

**Higher Education and Civic Engagement:**

**How well are Geneva College students prepared for participation?**

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## Introduction

The idea of education for citizenship has been a central theme throughout time. Going back to Plato and Aristotle, education has always been at the center of our common life. Plato believed education to be the central concern of the polis or “city-state.” The polis was to provide laws to educate citizens into a life of virtue in order to make a good polis possible. Later, John Dewey, cited by Robert Bellah (1992), wrote about his concern for education in America: “When the school introduces and trains each child of society into membership within such a little community, saturating him with the spirit of service, and providing him with the instruments of effective self-direction, we shall have the deepest and best guaranty of a larger society which is worthy, lovely and harmonious” (152). Finally, Thomas Jefferson saw educated people actively participating in government as the best defense of freedom. Otherwise, rulers would become corrupt and people careless because people would forget themselves “in the sole faculty of making money” (Bellah, 1985, 31). From Plato to Jefferson, the aim of all educational curricula was to serve the common good.

As American higher education has evolved from the eighteenth century to the present, moral and civic concerns have moved from its center, inherent in the very concept of a college education, to its margins, segregated from the rest of academic life (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, and Stephens, 2003). If these trends prevail, education for responsible citizenship could vanish altogether, at least for some institutions.

Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, and Stephens (2003), in *Educating Citizens*, believe a morally and civically responsible individual recognizes himself or herself as a member of a larger social fabric; and therefore, considers social problems to be at least partly his or her own; “such an individual is willing to see the moral and civic dimensions of issues, to make and justify informed moral and civic judgments, and to take action when appropriate” (17). Teaching for this purpose is to enable the student to realize the diversity of worldviews within our society and train students for citizenship where they can become a voting citizen rather than a “bound vassal to an inherited ontology” (Bellah, 1992, 171).

Civic education is recognized by many scholars as key to democracy in our country as well as a powerful message to students: “...if an institution and its leadership adopt a comprehensive approach to moral and civic learning and seek to implement it with a high degree of intentionality, the results can be transformative for students...” (Colby et al., 2003,10). Education for citizenship facilitates development of students in increasingly mature conceptions of morality through their active and positive participation in relationships with the social world. In addition, education is the most effective path to economic stability. The presence of wealth and income tends to

be accompanied by increased civic participation, social participation, parental involvement in schooling, and the like. Thus, the nation as a whole benefits from higher incomes of its citizens (Malveaux, 2003).

If today's college graduates are to be positive forces in the world, they need not only to possess knowledge and intellectual capacities but also to see themselves as members of a community, as individuals with a responsibility to contribute to their communities. If a college education is to support the kind of learning that graduates need in order to be involved and responsible citizens, "its goals must go beyond the development of intellectual and technical skills and beginning mastery of a scholarly domain" (Colby et al., 2003, 7).

However, as Americans, the meaning of one's life is often to become one's own person – often referred to as individualism. Bellah (1985) suggests that the individual's need to be successful in work becomes the enemy of the need to find the meaning of one's work in service to others. "Work does not integrate one into the public household but estranges one from it. It becomes hard to do good work and be a good citizen at the same time" (197). Higher education has become the path to success for Americans. Education as a means to advancement in a complex occupational system is, according to Bellah (1992), "the American Dream (156)." The authors of *Education Citizens* (2003) and Robert Putnam (2000) agree that the consequences of this cultural climate include a growing sense that Americans are not responsible for or accountable to eminence of self-interest and individual preference over concern for the common good. Goals of personal advancement and gratification too often take precedence over social, moral, or spiritual meaning" (Colby et al., 2003, 7).

A further trend in American higher education that impairs education for citizenship is the specialization of disciplines. Bellah (1992) argues that what once was integrated and democratic has now turned into the "multiversity." In the multiversity, undergraduate moral and civic education has been segregated into narrower parts of the curriculum, which may become the extracurricular sphere in some institutions (Colby et al., 2003, 175).

Other harms that civic education has had to confront include the ugly side of politics that often invade our tendencies to participate, increased universality among Americans, and who we have become as consumers. First, according to Bellah (1985), many individuals associate politics as something morally unsavory. Their judgments about public involvement turn negative when they extend beyond local concerns.

Secondly, nearly all Americans today are exposed to radio and television. The media exposes children and adults to events as they are happening or soon after. The amount of information and images that are seen daily is overwhelming and it is "often hard for us to see the flood of events as anything more than transient images on the screen, mildly exhilarating or vaguely disturbing but hardly calling for responsible action or even judgment" (Bellah, 1992, 149). Finally, a continuous exposure to items of consumption becomes an educational influence and

challenge. In a culture that places great significance on materialism, transmitting meaning or values to students is an ever-increasing challenge.

In his book, *Habits of the Heart*, Bellah (1985) reminds readers that we are not simply ends in ourselves, either as individuals or society: “We are parts of a larger whole that we can neither forget nor imagine in our own image without paying a high price.” Connecting with others in “work, love, and community is essential for happiness, self-esteem, and moral worth” (84). Civic education is as essential today as it was when our country was founded: “The idea of education for citizenship in a complex world is not some quaint leftover from the nineteenth-century curriculum. It is an essential task for a free society in the modern world” (Bellah, 1992, 178).

As we turn to the present study, the question at hand is “Are Geneva College students learning to be good citizens?” An examination of a sample of Geneva students and their tendencies to trust others, take an interest in politics, participate or serve in their community, and socialize with others revealed evidence of the institution’s strengths and weaknesses in preparing its students for civic engagement.

This topic is of particular importance at Geneva College, because in its mission statement Geneva proclaims to be an institution committed to serving society: “The mission of Geneva College is to glorify God by educating and ministering to a diverse community of students for the purpose of developing servant-leaders, transforming the kingdom of Christ.” In addition, the eleventh student outcome stated in Geneva’s handbook reads, “Actively participate in civic life and provide leadership that is shaped by principles of biblical justice” (16). Similarly, the handbook also states that one aim of Geneva College is to prepare students for active participation and leadership in a democratic society, through experiences which will develop the ability to work with other people, and the spirit of loyalty and cooperation. If Geneva College is to be faithful to its mission and educational objectives, it is crucial that students are being prepared for lives of civic participation in the classroom as well as through out-of-the-classroom experiences. This project attempts to measure the effectiveness of Geneva in accomplishing this mission.

### **Literature Review**

The current literature relating to civic engagement among college students is quite extensive and comprised of many recognized scholars, such as Robert Bellah, Robert Putnam, and Thomas Ehrlich. According to these authors and several others (Pascarella, Terenzini, Sander, Kirlin, Crossley, Egerton, Sax, and Malveaux), higher education plays a key role in developing citizenship among students.

Perhaps the most obvious link between higher education and civic engagement is the mission statements of most colleges and universities. The mission statement of an institution will often explicitly refer to an institution's responsibility to educate for leadership and to contribute to society. In *Educating Citizens* (2003), the authors state that recognizing the responsibility to prepare citizens for participation in society implies that certain moral and civic values will be included in institutions' goals and practices.

The college years have long been understood as a time when students, especially those who come directly from high school, begin to question and redefine their sense of who they are. Although much development happens in college, the effects of education ripple throughout students' lives: "Students may leave college with the trajectories of their lives shifted only slightly but with ways of approaching and responding to their subsequent experiences that magnify the shift over time, until much later it becomes clear that the gap between where they are and where they would have been without those influences is dramatic" (Colby et al., 2003, 5). Living apart from everything one has known, confronting diversity, discussing ideas, and asking hard questions all contribute to the personal development that happens in the college years.

Ever since the 1940's, when the first research on this topic appeared, students in most colleges and universities have shown shifts in their values, such as sociopolitical tolerance, greater concern for civil rights and civil liberties, more egalitarian views of gender roles, declines in authoritarianism and dogmatism, and more secular religious attitudes (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Higher education is associated with a modest increase in knowledge of and interest in politics. According to Malveaux (2003), people with a college education are more likely to participate in the electoral process. Further, education seems positively correlated with other forms of civic participation, including attendance and participation at public meetings as well as running for public office (Malveaux, 2003). After surveying 15,000 individuals and conducting 2,500 personal interviews, Verba, Scholozman, and Brady, cited by Ehrlich (2000), revealed empirical evidence that educational attainment is a powerful predictor of civic engagement: "The more education people have, the more likely it is that they will participate in civic affairs." This has been a widespread belief among political scientists since the end of World War II.

Robert Putnam's research in *Bowling Alone* (2000), reveals similar findings: "Education is one of the most important predictors – usually, in fact, *the* most important predictor – of many forms of social participation – from voting to associational membership, to chairing a local committee to hosting a dinner party to giving blood" (186). In addition, education is an especially powerful predictor of participation in public, formally organized activities. Having four additional years of education is associated with 30 percent more interest in politics, 40 percent more

club attendance, and 45 percent more volunteering. College graduates are more than twice as likely to serve as an officer or committee member of a local organization, to attend a public meeting, to write Congress, or to attend a political rally. The same basic pattern applies to both men and women and to all races and generations. Education, in short, is an extremely powerful predictor of civic engagement (Putnam, 2000). According to the report “Giving and Volunteering in the United States 2001,” “Adults who became involved with giving and volunteering in their youth maintained that involvement into adulthood. Respondents in 59.8 percent of contributing households had done volunteer work in their youth, compared to only 36.2 percent of non-contributing households” (4).

In addition to these positive outward effects, the personal development, such as moral development and self-efficacy, that happens in the college years has a powerful effect on students while they are in college, but perhaps more importantly in the years after graduation: “The college experience can be a powerful opportunity for students to develop more reflective and mature habits of moral interpretation” (Colby et al., 2003, 108). The research of Lake, Snell, Perry, & Associates (2000) coincides with this: 55% of 18 to 25 year olds in college or with some college education and 62% of college graduates have high levels of efficacy in comparison to 35% of young people who do not expect to attend college. As students reflect on the choices they are making for themselves, they are better able to understand the process of either accepting or resisting certain options for who they will be (Colby et al., 2003, 121).

According to Rest (1979), cited by Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, and Stephens (2003), attending college increases students’ scores on the James Rest’s Defining Issues Test [DIT]. The DIT is an easy and available tool for colleges to use in measuring moral judgment as conceived by Kohlberg. In addition, Pascarella & Terenzini (1991) have found a significant correlation between years of education and Kohlberg’s Moral Judgment Interview as well as on the DIT. This is true regardless of the students’ age. Moral judgment is more likely to stop increasing at the end of formal education than at any particular age (Colby et al., 2003). In fact, some studies have shown a small negative correlation of DIT scores with age and a larger positive correlation of DIT with educational attainment. This provides evidence for the assumption that at every age, higher education positively affects moral judgment.

College and universities can help students learn to think more clearly about moral issues and understand social and political relationships, processes, and institutions in a more sophisticated way. During the college years, students will confront many complex and ambiguous situations, but higher education can influence how students will understand and make meaning from these situations (Colby et al., 2003, 101). As students engage hard questions and complexity in society and citizenship, emotions tend to play a key role in connecting what is learned in the classroom to who they are in society: “Moral emotions play an important role in motivating action, and many

programs of moral and civic education include efforts to elicit some kind of moral emotion, either negative or positive” (Colby et al., 2003, 125).

Perhaps the greatest challenges students encounter during their college years happen in the classroom. The authors of *Educating Citizens* (2003) refer to a large body of research that makes it clear that the experience of grappling with challenging moral issues in classroom discussions or in activities that require the resolution of conflicting opinions contributes significantly to the increasing maturity of individuals’ moral judgment (Colby et al., 2003). Empirical studies of college students’ progression through this sequence reveal that many students move from the initial dualistic state to the more relativistic positions during college (Colby et al., 2003). Carrying out one’s moral convictions is determined greatly by how one understands and thinks about moral issues, which is often challenged and promoted in the classroom.

In addition, the knowledge and skills one gains in college can be foundational in supporting moral and civic effectiveness: “Without foundational knowledge of basic political concepts, it is difficult for individuals to assimilate new information about political issues (Colby et al., 2003, 111). According to Sander and Putnam (1999), research shows that civic skills and civic knowledge are powerful determinants of long-term civic participation. A more mature and civic understanding entails the acquisition of rich substantive knowledge, which is the foundation for wise and effective judgment.

Although classroom discussions where students are challenged in how they think about citizenship and moral issues play a key role in developing long-term civic participation, what students learn and experience outside of the classroom is also a major predictor in who they become as adults: “among the strongest predictors of civic engagement in adults is their experience, both curricular and extracurricular, as young people” (Sander & Putnam, 1999). Leadership programs contribute significantly to developing skills that are useful later in life, such as running meetings, advocating for change, or writing letters. These activities then can generate networks of engagement and trust (Sander & Putnam, 1999). Having political and civic competencies not only makes effective action possible, it leads to a greater sense of empowerment and leads people to see themselves as engaged citizens and thus be motivated toward further engagement (Lake Snell Perry & Associates, Inc. 2002). According to Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, and Stephens (2003), “Participation in leadership activities during college is the single most important predictor of students’ development of humanitarian social concern and values” (127). The authors also cite Kirlin (2000) who suggests that involvement with organizations that teach students how to participate in society by learning how to form and express opinions and organize people for action is the most powerful predictor of adult civic engagement. According to the authors of *Educating Citizens* (2003), “supporting students’ moral and civic

development is best achieved through the cumulative, interactive effects of numerous curricular and extracurricular programs in an environment of sustained institutional commitment to a set of overarching goals” (Colby et al., 2003, 10). Finally, Sander and Putnam (1999) agree by suggesting that extracurricular activities are an over-looked but extremely valuable experience in forging civic habits.

Through the classroom and extracurricular activities, schools, universities, and colleges aim to equip students with a range of cognitive, social, and personal skills which are pre-conditions of effective citizenship. Emler (2000) found that unemployed youth had a much increased risk of social isolation compared to that of university students, particularly those students living away from home. In a similar study, Crossley (2001) found that higher education provides a privileged space for young people to develop rhetorical and organizing skills and has been used as a means of state or citizenship formation (Egerton, 2002).

Using the British Household Panel Study, Egerton (2000) researched the effects of higher education on the social and civic engagement of young people. The social and civic activity of young people was observed as 17 or 18 year-olds before entering the labor market or higher education, and compared with that of the same young people in their early 20's after completing higher education or gaining labor market experience. The study observed 12 areas of participation including political parties, trade unions, environmental groups, parent/school associations, neighborhood watch programs, religion or church organizations, voluntary or other community or civic groups, social clubs, sports clubs, women's institutes, and women's groups. It was found that the social and civic engagement of young people *planning to enter* higher education was higher in their late teens than that of their peers who did not enter. But, higher education had an additional effect on civic engagement, for both young and older students (Egerton, 2002).

Young people who will enter higher education were more likely to be active in an organization before entering. It is clear that the pattern of high levels of organizational membership is established prior to experiencing higher education, but higher education increases this substantially. Although prior activity levels is the most important variable, higher education does have an additional effect on certain areas of participation, particularly in voluntary or other community or civic groups and religion. This suggests that values acquired and/or social networks entered during higher education have facilitated this involvement (Egerton, 2002).

However, a study done by Pascarella and his colleagues in 1986 found conflicting results. The scholars sampled freshman students in 1971 and then followed up on these students nine years later. They found that the values students held, apparently due to educational attainment, disappeared when controls for a variety of background, institutional, and occupational characteristics were added. Pascarella found that the highest academic



degree attained had no significant direct effect on humanitarian and civic values on his sample. However, Pascarella's many years of research on this topic has found mixed results, and he believes that the general weight of evidence supports that college attendance does have a modest net effect on social consciousness and humanitarian values (Pascarella, 1991).

In a study by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA, Sax's findings on the change of students' values and sense of citizenship during the college years are very specific and directly related to the present study. Using a freshman survey in 1985, a follow-up survey in 1989, and then a nine-year follow-up survey in 1994, Sax found change in students' values in three outcome areas: commitment to social activism, sense of empowerment, and community involvement.

Students' commitment to social activism, such as helping others in difficulty, influencing social goals and the political structure, or participating in community action programs, increased during college, but the gains, except for commitment to influencing social values, are most likely lost in the years after college. The second area, sense of empowerment, exhibits very little change during the nine year study. Each of the three surveys used reveals that roughly two-thirds of students believe that individuals have the ability to change society. Subsequently, higher education shows little influence in this area. Finally, in the area of citizenship and community involvement, Sax (2003) found that half the students who volunteered in college engaged in service after college, compared to a third of students who performed no volunteer work in college.

Sax (2003) explored further *how* college affects students' commitment to social activism, sense of empowerment, and community involvement. First, Sax found that students tend to become even more committed to social activism if they attend a college where other students espouse a social activist mentality. Sax also revealed evidence that majoring in engineering has a negative effect on students' commitment as does watching television. Finally, performing volunteer work, attending religious services, attending class, exercising and playing sports all positively influence students' commitment to social activism.

In studying college students' sense of empowerment, Sax (2003) found that the importance of socio-economic level of the student's peer group had a positive effect on the student's post-college sense of empowerment. In other words, attending a college that enrolls students from wealthier and more highly educated families tends to promote the belief that individuals have the ability to change society. Sense of empowerment is also influenced by socializing with people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, discussing political and social issues, and attending religious services. Declines in empowerment result from feeling uncared for in college or depressed. Citizenship or community involvement is most influenced by levels of commitment to students' peers.

Attending a college where other students are highly committed to social activism tends to encourage students' own involvement in their communities in the years after college (Sax, 2003).

To seek further evidence about how higher education might affect civic engagement among students a study of Geneva College shows how Geneva students might be affected by their education. According to *Student Perceptions of their Personal Growth* (2001), Geneva students suggest that their education has been weak in preparing them for leadership and active involvement in civic life: "the average student said Geneva impact on them in this area was minimal" (2). However, in addition to this, the report also notes that seniors reported greater Geneva impact than first year students. This indicates some evidence of an effective educational effort at Geneva College.

The literature clearly states that education has a direct relationship to civic engagement in the college years as well as years after college. Grappling new ideas and being challenged in and outside of the classroom contributes to students' moral development and self-efficacy and leads to greater participation in politics and society. The studies mentioned above note the importance of gaining civic knowledge, volunteering, personal development, and engaging in extracurricular and leadership opportunities in developing citizens. Education has been found to play a key role in the capacity of graduates to participate in their communities and become good citizens.

### **Research Methodology**

The purpose of this research was to determine how well Geneva College students are being prepared for lives of civic engagement. The term "civic engagement" was used to cover a variety of activities including political participation, club or church membership, volunteering, philanthropic giving, spending time with family, friends, and neighbors, and other forms of community involvement.

Data for this research was collected by measuring forms of social capital among Geneva students. The term "social capital" is used extensively by Robert Putnam in his text, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (2000). Social capital refers to our social networks (who we know) and the tendencies that come from these networks to do things for each other (reciprocity). Social capital is valuable for the people who are connected and often for bystanders as well. It is a value to individuals as well as to a collective group. Individuals who know people tend to use those connections to get jobs or receive a helping hand. Collectively, social capital is beneficial to neighborhoods where neighbors keep a watch on one another's homes while they are away. However, social capital is not always warm and safe. The term also refers to groups of people with evil intent, such as a gangs or cults. Social capital, in short, is one measure of civic engagement.

For this project, an assessment of social capital was taken of a sample of students at Geneva College, using the Social Capital Survey. This survey was based on the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey (2000) which was administered by The Roper Center, a survey organization. The benchmark survey was designed by and built upon the work of Professor Robert Putnam. Putnam's research on social capital includes data gathered from nearly 500,000 interviews over the last quarter century. Alongside this data, Putnam provides a benchmark survey to be used as a tool for comparison to his data. Putnam is the Peter and Isabel Malkin Professor of Public Policy at Harvard University and author of *Bowling Alone* (2000).

The Social Capital Survey used at Geneva College asked students to respond to a series of questions regarding their level of participation and involvement on campus and in their community. The survey measured various items such as levels of giving blood, hanging out with friends, participating in various groups and associations, levels of trust, participation in clubs or organizations, and the diversity of friendship patterns.

Four hundred surveys were distributed to freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors living in four residence halls on Geneva's campus. Two of the halls were traditional dorm style while two were apartment style student housing. Also, two buildings were all-male, and two were all-female. One hundred eighty-two students responded. Of these, 51% were female and 49% were male. Thirty-one percent of respondents were freshmen, 24% were sophomores, 23% juniors, and 22% were seniors. Each survey was collected and recorded in an *Excel* worksheet.

The data received by current Geneva College students was compared to national statistics gathered by Putnam in his research. Two groups in Putnam's data were used to compare Putnam's national statistics to Geneva students. These groups were adults with "some college" and the 18-34 age group. The "some college" group was all respondents who had either a 2-year degree or had partially completed their college education (anyone with some college, but not a 4-year degree). The 18-34 age group was respondents to Putnam's survey between the ages of 18 and 34 with any amount of college. The beliefs and behaviors of students at Geneva College were used as a predictor of future lifestyle patterns. The collected data became evidence for how well Geneva students are prepared for civic engagement.

### **Social Capital Survey Results**

Putnam's Social Capital Benchmark Survey, and his nationwide statistics, shed light on how Geneva College students compare to and differ from other adults with either a 2-year college degree or some college (not a

4-year degree), and other 18-34 year-olds. Further, the data received was broken down between freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior respondents in order to measure social capital by years at Geneva College.

The first and perhaps one of the most significant differences between Geneva students and the adults in Putnam's data is their level of trust in others such as their neighbors, police, and store owners in the community. When asked if others in general could be trusted, only 14% of Geneva students agreed compared to 48% of other adults with some college education and 40% of all 18-34 year olds in Putnam's data (see Appendix 2, Table 1). Most Geneva students (61%) chose "It depends." Further, only 39% of Geneva students have a lot of trust in their neighbors or people living near them in their residence hall compared to 50% of others with some college education (see Table 2). However, most Geneva students have at least "some trust" in those living near them, which is similar to other adults with some college education.

When asked about the police in their local community, Geneva students were again comparatively distrustful; 36% answered "trust them a lot" compared to 48% of adults with some college education and 40% of other 18-34 year-olds (see Table 3). Once again, the statistics balanced out when Geneva students answered that they had at least "some trust" for their police. Next, Geneva students were asked how much they could trust the people who worked in the stores where they shopped. Whereas 28% of adults with some college education can "trust them a lot," only 16% of Geneva students answered similarly. However, the same number of adult respondents aged 18-34 answered similarly to Geneva students for this category (see Table 4).

Three questions on the Social Capital Survey administered to Geneva College students asked how much they trusted people of varying races. First, only 10% of Geneva students trust Caucasians "a lot," and 60% trust them "some." This is very interesting because 91% of adults with some college education and 83% of those ages 18-34 trust Caucasians some or a lot (see Table 5). These numbers decrease when asked about trusting African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos. Only 4% of Geneva students "trust a lot" of African Americans, which is much lower than both other groups. Twenty-six percent of Putnam's adults with some college education trust African Americans "a lot" and 19% of those ages 18-34. The numbers become more comparable if we look at "trust them some" and "trust them only a little." Sixty-one percent of Geneva respondents, 64% of Putnam's respondents with some college, and 59% of Putnam's 18-34 year-olds answered "trust them some" when asked about African Americans (see Table 6). A similarity was found when asked about Hispanics and Latinos. Only 4% of Geneva respondents trust Hispanics/Latinos compared to 24% and 18% of others with some college and 18-34 year-olds. For the "trust them some" category, Geneva students still were slow to trust though the figures became closer: 54% of Geneva students, 64% of adults with some college, and 59% of other 18-34 year-olds (see Table 7).

Geneva students were less trusting in each of the seven areas asked on the Social Capital Survey. Measuring trust among students is an indication of social capital because social capital refers to connections among individuals - "social networks and the norms or reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (Putnam, 2000, 19). Social trust is strongly associated with other forms of civic engagement and social capital. According to Putnam, when people trust their fellow citizens, they are more likely to volunteer more, contribute to charities more, participate more often in politics and community organizations, serve more readily on juries, give blood more frequently, are more tolerant of minority views, and display many other forms of civic virtue (137). For these reasons, the level of trust Geneva students have for one another and their community has a significant impact on their level of social capital and civic engagement. Unfortunately, Geneva students who completed the Social Capital Survey appeared to be less trusting than others with similar college education and of similar age.

Secondly, the Social Capital survey uncovered the amount of interest among Geneva College students in the area of politics and national affairs. Political knowledge and interest are important because they are critical preconditions for active involvement. If one doesn't care about what's going on, participation is unlikely. Having four additional years of education is associated with 30 percent more interest in politics (Putnam, 2000, 35). Interestingly, Geneva students are much less interested in politics and national affairs than other adults in Putnam's research with some college education, but slightly more interested than others aged 18-34. Twenty-one percent of Geneva students answered "very interested" in comparison to 32% of adults with some college education and 19% of others aged 18-34. Many more Geneva students (41%) answered "somewhat interested," which was slightly higher than the other two categories (39% and 34%) (see Table 8).

Along the lines of interest in politics, the Social Capital Survey also asked students whether they were registered to vote. Again, Geneva students are much less likely to be registered to vote compared to adults with some college education, but again are similar to others between the ages of 18 and 34. Sixty-nine percent of Geneva students are registered to vote, whereas 89% of others with some college are registered, and only 66% of 18-34 year-olds (see Table 9).

According to Malveaux (2003), people with a college education are more likely to participate in the electoral process. In addition, those with a college education are more likely to participate in other forms of civic engagement, such as attending public meetings and running for public office. Interestingly, Geneva students who responded reported a high attendance to political meetings or rallies. Eighty-seven percent of Geneva respondents have attended a political meeting or rally within the past twelve months. Data from Putnam's research shows that only 82% of those with some college have attended a political meeting or rally and 86% of others between the ages

of 18 and 34 have attended in the past twelve months (see Table 16). In *Bowling Alone*, Putnam explains that trends in political and community participation show that those who are better educated have higher levels of participation. The Social Capital Survey and Putnam's research, however, shows that respondents between the ages of 18 and 34, as well as Geneva respondents, attended political rallies more often than all adults with some college education.

The majority of Putnam's respondents placed themselves in the categories of "moderately conservative" and "middle-of-the-road" when asked about their general political and social outlook. According to the Social Capital Survey, Geneva students who responded tend to be significantly more conservative. Sixty-two percent of Geneva student respondents classify themselves as very or moderately conservative compared to 48% of adults with some college education and 43% of Putnam's respondents between the ages of 18 and 34. Only 8% of Geneva students say they're moderately or very liberal, which is much lower than 22% of others with some college and 29% of other 18-34 year-olds (see Table 12).

Though most of the data gathered by the Social Capital Survey indicated lower levels of political engagement among Geneva student respondents, the opposite appears to be true when looking at different areas of civic engagement, such as serving on local committees, working on community projects, donating blood, and volunteering. According to Putnam (2000), having four additional years of education is associated with 40% more club attendance, and 45% more volunteering. College graduates are more than twice as likely to serve as an officer or committee member of a local organization, to attend a public meeting, to write Congress, or to attend a political rally. Thirty-seven percent of respondents from Geneva reported serving as an officer on a committee of a club or organization, such as rugby, hall or student government, athletic teams, or academic clubs in the past 12 months. Others, from Putnam's data, who have completed some college and those ages 18-34 report 18% and 20% in this area (see Table 23).

When asked about working on community projects, 79% of Geneva students reported having done so in the past twelve months. Many students have done so several times, in fact, 4% of Geneva student respondents reported working on community projects more than 25 times in the past twelve months. In comparison, only 41% of those with some college education and 35% of those ages 18-35 in Putnam's data have worked on a community project in the past twelve months (see Table 13).

Donating blood is one relatively quick and easy way to serve the community in which we live. Thirty-four percent of Geneva students who completed the Social Capital Survey have done so either on campus or off in the past twelve months, where 25% of others with some college and 21% of others ages 18-34 have done so (see Table 14).

An area of community involvement in which Geneva students reported lower numbers of participation than those with some college and those aged 18-34 is volunteering. Respondents with some amount of college education, but not a four-year degree, volunteered an average of 9.4 times in the previous 12 months, and respondents ages 18-34 volunteered an average of 9.3 times. Geneva respondents only volunteered an average 6.1 times in the past 12 months (see Table 22). This is interesting because, according to Putnam (2000), having four additional years of education is associated with 45 percent more volunteering. The volunteer rate among Geneva students is unfortunate because, according to the report entitled “Giving and Volunteering in the United States 2001,” “Adults who became involved with giving and volunteering in their youth maintained that involvement into adulthood.” Also, Sax (2003) found that half the students who volunteered in college engaged in service after college, compared to a third of students who performed no volunteer work in college.

Although Geneva students report volunteering significantly less than others who compare to them in age and in years of college education, Geneva students significantly outscore both groups when we look at monetary contributions to religious organizations. Thirty-four percent of Geneva respondents gave \$1-100 and 54% of respondents gave more than \$100. In comparison, only 12% and 15% of the other groups gave \$1-100. However, 62% of adults with some college in Putnam’s data gave more than \$100, but only 46% of 18-34 year-olds gave more than \$100, so the Geneva students fall right in-between (see Table 25). In addition, the survey indicates that 95% of the Geneva students who responded attend religious services almost every week or every week (see Table 24). Attending religious services is an affirmation for the reason that Sax (2003) claims that attending religious services positively influences students’ commitment to social activism.

In his text, *Bowling Alone* (2000), Putnam argues that watching television might account for one-quarter of the entire drop in civic engagement over the past 30 years. “More television watching means less of virtually every form of civic participation and social involvement” (228). When asked about the amount of television watched for entertainment, Geneva respondents reported watching much less television than both other groups. Compared to 30% and 34% of Putnam’s surveyed groups, only 16% of the Geneva students agreed that television was their primary form of entertainment (see Table 28).

Even though one is more inclined to think of community associations and public life as important forms of social involvement, Putnam contends that friendships and other informal types of sociability provide crucial social support and are very important in sustaining social networks. In what Putnam calls *schmoozing*, Geneva students are at the top of the list. Geneva respondents report having friends over to their home, while not at college, an average of 46 times a year. The other groups, those with some college and others ages 18-34, have friends over 24

times and 30 times a year respectively (see Table 18). Geneva students do not fall short in the area of informal socializing with friends.

Finally, in the area of happiness, the Geneva students are very close to the other groups surveyed by Putnam. Thirty-nine percent of Geneva respondents, 40% of Putnam's respondents with some college education, and 35% of others 18-34 year-olds say they are "very happy." Similarly, 57% of Geneva students, 55% of adults with some college, and 59% of 18-34 year-olds report being "happy" (see Table 26). Though it is coincidental to see such similar figures for each option for this question, at no place in the literature do the authors discuss happiness in relation to higher education or civic engagement. Social Capital does not merely mean "warm, cuddly feelings or frissions of community pride," but rather, Putnam (2000) argues that even our health and happiness depend on an adequate stock of social capital (28). According to Putnam, happiness is best predicted by the breadth and depth of one's social connections.

In addition to comparing Geneva students to Putnam's survey respondents, this project also sought to find differences within the Geneva student body by measuring the responses received in light of their class level at Geneva College. The hope was to find areas that clearly showed a change in student behavior in respect to their years of college education. The areas that showed improvement by class level at Geneva were number of respondents registered to vote, and the number of respondents who give monetary contributions to religious organizations as well as the amount of money given. In addition, I discovered that the percentage of Geneva student respondents who say they're conservative increased with year at Geneva.

First, the freshmen at Geneva reported the fewest number of students registered to vote in comparison to each of the four classes. Forty-three percent of the freshmen respondents registered to vote whereas 72% of the sophomores, 88% of the juniors, and 83% of the seniors are registered (see Table 9). Although Geneva seniors are not the group with the highest percentage of registered voters, they reported significantly more than the Geneva freshmen and sophomores.

Secondly, there was a significant and positive change in the number of Geneva students who donate to a religious organizations and the amount of money given rose with year at Geneva as well. Eighty-five percent of the freshmen, 84% of the sophomores, 88% of the juniors, and 97% of the seniors give to religious organizations. When looking at amount of money donated, 48% of the freshmen and sophomore respondents, 56% of the juniors, and 65% of the seniors donate more than \$100 a year (see Table 25). It seems as though the Geneva student respondents donated more to religious organizations as they have spent more years at Geneva College.



A final change that was seen in relation to number of years spent at Geneva is the increasing conservatism among students as they spend more time in college. Overall, the Geneva student respondents reported to be more conservative than the populations surveyed in Putnam's research. However it seems as though the sophomores, juniors and seniors tend to be more conservative than the freshmen. Forty-three percent of the Geneva freshmen who responded, 66% of the sophomores, 69% of the juniors, and 59% of the seniors consider themselves to be very or moderately conservative. From another perspective, 9% of the freshmen respondents consider themselves to be moderately or very liberal in comparison to 2% of the sophomores, 4% of the juniors, and 0% the of seniors (see Table 12).

Two items on the survey saw little or no difference between the responses of freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. These items were the level of trust in others and the number of students that watched television as their primary form of entertainment. First, in the area of trust, there was little change among the four groups. Overall, it appears that the Geneva freshmen respondents are reported being less trusting except towards their neighbors either in their residence hall or in their neighborhoods back home. Between the sophomores, juniors, and seniors there was little change or consistency in change to make a significant conclusion.

Secondly, the Social Capital Survey indicated that there was no significant change in the amount of television watched for entertainment in relation to class level at Geneva. The survey shows that the sophomore respondents watch television the least with only 9% agreeing that it is their primary form of entertainment. Among the freshmen, juniors, and seniors, 18-19% agreed that it was their primary form of entertainment (see Table 28). Overall, freshmen respondents at Geneva College watch the same amount of television as the senior respondents. There appears to be no change in students in this area after four years at Geneva.

Several items on the Social Capital Survey showed the participation and involvement among freshmen to be unique of the other three classes at Geneva College. Freshmen respondents reported volunteering more, taking officer roles in clubs more, worked on more community projects, attended more political rallies, been in the home of someone of a different race more, and had friends over to their home more often.

First, 89% of the freshmen respondents have volunteered in the past twelve months in comparison to 77% of the sophomores, 74% of the juniors, and 80% of the seniors (see Table 22). However, when measuring the number of times respondents volunteered, freshmen reported very similarly to the other classes. Secondly, 43% of the freshmen reported that they have taken an officer role or have served on a committee in the past twelve months. Only 36% of sophomores, 38% of juniors, and only 23% of seniors indicated that they have done so (see Table 23). Next, 93% of the Geneva freshmen respondents indicated that they have worked on a community project in the past

12 months. Again, only 80% of sophomores, 66% of juniors, and 87% of seniors answered similarly. In addition, 15% of freshmen worked on community projects 10 or more times whereas only 5% of sophomores, 2% of juniors, and 5% of seniors worked on projects 10 or more times in the past 12 months (see Table 13).

According to Sax (2003), sense of empowerment is influenced by socializing with people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. According to the Social Capital Survey, it appears as though the Geneva freshmen respondents were more open to or had more opportunities to interact with those of a different race. Eighty-six percent of the Geneva freshmen have been in the home of someone of a different race, 36% of whom reported doing so more than 25 times. Seventy-five percent of the sophomores, 71% of the juniors, and 77% of the seniors have also been in the home of someone of a different race, though reported less often than the Geneva freshmen (see Table 19).

Further, Geneva freshmen seem to have friends over to their home more often in general. Again, as mentioned before, Putnam contends that friendships and other informal types of sociability provide crucial social support and are very important in sustaining social networks. While they are not at college, 66% of Geneva freshmen respondents reported that they have friends over to their home once a week or more on average. The survey indicated that this is true for 52% of the sophomores, 58% of the juniors, and only 38% of the seniors (see Table 18). It appears the freshmen respondents socialize more than the other groups of students; however, as we look at the number of students working, we find that only 46% of freshmen work in comparison to 75% of sophomores, 74% of juniors, and 72% of seniors (see Table 29). Perhaps one explanation for the Geneva freshmen's tendency to socialize more is that they work less.

In the area of political participation, the freshmen respondents also had the highest attendance at political rallies. Eighteen percent of the freshmen respondents have attended a political rally in the past twelve months, and half of these students have gone more than once. In comparison, 14% of the sophomores, 5% of the juniors, and 15% of the seniors have attended a political rally (see Table 16). With this in mind, Geneva freshmen also have more trust in the federal government. Forty-three percent of the Geneva freshmen respondents trust the federal government most or all of the time. Only 38% of the Geneva sophomores, 29% of the juniors, and 30% of the seniors agreed (see Table 10). Even though the freshmen respondents at Geneva show less interest in politics and national affairs than the other classes (57% of freshmen answered "very interested" or "somewhat interested" in comparison to 59% of sophomores, 66% of juniors and seniors), they attended more political rallies and trust the federal government more.

The data I gathered from administering the Social Capital Survey to 182 Geneva students led to many assumptions about Geneva College students. These were in regard to how they differ from other adults with some education and others aged 18-34 and also how Geneva students differ by class. In many instances, the Geneva respondents appeared to have higher levels of social capital than those similar to them outside of Geneva. However, it was also found that the students at Geneva showed an increase of social capital by class level in some areas several other areas of social capital showed very little positive change in relation to class level.

### **Discussion**

Because of the nature of Geneva College, much of the data uncovered by the Social Capital Survey was surprising. Geneva College is a Christian institution committed to teaching and living out biblical truths. The mission statement of Geneva College proclaims its commitment to educate students in becoming servant-leaders in order to transform society for the kingdom of Christ. With this in mind, it seems as though an increase in civic participation and social capital would be apparent with an increase in class level; however, this was rarely the case.

Overall, the data collected from the Social Capital Survey indicated that Geneva students outscore Putnam's respondents in many areas of social capital. It appears that Geneva students attend more political rallies, more readily serve as an officer in a club or on a committee, work on more community projects, donate blood more often, give more money to religious organizations, and socialize with friends more often. In recognizing these levels of participation, it is also necessary to point out the unique opportunities offered to students during their college experience. For instance, programs such as "Our Town," where all Geneva students are encouraged to help clean-up their campus and surrounding community, no doubt contribute to the high number of students who have worked on community projects in the past twelve months. Also, my hunch is that while in college, awareness of opportunities for student leadership are more prevalent than they normally would be in society and thus Geneva students have a greater opportunity to step into these positions. Finally, Geneva College offers several opportunities throughout the school year for students to donate blood. Perhaps convenience and the persuasion of Geneva's student senate played a role in the number of students who have donated blood this year.

According to Malveaux (2003), higher education is also associated with a modest increase in knowledge of and interest in politics. Interestingly, Geneva respondents appeared to be less interested in politics and national affairs compared to adults with some college education but were similar to Putnam's respondents who were between the ages of 18 and 34. The same coincidence appeared for the area of voter registration. Since Putnam's "some college" category includes individuals of all ages, and the Geneva respondents were primarily between the ages of

18 and 22, it seems as though registering to vote and interest in politics and national affairs increases with age, rather than with education.

When asked if watching television was a primary source of entertainment, Geneva respondents agreed much less often than Putnam's respondents, which indicate a high level of social capital according to Putnam (2000). However, it is necessary to explain that in two of the four residence halls surveyed, TVs are normally only found in the residence hall lounges. Cable TV and most reception is unavailable in the rooms of the residence halls. This, no doubt, contributes to the results found when using the Social Capital Survey. A further encouraging result of the survey was the level of schmoozing, or informal socializing among Geneva students. The Social Capital Survey indicated that Geneva student have friends to their home almost twice as much as the respondent's in Putnam's data. It could possibly be that, while at home, college students have more time to socialize, or that students more often choose their homes to hang out rather than a public space. In any case, Geneva students significantly outscore other adults in this area.

In the areas of philanthropy and attending religious services, Geneva respondents reported very high levels of participation. It is encouraging to recognize the high number of Geneva respondents that give to religious organizations: 54% have given more than \$100 in the past 12 months. We can assume that Geneva students, because they are full-time students, make significantly less income than both other groups, so the percentage of income given seems to be considerably high. And, considering the background and values of the college, most Geneva students seem to be religious (95% attend religious services almost every week or every week), which shows to have a direct effect on the amount of monetary contributions Geneva students donate to religious organizations. Philanthropy was one of very few survey items that increased with class level among Geneva respondents. It appears that Geneva students give more as they continue in their education.

The data gathered from the Social Capital Survey also suggests that Geneva students are more conservative than the groups surveyed by Putnam. Along with philanthropy, this area also strengthened with class level. However, because of the nature of our institution, conservatism among students isn't surprising. Being a relatively conservative Christian college, it is more likely that Geneva will draw students of similar backgrounds or perspectives, or students that share the same views as the college are more likely to stay at Geneva for their entire college experience rather than transfer to an alternative institution.

Geneva College respondents reported high levels of participation in many areas of social capital, though other areas turned up short. Interestingly, Geneva students were less trusting than both groups of respondents in Putnam's data. In each of the six areas of trust asked on the Social Capital Survey, Geneva respondents were slow

to “trust a lot” on each one (neighbors, police, store employees, Caucasians, African Americans, and Hispanics/Latinos) in comparison to Putnam’s respondents. However, most Geneva respondents had at least “some trust” for those living near them. Trust, according to Putnam (2000), is an important component to social capital and is associated with other forms of civic engagement such as volunteering, philanthropy, and political and community involvement. It is surprising that the Geneva student respondents are less trusting than those similar to them outside of Geneva, especially within their own residence halls.

Finally, Geneva respondents reported low levels of volunteering in comparison to the respondents in Putnam’s research. According to the literature (Putnam, 2000), education is associated with 45% more volunteering, but this wasn’t true among Geneva respondents. The low level of volunteering among Geneva respondents is unfortunate because, as indicated in the literature, when individuals volunteer in college they are more likely to volunteer as adults.

When broken down by class, it appeared as though Geneva freshmen are more civically engaged than their sophomore, junior, and senior classmates. Freshmen respondents reported higher levels in each of the following areas: taking an officer role on a committee or in a club, attending political rallies, volunteering, being in the home of someone of a different race, trusting the federal government, and having friends in their home.

From this data, one could conclude that Geneva College is not fulfilling its mission to students since it appears that civic engagement decreases as students spend more time at Geneva. However, it is necessary to consider the opportunities unique to the freshmen class, such as the community service day during freshmen orientation where every freshman is required to serve in the community with their orientation class. Another factor that may also come into play is the percentage of freshmen who are employed while attending college. Whereas only 46% of freshmen respondents have some level of employment, 75% of the sophomores, 74% of the juniors, and 72% of the seniors are employed either on or off campus. Because fewer freshmen are employed, they may have more time to participate in the mentioned areas. In addition, it is likely that freshmen, in comparison to upperclassmen, have maintained their connections to their home communities and groups of friends which allow them to take an active role among these groups more easily. Interestingly, attendance to political rallies and trust in the federal government were high among the freshmen respondents in comparison to the upperclassmen, even though their interest in politics and national affairs was less. Perhaps Geneva students are developing an interest in government while in college, but are not following through with action. Many factors may affect these levels of participation, but overall it is unfortunate that Geneva freshmen appear to have higher levels of civic engagement than their upperclassmen.

In a study by Egerton (2002), it was found that the social and civic engagement of young people *planning to enter* higher education was higher in their late teens than that of their peers who did not enter. But, higher education had a small additional effect on civic engagement, for both young and older students. Perhaps incoming Geneva freshmen had a higher level of civic engagement than other young people, but instead of being positively affected in college, the levels of participation actually decreased.

Most of the literature acknowledges higher education for developing civic skills and interests in students, such as volunteering, social activism, and community involvement. Unfortunately, there was mixed evidence of these values among the students at Geneva College. Sax (2003) found that students tend to become even more committed to social activism if they attend a college where other students espouse a social activist mentality, and that citizenship or community involvement is most influenced by levels of commitment to students' peers. If this is the case, creating a critical mass of interested students to participate in the community and social activism efforts is key to changing the patterns at Geneva.

Fortunately, and consistent with most of the literature, Geneva respondents appear to have higher levels of social capital than Putnam's respondents with "some college" and respondents between the ages of 18 and 34. However, for many of the survey items it was also found that the students at Geneva showed very little positive change in relation to class level. In fact, the Geneva freshmen respondents often had more participation or social capital in comparison to the other classes, though not conclusively.

### **Conclusion**

The results obtained through the use of the Social Capital Survey lead to some overall conclusions and informed assumptions about Geneva college students. Comparing the results of the survey to Putnam's data uncovered strengths and weaknesses in Geneva students, as well as the areas in which Geneva may be able to improve through academic and non-academic programming efforts.

Overall, Geneva students are more conservative politically and socially than others with similar education and of similar age. They are church-goers and make significant contributions to their religious organizations. They also donate blood more often and have high levels of participation in leadership and working on projects within their communities. Socializing informally is important to students in that they have friends over to their home almost twice as often as the other groups recorded in Putnam's data. In addition, Geneva students watch much less television than others of similar educational backgrounds and age. Each of these items contributes to the level of

social capital among the students. However, Geneva students also tend to be less trusting of each other and their communities, and they volunteer significantly less.

The greatest concern for Geneva College students is the lack of change in students between freshmen and seniors. Only in the areas of philanthropy and voter registration was there a significant increase in levels of participation. Most other survey items saw no change or even negative change in social capital among freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior students. In fact, many areas saw freshmen having higher levels of participation than the three other classes.

The data gathered from the Social Capital Survey is potentially troubling because it seems to conflict with Geneva's mission statement. The mission statement states that Geneva College will glorify God by "educating and ministering to a diverse community of students for the purpose of developing student-leaders, transforming society for the kingdom of Christ." If the purpose of Geneva is to transform society, the current data, which shows little evidence that the level of participation and social capital among students is of any significant magnitude, conflicts with that goal. Thus, it remains questionable that education for this purpose is being accomplished at Geneva College.

The Social Capital Survey revealed much data that is worth further research. Studying social capital among Geneva alumni would shed new light on the impact Geneva College has on civic engagement in the years following their college experience. Also, comparing Geneva College with other institutions of the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities would be an appropriate comparison in evaluating Geneva's education to students. If it is the purpose of higher education in America and of Geneva College to prepare students for lives of civic engagement, research on this topic must continue and deepen so that institutions such as Geneva College can faithfully fulfill their mission to transform society.

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Appendix I  
Social Capital Survey

## Social Capital Survey Spring 2004

**Please circle the BEST answer for EACH question.**

1. Generally speaking, would you say that most people in our society can be trusted?

- A. People can be trusted
- B. You can't be too careful
- C. It depends

2. This section will address how much can you trust different groups of people?

A. First, think about people in your neighborhood or residence hall. Generally speaking, how much can you trust them?

- A. Trust them a lot
- B. Trust them some
- C. Trust them only a little
- D. Trust them not at all
- E. I'm Neutral

B. How about the police in your local community?

- A. Trust them a lot
- B. Trust them some
- C. Trust them only a little
- D. Trust them not at all
- E. I'm Neutral

C. How much can you trust the people who work in the stores where you shop?

- A. Trust them a lot
- B. Trust them some
- C. Trust them only a little
- D. Trust them not at all
- E. I'm Neutral

D. How much can you trust Caucasians?

- A. Trust them a lot
- B. Trust them some
- C. Trust them only a little
- D. Trust them not at all
- E. I'm Neutral

E. How much can you trust African Americans?

- A. Trust them a lot
- B. Trust them some
- C. Trust them only a little
- D. Trust them not at all
- E. I'm neutral

F. How much can you trust Hispanics or Latinos?

- A. Trust them a lot
- B. Trust them some
- C. Trust them only a little
- D. Trust them not at all
- E. I'm Neutral

3. How interested are you in politics and national affairs?

- A. Very interested
- B. Somewhat interested
- C. Only slightly interested
- D. Not at all interested

4. Are you currently registered to vote?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. I'm not eligible to vote

5. How much of the time do you think you can trust the FEDERAL government to do what you think is right?

- A. Just about always
- B. Most of the time
- C. Some of the time
- D. Hardly ever

6. How much of the time do you think you can trust the LOCAL government to do what you think is right?

- A. Just about always
- B. Most of the time
- C. Some of the time
- D. Hardly ever

7. Thinking POLITICALLY AND SOCIALLY, how would you describe your own general outlook?

- A. Very conservative
- B. Moderately conservative
- C. Middle-of-the-road
- D. Moderately liberal
- E. Very liberal
- F. Something else

8. How many times in the past 12 months have you worked on a community project?

- A. Never
- B. Once
- C. 2-4 times
- D. 5-9 times
- E. 10-15 times
- F. 16-25 times
- G. More than 25 times

9. How many times in the past 12 months have you donated blood?

- A. Never
- B. Once
- C. 2-4 times
- D. More than 4 times

10. How many times in the past 12 months have you attended any public meeting in which there was discussion of town or school affairs?

- A. Never
- B. Once
- C. 2-4 times
- D. 5-9 times
- E. 10-15 times
- F. 16 or more times

11. How many times in the past 12 months have you attended a political meeting or rally?

- A. Never
- B. Once
- C. 2-4 times
- D. 5-9 times
- E. 10 or more times

12. How many times in the past 12 months have you attended any club or organizational meeting (not including meetings for work)?

- A. Never
- B. Once
- C. 2-4 times
- D. 5-9 times
- E. 10-15 times
- F. 16-25 times
- G. More than 25 times

13. When you're NOT at college, how often do you have friends over to your home (parent's home)?

- A. Never
- B. Once a year
- C. 2-4 times a year
- D. 5-9 times a year
- E. About once a month on average
- F. Twice a month
- G. About once a week on average
- H. More than once a week

14. How many times have you been in the home of a friend of a different race or had them in your home (parent's home)?

- A. Never
- B. Once
- C. 2-4 times
- D. 5-9 times
- E. 10-15 times
- F. 16-25 times
- G. More than 25

15. How many times have you been in the home of someone of a different neighborhood (i.e. school district) or had them in your home (parent's home)?

- A. Never
- B. Once
- C. 2-4 times
- D. 5-9 times
- E. 10-15 times
- F. 16-25 times
- G. More than 25 times

16. How many times in the past 12 months have you been in the home of someone you consider to be a community leader?

- A. Never
- B. Once
- C. 2-4 times
- D. 5-9 times
- E. 10-15 times
- F. 16-25 times
- G. More than 25 times

17. How many times in the past 12 months have you volunteered (outside of Geneva)?

- A. Never
- B. Once
- C. 2-4 times
- D. 5-9 times
- E. 10-15 times
- F. 16-25 times
- G. More than 25 times

18. In the past 12 months, have you served as an officer or served on a community of any local club or organization?

- A. Yes
- B. No

19. Not including weddings or funerals, how often do you attend religious services?

- A. Every week (or more often)
- B. Almost every week
- C. Once or twice a month
- D. A few times per year
- E. Only a couple times a year
- F. Never

20. During the past 12 months, approximately how much money did you contribute to all secular and religious causes, including your local religious congregation?

- A. None
- B. Less than \$50
- C. \$51-100
- D. \$101-200
- E. \$201-300
- F. More than \$300

21. All things considered, how happy are you?

- A. Very happy
- B. Happy
- C. Not very happy
- D. Not happy at all

22. How would you describe your overall state of health these days?

- A. Excellent
- B. Very good
- C. Good
- D. Fair
- E. Poor

23. How much do you agree with the following statement: Television is my primary form of entertainment?

- A. Agree strongly
- B. Agree somewhat
- C. It depends
- D. Disagree somewhat
- E. Disagree strongly

24 A. Describe your current employment status

- A. Not working
- B. Working on-campus
- C. Working off-campus
- D. Working both on and off campus

B. If you are currently working, how many hours do you work each week?

- A. 0-5 hours
- B. 6-10 hours
- C. 11-20 hours
- D. 21-30 hours
- E. 31-40 hours
- F. Over 40 hours

25 A. What race do you consider yourself to be?

- A. White
- B. African American or Black
- C. Hispanic / Latino
- D. Asian or Pacific Islander
- E. Alaskan Native / Native American
- F. Other

B. If you answered Hispanic / Lation, what is your background?

- A. Mexican
- B. Puerto Rican
- C. Cuban
- D. Other

C. If you answered Asian or Pacific Islander, what is your background?

- A. Chinese
- B. Korean
- C. Japanese
- D. Filipino
- E. Asian Indian
- F. Vietnamese
- G. Cambodian
- H. Other

26. Are you an American Citizen?

- A. Yes
- B. No

27. While at college, how many different telephone numbers do you have, not counting those dedicated to a fax machine or computer? \_\_\_\_\_

28. If you add together the yearly income, before taxes of your parents, what would be the total?

- A. \$19,999 or less
- B. \$20,000 - \$29,999
- C. \$30,000 - \$49,999
- D. \$50,000 - \$74,999
- E. \$75,000 - \$99,999
- F. \$100,000 or more
- G. I'm unsure

29. Are you Male\_\_\_\_\_ or Female\_\_\_\_\_

30. What is your hometown and state?

\_\_\_\_\_

31. In what year were you born?\_\_\_\_\_

32. In what year at Geneva are you?

- A. Freshman
- B. Sophomore
- C. Junior
- D. Senior

Appendix II  
Social Capital Survey Results

## Social Capital Survey Results Spring 2004

**TABLE 1**  
**Most people in our society can be trusted**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data	
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.	Some College	Age 18-34
People can be trusted	14%	7%	18%	15%	20%	48%	40%
You can't be too careful	24%	21%	30%	27%	20%	46%	54%
It depends	61%	71%	52%	59%	60%	6%	6%

**TABLE 2**  
**Trust people in your neighborhood or residence hall**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data	
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.	Some College	Age 18-34
Trust them a lot	39%	39%	34%	44%	38%	50%	30%
Trust them some	47%	55%	43%	41%	45%	37%	44%
Trust them only a little	9%	2%	16%	10%	13%	9%	16%
Trust them not at all	1%	0%	2%	0%	3%	4%	10%
I'm neutral	4%	4%	5%	5%	3%		

**TABLE 3**  
**Trust police in your local community**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data	
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.	Some College	Age 18-34
Trust them a lot	36%	46%	23%	31%	43%	48%	40%
Trust them some	43%	25%	52%	57%	45%	35%	35%
Trust them only a little	12%	16%	14%	5%	10%	11%	14%
Trust them not at all	4%	4%	7%	2%	3%	6%	11%
I'm neutral	5%	9%	5%	5%	0%		

**TABLE 4**  
**Trust people who work in stores where you shop**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data	
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.	Some College	Age 18-34
Trust them a lot	16%	16%	11%	21%	18%	28%	16%
Trust them some	48%	48%	41%	57%	45%	52%	46%
Trust them only a little	25%	19%	34%	16%	30%	15%	26%
Trust them not at all	2%	4%	2%	0%	3%	5%	12%
I'm neutral	9%	13%	11%	5%	5%		

**TABLE 5**  
**Trust Caucasians**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data	
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.	Some College	Age 18-34
Trust them a lot	10%	5%	14%	7%	15%	30%	22%
Trust them some	60%	57%	48%	69%	70%	61%	61%
Trust them only a little	9%	7%	14%	10%	5%	8%	15%
Trust them not at all	1%	0%	2%	0%	3%	1%	2%
I'm neutral	3%	5%	2%	0%	3%		

**TABLE 6**  
**Trust African Americans**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data	
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.	Some College	Age 18-34
Trust them a lot	4%	0%	7%	5%	5%	26%	19%
Trust them some	61%	59%	45%	67%	75%	64%	59%
Trust them only a little	12%	9%	18%	12%	8%	10%	17%
Trust them not at all	2%	4%	0%	0%	5%	1%	5%
I'm neutral	21%	29%	30%	17%	8%		

**TABLE 7**  
**Trust Hispanics or Latinos**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data	
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.	Some College	Age 18-34
Trust them a lot	4%	0%	7%	5%	5%	24%	18%
Trust them some	54%	48%	43%	60%	68%	64%	59%
Trust them only a little	18%	21%	20%	16%	13%	10%	20%
Trust them not at all	2%	2%	0%	0%	5%	3%	4%
I'm neutral	23%	29%	30%	19%	10%		

**TABLE 8**  
**Interest in politics and national affairs**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data	
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.	Some College	Age 18-34
Very interested	21%	27%	20%	21%	13%	32%	19%
Somewhat interested	41%	30%	39%	45%	53%	39%	34%
Only slightly interested	29%	32%	32%	26%	23%	20%	24%
Not at all interested	10%	11%	9%	7%	13%	9%	23%

**TABLE 9**  
**Registered to vote**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data	
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.	Some College	Age 18-34
Yes	69%	43%	72%	88%	83%	89%	66%
No	30%	55%	27%	12%	18%	11%	34%
Not eligible to vote		2%					



**TABLE 10****Trust the FEDERAL government to do what is right**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Just about always	2%	4%	2%	0%	0%		2%	4%
Most of the time	34%	39%	36%	29%	30%		21%	26%
Some of the time	53%	41%	39%	61%	64%		54%	46%
Hardly ever	11%	16%	9%	10%	5%		23%	24%

**TABLE 11****Trust the LOCAL government to do what is right**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Just about always	3%	5%	0%	2%	3%		6%	5%
Most of the time	34%	38%	23%	33%	41%		36%	33%
Some of the time	53%	41%	66%	57%	51%		48%	46%
Hardly ever	10%	16%	11%	7%	5%		11%	16%

**TABLE 12****General political and social outlook**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Very Conservative	18%	19%	18%	21%	13%		14%	14%
Moderately Conservative	44%	36%	48%	48%	46%		34%	29%
Middle-of-the-road	28%	27%	27%	24%	36%		29%	27%
Moderately Liberal	6%	9%	5%	2%	5%		16%	18%
Very Liberal	2%	4%	2%	2%	0%		6%	11%
Something else	2%	4%	0%	2%	0%		1%	1%

**TABLE 13****Worked on Community Project during past 12 months**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Yes	79%	93%	80%	66%	80%		41%	35%
No	19%	7%	20%	34%	20%		60%	65%

**TABLE 14****Donated blood during past 12 months**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Yes	34%	32%	34%	33%	37%		25%	21%
No	66%	68%	66%	67%	63%		75%	79%

**TABLE 15****Attended a public meeting with discussion of town or school affairs during the past 12 months**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Average times in past 12 months	0.8	1.1	0.5	0.6	0.8		2.6	2.8
Never	68%	66%	61%	79%	65%		Data not available	
Once	18%	13%	27%	12%	25%			
2-4 times	12%	18%	9%	5%	13%			
5-9 times	2%	2%	0%	2%	3%			
10-15- times	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%			
16 or more times	1%	2%	2%	0%	0%			

**TABLE 16****Attended a political rally or meeting during past 12 months**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Yes	12%	18%	14%	5%	15%		18%	14%
No	87%	82%	86%	95%	85%		82%	86%

**TABLE 17****How many times attended club or organizational meeting during past 12 months**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Never	15%	14%	21%	14%	10%			
Once	4%	4%	2%	10%	3%		Data not available	
2-4 times	27%	36%	19%	21%	31%			
5-9 times	13%	11%	19%	10%	15%			
10-15 times	14%	13%	12%	12%	23%			
16-25 times	7%	7%	7%	7%	8%			
More than 25 times	18%	16%	21%	26%	10%			

**TABLE 18****How often have friends over (when not at college)**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Average times in past 12 months	46	55	48	48	35		23.8	29.5
Never	8%	5%	9%	12%	5%		Data not available	
Once a year	2%	0%	2%	2%	3%			
2-4 times a year	11%	4%	5%	12%	23%			
5-9 times a year	6%	5%	11%	0%	5%			
About once a month on average	11%	14%	11%	7%	10%			
Twice a month	8%	5%	9%	7%	13%			
About once a week on average	25%	23%	20%	29%	18%			
More than once a week	29%	34%	32%	29%	20%			

**TABLE 19****How many times have been in the home of a friend of a different race**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Average times in past 12 months	11.53	13.25	9.76	10.7	11		11.8	18
Never	22%	14%	25%	29%	23%		Data not available	
Once	7%	7%	9%	5%	5%			
2-4 times	14%	7%	16%	17%	18%			
5-9 times	12%	13%	9%	10%	15%			
10-15 times	10%	16%	11%	2%	8%			
16-25 times	6%	7%	7%	7%	3%			
More than 25 times	30%	36%	23%	31%	30%			

**TABLE 20****How many times have been in the home of someone of a different neighborhood**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Never	3%	0%	5%	7%	0%			
Once	3%	2%	5%	2%	5%		Data not available	
2-4 times	11%	9%	7%	12%	18%			
5-9 times	8%	4%	14%	12%	5%			
10-15 times	7%	5%	7%	5%	13%			
16-25 times	8%	11%	2%	10%	10%			
More than 25 times	59%	70%	61%	52%	50%			

**TABLE 21****How many times been in the home of a community leader**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Never	36%	35%	43%	38%	28%			
Once	7%	7%	9%	0%	10%		Data not available	
2-4 times	21%	19%	11%	24%	31%			
5-9 times	12%	13%	16%	14%	5%			
10-15 times	12%	13%	16%	10%	10%			
16-25 times	6%	4%	2%	5%	13%			
More than 25 times	6%	9%	2%	10%	3%			

**TABLE 22**

**Volunteered in past 12 months**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Average times in past 12 months	6.09	6.5	6.5	5.6	6.1		9.4	9.3
Never	19%	11%	23%	26%	20%		Data not available	
Once	8%	11%	5%	7%	10%			
2-4 times	40%	43%	39%	38%	40%			
5-9 times	11%	14%	9%	12%	8%			
10-15 times	8%	9%	9%	5%	10%			
16-25 times	5%	4%	9%	2%	5%			
More than 25 times	8%	9%	7%	10%	8%			

**TABLE 23**

**Served as an officer or served on a committee of any club or organization**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Yes	37%	43%	36%	38%	23%		18%	20%
No	63%	57%	64%	62%	73%		82%	80%

**TABLE 24**

**How often attend religious services**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Every week or more	72%	68%	68%	79%	75%		41%	34%
Almost every week	23%	25%	20%	21%	23%		9%	8%
Once or twice a month	4%	5%	7%	0%	3%		20%	22%
A few times a year	1%	2%	2%	0%	0%		17%	22%
Only a couple times a year	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%		13%	14%
Never	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%			

**TABLE 25**

**Amount of money donated to religious causes**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
None	12%	15%	16%	12%	3%		26%	39%
\$1-100	34%	38%	37%	32%	33%		12%	15%
More than \$100	54%	48%	48%	56%	30%		62%	46%

**TABLE 26**

**Happiness**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Very happy	39%	33%	45%	38%	40%		40%	35%
Happy	57%	64%	45%	57%	60%		55%	59%
Not very happy	3%	4%	8%	2%	0%		5%	6%
Not very happy at all	1%	0%	2%	2%	0%		1%	1%

**TABLE 27****Health**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.	Some College	Age 18-34	
Excellent	30%	27%	30%	33%	30%	23%	27%	
Very good	49%	50%	43%	55%	48%	38%	38%	
Good	17%	16%	25%	10%	18%	27%	26%	
Fair	4%	7%	0%	2%	5%	10%	8%	
Poor	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	3%	1%	

**TABLE 28****Television as primary form of entertainment**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.	Some College	Age 18-34	
Agree Strongly	4%	5%	2%	7%	3%	13%	14%	
Agree Somewhat	12%	14%	7%	12%	15%	17%	20%	
It depends	20%	21%	20%	12%	28%	1%	0%	
Disagree Somewhat	26%	34%	23%	29%	18%	25%	21%	
Disagree Strongly	37%	25%	48%	40%	38%	45%	46%	

**TABLE 29****Employment**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.	Some College	Age 18-34	
Not working	35%	54%	25%	26%	28%			
Working on-campus	44%	21%	52%	52%	58%	Data not available		
Working off-campus	9%	11%	14%	5%	5%			
Working both on and off campus	13%	14%	9%	17%	10%			

**TABLE 30****If working, how many hours per week**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.	Some College	Age 18-34	
0-5 hours	30%	33%	31%	24%	31%			
0-10 hours	41%	45%	44%	38%	38%	Data not available		
11-20 hours	16%	12%	19%	15%	16%			
21-30 hours	7%	6%	6%	12%	6%			
31-40 hours	1%	0%	0%	6%	0%			
Over 40 hours	4%	3%	0%	6%	9%			

**TABLE 31****Race**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
White	93%	88%	98%	93%	95%			
African American or Black	2%	5%	0%	2%	0%		Data not available	
Hispanic / Latino	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%			
Asian or Pacific Islander	2%	2%	2%	0%	3%			
Alaskan Native / Native American	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%			
Other	3%	5%	0%	5%	0%			

**TABLE 32****American Citizen**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
Yes	98%	98%	98%	98%	100%			
No	2%	2%	2%	2%	0%		Data not available	

**TABLE 33****How many different telephone numbers**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
1	37%	28%	47%	44%	32%		84%	85%
2	50%	55%	42%	44%	57%		11%	11%
3	11%	15%	8%	10%	8%		4%	3%
4	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%		2%	1%

**TABLE 34****Yearly Family Income**

	Geneva College					Putnum's Data		
	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.		Some College	Age 18-34
\$19,999 or less	6%	10%	5%	3%	5%		10%	16%
\$20,000-\$29,999	7%	10%	7%	3%	8%		14%	17%
\$30,000-\$49,999	16%	12%	14%	20%	18%		30%	27%
\$50,000-\$74,999	26%	33%	21%	25%	21%		23%	19%
\$75,000-\$99,999	15%	10%	19%	5%	26%		9%	8%
\$100,000 or more	10%	4%	14%	15%	8%		10%	10%
I'm unsure	22%	23%	19%	30%	13%			

**TABLE 35**

**Gender**

**Geneva College**

	Total	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sn.
Male	49%	48%	39%	60%	53%
Female	51%	52%	61%	40%	48%

**TABLE 36**

**Year at Geneva College**

**Geneva College**

	Total
Freshmen	31%
Sophomore	24%
Junior	23%
Senior	22%