Utilizing CrimePad® to Enhance Student Learning

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INTRODUCTION

- Forensic science is a rapidly growing field.
  - Improved practices and standards

- Traditional crime scene documentation is based on handwritten documents.

- Agencies are looking for ways to digitize their investigative data.

- Courses utilizing CrimePad®
  - FIS 302 – Crime Scene Investigation I (CSI I) -
  - FIS 335 – Forensic Photography
  - FIS 402 – Crime Scene Investigation II (CSI II)
  - FIS 409 – Bloodstain Pattern Analysis (BPA)

METHODS

- Introduce students to CrimePad®.

- Document mock crime scenes using both handwritten and CrimePad® documentation.

- Invite colleagues to attend and/or participate in exercises.

- Survey student perspective on utilizing CrimePad®.
  - Did you enjoy using CrimePad®?
  - Was CrimePad® easy to understand?
  - Is CrimePad® effective for documenting scenes?
  - Do you think CrimePad® has shortcomings?
  - Should CrimePad® be the primary method of documenting crime scenes?

RESULTS PART II

- **Advantages**
  - Browser and app-based
  - Systematic approach to documentation
  - Duplication of evidence documentation
  - Organization of all data into one location (cloud)
  - Information sharing and case review in real time

- **Disadvantages**
  - Battery life
  - Time consuming
  - Connectivity issues
  - Challenging user-interface
  - Limited photography and sketching functions

RESULTS PART II

- Forensic photography students used the browser version.
- As displayed in Figure 1, most students agreed that CrimePad® was enjoyable, easy to understand, effective, and should be used as the primary documentation method for scenes.
- At the same time, most students agreed that there were shortcomings.
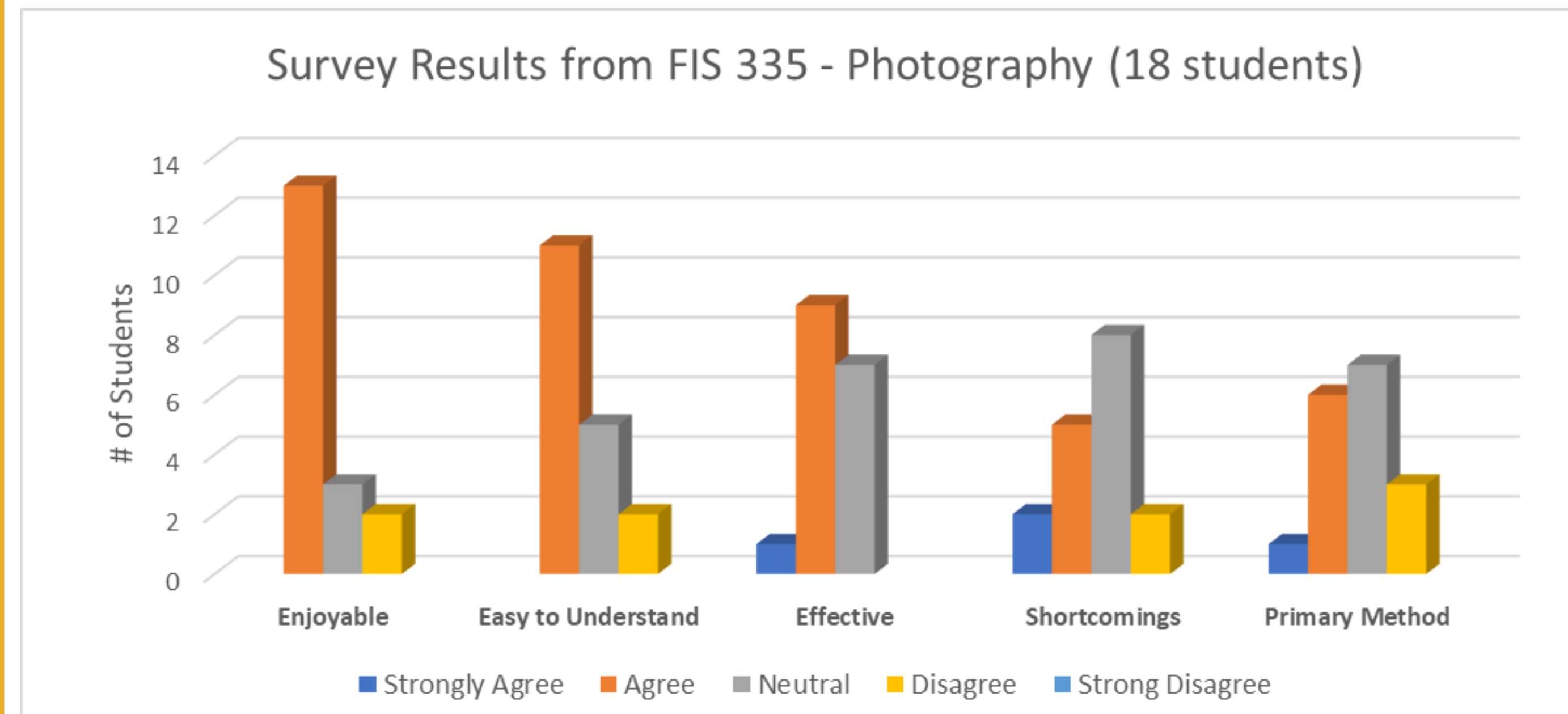
Survey Results from FIS 335 - Photography (18 students)

Figure 1: Forensic photography survey results

- CSI I students used the iPad® version.
- As shown in Figure 2, most students agreed that CrimePad® was enjoyable, easy to understand, and effective.
- Most students agreed that CrimePad® has shortcomings.
- On the other hand, most students disagreed that CrimePad® should be the primary documentation method at scenes.
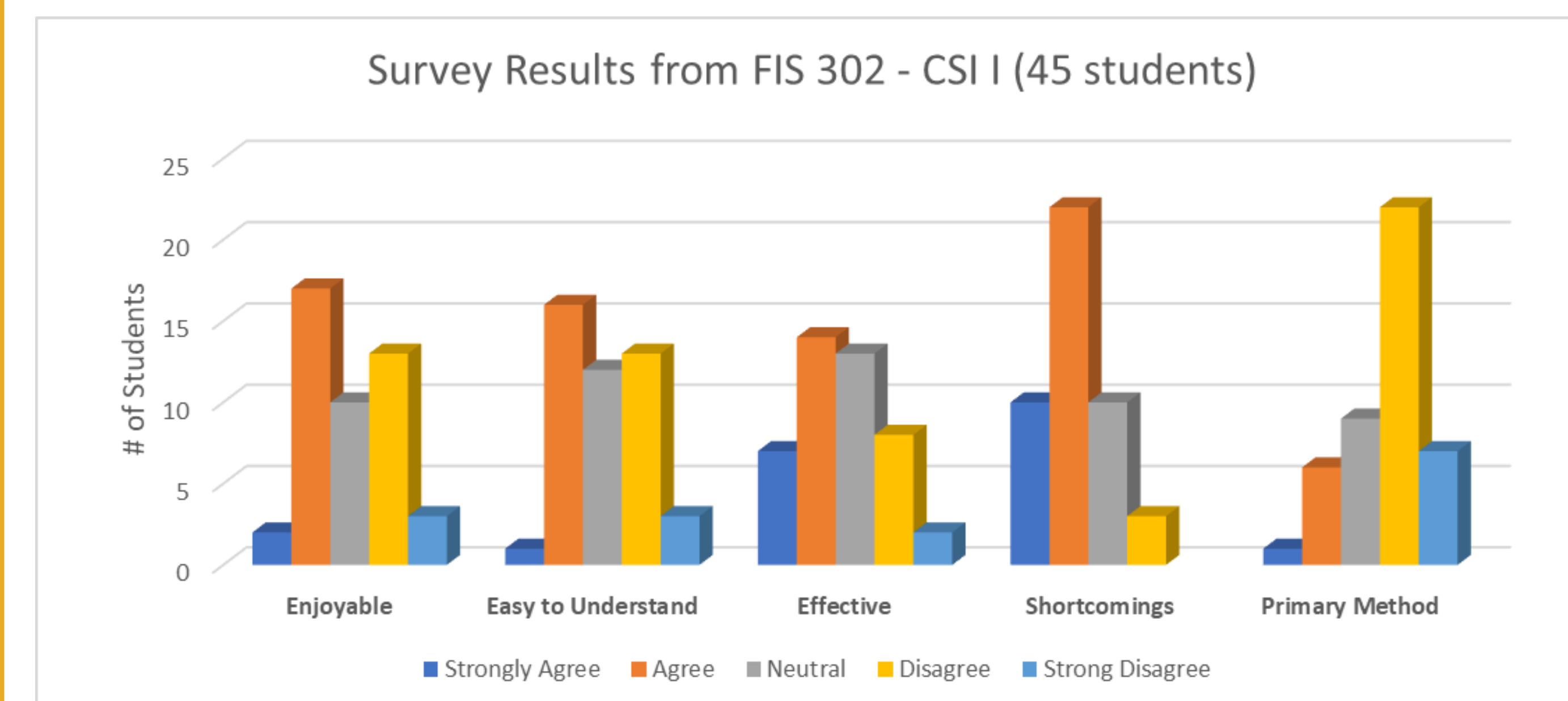
Survey Results from FIS 302 - CSI I (45 students)

Figure 2: Crime scene investigation I survey results

- CSI II students used the iPad® version.
- According to Figure 3, there was an agreement between most students that CrimePad® was enjoyable, easy to understand, effective, and should be used as the primary documentation method for scenes.
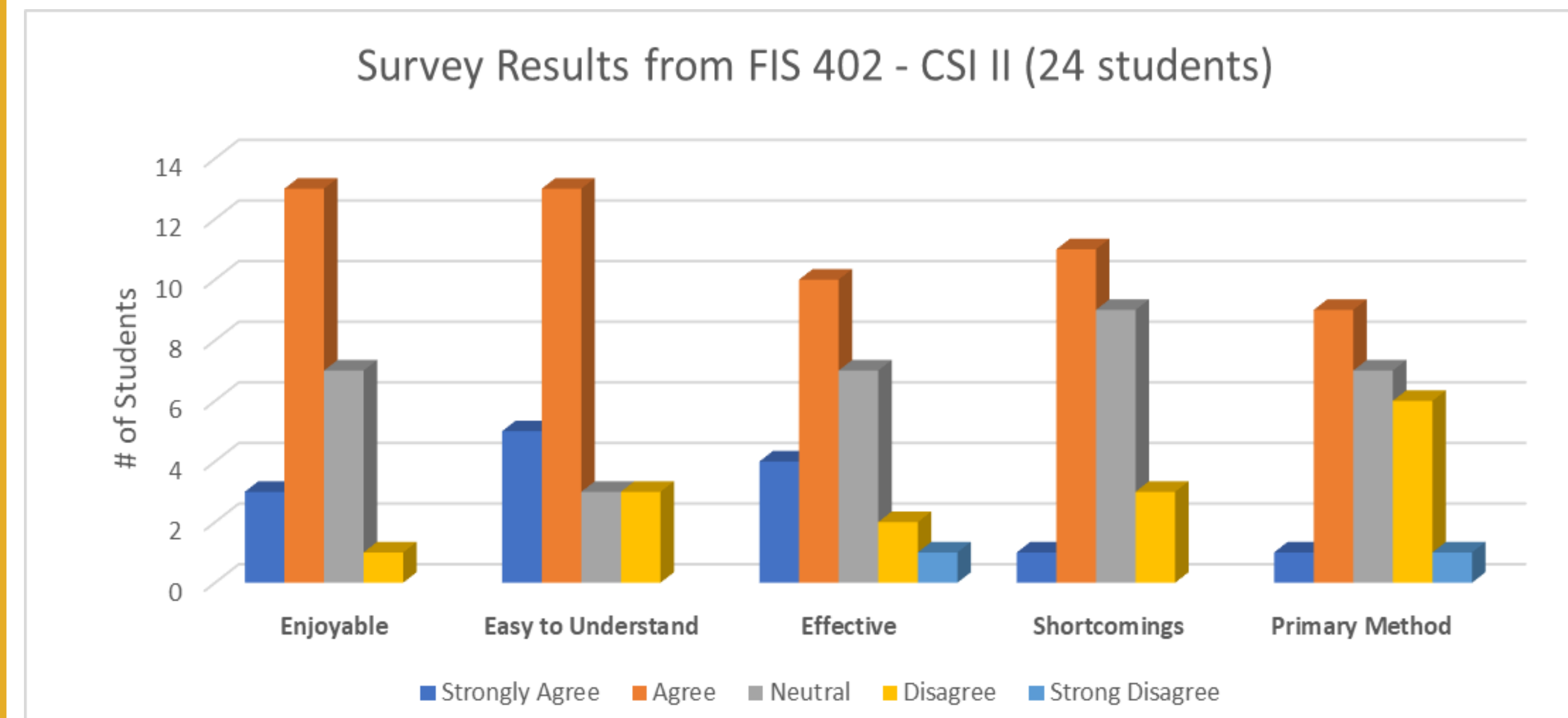- Students mostly agreed that there were shortcomings to using the CrimePad®.

Survey Results from FIS 402 - CSI II (24 students)

Figure 3: Crime scene investigation II survey results

- BPA students used the iPad® version.
- Based on Figure 4, most students disagreed that CrimePad® was enjoyable, effective, and should be used as the primary documentation method at scenes.
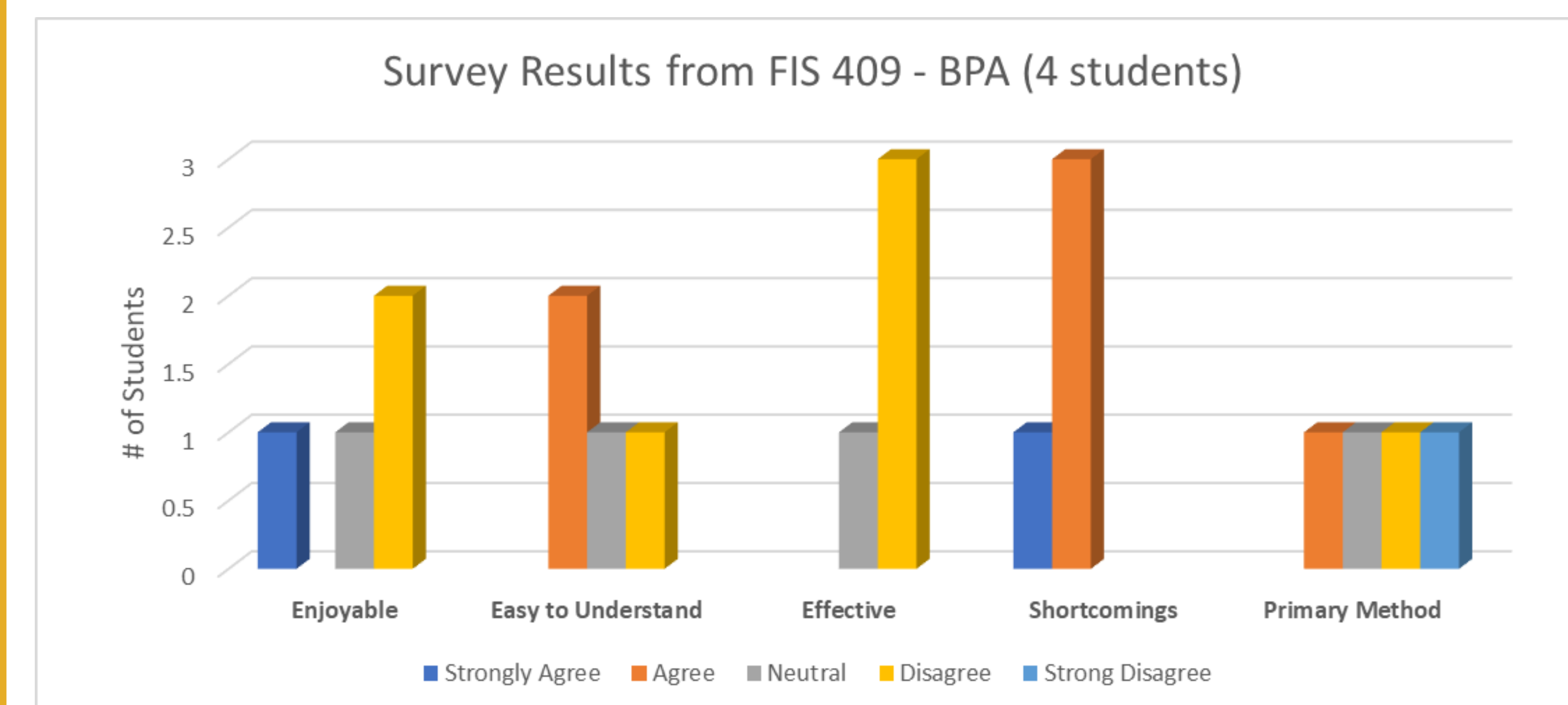- Most students agreed that CrimePad® was easy to understand and had shortcomings.

Survey Results from FIS 409 - BPA (4 students)

Figure 4: Bloodstain pattern analysis survey results
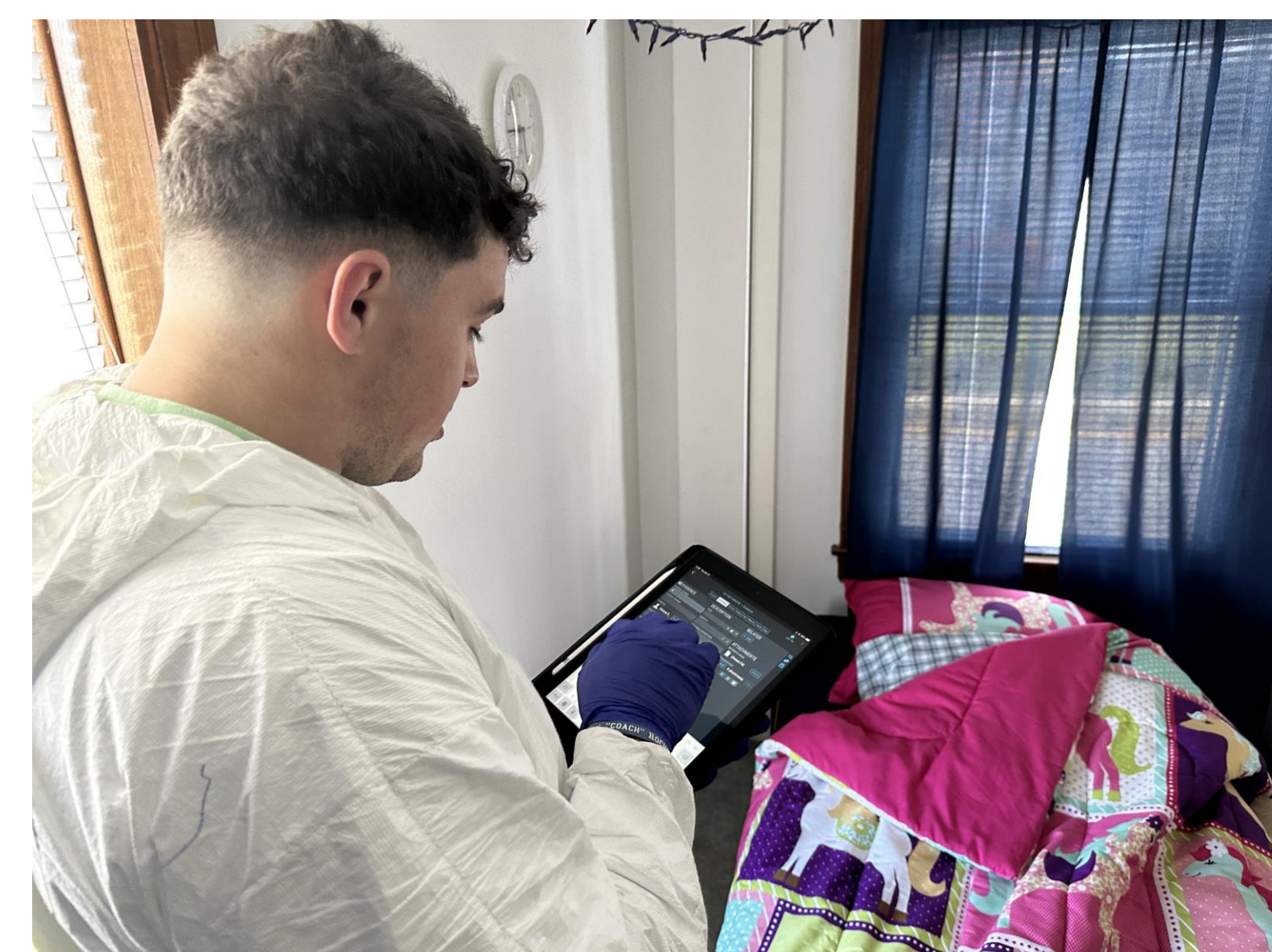
PHOTOGRAPHS

Figure 5: Student documenting evidence item A

Figure 6: Student recording a presumptive test

Figure 7: Student performing a bird's eye view sketch

DISCUSSION

- With new technology comes change.

- There is a difference between using the browser version and the iPad® version. The iPad® version requires quicker completion as there are mock scene constraints.

- No student cohort has utilized CrimePad® throughout the entirety of their major leading to varying thoughts and opinions.

- CrimePad® has a large learning curve. Students are basing their opinions on limited use.

- CrimePad® has both front-end and back-end uses.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Develop a structured plan to implement CrimePad throughout the examiner major.

- Work with Visionations, LLC. to produce workable report templates and label designs for FIS courses.

- Collaborate with agencies who are using CrimePad (e.g., Baltimore Police Department) to gather ideas on how to further enhance student learning.

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