

Research on Iowa Student Experiences

Elizabeth J. Whitt

October 19, 2006

Student Success Team

What *Really* Matters for College Student Success: Student Engagement



The greatest impact appears to stem from students' total level of campus engagement, particularly when academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular involvements are mutually reinforcing... Therefore, institutions should focus on the ways they can shape their academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular offerings to encourage student engagement.

Pascarella & Terenzini, *How College Affects Students*, 2005,
p. 647

What *Really* Matters for College Student Success: Student Engagement

Engagement has 2 components:

- The quality of students' time and effort and
- The institution's allocation of resources and organization of learning opportunities and services to engage students in educationally purposeful activities.
- Therefore, what matters most is what students do, not who they are.

What Matters for Student Success

- Effective Educational Practices
 - Academic Challenge
 - Active and Collaborative Learning
 - Student-Faculty Interaction
 - Enriching Educational Experiences
 - Supportive Campus Environments

(c.f., Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Kuh et al., 2005; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005)

RISE Research Questions

- What are the dimensions of undergraduate experiences and outcomes at UI? What matters for UI undergraduates?
- What outcomes do UI undergraduates achieve and how?
- How do UI undergraduates describe their experiences and the impact of college?
- In what ways, if any, do the experiences and outcomes of UI undergraduates differ from those desired by the university and/or described in its mission?

RISE Research Methods

- Quantitative Methods :
- Qualitative Methods:

RISE Results

- Senior Interviews:
 - “I stayed [at UI] because I got involved.”
 - ✓ But, in most cases, “I wasn’t involved my freshman year.”
 - “I stayed [at UI] because I had a great experience my freshman year.”
 - ✓ Key elements: “My floor,” “my friends on my floor,” “my dorm,” “someone encouraged me to get involved.”

RISE Results

- First-Year Interviews:
 - Job 1: adjusting to college, learning to be a college student: “Time management is the big one.”
 - ✓ Key elements: “My floor,” “my roommate,” “my friends on my floor,” “my dorm,” and the floor environment.
 - “I have more free time than I expected,” “I have a lot of free time.”
 - Generally, “a typical day,” doesn’t include formal out-of-class experiences or other types of “formal” involvement

RISE Results

- RISE Survey Results for First-Year Students
 - “Participated in a living-learning community”: Significant positive relationship to cumulative gpa; Significant negative relationship to binge drinking.
 - “Participated in a racial or cultural awareness workshop”: Significant positive relationship to growth in liberal arts outcomes, personal/interpersonal growth outcomes, overall composite growth outcomes; Significant negative relationship to binge drinking.

RISE Results

- RISE Survey Results for First-Year Students:
 - 87.8% of first-year students were involved in 'extracurricular activities' 0-5 hours per week in the current semester.
 - 81% of first-year students worked 0 hours per week for pay on campus; 82.3% worked 0 hours for pay off campus.
 - 62.2% of first-year students were involved in community service activities 0 hours per week in the current semester.
 - 57% of first-year students spent 0-15 hours per week preparing for class during the current semester; 0-20: 79.3%.

RISE Results

- Binge Drinking
 - 35.9 % of first-year students (and 42.7% of seniors) said they had 5 or more drinks in one sitting 3 to 6 or more times in a 2-week period.
 - Binge drinking had a significant negative association with grade point average for first-year students (and for seniors, but more negative for frosh); more bingeing, more negative relationship (with controls for high school drinking, ACT scores, etc.). Particularly negative for women . . .

Resources

Kuh, G.D., Kinzie, J.I., Schuh, J.H., Whitt, E.J. & Associates (2005). Student success in college: Creating conditions that matter. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kuh, G.D., Kinzie, J.I., Schuh, J.H., & Whitt, E.J. (2005). Assessing conditions to enhance educational effectiveness: The inventory for student engagement and success. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

DEEP Policy and Practice Briefs:

<http://webdb.iu.edu/Nsse/?view=deep/briefs>

- Recommendations for campus leaders, faculty, student affairs, advisors, student leaders, department chairs, new faculty, accreditation teams, business leaders.
- About creating conditions so all students can learn, collaborating to create educational effectiveness, using resources effectively.