

Summary of Key Evidence for UCORE: AY24-25 [ROOT] Assessment

UCORE Assessment | Washington State University

Background

Roots of Contemporary Issues [ROOT] courses, commonly known as History 105 / 305, are foundational first-year experience courses for UCORE, WSU's general education curriculum. The courses provide a common intellectual foundation for college learning, upon which students build for the remainder of their undergraduate careers and as they navigate and shape an ever-changing world within and beyond the university. [ROOT] courses advance designator student learning outcomes aligned with five of the WSU Undergraduate Learning Goals (Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, Written Communication, Diversity, and Integrative Learning) by asking students to use historical approaches, sources, and modes of communication to understand the world around them. Incoming first-year students take History 105 to satisfy [ROOT], while HISTORY 305 is intended for transfer students that need to fulfill the [ROOT] requirement.

Methods and Responses

Roots of Contemporary Issues [ROOT] Assessment is intended to provide [ROOT] faculty with information for program improvement, gauge student learning on [ROOT] designator learning outcomes for UCORE general education assessment, and provide evidence of UCORE's contribution towards advancing the WSU Undergraduate Learning Goals. In fall 2024 and spring 2025, [ROOT] instructors completed an assessment report form to provide an evaluation of student achievement of two [ROOT] designator learning outcomes in their course (direct measure, using faculty expert judgement). For AY24-25, the [ROOT] assessment report form focused on two designator learning outcomes (Information Literacy and Written Communication).

Thirty-seven [ROOT] instructors participated in the AY24-25 assessment, representing **93%** of [ROOT] instructors and roughly **96%** of students completing [ROOT] courses in fall 2024 and spring 2025. Of the 4,168 [ROOT] students assessed in fall 2024 and spring 2025, roughly 94% were completing History 105 and 6% were completing History 305.

Note: From AY21-22 – AY23-24, [ROOT] faculty worked to develop, test, and pilot this new process for direct assessment. [ROOT] Assessment previously included the Final Papers Assessment (aligned with Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, and Integrative Learning) and the Diversity & Inequality Papers Assessment (aligned with Diversity and Written Communication), see the [UCORE Assessment website](#) for more information.

Achievement of [ROOT] Designator Learning Outcomes

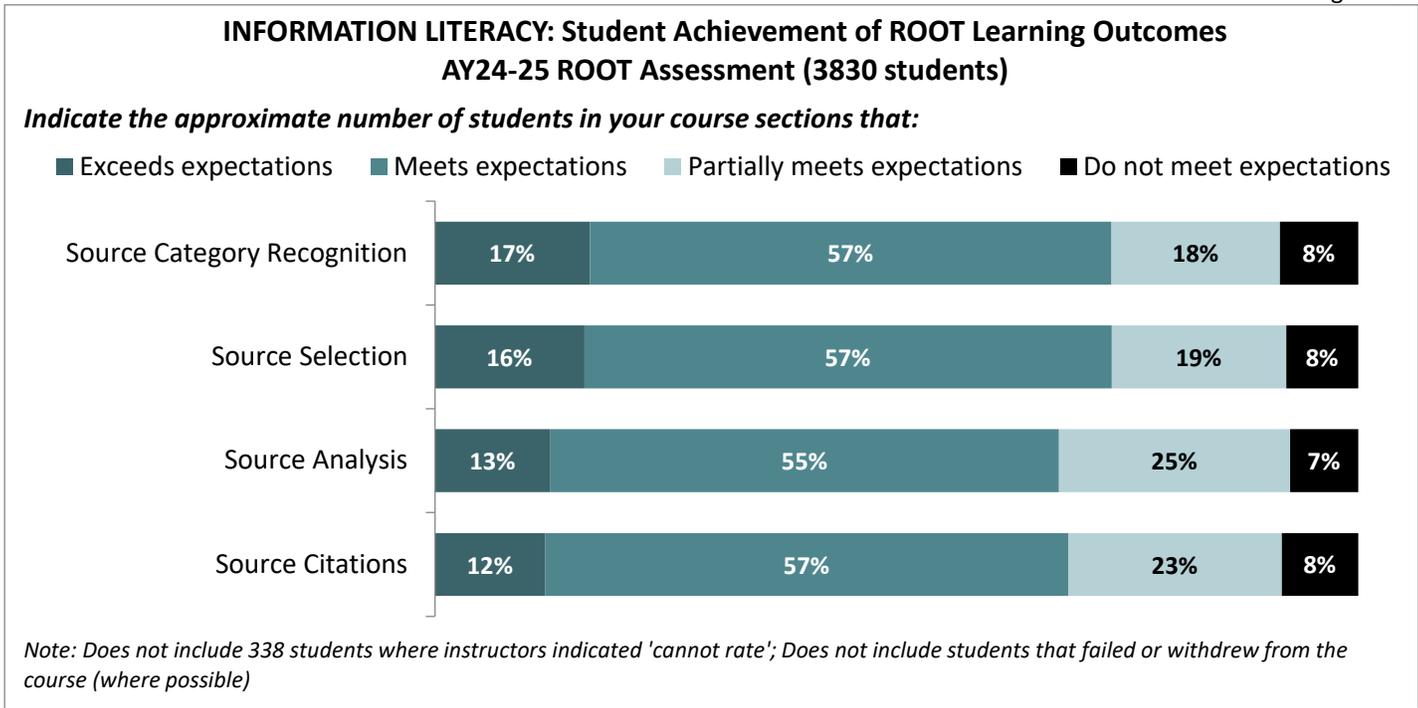
Instructors rated students on their performance on criteria for two [ROOT] designator learning outcomes, providing evaluation as appropriate to their course and its assignments.

INFORMATION LITERACY Achievement. Students, regardless of major, who successfully complete a [ROOT] course (History 105/305) should be able to **use appropriate evidence from primary and secondary sources to answer historical questions**. Students meeting expectations on this outcome:

- recognize differences between primary and secondary source categories, and among genres of sources;
- select appropriate sources to answer questions and support claims;
- demonstrate a working awareness of the relationship between the nature of sources and the conclusions that can be drawn from them; and
- use traceable citation methods to demonstrate the ethical need to cite sources.

AY24-25 [ROOT] instructors indicated that, on average, **71%** of students met or exceeded expectations on the designator learning outcome performance criteria associated with **Information Literacy**. See *Figure 1*.

Figure 1



WRITTEN COMMUNICATION Achievement. Students, regardless of major, who successfully complete a [ROOT] course (History 105/305) should be able to communicate historical ideas and evidence in written forms with intentionality, clarity, accuracy, and organization. Students meeting expectations on this outcome:

- organize ideas and evidence in clear ways;
- follow written conventions; and
- tailor decisions about style, tone, media, and delivery to the intended audience.

AY24-25 [ROOT] instructors indicated that, on average, **81%** of students met or exceeded expectations on the designator learning outcome performance criteria associated with **Written Communication**. See *Figure 2*.

Figure 2

