

*Closing the Assessment Loop:
Using Outcomes Data to Guide New Majors*

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*What does the curriculum look like
to a freshman?*

*How do we help students make
meaning of the pieces?*

Undergraduate Programs in Political Science

- ✓ Wahlke Report
 - Findings
 - Recommendations
 - Changes since Wahlke

 - ✓ Bobic's *Do You Want Fries with That?*
 - Student and faculty perceptions of the degree
 - Recommendations

 - ✓ Tagg's *The Learning Paradigm College*
 - Creating the “long time horizon”
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[Colleges] “should lay out for entering students a vision of the whole college experience that they can illustrate and support with evidence from their own programs. They should show students what is at the top of the ladder. This vision should be sewn from the fabric of students’ experience at the college, not tackled together from fragments of the whole cloth of wishful thinking.”

- John Tagg, The Learning Paradigm College.

What's at “the top of the ladder”?

- ✓ Assessment
 - ✓ How and with whom results are shared
 - ✓ Sharing with students from the beginning
 - Intentional, explicit & consistent communication
 - Establishing a culture of assessment
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Starting from the top

- ✓ Orientation & first-year courses
 - Models
 - Common content

 - ✓ Introductory courses in political science
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Curriculum at Iowa State

- ✓ Breadth
 - ✓ Methods
 - ✓ Writing
 - ✓ Opportunities for research & internships
 - ✓ Required orientation course
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Assessment at Iowa State

- ✓ Imbedded skills inventory
 - ✓ Writing assessment
 - ✓ Degree program analysis
 - ✓ Alumni surveys
 - ✓ Senior surveys
 - ✓ Senior focus groups
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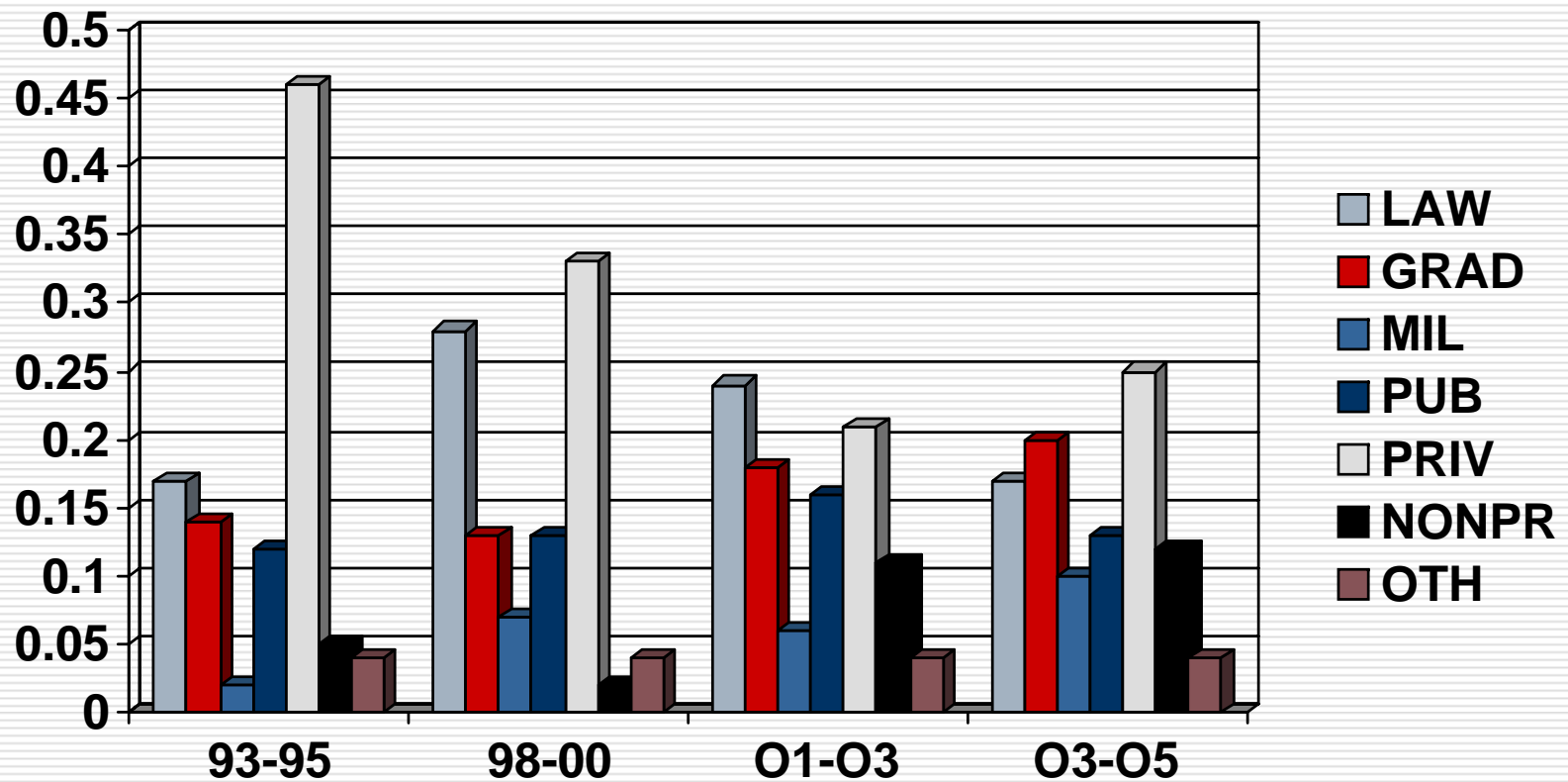
Political Science 101

- ✓ Rationale & history
 - ✓ Objectives
 - Introduction to university, department, and careers
 - group advising
 - ✓ Personnel
 - ✓ Structure
 - 1 credit, half-semester
 - S/F grading
 - Required of all new majors
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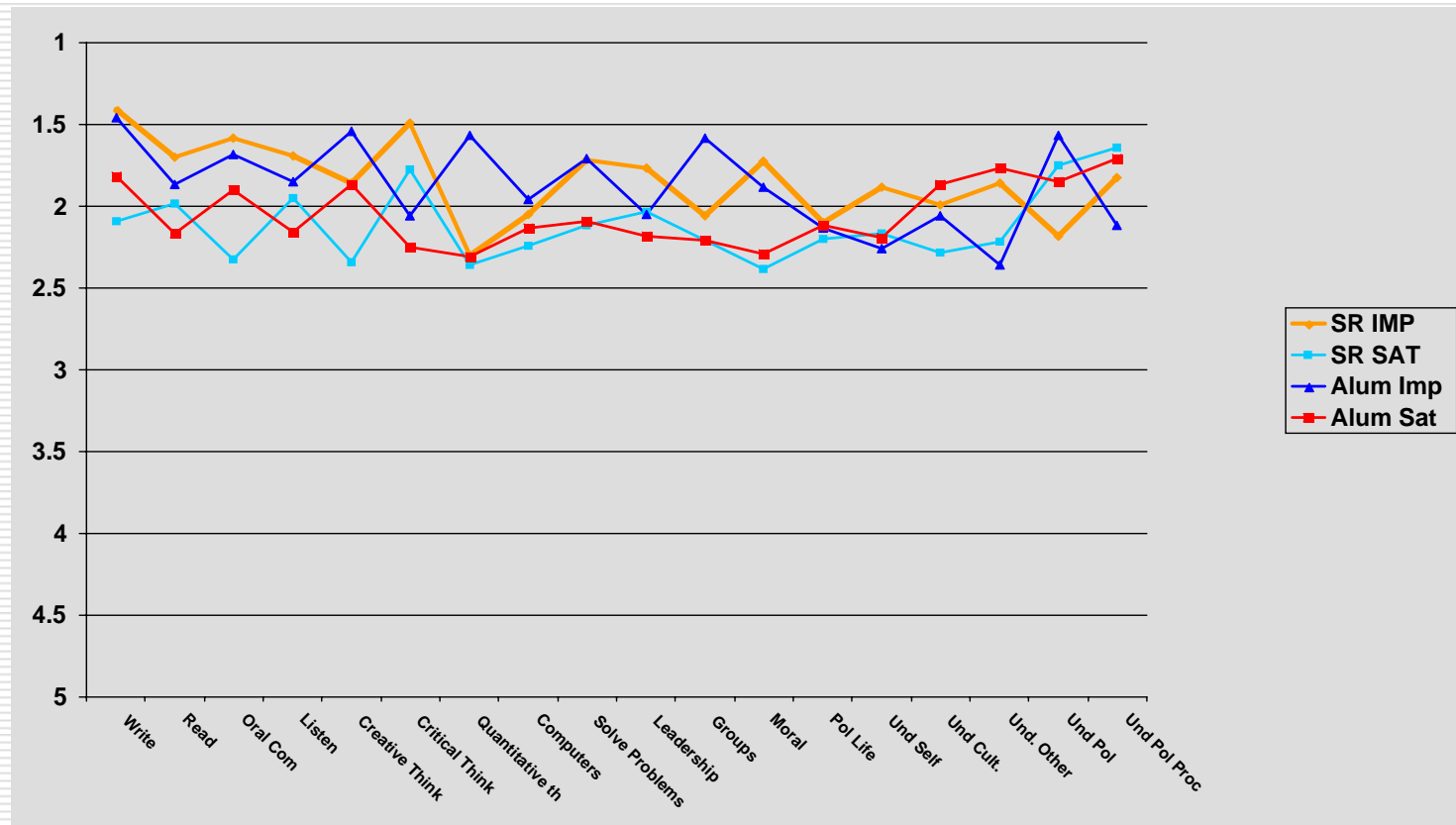
Initial Topics & Assignments

- ✓ Faculty presentations
 - ✓ Career Exploration
 - Legos & the liberal arts
 - APSA video
 - Alumni panel
 - “Value added” education: study abroad & internships
 - “Get A Job” or “More School” research
 - Outcomes discussion and data
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Initial Placement of Graduates



Senior & Alumni Surveys



Later Topics & Assignments

- ✓ The “Projected Resume” & essay
 - ✓ The University
 - Bureaucracy Bingo
 - Student panel
 - ✓ The Curriculum
 - Educational goals statements
 - Degree program planning
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Results

- ✓ Increased consistency of information
 - ✓ Increased knowledge of individual students
 - ✓ Increased development within degree programs
 - ✓ Strengthened alumni network
 - ✓ Contributed to a culture of assessment
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Changes in Degree Program Development

