

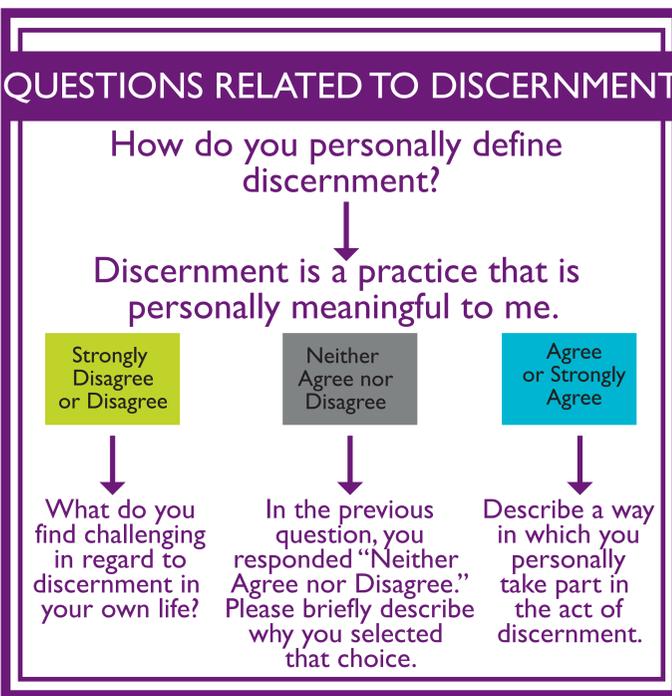


### DISCERNMENT DATA BACKGROUND

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 Definition Findings:

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

Breakdown of the 321 responses:

N/A (0): 215  
 Beginning (1): 83  
 (2): 20  
 (3): 2  
 (4): 1

	N/A (0)	Beginning (1)	(2)	(3)	Advanced (4)
Responding to the question: "How do you personally define discernment?"	Does not state a definition of discernment or definition provided is not a correct explanation of what is discernment.	Definition provided presents little depth of understanding the topic of discernment. It may include one of the elements listed below. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflection</li> <li>Decision-Making</li> <li>Choices</li> </ul>	Definition provided presents some knowledge about the topic of discernment. Definition may begin to make a personal connection to discernment. Definition includes at least one of the elements listed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is a Practice</li> <li>Reflection</li> <li>Prayer</li> <li>Self-Evaluation</li> <li>Well-Informed</li> <li>Choices</li> <li>Improvement</li> <li>Critical Thinking</li> <li>Common Good</li> <li>Decision-Making</li> <li>Practical</li> <li>Spiritual</li> <li>Giving Attention</li> </ul>	Definition provided presents some knowledge about the topic of discernment. Definition makes a personal connection to discernment. Definition includes at least two of the elements listed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is a Practice</li> <li>Reflection</li> <li>Prayer</li> <li>Self-Evaluation</li> <li>Well-Informed</li> <li>Choices</li> <li>Improvement</li> <li>Critical Thinking</li> <li>Common Good</li> <li>Decision-Making</li> <li>Practical</li> <li>Spiritual</li> <li>Giving Attention</li> <li>Relationship with God</li> <li>A way of life, ongoing</li> </ul>	Definition provided clearly demonstrates a clear knowledge of the topic of discernment and a personal connection to the topic. Definition mentions three or more of the following elements of discernment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is a Practice</li> <li>Reflection</li> <li>Prayer</li> <li>Self-Evaluation</li> <li>Well-Informed</li> <li>Choices</li> <li>Improvement</li> <li>Critical Thinking</li> <li>Common Good</li> <li>Decision-Making</li> <li>Practical</li> <li>Spiritual</li> <li>Giving Attention</li> <li>Relationship with God</li> <li>A way of life, ongoing</li> </ul>

### 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%

"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."

### 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?

### 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

**0-1 Score Examples:**  
 "Doing homework instead of using phone"  
 "I judge people"

**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 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."

### CHALLENGES OF DISCERNMENT

**1-4 Score Examples:**  
 "The actions of others and how they impact me"  
 "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."