

UCORE Assessment Plan, AY2021-22 – AY2026-27

UCORE Assessment | Washington State University

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Background

WSU’s general education program, known as UCORE, helps students acquire broad knowledge and transferable skills to complement their major programs of study. UCORE engages students in a well-rounded education through a curriculum designed to advance [WSU’s Seven Learning Goals of Undergraduate Education](#).

Purposes for UCORE Assessment of WSU’s Seven Learning Goals

1. **Monitor Achievement:** Determine the extent to which students are meeting expectations in the context of the UCORE curriculum and monitor results for any red flags. Periodically confirm if the basic suite of measures are meeting needs and recommend improvements. Regularly report on WSU’s Seven Learning Goals, in the context of the UCORE curriculum, for university overview and accreditation.
2. **Look More Deeply at Particular Learning Goals or Questions:** Dig deeper into particular WSU Learning Goals or questions, which may involve different or more fine-grained assessment tools and processes. The UCORE Assessment Plan alternates these assessments with a regular basic dashboard approach to monitor achievement, as described above.
3. **Use Results for Improvement:** Design and implement assessments that can be used *formatively*, to guide improvement of courses, instruction, and curricula, and also *summatively*, for accountability and accreditation. UCORE intends assessment activities to be useful to faculty and programs, and seeks to widely share results with constituents. The [UCORE Assessment website](#) supports regular communication with university stakeholders, students, and the public.

Approach to Assessment Planning for UCORE

- Collect meaningful assessment data on student learning on WSU's Seven Learning Goals of Undergraduate Education in the context of the UCORE curriculum — using a mix of direct measures, indirect measures, and other indicators — in order to recognize strengths and recommend improvements in programs, courses, curriculum, pedagogy, faculty development, policies or other decisions intended to support learning in general education courses and curriculum.
- Prioritize the value and role of faculty to assess student learning, as critical to effectively evaluate the performance of WSU students in context and in our curriculum, rather than relying on external standardized exams for direct measures of learning.
- Support and improve meaningful and sustainable assessment processes for general education curriculum, courses, instruction, and related services and support.

System and Infrastructure: Roles of UCORE Director, Committee, & Subcommittee for Assessment and the Office of Assessment for Curricular Effectiveness (ACE)

Director

Provides guidance and oversight of the UCORE general education curriculum and related achievement of WSU's Seven Learning Goals. Regularly updates both UCORE Committee and Subcommittee for Assessment on assessment results and actions. Reports periodically to the Provost and university community on undergraduate student learning assessment results and the effectiveness of the UCORE curriculum.

Committee

In concert with the Director, this faculty committee regularly reviews results of UCORE assessment of student learning on WSU's Learning Goals of Undergraduate Education; monitors and recognizes achievement; and suggests uses of assessment results to inform or influence decisions intended to enhance undergraduate student learning achievement.

Subcommittee for Assessment

In concert with the Director and ACE, this faculty committee meets monthly during the regular academic year, convening in subgroups as necessary, to:

- Advise UCORE Director and ACE – raise questions; give advice; notice gaps; inform concerns and decisions; and provide transparency – in ways that faculty reps are informed but not unnecessarily burdened.
- Respond to and confirm recommendations and actions from UCORE Director, from vantages as faculty & members of various departments, schools, colleges, with representative and unique perspectives, to ensure faculty and college leadership input on recommendations and actions.
- Serve as a working group for discrete assessment tasks (e.g., pilot measures, policies and practices, curriculum recommendations), before items go to the UCORE Committee for consideration, adoption, and/or implementation.

Office of Assessment for Curricular Effectiveness (ACE)

In coordination with the UCORE Director, ACE staff provide leadership, expertise, and administrative support for UCORE assessment, including assessment planning, data collection, analysis and reporting; development of new assessment measures; assessment subcommittee and related scheduling & support; maintaining the SharePoint archive site and the UCORE Assessment website (see [ACE mission](#)).

Key Assessments for UCORE, AY2021-22 – AY2026-27

	Measures	AY21-22	AY22-23	AY23-24	AY24-25	AY25-26	AY26-27
SENIOR-LEVEL	[CAPS] Assessment for UCORE – Direct, UCORE-level	Crit & Create Think Written Comm <i>Oral Comm¹</i> <i>Diversity¹</i>	Integrative Learn Info Literacy <i>Quant Reasoning¹</i> <i>Scientific Literacy¹</i>	Crit & Create Think Written Comm <i>Non-Writ Comm¹</i> <i>Diversity¹</i>	Integrative Learn Info Literacy <i>Quant Reasoning¹</i> <i>Scientific Literacy¹</i>	Crit & Create Think Written Comm <i>Non-Writ Comm¹</i> <i>Diversity¹</i>	Integrative Learn Info Literacy <i>Quant Reasoning¹</i> <i>Scientific Literacy¹</i>
	[CAPS] Supplemental Assessments – Indirect, UCORE-level	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W
	National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) – Indirect, institution-level		Crit & Create Think Quant Reasoning Written Comm Non-Writ Comm Diversity Integrative Learn <i>Info Literacy²</i>		Crit & Create Think Quant Reasoning Written Comm Non-Writ Comm Diversity Integrative Learn <i>Info Literacy²</i>		Crit & Create Think Quant Reasoning Written Comm Non-Writ Comm Diversity Integrative Learn <i>Info Literacy²</i>
FIRST YEAR-LEVEL	[ROOT] Assessment – Direct, program-level	<i>(in transition)</i>	[ROOT] pilot	Written Comm Info Literacy	Critical Thinking Diversity Integrative Learn	Written Comm Info Literacy	Critical Thinking Diversity Integrative Learn
	National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) – Indirect, institution-level		Crit & Create Think Quant Reasoning Written Comm Non-Writ Comm Diversity Integrative Learn <i>Info Literacy²</i>		Crit & Create Think Quant Reasoning Written Comm Non-Writ Comm Diversity Integrative Learn <i>Info Literacy²</i>		Crit & Create Think Quant Reasoning Written Comm Non-Writ Comm Diversity Integrative Learn <i>Info Literacy²</i>
Other “Dashboard” Assessments (e.g., other UCORE designations, % C-/D/F/W, enrollments)		[BSCI] [PSCI] pilot	[BSCI] [PSCI] pilot	Possible pilot	Possible pilot	Possible pilot	Possible pilot
		Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W
Special Topics, as needed (e.g., equity gaps, specific learning goal / question, mid-level students)		Equity Gaps in Course Grades		Equity Gaps in Course Grades		Equity Gaps in Course Grades	
UCORE ASSESSMENT SUMMARIES:			Biennial Summary of Achievement		Biennial Summary of Achievement		Biennial Summary of Achievement

¹Quantitative Reasoning, Scientific Literacy, Diversity, and Non-written Communication are optional in [CAPS] courses, depending on the student project, discipline, and course

²NSSE questions mapped to Information Literacy are not part of the standard NSSE instrument and are only administered as part of certain optional topical modules

Additional Resources

- [WSU's Seven Learning Goals of Undergraduate Education](#)
- [Map of UCORE Requirement Areas as they Advance WSU's Learning Goals](#)
- [UCORE Assessment Summaries of Student Achievement](#)
- [UCORE Assessment website](#)
- [UCORE website](#)

Appendix: Key Assessments for UCORE, 2016 – AY2020-21

	Measures	2016	2017	AY17-18	AY18-19	AY19-20 ³	AY20-21 ³
SENIOR-LEVEL	[CAPS] Asmt for UCORE – Direct, UCORE-level	*Crit & Create Think *Info Literacy *Depth, Breadth, & Integrative Learn *Communication	Crit & Create Think Info Literacy Depth, Breadth, & Integrative Learn *Written Comm *Oral Comm ¹ *Quant Reasoning ¹ *Scientific Literacy ¹ *Diversity ¹	Crit & Create Think Info Literacy Depth, Breadth, & Integrative Learn Written Comm Oral Comm ¹ Quant Reasoning ¹ Scientific Literacy ¹ Diversity ¹	*Crit & Create Think *Info Literacy *Integrative Learn *Written Comm *Oral Comm ¹ *Quant Reasoning ¹ *Scientific Literacy ¹ *Diversity ¹	*NEW CAPS ROTATING FORMAT: Crit & Create Think Written Comm Oral Comm ¹ Diversity ¹	*NEW CAPS ROTATING FORMAT: Info Literacy Integrative Learn Quant Reasoning ¹ Scientific Literacy ¹
	[CAPS] Supplemental Asmts – Indirect, UCORE-level	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W	Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W
	National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) – Indirect, institution-level	*Crit & Create Think *Quant Reasoning *Written Comm *Oral Comm *Diversity *Integrative Learn *Info Literacy ²	Crit & Create Think Quant Reasoning Written Comm Oral Comm Diversity Integrative Learn		Crit & Create Think Quant Reasoning Written Comm Oral Comm Diversity Integrative Learn Info Literacy ²		Crit & Create Think Quant Reasoning Written Comm Oral Comm Diversity Integrative Learn
FIRST YEAR-LEVEL	[ROOT] Final Papers Asmt – Direct, program-level	Critical Thinking Info Literacy Diversity	Critical Thinking Info Literacy *Written Comm		Info Literacy *Integrative Learn		Critical Thinking Info Literacy Written Comm Integrative Learn
	[ROOT] Diversity & Inequality Papers Asmt – Direct, program-level			*Written Comm *Diversity		Written Comm Diversity	
	National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) – Indirect, institution-level	*Crit & Create Think *Quant Reasoning *Written Comm *Oral Comm *Diversity *Integrative Learn *Info Literacy ²	Crit & Create Think Quant Reasoning Written Comm Oral Comm Diversity Integrative Learn		Crit & Create Think Quant Reasoning Written Comm Oral Comm Diversity Integrative Learn Info Literacy ²		Crit & Create Think Quant Reasoning Written Comm Oral Comm Diversity Integrative Learn
Other “Dashboard” Assessments					Enrollments; % C-/D/F/W		
Special Topics			Equity Gaps in Course Grades	Equity Gaps in Course Grades		Equity Gaps in Course Grades	
UCORE ASSESSMENT SUMMARIES:		2016 Summary of Achievement	2017 Summary of Achievement		Biennial Summary of Achievement		Biennial Summary of Achievement

*Indicates pilot/testing or revising of measure for this learning goal

¹Quantitative Reasoning, Scientific Literacy, Diversity, and Oral Communication are optional in [CAPS] courses, depending on the student project, discipline, and course

²NSSE questions mapped to Information Literacy are not part of the standard NSSE instrument and are only administered as part of certain optional topical modules

³For the spring 2020 semester, WSU made the emergency move to distance education beginning March 23rd as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. For the fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters, undergraduate courses at WSU were delivered at a distance and completed remotely, with extremely limited exceptions for in-person instruction.