

**East Central University**  
**OSRHE Annual Assessment Report for 2002-2003**  
**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 2002-03 academic year, 57 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 (34%), followed by reading (13%), English (11%), and science (7%). The courses and pass rates for students who enrolled in remedial courses were Fundamentals of English (86%), Beginning Algebra (75%), Intermediate Algebra (73%), Developmental Reading (74%), and Concepts in Science (100%).

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. The students in the second cohort performed better than the students in the third cohort except for the reading course group.

ECU's math survey cut-scores were adequate for the freshman class of 2001-02 since 76 percent of the students who passed secondary testing earned C or higher in Survey of Math. However, students who tested out in other subject areas failed to earn 70 percent C or higher in English Composition I (69 percent), College Algebra (64 percent), five selected general education courses for reading (67 percent), and three general education science courses (62 percent).

Curriculum and pedagogical changes in the zero-level math courses have resulted in a significant increase in the number of students successfully completing math remediation. In addition, early data suggest students passing the new course format do as well as their predecessors in College Algebra.

### **Mid-Level Assessment**

ECU assessed five general student outcomes during 2002-03. 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 two instruments, the College Basic Academic Subjects Examination (CBASE) and the ACT Alumni Survey. Three hundred and forty students were assessed using the CBASE and 238 ECU graduates using the ACT Alumni Survey. 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 2002-03 cohort had an overall average score of 263 on the CBASE multiple choice. Overall, this cohort's performance was 24 points below 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 2002-03 group's performance was the same as the average score of the 2001-02 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 about the same as the peer group and the ECU 1995-01 average on the "writing" section of the CBASE and 13 points higher than the 2001-02 cohort. On the "reading" section of the CBASE, ECU students' overall performance was 12 points higher than 2001-2002 ECU students, 25 points below past ECU students, 26 points below students in the full-exam peer group, and 16 points lower than the 2000-2003 CBASE 1:1 peer group. Feedback from the ACT Alumni Responses indicated ECU alumni were relatively less satisfied than the public college norm with their college's contribution to their personal growth in "writing effectively" and "understanding written information".

ECU alumni respondents were more satisfied than the public college norm with their acquired skills related to their ability to "speak effectively". The 2002-03 survey respondents indicated their education at ECU made less contribution to their personal growth in "recognizing assumptions, making logical inferences, and reaching correct conclusions" than past ECU alumni and the respondents in the public college sample. Personal growth contributions to "defining and solving problems" were also lower than past ECU alumni and the public college sample. ACT Alumni Survey data indicate ECU's alumni are slightly less satisfied than the public college norm with the University's contribution to their personal growth in using the library. Increasingly, students are using online research rather than going to the library.

In 2002-03, ECU students' overall performance in General Mathematics was 13 points below the average for 2001-2002 ECU students, 13 points below past ECU students, 27 points below students in the full-exam peer group, and 26 points lower than the 2000-03 CBASE 1:1 peer group. ECU 2002-2003 students overall performance in Algebra was 9 points below 2001-2002 students, 29 points lower than past ECU students, 44 points below students in the full-exam group, and 40 points lower than the 2000-2003 CBASE 1:1 peer group. The 2002-03 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.

### **Program Outcomes Assessment**

During 2002-03, 1077 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. The following are some of the program changes resulting from outcomes assessment:

- The Art program is taking action to address weaknesses in the three dimensional area through curricular and budgetary enhancements. Though not alarming, slipping scores have prompted the faculty to include more written responses in course work throughout the major.
- The Chemistry program found a greater emphasis on report writing and communications skills is warranted, and since last year's report, steps in that direction have been taken. To continue to be competitive in the current chemical industry, addition of a second semester of physical chemistry to the curriculum is needed.
- The Mathematics department is incorporating the test into MATH 3715 Linear Algebra, and has increased Linear Algebra from 3 to 5 hours in an effort to improve student performance. The writing of mathematical proofs will be given greater emphasis in all upper-level courses.
- The Business Administration program is developing several new assessment approaches to overcome problems related to using the ETS MFAT in Business..
- The Criminal Justice program is revising its curriculum and adopting a new Juvenile Justice Systems text due to results on the ACAT that suggest students need to improve their knowledge of relevant court cases.

### **Student Satisfaction Assessment**

In 2002-03, East Central University used a new version of the ACT Student Opinion Survey named Survey of Student Opinions. The new version contains most of the survey items included on the older survey ECU has used for over 10 years. The main difference between the old and new surveys is the ability of students to rate the importance of a survey item to them, not just their satisfaction with a particular aspect of the college environment or college service. Knowing the importance of the survey items to the students will allow administrators to focus the institution's improvement efforts on the things students value the most. In 2002-03, ECU administered the ACT Survey of Student Opinions (SSO) and ACT Alumni Survey (AS), collecting 1088 responses from currently enrolled students and 243 responses from alumni who graduated within the past five years.

The results of the ACT Student Opinion Survey show ECU students rate most items higher than the public college sample. The rating for "student union facilities" exceeded the public college sample rating by the largest amount. The rating of "residence hall rules and regulations" fell below the public college norm and was the only survey item with a negative difference. However, this difference is not statistically significant. Overall, the students responding to the survey indicated they were more satisfied with ECU than the average public student is with their institution of higher education. "Attitude of faculty toward students" received the highest average rating of all items.

In the university services category, the average survey response for 2002-03 exceeded the 1998-02 average ECU response and was slightly lower than the public college sample average. The difference, however, is not significant. Survey items receiving relatively high and significant ratings were "financial aid services", "parking facilities and services", "academic advising services", and "student health/wellness services". However, "job placement services", "career planning services", "student

employment services”, “college sponsored tutorial services”, “credit by examination program”, “recreational and intramural programs/services”, “honors program”, “college sponsored social activities”, “college orientation program”, “residence hall services and programs”, “cultural programs”, and “day care services” received relatively low and significant negative ratings. Only one item, “availability of the courses you want at times you can take them”, was of relatively high importance with relatively low satisfaction. The item, “purposes for which student activity fees are used”, was of average importance with relatively low satisfaction. Items of relatively high importance with highest ratings in the relatively high satisfaction section were “quality of instruction in your major field”, “course content in your major field”, “attitude of the faculty toward students”, “class size relative to type of course”, and “this college in general”.

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

- They would attend ECU again (83.7 percent responded "probably" or "definitely yes", eleven percent above the public college norm).
- ECU’s relative quality of education compared to other colleges (74.5 percent responded “about the same” or “better”, five percent above the public college norm).
- They were prepared for continuing education (93.8 percent “adequately” to “exceptionally well”, two percent below the public college norm).
- College education has improved your life (93.3 percent “definitely” or “probably” yes, as compared to 92.2 percent for the public college norm).

### **Graduate Student Assessment**

One hundred forty-five graduate students were assessed during the 2002-03 academic year using the Certification Exam for Oklahoma Educators (CEOE), the National Counselor Preparation Exam, the Rehabilitation Counselor Certification Exam, locally developed comprehensive exams, internships, practicums, portfolios, and various constituent surveys. The pass rate on the CEOE for school counseling graduate students exceeded 89 percent in several areas. For 2002 the ECU mean score on the National Counselor Preparation Exam was 67, considerably lower than the national mean of 89. Eight out of eleven students passed the Rehabilitation Counselor Certification Exam. 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.