Refining the Gold Standard

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

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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**

Assessing Student **Engagement**

"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**
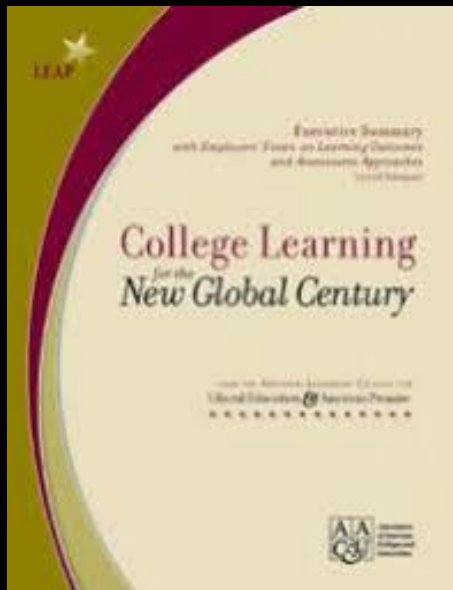   - There is great **complexity** in the relationship between student inputs, environments, and outcomes

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."
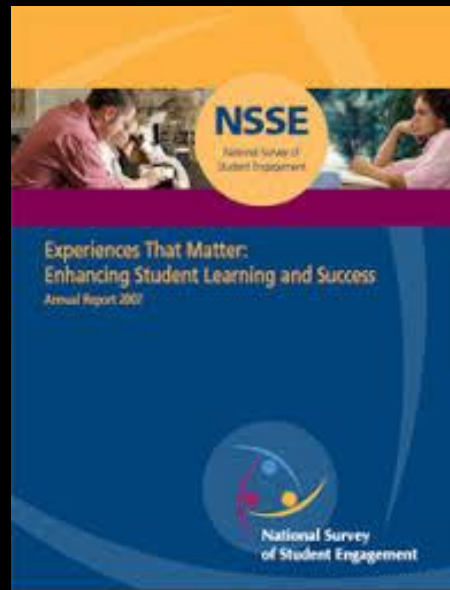
  - Kuh, 2007

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

2007

2008

What Makes an Activity **HIP**?

"Decades of Research"	The Six Conditions	NSSE Outcomes

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 2nd 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?