

Chapter IX: FRESHMAN / JUNIOR TESTING

Freshman/Junior Testing

Who takes it?

Entering freshman. The students then take an identical test two years later (after accumulating 60 credit hours). Half of the students take the CAAP test and the other half take the Academic Profile test.

When is it administered?

Freshmen take it during Freshman Week. Juniors take it at specially arranged times by the Assessment and Testing Office.

How long does it take for the student to complete the test?

3 hours for each test.

What office administers it?

The Assessment and Testing Office.

Who originates the tests?

Currently two tests are given: the CAAP (ACT) and the Academic Profile (ETS).

When are the results typically available?

For the individual student, results are available several months after the test is taken. University reports for the fiscal year are typically available in late June.

What type of information is sought?

Information about the liberal arts based general education curriculum.

The CAAP (Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency) from ACT provides measurement in five areas: science, mathematics, reading, writing, and critical thinking. Students randomly take tests in four of the five areas. When students take it a second time, they take tests in the same four areas to see whether improvement has been made (value added). The Academic Profile from the Educational Testing Service provides information in these areas: natural science, social science, mathematics, humanities, reading, writing, and critical thinking. All students who take the Academic Profile take the same tests both times.

CAAP: American College Testing Program

PO Box 168, Iowa City, IA

(319) 337-1053

Academic Profile: Higher Education Assessment, Educational Testing Service

Princeton, NJ 08541

(609) 951-6508

From whom are the results available?
From the Assessment and Testing Office.

Are the results available by division or discipline?
Discipline.

Distribution regularly made available to whom?
Individual results are communicated to students and their advisors. University, division, and discipline averages are sent to the President, VPAA, Division Heads, Assessment Committee, and selected administrators.

Are the results comparable to data of other universities?
The CAAP is nationally normed. The Academic Profile provides norms only within the university (though this may be changed), but it does rate students within performance levels.

What follows are the CAAP and Academic Profile results:

(General editor's comments)

These results are rather discouraging. The CAAP results are down across all subject areas. The FY 1997 Academic Profile results show mainly small increases (except for reading); however, they do not show the same gains of the previous year.

The results could come from a number of factors:

1. We are hitting the ceiling effect—we already have bright students; therefore, they are not likely to show much gain on these tests.
2. Assuming the tests do measure important skills, then campus courses do not directly address skill development.
3. Juniors do not see the reasons to put much effort into it.

Motivation does seem to be a major factor based on anecdotal reports. See the later chapter on motivation.

FRESHMAN - JUNIOR TESTING
Pre-Test / Post-Test Results, FY 1996-97
Academic Profile

	1995-96 FY '96 N=72	1996-97 FY '97 N=419
Humanities		
Freshmen	121.09	118.67
Juniors	123.25	119.24
Change +/-	2.16	0.57
% Positive/%Negative/%Unchanged	68.1/16.7/15.3	53.9/38.4/7.6
Social Science		
Freshmen	119.70	116.79
Juniors	121.98	117.35
Change +/-	2.27	0.56
% Positive/%Negative/%Unchanged	69.4/19.4/11.1	53.9/38.7/7.4
Natural Science		
Freshmen	121.70	119.17
Juniors	123.18	119.40
Change +/-	1.48	0.22
% Positive/%Negative/%Unchanged	61.1/25.0/13.9	57.3/34.6/8.1
Reading		
Freshmen	124.19	121.74
Juniors	126.10	121.50
Change +/-	1.90	(0.24)
% Positive/%Negative/%Unchanged	68.1/23.6/8.3	51.1/41.1/7.9
Writing		
Freshmen	120.87	118.55
Juniors	121.97	118.58
Change +/-	1.09	0.03
% Positive/%Negative/%Unchanged	56.6/29.2/13.6	52.3/40.1/7.6
Critical Thinking		
Freshmen	117.36	114.31
Juniors	120.23	115.88
Change +/-	2.87	1.56
% Positive/%Negative/%Unchanged	69.4/22.0/5.6	59.9/30.5/9.5
Mathematics		
Freshmen	120.68	118.45
Juniors	122.16	118.50
Change +/-	1.48	0.05
% Positive/%Negative/%Unchanged	65.3/26.4/8.3	51.1/41.3/7.6
Total		
Freshmen	467.20	458.12
Juniors	473.84	459.45
Change +/-	6.63	1.33
% Positive/%Negative/%Unchanged	80.6/16.7/2.8	65.2/32.9/1.9

Note: Beginning in Fall 1994, the Academic Profile replaced the COMP as a junior test.

FRESHMAN - SOPHOMORE / JUNIOR TESTING
Pre-Test / Post-Test Results, FY 1991-97
CAAP Tests: Pre-Test / Post-Test Scale Scores and Percentiles

	1990-91 FY 91*	1991-92 FY 92	1992-93 FY 93	1993-94** FY 94	1994-95 FY 95	1995-96 FY 96	1996-97 FY 97	
Writing Skills	N=	389	237	145	18	155	533	498
Freshmen		67.36	67.11	66.29	66.50	67.05	66.76	67.24
Sophomores / Juniors		68.50	67.85	66.39	67.55	66.08	66.90	66.92
Change +/-		1.14	0.73	0.09	1.05	(0.96)	0.13	(0.31)
% Positive/%Negative/%Unchanged		62.5/19.8/17.7	56.1/28.7/15.2	44.8/38.6/16.6	77.8/22.2/0.0	45.2/42.6/12.2	49.9/32.6/17.4	47.4/37.3/15.3
Pre-Test Percentile		86.10	84.60	79.80	81.00	84.30	82.60	85.40
Post-Test Percentile		92.00	89.10	80.40	87.30	78.50	83.40	83.50
Reading	N=	342	369	523	172	563	593	477
Freshmen		65.26	64.70	54.76	64.15	63.90	64.31	64.57
Sophomores / Juniors		66.85	65.72	65.22	64.58	63.03	64.70	64.29
Change +/-		1.59	1.02	0.46	0.41	(0.87)	0.38	(0.27)
% Positive/%Negative/%Unchanged		65.8/23.7/10.5	57.2/32/10.8	51.2/38.1/10.7	54.1/40.1/5.8	45.5/46/8.5	53.6/35.9/10.5	48.4/43.2/8.4
Pre-Test Percentile		86.80	84.20	84.60	80.90	79.70	81.90	83.40
Post-Test Percentile		90.70	88.20	86.70	83.50	77.10	84.20	81.70
Mathematics	N=	376	249	507	174	552	560	482
Freshmen		60.24	59.82	59.76	59.92	59.53	59.55	60.17
Sophomores / Juniors		61.82	61.27	60.61	59.99	59.53	60.10	59.87
Change +/-		1.58	1.45	0.84	0.06	-	0.54	(0.29)
% Positive/%Negative/%Unchanged		61.7/26.1/12.2	66.3/22.5/11.2	56.2/30.2/13.6	43.1/40.8/16.1	45.8/43.1/11.1	52.9/36.8/10.4	43.4/42.5/14.1
Pre-Test Percentile		85.20	83.10	82.80	83.60	81.70	98.00	84.90
Post-Test Percentile		91.50	89.80	87.40	84.00	81.70	98.30	83.40
Critical Thinking	N=	370	346	544	170	574	544	494
Freshmen		65.44	64.75	64.23	64.06	64.36	64.20	64.69
Sophomores / Juniors		66.21	66.19	65.57	64.32	63.67	65.30	64.42
Change +/-		0.77	1.44	1.34	0.26	(0.68)	1.10	(0.26)
% Positive/%Negative/%Unchanged		54.1/35.4/10.5	63.6/26.3/10.1	61.4/29/9.6	55.9/39.4/4.7	49.5/42.3/8.2	59/29.4/11.6	53.4/37/9.5
Pre-Test Percentile		82.20	79.00	76.90	76.20	77.40	58.50	78.80
Post-Test Percentile		85.80	85.80	82.80	77.30	74.40	58.90	77.70
Science Reasoning***	N=	n/a	309	542	172	580	522	465
Freshmen			61.88	61.50	61.16	61.51	61.89	62.19
Sophomores / Juniors		63.49	63.73	62.99	62.12	60.50	61.98	61.60
Change +/-			1.85	1.48	0.95	(1.04)	0.08	(0.59)
% Positive/%Negative/%Unchanged		n/a	68/20.1/12	62.2/26/11.8	58.1/33.1/8.7	41.4/47.8/10.9	50.4/40.2/9.4	48.8/41.5/9.7
Pre-Test Percentile		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Post-Test Percentile		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Note: In each column, data reflect scores of students who, during that year, completed the "Sophomore / Junior" retest. The "Freshmen" score in that column is the matched pretest mean, reflecting scores earned by these same students whenever they first entered. The table is, therefore, a longitudinal summary by cohort, not a comparison of the Freshman vs. Sophomore / Junior scores within a given year.

* CAAP tests were first introduced in 1989; for FY 89 and FY 90, there are therefore no corresponding Freshmen tests for comparison so those years are not listed.

** Beginning in Fall 1993 (FY 94), Sophomore / Junior testing follows the completion of 60 credit hours (vs. 45 credit hours in previous years.)

*** The Science Reasoning module was introduced a year later than the other four modules.

