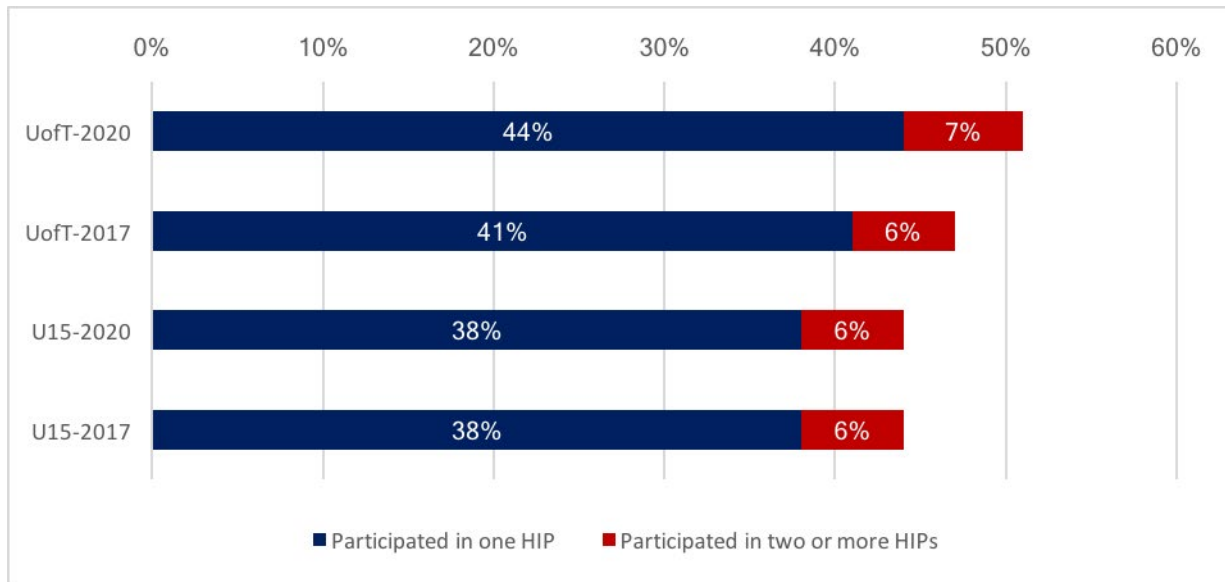
First Year Student Responses.

Among first year students, the proportion who indicated that they had participated in a High-Impact Practice increased from 47% to 51% and this is significantly higher than U15 in 2017 and in 2020.

FIRST YEAR STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES

Time Period	Participated in one HIP	Participated in two or more HIPs	Total
U of T-2020	44%	7%	51%
U of T-2017	41%	6%	47%
U15-2020	38%	6%	44%
U15-2017	38%	6%	44%

FIRST YEAR STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES



The table below focuses on participation in specific High-Impact Practices and it shows that service learning is the most commonly cited activity and that the proportion of first year students who participated in 1 or more courses with service learning or community engaged learning component increased from 2017 to 2020 and in both cases were higher than U15 peers.

The Experiential Learning Hub (EL) is a place where students can learn about and explore experiential learning opportunities at U of T. The EL Hub provides students access to profiles of existing experiential learning programs, links to divisional and institutional offices coordinating these opportunities, resources to support their participation in experiential learning programs, and an overview of key guidelines and procedures that will ensure their success in these programs.

In the year of 2019-2020, U of T undergraduate students have engaged in around 2700 undergraduate student experiences abroad, in the areas of course-based, research and professional experiences. Three million dollars in International Experience (IE) and International Experience (IE) + Awards is available annually to reduce financial barriers and enable strategic growth for students who choose to study abroad. Individual awards are up to \$8,000 based on students' need and anticipated costs of experience.

FIRST YEAR STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SPECIFIC HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES DATA TABLE

Specific HIP Participation	U of T-2020	U of T-2017	U15-2020	U15-2017
Service Learning	44%	41%	38%	38%
Learning Community	12%	11%	10%	10%
Research with Faculty	3%	2%	3%	3%

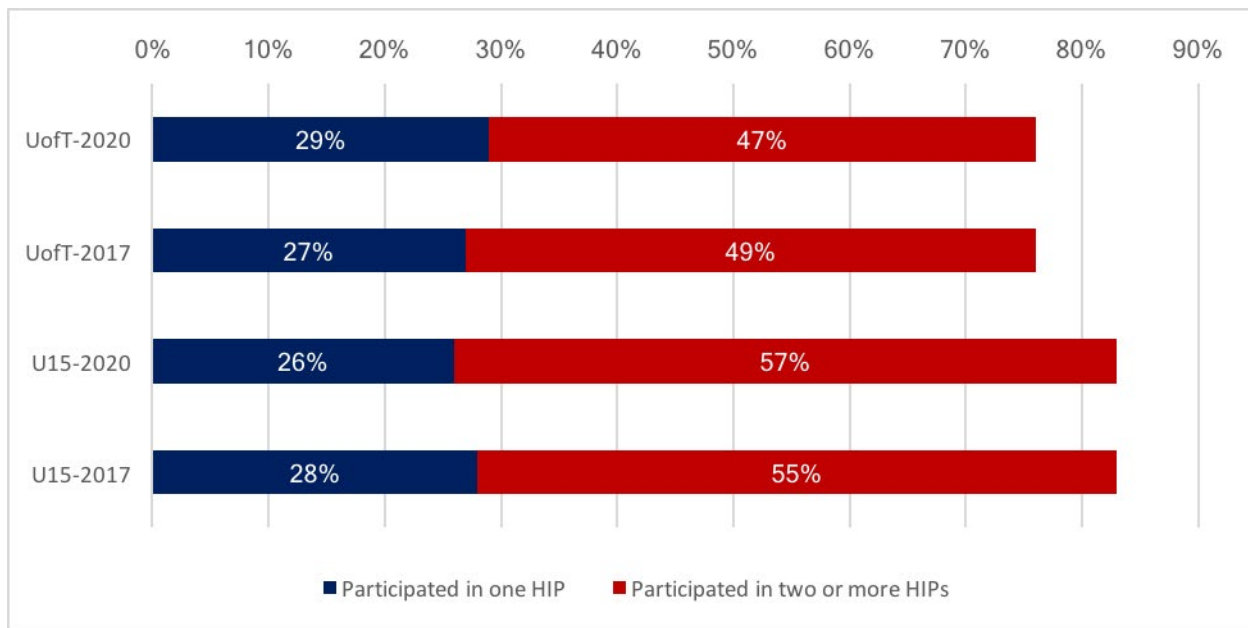
The table highlights that first year students are more likely to report participating in a course with a service learning or community engagement component than in 2017 and more than the U15 comparators. The responses for learning communities and research with faculty are similar and largely unchanged from 2017.

Final Year Student Responses.

While the focus for first year students is on just three of the High-Impact Practices, the final year student participation focuses on all six. In this analysis, the total proportion of U of T students participating in any HIPs was unchanged from 2017 and our participation rate remains lower than our U15 peers. Note the totals for U of T and U15 are the same in 2017 and 2020 but there were some small adjustment in the proportion of students doing 1 HIP and 2 or more.

FINAL YEAR STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES DATA TABLE

Year	Participated in one HIP	Participated in two or more HIPs	Total
U of T-2020	29%	47%	76%
U of T-2017	27%	49%	76%
U15-2020	26%	57%	83%
U15-2017	28%	55%	83%

FINAL YEAR STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES

The table below shows the participation in all six High-Impact Practices for U of T and the U15 in 2020 and 2017. In this table we see that the differences between the U15 and of U of T are in three main areas. Fewer students involved in capstones (thesis, final projects), internships and to a lesser degree service learning.

FINAL YEAR PARTICIPATION IN SPECIFIC HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES

Specific High-Impact Practice	U of T-2020	U of T-2017	U15-2020	U15-2017
Service Learning	41%	41%	45%	45%
Learning Community	17%	18%	18%	18%
Research with Faculty	27%	27%	26%	25%
Internship	44%	46%	53%	51%
Study Abroad	12%	12%	12%	12%
Capstone	26%	27%	36%	34%

The table above highlights that among final year students, participation did not vary much from 2017. Internships and service learning remain the activities students are most likely to participate in, though our participation rates are lower than U15. The same is true for capstone projects, while participation in research, learning communities and study abroad mirror the U15. With respect to study abroad, the NSSE question focuses just on study abroad for credit. The [U of T International Strategic Plan](#) metrics for participation in Learning Abroad capture all known activity for the undergraduate population in any given year. This activity includes coursework, research and professional experiences abroad. Internal data indicates that 22% of all U of T undergraduates had a learning experience abroad by graduation for the 2021 academic year.

Conclusion

The University of Toronto continues to use NSSE results to learn more about the many ways our students engage in their academic and co-curricular activities. We remain focused on enhancing our supportive learning environment. The University is encouraged that there has been positive progress since starting this survey in 2004. Building on the feedback provided by the 2020 survey, we will continue to contribute to our students' personal growth and academic success through greater opportunities in both formal academic programming and in activities beyond the classroom. We also look forward to measuring our performance with respect to implementing the spirit and articulated aims of the 2019 Vision for Undergraduate Experience put forward by the Expert Panel on the Undergraduate Student Educational Experience. We also expect our actions that result from the recommendations of the Student Mental Health Task Force will work to create a more caring and compassionate campus environment.

Next Steps

Communication of Results

First-Entry Deans will receive results from the full NSSE sample and results for their division. Each division is encouraged to share their results throughout the University. Presentations by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Students will take place across the University.

Further Research

The 2020 NSSE results have identified potential areas for further investigation. Through the work of the Forum on Student Experience, the work of the Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education and the initiatives of several divisions, colleges and units throughout the University, we will undertake specific projects, including deeper assessments, prior to the next NSSE administration.

Further Information

The National Survey of Student Engagement is a project of the Office of the Vice-Provost, Students and the Planning & Budget Office of University of Toronto.

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For more information on NSSE visit: nsse.iub.edu

For more information on U of T's participation in NSSE and the results, contact:

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