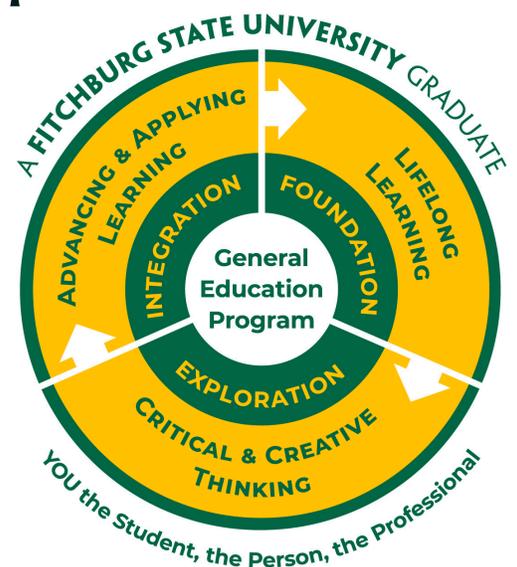


Learning Outcomes Assessment Report 2023

Information Literacy, Reading, and Writing

Fitchburg State University
General Education Program



General Education Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Report 2023

Information Literacy, Reading, and Writing

Process:

In order to assess the new General Education Program, all instructors of courses that receive learning outcome or skill designations will be asked to volunteer student work and participate in the assessment process. Assessment completed by faculty that “closes the loop” and provides data back to instructors in order to inform and strengthen instructional and program design is essential to the health and further refinement of our general education.

The General Education Ambassador and Assessment Program is comprised of faculty and librarians working together to develop campus communities of practice around our learning outcomes; participation in the assessment process is a key way of becoming active in these communities of practice.

The design of our assessment procedures will take place over a five-year period, with the General Education learning outcomes and skills organized into five groups. One group will be assessed each academic year. Assessment program design began in 2021-2022 with the development of **Information Literacy, Reading, and Writing** rubrics by faculty/librarians assembled through an open campus call ([see rubrics here](#)).

In Spring 2023, the call for artifacts went out to campus to request instructors voluntarily submit student artifacts from fall 2022 and/or spring 2023 courses that have been officially designated through AUC with any of the following General Education attributes: Information Literacy, Reading, and Writing as either a learning outcome or a skill. Instructors were asked to submit student artifacts through a Google form stored only on the General Education Program Google Drive. Instructors could remove student names and other identifying information from artifacts themselves or they could submit as is, since all remaining identifying information was subsequently removed by the Director of Assessment before the artifacts were assessed. Assignment descriptions were also requested in case they were needed by assessors for clarification.

A second call went out in Spring 2023 to request assessors to assess the student artifacts submitted. To be eligible to assess, a faculty member or librarian must teach at least one course with the learning outcome designation that they will assess or offer library instruction in information literacy. Three assessors per learning outcome were compensated for their participation in Assessment Day on May 22, 2023.

During Assessment Day, assessors had the opportunity to norm the assessment process, complete assessment of a selection of artifacts, and debrief on the process, including the effectiveness of the rubrics. Assessment Day was facilitated by the Director of Assessment, Cate Kaluzny, and Chair of the General Education Program, Kisha Tracy.

Although the number of artifacts received did not quite meet the goal of 100 per learning outcome, a significant number of artifacts were collected, sampled, scored, and analyzed in conjunction with the May 2023 Assessment Day. This sets up the assessment to both aid in improving the process of future assessment as well to improve the shape of the General Education curriculum.

The following describes the level of sampling and the total artifacts assessed:

| Outcome | #Artifacts Total | #Artifacts Sample Scored | #Assessors |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Information Literacy</i> | 169 | 29 | 3 |
| <i>Reading</i> | 56 | 35 | 3 |
| <i>Writing</i> | 72 | 30 | 3 |

Summary of Data:

The following illustrates the mean of means for each of the learning outcomes assessed (Reading, Information Literacy, Writing):

Data is comprised assigning the following values: N/A=0, Emerging=1, Developing=2, Refining=3, Internalizing=4

| Outcome | Mean of Means |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Information Literacy</i> | 0.72 |
| <i>Reading</i> | 1.48 |
| <i>Writing</i> | 2.64 |

(The above means or averages provide summary points of reference. It is more helpful to look at data below from each individual rubric to make comparisons between individual criteria for each outcome.)

As a reference for analyzing the following data:

- The “mean” is the “average.”
- The “median” is the “middle” value in the list of numbers.
- The “mode” is the value that occurs most often.
- The standard deviation is the average amount of variability in your dataset. It tells you, on average, how far each value lies from the mean.

Also for reference, the [Reading, Information Literacy, and Writing Rubrics](#) can be found here.

Information Literacy:

Process

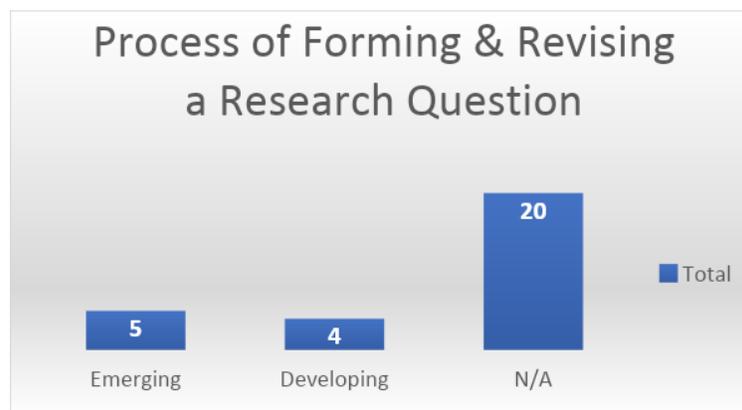
| | Forming and Revising Research Question | Identifying Authoritative Sources | Locating Sources Using Research Strategies | Process of an Effective Plan for Finding Information |
|---------------------------|---|--|---|---|
| Mean | .45 | 1.03 | .38 | .38 |
| Median | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Mode | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Standard Deviation | .74 | .73 | .49 | .56 |
| Sum | 13 | 30 | 11 | 11 |

Product

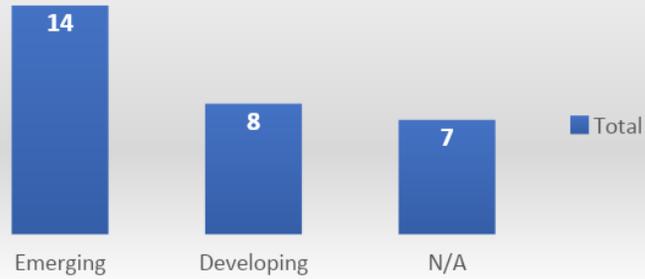
| | Synthesize Sources of Information to Communicate New Ideas | Engagement with Ongoing Scholarly Conversations (Academic Discourse) | Citing Sources Ethically and Appropriately |
|---------------------------|---|---|---|
| Mean | .70 | .79 | 1.34 |
| Median | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Mode | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Standard Deviation | .93 | .86 | .97 |
| Sum | 20 | 23 | 39 |

Data indicates there is an apparent need to align what students are being asked to do in assignments with the Information Literacy rubric.

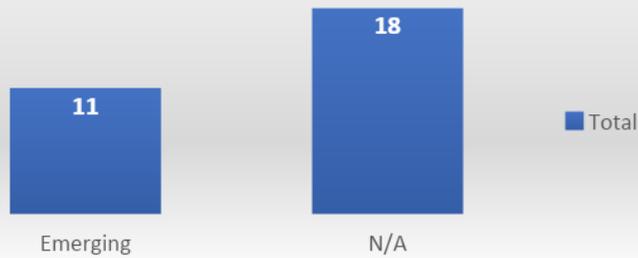
Below please find visual depictions of the data analysis:



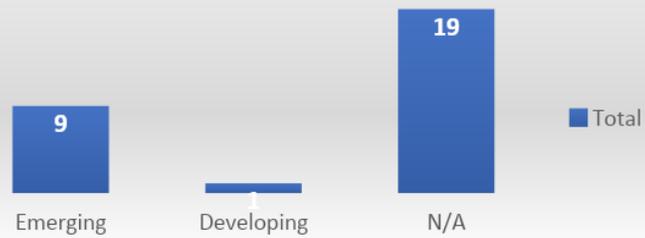
Process of Identifying Authoritative Sources



Process of Locating Sources Using Research Strategies



Process of Developing an Effective Plan for Finding Information



Product (Synthesize Sources of Information to Communicate New Ideas)



Product (Engagement with Ongoing Scholarly Conversation (Academic Discourse))



Product (Citing Sources Ethically and Appropriately)

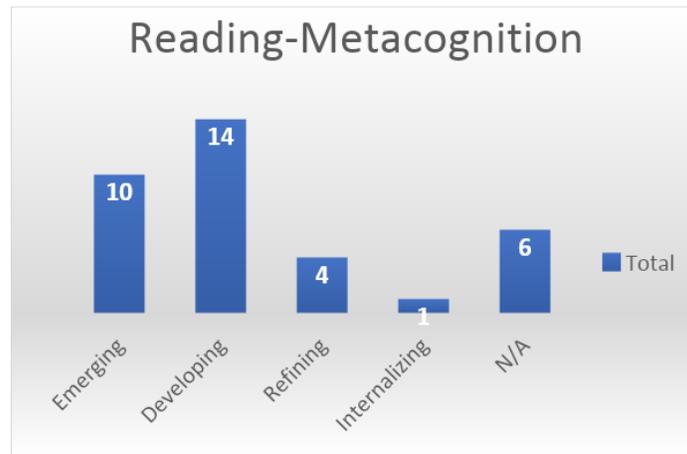


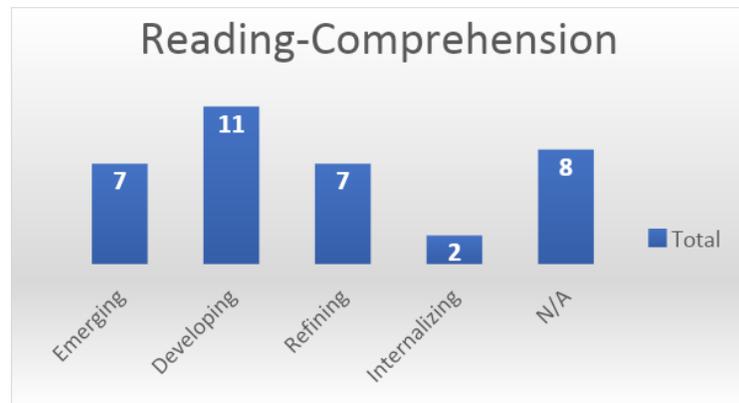
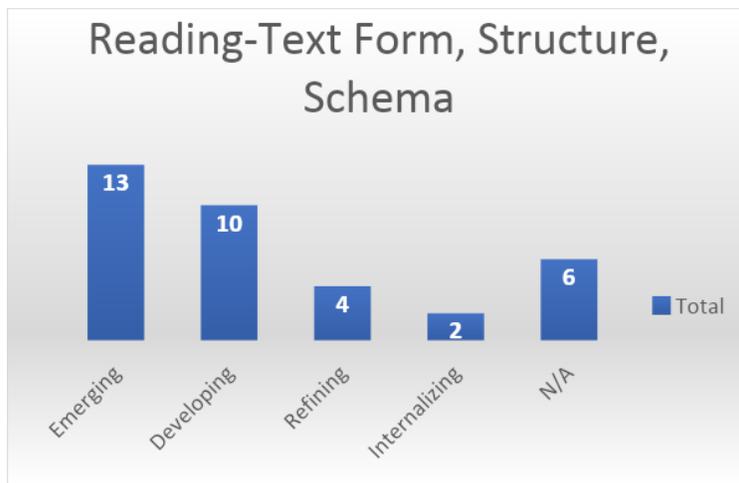
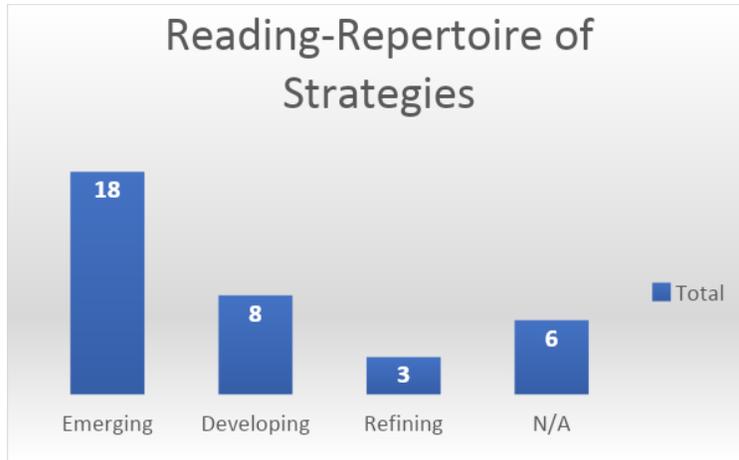
Reading:

| | Metacognition | Repertoire of Strategies | Use of Text Form, Structure, and Schema | Comprehension |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|--|----------------------|
| Mean | 1.54 | 1.22 | 1.51 | 1.66 |
| Median | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Mode | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Standard Deviation | 1.00 | .83 | 1.07 | 1.19 |
| Sum | 54 | 43 | 53 | 58 |

Student work fell largely in the “emerging” and “developing” stages as scored by the assessors. Since the artifacts were submitted from First Year Experience courses, the students are indeed in the early part of their college career as a note on the Reading rubric acknowledges: “In general, the rubric is meant to assess student progression in developing their reading skills through the four-year general education curriculum. It is expected that students in their first and second years of the general education program will likely score on the lower end of the rubric (Emerging and Developing) as they are just beginning their skill development, and they will continually improve (Refining and Internalizing) as they progress through the program during their 3rd and 4th years.” The Reading data supports this assumption.

Please see the following series of charts for visuals related to the above data:





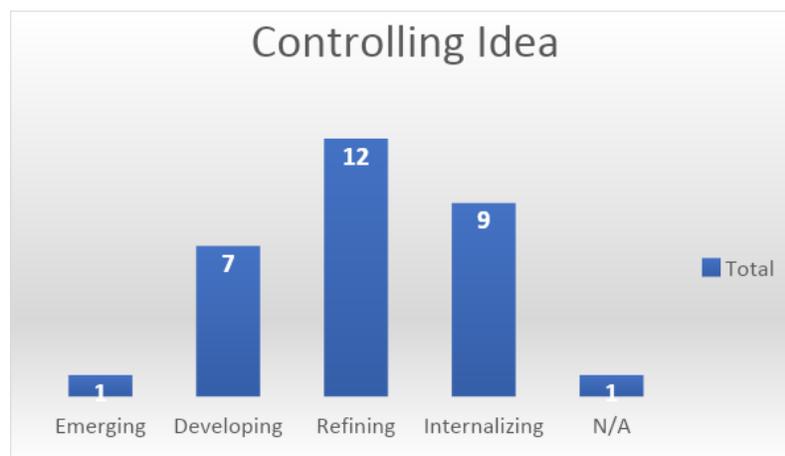
Writing:

| | Controlling Idea | Controlling Idea Development | Organization | Sources & Evidence |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Mean | 2.9 | 2.5 | 1.51 | 2.23 |
| Median | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Mode | 3 | 4 | 4 | 2 |
| Standard Deviation | .98 | 1.26 | .89 | 1.05 |
| Sum | 87 | 75 | 88 | 67 |

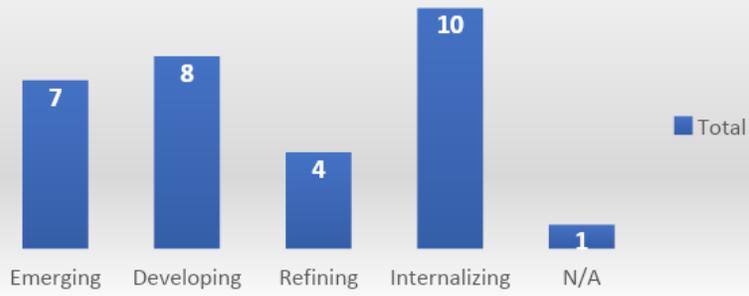
| | Documentation of Sources | Academic Discourse | Style/Presentation |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mean | 2.33 | 2.34 | 3.21 |
| Median | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Mode | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| Standard Deviation | 1.164 | 1.45 | .89 |
| Sum | 70 | 71 | 93 |

Data indicates a good alignment of what students are being asked to do in the artifacts and the Writing rubric.

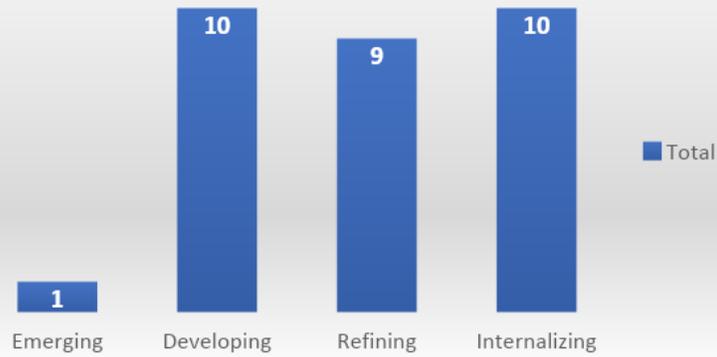
Below please find visuals of the writing outcome by criteria:



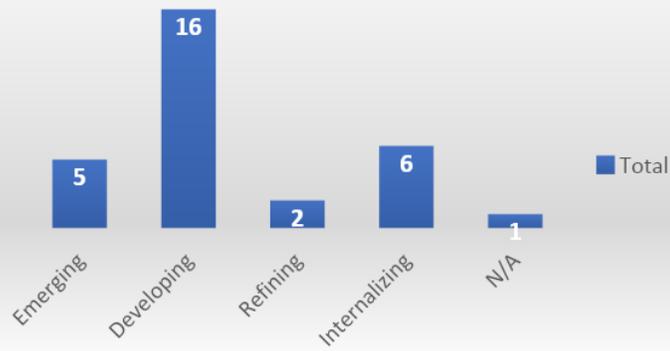
Controlling Idea Development

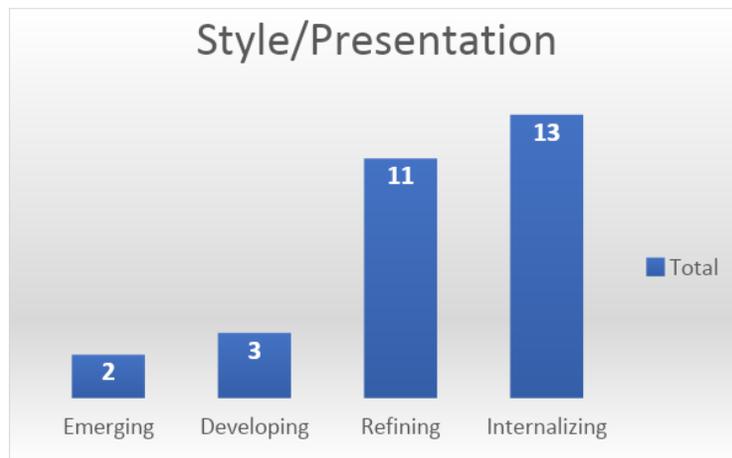
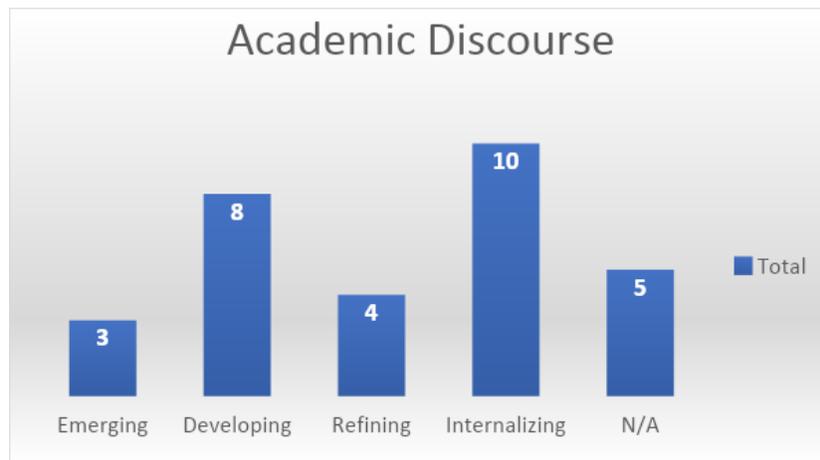
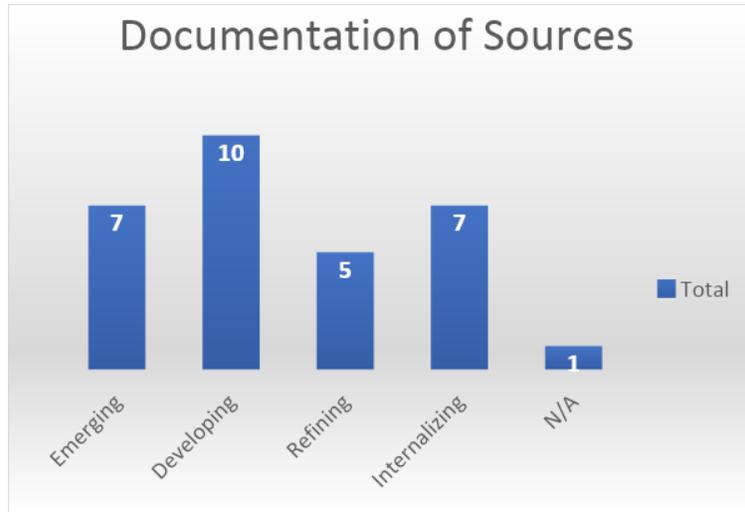


Organization



Sources and Evidence





Observations:

Process:

At the end of Assessment Day, the facilitators and assessors took the opportunity to debrief the assessment process in order to evaluate its effectiveness and any suggestions for improvement. While it was acknowledged that a formal assessment tool, particularly one that allows instructors to send artifacts directly from Blackboard, would be preferable, assessors reported that Google Forms was adequate enough for our current needs.

Assessors also reported that the Assessment Day format, beginning with a norming session before completing the assessment, worked well. It was noted that in-person norming and assessment was effective and should be continued, although additional assessment could subsequently be done asynchronously. The latter would allow more artifacts to be assessed.

Rubrics:

During the norming process and the assessment that followed, assessors discussed the effectiveness of their respective rubrics. The Information Literacy and Writing assessors found the rubrics effective as is while noting the need to do further assignment design and learning outcome outreach (see below). The three Reading assessors found that a few minor yet important revisions were necessary. In the criteria of Metacognition and Use of Text Form, Structure, and Schema, an “and/or” was added in order to allow assessors to focus only on one (or more) of the types of learning listed rather than needing all to be demonstrated. These changes have subsequently been made to the rubric.

The First Year Experience Community of Practice in summer 2023 discussed what was learned about assignment design from the General Education Assessment Day in May, and has begun making plans to supplement the General Education Program assessment process by annually assessing student artifacts for Information Literacy and Reading.

Assignment Design and Learning Outcome Outreach:

As this was the pilot for assessment and due to the schedule of the creation of the rubrics for Information Literacy, Reading, and Writing, there was not time to give ample attention to guiding faculty in assignment design or artifact selection to align with the rubrics. It was acknowledged that this no doubt impacted the outcome of the scoring, but carrying out the assessment was still deemed a viable process. In the future, assessors did suggest workshops and other means of communicating the rubrics to instructors.

The table below illustrates the frequency of the scoring of N/A (not able to assess) on an artifact. This includes scoring across all criteria for each rubric.

| Outcome | # N/A |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| <i>Information Literacy</i> | 100 |
| <i>Reading</i> | 26 |
| <i>Writing</i> | 45 |

The high frequency of N/A for the Information Literacy rubric in particular is notable and should be considered in plans for improvement of the process, especially in communicating the criteria included in the rubric.