

UPPER DIVISION WRITING REQUIREMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this project we analyzed how students meet the Upper-Division Writing Requirement. We compared the pass rates and identified differences in characteristics of students who take the Upper-Division Writing Examination (UDWE) and those who enroll in an upper-division writing course (W-Course) in the period between fall 2002 and fall 2007.

- The percentage of students who passed the UDWE (64%) is noticeably lower compared to the percentage of those who passed a W-Course (92%) (Page 3).
- The average UDWE pass rates vary by college from a low of 45% for Engineering to a high of 68% for Arts & Humanities (Page 7).
- The average W-Course pass rates vary from 81% for CSB to 87% for Education and Engineering (Page 7).
- Whites and females are more likely to take the UDWE (Page 8).
- African-Americans are the least likely to pass the test (29%) and the course (78%) (Page 9).
- Students with higher GPAs are more likely to take the UDWE (Page 10).
- The average GPA of students who are failing the UDWE is at the level where students are likely to pass a W-Course (Page 10).
- The average UDWE pass rates vary by major from a high of 90% for English to less than 40% for Kinesiology and Criminology (Page 15).
- Undeclared and Pre-Business majors were least likely to pass the course (Page 16).

Introduction

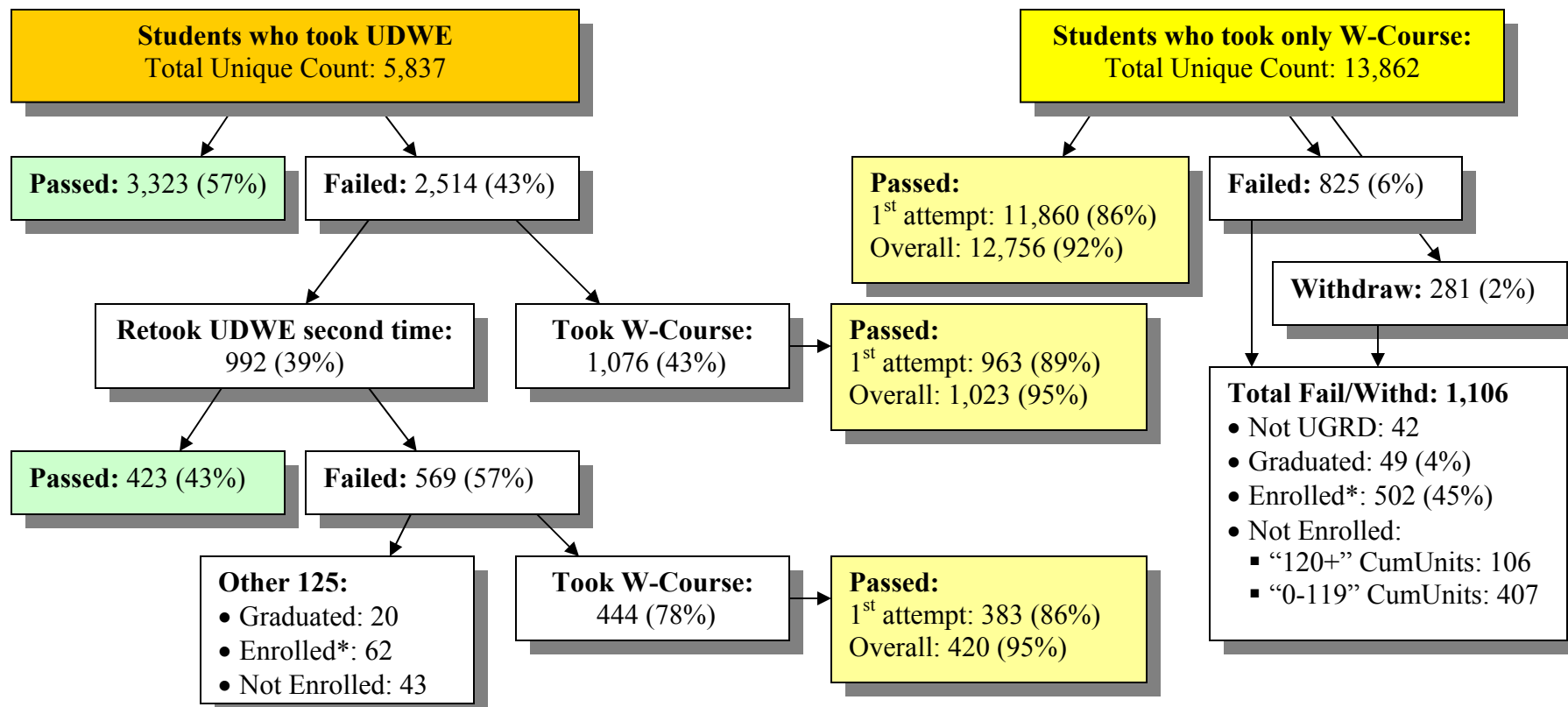
All undergraduate students must demonstrate competency in writing skills at the upper division (junior/senior) level as a requirement for graduation. Students may meet this requirement in one of two ways: either pass the Upper-Division Writing Examination (UDWE), or obtain a “C”, “CR”, or higher grade in an approved upper-division writing course (W-Course).

The purpose of this project is (1) to look at the characteristics of students enrolling in a W-course and those taking the UDWE, and (2) to compare the “success” rate of the UDWE versus W-course option. The success rate is identified as a pass / failure rate.

UDWE is given five times each year in January, March, June, August and October. There were a total of 21 approved upper-division courses, identified in the catalog by the letter “W”. The analysis covered the period between fall 2002 and fall 2007.

Following are the findings of the analysis.

Summary Statistics for the UDWE and W-Course Options. Fall 2002 – Fall 2007



- 3,746 students eventually passed the UDWE, which is 64% of the total number who took the test.
- Those who failed the test and then took the W-Course, passed the course at 95% rate, incl. 89% passing on the first course attempt.
- 12,756 students eventually passed the W-course, which is 92% of the total number who selected the W-Course option; 86% passed the course on the first attempt.

* Enrolled: students who were enrolled in spring 2007 and/or fall 2007.

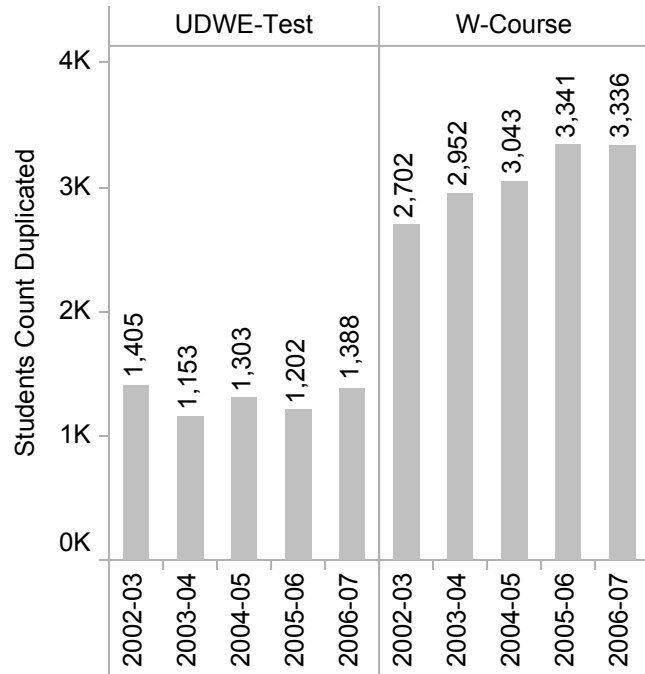
Not enrolled: students who were not enrolled in both spring and fall of 2007.

Note: Pass includes: 114 or higher UDWE score, A, B, C, CR grades for W-Course.

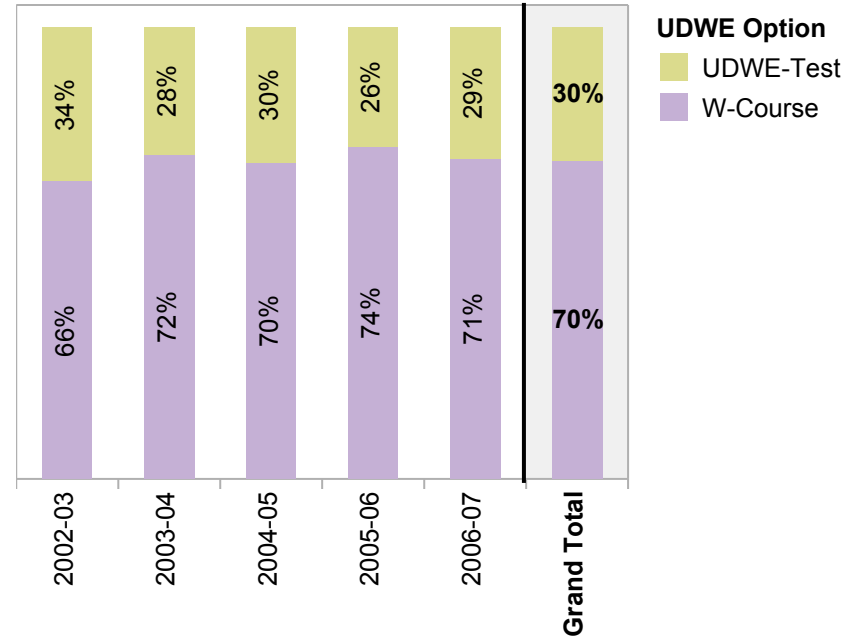
Fail includes: 113 or less UDWE score, D, F, NC, WU (Withdrawal Unauthorized, IC (Incomplete Charged) grades for W-Course.

Withdraw includes: W (Withdrawal), I (Incomplete Authorized) grades for W-Course.

UDWE and W-Course Enrollment by Academic Year.

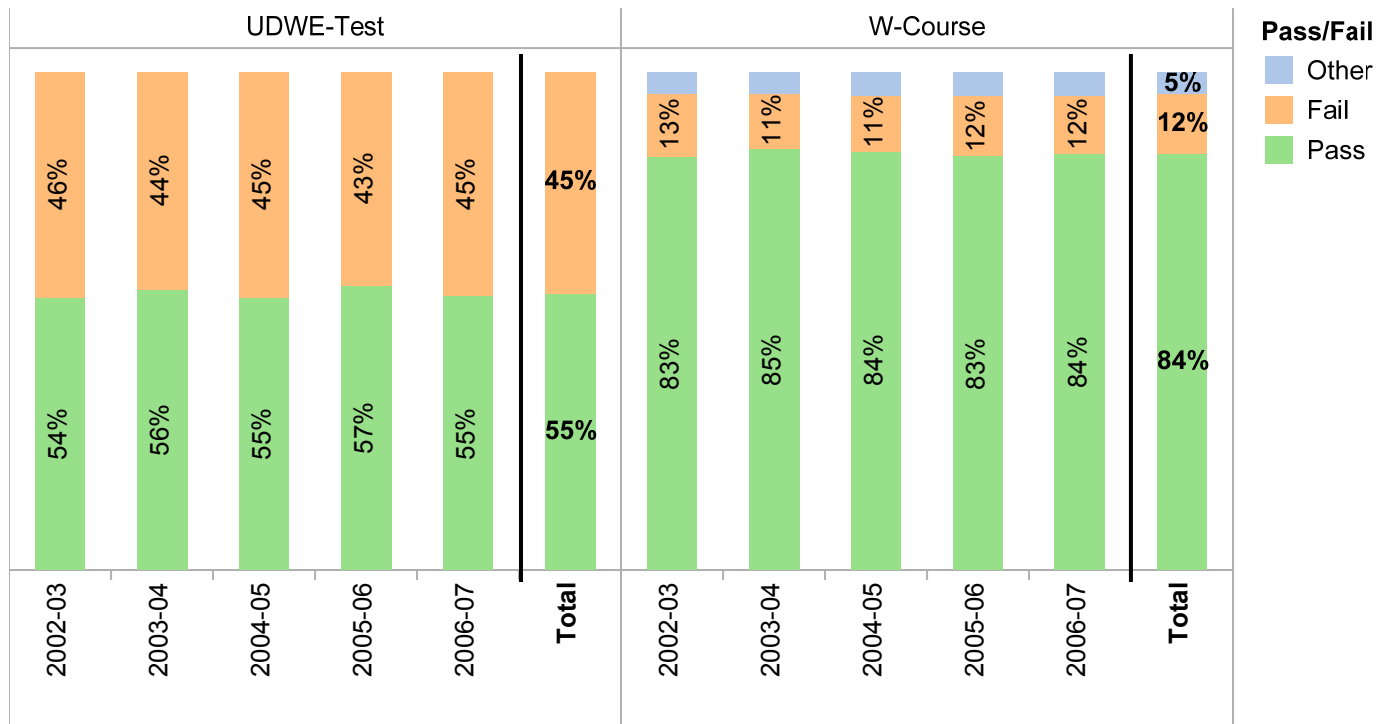


Proportion of Students Enrolled in UDWE and/or W-Course by Academic Year.



- Enrollment in W-Courses is growing, along with the university's enrollment overall.
- Overall, 70% of students fulfilling upper-division writing requirement select a W-Course, while 30% take the UDWE.

Pass / Fail Proportion* for the UDWE and W-Course Options by Academic Year.



- The “Pass / Fail” ratio was consistent across the past five years for both the UDWE and W-Course options.
- The proportion of the tests passed (55%) was considerably lower than the proportion of the W-Courses passed (84%).

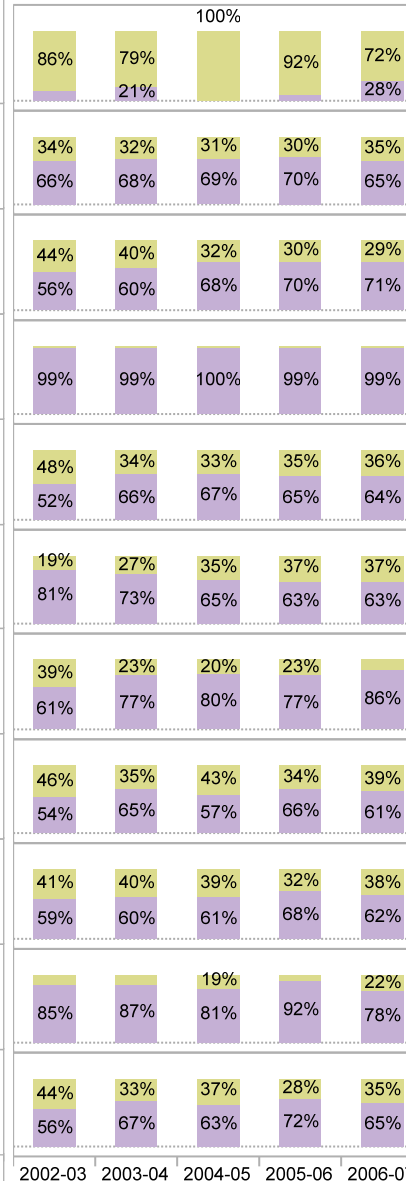
* The basis for the proportion is the number of all tests / w-courses taken (not the number of individual students).

Note: The UDWE pass score is 114. The score includes 2 essays and a multiple-choice CAAP portion. Following is the score formula: $(CAAP \times 1.22) + ((Essay\ A + Essay\ B) \times 2.5)$. Essays are graded by two readers on a scale from 1 to 6. Maximum score possible for an essay portion is: $(12 + 12) \times 2.5 = 60$

UDWE and W-Course Enrollment by College and Academic Year

	UDWE-Test					W-Course				
Null	24	15	27	23	23	4	4		2	9
AH	174	168	180	181	217	339	353	395	422	402
AST	123	120	104	101	114	157	183	224	231	276
CSB	9	6	3	6	8	750	740	768	803	850
ED	406	265	233	216	187	440	522	467	401	337
ENG	38	57	79	79	74	157	155	144	134	125
EXT	15	22	12	14	8	23	73	47	46	51
HHS	264	207	320	271	353	307	377	427	524	553
SM	173	150	159	138	185	251	221	245	297	307
SPE	10	7	6	4	9	56	47	25	44	32
SS	169	136	180	169	210	218	277	301	437	394
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07

UDWE and W-Course Proportions by College and Academic Year



UDWE Option
 UDWE-Test
 W-Course

- Overall, the proportions remained somewhat consistent for the colleges in the past five years, with the exception of Agricultural Sciences & Technology, where the UDWE-test proportion gradually declined and Engineering where it steadily increased.

Note: Craig School of Business requires a specific “W” class.

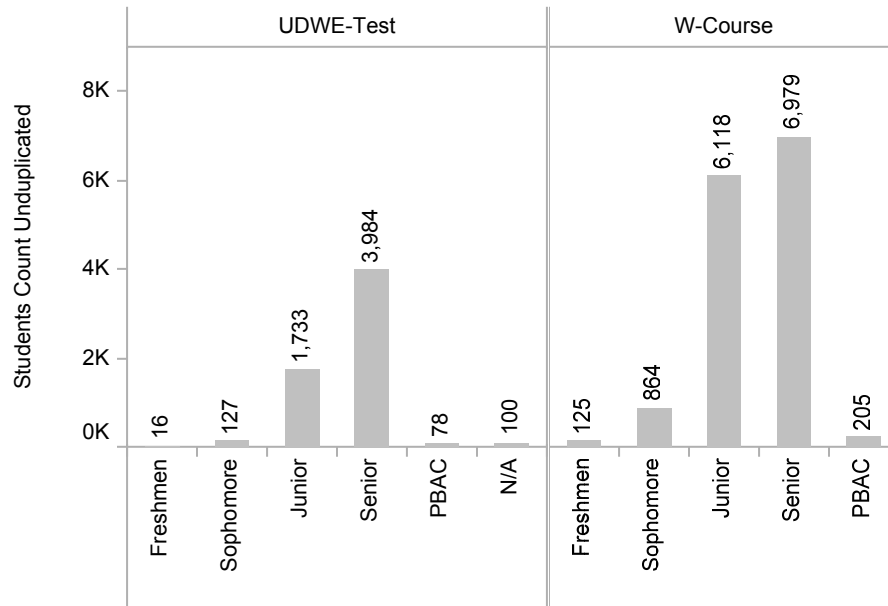
Pass/Fail Ratio for the UDWE and W-Course Options by College and Academic Year



- Success rates for the UDWE and W-Course options are somewhat consistent across the past five years at the college level, with the exception of Engineering where there were some variations in the pass rates for the UDWE option.
- College of Arts & Humanities has the highest success rate for the UDWE (68%), while Engineering has the lowest (45%)
- Craig School of Business has the lowest W-Course success rate (81%), while Education and Engineering have the highest (87%).

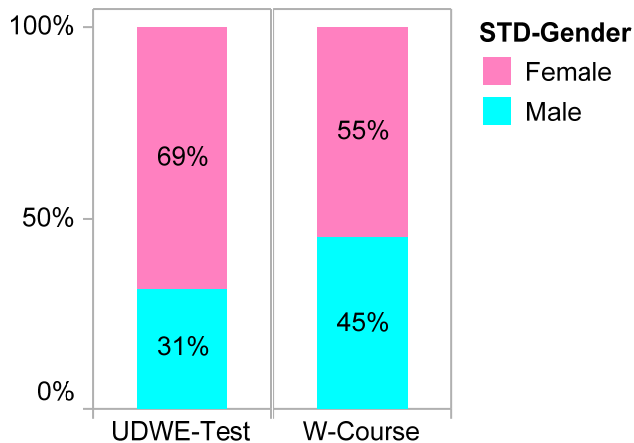
* UDWE ratio for CSB is not shown due to the small number of students who took the test in that school.

UDWE and W-Course Enrollment by Student Level (Fall 2002 – Fall 2007)

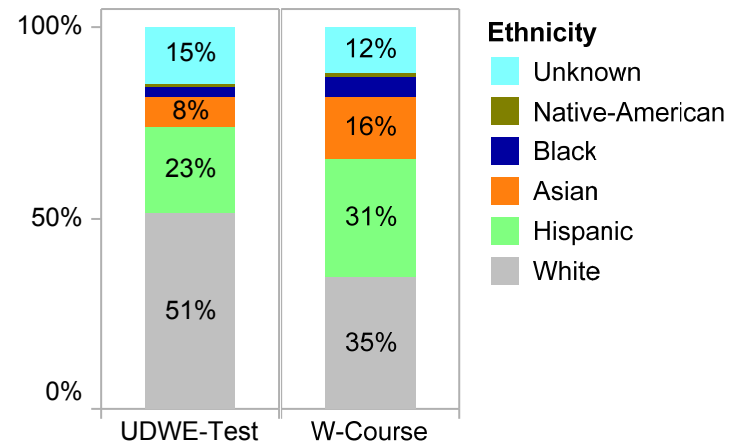


- Most of the students take the UDWE and/or W-Course at their senior or junior level.
- Males are less likely to take the UDWE
- White students constitute half of the UDWE takers (but the proportion of whites in the total undergraduate student body is only 36%).

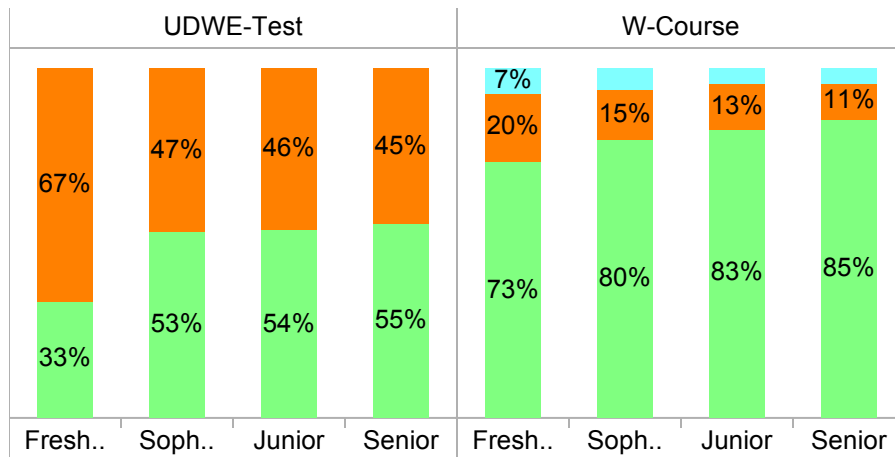
UDWE and W-Course Enrollment by Gender (Fall 2002 – Fall 2007)



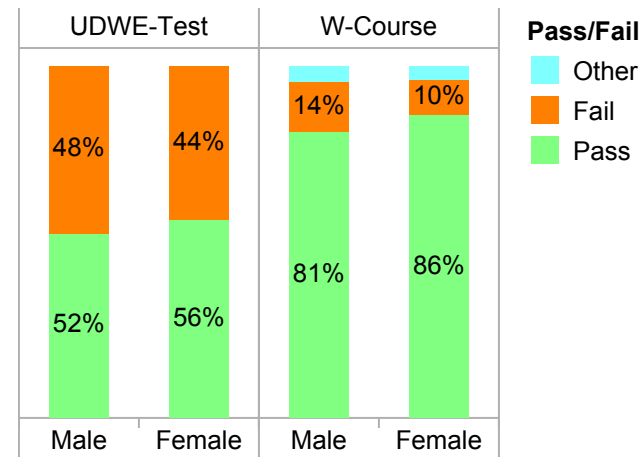
UDWE and W-Course Enrollment by Ethnicity (Fall 2002 – Fall 2007)



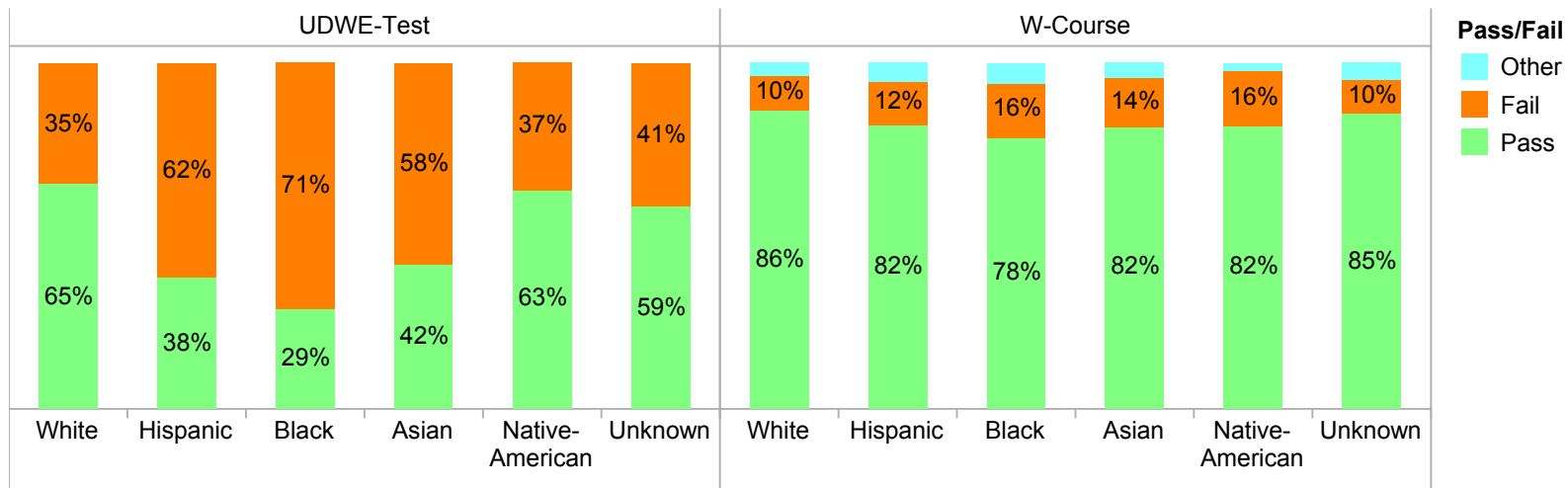
Pass/Fail Ratio for the UDWE and W-Course by Student Level



Pass/Fail Ratio for the UDWE and W-Course by Gender

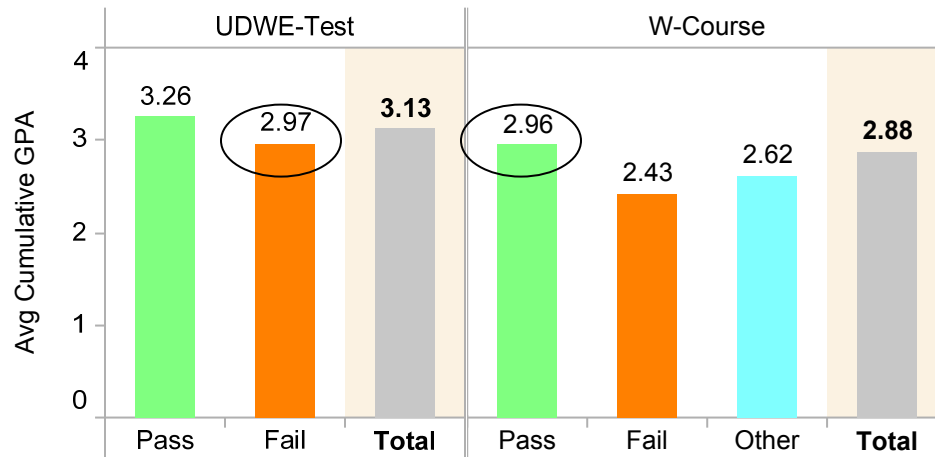


Pass/Fail Ratio for the UDWE and W-Course by Ethnicity



- Whites and females have the highest percentage of passing the UDWE test and the W-Course.
- African-Americans are the least likely to pass the test and the course.

**Average Cumulative GPA* for UDWE and W-Course Options
by Pass / Fail**



- Average cumulative GPA for students taking the UDWE is higher than for the W-Course option (3.13 vs. 2.88).
- Students who failed the UDWE had an average cumulative GPA of 2.97, which is at the level where students were likely to have passed the W-Course.

* Data includes fall 2002 – fall 2007 period.

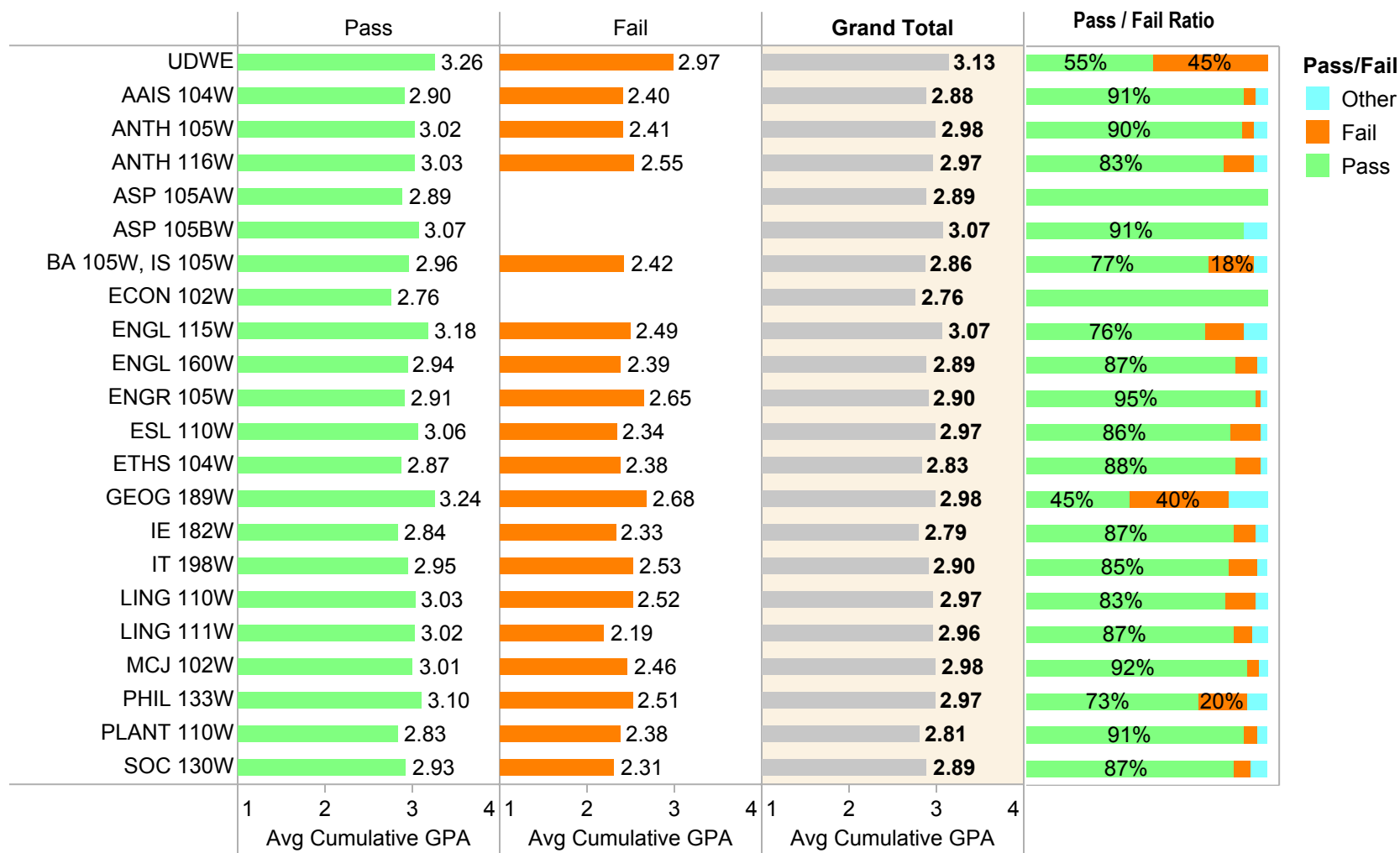
UDWE and W-Course Enrollment by Course and by Term.

	Fall 2002	Spr 2003	Fall 2003	Spr 2004	Fall 2004	Spr 2005	Fall 2005	Spr 2006	Fall 2006	Spr 2007	Fall 2007	Total	Percent
Total UDWE*	497	908	466	687	472	831	434	768	440	948	383	6834	
Total W-Course	1,324	1,378	1,494	1,458	1,515	1,528	1,619	1,722	1,636	1,700	1,855	17,229	100%
AAIS 104W					72	76	101	82	99	76	102	608	4%
ANTH 105W			52	112	86	79	86	140	143	112	134	944	5%
ANTH 116W	134	217	172	170	214	164	234	249	172	167	210	2,103	12%
ASP 105AW	5		7		1		3		3		2	21	0%
ASP 105BW		4		6		5		2		5		22	0%
BA 105W, IS 105W	487	429	498	458	432	496	420	452	405	454	471	5,002	29%
ECON 102W										13		13	0%
ENGL 115W	27	12	8	2	18	16	10	21	11		19	144	1%
ENGL 160W	319	329	360	332	326	335	366	340	433	389	430	3,959	23%
ENGR 105W										15	28	43	0%
ESL 110W	46	41	35	33	27	37	38	28				285	2%
ETHS 104W	56	120	95	60								331	2%
GEOG 189W						12		8				20	0%
IE 182W	83	57	57	63	24							284	2%
IT 198W	33	22	70	45	114	92	139	202	156	230	215	1,318	8%
LING 110W									23	33	10	66	0%
LING 111W				17	14	24	20	25	25	44	28	197	1%
MCJ 102W	38	45	60	44	49	55	58	49	61	52	46	557	3%
PHIL 133W	25	17	14	19	21	33	16	33	16	13	26	233	1%
PLANT 110W	28	39	23	49	42	50	38	40	30	46	46	431	3%
SOC 130W	43	46	43	48	75	54	90	51	59	51	88	648	4%

- The largest W-course enrollment is in BA 105W (formerly IS 105W) (29%), ENGL 160W (23%), and ANTH 116W (12%).
- There has been a noticeable growth in enrollment in Engl 160W and IT 198W.

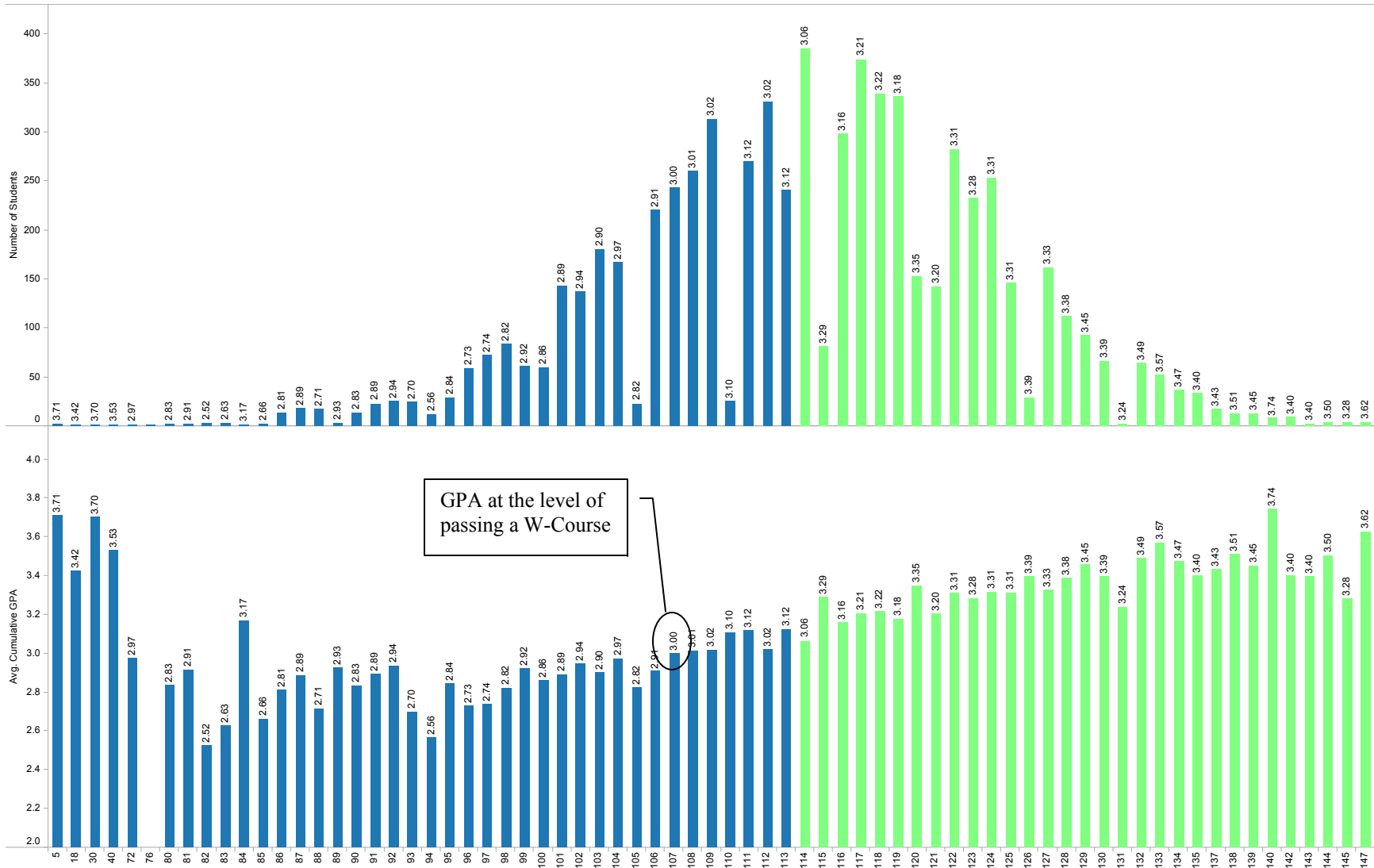
* Note: UDWE January, March, and June sessions are reported under spring terms; August and October sessions are under fall terms.

Average Cumulative GPA and Pass/Fail Ratio by W-Course and UDWE (Fall 2002 – Fall 2007)



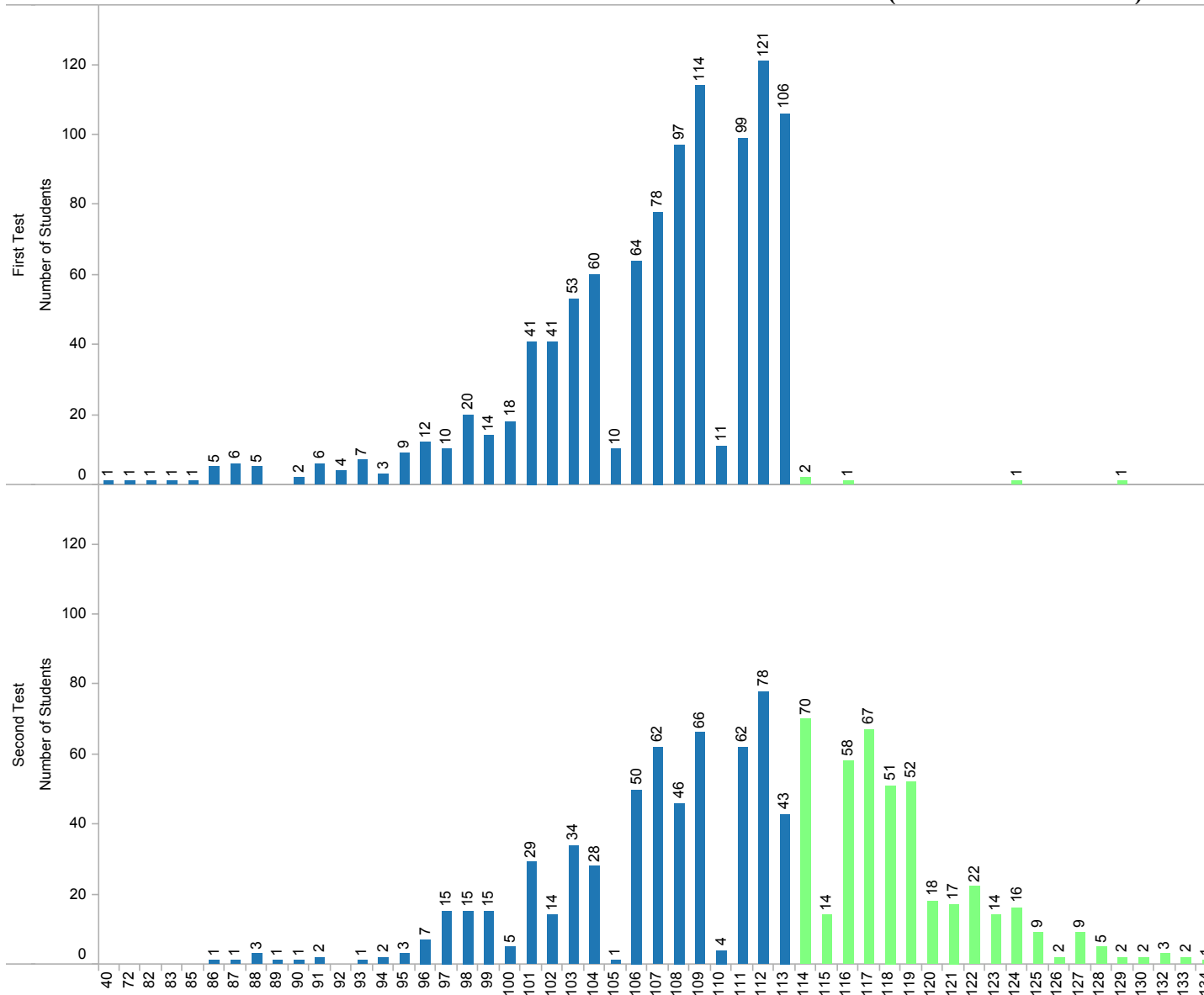
- Students enrolled in the UDWE had a higher average GPA (3.13) than any of the W-Courses.
- AAIS 104W, PLANT 110W, ENGR 105W, ASP 105AW, and ECON 102W had some of the highest pass rates (91%-100%), while their students' GPA was at some of the lowest levels (2.76 – 2.90).
- GEOG 189W, PHIL 133W, ENGL 115W, and BA 105W had the lowest pass rates.

Distribution of UDWE test scores and Average Cumulative GPA (Fall 2002 – Fall 2007)



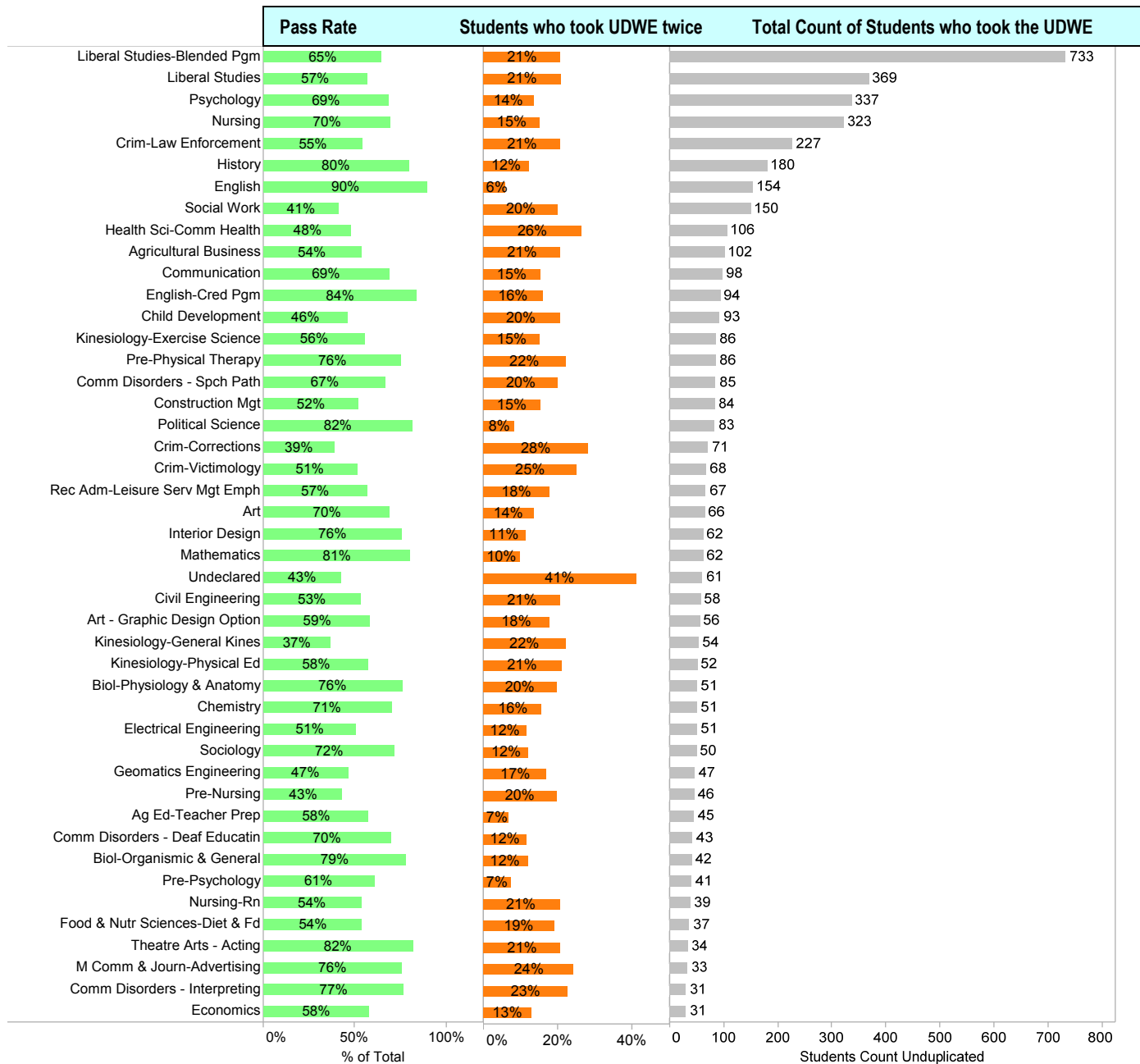
- Students with higher GPA are likely to get higher scores on their UDWE.
- Students who scored 107 or more on the UDWE had GPA "3.00 +" and were likely to have passed a W-Course (1,683 students).

Distribution of Scores for students who took the UDWE twice. (Fall 2002 – Fall 2007)



- On average, students were able to improve the scores by 5% when they took the second test.

UDWE Pass Rate and Enrollment by Major* for students who selected the UDWE Option (Fall 2002 – Fall 2007)



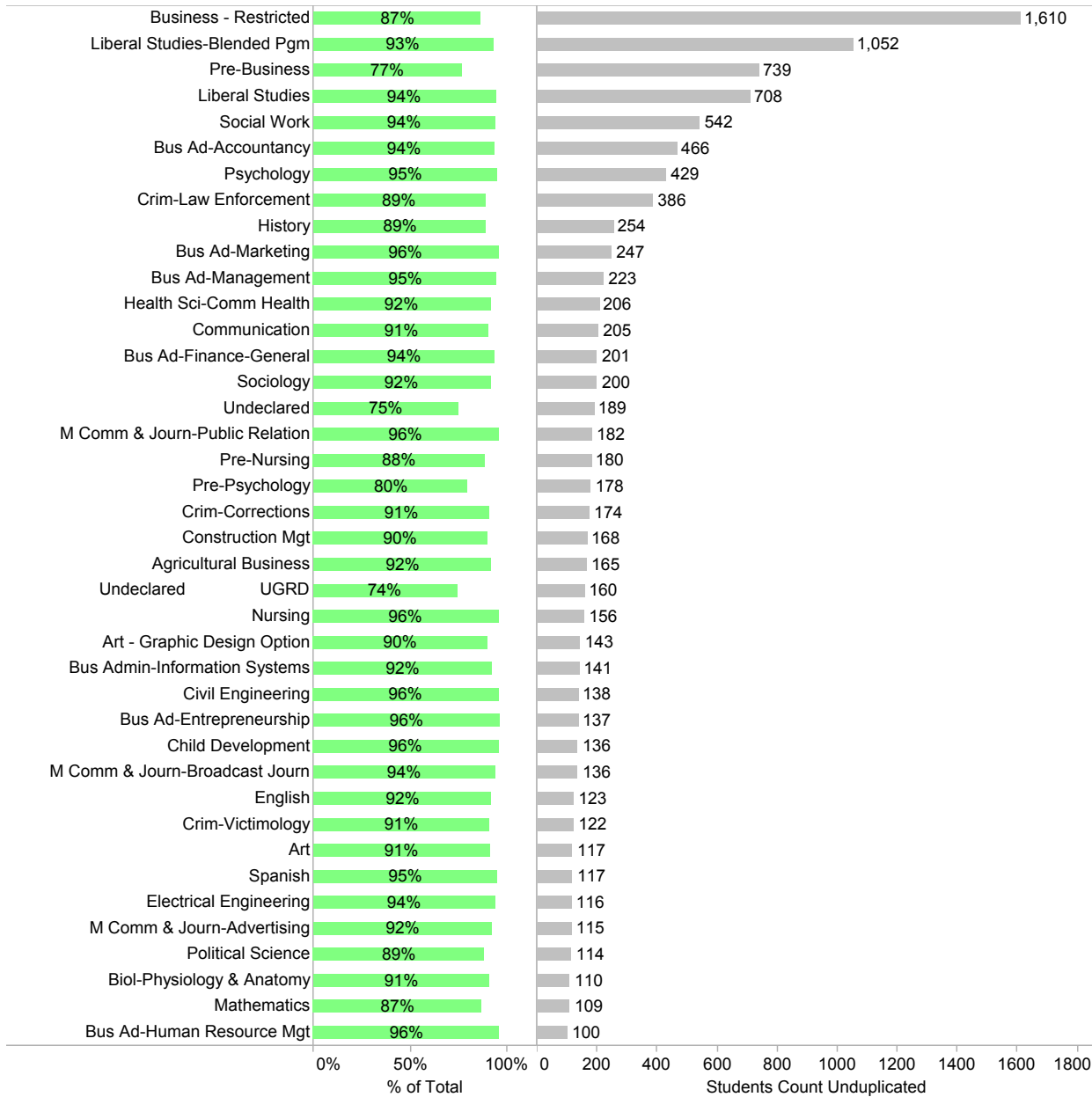
Example of how to read the chart:

- 337 Psychology majors took the UDWE; 69% of them eventually passed the UDWE, and 14% took the UDWE twice.

- English majors had the highest UDWE pass rate (90%), while General Kinesiology and Crim-Corrections had rates below 40%.

* Majors with 31 and more students who took the UDWE in the past 5 years.

W-Course Pass Rate and Enrollment by Major* for students who selected W-Course Option (Fall 2002 – Fall 2007)



Example of how to read the chart:

- 87% of 1,610 “Business-Restricted” majors who selected the W-Course option eventually passed the course.
- Undeclared and Pre-Business majors were most likely to fail.

* Majors with W-Course enrollment of 100 and more students in the past five years.