



# Student Life Learning Goals and Outcomes by Involvement

A Research Report from the  
2024 Student Life Survey

Columbus Campus

Center for the Study of Student Life

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report examines Ohio State student life learning goals and outcomes. Data for this report are from the 2024 Student Life Survey. In January 2024, 9,000 students on the Columbus campus were surveyed, out of which 1,488 responded, resulting in a response rate of 16.5%. A sample of 5,500 undergraduate students were surveyed; 15.5% responded ( $n = 850$ ). A sample of 3,500 graduate and professional students were surveyed; 18.2% responded ( $n = 638$ ). Data were weighted to be representative of the full Ohio State population.

### KEY FINDINGS – UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

- Overall, involved undergraduate students are more likely to agree that they have had experiences with the learning goals than uninvolved undergraduate students.
- A significantly higher percentage of involved undergraduate students (**91.3%**) reported experiencing personal growth at Ohio State relative to uninvolved undergraduate students (**83.3%**).
- A higher number of involved undergraduate students (**73.2%**) reported that they create community spaces where others can feel a sense of belonging relative to uninvolved graduate students (**57.1%**).
- More involved undergraduate students (**80.7%**) indicated that they can develop relationships that build connections across the university compared to uninvolved undergraduate students (**60.9%**).
- More involved undergraduate students (**84.0%**) reported that they see connections between their non-academic experiences at Ohio and their future goals relative to uninvolved undergraduate students (**73.0%**).

### KEY FINDINGS – GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

- Overall, there are few differences in the learning goals between uninvolved and involved graduate and professional students.
- Additionally, there are no significant differences in agreement about experiences that meet the learning goals between uninvolved and involve students.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this report is to examine students' experiences with the Student Life Learning Goals and Outcomes. These learning goals include student self-discovery, sense of belonging and, health and well-being and critical thinking skills.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The Student Life Survey is administered annually by the Center for the Study of Student Life to examine trends in student engagement, sense of belonging and satisfaction with the college experience. The 2024 Student Life Survey was administered to a stratified, random sample of 9,000 Ohio State students at the beginning of spring semester (January 2024). This sample comprised 5,500 undergraduate students, and 3,500 graduate and professional students, all on the Columbus campus. A total of 1,488 students responded to the survey, resulting in a response rate of 16.5%. See the Appendix for a summary of respondents' demographic and academic characteristics.

Data were broken down by students' educational level (undergraduate, graduate, and professional). Data from 850 undergraduate students, 502 graduate students, and 136 professional students are included in this report. To investigate whether differences between the different groups of students were significant, chi-square tests of independence were conducted. Percentages provided in the following tables are weighted. Demographics of the students included in the report did not substantially vary from the overall Student Life Survey sample.

## **WEIGHTING PROCEDURE**

Responses were weighted to address differences between the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents compared to the general student population at Ohio State in the spring semester of 2024. Weights were adjusted so the survey data are representative of the student population at Ohio State. For example, 62.6% of the survey respondents in the Student Life Survey were female, but 52.4% of the total population at Ohio State was female. The procedure adjusted the base weight to the demographic data available on the sampling frame using sex, race/ethnicity and student status (i.e., undergraduate, graduate student or professional student). Weighted and unweighted demographic data for survey respondents is available in the Appendix.

## FINDINGS

### CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

The percentage of involved students was calculated by examining participation across thirteen different types of campus activities and community service. Among all respondents, 78.7% report being involved in at least one of thirteen types of involvement. More specifically, 80.1% of undergraduate students, 72.9% of graduate students and 79.6% of professional students reported being involved. The tables below summarize campus activities and community service involvement. Undergraduate students were most likely to be involved with a student organization (57.1%) and working at an on-campus job (26.6%). Graduate students were most likely to be involved in research with a faculty member (41.3%) and working at an on-campus job (21.2%). Professional students were most likely to be involved in student organizations (59.9%) and ongoing service or volunteer programs (25.4%).

**Table 1: Campus Involvement by Educational Level**

	Undergraduate students (n = 838)	Graduate students (n = 495)	Professional students (n = 134)
A social fraternity or sorority	8.7%	1.2%	4.6%
A business fraternity or sorority	2.3%	0.4%	2.3%
Intramural sports	11.2%	1.6%	11.1%
Sports clubs	8.7%	3.7%	2.3%
Student organizations (e.g., Psychology Club, Running Club, Black Student Association)	57.1%	22.5%	59.9%
Research with a faculty member	11.3%	41.3%	16.2%
Working at an on-campus job	26.6%	21.2%	5.4%
A learning community in the Residence Halls (e.g., Engineering House, Stadium Scholarship Program, Morrill Scholars Program, Global Business)	7.4%	0.0%	0.0%
A capstone project or experience (e.g., senior thesis, portfolio, doctoral dissertation)	8.3%	17.8%	2.3%

**Table 2: Community Service Involvement by Educational Level**

	Undergraduate students (n = 806)	Graduate students (n = 492)	Professional students (n = 130)
An academic course with a service-learning component	7.9%	6.8%	12.2%
A one-day service event	19.6%	11.4%	24.6%
Multi-day service event (e.g., Buck-I-SERV, a church or club-based service trip)	5.6%	2.9%	6.1%
An ongoing service/volunteer program (e.g., volunteered at a community organization once a month or more)	19.5%	9.8%	25.4%

## STUDENT LIFE LEARNING GOALS AND OUTCOMES: UNDERGRADUATES

To examine the association between involvement and students' experiences with the Student Life learning goals and outcomes, chi-square tests of independence and logistic regressions were employed. A student was coded as involved if they participated in at least one of the thirteen activities illustrated in Tables 1 and 2. 80.1% of undergraduate students were coded as involved.

First, associations between student responses and involvement status were examined. Second, logistic regression was used to determine if the association between involvement and student outcomes remained after taking into account demographic and academic characteristics. Control variables included gender identity, race/ethnicity, international student status, living on campus, academic rank, cumulative GPA and first-generation student status. These analyses suggest that involvement had strong associations with undergraduate student outcomes, even when controlling for demographic and academic factors.

### Embrace Self-Discovery

Table 3 compares undergraduate students' responses to different questions about their personal growth. Overall, involved undergraduate students indicated higher personal growth and development of knowledge and skills for their future careers than uninvolved undergraduate students.

**Table 3: Undergraduate students who 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with the following statements about their self-discovery at Ohio State**

% Agree or Strongly Agree	Involved	Not Involved	$\chi^2$	Odds Ratio <sup>a</sup>
I have experienced personal growth during my time at Ohio State. ( <i>n</i> = 603)	91.3%	83.3%	7.8**	1.5
I am developing knowledge and skills that can contribute to my future career. ( <i>n</i> = 602)	91.9%	86.3%	4.1*	1.6
I can reflect on how interactions with others shape my perspective. ( <i>n</i> = 602)	90.3%	86.2%	2.0	1.0
I can find resources and opportunities at Ohio State that support my success. ( <i>n</i> = 602)	84.6%	81.2%	0.9	0.9

<sup>a</sup> Results from logistic regression controlling for, or taking into account: gender, race, international status, living on campus, academic rank, cumulative GPA and first-generation student status.

## Cultivate Community

Table 4 compares undergraduate students' responses to different questions about cultivating community. Overall, involved undergraduate students are more likely to create inclusive community spaces than uninvolved undergraduate students.

**Table 4. Undergraduate students who 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with the following statements about their sense of community at Ohio State**

% Agree or Strongly Agree	Involved	Not Involved	$\chi^2$	Odds Ratio <sup>a</sup>
I create community spaces where others can feel a sense of belonging. ( <i>n</i> = 603)	73.2%	57.1%	14.0***	1.5
I try to understand different points of view in conversation. ( <i>n</i> = 603)	90.8%	89.8%	0.1	0.8
I can connect with individuals who are different from me. ( <i>n</i> = 603)	88.7%	84.5%	1.9	1.2
I make an effort to understand societal and global problems. ( <i>n</i> = 603)	84.8%	79.9%	2.0	1.4

<sup>a</sup> Results from logistic regression controlling for, or taking into account: gender, race, international status, living on campus, academic rank, cumulative GPA and first-generation student status.

## Foster Health and Well-being

Table 5 compares undergraduate students' responses to questions regarding their health and well-being. Overall, involved undergraduate students are more likely to develop relationships that build connections across the university than uninvolved undergraduate students.

**Table 5. Undergraduate students who 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with the following statements about their health and well-being at Ohio State**

% Agree or Strongly Agree	Involved	Not Involved	$\chi^2$	Odds Ratio <sup>a</sup>
I focus on my health and well-being as a part of my everyday life. ( <i>n</i> = 592)	73.3%	67.1%	2.2	1.2
I can find campus resources that support my well-being. ( <i>n</i> = 591)	72.2%	66.8%	1.6	1.2
I have strategies I use to overcome challenges. ( <i>n</i> = 590)	81.8%	78.1%	1.0	1.1
I can develop relationships that build connections across the university. ( <i>n</i> = 590)	80.7%	60.9%	24.4***	2.4***

<sup>a</sup> Results from logistic regression controlling for, or taking into account: gender, race, international status, living on campus, academic rank, cumulative GPA and first-generation student status.

## Think Critically

Table 6 compares undergraduate students' responses to questions on their critical thinking skills. Overall, involved undergraduate students see more connections between their non-academic experiences and future goals compared to uninvolved undergraduate students.

**Table 6. Undergraduate students who 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with the following statements about their critical thinking skills**

% Agree or Strongly Agree	Involved	Not Involved	$\chi^2$	Odds Ratio <sup>a</sup>
I look at different viewpoints when exploring a topic. (n = 587)	88.3%	82.9%	2.9	1.6
I find trustworthy information to understand complicated problems. (n = 588)	89.6%	87.1%	0.7	1.2
I see connections between my non-academic experiences at Ohio State and my future goals. (n = 589)	84.0%	73.0%	9.2**	1.9*
I use my knowledge and skills to find solutions to complex challenges. (n = 585)	91.3%	85.8%	3.7	1.3

<sup>a</sup> Results from logistic regression controlling for, or taking into account: gender, race, international status, living on campus, academic rank, cumulative GPA and first-generation student status.

## STUDENT LIFE LEARNING GOALS AND OUTCOMES: GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

The same set of analyses employing chi-square tests of independence and logistic regressions were used to examine how involvement shapes graduate and professional students' experiences with the Student Life learning goals and outcomes. When combined, 74.4% of graduate and professional students reported being involved.

As with the previous set of analyses, associations between student responses and involvement status were first examined. Second, logistic regression was used to determine if the association between involvement and student outcomes remained after taking into account demographic and academic characteristics. Control variables included gender identity, race/ethnicity, international student status, graduate/professional status, cumulative GPA and first-generation student status. Due to small sample sizes, graduate and professional students were analyzed together rather than separately.

These analyses suggest that involvement had no significant associations with graduate and professional student outcomes when controlling for demographic and academic factors.

### Embrace Self-Discovery

Table 7 compares graduate and professional students' responses to different questions about their personal growth. Overall, there was no significant difference between involved graduate and professional students and uninvolved graduate and professional students.

**Table 7: Graduate/professional students who 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with the following statements about their self-discovery at Ohio State**

% Agree or Strongly Agree	Involved	Not Involved	$\chi^2$	Odds Ratio <sup>a</sup>
I have experienced personal growth during my time at Ohio State. ( <i>n</i> = 470)	91.6%	89.7%	2.4	1.6
I am developing knowledge and skills that can contribute to my future career. ( <i>n</i> = 469)	96.3%	96.3%	0.7	1.6
I can reflect on how interactions with others shape my perspective. ( <i>n</i> = 470)	91.2%	90.8%	0.8	1.4
I can find resources and opportunities at Ohio State that support my success. ( <i>n</i> = 469)	87.0%	89.4%	0.3	0.8

<sup>a</sup> Results from logistic regression controlling for, or taking into account: gender, race, international status, graduate/professional status, cumulative GPA and generational status.



## Cultivate Community

Table 8 compares graduate and professional students' responses to different questions about cultivating community. Overall, there was no significant difference between involved graduate and professional students and uninvolved graduate and professional students.

**Table 8. Graduate/professional students who 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with the following statements about their sense of community in Ohio State**

% Agree or Strongly Agree	Involved	Not Involved	$\chi^2$	Odds Ratio <sup>a</sup>
I create community spaces where others can feel a sense of belonging. ( <i>n</i> = 471)	69.2%	71.6%	0.2	1.1
I try to understand different points of view in conversation. ( <i>n</i> = 471)	91.4%	93.0%	0.6	0.8
I can connect with individuals who are different from me. ( <i>n</i> = 471)	89.6%	93.1%	1.4	0.7
I make an effort to understand societal and global problems. ( <i>n</i> = 471)	89.0%	90.9%	< 0.1	1.0

<sup>a</sup> Results from logistic regression controlling for, or taking into account: gender, race, international status, graduate/professional status, cumulative GPA and generational status.

## Foster Health and Well-being

Table 9 compares graduate and professional students' responses to questions regarding their health and well-being. Overall, there was no significant difference between involved graduate and professional students and uninvolved graduate and professional students.

**Table 9. Graduate/professional students who 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with the following statements about their health and well-being at Ohio State**

% Agree or Strongly Agree	Involved	Not Involved	$\chi^2$	Odds Ratio <sup>a</sup>
I focus on my health and well-being as a part of my everyday life. ( <i>n</i> = 464)	72.0%	73.2%	< 0.1	0.9
I can find campus resources that support my well-being. ( <i>n</i> = 464)	75.0%	75.1%	0.3	1.1
I have strategies I use to overcome challenges. ( <i>n</i> = 462)	80.9%	82.8%	< 0.1	1.0
I can develop relationships that build connections across the university. ( <i>n</i> = 463)	74.4%	76.7%	0.2	0.9

<sup>a</sup> Results from logistic regression controlling for, or taking into account: gender, race, international status, graduate/professional status, cumulative GPA and generational status.

## Think Critically

Table 10 compares graduate and professional students' responses questions on their critical thinking skills. Overall, there was no significant difference between involved graduate and professional students and uninvolved graduate and professional students.

**Table 10. Graduate/professional students who 'strongly agree' or 'agree' with the following statements about their critical thinking skills**

% Agree or Strongly Agree	Involved	Not Involved	$\chi^2$	Odds Ratio <sup>a</sup>
I look at different viewpoints when exploring a topic. (n = 464)	87.0%	85.1%	0.0	1.1
I find trustworthy information to understand complicated problems. (n = 465)	88.7%	87.5%	0.4	1.2
I see connections between my non-academic experiences at Ohio State and my future goals. (n = 463)	82.7%	81.6%	0.3	1.2
I use my knowledge and skills to find solutions to complex challenges. (n = 465)	91.1%	90.5%	0.6	1.3

<sup>a</sup> Results from logistic regression controlling for, or taking into account: gender, race, international status, graduate/professional status, cumulative GPA and generational status.

## CONCLUSION

This report explored the relationship between involvement and the student life learning goals and outcomes. The findings suggest that most students at The Ohio State University embrace self-discovery, cultivate community, foster health and well-being and think critically. Additionally, involved undergraduate students are more likely than uninvolved undergraduate students to indicate higher levels of self-discovery, cultivating community, fostering health and well-being and thinking critically. There was no significant difference in self-discovery, cultivating community, fostering health and well-being and thinking critically between involved and uninvolved graduate and professional students.

## APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Note: Participant demographics below represent all respondents in the 2024 Student Life Survey.

	Undergraduate Students			Graduate Students			Professional Students		
	<i>n</i>	Un-weighted Percent	Weighted Percent	<i>n</i>	Un-weighted Percent	Weighted Percent	<i>n</i>	Un-weighted Percent	Weighted Percent
<b>Total</b>	<b>850</b>			<b>502</b>			<b>136</b>		
<b>Academic Level</b>	<b>848</b>			—			—		
First-year undergraduate	232	27.4%	28.2%	—	—	—	—	—	—
Second-year undergraduate	203	23.9%	24.0%	—	—	—	—	—	—
Third-year undergraduate	204	24.1%	23.5%	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fourth-year undergraduate	172	20.3%	19.6%	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fifth-year or beyond undergraduate	37	4.4%	4.6%	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Gender Identity</b>	<b>850</b>			<b>502</b>			<b>136</b>		
Man	306	36.0%	45.8%	179	35.7%	44.3%	36	26.5%	35.5%
Non-binary	11	1.3%	1.2%	11	2.2%	2.2%	1	0.7%	0.7%
Woman	499	58.7%	49.2%	300	59.8%	51.0%	96	70.6%	61.6%
Another identity not listed	5	0.6%	0.5%	2	0.4%	0.3%	1	0.7%	0.6%
Multiple identities selected	19	2.2%	2.0%	3	0.6%	0.6%	1	0.7%	1.0%
Prefer not to answer	10	1.2%	1.3%	7	1.4%	1.6%	1	0.7%	0.6%
<b>Transgender Identity</b>	<b>846</b>			<b>500</b>			<b>135</b>		
Transgender	15	1.8%	1.7%	9	1.8%	1.8%	2	1.5%	1.4%
Cisgender	814	96.2%	96.4%	483	96.6%	96.6%	132	97.8%	98.0%
Prefer not to answer	17	2.0%	1.8%	8	1.6%	1.6%	1	0.7%	0.6%

	Undergraduate Students			Graduate Students			Professional Students		
	<i>n</i>	Un-weighted Percent	Weighted Percent	<i>n</i>	Un-weighted Percent	Weighted Percent	<i>n</i>	Un-weighted Percent	Weighted Percent
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>850</b>			<b>502</b>			<b>136</b>		
Black and/or African American	49	5.8%	6.7%	50	10.0%	11.3%	9	6.6%	8.3%
Asian/Asian American, Pacific Islander, Desi American, and/or Native Hawai'ian	122	14.4%	12.7%	108	21.5%	17.8%	23	16.9%	15.8%
Latine and/or Hispanic	20	2.4%	2.3%	28	5.6%	5.0%	4	2.9%	2.8%
Middle Eastern and/or North African (MENA)	18	2.1%	2.0%	23	4.6%	4.2%	6	4.4%	4.5%
White and/or European American	525	61.8%	61.8%	222	44.2%	47.0%	80	58.8%	58.4%
Multiracial and/or Biracial	77	9.1%	9.9%	38	7.6%	8.7%	9	6.6%	6.8%
Another identity not listed	2	0.2%	0.3%	2	0.4%	0.5%	1	0.7%	0.5%
Prefer not to answer	37	4.4%	4.3%	31	6.2%	5.5%	4	2.9%	3.0%
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>844</b>			<b>501</b>			<b>135</b>		
LGBQ+	195	23.1%	22.5%	113	22.6%	22.6%	27	20.0%	19.6%
Heterosexual/straight	616	73.0%	73.7%	361	72.1%	72.2%	105	77.8%	77.8%
Prefer not to answer	33	3.9%	3.8%	27	5.4%	5.2%	3	2.2%	2.6%
<b>Generational Status</b>	<b>850</b>			<b>502</b>			<b>136</b>		
First-generation student	189	22.2%	22.0%	122	24.3%	24.0%	17	12.5%	12.4%
Continuing-generation student	645	75.9%	76.3%	248	49.4%	48.9%	56	41.2%	40.3%
Unknown	16	1.9%	1.7%	132	26.3%	27.2%	63	46.3%	47.3%
<b>Disability</b>	<b>847</b>			<b>501</b>			<b>134</b>		
Has a disability	82	9.7%	9.8%	54	10.8%	12.0%	10	7.5%	6.8%
Does not have a disability	728	86.0%	86.0%	430	85.8%	84.6%	121	90.3%	91.3%
Prefer not to answer	37	4.4%	4.2%	17	3.4%	3.5%	3	2.2%	1.9%

	Undergraduate Students			Graduate Students			Professional Students		
	<i>n</i>	Un-weighted Percent	Weighted Percent	<i>n</i>	Un-weighted Percent	Weighted Percent	<i>n</i>	Un-weighted Percent	Weighted Percent
<b>Education Route</b>	<b>848</b>			—			—		
Campus change	55	6.5%	6.8%	—	—	—	—	—	—
Transfer student	142	16.8%	16.6%	—	—	—	—	—	—
Continuing Ohio State student	651	76.8%	76.7%	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Residence</b>	<b>846</b>			<b>501</b>			<b>136</b>		
On-campus	361	42.7%	42.6%	15	3.0%	2.3%	4	2.9%	2.7%
Off-campus	480	56.7%	56.7%	483	96.4%	97.0%	131	96.3%	96.7%
Sorority or fraternity housing	5	0.6%	0.7%	3	0.6%	0.8%	1	0.7%	0.6%