

# Norris Student Employee Learning Assessment 2013-2014

## Background

The Norris University Center employs 200 students in areas such as marketing, operations, recreation, administration, and financial services.

This assessment project identifies students' learning through their first year of employment. This is the first year of a longitudinal study which will follow students through their Norris employment.



## Learning Outcomes

Student Affairs Outcome:

- Students who engage in Student Affairs programs, activities, and services will acquire and use cognitive and practical skills that will enable them to live healthy, productive, and purposeful lives.

Department Outcomes:

- Norris student employees who participate in area-specific job training will understand job skills necessary to perform their job function.
- Students who are employed by the Norris University Center will practice job and leadership skills necessary for their position.

## Methods

Twenty-three one-on-one interviews were conducted with first-year student employees at the beginning of their employment at Norris. The interviews were coded using a rubric which defined characteristics of learning competencies on a scale of beginner, intermediate, advanced, accomplished (scale of 1-4).

Thirty-six end-of-year student employment learning surveys were completed by Norris first-year student employees. Students indicated their level of agreement with learning competency statements before they worked at Norris and after the academic year (scale of 1-4).

### Norris Learning Competencies

Customer Service    Communication  
Management        Job Knowledge  
Teamwork            Responsibility

## Interview Results

First-year student employees were interviewed before training and actual work experience. Three Key themes emerged:

### Students Cannot Describe Good Service

Each employee's job description include customer service as a key component. 35% of interview participants could not identify an example of positive customer service. An additional 48% could not describe specific components of good service.

"It's hard to think of off the top of my head- From my experience the person is knowledgeable and helpful and friendly... it raises your confidence and makes you happy with your purchasing decision."

### Students Do Not Know Policies

When asked "what university or Norris policies are the most relevant to your job," 30% of first-year student employees could not come up with one.

"I mean I know my job title and I know what I'm supposed to do but I'm not sure what you mean in relation to job policies- I'm not sure what job policies are."

"...to show up and stuff, to be in uniform, to be participating not just sitting there. Just basic integrity policies like don't show up drunk and stuff like that."

### Students Are Eager to Learn

New employees are eager to learn skills that will translate well into life after college. Additionally, student employees identified a desire to become more autonomous in their positions and eventually move up in their position to become a Supervisor or Manager.

"I hope to learn more about just being in an office and leaning how to use Excel and things like that. This will help me in future jobs."

"I hope that I would be able to get the job under my belt and be able to do everything on my own."

## Limitations

The end-of-year student learning survey collected self-reported data and is an indirect measure of learning. Future assessment could observe student employee behaviors to directly measure learning.

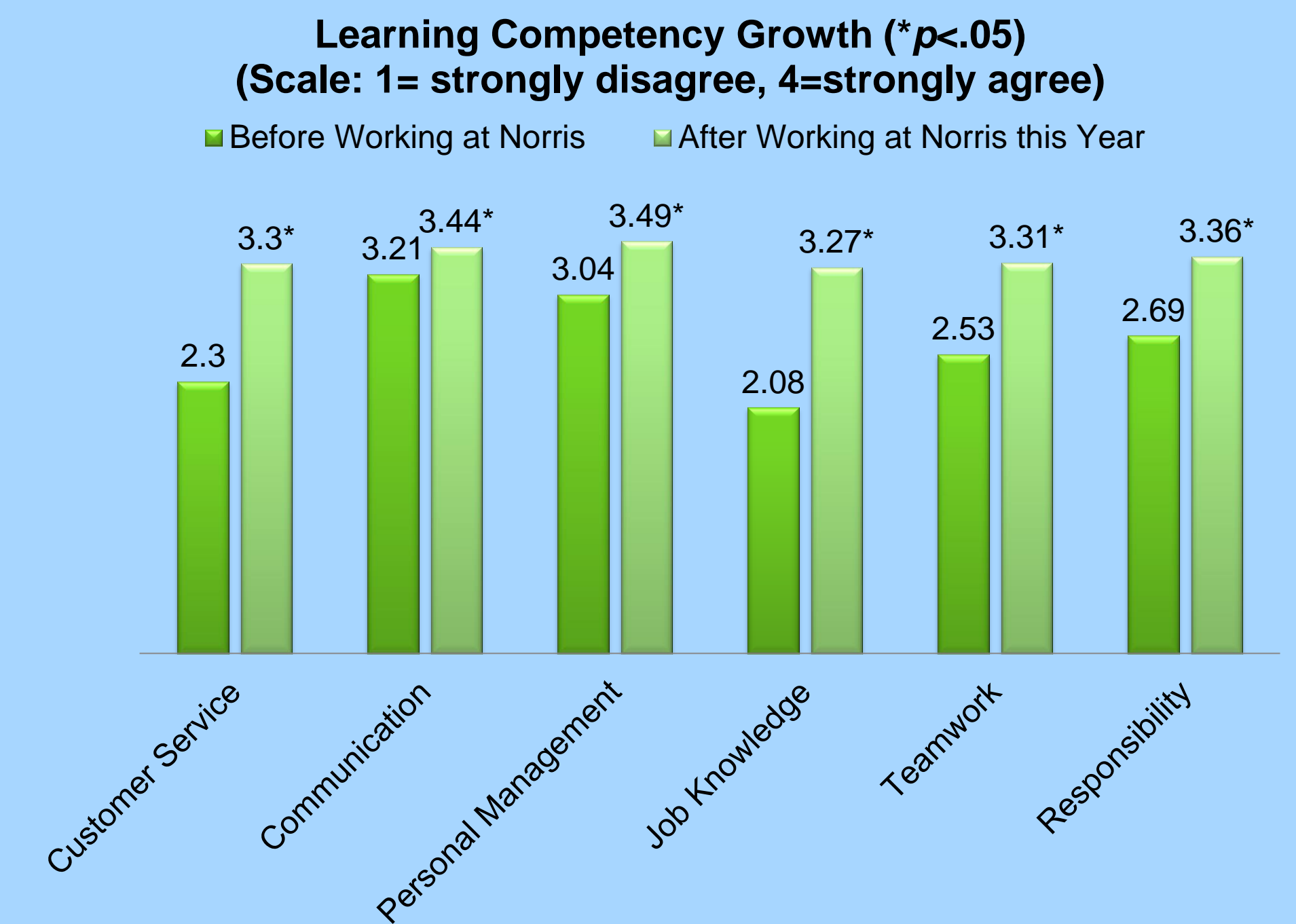
Survey respondents represent a small sample size.

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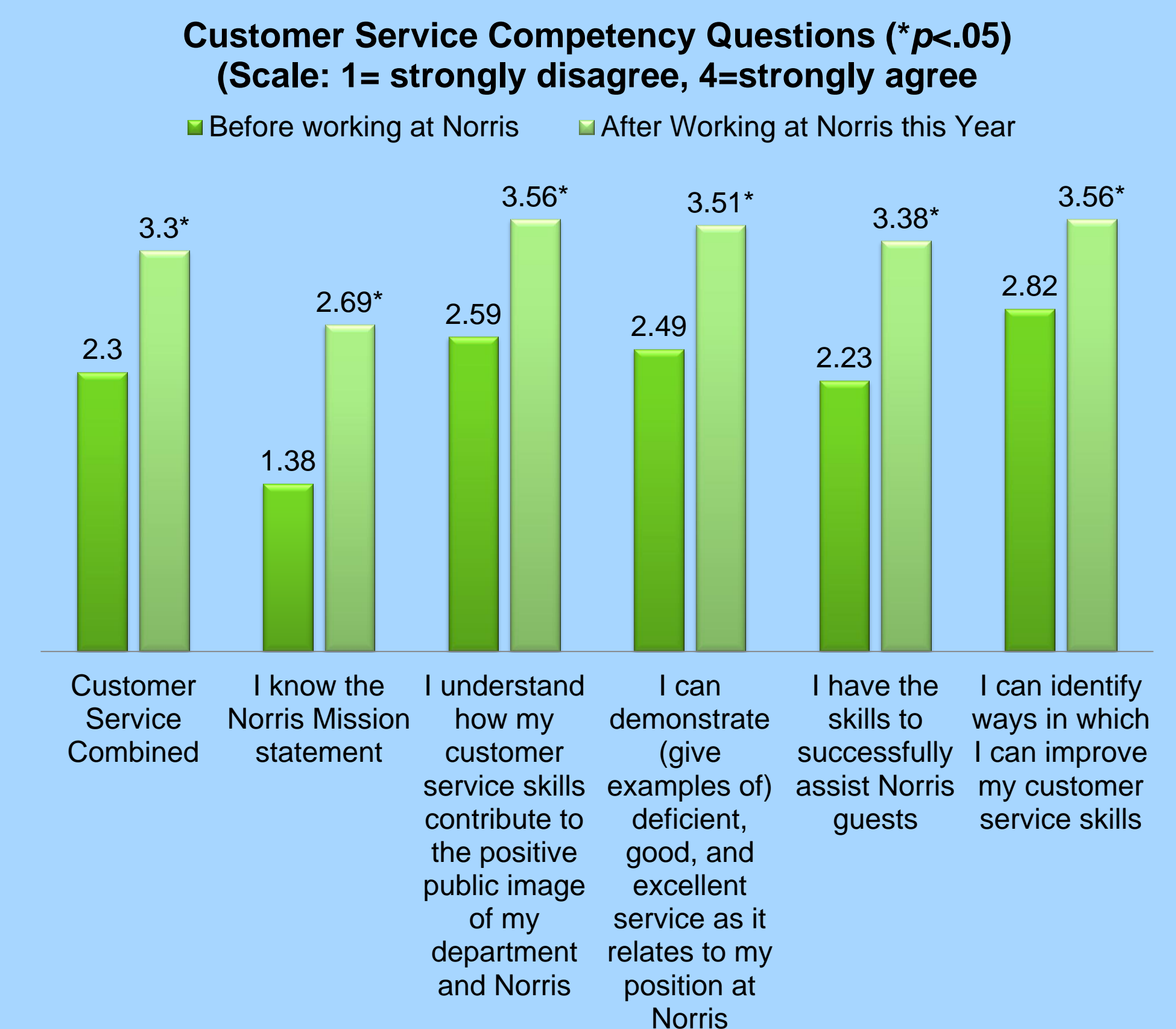
## Survey Results

At the end of one year of work at the Norris Center, we found statistically significant growth in self-reported student learning in all six learning competencies.

The largest growth in learning was observed in the area of Job Knowledge, followed by Customer Service.



The Customer Service competency showed statistically significant learning in all areas evaluated.



## Conclusions

- Norris first-year employees learn throughout their first year of employment as shown in the survey data.
- At the beginning of employment students lack awareness of policies and customer service.
- Even though students report having customer service competency prior to employment, their interview results demonstrate a lack of competence.
- Supervisors should create processes to teach area specific job skills that reflect Norris Center learning competencies.

"Having learned how dependent my job is on the satisfaction of our clients, I have improved my attitude, patience, and consideration, especially when catering to the needs of our inquisitive visitors..."



"I have learned that good communication is just as important as good work. Also, being up front, clear, and prompt is better than guessing, sugar coating, and beating around the bush."



"Norris has taught me the value of being responsible. I know that I am responsible for dressing appropriately, arriving on time, and performing my job. I have learned that it is important to always be professional..."