

Curricular Engagement Report

Academic Year 2017

Background

Between the Center for Service & Learning and the Office of Community Engagement, a history of counting service-learning (2000-2012) and community-based learning courses (2103-2016) has been established. The information is used for school- and campus-level reporting (e.g., Chancellor's Report to the Community, Curricular Engagement Report to the Deans), award applications (e.g., Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement), and key data points for the campus and leadership communications. The way these courses are counted has varied over time, largely due to changes in university policies or priorities and the development of different information technologies (i.e., RISE designations, Community-Based Learning Inventory). Further, the data collected in the past have varied due to the changing nature in the work area of civic or community engagement at IUPUI. For example, in the past additional questions have been asked about, but not limited to: course design, process, and partnerships.

Purpose

With the tradition of “counting courses” firmly in place, the Office of Community Engagement sought to utilize current systems and processes to accomplish this annual task and examine the following:

- What can we learn about **courses utilizing community-based learning or service-learning through existing systems and processes**? Stated differently: Without asking faculty to respond to an email or other data collection tool, what is already being captured through existing information technologies at IUPUI and what is missing when it comes to community-based or service-learning courses?
- What are **the similarities or differences between data collected through DMAI compared to course designations** (i.e., RISE/EL/GRE)?
- What are the **limitations and benefits** of this methodology and how might the information collected be **useful**?

Methodology

In May of 2017, a “Data Request Form” was submitted to the Faculty-Level Data Advisory Council requesting the following data points for courses offered during the 2016-2017 academic year (fall, spring, and summer):

- Within DMAI, those that checked the “SL” and/or “CE” box in courses taught: term, subject, component, school offering that course, course department code, enrollment, instructor status/appointment (e.g. adjunct, tenure-tracked);
- Registrar records of RISE courses, particularly the following codes: SL01-04, SL12, SL13, SL 23, EL01-03, EL12, EL13, EL23, SR35, IS35, GRS1, GRS2, GRS4-8, and GRE0-3, GRE7, and GRE8 for AY2016-2017: term, subject, component, school offering that course, course department code, enrollment & instructor status/appointment;

- Students enrolled in above experiences: unduplicated count of students, descriptive analysis of student characteristics such as enrollment status, percentage of students enrolled based on ethnicity, gender, percentages of various levels of unmet financial aid enrolled in these experiences.

The first data points outlined above are particularly relevant because 2016-2017 was the first academic year data has been collected through the newly integrated platform Digital Measures Activity Insight (DMAI). The student characteristics became simplified to just “unduplicated head count” of students enrolled in the final data set.

Once the data request was approved, we worked very closely with the leadership and staff of Institutional Research and Decision Support (IRDS) to assure our request was clear and realistic. Simple descriptive statistics were utilized to present the findings below, requiring only that the researchers work with spreadsheets. All courses with zero enrollments were excluded from analysis.

Inclusion Criteria

As mentioned, both service-learning and more recently, community-based learning courses (e.g., internships, clinical/practicum) have been counted to capture a variety of ways in which students spend time in a community setting or work with a community organization on a project. Below is an outline of which course designations fit into each category based upon the RISE designations. See Appendix A for the RISE designation definitions.

Community-based courses:

- Undergraduate or graduate level courses with enrollments greater than zero;
- Courses tagged with one of the following RISE designations:
 - SL01-04, 12, 13, 23
 - EL01, 02, 03, 13, 23
 - IS35
 - SR35
- Or, courses tagged with one of the following graduate level designations (EXP1):
 - GRS1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8
 - GRE0, 1, 2, 3, 7, 8
- And/or courses where faculty checked the “SL” and/or “CE” box in DMAI.

Service-learning courses:

- Undergraduate or graduate level courses with enrollments greater than zero;
- Were tagged with one of the following RISE designations:
 - SL01, 02, 03, 04, 12, 13, 23
 - IS35
 - GRS1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8
- And/or courses where faculty checked only the “SL” box in DMAI.

Notable Findings & Possible Implications

The following section presents the findings from this study and a brief summary of the usefulness as well as limitations of this method for each data point historically reported. When reporting on the number of courses, we've presented community-based learning as well as only service-learning.

Table 1				
Summary of Findings[±]				
	Number of Students (Unduplicated)	Number of Community-Based Courses, including SL	Number of Service-Learning Courses	Number of Instructors
TOTAL	8,734	891	326	323
Undergraduate	7,853	761	272	272
Graduate	1,133	130	54	51

[±] NOTE: see previous section, "Inclusion Criteria" to understand the difference between community-based courses and service-learning courses.

Counting Courses

Similarities and/or Differences between DMAI and RISE designated courses/counting. **232 (26%) of the 891 community-based course sections taught at IUPUI in AY 2016-2017 have no formal RISE designation**, yet the instructor checked the "SL" and/or "CE" box in DMAI. Currently, DMAI alone is not capturing all community-based courses, but does allow faculty to self-report. DMAI does have the potential to serve as a "checks and balance" process if faculty were given additional guidance. To our knowledge, the faculty who completed a DMAI for this report were not given additional guidance, yet 34 RISE designated course sections were checked in DMAI as "SL" and/or "CE".

Possible Implications. **Going forward investigators may need to engage in a different or more robust effort to better capture/report/count community-based graduate and professional course sections.** When looking at the course sections that were counted/reported for the 2015-2016 AY (n=1,224) 428 sections were counted in the graduate or professional areas. In this round of data collection, and admittedly a very different methodology, a very small amount of graduate or professional course sections were captured, n = 130. Of those 130, 57 have a RISE or EXP1 designation (73 have no RISE or EXP1 designation). In DMAI, 77 graduate or professional course sections were tagged with the "SL" and/or "CE" and of those 77 only two *also had* a RISE designation.

Students

Possible implications. Given the nature and history of the RISE designations at IUPUI and the new faculty annual reporting platform, DMAI, there are a lot of questions about students experiences in community-based or service-learning courses that could be answered in the future, utilizing existing data collection platforms or other, institutional-level surveys (e.g., faculty or staff survey).

First, however, it must be noted that there is a major limitation to looking at the 8,734 as a valid or reliable report of students who completed a community-based curriculum, project, or experience. As far as the authors of this report know, there is currently no existing way to validate if the community-based element was required or optional, or completed or not, by the student enrolled in that course.

A couple of questions that could be pursued are, but not limited to:

- Assuming the purpose of the RISE designation is working, which is to make visible to the student at time of enrollment there is a service requirement or community-based component to this course, *is there a correlation between having a designation/knowning and levels of satisfaction with a course experience?* Depending on how many courses utilize the blue[®] course evaluation process, this question may be relatively easy to answer. This information may motivate faculty (especially tenure-tracked who rely on course evaluations as part of their P&T dossier/process) to make sure students know, at the time of enrollment, what the curriculum or learning experience will be via the designation process.
- *What “type of student” are self-selecting into community-based learning courses and is there a relationship between these characteristics and their satisfaction or success (DFW rate) with that course?* OR What is the relationship between student success (retention, persistence, DFW rates) and self-selecting (i.e., knowing at the time of enrollment) or not (i.e., not knowing at the time of enrollment) into a community-based learning course? As IUPUI continues to implement programs and initiatives to enroll under-represented students and/or retain at-risk students through graduation, this information would be useful to administrators who wish to better understand if/how community-based learning experience correlates to these student populations and their success at IUPUI (if not after).

Instructors

Limitation. Completing a DMAI is not required of all faculty types (e.g., adjunct instructors). This is a limitation of the methodology and should be taken into consideration when counting courses in the future as well.

Rank/Status	n	Percent of all instructors (N=323)
Tenured/Tenure-track Faculty*	64	20%
Adjunct	59	18%
Clinical	49	15%
Lecturers	46	14%
No designation	29	9%
Visiting	13	4%
Academic Administrator	3	1%
Graduate student instructors	2	<1%

Gender			
	Female	228	69%
	Male	102	21%
Race/Ethnicity			
	White	265	82%
	Black/African American	31	10%
	Hispanic/Latino	15	4.6%
	Asian	9	2.7%
	Two or more races	2	0.6%
	NR-Alien	2	0.6%
	American Indian/Alaska Native	1	0.003%

*NOTE: One of the sources of data for this report is bias toward tenured or tenure-tracked faculty; our data skews toward this type of instructor at IUPUI. Please see the section directly above this table.

Community Partners and Estimated Service Hours

It is important to acknowledge that this methodology rules out the capturing of community partners and estimated service hours. Partners and hours are, however, being captured in a different way: through the newly adopted [Collaboratory](#) platform. The current disadvantage of using the Collaboratory is that it will take more time to capture hours and partners since those data points do not currently reside in any other IUPUI data collection platform, system or process. The advantages of using the Collaboratory are that it is more robust and collects useful information about not only course-based partners or time, but other important institutional resources and actors involved in community-based or –engaged experiences, program, initiatives, or products. For example, in addition to reporting hours, we will also know what role the students played in the project (e.g., undergraduate research, volunteering, advocacy, internship, work study). Beyond hours, we will also be able to illustrate *how* students are engaged, including, course-based experiences and beyond (e.g., co-curricular, research, assistantship). The long-term advantage of leveraging the Collaboratory to supplement what is missing from this methodology is the ability to ask deeper, more meaningful questions about a variety of community-engaged activities that involve students.

Summary & Remaining Question

Overall, this approach captures the majority of the information historically collected (i.e., number of courses, students, faculty) using minimal resources and more importantly, it is much less burdensome on faculty. However, we should not assume it is without flaws given the historical challenges with course designations (see [AY16 Curricular Engagement Report](#)). We recognize it is likely some of the 891 course sections counted (and consequently unique number of faculty and students) were in fact not community-based learning or service-learning experiences. Similarly, we are likely also missing courses (especially graduate and professional) that are not designated, were not reported through DMAI, or because those courses were taught by (adjunct or associate) instructors who are not required to complete DMAI.

The OCE continues to be interested in conversation(s) with university stakeholders to determine who needs this information, for what purpose, and how often it can/should be reported. The OCE

is responsible for capturing information used in award applications and reporting on behalf of the university (e.g., accreditation, speeches, marketing) when it comes to “deepening our commitment to community engagement” (IUPUI Strategic Plan, Goal #7). No award applications ask for or are (solely) based on number of curricular service hours completed by students. However, as an established tradition, we recognize the value this practice may have and remain committed to capturing the information on an on-going basis in ways that do not add additional burden (e.g., Collaboratory) to IUPUI constituents.

One remaining question is how are community-based experiences scaffolded across a program of study and required as part of other high-impact practices (e.g., core curriculum, honors, mentored research, study abroad). This information was required for the 2015 Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement and will likely be required again, when IUPUI reapplies for this designation in 2025. As the primary responsible party for collecting and reporting on this information, and as good stewards of this information, we are interested in exploring these questions and any additional questions other stakeholders may have that could inform decision-making.

Proposed Next Steps

As systems and processes continue to evolve, so too does this task. We remain committed to ensuring information collected about community-based or –engaged experiences supports informed decision-making and is useful to a variety of stakeholders both internal and external to IUPUI. We are presenting here a few next steps, which have also been shared with IRDS, and appreciate additional input from others as we continue to be partners in this work.

Courses at Census

As mentioned, one of our remaining questions is “how are students working in and with the community through a variety of teaching and learning practices (e.g., undergraduate research, learning communities)?” To ensure data accuracy and reduce the burden of data entry, we ask that IRDS share with us an excel file of courses offered at IUPUI, each academic year, for two purposes: 1) batch uploading courses (i.e., Course Number, Course Name, Section, Term) into the Collaboratory for data collection through this platform at census, and 2) for continuing to be able to count community-based and service-learning courses taught at IUPUI each academic year.

Usage and Reporting

We are interested in working with IRDS and the Strategic Plan Champions on understanding what data would be useful for informed decision-making and reporting. We propose continued discussions related to the information captured in this report, stakeholder interests, and plans to share the information more widely (if at all), frequency, and timing.

In summary, OCE is very grateful for IRDS’s support in this exploratory process and hope to be able to provide useful information in the future that supports informed decision-making and demonstrates progress toward the IUPUI’s goals as outlined in our strategic plan.

Appendix A

Summary of RISE Designations Included in this Project

Requirement Designation	Requirement Designation Description	Number of Courses with this Designation
SL01	Community Based Research	16
SL02	Organized Community Service	120
SL03	Significant Time in Community	45
SL04	Service in Different Culture	3
SL12	Community Based Research & Org'd Community Service	2
SL13	Significant Time in Community Based Research	2
SL23	Significant Time in Organized Community Service	39
SR35	Faculty-Mentored Research and Service Learning	2
EL01	Community Based Research	39
EL02	Organized Community Service	30
EL03	Significant Time in Community	272
EL12	Community Based Research & Org'd Community Service	0
EL13	Significant Time in Community Based Research	1
EL23	Significant Time in Organized Community Service	1
IS35	International Service-Learning	2
GRS1	Organized Community Service	1
GRS2	Significant Time in Community	4
GRS4	Community Based Research & Org'd Community Service	3
GRS5	<i>Cannot find description</i>	2
GRS7	Significant Time in Organized Community Service	6
GRS8	Org'd Community Service in Diff Culture	2
GRE0	Community-based Research	2
GRE1	Organized Community Service Activity	4
GRE2	Significant Time in Community Setting	22
GRE3	Immersed in Diff Culture	2
GRE7	Significant Time in Organized Community Service	3