



The Relationship between Institutional Mission and Student Engagement and Learning Environment

Mission Research Progress Report 2008

Research expands with Teagle Foundation Grant

For a fifth consecutive year, a consortium of Catholic colleges is taking part in research and sharing results on student perceptions of institutional mission on campus. There is an expansion of research activity this year, however, made possible by a two-year Teagle Foundation Grant focused on student learning outcomes. The result is the formation of a new consortium of independent colleges to explore mission perception, as well, and that research is underway. This added research aspect will afford future opportunities to compare consortia and develop fresh indices for measuring progress on mission effectiveness.

Origin and activity

The research instrument is the Mission Perception Inventory (MPI). The MPI is a twenty-item questionnaire covering institutional mission constructs, first developed in 2004 and appended to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) by a consortium of Catholic colleges. The NSSE Catholic College Consortium has used the MPI every year since. Results by item and scales are provided in institutional reports from the NSSE institute, and later, a confidential Mission Perception Inventory (MPI) Report is produced for consortium members by the mission research team at Marywood University. The MPI Report compares individual institution means to consortium group means using text and graphs.

Participation has grown from fourteen Catholic colleges in 2004 to thirty-six this year. In addition, the Teagle Foundation Grant has made possible the enlargement of this effort to include another segment of schools in the research. The new group of nineteen private, non-affiliated institutions is called the NSSE 2008 Mission Perception Consortium of Independent Colleges (MECIC). The same MPI questions are being administered by both consortia. This will allow comparison of consortia data in the future, and help to define the unique characteristics of each relative to student mission perception.

A conference paper on the procedure for confirming the validity and reliability of the MPI instrument in repeat administrations will be presented at the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) Annual Forum in May 2008 in Seattle. Further, with continued support of the Teagle Foundation Grant, the mission research team at Marywood University will develop a new index for assessing an institution's actual versus expected outcomes on student perception of mission, and the analysis and results will be shared in future presentations.

Learn more

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