

Collegiate Learning Assessment

Northwestern State University
Fall 2010

- An institutional-level assessment of critical thinking and written communication skills
- Direct measure of performance
- Electronic delivery with ~ 90 minutes required for completion
- “Tasks” are randomly distributed to students: Performance Task, Make-an-Argument Task, Critique-an-Argument Task

CLA Basics

- Performance Task – respond to several open-ended questions about hypothetical but realistic scenarios using relevant documents
- Make-an-Argument Task – take and justify a position on an issue
- Critique-an-Argument Task – evaluate the reasoning of an argument made by someone else

CLA Tasks

- Administered only to entering (first-time, full-time) students in the fall semester
- Minimum of 100 students who have SAT/ACT scores on file
- August 15th – Testing Window Opens
- October 31st – Testing Window Closes

Freshman Student Sample

- Minimum of 100 existing senior students who attended institution as freshmen
- This piece completes the cross-sectional study
- Administered during the spring semester during Capstone course

Senior Student Sample

- Extremely important to share the initiative with the faculty
- Also important to share the reports when available
- Announcements, postings, and encouragement about assessment are helpful to engage students
- www.cae.org/content/pro_collegiate_sample_measures.htm

Faculty Support

- For fall administration, Office of Planning & Assessment will work with selected OR classes to administer during class in a computer lab
- OPA will be responsible for assisting students with electronic test administration (i.e., Web site, test session number, etc.)

Test Administration

- Freshmen results received in the spring
- Senior results received in the summer
- Students receive their individual reports ~ one week after the institution
- Sub-scores reported for each task: analytical reasoning & evaluation, writing mechanics, writing effectiveness, and problem-solving

Assessment Results