

## What are the Key Observations Regarding These Results?



*Communicating Assessment Results*

1

## 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?



*Communicating Assessment Results*

2

## 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?



*Communicating Assessment Results*

3

## Using Graphs, Tables and Charts to Communicate Assessment Results



*Communicating Assessment Results*

4

## Use of Graphics

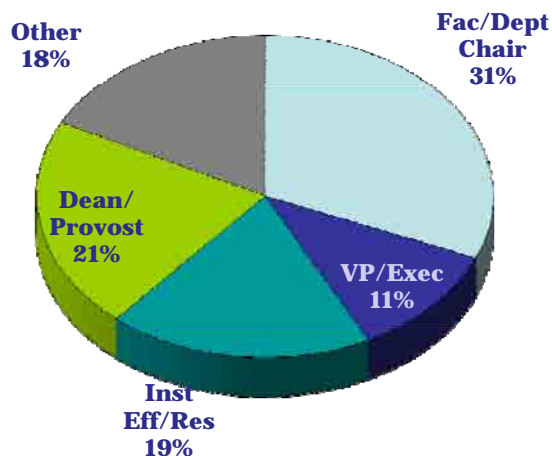
- Most popular types: line, bar, and pie charts
  - Design to fit the data
    - Part of Whole or Distribution: Pie Chart
    - Historical Trends: Line or Bar Chart
    - Categorical Groups: Bar Chart
  - Vary enough to make interesting
  - Be consistent enough to facilitate understanding
    - Always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



*Communicating Assessment Results*

5

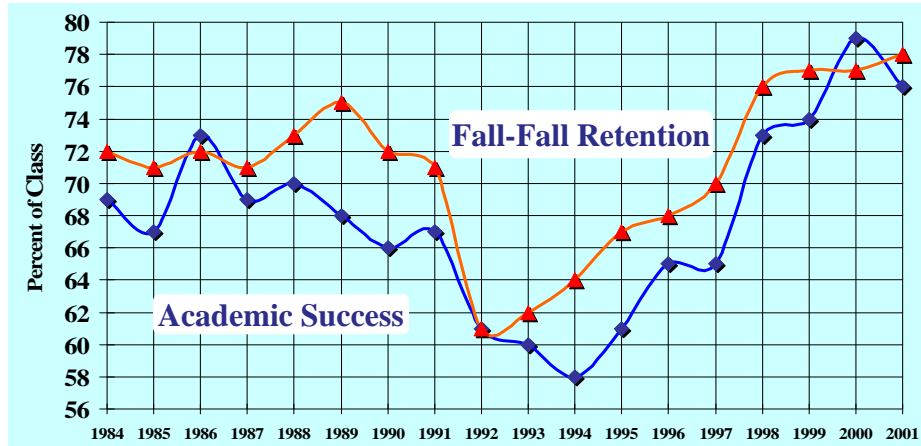
## Percent of Whole: Pie Chart



*Communicating Assessment Results*

6

## Academic Success and Retention First-Time Freshmen



*Communicating Assessment Results*

Preliminary  
7

## Line Graphs

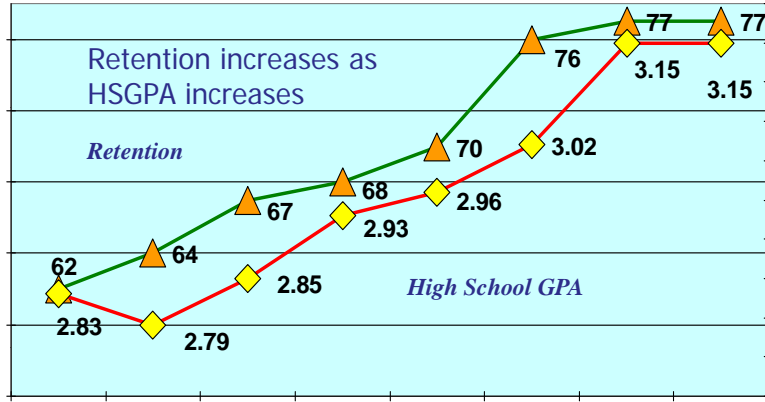
- In previous line chart, distinct measures were academic success and retention
- Scale was the same (percent of total freshman class)
- Association between the two variable illustrated
- Floating data labels to make easier to interpret



*Communicating Assessment Results*

8

## Impact of Increased HSGPA on Freshman Retention



Communicating Assessment Results

9

## 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



Communicating Assessment Results

10

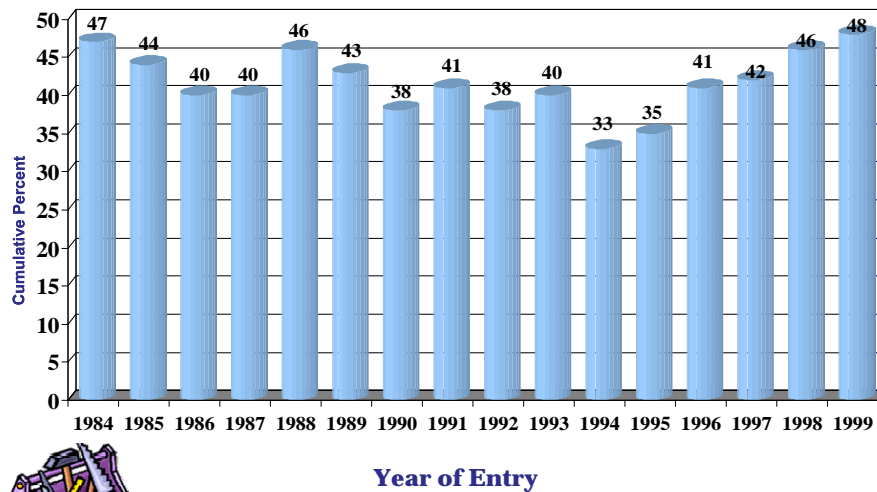
## Bar Charts and the Importance of Scaling



*Communicating Assessment Results*

11

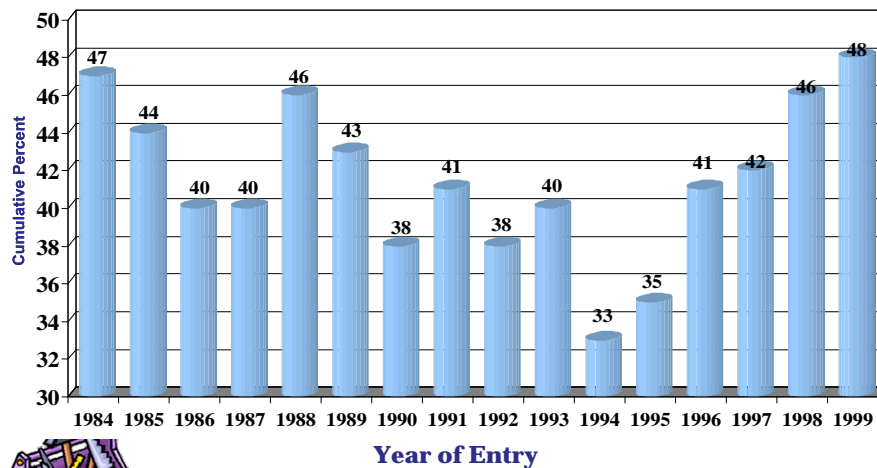
### Six Year Graduation Rates of First-Time Freshman



*Communicating Assessment Results*

12

## Six Year Graduation Rates of First-Time Freshman



*Communicating Assessment Results*

13

## 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



*Communicating Assessment Results*

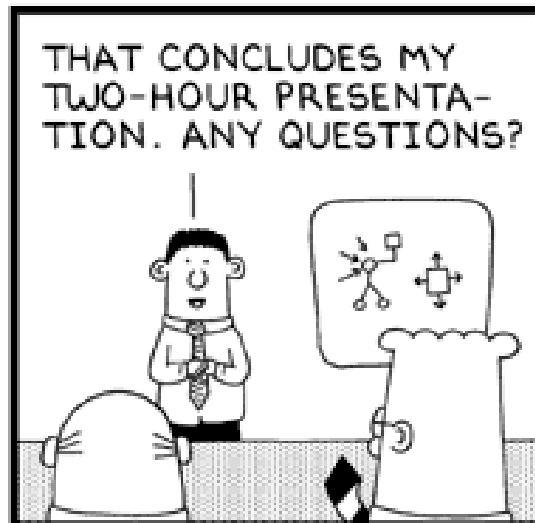
14

## Presenting Results Orally



*Communicating Assessment Results*

15



© 2003 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

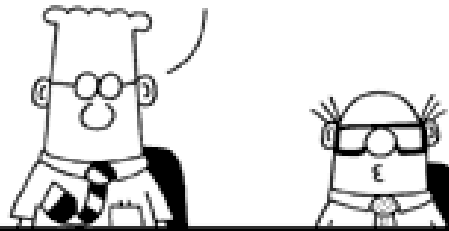


*Communicating Assessment Results*

16



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



8/4/03 © 2003 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.



*Communicating Assessment Results*

17

ARE THERE  
ANY QUESTIONS  
ABOUT THE  
CONTENT?



THERE WAS  
CONTENT?



*Communicating Assessment Results*

18

# DEATH BY POWERPOINT



*Communicating Assessment Results*

19

## 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



*Communicating Assessment Results*

20

## 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



Communicating Assessment Results

21

## Bibliography

Nichols, James. IEA Associates Website

<http://www.iea-nich.com/>

Tufte, Edward R. *Visual Explanations: Images and Quantities, Evidence and Narrative*. Cheshire, CN: Graphics Press, 1997.

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



Communicating Assessment Results

22

# *Communicating Assessment Results*

*Martha Smith Sharpe  
Old Dominion University  
msharp@odu.edu*

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools  
The Commission on Colleges  
2005 Annual Meeting  
December 3, 2005



*Communicating Assessment Results*

23