

Critical Thinking 2005

Results from the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP)-Critical Thinking Subtest

Report prepared: June 2005

Outcome

Through the General Education Core 300: Values and Critical Thinking course and other course-work students will learn to think critically and evaluate their own values and the value systems of other persons, groups and nations.

Method

Altogether 64 Freshman and 65 Seniors were administered the Critical Thinking subtest of CAAP (Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency) in the spring of 2004. The test is based on a national sample of 13,865 college students. This test is composed of multiple-choice questions. The standard scores are reported approximately on a range from 40 to 80 with a mean of 60 and a standard deviation of 5.

National percentile transformation tables are provided for comparison of local scores to national scores. Local scores are also broken down by various student demographics. No scores are reported for samples less than 5. Also, those who indicated that they tried their best or gave a moderate effort scored above the average at the 55th percentile, and those who did not respond to the question assessing effort, scored below the average at the 44th percentile. Because of small sample sizes and the potential effect of effort the findings should be interpreted cautiously.

Findings

Table 1 summarized the comparison of Freshmen scores with Senior scores broken down by different demographic backgrounds, as well as provided the overall institutional scores. Bolded numbers indicate the percentile rank of scores compared to the national sample.

The following are highlights of findings for the **overall ULV sample of 141 students**:

- The ULV total sample score is at the 50th percentile nationally which suggests that ULV students' critical thinking score is at the national average.
- Students with higher self-reported GPA's tend to do better with only GPA's over 3.51 scoring above the average at the 55th percentile.
- Women (50th) tend to do a little better than men (44th).
- Adult and traditional students score at the same level right at the national average at the 50th percentile.

- Students who are part-time, transfers, have English as first language tend to do a little better than their counterparts.
- Ethnic group comparisons show that African American student scores at the 27th percentile and are quite a bit lower than the other ethnic groups, with White scores being highest at the 55th percentile, and Latino and Asian American scores being identical at the 44th percentile.
- In terms of majors, biology/science and communication scores are well above the average (64th), social science scores are at the average (50th), and computer science (22nd), education (39th), and undecided (44th) scores are below the average.

The following are highlights of **comparisons between Freshmen and Seniors**:

- Overall, the senior score at the 50th percentile is higher than the freshmen score at the 44th percentile.
- Score patterns reported in the demographic categories of the overall sample hold true, more or less, within the freshmen as well as the senior samples.
- For the various demographic subgroups, seniors generally do better than freshmen with some notable variances.
- The Latino freshmen and senior scores are both at the 44th percentile, while the senior African American score at the 22nd percentile is lower than the African American freshmen score at the 39th percentile.
- Senior scores for those who don't have English as a first language (32nd percentile) are lower than the freshmen (44th).

Action recommendations

- The lower scores by African American students should be examined further
- Majors and programs with lower scores need to examine their curriculum for the amount of time spent on critical thinking.

Dissemination

During the 2006-2007 academic year this information will be shared during luncheon meetings with stakeholder, such as students, faculty who teach the values and critical thinking course (Core 300) and other faculty to generate action plans.

Table 1
Critical Thinking CAAP (College Assessment of Academic Proficiency) Scores for Freshmen and Seniors (Fall 2003)

	Total			Freshman			Seniors		
	n	Average	Percentile Rank (National)	n	Average	Percentile Rank (National)	n	Average	Percentile Rank (National)
<u>Total Sample</u>	141	61.6	50	64	61	44	65	62.3	50
<u>Gender</u>									
Women	84	62	50	43	61	44	35	62	50
Men	53	61	44	21	61	44	29	63	55
<u>Age</u>									
< 25	100	61.7	50	63	61	44	27	63	55
26 & >	41	61.7	50	*	-	-	38	62	50
<u>Ethnicity</u>									
Latino/Hispanic	41	60.5	44	23	61	44	16	60.5	44
African American	11	58	27	5	60	39	5	57	22
White Caucasian	58	63	55	25	61	44	28	65	67
Asian/P.I./Filipino	13	60.5	44	5	62	50	-	-	-
No Response	14	63.5	64	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>English</u>									
First Language	118	62	50	53	61	44	56	63	55
Not First Language	20	60	39	11	61	44	9	59	32
<u>Enrolled</u>									
As Freshmen	95	61	44	63	61	44	25	63	55
Not As Freshmen	42	62	50	-	-	-	39	62	50
<u>Status</u>									
Full-time	119	61	44	63	61	44	49	62	50
Part-time	19	62	50	-	-	-	16	62	50
<u>Cum GPA</u>									
2.01-2.50	10	58	27	9	58	27	-	-	-
2.51-3.00	35	61	44	17	62	50	14	62	50
3.01-3.50	48	61	44	20	60	39	25	62	50
3.51 & >	42	63	55	17	63	55	24	64	64
<u>Education Plan</u>									
Return to ULV	89	61	44	60	61	44	20	62	50
Trans. to Diff. Sch.	9	64	64	-	-	-	7	65	69
<u>Majors</u>									
Biology Sciences	13	64	64	6	61	44	7	66	76
Business	38	61	44	8	61	44	25	62	50
Communications	12	64	64	5	62	50	7	65	69
Comp. & Info Sci.	6	57	22	-	-	-	6	57	22
Education	6	60	39	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social Science	19	62	50	10	61	44	7	64	64
Undecided	12	61	44	12	61	44	-	-	-
<u>Effort</u>									
Tried My Best	15	63	55	5	63	55	10	63	55
Gave Mod. Effort	20	63	55	-	-	-	15	64	64
No Response	99	61	44	52	61	44	37	61	44

*Samples less than 5 are not reported
6/14/05

