

ASSESSING
GLOBAL
LEARNING

Intercultural, Civic Engagement,
and Critical Thinking Outcomes

WESTMONT
COLLEGE

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

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This institutional report was written by Nora Pillard Reynolds and Eric Hartman, as a component of a larger Global Engagement Survey (GES) research project coordinated through globalsl.org.

The Global Engagement Survey (GES) is a multi-institutional effort to share tools and analysis, while advancing research and understanding, regarding global learning and high impact practices.

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“I've learned a lot about social identity at Westmont. I've come to see how my experience and background has informed my perspective and way of thinking. I'm learning how unique each person's thinking is but also how we are all socialized in one way or another. It's important to find out what things have been socialized and to take a step away and determine if I agree with what I've been taught based on my morals and faith.”

The Global Engagement Survey

Critical Thinking, Intercultural Learning, and Global¹ Civic Engagement

Drawing on several established surveys² that examine growth in intercultural learning, global civic engagement, and critical thinking, the Global Engagement Survey (GES) integrates the strongest components of each to track student learning in these areas. In addition to drawing on the strengths of existing scales, it adds opportunities for paragraph-length reflections for evidence of behavioral choices and demonstrable student learning that support self-report assertions.

The GES was developed to address several specific challenges:

- While intercultural learning and civic engagement scholars have made significant strides in tracking student development in these areas, they have rarely integrated their insights³.
- When scholars have integrated the insights of these separate fields, they have called for more multi-institutional research, ideally with control populations, with attention to the relationships among program factors, populations, and specified learning outcomes⁴.
- Numerous institutional representatives have expressed interest in gaining access to a survey tool of this kind that would permit them to understand their own programs in comparison with other institutions.

During the summer of 2014 ten institutions cooperated to pilot the Global Engagement Survey in respect to thirty different high impact programs⁵ taking place in the United States and abroad. Among other educational innovations, high impact programs include traditional study

¹ Recognizing the conceptualizations of “global” advanced by political theorists (Nussbaum, 1997), international education scholars (Reilly & Senders, 2009), service-learning scholars (Hartman & Kiely, 2014), and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (Musil, 2006), we consider both domestic and international civic outcomes.

² To develop the Global Engagement Scale researchers reviewed and were influenced by Bennett’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (1993), Braskamp’s Global Perspectives Inventory (2014), Shealy’s Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory (2010), Morais and Ogden’s Global Citizenship Scale (2011), Lough, McBride, and Sherraden’s International Volunteer Impacts Survey (2009), and the American Association of Colleges and Universities’ Global Learning Initiative (Hovland, 2014).

³ See: Bringle, R., Hatcher, J. & Jones, S. (2011). *International service learning: Conceptual frameworks and research*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.

⁴ See: Morais & Ogden (2011) and Sherraden, Lough, & Bopp (2013)

⁵ See: Kuh (2008)

Westmont Participation

Westmont students participated in the Emmaus Road Program and the Off-campus Program.

The **Emmaus Road Program** is a global service learning experience. In the program, undergraduate students complete either an internship or volunteer experience abroad to earn one credit. The program lasts for four – eight weeks, includes coursework before and after the experience, and takes place in 15 different countries.

The **Off-campus Program** is a traditional four week faculty-led study abroad experience in which students earn eight credits.

Survey completion rates among Westmont participants:

Pre-survey completed	64
Post-surveys completed	45
Total matched cases	28
- Emmaus Road	22
- Off-campus	6



abroad experiences, domestic service-learning programs, and global service-learning programs, all of which are represented among the thirty programs in the dataset for the first year. Program factors were tracked across twelve different indicators, such as whether programs were integrated with the academic curriculum and, if so, for how many credits.

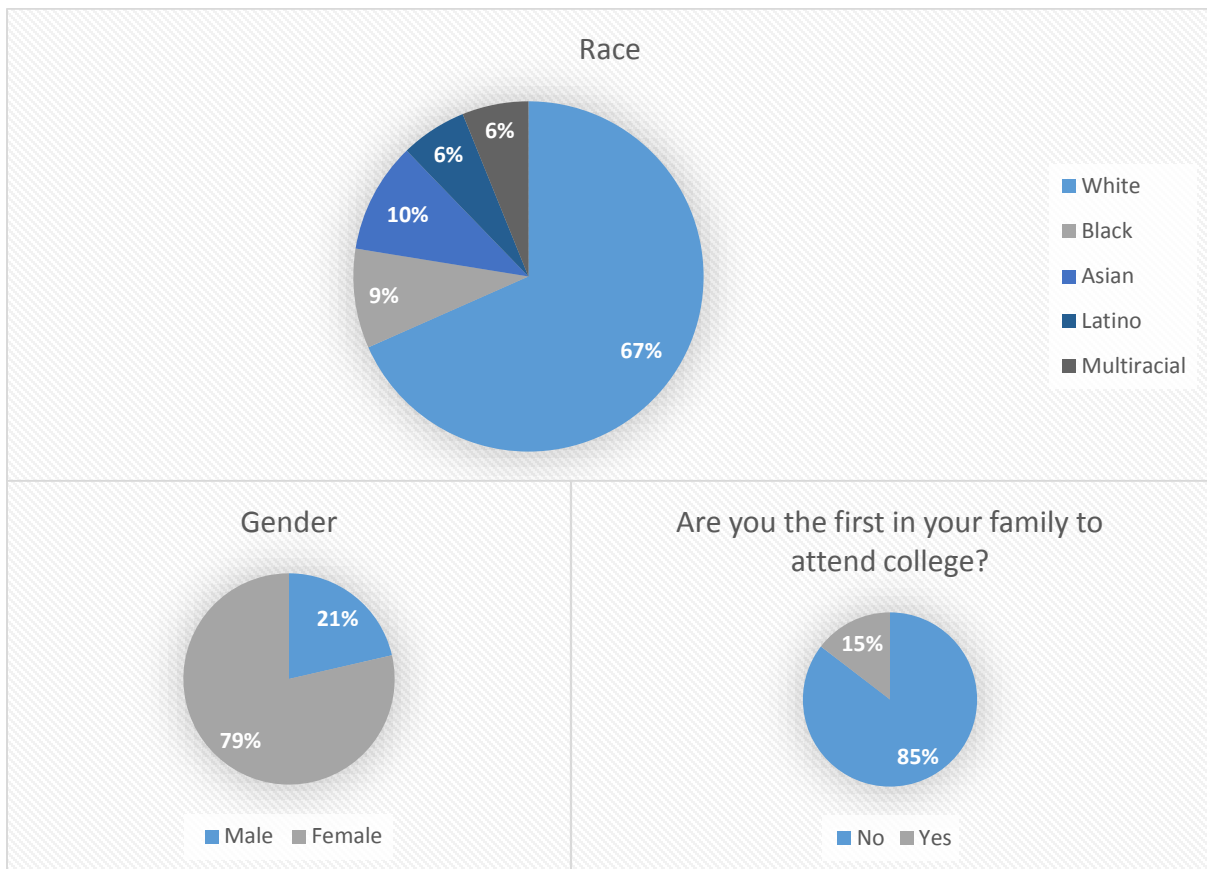
Institutional participants were secular and faith-based, public and private, liberal arts and Research 1. While more than 500 students participated in the thirty programs included in the GES, slightly more than 100 were matched through their completion of the pre- and post-experience survey. The survey includes 46 closed questions (strongly agree to strongly disagree), along with 9 opportunities for open-ended sharing.

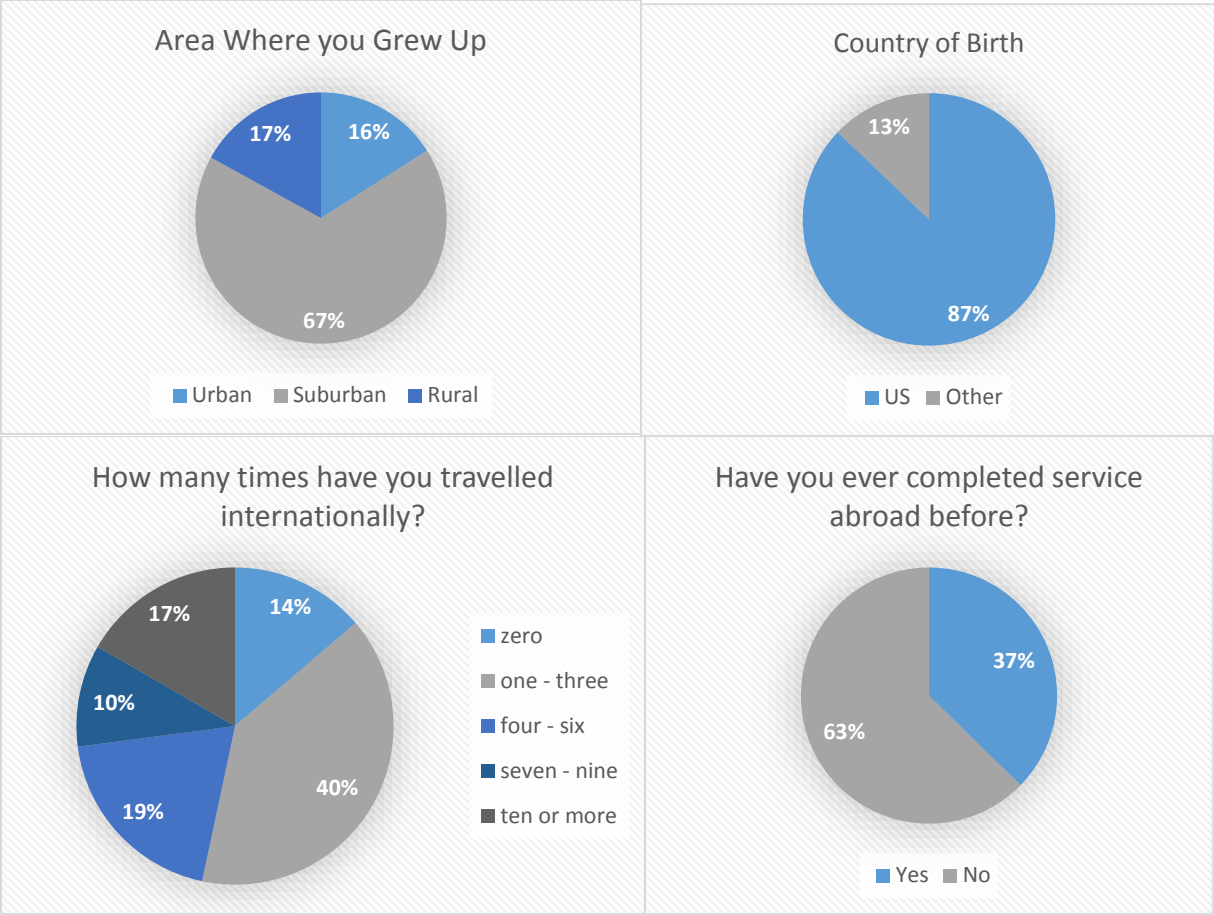
In the pages that follow we share a baseline review of programs at your institution. This report is confidential and is shared with the hope that it facilitates stakeholder conversation and continuous improvement. Each institution's participation also supports broad, anonymous data gathering for the field as a whole.

Study Participants

The study participants represented the following institutions: Cornell University, Duke University, Kansas State University, Morehead State University, Northwestern University, St. Joseph’s College of New York, The State University of New York – Binghamton, University of Central Missouri, University of Kentucky, West Virginia University, and Westmont College.

The overall study participants were primarily white/ Caucasian, female, born in the U.S., and from a suburban area. The majority of students were not the first in their family to attend college and most had some prior international travel experience. The sample offered greater variation in terms of experience doing service abroad. The following charts provide an overview of the **242 study participants** who completed the pre-survey, the post-survey, or both.

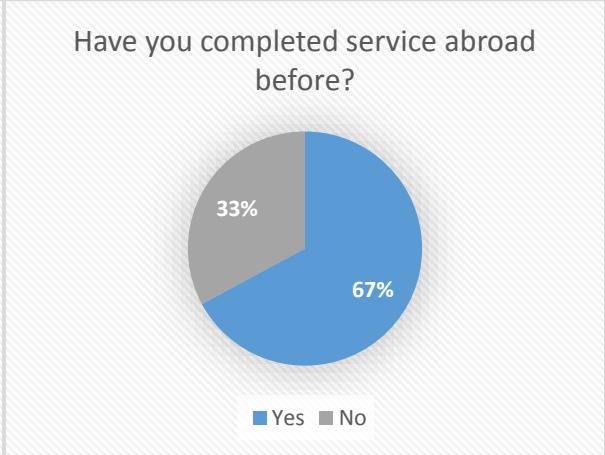
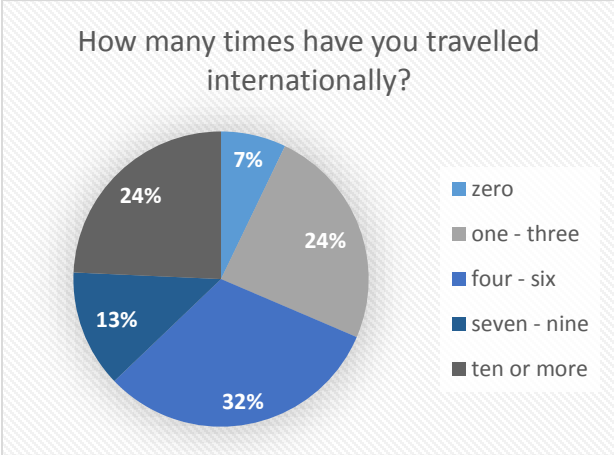
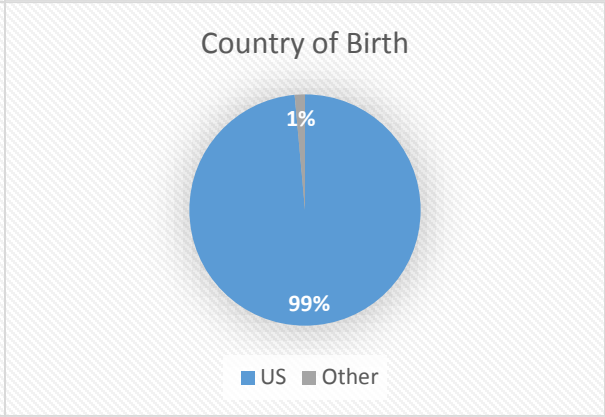
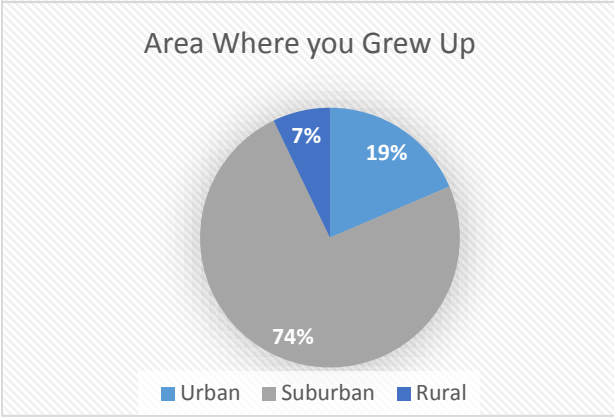
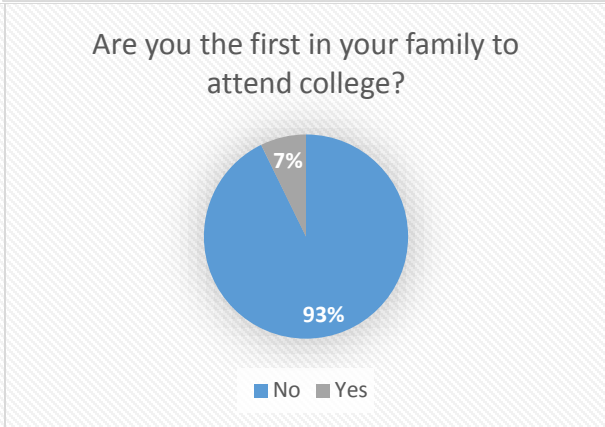
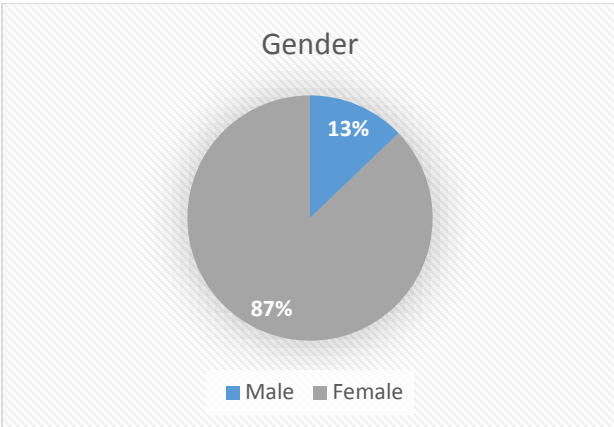
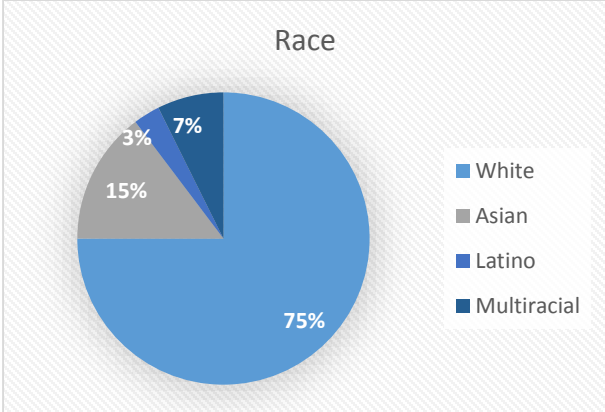




Westmont Participants

The **70 study participants from Westmont** were similar to the entire sample. Westmont participants were predominantly White/ Caucasian, female, born in the U.S., and from a suburban area. Compared to the overall sample, Westmont participants were more heavily White/ Caucasian, female, and from suburban areas. Similar to the overall sample, Westmont participants reported previous international travel; however, many more Westmont participants had previous service experience abroad than the entire sample. Overall, 37% of participants reported international service experiences, while 67% of the Westmont participants reported the same. The charts below provide a visual summary of the background of the 70 Westmont participants who completed the pre-survey, the post-survey, or both.

Westmont College Participants



Survey Overview

The data consisted of participant background information, program factors (see Addendum 1), and both closed (37 items) and open-ended questions (9 items). The table below provides a breakdown of the items and the competencies assessed.

Competency	Closed	Open-ended
Intercultural competence	10	2
Self-awareness	3	
Global knowledge	3	
Involvement in civic organizations	9	4
Political voice	8	
Global civic activism	3	
Critical thinking	10	3

The survey completion rates for this pilot year are represented as follows:

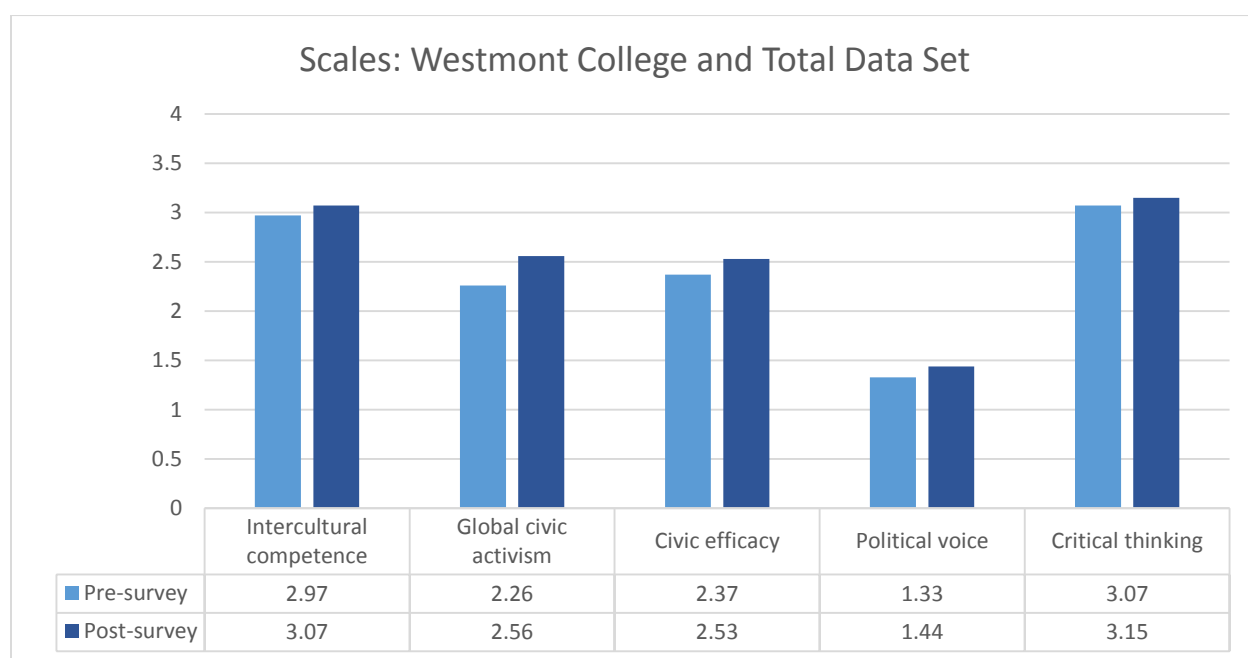


The survey completion rates did influence the viability of specific statistical analyses; however some tentative conclusions may be drawn. Further, we expect improved completion rates in the coming years that will enable us to utilize additional analyses. The background characteristics for the overall sample (n=242) and for Westmont College (n=70) represent the sample of all participants who completed a survey. For the statistical analyses that follow, only the sample of matched cases (n=102) was utilized to examine significant difference between the pre- and post-surveys. For all items that differed significantly between the pre- and post-survey, we provide additional tables so you can explore your institution’s mean scores in comparison to the overall sample. Please note, the small sample size of matched cases (n= 28) from your institution only permits descriptive consideration of these patterns. The institution-specific sample size is too small to claim statistical significance. Survey questions that were not statistically significant are included in Addendum 2.

The survey overview describes initial findings related to the scales and individual items for the overall matched sample (n=102). All 46 closed survey items asked participants to respond with the following options: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. After discussing the initial findings for the whole sample, we provide some institution specific data for your consideration.

Findings: Scales

In the survey results, the three scales that showed significant difference from the pre-survey to post-survey were: intercultural competence ($\alpha = .71$), global civic activism ($\alpha = .70$), and civic efficacy ($\alpha = .78$). The scales for political voice ($\alpha = .87$) and critical thinking ($\alpha = .82$) did hold together well; however, those scales did not show significant difference between the pre- and post-surveys. The participants ($n=102$) reported increases between the pre-survey and the post-survey in intercultural competence, global civic activism, and civic efficacy. Higher average scores indicate greater personal sense of capacity in each area.

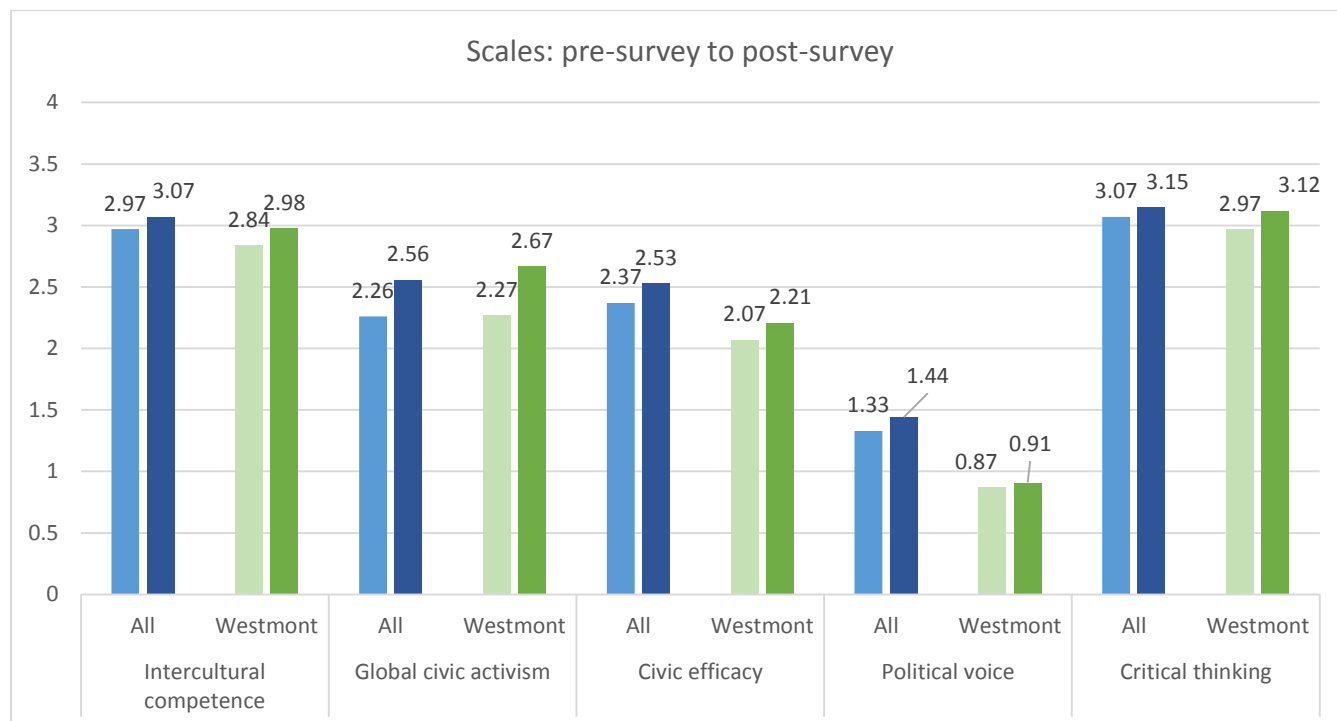


The intercultural competence scale is composed of seven items, the global civic activism has three items, the civic efficacy scale included six items, the political voice scale has six items, and the critical thinking scale includes four items. Higher scores on individual items indicate stronger agreement with each statement (strongly agree = 4; strongly disagree = 0).

<p>Intercultural Competence $\alpha = .71$</p>	<p>I easily adapt my plans or ways of doing things in response to changing circumstances.</p> <p>I have a hard time working with people who are different from me. (inverted)</p> <p>I am very flexible in my thinking and ideas.</p> <p>I can easily resolve misunderstandings with people from other cultures.</p> <p>I am very willing to try new things.</p> <p>I am very comfortable talking about diversity with people of different cultures.</p> <p>I have a very strong appreciation of other nations, cultures, and customs.</p>
<p>Global civic Activism $\alpha = .70$</p>	<p>If at all possible, I will always buy fair-trade or locally grown products and brands.</p> <p>I will deliberately buy brands and products that are known to be good stewards of marginalized people and places.</p> <p>I will boycott brands or products that are known to harm marginalized global people and places.</p>
<p>Civic Efficacy $\alpha = .78$</p>	<p>I know how to develop a plan to help mitigate an environmental or social problem.</p> <p>I know several ways in which I can make a difference on some of society's most worrisome problems.</p> <p>I am able to get other people to care about social or environmental problems that concern me.</p> <p>I am informed of current issues that impact international relationships.</p> <p>I feel comfortable expressing my views regarding a pressing social or environmental problem in front of a group of people.</p> <p>I am able to write an opinion letter to a local media source expressing my concerns over social inequalities and policy issues.</p>
<p>Political voice $\alpha = .87$</p>	<p>Over the next 6 months, I will contact a newspaper or radio to express my concerns about international environmental, social, or political problems.</p> <p>Over the next 6 months, I will contact a newspaper or radio to express my concerns about domestic environmental, social, or political problems.</p> <p>Over the next 6 months, I will express my views about international politics on a website, blog, or chat room.</p> <p>Over the next 6 months, I will express my views about domestic politics on a website, blog, or chat room.</p> <p>Over the next 6 months, I will contact or visit someone in government to seek public action on international issues and concerns.</p> <p>Over the next 6 months, I will contact or visit someone in government to seek public action on domestic issues and concerns.</p>
<p>Critical thinking $\alpha = .82$</p>	<p>I really enjoy analyzing the reason or causes for people's behavior.</p> <p>I think a lot about the influence that society has on other people.</p> <p>I believe it is important to analyze and understand our own thinking processes.</p> <p>I think a lot about the influence that society has on my own behavior.</p>

Findings: Westmont College

Westmont students' patterns generally paralleled the patterns of positive outcomes in the expected direction in the dataset as a whole. These patterns suggest Westmont students enrolled in the off-campus study and Emmaus road programs deepened in intercultural competence, global civic engagement, and critical thinking as typically intended by global learning programs. There were, however, also patterns specific to Westmont.

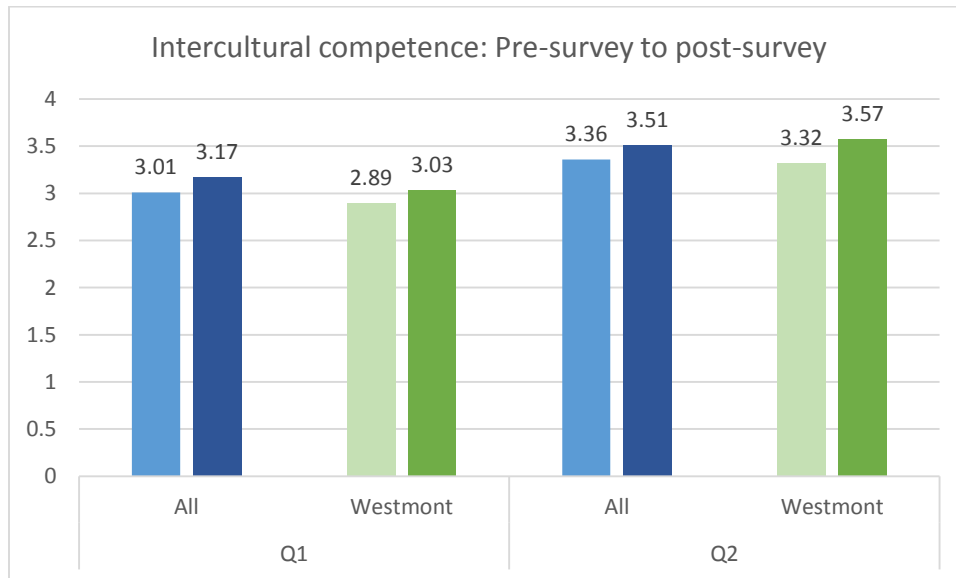


Westmont students' responses in the pre-survey focused heavily on their coursework experiences, while their responses in the post-survey shifted to incorporate many examples from their experiences in the Global Education summer programs. When questions focused specifically on dominant cultural assumptions and how they privilege some groups and marginalize others, students credited their international immersion experiences with increased awareness.

By traveling abroad, I was better able to understand these forces by seeing them firsthand and speaking to those who experienced these forces first hand.

We discussed this a lot on my trip this summer. We would have conversations with Americans and locals about the assumptions they have about Americans and the assumptions we had about them, and how these assumptions create groups of people.

*I've seen that stereotypes created by dominant cultures have created "lenses" in which people alter the way they treat or view others. **When I went to Taiwan and Korea,** because of the way the US is portrayed in the media etc., a lot of people expected that we dressed immodestly, spoke loudly, and acted crazily in general.*

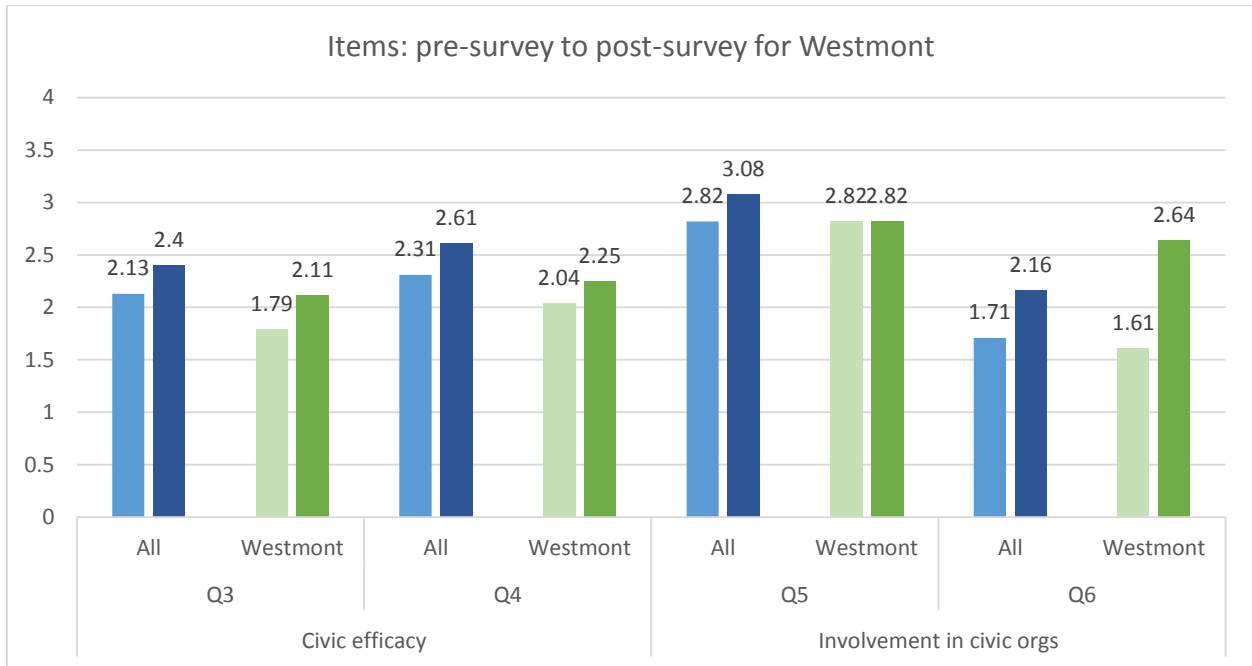


Intercultural learning	Q1	Whatever the situation, I almost always look at it from many points of view.
	Q2	I have very strong appreciation of other nations, cultures, and customs.

Intercultural understanding and experiential learning emerged as themes through several different survey reflections, a few of which are included here:

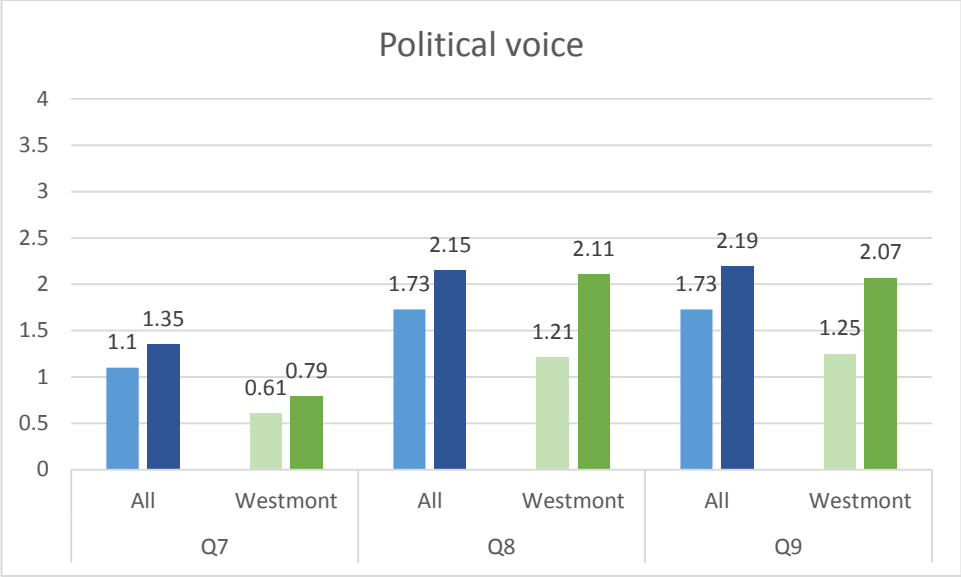
- As a white woman growing up in a middle class family with two parents who are still married, I think **it is easy to not be aware of my own habits of thinking.** The professors at Westmont and opportunities to travel abroad allow the majority of Westmont students who have grown up similarly, to seek out diversity and become aware of adversity in other cultures.
- In Taiwan and South Korea, my host families bent over backwards to provide for each and every one of my needs thoroughly. **I would analyze why these people, who didn't have much money to begin with, would spend and give so much just to honor me, especially since I would not think to give that much to a foreigner in my household.**

Westmont students' civic efficacy and involvement in civic organizations generally paralleled the overall sample.



Global civic engagement	Q3	I know several ways in which I can make a difference on some of society's most worrisome problems.
	Q4	I am informed of current issues that impact international relationships.
	Q5	Over the next 6 months, I plan to do volunteer work to help individuals and communities domestically.
	Q6	Over the next 6 months, I will pay a membership or make a cash donation to an international organization.

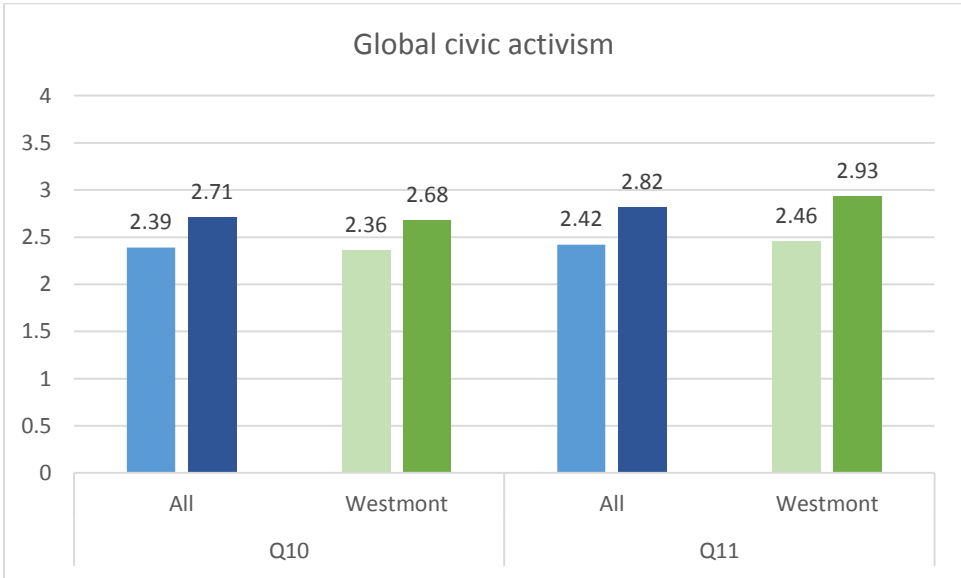
Westmont student patterns; however, did not always parallel the sample. As indicated by the pattern exhibited in respect to Question 7 in the chart below, Westmont students seem less likely to contact a government representative about an international issue than other students in the sample. While Question 7 exhibited the most marked departure from the pattern, across the civic engagement scale, Westmont students in this small sample seem generally less likely to engage civically than is the case for students from other institutions in this sample. They do seem more prone to give financially to address an issue (Q6). Again, the sample sizes here permit descriptive consideration, but should not be considered statistically significant findings.



Q7 Over the next 6 months, I will contact or visit someone in government to seek public action on international issues and concerns.

Q8 Over the next 6 months, I will participate in a campus forum, live music or theater performance or other event where young people express their views about international problems.

Q9 Over the next 6 months, I will participate in a campus forum, live music or theater performance or other event where young people express their views about domestic problems.

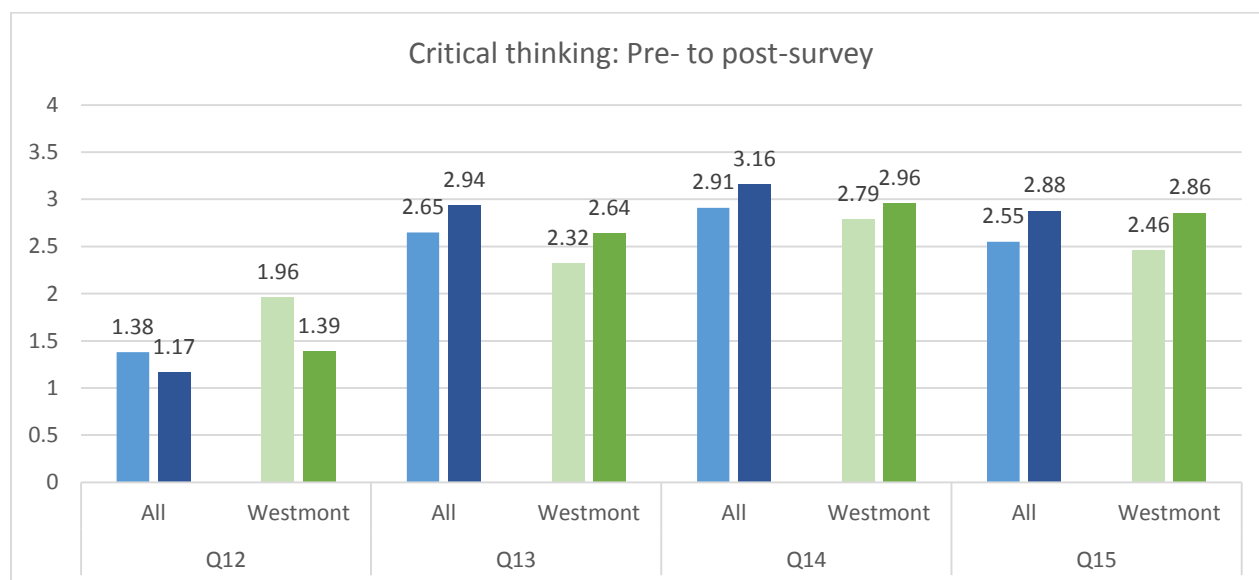


Q10 If at all possible, I will always buy fair-trade or locally grown products and brands.

Q11 I will deliberately buy brands and products that are known to be good stewards or marginalized people and places.

Westmont student reflections often integrated evidence of intercultural learning with critical thinking to consider how structural experiences and life histories may affect others' outlooks and beliefs:

- *While we were abroad for Emmaus Road we worked with women who were refugees, feeding them lunch and taking care of their kids. At first it seemed as if they weren't gracious and I found that frustrating. But then at the same time, **they have been stuck in the same place of uncertainty for years as a refugee**, with no resources and no hope for change, why would they be extremely grateful to one woman they don't even know? I didn't receive the gratefulness I expected because in the grand scheme of things, a lunch is nothing.*
- *Over the summer I worked with children, mostly orphaned, who came from hard backgrounds. Many of them had suffered physical, psychological, and emotional abuse in their prior homes. Unfortunately, this kind of treatment left them with lasting effects. I would notice the ways in which their behavior and interpersonal interactions with others were both positively and negatively affected by their past. **Once I heard their stories, I was easier to understand why they thought and acted the way that they did.***



Critical thinking	Q12	I spend very little time thinking about international issues.
	Q13	I enjoy talking with other people about the reasons for and possible solutions to poverty.
	Q14	I often think about the amount of power people have in different segments of society.
	Q15	I have become increasingly aware of the ways in which dominant cultural assumptions create in-groups and out-groups around the world, privileging some populations and marginalizing others.

Summary and Distinctive Character

Westmont College students, like the overall sample of students exposed to high impact programming practices here, seem to exhibit positive growth in intercultural learning, civic engagement, and critical thinking capacities through their immersive summer learning, service, and abroad experiences. Westmont students seem somewhat less civically engaged than other students, but more willing to give financially. The small sample size of students in the pilot evaluation this year prevents us from saying anything conclusive about these findings. Yet they are suggestive.

While we acknowledge the limitations of the available data, it is also clear that the qualitative survey responses suggest growth in intercultural competence and critical thinking through Westmont College coursework and experiential learning. Additionally, qualitative responses point strongly toward the specific character of Westmont as a Christian institution. When asked about the most important thing they learned during their summer experience, a number of Westmont students described direct connections to their faith.

- *God doesn't want me to go to another country to change their ways or "make their lives better"; He simply asks that we love the people we come in contact with and take the time to get to know them personally.*
- *For my May-term class, I had to read the Koran, and in reading this and then going on an Emmaus road trip, I felt more aware of the similarities between different faiths and the way we can bond over the similarities and through that discuss the differences.*
- *Despite differences in culture, education, living, etc., God is still the same God everywhere in the world, and He loves everyone the same and He can do the same work within everyone.*

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Addendum 1: Program Factors

Students	All undergraduate undergraduate & graduate 3 rd & 4 th year
Credits	1 – 6 credits
Required/ elective	Required Not required but highly encouraged Several required, at least ½ Elective To complete minor
Language	On-campus program English Not English, requires local language/ advanced/ intermediate / rudimentary language skills Not English, no language requirement
SES	Higher SES than community Some overlap, mostly higher than community Same SES Some overlap, mostly lower SES than community
Leader	From host community & ongoing relationships Same as community Relationships over years visited at least twice once before First time to host community
Location	US/ home community US/ extended stay away from campus Pre & post in US/ immersion outside US International students come to US Entire exp. outside US
Selection	Apply, but rarely rejected less than 75% less than 50% Admitted if good academic standing
Duration	1 -10 weeks
Intervention	Summer Summer, coursework before & after Summer, coursework before one course during semester
Components of community engagement	There is no community engagement. This is a conventional, on-campus program. Students experience structured community presentations from local leaders & speakers. Students visit local sites of historic and cultural importance. Students are engaged in direct service activities in the community (e.g. tutoring, providing physical service). Students are engaged in cooperative problem-solving with community partners (e.g. developing programs, policies, or research together). Students cooperate with community partners to advance advocacy and change projects intended to outlast program length. Students stay in home-stays with host community families. Students stay in student housing with host community peers. Students stay independently in apartments or other housing that is part of the fabric of the host community.
Learning goals	Disciplinary learning, including specific professional skill development Development of intercultural competence Domestic civic skills Global civic skills Development of awareness of positionality, including deeper understanding of power and privilege Development of critical thinking

Addendum 2:

Questions that Did Not Attain Statistical Significance in this Sample

- I easily adapt my plans or ways of doing things in response to changing circumstances.
- I have a hard time working with people who are different from me.
- I have a hard time understanding the feelings of people from other cultures well.
- I am very flexible in my thinking and ideas.
- I can easily resolve misunderstandings with people from other cultures.
- I am very willing to try new things.
- I am very comfortable talking about diversity with people of different cultures.
- I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.
- I know how to develop a plan to help mitigate an environmental or social problem.
- I am able to get other people to care about social or environmental problems that concern me.
- I feel comfortable expressing my views regarding a pressing social or environmental problem in front of a group of people.
- I know several ways in which I can make a difference on some of society's most worrisome problems.
- I am able to get other people to care about social or environmental problems that concern me.
- I feel comfortable expressing my views regarding a pressing social or environmental problem in front of a group of people.
- I am able to write an opinion letter to a local media source expressing my concerns over social inequalities and policy issues.
- Over the next 6 months, I plan to do volunteer work to help individuals and communities abroad.
- Over the next 6 months, I will participate in a walk, dance, run, or bike ride to address a social or environmental issue.
- Over the next 6 months, I plan to be involved with a humanitarian organization or project with an international focus.
- Over the next 6 months, I plan to be involved with a humanitarian organization or project with a domestic focus.
- Over the next 6 months, I plan to get involved with an environmental organization or project with an international focus.
- Over the next 6 months, I plan to get involved with an environmental organization or project with a domestic focus.
- Over the next 6 months, I will pay a membership or make a cash donation to a domestic organization with a humanitarian focus.
- Over the next 6 months, I will contact a newspaper or radio to express my concerns about international environmental, social, or political problems.
- Over the next 6 months, I will contact a newspaper or radio to express my concerns about domestic environmental, social, or political problems.
- Over the next 6 months, I will express my views about international politics on a website, blog, or chat room.
- Over the next 6 months, I will express my views about domestic politics on a website, blog, or chat room.
- Over the next 6 months, I will contact or visit someone in government to seek public action on domestic issues and concerns.
- I will boycott brands or products that are known to harm marginalized global people and places.
- I really enjoy analyzing the reason or causes for people's behavior
- I think a lot about the influence that society has on other people
- I believe it is important to analyze and understand our own thinking processes.
- I think a lot about the influence that society has on my own behavior.
- I spend a great deal of time thinking about domestic issues.
- I am interested in learning more about the causes of world poverty.