



# Involving Undergraduates in Assessment Research

Students Assessing Teaching And Learning Program  
[crte.ucmerced.edu/satal](http://crte.ucmerced.edu/satal)



## Question

The SATAL program supports faculty and programs with their assessment activities by collecting evidence of student learning in support of Student Learning Outcomes.

## Background



- Initiated in 2009, SATAL provides anonymous aggregated feedback on instructional and co-curricular activities.
- The SATAL program trains undergraduates in research design, data gathering and effective reporting.
- The goals are to gather data for course and program assessment and to involve undergraduate in assessment as a form of undergraduate research training.
- Undergraduates are well positioned to provide supplemental classroom and co-curricular assessment support.
- The peer to peer nature of the interaction offers a non-threatening context for open, authentic, reflection on learning.
- BYU's SCOT program and a few others elsewhere offer a similar service, but SATAL is distinctive in that students don't just collect information, they are also involved in the design of research instruments (e.g. surveys) and analysis of results.

## Method

SATAL students design and collect various forms of data - qualitative and quantitative, direct and indirect, formative and summative

### Assessment tools:

- **Focus groups:** leaders will facilitate discussion, to produce a professional summary report.
- **Class interviews:** a quick manner of informing faculty about what helps learning and what changes can be made to improve learning in the class.
- **Videotaping:** it presents a more complete record of classroom events and a different perspective of the way an instructor is teaching.
- **Mid/End-course Evaluations:** proctors will distribute and collect faculty-designed questionnaire and then tabulate and write a summary report of findings.
- **Classroom observations:** observers will describe (rather than evaluate) what goes on in the classroom with regard to time spent in questioning, board work, small group discussion, etc.

## Workshops and Projects

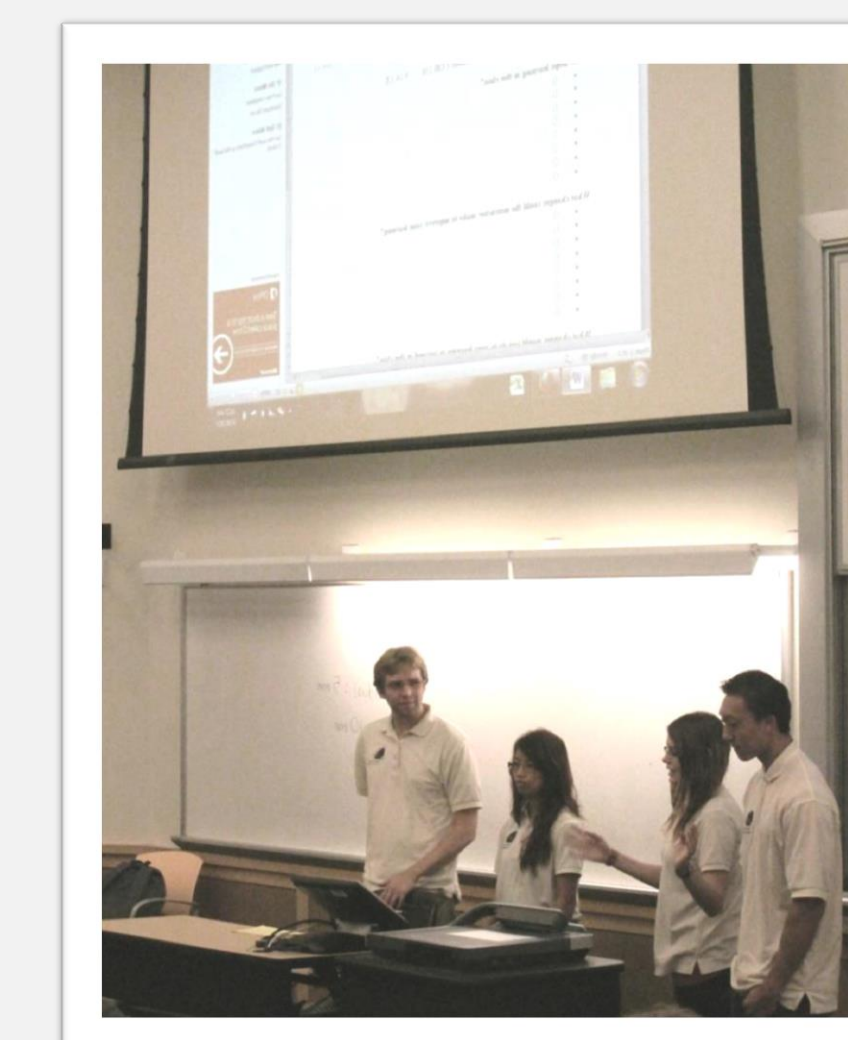


### Videotaping Projects

- Teacher assistant videotaping and consultations
- Cognitive Information Sciences interdisciplinary study examining movement trends in teaching.

### Feedback Initiative Project

To train students to assess and provide constructive feedback, SATAL designed and piloted a feedback rubric in 12 Merritt Writing Program classes.



## Impact

### Impact on faculty:

"Direct student feedback in focus groups is highly valuable, and we plan to use it extensively in the future." – Applied Math Assistant Professor

"It was a pleasure working with the SATAL team. I highly appreciate our discussions and your guidance throughout the class evaluation process. SATAL students' work was very professional – they communicated well, kept their work confidential and presented me with the results summary in a timely manner" – Chemistry lecturer

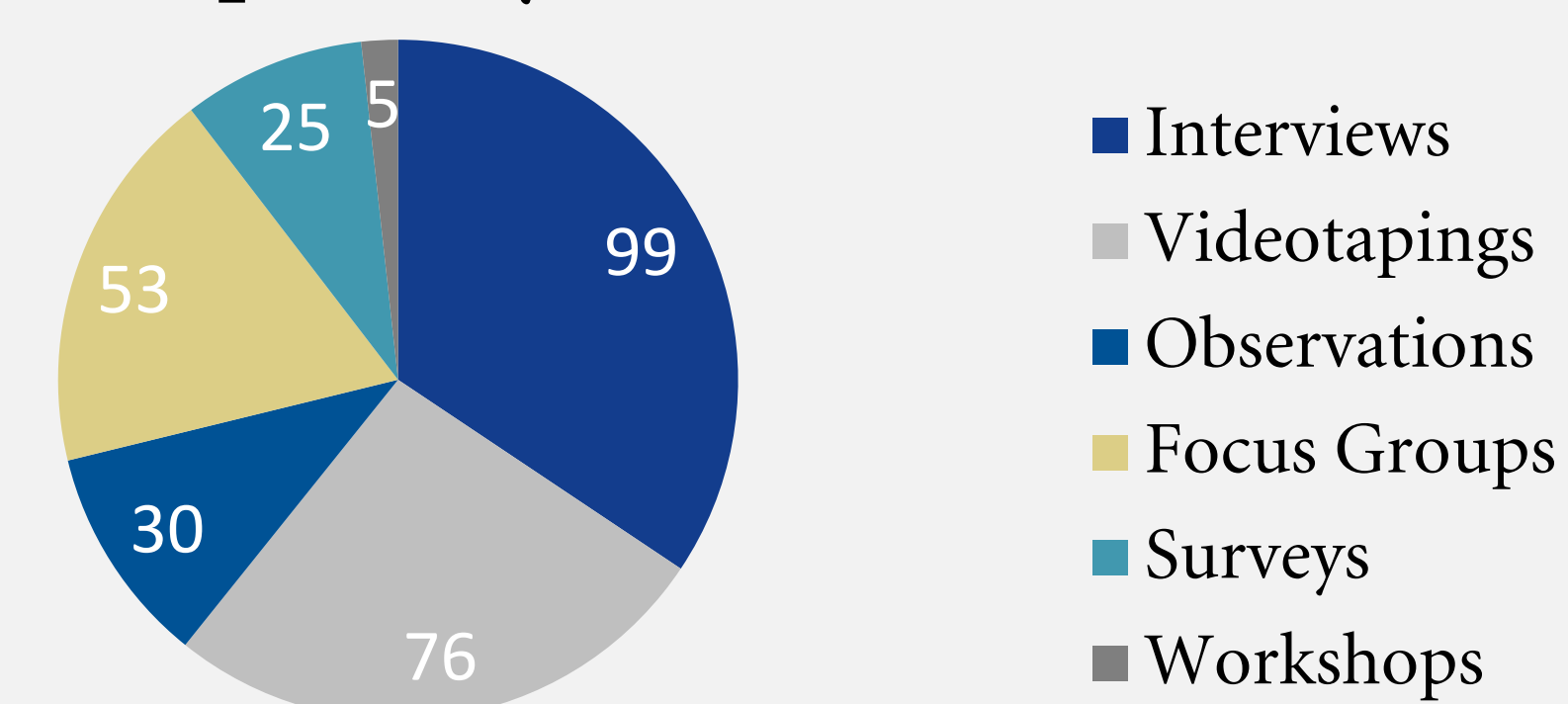
"The student centered aspect seems to be very effective. It seems students in the class are much more willing to give honest feedback to other students doing the evaluation. Customizing the evaluation in terms of what to focus on when getting feedback from students in the class was also very nice to have." – Psychology/Cognitive Science Lecturer

### Impact on undergraduate students working in the program based on self assessment survey results:

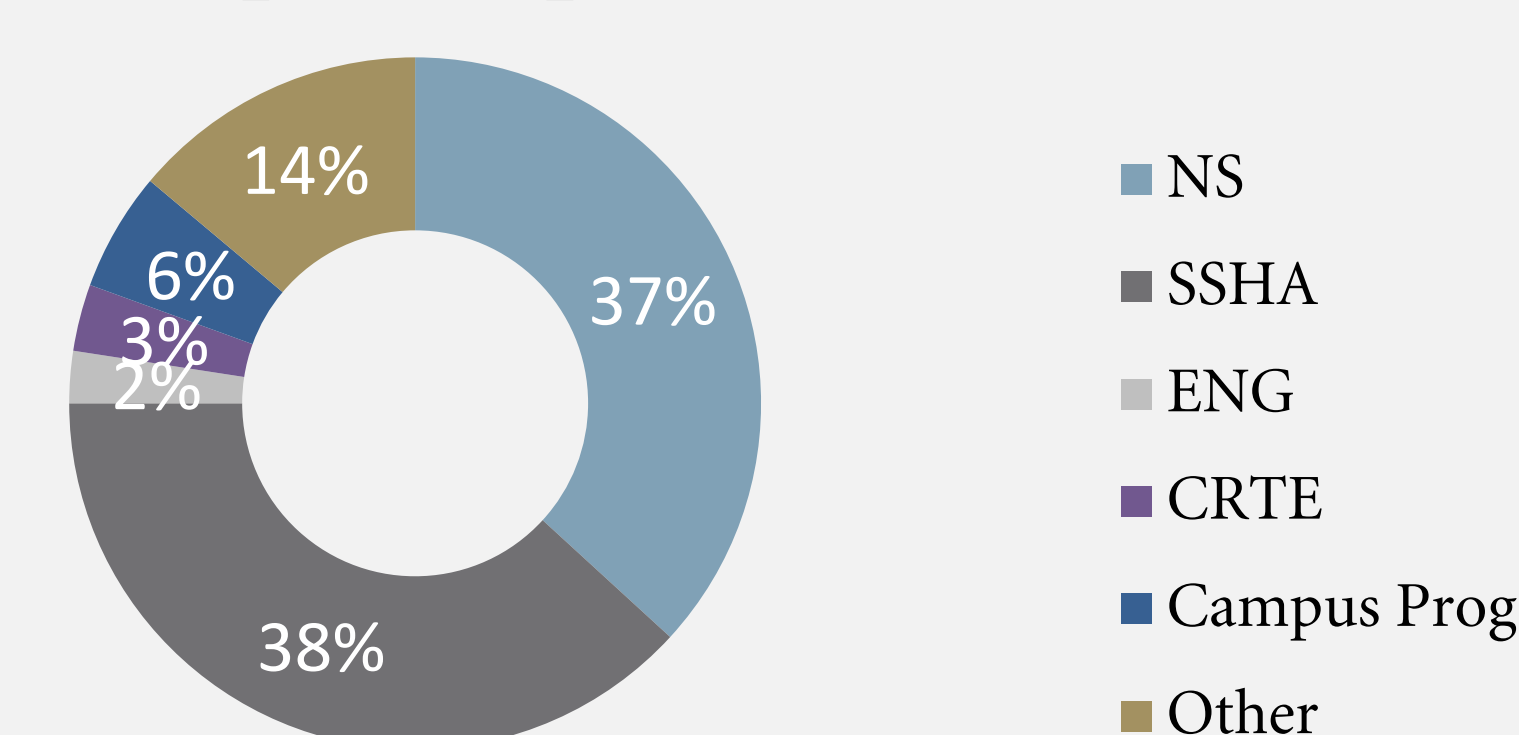
Skills Improvement	N = 17
Research	88%
Teamwork & Leadership	88%
Oral & Written Communication	88%
Achieving Full Potential	88%
Value Diverse Perspective	82%
Ethical Considerations	71%
Decision Making	65%

## SATAL Support Since Its Beginning in 2009 through 2012

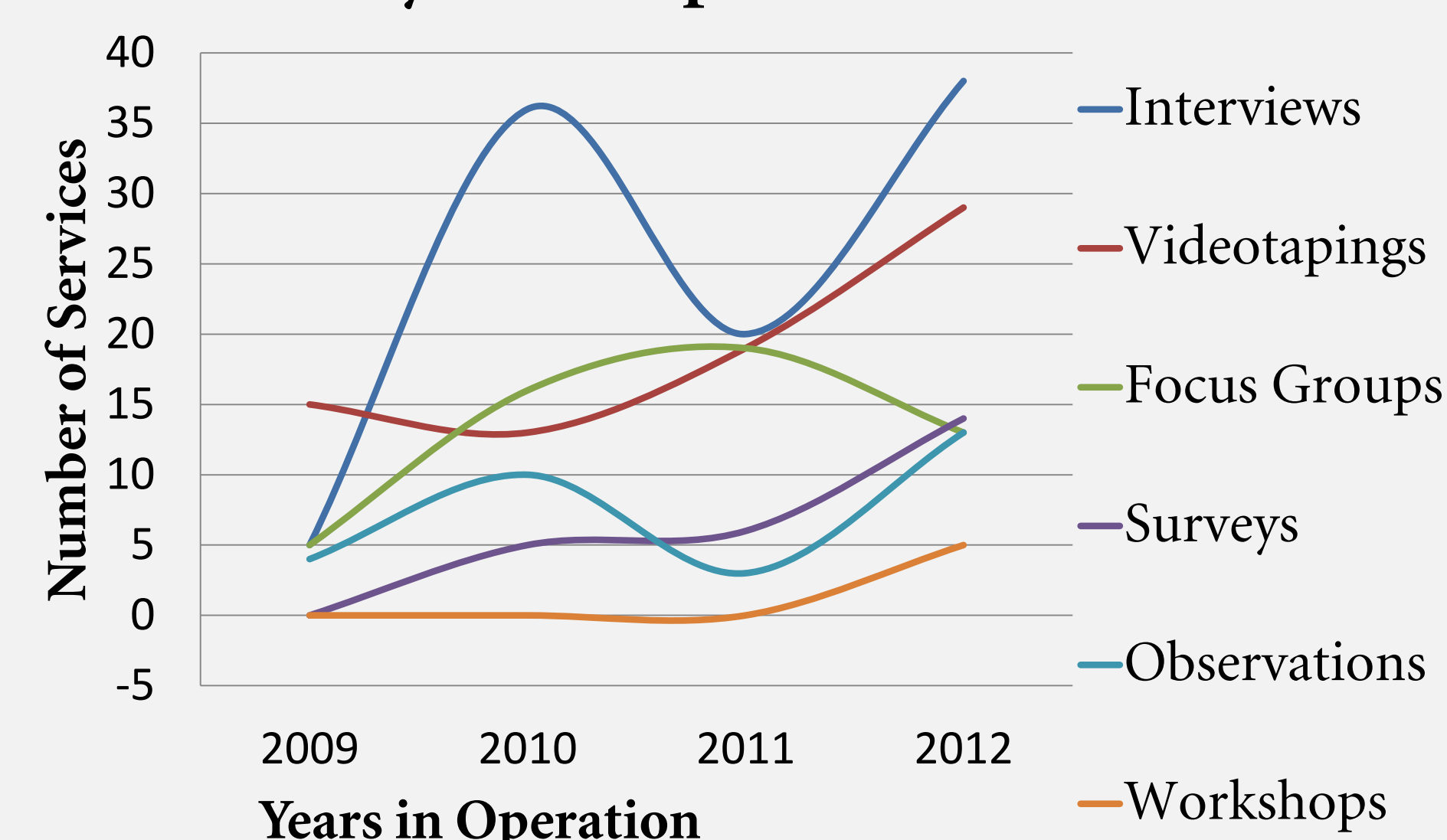
Total Number of SATAL Requests by Service



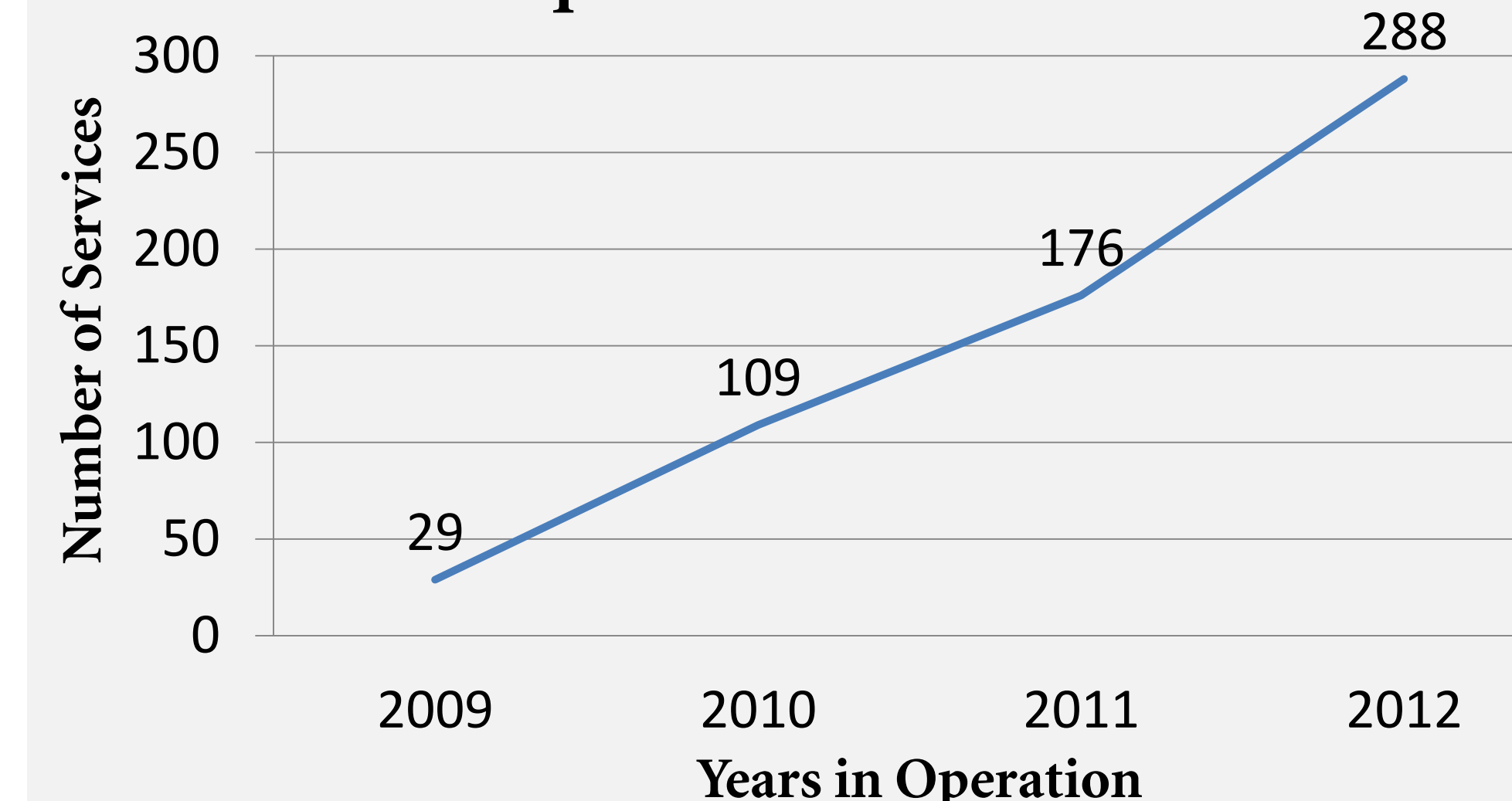
Number of SATAL Services Requested per School



SATAL Services Requested by Service per Year



Total Number of SATAL Services Requested Over Time



## Acknowledgments

SATAL Students who are assisting faculty and programs in their existing assessment projects:  
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Poster Designed by Charlesice Hawkins