

Results from the survey of initial beliefs

- Most of the questions were relatively easy examples of question types that you should be able to answer after completing the course.
- 233 of you completed the survey. On average, you correctly answered 65 percent of the questions that required knowledge of the content of the course.
- There were no notable differences among you according to year in college (first, second, third, etc.).
- Those of you who said you would be taking this class if even if it did not satisfy the Oral Communication/ Logic requirement had an average of 67, compared to an average of 63 for students concerned with the requirement.

Results, continued (2 of 4)

- The most surprising results of the survey had to do with your expectations about grades.
- When asked (1) to say what grade you think you are most likely to end up with in this class and (2) to predict the average of the grades earned by all of the students in this class at the end of the semester (a course GPA, in effect, as opposed to a student GPA), your 233 responses yielded some interesting results:
 - 202 of you predicted that you would get a letter grade *higher* than what you predicted for the course average.
 - Only 3 of you predicted that you would get a letter grade *lower* than what you predicted for the course average.

Results, continued (3 of 4)

- You were also asked to predict what percentage of the students in this class you will do at least as well as, or better than. This, in effect, asks you to specify some number n so that you would predict that you would end up in the top n percent of the class. And here's the astounding thing:

97 percent of you predicted that you would end up in the top half of the class.

Results, continued (4 of 4)

97 percent of you predicted that you would end up in the top half of the class.

- The upside of this is that it suggests that the vast majority of you are optimistic, committed, ambitious, and engaged. These attitudes will serve you well in this class and others.
- By definition, this can work out to be true for half of you. But half of you will also have to adjust your expectations. I'll do my best to teach every one of you as much as I can. But no matter how much I teach you, or how much you learn—or, for that matter, how easy I grade—I can't give 97 percent of you the above-average grades you anticipate receiving. So please consider your expectations carefully.