Background

Roots of Contemporary Issues [ROOT] courses are foundational first-year experience courses for UCORE. The courses introduce students to five of WSU’s Seven Learning Goals of the Baccalaureate (Critical & Creative Thinking, Information Literacy, Communication, Diversity, and Depth, Breadth & Integration of Learning) by asking students to explore and understand the historical and global roots of various issues facing the world today.

Final Papers Assessment

The Roots of Contemporary Issues Final Papers Assessment Project is intended to provide [ROOT] faculty with information for program improvement, as well as gauge student learning on three of the WSU Learning Goals (Critical & Creative Thinking, Information Literacy, and Communication in AY 2016-17) at the first-year level. Each academic year, beginning in AY 2012-13, [ROOT] faculty evaluate a random sample of students’ final research papers from all campuses using a faculty-developed rubric. In 2018, [ROOT] faculty will expand these efforts using additional assignments as assessment artifacts. The Roots of Contemporary Issues program, in collaboration with the WSU Libraries and Office of Assessment of Teaching and Learning (ATL), coordinates the assessment, reporting and data analysis for the Roots of Contemporary Issues Final Papers Assessment Project.

Results – First-Year Students

CRITICAL and CREATIVE THINKING: Results from the AY 2016-17 Roots of Contemporary Issues Final Papers Assessment Project indicated that 99% of first-year students exceeded, met, or partially met expectations at the first-year undergraduate level for using evidence to support an argument at the end of their UCORE first-year experience course [ROOT]. Additionally, 97% exceeded, met, or partially met expectations for developing historical context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-Year CRITICAL THINKING Achievement at End of [ROOT] Course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AY 2016-17 HISTORY 105 Final Papers Assessment (156 students)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exceed expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partially meet expectations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Use of Evidence

- 11% exceed expectations
- 49% meet expectations
- 40% partially meet expectations
- 10% do not meet expectations

Historical Context

- 10% exceed expectations
- 46% meet expectations
- 41% partially meet expectations
- 3% do not meet expectations

*Includes scores from two raters for each student paper; Papers are from students with a freshman academic level in History 105 courses on the Pullman, Tri-Cities, Vancouver, and Global campuses
INFORMATION LITERACY: Results from the AY 2016-17 Roots of Contemporary Issues Final Papers Assessment Project indicated that 100% of first-year students exceeded, met, or partially met expectations at the first-year undergraduate level for selecting sources appropriate to a research paper at the end of their UCORE first-year experience course [ROOT]. Additionally, 99% exceeded, met, or partially met expectations for using a citation system that suggests they accurately referenced their evidence and 95% exceeded, met, or partially met expectations for using sources in a way that suggests they understood the relationship between the nature of the source and the kinds of conclusions they could draw from it.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION: Results from the AY 2016-17 Roots of Contemporary Issues Final Papers Assessment Project indicated that 99% of first-year students exceeded, met, or partially met expectations at the first-year undergraduate level for following written conventions at the end of their UCORE first-year experience course [ROOT]. Additionally, 98% exceeded, met, or partially met expectations for including an organizational structure and 97% exceeded, met, or partially met expectations for stating an argument.

*Includes scores from two raters for each student paper; Papers are from students with a freshman academic level in History 105 courses on the Pullman, Tri-Cities, Vancouver, and Global campuses*