

# Evaluating the Effects of Cultural Event Attendance: A Qualitative Approach

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Most colleges and universities expend considerable time and effort to create a series of events—lectures, art exhibits, performances, film screenings—open to the entire campus and often the larger community on the premise that such programming provides some benefit to the students and members of the campus community who attend them. The question we have been investigating over the past several years boils down to this: What do college students get out of attending on-campus cultural events?

This question is actually an important piece of a larger puzzle having to do with the value of the liberal arts college experience for undergraduate students. Institutions of higher education expect enormous changes in the coming years, some of which relate to the technological and economic underpinnings of the campus experience. For example, the increasing cost-effectiveness and technical sophistication of distance education, in the form of online instruction, are leading some to anticipate extraordinary—even existential—challenges for the traditional four-year undergraduate institution in the near future. “If students are going to pay high tuition, or even just buy gas to drive to campus and search for the elusive parking space,” writes José Antonio Bowen, now president of Goucher College, “then we must offer them a classroom experience that goes beyond the free (and increasingly excellent) content available on the internet.”<sup>1</sup>

One difference between education online and on campus is the ability of colleges to provide performances, exhibitions, and public lectures that occur outside of the traditional classroom but are nonetheless an integral (but largely unevaluated) part of the educational experience—what the prominent educator and scholar George D. Kuh calls “the other curriculum.”<sup>2</sup> It makes sense, then, that being able to

describe the precise value of attending on-campus, out-of-class cultural events would help us understand what students get out of the “traditional” college or university experience.



Figure 1: Juniata College Orchestra. Photo Credit: Alison Rihs

We have been gathering data to pursue this investigation since 2010, using both quantitative and qualitative methods in a longitudinal design. This paper presents one set of those results, a qualitative analysis of reflections written by students after their attendance at cultural events on campus. Before describing this particular facet of the investigation, however, we will explain how and why this project came about.<sup>3</sup> Interestingly, the interdisciplinary character of the research team mirrors the liberal arts values being explored in the study: lifelong learning, openness to new experience, and the ability to engage in critical reflection.

### INITIATING THE RESEARCH

This project has its origins in James Tuten’s undergraduate experience. Beginning in his sophomore year, he worked as the house and stage manager of the recital hall in the fine arts department at the College of Charleston. Because he was a music major and was required to attend a certain number of events anyway, this turned out to be a good deal because he got paid to attend those same events—and he got to meet the performers as well. To this day, Tuten regards his exposure to twenty or more concerts each semester as a major formative part of his education.

When Tuten came to Juniata in 2000 he chaired the visiting speakers committee and was again involved in organizing events. Recalling the impact on-campus events had on him, Tuten began to wonder about their larger effect on students. He was convinced that the effect was positive, but did not

know how such events contributed to a student's education more generally. However, he imagined that since colleges had been organizing such events for decades if not centuries, someone had to have studied and understood these effects.

Much to his surprise, hardly any such research had appeared in print. In 2009, while preparing a speech to the entering class of first-year students, Tuten wanted to urge his audience to take advantage of Juniata's free cultural events.<sup>4</sup> In order to support the argument that such attendance led to positive educational results, he searched the relevant scholarly literature and was quite disappointed by the results. Tuten now feels, somewhat naively, that he just expected ProQuest Research Library to deliver the definitive answer on what the outcomes are for attending cultural events. But ProQuest didn't hold the answer. Neither did Academic Search Premier or JSTOR. As it turns out, we in higher education in fact don't know much about the effect on students of their attendance at on-campus lectures, performances, panels, and other cultural events. Perhaps the messiness of measuring educational outcomes at least partly explained why few scholars have tried to understand this topic more systematically. Furthermore, no specific academic discipline "owns" responsibility for this component of the educational experience. Consequently, it has not been the focus of any one particular discipline's ongoing research.

Tuten had identified an interesting research problem that had received little attention and could have a significant impact on our understanding of the undergraduate experience. His training as an historian, however, hadn't prepared him to tackle social science questions of this sort. He called Kathy Westcott, then the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) Director at Juniata College, for assistance in developing a project.

## EXPLORING FURTHER

Westcott, a school psychologist, had rotated into the position of SOTL Director, after the departure of the first two directors, Dave Drews and Mike Boyle.<sup>5</sup> The center had just been funded by a grant from the Teagle Foundation and its members were focusing on defining the center's mission and activities. In writing and implementing this grant, Westcott spent a lot of time reading about the scholarship of teaching and learning as well as the outcomes of a liberal arts education. This opened a whole new area of literature for her, specifically the defining of liberal arts education outcomes at the institutional level. In particular, the report *Liberal Arts Colleges and Liberal Arts Education: New Evidence on Impacts* (commonly known as the Wabash Study) provided a holistic view of outcomes, highlighting the intellectual and personal development of students at liberal arts colleges.<sup>6</sup> It framed new questions for her as to how the college experience leads not only to gains in academic knowledge and skills, but also to students' overall well-being and development (e.g., health, social relationships, and critical thinking).

For Westcott, Tuten's speech raised a number of clear institutional questions related to liberal arts educational outcomes: How does attendance at campus cultural events facilitate the attainment of our desired liberal arts education outcomes? How do we determine which, if any, liberal arts outcomes are derived from cultural event attendance? How important is it to us as a residential liberal arts college to be able to test these in a systematic way? After a mentoring session in the SOTL center's Brown Bag series of colloquia, a way to address these questions emerged.

Tuten and Westcott first turned to Alexander Astin's work on student involvement and George Kuh's on both "the other curriculum" and student outcomes linked to student engagement.<sup>7</sup> Essentially, this body of literature highlights the importance of student engagement in and out of the classroom—of engagement between faculty and students as well as among students themselves. Student engagement increases when campuses provide activities that compel students to commit their time, energy, and effort to their educational experience. Such increased involvement on campus leads to positive outcomes on measures of educational success, at both the level of the institution (e.g., rates of retention and graduation)<sup>8</sup> and of the individual (e.g., communication skill development, self-efficacy development).<sup>9</sup> These findings suggested a theoretical model that places attendance at cultural events within Kuh's "other curriculum"—the educational experiences outside of the classroom that facilitated involvement and engagement.

Could the seemingly passive engagement of attending on-campus cultural events be shown to impact student development? Certainly the campus community behaved as if these events offered valuable intellectual and social opportunities. The institution provided ongoing financial support for them. The faculty required attendance as part of their courses and encouraged attendance in other ways. Researchers had found some positive outcomes in terms of greater participation in student clubs and activities, but could attendance at campus culture events produce broader and deeper impacts? Finding empirical answers to that question opened up huge, messy challenges having to do with measurement, so Tuten and Westcott sought assistance from their colleagues.

Their first recruit was Dave Drews, an emeritus professor of psychology whose scholarship addressed the effects of studying abroad, methods of validating student class evaluations, the use of cognitive mapping techniques to capture the learning of psychology majors, and ways to improve critical thinking in an introductory math course. He had also been involved in the creation of the SOTL Center. Drews believed the research question offered a perfect platform to advance the center's mission; it would encourage interest in the systematic study of student learning by drawing in as many disciplines as possible. During several of the center's bi-weekly Brown Bag lunches, colleagues from all corners of the campus helped flesh out a methodological approach.

## PROBLEMS OF METHOD AND MEASUREMENT

Tuten, Westcott, and Drews focused on the first-year experience course, College Writing Seminar (CWS), as a promising site for data gathering and quasi-experimental manipulation. They planned to have students in different sections of CWS experience different levels of exposure to on-campus events. They were surprised to find no studies that varied the treatment within an entire cohort (such as the entering class of students at a college or university) in the way they proposed to do. Luckily, colleagues with administrative responsibility for the class and for the students, including Carol Peters (coordinator of the multiple sections of CWS) and Dan Cook-Huffman (assistant dean of students) supported the work and made the study easy to organize and implement.



Figure 2: Juniata College Museum of Art, Minna Citron Opening. Photo Credit: Sungouk Park

In the fall semester of 2010, CWS enrolled 429 students. One-third of the students had to attend five on-campus presentations or performances broadly defined as a cultural event: lectures, musical performances, theater performances, international film screenings, and art gallery exhibition openings. Another one-third of these students were also required to attend five events, but lectures were excluded because of the similarity between lecture attendance and the typical classroom experience; the researchers wanted to know if there was something particular about the other experiences. The final one-third of the students had no requirement to attend cultural events, and thus served as a control for quantitative measures not reported here.

Students who attended cultural events were required as a CWS class assignment to write a short reflection paper on each event. These essays served as a primary source of data for student outcomes for this portion of the study. They had to describe the event, discuss their expectations for the event, explain their degree of experience with the event, and reflect upon or analyze what they saw or heard. The

students provided a normative evaluation of the event’s quality (good or bad) and a personal assessment of what they got out of attending the event. We collected 793 reflection papers written by 206 students.<sup>10</sup> The papers identified forty-four different on-campus events, one-half of them lectures or panel discussions, and the other one-half of them performances.

At this point Tuten recruited Bill White to help with the qualitative analysis of the reflection papers. Having long experience with content-analytic data of this sort, White recommended using a grounded theory approach to develop coding schemes for the essays. Grounded theory is a qualitative research method that proceeds by inductive means to develop a systematic description of some phenomenon or substantive area.<sup>11</sup> It is often contrasted with hypothetico-deductive methods, which proceed by deductive means to assess evidentiary support for causal relationships among variables. This is the difference between the field observer, who gathers data by witnessing and recording events in their natural context, and the laboratory scientist, who conducts trials in which subjects are exposed to varying conditions and the corresponding outcomes taken as evidence of causation.

Grounded theory involves examining qualitative data (e.g., written texts) in the service of producing sets of one or more of four basic elements of theory: concepts (i.e., “variables”), categories (i.e., “values”), properties (i.e., operational definitions), and propositions (i.e., relationships among concepts).<sup>12</sup> In this case, our reading of the essays produced concepts such as “impact” (with categories including positive/negative as well as attitude/knowledge/action). A variety of different implementations of grounded theory exist, and the epistemological implications of those differences have produced methodological debate among sociologists, ethnographers, and other qualitative researchers.<sup>13</sup> In broadest terms, however, grounded theory involves closely examining a set of data with an eye toward discovering “emergent” constructs within it. A constant, iterative comparison of the emerging description with the data set itself serves as a check on the subjectivity of the analyst’s interpretative work in developing the description. In our case, we derived the properties of impact via repeated reading of the essays, and began to suspect that different forms of impact were associated with different types of events (specifically, lecture/discussions versus performances).

<b>Cultural Events</b>	<b>Number</b>
<i>Public Lectures</i>	28
<i>Performances (including films, theatre performances, concerts, art exhibit openings)</i>	23
<i>Total Events</i>	51

Figure 3: Number and type of events for Fall 2010.

To that end, Tuten and White read a sample of approximately thirty essays and identified six themes that appeared within them, relating to the writer's (a) expectations about the event; (b) prior knowledge, experience, or familiarity with the event type; (c) specific connection to the event itself; (d) overall assessment of the event; (e) judgment about how the event reflects on the college campus community; and (f) judgment about the impact of the event on the writer himself or herself. All but item (c)—the existence of a “specific connection” between the event and the writer—were seen to take positive and negative forms. After Tuten and White established and refined procedural rules for distinguishing edge cases (i.e. cases that, due to the vagaries of language used, did not easily fit in the existing categories), they then coded a slightly larger sample and revised classification rules that produced too much disagreement as measured by unsatisfactory inter-coder reliability scores.

Through this process, the category “Impact on the Student” was defined as the value of the event as a source of ideas or knowledge, or as a motivator or prompt for thought or action. Impact could be coded as either positive, negative, or no explicit reference. Positive impact was coded for statements that indicated positive or favorable impact on the student's thoughts, actions, or intentions beyond mere enjoyment of the event itself. It also included statements about looking forward to attending similar events in the future as well as the identification of personal growth and/or development as a result of the event. Negative impact was defined as language that indicated that the event would have some lasting negative impact on the student's thoughts, actions, or intentions, or would cause some sort of avoidance behavior, beyond mere dislike of the event itself. This theme included statements swearing off entire bodies of artistic or intellectual endeavor.

A group of coders recruited from Westcott's research lab, including Nick Talisman, received training and then set to work reading and coding the essays. Two coders read each essay. There was 89.7% agreement among the coders. Inter-rater reliability measures (Cohen's kappa = .79) indicated substantial agreement.<sup>14</sup> When the coders disagreed, the principal researchers reviewed the essay and made a final determination. The final ratings of impact identified 375 papers (47.3%) describing some impact and 418 (52.7%) papers describing no impact.

As we began to look at the results, we saw that for approximately half of the students, no impact for attendance at the events was identified in their reflection papers. It is certainly possible, however, that for these first-semester, first-year students any impact may not occur until they, say, take a class two years later or until they go to another event and make a connection with their own experience, or until they correlate different sounds or ideas that they have heard. In addition, the structure of the reflection paper prompt (see appendix) may have primed their responses in ways that may have minimized statements regarding perceptions of impact linked to attendance at the event.



Figure 4: Red Barat. Photo credit: Juniata College Staff

For those papers that did state an impact, we became interested in the specific kinds of impacts that were identified. Consequently, we re-read the reflection papers that had been coded as having any statement of impact. Parallel to the psychology literature on attitude formation,<sup>15</sup> we began to see impact as being expressed both in terms of attitudes or emotions as well as beliefs or knowledge. A student might, say, express empathy for the Palestinians and articulate that as a change s/he had undergone. Alternately, the student might point to some new belief or otherwise tell us that s/he had learned something about the situation in the Middle East.

Another dimension of impact that emerged was behavior. In some cases, the students would point to some action they took as a result of attending the cultural event. We saw this as the “gold standard” of impact; if a student described himself or herself as “doing something” because he or she had attended a lecture or gone to see a performance, then an argument could be made that cultural events had a positive effect on our students.

We thus began to think of impact as a hierarchy, with “feeling something” in response to an event (attitude) as the lowest rung, “learning something new” (i.e., knowledge) the next step, and “doing something” (action) at the top. We initiated a second round of coding, with readers assessing the type or quality of impact expressed in the response paper. Treating “type of impact” as varying among attitude-

related, knowledge-related, or behavior-related types partakes of a traditional social psychological approach to persuasion, wherein “attitudes” reflect affective aspects or orientations, “knowledge” reflects cognitive aspects, and “action” reflects behaviors, reactions, or decisive expressions of intent undertaken in response to a given message.<sup>16</sup> We used the following explanations to guide our coding of the critiques:

#### Attitude

*Positive or negative associations for the cultural event.* It manifests in ideas of liking the event without any additional articulate statement about it. Attitudes are necessarily personalized with emotional language. Attitude reflects a broad emotional or affective valence that the writer assigns the event. This is usually reflected in broad comments without specific claims or details. (e.g. “I dislike censorship” vs. “censorship is unfair”). The following kinds of statements were coded as Attitude:

- “Bill Strickland was a very inspiring human being. His speech gave me a ‘can do’ attitude about everything for weeks after I had heard his speech and watched his slideshow. I believe that he could inspire anyone to do anything if you gave him the time to. This Cultural Event gave me a new outlook on my abilities as a student, and overall as a person.” This is a paradigmatic example of an Attitude statement.
- “This will forever influence my world views by making me realize that although it is hard to stand up for something, it must be done.” This statement was coded as Attitude rather than Knowledge because this statement reflects a stronger sensibility or attitude about the importance of the idea that one should stand up for important things.
- “I will most definitely attend more events like this one and possibly even work in the theatre or join a club of some sort.” This was coded as Attitude rather than Action because although it represents a commitment to action, no evidence of actual action is provided.

#### Knowledge

*Truth claims about some concept; it can be fact or opinion.* A claim about how things are in the world. They are universal claims, possibly connected to previously learned knowledge or existing beliefs. Examples of knowledge claims include cases where the event raised awareness; introduced new perspectives, knowledge, or ways of being; changed an existing perspective; caused disillusionment; or disabused one of incorrect knowledge. The following are examples of Knowledge statements, all of which reflect knowledge gained as the result of a student’s encounter with a new experience:

- “All in all, the experience was frustrating, but also it made me learn that the world is diverse and to understand that different people do different customs and have completely different mannerisms than Americans.”

- “As I had never been to a dance show before, I tried to keep an open mind. . . . I learned that just as artists have their own visions, choreographers represent situations in different, and sometimes odd, ways. I was wondering what Rioult was trying to demonstrate through his choreography.”
- “Dr. Washington’s presentation made me look at diversity from a totally different perspective. As somebody who has always tried to simply turn a blind eye to what color or religion people are, I have always acted like there was no difference between myself and others. I had always felt like this was the best way to deal with it. However, Dr. Washington explained to us that this was not the case; the fact of the matter is, people are culturally different from one another, and ignoring those differences is not diversity, it is denial.”



Figure 5: Dr. Jamie Washington. Photo Credit: Juniata College Staff

### Action

*An actual physical action that the writer has taken, beyond attending the event or changing his/her mind about things. It could include speech (beyond writing the essay or participating in the event itself) in the sense of speaking out. It implies an expenditure of time, money, or effort in relation to some aspect of the cultural event. The actions may be as modest as the first example below, or as significant as the last:*

- “I was singing them for days after seeing the show, and even downloaded some of them onto my iPod.”
- “Before going to see Capitol Steps, I hardly ever looked at a newspaper and the only time I watched a news report was when I was home and my parents insisted on not changing the channel. Now, at least once a week, I pick up a copy of the *New York Times* to see what’s going on.”

- “I learned many valuable things that will stick with me throughout college and when looking for a job. He mentioned helpful tips during an interview and I personally used some in interviews I have had.”

## RESULTS

After the second round of coding, the initial classification of essays as representing positive impact was revised from 375 down to 361. Three essays were re-coded as having negative attitude impact, nine essays were coded as missing data (e.g., lost essays), and two cases were classified as presenting no impact. The 361 essays reflecting positive impact were then categorized into one of the three categories of Attitude, Knowledge, or Action. As previously stated, the categories were hierarchical, with behavior demonstrating the most signification of impact, followed by reflection of gains in knowledge, and lastly stated changes in attitudes. In cases where multiple categories of impact were identified within one essay, the highest category (i.e., knowledge over attitude, behavior over knowledge) was recorded. There was 74% agreement, Cohen’s kappa = .44 (moderate agreement, per Landis and Koch) on the classification of the essays by type of impact.<sup>17</sup>



Figure 6: Puppetry Master Class. Photo Credit: Juniata College Staff

Of the 361 essays coded for type of impact, 240 (66%) were attitude-type of impact, 96 (27%) were knowledge-type of impact, and 25 (7%) were behavior-type of impact.

In general, the reports of impact were associated with performances (79%) far more than with lecture (21%), but it is difficult to make any judgments about student preferences for type of events

because half the students only received credit for the assignment if they attended performances rather than lectures.

The different types of events had different types of impact on attendees. Table 1 shows the distribution of impact types across lecture events versus performance events. That distribution differs by type of event,  $\chi^2(2) = 47.1, p < .0001$ .

In order to interpret those results a closer examination is required. Students were more likely to report a knowledge-type impact (57% vs. 18%), and less likely to report an attitude-type impact (40% vs. 74%), after attending a lecture than after attending a performance. Furthermore, within each category of impact, the distribution of action-type impact resembles that of attitude. For action-type impact, two instances (8% of the column total) are associated with lecture events and twenty-three (92%) are associated with performances; this is somewhat similar to the attitude-type impact distribution of 13% for lectures and 87% for performance (as compared to 46% and 54% for knowledge). Therefore the difference identified by the Chi Square points to the strong association between performance and attitude-type impact.

Type of Event	Type of Impact			Total
	Attitude	Knowledge	Action	
Lecture/Discussion	31 (40%)	44 (57%)	2 (2%)	77
Performance	209 (74%)	52 (18%)	23 (8%)	284
Total	240 (66%)	96 (27%)	25 (7%)	361

Figure 7: Type of Impact by Type of Event.

## IMPLICATIONS

Returning to our research question, what does this study reveal about the outcomes for students who attend cultural events? Although 53% of the reflection papers did not state explicit impact on the students' attitudes, knowledge, or behavior, the 47% of the reflection papers that did state an impact provide interesting insight as to how students understand and convey their experience shortly after attending an event. The overwhelming majority of those reflected positive impact, primarily on student attitudes, with some impact on knowledge and to a much lesser extent on behavior. Impact on attitude was more closely associated with attendance at performances while impact on knowledge was more associated with attendance at lectures. The data on impact on behavior were too slim to draw substantive conclusions.

Exposure to different ideas and to different aesthetic forms was found to have a broadening effect on the tastes and understandings of first-year students. In instances where we could clearly identify some positive impact, only between seven and ten percent of the critiques reported some sort of social or

behavioral change, such as meeting new people or adopting a new aesthetic preference. More often, the changes were to beliefs and attitudes. Interestingly, beliefs were more likely to be affected by lectures and discussions, while attitudes were more likely to be affected by performances. The form in which these sorts of attitudes were expressed tended to indicate a willingness to go see that kind of performance again, or even merely an understanding that it was reasonable for others to appreciate that kind of performance. Lectures and discussions were more likely to find students expressing some kind of lesson learned or other insight, an articulable belief that may be expected to influence the student's decision-making and expression of ideas in the future.

From the analyses of these cultural event critiques we see that a significant number of students report an impact on attitudes and to a lesser degree knowledge. The fact that these impacts occur suggests a role for cultural events in student engagement and development, emerging as early as the first semester. It is possible that this kind of engagement may set the tone for four years of involvement in an intellectual community.

Cultural events are only lightly studied perhaps because they seem to be in the form of passive learning. This study involved an active step, requiring written reflection, and when you require students to articulate their learning that intervention may shape impact. Active engagement, as Kuh and Astin have shown, links to more positive student outcomes. Administrators may be able to achieve a stronger impact if cultural event programming is more carefully planned and integrated into the student experience. What is the role of reflection? We suspect it plays a valuable role. How do we help students process these events? How do we more directly engage or prepare students for experiencing and consolidating the event?

The data presented here are a snapshot of first-year students, only one-eighth (at best) through their college careers. To gather stronger evidence of effect, the current study will be longitudinal with some focus on the persistence or accumulation of any effects. Identifying whether or not seniors are more likely to report effects on their attitudes, knowledge, or behavior than first-year students, for example, would help to better illustrate how cultural event attendance may influence students differently at different developmental stages. Additionally, it would be important to connect these qualitative measures of impact with quantitative measures of student engagement in order to understand the correlational contribution of on-campus cultural events to student retention, morale, and connection to campus.



Figure 8: Lecture by Dr. Bill Phillips, Class of 1970, Co-Winner of the 1997 Nobel Prize in Physics.  
Photo Credit: Sungouk Park

## FUTURE RESEARCH

The qualitative results point toward a model of how to gauge the types of impact cultural event attendance can have. As a result of what we have learned so far and the many topics that remain unexplored, we have several additional questions to pursue. Which institutional policies enacted early in a student's education spur him or her to engage in campus cultural events? How does a student's mandated exposure to a wide variety of cultural events, as we have used the required College Writing Seminar, affect outcomes such as attendance by choice in subsequent years of college? We have collected longitudinal survey data for two (now graduated) classes that span their four years of college. In the near future we expect to have results based on those survey instruments.

Other questions speak to the student's experiences as a member of the audience at the cultural event. What difference does it make hearing a lecture while sitting in an auditorium full of other audience members, as opposed to watching a TED Talk on a screen? What happens when a student attends a performance and is aware of other audience members (be they strangers or friends) and what they are doing? If audience members are engaged with the cultural event, does it affect the student and produce a positive impact in terms of attitude or action?

A third area of investigation could focus on what students do following a cultural event. How do they analyze or think critically about the performance they saw or the information they received, especially if the style of the performance or the scope of the information is new and transcends their existing body of knowledge? What post-event programming could the college or university offer to help students think in new ways, develop new interests, or hone existing skills?<sup>18</sup> Such programming could

blend the academic, co-curricular, and residential components of campus life. If students could develop their ability to articulate not just what they liked about the cultural event but also why—if they could state more effectively not just what they learned but also how they disagree with the presenter—then we would better understand the impact of cultural events.

To gain a better understanding of impact, perhaps a reflection requiring them to integrate their experience across a semester, year, or the entire span of their undergraduate education would provide the basis to make firmer conclusions about impact.

College provides an opportunity to learn and experience the breadth the world offers, and one way to do that is by sponsoring cultural events. Different types of on-campus, out-of-class cultural events engage students in different ways, connect them with each other, provide intellectual stimulation, and in some instances even motivate them to act on their own. More precisely, exposure to artistic performances tends to instill an appreciation for those cultural forms, while attending lectures tends to inculcate new beliefs or reinforce existing ones. A sufficiently diverse program of cultural events can instill in students an appreciation for the core values of a liberal arts education.

Colleges are also homes of research and in recent years an increasing emphasis has focused on collaborative, interdisciplinary projects as well as on developing a better understanding of what and how students gain from their college experience. The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning has been conducted mainly within specific disciplines, but no particular discipline shoulders the responsibility of working on these non-departmental co-curricular programs. In addition to the findings we have made here and expect to present in the future, this project tellingly shows how to achieve interdisciplinary research on student outcomes within the co-curriculum. The methodological results have married qualitative and quantitative (or mixed method) research. We learned new techniques and came to appreciate the value of applying psychological methods along with the method of paying close attention to language that is common in the fields of communication and history. This melding of methods, when extended to cross-disciplinary dialogue, is fruitful for professional development.

## NOTES

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## APPENDIX

### Cultural Event Requirement

#### Instruction for Critiques

Write your review in three paragraphs (1 to 2 pages) using a formal style although you may use first person if you wish.

**Form**

Include your name, the name of your CWS instructor, and date the piece. Please print **TWO copies** to turn in to your CWS Lab instructor.

**First Paragraph - Introduction**

This should be the shortest paragraph. In two to three sentences give the facts (who, title, what, when, where) about the event. Briefly describe your expectations for the event. You may give your general assessment here too.

**Second Paragraph - Description**

This may be the longest paragraph. Describe in some detail what took place.

**Third Paragraph - Critique**

In this paragraph you apply your critical thinking skills to the event you witnessed. Did you deem it successful or disappointing; surprising or predictable? Did you learn anything from the experience? For any statement back it up with some examples and specifics that demonstrate why you are justified in your assessment. What basis do you have for comparison?