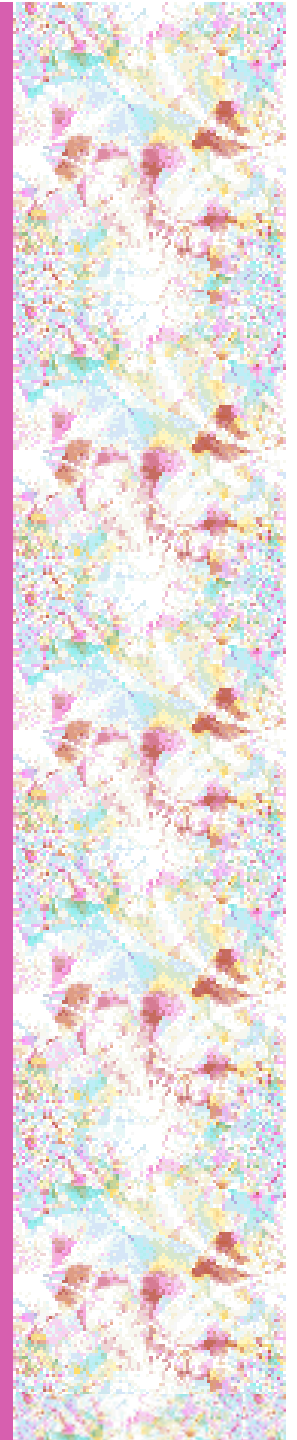


**Creative Freshman
Assessment Using the EBI
First Year Initiative Study**

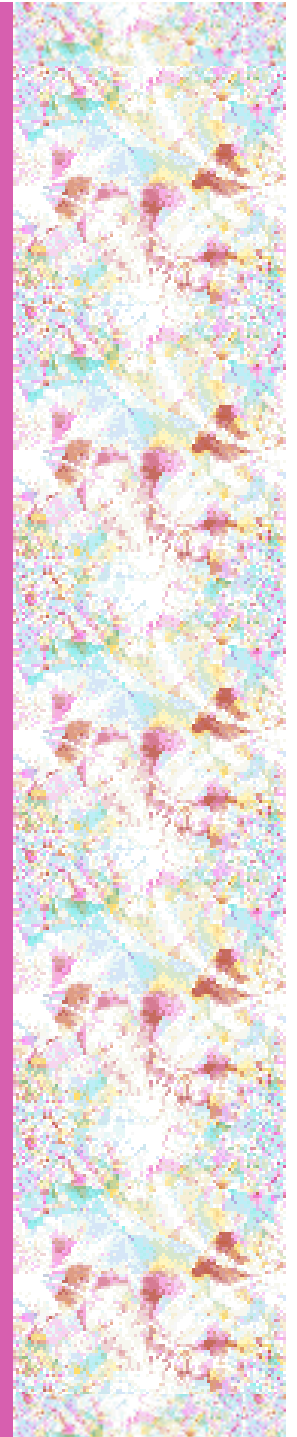
**NC State University's Undergraduate
Assessment Symposium
*April 16-17, 2004***



Heather Langdon

Senior Research Associate

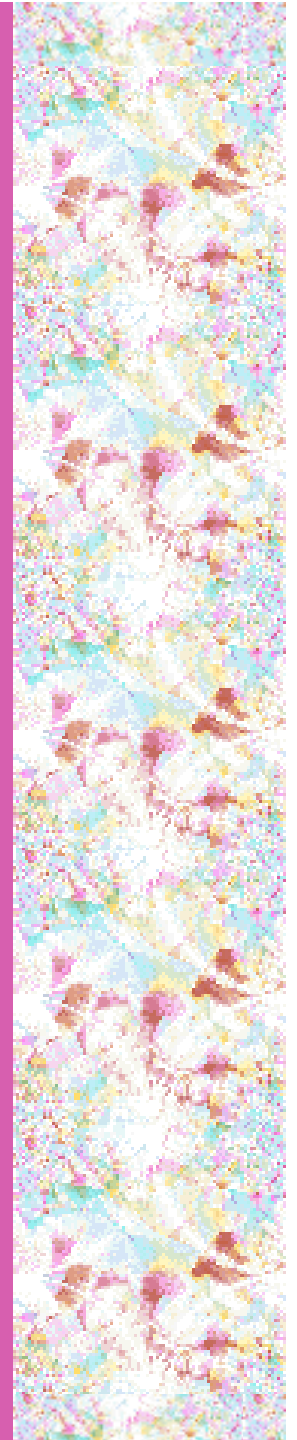
Heather has worked with assessment at Appalachian State University through the Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning since 1995. She works with academic departments and programs on campus with their assessment efforts. Heather serves on the Learning Communities Council and Retention Management Team, providing assessment and retention information.



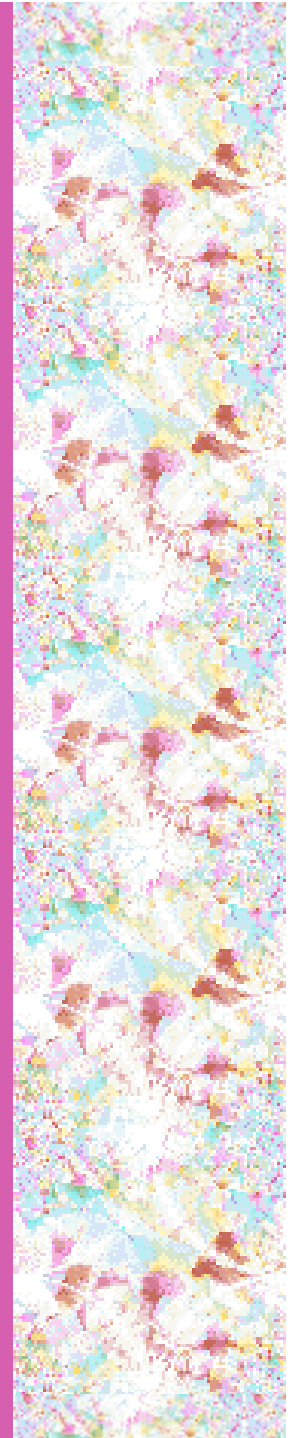
Vivian Thompson

Assessment Coordinator

Vivian has a background in educational media technology and joined the Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning as Assessment Coordinator at Appalachian State University in 2001. Vivian coordinates the administration of multiple surveys throughout the year, including departmental and program surveys, as well as the UNC-Office of the President surveys required of UNC institutions.



- Appalachian State University has used the Educational Benchmarking First Year Initiative (FYI) Study as one way to assess Freshman Seminar since 2001
- In Fall 2003 the FYI Study was used to assess all first year students in order to compare Freshman Seminar and other learning community experiences with students who were not involved with a learning community on campus.
- This session will present study methodology and outcomes.

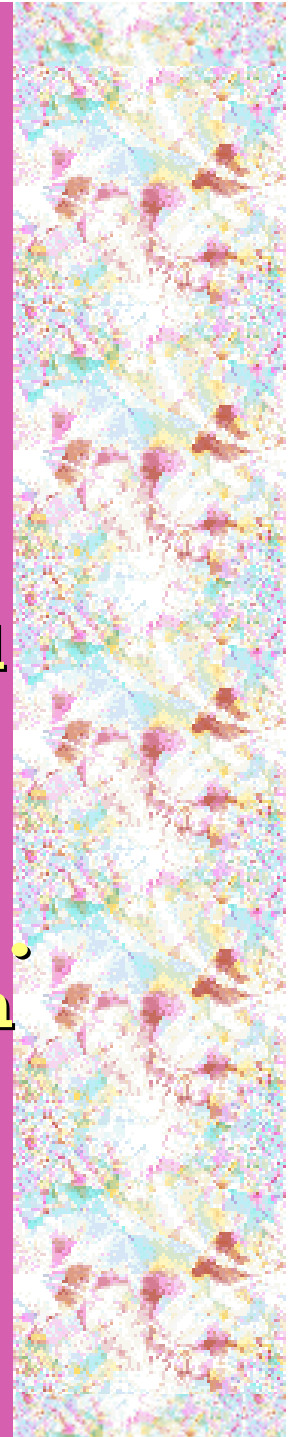


What is the First Year Initiative Study?

Research and experience have shown that targeted seminars for first-year students correlate with improving student success with the first-year experience, retention and student satisfaction. The FYI survey is administered to students at the end of the first-year seminar, providing institutions with feedback regarding seminar outcomes. The survey is guided by national experts on first-year seminars (John Gardner, Betsy Barefoot and Randy Swing) and based on sound research evidence of what works in first-year seminars.

-EBI website

<http://www.webebi.com/University/FYI/Index.htm>



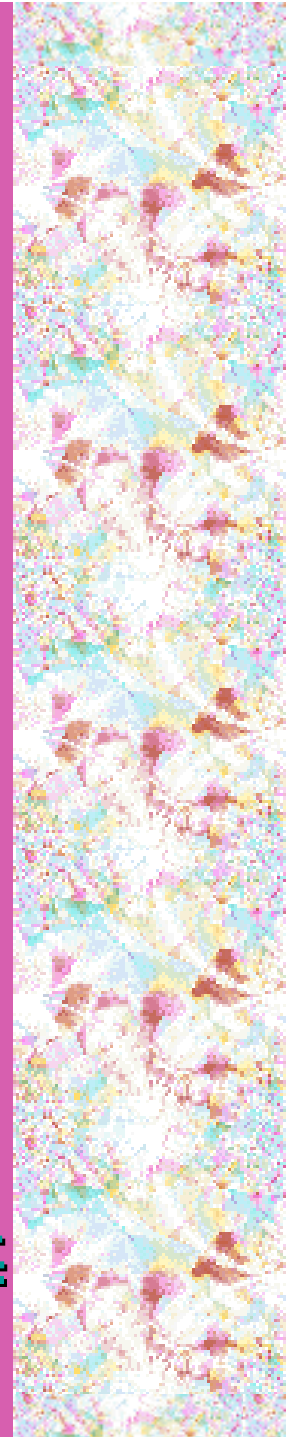
Casting A Large Net

- In August 2003, we began discussing administering the FYI to all Freshman
- with Director of Freshman Learning Communities, Joni Petschauer & Assistant Director of Freshman Seminar Program, Beth Glass
- In September 2003, we discussed our special needs with EBI including a confirmation page, Learning Communities and Course sections.
- In October 2003, we decided to administer the FYI completely online and we began setting up the survey.



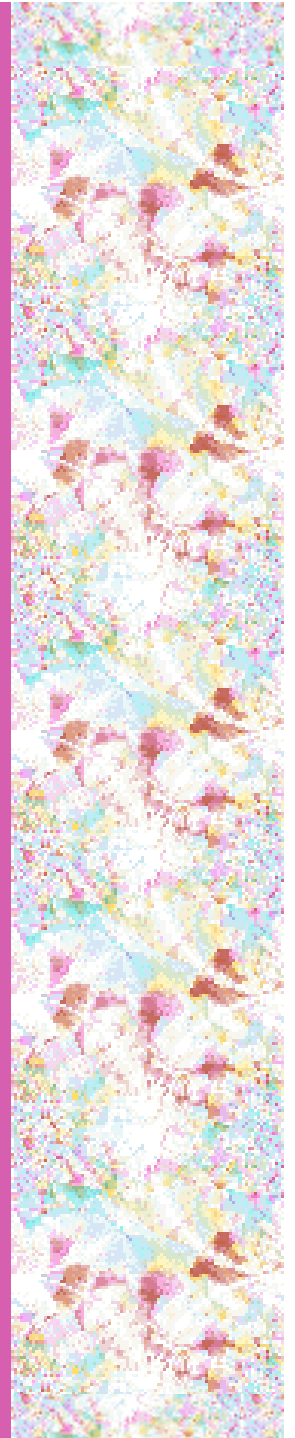
Web-Enabled Survey System (WESS)

- Register with WESS as your institution's contact.
- Email a text file of your population with students' first name, last name and email address.
- <http://www.webebi.com/WESS/WESSInfo/>
- <https://order.webebi.com/myebi/login.aspx>

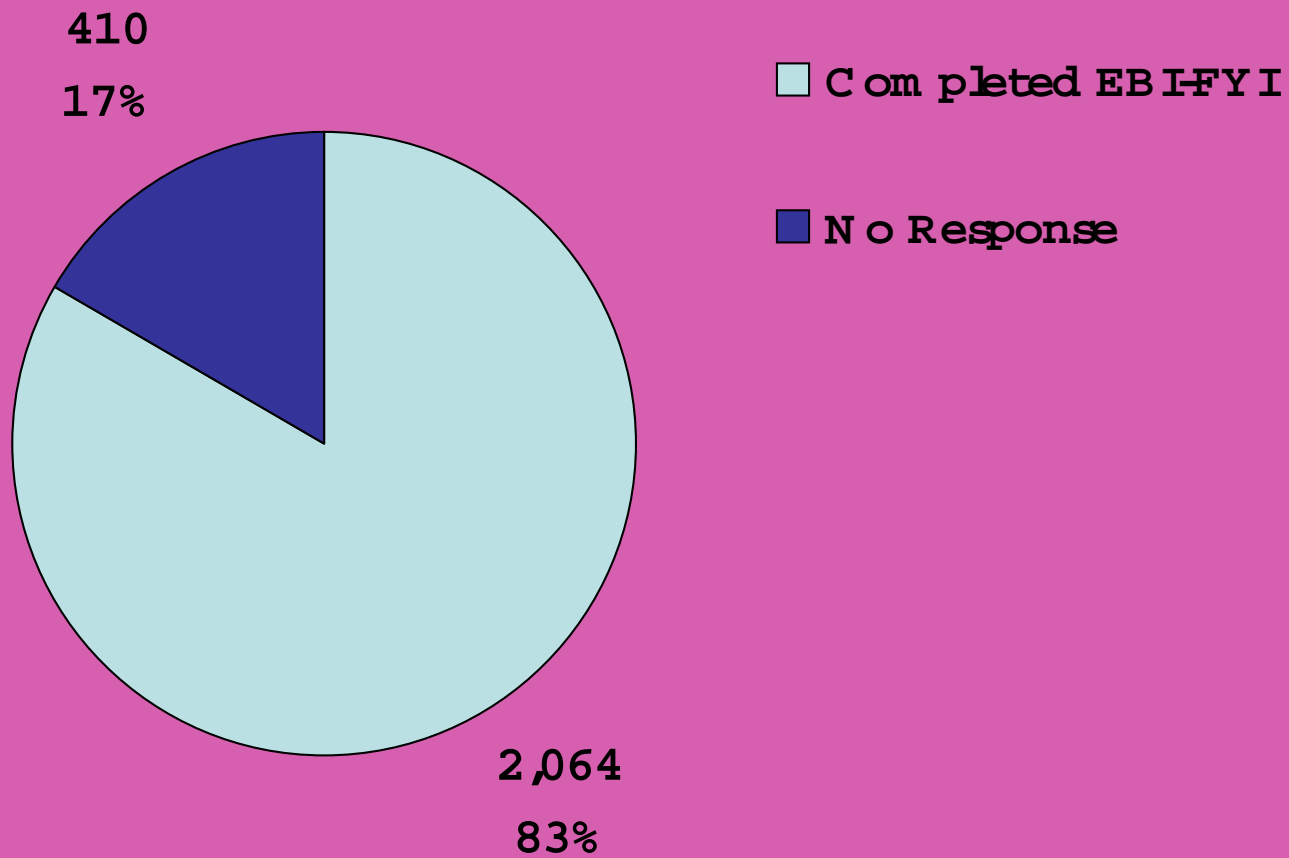


Minor Problems

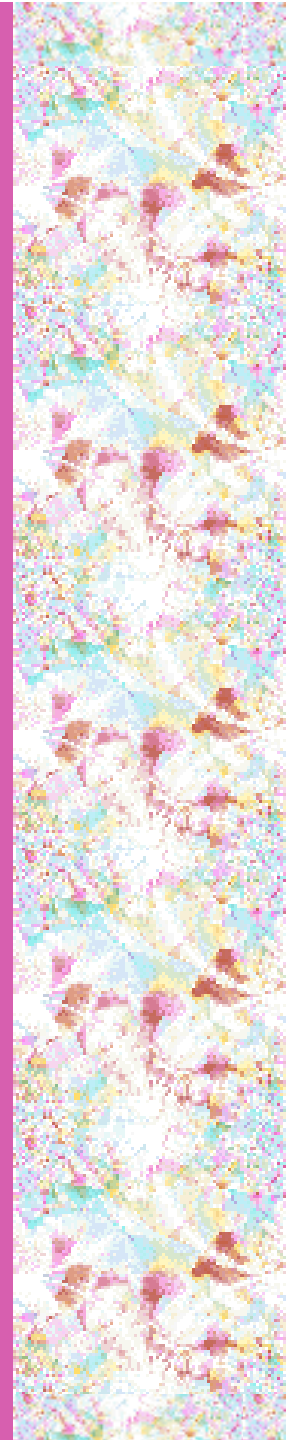
- Spreading the word to faculty about FYI online
- Confirmation page
- Student confusion about FYI
- Multiple surveys given to freshmen



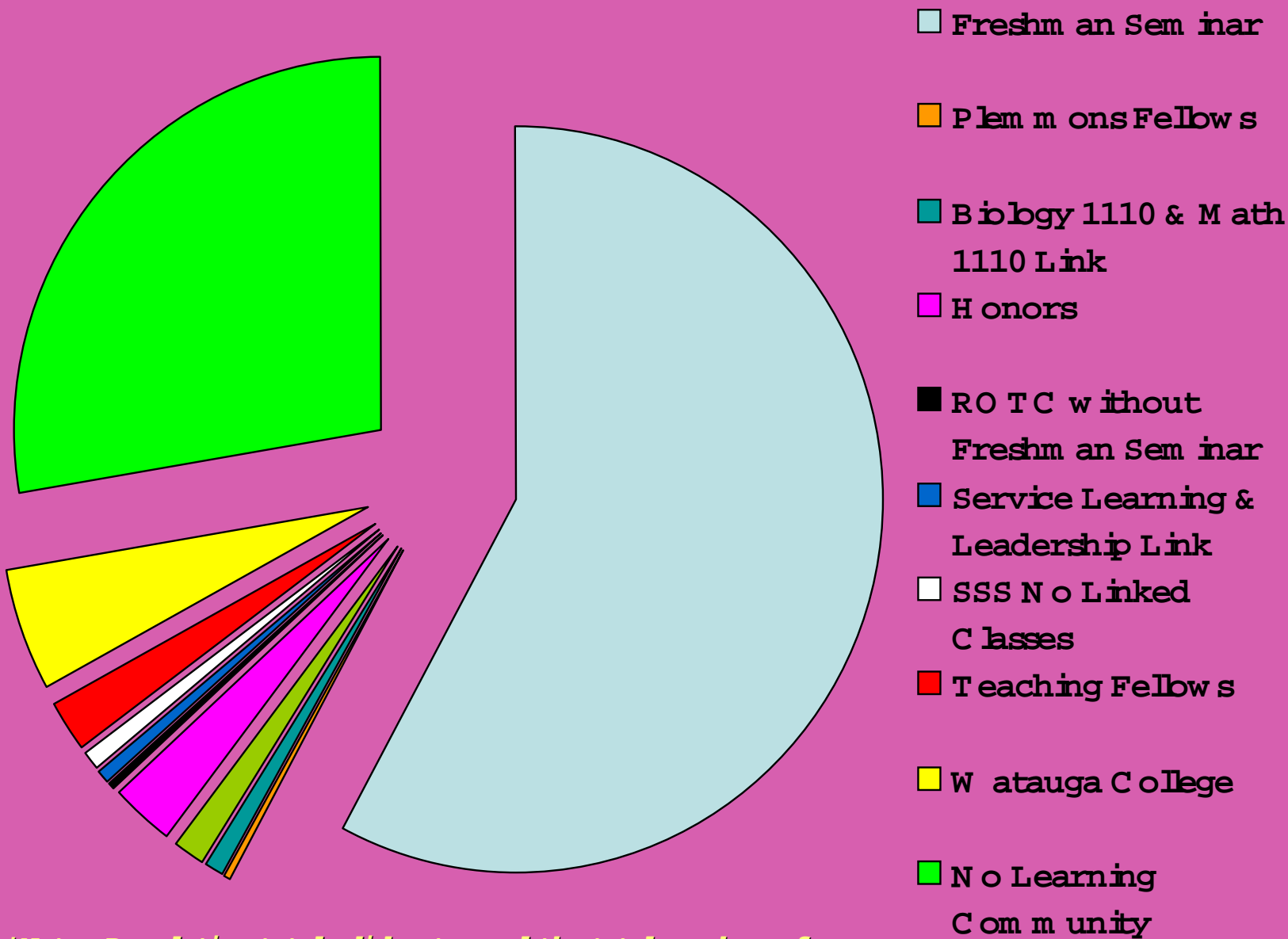
Response Rate



N=2,474



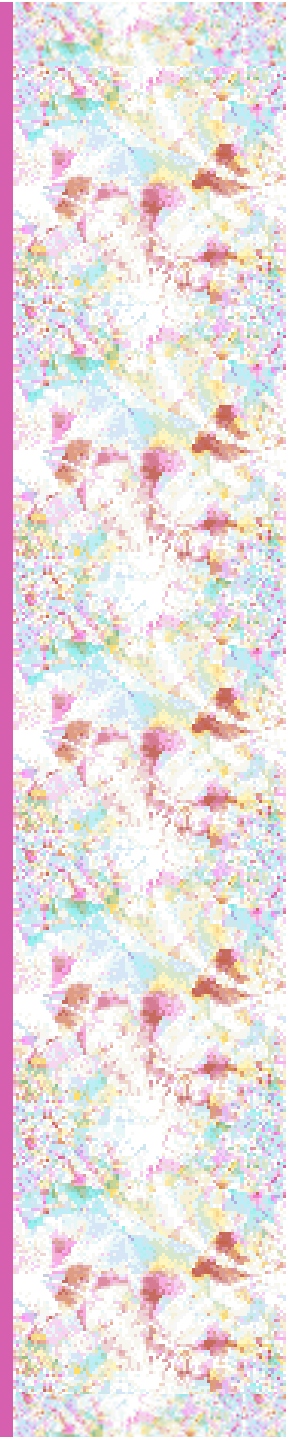
Response Numbers by Population*



**Note: Population totals did not equal the total number of responses because not all students completing the EBI-FYI chose a population code.*

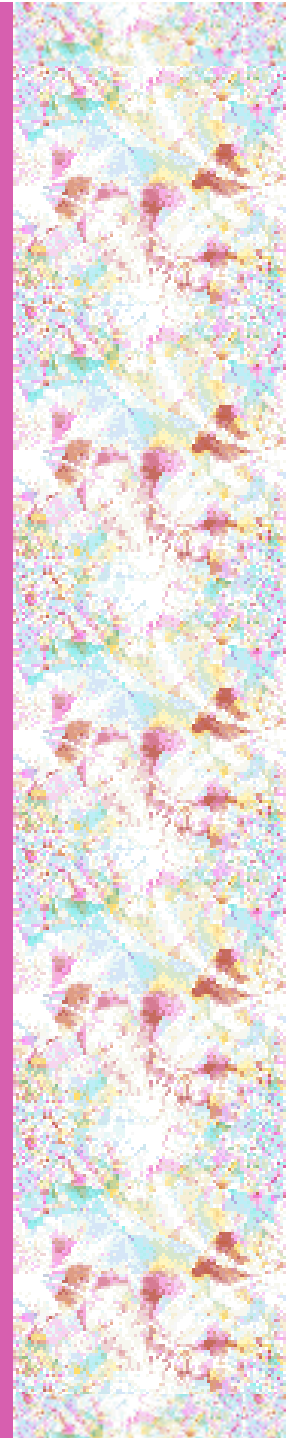
Data Collection : Problems & Recommendations

- Population Codes
 - Codes selected by students did not mesh with actual population or course section
- Course Section Codes
 - Incorrect course sections
- Hope to try dual administration



Results

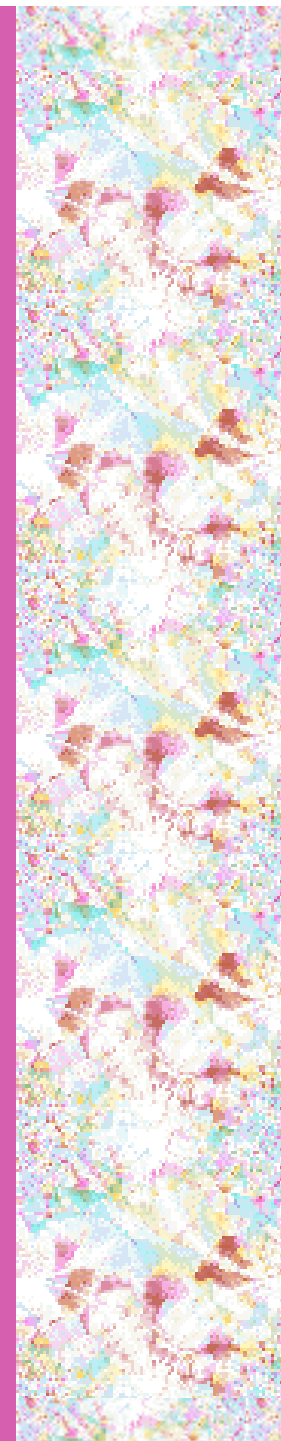
- Predictive Factors for “Overall Course/Experience Effectiveness” for Appalachian (in order of importance):
 - Course/Experience Included Engaging Pedagogy
 - Usefulness of Course/Experience Readings
 - Course/Experience Improved Managing Time and Priorities
 - Satisfaction with College/University
 - Course/Experience Increased Out-of-Class Engagement
 - Course/Experience Improved Connections with Peers
 - Course/Experience Improved Study Strategies
 - Course/Experience Improved Critical Thinking
 - Course/Experience Improved Connections with Faculty



Results

- Students not in learning communities generally rated the first year experience lower than LC students
- These LCs ranked in top 3 at least once among the predictive factors:
 - History & English Link (SSS only)
 - Plemmons Fellows
 - Service Learning & Leadership Link
 - SSS no linked classes
 - Teaching Fellows
 - Watauga College
- These LCs ranked in top 3 several times:
 - Service Learning & Leadership Link (all 9 Factors)
 - Teaching Fellows (6 Factors)
 - Plemmons Fellows (4 Factors)

Our campus summary report is located on the web: http://www.appstate.edu/www_docs/depart/irp/assessment/reports/FYIRreport-4-2004.pdf



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www.assess.appstate.edu
- Educational Benchmarking, Inc.
www.webebi.com
- Appalachian Freshman Links
http://www.appstate.edu/www_docs/pr/freshmanprograms/index.html

