

# College Senior Survey Analysis: Spring 2007

## GENERAL EDUCATION

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Working Report No. 3

**Presented by**

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## Purpose

The fundamental goal of the College Senior Survey (CSS) analysis is to ensure that findings are disseminated and discussed among different constituencies and stakeholders to generate action recommendations and to enhance the University of La Verne experience for future generations of our students. This report summarizes major findings related to **general education**: Writing, critical thinking, information literacy, and interdisciplinary perspectives.

## Procedure

In Spring 2007, all seniors taking their 499 or 495 senior project courses were asked to complete the College Senior Survey, developed and processed by Higher Education Research Institute (HERI). The survey asked students about their views on their academic experience at the University of La Verne, their lives on and off campus, and their future plans. A total of 309 seniors (52.4%) responded to the survey. Among them, 111 respondents reported that they started in the University of La Verne as main campus freshmen, 43 as main campus transfers, 59 as CAPA students, and 31 as RCA transfers.

Four self-identified student groups are used for internal comparisons: Student who entered University of La Verne as (a) main campus freshman (MC-Fresh), (b) main campus transfers (MC-Trans), (c) CAPA (College Accelerated Program for Adults) students, and (d) RCA (Regional Campus Administration) students (RCA). For external comparisons, the overall results of all private four-year colleges and universities that participated in CSS are used. However, for the questions and items designed by the University of La Verne, external comparisons are not available.

## Findings

The following graphs summarize the findings with observations that highlight the salient elements for attention and discussion.

### Note:

**The other reports** of the CSS analyses focus on:

**No.1, Offices & departments:** It divides key findings from the survey by responsible offices and departments.

**No.2, Missions & Values:** Seniors' responses partially demonstrate the extent to which the University of La Verne has fulfilled the various elements stated in the university mission.

**No.4, Bragging rights and major concerns:** To highlight some university strengths and alert the community about areas of weakness.

**No.5, WASC EER (Educational Effective Review) objectives:** The responses can be used to partially demonstrate to WASC that how well the University of La Verne has achieved the mission and the stated learning outcomes, how we have assessed how well we have done, and how we have used what we learned to improve our teaching and services.

*(Should you have any questions, please contact Yingxia Cao, Director of Institutional Research, at [ycao@ulv.edu](mailto:ycao@ulv.edu) or 909-5933511 ext. 4235).*

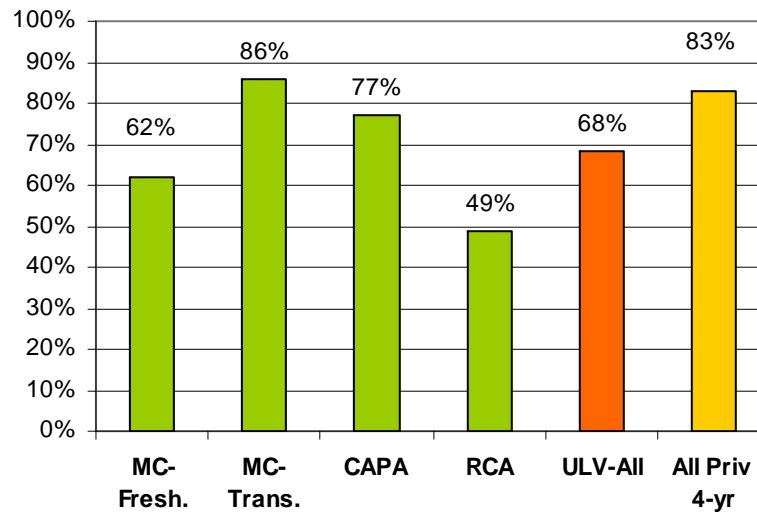
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### Overall Satisfaction

- Overall, 68% of the University of La Verne seniors were satisfied or very satisfied with the general education courses provided by the University, which was 15% fewer when compared with the seniors from other private four-year colleges and universities.
- Among the four groups of the University of La Verne seniors, RCA group and main campus entering freshman group had fewer percentages of seniors who were satisfied or very satisfied.

**Satisfaction with General Education or Core Curriculum Courses (Satisfied/Very Satisfied)**

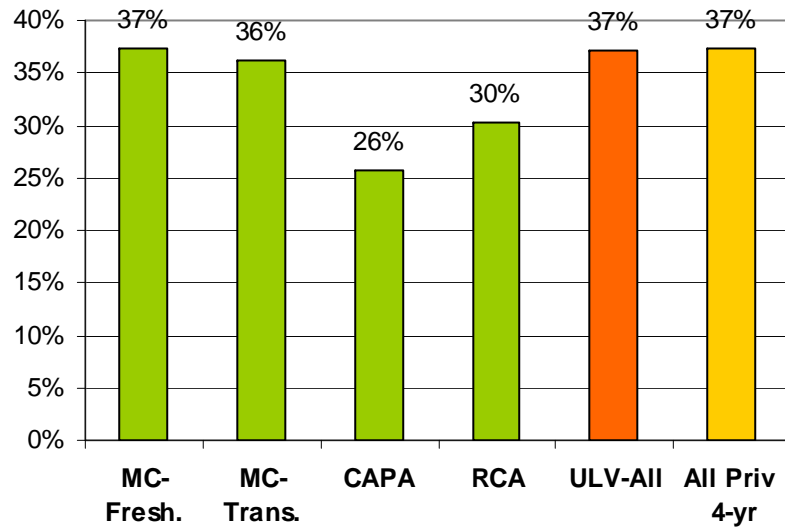


## Writing

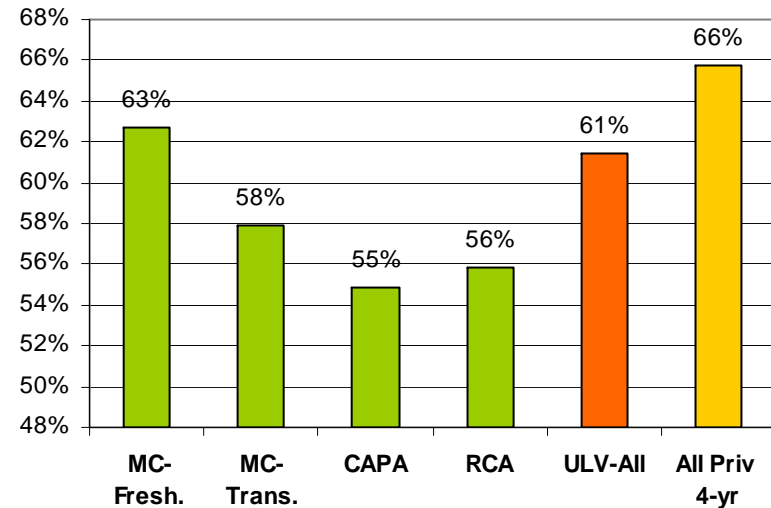
### Writing Skills and Ability

- 37% of the University of La Verne seniors reported that their writing skills had become much stronger, compared with when they first entered the University.
- 61% of the University of La Verne seniors believed that their writing abilities were among the highest 10% or above average as compared with the average person their age, which was 5% fewer than the seniors from other private four-year colleges and universities.

Writing skills (change in, much stronger)



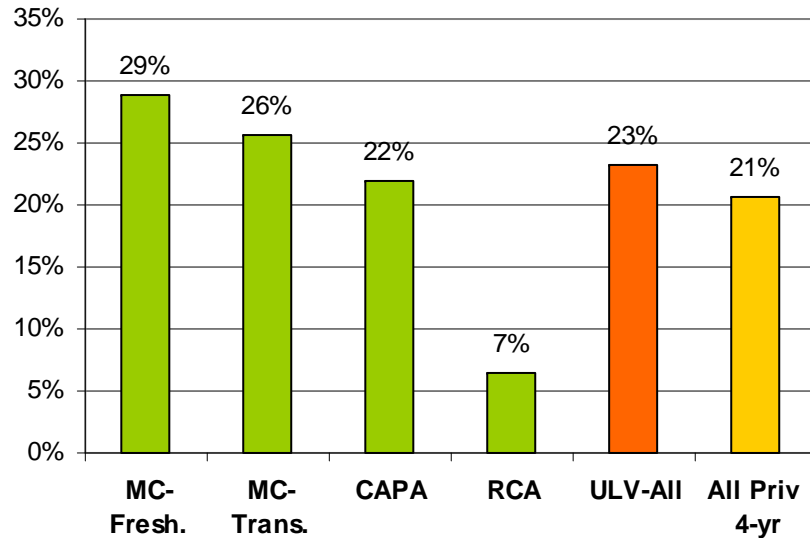
Writing ability (Highest 10% or above average)



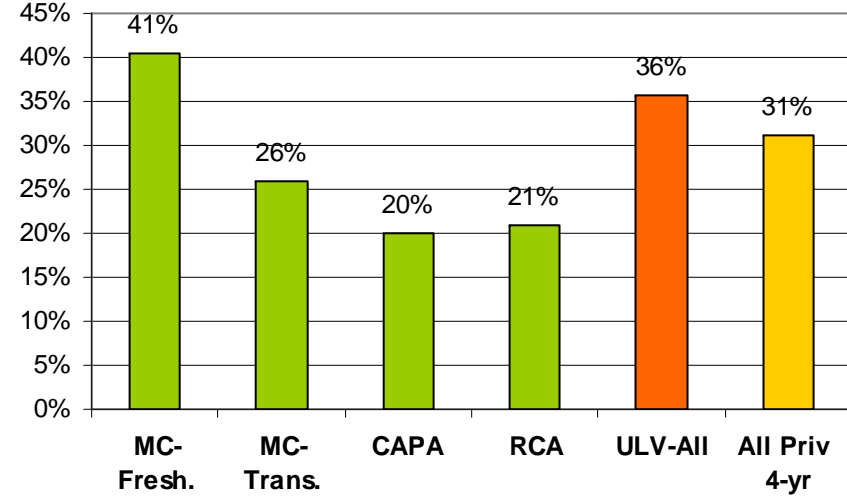
## Importance of Writing Original Works and Opportunity to Work on Research Projects

- 23% of the University of La Verne seniors regarded writing original works (poems, novels, short stories, etc.) as essential or very important for their objectives, similar to the seniors from other private four-year colleges and universities.
- 36% of the University of La Verne seniors reported that their professor had provided them opportunities to work on research projects, which was 5% more than the seniors from other private four-year colleges and universities.

Writing original works (poems, novels, short stories, etc.)  
(Essential/Very Important)



An opportunity to work on a research project  
(frequently)

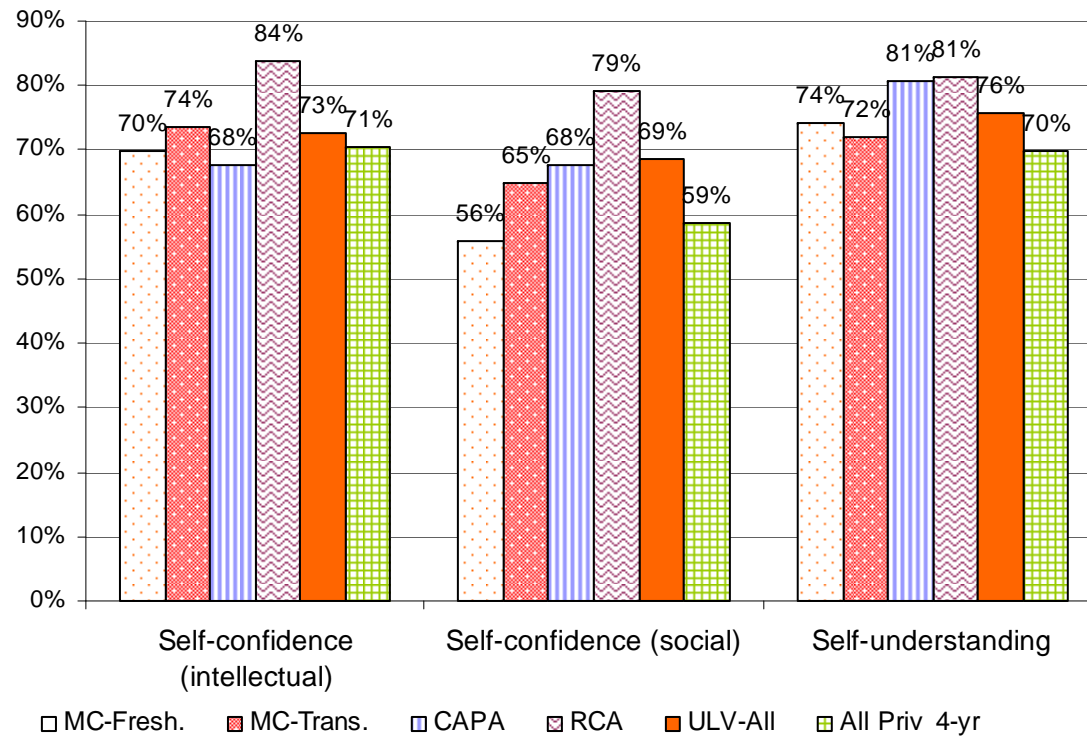


## Critical thinking

### Self-Perceptions

- Compared with the seniors from other private four-year colleges and universities, a higher percentage of the University of La Verne seniors thought that their social self-confidence (social) and self-understanding were of highest 10% or above average when compared with the average person their age.

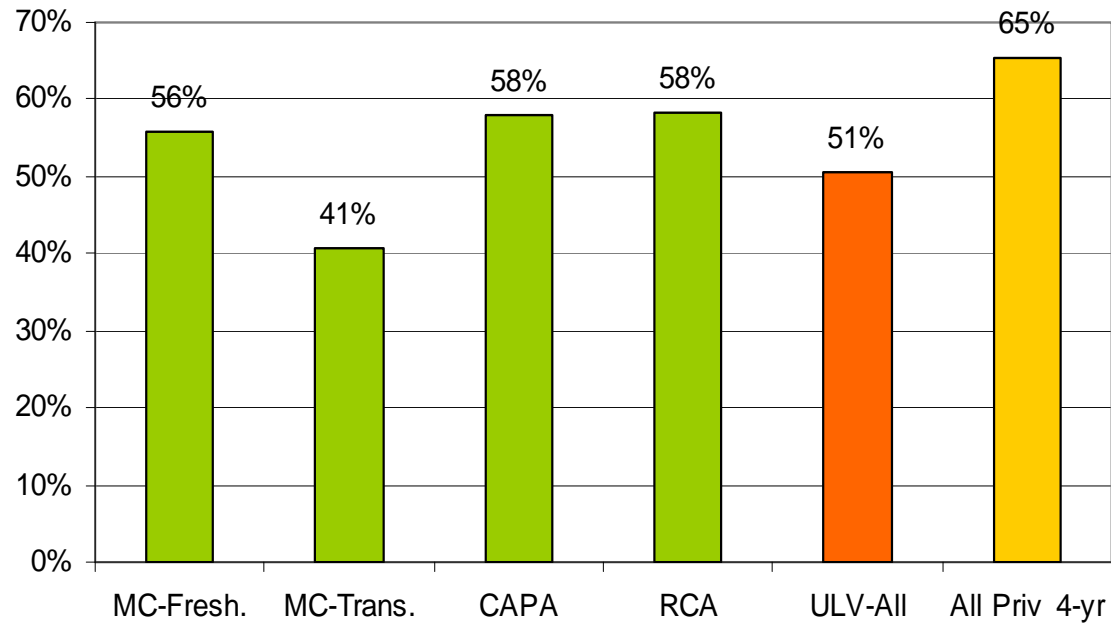
**Student Self-Perception, Compared with the Average Person Your Age (Highest 10% and Above Average)**



## Challenging Professors' Ideas

- Compared with the seniors from other private four-year colleges and universities, 14% fewer University of La Verne seniors reported that they frequently or occasionally challenged professors' ideas in class.

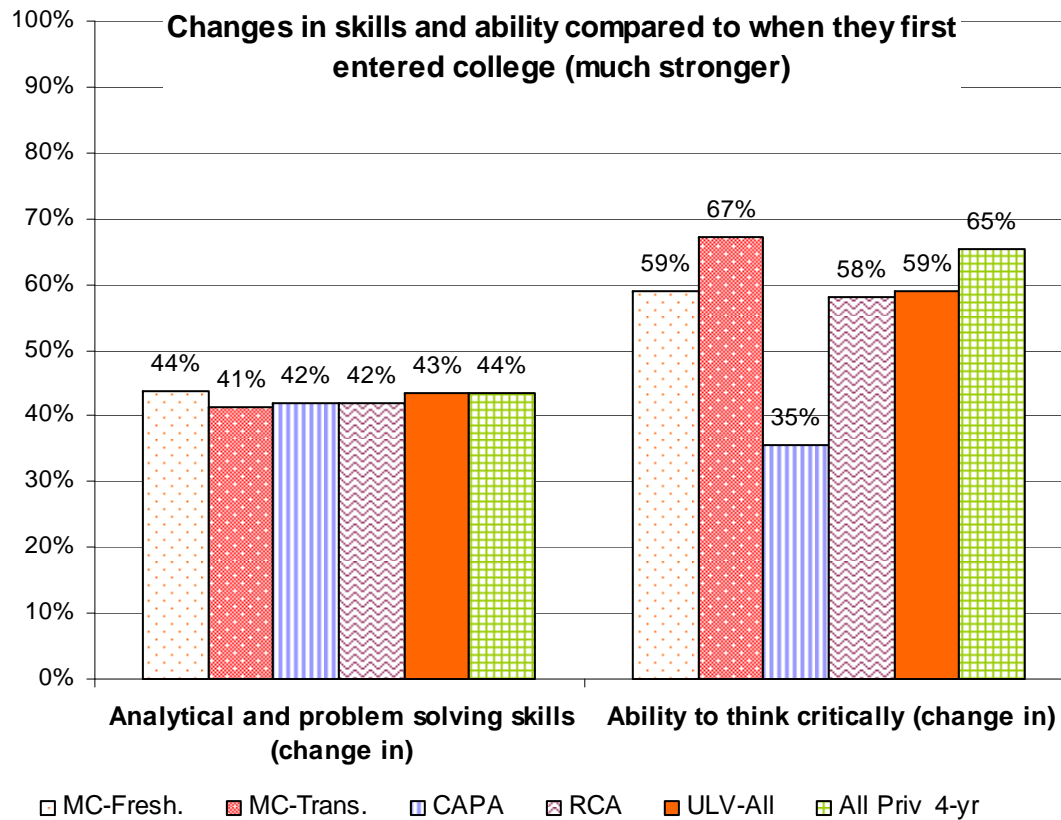
**#4.28 Challenged a professor's ideas in class**  
(Frequently or Occasionally)





## Changes in Problem-Solving Skills and Critical-Thinking Ability

- 59% of the University of La Verne seniors reported that they had much stronger changes in their analytical and problem solving skills, compared with when they first entered the University, which was 6% fewer than their peers from other private four-year colleges and universities.
- Similar to the seniors from other private four-year colleges and universities, 43% of the University of La Verne seniors reported that they had much stronger changes in their ability to think critically, compared with when they first entered the University.

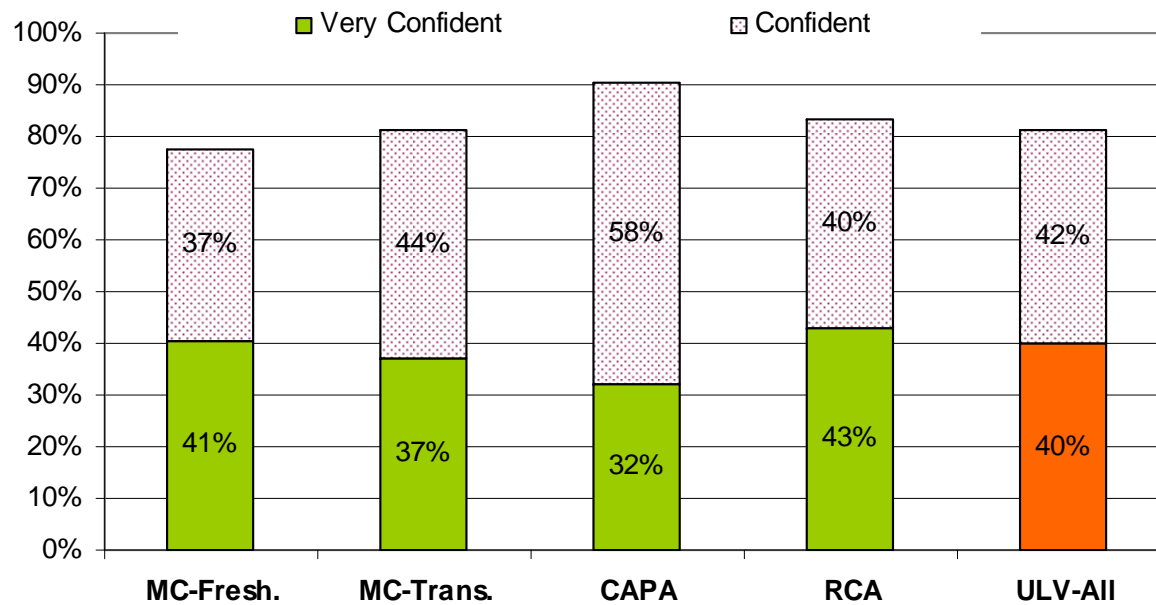


## Information Literacy

### Literacy about Mass Media

- 82% of the University of La Verne seniors reported that they felt confident or very confident about their ability to determine the validity of information from the mass media.
- Among them, about 90% of the CAPA seniors reported that they felt confident or very confident about their ability to determine the validity of information from mass media.

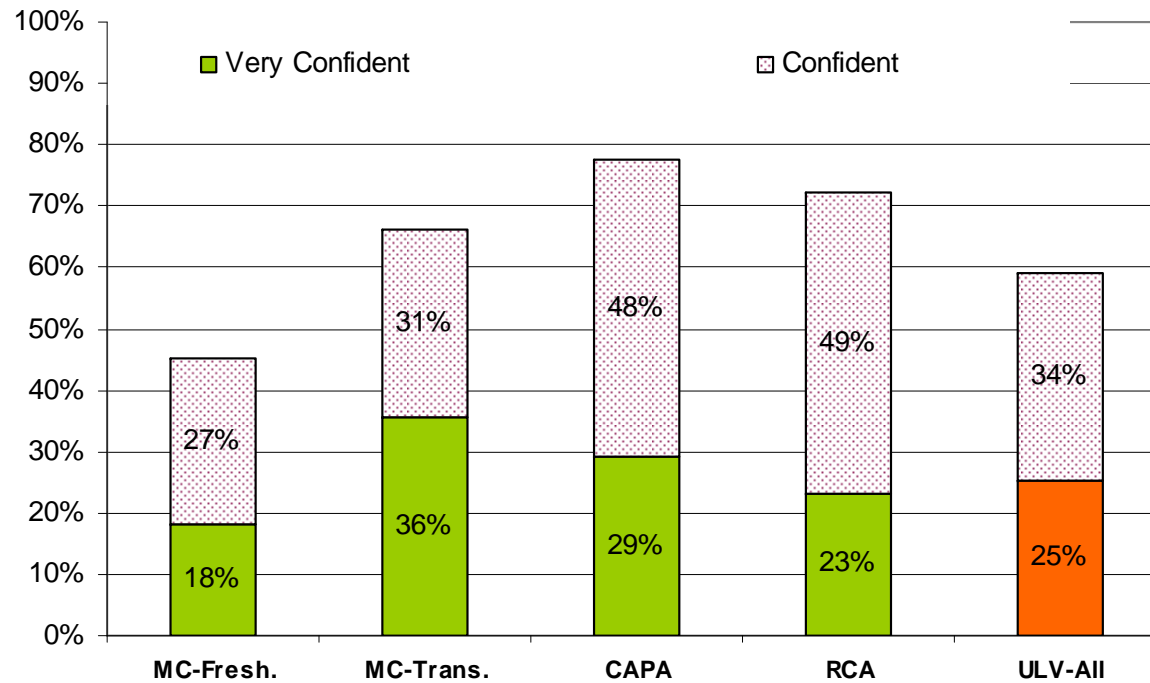
Ability to determine the validity of information from mass media



## Literacy about Personal Finance

- About 60% of the University of La Verne seniors reported that they felt confident or very confident about their understanding of personal finances such as loans, credits, investments, and banking rules.
- Among them, 77% of the CAPA Seniors and 72% of the RCA seniors reported that they felt confident or very confident about it.
- However, only 45% of the main campus entering freshman cohort seniors reported that they felt confident or very confident about it.

**How confident do you feel about your understanding of personal finances such as loans, credits, investments, and banking rules?**



### Interdisciplinary Perspective

- About 90% of the University of La Verne seniors thought that it was important or very important for them to view issues from the perspective of multiple fields.
- Of the four senior groups, CAPA seniors had the highest percent (97%) of those who felt it important or very important.

