



Promoting Student Success in the First Year of College

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**29th Annual Conference on
The First Year Experience
Denver CO
February 13, 2010**



INDIANA UNIVERSITY
Center for Postsecondary Research

Context

- **Global Competitiveness in Degree Attainment**
- **The New Majority and Demographic Gaps**
- **Questionable Levels of Student Performance**





***“That’s nice. What else
have we learned at school?”***



**“It’s the Learning,
Stupid”**



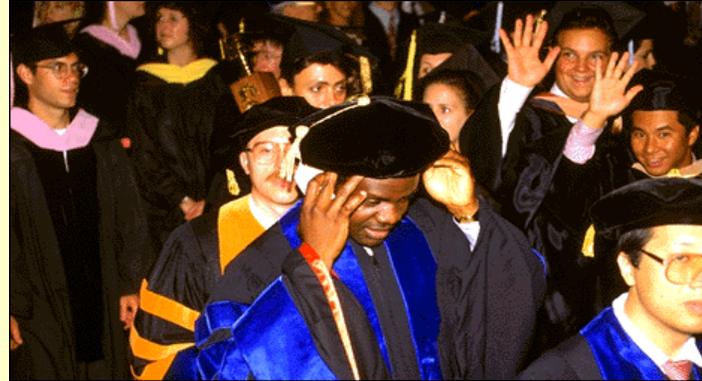
Context

- **Global Competitiveness in Degree Attainment**
- **The New Majority and Demographic Gaps**
- **Questionable Levels of Student Performance**
- **In a Most Challenging Fiscal Environment ...**
- ➔ ***We Need Higher Levels of Student Attainment at an Affordable Cost***

What If...

- ❖ **If we imagined what our work would be like using what we know about how students learn...?**
- ❖ **And if we created optimum learning conditions for all students...?**
- ❖ **Then, how would we re-design our first-year programs and practices?**
- ❖ **What kinds of teaching and assessment approaches would we use?**

Overview



- **What the world needs now**
- **Why engagement in the first year matters**
- **High-impact practices**
- **A five step agenda**

LEAP



Narrow Learning is Not Enough: The Essential Learning Outcomes



- ★ ***Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical & Natural World***
- ★ ***Intellectual and Practical Skills***
- ★ ***Personal and Social Responsibility***
- ★ ***“Deep” Integrative Learning***



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Deep, Integrative Learning

- **Attend to the underlying meaning of information as well as content**
- **Integrate and synthesize different ideas, sources of information**
- **Discern patterns in evidence or phenomena**
- **Apply knowledge in different situations**
- **View issues from multiple perspectives**

Raising The Bar

Employers' Views On College Learning In The Wake Of The Economic Downturn

Key findings from survey among 302 employers
Conducted October 27 – November 17, 2009
for



Association of American Colleges and Universities

Employer expectations of employees have increased

% who agree with each statement

Our company is asking employees to **take on more responsibilities** and to **use a broader set of skills** than in the past



Employees are expected to **work harder to coordinate with other departments** than in the past



The **challenges** employees face within our company are **more complex today** than they were in the past

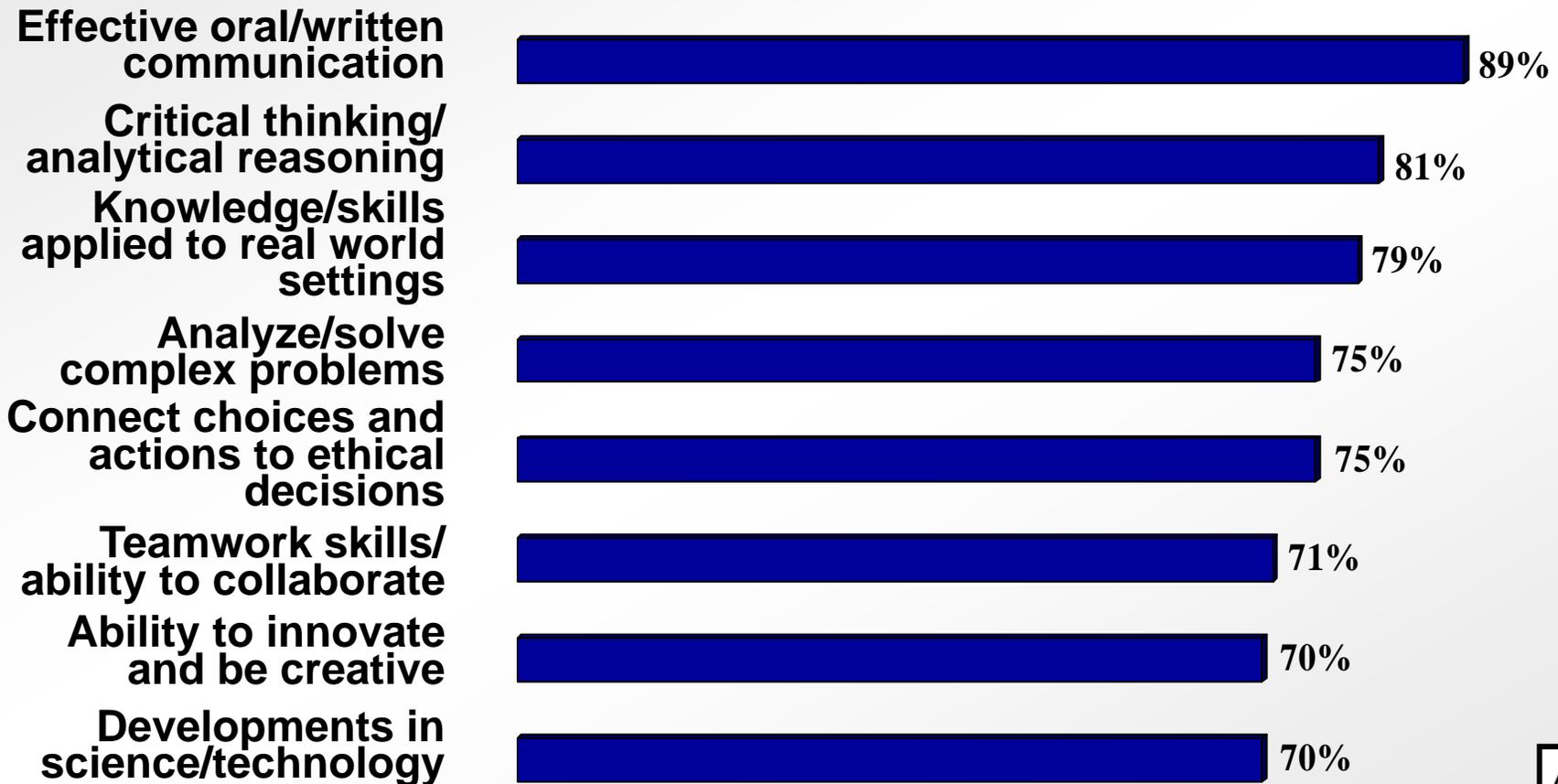


To succeed in our company, employees need **higher levels of learning and knowledge** today than they did in the past



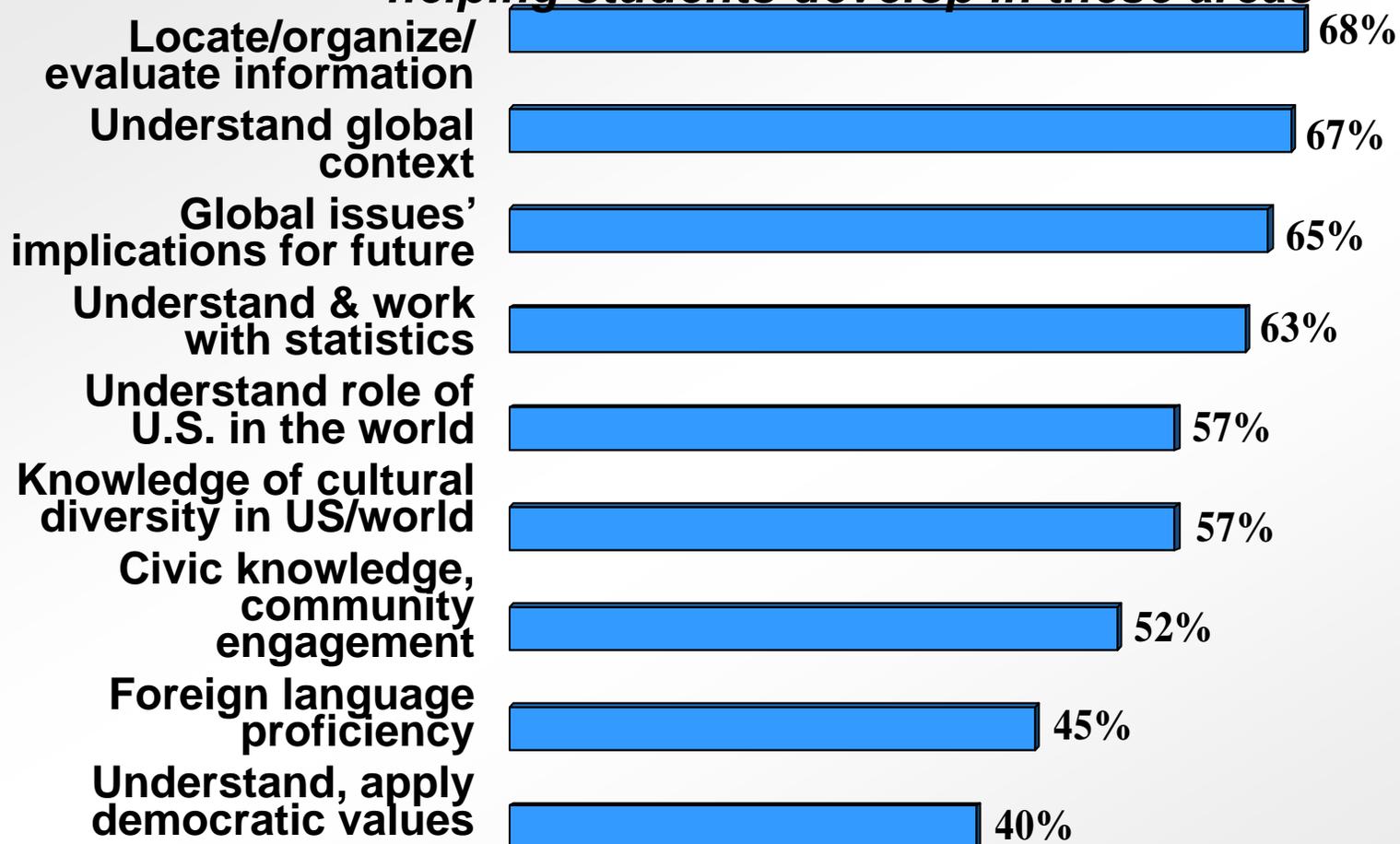
Employers' Top Priorities for Student Learning In College

% saying two- and four-year colleges should place MORE emphasis on helping students develop these skills, qualities, capabilities, knowledge



Other Areas Of Learning Needing More Emphasis

% saying two- and four-year colleges should emphasize MORE helping students develop in these areas

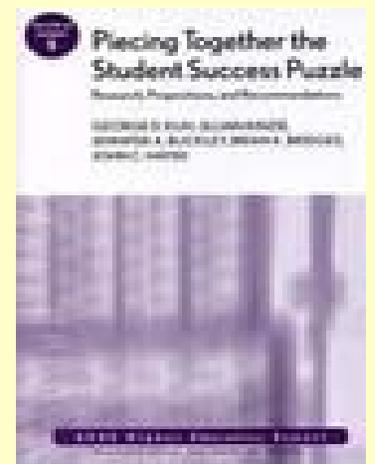


What Matters to Student Success

Kuh, G.D., Kinzie, J., Buckley, J.A., Bridges, B.K., & Hayek, J.C. (2007). *Piecing together the student success puzzle: Research, propositions, and recommendations*. ASHE Higher Education Report, 32(5). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Commissioned papers at:

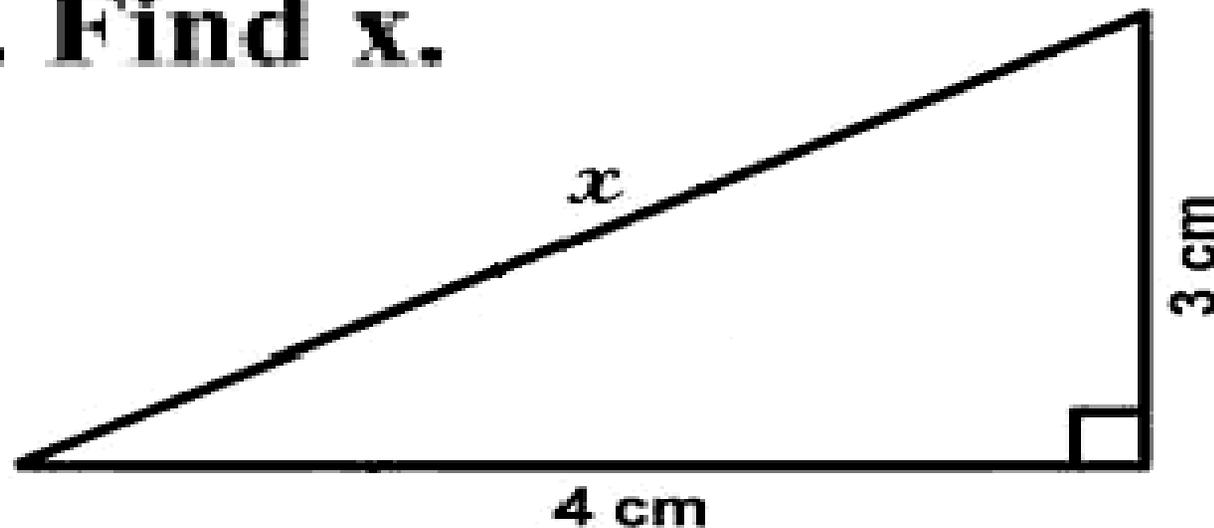
<http://nces.ed.gov/npec/papers.asp>



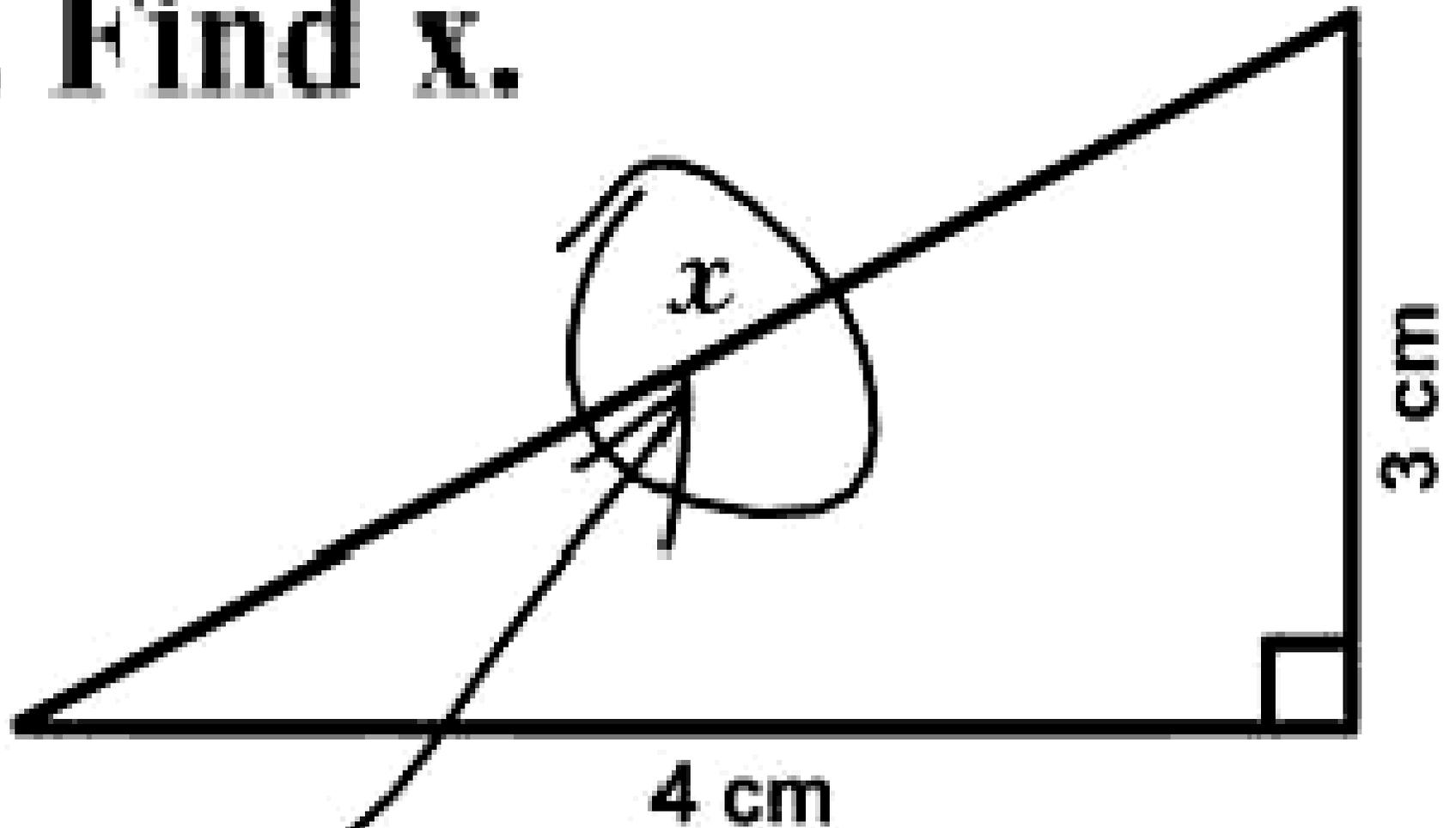
Pre-college Characteristics Associated with Student Success

✓ Academic preparation

3. Find x .



3. Find x .



Here it is

Pre-college Characteristics Associated with Student Success

- ✓ Academic preparation
- ✓ Ability and college-level skills
- ✓ Financial wherewithal
- ✓ Family education and support

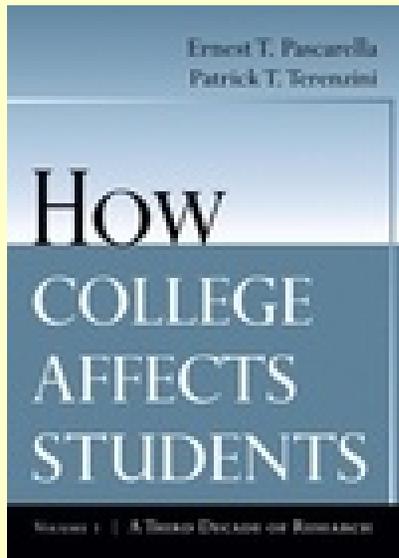


Early College Indicators of Persistence and Success

- ✓ **Psycho-social fit**
- ✓ **Goal realization**
- ✓ **Credit hours completed**
- ✓ **Academic and social support**
- ✓ **Involvement in the “right” kinds of activities**



What *Really* Matters in College: **Student Engagement**



Because individual effort and involvement are the critical determinants of college impact, institutions should focus on the ways they can shape their academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular offerings to encourage **student engagement**.

Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005, p. 602

Foundations of Student Engagement

Time on task (Tyler, 1930s)

Quality of effort (Pace, 1960-70s)

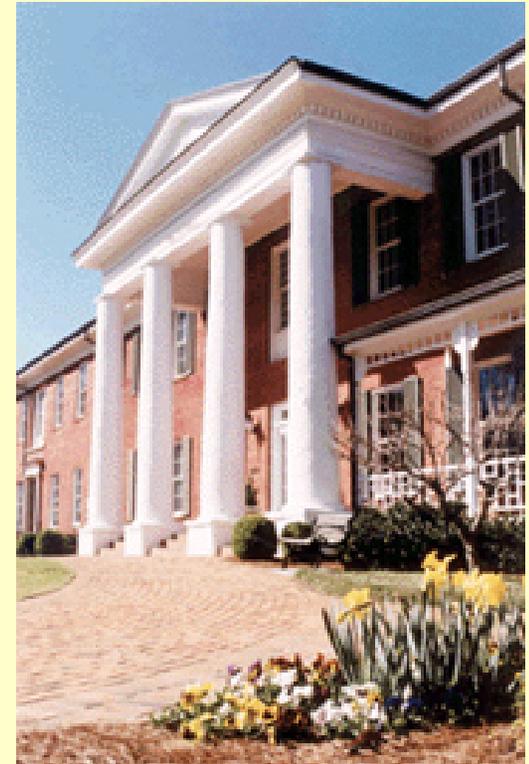
Student involvement (Astin, 1984)

Social, academic integration (Tinto, 1987, 1993)

Good practices in undergraduate education (Chickering & Gamson, 1987)

College impact (Pascarella, 1985)

Student engagement (Kuh, 1991, 2005, 2007)



Student Engagement Trifecta

- What students **do** -- time and energy devoted to educationally purposeful activities
- What institutions **do** -- using effective educational practices to induce students to do the right things
- Educationally effective institutions channel student energy toward ***the right activities***

Good Practices in Undergraduate Education

**(Chickering & Gamson, 1987;
Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005)**

- ✓ **Student-faculty contact**
- ✓ **Active learning**
- ✓ **Prompt feedback**
- ✓ **Time on task**
- ✓ **High expectations**
- ✓ **Respect for diverse learning styles**
- ✓ **Cooperation among students**



***National Survey of
Student Engagement
(pronounced “nessie”)***

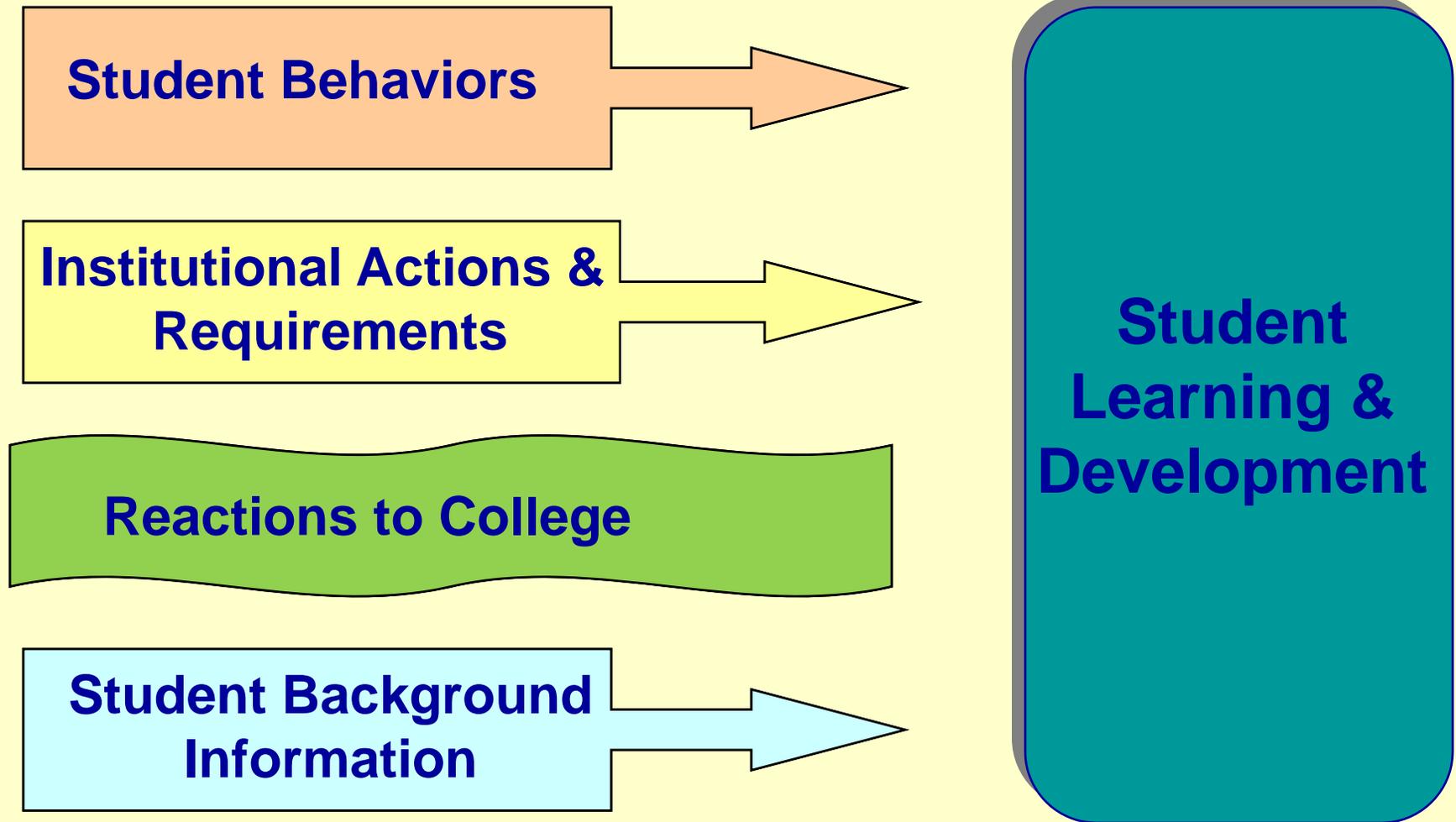


***Community College
Survey of Student
Engagement
(pronounced “cessie”)***



College student surveys that assess the extent to which students engage in educational practices associated with high levels of learning and development

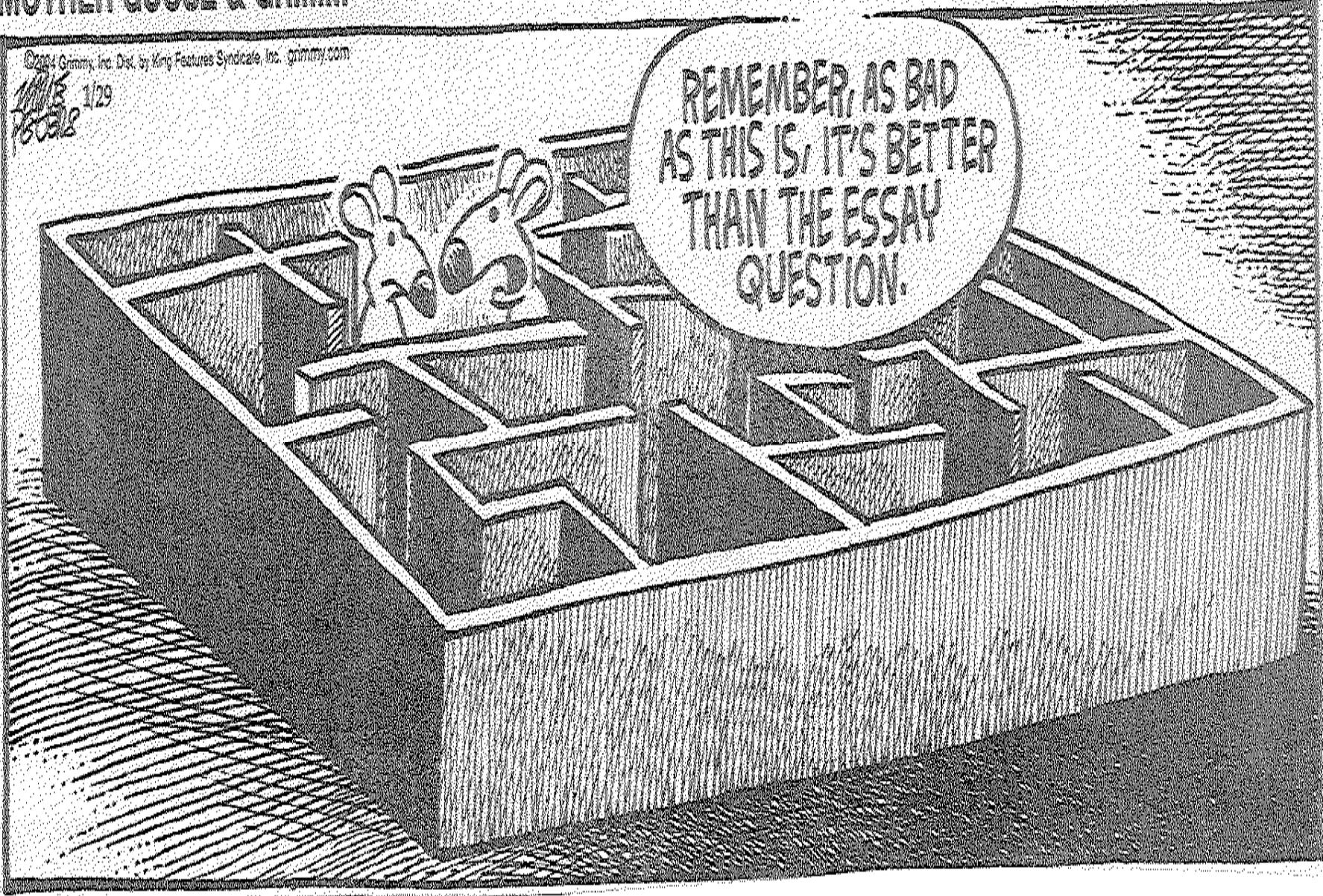
NSSE & CCSSE Questionnaires



MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

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REMEMBER, AS BAD
AS THIS IS, IT'S BETTER
THAN THE ESSAY
QUESTION.

Grades, persistence, student satisfaction, gains across a range of desired outcomes, and engagement go hand in hand



Both the NSSE benchmark and deep learning scales are...significantly and positively linked to ... effective reasoning and problem solving, well being, inclination to inquire and lifelong learning, intercultural effectiveness, leadership, and moral character... These associations persisted even after introducing controls for important confounding influences.

Pascarella et al., 2009 reporting on the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education (WNSLAE)

It's more complicated than this...

- ***Many of the effects of college are “conditional”***
- ***Some are compensatory***
- ***Some have unusually positive effects***



Who's (on average) more engaged?

- **Women**
- **Full-time students**
- **Students who live on campus**
- **Students with diversity experiences**
- **Students who start and stay at same school**

CCSSE: Who Is More Engaged?

More Engaged

Less Engaged

Full-time students

Part-time students

Nontraditional-age students (those over age 24)

Traditional-age students (those 24 and younger)

Students seeking credentials

Students not seeking credentials

Students who have completed 30 or more credits

Students who have not completed 30 or more credits

Female students

Male students

Black students

Students who are not black

International students

U.S. students

Students who work fewer than 30 hours per week

Students who work more than 30 hours per week

Students who have taken developmental courses

Students who have not taken developmental courses

Students who have taken study skill courses

Students who have not taken study skill courses

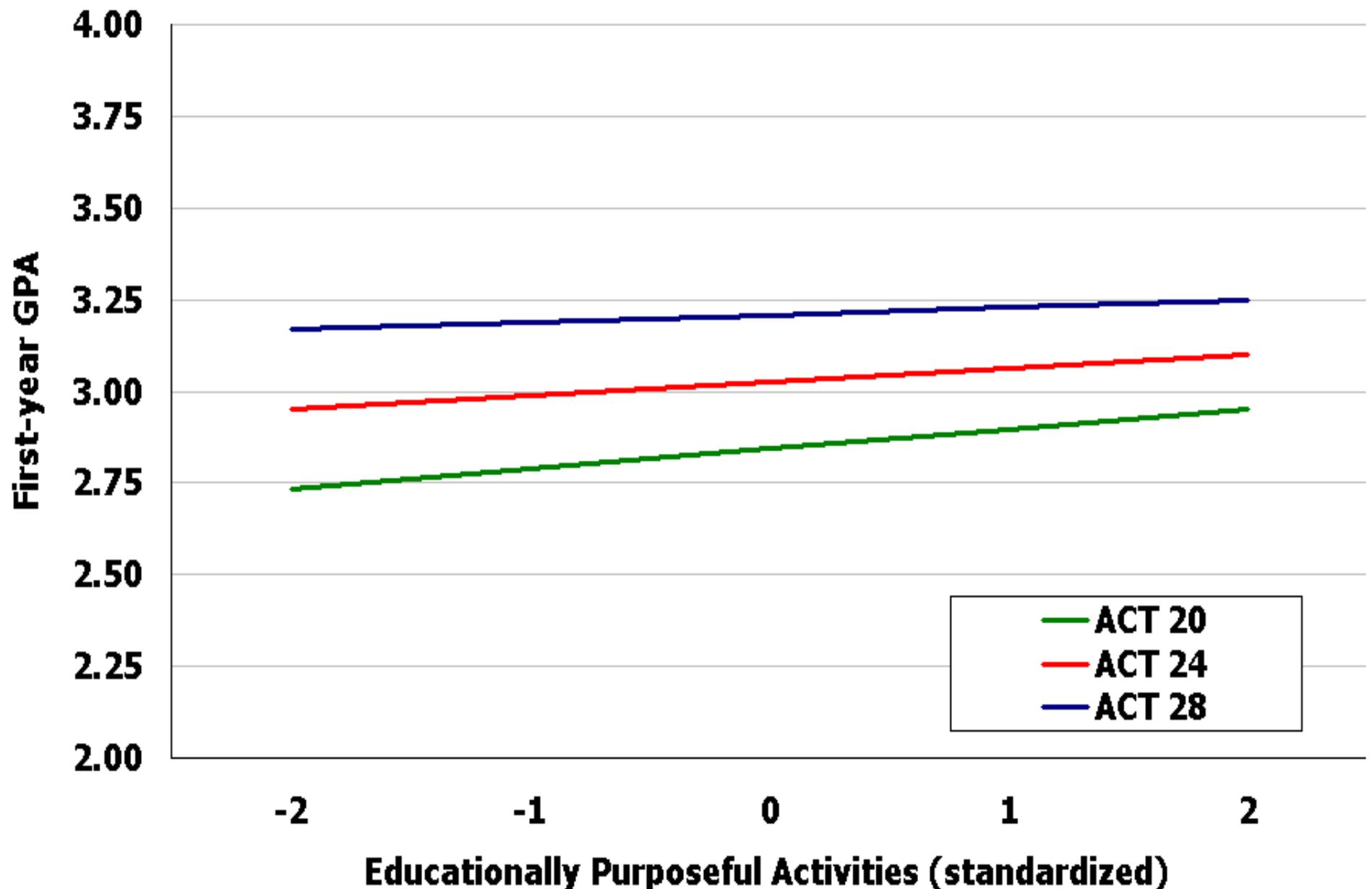
Students who have participated in orientation

Students who have not participated in orientation

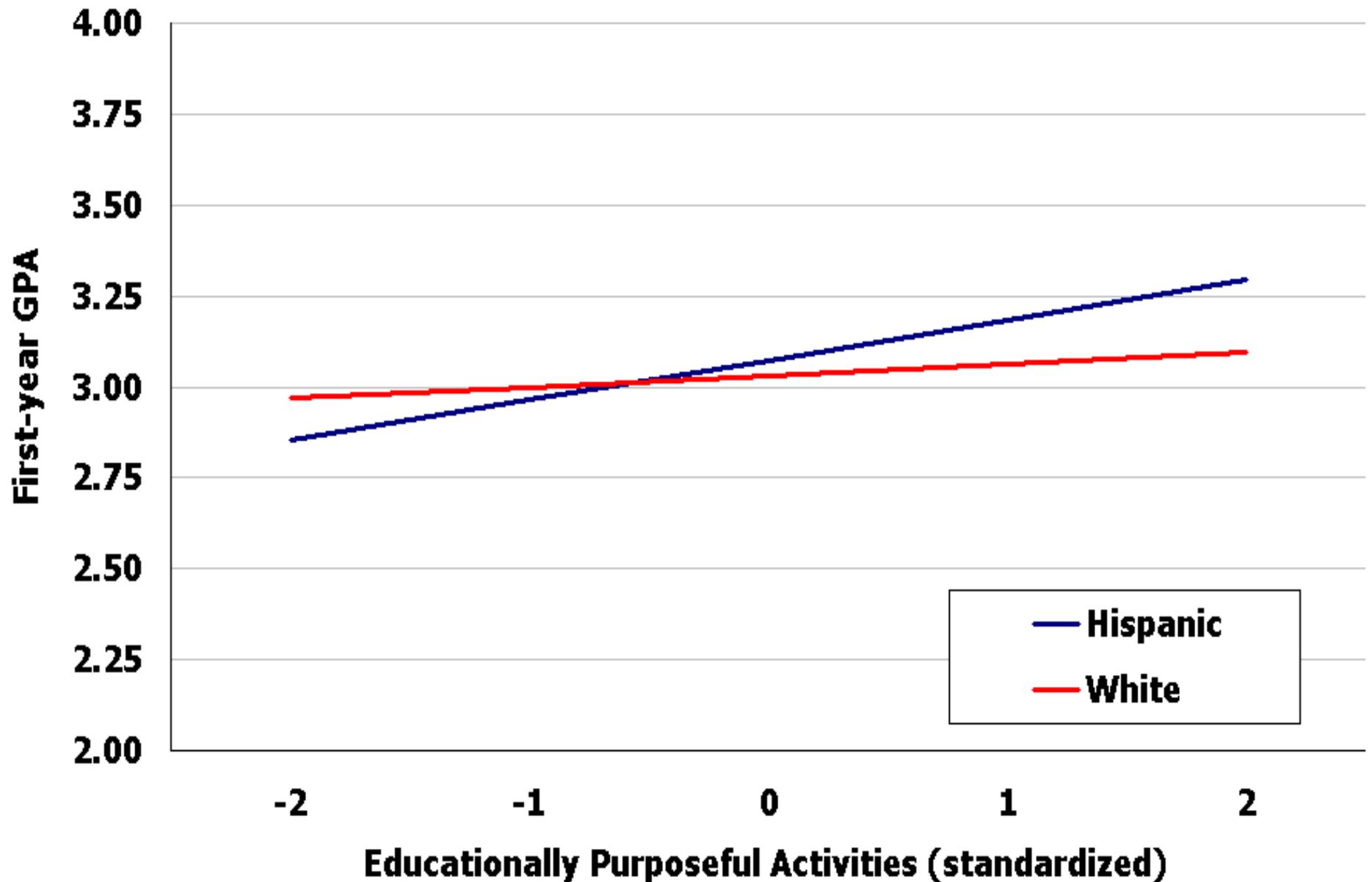
Students who have participated in learning communities

Students who have not participated in learning communities

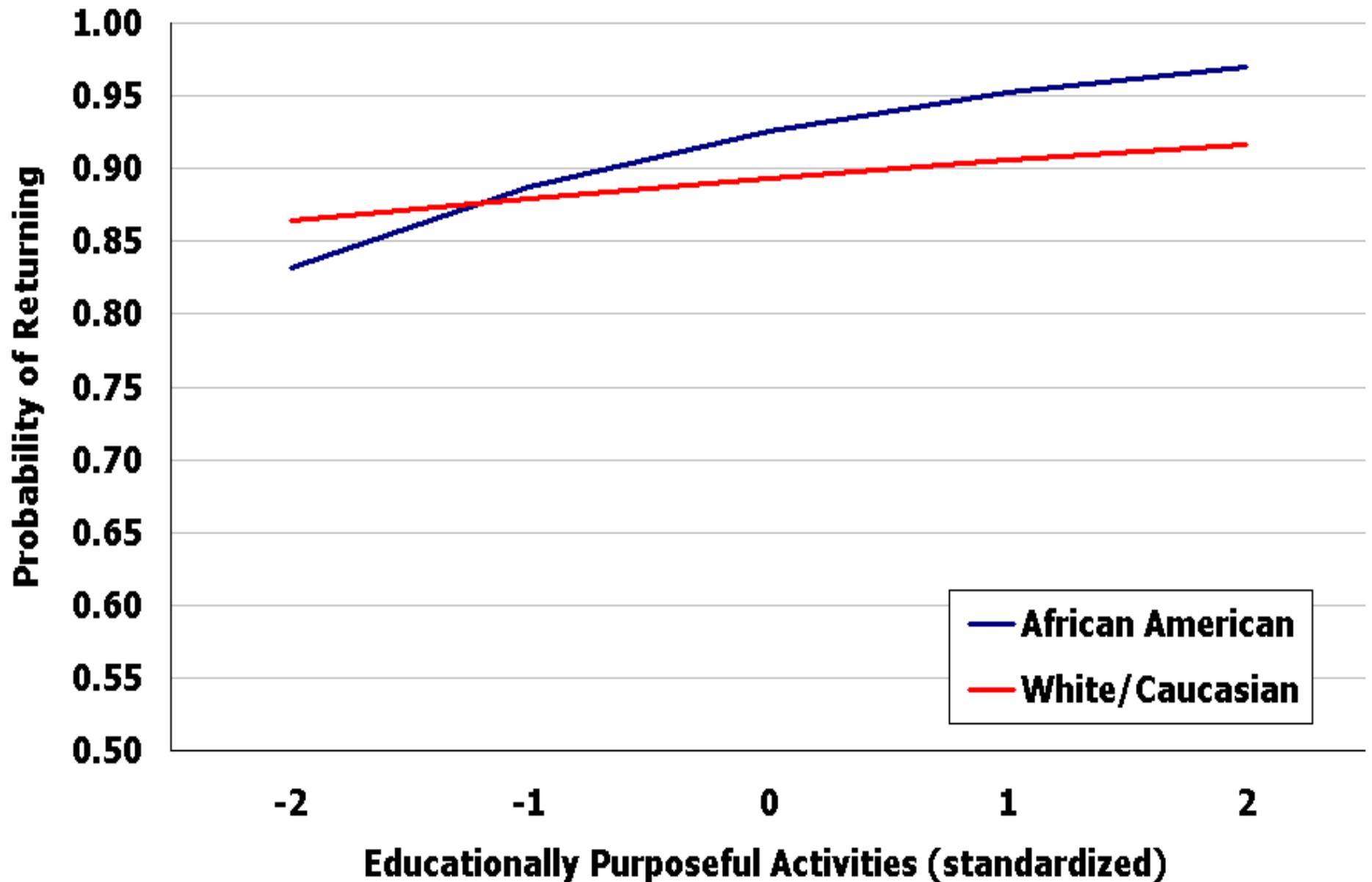
Impact of Educationally Purposeful Activities on First Academic Year GPA by Pre-College Achievement Level



Impact of Educationally Purposeful Activities on First Academic Year GPA by Race/Ethnicity



Impact of Educationally Purposeful Activities on the Probability of Returning for the Second Year of College by Race



Who's more engaged?

- Women
- Full-time students
- Students who live on campus
- Students with diversity experiences
- Students who start and stay at same school
- Students who have done “*high-impact*” practices

LEAP



LEAP



High-Impact Educational Practices



WHAT THEY ARE,
WHO HAS ACCESS TO THEM,
AND WHY THEY MATTER

BY GEORGE D. KUH

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY CAROL GEARY SCHNEIDER
AND FINDINGS ON STUDENT SUCCESS FROM AAC&U'S
LEAP INITIATIVE



www.aacu.org

LEAP



High-Impact Activities



- ★ **First-Year Seminars and Experiences**
- ★ **Common Intellectual Experiences**
- ★ **Learning Communities**
- ★ **Writing-Intensive Courses**
- ★ **Collaborative Assignments and Projects**
- ★ **“Science as Science Is Done”;
Undergraduate Research**
- ★ **Diversity/Global Learning**
- ★ **Service Learning, Community-Based
Learning**
- ★ **Internships**
- ★ **Capstone Courses and Projects**



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Essential Learning Outcome:

NSSE Deep/Integrative Learning

- ◆ Integrating ideas or information from various sources
- ◆ Included diverse perspectives in class discussions/writing
- ◆ Put together ideas from different courses
- ◆ Discussed ideas with faculty members outside of class
- ◆ Discussed ideas with others outside of class
- ◆ Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory
- ◆ Synthesizing & organizing ideas, info., or experiences
- ◆ Making judgments about the value of information
- ◆ Applying theories to practical problems or in new situations
- ◆ Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views
- ◆ Tried to better understand someone else's views
- ◆ Learned something that changed how you understand an issue

Effects of Participating in High-Impact Activities on Deep/Integrative Learning and Gains

	Deep Learning	Gains General	Gains Personal	Gains Practical
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First-Year

Learning Communities	+++	++	++	++
Service Learning	+++	++	+++	++

Senior

Study Abroad	++	+	++	
Student-Faculty Research	+++	++	++	++
Internship	++	++	++	++
Service Learning	+++	++	+++	++
Culminating Experience	++	++	++	++

+ p < .001, ++ p < .001 & Unstd B > .10, +++ p < .001 & Unstd B > .30

Effects of Participating in High-Impact Activities on Student Engagement

	Level of Academic Challenge	Active and Collab. Learning	Student-Faculty Interaction	Supportive Campus Env.
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First-Year

Learning Communities	++	+++	+++	++
Service Learning	++	+++	+++	++

Senior

Study Abroad	++	++	++	+
Student-Faculty Research	+++	+++	+++	++
Internship	++	+++	+++	++
Service Learning	++	+++	+++	++
Culminating Experience	++	++	+++	++

+ p < .001, ++ p < .001 & Unstd B > .10, +++ p < .001 & Unstd B > .30

High-Impact Activities **Increase Odds Students Will:**

- ✓ ***Invest time and effort***
- ✓ ***Interact with faculty and peers about substantive matters***
- ✓ ***Experience diversity***
- ✓ ***Get more frequent feedback***
- ✓ ***Reflect & integrate learning***
- ✓ ***Discover relevance of learning through real-world applications***



AMERICAN
AVIATION
←

←
LEARN TO
FLY HERE!
←

High-Impact Practices and the Disparities Within...

Frosh: Service Learning and LCs

- ✓ *Parity among racial/ethnic groups*
- ✓ *Fewer 1st gen students*
- ✓ *Fewer part-time students*
- ✓ *Fewer transfer students*
- ✓ *Fewer older students*

Assessing Student Engagement in High-Impact Practices

*To what extent does your institution provide these experiences?
[√ = have on campus; ✓ = required; estimate the % of various student populations in these activities]*

	Learning Community	First Year Seminars	Service Learning
<i>On Our Campus</i>			
Required for all			
% Students involved			
% First Generation			
% Transfer Students			
% African American			
% Latino Students			
% Asian American			
% other			
% Adult Students			



Ponder This

“If all you ever do is all you’ve ever done, then all you’ll ever get is all you ever got”

Texan quoted in T. Friedman, *Hot, Flat and Crowded* (2008, p. 6)



Five Step Agenda

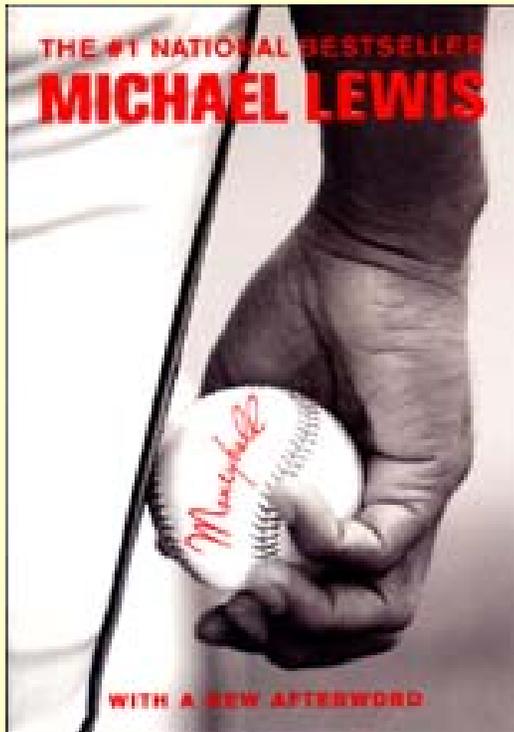
- 1. Make the classroom the locus of community building**
- 2. Use engaging pedagogies campuswide**



Engaging Pedagogies and Practices

- 1. *Classroom organization***
- 2. *Early and continuing assignments requiring reflection and integration coupled with feedback***
- 3. *Use of peer preceptors/mentors***
- 4. *One minute papers (variations)***
- 5. *Case studies***
- 6. *Debates***
- 7. *Simulations***
- 8. *Small group problem sets***
- 9. *Others...***

3. Put money where it will make a difference to student success



“...in professional baseball it still matters less how much you have than how well you spend it”

3. Put money where it will make a difference to student success

- a. It's not **how much** you spend but **where** (DEEP study, Delta Cost Project)***
- b. Sunset redundant and ineffective programs***
- c. Invest in “**high-impact**” and other activities that contribute to student success***
- d. If it works, maybe require it?***

Targets of Opportunity

- ✓ **Require advising and orientation**
- ✓ **Use valid placement tests**
- ✓ **Reduce D/W/F rates**
- ✓ **Deploy early warning systems**
- ✓ **Organize residences around educational themes**
- ✓ **Communicate with at-risk student family members**

4. Ensure programs are of high quality

What kind of evidence will signal effectiveness?

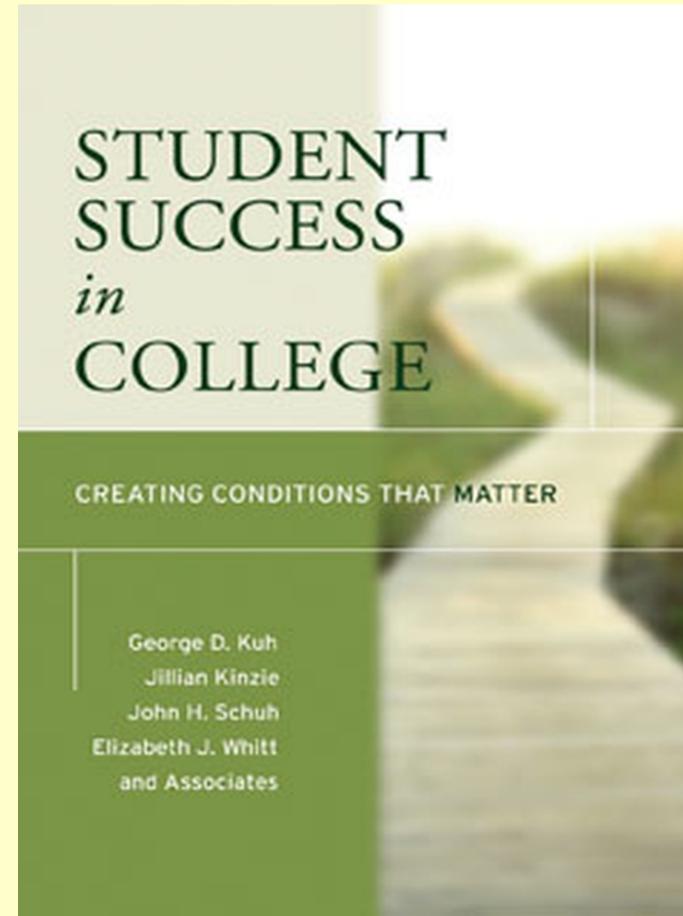


5. Cultivate a campus culture that fosters student success

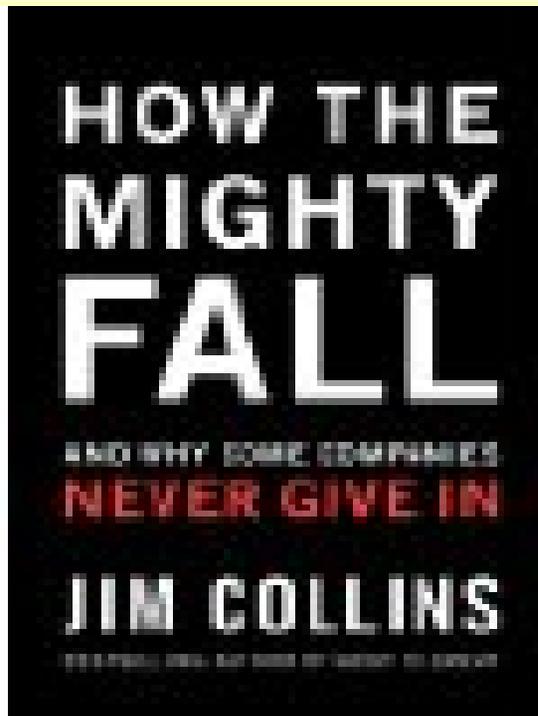
- ❖ **unshakeable focus on student learning** (*“teach the students we have, not the students we wish we had”*)
- ❖ **“get the right people on the bus”**
- ❖ **high performance expectations for all**
- ❖ **human-scale settings**
- ❖ **improvement-oriented ethic**
- ❖ **inclusive language and traditions**

Project DEEP

**To discover,
document, and
describe what high
performing
institutions do to
achieve their
notable level of
effectiveness.**



High performance is not guaranteed to last



*It's not complacency
but over-reaching
that better explains
how the once
invincible self-
destruct*

Five years later, DEEP schools followed one of two approaches

a. Advancing the student success agenda

- Pervasive***
- Targeted***

b. Drifting off course



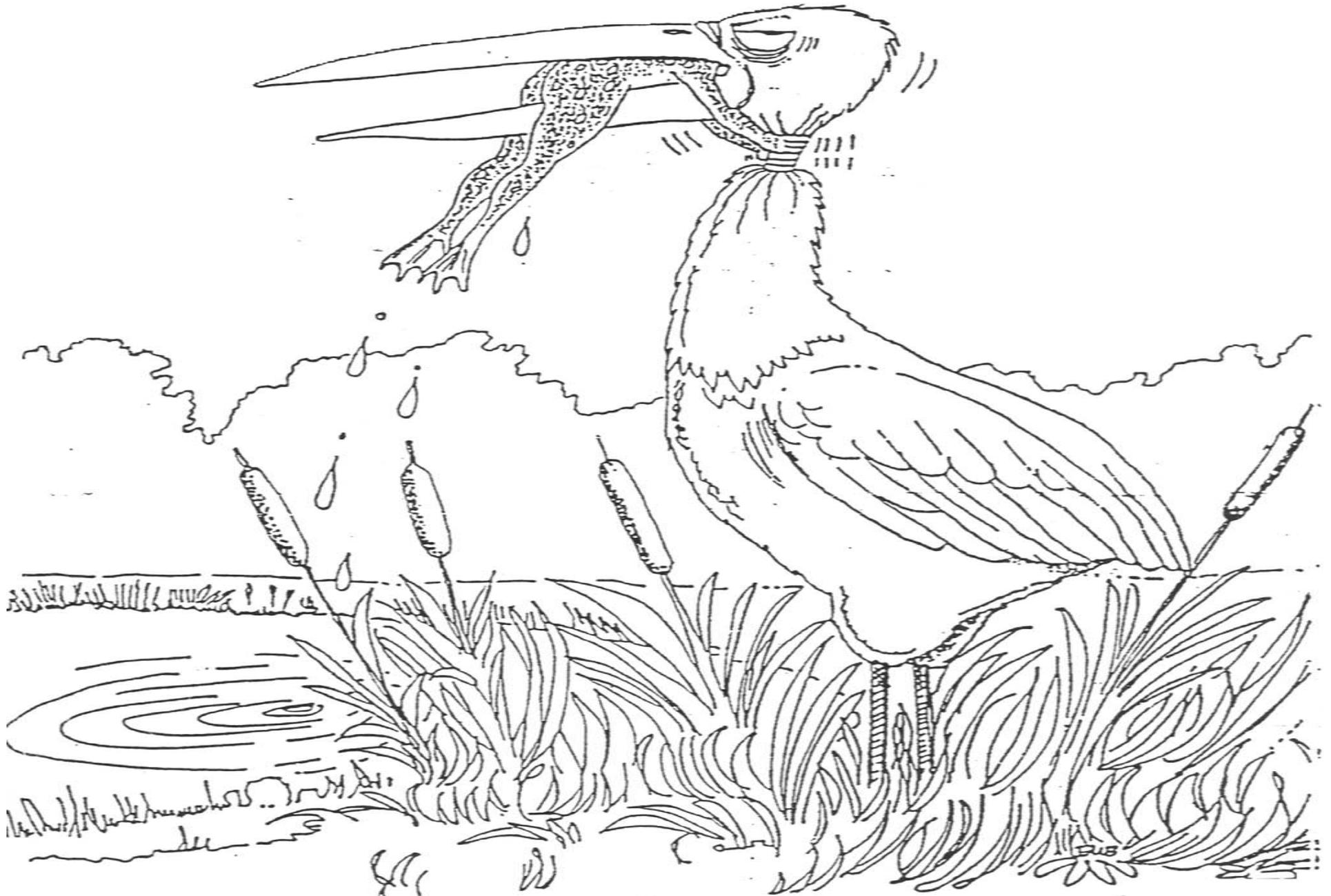
Keys to Sustaining the Student Success Agenda

- a. Student success becomes an institutional priority when everyone--especially campus leaders--make it so.***
- b. Measure and act on what matters to student success***
- c. Stay positively restless***



Questions & Discussion

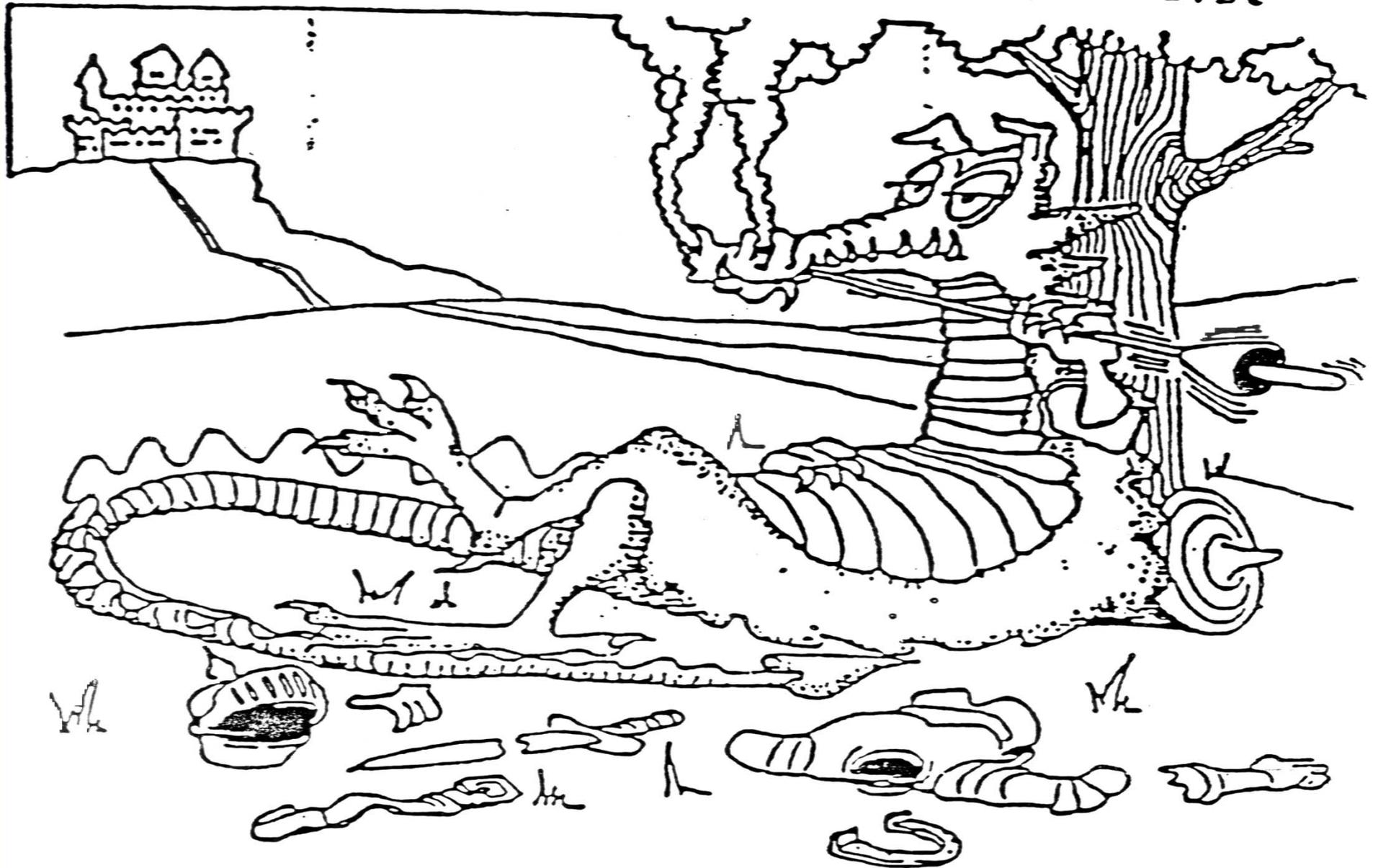




Don't EVER give up!

Remember

No Matter How Hard You Work
No Matter How Right You Are



Sometimes the Dragon Wins