CREATING AND ASSESSING CAMPUS CLIMATES THAT ENCOURAGE CIVIC LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT

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#PSRI
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http://www.psri.hs.iastate.edu/
THINK ABOUT

Your most “effective” intervention for increasing civic learning and engagement...

what is its “lever?”

why does it work?
“It’s not only about what happens inside the classroom; it’s also about what happens outside the classroom”

President Sylvia Jenkins
Oct 17. 2016, Keynote Address

...It’s also about how students’ feel about what happens”

Bob Reason, right now
LEARNING GOALS

At the end of this session audience members will

• Have a better understanding of how climates (broadly defined) influence learning.

• Be aware of the PSRI as an instrument available to assess campus climates that are related to civic learning and engagement.
  • Including some findings from our research

• Think about how improving climates (broadly defined) both on and off-campus can improve students’ civic learning and engagement
  • And, perhaps, the outcomes for the communities with whom we work.
THINKING ABOUT LEARNING
(AND STUDYING LEARNING)

1. Existing studies
   - “where you go matters less than what you do when you get there”
   - Underspecified measures of institutional differences
     - Size, source of support, and selectivity

2. Understanding that environment influences behavior/outcomes
   - $B = f(P \times E)$—Lewin, 1936

3. Perceptions of Environment (Climate) affects what you do and how you feel about it.
FRAMEWORKS FOR STUDYING LEARNING

Astin’s I – E – O Model (1993)

Pascarella et al. (1996)

Terenzini & Reason (2005)
A comprehensive model of influences on student learning and persistence (Terenzini & Reason, 2005).

(Terenzini & Reason, 2010)
Pre-college characteristics and experiences

Personal Characteristics
Local environments
• Friendship groups
• Major
• College
• Residence hall
• Student organizations
General Sense of the campus—from the students’ perspectives

- “climate”
Institutional Policies
Institutional Practices
Faculty Culture
THE PERSONAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY INVENTORY

An institutional climate assessment

AAC&U Core Commitments Initiative

5 Dimensions of Personal and Social Responsibility

  Striving for Excellence
  Cultivating Academic Integrity
  Contributing to a Larger Community
  Taking Seriously the Perspectives of Others
  Developing Competence in Ethical and Moral Reasoning/Action
CURRENT PSRI RESEARCH

Civic Learning Outcomes:

- Importance of Contributing to the Larger Community
- Openness to Diversity and Challenge
- Critical Thinking
- “Conventional” Activism Orientation

Data:

- 17,035 students @ 27 IHEs
- 5,480 campus professionals @ 25 IHE
FINDINGS—ENCOURAGING ENGAGEMENT & LEARNING

Importance Placed on Contributing to the Larger Community

- Community-based Programs
- Peer-to-Peer Conversations/reflection

Mitchell, et al. (2016)
FINDINGS–ODC

Climate supportive of Perspective-Taking

- Classes help students to explore diverse perspectives, cultures, and world views
- Classes encourage...explore controversial issues using evidence
- Faculty help students think through...challenging ideas and perspectives
- Faculty advocate for students to respect diverse viewpoints

FINDINGS—CRITICAL THINKING

Participating in Community-based Projects

Climate supportive of Contributing to the Larger Community

Climate supportive of Perspective-Taking
- Classes help students to explore diverse perspectives, cultures, and world views
- Classes encourage...explore controversial issues using evidence
- Faculty help students think through...challenging ideas and perspectives
- Faculty advocate for students to respect diverse viewpoints

Climate supportive of Developing Ethical and Moral Reasoning
- Campus provides opportunities for students to develop their ethical and moral reasoning
- Campus helps students develop...ability to express and act upon personal values responsibly

Mitchell et al., (in progress)
FINDINGS—ACTIVISM ORIENTATION

Participating in Community-based Projects

Climate supportive of Perspective-Taking

Classes help students to explore diverse perspectives, cultures, and world views
Classes encourage...explore controversial issues using evidence
Faculty help students think through...challenging ideas and perspectives
Faculty advocate for students to respect diverse viewpoints

Unpublished research findings
CONCLUSIONS

Activities still matter
- Community-based projects
- Common-intellectual experiences
- Diversity and/or Global experiences

Climates can reinforce the learning from those experiences
- Importance of contributing to the larger community
- Importance of Perspective Taking
- Supporting and Developing Ethical and Moral Reasoning
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what is its “lever?”
why does it work?
REFERENCES


The Personal and Social Responsibility Inventory (PSRI): An Institutional Climate Measure is a campus climate survey developed originally as part of an initiative called Core Commitments: Educating Students for Personal and Social Responsibility. Sponsored by the Association of American Colleges and Universities and directed by Caryn McTighe Musil, Core Commitments was supported by a grant from the John Templeton Foundation. The initial inventory was developed in 2006 by L. Lee Knefelkamp, Teachers College, Columbia University, who consulted with Richard Hersh, Council for Aid to Education, and drew on the research assistance of Lauren Ruff. The initial inventory was then refined in cooperation with Eric L. Dey and associates at the University of Michigan’s Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education and refined after Dey’s death by Robert D. Reason, at Iowa State University.

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