

**General Education  
Annual Report  
2018-19**

Submitted by  
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**Intro**

General Education includes the General Education curriculum, the First-Year Experience Program that is a component of GenEd, and a second core option, the International Honors Program. Two additional initiatives are included in this report: a) information regarding the status of the Cornerstones General Education Pilot Program funded through the Mellon I grant, ending its third year, and b) a review of responses from the PLUS 100 cohort. Information specific to each program will be provided in each category below. An additional category of Assessment has been added to this particular report because of the broad cross-campus scope of these programs.

See Appendices A-E for specific data for each program. Individual reports from each program are also included as attachments.

**General Education Council members 2018-19**

Lauri McCloud (Social Sciences), Matt Smith (Natural Sciences), Ron Gerhardstein (SOAC), Scott Rogers (Humanities), Rona Kaufman (FYEP), Carmina Palerm (IHON), Kris Plaehn (Academic Advising), Kevin Berg (Registrar), Gracie Anderson (ASPLU student rep) and Miguel Ordanez (ASPLU student rep).

**Highlights**

The 2018-19 academic year became a year of reflection around General Education at PLU. In the Spring of 2018, the Provost appointed an Ad Hoc Committee for the Review and Revision of General Education at PLU. Somewhat spurred by the work of the Faculty Joint Committee as well as anticipated responses from the Northwest Commission regarding implementation of measurable outcomes across the curriculum, this work has allowed faculty to engage in conversations around the purpose and format of General Education, now and for the future.

The Mellon-funded Cornerstones General Education Program began as a pilot in the Fall of 2016. The design and implementation of this program has added to the consideration of possibilities around curriculum and assessment.

### *General Education Program*

As mentioned above, the nature of student learning in the core curriculum has been at the forefront of conversations. The Ad Hoc Committee continues to reinforce the notion that whatever curriculum is designed, the ability to measure how students achieve the learning outcomes for their general curriculum (in addition to their degree program) is of high priority.

Within the work of the Ad Hoc Committee, a proposal to change the nature of the Core Curriculum Committee to be comprised of elected faculty members was approved by the Faculty Assembly. This new structure will be implemented in Fall 2019.

### *International Honors Program*

The International Honors Program continued to maintain solid enrollment and retention of students in the program. Dr. Palerm continued to seek to grow the number of faculty involved and available to teach in the program, and continued to develop the IHON curriculum to align with inclusive, contemporary pedagogy and content. Four new general courses were developed and taught as well as a comprehensive revision of the IHON 111 and 112 initial experience was undertaken.

### *Cornerstones General Education Pilot Program*

Students in this program continued through to their third year, focusing on developing the ePortfolio. Design ideas and assessment results continued to inform the broader conversation about necessary curricular components including the role and place of scaffolding learning for students, the possibilities of thematic vs. disciplinary focus, the level of course appropriate for this type of stated learning outcome, and the ways in which students think about the definition and purpose of these requirements in their overall educational experience at PLU.

### *First-Year Experience Program*

The FYEP steering committee focused on two curricular components this year: the role of PLUS 100 and the status of the Common Reading Program and steps for the future. PLUS 100 remains structurally as a component of the First-Year Experience; there is still conversation about who it is for, and ways it can be staffed. Common Reading moves forward with a pilot change of schedule, putting the initial conversation around the book in the first week of FYEP 101 classes and the panel discussion Friday afternoon of that week. Conversations around new ways to connect both into and across the curriculum are planned to continue this academic year.

### *PLUS 100*

Much data was gathered regarding last year's cohort, and was helpful in curricular adjustments and student focus. This program continues to take a priority focus to determine place, focus and purpose.

## **Enrollment**

Opt-in enrollment affects only IHON and PLUS 100.

### *International Honors Program*

IHON demonstrates an increase in credit-hour production of 51%.

Average retention rate is 94%.

### *PLUS 100*

One hundred and one FY students completed one of the seven sections of PLUS 100 in Fall 2018. One section was prioritized for incoming football players, with 28 students enrolled (25%). Students noted concern about the purpose and focus of the course, including the workload.

## **Strategic Goals**

Overall, the strategic goal for the General Education curricular offerings is twofold: 1) to offer a distinctive and purposeful program for students, and 2) be able to measure the effectiveness of these offerings via evidence of student learning combined with student perception of the particular program.

## **Assessment**

Assessment has remained a hopeful long-term goal for many of the programs affiliated with our General Education program. One, FYEP, has worked to have consistent measures of student learning in FYEP 101 over the past ten years, and remains a model for other programs.

The General Education Council has consistently employed an indirect measure for attainment of the Integrative Learning Outcomes. Currently, a question regarding a different ILO each year is added to the EvaluationKit online course evaluation format, and the data is then reviewed and analyzed according to the curriculum map provided by faculty regarding where, in a particular element, there is alignment with a particular ILO.

### *General Education Program*

See attached report in Appendix A, and accompanying curricular map (?).

ILO #3 focuses on developing strategies for working with others. The response rate is just over 50%, with the majority of students (an overall mean of just over 4.0/5.0) agreeing the specific course gave them the opportunity to develop these skills. Departments who feel their courses do not provide significant opportunity to work with others can account for the "other" responses.

Appendix A also includes data from 2016-17, 2017-18 for ILOs #1 and #2, as well as the 2016-17 assessment plan for moving forward.

*International Honors Program*

IHON 328 used the course evaluation data for ILO #3. 91.67% of students strongly agreed and 8.33% agreed that the course provided the opportunity to develop these skills and abilities.

A strategic initiative for the 2019-20 academic year is to design signature assignments to embed across the IHON curriculum for purposes of measure student achievement of outcomes.

*Cornerstones General Education Pilot Program*

A summary of findings thus far:

FYEP 101, 102: There is not a significant difference between the FYEP 101 scores as they stand alone. However, the FYEP 190 scores are much more revealing of the year-long experience:

LO 1A Identify the topics of study and the kinds of questions scholars pursue in this discipline or field

**Non-Cornerstones students: 2.7**

**Cornerstones students: 3.5**

LO 1B Identify what counts as valid evidence in the discipline/field.

**Non-Cornerstones students: 2.2**

**Cornerstones students: 3.0**

SYEP 201, 202: Forthcoming

ePortfolios: Forthcoming

As the Mellon grants will be completed this academic year, a full report of the impact of the Cornerstones Pilot and other components of Mellon II will be provided.

See Appendix B for the assessment plan and a summary of faculty and student feedback.

*First-Year Experience Program*

See Appendix C FYEP data and report for 2018-19.

FYEP 101: Learning Outcomes #3, #4

Mean for #3 Organization and Structure: 2.61

Mean #4 Writing as a Process: 2.35

This process provided the assessment team to talk deeply about the common assignment, and to make significant changes to the assignment for 2019-20 that make clearer alignments between aspects of the common assignment and the learning outcomes. See full data report in Appendix C.

FYEP 190:

See Appendix C for data.

Overall, this assessment process confirmed hunches about the 190 common assignment, including:

- Inconsistency of delivery and expectation largely invalidates this assessment.
- The Rubric does not match the expectations for the assignment. That is, this course experience is not parallel to the 101 rubric, where the goal is to have students be at “met”, with opportunities to meet “exceeds” at the capstone level. 190 does not carry the same intent, nor have any similar “bookend”.
- No agreement on the definition of “intellectual work” across disciplines makes it difficult to norm results.

Because of the proposals to revise 190 to a true, stand alone course, 190 assessment will be suspended until Fall 2021 when new curricula is implemented.

*PLUS 100*

See Appendix D.

PLUS 100 data focused on surveys and focus groups of both students and faculty. We still need to determine who this course is for, and who will teach it.

*Common Reading*

See Appendix E. This appendix includes survey data from students who participated in the Fall 2018 Common Reading Experience and the final report from the Common Reading Review Committee.

The FYEP Steering Committee has prioritized the determination of a clearer focus and place for Common Reading within the FYEP program.

This data relies on student responses to a survey.

## **Conclusions**

Assessment of student learning in meaningful ways continues to be the strongest reasons for reviewing and revising our General Education curriculum. The recommendations from the NWCCU Seven-Year report in Spring 2018 also reinforce not only the need for assessment of student learning across the curriculum, but for a system that allows for a way to “connect the dots” across the many experiences students have at PLU in meaningful ways to demonstrate our students’ successes.

This report, in many ways, in one more way this need is reinforced. Much data is presented here—but none of it is easily transformed into a holistic description of either a particular curricular component (a GenEd element, or the GenEd program as a whole) or as a response to the overarching program goals.

We do have many opportunities to gauge student learning, and student success. Finding structural ways to frame this, and to find the appropriate measurements of learning, are an important next step as a formalized assessment structure is developed and implemented.

General Education Report 2018-19  
Appendix A  
Integrative Learning Objective #3  
Response Result Summary  
Fall 2018, J-term 2019, Spring 2019

General Education Program  
Assessment Report  
2018-19 Academic Year

The General Education Council continued the cycle of including one Integrative Learning Outcome per year in the end-of-semester course evaluation for student response.

This year, ILO #3 was included on the evaluation form for every course that carries a General Education element: "Students will work creatively to identify and clarify the issues of concern, acknowledge and respond to conflicting ideas and principles, identifying common interests where possible, and develop and promote effective strategies and interpersonal relationships for implementing cooperative actions. To what extent do you agree with this statement: This general education course supported my development toward mastery of this learning goal."

<b>Summary</b>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Response Rate</i>	<i>Mean</i>
<b>Fall 2018</b>	51.94%	33.29%	10.34%	2.81%	1.62%	57.17%	4.31
<b>J-term 2019</b>	59.67%	32.98%	4.98%	1.54%	0.83%	56.01%	4.49
<b>Spring 2019</b>	54.92%	31.04%	9.48%	2.87%	1.68%	51.22%	4.35

Generally speaking, the majority of courses where students responded to this question provided a reasonable opportunity to develop the skills and abilities around working effectively with others. It is understood that not all courses provide the opportunities to practice/meet each ILO.

For the 2019-20 academic year, ILO #4: Valuing will be included on course evaluations for all designated General Education elements.

**Valuing.** Students will be able to articulate and assess one's own values, with an awareness of the communities and traditions that have helped to shape them; recognize how others have arrived at values different from one's own, and consider their views charitably and with an appreciation for the context in which they emerged; develop a habit of caring for oneself, for others, and for the environment; approach moral, spiritual, and intellectual development as a

life-long process of making informed choices in one's commitments; and, approach one's commitments with a high level of personal responsibility and professional accountability.

Comparison to ILO #1, #2

ILO #1

2016-17

Data only from Social Sciences Division as a pilot.

ILO #2

2017-18

Summary	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree
Fall 2017	49.23	35.35	10.97	3.08
J-term 2018	54.96	33.37	9.05	1.53
Spring 2018	48.74	35.52	10.82	2.97

These data are from the online course evaluation system, beginning in 2016.  
Previous data was from a student survey given annually to students, by ILO.



General Education Report 2018-19  
Appendix B  
Cornerstones Assessment

The Cornerstones Design Team will work on a final report of the Cornerstones Pilot Program during Fall 2019.

The Assessment Plan, and a preliminary summary of faculty and student responses is included here.

*Cornerstones Assessment Plan*

**Cornerstones Assessment Plan (2/23/2018)**

General Assessment Framework:

Year	Courses	Direct Assessments	Indirect Assessments
<b>One</b>	FYEP 101 FYEP 190	101 Common Assignment, 190 Common Assignment	First Year Focus Group
<b>Two</b>	SYEP 201 SYEP 202	201 and 202 Common Assignment	Second Year Focus Group
<b>Three</b>	ePortfolio	ePortfolio Evaluation #1 (Reflection); ePortfolio Evaluation #2 (Professional)	Third Year Focus Group; Surveys on DJS, Vocation, Transfer, Cohort/Belonging, Program Goals and Outcomes
<b>Four</b>	none	none	Student Survey
<b>Meta-level assessments:</b> faculty focus group/interviews; syllabus and assignment analysis.			

**Assessable Questions and what we can measure** (what can Cornerstones show us about student learning and how?)

Question(s)	What we have planned now	What else we might get
Did the students in the program master the core learning outcomes?	101, 190, 201, 202 common assignments; ePortfolio evaluation; surveys in the 3rd and 4th year	
Did the minor shape their trajectory through the program? Did the minor influence their choice of major? Did learning done in the minor influence learning in other places?	Focus groups; surveys in the 3rd and 4th year	

Did the cohort model contribute to academic achievement and/or an enhanced sense of belonging?	Focus groups; surveys in the 3rd and 4th year	MAPworks
Did the students see coherent pathways through the program? What facilitated these pathways? Themes? Reduced core? Consistent support? Cohorts?	Focus groups; surveys in the 3rd and 4th year	
Did the linked courses facilitate learning and/or an enhanced sense of belonging? Did they facilitate transfer of learning across sections?	Focus groups; surveys in the 3rd and 4th year	
Did the ePortfolio help to create continuity in the program?	Focus groups; surveys in the 3rd and 4th year	
Did faculty team teaching/collaboration result in better student learning and/or an enhanced faculty experience?	Focus groups; Interviews with faculty	

**Other interesting questions:**

Who left the program and why?

Could Mapworks offer us anything here?

Could we see general course eval data and contrast it with other courses?

Could we contrast the unstructured 201/202 with the structured 201/202?

*Summary of Faculty and Student Responses: Components of Value and Appreciation*

<b>Clear Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 cornerstones seminars + e-portfolio course [13 credits]</li> <li>• A distributive core [20 credits]</li> <li>• A minor [16 credits]</li> </ul>
<b>Connection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linking 101 to a 190 course with same cohort all year with faculty who collaborate</li> <li>• Having a structured 2<sup>nd</sup> year seminar sequence including some in year one cohort</li> <li>• Focusing SYEP 201-202 on group project-based learning</li> <li>• FYEP preparing for more extensive SYEP group work</li> <li>• Connecting courses in minor to CS seminars</li> </ul>
<b>Cohort</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of belonging</li> <li>• Increased classroom participation</li> <li>• Ease of assessment in multiple forms at multiple stages</li> </ul>
<b>Choice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The required Minor</li> <li>• Two different interdisciplinary models for the SYEP linked seminar sequences - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Stand-alone sequence outside of distributive core with no disciplinary “Home”</li> <li>○ A sequence of 2 disciplines that “talk” to each other and enable double dipping</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Multiple Lenses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple disciplinary lenses on topic or project in the seminars</li> <li>• Faculty guest visits, both CS and non CS faculty</li> </ul>
<b>Diversity, Justice, Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DJS is infused in FYEP and SYEP</li> <li>• In SYEP, DJS becomes experiential</li> </ul>
<b>Transfer</b>	<p>Students report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeing thematic connections across courses</li> <li>• Seeing connections between courses and life choices</li> <li>• Seeing knowledge and skill transfer across courses</li> </ul> <p>Faculty report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building in reflections on past and current learning</li> <li>• Building in reflections on how current learning might connect to future learning</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seeing evidence of knowledge and skills transfer across courses</li></ul>
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General Education Report 2018-19  
Appendix C.1  
First-Year Experience Program  
Assessment Plan and FYEP 101 Data

*FYEP Assessment Plan*

FYEP Assessment Plan  
2018-19  
Summary

This academic year, 2018-19, is year two of a three-year assessment plan.

A summary of the assessment activities listed follows.

- FYEP 101 Common Assignment Review

Review and analysis of student work, LOs 3 & 4

- FYEP 190 Common Assignment Review

A review of the 190 common assignments for the 2017-18 academic year was held Fall 2018. As this second semester experience will be revised, with an implementation date of Fall 2021, we will not review and analysis student work for FYEP 190 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21.

- 101 Syllabus Evaluation/Norming

Fall 2019: develop a protocol and strategy for collecting and reviewing syllabi for FYEP 101.

- 190 Syllabus Evaluation/Norming

No longer relevant.

Develop a protocol and strategy for collecting and reviewing syllabi for FYEP 102 as part of the course design template.

- New FYEP Faculty Observations

Discuss and develop a formal program for visiting classes, with an emphasis on supporting faculty new to 101 teaching. (Teaching squares model??)

- Linked Community Assessments

These assessments are currently under development in collaboration with Jes Takla, Residential Life Director.

Data from Jes

Comparison of Linked Community common assignment scores to non: suggests the Linked students do “better” on the common assignment.

- FYEP Student Survey

In the development phase, with hopes of implementing 2019-20.

The consistent data point to consider student learning remains the assessment of the FYEP 101 common assignment. The results of the review and analysis of these data inform curricular changes consistently over time. The FYEP 101 handbook and the common assignment have been revised. The data from FYEP 190 have been consistent in pointing to the need to create a more consistent common experience for students that is somehow scaffolded and connected to FYEP 101.

Multiple conversations across campus have impacted how we think about, and what we wonder about, our First-Year Experience. To that end, we propose the following revised assessment plan through the implementation of FYEP 102 in Fall 2021.

## FYEP Assessment Data: FYEP 101 Data

### Writing 101 Assessment May 28 2019 // Final Report and Discussion

#### Summary Statement:

The assessment committee met from 10a to 3p on Tuesday, May 28. We completed the assessment scoring process following our usual process for organizing assessment teams, calibrating samples papers, and scoring a randomized selection of sample common assignments from across Writing 101 section (see more on process below). Our scores were as follows:

	MEAN	ST DEV	MEDIAN	MODE
LO 3: Organization and Structure	2.61	0.86	2.66	3
LO 4: Writing as a Process	2.35	1.01	2.42	2

Fig. 1 2018-19 Writing 101 Assessment Results

	Percentage of Students Excelling (scoring 5 or above)	Percentage of Students Achieving (scoring 3 or above)
LO 3: Organization and Structure	0%	45%
LO 4: Writing as a Process	1.2%	34%

Fig. 2 2018-19 Writing 101 Percentage of Students Achieving or Exceeding Standards

Learning Outcome #3 was redesigned in 2015 and has not been singled out for assessment in the years since. Learning Outcome #4 was revised in 2015 but largely consistent with prior expectations. As such, we can compare 2018-19 data to previous years (see Fig. 3). Note that LO# 4 was assessed in 2015-16 but the data was not available at the time of reporting. LO#4 was not assessed in 2016-17 or 2017-18.

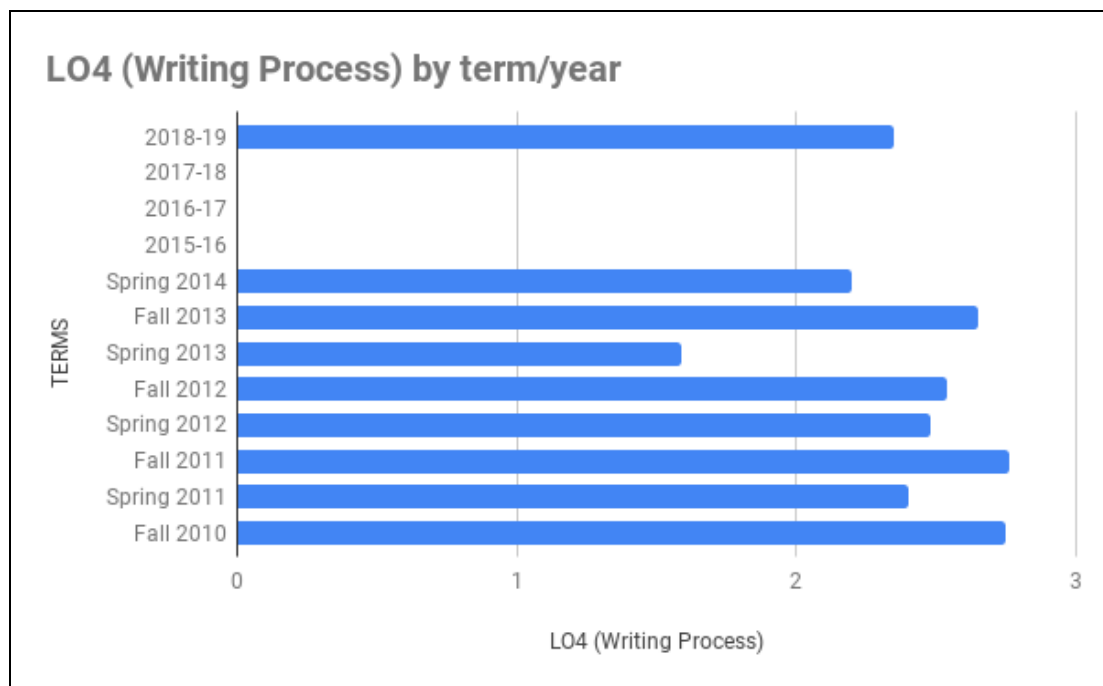


Fig. 3 Mean Scores for LO #4 (Writing Process) 2010 to Present

Scores for LO #4 were in keeping with what we've seen in the past. This suggests that current students are responding to the assessment in similar ways and/or that their skill development is on par with students over the past decade or so. Notably, for both LO #3 and #4, there was a sense among the committee that these papers were "better" than previous years. In the case of LO #4 (on writing process), this is likely because this outcome is best aligned with the nature of the common assignment, a reflection on what students have written in their 101 course. Writing process and reflection fit well together.

After scoring and aggregating data, the committee met for approximately 45 minutes to identify what, if anything, we learned from completing the assessment. Additionally, we considered what, if anything, we'd like to see changed in our common assignment assessment process. Our guiding questions were:

- What surprised you about these student papers?
- What trends did you see? What do you think these trends suggest about what students know or do not know?
- What problems do you find in/with the rubric or common assignment prompt? What moments are confusing or in need of development or revision?

Our discussion led to a number of valuable insights. A few major themes are worth noting in more depth.

**One:** Echoing the assessment committee report from 2017-18, we concluded that **the Writing 101 Common Assignment, as designed, is too constricting and/or confusing for many students.** This was true in our evaluation of LO #1 (Rhetorical Situation) and LO #2 (Argument and Point of View) in last year's assessment. For most students, the stated expectations that they account for learning in the six outcome areas results in the assignment functioning more like a checklist than an authentic space for reflection. They focus on checking the boxes by making claims about each outcome, usually followed by shallow explanation and limited evidence. Most students address these outcomes as rules and standards as a means for showing they've met the expectations. Further, those students who wish to be more thoughtful may be punished as the assignment and scoring rubric are based on commonplace academic writing conventions, which are difficult to integrate in reflective writing. Virtually across the board, students have trouble organizing this paper, and they have difficulty mobilizing evidence (even when they clearly have it).

**Two:** Again, echoing last year's assessment, **the Common Assignment Assessment, as designed, does not show us learning in the desired outcome areas.** There is a fundamental disconnect between what the prompt calls for (reflection about writing) and what the rubric requires (common standards for academic writing). In 2017-18, we saw this most prominently with LO #2 (Argument and Point of View), where students struggled to match thesis development with the assigned task of reflection. Here, we see it again with LO #3 in particular. Students struggle to organize the reflection in a way that meets the common standards for effective organization (as they understand them and/or as they are taught in many 101 sections). Or, they limit the reflective potential of their work by constraining their ideas into a rigid 5-paragraph format. Regarding LO #4, students understand what process is but they struggle to talk about it. We are not doing a good job of helping students see process as a form of intellectual engagement and our assessment tools are not helping.

**Three:** It is clear that **the reflective genre is not taught (or not taught well) in the majority of Writing 101 sections.** We see evidence in the sample papers that 101 faculty are allocating more time to the common assignment, however, this time is seemingly not focused on teaching strategies for reflection or writing about reflection. As a committee, we concluded (as did the 2017-18 committee) that reflection is not something many faculty, particularly those outside of the English Dept., are well-equipped to teach. Additional support is required.

**Four:** **We need to triangulate this data to understand how students are experiencing the course and the assessment.** More specifically, we want to know the extent to which our Common Assignment Assessment favors particular students based on prior knowledge/experience. Further, we question if our rubric, as designed, validates student voices/experiences or if it calls on them to conform. We discussed the following strategies for triangulation:

- Surveying students about their impressions of the course and the common assignment; ideally a pre-and post-survey might be implemented to capture change over time.
- Surveying faculty about their understanding of the purpose and value of reflective writing, and of the common assignment more specifically.



- Cross-referencing passing rates and survey data with other student information (AIS Scores, SES data) to determine who is being served (or underserved) by our current practices.

At the end of our discussion we evaluated a proposed revision to the Common Assignment Prompt that would see our assessment process include both the reflection and the original artifact paper described in/by the reflection. With two papers under consideration, we agreed that we could better evaluate student progress in relation to the core learning outcomes. The committee offered suggestions to revise the prompt by 1) emphasizing the need for evidence of change/development over time; 2) having students include feedback they've received that initiated particular changes or revisions; 3) focusing more on reflection in the common assignment as the artifact essay will demonstrate ability in conventional academic writing areas. Several committee members wondered aloud if we might take this one step further and require a portfolio. For now, we agreed to try the common assignment reflection and artifact essay only in our next assessment cycle to evaluate how our understanding of student learning/achievement might change based on the additional writing sample.

This revision will be implemented for the 2019-20 academic year.

## Assessment Scoring Process

We had 35 sections of Writing 101 in the 2018-19 academic year. Two or three papers were selected from each course to result in a total test sample of 90. The assessment coordinator randomized which courses would have three papers selected to reach the desired total. Similarly, papers from each course were selected using a random number generator. In the event a randomly selected paper was missing, the next paper in alphabetical order for the course was selected. Papers were printed, names were redacted. Each paper received a unique code for use in scoring and data collection. This code is known only to the director of assessment.

Scoring tables consisted of five volunteer readers. Prior to scoring we conducted a calibration session to arrive at agreed standards and goals for evaluation. Two papers were selected by the assessment coordinator for calibration. Scores were generated by the group using the Writing 101 rubric (for LOs 3 and 4 only), followed by conversation among the raters. When each table agreed that they had consistency within one whole number we considered the table calibrated.

Papers were unassigned within table groups to facilitate a shared pace for assessment. That is, papers were selected from a shared pile, meaning some raters scored more papers based on the length of the samples and/or their ability to read and rate more quickly. Each paper was scored on individual rater sheets. These sheets were compiled by a table leader. Each paper was read twice. In the event a score for a particular learning outcome differed by more than one whole number, a third reading was conducted to remove the outlier score. Agreement at two tables was high (Table 1 80% agreement after initial scoring, Table 2 75% agreement after initial scoring), while the third table was less consistent and required third/tie-breaker readings for nearly half of the papers scored (Table 3 55% agreement after initial scoring).

## Assessment Discussion and Debrief Notes

<p><b>Table 1 (Rona, Neva, Paul, Nancy, Christine)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We noticed more consistency across papers. It seems like most instructors are spending time on teaching the [common assignment] essay. But some did feel like it was more of a draft or brainstorming.</li> <li>• Process was usually referenced even if it was not explored.</li> <li>• Peer review, writing center, feedback came up across papers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Table 2 (Nathalie, Hillary, Adela, Jan, Mike R.)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing 101 students are still grappling with their place in the world; we need to keep this in perspective when evaluating their work...what are we asking of them?</li> <li>• Assignment and rubric are not aligned on LO#; the rubric focused on feedback exclusively; is that the only important part of process?</li> <li>• AP influence; we need to teach them to relearn approaches to writing</li> <li>• How much structure in the [common]assignment is useful? Structure makes this easier to assess, but does it help learning?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Table 3 (Leslie, Patrick, Roberto, Lisa, Austin)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students said they weren't comfortable making their own arguments and defending them with evidence.</li> <li>• Difficult to do this assessment with a reflection paper. Would have been easier with the original paper they were talking about.</li> <li>• A surprise: almost not citation of original papers.</li> <li>• Students know writing as a process in a literal way (in stages), but not as a philosophical idea of growth as writers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>All group discussion notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call for an FYEP group to promote good practice; we need a workshop on how to grade/comment on this kind of writing.</li> <li>• Note the distinction between "guiding reviewers" and reflection (the former is more common in the common assignment)</li> <li>• Where do we draw a line between something appearing in a paper (e.g., effective paragraphs) and their understanding of how to use them? LO 3 was the question here. If there is any structure at all should they score higher?</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students show the ability to see the difference between high school and college writing.</li> <li>Some showed awareness of the LOs, some stayed focused on narrative (chronology).</li> <li>Some work needs to be done in terms of the genre, conventions of this kind of paper.</li> <li>Most students identified what changed, some identified why, but few examined how their work changed.</li> <li>Trends suggest that students know there is a process but not how to examine it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The common assignment prompt: too many elements can lead treating the project as a checklist, which hinders organization. We may be teaching to the tool...are we getting good writing from that?</li> <li>How do you teach habits of mind as a writer? E.g., writing thoughtfully, making meaning from chaos/ambiguity.</li> <li>Outcome #3: can we better define scale/scope for part and whole?</li> <li>Can we survey students about the course? What was challenging or enlightening to you? Where are your gaps? E.g. what was it you discovered in this class as part of your writing that your didn't know about and found difficult? What do you wish you had known sooner?</li> <li>Students are able to articulate how to do things, but they aren't always able to do it in practice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rule followers--papers lacked voice, or those that had more voice scored lower on the rubric.</li> <li>Missing...the partnering of the student with the professor and writing community. The culture of individual, competitive thinking. Important to frame the community aspect as different students have different expectations of college and different perceptions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The common assignment is not a priority in some classes. How can we support reflective writing? How can we better communicate both our process and our results to help faculty see value in the assessment? How do we teach them to integrate evidence as a part of reflection?</li> <li>The papers seem rule-oriented; they seem excited to talk about standards and "rule." This is likely driven by the fact that the prompt functions for students as a checklist; it is difficult to organize or reflect with so many rigid expectations.</li> <li>Can we teach reflection in 2 weeks at the end of a long semester?</li> <li>Students view process as a series of steps or stages; not as thoughtful, not growth as thinkers/writers.</li> <li>Students seem to miss the sense that writing is done in community with others.</li> <li>Students seem to do better with LO 3 and 4, but these are also more boring.</li> <li>How might a portfolio change this assessment?</li> <li>Does our rubric make room for unique ways of thinking, knowing, and communicating that students may bring with them to the course? Does it validate their voice or ask them to conform? How can we capture resistance to the prompt?</li> <li>How do students read our outcomes? How might they interpret these ideas differently than we do?</li> <li>Are students themselves one audience for the reflection? What do they want from it (or, what can it provide them whether they know they want it or not)?</li> </ul>
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General Education Report 2018-19  
Appendix D  
PLUS 100 Assessment Summary

**PLUS 100 Summary**  
**May 2019**

Context

The history of PLUS 100 is rooted in a 1-credit course, PSYC 113 Education and Career Planning, developed to support students struggling to choose a major. The course was developed and taught through Academic Advising. In the mid-2000s, then Director Pat Roundy used PSYC 113 as a core component of a retention initiative that focused on providing support for incoming students with a GPA below 3.0 or SAT scores below 1000, or both. Over the past years, PSYC 113 was seen by others as an initial “introduction to PLU” course, perhaps to be considered as a requirement for all students as a “common experience”. Ongoing conversations around the learning outcomes, purpose, and focus for this course have provided for interesting disagreements as to who this course might be best supporting.

During the 2017-18 academic year, a PLUS 100 working group was appointed to review data on which student cohorts were most impacted by their PLUS 100 experience, and what type of course activities seemed most important and influential. Data reviewed determined that AIS 1-3 students who also identified as first-generation, students of color, and commuter were most impacted by this experience. Experiences that focused on building community for particular identity groups, along with a focus on support resources as well as the development of those skills that provide “academic capital”, were identified. For the Fall 2018 incoming class, sections of PLUS 100 were created for AIS 1-3 students as well as first-gen, students of color, and commuter students; as well, a section for incoming football players was also added to the mix. Students were identified through Banner data, and enrolled into an identity-based section. Jes Takla took on the daunting task of developing a curricular outline, and former instructors developed lesson plans to add to a shared archive.

The information below is derived from instructor and student feedback (written and oral).

What we know

- *Students: Who does PLUS 100 best serve?* I think there continues to be consensus that PLUS 100 is not for every first year student. There is a developmental/pedagogical focus that supports this. The data (retention, persistence, student feedback) continues to show that the original groups we pinpointed last year (first-generation, commuter, Students of Color, AIS 1-3) still benefit the most from this experience (e.g., their retention/persistence rate is higher than those who do not participate in a PLUS 100

class). The Athletic team pilot section with incoming football players was deemed successful.

- *Curriculum: What should be included?*
  - Size. It is clear from instructor and student feedback that last year's curriculum design was "too big" for the 1-credit hour assigned to this course.
  - Duration. Consensus remains on a 15-week course, 1 hour each week.
  - Outcomes. The response that emerges from the conversations and written feedback from both instructors and students is to focus on the original #1 and #3 outcomes: Developing a set of academic/personal goals, behaviors, and strategies that will help you successfully transition to PLU; and, using campus & community resources (e.g., faculty, peers, centers, departments) to assist you in your academic pursuits, well being, and support your college transition.
  - Role of Cultural Capital. As appropriate in each identity-based cohort, some time should be spent reflecting on the original outcome #3: Identify and reflect on your cultural capital (e.g., strengths, values, experiences, and abilities), and how you can continue to grow your capital, through in-class exercises, assignments, and other class activities.
  - Primary Focus on Academic Capital. Clearly instructors prioritized a set of knowledge and skills that represent the academic capital necessary for transition and on-going success as a student at PLU. They found ways to build upon and develop the cultural capital that their specific identity group brought to the table, and, in the end, desired the time and reflection to spend enough time making these connections for students.
  - Course-level Design and Development. The developed curriculum provides structured lesson plans (something that was lacking in past iterations of this experience) that provides instructors with foundational places to begin. However, most instructors found the structure daunting, often not providing a flexibility to meet the needs of their particular group of students.
  - Teaching Assistants. For students, have a peer mentor as part of the course was a key factor in the success of the course. We are able to have students do this for credit, but are not able to pay them.
- *Resources*. Currently, the resource model for this program is based upon the time when it was primarily an initiative of the then Academic Advising Office. The Director of Academic Advising facilitated this work, and it was included as a component of the Academic Advisors workload. As well, certain colleagues in the Student Life Division whose work portfolio included retention/support work with students were included to provide adequate section availability. Thus, there are no designated funds to pay instructors; the FYEP budget can support minimal funds for supplies/food (\$100 per section) and food for an instructional development workshop. We need to be clear on a model of compensation for instructors, either within their current job description, or for a stipend.
- *Organizational Home*. As mentioned in the Resources section, the original "home" for this program was Academic Advising. Last year, FYEP became a temporary home as

Academic Advising transitioned to the Center for Student Success. Is this the right home for this program?

### Recommendations for Fall 2019

- *Students.* PLUS 100 sections should be developed around particular identity-based cohorts the data shows as supported by this experience. Currently, this includes First-Gen students, Students of Color, and Commuter students; for Fall 2019, a pilot program will provide PLUS 100 experiences for all incoming athletes. Again, a focus on AIS 1-3 students (though I'm not sure if this shifts as the AIS scale has moved from 5 to 10). For Fall 2019: 1 section each for Students of Color, Commuter, First-Generation students; 6 sections for Athletes; 1 section for non-conditionally admitted intend Nursing students at the recommendation of CSS Advisors. Data pulled from the Banner data we have, passed along to advising, who can then encourage students to enroll.
- *Curriculum.* The work last year has provided us with baseline lesson plans around a wide-range of topics. We also learned we need to insure several things: 1) the curriculum accurately reflects 1-credit of work for both instructors and students, 2) the curriculum is meaningful and do-able, 3) the experience develops both community for students and relationships with students, and among students and faculty/staff, 4) the curriculum has enough flexibility that instructors can adjust to meet the needs of their particular cohort's needs, and 5) the instructors have enough guidance on the side to feel supported. Recommendations for Fall 2019 curriculum:
  - Focus on Outcomes #1 and #3, with attention to cultural capital as it fits within those outcomes.
  - Focus on "academic capital" as the common experience. Determine 3-5 common lessons/tools that everyone will do.
  - Development of a full course, choosing from the array of lesson plans available is up to each instructor to fill the additional weeks.
  - Provide on-going development and support for instructors. 1) August workshop (morning "training", afternoon course development), 2) Electronic responses/support via Google Hangouts (?), 3) mid-way meetings??
  - Consider offering methods for "on the go" assessment, or what are effective ways to know where students are?
  - Develop a measurement of the outcomes.
- *Resources.* Resources remain at the same level as last year.
  - *Instructors/Staffing.* Recruitment from the "usual suspects", mostly staff. Coaches involved in the Athletic sections. Teaching Assistants recruited by instructors.
  - *Supplies.* Remains the same amount through FYEP budget.
- *Organizational Home.* Remains in FYEP.

### Proposing and Implementing a Long-term Plan for Program Sustainability

By the end of the Fall 2019 semester, a proposal for long-term plan for PLUS 100 that is sustainable over time will be submitted to the Provost for approval and implementation to begin in Fall 2020. This proposal will include clear parameters around:

- Students: Who are the students who will participate in this program? Why?
- Learning outcomes: What are the specific learning outcomes for this program? Why?
- Curricular Priorities: What content is prioritized?
- Instructors: Who will be the instructors of this experience? How will this work be reflected in their work, and in compensation? What are the qualifications required?
- Organizational Home: Where does this program live, and who will have oversight and administration of it?
- Resources: Include a budget that accommodates staffing and other support activities.

General Education Report 2018-19  
Appendix E  
Common Reading  
Student Response Survey Data

Common Reading Fall 2018  
Prepared for Student Engagement  
Max Staples, Assessment Intern

### **Background**

The Common Reading Program (CRP), created for incoming students and based on high impact educational practices, seeks to aid their transition by providing a common experience that communicates PLU's values and expectations. The program began in Fall 2007 and became required for all incoming first year students in Fall 2012. Students read a common text over the summer and discuss themes from the book with their peers and faculty members. In addition, the CRP is designed to support the First Year Experience Program objectives. The objectives are included below for additional context.

1. Support student transition from high school to college
2. Initiate/sustain academic foundation for General Education
3. Convey PLU's mission and emphasis on vocation and/or DJS
4. Practice accessing academic resources
5. Provide common time frame for learning
6. Provide sense of community & supportive relationships

PLU is also noted for its commitment to diversity, justice and sustainability (DJS). The Common Reading Selection Committee intentionally chooses texts that align with these principles in order to provide an opportunity for critical discussion and engagement with issues surrounding the DJS values as a common academic experience. Themes are drawn from the text and used in the discussion guide. This year's discussion guide uplifted the following themes in no particular order – Fear and Place in the World, Place and Belonging, Constructions of Race, Narratives, Literary Style and Rhetorical Situation.

### **Methodology**

This report summarizes findings from a survey administered to students that participated in the CRP. A staff survey was also administered, but those results are not included in this report. The survey was a mixed methodology instrument. A total of seven questions were included in the survey, six of the questions were qualitative and one was quantitative. The questions were designed around the CRP and FYEP objectives, in order to evaluate the efficacy of the CRP program through student experiences.

A total of 535 out of 666 first year students attended the CRP (80%). Removing student athletes that were unable to attend the program due to away game commitments the attendance proportion increased from 80% to 83%. Among those whom attended, survey respondents totaled 403, however, not all of these students responded to all of the questions.

### Analysis

#### Question 1 – Did you read *Between the World and Me*?

Figure 1 depicts the proportion of students who did or did not read the book

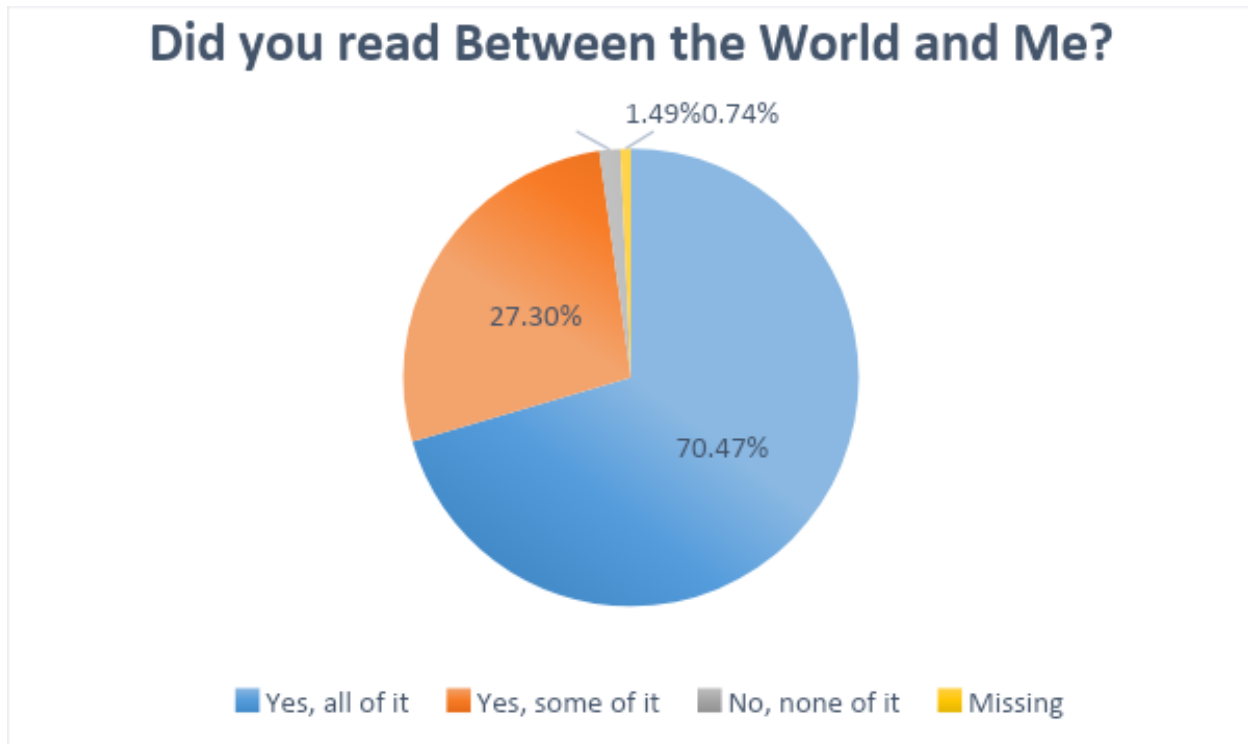


Figure 1

The vast majority of students stated that they had read the book (98.1%) compared to a small proportion that stated they did not read the book (1.36%). The remaining 0.54% of students did not respond to this question.

#### Question 2 – Please tell us why you *did not* read *Between the World and Me*.

Only 5 students identified as not having read the book. Their responses are listed below

- "I clicked the wrong button, **I did read it**"
- "**I did not know** we had to get the book until arriving on campus"
- "**...I was working 12+ hours** of construction and was too exhausted at the end of work. Once I got here though I did go through it and research the author and book to understand and have a grasp of it"
- "**I forgot about the summer reading** and when I did remember it, I had no time left as I had other obligations such as work and preparing for the school year."
- "**Came to orientation late** and never got a chance"



**Question 3 – What was one new thing you learned about the text as a result of interaction with your faculty group leader?**

Figure 2 Depicts the frequency of identified themes. The categories are not mutually exclusive.

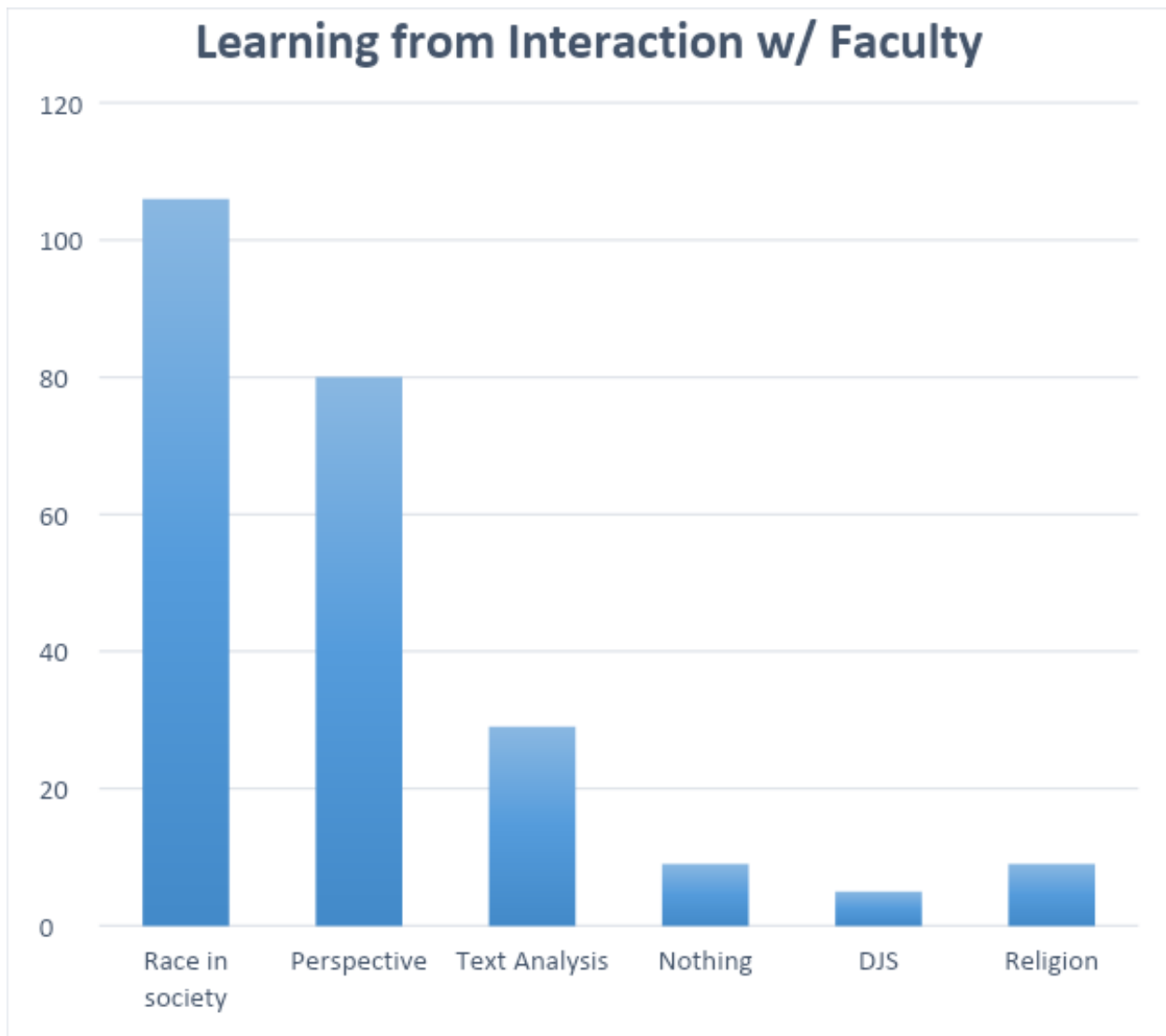
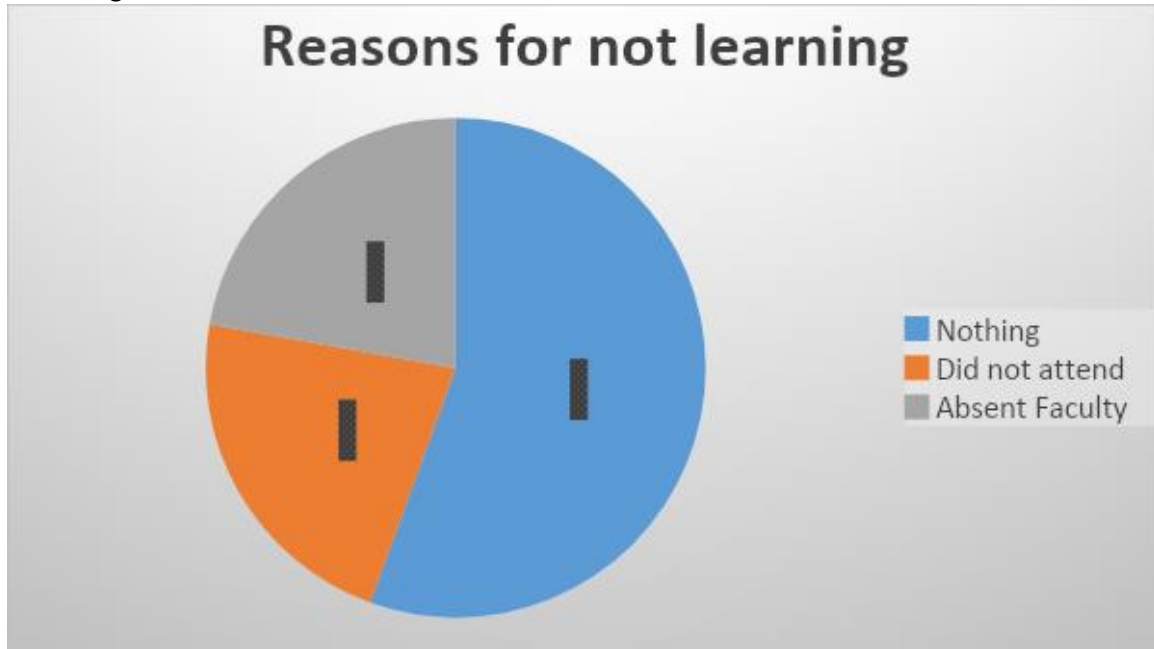


Figure 2

One of the program goals for the CRP is to initiate student understanding of differences and provide an entry for students into ideas such as race, otherness, age, religion and education. The responses indicated that as a result of discussions with faculty about *Between the World and Me* students were led to learn about topics relating to race in society and otherness in a large proportion – 27% of respondents used words relating to racial issues and 20% of students identified as having learned about interpretation of the text through another's point of view (using words such as perspective, interpretation, lens and experience). In addition, 2% of students responded about religion and 1% responded with words relating to DJS.

Another goal of the CRP that falls underneath the FYEP objectives is to initiate an academic foundation for general education. In relation to this objective 8% of respondents identified as having learned about text analysis using words such as themes, analysis, assess, critical and symbolism.

Only 2% of respondents, a total of 9 students, stated that they did not learn anything as a result of interaction with faculty. The reasons students gave varied. The breakdown of these responses are shown in figure



3.

**Question 4 - What was one new thing you learned about the text as a result of discussion with your classmates and group members?**

Figure 4: Frequency of responses from interaction with peers. Categories are not mutually exclusive.

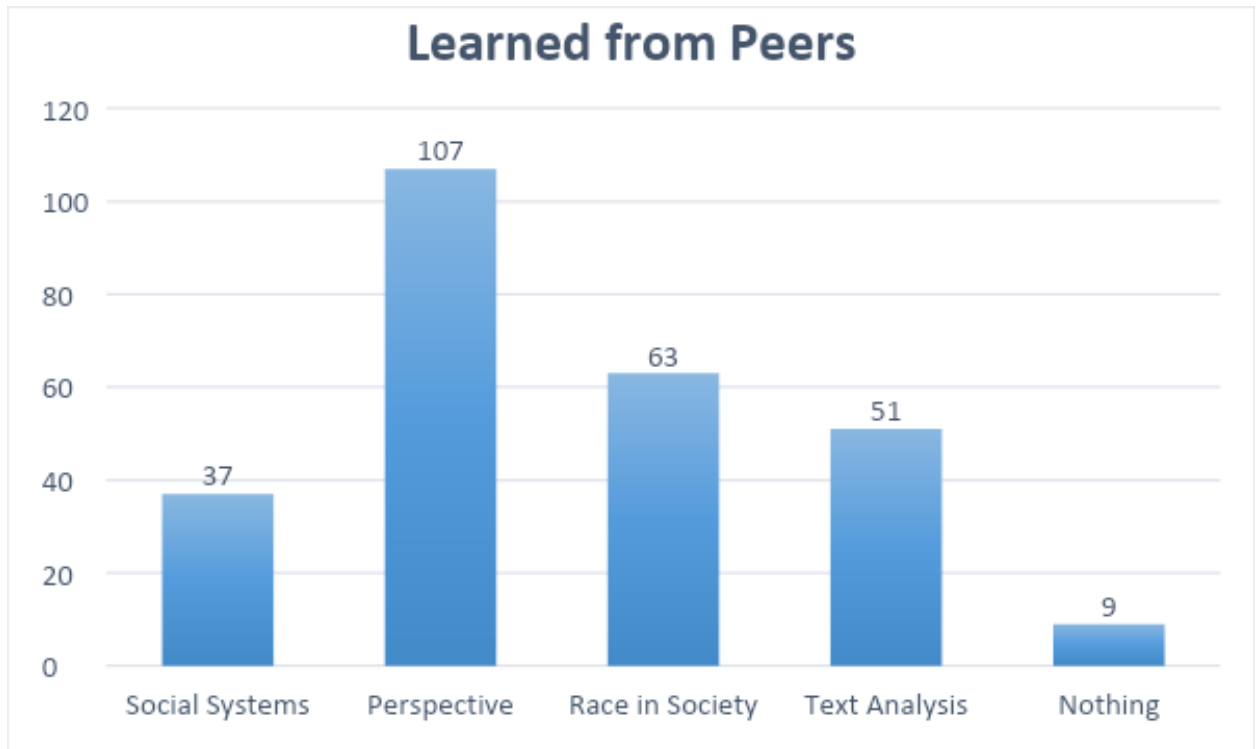
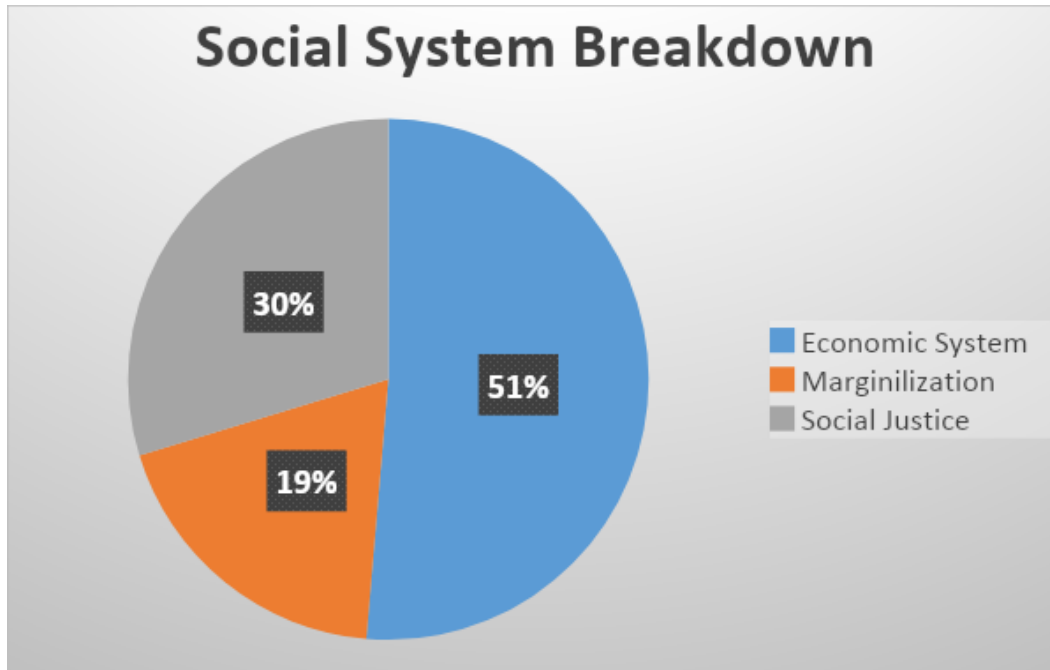


Figure 4

As a result of interaction with peers, students overwhelmingly stated that they had learned about another's perspective (34% of the analyzed responses). The responses within this category varied considerably. Some students identified specific ideas from the text that helped them to see another's perspective while others cited specific interactions with their peers. Several responses are listed below.

- "We learned and talked about all the themes of the book including: fear, race/racism, body, history and religion. I learned that all of these themes are prominent throughout the book and they are super important to Coates and his life."
- "How different my classmates interpretations were. I learned to appreciate their views of the book through their own lenses."
- "In our little group discussion of 3-4 of us, is that one of my classmate, being a women of color and Latina, she doesn't fear for her life but that she fears for her younger brothers life because it is different between them. She hopes that he will find inspiration to fight back and that she will always fight back her him and I thought that was very strong and rich."

Another category worth noting is social systems, 12% of students identified having learned about various social systems. Students were able to identify systems of hierarchy that play roles of oppression in our society. These include economic systems, marginalization and social justice. The proportion of responses out of the 37 students that responded in this way are displayed in figure 5. One Response from each category is listed



below.

- Marginalization: “My privileged classmates emphasized how they will never truly understand or resonate with the struggle marginalized people endure to protect their bodies.”
- Social Justice: “I learned that the text itself is used to call the reader to action, to cause deeper thought in the reader, and that the intimacy of a letter to a son makes all the difference in the book as compared to if it was simply written in an essay-style or typical book.”
- Economic System: “I learned about how the Dream that Coates describes is difficult to escape because of the way it is perpetrated everywhere and easier to stay in than to “wake up” from. Many people stay with the Dream because of the way it corrupts our society into believing that it is the right way to do things.”

Finally, 3% of students responded that they had not learned anything. Over half of the students in this category were absent from the discussion and the remaining students offered little information. I am including the latter half of responses below. These responses could be interpreted as an unwillingness to engage, but without more context it is difficult to determine why.

- “Nothing”
- “Not much.”
- “None? I can’t remember anything.”

**Question 5 - What was one new thing you learned about diversity, justice, or sustainability (DJS) as a result of participating in Common Reading?**

Figure 6: Frequency of responses for DJS

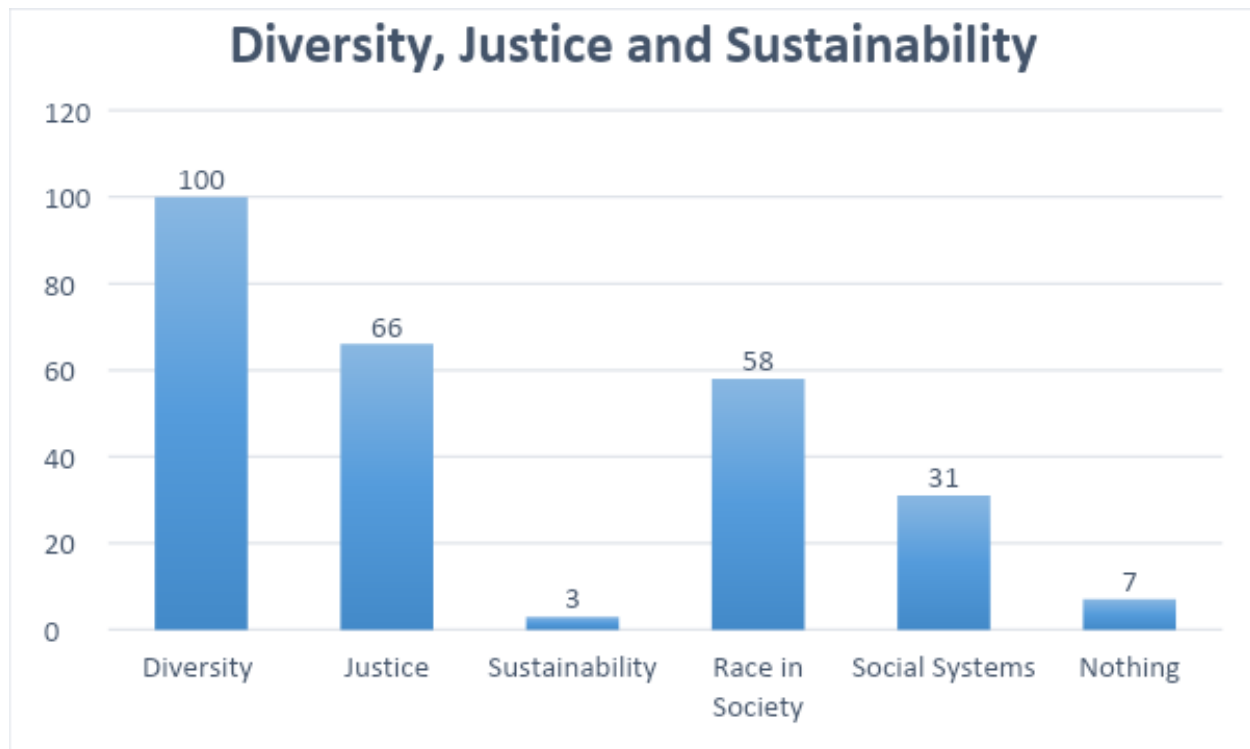


Figure 6

A large proportion of respondents identified that they had learned something about diversity and justice (33% and 22%, respectively). While there is a lot of overlap between these two categories there are definitely some ideas that stuck out for each. With respect to justice, many students were on the awareness side of the engagement spectrum. Students identified a need to take action in the form of listening to others perspectives, advocating for marginalized groups and ‘passing the mic’ to those marginalized groups. With respect to diversity, students recognized that various marginalized groups can have vastly different experiences. Students also seemed to really step outside of self and recognize they may never fully understand another’s experience, but that it is important to hear their stories. Several responses from each of these categories are listed below.

Diversity:

- “Diversity is extremely vital in an environment because it can led to new experiences”
- “I learned about the importance of diverse stories in literature and other medias. This book clarified and informed me about the black experience in a way I had never been communicated with before, and to avoid 'the norm' so sterile, one must represent in the media groups who are oppressed.”

Justice:

- “From reading Ta Nehisi, I realized that we can’t forget about the oppression and struggles that the black body faces, along with all minority groups. We have to do something instead of waiting for others to do it for us.”
- “People have many different experiences growing up. I should not look at someone and assume that they haven't been through any injustice. Which is why I need to be conscious of the fact that people have fears, people have anxieties, and most of all people go through events in their

life that mold them. Every person needs to do their job to support and love others, while doing their best to understand and stand up for others.”

One category that was framed in the question was rarely identified by respondents – sustainability. Only 1% of students mentioned sustainability and the responses were very different in terms of understanding and context. I have included these responses below.

- “I learned that everyone comes from a different place which is where "diversity" comes from, that everyone should have equal opportunity to their own dream, which is where "justice" comes from, and that we are all a product of our own heritage and background, which is where sustainability comes from.”
- “I learned that diversity and justice are different to everyone due to their many lenses. Whereas I did not learn anything relating to sustainability.”
- “I learned that the societal institutions that we create diminish sustainable environments in which justice can be held.”

Some other categories that overlapped with DJS, but had enough specific responses to earn their own category were race in society and social systems. The race in society category had responses pertaining to police brutality, biological facts about race and the origins of racism. As a result of interaction with the text, students definitely seem to understand the presence of the social systems at play in our world. Students distinguished between the lack of justice within the American dream and the importance of education and celebration of diversity within the education system to enable further progress of DJS within of our society as a whole. Several responses can be seen below.

#### Race in Society:

- “I learned that police brutality is not by any means a new thing. Ta-Nehisi Coates talked about the murder of Prince Jones, and compared it to the murder of Michael Brown. Police brutality has always been an unfortunate reality, so as social media, and reporting has been made easier, so a wider range of people have access to news, police brutality seems like a new advent.”
- “From reading Ta Nehisi, I realized that we can’t forget about the oppression and struggles that the black body faces, along with all minority groups. We have to do something instead of waiting for others to do it for us.”

#### Social Systems:

- “That there is a deeper level of racial separation based on ideas, privileges, and fabricated-social concepts.”
- “I learned more about our country and our governments unfair justice system. All over media I see examples of police unjust when it comes to minorities but now, I was finally able to see from the eyes of someone who has experienced unjust throughout their entire life. Justice is one of the roots that this country was defined upon. Our founding fathers fought against the unjust they were experiencing from Britain and once we won the war it was represented that we were now free from this unjust. However, Coates was able to represent that what we tried to free ourselves from centuries ago is still just as prevalent in today's society.”

Finally, a small proportion of students responded that they did not learn anything (2%). Again, this could be seen as an unwillingness to engage, but without more context it is difficult to determine.

**Question 6 - After participating in Common Reading, what is one new thought you have about yourself as a student and your place in the PLU community?**

Figure 7: Frequency of students that identified one new thing they learned about themselves as a student or a member of the PLU community.

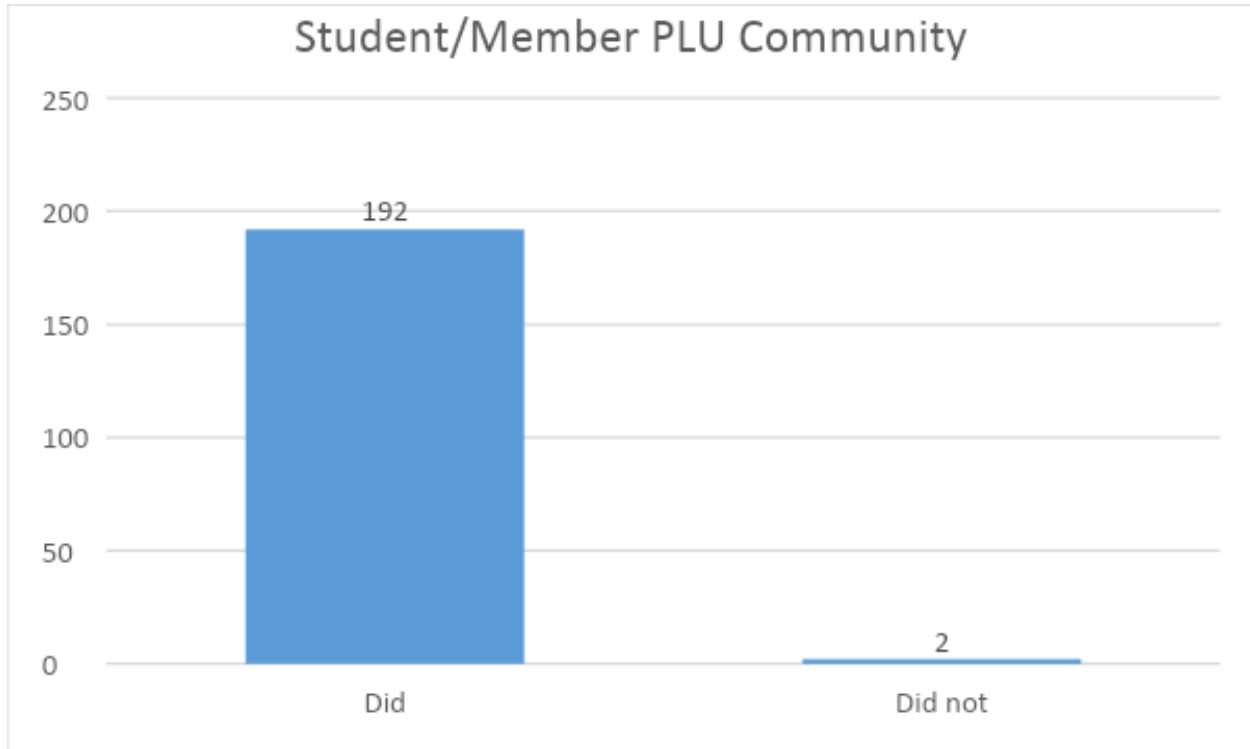
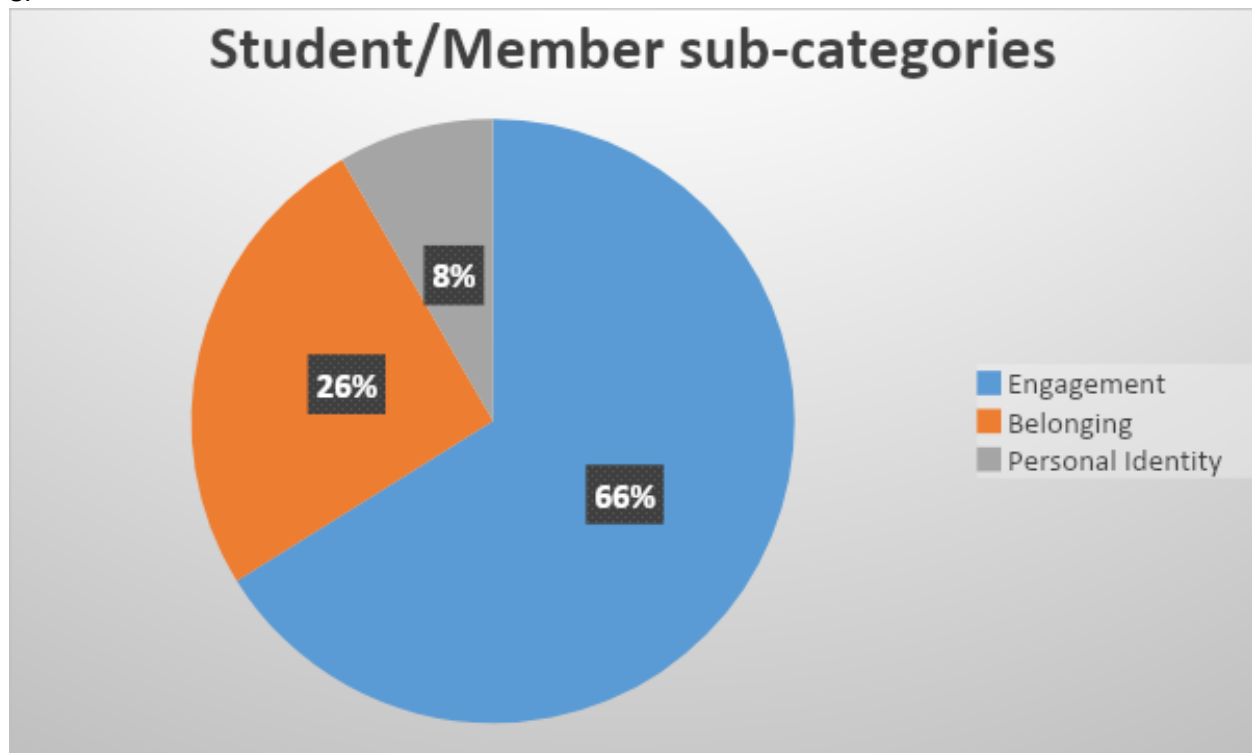


Figure 7

An overwhelming majority of students were able to identify one new thing they learned about themselves as a student and as a member of the PLU community (99% to 1%, respectively). Upon analyzing the responses several themes were evident. These were engagement, belonging and personal identity. The breakdown of the proportions of student responses for these categories are listed below in Figure

8.



The engagement category represents students who identified their responsibility as a student and member of the community to engage with others. Responses include those whom identified a new awareness of becoming an advocate for marginalized groups within the community, listening to others experiences and speaking out against injustices in general.

The belonging category represents students that identified a newfound sense of belonging within the PLU community. These responses include words like safe space, connected and welcome. Finally the personal identity category represents students that identified as having learned something new about themselves. Responses from each of the categories are listed below.

#### Engagement:

- "That it is my role as a student to treat everyone with fairness and respect. To serve everyone surrounding me justice. By doing so i can help create a more diverse and sustainable atmosphere at PLU."
- "I believe as a student at PLU it is our duty to advocate for different people not only in our school community but also our greater community and society as a whole. But also change starts on a smaller scale, there being personal families. If one can challenge views of their peers but not of their own family how are they truly an advocate?"

#### Belonging:

- "As a person of three marginalized identities, I feel like I will be very accepted here. And I have learned to always stand up for other marginalized identities I may not be a part of."
- "Everyone has a place at PLU. Everyone is and should be made to feel included."



### Personal Identity:

- “I can learn how to be comfortable with who I am and who I will be and accept it.”
- “I think that I can fit into the community as an academic individual more than I thought I might. I genuinely enjoyed the discussions and felt relatively confident participating in them during Common Reading, so I feel more confident about myself as a university student.”

### **Question 7 - Participating in the Common Reading Program told me that PLU had high expectations for me as a student. (Mark the response that most closely matches your experience)**

Figure 9: Frequency of responses for student’s idea of PLU’s expectations of students

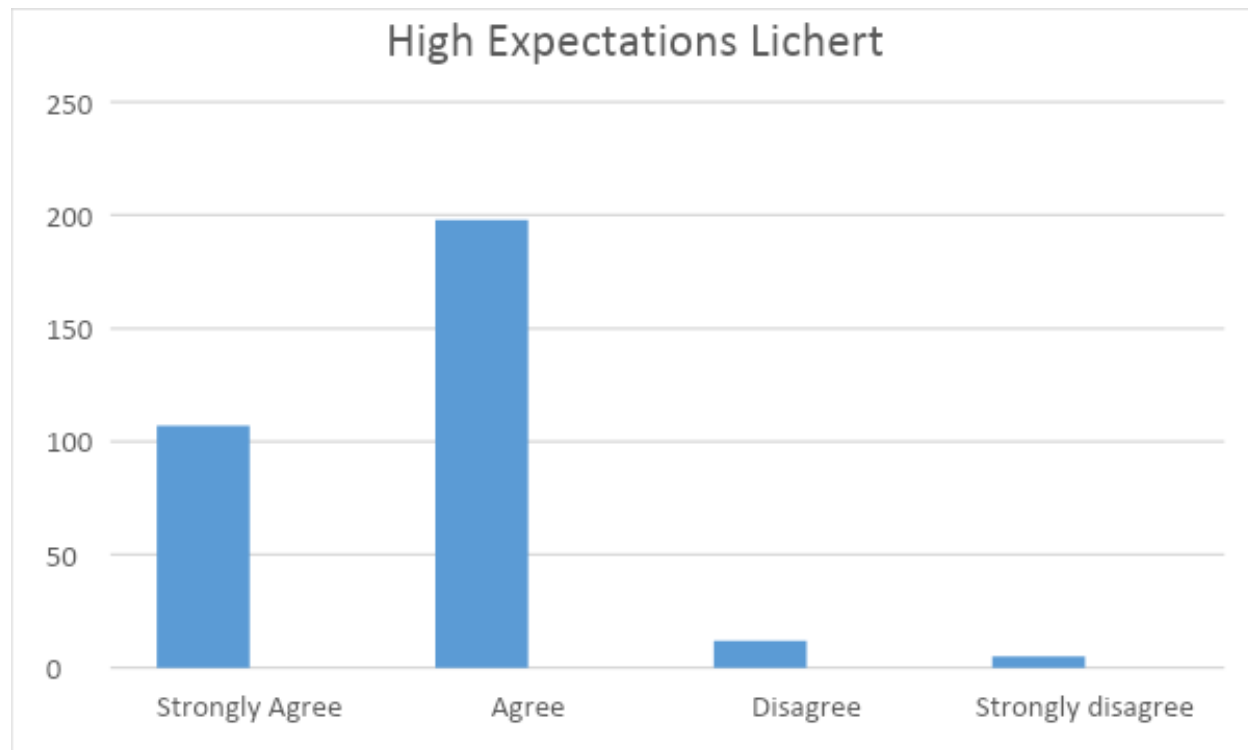


Figure 9

The majority of students tend to agree that the CRP told them PLU had high expectations of them as students.

### **Conclusion**

Participation in the CRP was high with the majority of students reading the required text and engaging with faculty and peers throughout discussions. This was evidenced by the number and detail of responses given by students. Of the students that identified not learning anything as a result of interaction with faculty over half listed absent faculty as a reason. This tells me that as a result of absent faculty several students experienced a disruption to their continuity of learning. Providing a contingency plan for absent faculty could mitigate this disruption. Consistent with the CRP objective of providing students an entry into difference, the responses obtained from many of the questions show students overwhelmingly experienced and recognized others perspectives. The data has shown that this newfound awareness of others perspectives has led to a willingness of students to engage in and contribute to the PLU community and its goals of diversity, justice and sustainability. Finally, the responses clearly show that the text was a contributor to students learning. This was evidenced by the

specific language from the text that students included in their responses. It is my conclusion that this text served to contribute to the goals and objectives of the CRP and FYEP.