Resources & Constraints
Although other factors might provide equal or greater impact (e.g., policy changes, statistical redefinitions), I restricted my project to pedagogical changes.

Goals/Intended Outcomes
The intent is to identify any pedagogical/delivery changes that could be implemented in an online environment that would improve student success.

Motivation:
Each semester we offer 10-14 sections of ICS 101, Digital Tools for the Information World, which is considered a “Gatekeeper” course because its overall success rate is 67%, slightly lower than the 70% cutoff. Because the course tends to be content heavy, I wanted to see if all the content that was currently in the course was truly needed by all the various programs that use ICS 101 as either a prerequisite or programmatic requirement. I wanted to see if something could be eliminated without jeopardizing the course’s system wide articulation.

Prerequisites
ICS 101 changed its prerequisite courses (Math and English) to recommendations in 2005 based on suggestions from KapCC’s Office of Institutional Research. I compared success data from before and after the change to see if this change may have lessened the success rate of students. After looking at several years of data, no significant difference could be seen.

MS Office Application Differences
We cover four main Microsoft applications in the course: Word, Excel, Access, and PowerPoint. I wanted to see if possibly one of the applications was more difficult than the others in terms of success. My suspicion was that Access, because of its unfamiliarity, would be more difficult for students. I needed to compare similar assessments across multiple sections of the course to get a clear understanding of students’ performance on the various applications. Because of the flexibility that faculty exercise in assigning and grading various projects in the course, I needed to compare something that was common to all sections. All students in ICS 101 do work online using a product called MyITLab, which provides simulated training and assessments in the various MS applications. I was able to data mine students’ assessments in all four applications for over five years. I gathered over 14,000 data records. Much to my surprise, again there was no significant difference in students’ performance in the various applications. Students’ averaged 80% success in all applications; probably due to the goal of 80% students needed to receive points for the activity.

UH System Programmatic Needs
Because the course tends to be content heavy, I wanted to see if all the content that was currently in the course was truly needed by all the various programs that use ICS 101 as either a prerequisite or programmatic requirement. I wanted to see if something could be eliminated without jeopardizing the course’s system wide articulation.

I worked with Yao Hill, OFIE’s qualitative research specialist in devising a survey we could administer to faculty in programs that use ICS 101 in some capacity to ascertain their needs. Based on a very limited response from stake holders (N=10), it seems that the most pressing needs are in MS Word, MS Excel, and issues and concepts related to IT. In other words, Access and PowerPoint had much less relevance to their vocational needs.

How it worked/Outcomes
• Better understanding of other programs’ needs from our course.
• Increased awareness of students’ learning issues.

Moving Forward
1. Possible Curriculum changes
2. Course Level Certificates of Excellence for students

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