

Need for Cognition Scale

Need for Cognition Scale MUW Freshmen & Seniors 2013 - 2015					
Class	Term	Year	N	Mean	SD
Freshmen	Fall	2013	93	61.4	12.5
Seniors	Spring	2014	59	66.4*	9.9
Freshmen	Fall	2014	84	60.8	11.2
Seniors	Spring	2015	48	68.4*	9.2
Freshmen	Fall	2015	108	60.6	9.8

Observation: Need for Cognition has been stable across three freshmen classes with no significance difference ($p > 0.05$) between mean scores. NCS has been stable across the two senior classes with no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) between mean scores. *Both senior class scores were significantly higher ($p < 0.05$) than all three freshmen class scores.

Need for Cognition is a concept refined by Cacioppo and Petty (1982) as one's tendency to "engage in and enjoy effortful cognitive activity" and is commonly used as an indicator of intellectual curiosity. Need for cognition has been examined in relation to many positive academic-related characteristics. Individuals with high need for cognition are influenced more by strong arguments, and are less likely to be affected by superficial influences (Zhang, 1996). They process information more extensively (Barden & Petty, 2008), are more susceptible to vivid narratives (Thompson & Haddock, 2012), and are less susceptible to prevailing thought in the marketplace (Suri & Monroe, 2001). Individuals high in need for cognition are more likely to reflect upon feedback about task performance (Anseer, Lievens, & Schollaert, 2009) and more accurately predict future performances than those with low need for cognition (Reinhard & Dickhauser, 2009). Those who exhibit high need for cognition are more likely to think deeply about persuasive communication (Cacioppo, Petty, Kao, & Rodriguez, 1986) and develop stronger opinions that are derived from sound knowledge (Haugtvedt, Petty & Cacioppo, 1992).

Think Outside the Box: Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity uses the 18-item Likert scale version of the Need for Cognition Scale (NCS). Students are asked to rate each statement on a 5-point scale from 1 = "Extremely Uncharacteristic" to 5 = "Extremely Characteristic" with 3 = "Uncertain." Individual scores are derived by totaling the ratings for all items. Scores range from 18 – 90. You can review the NCS on the QEP Assessment Webpage

References

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