

2014

[Spring 2014 TLPDC Ethics Lunch Series Report]

Series sponsored by the Texas Tech University Ethics Center and the Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development Center.

Spring 2014 TLPDC Ethics Lunch Series Report

Introduction

The Texas Tech University Ethics Center (TTU Ethics Center) in collaboration with the Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development Center (TLPDC) hosted two luncheons during the Spring 2014 semester. These collaborative sessions were conceived in the Fall of 2009 as part of the SACS-COC Quality Enhancement Plan. The TLPDC Ethics Lunch Series addresses different aspects of professional codes of ethics, academic integrity, and ethical issues in personal, professional, and civic life. The following report summarizes two sessions which took place in Spring of 2014.

Session I

Name: Science and Environmental Illiteracy: A Role for Ethics?

Date: 2/12/2014

Time: 12 - 1 PM

Location: Room 151 - Audio/Video Instructional Lab (AVI), Library

Speaker: Dr. Tom Arsuffi Director, Llano River Field Station Texas Tech University

Summary: "Water, the environment, and natural resources are critical issues for present and future generations, especially with population increases in the next century. An ecologically literate public will be needed to make informed decisions on a variety of issues as resources become limited. Yet studies consistently reveal that the U.S. public suffers from a tremendous environmental literacy gap that is increasing rather than decreasing. Further, >90% of U.S. will live in urban areas and children will have increasingly little contact with nature. The disconnect between children and nature has important health, policy and career ramifications (Richard Louv, Last Child in the Woods). Here, I examine the structure and function of science, environmental education and literacy at various scales and from a natural resources and water as ethical issues perspective."¹

¹ <https://www.tltc.ttu.edu/WebApps/EMSEventEnrollmentPro/View/RSS/RSS.aspx/GetEvents> (accessed 02/12/2014)

Attendees and Feedback

The 43 attendees came from 13 different colleges/units. A majority was from the College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources and many were graduate students. See table 1 for a more detailed description of participants' affiliations.

Table 1

Affiliations and Rank of Participants at 'Science and Environmental Illiteracy: A Role for Ethics?' session.

	Faculty	Staff	Graduate	Undergraduate	SUM
Architecture			1		1
Office of Planning & Assessment		1			1
Office of the Vice President for Research		1			1
Law	1				1
Operations Division Engineering Services		2			2
Library	1	1			2
Human Sciences			1	2	3
Engineering		1	2		3
Ethics Center		3			3
Media and Communications			3		3
Arts and Sciences			2	1	3
The Institute of Environmental and Human Health	1		4		5
Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources	5		5	5	15
TOTAL	8	9	18	8	43

Event Questionnaire: thirty questionnaires were collected. Respondents answered the following six questions/statements:

1. What is your affiliation with Texas Tech University?
2. How did you hear about this event?
3. This workshop met my expectations based on the workshop title and description.
4. I would recommend this workshop to my colleagues.
5. What comments or suggestions do you have regarding this workshop?
6. What suggestions do you have for *future* ethics workshops?

The following charts summarize the answers to the first four questions.

1. The majority of respondents were graduate students (Figure 1).

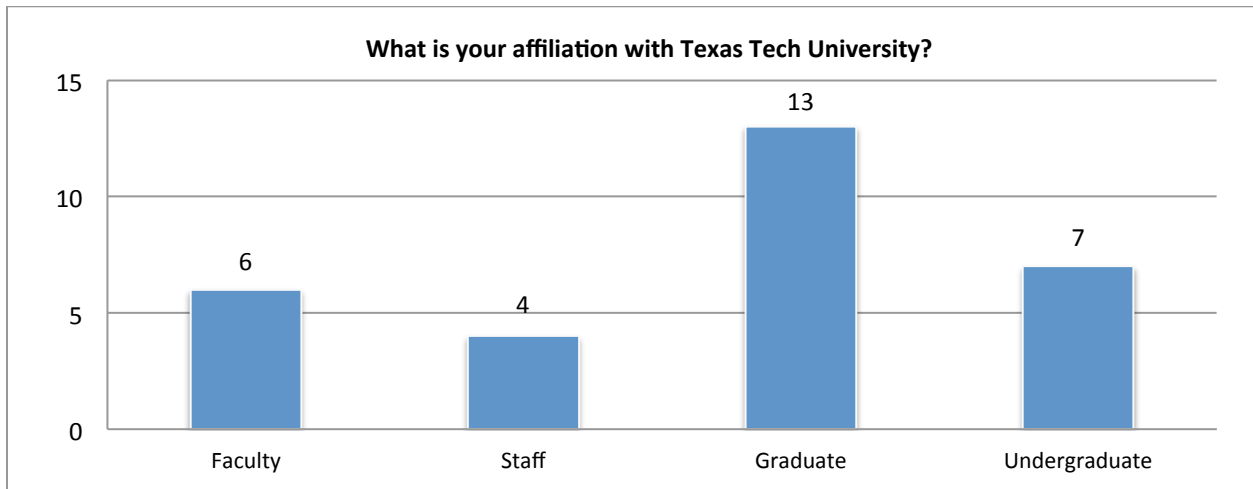


Figure 1. Number of Session I Respondents, by Rank

- Most respondents learned about this event through word-of-mouth (43.9%) and TechAnnounce (34.1%) (Figure 2).

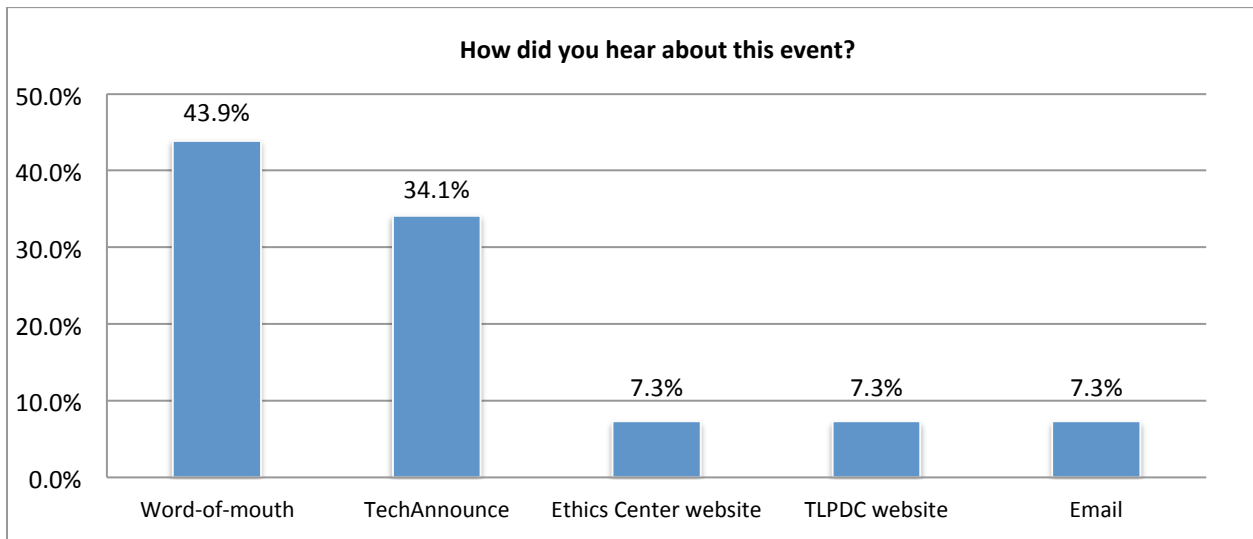


Figure 2. Session I Marketing Results

- Almost all respondents (93.3%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that this workshop met their expectations based on the workshop title and description (Figure 3).

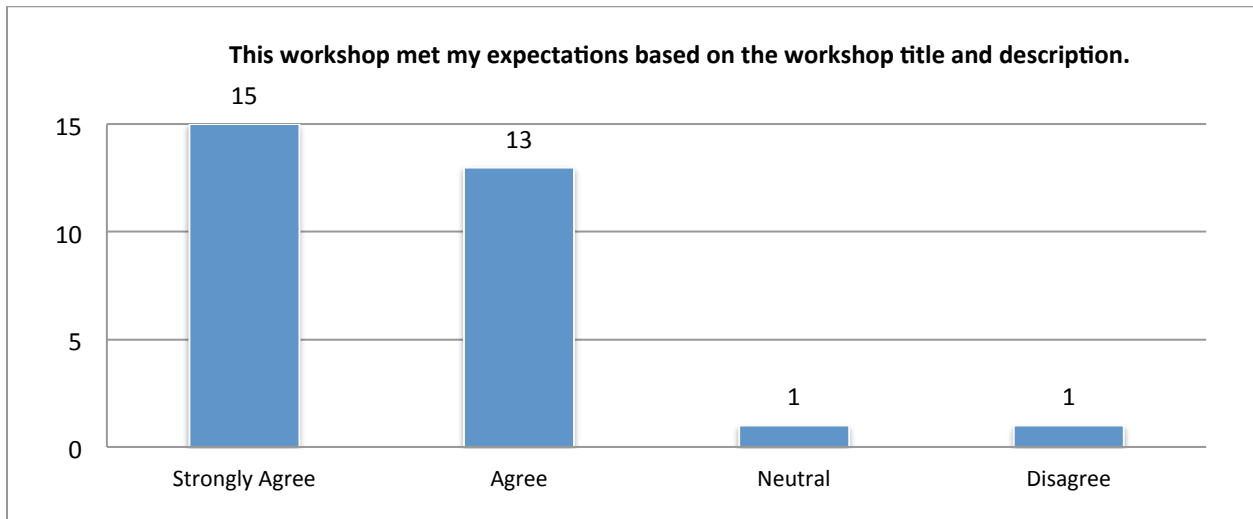


Figure 3. Session I Respondents' Expectations

4. The majority of the respondents (90.0%) also *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that they would recommend this workshop to their colleagues (Figure 4).

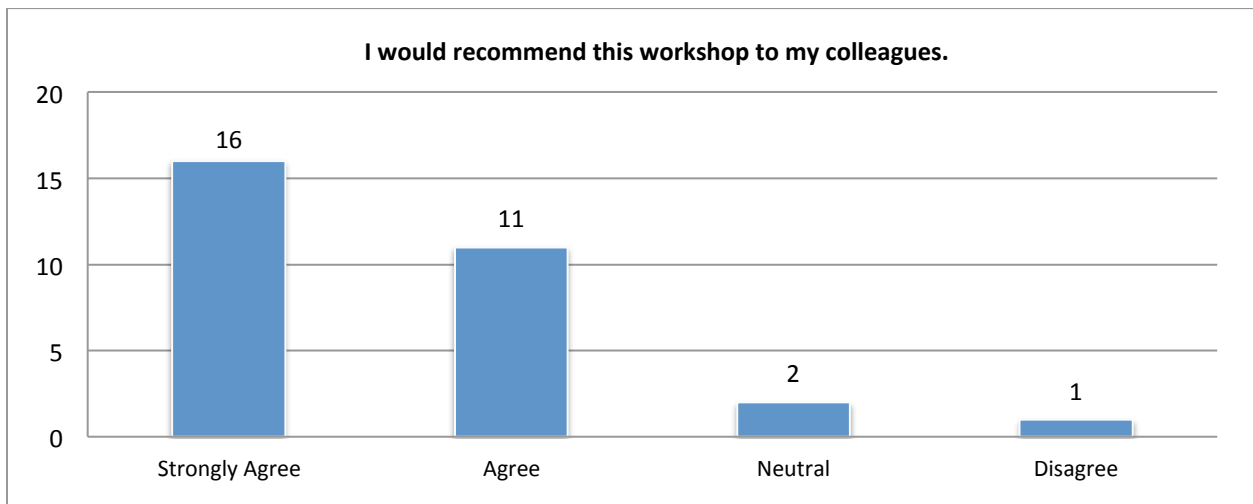


Figure 4. Session I Respondents' Plans to Recommend Session

Substantive Comments

5. Twenty respondents gave comments/suggestions regarding this workshop. Selected comments include:²

- Excellent presentation. Exceeded my expectation.

² See appendix A for a comprehensive list of comments/suggestions regarding this workshop.

- Wonderfully done topic, expressed well. Very important to communicate environmentalism to public.
- Q + A session at end would be helpful.
- The environment is very important therefore it does make a difference how we conserve and utilize its resources. Thank you for sharing this information.
- I felt like the presentation seemed all over the place at times lacking a direct message.
- Would recommend to students, more than faculty. Would've liked to hear more suggestions for change. How to extend to our classrooms here at Tech, etc.

6. Seven respondents also provided suggestions for future ethics workshop.

- Love 'em, more!
- How to discuss controversial issues while maintaining ethics.
- Webstreaming.
- Please bring him back for more presentation.
- More seats for more people!
- Try to make it more engaging and interactive.
- It would be nice to have more workshops like this. It could be better to have some handouts outside to get more interaction between individuals.

Session II

Name: Diversity Matters: The Ethics of Educating the Many

Date: 3/11/2014

Time: 12:30 - 1:30 PM

Location: Room 151 - Audio/Video Instructional Lab (AVI)

Panelists: Dr. Aliza Wong

Summary: “At a time in which buzzwords, taglines, slogans, and soundbites abound; when university affirmative action cases appear before the Supreme Court, reality TV stars use new-found fame to express their opinions about Jim Crow, and hazing in professional athletics includes racial epithets and slurs; when an African American president is elected and re-elected, the Stand Your Ground death of a young African American youth leads to a national discourse on race, and the legacies of slavery, imprisonment, and discrimination fill the silver screen - Diversity Matters. Speaking both to and beyond

the scope of the university, the presenters at this TLPDC/Ethics Lunch will focus on the ways in which the ethics of "deep diversity" offer new ways of acknowledging and respecting the multiplicity and distinctiveness of individuals and protect the more participatory conversation on inclusion. The discussion will engage with the viability of a universal understanding of ethics, particularly in multicultural communities. Colleges and universities represent microcosms of diverse cultures and groups - how do we best embody an ethical approach to providing for the multiple and different needs, intellectual curiosities, and meaningful engagement in the curricular and co-curricular workings of the university?"³

Attendees and Feedback

The 42 attendees came from 18 different colleges/units. Several participants were from the College of Arts and Sciences and most were staff and graduate students. See table 2 for a more detailed description of participants' affiliations.

Table 2

Affiliations and Rank of Participants at 'Diversity Matters: The Ethics of Educating the Many' session.

	Faculty	Staff	Graduate	Undergraduate	SUM
Cross-Cultural Academic Advancement Center		1			1
Internal Affairs			1		1
Mentor Tech			1		1
Rec Sports		1			1
Center for Campus Life		1			1
Architecture			1		1
Media and Communication	1				1
Office of the Vice President for Research		1			1
School of Nursing		1			1
Support Operations for Academic Retention	1				1
Visual and Performing Arts			2		2
Engineering			2		2
Provost Office		2			2
Education	1	1			2
Human Sciences			4		4
Library		4			4
Ethics Center		4			4
Arts and Sciences	6		5	1	12
TOTAL	9	16	16	1	42

³ <https://www.tltc.ttu.edu/WebApps/EMSEventEnrollmentPro/View/RSS/RSS.aspx/GetEvents> (accessed 3/11/2014)

Event Questionnaire: thirty-five questionnaires were collected. The questionnaire included the following six questions/statements:

1. What is your affiliation with Texas Tech University?
2. How did you hear about this event?
3. This workshop met my expectations based on the workshop title and description.
4. I would recommend this workshop to my colleagues.
5. What comments or suggestions do you have regarding this workshop?
6. What suggestions do you have for *future* ethics workshops?

The following charts summarize the answers to the first four questions.

1. Most respondents were staff members and graduate students (Figure 5).

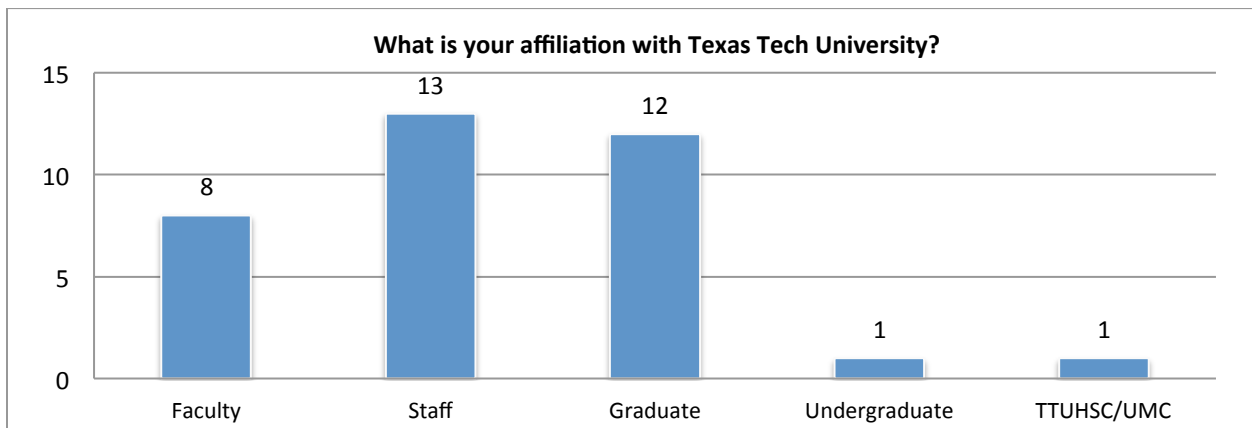


Figure 5. Number of Session II Respondents, By Rank

2. Most respondents learned about this event through TechAnnounce (44.7%) and the TLPDC website (23.7%) (Figure 6).

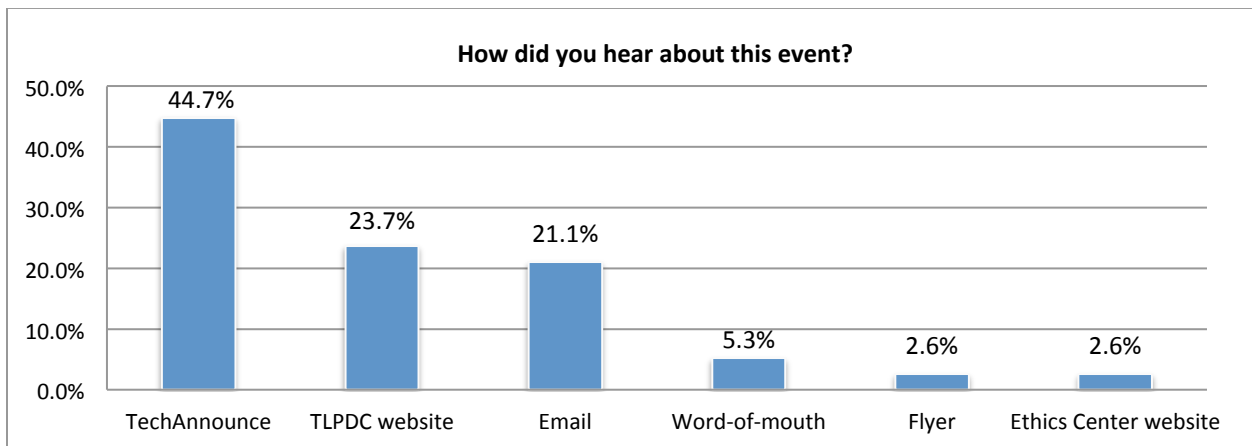


Figure 6. Session II Marketing Results

3. A majority of respondents (91.4%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that this workshop met their expectations based on the workshop title and description (Figure 7).

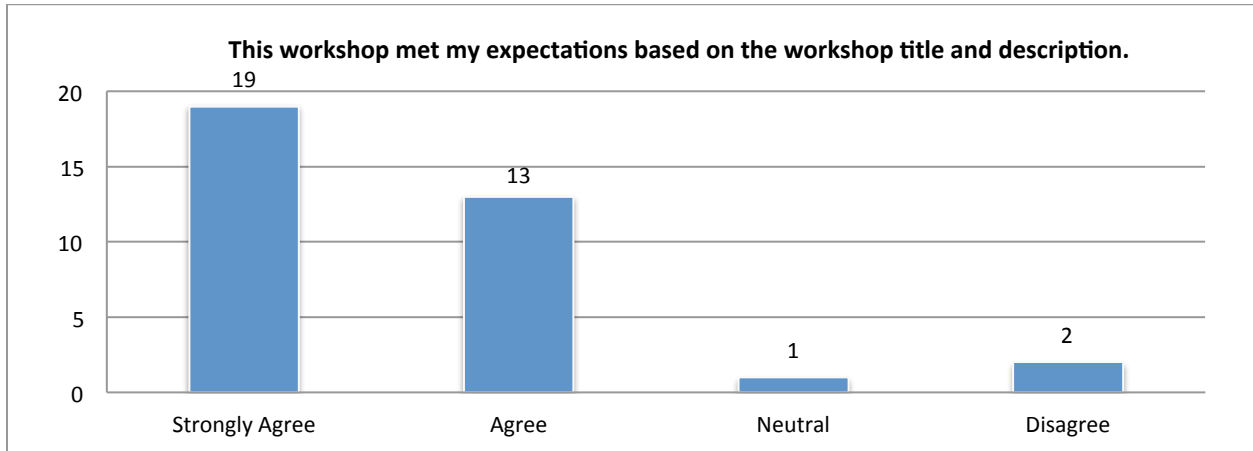


Figure 7. Session II Respondents' Expectations

4. A great number of respondents (94.3%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that they would recommend this workshop to their colleagues (Figure 8).

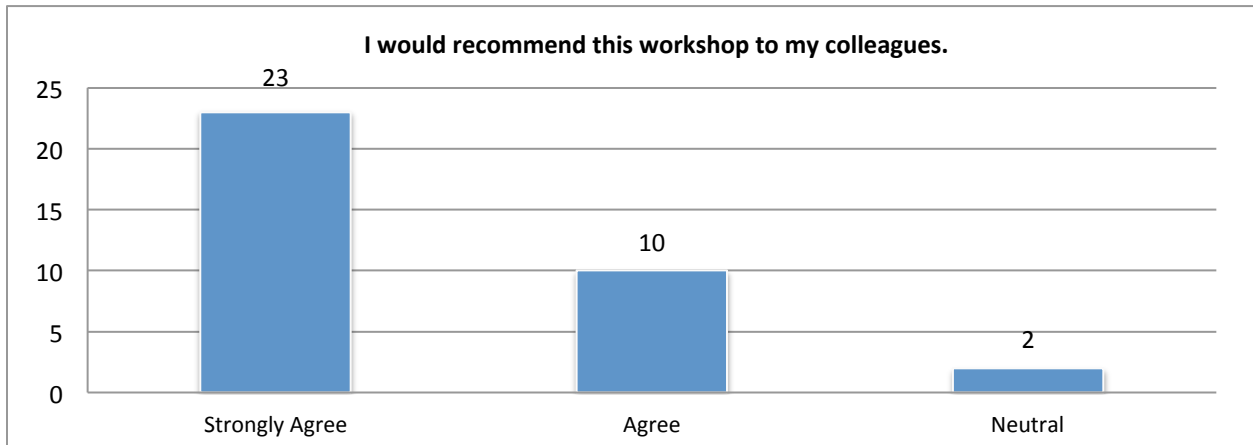


Figure 8. Session II Respondents' Plans to Recommend Session

Substantive Comments

5. Twenty respondents gave comments/suggestions regarding this workshop. Selected comments include:⁴
- This was a wonderful workshop. I'm so glad that attended. This should be a mandatory workshop for anyone associated with Texas Tech!

⁴ See appendix B for a comprehensive list of comments/suggestions regarding this workshop.

- My impression was there would be more tangible recommendations, but I still got a lot out of the workshop.
- Really positive and engaging presentation. At times, I felt uncomfortable and that was because the information was alarmingly true. This was really enjoyable and would recommend it to another.
- I really liked the workshop and feel it fits more with Diversity matters but not the Ethics of educating many. What is appropriate when teaching or educating students from all backgrounds?

6. Seven respondents also gave suggestions for future ethics workshops.

- Bring her back!
- More time. Was very engaging.
- I could have stayed another hour! Perfect!
- Announce more about this event.
- Keep them coming! It's needed on this campus!!
- Continue discussion of the ethics of deep diversity and how this can happen at TTU.
- In the beginning, the instructor could address little different contexts of diversity and ethics. Of course, these concepts should be discussed and understood together. But I think diversity may be a part (or [...] issue) of ethics. (I mean . . . They are not exactly the same and this point could be explained briefly).

Conclusion

Evaluations from the Spring 2014 TLPDC Ethics Lunch Series showed that attendees found these workshops informative, helpful, and thought-provoking; both sessions were well-received and benefitted the attendees in several ways. The majority of the respondents (92.4%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that these workshops met (some felt 'exceeded') their expectations based on the workshop title and description (Figure 9). Respondents also believed the workshops created awareness and were interactive and engaging; 92.2% of respondents *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that they would recommend these workshops to their colleagues (Figure 10).

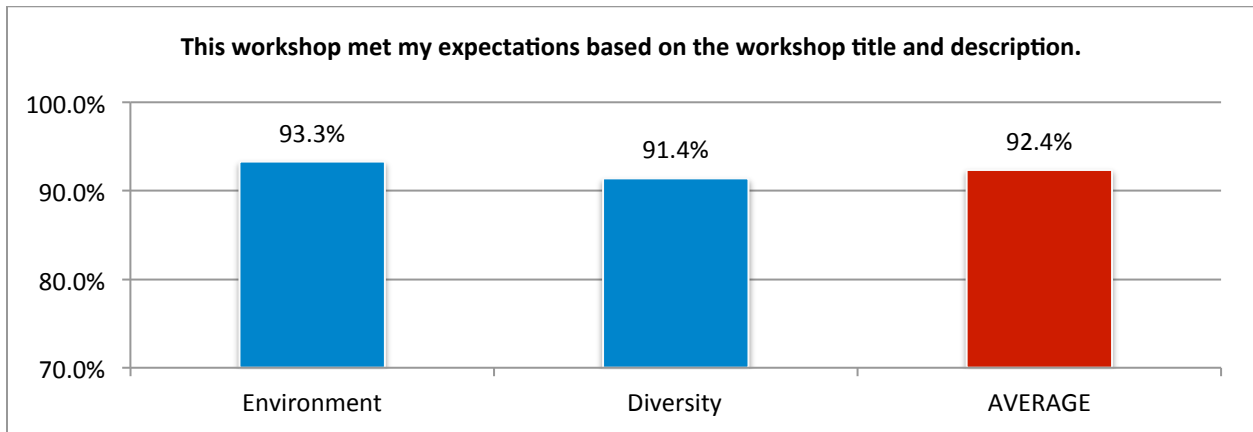


Figure 9. Spring 2014 Series Respondents' Expectations

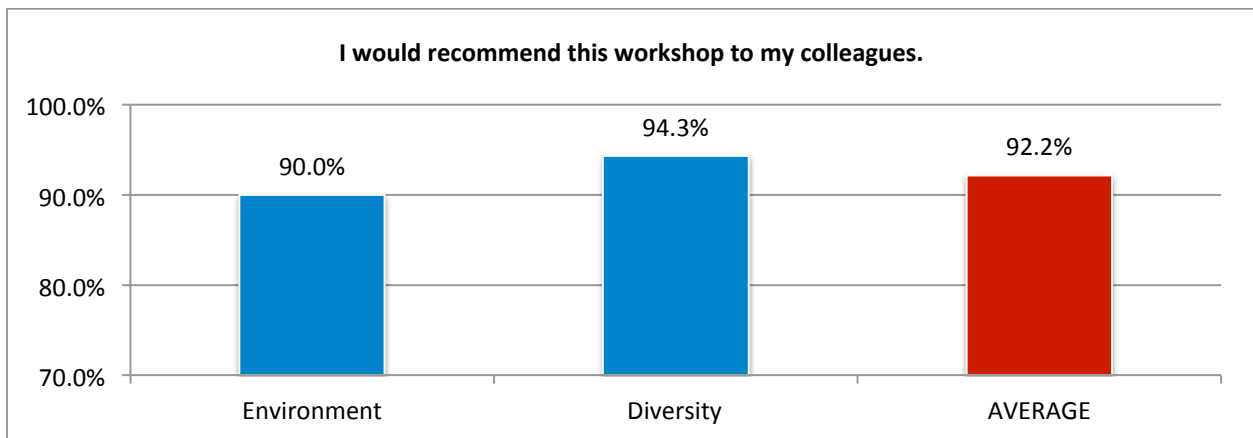


Figure 10. Spring 2014 Series Respondents' Plan to Recommend Workshop

Attendees enjoyed the interactions, and many suggested adding more seats, as well as longer time for questions and answers. Some suggested hosting more workshops similar to these two sessions and bringing the same speakers back. Respondents also suggested handouts for distribution and video-recording/web streaming for those unable to attend the sessions. In addition, some respondents wished for suggestions, such as more tangible recommendations, how to conserve and utilize its resources (*Environmental ethics* session), and how to teach diversity to TTU students coming from all backgrounds. A Marketing question (how did you hear about this event?) was added during the 2013-014 academic year to assess the marketing approaches. The results showed TechAnnounce, the TLPDC website, and word-of-mouth were the most effective means for learning about the Ethics Lunch Series. Overall, the Spring 2014 TLPDC/Ethics Center Ethics Lunch Series had a very positive feedback. Attendees encouraged the TTU Ethics Center to continue providing/repeating workshops, as well as to do more event promotion.

Appendix A

Comments/suggestions regarding the workshop “Ethics and Safety in Research Leadership”

1. Great presentation. Copies of presentation on website for all to benefit.
2. Excellent presentation. Exceeded my expectation.
3. More time for discussion.
4. Great!
5. I found it informative and very useful.
6. Great presentation.
7. It was nice - could have added one/two video to make more interactive.
8. Q + A session at end would be helpful.
9. Great choice of food.
10. It was great, thank you!
11. Good topic!
12. Great talk!
13. I really liked the information discussed.
14. Great balance & use of statistics + images.
15. I felt like the presentation seemed all over the place at times lacking a direct message.
16. The environment is very important therefore it does make a difference how we conserve and utilize its resources. Thank you for sharing this information.
17. Would recommend to students, more than faculty. Would've liked to hear more suggestions for change. How to extend to our classrooms here at Tech, etc.
18. Wonderfully done topic, expressed well. Very important to communicate environmentalism to public.
19. Have a better developed presentation (PowerPoint). It became confusing with the sudden topic changes.
20. I felt there were more slides that were really good and valuable (mainly the ones dealing with Jenny Lloyd- Strova's research/specific to [...] literacy and the ones about ethical theories, applied ethics, + intergenerational ethical perspectives), but I felt some slides were quite weak + seemed to make big assumptions (like about how "most people" are, etc. - the slide referring to the "pre-ethical" vs "ethical" past seemed problematic). Overall, the talk was much less about the actual issue of [...] literacy than I expected. Got off topic / mixed up purpose. Also, a note:

presenter used a judgmental tone (consistently) when talking about points of view evidently other than his own; this weakened his credibility/professionalism.

Appendix B

Comments/suggestions regarding the workshop “Academic Integrity and Online Classes”

1. Great activities.
2. Very helpful. Thank you.
3. Very intriguing.
4. Excellent material - would love to sit in on more workshops such as this one.
5. Thank you Dr. Wong! For making one look outside the box.
6. Very informative session.
7. Have this speaker again!
8. This was absolutely wonderful - very thoughtful and informative. Wonderfully presented!
9. A talk full of thoughts.
10. Do it again, this was one of the best [...] workshops I have been to at Tech.
11. Good!
12. It could be longer in duration.
13. I like the interactive activities.
14. My impression was there would be more tangible recommendations, but I still got a lot out of the workshop.
15. I really liked the workshop and feel it fits more with Diversity matters but not the Ethics of educating many. What is appropriate when teaching or educating students from all backgrounds?
16. Very good talk regarding a topic that needs to be discussed more and can be difficult to discuss. Speaker/listener participation was great.
17. This was a wonderful workshop. I'm so glad that attended. This should be a mandatory workshop for anyone associated with Texas Tech!
18. Really positive and engaging presentation. At times, I felt uncomfortable and that was because the information was alarmingly true. This was really enjoyable and would recommend it to another.
19. Thought provoking.
20. Very thought provoking and profound presentation! Definitely should be presented every semester so more opportunities for other to participate. Outstanding - thank you!