Using SERU Data to Examine Student Learning Outcomes in Campus Housing

Department of Housing and Residence Education

Purpose of Study

Extensive research concluded that campus housing positively impacts student intellectual and personal development in college (Pascarella, Terenzini, Blimling, 1994; Schuh, 1999; Schroeder & Mable, 1994). Living Learning Communities were found to enhance student academic performance, academic and social integration, and learning outcomes (Inkelas & Soldner, 2011; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1981; Zhao & Kuh, 2004).

This current study was conducted to assess student learning outcomes in college for on campus students. It aims to examine:

- > How much have students improved in learning outcomes in college?
- ➤ Is there a gender difference in learning outcomes for students in campus housing?
- > Do racial/ethnic differences exist in learning outcomes for students in campus housing?
- > Do Living Learning Communities enhance student learning outcomes as compared to standard residence halls?

Data Source

- > 2013 UF SERU data.
- > Only participants who lived in UF campus housing were selected. Among about 7,500 students who lived on campus at the time of data collection, 4,672 students took the survey, yielding a 62% response rate.
- Demographic questions and questions measuring student learning outcomes were selected for analysis. The learning outcomes questions asked participants to rate their skill levels when they started college and their current levels (1=very poor, 2=poor, 3=fair,
- 4=good, 5=very good, 6=excellent).
- a. Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Ability to be clear and effective when writing
- c. Ability to read and comprehend academic material
- Foreign language skills
- Understanding of a specific field of study
- Quantitative (mathematical and statistical) skills Ability to speak clearly and effectively in English
- Ability to understand international perspectives (economic, political, social, cultural)
- Leadership skills Computer skills
- Internet skills
- Library research skills
- Other research skills Ability to prepare and make a presentation
- Interpersonal (social) skills
- Ability to appreciate, tolerate and understand racial and ethnic diversity
- Ability to appreciate the fine arts (e.g., painting, music, drama, dance)
- Ability to appreciate cultural and global diversity
- s. Understanding the importance of personal social responsibility
- Self-awareness and understanding

Participants

- > 39% male students, 61% female students.
- > 6.7% Asian, 6.9% African American/Black, 0.1% American Indian/Native American, 0.3% Pacific Islanders, 63% White, 3.4% Multiple Racial, 0.8% international students, and 2.1% didn't report their races/ethnicity.
- > 16% freshman, 49%, sophomore, 24% junior, and 11% senior.
- ➤ 12% first generation students.
- > 20% sorority/fraternity members.

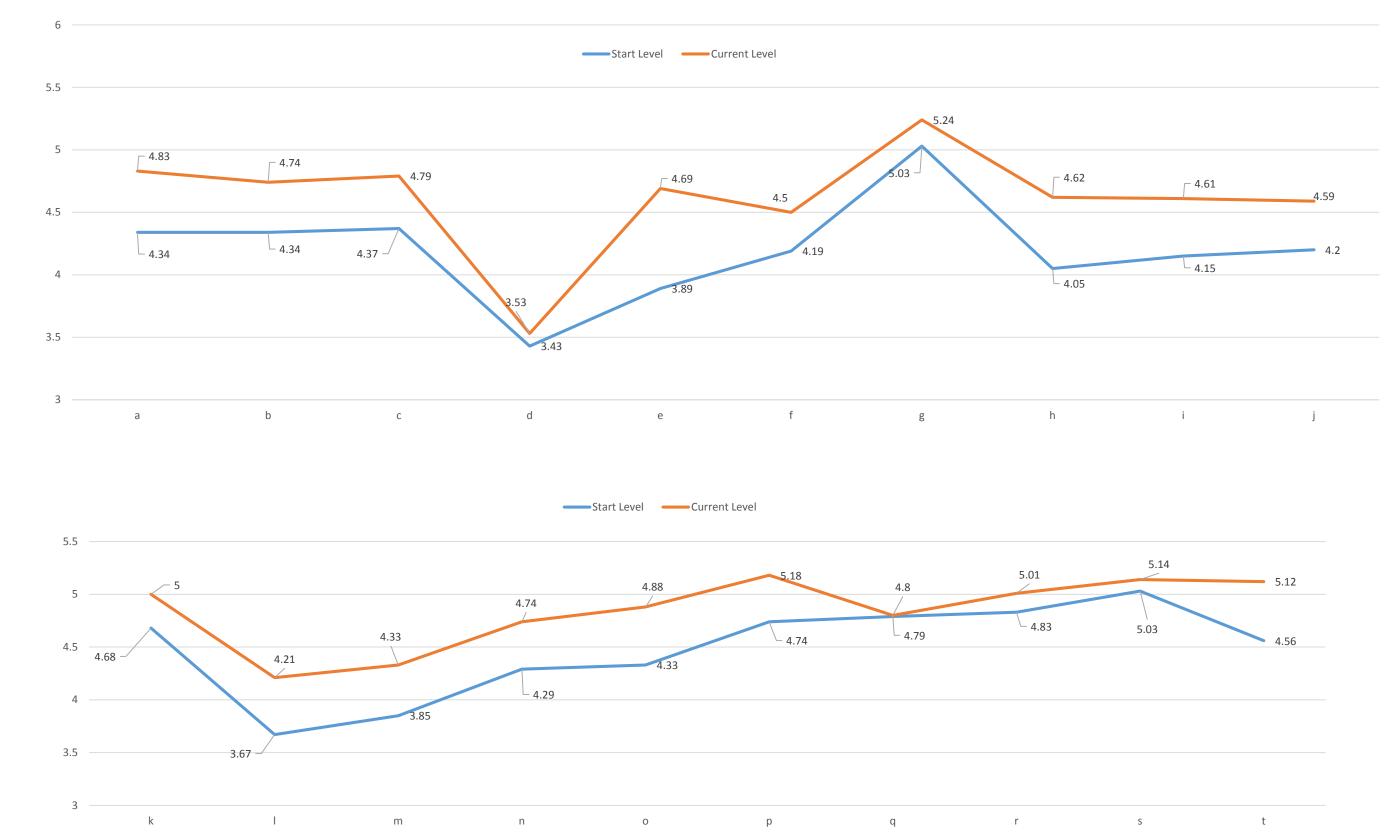
Data Analysis

- > Data was coded and analyzed using SPSS.
- > A new variable was created to measure student learning outcomes, i.e. how much students have improved in college, by calculating the difference between current level scores and scores when students started college.
- > Descriptive statistics were examined for demographic items and overall student learning outcomes in college.
- > T-test was conducted to compare: male vs. female, and students in Living Learning Communities (LLCs) vs. in standard residence halls.
- > ANOVA was used to examine if there are racial differences in how much on campus students learn in college.

Findings: Overall

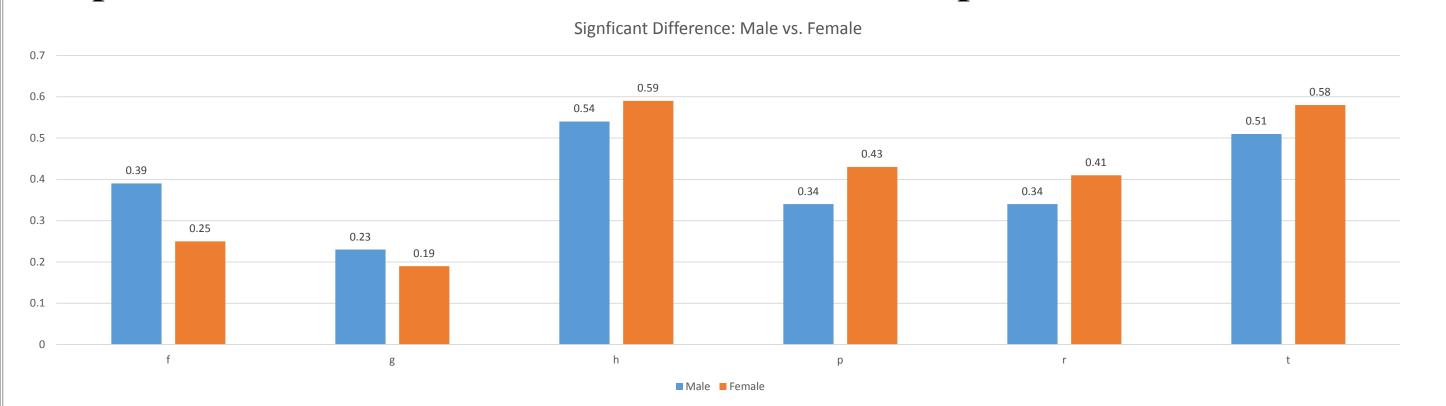
- > On campus students reported the highest learning in "Understanding a specific field of study", with a .80 mean increase (21% increase since they started college.)
- > Other high learning outcomes were:
 - Ability to understand international perspectives 14% increase.
- Interpersonal/social skills 11% increase.
- > Students reported lowest learning in "Foreign languages skills", with a .11 mean increase (3% increase in college)

Please refer to the following graphs for self-reported skills when students started college vs. current levels now.



Findings: Gender Differences

Male students reported significantly higher learning in quantitative skills, ability to speak clearly and effectively in English, and leadership skills as compared to female students. Female students improved more in four areas.



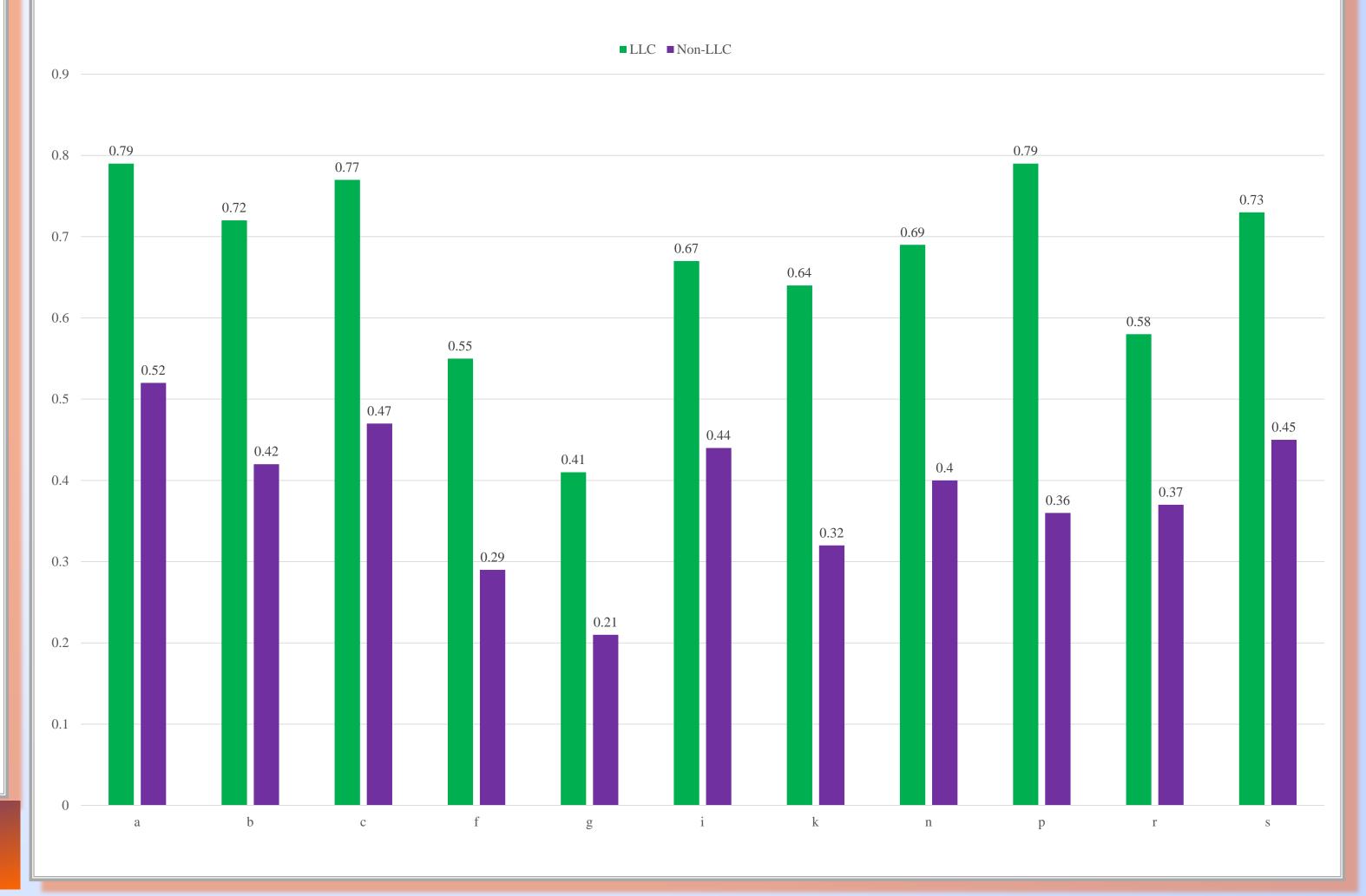
Findings: Racial Differences

Racial differences exist in how much on campus students learn since they started college. Internet skills is the only one that shows no significant difference among different racial/ethnic groups.

Findings: LLC Impacts

Learning outcomes (mean differences between current levels and levels when students started at UF) for students who had lived or were currently living in Living Learning Communities (LLCs) were significantly higher than students in standard residence halls in 11 items out of 20, which include:

- a. Analytical and critical thinking skills
- b. Ability to be clear and effective when writing
- c. Ability to read and comprehend academic material
- f. Quantitative (mathematical and statistical) skills
- g. Ability to speak clearly and effectively in English
- i. Leadership skills
- k. Internet skills
- n. Ability to prepare and make a presentation
- p. Ability to appreciate, tolerate and understand racial and ethnic diversity
- r. Ability to appreciate cultural and global diversity
- s. Understanding the importance of personal social responsibility



Questions for Further Exploration

- > Why do male students learn less in college in international/global perspectives, diversity, and social responsibilities? How can housing develop programs to enhance student learning in these areas?
- > What LLC programs may enhance student learning outcomes? Shall we extend LLC programming to all students in campus housing? Can we establish more LLCs to enhance student learning?
- > What can we do to better help minority students to improve their learning experience and learning outcomes on campus?