

Humanities Disposition Study

Fall 2021

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Beginning fall 2016 the Humanities Department included a series of disposition questions at the end of the pre- and post-tests designed to measure student point of view on varying topics associated with the course. All of the questions are ordinal in nature with response options of “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Neutral”, “Disagree”, and “Strongly Disagree”, and are aligned with other courses within the discipline (e.g., HUM 2211 and HUM 2250). Further, some disposition questions align with other courses within the Humanities Department. This report will focus on cross-discipline comparisons of disposition questions.

The Humanities courses undergoing assessment for fall 2018, ARH 1000, HUM 2020, 2211, 2235, 2250, MUL 1010, PHI 2010, 2600, and REL 2300, included common questions that overlap in some areas. Table 1 below lists each disposition prompt (and associated learning outcome) along with which courses include that question.

		ARH 1000	HUM 2020	HUM 2211	HUM 2235	HUM 2250	MUL 1010	PHI 2010	PHI 2600	REL 2300
<i>Engage with the course material on a personal level.</i>										
Q1	I often continue to think about ideas or issues covered in my classes after my instructor is finished with them.	X					X	X	X	X
Q2	I often feel that ideas or concepts that I study in my classes are relevant to my own life.	X					X	X	X	X
Q3	I allow what I learn in class to impact how I see the world.	X					X	X	X	X
<i>Display open-mindedness.</i>										
Q4	I'm comfortable when different perspectives on an issue seem equally valid.	X	X	X	X	X				
Q5	I value more perspectives on an issue rather than fewer	X	X	X	X	X				
Q6	I am willing to change my mind based on new evidence.	X	X	X	X	X				
Q7	I consider it valuable to have my beliefs challenged occasionally.	X	X	X	X	X				
<i>Demonstrate willingness to inhabit the position of another.</i>										
Q8	Instead of focusing on what I think is wrong about what someone is saying or writing I prefer to try to understand how the ideas might make sense.	X						X	X	X
Q9	I feel like those who disagree with me make me look more seriously at perspectives I'd otherwise dismiss.	X						X	X	X
Q10	I feel that reading a text from the author's perspective is essential for understanding it.	X						X	X	X
<i>Relate the course material to life outside the classroom.</i>										
Q11	I like to see connections between course material and current events.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Q12	I often discuss ideas from my readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Q13	I often find ways to relate ideas or concepts from my classes to something of interest to my friends.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Resist the urge for quick and easy answers.</i>										
Q14	I'm ok feeling uncertain about ideas or issues.		X	X	X	X		X	X	
Q15	I don't think instructors should always give firm solutions to problems discussed in class.		X	X	X	X		X	X	
Q16	If an answer occurs to me right away, I still prefer to consider other possibilities.		X	X	X	X		X	X	
<i>Seek knowledge independently.</i>										
Q17	I often investigate ideas, issues, or concepts more deeply outside of my classes to learn more about them.						X			X
Q18	If something sparks my interest, I will look into it further on my own.						X			X
Q19	I don't believe knowledge is only valuable if it improves my grade.						X			X

Table 1. Organization of disposition questions by course.

Table 2 below lists each disposition prompt (and associated learning outcome), and the “Positive response” change (e.g., increase/decrease in “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”). Of the 98 disposition offerings over all courses 41% of dispositions exhibit a 5% positive response increase or higher compared with 54% in fall 2020, 46% of fall 2019, 44% in fall 2018, 32% in 2017, and 21% in 2016. Questions 3, 4, 8, 9, 15, and 16 exhibit positive change with all courses utilizing the question. Question 7 exhibits the most negative changes with 2 of 5 courses exhibiting a negative increase.

		ARH 1000	HUM 2020	HUM 2211	HUM 2235	HUM 2250	MUL 1010	PHI 2010	PHI 2600	REL 2300
Engage with the course material on a personal level.										
Q1	I often continue to think about ideas or issues covered in my classes after my instructor is finished with them.	-0.6%					-1.2%	1.7%	3.2%	0.5%
Q2	I often feel that ideas or concepts that I study in my classes are relevant to my own life.	10.6%					11.9%	13.5%	13.7%	-6.1%
Q3	I allow what I learn in class to impact how I see the world.	3.7%					4.7%	4.9%	0.9%	2.7%
Display open-mindedness.										
Q4	I'm comfortable when different perspectives on an issue seem equally valid.	1.0%	0.6%	4.3%	2.8%	0.5%				
Q5	I value more perspectives on an issue rather than fewer	1.0%	1.6%	-13.0%	2.6%	-2.7%				
Q6	I am willing to change my mind based on new evidence.	0.2%	1.5%	0.0%	0.5%	-8.9%				
Q7	I consider it valuable to have my beliefs challenged occasionally.	4.5%	3.4%	-8.7%	1.4%	-8.6%				
Demonstrate willingness to inhabit the position of another.										
Q8	Instead of focusing on what I think is wrong about what someone is saying or writing I prefer to try to understand how the ideas might make sense.	1.9%						4.5%	2.4%	5.2%
Q9	I feel like those who disagree with me make me look more seriously at perspectives I'd otherwise dismiss.	0.3%						9.1%	0.2%	14.0%
Q10	I feel that reading a text from the author's perspective is essential for understanding it.	9.7%						-2.9%	6.0%	-3.8%
Relate the course material to life outside the classroom.										
Q11	I like to see connections between course material and current events.	-2.4%	5.9%	4.3%	10.6%	2.7%	-2.6%	1.5%	6.0%	16.3%
Q12	I often discuss ideas from my readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	2.1%	7.0%	13.0%	-10.8%	-6.1%	3.2%	3.8%	5.6%	0.7%
Q13	I often find ways to relate ideas or concepts from my classes to something of interest to my friends.	13.2%	11.9%	-4.3%	8.9%	9.1%	12.8%	5.0%	5.3%	5.5%
Resist the urge for quick and easy answers.										
Q14	I'm ok feeling uncertain about ideas or issues.		8.9%	17.4%	-11.6%	9.1%		3.7%	9.2%	
Q15	I don't think instructors should always give firm solutions to problems discussed in class.		6.8%	8.7%	11.7%	12.1%		11.7%	16.8%	
Q16	If an answer occurs to me right away, I still prefer to consider other possibilities.		5.7%	13.0%	10.8%	3.6%		5.6%	0.1%	
Seek knowledge independently.										
Q17	I often investigate ideas, issues, or concepts more deeply outside of my classes to learn more about them.						11.7%			-1.6%
Q18	If something sparks my interest, I will look into it further on my own.						-6.2%			-4.4%
Q19	I don't believe knowledge is only valuable if it improves my grade.						-4.5%			9.7%

Scale	-15%	0%	15%
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Table 2. Organization of disposition questions by course with positive response changes.