

Assessment Report, 2020-2021
Masters Degree Program
Adult Learning and Leadership

Assessment Report, 2020-2021..... 4

 Introduction.....4

 Student Learning Outcomes.....5

Evaluation Approach..... 6

 Direct Measures.....6

 Indirect Measures.....7

 Direct Measure Findings.....7

 SLOs summaries and results.....8

 Students’ Self-assessments.....14

 Indirect Measure Findings.....14

 Students’ Narratives Self-assessment of SLOs.....14

 End of Program Reports.....22

 Inter-Reliability Statistical Test.....31

Assessment Report Review and Recommendation..... 32

List of Tables

<i>Table 1. Masters of Adult Learning and Leadership SLOs.</i>	6
<i>Table 2. Direct Measures.</i>	7
<i>Table 3. Students' Assessments of Items Key to Enrollment.</i>	22
<i>Table 4. Students' Responses to Program Quality.</i>	23
<i>Table 5. Kappa Assessment for Mutual Agreement.</i>	31
<i>Table 7. Review and Recommendations.</i>	32

List of Figures

<i>Figure 1. Student Populations/Ratings, AYs 2013/2014 thru 2020/2021.</i>	5
<i>Figure 2. 3-Year Transition in Student Population.</i>	5
<i>Figure 3. Yearly Average SLO Rating.</i>	8
<i>Figure 4. SLO 1. Literature Integration</i>	10
<i>Figure 5. SLO 2. Research Process.</i>	10
<i>Figure 6. SLO 3. Social Justice Issues.</i>	11
<i>Figure 7. SLO 4. Technological Impacts.</i>	11
<i>Figure 8. SLO 5. Written Communication Skills.</i>	12
<i>Figure 9. SLO 6. Synthesize Information.</i>	12
<i>Figure 10. SLO 7. Moral and Ethical Responsibilities.</i>	13
<i>Figure 11. Students' Self-Assessments vs Raters' Assessment.</i>	14
<i>Figure 12. Students' Self-Assessment Narratives, SLO 1, Literature Integration.</i>	15
<i>Figure 13. Students' Self-Assessment Narratives, SLO 2, Research Process.</i>	16
<i>Figure 14. Students' Self-Assessment Narratives, SLO 3, Social Issues.</i>	17
<i>Figure 15. Students' Self-Awareness Narrative, SLO 4, Technological Impacts.</i>	18
<i>Figure 16. Students' Self-Awareness Narratives, SLO-5, Written Communications.</i>	19
<i>Figure 17. Students' Self-Awareness Narratives, SLO 6, Synthesize Information.</i>	20
<i>Figure 18. Students' Self-Awareness Narratives, SLO 7, Moral and Ethical Responsibilities.</i>	21
<i>Figure 19. Number of Students Responding by Semester.</i>	22
<i>Figure 20. Students Accessing Portfolio Site.</i>	24
<i>Figure 21. Main Reasons to Enroll in the Program.</i>	25
<i>Figure 22. Contrasting Occupational Themes.</i>	26
<i>Figure 23. End of Program, Best Aspects of Program.</i>	28
<i>Figure 24. End of Program, Concerns to Share.</i>	29
<i>Figure 25. End of Program Survey, How to Reach People or Generally Market Program.</i>	30

Assessment Report, 2020-2021

Introduction. The purpose of the 2020-2021 MS Adult Learning and Leadership Assessment Report was to conduct an annual formative assessment to review the focus of the program, to collect, analyze, and summarize data, and to formulate decisions regarding program improvements in curricula, facilitations, and evaluation of artifacts. Additionally, through the use of students' self-assessments and reflection papers, the assessment sought to "give voice" to the adult learners participating in the program.

We made adjustments to the context of the AY 2020-2021 assessment reflecting upon two events: (a) the continued presence of a pandemic requiring mitigation measures and (b) a shift in the composition of the traditional student population. First, previous formative assessments analyzed the student population being divided into three subgroups: Fort Leavenworth Center, Olathe Center, and Global Campus. However, AY 2020-2021 COVID 19 risk mitigation policies required that all students and faculty transition to a virtual learning environment. Thus, the study's findings represented the learning approach only as virtual versus distinguishing between the three subgroups.

Second, the findings reflected a changing student demographics where the majority of the students enrolled via global campus online with a minority of students enrolling through the Fort Leavenworth and Olathe Centers. The shift reflects a two-year decline in students' demographics at the Fort Leavenworth Center. The average subgroup at the Fort Leavenworth Center from AY 2013 to AY 2018 was 52 students or approximately 65% of the total student population. Due to policy changes and the option for a Government fully funded graduate program at the Army University, the Fort Leavenworth Center population decreased to 36 students in AY 2018-2019 and to 22 students in AY 2019-2020. The decrease continued in AY 2020-2021 to 19 students or 37% of the total student population. This was the first year in the program where the Fort Leavenworth Center subgroup became the minority within the student population. In contrast, the proportion of Global Campus students increased from 12 students in AY 2019-2020 to 27 students or 53% of the student population in AY 2020-2021. Figure 1 depicted changes in student population ranging from a high of 88 students in AY 2014-2015 to a low of 38 students in AY 2019-2020. AY 2020-2021 exhibited an increase in students to 51.

Figure 2 reflected the 3-year shift in student population and the decline in the Fort Leavenworth Center subgroup.

Figure 1. Student Populations/Ratings, AYs 2013/2014 thru 2020/2021.

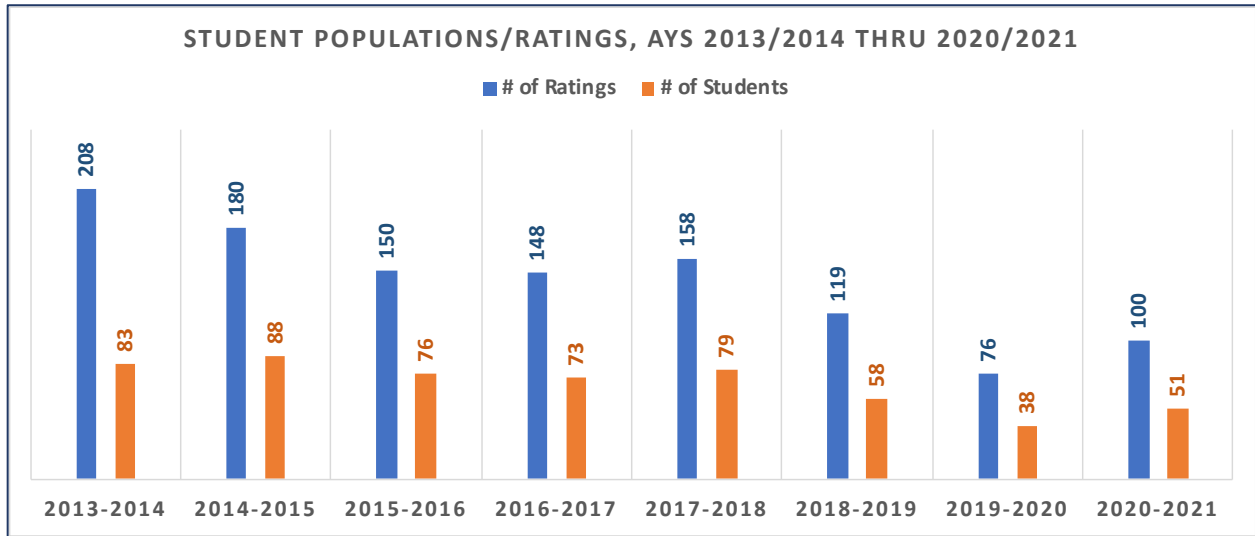
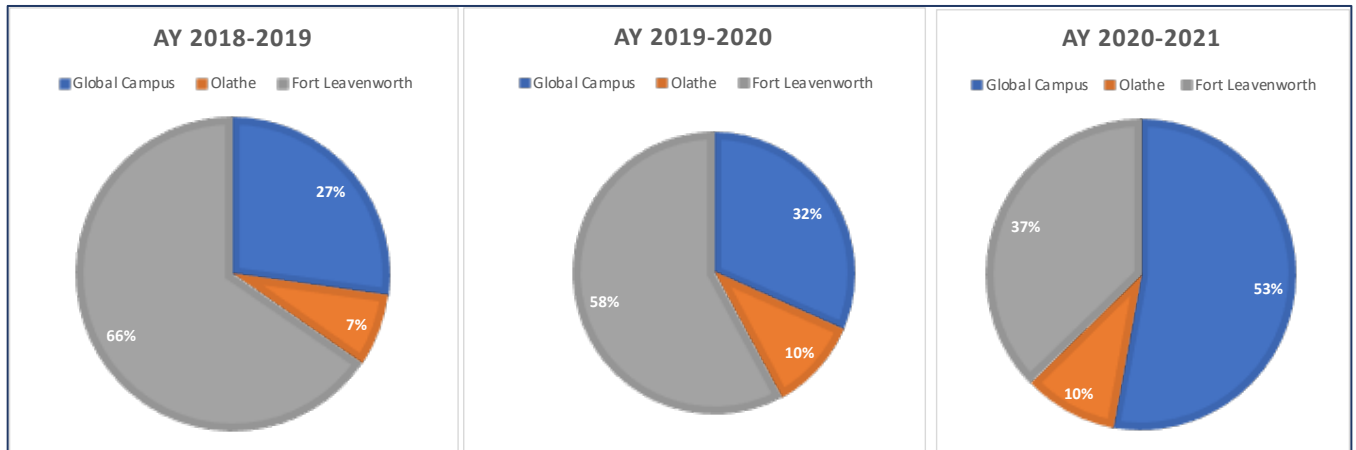


Figure 2. 3-Year Transition in Student Population.



Student Learning Outcomes. The Masters of Science in Adult Learning and Leadership program encompassed seven student learning outcomes. Table 1 listed the SLO number, title, and learning outcomes students must master to achieve educational outcomes.

Table 1. Masters of Adult Learning and Leadership SLOs.		
SLO #	Title	Learning Outcomes
Knowledge		
1	Literature Integration	Articulate an understanding of the breadth and depth of the literature in the field of adult education.
2	Research Process	Demonstrate understanding of the research process.
3	Social Issues	Demonstrate an understanding of social issues affecting adult education.
4	Technological Impacts	Demonstrate knowledge of the impact of technology on adult education and adult learning.
5	Written Communication Skills	Demonstrate effective written communication skills.
6	Synthesize Information	Demonstrate the ability to synthesize complex information.
Attitudes and Professional Conduct		
7	Moral and Ethical Responsibilities	Recognize moral and ethical responsibilities within the adult education profession and practice professional ethics.

Evaluation Approach. The assessment used a mixed method, component typology encompassing both direct and indirect measures (Rallis & Rossman, 2003). The direct measure consisted of a quantitative research methodology and statistical tools using evaluators' ratings of students' artifacts and reflective essays from SLOs 1 through 7 and the final student essay. The indirect measures consisted of qualitative research methodologies using narrative themes from students' self-assessments and end of program (EOP) survey instruments.

Direct Measures. Administrators assessed learning outcomes through two components of the MS portfolio. The first component consisted of artifacts to demonstrate satisfaction of SLOs from completed courses (assignments within the courses). The second component was a narrative reflection essay summarizing students' evidence of knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to fields of study. Faculty members assessed blind portfolios using a Likert rating scale and an evaluation rubric. Two faculty members evaluated each portfolio submission. During the course of the 2020-2021 academic year, raters reviewed 51 portfolios. Ratings took place at the completion of fall, spring, and summer sessions. Table 2, *Direct Measures*, contains specific details regarding the content of the portfolio product.

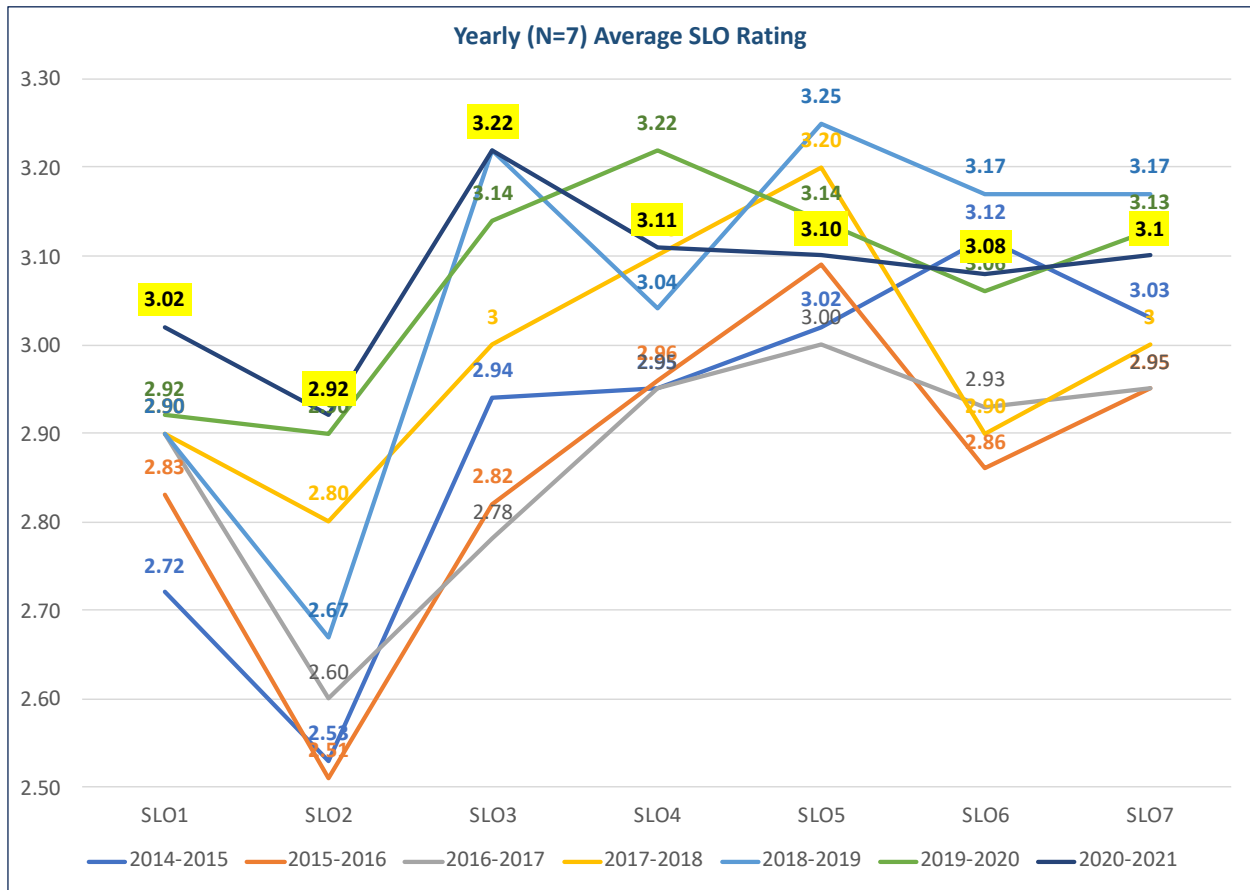
Table 2. Direct Measures.		
Item	Title	Content
Performance based assessment	Artifacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Products (i.e. any paper, presentation, video, podcast) composed during designated coursework. ▪ Requires two artifacts for each SLO.
Essay	SLO reflection essays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two-page paper that addresses the topic of the SLO. ▪ Reflects upon the knowledge, understanding, and synthesis the student achieved during the adult education courses (the program).
Essay	Final Reflection Essay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completed as the final requirement after all essays and products are submitted for assessment. ▪ Three to five-page essay where student reflects upon growth and change as he/she progresses through the program.

Indirect Measures. All students completed two components: 1) a self-assessment of their progress in the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes and 2) an end-of-program survey containing summated Likert scale statements and open-ended questions.

Direct Measure Findings. The direct measure findings consisted of various quantitative comparisons between the program's goals and actuals. Additionally, in some cases the findings provided a comparative analysis of ratings between current and previous academic years. Figure 3 displayed the yearly SLO average for the past 7 academic years. The darker blue line with yellow highlighted data points indicated the average ratings for AY2020-2021 where 51 students received evaluations for a total of 100 ratings. Due to a technical error, 2 students only received 1 rating. Staff and faculty established a program objective of achieving a proficient (3.0) or higher, 75% percentage level rating for each SLO. With the exception of SLO 2, AY2020-2021 achieved the program objective. That said, SLO 2 continued to progress towards the objective receiving the highest average rating (2.92) in the program's history. SLO 1 also recorded the highest numerical ratings in the program's history.

While SLOs 1 and 2 reached new program heights, we observed decreases in average ratings for SLOs 4 thru 7. We also noticed less variability in the averages between SLOs 4 thru 7 where the average ratings differed by less than .03. SLO 3 tied with the highest rating ever recorded for Social Justice Issues within the program.

Figure 3. Yearly Average SLO Rating.



SLOs summaries and results. The line charts depicted the slopes of cumulative SLOs’ ratings over AYs 2014-2015 through 2020-2021. The horizontal axis listed whether students received a rating of unsatisfactory, basic, proficient, or distinguish. Note that as the student population decreased over the academic years, the heights of the slopes also decreased. The blue comment box denoted whether the program achieved the faculty goal of 75% of students achieve a rating of proficient or distinguished. The percentage figure reflects the number of students achieving a proficient rating plus the number of students achieving a distinguished rating. The combined figure was divided by the number of portfolio ratings (N=100). The yellow text line within the blue box described the percentage of change in evaluators’ proficient and distinguished ratings in comparison to the previous academic year, AY 2019-2020.

Recognizing the difference in population sizes, where AY 2019-2020 (N=76) was lower than AY 2020-2021 (N= 100) and in learning approaches due to COVID 19 precautions, we

elected to perform a statistical test to note any statistical differences in the treatments or ratings for either independent student populations. We chose two arrays of evaluators ratings from each of the academic years. We conducted a *t* Test for Two Independent Samples to determine if the mean of the two sample sets were similar. Each blue box contained the results of the statistical test. We failed to reject the null hypothesis in all 7 tests.

Figures 4 through 10 provided overviews of the direct measures' data and longitudinal results for each SLO. With the exception of SLO 2, the remaining SLOs met the faculty goal of achieving a 75% or above rating of proficient or distinguished. We saw higher percentages increases in SLOs 1, 2, and 7. While the percentage decreased by 3% in SLO 3, for the first time in the program history, raters evaluated a higher number of SLO artifacts as "Distinguished" (N=45) versus "Proficient" (N=36). SLOs 4 thru 6 declined in percentages with decreases ranging from -4% to -8%.

Figure 4. SLO 1. Literature Integration

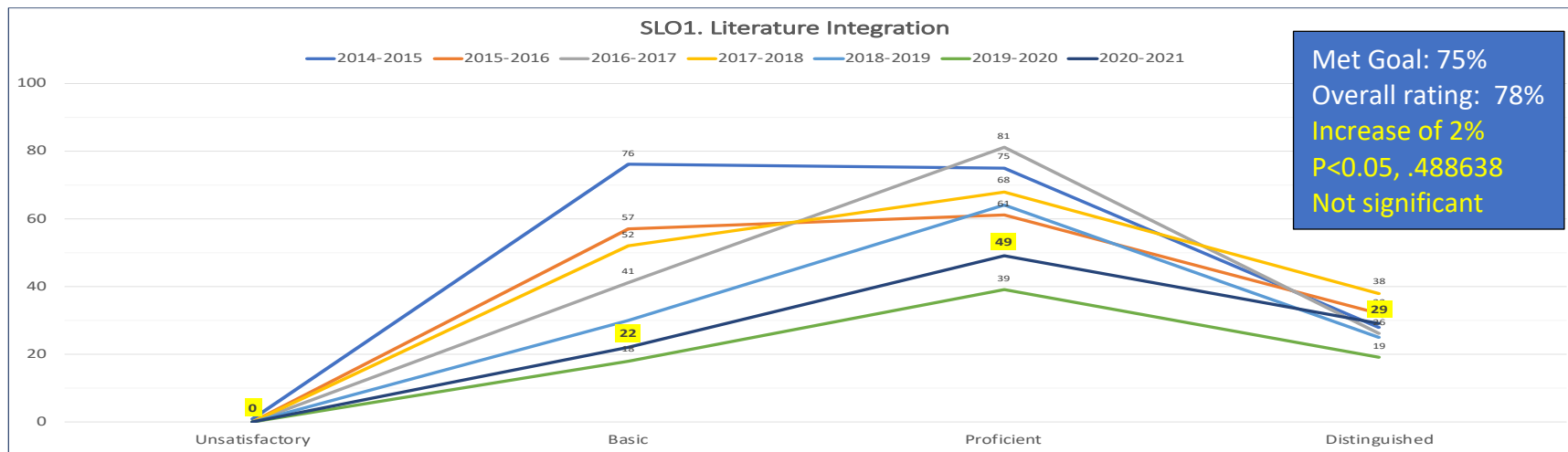


Figure 5. SLO 2. Research Process.

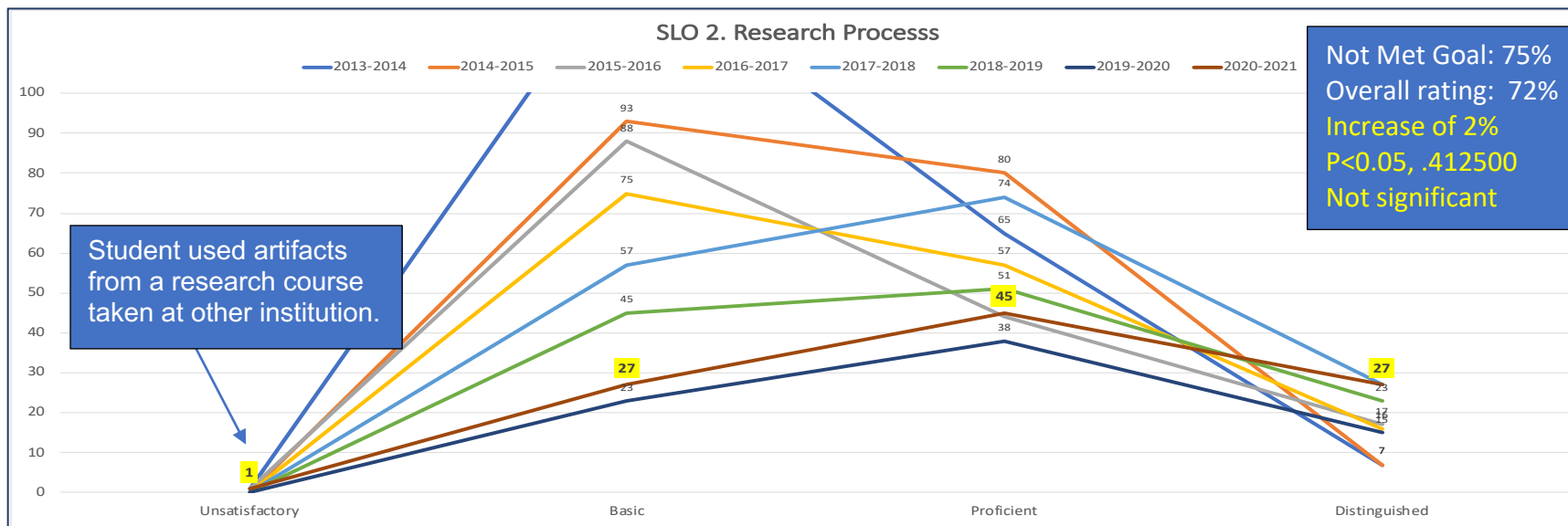


Figure 6. SLO 3. Social Justice Issues.

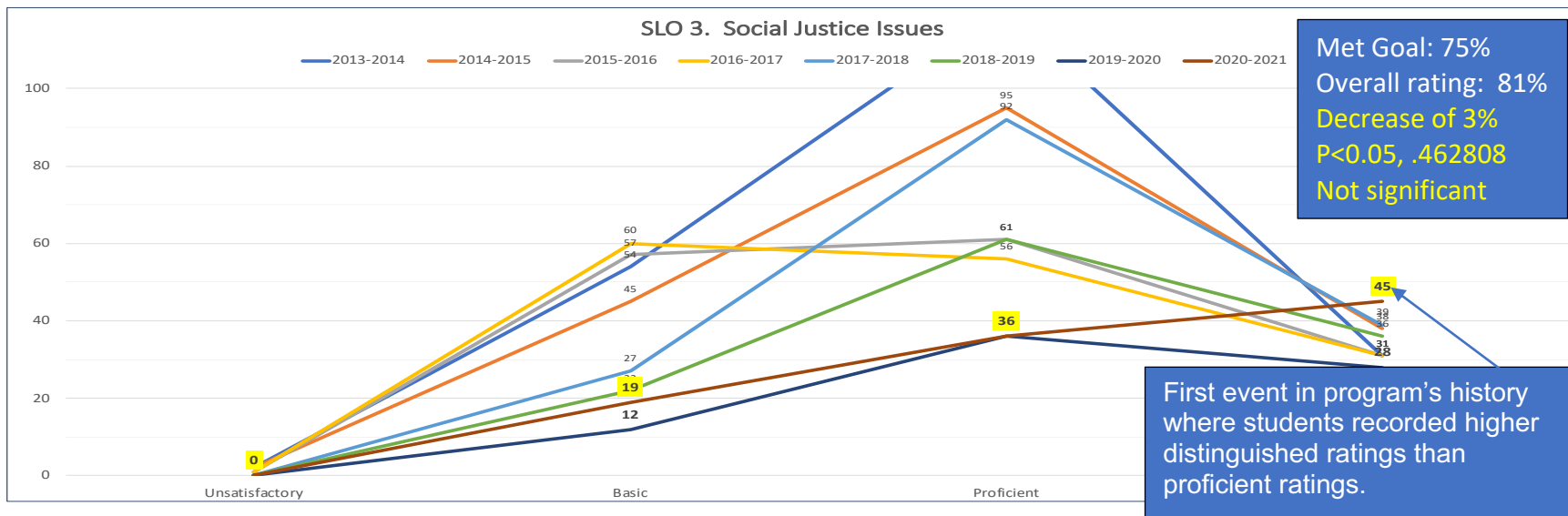


Figure 7. SLO 4. Technological Impacts.

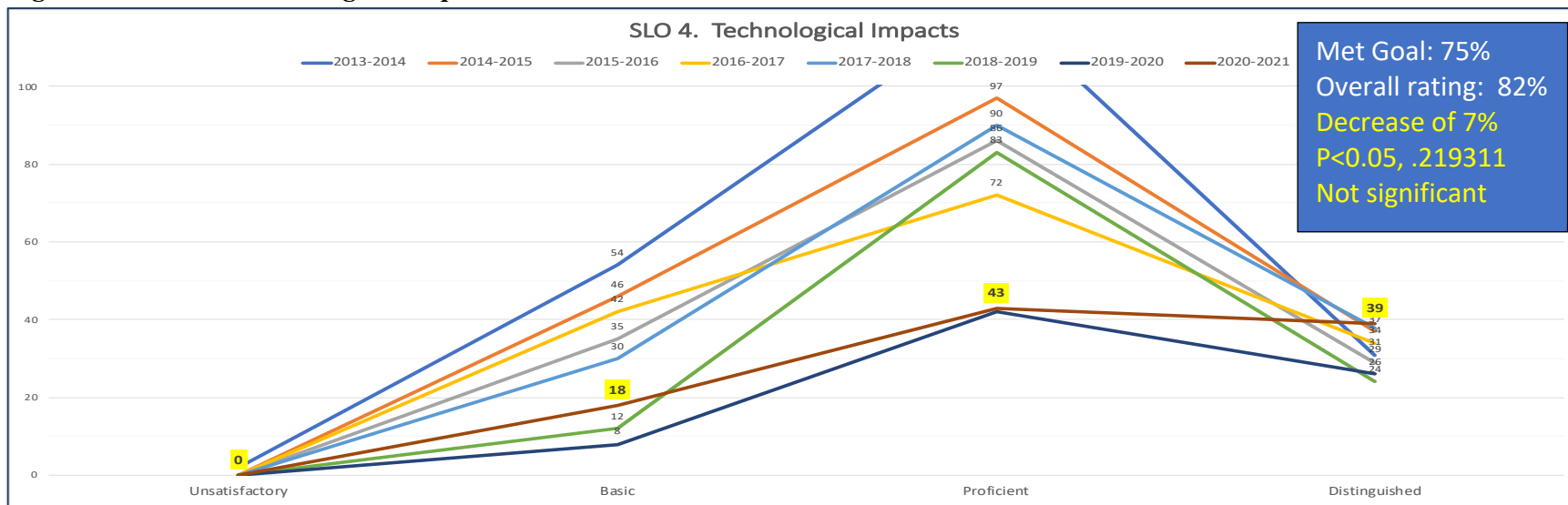


Figure 8. SLO 5. Written Communication Skills.

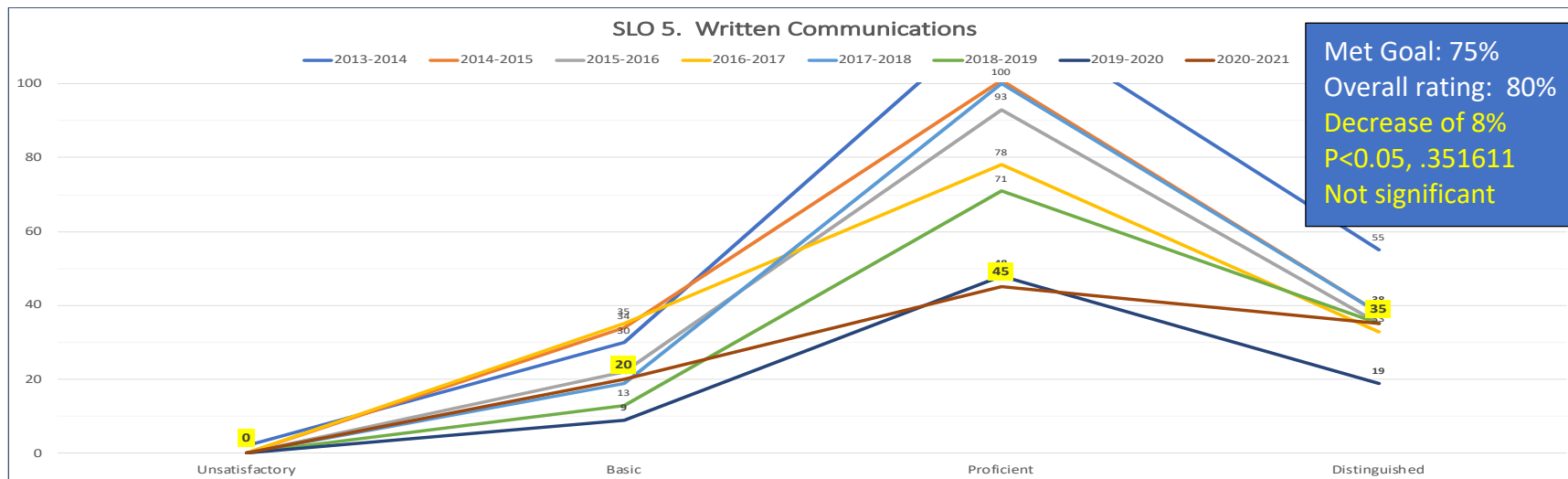


Figure 9. SLO 6. Synthesize Information.

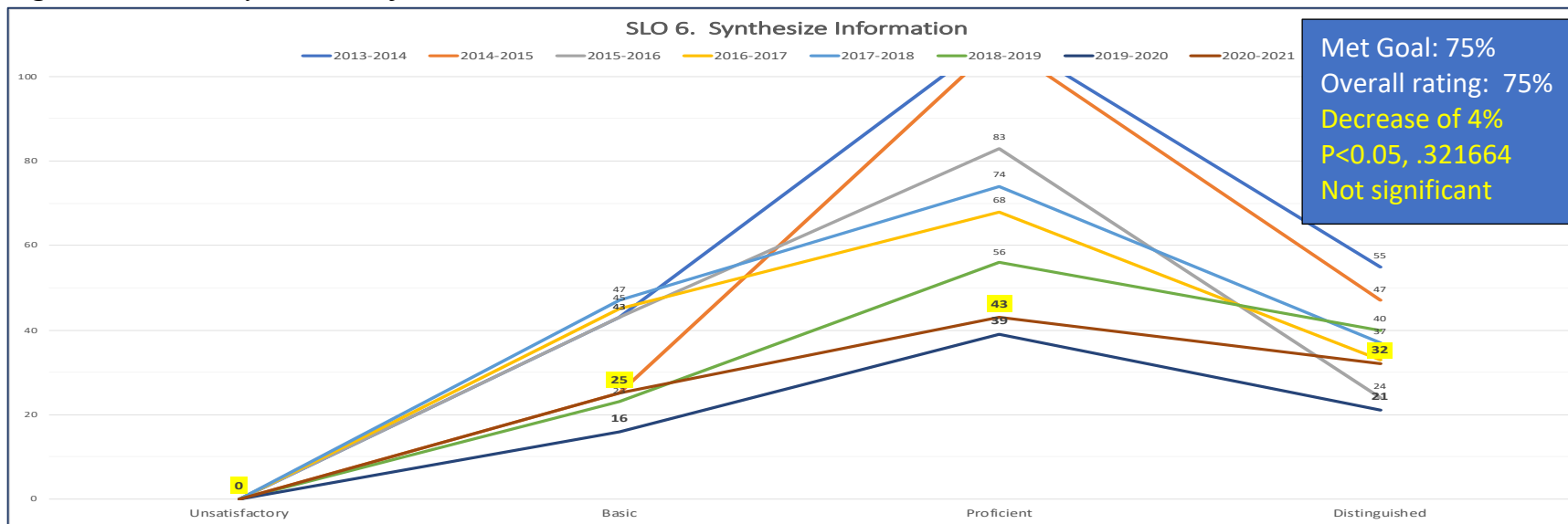
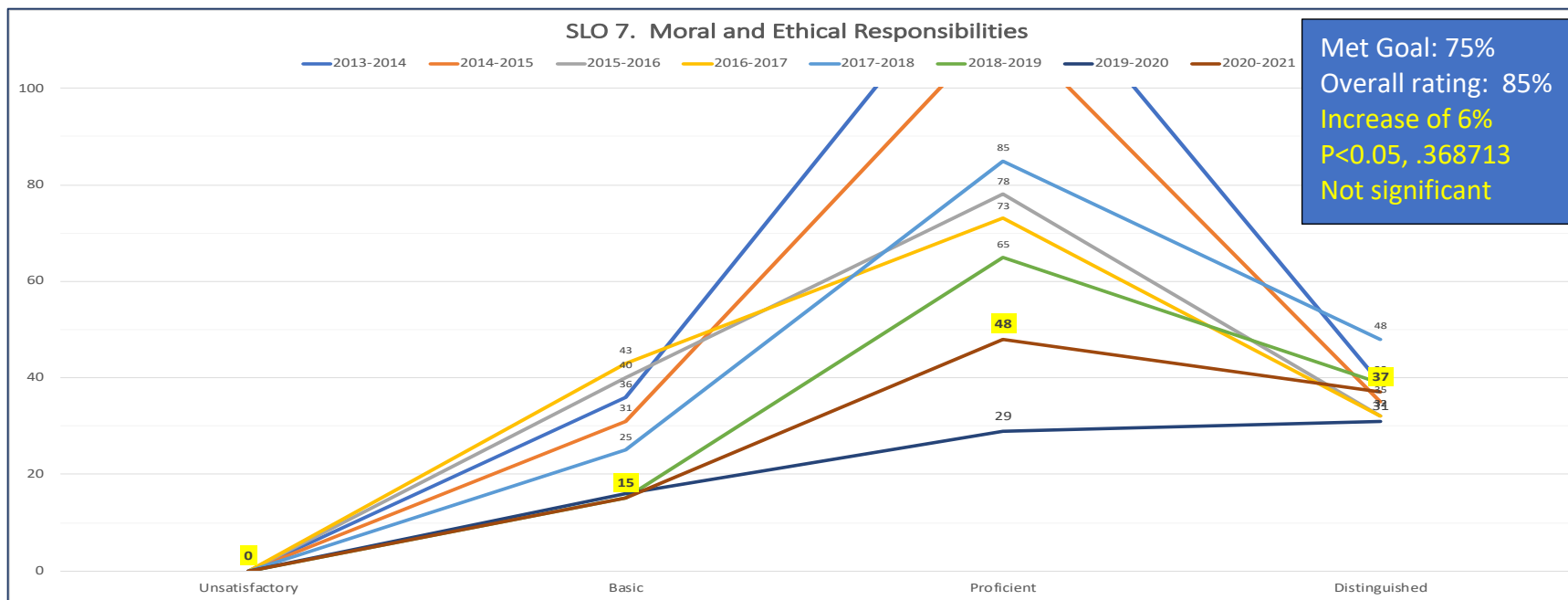
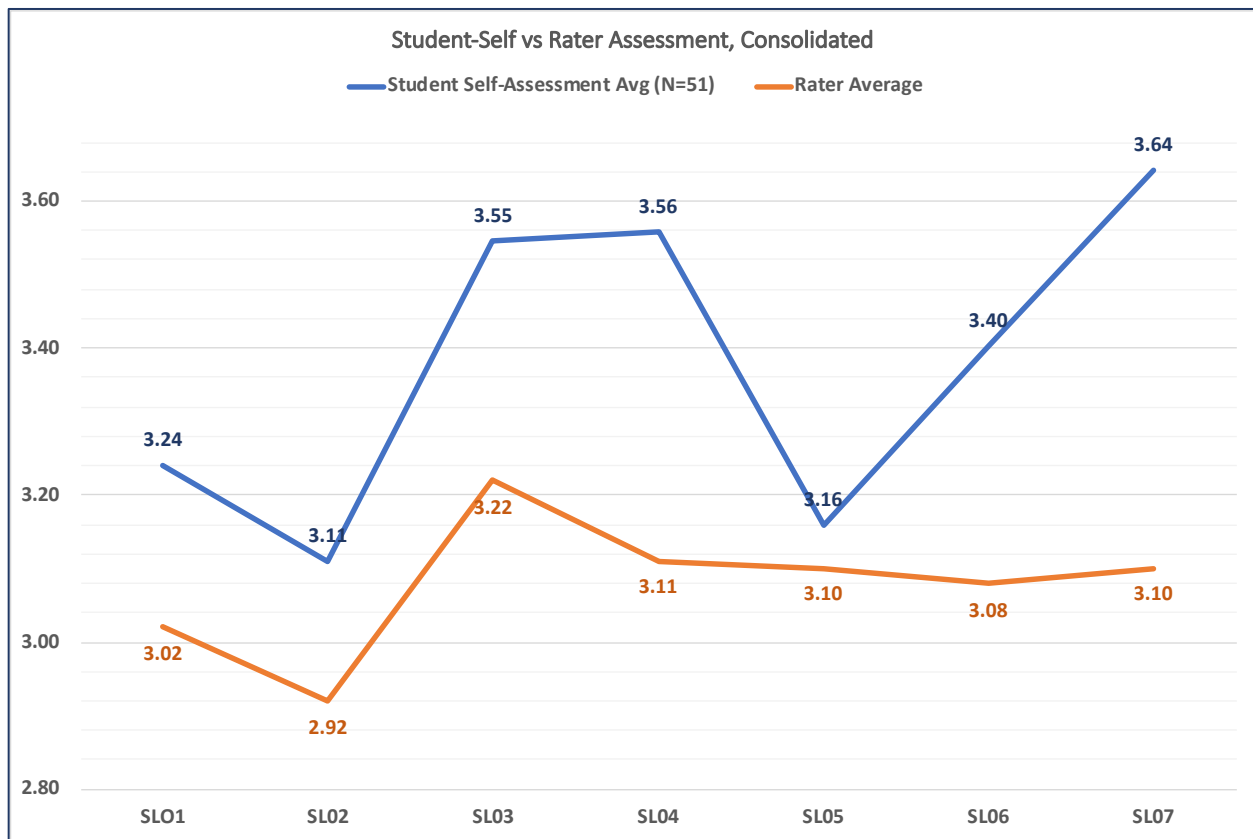


Figure 10. SLO 7. Moral and Ethical Responsibilities.



Students' Self-assessments. At the conclusion of the program, students (N=51) completed a self-assessment of their understanding and knowledge of the learning outcomes. As Figure 12 showed, similar to previous academic years, in all cases students' averaged self-assessed ratings were higher than averaged evaluator ratings.

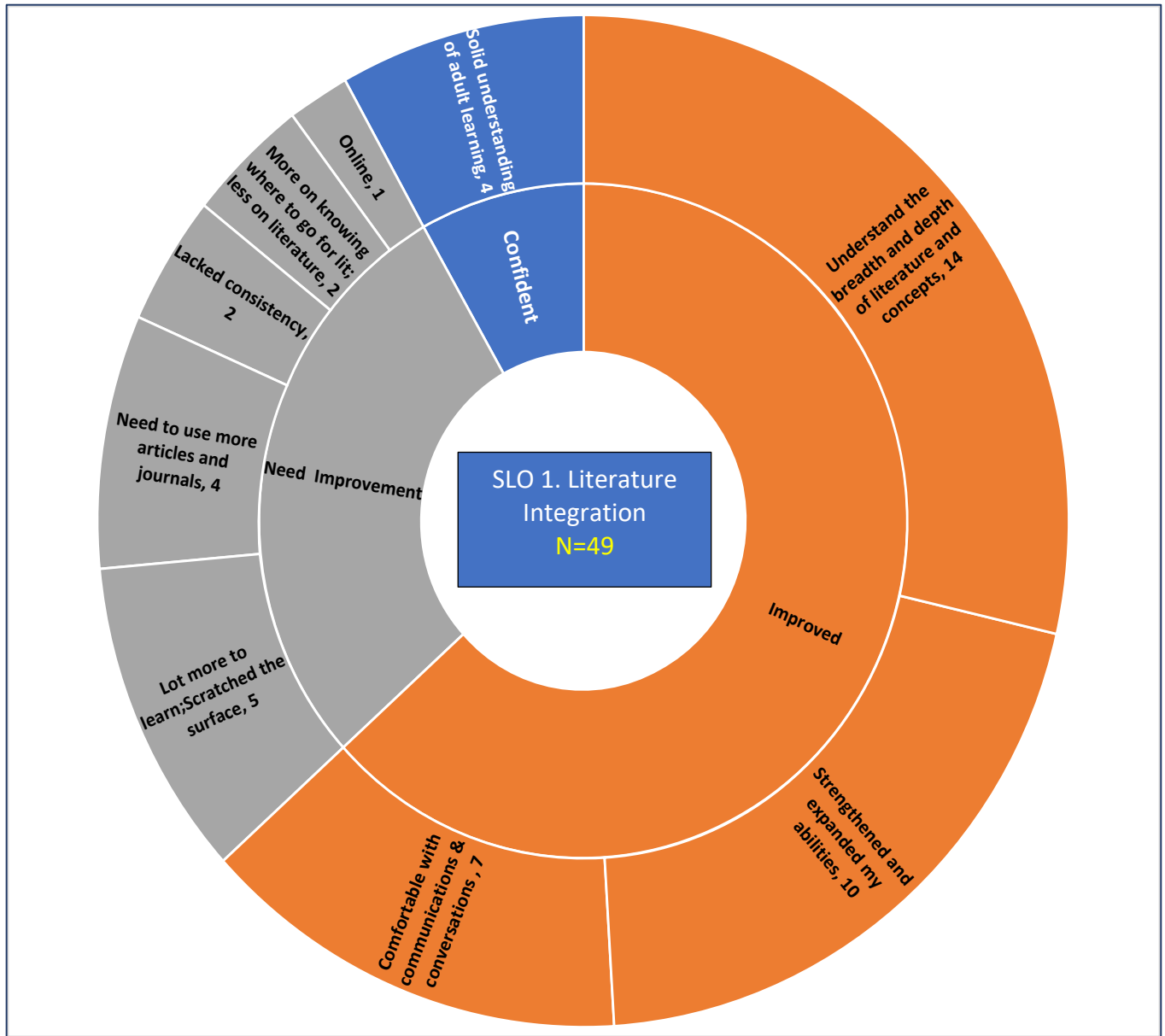
Figure 11. Students' Self-Assessments vs Raters' Assessment.



Indirect Measure Findings. All students completed two components: 1) a self-assessment of their progress in the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes and 2) an end-of-program survey containing summated Likert scale statements and open-ended questions.

Students' Narratives Self-assessment of SLOs. Figures 12 through 19 contain sunburst charts incorporating students' narratives. As we reviewed students input, we developed patterns of qualitative themes which best described comments in a truncated fashion. The interior ring of the sunburst lists three major classification; confident, improved, and need improvement. The outer rings contained minor themes and the number of like comments associated with the theme. The sunburst does not contain comments such as "none" or where students provided no input.

Figure 12. Students’ Self-Assessment Narratives, SLO 1, Literature Integration.



Literature Integration

A majority of students (63.2%) indicated they saw improvements in their integration of literature within both their reflection papers and artifacts. Students who indicated the need for improvement cited efforts to improve in the incorporation of additional journal articles and literature within their artifacts and the need to explore additional literature. Surprisingly, only 1 student expressed concerns with adjusting to an online environment.

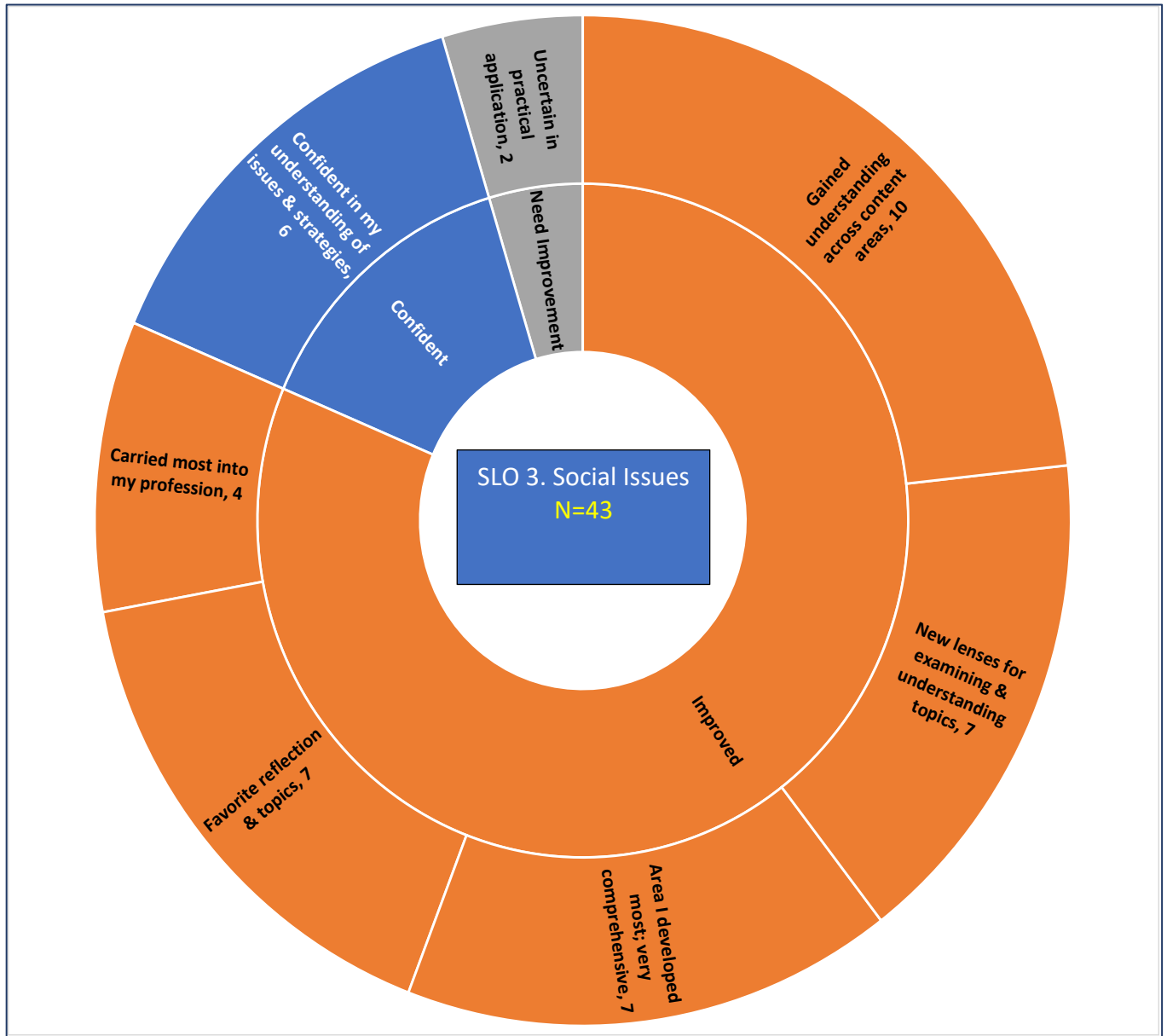
Figure 13. Students' Self-Assessment Narratives, SLO 2, Research Process.



Research Process

76.4% of students felt they saw improvements in their use of research methods or felt extremely confident in their research abilities. Several students expressed they were better prepared to discern literature and journal articles. Students who indicated the need for additional improvement (23.5%) failed to see the applicability of the research process in their daily lives or struggled with the research terms and epistemologies.

Figure 14. Students' Self-Assessment Narratives, SLO 3, Social Issues.



Social Issues

81.3% of students felt they expanded their knowledge and gained a new appreciation for social justice issues within adult education. Many (28%) were able to relate content to other areas in the program. A small number of students were uncertain of the applicability of content to their personal and professional. One student reflected that “I am not sure that I will ever get past basic. Plus, I am in the military and we are somewhat (not totally) sheltered from this”. Others stated they struggled in applying critical theories to their artifacts.

Figure 15. Students' Self-Awareness Narrative, SLO 4, Technological Impacts.



Technological Impacts

59.5% of students indicated improvements in their technological skills and how they translated to better engagements with students. Some highlighted their generational skills and workplace environment provides them a thorough understanding of technology. A small number (13%) of students struggled or became overwhelmed in the selection of applications to use. While they understood the concepts of using technology to engage with adult learners, they lacked experience in selecting, uploading, and incorporating applications into their practice.

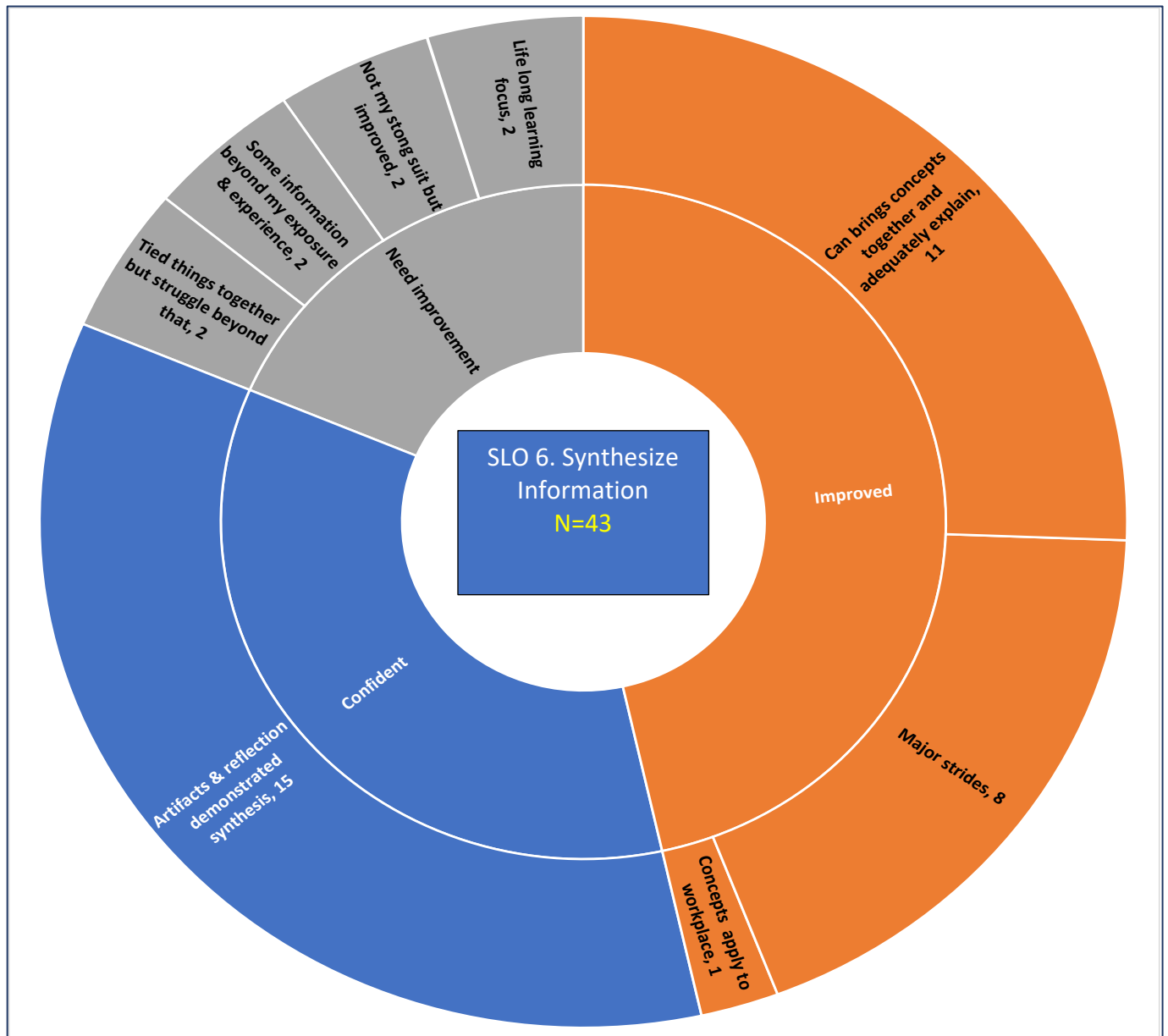
Figure 16. Students’ Self-Awareness Narratives, SLO-5, Written Communications.



Written Communications

This topic garnered the most comments from students where 31% of the students expressed the need for additional improvements. Another 47% of students felt the program significantly enhanced their skill sets and they pointed to the faculty members as being very beneficial in their growth as academic writers. Most students felt they made some improvements but recognized the need to continue to improve their skillsets. For those who expressed confidence in their skillsets, most indicated they were already exceptional writers prior to the program.

Figure 17. Students' Self-Awareness Narratives, SLO 6, Synthesize Information.



Synthesize Information

A good proportion of students felt either very confident (35%) or demonstrated strong improvements (47%) in their abilities to demonstrate synthesis in their artifacts and reflection papers. This over-confidence most likely explains the significance difference in students' self-assessment ratings (3.64) and actual ratings (3.1). For those students expressing the need to improve (18%), most cited struggles with tying everything together (literature-communications-concepts) and producing strong artifacts.

Figure 18. Students’ Self-Awareness Narratives, SLO 7, Moral and Ethical Responsibilities.



Moral and Ethical Responsibilities

Over 60% of students felt improvements in their moral and ethical responsibilities competencies. Another 25% rated themselves distinguished citing their profession. Almost all of these narratives were in the context of students’ interactions and applications within the workplace or academic setting. For those students indicating needing improvement, most sought additional content or struggled in applying the content to their artifacts and reflection papers.

End of Program Reports. The following exhibit reflected the students’ responses for a total of 50 responses out of a possible 51 students or a 98% response rate. Figure 20 provided the sample population as defined by each semester. The end of program report consisted of 7 close-ended questions.

Figure 19. Number of Students Responding by Semester.

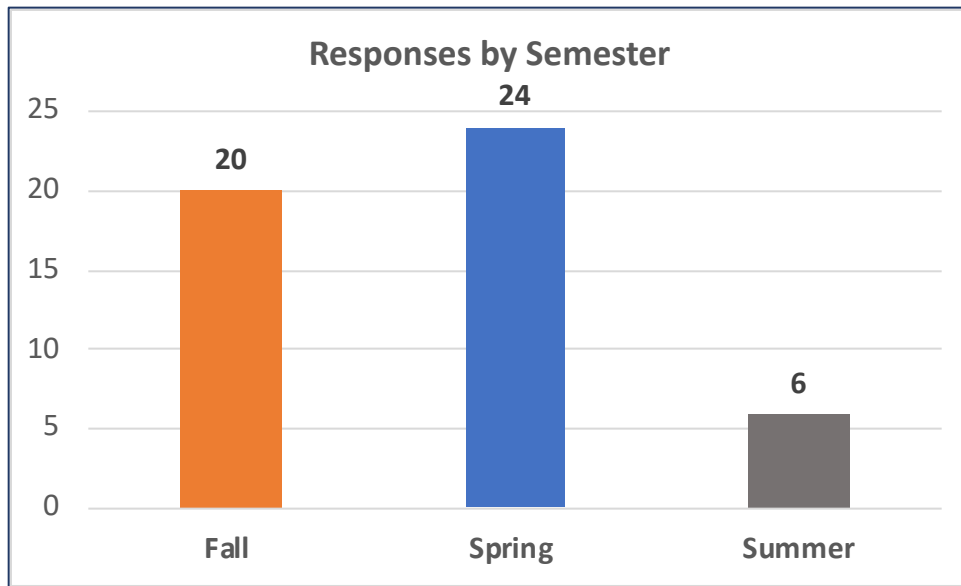


Table 3 displayed the cumulative findings of students’ responses to the Question 4 (Q4), “How important were each of these items in your decision to enroll in Adult Learning and Leadership program at K-State?” Students (N=50) responded to the question via the use of a 5-point Likert Scale rating where responses ranged from Not important to Very Important. The topic receiving the highest percentage of students’ combined responses “More Important and Very Important” was listed first with the remaining items in decreasing percentage order. The item rated #1 amongst students was *Program fitting into schedule* which demonstrated an increase in percentage by 7% over the previous academic year. While the next 3 topics shifted downward in positive responses, Topic #5, *Academic reputation of degree*, climbed by 12%.

Table 3. Students’ Assessments of Items Key to Enrollment.

Importance of Topic Rated by Percentage.	Highest % of Positive Responses	Increase/Decrease AY 2019-2020
1. Program fitting into schedule.	90%	+7%
2. Convenience of the course.	82%	-4%

Importance of Topic Rated by Percentage.	Highest % of Positive Responses	Increase/Decrease AY 2019-2020
3. Being able to study adult learning and education.	80%	-6%
4. Academic reputation of university.	76%	-7%
5. Academic reputation of degree.	72%	+12%
6. Being able to study leadership.	68%	+2%
7. Name of the degree program.	60%	+3%

Table 4 displayed the cumulative findings of students' responses to the second question, "On a scale of poor to excellent, how would you rate the quality of these items during your program?" Students responded to the questions via the use of a 5-point Likert Scale rating where the responses ranged from Poor to Excellent. The table listed responses (N=50) using the rating of excellent as the primary pacing item. Of the 15 topics, 9 topics received higher percentage ratings over the previous academic year. *Instructors' accessibility* increased by 19% which may be attributed to greater use of zoom platforms or online communications. The *Portfolio canvas course* was also well-received with an increase of 10%. The highest percentage decrease was *Quality of instruction* (-7%).

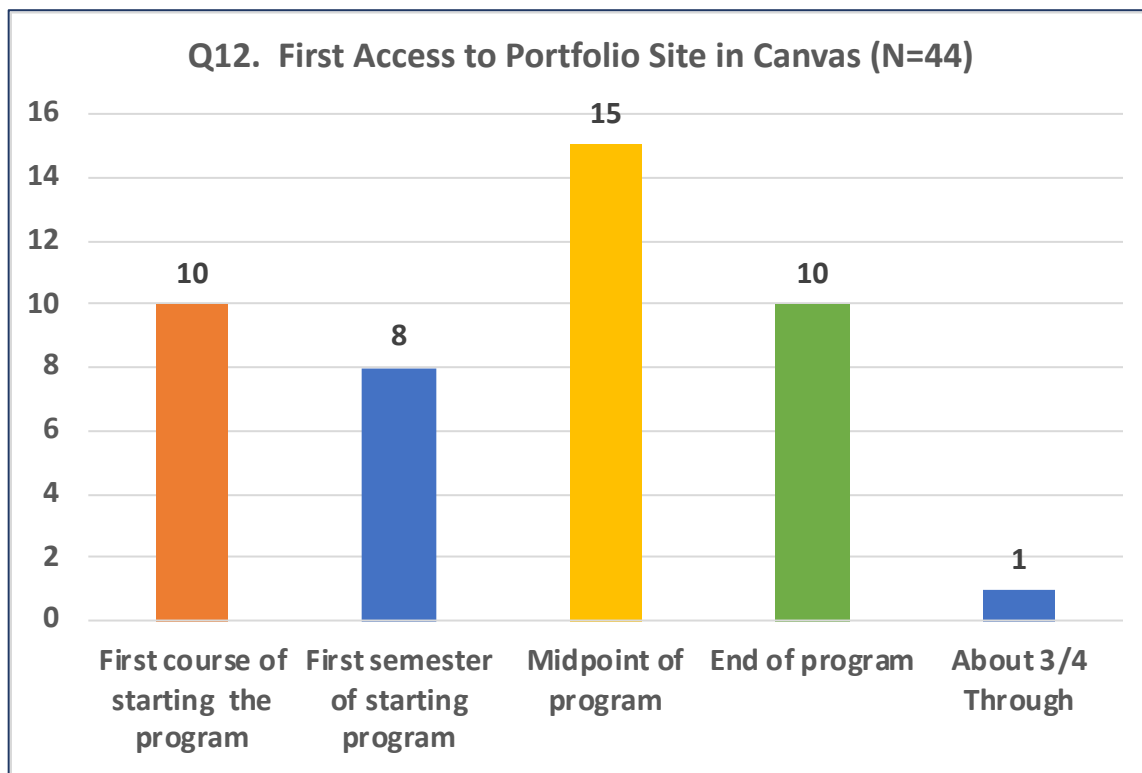
Table 4. Students' Responses to Program Quality.

Ranking of Topics Rated Excellent by Students.	Percentage of Excellent Responses (High to Low)	Increase/Decrease AY 2019-2020
1. Instructors' accessibility.	62%	+19%
2. Communications & responses to questions.	60%	+9%
3. Helpfulness of faculty.	58%	-2%
4. Fairness of grading.	56%	+7%
5. Receipt of notifications from department.	54%	0%
6. Quality of instruction.	50%	-7%
7. Canvas site which provides information.	48%	+8%
7. Quality of overall course content.	48%	-1%
9. Portfolio canvas course.	44%	+10%
10. Clarity of degree requirements.	42%	-1%
11. Quality of academic advising.	42%	-1%

Ranking of Topics Rated Excellent by Students.	Percentage of Excellent Responses (High to Low)	Increase/Decrease AY 2019-2020
11. Program length.	42%	+2%
11. Accessibility of academic advising.	42%	+8%
11. Interaction opportunities with faculty.	42%	+8%
11. Courses schedule.	42%	+13%

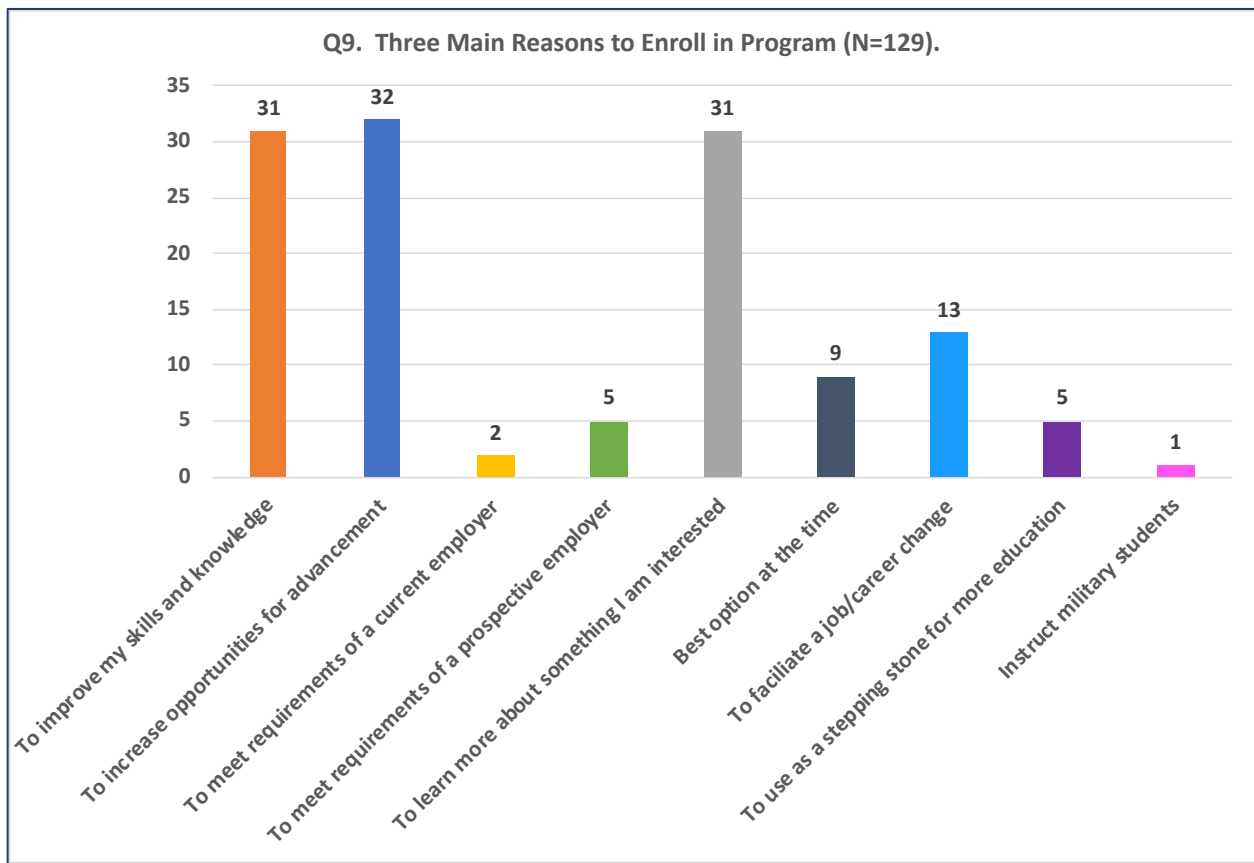
Figure 20 displayed students’ responses to the question “When did you first access the portfolio site in canvas?”. Approximately 75% of the students accessed the site by the midpoint of the program. However, an additional 22.7% of students delayed their access until the end of the program. The findings demonstrated a larger amount of students’ procrastination when compared to AY 2019-2020 where less than 1% of the student population waited to the end of the program.

Figure 20. Students Accessing Portfolio Site.



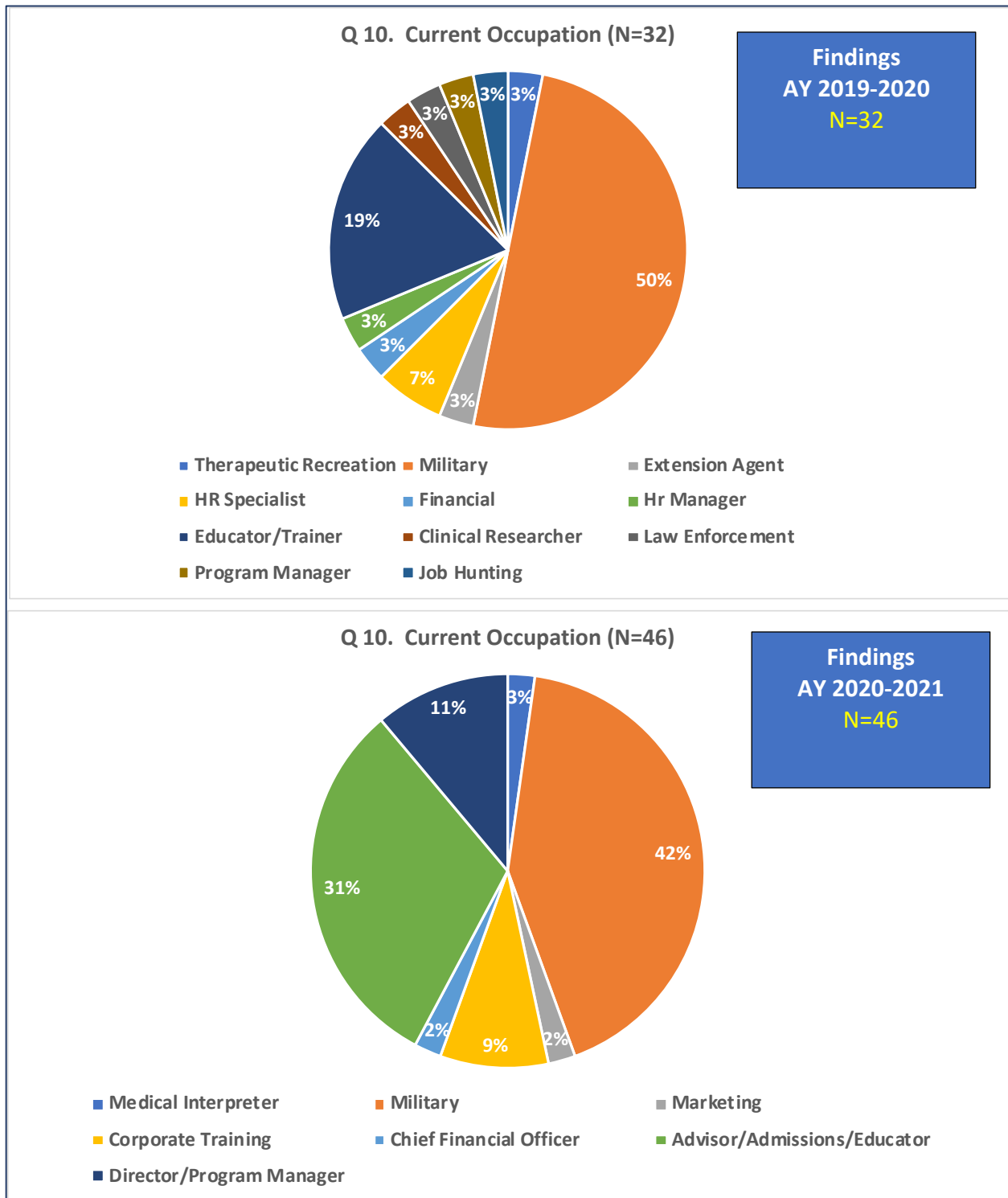
The end of program survey queried students on “*What were the three main reasons you enrolled in the MS in Adult Learning and Leadership?*”. Figure 21 provided the cumulative total of the students’ responses (N=129). A major impetus for students to enroll focused evenly on three topics; improving skills and knowledge, increase opportunities for advancement, and learn more about something I am interested in. Only a small percentage of the population (5%) indicated their reason related to current or prospective employment.

Figure 21. Main Reasons to Enroll in the Program.



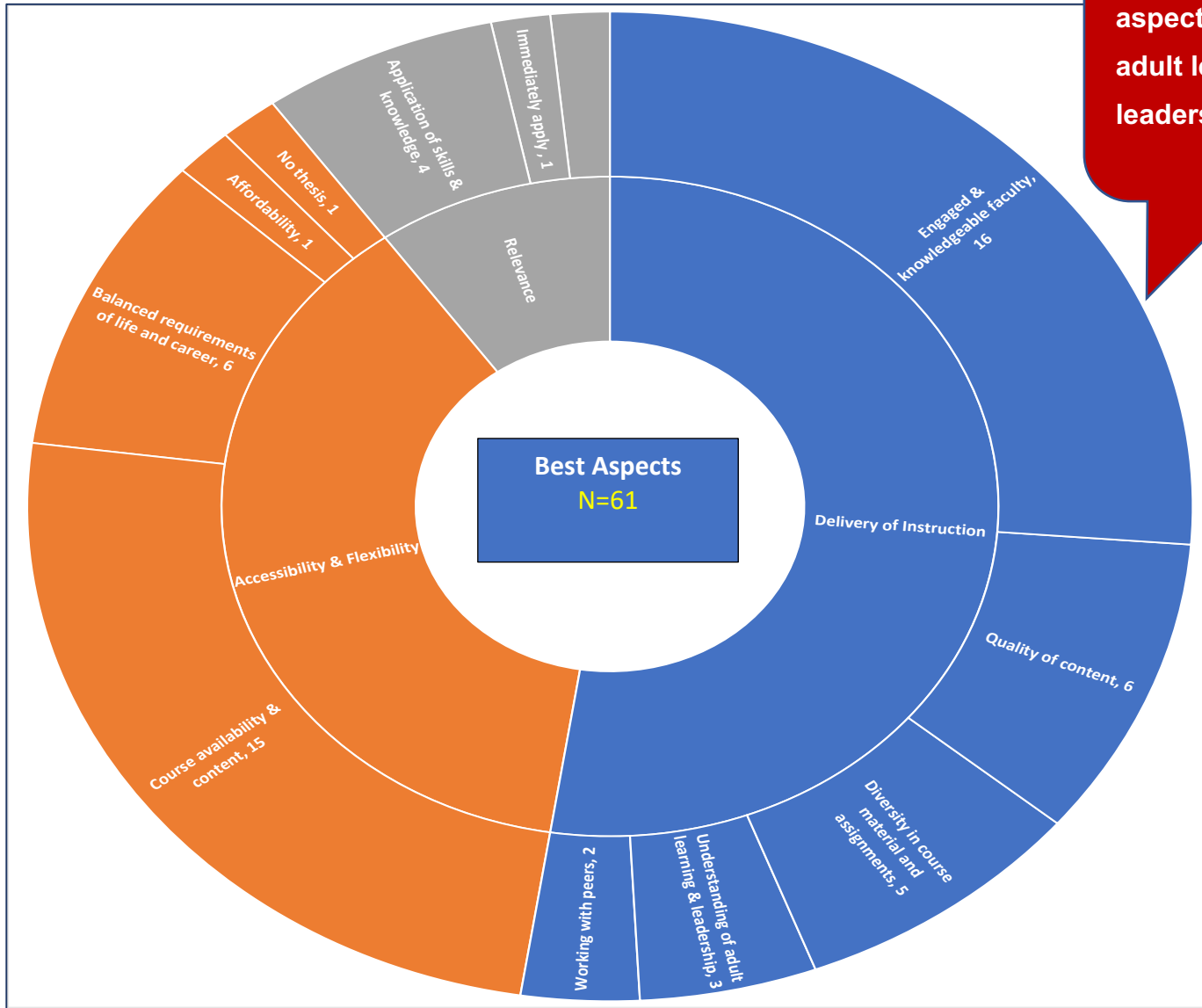
Question 10 posed an open-ended question “*What is your current occupation?*”. With the shift in student population where the Fort Leavenworth Center subgroup decreased, we expected a shift from a majority of military occupational themes to a variety of other occupational themes. Figure 23 depicted changes in themes from AY 2019-2020 to AY 2020-2021. We saw a decrease in military occupational themes (-8%) with an increase in educator/trainer occupational themes (21%) and director/program management themes (8%).

Figure 22. Contrasting Occupational Themes.



Figures 23, 24, and 25 displayed students' responses to series of open-ended questions. The questions focused on the best aspects of the K-State program, areas of concerns regarding the program, and suggestions for marketing the Adult Learning and Leadership program. We reviewed students' comments, identified common themes, and bundled the responses into sunburst graphs with the inner loops containing primary themes and the outer loops providing additional fidelity of comments. Similar to previous years, comments regarding the best aspects of program elements (N=61) were much higher than areas which concerned students (N=17). Of the 28 marketing suggestions, 20 of the comments related to a military population. The remainder of the comments addressed ways to develop or improve outreach plans (N=5) and marketing communications (N=3).

Figure 23. End of Program, Best Aspects of Program.



Q6. "What is the best aspect of the K-State adult learning and leadership program?"

Figure 24. End of Program, Concerns to Share.



Q7. "Do you have any concerns about this graduate program that you would like to share with the department?"

Figure 25. End of Program Survey, How to Reach People or Generally Market Program.



Q8. "If you have a suggestion of how we could reach people in your field or generally market the program, would you share?"

Inter-Reliability Statistical Test. As part of the assessment process, the inter-reliability of faculty members' ratings were assessed using Cohen's Kappa statistical test. Table 5 displayed the percentage of agreement and the Kappa measurement using a random sampling of 15 students' portfolios for a total of 102 ratings. The Kappa score of -0.0322 indicated the raters were in none or slight agreement. For the random sampling, raters' agreements equated to 37.2%. The percentage of agreement was lower than the AY 2019-2020 of 49.6%. Historically, raters' inter-reliability consistently records none or slight agreement.

Table 5. Kappa Assessment for Mutual Agreement.

<i>AY 2020-2021</i>					
Rater 1	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Sum	Percentage
Basic	1	14	5	20	20%
Proficient	10	30	7	47	46%
Distinguished	7	21	7	35	34%
	18	65	19	102	
Percentage	18%	64%	19%		
Probability of Agreement	0.37254902				
Probability of Chance	0.39				
Total:	Agree = 38				
Total evaluations:	102				
Kappa	-0.032258065				
	None or Slight Agreement				

Assessment Report Review and Recommendation.**Table 6. Review and Recommendations.**

Action Item	Findings and Recommendations
Changing Contexts of Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID 19 mitigation policies, learning approaches, and changing demographics shaped the context of the assessment report. However, statistical testing indicated no differences in evaluators' treatment/rating of portfolios as a result of the changes. • Findings indicated less variability of ratings in SLOs 4 thru 7 and greater shifts in occupational themes. <p>Recommendation: The assessment should continue to monitor adjustments in student populations in order to promote reflections on both communications and marketing towards the changing majority and minority subgroups.</p>
75% Proficiency Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AY2020-2021 met the objective of a 75% or greater proficiency for 6 of the 7 SLOs. Significant progress has been made towards SLO 2 achieving the 75% goal. <p>Recommendation: Continue the proficiency level of 75% as a metric.</p>
End of Program Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students number one reason to enroll was programs fitting into schedule with an increase of 7% over previous year. Students' narratives indicated schedule flexibility and convenience of virtual learning as being inter-related and served to increase enrollment in the program. • Instructor accessibility, interactions, and increased communication rose significantly (+36%) over the previous year. Additionally, students rated online communications within the canvas sites (+8%) and the portfolio canvas course (+10%) as beneficial. A new video recording of the portfolio requirements was uploaded to the Canvas site and SLO1 was clarified for learners. Portfolio engagement reminder emails were sent to MS students via Canvas. Further analysis is necessary to determine what other changes were made that attributed to these increases. Such changes should be considered for sustainment. • Students rarely cited the implementation of COVID 19 mitigation measures in narratives. Thus, the direct and indirect impact of measures on quality and students' perceptions of their experiences remains unknown. <p>Recommendation: Faculty discuss the merits of findings and the implications for AY 2022 and AY 2023.</p>
Inter-Reliability of Faculty Ratings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The statistical tests indicated inter-reliability remains a concern with mutual agreement being none or slight. <p>Recommendation: Further discussions on the topic given the role of inter-reliability in the performance assessment</p>