



Beyond the Classroom Walls: Academic and Social Engagement with Students

Teaching and Learning Committee's
Opening Workshop

Fall 2012

In the next 55 minutes or so.....

- Why we should care about engagement with students
- What our students report about their engagement with faculty and staff
 - As compared to reports by men at other Colleges
 - As compared to reports by Wabash students in previous years
- Time for Questions, Comments, Reactions, etc.



Why should we care about Engagement with students?

- “Its mission is excellence in teaching and learning within a community built on close and caring relationships among students, faculty, and staff.” (from Wabash mission)
- “A personal context to teaching and learning that encourages candid, respectful face to face conversations, freedom of thought, and a local scholarly community that creates lifelong relationships.” (from Wabash core values)



HLC Self-Study Report

- ***Theme 2: Wabash College has strengthened its student engagement***
- High levels of student engagement have always been central to Wabash's commitment to educating the whole person inside and **outside the classroom** in a close-knit residential experience.



But is such an emphasis wise?



- Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education
 - > 50 schools of different kinds
 - Longitudinal assessment of liberal arts outcomes:
 - Critical thinking
 - Moral reasoning
 - Psychological well-being, etc.....
 - And the practices that promote them.....

“High Impact” Teaching Practices

- Students who report MORE of these practices display more impressive gains across their college career on...
 - Critical thinking
 - Moral reasoning
 - Academic Motivation
 - Leadership abilities
 - Well-being
 - Interest in Political and social involvement



The “High Impact” Practices

- Academic challenge and high expectations
- Diversity experiences
- High quality teaching
 - Faculty interest in teaching and student development
 - Prompt feedback
 - Quality of non-classroom interactions with faculty
 - Teaching clarity and organization

The questions.....

- Faculty Interest:

Most faculty with whom I have had contact are..

- Genuinely interested in students.
- Interested in helping students grow in more than just academic areas.
- Outstanding teachers.
- Genuinely interested in teaching.
- Willing to spend time outside of class to discuss issues of interest and importance to students.

- Quality of non-classroom interactions:

- Extent of agreement that your non-classroom interactions with faculty have had a positive influence
 - On your personal growth, values, and attitudes
 - On your intellectual growth and interest in ideas
 - On your career goals and aspirations
- Extent of agreement that you have developed close, personal relationship with at least one faculty member.
- Extent of agreement that you are satisfied with the opportunities to meet and interact informally with faculty members.

And that's not all....Wabash analyses:

- Faculty interest in teaching and student development
 - Freshman retention**
- Non-classroom interactions with faculty
 - Academic motivation**
 - Critical thinking**

** prediction was above and beyond other “good practices” and academic performance (both in and before college)

So, why should we care?

- To start, our mission suggests that we care.
- And, reports of engagement are associated with student growth on good things
- So, how are we doing on student reports of engagement?

CIRP: A Snapshot of Student Engagement

- CIRP Data: Cooperative Institutional Research Program at the Higher Educational Research Institute at UCLA
- Established in 1966; nation's largest and oldest empirical study of higher education
- 1,900 institutions and 15 million students, including Wabash
- The following data come from the 2011 CIRP senior survey for Wabash students

Faculty encouraged me to meet with them outside of class

	Wabash	Men Comp I	Men Comp II
Strongly Agree	44.7%	27.6%	24.1%
Agree	51.3%	58.6%	61.1%
Disagree	3.3%	12.3%	12.9%
Strongly Disagree	0.7%	1.6%	1.8%

Comp I=Private, nonsectarian 4yr colleges

Comp II=Nonsectarian colleges plus Catholic or other religious 4yr colleges

At least one staff member has taken an interest in my development

	Wabash	Men Comp I	Men Comp II
Strongly Agree	75.8%	48.5%	45.6%
Agree	21.6%	44.0%	47.1%
Disagree	2.6%	6.3%	5.9%
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	1.2%	1.4%

Comp I=Private, nonsectarian 4yr colleges

Comp II=Nonsectarian colleges plus Catholic or other religious 4yr colleges

Faculty showed concern about my progress

	Wabash	Men Comp I	Men Comp II
Strongly Agree	51.0%	27.4%	25.6%
Agree	40.5%	56.4%	59.6%
Disagree	5.9%	12.4%	11.3%
Strongly Disagree	2.6%	3.7%	3.5%

Comp I=Private, nonsectarian 4yr colleges

Comp II=Nonsectarian colleges plus Catholic or other religious 4yr colleges

Since entering college, how often have you asked a professor for advice after class?

	Wabash	Men Comp I	Men Comp II
Frequently	48.4%	35.8%	34.4%
Occasionally	50.3%	59.1%	60.3%
Not at all	1.3%	5.2%	5.3%

Comp I=Private, nonsectarian 4yr colleges

Comp II=Nonsectarian colleges plus Catholic or other religious 4yr colleges

How often have professors provided you with honest feedback about your skills and abilities?

	Wabash	Men Comp I	Men Comp II
Frequently	69.3%	52.2%	46.8%
Occasionally	30.7%	45.1%	48.7%
Not at all	0.0%	2.8%	4.5%

Comp I=Private, nonsectarian 4yr colleges

Comp II=Nonsectarian colleges plus Catholic or other religious 4yr colleges

How often have professors provided you with an opportunity to discuss coursework outside of class?

	Wabash	Men Comp I	Men Comp II
Frequently	64.5%	50.8%	47.6%
Occasionally	34.9%	46.0%	47.9%
Not at all	0.7%	3.2%	4.5%

Comp I=Private, nonsectarian 4yr colleges

Comp II=Nonsectarian colleges plus Catholic or other religious 4yr colleges

How often have professors provided you with emotional support and encouragement?

	Wabash	Men Comp I	Men Comp II
Frequently	37.9%	29.1%	28.3%
Occasionally	53.6%	54.1%	54.4%
Not at all	8.5%	16.7%	17.3%

Comp I=Private, nonsectarian 4yr colleges

Comp II=Nonsectarian colleges plus Catholic or other religious 4yr colleges

How often have professors provided you with help in achieving your professional goals?

	Wabash	Men Comp I	Men Comp II
Frequently	42.1%	37.41%	36.5%
Occasionally	50.7%	51.2%	52.4%
Not at all	7.2%	11.5%	11.1%

Comp I=Private, nonsectarian 4yr colleges

Comp II=Nonsectarian colleges plus Catholic or other religious 4yr colleges

Since entering college, how often have you worked on a professor's research project?

	Wabash	Men Comp I	Men Comp II
Frequently	13.1%	12.1%	10.9%
Occasionally	23.5%	29.4%	27.6%
Not at all	63.4%	58.5%	61.5%

Comp I=Private, nonsectarian 4yr colleges

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What does all this tell us?

- Wabash students report feeling particularly engaged with faculty & staff, as compared to students at other colleges.
- Areas in which we are not particularly outstanding: emotional support/encouragement, opportunities for joint research, and support for students to achieve professional goals.
- How do we want to act on these data?

How are we doing over time?

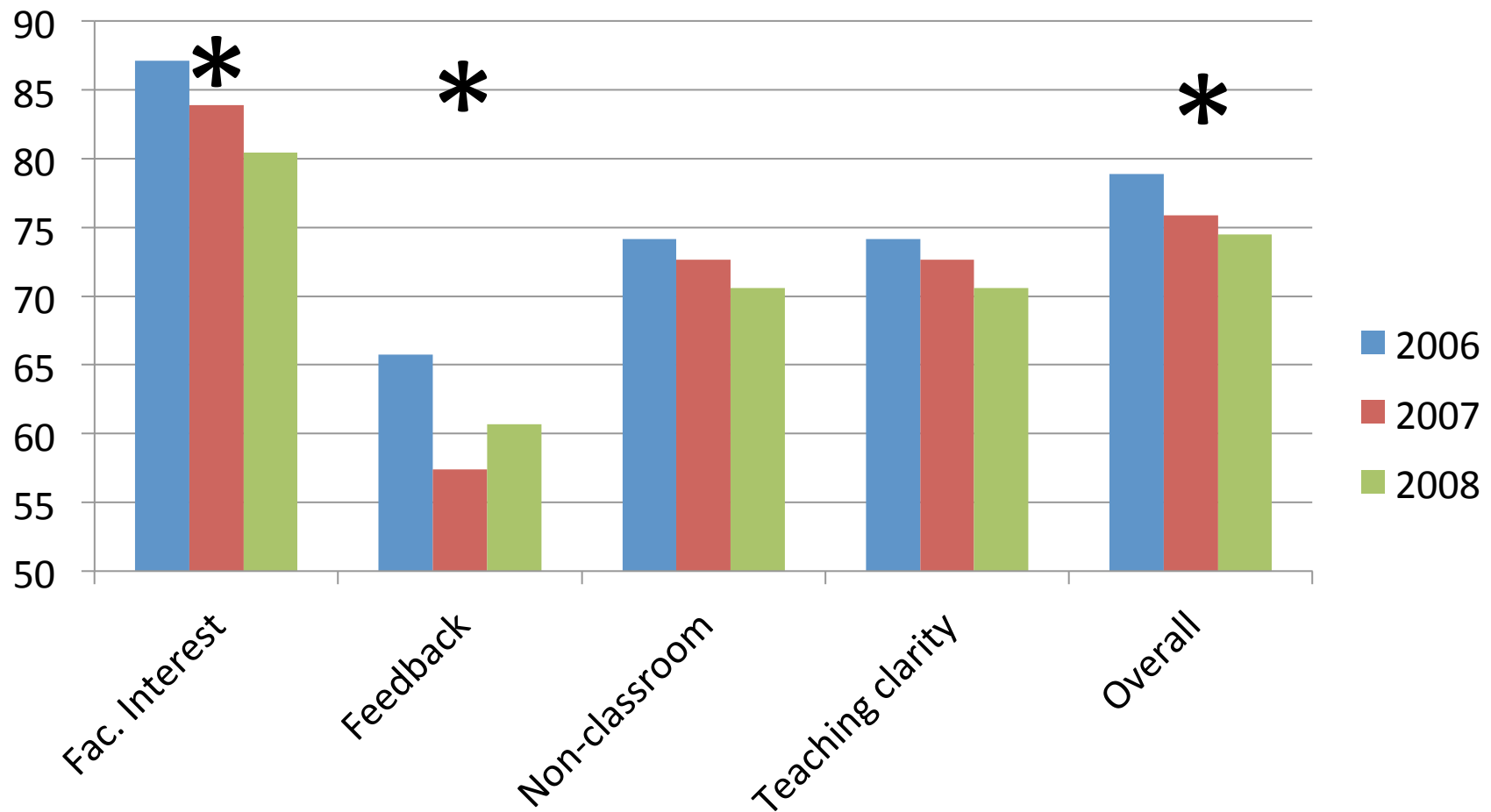
- Three years of National Study responses (freshman responses/outcomes)
 - '06-'08
- 11 years of National Survey of Student Engagement



The “High Impact” WNS

- Academic challenge and high expectations
- Diversity experiences
- High quality teaching
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Across three years....

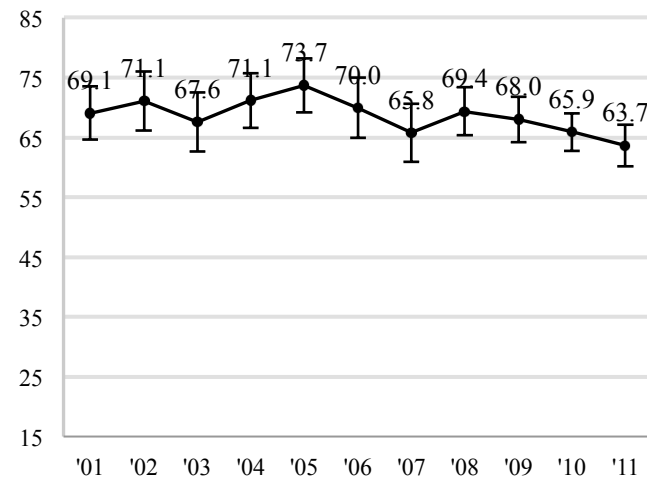


NSSE Student-Faculty Interaction

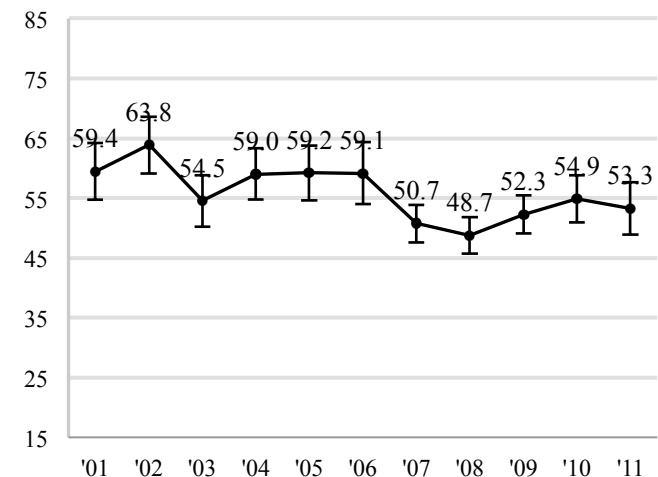
- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
- Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committee, orientation, student life activities, etc.)
- Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance
- Work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements (answered based on “done,” “plan to do,” “do not plan to do,” or “have not decided”)

Senior (left) and Freshman (right) scores on NSSE student-faculty interaction across 11 years

Student-Faculty Interaction (SFC)^b



Student-Faculty Interaction (SFC)^b



NSSE Student-Faculty Interaction

- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
- **Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committee, orientation, student life activities, etc.)**
- **Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance**
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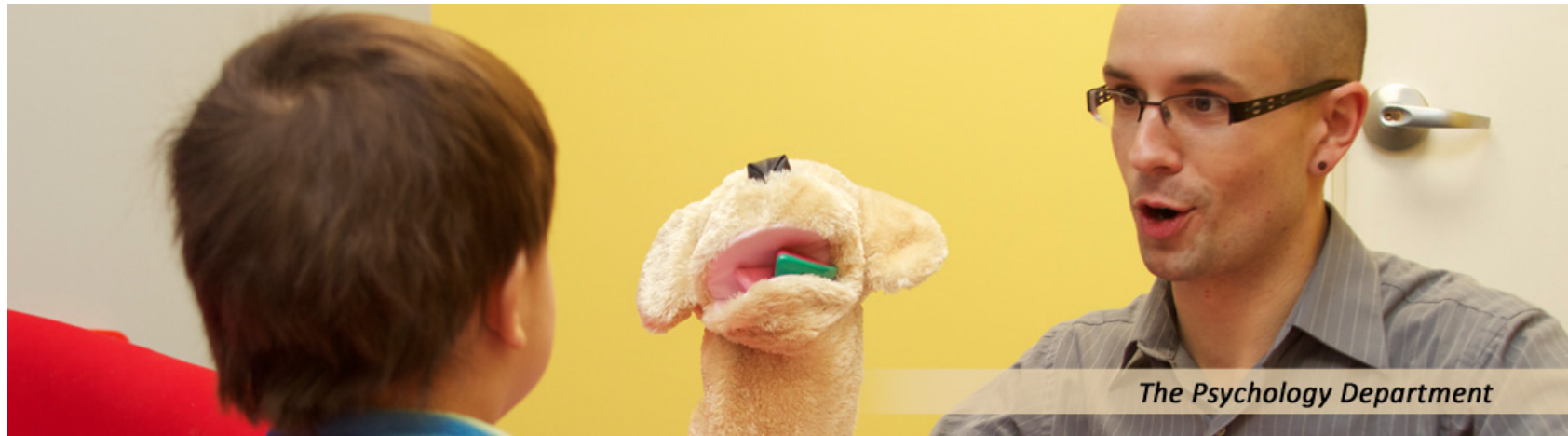
So, over time...?

- Some reliable decreases in favorability of student perceptions across three (WNS) or 11 (NSSE) years
- Worth noting that even with decreases, we are still at least “average” compared to other colleges like us.....and in some cases, still ‘above average’ 😊

In Sum....

- Engagement outside the classroom matters....
 - In the mission and core values
 - In the prediction of important student outcomes
- Students reports of experiences with engagement are, in general, favorable...
- And these reports also leave room for conversation and attention.....

So...let's converse and attend....



Questions? Comments? Reactions?