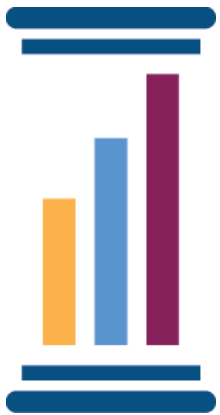


# Linking Institutional Assessment and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning



**Thomas F. Nelson Laird**  
**Alexander C. McCormick**  
Indiana University

**Richard A. Gale**  
Mount Royal University



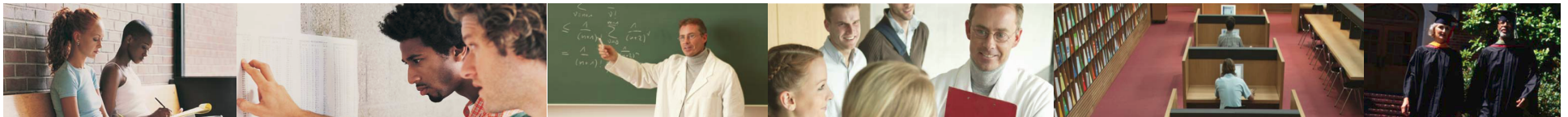
1/27/11

Presentation at the 2011 Association of American Colleges & Universities Annual Meeting

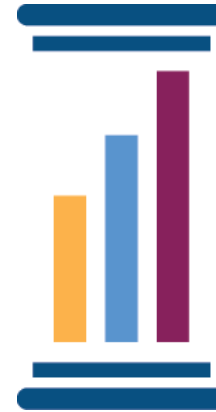
# Topics for Today

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- 1. Conceptually linking institutional assessment and scholarship of teaching and learning**
- 2. Doing scholarship of teaching and learning at the institution level**
- 3. Possible links across levels**
- 4. Linking at Mount Royal University**
- 5. Some lessons and thoughts**



TOPIC 1



**CONCEPTUALLY LINKING  
INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT AND  
SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND  
LEARNING**

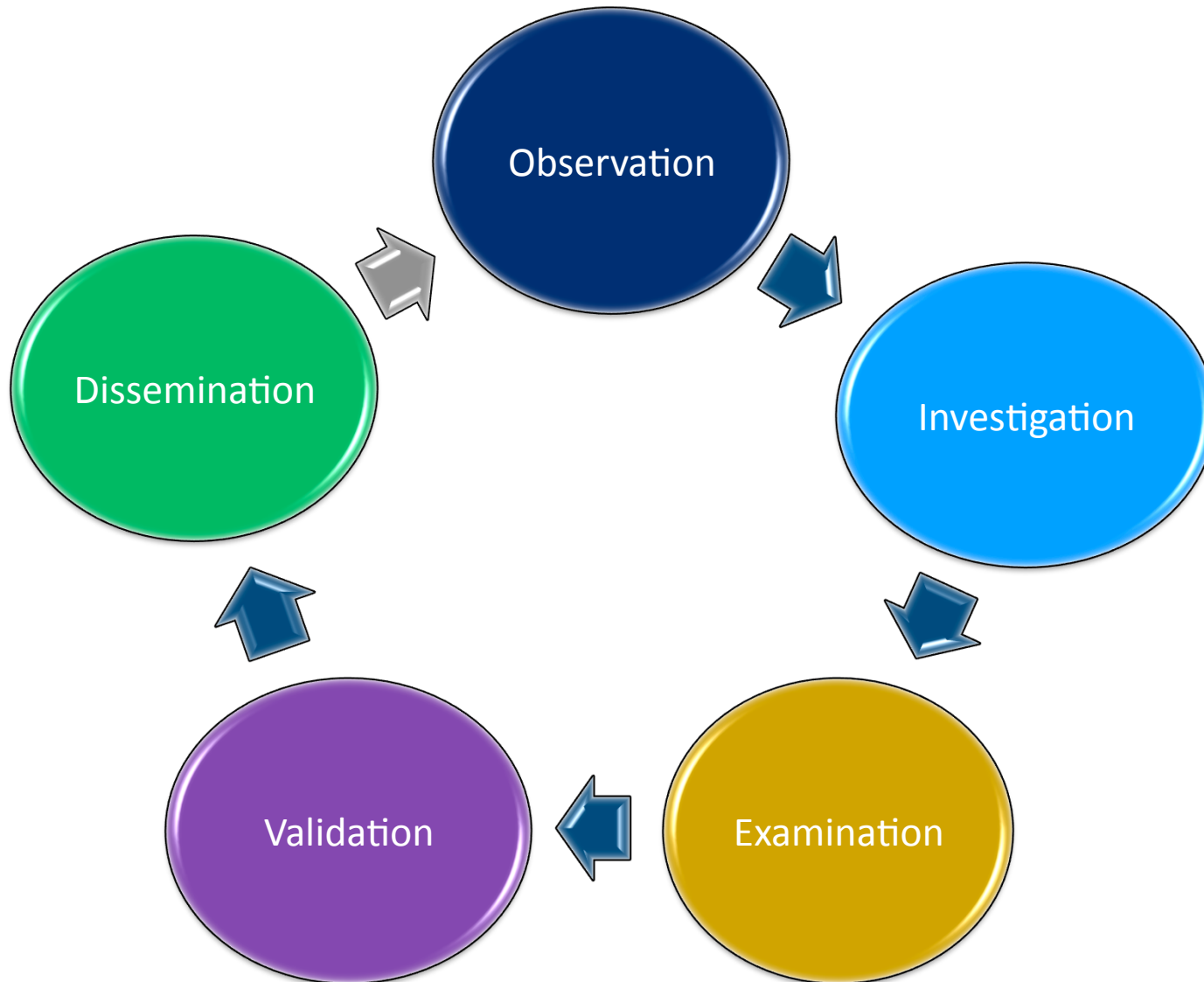
# Scholarship Described

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- **Scholarship of teaching and learning generally includes: rigorous, systematic, and evidence-based study of student learning in one's own course; the understanding and improvement of student learning and/or teaching practice as its ultimate goal; commitment to disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary peer review and appropriate public dissemination; impact beyond a single course, program, or institution – advancing the field of teaching and learning to build collective knowledge and ongoing improvement.**
  - **Mount Royal University Institute for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning ([mtroyal.ca/isotl](http://mtroyal.ca/isotl))**

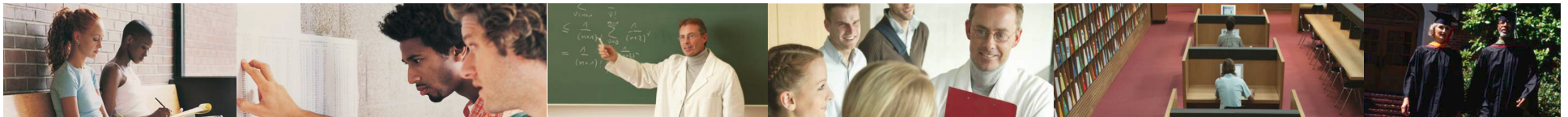
# Cycle of Inquiry

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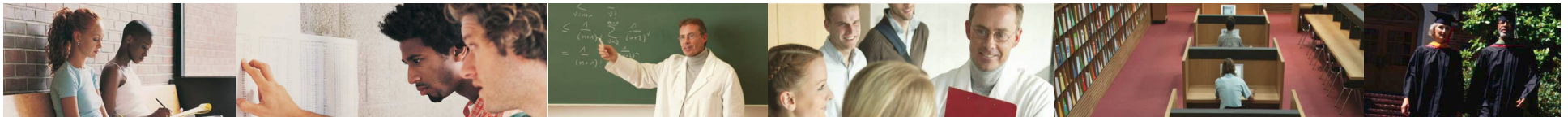
# Implications and Applications

- **For student learning**
  - **Observation-based inquiry**
  - **Fine-grained data collection**
  - **Practice-based improvement**
  - **Learning-centric investigation**
  - **Public, peer-reviewed, and widely disseminated**
  - **“Understanding and improving student learning”**



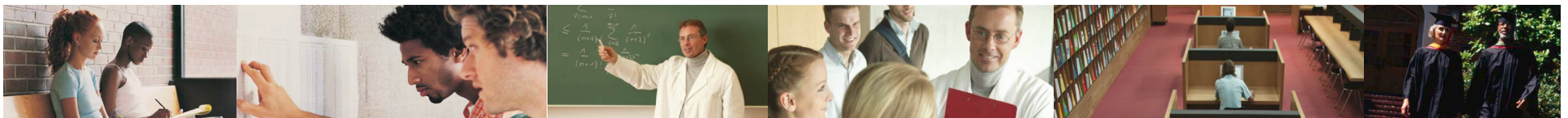
# Implications and Applications

- **For institutional assessment**
  - Coordinating and triangulating with other campus assessment initiatives
  - Connecting with complementary evidence of outcomes and achievements
  - Working toward significant impact on student learning (locally and beyond)
  - Asking questions that matter (to students, to academe, to our culture, to our world)

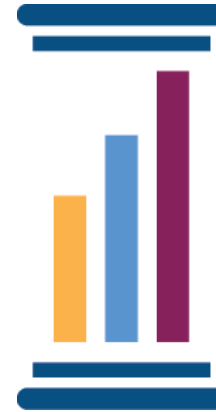


# Trajectories and Opportunities

- **Coordinating approaches to understanding and improving student learning**
- **Using what we already know, or are trying to know, as a guide to evidence-based research**
- **Complementing and dovetailing with other sources of data being gathered**
  - **student evaluations, program reflection and review**
  - **campus assessment, institutional analysis and surveys**
  - **NSSE, FSSE, CLA, and others**



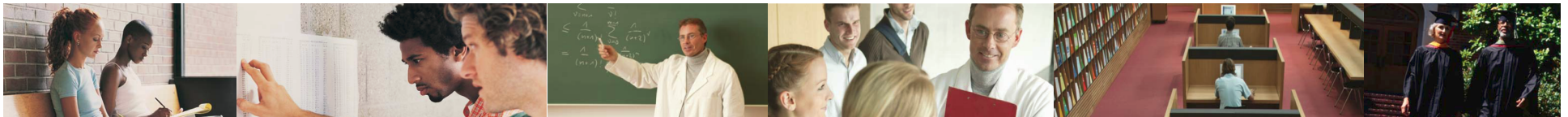
## TOPIC 2



# **DOING SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING AT THE INSTITUTION LEVEL**

# Scholarship of Teaching & Learning at the Institutional Level

- **Systematic inquiry into the conditions that promote learning**
- **Affords comparisons against:**
  - **Peer institutions**
  - **Absolute standard**
  - **Prior years' results**
- **Identifies accomplishments and opportunities for improvement**



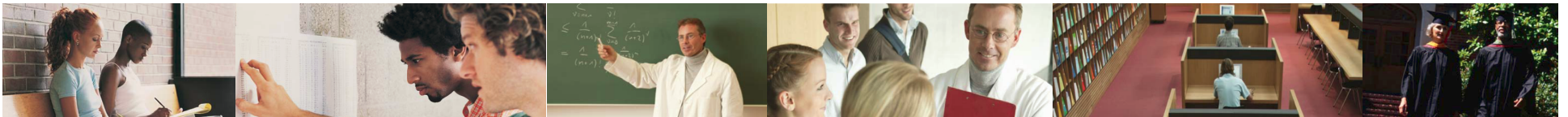
# Scholarship of Teaching & Learning at the Institutional Level

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## What's missing?

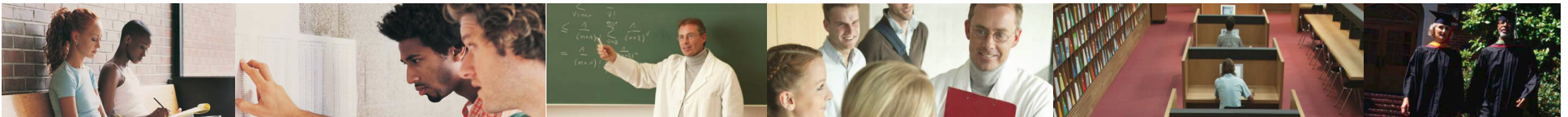
- **Dissemination (part way there)**
- **Advancement of the field**

*Why?*

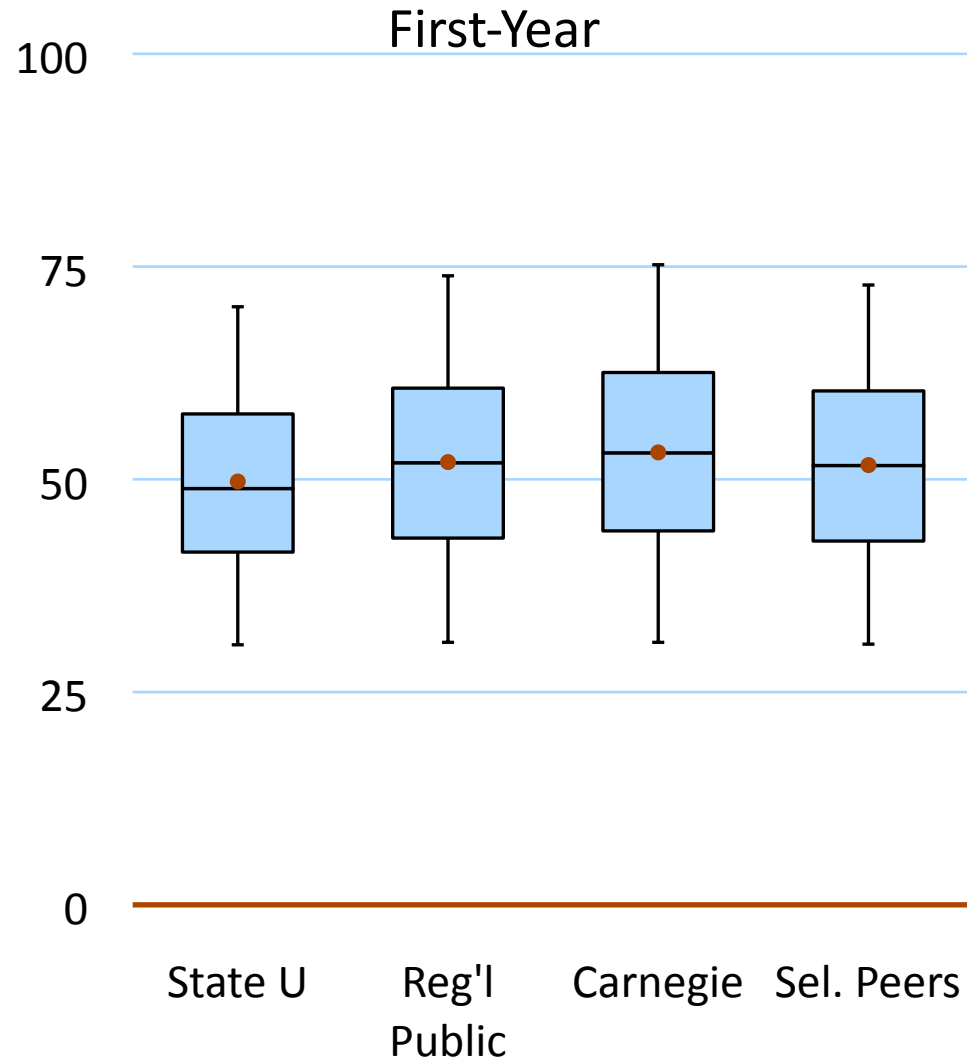


# Inquiry Examples (NSSE)

- **How do we compare to peers?**
  - NSSE benchmarks
  - Deep learning scales
  - High impact practices
  - Individual survey items
- **Are we satisfied?**
- **Are we improving?**
- **Who is least engaged?**



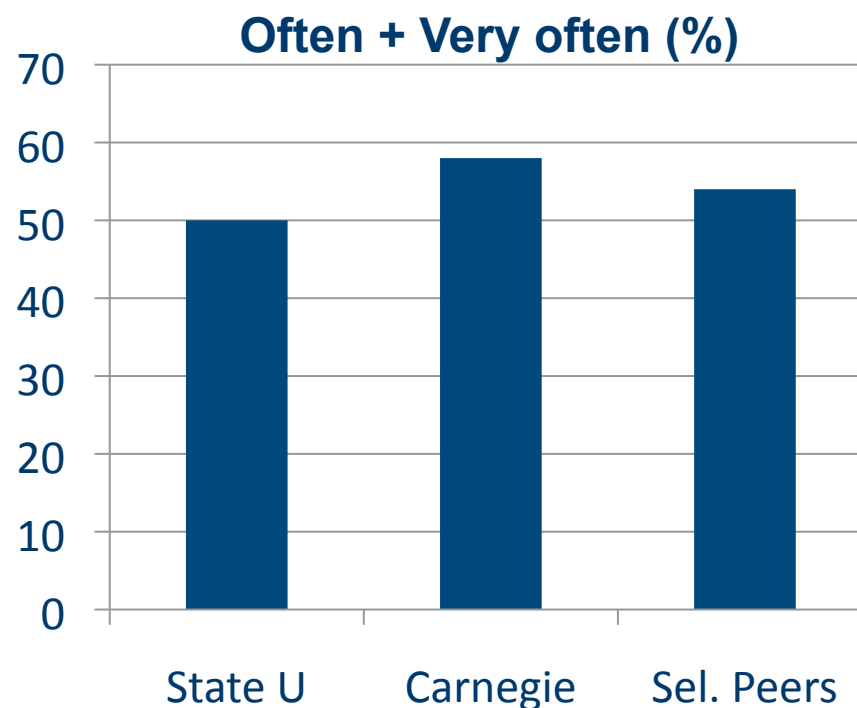
# Academic Challenge vs. Peers



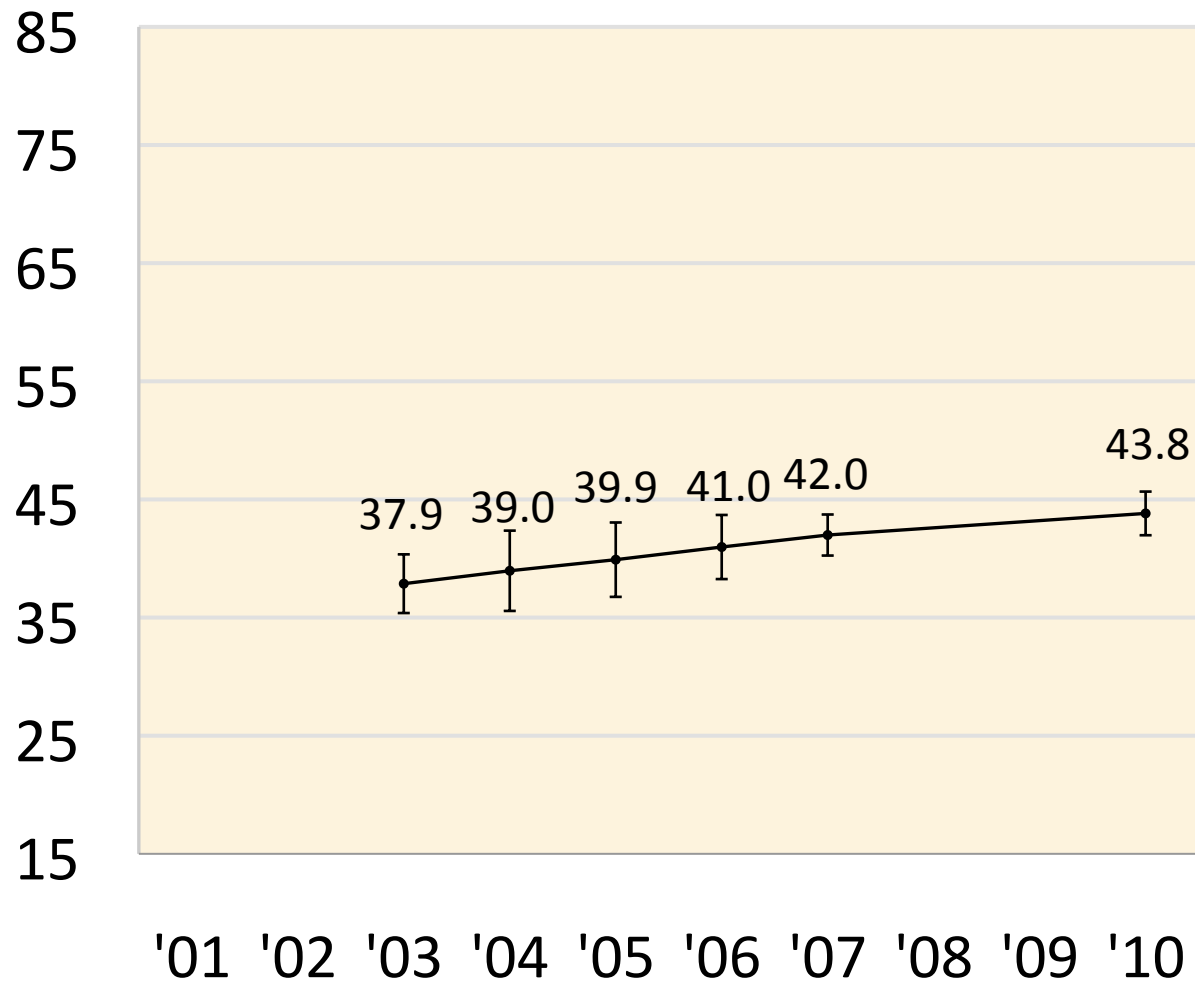
# High Expectations

In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you...

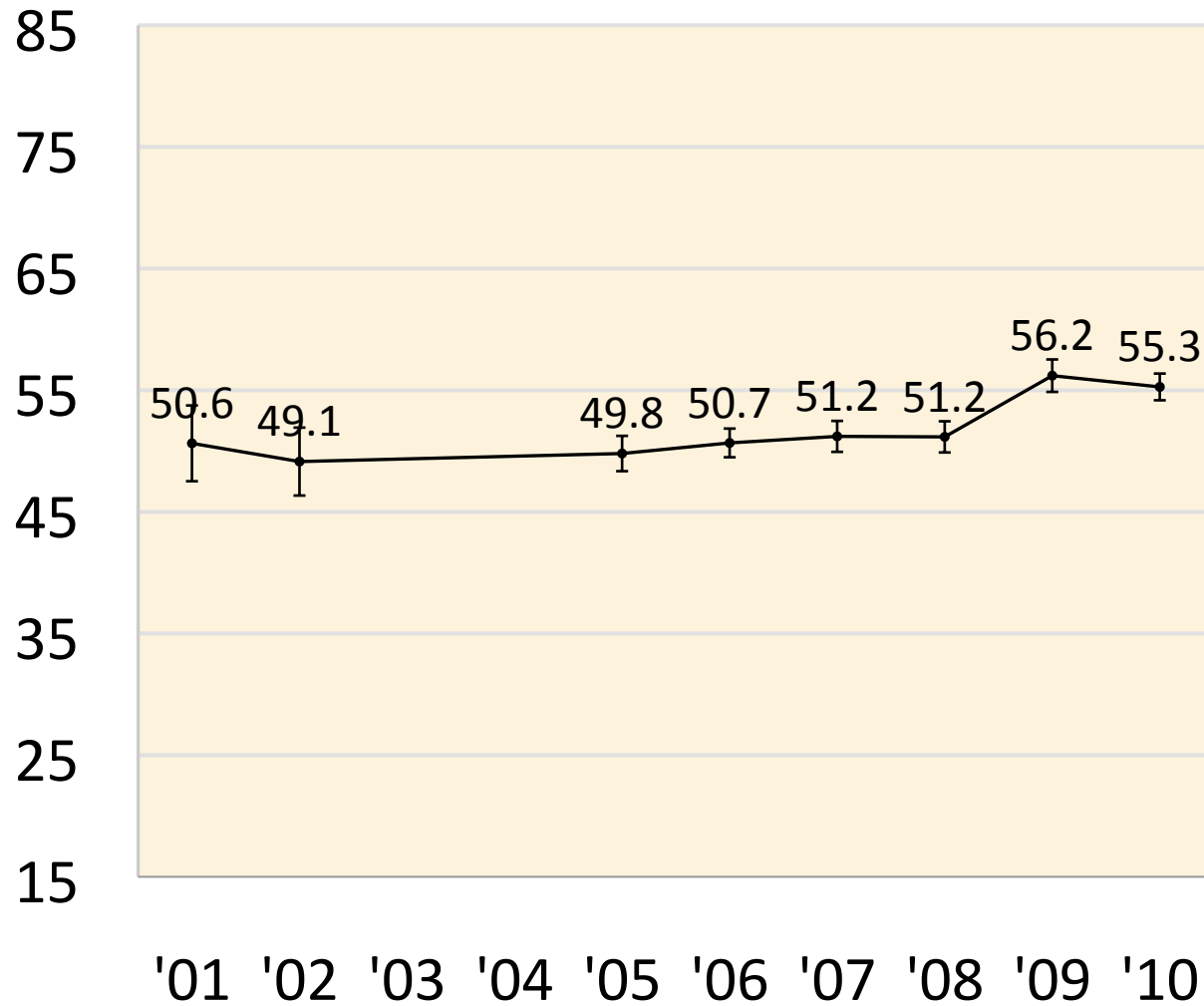
- Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations? [FY]



# FY Student-Faculty Interaction Over Time



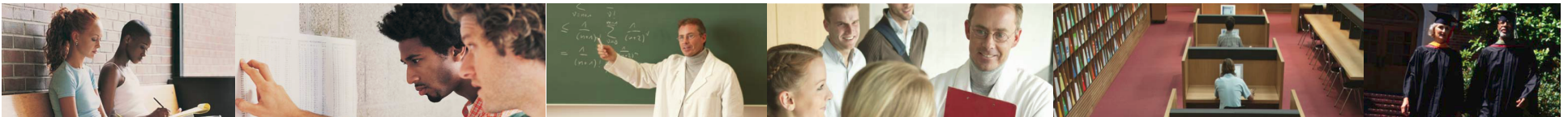
# FY Academic Challenge Over Time



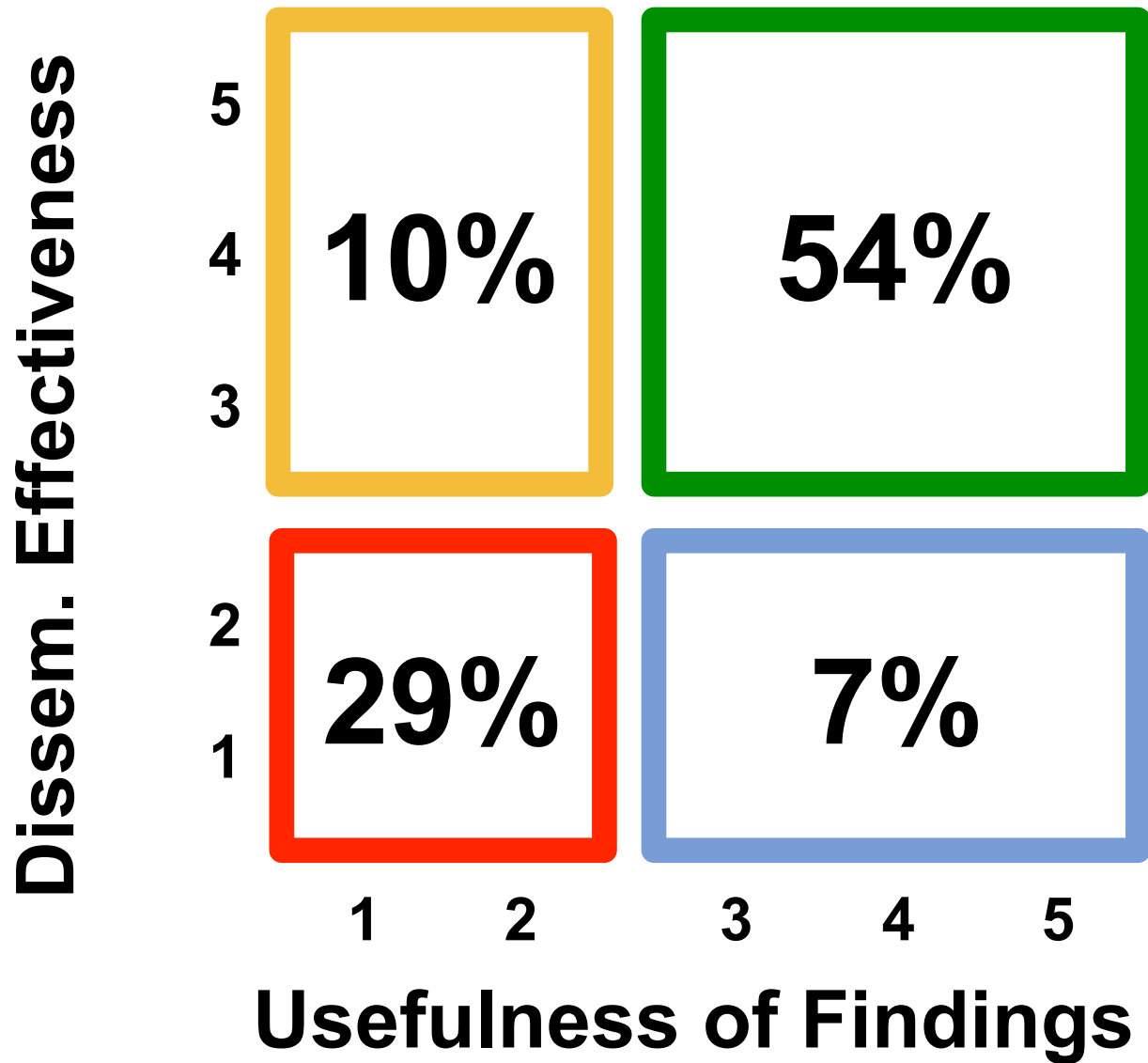
**FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF  
INSTITUTION-LEVEL  
SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING  
AND LEARNING**

# Faculty Views of Institutional Assessment Efforts

- **75%** indicate institution is involved “Quite a bit” or “Very much”
- **65%** indicate results are disseminated effectively
- **61%** indicate that institutional assessment efforts are useful to them



# That's Pretty Good, But...



# Findings Used?

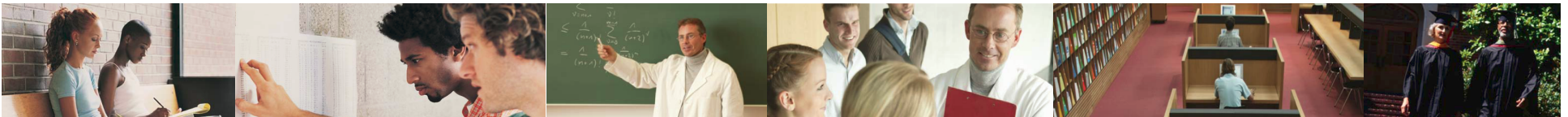
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- Faculty who indicated that institutional assessment informed teaching and learning improvement activities “Quite a bit” or “Very much”
  - 47% for **department** activities
  - 44% for **institutional** activities

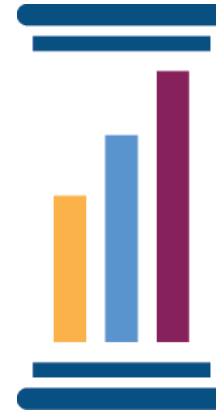
# Accreditation Matters?

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- **Faculty members' perceptions of institutional assessment efforts vary by field**
- **Professional fields have more positive views than arts and sciences fields**



## TOPIC 3



# CONNECTING DIFFERENT LEVELS OF SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

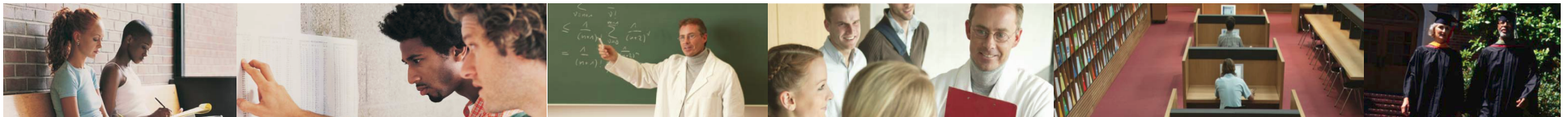
# **CLASSROOM TO INSTITUTION**

# Example Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Project

- **IU History Learning Project**

Diaz et al., 2008

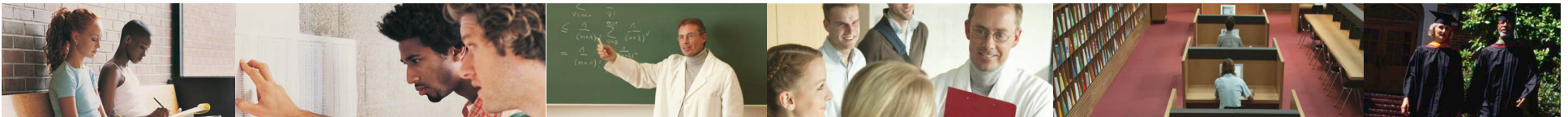
**48%** of students in history courses identified memorizing as the way they study for history exams



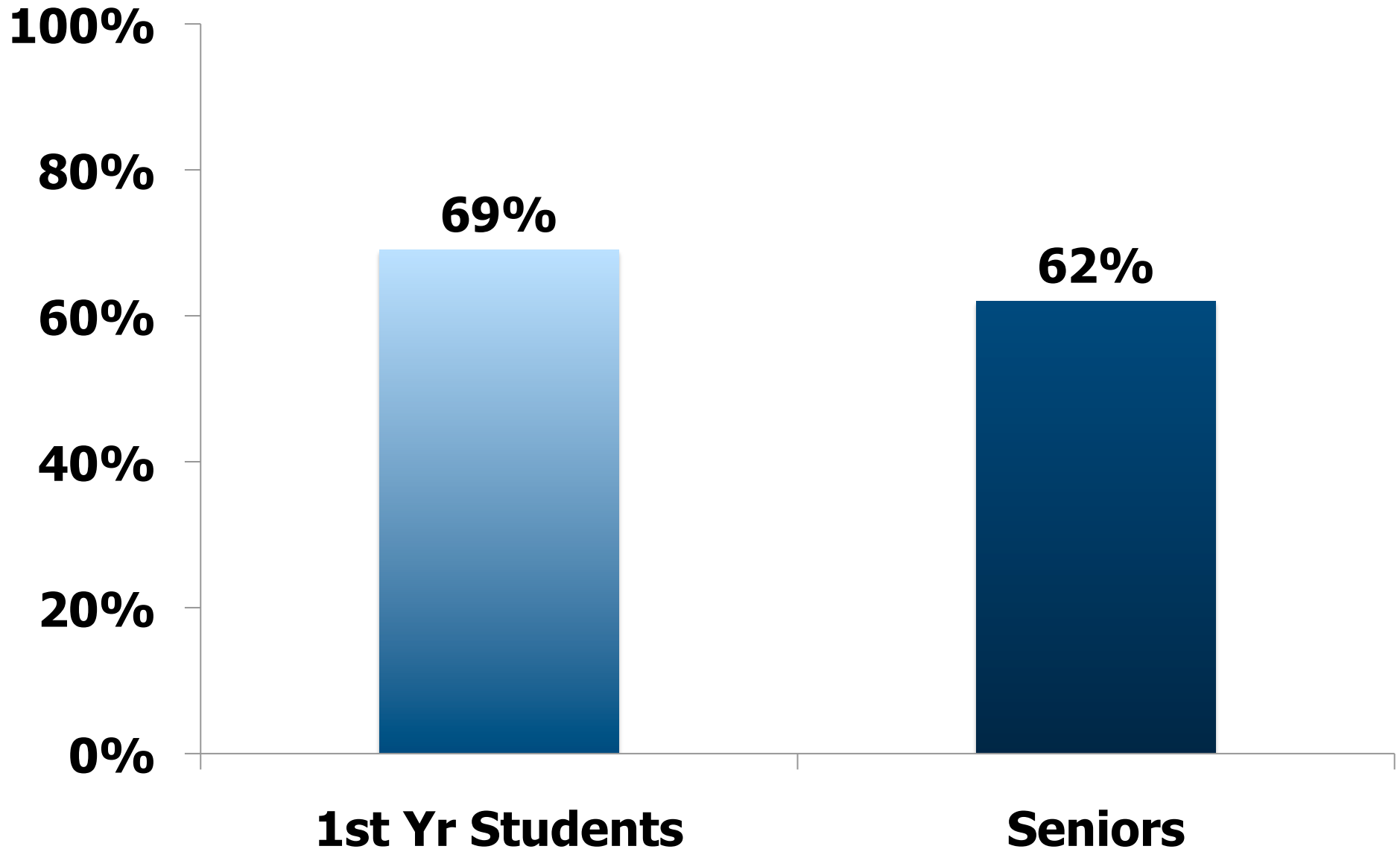
# Related Institution Questions

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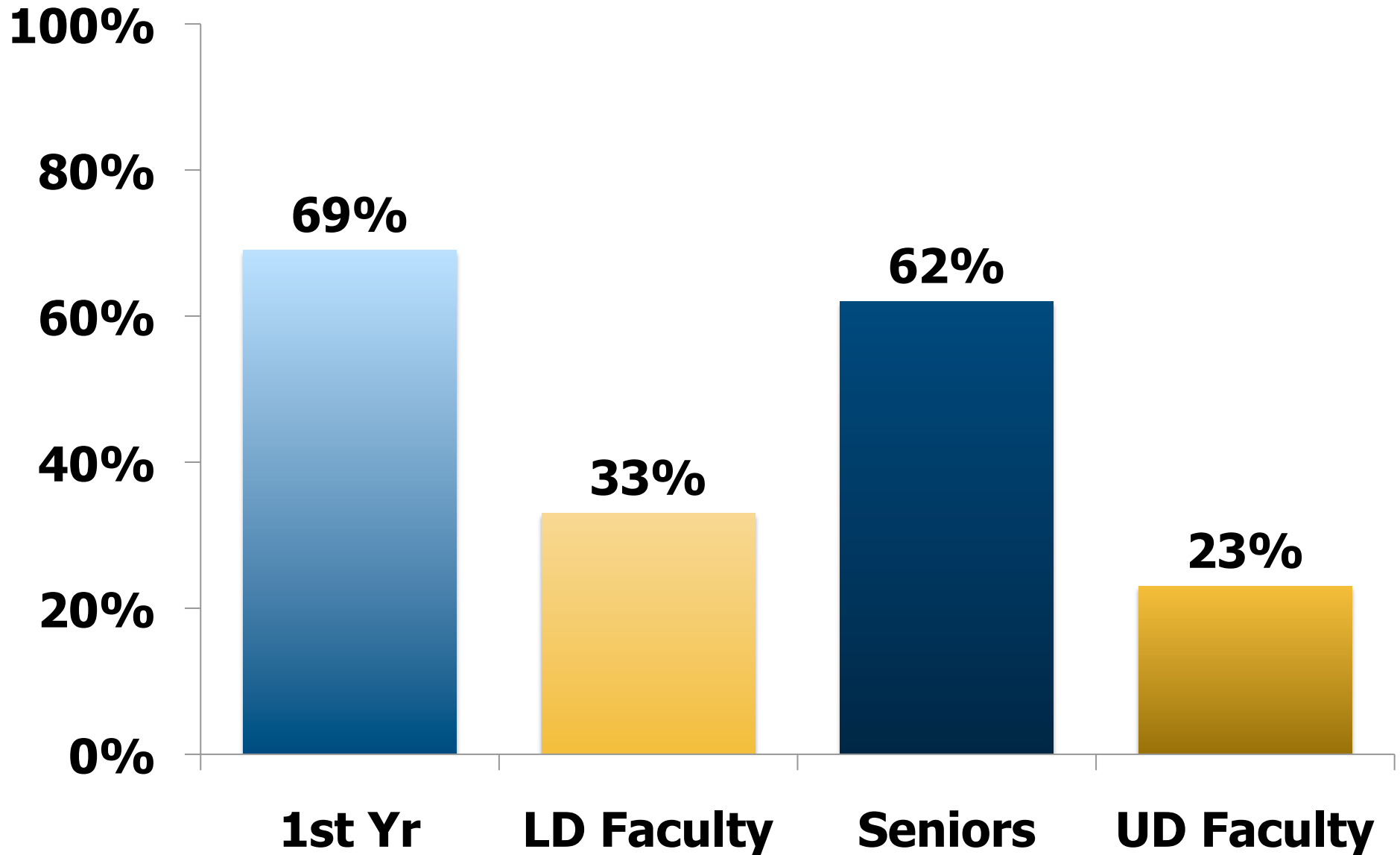
- How much do our students think our courses emphasize memorization?
- **NSSE-specific:** What percentage of students indicate that their courses emphasize memorizing “Quite a bit” or “Very much”?



# Courses Emphasized Memorization "Quite a bit" or "Very much"



# Courses Emphasized Memorization "Quite a bit" or "Very much"



# Challenges

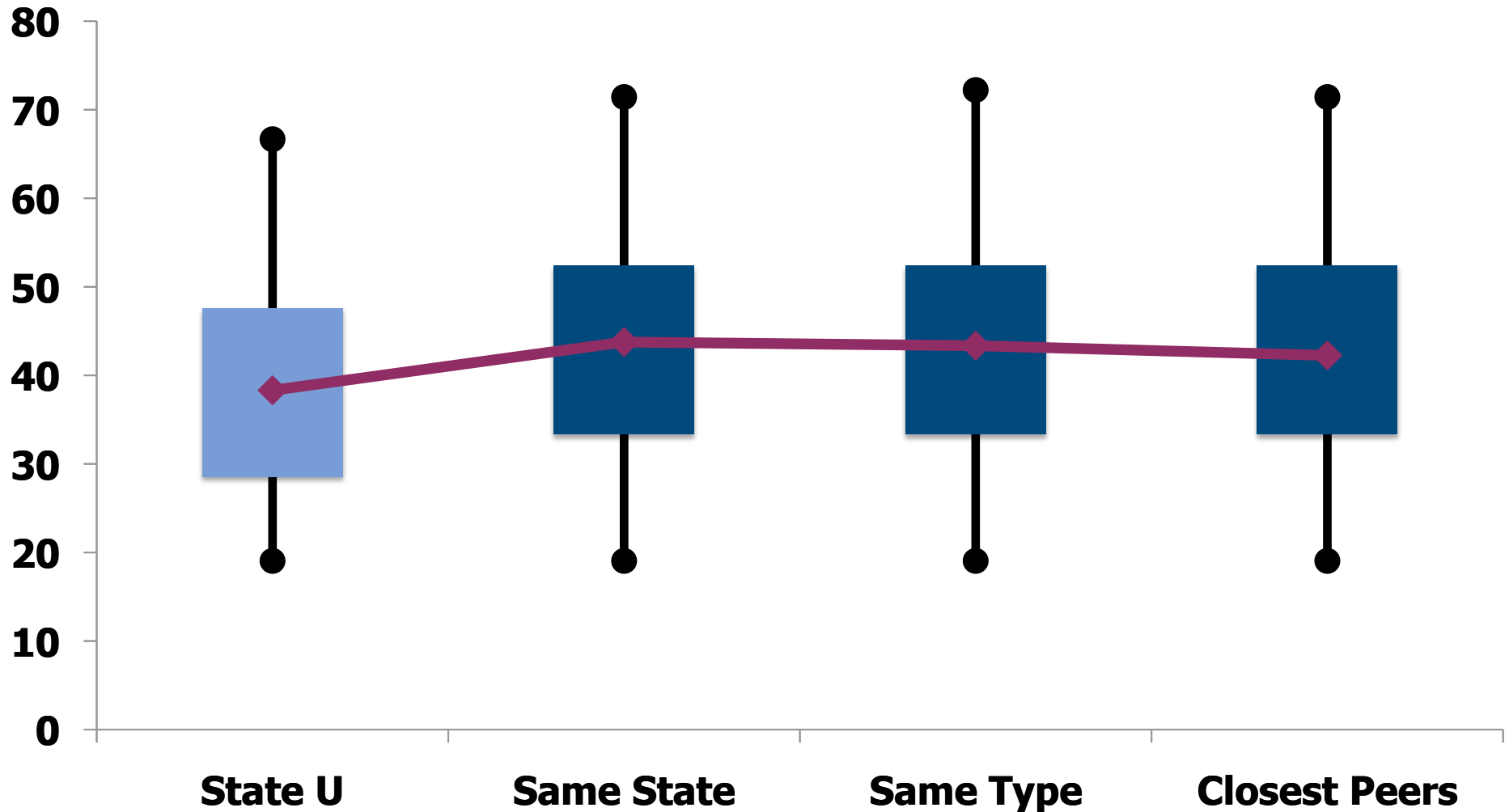
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- **Who knows what their faculty are finding from their classroom investigations?**
  - **How should the information be gathered, summarized, and shared?**
- **How do findings from faculty investigations in their classrooms find their way to those in charge of institutional assessment?**

# **INSTITUTION TO CLASSROOM**

# Institution finds...

## Active & Collaborative Learning--FY Students



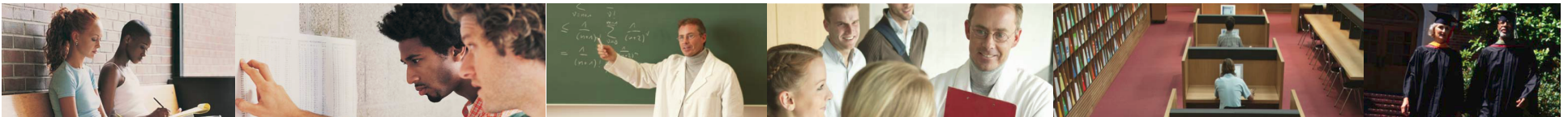
# Possible Follow-Up 1

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- **Working groups of faculty investigate...**
  - **What methods of instruction are used in our introductory courses?**
  - **How do students work in groups, if at all, in our courses?**
  - **What effect do collaborative learning activities have on our preferred outcomes? What happens to responses on active & collaborative learning items when pedagogical changes are made?**

# Possible Follow-Up 2

- **Individual investigation in class**
  - **How much do my students participate in active and collaborative learning?**
  - **How do their responses fit with my preferences for these activities?**
  - **How can I effectively increase student learning by using active practices?**



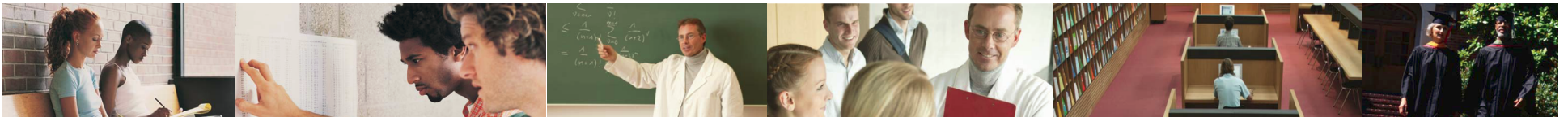
# Possible Follow-Up 3

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- **Investigations in Key Departments**
  - **Departmental investigations of the incorporation of active and collaborative practices in large classes**
  - **Testing of pedagogical changes to promote active learning**
  - **Use of student evaluation system to launch widespread classroom investigation of collaborative practice**

# Challenges

- **Effectively disseminating institutional findings**
- **Key players making results useful to faculty**
- **Faculty paying enough attention and using institutional findings to inform their efforts**

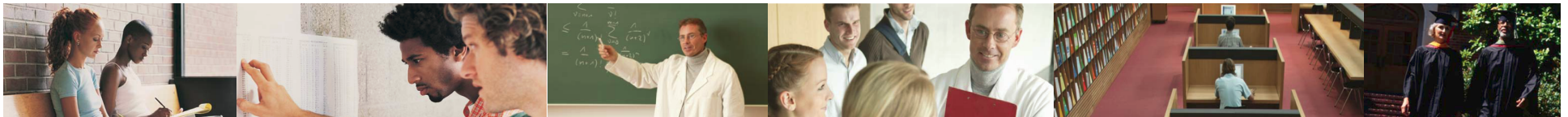


**WE KNOW FACULTY ARE  
ENGAGED IN SCHOLARSHIP OF  
TEACHING AND LEARNING...  
BUT NOT EVENLY SO**

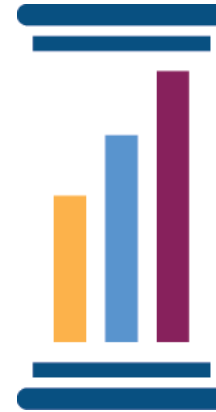
Scholarship of Teaching & Learning Engagement Items	Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much
Using assessment findings to inform changes made to your courses	<b>10%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>28%</b>
Systematically collecting information about the effectiveness of your teaching beyond end-of-term course evaluations	<b>16%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>23%</b>
Collaborating with colleagues on improving teaching and learning	<b>15%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>22%</b>
Publicly presenting information about teaching or learning	<b>42%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>13%</b>
Publishing on teaching and learning	<b>56%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>10%</b>

# Who does more scholarship of teaching and learning?

- **Tenure-track instructors**  
(even though they report less inst encouragement)
- **Those teaching graduate students**
- **Those who report higher levels of institutional encouragement**
- **Those in Education**



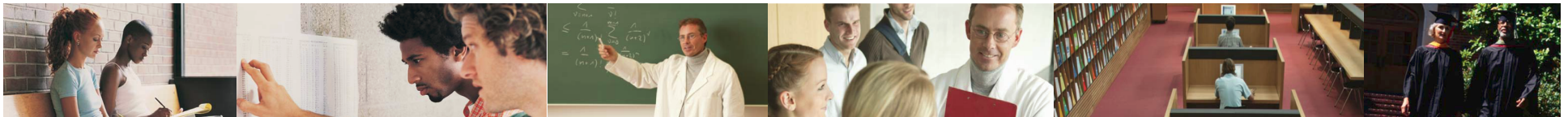
## TOPIC 4



# **MOUNT ROYAL UNIVERSITY AND THE INSTITUTE FOR SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

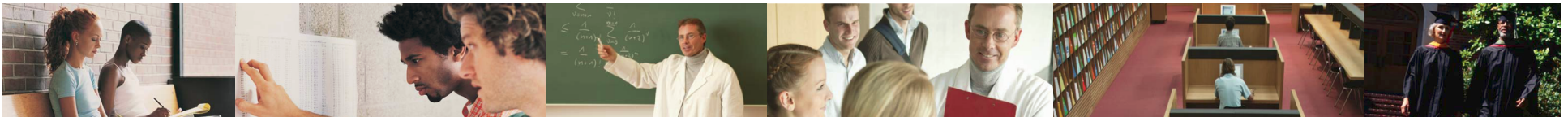
# Case Study – Backstory

- **Institute for Scholarship of Teaching & Learning**
  - **100-years as Mount Royal College**
  - **University status and the role of research**
  - **Establishment of a research institute to promote a developmental approach to systematic scholarly inquiry into student learning**



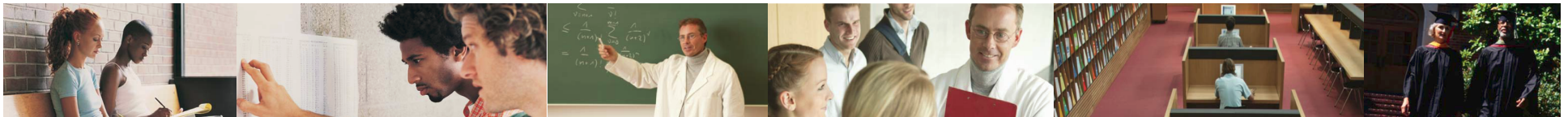
# Case Study – Programming

- **Institute for Scholarship of Teaching & Learning**
  - Teaching and Learning Scholars Program
  - Scholars Writing Residencies
  - Engaging Departments Initiative
  - Scholarship in Progress Series
  - Scholarship Network
  - Canadian Forum (Calgary AB each May)
  - Centennial Symposium (Banff AB each November)



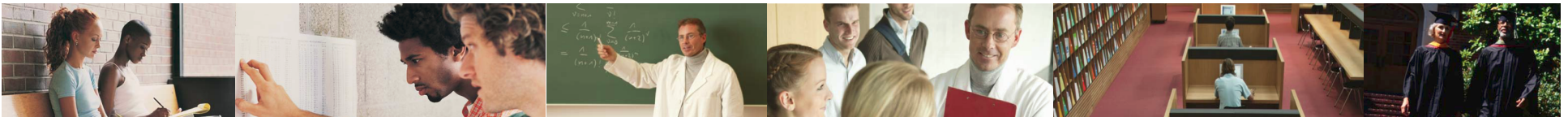
# Case Study – Integration

- **Institute for Scholarship of Teaching & Learning**
  - Scholar projects identification and scaffolding
  - Engaging departments in review and development
  - Harvard Assessment Seminar coordination
  - Office of Institutional Analysis and Planning
  - Office of the Provost and Academic Vice President
  - Recognition of integration in the academic plan



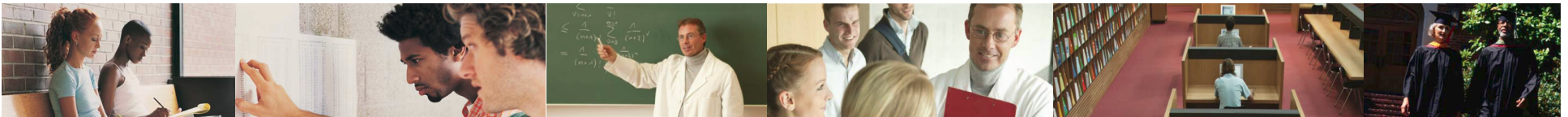
# Case Study – Statistics

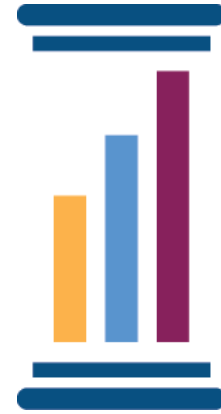
- **Institute for Scholarship of Teaching & Learning**
  - Full-time tenured faculty scholars – 45%
  - Full-time tenure track faculty scholars – 40%
  - Part-time faculty scholars – 15%
- **Institute for Scholarship of Teaching & Learning**
  - Assessment Seminar participation – 15%
  - Engaging Departments participation – 12%
  - Campus leadership (chairs, managers, etc.) – 33%



# Case Study – Push-points

- **Institute for Scholarship of Teaching & Learning**
  - Faculty leaders and mentors
  - Departmental review and accreditation
  - Program and degree development
  - Institutional research committees
  - Campus initiatives and data conduits
  - Aspirations and distinctions

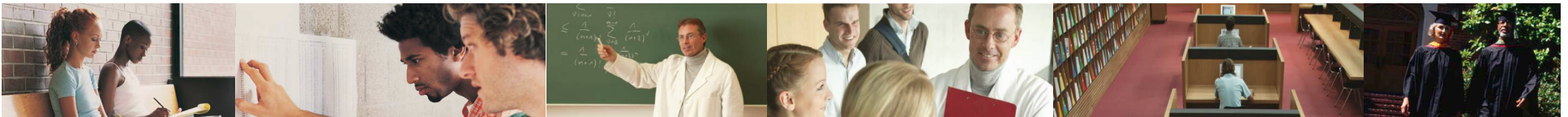




# PRELIMINARY LESSONS

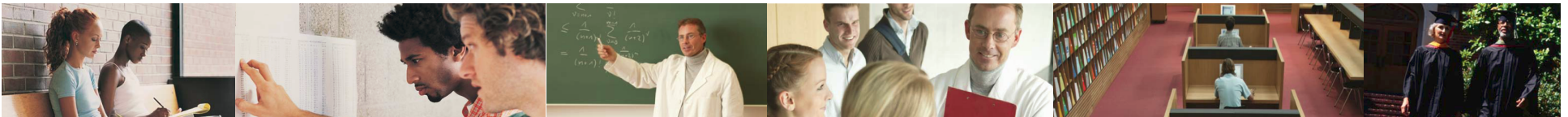
# Preliminary Lessons (1)

- **Scholarship of Teaching & Learning and institution-level assessment have much in common**
- **Yet rarely are they in conversation**
  - **Structural issues?**
  - **Lack of mutual awareness?**
  - **Cultural issues?**
  - **Lack of common language or purpose?**



# Preliminary Lessons (2)

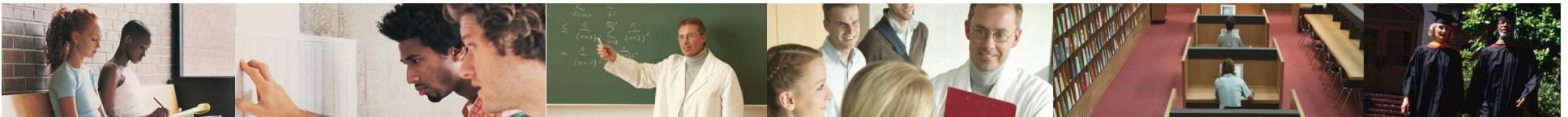
- **Build linkages between scholarship of teaching and learning & assessment groups on campus**
- **Schools/colleges and departments as a nexus or trading zone**
  - **Partnership in common cause**
  - **Link learning goals at multiple levels**
  - **Create opportunities to share interests, findings, project ideas**



# Preliminary Lessons (3)

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- **Does accreditation influence faculty perceptions (and practice?)**
  - Bring professions and arts & sciences into conversation about assessment, scholarship of teaching & learning
- **Further challenges at both levels**
  - Going public
  - Advancing the field



# QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION