



General Education Committee Assessment of Student Learning in Designated Courses

Presentation
Of

Assessment Data: Spring 2011

Prepared by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness

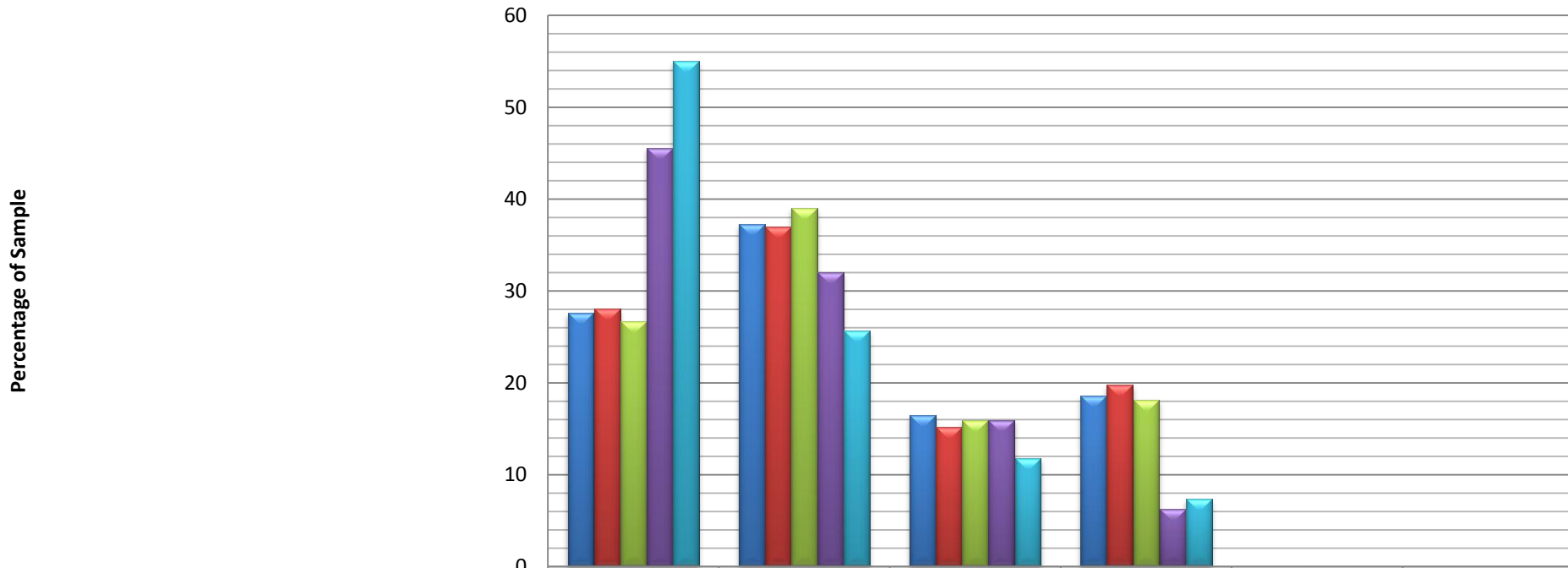
Interpretive notes

- The assessment of student learning outcomes associated with General Education designators is conducted annually by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) as part of the SUNY Potsdam ***Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan***.
- Assessment data are collected electronically from faculty teaching courses with General Education designators on a three year cycle.
- Data are aggregated and reported anonymously to the Gen Ed committee annually and then made public through the OIE Website.
- Data are also analyzed by Gen Ed Subcommittees responsible for each designator for the purpose of planning and recommending action for the improvement of student achievement.

Interpretive notes...continued

- A pilot assessment of Information Literacy (IL) was implemented, collecting assessment data for five student learning outcomes central to basic Information Literacy [aka Information Management]. This was the first time these outcomes for IL which are imbedded in FW, FS, & FC courses, have been formally assessed.

American History (AH) Spring 2011 n= 381/447 (85.2%)



Students will demonstrate:

	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standards	Approaching Standards	Not Meeting Standards	Not Assessed	Not Taught
1. knowledge and understanding of at least one significant issue of unity and diversity in American society.	27.6	37.3	16.5	18.6	0	0
2. knowledge and understanding of common institutions in American society and their effects upon various groups within that society	28.1	37	15.2	19.8	0	0
3. knowledge and understanding of some aspect of America's evolving relationship with the rest of the world	26.7	39.1	16	18.2	0	0
4. knowledge and understanding of a sense of history by suggesting continuities and discontinuities in the development of the topic under study.	45.6	32.1	16	6.3	0	0
5. Students will demonstrate ability in the use of primary sources	55.1	25.7	11.8	7.4	0	0

American History (AH)

Assessment tool(s) used to assess the SUNY Learning Outcome(s):

Percent of Total Responses	Assessment Tool
66.7%	Exam(s)
16.7% 0.0%	Quiz(zes)
16.7%	Standardized/Departmental Tests
16.7%	Homework
33.3%	Project(s)
66.7%	Oral Presentation(s)
0.0%	Writing Sample(s)
0.0%	Portfolio
0.0%	Interview(s)
0.0%	Live Performance(s)
0.0%	Rubrics
33.3%	Other: Research papers, Primary document exercises, Term papers with peer review,

Q.6 What assignments and/or assessment activities did you feel were most effective in generating assessment data to measure the percentage of students who were 'exceeding', 'meeting', 'approaching' or 'not meeting' the ML student learning outcomes?

- research papers and exams
- Essay exams, term paper, with draft and revision, oral presentation introducing readings and class discussion of readings
- Exams and papers are effective on 3, 4, and 6. Having a discreet assignment on 5 is useful, although perhaps there should be two assignments on primary sources to show progress.
- For #6: assignments tailored to teach students about the "They Say/I Say" conversation inherent in history: a historian proposes a thesis, and others engage with it, overturn it, etc. These assignments asked students to specifically restate a historian's thesis. For #7: Students had to submit analyses of specific primary texts

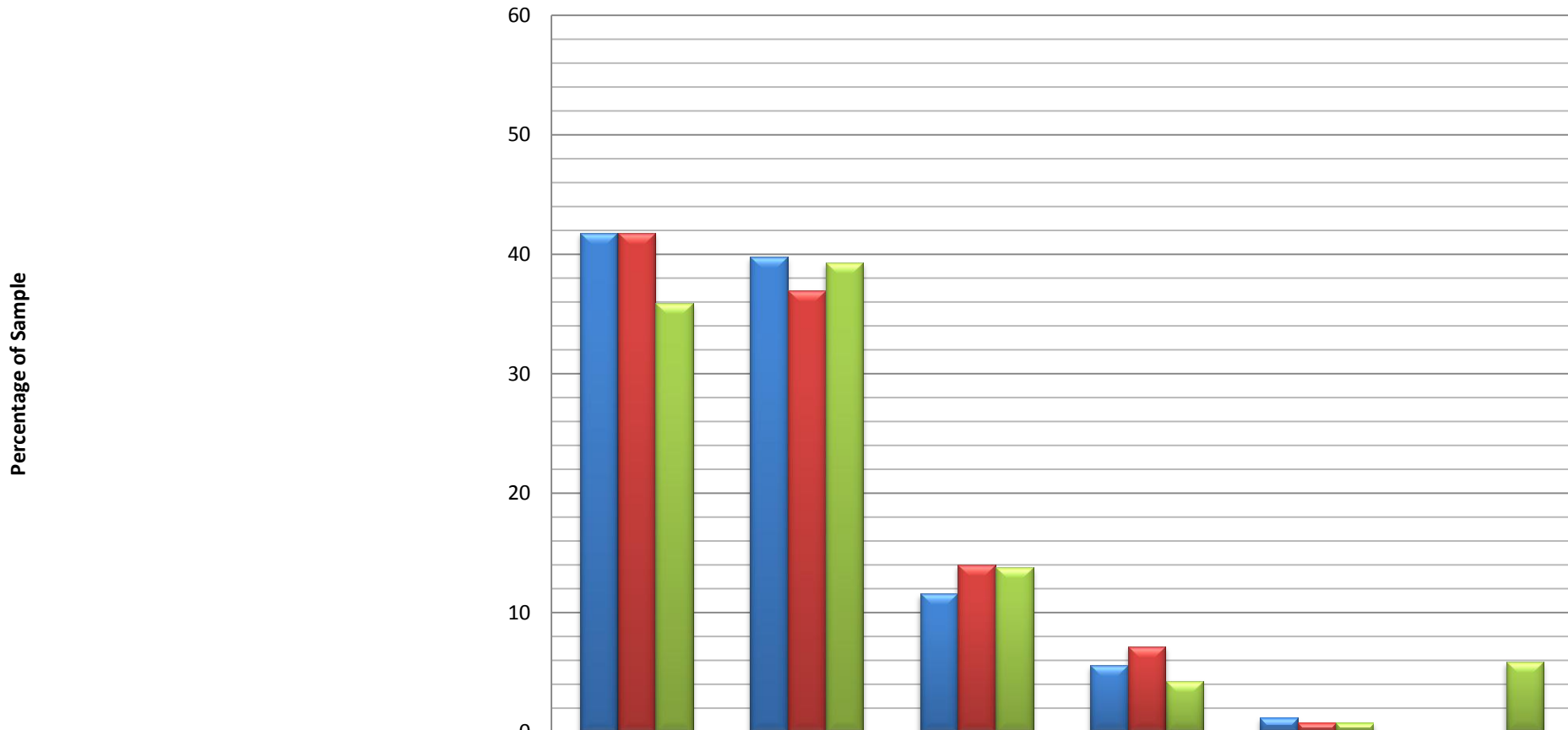
Sample Answering: 4 responses

Q.7 What adjustments will you make in order to better fulfill the requirements for the designator the next time you teach the course?

- place more emphasis on relating primary document exercises/discussions to learning outcomes
- Note: Although I have done my best to teach my courses and assess my students according to the AH criteria, I view the Gen Ed program as presently constituted as an attack on both academic freedom and the professionalism of SUNY Potsdam instructors. Thus I believe it needs much rethinking. Thank you.
- short quizzes
 - I need to have better assignments for assessing #5. The school and I need to devise more incentives for completing all assignments. The "does not meet" measure is heavily influenced by assignments that are simply not turned in. Meeting and exceeding categories were stronger in HIST 204, which requires revisions and second submissions, than in HIST 305, which is too large to allow rewrites.

Sample Answering: 3 responses

Critical Thinking (FC) Spring 2011 354/531 (66.6)



Students will demonstrate:

- 1. ability to identify the main question, problem, or claim in discourse, and think through it in a critical, creative manner according to the standards of good reasoning, that is, the rules of argument.
- 2. the ability to model critical thinking processes, or patterns, in the humanities, natural sciences, or social sciences.
- 3. the ability to self-consciously apply the standards of critical thinking.

	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standards	Approaching Standards	Not Meeting Standards	Not Assessed	Not Taught
■ 1. ability to identify the main question, problem, or claim in discourse, and think through it in a critical, creative manner according to the standards of good reasoning, that is, the rules of argument.	41.8	39.8	11.6	5.6	1.2	0
■ 2. the ability to model critical thinking processes, or patterns, in the humanities, natural sciences, or social sciences.	41.8	37	14	7.2	0.8	0
■ 3. the ability to self-consciously apply the standards of critical thinking.	35.9	39.3	13.8	4.3	0.8	5.9

Critical Thinking (FC)

Assessment tool(s) used to assess the SUNY Learning Outcome(s):

Percent of Total Responses	Assessment Tool
36.4%	Exam(s)
27.3%	Quiz(zes)
0.0%	Standardized/Departmental Tests
72.7%	Homework
45.5%	Project(s)
63.6%	Oral Presentation(s)
0.0%	Writing Sample(s)
0.0%	Portfolio
0.0%	Interview(s)
0.0%	Live Performance(s)
18.2%	Rubrics
9.1%	Other: Article summaries (analysis), Case studies

Q.12a What assignments and/or assessment activities did you feel were most effective in generating assessment data to measure the percentage of students who were 'exceeding', 'meeting', 'approaching' or 'not meeting' the FC/IL student learning outcomes?

- n/a
- FC - Article Summaries (analysis), case studies, journals
- Article Summaries(analysis), journaling, discussion of case studies in music education and ethics in teaching.
- Two 5 page written critical analyses; one of which is presented orally.
- Since my students are unique in their learning styles, I think a diverse variety of assessment tools are needed to get the most accurate understanding of my students' learning.
- I require three literary analysis essays for LITR 100: they grow in length and complexity through the semester. Each essay is designed to measure student ability to interpret texts, employ critical terminology effectively, synthesize information, and incorporate aspects of class activities (discussion, exercises for incorporating textual passages/ sources) into a well-crafted short essay.
- Writing samples, Individual research projects, Critique of source material
- Essay questions in exams and small and basic research projects.
- research projects; issue analysis papers
- homework which had the students go to different sources and evaluate their authenticity and reliability
- Quizzes and papers

Sample Answering: 11 responses

Q.13 Considering the assessment data from your FC/IL course(s), what adjustments will you make in order to better fulfill the requirements for the FC/IL designator the next time you teach the course?

- As an instructor of an FC course, I received no notification of the IL objectives and was not made aware they were part of FC courses. This course does not have a research component and therefore most of the IL objectives do not apply. It may be possible to include information on search engines and evaluating web pages into projects that are already included in the course. Other than that, there is no time to add anything more into this course.**
- Was not aware of the IL objectives. The course doesn't contain an research component. Looking into modifying/including IL obj into already existing projects. But other than that, there is no room/time to add anything more into the course.**
- I will schedule a library session on information literacy.**
- I will check to make sure that my students complete the online assessment in a more timely manner. I will require my literature students to include at least 1 print source, 1 library data base source, and 1 credible web source in their research paper as I already do in my COMP 101 course.**

- **Include additional measureable/gradable steps in the Individual Research Project.**
- **I am going to add a more specific assignment on source evaluation.**
- **additional IL review**
- **First, I don't understand. When I put this FC Gen Ed through the committee it**

was

NOT linked with IL. This evaluation now makes it seem as if they are linked, which means that I need to redo the entire set up for this honors course.

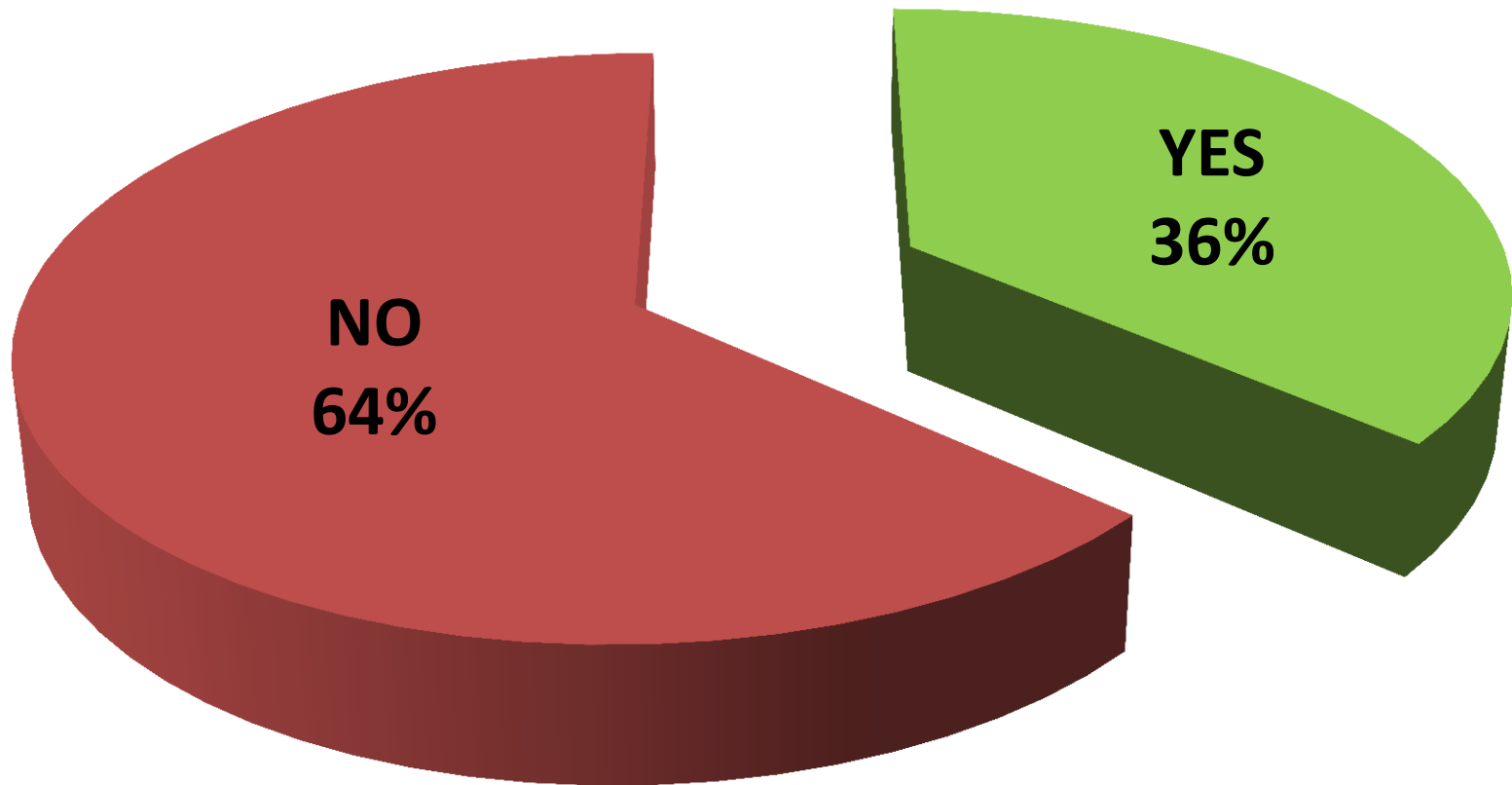
When this change was done (if it has been done), then there should have been written information sent that the FC was no longer viable and that new paperwork requiring me to set it up as an FC/IL was needed. No such communication was ever received.

- **The IL 'outcomes' listed above were never approved by, nor endorsed by the general education committee and do not reflect the criteria as originally written and approved.**

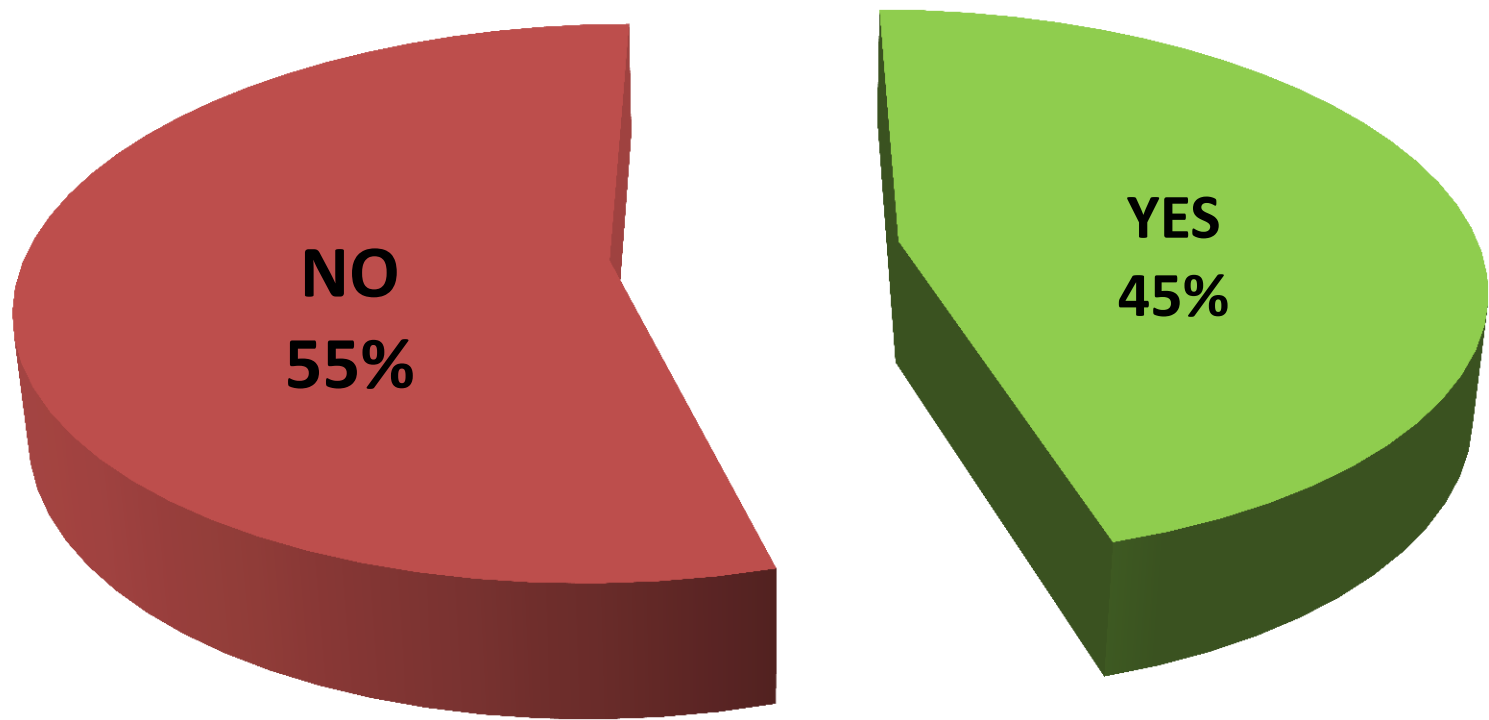
They are also largely inappropriate for conjunction with FC, where the emphasis is on critical thinking, not research.

Sample Answering: 9 responses

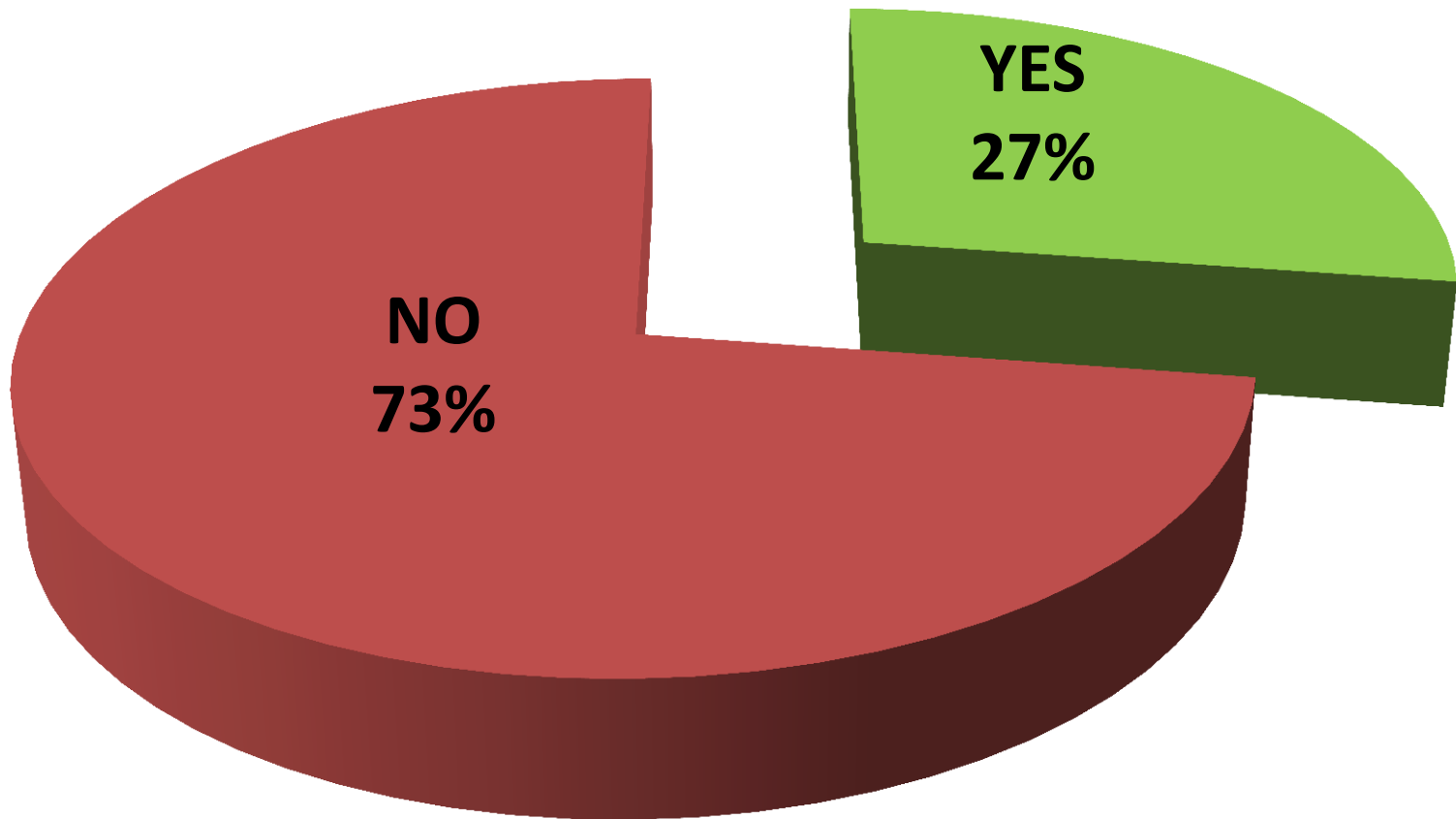
In your FC course(s) have you included explicit instruction beyond the on-line tutorials in Information Literacy skills? (n=11)



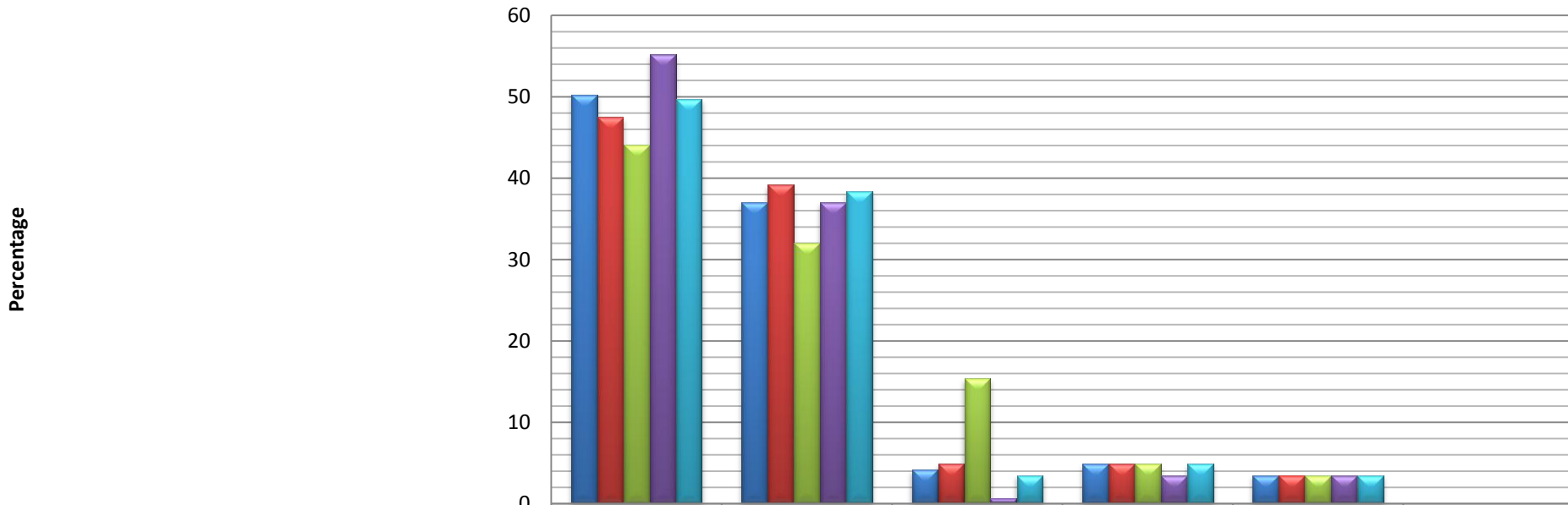
In your FC course(s) did you teach Information Literacy skills yourself?



In your FC course(s) did your class have a Library session on Information Literacy skills?



Basic Communication (FS) Spring 2011 143/395 (36.1%)



Students will demonstrate:

- 1. demonstrate ability to develop clear and focused thesis statements, main points, and sub-points; that are appropriate for the time allocated, the audience, and the occasion
- 2. understanding of the role of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, testimony) in developing a logical argument.
- 3. understanding of the role of speaker credibility (ethos) and emotional/motivational appeals (pathos) in building support for a speaker's ideas
- 4. Students will recognize the similarities and differences between informative and persuasive speaking
- 5. Students will recognize the similarities and differences between written and oral communication, including differences in style, practices of intellectual integrity, and proper citation

	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standards	Approaching Standards	Not Meeting Standards	Not Assessed	Not Taught
■ 1. demonstrate ability to develop clear and focused thesis statements, main points, and sub-points; that are appropriate for the time allocated, the audience, and the occasion	50.3	37.1	4.2	4.9	3.5	0
■ 2. understanding of the role of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, testimony) in developing a logical argument.	47.5	39.2	4.9	4.9	3.5	0
■ 3. understanding of the role of speaker credibility (ethos) and emotional/motivational appeals (pathos) in building support for a speaker's ideas	44.1	32.1	15.4	4.9	3.5	0
■ 4. Students will recognize the similarities and differences between informative and persuasive speaking	55.2	37.1	0.7	3.5	3.5	0
■ 5. Students will recognize the similarities and differences between written and oral communication, including differences in style, practices of intellectual integrity, and proper citation	49.7	38.4	3.5	4.9	3.5	0

Basic Communication (FS)

Assessment tool(s) used to assess the SUNY Learning Outcome(s):

Percent of Total Responses	Assessment Tool
75.0%	Exam(s)
75.03%	Quiz(zes)
0.0%	Standardized/Departmental Tests
75.0%	Homework
50.0%	Project(s)
100.0%	Oral Presentation(s)
75.0%	Writing Sample(s)
0.0%	Portfolio
0.0%	Interview(s)
100.0%	Live Performance(s)
25.0%	Rubrics
9.1%	Other: Reflective Paper, Required Info Lit Tutorials

Q.14a What assignments and/or assessment activities did you feel were most effective in generating assessment data to measure the percentage of students who were 'exceeding', 'meeting', 'approaching' or 'not meeting' the FS/IL student learning outcomes?

- The informative and persuasive speeches coupled with research homework. Different in-class activities addressed critical thinking.
- Speeches, Essays
- Annotated bibliography, speeches, tests
- reading assignments and response papers

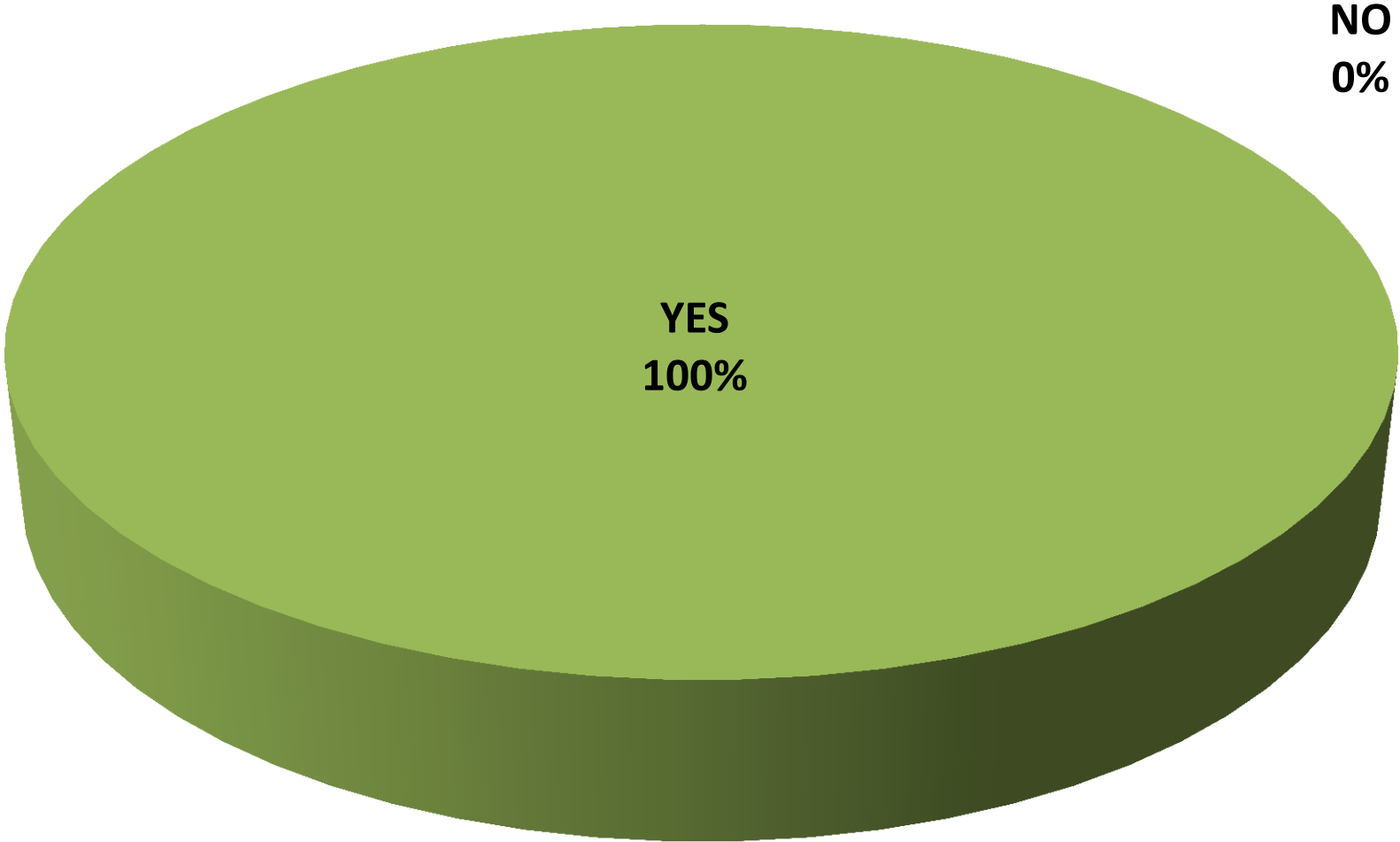
Sample Answering: 4 responses

Q.15 Considering the assessment data from your course(s), what adjustments will you make in order to better fulfill the requirements for the FS/IL designator the next time you teach the course?

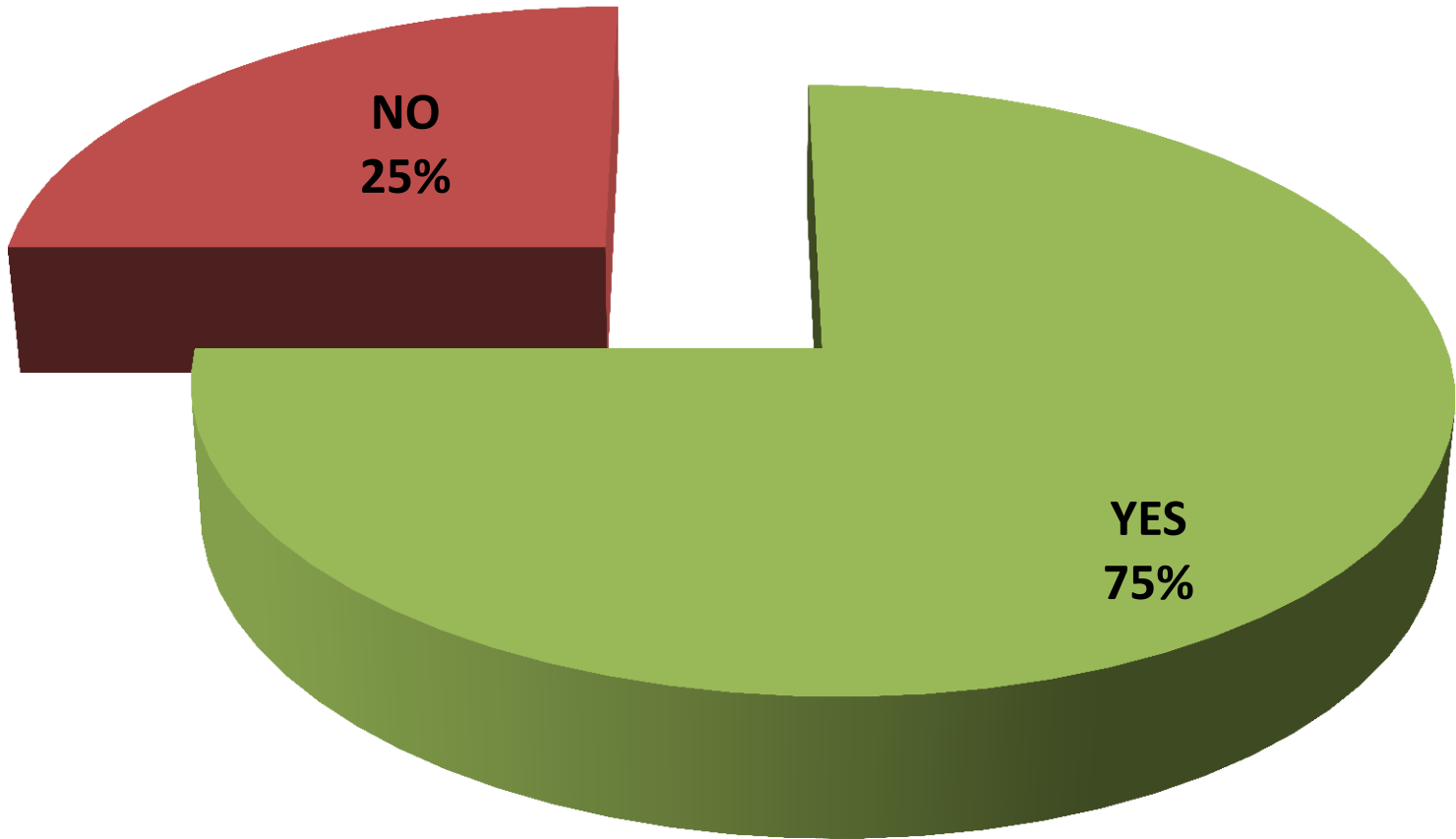
- Adopting a writing manual and developing a specific course lesson on citation skills. Library Literacy Skill session
- None. But I do recommend separating ethos & pathos into separate items on this assessment; having them together really skewed the response for this section.
- More discussion on reading assignments

Sample Answering: 3 responses

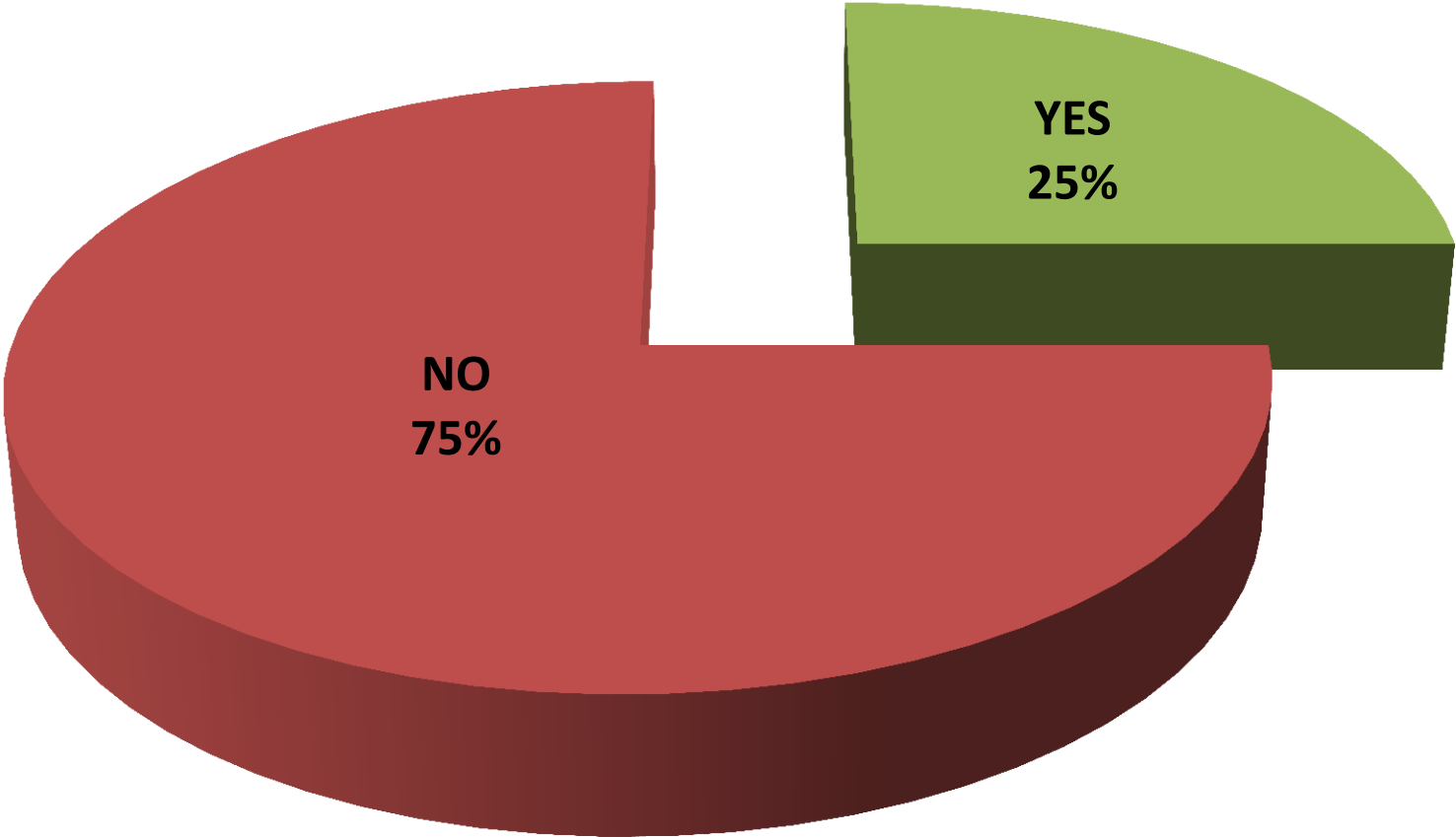
In your FS course(s) have you included explicit instruction beyond the on-line tutorials in Information Literacy skills?



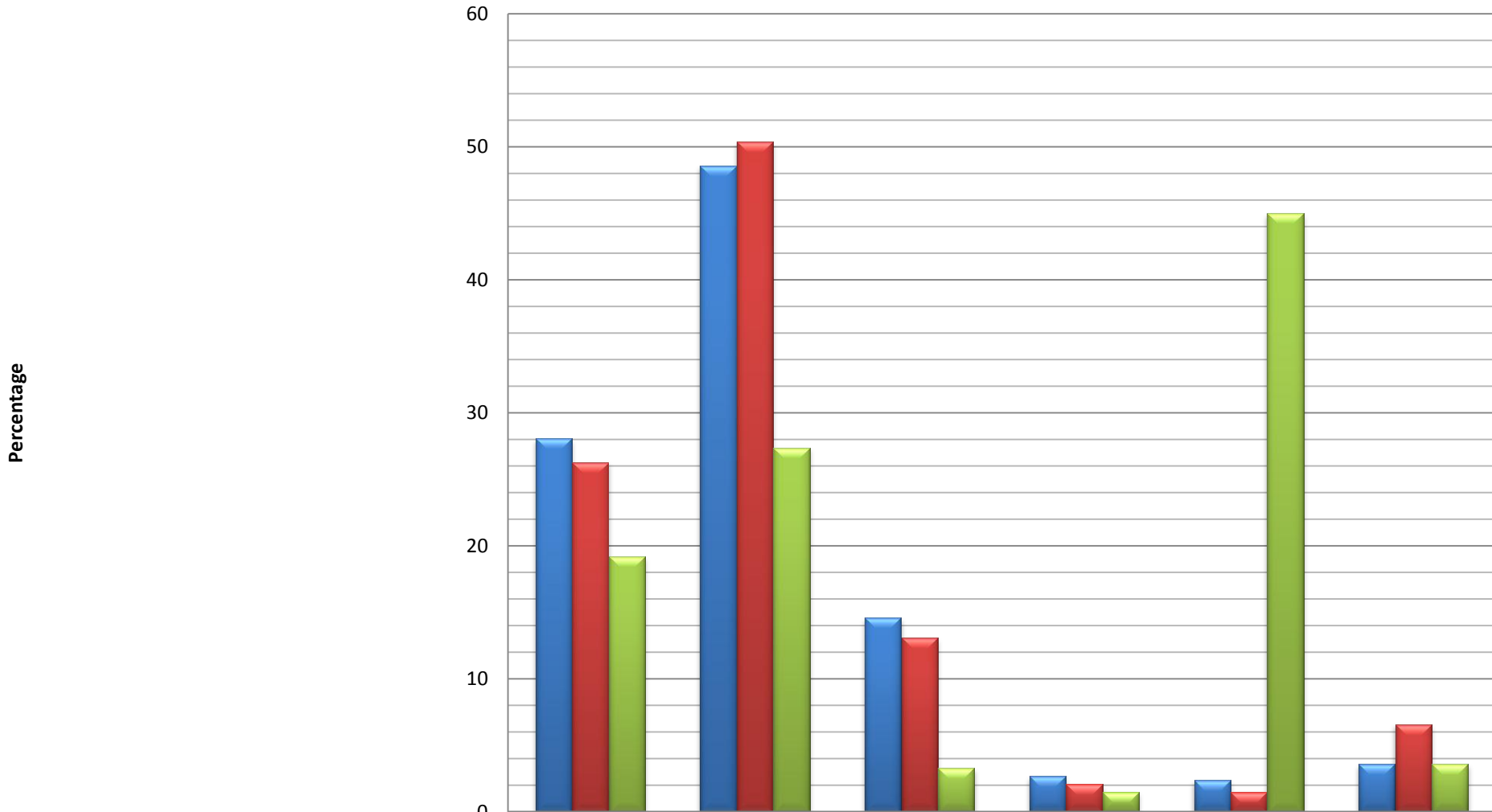
14c. In your FS course(s) did you teach Information Literacy skills yourself?



In your FS course(s) did your class have a Library session on Information Literacy skills?



Speaking intensive (SI) Spring 2011 n= 355/704 (47.6%)



Students will demonstrate:

- 1. the ability to research a topic, develop an argument and organize supporting details.
- 2. Students will demonstrate proficiency in oral discourse.
- 3. ability to evaluate an oral presentation according to established criteria. (24.4%)

	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standards	Approaching Standards	Not Meeting Standards	Not Assessed	Not Taught
1. the ability to research a topic, develop an argument and organize supporting details.	28.1	48.6	14.6	2.7	2.4	3.6
2. Students will demonstrate proficiency in oral discourse.	26.3	50.4	13.1	2.1	1.5	6.6
3. ability to evaluate an oral presentation according to established criteria. (24.4%)	19.2	27.4	3.3	1.5	45	3.6

Speaking Intensive (SI)

Assessment tool(s) used to assess the SUNY Learning Outcome(s):

Percent of Total Responses	Assessment Tool
33.3%	Exam(s)
19.0%	Quiz(zes)
0.0%	Standardized/Departmental Tests
23.8%	Homework
71.4%	Project(s)
95.2%	Oral Presentation(s)
47.6%	Writing Sample(s)
4.8%	Portfolio
19.0%	Interview(s)
14.3.0%	Live Performance(s)
38.1.0%	Rubrics
19.0%	Other: Group & Individual work; simulation; class discussion; panel presentations with audience

Q.7 What assignments and/or assessment activities did you feel were most effective in generating assessment data to measure the percentage of students who were 'exceeding', 'meeting', 'approaching' or 'not meeting' the SI student learning outcomes?

- homework on their final project, and student oral presentations
- Direct observation of teaching performance after a few weeks of experience in the host teachers' classrooms.
- The Practicum Assignments-topic, abstract and verbal presentations, the Verbal Presentations of Papers
- Grading Rubric for course presentations.
- Unique individual & group speeches, short oral reports, reading quizzes.
- Guided research project consisting of a) initial short presentation on selected topic, b) feedback meeting on presentation and on suitable literature and research question, c) optional hand in of rough draft on which instructor gave feedback for final draft, d) hand in of final paper, e) presentation of research project, f) feedback meeting on presentation and paper.
- individual presentations

- Multiple oral presentations on assigned topics that were scored according to established criteria.
- The two required in-class (2-person on 2-person style) debates, plus the required in-class presentation.
- Oral presentation
- A series of 4 speaking assignments that require research, synthesis of knowledge and experience, public speaking skills and presentation of logical and compelling argumentation.
- Individual project for the final exam (5 weeks) They have to research a topic, develop an argument, organize supporting details, and write meaningful information about the topic in a PowerPoint to support an oral presentation in class.
- Oral presentations and writing samples were the best measures.
- I used a peer critique form with the class for the final presentation. Students were to critique their peers on their delivery skills. Students also were asked to do oral speaking assignments.

- Rubrics (created with student input) that were published and filled out by both students and professor during oral presentations.
- I have already shared some of the modifications I have made to make my intermediate French conversation 213 more speaking intensive, more creative/innovative, using more simulations and more student centered. Students presented a project called the Journal televise where they presented the news in French, a 30 minutes broadcast, not unlike what you would see on CNN. I have my anchorman and woman, breaking news (Osama bin Laden's death), politics, interview/debate, culture, music, sports, commercials, weather, etc. They did a French recital live with Dr. Miller. I hope I am on the right track! Thanks for your time.
- The persuasive speech grading rubric

Sample Answering: 17 responses

Q.8 Considering the assessment data from your SI course(s), what adjustments will you make in order to better fulfill the requirements for the designator the next time you teach the course?

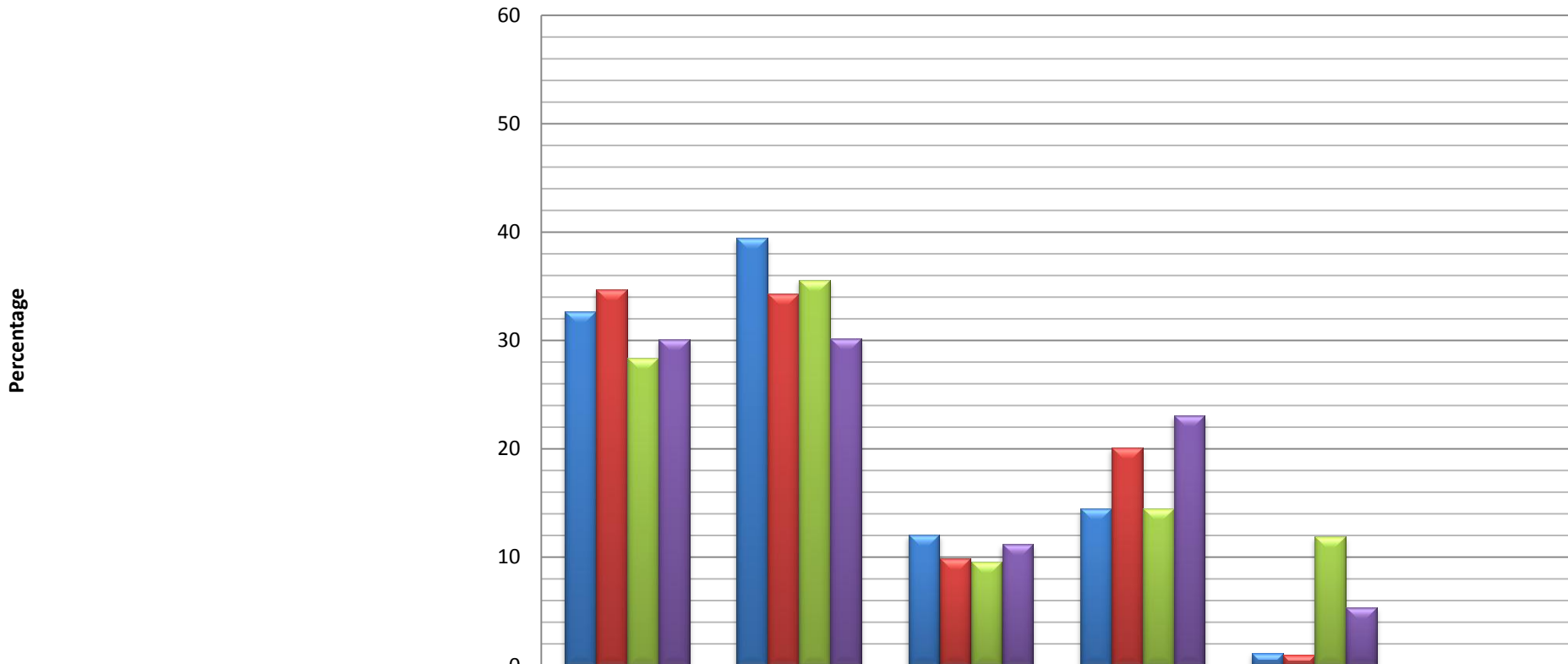
- **figure out a way to make them more realistic and helpful evaluators of their classmates.**
- **Much of the work done to prepare students for this course actually takes place in other courses. I continually modify and strengthen program courses to have a more significant component of live presentation. And, assignment options in field experience courses can be modified to more completely prepare students for this full semester experience.**
- **Clearer directions on verbal assignments, tighter attendance requirements**
- **Attempt to give better coaching earlier in the course.**
- **I've been tweaking this course for 5 years, and am pretty happy with its SI components at this time.**
- **Simulation. This was aimed at students embodying a certain position and defend it. It was about training persuasive speech. It was good exercise in terms understanding different positions, but it needs to be more carefully prepared and rehearsed. All students did well in it, but it was hard to assess them individually.**

- I may have the students assess each other's presentations.
- Have the students assess an oral presentation using established criteria.
- I frankly think I have it pretty well right where I want it at this point. I've taught the course for 4 consecutive spring semesters now, and I've tweaked each time to get things to be where they are at this point.
- Have student input on rubric design
- This was the first year for the panel presentation portion with a live audience. This requires extemporaneous skills that are important to practice and develop. It turned out to be an important addition to the course requirement for improving public speaking. I will incorporate this assignment into the course from now on.
- In order to better fulfill the requirements for the designator, the next time I teach the course I should keep having an Intern for more extra practice of the language outside of the classroom.
- Stay the course.

- I would not recommend any adjustments at this time.
- (1) Put SI assessment criteria in the syllabus (my bad)(2) Include explicit research assignments (the oral presentations are both big (include outline and citation) and small (shorter, less formal); will pull out explicit research phase for some big talks and develop a rubric with and for the students).
- I will also add that I was lucky to have two native speakers who worked with me somewhat as TAs although not officially. The students were in class but because they are way too advanced they helped monitor students' speaking progress. The students enjoyed learning from them. Again, I would spend more time doing interesting and interactive projects and plan in advance so we could travel to Montreal and interact with Francophones there. I do believe that students can also benefit from SKYPE technologies. I do not know if MOODLE will offer advantages to teach a SI class in French but BB is not very convenient without voice technologies.
- I encourage, but do not require students to complete peer evaluations of student presentations. In the future I will evaluate student performance in evaluating their peers.

Sample Answering: 17 responses

Other World Civilizations (XC) Spring 2011 n=658/760 (86.6%)



Students will demonstrate:

- 1.ability to explain the interconnections of several significant aspects of the examined group(s) such as the political, historical, artistic, ideological, economic, and technological.
- 2. ability to compare and contrast the examined group(s) with other cultures.
- 3. ability to reconstruct the interaction of the examined group(s) with other cultures.
- 4. ability to recognize and address the problems raised by ethnocentrism and cultural relativism, and/or the tensions between nationalism and globalism.

	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standards	Approaching Standards	Not Meeting Standards	Not Assessed	Not Taught
■ 1.ability to explain the interconnections of several significant aspects of the examined group(s) such as the political, historical, artistic, ideological, economic, and technological.	32.7	39.5	12.1	14.5	1.2	0
■ 2. ability to compare and contrast the examined group(s) with other cultures.	34.7	34.3	9.9	20.1	1	0
■ 3. ability to reconstruct the interaction of the examined group(s) with other cultures.	28.4	35.6	9.6	14.5	11.9	0
■ 4. ability to recognize and address the problems raised by ethnocentrism and cultural relativism, and/or the tensions between nationalism and globalism.	30.1	30.2	11.2	23.1	5.4	0

Other World Civilizations (XC)

Assessment tool(s) used to assess the SUNY Learning Outcome(s):

Percent of Total Responses	Assessment Tool
68.8%	Exam(s)
31.3%	Quiz(zes)
0.0%	Standardized/Departmental Tests
25.0%	Homework
62.5%	Project(s)
31.3%	Oral Presentation(s)
37.5%	Writing Sample(s)
0.0%	Portfolio
0.0%	Interview(s)
0.0%	Live Performance(s)
12.5%	Rubrics
18.8%	Other: in-class discussions and debates; journal readings; guest speaker & cultural event critiques.

Q.8 What assignments and/or assessment activities did you feel were most effective in generating assessment data to measure the percentage of students who were 'exceeding', 'meeting', 'approaching' or 'not meeting' the XC student learning outcomes?

- The students have to write an essay exam and then correct the errors in it to demonstrate how they meet these outcomes. The revise and resubmit nature of the exams were helpful. Related papers and presentations also demonstrated if they were generalizing the knowledge they had developed.
- The discussion of the Horton article and the group projects. This was an exceptional group of students individually and as a class.
- Class room discussions, reviews after exams, exams
- Short-answer questions were most effective.
- exams and projects
- Exam essay questions, in-class debates and in-class discussions. Some Reading Response questions were also useful towards this end.

- **Students had to revise and resubmit four essays that covered these areas, I feel the revise and resubmit format really helped the students learn the material much better.**
- **Research project that required students to explore connections and differences/similarities between cultures**
- **5-6 page paper**
- **Oral presentation**
- **Class debate**
- **Journals**
- **Each of my various assessment assignments have proven to be rather useful in evaluating student learning.**
- **Exam data were easiest to manipulate, although I will use them more effectively in the future (because of the way I collected them, I was only able to judge whether students met or did not meet the criteria). The cultural comparison paper, in which I used a rubric to assess outcome 4, gave much more complete data (I aggregated the categories here so they were consistent with the exam data).**
- **Rubrics for project provide the most reliable data although exams are the most efficient way to collect data in this large enrollment 100-level course.**

Sample Answering: 15 responses

Q.9 Considering the assessment data from your XC course(s), what adjustments will you make in order to better fulfill the requirements for the designator the next time you teach the course?

- No changes anticipated at this time.
- Re-institute an anthropology pre-requisite.
- Probably change one of the readers-it seems to pose difficulties for a 100-level class and it is where most students miss most of the questions on the exams.
- I will diversify assignments, and further emphasize interaction and ethnocentrism/globalism. (I intend to integrate an in-class exercise on Islam and science in the coming semesters.)
- additional comparative world regional questions on exams.
- additional exam questions regarding comparisons between world regions

• Tweak the above (that is, my answers to question 8). Also: continue my ongoing search for well-written, relevant, non-eurocentric course readings, and continue to include discussion/participation as a grading rubric -- good readings along with incentives to keep up with readings and discuss them in class seem to help generate more (and more insightful) in-class discussion and questions, and better-argued exam essay answers. I will also note that one change that would significantly improve student learning is smaller classes and reduced teaching load. 40-student classes do NOT provide optimal environments for discussion and student questions (first, because there just isn't time for all students to contribute substantially to discussion, and second because many students report being hesitant to speak up in such a large group). In addition, if I were teaching smaller sections, I could assign more work to students (in particular, more written reflections on readings, which fit well with the XC assessment criteria). Having prior experience with 18- to 24-student sections, as well as with fewer overall students, I can attest that numbers do make a difference in student learning.

• Include lesson and assessment on globalization/nationalism, which is discussed in the course text.

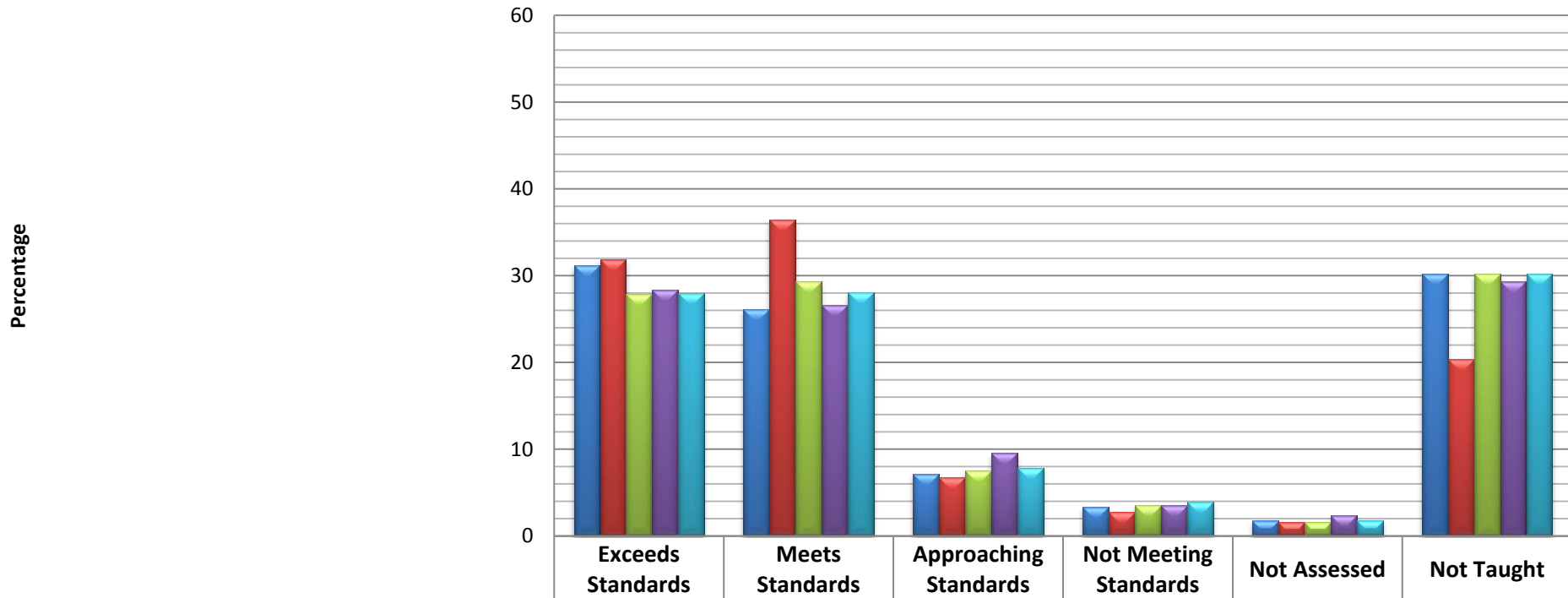
- Considerable work goes into teaching this class at a high level of sophisticated analysis, while at the same time make it accessible to sophomores and second semester FY students. Active learning design helps to take students away from the stereotypical notions they bring to the classroom, and provide an analytical framework. I may add an artistic element other than literature (but I strongly believe the extensive and complex readings are essential to the requirements). --- The class does fulfill the requirements for the designator, although it's a challenge for Gen Ed students.

- Perhaps focus more on students (like the 8 above) who have weak attendance or stop attending half-way into the semester because their attendance could have changed the learning outcomes.

- I will focus more on having students complete projects which specifically address ethnocentrism and cultural relativism.

- #4 was based on a rubric score for a cultural comparison essay; 3, 5, 6 on exam scores. The next time I teach the course, I would to collect multiple sources of data on 4 (or, alternately, on 3, 5, 6) to check validity.
Sample Answering: 12 responses

Information Literacy (IL in FS & FC) Spring 2011 n=497/927 (53.6%)



	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standards	Approaching Standards	Not Meeting Standards	Not Assessed	Not Taught
■ 1. Students will demonstrate ability to draft research questions from a broad initial topic and derive suitable search vocabulary. (36.5%)	31.2	26.2	7.2	3.4	1.8	30.2
■ 2. Identify and access appropriate information resources, such as library catalog; library subscription data bases; and the free web (42.7%)	31.9	36.5	6.8	2.8	1.6	20.4
■ 3. Students will demonstrate knowledge of search strategies suitable for a variety of search tools(37.4%)	27.9	29.4	7.6	3.6	1.6	30.2
■ 4. Students will evaluate search results, select and acquire the most appropriate information source(s) (37.9%)	28.4	26.6	9.6	3.6	2.4	29.4
■ 5. Students will read, analyze, synthesize, cite and report back relevant information or data obtained from the sources gathered (36.5%)	28	28.1	7.9	4	1.8	30.2