



Setting a Research Agenda:
Service-Learning in Faith-based Colleges and Universities

6th International Service Learning Research
Conference

October 13 and 14, 2006



From Passion to Objectivity

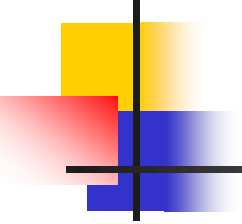
An appropriate theme!



Setting the Context

- Heffner and Beversluis (2003) in their book Commitment and Connection about service-learning at Calvin College suggest:

“Faith-based service-learning exists at the crossroads of several important contemporary conversations: conversations about the role of faith in the public square, about the role of higher education in the development of communities, about the role of education in moral and spiritual development of students and about the integrity and spirituality of teaching and learning.”

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- Garry Hesser in his review of that book in the “Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning” (2003) says something to the effect that:
 - While service is a widely shared faith value, and many of the pioneers of the service-learning movement were deeply rooted in faith, the “basics and biases” of faith perspectives have not been given the attention they deserve.



Questions that focus the conversation

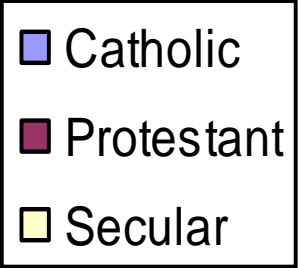
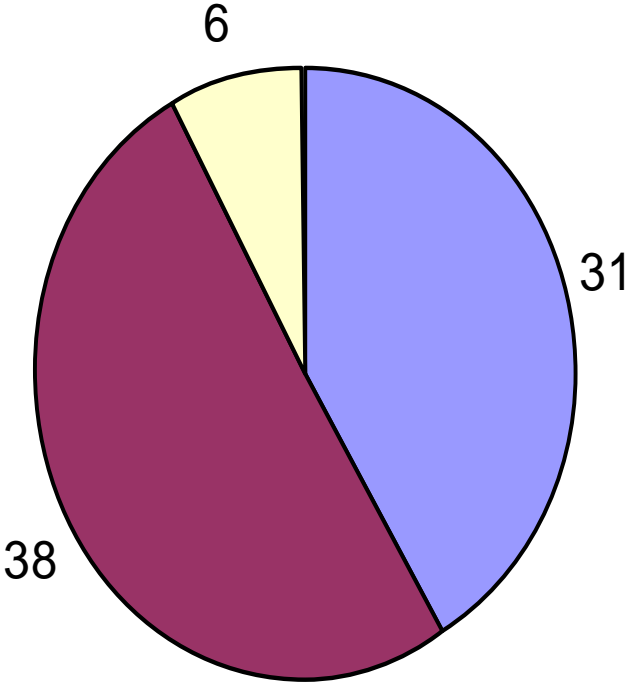
- What are the **particular perspectives** that a faith perspective brings to service-learning and what are the particularities that specific faith traditions bring?
- How does service-learning contribute to: the **inward journey**--- character formation, faith development, moral development, and spiritual growth, on the one hand and the **outward journey**, service, civic engagement, justice, witness, and responsible citizenship on the other?
- What can we **learn from each other** and from our community partners, many of whom are faith based?
- What particular insights do those of us working from a faith base have to **share with the broader movement**?

A survey of perspectives on faith and service-learning

Done by Judy Hutchinson, APU

- Survey to all registrants at the *Faith Traditions, Spirituality and Service-Learning* at Messiah College, June 2006
- 76 of 105 registrants responded

Profile of Colleges of Respondents





Catholic Orders

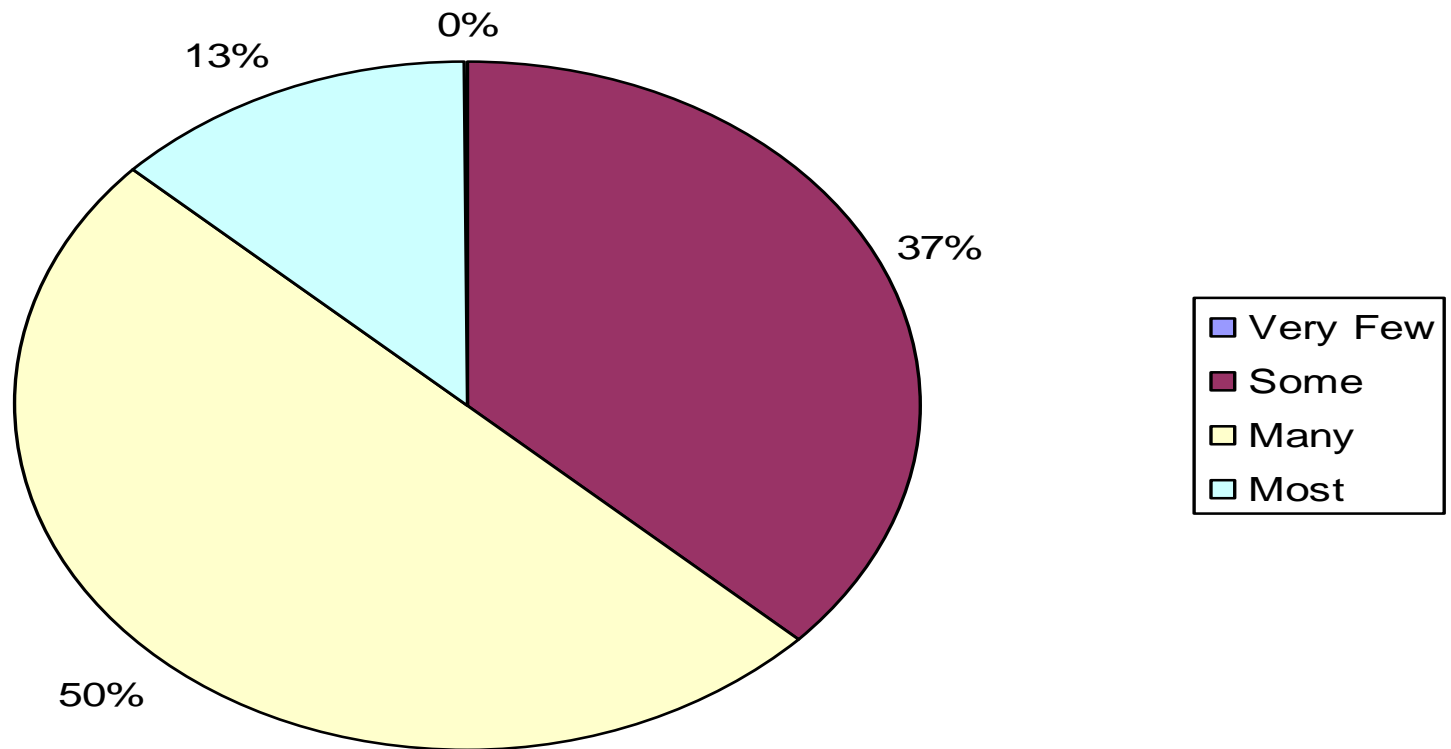
- Benedictine
- Bernadine Sisters of St. Francis
- Congregation of the Holy Cross
- Diocese of Erie
- Dominican
- Felician Sisters - Franciscan tradition
- Franciscan
- Holy Cross
- Jesuit
- Lasallian (Brothers of the Christian Schools)
- Mercy
- Roman
- Sisters of Mercy
- Sisters of the Holy Cross
- Spiritan
- St. Francis of Desales
- Vincention



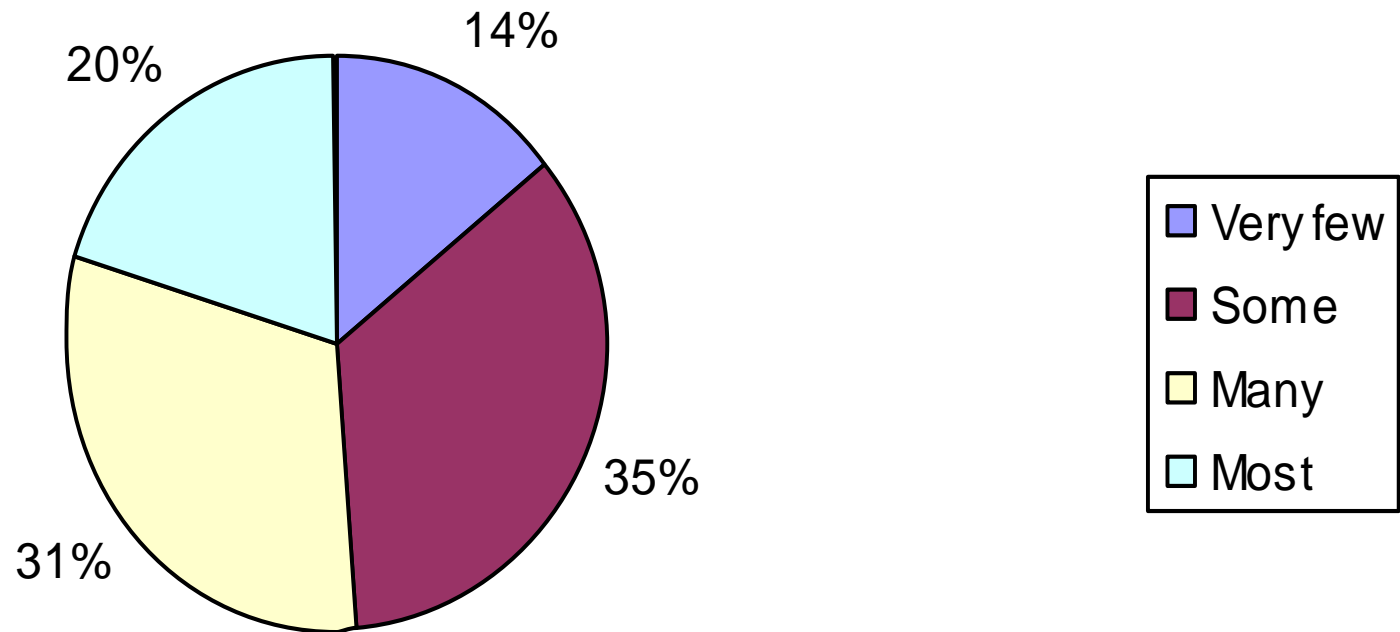
Protestant Denominations

- Brethren in Christ
- Christian Reformed
- Church of Christ
- Church of God
- Evangelical Free
- Evangelical Friends
- Friends
- Independent Bible Church
- Interdenominational
- Lutheran
- Lutheran - Missouri Synod
- Lutheran (ELCA)
- Mennonite
- Methodist
- Non-denominational
- Nondenominational Christian; Wesleyan Holiness tradition
- Non-denominational, evangelical
- Presbyterian
- Reformed Church of America
- Southern Baptist
- United Methodist
- Wesleyan
- Wesleyan, Quaker

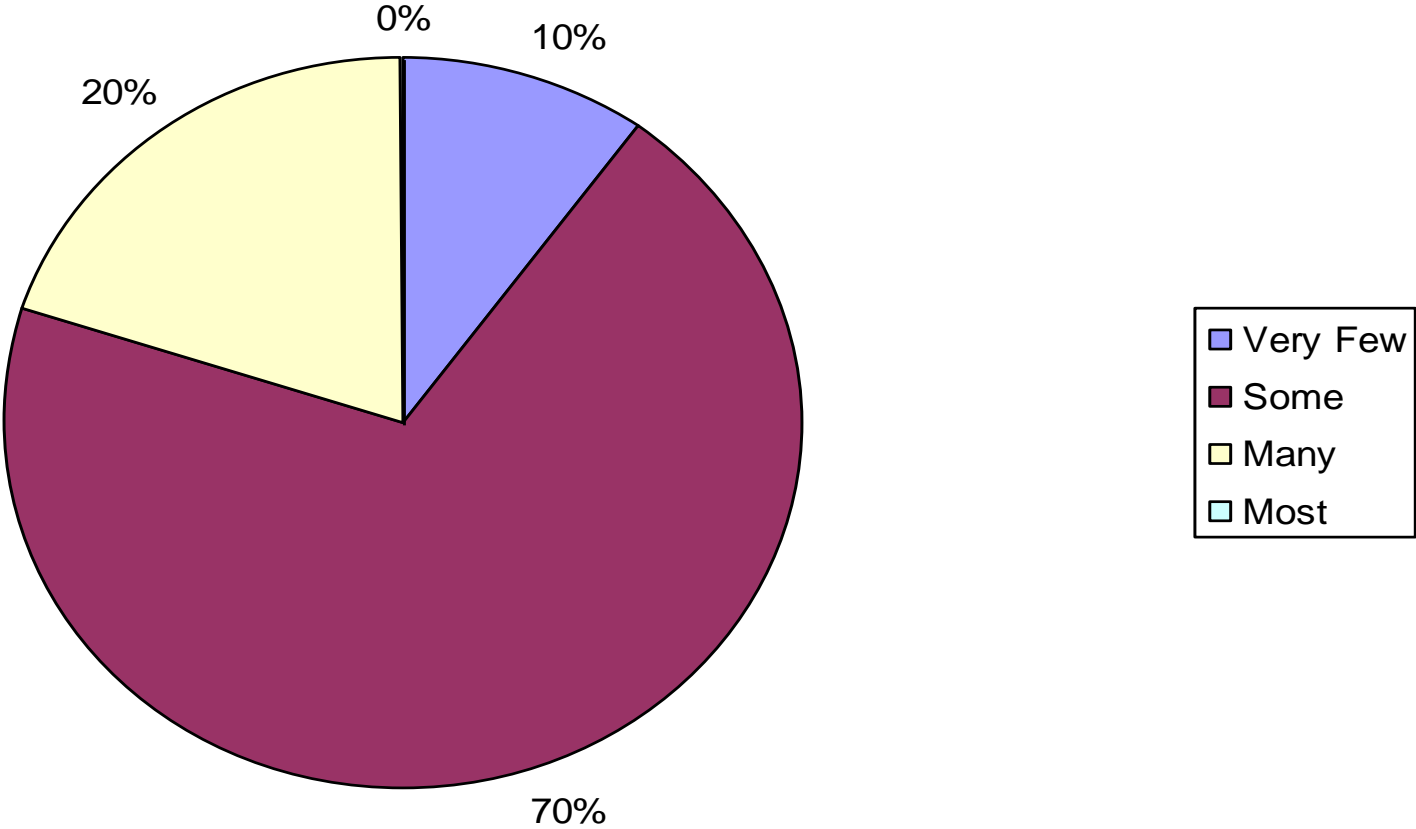
Catholic: Do students choose your school because of its faith tradition?



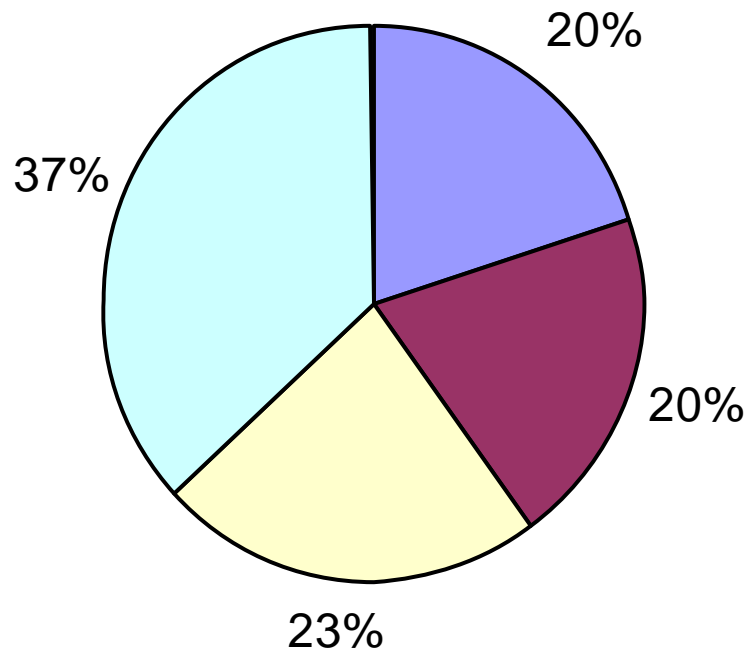
Protestant: Do students choose your school because of its faith tradition?



Catholic: Do faculty choose your school because of its faith tradition?



Protestant: Do faculty choose your school because of its faith tradition?



Relevant Elements of Faith Traditions	Central to Catholic %	Central to Protestant %	All by rank #
Academic excellence	85%	74%	48
Service to the poor	73%	57%	39
Civic engagement	54%	59%	36
Community building/development	56%	49%	32
Social justice	69%	37%	32
Community action and social change	60%	34%	28
Peace/reconciliation	36%	40%	23
Individual Empowerment	35%	34%	22
Evangelism and missions	12%	43%	18
Environmental issues	20%	21%	12
Needs fulfillment	8%	26%	12
Institution building	12%	21%	11



Windows

- Lori Vogelgesang – UCLA,
HERI/Spirituality Study
- Liz Hollander – Campus Compact,
Indicators of Engagement
- Jay Brandenberger – Notre Dame,
Catholic Perspectives

Responses and discussion:

Cathy Burack and Sharon Shields



Emerging questions –

Service-Learning

- Does service-learning provide a means to connect faith with serious intellectual inquiry?
- Can service-learning provide a bridge to bring those two apparently (to most?) and historically (to many?) divergent goals together?
- Can service-learning enable intellectual inquiry to be stronger precisely because of our faith commitments not in spite of them?
- What role should service-learning have in connecting intellectual development to character development, civic engagement, and social justice?
- How would this take shape in various faith traditions?
- What are some aspects of “my” faith tradition that can genuinely sustain true scholarship that also aids in the development of character and active citizenship that contributes to society? What role can service-learning play?

Emerging questions –

Faith traditions

- What do our particular faith traditions contribute to:
 - Intellectual inquiry and scholarship
 - Character and faith development
 - Civic engagement and responsible citizenship
 - Authentic service, justice, and social change



Prior Conversations

- Biennial conferences at Messiah College
 - 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006
 - Titles from general to specific
 - Strengthening service-learning, spirituality, justice, faith traditions
- Research consultation at APU (Grant from CCCU)
 - 2005
 - HERI Spirituality Study, CC Indicators of Engagement, Regan Schaeffer, Brian Hoyt, and others!
- Preconference conversations 2004 and 2006 at Messiah Conference