



DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT

Indiana State University
Division of Student Affairs
Student Internship Supervisor Evaluations
2005-2007

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Abstract

Indiana State University has managed student internship placements for over three decades, but in the late 1990's, student "experiential learning" was built into the institution's strategic plan and a major grant was awarded by the Lilly Endowment. Employer supervisors were asked to measure student interns' performance in both quantitative and qualitative ways.

Background and Purpose

Indiana State University has managed student internship placements for over three decades, but in the late 1990's, student "experiential learning" was built into the institution's strategic plan and a major grant was awarded by the Lilly that supports community-based learning, including internships. The ISU Career Center was directed to develop support services to standardize the management of student internship experiences which includes an "Internship Repository" that serves to collect and maintain records of student internships, including the collection of post-internship evaluations. Some student internships are managed by individual academic units that do not take advantage of the Career Center's program and as such, those internship experience results are not included in this report.

Since the late 1990's Indiana State University has engaged a strategy that embraces experiential learning as a core component of its learning pedagogy. The University considers experiential learning as the active engagement in learning activities that result in skills or knowledge transferable to professional settings and for the effective management of students' lives after graduation. The concept of experiential learning includes such things as service-learning, student-faculty research, field experiences, creative and artistic activities, or study abroad. Of experiential learning, internships can facilitate high quality learning as those opportunities allow student immersion in a work environment that can reinforce previous classroom-based and other learning experiences.

College internships are considered an important component of learning by many academic disciplines (Stuchman & Farkas, 2005). The value of internship experience might best be understood by examining the foundations of learning itself. William Perry (1980) presented a model of intellectual and moral development suggesting that individuals, including college students, move through specific stages, beginning with a stage characterized by cognitive functioning based in simple solutions and dualistic

thinking to later stages that lead to an understanding of the environment through multiple possible solutions and an appreciation of experiential learning grounded in both external reinforcement received from others as well as internal reflection of personal experiences that leads to complex and abstract meaning-making. In achieving advanced stages of learning, individuals develop the capacity for globalized thinking and effective problem-solving. Serving an internship, students are exposed to a professional environment wherein advanced learning and application of acquired skills can be demonstrated.

The value of experiential learning was noted by Carl Rogers (1961), the “father” of interpersonal therapy, when he proposed that

“Experience is, for me, the highest authority. The touchstone of validity is my own experience. No other person's ideas, and none of my own ideas, are as authoritative as my experience. It is to experience that I must return again and again, to discover a closer approximation to truth as it is in the process of becoming in me.”

Rogers continues by referring to a “good life” as an ever evolving process, rather than a static state of being, the “good life” is a direction one takes rather than its existing as a specific destination. A “good life” is experienced when one’s life path is pursued in a holistic way when psychological freedom exists to allow for movement and sound decision-making, in any direction.

Yet, it has been observed that college students and graduates often find it difficult to apply what they’ve learned and how that learning might assist them in attaining career goals (Cherwitz & Hurtado, 2007) if, in fact, those career goals have been crystallized at all. To maximize benefits of an internship, Stier (2002) considers that academic preparation, motivation, and competency level for students themselves, paired with adequate preparation of the sponsoring internship sites are critical to support a successful internship.

This study sought to better understand the internship experience from the perspective of host employers. Employers observe and evaluate student interns in the workplace and can provide a unique direct measure of student intern behavior.

Methods

Internships that are monitored or managed by the Student Career Center are evaluated by use of a standard format evaluation instrument (see appendix 1). This study examined employer evaluations of 444 student interns that were collected from January of 2005 through December, 2007. Most internship placements were in the State of Indiana or within the immediate surrounding region, including private, for-profit, not for-profit, public, and governmental or NGO concerns. Student interns represented a broad range of academic disciplines offered at the University.

Results

Employers or site supervisors were asked to complete student intern evaluations for the through an electronic, web-based form. A URL was provided through an email message to each supervisor with a request that they complete the evaluation as soon as possible after the students' completion of their internship cycle. Constructs alone were purposely provided for evaluation to allow for broad interpretation of objective criteria to be used by the evaluators who were asked to rate interns on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high). Those broad constructs included:

- Attitude toward work
- Ability to learn
- Quality of work output
- Maturity
- Dependability
- Quantity of work output
- Ability to relate with others in the workplace
- Overall performance

Results of the Employer Evaluations are provided in table 1 below.

<i>Domain</i>	<i>Mean Score</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>N</i>
Attitude toward work	4.37	.66	444
Ability to learn	4.53	.65	444
Quality of work	4.38	.67	444
Maturity	4.35	.75	444
Dependability	4.50	.73	444
Quantity of Work	4.09	.76	444
Relating to Others	4.50	.65	444
Overall Performance	4.44	.69	444

Table 1. Employer Evaluations of Interns

In addition to the rating of the broad constructs presented above, employers were also asked to respond to several questions regarding their observation of students' skills sets consistent with established learning outcomes goals for the Indiana State University's General Education Program. The learning outcome goals questions were not included on the Internship Evaluation form until 2006. From that point, employers were asked to voluntarily provide information regarding their student interns, which generated responses representing 218 individual interns, with results presented in table 2 below. Ratings ranged from 1 (low) to 5 (high).

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean Score</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>N</i>
Creative Problem Solving	4.31	.83	218
Appreciation for Opposing Views	3.69	1.62	218
Effective Writing	3.53	1.82	218
Effective Speaking	4.32	.89	218
Solving Complex Problems	3.70	1.58	218
Working on a Team	4.34	1.33	218
Respect for Others	4.33	1.23	218
Reading Ability	4.18	1.61	218
Independent Thinking	4.45	.74	218
Critical Analysis	3.95	1.47	218
Reasoned Inquiry	4.15	1.30	218
Making Informed Choices	4.38	.85	218
Self Directed Learning	4.45	.97	218
General Learning Processes	4.21	1.39	218
Adaptability	4.42	1.05	218

Table 2. General Education Learning Outcomes

Further analysis of data was conducted to determine ratings for students within specific academic units and is presented as means in appendix 2 with the 1-5 rating format reported.

Discussion

The Indiana State University Internship Program has demonstrated that students entering internship placement do so with skills sets that allow high levels of performance along seven domains of attitude toward work, ability to learn, quality of work, maturity, dependability, quality of work, relating to others, and overall performance. Yet, supervisor ratings of student interns' demonstration of skills sets reflective of general education shows some areas where attention and further inquiry might be warranted.

Appreciation for the views of others, effective writing skills, solving complex problems, and critical analysis received overall lower ratings when compared to other learning outcomes variables, with discernable differences in performance levels of students from specific academic areas of study. Further investigation is necessary to better understand the findings and the potential impact of students' learning at Indiana State University. Additionally, supervisors were invited to add comments to their evaluation form. Results of those comments are currently being evaluated and will be presented in a separate report to follow.

References

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- Cherwitz, R.A. and Hurtado, A.L. (2007). Interns as Intellectual Entrepreneur. *Academe* (93) 1.
- Perry, W.G. (1981). Cognitive and Ethical Growth: The Making of Meaning, in Arthur W. Chickering and Associates (eds.), *The Modern American College*. Jossey-Bass: 76-116.
- Rogers, Carl. (1961). *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy*. London: Constable.
- Stichman, A.J. and Farkas, M.A. (2005). The Pedagogical Use of Internships in Criminal Justice Programs: A Nationwide Study. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*. Highland Heights (16) 1.
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Appendix 1- Site Supervisor Internship Evaluation

Thank you for providing this opportunity to ISU students. In order to help this experience be best utilized, please take a few minutes to provide feedback to ISU on the student's performance, and comments or suggestions that will help us continue to promote improvement of our process. Information provided will be potentially used to determine student grades, as well as to advance policy and protocol. Upon completion, submit your response and print a copy for yourself.

Please review the following details regarding this internship, if any of this information is incorrect, please contact the <u>Career Center</u> at (812) 237-5000 prior to completing this evaluation.	
Internship ID	660
Signature Code	9940050
Internship Start Date	12/12/20
Expected Internship Completion Date	12/12/20
Internship Host Organization	Kramerica Corporation
Current Host Supervisor	Elaine Benes

Please select an option under each category that best describes your experience with the intern.

Attitude - Application to Work

- 5-Outstanding in enthusiasm
- 4-Very interested and industrious
- 3-Average in diligence and interest
- 2-Somewhat indifferent
- 1-Definitely not interested

Dependability

- 5-Completely dependable
- 4-Above average in dependability
- 3-Usually dependable
- 2-Sometimes neglectful or careless
- 1-Unreliable

Ability To Learn

- 5-Learned work exceptionally well
- 4-Learned work readily
- 3-Average in understanding
- 2-Slow to learn
- 1-Difficulty learning in this environment

Quantity of Work

- 5-Unusually high output
- 4-More than average
- 3-Normal amount
- 2-Below average
- 1-Low output, slow

Quality of Work

- 5-Excellent
- 4-Very Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Below Average
- 1-Very Poor

Relations with Others

- 5-Exceptionally well accepted
- 4-Works well with others
- 3-Gets along satisfactorily
- 2-Has difficulty working with others
- 1-Works very poorly with others

Maturity - Poise

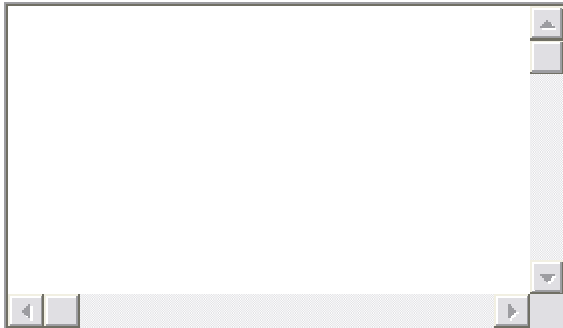
- 5-Poised and confident
- 4-Has good self-assurance
- 3-Average maturity and poise
- 2-Seldom asserts himself or herself
- 1-Timid

Overall Performance

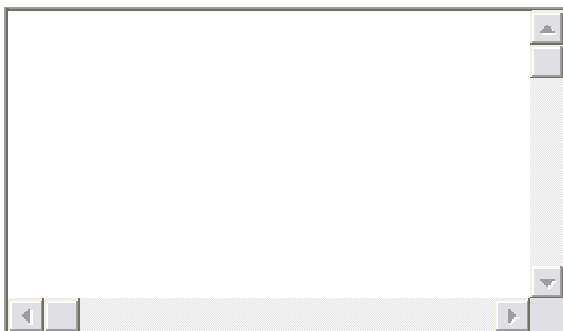
- 5-Outstanding
- 4-Very Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Marginal
- 1-Unsatisfactory

Please answer the following questions:

Comment on the student's ability to relate classroom knowledge to the internship setting. Does the student demonstrate an appropriate foundation for this type of experience, and does s/he uphold the expectations of this placement?



Does the student demonstrate appropriate decision-making skills? Does s/he respond appropriately under work related stresses? If this placement involves critical thinking and crisis situations, how does the student function? Please provide examples or specific comments.



How has the student demonstrated motivation, enthusiasm, and initiative in this internship? Can you recall a situation in which the student really demonstrated exemplary involvement, or took an active role in a project or situation?

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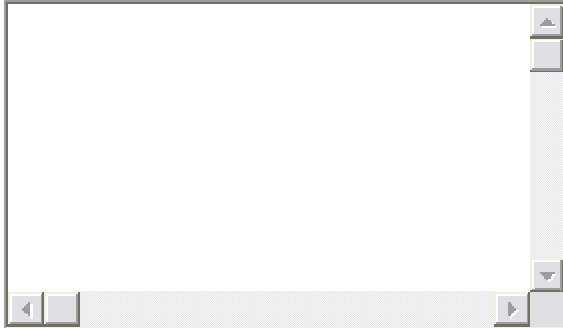
What are this student's most significant strengths? Please discuss the student's professional growth during this experience.

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What constructive feedback would you provide to help the intern get even more out of this experience?

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Does this student function as a team member, or in a more independent role? How effective is s/he in the expected role?



Did the student have opportunity, in this internship, to make classroom or public presentations, or act in a capacity to represent your agency outside your office?

Yes No

If so, please comment on the student's performance.



Social Science Internship Questions

- A. Did you address the issue of confidentiality with the student at the onset of the internship? Does the student demonstrate appropriate understanding and practice of the concept?
- B. How effective is the student in establishing appropriate relationships with co-workers and clients? In your professional opinion, is the student's relationship development skills well served in your setting? Please reference the students advising/counseling/listening skills with clients and colleagues.
- C. Does the student demonstrate ability to analyze information, prepare reports, and properly manage client records? Please provide some specific details.

Grade Input

It is helpful, for those using this evaluation in determination of grades, to have specific input from the internship site supervisor. Please “grade” the student on his/her participation in the internship, so that it can be factored into the academic credit component.

- A** Student’s work was excellent at all levels. S/he would be offered employment, if available. I would recommend him/her for any position for which s/he applies.
- B+**
- B** Student’s work was solid and conscientious. I might offer employment to this person. I would give a strong recommendation if asked.
- C+**
- C** Student’s work was acceptable, but did not contribute in any significant way to the success of the organization.
- D** Student’s work was marginal.
- F** Student’s work was not acceptable and threatened the success of the organization.

Verification of hours worked

I have monitored the student’s hours worked, and can certify that the student has completed the noted number of hours below.

Hours

The intern has completed the required number of hours and has successfully completed this internship

experience? Yes No

If no, please explain below.

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Additional Information

Is it your intention to continue to work with ISU interns?

Yes No

Would you like to discuss further possible ways to effectively utilize interns in your agency?

Yes No

Are you, or an employee of your organization, an ISU Alum?

Yes No

In the future, we may have employer panel discussions to inform ISU Faculty about employer hiring needs and perspectives on how our University can better prepare our graduates. Would you be willing to serve on such a panel?

Yes No

Aside from providing interns (or helping to meet your entry-level hiring needs), please describe how our University might help your organization.

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Evaluations are an important learning component of internships, thus, information in the evaluations may be shared with both students and employers. Please indicate your choice below:

Yes, I agree to disclose this information.

No, I would rather not disclose this information.

Elective Questions

As part of accreditation, Indiana State University must address a few items related to general education. We would appreciate a couple of minutes of your time to address this student's advancement of general education as part of this experience. Thank you for your willingness to help us further assess general education at Indiana State. This data will be used in the accreditation report as well as an added component of this student's evaluation.

These questions are OPTIONAL, you may choose to submit your evaluation now if it is complete at this point.

I would like to answer these elective questions? Yes No

[Submit Now](#)

Please evaluate the intern's ability to perform the following tasks:

Finding new ways to think about problems or topics

- 5-Very Good
- 4-Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Not Very Good
- 1-Not Good At All
- Did not observe intern's skill on this item/unable to determine

Ability to think independently

- 5-Very Good
- 4-Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Not Very Good
- 1-Not Good At All
- Did not observe intern's skill on this item/unable to determine

Evaluating opposing options or viewpoints

- 5-Very Good
- 4-Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Not Very Good
- 1-Not Good At All
- Did not observe intern's skill on this item/unable to determine

Capacity for critical analysis

- 5-Very Good
- 4-Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Not Very Good
- 1-Not Good At All
- Did not observe intern's skill on this item/unable to determine

Communicating ideas by writing effectively

- 5-Very Good
- 4-Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Not Very Good
- 1-Not Good At All
- Did not observe intern's skill on this item/unable to determine

Capacity for reasoned inquiry

- 5-Very Good
- 4-Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Not Very Good
- 1-Not Good At All
- Did not observe intern's skill on this item/unable to determine

Communicating ideas by speaking effectively

- 5-Very Good
- 4-Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Not Very Good
- 1-Not Good At All
- Did not observe intern's skill on this item/unable to determine

Making informed and reasonable choices

- 5-Very Good
- 4-Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Not Very Good
- 1-Not Good At All
- Did not observe intern's skill on this item/unable to determine

Solving complex problems

- 5-Very Good
- 4-Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Not Very Good
- 1-Not Good At All
- Did not observe intern's skill on this item/unable to determine

Learning effectively on his/her own

- 5-Very Good
- 4-Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Not Very Good
- 1-Not Good At All
- Did not observe intern's skill on this item/unable to determine

Working with others on projects

- 5-Very Good
- 4-Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Not Very Good
- 1-Not Good At All
- Did not observe intern's skill on this item/unable to determine

Understanding that learning is a life-long process

- 5-Very Good
- 4-Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Not Very Good
- 1-Not Good At All
- Did not observe intern's skill on this item/unable to determine

Understanding and respecting the cultures, attitudes, and customs of others

- 5-Very Good
- 4-Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Not Very Good
- 1-Not Good At All
- Did not observe intern's skill on this item/unable to determine

Ability to adapt to change

- 5-Very Good
- 4-Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Not Very Good
- 1-Not Good At All
- Did not observe intern's skill on this item/unable to determine

Reading ability

- 5-Very Good
- 4-Good
- 3-Average
- 2-Not Very Good
- 1-Not Good At All
- Did not observe intern's skill on this item/unable to determine

<input type="button" value="Submit"/>	<input type="button" value="Reset"/>
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Appendix 2

To assist in the interpretation of the data collected through the Internship Evaluation program, data is presented in the table below specific to academic majors. In many cases, academic majors were represented by very few students, in which case, they are not included in this table as it would be difficult to infer generalizability to the larger population of students within that major. Caution is extended to refer to the “n” in each case to determine the degree of generalizability that might be extended based on that “n.”

	Attitude Toward Work	Ability to Learn	Quality of Work	Maturity	Dependability	Quantity of Work	Relating to Others	Overall Performance	Gen Ed Outcomes	Creative Problem Solving	Appreciation for Opposing Views	Effective Writing	Effective Speaking	Solving Complex Problems	Working on a Team	Respect for Others	Reading Ability	Independent Thinking	Critical Analysis	Reasoned Inquiry	Making Informed Choices	Self Directed Learning	General Learning Processes	Adaptability
Accounting N=21	4.24	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.7	4.3	4.5	4.5	n=11	4.36	3.64	3.43	3.64	4.14	4.28	4.57	4.78	4.42	3.71	4.14	4.35	4.5	4.42	4.28
Aerospace Admin N=4	4.4	4.8	4.4	4.6	4.8	3.6	4.6	4.6	n=2	5	2	4.5	4	2	4.5	5	2.5	5	5	5	4.5	5	5	4.5
Athletic Training N=8	4.8	4.6	4.5	4.9	4.6	4.6	4.9	4.7	n=6	5	3.83	3.83	4.5	4.66	4.83	4.66	4.16	5	4.83	4.66	4	5	5	4
BS Nursing 2	4	4	3.5	4	3.5	3.5	3.5	4	n=2	4	2	2	4.5	2	4	2	2	4	4	3.5	3.5	3.5	4	4.5
Business Administration N=2	4.5	5	5	5	5	4	4.5	5	n=2	4.5	4.5	5	4.5	4.5	5	4.5	5	5	4.5	4.5	5	4.5	4.5	5
Chemistry N=6	4.5	4.9	4.5	4.7	4.2	4.0	4.7	4.7	n=4	3.25	2	3.5	4.75	4.25	4.75	4.75	3.25	4.5	4.75	4.5	3.5	3.25	4.25	4.75
Community Health Promotion N=5	4.4	4.8	4.4	4.8	4.2	4	4.2	4.2	n=3	4.66	3.33	5	5	3	5	5	3.33	5	5	5	5	5	3.33	5
ChildFamDvp N=5	4.4	4.8	4.6	4.8	4.8	4.4	4.8	4.8	n=3	4.66	4.66	4.33	4.66	3.33	5	5	4.66	4.66	4.33	3.33	4.66	4.66	3.33	5
CompAidedMgftTech N=4	4.5	5	4.5	4	4.5	4.3	4.8	4.8	n=3	4	5	4.66	4.66	4	5	4.66	3	3.66	4.66	4	4.33	5	4.33	5
Const Mgmt N=35	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.5	3.9	4.4	4.2	n=17	3.64	3.05	2.76	4.11	2.94	4.64	3.58	3.94	4.17	3.47	3.94	3.94	4.29	3.11	4.23
Criminology N=13	4.2	4.6	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.2	4.4	4.5	n=8	4.6	3.1	3.6	4.6	4.1	4.2	4.9	4.8	4.5	3.9	4.1	4.8	4.9	4.8	4.6
ElectTech N=6	4.4	4.7	4.2	4.5	4.5	4.2	4.5	4.5	n=4	4.25	3.75	2.25	3.75	4.5	4.5	2	2.25	4.75	3.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	3.25	4.5
FineArts N=2	4.5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	n=2	.5	4	0	4.5	4.5	5	4.5	5	4.5	2.5	2.5	5	4.5	4.5	5
History N=6	4.4	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.4	4.0	4.4	4.8	n=4	4.5	3.25	3.5	3.5	3.25	4.5	3.5	5	5	4.5	5	4.75	5	3.5	4.75
IndustSprvsn N=7	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.3	4.0	4.1	4.1	n=5	4.2	4.2	4.4	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.2	4.8	4.4	4.2	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.6
InformatTech N=64	4.3	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.5	4.0	4.5	4.5	n=30	4.43	3.63	2.9	4.13	4.33	4.2	3.8	4.1	4.4	4.16	4.43	4.5	4.66	4.13	4.33
Packaging N=7	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.3	4.6	4.7	4.3	4.6	n=5	4.4	4.4	3.6	4.0	4.0	4.4	4.8	3.8	4.4	3.8	4.4	4.2	4.6	3.6	4.8
PhysEd/ExerSci N=3	4.3	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.3	4.7	4.7	n=3	3.66	2.66	4.33	4	2.66	4.66	4.66	4.66	4	2.66	4	4.66	3.33	4.33	4.66
RecSportMgmt N=8	4.5	4.1	4.1	4.4	4.8	4.3	4.5	4.4	n=1	3.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	5.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	5.0	4.0	4.0
ProfAviationFlightTech N=5	5	5	5	5	5	4.8	5	5	n=2	5	5	4.5	5	4.5	5	4.5	4.5	5	4.5	4.5	5	5	4.5	5
Psychology N=84	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.0	4.6	4.5	n=34	4.41	3.70	3.38	4.47	3.29	4.35	4.67	4.23	4.5	3.61	3.79	4.44	4.35	4.44	4.32
Social Work N=31	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.5	4.1	4.5	4.4	n=28	4.35	4.17	4.14	4.67	3.32	3.89	4.78	4.21	4.57	4.07	4.39	4.53	4.46	4.53	4.60
Sociology N=5	3.4	3.8	3.6	3.4	3.8	3.6	3.8	3.8	n=4	3.75	2.5	3	3.5	2	4	3.25	3.75	3.25	3.25	3.75	3.25	3.25	4	3.5
SpeechCommPubRel N=6	4.5	4.7	4.7	4.8	4.6	4.3	4.5	4.5	n=2	4.5	4.5	5	4.5	4.5	5	5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	5	5	4.5
ExerciseScience N=9	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.4	4.6	4.3	4.6	4.6	n=3	4.3	4.3	4.3	5.0	4.7	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.7	4.3	4.8	5.0	4.8	4.8	5.0

