

*Seaver College Alumni Survey Data*

In the spring of 2012, Seaver College graduates were administered a Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) survey containing questions regarding various aspects of their education at Pepperdine University. Among the questions in the HEDS survey, alumni were asked 21 questions regarding components the Seaver College General Education (GE) curriculum and that sought to determine the extent to which the GE program contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development. The questions are presented in Tables 1 and 2, respectively. (The questions in Table 1 were included in the core HEDS survey questions; the questions in Table 2 were added to the survey as supplemental questions.) The Likert-scale response options for each question were a) very little, b) somewhat, c) sufficiently, or d) considerably.

<b>Table 1.</b> Undergraduate alumni survey question on <i>overall undergraduate experience</i> contribution to knowledge, skills, and personal development	
<i>To what extent did your experience as an undergraduate contribute to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?</i>	
Careful reading	Comprehension and analysis of written texts within and across genres.
Critical thinking	Examination of ideas, evidence, and assumptions before accepting or formulating a conclusion.
Creative thinking	Developing or combining ideas, images, or expertise in innovative ways.
Information literacy	Locating, evaluating, and using information effectively and responsibly for a particular purpose.
Quantitative literacy	Seeking, understanding, and using quantitative information appropriately to solve problems or make arguments.
Effective writing	Conveying accurate and compelling content in clear, expressive, and audience-appropriate prose.
Effective speaking	Appreciation for Diversity
Teamwork	Contributing to a team, facilitating the work of team members, and fostering a constructive team climate.
Problem solving	Designing, evaluating and implementing a strategy to answer questions of achieve a goal.
Civic engagement	Promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes.
Intercultural knowledge and competence	Information, skills, and commitments that support effective and appropriate interactions in a variety of cultural contexts.
Ethical reasoning	Recognizing ethical issues, examining different ethical perspectives, and considering the ramifications of alternative actions.
Integrative thinking	The habit of connecting ideas and experiences, and the ability to transfer learning to novel situations.

Approximately 258 alumni from varying degree programs and graduation years completed the survey. Responses to the questions on their overall undergraduate experience and the general education curriculum were extracted. In order to evaluate the responses relative to Seaver College’s 14 General Education (GE) Learning Outcomes, we grouped content areas from both

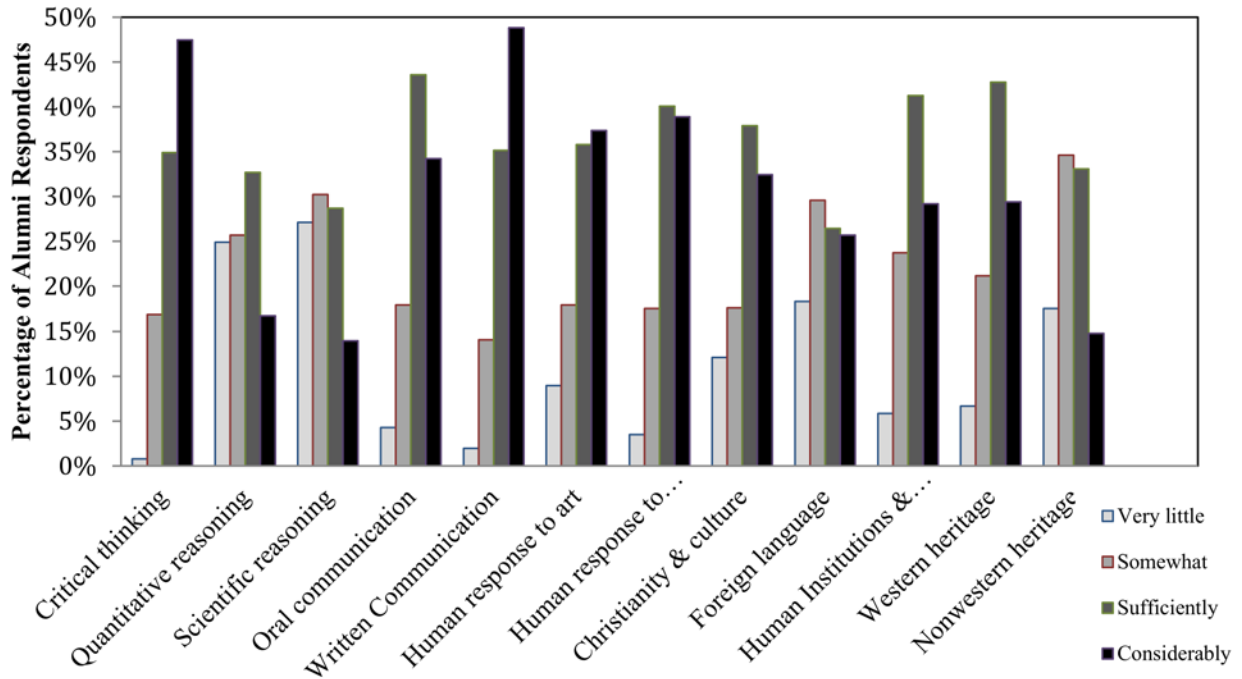
survey questions (Table 3), such that 12 of the 14 GE learning outcome content areas were addressed in the survey. The alumni responses to these items are shown in Figure 1.

<b>Table 2.</b> Undergraduate alumni survey question on the general education curriculum contribution to knowledge, skills, and personal development	
<i>How has the General Education curriculum contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?</i>	
Quantitative Reasoning	Explain math concepts, solve quantitative problems, and understand empirical data
Science	The scientific method and the natural and physical worlds
The Arts	The historical, cultural or technical significance of music, theater or art
Literature	The ability to read, interpret and understand literature.
Christianity	Christian Scripture and the use of Scripture to evaluate the ethical and religious dimensions of contemporary society and culture.
Foreign Language	The ability to read, speak, listen, and write in a non-English language.
Human Institutions & Behavior	The disciplines of economics, psychology and sociology and how they inform institutional and human behavior.
Western Culture	The history, literature, philosophy and artistic achievements of western civilizations.
Nonwestern Culture	The history, literature, philosophy and artistic traditions of civilizations outside western civilizations.

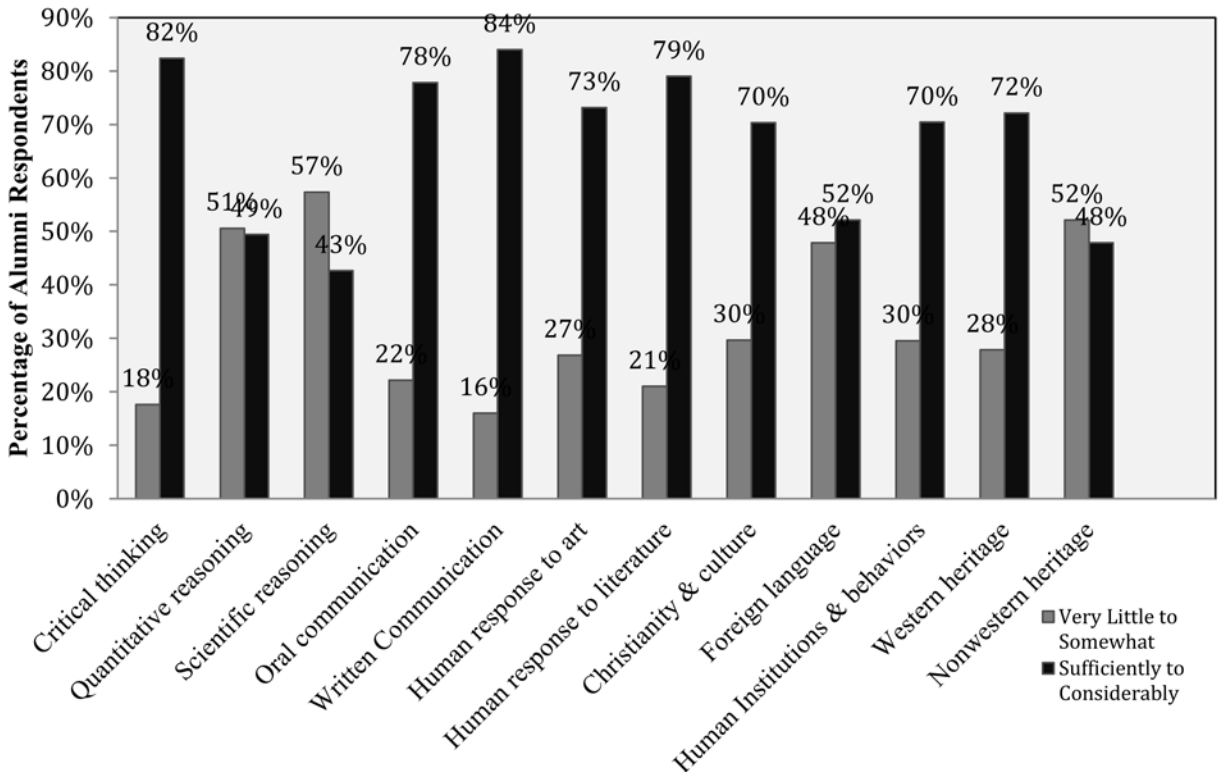
Although there were four response options to each question (Figure 1), to simplify analysis of the data responses were stratified into two categories: 1) “very little” or “somewhat” and 2) “sufficiently” or “considerably”. The responses to alumni perceptions of their learning in areas of the GE curriculum stratified into these two categories of responses are shown in Figure 2.

<b>Table 3.</b> General education learning outcomes (content areas)	
<i>GE Learning Outcomes</i>	<i>Survey Question Item</i>
Critical thinking	Critical thinking
Quantitative reasoning	Quantitative reasoning
Scientific reasoning	Science
Oral communication	Effective speaking
Written communication	Effective writing
Human response to art	The arts
Human response to literature	Literature
Christianity & culture	Christianity
American experience	<i>Not addressed in survey</i>
Foreign language	Foreign Language
Human institutions & behaviors	Human institutions & behaviors
Western heritage	Western culture
Nonwestern heritage	Nonwestern culture
Research & inquiry	<i>Not addressed in survey</i>

**Figure 1. Knowledge Areas in GE Curriculum: Undergraduate Alumni Perception of Proficiency**



**Figure 2. Knowledge Areas in the GE Curriculum: Undergraduate Alumni Perception of Proficiency**



Overall, alumni perceive that their undergraduate experience contributed “sufficiently” or “considerably” in 9 of the 12 GE learning outcome areas assessed; with critical thinking, oral communication, written communication, and human response to literature receiving the highest percentages (Figure 2).

The current GE curriculum aligns well with the future direction of the University’s accrediting body, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (**WASC**). In the October 2011 report, “Situating WASC Accreditation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Redesign for 2012 and Beyond”, the WASC Task Forces and Steering Committee recommended that the next stage of WASC accreditation include institutional demonstration that graduates have achieved expected levels of proficiency in each of the areas already established in **CFR 2.2 (written and oral communication, quantitative skills, critical thinking, information literacy and appreciation of diversity)**. The current requirements in the Seaver College GE program (e.g., written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, and research & inquiry) and the GE curriculums’ alignment with the diversity of the IEOs ensure that the program will allow us to continue to prepare and monitor the success of graduates for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>1</sup>

In order to assess how graduates perceive that their undergraduate experience and the GE curriculum facilitated learning in the five areas of expected proficiency articulated by WASC, we extracted data from the survey including: written communication, oral communication, quantitative skills, critical thinking, information literacy, and intercultural knowledge and competence (i.e., appreciation for diversity). The results are presented in Figure 3. Based on the collective responses of survey respondents, 67-84% of alumni perceived that their undergraduate experience “sufficiently” or “considerably” contributed to their learning in these five areas.

---

<sup>1</sup> WASC (2011). [Working Draft] Situating WASC Accreditation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Redesign for 2012 and Beyond.

**Figure 3. Undergraduate Alumni Perception of Learning in five WASC 2012 Core Proficiencies (CFR 2.2)**

