

Christen Priddie & Allison BrckaLorenz

This measure examines how much opportunity students have to engage in discussions with people who differ from themselves. Questions explore how often faculty create opportunities for students to engage in discussions with people from different races, economic backgrounds, religious beliefs, political views and sexual orientation. This document provides basic findings for the Discussions with Diverse Others' scale and individual component items.

## Data Description

The data in this brief come from faculty respondents at 375 four-year colleges and universities that administered the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) between 2014 and 2017. About 80% of faculty at these institutions responded to all of the items in this content area. FSSE collects information annually at hundreds of four-year colleges and universities from faculty who teach at least one undergraduate course in the current academic year. The results provide information about faculty expectations for student engagement in educational practices that are empirically linked with student learning and development. Institutions use their data to identify aspects of the undergraduate experience that can be improved through changes in policy and practice. For more information, visit the FSSE website: [fsse.indiana.edu](https://fsse.indiana.edu).

## Item Information

The Discussions with Diverse Others content area consists of five items. Information on these items can be found in Tables 1 and 2. Table 1 contains counts, means and standard deviations; it additionally contains factor loadings for all the items including those that comprise the *fDD* scale. Note that although there are five individual items within this content area, only four of them are used to create the *fDD* scale in order to stay parallel to the National Survey of Student Engagement's (NSSE) Discussions with Diverse Others Engagement Indicator. Table 2 contains frequency percentages for all of the items' response options.

With the largest proportion of faculty responding "Some", faculty least substantially create opportunities for students to engage in discussion with people from different political views and sexual orientations. Faculty more substantially create opportunities for students to engage in discussions with people from different race/ethnicities and economic backgrounds.

Table 3 contains significant correlations between the individual items in the Discussions with Diverse Others content area. Moderate relationships exist between the items on faculty fostering student discussions with people who have different sexual orientations and discussions with people of different races and ( $r = .642, p < .01$ ) and items on discussions with people who have different sexual orientations and discussions with people with different economic backgrounds ( $r = .675, p < .01$ ). Moderate-strong relationships exist for faculty providing opportunities for discussions with people with different religions and discussions with people of different races ( $r = .748, p < .01$ ), people with different economic

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backgrounds ( $r = .788, p < .01$ ), and people with different sexual orientations ( $r = .755, p < .01$ ). A moderate relationship also exists between faculty fostering discussions for people with different economic backgrounds and political views ( $r = .770, p < .01$ ). Strong relationships exist between faculty fostering discussions with people of different economic backgrounds and races ( $r = .827, p < .01$ ) and between discussions with people from different political views and religions ( $r = .836, p < .01$ ).

### Scale Information

Four individual items combined together to create one scale: *fDD*. To create the scale, first, the individual responses are recorded to a 0 to 60 scale: Very much=4 is recorded to 60, Quite a bit=3 is recoded to 40, Some=2 is recoded to 20, and Very little=1 is recoded to 0. Individual faculty responses on these 0-60 items are then averaged together to create an aggregate scale score. Information on this scale can be found in Table 4. The scale has a high Cronbach's Alpha suggesting that the items are highly correlated and the scale should be considered a narrow construct. The intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) suggests that 13% of the variation in *fDD* is at the institution level. If interested in institution-level effects, multi-level modeling may be appropriate when examining the scale. All factor loadings are high suggesting the items fit well within the construct (Table 1).

### Correlations

Table 5 presents correlations between the *fDD* scale and the core survey FSSE scales. Faculty who provide opportunities for students to engage in discussions with diverse others also more strongly emphasized higher-order learning, valued reflective and integrative learning, and more frequently used effective teaching practices. Relationships between faculty who provide opportunities for students to engage in discussions with diverse others also more strongly encouraged student use of learning strategies and collaborative learning, more frequently participated in student-faculty interactions, and more strongly supported increasing supportive environments on campus. Perceptions of students' quality of interactions with others on campus and faculty values for quantitative reasoning was slightly related to faculty engaging students in discussions with diverse others.

### Disciplinary Differences

Faculty fostering student discussions with diverse others varies by faculty disciplinary area appointment (Figure 1). Faculty who incorporate more opportunities for students to engage with other students of diverse backgrounds are in the fields of Social Service Professions; Communication, Media, and Public Relations; and Other Disciplines. Faculty who provide the least amount of opportunities for their students to engage with others of diverse backgrounds are in the fields of Physical Sciences, Math, and Computer Science; Biology, Agriculture, and Natural Resources; and Engineering. There is greater variation within disciplinary area for a few disciplines. Physical Sciences, Math, and Computer Sciences; Biology, Agriculture, and Natural Resources; and Engineering faculty have larger interquartile ranges suggesting that faculty in this field are not as consistent when it comes to providing their students opportunities to engage with others of diverse backgrounds. Other fields, such as Arts and Humanities, Education, Social Sciences, and Health Professions, have a smaller interquartile range suggesting their faculty are more consistent in creating opportunities for their students to engage with diverse others.

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## Our Related Papers

For more information about FSSE and discussions with diverse others, see the following publications, conference papers and presentations, research reports or other FSSE investigations focused on the *fDD* scale:

- BrckaLorenz, A., Nelson Laird, T. F. (June 2015). [Examining patterns of effective teaching practices across disciplinary areas](#). Program presented at the 2015 Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Annual Conference, British Columbia, Canada.
- National Survey of Student Engagement. (2014). [Teaching Professional Development](#). *Bringing the Institution into Focus—Annual Results 2014*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research.

## Predictors

Faculty including opportunities for students to engage with diverse others in their classrooms vary based on faculty, course, and institution characteristics. Table 6 presents predictors of increased opportunities for students engaging with diverse others by faculty, course, and institution characteristics. Following Table 6 are figures (Figures 2-6) representing the average *fDD* scale scores by faculty and institution characteristics with some of the larger differences.

For the incorporation of faculty creating opportunities for students to engage with diverse others, men, White, Asian, Hispanic or Latino, faculty at private institutions and faculty who have been teaching for fewer years were less likely to create opportunities for their students to engage with diverse others than the average faculty member. Faculty at institutions without a tenure system and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander faculty were more likely to create such opportunities than average. Faculty at doctoral-granting institutions with highest and moderate research activity faculty were more likely to provide the space for students to engage with diverse others while doctoral-granting institutions with higher research activity, Master's-granting and Baccalaureate-granting institution faculty provide these opportunities less than average.

# Discussions with Diverse Others

Table 1. Discussions with Diverse Others Item Descriptives

**In your selected course section, how much opportunity do students have to engage in discussions with people from the following groups?**

Response options: 4=Very much, 3=Quite a bit, 2=Some, 1=Very little

	Count	Mean	Std. Dev.	Factor Loading
People of a race or ethnicity other than their own ( <i>fDDrace</i> )	42,961	2.57	1.078	.927
People from an economic background other than their own ( <i>fDDeconomic</i> )	42,596	2.56	1.003	.923
People with religious beliefs other than their own ( <i>fDDreligion</i> )	42,289	2.38	1.029	.907
People with political views other than their own ( <i>fDDpolitical</i> )	42,137	2.45	0.988	.898
People with a sexual orientation other than their own ( <i>fddsexorient</i> )	41,748	2.19	1.016	--

Table 2. Discussions with Diverse Others Item Frequencies

**In your selected course section, how much opportunity do students have to engage in discussions with people from the following groups?**

	Very much (%)	Quite a bit (%)	Some (%)	Very little (%)
People of a race or ethnicity other than their own ( <i>fDDrace</i> )	26.5	23.6	30.5	19.4
People from an economic background other than their own ( <i>fDDeconomic</i> )	22.8	25.6	36.4	15.1
People with religious beliefs other than their own ( <i>fDDreligion</i> )	19.4	21.2	37.7	21.7
People with political views other than their own ( <i>fDDpolitical</i> )	19.0	24.0	39.5	17.5
People with a sexual orientation other than their own ( <i>fddsexorient</i> )	15.5	16.8	39.3	28.4

Table 3. Significant Correlations between Discussions with Diverse Others Items

	<i>fDDrace</i>	<i>fDDeconomic</i>	<i>fDDreligion</i>	<i>fDDpolitical</i>
<i>fDDeconomic</i>	.827**			
<i>fDDreligion</i>	.748**	.788**		
<i>fDDpolitical</i>	.708**	.770**	.836**	
<i>fddsexorient</i>	.642**	.675**	.755**	.728**

Note: \*\* $p < .01$

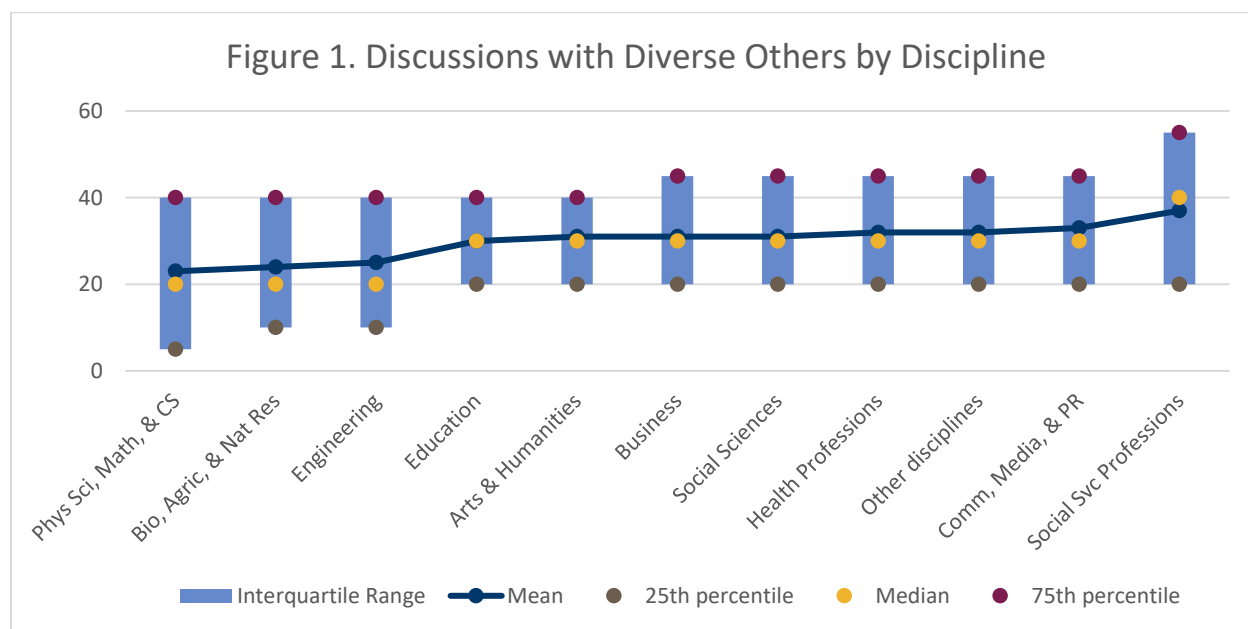
Table 4. Discussions with Diverse Others Scale Descriptives

Scale	Count	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.	Cronbach's Alpha	ICC
<i>fDD</i>	42292	0	60	29.77	18.729	.934	.132

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Table 5. Significant ( $p < .001$ ) Correlations between Discussions with Diverse Others Scale and FSSE Scales

	<i>fDD</i>
Higher-Order Learning	.285
Reflective & Integrative Learning	.314
Learning Strategies	.189
Quantitative Reasoning	.077
Collaborative Learning	.156
Student-Faculty Interaction	.167
Effective Teaching Practices	.235
Quality of Interactions	.058
Supportive Environment	.189



# Discussions with Diverse Others

Table 6. Faculty and Institution Characteristic Predictors for Discussions with Diverse Others (continued on next page)

		<i>fDD</i>		
		Unstd. B	SE	Sig.
(Constant)		.461	.055	***
Disciplinary area	Arts & Humanities	.166	.012	***
	Bio Sciences, Agriculture, & Natural Resources	-.255	.018	***
	Physical Sciences, Math, & Computer Sciences	-.294	.016	***
	Social Sciences	.104	.015	***
	Business	.036	.017	*
	Communications, Media, & Public Relations	.140	.024	***
	Education	-.021	.018	
	Engineering	-.198	.024	***
	Health Professions	.031	.017	
	Social Service Professions	.274	.026	***
	Other disciplinary fields	.067	.020	***
Academic rank	Professor	.031	.015	*
	Associate Professor	.026	.014	
	Assistant Professor	.013	.015	
	Instructor	-.020	.014	
	Lecturer	-.046	.017	**
	Other rank	-.004	.019	
Tenure status	No tenure system	.174	.014	***
	Not on tenure track	.073	.012	***
	Tenure track	-.108	.015	***
	Tenured	-.142	.013	***
Number of courses taught this school year		.018	.005	***
Years of teaching experience		-.042	.008	***
Age in years		.031	.007	***
Gender identity	Man	-.069	.032	*
	Woman	.010	.032	
	Another gender identity	.115	.092	
	I prefer not to respond	-.056	.039	
Racial/ethnic identification	American Indian or Alaska Native	.122	.073	
	Asian	-.244	.029	***
	Black or African American	.035	.028	
	Hispanic or Latino	-.082	.032	**
	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	.523	.131	***
	White	-.224	.021	***
	Other	.044	.042	
	Multiracial	-.062	.033	
I prefer not to respond		-.112	.030	***

Notes: \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ . All continuous variables were standardized before entry in the model so that unstandardized coefficients can be interpreted similar to effect sizes. Effect coding was used so that coefficients can be interpreted as compared to the average faculty member as opposed to a selected reference group.

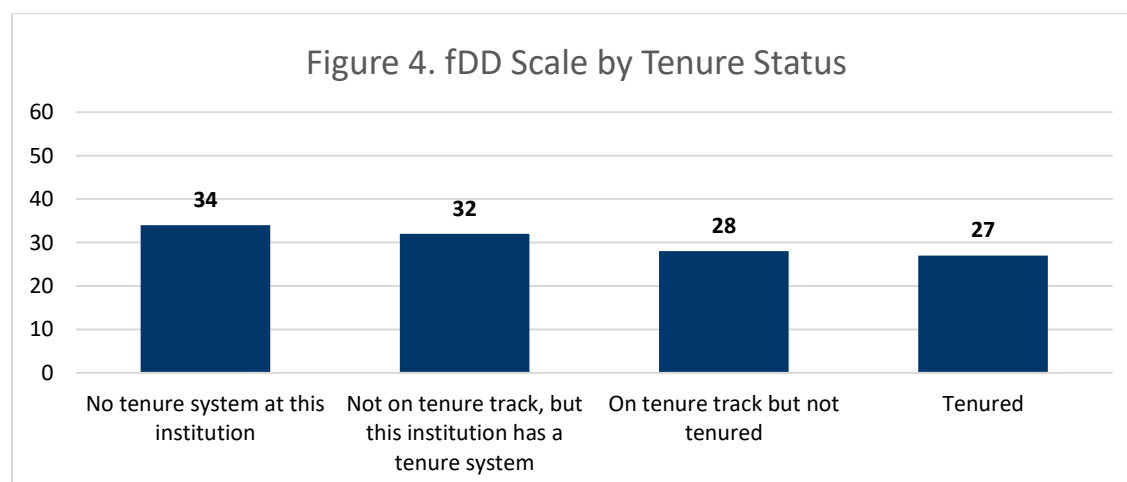
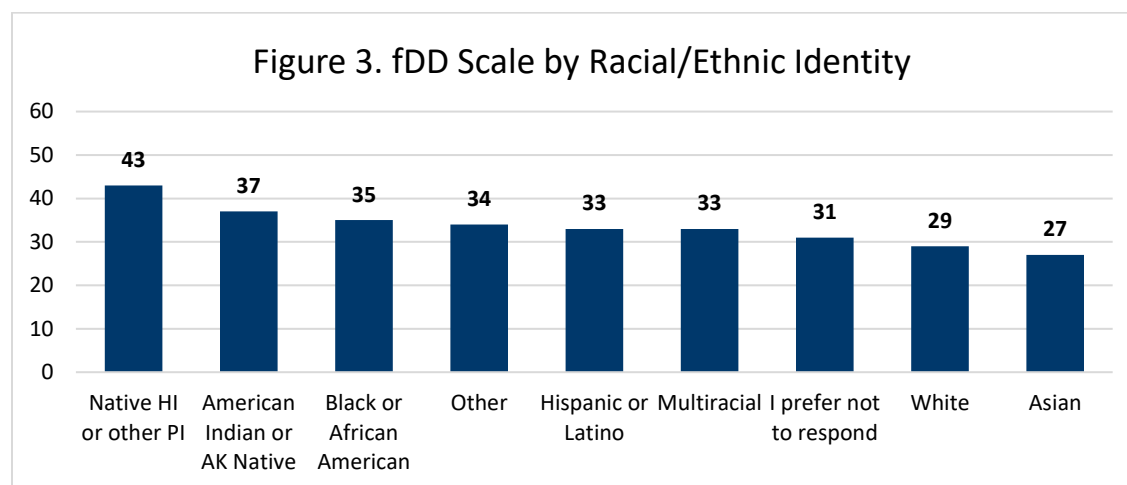
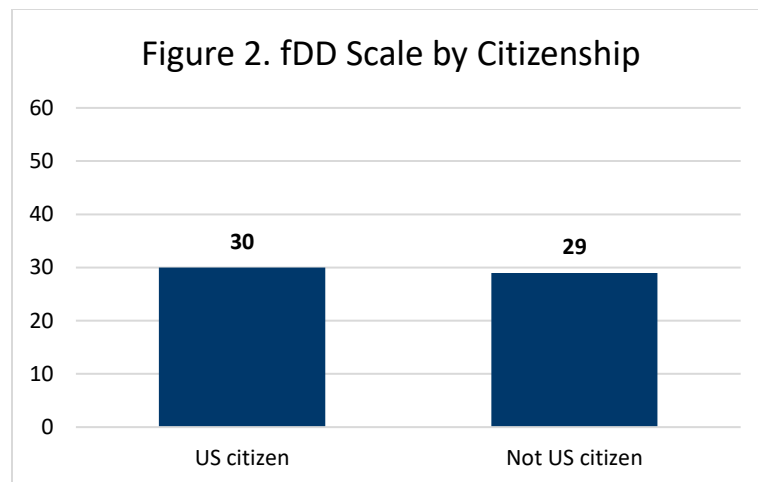
# Discussions with Diverse Others

Table 6. Faculty and Institution Characteristic Predictors for Discussions with Diverse Others Scale (continued)

		<i>fDD</i>		
		Unstd. B	SE	Sig.
Sexual orientation	Straight (heterosexual)	-.042	.028	
	Bisexual	.081	.046	
	Gay	.022	.042	
	Lesbian	-.057	.046	
	Queer	.113	.086	
	Questioning or unsure	-.077	.134	
	Another sexual orientation	.007	.085	
	I prefer not to respond	-.047	.033	
Holds an earned doctorate		-.030	.014	*
US citizen		-.036	.035	
Private institution		-.111	.013	***
Undergraduate enrollment in thousands		.021	.007	**
Carnegie basic classification	Doctoral U-highest research activity	.072	.020	**
	Doctoral U-higher research activity	-.073	.014	***
	Doctoral U-moderate research activity	.073	.015	***
	Master's C&U-larger programs	.001	.010	
	Master's C&U-medium programs	-.083	.016	***
	Master's C&U-smaller programs	-.076	.022	***
	Baccalaureate-arts & sciences	-.075	.018	***
	Baccalaureate-diverse fields	-.067	.017	***
Other Carnegie classification		.228	.028	***

Notes: \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ . All continuous variables were standardized before entry in the model so that unstandardized coefficients can be interpreted similar to effect sizes. Effect coding was used so that coefficients can be interpreted as compared to the average faculty member as opposed to a selected reference group.

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