

AY 2017-18 Summary of Key Evidence for UCORE: Focus on First-Year Students Roots of Contemporary Issues Diversity Assessment Project

Background

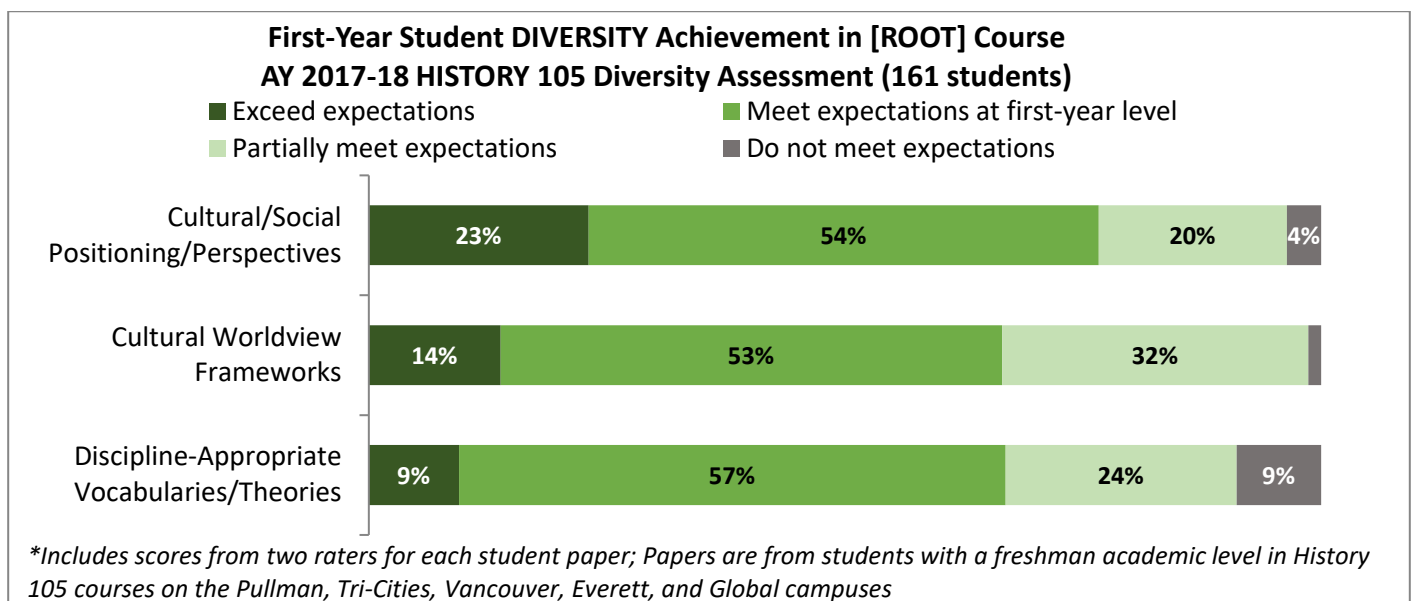
Roots of Contemporary Issues [ROOT] courses are foundational first-year experience courses for UCORE. The courses introduce students to five of WSU’s Seven Learning Goals of the Baccalaureate by asking students to explore and understand the historical and global roots of various issues facing the world today.

Diversity Assessment Project

In AY 2017-18, the Roots of Contemporary Issues program completed an assessment of 2-3 page response papers that explicitly ask students to address themes of inequality and diverse ways of thinking. In summer 2018, [ROOT] faculty evaluated a random sample of these papers from all campuses using a faculty-developed rubric. AY 2017-18 was the first time that the program assessed these papers for two WSU learning goals specifically, Diversity and Communication, with the goals of providing [ROOT] faculty with information for program improvement, as well as gauging student learning on these two WSU Learning Goals at the first-year level. One challenge in measuring the Diversity learning goal, is that Diversity can refer to students’ ability to identify social differences (based on gender, race, ethnicity, wealth, etc.) or students’ ability to understand diverse perspectives and worldviews that develop as a result of differences (i.e., understanding diverse ways of thinking). Because the [ROOT] courses intentionally address these different ways of understanding Diversity in discrete lesson plans, they are in a position to collect information on this learning goal at the first year level. The Roots of Contemporary Issues program, in collaboration with the WSU Libraries and Office of Assessment of Teaching and Learning (ATL), coordinated the assessment, reporting and data analysis for this [ROOT] Diversity Assessment Project.

Results – First-Year Students

DIVERSITY: Results from the AY 2017-18 Roots of Contemporary Issues Diversity Assessment Project indicated that **77%** of first-year students met or exceeded expectations at the first-year undergraduate level for *demonstrating an understanding of cultural/social positioning/perspectives* in their UCORE first-year experience course [ROOT]. Additionally, **66%** met or exceeded expectations for *demonstrating understanding of cultural worldview frameworks* and **67%** met or exceeded expectations for *using discipline-appropriate vocabularies/concepts*.



WRITTEN COMMUNICATION: Results from the AY 2017-18 Roots of Contemporary Issues Diversity Assessment Project indicated that **71%** of first-year students met or exceeded expectations at the first-year undergraduate level for *stating an argument* in their UCORE first-year experience course [ROOT]. Additionally, **72%** met or exceeded expectations for *including an organizational structure* and **88%** met or exceeded expectations for *following written conventions*.

