

# **The First-Year Seminar as High-Impact Practice**

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**What are HIPs?**

# High-Impact Practices (HIPs)

“...curricular & co-curricular **structures** that tend to draw upon high-quality pedagogies and practices in **pursuit of 21st century learning outcomes**; they are ‘teaching and learning practices that have been widely tested and have been shown to be beneficial for college students...[toward] increase[d] rates of retention & student engagement”

G.D. Kuh (2008), *High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, & Why They Matter*. Association of American Colleges & Universities.

# High-Impact Practices (HIPs)

*Structures* rather than programs

“**Investment of time & energy** over an extended period that has unusually positive effects on student engagement in educationally purposeful behavior”

*Kuh in Brownell & Swaner (2010),*

*Five high-impact practices:*

*Research on learning outcomes, completion, and quality, p. x*

# Key High-Impact Experiences, Programs, & Approaches

First-Year Seminars & Experiences

Common Intellectual Experiences

Learning Communities

Writing-Intensive Courses

Collaborative Assignments &  
Projects

Undergraduate Research

Diversity/Global Learning

ePortfolios

Service Learning, Community-Based  
Learning

Internships

Capstone Courses & Projects

# Characteristics of HIPs

Creates an investment of time & energy

Includes interaction with faculty & peers about substantive matters

Demands reflections & integrated learning

Real-world applications

High expectations

Includes frequent feedback

Exposure to diverse perspectives

Public displays of accountability

**Why HIPs?**

# Why HIPs?

Higher persistence to second year, higher graduation rates overall, better grades

Foster a sense of community on campus leading to greater satisfaction with college

Increase in cognitive & personal development

Improve students' academic engagement, intellectual development, writing and reading skills, critical thinking, & integrative learning...leading to greater intellectual curiosity

Improve students' self-efficacy & identity development, higher levels of civic engagement & social responsibility, appreciation for diversity, & intercultural awareness

Substantial positive effect for historically underserved students

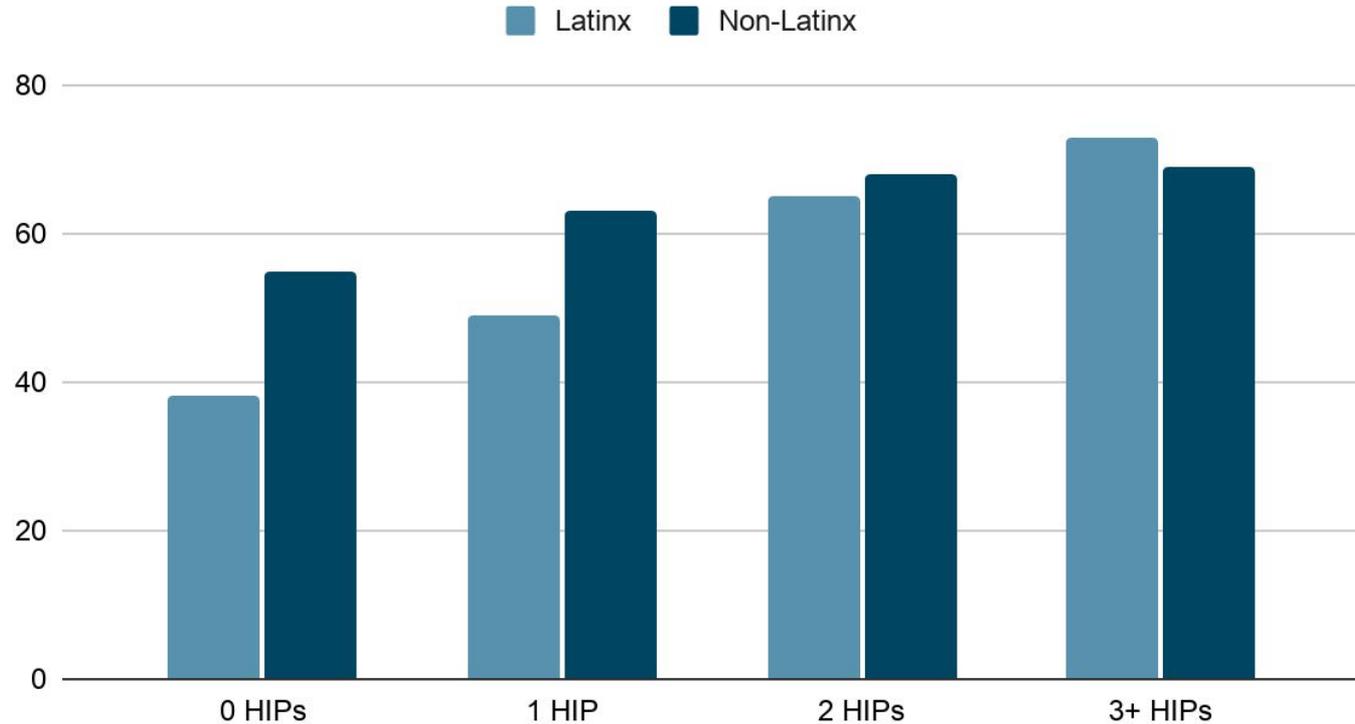
*For citations on all of these outcomes, look to Greenfield, Keup, & Gardner (2013),  
Developing & Sustaining Successful First-Year Programs: A Guide for Practitioners*

# Equity Effects

“The most valuable finding [is] the ‘equity effects’ that appear in students’ report of their learning as their success is boosted by HIPs; the equity-minded perspective that educators can nurture; **the principles of inclusive excellence that can guide colleges and universities in providing a liberal education that offers not only equitable access to HIPs, but also equitable achievement of outcomes**”

Schneider & Albertine, 2013, *Assessing Underserved Students’ Engagement in High-Impact Practices*

# Compensatory Effect



## California State University Northridge Graduation by Ethnicity & Participation in HIPs

Huber (2010), [\*Does Participation in Multiple High Impact Practices Affect Student Success at Cal State Northridge?: Some Preliminary Insights\*](#)

## **Adaptability of HIPs**

“Key conditions [of HIPs] can be adapted and incorporated into any teaching & learning situation inside or outside the classroom to promote higher levels of student performance”

Kuh qtd. In Brownell & Swaner, 2010, *Five High-Impact Practices*

**HIPs in the FYS**

# First-Year Seminars & 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”

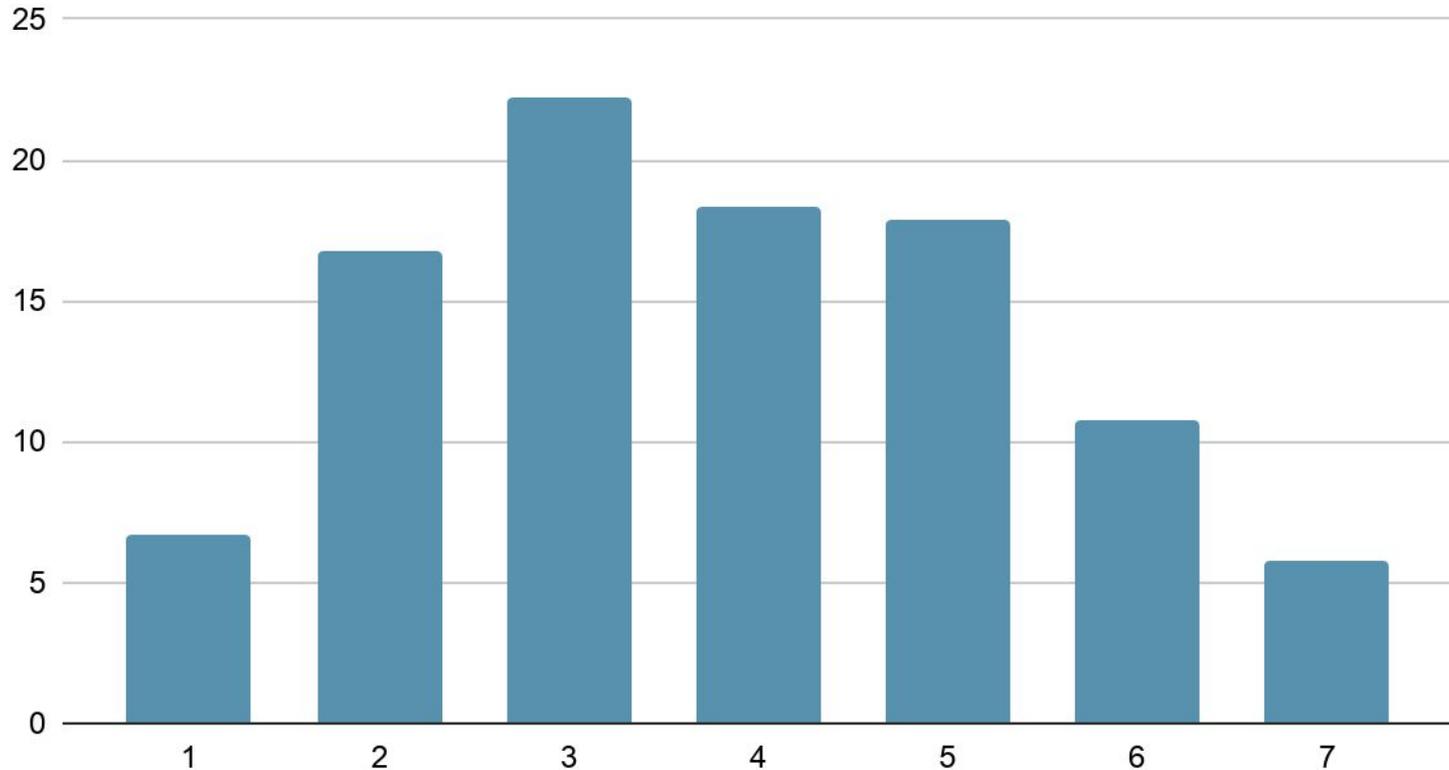
*via Association of American College & Universities writing in High-Impact Practices*

# Common Connections Between FYS & Other HIPs

High-Impact Practice in the FYS	%age of Colleges Reporting
Collaborative assignments & projects	67.2
Diversity/global learning	58.8
Writing-intensive	42.5
Common reading experience	38.1
Learning community	36.8
Serving learning	31.8
Undergraduate research	12.8

*Compiled via multiple surveys of First-Year Seminars & Programs*

# Number of HIPs Offered in College FYS Courses



*Data from 2012-2013 National Survey of First-Year Seminars*

# **Ideas & Suggestions**

# Key Components of HIPs in FYS

Periodic, structured opportunities to reflect on and integrate learning

Interactions with faculty & peers about substantive matters

Frequent, timely, & constructive feedback

Opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real-world applications

Public demonstration of competence

Experiences with diversity

Significant investment of time & effort

Performance expectations set at appropriately high levels

# Opportunities to Reflect on & Integrate Learning

Reflective journal/weekly reflective exercises

Reflective papers/assignments

Personal narrative

Self-assessment inventories

Reflective essay or pre/prost reflective essays/letters to self

Teaching & practicing principles of self-regulated learning (planning, doing, reflecting)

Personal goal setting/life planning/values clarification

Educational plan

Classroom assessment techniques (e.g.: one-minute paper, think-pair-share)

Creation of concept maps

Reading responses

# Interactions with Faculty & Peers

Group/partner paper/presentation/project

Group discussions/structured classroom discussions

Collaborative learning activities/small-group activities

Learning community configuration

Learning teams/peer teaching

Replies to journal entries; dialogue in journals

Assigned visits to faculty

One-on-one conferences

# **Frequent, Timely, & Constructive Feedback**

Encouraging use of writing center

Recording presentations

Writing conferences

Peer review workshops

Use of rubrics

Scaffolded assignments

Required revisions

# **Relevance of Learning Through Real-World Applications**

Field trips/field experiences

Participation in on-campus/off-campus experiences

Activities emphasizing connection between college & future careers

Service learning

Research on real-world problems

Alumni mentors

# Public Demonstration of Competence

Participation in research symposium

Oral presentations in public forum or in class

Submission of class work for publication (print or online)

Conducting primary research & presenting findings

Public teaching demonstrations or outreach

# Experiences with Diversity

Establishing diversity as a primary focus of the seminar

Community service experiences

Social barometer activities

Course texts representing a variety of perspectives, genre, voices

Elements of identity presentation/structured opportunities for sharing

Faculty development on inclusive teaching

# Significant Investment of Time & Effort

Research papers (on academic topic, planned major)

Academic papers (e.g.: thesis driven, argumentative)

Attendance requirement

Required reading

Direct research experience

Work demanding substantial thinking, writing, revision, collaboration

# **Performance Expectations Set at Appropriately High Levels**

Discussions about purpose of the course/introduction to college-level academic expectations

Scaffolded/staged writing assignments/expectations for college-level writing

Student-led discussions/peer teaching

Significant reading (quantity, difficulty)

Gamification

Direct research experiences

**What HIPs have  
you incorporated  
into your  
FYS courses?**

# Some Key Takeaways:

There are MANY ways to incorporate HIPs into courses; **find a strategy that works for your teaching style & your content.**

Some of the things we think of as “bonus” components (e.g.: reflective writing, conversation, goal setting) are actually not just “nice to have”--they’re high impact! **Lean into those components proudly & know that they matter short-term AND long-term for students’ learning and personal development!**

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