

Measuring the Co-Curricular Impact: Affinity, Sense of Belonging, Resiliency, and Academic Habits (2021 IUPUI Assessment Institute)

Please put
presenter
questions in the
Q&A box.

Monday, October 25, 2021

Presenter:

D. Scott Tharp, Ph.D., M.S.W. (he/him/his)
Student Affairs Assessment &
Effectiveness Specialist
DePaul University, Chicago, IL

Moderator:

Aidan Morrissey (he/him/his)
Student Affairs Assessment Intern
DePaul University, Chicago, IL



Chicago Land Acknowledgement

This land on which I inhabit is physically situated in the original ancestral homelands of the Council of the Three Fires: the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi Nations. Many other tribes such as the Miami, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac, and Fox also called this area home. The region has long been a center for Indigenous people to gather, trade, and maintain kinship ties. I recognize these Nations as the traditional stewards of this land and its importance for the 65,000 Indigenous peoples thriving here today. We pay respect to these peoples – past, present, and future – and their continuing presence in the homeland and throughout their historical diaspora.





Learning Outcomes

- Describe six campus-centered survey indices
- Describe one process used to create and implement a student survey using campus-centered survey indices
- Describe processes and techniques involved with analyzing index data
- Articulate opportunities for using index data to monitor impact and identify opportunities for strategic growth



Session Agenda

- Welcome, Outcomes, Agenda
- Context for Measuring Co-Curricular Impact 
- Overview of Survey Indices, Design Process, and Implementation
- Goals for Data Analysis and Select Findings 
- Takeaways and Final Questions



Context for Measuring Co-Curricular Impact

DePaul University

- Nation's largest Catholic University (21,922 students in 2020)
- Two campuses located in the city of Chicago

Division of Student Affairs

- 10 Departments (in 2020)
 - Adult, Veteran, and Commuter Student Affairs
 - Athletic Academic Advising
 - Center for Students with Disabilities
 - Dean of Students
 - Health Promotion and Wellness
 - Multicultural Student Success
 - New Student and Family Engagement
 - Residential Education
 - Student Involvement
 - University Counseling Services

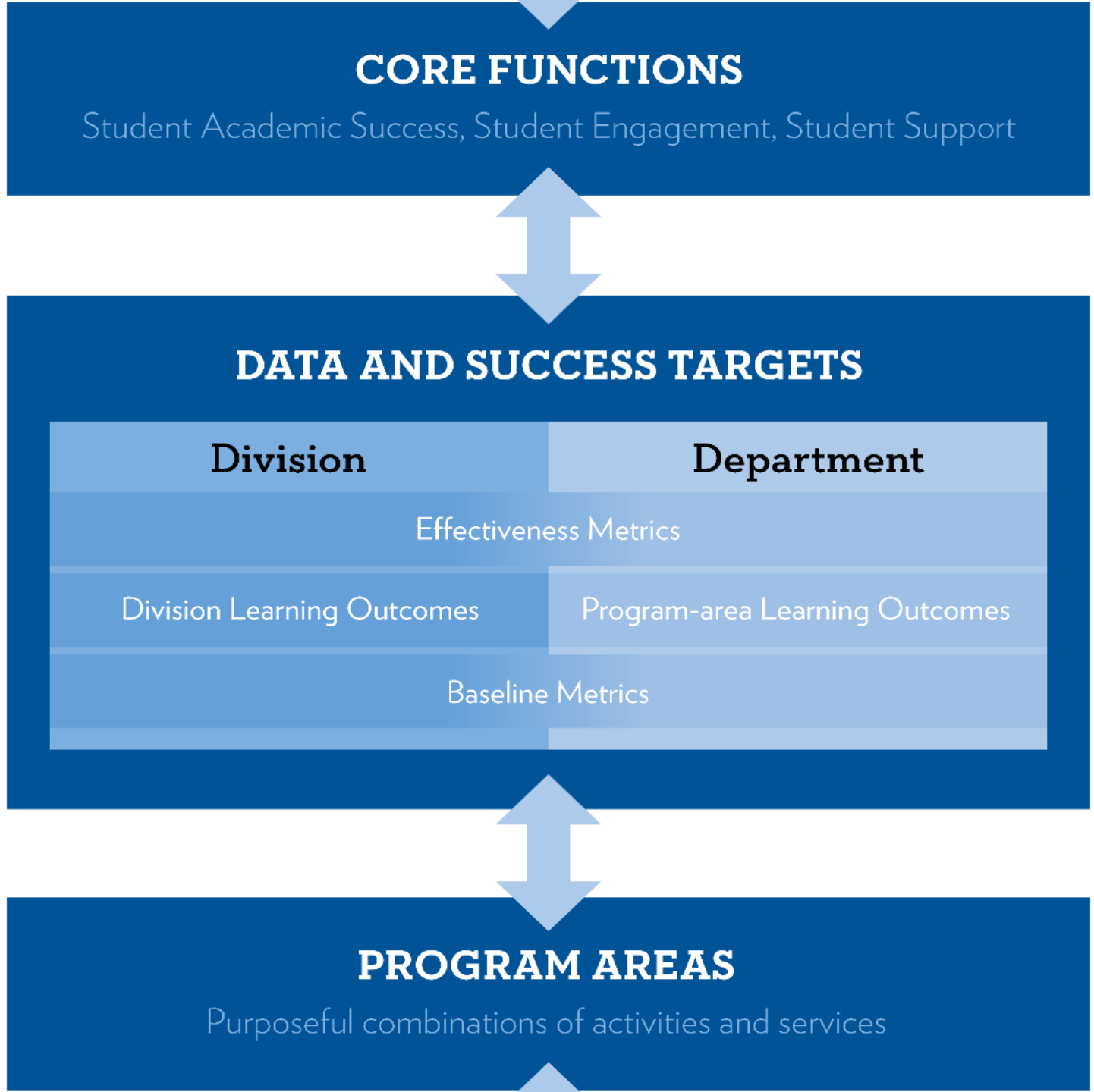


Context for Measuring Co-Curricular Impact

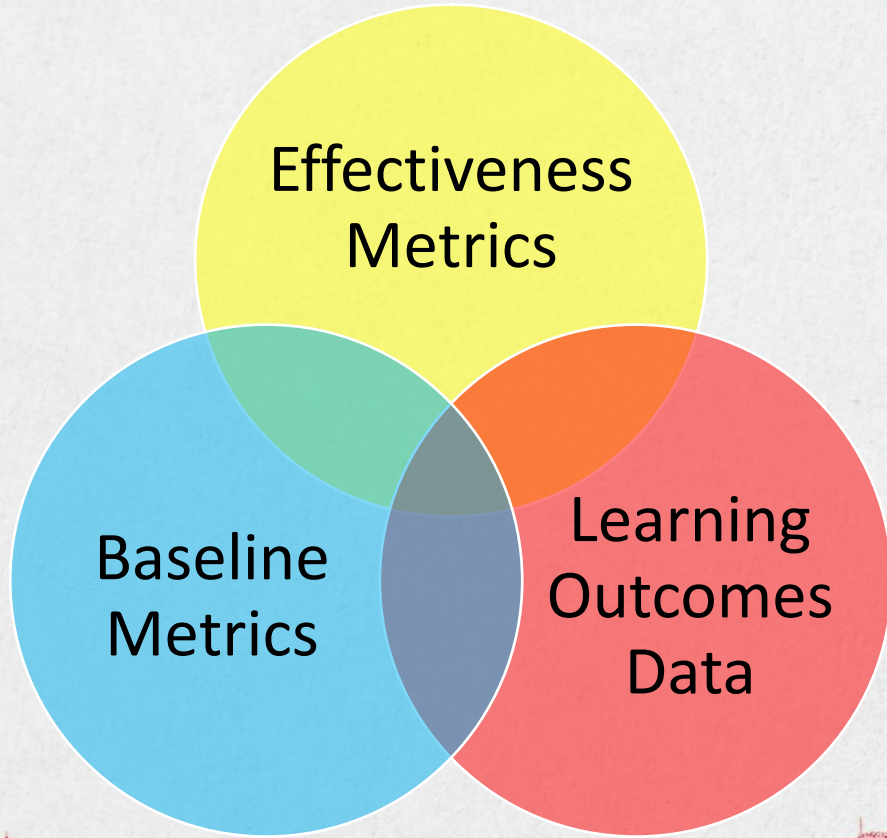
- Multiple changes in university leadership since 2014
 - Vice-President of Student Affairs → Provost → President
- Student enrollment and budget cuts
- Evolving priorities for Student Affairs
 - Student persistence and retention, student engagement
- New divisional model for data-driven decision-making



Student Affairs Data-driven Decision-making Model (2018)



Tripartite Approach to Data

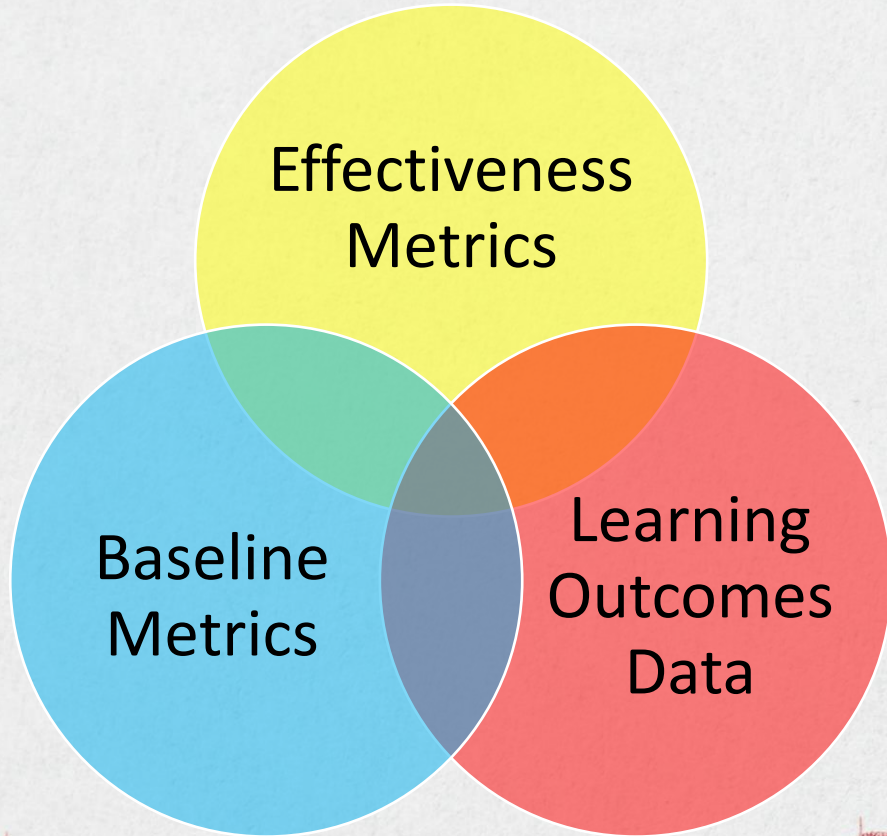


How successful was the division / department in

- Providing enough activities / services for students?
- Supporting the target population of students?
- Ensuring student satisfaction?
- Supporting student learning?
- Supporting student's non-learning development?
 - Student academic success
 - Student engagement
 - Student support



Tripartite Approach to Data



What was the division / department impact on student persistence, retention, and engagement through purposefully designed interventions that are measurable through...

- Student learning
- Affinity to campus
- Sense of belonging to their peers
- Resiliency
- Academic /personal habits



Participant Poll!

Interactive Activity!

Indicate which of these constructs (if any) are collected by your campus about your students. Use the link provided in the chat. 😊



Fast Poll Link: <https://fast-poll.com/poll/bce30cd1>



The Blue Demon Engagement (BDE) Survey

A survey consisting of six internally developed indices using 5-point scales that measure:

- Academic Self-Management (ASM) (4 items)
- Personal Self-Management (PSM) (4 items)
- Affinity to DePaul (AFF) (4 items)
- Sense of Belonging with other DePaul students (BEL) (4 items)
- Personal Resiliency (PRE) (3 items)
- Social Resiliency (SRE) (4 items)



Index Items

Academic Self-Management (ASM) Index

- I am organized to help me finish academic assignments and projects on time.
- I prioritize my time around school work.
- I actively seek help from others to improve my academic habits or performance.
- I actively incorporate feedback from others in order to improve my academic performance.

Personal Self-Management (PSM) Index

- I am organized to help me achieve my personal goals.
- I prioritize my time around personal goals.
- I actively seek help from others to grow as a person.
- I actively incorporate feedback from others in order to achieve my personal goals.



Index Items

Affinity to DePaul (AFF) Index

- I am proud to attend DePaul.
- I try to wear blue on Thursdays.
- I am familiar with DePaul's history and traditions.
- I actively follow DePaul news and events.

Sense of Belonging (BEL) Index

- I feel like an outsider to the DePaul community.*
- I see myself as a part of the DePaul community.
- I feel accepted for who I am among my peers in the DePaul community.
- I have a community of friends on campus.

*Reverse Scored



Index Items

Personal Resiliency (PRE) Index

- My personal problems are beyond my ability to solve. *
- I strongly believe in my abilities.
- Events in my life that I cannot influence are a constant source of worry/concern. *

*Reverse Scored

Social Resiliency (SRE) Index

- I have a supportive community.
- I can discuss personal issues with my supportive community.
- When needed, I can rely on my supportive community for help.
- The people in my supportive community appreciate me for who I am.



Designing the BDE

- **Summer/Fall 2019:** Review of scholarship and existing scales that measure these constructs
- **Fall 2019:** Partnership between Student Affairs and Institutional Research to draft DePaul-centric indices
- **Winter 2020:** Pilot test drafted indices with select student leaders; refined these indices through item analysis and reflection about what items seemed most useful for Student Affairs

Special thanks
to Matt Savage
in Institutional
Research!



Implementing the BDE

- Survey intended to launch in November 2020 but was delayed until January 2021
- Conducted using a split sample of 3,999 randomly selected students
 - Half were randomly selected from all student affairs participants identified via event attendance and student group populations (e.g., student staff, mentee programs) (n=2,045)
 - Half were randomly selected from the remaining population of “non-participants” (n=1954)
- A total of 942 usable responses were returned for a 23.6% response rate. Of these usable responses, 71.8% (n=676) were student affairs participants and 28.2% (n=266) were non-participants.



Goals for Data Analysis

Discover something about our students

- “Baseline data” for our students
- Relationships between index scores and student success metrics

Compare student affairs participants to non-participants

Identify areas of improvement and opportunity

- Across student sub-populations
- Within each index (based on items)



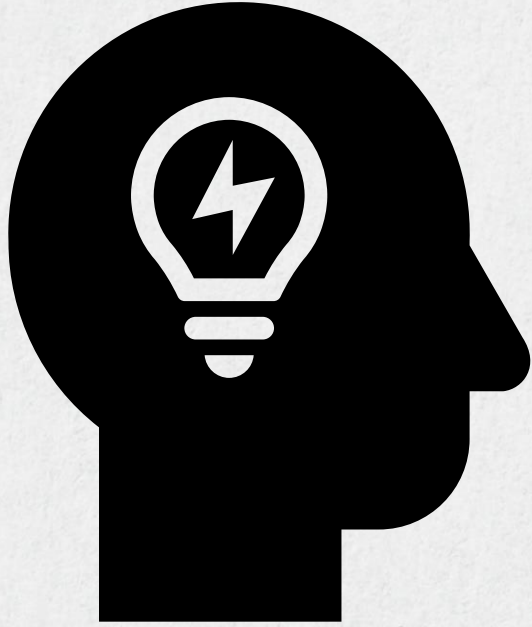
Integrating Student Data into the Analysis

Survey invitations were unique to each individual student to connect their survey responses to information in our data warehouse

- Demographic information (race, first-generation status)
- Academic information (cumulative GPA, persistence)
- Engagement information by
 - Department
 - Engagement category
 - Level of engagements (i.e., # of events attended)



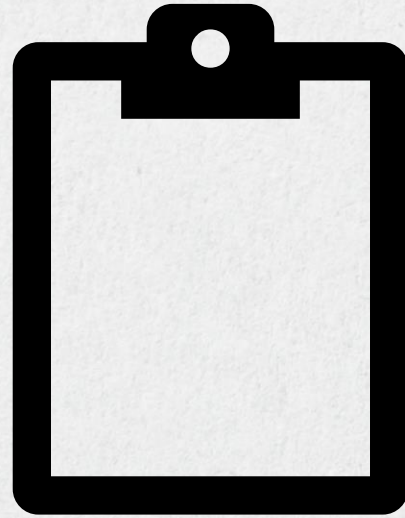
Reflection Break!



- Questions?
- Observations?

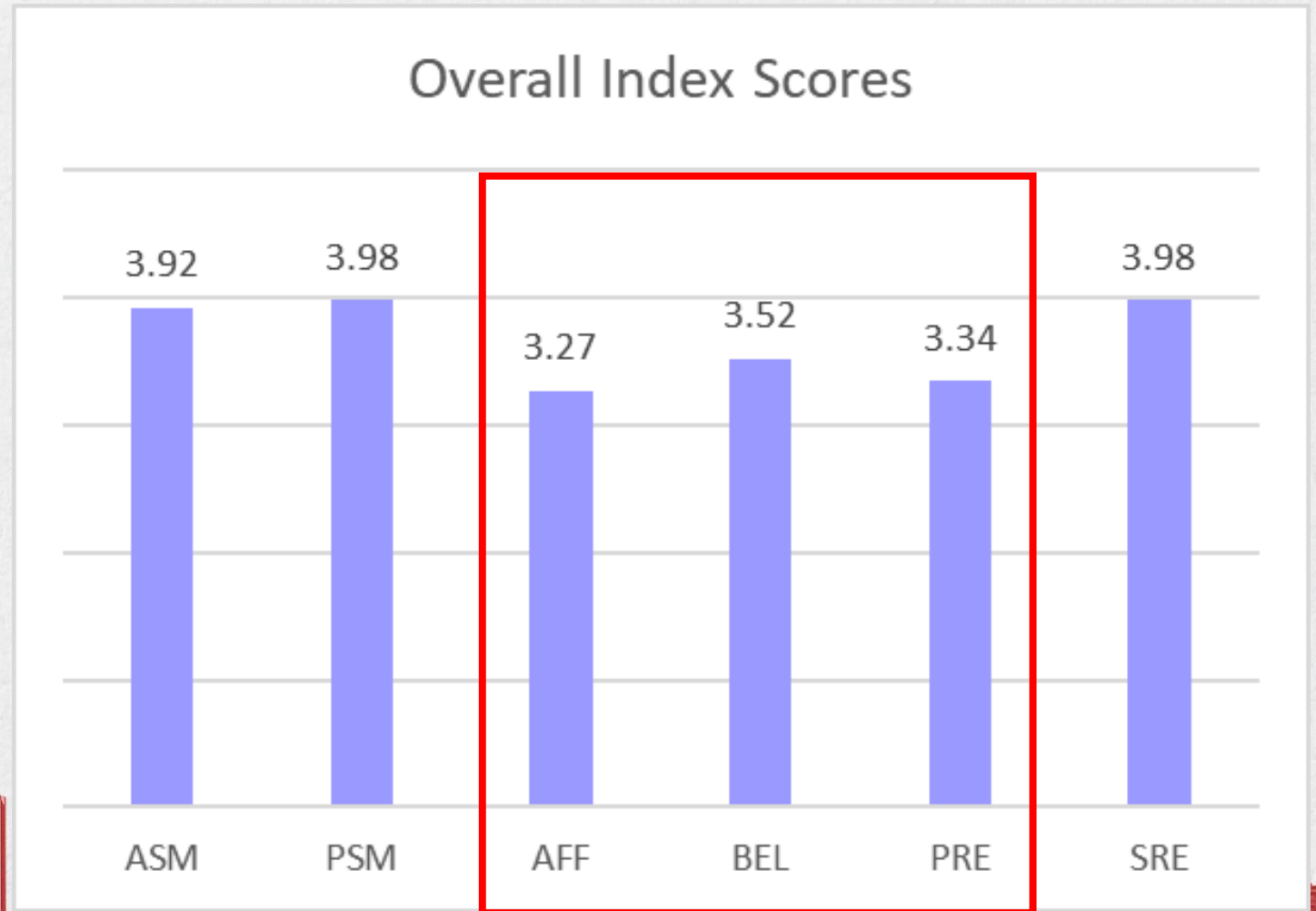


Select Findings



Select Findings

Mean index score for all six indices



Select Findings

Correlations between each index score and a students' cumulative GPA

ASM Index

Correlation: Yes ($p < .01$)
Direction: Positive
Pearson's $r = .20$ (Low)

PSM Index

Correlation: Yes ($p < .01$)
Direction: Positive
Pearson's $r = .10$ (Weak)

AFF Index

Correlation: No

BEL Index

Correlation: Yes ($p < .01$)
Direction: Positive
Pearson's $r = .11$ (Weak)

PRE Index

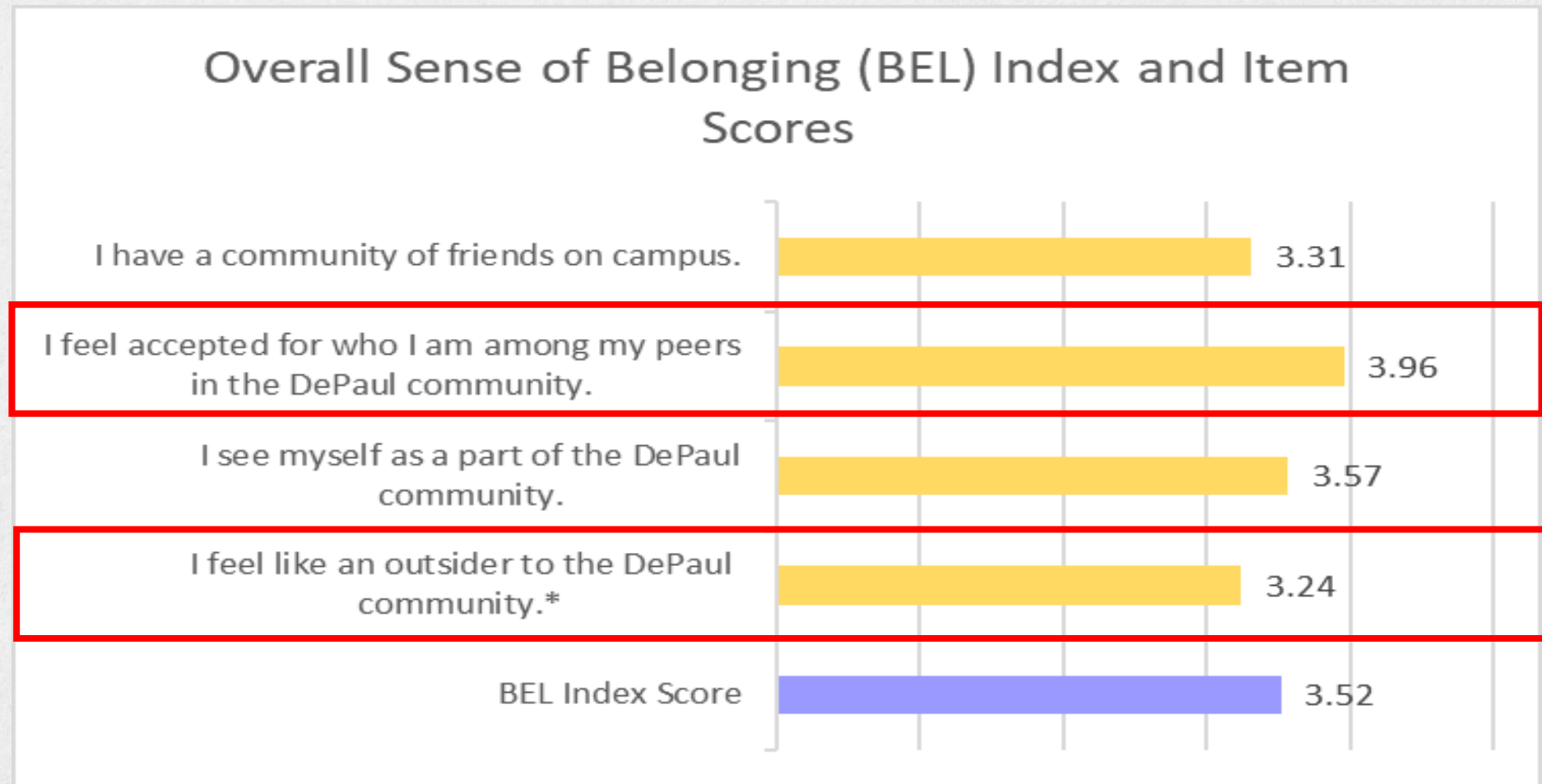
Correlation: No

SRE Index

Correlation: Yes ($p < .01$)
Direction: Positive
Pearson's $r = .11$ (Weak)

Select Findings

Sense of belonging index and item scores for all respondents

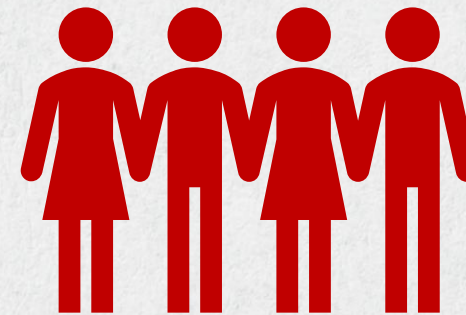
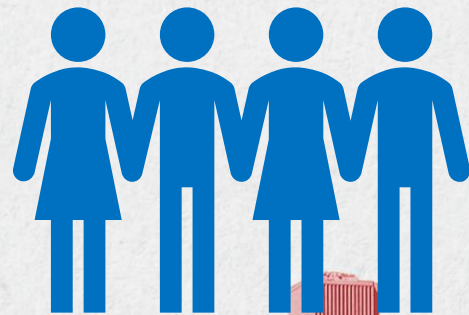


Select Findings

Sense of belonging index and item scores for all respondents broken down by first generation status

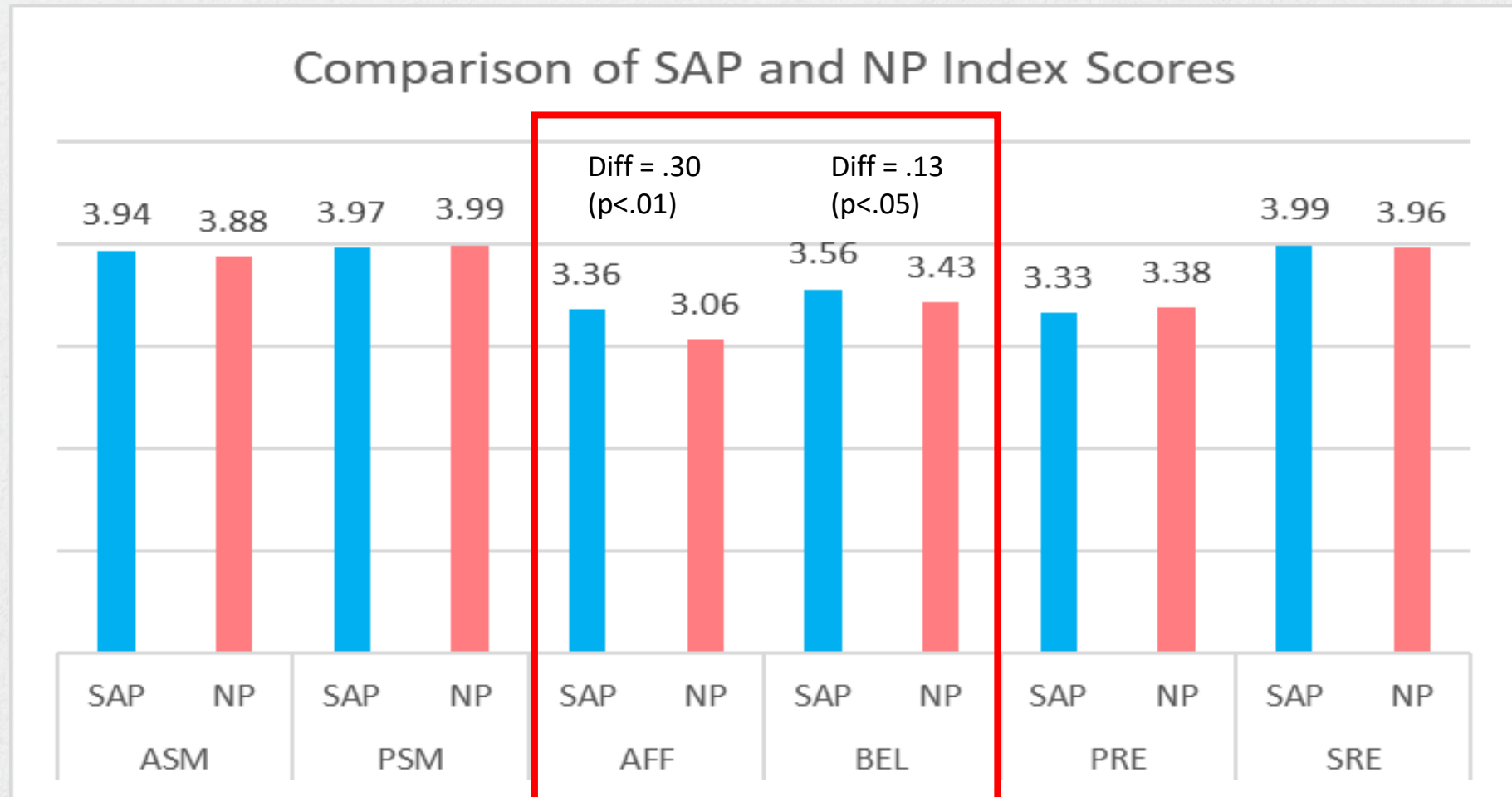


How did Student Affairs participants (SAPs) compare with non-participants (NPs) on these indices overall and among select demographic groups? (Select Highlights)



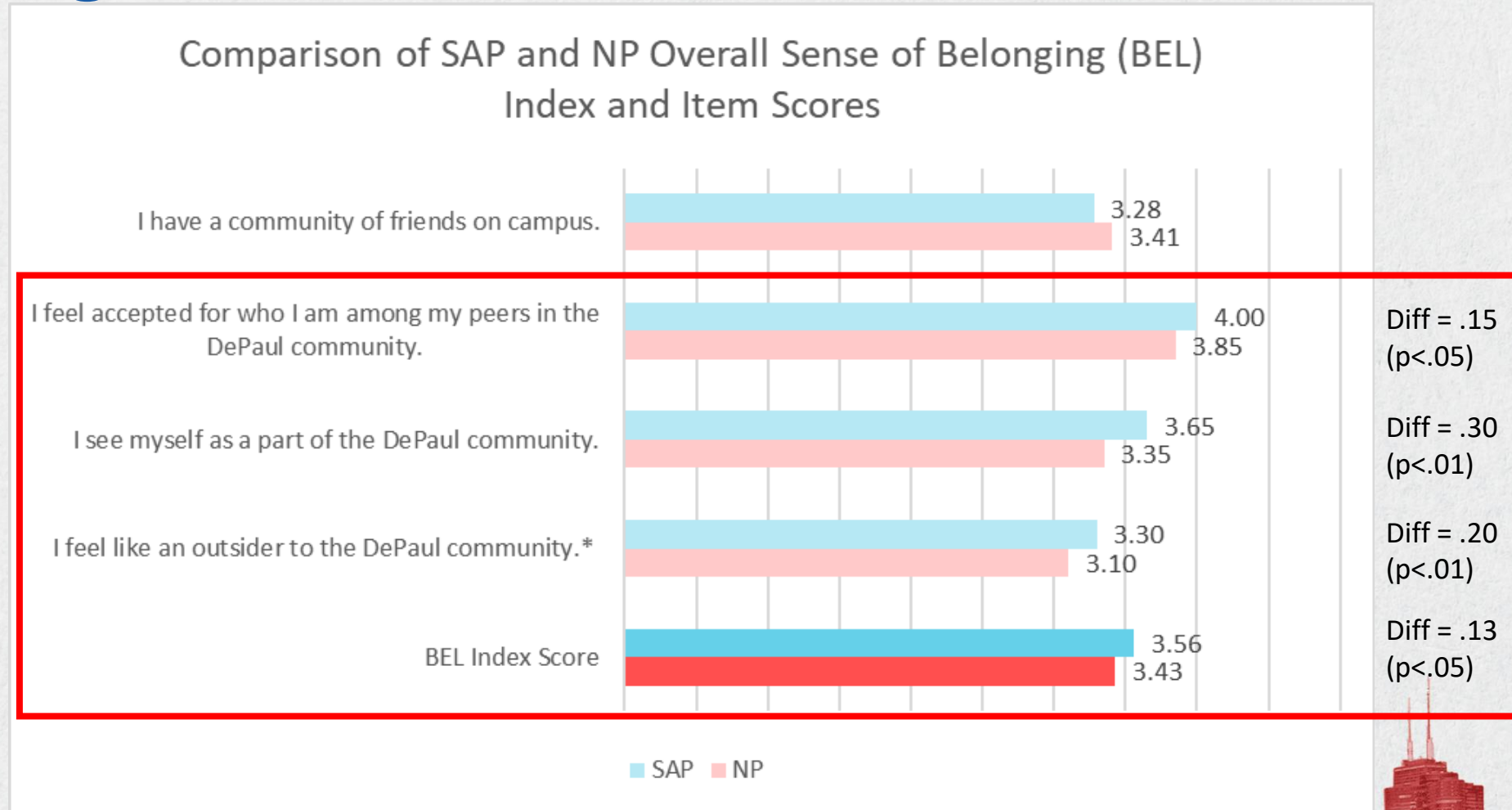
Select Findings

Comparison between student affairs participants and non-participants mean index scores (with additional independent samples t-test findings)



Select Findings

Comparison between student affairs participants and non-participants overall index and item scores (with additional independent samples t-test findings)



How We Have Used (Or Will Use) These Findings

- Articulate the impact of the co-curricular experience
- Benchmarking student scores over time (overall and by select student populations)
- Identify opportunities for growth and strategic improvement
 - Through campus-wide collaborations
 - Internally within departments and strategic initiatives
- Measure specific department / program impact
 - Pre/post data collection
 - Larger sampling techniques to compare participants to non-participants



Participant Poll!

Interactive Activity!

Which index (or indices) might be most useful for you / your campus?
(Select all that apply)

Use the link provided in the chat. 😊

Fast Poll Link: <https://fast-poll.com/poll/8b002469>



Chat Activity!

Interactive Activity!

Using the chat feature, share any other ideas / insights for ways this data might be useful to you / your campus. We'll react to some of them as they come in 😊



Let's Stay Connected!



D. Scott Tharp, PhD, MSW
dtharp1@depaul.edu

