Assessing the Information Literacy ISLO: Fall 2013

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Information Literacy ISLO

Information Literacy includes the ability to:

- Effectively locate and access information in numerous formats using a variety of appropriate search tools

- Evaluate the relevance, quality, and credibility of a wide variety of information sources using critical thinking and problem solving skills

Skyline Library Information Literacy PSLOs:

1. **Topic choice / focus:** Articulate a focused research question, topic, or information need.
2. **Search tool selection:** Identify a variety of types and formats of information sources and select appropriate search tools to find the information needed.
3. **Search strategy:** Develop and execute an effective research strategy using a wide range of search tools, accurately interpret results, and find authoritative information pertinent to the topic.
4. **Information source evaluation:** Evaluate the relevance, quality, authoritativeness, and creditability of information retrieved.
5. **Citation style:** Access, cite, and use information ethically and legally.

Information Literacy ISLO and PSLOs

Information Literacy includes the ability to:

- Effectively locate and access information in numerous formats using a variety of appropriate search tools

 PSLO #2: Search tool selection: Identify a variety of types and formats of information sources and select appropriate search tools to find the information needed.

 PSLO #3: Search strategy: Develop and execute an effective research strategy using a wide range of search tools, accurately interpret results, and find authoritative information pertinent to the topic.

- Evaluate the relevance, quality, and credibility of a wide variety of information sources using critical thinking and problem solving skills

 PSLO #4: Information source evaluation: Evaluate the relevance, quality, authoritativeness, and creditability of information retrieved.

 ADDITIONAL INFO LIT PROGRAM SLOs:

 PSLO #1: Topic choice / focus: Articulate a focused research question, topic, or information need.
 PSLO #5: Citation style: Access, cite, and use information ethically and legally.

Instructional approach: Infusion into ENGL 100

Beginning fall 2011, information literacy became a graduation requirement for all students seeking an Associate Degree. Information literacy instruction is now incorporated (or "infused") into all sections of ENGL 100 via two workshops given by Skyline librarians. Successful completion of ENGL 100 is the primary way most students satisfy the graduation requirement.

Thirty sections of ENGL 100 were offered in fall 2013:
- 26 in-person sections (21 daytime, 5 evening)
- 3 online sections
- 1 hybrid section

Guiding Questions

- **Are students using authoritative and credible websites in their research?**

- **Do they understand the difference between scholarly and general interest articles and publications, and how to find each online?**

- **Are students going beyond Google and Wikipedia to find information?**

Assessing information literacy skills

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Three assessment methods:

1. Rubric applied to a **"Search and Quick Write" in-class exercise**
(a direct measure of PSLOs 2, 3 and 4)

2. Rubric applied to **ENGL 100 research essays**
(a direct measure of PSLOs 1, 4 and 5)

3. **Student self-reflection survey**
(an indirect measure of PSLOs 2, 3, 4 and 5)

Sample size

Approximately 750 students were enrolled in ENGL 100 in fall 2013 (30 sections x 25). Our sample size goals:

<u>In-class exercises</u>: 20% sample (150)
Actual number of exercises assessed = **114**

<u>Research essays</u>: 10% sample (75)
Actual number of essays assessed = **86**

<u>Self-reflection surveys</u>: 100% sample (750)
Actual number of surveys completed = **441**

"Search & Quick Write" Exercise

Find one article from a scholarly journal and one article from a general interest or professional publication on this topic:
"Does employee use of social networking sites impact worker productivity in a positive or negative way?"

Students name the online search tool they used, describe their search strategy, and explain why they believe the articles they've chosen are relevant.

"Search and Quick Write" Exercise Rubric

The rubric measures four skills:

1) Search tool selection (PSLO 2)

2) Online search technique (PSLO 3)

3) Information source relevance (PSLO 4)

4) Information source quality (PSLO 4)

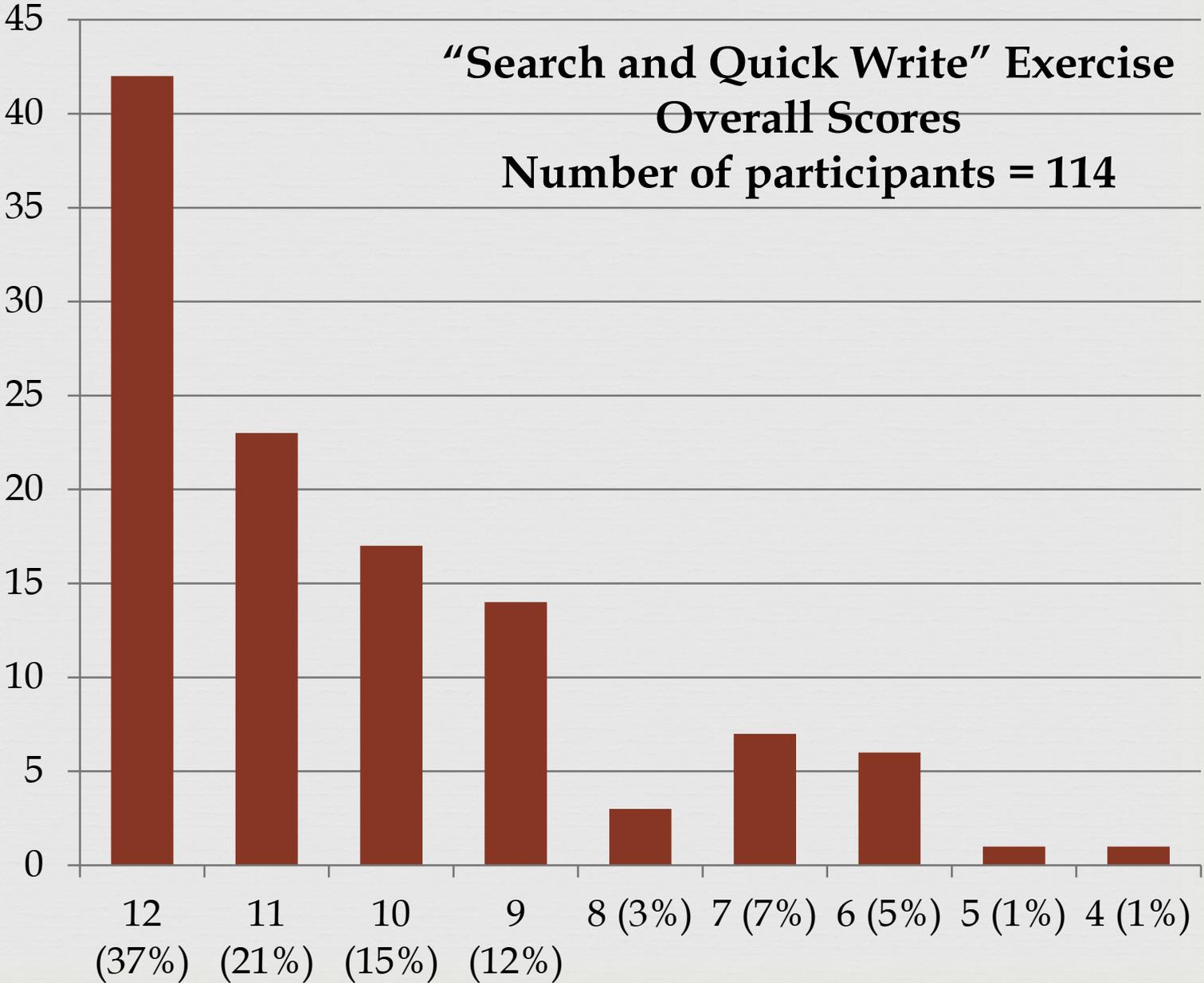The level of mastery of each skill is given a point value:
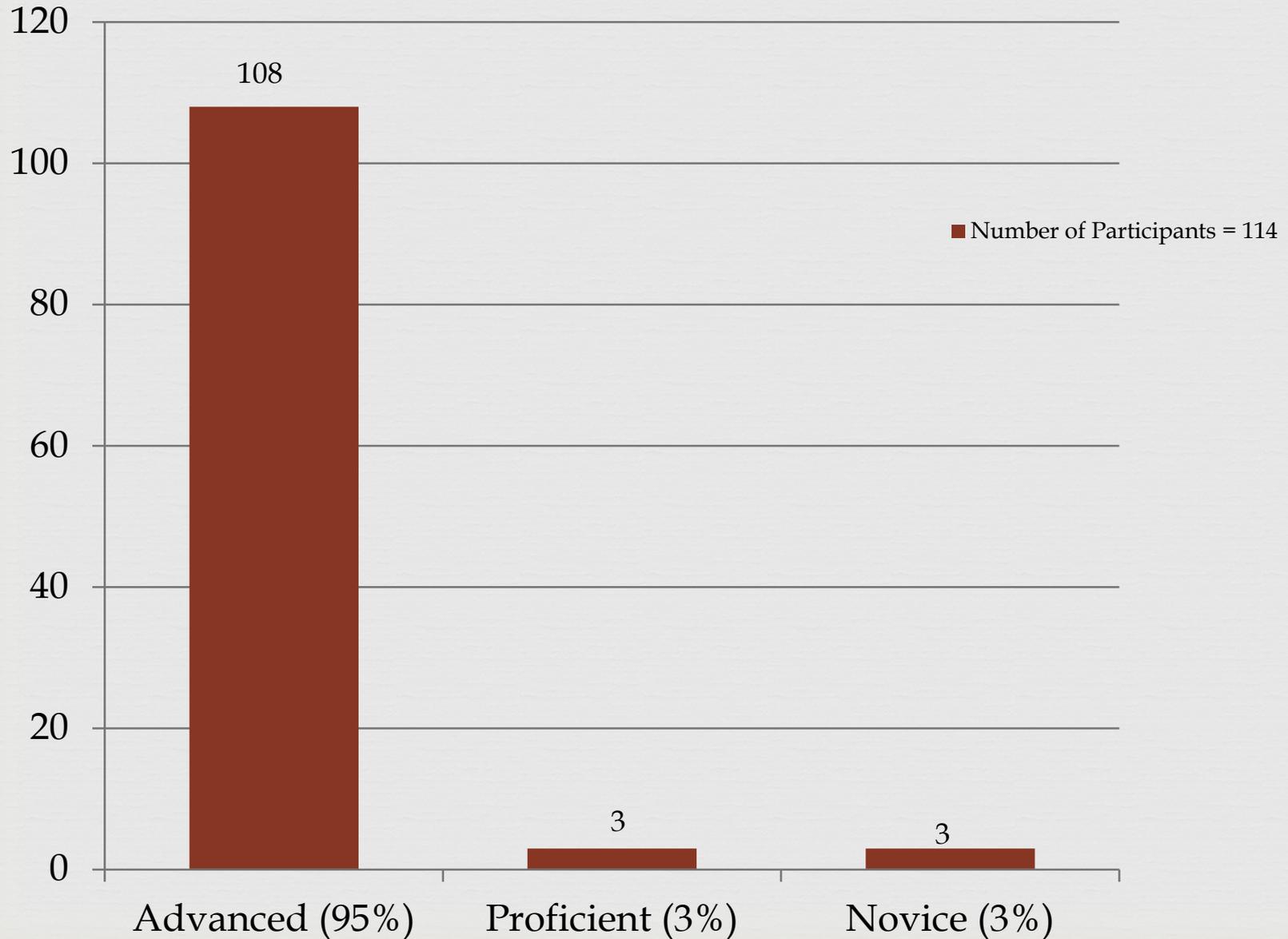
Novice = 1

Proficient = 2

Advanced = 3   **MAXIMUM TOTAL SCORE = 12**
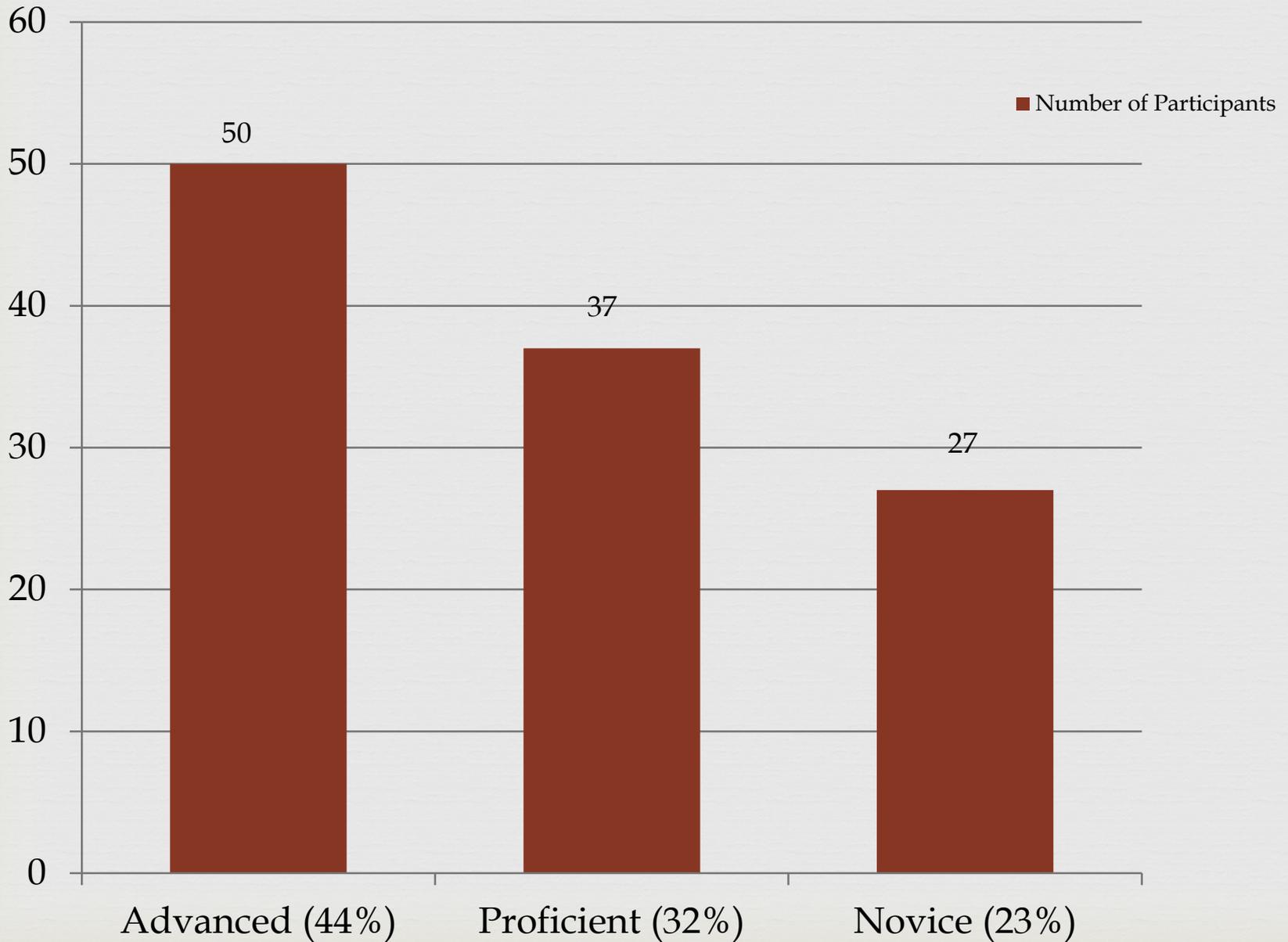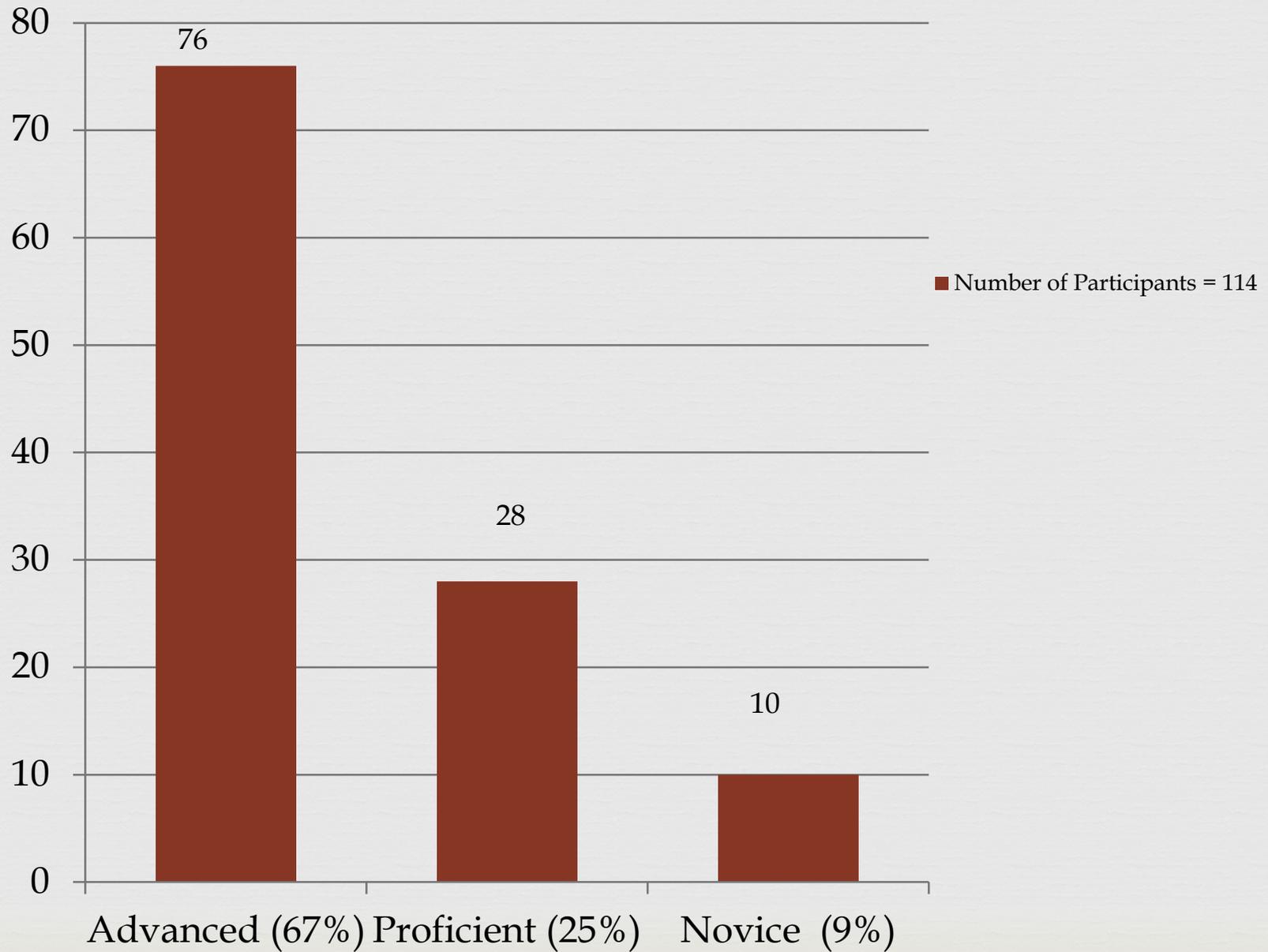
Search Tool Selection (PSLO 2)

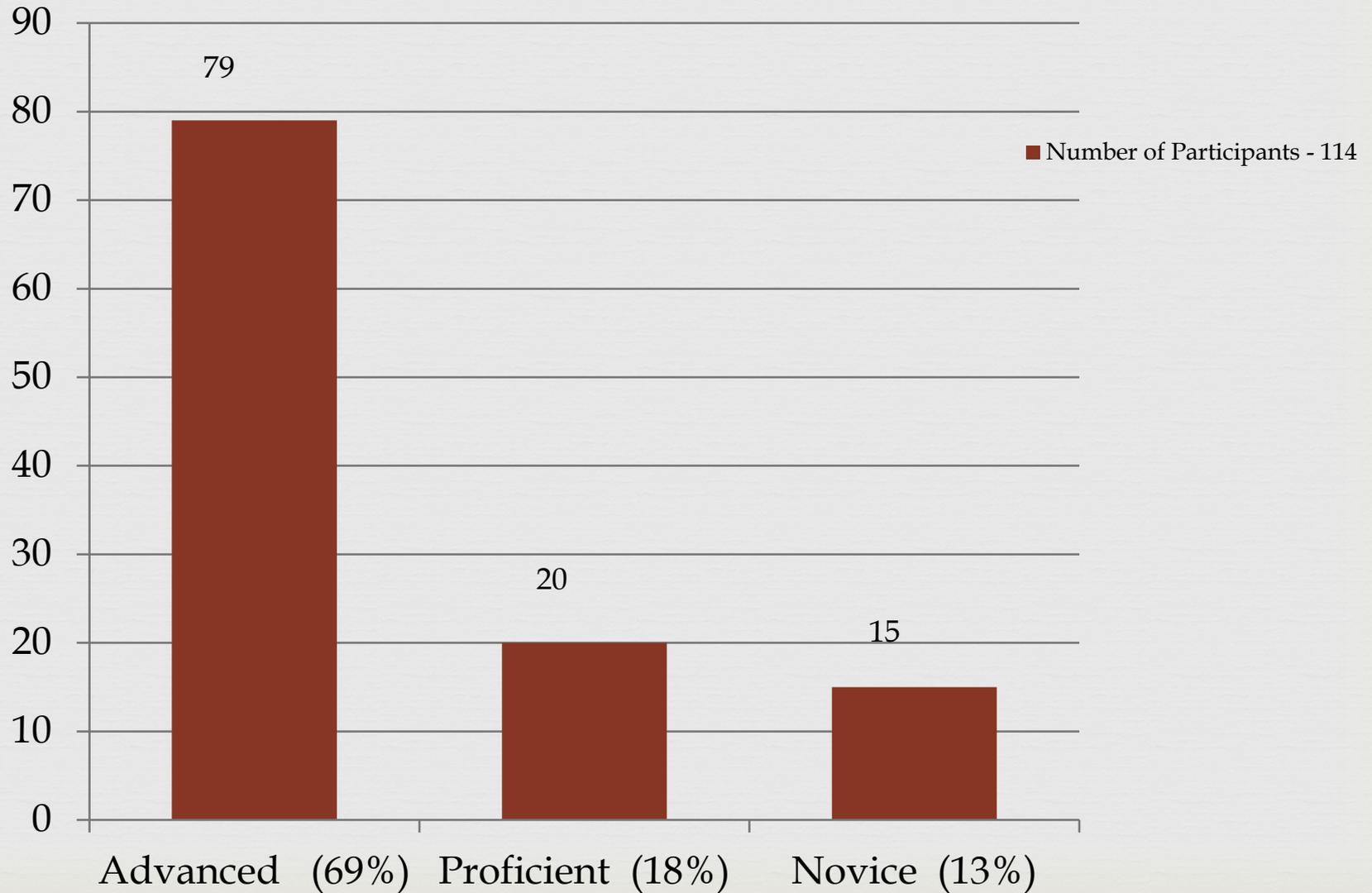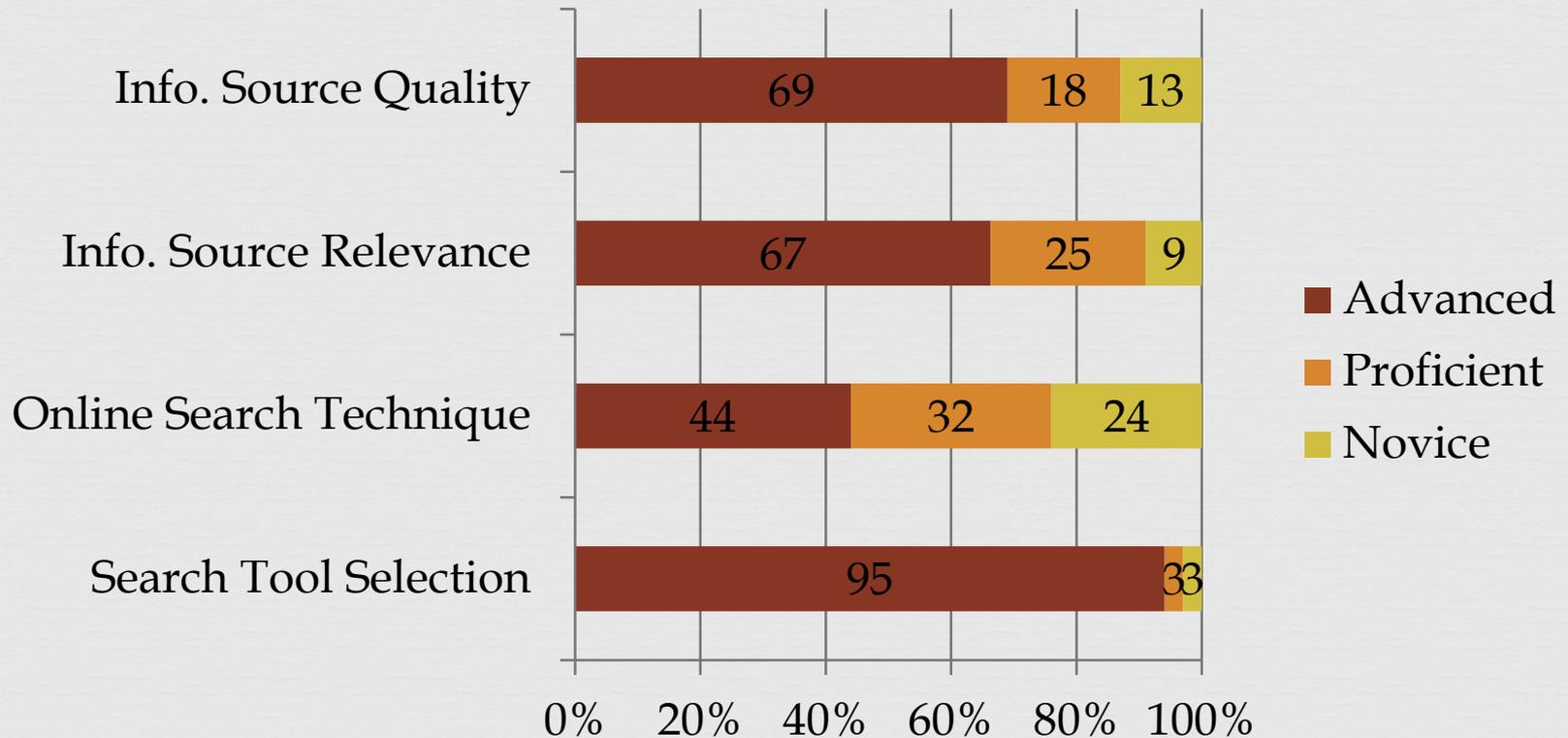Online Search Technique (PSLO 3)

Information Source Relevance (PSLO 4)

Information Source Quality (PSLO 4)
(Recognizing Scholarly & General Interest Periodicals)

"Search and Quick Write" Exercise Summary

Info. Source Quality	69	18	13
Info. Source Relevance	67	25	9
Online Search Technique	44	32	24
Search Tool Selection	95	3	3

Legend:
- Advanced
- Proficient
- Novice

Axis: 0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Did we meet our success criterion?

Our goal: For each skill category, **70%** will score 'proficient' or 'advanced'

Search tool selection: 98%
Online search technique: 76%
Information source relevance: 92%
Information source quality: 87%

Discussion Question: According to these numbers, students' ability to do online research and find quality sources is high. Does that match your experience with your students' research efforts? What do your student do well? With what do they struggle?

Evaluation of Research Essay with Rubric

All 19 faculty who taught ENGL 100 in fall 2013 were asked to submit copies of four randomly chosen, ungraded essays that required students to do outside research. Eighty-eight were submitted, 86 were scored (2 discarded due to missing bibliographies).

Samples of essay titles:

America's Role in the Syrian War

The Impact of Industrial Corn

Yoga Subculture Ethnography

Standardized Testing

The Economic Impact of AIDS on South Africa

The Legacy of Jim Crow

What You are Not: Gangster Rap Unveiled

A Successful Life

Integration of Traditional Medicine in the US Healthcare System

*Crazy Things Seem Normal, Normal Things Seem Crazy: An Analytical
          Analysis of the Duality of Human Nature*

Women's Purpose in Greek Myths

Supply and Demand: The Hydra of the Drug Trade

For the Greater Good

Yemen: Underage Marriage

Japanese Generations

Domestic Violence: A Global Threat to Women

The Red Badge of Courage: Henry's Journey into Heroism

Male Nurses

British Imperialism in India

Fast Food and a Slow Death

Research Essay Rubric

The rubric measures three skills:

1) Topic choice / focus (PSLO 1)
2) Info source relevance, quality, and credibility (PSLO 4)
3) Info source documentation (PSLO 5)

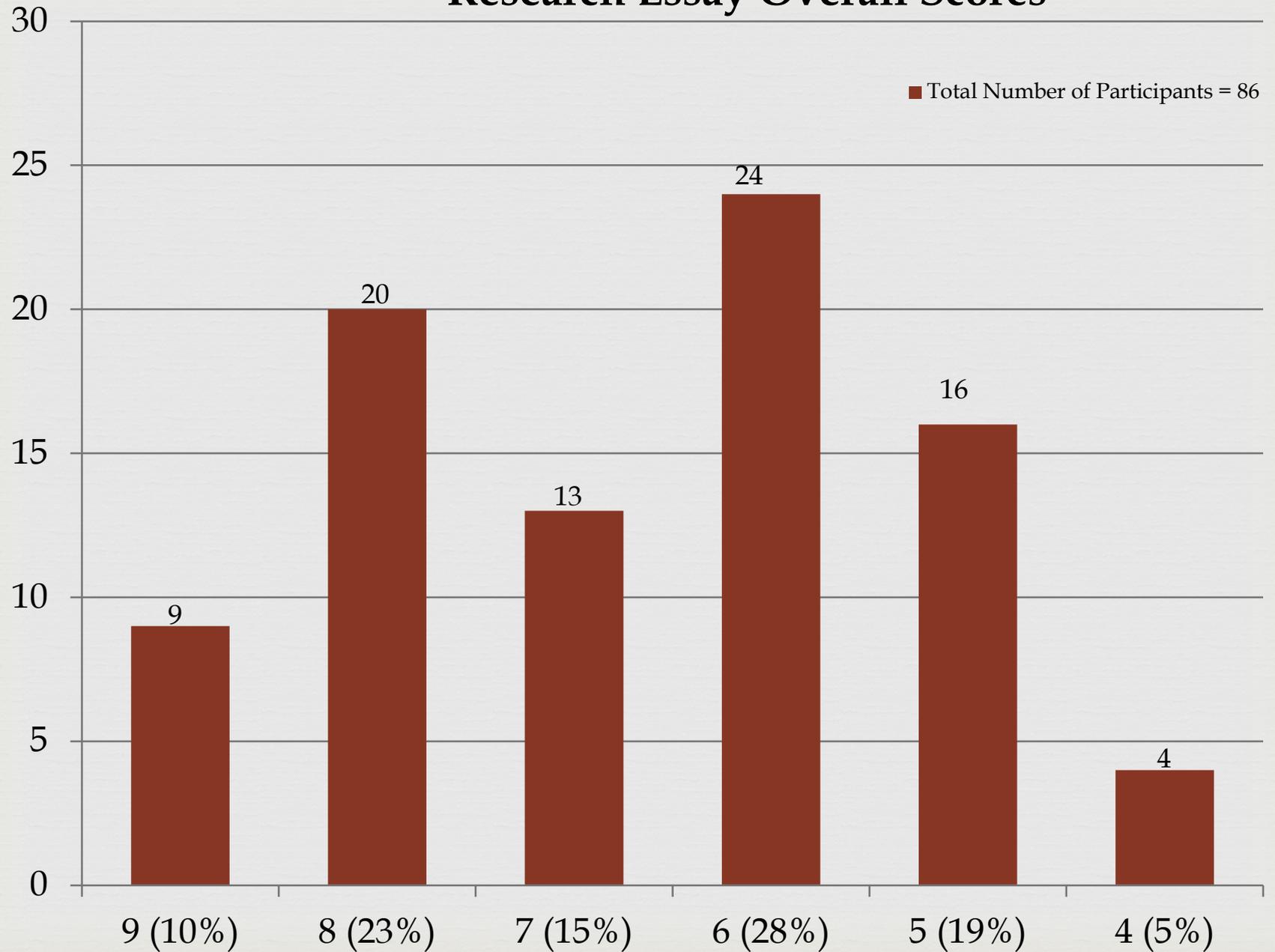The level of mastery of each skill is given a point value:
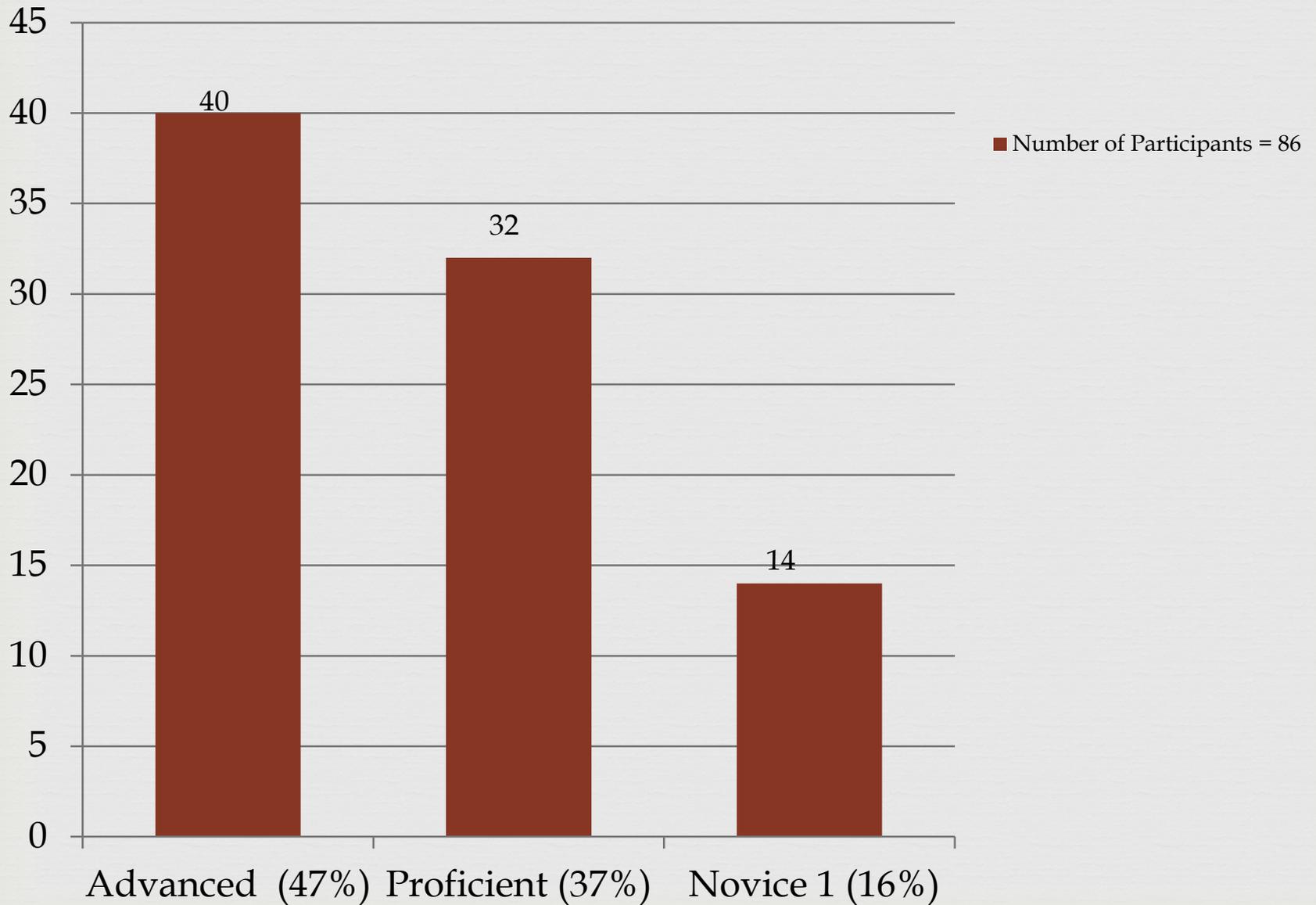
Not attempted = 0
Novice = 1
Proficient = 2
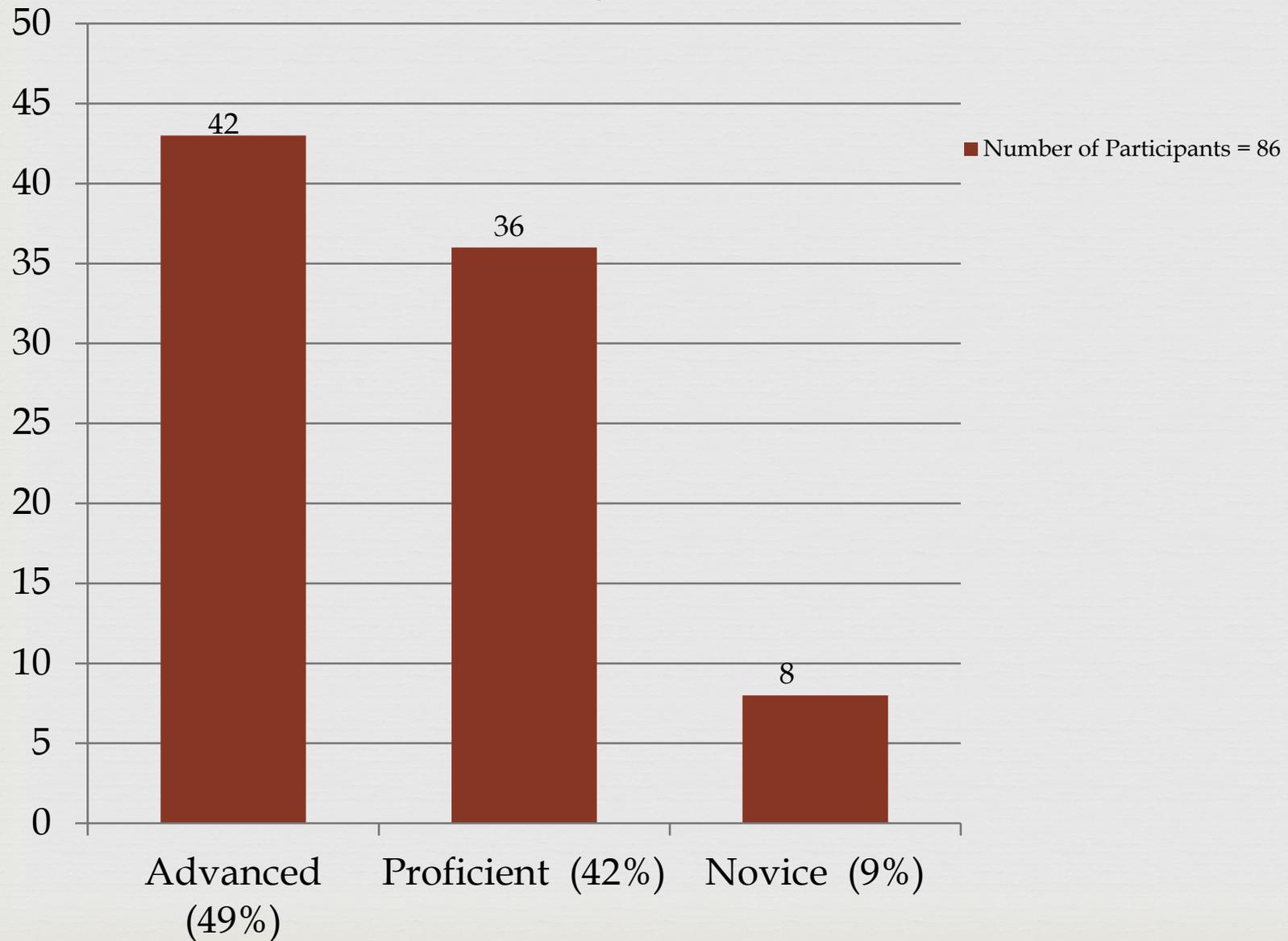Advanced = 3   **MAXIMUM TOTAL SCORE = 9**

Research Essay Overall Scores

Total Number of Participants = 86

Score	Count
9 (10%)	9
8 (23%)	20
7 (15%)	13
6 (28%)	24
5 (19%)	16
4 (5%)	4

Information Source Relevance, Quality & Credibility (PSLO 4)

Legend: Number of Participants = 86

Category	Count
Advanced (49%)	42
Proficient (42%)	36
Novice (9%)	8

Information Source Documentation (PSLO 5)

Number of Participants = 86

Advanced (11%) — 10
Proficient (71%) — 61
Novice (17%) — 15
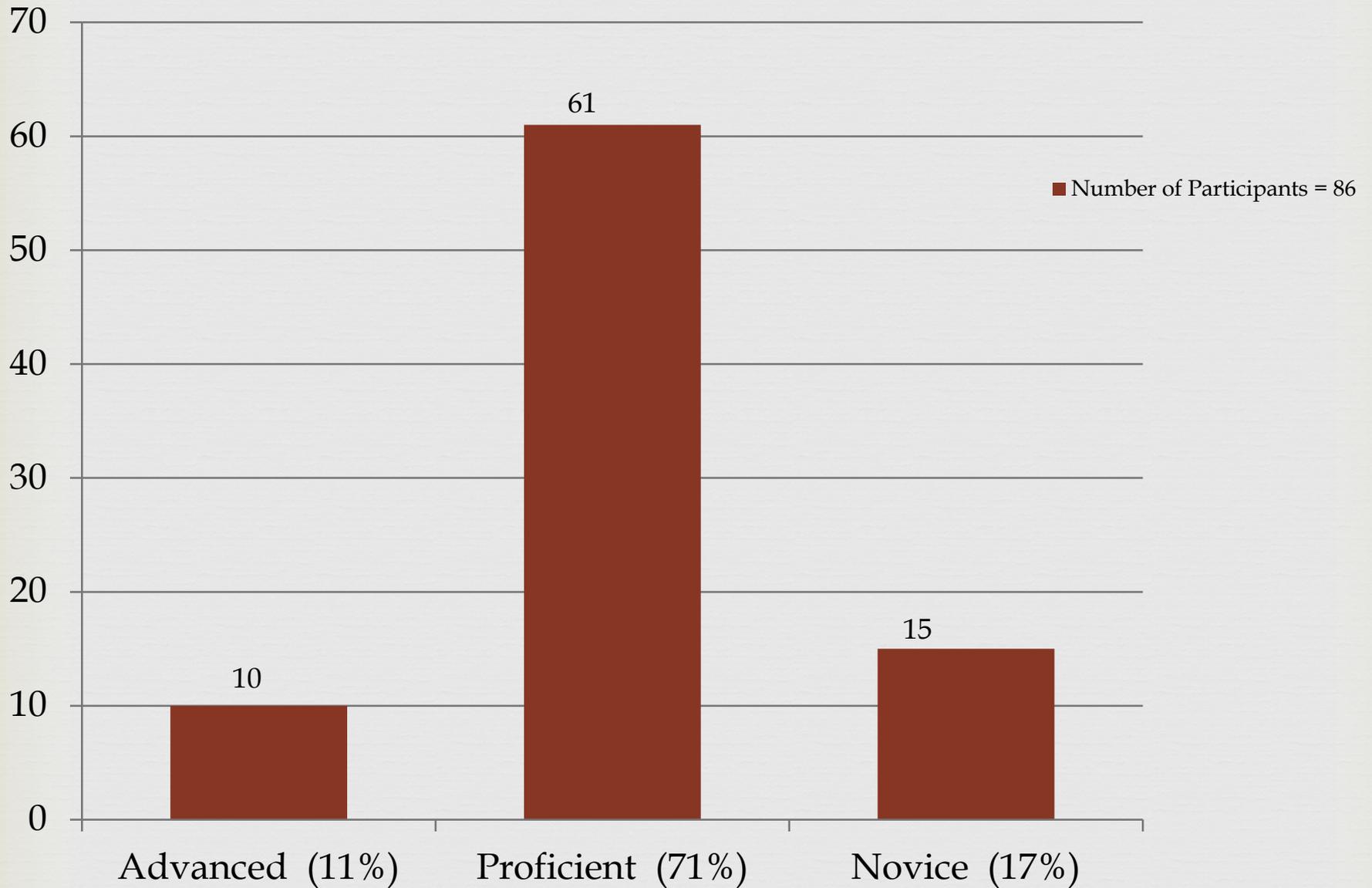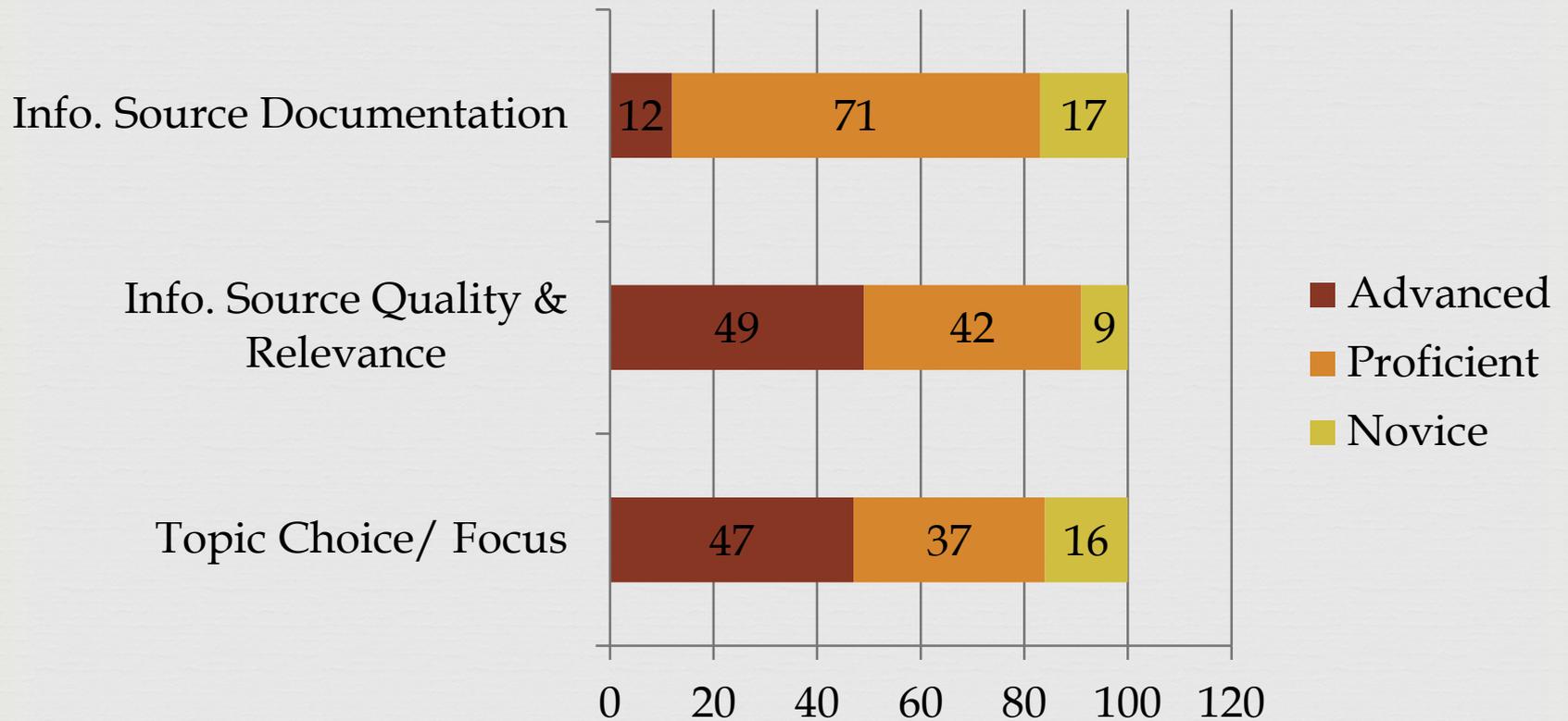
Citation Analysis of the 86 student essays

❧ Total # of sources cited = **610**

❧ Total # of sources taken from Skyline Library subscription databases (primarily EbscoHost, Gale, ProQuest) = **130 (21%)**

❧ Total number of students whose bibliography included at least one source from a subscription database = **40 (46%)**

A tiny sample of the variety of sources students cited <u>outside</u> of library databases:

❧ hundreds of websites

    * simplypsychology.com, etc.
    * *Huffington Post* ; BBC ; MSNBC, etc.
    * NPO's ; policy institutes ; think tanks
    * US Dept of Labor and other government websites

❧ print books and ebooks
❧ blogs ; content farm articles (e.g. *Yahoo Voices*)
❧ personal interviews
❧ *Wikileaks*

Discussion Question

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If you assign some sort of online research requiring outside sources, are you satisfied with the academic quality and diversity of the sources your students are using?

Student Self-reflection Survey

- Given in November – December 2013
- 27 sections participated (20 daytime, 4 evening, 3 online)
- 441 students took the 10 question survey. Each question pertained to one of our PSLOs (excluding topic choice/focus)
- 5 point Likert scale
- Target success rate: 70% will answer "Frequently" or "All the time"
- Not a satisfaction survey. Instead, it asks students to reflect on their information literacy skills. The ultimate purpose of the survey was to find out how the IL workshops may or may not have changed students' research strategy.

Significant Positive Findings

- A majority of students (79%) said they frequently or consistently recognized the difference between popular and scholarly information sources.

- A majority of students (80%) said they frequently or consistently recognized information sources likely to be trustworthy.

- A majority of students (87%) said they frequently or consistently understood how to cite their sources properly and avoid plagiarism.

Significant Troubling Findings

- Only half of students (55%) frequently or consistently took the time to identify an author and assess his/her/their credibility.

- Less than half of students (49%, 46% and 39%) frequently or consistently applied the search strategy techniques taught in workshop #2.

- Only half of students (55%) frequently or consistently searched one or more of the library's article subscription databases

Discussion Question

A majority of students (80%) claim they can recognize sources likely to be trustworthy. But only half (55%) take the time to identify the author(s), which is absolutely fundamental to determining credibility. Why is there this disconnect?

Insights and Action Plans

- Is assessing only English 100 students extensive enough for an institution-wide ISLO?
- How much should we think about implementing information literacy instruction beyond English 100? If so, how can it be infused? Should it be assessed in those contexts?
- Given what you've seen, how is this information pertinent to your discipline/ area? What can you do to reinforce or improve learning?
- What can we do to address students' gaps in learning?

- Question for ENGL 100 faculty – annotated bibliography as part of the research assignment?