

BACKGROUND

ISU administers three engagement surveys: the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), and Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE). NSSE and BCSSE are administered to [cohorts of students](#) on a three-year cycle. The FSSE is administered to faculty on a three-year cycle. The three surveys are administered by the [Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research \(IUCPE\)](#).

This report will present data from two of the surveys and years: the spring 2013 NSSE and spring 2014 FSSE. Question selection and alignment was guided by a framework presented in *A Crucible Moment: College Learning & Democracy's Future* from the National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement.¹

FIGURE 4: What Would a Civic-Minded Campus Look Like?

CIVIC ETHOS governing campus life

The infusion of democratic values into the customs and habits of everyday practices, structures, and interactions; the defining character of the institution and those in it that emphasizes open-mindedness, civility, the worth of each person, ethical behaviors, and concern for the well-being of others; a spirit of public-mindedness that influences the goals of the institution and its engagement with local and global communities.

CIVIC LITERACY as a goal for every student

The cultivation of foundational knowledge about fundamental principles and debates about democracy expressed over time, both within the United States and in other countries; familiarity with several key historical struggles, campaigns, and social movements undertaken to achieve the full promise of democracy; the ability to think critically about complex issues and to seek and evaluate information about issues that have public consequences.

CIVIC INQUIRY integrated within the majors and general education

The practice of inquiring about the civic dimensions and public consequences of a subject of study; the exploration of the impact of choices on different constituencies and entities, including the planet; the deliberate consideration of differing points of views; the ability to describe and analyze civic intellectual debates within one's major or areas of study.

CIVIC ACTION as lifelong practice

The capacity and commitment both to participate constructively with diverse others and to work collectively to address common problems; the practice of working in a pluralistic society and world to improve the quality of people's lives and the sustainability of the planet; the ability to analyze systems in order to plan and engage in public action; the moral and political courage to take risks to achieve a greater public good.

No evidence of a national consensus on the definition of civic engagement or civic learning was found in the process of creating this report. NSSE, however, has begun a process of [mapping](#) survey questions to specific institutional units, processes, and committees. This document may provide some guidance. Thus, the selection of specific engagement survey questions may be variable depending upon the nature of the research question or how the data is used.

More information about civic engagement as it relates to campus climate and diversity can be found in a [report](#) using NSSE and Foundations of Excellence data to examine campus climate at ISU.

¹ The National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement. 2012. *A Crucible Moment: College Learning & Democracy's Future*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges & Universities.

SELECTED ENGAGEMENT SURVEY AREAS & QUESTIONS

Community-based Projects in Coursework, pp. 3-4

- NSSE question 12. About how many of your courses at this institution have included a community-based project (service-learning)?
- FSSE question 9. About how many of your undergraduate courses at this institution have included a community-based project (service-learning)?
- FSSE question 1g. How important is it to you that undergraduates at your institution do the following before they graduate?: Participate in a community-based project (service-learning) as part of a course

Time Spent on Volunteering and Community Service, pp. 5-6

- NSSE question 15e. About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing the following?: Doing community service or volunteer work
- FSSE question 20d. In an average 7-day week, about how many hours do you think the typical student in your selected course section spends doing each of the following?: Doing community service or volunteer work

Connecting Learning to Social Problems and Issues, pp. 7-8

- NSSE question 2b. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?: Connected your learning to societal problems or issues
- FSSE question 23b. In your selected course section, how important is it to you that the typical student do the following?: Connect his or her learning to societal problems or issues?

Using Numerical Information to Examine a Real-World Problem (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.), pp. 9-10

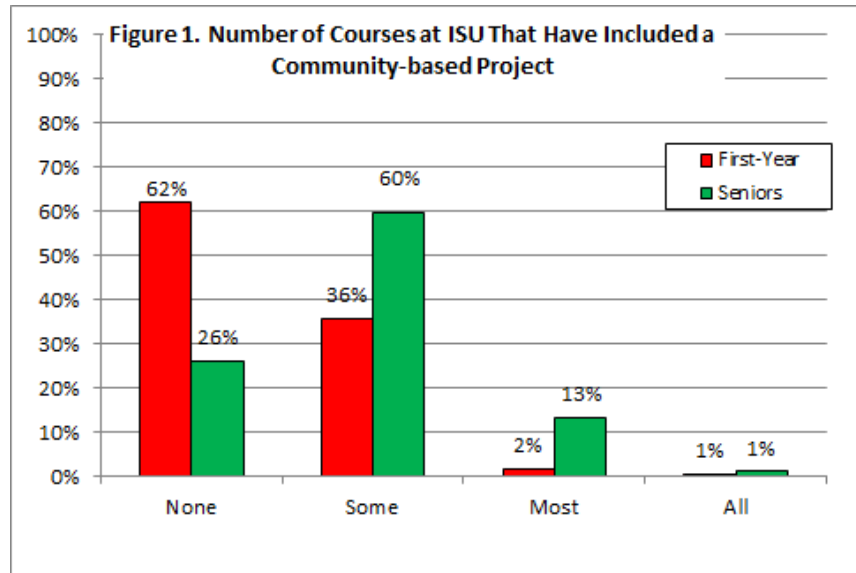
- NSSE question 6b. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?: Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)
- FSSE question 22e. In your selected course section, how important is it to you that the typical student do the following?: Use numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)

University Contributions to Knowledge, Skills, and Personal Development in Being an Active and Informed Citizen, pp. 11-12

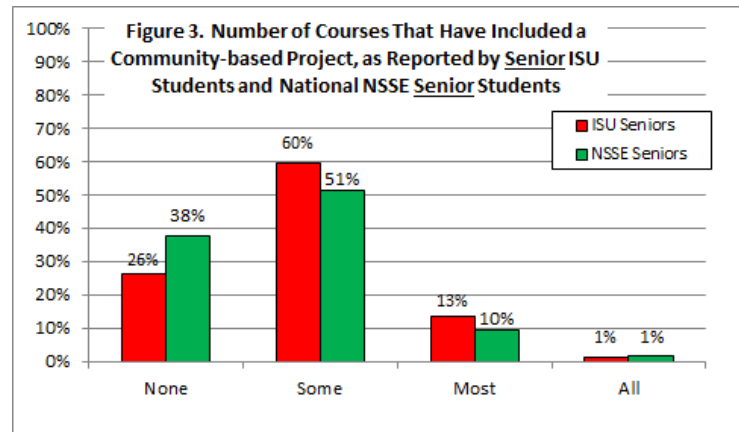
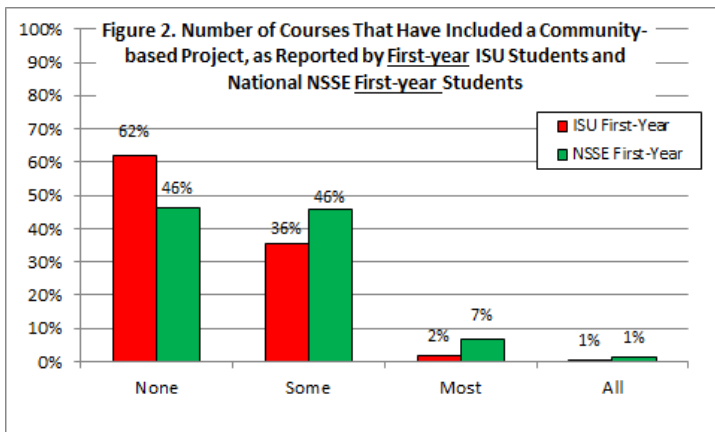
- NSSE question 17i. How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas? Being an informed and active citizen
- FSSE question 29j. To what extent do you structure your selected course section so that students learn and develop in the following areas?: Being an informed and active citizen

COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECTS IN COURSEWORK²

NSSE results indicate that projects are more emphasized in courses taken by seniors (see Figure 1). This suggests growth in the number of ISU courses that include a community-based project from students' first to their senior years.

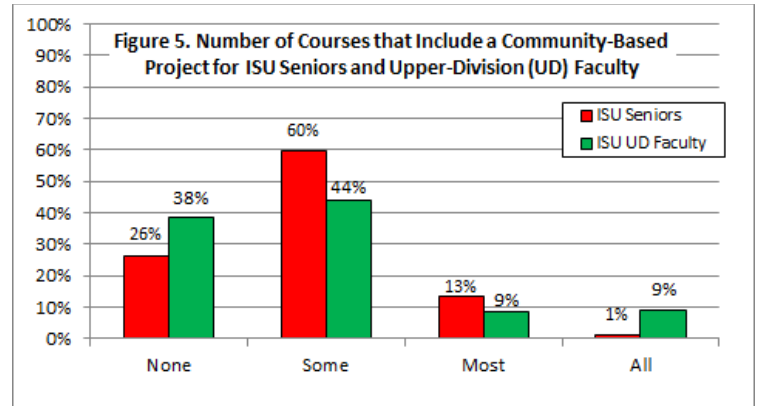
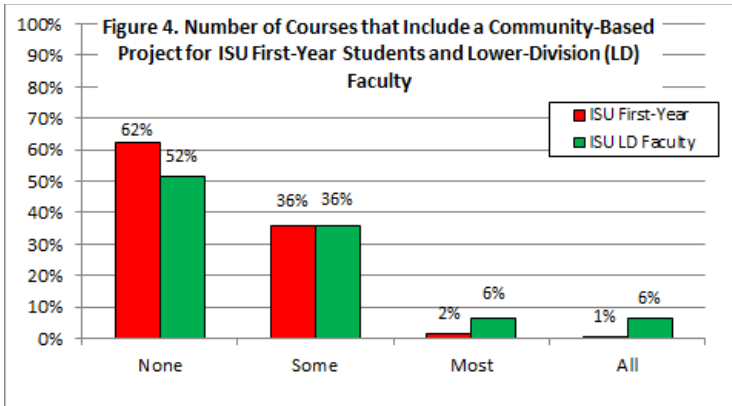


Nationally, first-year students at other universities report engaging in more community-based projects, as shown in figure 2. ISU seniors, on the other hand, report higher number of community-based projects in their courses than students at other universities, as shown in figure 3.

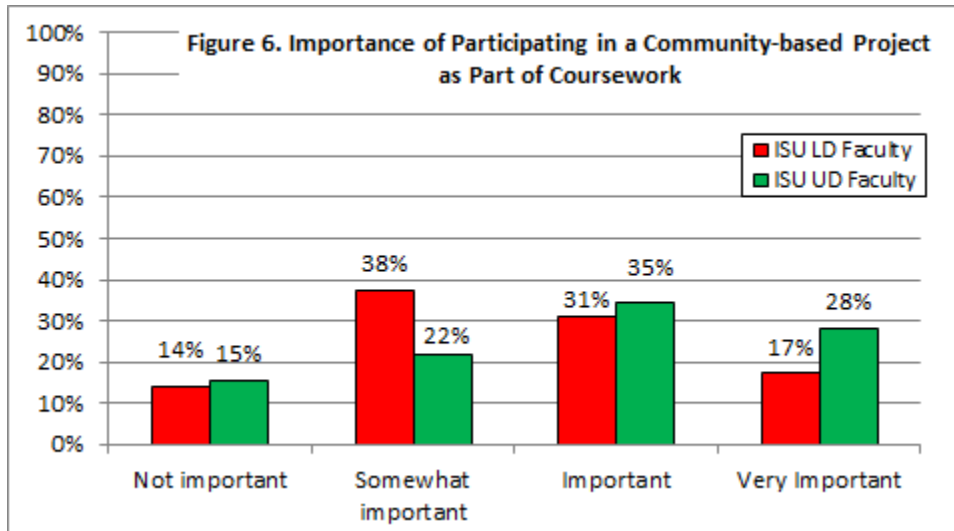


² NSSE question 12. About how many of your courses at this institution have included a community-based project (service-learning)?

ISU lower-division (LD) faculty³ tend to report higher levels of incorporating community-based projects in their classroom than first-year students report, as shown in figure 4. Seniors, by contrast, report that community-based projects occur in their courses more often than upper-division (UD) faculty indicate (figure 5). Interestingly, 9% of upper-division faculty report incorporating community-based projects in “all” their courses, compared to 1% of seniors.



As shown in figure 6, most faculty feel that including a community-based project as part of coursework is important⁴. In all, about 60% of faculty feel that it is important or very important to include a community-based project as part of students’ coursework. Upper-division faculty tend to place more importance on this area. This is likely not the result of upper-division faculty placing more value on community-based projects. Rather, it could be that lower-division faculty have different learning and curricular goals more tailored towards first-year students.

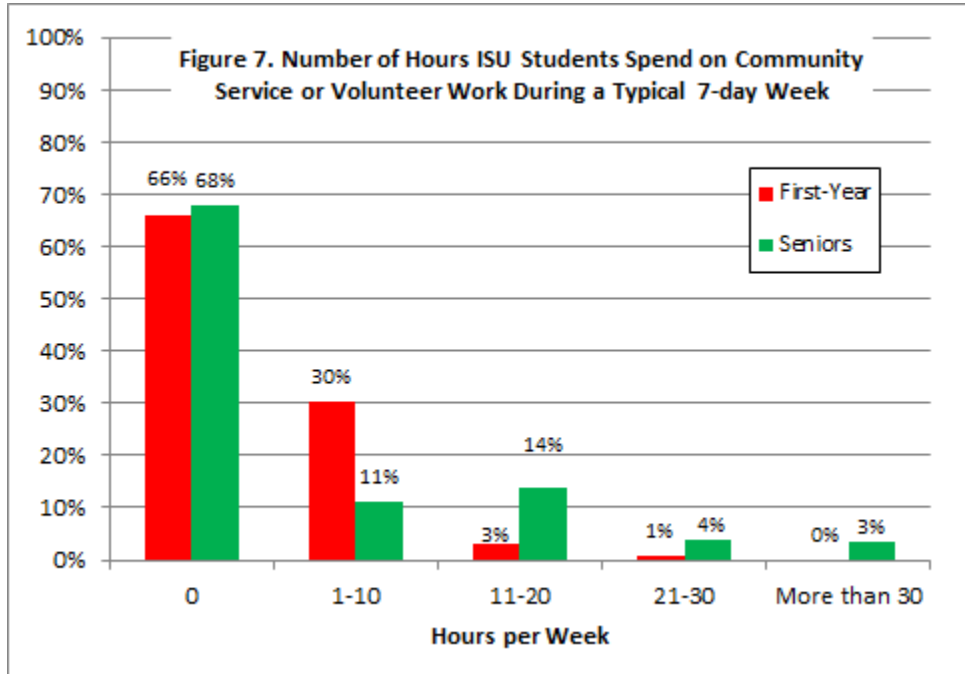


³ FSSE question 9. About how many of your undergraduate courses at this institution have included a community-based project (service-learning)?

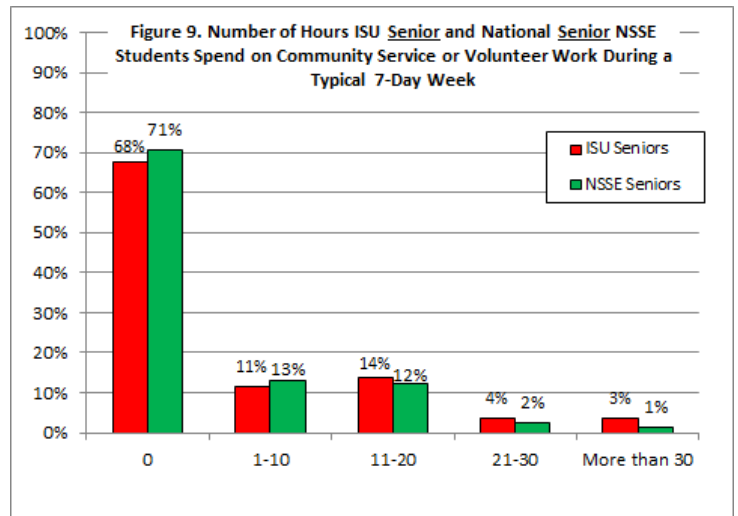
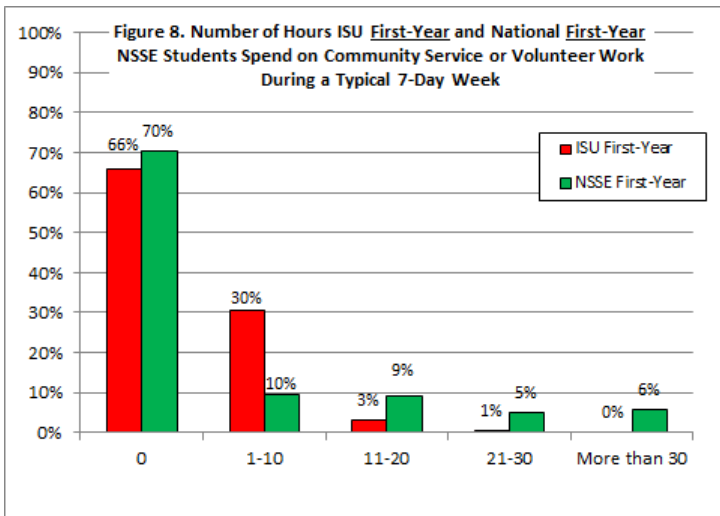
⁴ FSSE question 1g. How important is it to you that undergraduates at your institution do the following before they graduate?: Participate in a community-based project (service-learning) as part of a course

TIME SPENT ON VOLUNTEERING AND COMMUNITY SERVICE⁵

About two-thirds of ISU first-year and senior students report they engage in no community service or volunteer work. However, senior students report spending more time volunteering and in community service.

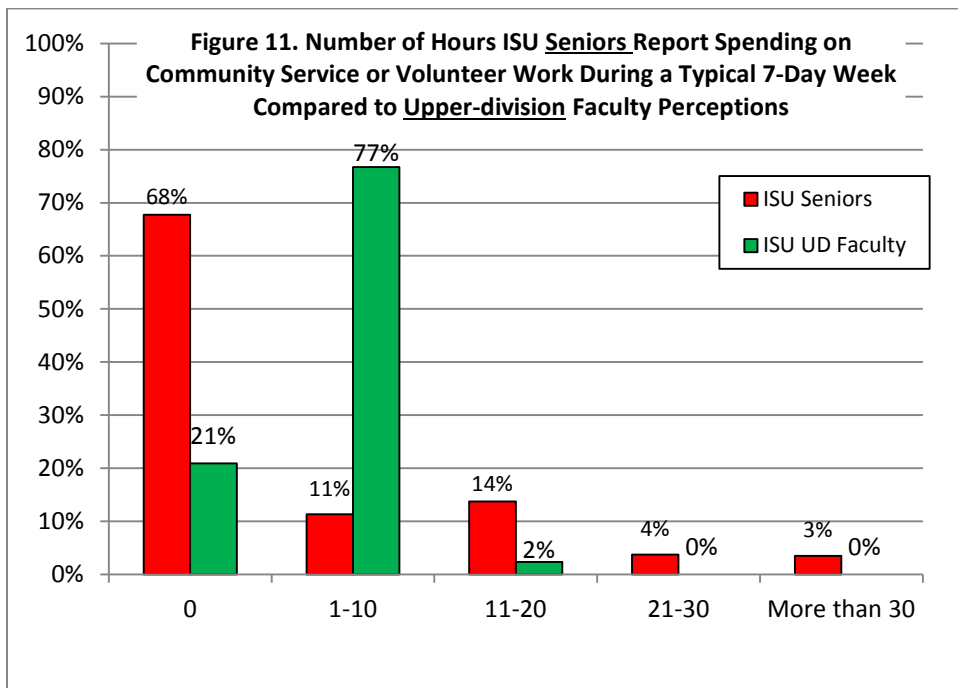
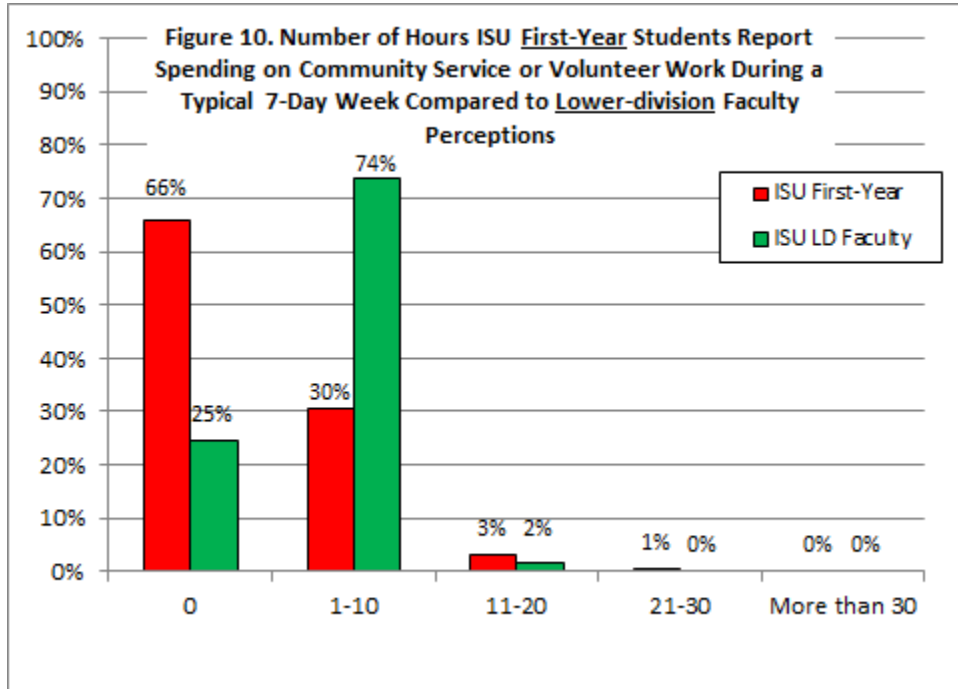


As figures 5 and 6 show, ISU first-year students generally report spending less time on volunteer work and community-service than students at other universities. ISU seniors, however, report spending about the same amount of time on volunteer work and community service as students at other universities.



⁵ NSSE question 15e. About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing the following?: Doing community service or volunteer work

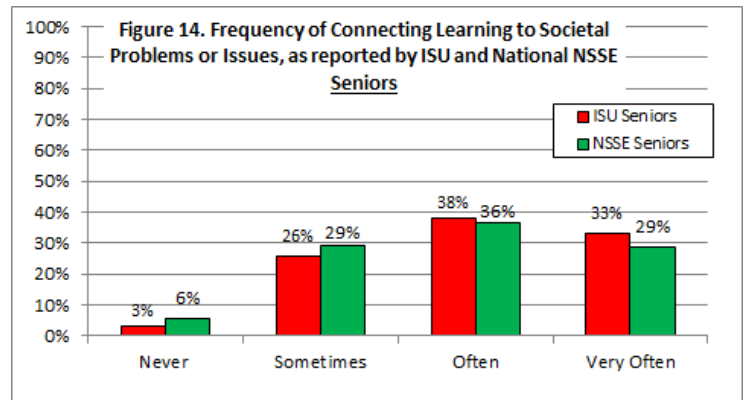
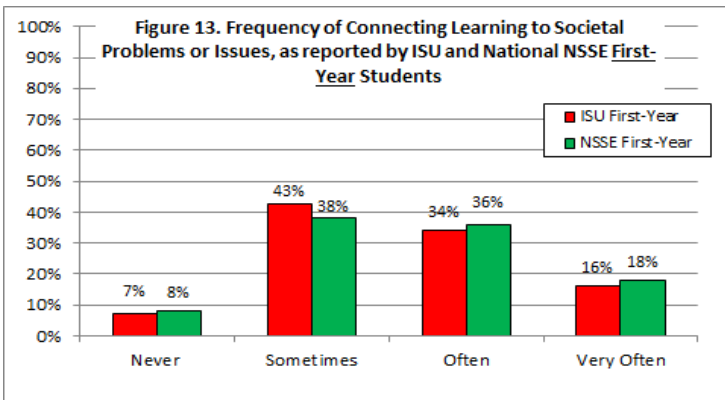
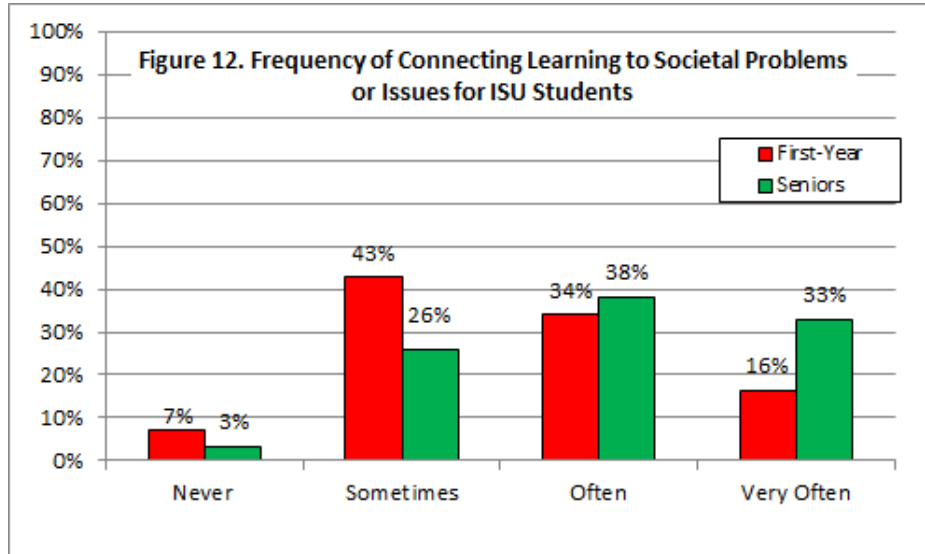
ISU faculty tend to somewhat overestimate how much time students spend on community service and volunteering.⁶ For instance, about 33% of all ISU students report spending at least some time on volunteering or community-service work. About 78% of faculty, however, perceive that students spend at least some time on volunteering or community service.



⁶ FSSE question 20d. In an average 7-day week, about how many hours do you think the typical student in your selected course section spends doing each of the following?: Doing community service or volunteer work

CONNECTING LEARNING TO SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND ISSUES⁷

Seniors at ISU report higher frequencies of connecting learning to societal problems than first-year students. In terms of national comparisons, ISU is fairly consistent with national data, as shown in figures 13 and 14.



⁷ NSSE question 2b. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?: Connected your learning to societal problems or issues

Upper-division faculty place more importance on the typical student connecting her or his learning to societal problems and issues, as shown in figure 15.⁸ Again, however, this may be the result of curriculum designed to meet the specific learning needs of students, depending on where they are in their developmental growth.

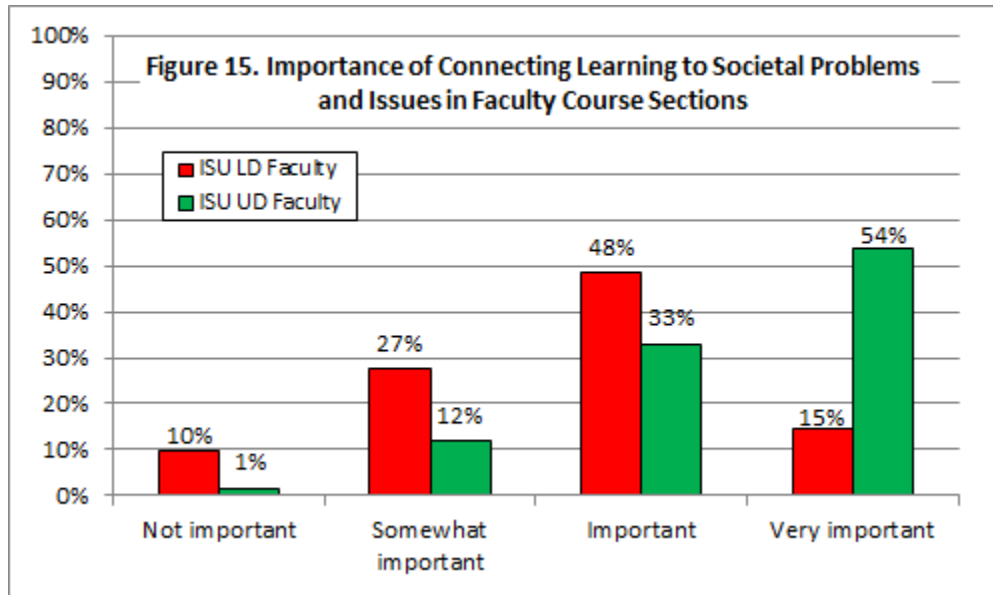


Table 1 compares faculty importance placed on connecting courses to social problems and issues with student perceptions about the frequencies. The table seems to indicate that faculty importance exceeds reported student connections. The data in the table is for illustrative purposes only. Student responses are relative – what is defined as ‘very often’ to one student, may be defined as ‘sometimes’ to another. Additionally, caution should be exercised when comparing survey responses that utilize difference scales.

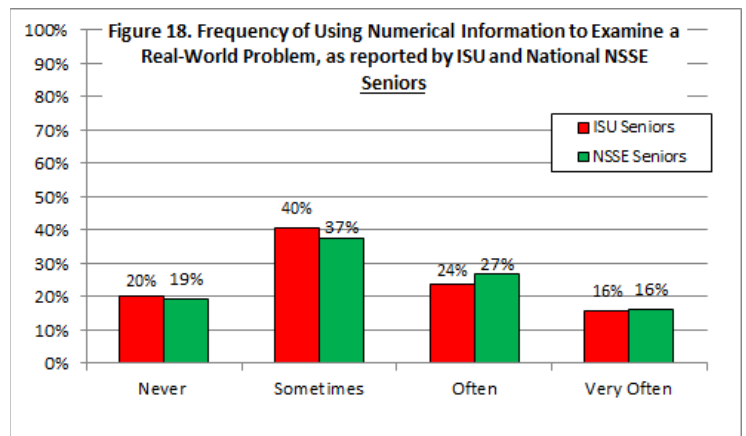
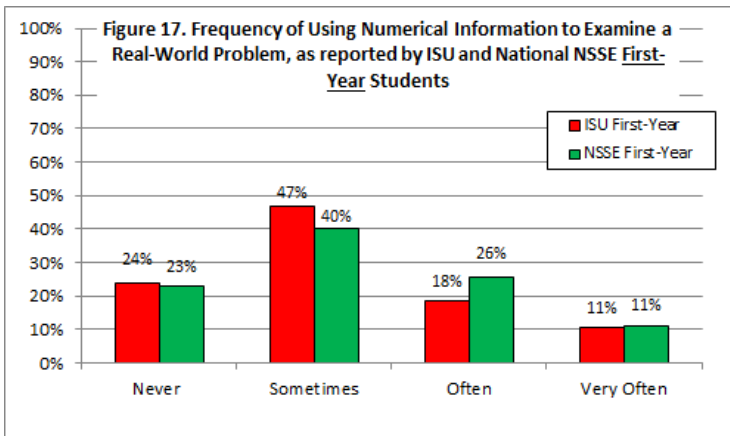
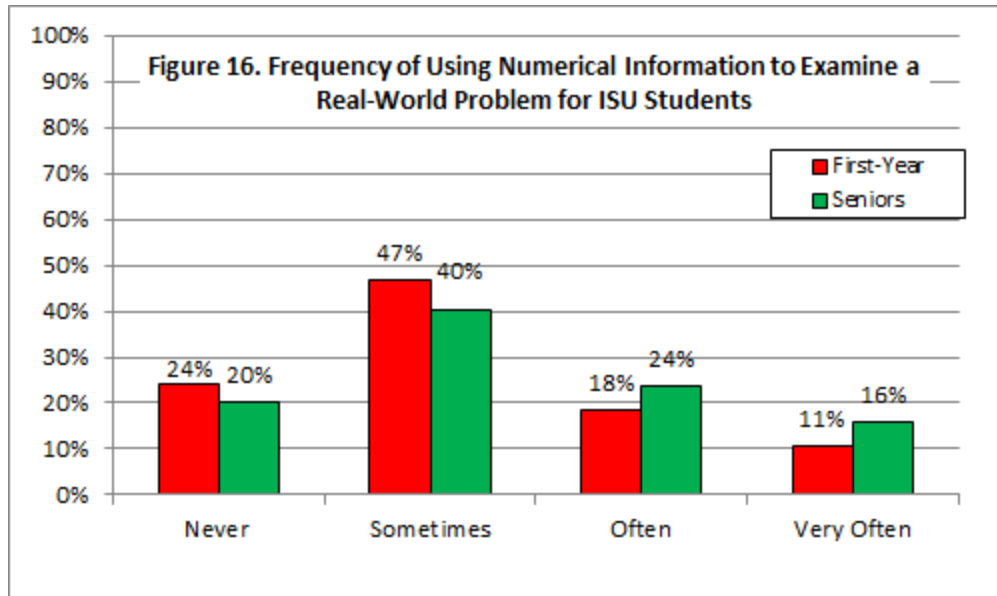
Table 1. Faculty Importance Placed on Connecting Their Course to Social Problems and Issues Compared to Student Perceptions about the Frequency of Connections

Response	ISU First-Year Frequency		ISU LD Faculty Importance		ISU Seniors Frequency		ISU UD Faculty Importance	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Never (students)								
Not important (faculty)	14	7%	6	10%	17	3%	2	1%
Sometimes (students)								
Somewhat important (faculty)	84	43%	17	27%	135	26%	16	12%
Often (students)								
Important (faculty)	67	34%	30	48%	199	38%	44	33%
Very Often (students)								
Very Important (faculty)	32	16%	9	15%	172	33%	72	54%
Total	197	100%	62	100%	523	100%	134	100%

⁸ FSSE question 23b. In your selected course section, how important is it to you that the typical student do the following?: Connect his or her learning to societal problems or issues?

USING NUMERICAL INFORMATION TO EXAMINE A REAL-WORLD PROBLEM (UNEMPLOYMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE, PUBLIC HEALTH, ETC.)⁹

Seniors at ISU report higher frequencies of using numerical information to examine a real-world problem than first-year students. In terms of national comparisons, ISU is fairly consistent with national data.



⁹ NSSE question 6b. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?: Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)

Figure 19 shows that, in general, lower and upper division faculty place about the same level of importance on using numerical information to examine a real-world problem (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.).¹⁰

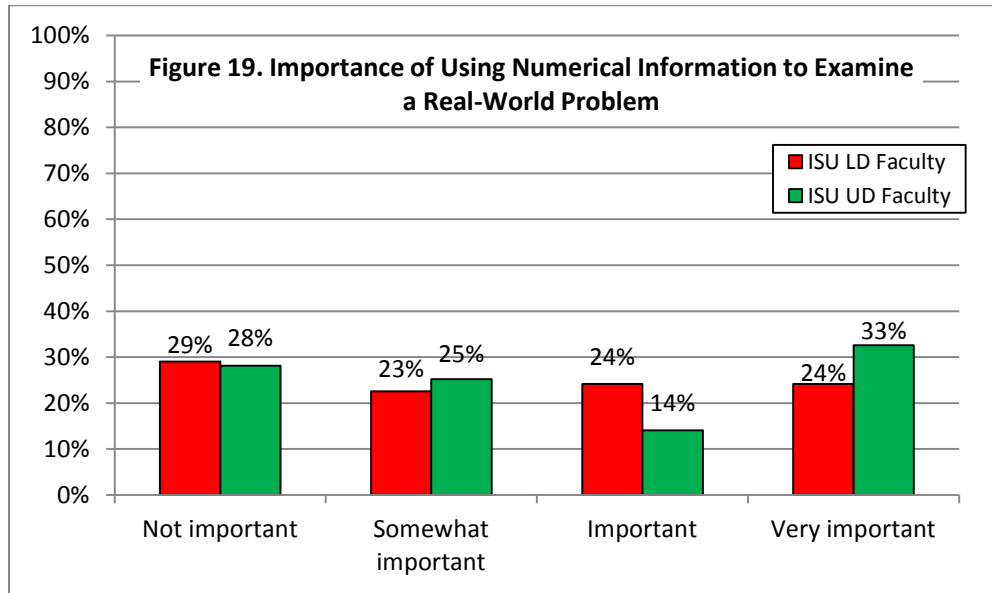


Table 2 would imply that faculty may place more importance on using numerical information to solve real-world problems than student perceptions about frequency. As with table 1, however, the data is for illustrative purposes only. Student responses are relative – what is defined as ‘very often’ to one student, may be defined as ‘sometimes’ to another. Additionally, caution should be exercised when comparing survey responses that utilize difference scales.

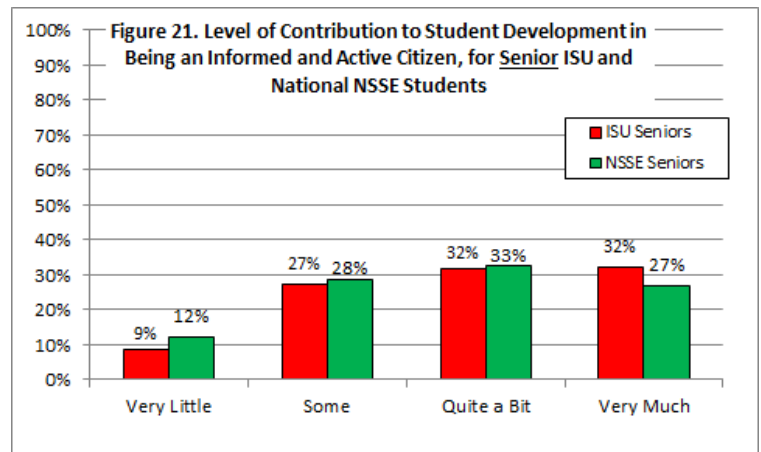
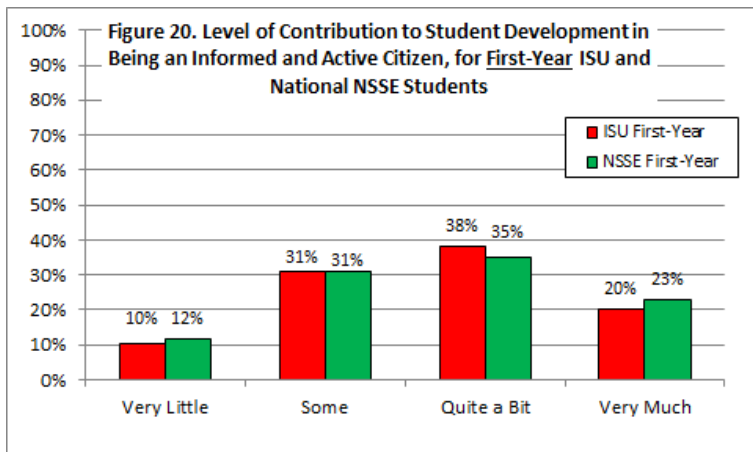
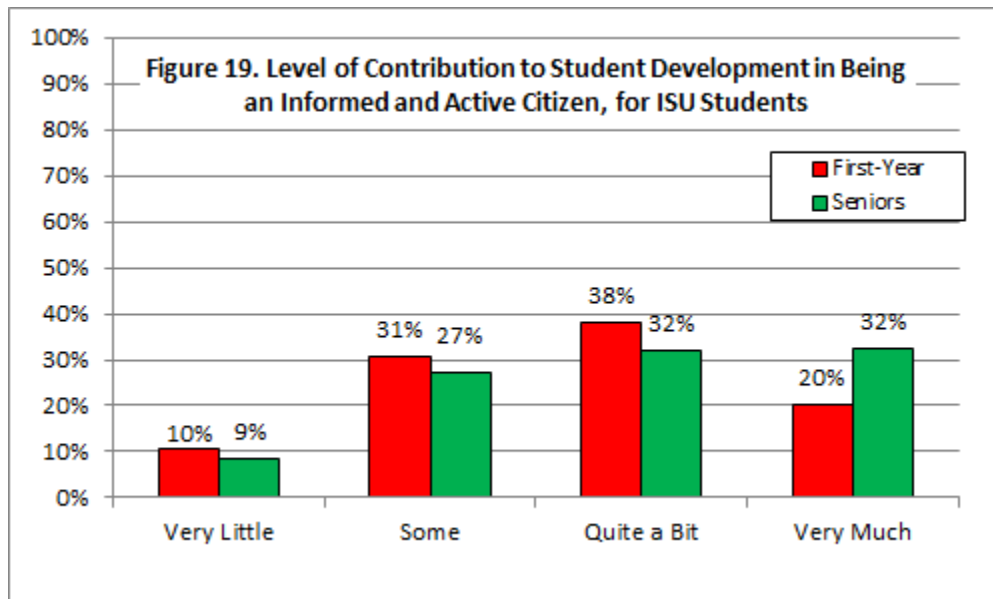
Table 2. Faculty Importance Placed on Using Numerical Information to Examine a Real-World Problem Compared to Student Perceptions about the Frequency

Response	ISU First-Year Frequency		ISU LD Faculty Importance		ISU Seniors Frequency		ISU UD Faculty Importance	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Never (students)								
Not important (faculty)	47	24%	18	29%	104	20%	38	28%
Sometimes (students)								
Somewhat important (faculty)	91	47%	14	23%	209	40%	34	25%
Often (students)								
Important (faculty)	36	18%	15	24%	122	24%	19	14%
Very Often (students)								
Very Important (faculty)	21	11%	15	24%	82	16%	44	33%
Total	195	100%	62	100%	517	100%	135	100%

¹⁰ FSSE question 22e. In your selected course section, how important is it to you that the typical student do the following?: Use numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)

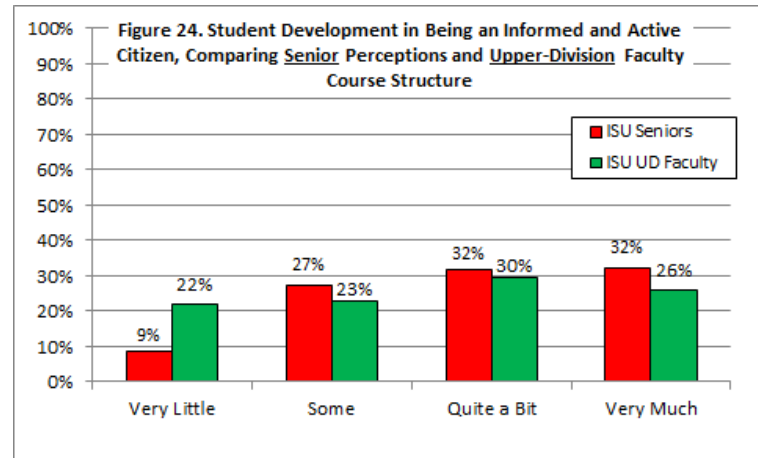
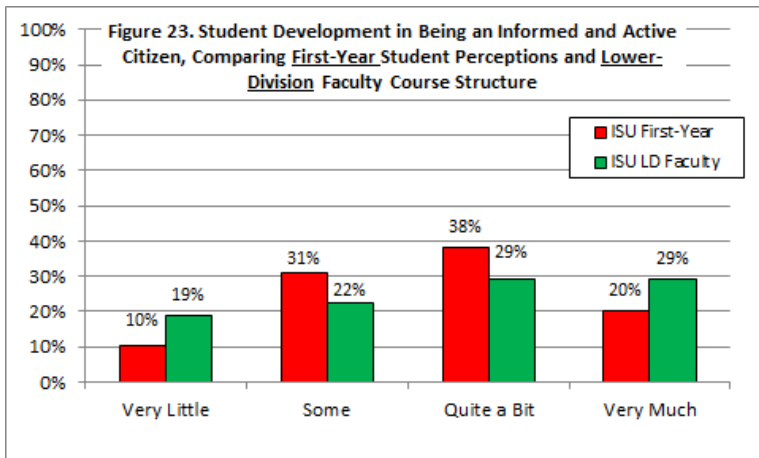
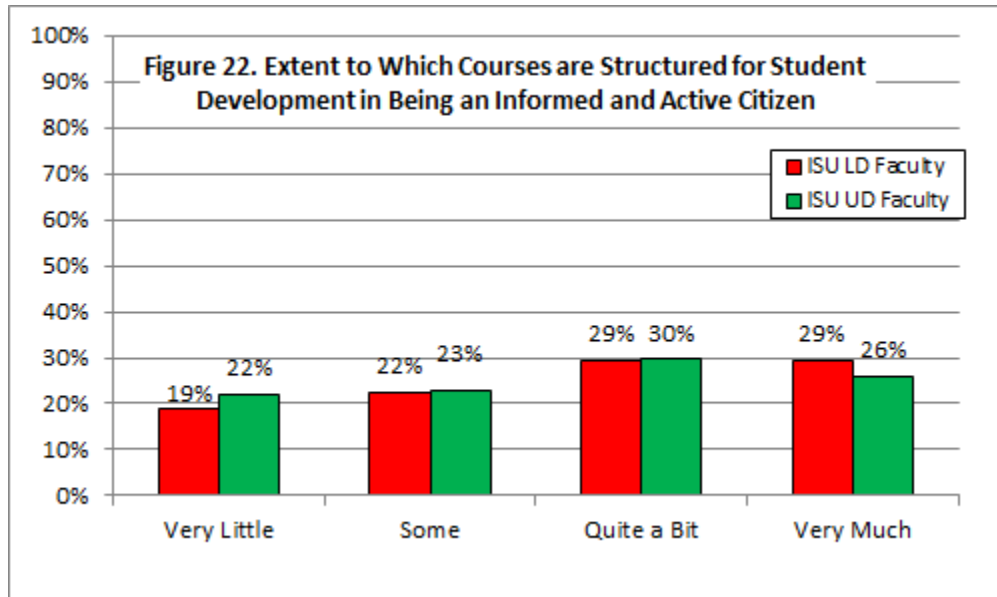
UNIVERSITY CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT IN BEING AN ACTIVE AND INFORMED CITIZEN¹¹

ISU seniors report higher levels of institutional contributions to development in the area of being an active and informed citizen, as shown in figure 13. This could suggest that experiences are more purposeful or frequent during the senior year at ISU, more emphasis is placed on being an active citizen in senior year curricular and co-curricular experiences, or that contributions are made more explicit to seniors.



¹¹ NSSE question 17i. How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas? Being an informed and active citizen

Nearly 60% of faculty at ISU structure their courses so that students can learn about being an informed and active citizen.¹² As figures 23 and 24 show, faculty course structure generally aligns with student perceptions about contributions to their development, with the exceptions of a few areas.



¹² FSSE question 29j. To what extent do you structure your selected course section so that students learn and develop in the following areas?: Being an informed and active citizen

Appendix: Data Tables

Table 3 – NSSE question 12. About how many of your courses at this institution have included a community-based project (service-learning)?

Response	ISU First-Year		NSSE First-Year		ISU Seniors		NSSE Seniors	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
None	108	62%	52,627	46%	125	26%	65,618	38%
Some	62	36%	52,427	46%	286	60%	89,450	51%
Most	3	2%	7,633	7%	64	13%	16,620	10%
All	1	1%	1,305	1%	5	1%	2,612	1%
<i>Total</i>	<i>174</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>113,992</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>480</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>174,300</i>	<i>100%</i>

Table 4 – FSSE question 1g. How important is it to you that undergraduates at your institution do the following before they graduate?: Participate in a community-based project (service-learning) as part of a course

Response	ISU LD Faculty		ISU UD Faculty		All Faculty	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Not important	9	14%	22	15%	31	15%
Somewhat important	24	38%	31	22%	55	27%
Important	20	31%	49	35%	69	33%
Very Important	11	17%	40	28%	51	25%
<i>Total</i>	<i>64</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>142</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>100%</i>

Table 5 – NSSE question 15e. About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing the following?: Doing community service or volunteer work

Response	ISU First-Year		NSSE First-Year		ISU Seniors		NSSE Seniors	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0	106	66%	75160	70%	311	68%	116,885	71%
1-5	44	27%	5183	5%	16	3%	7,781	5%
6-10	5	3%	5114	5%	36	8%	13,899	8%
11-15	3	2%	4770	4%	36	8%	9,986	6%
16-20	2	1%	4957	5%	27	6%	10,509	6%
21-25	1	1%	3399	3%	15	3%	2,864	2%
26-30	0	0%	2044	2%	2	0%	1,264	1%
More than 30	0	0%	5991	6%	16	3%	2,250	1%
<i>Total</i>	<i>161</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>106,618</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>459</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>165,438</i>	<i>100%</i>

Table 6 – FSSE question 20d. In an average 7-day week, about how many hours do you think the typical student in your selected course section spends doing each of the following?: Doing community service or volunteer work

Response	ISU LD Faculty		ISU UD Faculty	
	#	%	#	%
0	15	25%	27	21%
1-5	43	70%	91	71%
6-10	2	3%	8	6%
11-15	1	2%	3	2%
16-20	0	0%	0	0%
21-25	0	0%	0	0%
26-30	0	0%	0	0%
More than 30	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Total</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>129</i>	<i>100%</i>

Table 7 – NSSE question 2b. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?: Connected your learning to societal problems or issues

Response	ISU First-Year		NSSE First-Year		ISU Seniors		NSSE Seniors	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Never	14	7%	10,169	8%	17	3%	10,428	6%
Sometimes	84	43%	48,179	38%	135	26%	55,103	29%
Often	67	34%	45,197	36%	199	38%	68,203	36%
Very Often	32	16%	22,606	18%	172	33%	53,756	29%
<i>Total</i>	<i>197</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>126,151</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>523</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>187,490</i>	<i>100%</i>

Table 8 – FSSE question 23b. In your selected course section, how important is it to you that the typical student do the following?: Connect his or her learning to societal problems or issues?

Response	ISU LD Faculty		ISU UD Faculty		All Faculty	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Not important	6	10%	2	1%	8	4%
Somewhat important	17	27%	16	12%	33	17%
Important	30	48%	44	33%	74	38%
Very important	9	15%	72	54%	81	41%
Total	62	100%	134	100%	196	100%

Table 9 – NSSE question 6b. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?: Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)

Response	ISU First-Year		NSSE First-Year		ISU Seniors		NSSE Seniors	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Never	47	24%	28,317	23%	104	20%	36,107	19%
Sometimes	91	47%	49,927	40%	209	40%	69,260	37%
Often	36	18%	31,699	26%	122	24%	49,808	27%
Very Often	21	11%	14,004	11%	82	16%	30,050	16%
Total	195	100%	123,947	100%	517	100%	185,225	100%

Table 10 – FSSE question 22e. In your selected course section, how important is it to you that the typical student do the following?: Use numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)

Response	ISU LD Faculty		ISU UD Faculty		All Faculty	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Not important	18	29%	38	28%	56	28%
Somewhat important	14	23%	34	25%	48	24%
Important	15	24%	19	14%	34	17%
Very important	15	24%	44	33%	59	30%
Total	62	100%	135	100%	197	100%

Table 11 – NSSE question 17i. How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas? Being an informed and active citizen

Response	ISU First-Year		NSSE First-Year		ISU Seniors		NSSE Seniors	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Very Little	17	10%	12,209	12%	39	9%	19,922	12%
Some	50	31%	32,696	31%	124	27%	46,812	28%
Quite a Bit	62	38%	37,157	35%	145	32%	53,449	33%
Very Much	33	20%	24,065	23%	147	32%	44,248	27%
<i>Total</i>	<i>162</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>106,127</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>455</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>164,431</i>	<i>100%</i>

Table 12 – FSSE question 29j. To what extent do you structure your selected course section so that students learn and develop in the following areas?: Being an informed and active citizen

Response	ISU LD Faculty		ISU UD Faculty		All Faculty	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Very Little	11	19%	28	22%	39	21%
Some	13	22%	29	23%	42	23%
Quite a Bit	17	29%	38	30%	55	30%
Very Much	17	29%	33	26%	50	27%
<i>Total</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>128</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>186</i>	<i>100%</i>