

Chapter 10: Multi-State Collaborative Initiative

Description of the Project:

In spring 2015 and spring 2016, Truman participated in the Multi-State Collaborative Initiative to Advance Learning Outcomes Assessment (MSC). MSC is a joint project by the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO) and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). Nine states participated in the pilot year: Connecticut, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Utah. Maine joined for the demonstration year. Much more information about the project is available at <http://www.sheeo.org/projects/msc-multi-state-collaborative-advance-learning-outcomes-assessment#What>.

The project is similar in many ways to the Truman Portfolio. Student artifacts are scored by faculty who have been trained on specific rubrics. This kind of direct assessment allows for a richer understanding of student achievement than is possible with only surveys and standardized tests. For the pilot year, MSC included three prompts for student work: Critical Thinking, Written Communication, and Quantitative Literacy. AAC&U VALUE rubrics were used to evaluate the work. For the Demonstration year, Civic Engagement was also studied, but Truman did not submit student work for this category.

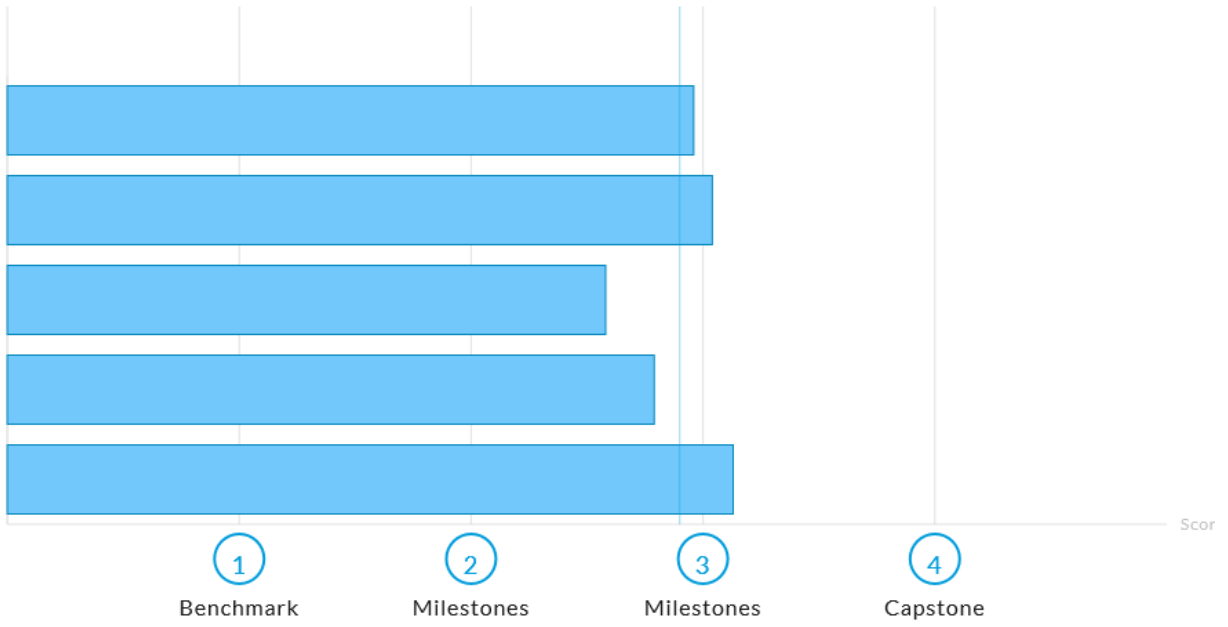
During the pilot year, faculty were recruited for participation with stipends. Because no stipends were available for the Demonstration Year, far fewer faculty participated, meaning that Truman submitted fewer student artifacts. Because of the small sample size, these findings should be interpreted with care.

Critical Thinking:

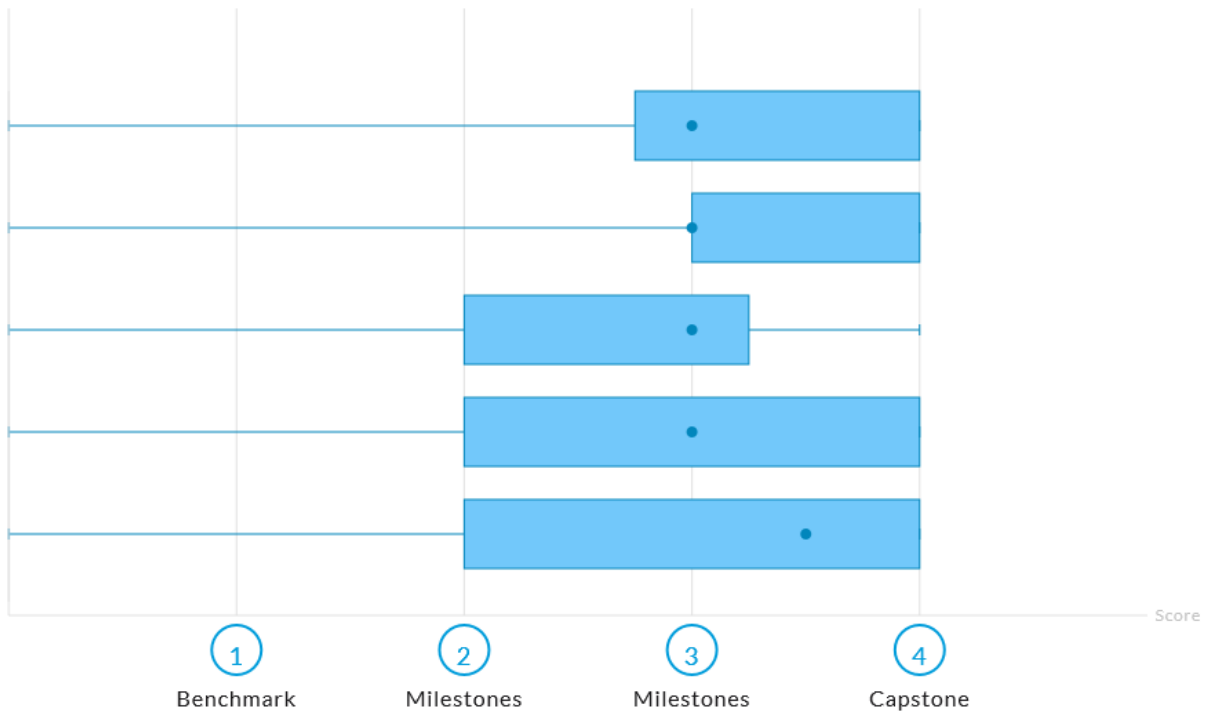
Truman submitted work from 24 students on Critical Thinking. The average overall score was 2.9 on a 0-4 scale. The subcategories scored were Explanation of issues, Evidence, Influence of context and assumptions, Student's position, and Conclusions. Truman students scored highest on the subcategory Conclusions. Though direct comparison is difficult, all scores are higher than the average scores found for participating four-year institutions.

Criterion

Average: 2.9

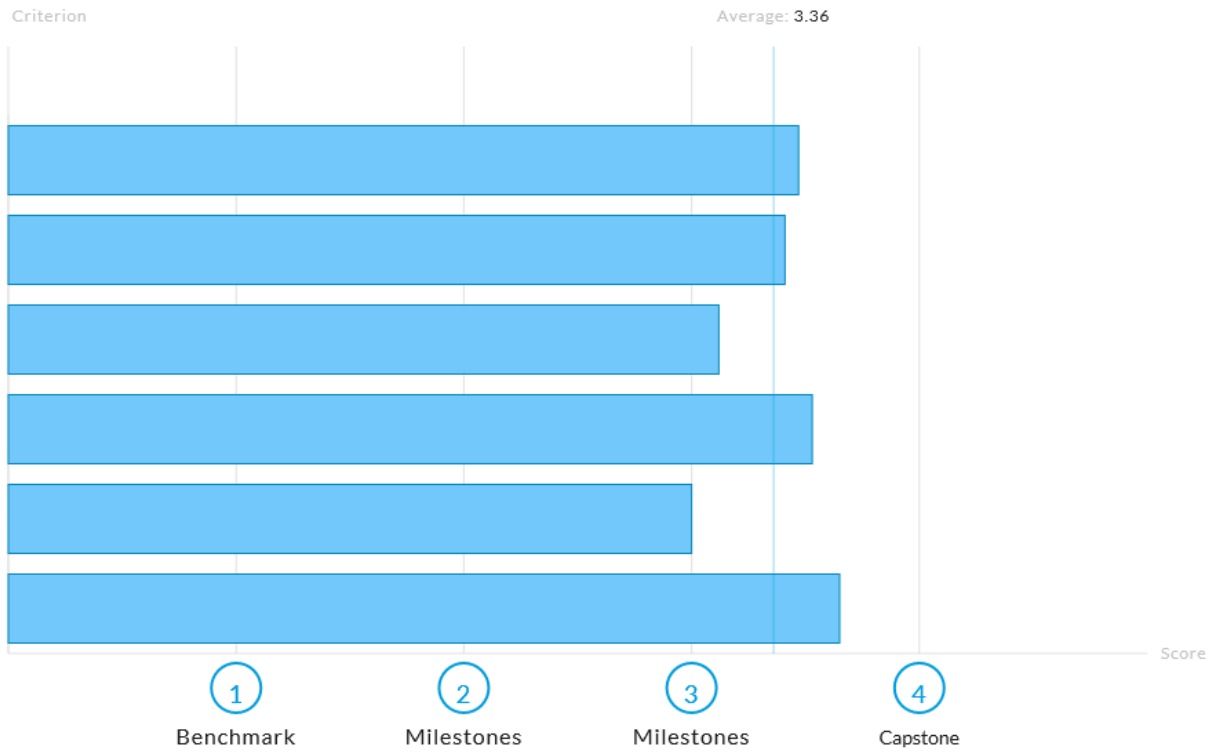


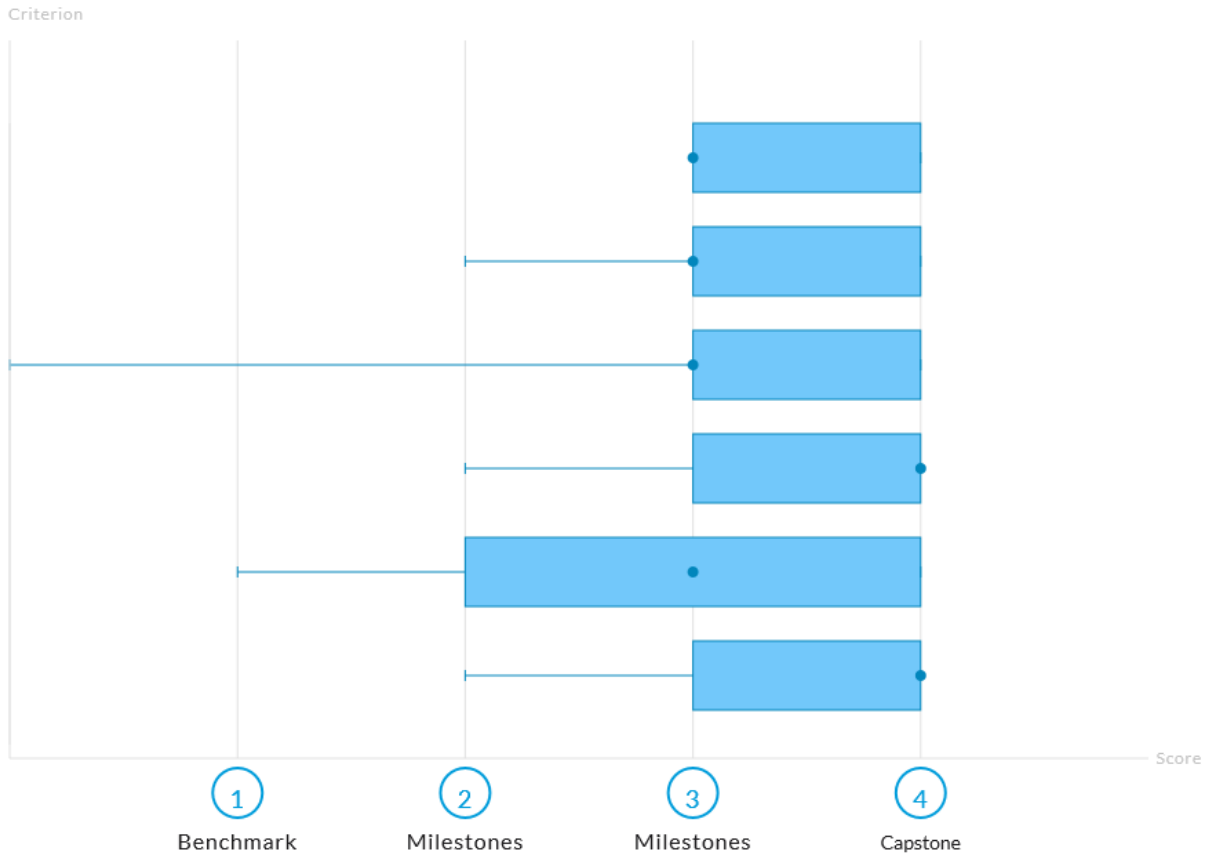
Criterion



Quantitative literacy:

Truman submitted work from 17 students on Quantitative Literacy. The average overall score was 3.36 on a 0-4 scale. The subcategories scored were Interpretation, Representation, Calculation, Application/Analyses, Assumptions, and Communication. Truman students scored lowest on Assumptions and highest on Communication. Though comparisons are difficult, Truman students scored nearly a point higher than students from other participating four-year institutions.





Conclusions:

Truman students scored well on both categories for which work was submitted. Both the nature of the project and the small Truman sample size warrant caution in comparing the results to those of other institutions. However, Truman students scores well above average, as expected.