

Civic Learning and Effective Educational Practice: A Focus on Service-Learning and Civic Engagement



Jillian Kinzie and Alexander McCormick
IU Center for Postsecondary Research and National Survey for Student Engagement
Maggie Stevens
Indiana Campus Compact

AAC&U Annual Meeting, January 24, 2014



The Call to Embrace Civic Learning

- An “undisputed educational priority”
- Campus Compact has advanced campus-based civic engagement for more than 25 years





Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement in the 21st Century

Civic Knowledge
Civic Skills
Civic Values
Capacity for Collective Action

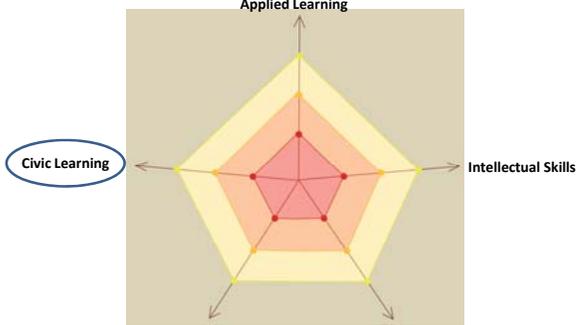


Civic Action

http://www.aacu.org/civic_learning/crucible/
<http://www.compact.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Praxis.pdf>



Degree Qualification Profile



http://degreeprofile.org/advantage/publication/The_Degree_Qualifications_Profile.pdf




Degree Qualification Profile

- **Civic learning** is that which enables students to respond to social, environmental and economic challenges at local, national and global levels.
- **Applied learning** is used by students to demonstrate what they can do with what they know.
- **Intellectual skills** are used by students to think critically and analytically about what they learn, broadening their individual perspectives and experiences.
- **Broad knowledge** transcends the typical boundaries of students’ first two years of higher education, and encompasses all learning in broad areas through multiple degree levels.
- **Specialized knowledge** is the knowledge students demonstrate about their individual fields of study.



Crucible Moment: State of Civic Learning

- One in three students “strongly agreed that faculty publicly advocate the need for students to become active and involved citizens”
- Only one-third strongly agreed that their education increased their civic capacities




What do we know about Students' Civic Learning Experiences?

- What percentage experience service-learning?
- How many are informed about civic issues, discuss issues of state and national importance, ask others to address local issues, or organize others on state and national issues?
- Are students making gains in being active, informed citizens? Contributing to the well-being of the community? Helping people resolve conflicts? Leading groups that are inclusive and welcoming?



National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

NSSE annually gathers valid, reliable information on the extent to which students engage in and are exposed to proven educational practices

- More than 1,500 bachelor's degree-granting institutions
- First-year and senior students surveyed

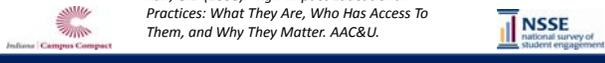


Some Educational Activities are Unusually Effective

Growing evidence that "high-impact practices" provide substantial educational benefits to students



Kuh, G.D. (2008). *High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access To Them, and Why They Matter*. AAC&U.



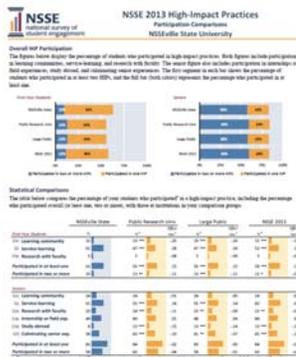
High Impact Activities



- ★ First-Year Seminars and Experiences
- ★ Common Intellectual Experiences
- ★ Collaborative Assignments and Projects
- ★ Learning Communities
- ★ Writing-Intensive Courses
- ★ Undergraduate Research
- ★ Diversity/Global Learning
- ★ Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- ★ Internships
- ★ Capstone Courses/Projects



NSSE's New High-Impact Practices Report



What does NSSE tell us about Participation in Service-Learning?



Service-Learning Results from NSSE 2013

- NSSE 2013 - 335,000 students at 568 U.S. bachelor's degree-granting institutions.

About how many of your courses at this institution have included a community-based project (e.g., service-learning)?

[All, Some, Most, None]



NSSE 2013: Participation in Service-Learning

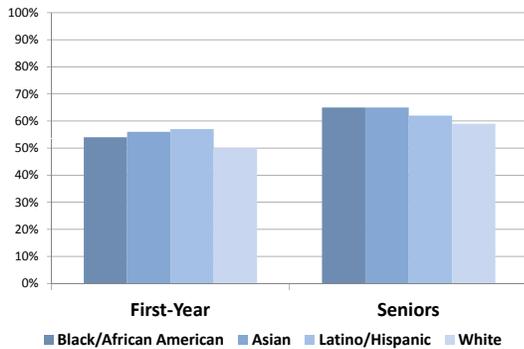
- **52%** of first-year students
- **60%** of seniors

Not bad, right?

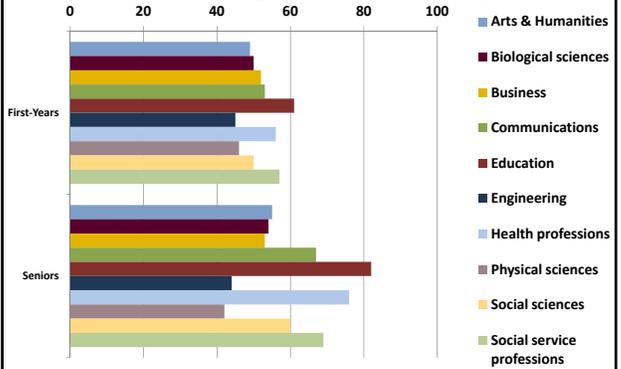
But participation varies by student & institutional characteristics



Percentage of students who had service-learning experience by Race-ethnicity



Percentage of students who had Service-learning experience By Major



Service-learning and Majors

- Are there majors with a distinctive emphasis on service-learning?
- *What might this suggest for building partnerships with academic colleagues?*



A Closer Look at Service-learning through NSSE Additional Items



NSSE 2012 Additional Questions: Service-Learning



- Do students do it?
- How often?
- How many courses include service-learning?
- Is service-learning voluntary or required?
- Where does service-learning take place?
- What types of activities do students do in their service-learning?
- What are students getting out of service-learning?



Service-Learning Results

- Sample for additional service-learning items:

- 42 institutions
- N=4,607
 - First-years: 1,715
 - Seniors: 2,892



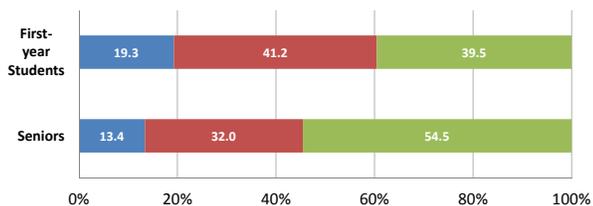
- “Earlier you indicated that you participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course (e.g., service-learning) this year. We would like to know more about this experience...”
- Of students who did SL, 60% indicated 1 SL course this term & 40% indicated 2+ courses



Learning Outcomes

My service-learning experience helped me to **understand the subject matter of the course**

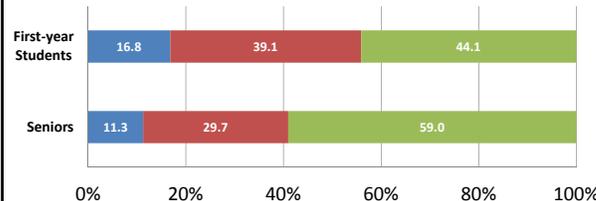
■ Not at all ■ Somewhat ■ Very much



Learning Outcomes

My service-learning experience helped me to understand the **connection between studies and real life**

■ Not at all ■ Somewhat ■ Very much



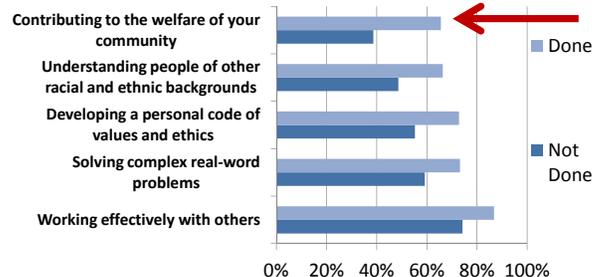
The Impact of Service-Learning

- First-year students & Seniors who had a S-L experience had **higher levels** of engagement on the following than those who did not do S-L:
 - **Active and Collaborative Learning** (asking questions in class, working with peers on assignments, making presentations)
 - **Student-Faculty Interaction** (talking about career plans, discussing assignments, and prompt feedback)
 - **Diversity Experiences** (serious conversation with students of diff. race-ethnicity, with diff. beliefs, and perception that school encourages contact among students from diff. racial, social, economic groups)



Effect of Service-Learning: Educational Gains

Substantial^a Perceived Gains by Service Learning Participation



a. Percentage responding “Very much” or “Quite a bit”



NSSE 2013 Civic Engagement Modules (adapted from AACSU Degrees of Preparation Survey)

NSSE National Survey of Student Engagement
Topical Module: Civic Engagement

Adapted from the Degrees of Preparation survey that was developed by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. The module was designed to assess the student's knowledge and attitudes toward civic engagement with local, state, national, and global issues.

1. Select the response that best represents your ability to do the following:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
a. Help people resolve their disagreements with each other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
b. Hear and resolve the concerns, disagreements, and grievances	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
c. Lead a group where people from different backgrounds feel welcomed and included	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
d. Contribute to the well-being of your community	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

2. During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you done the following?

	Never	Infrequently	Sometimes	Frequently	Very frequently
a. Informed yourself about local or campus issues	0	0	0	0	0
b. Informed yourself about state, national, or global issues	0	0	0	0	0
c. Discussed local or campus issues with others	0	0	0	0	0
d. Discussed state, national, or global issues with others	0	0	0	0	0
e. Raised awareness about local or campus issues	0	0	0	0	0
f. Raised awareness about state, national, or global issues	0	0	0	0	0
g. Asked others to address local or campus issues	0	0	0	0	0
h. Asked others to address state, national, or global issues	0	0	0	0	0
i. Organized others to work on local or campus issues	0	0	0	0	0
j. Organized others to work on state, national, or global issues	0	0	0	0	0

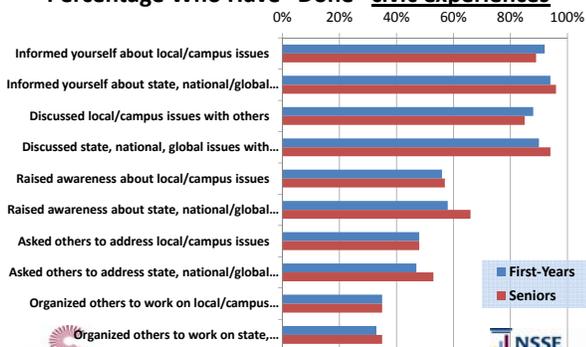
3. Think about the experiences you may have had with local, campus, state, national, or global issues. What about these experiences has been most meaningful to you?

NSSE 2013 Civic Engagement Results

- Administered as NSSE module in 2013
- Sample for civic engagement module:
 - N = 40,650
 - First-year student: 14,250
 - Seniors: 26,400
 - 50 institutions



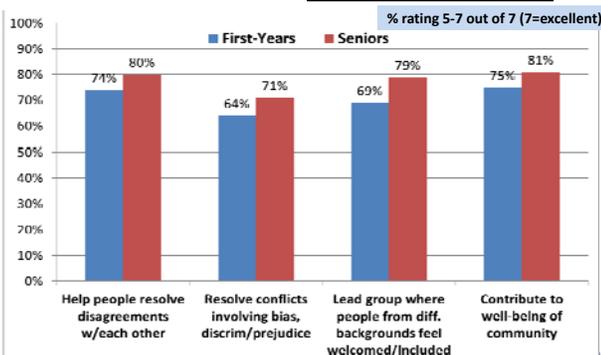
NSSE Civic Engagement Module Results Percentage Who Have "Done" civic experiences



Ratings of Civic Experiences by Major

Civic Experience items	HIGHEST	LOWEST
Informed self about local/campus issues	Comm	
Informed self about state, nat./global issues	Social Sci	
Discussed local/campus issues with others	Comm	
Discussed state, nat., global issues w/others	Comm	
Raised awareness about local/campus issues	Comm	
Raised awareness about state, nat. /global issues	Social Sci	Prof
Asked others address local/campus issues	Comm	
Asked others address state, nat./global issues	Comm	
Organized others work on local/campus issues	Comm	
Organized others work state, nat. /global issues	Comm	

NSSE 2013 Civic Engagement Module How do students rate their civic engagement abilities?



Ratings of Civic Ability by Major

- The majority of students (66 - 84%) rate their abilities highly (5-7) across all majors, with Social Sciences and Social Service Professions majors rating their abilities the highest, and Physical Sciences and Engineering the lowest.
- Students rate their "contributing to the well-being of community" ability the highest across all majors. Social Sciences and Social Service Profession majors also rated "helping people resolve disagreements with others" highly.

NSSE Civic Engagement Module Findings

- What do these results suggest about...
 - civic engagement experiences?
 - civic engagement skills and abilities?
 - variation by major field?
- What do faculty say about their use of these practices?



FSSE 2013 Civic Engagement Module

- 3,000 faculty members completed the module
- Majority of faculty (74%) said their institution substantially (very much + quite a bit) encouraged undergrads to “contribute to the well-being of community,” and about half indicated support for “helping people resolve disagreements,” “resolve conflicts involving bias,” and “lead a group where others feel welcomed.”



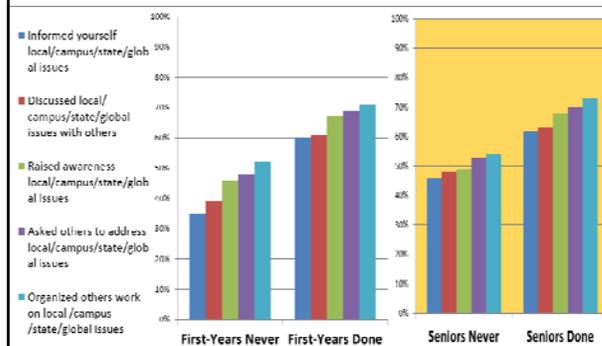
FSSE Civic Engagement Results

Percentage of faculty indicating they encouraged students to do the following “Often” or “Very Often”

Inform themselves about state or national/global issues	59%
Discuss state or national/global issues	51%
Raise awareness about state or national/global issues	48%
Organize others to work on state or national/global issues	20%



Relationship Between Doing Civic Activities and “Substantial” Gains in ‘Being Informed Active Citizen’



Some Conclusions

- Most students experience service-learning, and “basic” civic engagement experiences (becoming informed, discussing issues)
- Less than half experience higher-level civic activities (asking others to address, organizing others)
- Physical Science & Engineering majors are less likely to have civic experiences than Communications or Social Sciences majors
- Most faculty encourage “basic” civic engagement skills, but less than half encourage organizing for civic action
- Students who do civic engagement activities report greater gains in being an informed and active citizen.



Focus on Campus Practice

What do these results suggest for campus practice?



Campus Compact Lessons for Practice

What are some strategies for building a civic-minded campus?



Offering one civic experience is not the same as developing a pervasive strategy of civic learning.



Discussion

- What comments do you have about these results?
- What are the implications for these findings for your campus/department?
- What other questions do you have after reviewing this data?



Jillian Kinzie & Alexander McCormick
IU Center for Postsecondary Research
National Survey of Student Engagement

jikinzie@indiana.edu

amcc@indiana.edu

Maggie Stevens
Indiana Campus Compact
magsteve@iupui.edu

