

CCTDI Assessment Report

Spring 2019

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Academic Success Department's goal is to permit first-time-in-college students to become independent learners proficient in critical thinking. Through course completion, students will be able to demonstrate their analytical and evaluation skills. One measurement for the achievement of that goal is the use of the California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory tests (CCTDI). The Academic Success Department has identified a set criterion for defining student advancement in SLS 1515 *Cornerstone Experience*. The results of the overall means of the CCTDI are expected to statistically significantly improve in the following Critical Thinking Dispositions: Truth Seeking, Open-Mindedness, Analyticity, Systematicity, Inquisitiveness, Confidence in Reasoning, and Maturity of Judgment, as measured by the CCTDI. This report began as part of the FSW QEP and continues as course level assessment for SLS 1515 *Cornerstone Experience*.

Pre-test/post-test studies in small groups provide an assessment foundation for learning and skill set adoption under given criteria. While scores do yield some error related to the target subject such as grade level or demographic, many can be accounted for in small sub-samples (individual classes). Moreover, those correlative measures that cannot be accounted for can be better understood through assessment (Cole et al., 2011).

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2 STATISTICS

2.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND SIGNIFICANCE TESTING

During the spring 2019 semester, 742 total tests (pre- and post-) were administered to students. Of those, 241 of which were pre-/post- paired tests and 260 tests did not have counterparts. Pre-test and post-test mean scores for each dimension as well as the overall score are provided in Table 1. Six of seven dimensions exhibit improvements. The difference in the means from pre-to-post test scores for each dimension (Truth-seeking, Open mindedness, Inquisitiveness, Analyticity, Systematicity, Confidence in Reasoning, and Maturity of Judgment) was tested for significance using a paired means t-test according to standard methods (Davis, 1973; McDonald, 2009; Siegel, 1956; Wilkinson, 1999). The results of significance testing for each dimension are also shown in Table 1.

The paired means t-test results indicate that for the increases in Truth-seeking, Analyticity, and Confidence in Reasoning, the results are statistically significantly different. In other words, we must

reject the null hypothesis that the difference in the means of the pre- and post-test scores are equal to 0, and we can conclude this with a 95% confidence that the differences in scores are not solely due to chance. For the three dimensions and the overall score, which exhibits a statistically significant increase in mean scores, it can be reasonably concluded that the average increase in score of the students as a group is a result of some change in the students as a group. For the remaining dimensions, this cannot be stated.

Effect size was calculated using a method devised by Rosenthal and Rosnow (1991) for meta-analytical purposes in potential comparisons with other institutions (Lipsey and Wilson, 1993). The statistically significant results exhibit what Cohen (1988) would consider small effect sizes ranging from 0.01 to 0.30 (Table 1). In other words, non-overlap from pre-test scores to post-test scores range from approximately 0% to 21%.

| | Truth-seeking | Open Mindedness | Inquisitiveness | Analyticity | Systematicity | Confidence in Reasoning | Maturity of Judgment | Overall |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Pre-test Mean | 33.6 | 40.4 | 47.5 | 44.0 | 40.4 | 44.4 | 39.0 | 289.2 |
| Post-test Mean | 34.2 | 40.6 | 47.2 | 45.2 | 40.5 | 45.7 | 39.5 | 292.8 |
| Effect size | 0.14 | 0.04 | -0.06 | 0.30 | 0.02 | 0.25 | 0.08 | 0.21 |
| p-value | 0.035 | 0.506 | 0.359 | 6.07x10⁻⁶ | 0.744 | 1.44x10⁻⁴ | 0.197 | 0.001 |

Table 1. Comparison of mean scores for Pre/post test scores. Bold denote statistically significant difference. Positive effect sizes indicate a higher mean score for Post-test scores.

2.2 SUPPORTING EXPLORATORY DATA ANALYSIS

Since significance tests only provide information under the assumption the two groups are unchanged excepting for the learning in the classroom between pre-/post-tests, it is necessary to explore in detail each dimension using multiple standard processes for support of significance testing. In this way, the most effective assessment can be presented toward instructive improvement (Elder and Paul, 2007).

Figure 1 highlights the percentage of student test scores that improved and declined. The attributes of Confidence in Reasoning and Analyticity exhibit the greatest improvement percentages at 61.0% and 55.6%, respectively. Inquisitiveness exhibits a greater decline than improvement.

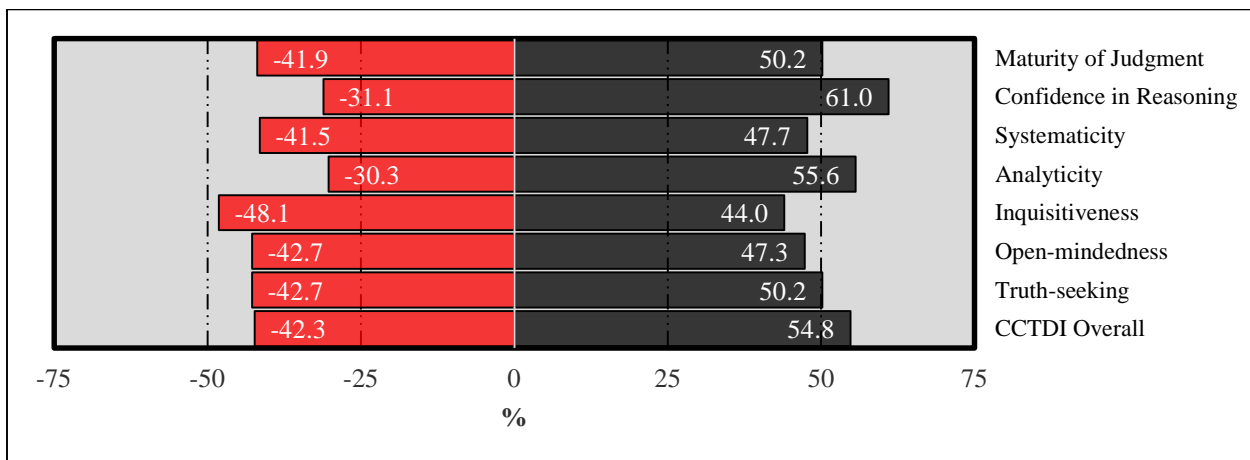


Figure 1. Percentage of students improved (black) vs. declined (red). Difference of the sum of increase and decline from 100 is the percentage of test takers that exhibited no change.

2.3 LONGITUDINAL STUDY

The results of paired means t-test of pre-/post- test scores for all semesters from fall 2012 through spring 2019 are shown in Table 2. Analyticity and Confidence in Reasoning exhibit improvements from pre-test to post-test in all terms, although not all improvements are statistically significant. The Confidence in Reasoning attribute has exhibited statistically significant improvements in all but one term since implementation (15 of 16 terms). Analyticity exhibits a similar rate, with statistically significant improvement in 11 of 16 terms. The Truth-seeking attribute also demonstrates strong results with 8 of 16 terms exhibiting statistically significant improvement. Open Mindedness consistently exhibits positive changes from pre-test to post-test, although only 5 of 16 terms are statistically significant. A complete review of positive changes and statistically significant positive changes is listed below:

- ✚ Confidence in Reasoning
 - 16/16 positive change, 15/16 statistically significant
- ✚ Analyticity
 - 16/16 positive change, 11/16 statistically significant
- ✚ Truth-seeking
 - 15/16 positive change, 8/16 statistically significant
- ✚ Systematicity
 - 14/15 positive change, 6/16 statistically significant
- ✚ Open Mindedness
 - 16/16 positive change, 5/16 statistically significant
- ✚ Maturity of Judgment
 - 8/16 positive change, 4/16 statistically significant
- ✚ Inquisitiveness
 - 8/16 positive change, 1/16 statistically significant

| | Truth-seeking | Open Mindedness | Inquisitiveness | Analyticity | Systematicity | Confidence in Reasoning | Maturity of Judgment |
|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Fall '12 | 1.1 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 1 | 0.8 | 1.6 | 1.2 |
| Spring '13 | 0.4 | 0.7* | 0.1 | 1.2 | 0.8* | 1.8 | 1.1 |
| Summer '13 | 0.8 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 2.6 | 0.0 |
| Fall '13 | 0.5 | 0.0 | -0.6 | 0.4* | 0.0 | 1.4 | -0.1 |
| Spring '14 | 1.1 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 1.2 | 0.8 | 1.7 | 1.1 |
| Summer '14 | 0.8* | 0.5 | 0.2 | 1.2 | 1.6 | 1.8 | 0.1 |
| Fall '14 | 0.8 | 0.4* | -0.3 | 0.7 | 0.2 | 1.7 | -0.2* |
| Spring '15 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 0.1 | 1.3 | 0.4* | 2.3 | -0.0 |
| Fall '15 [#] | 0.0 | 0.0 | -0.4 | 0.5 | -0.5 | 1.3 | 0.3 |
| Spring '16 [#] | 0.8 | 0.4 | 0.0 | 1.1 | 0.6 | 2.0 | 0.3 |
| Fall '16 [#] | 0.1 | 0.0 | -0.1 | 0.5 | -0.5 | 2.0 | -0.3 |
| Spring '17 [#] | -0.3 | 0.1 | -0.2 | 0.8 | 0.9 | 2.1 | 0.0 |
| Fall '17 [#] | 1.5* | 0.3 | -0.6 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 1.4* |
| Spring '18 [#] | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.1 | 1.5 | 0.6 | 2.3 | -0.6 |
| Fall '18 [#] | 0.1 | 0.1 | -1.0 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 1.5 | -0.9 |
| Spring '19 [#] | 0.7 | 0.2 | -0.3 | 1.2 | 0.1 | 1.3 | 0.5 |

Table 2. SLS 1515 CCTDI Pre-/Post- test results mean difference. Comparison of significance test results for mean difference of pre-/post-test scores for Fall 2012 through Spring 2018. Shaded cells indicate statistically significant differences in the mean at the 95% confidence level. Red text denotes decrease from pre-to-post. *Denote marginal significance as defined by Johnson (2013). [#]Indicate scores originate from a random sample of the full SLS 1515 population.

Table 3 provides additional information regarding the paired means t-test including the observed t-statistic (t_{obs}) and probability of difference due to chance (p-value) with respect to the degrees of

freedom for each study. No effect size is reported since the method of calculation for this study has not been consistent historically (Rosenthal and Rosnow, 1991; Dunlop et al., 1996).

| | Truth-seeking | Open Mindedness | Inquisitiveness | Analyticity | Systematicity | Confidence in Reasoning | Maturity of Judgment |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| Fall 2012 $t_{crit} = 1.97$ | $t(365)=4.00$, $p<0.05$ | $t(365)=2.67$, $p<0.05$ | $t(365)=2.40$, $p<0.05$ | $t(365)=4.18$, $p<0.05$ | $t(365)=2.81$, $p<0.05$ | $t(365)=5.97$, $p<0.05$ | $t(365)=3.73$, $p<0.05$ |
| Spring 2013 $t_{crit} = 1.97$ | $t(204)=1.09$, $p=0.275$ | $t(204)=2.24$, $p=0.026^*$ | $t(204)=0.24$, $p=0.813$ | $t(204)=3.46$, $p=0.0007$ | $t(204)=2.08$, $p=0.039^*$ | $t(204)=5.28$, $p<0.001$ | $t(204)=2.89$, $p=0.004$ |
| Summer 2013 $t_{crit} = 1.98$ | $t(145)=1.71$, $p=0.090$ | $t(145)=0.94$, $p=0.347$ | $t(145)=0.95$, $p=0.345$ | $t(145)=2.92$, $p=0.004$ | $t(145)=2.69$, $p=0.008$ | $t(145)=5.79$, $p<0.001$ | $t(145)=0.03$, $p=0.980$ |
| Fall 2013 $t_{crit} = 1.97$ | $t(859)=2.69$, $p=0.007$ | $t(859)=0.07$, $p=0.941$ | $t(859)=3.10$, $p=0.002$ | $t(859)=2.26$, $p=0.024^*$ | $t(859)=0.05$, $p=0.963$ | $t(859)=7.71$, $p<0.001$ | $t(859)=-0.54$, $p=0.590$ |
| Spring 2014 $t_{crit} = 1.97$ | $t(407)=3.91$, $p=1.09 \times 10^{-4}$ | $t(407)=3.36$, $p=8.56 \times 10^{-4}$ | $t(407)=2.83$, $p=0.907$ | $t(407)=5.00$, $p=8.72 \times 10^{-7}$ | $t(407)=2.83$, $p=0.005$ | $t(407)=6.02$, $p=2.95 \times 10^{-9}$ | $t(407)=3.47$, $p=5.79 \times 10^{-4}$ |
| Summer 2014 $t_{crit} = 1.97$ | $t(173)=2.14$, $p=0.034^*$ | $t(173)=1.34$, $p=0.183$ | $t(173)=0.57$, $p=0.570$ | $t(173)=3.84$, $p=1.70 \times 10^{-4}$ | $t(173)=4.19$, $p=4.44 \times 10^{-5}$ | $t(173)=4.98$, $p=1.52 \times 10^{-6}$ | $t(173)=0.31$, $p=0.755$ |
| Fall 2014 $t_{crit} = 1.97$ | $t(1848)=5.82$, $p=7.88 \times 10^{-8}$ | $t(1848)=2.57$, $p=6.74 \times 10^{-9}$ | $t(1848)=-2.78$, $p=0.010$ | $t(1848)=6.01$, $p=0.005$ | $t(1848)=0.55$, $p=2.30 \times 10^{-9}$ | $t(1848)=13.80$, $p=2.77 \times 10^{-41}$ | $t(1848)=-2.20$, $p=0.028^*$ |
| Spring 2015 $t_{crit} = 1.97$ | $t(764)=4.36$, $p=7.44 \times 10^{-12}$ | $t(764)=5.46$, $p=1.51 \times 10^{-5}$ | $t(764)=0.51$, $p=0.608$ | $t(764)=7.58$, $p=9.82 \times 10^{-14}$ | $t(764)=2.26$, $p=0.024$ | $t(764)=11.79$, $p=1.41 \times 10^{-29}$ | $t(764)=-0.06$, $p=0.954$ |
| Fall 2015 $t_{crit} = 1.97$ | $t(268)=0.03$, $p=0.974$ | $t(268)=0.08$, $p=0.936$ | $t(268)=-1.11$, $p=0.178$ | $t(268)=1.61$, $p=0.108$ | $t(268)=-1.65$, $p=0.101$ | $t(268)=4.11$, $p=5.26 \times 10^{-5}$ | $t(268)=-0.80$, $p=0.422$ |
| Spring 2016 $t_{crit} = 1.97$ | $t(148)=1.91$, $p=0.058$ | $t(148)=1.18$, $p=0.239$ | $t(148)=0.11$, $p=0.912$ | $t(148)=2.93$, $p=0.004$ | $t(148)=1.35$, $p=0.180$ | $t(148)=5.13$, $p=9.05 \times 10^{-5}$ | $t(148)=0.78$, $p=0.436$ |
| Fall 2016 $t_{crit} = 1.97$ | $t(274)=0.34$, $p=0.737$ | $t(274)=-0.16$, $p=0.870$ | $t(274)=-0.37$, $p=0.710$ | $t(274)=1.62$, $p=0.106$ | $t(274)=-1.43$, $p=0.154$ | $t(274)=6.52$, $p=3.46 \times 10^{-10}$ | $t(274)=-0.96$, $p=0.336$ |
| Spring 2017 $t_{crit} = 1.98$ | $t(140)=-0.51$, $p=0.608$ | $t(140)=0.30$, $p=0.766$ | $t(140)=-0.42$, $p=0.678$ | $t(140)=1.85$, $p=0.067$ | $t(140)=1.78$, $p=0.078$ | $t(140)=4.20$, $p=4.65 \times 10^{-5}$ | $t(140)=-0.04$, $p=0.972$ |
| Fall 2017 $t_{crit} = 1.97$ | $t(175)=2.22$, $p=0.028^*$ | $t(175)=0.53$, $p=0.599$ | $t(175)=-0.88$, $p=0.382$ | $t(175)=0.61$, $p=0.546$ | $t(175)=0.38$, $p=0.702$ | $t(175)=0.80$, $p=0.427$ | $t(175)=1.99$, $p=0.049^*$ |
| Spring 2018 $t_{crit} = 1.97$ | $t(139)=1.19$, $p=0.234$ | $t(139)=1.11$, $p=0.271$ | $t(139)=0.12$, $p=0.906$ | $t(139)=3.77$, $p=0.0002$ | $t(139)=1.11$, $p=0.268$ | $t(139)=4.96$, $p=2.01 \times 10^{-6}$ | $t(139)=-1.16$, $p=0.247$ |
| Fall 2018 $t_{crit} = 1.97$ | $t(233)=0.25$, $p=0.805$ | $t(233)=0.46$, $p=0.649$ | $t(233)=-3.23$, $p=0.001$ | $t(233)=0.84$, $p=0.402$ | $t(233)=-0.10$, $p=0.918$ | $t(233)=4.00$, $p=8.53 \times 10^{-5}$ | $t(233)=-2.18$, $p=0.31$ |
| Spring 2019 $t_{crit} = 1.97$ | $t(240)=2.12$, $p=0.035$ | $t(240)=-0.67$, $p=0.043$ | $t(240)=-0.92$, $p=0.359$ | $t(240)=4.63$, $p=6.07 \times 10^{-6}$ | $t(240)=0.33$, $p=0.744$ | $t(240)=3.96$, $p=1.44 \times 10^{-4}$ | $t(240)=1.29$, $p=0.197$ |

Table 3. Additional significance testing statistics for attributes including observed t -stat (t_{obs}), probability of difference due to chance (p -value), degrees of freedom (df), and critical t -stat. In some cases, earlier reports did not include p -value when $p<0.05$ or in later studies, $p<<0.001$ and are indicated where applicable. Mean difference of pre-/post-test scores are reported in Table 3. *Denote marginal significance as defined by Johnson (2013).

Figure 2 is a graphical representation of the difference in mean scores of attributes across all semesters. The consistently strong improvement in scores from pre-to-post tests of the Confidence in Reasoning attribute is clearly visible (see consistent red zones in Figure 2). Analyticity exhibits the second strongest improvement over time followed by Truth-seeking.

By comparison, the attribute with minimal results across all semesters is Inquisitiveness (see consistent blue zones in Figure 2). This dimension has the lowest mean score difference across 13 of 16 semesters during the study and exhibited a decline from pre-to-post scores in the fall 2013, fall 2014, fall 2015, fall 2016, spring 2017, fall 2017, fall 2018, and spring 2019 semesters.

In terms of variability, Systematicity exhibits the widest variation of any indicator, as high as +1.6 in summer 2014, and as low as -0.5 in both fall 2013 and fall 2016, a range of 2.1. The Inquisitiveness attribute also exhibits substantial variability from as high as +1.4 in summer 2013 to as low as -1.0 in fall 2018, a range of 2.3. Analyticity is the most stable of all attributes with a range of just 1.3 from highest (+1.5) in spring 2018 to lowest (+0.2) in fall 2018.

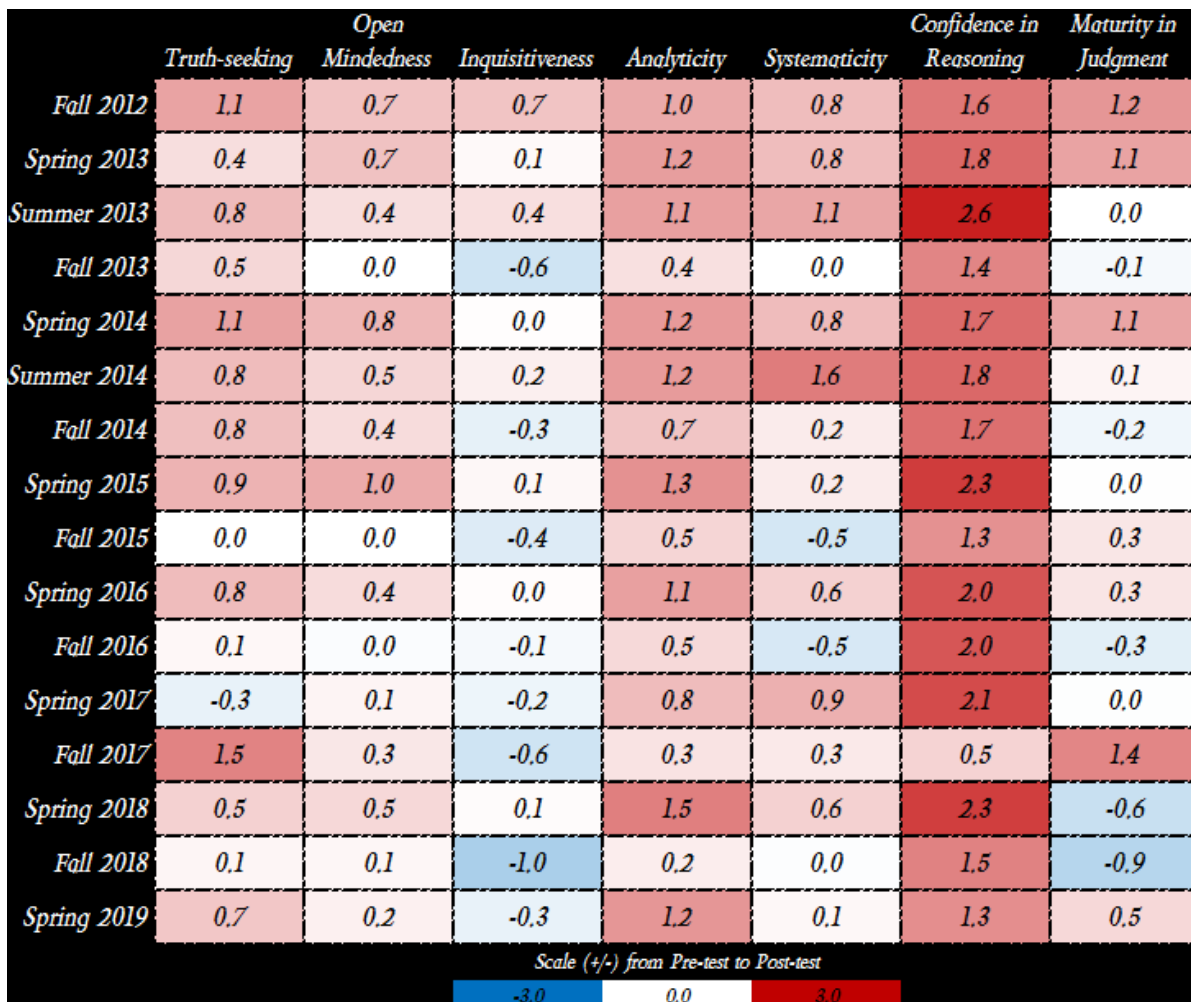


Figure 2. Colormap comparison of the difference in mean scores from pre-to-post tests across semester by attribute. Color bar represents maximum range of changes in the mean from pre-test to post-test with strongest positive changes in the mean denoted by darker reds (max = +3) and strongest negative changes in the mean denoted by darker blues (max = -3).

The attributes of the CCTDI exhibit a wide range of scores from pre-test to post-test. In some cases, the post-test scores of one attribute are lower than the pre-test scores of another. A review of this comparison can be helpful in determining if there is further room for improvement in that attribute as well as if minimal improvements are a result of an already strong attribute score. Figure 3 compares time-averaged pre-test mean scores from fall 2012 through the present to time-averaged post-test mean scores. Note that the highest pre-test scoring attribute, Inquisitiveness, also exhibits the smallest improvement from pre-to-post test with an improvement that barely registers on the graph. By comparison, the second highest pre-test attribute, Confidence in Reasoning, exhibits the largest improvement. For more clarity, see Figure 4 which displays time-averaged pre-test scores with time-averaged improvements from pre-test to post-test.

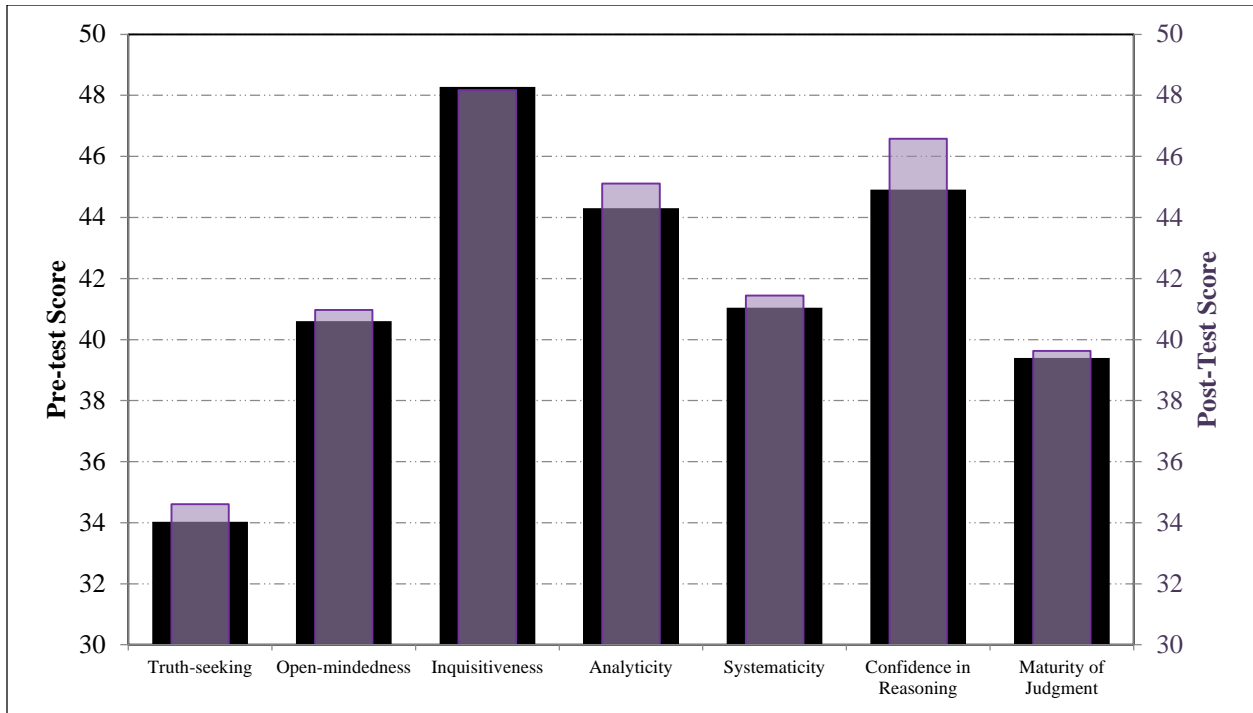


Figure 3. Average through time of the CCTDI mean scores from pre-test (black) to post-test (purple) from fall 2012 through the present.

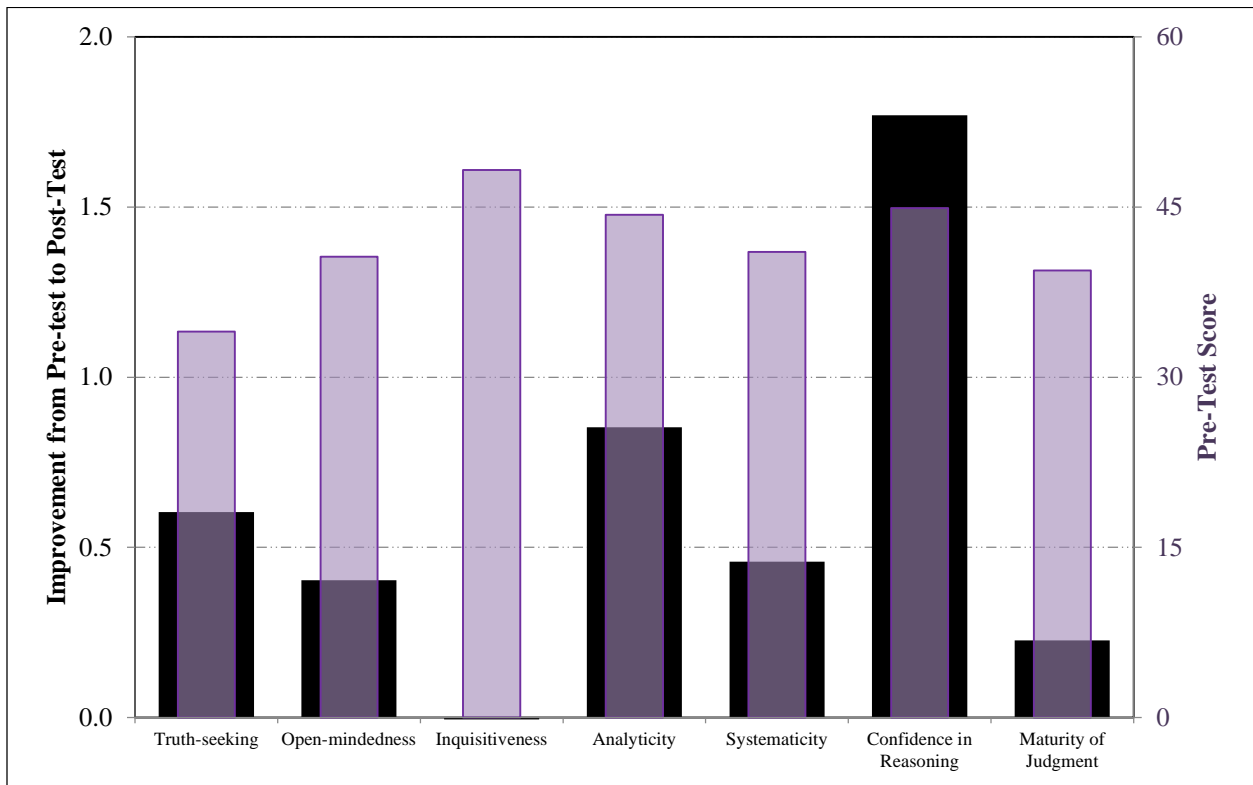


Figure 4. Time-averaged CCTDI mean improvement from pre-to-post test (black) compared with time-averaged mean scores from pre-test (purple).

3 CONCLUSIONS

In the SLS 1515 *Cornerstone Experience* course-level assessment, students are expected to improve in the seven Critical Thinking Dispositions: Truth Seeking, Open-Mindedness, Analyticity, Systematicity, Inquisitiveness, Confidence in Reasoning, and Maturity of Judgment based on exposure to these topics as a result of the course. These dispositions are measured using the California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory tests (CCTDI) and analysis between pre-test (first three weeks of semester testing date) and post-test (last three weeks of semester testing date) is performed.

A drilldown of the results of the CCTDI spring 2019 assessment are as follows:

1. The means of post-test scores exhibit statistically significant improvement over means of pre-test scores in the Truth-seeking, Analyticity, and Confidence in Reasoning attributes, although six of seven attributes exhibit improvement.
2. In a comparison of students who improved from pre-to-post and those that didn't, 6 of 7 attributes exhibit a greater population of students who improved from pre-to-post test scores than declined. Confidence in Reasoning and Analyticity exhibit the greatest improvement percentages at 61.0% and 55.6%, respectively.
3. In a longitudinal study, since comparisons began in fall 2012 the three attributes that have consistently exhibited the largest improvement in scores from pre-/post-test scores are 1) Confidence in Reasoning, 2) Analyticity and 3) Truth-seeking, in that order. Both Confidence in Reasoning and Analyticity have exhibited increases in mean score across all semesters.
4. In the same longitudinal study, the attribute with minimal results across all semesters is Inquisitiveness and exhibits a decline from pre-to-post scores in fall 2013, fall 2014, spring 2015, fall 2015, fall 2016, spring 2017, fall 2017, fall 2018, and spring 2019.
5. In the same longitudinal study, a comparison between time-averaged pre-test mean scores from fall 2012 through the present to time-averaged post-test mean scores exhibits the highest pre-test scoring attribute, Inquisitiveness, also exhibits the smallest improvement from pre-to-post test with an improvement that barely registers on the graph. Meanwhile, the second highest pre-test attribute, Confidence in Reasoning, exhibits the largest improvement.

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