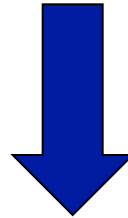


Small group activities within academic communities improve the connectedness of students with faculty

Dr. Katharina Brandl
Assistant Professor

Curriculum changes in medical schools

Educate the next generation of physicians



Continuous curricular renewal

Goals:

- Learning communities
- Learner-centered curricula
- Team-based approach to healthcare
- Clinical skills early in the training

Outcomes of curricular changes

Academic outcomes:

- Increased¹ or stable² Step 1 and increased¹ Step 2 performance
- Decrease in Step 1 failure rates²

¹Williams PC et al: The strategic impact of a changing curriculum and learning environment on medical students' academic performance. *J Natl Med Assoc* 103: 802-810, 2011.

²Wilkerson L et al.: Two perspectives on the effects of a curriculum change: student experience and the United States medical licensing examination, step 1. *Acad Med* 82: S117-120, 2007.

Outcomes of curricular changes

Outcomes related to social and psychological wellbeing:

- Increased faculty engagement¹
- Lower depressive symptoms²
- Positive² or stable³ learning environment

¹Venance SL et al.: Exploring frontline faculty perspectives after a curriculum change. *Med Educ* 48: 998-1007, 2014.

²AlFaris EA et al. Student centered curricular elements are associated with a healthier educational environment and lower depressive symptoms in medical students. *BMC Med Educ* 14: 192, 2014.

³Edgren G et al.: Comparing the educational environment at two different stages of curriculum reform. *Medical Teacher* 32: E233-E238, 2010.

Conceptual framework

McMillan¹: Sense of community theory

“feeling connected among community members”

¹McMillan DW, and Chavis DM. Sense of Community - a Definition and Theory. *J Community Psychol* 14: 6-23, 1986.

Conceptual framework

McMillan¹: Sense of community theory

Elements that build a sense of community:

- Membership
- Influence
- Integration
- Emotional connection

} all exemplified though the
Academic Communities

¹McMillan DW, and Chavis DM. Sense of Community - a Definition and Theory. *J Community Psychol* 14: 6-23, 1986.

Aims of the study

- To investigate the impact of a curriculum change on students' connectedness among themselves and with faculty and the resulting sense of community.
- To determine which element of the curriculum change most contributed to their connectedness and sense of community.

Goals of the curriculum change at UCSD SOM

Reduction in
lecture hours

Increased
small group
activities

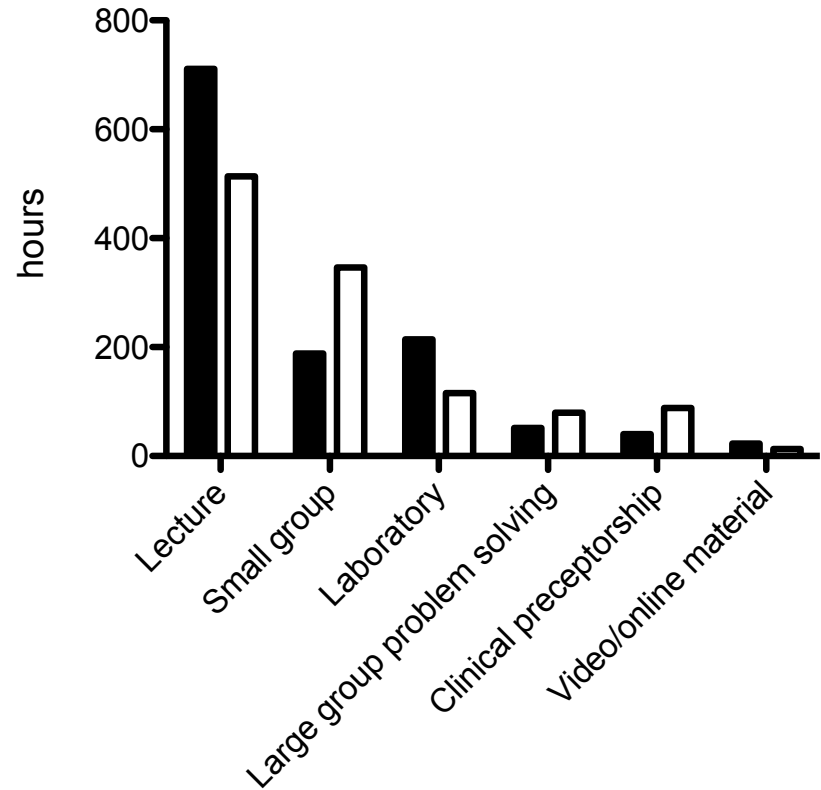
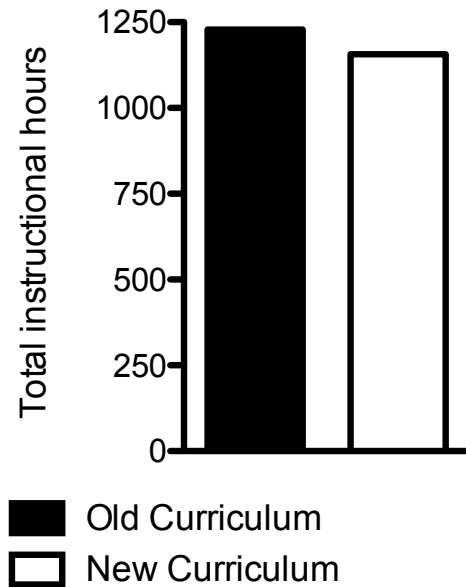


Introduction of
six academic
communities



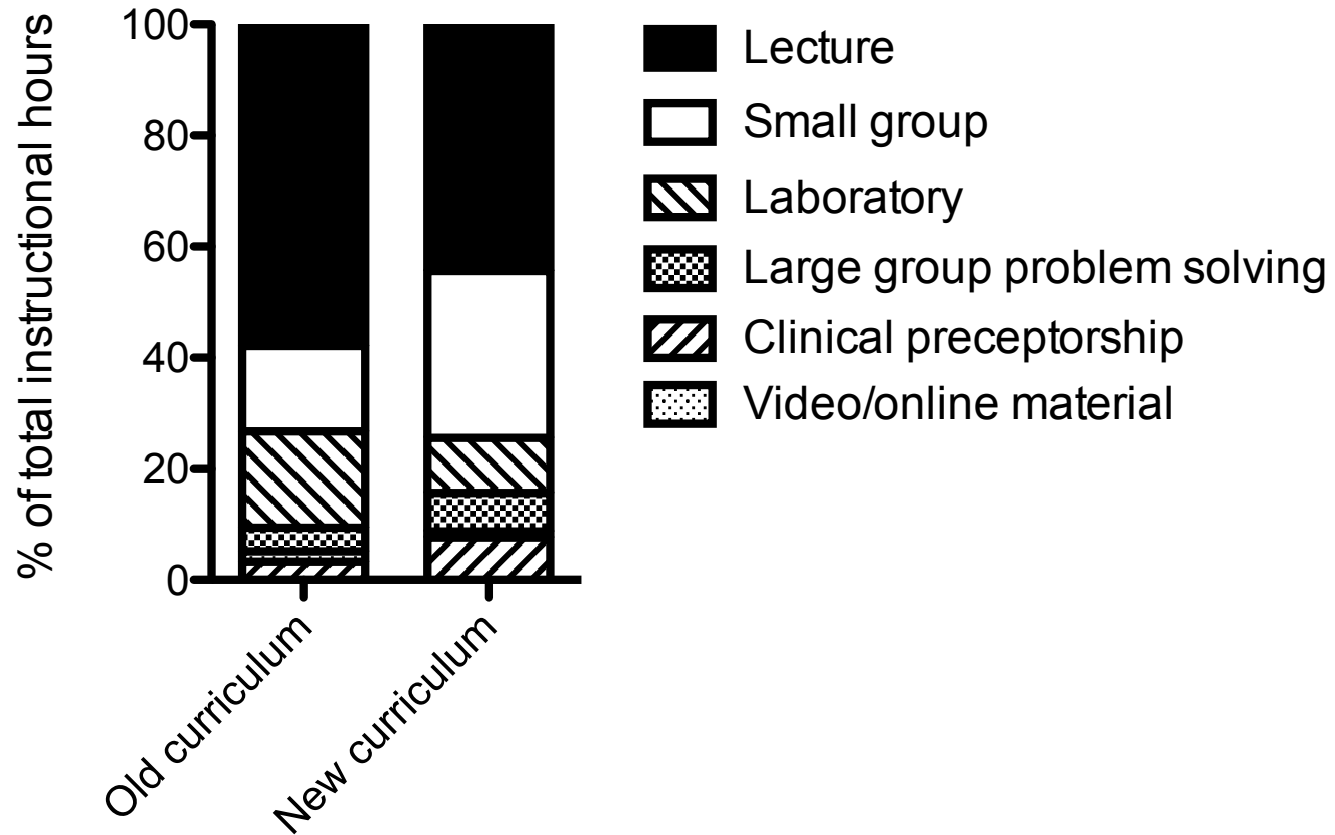
More clinical
activity in pre-
clerkship years

Curriculum change at the UC San Diego SOM

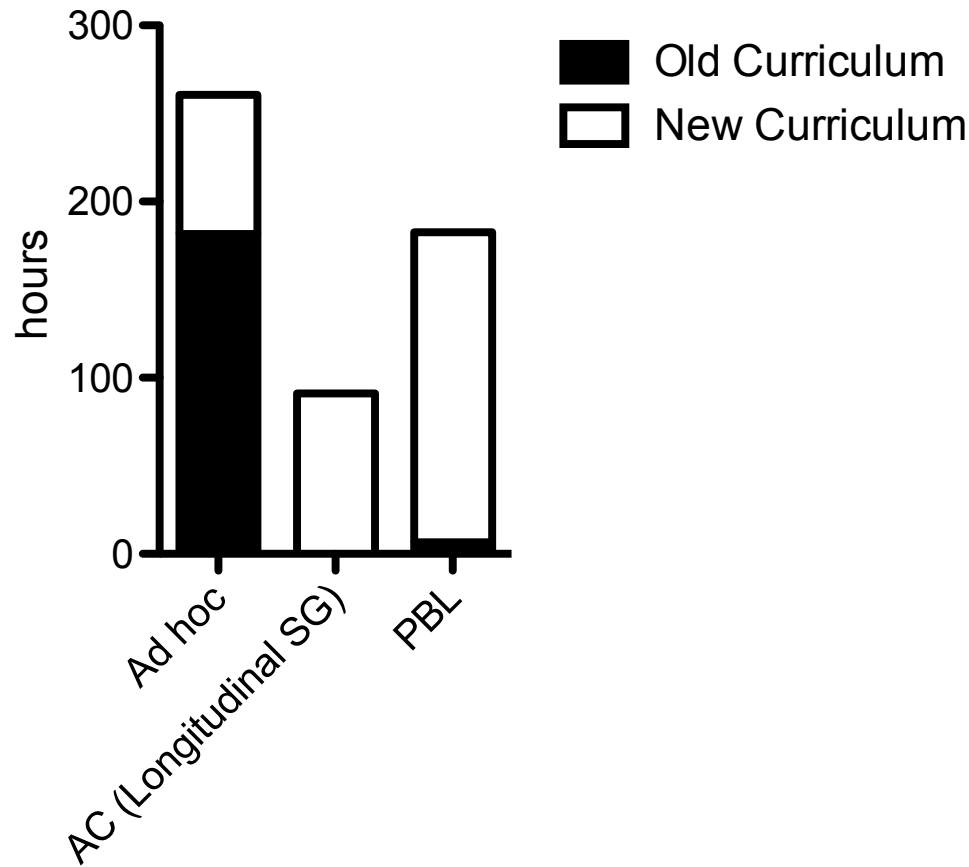


MS1 and MS2 instructional hours were analyzed together

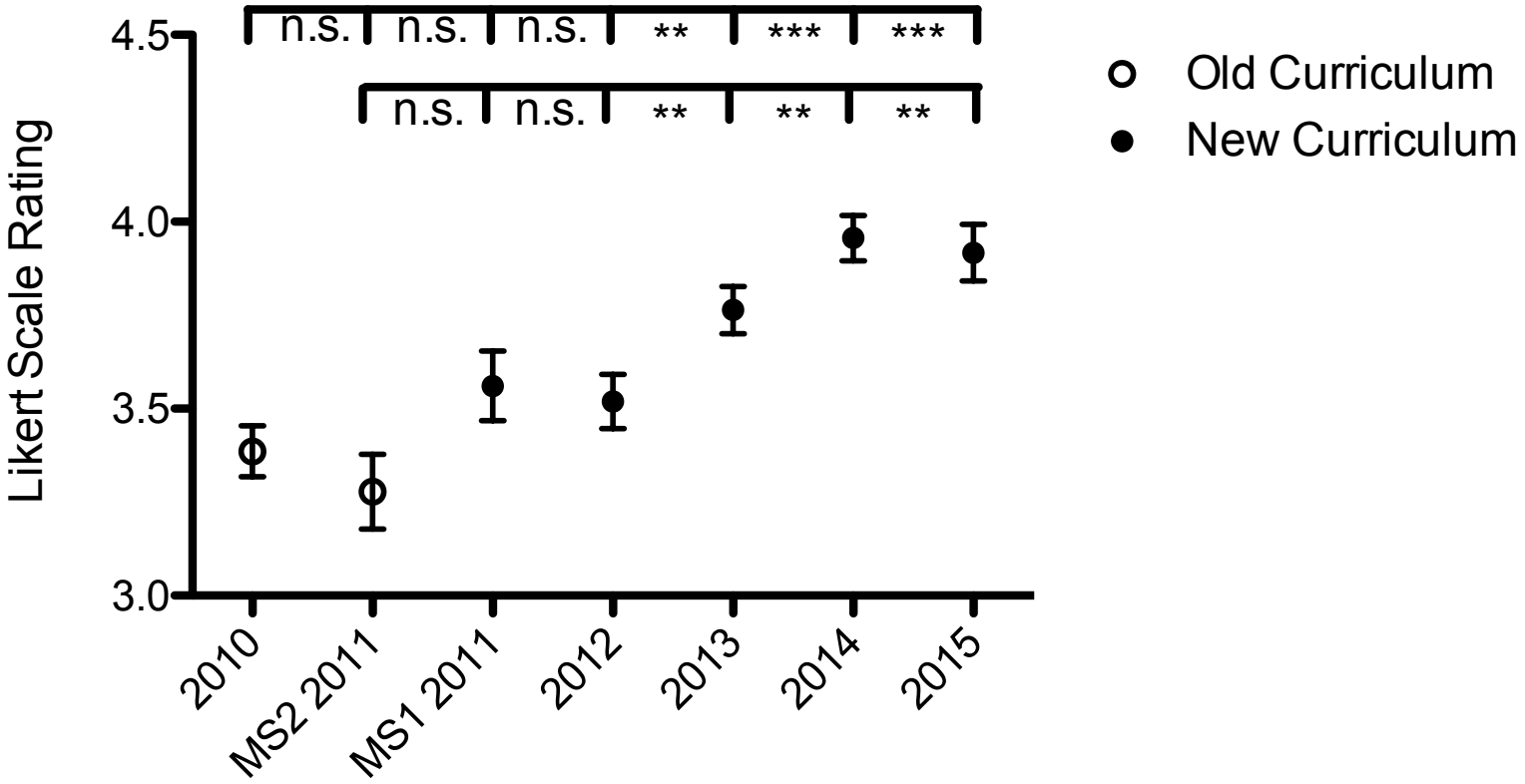
Curriculum change at the UC San Diego SOM



Curriculum change at the UC San Diego SOM

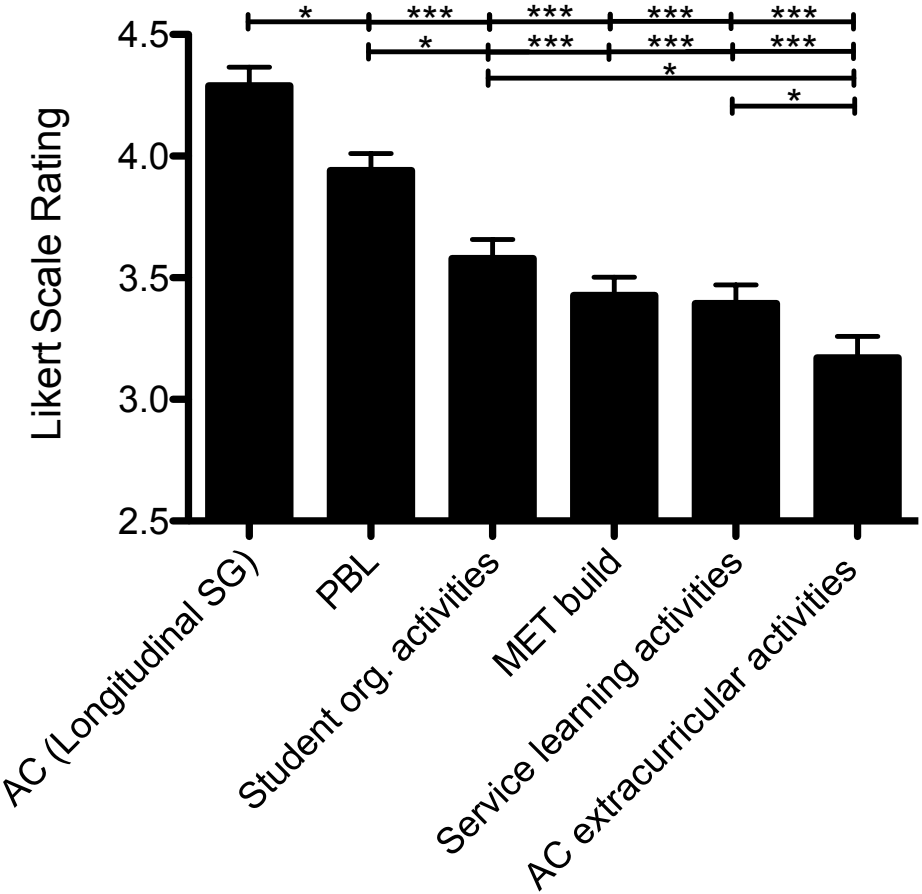


Effects of the curricular change on students' connectedness with faculty



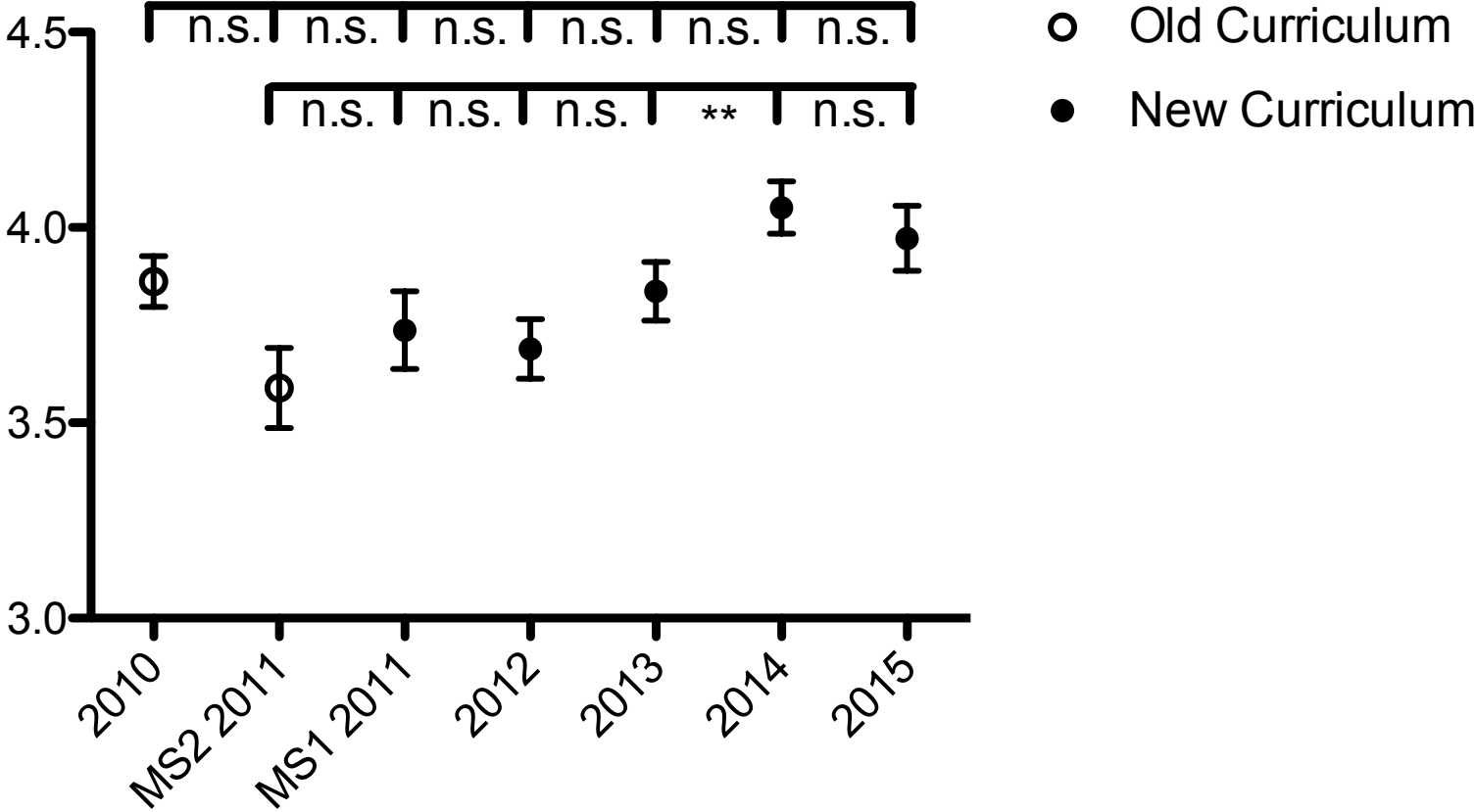
n = 904, MS1 and MS2 were analyzed together unless otherwise noted

Longitudinal small group activities contribute most to students' connectedness with faculty



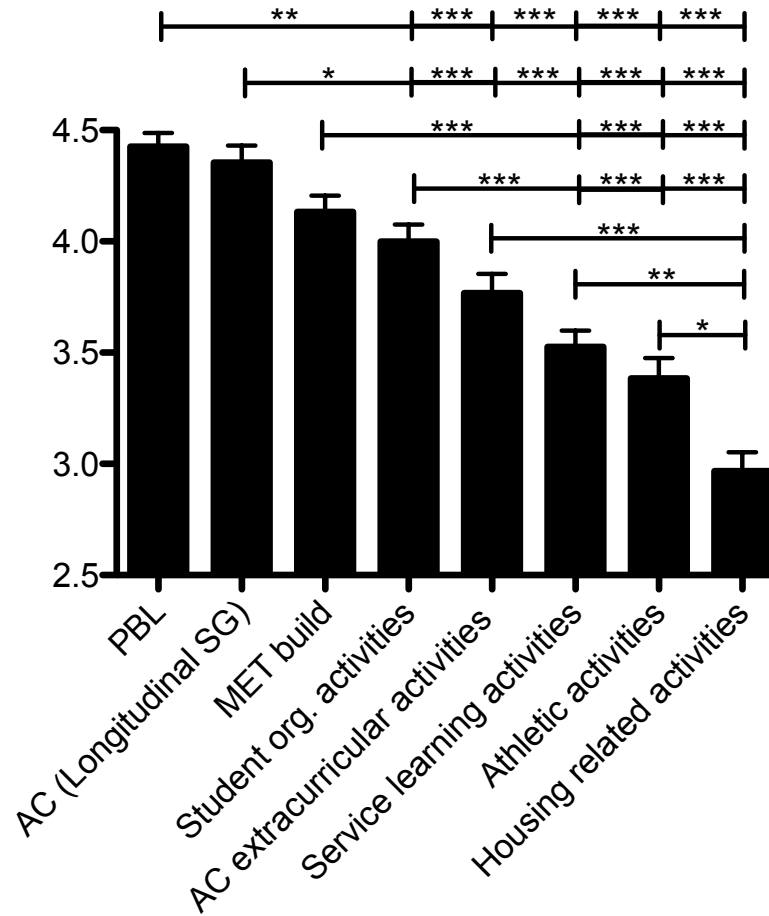
n = 153, MS1 and MS2 were analyzed together

Effects of the curricular change on students' connectedness among themselves



n = 904, MS1 and MS2 were analyzed together unless otherwise noted

Small group activities contribute most to students' connectedness among themselves



n = 153, MS1 and MS2 were analyzed together

Conclusion

- Increased small group activities enhances students' connectedness with faculty
- Longitudinal small group activities within academic communities are most contributing to students' connectedness with faculty
- Students' connectedness among themselves was high baseline and did not significantly change

Acknowledgments

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