2010

Assessing Assignments: The Library as Partner in Campus-Wide Assessment

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PaLA Conference
October 24, 2010

Previous Assessment Efforts

- Library competency test for First year students (administered yearly)
- Assessment of First Year Seminar papers (content and bibliographies)
- Assessment of Honors and other departmental papers (bibliographies)

Syllabi Analysis Project

2007-2008

Meeting with the Provost

- Provost interested in budget and library resources usage
- Enthusiastic about the project
- Granted access to syllabi database (only)
- Asked us to extract data of interest to them; expanded to other campus groups (Writing Center, Learning Center, Disabilities Office)

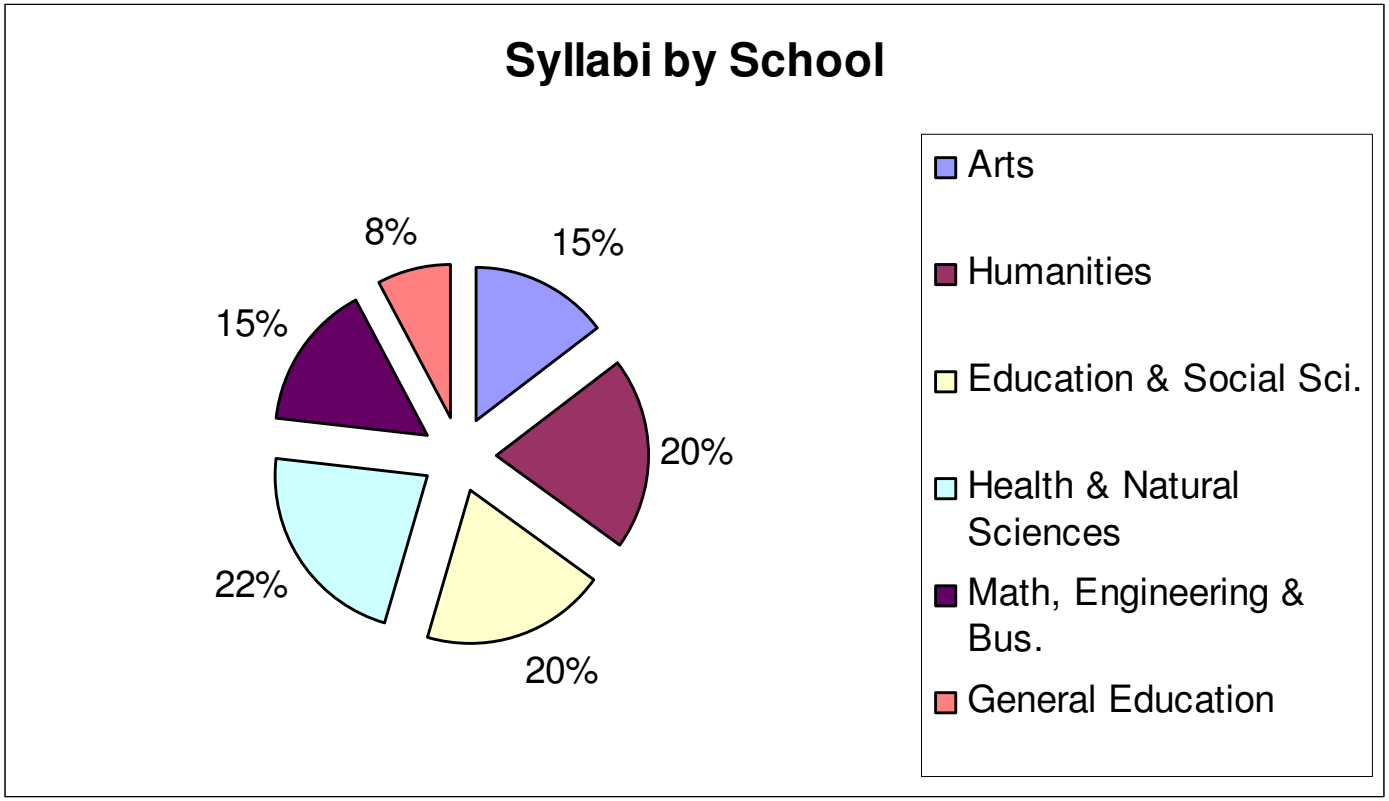
Syllabi Analysis Overview

- Objectives
  - Information literacy
  - Collection Development
  - Other Offices and Departments
- Methods
  - Syllabi in campus database – Data entry
  - What we learned

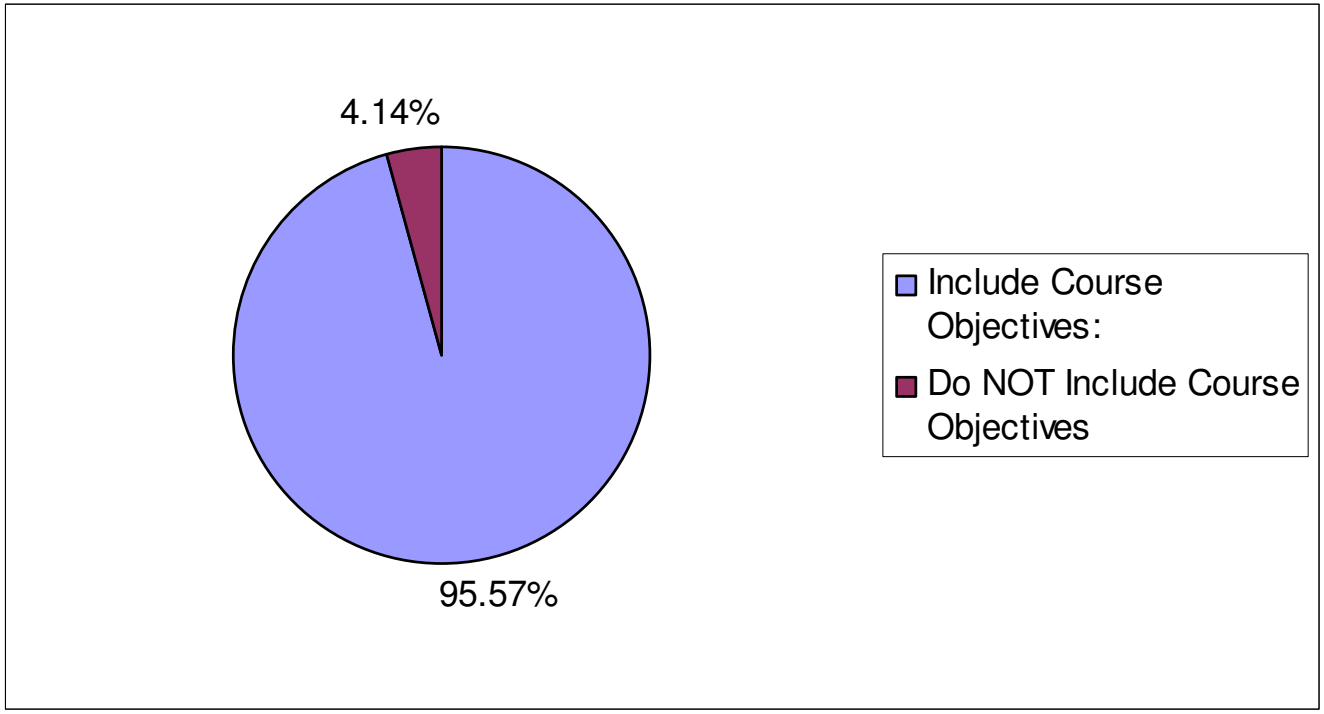
Findings

Totals

1,401 syllabi

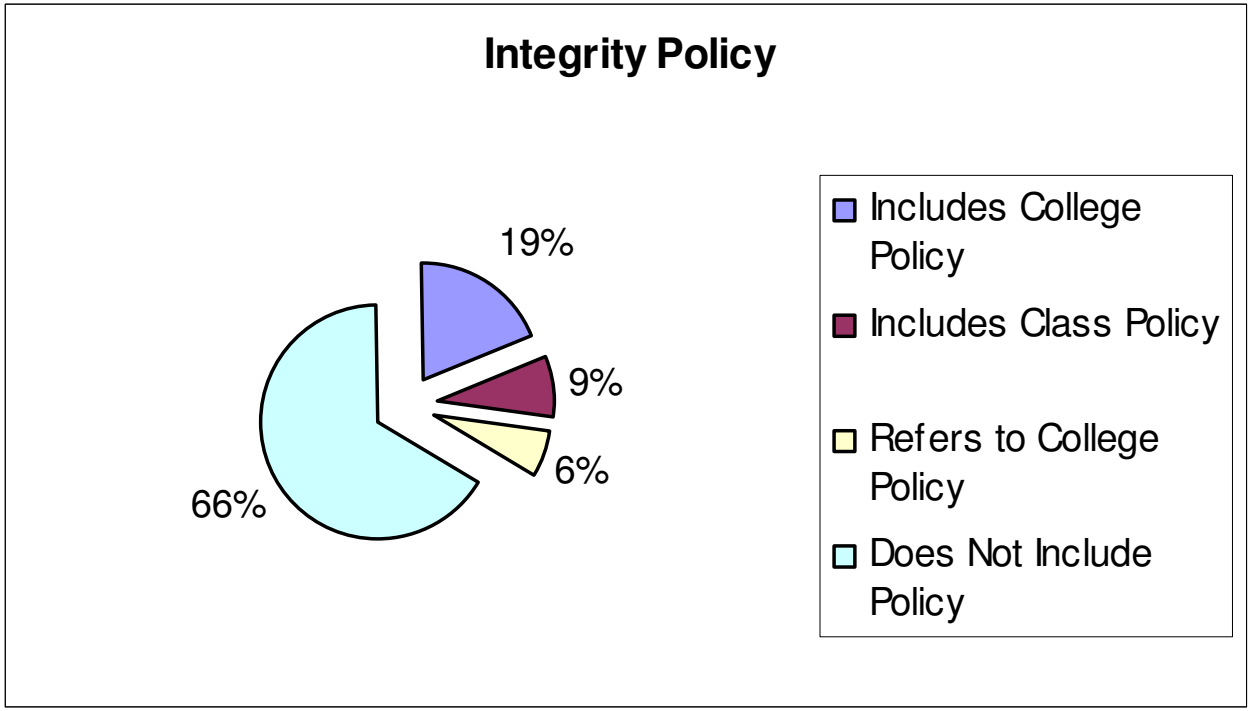


Objectives



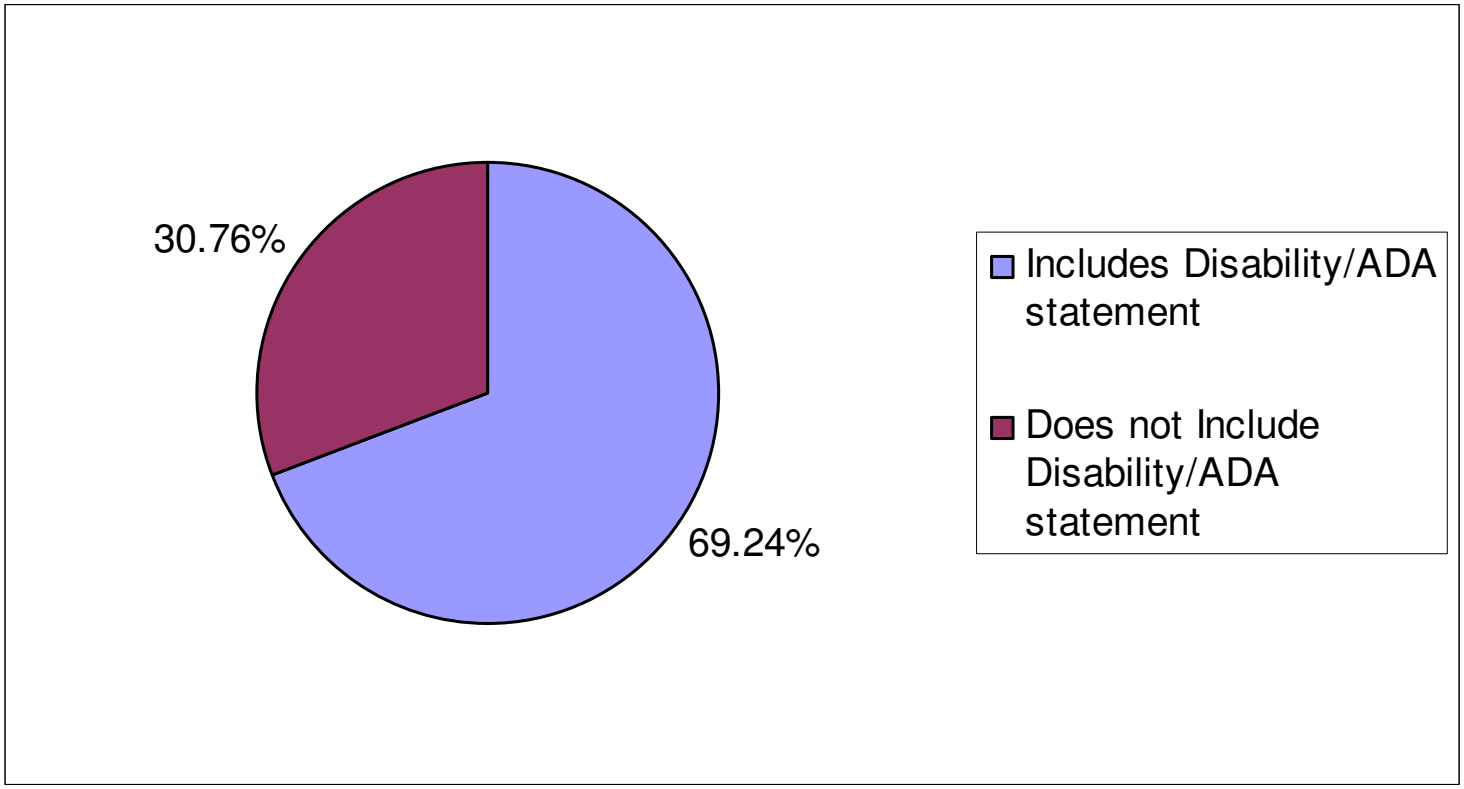
96% Include Course Objectives

Integrity Policy



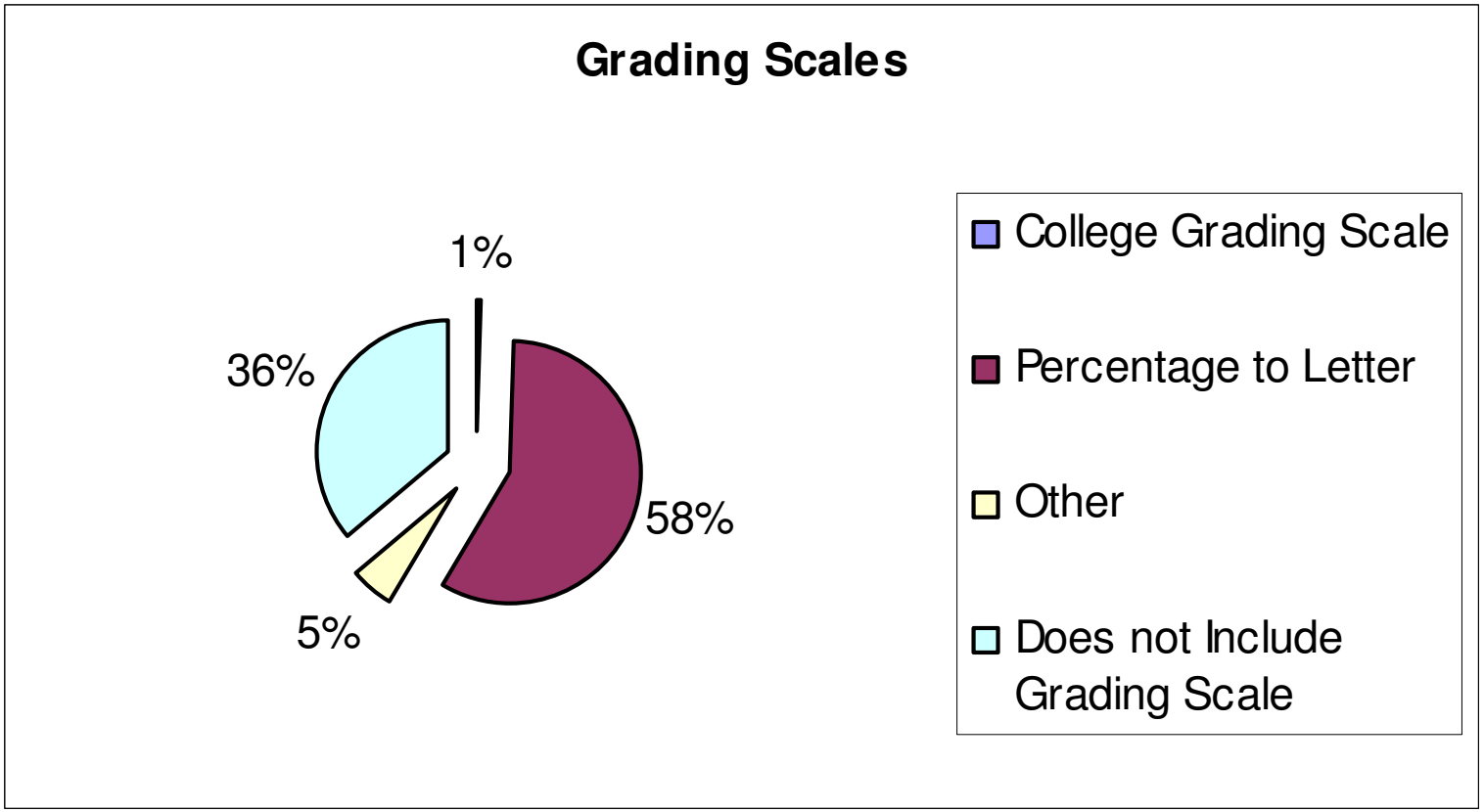
44% Include Integrity Policy*

ADA/Disabilities Statement



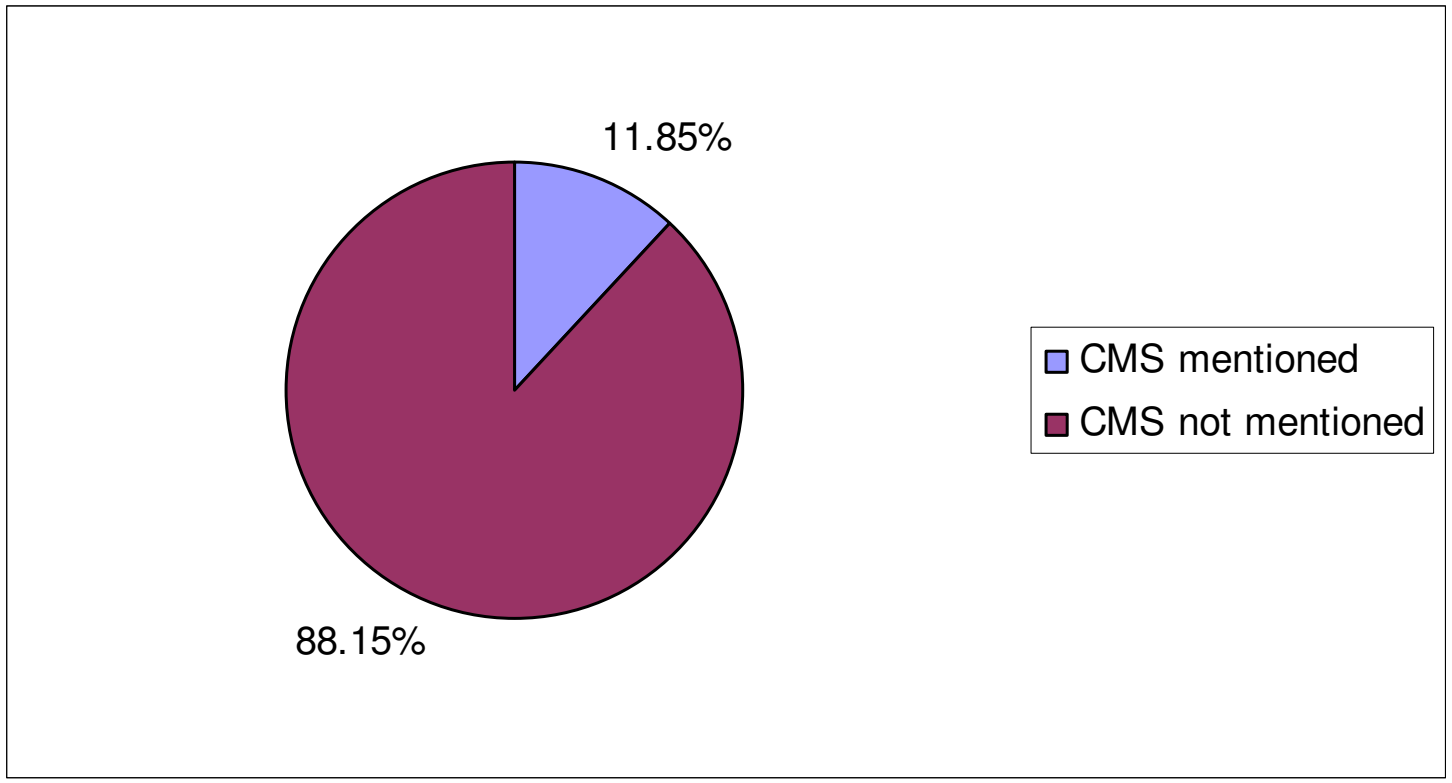
69% Include ADA or Disabilities Statement

Grading Scales



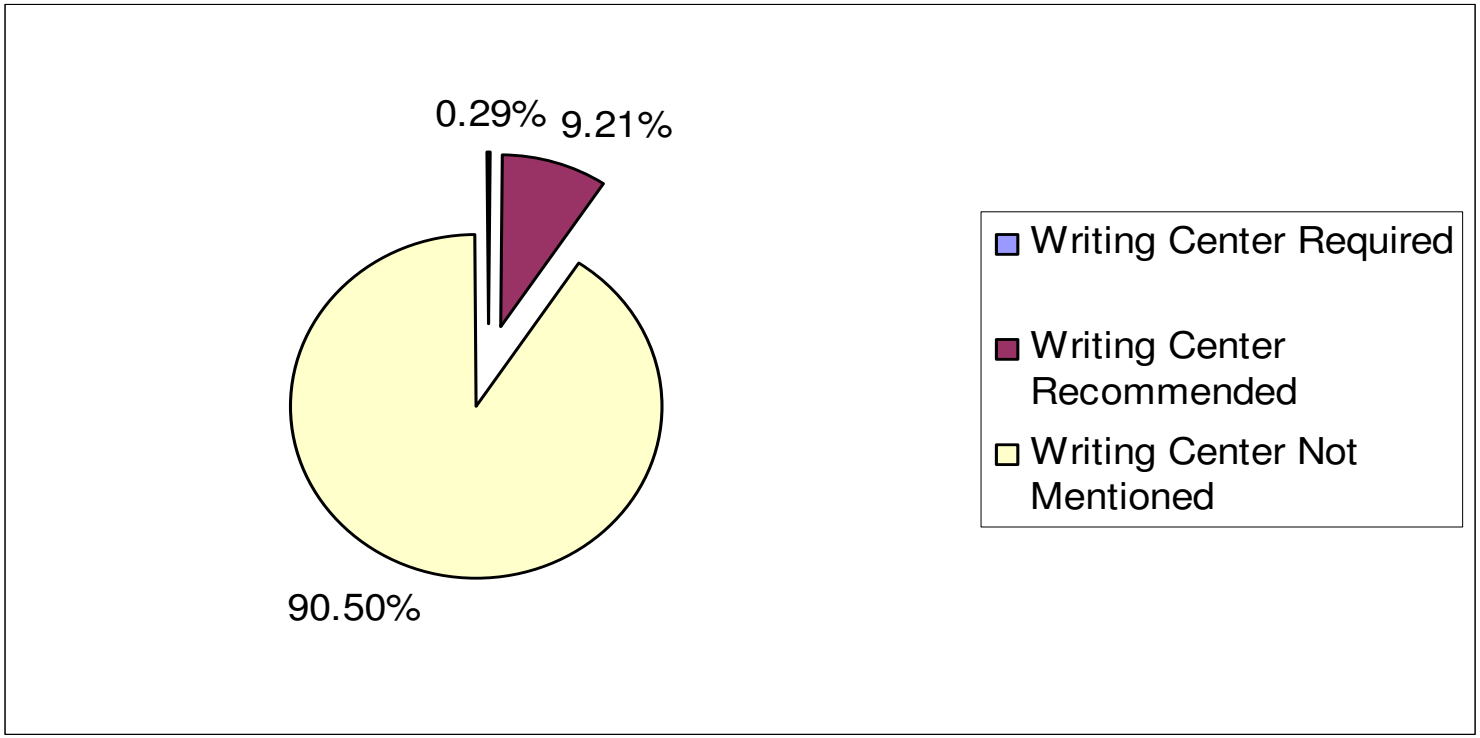
64% Include Some Type of Grading Scale

Course Management Systems



12% mention course management software (ie- Blackboard)

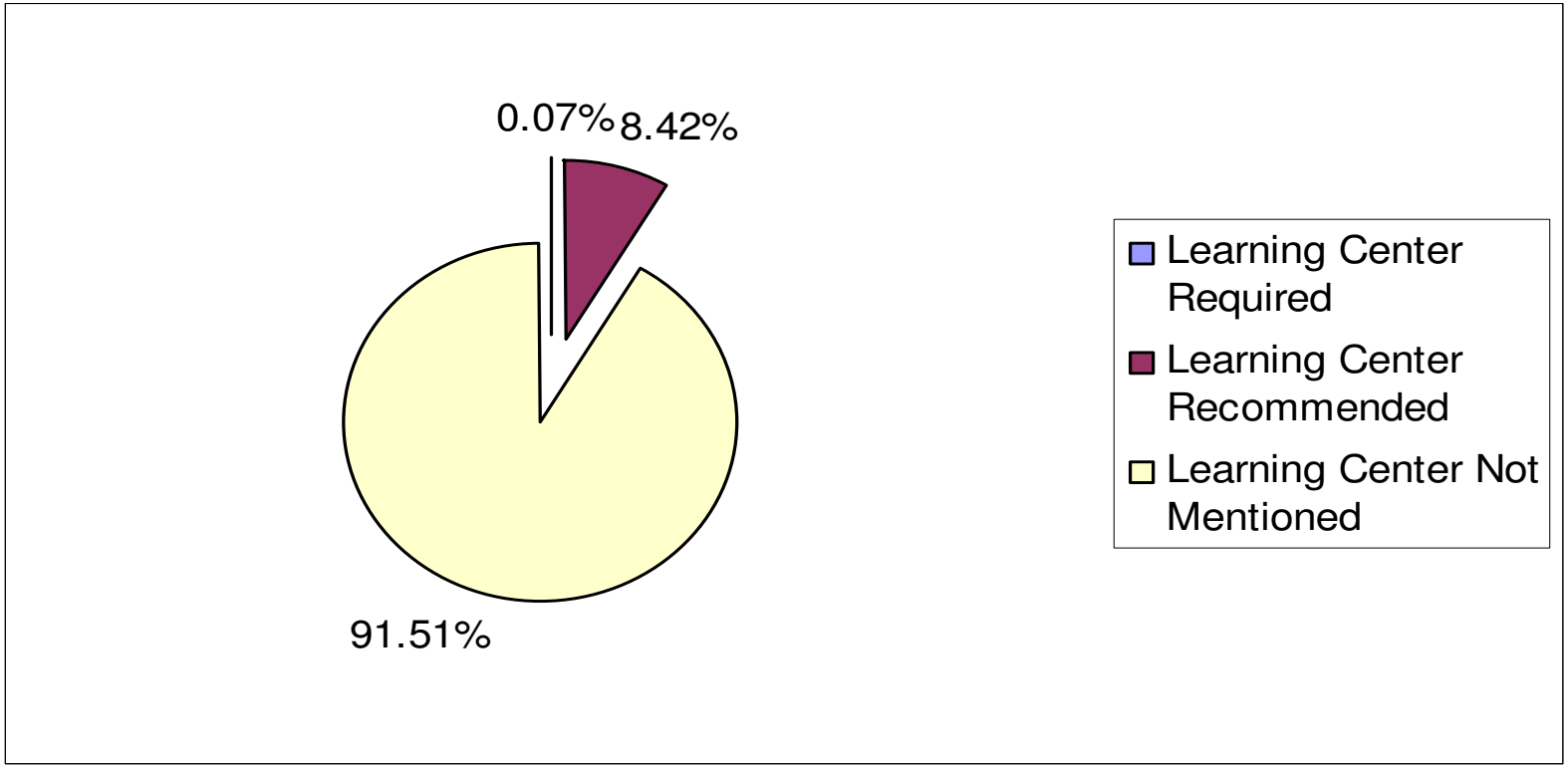
Writing Center



.2% require

9% recommend

Learning Center



.1% require

8% recommend

Library – What We Looked For

Mention of:

- Library and Library Instruction
- Information Literacy
- Reserves
- Websites and Databases
- Citation Styles

What We Found

Syllabi not adequate for assignment or collection development information

Solution

- Collect separate assignment information

Unplanned Benefits

- Appreciation of Provost
- Request to present data to Academic Council
- Subsequently, presented to two Schools
- Raised visibility of librarians as campus stakeholders
- Prepared the way for expanded project (assignment analysis)

What We Learned

Begin planning at least a year in advance!

Library Assignment Analysis Project

2009-2010

Meeting with the Provost – Take II

- Provost approved the library assignment collection project
- Asked us to present the proposal to school deans for their buy-in and for them to be the communication channel to department chairs

Meeting with School Deans, Spring 2009

- Deans agreed with the value of the project
- Recommended time line and changes in wording of memo draft prepared for faculty
- Agreed to communicate the project, with a time line, to department chairs

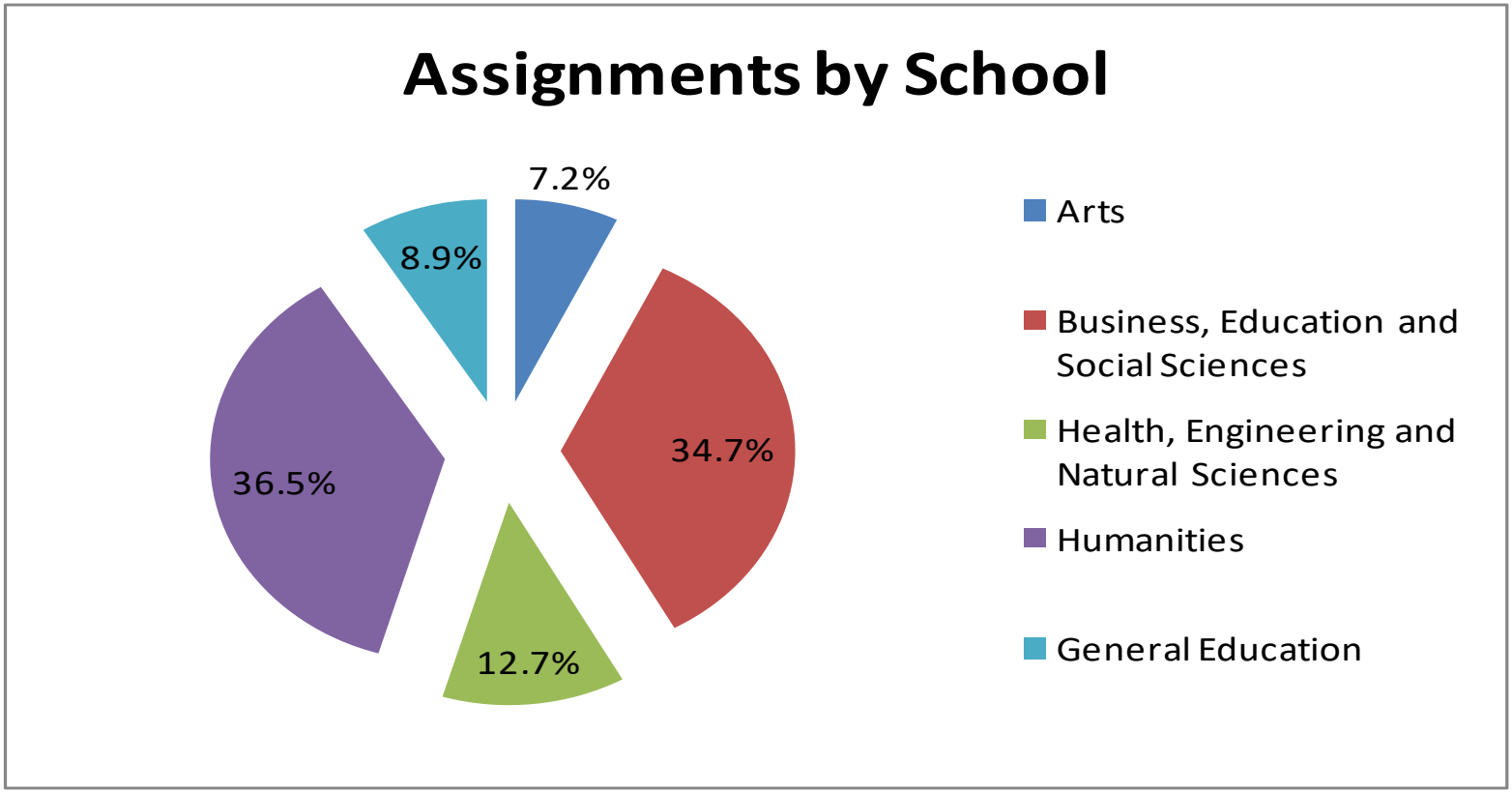
Process

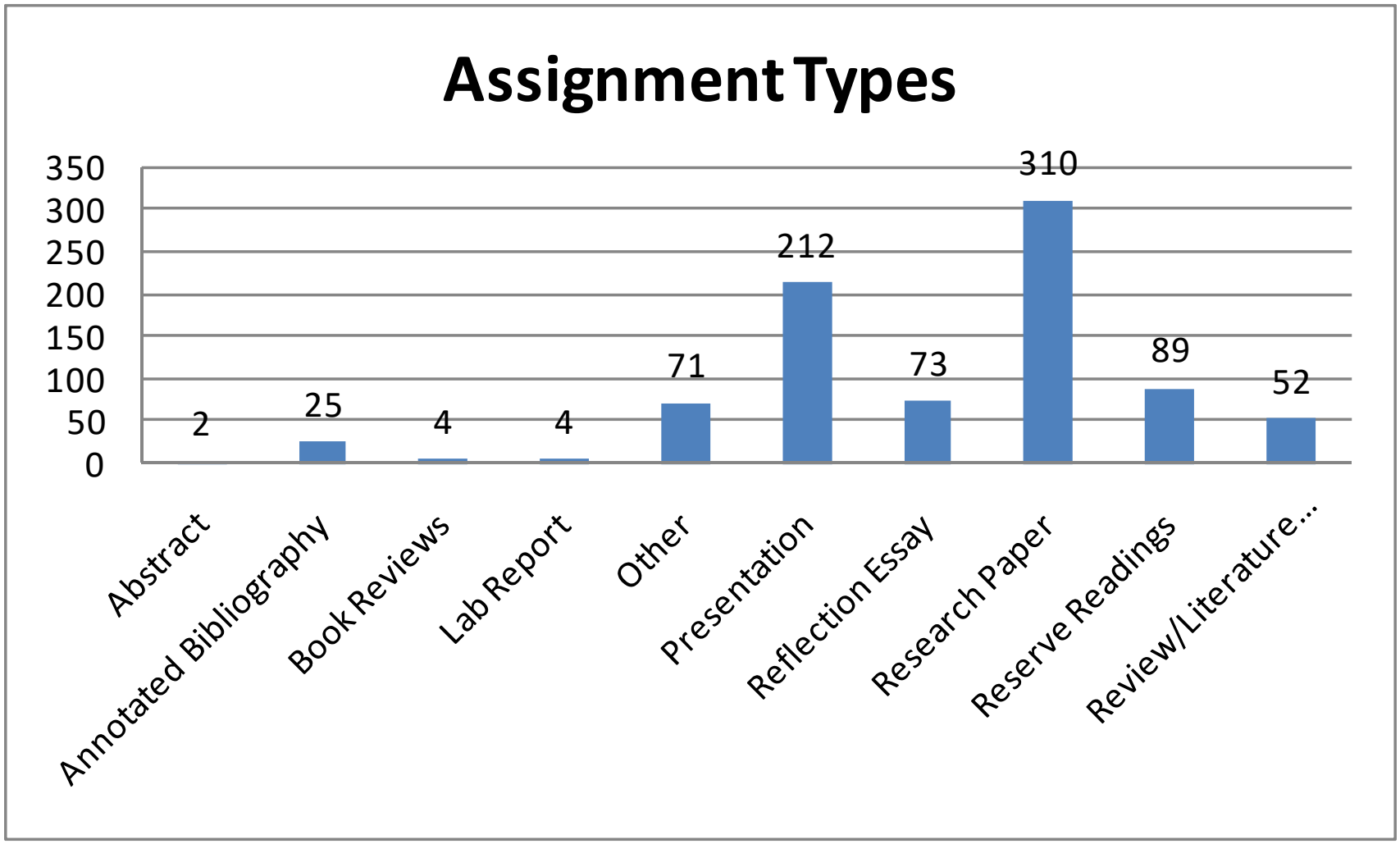
- One dean suggested creating a form that faculty could fill out in lieu of submitting written assignment directions (librarians created forms for each department)
- September 2009, Deans asked Department chairs to send the request for assignment information to their faculty (for AY 2010)

Process continued

- About half of the departments submitted assignments by spring 2010
- Reminders sent by librarians (sometimes more than once) resulted in a very good total return
- Extracted library reserve data by course
- Summer, 2010, data entered by students

842 Assignments Submitted and Analyzed




Assignment Types
350
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250
200
150
100
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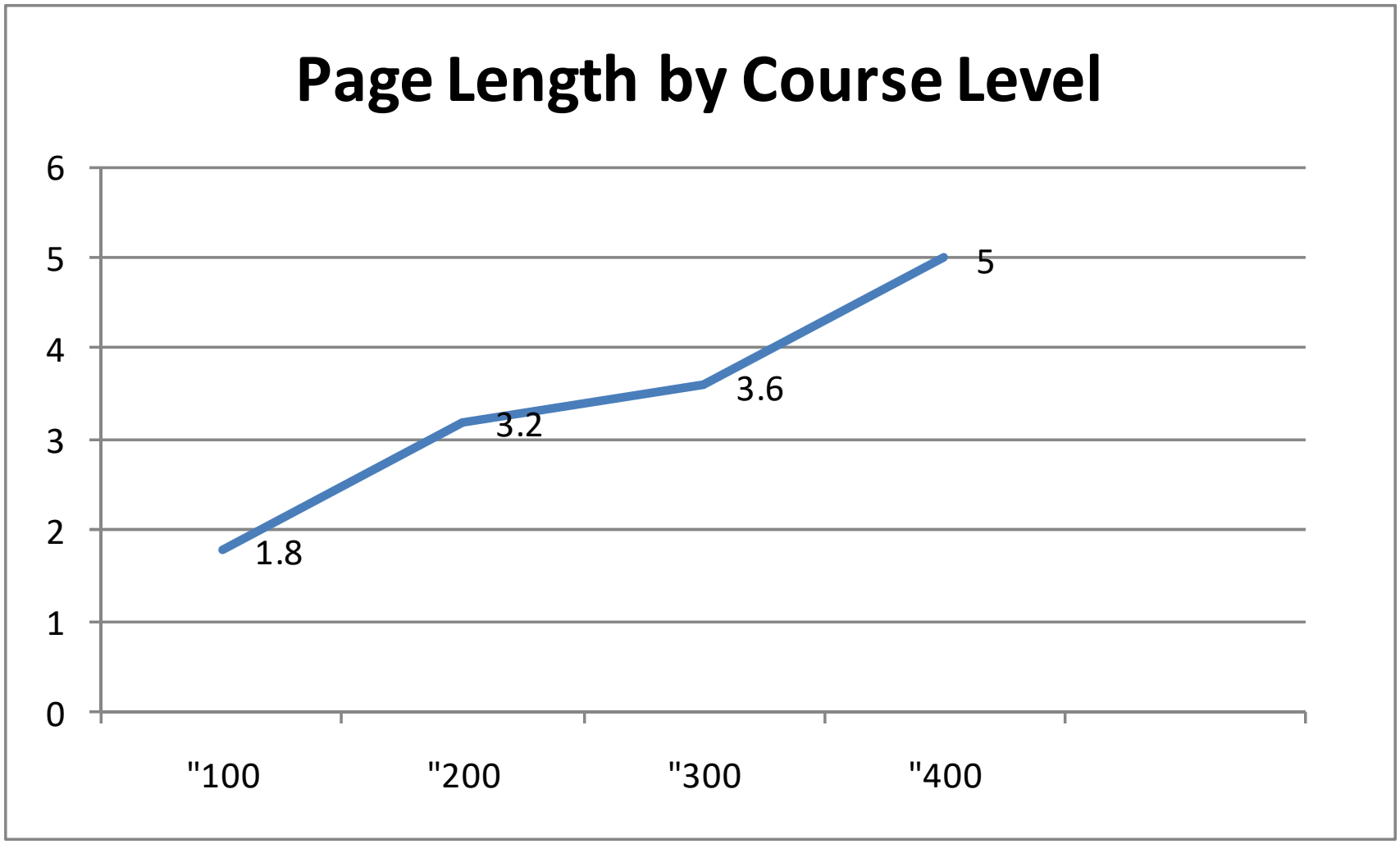
0
2
25
4
4
71
212
73
310
89
52
Abstract
Annotated Bibliography
Book Reviews
Lab Report
Other
Presentation
Reflection Essay
Research Paper
Reserve Readings
Review/Literature...


Page Length by Course Level
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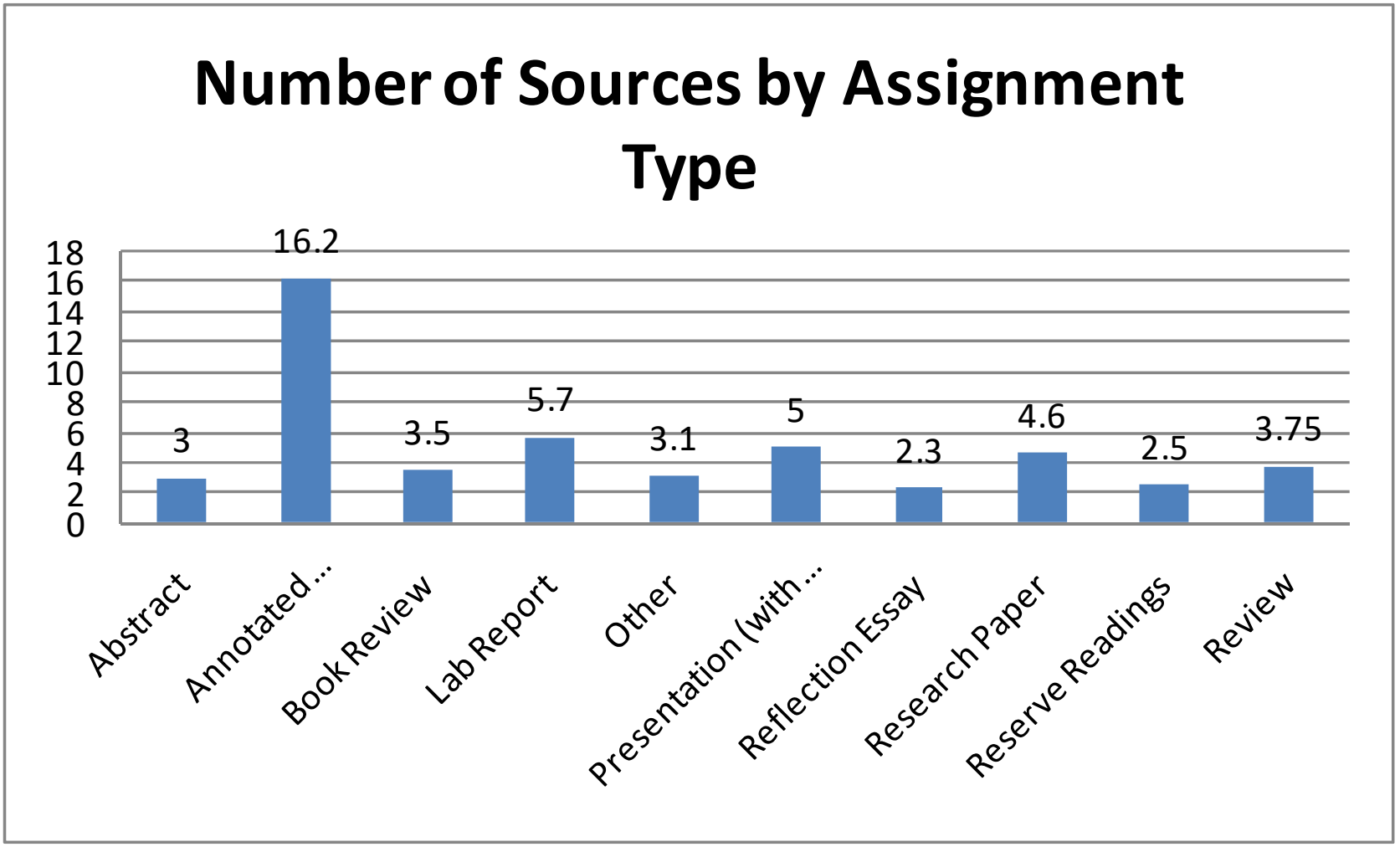
Number of Sources by Assignment Type
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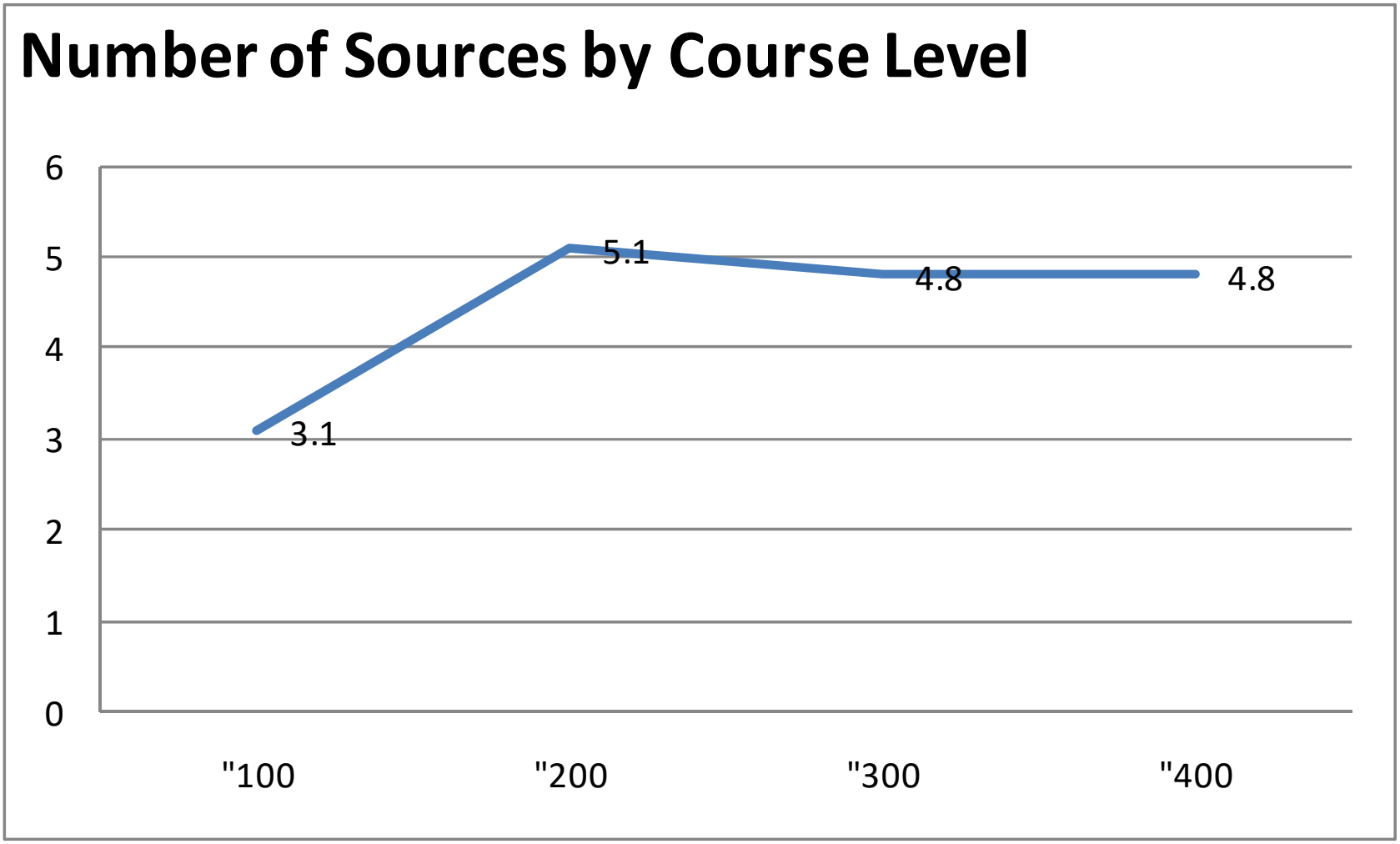
Abstract
Annotated ...
Book Review
Lab Report
Other
Presentation (with ...
Reflection Essay
Research Paper
Reserve Readings
Review


Number of Sources by Course Level
6
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What we learned

- In cases where forms only were submitted, some narrative information that would have benefitted librarians was lost
- However, the forms provided information that was not included in some written assignments
- Individual follow up provided opportunities to raise awareness of faculty regarding unknown library resources

What we Envision

- Data to demonstrate use (or not) of library resources for class assignments
- Providing liaison librarians with a good picture of what their department faculty are assigning – possible opportunity for discussion of information literacy
- Continuing to be invited to the table as a campus stakeholder

Becoming a Stakeholder – A Snapshot

"[The Provost] was quite taken with your preliminary report. Is it alright with you if he shows it to others? He would also like to invite the two of you to present at a future Academic Council meeting. … Messiah's syllabus policy will be on the agenda this spring and he thinks your work is highly relevant to that discussion."