

*Assessing Underserved Students'  
Engagement in High-Impact Practices:*

**WHAT MAKES LEARNING ENGAGING &  
FOR WHOM?**

Ashley Finley, Ph.D  
Senior Director of Assessment & Research, AAC&U  
National Evaluator, Bringing Theory to Practice  
*The Assessment Institute*  
October 28, 2013



**10 Most Common High-Impact Practices:**

- FYS & Experiences
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing Intensive
- Collaborative Assignments
- Undergraduate Research
- Diversity/Global Learning
- Service Learning, CBL
- Internships
- Capstone Courses & Projects

How many of  
these are you  
doing?

**Why?**



## Developing an Inquiry-Based Model

- 1) Who participates?
- 2) What are the effects of participation in specific experiences?
- 3) What are the effects of participation in multiple activities?
  - Compared to students in the **same** group who **do not participate**?
  - Compared to students in **other groups** that **do** participate?
- 4) How do students describe these experiences?

## How “high-impact”? And for whom? (Tia McNair, senior director for student success, Co-PI)

- Data from 38 institutions (CA,OR, WI)
- NSSE data from 2006-2008 (one year of data from each campus)
- HIPs examined
  - Learning Communities
  - Service learning
  - Study Abroad
  - Internship
  - Capstone
  - Student/Fac. Res.
    - 0-6 experiences
- 20,000+ students
  - First Year = 36.5%, SR = 51.1% (included Soph., Jr, Unclassified)
  - Transfer = 33%
  - First-generation = 51%
  - Race
    - White= 58.7%
    - African American = 2.5%
    - Asian American = 11.8%
    - Hispanic = 13.2%
    - (Other = 6.2%, No Response = 7.5%)

## Who participates in HIPs?

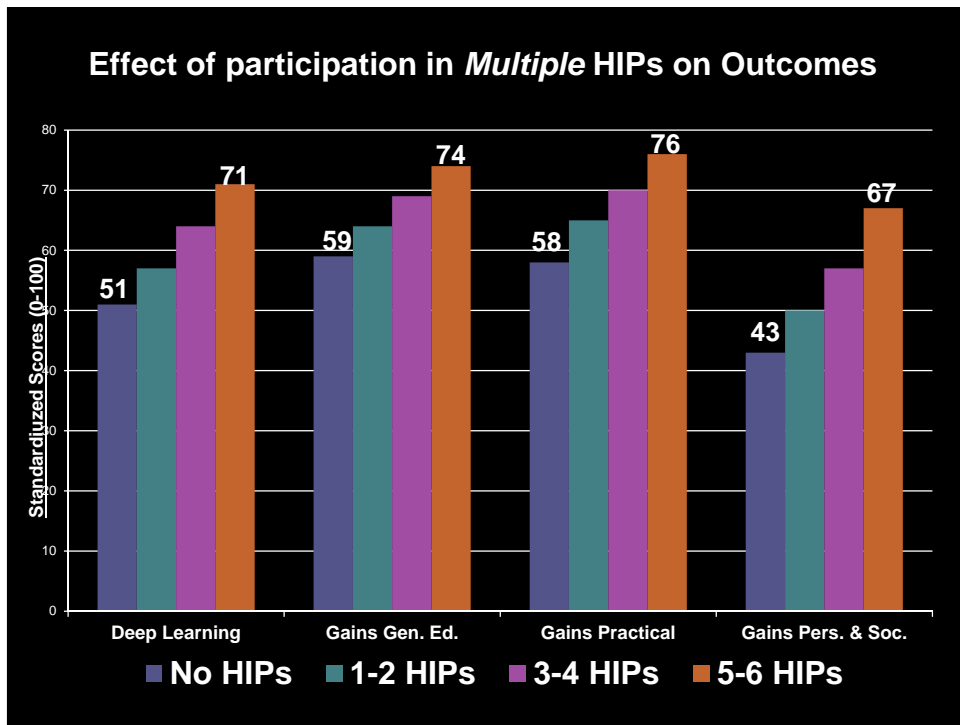
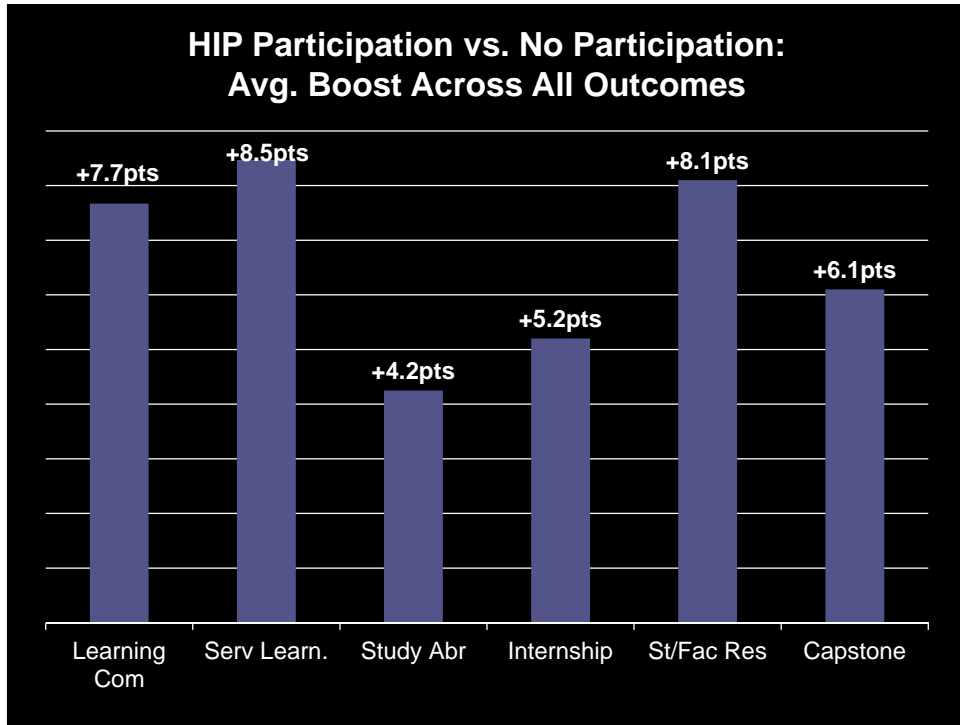
- Overall students participated in **1.3 HIPs** experiences
- Non first-generation students participate in more HIPs than first-generation (**1.5 vs. 1.2**)
- Transfer students participate in more HIPs than non-transfer (**1.5 vs. 1.2**)
- White students participate in more HIPs than Asian American and Hispanic students (**1.4 vs 1.3 & 1.2, respectively**)
  - No difference bet. White and African American students

What are the effects of participation  
in certain high-impact experiences?

What are the effects of participation  
in multiple high-impact experiences?

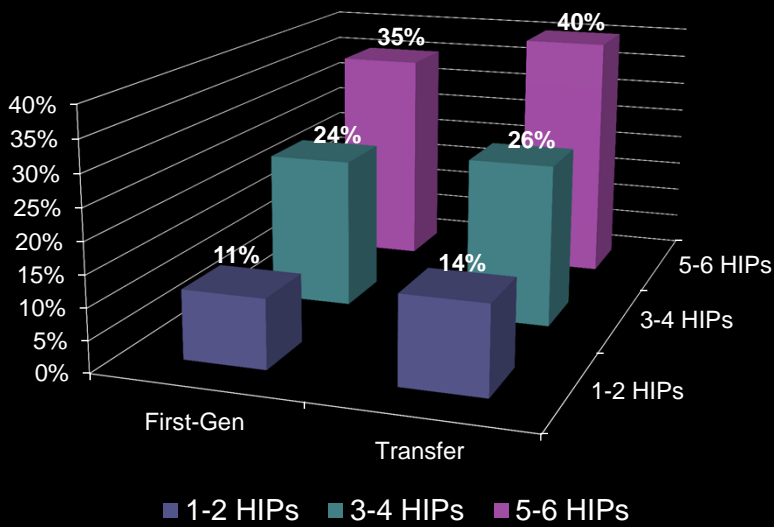
### Outcomes Examined

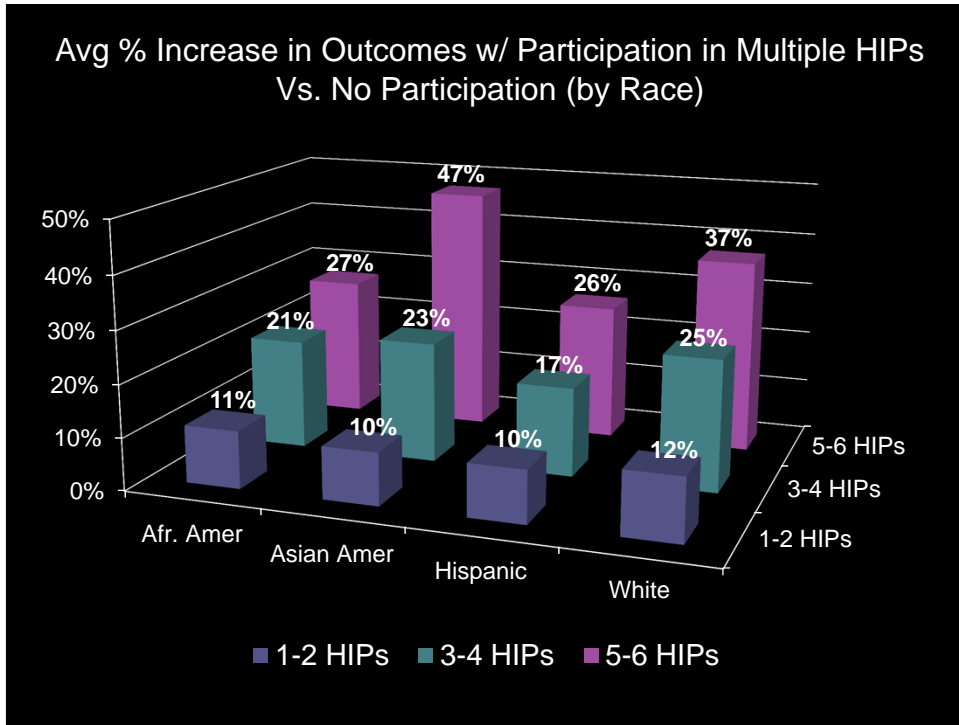
- **Deep Learning** = Pursuit of learning beyond memorization to seek underlying meanings & relationships
- **Gains in General Education** = Writing/speaking skills, acquire broad general educ, analyzing quant. probs
- **Gains in Practical Competence** = Work related knowledge & skills, working effectively w/ others, use of technology, quant. problem-solving, solving complex real-world problems
- **Gains in Personal & Social Development** = Developing ethics, understanding diff. bkgnds, understanding self, contributing to community, voting



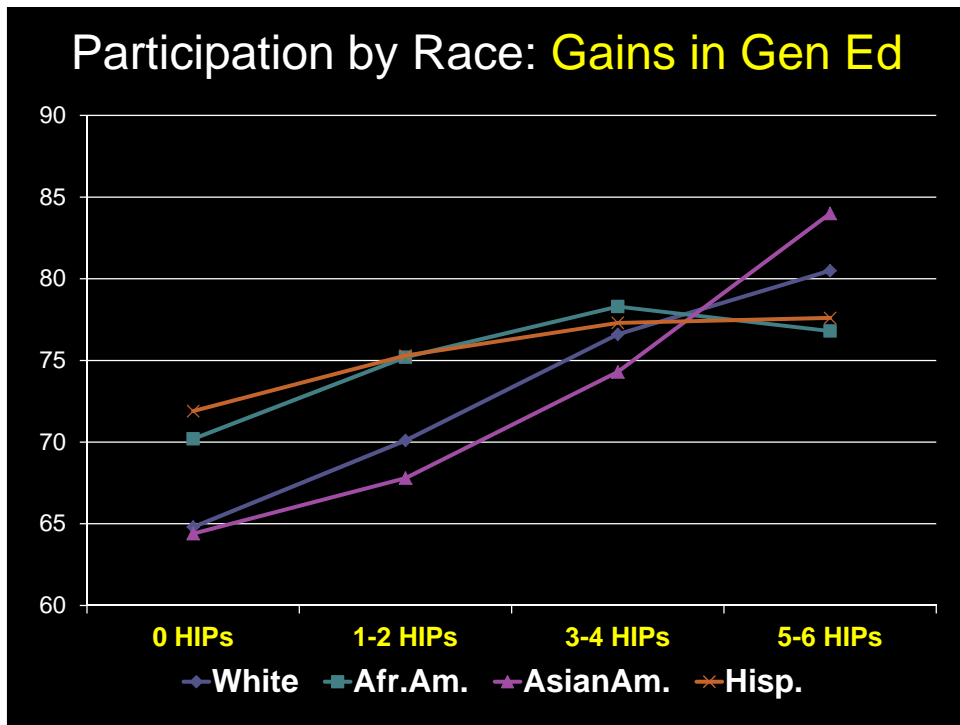
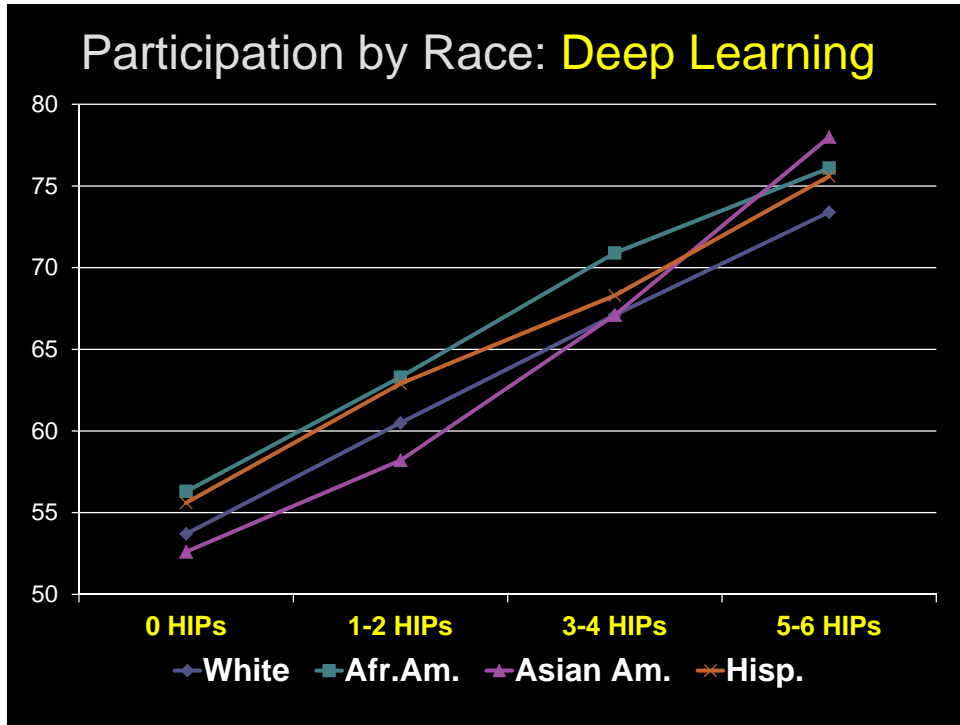
What is the effect of participation in multiple HIPs relative to students in the same group who do NOT participate?

Avg % Increase in Outcomes w/ Participation in Multiple HIPs Vs. No Participation (by First-Generation & Transfer Status)

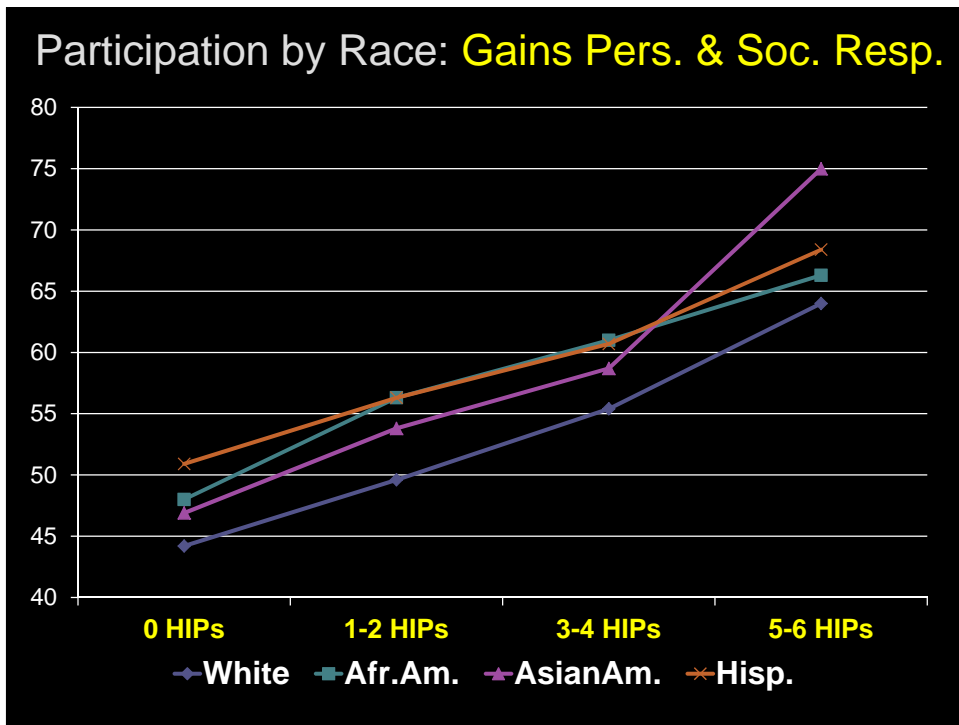
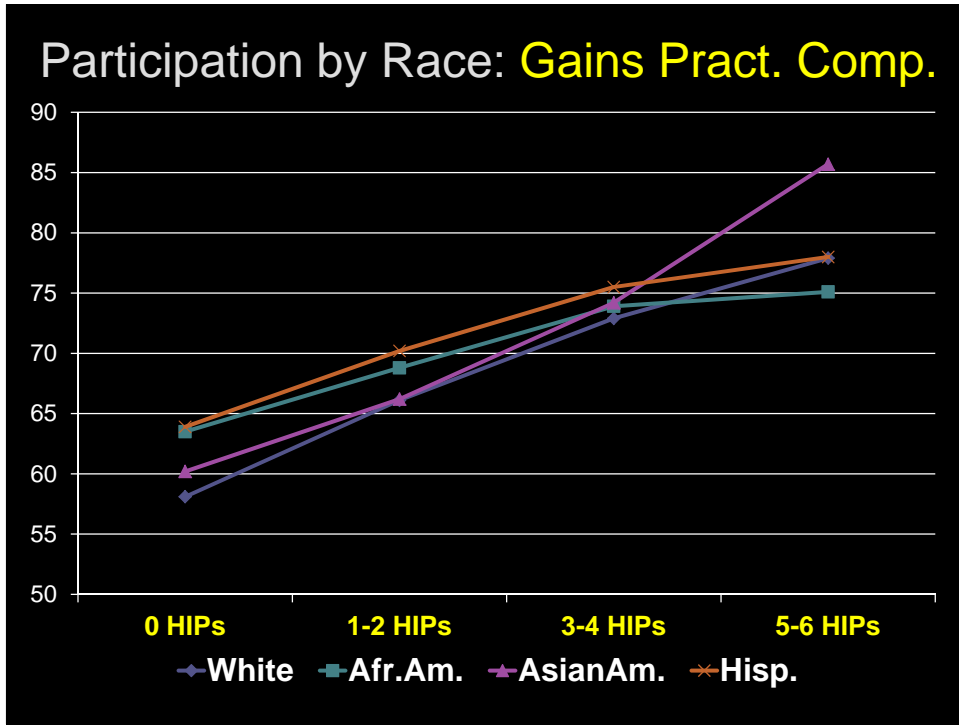


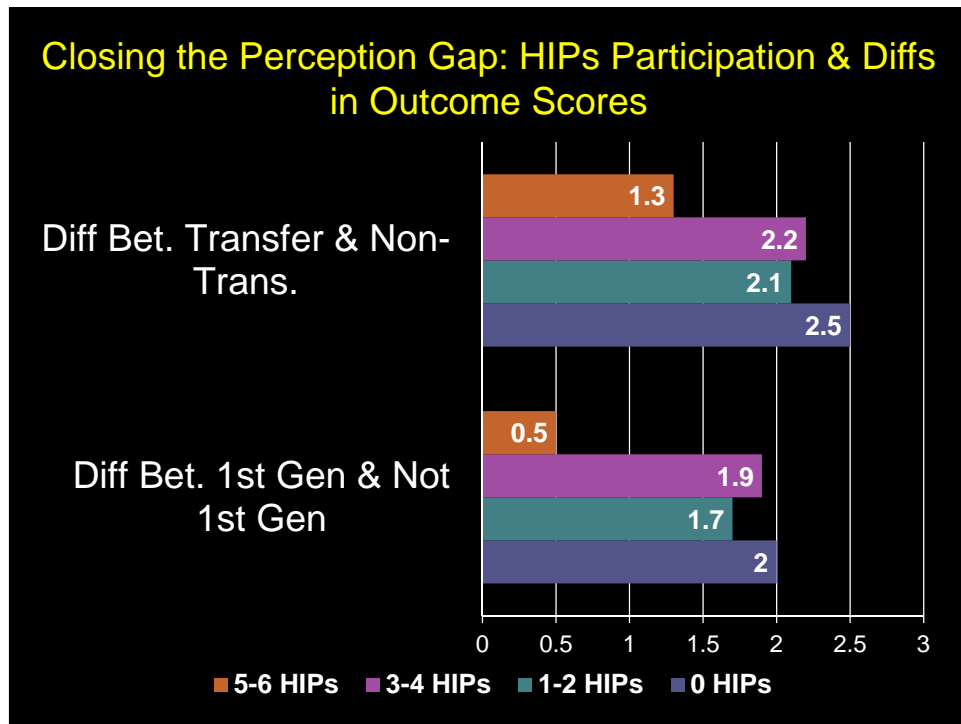


What are the comparative effects of participation in multiple HIPs for different groups of students?









### In Their Own Words: What Matters To Students...

- 15 focus groups
- 3 campuses/state (9 campuses total)
- 91 students

- Focus Grp Characteristics:
  - 48 first-generation
  - 40 transfer
  - 46 low-income
  - 28 Hispanics
  - 24 African-Americans
  - 14 Multi-racial
  - 11 Asian-Americans
  - 9 Caucasians
  - 4 Native Americans
  - 1 Arab-American

## Reality Check: What's this stuff called?

"...I have teachers that take us out of the building. I don't know what it's called. It's called--it's called something here. They take you out of the building, and you go learn about like the vegetable gardens that they have growing here, among the Hmong society...So there's a lot of professors here that teach differently."

Student, Wisconsin

- **Expectations** set at appropriately high levels
- Sig. investment of **time & effort**
- **Interactions** w/ faculty & peers
- Experiences with **diversity**
- Freq., constructive **feedback**
- Periodic, structured opps. to **reflect & integrate**
- Relevance through **real-world applications**
- Public **demonstration** of competence

Source: Kuh & O'Donnell, 2013, *Ensuring Quality and Taking High Impact Practices to Scale*, <http://secure2.aacu.org/store/detail.aspx?id=HIPQUAL>

## Considerations for Campus Work: Telling the Story at Home

- Incorporation of direct assessment of learning
- Clear articulation of civic outcomes (e.g. civic mindedness, intercultural competence, ethical reasoning, social justice)
- Identification of barriers and obstacles for inclusion and success at the institutional level
  - Modeled in Equity Scorecard (Center for Urban Education), also CUE's "toolkit" in *Assessing Underserved Students' Engagement in High-Impact Practices*

## Additional Resources

- Me: [finley@aacu.org](mailto:finley@aacu.org)
- Finley & McNair, *Assessing Underserved Students' Engagement in High-Impact Practices*, forthcoming: <http://www.aacu.org/assessinghips>
- VALUE Rubrics:  
<http://www.aacu.org/value/index.cfm>
- Bringing Theory to Practice Civic Monograph Series:  
[http://www.aacu.org/bringing\\_theory/CivicSeries.cfm](http://www.aacu.org/bringing_theory/CivicSeries.cfm)

**Enjoy the conference!**