

**Academic Year 2007-2008 Assessment Report
Elliott School of Communication
Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Wichita State University**

Narrative Explanation

Background: Consistent with the ESC Assessment Plan updated and approved by the ESC faculty in Oct. 2004, we administered three of our four assessment tools in AY 07-08, including: the senior satisfaction survey, senior portfolio evaluation, and senior exit exam (critical thinking/analytical writing exercise). The fourth assessment tool, the alumni survey, was not administered. As our Plan stipulates, the alumni survey is only administered periodically. Plans are underway to examine converting the alumni survey from mail/telephone instruments to a web-survey. All four of these assessment tools align with program goals and objectives and expected learner outcomes identified in the assessment plan.

Summary Results: All assessment tools were administered to students enrolled in COMM 472 (Senior Portfolio), a required one-credit course for ESC graduating seniors. **The senior satisfaction survey** data measures satisfaction levels along fourteen items with respect to various features of our degree program, courses, faculty & staff, facilities, etc., (results on file in ESC). Results (fall & spring) met or exceeded our expectations. The **senior portfolio** evaluation forms (a collection of a student's best work evaluated by an outside professional) were taken as a whole from both semesters and tabulated along seven indices. Results met or exceeded expectations. Finally, the **senior exit exam** (a critical thinking and analytical writing exercise) was randomly sampled from both semesters for grading purposes along two indices. Results met or exceeded expectations.

Break-out Results: The **Satisfaction Survey results** were derived from 82 anonymous respondents who took the survey in fall and spring. Data was tabulated by the Associate Director of the school. Key summary findings included: an overwhelming majority of students believe (1) the ESC increased their basic overall knowledge of communication,

expectations (scored satisfactory on one index; less than satisfactory on the other). Two students scored unsatisfactory along both lines. (Full results available from the ESC)

The Portfolio Evaluation Results were derived from 133 portfolio evaluations from both semesters conducted by outside communication professionals. Student identity was concealed in the coding process. The evaluation template rated seven items on a scale of 1 to 5 (5=very strong; 1=very weak). The overall average for all portfolios was 4.11, a slight increase from last year (3.96). The highest average scores for all portfolios were on the quality of organization of the portfolio (4.24) and the oral presentation of the portfolio (4.30).

Recommendations for Assessment Collection: In our 2004/2005 assessment report, the ESC faculty made recommendations for change in how we collect assessment data. These were implemented in this report and include: portfolio evaluations forms are now standardized across emphasis areas; portfolio evaluation forms now protect anonymity in the data collection process; portfolio evaluations are now tabulated and sampled in some way like the critical thinking exercise for timely results; portfolio forms now account for progress in basic communication skills. Two other recommendations are still in a discernment phase: how best to continue recruiting outside professionals each semester without compensation to evaluate all senior portfolios; how best to work toward collecting a consistent “N” size across assessment measures. ESC Faculty should review the critical thinking assessment tool. The tool tests specific knowledge from one class (COMM 535), but students may not have taken the class or may have taken it several semesters earlier. While only two students did not meet expectations, we should continue to monitor whether the instrument accurately and reasonably assesses student knowledge.

Recommendations for Program Changes: To address prior concern with technology, the ESC recently improved COMM 305 with additional instruction in current communication technology (the changes were the result of last year’s assessment and subsequent faculty discussion). The class has shifted from a large lecture course, to smaller classes with more hands-on technology instruction. The results from 2007-2008 show small improvements from the prior year in the reported value of COMM 305. Future assessments should consider asking specific questions about the class to further clarify the perceived value of the class changes. While the survey results suggest students are very pleased with their classes, several written comments on the survey expressed a desire for fewer required classes and additional opportunities for elective classes. The faculty should consider options for expanding offerings to enable students to enroll in a wider variety of classes.

Prepared by Dr. Jeffrey Jarman, Associate Director, Elliott School of Communication
September 15, 2008

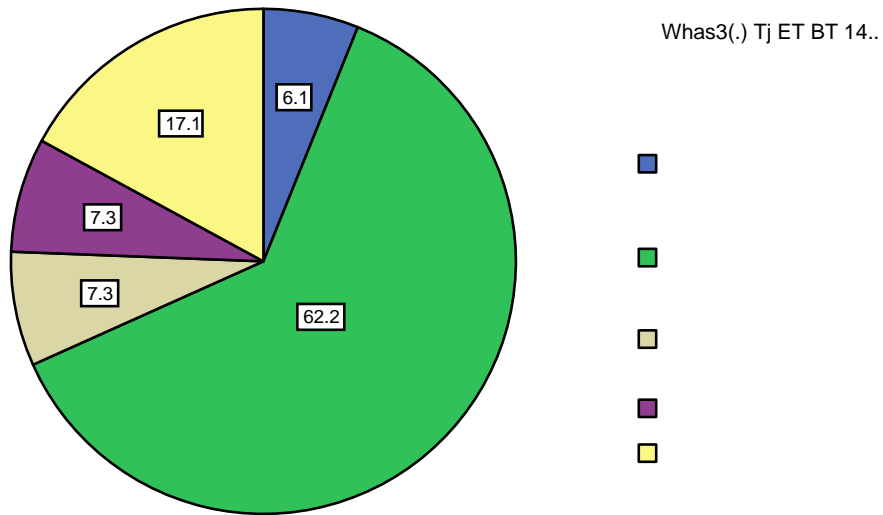
Fall

II. Coop / Internship

Overview: Almost three-quarters of the respondents participated in a coop or internship. A majority were very satisfied with their experience, and very few left with a negative impression.

III. Meeting student goals / Post-graduation plans

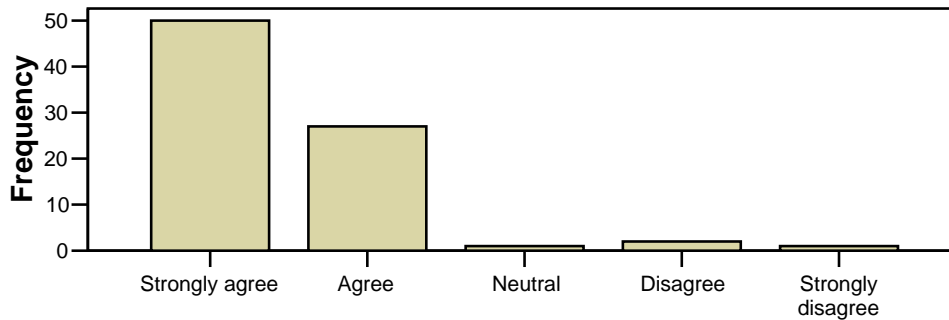
Overview: Almost two-thirds of the respondents intend to pursue a full time career in communication. Most students believe their degree will help them find a job.



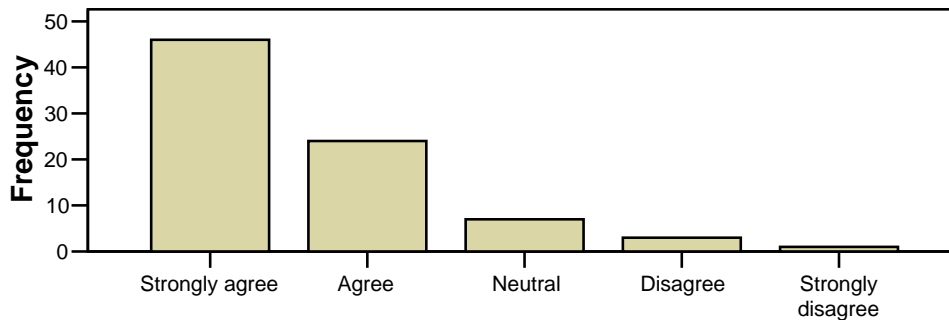
IV. Skills / Knowledge gained

Overview: Respondents indicated a strong increase in all skills taught by the ESC. The average for each area was: basic overall knowledge (1.48), writing skills (1.63), speaking skills (1.83), visual skills (1.98), and critical thinking (2.17). While these scores are strong, they are slightly higher than last year. The one exception is visual knowledge, which improved from 2.20 to 1.98.

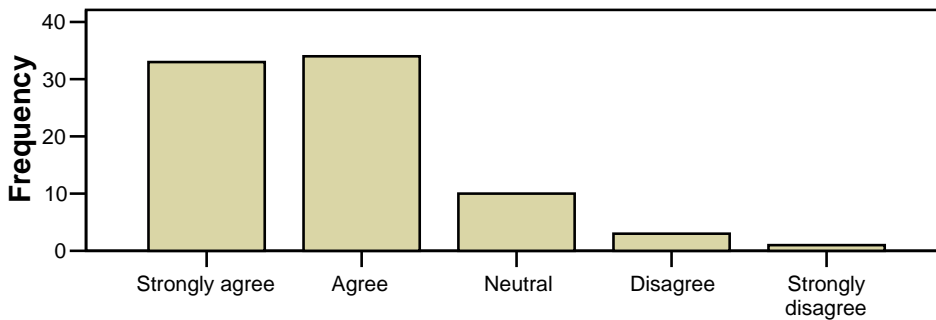
The program increased my basic overall knowledge of ...



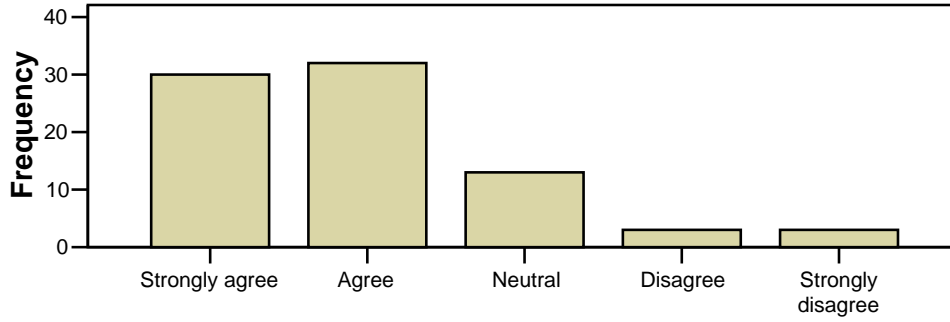
The program improved my writing skills



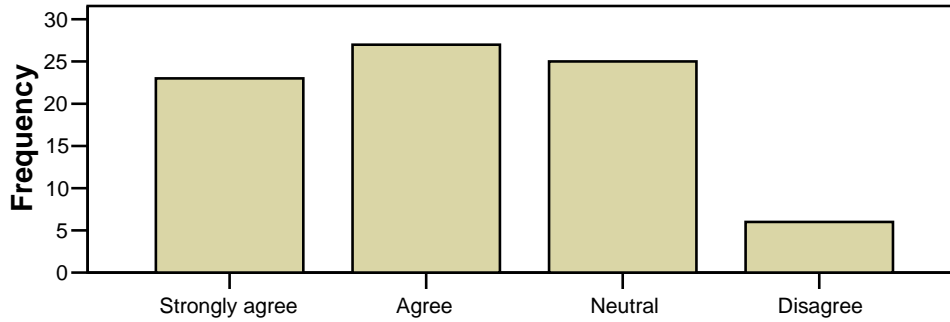
The program improved my speaking skills



The program improved my visual skills

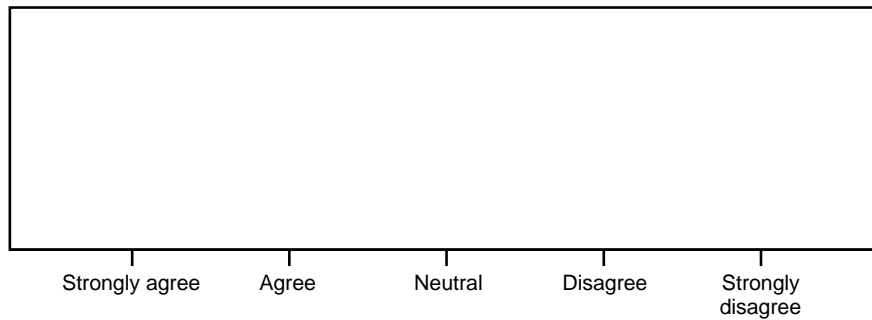


The program improved my critical thinking skills

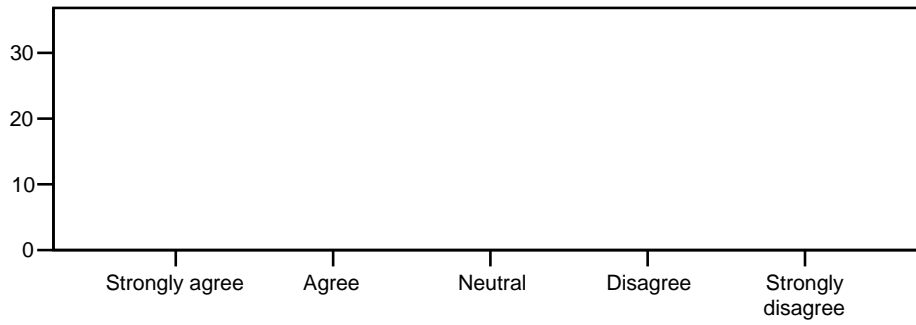
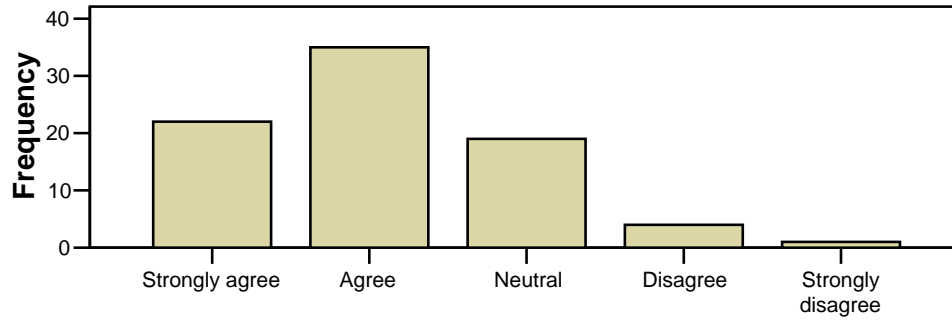


V. Classroom / learning environment

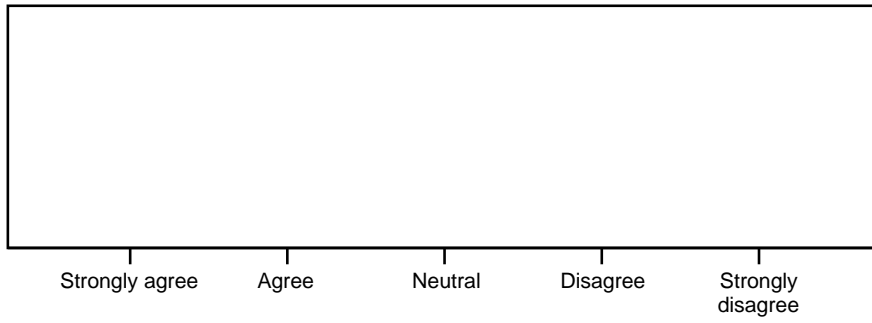
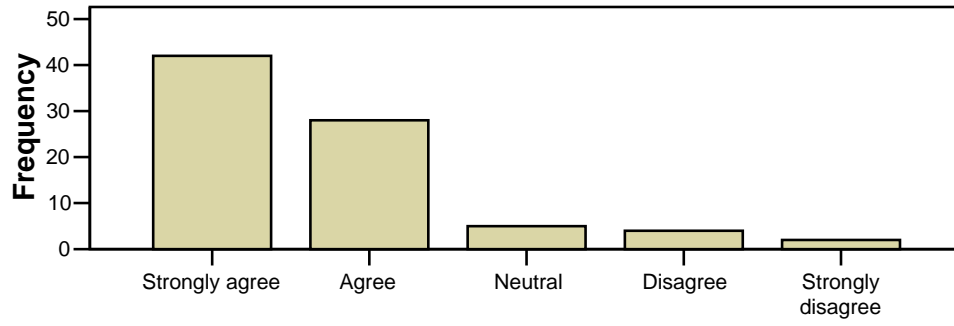
Overview: Key indicators continue to suggest that the classroom environment at the ESC is strong. Students believe the atmosphere is supportive (1.84), technology access in class (2.01) and out of class (2.36) is satisfactory, and their personal interests were allowed to come into the classroom (2.10).



The program allowed my personal interests to become ...

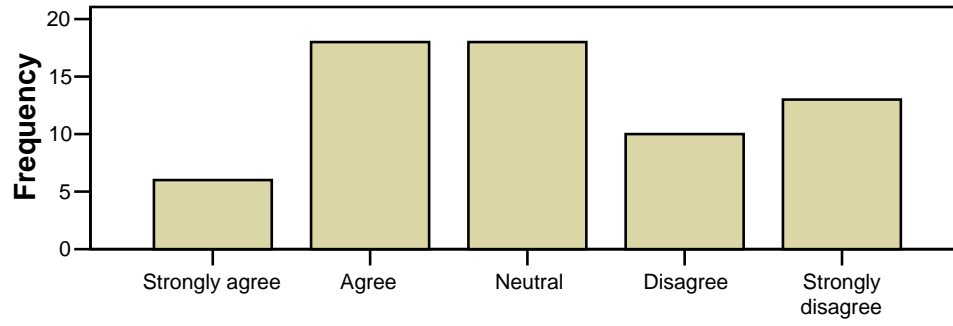


The ESC faculty are highly qualified





Value of Comm 430



Value of Comm 631

