Assessing your Core Course

This guide is meant to help you as you assess your Core course by providing simple instructions about what to do, and when. For more information on the Core see: [http://uca.edu/core/](http://uca.edu/core/)

1) If your course is in the Core, what area is it designated as? (Communication, Critical Inquiry, Diversity, Responsible Living, Capstone? Is it an FYS?)
   a. What rubric(s) is it using in that (those) area(s)?
   b. Rubrics can be found here: [http://uca.edu/core/assessment/](http://uca.edu/core/assessment/)

2) Once you know what rubric(s) you’re using, consider assignments. What assignments do you currently use that seem to assess the same outcomes addressed in the rubric(s)? Something you do in your course should line up with the rubric(s) since your course is supposed to fit in this (these) area(s). Ideally you’d be able to use the same assignment as both a gradable component of your class and as an assessment assignment.

3) Now you’re ready to assess. Give your assessment assignment no earlier than the 8th week of class.

4) Score your assessment assignment. (After you’ve graded your assignment for class, go back and think about it as it relates to the rubric(s) you’re assessing for.)
   a. Scores range from 0-4 and reflect degrees of mastery. These rubrics are used in LD Core and UD Core courses, they are given to students as freshmen, throughout their college careers, and as seniors. The rubric is meant to capture progress with respect to the outcomes, to give us a longitudinal view of our students and see how they are progressing in these competency areas.
   b. Scoring them, therefore, needs to reflect our expectations. For example, I teach Contemporary Moral Problems, which is a responsible living course. It is also often an FYS. This course is meant for students with no expertise in the area, who are fresh to college or at least this topic/theme. So I don’t expect students to get a 4 on the assessment tool. They aren’t expected to be experts; they are expected to be beginning to develop these skills. My expectations on assignments reflect this. An “A” in my Contemporary Moral Problems class isn’t the same or doesn’t reflect the same level of expertise as an “A” in my upper level Applied Ethics course, which is also a Responsible Living course and uses the same rubric I use in Contemporary Moral Problems. I think we all teach this way. We expect different from freshmen as we do from upper level students and majors. The rubrics reflect this in their scoring. Expectations for freshmen in my LD Core course is basic, they will probably score 1s and 2s, even when the assignment grade is an “A” or a “B,” because what I expect even from an “excellent” freshmen is not total mastery of the area. But students in my upper level applied ethics will be expected to be more prepared and demonstrate a greater degree of expertise in this area; I can expect them to get 3s and 4s. An “A” in my 4000 level class is probably a 4, but a “C” may still be a 3, since an average student whose expected to be an expert will outperform an excellent freshmen who is only expected to have basic knowledge.
Consider how much better at Math (in general) a “C” student in Differential Equations is than an “A” student in Quantitative Literacy. This is the same type of thing.

c. Ideally, as we collect data we’ll see if our juniors and seniors, our UD Core courses are producing students who are scoring higher than lower level students. This would demonstrate progress, assuming constancy in application of the assessment tool and interrater reliability between instructors (which is the point of calibration and the on-line training.)

5) Report your results electronically in your data collection sheet. (Instructions are included in the on-line training as well as on the data collection sheet itself.)
   a. Instructions for filling out the data sheets, and the data sheets themselves are located here: http://uca.edu/core/assessment/

6) Submit electronically your data collection sheets to your department’s core liaison. Your liaison needs to have all your department’s data sheets collected and turned in no later than the day grades are due, so please be considerate of this deadline and submit your sheets in a timely manner.

7) You’re done!

8) Liaisons then upload the collection sheets to the Google site under the appropriate heading.