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Growing a Culture of Assessment at the Drake Memorial Library

Kenneth R. Wierzbowski
The College at Brockport, kwierzbo@brockport.edu

Jennifer Little Kegler
The College at Brockport, jkegler@brockport.edu

Claire Goverts
The College at Brockport, cgoverts@brockport.edu

Michael Dentino
The College at Brockport, mdentino@brockport.edu

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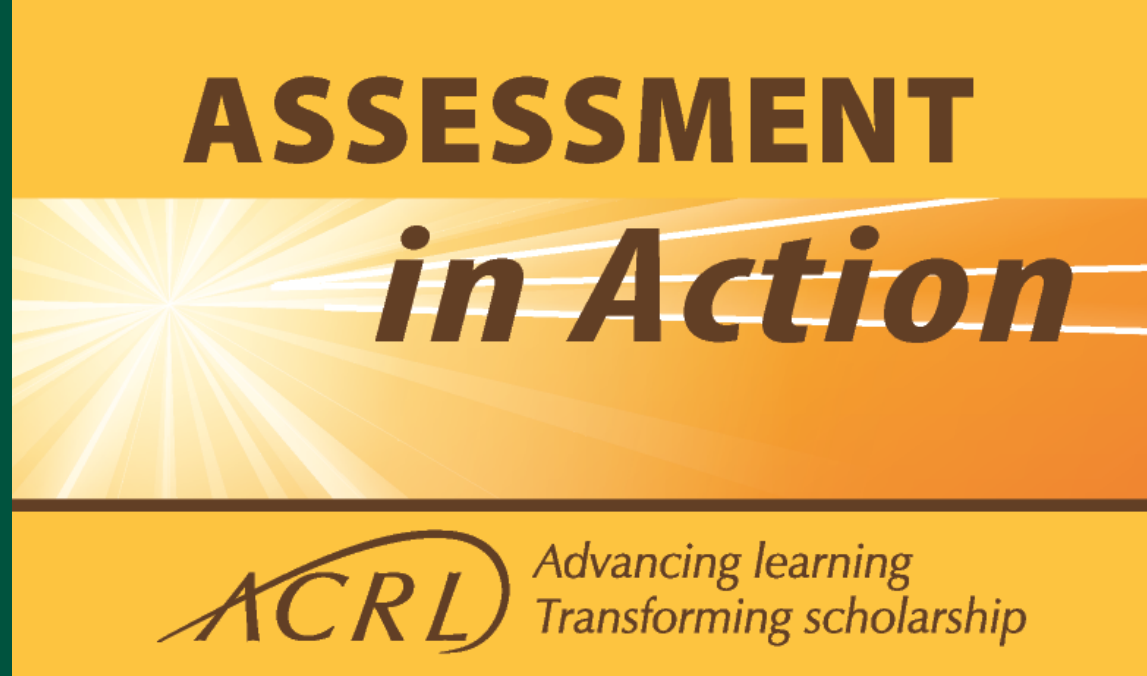# Growing a Culture of Assessment at the Drake Memorial Library

Kenneth R. Wierzbowski, Systems & Assessment Librarian; Jennifer Kegler, Associate Librarian/Library Instruction Coordinator;
Claire Goverts, Assistant Director Institutional Research; Michael Dentino, Director of Student Learning Center, The College at Brockport

The College at BROCKPORT
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Introduction

- In recent years, the Drake Memorial Library has partnered with the First-year Experience Program to provide information literacy instruction to incoming freshmen during their Academic Planning Seminar course.

- Instruction and Reference Librarians only have a single 50-minute session to introduce incoming freshmen to the library, its resources, and to teach basic information literacy skills.

- Informal assessment has always been done, but the data was self-limiting and stored in silos.

- Campus-wide focus on student learning and assessment has prioritized the connection of library goals with those of the campus at large.

Objectives

- Determine the existing information literacy skills of incoming freshmen; establish a 'baseline'
- Assess the effectiveness of our current information literacy sessions
- 'Close the loop' by acting on our findings to improve information literacy sessions and to ensure effective use of limited class time
- Tie the results of our findings to broader campus assessment initiatives and communicate these results
  - Build a perpetual culture of assessment in the library to improve our resources and services

Literature Review

Of the many case studies, methods, and theories, the Brockport Assessment in Action team focused on selected elements which best suited our local circumstances and timeline.
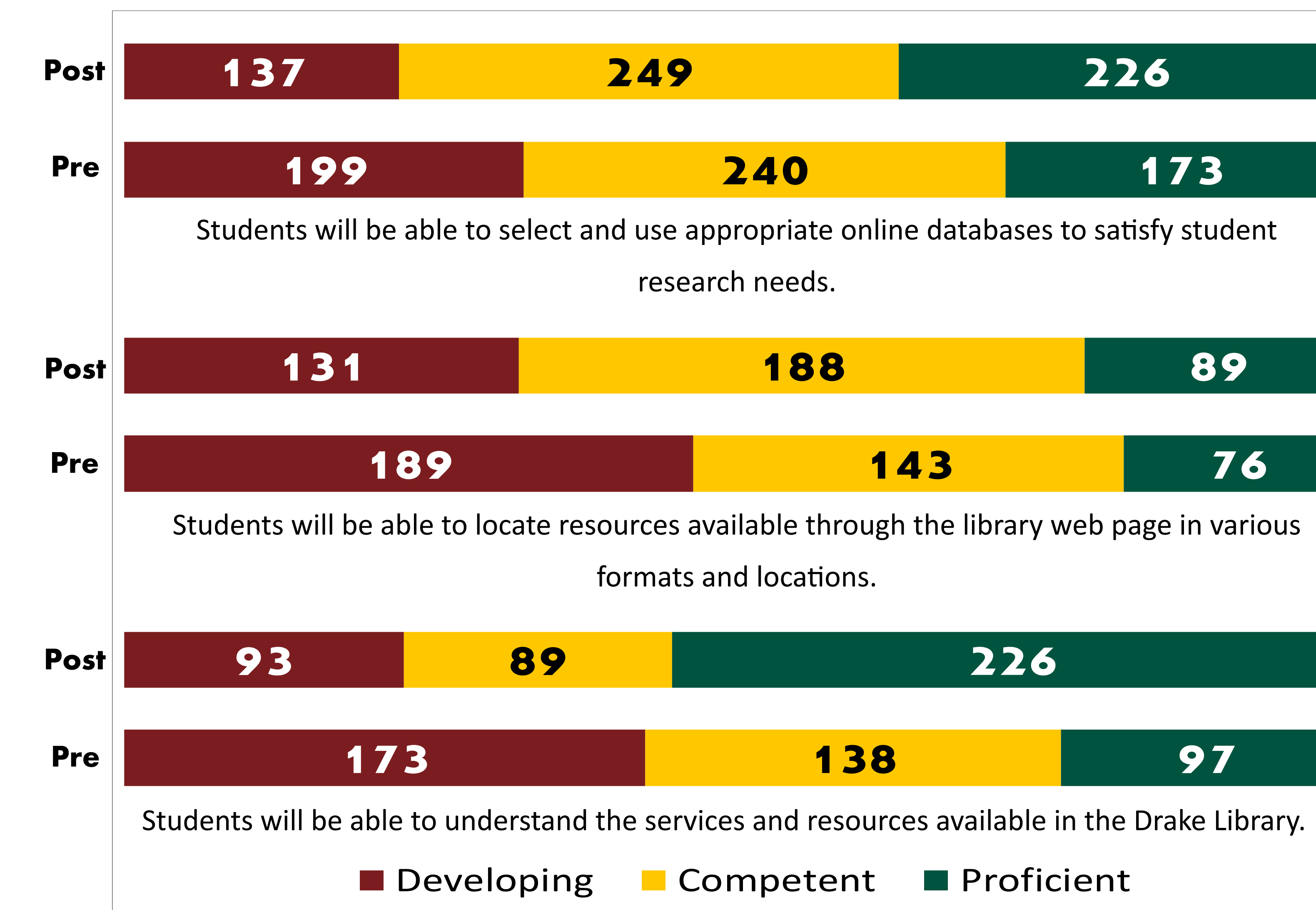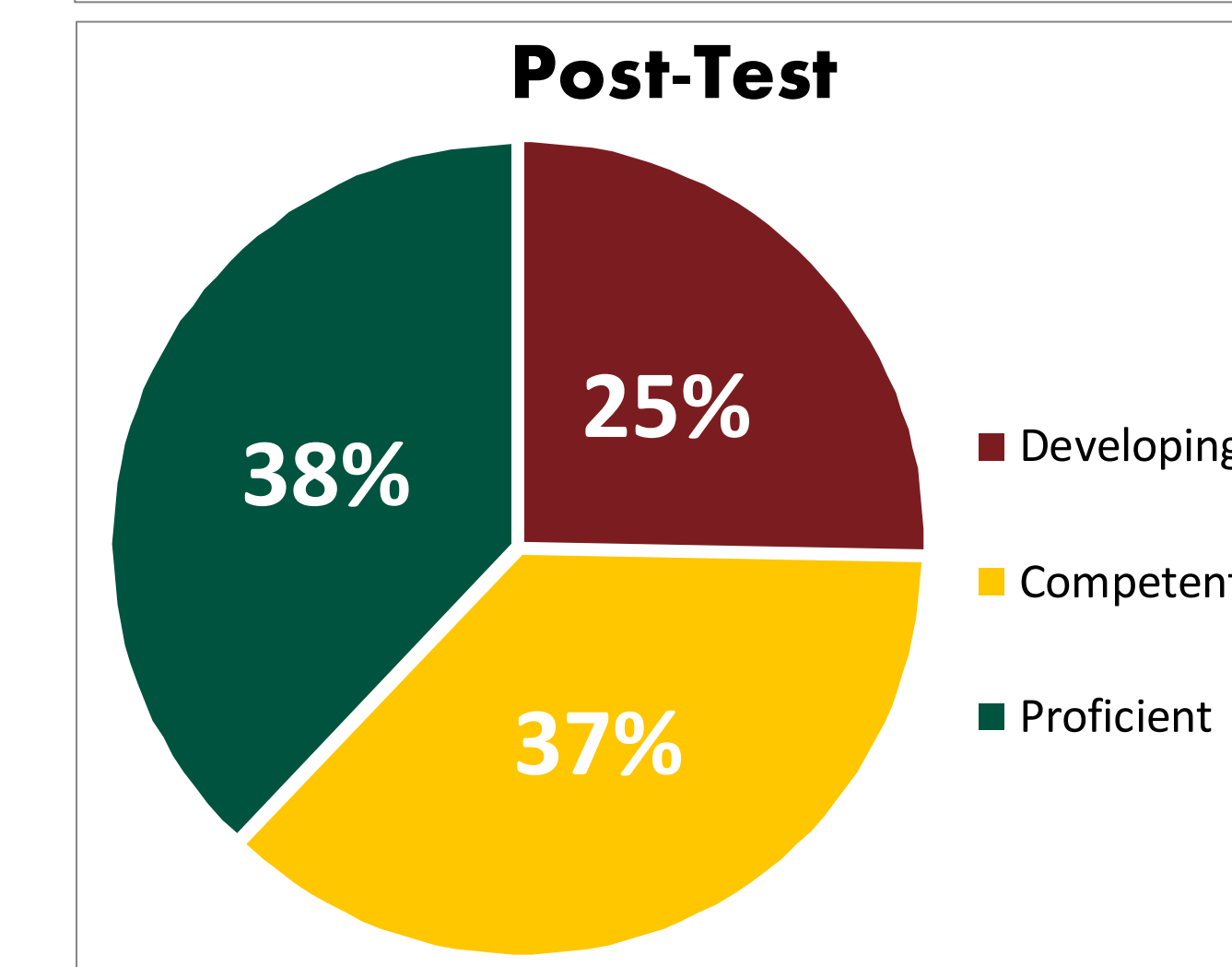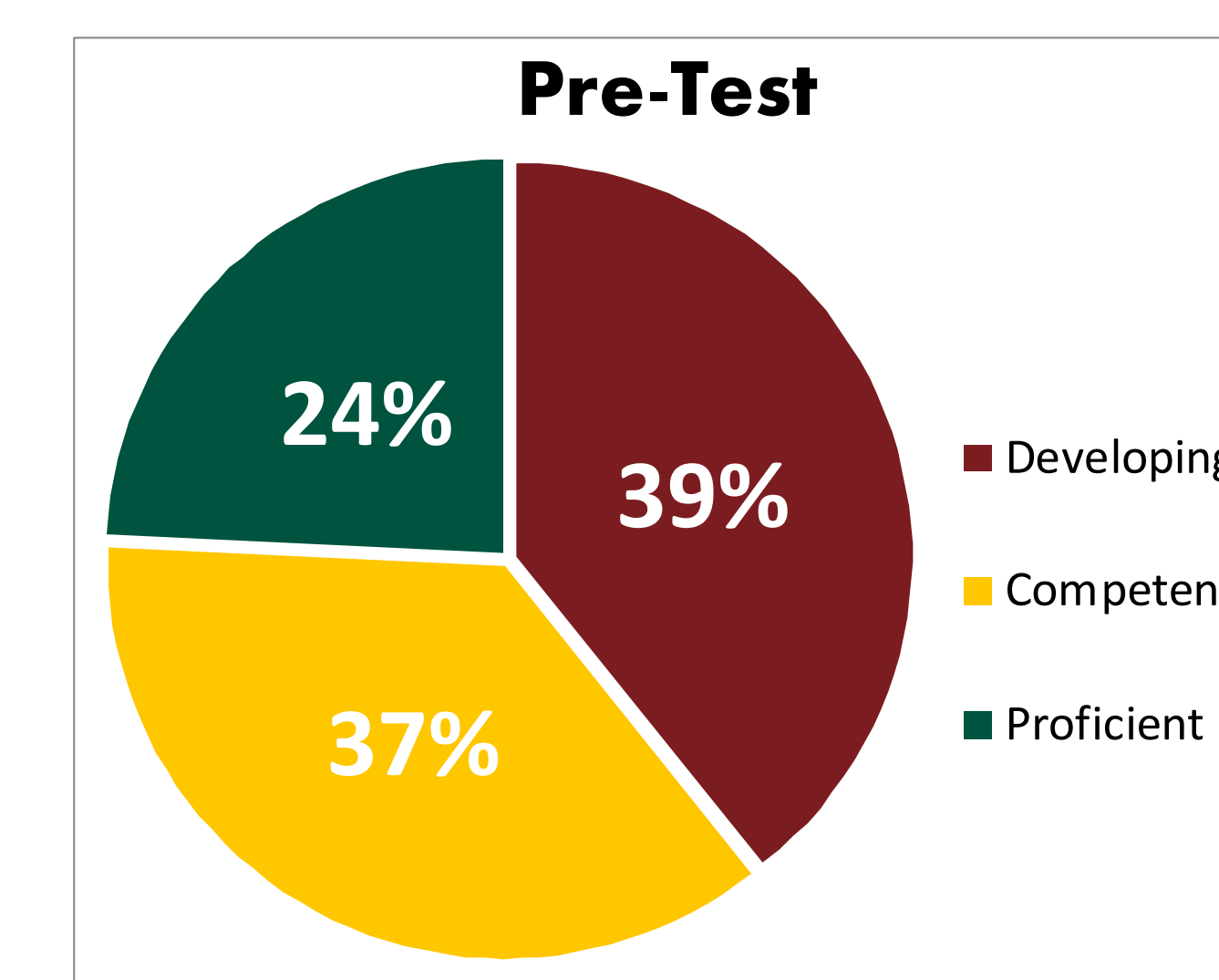
The work of Swoger (2011), Mech (2006), Schilling & Applegate (2012) and others shows that despite the less than ideal circumstances surrounding the one-shot approach, these sessions can indeed be assessed with actionable results.
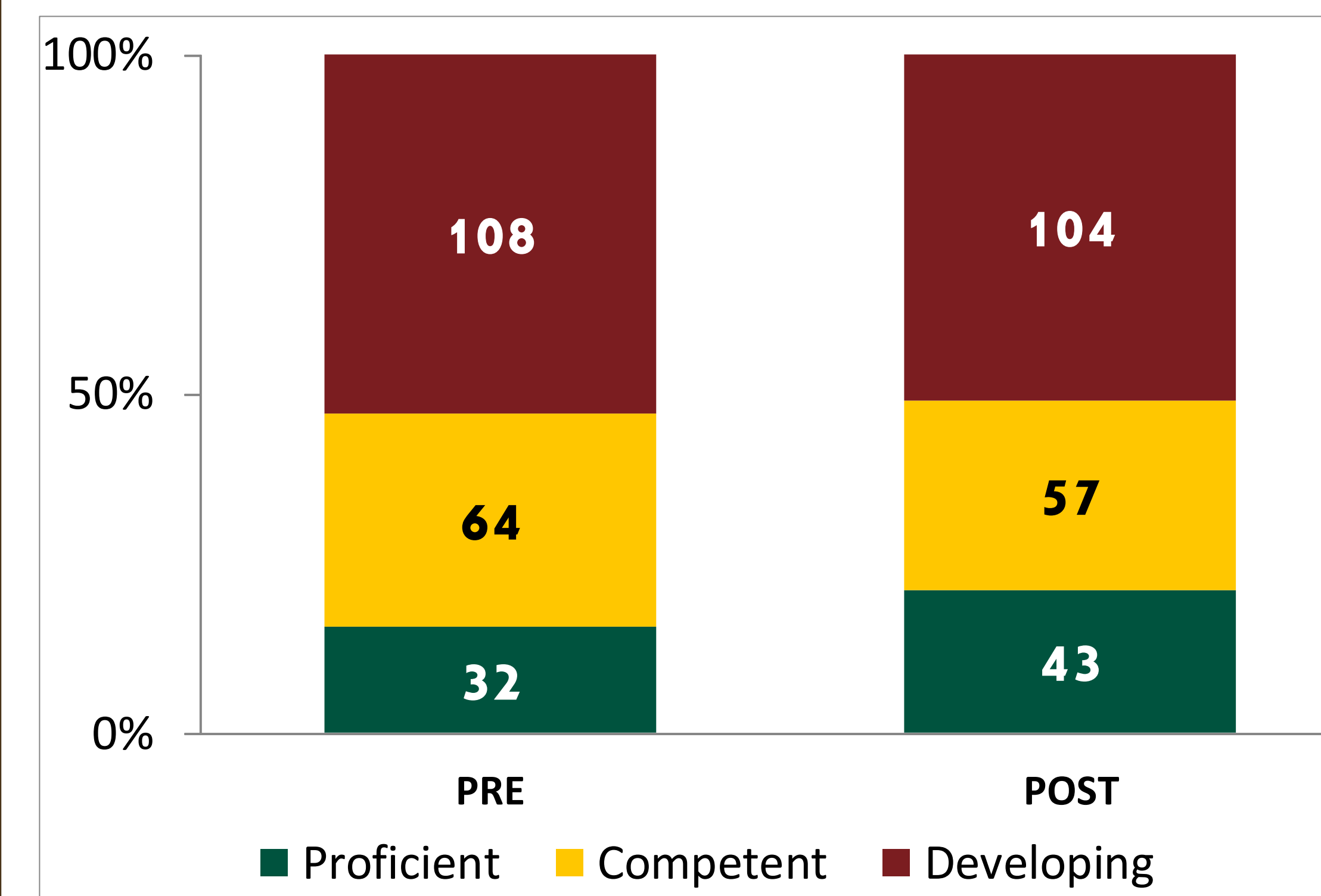
(Circular diagram: Selected Elements of Information Literacy Instruction & Assessment — Rubrics, Establishing a Baseline, Developing a Lesson Plan, Pre-Post Test Method, Information Literacy Standards, Outcomes Based Assessment, One-Shot Sessions, Collaboration with Faculty)

Process & Methods

Step	Description
Reviewing Student Learning Outcomes	• Previously established for existing information literacy sessions, remapped to the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education
Meeting with faculty	• AiA Team Member met with administrators and faculty during instructor orientation asking for their support; faculty were by and large supportive and onboard in assisting with the project.
Adapting the instrument	• Permission to adapt an existing instrument developed by the D. Leonard Corgan Library at King's College was granted. Instrument uses the ACRL Information Literacy Standards as a conceptual framework.
Developing a scoring rubric	• A 3-point scoring rubric was developed; point values from the instrument were categorized into Proficient, Competent and Developing classifications.
Creating a lesson plan	• Building from an existing template, the team revised and updated the plan to emphasize each of the outcomes defined for the sessions.
Administering the Pre-Test	• Both tests were loaded into the campus learning management system. Reminder emails were sent prior to each session prompting students to take the pre-test.
Administering the Post-Test	• Students took the post-test in the library at the end of the session or outside of class if there was not enough time.
Analyzing the data	• Raw data was compiled and analyzed by the IR team member. Of the 404 pre-test and 419 post-test respondents, a total of 204 respondents who met our criteria took both tests.

Results

Overall change

Pre-Test
- Developing 39%
- Competent 37%
- Proficient 24%

Post-Test
- Developing 25%
- Competent 37%
- Proficient 38%

Students will be able to select and use appropriate online databases to satisfy student research needs.

	Developing	Competent	Proficient
Post	137	249	226
Pre	199	240	173

Students will be able to locate resources available through the library web page in various formats and locations.

	Developing	Competent	Proficient
Post	131	188	89
Pre	189	143	76

Students will be able to understand the services and resources available in the Drake Library.

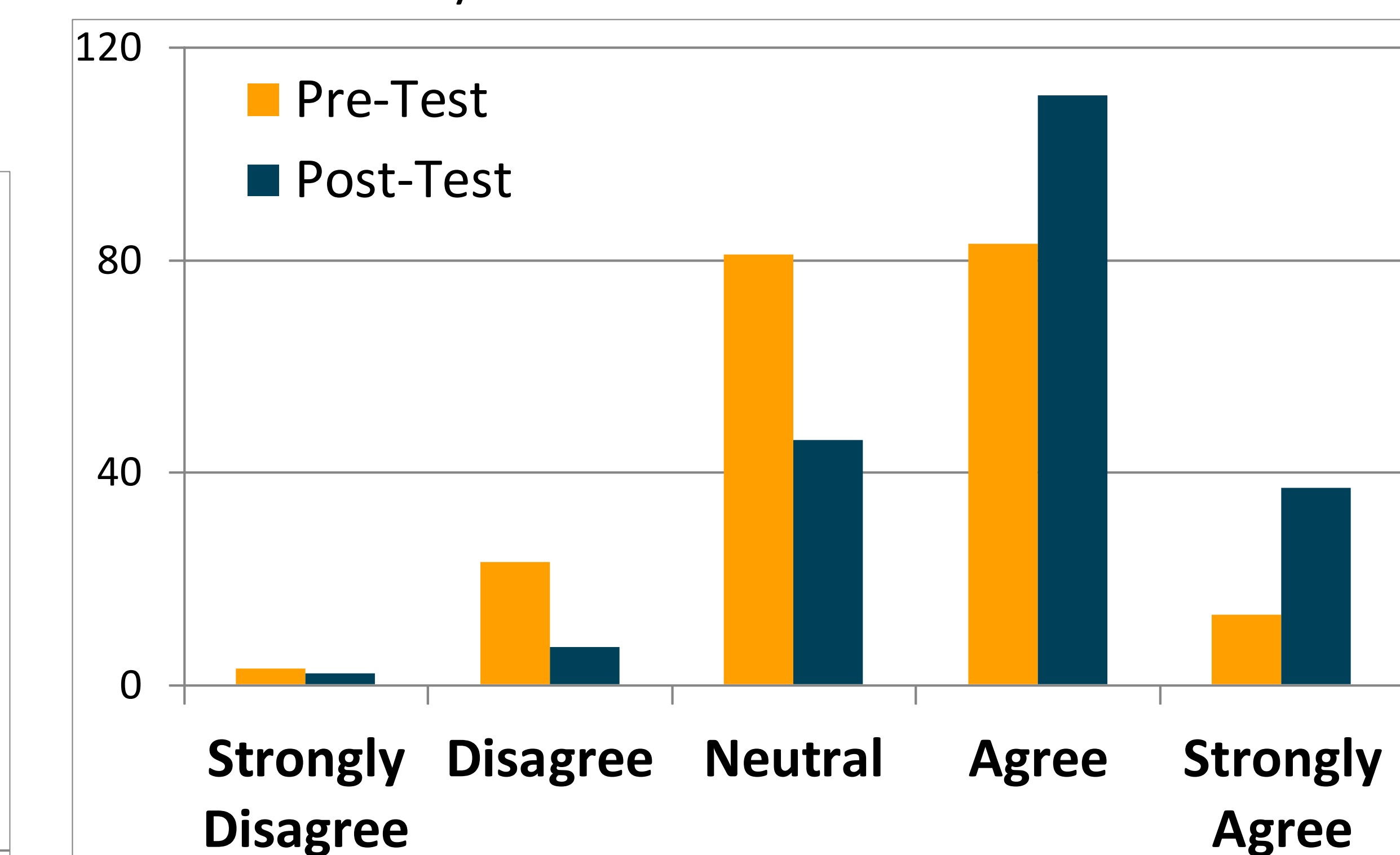|	Developing	Competent	Proficient
Post	93	89	226
Pre	173	138	97

■ Developing ■ Competent ■ Proficient

Advanced information literacy concepts were included on both tests, but not focused on during instruction. Concepts included copyright issues, truncation, identifying sources and plagiarism.

	PRE	POST
Developing	108	104
Competent	64	57
Proficient	32	43

■ Proficient ■ Competent ■ Developing

Advanced Information Literacy Questions

Qualitative questions to obtain student feelings about the library and services were also included.

(Bar chart: Pre-Test / Post-Test across Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree)

How much do you agree with the following statement:
"I have learned a lot about research from libraries."

Conclusions & Next Steps

- Students showed a clear improvement of their information literacy skills from pre to post test.
- Incoming freshmen lack advanced skills such as advanced search techniques and knowledge of basic copyright and plagiarism concerns.
- Students improved the most from pre to post test in the outcomes concerning the understanding of services and resources available at the library.
- Students struggle with identification of formats and determining the appropriateness of using multidisciplinary and/or subject-specific databases.
- Students entering Brockport are able to confidently identify databases, Reference sources, and websites pertaining to a specific subject as well as the ability to form simple search strategies.

- The results found during the assessment will be worked into revised information literacy outcomes and lesson plans for the Fall 2014 semester and beyond. *However...*
- The ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education are currently undergoing significant revisions. These changes will alter the outcomes and concepts taught in library information literacy sessions.
- Future assessment of information literacy sessions will be modified according to these changes with more emphasis on authentic assessment methods.
- Assessment timeline will shift to match the new college assessment cycle, and data will be put into the campus assessment software platform, Tk20. This will allow future assessment efforts to be directly tied into broader campus goals.