Refining the Gold Standard

Taking a critical perspective on the research behind High-Impact Practices

Caleb Craft, Learning and Development Specialist; The Office of Student Life
Session Outcomes

• Understand the **history and development** of High-Impact Practices for student engagement

• Apply a **critical** perspective on current research supporting HIP recommendations

• Extract research and practice-oriented **solutions** for first-year student success
Discussion Questions

• What are some of the most important outcomes for first year students? What is first-year success?

• How do we measure these outcomes?
How does the NSSE respond to those questions?

- Landscape of assessment in Higher Education: reputation and resources
- 1998 Pew Charitable Foundation: Focus on Quality
- 1999 Pilot of the NSSE
“the time and effort students devote to activities that are empirically linked to the desired outcomes of college and what institutions do to induce students to participate in those activities”
The (Un)Answered Question

• “What is the one thing we should do to increase student engagement and success on our campus?” (Kuh, 2007)

  • We don’t know enough
  • There is great complexity in the relationship between student inputs, environments, and outcomes
The *(Un)*Answered Question

• “So, today when I am asked, ‘What one thing can I do to enhance student engagement and increase student success?’ I have an answer.”

• “I say make it possible for every student to participate in at least two high-impact activities during their undergraduate program, one in the first year, and one later related to their major field.”

• Kuh, 2007
High-Impact Educational Practices

• Diversity/Global Learning *(Study Abroad)*
• Common Intellectual Experiences
• Learning Communities
• Writing-Intensive Courses
• Capstone Courses and Projects

• Undergraduate Research
• First-Year Seminars and Experience
• Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
• Collaborative Assignments and Projects
• Internships
Founding HIP Documents

2007

College Learning for the New Global Century

2007

Experiences That Matter: Enhancing Student Learning and Success

2008

High-Impact Educational Practices
What Makes an Activity HIP?

The Six Conditions

1. Time and effort to purposeful tasks
2. Interactions with peers and faculty
3. Experience diversity
4. Frequent feedback
5. Try out learning in different settings
6. Life Changing
So ...what do we know? And what don’t we know?
What Do We Know

From the **NSSE**

– Personal & Academic Gains
– Persistence to 2\(^{nd}\) Year
– GPA Increases
– Compensatory Effect

From **other research studies**

– Wabash Longitudinal Studies
– Single Institution Studies
Problems with what we know!

• Heavy reliance on self-reported learning outcomes

• Lack of longitudinal data

• Not nationally representative
What don’t we know

• **Post College** Outcomes
  – Degree Completion (Andrews, 2017)
  – Employment Outcomes

• How “What Works”, *Works*?
  – Black Box
  – Generalizability Vs Nuance
What don’t we know

• We don’t know anything about whatever we don’t ask
  – Theory-Laden Observation
  – Example: IOWA GROW
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What Do We Do?

• Keep Using NSSE As A Tool
  – Description Vs Prescription

• Supplement With Other Forms Of Assessment
  – (Why) Do Learning Communities Lead To Increased GPAs?
  – (How) Does a Service Learning Experience Increase First-year Student Success Outcomes?
What do we do?

In Program Design

- **Conditions** instead of Practices
- **Involvement** instead of Participation
- **Mixed Methods** instead of One Survey
- **Creativity** instead of structured Rigidity
Closing Reflection

• What is one thing you can take with you from this session?

• In the context of your role, how can you meaningfully assess the success of your work with first-year students?