Assessing Students' Social Responsibility and Commitment to Public Service

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National Imperative for Civic Learning

- Recovery from a "civic recession" in America
- Despite reports of volunteerism on surveys, students are less likely to vote or engage politically
- Institutions are being called to action to promote and assess civic outcomes
  - AAC&U Report: *A Crucible Moment: College Learning & Democracy's Future* (The National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, 2012).

The US Dept. of Education Responds

2012 report with five priorities, among them:

- 1) Making civic learning and democratic engagement core expectations for K-12, undergraduate, and graduate students;
- 2) Developing robust evidence of student achievement of civic learning outcomes and impact of educational institutions.
- The report lays out the federal governments' own roadmap for advancing civic learning as a nation.

Purpose of Study

- To identify an array of outcomes on our survey that tap into personal and social responsibility: College entry, 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 4th year of college.

- Assess the relationship between campus practices, student experiences, and *longitudinal* change on the various measures of civic learning

- Pull together to sum up decades of research using these instruments

Framework: Civic Learning Spiral[*]

- Self
  - Self & Others (α_{YFCY}= .64; α_{CSS}= .66)
- Communities & Cultures
  - Change: Knowledge of people from different races/cultures
- Knowledge
  - Civic Awareness (α_{YFCY}= .81; α_{CSS}= .82)
  - Integration of Learning (α_{DLE}= .61)
- Skills
  - Pluralistic Orientation (α_{YFCY}= .86; α_{DLE}= .81; α_{CSS}= .87)
  - Critical Consciousness & Action (α_{DLE}= .81)
- Values
  - Social Agency (α_{YFCY}= .82; α_{DLE}= .83; α_{CSS}= .83)
- Public Action
  - Civic Engagement in Public Forums (α_{DLE}= .77; α_{CSS}= .67)
  - Political Engagement (α_{YFCY}= .71; α_{DLE}= .77; α_{CSS}= .74)

*From Musil (2009)

Data and Samples

	The Freshman Survey **(TFS)**	**Your First College Year** **(YFCY)**	**Diverse Learning Environments** **(DLE)**	**College Senior Survey** **(CSS)**
Year(s)	2006-2009	2008	2011	2010
Students	matched	25,373	8,316	10,701
Institutions	matched	399	17	97

Measures

- 9 Outcomes: Reflect Civic Learning Spiral
  - 5 previously validated constructs created with IRT
  - 3 new factors
  - 1 single item measure
  - Reliability and factor loadings available at: www.heri.ucla.edu/dle/presentations
- 25 Covariates: Common Model
  - Inputs/controls, campus-facilitated practices, informal experiences, cognitive measures, institutional characteristics
- 5-12 Additional Covariates: Survey-Specific Models
  - Measures not available on all three surveys

Analysis

- Missing Data: EM algorithm
- Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM)
  - Accounts for nested structure of data
- 19 models for 9 outcomes across 3 surveys
  - 7 outcomes available on more than one survey

Results by Common Model

Direction and Number of Significant Relationships*

- Positive Cross-Racial Interaction (+18)
- Habits of Mind (+18)
- Sense of Belonging (+10, -3)
- Volunteer Work (+12)
- Liberal Political Views (+10, -2)
- Leadership Training (+11)
- Institution's Respect for Expression of Diverse Beliefs (+11)
- Service-Learning Course (+10, -1)

*Significant at $p < .05$ or greater

Results by Outcome

Social Agency	Pluralistic Orientation	Political Engagement
• Habits of Mind (+3)	• Habits of Mind (+3)	• Habits of Mind (+3)
• Positive Cross-Racial Interaction (+3)	• Positive Cross-Racial Interaction (+3)	• Positive Cross-Racial Interaction (+3)
• Volunteer Work (+3)	• Institution's respect for diverse beliefs (+3)	• Institutional control: Private (-3)

Results by Outcome

Social Agency	Pluralistic Orientation	Political Engagement
• Race: Asian, Hispanic, or Other Race compared to White (+YFCY, DLE) • Sense of belonging (+YFCY, CSS) • Leadership training (+YFCY, CSS)	• Race: All groups compared to White (+YFCY, DLE)	• Volunteer work (+DLE, CSS) • Sense of belonging (-YFCY, DLE)
• Problem-solving (+YFCY, CSS)* • Political campaign (+YFCY, CSS)*	• Problem-solving (+YFCY, CSS)*	• Student election (+YFCY, CSS)* • Political campaign (+YFCY, CSS)*

Results by Survey

YFCY (6 outcomes)	DLE (6 outcomes)	CSS (7 outcomes)
• Student election (+6) • College exposed me to different values and cultures (+6) • Institution's respect for diverse beliefs (+6) • Local or national political campaign (+5) • Leadership training (+5) • Service-learning (+5) • Volunteer work (+5) • Sorority/fraternity (-5)	• Institutional Commitment to Diversity (+4) • Liberal Political Views (+4) • Co-Curricular Diversity Activities (+4)	• Racial student organization (+7) • Study abroad (+6) • Ethnic Studies (+6) • Sense of belonging (+6) • Belief: Dissent is a critical component of political process (+6) • Belief: Individual can do little to change society (-6)

Results by Key Predictors

Campus-Facilitated Academic	Campus-Facilitated Co-Curricular	Informal
• Service Learning (11/19; 5 YFCY; 3 DLE; 3 CSS) • Ethnic Studies (6/7 CSS) • Women Studies (5/7 CSS) • Dialogue (3/6 DLE)	• Leadership Training (11/19; 5 YFCY; 3 DLE; 3 CSS) • Study Abroad (6/6 CSS) • Co-Curricular Diversity Activities (4/6 DLE)	• Sorority or Fraternity (7/19; 3 YFCY; 1 DLE; 3 CSS) • Positive Cross-Racial Interaction (18/19; all but 1 YFCY) • Racial Student Organization (7/7 CSS) • Voted in Student Election (10/13; 6 YFCY; 4 CSS) • Student Political Club (4/6 DLE)

Volunteer Work in College

	YFCY	DLE	CSS
Self & Others	0.068***	---	0.068***
Change: Knowledge of people from different races/cultures	ns	---	ns
Civic Awareness	0.508***	---	ns
Integration of Learning	---	ns	---
Pluralistic Orientation	0.349***	ns	ns
Critical Consciousness & Action	---	ns	---
Social Agency	1.120***	0.726***	2.155***
Civic Engagement in Public Forums	---	0.580***	0.271***
Political Engagement	ns	0.137***	0.070**

Service Learning in College

	YFCY	DLE	CSS
Self & Others	ns	---	ns
Change: Knowledge of people from different races/cultures	0.037***	---	0.069***
Civic Awareness	0.582***	---	0.658***
Integration of Learning	---	ns	---
Pluralistic Orientation	ns	ns	ns
Critical Consciousness & Action	---	ns	---
Social Agency	0.444***	0.349**	0.777***
Civic Engagement in Public Forums	---	ns	0.244***
Political Engagement	0.096***	ns	ns

Conclusion and Implications

- Colleges are already engaged, and have been so for many years, in using instruments that tap into civic learning outcomes

- Campus commitments to improving the climate for diversity are linked with enhancing students' civic learning outcomes

- Particular practices are important to some student change but not all civic learning outcomes

Resources

For Surveys/Institutes/Papers:

www.heri.ucla.edu

Visit www.ed.gov/civic-learning to read the full set of ED's commitment and "Roadmap."

Visit "civic learning" at AAC&U website
http://www.aacu.org/