

EVIDENCE

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

NOVEMBER 2004

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CORRECTION: In the October issue of *EVIDENCE*, in the opening of the 2004 NSSE article, the NSSE's Stockton sample size was misrepresented. It read, "...196 freshman (6.2% of the freshman class) and 269 seniors (5.3% of the senior class) responded...". The correct percentages were 22% of the freshman class and 22% of the senior class.

NSSE: Five Years of Students' Ratings of Mental Activities

Sonia V. Gonsalves

In last month's issue of *Evidence*, I looked at some of the ways in which Stockton differed from comparison-group colleges on the NSSE. This month's issue takes a criterion-referenced look at the way the freshmen and seniors view the emphasis that faculty place on different types of cognitive tasks. From this perspective, the issue for us now is whether these perceptions fit our goals. Is "quite a bit" OK? Would we like to see more separation between senior and freshman experiences? Are we satisfied with these reports?

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Update on the Assessment in Criminal Justice

Christine Tartaro

The criminal justice program has chosen to focus on assessment of students' knowledge of the American Psychological Association (APA) citation and style methods. Whether our students plan to continue their education in graduate school or enter the workforce after graduation, it is essential that they learn to properly cite sources and format a paper.

Program members shortened and modified the APA test used by Stockton's Psychology Program and administered the instrument to 150 students during the last week of the fall 2003 semester and first two weeks of the spring 2004 semester. The instrument included 21 multiple choice questions about in-text and bibliographical citations as well as basic style rules. Results indicated that our students need further instruction on APA issues. After discussing the results the program agreed on a course of action. All W2 courses taught by CRIM faculty will include an emphasis on APA style guidelines. The CRIM research methods class, which is also a W2, will include a stronger emphasis on these issues. The faculty chose research methods as the focal point for APA education, because it is in research methods that students learn to write a literature review. It seemed logical to focus on proper citations at the same time that students are learning the do's and don'ts of putting together a literature review.

In an effort to measure the effectiveness of our efforts, the program began conducting before-and after-tests in some of our research methods classes in the summer of 2004. We are currently working on data entry and hope to have results to report in the near future.

NURSING PROGRAM ASSESSMENT REPORT

Michelle Sabatini

Nursing Program Actions

The nursing program has begun the process of assessing critical thinking. The program chose The National League for Nursing (NLN) Critical Thinking in Clinical Nursing Practice multiple-choice test. The tests were administered to incoming students in the Spring 2004 term that were enrolled in Theory in Nursing 3331. The test was submitted to the NLN for scoring and results have been received and reviewed. This test will be administered again to the same students prior to their graduation. The change in scores will be calculated and reviewed.

Results

Five students participated in this initial assessment. The overall test score for the group was a 92. This corresponds to a percentile rank of 50. This percentile is based on analysis of 2001 data for 1157 graduating students in RN programs

across the nation. Because this score represents pre-test results only, no statement can be made regarding critical thinking and the nursing curriculum.

Plans to use Assessment Results

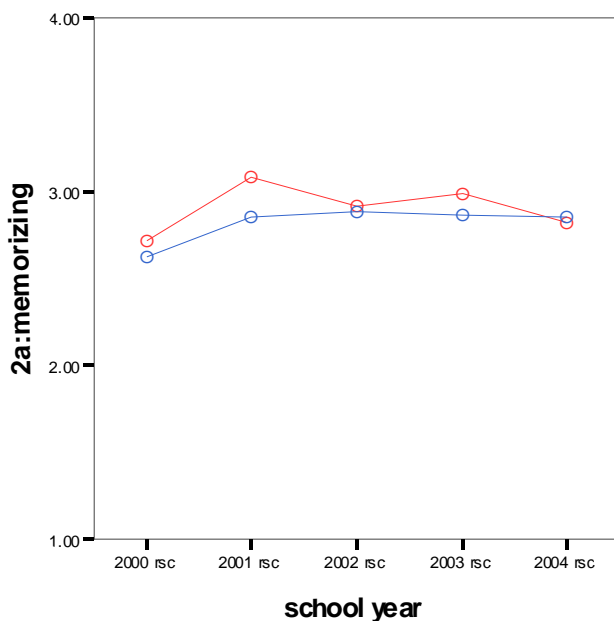
The individual and group results were evaluated. These results were shared and discussed with students. The Nursing program will use the results to evaluate the critical thinking content in the curriculum. The outcome data will also be utilized for accreditation purposes.

Future program assessment plans.

The nursing program would like to administer the test to a larger cohort of students and we are planning to administer this test to the incoming class of 2005.

The nursing program would also like to add a qualitative aspect to the critical thinking test in the future. Options include case studies or essays evaluated by the Critical Thinking Rubric already utilized by the nursing faculty. We also are exploring the idea of assessing additional concepts such as professional attitudes and leadership.

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grade level
 —○— freshman
 —○— senior

Dot/Lines show Means

NSSE Mental Activities— Stockton Freshman and Senior responses for years 2000 – 2004

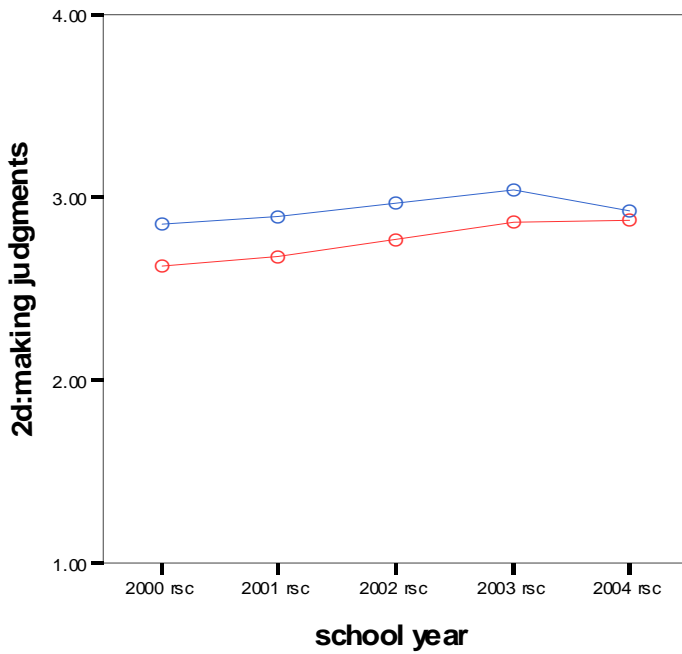
How much has your coursework emphasized memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your courses and readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form?

Freshmen and seniors have responded “quite a bit” to this question.

1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much

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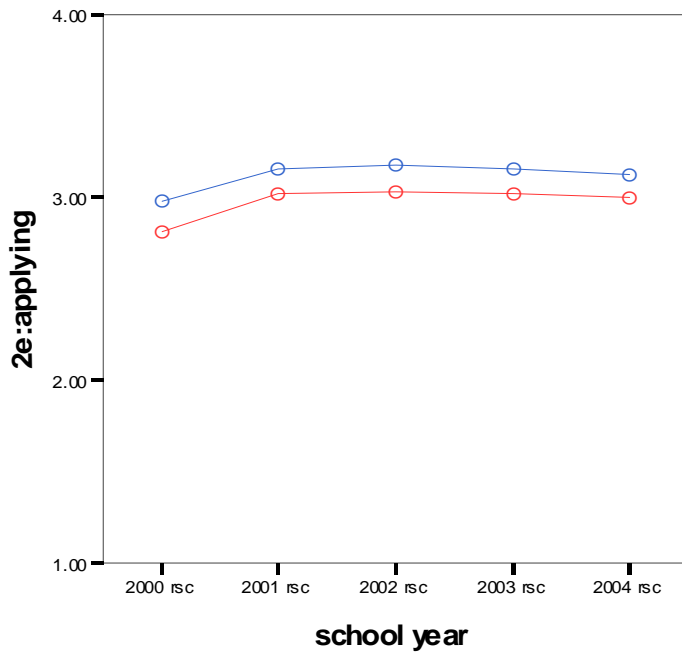


grade level
 —○— freshman
 —○— senior

Dot/Lines show Means

How much has your coursework emphasized making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods, such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions? Here again, the responses from both freshmen and seniors are in the “quite a bit” range.

1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much



grade level
 —○— freshman
 —○— senior

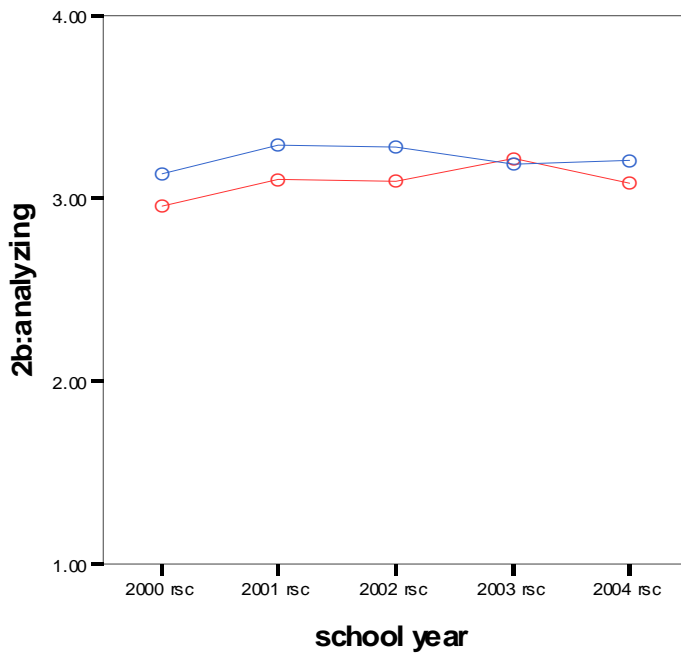
Dot/Lines show Means

How much has your coursework emphasized applying theories or concepts to practical problems? The responses are remarkably similar for both freshmen and seniors, and they are in the “quite a bit” range.

1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much

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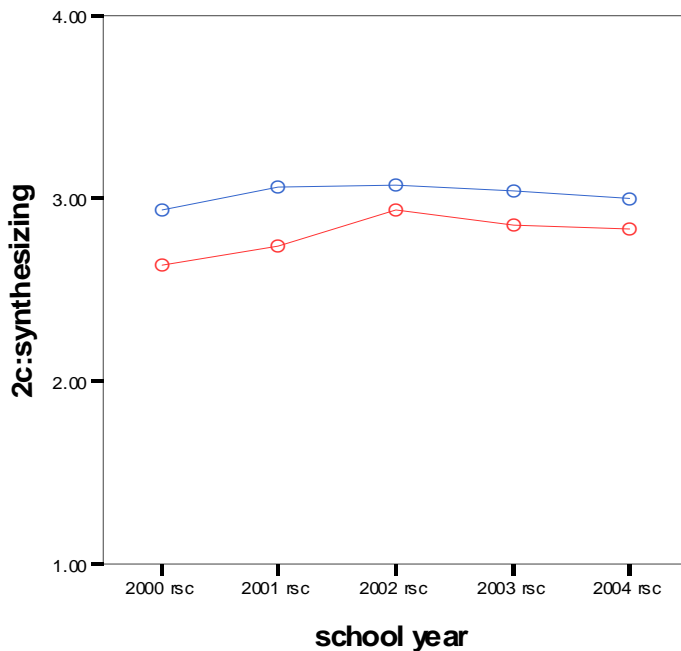
grade level
 ○ freshman
 ○ senior

Dot/Lines show Means

How much has your coursework emphasized analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components?

Freshmen and seniors report “quite a bit” of analysis in their coursework emphasis.

1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much



grade level
 ○ freshman
 ○ senior

Dot/Lines show Means

How much has your coursework emphasized synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships?

Both freshmen and seniors report that there is “quite a bit” of emphasis on all levels of intellectual engagement in the classroom, and the ratings have been consistent over the past five years. Freshmen are reporting a slightly higher level of memorization emphasis than are seniors, and seniors a slightly greater emphasis on making judgments, application, and synthesis. There is no bad news here; both junior and senior students believe that all levels of cognitive engagement are emphasized in their classes. The report from the classrooms shows that our faculty are demanding as much higher-level cognitive work from our freshmen as they are from our seniors, and that we are placing equal emphasis on all levels of cognitive engagement.

1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much