

The VCLA is a standardized assessment mandated for teacher licensure by the VDOE. The VCLA assesses verbal and written language skills deemed necessary to be competent teachers. The VCLA is criterion referenced and objective based and is designed to measure a candidate's knowledge and skills in relation to an established standard rather than in relation to the performance of other candidates (Pearson, 2010). Specifically, Pearson reports that for the subject of reading the assessment is designed to measure comprehension and analysis of readings, outlining and summarizing skills, and ability to interpret tables and graphs. For the subject of writing, the assessment is designed to measure the development of ideas in essay form on specific topics and the mastery of grammar, mechanics, and vocabulary (<http://www.va.nesinc.com>). A cut score is required to meet the licensure requirement in Virginia. If met or exceeded, it is another indicator of the skills necessary to be a competent and qualified professional educator.

The VCLA has the strength of measuring basic communication skills often taught in General Education courses, particular in English courses, therefore measuring some degree of subject matter knowledge. It is also a VDOE licensure requirement indicating the state has faith in the instrument. A major limitation is the lack of reliability and validity data on the VCLA published by the testing company or the VDOE. Another limitation is that test anxiety may play a role in how a student performs on this standardized assessment. The faculty agrees that the VCLA results should be used in conjunction with other measures to determine our program completers' degree of subject matter knowledge.

Table 28
VCLA Mean Scores and Pass Rates by Year and Program

Year	Program	n	Mean	SD	Pass Rate
2015-2016	Elem Ed	0	-	-	-
	K-12 Special Education	29	518.2	29.3	100%
	CS	0	-	-	100%
	Cur & Instruction (Gifted & Talented)	1	578.0	-	100%
	IDS	21	500.1	37.5	100%
2016-2017	Elem Ed	4	539.75	25.71	100%
	K-12 Special Education	24	506.71	21.83	100%
	CS	109	519.92	30.47	100%
	Cur & Instruction (Gifted & Talented)	0	-	-	-
	IDS	16	515.88	29.10	94%
2017-2018	Elem Ed	1	501	-	100%
	K-12 Special Education	17	504.65	29.33	100%
	CS	115	525.73	29.35	100%
	Cur & Instruction (Gifted & Talented)	1	547	-	100%
	IDS	26	509.62	26.40	96%

Year	Program	<u>n</u>	Mean	SD	Pass Rate
2018-19	Elem Ed	-	-	-	-
	K-12 Special Education	19	502.16	24.09	100%
	CS	114	521.67	28.08	100%
	Cur & Instruction (Gifted & Talented)	-	-	-	-
	IDS	20	508.75	20.48	100%

Note: The assessment is a requirement for VDOE licensure.
The VCLA composite passing score is 470.