

Blackboard®



Unpacking Course Content Accessibility

Insights, Trends and Case Studies





Nicolaas Matthijs
Blackboard

Ally Product Manager



Joe Feria-Galicia
UC Berkeley

*Accessibility Team Lead &
Instructional Designer*

Outline

1. About Ally
2. Data and Insights
3. Conclusion
4. Case Study
5. Find out more
6. Questions

About Ally

Download Accessible Version X

- Enhanced version - Original file with automated improvements
- HTML version - For viewing in the browser
- Audio version
- Electronic braille version
- Epub version

Cancel Download

Accessibility score
1AL_biofuels1_nos_f15.jpg

14%

This image is missing an alternative description

Why this matters

How to write a good description

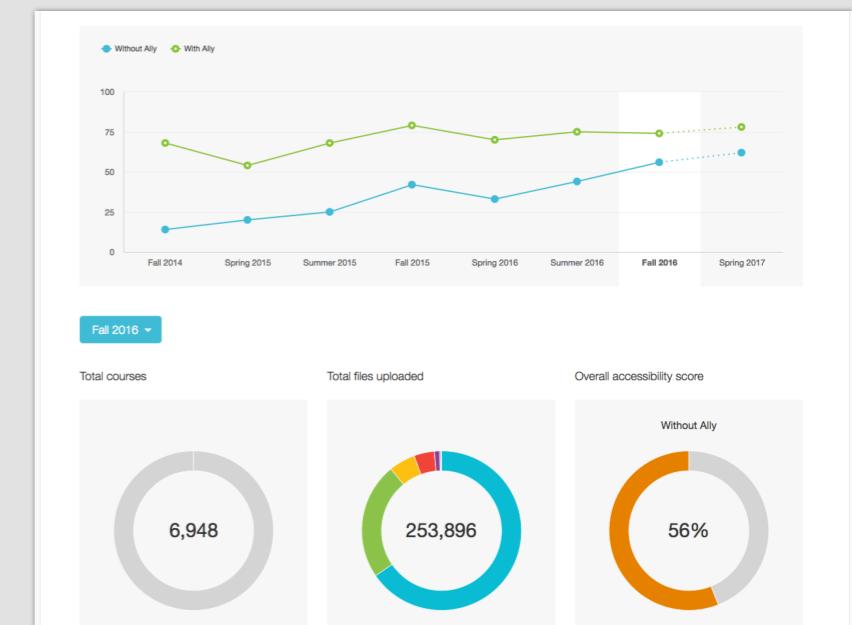
Add alternative text

Enter a description for this image Add

Or

Indicate image is decorative

This image is used as decoration only and a description is not needed



Alternative Accessible Versions

Automatically checks for accessibility issues and generates alternative accessible formats

Instructor feedback

Guides instructors on how to improve the accessibility of their course content and alters future behavior

Institutional report

Provides detailed data and insights to help further improve course content accessibility at the institution



Enrichment Material

Biology 101

Course Info

Announcements

Notifications

My Grades

Chapter 1

Chapter 2

Chapter 3

Videos

Enrichment Material

Student Blogs

Course Wiki

My Groups

Course Tools

Build Content

Assessments

Tools

Partner Content



Our Bio Voice Discussion Board

[Enter Voice Board](#)Personalizing Web Search using Long Term Browsing History

Biofuel Production

Download accessible versions



- Enhanced version – Original file with automated improvements
- HTML version – For viewing in the browser
- Audio version
- Electronic braille version
- Epub version

Cancel

Download



Kingdom



Adaptati



14%

Score ⓘ

This image is missing an alternative description

[What this means](#)

[How to write a good description](#)

Add alternative text

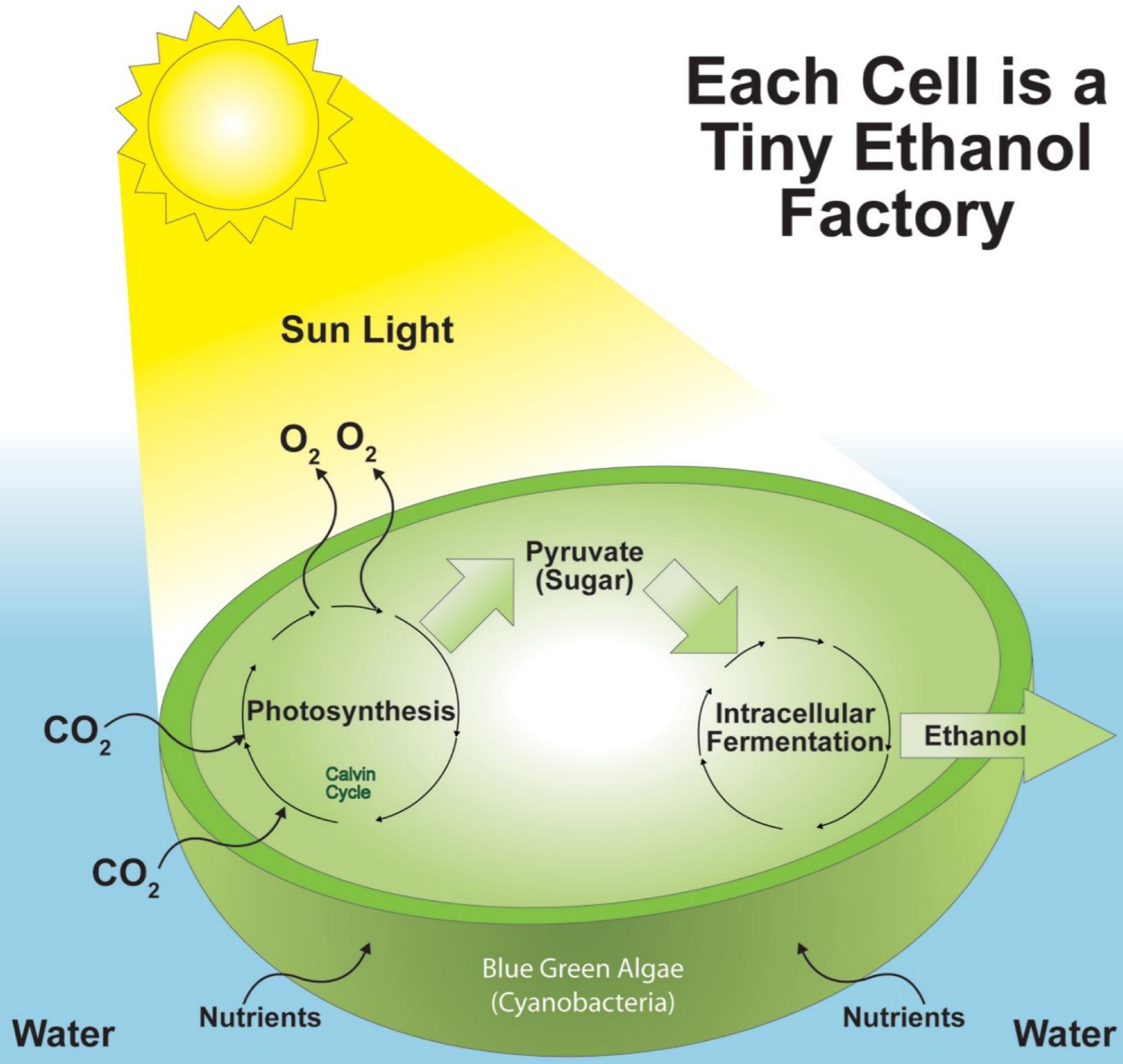
Enter a description for this image

Add

Or

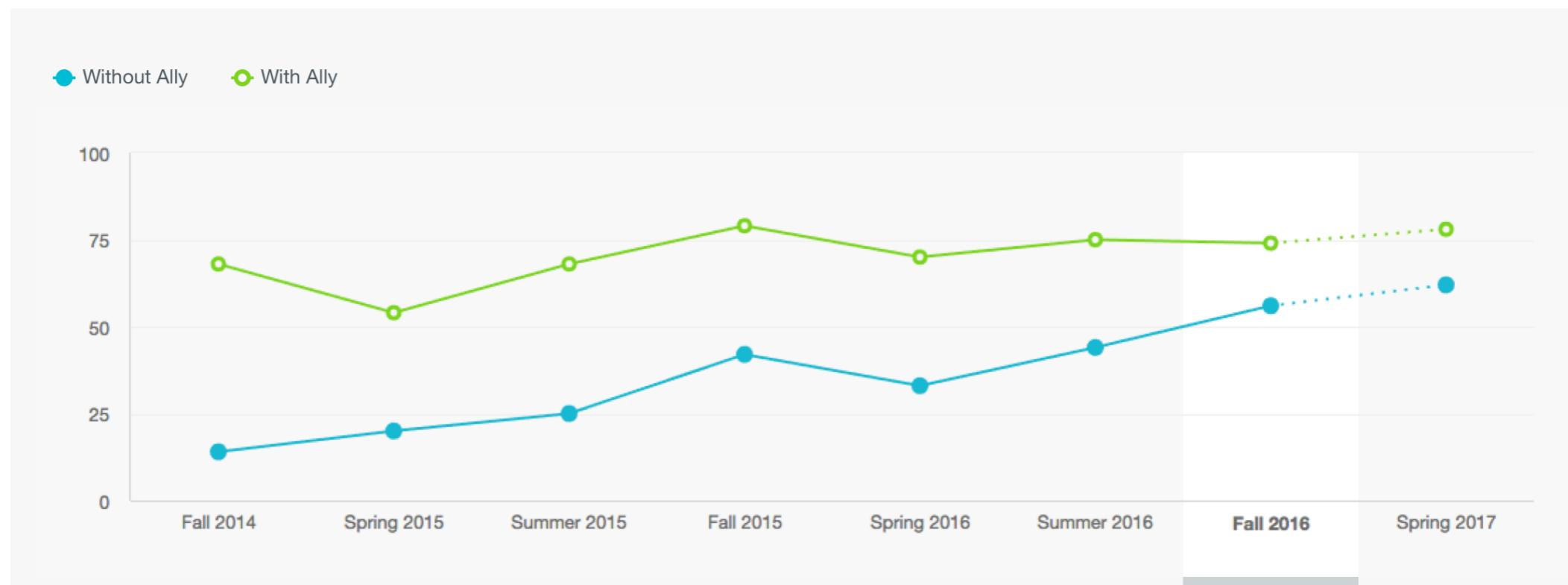
Indicate image is decorative

Used as decoration only and a description is not needed



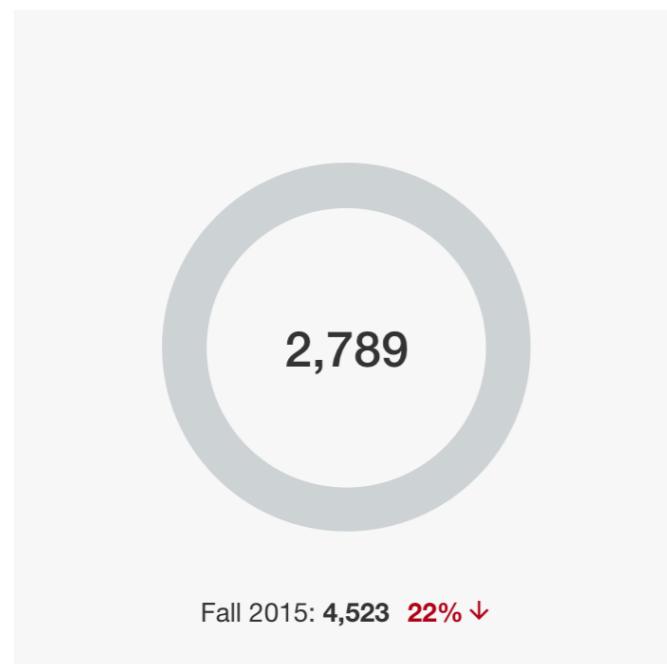
Accessibility score

By term ▾

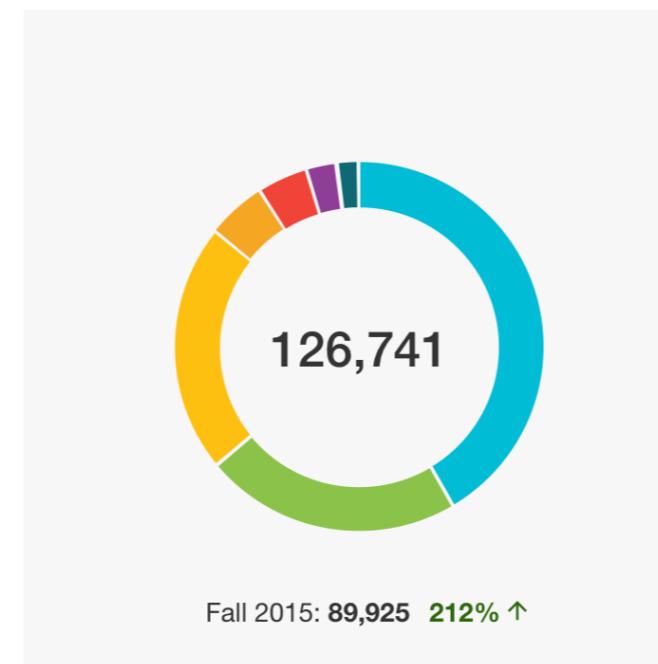


Fall 2016 ▾

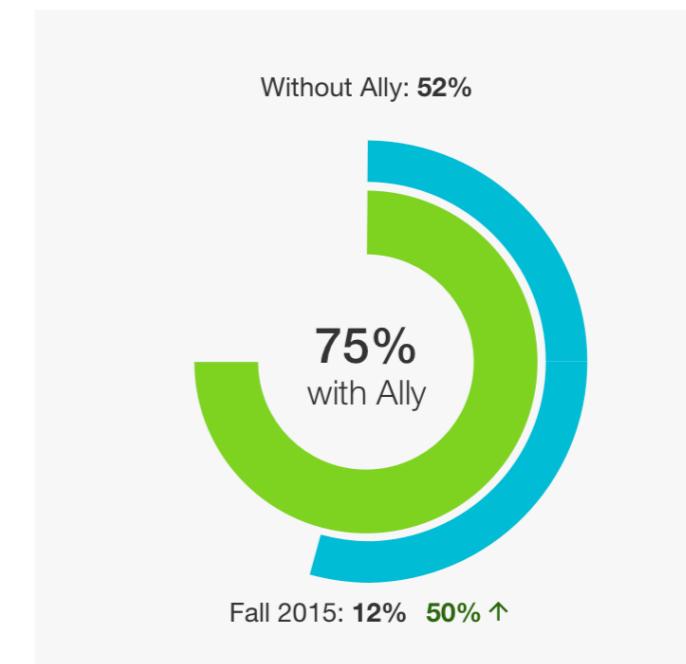
Total courses



Total files uploaded



Overall accessibility score



Automated Accessibility Checklist



- Automated accessibility checklist based on content type
- Based on WCAG 2.0 AA

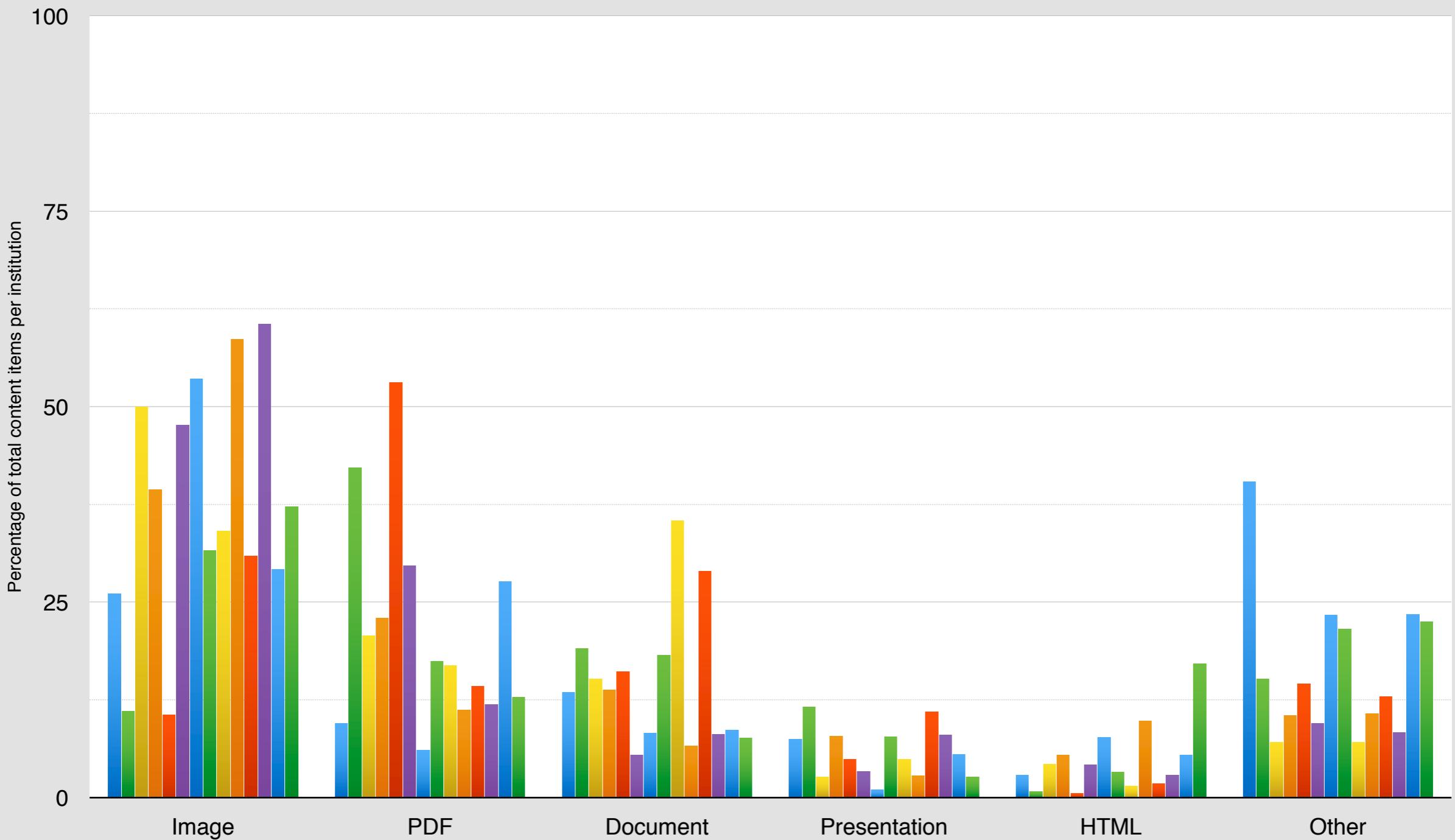
Data and Insights



Data

- Baseline data collected by Ally
 - 20 institutions in North America
 - Up to 5 years of data per institution
 - 21+ million content items
 - 700,000+ courses
- Looks at all courses in institution
- Anonymized

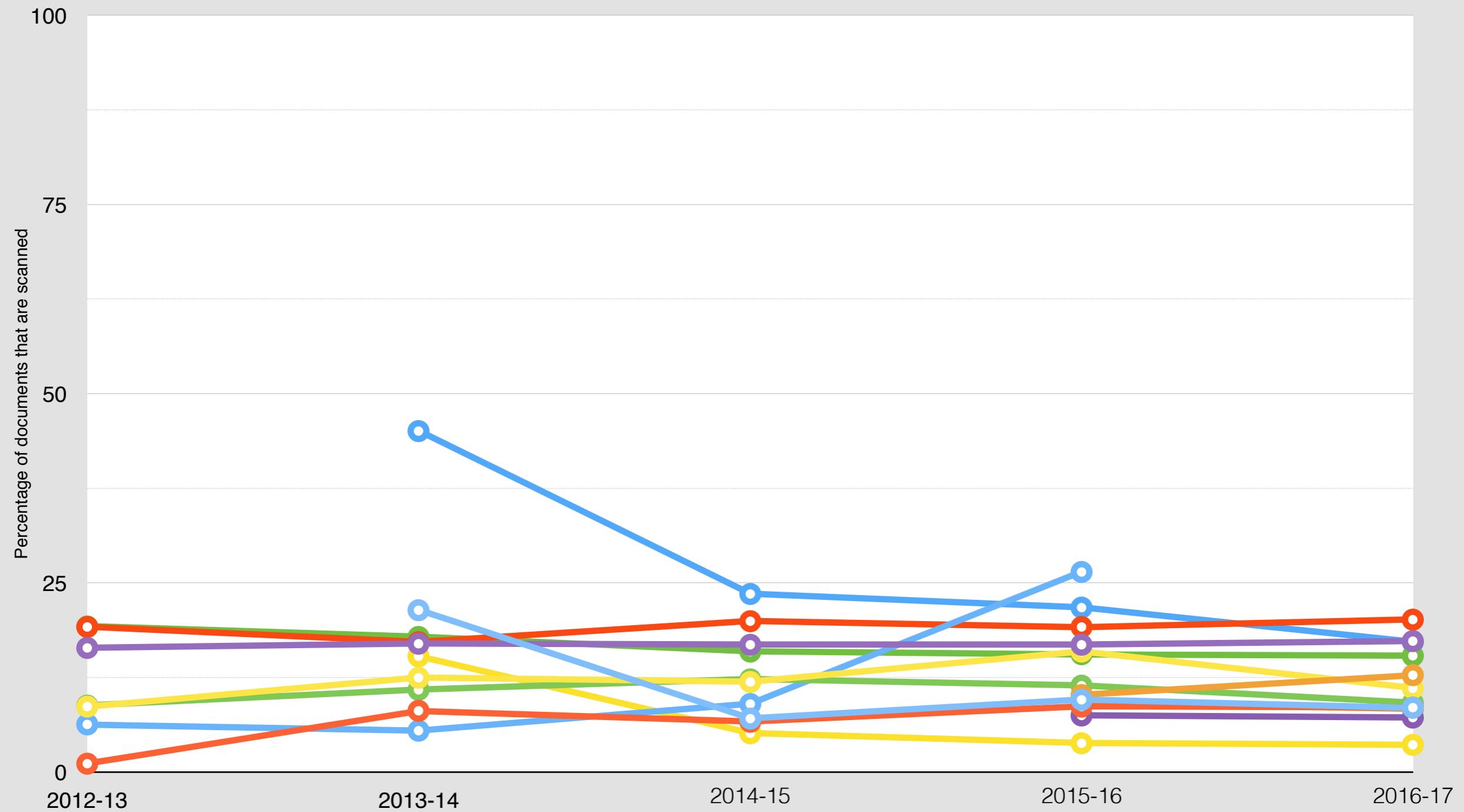
Content Type Distribution



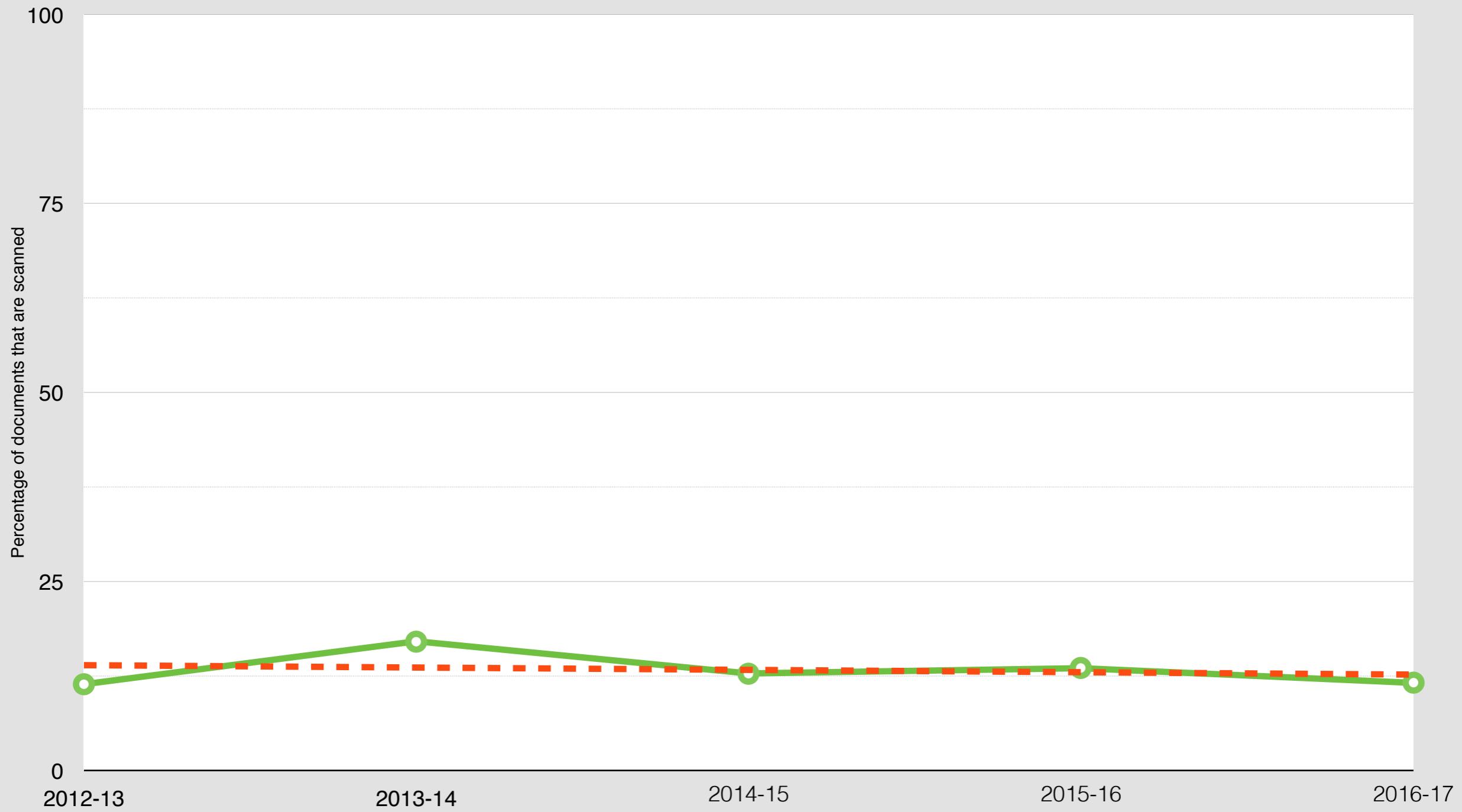
Content Type Distribution

- Most common content types are Image and PDF
 - Not a great starting point for accessibility
- Significant institutional differences
 - Can be skewed by courses with lots of unusual content

Scanned Documents (Per Institution)



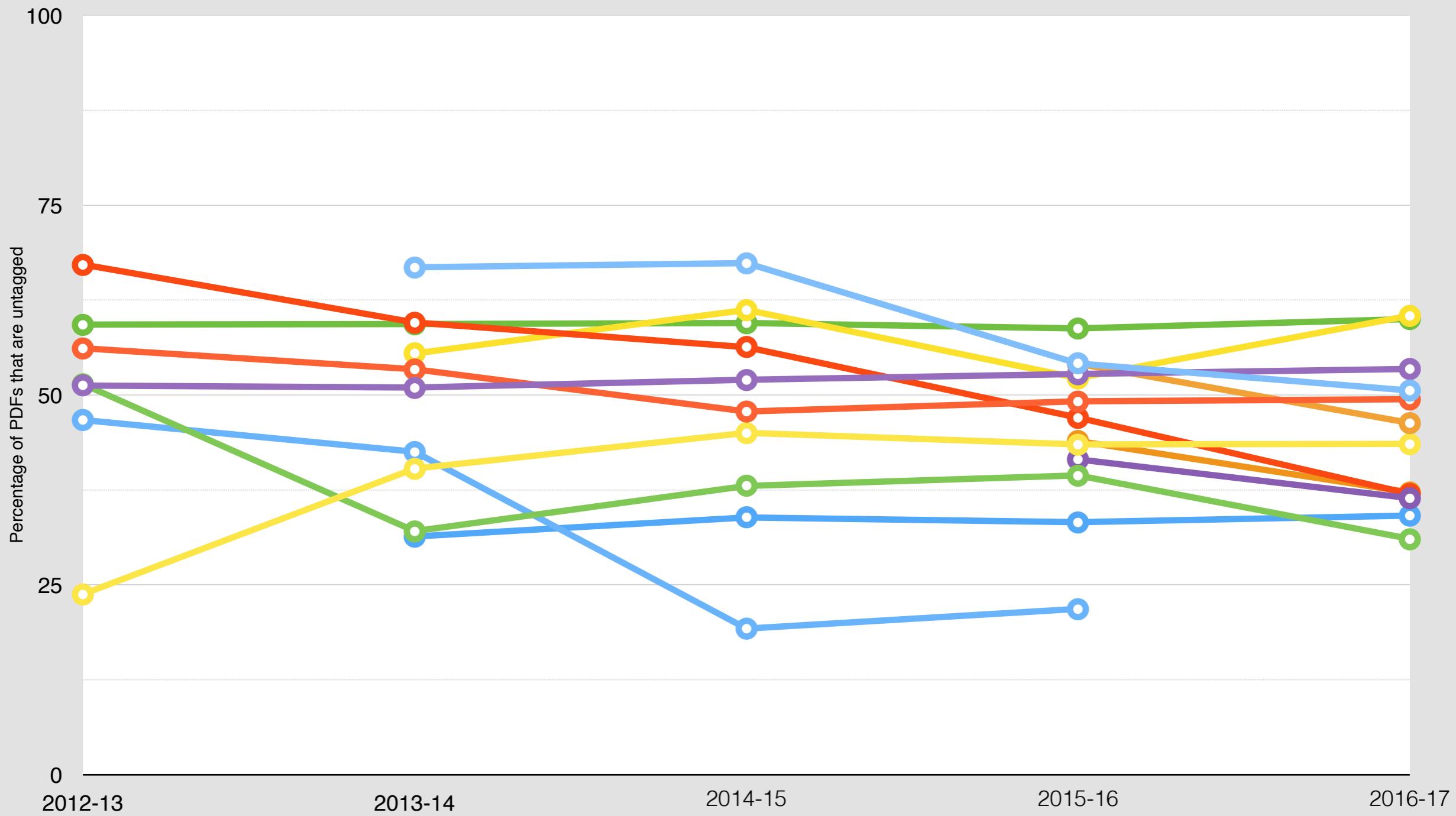
Scanned Documents (Trend)



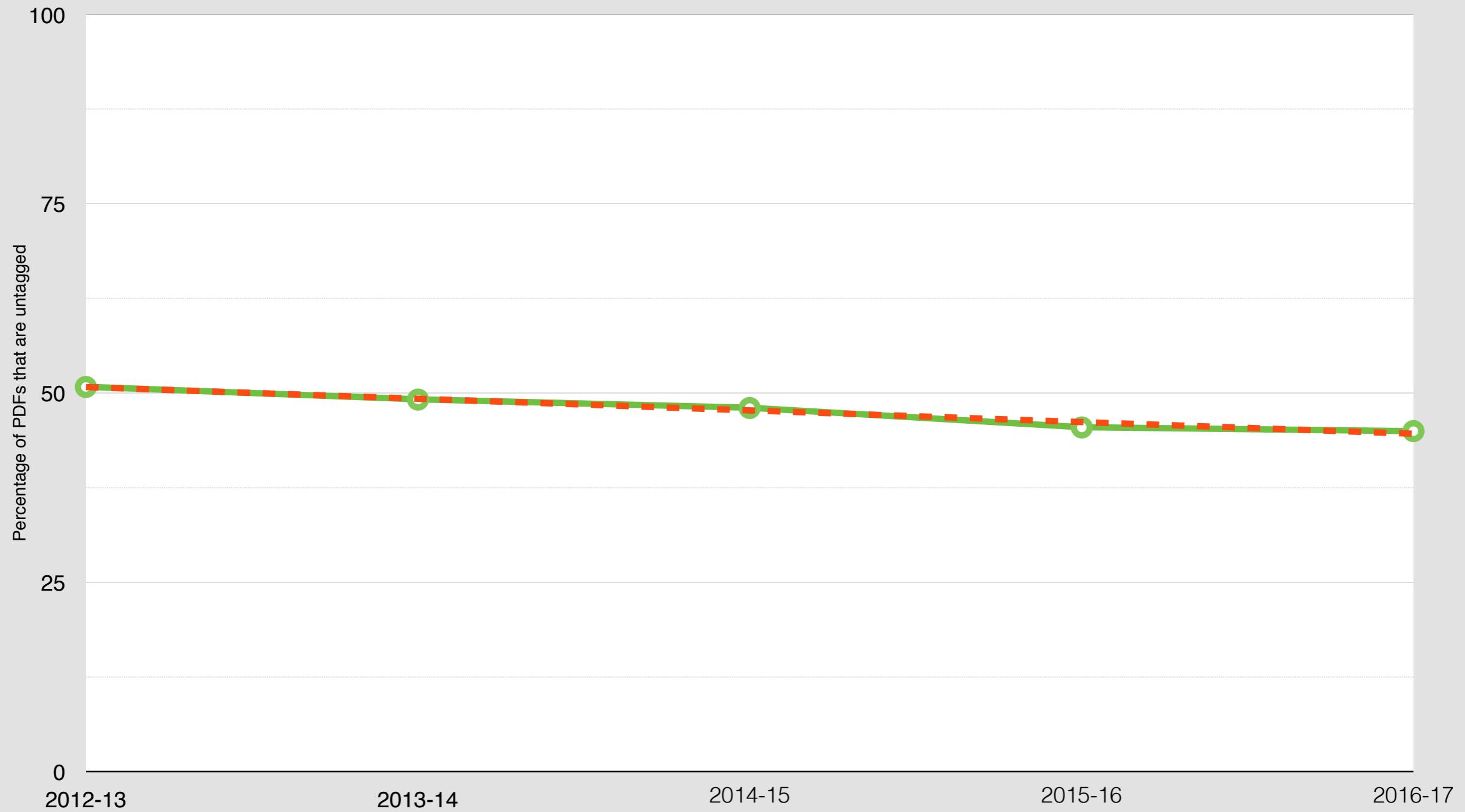
Scanned Documents (Trend)

- Very minor overall downward trend
- Some institution are improving significantly
 - Strong connection with institutional initiatives

Untagged PDFs (Per Institution)



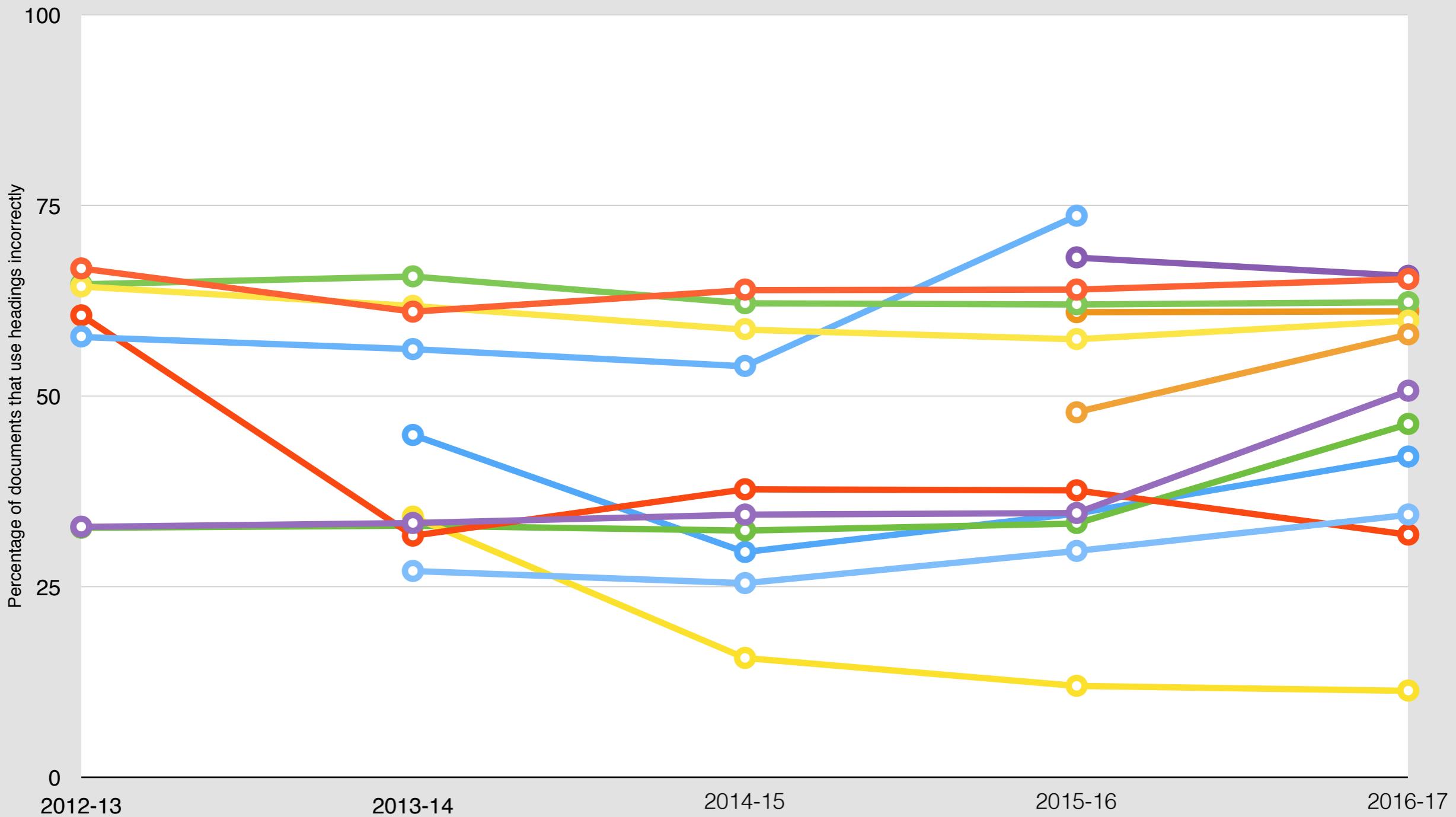
Untagged PDFs (Trend)



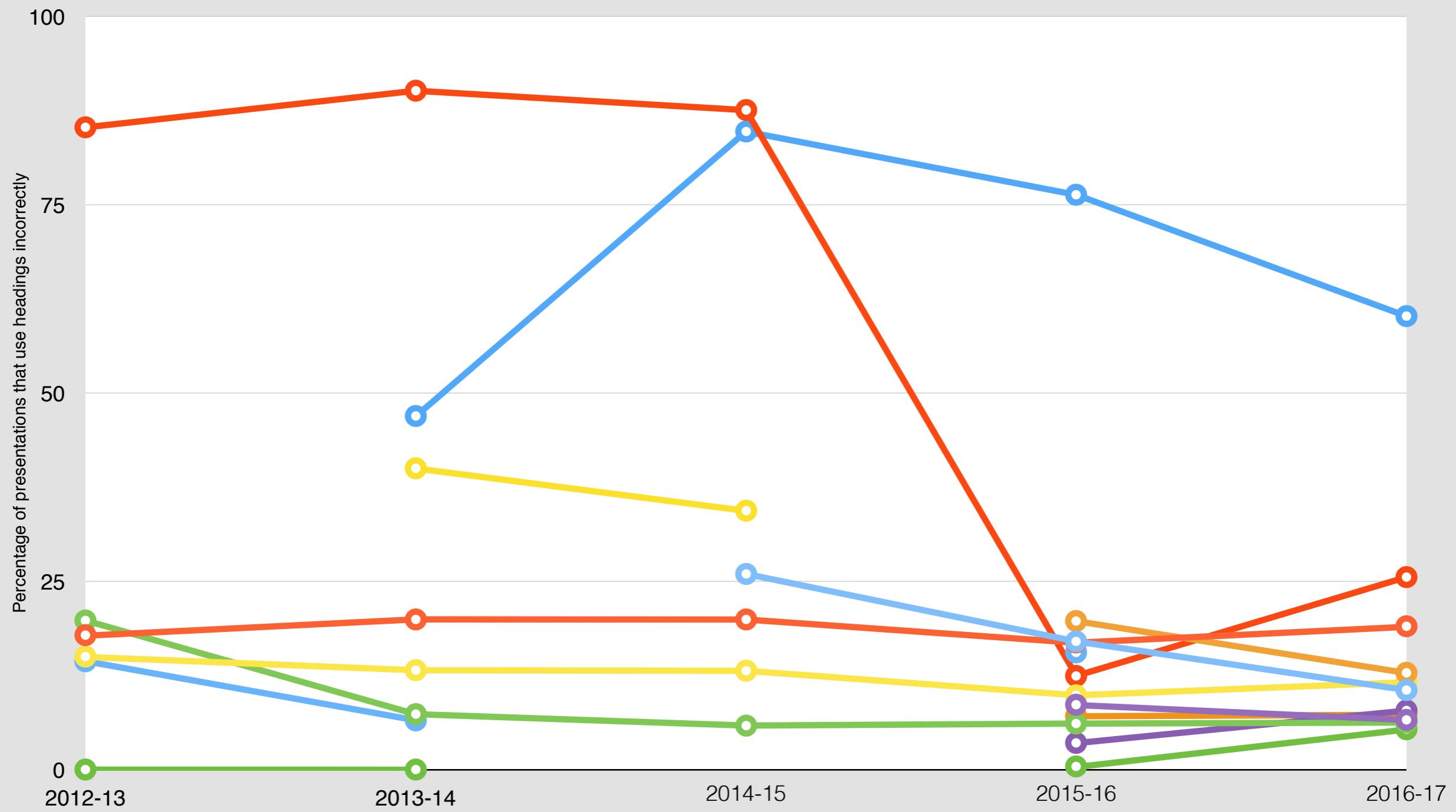
Untagged PDFs (Trend)

- Slight but consistent overall downward trend
 - Software improvements?
- Quite a large band
 - Institutional licensing decisions?
- Doesn't say anything about the quality of the tags yet

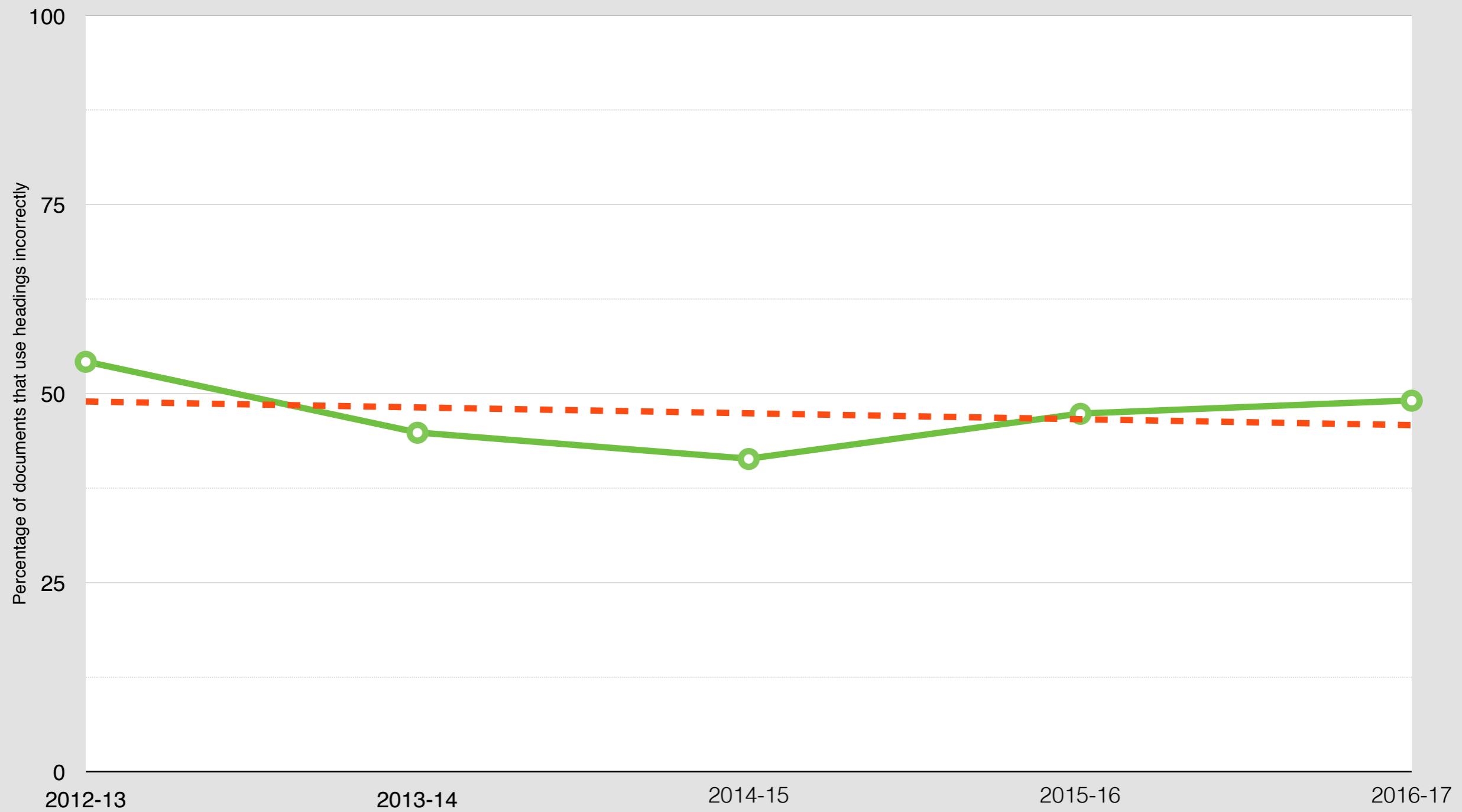
Headings - Documents (Per Institution)



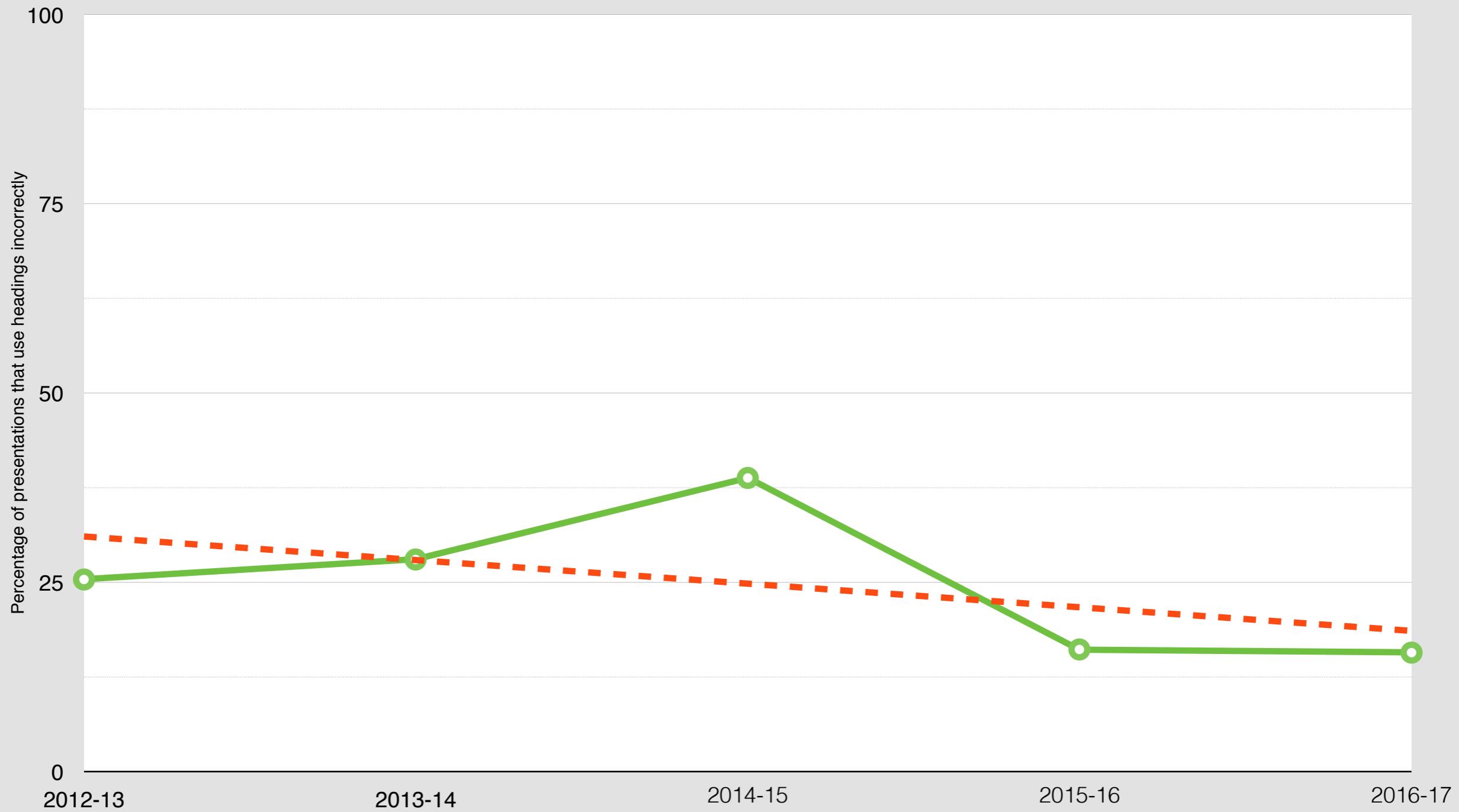
Headings - Presentations (Per Institution)



Headings - Documents (Trend)



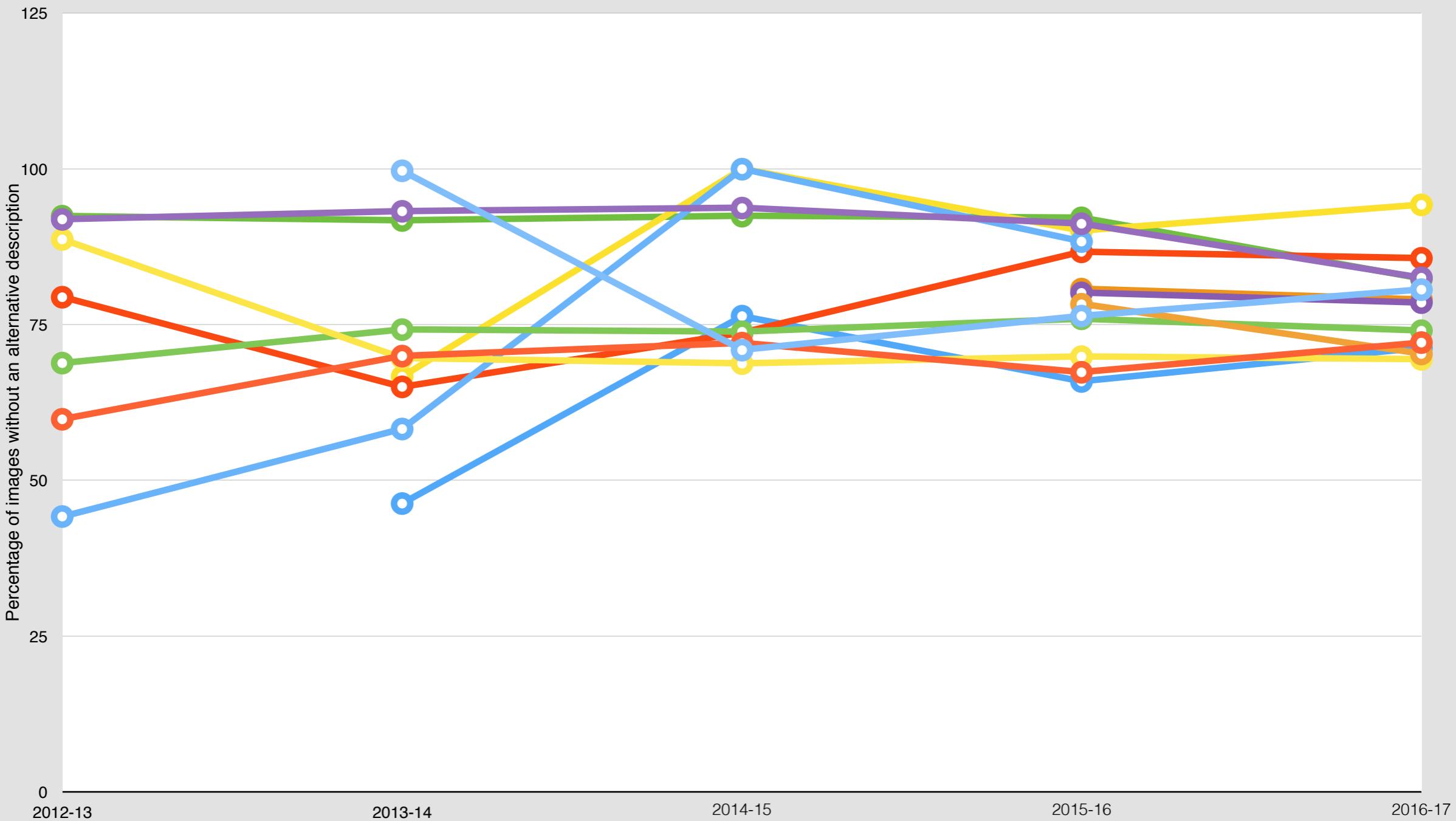
Headings - Presentations (Trend)



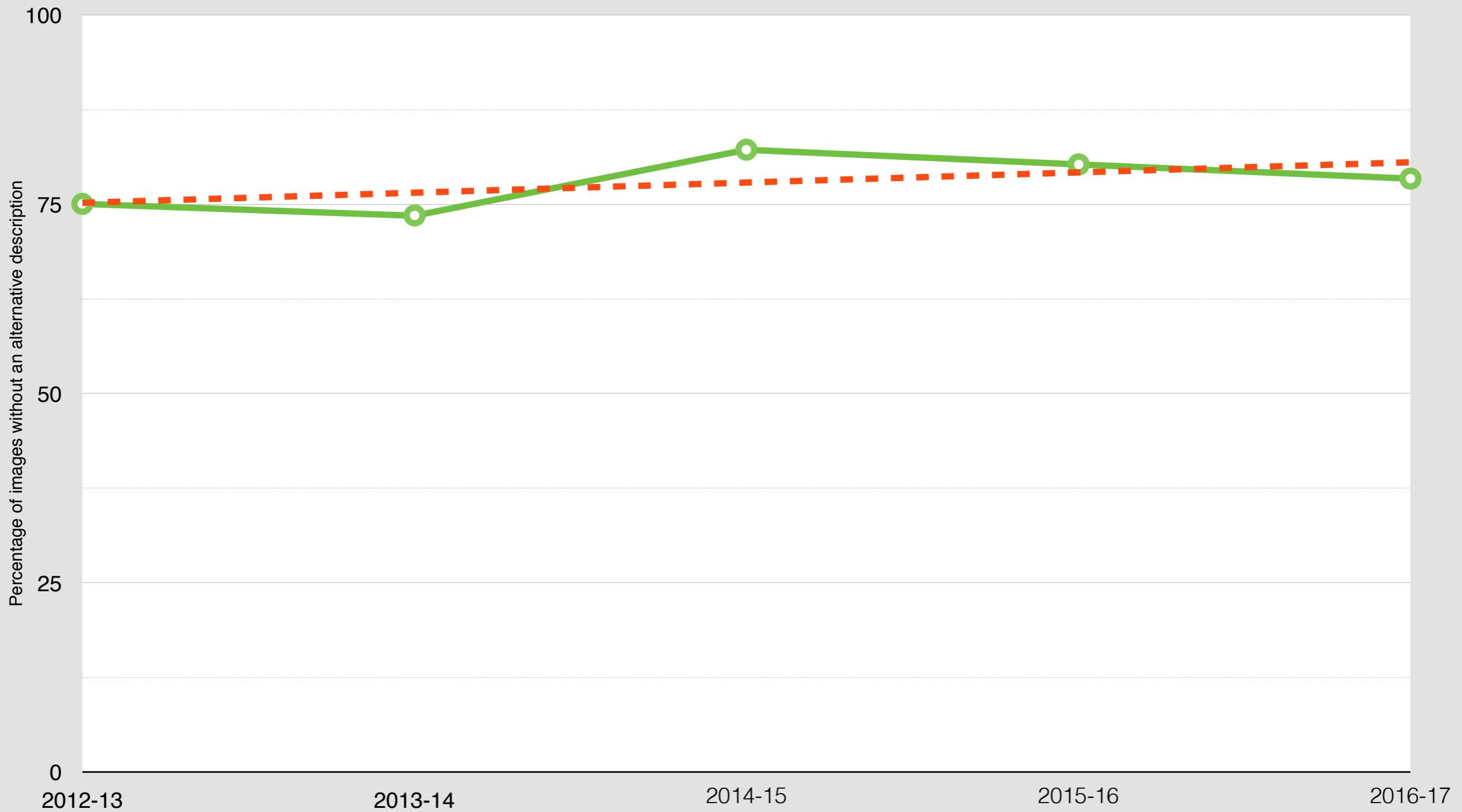
Headings (Trend)

- About half of the documents is flagged as not using headings correctly, while only roughly 1 in 5 presentations is flagged as not using headings correctly
 - Thanks to built-in slide templates
- Institutional content templates can be very effective
 - Make sure the institutional content templates are accessible. Otherwise, the problem can become significantly worse

Images Without An Alternative Description (Per Institution)



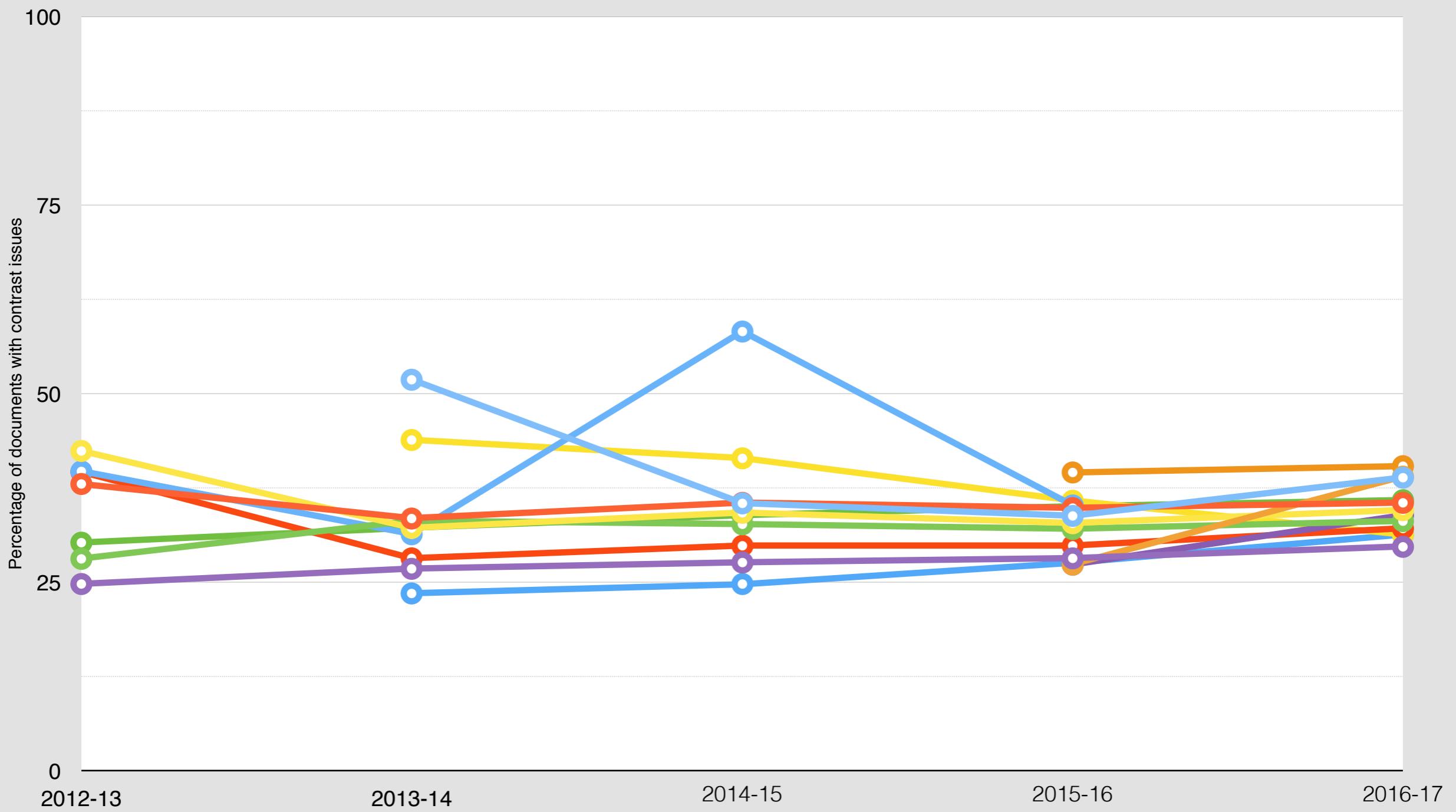
Images Without An Alternative Description (Trend)



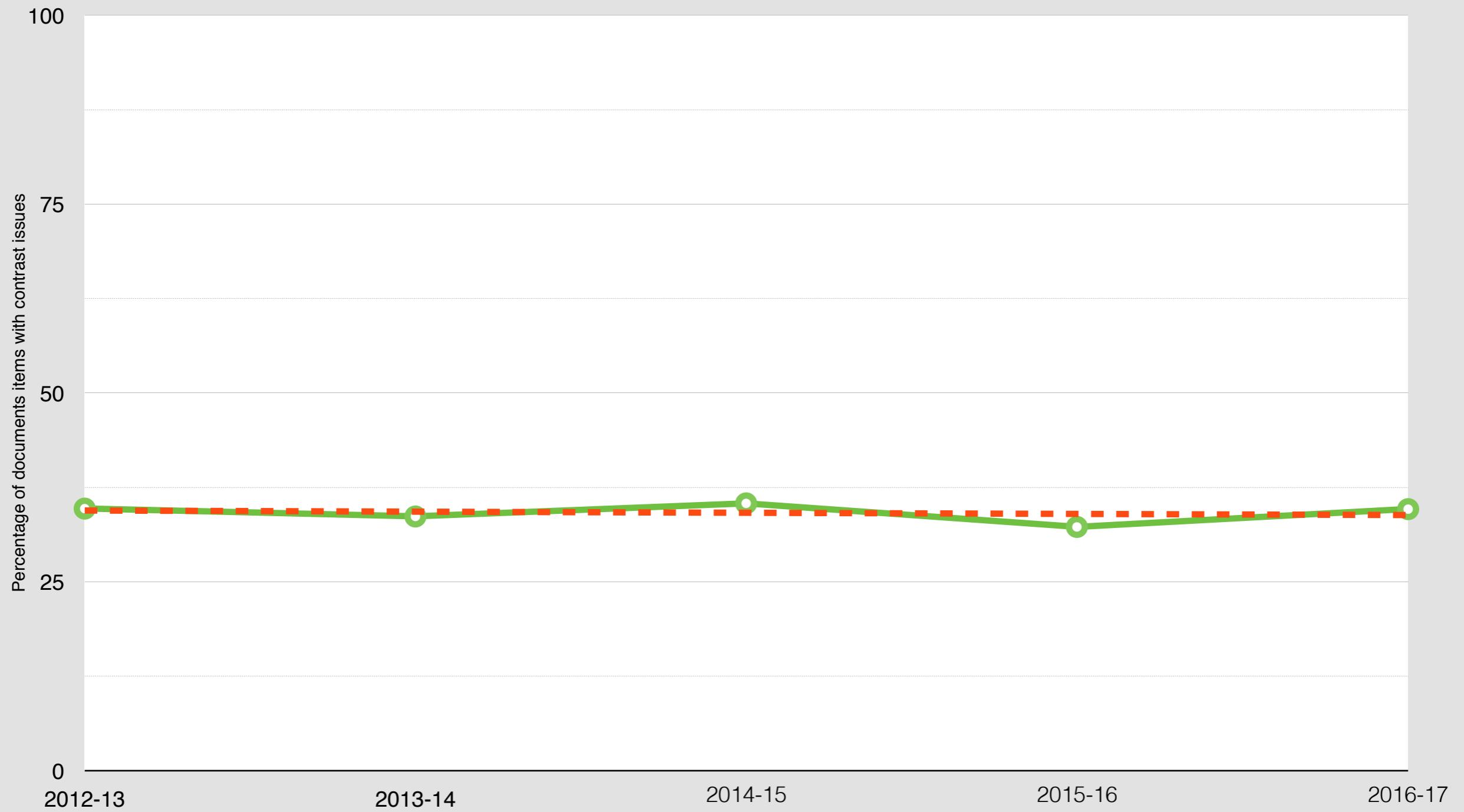
Images Without An Alternative Description (Trend)

- Over 75% of images don't have an alternative description
- Deteriorating slightly over time
 - Many systems now set file name as default alt text

Documents With Contrast Issues (Per Institution)



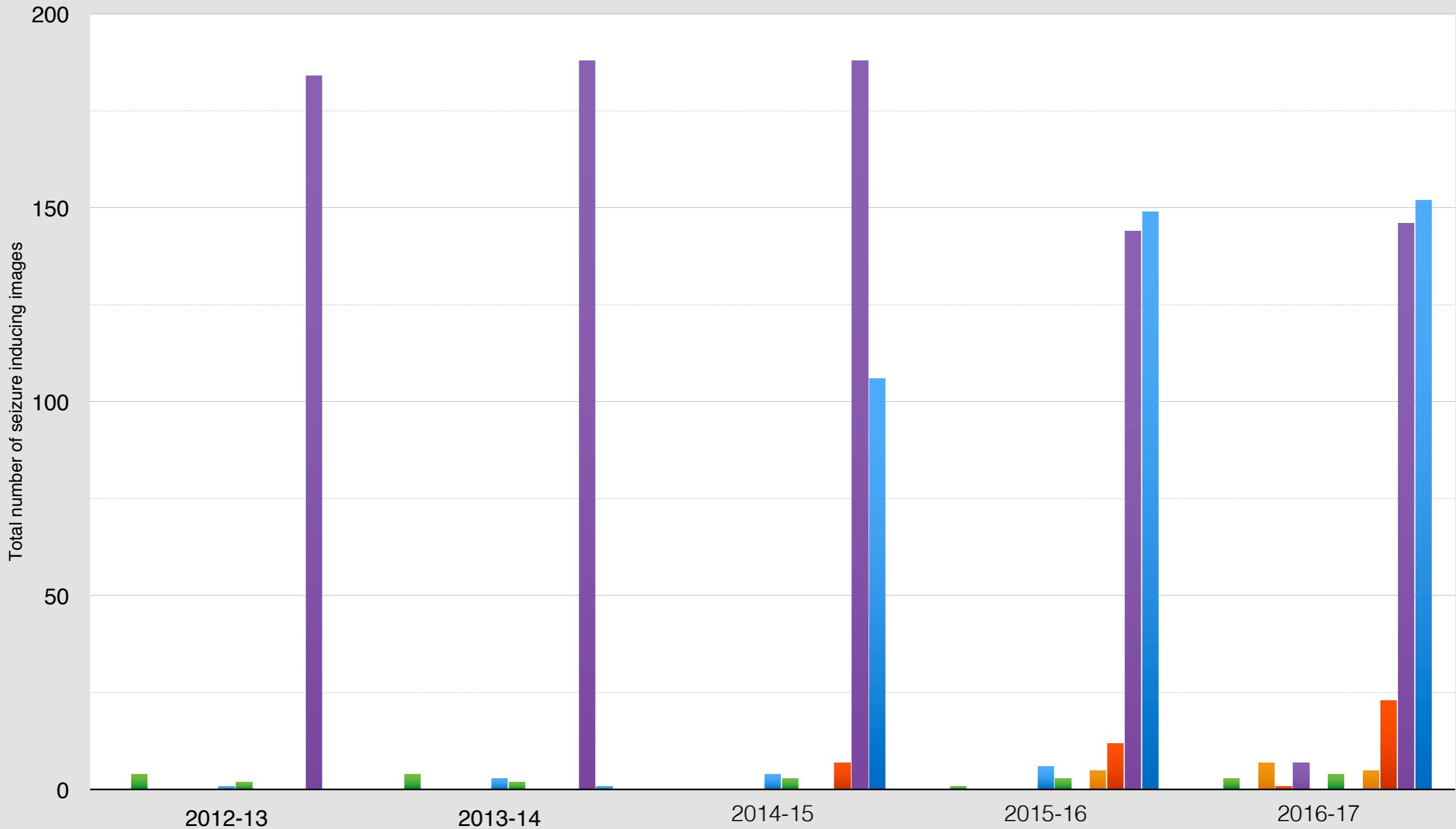
Documents With Contrast Issues (Trend)



Documents With Contrast Issues (Trend)

- Roughly 1 in 3 documents is flagged as having contrast issues
- Consistent across institutions with no noticeable improvement

Seizure Inducing Images



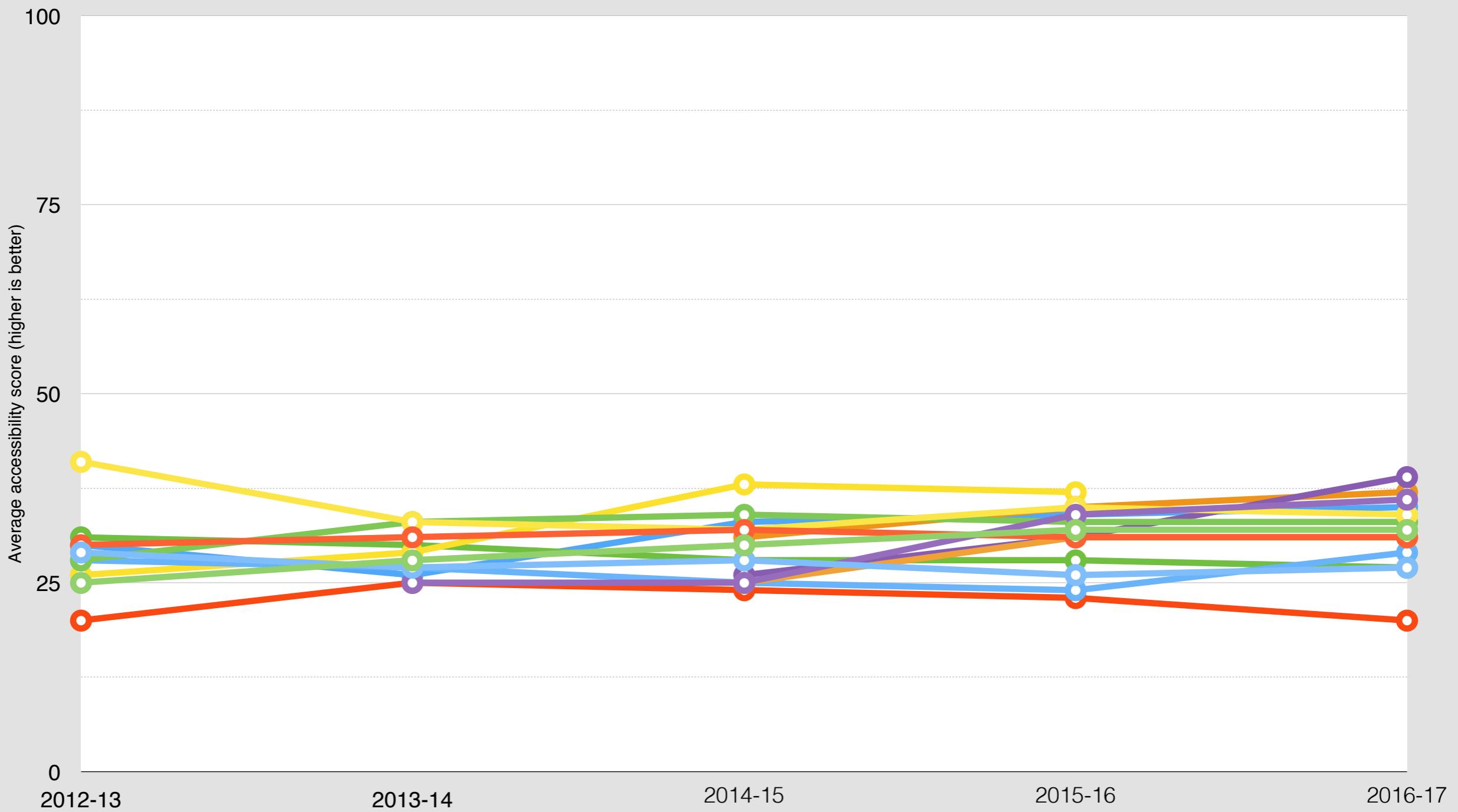
Seizure Inducing Images

- Small number, but present nonetheless
- Important that these can be identified and dealt with

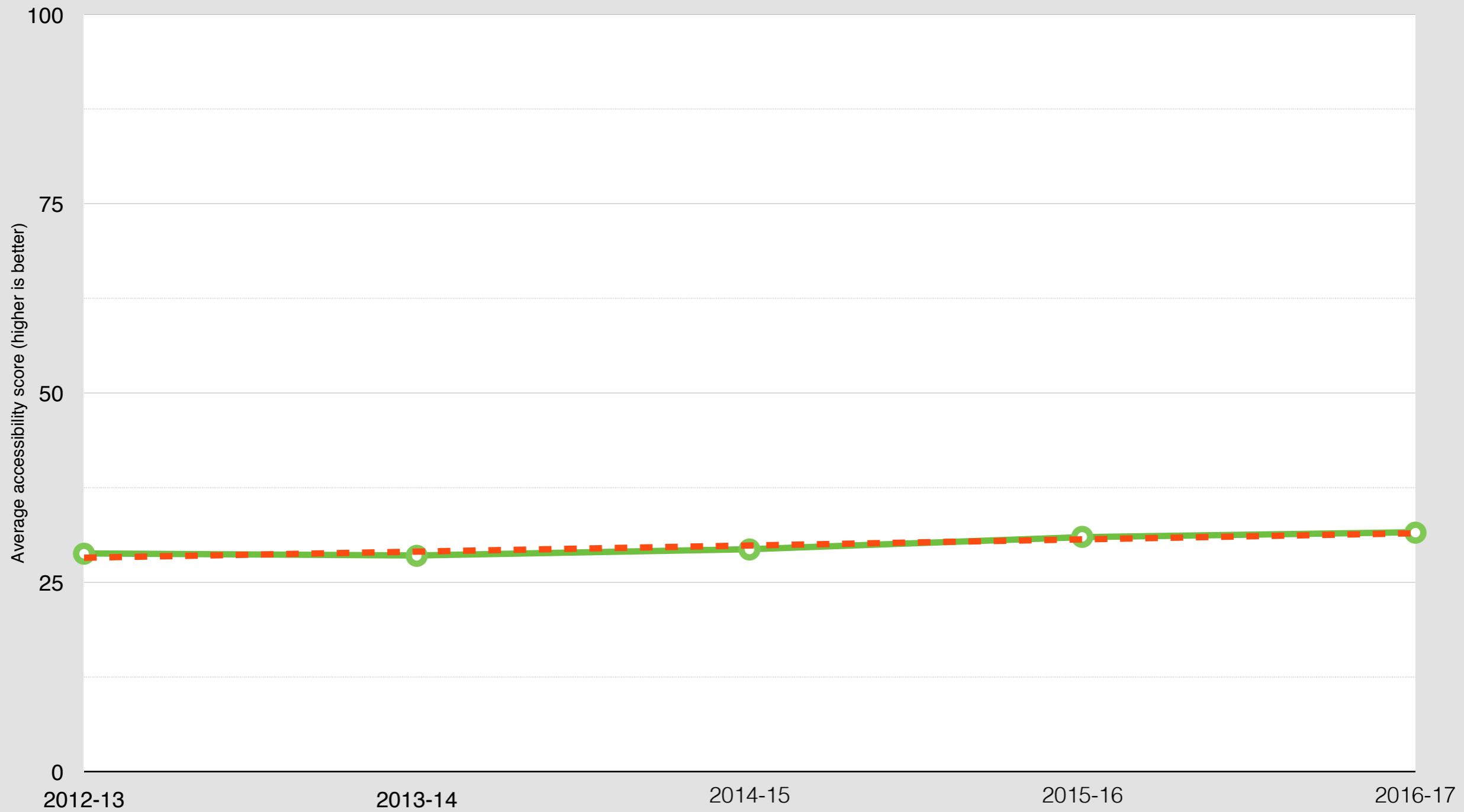
Accessibility Score

- Every individual item has an accessibility score
- Score between 0 and 100
- Weighted average of the results from accessibility checklist
- Reflect how accessible the item is, how many students it affects and/or how critically it affects them
- Course accessibility score & institution accessibility score

Overall Accessibility Score (Per Institution)



Overall Accessibility Score (Trend)



Overall Accessibility Score (Trend)

- Slight overall improvement in last 5 years
- Some institution have clear upward trend. Others are flat or even declining.
 - Strong connection with institutional initiatives
- At the current pace, it will take another 20 years to get to 50%

Conclusion

- Things are getting better, but not by much
- Problem is not going to fix itself or go away anytime soon
- Need to find ways to make progress faster
 - Work with vendors to make existing tools better at creating accessible content
 - Space for new tools to help make content more accessible
 - Need to find ways to raise awareness and visibility with content creators
- Institutional engagement can pay off
 - Institutional initiatives are often reflected in numbers

Berkeley Resource Center for Online Education (BRCOE)

Case Study



Berkeley Resource Center for Online Education (BRCOE)

- Fee-for-service model (self-sustaining)
- Over 200 unique online courses
- 500 sections offered in three LMS
 - Canvas
 - Moodle
 - edX

BRCOE Team

- Managerial Team
- Instructional Designers
- Media
 - Graphic Design
 - Videographers
 - Animators
 - Support
- Student Workers

Agile Learning Organization

- Constant evolution
- Communities of Practice
- Experts and Novices

BRCOE Accessibility Team

- Researched best practices
 - Proper use of tables
 - CSS
 - ARIA
 - Div Tags
 - Heading with meaningful hierarchy
 - Self describing links
 - Alternative text for images

BRCOE Hub

The screenshot shows the homepage of the BRCOE Accessibility Hub. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links to Home, Getting Started, Formatting, UC Resources, Evaluation, and References. Below the navigation bar is a red header section containing the title "BRCOE Accessibility Hub". The main content area starts with a definition of accessibility: "Accessibility refers to the concept that people with disabilities are able to access and use a product or system, including with the help of assistive technologies. For example, an "accessible" Web site may be designed so that the text can be enlarged by the user, rather than having a fixed font size, or may be designed so that it can be interpreted and "read out loud" by screen reader software used by blind or low-vision people." It then states: "On this website you will find a series of resources that will enable you to learn about and implement accessibility. Click on any of the headings below to see resources for each topic listed below that heading." The page lists several sections with associated resources:

- Getting Started**
 - Definitions
 - Best Practices
 - Color Contrast
 - Math Equations
- Formatting**
 - Adobe Acrobat
 - Microsoft Office
 - InDesign
- University of California Resources**
- Evaluation Tools**
 - Chrome plugins
 - Firefox plugins
- References and Research**
 - Articles
 - Legislation and Guidelines

At the bottom of the page, there is a link to "Acknowledgements".

<http://j.tinyurl.com/brcoehub>

Instructional Design Buy In

- Frame Accessibility as a Social Justice Issue
 - Equal opportunities to education
 - Historically excluded
 - Growing population
 - Link our family members
- Frame as Professional Development Opportunity
 - Growing field
 - Look at job descriptions
 - Connected to mobile learning platforms

BRCOE Templates

- New templates integrated:
 - Div Tags
 - CSS
 - Javascript
- Pass color contrast tests
- Self-describing links
- Alt text
- ARIA

Sample Course Module

Module [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [6](#)



Module 6

This module provides instructors with tips and strategies to deliver documents for improved access by various types of technology. Efficient strategies are provided so that extra time and resources are not necessary to remediate content for accessibility. Information will include how to build a document in Microsoft Word and disseminate to students in either a Word or PDF file.

 [Guest Interview](#)  [Learning Objectives](#)  [Lectures](#)  [Resources](#)  [K.W.L. Final Project](#)

 **Guest Interview**

View the guest interview and take notes by clicking on the below presentation. You may start, stop and revisit segments at your own pace using the video controls and seek bar.

Guest Interview Video link and Transcript

| Presentation | Transcript |
|---|---|
| Interview with Alison Boswell (17:52) | Alison Boswell Interview Transcript   |

 **Learning Objectives**

Upon completion of this module, you will be able to:

- Locate the BRCOE syllabus template
- Explain the components of an accessible document
- Format a document for improved readability
- Employ image descriptions for embedded images

Other Templates

- Course syllabus (Word)
- Course lectures (PowerPoint)

Sample Syllabus Template

Enterprise Risk Management (X436.9)

2 Units, UC Extension

Required or elective course in certificate (if applicable)

Course Description

Risk management has most often been confined to quantitative topics such as derivatives and risk measurements that aim to limit financial risk. Unfortunately, the spectrums of risks that may emerge in enterprises include many more aspects. By taking this course, you will learn a more holistic approach that covers all the decisions and actions of employees in an active enterprise. Students will also uncover issues and challenges in total risk management while exploring techniques for balancing enterprise risk and reward to enable performance optimization.

Prerequisites

There are no prior course requirements.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course students will:

- Demonstrate their ability to identify risk elements in an enterprise
- Measure the level of expected risk

Automated Tools

- Functional Accessibility Evaluator (FAE)
- Tota11Y
- Code Sniffer
- Inspect Element
- Ally

Manual Testing

- UC Berkeley's Web Access Team
 - Templates
 - Platforms
- New features & tools
 - Captivate
 - Storyline
 - Video players

Quality Assurance (QA) Spreadsheet

- Specific QA checks for common accessibility issues
 - Headings
 - Alternative Text
 - Tables and formatting
 - Self-describing links
 - Closed Captioning and transcripts

Professional Development

- Production meetings
- BRCOE Hub
- One-on-one
- New employee onboarding

Conclusion

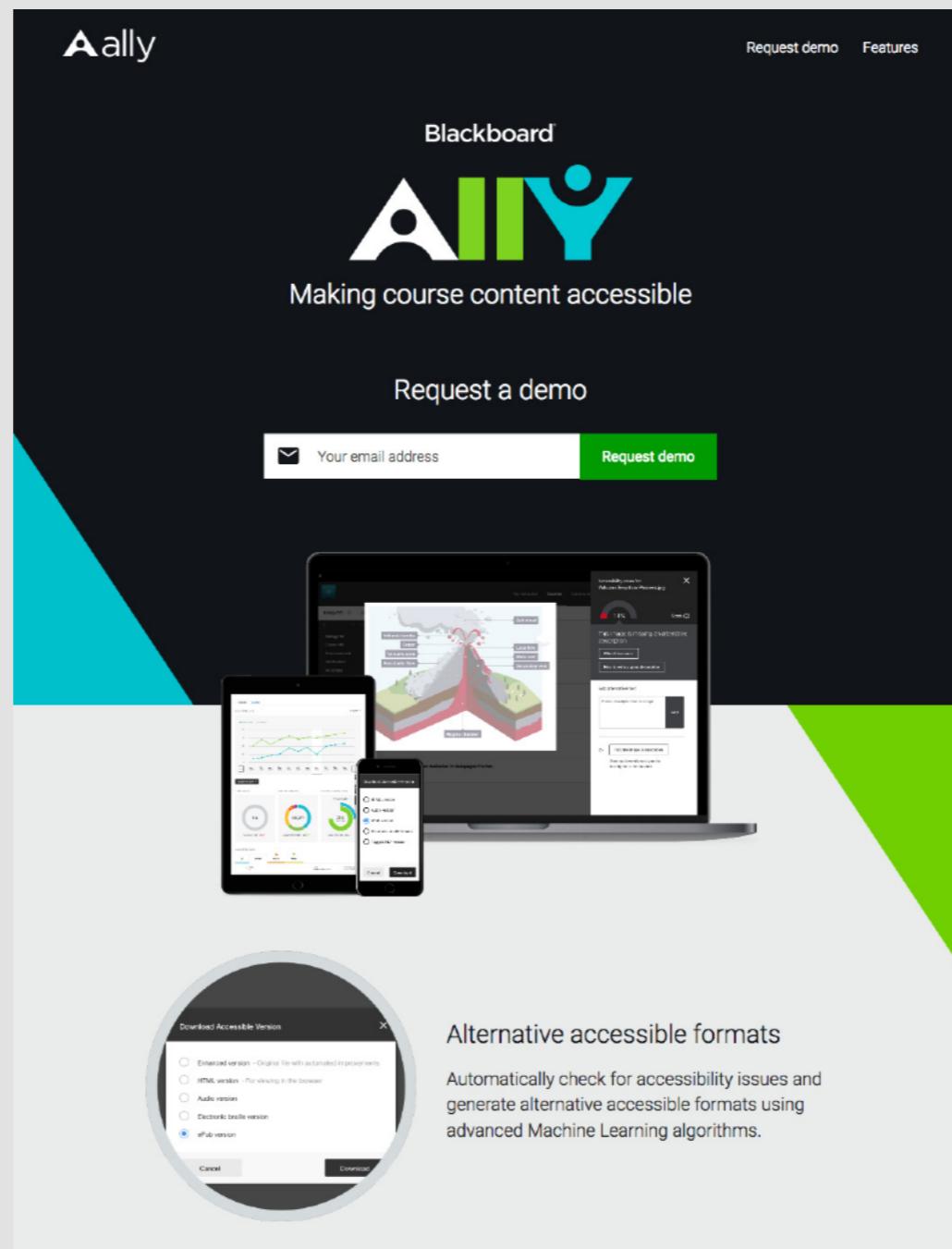
- Remediation time on new course builds has been greatly reduced while content delivery has been strengthened. Furthermore, our collective responsibility to improve our practice has been supported and solidified.

CSUN 2018

- Updated numbers
 - Including audio and video data
 - Including non-US institutions
 - Comparing data from range of Learning Management Systems
- Show Ally effect
- Connect to student success?

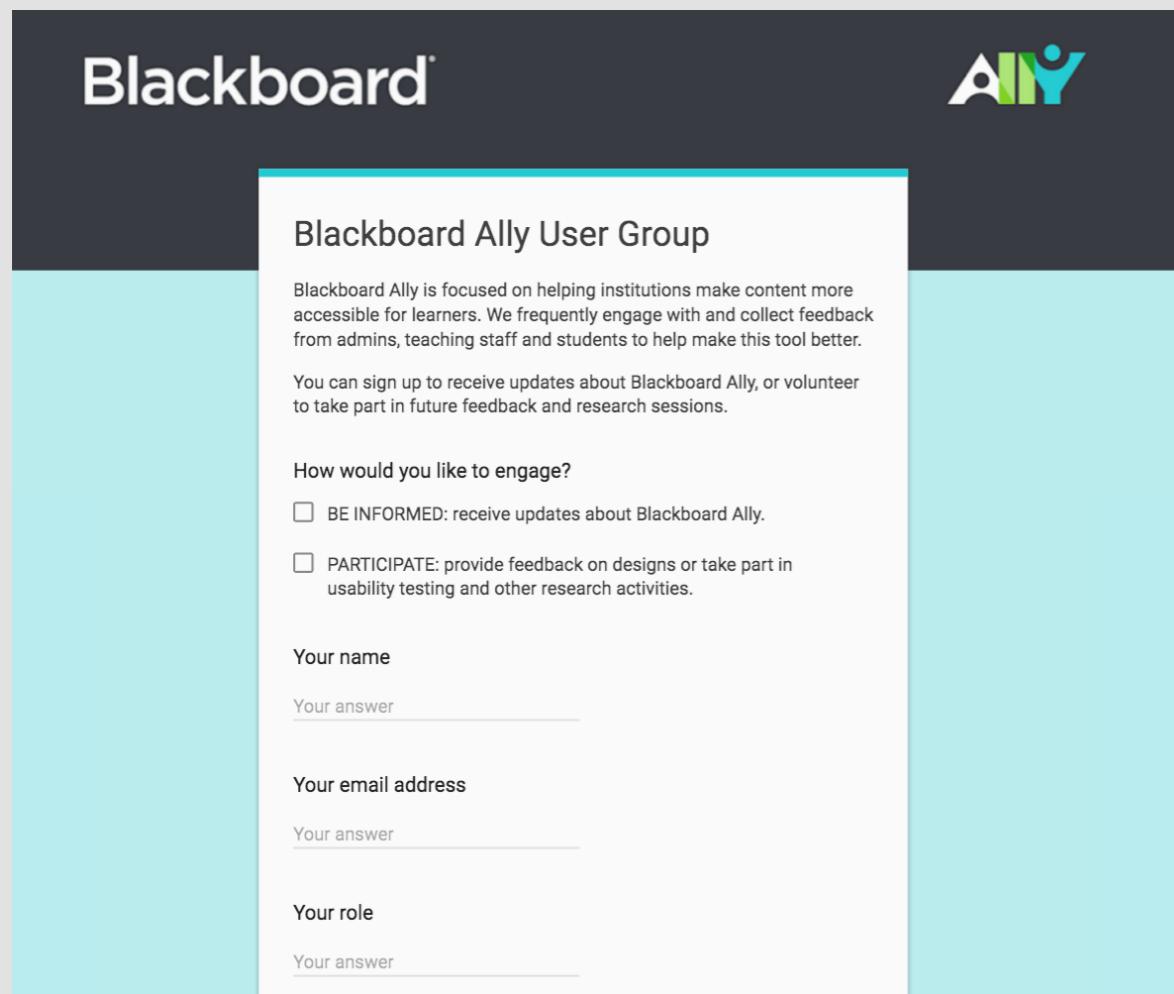
— CSUN —
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY
CONFERENCE

Find Out More



<http://ally.ac>

Ally User Group



The image shows a screenshot of a web page for the Blackboard Ally User Group. The page has a dark header with the Blackboard logo on the left and the Ally logo on the right. Below the header is a teal-colored sidebar containing fields for 'Your name', 'Your email address', and 'Your role'. The main content area has a white background and features the title 'Blackboard Ally User Group' in bold. It includes a paragraph about the group's purpose, a section for engagement options ('BE INFORMED' and 'PARTICIPATE'), and a 'Sign up' button.

Blackboard Ally User Group

Blackboard Ally is focused on helping institutions make content more accessible for learners. We frequently engage with and collect feedback from admins, teaching staff and students to help make this tool better.

You can sign up to receive updates about Blackboard Ally, or volunteer to take part in future feedback and research sessions.

How would you like to engage?

BE INFORMED: receive updates about Blackboard Ally.

PARTICIPATE: provide feedback on designs or take part in usability testing and other research activities.

Your name

Your answer _____

Your email address

Your answer _____

Your role

Your answer _____

- Receive updates about Blackboard Ally
- Participate in UX research, usability testing, early access, etc.

Sign up at
<http://tinyurl.com/blackboard-ally-user-group>

Visit us at our booth

