**DISCERNMENT DATA BACKGROUND**

Began assessment cycle of our learning outcomes beginning with a focus on the area of discernment and reflection in the 15-16 academic year

For each open-ended question, a rubric was developed to assess student responses

What can we learn about the student process to discernment and what more can we do in helping our students utilize this Ignatian tool to decision making through their four years at Loyola and beyond?

**DISCERNMENT DATA FINDINGS**

Most responses were basic with “ability to judge” or “ability to choose” being a frequent response.

Breakdown of the 321 responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
<th>N/A (0)</th>
<th>Beginning (1)</th>
<th>Developing (2)</th>
<th>Proficient (3)</th>
<th>Advanced (4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>

**DISCERNMENT**

**FALL 2015 MESSINA DISCERNMENT DATA FINDINGS**

Key Takeaways:

- Our students are about where you would expect a first-year to be at the end of the first semester in terms of discernment: may know words related to discernment but a depth of understanding is missing
- Opportunities exist to provide continual support in both knowledge of and application of discernment throughout the next 3 1/2 years at Loyola
- Initially it may help to name discernment when it is happening for our students

**EXAMPLES OF DISCERNMENT**

- "I always think of the phrase St. Ignatius said: "motions of the soul." I define discernment as examining whether the choices I make align with the core of who I am and the path I want to be on."
- "I define discernment as personal discovery or problem solving that can be achieved through extensive reflection and personal examination."

**EXAMPLES OF DISCERNMENT**

What to Expect in the Spring 2016 Survey Related to This Area:

- Students will review the Loyola definition of discernment and respond to the following questions:
  - What elements of this definition of discernment do you find you are able to personally relate to? Why?
  - What elements of this definition do you find are difficult to personally relate to? Why?

  Given this definition, please describe a way in which you have personally taken part in the act of discernment during your first year of college?

**CHALLENGES OF DISCERNMENT**

- "I take part in the act of discernment by reflecting on my decision-making often to ensure that I am staying true to my values and becoming a better person on a day-to-day basis."
- "I reflect on important decisions that I have to make and pray to God for guidance."

**0-1 Score Examples:**

- "Discernment is a practice that is personally meaningful to me.
  - Strongly Disagree: 24 (7.45%)
  - Disagree: 3 (0.93%)
  - Neither Agree nor Disagree: 61 (18.94%)
  - Agree: 165 (51.24%)
  - Strongly Agree: 68 (21.12%)

**2-4 Score Examples:**

- "I believe it is important to take a step back and reason with decisions that you need to make or are currently making and reflect on your life to make sure that you are where and who who aspire to be."
- "I reflect on important decisions that I have to make and pray to God for guidance."

**1-4 Score Examples:**

- "Peer pressure, distance from home, distance from friends and family, etc. make it hard to discern."
- "A huge part of discernment is finding a balance between how you discern certain morals and values, in comparison to how others discern their morals and values. For example, when coming to college I had a lot to discern, including who I wanted to associate myself with and how I wanted to make the best out of my four years at Loyola University. Some people act differently than I typically would, which I had to discern and judge whether or not it was healthy for my well being."
- "I think that my schedule is so busy that I don’t really have a lot of down time where I can clear my mind and reflect on myself."

**QUESTIONS RELATED TO DISCERNMENT**

- How do you personally define discernment?
  - Strongly Disagree or Disagree
  - Neither Agree nor Disagree
  - Agree or Strongly Agree

- In the previous question, you responded “Neither Agree nor Disagree.” Please briefly describe why you selected that choice.

- Describe a way in which you personally take part in the act of discernment.

- What do you find challenging in regard to discernment in your own life?

<table>
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