

Reinventing Campus Culture: Using Strengths to Build Engagement & Wellbeing

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**Engage with
us on Twitter!**

@UMN_Strengths

#StrengthsAndU

DISCOVERY ILLUMINATES
STUDENTS' STRENGTHS



Agenda for the Morning

- Overview of Strengths
- University of Minnesota Story
- Strengths Touch Points
- Coaching with Strengths
- Team Development
- Career Development
- Assessment





Here & Now

Why We Need Strengths-Based Development

- Conventional wisdom focuses on fixing weaknesses. Unfortunately, that “wisdom” leaves organizations struggling on the path to mediocrity.
- The best-led organizations know that the direct path to individual, team, and organizational success begins with a primary investment in the **greatest talents of each individual**.
- Find what’s naturally **right** with your people, and build on it.



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Clifton StrengthsFinder®

- Online talent assessment that helps people discover and describe their talents
- Based on 40+ years of research
- Widely used
 - 7,922,856...8,500,000...and counting!
 - More than 4500 completes per day (one every 19 seconds)
- More than 2.5 million copies of *StrengthsFinder 2.0* sold; over one million StrengthsQuest
- Available in more than 25 languages

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STUDENTS' STRENGTHS

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Strength Equation

Talent

(a natural way of thinking, feeling, or behaving)

X

Investment (time spent practicing, developing your skills, and building your knowledge base)

Strength

(the ability to consistently provide near-perfect performance)

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What It Is....and What It Isn't

WHAT IT IS:

- Tool for development
- Identifies “how you are wired”
- Understand the lens through which you view the world
- Common language to integrate within the organization
- Maximize productivity
- Where you find your energy vs. what exhausts you

WHAT IT ISN'T:

- Tool for hiring
- Tool for promotion or advance
- Identify the “right” vs. “wrong” or “good” vs. “bad” talents
- Labeling people
- One-size-fits-all approach
- An excuse to NOT do something because “it’s not my strength”
- Complete explanation of who you are and why you do things

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By using responses to the **Engagement** items, Gallup can place students in three groups:

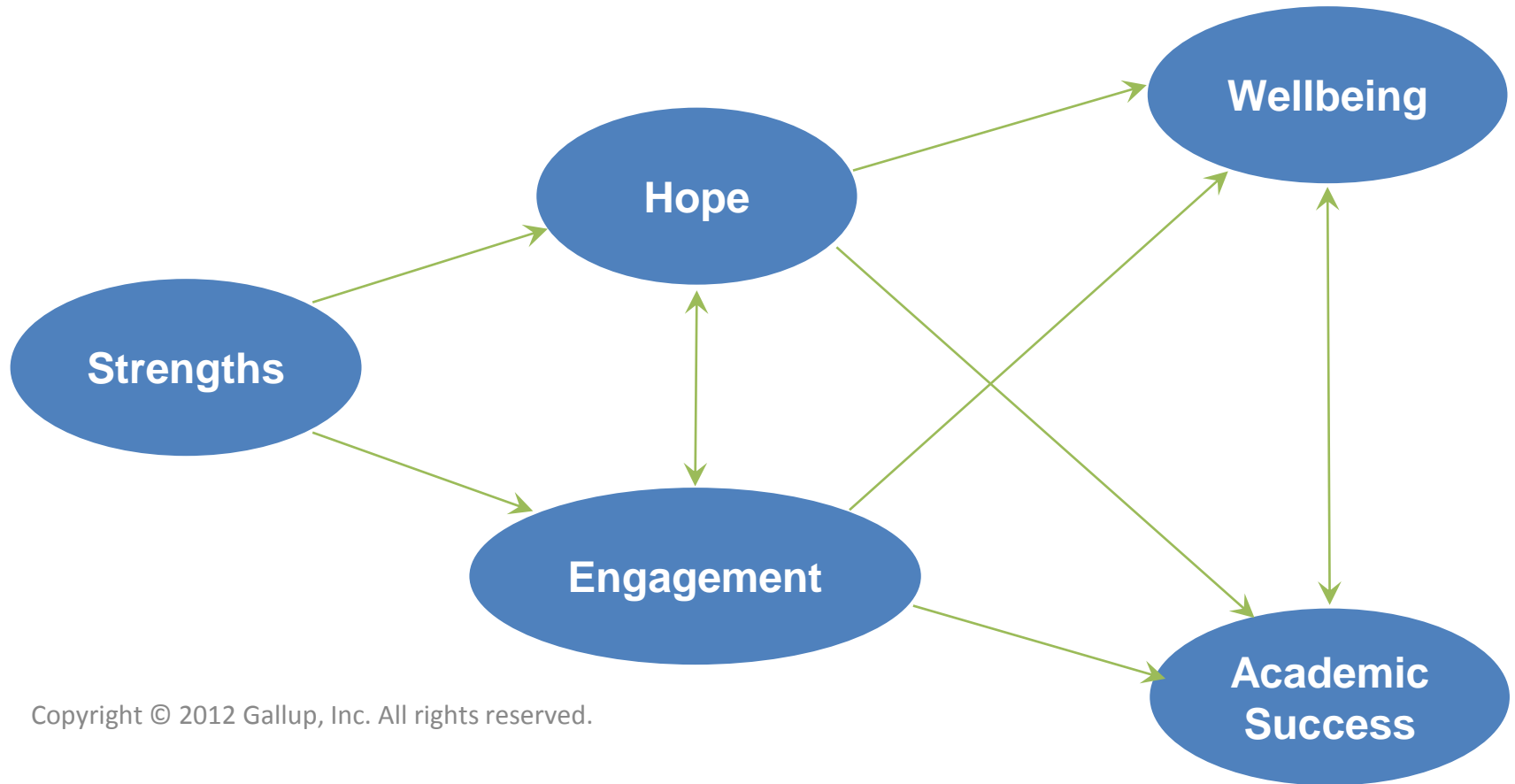
- Engaged
 - Highly involved with and enthusiastic about school. Contribute to the learning process and likely involve their peers in the learning process. Psychologically committed to school. Have most needs met by the learning environment.
- Not Engaged
 - Present in the classroom, but not psychologically connected to school or the learning process. Some but not all needs met in the learning environment.
- Actively Disengaged
 - Not involved with the learning process. May be undermining that process for themselves and peers. Unhappy in school and share that unhappiness with others.

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Student success model



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Strengths Approach

We are using a Strengths approach on our campus to enhance student engagement and well-being which leads to improved retention, graduation and life success.



STRENGTHS AT THE U: CREATING A STRENGTHS-BASED UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE

STRENGTHS INITIATIVE FRAMEWORK

On the Twin Cities campus we are using a Strengths approach to enhance student engagement and well-being which leads to improved retention, graduation and life success. StrengthsFinder® is a tool that contributes to the demonstration of the Student Learning Outcomes (www.slo.umn.edu) and the Student Development Outcomes (www.sdo.umn.edu).

Strengths Integration Strategies



Academic and Personal Growth

In addition to these strategies, colleges and units are encouraged to integrate a Strengths-based approach into their own programs, learning experiences and curricula.



*Capstone: a final project, culmination of experiences and resources, reflection, or other experience that relates to preparing to transition from undergraduate student to graduated student.

GOALS FOR THE STRENGTHS INITIATIVE

Pre-Arrival

At the start of the first year, students will...

- Be familiar with the U of M strengths initiative and why we are doing it.
- Understand how they will take the assessment and how to access their reports.
- Have taken the assessment and be able to recall one or two of their Talent Themes.
- Be introduced to StrengthsFinder® and have a basic understanding of a Strengths-approach.

1st Year

At the end of the first year, students will...

- Be able to recall all of their five Talent Themes.
- Be able to articulate their Talent Themes in their own words.
- Have engaged in and initiated discussions about their own Talent Themes with others and learned about different types of Talent Themes.
- Understand ways in which their Talent Themes can apply to their student experience.

2nd Year

At the end of the second year, students will...

- Understand the difference between Talent Themes and Strengths.
- Use their Strengths to contribute to their academic success including group work, studying, time management, etc.
- Be able to apply their Strengths to their engagement experiences.
- Understand how their Strengths relate to their career and major exploration and decisions.
- Be aware of what happens when their Strengths aren't lived in healthy ways (aka, shadow side, barrier labels).

3rd Year

At the end of the third year, students will...

- Continue to integrate Strengths into their engagement opportunities.
- Integrate their Strengths into the career and post-graduation planning process.
- Utilize Strengths as they reflect upon their overall learning and development in relation to the Student Learning Outcomes and Student Development Outcomes.

4th Year

At the end of the fourth year, students will...

- Utilize Strengths as they reflect upon their overall learning and development in relation to the Student Learning Outcomes and Student Development Outcomes.
- Be able to apply and articulate Strengths to the post-graduation implementation process (interviews, applications, etc.)

Post-Graduation

After graduation, alumni will...

- Have advanced in their demonstration of the Student Learning and Development Outcomes.
- Experience greater well-being due to living in their Strengths.
- Experience greater post-graduation satisfaction by doing what they do best every day.

Clarifying Language

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Talent} \\ \times \text{ Skill, Knowledge} \\ \text{and Time} \\ \hline = \text{Strength} \end{array}$$

- **Talent Theme:** A naturally recurring pattern of thought, feeling, or behavior that can be productively applied. There are 34 talent themes associated with StrengthsFinder®.
- **Knowledge:** What you know as a result of either formal or informal education.
- **Skill:** The basic ability to move through the fundamental steps of specific task.
- **Time:** Time spent practicing and developing your skills, and building your knowledge base.
- **Strength:** The ability to provide consistent, near-perfect performance in a given activity – reached only by applying and investing skill and knowledge to Themes.

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Snapshot of U of M – Twin Cities



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U of M's Strengths Story

- Strengths was already happening in “pockets” at the U
- Strengths Advisory Board (2009)
- Gallup Strengths in Education conference (June 2009)
- Full-time position developed in the Office for Student Engagement (September 2010)
- Vice Provost for Student Affairs championed initiative for first year students (March 2011)



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Strengths by the Numbers

17,000+

first-year and transfer students have taken StrengthsFinder through the *Strengths at the U* initiative

5,500+

staff, faculty, and other groups have used U of M purchased codes to take StrengthsFinder since March 2011

3,440+

students, staff, faculty, parents and alumni participated in Strengths related workshops organized and/or facilitated by the Office for Student Engagement

1,400+

individuals have purchased StrengthsFinder test code access and/or StrengthsFinder books from the University Bookstore

600+

members of the University community have participated in Gallup-facilitated Strengths Educator and Mentorship workshops since March 2011

175+

staff and faculty have attended Strengths workshops from August 2012-August 2013 through the Office of Organizational Effectiveness

20+

departments at the U of M had staff members serving on 4 working groups to help launch *Strengths at the U*, and 21 departments have been represented by members of the Strengths Advisory Board

Strengths Stories



Examples of Student “Touch Points”

- Welcome Week session
- Convocation (President’s office support)
- Academic advising and career counseling sessions
- Housing & Residential Life
- Workshops
- [34 in 34](#)
- Strengths & Engagement Coaching
- Parent’s weekend
- Student Employment Leadership Program



Jacquelyn Johnson @jacqui_johnson8

Mar 9

Strangest encounter with a security guard. #awk #smalltalk
#heaskedaboutstrengths @UMNprobs

Retweeted by UMNProbs

Expand

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**Rebecca Kang**

Anyone else finish their StrengthsFinder and get their Top 5?
I got: Achiever, Analytical, Focus, Consistency, and Learner. In that order.

What did everyone else get?

Like · Comment · Follow Post · July 19 at 12:21am

12 people like this.

[View previous comments](#) 100 of 107



Emily Schaumann connectedness, harmony, activator, maximizer, positivity

July 19 at 1:24am · Like



Blake Apgar Developer, empathy, adaptability, intellection, ideation.

July 19 at 1:34am · Like · 1



Hayley Turner @Haylz1893

31 Aug

@umn_strengths I'm going to use responsibility in student groups to help lead the way. #gopher16 #umn



UMN Strengths @UMN_Strengths

4 Feb

This Week's Strength is COMPETITION! See how others use this strength to be successful: strengths.umn.edu . Week 19 Strengths 20/34



Brittany Berenz @Britt_Berenz

5 F

I don't know anything about Competition, except that I always win!

@umn_strengths pic.twitter.com/CFwRSLI

Retweeted by UMN_Strengths

[View photo](#)

Online engagement opportunities

- strengthsquest.com
- strengths.umn.edu
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Portal
- Videos

In-class engagement opportunities

- First-year experience
- Access to Success
- “Success over stress”
- Career courses
- Leadership minor

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Foundation for Success: A New Model for Residence Education






The Next Step
From
Engagement to
Wellbeing



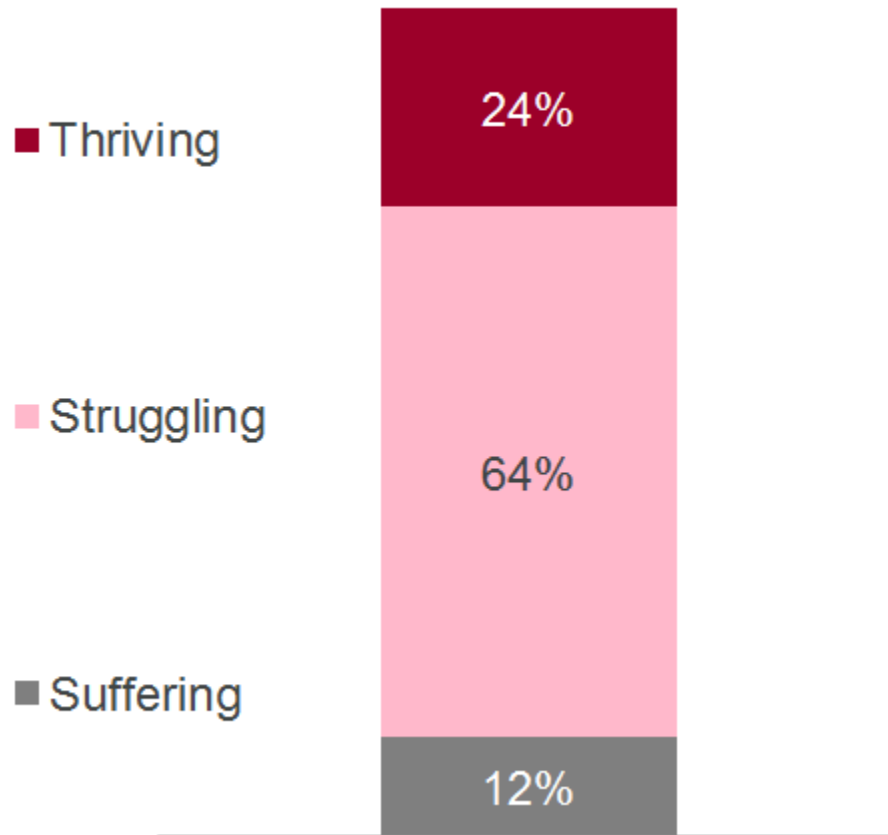
WELL BEING

The Five Essential
Elements

Wellbeing

| | |
|--|--|
|  | Thriving Well-being is strong, consistent, and progressing |
|  | Struggling Well-being is moderate or inconsistent |
|  | Suffering Well-being is at high risk |

Life Evaluation Across the World



| | |
|----------|------------------------------|
| Denmark | 82% Thriving 1% Suffering |
| Zimbabwe | 3% Thriving 40% Suffering |

| | |
|---------------|------------------------------|
| United States | 50% Thriving 4% Suffering |
| Minnesota | 51% Thriving 4% Suffering |

Based on the Cantril Self-Anchoring Striving Scale, Present and Future

World Poll 2005-present
Weighted by population size

Wellbeing

Career

How you occupy your time; liking what you do each day

Social

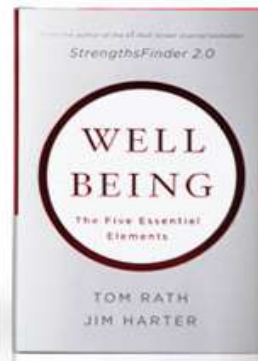
Relationships and love in your life

Financial

Managing your economic life to reduce stress and increase security

Good health and enough energy to get things done daily

Physical



Engagement and involvement in the area where you live

Community

Outcomes



Each student will do what
they do best every day.





Each student will have strong
and positive relationships.

Each student
will make
sound
financial
decisions.



Each student will
make healthy
and sustainable
choices.





Each student will have
an inclusive and
engaged community
experience.



A photograph of two young women sitting on a green lawn outdoors. The woman on the left, with dark curly hair and wearing a green shirt, is typing on a silver laptop. The woman on the right, with blonde hair in a ponytail and wearing a dark blue jacket, is looking at the laptop screen. In the background, there is a colorful flower bed with orange, yellow, and red flowers, a yellow caution tape, and a brick building with large windows. Other people are visible in the distance.

careers
academic skills
relationships
confidence

Strengths & Engagement Coaching



"I did the strengths coaching, and I thought it was a great experience. My advisor during the session was amazing and really helped me gain insight in how to use my strengths to their fullest potential."

- Class of 2017 student

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Teams and Strengths

- 2 teams of 3
- Each person will be assigned a tool (Scissors, template and pen, or glue stick)
- There are three stations
 - #1: Draw/Outline Design
 - #2: Cut Design
 - #3: Puts Designs Together



Teams and Strengths

- Rules
 - You may communicate with each other
 - You can only do the job assigned to your station
 - You can choose to use your tool or not, but you may only use your assigned tool



CAREER PATH



Strengths & Career



Empathy

Woo

Individualization

Counseling

Sales

Teaching

"Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life." - Confucius

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Job Analysis

Event and Communications Intern, American Heart Association

- Overall implementation of fundraising event including, but not limited to: logistics, event planning, social media communications and volunteer recruitment.
- Ability to organize time and work independently
- Ability to multi-task
- Computer skills, including word processing and experience with Microsoft office Written and verbal skills.
- Ability to work well with people, face-to-face, on the phone and over online communications

Juan

- Achiever
- Learner
- Communication
- Context
- Belief

Ann

- Analytical
- Empathy
- Futuristic
- Intellection
- Maximizer



Strengths & Job Search Skills

- Interviewing: STARS Method
 - Situation/Task
 - Action
 - Result
 - Strength(s)
- Cover Letter
- Resume
- Elevator Pitch



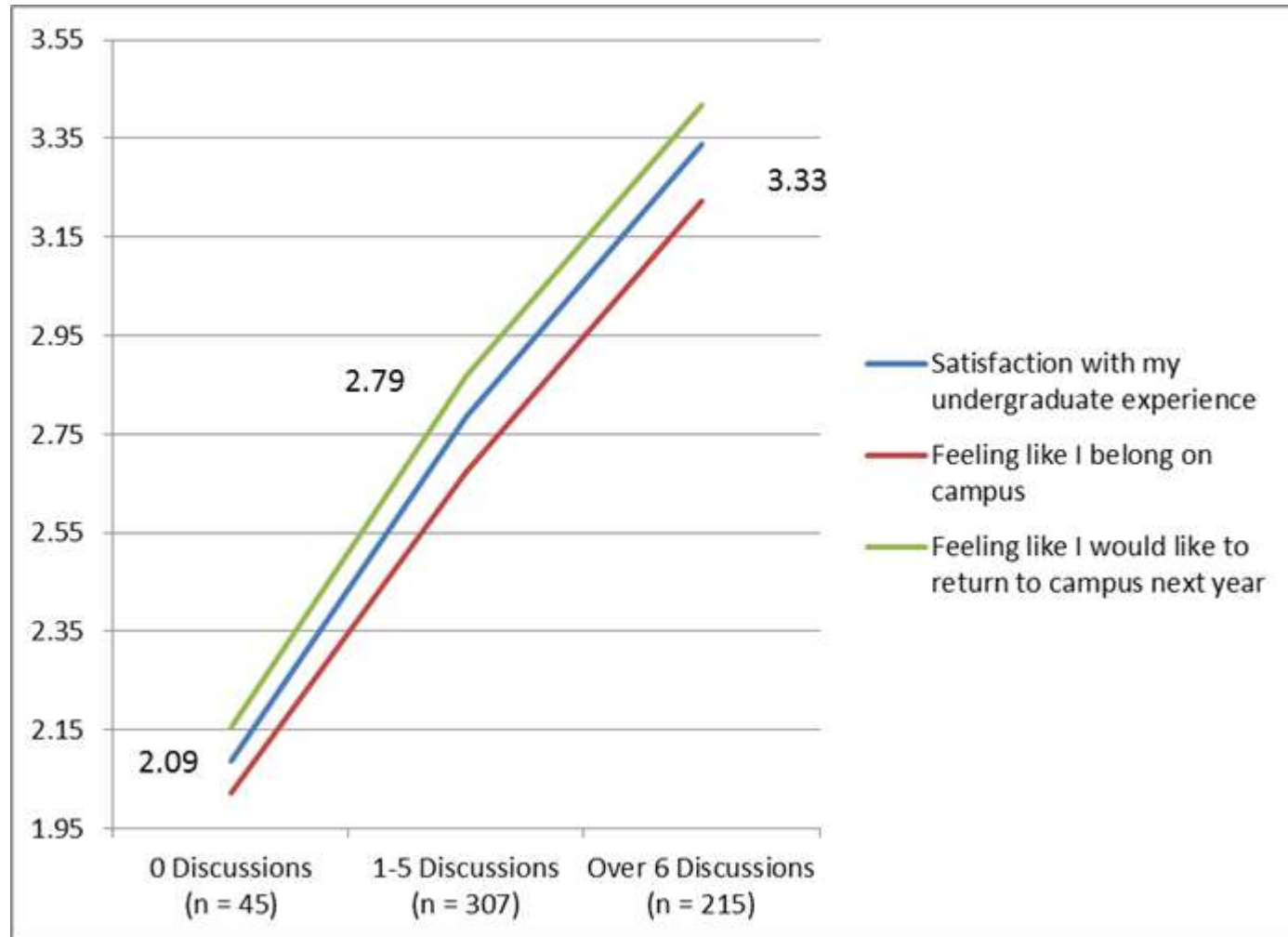
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Strengths at the 'U' Assessment



Strengths Discussions Matter

“I believe that knowing my Strengths and interacting with them has positively impacted me in the following areas”

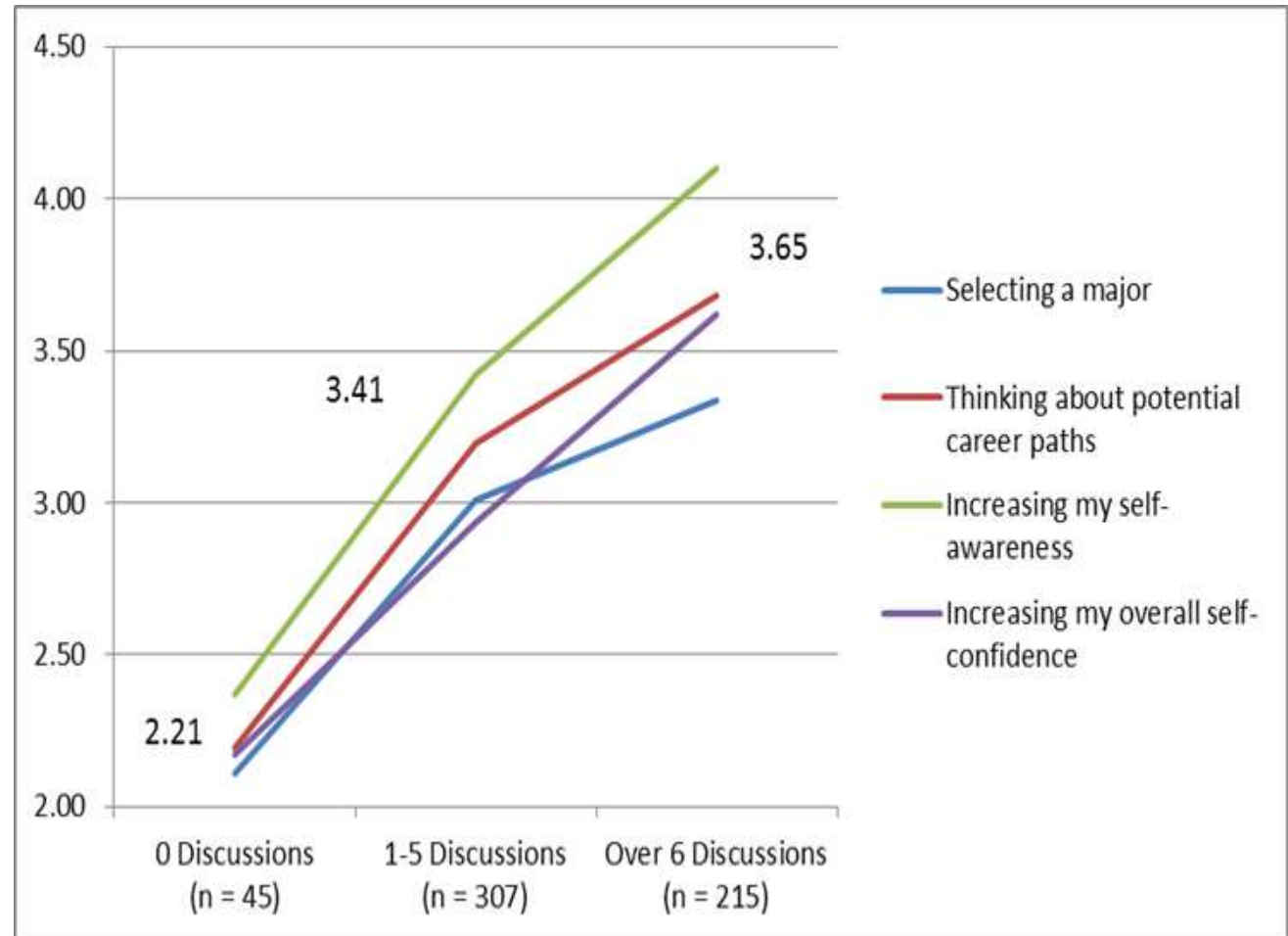


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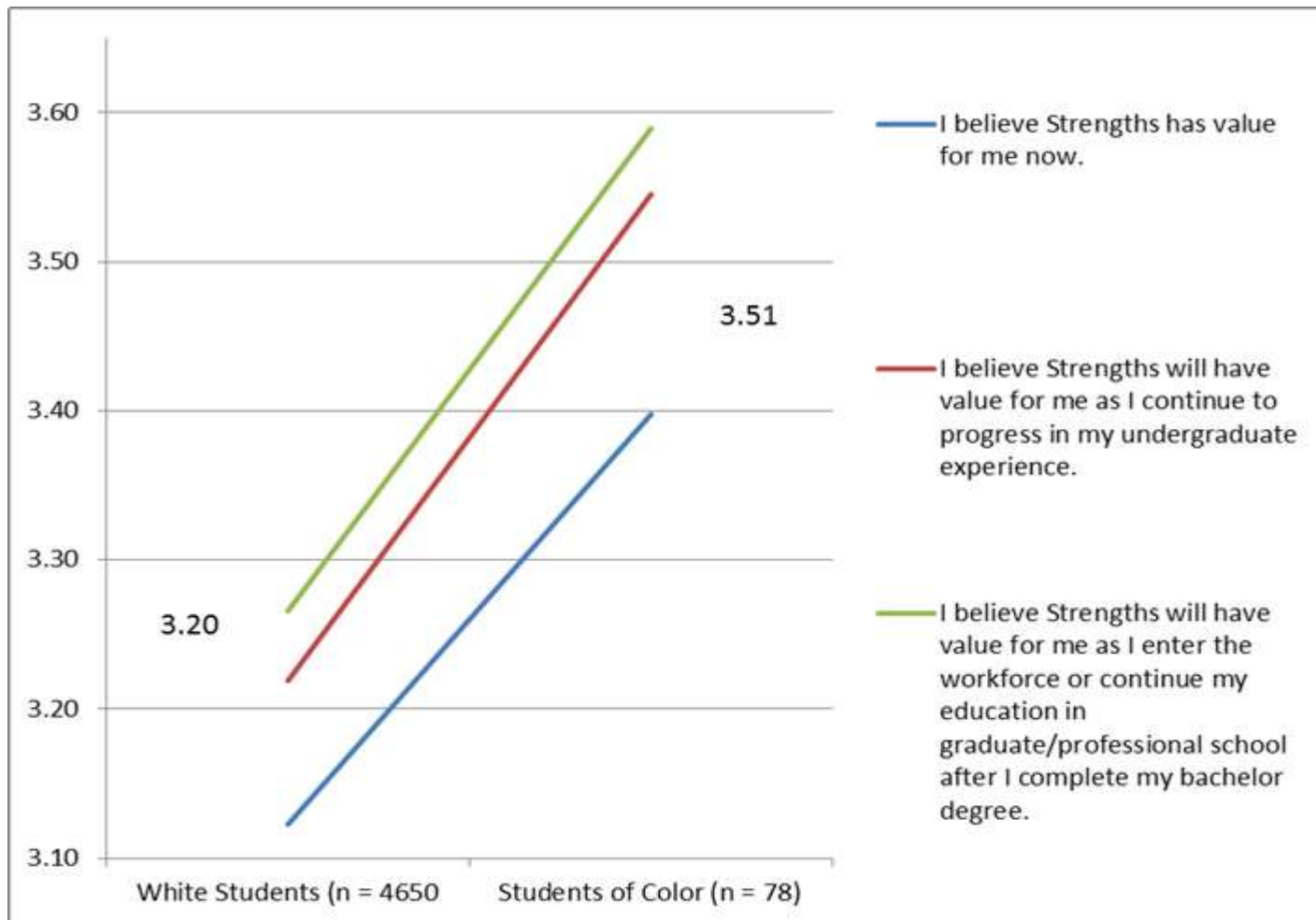


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Impact on Students of Color

“I believe that knowing my Strengths and interacting with them has positively impacted me in the following areas”



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Retention & Academic Success

RETENTION & ACADEMIC SUCCESS

First-year students' Strengths awareness has a positive, indirect effect on fall semester GPA and retention to their second year through their engagement, hope, and academic self-efficacy.



Figure 1. Structural equation model of the relationships between Strengths awareness and student success outcomes. Note. $^{**} p < .01$, $^{***} p < .001$. Data from class of 2015, $n = 1,496$. The full effect decomposition is located in Appendix D.

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Insights into Retention & GPA

| | Disagree & Strongly Disagree | Agree & Strongly Agree |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| I can name my top five Strengths | 92.3% (336 retained out of 364) | 95.2% (819 retained out of 860) |
| I believe Strengths has value for me now | 93.4% (152 retained out of 162) | 99.9% (266 retained out of 268) |
| I can name my top five Strengths | 3.30 (n = 148, sd = .55) | 3.42 (n = 365, sd = .49) |
| I know how to apply my Strengths to achieve academic success | 3.33 (n = 120, sd = .32) | 3.42 (n = 327, sd = .47) |

Questions, Comments

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