

Can we trust Rate My Professor?

Does the level of difficulty relate to the professor's overall ratings ?

Does lower-rated or high-rated professors attract more reviews ?

What motivates Trinity students to leave reviews on RMP ?

Problem Statement

After the final exam in my first year, one of my friends told me that the first thing she was going to do was give the professor who taught that course a 1-star rating on Rate My Professor (RMP).

Rate My Professor is known for its critical reviews, as many students are highly motivated to "bash" their professors and caution other students to avoid them. Therefore, the website often suffers from biased and subjective reviews, with ratings based more on personal opinions than on objective assessments of teaching quality.

Data Collection

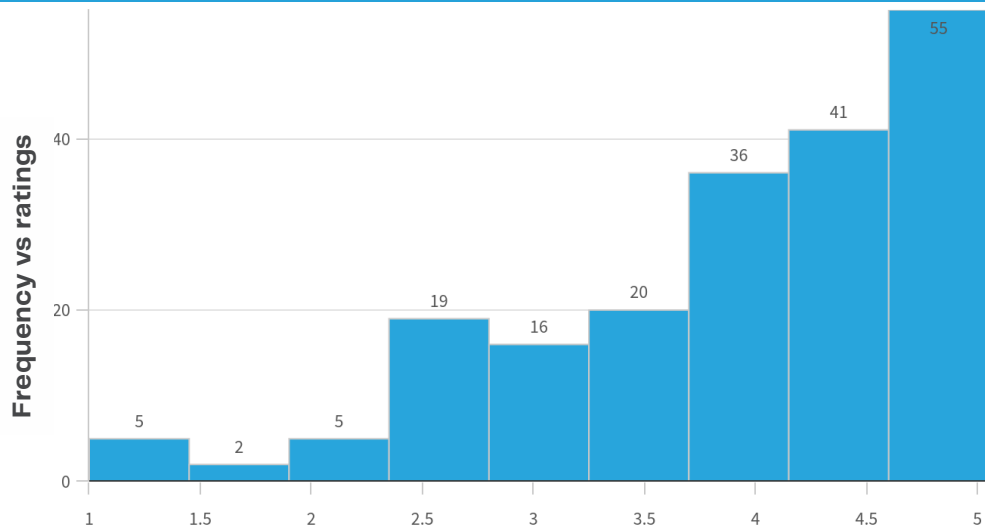
199 current Trinity professors profiles were hand-selected

✓ **2576** REVIEWS

✓ **25** MAJORS

✓ **4** DISCIPLINES

Overview



Avg Number of Reviews

12.92

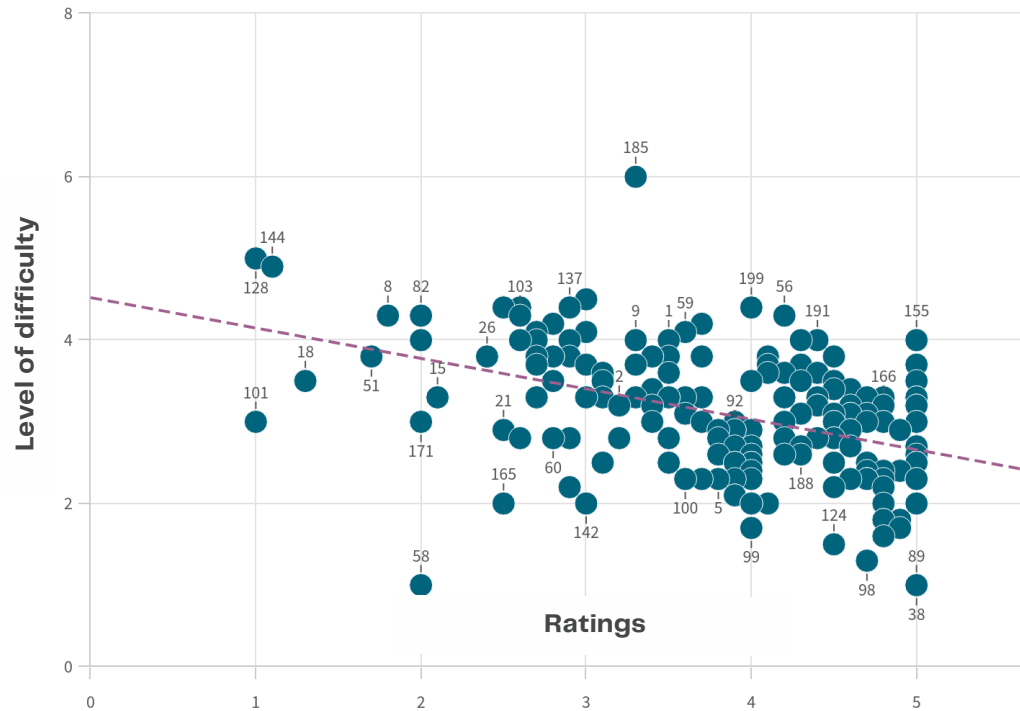
Avg Ratings

3.91

Avg Difficulty

3.06

Finding #1: Professors who are **perceived as more difficult** often tend to **receive lower** overall ratings



Results

Level of difficultness and overall ratings were found to be moderately negatively correlated, $r(199) = -.443$, $p < 0.001$

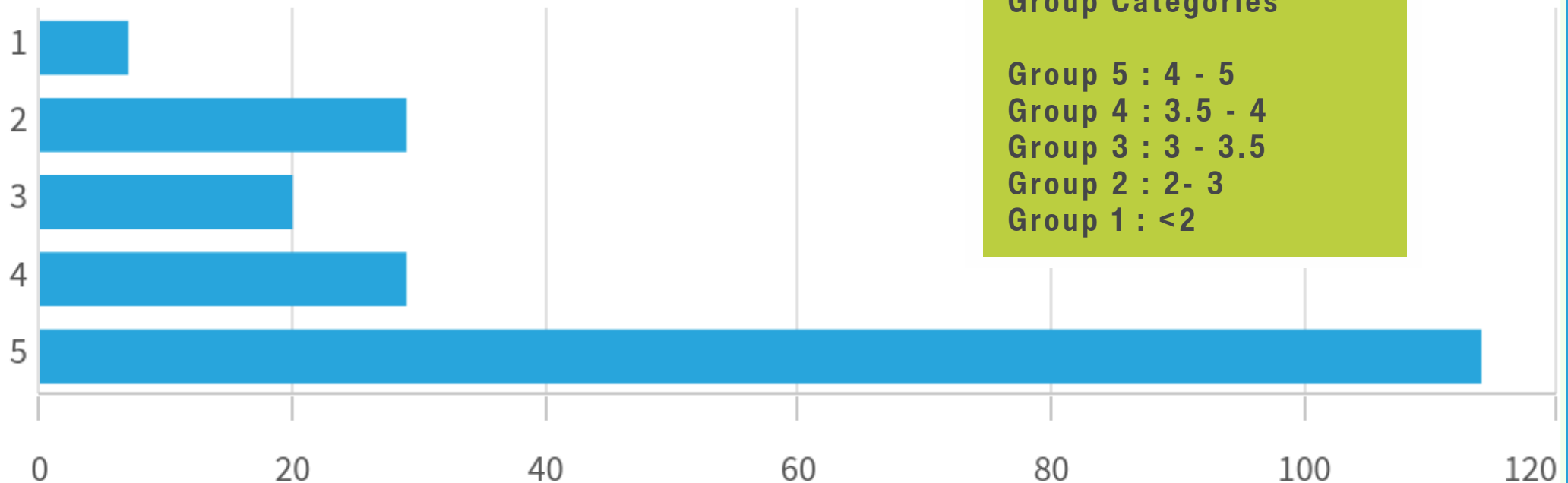
Correlation Rate

-44.27%

Professor ratings decrease when students rate the course as more difficult. Professors who are perceived as more difficult often tend to receive lower overall ratings. This could be because students associate higher difficulty with lower enjoyment or satisfaction in the course.

Finding #2: Higher-rated professors attract more student reviews

Ratings Groups and Number of Profiles



We run an one-way ANOVA Analysis to investigate whether number of review does differed by the professor's ratings

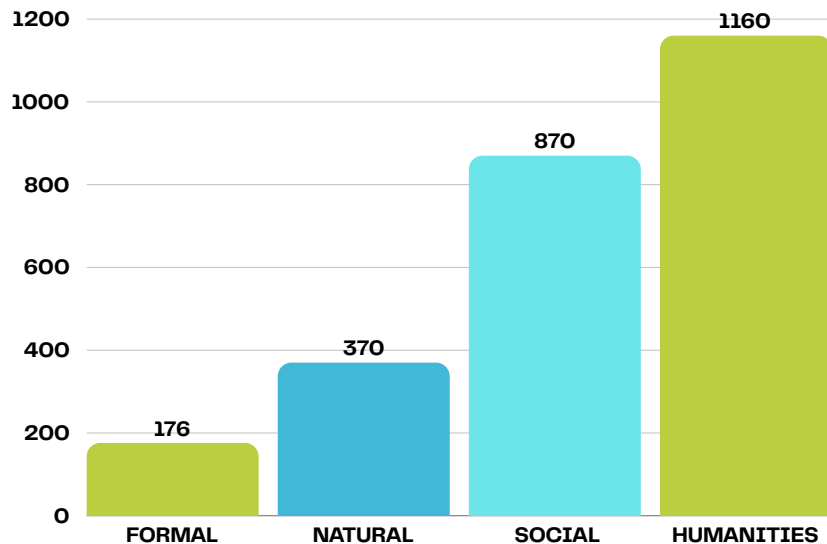
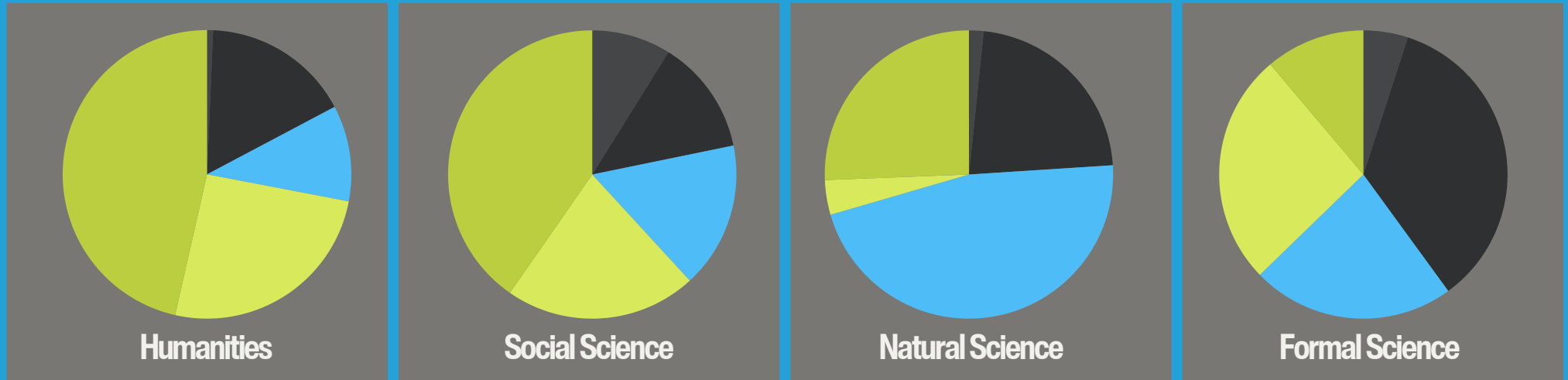
In fact, there is a difference in average number of reviews between groups of professors.

Finding

Students are more motivated to leave reviews for professors who demonstrate good teaching. When students experience effective teaching, they may feel compelled to share their positive experiences

Finding #3: How Academic Majors Shape Professor Reviews

Lv1 Lv2 Lv3 Lv4 Lv5



Social Sciences and Humanities students are more likely to leave positive comments for good professors, while Natural and Formal Sciences students write reviews mainly to warn about ineffective ones

Conclusion

Social Sciences and Humanities have significantly more positive reviews and higher number of reviews for their professors on Rate My Professor compared to Formal Sciences and Natural Sciences.

Rate My Professor with “(G)rate-titude”

Rate My Professor isn't always as fair as we might think.
But, the level of gratitude expressed could be a potential indicator of the subjective ratings for how "good" or "not-good" a professor is perceived to be.

Conclusion

Students' ratings on Rate My Professor should reflect their level of gratitude toward that professor.
Whether the professor were your favorite or not, whether the professor challenged you with the toughest lessons or gave you the most enjoyable moments in college

In the end,
every professor has contributed to your learning journey in some way



In Natural and Formal Sciences, students often rate professors because they dislike the courses—leaving deserving professors without enough recognition.



In Social Sciences and Humanities, we tend to be overly generous and avoid giving negative reviews



Remember, an objective reviews on Rate My Professor may have a big impact on future generations of students.