



Converted Scores in Student Ratings of Instruction

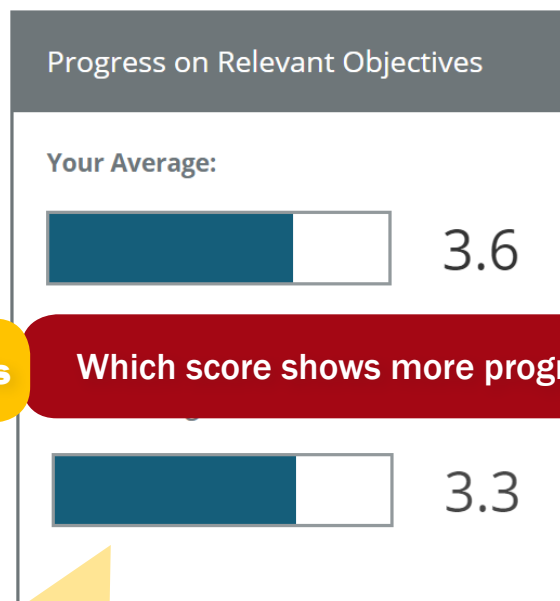
For many items in IDEA's instruments, a converted score, or *converted average comparison*, is provided. Here is what those are and how to use them.

Converted scores are standard scores that allow you to more meaningfully compare scores from one item in the report to another, or one course or instructor to another. They express scores relative to the mean.

Why are Converted Scores useful?

Consider this

Which score shows more progress?



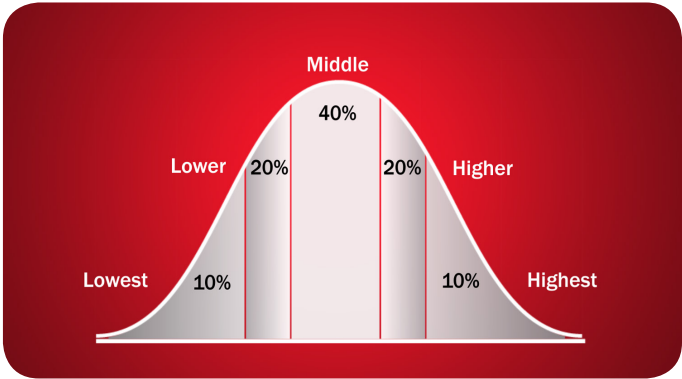
Why can I not just see if one number is higher than another?

$3.6 > 3.3$

While one score is higher than the other, you do not know for sure that there is a meaningful difference. That's where converted scores can help. Converted scores show you how similar or different two scores are whether they are different items in a single course or scores from two different courses.

Students typically report more progress on some objectives or items than on others, and the amount of spread in scores varies for individual items. Courses, too, have different characteristics, means, and variance. So comparing one to another is not possible. **Converted scores** are a way of controlling this inconsistency so that comparing one to another becomes meaningful. Even when different learning objectives are chosen, the converted averages make comparing one course to another, or one course to a group, such as the unit or IDEA database, possible and meaningful.

Converted scores are **T-scores** that all have the same average, set at 50, and the same variability—a standard deviation of 10. Scores range from whatever the lowest score is in a data set to the highest score.



Then you can see how the score compares to others by seeing the comparison category it falls in from lowest to highest.

- Lowest
- Lower
- Middle
- Higher
- Highest

Wherever you see the Converted Average Comparison, you see the converted score....

A screenshot of a dashboard titled 'Progress on Relevant Objectives'. It shows 'Your Average: 3.8' with a progress bar. Below that, a comparison score of '46' is shown in a yellow box. A tooltip above the score reads 'Similar: Middle 40% (45-55)'. There are four empty boxes to the right of the score.

....and hovering over the score tells you how this score compares to the comparison group. What comparison group you ask?

On the top right, next to “Compare to,” you see the comparison group. You can change the group from **IDEA Database** (all courses from all our member institutions), **IDEA Discipline** (all courses in your discipline from all our member institutions), or **Your Insitution** (all courses from your institution).

A dropdown menu labeled 'Compare to:'. The menu is open, showing four options: 'IDEA Database' (selected), 'IDEA Database', 'IDEA Discipline', and 'Your Institution'. A hand icon is pointing to the second 'IDEA Database' option.



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