

# Creating an Exemplary Self-Study for Reaffirmation of Accreditation

Association for Biblical Higher Education

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# Institutional Context of Life Pacific University

- Located in San Dimas, California
- Founded in 1923 (L.I.F.E. Bible College)
- Connected to The Foursquare Church
- Enrollment around 600-700
- 5 traditional majors, 2 residential and online AA programs, 2 online BA programs, 4 online graduate programs, additional location in Virginia

## Accreditation History

- ABHE – Initial Accreditation in 1980
  - Reaffirmation in 1985, 1991, 2001, 2011, 2021?
- WSCUC – Initial Accreditation in 2004
  - Reaffirmation 2010
  - special visit-probation in 2012
  - special visit-probation removed 2015
  - Reaffirmation in 2017

# Preparation for the Self- Study

## Getting Ready versus Staying Ready

- Employee transitions - Loss of institutional memory
- Changing higher education landscape leading to new expectations and emphasis from the Department of Education and accreditors
- Maintain awareness of accreditation issues and concerns – reading the online journals, attending conferences, serving on visiting teams
- Maintain good institutional records
- Maintain assessment and planning cycles
  - Program Review narratives
  - Substantive Change Proposals
  - Reports and narratives of institutional research and projects

# Preparation for the Self- Study

## Timeline

- Establish Steering Committee – 12 months prior to submission of the Self-Study
- 12 to 6 months prior – orient committee, discuss approach, identify existing and needed data/assessments
- 6 months prior – Send email with writing responsibilities to staff/groups
- 4 months prior – Review first drafts and follow up with writing teams for necessary clarification and additional information

# Preparation for the Self- Study

## Timeline

- 2 to 4 months prior – continue rounds of new drafts, review, rewrites
- 2 months prior – Begin final round of editing: 2-4 final editors who will remove repetition, ensure all essential elements are adequately addressed, and give the report a common voice
- 2 weeks prior – Send final draft to Faculty, Staff, and Board for review

# Preparation for the Self- Study

## **Steering Committee**

- Responsibility – oversee the Self-Study: writing of the Compliance Document, findings from Assessment Plan, and create the Planning Document
- Representation – the broader the better; Administration, Faculty, Staff,
- Frequency of meetings – monthly or bi-monthly
- Assign writing responsibilities by Standard to lead writer and writing groups
  - involve many in the process for shared effort and to develop their understanding of standards and expectations
- Review drafts and begin editing

# Writing the Compliance Document

## Compliance Document

- Structure by addressing each Essential Element with a paragraph or more
- Assess compliance
  - Support claims with evidence – early in the process identify data that already exists, and additional data needed
  - Determine what evidence should be embedded in-text and what should be linked to from the Appendix
- Provide an evaluative analysis and conclusion
- Identify Recommendations

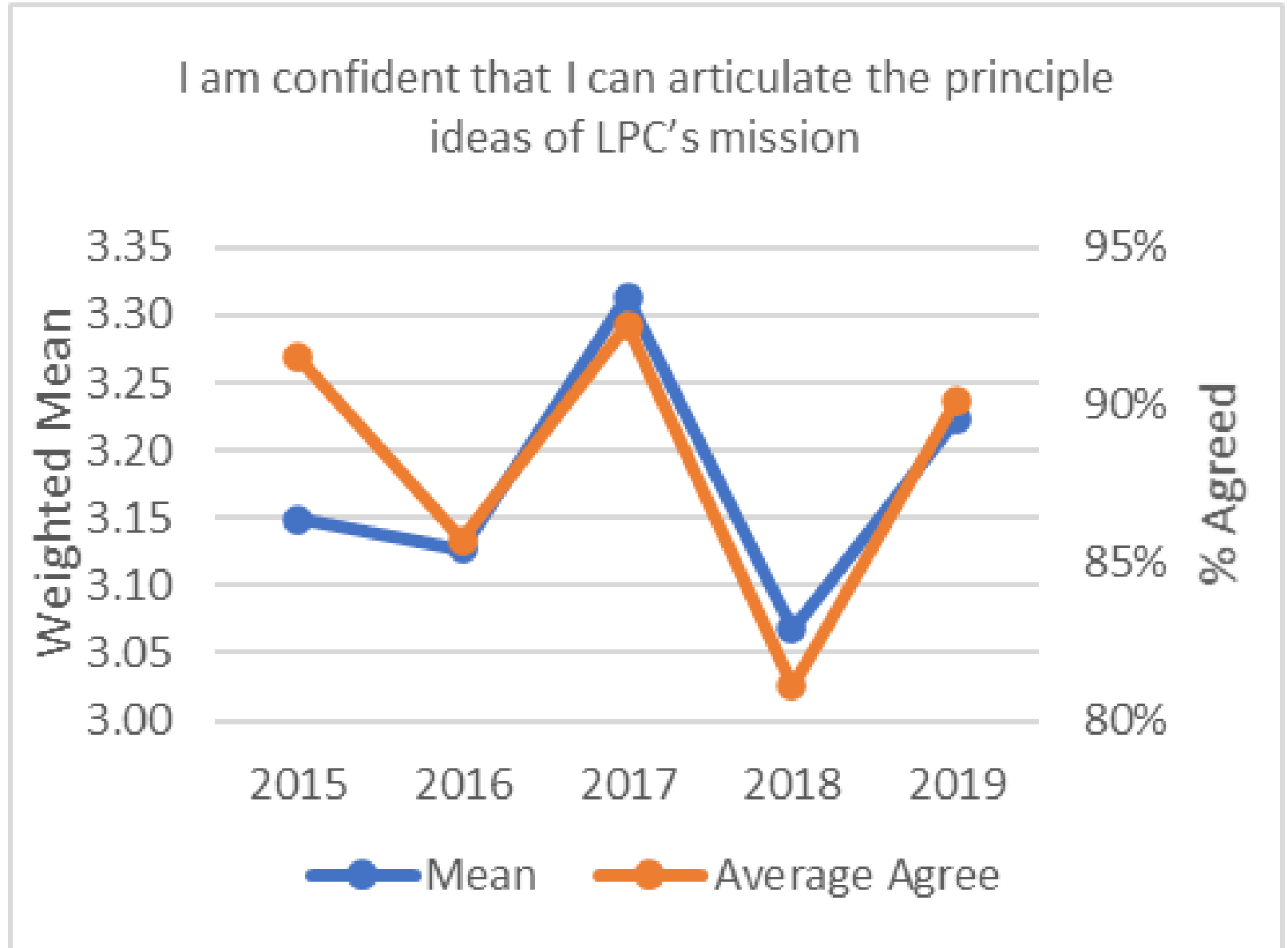


# Writing the Compliance Document

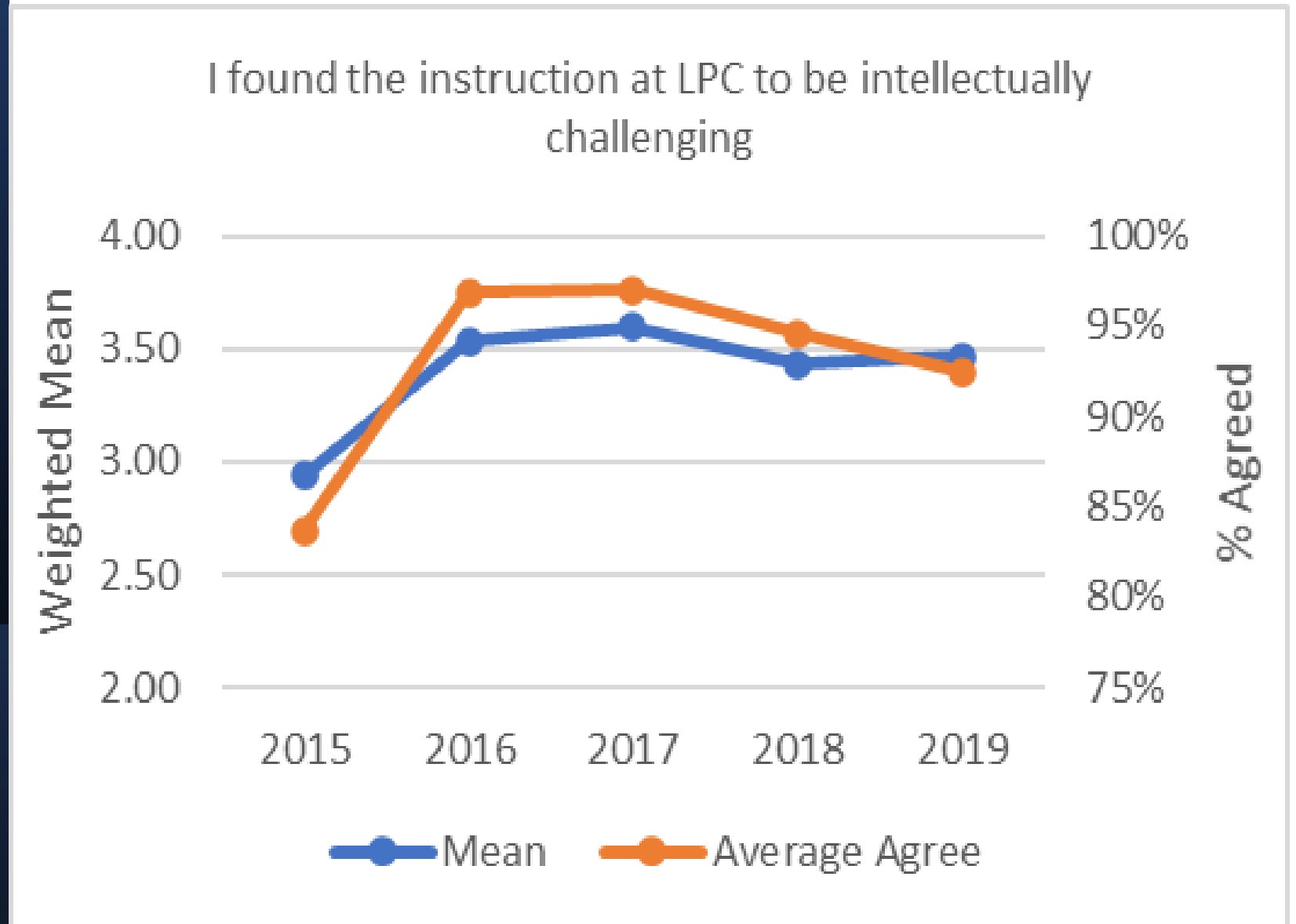
## Data to reference for the Self-Study

- Catalog (cite/link to relevant pages in report)
- Student Surveys
- Alumni Surveys
- Enrollment Reports
- Retention and Graduation Reports
- Program Assessment Plans with Curriculum Matrices and Rubrics
- Results of Assessments of Student Learning
- Program Reviews
- Employee Surveys
- Sample Syllabi
- Data Dashboard
- Strategic Plan
- Student, Staff, Faculty, and Board Handbooks
- Financial Statements, Budgets, and Audits
- Committee Minutes
- Organizational Chart
- Job Descriptions
- Marketing Samples

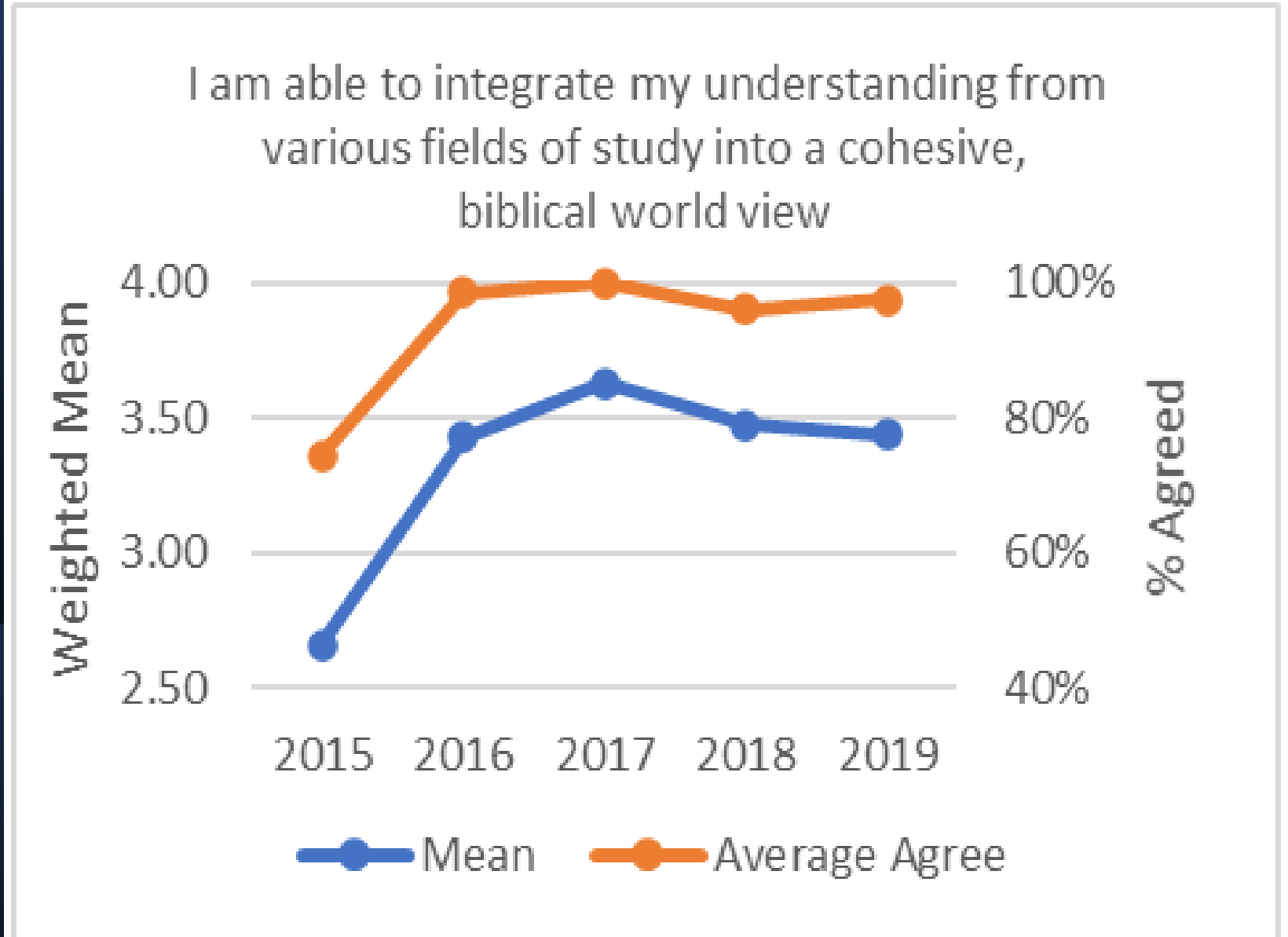
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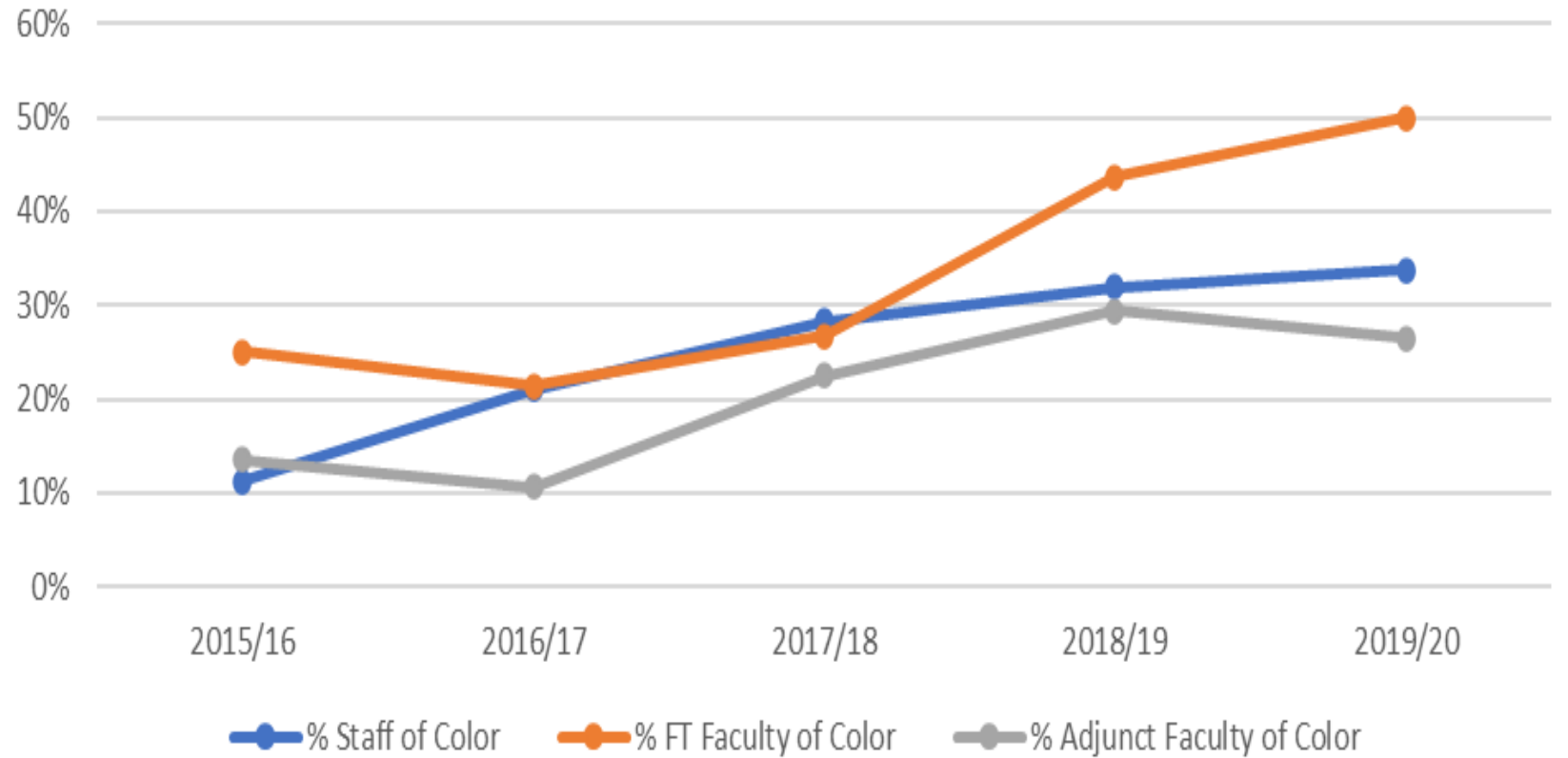


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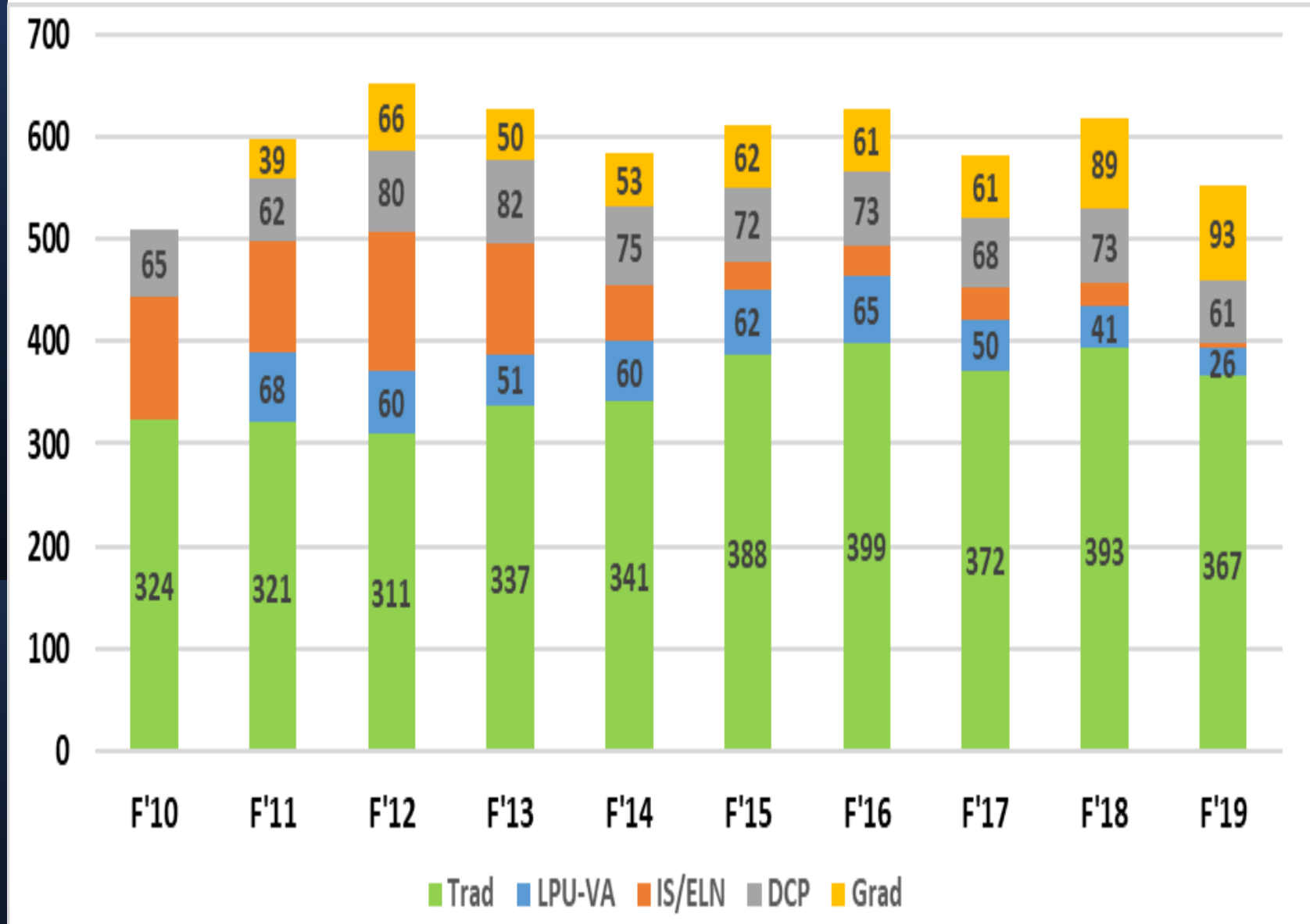


# Writing the Compliance Document

## LPU Employee Diversity Trend\_2015/16 to 2019/20



# Writing the Compliance Document



# Assessment Plan

## Assessment Plan

- “primarily designed to evaluate how well the institution is fulfilling its mission”
- Institutional Assessment Plan – institutional (departmental) effectiveness and student achievement of learning outcomes
- Identify Assessment instruments and processes including the annual assessment cycle/calendar
- Describe use of data for decision-making and improvement
- Provide examples of important institutional assessment pieces

# Planning Document

## Planning Document

- “lays out actions and timelines for addressing identified weaknesses”
- Demonstrate that the institution is committed to using its assessments and data to identify ways to improve
- What did you learn through your work on the Assessment Plan and Compliance Document?
- Supplement your current strategic plan with an additional plan to address what you discovered and your self-recommendations



## Lessons Learned

- Stay engaged with higher education issues and accreditation concerns
- Support all claims with data/evidence
- Use the self-study process to identify meaningful recommendations for improvement
- Incorporate what you discover into your next strategic planning cycle

## Lessons Learned

- Use the Self-Study as a professional development activity: Engage as many staff and faculty in the process as possible so that they are exposed to accreditation language and expectations and forced to wrestle with the issues
- Realize the first draft will require much editing and supplemental information since many of the initial writers do not have experience writing accreditation documents or thinking about what they do in these terms