

# NU Global Experience Office's Global Engagement Survey Report

*Pilot Year (2021-2022) &  
Preliminary 2022-2023 Comparison*

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## Executive Summary:

GEO uses a variety of assessment tools to track feedback and gauge progress in supporting students’ growth regarding its Global & Intercultural Learning Goals. One of these assessment tools is the Global Engagement Survey (GES). This survey was piloted in 2021-2022 with learners in selected sections of the GBST 1012 course and the GEXO 300 Badge. Based on this small sample size, **GEO has both quantitative and qualitative data that suggest learners are developing skills and knowledge associated with GEO’s Global & Intercultural Learning Goals.** Based on the insights from the first set of data, GEO distributed the survey to a larger network of learners in the 2022 - 2023 cycle. **The preliminary results of the 2022-2023 data align and strengthen the insights gained from the pilot year.** Below is a chart of the mean rates for the pre-and post-test scores for the pilot year of the survey. The metrics highlighted are those that align most closely with the Global & Intercultural Learning Goals.

	Cultural Adaptability <i>(Personal Dev.)</i>	Civic Efficacy <i>(Systems Thinking)</i>	Openness to Diversity <i>(Difference &amp; Diversity)</i>	Global Civic Values <i>(Ethical Action)</i>
NU Pre	3.79	3.57	4.19	3.69
NU Post	3.89	3.91	4.20	3.91
<i>Difference</i>	+ .1	+ .34	+ .1	+ .22
GES All Pre	3.90	3.69	4.16	3.89
GES All Post	4.00	3.91	4.28	4.11
<i>Difference</i>	+ .1	+ .22	+ .12	+ .22

## Introduction:

One of the initiatives for the Academic Integration & Planning team is the assessment of the Global Experience Office's global and community-based learning programs. There are a variety of different assessment opportunities and tools being used across the traditional study abroad, Faculty-Led, and Pathways programs looking at both programmatic elements and making the connections to GEO's **Global & Intercultural Learning Goals**:

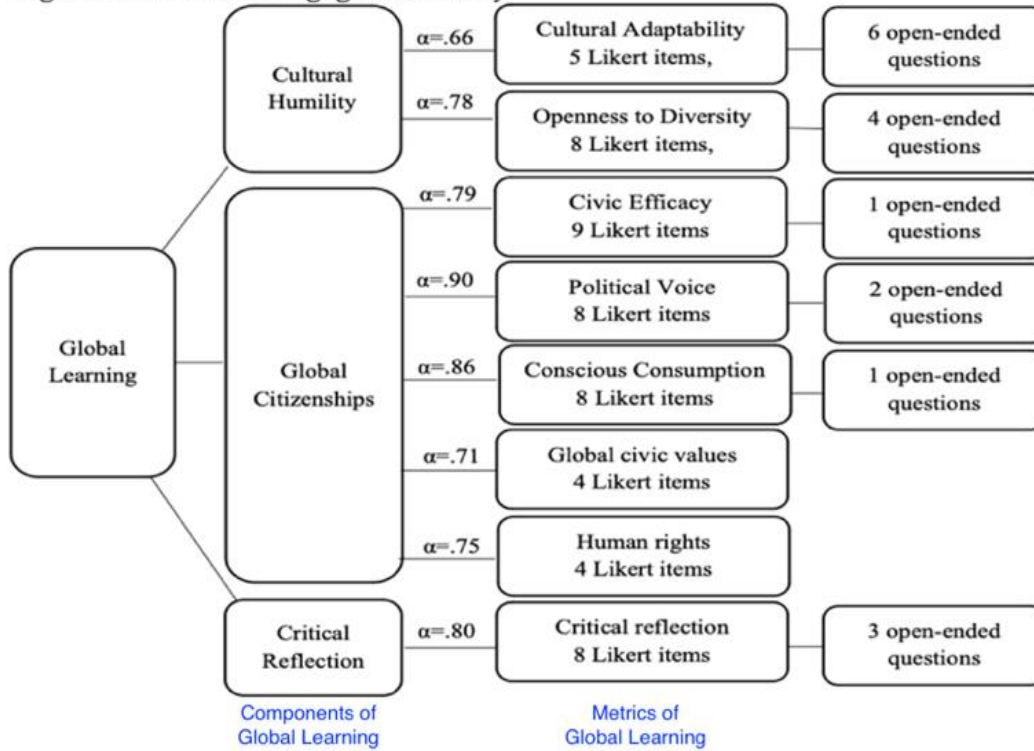
- Learners recognize and critically examine their cultural influences.
- Learners analyze the connection between the global and the local, and understand how structures, forces, and phenomena shape culture and individual experience.
- Learners can live, learn, and work effectively with people whose backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives are different from their own.
- Learners reflect and act with an understanding of the local and global impacts of their decision.

One of the assessment tools being used is the Global Engagement Survey (GES) developed and facilitated by the Community-Based Global Learning Collaborative. This report seeks to provide a general overview of the GES, insights from the 2021-2022 Pilot Year and 2022-2023 Year (\*data is still being collected), and the potential further utility of the survey and its findings for the Global Experience Office.

## Global Engagement Survey Overview:

The GES is a multi-institutional assessment tool that utilizes open and closed prompts (quantitative and qualitative methods) to better understand relationships between programmatic elements and student learning in global and community-based learning programs. There are 27 institutions in the consortium of partners distributing the GES. Learners take a pre-survey at the beginning of their global engagement experience and then take a post-survey at the end of their experience. The data collected by the two surveys can be analyzed separately, in terms of change between the pre-and post-survey results, and in comparison between the Northeastern data and the total data collected from all institutions using it. The GES defines Global Learning based on three components: Cultural Humility, Global Citizenship, and Critical Reflection, which align well with GEO's learning goals. Each of these components of Global Learning is further broken down into different metrics as seen on the next page.

Figure 1: The Global Engagement Survey



To keep the analysis of the data focused, the GES metrics of Cultural Adaptability, Civic Efficacy, Openness to Diversity, and Global Civic Values have been mapped onto the four GEO Global & Intercultural Learning Goals (personal development, systems thinking, difference and diversity, and ethical action). This provides a path to assess learners’ development in those goals.

GES Metrics	GEO’s Global Learning Goals
Cultural Adaptability	Personal Development
Civic Efficacy	Systems Thinking
Openness to Diversity	Difference and Diversity
Global Civic Values	Ethical Action

Much of the data detailed in the next section focus on the pre-and post-survey results as they relate to these 4 GES Metrics and the corresponding Global Learning Goals. Nonetheless, the value and insights of the survey are not limited to these metrics and could be analyzed further in the future.

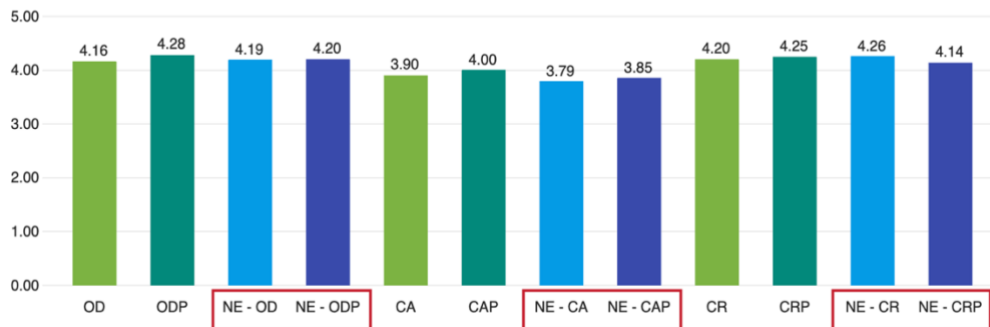
## Northeastern University Data:

Within the consortium, 1264 students took the pre-survey and 511 completed the post-survey. Northeastern’s participation included 71 learners who took the pre-survey and 18 who completed the post-survey. The ratio of pre-and post-participants at Northeastern is roughly in line with that of the broader consortium. Northeastern participants were drawn from some sections of the Global Learning Experience course (GBST 1012) and the survey was required for participants in the Global and Intercultural Communication badge (GEOX 300).

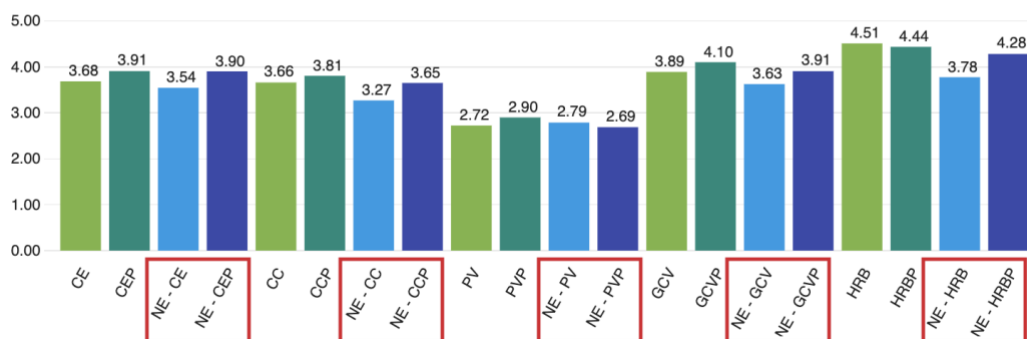
Overall, there were increases in the averages collected across the GES metrics demonstrating that students are potentially growing in their global learning. This could indicate that the programmatic elements (scaffolding and facilitation), such as the Global and Intercultural Communication badge (GEOX 300) and Global Learning Experience course (GBST 1012), are supporting learner development. However, this data is descriptive data and cannot be used to demonstrate causation between global engagement learning, the GEO programs, GBST 1012 course, or GEOX 300 badge.

Below are the survey means for the 8 Global Learning Metrics. When reviewing the data, there is a comparison across NU and consortium data, as well as a comparison between NU pre-and post-survey results:

Total data set & Northeastern: Pre & post-survey means on Openness to Diversity (OD), Cultural Adaptability (CA), and Critical Reflection (CR)



Total & Northeastern: Pre- and post-survey means on Civic Efficacy (CE), Conscious Consumption (CC), Political Voice (PV), Global Civic Values (GCV), & Human Rights Beliefs (HRB)



**Quantitative Interpretations:**

The gains in several metrics were slightly more significant than at other consortium institutions. Some notable observations of the GES scales as related to the GEO Global Learning Goals are:

- *Cultural adaptability (Personal Development):* Northeastern and the consortium had equal levels of growth across the pre-and post-survey results.
- *Civic Efficacy (Systems Thinking):* Northeastern started at a lower rate than the consortium and showed improvement to the level of the consortium participants. This is the metric on which Northeastern demonstrated the highest amount of growth.
- *Openness to Diversity (Difference and Diversity):* Northeastern had very limited growth between the pre-and post-survey and a lower rate of growth compared to the consortium participants.
- *Global Civic Values (Ethical Action):* Northeastern and the consortium had equal levels of growth, but Northeastern’s responses were lower than the consortium in the pre-and post-surveys by .20 points.

	Cultural Adaptability (Personal Dev.)	Civic Efficacy (Systems Thinking)	Openness to Diversity (Difference & Diversity)	Global Civic Values (Ethical Action)
NU Pre	3.79	3.57	4.19	3.69
NU Post	3.89	3.91	4.20	3.91
<i>Difference</i>	+ .1	+ .34	+ .1	+ .22
GES All Pre	3.90	3.69	4.16	3.89
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**Additional observations:**

- *Conscious Consumption:* Northeastern demonstrated growth by .33 points in the pre-and post-survey which is significantly higher than the consortium growth of .15, but the Northeastern post-survey means are still lower than the consortium participants (3.65 v 3.81).
- *Human Rights Beliefs:* Northeastern showed improvement by .34 points whereas other consortium participants had evidence of a decline of .07 points.

**Takeaways:**

Acknowledging the limitations of the small sample size, the data does show a trend of growth across these four metrics between the pre-and post-surveys. This is a trend for the consortium at large, but the increase in NU data for Civic Efficacy is notable since it is larger than the consortium’s rate of growth difference and has the greatest

growth difference while also having the lowest mean in the four metrics. Building on this observation there are similarities in the pre-and post-survey growth differences and comparisons with the consortium for two other metrics: Conscious Consumption and Human Rights Beliefs. All three of these metrics fall under the Global Learning Component of Global Citizenship. Therefore, combining the observation on Civic Efficacy with the increased growth in the Conscious Consumption and Human Rights Beliefs metrics may suggest that GEO programming has a positive impact on learners' global learning in general, but that programming has a specific positive impact on learners' understanding of and development in Global Citizenship.

### Qualitative Interpretations:

The qualitative data has the potential to provide further insight into how learners are interpreting the Global Learning metrics, especially when used in tandem with the quantitative results. Focusing specifically on the metric of Openness to Diversity, several students' qualitative responses indicated continuing discomfort with discussing difficult topics related to difference and diversity:

*Discussing Difference:* Many learners described being uncomfortable engaging in conversations about unfamiliar topics, situations in which they did not have lived experience, or in which their identities were associated with relative power and privilege.

- Pre-Survey Responses:
  - "Truthfully, I get uncomfortable when talking about subjects I'm not informed about such as differences in traditions or ways of life. In addition, I do find myself apprehensive about asking questions. I am a naturally inquisitive person, always wanting to learn more, but I get nervous to say the wrong thing at the wrong time."
- Post-Survey Responses:
  - "When I have to self-represent myself as a white person in the US in a conversation about race, I get uncomfortable navigating how to say something of substance while trying not to offend anyone or speak for others."

*Understanding Cultural Difference:* Some learners had a limited view of cultural differences. When asked specifically about working across difference, learners tended to discuss individual communication or professional styles rather than culture and identity.

- Pre-Survey:
  - "When values collide-for example, when a person has a different approach to deadlines than me."
- Post-Survey:
  - "If those people fall much further to the right on the political spectrum, or who have different experiences in regard to global issues, I can find it difficult to find common ground."

Multiple learners in the pre-survey described immutable cultural differences based on nationality (for example, Japanese vs. American). This was less evident in the post-survey.

- Pre-Survey:
  - “Because my dad is Japanese and mom is American, they have different standards, and thus different behaviors. My dad is not good at expressing his feelings, whereas my mom is very good at it. I have been thinking about how members of my family behave and why they behave the way they do.”

#### Takeaways:

These responses speak to the metric of Openness to Diversity and the larger Global Learning component of Cultural Humility. Based on many of the responses, there is a tendency to look at the world through either a lens of individualism or of monolithic cultural difference which could be an area that merits more careful learning scaffolding. Additionally, while the learners’ discomfort in discussing difference is evident in the responses, the responses speak to a larger question of how to have these conversations respectfully rather than a desire to avoid them or a perception that they aren’t valuable. This could be an opportunity for increased programmatic scaffolding focused on how to address uncomfortable topics and think critically about cultural difference. It could also indicate learners’ consciousness of social positioning and relative privilege which relates to other metrics and would need further investigation. Through further analysis of this data, especially in tandem with the quantitative responses, there is a potential to identify clear evidence of Global Learning as well as to identify specific opportunities for academic and skills scaffolding within GEO programming.



## Preliminary Comparison with 2022-2023 Survey Results

The post-survey results are still being collected for the 2022-2023 survey distribution. However, based on the available data, below are the comparison rates of completion between the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 cycles.

	Pre – Survey	Post - Survey
Northeastern (2021-2022)	71	18
Northeastern (2022-2023)	506	239 <i>*still collecting</i>
All GES (2021- 2022)	1264	511
All GES (2022-2023)	1656 <i>*still collecting</i>	577 <i>*still collecting</i>

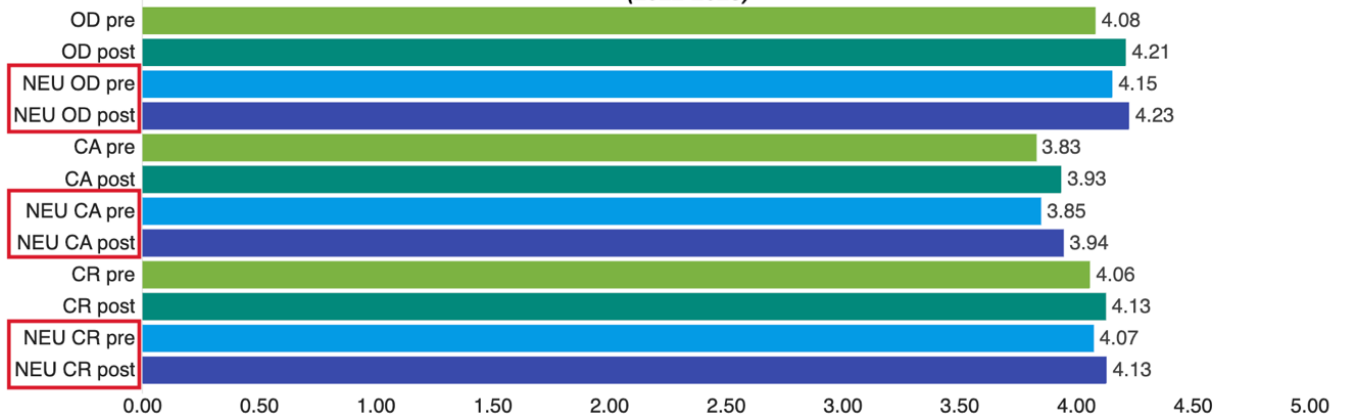
While the data still needs to be analyzed further, the trends of learners’ scores increasing between the pre-and post-survey across most of the metrics continue. For the four metrics identified to initially track progress with Global Learning Goals, the two years of survey data are below:

	Cultural Adaptability <i>(Personal Dev.)</i>	Civic Efficacy <i>(Systems Thinking)</i>	Openness to Diversity <i>(Difference &amp; Diversity)</i>	Global Civic Values <i>(Ethical Action)</i>
2021 – 2022: NU Pre-Survey	3.79	3.57	4.19	3.69
2021 – 2022: NU Post-Survey	3.85	3.91	4.20	3.91
<i>Difference</i>	+0.06	+ .34	+0.01	+0.22
2022 – 2023: NU Pre-Survey	3.85	3.62	4.15	3.80
2022 – 2023: NU Post-Survey	3.94	3.87	4.23	3.97
<i>Difference</i>	+0.09	+0.25	+0.08	+0.17
<i>Difference of yearly change pre to post</i>	+0.03	-.11	+0.07	-.05

While the qualitative and quantitative data for the 2022-2023 data needs to be further analyzed, below is a graph of the eight metrics of the GES divided into two graphs. The general GES pre-and post-means are compared to the Northeastern University pre-and post-means.

**Openness to Diversity, Cultural Adaptability & Critical Reflection scales pre & post-survey means**

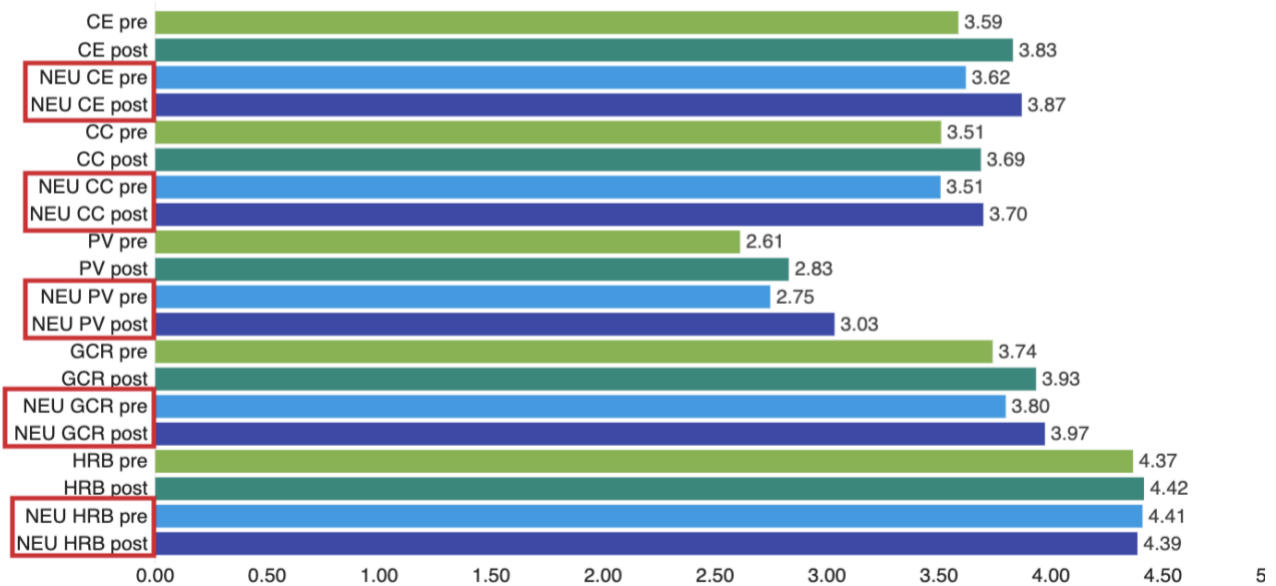
Total data set & NEU  
(2022-2023)



Scales: Civic Efficacy (CE), Conscious Consumption (CC), Political Voice (PV), Global Civic Responsibility (GCR), & Human Rights Beliefs (HRB)

**Global citizenship scales pre & post-survey means**

Total data set & NEU



A few notable observations include:

- In 2021-2022, there was an increase in the mean for the Human Rights Beliefs metric. However, for the 2022-2023 surveys, there is a slight decrease in this metric between the pre-and post-survey (4.41 to 4.39).
- In 2021-2022, there was a decrease in the mean for the Critical Reflection metric (4.26 to 4.14). However, for the 2022-2023 surveys, there is an increase between the pre-and post-survey (4.07 to 4.13). Because the pre-survey is starting at a lower rate, one potential explanation for this is that the demographics between the two years are very different, specifically 2022-2023 included significantly more learners participating in GEO first-year programs such as NUin. So potentially, critical reflection is a skill underdevelopment for these learners.
- For the 2022-2023 surveys, Northeastern pre-survey means are generally higher or the same as the consortium pre-survey means, but the gap between the consortium and Northeastern means diminishes mostly in the post-surveys. One exception is that Northeastern's post-survey mean for Political Voice is .2 higher than the consortium.

## Next Steps & Emerging Questions:

Both the general research and initial GES results demonstrate that facilitation and scaffolding contribute to learner development. Adding targeted scaffolding across GEO program types and using the GES as a learning and assessment tool can catalyze more transformative global experiential learning. Some future goals and considerations include:

- Connecting GES with other teaching and learning initiatives within GEO and across EI and Northeastern to increase access to assessment opportunities and gains from the analysis.
- Using the data collected to identify specific opportunities to create targeted scaffolding in the existing GEO programs to support learning – potentially focused on the diversity and difference goal and how to have respectful conversations on topics of race, class, culture, and difference.
- 2022-23: 506 learners took the pre-survey (the highest number among participating institutions; NU accounts for 31% of total pre-tests and 41% of total post-tests), which creates a larger data set and may have an impact on the value of comparing the Northeastern and total GES data sets due to how the Northeastern numbers impact the means of each matrix.

The next steps and goals for the assessment initiatives include pursuing an increased sponsored level role so that raw data can be analyzed by differentiated subsets and implementing the GES across all GEO programs to measure student outcomes within each program. Through intentional expansion, the data collected in the GES can stoke reflection and introspection that contribute to learning and development. This introduces the emerging questions related to this survey:

- Does the survey itself contribute to students moving toward learning outcomes?
- How would access to the raw data (through the increased sponsored level) increase our understanding of how different programmatic styles and courses are impacting students' global engagement survey scores?