Assessing Underserved Students’ Engagement in High-Impact Practices:

WHAT MAKES LEARNING ENGAGING & FOR WHOM?

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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 between 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. bkgrds, understanding self, contributing to community, voting
HIP Participation vs. No Participation: Avg. Boost Across All Outcomes

- Learning: +7.7pts
- Serve Learn.: +8.5pts
- Study Abroad: +4.2pts
- Internship: +5.2pts
- St/Fac Res: +8.1pts
- Capstone: +6.1pts

Effect of participation in Multiple HIPs on Outcomes

- Deep Learning
  - No HIPs: 51
  - 1-2 HIPs: 59
  - 3-4 HIPs: 58
  - 5-6 HIPs: 43
- Gains Gen. Ed.
  - No HIPs: 71
  - 1-2 HIPs: 59
  - 3-4 HIPs: 74
  - 5-6 HIPs: 76
- Gains Practical
  - No HIPs: 74
  - 1-2 HIPs: 58
  - 3-4 HIPs: 76
  - 5-6 HIPs: 67
- Gains Pers. & Soc.
  - No HIPs: 67
  - 1-2 HIPs: 67
  - 3-4 HIPs: 67
  - 5-6 HIPs: 67
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?
Closing the Perception Gap: HIPs Participation & Diffs in Outcome Scores

Diff Bet. Transfer & Non-Trans.

Diff Bet. 1st Gen & Not 1st Gen

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


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
- VALUE Rubrics: http://www.aacu.org/value/index.cfm
- Bringing Theory to Practice Civic Monograph Series: http://www.aacu.org/bringing_theory/CivicSeries.cfm

Enjoy the conference!