

WAC and Public Health

Creating the Perfect Intervention

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Methodology

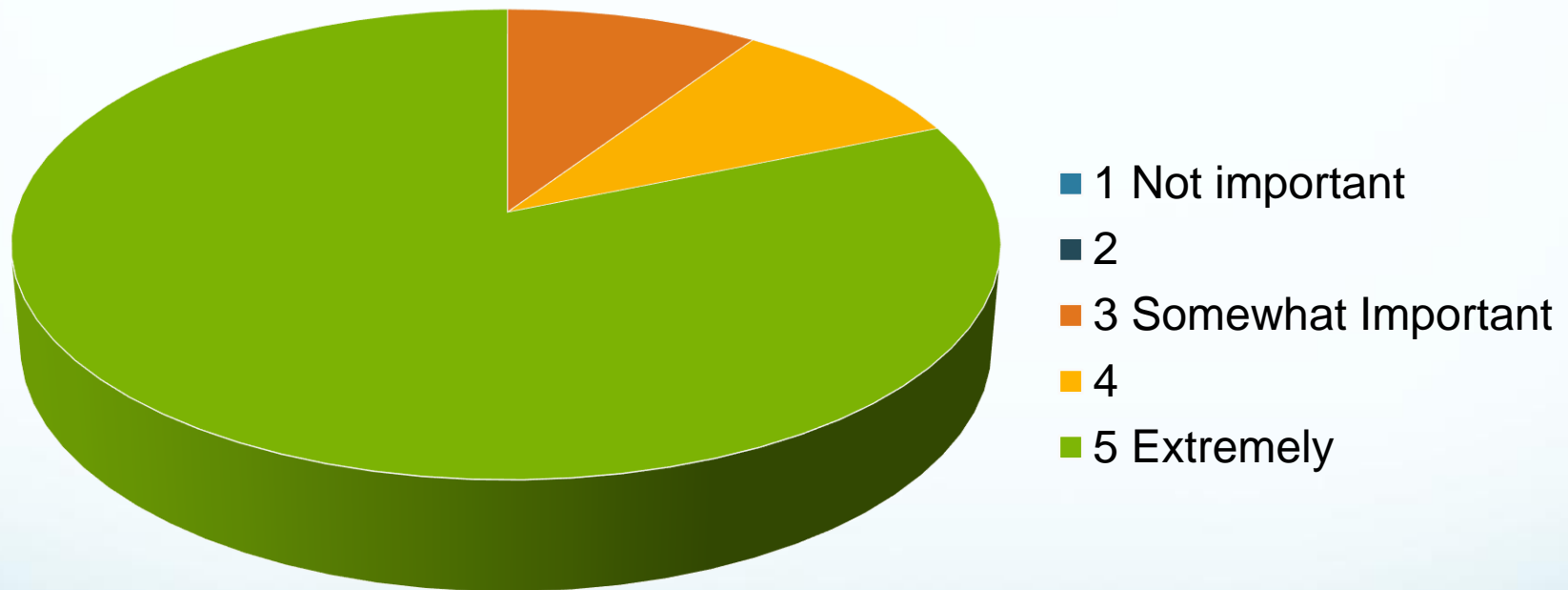
- Online review of course listings and syllabi in 49 accredited schools of PH
- Follow-up interviews and/or surveys with PH writing instructors
- Online surveys of PH professors in 3 PH schools in 3 states
- Student focus groups in one SPH
- Surveys of employers of PH graduates in 3 states

“The organized community efforts aimed at the prevention of disease and the promotion of health.”

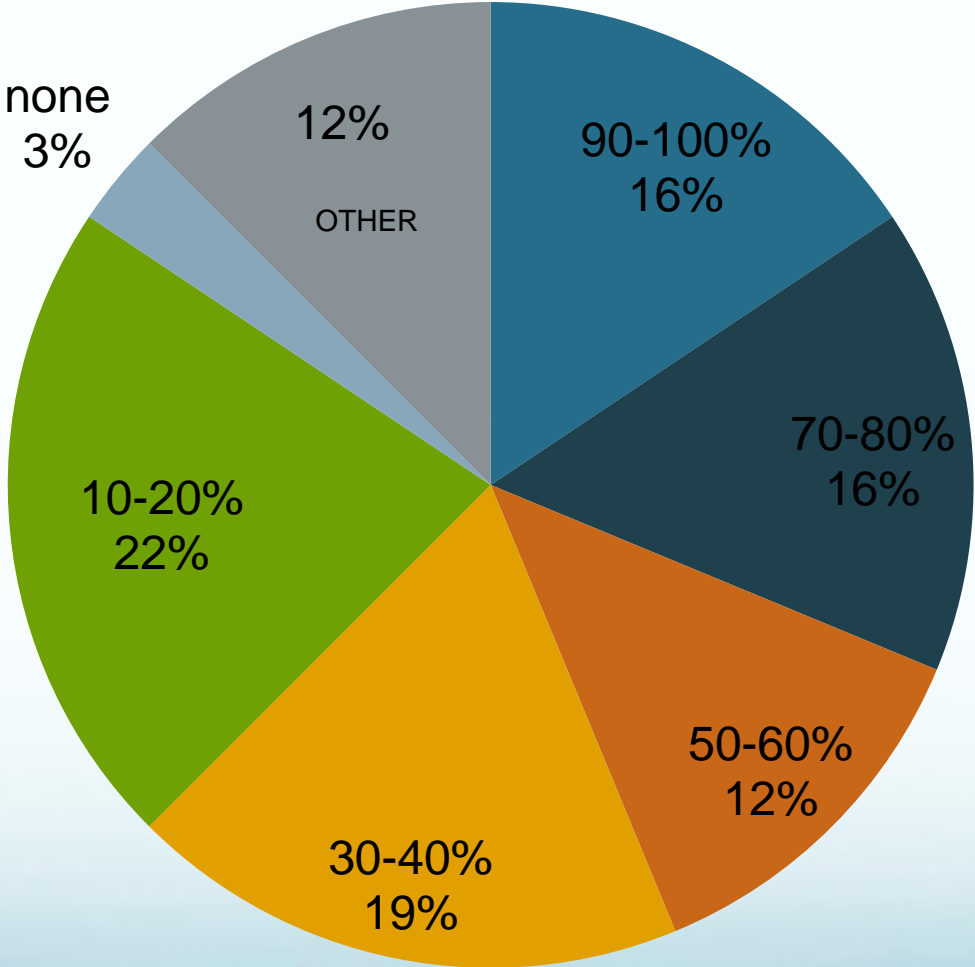




Importance of Good Writing Skills (Instructors)



Percentage of Student's Final Grade Based on Written Assignments



Students comment on the importance of good writing skills to

- “Given the definition of the word public, I would think that being able to communicate with the public is one of the most important things. So being able to write and communicate to other people is crucial. If we don’t have that we don’t have anything.” (MPH student)

Employers comment on employee writing

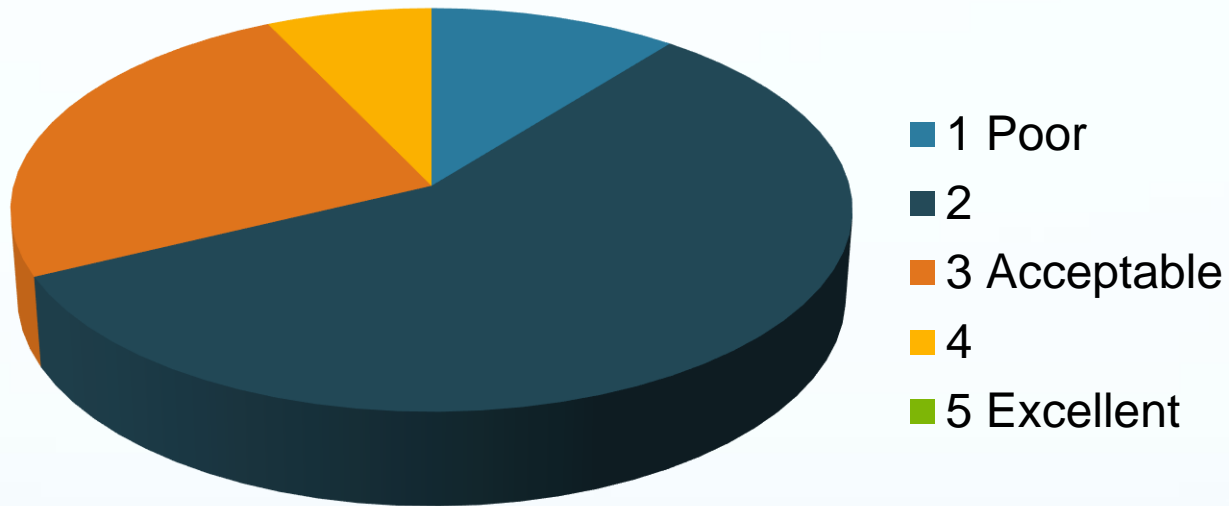
- “Although there are some exceptional employees with superb writing skills, most PH employees could use improvement in their writing skills.”
- “There is a gap across most PH staff in their ability to effectively and clearly articulate what is most important.”
- “Even some of senior staff struggles with good writing skills and their work must be edited by others.”

Employers comment on the results of poor Writing Skills in the workplace

Poor writing among employees:

- “...creates ‘rework’. They have to correct documents.”
- Leads to “failure to get grants.”
- “...delays finalization of key documents and degrades program effectiveness.”
- “For high visibility reports, an informal review and revision process is in place.... Including revisions by senior staff or staff identified with good writing skills.”

Professors rate student writing skills



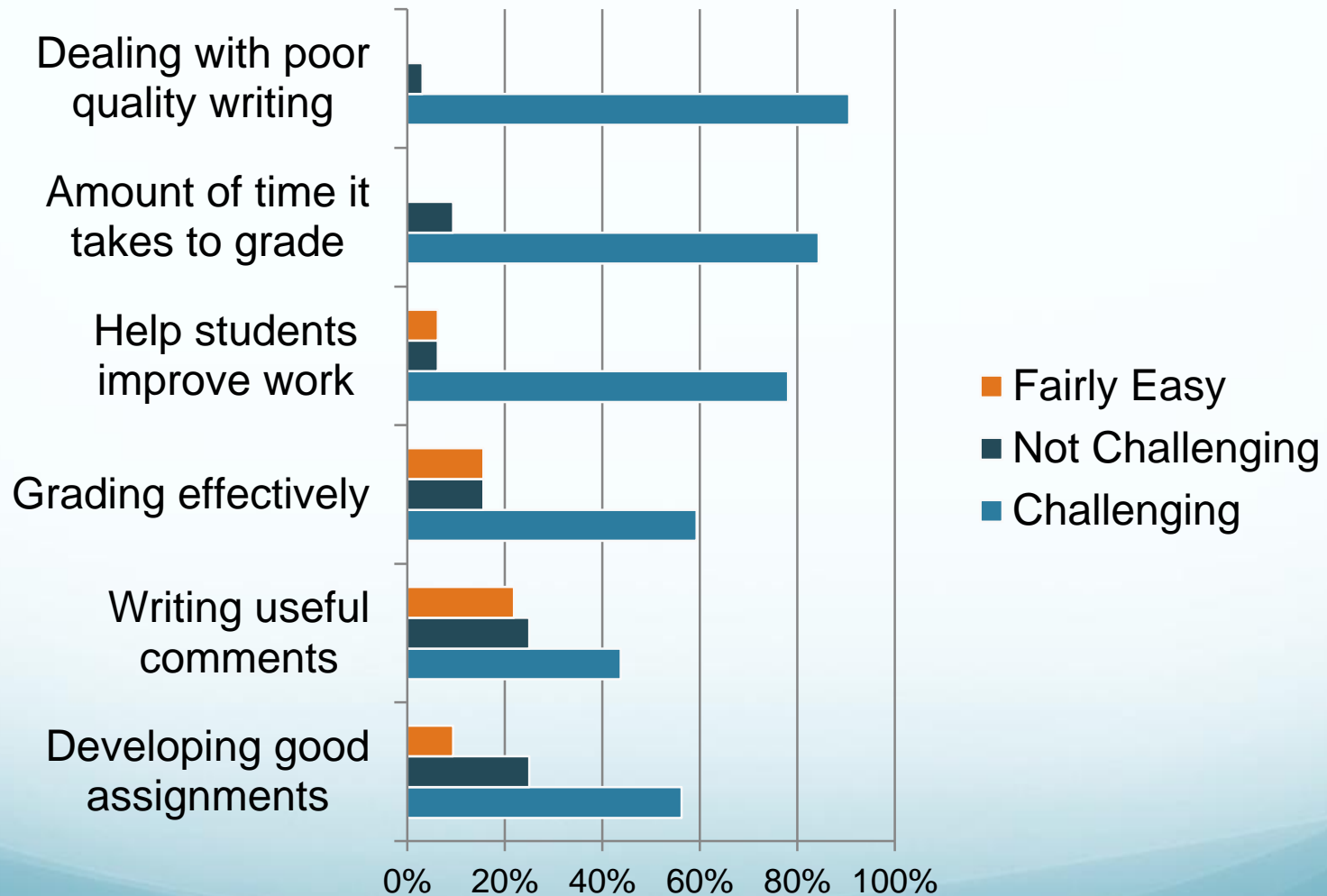
PH students rate their own writing skills

“In general, [my writing level] is moderate, though oftentimes... I’m rated in the higher category even though I don’t feel I’m that great of a writer”

“I’m graded way too high for what I consider my writing skills to be.”

“... the hardest thing is low standards and learning how to write like a social scientist or a biostatistician – something of which I have no knowledge. It’s hard. Not hard to write in general, but in each specific specialty.”

What is Most Challenging About Writing Assignments? (Professors)



What is most challenging about writing assignments?(students)

- Trying to figure out how to write on the same topic from the perspective of different sub-disciplines
- Gap between perceived skills and grades
- Vague assignment prompts
- Lack of feedback
- Seemingly arbitrary grading strategies
- Long turn-around time for assignments

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Thank You

