

All In Campus Democracy Challenge Survey of Participating Campuses Fall 2019

The ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge—a national, nonpartisan initiative designed to increase democratic engagement in higher education—works with more than 600 colleges and universities that enroll over 6 million students across the country. The Challenge was designed to strengthen practice and facilitate culture change on college campuses by providing structure (program design), support (consultation, training, resources, and networking), and incentives (awards and recognition). The Challenge encourages campuses to develop a two-year action plan—paralleling midterm and presidential election cycles—aimed at improving student democratic engagement and to measure the impact of this work using student voting rates.

Higher Ed Insight (HEI) was asked to help Challenge staff better understand how the initiative is strengthening practice and shifting culture on college campuses and which aspects of the Challenge most facilitate transformative change. To address these questions, HEI conducted a survey of all member institutions in October 2019 (see Appendix for survey methodology and protocol).

Key Finding #1:

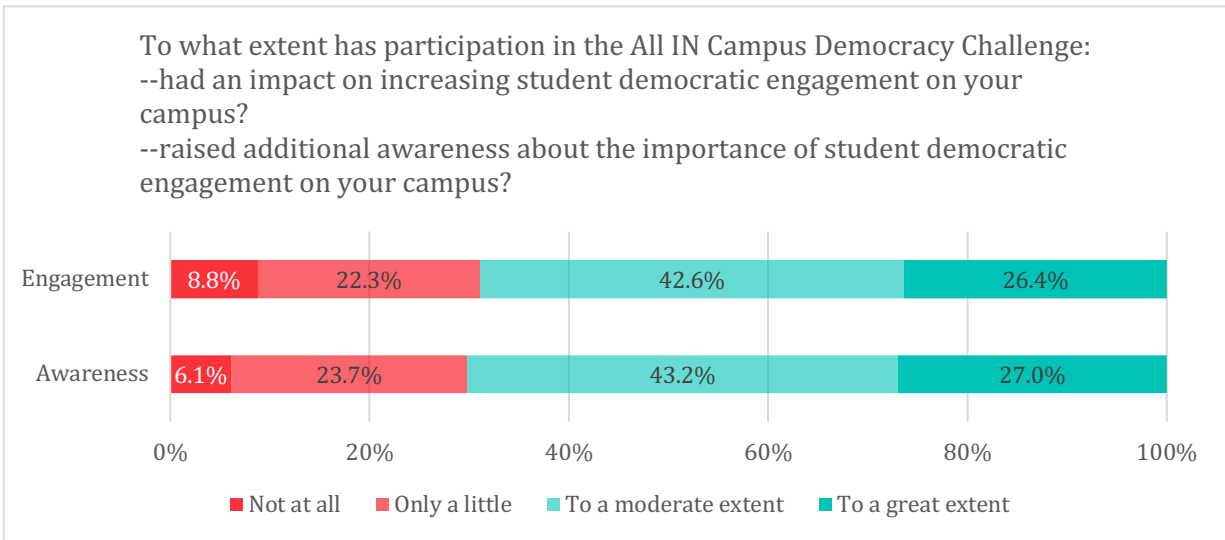
Campuses believe that participation in the Challenge is having an impact

Survey respondents were asked several questions about their perception of how being a member of the Challenge has affected their work. The purpose of these questions was to learn not only what campuses are doing surrounding democratic engagement programming, but also the level of perceived effectiveness of the Challenge’s work with these campuses.¹

Participants were asked to what extent participation in the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge (a) had an impact on increasing student democratic engagement on campus and (b) raised additional awareness about the importance of student democratic engagement on campus. Member campuses feel that participating in the Challenge has been beneficial, with nearly 70% saying that participation in the Challenge has both increased student democratic engagement and raised additional awareness on campus moderate or great extent and more than a quarter of campuses saying that participation in the Challenges has increased both these areas to a great extent (*See graph 1*).

¹ Campuses who joined as members in 2019 were removed from this analysis, since their membership was too recent for them to be able to discern any impact on the Challenge on their work. In a space for write-in responses, several of these campuses alerted us to this issue, saying they responded that the Challenge was having no impact only because their campuses had just joined.

GRAPH 1. Perceived Extent that Participation in the Challenge had an Impact on Member Campuses



Enrollment size was significantly correlated with saying that the Challenge had an impact on student democratic engagement “to a great extent,” where 31% of small colleges selected that response, compared with 26% of medium size campuses, and only 19% of large campuses ($p < .09$). This finding is likely due to the fact that small campuses have to reach a smaller number of students, making it somewhat easier to increase democratic engagement programming and awareness on campus when there is a concentrated effort.

Campuses that joined the Challenge earlier were also more likely to select “to a great extent” on this question, suggesting that being a member of the Challenge—and therefore having dedicated help to focus on this work—over time leads to a participating campus finding greater value in the membership experience.

Engagement with the Challenge were strongly correlated with selecting “to a great extent” on both questions.² Among those with a high engagement score, 52% indicated the Challenge had an impact on increasing student democratic engagement “to a great extent” compared with 23% of campuses with a medium engagement score, and only 11% of campuses with a low engagement score ($p < .003$). When asked to what extent participation had increased campus awareness, 47% of those with a high engagement score selected “to a great extent,” compared with 25% of campuses with a medium engagement score and 11% of those with a low engagement score ($p < .022$). Therefore, those who have the greatest level of participation with the structure provided by the Challenge find the most value in their membership.

Similarly, campus culture was strongly correlated with saying that participation had an impact “to a great extent.”³ Among campuses with a strong campus culture of democratic engagement, 45% said that the Challenge had an impact on increasing student democratic engagement “to a great extent,” compared with 18%

² Engagement scores are assigned to campuses by Challenge staff based on a series of opportunities for connection with the program. Scores range from 0 to 14, and the average score for campuses who participated in the survey was 7.4 (the average score for all member institutions was 5.9).

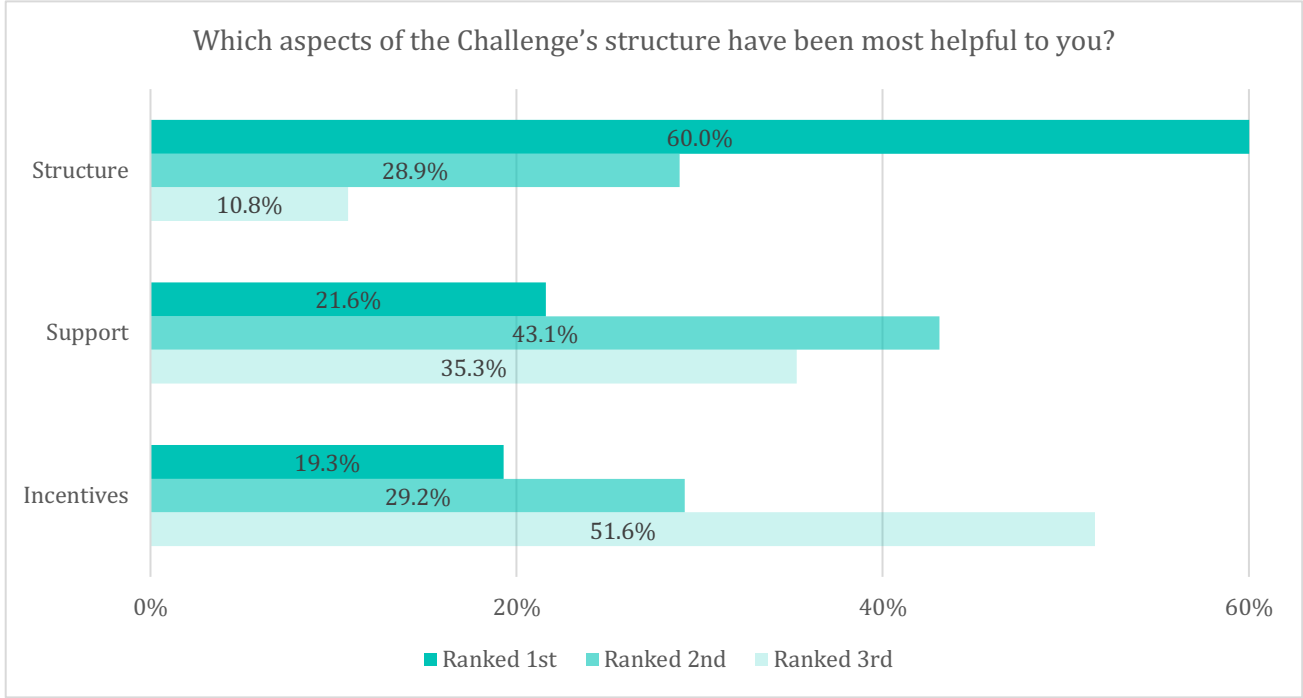
³ Campus culture was measured in the survey by a question that asked if student democratic engagement efforts on campus were led primarily by volunteers or by those whose job it is to manage such efforts or if participation in such work was expected of most staff and faculty. A few campuses indicated that their democratic engagement work was led by students, but these campuses were removed from the analysis as outliers.

of campuses where the work is primarily done by those whose job it is, and 7% of campuses where the work is led primarily by volunteers. Similarly, when asked to what extent participation in the Challenge had increased campus awareness, 41% of those with a strong campus culture of student democratic engagement selected “to a great extent” compared with 20% of those with a less developed campus culture in this area and 14% of campuses where student democratic engagement efforts are generally voluntary. This finding suggests that having a campus culture where faculty and staff are doing this work as part of their jobs and where more people on campus are invested in this work leads to membership in the Challenge having a greater impact on campus.

Structure, Support, and Incentives

When asked which aspects of the Challenge’s structure were the most helpful to them, campus respondents overwhelmingly selected “structure,” with 60% ranking this aspect first. This structure category includes all the aspects related to creating an action plan for increasing student democratic engagement, including establishing a public commitment, going through the process of developing the action plan, setting goals and strategies, and using NSLVE data to measure change in voting rates.⁴ “Support” (e.g., consultation with Challenge staff, training, resources, networking with other campuses) was the second most important factor, followed by “incentives” (e.g., seals or awards). Over half of the survey respondents listed incentives as least important. Thus, while incentives provide a crucial recognition of a campus’ great work in the area of democratic engagement and may be a selling point for campus leadership, it is the structure of the program, and to a lesser extent the support is offers, that makes the Challenge especially valuable for member institutions (See graph 2).

GRAPH 2. Aspects of Challenge Ranked in Order of Helpfulness



⁴ The National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSVLE) compiles student- and institution-level data on student voting rates.

Key Finding #2:

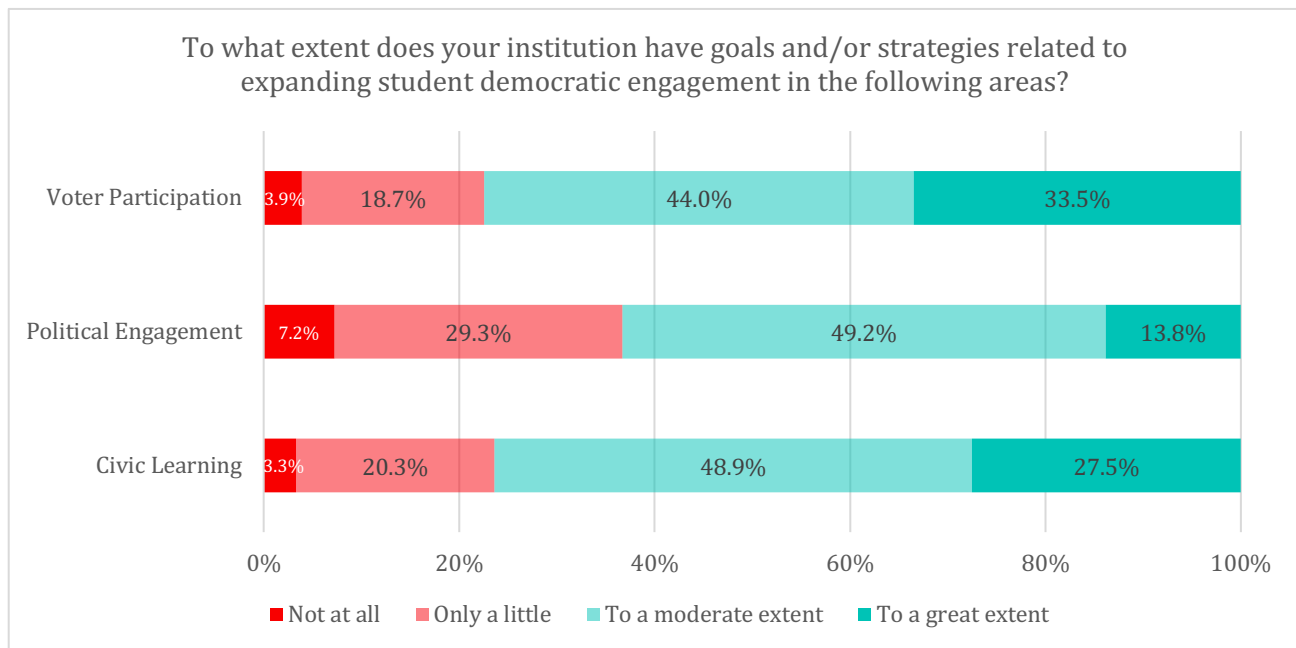
Participating campuses are taking steps to increase student democratic engagement

One goal of the survey was to better understand of what is happening on campuses in terms of their efforts to increase student democratic engagement. While the action plans provide an important road map for the Challenge to understand campus-based strategies, the survey allowed us to understand how campuses perceive the democratic engagement programming they were doing.

Goals and Strategies

Survey respondents were asked to what extent they had goals and/or strategies related to expanding student democratic engagement in the areas of (a) voter participation, (b) political engagement, and (c) civic learning (See graph 3). Campuses were more likely to have goals and/or strategies around voter participation and civic learning as compared to goals and/or strategies around political engagement. Political engagement is therefore an area that campuses are not working on as much and an important opportunity for programming and support from the Challenge going forward. Even for voter participation (which is often where this work begins on campuses), only a third of campuses had goals and/or strategies “to a great extent.” Thus, there is still plenty of room for campuses to continue to expand their work for each of the areas.

GRAPH 3. Institutional Goals and/or Strategies Related to Expanding Student Democratic Engagement



Campuses from the inaugural Challenge cohort were significantly more likely than other campuses to select that they had developed goals and/or strategies “to a great extent” for political engagement (22% versus 9%, $p < .031$). This pattern suggests that there is an awareness around political engagement (the importance of which is regularly communicated by the Challenge) for those campuses that have participated over several years.

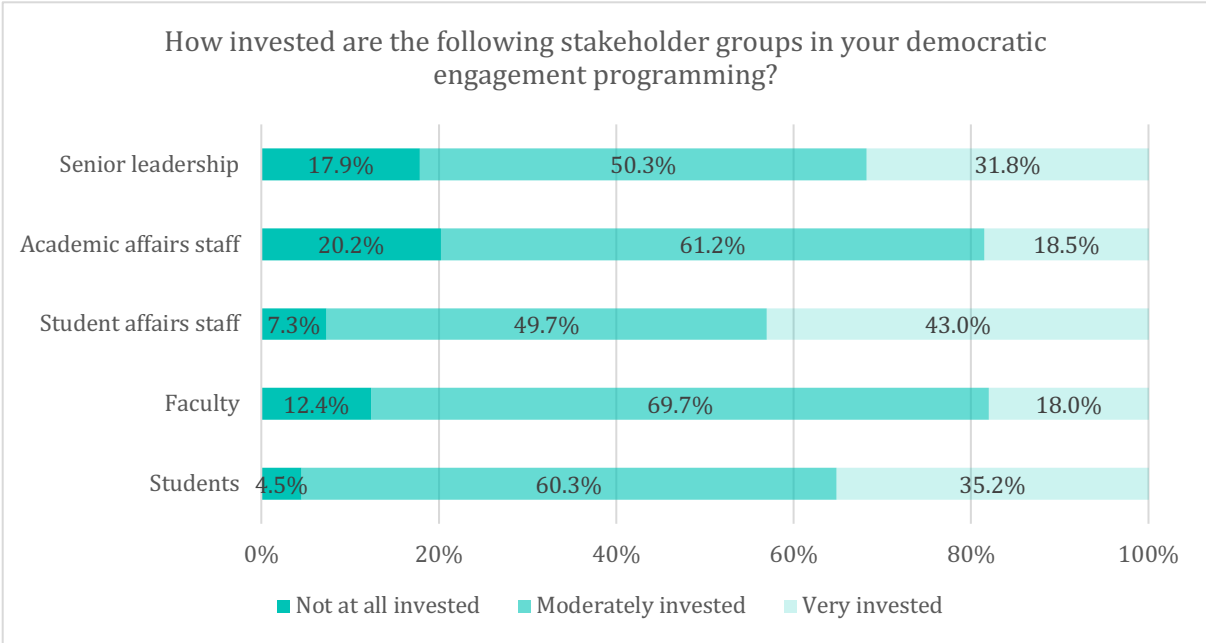
Campuses that were more engaged with the Challenge typically had more developed goals and/or strategies in all three areas. For voter participation, 43% of campuses with high engagement scores selected this response compared to 21% of campuses with low engagement scores ($p < .090$). For political engagement, 19% of respondents with a high engagement score selected “to a great extent” compared with 7% with a low engagement score ($p < .029$). Campuses with the lowest engagement scores were somewhat more likely to select “not at all” or “only a little” on civic learning (36% compared with 16% of highly engaged campuses, ($p < .128$)). These findings suggest that campuses that are more engaged with the Challenge are moving forward to devise goals and strategies on each of these areas.

Stakeholder Investment

The survey included a measure of perceived stakeholder investment in order to understand the degree to which how different groups on campus are engaged in this work. Survey respondents were asked how invested the following stakeholder groups were to campus democratic engagement programming: (a) senior leadership, (b) academic affairs staff, (c) student affairs staff, (d) faculty, and (e) students (See graph 4).

Student affairs staff was the group perceived by largest percentage of respondents (43%) as very invested. After student affairs staff, students were the most highly ranked, with less than 5% of campuses saying that their students were not at all invested. These responses suggest that students are involved in this work on most member campuses. Academic affairs staff and faculty were the stakeholder groups that respondents perceived as less likely to be very invested, although with faculty, few campuses said they were not at all invested, with faculty overall perceived as having a moderate level of investment. While only 18% of respondents said that the senior leadership on their campus were not at all invested, this finding is a possible concern since buy-in from the top tends to permeate across the campus.

GRAPH 4. Perceived Level of Investment in Democratic Engagement Programming by Campus Stakeholder Groups



Campuses with established goals and/or strategies in any of three areas (voter participation, political engagement, or civic learning) were significantly more likely to say that all campus groups are very invested in this work. Developing strong and effective goals and strategies for student democratic engagement requires stakeholder investment across the campus, so it makes sense that these variables are related.

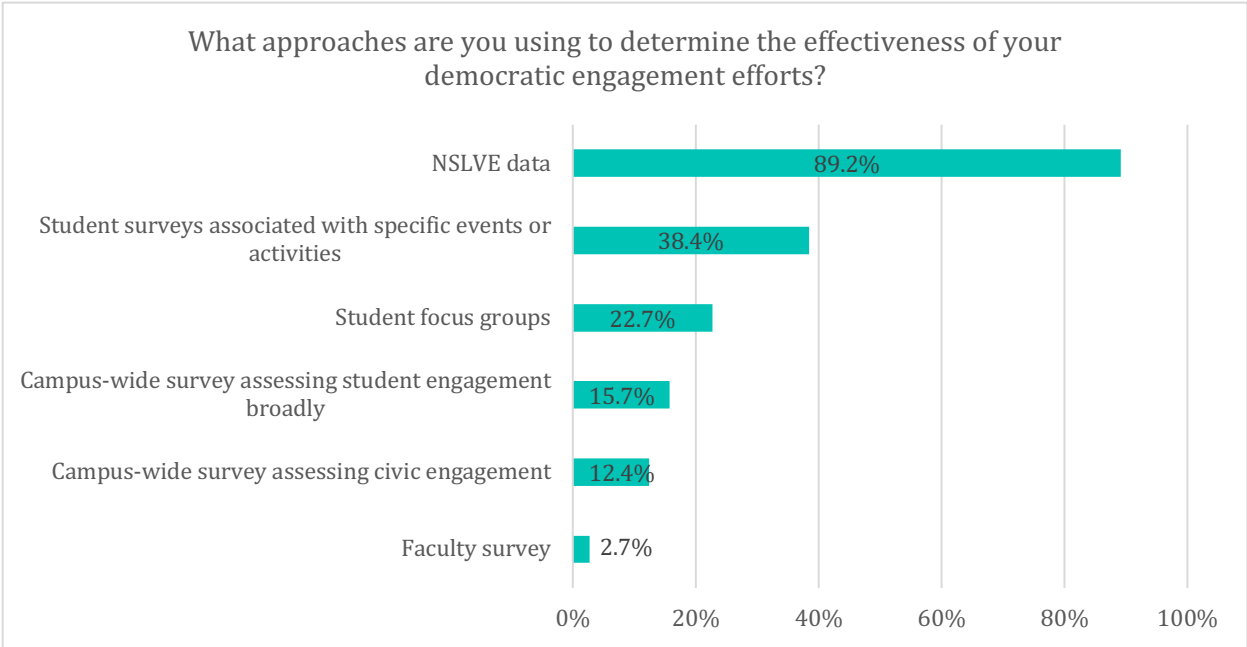
Institutions with high engagement scores were significantly more likely to say that student affairs staff are very invested in the work—57% of highly engaged campuses selected this response, compared with 36% of campuses with medium or low engagement scores ($p < .022$). Institutions with low engagement scores were likely to say that faculty are not as invested—11% of campuses with a low engagement score selected this response vs 20% of moderately engaged campuses and 22% of highly engaged campuses ($p < .080$). This finding suggests that being highly engaged with the Challenge often relies on the work of student affairs staff and that faculty investment may encourage greater engagement.

Evaluation and Communication Approaches

In initial pilot study with 21 member institutions (conducted in Spring 2019), reporting and evaluation emerged as areas of challenge for some campuses. This pattern disappeared for reporting in the later survey but evaluation remained one of the areas in which campuses felt they were less successful, suggesting that this is an area in which campuses need additional support. Because of these earlier findings, this survey included questions about communication and assessment in an effort to unpack how campuses are currently communicating and collecting data.

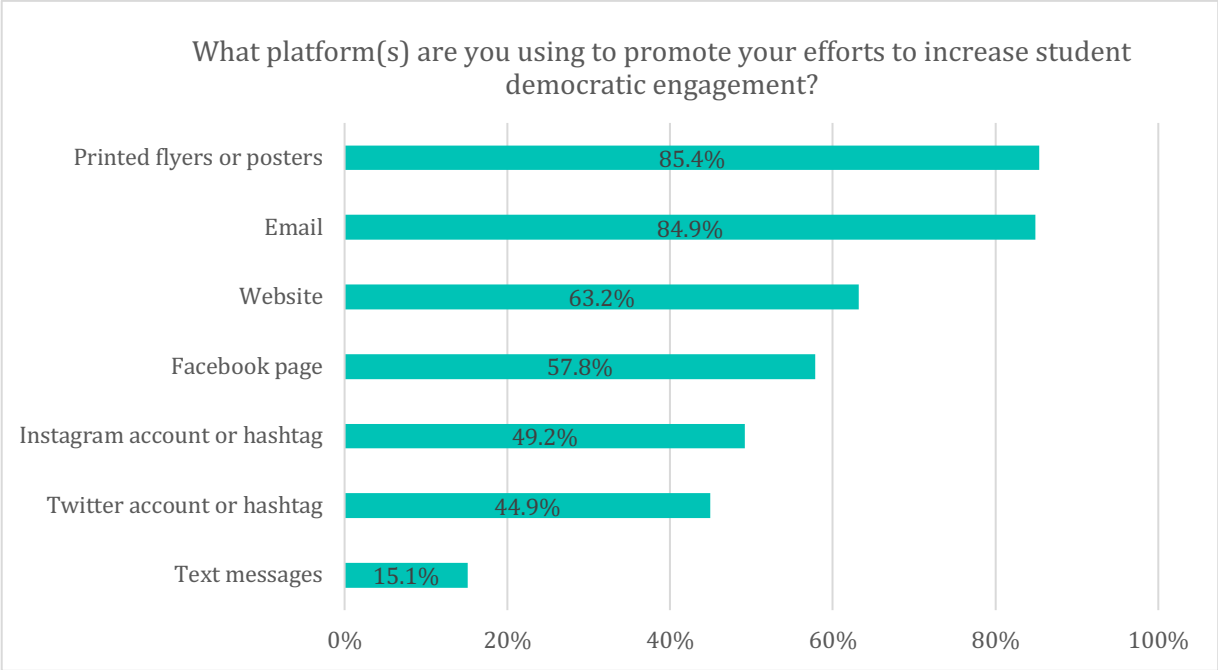
When asked about different approaches used to assess effectiveness of democratic engagement efforts, the vast majority of campuses (89%) said that they use NSLVE data but few used other approaches (*See graph 5*). The next highest category (38%) was student surveys associated with student participation in specific events, but there were few campus-wide efforts to assess democratic engagement. These findings add to the conclusion that campuses need additional support for how to evaluate their progress.

GRAPH 5. Campus Approaches for Data Collection around Democratic Engagement Efforts



The survey also indicated that campuses are using a wide array of channels to reach students for democratic engagement efforts, from printed flyers to emails to text messages (See graph 6). Many respondents also selected “other” on this survey question, writing in responses that included in-person tabling (4%), student engagement apps (3%), digital signs on campus (2%), the TurboVote platform (2%), classroom visits or announcements (2%) and classroom management systems (1%).

GRAPH 6. Campus Platforms for Communication around Democratic Engagement Efforts



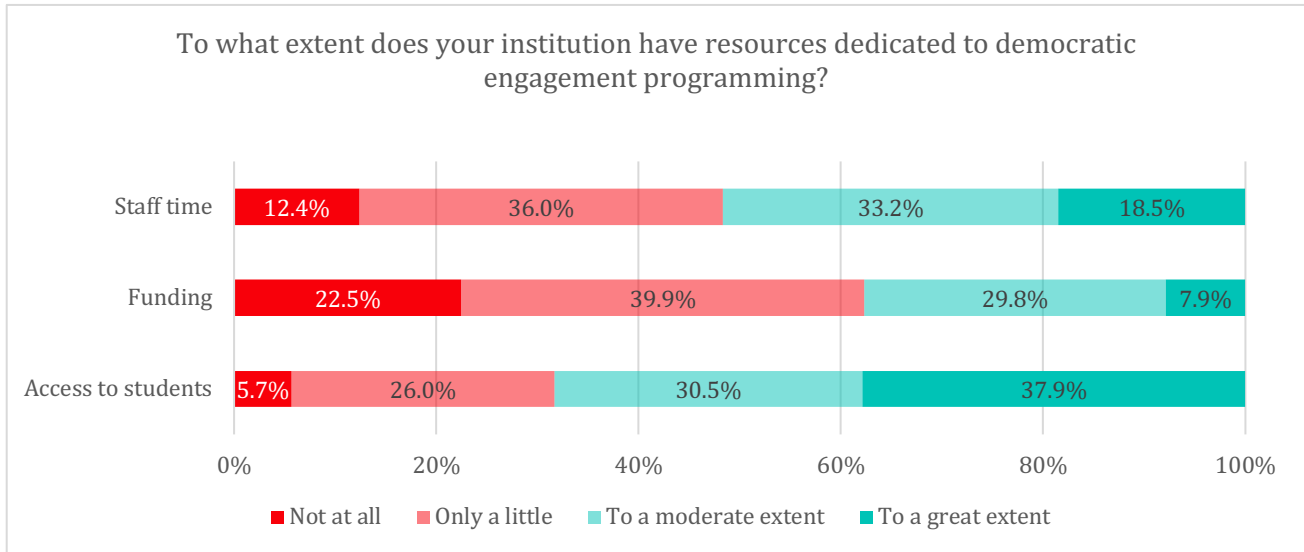
Key Finding #3:

Access to resources, particularly staff time, is central to campus’s student democratic engagement work and level of engagement with the Challenge

Engagement Scores and Resources

Survey respondents were asked to what extent their institution has resources dedicated to democratic engagement programming in the form of: (a) staff time, (b) funding, and (c) access to students, classrooms, events, etc. (See graph 7). Access to students was the highest rated category, with over a third of campuses selecting “to a great extent.” Conversely, campuses indicated that they had, on average, less dedicated funding, with the majority saying they had none or only a little, which is a concern for this work. There was a very strong positive correlation between having a campus culture where democratic engagement is considered the responsibility of most faculty and staff and having dedicated resources in all three categories.

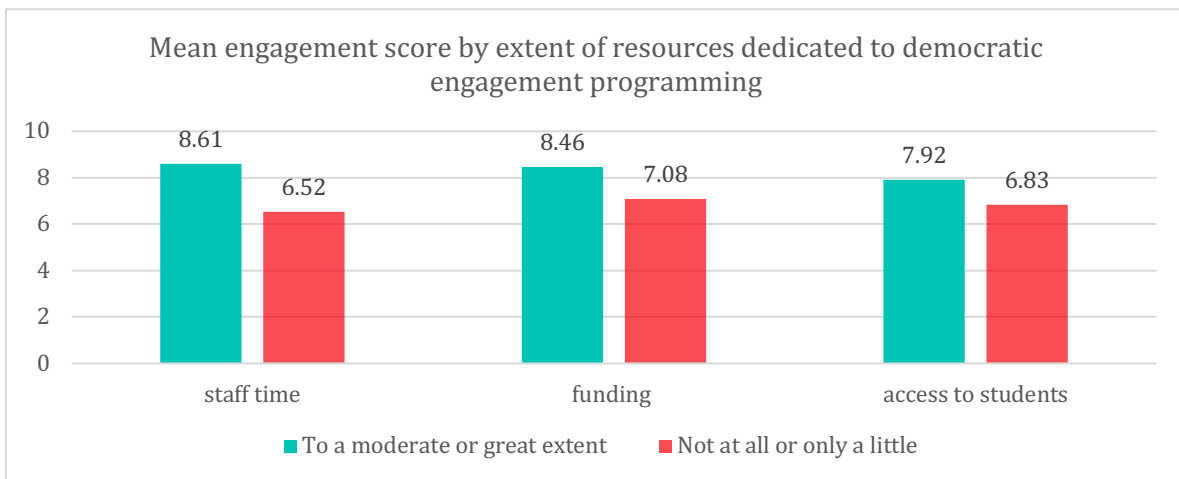
GRAPH 7. Extent that the Institution has Resources Dedicated to Democratic Engagement Programming



Community colleges were more likely than other types of institutions to say that their institutions grant them access to students “to a great extent” (55% compared to 31% of public four-year universities and 39% of private four-year colleges or universities, $p < .177$). This is an interesting finding given that most community college students are commuters and might be therefore be thought more difficult to gain access to than campus residents who participate in residence life activities.

Having a staff member whose job includes student democratic engagement efforts and sufficient funding for this work is connected to a greater ability to be engaged with the Challenge (See graph 8). There was a strong correlation between engagement scores and respondents’ perceptions of the adequacy of resources, including staff time ($p < .000$), funding ($p < .003$) and, to a lesser extent, access to students ($p < .031$). This suggests that engagement scores can serve as a proxy for dedicated campus resources to democratic engagement efforts.

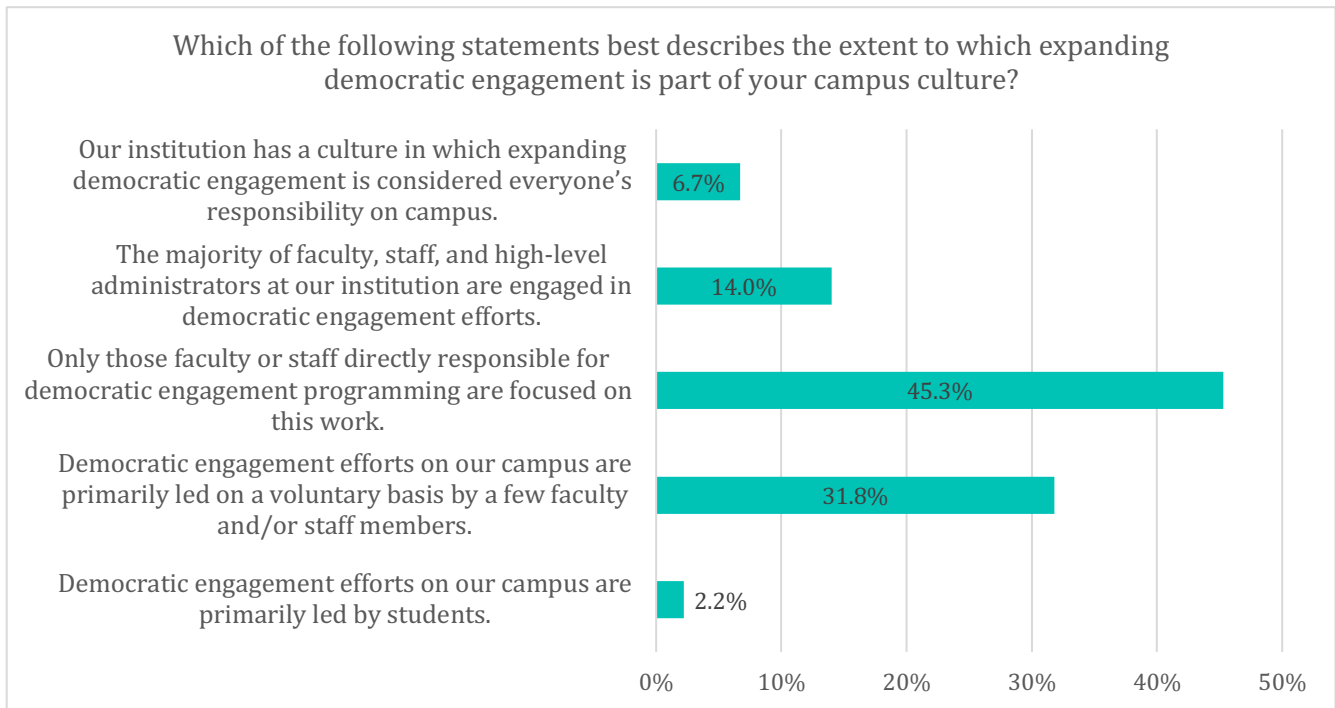
GRAPH 8. Engagement Score by Extent of Dedicated Resources



Campus Culture

The importance of having staff dedicated to increasing student democratic engagement can also be seen in respondents' perceptions of their own campus culture in terms of the importance placed on expanding student democratic engagement. Most respondents said that these efforts were led by a few volunteer faculty or staff (32%) or that the faculty or staff members directly responsible for this work were the only ones focused on it (45%) (See graph 9). While both of these categories suggest a campus culture where the majority of faculty and staff are not engaged in efforts to increased student democratic engagement, the difference between them is important. Whereas nearly a third of campuses have the work on democratic engagement being led by volunteers, nearly half have this work more embedded on campus through having dedicated staff time devoted to democratic engagement programming. This measure of campus culture was significantly correlated with several outcomes, suggesting that having engagement efforts more fully integrated into a campus culture impacts results (as outlined later in this report).

GRAPH 9. Perceived Extent Democratic Engagement Efforts are Part of Campus Culture



Campuses with high engagement scores were somewhat more likely to select “Our institution has a culture in which expanding democratic engagement is considered everyone’s responsibility on campus” (30% of campuses with a high engagement score vs 18% of with a medium score and 15% with a low score, $p < .149$). This suggests that the more engaged with the Challenge a campus is the more likely they are to be invested in this work.

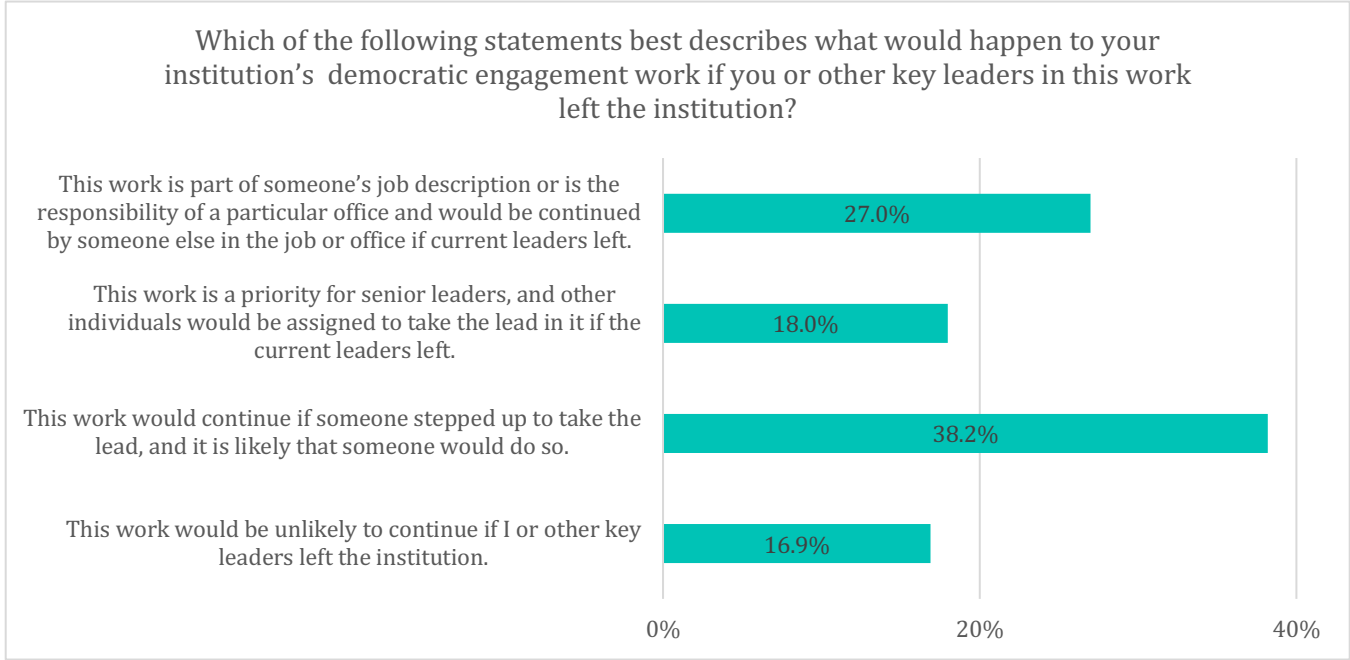
Survey respondents who identified as leaders (such as provosts, deans, vice presidents, etc.) (15%), faculty members (10%), and staff from civic engagement centers (21%) were somewhat more likely than general student or academic affairs staff to say that “Our institution has a culture in which expanding democratic engagement is considered everyone’s responsibility on campus” ($p < .157$). This could be because leaders and faculty members are (in some cases) more likely to be able to embed this work into the culture of a campus. In

the case of civic engagement center leaders, the very presence of a civic engagement center is likely correlated with a campus being more heavily invested in the work of supporting student democratic engagement.

Succession Planning

Related to the idea of having this work embedded in someone’s job description is the question of what happens when the person leading the work leaves the institution. Respondents were asked what they believed would happen on their campuses if this situation arose (See graph 10). The largest group (38%) said that the work would continue if someone were to step up to take the lead and that it is likely that someone would do so—a situation that reflects some potential instability in planning for the future. Democratic engagement work has an even more precarious position on campus for 17% of respondents, who believed that the work was unlikely to continue if they or another key leader left the institution. On the other hand, 27% of respondents were at a campus where democratic engagement work was written into someone’s job description, which made succession planning much clearer for the future of the work at that institution.

GRAPH 10. Institutional Succession Plans for Democratic Engagement Work



Campuses with the strongest campus cultures supporting democratic engagement and those with goals and/or strategies in any of the three measured areas (civic engagement, voter participation, or democratic engagement) were significantly more likely to say that “this work is part of someone’s job description.” These correlations suggest that having strategic goals around student democratic engagement as well as having this work embedded into the culture of the campus are related to having dedicated staff time.

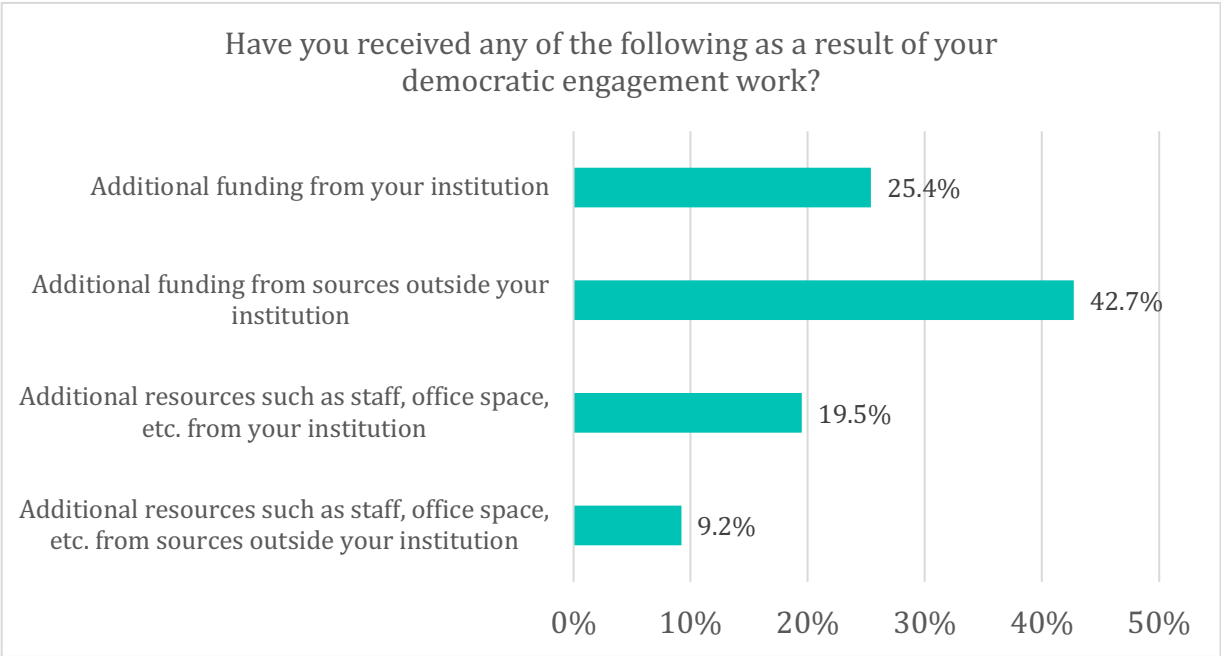
Institutions where the point person is a faculty member or senior leader were less likely to say that this work is in someone’s job description, and faculty were particularly likely to say that the work would end if they left. This finding suggests that, while it is important for senior leadership and faculty to be engaged in the work of democratic engagement, the campus situation may be more unstable when they take on primary responsibility for the work .

Campuses with the lowest engagement scores were significantly less likely to say that “this work is part of someone’s job description” (15% of low scores vs 30% of medium and 34% high scores, $p < .064$). Once again, this finding shows us that being engaged with the Challenge goes hand in hand with dedicated staff time.

Increased Resources

Campuses were asked if they had received additional resources as a result of their student democratic engagement work in the form of (a) funding from the institution, (b) funding from sources outside the institution, (c) resources such as staff, office space, etc. from the institution, (d) resources such as staff, office space, etc. from sources outside the institution. Nearly 43% had received additional funding from outside the institution, and a quarter of respondents said that they had received additional funding from the institution itself while smaller percentages said that they had received other additional resources. (See graph 11).

GRAPH 11. Additional Resources as a Result of Democratic Engagement Work



Having a strong campus culture around student democratic engagement was correlated with increases in all four resource categories. Having goals for civic learning was significantly associated with increased internal resources and moderately correlated with the other categories. Having goals for political engagement was significantly correlated with increase in all categories except internal resources. Having goals for voter participation was significantly correlated with increases in all categories except external funding.

Receiving additional external funding was associated with more engagement and a longer connection with the Challenge. Increased external funding was more often cited by campuses that had higher engagement scores (55% of high scores, compared with 46% of medium, and 28% of low scores, $p < .009$). Campuses that had been involved with the Challenge longer also reported receiving additional external funding (52% of the inaugural group versus 35% of campuses who joined later, $p < .075$).

Key Finding #4:

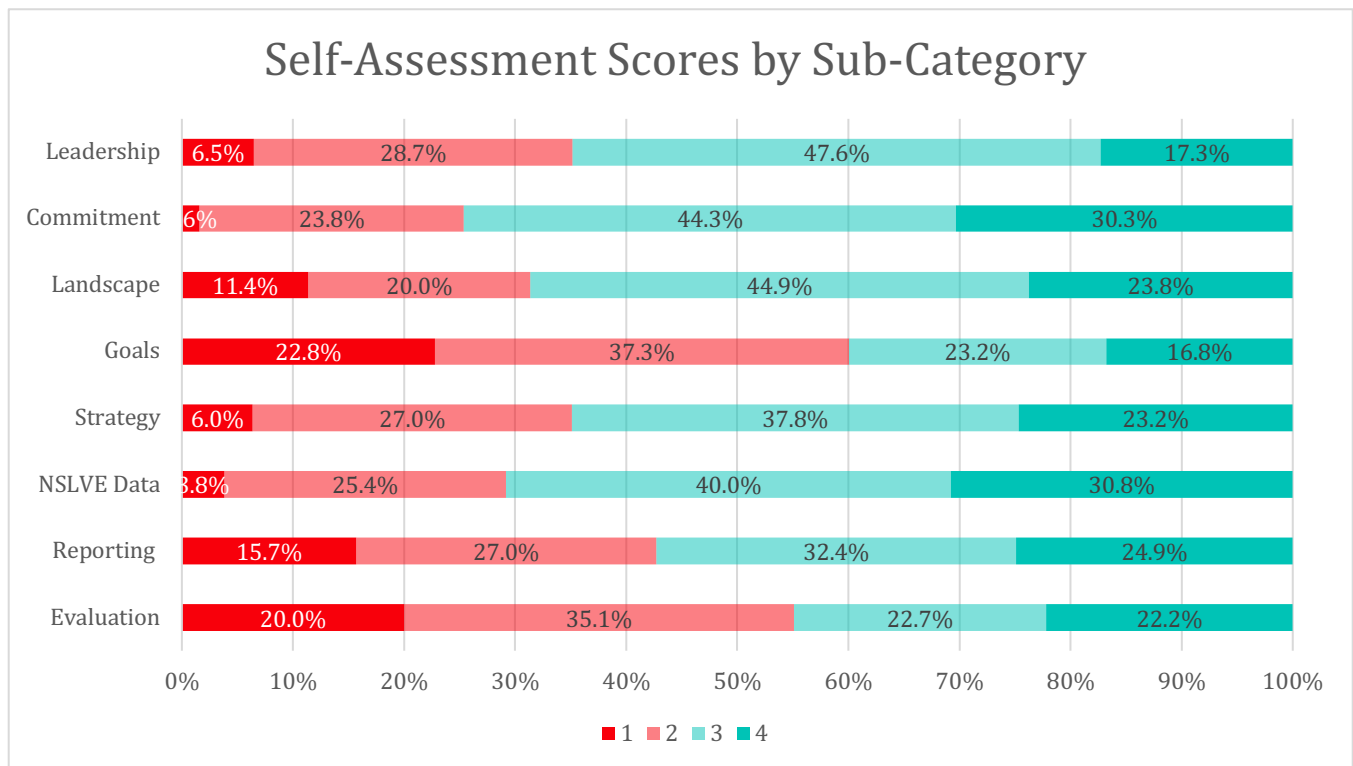
Campuses assess their own progress as moderately effective

A key goal of this study was to make it possible for Challenge staff to monitor campuses' progress and help them better support campuses. The survey offered campus respondents the opportunity to self-assess their institution using eight categories from the rubric used by the Challenge staff to evaluate campus action plans (based on the *Strengthening American Democracy* guide developed by the Students Learn Students Vote Coalition). The self-assessment scores (a combination of those eight categories) assess how campuses perceive democratic engagement on their campus.⁵ These measures can be used going forward to survey member institutions and track progress over time, with the data from this study serving as a baseline.

The categories used in the survey were leadership, commitment, landscape, goals, strategy, use of NSLVE data, reporting, and evaluation (See graph 12). The eight scores were compiled to create an overall self-assessment score for each institution. These overall self-assessment scores ranged from 8 to 32, and the mean self-assessment score across all campus respondents was 22.

Commitment and use of NSLVE data were two of the categories where campuses ranked themselves highest. On average, goals and evaluation were the categories on which campuses gave themselves the lowest scores. These scores offer an insight into how campuses perceive they are doing on different aspects of this work, and can inform the Challenge as they discern what areas to enhance their support of campuses in the future.

GRAPH 12. Self-Assessment Scores by Sub-Category

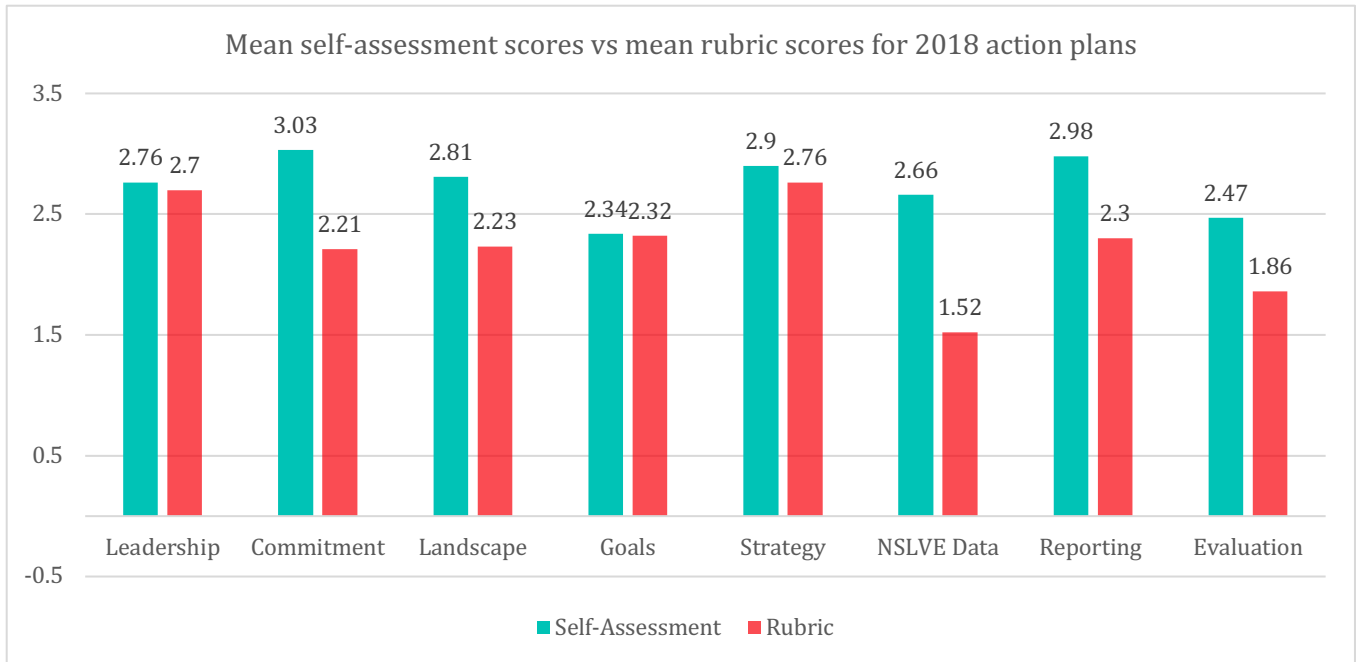


⁵ The action plan rubric scores included a ninth category—for executive summary—which was removed for the purposes of this analysis.

Self-Assessment Scores versus Rubric Scores

Mean campus self-assessment scores were compared with the mean rubric scores (as assigned by the Challenge staff for the 2018 action plans without the executive summary scores). This juxtaposition allows us to compare how campuses came across in the action plan rating process as compared to their own perception of the various sub-categories (See graph 13).

GRAPH 13. Mean Self-Assessment Scores Compared with Mean Rubric Scores



The ratings for some sub-categories, including goals, strategy, and leadership were similar, which suggests that there is some correlation between those sub-scores on the action plans and what campuses perceive about themselves. Other sub-categories had more of a gap, which in some cases may be explained by progress campuses have made since completing their action plans. For instance, the sub-score for NSLVE data use was substantially lower for the rubric score, which might be because the campuses have improved their use of these data following development of their action plans. However, further research is needed to test this idea and fully understand the gaps between rubric and self-assessment scores.

Key Finding #5:

Campuses outcomes are closely tied to campus investment in increasing student democratic engagement

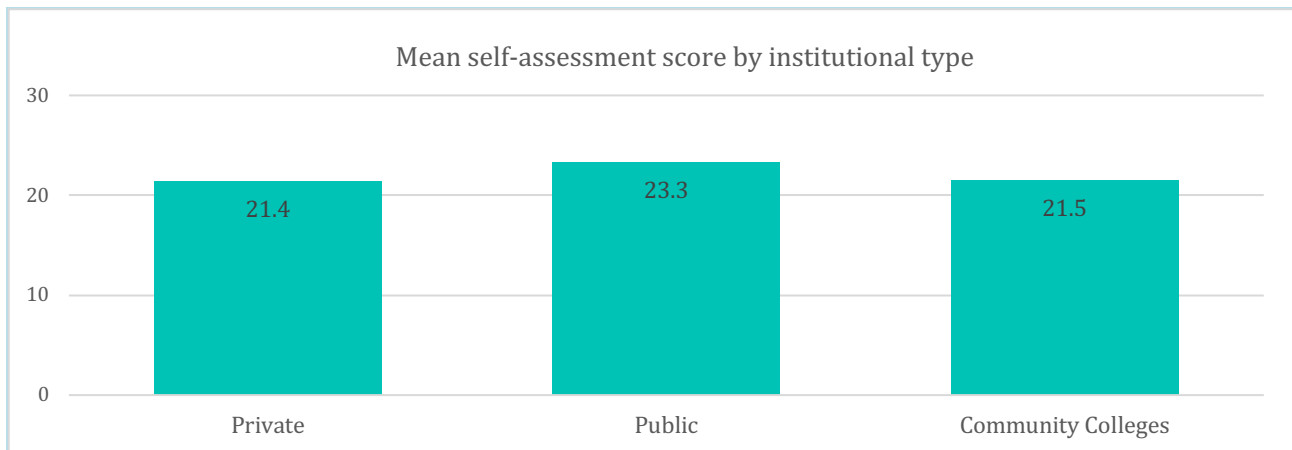
Beyond understanding how campuses rank themselves across the different dimensions of institutionalizing this work, HEI sought to unpack how outcomes varied across campuses. In our analysis of outcomes we explored two dependent variables: self-assessment scores and campus voting rate change.⁶

Self-Assessment Scores

The first key dependent variable analyzed was self-assessment scores discussed above, a total of the eight sub-categories mirroring the rubric score used to analyze institutional action plans. Analyzing differences across this variable allows us to unpack where the staff member who took the survey perceives that their campus on average across the eight categories.

Institutional Type. Self-assessment scores were correlated with institutional type ($p < .097$), with staff from public four-year institutions ranking their institution higher on average than private institutions or community colleges (See *graph 14*). Public four-years had a mean score of 23.3, while private four-years had a mean score of 21.4, and the mean score of community colleges was 21.5. Thus, four-year public colleges and universities were more likely to perceive their campus was doing well overall in its democratic engagement programming.

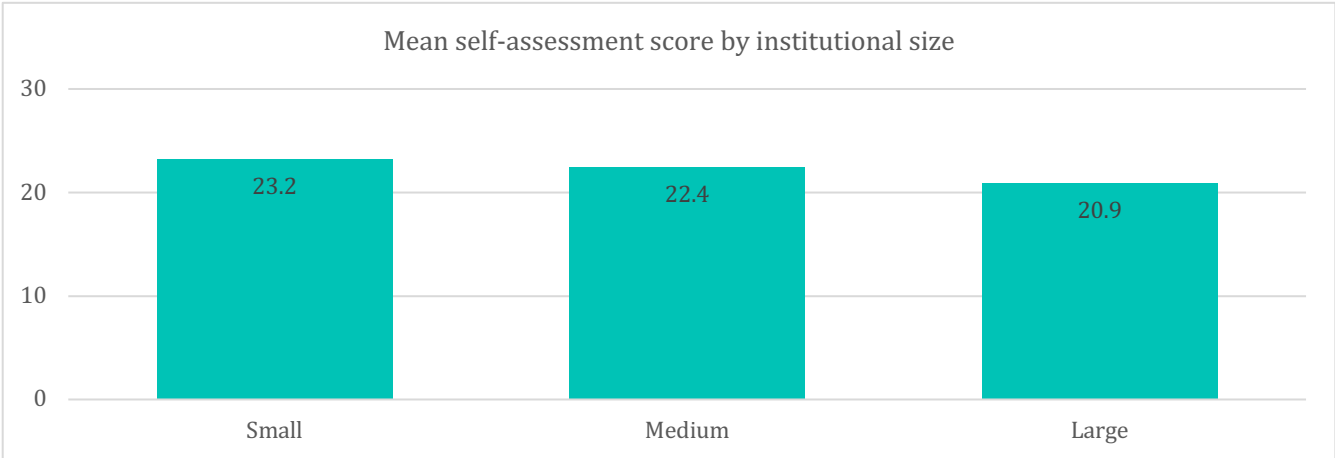
GRAPH 14. Mean Self-Assessment Score by Institutional Type



⁶ In the following analysis, campuses who joined the Challenge in 2019 were removed. This was done for two reasons: (1) these campuses had not participated in the Challenge long enough for their membership to have had an impact on these outcomes, particularly voting rate change, and (2) these campuses were significantly overrepresented among survey respondents and would therefore skew the findings.

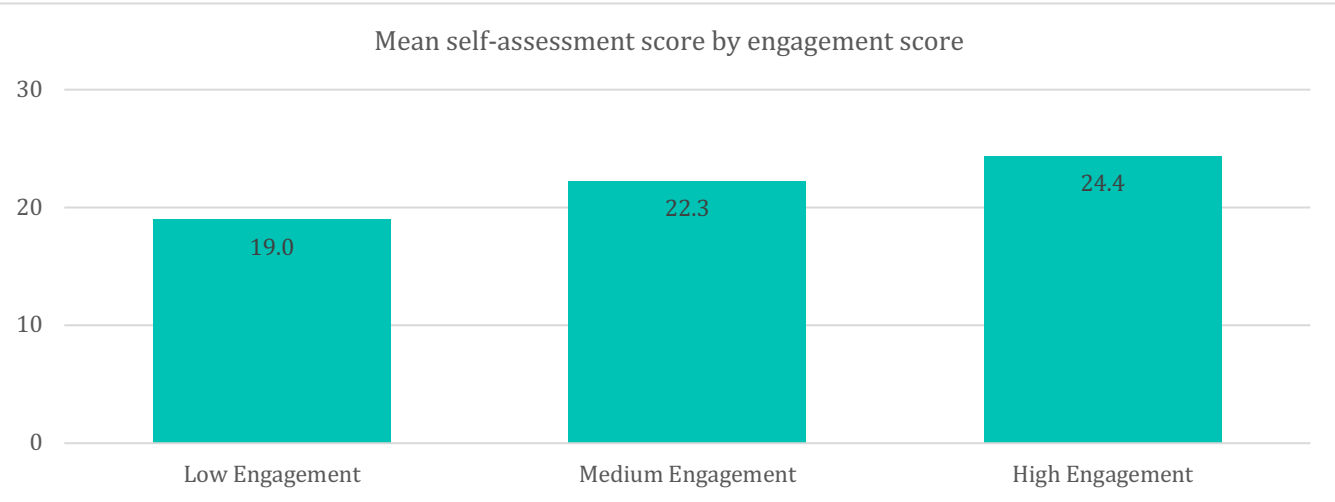
Institutional Size. Self-assessment scores were also somewhat correlated with the size of the institution ($p < .150$), with smaller schools giving themselves higher scores on average (See graph 15). Small institutions had a mean self-assessment score of 23.2, medium institutions had a mean score of 22.4, and large institutions had a mean score of 20.9. This difference may suggest that it is easier to implement campus changes at smaller institutions.

GRAPH 15. Mean Self-Assessment Score by Institutional Size



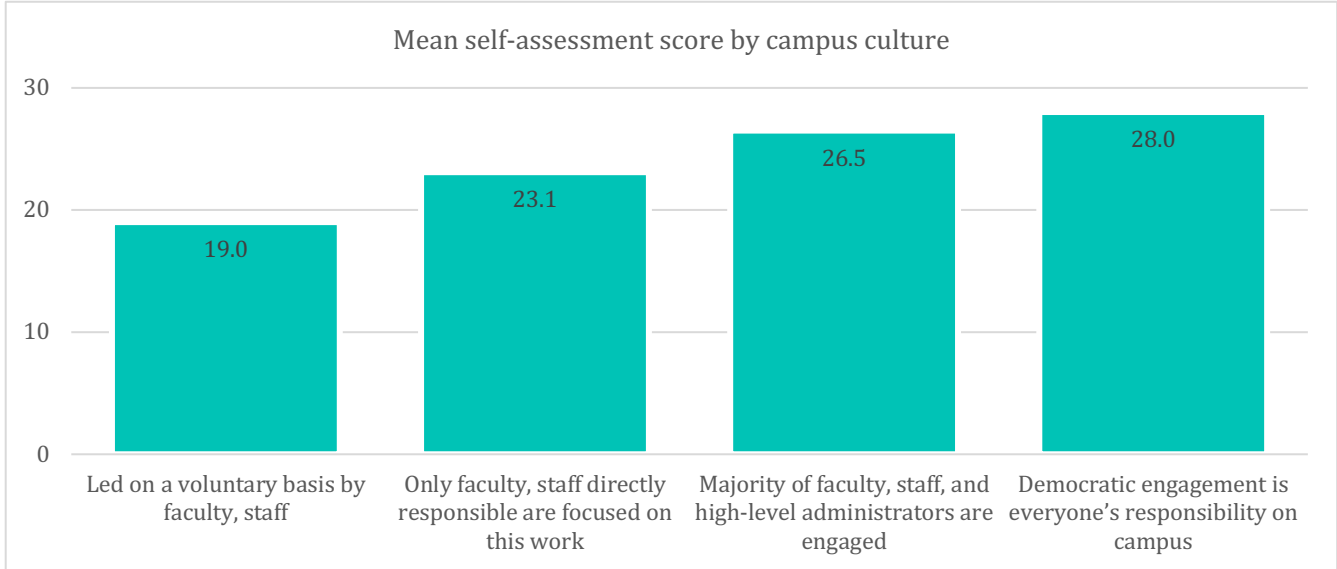
Engagement with the Challenge. Self-assessment scores were highly correlated with the engagement scores as assigned by the Challenge staff ($p < .000$) (See graph 16). The mean self-assessment score for institutions ranked by staff as highly engaged was 24.4, for campuses of medium engagement the mean score was 22.3, while those who were ranked as low on engagement has a mean overall rubric score of 19.0.

GRAPH 16. Mean Self-Assessment Score by Engagement Score



Campus Culture. Self-assessment scores were also highly correlated with campus culture as reported by respondents ($p < .000$) (See graph 17). The largest jump between categories was between those that said efforts were led on a voluntary basis (19.0 mean overall self-assessment score) and that only those directly responsible were focused on this work (23.1 mean overall self-assessment score). That difference of four points suggests that there is something fundamentally dissimilar about having a position dedicated to student democratic engagement, as compared to a volunteer-led effort, in ways that impact outcomes. Campuses who self-identified as having the highest category of campus culture, where democratic engagement is everyone’s responsibility on campus, had especially high self-assessment scores (28 out of 32 on average).⁷

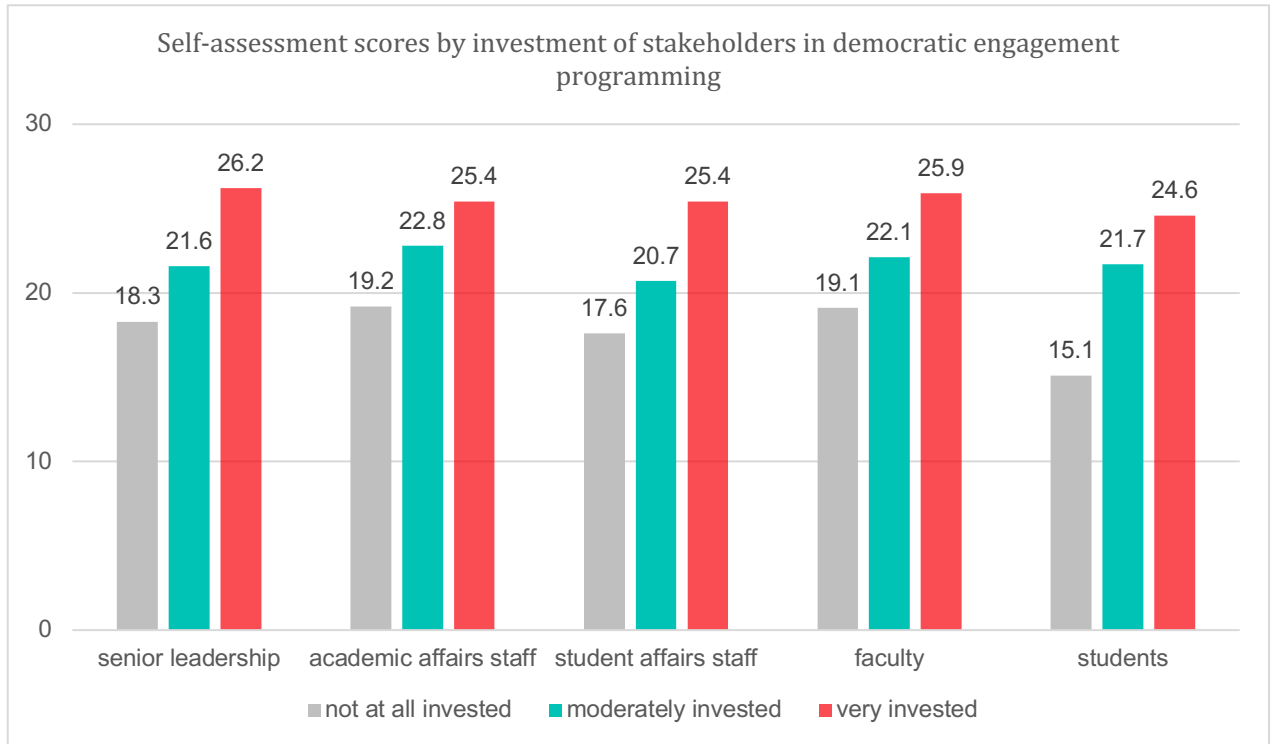
GRAPH 17. Mean Self-Assessment Score by Campus Culture



Stakeholder Investment. Self-assessment scores were highly correlated with perceived stakeholder investment across groups ($p < .000$ for all five) (See graph 18). While all of these categories show substantially lower scores for campuses that perceived those stakeholders as less invested, the student category is particularly notable. This finding suggests that having students invested in democratic engagement efforts is important for its success on campus.

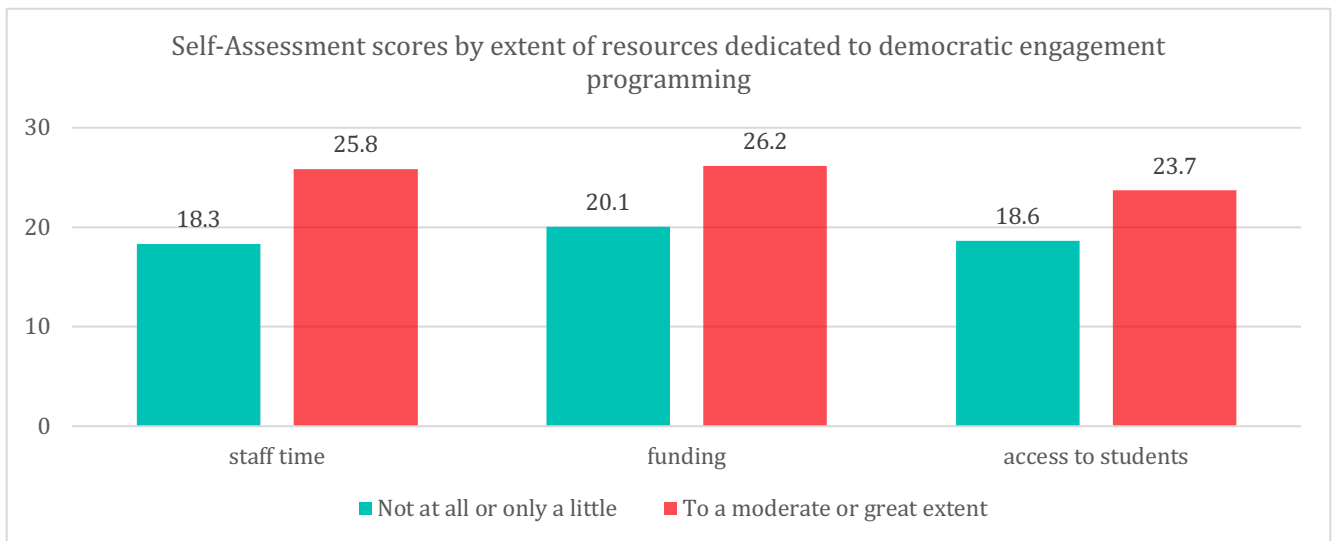
⁷ Campuses where democratic engagement efforts are primarily led by students were removed from this analysis because of their small number and clear differences from the other institutions surveyed.

GRAPH 18. Mean Self-Assessment Score by Perceived Stakeholder Investment



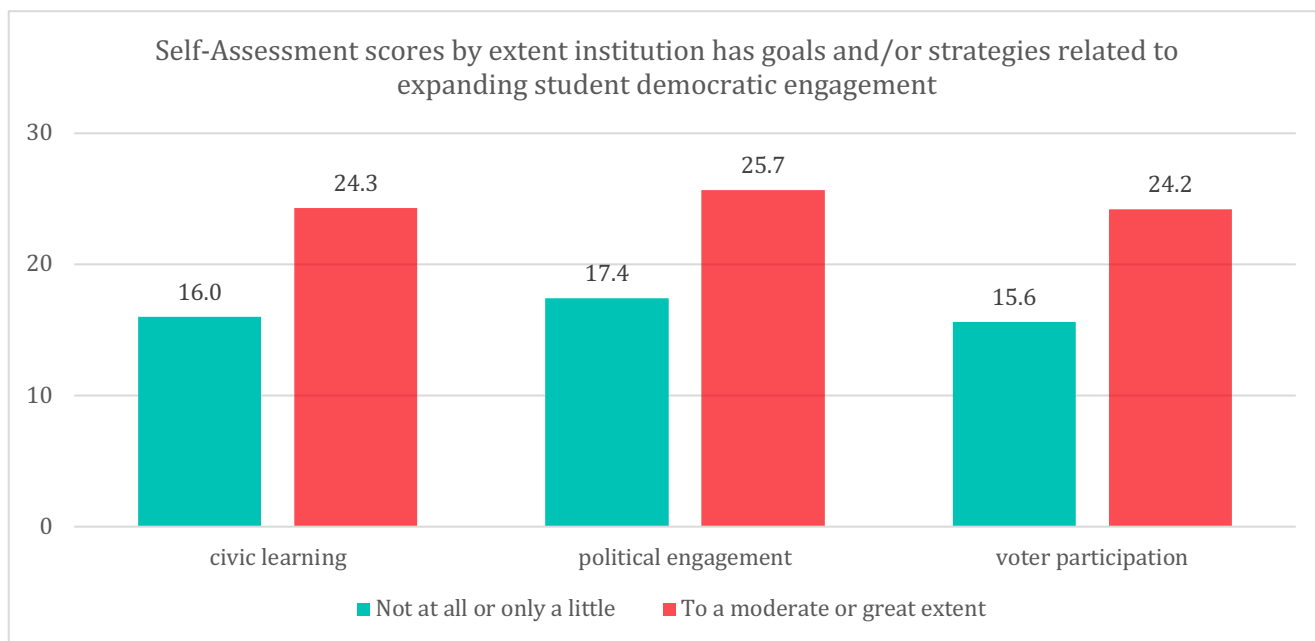
Resources. Self-assessment scores were highly correlated with dedicated resources in the form of staff time, funding, and access ($p < .000$ for all three categories) (See graph 19). There was a sizable difference in mean overall self-assessment score of 5 to 7 points between campuses that selected “not at all” or “only a little” compared with “to a moderate” or “great extent” for each resource category.

GRAPH 19. Mean Self-Assessment Score by Extent of Resources for Democratic Engagement Programming



Campus Goals and/or Strategies. Self-assessment scores were highly correlated with having goals and/or strategies related to expanding student democratic engagement ($p < .000$ for all three categories). There was a sizable different of 6 to 8 points between campuses that selected “not at all” or “only a little” compared with “to a moderate” or “great extent” for each goal category (See graph 20).

GRAPH 20. Mean Self-Assessment Score by Goals and/or Strategies in Student Democratic Engagement Efforts



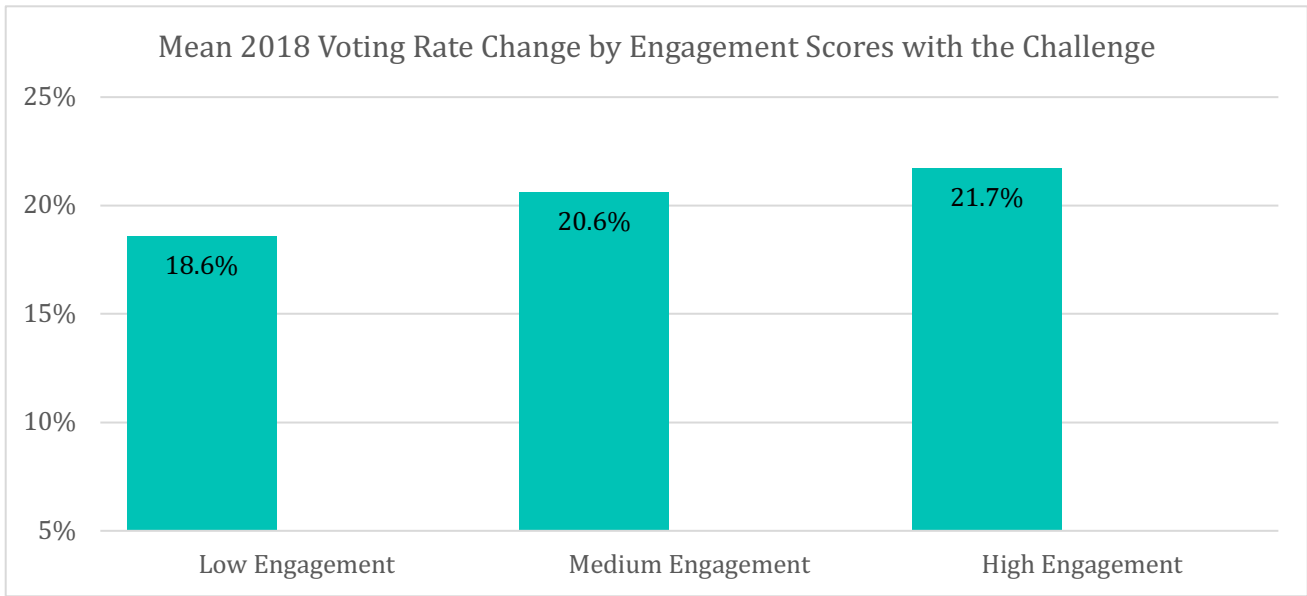
Voting Rate Change

The second key dependent variable in the outcomes analysis was voting rate change, which comes from NSLVE data provided to the Challenge by participating campuses. Voting rate change is the difference in campus voting rates between 2014 and 2018; the mean voting rate change was a increase of 20.7 percentage points for our sample.⁸ As is outlined below, these findings are not as strong as those for self-assessment scores. This makes sense, since the self-assessment scores came from the same survey as many of the independent variables analyzed, and thus the variables are more likely to be correlated. On the other hand, increasing campus voting rates is a challenge for institutions and includes a wide array of mediating factors not measurable in this type of analysis. Moreover, the findings reported here suggest that, while the evidence might not be as strong, these patterns are not just the result of chance.

Engagement with the Challenge. Campuses that were more engaged with the Challenge greater increases in campus voting rates (See graph 21). The mean score for campuses that had high engagement scores (as assigned by the Challenge staff) had an average 2018 voting rate change that was 3 percentage points higher than those whose engagement with the Challenge was lower ($p < .133$).

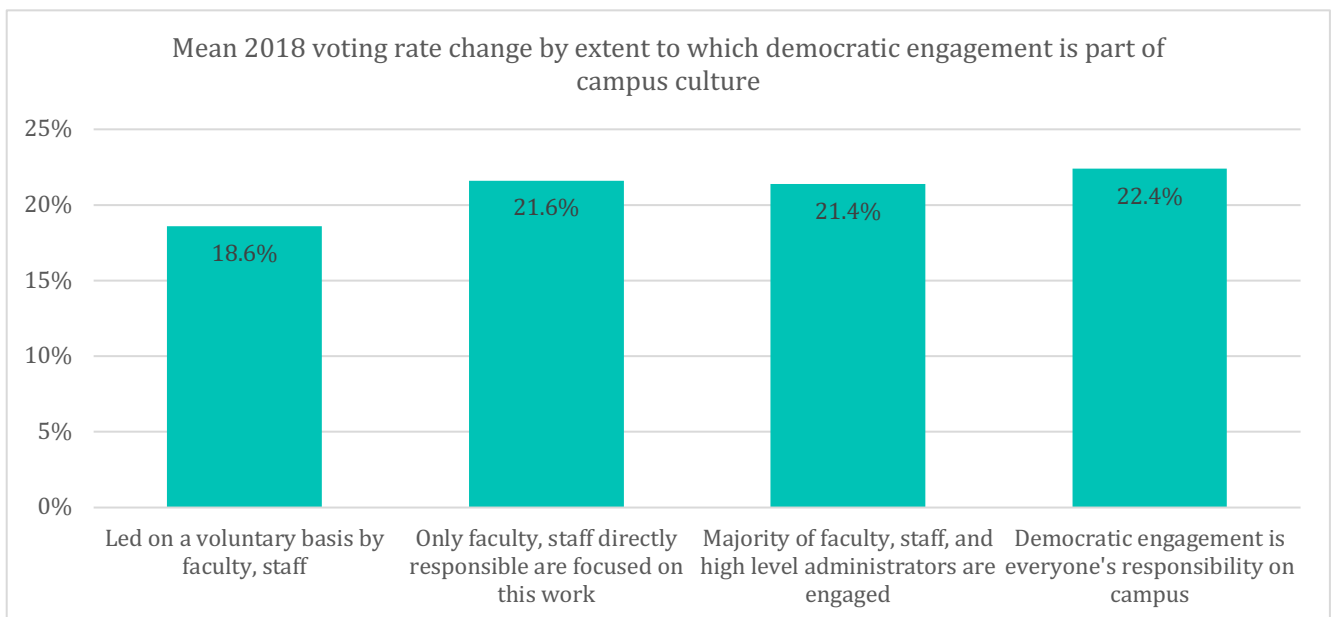
⁸ As with the analysis of self-assessment scores, campuses where efforts were led by students was omitted for this analysis.

GRAPH 21. Mean 2018 Voting Rate Change by Engagement Scores with the Challenge



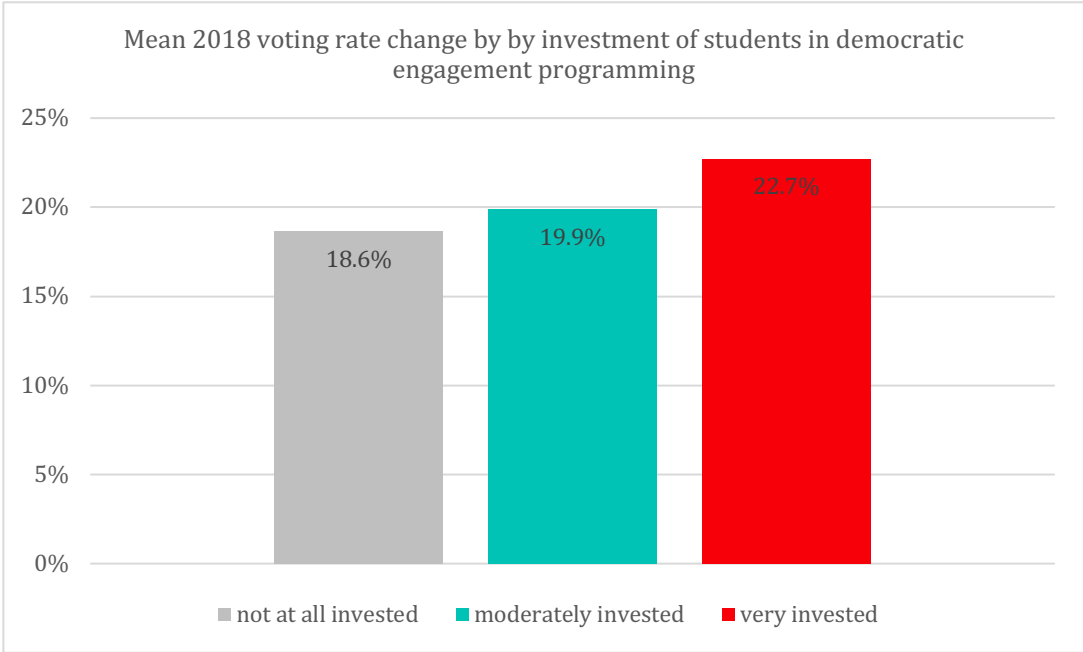
Campus Culture. Voting rate change was moderately correlated by campus culture ($p < .200$). This suggests that a difference in who on campus is invested in these efforts is connected to campus voting rate change. Campuses where only the faculty and staff directly responsible are focused on this work and those where the majority of faculty, staff, and high-level administrators are engaged were similar in the campus voting rate change (See *graph 22*). The key difference is seen for campuses where faculty and staff lead these efforts on a voluntary basis (3 percentage points below the other categories). This suggests that increasing voting rates is more likely when the person leading the work is in a formal role directly responsible for this work, as compared to a volunteer.

GRAPH 22. Mean 2018 Voting Rate Change by Campus Culture



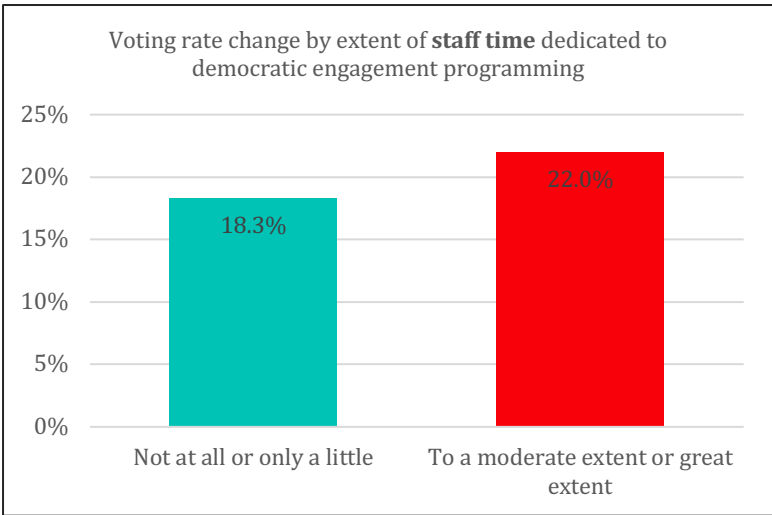
Student Investment. Voting rate change was analyzed by the perceived level of stakeholder investment across the five categories of (1) senior leadership, (2) academic affairs, (3) student affairs, (4) faculty, (5) students). None of the staff categories were correlated with voting rate change, but student levels of investment were moderately correlated ($p < .101$, see graph 23). Thus, those who perceived that their students (who, after all, are the ones who have to go out and vote) as very invested had a higher increase in voting rates.

GRAPH 23. Mean 2018 Voting Rate Change by Perceived Student Investment



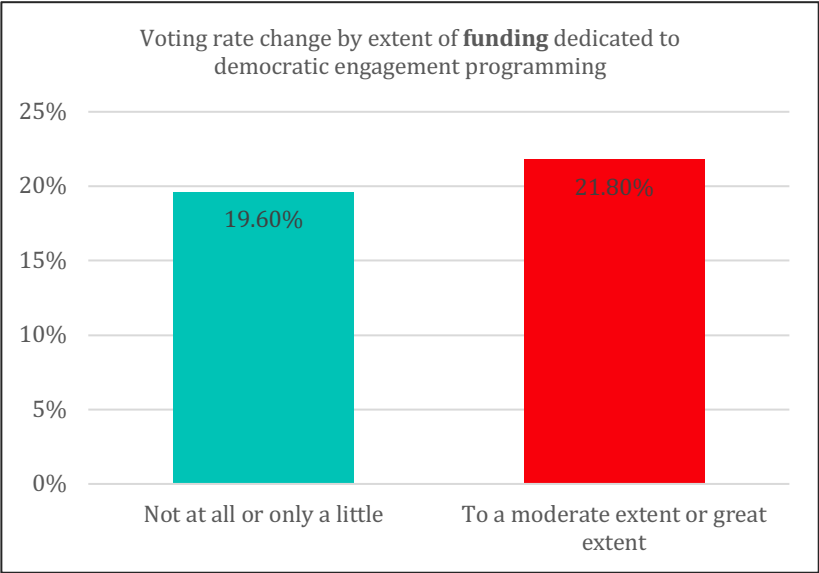
Resources. Having staff time dedicated to democratic engagement efforts was highly correlated with changes in campus voting rate ($p < .033$, see graph 24).

GRAPH 24. Mean 2018 Voting Rate Change by Perceived Extent of Staff Time Dedicated to Democratic Engagement Programming (*highly significant)



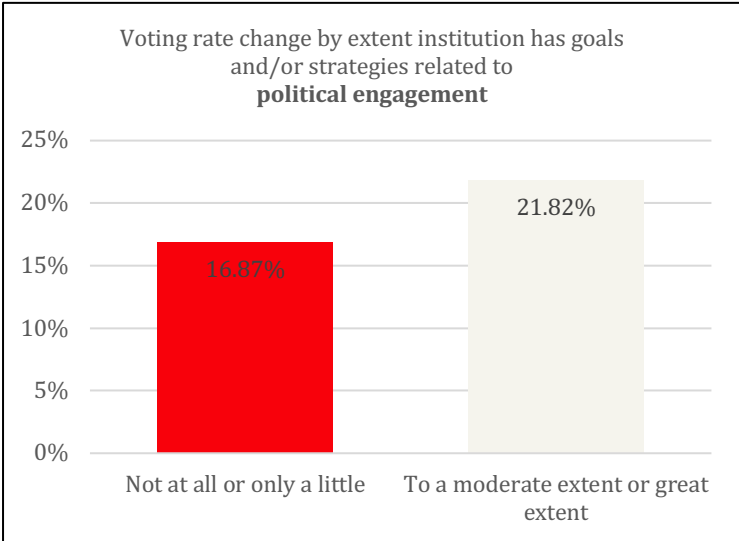
Voting rate change was also correlated with funding, to a lesser extent than with staff time ($p < .164$, see graph 25). Thus, while funding is important, dedicated staff time is what makes is most associated with voting rate change. Access to students was not correlated with voting rate change.

GRAPH 25. Mean 2018 Voting Rate Change by Perceived Extent of Funding Dedicated to Democratic Engagement Programming (*moderately significant)

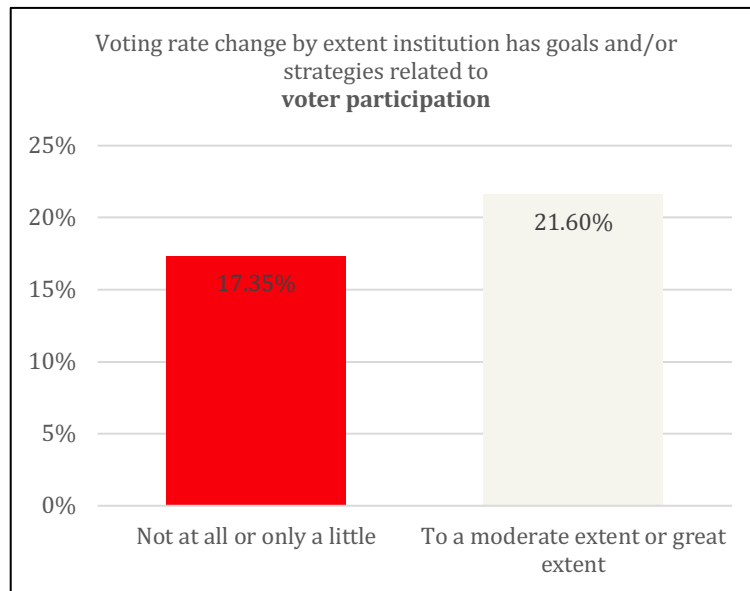


Campus Goals and/or Strategies. Voting rate change was highly correlated with institutional goals surrounding political engagement ($p < .013$, see graph 26). Changes in campus voting rate were also somewhat correlated with voter participation goals ($p < .146$). Voting rate change was not correlated with civic engagement goals. This might be because civic engagement goals are more related to programming that is not especially action oriented.

GRAPH 26. Mean 2018 Voting Rate Change by Perceived Institutional Goals and/or Strategies Related to Political Engagement (*highly significant)



GRAPH 27. Mean 2018 Voting Rate Change by Perceived Institutional Goals and/or Strategies Related to Voter Participation (*moderately significant)



More research is needed to understand why political engagement goals were correlated with voting rate change to a stronger extent than voter participation goals. One possible reason may be that few campuses indicated that they had goals and/or strategies for political engagement goals as compared with voter participation goals. It might also be that political engagement efforts that go beyond “get out the vote” type events to engage students more extensively are more effective in increasing voting rates.

Recommendations

The findings from this study can provide insight for the Challenge staff as they navigate how to continue to support member campuses in their democratic engagement programming. Our findings highlight that:

- Campuses are saying that the All In Democracy Challenge is having an impact, especially the structure of the program.
- Access to resources, especially staff time, is linked to the level of engagement with the Challenge.
- More engaged and committed campuses give themselves higher scores across the different dimensions of this work.
- More engaged and committed campuses are seeing greater increases in student voting.

There are a number of recommendations to campuses that these findings might allow the Challenge to share. Those campuses that are serious about seeing outcomes regarding their student democratic engagement should make sure their campus supports this work with resources, including funding. Furthermore, moving away from only relying on volunteer faculty and staff and instead having a person on campus that has this work as part of their job description is one of the most powerful moves a campus can make to embed this work on campus.

Survey findings suggest that campuses as a whole can use more support in several key areas. The self-assessment scores highlight that setting goals and evaluating progress are particular challenges for campuses. In

particular, assessing progress on increasing student democratic engagement beyond the voter participation data from NSLVE is needed for the majority of campuses. Further, there is room for improvement on most campuses in establishing each of the three goals and/or strategies we measured (voter participation, civic learning, and political engagement). Cultivating political engagement related goals and strategies is a particular place of opportunity for the Challenge to support campuses.

The engagement score, which the Challenge developed to measure the level of engagement a campus has with key activities, was found to be a meaningful measure. Campuses that were more engaged had both higher self-assessment scores and higher rates of change in campus voting. The engagement scores were also highly correlated with dedicated resources and campus culture, indicating that they can be used by the Challenge staff as a proxy for how embedded democratic engagement is on that campus.

Future Research. In the future, the Challenge could continue to distribute the core questions of this survey to measure campus change over time, with this data serving as a baseline for participating campuses. Campuses might also be asked to complete these questions when they join the Challenge. HEI recommends that regular assessment take place on a two-year rotation to match the action plan cycle, with the survey administered in the fall of non-election years once the NSLVE data for the previous election year is available. This assessment process would allow the Challenge to track the progress on campuses and understand the impact the organization is having over time.

One aspect of interest for future research is better understanding the role of goals and strategies related to political engagement as compared to civic learning and voter participation. Political engagement was the only one of these three areas that was highly significant in its correlation with campus voting rate change, and the fewest number of campuses had well developed goals and strategies in this area. Future research could seek to unpack what these political engagement goals and strategies look like on campuses that do have highly effective goals to understand better the difference between programming in this category and why that programming seems to be having an impact.

Another of the most interesting and clear findings in this study is the difference in outcomes when democratic engagement work is done as part of someone's job description, as compared to by someone in a voluntary role. Future research could explore this phenomenon in more detail, trying to understand what that looks like in practice. For example, what percentage of the job or jobs is devoted to democratic engagement programming at the most effective campuses?

Appendix: Survey Methodology and Protocol

HEI conducted a survey of all member institutions in October of 2019. All respondents were contacted via an emailed link from SurveyMonkey.com and offered a small incentive of five dollars in the form of an Amazon gift-card. This resulted in a relatively high response rate of 36%, with a total of 188 survey responses (517 member institutions were contacted). Survey responses were matched with data provided by the Challenge in the form of engagement scores, 2018 action plan rubric scores, and institutional demographic data (such as enrollment size). The Challenge provided NSLVE data on 2018 campus voting rates as well as campus voting rate change (or the increase in overall student voting rates between 2014 and 2018).

HEI conducted a bias analysis to compare survey respondents with the larger pool of Challenge member campuses and found the following:

- Both community colleges and Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) were underrepresented in the survey sample. Community colleges made up 13% of the survey sample versus 20% of the Challenge member population. MSIs made up 6.5% of the survey sample versus 20% of the total member population.
- Small colleges were slightly overrepresented, making up 31% of the survey sample compared with 25% of the total population, while medium and large colleges and universities were more similar to the overall member group.
- Institutions that completed the survey were more engaged compared to the overall member population, as the average engagement score (as assigned by Challenge staff) was 7.44 for the survey respondents compared with 5.89 on average overall.
- Action plan rubric scores from 2018 as well as 2018 voting rate and voting rate change measures were similar to the overall member group.
- One significant way that the survey respondent sample was skewed was that campuses who joined recently (in 2019) were substantially overrepresented (17% of the total respondents, compared with 2% of all member campuses).