



Toby Long, PhD, FAPTA
Director
Rachel Brady, PT, DPT, MS Project
Coordinator
Sharice Lane, MS, CCC-SLP, MPAP
Fellow

Experiences with a Hybrid Learning Program: Georgetown University Certificate in Early Intervention (GUCEI)

INTRODUCTION

GUCEI is a hybrid cohort competency based learning program that supports attainment in contemporary knowledge, skills, and practices in early childhood (EC) intervention. An 18 credit certificate program delivered predominantly online with 5 in person classes 4 major online core courses, 3 one-day minor courses, and an Orientation course.

Program Expectations:

Knowledge of the intent and implementation of IDEA, the needs of children with complex disabilities, family centered care, cultural and linguistic competence, evidence-based practices, team based decision making, natural environment practices, and
Skills to create an eco-map, administer a routines based interview, administer and interpret standardized developmental tests, write participation based outcomes, implement coaching, lead and participate in IFSP meetings, and be a team member.

METHODS

A mixed method approach gathered participant's perceptions of knowledge; use of skills; and program and course specific content, teaching and technology satisfaction. A focus group was held with Cohort 1 to understand student experiences.

Satisfaction: Course, program, and alumni surveys collected satisfaction information.

Knowledge and skills: Self-assessments of self-efficacy, self-knowledge, self-practice at entrance and exit from program and comprehensive exam.

Program strengths and needs: Participant and alumni open-ended survey questions.

FEEDBACK & SATISFACTION

Feedback: Focus groups and early program feedback

- Curriculum assumed students entered with more knowledge/skills of EI practices, laws, and systems. Modifications made to meet student needs for introductory material and review of EI practices. Annual curriculum review and modifications were made based on course and program evaluations.
- Although meeting expectations, students continue to report desire for additional in-person opportunities and video content for discussions, demonstrations, or as a reading substitute.

Satisfaction: Surveys

- Participants were satisfied with the overall program
- Majority of the students across cohorts strongly agreed that participation in GUCEI led to new or enhanced knowledge and skills
- Majority of students satisfied with overall courses structure (course content, materials, instructional methods/technology), met their needs for learning, and reported increased level of knowledge at course completion.

RESULTS

Students

Eighty-nine (89) students in 6 cohorts completed the program from 2012-2018. Students came from a wide variety of disciplines that typically serve children birth to five in therapeutic services and early childhood intervention professions. The majority were teachers in early childhood, special education or childcare followed by speech-language pathologists (Fig. 1a). The students were a diverse group: 2=Asian, 34=Black or African American, 44=White, 8=Hispanic, and 1=Not Specified (Fig. 1b). Four were international students.

Fig 1a. Student Roles

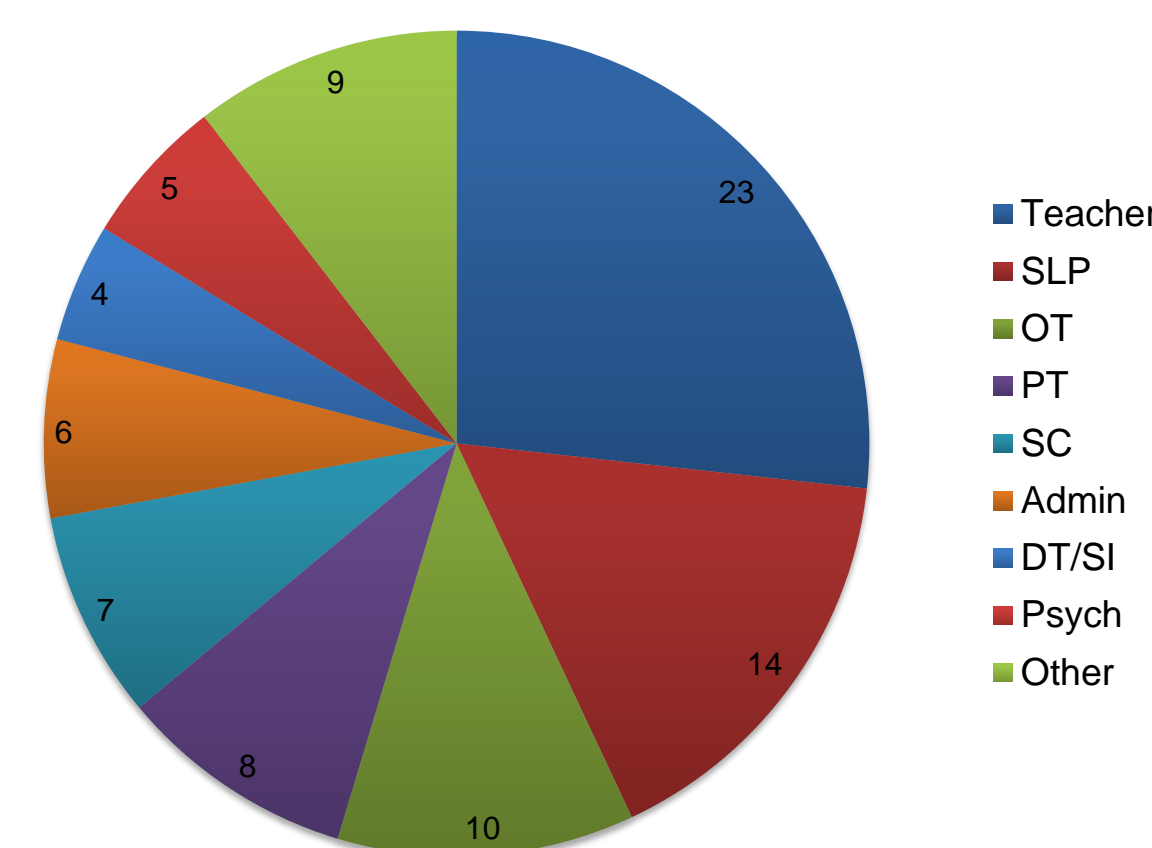
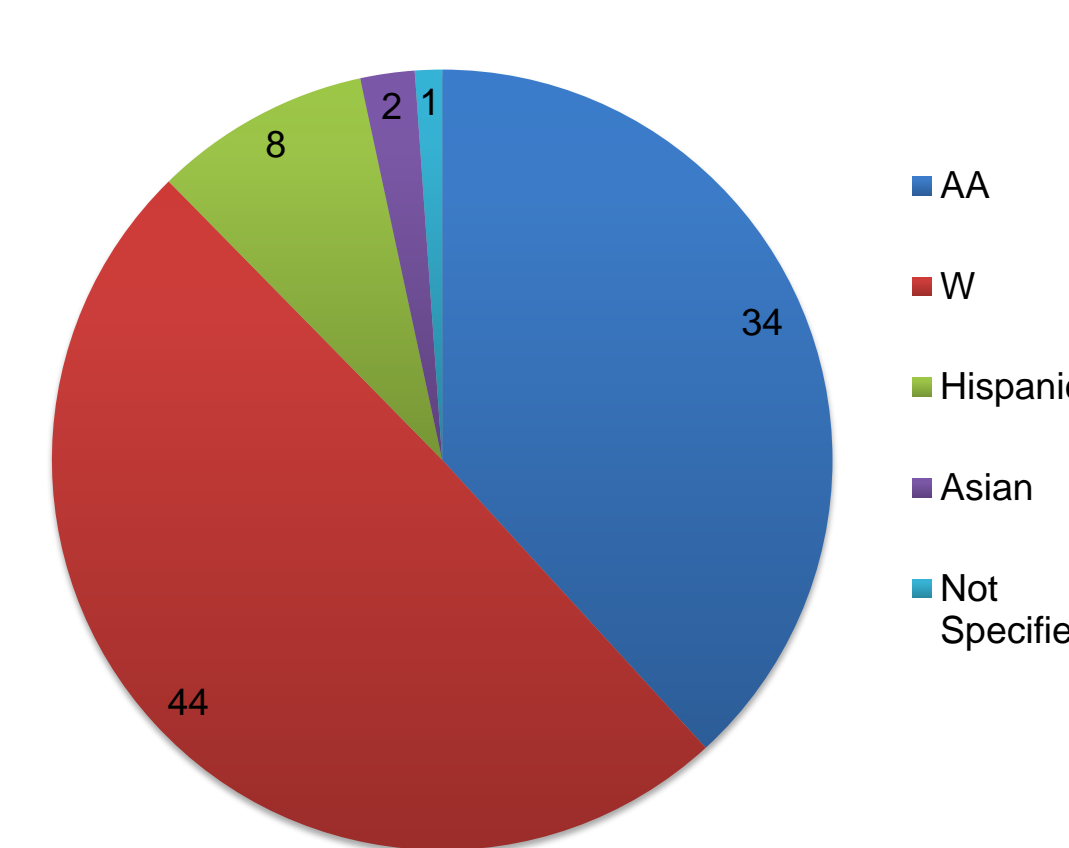


Fig. 1b Student Diversity



Knowledge

Pre-post self-assessments indicate that the program imparts essential early intervention knowledge in a manner that supports contemporary practices. Participants increased knowledge in all areas. Largest gains were reported in understanding service coordination in Part C, understanding and planning for family centered services, and the differences between Part B & Part C, (Fig 2a). Smallest gains were reported in the areas the students felt they came into the program with including building relationships with families, helping in effective ways, knowledge of professional codes of ethics, and the importance of families as team members (Fig 2b). The average comprehensive examination score was 87% with 8 participants scoring below the required 80% on their first trial.

Fig 2 a. Most Knowledge Gained

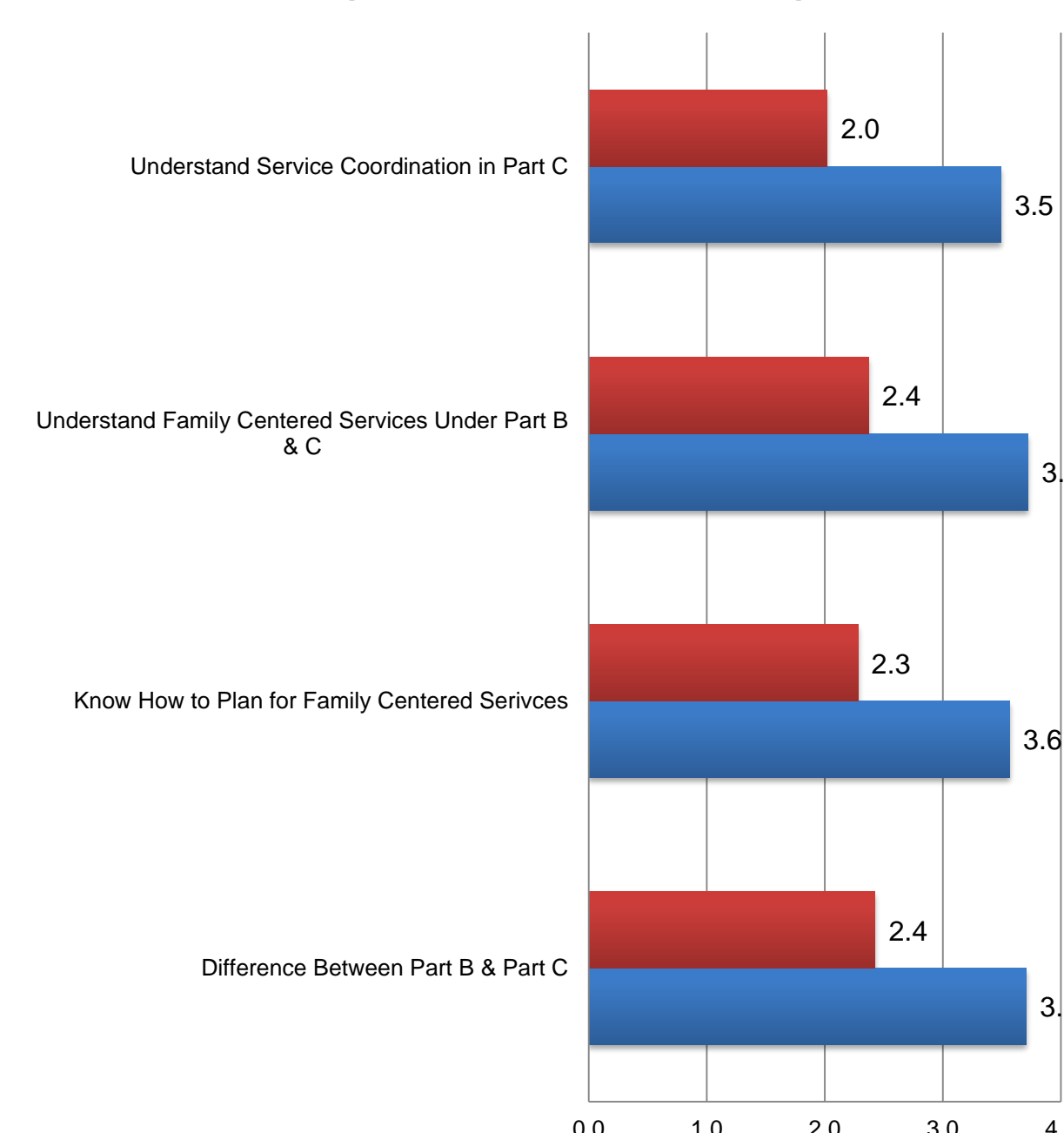
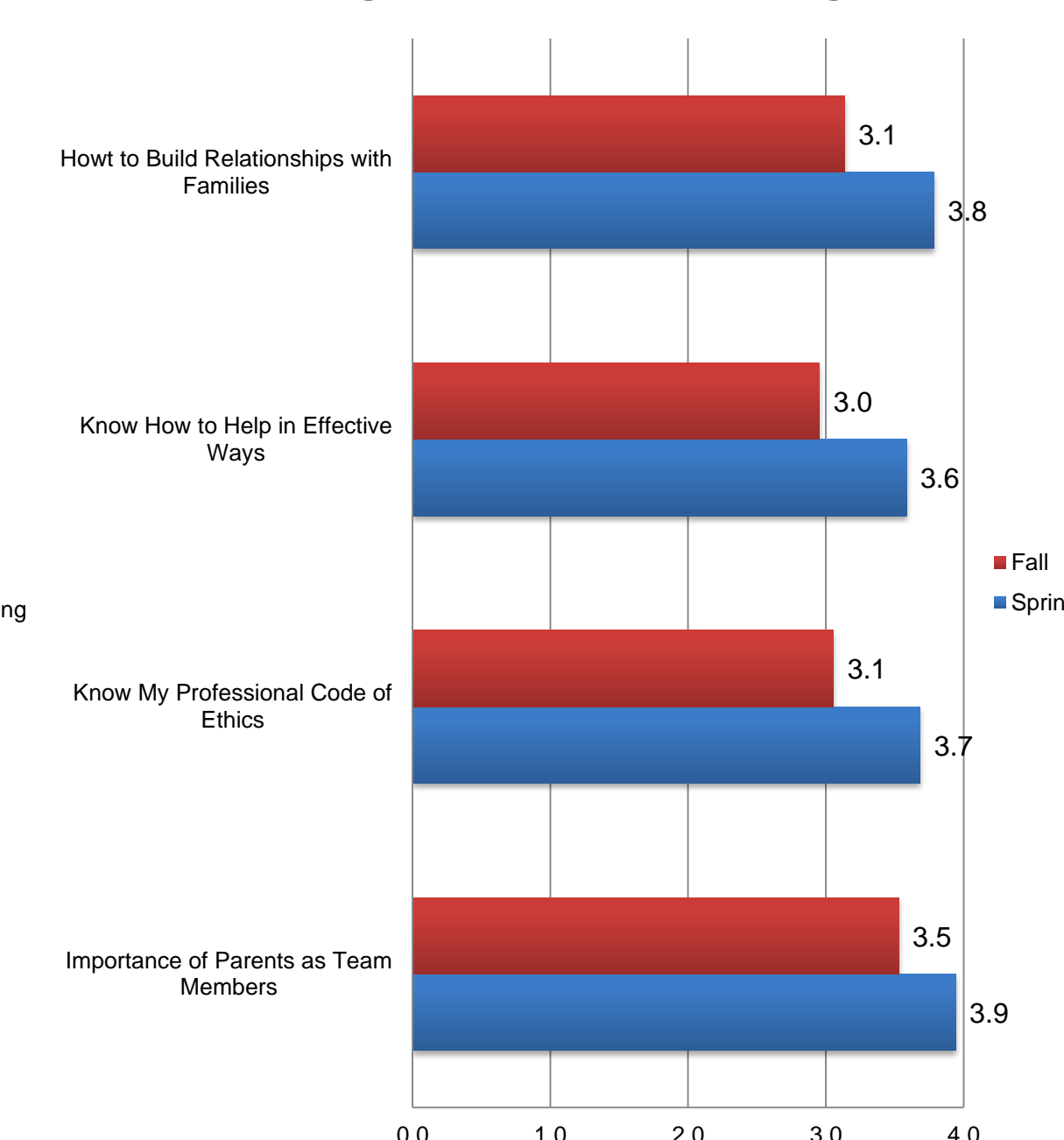


Fig 2 b. Least Knowledge Gained



Skills and Efficacy

Participants reported the largest gains in participating with the family during intervention visits, collaborating on family decisions about services, and adjusting and creating effective IFSP outcomes (Fig 3). Areas of practice reported to change little were providing information and support around family rights and procedural safeguards, evaluation and assessment skills for planning, and supporting transition. Participants reported effectiveness improved most in problem solving, assessing need for plan modification, skills to change strategies, increase support for family implementing strategies, and support for families who present with challenges (Fig 4). Being effective in facilitating a family's ability to support their child's development and collaborating with team members were reported to change little.

Fig 3. Change in Practice

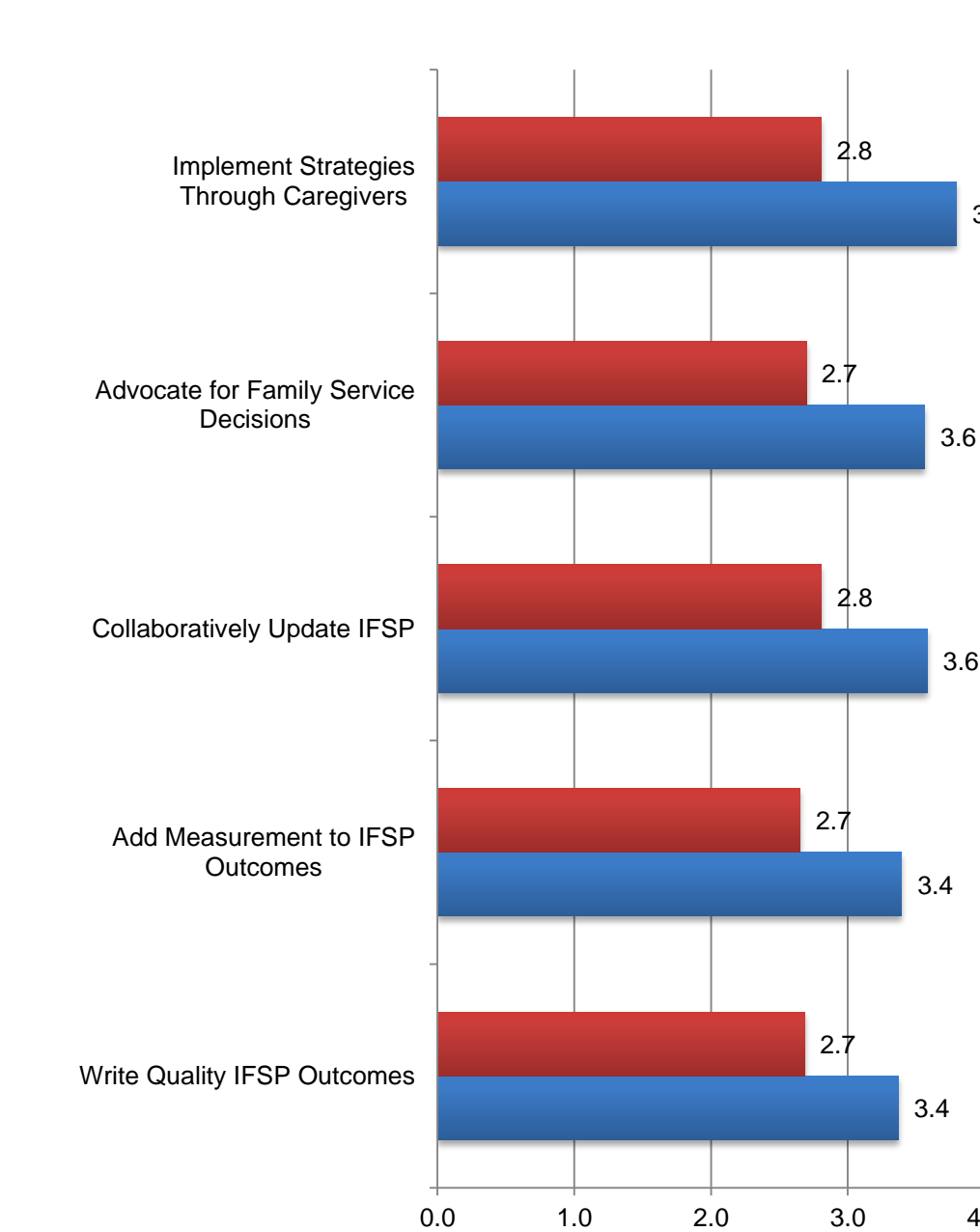
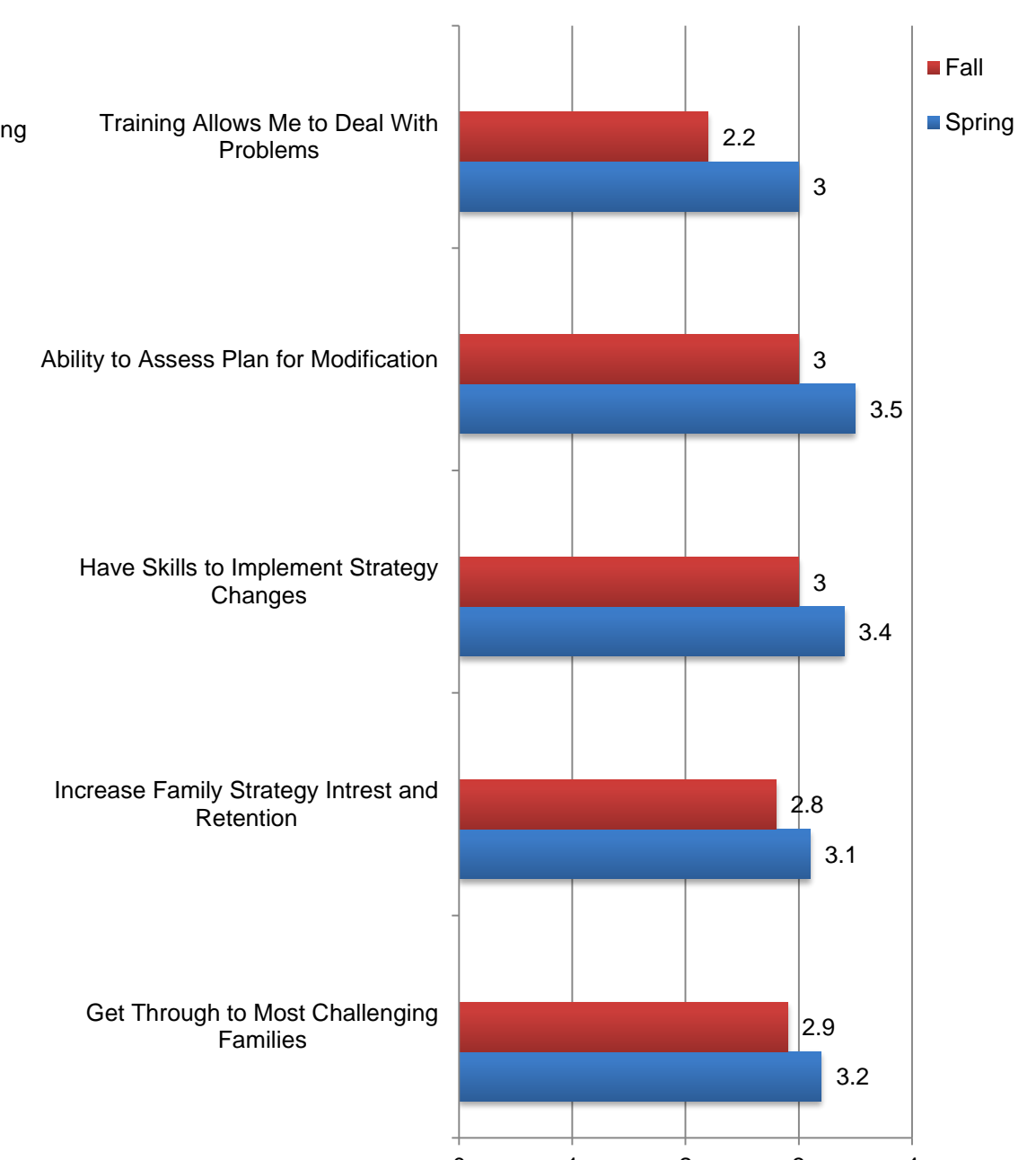


Fig 4. Self-Efficacy



LESSONS LEARNED

- GUCEI is an effective program to enhance the knowledge and skills of participants in contemporary early intervention practices
- GUCEI participants are satisfied with the program and their feedback has been incorporated into the program
- Data collection in more robust ways will help understand the impact of the program on more specific knowledge and skills

To learn more go to <https://www.learningei.org/>
or <https://scs.georgetown.edu/programs/378/certificate-in-early-intervention/>