What are the Key Observations Regarding These Results?

Key Observations

- Possible interpretations:
  - Every student had a passing average, so we must be doing well -- NOT!!!
  - Assessments are insufficiently rigorous
  - Students knew information, had skills already
- Closer examination – examine according to columns – student learning outcomes
  - Variation in student achievement averages
  - Verbal communication is lowest
  - Research method/computer skills more variable across students
- What is the next logical step?
Examine How Students Are Supposed to Attain Skills

• Implications:
  – What aspects of the curriculum ensure that students have appropriate learning experiences to develop oral communications skills?
  – Do the aspects of the curriculum which develop skills in research methods and computer skills utilize appropriate pedagogy to address student learning style differences?

Using Graphs, Tables and Charts to Communicate Assessment Results
Use of Graphics

• Most popular types: line, bar, and pie charts
  – Design to fit the data
    • Part of Whole or Distribution: Pie Chart
    • Historical Trends: Line or Bar Chart
    • Categorical Groups: Bar Chart
  – Vary enough to make interesting
  – Be consistent enough to facilitate understanding
    • Always ask someone who will tell you the truth to review

Percent of Whole: Pie Chart

- Fac/Dept Chair 31%
- Inst Eff/Res 19%
- VP/Exec 11%
- Inst Eff/Res 19%
- Other 18%
- Dean/Provost 21%
Line Graphs

- In previous line chart, distinct measures were academic success and retention
- Scale was the same (percent of total freshman class)
- Association between the two variable illustrated
- Floating data labels to make easier to interpret
Impact of Increased HSGPA on Freshman Retention

Retention increases as HSGPA increases

Multi-Scale Graphs

• Allows to show relationship and/or suggest causation
• Interpretive statement provided
• Plot information on two different scales
• Relate to the major point you are trying to make
Bar Charts and the Importance of Scaling

Communicating Assessment Results

Six Year Graduation Rates of First-Time Freshman

Year of Entry

Communicating Assessment Results
Six Year Graduation Rates of First-Time Freshman

Year of Entry

Communicating Assessment Results

Other Tips in Using Graphics

- Does the format and presentation of the graph support the conclusion you are trying to make?
- Is the effect (or lack thereof) apparent?
- Scaling of bar/line chart can affect conclusions reached
- Other stuff: reuse of scale and color on subsequent charts for the same variable
- Make the right comparisons
- Use of tabular data often valuable when too much data to depict graphically
Presenting Results Orally
Communicating Assessment Results

DID YOU INTEND THE PRESENTATION TO BE INCOMPREHENSIBLE, OR DO YOU HAVE SOME SORT OF RARE "POWER-POINT" DISABILITY?

ARE THERE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CONTENT?

THERE WAS CONTENT?
Characteristics of Presenter

- Importance of self-awareness of presenter
- Are data consistent or conflicting?
- It is NOT “all about you”
- Remember the characteristics of your audience
Oral Presentation Tips

- Decide the most important aspects to tell
  - Don’t tell all that you know
  - Focus on the relevant
- Be fair and honest – present conflicting and negative results
- Interface with your own personality – don’t try to be someone you are not
- Anticipate likely questions in advance, and prepare your responses
- Gauge the audience’s response – and adapt accordingly

Bibliography

Nichols, James. IEA Associates Website
http://www.iea-nich.com/


Also of interest: *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information* and *Envisioning Information*
Communicating Assessment Results

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