

**East Central University**  
**OSRHE Annual Assessment Report for 2001-2002**  
**Executive Summary**

### **Entry-Level Assessment**

The East Central University (ECU) Assessment Center uses ACT subject scores, ACT COMPASS computerized placement test scores, and other secondary tests to assess the academic skills of entering freshmen. Entering freshmen with ACT subject scores below 19 must pass the related COMPASS module or other appropriate secondary test to enroll in college level course work in that subject area. The COMPASS modules used to assess students' academic backgrounds in English, mathematics, and reading are Writing Skills, Algebra, and Reading, respectively. The Integrated Process Skills Test II (IPS) is used to assess the students' academic background in science. During the 2001-02 academic year, 63 percent of freshmen admitted had at least one ACT subject score below 19. After secondary testing, the highest proportion of academic skills deficiencies was in mathematics (39 percent), followed by reading (13 percent), English (10 percent), and science (6 percent). The courses and pass rates for students who enrolled in remedial courses were Fundamentals of English (81 percent), Beginning Algebra (76 percent), Intermediate Algebra (59 percent), Developmental Reading (83 percent), and Concepts in Science (90 percent).

The ECU Assessment Center tracked student performance in entry-level college courses by dividing students into three cohorts for each ACT subject area based on their performance on the ACT and secondary placement tests. The first cohort consisted of students who had ACT subject scores of 19 or higher. The second cohort contained students who had ACT subject scores below 19, but passed secondary placement testing. The third cohort contained students who had ACT subject scores below 19 and failed secondary testing. Students in the first cohort generally outperformed students in the second and third cohorts except in English Composition I and College Algebra. The students in the second cohort performed better than the students in the third cohort in the reading course group and in the science course group. However, students in the third cohort who successfully completed the remedial Intermediate Algebra course performed better than the second cohort in Survey of Mathematics and College Algebra. This higher success rate may be partially due to the continued use of an Internet-based course in MATH 0213 during 2001-2002. This course allows students to log onto a web site to complete class assignments. Students who completed this version of the course met a higher number of course objectives than students in the traditionally taught sections. Students in the third cohort also performed better than students in both the first and second cohorts in Freshman Composition I.

ECU's English cut-scores were adequate for the freshman class of 2001-02 since 73% percent of the students who passed secondary testing earned C's or higher in English Composition I. However, students who tested out in other subject areas failed to earn 70 percent C's or higher in Survey of Math (61 percent), College Algebra (58 percent), five selected general education courses for reading (62 percent), and three general education science courses (47 percent).

## Mid-Level Assessment

ECU assessed five general student outcomes during 2001-02. These outcomes covered critical thinking, library skills, oral or expressive communication, reading, and written communication. To obtain data on student performance on these outcomes, the Assessment Center and the University Assessment Committee used four instruments, the College Basic Academic Subjects Examination (CBASE), a general education institutional folio, an oral communication rating form, and the ACT Alumni Survey. A total of 287 students were assessed using the CBASE, 40 students using papers submitted from the courses of English and Languages faculty, 27 students using the oral communications form, and 90 ECU graduates using the ACT Alumni Survey.

The CBASE multiple-choice section was administered to 287 students who were randomly assigned to take the English, math, science, or social studies multiple-choice sections of the exam. The CBASE was administered at the end of the semester to students in UNIV 3001, the general education capstone course; they were given 50 points for taking the exam.

The 2001-02 cohort had an overall average score of 263 on the multiple-choice. Overall, this cohort's performance was 24 points below to the average performance for all ECU students tested during the 1996-99 period and 25 points lower than ECU's peer group's performance for the same 1996-99 period. The 2000-01 group's performance was also 9 points lower than the average score of the 2000-01 student cohort group. Given no significant differences of the academic backgrounds of ECU's entering students, the University Assessment Committee (UAC) believes poor student motivation may lead to low student effort and explain a significant part of the drop in student performance.

ECU students performed better than the peer group on the "writing" section of the CBASE but considerably lower than the 2000-01 cohort or the ECU 1995-01 average. On the "reading" section of the CBASE, they performed much lower than past ECU students and the students in the peer group. However, feedback from the ACT Alumni Responses indicated ECU alumni were relatively more satisfied than the public college norm with their college's contribution to their personal growth in "understanding written information".

ECU alumni respondents were also more satisfied than the public college norm with their acquired skills related to their ability to "speak effectively." The 2001-02 survey respondents indicated their education at ECU made about the same contribution to their personal growth in "recognizing assumptions, making logical inferences, and reaching correct conclusions" as past ECU alumni and the respondents in the public college sample. Personal growth contributions to "defining and solving problems" were slightly higher than past ECU alumni and the public college sample.

In 2001-02, ECU students' overall performance in General Mathematics was the same as past ECU students, 14 points below students in the full-exam peer group, and 10 points higher than the 1998-01 CBASE 1:1 peer group. ECU students overall performance in Algebra was 20 points lower than past ECU students, 35 points below students in the full-exam group, and 10 points lower than the 1998-01 CBASE 1:1 peer group. responses related to the two mathematics student outcomes are shown in the following tables. The 2001-02 ACT Alumni Survey respondents indicated their education at ECU made about the same contribution to their personal growth in "Understanding and Applying Math in Daily Activities," compared to past ECU alumni respondents and respondents in the public college sample. The 2001-02 survey

respondents indicated their education at ECU made a greater contribution to their personal growth in “Understanding Graphic Information,” compared to past ECU alumni respondents and respondents in the public college sample. Thirty-two percent of respondents indicated that “Understanding Graphic Information” had contributed to their personal growth “very much” compared to 23% for earlier ECU students and the public college norm.

### **Program Outcomes Assessment**

During 2001-02, a total of 1050 students were assessed as part of undergraduate program assessment. Degree programs used a variety of instruments to assess student outcomes, including locally developed exams, standardized tests (such as the ETS Major Field Achievement Tests (MFAT) and the Area Concentration Achievement Tests (ACAT)), portfolios, and various constituent surveys. Licensing and certification tests, such as the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) Exam, Oklahoma Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training (CLEET) Exam, National Council Licensing Exam for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN), and the Certification Exam for Oklahoma Educators (CEOE) were also used.

Student performance for many programs met or exceeded performance goals with the majority of students tested either passing the exams or scoring at or above a specified level on these exams. Many programs had pass rates exceeding 83 percent including Biology Education; Early Childhood Education; Elementary Education; Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Education; Special Education; Nursing; and Health Information Management.

The following are some of the program changes resulting from outcomes assessment:

- The Business Administration program is developing several new assessment approaches to overcome problems related to using the ETS MFAT in Business..
- The Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Education program has made curriculum changes due to student deficiencies noted in the results of the faculty developed comprehensive exit exam.
- The Criminal Justice program is revising its curriculum and adopting a new Juvenile Justice Systems text due to results on the ACAT that suggest that students need to improve their knowledge of relevant court cases.
- The Nursing program is addressing the need for increased emphasis on critical thinking skills by incorporating Critical Thinking Skills into Seminar on Nursing ( N4985) and folding in critical thinking exercises into other courses required for majors.
- The Math program is placing greater emphasis on the writing of mathematical proofs in all upper level courses and is increasing Linear Algebra from three to five credit hours to address deficiencies in student performance discovered with the Math MFAT.

## **Student Satisfaction Assessment**

In 2001-02, ECU administered the ACT Student Opinion Survey (SOS) and ACT Alumni Survey (AS), collecting 684 responses from currently enrolled students and 90 responses from alumni who graduated within the past five years.

The results of the SOS show ECU students have a higher level of satisfaction than the public college average. Those items showing the greatest positive response above the public college norm were the campus bookstore, student union, racial harmony on the campus, flexibility to design your own program, value of the information provided by your advisor, availability of courses when you want them, concern for you as an individual, general registration procedures, parking facilities and services, and laboratory facilities. Those areas drawing significant negative responses included student dissatisfaction with residence hall rules and regulations, residence hall services and programs, and food services.

Responses to the ACT Alumni Survey were also positive. Students observed:

- They would attend ECU again (79 percent responded "probably" or "definitely yes, six percent above the public college norm");
- ECU's relative quality of education compared to other colleges (82 percent responded "about the same" or "better, 11 percent above the public college norm");
- They were prepared for continuing education (96 percent "adequately" to "exceptionally well, the same as the public college norm") and
- College education has improved your life (93 percent "definitely" or "probably" yes, as compared to 92 percent for the public college norm).

## **Graduate Student Assessment**

A total of 177 graduate students were assessed during the 2001-02 academic year using the Certification Exam for Oklahoma Educators (CEOE), the National Counselor Preparation Exam, the Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRC) Exam, locally developed comprehensive exams, internships, practicums, portfolios, and various constituent surveys. The pass rate on the CEOE for school counseling graduate students exceeded 87 percent in several areas. For 2002 the ECU mean score on the National Counselor Preparation Exam was 87, only four points from the national mean of 91 and a 12 point improvement from 1999. Other assessment data collected to date indicate that most program goals are either being met or close to being met. In addition, alumni and employer surveys show a high degree of satisfaction with ECU's graduate programs.