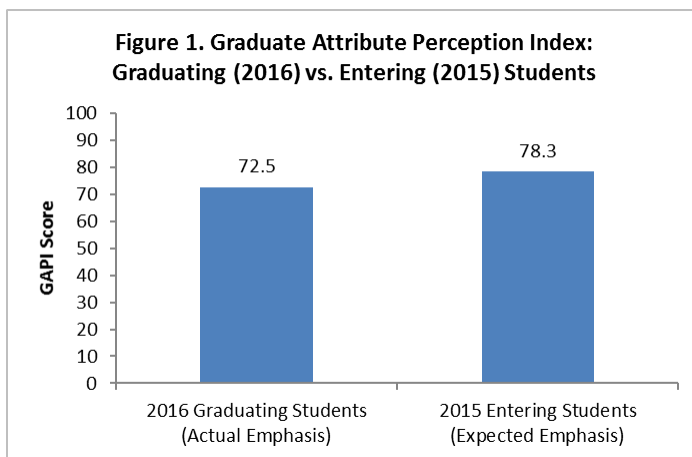


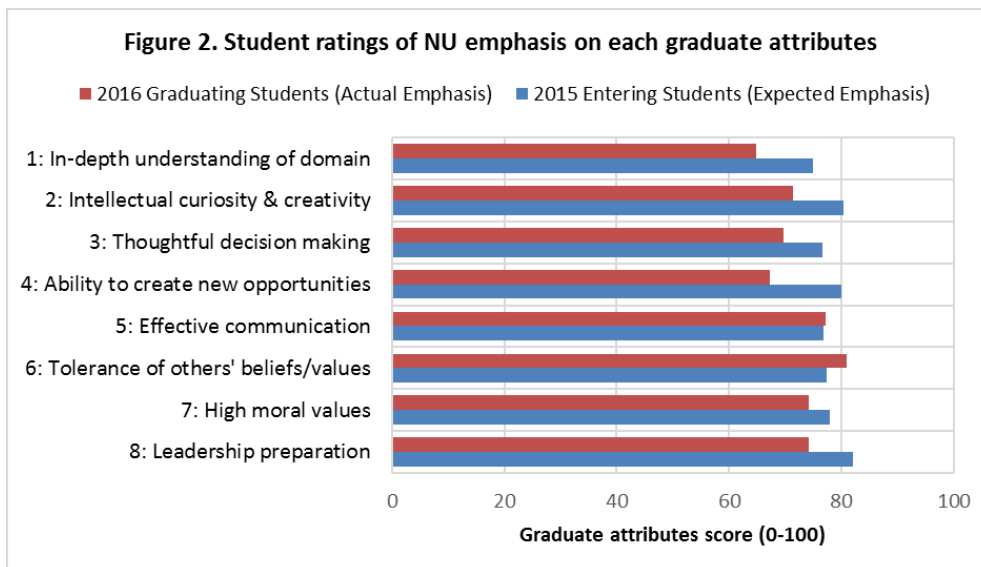
Student Perceptions of NU Graduate Attributes: Graduating and Entering Students Compared

In spring 2016 we asked graduating students to assess how much emphasis NU put on each graduate attribute (GA) during their undergraduate studies (N=340). We computed an overall score, the Graduate Attribute Perception Index (GAPI), based on respondents' ratings on each GA and on the correlation among GA ratings.

The average GAPI score was 72.5 (0-100 scale). We used, as approximate benchmark for comparison, the perceptions of 2015 entering (CPS and directly-admitted) students who, at the point of NU entry, had been asked how much emphasis they wanted NU to put on each GA (N=560). Comparison of the two groups (Figure 1) suggests that graduating students' average GAPI score was slightly lower compared to entering students' score. The difference between the two groups was small (a third of a standard deviation) but not negligible.



Results suggest that fall 2015 entering students expected NU to put strong emphasis on GAs and spring 2016 graduating students were fairly positive about NU's actual emphasis on GAs. Whether or not the difference above signals a level of GA emphasis that is below student expectations is an open question. Further analyses (Figure 2) suggest this could be the case with respect to graduate attributes 1 through 4 and 8.



This analysis prompts several questions for faculty/school/NU reflection—particularly as NU engages in institutional self-assessment—regarding the extent to which:

- GA development is taken into consideration when designing programs/courses.
- GAs are reflected in the curricular/extra-curricular activities to which students are exposed.
- Course/program contents, learning outcomes, and instructional processes translate into GAs.

The analysis also prompts discussions on (1) what performance indicators can be used to document student attainment of GAs and (2) the need for NU Schools to reflect on GA achievement in the annual program monitoring process and introduce appropriate curricular changes, if needed.

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We invite you to write to IR (ir@nu.edu.kz) and (1) share your thoughts and experiences relative to the topic under discussion in this **IR-MFF** issue and/or (2) suggest a question/topic that you would like us to address in a future issue of the **IR-MFF**.

The IR-MFF is published every last Friday of the month or, if the relevance and timeliness of the topic require, earlier (August through November and January through April). Analyses are *limited to 300 words or less (narrative text) and one or two graphs/tables*. If you need more detailed information (methodological or otherwise), please contact IR at ir@nu.edu.kz.