

# Assessing International Students in the Library Instruction Classroom

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**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS** AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

# Session Overview

- Background
- Methodology
- Findings
- Conclusions and next steps



# Background:

## International Students at Illinois

### Fall 2015

- 10,208 students
- 5,410 undergraduates

### Five year growth

- 21% 2010-2015



# English as a Second Language (ESL) Courses

## ESL 112 and ESL 115

- Course focus: “...introduction to research writing; instruction on basics of library research, synthesizing sources, and elements of style...”
- Fulfills University’s Composition 1 requirement



# Library Instruction and ESL Courses

- Embedded in all sections of ESL 112 and 115
  - Fall 2008 - present
- Common syllabus and assignments
  - Common demonstration topics
  - Scholarly source expectations
  - Supporting resources available in course LibGuide



# The Assignment

- **Assignment Prompt:**

*Choose an organization that is actively working towards addressing a problem in society (community, state, region or country) affecting a distinct population (women, animals, children, etc.). Write a problem/solution paper that describes and critiques three current solutions offered by the organization and recommends how to improve them.*

- **Research Process Portfolio**

- Pre-research portfolio
- Annotated bibliography
- Source synthesis matrix or research paper outline



# Study Assumptions

Based on prior anecdotal evidence we theorized students would face challenges with...

- Creating focused topics
- Identifying keywords and alternatives
- Differentiating resource/article types



# Methodology: Recruiting Students

## Fall 2015

- 69 students
  - 4 sections: ESL 112
  - 4 sections: ESL 115

## Spring 2016

- 38 students
  - 2 sections: ESL 112
  - 2 sections: ESL 115





# Library Integration

- Librarians added to forum in course website
- Concept maps completed by students and deposited in forum
- Librarians provide feedback
- Students revise concept maps prior to library instruction



# Concept Map

## Create a Concept Map for Your Topic ESL 112 | ESL 115

**SAMPLE: PROBLEM FOCUSED**

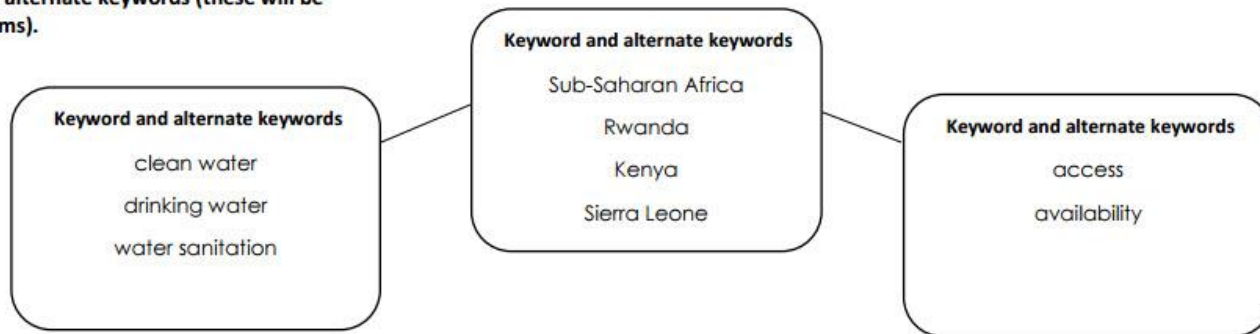
Complete a Concept Map to identify the keywords and concepts you will use when you search for articles about your topic. It can help you identify what you know about your topic and begin to think about your topic in new ways.

To complete your concept map follow the steps below.

1. Type your solution or problem in the box below and underline your keywords or keyword phrases:

TOPIC: Access to clean water in Sub-Saharan Africa must be improved.

2. Enter your keywords in the boxes below and list alternate keywords (these will be synonyms).



### TO BE COMPLETED IN CLASS:

3. List the subject areas of professionals who are likely to publish articles about your topic. Use the *UGL Find Articles Guide* to identify these.

Subject area #1

Subject area #2

Subject area #3



# Topic Statement Criteria

- **Ready:** Fully developed. Topic statement is present and (mostly) ready to go.
- **Refine:** In progress. Topic statement is present but requires a bit of focus and/or refinement.
- **Revise:** Not developed or absent. Topic statement is either a) present but too loosely defined (e.g. “obesity in children,” “skin cancer.” etc.) or (b) not present.



# Keyword Criteria

- **Ready:** Database ready. All main concepts with clear relationship to topic identified and relevant alternative keywords provided for each concept as appropriate.
- **Refine:** Almost database ready. All, or some, main concepts with clear relationship to topic identified and some relevant alternative keywords present, though refinement is necessary for successful database search.
- **Revise:** Not database ready. Main concepts with clear relationship to topic not identified and/or alternative terminology missing or irrelevant.



# Annotated Bibliography Assignment

- Five sources required
  - Summary of article thesis/main points
  - Article relevancy to research question
  - Reliability of source
- Five students per section randomly selected



# Assessing the Annotated Bibliographies

- Retrieved from database or web
- Database name
- Periodical type
- Publication date
- Article length
- Reliability statement



# Reliability Statement Criteria

- **Strong:** Identified two or more evaluative criteria. For example: information about author credentials, journal focus/coverage, citations, or article content.
- **Weak:** Identified only one of the above criteria examples.
- **Inaccurate:** Information based on circumstantial, irrelevant, or incorrect information (the article title, the organization name, etc.).



# Instruction Modifications: Fall to Spring

1. Revisions to Concept Map
2. New Concept Map instructional video (required in-class viewing) and supporting materials in multiple formats
3. New Reliability Statement infographic
4. Revisions to standardized ESL library instruction curriculum





# ESL LibGuide

<http://guides.library.illinois.edu/eslundergrad>



# Findings: Concept Maps

## Fall 2015

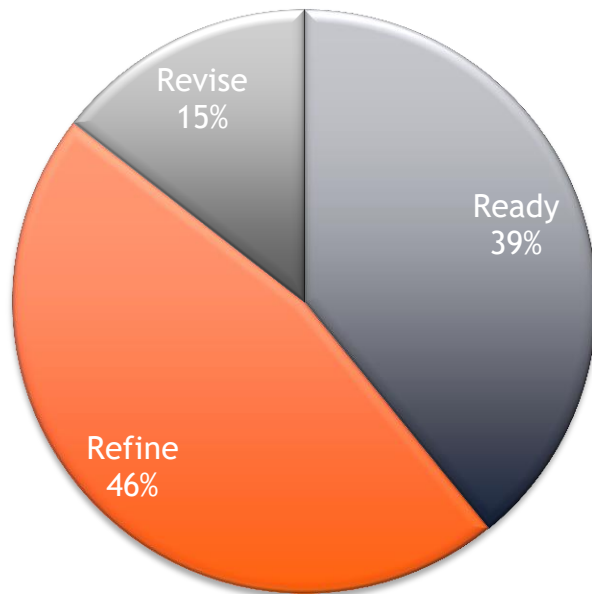
•69 students from 8  
sections

## Spring 2016

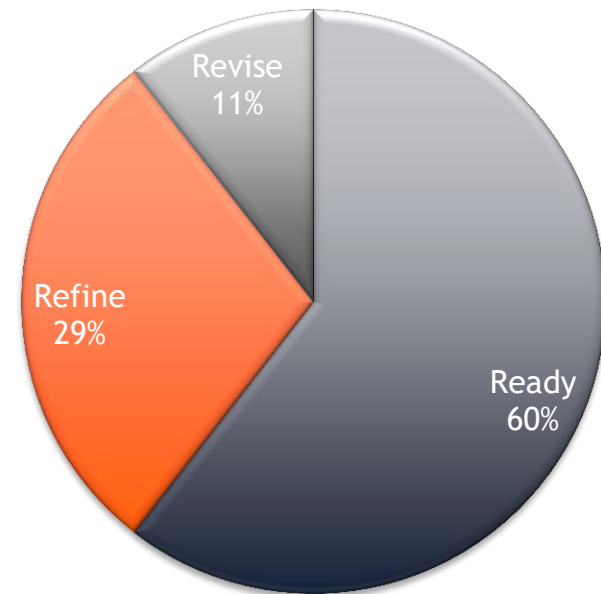
•38 students from 4  
sections

# Topics

Fall 2015



Spring 2016



# Topic Examples

## Ready

How salary is related with job satisfaction in developed countries.

## Refine

Feeding the hungry in America.

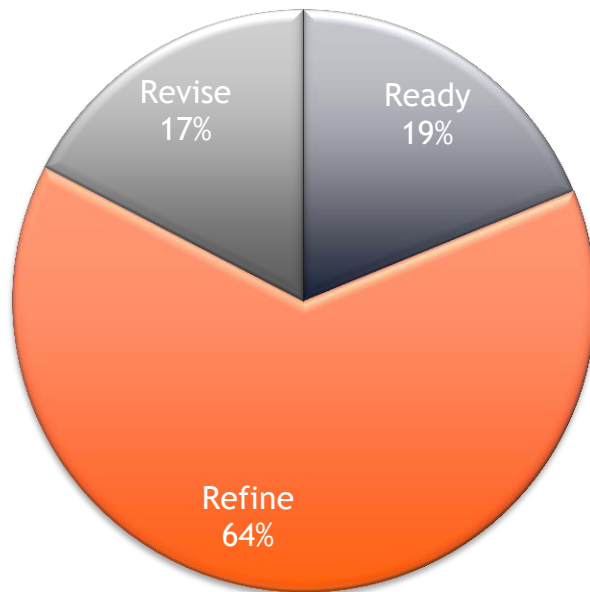
## Revise

Teenage depression.

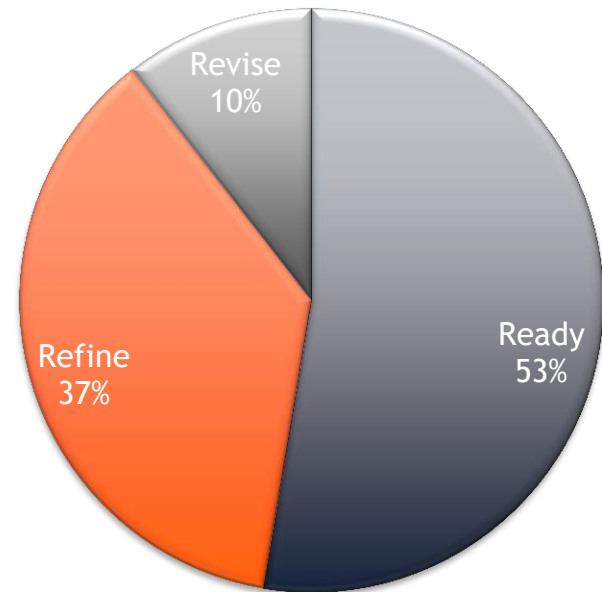


# Keywords & Alternative Terminology

Fall 2015



Spring 2016



# Keyword Examples

## Ready

Indonesia (main keyword)

Sumatera

Java

Southeast Asia

## Refine

Avoiding (main keyword)

Keep off

Invalidate

Annul

## Revise

Health (main keyword)

Disease

Poor region

Cheat

# Annotated Bibliographies

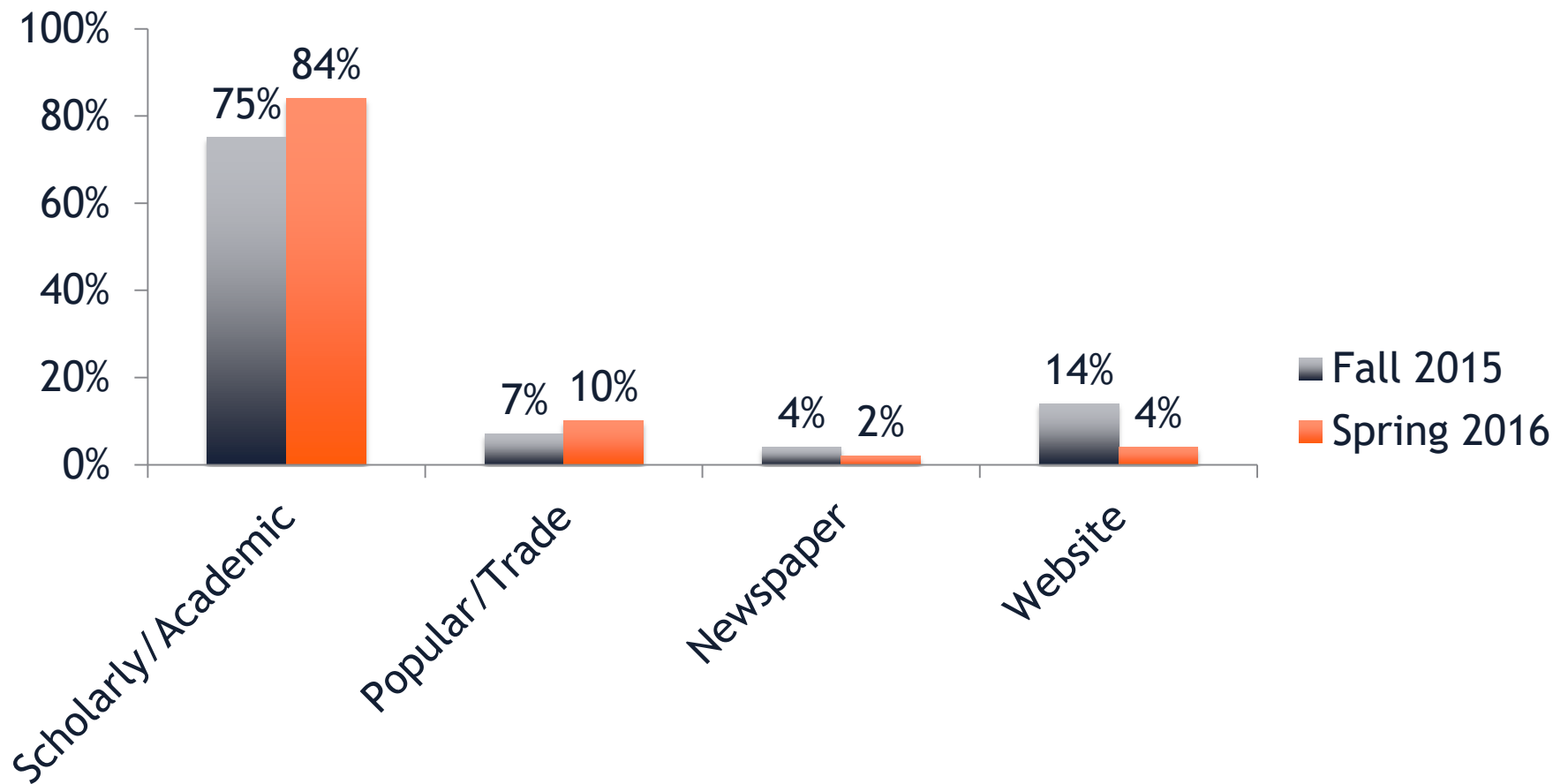
## Fall 2015

- 30 students from 7 sections

## Spring 2016

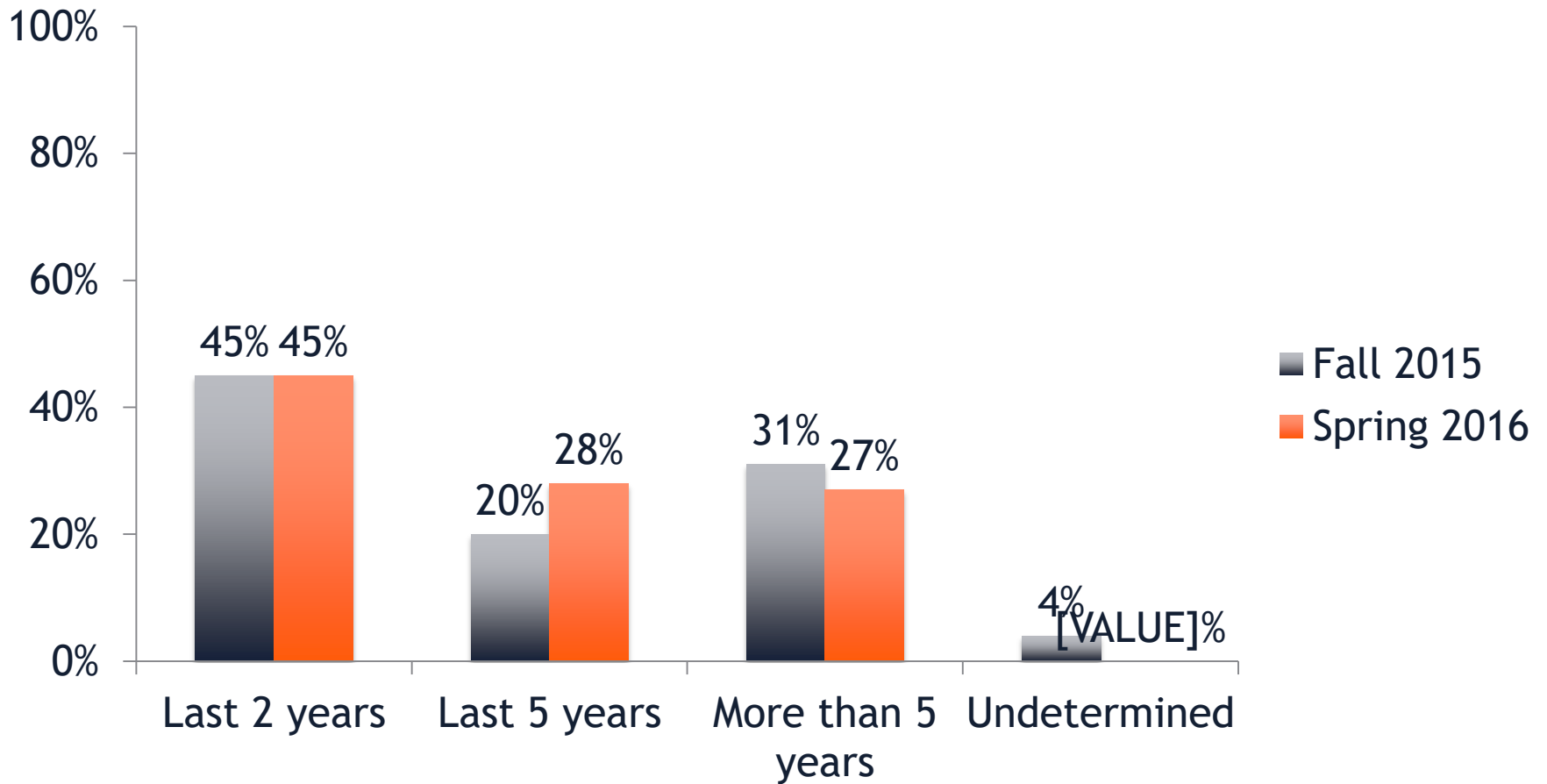
- 20 students from 4 sections

# Article Type

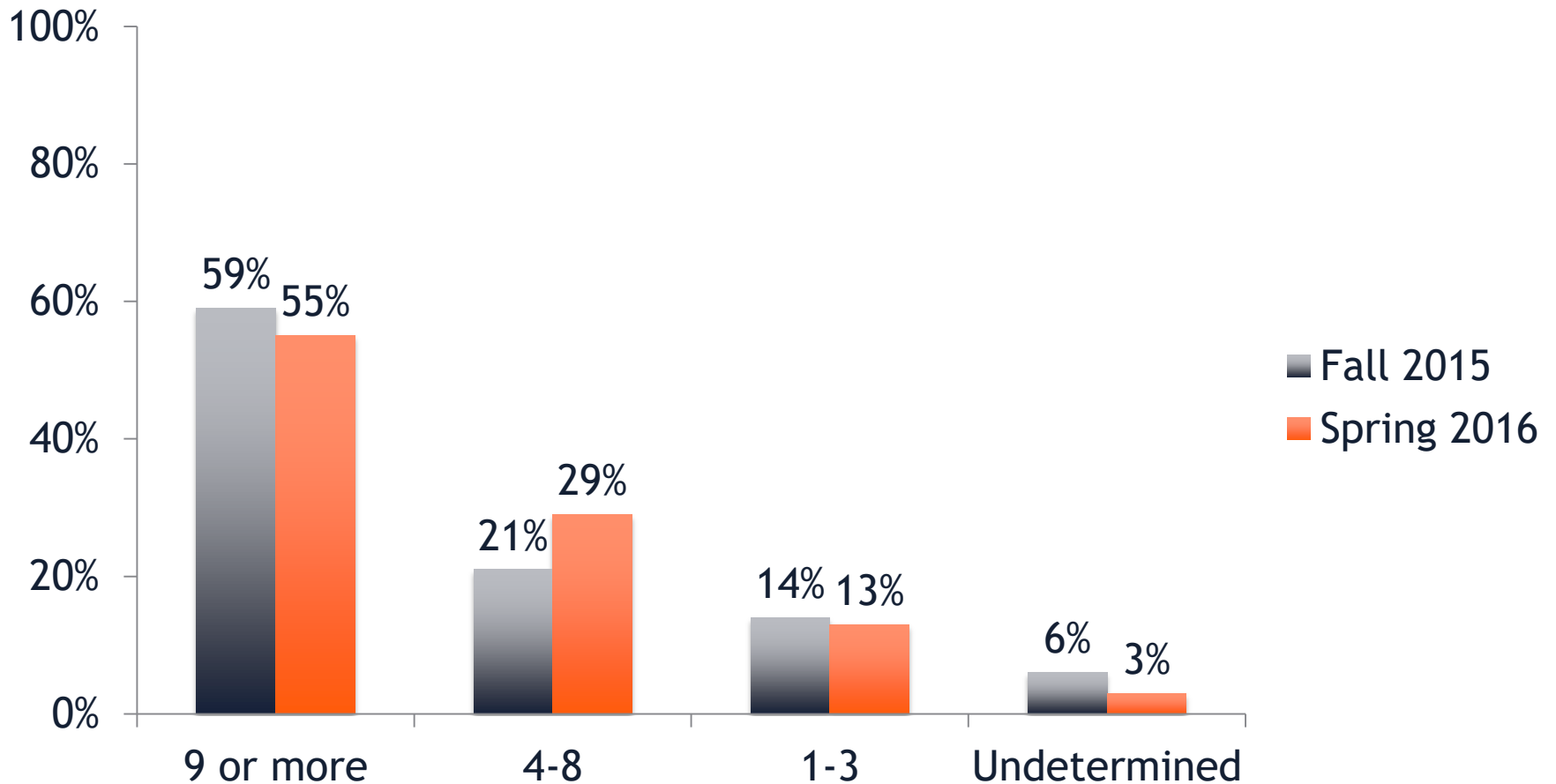




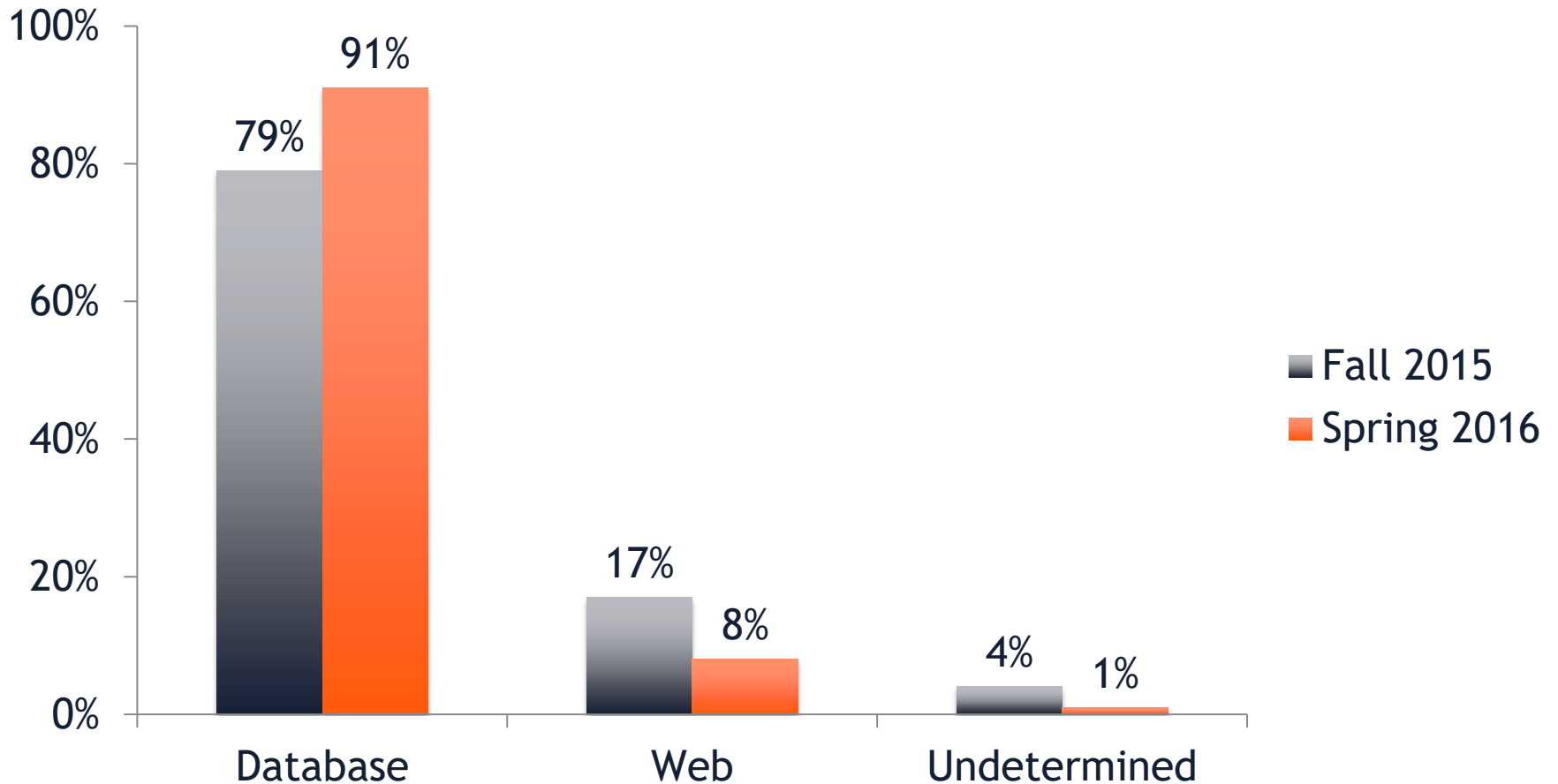
# Article Date



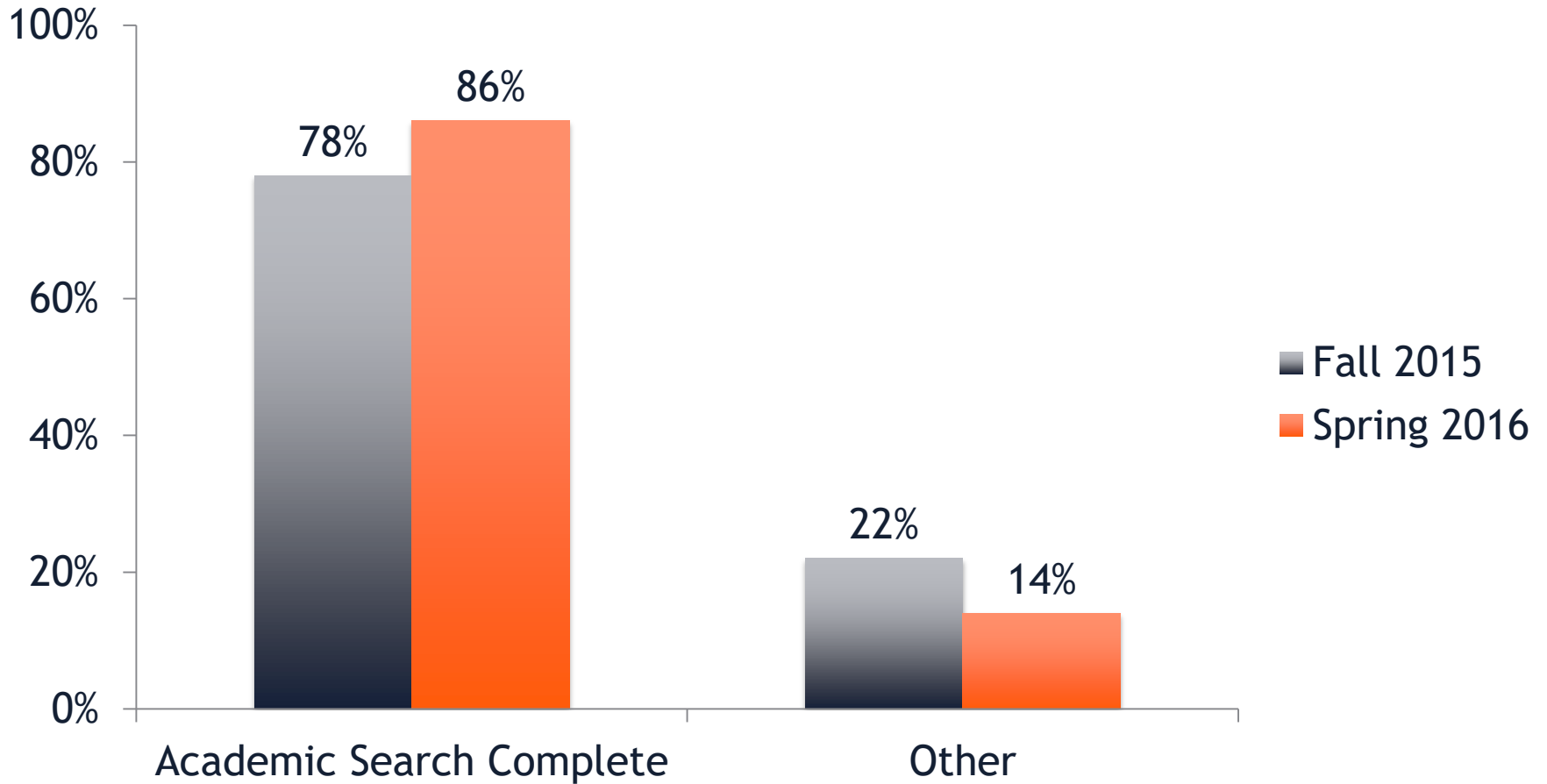
# Article Length



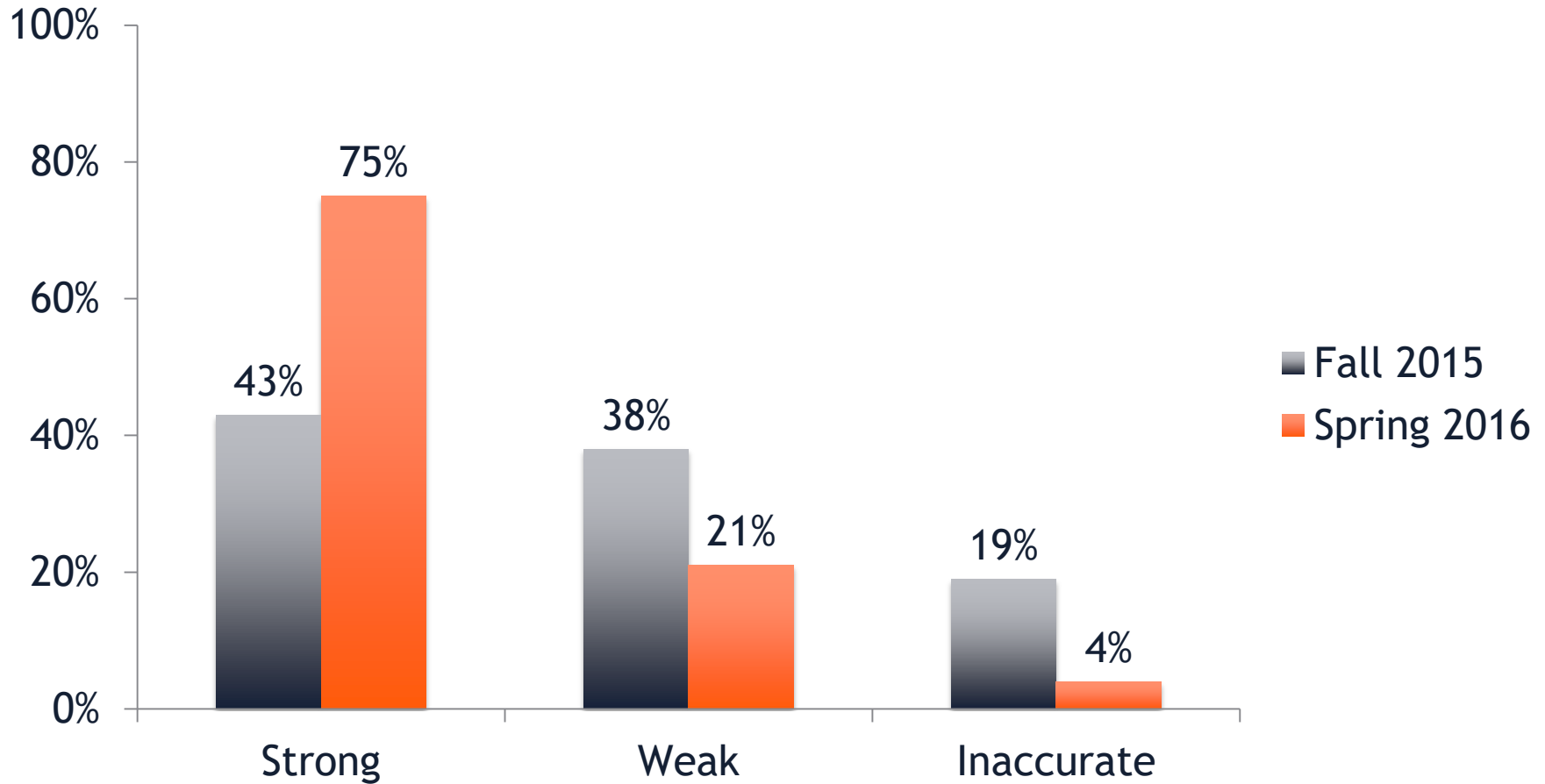
# Retrieved From



# Database



# Reliability Statement



# Reliability Statement Excerpts

- **FALL**

“The article is found in the database of UIUC library...”

- **SPRING**

“The article was published in 2013 and has a very clear references (endnotes). It was peer reviewed. The author, Douglas Massey, is the professor of Sociology and Public Affairs at Princeton University. He is also the president of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. The article was published by journal *Daedalus*, which was published by MIT Press in support of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.”



# Conclusions and Next Steps

- Deeper understanding of international students and research challenges
- Necessity of instruction programs to be agile and responsive
- Value of building partnerships



This project is part of the program “Assessment in Action: Academic Libraries and Student Success” which is undertaken by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) in partnership with the Association for Institutional Research and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities. The program, a cornerstone of ACRL's Value of Academic Libraries initiative, is made possible by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.





# Questions and Comments



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