Learning Styles Survey

During the 2001-02 academic year, Capital surveyed the learning styles of 77 students enrolled in *IDS 105: College Success* using the Soloman-Felder Learning Styles Index. Results are displayed along a continuum from mild to moderate. Results for each axis, and characteristics of those types of learners, are recorded below. As a group, these students are generally 2-to-1 or even 3-to-1 in the direction of active, sensing, visual, sequential learners.

ACTIVE AND REFLECTIVE LEARNERS

- Active learners tend to retain and understand information best by doing something active with it--discussing or applying it or explaining it to others. Reflective learners prefer to think about it quietly first.
- "Let's try it out and see how it works" is an active learner's phrase; "Let's think it through first" is the reflective learner's response.
- Active learners tend to like group work more than reflective learners, who prefer working alone.
- Sitting through lectures without getting to do anything physical but take notes is hard for both learning types, but particularly hard for active learners.

Active						Reflective					
extreme		moderate		mild		mild		moderate		extreme	
1	6	3	8	10	21	10	6	6	4	1	1
7		11		31		16		10		2	
Number of students:					49	28					

SENSING AND INTUITIVE LEARNERS

- Sensing learners tend to like learning facts, intuitive learners often prefer discovering possibilities and relationships.
- Sensors often like solving problems by well-established methods and dislike complications and surprises; intuitors like innovation and dislike repetition. Sensors are more likely than intuitors to resent being tested on material that has not been explicitly covered in class.
- Sensors tend to be patient with details and good at memorizing facts and doing hands-on (laboratory) work; intuitors may be better at grasping new concepts and are often more comfortable than sensors with abstractions and mathematical formulations.
- Sensors tend to be more practical and careful than intuitors; intuitors tend to work faster and to be more innovative than sensors.
- Sensors don't like courses that have no apparent connection to the real world; intuitors don't like "plug-and-chug" courses that involve a lot of memorization and routine calculations.

Sensing						Intuitive					
extreme		moderate		mild		mild		moderate		extreme	
2	8	10	15	18	5	9	5	4		1	
10		**25**		**23**		**14**		**4**		**1**	
Number of students:					58	19					

VISUAL AND VERBAL LEARNERS

Visual learners remember best what they see--pictures, diagrams, flow charts, time lines, films, and demonstrations. Verbal learners get more out of words--written and spoken explanations. Everyone learns more when information is presented both visually and verbally.

Visual						Verbal					
extreme		moderate		mild		mild		moderate		extreme	
2	10	8	11	13	7	11	9	3	2		1
12		**19**		**20**		**20**		**5**		**1**	
Number of students:					51	26					

SEQUENTIAL AND GLOBAL LEARNERS

- Sequential learners tend to gain understanding in linear steps, with each step following logically from the previous one. Global learners tend to learn in large jumps, absorbing material almost randomly without seeing connections, and then suddenly "getting it."
- Sequential learners tend to follow logical stepwise paths in finding solutions; global learners may be able to solve complex problems quickly or put things together in novel ways once they have grasped the big picture, but they may have difficulty explaining how they did it.
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Sequential						Global					
extreme		moderate		mild		mild		moderate		extreme	
	3	6	9	19	18	10	10	1	1		
3		**15**		**37**		**20**		**2**			
Number of students:					55	22					