

## FSSE 2015 Experiences with Writing Module Findings

New to FSSE for the 2013 administration were topical modules, short sets of questions on a topic related to current issues in higher education and student engagement. The Experiences with Writing module touched on three aspects of good writing assessments: interactivity, meaning-making, and clarity.

These results use responses from 4,533 faculty members from 28 institutions who responded to the 2015 Experiences with Writing module. A majority of faculty members reported that they encouraged their students to do the following activities for at least some writing assignments: “Analyze or evaluate something they had read” (88%); “Write in the style and format of a specific field (engineering, psychology, etc.)” (77%); “Summarize material they had read” (75%); “Argue a position using evidence and reasoning” (74%). In addition, faculty members across disciplinary areas reported high rates of emphasis that they did the following for at least some writing assignments: “Provide clear instructions describing what you wanted students to do” (98%), “Explain in advance what you wanted students to learn” (95%), “Explain in advance the criteria you would use to grade the assignment” (96%).

The activities that faculty encouraged and required their students to do for at least some of their writing assignments differs across disciplinary areas. For example, faculty in education (70%) reported the highest percentage in “Talking with a classmate, friend, or family member to develop ideas before starting the assignment” compared to that of the other disciplinary areas. Faculty in biology (85%) and education (84%) reported highest rate of emphasis on summarizing material students had read. The figure below shows how the percentage of faculty who encouraged their students to “analyze or evaluate” something they had “read, researched, or observed” in at least some of their writing assignments differs by discipline area.

