

National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

Making Learning Outcomes Usable & Transparent



Learning Outcomes Assessment, Transparency, and the Internet

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Overview of NILOA

- Why NILOA?
- Who are we?
- Who is funding the Project?





Why Webscan

- Survey Report
- Occasional Papers
- Case Studies
- Accreditation Study
- Web Scan Study





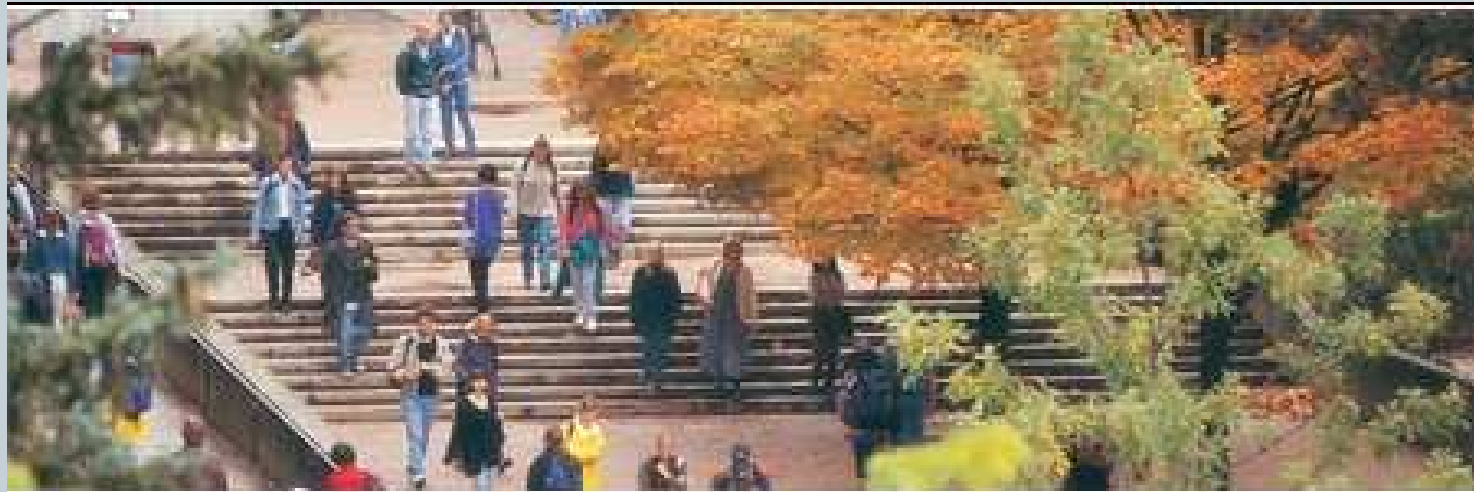
Concept of Transparency

- Accountability
- Communication
- Audience





Research Questions and Methods





Research Questions

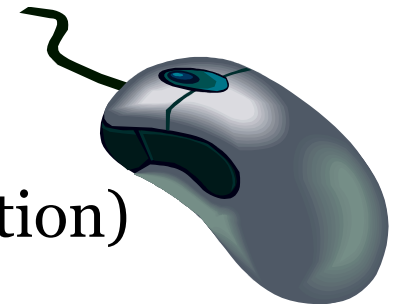


- What does the institution display on its website regarding student learning outcomes assessment?
- On which web pages is information about assessment of student learning outcomes located?



Terminology

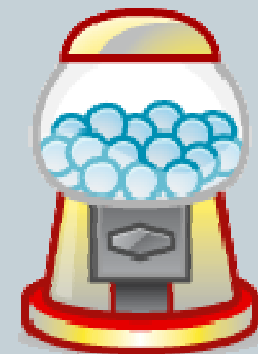
- **Direct evidence of learning.** (e.g., capstone)
- **Indirect evidence of learning.** (e.g., survey)
- **Capacity building efforts.** (e.g., faculty/staff development)
- **Assessment purposes.** (e.g., general education)





Methods

- Stratified random sample
- Part 1: Specific web page scan
- Part 2: Search engine
- Part 3: Reviewer information and mission
- Part 4: Reflection



Home Create External Data Database Tools

View Paste Cut Copy Format Painter Views Clipboard

Font Rich Text Refresh All Save Delete Records New Save Spelling More

Filter Selection Advanced Toggle Filter Sort & Filter Find Replace Go To Select Find

NILOA Web Scan

NILOA Web Scan

ID: 101240

Gadsden State Community College

Associate _____

City: Gadsden

State: AL

PART I: Page Scans

Home Page Provost/CAO Page Admissions Office/Prospective Student Page Institutional Research Strategic Plan Academic Affairs

Home Page:

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Accountability | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Surveys | <input type="checkbox"/> Alumni Surveys | Other: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Standardized Tests | <input type="checkbox"/> Portfolios | <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty/Staff Development | Comments: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Tests | <input type="checkbox"/> E-Portfolios | <input type="checkbox"/> Awards for Assessment | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> National Student Surveys | <input type="checkbox"/> General Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Accreditation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Student Surveys | <input type="checkbox"/> Capstone Experiences | <input type="checkbox"/> Student and/or Alumni Profiles | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Surveys | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Achievement events/programs | | |

PART II: Search Terms

No Search Engine

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 Comments on Part II

"Core competency"

Number of items found

departmental/college or institutional:

PART III: Institutional Statements

Mission Statement

Educational Goal Statement

Philosophy

Other

PART IV: Reviewer Information

Reviewer's initials: Review Date: Review Time:

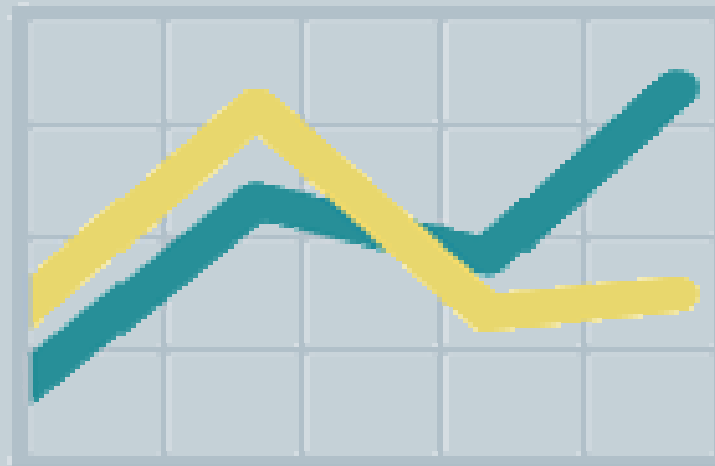
Amount of time reviewed (in minutes):

Open Comments:



Data Analysis

- Descriptive statistics
- T-tests
- Anova
- Chi-square





Limitations

- Confounding variables
- Website changes
- Website access
- Website finances and structure
- Researcher bias





Findings





Findings

- Who has Institutional Research websites?
- Say vs. Show
(Differences between NILOA survey and web scan findings)
- Evidence types found
- Location and audience
- Password protection





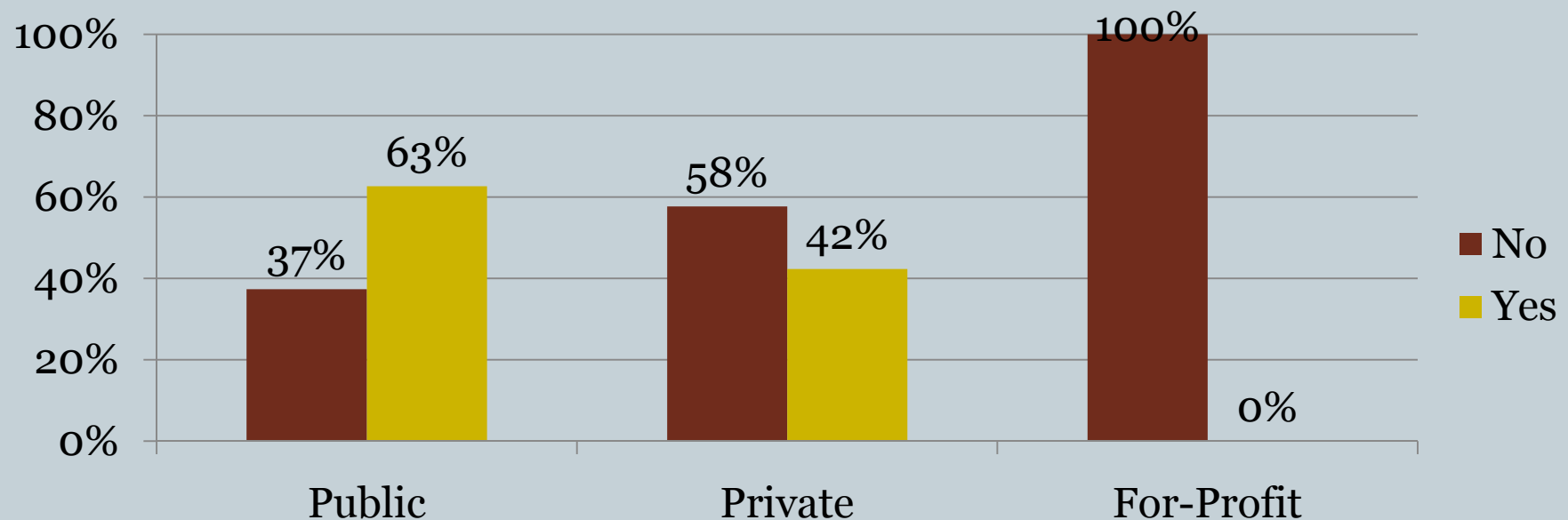
Which Institutions Had IR Pages?

- 52% of institutions in our sample
- Institutions with IR pages tended to have higher student enrollment numbers
 - With IR website, average enrollment = 7,666 students
 - No IR website, average enrollment = 3,255 students
 - Statistically significant difference at $\alpha = .000$



Which Institutions Had IR Pages?

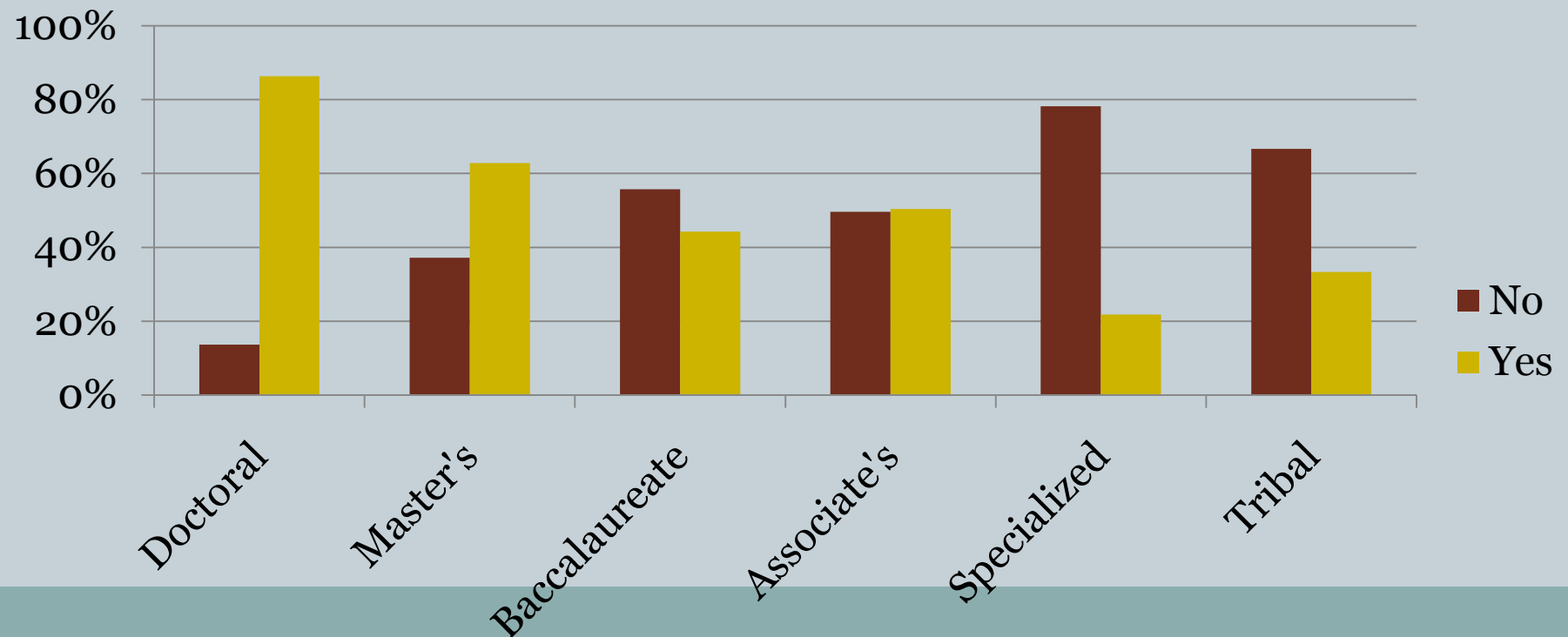
- Almost two-thirds of public institutions
- Just under half of private institutions





Which Institutions Had IR Pages?

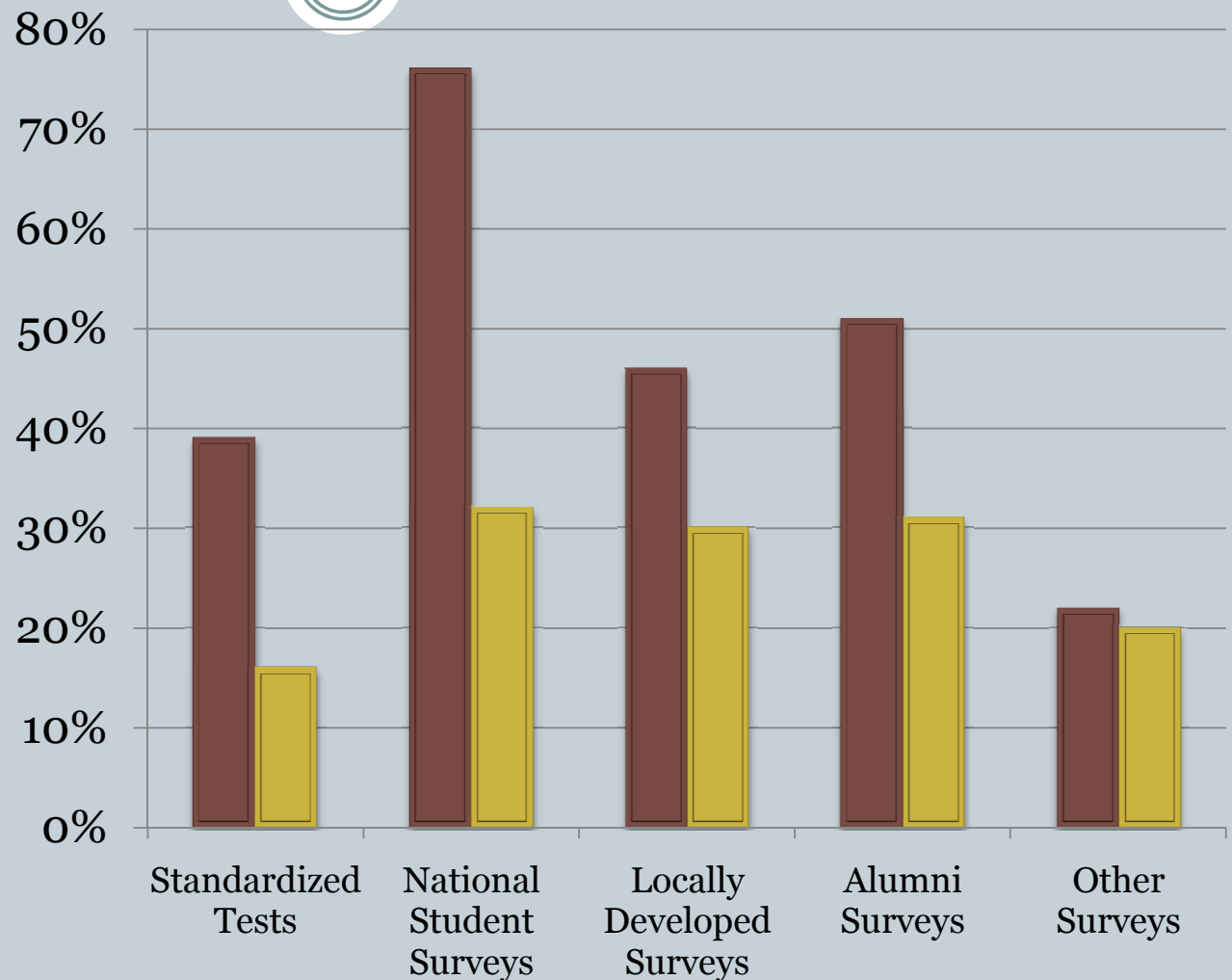
- Doctoral and Master's institutions were most likely
- Followed by Baccalaureate and Associate's institutions





Say vs. Show

- More assessment activity was reported by chief academic officers than was available on institution websites



■ NILOA 2009 National Survey ■ NILOA 2009 Web Scan

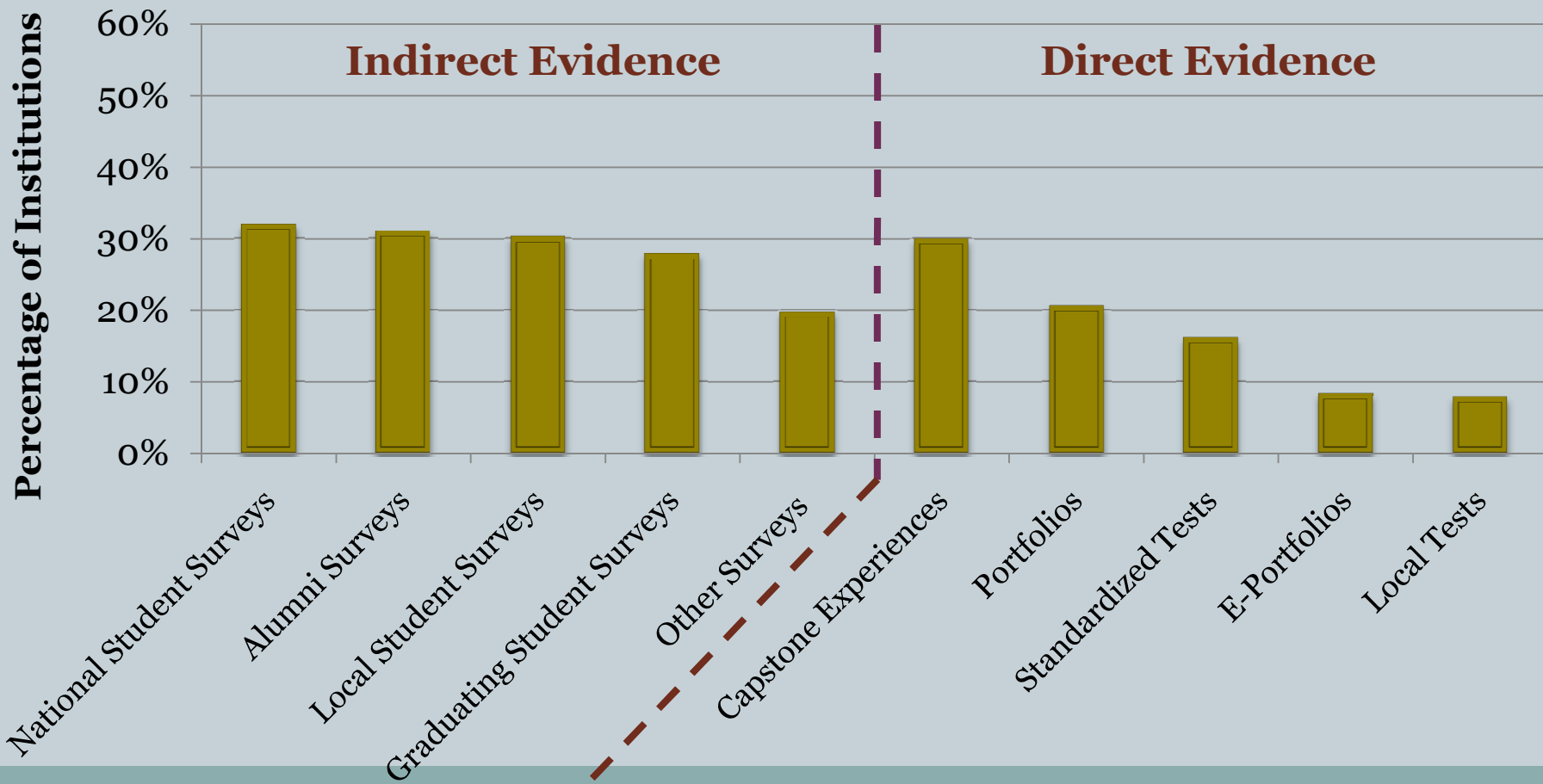


Few in Number, But Great in Variety

- An average of only **2.2** student learning outcomes assessment activities were found
- Many different types of assessment activities were represented on institution websites
 - The most frequently posted—by at least **30%** of all institutions—included information on national student surveys, alumni surveys, local student surveys, and capstone experiences



Few in Number, But Great in Variety





Few in Number, But Great in Variety

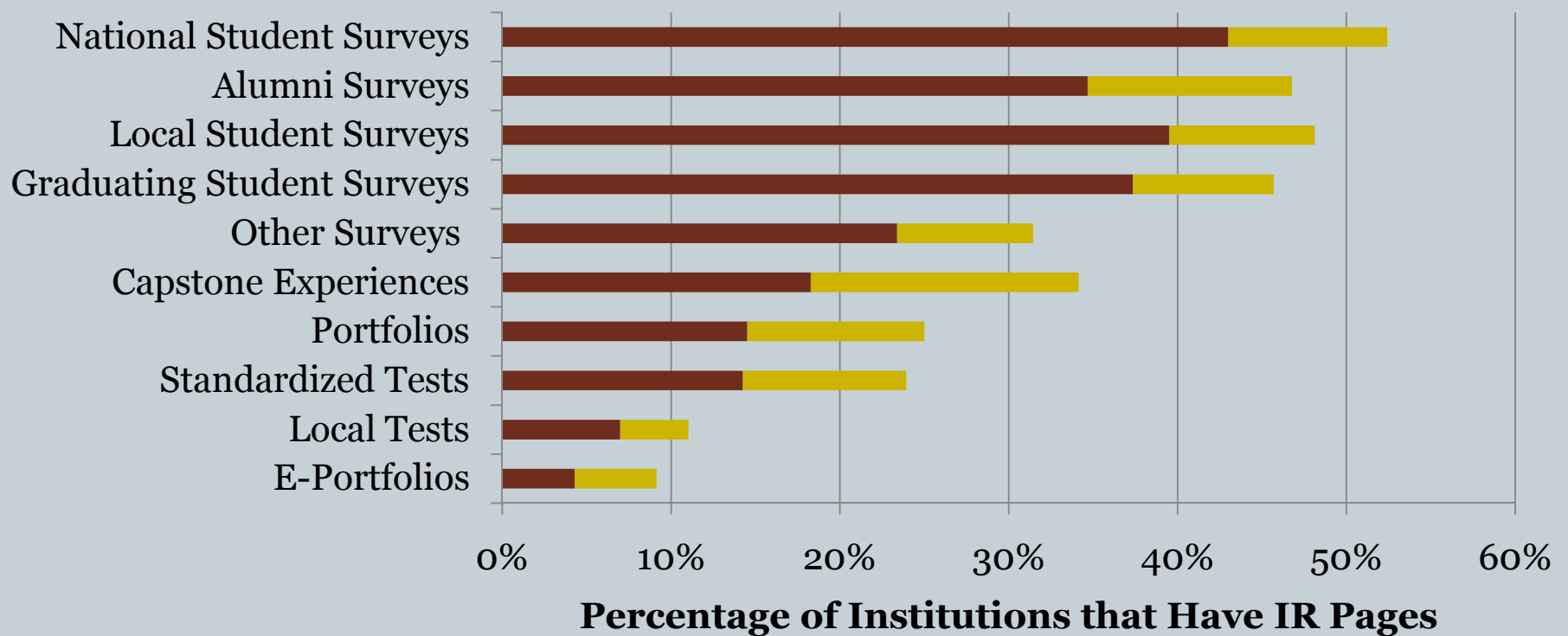
For the 372 institutions that had IR pages

- An average of **3.3** student learning outcomes assessment activities were found across the institutional websites
 - With an average of 2.4 activities on IR pages



Few in Number, But Great in Variety

For the 372 institutions that had IR pages



■ Institutional Research Pages ■ Other Location

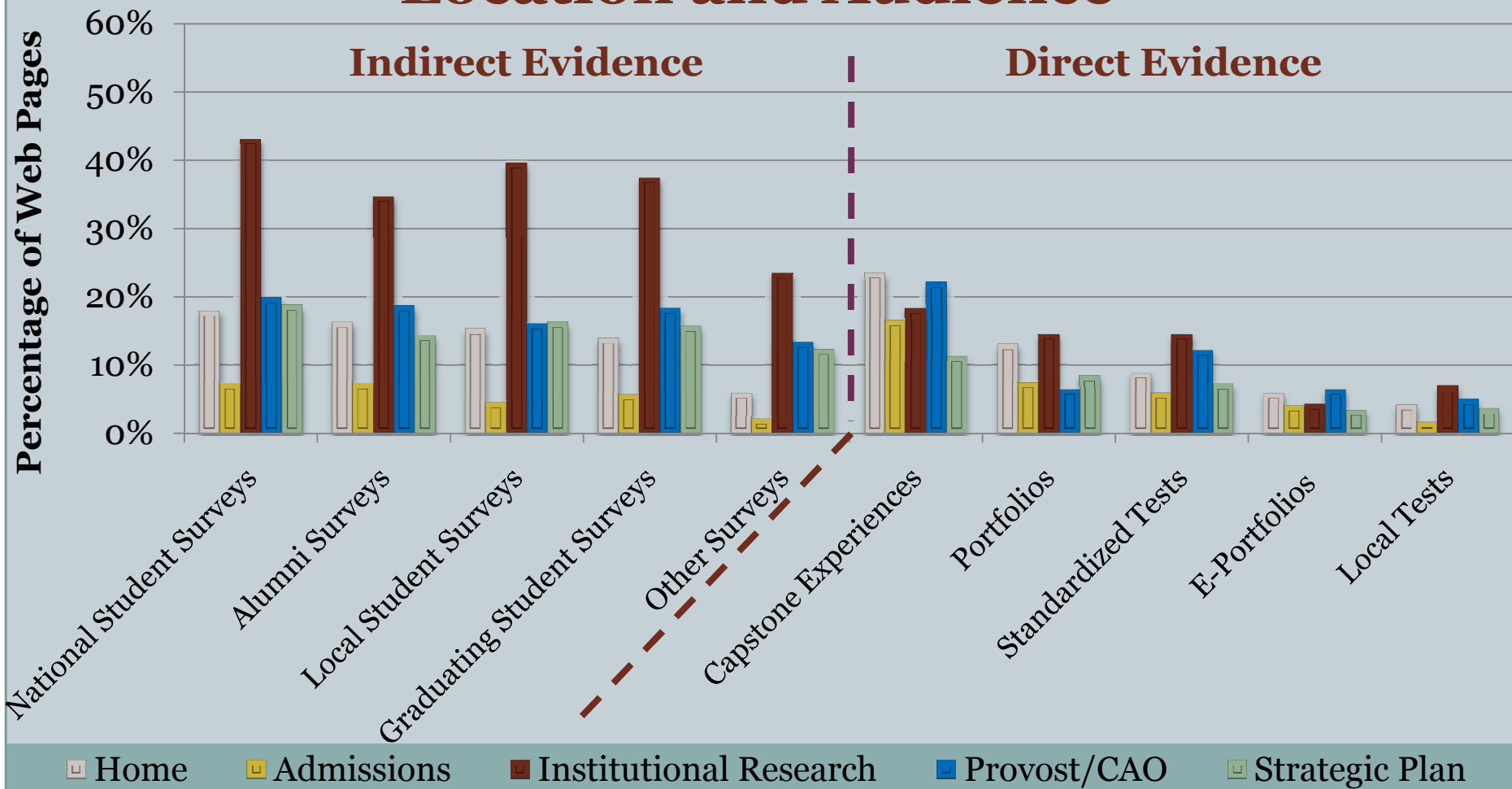


Location and Audience

- Student learning outcomes assessment information was most often available on web pages primarily targeting internal audiences

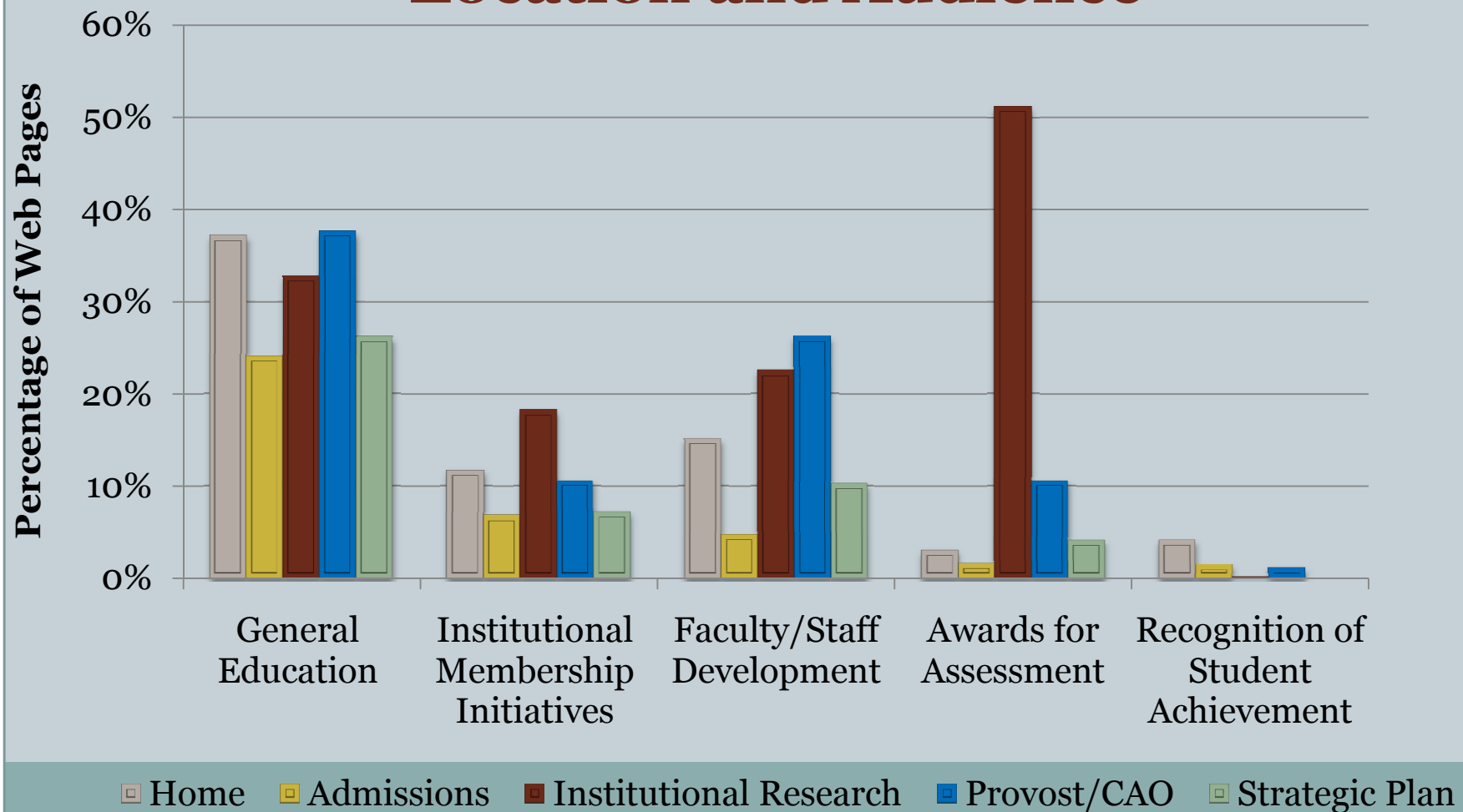


Location and Audience





Location and Audience



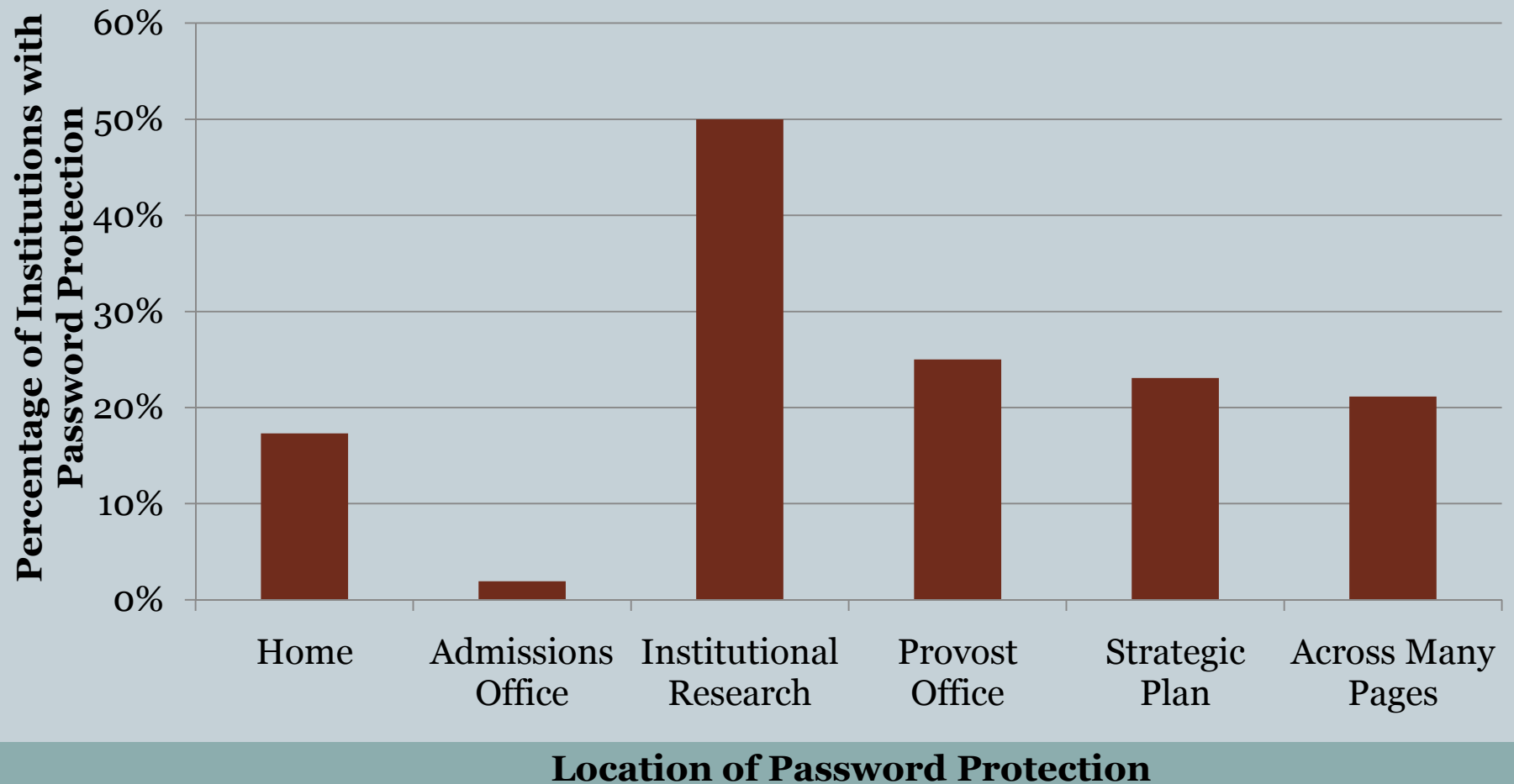


Password Protected

- For 7% of the institutions, password protection limited access to information regarding learning outcomes assessment activities
- Reasons for password protection included:
 - Temporary password protection of draft documents
 - Internal-only information, not for public consumption
 - Student-level data
- In half of the cases, we could not determine what resided behind the password protection



Password Protected





Recommendations





Recommendation #1

- Make assessment information more accessible (Volkwein, 2010)
 - Provide information on multiple web pages
 - Collaborate with other campus stakeholders
 - Update web pages regularly

Page Navigation

- Academic Excellence
- Vibrant Campus Life
- State-of-the-Art Resources
- Great Location
- The Wise Approach
- Visit Us

Apply Now!

- Admissions
- Cost & Financial Aid
- Student Life
- Housing
- International/ Intercultural Students
- FAQ
- Contact Us
- Send Me Stuff

Site Navigation

- Previous Page
- Why IWCC
- IWCC Home Page

WHY IWCC: Vibrant Campus Life




Captain's Blogs

MEET YOUR ADVISORS




Visit Us



Academic Excellence



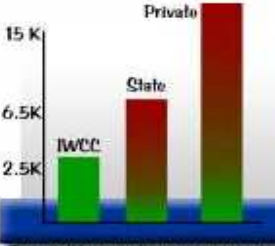
Vibrant Campus Life



State-of-the-Art Resources



Great Location



Institution Type	Tuition/Housing Costs per semester
IWCC	2.5K
State	6.5K
Private	15K

The Wise Approach

Tuition/Housing Costs per semester



Visit Us





Recommendation #2

- Explicitly state assessment goals, activities, and initiatives on web pages
 - Ensure statements are understandable and transparent





Academic and Co-curricular Assessment

Program Assessment Home

Assessment at Sacramento State

[University Learning Outcomes](#)

[Student Affairs Assessment Plans](#)

[Institutional Assessment Portfolio](#)

[Academic Program Assessment Tools](#)

[Assessment Strategies](#)

Assessment Beyond Sacramento State

[Accreditation](#)

[Other Campuses](#)

[Context for Assessment](#)

University Learning Outcomes

Serving individuals who live and work in the state capital region and beyond, Sacramento State is committed to providing an academic environment in which community leadership grounded in scholarship is fostered. Our institutional learning outcomes reflect this commitment, and our programs are designed to provide opportunities for learners to build a strong knowledge base within and across disciplines, to grow as critical and analytical thinkers, to develop information competencies including expertise with a variety of modes of communication, and to engage in public discourse and community work as ethical and just human beings.

The following link leads to the document which explains our General Education Learning Outcomes:

[General Education Learning Outcomes](#)

The Chancellor's Office recently issued Executive Order 1033 governing General Education and directed all campuses to align GE learning outcomes with the LEAP outcome framework. Here is a summary of the LEAP Framework:

[LEAP's Essential Learning Outcomes](#)

The following link leads to the statement of our baccalaureate learning goals:

[Baccalaureate Learning Goals](#)





Recommendation #3

- Help audiences understand assessment activities through simple examples and descriptions
 - Explain data in layperson's language (Middaugh, 2010; Volkwein, 2010)
 - Use an outside reviewer



Learner Satisfaction

See how learners rate their Capella experiences.

On-line learners may have different needs, expectations, and priorities than more traditional students. At Capella, we strive to understand and meet those needs, priorities and expectations. One way we do that is to measure learner satisfaction using standardized surveys. These surveys allow us to evaluate Capella's performance and to compare it to other similar institutions.

National Survey of Student Engagement

Each year Capella participates in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). In 2008, all Capella undergraduate students that were the equivalent of first-year or senior level students were invited to participate.

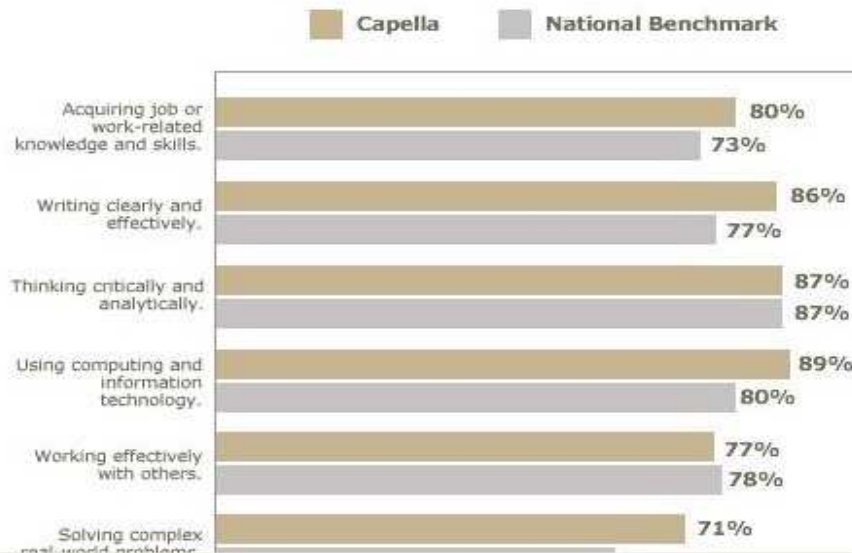
Results reported here are from students at the senior-year level. Capella's results are compared to the survey's the National Benchmark's results, which represent learners from 769 different institutions. The response rates were 42% for Capella and 35% for the National Benchmark. Sampling error is +/-4.0% for Capella and 0.2% for the National Benchmark.

Survey details

NSSE obtains information from hundreds of colleges and universities nationwide about undergraduate student participation in programs and activities and their interactions with faculty and other students. The results provide a picture of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending college

The numbers reported here reflect the percentage of respondents who chose the top 2 positive answers on a 4-point scale or the top 3 positive answers on a 7-point scale.

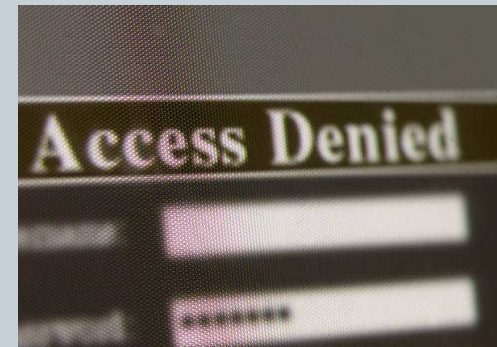
What Universities Enable Students To Do





Recommendation #4

- Clarify the use of password protected web pages
 - What content is content being posted
 - ✦ Who needs to see it and why?
 - Appropriateness
 - ✦ What's your rationale?





Capital
Community College
950 Main Street Hartford, CT



Student Learning Assessment Implementation Team

POLICY ON SHARING DATA ON INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT

The purpose of generating, gathering, and analyzing data on Institutional Effectiveness and Student Learning is to improve the institution's performance of its key functions: enrolling, supporting, and educating its students. Data for these purposes falls into two categories:

- a. reports that are mandated by the state, by the community college system, and/or by accrediting agencies; this data may be part of the public record and therefore accessible to anyone.
- b. data that is generated by a particular office, department, committee, or team for a particular purpose; such data may include customer satisfaction surveys, service utilization figures, Banner reports, and/or data on student performance in course-level, program specific, or college-wide assessment activities.

For the purpose of this policy, public data is public: once it is reported, posted, or published it is available to anyone who takes the time to look for it, quote it, cite it, and make use of it. However, the second type of data, which is generated in-house for a particular purpose, is not public information, and the college must establish guidelines to cover the reporting, posting, publishing, and manipulation of this data for purposes for which it was not originally intended.

Proposed Guidelines for Non-Public Data

1. The office, department, committee, or team that produces the data has control of the data's use. For example, the Executive Committee sub-committee on planning and institutional effectiveness controls the use of data it generates on how the college is performing in relation to its strategic goals; academic departments and programs control the use of data on student performance in those programs, including performance on licensure exams, etc.; departments that conduct customer satisfaction surveys control the use of those results; and results compiled by the college-wide Assessment Implementation Team may be reported as aggregate data to appropriate offices, departments, and governance committees but may not be disseminated beyond the college without the consent of Assessment Coordinator and Assessment Advisory Council. Those who control the use of particular data may summarize that information at levels of generality appropriate for reporting in All-College meetings, through the Institutional Assessment Portfolio, or through other means, but may not be compelled to do so.
2. The Office of Institutional Research, which has access to sensitive data related to every academic program, department, and college-wide assessment activity, must obtain the permission of those who control the use of non-public data before reporting, posting, or publishing any non-public data or using that data for any purpose beyond the original intention of those who produced the data.

APPLICATION OF POLICY TO STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT DATA

1. Limited use of student learning assessment findings

Data collected for the assessment of student learning is governed by four questions: What do students know? When do they know it? Who needs this information for decision making? How will we use this information to enhance student learning? All student learning assessment projects must focus on and be limited to answering these questions. Therefore, the findings of assessment implementations are not appropriate for uses beyond those directed toward improving student learning. The Assessment Implementation Team controls the use of information it collects, sharing it with relevant college departments in accordance with standards of confidentiality and clarity of purpose. The team or departments may report summaries, conclusions, or actions based on the assessment data, tailoring these reports for public purposes in accordance with Guideline #1 above. All assessment results will be prefaced with the following disclaimer:

This information is one indicator of student performance in relation to a specific goal. It is the result of an assessment project expressly designed to guide decisions concerning the improvement of student learning.

2. Anonymous aggregate reporting

To maintain student and faculty involvement in the assessment process, the college must assure that no grades, awards, evaluations, or judgments about any individual can be adversely affected by participation in an assessment study. For this, the college must be able to promise that no student, teacher, or small group can be identified through the assessment reports. Since the college is a public institution and open to pressure for information from many quarters, to keep that promise it must take measures to disconnect assessment findings and reports from the Banner identification numbers through which a huge amount of information can be connected with individuals. The Assessment Implementation Team has revised its research design to assure that reports are confined to aggregates of anonymous participants.

3. Maintaining focus on practical teaching and learning applications

The student learning assessment movement began among teachers who wanted to gather information on which to make decisions to better support student learning. More recently, the language of assessment has been adopted by external evaluators and funders who are concerned about institutional accountability, and the methods of gathering and using data for external accountability often run counter to the methods best suited to assessment projects in quest of interventions to improve learning. Although data from some assessment projects can serve both internal and external purposes, other assessment data may serve internal purposes only. To keep assessment focused on the practical internal uses of information, teaching faculty must lead in generating questions, implementations, and interpretations.



Recommendation #5

- Facilitate successful website navigation (Shneiderman & Plaisant, 2004)
 - Varying web browsers, accessibility of software, etc
 - File sizes (Pdf, Excel, SPSS outputs, etc) and download times





Discussion

- **What do these implications mean for IR offices?**
 - Culture shift—IR offices as “Knowledge Brokers”
 - IR Officers and partnerships with other campus units
- **What systems are currently in place?**
 - Do you have an IR website? Who manages it?
 - ✦ If no, how do you communicate assessment activities?
 - ✦ If yes, who is responsible for uploading and updating content?
- **Who is your target audience(s)?**
 - Make the internal...external



- **What are some additional strategies for increasing transparency?**
 - What are the next steps for IR offices? For campuses at-large?
- **What are some innovative communication examples from your campus or strategies you have heard of?**
 - For web pages and off the web



Next Steps for NILOA

- Examination of posted results
- Greater emphasis on program/departmental activities



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Search Site Search

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This portal tracks the journey of higher education institutions as they respond to the challenge of learning assessment. Built around key alliances and thoughtful strategies, it is an information-rich resource for anyone planning and implementing campus assessment processes and activities.

Now in the field: NILOA 2010 Survey

For more information about this survey, please click the tab on the right "Survey 2010"

- Survey 2010
- Measuring Quality
- Occasional Papers
- What do you think?
- Newsfeeds

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[Occasional Papers](#)
[College & University Associations](#)
[College & University Programs](#)

[In the News](#) | [Archive](#) | [RSS](#)

Impact of Orientation Programs on Student Learning

Mon, May 03, 2010 - 08:00 am
Matthew Mayhew, Kim Vanderlinden, Eun Kim in *Research in Higher Education*

This journal article discusses an assessment of orientation programs on student learning. Requires login.

Peer Review, "Engaging Departments: Assessing Student Learning"

Fri, Apr 30, 2010 - 08:00 am
AAC&U

This new issue of Peer Review from AAC&U has a number of articles about how departments are developing assessment approaches to student learning.

The Accountability/Improvement Paradox

Fri, Apr 30, 2010 - 08:00 am
Victor M.H. Borden in *Inside Higher Education*

This article discusses tension between accountability and improvement for professionals and policy makers.

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Survey Report

National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment
October 2009

More Than You Think, Less Than We Need: Learning Outcomes Assessment in American Higher Education

George Kuh and Stanley Ikenberry



Full Report
learningoutcomesassessment.org

Web Scan Report

National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment
May 2010

Exploring the Landscape: What Institutions Post on Their Websites About Their Student Learning Outcomes Activities

Natasha Jankowski and Julia Makela



Full Report
learningoutcomesassessment.org

National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

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Thank you!

www.learningoutcomesassessment.org

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