

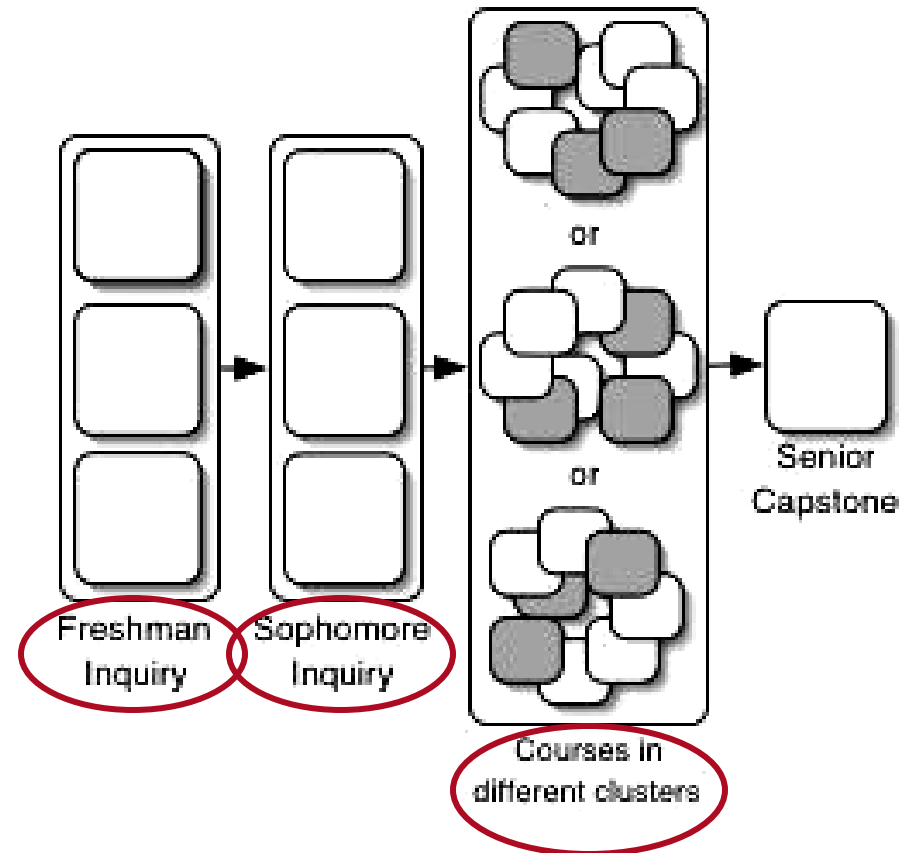
ACE/FIPSE PROJECT AT PSU: LESSONS LEARNED



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When PSU was invited to join the “Assessing International Learning” project, we decided to focus on measuring student attainment of knowledge, skills and attitudinal learning goals within the core curriculum -- the University Studies Program. Our initial assessment efforts focused on the first three levels of the General Education Program: the Freshman (FRINQ), Sophomore Inquiry (SINQ), and Upper-Division cluster courses (300/400 level classes).



First Round of Assessment (March 2007)-- 35 first-year and 26 second-year students

2006-2007 FRINQs

The Constructed Self

Columbia Basin

Design & Society

On Democracy

System Earth

The Work of Art

Power and Imagination

2007 SINQs

African studies

Archaeology

Classic Greek civilization

Environmental sustainability

Family studies

Global environmental change

places

Knowledge, rationality &
studies

studies

Medieval studies

Morality

Popular culture

Renaissance studies

Sciences - humanities

American studies

Asian studies

Community studies

European studies

Freedom, privacy, &
technology

Healthy people/healthy

Latin American understanding

Leadership for change

Media

Middle east studies

Nineteenth century

Professions & power

Science in the liberal arts

Sexualities

Women's studies

Second Round of Assessment (July 2007)-- 40 upper-division cluster students (300/400 level)

Upper Division Cluster Courses In Asian Studies

ANTH 312U Southeast Asian Societies & Cultures	GEOG 352U The Himalayas & Tibet
ANTH 316U Traditional East Asia	GEOG 353U Pacific Rim
ANTH 317U Peoples & Cultures of South Asia	GEOG 453U Japan
ArH 311U History of Asian Art: Indian & Indonesian	HST 320U East Asian Civilization
ArH 312U History of Asian Art: Chinese	HST 321U Modern East Asia
ArH 313U History of Asian Art: Japanese	INTL 317U Topics in Asian Thought
ArH 321U Survey of Korean Art	INTL 321U Globalization & Identity: Humanities
ArH 411U Chinese Buddhist Art	INTL 322U Globalization & Identity: Social Sciences
ArH 412U Japanese Buddhist Art	INTL 323U Tradition & Innovation: Humanities
ArH 415U Issues in Asian Art	INTL 324U Tradition & Innovation: Social Science
ArH 422U Chinese Painting	JPN 341U Introduction to Classical & Medieval Japanese Literature
ArH 423U Japanese Painting	JPN 342U Introduction to Early Modern & Modern Japanese Literature
ArH 425U Modern Japanese Painting	JPN 361U Japanese Literature through Film
CHN 341U/HST 399U Topics in Chinese Literature & Thought	JPN 452U Japanese Traditional Drama
CHN 342U/ENG 399U Chinese Vernacular Literature (Traditional)	MUS 375U World Music II: Asia
CHN 343U Chinese Vernacular Literature (Modern)	PS 466U/INTL 410U Politics of East Asia
EC 446U Institutional Economics	PS 468U International Politics of East Asia
USP 445U Cities & Third World Development	

Preliminary Conclusions I: Progress through the General Education Curriculum

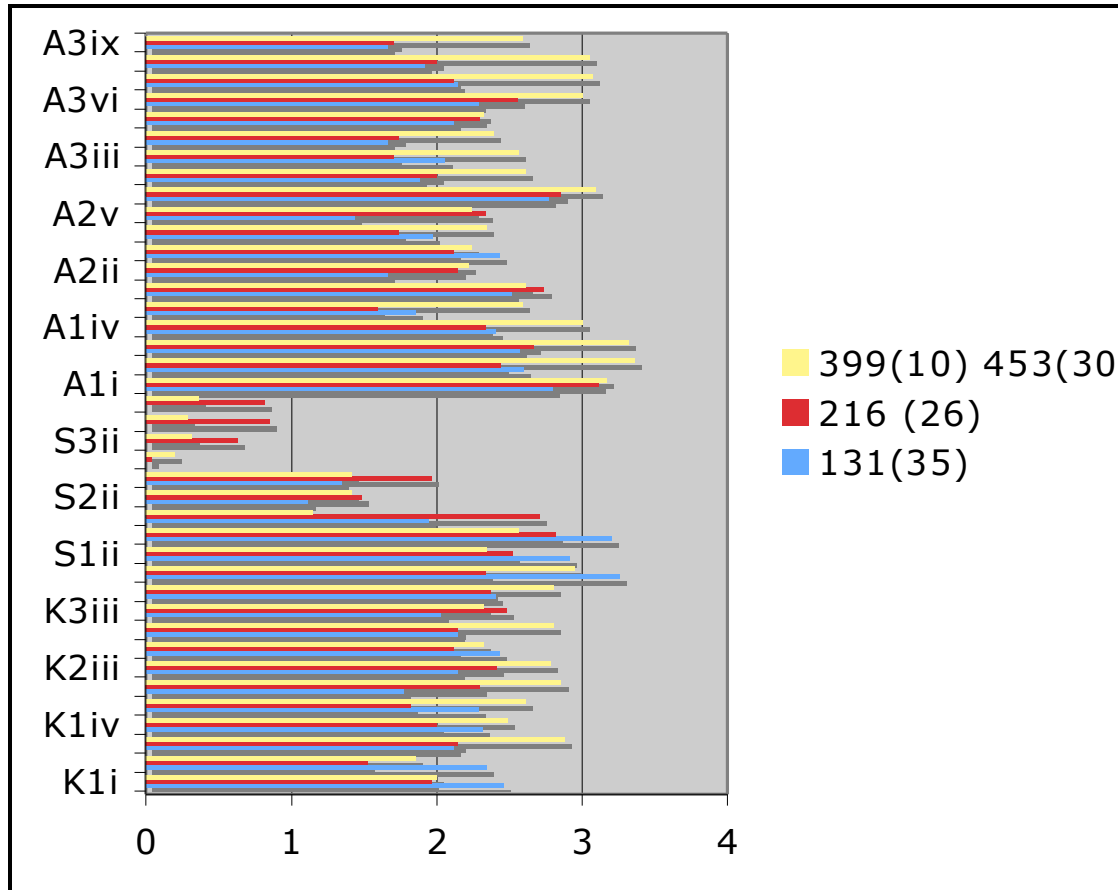


Figure 1: Bar graph depiction of average scores for all rubrics, see previous key for course information (Yellow bars indicate averages for upper division cluster courses; red for SINQ; blue for FRINQ)

Early analysis of the ratings data (without the SPIFs) suggested a **general upward trend** in the attainment of learning goals as students move through the general education program, with the portfolios of students in the upper-division courses scoring higher on most outcomes than those produced by students enrolled at the first-year level. This difference is **most noticeable** with respect to **knowledge** and **attitudinal** outcomes.

Preliminary Conclusions II: Inconsistent trends

However, interestingly, this trend is **least consistent with respect to the skills outcomes**, with some of the SINQ (200 level) student portfolios demonstrating higher skills ratings than those produced by upper-division (300/400 level) students. We hypothesized that one possible explanation for this may be that **heritage language learners and international students**, two groups with high levels of foreign language proficiency who generated more than half of the foreign language artifacts in the student portfolios, **are evenly dispersed throughout the general education program.**

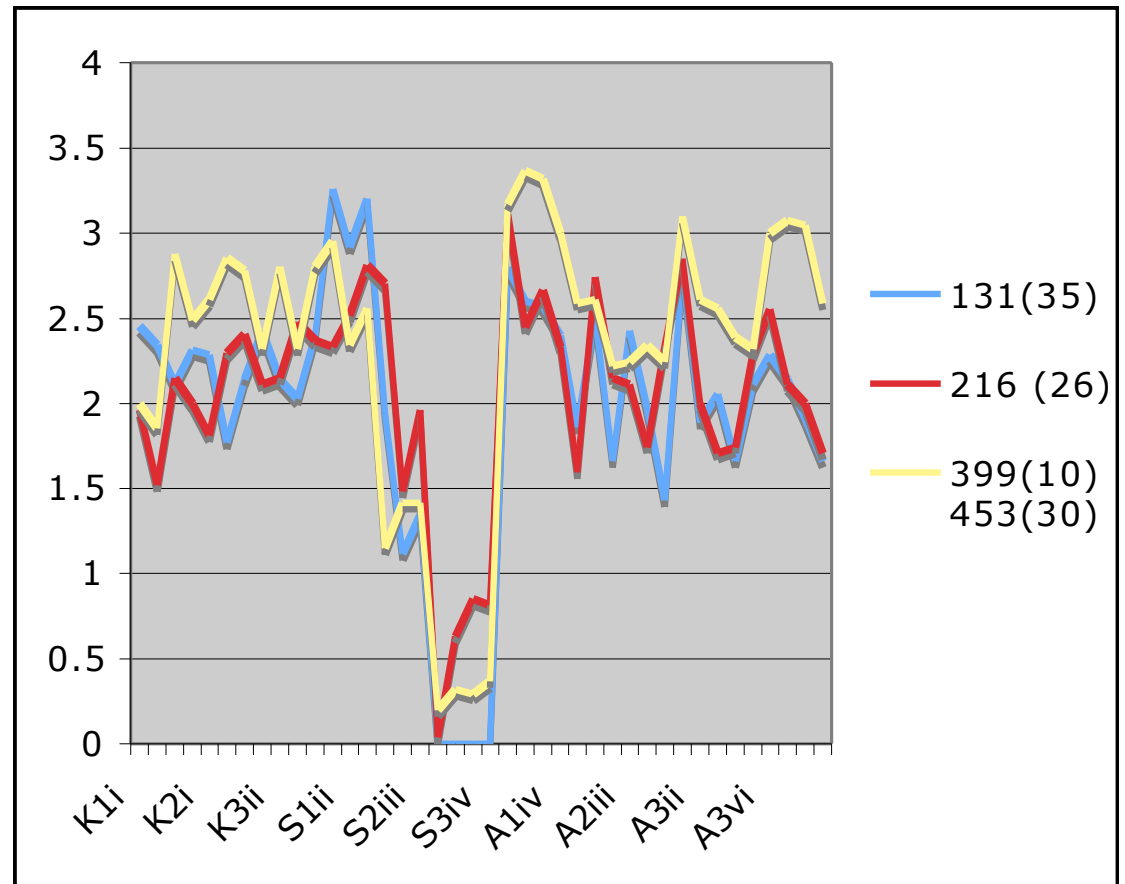
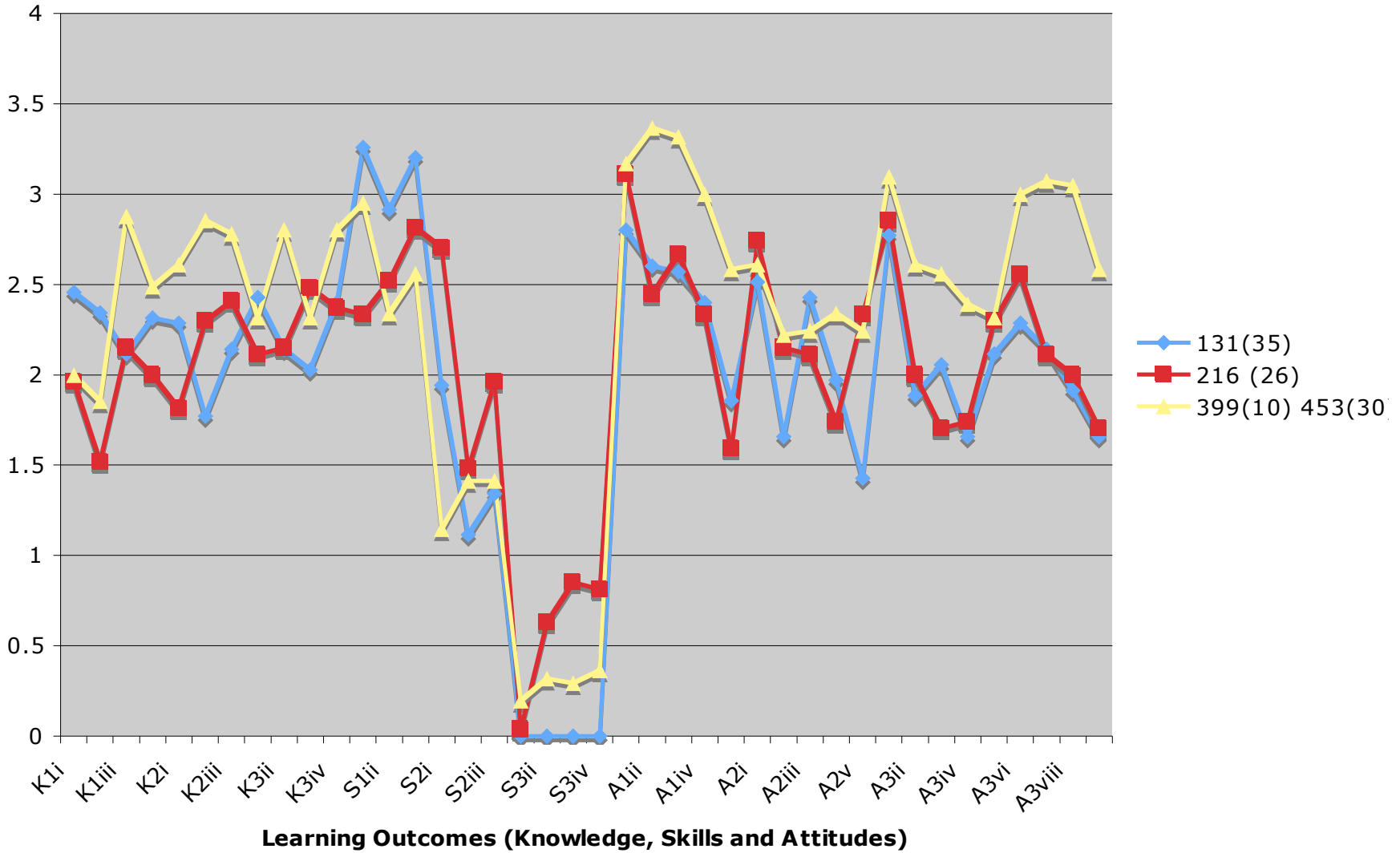
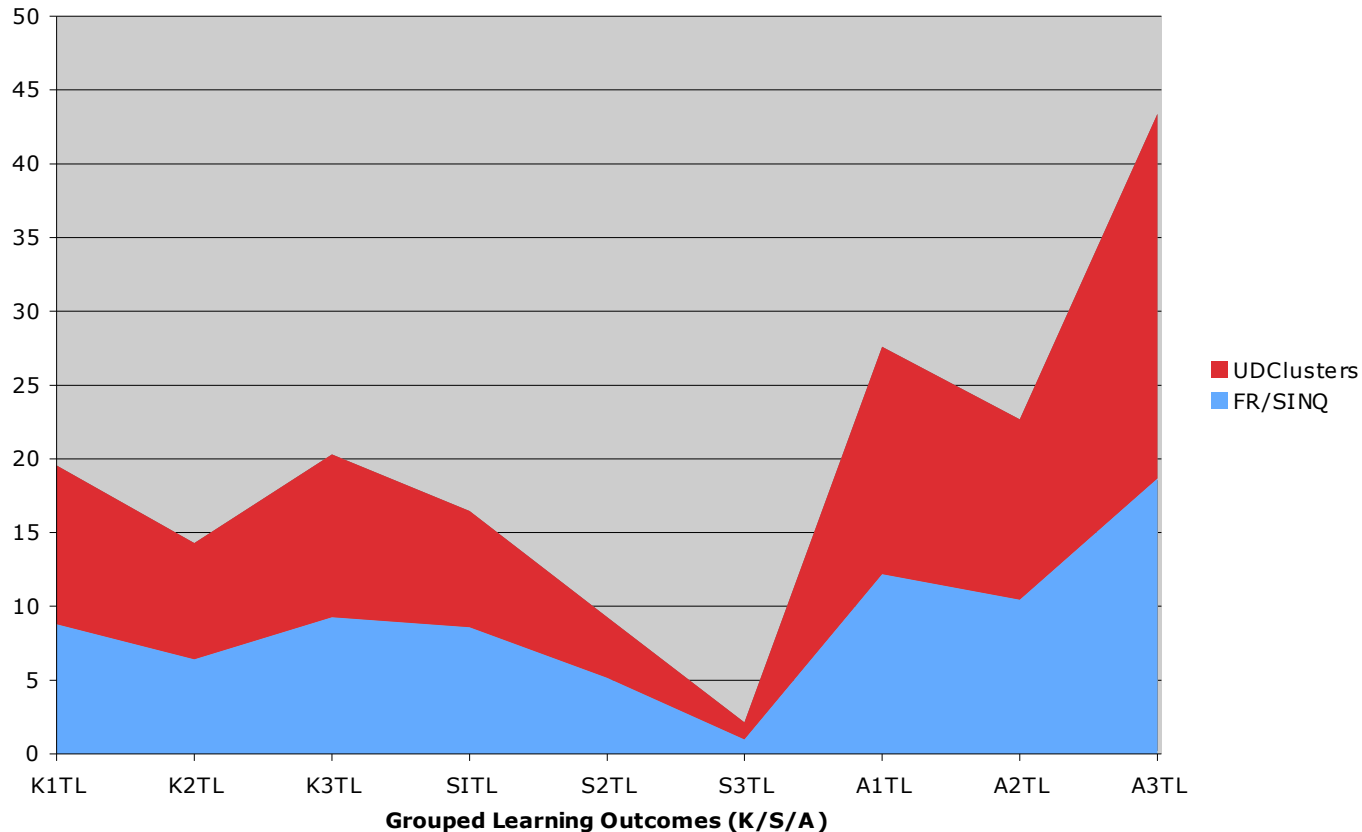


Figure 2: Line graph depiction of average scores for all rubrics (Yellow bars indicate averages for upper division cluster courses; red for SINQ; blue for FRINQ)

Assessed Learning Outcomes in the Core Curriculum



Upper and Lower Division Averages

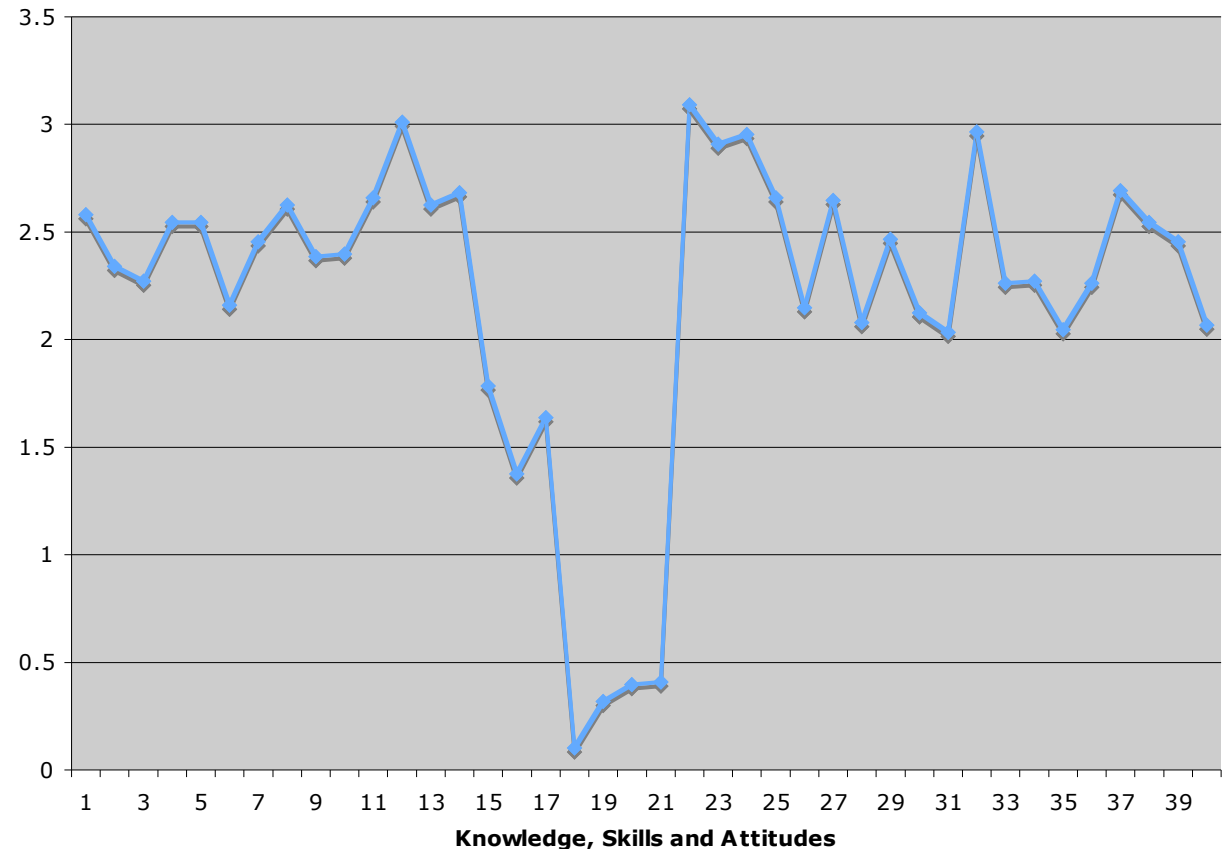


It also appears that the **greatest gains in international learning outcomes occur after the sophomore year**, with the scoring of FRINQ and SINQ portfolios quite close to each other, but both rather different from the upper-division cluster portfolios, which scored notably higher on most outcomes.

Preliminary Conclusions III: Trends across all levels

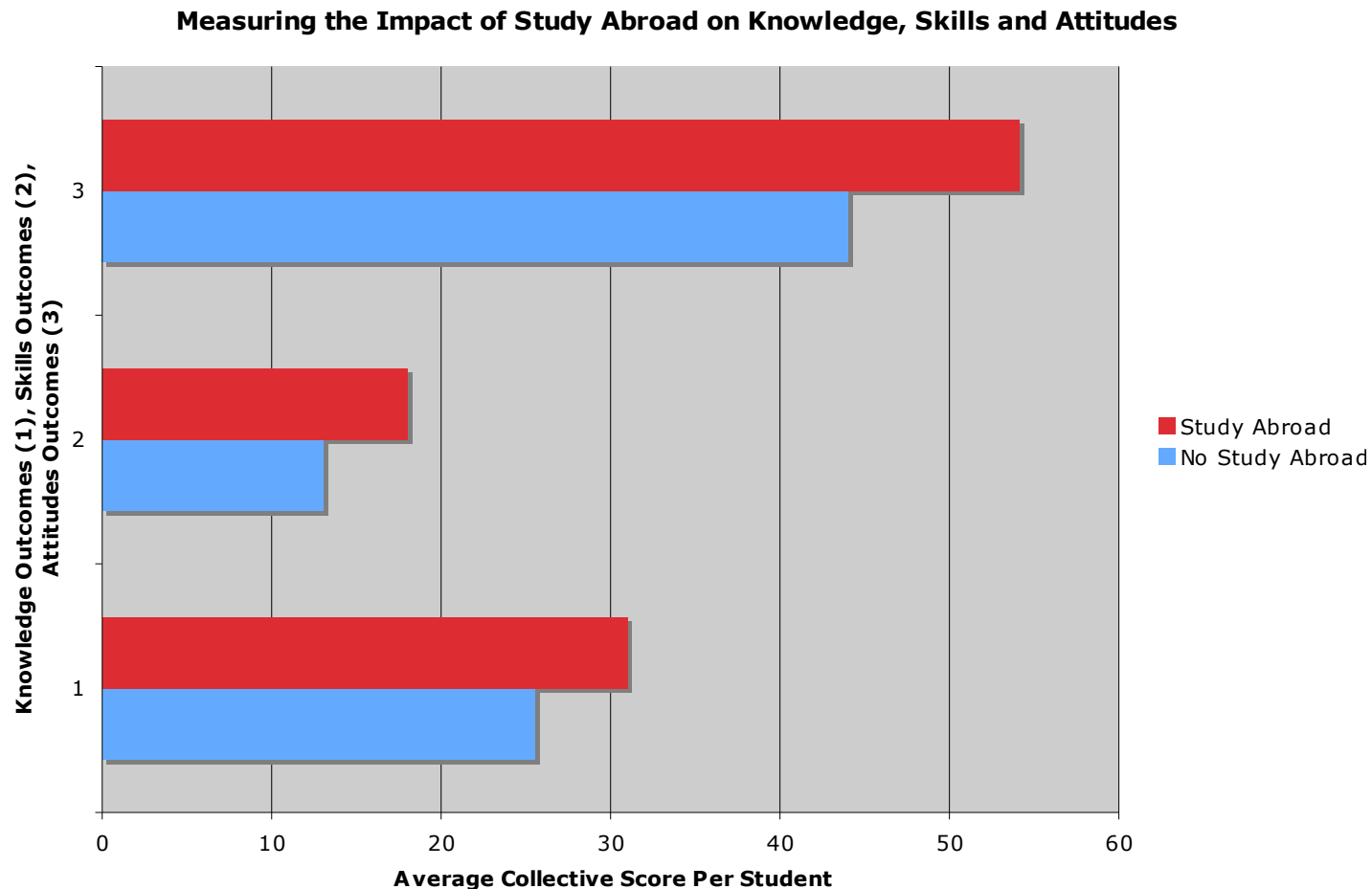
Third, early analysis revealed that **certain learning outcomes were either higher or lower across the board**: student knowledge of global issues, processes, trends and systems; appreciation of philosophical and religious perspectives, and differences in material culture; and high levels of awareness of biases, prejudices and stereotypes received **relatively low** scores. By contrast, student knowledge of other cultures, understanding of the history of one's own culture, and awareness of the similarities and differences between cultures received **high average ratings** across the full range of portfolios we assessed, suggesting possible strengths and weaknesses in our curricular efforts at PSU.

Average Ratings-- All Learning Outcomes



Lessons Learned I: Positive Impact of Study Abroad on all Learning Outcomes

However, with the receipt of the complete data file, we were able to relate these trends to other factors reported in the SPIFs, and a few additional patterns emerged. One fairly obvious and dramatic pattern is the **positive impact study abroad** has on all three types of learning outcomes.



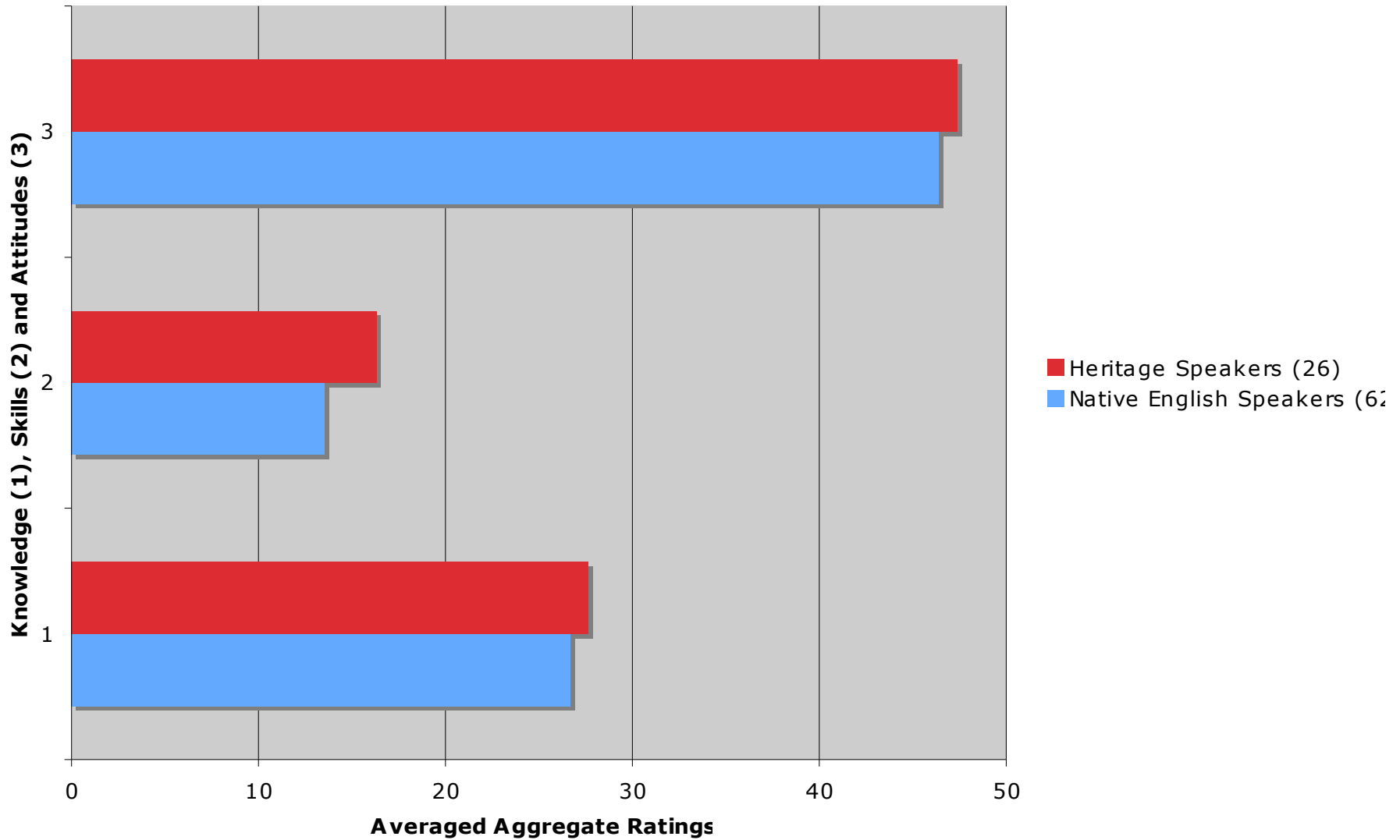
Lessons Learned II: Differences between Bilingual/Heritage and native speakers

As noted earlier, we found that **many of our FRINQ and SINQ portfolios received skills ratings** than did some of those produced by more advanced students in 300 and 400 level courses, which we hypothesized was due to the presence of **bilingual, heritage speakers** of other languages and **international students** in those courses. But when we merged the ratings and SPIF data, we were able to isolate our bilingual, heritage and international students from the general pool, and track how these students performed-- as a group-- across the three types of learning outcomes. These results were not what we expected.

Lessons Learned II: Differences between Bilingual/Heritage and native speakers

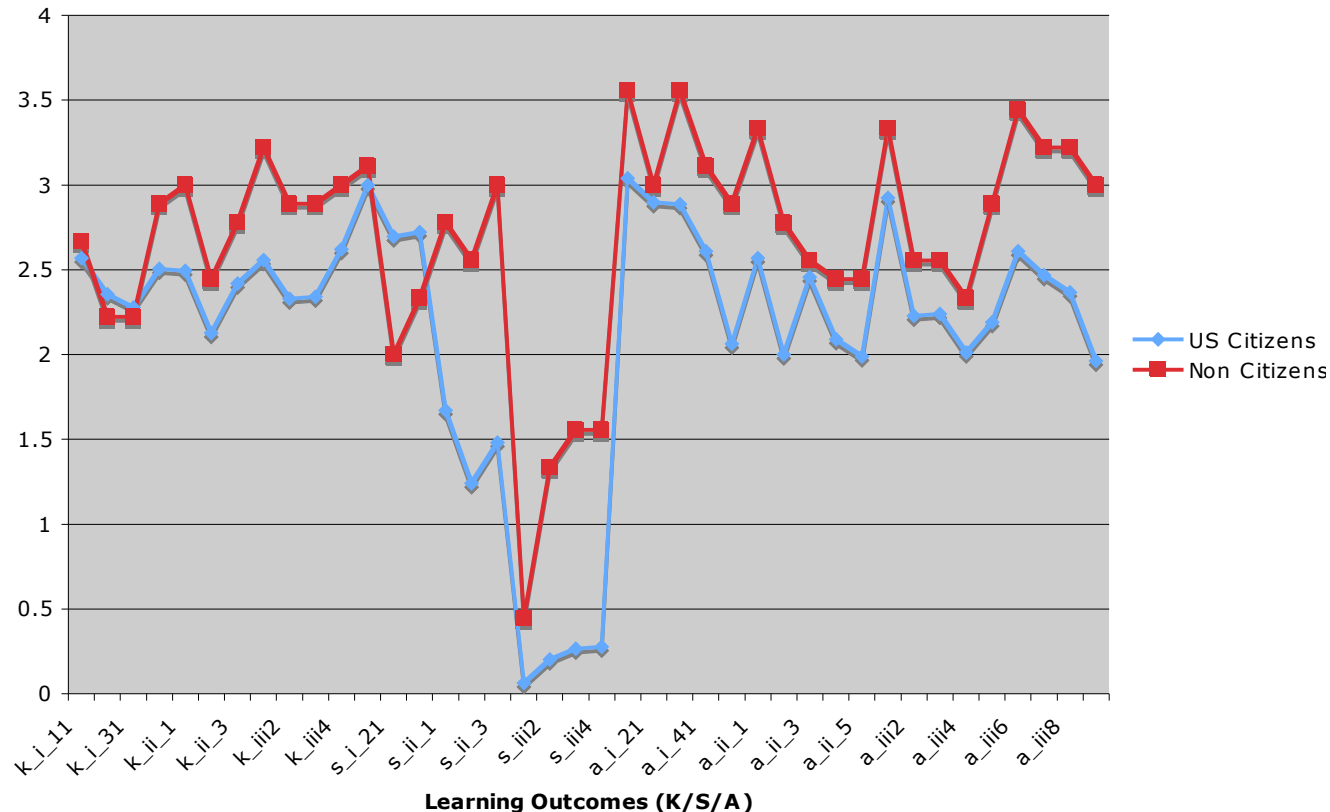
Our **heritage/bilingual** students **outperformed** our monolingual **native English speakers** on the learning outcomes associated with the second section of the **knowledge** rubric (“Demonstrates knowledge of other cultures”), particularly on K2.1 (cultural practices) and K2.3 (cultural beliefs and values), and on the **skills** outcomes pertaining to foreign language ability. But our **monolingual native English speakers** **outperformed** the **heritage/bilingual** group **on all of the Skills 1 outcomes** (“Uses knowledge, diverse cultural frames of reference, and alternate perspectives to think critically and solve problems,”) especially on “recognizing the importance and validity of others’ perspectives,” and “recognizing the cultural underpinnings of evidence, opinion and arguments.” On **attitudinal** outcomes, **monolingual native English speakers** earned substantially **higher** scores on A3.9-- “recognizing own bias”-- and A3.8-- “recognizing the specific ways he or she has been changed by cross-cultural experiences.”

International Learning Outcomes: Native vs. Heritage Speakers



Lessons Learned II: Bilingual/Heritage and native speakers

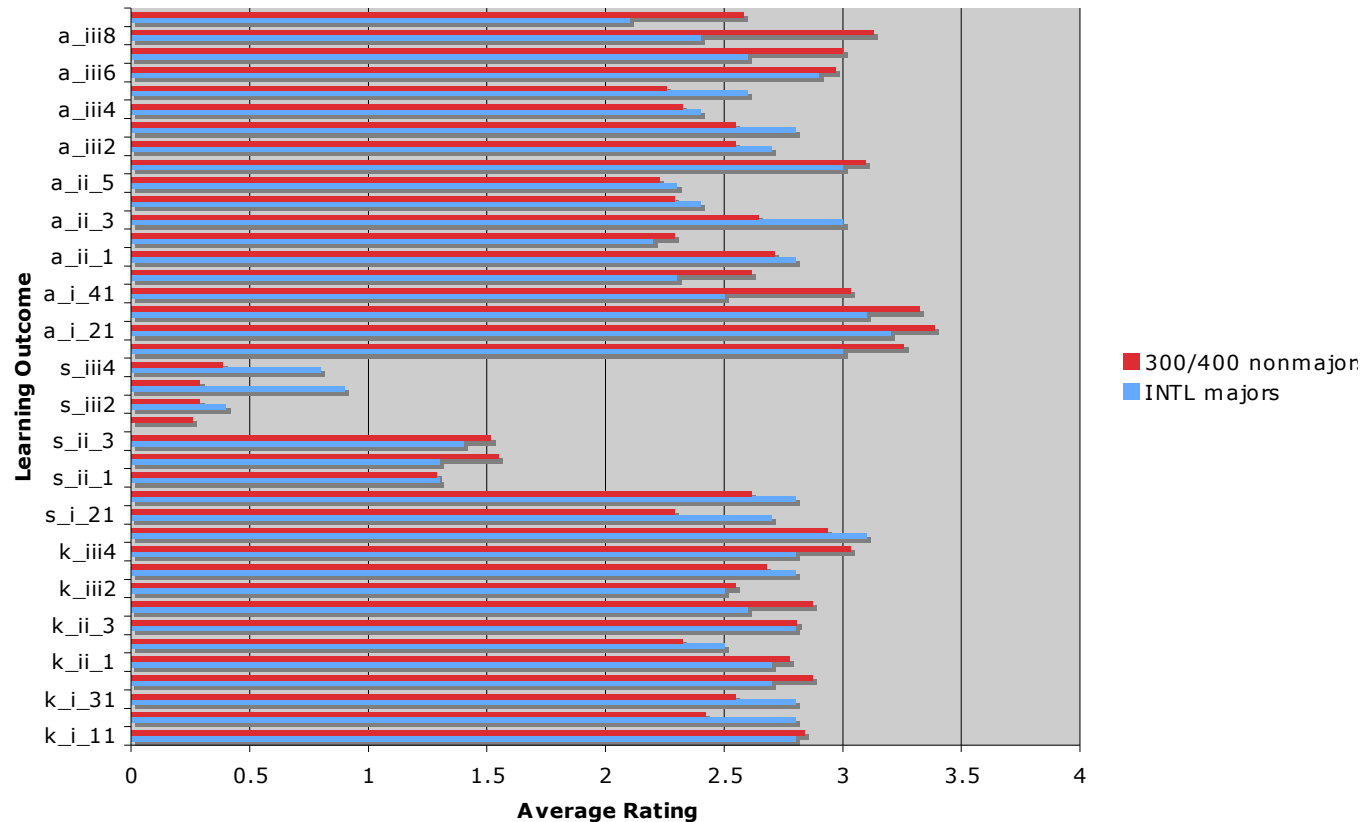
US Citizens v. Non-Citizens-- All Learning Outcomes



Moreover, this pattern in the Skills 1 ratings (“Uses knowledge, diverse cultural frames of reference, and alternate perspectives to think critically and solve problems,”) especially on “recognizing the importance and validity of others’ perspectives,” and “recognizing the cultural underpinnings of evidence, opinion and arguments,” is repeated in the portfolios of our twelve **international students**, who also (as a group) **underperformed our native English speakers on Skills 1, while outperforming them on the Skills 2 and 3 parts of the rubric.**

Lessons Learned III: International Studies Majors

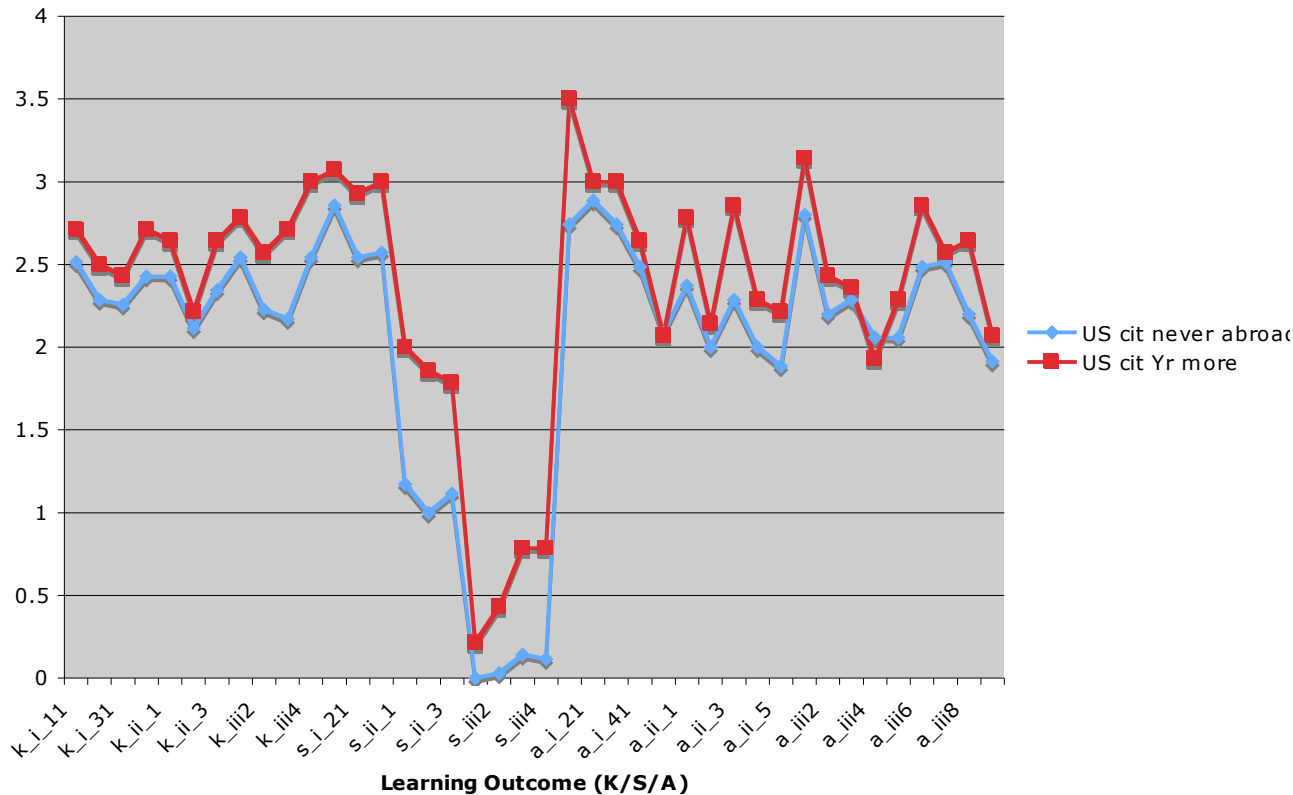
INTL Majors v. Non-Majors



International Studies majors generally **outperformed non-majors** in **knowledge** learning outcomes, with the exception of K1.4 (“Demonstrates basic world geographical knowledge”), K3.1 (“Understands self in cultural context”) and K3.4 (“Understands his/her historical space and place in a global and comparative context”); and **outperformed non-majors** in **skills**. However, surprisingly, **non-majors scored higher** on the **A.1 outcomes** (“Demonstrates a willingness to seek out international and intercultural opportunities”), and **three outcomes from A.3**, the third set, which measures student awareness and acceptance of cultural differences and tolerance for cultural ambiguity.

Lessons Learned IV: Time spent abroad

US Citizens never abroad v. year or more abroad-- all learning outcomes



Perhaps the most intriguing pattern to emerge thus far pertains to the possible impact of the **length of time** spent abroad on learning outcomes. With international students removed from the pool, **students who reported having spent a year or more abroad outperformed those who never left the US** on nearly every learning outcome. However, the difference is most marked with respect to knowledge and skills outcomes, and fluctuates considerably in the attitudes section.

Lessons Learned IV: Time spent abroad

In assessing the impact of **length of time abroad** on attitudinal outcomes, another pattern emerged: **monolingual English students who reported numerous trips abroad of short duration** unconnected with study actually **scored lower than the norm** on most of the **attitudes** outcomes. Of the **lowest quartile** of portfolios in attitudes scores, roughly **half** were **monolingual English speakers who had traveled abroad** to two or more countries on brief trips totaling less than a month; perhaps even more surprising is the fact that **the other half** of this bottom quartile is comprised of **bilingual/heritage language students** whose parents immigrated to the US (but who are themselves US citizens). Virtually all of these students are also **first generation college** attenders, are relatively **low income**, and have spent significant periods of time (often several years) **living abroad** in the countries of their parents' origin. Yet, despite this range of international, multicultural and multilingual experiences, these students' portfolios collectively demonstrated high levels of **intolerance** for culturally diverse perspectives and practices, and **low levels of interest** in cross-cultural topics and experiences.

Lessons Learned IV: Time spent abroad

Of this quartile of (22) students:

- **Seven** (nearly a third) reported that they **spoke only English**, but **six** described themselves as “**minimally fluent**” in a language other than English, **two** as “**somewhat fluent**”, and **three** as “**moderately fluent.**” **Five** reported **speaking a language other than English at home.**
- **Five** had **lived abroad for two or more years**, and **three** had **lived and attended school in another country for more than five years.**
- **Six** reported **frequent short trips abroad** totaling less than two months, and **ten** students (nearly half the sample) had **visited three or more countries** in three months of travel.

While our sample size is too small to offer any definitive statements regarding the impact of either foreign language skills or travel abroad on tolerance for cultural diversity or appreciation of cultural differences, these cases are suggestive of counterintuitive patterns or trends in international learning outcomes, and are worthy of further investigation and consideration.

Lessons Learned IV: Time spent abroad

This finding raises **two possibilities** of potential importance for internationalization efforts at PSU. One is that **frequent tourist trips** abroad may have a **positive** impact in terms of basic **knowledge** outcomes (slight correlation), **but may actually have a negative impact on attitudes**. We hypothesize that **frequent tourist travel** unconnected to structured educational goals **may serve to reinforce preexisting stereotypes** of cultural difference, notions of exoticism, and, perhaps, ethnocentric beliefs and values. If this correlation strengthens with the addition of more cases, it would underscore the importance providing a solid educational structure for short-term study abroad, including the importance of predeparture orientation and postreturn sessions to assist students in processing their experiences. The second conclusion is that **students with ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds may not be predisposed toward greater tolerance for cultural differences and cultural ambiguity** (Attitudes 3). With respect to our goals at PSU, we feel that this data provides some empirical support recognizing **diversity and internationalization as two separate goals across the curriculum**.

Moving Ahead: Applying lessons learned

Our data analysis suggests a few possible roads forward for internationalization efforts on campus:

- **First**, because frequent tourist trips abroad appear to have a positive impact in terms of basic knowledge outcomes (slight correlation), but a negative impact on attitudes, frequent tourist travel unconnected to structured educational goals may serve to reinforce preexisting stereotypes of cultural difference, notions of exoticism, and, perhaps, ethnocentric beliefs and values. This finding underscores the importance providing a solid educational structure for short-term study abroad, including the importance of predeparture orientation and postreturn sessions to assist students in processing their experiences.
- **Second**, because students with ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds may not be predisposed toward greater tolerance for cultural differences and cultural ambiguity, diversity and internationalization should be recognized as two separate educational goals across the curriculum.
- **Third**, the general trend across all learning outcomes as students move through the general education program indicates that progress is already being made on campus. However, because this trend does not hold for the skills outcomes associated with foreign language proficiency, more attention should be paid to integrating foreign language skills across the curriculum as part of an on-going internationalization effort.
- **Finally**, because short-term study, work and service learning abroad experiences serve our older, place-bound student body more effectively than the traditional junior year abroad program model, we hope to encourage more of our faculty-- by providing support (time off, financial resources, opportunities) to faculty in order to develop short-term programs for our students abroad that will have the desired impact on knowledge, skills and attitudes.