



Lessons Learned about One High-Impact Practice

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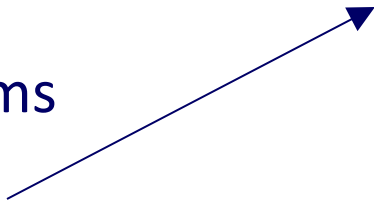
29th Annual Conference
on the First Year
Experience

Denver, CO

- ❑ First-Year Seminars and Experiences
- ❑ Common Intellectual Experiences
- ❑ **Learning Communities** → Living-Learning Programs
- ❑ Writing-Intensive Courses
- ❑ Collaborative Assignments and Projects
- ❑ Undergraduate Research
- ❑ Diversity/Global Learning
- ❑ Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- ❑ Internships
- ❑ Capstone Courses and Projects

What are living-learning programs? (And, what's so great about them?)

Learning communities:

- ❑ Paired or clustered courses
 - ❑ Cohorts in large courses, or FIGs
 - ❑ Team-taught programs
 - ❑ Residence-based
- 
- ❑ Residence-based learning communities:
 - Residential Colleges
 - Living-Learning Centers
 - Residential Learning Communities
 - First Year Experience Programs
 - Theme Housing

□ From the NSLLP:

- ✓ Program involves undergraduate students who live together in a discrete portion of a residence hall (or the entire hall)
- ✓ Program has staff and resources dedicated for that program only, and not for the entire residence hall
- ✓ Participants in the program partake in special academic and/or extra-curricular programming designed especially for them

Living-Learning Programs as the “Miracle Cure”

- ❑ Living-learning programs created to fill tall order of improving undergraduate education

- ❑ The “ultimate learning experience”
 - ✓ Can help students make a successful transition to college
 - ✓ Can improve student learning and development
 - ✓ Can facilitate better academic achievement and retention

- ❑ And, they’re a high-impact practice!



National Study of Living-Learning Programs

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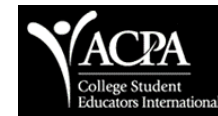
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National Study of Living-Learning Programs

Sources of funding

- The National Science Foundation
- ACUHO-I
- NASPA
- ACPA



National Study of Living-Learning Programs

A short history

2003

Pilot Study

- Four campuses
- 5,437 students
- Tested reliability & validity of survey instrument and data collection methods



The 2004 NSLLP

- 34 institutions
- 23,910 students
- 297 L/L programs
- T₁ data collection



The 2007 NSLLP

- 46 institutions
- T₂ follow-up (n=1,509)
- New baseline (n=22,258)
- 617 L/L programs

National Study of Living-Learning Programs

Four sources of data

- Baseline survey completed by L/L and TRH students
 - 2004: 34 institutions
 - 2007: 46 institutions
- 2007: Longitudinal follow-up study of the original 2004 schools
 - 16 follow-up participants
- Living-learning programs survey
 - One survey for each L/L program on the respective campus
 - Respondents are L/L staff or Residence Life staff with oversight of L/Ls
- Four campus site visits identified through survey data
 - Site visits occurred in Spring 2008
 - Schools included: Clemson University, Florida State University, Miami University of Ohio, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

National Study of Living-Learning Programs Question types on student surveys

(Based on Astin I-E-O framework)

Inputs	Environments	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographics • High school achievement • Pre-college assessment of importance of college involvement and perceptions of self-confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic major • Peer interactions • Faculty interactions • Co-curricular involvement • Study group interactions • Alcohol-related experiences • Use of residence hall resources • Perceptions of residence hall climate • Diverse interactions • Time spent on leisure activities • STEM related questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic and social transition to college • Perceptions of intellectual abilities and growth • Perceptions of self-confidence • Appreciation of diversity • Sense of civic engagement • Alcohol use and behaviors • Persistence/drop-out risk • College GPA self-reports • Overall satisfaction and sense of belonging

National Study of Living-Learning Programs Questions on the L/L Program Survey

- ❑ General information (e.g., size, goals & objectives)
- ❑ Reporting structure
- ❑ Budget/fiscal resources
- ❑ Academic coursework
- ❑ Faculty and staff roles
- ❑ Activities and resources
- ❑ Additional STEM-related questions

Themes of programs*

- ❑ Civic & Social Leadership (4 types)
- ❑ Disciplinary (12 types)
- ❑ Fine & Creative Arts (2 types)
- ❑ General Academic
- ❑ Honors
- ❑ Cultural (3 types)
- ❑ Leisure (2 types)
- ❑ Political Interest
- ❑ Residential College
- ❑ Research
- ❑ ROTC
- ❑ Transition (2 types)
- ❑ Umbrella
- ❑ Upper Division
- ❑ Wellness/Health
- ❑ Women's (2 types)

* *Based on content analysis of 2007 NSLLP data*

Size

- ✓ Median size of program.....52
- ✓ Modal size of program.....50
- ✓ Largest programs have over 1,000 students ($n=11$)

Cost

- ✓ Average cost of program \$21K
- ✓ Mean cost of program \$5K
- ✓ 10% of programs had no budget
- ✓ 25% had budgets under \$1K

Configuration

- ✓ Programs housed within one discrete portion of residence hall..... 71%
- ✓ Encompass entire residence hall..... 18%
- ✓ Rest were unique arrangements

Basic characteristics of programs

Oversight

- ✓ Residence Life/Housing only 47%
- ✓ Academic Dept/Affairs unit only..... 15%
- ✓ Combination Student Affairs/Academic Affairs..... 31%
- ✓ Rest are other arrangements

Professional affiliation of director

- ✓ Residence Life..... 43%
- ✓ Academic Department..... 21%
- ✓ Combination..... 13%
- ✓ Multi-person board..... 8%
- ✓ Rest are other

Goals of L/L programs most often listed as “very important”

- ❑ Experiencing a smooth academic transition to college (55%)
- ❑ Feeling a sense of belonging to the institution (54%)
- ❑ Demonstrating openness to views different than one’s own (52%)
- ❑ Learning about others different than one’s self (50%)
- ❑ Experiencing a smooth social transition to college (50%)

- 52% of L/L programs in NSLLP did not include any form of academic coursework
 - 28% provided only one course
 - 14% offered two courses
 - Outlier: 1 program offered more than 20 courses

- Of forms of coursework integrated into program, most popular were:
 - Specially designed courses for L/L program (11%)
 - Credit-bearing courses co-listed by an academic department (9%)

- 23% had no faculty involvement at all
- 64% included 1-3 faculty members
- Most common forms of faculty involvement were:
 - Teaching
 - Conducting workshops
 - Mentorship
 - Attendance at social events
 - Serving on advisory boards
 - Academic advising

- 85% utilized student affairs staff in some way

- Most common forms of staff involvement were:
 - Administrative tasks
 - Living in community
 - Attending social events
 - Mentorship
 - Conducting workshops
 - Supervising RAs

Co-curricular activities offered

REQUIRED:

- ❑ Orientation 23%
- ❑ Group projects 14%
- ❑ Team building activities 12%
- ❑ Academic advising 12%
- ❑ Service learning 11%

OPTIONAL:

- ❑ Cultural outings 79%
- ❑ Multicultural programs 77%
- ❑ Study groups 75%
- ❑ Career workshops 71%
- ❑ Community service 70%

NSLLP scales related to AAC&U essential learning outcomes

NSLLP

- ❑ Critical thinking/analysis abilities
- ❑ Application of knowledge abilities
- ❑ Growth in cognitive complexity
- ❑ Growth in liberal learning
- ❑ Growth in personal philosophy
- ❑ Diversity appreciation
- ❑ Sense of civic engagement

AAC&U ELOs

- ❑ Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World
- ❑ Intellectual and Practical Skills
- ❑ Personal and Social Responsibility
- ❑ Integrative Learning

Living-learning participation and student learning outcomes

Outcome	TRH	LLP	Effect size
Critical thinking/analysis abilities		↑	Very low
Application of knowledge abilities		↑	Very low
Growth in cognitive complexity			N/S
Growth in liberal learning	↑		Very low
Growth in personal philosophy	↑		Very low
Diversity appreciation			N/S
Sense of civic engagement		↑	Very low

Living-learning participation and other outcomes

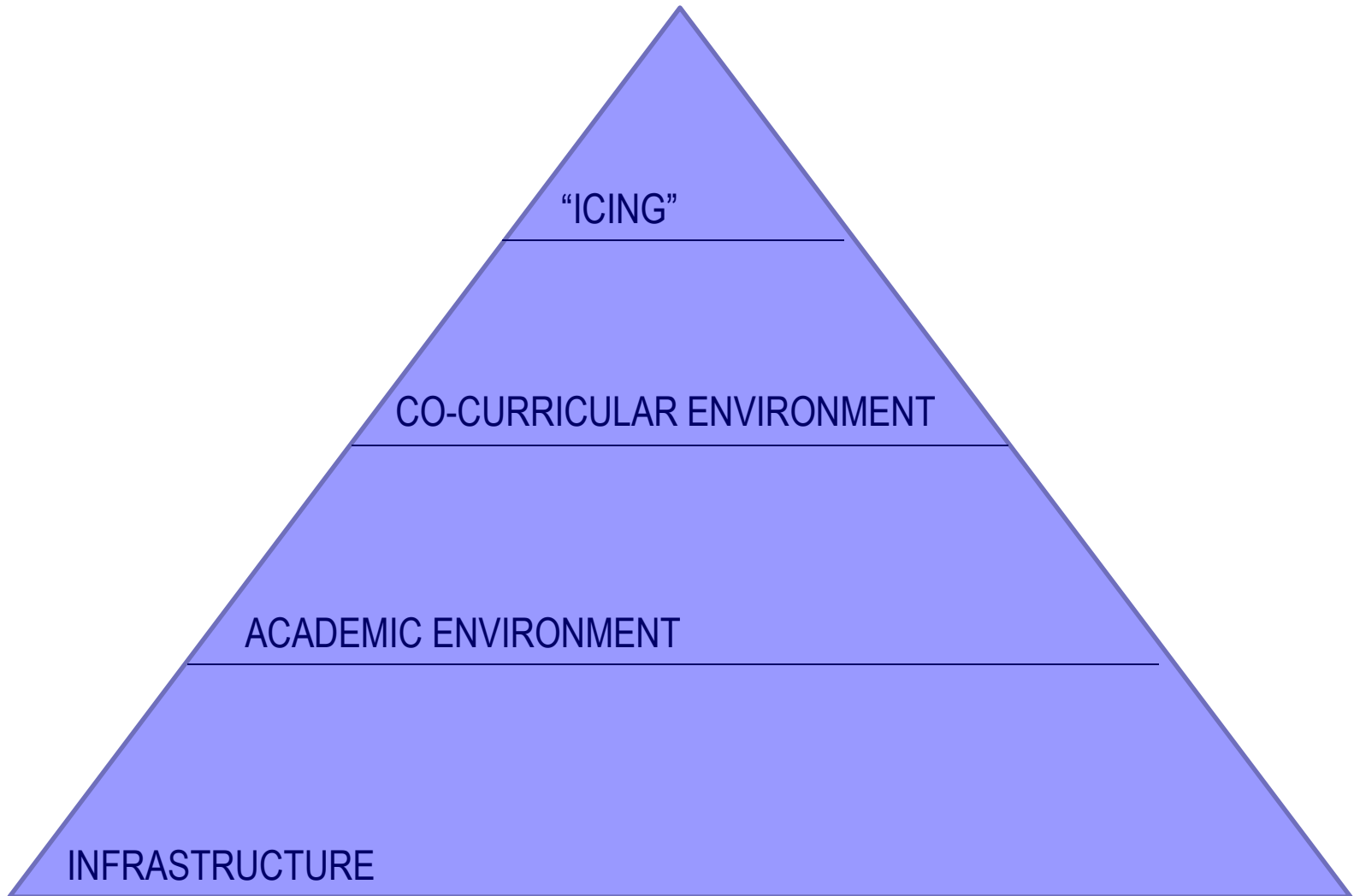
Outcome	TRH	LLP	Effect size
Smooth academic transition		↑	Low-Mod
Smooth social transition		↑	Low-Mod
Sense of belonging		↑	Low-Mod

LLP components related to student outcomes*

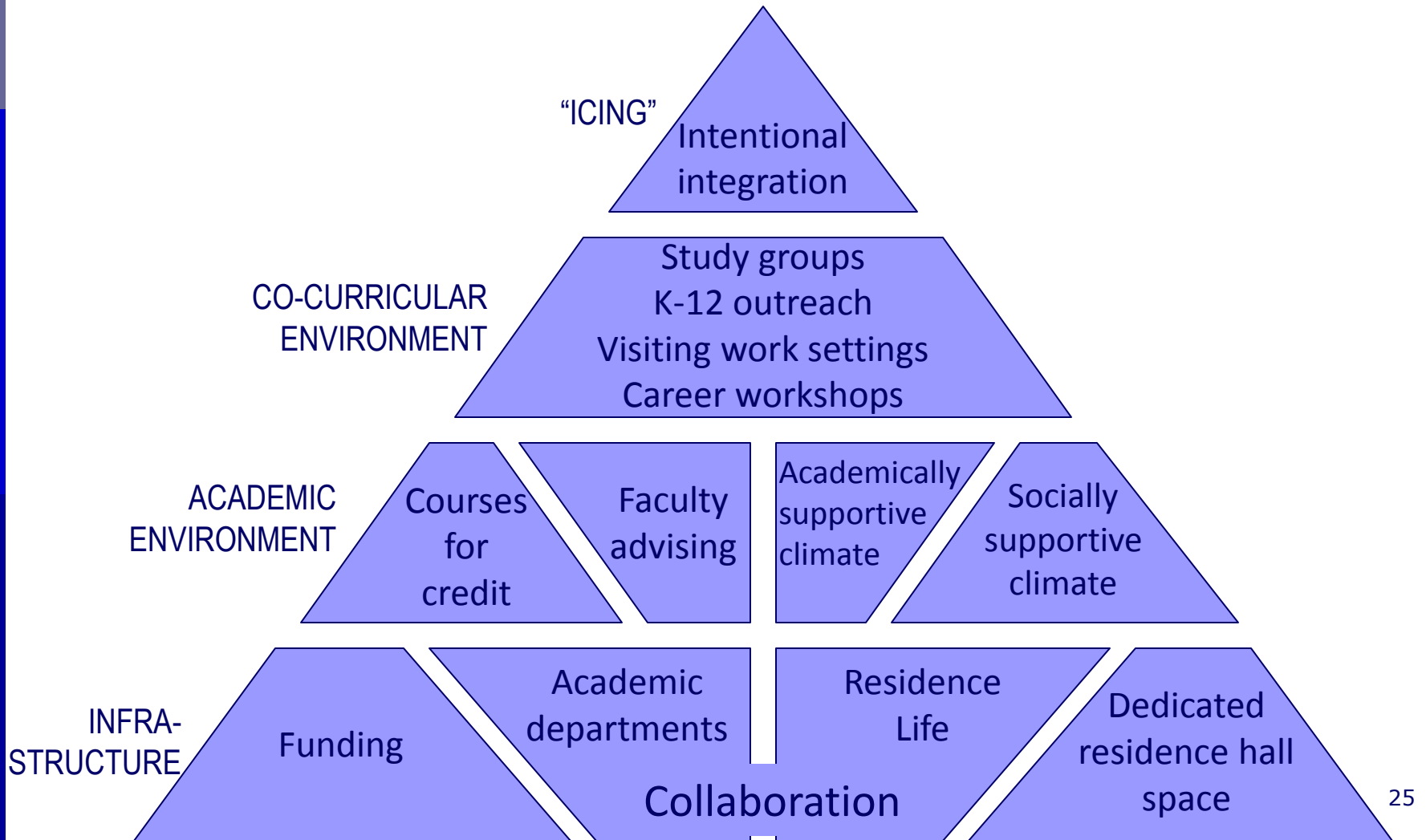
Academic components	Social components	Co-curricular components
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Course-related interaction with faculty members ❑ Studied with peers ❑ Residence hall climate supportive of academics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Academically-related discussions with peers ❑ Socio-culturally-related discussions with peers ❑ Residence hall climate supportive of cultural differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Career workshops (-) ❑ Internships ❑ Visiting work settings related to field ❑ Outreach to local K-12 schools

* Outcomes include critical thinking, application of knowledge, civic engagement, academic transition, social transition, sense of belonging. Analysis controls for: race/ethnicity, gender, SES, high school GPA, SAT score, pre-test of dependent variable

A LLP “hierarchy of needs”



“Hierarchy of needs” LLP best practices building blocks



Take-away message

- ❑ Living-learning programs have limited effectiveness in facilitating essential learning outcomes
- ❑ However, they have better success with outcomes associated with making the transition to college
 - *Note: Vast majority of LLPs cater to first-year students*
- ❑ LLP best practices incorporate:
 - Infrastructure, including an Academic/Student Affairs partnership
 - Academic components (courses, faculty advising, supportive climate)
 - Co-curricular components (study groups, K-12 outreach, visiting work settings, career workshops)
 - Intentional integration of all of the above
- ❑ However, many (if not most) LLPs are missing one or more of the above components

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