



cla+

Use Cases

CLA+ is used by a wide variety of public, private, four-year, two-year, and international colleges and universities. The original purpose of our instrument was to help institutions better understand their value to students. CLA+, which was upgraded in 2013, allows for unique research designs that help institutions better understand student learning and growth.

How institutions use CLA+:

- measure core curriculum or general education efficacy
- peer comparisons and group reporting
- benchmark entering and exiting performance
- demonstrate academic growth for accreditation
- department, program, and efficacy research
- individual student research
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Our team can help suggest ideas for a meaningful CLA+ study and the best research designs for your institution.

CLA+ reports may include:

- means, standard deviations, and 25th and 75th percentile scores
- a summary of subscores for the skill areas measured by CLA+
- criterion-referenced mastery levels
- growth estimates (effect sizes and value-added scores)
- student sample demographics
- student effort and engagement survey responses
- local survey responses

CASE STUDIES OF CLA+ ADMINISTRATION

CORE CURRICULUM MEASUREMENT

A large public university administers CLA+ to assess part of its core curriculum—specifically, critical thinking, written communication, and empirical and quantitative skills. Incoming freshman take CLA+ at the onset of their college career, then again after they have finished their core curriculum, either after their second or third year. This provides institutional researchers with significant data on the effect of general education for their students. The institution can use the freshmen scores for formative purposes to help either place students in necessary writing courses and/or gauge the effectiveness of curricular approaches to improve these outcomes. The institution will also conduct a longitudinal survey with these students to assess how its general education outcome correlates with post-collegiate opportunities and success.

A large university is transitioning to a new core curriculum and will use CLA+ scores to measure student improvement and compare with previous CLA+ results.

A private university utilizes additional reporting data, including sub-scores, cross-school comparisons, and the value-added data. CLA+ helps the institution report on half of their general education outcomes. CLA+ also satisfies accreditation requirements.

A large community college has emerged as a strong partner for CLA+ services. The community college serves an important avenue for underserved students. CLA+ colleagues deliver performance task academies for first year faculty, who better understand how to introduce and measure problem-based learning in their own classrooms. The institution is trying to improve its graduation rate and will use CLA+ to identify and address student weaknesses with the hopes of increasing student persistence. CLA+ results will also help the institution identify the success of a student resources program.

An HBCU uses CLA+ as part of a certification program, testing students three times over four years. The institution's purpose is to track student growth, and identify parts of their curriculum that contribute most to student learning. There is international interest in particular credentialing pilot.

An innovative, competency-based university tests all of its freshmen as they enter and at the end of their first year. It's used as an efficacy study for the university's unique curriculum and methods. CLA+ aligns with the university's institutional focus on interdisciplinary skills.

PEER INSTITUTION COMPARISON

CLA+ Data Analytics will launch in Summer 2017. This service, an interactive database will greatly enhance an institution's ability to contextualize CLA+ results and make better decisions about the impacts on student learning.

A small liberal arts college is assessing all graduating seniors as part of its senior capstone courses. This model is helpful to compare and measure the level of student proficiency in the transition from college to career.

A new, test-optional school used CLA+ as a measure of its students entering academic ability and compare against the national average. They are also identifying students from departments to see if certain programs contribute more to CLA+ outcomes.

A distance-learning, for-profit institution will use CLA+ to demonstrate baseline and growth measures compared to the national norm. It will receive data on the value of a distance-learning education and see what practices contribute to students' critical- thinking skills over time. There is interest in seeing the comparison of a distance-learning institution to the national average.

BENCHMARK AND VALUE-ADDED PERFORMANCE FOR ACCREDITATION

A small university is testing all of its freshmen and seniors to gain baseline and value-added results. CLA+ outcomes align with their new strategic plan. There is strong interest in credentialing as a way to supplement the information employers seek from students.

A university uses CLA+ to assess the learning outcomes that the institution struggled to measure internally. It allowed students to test remotely. The university sought to gain value-added data for its freshmen and seniors.

A university has built CLA+ into its Quality Enhancement Plan for reaccreditation. The Quality Enhancement Plan is based around CLA+ and other assessment instruments to measure institutional impact. CLA+ helps the institution better understand what practices improve student learning outcomes. Faculty found that CLA+ measures skills they believe to be essential to student development

UNIQUE CASES

A new international university is using CLA+ to establish a baseline measure that correlates with its academic mission. CLA+ is used to measure entering student ability. The test is seen as more authentic than other assessments and aligns closely with the university's institutional goals in educating future leaders. CLA+ scores are used to help faculty understand student strengths and deficiencies. The university will also use CLA+ to track growth and improvement over time.

An English-language school in Asia has added CLA+ to its strategic plan, and has structured CLA+ into its strategic development. The school is interested in allowing students to demonstrate their critical-thinking skills in English.

A branch of the military uses CLA+ to test all of its aspiring officers to assess their ability to think creatively and analyze competing and conflicting reports. The military branch has emphasized the need for critical thinking and effective communication and uses CLA+ results to help determine future career opportunities and placements.

A community college uses CLA+ as part of a unique incentive program. Students who meet criteria and perform well on CLA+ are eligible for a scholarship and admission into a local four-year university. Partner universities are interested in strong CLA+ performance because those students are likely to persist, graduate, and succeed after the college—improving institutional outcomes while helping ensure student success.

For more information, contact Dylan Forsyth and the CLA+ team at clateam@cae.org