

Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements University Honors Program

Assessment Measures

The University Honors Program uses the following measures to assess departmental learning outcomes:

- Grades, course evaluations, and enrollment totals for capstone seminars
- Grades, course evaluations, and enrollment totals for final courses in sequences
- Grades, course evaluations, and enrollment totals for introductory courses in sequences

Assessment Findings

Senior Capstone Seminar Discussion (Attachment 1):

The University Honors Program analyzed course grade, evaluation, and enrollment data in HSCP490: Senior Capstone Seminar for a five-year period (Fall 2003 through Fall 2007).

Seniors who have completed three of the sequences in the University Honors Program are admitted to this seminar, and with satisfactory performance in this course (a grade of B or better) along with a minimum overall grade point average of 3.5, a student earns the official designation “University Scholar.” During this period, enrollment remained varied between five and thirteen students. A small class is considered critical, since a low faculty/student ration is a goal for all courses in the program and since this course is truly a seminar, with the students’ own research projects occupying a central place in the course. However, in the interest of wide participation, five students in a class falls significantly below the ideal number, which is ten to twelve students.

All of the students who enroll in the capstone seminar display exceptional performance, with no grades falling below an A- (3.75 to 4.0). Despite their relative unfamiliarity with research seminars, students seem to appreciate both the course and the instructor, which they show with consistently high ratings on student evaluations.

204-Level Course Discussion (Attachments 2-6):

The University Honors Program analyzed course grade, evaluation, and enrollment data in HSPH 204, HSHU 204, HSSS 204, HSEV 204, and HSCT 204—the final courses in each of the four-course sequences—for a five year period (Fall 2003 through Fall 2007). Because it was only added this past year, the theology (HSTR) sequence was not included in the analysis.

The variations in enrollment between courses immediately stand out. The significantly higher enrollment in HSPH 204, which is often triple that of the other 204 courses, is undoubtedly due to the fact that for most students in the university the HSPH sequence directly maps onto their philosophy requirement. To accommodate the larger number of interested students, multiple sections of HSPH 204 are offered. The significantly smaller enrollment in HSCT 204 can be explained in part by the fact that the courses in the sequence do not map very clearly onto the general education requirements for most students. Nevertheless, the small enrollment in HSCT 204 has raised concern among the faculty.

The average grade for students in 204 courses has been consistently superior during that entire period, rarely falling below a 3.5 for a single year in any of the courses, with the exception of HSPH 204, in which the grades have consistently been around 3.2. Even in HSPH 204, however, there has only been one D in the past five years (and no Fs). Student evaluations consistently show a consistently high regard both for the courses and for the instructors. This is not surprising, given a significant degree of self-selection in those completing sequences and given the fact that faculty for the courses are (as is true for all University Honors Program courses) selected from among the best undergraduate teachers in the university; nevertheless, the data show a high degree of satisfaction among students.

101-Level Course Discussion (Attachments 7-11):

The University Honors Program analyzed course grade, evaluation, and enrollment data in HSPH 101, HSHU 101, HSSS 101, HSEV 101, and HSCT 101—the first courses in each of the four-course sequences—for a five year period (Fall 2003 through Fall 2007). Again, because it was only recently introduced, the theology (HSTR) sequence was not included in the analysis.

The number of students enrolled in these initial courses was significantly higher than in any the subsequent courses in the sequences. Although the number of students was generally consistent with the desired seminar-style format, the enrollments in HSHU 101 and HSSS 101 averaged thirty students per section, which is significantly above the desired number of 18-22 students. Lower average grades undoubtedly are due in part to the fact that students typically take these courses at an earlier stage of their academic career. Nevertheless, the data does suggest a possible correlation between class size and grade point average, with the larger classes typically having lower grades on average. It is noteworthy that in HSPH 101—as in HSPH 204—the grades are somewhat lower than in parallel courses in other sequences. Perhaps more interesting is that the averages are also much more consistent in the philosophy courses. This may be due in part to the greater cohesiveness of the faculty and a higher degree of shared expectations for the courses in this sequence.

Despite the larger class sizes in HSHU 101 and HSSS 101, student evaluations were fairly strong for both courses. Also noteworthy is that the lower grades in HSPH 101 did not seem to translate to lower instructor and course evaluations. The evaluations for HSEV 101 were, however, consistently below those for the other courses. Further study is needed to determine to the reason this course has consistently lower evaluations. Part of the explanation may involve the fact that this is the only science course in the program.

Curricular Improvements

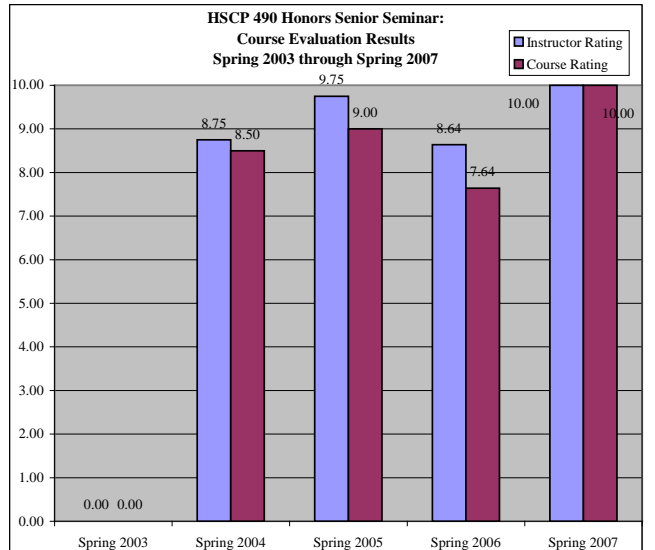
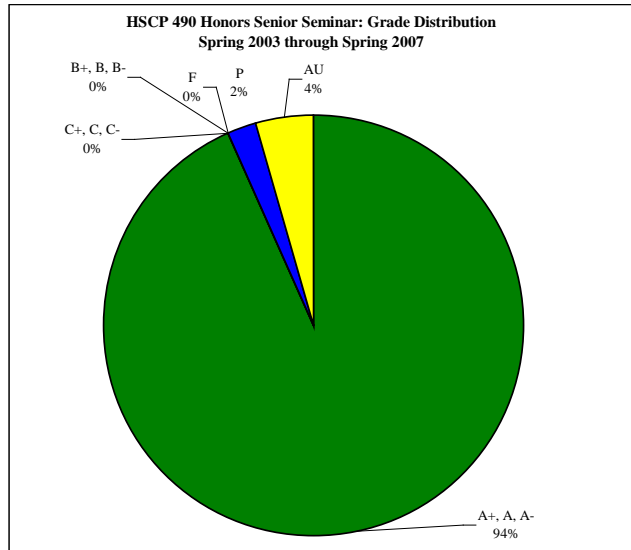
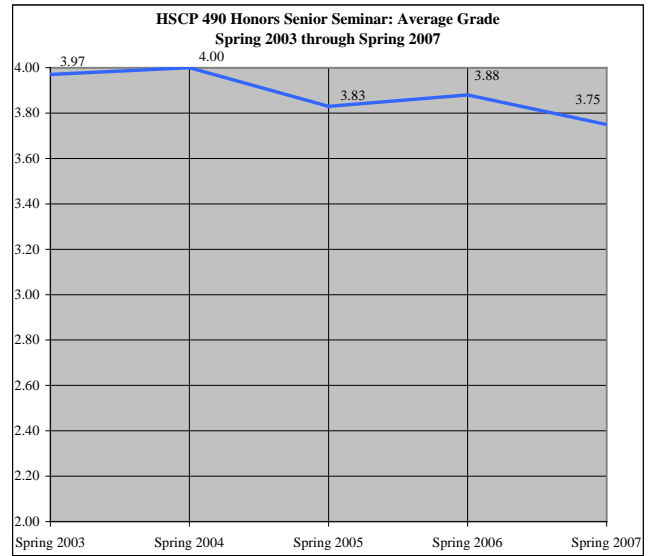
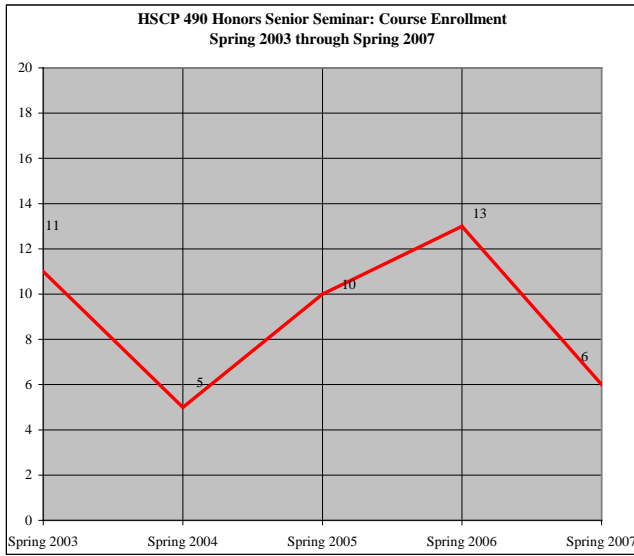
Over the past several years, faculty discussions have led to two significant changes in the University Honors Program curriculum. After a year of planning, in 2007-08, the first two courses in a four-course sequence in theology were offered. One of the driving forces for this expansion of the curriculum was student interest, the same kind of interest reflected in the large number of students completing the HSPH sequence. As is the case for HSPH, the HSTR sequence maps quite neatly onto the theology requirement. Although this innovation is perfectly in line with the University Honors Program's overall curriculum, which offers courses that fulfill the standard general education requirements in a richer way than standard offerings, the faculty is also concerned about a "crowding out" effect that could result from the addition of theology. One sequence that has had significant variations in enrollment, including small numbers in the final course (204) is HSCT. Although the lack of stability in enrollment preceded the introduction of the theology sequence, the faculty agreed that with the new sequence it would be a good time to reevaluate and possibly reconfigure the HSCT sequence. This process of evaluation will be undertaken in the Fall of 2008.

Attachment 1

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Outcomes Assessment

SENIOR SEMINAR SUMMARY DATA: HONORS PROGRAM HSCP 490 Honors Senior Seminar

Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades Grade Distribution						Course Evaluation Results					
		Avg.	StDev.	A+, A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	F	P	AU	Course Eval. #	Course Eval. %	Instructor Rating Avg.	Instructor Rating StDev.	Course Rating Avg.	Course Rating StDev.
Spring 2003	11	3.97	0.10	9						2					
Spring 2004	5	4.00	0.00	5						4	80.00%	8.75	0.96	8.50	0.58
Spring 2005	10	3.83	0.16	9				1		8	80.00%	9.75	0.46	9.00	1.31
Spring 2006	13	3.88	0.15	13						11	84.62%	8.64	1.57	7.64	2.06
Spring 2007	6	3.75	0.12	6						1	16.67%	10.00		10.00	

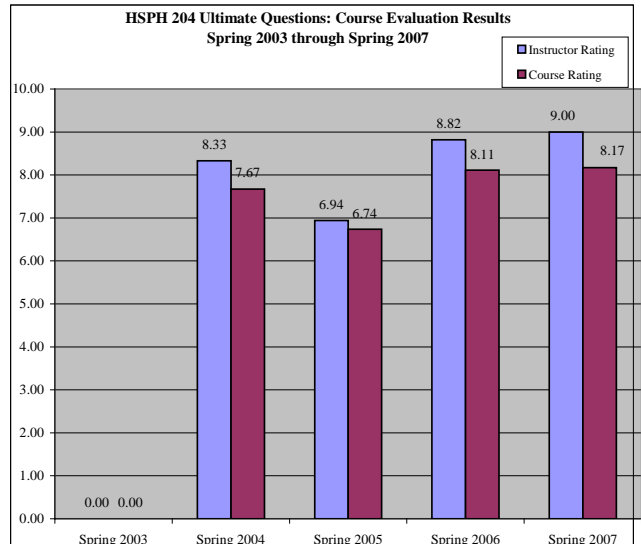
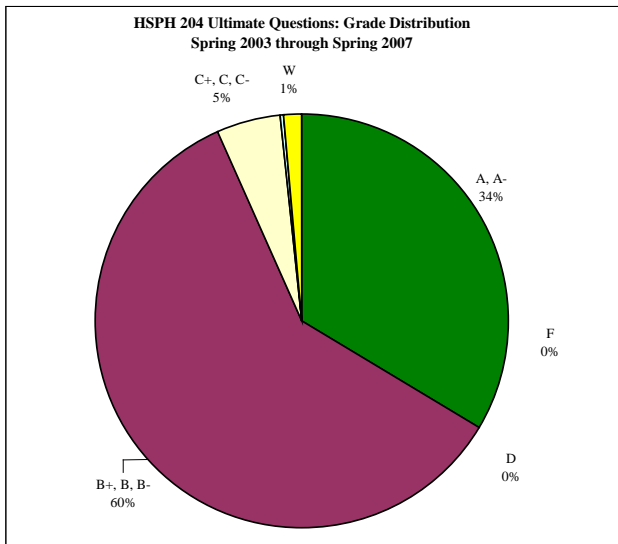
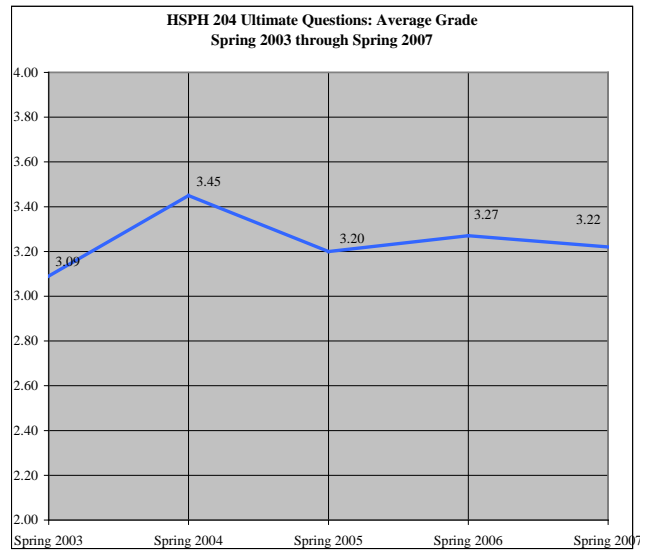
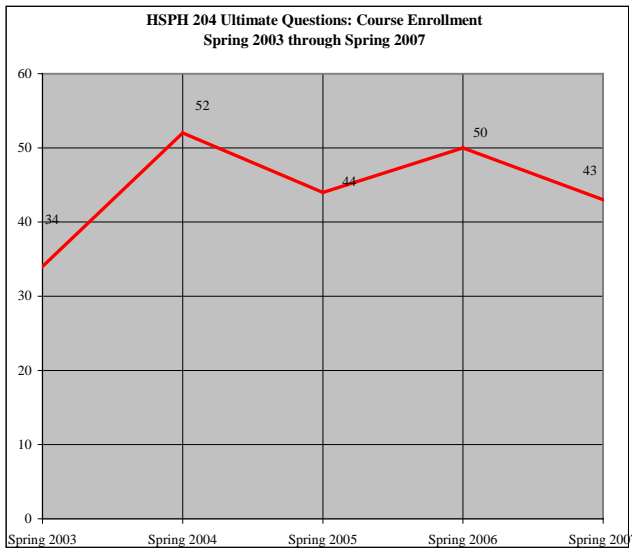


Attachment 2

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: HONORS PROGRAM HSPH 204 Ultimate Questions

Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades Grade Distribution						Course Evaluation Results						
		Avg.	StDev.	A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	D	F	W	Course Eval. #	Course Eval. %	Instructor Rating Avg.	Instructor Rating StDev.	Course Rating Avg.	Course Rating StDev.	
Spring 2003	34	3.09	0.61	7	23	2	1			1						
Spring 2004	52	3.45	0.39	24	28						52	100.00%	8.33	1.78	7.67	2.18
Spring 2005	44	3.20	0.51	13	25	4				2	35	79.55%	6.94	2.07	6.74	1.69
Spring 2006	50	3.27	0.46	16	31	3					45	90.00%	8.82	0.96	8.11	1.65
Spring 2007	43	3.22	0.49	15	26	2					36	83.72%	9.00	1.12	8.17	1.62

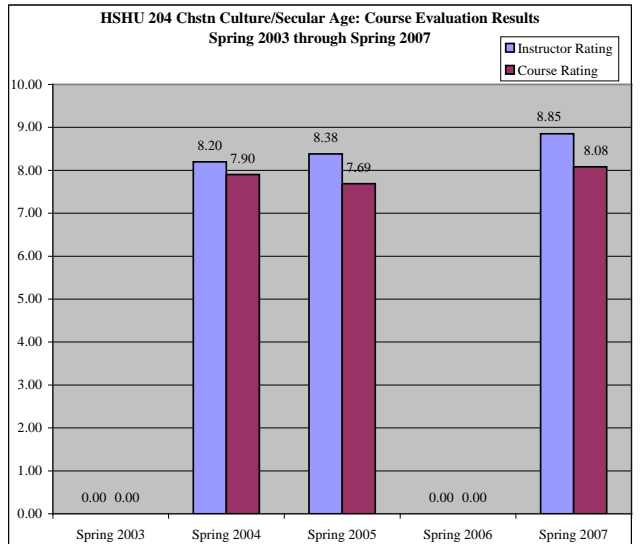
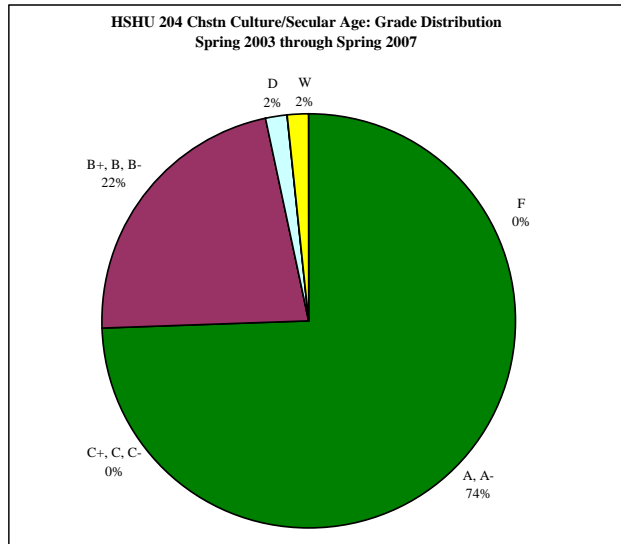
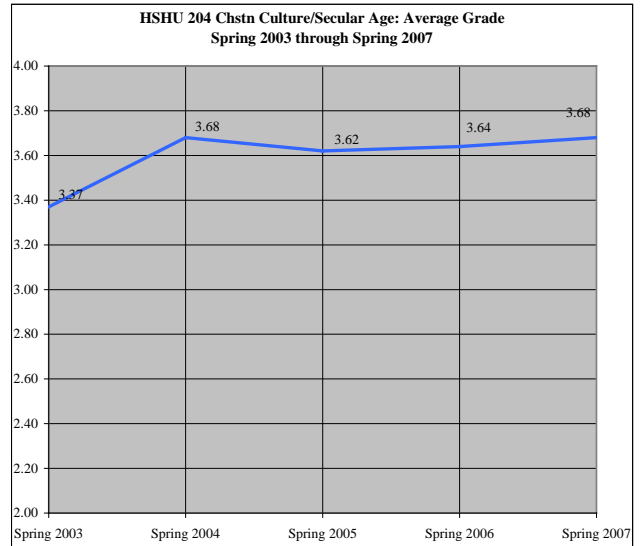
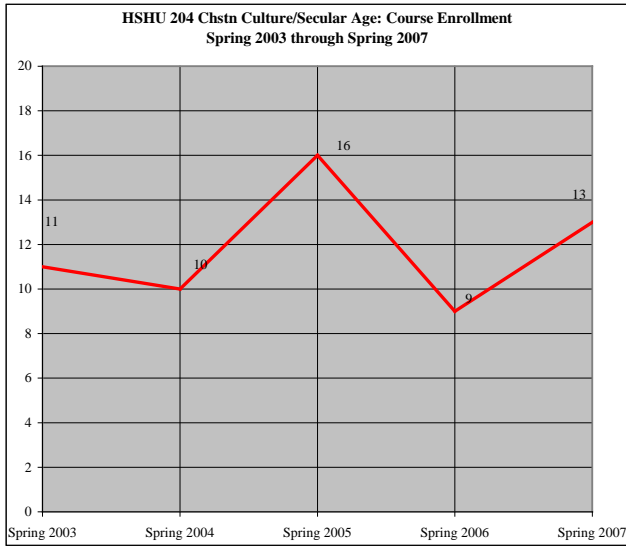


Attachment 3

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: HONORS PROGRAM HSHU 204 Chstn Culture/Secular Age

Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades Grade Distribution						Course Evaluation Results					
		Avg.	StDev.	A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	D	F	W	Course Eval. #	Course Eval. %	Instructor Rating Avg.	Instructor Rating StDev.	Course Rating Avg.	Course Rating StDev.
Spring 2003	11	3.37	0.87	6	3		1								
Spring 2004	10	3.68	0.23	8	2					10	100.00%	8.20	1.69	7.90	1.37
Spring 2005	16	3.62	0.35	12	4					13	81.25%	8.38	1.71	7.69	2.14
Spring 2006	9	3.64	0.32	7	2										
Spring 2007	13	3.68	0.28	11	2					13	100.00%	8.85	1.07	8.08	1.61

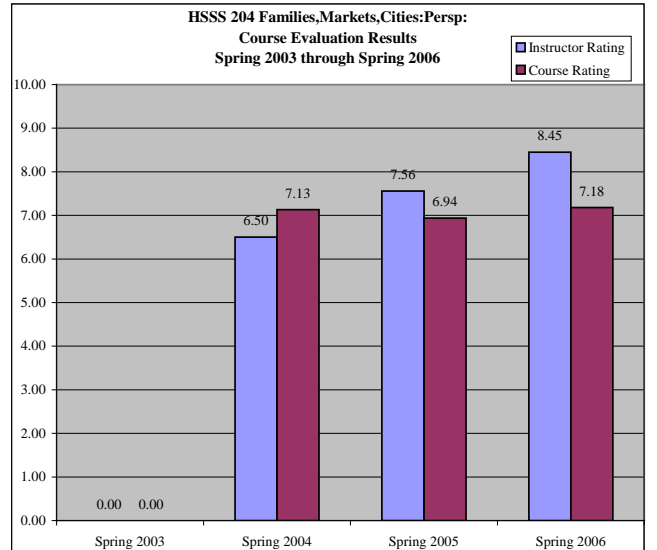
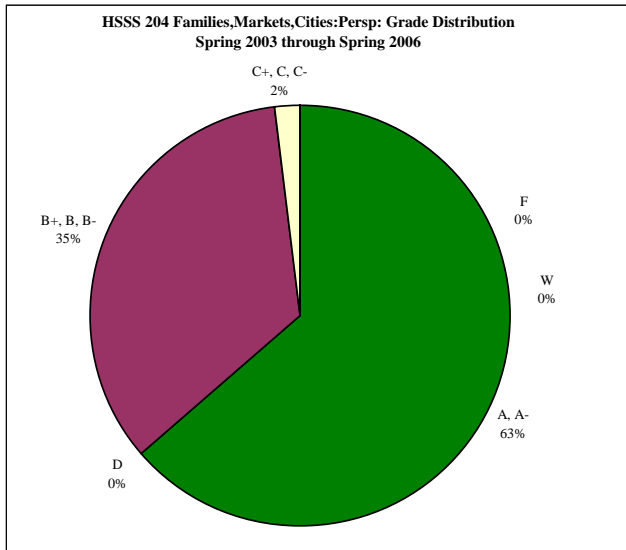
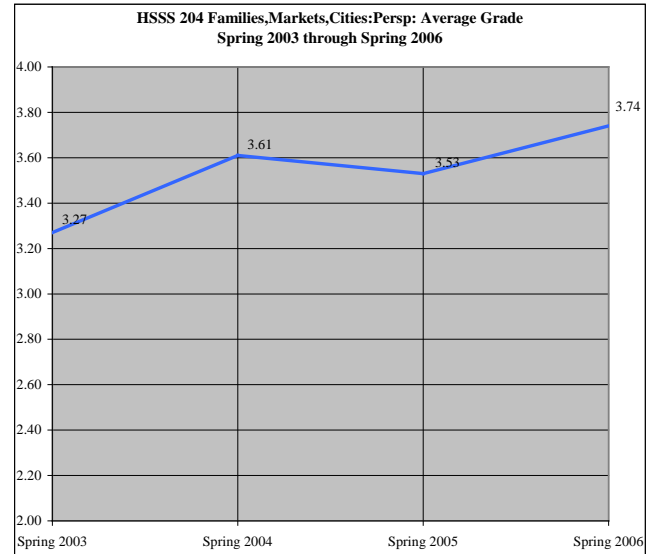
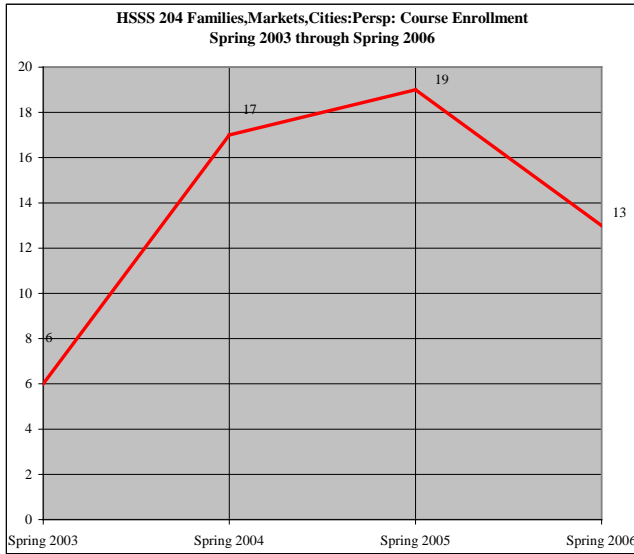


Attachment 4

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: HONORS PROGRAM HSSS 204 Families,Markets,Cities:Persp

Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades							Course Evaluation Results					
		Avg.	StDev.	A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	D	F	W	Course Eval. #	Course Eval. %	Instructor Rating Avg.	Instructor Rating StDev.	Course Rating Avg.	Course Rating StDev.	
Spring 2003	6	3.27	0.59	2	3	1										
Spring 2004	17	3.61	0.33	10	7						16	94.12%	6.50	2.34	7.13	1.96
Spring 2005	19	3.53	0.33	11	8						16	84.21%	7.56	1.03	6.94	1.48
Spring 2006	13	3.74	0.19	12	1						11	84.62%	8.45	1.69	7.18	2.27

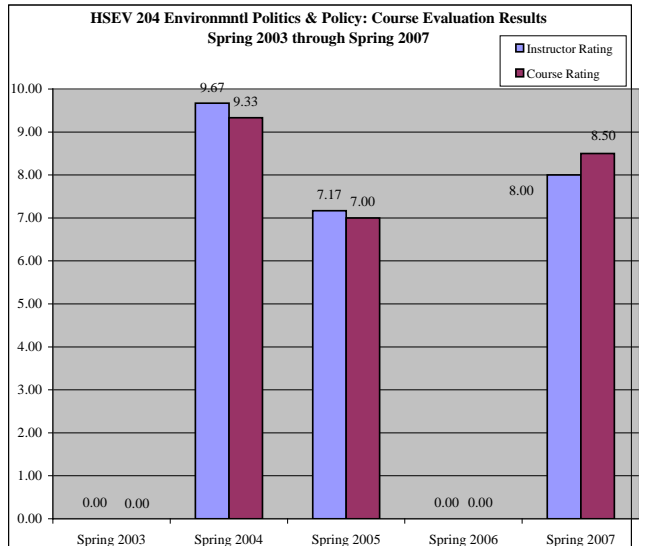
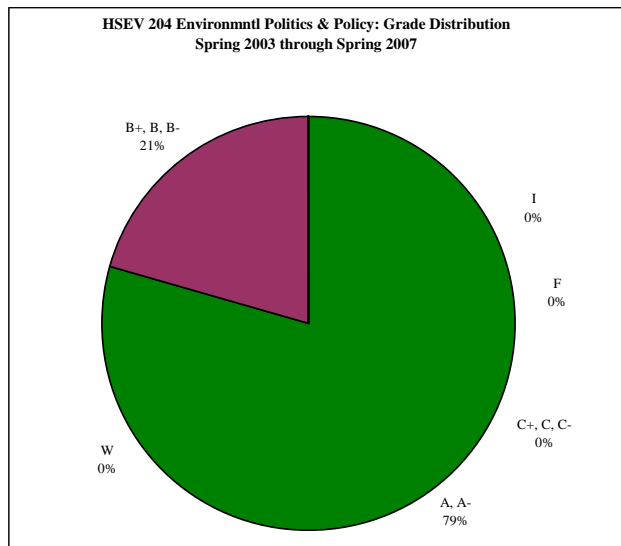
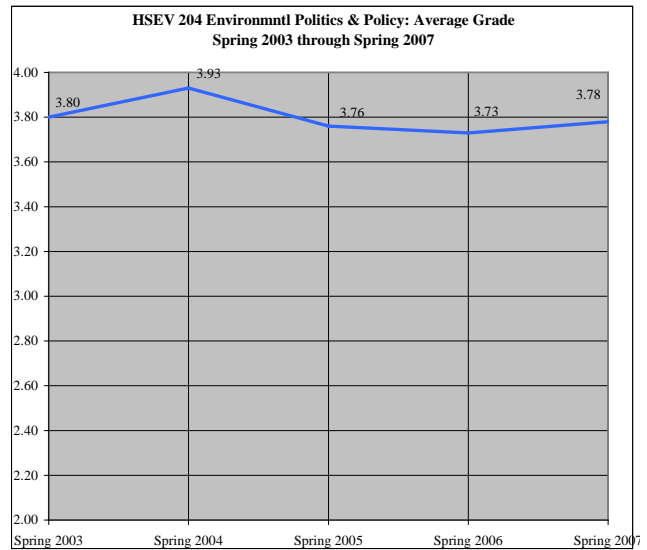
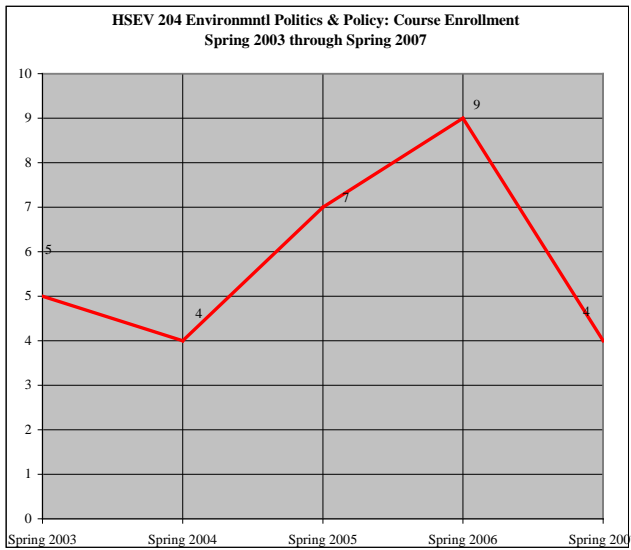


Attachment 5

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: HONORS PROGRAM HSEV 204 Environmntl Politics & Policy

Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades Grade Distribution						Course Evaluation Results					
		Avg.	StDev.	A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	F	W	I	Course Eval. #	Course Eval. %	Instructor Rating Avg.	Instructor Rating StDev.	Course Rating Avg.	Course Rating StDev.
Spring 2003	5	3.80	0.45	4	1										
Spring 2004	4	3.93	0.15	4						3	75.00%	9.67	0.58	9.33	1.15
Spring 2005	7	3.76	0.33	5	2					6	85.71%	7.17	1.72	7.00	1.55
Spring 2006	9	3.73	0.41	6	3										
Spring 2007	4	3.78	0.15	4						4	100.00%	8.00	0.82	8.50	1.00

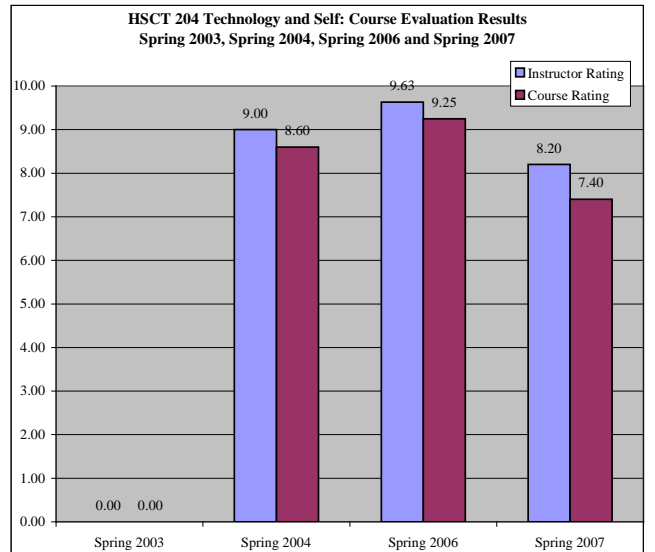
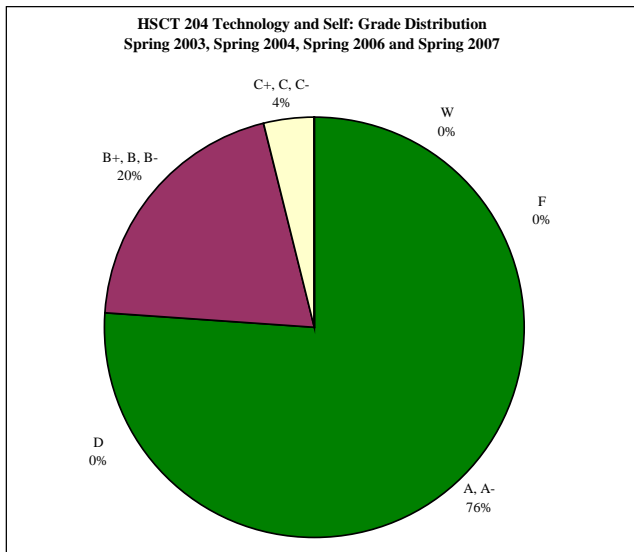
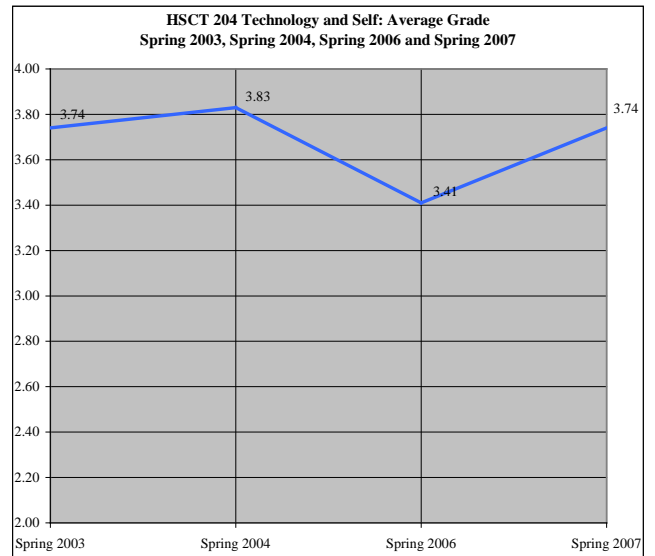
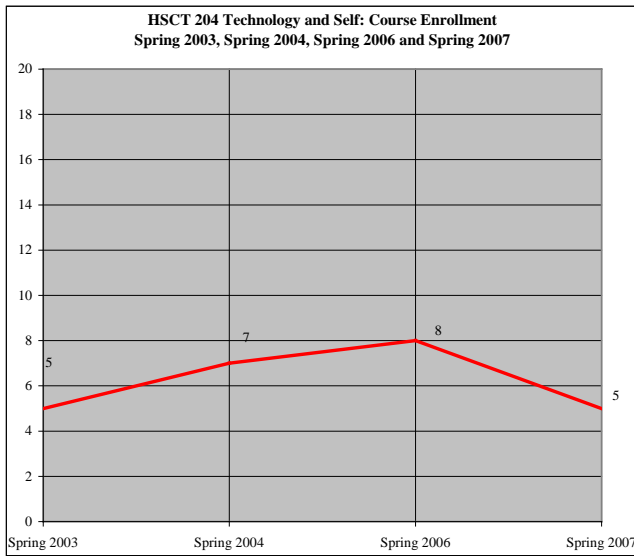


Attachment 6

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: HONORS PROGRAM
HSCT 204 Technology and Self

Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades							Course Evaluation Results					
		Avg.	StDev.	A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	D	F	W	Course Eval. #	Course Eval. %	Instructor Rating Avg.	Instructor Rating StDev.	Course Rating Avg.	Course Rating StDev.	
Spring 2003	5	3.74	0.29	4	1											
Spring 2004	7	3.83	0.16	7							5	71.43%	9.00	0.71	8.60	1.14
Spring 2006	8	3.41	0.75	4	3	1					8	100.00%	9.63	0.52	9.25	0.89
Spring 2007	5	3.74	0.29	4	1						5	100.00%	8.20	1.10	7.40	1.82

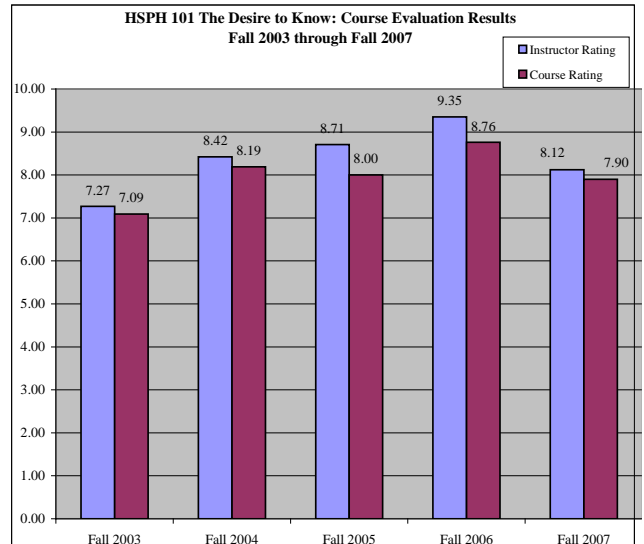
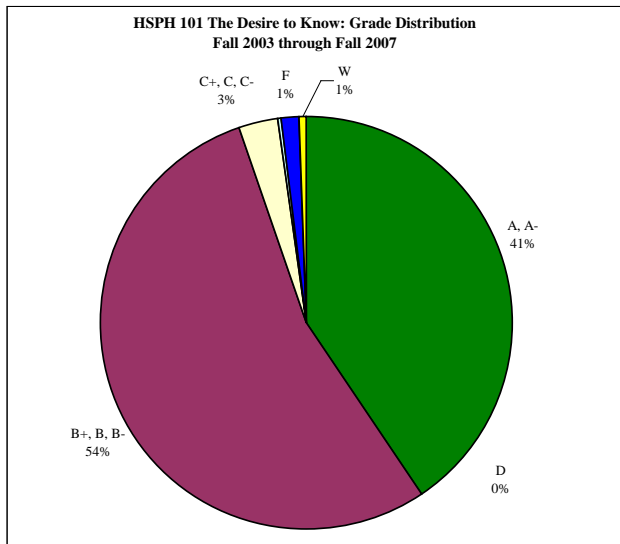
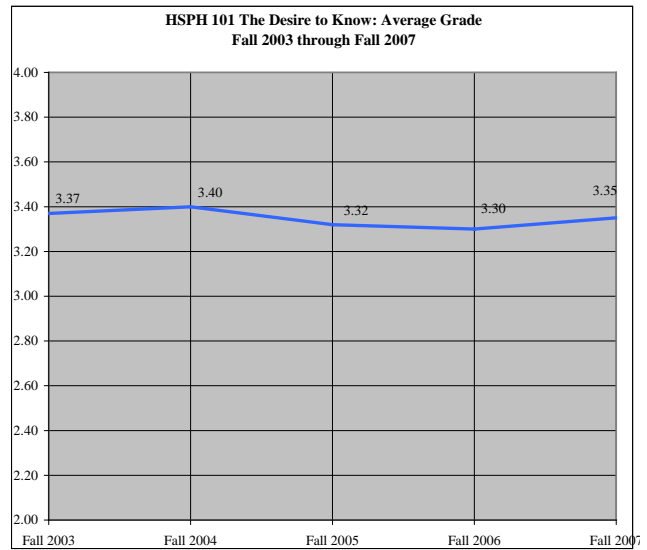
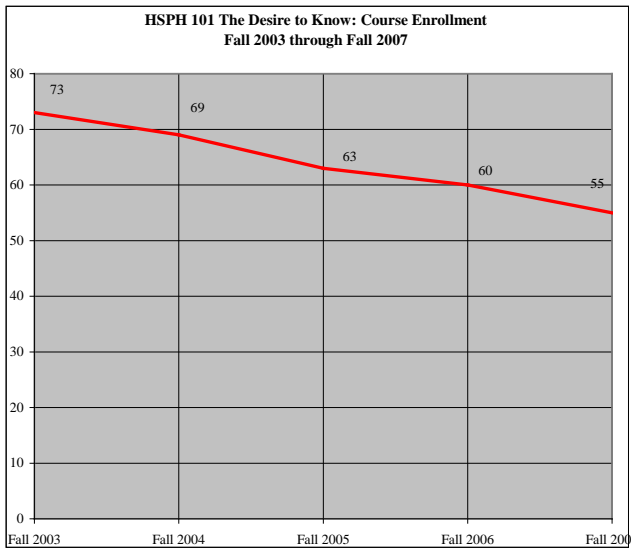


Attachment 7

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: HONORS PROGRAM HSPH 101 The Desire to Know

Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades Grade Distribution						Course Evaluation Results					
		Avg.	StDev.	A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	D	F	W	Course Eval. #	Course Eval. %	Instructor Rating Avg.	Instructor Rating StDev.	Course Rating Avg.	Course Rating StDev.
Fall 2003	73	3.37	0.50	31	38	4				64	87.67%	7.27	2.31	7.09	1.68
Fall 2004	69	3.40	0.46	30	35	3			1	53	76.81%	8.42	1.65	8.19	1.48
Fall 2005	63	3.32	0.77	25	33	2		2	1	58	92.06%	8.71	1.78	8.00	1.81
Fall 2006	60	3.30	0.47	18	40	1	1			49	81.67%	9.35	0.90	8.76	1.20
Fall 2007	55	3.35	0.76	26	27			2		50	90.91%	8.12	1.94	7.90	1.66

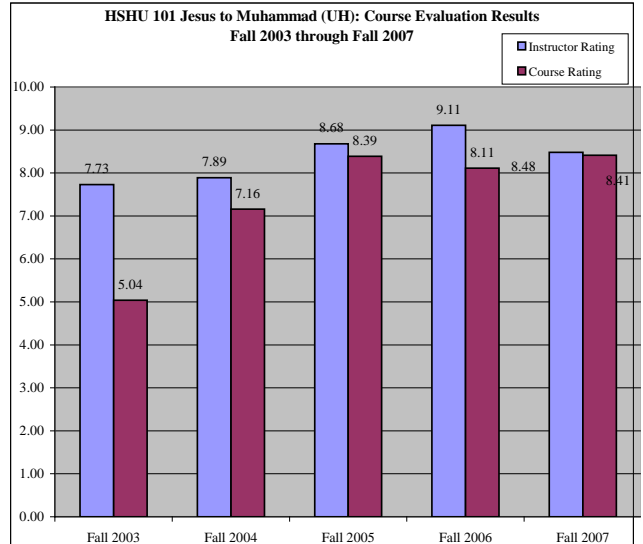
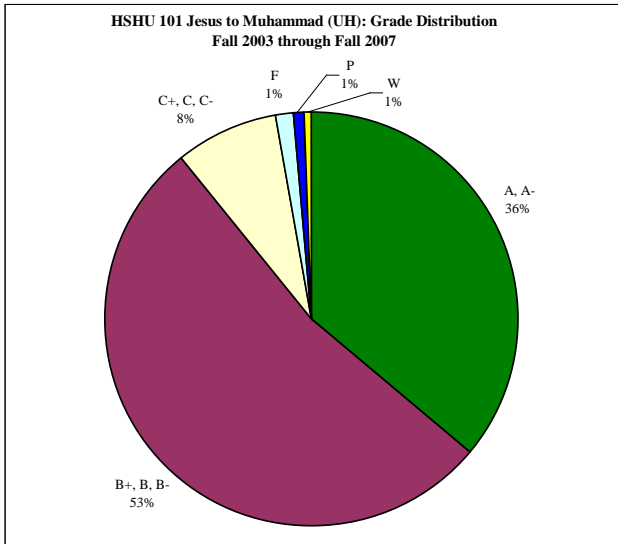
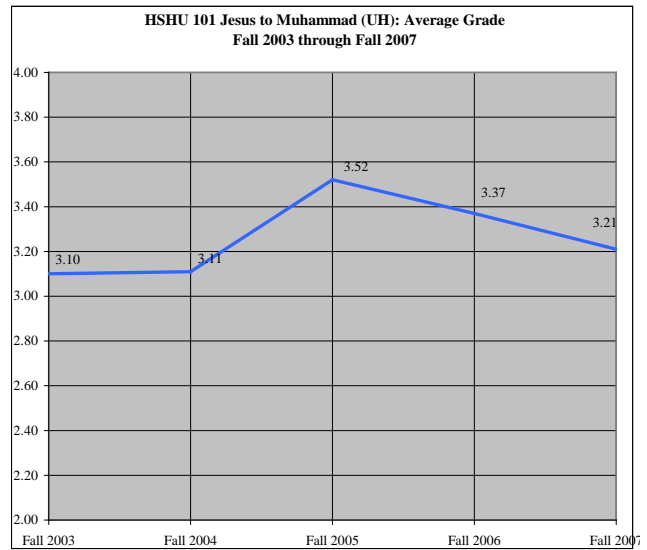
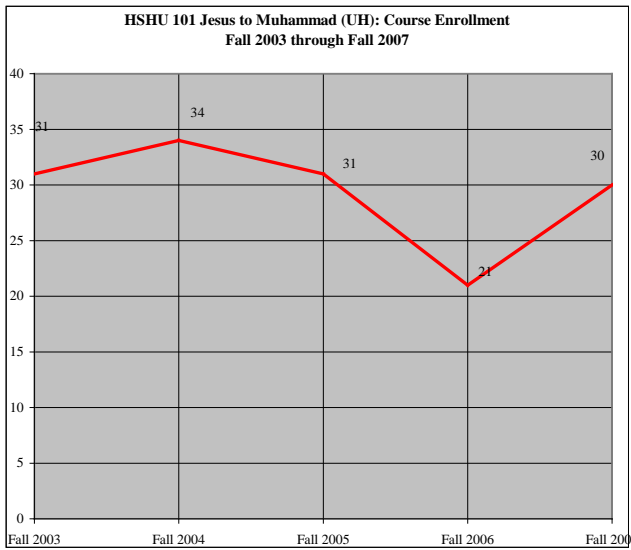


Attachment 8

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: HONORS PROGRAM HSHU 101 Jesus to Muhammad (UH)

Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades Grade Distribution						Course Evaluation Results					
		Avg.	StDev.	A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	F	P	W	Course Eval. #	Course Eval. %	Instructor Rating Avg.	Instructor Rating StDev.	Course Rating Avg.	Course Rating StDev.
Fall 2003	31	3.10	0.51	7	20	4				26	83.87%	7.73	2.49	5.04	2.85
Fall 2004	34	3.11	0.55	8	20	5			1	19	55.88%	7.89	2.21	7.16	1.98
Fall 2005	31	3.52	0.37	17	13	1				28	90.32%	8.68	1.16	8.39	1.23
Fall 2006	21	3.37	0.49	9	11	1				9	42.86%	9.11	0.93	8.11	1.36
Fall 2007	30	3.21	1.01	12	14	1	2	1		27	90.00%	8.48	1.34	8.41	1.39

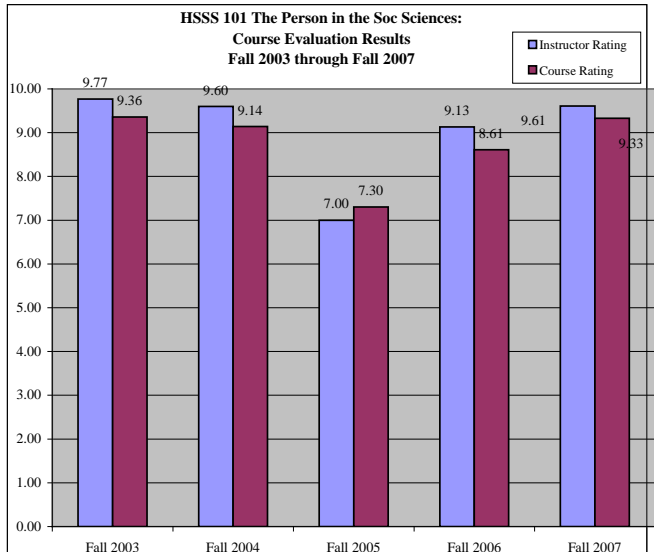
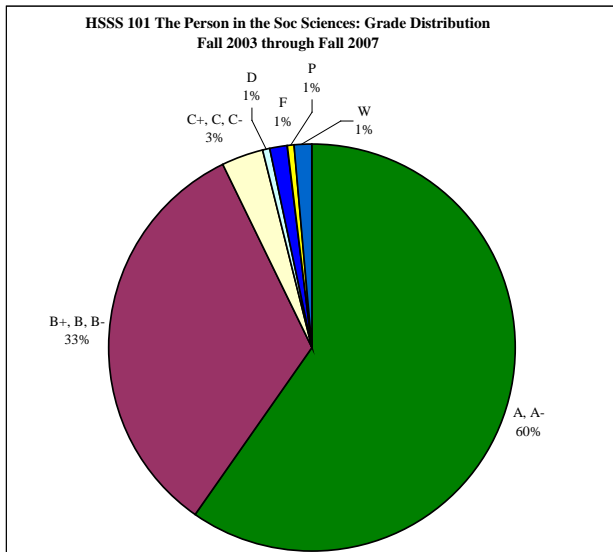
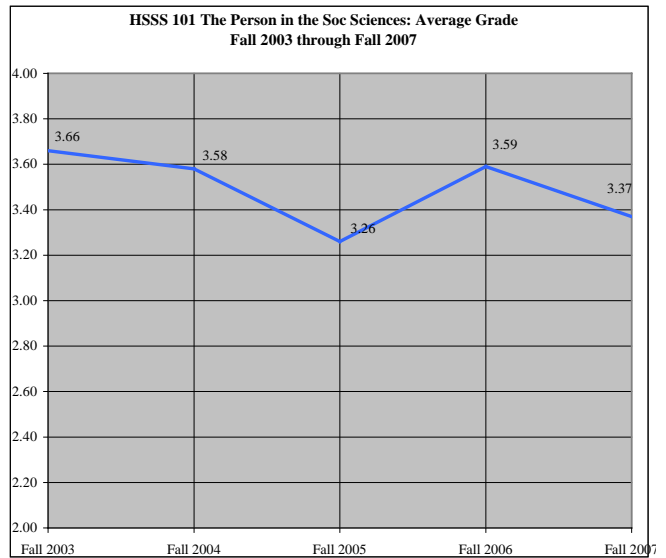
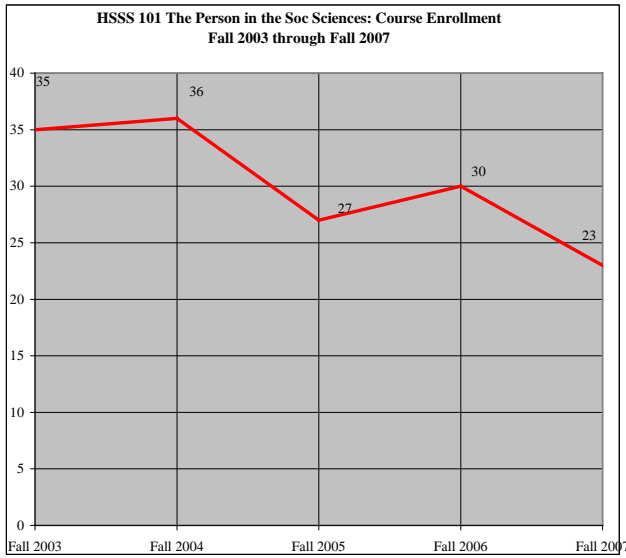


Attachment 9

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: HONORS PROGRAM
HSSS 101 The Person in the Soc Sciences

Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades Grade Distribution							Course Evaluation Results						
		Avg.	StDev.	A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	D	F	P	W	Course Eval. #	Course Eval. %	Instructor Rating Avg.	Instructor Rating StDev.	Course Rating Avg.	Course Rating StDev.	
Fall 2003	35	3.66	0.39	24	10	1						22	62.86%	9.77	0.53	9.36	0.73
Fall 2004	36	3.58	0.55	23	12	1						35	97.22%	9.60	0.98	9.14	1.14
Fall 2005	27	3.26	1.02	15	7	3	1	1				23	85.19%	7.00	2.15	7.30	1.84
Fall 2006	30	3.59	0.34	18	12							23	76.67%	9.13	1.25	8.61	1.53
Fall 2007	23	3.37	0.87	10	9				1	1	2	18	78.26%	9.61	0.85	9.33	0.97

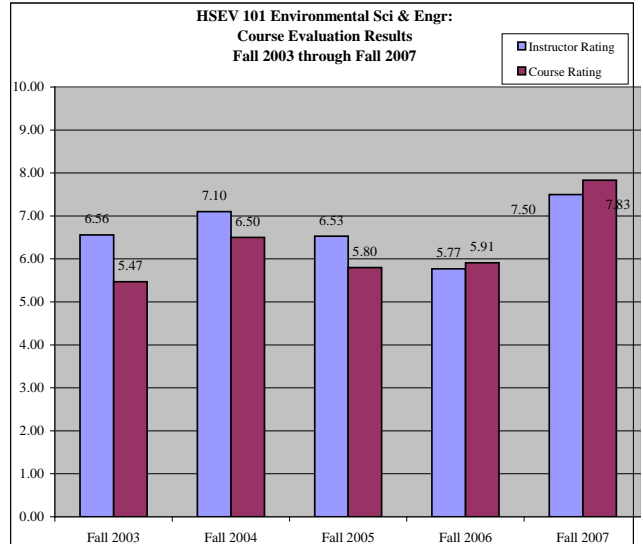
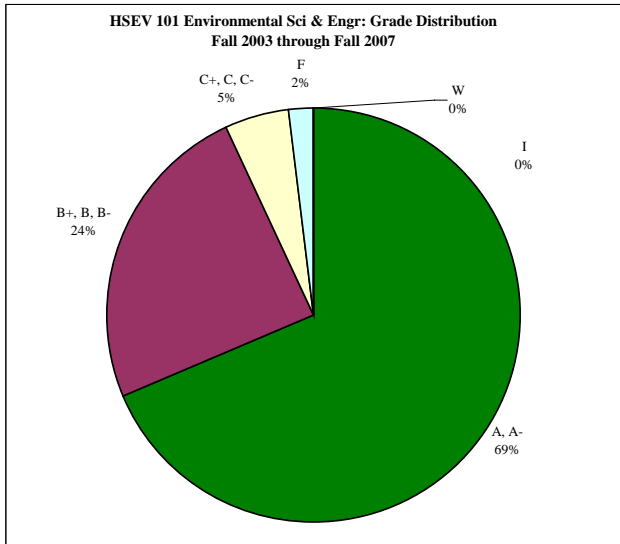
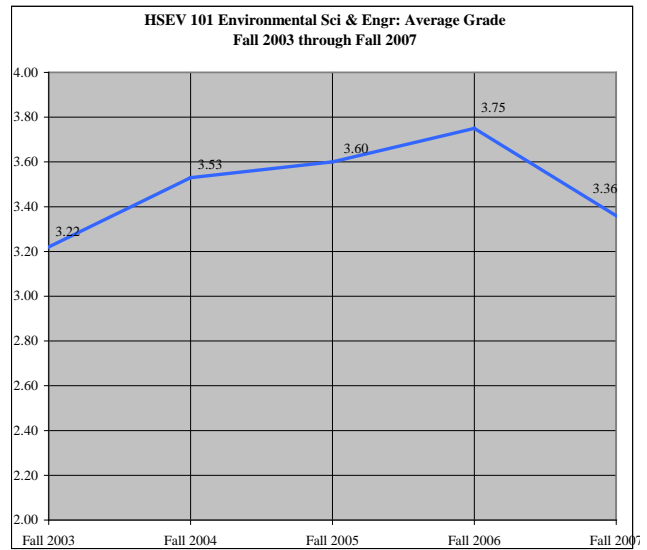
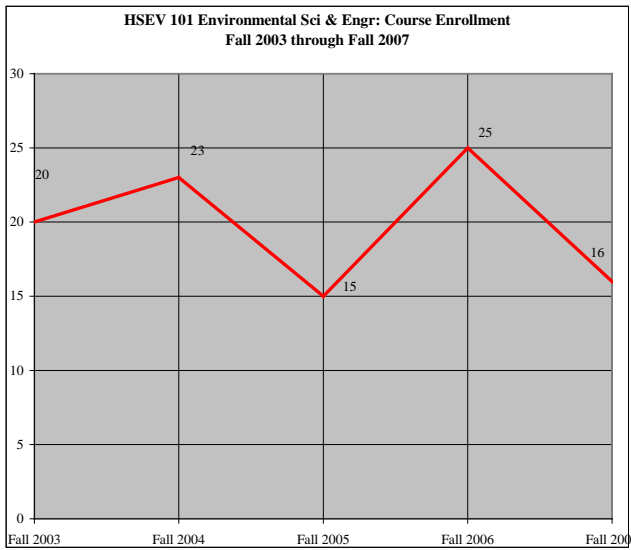


Attachment 10

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: HONORS PROGRAM
HSEV 101 Environmental Sci & Engr

Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades Grade Distribution						Course Evaluation Results					
		Avg.	StDev.	A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	F	W	I	Course Eval. #	Course Eval. %	Instructor Rating Avg.	Instructor Rating StDev.	Course Rating Avg.	Course Rating StDev.
Fall 2003	20	3.22	1.01	11	5	3	1			18	90.00%	6.56	2.04	5.47	2.44
Fall 2004	23	3.53	0.39	16	7					20	86.96%	7.10	2.25	6.50	2.33
Fall 2005	15	3.60	0.28	9	6					15	100.00%	6.53	2.36	5.80	2.57
Fall 2006	25	3.75	0.46	21	3	1				22	88.00%	5.77	2.52	5.91	2.22
Fall 2007	16	3.36	1.08	11	3	1	1			12	75.00%	7.50	1.17	7.83	1.40



Attachment 11

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: HONORS PROGRAM
HSCT 101 Text and Technology

Term	Course Enrollment	Course Grade		Course Grades Grade Distribution						Course Evaluation Results						
		Avg.	StDev.	A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	F	W	I	Course Eval. #	Course Eval. %	Instructor Rating Avg.	Instructor Rating StDev.	Course Rating Avg.	Course Rating StDev.	
Spring 2004	13	3.78	0.21	12	1											
Fall 2004	15	3.77	0.25	12	2			1			11	73.33%	9.36	0.92	8.27	1.42
Fall 2005	14	3.62	0.41	8	5			1			11	78.57%	7.73	1.62	7.18	1.99
Fall 2006	17	3.54	0.45	10	7						14	82.35%	9.14	0.77	8.71	0.83
Fall 2007	15	3.46	0.40	6	9						15	100.00%	8.13	0.99	7.00	1.81

