

High-Impact Practices (HIPs) at The University of Scranton: Current Participation and Tracking Activities¹

Introduction

Research conducted by George Kuh (2008) through the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) identified a set of widely-tested teaching and learning strategies and programs that—when done well—have substantial educational benefits, especially for traditionally underserved students. Students who engage these “high impact practices,” or HIPs, tend to have increases in “deep approaches to learning, which encompass integrating ideas and diverse perspectives, discussing ideas with faculty and peers outside of class, analyzing and synthesizing ideas,” to name a few benefits (Brownell and Swaner, 2009). For greatest benefit, Gonyea, Kinzie, Kuh, and Laird (2008) recommend that all students in higher education participate in at least two high-impact practices, one in their first year and another in their academic major.

One of the key benefits of HIPs is that they bring students into direct connection with faculty, with one another, and with others into opportunities for deeper learning. HIPs take a variety forms and occur at various levels (course, program, or groups of interrelated courses and activities) and settings within any institution, including in traditional classrooms as well as special programs and co-curricular settings. HIPs include:

First-Year Seminars and Experiences	Undergraduate Research
Common Intellectual Experiences	Diversity/Global Learning
Learning Communities	Service/Community Based Learning
Writing Intensive Courses	Internships
Collaborative Assignments & Projects	Capstone Courses & Projects

The University of Scranton offers a number of high impact practices at the course, program, and college level, and through co-curricular and student life opportunities. This paper intends to describe the many HIP offerings in place at the University and current student participation in them, drawing from current datasets and resources. A HIPs completions dashboard, reflecting the HIPs outcomes for graduating students, is also included.

In addition to participation and outcome data, the report also offers some next steps for tracking and reporting these important activities. Such reporting of student and faculty participation in them will help us to understand and communicate the programming we provide

¹ Prepared by the Offices of Planning & Institutional Effectiveness, Institutional Research, and Educational Assessment. Orig. October 2017. Updated January 2018. Contact Kathryn.yerkes@scranton.edu for more information.

that contributes to student success and deep learning. The report is not advocating increases in HIPs offerings, but rather seeks to celebrate our current achievements and create a baseline of information for discussion and reporting.

In addition to the fundamental value they offer students, our planning and assessment strategies depend in several ways upon tracking HIP offerings:

- Planning and Institutional Assessment: The University's ***Engaged, Integrated, Global*** Strategic Plan guides us in setting appropriate goals for students' participation in several HIPs, understanding the quality and impact of those experiences and inviting students to reflect on their learning experiences. The planning and institutional effectiveness process tracks the progress of these initiatives through annual planning updates and the gathering of key metrics and data.
- Educational Assessment: The University's ***Comprehensive Plan for the Assessment of Student Learning*** describes the value of using certain high impact practices, like culminating experiences and capstone assignments, for program assessment. Many programs, in particular, those holding disciplinary accreditations, seek data and information related to HIPs for a variety of reporting.

To begin to address these needs, the Planning & Institutional Effectiveness Office has coordinated conversations across multiple units to identify the current state and some recommendations for tracking, evaluation, and reporting. These discussions have focused on three areas of examination:

1. What are the University's current HIP offerings? Where are they offered? How many students are participating?
2. For current offerings, how are offerings and participation tracked? Is this done in such a way as can be consistently reported each year?
3. For current offerings, where are data not available, or inconsistently tracked/reported?
4. Given our strategic plan and divisional and college goals for enhancing HIPs offerings, what steps can be taken to track and report offerings and participation, and provide greater opportunities for indirect and direct assessment?

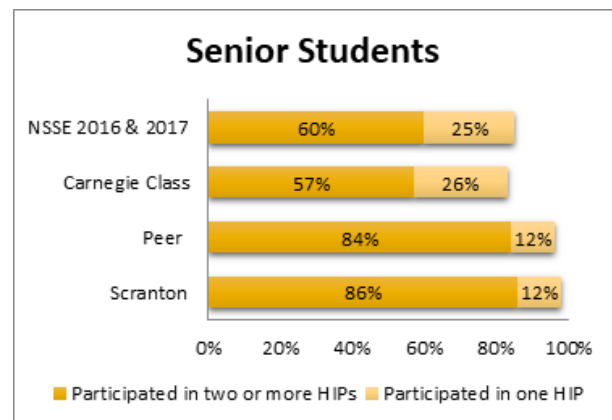
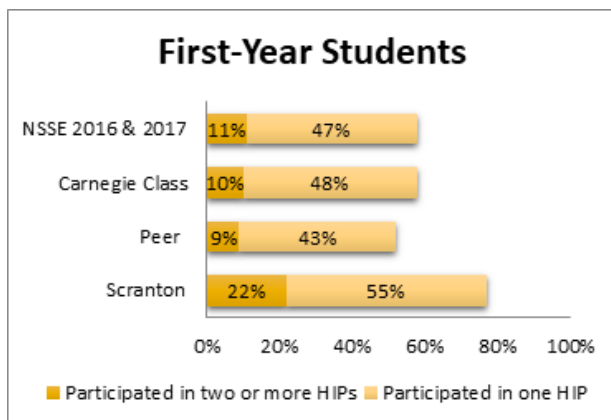
Recent HIPs Participation & Assessment Data

The good news is that most of these high impact practices are already underway, in whole or in part, at the University of Scranton. All undergraduate students participate in first year seminar (FYS) and the GE writing intensive requirement. Beyond these two HIPs, building from their unique college and program plans and goals, colleges and programs approach the offering of HIPs in different ways. For example, PCPS has led the way in requiring all of its students to

participate in service learning/community based learning², with KSOM and CAS offering some service learning courses. CAS students are the majority of participants in faculty-student research, while KSOM students actively participate in internships. The departments within the division of Student Formation and Campus Life also offer opportunities for student participation in HIPs, in particular, living/learning communities, internships and service-related activities).

Much of Kuh’s research on the value of HIPs focuses on deep analyses of data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). The University of Scranton likewise uses NSSE data to examine student participation and outcomes related to selected HIPs³. Using 2016 and 2017 NSSE data, we observe that, overall:

- Among first-year students, participation in HIPs was higher at Scranton as compared to all other groups - between 10% and 12% higher.
- Addressing the recommendation that students take part in at least two HIPs prior to graduation, the University’s NSSE paints a very positive picture. Overall, Scranton students participate in HIPs more often than our comparisons groups.



² In addition to the University’s four institutional learning outcomes, the PCPS has an additional 5th learning outcome for its students related to community based learning.

³ The NSSE includes the following HIPs in its questions: learning communities, service learning, and research with faculty for both freshmen and seniors; internships/field experience, study abroad, and culminating senior experiences for seniors only.

Current University Practices & Participation within Each HIP Category

Drawing more deeply, the following section details the types of programs, and, where available, **participation rates**⁴ for each HIP at the University of Scranton. A special note: the University's Honors Program is not included in a specific HIP category; however, that program does include several particular HIP activities.

First-Year Seminars and Experiences

All University students are required to participate in a First-Year Seminar (FYS). Students choose from seminars that address a wide variety of different topics, and which can function as a major course, a general education course or an elective. A list of current seminars is located in the undergraduate catalog. The Banner system captures FYE enrollment data.

Academic Year	Number of First-Time Students
Fall 2013	881
Fall 2014	1067
Fall 2015	912
Fall 2016	1006

Common Intellectual Experiences

Common intellectual experiences occur in many courses and programs. The *Eloquentia Perfecta* initiative within the general education program is one example. These experiences are also frequently part of other HIP offerings.

Learning Communities

At the University, several learning communities and living-learning communities (those with a residential requirement) are in place. Learning communities include the Special Jesuit Liberal Arts Program, and Business Leadership Program. The Banner system captures participation data for these programs.

Program Enrollment	Fall 2015	Fall 2016
SJLA (Spec Jesuit Liberal Arts)	182	190
BLDR (Business Leadership)	35	35

⁴ Note that participation rates for students in these activities may differ from official enrollment and headcount statistics as presented in other reporting. Effort is made here to count all participation events for all students, and so, depending upon the nature of the HIP offering, some students may be counted twice (a "duplicate" headcount). A good example is for writing intensive courses.

The Office of Residence Life coordinates **residential learning communities (RLCs)** in collaboration with faculty and others. There are two types of residential learning communities - **living learning communities (LLCs)** and **themed communities (TCs)**. Living learning communities consist of a group of students with a common interest who live together, and many of whom enroll in a common course; at present, only first-year students are part of living learning communities, and the linked courses are First Year Seminars.

Themed communities do not have a linked course component. Four themed communities are offered in the sophomore year as continuations of living learning communities, and one is offered for juniors and seniors (“Global Exchange”) who live and engage with an international exchange student.

Overall Percent of Continuing⁵ and First-Year Students Participating in RLCs or LLCs:

Academic Year	Continuing Student Participation In RLCs	First-Year Student Participation in LLCs
2014-15	3%	16%
2015-16	8%	22%
2016-17	12%	22%

First-Year Student Participation by Type of LLC Experience⁶:

Academic Year	Celebrate the Arts	Cura Personalis	FIRE	Helping Professions in the Jesuit Context	Wellness	TOTAL
2014-15	22	44	45	-	60	171
2015-16	22	36	41	27	73	199
2016-17	17	50	33	59	62	221

Upper-class⁷ Participation by Type of RLC Experience:

Academic Year	Celebrate the Arts (S)	Cura Personalis (S)	FIRE (S)	Helping Professions in the Jesuit Context (S)	Wellness (S)	Global Exchange (J/Se)	TOTAL
2014-15	-	45	-	-	-	-	45
2015-16	13	36	20	-	45	20	134
2016-17	18	40	-	11	62	42	173

⁵ Sophomores, juniors, seniors.

⁶ A dash (-) indicates the experience was not offered in that year.

⁷ Sophomores (S), Juniors/Seniors (J/SE).

Writing-Intensive Courses

As part of the General Education curriculum, students are required to complete two courses designated as Writing-Intensive Requirement (W). Enrollment in Writing-Intensive courses is captured in the Banner system and provided by the Office of Registrar and Academic Services. Certain elements of the first year seminar include introductory writing through *Eloquentia Perfecta*. Student Participation, by year:

Academic Year	Student Participation ⁸
2014-15	2499
2015-16	2533
2016-17	2438

Collaborative Assignments & Projects

Collaborative assignments and projects occur in many courses and programs. These experiences are also frequently part of other HIP offerings.

Undergraduate Research

As part of this high impact practice, we consider both research *experiences* and research *exposure* to be important^[1]. The University offers three formal experience opportunities for undergraduate research through the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs – the Faculty Student Research Program (FSRP), President’s Fellowship for Summer Research (PFSR), and the Student Scholars Celebration⁹. Participation in FSRP is open to all undergraduates and graduate students in good academic standing. Although the FSRP program is offered on a non-credit basis, students receive transcript recognition for their participation. The Banner system captures data for research experiences registered under the FSRP program. The PFSR awards are competitive and provide support for exceptional students and their faculty mentors. Students who participate in FSRP and PFSR are strongly encouraged to present their research at the annual Student Scholarship Celebration; this event is also open to other student research projects.

⁸ Note that these totals are duplicated counts, meaning that individual students may be counted more than once in the event they enrolled in more than one “W” course in that academic year.

^[1] Per recommendations of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs and Metrics Team.

⁹ Note that the ORSP offers funding for rHIP (Research as a High Impact Practice) for faculty/student joint research projects.

Faculty Sponsored Research Programs (FSRP) Participants:

Academic Year	Student Participants
2013-14	61
2014-15	88
2015-16	91
2016-17	110

President’s Fellowship for Summer Research (PFSR) Participants:

Summer	Student Participants
2014	8
2015	9
2016	8
2017	7

Student Scholar Celebration Participants:

Academic Year	Student Participants
2013-14	85
2014-15	84
2015-16	164
2016-17	151

Provost’s Assessment Scholars Program¹⁰ Participants:

Academic Year	Student Participants
2016-17	15

In addition to research experiences, research *exposure* is tracked by student enrollment in research-focused courses¹¹.

Academic Year	Students Enrolled
2014-15	312
2015-16	320
2016-17	342

¹⁰ Program launched in fall 2016.

¹¹ Courses used defined through strategic metrics process.

Diversity/Global Learning

Currently, the most common global experience is study abroad. Types of study abroad opportunities include direct enrollment programs, sponsored study abroad programs, special international student programs, internship and service learning opportunities, summer and intersession programs (a shorter study period than the traditional semester term), and University faculty led study programs taking place during the intersession and summer terms, and over spring break. The Office of International Programs gathers and reports participation data for study abroad experiences. The following table details study abroad enrollment for the last five academic years.

Study Abroad Students: Enrollments						
Academic Year	2011-12	2012-13	2013-2014	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Entire Year	1	2	1	1	0	1
Fall Semester	18	15	16	22	18	23
Intersession	28	69	65	103	77	81
Spring Semester	74	69	81	57	66	60
Summer Session	8	59	52	68	49	84
Totals	129	214	215	251	210	249

Service Learning, Community-Based Learning

In 2016, the Provost charged a committee to recommend steps to consider the strategic plan goal regarding the formation of a coordinated approach to community based learning. One of the recommendations from this committee is the use of the term “community based learning (CBL)” in place of service learning across the University, to better differentiate it from the many types of University service activities that do not have a curricular component. In the spring of 2017, Strategic Initiatives funding made possible a faculty coordinator role within the Provost’s Office to coordinate and develop such activities; the coordinator for the Office of Community Based Learning was appointed in September 2017. Currently, each of the University’s three academic colleges addresses this area in different ways. The PCPS has a community-based learning requirement¹² in place for all students.

¹² In 2016, the PCPS changed its terminology regarding the curriculum requirement from “service learning” to “community based learning.”

Student participation rates within the PCPS:

Academic Year	Total students ¹³
2011-12	1355
2012-13	1316
2013-14	1955
2014-15	1949
2015-16	2103
2016-17	1922

Within the KSOM and CAS, there is no service learning/CBL requirement, though a number of courses offer a service learning component. The following number of service learning courses have been offered during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 academic years:

College	AY2014-15	AY2015-16	AY2016-17
CAS	5	7	7
KSOM	9	8	12
PCPS	33	31	39

Internships¹⁴

Internships are one of several types of experiential learning at the University. Data on internships taken for credit is available via the Banner data system and is included below. In addition to for-credit internships, non-credit opportunities are also available. These non-credit opportunities may be sought and/or approved either through the Center for Career Development, or the student's home college.

Academic Year	Number of Students Completing For-Credit Internships
2014-2015	255
2015-2016	254
2016-2017	251

Capstone Courses and Projects

A survey conducted in 2015 by the Office of Educational Assessment (OEA) of academic department chairs identified a total of **32 courses** that can be considered a 'culminating senior experience'. These courses are defined as capstone course, or "includes a senior project, thesis, or portfolio". These types of experiences often serve as artifacts/resources for student learning

¹³ Source: PCPS Dean's Office. This is a duplicated headcount, meaning that students may be counted more than once if they enrolled in multiple courses.

¹⁴ This report currently captures data for for-credit internships. The University is exploring means to track non-credit internship offerings, along with other experiential learning opportunities, in more systematic ways.

outcomes assessment. Further analysis by the OEA indicates that **fifteen programs**¹⁵ utilize capstone work, and **six programs** currently utilize portfolios as part of the assessment process.

¹⁵ As of December 2016.

Appendix 1: High-Impact Educational Practices Descriptions

First-Year Seminars and Experiences

Many schools now build into the curriculum first-year seminars or other programs that bring small groups of students together with faculty or staff on a regular basis. The highest-quality first-year experiences place a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, frequent writing, information literacy, collaborative learning, and other skills that develop students' intellectual and practical competencies. First-year seminars can also involve students with cutting-edge questions in scholarship and with faculty members' own research.

Common Intellectual Experiences

The older idea of a "core" curriculum has evolved into a variety of modern forms, such as a set of required common courses or a vertically organized general education program that includes advanced integrative studies and/or required participation in a learning community. These programs often combine broad themes—e.g., technology and society, global interdependence—with a variety of curricular and co-curricular options for students.

Learning Communities

The key goals for learning communities are to encourage integration of learning across courses and to involve students with "big questions" that matter beyond the classroom. Students take two or more linked courses as a group and work closely with one another and with their professors. Many learning communities explore a common topic and/or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines. Some deliberately link "liberal arts" and "professional courses"; others feature service learning.

Writing-Intensive Courses

These courses emphasize writing at all levels of instruction and across the curriculum, including final-year projects. Students are encouraged to produce and revise various forms of writing for different audiences in different disciplines. The effectiveness of this repeated practice "across the curriculum" has led to parallel efforts in such areas as quantitative reasoning, oral communication, information literacy, and, on some campuses, ethical inquiry.

Collaborative Assignments and Projects

Collaborative learning combines two key goals: learning to work and solve problems in the company of others, and sharpening one's own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences. Approaches range from study groups within a course, to team-based assignments and writing, to cooperative projects and research.

Undergraduate Research

Many colleges and universities are now providing research experiences for students in all disciplines. Undergraduate research, however, has been most prominently used in science disciplines. With strong support from the National Science Foundation and the research community, scientists are reshaping their courses to connect key concepts and questions with students' early and active involvement in systematic investigation and research. The goal is to involve students with actively contested questions,

empirical observation, cutting-edge technologies, and the sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions.

Diversity/Global Learning

Many colleges and universities now emphasize courses and programs that help students explore cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own. These studies—which may address U.S. diversity, world cultures, or both—often explore “difficult differences” such as racial, ethnic, and gender inequality, or continuing struggles around the globe for human rights, freedom, and power. Frequently, intercultural studies are augmented by experiential learning in the community and/or by study abroad.

Service Learning, Community-Based Learning

In these programs, field-based “experiential learning” with community partners is an instructional strategy—and often a required part of the course. The idea is to give students direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. A key element in these programs is the opportunity students have to both apply what they are learning in real-world settings and reflect in a classroom setting on their service experiences. These programs model the idea that giving something back to the community is an important college outcome, and that working with community partners is good preparation for citizenship, work, and life.

Internships

Internships are another increasingly common form of experiential learning. The idea is to provide students with direct experience in a work setting—usually related to their career interests—and to give them the benefit of supervision and coaching from professionals in the field. If the internship is taken for course credit, students complete a project or paper that is approved by a faculty member.

Capstone Courses and Projects

Whether they’re called “senior capstones” or some other name, these culminating experiences require students nearing the end of their college years to create a project of some sort that integrates and applies what they’ve learned. The project might be a research paper, a performance, a portfolio of “best work,” or an exhibit of artwork. Capstones are offered both in departmental programs and, increasingly, in general education as well.



High Impact Practices: Undergraduate Participation Rates

Participation Rates by HIP category

	2013-2014 Graduates		2014-2015 Graduates		2015-2016 Graduates		2016-2017 Graduates	
	# Students	Participation Rate	# Students	Participation Rate	# Students	Participation Rate	# Students	Participation Rate
*Honors Programs ¹	91	10.67%	101	10.61%	107	11.76%	107	12.57%
*Internships (for credit) ²	224	26.26%	248	26.05%	230	25.27%	196	23.03%
*Service/Community Based Learning ³	291	34.11%	326	34.24%	335	36.81%	315	37.02%
*Undergraduate Research ⁴	246	28.84%	303	31.83%	284	31.21%	304	35.72%
*Study abroad ⁵	177	20.75%	213	22.37%	186	20.44%	204	23.97%
*Writing Intensive Courses ⁶	848	99.41%	937	98.42%	895	98.35%	831	97.65%
*First Year Seminars ⁷	277	32.47%	462	48.53%	760	83.52%	761	89.42%

Participation Rates by HIP count

	2013-2014 Graduates		2014-2015 Graduates		2015-2016 Graduates		2016-2017 Graduates	
	# Students	Participation Rate	# Students	Participation Rate	# Students	Participation Rate	# Students	Participation Rate
Participated in three or more HIPs	386	45.25%	491	51.58%	591	64.95%	567	66.63%
Participated in two HIPs	233	27.32%	275	28.89%	248	27.25%	233	27.38%
Participated in one HIP	231	27.08%	174	18.28%	68	7.47%	49	5.76%
Did not participate in any HIP	3	0.35%	12	1.26%	3	0.33%	2	0.24%
TOTAL	853	100.00%	952	100.00%	910	100.00%	851	100.00%

These counts include students who graduated with a bachelor's degree between July 1st and June 30th. A registered student has code RE ("Registered") or RW ("Web Registered").

* Reported to US News (all internships are reported, not just for-credit internships). US News considers Honors Programs to be a distinct High Impact Practice.

¹ At least one of the following attributes: Honors Program (HON), Spec Jesuit Liberal Arts (SJLA), and Business Leadership (BLDR)

² Registered for-credit in at least one of the following schedule types: Internship/Load (I), Internship/No Load (I), HAHR Special Internship (K)

³ School is Pamunka College of Professional Studies (H)

⁴ Registered in at least one of the following courses: 097, 093, 193, 293, 393, 493, 593, 693, 793, 893, 993, 094, 194, 294, 394, 494, 594, 694, 794, 894, 994, 487H, 488H, 489H

⁵ Registered in course STAB 001 or at least one of the following schedule types: Travel/Load (F), Travel/No Load (T). A measure of the Diversity/Global Learning HIP.

⁶ Registered in at least one course with the attribute WI ((W) Writing Intensive)

⁷ Registered in at least one of the following courses: INTD100A, INTD100D, INTD100K, INTD100P, INTD100X, attribute FSP (First-Year Seminar), attribute FYS ((FYS)1-4 Yr Seminar (EP I))

References

Brownell, J.E. and Swaner, L.E. (Spring 2009). [High impact practices: applying the learning outcomes literature to the development of successful campus programs](#). *Peer Review*, 26-30.

Gonyea, R.M., J. Kinzie, G.D. Kuh, and T.N. Laird. 2008. High-impact activities: What they are, why they work, and who benefits. Presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), Washington, DC.

Kuh, George D. (2008). [High Impact Practices: Who they are, who has access to them, and why they matter](#). AAC&U.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (1991). How college affects students: Findings and insights from twenty years of research. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.