The Effects of Community-Based and Civic Engagement in Higher Education: An Annotated Bibliography (2011-2021)

Inclusion Parameters:

The search prioritized studies published between 2011 and 2021 that addressed outcomes related to community-based and civic experiences. In addition, the following parameters for inclusion must be met:

- Full-text version available for download.
- Meta-analyses and analyses of original data (rather than a summary of data analyzed in other publications).
- Multi-institutional studies (two or more institutions).
- Single-institution studies that were longitudinal or included data from multiple cohorts/academic years.
- Inclusion of at least one of a range of civic or community-based engagement experiences (i.e., service learning, study abroad, diversity experiences, global learning, internships, field experiences, community-based undergraduate research, community-based work-study).
- Analysis of at least one of a range of outcomes at the student and institution levels.

Please note that our focus was on publications written in English; however, we welcome the community to share publications in other languages if they meet the above parameters.

If you know of a publication meeting the above parameters that we have missed, please reach out to afinley@aacu.org.

Annotated Bibliography:

- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- High-impact practice (HIP): Community-based practices
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility

Based on a cross-sectional study of nearly 10,000 undergraduates from 23 institutions. Participation of undergraduate students in course and non-course community-based projects was associated with self-reported gains in civic commitments and learned skills in college.


- Peer-reviewed
- Single institution, multiple cohorts/years
- HIP: Community-based practices
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions

A program evaluation of Oakland University’s Student Philanthropy and Community Engagement Program, which is housed in multiple classes. The study focuses on a single institution and program with data collected over multiple academic years and across nine courses (*n* = 270). Students completed pre/post-intervention surveys. Pre/post-program scores suggested increased awareness of local challenges, ability to connect challenges to relevant non-profits, indicated some level of community participation, obligations to the community, responsibility to help others, efficacy, intention to volunteer, and willingness to raise money for philanthropic purposes. Differences were noted based on subgroups (e.g., demographic groups, field of study). Overall, the program “effectively increased students’ interest in philanthropy while also increasing their engagement with and knowledge of the local community” (p. 30).


- Peer-reviewed
- Single site, multiple cohorts/years
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions

Data comes from 114 students who took an elective Citizenship and Service Practicum course in 2008, 2009, and 2010 (out of 400 students who took the course during those years). Data from three semesters of end-of-course evaluations for the course that involved a service-learning project providing shelter to the homeless indicate that the service-learning experience raised students’ awareness of homelessness, helped dispel negative stereotypes and foster more positive attitudes, and promoted positive civic attitudes and desire to “make a difference.”


- Peer-reviewed
- Single site, multiple cohorts/years
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Intellectual and practical skills

Thirty-six students participating in service-learning courses across five semesters self-reported that these courses contributed to their learning in relation to the intellectual and practical skills of collaboration, communication, and connections.

- Peer-reviewed
- Meta-analysis
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions
- Outcomes: Intellectual and practical skills
- Outcomes: Learning

A meta-analysis of 62 studies and 11,837 student participants. Students who participated in service-learning experienced “significant gains in five outcome areas: attitudes toward self, attitudes toward school and learning, civic engagement, social skills, and academic performance. Mean effects ranged from 0.27 to 0.43” (p. 164). Several best practices in service-learning implementation were significantly related to increased outcomes in students.


- Peer-reviewed
- Single institution, multiple samples/years
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility

Investigated an institution’s School of Humanities and Social Sciences service-learning program. Over two academic years, two groups of students completed pre/post surveys (n = 351, 832, with original 351 included in both groups). The second, larger group participated in a service-learning module (total of 13 modules). Students’ positive perceptions of service learning and the program features were significantly correlated to positive impact on their civic outcomes.


- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- HIP: Service learning
- HIP: Diversity experiences or global learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions

Examined the quality of service-learning course characteristics in terms of contact theory in impacting student outcomes surrounding colorblindness and awareness of racial issues. Participants were enrolled in 13 different service-learning courses from two institutions (n = 220). Focus was on contact theory: providing opportunity to engage with--or have contact with--individuals from different groups. In general, students’ colorblindness decreased after participation in a service-learning course. The degree to
which service-learning courses met the tenets of contact theory as well as participation in a service-learning community were significantly associated with lower levels of colorblindness and unawareness of blatant racial concerns. Not doing service learning was associated with an increased lack of awareness of discrimination.


- Peer-reviewed
- Single site, multiple cohorts/years
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions
- Outcomes: Intellectual and practical skills
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility

Used data from the Civic Attitudes and Skills Questionnaire (CASQ) and follow up interviews to determine the effects of a mandatory hybrid service-learning course at a private university in Ecuador. In interviews, students who participated in service learning reported feeling engaged with the community and perceived a positive impact on their civic action, interpersonal and problem-solving skills, political awareness, leadership skills, social justice attitudes, and diversity attitudes. CASQ data -- also self-reported -- showed a difference between students who had completed the course and students who had not in all the above areas except civic action.


- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- HIP: Diversity experiences or global learning
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions

Employed a pretest-posttest analysis of Global Perspectives Institute data of 511 students who had studied away from 11 campuses. The authors found that study abroad increases students “intercultural wonderment,” defined as an underlying curiosity to seek engagement with new and different experiences and a comfort with related disequilibrium and discomfort.


- Not peer-reviewed (report)
- Multi-institutional
- HIPs: General
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Learning
- Outcomes: Underserved student success
- Implications for traditionally underserved student populations

Used National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) survey results across 38 institutions in three states accounting for 25,336 college students. Participation in
multiple HIPs is associated with student perceptions of their own learning. Self-perceptions of learning were significantly higher for students who had participated in at least one HIP than students who had not participated in any HIPs. Among the highest perceptions of deep learning and learning gains were students who participated in service learning and student/faculty research. Participating in more HIPs was associated with more positive self-perceptions of deep learning and engagement. These benefits were more profound for historically underserved groups, transfer students, and first-generation students. In general, participation in HIPs appears to positively influence students’ self-perceptions about their learning and engagement.


- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions

Included participants from five institutions (*n* = 228) who participated in service-learning courses in multiple disciplines and contexts (19 total courses) from the 2012-2016 academic years. Focus is on the design of service-learning courses—their motivating potential or the quality of the service-learning course—and the effect on student outcomes related to motivation/dispositions. Findings suggest that motivating characteristics of service-learning courses are significantly related to students’ general self-efficacy (i.e., “confidence in coping with novel or difficult tasks across situations,” p. 26), as mediated by learner empowerment (i.e., in this case, motivation to succeed in a specific context).


- Peer-reviewed
- Single site, multiple cohorts/years
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Career
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions
- Outcomes: Intellectual and practical skills
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility

A five-year outcome study of cohorts of graduates from Lingnan University found that students with service-learning experiences have significantly higher scores in civic responsibility than do their counterparts without such experiences. They are more willing to be involved in community service after graduation, and they invest more hours of service per month. Service-learning participants also exhibit better career exploration skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills, and research skills.


- Not peer-reviewed (paper presentation)
- Multi-institutional, longitudinal
- HIP: Service learning
- HIP: Diversity experiences or global learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility
- Outcomes: Learning
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions

Large longitudinal study from multiple institutions split into three samples ($n = 25,373$; $8,366$; $10,701$) spanning several academic years and hundreds of institutions. Establishes multiple dimensions of civic learning per the Dimensions of Civic Learning Survey, including understanding of self and others, civic awareness, integration of learning, pluralistic orientation, critical consciousness and action, social agency, civic engagement in public forums, and political engagement. Results suggest that service-learning experiences predicted 13 out of the 19 measured outcomes associated with civic learning. Other experiences beyond service learning were also beneficial to civic learning outcomes and spanned formal, informal, and co-curricular experiences: participation in inclusive curriculum (e.g., courses and/or content focused on race, ethnicity, gender), study abroad, leadership training, racial/ethnic student organizations, informal cross-racial interactions among students, voting during student elections, and informal volunteering. Interestingly, there were negative associations with some civic learning outcomes for students who engaged in Greek life.

- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- HIPs: General
- Data: Self-reported
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Graduation and retention
- Outcomes: Institutional

Examined the relationship between ten HIPs and graduation rates at 101 four-year public colleges and universities in the United States. The findings suggest that HIPs are in widespread use but have limited relationships with graduation rates. Benefits from HIPs likely experienced by individuals at participating institutions were not evident in institutional graduation rates.

- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- HIPs: General
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Learning
- Outcomes: Intellectual and practical skills
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions

Used data from the longitudinal Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education to estimate the effects of participation in ten HIPs: first-year seminars, academic learning communities, writing-intensive courses, active and collaborative learning, undergraduate research, study abroad, service learning, internships, and capstone courses/experiences. Active and collaborative learning as well as undergraduate research had broad-reaching positive effects across multiple liberal arts learning.
outcomes, such as critical thinking, need for cognition, and intercultural effectiveness. Several other HIPs—including study abroad, internship, service learning, and capstone course/experience—had more narrowly focused positive effects on student learning. Additionally, three HIPs—first-year seminar, academic learning community, and writing-intensive courses—were not significant predictors of any of the liberal arts educational outcomes.


- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- HIPs: General
- HIP: Internship/field experience
- HIP: Diversity experiences or global learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Underserved student success

Used quantitative data from the National Study of LGBTQ Student Success to investigate if participation in HIPs influenced LGBTQ+ students’ academic development. Findings suggested that undergraduate research significantly, positively predicted LGBTQ+ students’ academic development, with instructor relations mediating the effect. (Academic development was self-reported via seven survey items.) Internship, learning community, senior capstone experience, and study abroad did not significantly influence LGBTQ+ students’ academic development.


- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional, longitudinal
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility
- Outcomes: Intellectual and practical skills
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions

National data on six liberal arts outcomes (critical thinking, moral reasoning, lifelong learning inclination, intercultural effectiveness, psychological well-being, and political and social involvement) were analyzed to investigate the impact of college students’ service-learning experiences. Sample sizes varied for each variable, ranging from 886 to 1,857. More than half of the students participated in service-learning during college. Service-learning participation was significantly and positively associated with political and social involvement (i.e., perceived importance of political participation and involvement in the community), though there were no significant associations among the remaining five variables tested.
- Peer-reviewed
- Single institution, longitudinal
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Graduation and retention
- Outcomes: Underserved student success (completion)
- Implications for traditionally underserved students

Longitudinal study at a single institution including 3,458 students who began studies in 2005 and were tracked for six years. Students who participated in service learning were compared against those who did not, with students’ academic characteristics similar between groups. Demographics were different in interesting ways (e.g., the SL group included more Pell-eligible students). Students who participated in service learning completed their degrees at significantly higher rates and earned more credits overall. Service learning was a significant predictor while variables such as race and ethnicity, financial need, and GPA were not significant predictors of degree completion.

- Not peer-reviewed (book chapter)
- Single institution, longitudinal (single cohort, students completed 400 hours of community service during their college journey)
- HIP: Community-based practices
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Underserved student success
- Outcomes: Graduation and retention
- Outcomes: Learning

Longitudinal study of the Community Engagement Scholars Program (CESP) at a single institution (*n* = 242). Using propensity score matching, CESP students were matched with a control group. Participating students had significantly higher GPAs, more persistence in their degree tracks, and completed their degrees more quickly. Participating underrepresented students completed more credits than non-participating underrepresented students.

- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- HIPs: General
- HIP: Internship/field experience
- HIP: Diversity experiences or global learning
- HIP: Community-based practices
- Outcomes: Graduation and retention
- Outcomes: Underserved student success

Used data from the Education Longitudinal Study (ELS) to analyze the impact of HIP participation on students’ likelihood of completing college within six years, controlling for
socioeconomic status, high school math and reading scores, and high school involvement. Results suggested that students involved in HIPs were more likely to complete college within six years compared to uninvolved peers but found no evidence of compensatory effects for underserved students. In other words, this study did not find that HIPs differentially affected college completion rates by gender, first-generation status, or racial background, though participation in HIPs did vary by gender, first-gen status, and racial background. The following HIPs were included: study abroad, research with a faculty member, community-based project, and internship, co-op or field experience.


- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- HIP: Community-based practices
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Institutional

Focused on the benefits of university-community partnerships to communities. The case study included 11 university-community collaborations in Europe. They found several institutional advantages of local urban community projects, including institutional implementation of collaborative and participatory pedagogies and students practicing collaborative and mutual learning.


- Not peer-reviewed (report)
- Single site, multiple cohorts/years
- HIPs: General
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Graduation and retention
- Outcomes: Underserved student success

This report describes the outcomes of the college success program designed to support historically underserved students at San Francisco State University. The program includes a two-semester community engagement course for fifth- and sixth-year students, “SF Living Lab.” The academic and wrap-around support program has yielded six-year graduation rates for students in the Metro program that consistently exceed other similar, historically underserved students and the “more privileged SF State students.”


- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- HIPs: General
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Career
- Outcomes: Graduation and retention

Used data from over 31,000 seniors on the NSSE. After controlling for a variety of demographic and institutional factors, the study finds HIP participation is a significant
predictor of future career plans and early job attainment. This study included the following HIPs: learning community, study abroad, research project with a faculty member, internship, senior capstone project or culminating experience, formal leadership role on campus, and a community-based project or service-learning project. Seniors who participated in an internship, studied abroad, or completed a capstone project were more likely to seek employment after graduation. Seniors who had a leadership role on campus or participated in undergraduate research were more likely to attend graduate school than their counterparts who had not had these experiences. Learning community and service-learning experiences did not have a statistically significant effect on students’ plans to attend graduate school or seek employment. Of those seeking employment, seniors who had done an internship, engaged in service learning, or completed a capstone course were more likely to start a new job after graduation (vs. indicate that they did not yet have a job). Students who completed an internship or completed a senior capstone project were also more likely to continue in their current job after graduation (vs. indicate that they did not yet have a job).


- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- HIP: Community-based practice
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility

Students from 19 institutions (n = 12,745) completed a survey assessing their sense of personal and social responsibility and perceived importance of contributing to one’s community, which were associated with participation in community-based practices (within a course or outside of a course). Engagement in more community-based practices was positively associated with perceived importance of contributing to one’s community and a higher perception of personal and social responsibility. In addition, peer-to-peer discussion as part of the community engagement activities affected the same outcomes, with an even more positive influence on community-based practices.


- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Career

A qualitative study with 33 participants (alumni) from three service-learning programs at three institutions. Students’ career pathways were informed by engagement in sustained service-learning experiences that lasted a minimum of two consecutive semesters. They reported more awareness of and interest in careers related to public service and social responsibility.

Drawing on ELS 2002–2012 data, this study analyzed how students’ participation in study abroad is associated with students’ likelihood to vote after college. While there was no main effect for study abroad on post-college voting behavior, participation in education abroad increased first-generation students’ voter participation (and the interaction term was highly significant). The study indicates that the study abroad experience for this subsample of students has a lasting and unique relationship to post-college voting behavior that already accounts for selection bias into study abroad and other civic-minded behavior.


Used a sample of 8,460 students with data from the ELS to investigate the relationship between study abroad and post-college civic engagement for first-generation college students. Participation in study abroad significantly and positively correlated with voting, volunteering, and donating at approximately age 26. First-generation college student status significantly and negatively correlated with voting, volunteering, and donating. Controlling for other factors, completing a community-based project in college was a statistically significant positive predictor of volunteering, voting, and donating; above and beyond that, study abroad is associated with post-college volunteering, and first-generation college student status moderates the relationship between study abroad and post-college voting.


Drawing on ELS 2002-2012 data, this study analyzed how students’ participation in study abroad is associated with students’ likelihood to volunteer after college. Controlling for service learning, previous volunteering experience, and selection bias for study abroad, this study provides evidence that study abroad promotes democratic outcomes, such as volunteerism.

- Peer-reviewed
- Single institution, longitudinal
- HIP: Service learning (and public service)
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility

Continuation of their previous longitudinal studies; longitudinal study following alumni (*n* = 359) two years after graduation from a single institution. They measured perceptions of service learning and public service co-curricular experiences and coursework in college and civic engagement behaviors. Course work focused on service-learning/public service and co-curricular service were significantly associated with increased civic engagement activities post-graduation and civic attitudes.


- Single institution, longitudinal, multiple cohorts
- Peer-reviewed
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions

Third study of a series of longitudinal studies conducted at Tulane. Following university-wide service-learning requirements, students’ civic attitudes, knowledge, and skills showed significant increases, as well as social justice attitudes and interpersonal skills for community engagement specifically following the second, more robust service-learning requirement.


- Peer-reviewed
- Single institution, multiple years
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Underserved student success
- Outcomes: Graduation and retention
- Outcomes: Learning

Single institution study following two cohorts of students who entered the institution during two academic years (*n* = 2,728). Students who took service-learning courses were compared to students who did not on GPA, persistence, and graduation. Race was studied as a moderating variable. They found that service-learning was positively associated with graduation (they graduated at 2.4 times the rate), which remained consistent by race. The positive effect of service-learning on GPA was significant only for female students. In addition, students who entered college with a higher high school GPA were more positively affected by service-learning.

- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- HIPs: General
- HIP: Internship/field experience
- HIP: Diversity experiences or global learning
- HIP: Community-based practices
- Data: Self-report
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility

Used cohort and longitudinal data from the 2002-2012 ELS to test whether experiences in six different HIPs (internship, research with a faculty member, study abroad, community-based course project, culminating senior experience, and mentoring within a program) predicted levels of civic engagement later in adulthood. The study found that experiences in HIPs significantly predicted higher levels of civic engagement later in adulthood (age 26), especially for students who entered college with low levels of pro-civic orientations. Some of these longitudinal relationships were adjusted downward after controlling for pre-college selection factors, other college experiences, and other adult outcomes. Still, the significant influence of these undergraduate HIP experiences persisted into adulthood.


- Peer-reviewed
- Single institution, multiple years
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility
- Outcomes: Learning

Study took place at a single institution in one service-learning course (packaging design) over multiple years (2006-2018). 377 student reflections were qualitatively analyzed. Findings suggest that service-learning enhanced student learning (packaging design content) when compared to student learning in the traditional packaging design course. In addition, reflections indicated that students’ sense of civic responsibility was impacted by the service-learning experience.


- Peer-reviewed
- Single site, multiple cohorts/years
- HIP: Community-based practices
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility

Involved 740 students who completed community engagement courses with a service-learning component at a single institution over multiple academic years (2017-18, 2018-
19) and multiple disciplines. Students who participated in more service-learning hours self-reported increased levels of civic engagement.


- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Graduation and retention

Students who participated in community service learning at the three institutions (two public, one private) were more likely to re-enroll in courses and graduate. The positive relationship was weaker at the private institution. Student characteristics like gender, first generation student status, race, etc., were less important to persistence than participating in community service learning, being enrolled full-time, and GPA.


- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- HIP: Service learning
- HIP: Diversity experiences or global learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility

Included 1,066 alumni from 30 campuses and investigated the effects of service learning on students’ civic outcomes after graduation. The specific characteristics of service-learning experiences (both curricular and co-curricular) were associated with civic-mindedness and increased civic engagement (volunteering, civic action) post-graduation. Findings suggest that civic mindedness is positively associated with civic engagement. In addition, specific aspects of curricular and co-curricular service-learning experiences such as valuable dialogue--particularly across differences--and reflection were strongly associated with civic-minded orientations.


- Not peer-reviewed (dissertation)
- Multi-institutional
- HIP: Diversity experiences or global learning
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions

Using data from the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education, this study found that 1,647 students from 17 four-year institutions demonstrated statistically significant increases in intercultural competence after participating in study abroad. The results suggest that the relationship between study abroad and intercultural competence is one of selection and accentuation. Further, this study found that study abroad influences students’ diversity of contact but has no statistically significant effect on relativistic
appreciation of cultural differences or comfort with diversity.


- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- HIP: Diversity experiences or global learning
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions

Using data from the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education, this study found that 1,647 students from 17 four-year institutions demonstrated statistically significant increases in intercultural competence after participating in study abroad. The results were general rather than conditional. But, challenging the common assumption that study abroad leads to gains in intercultural competency, many other campus activities were also influential in intercultural competence.


- Peer-reviewed
- Single site, multiple cohorts/years
- HIP: Community-based practices
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Graduation and retention
- Outcomes: Underserved student success
- Implications for traditionally underserved student populations

Community-engaged employment offers paid opportunities for students to earn money while participating in meaningful community initiatives. This multi-cohort study of more than 50,000 students explored the impact of community-engaged employment on the academic outcomes of underrepresented students. Underrepresented students who were employed in a community-engaged work program had significantly higher second-year retention rates, graduation rates, grade point averages, and number of credits completed compared to similar students not employed in the program. These findings indicate that community-engaged employment can provide positive academic outcomes similar to volunteer community engagement experiences, while also addressing financial barriers that many underrepresented students encounter.


- Peer-reviewed
- Single institution, multiple years
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: self-report
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions (disposition: academic engagement and cost as measured by self-report survey)
First-year college students from two academic years ($n = 300$) completed a pre/post survey during their first semester of college. All student participants engaged with multiple HIPs during the semester of study. Students who participated in service-learning as part of their learning community were compared with students who did not do so as part of their learning community. Those in service-learning were more community engaged outside of service-learning course requirements than those who did not participate in service-learning. Pre-college civic attitudes predicted the choice to participate in service-learning. Results further suggest that civic attitudinal engagement and self-reported academic engagement were the same between groups, which the authors posit may relate to exposure to multiple HIPs simultaneously. Other results are specific to the service-learning experience. Of students who participated in service-learning, academic engagement at the beginning of the course was positively associated with academic and civic engagement at the end. Civically engaged students also perceived less personal cost associated with community engagement.

- Peer-reviewed
- Single institution, longitudinal
- HIP: Internships
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions (attitudes) (JC added to spreadsheet)

Single institution longitudinal study ($n = 155$, spring 2010 to 2014) including a treatment group and two controls. Students who participated in training on project-based community research skills (via a seminar or summer internship) demonstrated stronger civic attitudes than non-participants.

- Peer-reviewed
- Single site, multiple cohorts/years
- HIP: Diversity experiences or global learning
- HIP: Service learning
- HIP: Internships
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Learning
- Outcomes: Mindsets and dispositions
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility

Compared learning outcomes for 1,500 students enrolled in psychology courses utilizing HIPs at a private university during 2002-2015. All students completed the Civic Action Skills Questionnaire, the Color-Blind Attitudes Scale, the Multicultural Counseling Inventory, the Multicultural Environmental Inventory, the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure, the Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy, the Psychological Costs of Racism to Whites Scale, the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale, and the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire. Differences from the beginning to the end of the semester were analyzed for three groups: students who completed academic-based service-learning (ABSL), cultural-based service-learning (CBSL), and experiential learning (EL, community-based internships). Experiential learners and academic-based service-learners increased their guilt and shame regarding their own Whiteness from the beginning to the end of
semester compared to cultural-based service-learners. Cultural-based service-learners increased their intercultural relationships, civic responsibility, interpersonal engagement, and understanding of diversity content by the end of the semester.


- Peer-reviewed
- Single institution, longitudinal
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Learning
- Outcomes: Graduation and retention
- Outcomes: Underserved student success

Included 5,368 students followed longitudinally from fall 2011 to summer 2015. Just over half of the participants experienced at least one service-learning course. Propensity score matching was used to compare students who did and did not participate in service-learning. Findings suggest that underrepresented students who participated in service-learning had higher cumulative GPA, continued their studies, and were more likely to graduate; however, this was not consistent across university colleges, which may be due to differences inherent to the courses specific to each college’s service-learning program. Participation in service learning by non-underrepresented students was associated with higher graduation and retention across all colleges.


- Peer-reviewed
- Single institution, longitudinal
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Learning
- Outcomes: Graduation and retention
- Outcomes: Underserved student success

Two cohorts of first-year undergraduates participated in service-learning at a single institution (fall 2011, fall 2012). Students were tracked longitudinally for impact of service-learning on educational success. Propensity score matching developed comparison groups. Two main analyses of GPA, credits completed, and graduation rates for (a) the full sample and (b) underrepresented students specifically. For the full sample, there was a significant, positive relationship between participating in service-learning and GPA, graduation rates, and credits earned specifically by the third year. These findings were consistent for the full sample but less consistent by year for the historically underrepresented student sample.


Used data from eight large public research universities from the Student Experience in the Research University survey to investigate the differential effects of service-learning experiences on students’ sense of belonging based on students’ social-class background. The results suggest that service-learning courses had significant positive effects on lower/working-class students’ sense of belonging but no effects on middle-/upper-class students’ sense of belonging.

Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership survey responses from 4,387 students (19 institutions) were used to measure the impact of community engagement (e.g., service learning, work-study, community engagement via student organization or personal initiative) on their engagement in social justice. Data suggest a positive association with community-based engagement and social justice activities.

Included 7,823 participants from nine institutions. Findings suggest that students' self-reported desire/motivation to participate in community service after graduation was enhanced by community service experiences during college.
Outcomes: Intellectual and practical skills
A validity study of the civic-minded graduate (CMG) construct and measures. CMG includes four main aspects (knowledge, skills, dispositions, and behavioral intentions) that fall into 10 domains/subscales: knowledge related to volunteering, academic and technical skills, and social skills; skills related to communication, diversity, and consensus-building; dispositions related to valuing community engagement, self-efficacy, and social responsibility; and behavioral intentions towards community service. Three studies including students across multiple years who took service-learning courses or engaged in community-based programs and practices. The authors were particularly interested in investigating a broad range of relevant practices beyond service-learning. They found positive associations between these experiences and the civic-minded skills and dispositions that make up the three CMG measures, quantitative and qualitative.

gains and study abroad showing the least significant gains. There are some variations in these results for Black, Hispanic, and older college students (25+ years).


- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- Meta-analysis
- HIP: Service learning
- Data: Self-reported
- Data: Direct assessment
- Outcomes: Learning

Meta-analysis of the impact of service-learning on student learning outcomes, including 11 studies between 1993 and 2008 with a combined sample of 2,129 students from a variety of disciplines. Focused on student learning outcomes (e.g., self-report, exam scores, cognition measures, assignment scores) following service-learning. Nine of the studies were from Novak et al.’s 2009 meta-analysis, the remaining were published later. “Service-learning has had statistically significant and positive effects on student learning outcomes (p. 58).”


- Peer-reviewed
- Single institution, longitudinal
- HIP: Service learning
- HIP: Community-based practices
- Data: Self-reported
- Outcomes: Personal and social responsibility

Data collected from participants as students and as alumni, including multiple cohorts of alumni who graduated between May 2009 and December 2010 from the College of Liberal Arts (n = 150). Technically two academic years of graduates, and the data were collected about their time at the university and with a self-report survey 2-3 years after graduation. Service-learning experiences were positively associated with more political behaviors post-graduation (donating to a political campaign, attending political meetings, voting, social movement organization/activist group membership, protest participation) than other studied experiences as students, including volunteering, service add-on, campus leader, and organization involvement. Organizational involvement and volunteering (outside of class requirements) were significantly related to donating money to a political campaign and petition signing both, and organization involvement was related to membership in activist groups. Campus leadership only had an effect on activist group membership.


- Peer-reviewed
- Multi-institutional
- Meta-analysis
- HIP: Service learning
Meta-analysis of 40 studies published between 1993-2010 with a total of 5,495 participants. Findings suggest that engagement in service-learning positively affects (a) how college students understand social issues and (b) their cognitive development.


Large, longitudinal, single-institution study examined the association between participating in service learning and graduation with a bachelor’s degree within six years. Between 2002 and 2006, a large sample of freshman and transfer students (\( n = 31,074 \)) were followed throughout their course of study. Participating in service-learning was found to be significantly associated with graduation within six years. Participating in upper division service-learning experiences was more strongly correlated with graduation, as was the case with transfer students compared with first-time freshmen.