

## General Education Assessment of Writing

Assessment Report June 14, 2019

On May 14, 2019, a team of FSEM faculty gathered to assess a random sampling of 60 FSEM essays from Fall 2018. The team included Ranjini Thaver, Ben Tanner, Holley Lynch, Joe Woodside, Stuart Michelson, Josh Eckroth, Leigh Ann Dunning, Nicole Denner, Megan O'Neill, and Lisa Coulter.

As per best practices, the team first reviewed the rubric, then calibrated scores by using two sample essays for practice. The team achieved high interrater reliability during the calibration session. During the assessment portion, each sample was scored by two readers who did not see each other's ratings.

The results of the random sample assessment are reflected in the graphics below:

Table one: FSEM Fall 2018 Average score by dimensions

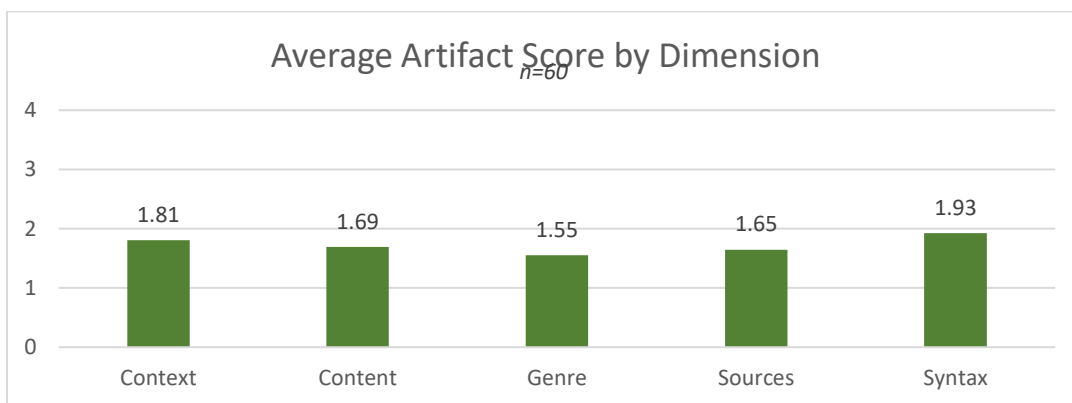
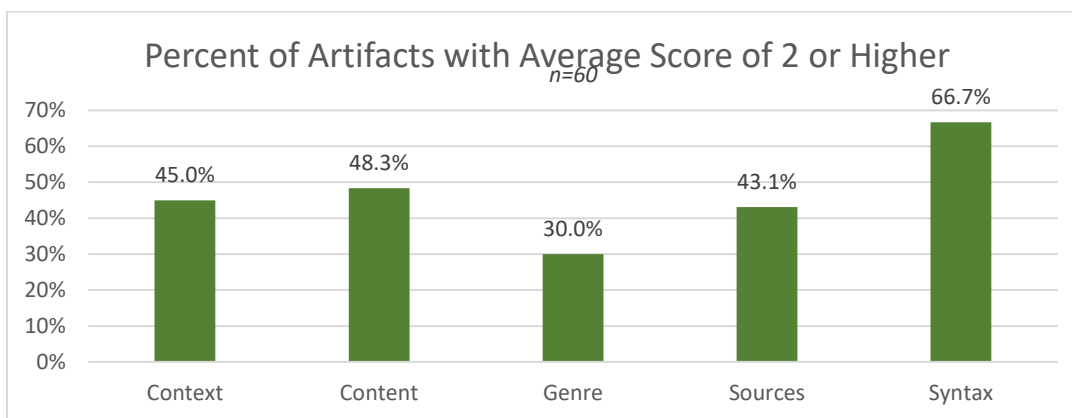


Table two: FSEM Fall 2018 Percentage of artifacts scoring 2 or above (on a scale of 4)

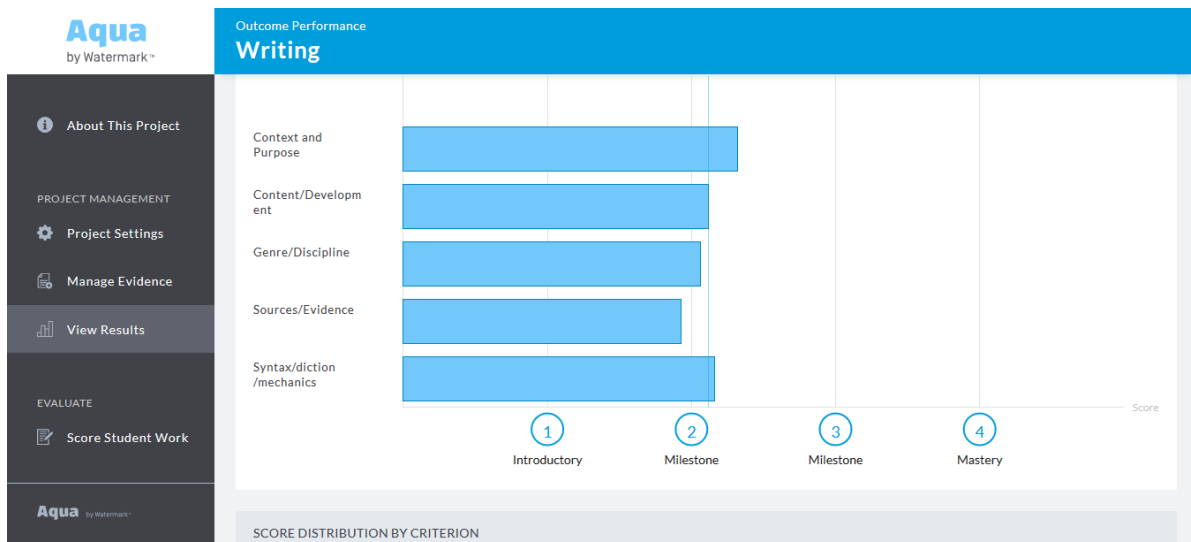


**Analysis:**

Across the board, FSEM writing assessment showed skill levels at introductory to developing (that is, scores of 1 and 2). These scores represent the lower two tiers of our writing rubric. Few samples were scored higher than 2, and none were scored at 4 for any dimension. Since the curriculum map indicates that writing skills are introduced in the FSEM, these results can be seen as reflecting introductory levels of achievement.

However, it's worth noting that contrasted with previous FSEM Writing assessments, the FSEM 2018 scores are **consistently slightly lower**. Table Three, for example, indicates assessment results of FSEM Fall 2016 Writing.

Table Three: FSEM 2016 Writing Assessment



Because the assessment results are in different formats, the chart below is presented for easier reading.

	FSEM 2016	FSEM 2018
Context/Purpose	2.2	1.81
Content/Development	2.0	1.69
Genre/Discipline	1.9	1.55
Sources/Evidence	1.7	1.65
Syntax/Diction	2.1	1.93

While it's a concern that overall achievement in FSEM Writing appears to be lower than we would like, we should remember that a number of factors can contribute to assessment results. Sample sizes, artifact fidelity to the outcome and rubric, and the scorer training efficiency are all elements to consider. Because choice of artifact has always been problematic for faculty submitting samples, we could look there first for better education and selection. (For example, at least two artifacts submitted for Fall 2018 were not scorable: one consisted of a single paragraph and one consisted of an excerpt of dialogue from a creative project. Neither of these adhered to our request for samples, which described appropriate samples as both demonstrating a specific argument or point and making some use of sources.)

It's likely, too, that faculty commitment to assessment efforts has not been consistent or supported. At the close of Fall 2018's FSEM assessment, FSEM Director Ranjini Thaver suggested that each FSEM semester could end with a form of assessment, which I support entirely. Such an opportunity is not just effective faculty development; it's also a way for FSEM instructors to understand the range and scope of kinds of FSEM assignments.

### **VALUE Institute**

Stetson participated this year in the VALUE Institute of AAC&U, focusing on Written Communication in a project which will see their trained scorers scoring our samples. This process allows for some norming of Stetson assessment results to national scoring data. We should have those results in the fall of 2019, at which point a further report will be made.

### **Recommendations:**

- Work on faculty education about appropriate samples for writing assessment.
- Create additional opportunities for Stetson FSEM instructors to spend more time reading written products from other sections; this kind of perspective-building should go a long way toward norming our practice around not just what samples are appropriate but also what kinds of assignments instructors are giving.
- Ensure that faculty and staff instructors are aware of the writing assessment results and are asked for input about making the results better.

Attachments:

GLO 1.1., Writing outcome and rubric