



# High Impact Practices

2021 Results from the Multi-  
Institutional Study of Leadership

Center for the Study of Student Life

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) is an international survey that investigates the extent to which the university environment contributes to student leadership development and the preparation of global citizens. This brief report uses data from the 2021 MSL dataset to examine questions pertaining to student participation in high-impact practices. According to the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research (2021), high-impact practices are activities that require substantial time and effort, enable learning outside of the classroom, require faculty and staff to interact with students in a meaningful way and provide opportunities for feedback. The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) includes culminating senior experiences, first-year seminars, learning communities, living-learning programs, practicums (and other similar experiences), research with faculty and study abroad experiences as activities that qualify as high-impact practices (2022). The MSL list of high-impact practices is broader than the AAC&U list, so practices that did not align with the AAC&U list were not included when analyzing the data from the MSL's high-impact practice section of the survey.

## KEY FINDINGS

- **85.9%** of students reported participating in at least one high-impact practice
  - Excluding first-year or freshman seminars, **57.1%** of students reported participating in at least one high-impact practice.
- **71.2%** of students reported participating in a first-year or freshman seminar course, which was the most common high-impact practice
- **35.4%** of students reported participating in a practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical experience, which was the second most common high-impact practice
- **7.5%** of students reported having studied abroad, the least common high-impact practice
- A higher proportion of women (**89.1%**) were involved in at least one high-impact practice compared to men (**82.5%**)

## INTRODUCTION

The Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) is an online survey that was conducted to measure college experiences that contribute to student leadership development and, in turn, contribute to the preparation of engaged citizens. The MSL was administered online during March 2021. Questions related to the high-impact practice engagement of students were asked on the survey instrument. This report summarizes data from these questions for the 2021 administration.

In 2021, the survey was administered to a random sample of 4,000 undergraduate students on The Ohio State University's Columbus campus. Further, because Latinx and international students were underrepresented in previous administrations of the MSL, these groups were oversampled in 2021. A total of 715 students from the random sample and Latinx and international student oversamples responded for a response rate of 15.4%. This group of undergraduate students at Ohio State is the focus of the report. For self-reported demographics, see Appendix A.

## FINDINGS

### HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES

High-impact practices promote active learning through student engagement. To measure the high-impact practices of students, the MSL survey instrument asked respondents about the high-impact practices that they engaged in. The table below provides detailed information on responses to the question.

**Which of the following have you engaged in during your college experience?:**

	Yes	No
Culminating senior experience ( <i>n</i> = 680)	11.3%	88.7%
First-year or freshman seminar course ( <i>n</i> = 680)	71.2%	28.8%
Learning community or other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together ( <i>n</i> = 680)	22.9%	77.1%
Living-learning program ( <i>n</i> = 680)	13.2%	86.8%
Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical experience ( <i>n</i> = 680)	35.4%	64.6%
Research with a faculty member outside of class ( <i>n</i> = 680)	14.4%	85.6%
Study abroad ( <i>n</i> = 680)	7.5%	92.5%

### Demographic Differences

A variable was created in which students were coded into two different categories based on if they participated in at least one of the above high-impact practices or did not participate in any high-impact practices. The following table examines differences in participation in high-impact practices between demographic groups. Percentages indicate the proportion of students in each group that participated in one or more high-impact practices during college. Chi-square tests were conducted to identify statistically significant differences. Small sample sizes and/or high variability in responses could decrease the ability of statistical tests to detect statistically significant differences between demographic groups. Therefore, non-significant findings should be interpreted with caution when sample sizes are small. Statistically significant differences were found within gender identity. A higher proportion of women participated in high-impact practices than men. In addition, marginally significant differences were found within racial/ethnic identity.

### High-Impact Practice Participation During College (*n* = 680)

<b>All Students</b>	680	85.9%
<b>Gender Identity</b>		*
Man	160	82.5%
Woman	340	89.1%
Transgender/Gender Non-Conforming	--	--
<b>Racial/Ethnic Identity</b>		†
White	321	85.7%
Black	27	74.1%
Asian	59	91.5%
Latinx	23	91.3%
Multiracial/ethnic	57	94.7%
Other race/ethnicity	26	92.3%
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>		
Heterosexual	377	86.5%
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Queer, Questioning	134	88.8%
Preferred response not listed	--	--
<b>First-Generation College Student</b>		
Continuing-generation college student	439	87.7%
First-generation college student	72	84.7%
Don't know	--	--
<b>Citizenship/Generation Status</b>		
Second-generation or higher	376	85.6%
First-generation U.S.-born	78	92.3%
Foreign-born (naturalized/permanent resident)	25	84.0%
International student	39	89.7%
<b>Disability Status</b>		
No disability	431	86.5%
Has disability	84	89.3%
<b>Political Affiliation</b>		
Liberal	277	88.8%
Moderate	190	85.3%
Conservative	79	83.5%

## REFERENCES

- American Association of Colleges and Universities. (2022, January 7). High-Impact Practices. AAC&U. Retrieved February 8, 2022, from <https://www.aacu.org/trending-topics/high-impact>
- Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research. (2021). *High-Impact Practices*. Evidence-Based Improvement in Higher Education. Retrieved January 26, 2022, from <https://nsse.indiana.edu/nsse/survey-instruments/high-impact-practices.html>



## APPENDIX A: STUDENT SELF-REPORTED DEMOGRAPHICS

	<i>n</i>	%
<b>Gender Identity</b>		
Man	160	31.0%
Woman	341	66.1%
Transgender/Gender Non-Conforming	15	2.9%
<b>Racial/Ethnic Identity</b>		
White	322	62.6%
Black	27	5.3%
Asian	59	11.5%
Latinx	23	4.5%
Other race/ethnicity	26	5.1%
Multiracial/ethnic	57	11.1%
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>		
Heterosexual	378	73.3%
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Queer, Questioning	134	26.0%
Preferred response not listed	4	0.8%
<b>First-Generation College Student</b>		
Continuing generation college student	440	84.8%
First-generation college student	72	13.9%
Don't know	7	1.3%
<b>Citizenship/Generation Status</b>		
Second-generation or higher	377	72.6%
First-generation U.S.-born	78	15.0%
Foreign-born (naturalized/permanent resident)	25	4.8%
International student	39	7.5%
<b>Disability Status</b>		
No disability	432	83.7%
Has disability	84	16.3%
<b>Political Affiliation</b>		
Liberal	277	50.6%
Moderate	191	34.9%
Conservative	79	14.4%

*Note.* A number of respondents did not complete demographic items; subtotals within each demographic category are less than the overall reported number of respondents for each year. Due to sample sizes, students who identified their gender as transgender/gender non-conforming, selected 'preferred response not listed' for sexual orientation, or selected 'don't know' for first-generation college student status were not included in demographic analyses for gender identity, sexual orientation, or first-generation college student status. Students in the Latinx and international student oversample did not all respond to the demographic items.