

Welcome to the 2010 NSSE Webinar Series

November 16, 2010

Today's Webinar:

Using BCSSE-NSSE Data to Assess the Effects of Learning Communities on First-Year Experiences

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Overview

Today we will cover:

- ❖ Very brief description of BCSSE and NSSE
- ❖ Learning more about LC students using BCSSE data
- ❖ Using BCSSE-NSSE data to understand the impact of LC on students with low confidence and/or expected academic transition difficulties
- ❖ Learning more about LC students using NSSE data



Learning Communities and Assessment

Learning community (LC) – a formal program where groups of students take 2+ classes together – contributes to persistence, academic success, peer support, integrated learning, and coherence in the first year of college.

- ❖ What data do you use to guide your LC planning, design, and program assessment?



Very Brief Description of BCSSE & NSSE

Beginning College of Student Engagement (BCSSE)

- ❖ Collects data from entering, first-year students regarding their prior high school experiences, as well as their expectations and beliefs regarding their first-year experiences.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

- ❖ Collects data from first-year and senior students near the end of the academic year regarding their academic engagement.



LC Students and BCSSE Data

Throughout this presentation we will present data from a fictitious university using a subset of randomly selected BCSSE and NSSE data. The goal is to show how one institution may use these data to assess their learning community program.



LC Students and BCSSE Data

NSSEville State is in its fourth year of offering a learning community. Two important goals of the learning community program is to provide additional support and resources for those students that display low confidence in their academic abilities and for those students who expect a difficult academic transition during their first year.



LC Students and BCSSSE Data

		Learning Com	
		No	Yes
High school grades	A	58%	62%
	B	42%	38%
Read on their own	S +	66%	69%
	N/VL	34%	31%
High school studying	6 +	62%	63%
	0-5	38%	37%
Intention to graduate	Yes	86%	91%
First generation	Yes	31%	35%
Ethnicity	Asian	5%	4%
	Black	7%	10%
	Caucasian	74%	78%
	Hispanic	6%	5%
	Other	8%	3%

Students in LC were slightly more likely to report A's in high school, read more, and intend to graduate.

Interestingly, also slightly more likely to be first generation.



LC Students and BCSSE Data

		Learning Com	
		No	Yes
High School Engagement	Mean	5.3	5.7 ¹
Expected FY Engagement	Mean	6.1	6.5
Expected Academic Perseverance	Mean	7.1	7.2
Expected Academic Difficulty	Mean	4.9	5.0
Perceived Academic Preparation	Mean	6.9	7.0
Importance of Campus Support	Mean	7.4	7.6

¹ p<.05



LC Students and BCSSE Data

Overall, there are some differences in the characteristics and backgrounds of those in the learning community and those not. However, they conclude that that they are not getting students with low confidence or high transition difficulty expectations into their LC program. This creates discussion about how to better target these students. The Director wants to know if those with low confidence or expected transition difficulties benefit from participation in the learning community.



LC Students and BCSSE/NSSE Data

Since the Director is particularly interested in students with low academic confidence and/or those who expect to experience a difficult academic transition, they used two scale measures from BCSSE: Expected Academic Difficulty and Perceived Academic Preparation.

To identify those with low confidence or high expectations for transition difficulties, students were group into categories of low, medium, and high for each measure.



LC Students and BCSSE/NSSE Data

		Perceived Acad. Prep			Expected Acad Difficulty		
		Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
High School Engagement	Mean	4.8	5.3	5.8			
Expected FY Engagement	Mean	5.8	6.0	6.6			
Expected Acad. Perseverance	Mean	6.3	7.2	7.9			
Expected Academic Difficulty	Mean	5.3	5.0	4.5			
Perceived Acad. Preparation							
Importance of Campus Env.	Mean	6.9	7.4	7.9			



LC Students and BCSSE/NSSE Data

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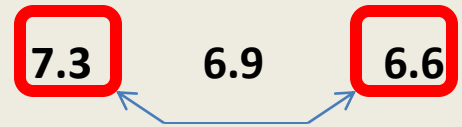
LC Students and BCSSE/NSSE Data

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LC Students and BCSSE/NSSE Data

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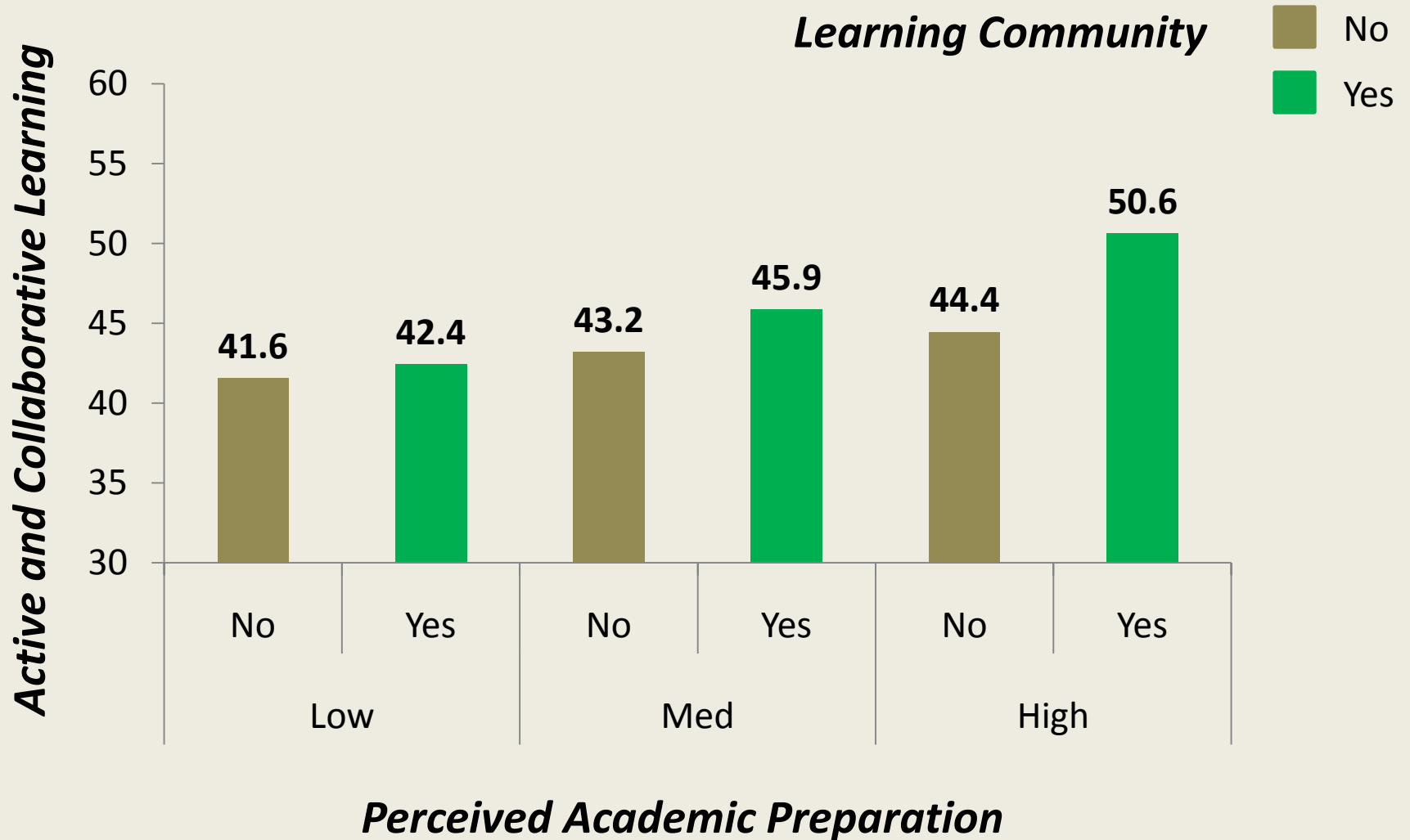


LC Students and BCSSE/NSSE Data

In this example, ANCOVA was used to compare mean scores on active & collaborative learning, student-faculty interaction, and integrative learning. The covariates (controls) used were gender and prior high school engagement. The use of covariates helps to reduce error and eliminate those factors as possible sources of differences in the outcome variables.

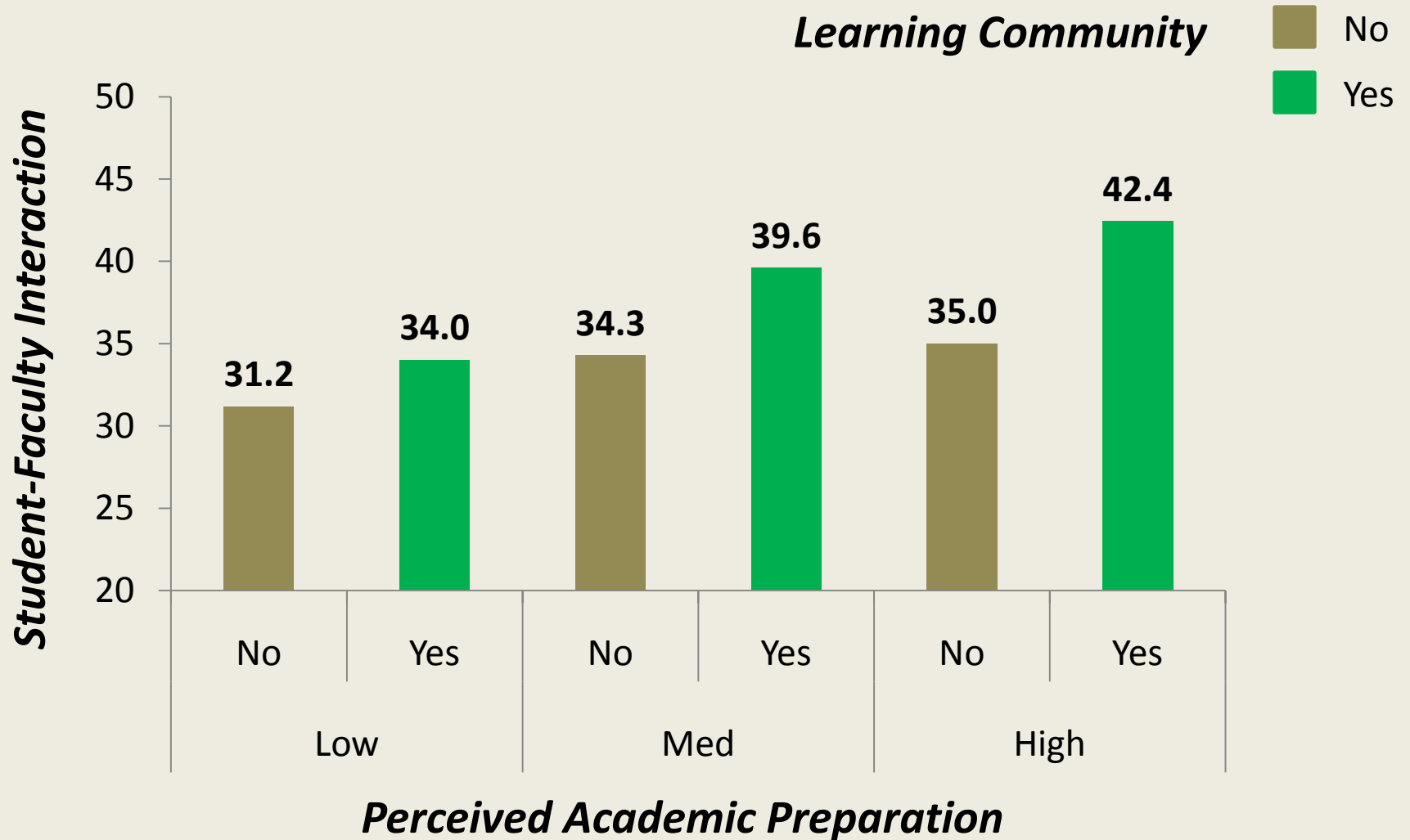


LC Students and BCSSE/NSSE Data



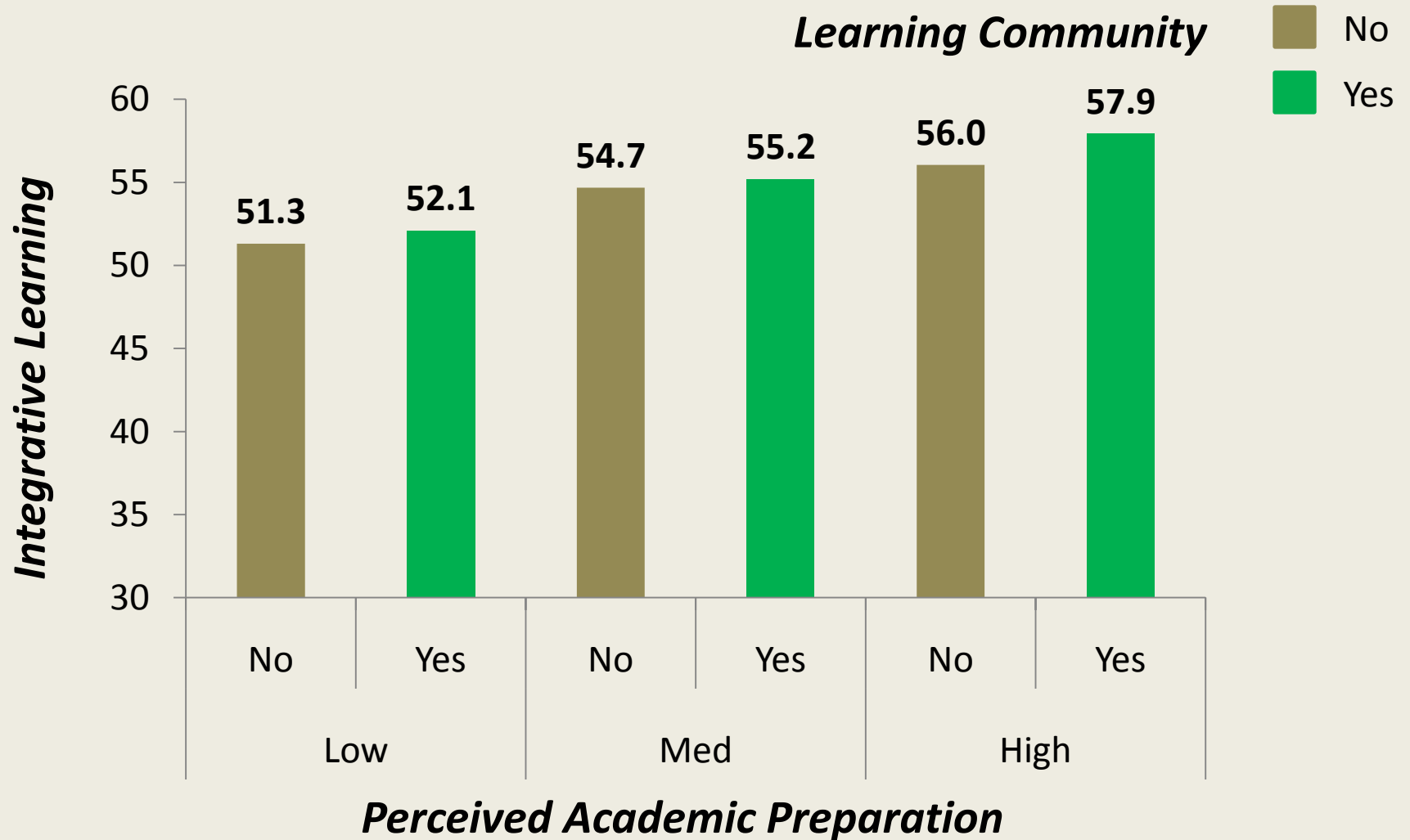


LC Students and BCSSE/NSSE Data



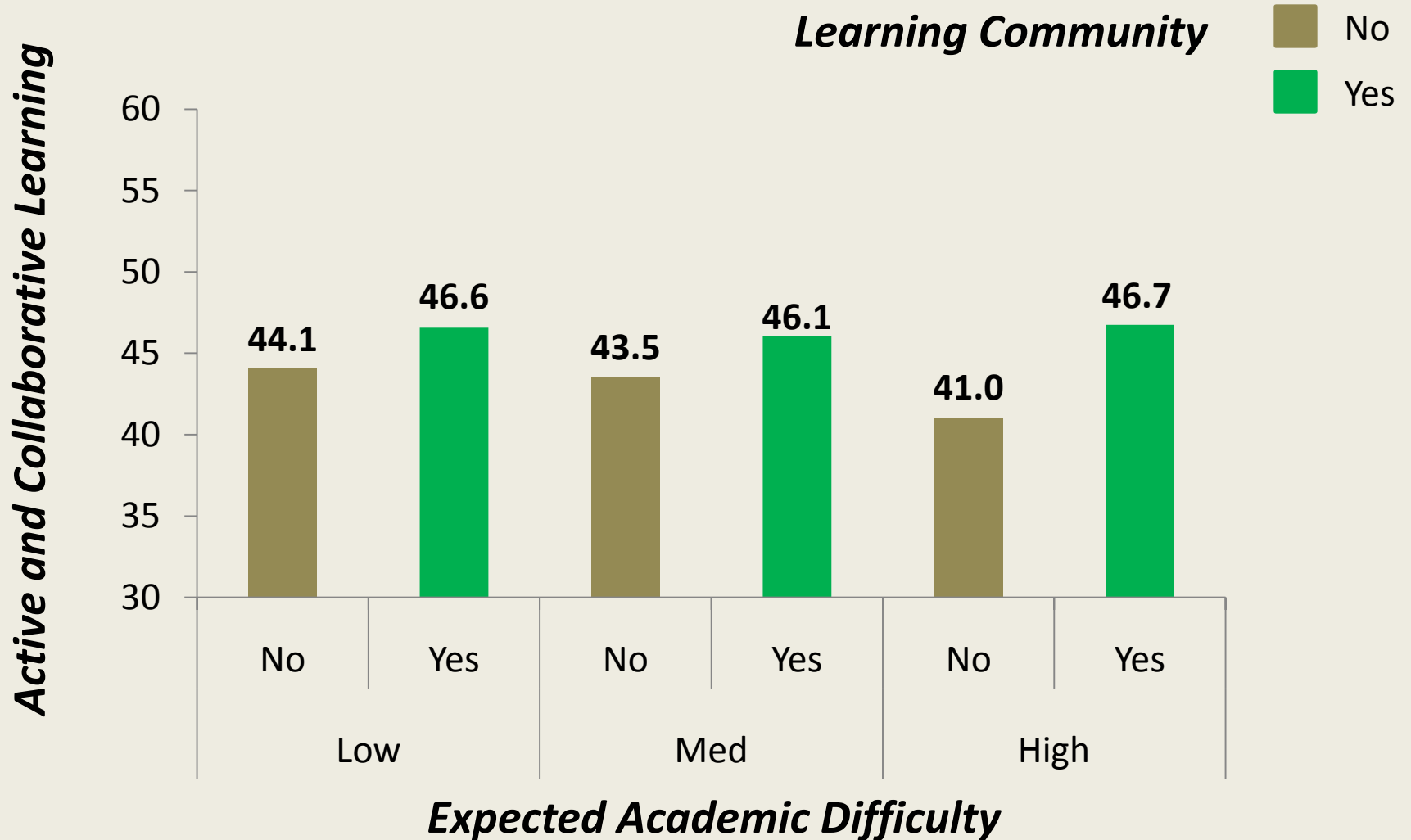


LC Students and BCSSE/NSSE Data



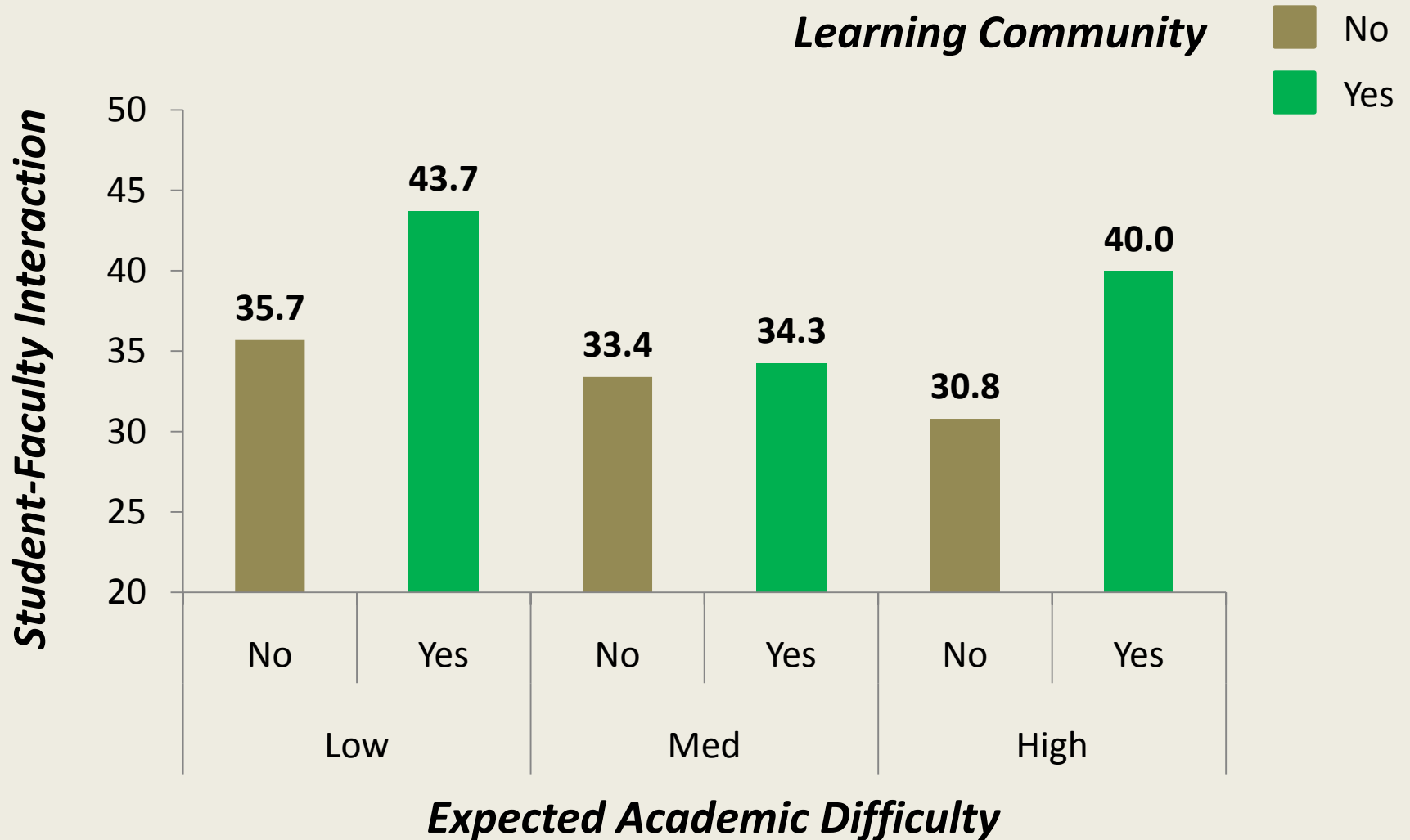


LC Students and BCSSE/NSSE Data



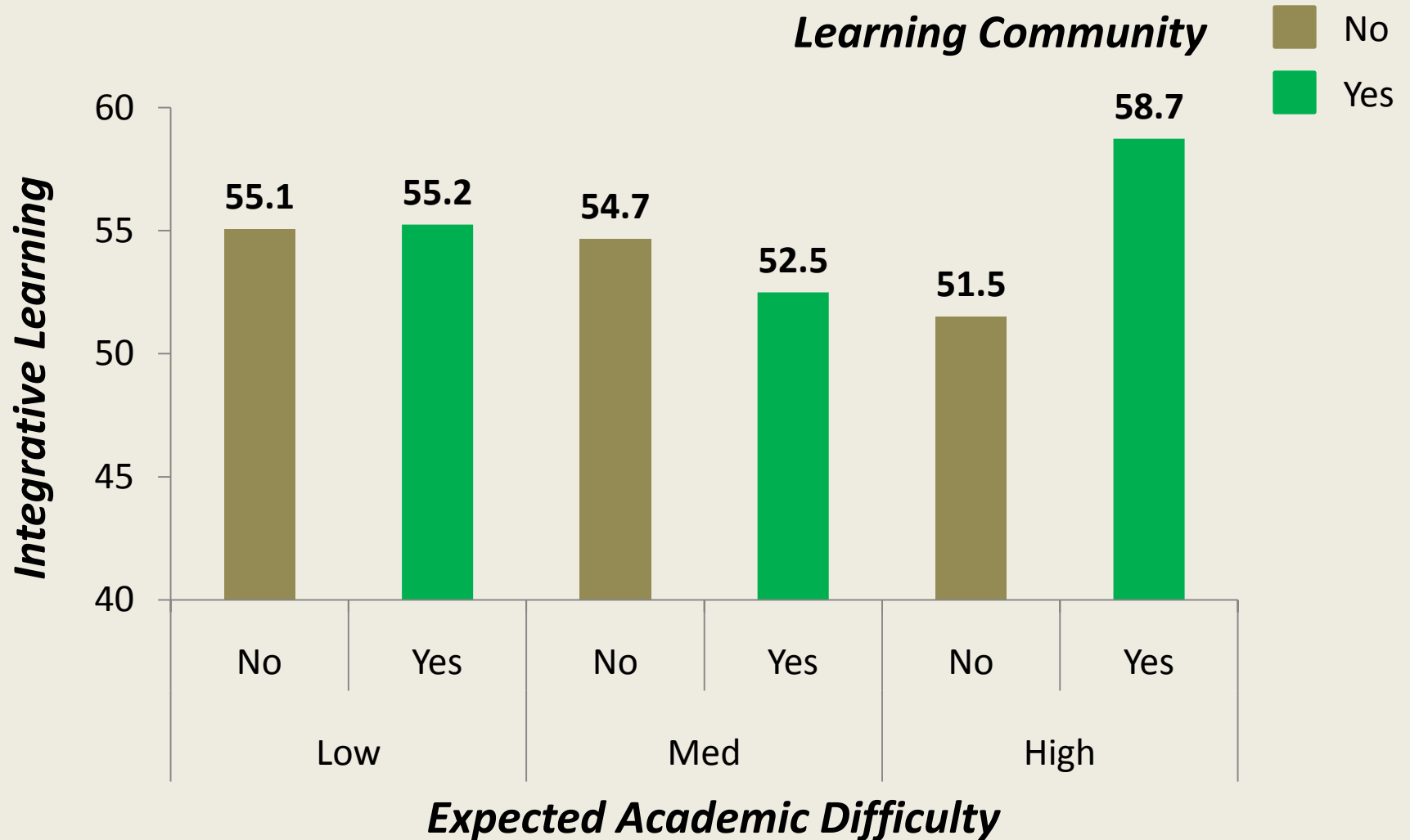


LC Students and BCSSE/NSSE Data





LC Students and BCSSE/NSSE Data





LC Students and BCSSE/NSSE Data

Two primary conclusions:

- ❖ One is that students with higher levels of academic self confidence appear to be benefiting the most from participation in a learning community compared to their peers with low confidence.
- ❖ Second, students who expect higher degree of academic difficulty seem to be benefiting from learning communities.



LC Assessment Using NSSE

Program assessment and effectiveness:

- ❖ Are students in the LC having a different experience than their non-LC peers?
- ❖ Is the LC having an impact on: advising, persistence, and engagement?

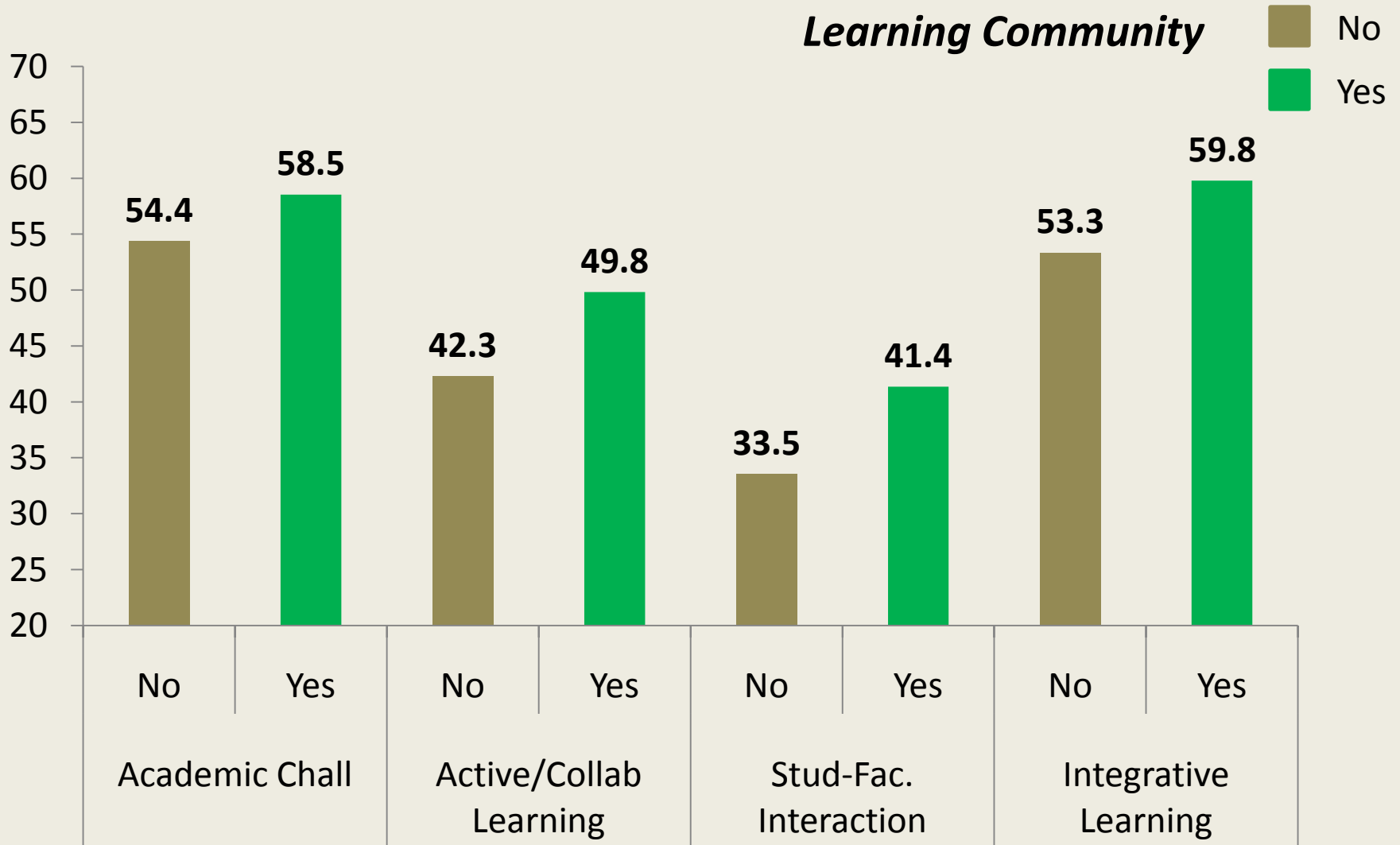


LC Students and NSSE Data

		Learning Commun.	
		No	Yes
Advising	Excellent	34%	39%
Evaluate experience	Excellent	43%	37%
Start over?	Definitely Yes	46%	45%



LC Students and NSSE Data





LC Students at NSSEville State

- ❖ Results showed that for all forms of academic engagement, scores were significantly higher for students in the LC and that students rated advising slightly higher than non-LC students
- ❖ However, the evaluation of academic experience was lower for LC students.
- ❖ Results suggest areas where the LCs could be improved.



Thank you!

Copy of this and all upcoming and past webinars can be found at:

<http://nsse.iub.edu/webinars/>

Additional BCSSE information can be found at:

<http://bcsse.iub.edu/>

Feel free to contact us with any questions regarding BCSSE & NSSE.

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