PULSE Program for Service Learning
E1A Form for Assessment of the Undergraduate Core

1) Have formal learning outcomes for the department's Core courses been developed? What are they?
(What specific sets of skills and knowledge does the department expect students completing its Core courses to have acquired?)

Students completing the Theology core will be able to:
1. Engage the quest for truth and meaning that generate theological insight in Christianity and other religious traditions;
2. Explore the fundamental texts and practices that shape Christian theology;
3. Understand the dynamic relationship between religious truth-claims and their moral implications, both personal and societal;
4. Engage the various disciplinary methods required for theological reflection, including textual, historical, social, and cultural analysis; and
5. Relate theological inquiry to the enduring questions animating the broader liberal arts tradition.
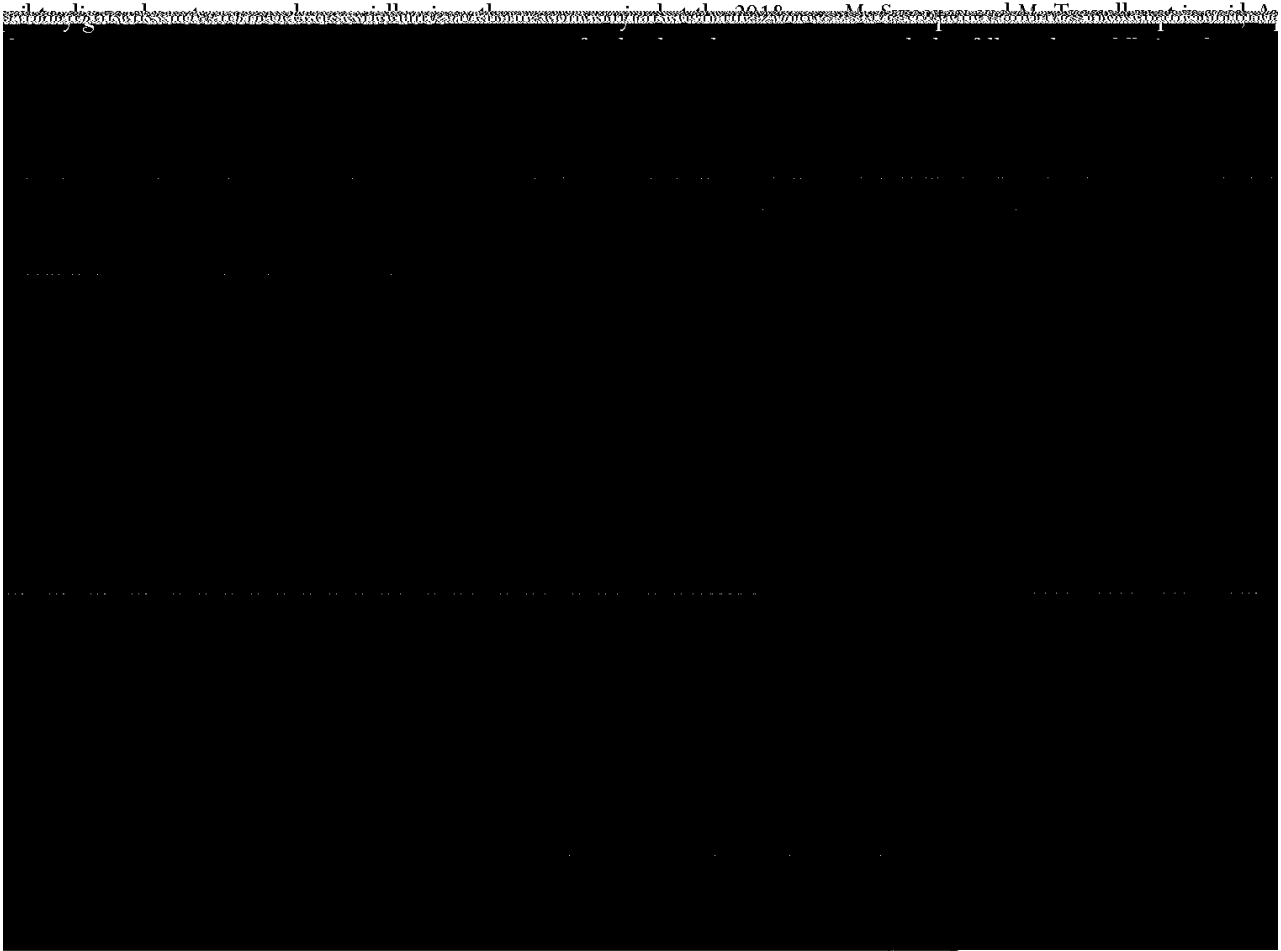
PULSE Core Goals
1. Students will have an understanding of the ways in which service and the study of philosophical and theological traditions inform each other;
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to employ an ongoing praxis methodology in which they *encounter* challenging social realities, critically *reflect* upon them in conversation with philosophical and theological traditions, and *act* with informed and critical agency;
3. Students will develop a critical understanding of intersectionality and interlocking structures of privilege and oppression, especially race, class,

B. As a faculty we developed a writing prompt that was given to students by a set date early in September, and the same prompt was given by faculty at the end of the school year.
C. Faculty were asked to submit to the PULSE office six end-of-year papers -- 2 weak, 2 middling, 2 strong – and the corresponding beginning-of-year

Scale Used

1 = Does not meet requirement

2 = Somewhat meets requirement

Method

Strong Papers

Core Assessment AY 2019-2020
Discussion regarding core assessment for AY 2018-2019 resulted in a decision to re-assess goal #3 again in AY 2019-2020 so as to enable faculty to implement any curricular changes and assess the impact of these right away (rather than having to wait to cycle through all the goals to assess impact)

The above fall prompt will be assigned to all PULSE core-level students, and the beginning-of-year papers will be due to faculty on *either* **Tuesday, September 3 (for TuTh classes)** *or* **Wednesday, September 4 (for MWF classes); the end-of-year date is** *tbd*.

APPENDICES:
Appendix 1 (p. 8-9): Michelle Sterk Barrett, *Fostering the Spiritual Development of Undergraduates through*

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics related to independent variables are reported in this section. Descriptive statistics related to the spirituality variables will be discussed in the following section analyzing the first research question.

As demonstrated in Table 10, students generally had a very strong PULSE experience. Mean responses to all of the independent variables fell between 3 and 4 indicating overall student agreement with each statement. The highest mean and lowest standard deviation was in response to whether students felt supported by their PULSE professors. It is c(w) 2 (10 (r) va) 4 (r( ) -10 ( ) - (r) v) 2 4 (e)

The problems that caused people at my placement to need social services were frequently the result of circumstances beyond their control.   271   3.52   .595

APPENDIX 2

Fostering the Spiritual Development of Undergraduates through Service

Holistic student development, the belief that education should foster the development of the whole person, is a primary mission of higher education (American Council on Education, 1937; Braskamp, Trautvetter, & Ward, 2006; Kiessling, 2010). One component of holistic student development is spiritual development (Kiessling, 2010).

Studies have found that undergraduates a ET Q q9.92cm BT 50 0Tf ( ) I 0 0589.92 cm BT 5022 cm BT 7

a pedagogy that has shown promise in facilitating the spiritual development of undergraduates as a limited number of prior studies have found a relationship between spiritual growth and service-learning participation (Astin et al., 2011a; Cherry, De Berg, & Porterfield, 2001; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Kuh & Gonyea, 2006; Lovik, 2010; Radecke, 2007; Yeh, 2010). The existing studies do not simultaneously use comprehensive measures of both spiritual growth and service-learning participation and, therefore, offer inadequate analysis of the relationship between the two. This study seeks to fill this gap and offer further understanding of how service-learning may be utilized as a pedagogical tool to foster spiritual growth within an academic context.

Understanding how to better foster spiritual development among undergraduates can provide many benefits to students, society, and higher education institutions. Prior research has established a relationship between spirituality and psychological well-being (Astin, et al., 2011b; Park & Millora, 2010), self-esteem (Astin, et al., 2011b), decreased

2) Which aspects of the service-learning experience relate to the occurrence of spiritual growth?

3) What role do "challenge" and "support" plan in the process of spiritual growth? These

research questions were addressed through an explanatory design mixed methods study

(Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) that incorporated a quantitative and qualitative strand.

The third research question is derived from the theoretical perspective of Nevitt Sanford

(1962, 1966, 1967). Sanford proposed that optimal college student development occurs when

students face an appropriate balance of challenge and support. If a student does not face enough

challenge then there is no impetus for growth. If a student is not adequately supported through

significant challenges then the possibility for healthy growth may be hindered. Sanford's theory

of challenge and support aligns with spiritual development theories proposing that spiritual

struggle is a necessary precursor to spiritual growth and empirical studies and spiritual

development theories suggesting that crisis and disequilibrium are precursors to spiritual struggle

(Cartwright, 2001;Daloz Parks, 2000; Fowler 1981, Holcomb and Nonneman, 2004; Ma, 2003;

Tisdell, 2003; Welch and Koth, 2013). It also aligns well with research indicating that students

may not grow spiritually and get stuck in maladaptive patterns of behavior without enough

support (Bryant and Astin, 2008; Faigin, 2013; Holcomb and Nonneman, 2004).

Participant Selection

Study participants were drawn from the Boston College PULSE Program, a service-

learning program that requires students to do 10-12 hours of weekly service for the full academic

year while taking an interdisciplinary philosophy and theology course entitled, Person and Social

Responsibility. Among the 361 total students in the 2012-2013 PULSE Program, 272 students

completed both the pre-survey and post-survey for a total response rate of 75%. Eleven survey

respondents whose results indicated an extremely high or low level of spirit1 1 Tf [0 0.o1BT 50 0 0 50 1347 -2 5

Interviewees were also selected to ensure variation in academic disciplines, ethnic backgrounds,

religious backgrounds, PULSE classes, and PULSE placements.

Characteristics of the Sample

Of the 272 study participants in the quantitative strand, 36% were male

2001; Kiely, 2005); exposure to complex social problems without easy solutions (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Kiely, 2005); exposure to social problems that seem unjust (Kiely, 2005); and written reflection activities and class discussions that ask students to think critically about prior assumptions, values, or beliefs (Astin et al., 2000; Eyler et al., 2001; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Fenzel & Peyrot, 2005; Hatcher et al., 2004; Kiely, 2005).   In order to effectively process these challenges and integrate a new way of thinking into one's being, support can exist in the following ways: reflection activities that provide a student the opportunity to process his/her cognitive dissonance by connecting what he/she is observing in the placement with what he/she is studying in class (Astin et al., 2000; Eyler et al., 2001; Fenzel & Peyrot, 2005) or supportive relationships with a faculty member, peers, or placement site supervisor (Astin et al., 2000; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Hatcher, et al., 2004; Kiely, 2005).   Specifically, each student responded to his or her level of agreement with the indicators in Table A1.

For data analysis purposes, these variables were categorized in two different ways. First, independent variables were categorized into *Total Challenge* and *Total Support* scales to consider how Sanford's

Astin, & Lindholm, 2011b; Braskamp et al., 2006; Love & Talbot, 1999; Roehlkeptatian et

differences in the individual service-learning experiences that may have related to whether

spiritual growth occurred.

An interview protocol was utilized that included a list of open-ended questions

consistent with the research questions. Interviews explored the role that each of the following

may have played in spiritual growth: group reflection discussions, written reflection,

relationships, cognitive dissonance, a high quality service experience, and connection between

coursework and service experience. Interviewees were also asked about demographic

characteristics that might have influenced spiritual growth including: prior community service

and service-learning experience, religious background, and family background.

Limitations

The unique aspects of Boston College and the PULSE Program may limit generalizability

of findings to other service-learning experiences. Specifically, PULSE is distinct from other

service-learning programs in that it is a full academic year, it includes more hours of weekly

service (10-12) than is typical and academic content is focused on the disciplines of philosophy

and theology. Boston College is unique from other higher education institutions in that it is a

highly selective, Catholic higher education institution. Each of these aspects of the PULSE

Program and Boston College may have impacted the way in which spiritual

in *Spiritual Orientation* during this time frame. Analyzing the mean responses for each of the

individual spirituality variables similarly demonstrates that spiritual growth occurred as all

means changed in the positive direction and 43 of 54 of these changes were statistically

significant (See Tables 1-6). Similarly, mean responses for all of the spirituality scales changed

in the positive direction and all were statistically significant (see Table 7).

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Effect Size of Pre-Survey/Post-Survey Responses to Spiritual Identification Variables (N=272)

	Pre-Survey		Post-Survey			
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	*p*	*d*

Being on a

[a]Extent to which the variable describes the respondent. 1=Not at all 2=To some Extent 3=To a great extent
[b]Importance to the respondent. 1=Not important 2=Somewhat important 3=Very important 4=Essential
[c]Level of agreement with the statement. 1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree somewhat 3=Agree somewhat 4=Agree strongly
[d]Frequency of Occurrence. 1=Not at all or Not applicable 2=Occasionally 3=Frequently

SERVICE

world[a]						
Helping others who are in difficulty[a]	3.54	.624	3.69	.500	<.001	.27
Improving my understanding of other cultures and countries[a]	3.25	.791	3.47	.659	<.001	.30
Becoming involved in programs to clean up the environment[a]	2.52	.824	2.79	.880	<.001	.32
Most people can grow spiritually without being religious[b]	3.24	.777	3.40	.716	.001	.21
We						

Table 6

Means, Standard

life; were engaged with the question of how to live their philosophy of life with integrity and authenticity; and were facing religious/spiritual struggle as a result of their PULSE experience. The one dimension of spirituality that was not consistently evident among interviewees was a desire to build a deeper relationship with God.

The following quotes from interviewees illustrate these aspects of spiritual growth. The first quote depicts being engaged in a dynamic process of inner reflection to better understand oneself and the meaning and purpose of one's life.

Consistent with Sanford's (1962; 1966; 1967) theory of student development, the qualitative and quantitative aspects of this study point towards both challenge and support relating to spiritual growth. In the quantitative study, the *Total Challengehe*

Eastern Orthodox	.033	.033
Episcopalian	-.005	.024

SERVICE LEARNING & SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

United Church of Christ	.041	.031	.026	.036	.040	.025
None	-.024	-.056	-.058	-.041	-.037	-.047
African American/Black	.145*	.110	.108	.109	.110	.105
Asian American/Asian	.109	.089	.087	.093	.092	.081
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	.043	.032	.029	.022	.014	.006
Mexican American/Chicano	-.029	-.046	-.046	-.042	-.044	-.059
Puerto Rican	.013	.033	.036	.039	.050	.078
Other Latino	.053					

In this proposed model, the process of spiritual growth begins when a student witnesses how injustice impacts the lives of individuals he or she has gotten to know at his or her service site. At the same time a student is being challenged by observing social justice issues at the service site, he or she is simultaneously having his or her assumptions about the world challenged in class. The combination of these challenges leads a student's eyes to be "opened" to the idea that the world is not exactly what he or she believed it to be in a very fundamental way. People living in poverty may ac0.24 12 8 12 589.92 cm q 0.24 0 0 0.24 12 5.92 cm BT50 0 0 0 22107 -190

Opening Experience. An *Eye Opening Experience* is having an indirect effect on spiritual

growth (as measured by change in *Spiritual Orientation*) through *Religious/Spiritual Struggle*.

The following quotes from study participants illustrate the concepts in this model. The

first quote demonstrates a students' experience of witnessing injustice. The second quote

illustrates how an interviewee was challenged in class. In the third quote, a student describes

how PULSE was eye opening. The fourth quote demonstrates a student receiving support from

peers while undergoing spiritual struggle. In the final quote, a student describes the dynamic

interplay between all aspects of the service-learning experience that led to spiritual growth.

> She had glaucoma and lost all vision in one of her eyes. When the other one started to go as well, she came to the United States to get better medical care…now she's dealing with 5% total vision. She wasn't able to work, so she became homeless with her daughter. She's struggling to make ends meet and to find a job that she can actually do. If she had

opportunity for spiritual growth to occur in the classroom context (Astin et al., 2004).

Furthermore, integrating opportunities for spiritual growth in the classroom has the potential to

lead to other personal

relationships. The effective integration of classroom material and service can help students to

make sense of

Appendix

Table A1

Descriptive Statistics of Independent Variables/PULSE Components (N=272)

Variable	n	M	SD
I felt supported by my PULSE professor.	272	3.81	.481
Class journaling / reflective writing challenged me to think critically about my assumptions, values, and/or beliefs.	270	3.47	.672
There was a diversity of perspectives expressed in my PULSE class and discussion group.	270	3.50	.644
The problems that caused people at my placement to need social services were frequently the result of circumstances beyond their control.	271	3.52	.595
I felt supported by			

Table A5

Regression Analysis Summary for Class Challenge and Witnessing Injustice Predicting Change in Religious/Spiritual Struggle

Predictors	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-3.892	1.467		-2.653	.008
Class Challenge	.195	.116	.107	1.688	.093
Witnessing Injustice Scale	.283	.121	.148	2.342	.020

Table A6

Regression Analysis Summary for Witnessing Injustice, Class Challenge, and an Eye Opening Experience Predicting Change in Religious/Spiritual Struggle

Predictors	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-6.354	1.573		-4.041	.000
Witnessing Injustice Scale	.101	.126			

References

American Council on Education (1937). *The student personnel point of view*. Retrieved from
 http://www.naspa.org/pubs/files/StudAff_1937.pdf

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Daloz Parks, S. (2000). *Big questions, worthy dreams: mentoring young adults in their search for meaning, purpose, and faith.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
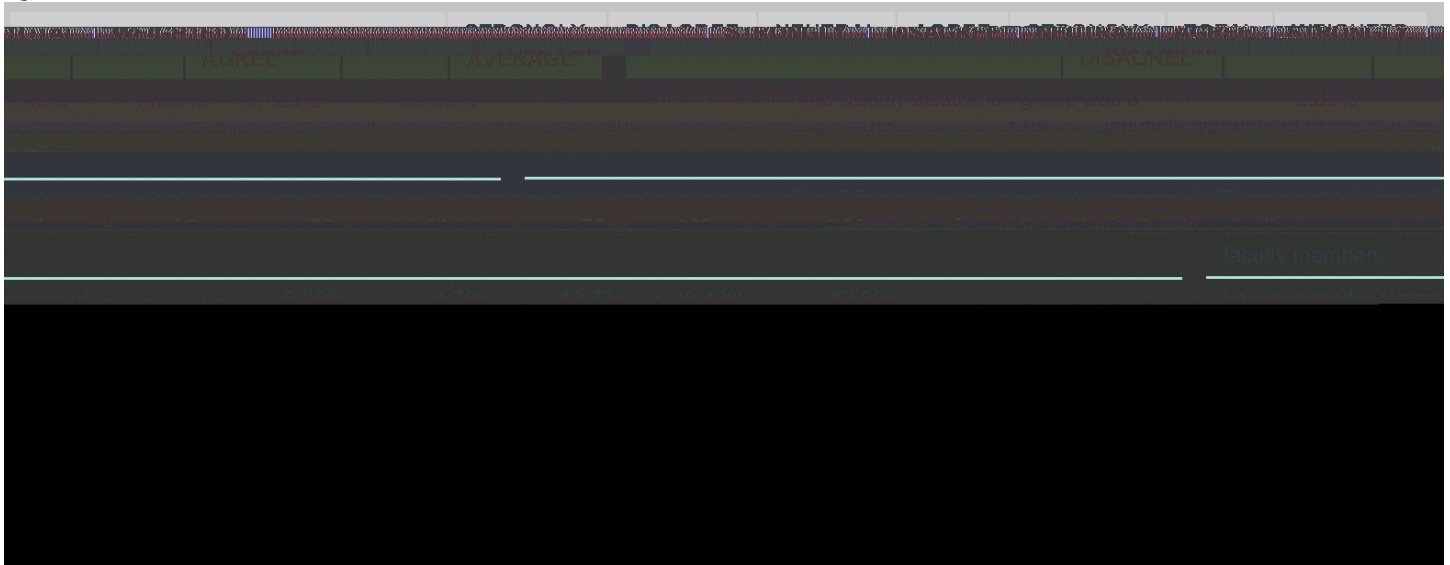
Eyler, J., & Giles, D., Jr. (1999). *Where's the learning in service-learning?* San Francisco, CA:
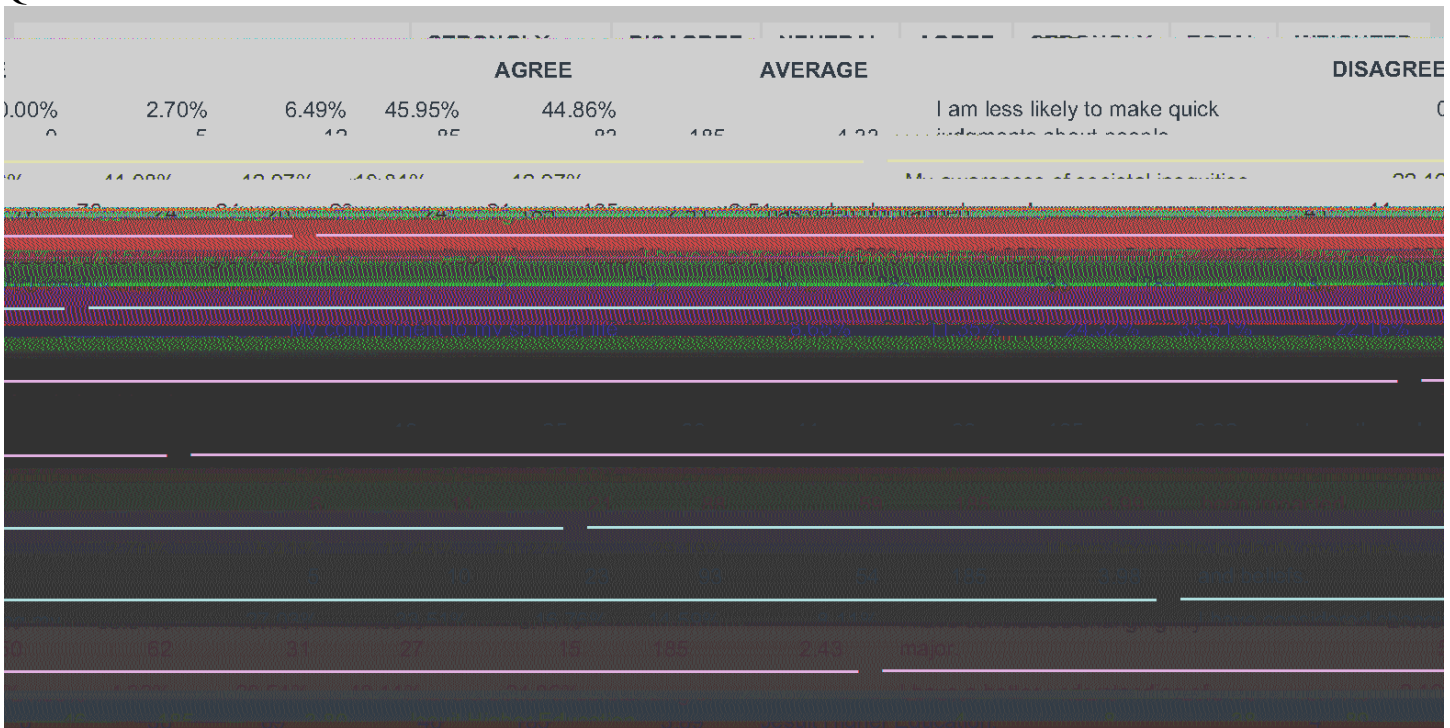
Lovik,

VonDras, D. D., Schmitt, R. R., & Marx, D. (2007). Associations between aspects of spiritual well-being, alcohol use, and related social-cognitions in female college students.

Beginning-of-Year Survey

	STRONGLY	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY	TOTAL	WEIGHTED
...experience in social service...	1.45% 5	3.76% 13	5.78% 20	42.77% 148	46.24% 160	346	4.29	...I have had ... settings.
...erest in philosophy.	3.26% 11	14.24% 48	36.20% 122	37.69% 127	8.61% 29	337	3.34	I have an inte...
...	127	38	14	345	2.60	after PULSE	37	1
...ore theology classes after PULSE	16.52% 57	40.29% 130	33.04% 117	6.67% 23	2.64% 9	345	2.60	I intend to take

College.

| | | 3.00% | 13.00% | 63.82% | 20.23% | | | I have an understanding of social... |
| | 0.00% 0 | 2.00% 2 | 2.89% 10 | 62.14% 215 | 34.39% 119 | 346 | 4.30 | I have an awareness of stereotypes. |

End-of-Year Survey

Question 3

Question 6

Question 5

	AVERAGE			STRONGLY DISAGREE		DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED
51	126	187	4.60	important to me.				1	2	7	
	15	13	77	82	187	4.21	social service settings	0.00%	8.02%	6.95%	
		Prior to PULSE, I had little experience		19.79%	26.20%	16.04%	27.81%	10.16%			
26.20%		I am knowledgeable about the U.S.				0.00%	2.14%	14.97%	56.68%		
	54	187	4.14	change.				2	3	16	112
0	0	3	77	107	187	4.56	diverse backgrounds				
							37	65	54	19	12
99	78	187	4.36	justice.	0.00%	0.00%	5.35%	52.94%	41.71%	0	0
					0	6	25	83	75	187	4.21
commend PULSE to other B.C. students.	4.49		1.60%	2.67%	6.42%	23.53%	65.78%	3	5	12	44

Question 9: How would you rate PULSE in your overall Boston College academic experience?

73	Most influential course I have taken.	40.11%	
91	One of the most influential courses I have taken.	50.00%	
12		6.59%	
		2.75%	5
	Uncertain	0.00%	0
	TOTAL		182