



*Report on the Collegiate
Learning Assessment+ (CLA+):
Fañomnåkan 2014 to
Fañomnåkan 2022*

University of Guam Institutional Report

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Background of Implementation at UOG

The University of Guam is an open admission, land-grant institution accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) and is the major institution of higher education in the Western Pacific. A central part of the Land-Grant mission requires the University of Guam to engage with the community, serve the needs of Guam and the Western Pacific region, and provide knowledge-based research to the Community.

The WASC establishes a minimum of five core competencies for a college degree, asking that universities "ensure the development of core competencies including, but not limited to, written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and critical thinking." They require that these core competencies be related to the university's learning outcomes and that the university show "through evidence of student performance, the extent to which those outcomes are achieved."

In Fañomnåkan (Spring) 2013, the University embarked on a rigorous journey to move the institution from Good to Great. In the Fanuchånan (Fall) of 2014, the University went through a major transformation as it instituted recommendations from the University's Good to Great (G2G) initiative. All programs (academic and administrative support) were examined in terms of their fit to the UOG statement of greatness, sustainability, quality, and demand relationships. The review of all programs was completed, and results were disseminated to the University community in May 2014 and implementation began in Fanuchånan 2014.

In 2014, the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) initiated assessment of the core competency of written communication as given in the following Institutional Learning Outcome, with which all programs and courses align their outcomes:

- Effective oral and written communication
 - **Core statement:** *Express ideas and facts to others effectively in a range of settings and in a variety of formats, particularly written, oral, and visual formats*

To address the recommendations identified by WASC and in the spirit of *Para Hulo*, CHamoru for the university's Latin motto, "excelsior," or "ever upward," the instrument selected for this assessment of students' written communication skills was the Collegiate Learning Assessment Plus (CLA+) criterion-referenced test. The CLA+, which was designed to assess critical thinking and written communication, has been in use at UOG since it was piloted in In Fañomnåkan 2014. The CLA+ was selected because it asks students to produce text using evidence in the Performance Tasks section of the test. The Performance Tasks are scored twice, once by a human scorer and once by an automated scoring engine, according to the recent CLA+ institutional reports.

CLASS administers the CLA+ to a random sample of Freshmen in September of their first semester of enrollment to establish a baseline before instruction. A random sample of Seniors takes the test between February and the first week of May in their graduating semester, or in the semester prior to graduation, to assess their written communication skills upon exiting. Randomly selected students were from EN110 Freshman Composition and graduating Seniors in 400 level and capstone courses in CLASS. Due to low participation rates, CLASS eventually included Seniors in the School of Education and the School of Business and Public Administration, although not in a systematic manner. This schedule of administration is consistent with the suggested CLA+ scoring window of "freshmen in the fall, and sophomores, juniors, or seniors in the spring," as described in the CLA+ Technical FAQs (Council for Aid to Education, 2014, p. 9).

General Description of CLA+

Prevalent commentary recommends that a student selects to attend postsecondary education, particularly universities to acquire the skill and strategies on how to “think.” Upon graduation, a student would be expected to have acquired basic “thinking skills” and know how to apply them to new situations (Pellegrino, Chudowsky & Glaser, 2001). These capacities would in turn ensure success in the profession. Many assessments, both large-scale and in the classroom, are successful at measuring students’ content knowledge in their discipline or sector. None of these large-scale assessments claims to measure everything gained from education, but rather highlights certain student abilities, be they generic or discipline specific. The primary stakeholders of skills tests, commonly accepted to include governments, institutions, employers and students, benefit from assessments of learning outcomes in different ways. Governments gain information on the quality of graduating students, performance indicators, and accountability measures.

The CLA+ is an external assessment used by hundreds of universities to measure students' achievement of critical thinking, problem solving, and writing skills. Universities commonly invite first-time first year and Seniors to participate in this assessment. CLA+ assists institutions in estimating their contributions to the development of students’ higher-order thinking skills. This is achieved through growth estimates in addition to overall evidence of students’ competency in critical-thinking and written communication. The second use highlights these skills for the use of individual students who take part in the assessment.

Postsecondary institutions can identify at-risk students when the CLA+ is administered to students in entry level courses and provide information on program effectiveness and improvement over time when conducted in capstone or exit level courses. Information retained by the CLA+ provides enriched discussions based on progression towards student success through curriculum development and benchmarks. Employers also gain information for employee recruitment and evidence of proficiency of skill sets. Students gain information on their skill sets and areas for improvement and proof of performance. The value of CLA+ for institutions subsequently determine its usefulness and effectiveness for government, employers, and students.

It is important to note that CLA+ results assess not only written communication, but students' critical thinking, measuring growth on these skills, and determining how our institution compares to other colleges and universities using CLA+.

What CLA+ Reports

The CLA+ Fañomnåkan reports include the Freshmen tested the previous Fanuchånan and the Seniors tested in the Fañomnåkan covered by the report. The Freshmen scores are needed for the Council for Aid to Education (CAE) to determine the effect size of the difference between the Freshmen and the Seniors tested and the value-added score. The list that follows in what is included in the Fañomnåkan reports. The Fanuchånan reports are similar but only for the Freshmen, so they do not contain any scores related to the comparison of Freshmen and Seniors.

CLA+ combines the Performance Task (PT) scores with the Selected Response Question (SRQ) scores into a Total Score that combines its measures of not only written communication but also critical thinking, analytic reasoning, and problem solving.

Reports include the CLA+ Total Score and percentile ranks, with Mastery Level descriptor for Seniors, along with effect size. The same information is given for the PT and SRQ scores.

Reports also breakdown the Mastery Levels by class based on the Total Score, showing the percent at each Mastery Level. Mastery Levels are now described as Emerging, Developing, Proficient, Accomplished, and Advanced. Before Fanuchånan 2021, the two lowest levels were Below Basic and Basic.

Value-added scores are given for Total Score, PT, and SRQ. The value-added scores compare growth between Freshmen and Seniors at UOG to growth at other institutions. CAE identifies the institutions for comparison by "similar populations of students" as determined by their Entering Academic Ability based on SAT and Freshmen CLA+ scores (Council for Aid to Education, 2014, p. 7).

Semesters Available for Analysis

This report covers Fañomnåkan 2014 to Fañomnåkan 2022. Fañomnåkan 2014 semester was essentially a test-pilot administration of the CLA+. AY 2018-2019 and Fañomnåkan 2021 are not included in this report. All CLA+ test data is from the semester CLA+ UOG Institutional Reports.

Table 1: Semesters Included in the Analysis

	Fanuchånan	Fañomnåkan
AY 2013-2014	N/A	Yes
AY 2014-2015	Yes	Yes
AY 2015-2016	Yes	Yes
AY 2016-2017	Yes	Yes
AY 2017-2018	Yes	Yes
AY 2018-2019	N/A	N/A
AY 2019-2020	Yes	Yes
AY 2020-2021	Yes	N/A
AY 2021-2022	Yes	Yes

Student Effort and Engagement

Students are surveyed for their opinion of their amount of effort and engagement. These results are given for each level of the scale as a percentage for Freshmen and Seniors for the PT and SRQ. Then the means are given for Freshmen and Seniors at each self-reported level of effort and engagement. The data is inconclusive and not consistently linked to scores.

Demographic Information

Demographic characteristics are given for numbers and percentages of Freshmen and Seniors taking the test. The characteristics included are Gender (Male, Female, Decline to State), Primary Language (English, Other), Field of Study (Sciences, Mathematics, and Engineering; Social Sciences, Humanities and Languages, Business, Helping/Services, Undecided or Other), Race/Ethnicity (American Indian/Alaska Native/Indigenous, Asian (including Indian subcontinent and Philippines), Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, African-American/Black (including African and Caribbean, non-Hispanic), Hispanic or Latino, White (including Middle Eastern), non-Hispanic, Other, Decline to State), Parental Education (Less than High School, High School, Some College, Bachelor's Degree, Graduate or Post-Graduate Degree, Don't Know).

No scores are disaggregated by any of these demographic characteristics.

Spotlight on Gender Distribution

From AY 2013-2015 to AY 2019-2020, females comprised majority of students who were assessed with the CLA+. One exception was Fanuchânan 2015, where 46% of the Freshmen, the only class assessed, were female. The gender distribution of assessed students reflects the gender distribution of the student population. Information on the gender distribution of scores was also not available for analysis.

Table 2a. Gender Distribution AY2013-2015 to AY 2015-2016

		AY 13-14			AY 14-15			AY 15-16			AY 15-16			AY 15-16			
		2013 Fall Fanuchânan	2014 Spring Fañomnâkan		2014 Fall Fanuchânan		2015 Spring Fañomnâkan		2015 Fall Fanuchânan		2016 Spring Fañomnâkan						
UNDERGRADUATE		UOG Total Enrollment	Total Count Tested	%	UOG Total Enrollment	Total Count Tested	%	UOG Total Enrollment	Total Count Tested	%	UOG Total Enrollment	Total Count Tested	%	UOG Total Enrollment	Total Count Tested	%	
		MALE	1413	15	1%	1534	42	3%	1468	69	5%	1599	33	2%	1473	59	4%
		FEMALE	1884	40	2%	2073	53	3%	1933	114	6%	2047	28	1%	1906	73	4%
		Other	3297	3	0%	3607	2	0%	3401	5	0%	3646	0	0%	3379	1	0%
		Total	3297	58	3%	3607	97	5%	6802	188	11%	7292	61	3%	3379	133	8%

Table 2b. Gender Distribution AY 2016-2017 to AY 2017-2018

	AY 16-17						AY 17-18					
	2016 Fall Fanuchânan			2017 Spring Fañomnâkan			2017 Fall Fanuchânan			2018 Spring Fañomnâkan		
UNDERGRADUATE	UOG Total Enrollment	Total Count Tested	%	UOG Total Enrollment	Total Count Tested	%	UOG Total Enrollment	Total Count Tested	%	UOG Total Enrollment	Total Count Tested	%
MALE	1631	35	2%	1442	29	2%	1528	40	3%	1396	73	5%
FEMALE	2244	51	2%	1887	52	3%	2005	56	3%	1822	115	6%
Other	3875	0	0%	3329	5	0%	3533	2	0%	3218	5	0%
Total	3875	86	2%	3329	86	2.5%	3533	98	2.7%	3218	193	5.9%

Table 2c. Gender Distribution AY2019-2020 to AY 2021-2022

	AY 19-20						AY 20-21				AY 21-22					
	2019 Fall Fanuchânan			2020 Spring Fañomnâkan			2020 Fall Fanuchânan			2021 Spring Fañomnâkan	2021 Fall Fanuchânan			2022 Spring Fañomnâkan		
UNDERGRADUATE	UOG Total Enrollment	Total Count Tested	%	UOG Total Enrollment	Total Count Tested	%	UOG Total Enrollment	Total Count Tested	%		UOG Total Enrollment	Total Count Tested	%	UOG Total Enrollment	Total Count Tested	%
MALE	1400	35	3%	1261	58	5%	1282	32	2%		1154	29	3%	1058	54	5%
FEMALE	1769	48	3%	1669	74	4%	1814	62	3%		1588	75	5%	1483	116	8%
Other	3169	2	0%	2930	3	0%	3096	1	0%		2742	0	0%	2541	3	0%
Total	3169	85	5%	2930	135	9%	3096	95	6%		2742	104	7%	5082	175	13%

Mean CLA+ Total Scores, Percentiles, and Mastery Levels

Freshmen were assessed in Fanuchånan 2014. The mean total mean score was 1035 at the 49th percentile with the Mastery Level at Basic. As this cohort progressed in their studies, the Mastery Level remained at Basic. Seniors in Fañomnåkan 2018 had a mean total score of 1028 and were in the 10th percentile. Seniors were again assessed in Fañomnåkan 2020 with a mean total score of 1064 at the 19th percentile.

Freshmen were assessed in Fanuchånan 2015 and showed a decrease in mean CLA+ total score (990) and percentile (31st) from the previous academic year, remaining at Basic for the Mastery Level. As this cohort progressed in their studies, the Mastery Level remained at Basic. Seniors were assessed in Fañomnåkan 2020 with a mean total score of 1064 at the 19th percentile. Seniors were not assessed again until Fañomnåkan 2022 where the participants had a mean CLA+ total score of 1030 at the 9th percentile and at the Developing Mastery Level.

The mean CLA+ total score for Seniors ranged from a high of 1070 in Fañomnåkan 2015 to a low of 1028 in Fañomnåkan 2018. For most semesters, the Mastery Level was at Basic with Fañomnåkan 2022 at the Developing level of mastery. For all semesters and classes where information was available, the Mastery Level was at Basic. When the categories of the Mastery Levels were modified, the level was identified as Developing.

The mean CLA+ total score percentile rank for Seniors ranged from 9th percentile in Fañomnåkan 2016 and Fañomnåkan 2022 to 19th percentile in Fañomnåkan 2020. The class with the highest mean CLA+ total score percentile rank was the Freshmen class with 48th percentile in Fanuchånan 2017. In Fanuchånan 2015, Freshmen had a mean CLA+ total score of 990 at the 31st percentile. The 19th percentile for the mean CLA+ total score among Seniors in Fañomnåkan 2020 indicated a decreasing trend among this cohort of students. It is important to note, however, that Fañomnåkan 2020 was the first full semester of the COVID-19 pandemic requiring remote learning.

Effect sizes characterize the amount of growth shown across classes and are reported in standard deviation units. Effect sizes are calculated by subtracting the mean scores of the Freshmen from the mean scores of each subsequent class, in these reports it is the Seniors and dividing these amounts by the standard deviation of the Freshmen scores. In Fañomnåkan 2015, the effect size was 0.27. When calculations were possible, the effect size of Seniors versus Freshmen was small, with the exception of the large effect size seen in the effect was small for Seniors Fañomnåkan 2020 with 0.92. The information also showed that in Fanuchånan 2021, the effect size for Sophomores versus Freshmen was -0.32.

Table 3a: Mean CLA+ Total Scores, Percentile, Mastery Level, and Effect Size by Class AY 20013-2014 – AY 2014-2015

	AY 13-14		AY 14-15			
	2013 Fall Fanuchânan	2014 Spring Fañomnâkan	2014 Fall Fanuchânan		2015 Spring Fañomnâkan	
UNDERGRATUATE	Mean Score & Percentile Rank	Mastery Level	Mean Score and Percentile Rank	Mastery Level	Mean Score & Percentile Rank	Mastery Level & Effect Size
SENIORS	1047 (13)	Basic	N/A	N/A	1070 (18)	Basic (0.27)
JUNIORS	1062	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SOPHOMORES	1110	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
FRESHMEN	N/A	N/A	1035 (49)	Basic	N/A	N/A

Table 3b: Mean CLA+ Total Scores, Percentile, Mastery Level, and Effect Size by Class AY 2015-2016 – AY 2016-2017

	AY 15-16				AY 16-17			
	2015 Fall Fanuchånan		2016 Spring Fañomnåkan		2016 Fall Fanuchånan		2017 Spring Fañomnåkan	
UNDERGRATURATE	Mean Score and Percentile Rank	Mastery Level						
SENIORS	N/A	N/A	1038 (9)	Basic	N/A	N/A	1047 (12)	Basic
JUNIORS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SOPHOMORES	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
FRESHMEN	990 (31)	Basic	N/A	N/A	1020 (35)	Basic	N/A	N/A

Table 3c: Mean CLA+ Total Scores, Percentile, Mastery Level, and Effect Size by Class AY 20017-2018 – AY 2019-2020

	AY 17-18				AY 19-20			
	2017 Fall Fanuchánan		2018 Spring Fañomnákan		2019 Fall Fanuchánan		2020 Spring Fañomnákan	
	Mean Score and Percentile Rank	Mastery Level	Mean Score & Percentile Rank	Mastery Level & Effect Size	Mean Score and Percentile Rank	Mastery Level	Mean Score and Percentile Rank	Mastery Level & Effect Size
UNDERGRADUATE								
SENIORS	N/A	N/A	1028 (10)	Basic (0.09)	N/A	N/A	1064 (19)	Basic (0.92)
JUNIORS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SOPHOMORES	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
FRESHMEN	1031 (48)	Basic	N/A	N/A	954 (10)	Below Basic	N/A	N/A

Table 3d: Mean CLA+ Total Scores, Percentile, Mastery Level, and Effect Size by Class AY 20020-2021 – AY 2021-2022

	AY 20-21				AY 21-22			
	2020 Fall Fanuchánan		2021 Spring Fañomnákan		2021 Fall Fanuchánan		2022 Spring Fañomnákan	
	Mean Score and Percentile Rank	Mastery Level	Mean Score and Percentile Rank	Mastery Level	Mean Score and Percentile Rank	Mastery Level & Effect Size	Mean Score and Percentile Rank	Mastery Level & Effect Size
UNDERGRATUEATE								
SENIORS	N/A	N/A			N/A	N/A	1030 (9)	Developing (0.07)
JUNIORS	N/A	N/A			N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SOPHOMORES	N/A	N/A			983 (N/A)	Developing (-0.32)	N/A	N/A
FRESHMEN	984 (20)	Developing			1021 (37)	Developing	N/A	N/A

Performance Task Subscores

What the CLA+ Tests

The CLA+ measures critical thinking, analytic reasoning, problem solving, and written communication skills. The test has two sections. The Performance Task assesses analysis and problem solving, writing effectiveness, and writing mechanics. The Selected Response Questions assess data literacy, critical reading, and evaluation, and critique an argument. Because UOG uses the CLA+ to assess written communication, this report focuses on the Performance Task.

The CLA+ reports include a separation of the PT score into subscores for its three components of analysis and problem-solving, writing effectiveness, and writing mechanics. These subscores are given for Freshmen and Seniors as percentage of students at each level of the 6-level rubric. The scores are not broken down by skills within each of the three components, which means for example that the report does not tell whether writing effectiveness strengths and weaknesses are in organization and argument or elaboration and citation. Likewise, the writing mechanics scores are not broken down into the rubric's categories of grammatical conventions, sentence structure and variety, and use of vocabulary.

How the CLA+ Tests

The CLA+ is administered online, using a secure testing platform. It has two parts, the Performance Task (PT) and the Selected Response Questions. SRQ scores are given for Freshmen and Seniors as means and percentile ranks for each of the three SRQ components.

The PT assesses written communication using a constructed-response prompt. The PT score includes three subscores: analysis and problem solving, writing effectiveness, and writing mechanics. The student has 60 minutes to write a response to an open-ended question using a provided library of four to nine documents of various types.

The CLA+ has two student guides, one addresses why it is important to the institution for the student to participate and one addresses why the student would benefit from the assessment. Both Student Guides includes one sample PT, including thumbnails of the first page of the items in the document library, which are news articles, a memo, charts of quantitative data, and research report and abstracts. Criteria for responses are given, no exemplar response is provided.

The CLA+ does not score the 25 Selected Response Questions (SRQs) for written communication, so their scores are not included in this report.

How CLA+ Is Scored

This report focuses on assessment of written communication, which the CLA+ assesses as writing effectiveness and writing mechanics in the PT. The Total Score for PT is a combination of these writing scores and a score for analysis and problem solving.

According to the technical report for the test, "CLA+ uses a combination of automated and human scoring for its Performance Tasks. Each Performance Task response is double-scored: once by IEA, and once by a trained human scorer." Intelligent Essay Assessor (IEA) is a machine-scoring system from Pearson Knowledge Technologies. Human scorers are trained on the prompts and rubrics and undergo calibration for reliability (Council for Aid in Education, 2014, p. 5).

Scoring the PT uses a 6-level rubric, with separate sections and descriptors for each of the subsections. The rubric for analysis and problem solving gives one score based on statement of an explicit decision/conclusion/position, relevant and credible support demonstrating analysis and comprehension, and treatment of contradictory evidence (Council for Aid in Education cited in Aloisi & Callaghan, 2018, pp. 68-69). The rubric for writing effectiveness gives one score based on organization of an argument and elaboration of ideas with clearly cited sources. The rubric for writing mechanics gives one score based on control of grammatical conventions, sentence construction and variety, and use of vocabulary. The PT score is a scaled conversion of the sum of the three subscores (Council for Aid to Education, 2014, p. 6). Responses that are blank or do not address the prompt are "removed from the results" (p. 5). The document does not tell whether the removed tests are included in the reported number of test takers.

Table 4: Performance Task Mean Scores

PERFORMANCE TASK MEAN SCORES		
SEMESTER	MEAN SCORE	EFFECT SIZE vs. FRESHMEN
Fañomnákan SPRING 2014 PILOT		
Fañomnákan Spring 2014 Freshmen	N/A	
Fañomnákan Spring 2014 Sophomores	1059	
Fañomnákan Spring 2014 Juniors	1051	
Fañomnákan Spring 2014 Seniors	1062	
AY 2014-2015		
Fañuchánan Fall 2014 Freshmen	1033	
Fañomnákan Spring 2015 Seniors	1055	0.14
AY 2015-2016		
Fañuchánan Fall 2015 Freshmen	991	
Fañomnákan Spring 2016 Seniors	1024	0.18
AY 2016-2017		
Fañuchánan Fall 2016 Freshmen	938	
Fañomnákan Spring 2017 Seniors	1040	
AY 2017-2018		
Fañuchánan Fall 2017 Freshmen	1036	
Fañomnákan Spring 2018 Seniors	1028	-0.06
AY 2018-2019		
Fañuchánan Fall 2018 Freshmen	N/A	
Fañomnákan Spring 2019 Seniors	N/A	
AY 2019-2020		
Fañuchánan Fall 2019 Freshmen	938	
Fañomnákan Spring 2020 Seniors	1043	0.67
AY 2020-2021		
Fañuchánan Fall 2020 Freshmen	986	
Fañomnákan Spring 2021 Seniors	N/A	
AY 2021-2022		
Fañuchánan Fall 2021 Freshmen	1006	
Fañuchánan Fall 2021 Sophomores	998	-0.04
Fañomnákan Spring 2022 Seniors	1022	0.1

The effect size is a measure of the difference between two groups. A large effect size means the groups are substantially different. An effect size of 0.2 indicates a small difference; 0.5 a medium difference, and .8 a large difference. This data shows the largest difference between Freshmen and Seniors on the Performance Task in AY 2019-2020.

Performance Task Subscores

The most students have consistently scored between 2 and 4 on the Performance Task rubric in the semesters the CLA+ has been administered, with the score of 3 most common. Few Freshman or Senior test takers have scored at the highest level.

Table 5: Analysis and Problem-Solving

RUBRIC PERFORMANCE LEVELS REPORTED AS PERCENTAGES OF TEST TAKERS						
VISUAL DATA ONLY						
1 (LOWEST)	2	3	4	5	6 (HIGHEST)	
PILOT Fañomnâkan SPRING 2014						
AY 2014-2015						
Fanuchânan Fall 2014 Freshmen	1	27	51	20	2	0
Fañomnâkan Spring 2015 Seniors	1	25	38	29	7	0
AY 2015-2016						
Fanuchânan Fall 2015 Freshmen	7	34	91	16	2	0
Fañomnâkan Spring 2016 Seniors	1	25	51	22	0	0
AY 2016-2017						
Fanuchânan Fall 2016 Freshmen	5	41	42	11	1	0
Fañomnâkan Spring 2017 Seniors	1	13	51	33	2	0
AY 2017-2018						
Fanuchânan Fall 2017 Freshmen	1	20	55	22	1	0
Fañomnâkan Spring 2018 Seniors	2	19	60	18	1	0
AY 2018-2019						
Fanuchânan Fall 2018 Freshmen	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fañomnâkan Spring 2019 Seniors	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AY 2019-2020						
Fanuchânan Fall 2019 Freshmen	5	41	42	11	1	0
Fañomnâkan Spring 2020 Seniors	0	20	56	24	0	0
AY 2020-2021						
Fanuchânan Fall 2020 Freshmen	1	27	54	17	1	0
Fañomnâkan Spring 2021 Seniors	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AY 2021-2022						
Fanuchânan Fall 2021 Freshmen	2	22	56	20	0	0
Fañomnâkan Spring 2022 Seniors	8	29	49	13	1	0

Table 6: Writing Effectiveness

RUBRIC PERFORMANCE LEVELS REPORTED AS PERCENTAGES OF TEST TAKERS						
VISUAL DATA ONLY AVAILABLE						
	1 (LOWEST)	2	3	4	5	6 (HIGHEST)
PILOT Fañomnåkan SPRING 2014						
AY 2014-2015						
Fanuchånan Fall 2014 Freshmen	1	24	46		3	0
Fañomnåkan Spring 2015 Seniors	1	22	40	29	8	1
AY 2015-2016						
Fanuchånan Fall 2015 Freshmen	2	38	39	18	3	0
Fañomnåkan Spring 2016 Seniors	1	24	56	18	1	0
AY 2016-2017						
Fanuchånan Fall 2016 Freshmen	0	46	41	12	1	0
Fañomnåkan Spring 2017 Seniors	1	13	49	35	2	0
AY 2017-2018						
Fanuchånan Fall 2017 Freshmen	0	14	62	23	0	0
Fañomnåkan Spring 2018 Seniors	0	13	65	21	1	0
AY 2018-2019						
Fanuchånan Fall 2018 Freshmen	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fañomnåkan Spring 2019 Seniors	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AY 2019-2020						
Fanuchånan Fall 2019 Freshmen	0	46	41	12	1	0
Fañomnåkan Spring 2020 Seniors	0	12	56	30	2	0
AY 2020-2021						
Fanuchånan Fall 2020 Freshmen	0	31	48	19	2	0
Fañomnåkan Spring 2021 Seniors	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AY 2021-2022						
Fanuchånan Fall 2021 Freshmen	4	18	59	18	1	0
Fañomnåkan Spring 2022 Seniors	1	34	46	17	1	0

Table 7: Writing Mechanics

	RUBRIC PERFORMANCE LEVELS REPORTED AS PERCENTAGES OF TEST TAKERS					
	VISUAL DATA ONLY AVAILABLE					
	1 (LOWEST)	2	3	4	5	6 (HIGHEST)
PILOT Fañomnâkan Spring 2014						
AY 2014-2015						
Fanuchânan Fall 2014 Freshmen	0	9	37	51	3	0
Fañomnâkan Spring 2015 Seniors	0	12	29	47	11	1
AY 2015-2016						
Fanuchânan Fall 2015 Freshmen	0	18	38	39	5	0
Fañomnâkan Spring 2016 Seniors	0	7	53	40	0	0
AY 2016-2017						
Fanuchânan Fall 2016 Freshmen	0	13	61	26	0	0
Fañomnâkan Spring 2017 Seniors	0	2	35	60	2	0
AY 2017-2018						
Fanuchânan Fall 2017 Freshmen	0	1	41	57	1	0
Fañomnâkan Spring 2018 Seniors	0	3	48	44	4	0
AY 2018-2019						
Fanuchânan Fall 2018 Freshmen	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fañomnâkan Spring 2019 Seniors	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AY 2019-2020						
Fanuchânan Fall 2019 Freshmen	0	13	61	26	0	0
Fañomnâkan Spring 2020 Seniors	0	2	40	54	4	0
AY 2020-2021						
Fanuchânan Fall 2020 Freshmen	0	5	60	34	1	0
Fañomnâkan Spring 2021 Seniors	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AY 2021-2022						
Fanuchânan Fall 2021 Freshmen	3	11	61	25	0	0
Fanuchânan Fall 2021 Sophomores	0	0	80	20	0	0
Fañomnâkan Spring 2022 Seniors	1	14	51	33	0	0

Considerations for Use of CLA+ and Interpretation of Scores

Does the CLA+ provide the information about written communication that UOG needs?

What does UOG need to know about how students write? That is, if the need is for an externally developed and scored assessment that gives a comparison of our students with students at other American institutions, then CLA+ is an acknowledged assessment in wide use that uses a direct assessment of evidence-based writing that is partially human-scored. However, the CLA+ Total Score is not a measure of written communication, although it does combine measures of written communication with other measures. It may be of interest to compare the critical thinking assessment with the CLA+.

If the need is for information that will help UOG target specific writing needs at the college or program level, the CLA+ reports do not provide this information.

This task force did not examine alternative external assessments of written communication, but at the time CLA+ was adopted as the assessment it was determined to be the best fit for the criteria of external direct assessment of human-scored evidence-based writing.

Do the CLA+ test items and scoring methods align with UOG's curriculum?

The CLA+ addresses prior knowledge of test takers: "One of the unique features of CLA+ is that no prior knowledge of any specific content area is necessary to perform well on the assessment. Students are assessed on their critical-thinking and written-communication skills, not on how much knowledge they have of subjects such as US history or chemistry" (Council for Aid to Education, 2014, p. 2).

Regarding the test items, only two sample Performance Task items are available, one in the Institutional Report and one in the Student Guide. The CAE website links to sample prompts are not working.

The sample in the institutional report asks students to write a report supporting a position on a claim about cell phones and auto accidents using police department data and a chart made by the character making the claim (Council for Aid to Education, 2022, Appendix E). Definitions of reports vary, and students may or may not be familiar with argumentative reports. The directions include the following "While your personal values and experiences are important, please write your response solely on the basis of information provided" with the prompt (Appendix E).

UOG's core statements on Institutional Learning Outcomes suggest that students may be accustomed to a values-based approach to their work as in this core statement: "Show an understanding of core values of adaptation, tolerance and cultural respect to be able to work effectively with diverse groups in forging harmonious community relations, in developing and administering public policies, and resolving conflicts" (University of Guam, 2022).

The other sample is in the Student Guide. It asks students to write a memo from the role of consultant to a mayor that analyzes the three main points of an argument for reducing crime by hiring more police officers using 8 documents: a memorandum, a news article, a police department chart, a research brief, a scatter plot of crime statistics, a graph of robberies and drug use, and a set of research abstracts (Council for Aid to Education, n.d.) Each of these sample prompts relates to public safety and requires analysis of quantitative data. That a memo is a genre for analyzing an argument may be unfamiliar. Students from some programs may find the role of consultant to a mayor more accessible than other students do.

In their first year, students take EN110 Freshman Composition and EN111 Writing for Research. Both these courses emphasize that learning about writing and developing writing skills are ongoing processes that continue after these courses. These courses also emphasize contexts of writing, variations in genre, audience, and disciplinary conventions.

For the major programs to share across campus their expectations for student writing, the types of writing their programs require, and their curricular approaches to writing in their courses could lead to identification of resources to support writing in all disciplines over all four years.

Do students write at their best on the CLA+?

UOG's CLA+ scores do not indicate the level of writing or growth we would like to see over the semesters from entering to graduation. However, to design program improvement it would be helpful to know whether the assessed level represents what students can do. The CLA+ surveys effort and engagement and provides an aggregate report of those scores compared to test means. The data is inconclusive. Incentive for selected UOG students to participate in the CLA+ is through statements of the value of these test results to the university and restriction of future registration or transcript requests for those who decline to take the test without providing an adequate reason. Concern about the effect of motivation was included in the first report on CLA+ assessment of writing (Santos-Bamba, 2015). This concern is reflected by other researchers.

A 2019 study of three standardized tests including the CLA+ concluded that "Alignments of test objectives with student or course objectives, and timeliness of data, are key for participation and motivation" (Simper, Frank, Kaupp, et al., p. 832).

In 2018, Simper, Frank, Scott, and Kaupp conducted interviews with students as part of a study of assessing learning outcomes and reported that "students suggested that the following are key to encouraging students to put effort into the test: that instructors value the data, that the test content is relevant to students, that test times should not conflict with other commitments, and that achievement should be made available to students" (p. 50).

Another study looked specifically at Indigenous students:

To succeed in assessment, Indigenous students are expected to think in the compartmentalized, non-contextual way in which traditional Western rationality works, which is in many ways alien to Indigenous world views (De Plevicz, 2007; Williamson & Dalal, 2007). Research also identifies an institutional culture based on standardized learning outcomes, which limits flexibility in assessment and creates resistance to reconceptualizing assessment to serve diversity (Bowser, Danaher, & Somasundaram, 2007; Dudgeon & Fielder, 2006) (Fleet & Kitson, 2009, p. 399)

A 2017 study looked at writing assessment as a tool for improving writing:

Effective assessment of student writing represents an important tool colleges and universities can use to measure, and ultimately improve, student writing proficiency. However, using third-party, commercial instruments may not provide the meaningful answers institutional leaders are seeking. The measurement of written communication through the evaluation of authentic student artifacts, using locally developed processes, may instead provide institutions with a better perspective of their unique students' writing skills and proficiencies. In turn, these data can help give faculty, staff, and administrators the information they need to identify areas for improvement and to implement curricular and pedagogical changes necessary to increase the writing proficiency of students graduating from their institutions. (Roberts, Nardone, & Bridges, 2017, p. 60)

Recommendations and Conclusions

A. CLA+ Instrument

1. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness should take the lead in determining the validity, reliability, and usefulness of the CLA+. This should be determined with consideration of existing program specific standardized assessments already in place.
2. If disaggregated data by gender, major, and ethnicity and other demographic information is available, this information should be obtained.
3. Consider a combination of existing program assessments with the collection and assessment of authentic student work from across disciplines by a trained UOG team.

B. Administration of CLA+

1. If the CLA+ continues as the assessment of written communication, it should be administered by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. A clearly outlined schedule and set of procedures should be established to include Freshmen and Senior class participants. The number of students tested should meet requirements for ensuring meaningful results. This is necessary to have consistently available data allowing UOG to track patterns and changes across time.
2. The data and analysis of CLA+ results should be compiled and disseminated to academic programs every academic year. Particular attention should be given to improving faculty's access to the reports so that results may inform their teaching and learning.
3. If the CLA+ is continued, UOG should provide training or an orientation to college advisors so they may inform UOG students, especially the incoming Freshmen and graduating Seniors of the importance of completing the CLA+. The advisors can make this a part of the advisement process so at every semester, or college level, the students are reminded to strengthen the skill sets tested by the CLA+ to improve employability as well as identify areas for improvement before they leave UOG.

C. Student Support Services

1. Provide students refresher mini-workshops or sessions to develop and strengthen test-taking skills.
2. Decentralize Writing Centers so that they are more accessible to students and discipline specific.
3. Establish support for students as they progress through their programs with a writing mentorship program.

D. Faculty Support

1. Identify ways to support faculty's efforts to include lessons or activities that strengthen written communication in their programs.

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Appendices

[Appendix A Fanuchånan \(Fall\) 2014 CLA+ Institutional Report University of Guam](#)
[Appendix B Fañomnåkan \(Spring\) 2014 CLA+ Institutional Report University of Guam](#)
[Appendix C Fanuchånan \(Fall\) 2015 CLA+ Institutional Report University of Guam](#)
[Appendix D Fañomnåkan \(Spring\) 2015 CLA+ Institutional Report University of Guam](#)
[Appendix E Fanuchånan \(Fall\) 2016 CLA+ Institutional Report University of Guam](#)
[Appendix F Fañomnåkan \(Spring\) 2016 CLA+ Institutional Report University of Guam](#)
[Appendix G Fanuchånan \(Fall\) 2017 CLA+ Institutional Report University of Guam](#)
[Appendix H Fañomnåkan \(Spring\) 2017 CLA+ Institutional Report University of Guam](#)
[Appendix I Fañomnåkan \(Spring\) 2018 CLA+ Institutional Report University of Guam](#)
[Appendix J Fanuchånan \(Fall\) 2019 CLA+ Institutional Report University of Guam](#)
[Appendix K Fañomnåkan \(Spring\) 2020 CLA+ Institutional Report University of Guam](#)
[Appendix L Fanuchånan \(Fall\) 2020 CLA+ Institutional Report University of Guam](#)
[Appendix M Fanuchånan \(Fall\) 2021 CLA+ Institutional Report University of Guam](#)
[Appendix N Fañomnåkan \(Spring\) 2022 CLA+ Institutional Report University of Guam](#)
[Appendix O Sample Request for Participation Letter](#)