INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

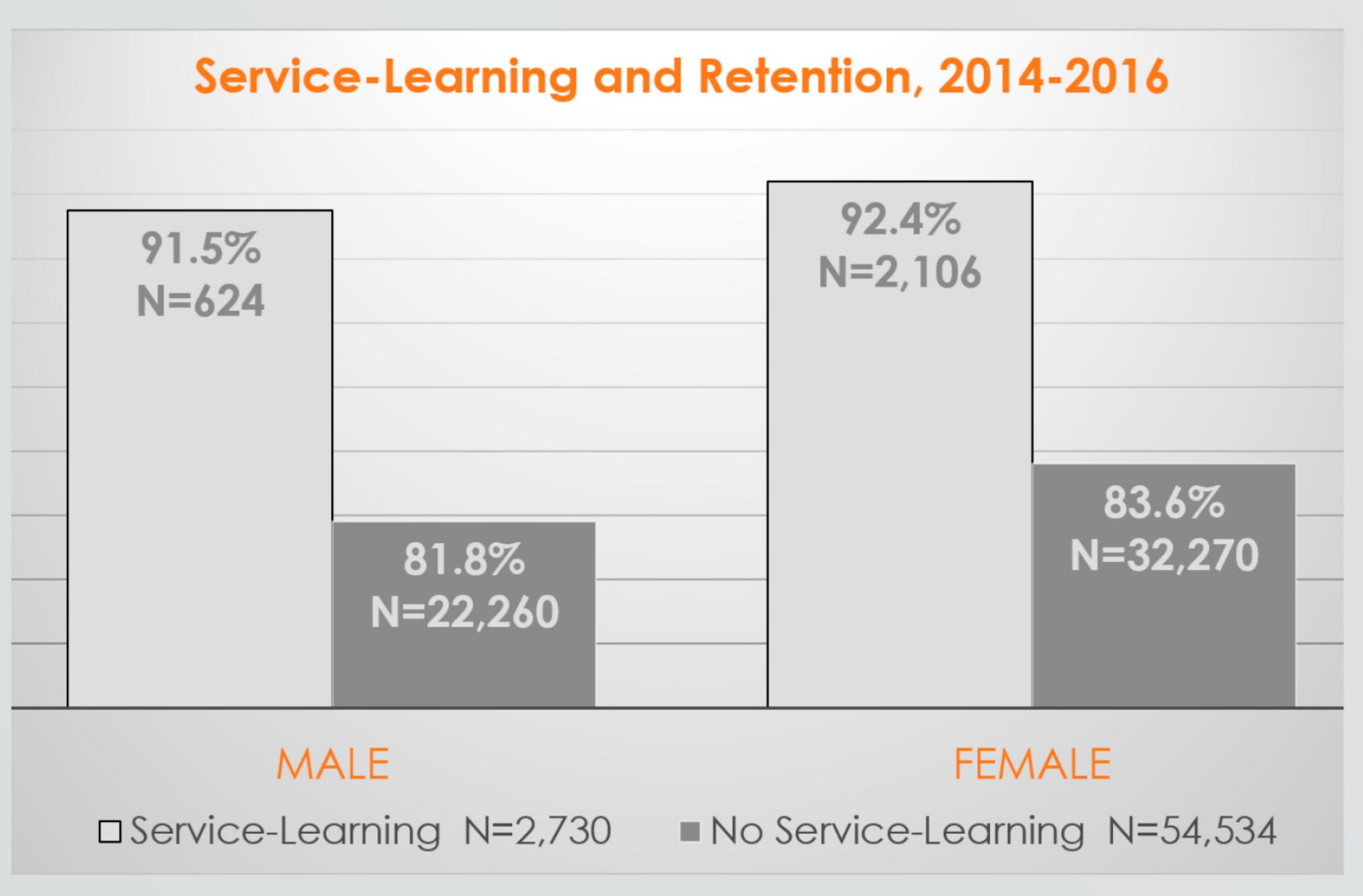
COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING YIELDS NOTEWORTHY

IMPACTS ON RETENTION AND GRADUATION

Service-Learning and Retention

Buffalo State Computing and Technology Services provided 54,534 enrollment records for Buffalo State students enrolled between Spring 2014 and Fall 2016. Enrollment records for 2,730 student participants in designated service—learning (SL) courses during the same timeframe were also provided. Data were analyzed to determine return rates of students from one semester to the next.

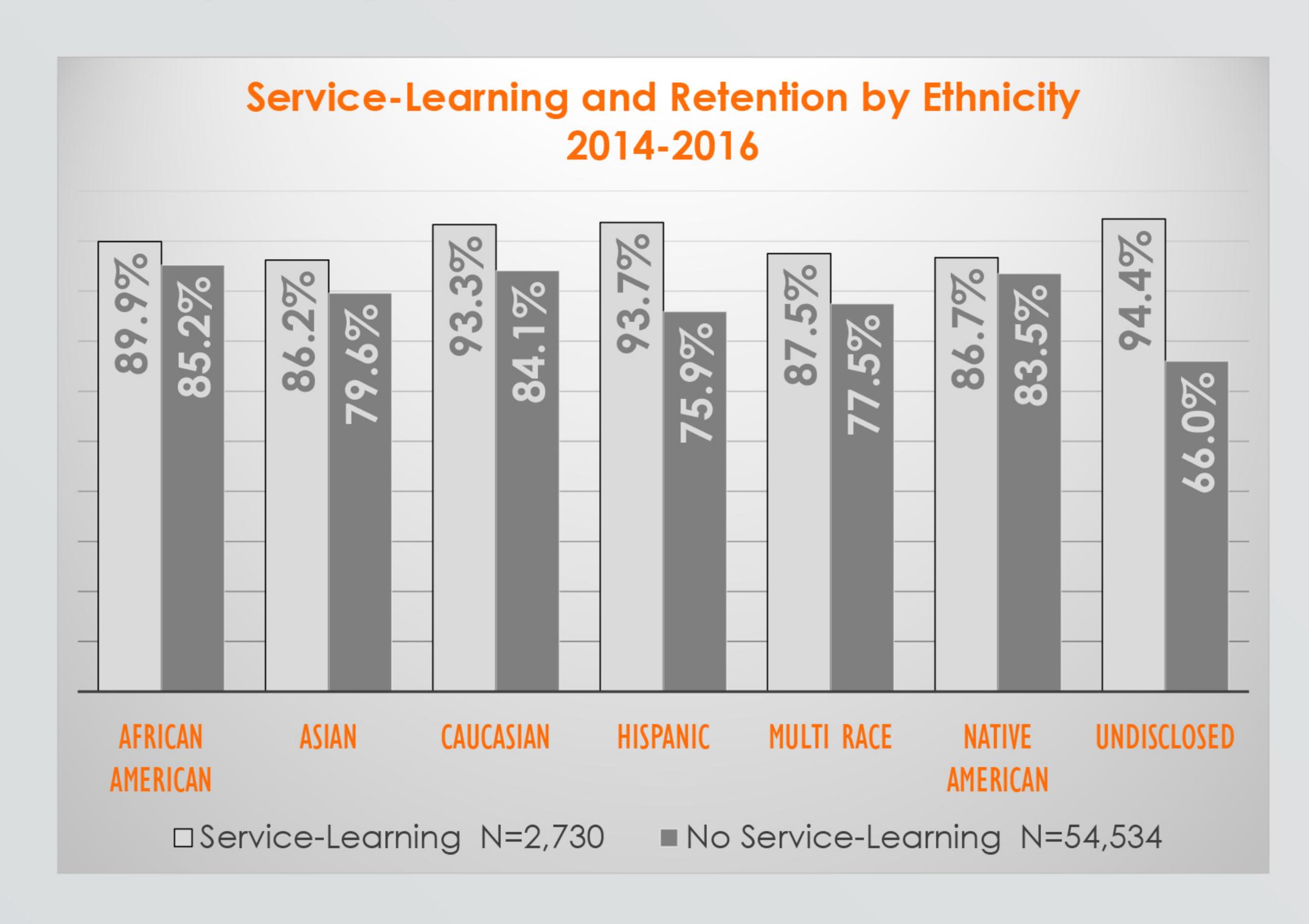
The comprehensive four—year picture revealed a 9.3% higher retention rate for students enrolled in designated service—learning courses when compared to the retention rate of the Buffalo State student body. Detailed outcomes include:



Service—learning participation resulted in increased return rates for both males and females, but was slightly more impactful for males. The return rate was 9.7% higher than the general rate of return for male

students who participated in a designated SL course, and was 8.8% higher for females, as illustrated by the graph to the left.

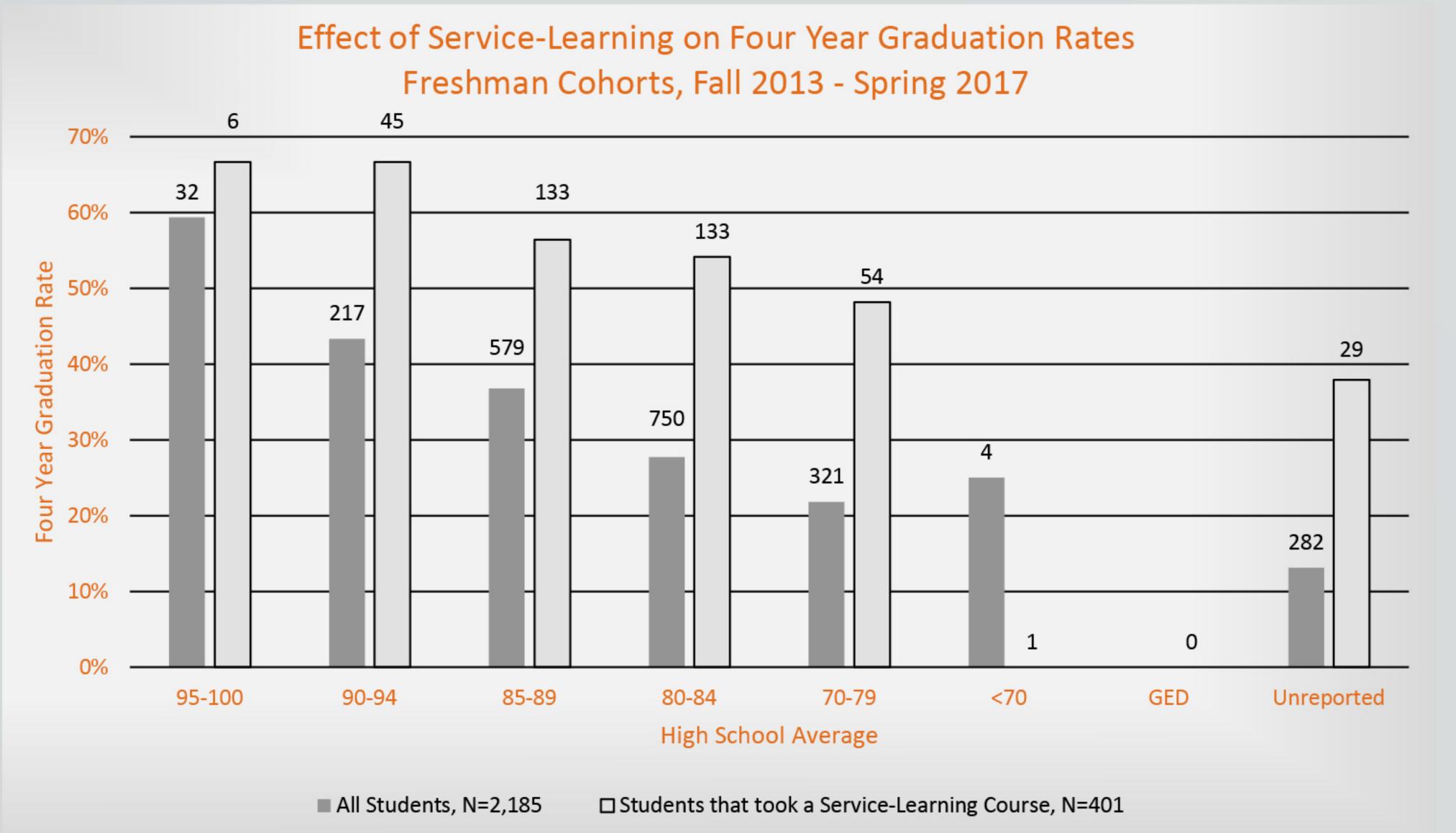
As evidenced in the graph to the right, SL participation positively impacted student enrollment from one semester to the next for individuals from varying self—reported ethnicities. The difference appeared highest for individuals of



undisclosed ethnicity (28.4% higher for students who took a SL course), but was also impactful for Hispanic students (17.8% higher), Caucasian students (9.2% higher), Asian students (6.6% higher), African American students (4.7% higher),

Service-Learning and Graduation

The Civic and Community Engagement Office then analyzed the four—year graduation rate of students enrolled as first—year students in Fall 2013. The cohort of 2,185 students was 25% more likely to graduate in four years if they had at least one service—learning course during their college career. Data were further analyzed to determine whether impacts were consistent across variables including incoming high school

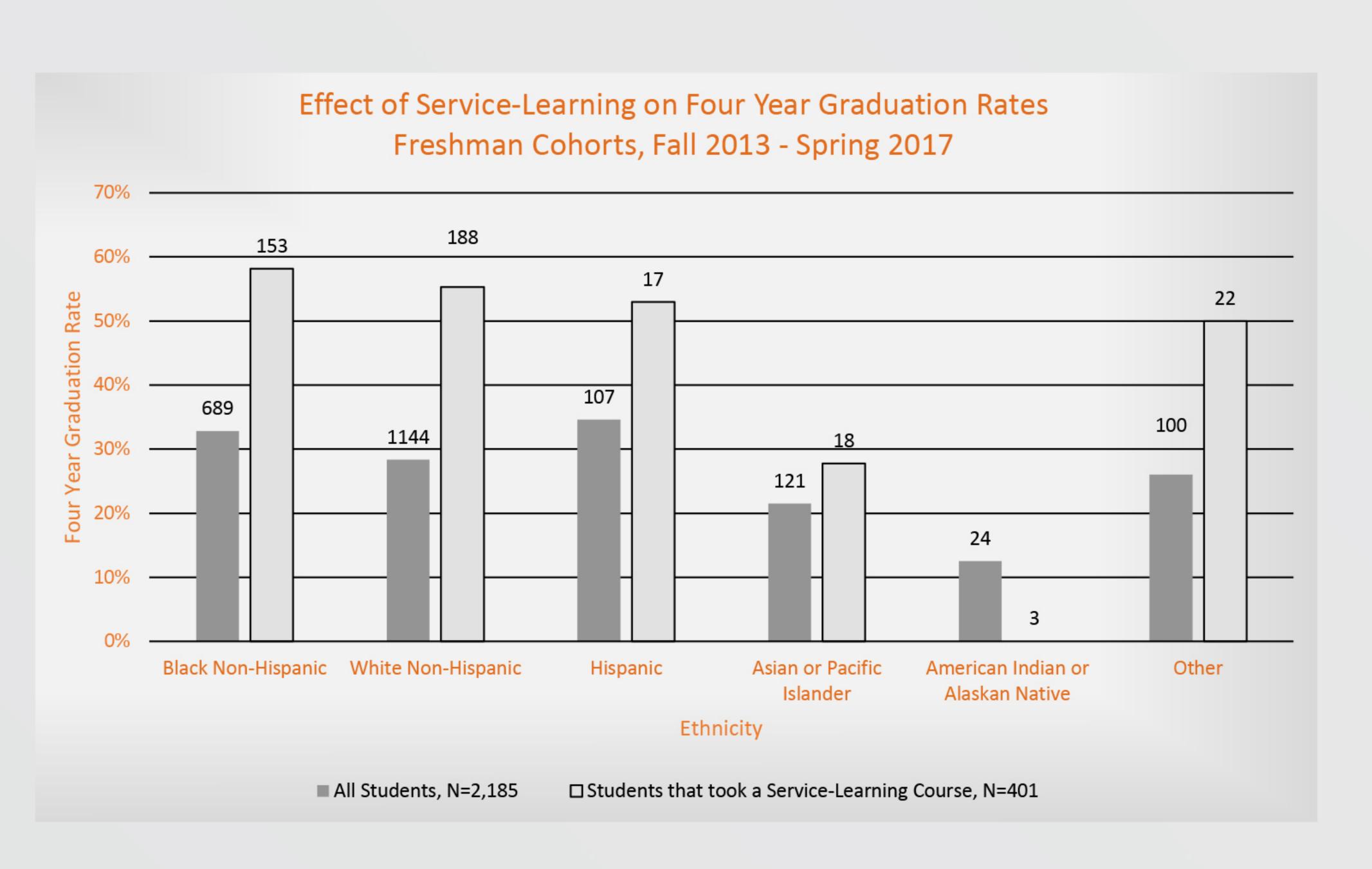


average, gender, and ethnicity. Results were consistently positive, and include:

As shown in the chart to the left, four—year graduation rates of students with varying

incoming high—school averages were all positively impacted by service—learning participation. Students with high school averages of 70–79 had a 26.3% higher four—year graduation rate for students who took at least one SL course when compared to students who had no SL. Students with high school averages of 80–84 had a 26.4% higher four—year graduation rate than students who had no SL.

Similarly, effects of SL on the four—year graduation rates of students of differing ethnic backgrounds were also positive. The impact appeared to be greatest for African—American students. African—



American students who had at least one SL course had a 32.6% higher four—year graduation rate than students who had no SL). The difference was also noteworthy for Caucasian students (32.3% higher), Hispanic students (21.8% higher), and students of other backgrounds (30.8% higher).

Conclusion

Student participation in designated service—learning courses at Buffalo State has an important impact on students' likelihood to re—enroll from one semester to the next, as well as graduating from Buffalo State in four years. Faculty members who teach with service—learning are



providing important benefits to students and the institution, which adds to the immediate success of academic and civic learning provided in the course(s).

Interpretation of Findings

Service—learning is a high impact practice that can lead to positive outcomes related to student achievement and success. Numerous studies have shown that service—learning influences both students' intention to persist in college and their actual re—enrollment at the institution. We have found that we have replicated results that are



similar to others' nationally. This supports the priority of civic engagement and service—learning in the 2016—2021 Buffalo State College strategic plan, SUNY's Urban—Engaged Institution.