



## Academic Learning and Language (ALL)

August 2010

# Report on Introductory Academic Program (IAP): Semester 2, 2010.

## **Course Report:** **Introductory Academic Program (IAP) Semester 2, 2010**

Commencement: 15<sup>th</sup> June 2010  
Completion: 16<sup>th</sup> July 2010  
Times: 9:00am – 5:00pm weekdays (See Appendix A)  
Student Numbers: 21 (18 University of Adelaide / 3 UNISA)  
Lecturers: Richard Warner (coordinator), Chad Habel, Julia Miller,  
David Butler (Maths Learning Service)  
Maureen Goldfinch, Tahereh Pourshafie  
Location: CLPD, Seminar Room 2

### **Program Details**

The IAP is a five week long pre-semester intensive academic acculturation program for AusAID sponsored international postgraduate students. It is a task-based program which involves students in planning, implementing and participating in a mini-conference (forum), the theme of which is decided upon by the students. The students are given a single academic article by their subject supervisor or course coordinator, which forms the basis for a three article critical review. Using this assigned article they formulate and refine their own question, research the topic area, create a concept map, write a critical review and present their review findings, using appropriate technology, to the forum audience including staff from their discipline area and senior staff of the university. Participants are also required to work in a range of forum organising committees and review each other's papers and presentations using criteria developed during the program and to produce a DVD of the forum proceedings. The processes and experiences involved in organising, writing for, participating in and reflecting on the conference incorporates an awareness of many aspects of intercultural academic issues.

The development of the skills required for all the forum-related activities forms the basis of the five-week IAP curriculum. While there are a range of skill components across the whole program, each week has a particular focus. Week 1 is primarily concerned with general orientation and adjustment, Week 2 with reading for postgraduate study, Weeks 3 and 4 with writing, speaking and presenting in academic settings (culminating in the forum) and Week 5 with reviewing, refining, and evaluating the products and the individual's development.

Students complete an initial diagnostic task which allows their level of development to be mapped. The initial assessment also identifies requirements in relation to IT and maths/stats knowledge and skills, and appropriate components are provided in the IAP program. Students complete regular program reviews, which identify stated ongoing needs and allow students to comment on the program. Needs in relation to English language development are identified through the various program tasks and adjunct support provided within the core program as required. At the end of the program, ongoing needs are also identified and appropriate activities recommended to help students satisfactorily adapt to their new academic environment.

### **IAP –Semester 2 2010**

#### **Student Cohort**

There were 21 students—18 coursework students and 3 research students—from a variety of countries including Indonesia, Vietnam, Nigeria, the Philippines and China. However, the source country with the largest number of students was Iraq with 9 students. Following an initiative begun in Semester 2, 2009 there were 3 students from the University of South Australia participating in the IAP.

## Reflections on the IAP

This was the first IAP in which there were a large number of students from one country other than Indonesia. The student mix seemed to work very well though and from the beginning of the program the students worked in a variety of different groupings, some lecturer determined, some student determined. The UNISA students were 'seamlessly' incorporated into the group and contributed significantly to the program, one UNISA student being the Master of Ceremonies at the IAP forum. The arrangement with UNISA seems to be working well, as the email comment (given after the forum) from their AusAID Liason Officer suggests:

I enjoyed the critiques immensely. I am so glad that I am privileged enough to be in a position to attend...Thank you for taking them in and setting the standards.

During the IAP the students were given increasing levels of autonomy as the program progressed and they coped with this role shift very well as evidenced by the forum and associated activities. All the students managed to submit all of their assigned tasks using MyUni (University of Adelaide intranet). The technical aspects of assignment submission did not appear to be a problem once a few enrolment related issues had been addressed. In this particular IAP, concept mapping using Webspiration software was also introduced, which was another technological and organisational dimension with which the students coped well. A small number of students requested extensions on their assignment submissions and each request was judged on its merits.

One ongoing problem in the delivery of the IAP is access to computer suites during class time for delivery of certain elements of the program. As was the case in the previous IAP, we were unable to book any computer suite in the University, which meant that a vital part of the feedback process on their critical review drafts had to be scrapped, namely synchronous written and oral feedback using the Wimba Voice tool. This limited access to technology in class is an issue which needs to be addressed with some urgency.

One other component of the IAP, the film *Japanese Story* is another area which needs to be re-examined. This film, with its focus on cultural differences, is shown in the program and forms the basis for comments on a discussion board in MyUni. Student response was minimal on the discussion board and face to face informal feedback from some students suggested that some of them were uncomfortable with some issues addressed in the film. Such responses suggest a need to look at other media to create engagement with the MyUni cultural issues discussion board.

One issue regarding substantial student illness arose which suggests the need to re-examine some of the structural processes around the course. A student experienced substantial health issues supported by medical documentation but felt pressured to attend class, since there is currently no provision for medical leave in the AusAID scholarship system. Since CLPD lecturers have a Health, Safety and Wellbeing duty of care it was necessary to address the situation properly to ensure that reasonable accommodations were possible while still ensuring that the student completed the program. This highlighted the need for better communication and collaboration between CLPD staff and staff in the International Student Centre who administer AusAID scholarships, as well as the need to identify clear requirements for completion of the program.

The Student Experience of Learning and Teaching (SELT) survey results from the IAP (attached) are particularly encouraging. There was 100% broad agreement in a number of categories including quality of course, learning environment being free from discrimination and the learning environment taking into account the diversity of the students. The latter two responses seem to indicate that the program is perceived by the students as being culturally sensitive and inclusive. These responses are definitely congruent with what IAP lecturers set out to promote. The question which provoked the widest variety of responses was question 1, relating to course workload. The majority of students felt it to be reasonable, yet a significant minority felt it to be too heavy/light (25%). This suggests that more emphasis needs to

be put on addressing this issue with the students. However, overall, the SELT results strongly indicate that the students value the IAP both in terms of delivery and outcomes. (Full SELT reports including individual student comments are available upon request).

## **Recommendations for improvement for the next IAP**

Refining aspects of the curriculum in light of:

1. student feedback
2. staff feedback
3. anticipated growth in student numbers

Based on **student feedback** there will be:

- Increased focus on additional prescribed writing tasks both in class and for independent study purposes
- Re-ordering of the date of delivery of some course components to better match students' needs
- Maintaining balance of program in terms of number of formal lectures
- Differentiating more precisely between a critical review and an essay

Based on **staff feedback** there will be increased focus on:

- Understanding the concept and purpose of academic critique
- Determining appropriate reading strategies for different purposes
- Note taking from texts
- Extending immediate post IAP feedback to incorporating later reflective feedback to inform curriculum (see IAP Curriculum Review below)
- Emphasising correlation between tasks and RSD framework

Based on **anticipated growth in student numbers** there will be greater utilisation of:

- Streaming based on students' degree subjects (with some whole group sessions and smaller group workshops included)
- Student mentoring-by previous IAP students
- The links forged with UNISA

## **Particular consideration for next IAP**

In Semester 1 2011, the projected numbers for the IAP are around 65 students, which gives the opportunity to include more team based-learning activities in the program. The spike in numbers is due to an expected one-off student cohort from Iraq of approximately 30 students. This will have significant impact on how the IAP is delivered next semester. Of particular issue is gaining access to appropriate classrooms for five weeks duration as Seminar Room 2 in CLPD can only hold a maximum of thirty students. However, this increase in student numbers is part of an ongoing upward trend which needs to be addressed in the long term and will form part of the IAP Curriculum Review (outlined below). The IAP is an important program and the constant 'room-chasing' that currently exists cannot be sustained if the program continues to grow as hoped.

## **IAP Curriculum Review**

As part of ongoing development and reflection upon the IAP, in late 2010, there will be a substantial review of the curriculum, taking into account the increased numbers of students. This will involve input from a number of stakeholders, including:

- IAP teaching and administrative staff,
- Previous IAP students in the form of a Focus Group
- International Student Centre staff
- Subject academics and supervisors

The focus of the curriculum review will be on identifying clear aims and objectives for the program in consultation with the above stakeholders, and then aligning teaching and learning tasks and assessment to these objectives. This will allow the articulation of clear requirements for the completion of the program which can then be communicated to students and relevant staff.

## **Conclusion**

The IAP in Semester 2, 2010 has proved to be a broadly successful one, from both student and staff perspectives. This success is part of a continuing trend in which the IAP has seen significant growth over the last five years, both in terms of student numbers, but also in the development of student autonomy. Now is a watershed moment, as this continuing growth, based on the current format, is putting great strains on the capacity to maintain the high level of quality which has been a constant of the program. Reliable long term access to university facilities, including rooms and technology is paramount, and a review of program delivery and content is necessary, if the academic value of the program is to be maximised.

Richard Warner  
**IAP Coordinator**  
Centre for Learning and Professional Development

## Appendix 1

### Introductory Academic Program Semester 2, 2010 Timetable (student copy)

DAY	VENUE	TIME	TASK
<b>WEEK 1</b>			
Mon Jun 14			<b>Public Holiday</b>
Tues Jun 15	CLPD	9:00-10:45	Introduction to the IAP
		10:45-11:15	Morning Tea
		11:15-12:30	Diagnostic Task
		12:30-14:00	Lunch
		13:00-14:00	ALL meeting
		14:00-17:00	Independent Study
	Students		INDEPENDENT LEARNING Reading 2 Articles on Teamwork (for Wednesday) Three Gorges Reading (for Thursday)
Wed Jun 16	CLPD	9:00-10:30	Doing Research: Introduction to Critical Review Task
	CLPD	10:30-12:00	Critical Review Concept Mapping (online)
		12:00-12:30	Forum Organisation
		12:30-13:30	Lunch
	CLPD (ISC)	13:30-15:00	Orientation/Afternoon Tea
		Students	INDEPENDENT LEARNING Read Assigned Article + take notes
Thur Jun 17	CLPD	9:00-10:30	Doing Research: Critical Reading (Three Gorges)
		10:30-11:00	Concordancing
	Napier 202	11.15-12.30	My Uni Workshop + IT Helpdesk
		12:30-14:00	Lunch
	CLPD	14:00-17:00	Independent Study
		Students	INDEPENDENT LEARNING Critical Reading: Animal Testing Article
Fri Jun 18	CLPD	9:00-10:00	Doing Research: Identifying and Critiquing Themes: Animal Testing
		10:30-11:15	Discussion Session with previous IAP Students
		11:30-12:30	Library Tour + Self Paced Tutorial
		12:30-14:00	Lunch
		14:00-17:00	Independent Study
		Students	INDEPENDENT LEARNING: Complete Basic Skills Library Tutorial

<b>WEEK 2</b>			
<b>DAY</b>	<b>VENUE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>TASK</b>
Mon Jun 21	CLPD	9:00-9:30	Week 1 Review
		9:30-11.00	Time Management
		11:00-12:30	Doing Research: Critical Review, Annotated Bibliographies
	BSL	12:30-14:00	Lunch
		13:00-14:00	ALL Meeting
		14:00-15:30	Library Research with Subject Librarians/Locate Discipline Based Articles (5 in total) <b>Attendance is Compulsory</b>
Tues Jun 22	CLPD	9:00- 10.30	Doing Research: Critical Review - Concept Map Feedback (1 article)
		10:30-12:00	Doing Research- Concept Map Modelling 3 articles
		12:00- 12.30	Forum Organisation
Wed Jun 23	CLPD	9:00- 10:30	Note Taking from Written Articles
		11.00-12.30	Your 'voice' in academic writing
		12:30-14:00	Lunch
		14:00-17:00	Independent Study / Forum Planning
		Students	INDEPENDENT LEARNING: Read Assigned Articles for Plagiarism Workshop Submit via MyUni Assignments Submission Module- Critical Review Concept Map
Thurs Jun 24	CLPD	9:00-10:00	Plagiarism Workshop
		10:00-11:00	Academic Writing Clinic 1: Referencing
		11:00-12:30	Academic Writing Clinic 2: Paragraph Writing
		12:30-14:00	Lunch
		14:00-16:00	<b>CONSULTATIONS</b> Independent Study
		16:00-17:00	Independent Study
Fri Jun 25	CLPD	9:00-10:30	Note taking from Lectures
		10:30-12:30	Japanese Story
		12:30-14:00	Lunch
		14:00-17:00	Independent Study
		Students	INDEPENDENT LEARNING: Submit Annotated Bibliography by 5pm

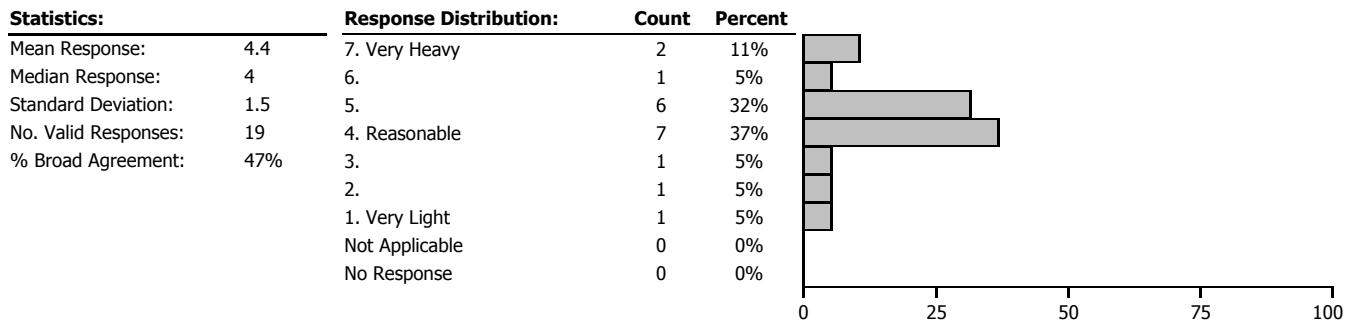
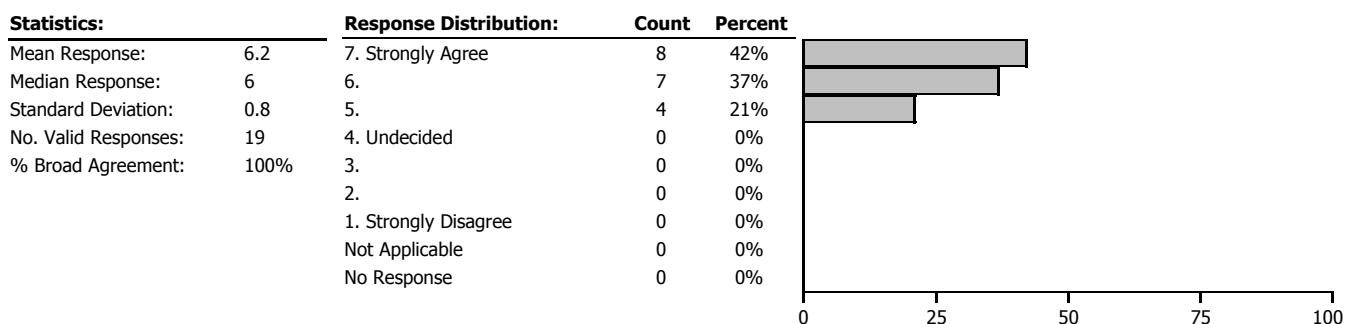
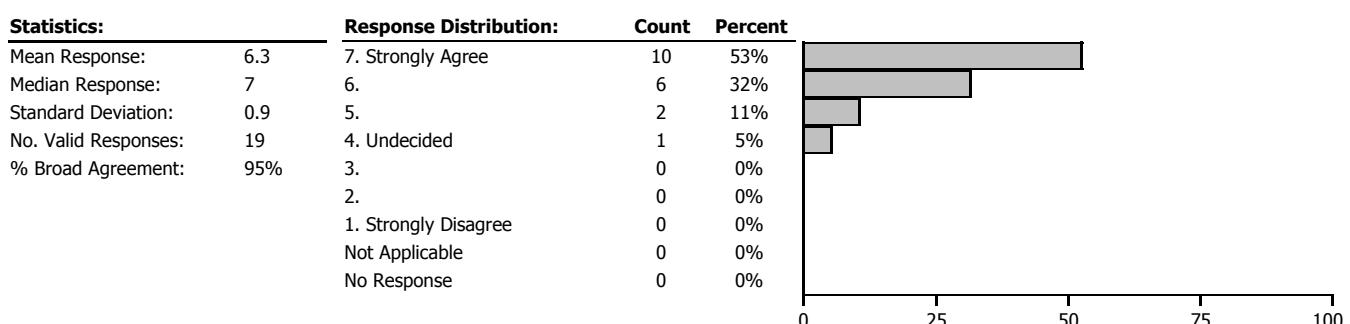
<b>WEEK 3</b>			
<b>DAY</b>	<b>VENUE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>TASK</b>
Mon Jun 28	CLPD	9:00 –10.30	Academic Writing Clinic 3: Cohesive Writing
		10:30- 12:30	Workshop- the Research Skill Development framework
		12:30-13:00	Lunch
		13:00-16:00	<b>15 min CONSULTATIONS / Independent Study</b>
		16:00-17:00	Independent Study
		Students	DUE DATE TODAY: Submit via Webspiration Critical Review Concept Map (3 articles) Read Plagiarism Article # 2 + note main ideas.
Tues Jun 29	CLPD	9:00-10:00	Doing Research: Reading and Deconstructing Written Articles
		10:00-11.30	Critical Review Development
		11:30-12:30	Dealing with Nerves (getting tongue tied)
		12:30-14:00	Lunch
		13:00-14:00	ALL Meeting
		14:00-17:00	Independent Study / Forum Planning
		Students	INDEPENDENT LEARNING: Read Assigned Articles for Plagiarism Lecture
Wed Jun 30	CLPD	9:00-11:00	Doing Research: Deconstructing Critical Reviews
		11:00-12:30	Plagiarism Lecture & Group Discussion
		12:30-14:00	Lunch
		14:00-17:00	Independent study / Forum Planning
Thurs Jul 1	CLPD	9:00-11:00	Discussion: Talking about Your Research
		11:00-12:30	How To Ask Questions About Statistics
		12:30-14:00	Lunch
		14:00-16:00	<b>CONSULTATIONS</b> Independent Study / Forum Planning
		16:00-17:00	Independent Study
Fri Jul 2	CLPD	9:00-11:30	Discussion: Creating Research Dialogues
		11:30-12:30	Forum Planning & Week 3 Review
		14:00-16:00	<b>CONSULTATIONS</b> Independent Study / Forum Planning
		16:00-17:00	Independent Study

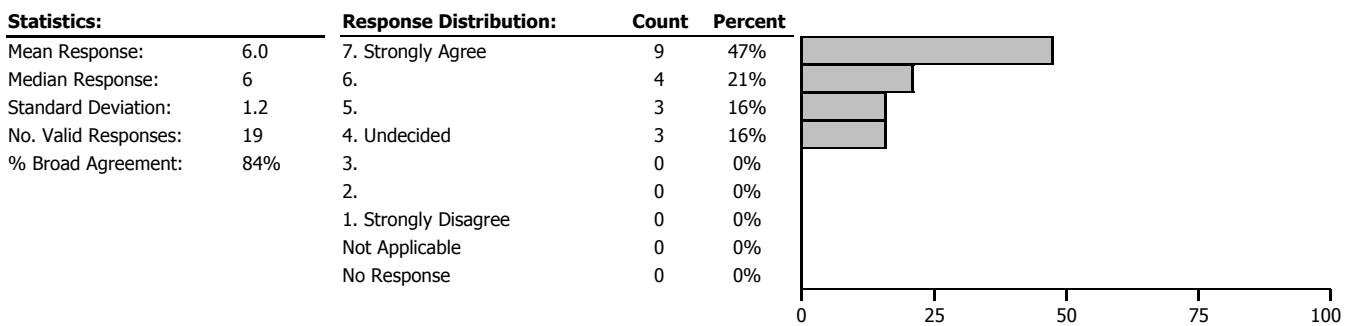
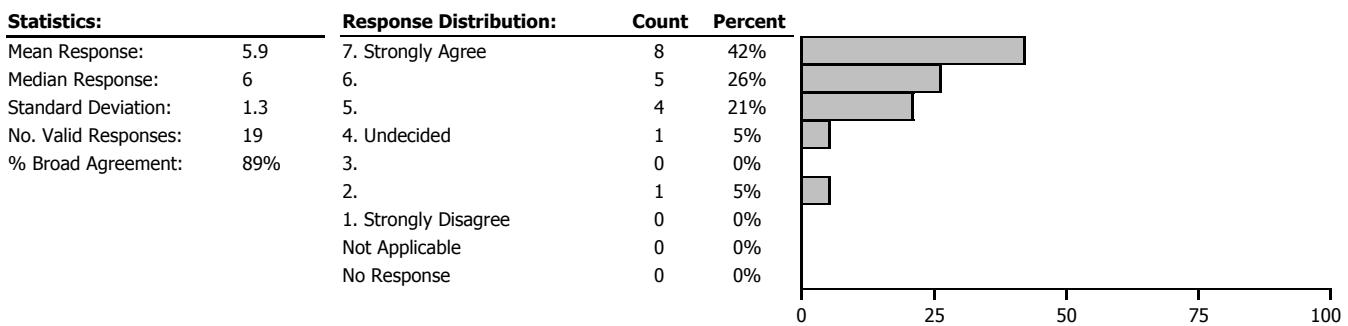
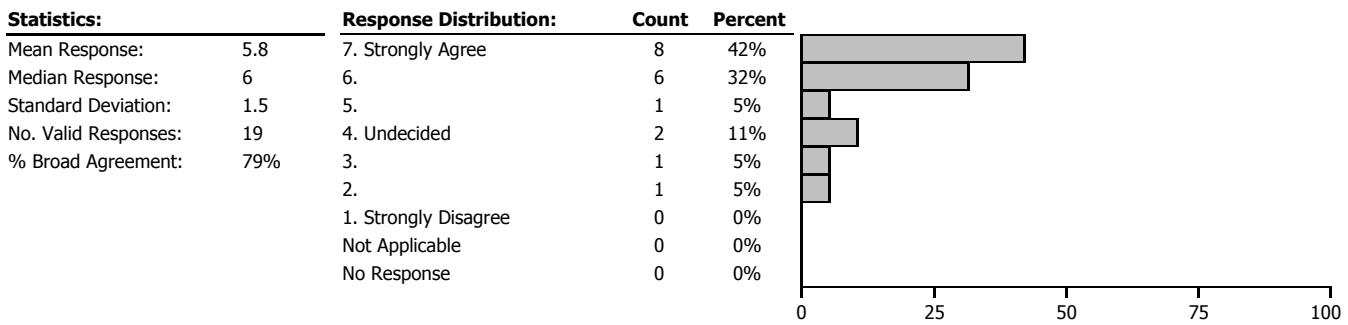
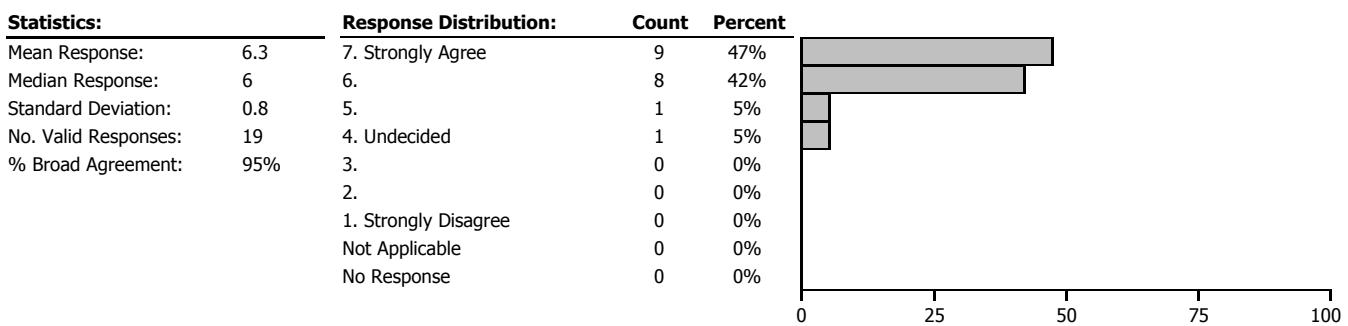
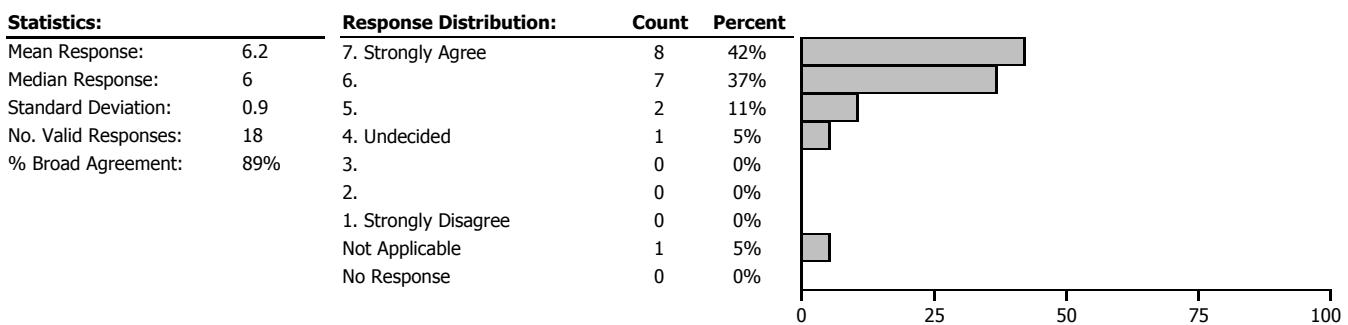
<b>WEEK 4</b>			
<b>DAY</b>	<b>VENUE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>TASK</b>
Mon Jul 5	CLPD	Due 10:00 am Students	DUE DATE TODAY: <b>Submit</b> via MyUni Assignments Submission Module - <b>Draft Critical Review</b>
		9:00-10:00	Submission of Critical Review draft 1
		10:00-11:00	Lecture: Effective Use of Power Point
		11:00-12:30	Presentation Styles
		12:30-14:00	Lunch
		14:00-17:00	Independent Study/Forum Planning
		15:00-16:00	marking meeting (with at least one marked paper each)
		Students	INDEPENDENT LEARNING: Develop Forum PowerPoint slides
Tues Jul 6	CLPD	9:00-11:00	Forum Planning
		11:30-12:30	Referencing Workshop
		12:30-14:00	Lunch
		14:00-17:00	Independent Study/Forum Planning
Wed Jul 7	Computer suite Napier 202	9:00-11:00	Wimba Voice Tools: Forum Paper Reviewer Comments
		11:30-12:30	Forum Planning
		12:30-14:00	Lunch
		16:00-17:00	Independent Study
Thurs Jul 8	CLPD	9:00- 12:30	<b>CONSULTATIONS</b> Independent Study/Forum Planning
		12:30-14:00	Lunch
		14:00-16:00	<b>CONSULTATIONS</b> Independent Study/Forum Planning
		16:00-17:00	Independent Study
Fri Jul 9	CLPD;	9:00-12:00	Preliminary Presentations (2 mins) (intro + 1 key point on Word document)
		12:00-12:30	Week Review
		Students	Develop PowerPoint slides Finalise Forum paper

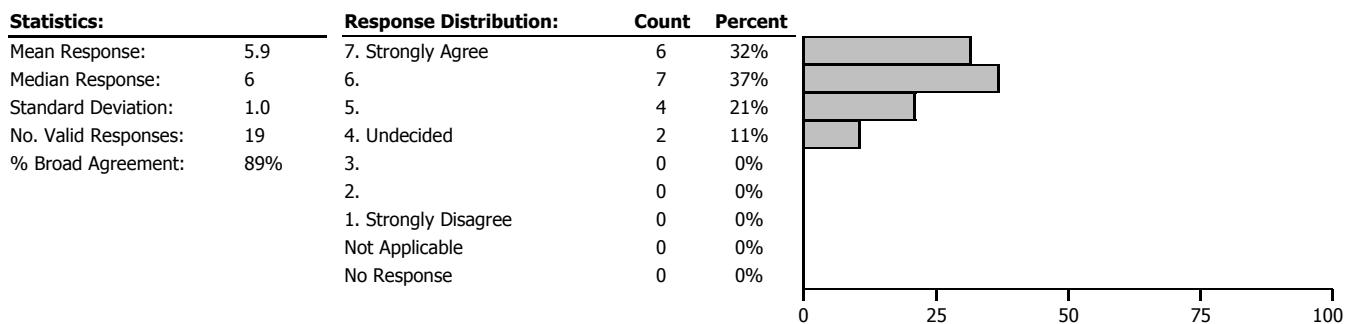
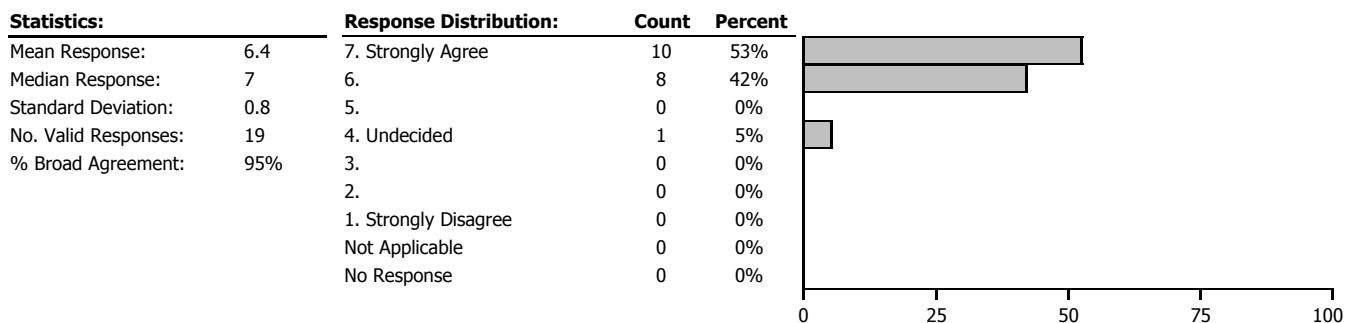
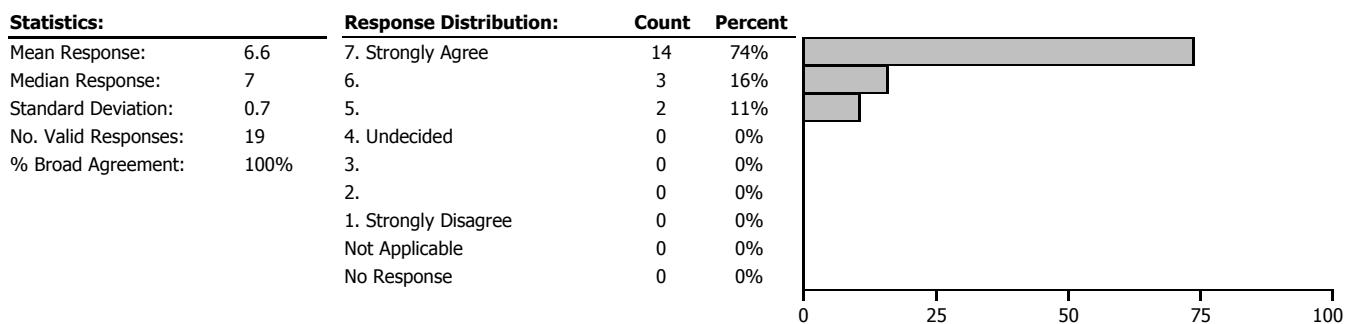
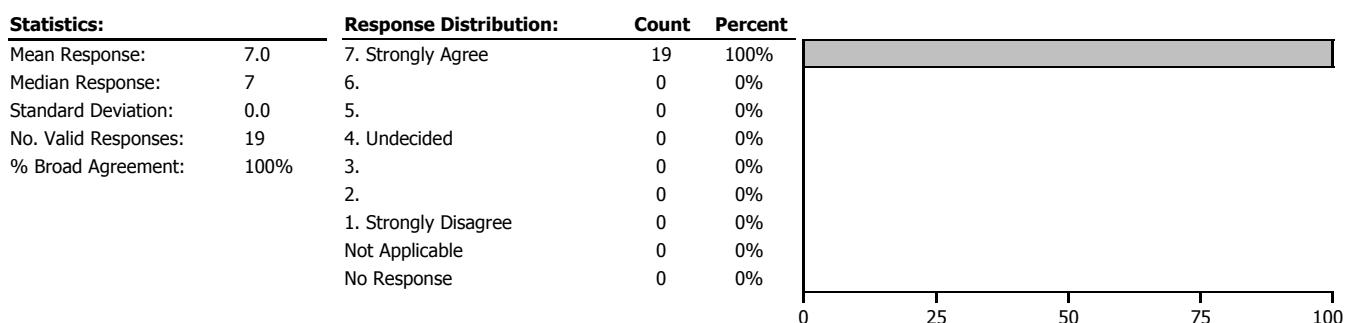
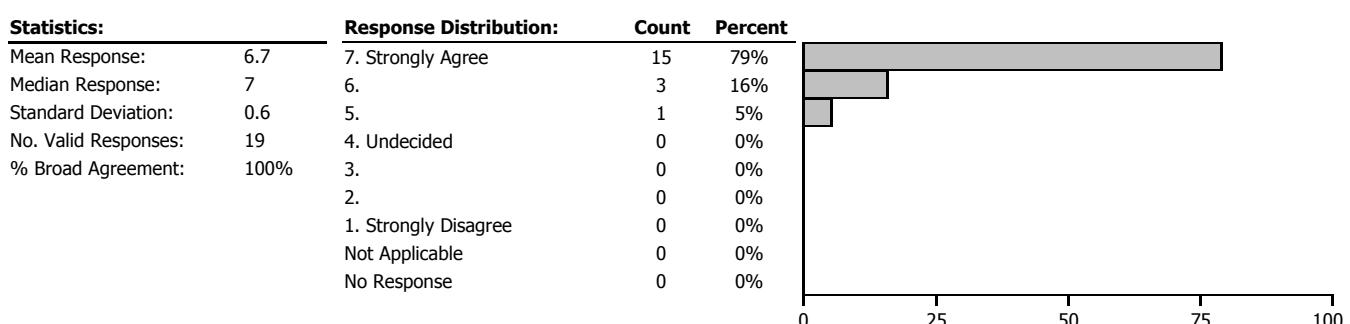
<b>WEEK 5</b>			
<b>DAY</b>	<b>VENUE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>TASK</b>
Mon Jul 12	CLPD	Students DUE TODAY 9:30am	INDEPENDENT LEARNING: Submit via MyUni Assignments Submission Module- Final Critical Review
		9:00-9:30	Submission of Critical Review
		9:30-12:30	<b>Practise Presentations A / Forum Planning</b>
		12:30-14:00	Lunch
		13:00-14:00	ALL Meeting
		14:00-17:00	Independent Study
Tues Jul 13	CLPD	9:00-12:30	<b>Practise Presentations B / Forum Planning</b>
		12:30-14:00	Lunch
		Students	PowerPoint Presentation- Submit to MyUni DUE TODAY 4pm
	CLPD	14:00-16:00	<b>CONSULTATIONS</b>
		16:00-17:00	Independent Study
Wed Jul 14	Schulz 307/308	10:00-12:30	Forum Presentations
		12:30-13:30	Post Forum Lunch
Thurs Jul 15	CLPD	9:30-12:00	Exit Diagnostic Task Program Evaluation Certificate Ceremony
		12:00-14:00	Lunch
		14:00-17:00	Independent Study
Fri Jul 17	CLPD	9:00-12:30	Independent Study

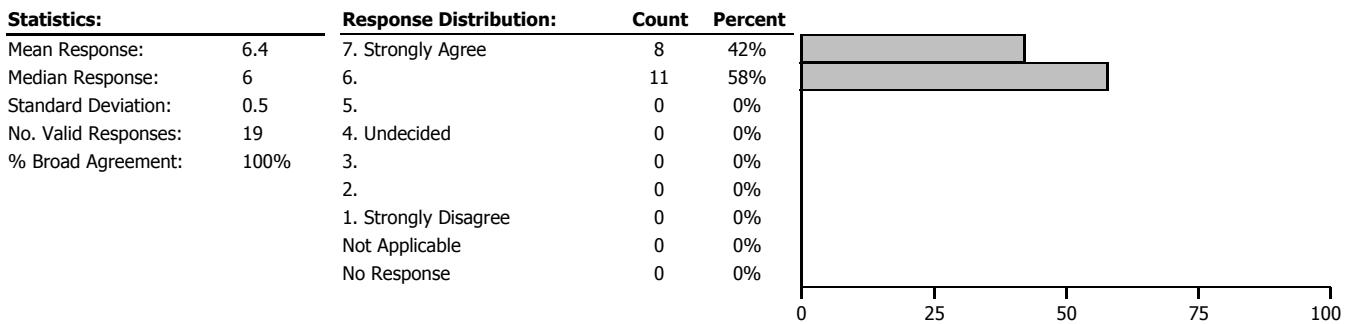
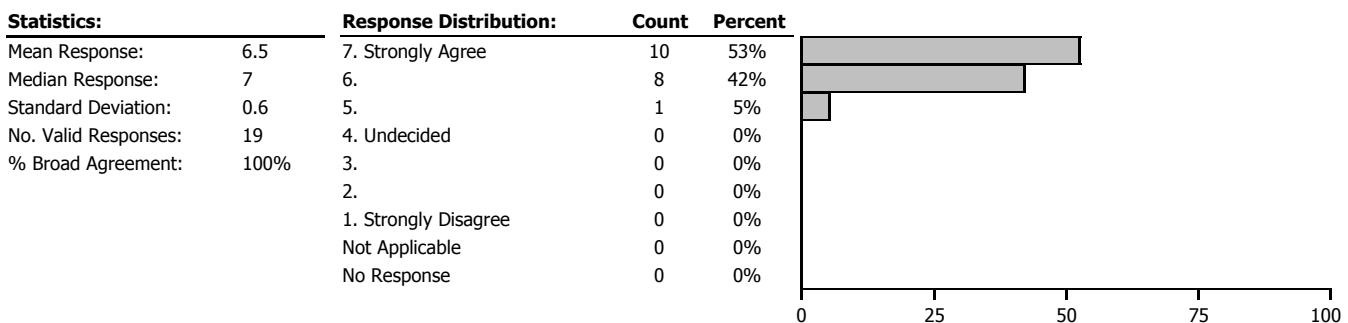
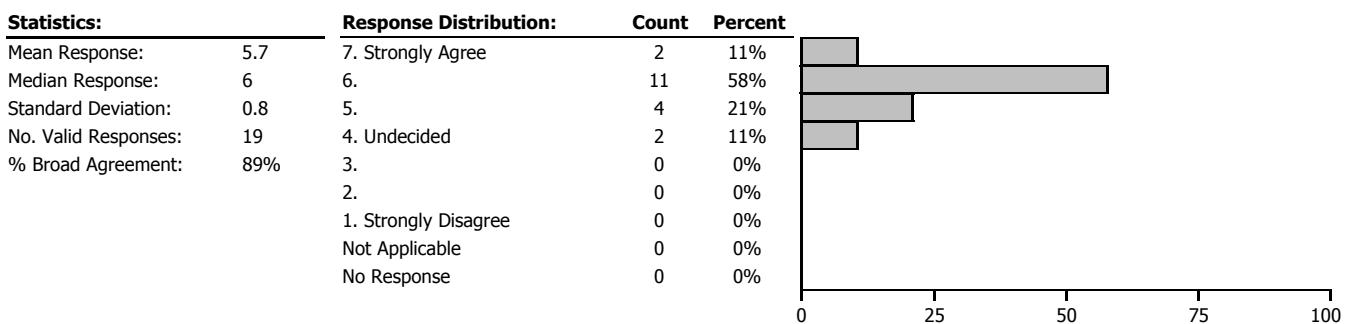
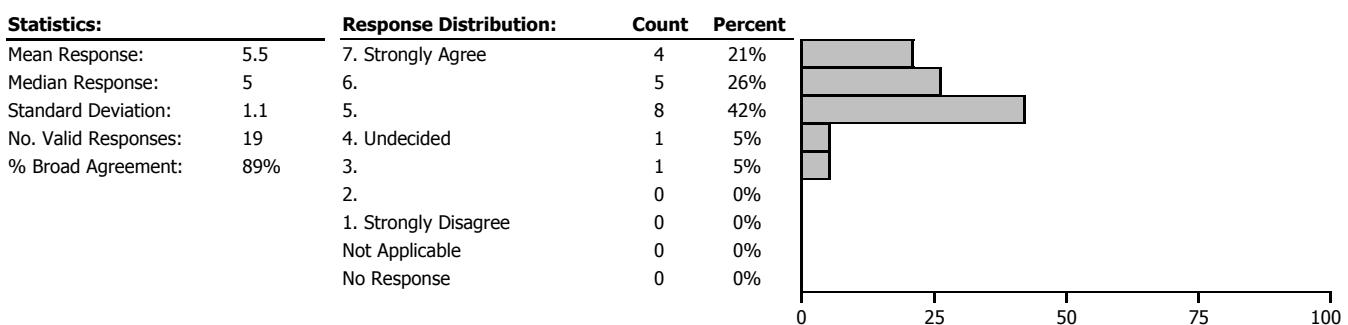


<b>Course:</b>	<i>Course Code:</i>	<i>Course Name:</i>	<i>Course Lvl:</i>
	IAP 1000	Introductory Academic Program	1st Year
<b>Teacher:</b>	Mr Richard Warner		
<b>Academic Year:</b>	2010		
<b>Academic Period:</b>	Winter School		
<b>Academic Org:</b>	Centre for Learning and Professional Development		
<b>Course Component:</b>	Postgrad		
<b>Teaching Dates:</b>	15/06/2010 To: 16/07/2010		
<b>No. Students:</b>	21	<b>No. Responses:</b> 19 (90%)	
<b>No. Classes:</b>	1		
<b>Administered by:</b>	Staff		
<b>Date of Survey:</b>	15/07/2010		

**Q 1. Overall, how would you rate the workload in this course?****Q 2. Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of this course.****Q 3. This course stimulates my enthusiasm for further learning.**

**Q 4. I feel part of a group committed to learning.****Q 5. It is made clear what is expected of me.****Q 6. I receive adequate feedback on my work.****Q 7. I am motivated to learn in this course.****Q 8. The assessment allows me to demonstrate what I understand.**

**Q 9. This course helps me develop my thinking skills (eg. problem solving, analysis).****Q 10. The learning resources (eg. handouts, web resources) are valuable for my understanding of the course.****Q 11. I am satisfied with the course information provided (eg. course outline, assessment details, timetables).****Q 12. The learning environment is free from discrimination.****Q 13. The learning environment takes into account the diversity of students' backgrounds.**

**Q 14. My ability to work independently is being increased.****Q 15. I understand the concepts presented in this course.****Q 16. I am able to pull together information from different sources in a cohesive manner.****Q 17. I can clearly communicate what I understand from my research in writing.****Q 18. The ability to research is important to my forthcoming university studies.**