

**THE VALUE OF A**  
***VIRTUAL TERM***  
***ABROAD***

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# **POLL**

**Is your institution discussing or implementing actions to “internationalize” the curriculum or create more global awareness?**

**Yes**

**No**

**Not sure**

# POLL

**Have you participated in a study abroad or other international experience?**

**Yes**

**No**

# **POLL**

**What impact did that international experience have on you?**

- A. Transformational**
- B. Continues to impact my world view**
- C. Was a lot of fun, but then got back to the real world**
- D. Not much**
- E. Doesn't apply/ No experience**

# **POLL**

**How many of you have participated in a COIL Collaboration or similar learning activity?**

# **WHY VIRTUAL TERM ABROAD?**

*“Only a small percentage of students participate in study abroad programs and many groups are underrepresented. There is little diversity in race, gender and ethnicity nor access for non-traditional, lower socioeconomic groups, those with disabilities and first generation college students” (Fischer, 2012).*

# ESC PARTNERS

UNAPEC – Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic - since 2007

Quality Leadership University (QLU) – Panama City, Panama - since 2009



# **PROJECT GOALS**

- **Opportunity for all students to participate in a virtual term abroad**
- **Analyze use of virtual tools and mobile technology**
- **Promote cross cultural and/or international interaction**



# **PROCESS**

- **Organize course collaborations**
- **Qualitative and quantitative analysis of discussion forums and virtual sessions**
- **Pre and Post surveys**
- **Interviews and Focus groups**

# **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:**

*Promoting and assessing value  
creation in communities and  
networks: a conceptual framework  
(Etienne Wenger, et al 2011)*

# VALUE CREATION

## Value Creation



(Wenger, Trayner, & de Laat as cited in Bozarth, 2012, para. 3)

# **SAMPLE COURSE COLLABORATION**

**Duration 2-3 weeks**

**Initial asynchronous icebreaker**

**2-3 Virtual sessions**

**Asynchronous discussion in  
between virtual sessions**

**Team written assignment**

# COLLABORATIONS COMPLETED

**Pilot: ESC Panama – SUNY/Cortland**

**ESC Panama – College of Westchester**

<http://commons.esc.edu/cowcollaboration/>

**ESC Panama – ESC CDL**

<http://sunyescimmigrationexperiment.blogspot.com/2013/02/guidelines-for-the-international.html>

**ESC Panama – University of Economics in Bratislava, Slovakia**

<http://habitatsk.wordpress.com/>

**ESC Panama (Market Research) – College of Westchester**

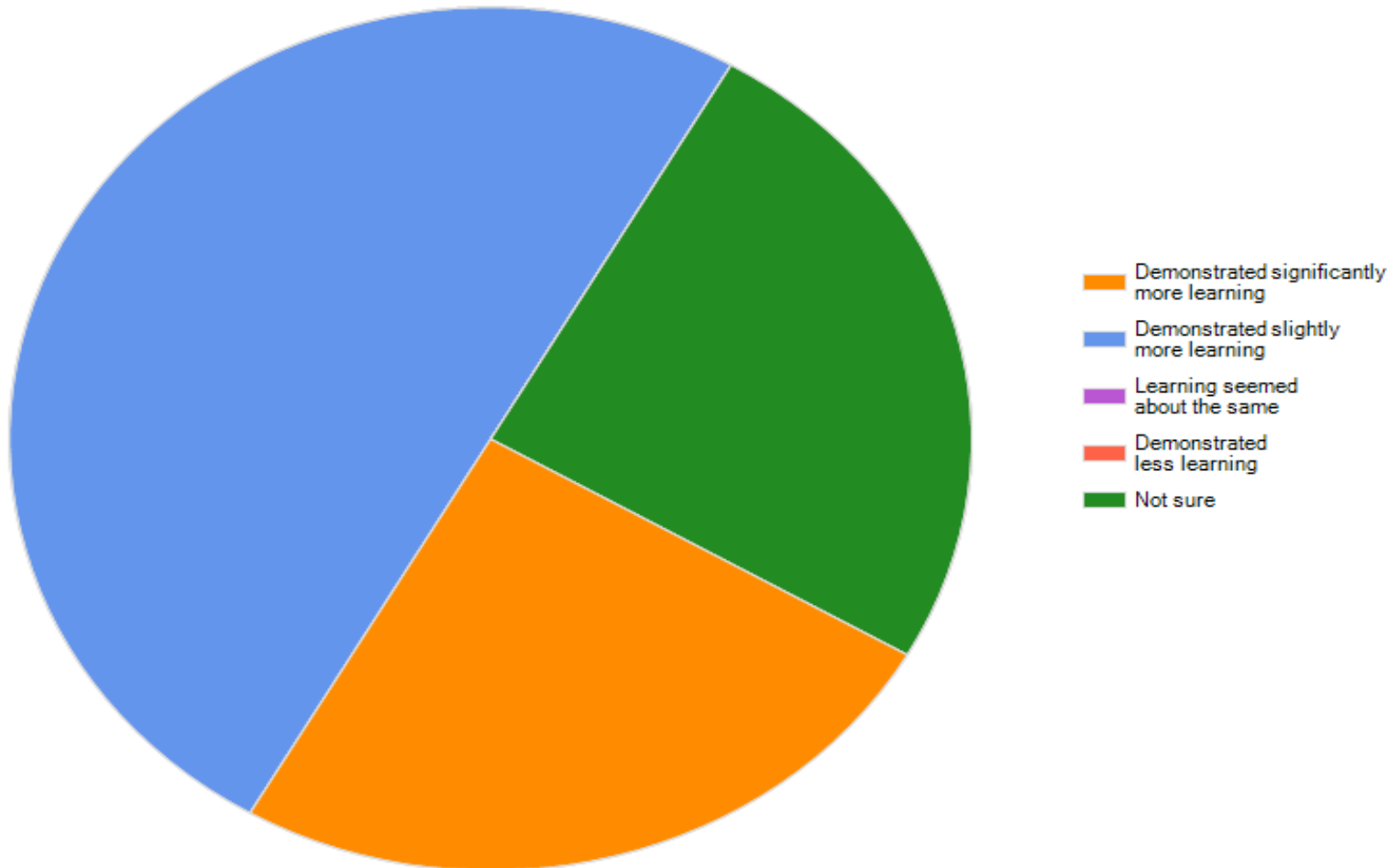
<http://commons.esc.edu/cowcollaboration2/>

**ESC Panama (International Finance) – College of Westchester**

<http://commons.esc.edu/internationalcollaboration/>

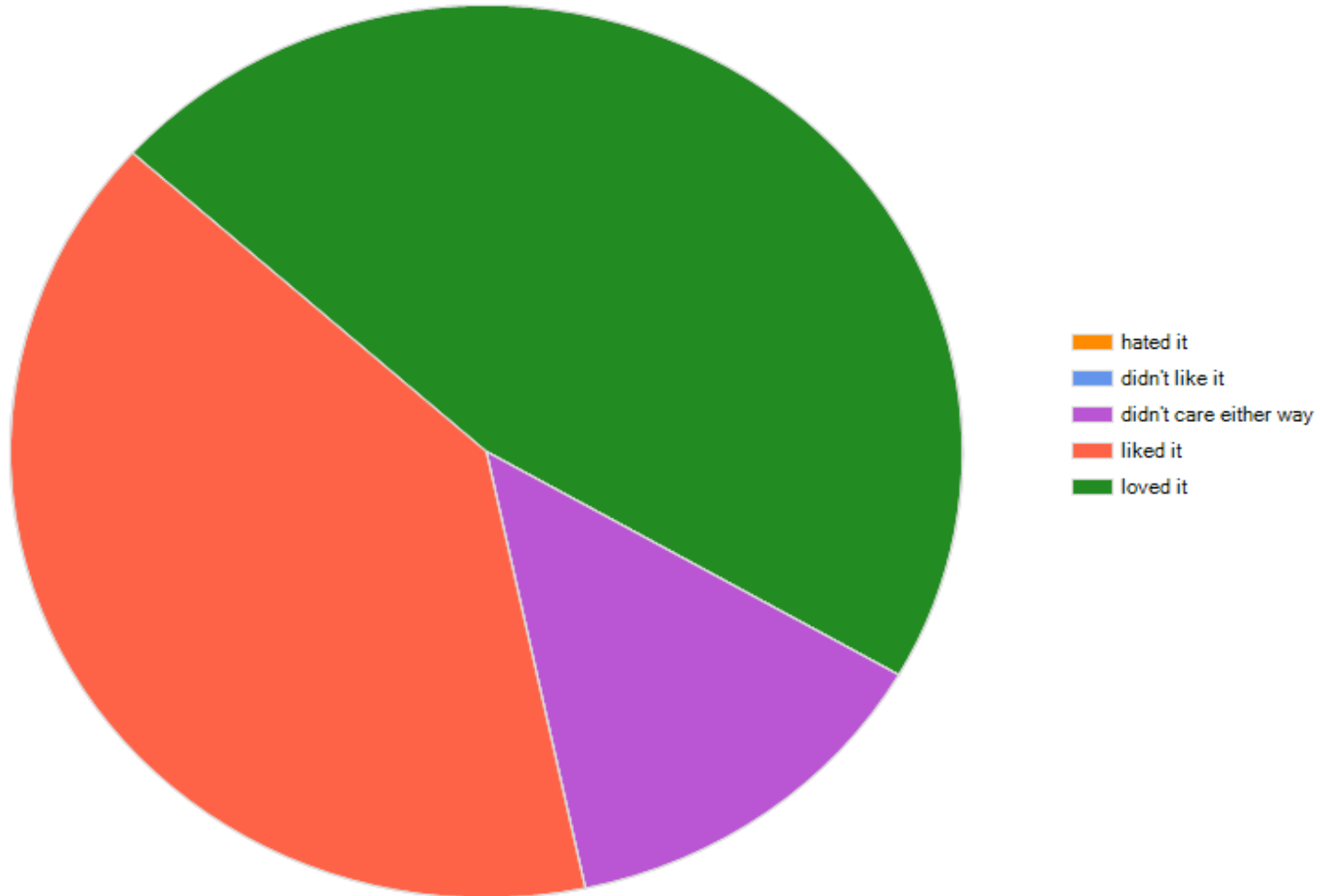
# FACULTY OPINION: STUDENT LEARNING

Compared to other courses I have offered, I feel students in this collaborative project:



# RESULTS: STUDENTS

How much did you enjoy the collaborative project?



# LESSONS LEARNED

- Icebreaker before first virtual session built enthusiasm; created identification with students in other country
- **Close communication between instructors is crucial**
- **Test the equipment in advance and have a Plan B**
- **Give students sufficient advance notice of virtual meeting schedule**
- **Collaboration should have some weight in the student grades / be a requirement of the course**
- **Plan virtual sessions to include student activities**
- **Provide more faculty training and student orientation**



# POST COLLABORATION SURVEYS ON VALUE CREATED

## CYCLE 1: Immediate value – Activities and interactions

What happened and what was your experience during the collaborative project?

*Q.2 - The quality of the participation was better than during other times in the course.*

## CYCLE 2: Potential value – Knowledge capital

How has your experience in the collaborative project changed you?

*Q.7 - My understanding or perspective of the other country has changed.*

## CYCLE 3: Applied value – Changes in practice

How has your participation in the collaborative project changed your social relationships?

*Q.13 - I trust students in the other country enough to ask them for help.*

# POST COLLABORATION SURVEYS ON VALUE CREATED

## CYCLE 4: Realized value - Performance improvement

**What access to resources has your participation in the collaborative project given you?**

*Q. 16 - I have new tools, methods or processes.*

## CYCLE 5: Reframing value - Redefining success

**How has your participation in the collaborative project changed your view of learning?**

**Has participation in the collaborative project changed your understanding of the value of international perspectives?**

*Q. 19 - I see the value in sharing learning with people from other countries and cultures.*

*Q. 21 - The shared learning helped me understand different points of view.*

# STUDENT PERCEPTION OF THE GREATEST VALUE CREATED

VALUE CREATED	% STUDENTS WHO AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE	% STUDENTS WHO NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	% STUDENTS WHO DISAGREE OR STRONGLY DISAGREE	AGREE MINUS DISAGREE	CYCLE
The project was fun or inspiring	77.4	22.8	0	77.40	1
I made learning connections between the collaborative project and other course content.	77.4	19.4	3.2	74.20	1
I see the value in sharing learning with people from other countries and cultures.	77.4	19.4	3.2	74.20	5
I have gained confidence in my ability to engage with people from another country or culture.	73.3	26.7	0	73.30	2
The activity and interaction were relevant to me.	74.2	22.6	3.2	71.00	1
I interacted or made connections with new people.	76.7	16.7	6.6	70.10	1

# STUDENT PERCEPTION OF THE LEAST VALUE CREATED

VALUE CREATED	% STUDENTS WHO AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE	% STUDENTS WHO NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	% STUDENTS WHO DISAGREE OR STRONGLY DISAGREE	AGREE MINUS DISAGREE	CYCLE
I trust students in the other country enough to ask them for help.	41.4	48.3	10.3	31.10	3
I know students in the other country well enough to know what they can contribute to my learning.	48.4	41.9	9.7	38.70	3
I feel less isolated.	48.4	51.6	0	48.40	3
I have access to documents or sources of information I would not otherwise have had.	63.3	23.3	13.4	49.90	4
I have gained access to new people	61.3	29	9.7	51.60	3

# **SUPPORTING EVIDENCE**

- **Faculty responses echoed student perceptions**
- **Analysis of discussion forums showed greater participation and “educationally valuable talk”**
- **Observation of virtual sessions – palpable enthusiasm and engagement**

# **POSITIVE RESULTS**

- **Students gained a lot more insight and knowledge about the other country**
- **Students recognized a change in their view of the importance of international perspectives**
- **Relationships established for future collaborations**
- **Lessons learned improve future collaborations**

# FINAL STUDENT OBSERVATIONS

Very engaging learning experience - expanded my knowledge of Panama.

*I like the fact that I was introduced to new tools of communication*

I personally enjoyed being a part of the program. I hope the school continues with it. It's an experience all students should be a part of.

***In international business you can't always be face-to-face with the person you are communicating with. Technology has really helped to shorten the gap and make communication easier. I feel like in the classes we were constantly having problems with technology: a microphone wouldn't work, the video wouldn't stream, or the internet connection was not stable. But that is the way it is. While doing my internship I had to communicate with other countries everyday and I would have the same problems. I have learned that I need to be patient and deal with the occasional flaw in technology because it is key to communicating with other countries.***

# FINAL FACULTY OBSERVATIONS

**I found the level and substance of student engagement made this an invaluable project.**

**I think that if it was a bit more organized it could have done even better...that said, students enjoyed the experience!**

*it was a good experience indeed even with overloading my time -☺ I enjoyed it as new experience. Thanks for the opportunity.*

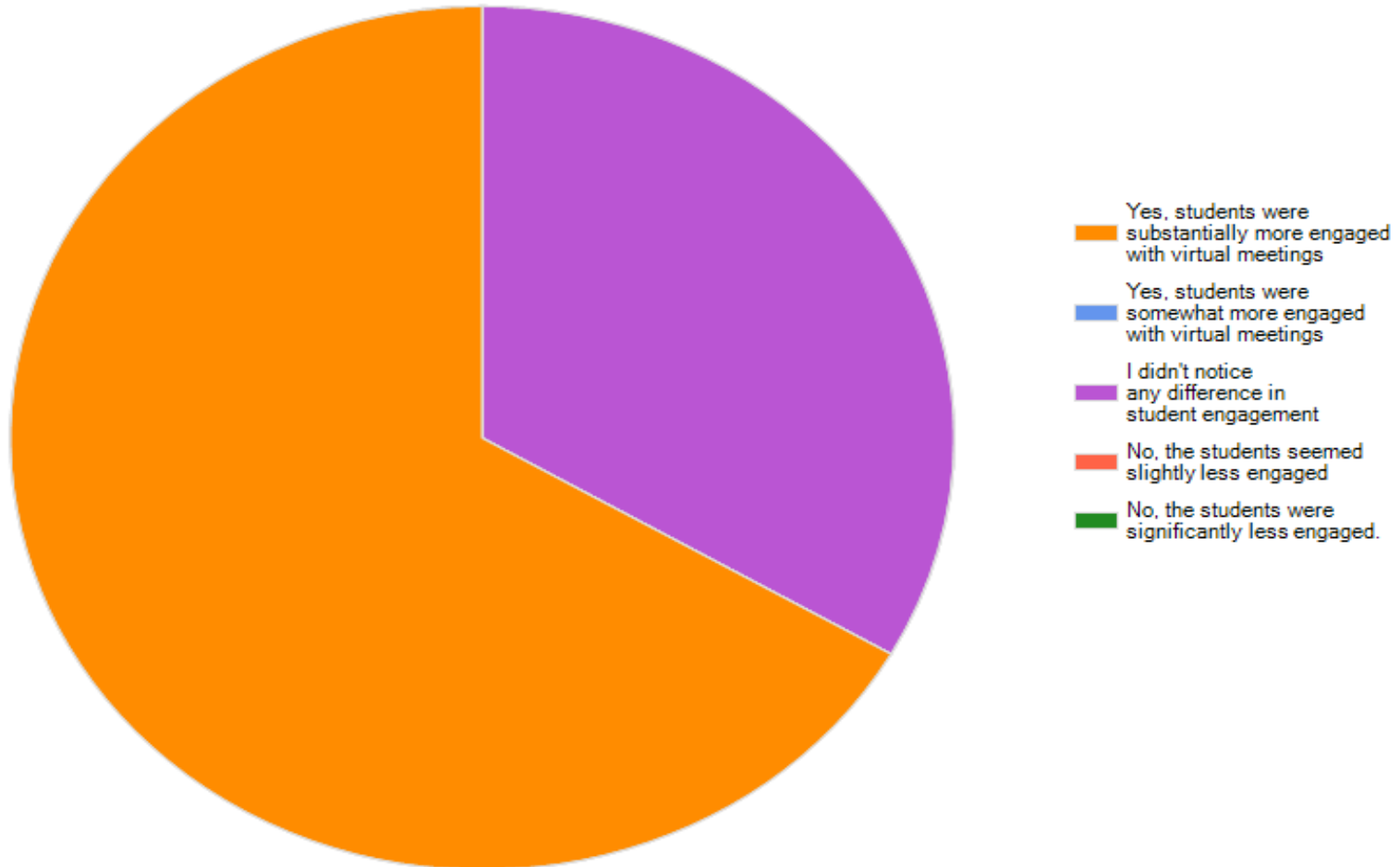


# OBSERVATIONS ON TOOLS

- **Being able to see and hear one another promoted more interaction and kept students more focused.**
- **Require people turn on cameras**
- **When students couldn't see one another, they most often opted for the text box even though they could use voice**
- **Text box is important for back channeling, tech difficulties and questions.**
- **Some tools don't work with teleconferencing equipment**
- **Tablets and phones facilitated attendance**
- **Windows 8 still doesn't work with a lot of tools**

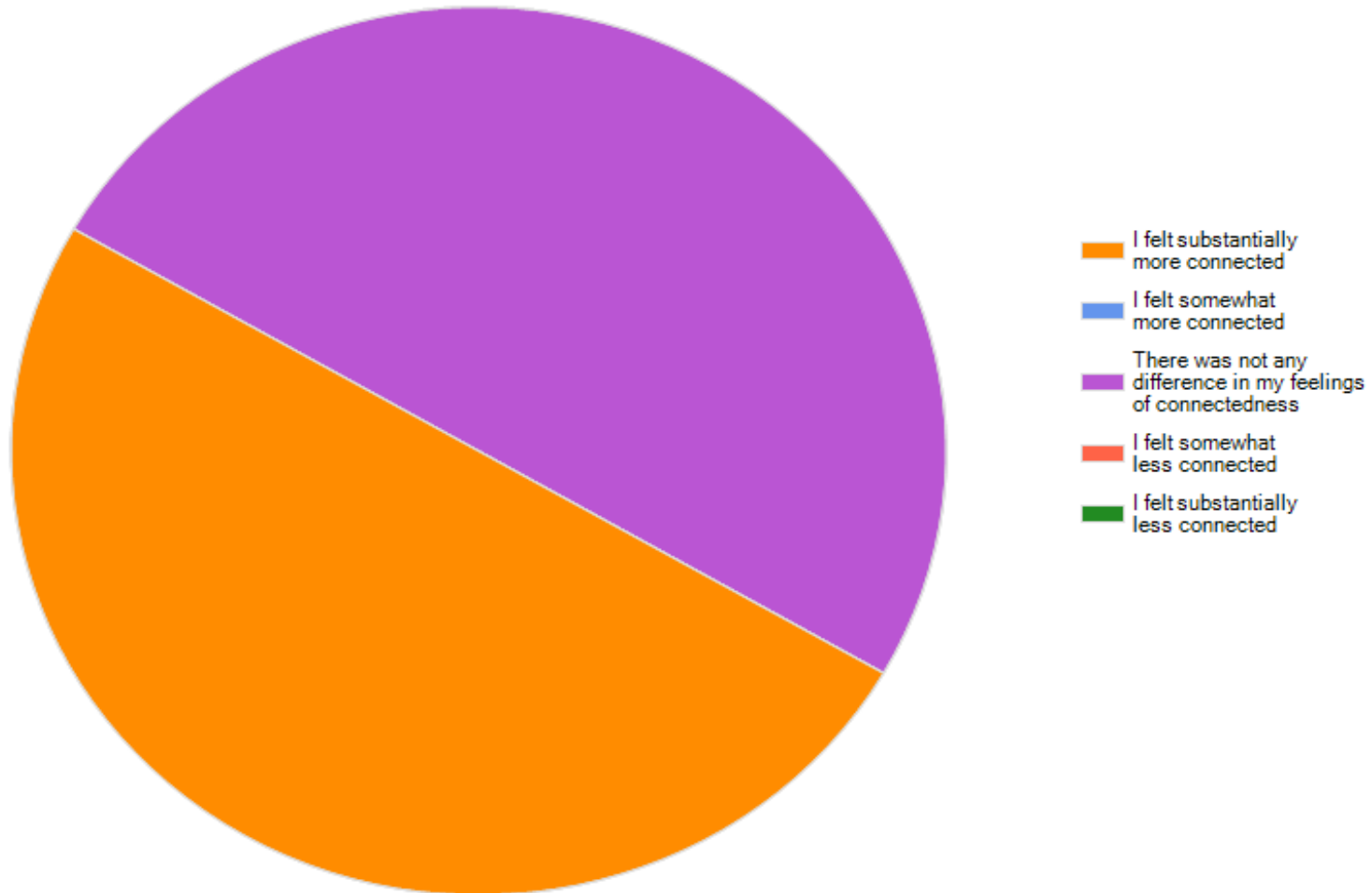
# FACULTY OPINION: STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Did having virtual meetings help your students stay more engaged with their coursework compared to student engagement in courses in which you haven't used virtual meetings.



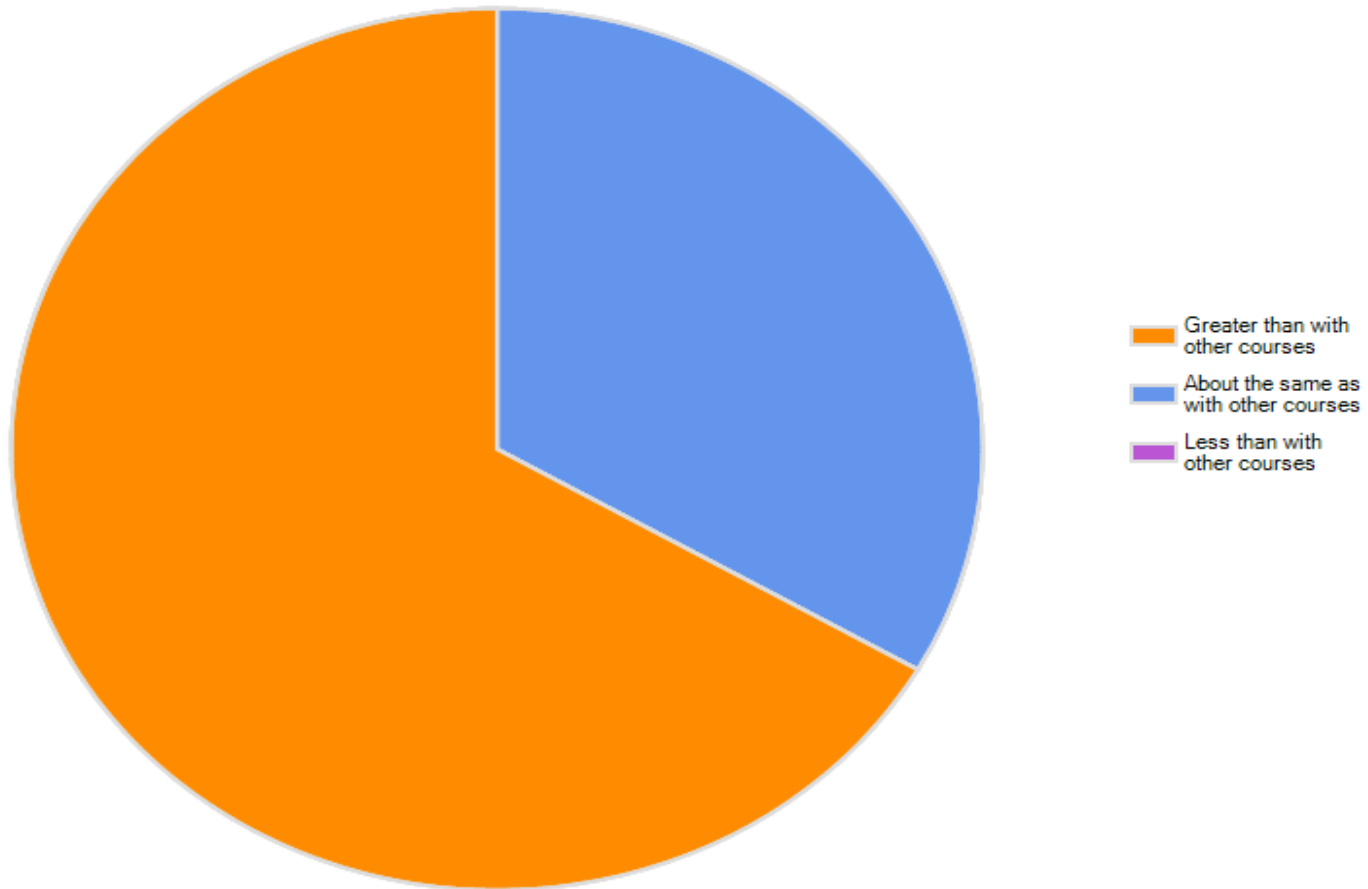
# FACULTY OPINION: CONNECTION TO STUDENTS

Did virtual meeting tools help you feel more connected to your students during the online portion of the course compared to when you teach entirely online between residencies?



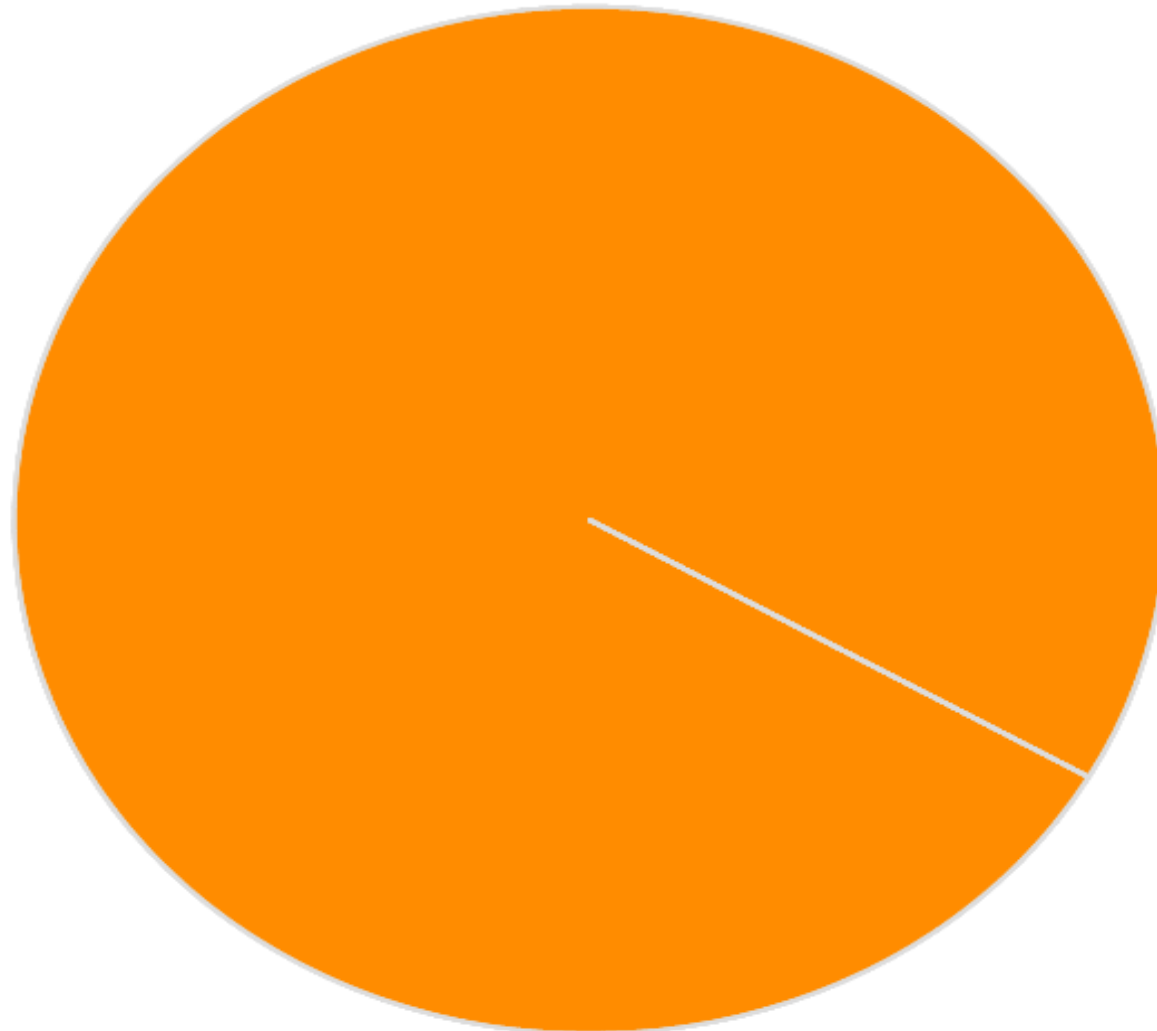
# FACULTY OPINION: SATISFACTION

Overall, my satisfaction with this collaboration using virtual meeting tools is:



# FACULTY OPINION: DO IT AGAIN?

I would like to use virtual meeting tools with other courses.



# **FUTURE EXPLORATION**

- **Does the impact last?**
- **Does collaboration have a positive impact on post-collaboration course activity and final grades?**
- **More exploration with mobile devices**
- **Try to measure changes in cross cultural understanding**
- **Design collaborations with learning objectives specific to fomenting the international experience rather than JUST course related objectives**
- **More trials involving international faculty and institutions**
- **Test voice tools especially to see if help overcome time differences**
- **Test with larger sample and larger class sizes**
- **Test longer collaborations/full term courses**

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO  
PARTICIPATE?**

**Collaborating with  
COLL for future  
research**

# **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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# MORE INFORMATION

## SUNY COMMONS:

<http://commons.suny.edu/iitg/virtual-study-abroad-student-engagement-international-interaction-using-meeting-mobile-tools/>

## PROJECT WEB SITE:

<http://commons.esc.edu/virtualtermabroad/>

***THANK YOU!***