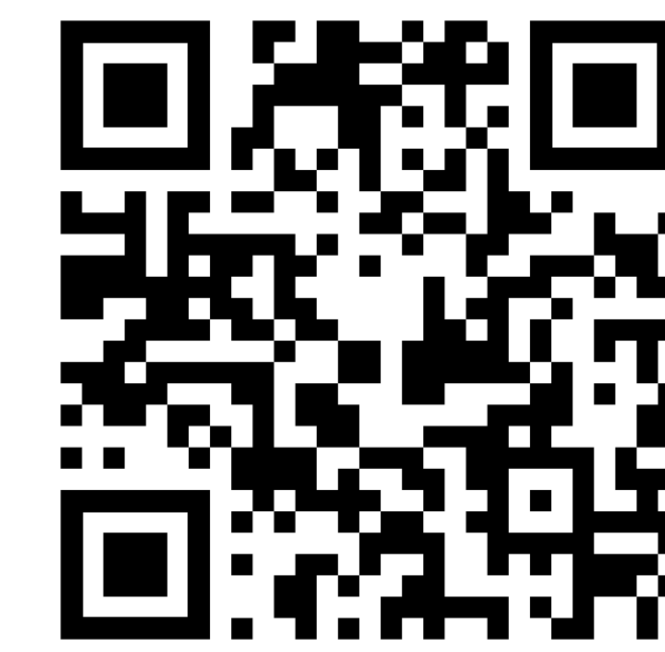


# Service Learning / Community-Engaged Learning as a High Impact Practice

Carina Sass, Dr. Juan Benitez, Mitra Baghdadi, and Dr. Sarah Taylor  
CSULB Center for Community Engagement



Scan the QR code on your mobile device to access more information on the Data Fellow's program.

1. Open your camera app on your mobile device.
2. Hold your device over the QR code so that it is clearly visible.
3. Open the website when it pops up on your screen.

## Introduction

Existing research shows that High Impact Practices (HIPs) affect student success. We seek to better understand how service learning (SL) impacts student success within the broader HIPs conversation in order to strategically align service learning with other HIPs as we seek to meet Beach 2030 priorities.

According to the literature, changes in attitudes and awareness, personal growth and effectiveness, higher academic engagement and learning, positive attitudes toward education, clearer future employment goals, increased volunteerism, resilience, and civic attitudes are predictors of student success (Smith, Sturtevant, Bullough, & Stanworth, 2019). Self-awareness, especially in examining community conditions, is also crucial. Our project builds off this literature in the context of service learning.

## Research Questions

Who enrolls in and completes service learning courses?

How is student success understood in relation to High Impact Practices such as service learning?

What are students' service learning experiences?

How does service learning contribute to an expanded understanding of student success?

## Methods

Our team is taking a Mixed Methods approach that allows us to combine institutional data with both qualitative and quantitative data collected through the Center for Community Engagement. At this time, we are using the following:

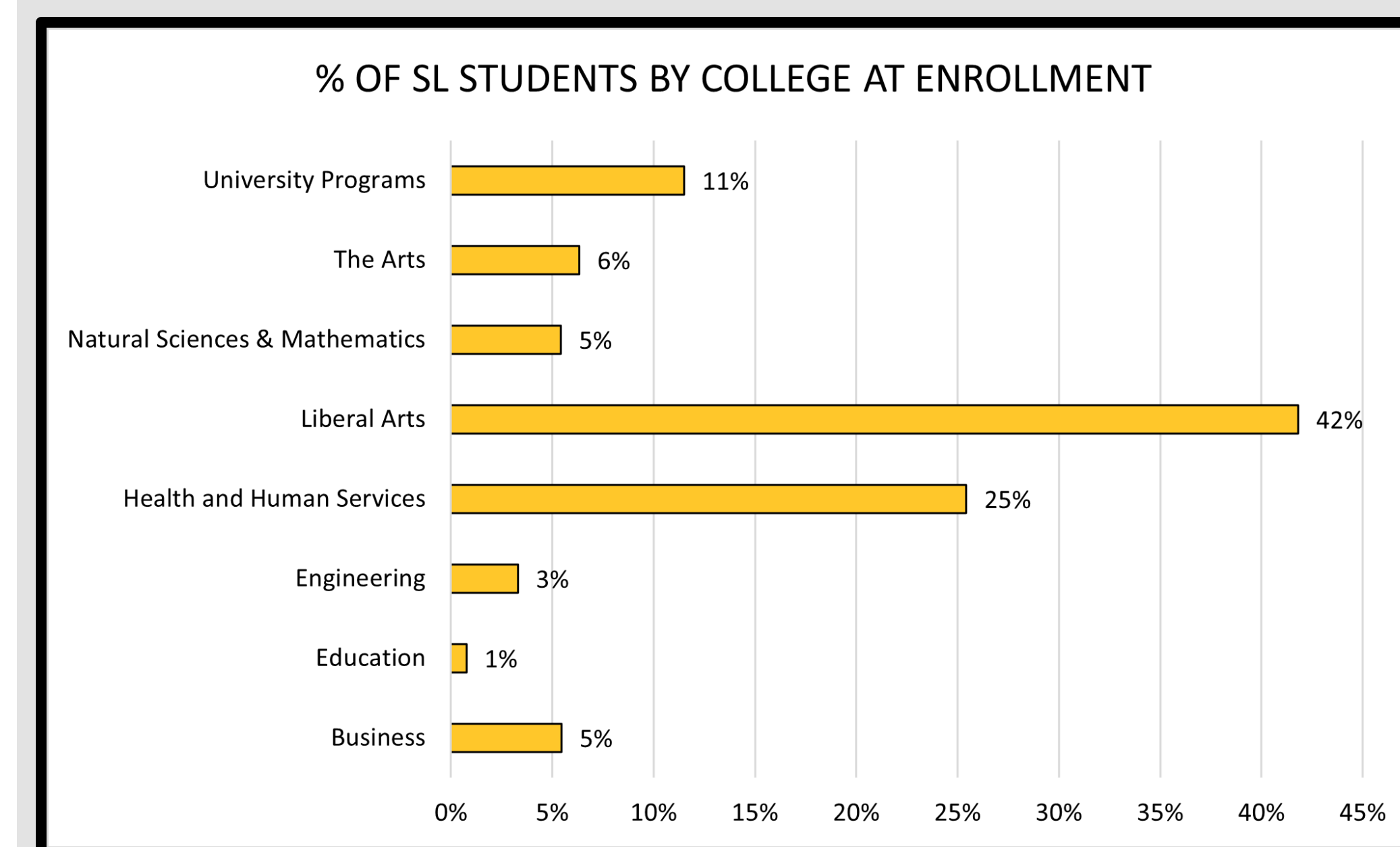
- End-of-term surveys with service learning students (Rating scales & open-ended questions)
- SSD 2.0 data (student-level and campus level by cohort)
- *S4 @ The Beach* data & *SL Pro* Data (online databases used to manage service learning activities)
- Combined SSD 2.0 and end-of term survey data

## Research Methods & Analysis

- Descriptive analyses to examine who takes SL courses at CSULB
- Qualitative content analysis (students' perspectives on SL & benefits of SL)

## Results

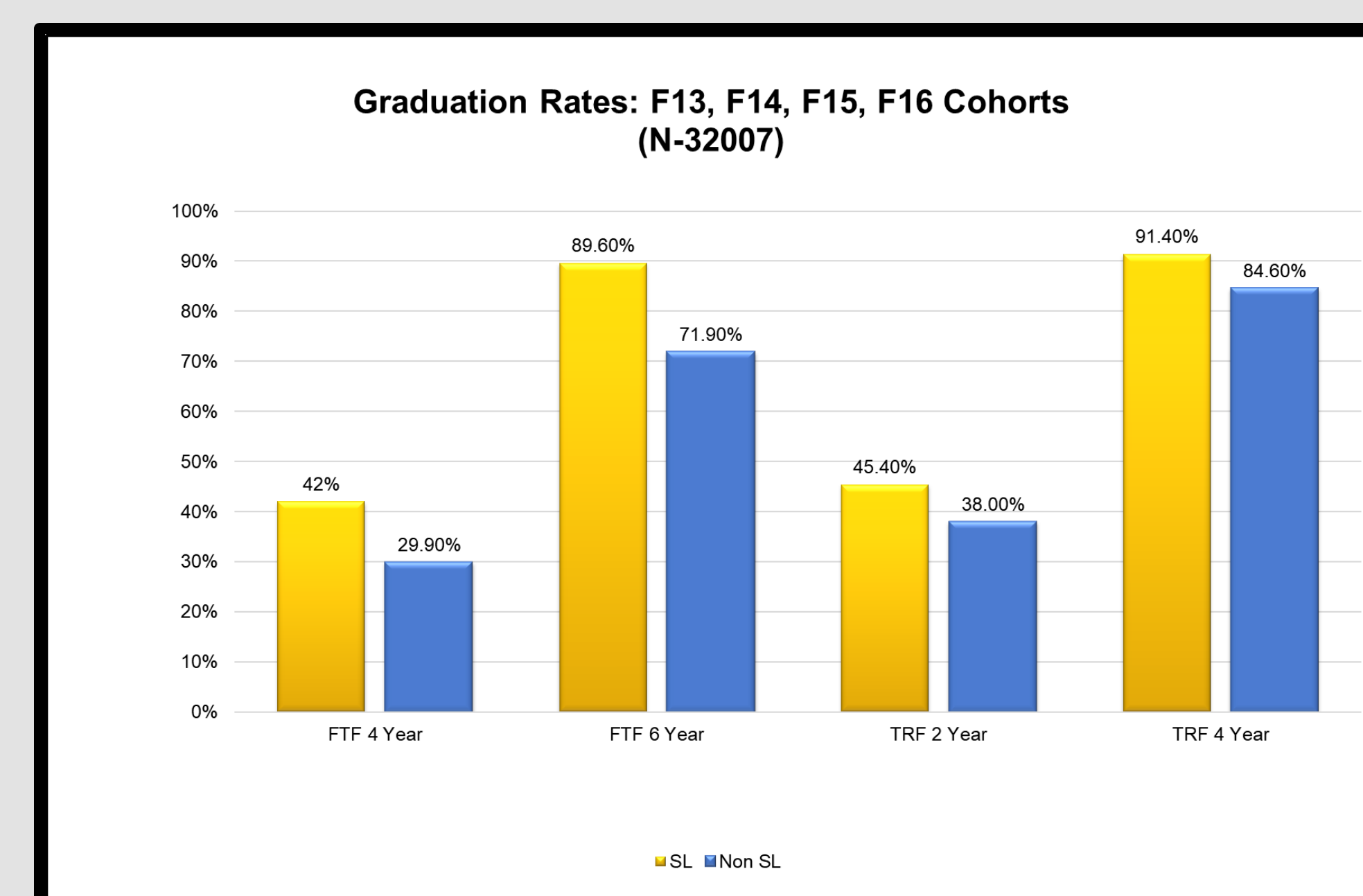
### CSULB Service Learning Students: Who are they?



Fall 13 - Fall 16 Cohorts (n=3,663)

<b>Student Type</b>	FTF	56.30%
	Transfer	43.70%
<b>Minority Status</b>	Minority	48.90%
	Non-Minority	42.00%
	Unknown	3.10%
	Visa Non-US	6.00%
<b>Pell Eligibility</b>	Pell Eligible	61.30%
	Not Pell Eligible	38.70%
<b>Sex</b>	Male	31.90%
	Female	68.10%
<b>First Generation Status</b>	First Generation	60.80%
	Not First Generation	31.50%
	Unknown	7.70%
<b>Dependent Family Income</b>	Less than \$24K	15.90%
	\$24K - \$71,999	32.30%
	\$72K or more	28.70%
	No response	23.10%

SL Students: Fall 13 - Fall 22 Cohorts  
(n=6,832)



SL Students and Non-SL Students: Fall 13 - Fall 16 Cohorts (n=32,007)

### Students' Service Learning Perceptions & Experiences



83%

- Acquired job or work-related skills through service learning

84%

- Said service learning helped them understand concepts in their class

86%

- Understand their role in the community and society after service learning

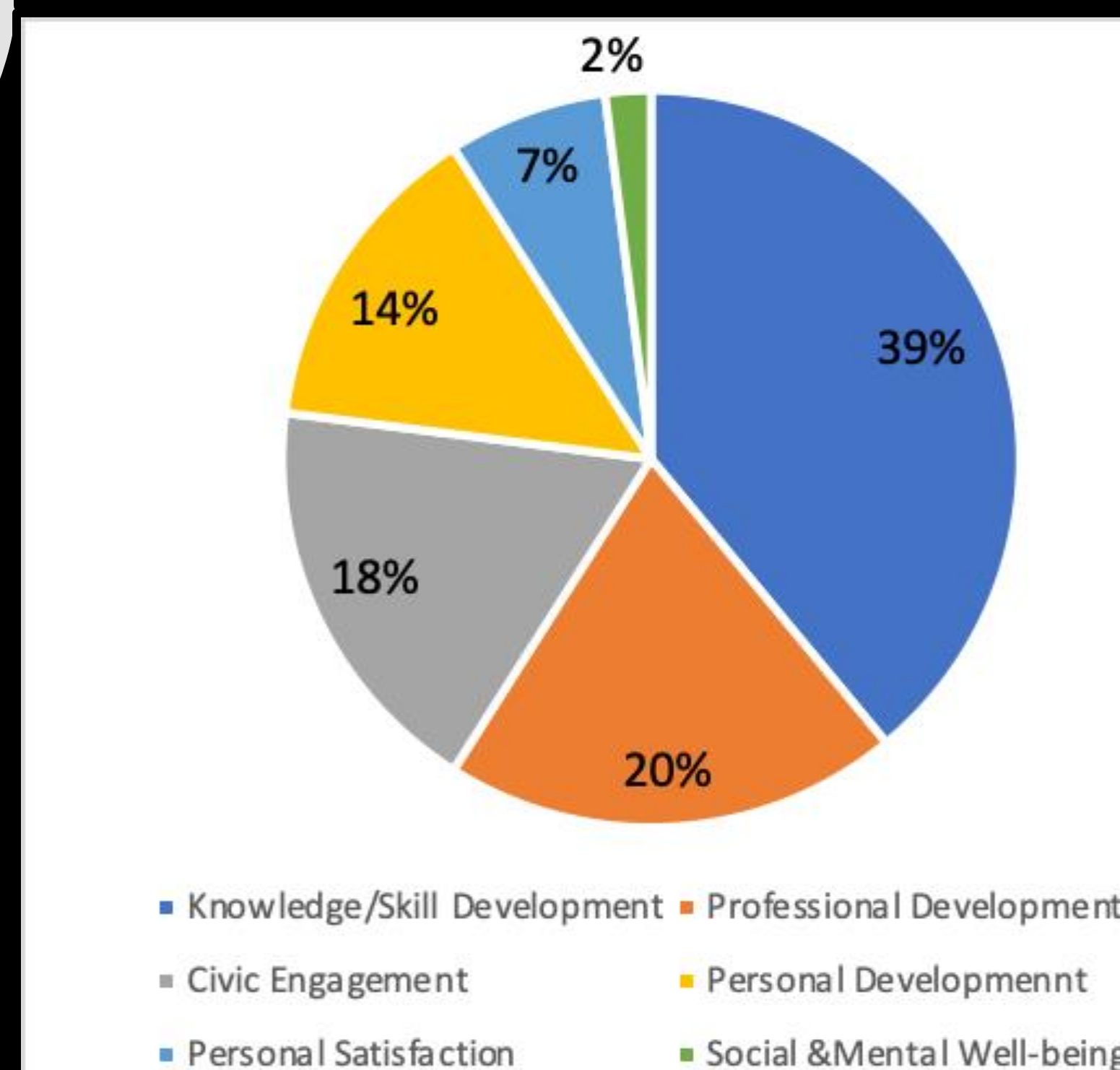
81%

- Interacted with people who differed from them by race/ethnicity, SES, political, or religious beliefs

72%

- Said service learning challenged them to think differently about the world

### Students: Main benefits of service learning



## Conclusion / Discussion

Indicators emerging from qualitative content analysis of students' perspectives on service learning have clear similarities with indicators found in the literature. Both contribute to our understanding of the benefits of SL and its impact on student success. The indicators found in the literature provide a broad framework for understanding the impact of SL on student outcomes, while our findings offer a more nuanced understanding of the benefits of SL from the perspective of students themselves.

Both sources of information show that SL can have a positive impact on student attitudes, knowledge, and skills, as well as on their personal growth and civic engagement. This reinforces the importance of SL as a high-impact teaching approach that connects theory and practice through critical reflection and community-based experiential learning, providing educators and institutions an opportunity to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of SL on student success and make informed decisions about how to best implement and assess SL programs.

## Implications for Action

- Remove barriers to participation in service learning. By knowing who are *not* enrolling in SL classes and why (e.g., SL not offered in their majors) we can develop SL classes to fill those gaps.
- Expand the definition and understandings of student success.
- Increase faculty and community partners' awareness of the benefits students gain from SL, enabling them to address these in a more intentional manner when working with SL students.
- Place SL more strategically within the broader HIPs arena and develop a HIPs scaffold to increase student access to HIPs experiences.
- Strategically build out service learning at CSULB to fulfill potential AB 1390 mandates.

## Next Steps / Future Directions

- Additional analysis to determine the degree to which service learning influences students' academic success.
- Examine how factors associated with high quality SL experiences (e.g., instructor support, relevance to course content) are associated with student success indicators Determine characteristics of existing SL courses (e.g., G.E. requirement or elective, Major requirement) and how this limits who enrolls in these courses.
- Based on initial results, review and refine research questions and/or research methods and tools.
- Continue data collection through surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups
- Continued collection and analysis of student success data from SSD 2.0 and *S4 @ The Beach* data.