



UNIVERSITY OF
CENTRAL
ARKANSAS

2016-2017 UCA Core Assessment
Evaluative Brief Prepared by the Office of Assessment

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Executive Summary

This brief outlines the UCA Core assessment of the Responsible Living outcome for the 2016-2017 academic year. It contains a brief context, sample information, results of the assessment, and recommendations. This brief is intended to inform the UCA Core Council's decisions related to continuous improvement of the UCA Core program.

Artifacts, or copies of student work, were collected during the 2016-2017 academic year from faculty who were teaching courses aligned to the Responsible Living outcome. The artifacts were uploaded by the Office of Assessment into Aqua by Taskstream, an assessment software. A team of evaluators was developed from the list of faculty teaching courses aligned to Responsible Living. This team was calibrated, then scored student work. Evaluations took place August 14th-17th, and each member of the scoring team was remunerated at \$250 per day.

The assessment results demonstrate growth in both Responsible Living rubrics by student classification level (e.g., freshman, sophomore) and course level (i.e., lower division, upper division). The growth between student classification year over year and course level performance (e.g., upper division, lower division) were both lower than expected. The lowest scoring rubric row was Rubric A, Row 3 aligning to Ethical Application. Several artifacts were marked as "N/A," illustrating a misaligned assignment to the respective rubric. Overall, there was a high level of inter-rater reliability.

It is recommended that the UCA Core Council considers the following:

- Explore assignment design training for UCA Core faculty.
- Explore curriculum scaffolding of the UCA Core.
- Work with faculty to ensure the assignment being chosen is the best representation of skill achievement for their assigned rubric.
- Continue to work with faculty and department chairs to ensure all course sections are submitting for UCA Core assessment.

Introduction

Context

In Spring of 2017, the UCA Core Council approved a new approach to assessing the UCA Core curriculum. The full proposal is available on the UCA Core website¹.

Purpose of this Brief

This brief provides documentation of institutional-level assessment of the UCA Core and recommendations made by the Office of Assessment to the UCA Core Council for potential improvement actions. The UCA Core contributes to meeting Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation criteria 3B (1-2)².

“HLC Criteria 3B: The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

(1) The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.

(2) The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develop skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.”

¹ *The full proposal is available here: <http://uca.edu/core/files/2013/07/UCA-Core-Proposal-.pdf>*

² *HLC Criteria 3B (1-2) can be viewed here: <http://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/criteria-and-core-components.html>*

Review Process

Evaluations for the artifacts collected during the 2016-2017 academic year from courses aligned to the Responsible Living rubrics took place August 14th – 17th, 2017. The evaluation team included:

- Rubric A (Ethics)
 - Donna Bowman, Honors College, Professor
 - Jacob Held, College of Liberal Arts, Associate Professor, Director of UCA Core
 - Vamsi Paruchuri, College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Associate Professor
- Rubric B (Wellbeing)
 - Michael Casey, College of Business, Professor
 - Rebekah Luong, College of Health and Behavioral Science, Instructor
 - Terri Rine, College of Health and Behavioral Science, Adjunct Faculty

The evaluation team, less Dr. Held as Director of UCA Core, was remunerated at \$250 per day for three days. Evaluations were hosted in Aqua by Taskstream housed in the Office of Assessment.

A full standard explanation, assessment plan, and assessment report can be viewed online³.

³ *The full standard set, assessment plan, and assessment report is available here:*
<https://www.taskstream.com/ts/uca/core/UCACoreAssessmentPlan&Handbook>

Artifacts

Fall 2016 assessment of UCA Core was completed in Blackboard by faculty via the rubric function. A fall snapshot was provided to the UCA Core Council in the spring of 2017. The faculty participation rate in Blackboard was documented as **67%**, however lacked calibration and had the potential for blanket scoring.

In spring of 2017, the Office of Assessment collected artifacts from faculty for the evaluation of the UCA Core Responsible Living learning outcome. Faculty who taught in this outcome during the 2016-2017 academic year completed a survey that provided their course syllabus, assignment instructions, and how the artifacts would be provided to the Office of Assessment.

For the 2016-2017 academic year, there were 2,501 student artifacts for evaluation against the UCA Core Responsible Living rubrics. The population included both Fall and Spring, however given the approval process did not occur until spring of 2017, faculty participation for the Fall semester was optional. The artifacts for spring 2017 accounted for a **77.25%** participation rate⁴.

	Scored	Not Scored	Total
Overall	1290	1211	2501
Rubric A	549	180	729
Rubric B	741	1031	1772

Overall, 51% of the total artifacts submitted were scored, including 75.31% of Rubric A and 41.82% of Rubric B. The variance in evaluation rates is attributed to the participation of Dr. Jacob Held as an evaluator. The original team consisted of two Rubric A evaluators and three Rubric B evaluators because of the sample distribution. Dr. Held’s addition to the Rubric A team allowed them to score more quickly than the Rubric B team.

Throughout the evaluation process, interrater reliability was monitored to ensure reliability of the evaluations being completed. There was a 42% joint probability of agreement with a 0.734 bias and 0.85 limit of agreement. In other words, 42% of the evaluations that were scored by two evaluators had identical scores, and, overall, the evaluators scored less than one point apart.

⁴ *The spring 2017 participation rate was calculated as potentially assessed population headcount against total population headcount.*

Sample Demographics

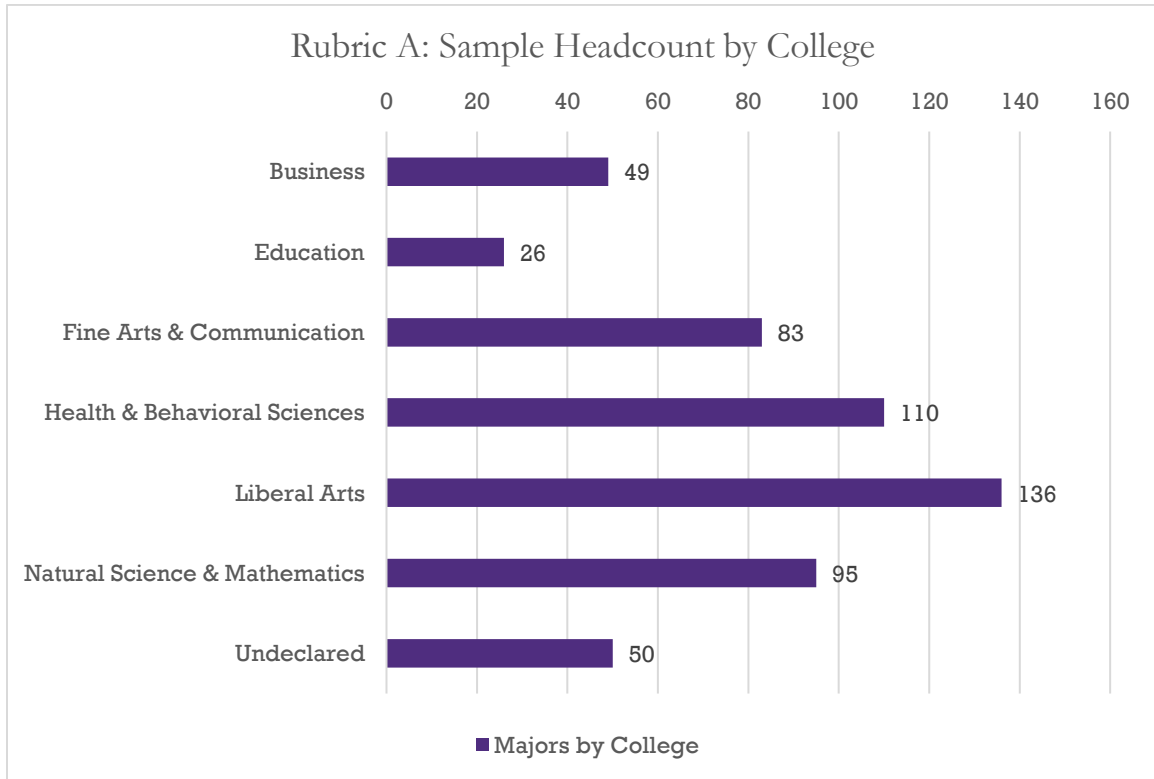
	Rubric A			Rubric B			Total		Overall
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Freshman	14	25	39	42	51	93	56	76	132
Sophomore	47	133	180	65	134	199	112	267	379
Junior	59	92	151	60	127	187	119	219	338
Senior	66	111	177	65	186	251	131	297	428
Post-Bacc	1	1	2	5	6	11	6	7	13
Total	187	362	549	237	504	741	424	866	1290

Responsible Living Rubric A: Ethics

Rubric A: Population by Race and Gender

	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic	Hispanic Latino	Non-Resident Alien	Two or more races	White
Freshman – Male	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	10
Freshman – Female	0	1	10	0	2	0	1	11
Sophomore – Male	1	2	3	0	4	1	2	34
Sophomore – Female	0	7	22	3	6	1	8	86
Junior – Male	0	1	7	0	5	2	3	41
Junior – Female	2	3	12	0	5	4	2	64
Senior – Male	0	1	9	1	2	2	2	49
Senior – Female	0	0	22	0	2	6	6	75
Post-bacc – Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Post-bacc - Female	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	3	15	85	4	28	17	25	372

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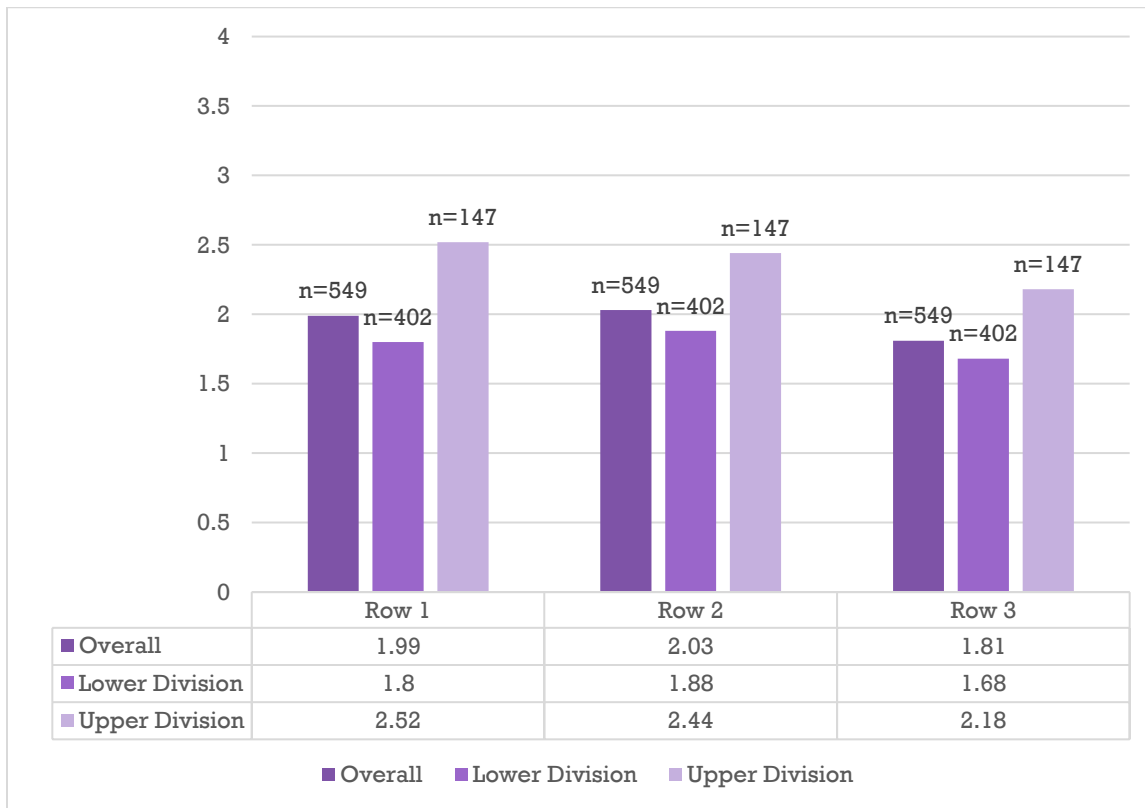


The chart labeled Rubric A: Population by Race and Gender disaggregates the total sample within this rubric. The disaggregated race proportions were compared to the institutional Diversity Ledger for Fall 2016⁵. Overall, the representation of all races was proportional with the biggest difference between the Diversity Ledger and the sample being 2.8%.

Gender distribution was also compared between the Diversity Ledger and the sample. There were 6.64% more female participants in the sample when compared to the Diversity Ledger.

⁵ Diversity Ledger available at: <http://uca.edu/ir/facts-and-figures/diversity-ledger/>

Rubric A: Overall

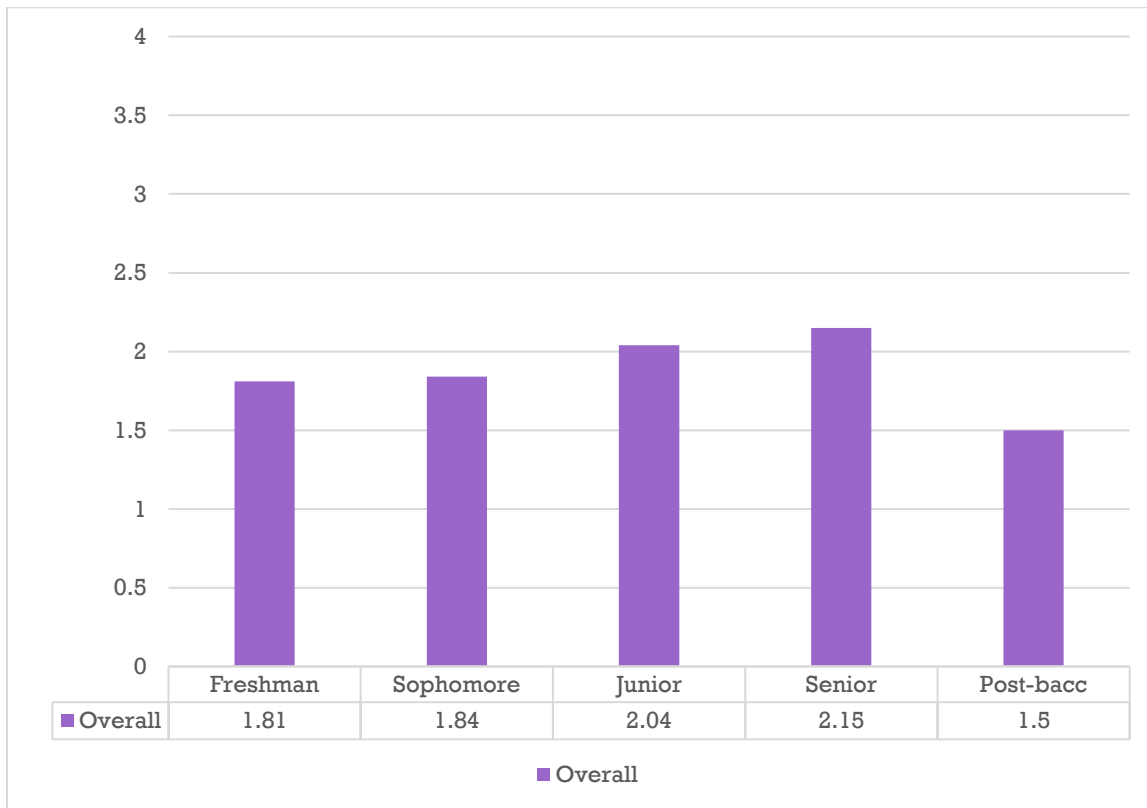


Rubric A: Overall Standard Deviations

	Row 1	Row 2	Row 3
Overall	0.87	0.82	0.79
Lower Division	0.74	0.76	0.71
Upper Division	0.97	0.82	0.86

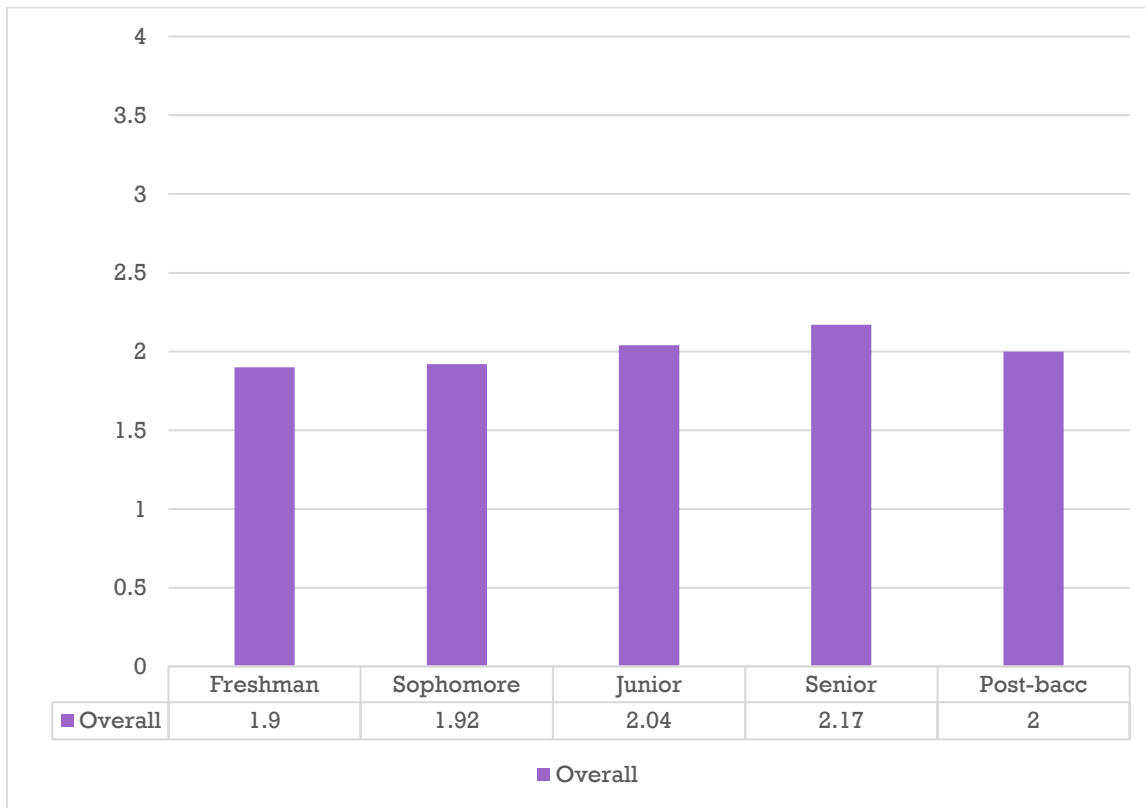
Overall, the scores for Rubric A averaged toward the middle of the potential scores. For Rubric A, there was a noticeable difference between lower and upper division courses. Lower division courses scored in an expected range, however the upper division scores were lower than expected (e.g., lower division scores should be between 1 and 2, and upper division scores should be between 3 and 4).

Rubric A Row 1: Ethical Awareness



In Rubric A Row 1: Ethical Awareness, there is a visible positive trend from the Freshman to Senior classification levels. This suggests improvement of student performance year over year. However, the overall performance increases less than expected from Freshman to Senior classification (e.g., Freshmen score 1’s, Sophomores score 2’s, etc.).

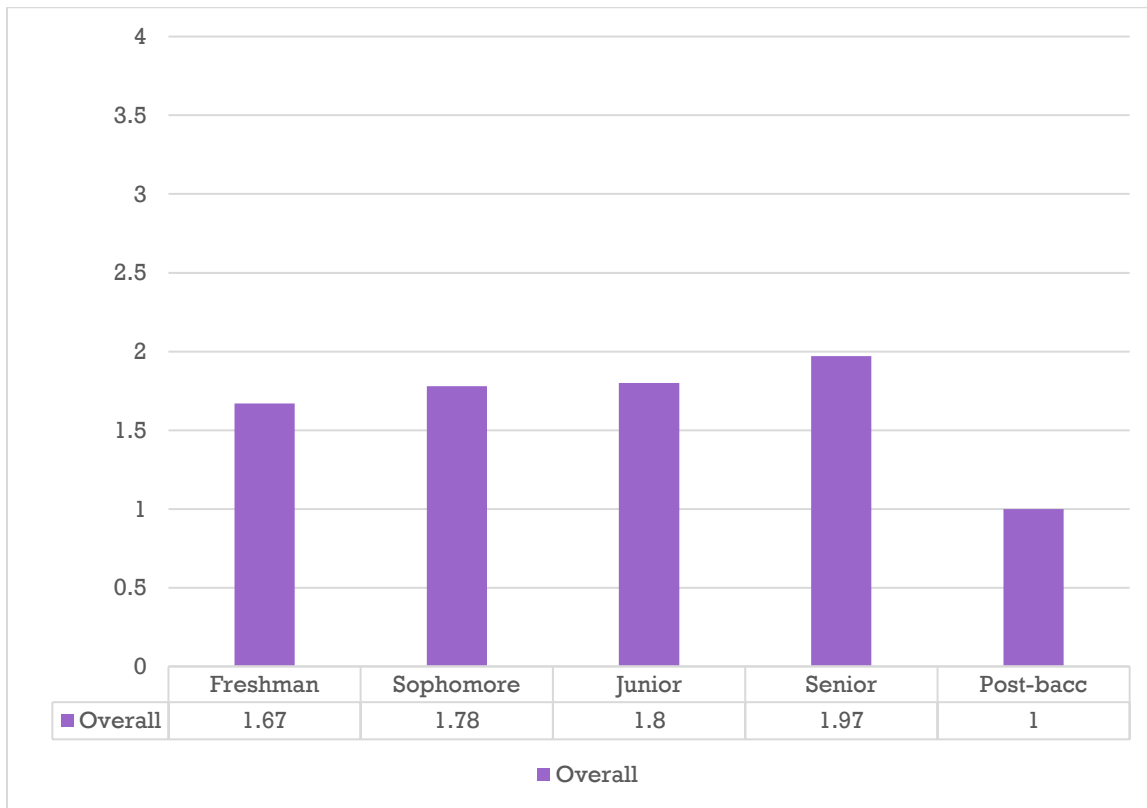
Rubric A Row 2: Ethical Issue Recognition



** Post- baccalaureate female received a score of N/A for the artifact measuring this rubric row.*

In Rubric A Row 2: Ethical Issue Recognition, there is a visible positive trend from the Freshman to Senior classification levels. This suggests improvement of student performance year over year. However, the overall performance increases less than expected from Freshman to Senior classification (e.g., Freshmen score 1’s, Sophomores score 2’s, etc.). No females were scored in the Post-baccalaureate classification.

Rubric A Row 3: Ethical Application



** No females were evaluated in the post- baccalaureate classification for this rubric row.*

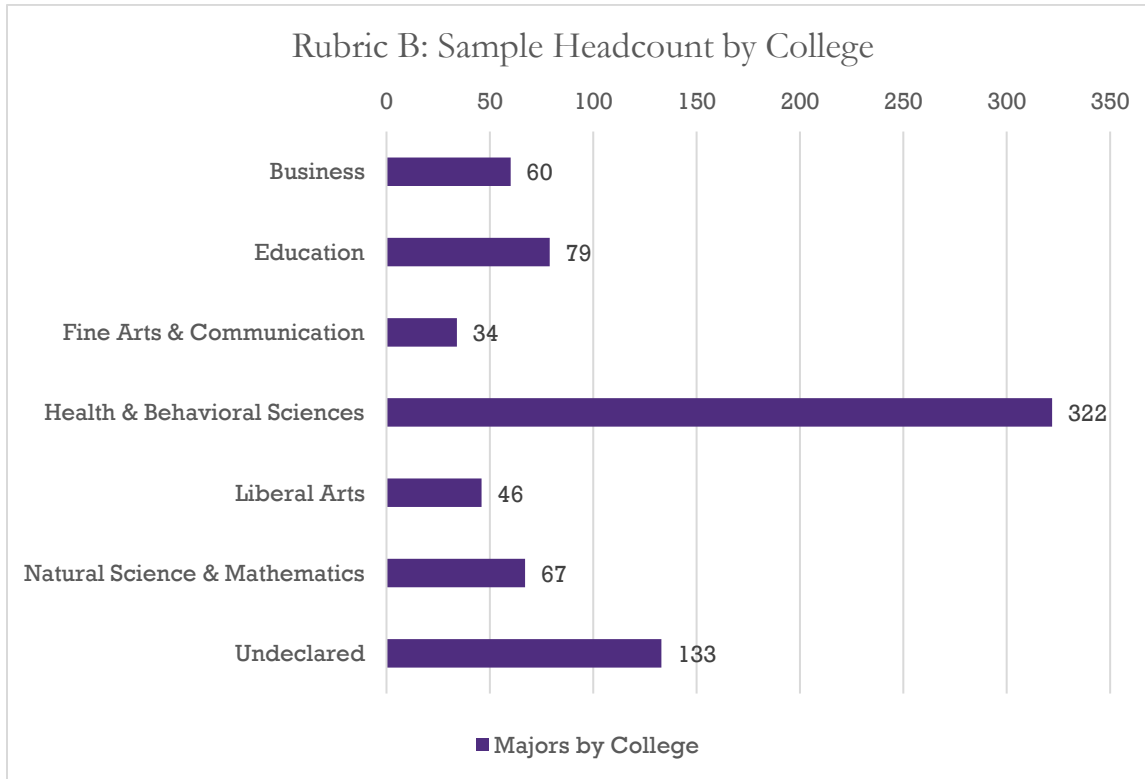
In Rubric A Row 3: Ethical Application, there is a visible positive trend from the Freshman to Senior classification levels. This suggests improvement of student performance year over year. However, the overall performance increases less than expected from Freshman to Senior classification (e.g., Freshmen score 1’s, Sophomores score 2’s, etc.). No females were scored in the Post-baccalaureate classification. Furthermore, Rubric A Row 3 was the overall lowest performing row during the 2016-2017 evaluation period for this rubric.

Responsible Living Rubric B: Wellbeing

Rubric B: Population by Race and Gender

	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic	Hispanic Latino	Non-Resident Alien	Two or more races	White
Freshman – Male	0	2	9	0	1	7	0	23
Freshman – Female	0	3	13	0	2	4	3	26
Sophomore – Male	1	1	12	0	3	4	3	41
Sophomore – Female	1	7	18	0	6	1	5	96
Junior – Male	0	3	11	0	4	1	2	39
Junior – Female	1	3	27	0	6	3	2	85
Senior – Male	1	2	9	0	2	4	2	45
Senior – Female	1	1	26	0	8	4	5	141
Post-bacc – Male	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4
Post-bacc - Female	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	3
Total	5	23	126	0	32	28	24	503

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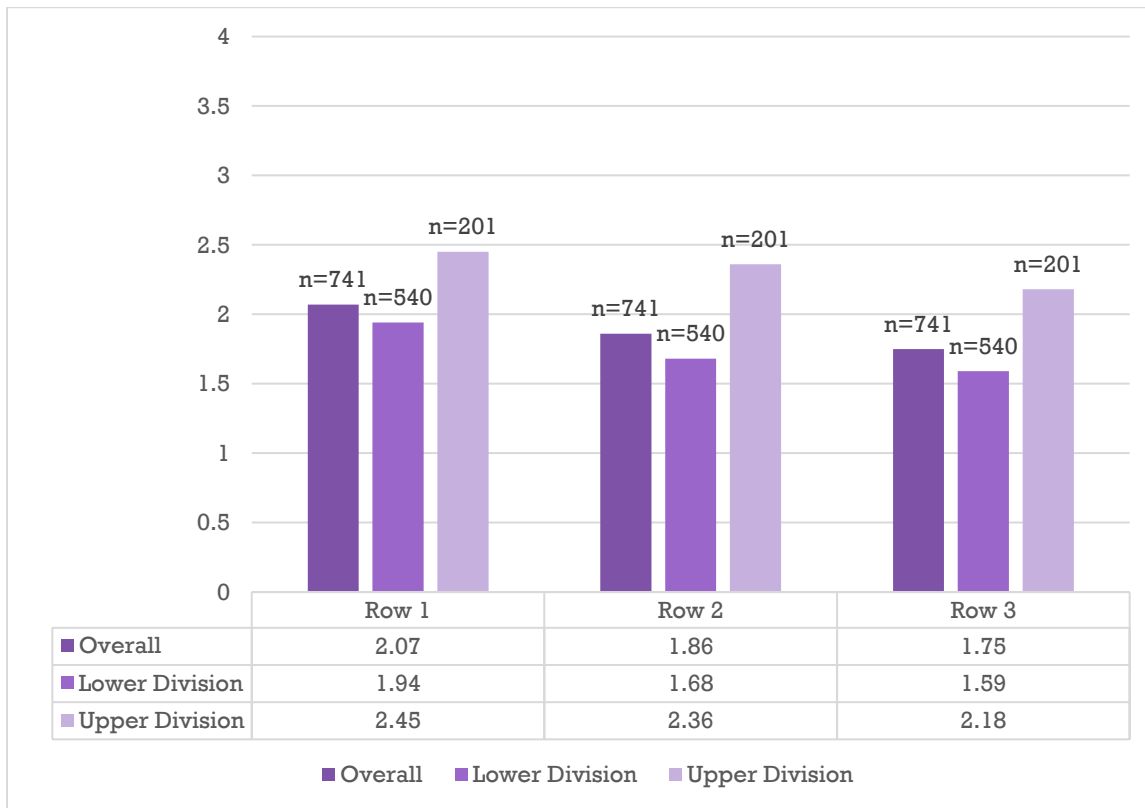


The table labeled Rubric B: Population by Race and Gender disaggregates the total sample within this rubric. The disaggregated race proportions were compared to the institutional Diversity Ledger for Fall 2016⁶. Overall, the representation of all races was proportional with the greatest difference between the Diversity Ledger and the sample being 1.52%.

Gender distribution was also compared between the Diversity Ledger and the sample. There was an 8.72% increase between female participants in the sample and the Diversity Ledger.

⁶ *Diversity Ledger available at: <http://uca.edu/ir/facts-and-figures/diversity-ledger/>*

Rubric B: Overall

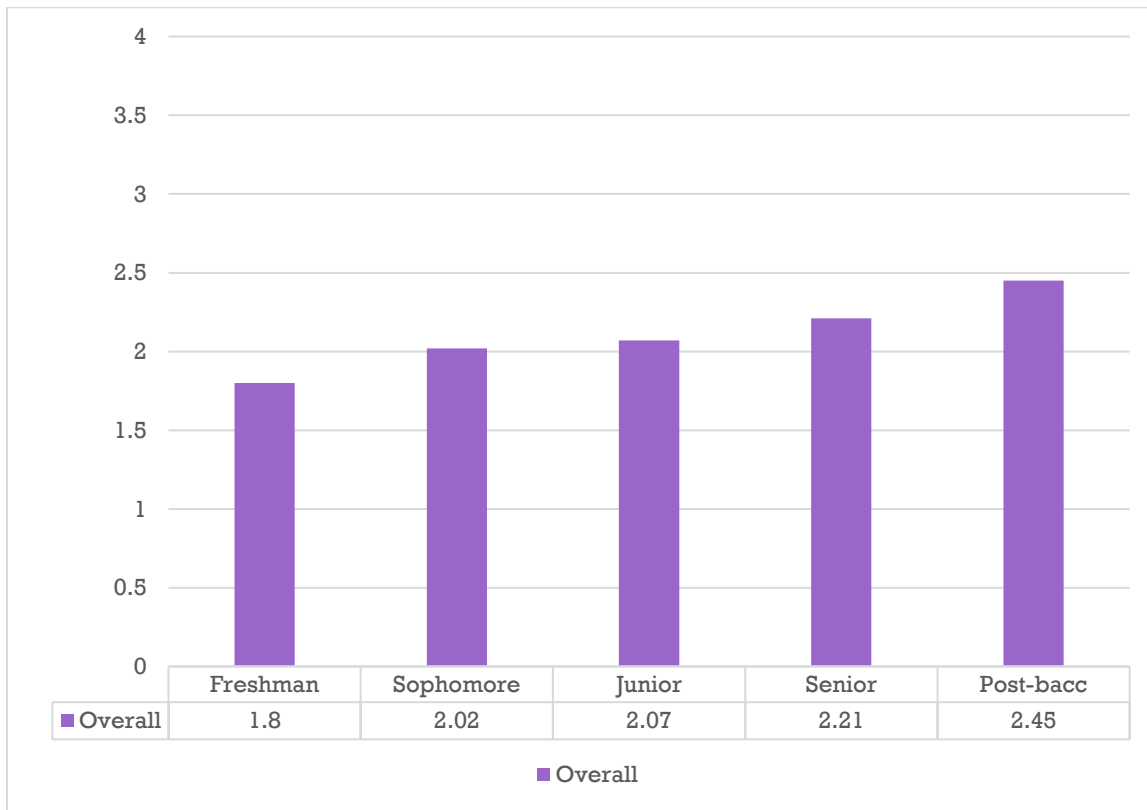


Rubric B: Overall Standard Deviations

	Row 1	Row 2	Row 3
Overall	0.83	0.82	0.84
Lower Division	0.75	0.70	0.73
Upper Division	0.92	0.91	0.96

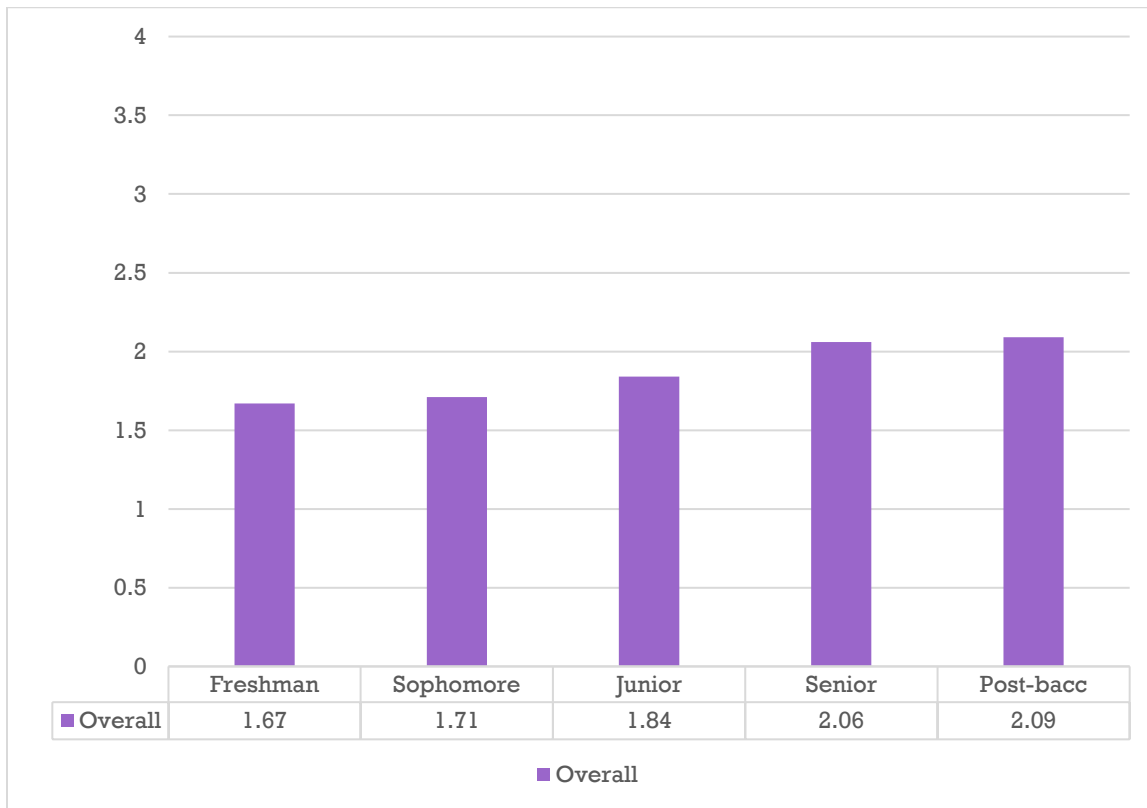
Overall, the scores for Rubric B averaged toward the middle of the potential scores. For Rubric B, there was a noticeable difference between lower and upper division courses. Lower division courses scored in an expected range, however the upper division scores were lower than expected (e.g., lower division scores should be between 1 and 2, and upper division scores should be between 3 and 4). It should also be noted that the sample skewed toward the Senior student classification, which could also impact overall scores.

Rubric B Row 1: Issue Recognition



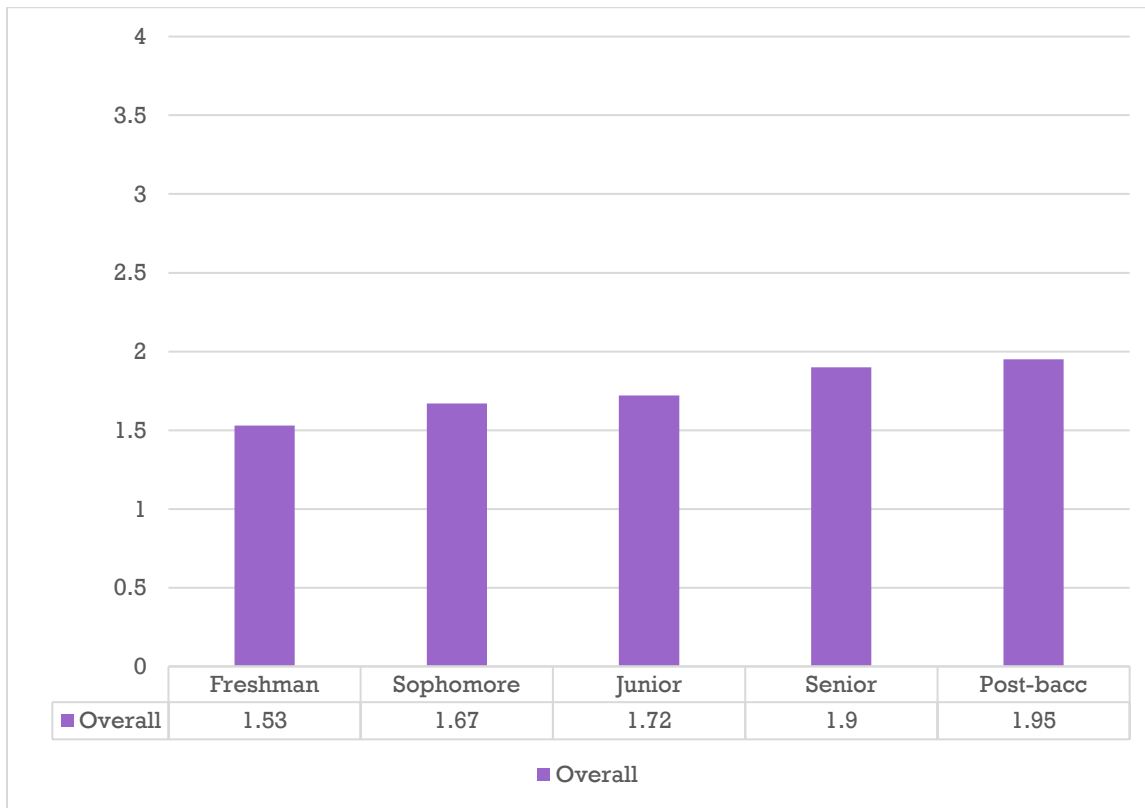
In Rubric B Row 1: Issue Recognition, there is a visible positive trend from the Freshman to Senior classification levels. This suggests improvement of student performance year over year. However, the overall performance increases less than expected from Freshman to Senior classification (e.g., Freshmen score 1’s, Sophomores score 2’s, etc.).

Rubric B Row 2: Analysis of Knowledge



In Rubric B Row 2: Analysis of Knowledge, there is a visible positive trend from the Freshman to Senior classification levels. This suggests improvement of student performance year over year. However, the overall performance increases less than expected from Freshman to Senior classification (e.g., Freshmen score 1’s, Sophomores score 2’s, etc.).

Rubric B Row 3: Impact of Decisions



In Rubric B Row 3: Impact of Decisions, there is a visible positive trend from the Freshman to Senior classification levels. This suggests improvement of student performance year over year. However, the overall performance increases less than expected from Freshman to Senior classification (e.g., Freshmen score 1’s, Sophomores score 2’s, etc.). Furthermore, Rubric B Row 3 was the overall lowest performing row during the 2016-2017 evaluation period for this rubric.

Considerations and Recommendations

The 2016-2017 implementation of the UCA Core assessment plan was a scaled-down model of the full process. Considering the reduced size of the project, the process demonstrated a strong ability to provide reliable data that is both calibrated and generalizable.

The final results of the 2016-2017 UCA Core assessment process opens the door for conversations in many areas. The considerations and recommendations as presented to the UCA Core Council by the Office of Assessment, include, but are not limited to:

1. Scores did not advance based on student classification as expected (e.g., lower division scores should be between 1 and 2, and upper division scores should be between 3 and 4). This inconsistency can potentially be linked back to assignment design.
 - a. Recommendation: Explore assignment design training for UCA Core faculty.
 - b. Recommendation: Explore curriculum scaffolding of the UCA Core.
2. There were several artifacts marked as “N/A” by evaluators for not meeting one or more rows of the rubrics. For Rubric A, Row 1 had 25, Row 2 had 29, and Row 3 had 43 “N/A” scores. Rubric B had 40 “N/A” scores in Row 1.
 - a. Recommendation: Work with faculty to ensure the assignment being chosen is the best representation of skill achievement for their assigned rubric.
3. Participation for Spring 2017 was 77.25%. For a first-time implementation, this is an excellent response rate, however it could be brought up in future semesters.
 - a. Recommendation: Continue to work with faculty and department chairs to ensure all course sections are submitting for UCA Core assessment.