

University of La Verne

Report of ACT 2003

Senior Exit Survey Supplemental Questions: Comparison of Traditional-Age and Adult students

Areas Covered

- **Diversity**
- **Community Orientation**
- **Fitness and Health**

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Executive Summary

Purpose

The purpose of this report was to partially address the questions raised by WASC regarding differential General Education requirements for traditional-age and adult student populations in the areas of diversity, community orientation, and fitness and health. Seniors in the two student populations were assessed for learning outcomes in the identified areas.

Participants were 53 freshman entry (traditional-age) and 197 transfer entry (adult) seniors who responded to the ACT Senior Exit Survey Supplemental Questions especially prepared to identify learning outcomes in the areas of diversity, community orientation and fitness and health. The survey was conducted during the Winter and Spring of 2003.

Highlight of Findings

The findings generally suggest that the traditional and adult students projected similar learning outcomes and perspective in all three areas. However, both groups showed strengths as well as areas that needed improvement.

Diversity

- High numbers in both groups reported that they socialize with and affirm people who are different from them.
- Relatively few individuals in both groups attended or immersed themselves in diverse cultural and ethnic events or talked to people different from them about walking in their shoes.
- Noticeably larger number of traditional than adult students sought to explore and understand reasons for differences.

Community orientation

- Similarly high numbers in both groups reported doing volunteer activity.
- Similarly few students in both groups attempted to understand the plight of help recipients.

Fitness and Health

- Similarly high numbers in both groups reported awareness of the connection between fitness and health.
- Similarly few in both groups reported actively seeking ways to reduce health risks.

Action recommendations

1. Both groups need to be provided with greater opportunities to explore cultures and experiences other than their own.
2. Create opportunity for both groups to learn from their volunteer activity and be engaged more deeply with people they help; distinguish volunteerism from service learning.
3. Create hands-on practical learning opportunities for students to apply their knowledge of the relationship between fitness and health.

Purpose

The purpose of conducting the supplemental survey was to partially address the issue raised by WASC concerning the differential GE requirements for adult and traditional-age students in the areas of (a) Diversity, (b) Community Service/Orientation and (c) Fitness and Health. WASC asked ULV to demonstrate that the learning outcomes for the two student groups were comparable in these areas, as possible justification for the differential G.E. requirements.

Methodology

Participants

During the 2002-2003 academic year altogether 390 ULV seniors completed the ACT Senior Exit survey, including especially designed supplemental questions, on the main campus and at Residence Centers. Students enrolled in the culminating Senior Project courses completed the survey under supervision in class settings. The number of participants in various demographic categories were as follows:

	N	%
Freshman Entry (Predominantly traditional-age)	53	14
Transfer Entry (Predominantly adult)	197	51
Unknown	140	36
White	188	48
Black	29	8
Hispanic	80	21
Other and unknown	93	23
Women	252	64
Men	129	33
Unknown	9	2

ACT's background form asks if students are Freshman Entry or Transfer Entry, and does not specifically identify students if they were enrolled on the main campus or at resident centers. For the purposes of this report Transfer Entry may be considered to be predominantly composed of adult students, and Freshman Entry may be considered to be predominantly composed of traditional-age students.

Supplemental Survey Questions

The supplemental questions were prepared by faculty in the Academic Assessment Committee in collaboration with the Director of the General Education Program (See Appendix A for questions). The questions dealt with the three areas of interest: (a) Diversity-7 questions (b) Community Service/Orientation-6 questions and (c) Fitness and Health-8 questions.

Findings

A. Diversity

Table 1 summarizes the comparison of the Freshman Entry and Transfer Entry students on diversity items. The endorsements of items show similarities and differences between the two groups. In both groups high numbers, about three to four in five, reported that they socialize with and affirm people who are different from them. In both groups relatively few, one in five, individuals endorsed attending or immersing themselves in diverse cultural and ethnic events or talking with people different from themselves about walking in their shoes. Noticeably larger number of Freshman Entry (over half) than Transfer Entry (one in five) students sought to explore difference.

The two groups appear to be generally similar in their high or low endorsement of diversity.

Action recommendation: Both group need to be provided with greater opportunities to explore cultures and experiences other than their own.

Table 1
Percentage of responses of ULV Seniors (ACT 02-03) on **Supplemental** items related to **Diversity** at ULV by **entry status**

ACT Items	Freshman Entry n=53	Transfer Entry n=197	All ULV n=390
1. I socialize with people who are different from my own culture (including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, physical ability). (Always/Usually)	66	79	77
2. I often talk with people who are different from me about what it means to live in their shoes. (Always/Usually)	26	35	36
3. I make an effort to go to cultural events that represent people different from me. (Always/Usually)	17	21	20
4. I am affirmative of people who are different from me. (Strongly Agree/Agree)	66	68	64
5. I like to read about cultures that are different from me. (Strongly Agree/Agree)	57	67	64

6. I immerse myself in cultures/religions/ethnicities/ groups that are not my own. (Always/Usually)	21	33	29
7. When I am confronted with difference, I seek to understand the history and context of why we are different. (Always/Usually)	53	17	56

B. Community Orientation

Table 2 summarizes the comparison of Freshman Entry and Transfer Entry students on community orientation items.

The responses of the two groups were equally good and bad in endorsing or acting in ways to promote community service. On the one hand, very large majorities in both groups, nearly 80%, actually volunteered their time at least one to three times a month, and about one in five did so weekly. On the other hand, less than half in both groups considered their civic responsibility to volunteer their time or express a desire to understand the realities of the recipients of volunteer services, and only one in five actively sought ways to volunteer. Those who volunteered did so in schools, youth organizations, hospitals, nursing homes, the homeless, houses of worship and shelters.

While there appears to be significant and comparable volunteer activity in both groups, there seems to be lack of desire to more closely understand the plight of those who are recipients of help. Such a discrepancy may underscore the distinction between volunteerism and service learning.

Action recommendation: Create opportunity for both groups to learn from their volunteer activity and be engaged more deeply with people they help.

Table 2
Percentage of responses of ULV Seniors (ACT 02-03) on **Supplemental** items related to **Community Orientation** at ULV by **entry status**

ACT Items	Freshman Entry n=53	Transfer Entry n=197	All ULV n=390
8. I have actively sought out ways to volunteer my time. (Always/Often)	19	25	25
9. How often do you volunteer your time?			
None	21	20	19
One to three times per month	45	46	48
One to three times per week	26	27	25

Four times per week to most everyday	4	3	3
10. In the last year, I volunteered my time in the following places:			
Public or private school	21	19	19
Community youth organization	4	4	6
Chamber of Commerce	0	2	1
State or government organization	2	4	3
Hospital, nursing home, hospice, or other health-related organization	9	6	6
Business	4	5	5
Homeless, hunger, or housing organization	4	5	6
Church, synagogue, mosque, or other spiritual communities	4	10	6
Legal or judicial organization	0	2	1
10. In the last year, I volunteered my time in the following places:			
Prison or juvenile home	0	0	1
Women's, men's, or children's shelter	2	1	1
Advocacy or human rights' organization	0	1	1
Non-profit organization, not listed above	0	0	0
11. I desire to understand the social and political realities of the people who are recipients of volunteer service. (Strongly Agree/Agree)	47	46	44
12. It is my civic responsibility to volunteer my time. (Strongly Agree/Agree)	45	39	41

C. Fitness and Health

Table 3 summarizes the comparison of the two groups on their knowledge and practice of fitness and health. Again, the groups were quite comparable in their endorsement and behavior regarding health lifestyles. In both group about half claimed to eat nutritious and well-balanced meals and were aware of intake of calories and fat. Nearly four in five indicated that they exercised at least one to three times a month and about six in ten did

so one to three or more times a week. Also, nine in ten indicated that they were somewhat or very well informed about the connection between exercise and health. In both groups very large majorities claimed to be somewhat or very well informed about the connections between lifestyle choices and family histories on health risks. However, only about half in both groups actively sought ways to reduce risk of disease and health problems.

It appears that in both groups there is equally high degree of awareness of the connection between fitness and health. However, there is room for improvement in actively seeking ways to reduce health risks.

Action recommendation: Create hands-on practical learning opportunities for students to apply their knowledge of the relationship between fitness and health.

Table 3
Percentage of responses of ULV Seniors (ACT 02-03) on **Supplemental** items related to **Fitness and Health** at ULV by **entry status**

ACT Items	Freshman Entry n=53	Transfer Entry n=197	All ULV n=390
13. I eat nutritious food and have well balanced meals. (Always/Usually)	42	55	51
14. I exercise:			
Never or Rarely	26	20	22
One to three times per month	15	14	14
One to three or more times per week	55	62	60
15. Concerning the connections between lifestyle choices and the increased risk of diseases, such as cancer, diabetes, stroke, etc., I am:			
Not very well informed	0	4	4
Somewhat informed	42	39	39
Very well informed	57	51	50
16. I am aware of the amount of calories, fat, and carbohydrates I am consuming. (Always/Often)	45	52	51
17. Concerning my family's health history and my health risks, I am:			
Not very well informed	6	4	5

Somewhat informed	30	33	31
Very well informed	62	56	57
18. Given what I know about physical health and my family's health history, I actively seek ways to reduce my risk of diseases and health problems. (Often/Always)	43	51	51
19. Concerning exercise and its connection to a healthy body, I am:			
Not very well informed	4	4	4
Somewhat informed	23	23	22
Very well informed	68	65	67
20. I know how to deal with my stress. (Strongly Agree/Agree)	51	56	53

General Conclusion

This study provides a partial but specific response to WASC's question about learning outcomes concerning the areas of diversity, community service and fitness and health where there are differential G.E. requirements between Traditional-age and adult programs. The findings suggest that the traditional age and adult transfer students generally project similar learning outcomes and perspectives in all three areas. However, both groups show strengths as well as areas that need improvement.

Action recommendations

1. Both groups need to be provided with greater opportunities to explore cultures and experiences other than their own.
2. Create opportunity for both groups to learn from their volunteer activity and be engaged more deeply with people they help; distinguish volunteerism from service learning.
3. Create hands-on practical learning opportunities for students to apply their knowledge of the relationship between fitness and health.

Appendix A

Supplemental Questions

1. I socialize with people who are different from my own culture (including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, physical ability).
 - a) Never
 - b) Rarely
 - c) Occasionally
 - d) Usually
 - e) Always

2. I often talk with people who are different from me about what it means to live in their shoes.
 - a) Never
 - b) Rarely
 - c) Occasionally
 - d) Usually
 - e) Always

3. I make an effort to go to cultural events that represent people different from me.
 - a) Never
 - b) Rarely
 - c) Occasionally
 - d) Usually
 - e) Always

4. I am affirmative of people who are different from me.
 - a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Slightly Disagree
 - d) Slightly Agree
 - e) Agree
 - f) Strongly Agree

5. I like to read about cultures that are different from me.

- a) Strongly Disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Slightly Disagree
 - d) Slightly Agree
 - e) Agree
 - f) Strongly Agree
6. I immerse myself in cultures/religions/ethnicities/groups that are not my own.
- a) Never
 - b) Rarely
 - c) Occasionally
 - d) Usually
 - e) Always
7. When I am confronted with difference, I seek to understand the history and context of why we are different.
- a) Never
 - b) Rarely
 - c) Occasionally
 - d) Usually
 - e) Always
8. I have actively sought out ways to volunteer my time.
- a) Never
 - b) Rarely
 - c) Occasionally
 - d) Often
 - e) Always
9. How often do you volunteer your time?
- a) None
 - b) Once a month
 - c) Twice a month
 - d) Three times a month
 - e) Once each week
 - f) Twice each week
 - g) Three times each week
 - h) Four times each week
 - i) Five times each week
 - j) Most everyday
10. In the last year, I have volunteered my time in the following places

- a) Public or private school
- b) Community youth organization
- c) Chamber of Commerce
- d) State or government organization
- e) Hospital, nursing home, hospice or other health related organization
- f) Business
- g) Homeless, Hunger or housing organization
- h) Church, synagogue, mosque, or other spiritual communities.
- i) Legal or juridical organization
- j) Prison or juvenile home
- k) Women's, men's or children's shelter
- l) Advocacy or human right's organization
- m) Non-profit organization, not listed above
- n) Other
- o) Not applicable

11. I desire to understand the social and political realities of the people who are recipients of volunteer service.

- a) Strongly Disagree
- b) Disagree
- c) Slightly Disagree
- d) Slightly Agree
- e) Agree
- f) Strongly Agree

12. It is my civic responsibility to volunteer my time.

- a) Strongly Disagree
- b) Disagree
- c) Slightly Disagree
- d) Slightly Agree
- e) Agree
- f) Strongly Agree

13. I eat nutritious food and have well balanced meals

- a) Never
- b) Rarely
- c) Occasionally
- d) Usually
- e) Always

14. I exercise

- a) Never
- b) Rarely
- c) Once a month
- d) Twice a month
- e) Three times a month
- f) Once a week
- g) Twice a week
- h) Three or more times a week

15. Concerning the connections between lifestyle choices and the increased risk of diseases, such as cancer, diabetes, stroke, etc.,

- a) I am not very well informed
- b) I am somewhat informed
- c) I am very well informed

16. I am aware of the amount of calories, fat and carbohydrates I am consuming.

- a) Never
- b) Rarely
- c) Sometimes
- d) Often
- e) Always

17. Concerning my family's health history and my health risks,

- a) I am not very well informed
- b) I am somewhat informed
- c) I am very well informed

18. Given what I know about physical health and my family's health history, I actively seek ways to reduce my risk of diseases and health problems.

- a) Never
- b) Rarely
- c) Sometimes
- d) Often
- e) Always

19. Concerning exercise and its connection to a healthy body,

- a) I am not very well informed
- b) I am somewhat informed
- c) I am very well informed

20. I know how to deal with my stress

- a) Strongly Disagree
- b) Disagree
- c) Slightly Disagree
- d) Slightly Agree
- e) Agree
- f) Strongly Agree

