

## No Time On My Side: Examining Factors Affecting Co-curricular Involvement

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### Goals of Presentation

- Understand motivations & obstacles behind co-curricular participation behavior
- Discuss study's implications for campus administrators

### Outline of Session

- Literature review
- Research questions & Data source
- Sample characteristics
- Survey structure
- Results
- Conclusions
- Case studies

### Why study co-curricular involvement?



### Literature Review

- Benefits of co-curricular involvement
  - Retention (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005)
  - Learning & critical thinking (Whitt, 1999; Gellin, 2003)
  - Leadership and public speaking skills (Astin, 1993)
- Between 40 and 50% report not participating in co-curriculars (2007 NSSE)

### Literature Review (cont.)

- What motivates participation?
- Limited research exists to answer question
  - MacKinnon-Slaney (1993)
    - Houle's (1961) typology for adult learning
      - Goal, Activity, & Learning-oriented students
  - Tan & Pope (2007)
    - Parallels current study but for adult learners & single institution

### Research Questions

- What motivates students to participate in co-curricular activities?
- What prevents students from participating?
- Are there certain student characteristics that relate to participation behavior?


### Data Source

- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
  - Developed in 1998, 1,200+ baccalaureate institutions
- NSSE Experimental Items
  - 2006 Co-curricular Items
  - 10,000+ respondents from 33 schools
  - First year & Senior respondents only



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## Sample Characteristics



Alaska Pacific University

### Institutions by Carnegie Group

Doctoral	Baccalaureate	
University of Colorado at Denver	Huntingdon College	Roanoke College
University of Miami	Occidental College	New College of Florida
South Dakota State University	Scripps College	Campbellsville University
The University of Texas at Arlington	Eckerd College	Catawba College
Masters	Calvin College	Ohio Northern University
Trinity University	Rhodes College	Wiley College
University of North Florida		
Armstrong Atlantic State University		
University of Indianapolis		
University of Southern Maine		
Belmont University		
University of St. Thomas (TX)		
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater		
Molloy College		
University of Portland		
Bryant University		
Austin Peay State University		
Johnson State College		
	Other	
	California College of the Arts	
	Nichols College	
	Kuyper College	
	Southern Catholic College	


### Institutional Characteristics

Carnegie Type	% Sample (n=33)	% NSSE '06 (n=540)	Barron's	% Sample	% NSSE '06
Doc RU-VH	6	4	Noncompetitive	3	5
Doc RU-H	6	8	Less competitive	20	15
Doc DRU	0	5	Competitive	30	39
Masters-L	24	24	Competitive Plus	3	4
Masters-M	12	14	Very Competitive	27	20
Masters-S	3	7	Very Competitive Plus	0	5
Bac-AS	24	20	Highly Competitive	7	8
Bac-Diverse	12	11	Highly Competitive Plus	10	2
Other	12	7	Most Competitive	0	2
Private Status	% Sample	% NSSE '06			
	69	62			

### Student Characteristics

	First Year		Senior	
	Sample (n=5,150)	NSSE '06	Sample (n=5,364)	NSSE '06
Greek	9%	9%	9%	11%
Student-Athlete	10%	9%	5%	5%
Female	57%	55%	60%	57%
Part-time	6%	9%	20%	20%
On-campus	66%	59%	15%	12%
B or higher avg.	80%	78%	86%	85%
Minority	14%	17%	15%	16%
25-years or older	6%	8%	33%	31%
Dependents	24%	28%	39%	38%

## Survey structure and definitions



## Survey Structure

- Hours spent in nine different co-curricular areas.
  - If no time spent, respondent moves to last section
- “Co-curricular activities...” (agree/disagree)
  - list of 13 reasons for involvement
- “I do NOT participate in co-curricular activities because...” (agree/disagree)
  - list of 8 reasons for non-involvement

## Definition of Co-curricular Activity

Athletics	Student Government
Academic club or honor society	Greek organization
Service organization	Campus housing/res. life programs
Performing/ Visual arts	Campus newspaper / other publication
Religious group	Other

## Participant Status by Class Standing

	First Year	Senior	Total
Non-Participant	1124 (22%)	1662 (31%)	26%
Participant	4026 (78%)	3702 (69%)	74%
Total	5150 (100%)	5364 (100%)	

### Student Characteristics by Participation Status

	First Year		Senior	
	Participant	Non-Participant	Participant	Non-Participant
Greek	12%	N/A	13%	N/A
Student-Athlete	14%	N/A	8%	N/A
Female	55%	63%	60%	62%
<b>Part-time</b>	3%	84%	12%	66%
<b>On-campus</b>	76%	38%	22%	4%
B or higher avg.	81%	75%	88%	84%
Minority	12%	18%	14%	15%
<b>25-years or older</b>	3%	14%	21%	55%
<b>Dependents</b>	19%	37%	30%	56%

### Results: Why students participate



### Why Students Participate (% "agree" or "strongly agree")

	First Year		Senior
64%	Leadership Skills		Leadership Skills 67%
63%	Campus Connection		Résumé 65%
61%	Résumé		Campus Connection 56%
57%	Meet People		Help Others 56%
56%	Stress Relief		Job Skills 54%
56%	Self-Confidence		Self-Confidence 54%
52%	Help Others		Meet People 50%
48%	Enjoyment		Stress Relief 50%
47%	Job Skills		Giving Back to School 45%
45%	Giving Back to School		Enjoyment 41%
37%	Career Decisions		Career Decisions 41%
36%	Helps Academics		Helps Academics 40%
24%	Pays for College		Pays for College 19%

### How student characteristics relate to reasons for participation

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Extrinsic Reasons for Participation Scale

( $\alpha = .83$ )

Co-curricular activities...

1=Strongly Disagree to 6=Strongly Agree

- Enhance my academic work
- Help me acquire skills that I can use after college
- Help me decide the type of work I may want to do after college
- Will enhance my resume and make me look more attractive to future employers
- Help me develop leadership skills

Predictors for "Extrinsic" Scale

	First Year	Seniors
Full-time	+++	
On-campus resident	+	+
Female	+	++
B grades or higher	+	++
Race (Caucasian vs)	Lat/AA/For (+)	AA/Asian (+)
First Generation		
Adult learner		-
Greek	+++	++
Student-Athlete	+	++

Intrinsic Reasons for Participation Scale

( $\alpha = .76$ )

Co-curricular activities...


1=Strongly Disagree to 6=Strongly Agree

- Help me increase my self-confidence
- Help me relieve stress
- Are the best way to meet new people
- Help me give back to the campus community
- Are a good way for me to help others

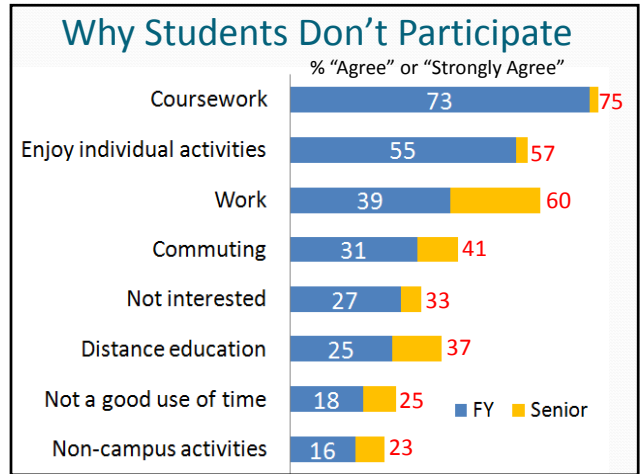
Predictors for "Intrinsic" Scale

	First Year	Senior
Full-time		
On-campus resident	++	+
Female	++	++
B grades or higher		
Race (Caucasian)	AA /Asian (+)	Lat/Asian/For (+) AA (+++)
First Generation		
Adult learner		
Greek	++	++
Student-Athlete	+	++

## Results: Why students do NOT participate



Rhodes College



## How student characteristics relate to non-participation reasons

### "Not Interested" Scale ( $\alpha = .67$ )

**I do NOT participate in co-curricular activities because...**  
1=Strongly Disagree to 6=Strongly Agree

- I do not believe it is a good use of my time
- I am not interested in any organized groups at my institution
- I enjoy individual activities (e.g., reading, video games, watching TV)

### Predictors for “Not Interested” Scale

	First Year	Senior
Full-time	++	
On-campus resident		+++
Female	--	-
B grades or higher		
Race (Caucasian vs)	Lat/AA/For (---)	Lat/For (---) AA (-)
First Generation		
Adult learner	--	-
Dependents		

### “Life Factors” Scale ( $\alpha = .57$ )

**I do NOT participate in co-curricular activities because...**

*1=Strongly Disagree to 6=Strongly Agree*

- As a distance education student, it is too difficult to become involved
- My time is devoted to non-campus sponsored activities (e.g., community or religious groups)
- Working for pay takes up too much of my time
- My commute to school makes it difficult to become involved

### Predictors for “Life Factors” Scale

	First Year	Senior
Full-time		-
On-campus resident	---	---
Female		
B grades or higher		
Race (Caucasian vs)	AA (-)	Latino (-) AA (-)
First Generation		
Adult learner	--	+
Dependents	+	+++

### Conclusions

- Leadership, résumé, and campus connection top reasons for participating
  - Enjoyment & academic enhancement less so
- Reasons don't change much between years, although seniors more utilitarian
- Non-participants more likely non-traditional and have understandable challenges
  - The majority appear to be interested
- Reasons for participation vary by student-type

## Implications

### To increase participation rates:

- Market with leadership opportunities, résumé development, & campus connection
  - Other benefits, too, but these most effective
- Recognize the wide spectrum of motivators and how they vary across student types
- Develop programs with non-participants in mind and their life factors
  - “for-credit” activities

## Case Studies

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