

Using institutional evidence of effective practices and conditions to improve student learning outcomes

Long Beach, California
October 2008

Wabash National Study details

- 49 institutions
- 15,000 students to date
- Longitudinal
 - Follow one class for *at least* 4 years
- Purpose
 - To identify teaching practices and institutional conditions that promote critical thinking, moral reasoning, openness to diversity, leadership, psychological well-being, need for cognition

Wabash National Study

- Larger institutions

- Brandeis University
- Butler University
- Delaware State University
- Fairfield University
- Millersville University
- North Carolina A&T State University
- Salem State College
- San José State University
- University of Kentucky
- University of Michigan
- University of North Carolina Wilmington

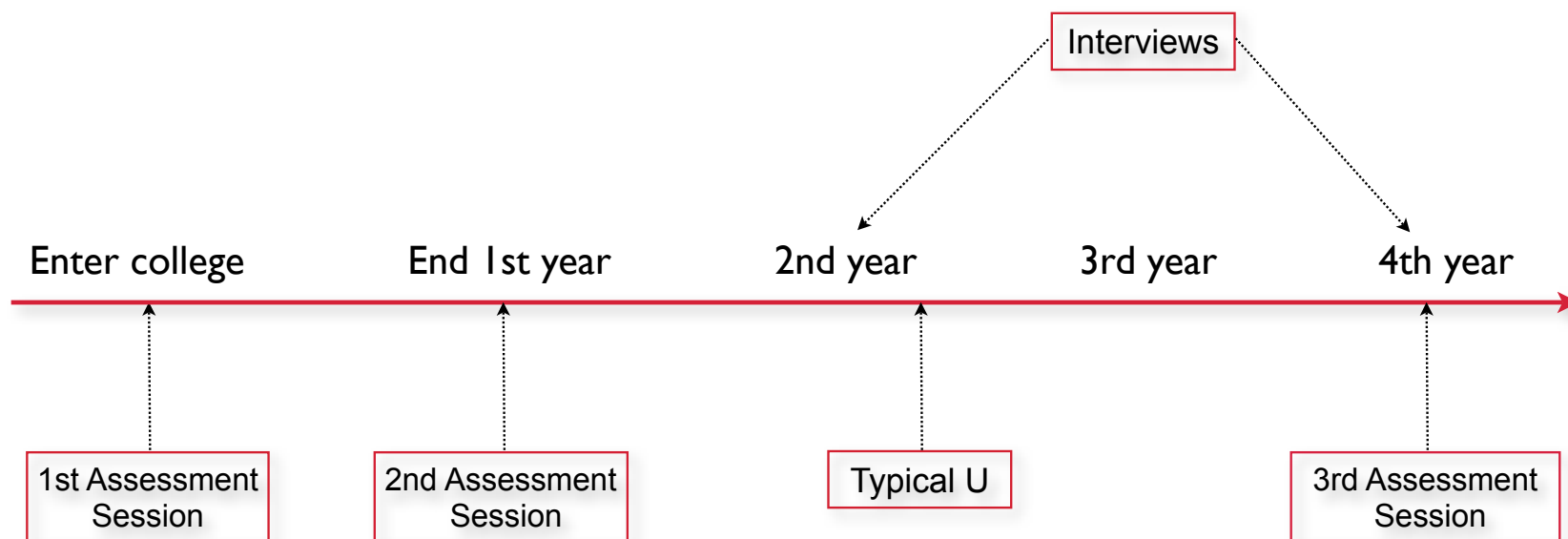
- University of Notre Dame
- University of Rhode Island
- Worcester Polytechnic Institute
- Worcester State College

- Community colleges

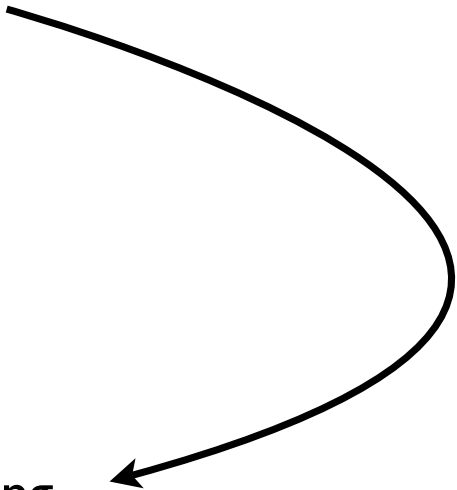
- Ivy Tech Community College
- Kirkwood Community College
- Community College of Rhode Island

Wabash National Study - Small Colleges

- Allegheny College
- Alma College
- Alverno College
- Augustana College
- Bard College
- Bard College at Simon's Rock
- Bennington College
- Blackburn College
- Carleton College
- Coe College
- College of the Holy Cross
- Columbia College (SC)
- Connecticut College
- Drew University
- Franklin College
- Gustavus Adolphus College
- Hamilton College
- Hampshire College
- Hobart & William Smith Colleges
- Hope College
- Lasell College
- Marlboro College
- New College of Florida
- Oxford College of Emory
- Prescott College
- Ripon College
- Vassar College
- Wabash College
- Warren Wilson College
- Wheelock College
- Whittier College



What surveys and tests do students take?

- Survey questions on
 - Long-term goals and aspirations
 - High school and college experiences
 - Economic and social background
 - Outcome surveys and tests
 - CAAP Critical Thinking Test
 - Defining Issues Test
 - Need for Cognition Scale
 - Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being
 - Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale
 - Socially Responsible Leadership Scale
 - Additional short scales
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Good teaching and high-quality interactions with faculty

- Students report that they
 - Have faculty who are interested in teaching
 - Have faculty who are good at teaching
 - ▶ Give clear explanations, summarize material well, use good illustrations, use class time effectively, and have command of what they are teaching
 - Have faculty who are interested in helping students grow personally and professionally
 - Get prompt feedback
 - Have meaningful interactions with faculty outside of class
- Unique positive impact on 24/28 outcome measures
 - High = 28%; Moderate = 72%; Low = 1%

Academic challenge and high expectations

- Students report that they
 - Work hard both in terms of quantity and difficulty
 - Get exams and assignments that require them to write and think
 - Are asked challenging questions by faculty and students
 - Are asked to integrate, synthesize, and interpret information and ideas
- Unique positive impact on 24/28 outcome measures
 - High = 18%; Moderate = 82%

Diversity experiences

- Students report that they
 - Attend lectures and debates on political and social issues
 - Participate in multicultural awareness workshops
 - Have meaningful conversations and interactions with students and staff who are different from themselves
- Unique positive impact on 17/28 outcome measures
 - Negative impact on academic motivation
 - High = 3%; Moderate = 83%; None = 14%

Good Teaching
and High Quality
Interactions with
Faculty

+

Academic
Challenge
and High
Expectations

+

Diversity
Experiences

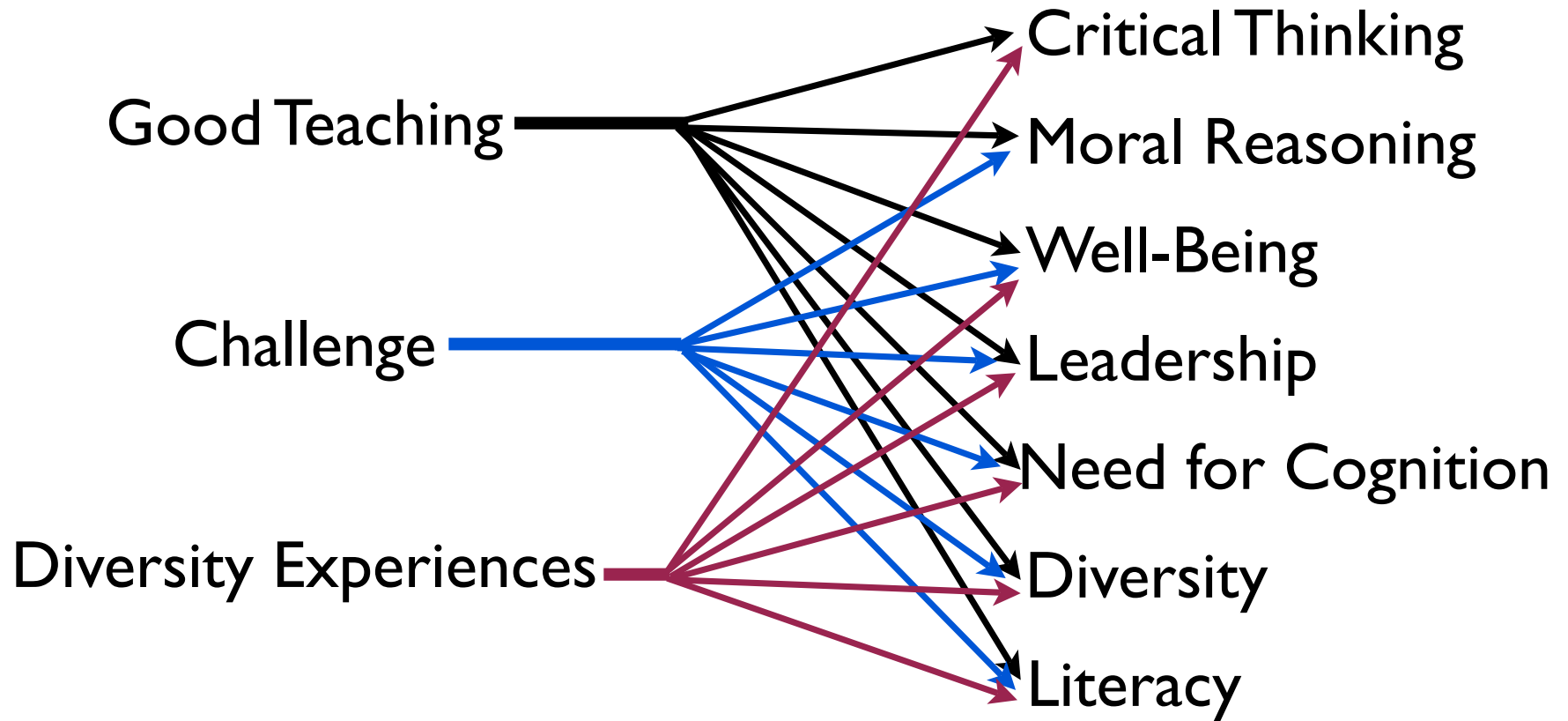
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Effective
Learning
Environment

Diversity Experiences → Openness to Diversity

Challenge → Curiosity

Good Teaching → Critical Thinking



Task

1. Audit

- Review and make sense of the evidence
 - What story do the data tell?

2. Communication

- How will you share this story with campus constituencies?

3. Action

- What practical consequences follow from the data?

Documents

- Audit/Communication/Action questions to guide discussion
- Typical University fact sheet
- First-year outcomes data for Typical U
- Information on good practices at Typical U
- Action Plan worksheet for groups to complete