Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)
Frequently Asked Questions

Section I: About Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)

What is the CLA?

- CLA stands for the Collegiate Learning Assessment. CLA is a national effort to assess the quality of undergraduate education by directly measuring student-learning outcomes.
- The CLA focuses on a set of common areas that comprise what is central to most notions of collegiate education. These areas are: critical thinking, analytic reasoning, written communication, and problem solving.
- CLA is developed by the Council for Aid to Education (CAE) and RAND Corporation. Starting from the fall of 2007, University of Kentucky will be participating in the four-year CLA assessment project.

Why is CLA important?

- CLA is a national effort to assess the quality of undergraduate education by directly measuring student-learning outcomes.
- Results of the large-scale, longitudinal study will be used to help all higher education institutions in America improve their undergraduate education curricula.
- This four-year assessment project will help our university to understand better the skill development among undergraduate students.

What types of questions are asked on CLA?

The CLA uses various types of tasks, all of which require students to construct written responses to open-ended questions. Students will automatically be assigned two tasks as they log in. Students will be prompted to complete the "Performance Task" (60 minutes) and Selected-Response section, where students will respond to 25 questions: 10 assess scientific and quantitative reasoning; 10 assess critical reading and evaluation; and 5 assess the students’ ability to critique an argument. Students complete this section within 30 minutes.

Are sample questions available?

Yes. For the Performance Task. In the Selected-Response section, students respond to 25 questions: 10 assess scientific and quantitative reasoning; 10 assess critical reading and evaluation; and 5 assess the students’ ability to critique an argument. Much like the Performance Task, each set of questions requires that students draw information from accompanying documents.
Complete the Below Performance Task:

**ROLE:** You are a staff member for an organization that analyzes the accuracy of policy claims made by political candidates. The organization is non-partisan, meaning that it is not influenced by, affiliated with or supportive of any one political party or candidate.

**SCENARIO:** Leila Jainson is running for reelection as the mayor of Stoneville. Mayor Jainson’s opponent in this contest is Dr. Carl Greer. Dr. Greer is a member of the Stoneville City Council. During a recent TV interview about cell phone use, Dr. Greer claimed that these phones interfered with people’s ability to operate a motorized vehicle and caused vehicle-related accidents in Stoneville. Dr. Greer said that reducing cell phone usage while driving motorized vehicles would lower the city’s vehicle-related accident rate. To support this argument, Dr. Greer presented a chart that compared the percentage of drivers who use cell phones while driving to the number of vehicle-related accidents. Dr. Greer based this chart on cell phone use and community data tables that were provided by the Stoneville Police Department and government population counts.

**TASK:** Your job is to evaluate Dr. Greer’s claims. To do so, please answer the question that follows, using the supporting documents provided (labeled A and B). Your answers should include the appropriate or relevant evidence (drawn from documents A and B) necessary to support your position.

**QUESTION:** Dr. Greer claims that “reducing cell phone usage while driving motorized vehicles would lower the city’s vehicle related accident rate”. What are the strengths and/or limitations of Dr. Greer’s position on this matter? What specific information in Documents A and B led you to this conclusion? What additional information, if any, would you like to have had?

**DOCUMENTS to use to support your response:**

1: Document A: Two tables that present data about the city’s five regions. The percentage of registered drivers who use cell phones while operating a motorized vehicle (Table 1) was obtained from a population survey. The middle column of Table 1 shows the number of registered drivers involved in a motorized vehicle-related accident. The number of registered drivers (Table 1) and the percentage who are college graduates (Table 2) are based on 2005 government population counts. The percentage of moving violation offenders in Stoneville (Table 2) is based on 2005 Stoneville Police Department data.

2: Document B: Dr. Greer used a chart during a TV interview to show the relationship between the number people who use cell phones while driving a motorized vehicle and vehicular accidents in Stoneville. This chart is based on data that were provided to Dr. Greer by the Stoneville Police Department.
Section II: What does participation in CLA mean for students?

How am I selected?

You are one of the 300 students randomly selected from the first-time, full-time (no transfer students) incoming freshman students who are enrolled in the fall 2014 semester and who are at least 18 years old on August 27, 2014.

Do I have to take the CLA?

No. Your participation is completely voluntary.

Do I have to answer all of the questions?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. For this reason, yes, we expect all questions to be completed with meaningful effort. As a student, you have the right to stop at any time during the study; however you will not receive the $50 cash for your participation.

Will taking the CLA affect my GPA?

No. Your participation will not in any way influence your academic standing at the University of Kentucky.

Will I get to see the results of the test?

Yes. CLA provides an online student log-in for students to receive their own scores at the conclusion of the testing cycle.

How long does the CLA assessment take?

- You will be assessed in the Freshman (Fall 2014) and Senior (Spring 2018) years. The Fall 2014 session 90 minutes with an additional 30 minutes for registration.

What are the benefits for me to take the CLA?

- You will be provided with measures of your own progress in your undergraduate studies
- You will immediately receive a total cash payment of $50 following the completion of each on-campus assessment session.
- In addition, the top three scorers of each assessment year will be paid $250 each.

Who gives the CLA?

- Experienced exam proctors are hired to distribute and collect materials, and ensure the integrity of the assessment sessions.
- A minimum of one proctor per room as multiple rooms are used.
- A computer support person will be available.
May my friends take the test if they were not selected?

No. The participation is by invitation only. You are invited because you are one of the 300 students randomly selected from the first-time, full-time (no transfer students) incoming freshman students who are enrolled in the fall 2014 semester and who are at least 18 years old on August 27, 2014. If your friend has not received an email invitation from our office (Office of Assessment), he or she is not allowed to participate in the CLA.

Will my name remain confidential?

Yes. Your information and identifications will remain confidential and will be stored in a secured database.

Section III: Testing Day

Where is the location?

The CLA instruments are administered online. The assessment sessions will take place in the Hub @ W.T.Young Library and the College of Nursing Building.

Driving Directions Maps Parking of the W.T. Young Library

What do I need to bring?

Please bring your UK student ID with you.

You do not need to bring any stationery (pen, paper, etc.) or calculator. We will provide all necessary stationery supplies.

When do I need to get there?

Please arrive promptly at check in-time. The Assessment will start about 30 minutes after check-in-time.

How long will the test take?

The total testing time is approximately 90 minutes. Please add an additional 30 minutes for registration.

Will I get paid on the testing day?

Yes. You will immediately receive the cash payment of $50 following the completion of the assessment session. You will need to complete all sections in all tasks to get paid. The proctors will be able to monitor this progress through their station.

What happens if I could not come on the assessment day?
If you really cannot attend your scheduled assessment session, please email Sara Jewell at sara.jewell@uky.edu immediately.

**Whom should I contact if there is an emergency?**

If you experience an emergency, please don't hesitate to contact us. You can email Sara Jewell at sara.jewell@uky.edu or Leah Simpson at leah.simpson@uky.edu

**Section IV: How can I get more information, ask questions, or make comments?**

**How can I get more information about the CLA?**

- You could visit the main webpage of the CLA at [http://www.cae.org/content/pro_collegiate.htm](http://www.cae.org/content/pro_collegiate.htm)
- You could address your concern to either Sara Jewell at sara.jewell@uky.edu or Leah Simpson at leah.simpson@uky.edu