UNIVERSITY CORE CURRICULUM TIERS TWO AND THREE
SUMMER 2015 JUDGMENT, WRITTEN COMMUNICATION, 
AND CRITICAL THINKING ASSESSMENT

SUMMARY REPORT

VISION

Ball State aspires to be the model of the most student-centered and community-engaged of the 21st century public research universities, transforming entrepreneurial learners into impactful leaders—committed to improving the quality of life for all.

OIE

Office of Institutional Effectiveness
September 2015
OIE No. UCCASMT-S1-2015
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William Knight

Karen Morgan
(Editor)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This report documents the second data collection and analysis within the University Core Curriculum’s (UCC) new programmatic approach to assessment of student learning outcomes. This new approach involves developing rubrics to measure student proficiency in several learning outcomes identified within the tiers of the UCC and using the Blackboard Outcomes Assessment application to collect samples of student work products linked to each outcome and evaluated by a panel of faculty members using rubrics. Written communication and critical thinking were identified as the learning outcomes for the UCC’s Tier 3 and the American Association of Colleges, and Universities (AAC&U) VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) rubrics in these areas were used to measure students’ proficiency. VALUE Project rubrics in these two areas were reviewed and modified by a faculty committee to optimize their use within Blackboard Outcomes Assessment. Judgment was identified as the learning outcome for the UCC’s Tier 2; a judgment rubric was created for this outcome because one was not available from the AAC&U.

- During 2014-2015 1,289 student assignments from UCC Tier 3 courses from 201 class sections were aligned to the written communication outcome. There were 894 student assignments from 185 class sections that were aligned to the critical thinking outcome. Twenty-two assignments from only one class section were aligned to the UCC Tier 2 judgment outcome. Assignments included in the sample represented five of the University’s seven colleges. A panel of 26 faculty members was recruited, trained, and asked to review a random sample of 200 student assignments each for written communication and critical thinking and a sample of 19 assignment for judgment.

- Following recommended best practices, each student assignment included in the analysis of the results was reviewed by at least two faculty members. When ratings differed beyond established levels, a third faculty member was asked to rate the assignment. Ratings were completed for 187 total students for the written communication outcome with at least two ratings carried out for 166 of these assignments. A total of 169 ratings were carried out for the critical thinking outcome, with at least two ratings carried out for 148 of these assignments. There were 19 ratings carried out for the judgment outcome, with at least two ratings carried out for 18 of these assignments.

- The majority of judgment assignments were rated as proficient (ranging from 58% for Presents Ideas of Others, Evaluates Ideas to 77% for Evaluates Strengths and Weaknesses). Most of the remaining assignments were rated as highly proficient (from 16% for Evaluates Strengths and Weaknesses to 29% for Presents Ideas of Others, Evaluates Ideas). The smallest
proportion of assignments was rated as not proficient (from 3% for *Analyzes Ideas, Infers Contributions* to 13% for both *Presents Ideas of Others, Evaluates Ideas and Demonstrates Effects of Judgment*). The average rating was 8.6 (on a scale of 4-12).

- The plurality of written communication assignments were rated as proficient (ranging from 46% rated this way for the *Context and Purpose and Organization* and *Sources and Evidence* rubric scales to 56% rated proficient for the *Style and Mechanics* scale). The next most commonly assigned rating was highly proficient; the percentage of assignments with this rating ranged from 25% for *Sources and Evidence* to 45% for *Context and Purpose and Focus and Organization*. The percentages of assignments rated as not proficient ranged from 9% for *Content and Purpose and Focus and Organization* to 26% for *Sources and Evidence*. Average ratings were 2.0 to 2.2 on a 3-point scale. The average total rating was 11.2 (on a scale of 5-15). Results were overall slightly improved for written communication compared with the 2013-2014 UCC assessment; scores in each scale increased on average 0.2 points, and the average total score increased from 10.8 to 11.2.

- The majority of critical thinking assignments were rated as proficient; the percentage of assignments with this rating ranged from 47% for the *Evidence* scale to 54% for the *Influence and Context and Position* scales. Highly proficient was the second most commonly assigned rating; the percentage of assignments rated as highly proficient ranged from 23% for *Position* to 35% for *Identification of Issue/Problem*. The rating of not proficient was assigned least frequently; assignments with this rating ranged from 11% for *Identification of Issue/Problem* to 26% for *Evidence*. Average ratings were 2.0 to 2.2 on a 3-point scale. The average total rating was 10.4 (on a scale of 5-15). Assessment results for critical thinking were very similar to those in 2013-2014; average ratings for most of the scales and for the total scale were unchanged.

- Only a few of the possible correlates of student performance had statistically significant relationships with ratings with the written communication outcome, and the effect sizes for these correlations were very small. There were no significant correlations with the judgment or critical thinking outcomes.

- This approach to assessment of Tiers 2 and 3 of the University Core Curriculum was generally determined to be useful and practical. The finding that more than 80% of students in the assessment sample were found to demonstrate judgment, written communication, and critical thinking at proficient and highly proficient levels for nearly all of the rubric rating categories is very positive. The fact that entering student characteristics (gender, race/ethnicity, international status, SAT scores, and high school grade point average) were not highly correlated with student performance indicates the validity of the
assessment rubrics and suggests that Tiers 2 and 3 of the UCC is valuable for all students.

- The major limitation of the assessment project was the low rate of participation in UCC Tier 2 and, particularly, Tier 3 classes in providing artifacts. It is impossible to generalize from these results concerning the judgment outcome since assignments were only available from one single course section. It is important for the validity of future assessment efforts that all UCC Tier 2 and Tier courses to be aligned with the three outcomes. It is also important for instructors to select assignments that are appropriate to rate with the rubric used for each outcome.
BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

The University Core Curriculum (UCC) Committee has changed Ball State University’s approach to assessment of its general education program from one that was course-based to a programmatic approach that involves ratings of previously-completed student assignments that are tied to specific UCC learning outcomes within the UCC tiers. For Tier 3, it was decided that written communication and critical thinking shall serve as the learning outcomes that are assessed. A faculty working group reviewed the written communication and critical thinking rubrics developed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) Project and made slight changes that would allow the rubrics to be used optimally within the Blackboard Outcomes Assessment system. For Tier 2, it was decided that judgment shall serve as the learning outcome that is assessed. An additional faculty working group created an original judgment rubric since one is not available from AAC&U. Faculty members teaching UCC Tier 3 (generally 300- and 400-level) courses in 2013-2014 were asked to use the Blackboard Learn CMS to both collect the assignments and align them to either or both of the two Tier 3 learning outcomes. Faculty members teaching Tier 3 courses were asked to do the same in 2014-2015, and additionally those teaching Tier 2 courses were asked to do so for the judgment outcome. The rubrics used for assessing the three outcomes are shown in Tables 1-3.

A total of 1,289 student assignments from 2014-2015 UCC Tier 3 courses from 201 class sections were aligned to the written communication outcome. There were 894 student assignments from 185 class sections that were aligned to the critical thinking outcome. For the judgment outcome, 22 student assignments were aligned to only 1 class section. A random sample of 200 assignments was selected for written communication and critical thinking and a random sample of 19 assignments was selected for judgment. The number of judgment assignments in the sample was reduced by three from the total number collected because three assignments were used for training purposes. The assignments were collected and sampled after the end of the Spring 2015 semester. Assignments included in the sample represented five of the University’s seven colleges (CAST, CCIM, CFA, CSH, and MCOB).

A request was sent to faculty members to participate in a training session and then rate a sample of the artifacts using the rubrics within the Blackboard Outcomes Assessment system. Participants received a $500 honorarium. Twenty-six faculty members across six of the colleges participated in the training and all of them carried out the ratings.

Ratings were carried out for 187 total students for the written communication outcome; at least two ratings were carried out for 166 of these assignments. A total of 169 ratings were carried out for the critical thinking outcome; at least two ratings were carried out for 148 of these assignments. The reason that not all 200 assignments were rated for written communication and critical thinking assignments was because the faculty members doing the ratings determined that a few of the assignments did not lend themselves to being rated by the rubrics. Nineteen ratings were carried out for the judgment outcome; at least two ratings were carried out for eighteen of
these assignments. Third ratings were carried out when total scores on the two ratings differed by more than five points (on a scale of 15 total points) for written communication and critical thinking and when total scores differed by more than four points (on a scale of 12 total points) for critical thinking; 15 third ratings were done for written communication assignments; 9 third ratings were carried out for critical thinking assignments, and 1 third rating was carried out for judgment.

The results were analyzed by calculating frequencies and averages for each of the rubric dimensions plus a total score for each of the two outcomes. Possible correlates of student performance (SAT scores, high school grade point average, gender, race/ethnicity, whether students were international or domestic, and Writing Proficiency Exam results) were appended to the results in order to investigate patterns of performance. Pearson and Spearman rho correlations were used to analyze those relationships.
Table 1. Ball State University (BSU) University Core Curriculum (UCC) Tier 2 Judgment Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not Proficient</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Highly Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>evaluates strengths and weaknesses of ideas, arguments and actions</td>
<td>the student fails to identify an issue or state a definite thesis</td>
<td>the student identifies an issue, and states a definite thesis; the perspective might be limited</td>
<td>the student identifies an issue and states a definite thesis, clearly articulating the strengths and weaknesses upon which the argument is based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presents ideas of others, evaluates ideas, considers and understands others’ values as well as one’s own, including understanding of the scientific method, if applicable</td>
<td>the student may attempt to present the ideas of others, but fails to demonstrate understanding of various points of view or cannot effectively summarize them; poor grammar or presentation style may make this difficult to determine</td>
<td>the student demonstrates understanding of various points of view and can effectively summarize them</td>
<td>the student demonstrates understanding of various points of view and creates a synergy among them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>analyzes traditional ideas, infers creative contributions, draws synthesis, has something to say</td>
<td>the student’s contribution provides only a summary with no analysis, synthesis, or inference</td>
<td>the student makes analytical or creative observations about the subject based upon a synthesis of traditional ideas</td>
<td>the student makes a creative or original contribution to the subject that provides new or unexpected insight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demonstrates how one’s judgment affects the complex, interrelated systems that compose our environment; develops context; demonstrates understanding of audience or asserts significance of findings</td>
<td>the student fails to explain and or demonstrate contextual relevancy in his or her work</td>
<td>the student effectively explains the contextual relevancy of his or her work, although its value may be limited</td>
<td>the relevance and value of the student’s work is self-evident; the work is thought-provoking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2. Ball State University (BSU) University Core Curriculum (UCC) Tier 3 Written Communication Rubric

This rubric was developed to provide feedback to Ball State’s UCC Committee about levels of proficiency in written communication from a sample of students enrolled in Tier 3 courses. It represents a modification of the written communication rubric developed by the Association of American Universities Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education Project. This rubric is associated with the UCC transformation of judgment into action: “Ball State graduates are responsible learners who communicate effectively.” and the Tier 3 goal that “students must demonstrate their capability to write at a level of competence appropriate for college graduates.”

Definition: Written communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context and Purpose</th>
<th>Not Proficient</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Highly Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrates insufficient attention to context, audience, and purpose.</td>
<td>Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, and purpose (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions).</td>
<td>Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that focuses all elements of the work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus and Organization</td>
<td>Fails to have a focus or the organization of ideas is inconsistent, ineffective, or ambiguous.</td>
<td>Demonstrates organization and focus of ideas, although may contain occasional lapses in focus or organization.</td>
<td>Establishes and maintains a clear focus and logical arrangement of ideas that accomplishes the purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development and Support</td>
<td>Fails to use appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.</td>
<td>Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.</td>
<td>Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources and Evidence</td>
<td>Demonstrates insufficient use of sources to support ideas appropriate for the genre of the writing or over reliance on one single source.</td>
<td>Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the genre of the writing.</td>
<td>Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the genre of the writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style and Mechanics</td>
<td>Uses style and mechanics that impedes meaning because of errors in usage.</td>
<td>Uses style and mechanics that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors.</td>
<td>Uses style and mechanics that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Ball State University (BSU) University Core Curriculum (UCC) Tier 3 Critical Thinking Rubric
**Definition:** Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion. This rubric is designed to be transdisciplinary, reflecting the recognition that success in all disciplines requires habits of inquiry and analysis that share common attributes. This rubric is designed for use with many different types of assignments and the suggestions here are not an exhaustive list of possibilities. Critical thinking can be demonstrated in assignments that require students to complete analyses of text, data, or issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identification of issue/problem</th>
<th>Not Proficient</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Highly Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ambiguity</strong> is defined as information that may be interpreted in more than one way.</td>
<td>Issue/problem to be considered critically is unstated or stated without clarification or description.</td>
<td>Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated but description may leave some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown.</td>
<td>Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong></td>
<td>Information is lacking or taken from source(s) without any interpretation/evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question.</td>
<td>Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/evaluation, but perhaps not enough to develop a fully coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are often taken as fact, with little questioning.</td>
<td>Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Influence of context and assumptions</strong></td>
<td>Shows no awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Does not identify contexts when presenting a position.</td>
<td>Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa).</td>
<td>Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)</strong></td>
<td>Position is not stated, or is simplistic and obvious.</td>
<td>Position acknowledges different sides of an issue.</td>
<td>Position is imaginative, taking into account the complexities of an issue. Limits of position are acknowledged. Others' points of view are synthesized within position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences)</strong></td>
<td>Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes are oversimplified.</td>
<td>Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes are identified clearly.</td>
<td>Conclusions and related outcomes are logical and reflect student’s informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESULTS

- As shown in Table 4 and Figure 1, the majority of judgment assignments were rated as proficient (ranging from 58% for Presents Ideas of Others, Evaluates Ideas to 77% for Evaluates Strengths and Weaknesses). Most of the remaining assignments were rated as highly proficient (from 16% for Evaluates Strengths and Weaknesses to 29% for Presents Ideas of Others, Evaluates Ideas). The smallest proportion of assignments was rated as not proficient (from 3% for Analyzes Ideas, Infers Contributions to 13% for both the Presents Ideas of Others, Evaluates Ideas and Demonstrates Effects of Judgment outcomes). The average total score rating was 8.6 (on a scale of 4-12).

- Table 6 and Figure 3 show that the majority of critical thinking assignments were rated as proficient; the percentage of assignments with this rating ranged from 47% for the Evidence scale to 54% for the Influence and Context and Position scales. Highly proficient was the second most commonly assigned rating; the percentage of assignments rated as highly proficient ranged from 23% for Position to 35% for Identification of Issue/Problem. The rating of not proficient was assigned least frequently; assignments with this rating ranged from 11% for Identification of Issue/Problem to 26% for Evidence. Average ratings were 2.0 to 2.2 on a 3-point scale. The average total rating was 10.4 (on a scale of 5-15). Assessment results for critical thinking were very similar to those in 2013-2014; average ratings for most of the scales and for the total scale were unchanged.

- The plurality of written communication assignments were rated as proficient (ranging from 46% rated this way for the Context and Purpose and Organization and Sources and Evidence rubric scales to 56% rated proficient for the Style and Mechanics scale). The next most commonly assigned rating was highly proficient; the percentage of assignments with this rating ranged from 25% for Sources and Evidence to 45% for Context and Purpose and Focus and Organization. The percentages of assignments rated as not proficient ranged from 9% for Content and Purpose and Focus and Organization to 26% for Sources and Evidence. Average ratings were 2.0 to 2.2 on a 3-point scale. The average total rating was 11.2 (on a scale of 5-15) (see Table 5 and Figure 2). Results were overall slightly improved for written communication compared with the 2013-2014 UCC assessment; scores in each scale increased on average 0.2 points, and the average total score increased from 10.8 to 11.2.
As shown in Table 7, only a few or the possible correlates of student performance had statistically significant relationships with ratings for the written communication outcome. Students with higher SAT scores tended to have higher scores on the *Focus and Organization* and *Development and Support* scales. Females tended to score higher on the *Context and Purpose*, *Style and Mechanics*, and total ratings. International students tended to score lower on most of the written communication scales, although there were only three international students in the sample. It is important to note, however that the effect sizes for all of these correlations were very small. There were no significant correlations between background variables and the judgment or critical thinking outcomes. Note there were no international students represented in the sample of judgment or critical thinking artifacts.
Table 4. Judgment Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Evaluates Strengths and Weaknesses</th>
<th>Presents Ideas of Others, Evaluates Ideas</th>
<th>Analyzes Ideas, Infers Contributions</th>
<th>Demonstrates Effects of Judgment</th>
<th>Total (scale of 4-12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not proficient (1)</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proficient (2)</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highly proficient (3)</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>average</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Judgment Results

Judgment in UCC Tier 2 Courses 2014-2015
Table 5. Written Communication Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Context and Purpose</th>
<th>Focus and Organization</th>
<th>Development and Support</th>
<th>Sources and Evidence</th>
<th>Style and Mechanics</th>
<th>Total (scale of 5-15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not proficient (1)</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proficient (2)</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highly proficient (3)</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>average</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Written Communication Results
Table 6. Critical Thinking Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not proficient (1)</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proficient (2)</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highly proficient (3)</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>average</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. Critical Thinking Results

![Critical Thinking in UCC Tier 3 Courses 2014-2015](chart.png)
Table 7. Correlates of Written Communication and Critical Thinking Assessment Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written Communication</th>
<th>SAT Math</th>
<th>SAT Verbal</th>
<th>HS GPA</th>
<th>WPE</th>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>International</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Context and Purpose</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus and Organization</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development and Support</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources and Evidence</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style and Mechanics</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Critical Thinking

| Identification of Issue/Problem        | -0.07    | 0.13       | -0.04  | 0.03 | -0.22         | 0.06   | -0.06         |
| Evidence                               | 0.14     | 0.21*      | 0.09   | -0.04| -0.09         | 0.08   | -0.01         |
| Influence of Context and Assumptions   | 0.13     | 0.17       | 0.11   | -0.02| -0.14         | 0.13   | -0.01         |
| Position                               | 0.03     | 0.09       | -0.05  | 0.03 | -0.09         | 0.04   | -0.08         |
| Conclusions                            | 0.12     | 0.18       | 0.00   | 0.07 | -0.19*        | 0.05   | 0.01          |
| Total Score                            | 0.08     | 0.16       | 0.03   | 0.03 | -0.19*        | 0.10   | -0.03         |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judgment</th>
<th>SAT Math</th>
<th>SAT Verbal</th>
<th>High School GPA</th>
<th>Writing Proficiency Exam</th>
<th>Race/ Ethnicity</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>International Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluates Strengths and Weaknesses</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.56</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presents Ideas of Others, Evaluates Ideas</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.34</td>
<td>-.41</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzes Ideas, Infers Contributions</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.35</td>
<td>-.34</td>
<td>-.29</td>
<td>-.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates Effects of Judgment</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>-.38</td>
<td>-.35</td>
<td>-.47</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>-.12</td>
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* * p < .05. ** p < .01.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The University’s second use of Blackboard Outcomes Assessment for the written communication and critical thinking outcomes and the first use for the judgment outcome revealed that this is a useful and practical approach to assessment of Tiers 2 and 3 of the University Core Curriculum. It is assuring that the more than 80% of students in the assessment sample were found to be demonstrating judgment, written communication and critical thinking at proficient and highly proficient levels. The fact that entering student characteristics were not highly correlated with student performance indicates the validity of the assessment rubrics and suggests that Tiers 2 and 3 of the UCC are valuable for all students. The major limitation of the assessment project was lack of participation of all UCC Tier 2 and 3 courses in providing assignments for the assessment sample. These results cannot be generalized to any extent concerning the judgment outcome since assignments were provided from only one course section. It is important for being able to generalizing future UCC assessment results to all Ball State undergraduates that faculty members teaching all UCC Tier 2 and 3 classes link one assignment to the three outcomes so that a much larger set of assignments is available for the assessment sample. It is also important for instructors to select assignments that are appropriate to rate with the rubric used for each outcome.