



**A CIVIC ENGAGEMENT TRENDS IN
UNDERGRADUATES: THE ROLE OF THE
INSTITUTION IN CULTIVATING ACTIVE
CITIZENS**

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Agenda

- ◆ Description of the Study
- ◆ Findings
- ◆ Implications for Future Research
- ◆ Questions

SOME BACKGROUND...



Civic Engagement at Tufts

- ◆ Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service
- ◆ Focuses on four key areas:
 - ◆ Students
 - ◆ Faculty
 - ◆ Community Partnerships
 - ◆ Alumni

Tisch College Outcomes Study

Scholars Program

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



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)
- ◆ Data sources: surveys, interviews, academic information (majors, GPAs, courses), & demographics

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/Undergraduate Retention
 - ◆ Cohort 2007: N = 59; 89.8% Retention
 - ◆ Cohort 2008: N = 61; 96.7% Retention
 - ◆ Cohort 2009: N = 77; 88.3% Retention
 - ◆ Cohort 2010: N = 75; 75.0% Retention

¹ new IPEDs race/ethnicity classification

- ◆ Preliminary Undergraduate Analysis
 - ◆ Factor Analysis of Survey Items
 - ◆ 10 factors for civic attitudinal items
 - ◆ 5 factors for civic activity items
 - ◆ Leadership composites
 - ◆ Four composites
- ◆ Link the themes in the interviews to the attitudinal, activity, and leadership items

FINDINGS



Civic Engagement Attitudinal Outcomes

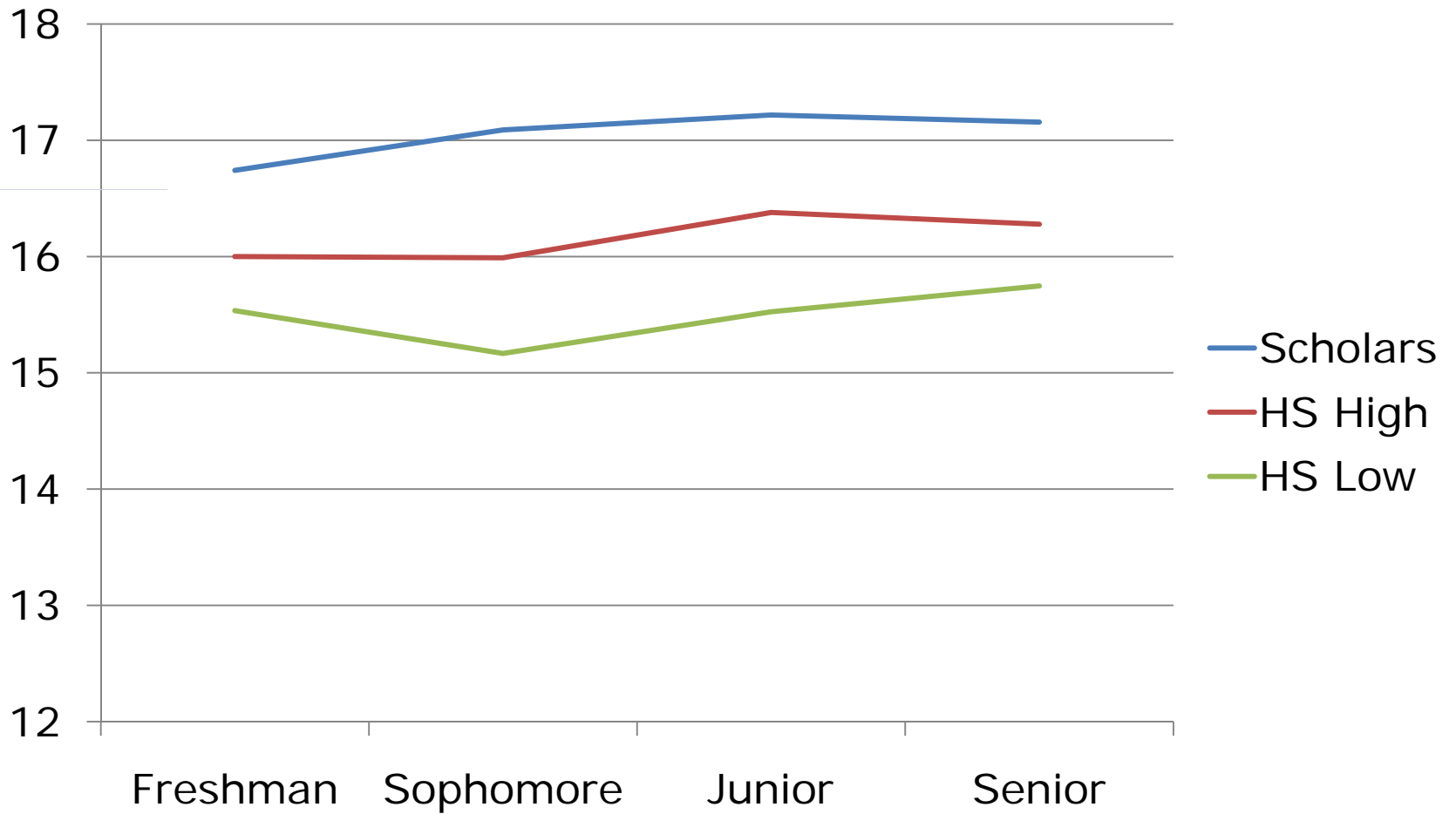
Factors	N of Items
Personal Efficacy Thru Community Service	10
Personal Efficacy Thru Political Action	9
Social Responsibility	9
Community Connectedness	7
Cognizance of Societal Realities	5
Informed Citizenship	5
Social Justice	4
Acknowledgement of Differences	4
Appreciation of Cultural Differences	4
Change Agency	3

Summary of Attitudinal Outcomes

- ◆ Positive growth (4)
 - ◆ Change Agency, **Informed Citizenship**, Cognizance of Societal Realities, and Acknowledgment of Differences
- ◆ Negative growth (4)
 - ◆ **Personal Efficacy Through Political Action**, Social Responsibility, Social Justice, and Appreciation of Cultural Differences
- ◆ Mixed depending on Research Group (2)
 - ◆ Personal Efficacy Through Community Service, Community Connectedness

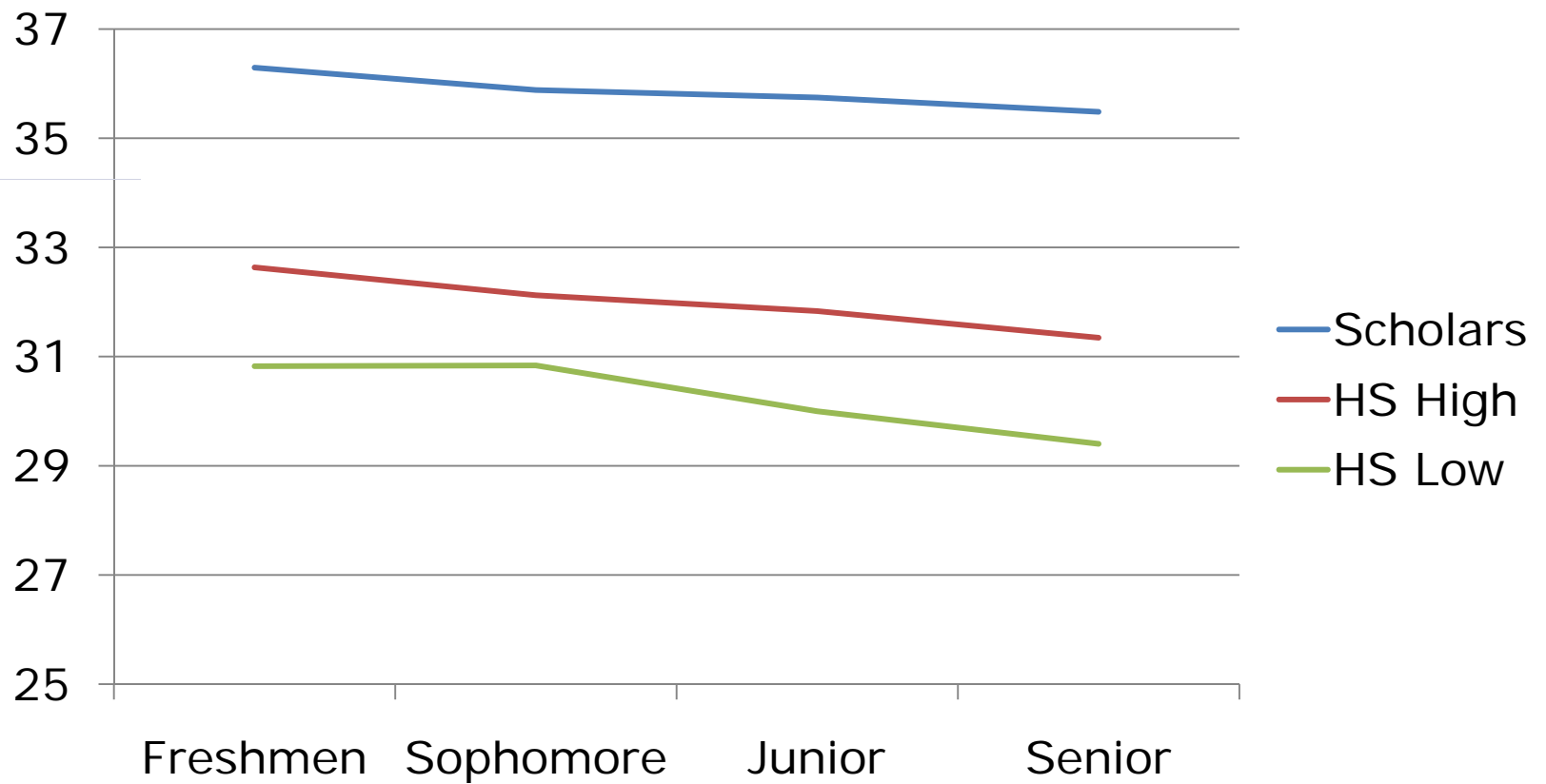


Informed Citizenship Trends





Personal Efficacy Through Political Action Trends





Civic Engagement Activity Outcomes

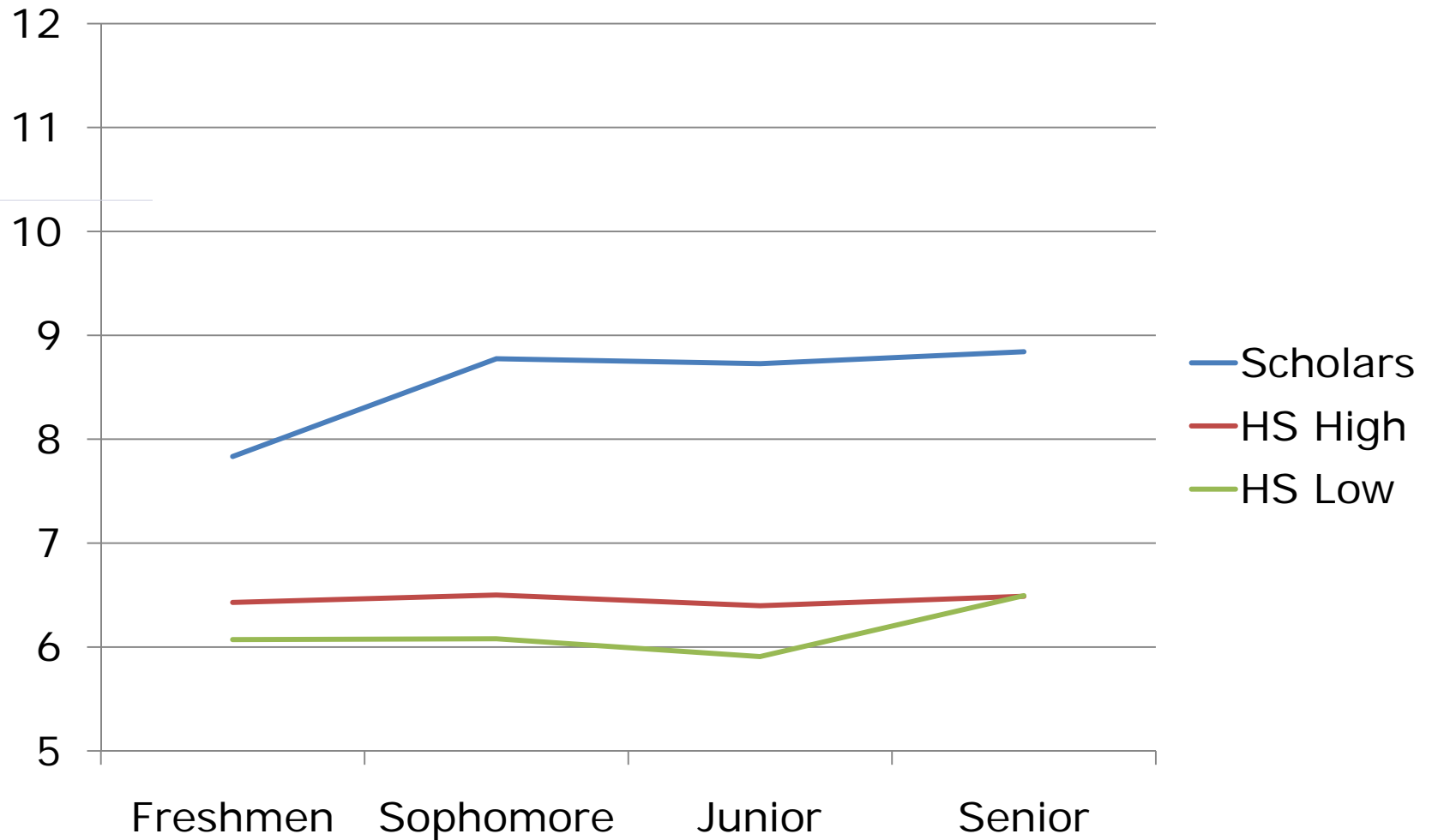
Factors	N of Items
Community Service	7
Political Action	6
Embodying a Civic-Minded Lifestyle	5
Civic Education and Outreach	4
Contributing to Public Discourse	3

Summary of Activity Outcomes

- ◆ Positive growth for all Tisch Scholars except for political action
- ◆ HS-Highs and HS-Lows variance decreased and some converged senior year
 - ◆ Political Action, Civic Education and Outreach, & Embodying a Civic-Minded Lifestyle
- ◆ HS-Highs and HS-Lows variance increased or remained the same
 - ◆ Community Service, Contributing to the Public Discourse



Civic Education and Outreach Trends



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 link civic engagement activities and attitudes from participants' collegial years to their alumni years
- ◆ Potential areas for undergraduate trends include gender & ethnicity differences
- ◆ Linking the academic courses participants have taken to their development of civic outcomes



Civic Engagement at Tufts

QUESTIONS???



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