

Summary of Key Evidence for UCORE: AY25-26 [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 2025 and spring 2026, [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 AY25-26, the [ROOT] assessment report form focused on two designator learning outcomes (Diversity and Written Communication).

Thirty-nine [ROOT] instructors participated in the AY25-26 assessment, representing **98%** of [ROOT] instructors and roughly **98%** of students completing [ROOT] courses in fall 2025 and spring 2026. Of the 4,771 [ROOT] students assessed in fall 2025 and spring 2026, roughly 92% were completing History 105 and 8% 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

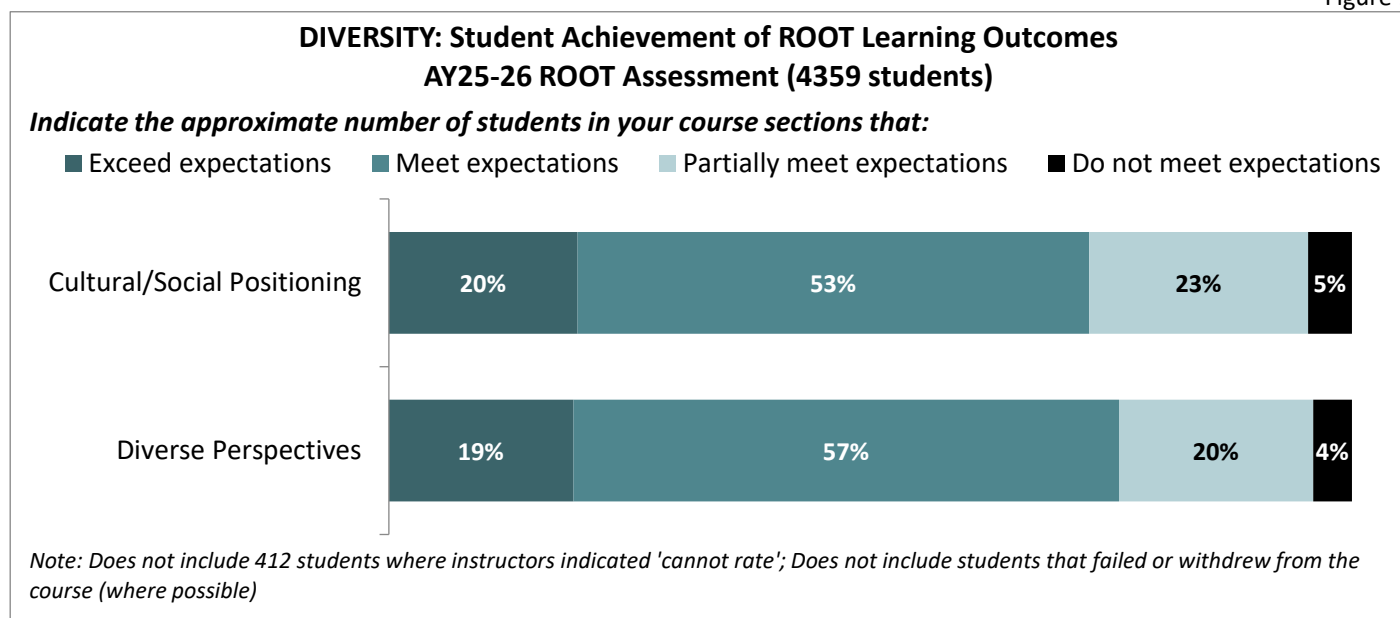
Instructors rated students on their performance on criteria for two [ROOT] designator learning outcomes, providing evaluation as appropriate to their course and its assignments.

DIVERSITY Achievement. Students, regardless of major, who successfully complete a [ROOT] course (History 105/305) should be able to use historical approaches and evidence to understand the diversity of the human experience across time and space. Students meeting expectations on this outcome:

- explain how structures of power and privilege are created and perpetuated; and
- identify points of historical connection and departure among diverse perspectives.

AY25-26 [ROOT] instructors indicated that, on average, **74%** of students met or exceeded expectations on the designator learning outcome performance criteria associated with **Diversity**. 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.

AY25-26 [ROOT] instructors indicated that, on average, **80%** of students met or exceeded expectations on the designator learning outcome performance criteria associated with **Written Communication**. See Figure 2.

Figure 2

