

A Comparative Analysis of Students Who Have/Have Not Been Exposed to Civic  
Engagement Curriculum in Higher Education at a Large Midwestern University

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## **Introduction**

One of the fundamental contributions to the ecological model of crime originally articulated by Shaw and McKay (1942) as social disorganization, and further elaborated by Kornhauser (1978), has been the inclusion of social capital as a salient explanatory construct in the systemic process of crime generation in communities (Hawdon & Ryan, 2009). Cultivation of social capital, defined as cooperative social relationships that facilitate the realization of collective goals, as a community resource is essential to the stability and success of a community (Putnam, 2000). The absence of social capital as a community resource has been linked to crime and violence through a breakdown in both informal (Rosenfeld, Messner, & Baumer, 2001) and formal social controls (Bursik & Grasmick, 1993).

Scholars from varying disciplines including sociology, criminology, psychology, economics and political science recognize the importance of civic engagement and civic participation to the development of the essential community construct of social capital. As Putnam (1995) notes, “researchers in such fields as education, urban poverty, unemployment, the control of crime and drug abuse, and even health have discovered that successful outcomes are more likely in civically engaged communities” (Putnam, 1995, p. 66). Civic engagement in its most simple form can be viewed as social action oriented towards community involvement facilitating community cohesion.

There are extensive and growing bodies of empirical research supporting systemic linkages from, 1) civic engagement to the cultivation of social capital (Ehrlich, 2000; Putnam, 1995, 2000); 2) social capital to the exercise of informal and formal social controls (Bursik &

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Grasmick, 1993; Ferguson & Mindel, 2006); and 3) the breakdown in social controls to the consequences of crime and delinquency (Hawdon & Ryan, 2009; Rosenfeld, et al., 2001), as well as a host of other community level social problems (Putnam, 2000; Saegert & Winkel, 2004).

Participation in civic engagement in higher education has shown strong links to civic engagement in adulthood outside of higher education (Bowman, Brandenberger, Lapsley, Hill, & Quaranto, 2010). Research suggests that college student civic engagement and involvement has a positive impact on students' commitment to future community involvement, efficacy, and empowerment (Knapp, Fisher, & Bristol, 2010). Young people who participate in school groups, volunteer, and take part in civic life are more likely to give both time and money and continue their engagement as adults (see Uslander, 2003). "Colleges have become perhaps the central institution for civic incorporation of younger generations" (Flanagan & Levine, 2010, p. 159). Youth with college experience are more likely to be civically engaged than youth without college experience (Flanagan & Levine, 2010). In essence, civic engagement in higher education is posited here as a foundational building block from which community cohesion, social capital, and subsequent social control, community stability and order maintenance follow.

Unfortunately, findings in the extant literature reveal that civic engagement by youth has declined dramatically over the past several decades (see Astin, 1993; Ehrlich, 2000; Flanagan & Levine, 2010; Putnam, 1995, 2000; Uslander, 2003).

### **Objective of the Present Study**

The present study seeks to extend the current knowledge and discussion of civic engagement as a construct in the systemic community-level relationships leading to social control. The present work provides an answer to the question, “how do university students with civic engagement exposure in higher education differ from university students without civic engagement exposure”. We hypothesize that university students self-identifying as having participated in courses emphasizing civic engagement in their curriculum will be more likely to respond affirmatively to a series of positively valued student attributes/characteristics and outcomes across a variety of socially desirable domains including academics/campus life, engagement/involvement, and comparative self-perception of skills/qualities, than those not having participated in courses with civic engagement as part of the curriculum.

Additionally, while there is an abundance of research examining civic engagement participation in college/university students (Astin, 1993), community college students (Prentice, 2011), non-college bound youth (Zaff, Youniss, & Gibson, 2009), high school students (Barber, Stone, & Eccles, 2005), adults (Flanagan & Levine, 2010), minority and immigrant populations (Hall, Cabrera, & Milem, 2011), and the poor (Besser, 2009), there is a dearth of empirical study examining differences between groups within these populations. For example, there is currently no research that we are familiar with that compares group differences between university students with civic engagement exposure and those without on salient student characteristics and qualities. From this exploratory work we develop student profiles characterizing the differences between students reporting civic engagement exposure/involvement and those without across several student characteristics and across these several domains.

It is important to note at the outset, this study is not capable of establishing a causal relationship between civic engagement and affirmative student responses due to the temporal ordering of the questions, responses, and civic engagement experiences. This study examines relationships or associations between students with civic engagement exposure and affirmative responses. Findings from the present study will be beneficial to a diverse audience. Students may become aware of potential advantageous educational experiences and associations with civic engagement exposure. Faculty may identify the utility in civically engaging their students in the community and its relationship to the domains of political involvement, engagement, academics and educational satisfaction, career path considerations, areas of personal importance, informed citizenship, and self-perception of skills/qualities. Education administrators may obtain more clarity regarding the essential role and responsibility of higher education as a necessary facilitating agent of student civic engagement and as a conduit to fostering individual level qualities requisite for building social capital and community stability outside of higher education.

### **Defining Civic Engagement**

At present there is no single universally agreed upon meaning for the concept of civic engagement. As Adler and Goggin (2005) note, the lack of a universal definition is appropriate given the relative newness of the field. Several of the most salient elements of existing definitions include civic engagement as community service, as collective action, as political involvement, and as social change (Adler & Goggin, 2005). The present study embraces the

definition employed at Illinois State University, one of only two dozen colleges in the nation distinguished as a Civic Learning Leadership Institution by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), where civic engagement is defined as “working to make a difference in the public life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation needed to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community through both political and non-political processes” (Illinois State University Carnegie Academy for the SoTL Team on Civic Engagement/Service Learning, 2010).

### **Declining Civic Engagement**

Despite empirical research supporting the advantages of civic engagement to overall quality of life, the last several decades, dating back to at least the 1970s, have experienced a precipitous decline in most traditional measures of civic engagement (see Astin, 1993; Ehrlich, 2000; Flanagan & Levine, 2010; Putnam, 1995, 2000; Uslander, 2003). This decline has been well documented, perhaps most thoroughly in Robert Putnam’s (2000) acclaimed work *Bowling Alone*. Putnam draws on an extensive array of empirical data to chronicle America’s decades long civic disengagement. For example, after reaching a relative high in the 1960s, voter turnout for national elections had declined by nearly 25% by the 1990s with millions of American’s abstaining from the simplest act of citizenship (Putnam, 1995). Similar declines were found in state and local elections, attendance at public meetings on town or school issues, attendance at political rallies, serving on committees at the local level, union membership, religious service participation, participation in parent teacher organizations, membership in traditional women’s

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groups, Boy Scouts, Red Cross volunteering, and declines in fraternal organization membership such as the Lions Club, Elks Club, Masons, Shriners, and Jaycees (Putnam, 1995).

One of the most unsettling findings to come from studies examining the wave of civic disengagement over the past several decades is the particularly acute withdrawal of America's youth from civic participation. This finding holds true when compared to older Americans and when compared to youth from earlier eras in American history. Simply stated, America's youth of today under the age of 30 are disconnecting and disengaging from civic participation and involvement at a greater rate than any other age group (Carpini, 2000). As Bringle et al., (2011) note, according to national surveys of college students, civic participation in volunteering is highest in high school and then drops off in college, as do many other civic oriented activities.

### **Civic Engagement and Student Outcomes**

Civic engagement as a component of university course curriculum can serve as a powerful means to fend off criticism and bridge the academic and social/community divide creating a learning environment fostering student civic engagement that extends beyond their years of higher education (Nesheim et al., 2007, p. 437). Many student outcome-based benefits of civic engagement have been documented in the empirical literature (Foubert & Grainger, 2006; Lopez & Brown, 2006) including: greater student retention, higher academic performance and GPA, increased understanding, leadership and team building skills, and implications for long-term career success (Astin, Vogelgesand, Ikeda, & Yee, 2000). According to Prentice and Robinson (2007), civic engagement increased students' knowledge of community needs and

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increased their commitment to continue serving their communities (p.5). Further, engagement and participation has also shown a positive relationship to achievement, educational aspiration, self-esteem, ability to overcome adversity, participation in the political process, volunteering, leadership, and physical health (Barber, et al., 2005, p. 133). Astin (1993) found that public speaking ability, leadership ability, and interpersonal skills share a statistically significant relationship to the number of hours each week that students spend civically engaged in clubs and organizations. Students who participate in student government, co-curricular clubs and activities, and fraternities and sororities are able...to gain a greater understanding of the larger society” (Cross-Brazzell & Reisser, 1999, p. 173). In Bowman et als. (2010) study of 416 students, civic engagement had positive effects on well-being, personal growth, environmental mastery and life satisfaction during later adulthood. Similarly, civic engagement has been shown to serve as a self-protector from risk taking behavior.

Markus, Howard, and King (1993) in a pre/post course survey found that students who participated in service learning showed increases on several dimensions of the Social Responsibility Index. Sax (2004) found that students tend to become more committed to the goals of helping others and influencing the political process if they attend a college where other students inhabit a social activist mentality. Other impacts of commitment to social activism include the time spent attending religious services, volunteering, attending classes, exercise and sports activity.

## **Civic Engagement and Social Capital**



The decline in civic engagement by youth and the need for their participation in the future to foster social capital and fend off social problems in communities is concerning. Efforts to stem the decline and encourage civic engagement have been initiated in the particularly appropriate venue of higher education. After all, as noted, education is one of the most important predictors of civic engagement and young adults with college experience are more civically engaged than their peers (Flanagan & Levine, 2010). Examples of higher education embracing and endorsing a broad civic mission include programs such as the Campus Compact (a consortium of more than one thousand colleges and universities), the American Democracy Project (ADP), the Core Commitments Program, and the Civic Indicators Project (CIP) (Flanagan & Levine, 2010).

Participation in civic affairs is a hallmark of American democracy, noted extensively and ceremoniously in Alexis de Tocqueville's (2011) renowned work, *Democracy in America*, with the quality of public life and the intended functioning of social institutions significantly influenced by civic engagement (Putnam, 1995). "Civic engagement breeds future cooperation and promotes coordinated efforts. In short, high levels of interpersonal trust and social participation within a social group allow citizens to resolve problems more easily" (Hawdon & Ryan, 2009, p. 528). The relationship between civic engagement and an increase in quality of life has been explained in the extant literature as generating from social capital. "Social capital refers in general terms to cooperative social relationships that facilitate the realization of collective goals" (Rosenfeld, et al., 2001, p. 283). More directly, civic engagement yields social capital by creating and sustaining organizations that are useful in both their intended purpose and collective purposes as well (Rosenfeld, et al., 2001). In the latter respect, civic engagement can

be understood as a form of “kinetic energy” that may be all around us but has yet to be conducted for a particular purpose (Hyman, 2000). When this kinetic energy is conducted by some catalytic issue, event, or concern social capital is deployed. In this regard, “. . .the creation of social capital presumes and depends upon individual civic engagement as a vehicle for building relationships, and the more the better. [T]he general health and welfare of communities should be expected to increase with increases in the number of civically engaged members” (Hyman, 2000, p. 4).

In sum, the complex links from civic engagement to organized, order maintaining, law abiding communities have been established in extant empirical work. However, much less attention has been paid to the foundational aspect of civic engagement, particularly as it relates to the ever important and uniquely applicable venue of higher education. Following the theoretical linkage of the various constructs leading to orderly society, civic engagement is necessary and essential; that said, we have limited understanding of how to promote civic engagement in an era that has experienced dramatic declines in participation in traditional forms of civic engagement among our youth. With college and university campuses serving as the training ground and higher education poised as a natural conduit to civically engage students, the present work seeks to examine student-based differences across a variety of student characteristics, attributes, and domains comparing those who have had civic engagement curricular exposure and those who have not. The findings offer insights into the co-occurring benefits of civic engagement in higher education.

----- Insert Figure 1 -----

## **The Present Study**

As outlined in the extant literature, the benefits of civic engagement cannot be overstated. Few prior studies have examined large samples of university students extending across class rank (freshman-graduate student), and none have done so for the purpose of developing student profiles distinguishing between civic engagement exposure in higher education curriculum and associations to advantageous student attributes, outcomes and domains. Further, few studies have examined self-identified civic engagement exposure, instead emphasizing only formally identified civic engagement courses and participation in specific civic engagement activities (ex. voting in national elections) for study. The present work sought to address several limitations evident in the literature by drawing on a large sample of university students across class rank and extending civic engagement beyond voting participation to a broader inclusion of civic activities/behaviors. Further, the present study developed student based profiles on a variety of student characteristics, self-perceptions, and outcomes distinguishing between students who have and who have not had civic engagement curriculum exposure.

## **Methodology**

The present study is cross-sectional and descriptive/exploratory employing a large sample of university students (n=3,724) across academic rank to examine the relationship between a variety of positively valued student characteristics and exposure to civic engagement in higher education. Data were collected in 2011 using a 100-item closed-ended multiple choice and

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Likert style e-survey instrument with responses compiled in a database from the commercially available SelectSurvey computer application. Subjects/students who had agreed to participate in institutional research were sent a study description, informed consent form, IRB approval notification, and a web link directing voluntary participants to the esurvey. A series of follow-up emails were sent each week for three weeks to facilitate responding.

The use of the esurvey was particularly conducive for the present study as it allowed the students to complete the questionnaire with confidentiality and convenience, and employed a platform they were familiar with. The esurvey also allowed for the collection of data from a large and diverse student population varying across disciplines and academic rank without the need to interrupt classes or embark on a time consuming in-person interview protocol.<sup>1</sup> Confidentiality rather than anonymity was maintained in an effort to administer future waves of the survey for longitudinal data collection and examination of patterns and trends in civic engagement oriented behavior, student characteristics and outcomes over time.

**Instrument** The esurvey instrument was constructed in consultation with the University Student Body President who, as a student leader and the chair of the university's Civic Engagement Subcommittee, was able to inform the content of the survey. Additionally, the survey instrument drew from the freshman and senior student surveys developed by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) home of the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), and nationally normed and validated instrument. CIRP data, while not collected for the explicit purpose of civic engagement, is collected annually from several hundred universities and

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to note that not all students agree to participate in institutional research and this is an options setting that they can deselect from their email accounts. The University does not record how many students decline to participate in institutional research so the calculation of response rates is not possible.

cited widely in academic literature. The 100-item esurvey instrument consisted of an initial section of demographic questions followed by a lengthy series of closed ended (yes/no) and Likert style questions. The survey took approximately 15 minutes to complete and students were incentivized with a random drawing for a tablet PC valued at \$400 dollars at the conclusion of the data collection phase.

**Dependent variable** Participants were presented with an official definition of civic engagement employed by Illinois State University. They were then asked to self-select whether or not they had participated in civic engagement, as defined by the university, as part of a class or course experience (coded as 0 = no, 1 = yes). Student responses to this question were used to create the dichotomous dependent variable. It is important and advantageous to note that students self-selected based on the definition provided and were not targeted based on their participation in specific civic engagement classified courses or a specific behavior (ex. voting).

**Independent variables** Independent variables were derived from both the demographic questions and from the substantive questions related to student attributes, characteristics and self-perceptions. The empirical literature and the HERI freshman and senior survey facilitated the categorization of questions into several student-based domains including academics/campus life, engagement/involvement, and comparative self-perception of skills/qualities. In the interest of brevity, given that the survey consisted of 100 items, we do not list all of the questions by domain but provide examples below. The analyses and results provide additional information related more specifically to individual question items and responses.

*Identified Domains.* The domain of Academics/Campus life refers to items that tap into academic success, Student organization participation, class based activity and engagement, and satisfaction with the institution, sense of community among students. Items contained in the Engagement/Involvement domain address the degree of respondent's involvement in campus, community, regional, and national affairs. Additionally, items ask about volunteering, voting, participation in students clubs and organizations, awareness of issues at the campus, local, regional and national levels. The Comparative Self-perception domain contains a series of questions related to how respondents view themselves compared to other college students their age across a variety of qualities and attributes including leadership ability, physical health, academic ability, public speaking ability, self-confidence, understanding of others, compassion, tolerance, cooperation, and awareness of campus, local, regional, and national issues.

### **Analysis Plan**

The first step of the analyses involves descriptive statistics to measure the frequency and prevalence of several characteristics of student respondents. The descriptive statistics and cross-tabs for the sample are located in Table 1. The second step of the analyses uses a series of Chi-squared tests to identify statistically significant relationships between students who self-identified as having participated in civic engagement oriented curriculum and a variety of positively valued student characteristics, and domain related questions. Tables 2, 3 and 4 present the Chi-squared results.

## **Analysis and Results**

The demographics presented in Table 1 show that overall, females (61%) on campus were more likely to have been exposed to Civic Engagement in the classroom than men (31%). This finding may, in part, be due to the majors selected by females compared to males. It may be that female preferred majors have more courses that include civic engagement oriented curriculum. For example, education and nursing might have overrepresentation of females and civic engagement oriented curriculum in the courses. Similarly, the middle age category, 20-21 years of age (43%), were most likely to report civic engagement exposure compared to the younger (22%) and older age categories (35%). This might be conceptualized as younger students being enrolled in general education courses and just starting to adjust to campus life and the middle age student grouping being enrolled in major based courses with more depth and engagement in the curriculum. Corroborating this finding, student academic rank also revealed that juniors and seniors were most likely to have had civic engagement exposure in their curriculum. No significant differences were noted by race.

Insert Table 1 About Here

Civic Engagement exposure as related to academic and/or campus life is presented in Table 2. Those with exposure to Civic Engagement in the classroom were significantly more likely to be involved in other activities as well. They report higher involvement in both the Greek system (13% compared to 8%) and campus based RSO's (59% compared to 39%),

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however, they are less likely to hold an RSO officer position (58%) than those without CE exposure (83%). With regard to in-class behavior, those with exposure to CE are significantly more likely to form study groups, ask questions in class, and talk to professors outside of the classroom than those without exposure. Although no differences were noted for perceived quality of instruction, those with Civic Engagement exposure report increased satisfaction with campus culture and activities as well as an increased satisfaction with their overall college experience. In sum, exposure to Civic Engagement appeared to have strong associations to importance aspects of being a successful student and aspects of educational satisfaction.

Insert Table 2 About Here

The third table of results, Table 3, documents the Campus and Community Engagement/Involvement domain. This domain is one of the largest domains. As expected, those with Civic Engagement exposure in the classroom are also more likely to volunteer on campus and in the community. The data do not permit us to determine if this volunteering is part of their civic engagement coursework or if it is in addition to the coursework. Civic Engagement exposed students are more likely to raise money for a cause (58% compared to 45% responding occasionally or often) and take part in campus elections (45% compared to 38%). Less significance is found for national level voting behavior and Civic Engagement exposure, so it may be more relevant to campus and local based events as that would be more likely to occur in the classroom. This might be explained by considering the emphasis or focus of civic engagement which thus far has had a more localized influence and application around the campus. National and international efforts are undertaken but grassroots movements with local application are most common.



Insert Table 3 About Here

Student self-perceptions on a wide variety of issues are presented in Table 4. This is the largest and broadest of the three domains examined. Results reveal that those with Civic Engagement exposure report significantly higher ratings of the role that extracurricular activities play in their academic success with important or essential reported by 56 percent of civic engagement exposed students compared to 42 percent of non-exposed students. Civic engagement exposed students were more likely to feel they had a responsibility to get involved in social issues/problems than non-exposed students (86% compared to 80%). They were more likely to say that they were aware of issues facing the local community and Illinois though as distance from campus increased (regional, national, global) significant differences in awareness decreased. Those with CE exposure also rated themselves higher on issues relating to leadership, campus involvement, and compassion/understanding. They were more likely to prefer the role of team leader rather than team member when compared to non-civic engagement exposed students (68% compared to 58%). They also were more likely to rate themselves above average for physical health (36% compared to 30%), more popular (18% compared to 14%), better at public speaking (34% compared to 29%), more self-confident, and have a better understanding of others. In sum, by and large, across the self-perceptions domain civic engagement exposed students tended to rate themselves higher on most issues and in no instance were the relationships in an unanticipated direction with non-exposed students rating themselves higher.

Insert Table 4 About Here

## Discussion

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The findings from this present study will be published in their entirety in an academic publication to be followed. The results were in large part confirmatory of what was expected. Civic engagement exposure does in fact share a relationship or association with many socially desirable student characteristics and attributes. Obviously, given the inability to look at causation, more research is needed to determine whether civic engagement produces students with these characteristics and qualities or whether certain types of students simply engage in civic engagement more frequently as a constellation of desirable and advantageous behaviors.

There are many avenues for future research and several projects and twists on the data are currently in the works. Future research could look at distinctions in those who are civically engaged at the local/campus and those with broader involvement at the regional or national level. Civic engagement, not surprisingly, is very much a localized event for ISU students with their exposure and knowledge most likely around the campus and local community. With regard to the domains examined, civic engagement was associated with positive behaviors across each domain.

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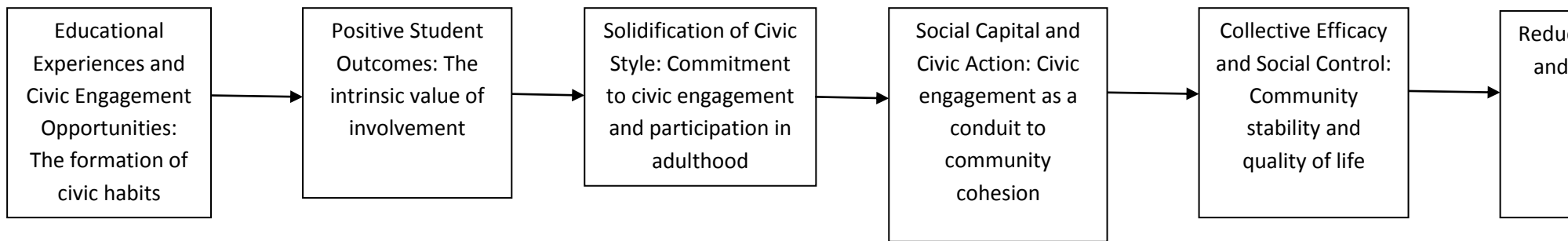
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Figure 1. A systemic theoretical model of civic engagement as a precursor to community stability.



**Table 1. Sample Demographics (N = 3,724)**

	No CE Exposure (n = 1985)		CE Exposure (n = 1207)	
	#	%	#	%
<b>**Gender</b>				
Female	1162	58.7	830	69.0
Male	818	41.3	373	31.0
<b>**Age</b>				
18-19	699	35.4	261	21.8
20-21	577	29.2	515	43.0
22 +	697	18.2	422	35.2
<b>Race</b>				
White	1637	82.7	1033	86.2
Black	112	5.7	48	4.0
Hispanic	102	5.2	58	4.8
Asian	78	3.9	38	3.2
Other	50	2.5	22	1.8
<b>**Academic Year</b>				



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Freshman	494		25.0		148		12.3
Sophomore	272		13.8		126		10.5
Junior	474		24.0		283		23.6
Senior	376		19.1		451		37.6
Masters	269		13.6		152		12.7
PhD	59		3.0		25		2.1
Other	29		1.5		16		1.3

**Table 2. Academic/Campus Life (N = 3,724)**

	No CE Exposure (n = 1985)		CE Exposure (n = 1207)	
	#	%	#	%
<b>**Greek System</b>				
No	1807	91.6	1033	86.8
Yes	166	8.4	157	13.2
<b>*GPA</b>				
0-.9	29	1.6	4	0.3
1.0-1.9	14	0.8	3	0.3
2.0-2.9	326	18.2	204	17.6
3.0-3.4	555	31.1	406	35.0
3.5 – 4.0	863	48.3	544	46.9
<b>**How many different Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) are you currently a member of?</b>				
None	1181	60.5	487	40.8
1-2	620	31.8	524	43.9
3+	150	7.7	182	15.3

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**If a member of an RSO, do you hold any official title?					
No	198	10.5	284	24.2	
Yes	973	51.5	395	33.6	
Not in an RSO	718	38.0	495	42.2	
Are you involved in an official capacity with ISU Student Government?					
No	1926	98.0	1163	97.2	
Yes	39	2.0	34	2.8	
**How often in the past year have you asked questions in class					
Never	44	2.4	20	1.8	
Rarely	342	18.3	149	13.2	
Occasionally	769	41.2	432	38.1	
Often	710	38.1	532	47.0	
**How often in the past year have you					

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Initiated a study group					
Never	629	33.7	226	19.9	
Rarely	576	30.9	374	33.0	
Occasionally	457	24.5	335	29.5	
Often	203	10.9	199	17.5	
**Asked a professor for advice before, after or outside of class					
Never	215	11.5	54	4.8	
Rarely	466	25.0	219	19.3	
Occasionally	762	40.9	480	42.3	
Often	422	22.6	383	33.7	
Satisfaction with ISU:					
Overall quality of instruction					
Very Satisfied	570	31.4	365	33.4	
Satisfied	923	50.9	563	51.6	
Neutral	265	14.6	132	12.1	
Dissatisfied	47	2.6	27	2.5	
Very Dissatisfied	9	0.5	5	0.5	

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**Overall sense of community and connection among students					
Very Satisfied	378	20.9	309	28.3	
Satisfied	725	40.0	418	38.2	
Neutral	554	30.6	280	25.6	
Dissatisfied	129	7.1	76	7.0	
Very Dissatisfied	25	1.4	10	0.9	
**Availability of campus social activities					
Very Satisfied	514	28.4	406	37.2	
Satisfied	733	40.5	409	37.5	
Neutral	495	27.3	235	21.5	
Dissatisfied	58	3.2	40	3.7	
Very Dissatisfied	12	0.7	2	0.2	
**Availability of campus opportunities to get involved in things that interest you					
Very Satisfied	539	29.7	456	41.5	
Satisfied	749	41.3	399	36.3	
Neutral	442	24.4	191	17.4	
Dissatisfied	69	3.8	49	4.5	
Very Dissatisfied	15	0.8	5	0.5	

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**Overall college experience					
Very Satisfied	693	38.3	526	48.1	
Satisfied	824	45.6	455	41.6	
Neutral	251	13.9	87	8.0	
Dissatisfied	32	1.8	23	2.1	
Very Dissatisfied	9	0.5	3	0.3	

**Table 3. Engagement/Involvement**

	No CE Exposure (n = 1985)		CE Exposure (n = 1207)	
	#	%	#	%
How would you characterize your political view?				
Very liberal	117	6.1	77	6.5
Liberal	555	29.1	345	29.3
Middle of the road	819	43.0	524	44.6
Conservative	360	18.9	206	17.5
Very conservative	54	2.8	24	2.0
**Will you vote in the next student government election				
No	1213	62.0	655	54.7
Yes	745	38.0	543	45.3
*Are you likely to vote in the next national presidential election?				
No	247	12.5	113	9.4
Yes	1727	87.5	1093	90.6

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**Do you do any volunteer work during the school year?					
No	897	45.5	275	22.8	
Yes	1076	54.5	929	77.2	
*Read, watched, or listened to the “news”					
Never	26	1.4	5	0.4	
Rarely	252	13.4	143	12.5	
Occasionally	821	43.8	460	40.3	
Often	776	41.4	534	46.8	
**Volunteered your time on campus					
Never	760	40.7	188	16.5	
Rarely	574	30.7	331	29.1	
Occasionally	401	21.5	411	36.2	
Often	132	7.1	206	18.1	
**Volunteered your time in your local community					
Never	320	17.1	70	6.2	
Rarely	604	32.3	269	23.7	



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Occasionally	638		34.1		498		43.8
Often	307		16.4		299		26.3
**Helped raise money (donated or collected) for a cause or campaign you believe in							
Never	462		24.7		156		13.8
Rarely	581		31.1		328		28.9
Occasionally	545		29.1		379		33.5
Often	283		15.1		270		23.8
**Performed volunteer or community service work							
Never	396		21.2		91		8.0
Rarely	593		31.8		293		25.7
Occasionally	597		32.0		474		41.5
Often	278		14.9		283		24.8

**Table 4. Comparative Self Perception**

	No CE Exposure (n = 1985)		CE Exposure (n = 1207)	
	#	%	#	%
**What role does participation in extracurricular activities play in your academic success as a student at ISU?				
None	430	21.9	161	13.4
Neutral	711	36.2	365	30.4
Important	615	31.3	453	37.7
Essential	209	10.6	222	18.5
*Do you feel you have a responsibility as a citizen to be informed about social issues/problems?				
No	93	4.8	35	3.0
Yes	1828	95.2	1131	97.0
**Do you feel you have a responsibility as a citizen to get involved in social issues/problems?				

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No	383		19.9		167		14.3
Yes	1537		80.1		1001		85.7
**How informed/aware are you of issues facing ISU?							
Very informed	124		6.4		135		11.5
Somewhat informed	1024		53.1		697		59.6
Not informed	779		40.4		338		28.9
**How informed/aware are you of issues facing the local Bloomington/Normal community?							
Very informed	115		6.0		95		8.1
Somewhat informed	674		35.0		479		41.0
Not informed	1134		59.0		594		50.9
How informed/aware are you of issues facing the state of Illinois?							
Very informed	373		19.4		261		22.4
Somewhat informed	1238		64.4		741		63.6
Not informed	311		16.2		164		14.1

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How informed/aware are you of issues facing the United States?					
Very informed	746	38.8	443	38.0	
Somewhat informed	1087	56.5	659	56.6	
Not informed	90	4.7	63	5.4	
How informed/aware are you of issues facing the global community beyond the U.S.?					
Very informed	475	24.8	275	23.7	
Somewhat informed	1154	60.2	710	61.2	
Not informed	288	15.0	176	15.2	
**When participating in a group project which role would you prefer?					
Team Leader	1074	58.6	767	68.2	
Team Member	759	41.4	358	31.8	
Academic ability					
Above average	1087	59.7	663	60.1	
Average	715	39.2	434	39.3	
Below average	20	1.1	7	0.6	

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*Creativity					
Above average	781	42.9	489	44.3	
Average	815	44.8	514	46.6	
Below average	223	12.3	100	9.1	
Emotional health					
Above average	623	34.2	398	36.1	
Average	1002	55.0	608	55.2	
Below average	198	10.9	96	8.7	
**Leadership ability					
Above average	858	47.1	635	57.6	
Average	829	45.5	405	36.8	
Below average	133	7.3	62	5.6	
*Physical health					
Above average	546	30.0	398	36.1	
Average	1093	60.0	617	55.9	
Below average	183	10.0	89	8.1	
*Popularity					

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Above average	262		14.4		199		18.0
Average	1265		69.5		767		69.5
Below average	294		16.1		137		12.4
**Public speaking ability							
Above average	522		28.6		371		33.8
Average	907		49.8		562		51.1
Below average	393		21.6		166		15.1
*Self-confidence							
Above average	602		33.0		375		34.0
Average	971		53.3		614		55.7
Below average	250		13.7		114		10.3
**Understanding of others							
Above average	1018		55.9		701		63.6
Average	753		41.4		384		34.8
Below average	50		2.7		17		1.5
Writing ability							
Above average	783		43.0		520		47.1
Average	893		49.1		514		46.6

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Below average	143		7.9		70		6.3
**Compassion for others							
Above average	1164		64.0		811		73.6
Average	583		32.0		264		24.0
Below average	73		4.0		27		2.5
**Willingness to get involved in things							
Above average	726		39.9		614		55.7
Average	929		51.0		428		38.8
Below average	166		9.1		61		5.5
*Tolerance of others							
Above average	936		51.3		618		56.1
Average	776		42.6		433		39.3
Below average	111		6.1		51		4.6
**Ability to work cooperatively with diverse people							
Above average	1121		61.5		762		69.1
Average	669		36.7		321		29.1
Below average	32		1.8		20		1.8

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**Understanding of campus based issues					
Above average	224	12.3	199	18.1	
Average	905	49.7	589	53.4	
Below average	692	38.0	314	28.5	
**Understanding of local issues					
Above average	244	13.4	184	16.7	
Average	952	52.3	636	57.7	
Below average	625	34.3	282	25.6	
*Understanding of regional issues					
Above average	349	19.2	234	21.3	
Average	1004	55.3	640	58.1	
Below average	464	25.5	227	20.6	
Understanding of national issues					
Above average	545	30.0	334	30.4	
Average	1001	55.1	619	56.3	
Below average	270	14.9	146	13.3	
Understanding of global issues					



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Above average	486		26.9		297		27.1
Average	1017		56.2		621		56.8
Below average	306		16.9		176		16.1