

Creating Global Citizens: Evidence from Institutional Data

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Introduction

The University of Minnesota-Twin Cities (UMNTC) is committed to developing undergraduate students who are prepared to be global citizens. This poster highlights data from a campus-wide student survey (the Student Experience in the Research University survey), which provides evidence related to students' curricular and co-curricular global and intercultural engagement.

Additionally, we demonstrate how students' engagement in curricular and co-curricular global and intercultural activities can enhance associated competencies, including gains in linguistic and cultural skills, ability to work with people from other cultures, understanding of the complexities of global issues, and ability to apply disciplinary knowledge in global contexts. Such research informs our understanding of student characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors that are associated with students' development in global and cultural competencies.

Research Questions

- How often do students engage in curricular/co-curricular global and intercultural activities at UMNTC?
- How is engagement in curricular/co-curricular global and intercultural activities associated with students' gains in cultural and global competencies?

Instrument

In spring 2010, the Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) survey was administered to 28,237 undergraduate students. The institutional response rate was 34% (n = 9,601).

Each student is randomly assigned one of four modules; in this study, our primary measures are drawn from a module that 30% of survey respondents (n = 2,879) were assigned to complete. The demographic characteristics of this group are demonstrated in Table 1. Female students and White students are slightly overrepresented within the survey module.

Table 1. Demographics of Respondents.

	n	%
Male	1046	38.7%
Female	1660	61.3%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	33	1.2%
African American	99	3.7%
Chicano-Latino	74	2.7%
Asian, Filipino, or Pacific Islander	258	9.5%
White	2201	81.3%
Unknown	41	1.5%

Global and Intercultural Engagement

"While attending the University of Minnesota, how frequently have you engaged in the following?"

- Interacted with students from outside the U.S. in class (e.g. through discussion sections, study groups, or class projects)
- Interacted with students from outside the U.S. in social settings (e.g. in clubs or student organizations, or in informal settings)
- Developed a friendship with a student from outside the U.S.
- Worked with a faculty member on a project with an international/global theme
- Presented a paper at a symposium or conference or participated in a panel on international/global topics
- Attended lectures, symposia, workshops, or conferences on international/global topics
- Attended a performance with an international/global focus

Global and Intercultural Competency Gains

"As a University of Minnesota student, how would you rate your competencies below? (Ratings included "when you started here" and "current ability level.")

- Understanding the complexities of global issues (1)
- Ability to apply disciplinary knowledge in a global context (2)
- Linguistic and cultural competency in at least one language other than my own (3)
- Ability to work with people from other cultures (4)
- Comfort working with people from other cultures (5)

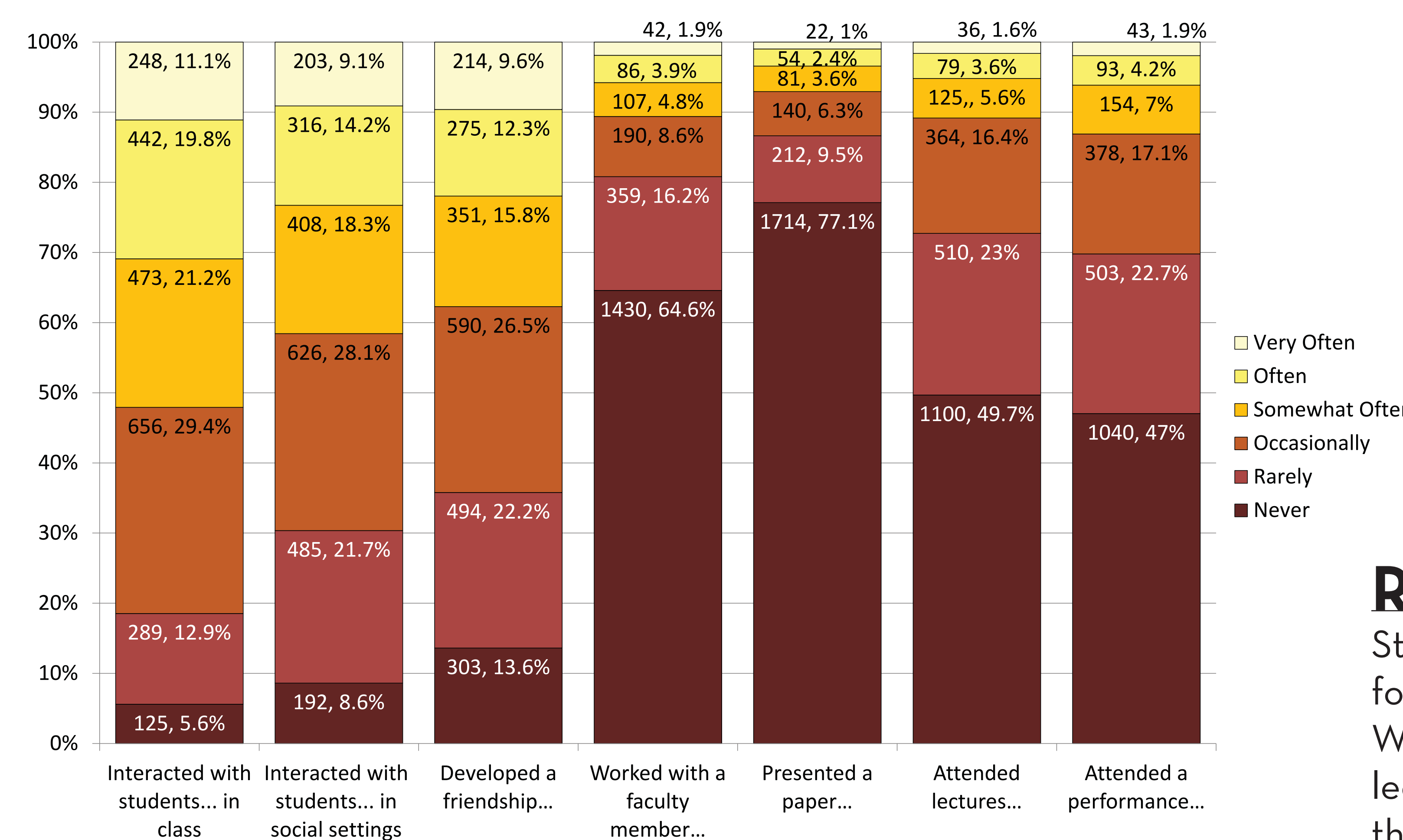


Figure 1. Frequency of Students' Engagement in Global and Intercultural Activities.

Results

Table 2. Regressions Predicting Gains in Intercultural and Global Competency Skills

Variables	1 B	2 B	3 B	4 B	5 B
Constant					
Interacted in Class					
Interacted Socially					+
Friendship				+	+
Worked with Faculty	+		+		
Presented a Paper	-	-		-	
Attended Lectures	+	+	+	+	+
Attended Performances	+	+		+	
Female			+		
First-Generation	+	+		+	+
Students of Color				-	-
Low-Income		+			
Working-Class					
ACT	-	-	-	-	-
GPA	+	+	+	+	+
R ²	6.6	7.1	5.5	5.6	4.6

The results above suggest that some curricular and co-curricular activities are more closely associated with students' gains in intercultural and global activities (Table 2). Specifically:

- Socially interacting with international students is positively associated with gains in ability and comfort working with people from other cultures
- Developing a friendship with a student from outside the U.S. is positively associated with gains in the ability to work with people from other cultures and comfort working with people from other cultures
- Working with faculty on an international/global project is positively associated with understanding the complexities of global issues and developing linguistic/cultural competency in another language
- Presenting a paper is negatively associated with understanding the complexities of global issues, applying disciplinary knowledge in a global context, and ability to work with people from other cultures
- Attending lectures is positively associated with all five global/intercultural competencies
- Attending performances is positively associated with understanding the complexities of global issues, applying disciplinary knowledge in a global context, and ability to work with people from other cultures

Recommendations

Students should be exposed to a variety of co-curricular activities to foster their development of intercultural and global competencies. Working with faculty on global/international research and attending lectures/performances are important to students' development; however, these are activities in which students are not as likely to participate (Figure 1). Therefore, enhancing these opportunities for students is one step to promoting their development.

