



A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO MEASURE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AT A NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

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Assessing Civic Engagement

- ◆ Why assess civic engagement on your campus?
- ◆ What are the questions you want to ask?
- ◆ How do you ascertain the answers?
- ◆ How do you analyze the information that you gather?

- ◆ Research University – Very high activity
 - ◆ 4-year Liberal Arts & Engineering undergraduate schools
 - ◆ 5,164 undergraduates; 5,088 graduate/professional students; 10,252 total enrollment
- ◆ Tisch College of Citizenship & Public Service
 - ◆ Education
 - ◆ Research
 - ◆ Alumni

SOME BACKGROUND....



As an institution, we are committed to improving the human condition through education and discovery. Beyond this commitment, we will strive to be a model for society at large.

We want to foster an attitude of “giving-back” and understanding that active citizen participation is essential to freedom and democracy; and a desire to make the world a better place



Civic Engagement at Tufts

- ◆ Tisch College
 - ◆ Student programs:
 - ◆ CPS Scholars
 - ◆ Education for Active Citizenship course
 - ◆ Internships
 - ◆ Lincoln Filene Center for Community Partnerships
 - ◆ Faculty research and teaching
 - ◆ Alumni programs

Civic Education at Tufts will...

- ◆ Give students the knowledge, skills, and experience to identify and implement solutions to complex social problems.



- ◆ Why assess civic engagement on your campus?

- ◆ What are the questions you want to ask?

Tufts' Instruments

- ◆ **Tisch College Study - Civic and Political Activities and Attitudes Survey (CPAAS)**
 - ◆ Examines link between students' experiences at Tufts and the development of their civic and political attitudes and activities over time
- ◆ **Senior & Sophomore Surveys**
 - ◆ Select civic engagement questions from CPAAS Survey were added beginning in 2003 with the Senior Survey and in 2006 with the Sophomore Survey
- ◆ **Standardized set of civic engagement survey items added by OIRE in 2006 to:**
 - ◆ Senior Survey
 - ◆ Graduate Exit Survey
 - ◆ Alumni surveys – Veterinary, Engineering, Dental

Standardized Survey Questions

Q#. How often in the last year did you participate in each of the following civic engagement or community service activities?

Active citizenship may be defined as participation in community service, issue-based initiatives, and political activities. Below are some examples of the types of activities associated with each element of active citizenship. Please respond to the questions that follow to the best of your ability.

Community-based service - e.g. domestic or international involvement in volunteer vacation or service trip, helping to raise money for a charitable cause, volunteering through a non-profit organization

Issue-oriented projects - e.g. outreach organizations addressing environmental issues, hunger relief, ethical aspects of stem cell research, energy, or civil liberties organization (ACLU), conduct community-based research or policy analysis, attending a town or city council board meeting

Politically-based activities - e.g. working or volunteering for a political campaign, lobbying, participating in a protest or march, participating in online political discussions, promoting voter registration

	Very Often	Often	Occasionally	Never	Last year, how many total hours did you participate in these projects/activities?	Please briefly describe your involvement
<i>Community</i> -based service						
<i>Issue</i> -oriented project/activity						
<i>Politically</i> -based project/activity						

Data Collection

Tufts Civic Engagement Data by Year

Survey	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Undergraduate Students							
Tisch College Study	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sophomore Survey				x	x	x	x
Senior Survey	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Graduate Students							
Exit Survey					x	x	x
Alumni							
Dental					x	x	x
Engineering					x	x	x
Veterinary					x	x	

- ◆ How do you ascertain the answers?

Decisions:

- ◆ Quantitative v. Qualitative
 - ◆ Surveys, Count Activity, Pre/Post Tests
 - ◆ Interviews, Focus Groups, Observations
- ◆ Cross Sectional v. Longitudinal Studies
- ◆ Descriptive v. Causal

Civic Engagement Assessment at Tufts

- ◆ Two Approaches at Tufts
 - ◆ Senior Survey Civic Engagement Analysis
 - ◆ Quantitative
 - ◆ Cross-Sectional Study (N = 4,630)
 - ◆ Tisch College Outcomes Study
 - ◆ Mixed Methods
 - ◆ Surveys and Interviews
 - ◆ Six Year Longitudinal Study of Four Cohorts (N = 272)

**Senior Survey Civic
Engagement Analysis**

Senior Survey Civic Engagement Questions

- ◆ Senior Survey- Civic engagement data collection began in 2003
- ◆ Items were modeled after Tisch College Outcomes Study questions
- ◆ Items measured include:
 - ◆ Satisfaction with service opportunities at Tufts
 - ◆ Attitudes regarding importance/value of service activities
 - ◆ Types of service/activities participated in
 - ◆ Reason(s) for involvement
 - ◆ Relationship of Tufts education to awareness of social problems and interest in effecting change
 - ◆ Plans for community and public service after graduation

Senior Survey Research Question

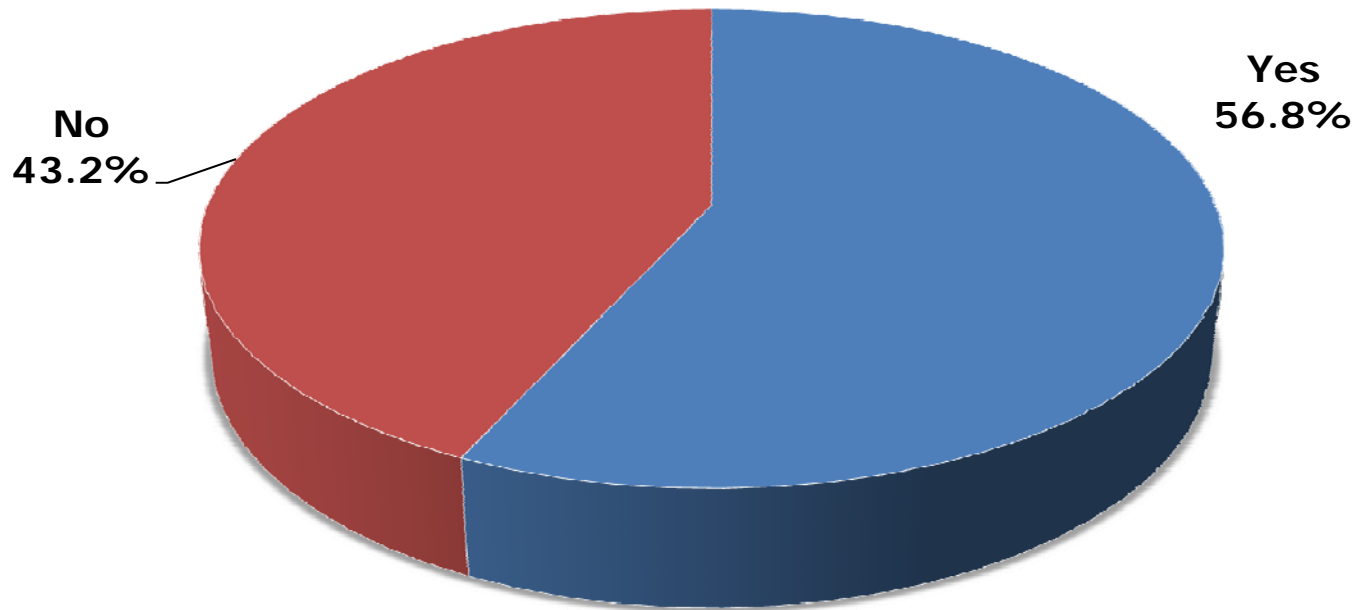
- ◆ Is the campus culture infusing civic mindedness throughout the student body?
- ◆ Civically-minded undergraduates is defined as students who are involved in civic engagement activities as well as those who experience a positive growth in their civic attitudes and values.

Senior Survey Sample

- ◆ Four graduating classes of Tufts Seniors (Classes of 2005- 2008), N = 4,630
- ◆ Demographics
 - ◆ 55.1% Female, 44.6% Male, 0.3% Transgender
 - ◆ 65.8% White, 12.2% Asian, 7.0% Hispanic, 6.6% Black, 1.6% Multiracial, 5.8% International, <1.0% Other
 - ◆ 86.2% Liberal Arts, 14.1% Engineering
 - ◆ Mean GPA: 3.37
 - ◆ 48.7% Studied Abroad

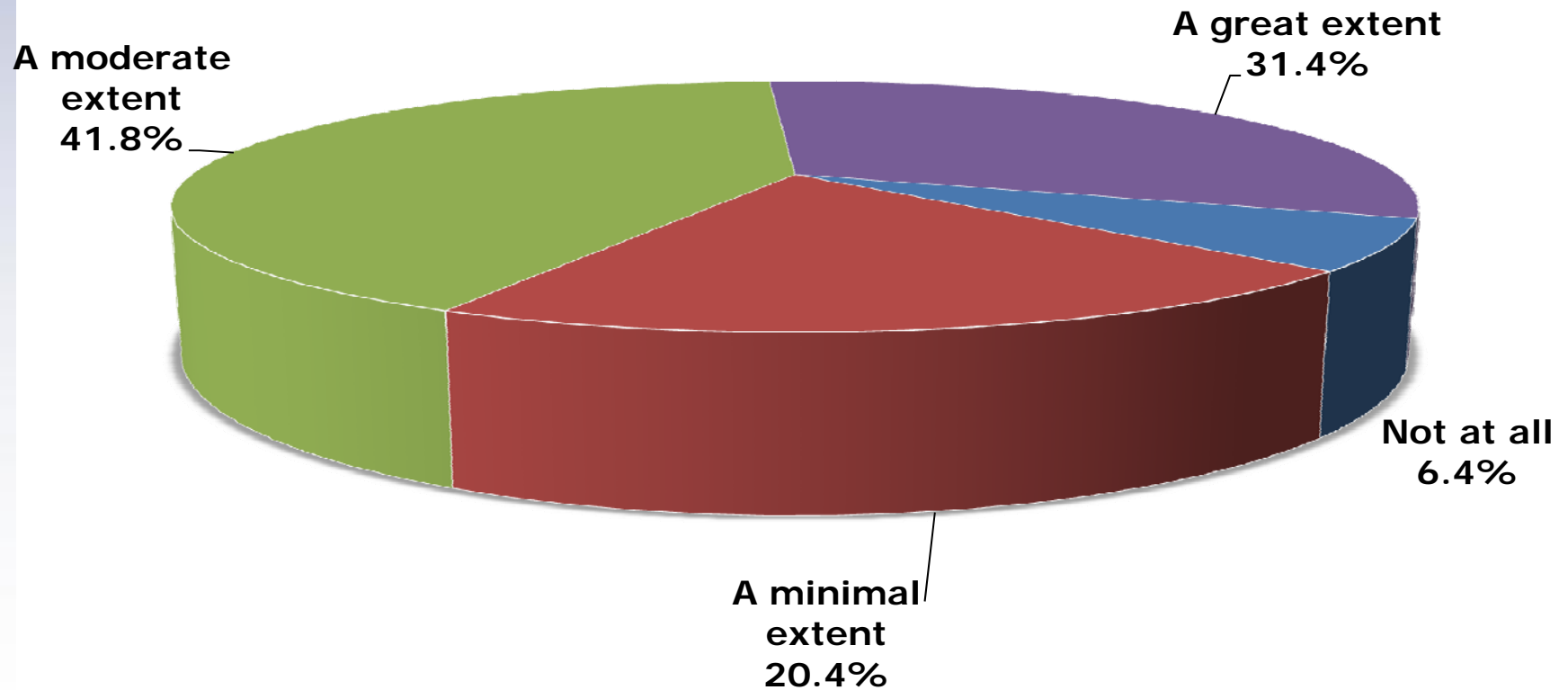
Senior Survey Sample

Did you participate in civic engagement activities while at Tufts?



Senior Survey Sample

To what extent did civic engagement enhance your academic experience?



- ◆ How do you analyze the information that you gather?

Senior Survey Methodology

- ◆ Descriptive Analysis
- ◆ Divided the sample into two parts
- ◆ Factor Analysis
 - ◆ Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)
 - ◆ N = 2302
 - ◆ Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)
 - ◆ N = 2328
- ◆ Structural Equation Model (SEM)
 - ◆ Maximum Likelihood Estimation
 - ◆ AMOS 17.0

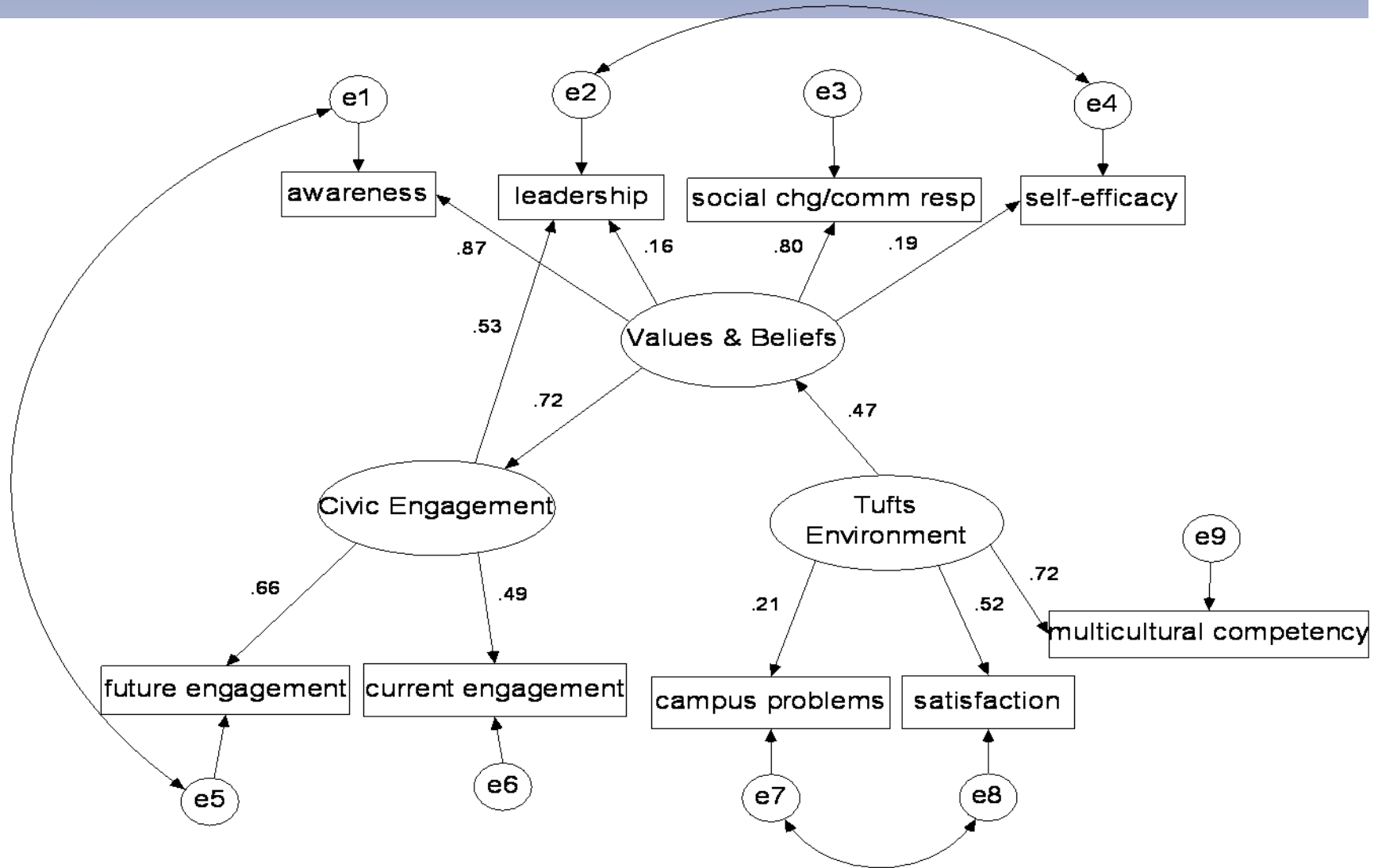
Factor Analysis

Latent Variable	Factor	N of Items
Values & Beliefs	Awareness of Community	5
Values & Beliefs	Leadership Ability	3
Values & Beliefs	Self-Efficacy	1
Values & Beliefs	Importance of Social Change/Community Responsibility	5
Tufts Environment	Perceived Campus Social Problems	7
Tufts Environment	Satisfaction with Tufts	4
Tufts Environment	Supporting Multicultural Competency	3

Outcome Variable

- ◆ Latent Variable: Civic Engagement
 - ◆ Two composites of current civic engagement activities and future civic engagement activities
 - ◆ Current civic engagement (q 117)
 - ◆ Do you: Volunteer, Work for a Political Campaign, Advocacy, Community Based Research, Etc
 - ◆ Mean: 0.85; Range: 0 – 7; Std Dev: 1.1
 - ◆ Future civic engagement (q 124)
 - ◆ Do you plan to: Volunteer, Work for Non-Profit, Make Donations, Attend Graduate School, Run for Office, Etc
 - ◆ Mean: 4.3, Range: 0 – 12; Std Dev: 2.6

Structural Equation Model



- ◆ Goodness-of-fit indices
 - ◆ $\chi^2(21) = 93.432, p < 0.001$
 - ◆ CFI (Comparative Fit Index) = 0.98
 - ◆ RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approx.) = 0.038
 - ◆ SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Sq Residual) = 0.025
- ◆ All path coefficients statistically significant ($p < 0.01$)
- ◆ Explains 22% of variance in students' values and beliefs and 51% of the variance in civic engagement

Senior Survey Findings

- ◆ Tufts Environment has a significant positive impact on the growth of civic values & beliefs (0.47)
- ◆ Tufts Environment has a positive indirect effect on the increase of civic engagement activities of undergraduates (0.34)
- ◆ Growth in students' civic values and beliefs directly led to a significant positive increase in their level of civic engagement (0.72)

The Model confirms supportive campus culture for infusing civic-mindedness in undergraduates



Civic Engagement at Tufts

Tisch College Outcomes Study

Scholars Program

- ◆ Multi-year, leadership development program engaging students as catalysts for change
- ◆ Academic
- ◆ Experiential
- ◆ Community
- ◆ Advising



Study's Purpose

- ◆ To understand how participation in various activities and programs at Tufts affects student civic and political attitudes
 - ◆ Assess the utility of the Scholars Program
 - ◆ Track the changes in the level of civic engagement activities and the positive growth of civic attitudes and beliefs throughout college and beyond

- ◆ How do you ascertain the answers?

Research Design

- ◆ Six-Year Longitudinal Study with Classes 2007 - 2010
 - ◆ Four cohorts split into three research groups
 - ◆ Tisch Scholars
 - ◆ High-School High Participators (HS High)
 - ◆ High-School Low Participators (HS Low)
 - ◆ Participant Survey
 - ◆ Tisch Civic and Political Activities & Attitudes Survey (CPAAS)
 - ◆ Tisch Post-Graduate Alumni Civic and Political Activities & Attitudes Survey (Alumni CPAAS)

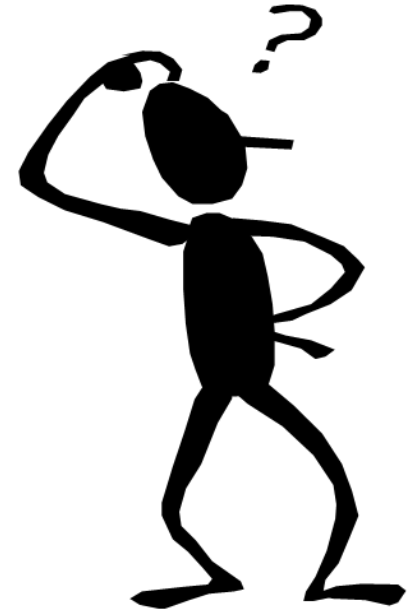
- ◆ Time Series Design with Retrospective Pre-Test
 - ◆ Participant Survey
 - ◆ Recruitment tool administered as a web survey in the fall of students' first year
 - ◆ Civic and Political Activities & Attitudes Survey
 - ◆ Web survey administered annually in the spring
 - ◆ Follow-Up Interviews
 - ◆ Conducted as sophomores (Fall) and seniors (Spring)
 - ◆ Post-Graduate Alumni Civic and Political Activities & Attitudes Survey
 - ◆ Web survey administered in the spring

CPAAS SURVEY

- ◆ Designed with input from national experts
 - ◆ Robert G. Bringle – I.U.P.U.I.
 - ◆ Dwight E. Giles, Jr. – U. Mass - Boston
 - ◆ Andrew Furco – U.C. Berkeley
- ◆ Integrated questions from other surveys to enable national comparison
 - ◆ Questions from CIRCLE, PEW, CASQ, Public Service Motivational Scale, Social Responsibility Inventory, Community Service Self-Efficacy Scale, and AmeriCorps Baseline Survey
 - ◆ Adapted questions to cover political activities and attitudes

CPAAS SURVEY

- ◆ Key components:
 - ◆ Activities
 - ◆ Activities at Tufts
 - ◆ Activities outside of Tufts
 - ◆ Political involvement
 - ◆ Attitudes
 - ◆ Personal ability to affect change
 - ◆ Personal responsibility to counteract problems
 - ◆ Societal responsibility to counteract problems



TISCH College Outcomes Evaluation Administration Schedule

Academic Year

	Class of 2007 Cohort		Class of 2008 Cohort		Class of 2009 Cohort		Class of 2010 Cohort	
2003-04	1st Year	Participant Survey CPAAS						
2004-05	Sophomore	Interviews CPAAS	1st Year	Participant Survey CPAAS				
2005-06	Junior	CPAAS	Sophomore	Interviews CPAAS	1st Year	Participant Survey CPAAS		
2006-07	Senior	CPAAS Interviews	Junior	CPAAS	Sophomore	Interviews CPAAS	1st Year	Participant Survey CPAAS
2007-08	1 Year out	Alumni CPAAS	Senior	CPAAS Interviews	Junior	CPAAS	Sophomore	Interviews CPAAS
2008-09	2 Years out	Alumni CPAAS	1 Year out	Alumni CPAAS	Senior	CPAAS Interviews	Junior	CPAAS
2009-10			2 Years out	Alumni CPAAS	1 Year out	Alumni CPAAS	Senior	CPAAS Interviews
2010-11					2 Years out	Alumni CPAAS	1 Year out	Alumni CPAAS
2011-12							2 Years out	Alumni CPAAS

Current Academic Year

- ◆ How do you analyze the information that you gather?

Tisch College Outcomes Study Methodology

- ◆ Descriptive Analysis
- ◆ Item Response Theory (IRT)
- ◆ Factor Analysis
 - ◆ Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)
 - ◆ Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)
- ◆ Multilevel Modeling (MLM)
 - ◆ also known as Hierarchical Linear Modeling

Demographics of Participants

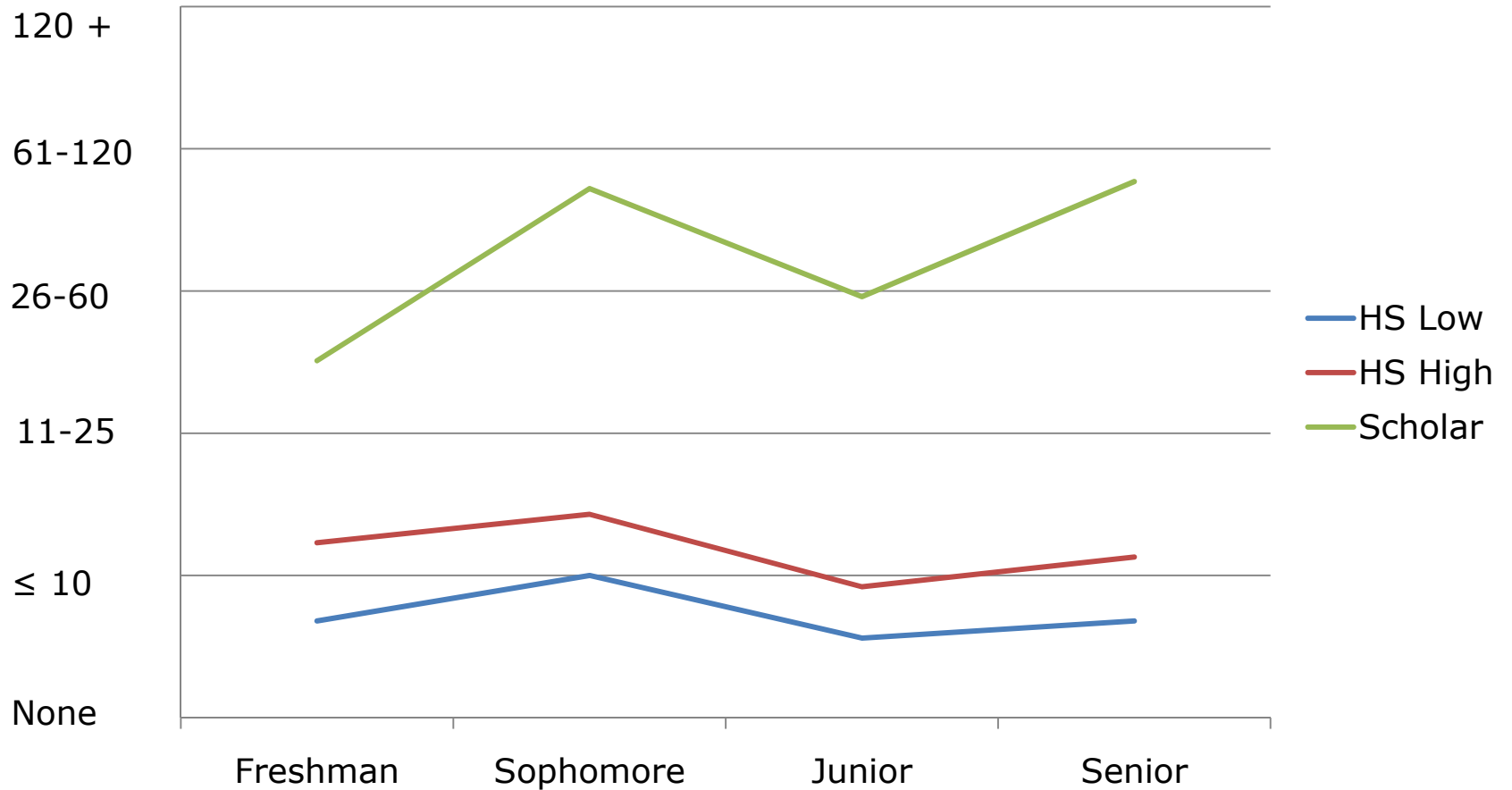
- ◆ 101 HS Highs, 87 HS Lows, 84 Scholars
- ◆ 56.6% Female; 43.4% Male
- ◆ 55.1% White, 14.0% Asian, 7.7% Hispanic, 7.0% Black, 2.2% Multiracial, 1.5% Non-resident Alien, 12.5% Unknown¹
- ◆ 84.9% Liberal Arts, 15.1% Engineering
- ◆ Cohort Size/Retention
 - ◆ Cohort 2007: N = 59; 93.2% Retention
 - ◆ Cohort 2008: N = 61; 96.7% Retention
 - ◆ Cohort 2009: N = 77; 96.1% Retention
 - ◆ Cohort 2010: N = 75; 98.7% Retention

¹ new IPEDs race/ethnicity classification

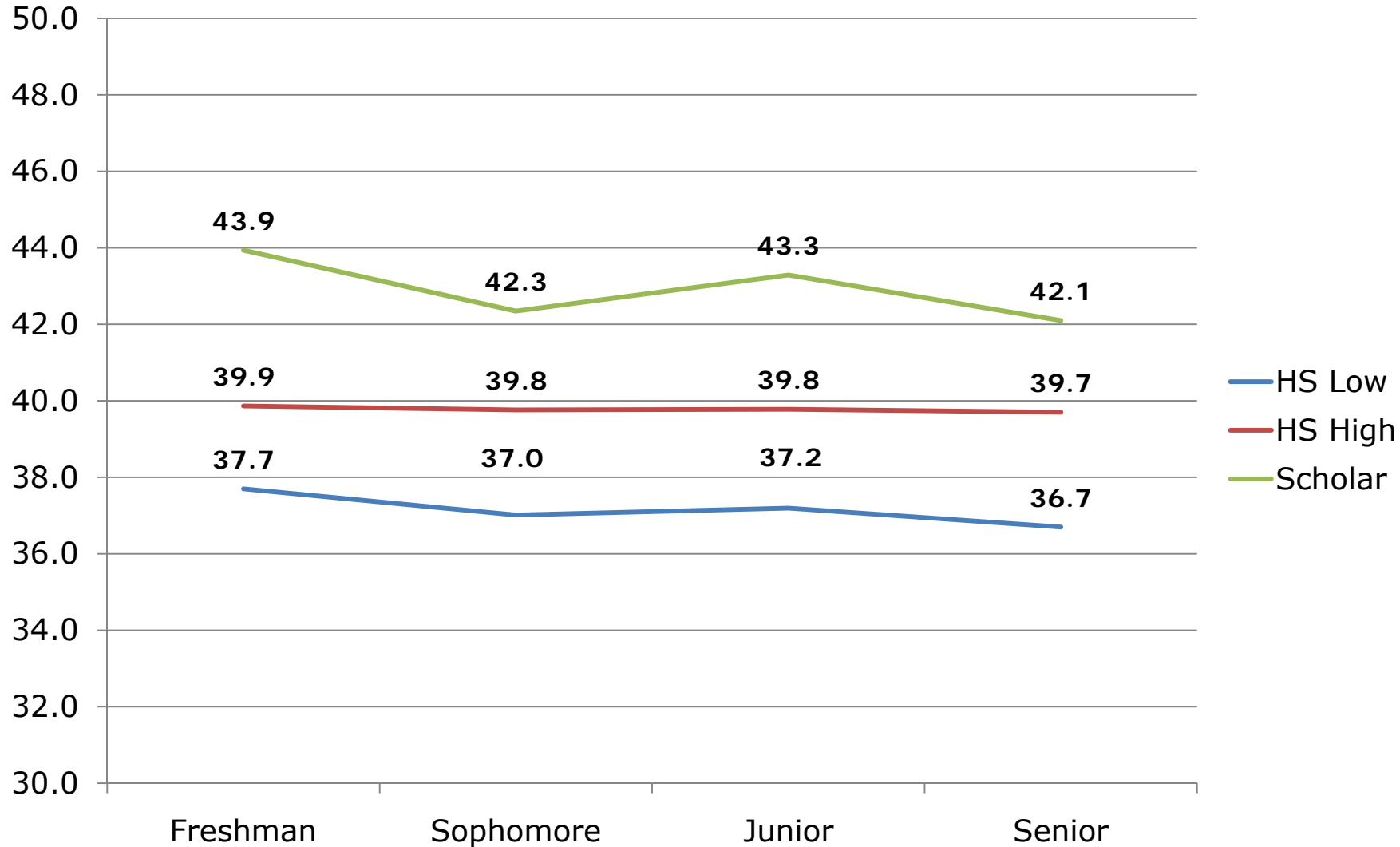
Factor Analysis

Section	Factor	N of Items
Attitudes	Personal Efficacy Thru Community Service	10
Attitudes	Personal Efficacy Thru Political Action	9
Attitudes	Refusal to Blame the Victim	6
Attitudes	Appreciation of Differences	3
Attitudes	Supporting and Advocating for Change	3
Attitudes	Supporting Social Responsibility	2
Attitudes	Community & National Awareness	2
Attitudes	Strong Community Attachment	5
Activities	Community Service & Campus Involvement	7
Activities	Political Action & Advocacy	10

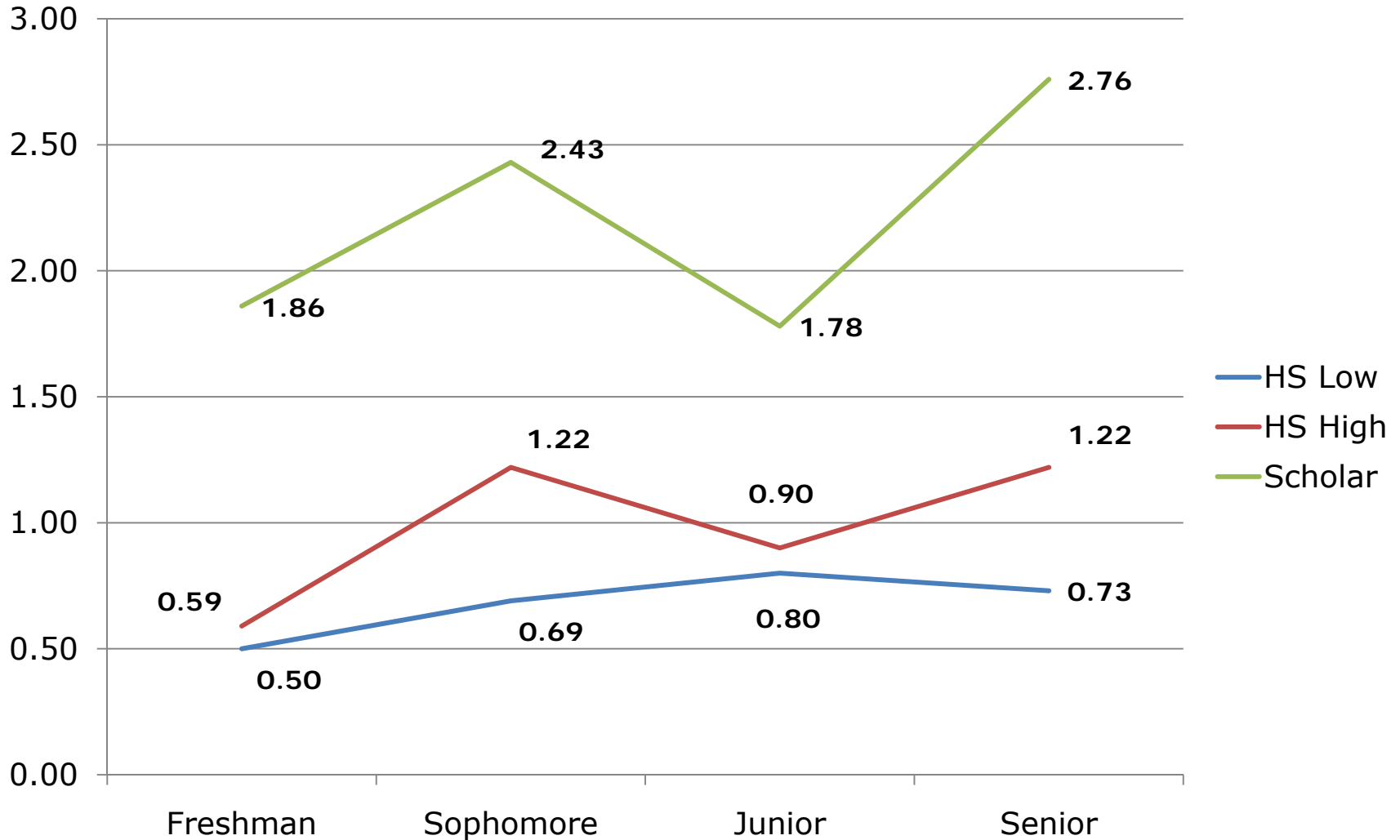
Average Hours Involved in Community Service Organization (Freshmen to Senior Year)



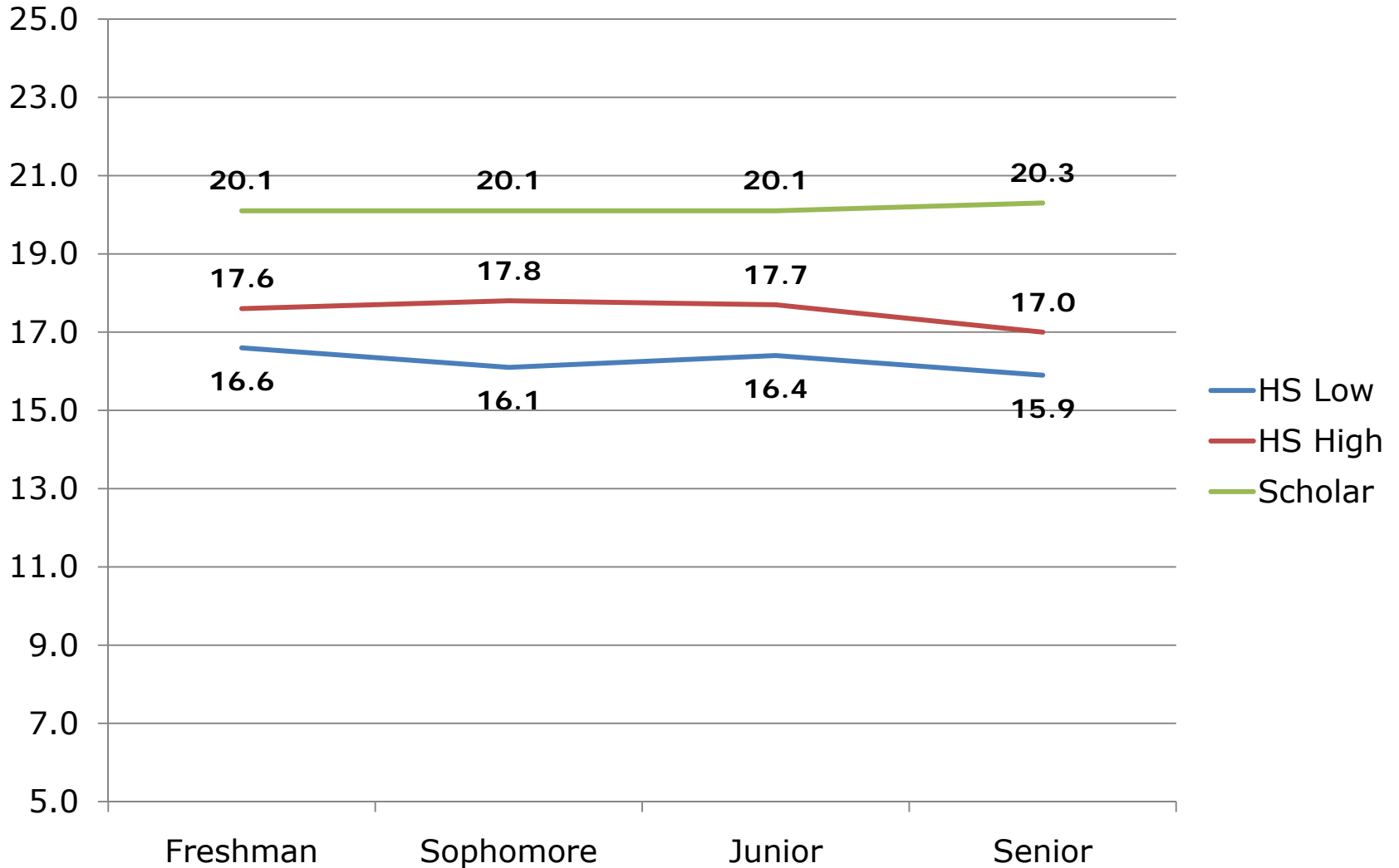
Personal Efficacy Thru Community Service (Freshmen to Senior Year)



Average Tufts Leadership Positions Held (Freshmen to Senior Years)



Attachment to Community (Freshmen to Senior Year)



Participant Interviews

- ◆ Annually interviewed 6 Sophomores in the Fall & 6 Seniors in the Spring starting in 2004
- ◆ Each group contained 2 HS Highs, 2 HS Lows, and 2 Scholars
- ◆ Currently, there are 42 interviews with 6 Seniors left to interview in Spring 2010
- ◆ Interview protocol was designed to describe the impact of Tufts on their civic beliefs and attitudes as well as their involvement in civic activities

- What is your current civic and political participation level?
- “I think when I entered I was a little more kind of gung-ho to try and change the world but now, I guess I realized that that’s good and I can certainly do that, but- I don’t know, it’s definitely- it’s a lot of work.”

-HS High

Quotes from Interviews

- ◆ “Being at Tufts really gives me a sense of- I guess just community spirit, I suppose you could say. And that in turn has made me more aware of how certain groups function as societies, and I think especially with the more liberal- I don’t want to say bias, but the- you know, there is a general leaning towards more liberal ideas, and I think that has influenced me too in thinking more about helping everyone as opposed to you know, just certain groups, so yeah, I think Tufts does influence that.”

-HS Low

Quotes from Interviews

- ◆ “I see a lot of value in diversity and differences. I don’t think it’s something we should ignore. I think it’s a strength both for the US and for working with issues. In talking a lot about diversity of opinions and diversity of thoughts, it’s something that’s sort of...very difficult to work with, but it has huge, huge rewards.”

-Tisch Scholar

Participation Rate Impact

- ◆ Levels of involvement in community service activities served as significant predictors of viewpoints on:
 - ◆ Self-efficacy through community service
 - ◆ Value of & Commitment to the Public Good
- ◆ Levels of involvement in political activities served as significant predictors of their viewpoints on:
 - ◆ Self-efficacy through politics
 - ◆ Awareness of & Interest in Community/National Issues

Practical Challenges

- ◆ Relationship & collaboration with stakeholders
 - ◆ Timing of data collection, analysis, and results dissemination
 - ◆ Complexity associated with defining civic engagement
- ◆ Problematic characteristics of evaluation design
 - ◆ Study recruitment, retention, and attrition
 - ◆ Lack of critical baseline data
 - ◆ Alterations to instruments' effect on results
 - ◆ Programmatic changes over time
- ◆ Validity of results due to confounding factors
 - ◆ Multiple sources of input for students' civic and political attitudes
 - ◆ Impact of expected personal and social development due to maturation versus impact of activities at Tufts

In the Future

- ◆ As we collect additional years of data (complete in 2012), we will be able to examine cohorts' civic engagement as they progress through Tufts and later, as alumni
- ◆ Potential areas for additional analyses include gender & ethnicity differences
- ◆ Community partner focus groups to inform research and practice
- ◆ Seeking partnership with other institutions to investigate variations in culture and alternative, but strong models of institutional culture that promote civic engagement.

Tufts Contact Information

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QUESTIONS???