Measuring Campus Well-Being

Background

Purdue University leaders recognize the foundational role of well-being and belonging in students’ success during college. While Belonging has been measured since 2013 - via one question in the SERU - Campus Well-Being has not been measured with regularity or across the entire student population. To better understand how to respond to areas of concern regarding Campus Well-Being and Belonging, a new data collection effort, on both measures, will begin later this fall, on October 24th.

Evidence shows that, while the health and well-being of Purdue students is mostly favorable, a significant minority of students have personal issues/concerns, or they feel unsure about their place within the Purdue community*:

- In response to the statement, “I am optimistic about my life,” just 74.3% of Purdue undergraduates agreed or strongly agreed. **One out of every four Purdue students is unsure or equivocal about their future.**
- 66.2% of undergraduate students agree or strongly agree that “I feel that I belong at Purdue.” **One undergraduate student out of 10 (11.5%) disagrees with the statement.** (The balance of 29.2% were equivocal.)
- 68.7% are satisfied with their life.
- 34.2% say they feel lonely

*These indicators are drawn from the Spring 2022 SERU survey and based on a sample of n=8494.

Strategic Measurement Plan

It is necessary to measure Campus Well-Being in a rigorous, systematic fashion. Explicitly measuring this concept will convey the message that Campus Well-Being is essential, will enhance diversity and inclusion, improve academic outcomes, our interventions and decision making, plus enhance research capacities.

The measure will include the following elements:

- General **health**, mental health, and physical health.
- The matters of passion, persistence, and resilience are covered in the survey, which we broadly label as **grit**.
- The topics of influence, scope or touch, and purpose make up the questions we broadly label as **impact** in this measure.
- Making meaningful and effective connections or bonds with others is labeled as **networks** within our survey items.
- Taking initiative and providing or receiving guidance and direction are two important elements that make up **leadership** within our measure.
Wild Card Questions

To measure what is important to the wide variety of students at Purdue, all colleges and major units have the option to include up to five wild card questions in the survey. The wild card questions will be reviewed for common as well as unique themes. A limited number will be used in the survey.

**During the fall of 2022, wild card questions can be submitted via this form, and questions will be collected through September 16.** The measurement instrument is available for units to review.

Logistics

The inaugural measure on campus well-being and sense of belonging will be open to the entire population of undergraduate students. The measurement process will take place twice during the academic year in both the fall and spring semesters. For the first year of this project, the Office of the Provost does not plan to offer incentives to students.

A calendar of important dates is outlined below:

- **September 16, 2022** – Wild card questions collection form closes at 5 pm
- **October 24, 2022** – Launch measure on campus well-being
- **November 14, 2022** – Close measure on campus well-being
- **March 13, 2023** – Launch updated measure on campus well-being
- **April 3, 2023** – Close updated measure on campus well-being
- **May 2023** – Share initial findings

Next Steps

In addition to considering and discussing possible wild card questions for your area, we also need your support to maximize participation across the different areas of student populations. It is necessary to obtain a large sample overall, but also one that captures an adequate response from small academic and demographic segments of the student population.

Please share information about this survey with instructors and student-facing staff and encourage student participation. The data collected from this survey will inform decisions about the success of our students. Thank you in advance for your assistance with this important work.

**Wild Card Questions should be submitted via this form by September 16th.** Please direct any questions or comments to idata@purdue.edu.