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[www.wooster.edu/assessment](http://www.wooster.edu/assessment)

## *Inside AM: the Diversity & Global Engagement Issue*

Given the recent announcement by President Cornwell regarding the launch of the Center for Diversity and Global Engagement this fall, it seemed appropriate to have an *Assessment Matters* dedicated to recent College of Wooster research and assessment related to issues of diversity and global engagement. This is also the first issue of *Assessment Matters* to have student and staff contributions. Jessica DuPlaga, Director of International and Off-Campus Programs, summarizes her use of the Global Perspectives Inventory to assess student learning and development outcomes from study abroad programs and her research with Virginia Wickline. Dr. Wickline, a Visiting Assistant Professor in Psychology, and Valeriya Spektor '10, a psychology major, report on findings from their recent research on the cultural adjustment of international students; they offer several recommendations to improve the adjustment process of international students based on their findings. You may also read about the proposal that Marianne Sierocinski '11 developed for an international extension of the College's Social Entrepreneurship Program using institutional diversity data from the HERI Faculty Survey and the CIRP first-year student survey.

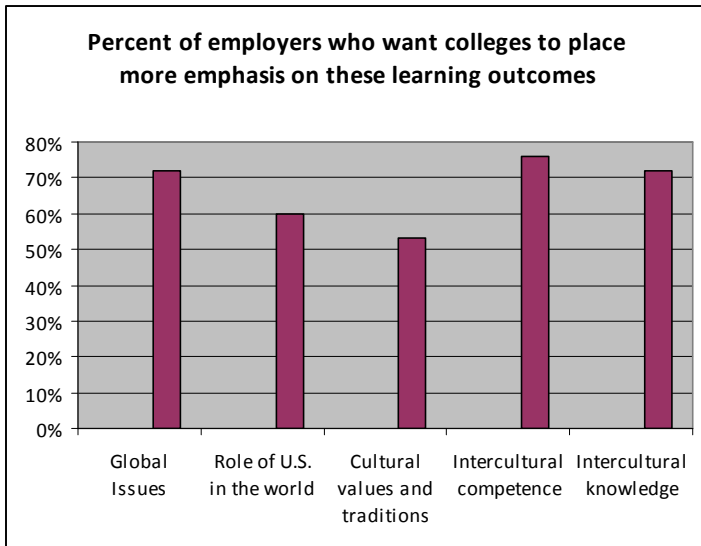
## *Pluralistic orientation of Wooster's first-year students*

In 2006 and 2007, the AAC&U commissioned a study on employers' views on student learning in college. Employers were generally dissatisfied with the skills and abilities of recent graduates, with 63% believing that recent college graduates do not have the skills they need to succeed in the global economy. In none of the twelve skills and areas of knowledge rated did a majority of employers rate recent graduates as "very well prepared." Only 18% of employers rated graduates as "very well prepared" in global knowledge, and more than 45% rated graduates as "not well prepared" in this area. Figure 1 shows that a majority of employers would like colleges to place more emphasis on the following student learning goals: global issues, the role of the United States in the world, cultural values and traditions in the U.S. and the world, intercultural competence (teamwork in diverse groups), and intercultural knowledge (global issues).

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Figure 1



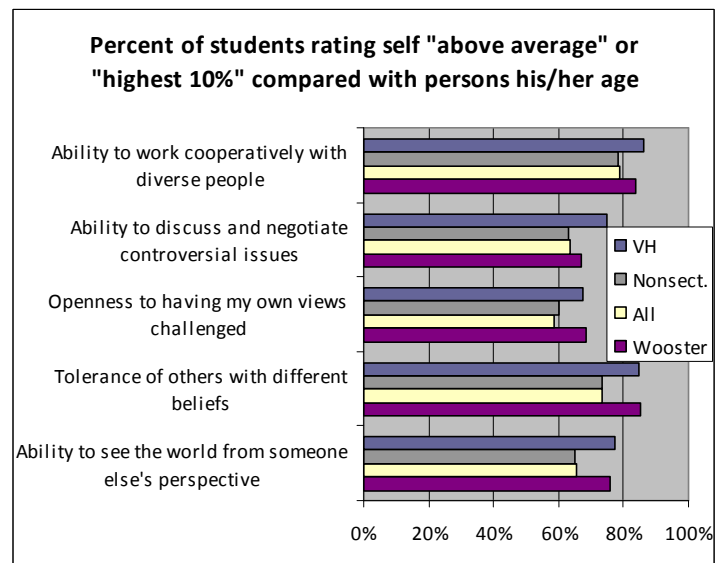
Source: American Association of Colleges and Universities (2008). *How should colleges assess and improve student learning?* Retrieved May 6, 2009, from [http://www.aacu.org/leap/documents/2008\\_Business\\_Leader\\_Poll.pdf](http://www.aacu.org/leap/documents/2008_Business_Leader_Poll.pdf)

Given this articulated need for workplace competencies associated with a diverse world, the Higher Education Research Institute added a new set of items to the CIRP first-year longitudinal surveys to capture some of the key skills employers consider appropriate to succeed in a diverse workplace. Together they constitute a pluralistic orientation factor. Figure 2 shows College of Wooster first-year student responses to these new items compared to all students (All), students from 4-year private nonsectarian colleges (Nonsect.), and students from 4-year, private, very high selectivity colleges (VH). Students were asked to rate themselves compared with the average person their age; responses from students who rated themselves “above average” or among the “top 10%” of their peers are displayed.

Overall, the majority of entering first-year students rated themselves reasonably high on these items. Students tended to rate themselves lowest on the cognitive development item, “openness to having my own views challenged,” except for College of Wooster students, who rated themselves lowest on their “ability

to discuss and negotiate controversial issues.” The largest difference between all men (69.4%) and women (58.5%) occurred on this item, with Wooster having an even larger 16 basis point spread between males’ (75.7%) and females’ (60.0%) response to this item. It is likely that faculty at Wooster will be working with students to improve their ability to discuss and negotiate controversial issues, since 86.8% of Wooster faculty rated “engaging students in civil discourse around controversial issues” as an essential or very important goal for undergraduate education on the HERI Faculty Survey.

Figure 2

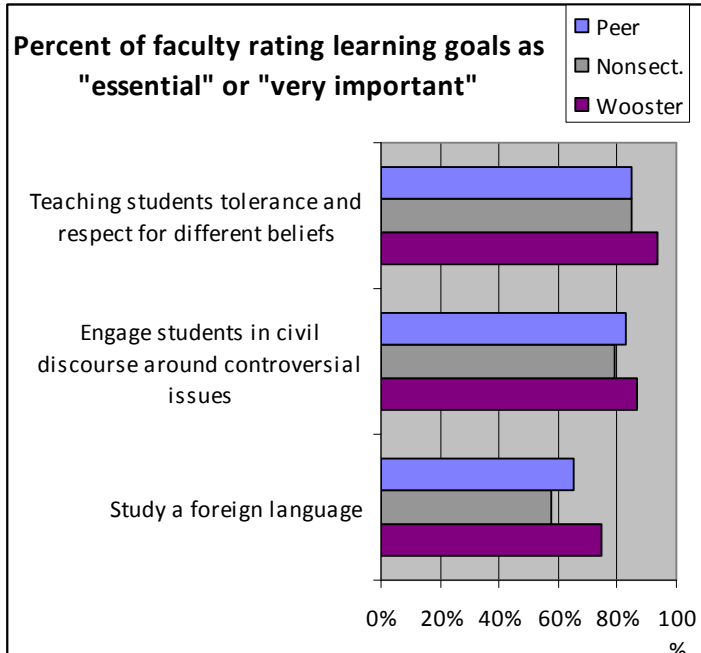


Source: Pryor, J. H., Hurtado, S., DeAngelo, L., Sharkness, J., Romero, L. C., Korn, W.K., & Tran, S. (2008). *The American freshman: National norms for fall 2008*. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA.

Students appear to have the most confidence in their “ability to work cooperatively with diverse people” and their “tolerance of others with different beliefs,” on which Wooster students had the highest percentage (85.3%) of students rating themselves highly than any of the comparison groups of students. The vast majority of Wooster faculty (93.4%) rated “teaching students tolerance and respect for different beliefs” as an essential or very important learning goal. A higher percentage of Wooster faculty than faculty at peer institutions rated several goals for undergraduate

education related to diversity and global engagement as essential or very important. (Figure 3)

Figure 3



Source: DeAngelo, L., Hurtado, S., Pryor, J. H., Kelly, K. R., Santos, J. L., & Korn, W. S. (2009). *The American college teacher: National norms for the 2007-08 HERI faculty survey*. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA.

Other objectives that a higher percentage of Wooster students than students at 4-year nonsectarian colleges considered to be “essential” or “very important” included: helping to promote racial understanding (46.3% versus 40.4%) and improving my understanding of other countries and cultures (70.3% versus 57.1%). A lower percentage of students from very high selectivity colleges than Wooster students rated helping to promote racial understanding (42.4%) as essential or very important, and a higher percentage rated improving my understanding of other countries and cultures (73.2%) as an essential or very important objective. A majority of Wooster first-year students (56.3%) estimated that chances were very good that they would participate in a study abroad program. As Jessica DuPlaga reports next, Wooster students show cognitive gains in cultural knowledge after their study abroad experiences.

## References

American Association of Colleges and Universities (2008). *How should colleges assess and improve student learning?* Retrieved May 5, 2009 from [http://www.aacu.org/leap/documents/2008\\_Business\\_Leader\\_Poll.pdf](http://www.aacu.org/leap/documents/2008_Business_Leader_Poll.pdf)

DeAngelo, L., Hurtado, S., Pryor, J. H., Kelly, K. R., Santos, J. L., & Korn, W. S. (2009). *The American college teacher: National norms for the 2007-08 HERI faculty survey*. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA.

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## Global learning gains by Wooster students from off-campus study

by Jessica DuPlaga, Director of International and Off-Campus Programs

There has been much recent talk in higher education—and particularly at The College of Wooster—about the need for institutions to encourage holistic development, global engagement and an appreciation for diversity amongst their students. Indeed, The College of Wooster has been lauded for many years for its emphasis on holistic student development, and diversity and global engagement is one of President Cornwell’s strategic priorities. In an attempt to measure how off-campus study plays a role in these efforts and to respond to the call for more accountability in off-campus study, the International Programs Office began assessing student development in the spring of 2008 through the use of the Global Perspectives Inventory (GPI).

Briefly, the GPI is a 46-item self-report questionnaire seeking to measure global perspectives through questions focusing on three dimensions of global learning and holistic development: cognitive (knowing, knowledge), intrapersonal (identity and affect), and interpersonal (social interactions and social responsibility). The tool, based on theories relating to intercultural maturity, intercultural communication and holistic human development, was developed by Larry A. Braskamp, David C. Braskamp and Kelly Carter Merrill.

The International Programs Office chose to use the GPI as it corresponds to Wooster’s mission and vision for

holistic student development and closely relates to student development goals for off-campus study. In addition, the GPI is based on theory and its authors conducted extensive research on the tool before making it public. Finally, Wooster's results can be compared to other institutions using the GPI.

The IPO, with the help of Visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology, Dr. Virginia Wickline, created an online assessment that includes, in addition to the GPI, questions about demographic background, perceived language ability, reasons for studying abroad, and perceived cultural knowledge.

The questionnaire was administered to students as a pre-test in spring 2008, as a pre-, control and post-test in fall 2008, and as a post-test in spring 2009. The test will also be administered as a pre-test again in spring 2009. The initial results indicated that the control group of students scored significantly lower than the pre- and post-test groups on many aspects of the GPI scales, while the pre- and post-test groups did not demonstrate significant difference. This raises the possibility that certain types of students—those who are perhaps more aware of the importance of cultural knowledge, who want to interact with diverse others and become socially engaged, who are already more aware of their personal identity or are more emotionally confident—choose to study off-campus. There were also significant differences in cultural knowledge between the pre- and post-test groups, suggesting that off-campus study enhances students' knowledge and that College of Wooster students develop cognitively thanks to off-campus study.

Other data collected shows that students choose to participate in off-campus study to enhance personal development and cultural knowledge, to support academic goals and to gain a widened perspective of the world. However, when they return, they see many more benefits emanating from the experience, including support of professional goals, volunteering, and meeting new people.

In the future, the IPO hopes to continue collecting data to facilitate a longitudinal study of student development through off-campus study, comparing individual students' pre- and post-test results. Further data analysis would also allow the IPO to analyze relationships between student development, program type, prior international experience and language learning.

These data and analysis will appear initially in the IPO's assessment and annual reports and will be used to guide the IPO in its efforts to better serve students and The College. It will help the IPO learn how students currently benefit from off-campus study and how the IPO can work to better match reality to institutional goals.

### *Summary of international student research 2007-08*

*by Virginia Wickline, Visiting Assistant Professor in Psychology and Valeriya Spektor, class of 2010*

[One of Dr. Wickline's areas of expertise is the cultural adjustment of international students, on which she has been conducting research for several years. The following summary is an excerpt of her recent findings and recommendations with student Valeriya Spektor '10 from a survey she conducted with international students from Beloit College, Denison University, The College of Wooster, Grinnell College, Lawrence University, Whitman College, Richmond University, and Kenyon College. Please contact Dr. Wickline for a more extensive overview, summary, and statistics.]

In general, students reported being rather satisfied with their experiences at their liberal arts colleges and generally reported adjusting well to their respective colleges. Their reports on campus climate and services/organizations were generally positive.

Freshmen had a harder time adjusting than upperclassmen in a host of ways. Eastern and non-White students reported more acculturative stress, time alone, and social difficulties than Western and White

students. Introverts and those who spent more time alone each day had a more difficult time adjusting than extroverts and those who made more social contacts of various types. No tremendous differences existed between men and women, but not unlike other populations, men were more likely to report binge drinking as a coping mechanism. There were also largely no differences between students from urban versus small towns/rural areas.

Definite ties existed between how students were adjusting culturally, their social difficulties, and mental health; however, there were not always strong ties between these factors and grade point average. As these domains are not independent, if students are indicating difficulty in one area, or even if they are doing well academically, service providers and professors should ask about other areas of functioning (socially, emotionally, spiritually) to possibly help them from a more holistic point of view, instead of just looking at academic performance.

Socioeconomic status (SES) was negatively correlated with adjustment outcomes, such that students from higher SES experienced less acculturative stress, depression, and social difficulties than students from lower SES groups, while there was no correlation between SES and grade point averages. This suggests that being of higher SES may serve as a protective factor in coming to the U.S. because it affords more opportunities, less stress, etc. Conversely, being of low SES appears to be a risk factor not for academic difficulty but emotionally/psychologically and socially. Service providers may want to know a little about students' financial situation in order to look out for "at risk" students.

Taken as a whole, the pattern of a person most at risk for adjustment difficulties is a freshman who is an introverted, non-Western (or non-White) student; speaks English as a Second Language; has not traveled much (if at all); is from lower socioeconomic status and has higher financial constraints; and spends a lot of time alone each day (perhaps emailing friends and

family back home rather than joining groups and making friends, whether American or international).

Many students expressed a desire to have an opportunity to get to know American students more and to interact with them on a more informal basis. Rather than being programs to "help" internationals, these would be experiences for both groups to get to know more about each other. One idea would be having an event that is typically "American" but is open to international perspectives as well. Possible suggestions for social events might include:

- A 'buddy' program, especially for first year students, either with other internationals or American students, to encourage social connections and learning more about adjusting to college life
- Game nights, where Americans and internationals bring games typical for their countries
- Dance events, music performances, etc. that are open to international and global perspectives. For example, if there are already performance groups that are culturally oriented (gospel choir, break dancing club, folk dancing group, film club, etc.), the groups could try to include music and dance from other countries from time to time
- For orientation, rather than having all events be lecture and information sharing, include some times/events that may have a general discussion topic around a casual event like school trivia, ice cream social, tea, etc.
- Given some students said they wished Americans were more informed about international issues, host some events where the international students are the "expert panel" and invite Americans to come learn about international student issues
- Encouraging departments to invite international students to a departmental meeting to share some of their experiences and suggestions, which may help faculty better understand and help students in their major

Few students indicated having done research with professors or having used academic or personal help services. While other aspects of adjustment were very similar, those who had English as a second language reported fewer academically oriented difficulties than those who were native English speakers. However, English language confidence was negatively correlated with social and psychological adjustment outcomes, such that students with lower confidence experienced more acculturative stress, depression, anxiety, and social difficulties. Encouragement to tap into opportunities provided by professors, service providers, advisors, etc. is encouraged, especially as some students did indicate having a hard time adjusting to the demands of college, developing study skills, and managing their time. Other suggestions for helping international students in these areas include:

- Sessions at orientation week,
- Having representatives from various academic and personal support services speak during orientation about what their offices provide,
- Required meetings with a faculty mentor or advisor on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, at least for the first semester,
- Required visits to each academic service on campus in the first semester for first-year students,
- An optional or required study table, especially for students for whom English is their Second Language, and
- A weekly conversation skills hour for non-native speakers that includes American students, in order to practice conversational English skills and connect with American students.

Students indicated a moderate amount of depressive and anxious symptoms during the cultural adjustment process. For students who are experiencing more difficulty:

- Student Wellness Centers may want specifically to target international students and explain their services, as the idea of therapy may be unfamiliar to individuals from some cultures.

- An international student support group, where students can freely talk about their stresses, may be beneficial to some students.
- As therapy may be counter to some students' values, alternative information or "discussion" sessions could be especially helpful for international students. For example, a presentation on stress reduction, time management, sleep suggestions, or study aids are all things that are related to mental health but do not require the one-on-one time that is common in American therapy models.

Financial aid and more administrative support for transportation and cultural excursions/experiences with American college students and the broader American culture are the things students most often indicated as ways their college could improve their services. As to cultural experiences, perhaps schools could look into:

- Financing a shuttle or keeping a list of community volunteers that may be willing to drive international students to stores and events from time to time,
- Organizing trips to Cleveland and other locations,
- Looking for volunteers to host events like Thanksgiving or Christmas, to give those that are staying here an opportunity to experience American holidays, and
- Getting businesses, churches, etc. to sponsor events on campus or provide some free tickets to American cultural events.

International orientation programs generally received positive reviews from students. However, international student offices may still benefit from holding focus groups with students to find out their perspectives about how these services could be more relevant and/or helpful to them.

Students often found food choices prohibitive and would like to either see their colleges provide more ethnic food options and/or consider being more flexible in their meal plans, so they can cook for themselves without feeling they are "wasting" food money.

Students may also find comfort in international pot luck dinners or events through international student offices where ethnic/cultural food options are the focus.

## *Proposal for a global social entrepreneurship program*

by Marianne Sierocinski, class of 2011

Participating in the Social Entrepreneurship (SE) Program at The College of Wooster has provided me with the opportunity to apply SE in an experiential learning environment, actively engaging in this innovative risk-taking process to create ventures with sustainable economic and social value. My group was charged with formulating a proposal for a Global Social Entrepreneurship program, an international extension of the current SE program. Conducting market research for our proposed product (an experiential study abroad program) represented an integral aspect of our business plan, especially since we sought a grant from the Office of the President to cover our start-up costs. Jessica DuPlaga, the Director of International and Office Campus Programs, assisted our effort by connecting us with existing institutional resources that could help bolster our proposal.

In particular, I examined the 2008 CIRP Freshman Survey and the 2007-08 HERI Faculty Survey. Within the 2008 CIRP data, I focused on objectives considered to be “essential” or “very important” by incoming students in the following categories: “influencing social values,” “helping others who are in difficulty,” and “participating in a community action program.” I also looked at students’ estimates of whether there was a “very good” chance they would participate in volunteer or community service work. Similar themes of questions relating to community service and social action, in addition to interest in global issues, were requested from the 2007-08 HERI Faculty Survey. The availability of comparative CIRP and HERI Faculty data from other institutions was particularly helpful when framing our proposal.

Ultimately, I incorporated the HERI Faculty Survey data into the final business plan under a discussion of the possible future scalability of the Global Social Entrepreneurship (GSE) program:

*Data from the 2007-2008 Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) Faculty Survey provide evidence that supports the possibility of expanding GSE to include more faculty members at The College of Wooster. In the 2008 survey, 67% of faculty reported that “[encouraging] students to become agents of social change” constituted “very important” or “essential” goals for undergraduates. In addition, 70% of faculty reported that they “strongly” or “somewhat” agreed with the statement: “colleges should be actively involved in solving social problems.” Regarding global engagement, a higher percentage of College of Wooster faculty (compared to all four-year private colleges) reported conducting research/writing focused on international/global issues within the last two years (37.4% of Wooster faculty compared to 27.8% overall). Obviously, more research is needed in this area, but these data show that a considerable portion of faculty at The College of Wooster could be interested in a program such as GSE.*

Overall, I found the insights provided by these additional resources to be both helpful and compelling evidence to include in the business plan.

## *Assessment Briefs*

The following assessment instruments can be used to assess diversity, global learning, or cultural knowledge and awareness and related learning outcomes:

***Intercultural effectiveness*** includes knowledge of cultures and cultural practices (one’s own and others’), complex cognitive skills for decision-making in intercultural contexts, social skills to function effectively in diverse groups, and personal attributes that include flexibility and openness to new ideas.

**Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale – Short Form (M-GUDS-S)** is a 15-item multiple choice

questionnaire that measures student attitudes, cognitions, and behaviors regarding diversity. Developed by Marie L. Miville, this instrument uses a 6-point Likert-type scale to assess student awareness and acceptance of both similarities and differences among people. It is used by the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education.

[www.wabashnationalstudy.org/wns/instruments.html](http://www.wabashnationalstudy.org/wns/instruments.html)

The **Global Perspective Inventory (GPI)** measures a person's *global perspective*, with an emphasis on the importance of *cultural influences*. The instrument reflects our living in a global world, in which multiple perspectives about knowing, sense of identity, and relationships with others are distinct and serve as powerful influences in our society. The GPI was developed with the idea that all persons ask three major questions: How do I know? Who am I? How do I relate to others? In our pluralistic society answering these questions of life now requires a global perspective.

<https://gpi.central.edu/index.cfm>

The **Learning from Study Abroad Instrument** was developed in a Teagle Foundation-funded collaborative project of the Associated Colleges of the Midwest, Associated Colleges of the South, and the Great Lakes Colleges Association. The instrument assesses *student learning outcomes for study-abroad programs consistent with the goals of liberal education*.

[www.glca.org/Programs,%20Groups%20&%20Service/Programs/?p\\_id=26](http://www.glca.org/Programs,%20Groups%20&%20Service/Programs/?p_id=26)

The AAC&U's VALUE Project has faculty teams creating **metarubrics** on the following essential learning outcomes: *civic knowledge and engagement (local and global)* and *intercultural knowledge and competence*. Leadership and partner campuses will be testing revised versions of these rubrics this spring.

<http://www.aacu.org/value/metarubrics.cfm>

## Assessment Calendar

### Meetings, Events, Conferences, & Deadlines

Apr 1	Assessment Committee and Educational Policy Committee joint meeting
Apr 17-21	NCA Higher Learning Commission Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL
May 14	WAB Critical Writing Assessment of spring 2009 papers
May 24-29	NAFSA 2009 Annual Conference & Expo Fostering Global Engagement Through International Education Los Angeles, CA
May 25	1 <sup>st</sup> of 3 due dates for annual departmental progress reports on assessment for the 2008-09 academic year
Jun 10-13	NASPA International Assessment & Retention Conference, New Orleans, LA
Jun 28- Jul 1	HEDS Summer Conference Greenville, SC

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John Neuhoff, Psychology

*Assessment Matters* is written by Theresa Ford, who encourages you to provide feedback on the newsletter, to share your ideas for the newsletter, and to submit materials to include in the newsletter.