Chapter IV: OVERVIEW OF TRUMAN ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

Note that most results are available by fiscal year. For example, fiscal year 2001 ran from 1 July 2000 through 30 June 2001.

Who takes it?	Nationally Normed Exams	Surveys	Qualitative
Freshman		Cooperative Institutional Research Program at UCLA (CIRP) Freshman Week Survey National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)	Interview Project*
Sophomore			Sophomore Writing Experience (SWE)
Junior	Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) or Academic Profile (AP)	College Student Experience Questionnaire (CSEQ)	Interview Project*
Senior	Senior Test in the Major	Graduating Student Questionnaire (GSQ) National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)	Capstone Experience Portfolio
Alumni		Alumni Survey Employer Survey	
Faculty		Faculty Survey	

* The Student Interview Project was administered to juniors in 1993, 1994, 1995, 1998, 1999, and 2000. It was administered to freshmen in 1996, 1997, and 2001.

Incoming Student--Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP)

Who takes it?
Fall first-time students.

When is it administered?
During Freshman Week (in August).

How long does it take for the student to complete the instrument?
30 minutes.

What office administers it?
Assessment and Testing sends the copies to the Freshman Week Committee. They are then distributed to Freshman College Coordinators. Class instructors then administer the survey and return it to Assessment and Testing.

Who originates the survey?
Higher Education Research Institute
UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information
3005 Moore Hall / Mailbox 95121
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1521
(310) 825-1925

When are results typically available?
The following December-January

What type of information is sought?
The major information tracked is the probable field of study, highest degree planned, college choice, reason for college choice, high school record, political orientation, parental income, and parental education and occupation. Other information is available as well: ethnic background, activities during the previous year, self-rating in regard to various abilities and skills, time spent the previous year in other activities, probable career, source of finances, and religious preference of the student.

From whom are the results available?
Assessment and Testing

To whom are the results regularly distributed?
President, VPAA, Division Heads, Assessment Committee, and selected administrators.

Are the results available by division or discipline?
No.

Are the results comparable to data of other universities?
The data is comparable to averages of other schools in a class that we select (such as medium-sized, selective schools).

Freshman Week Survey

Who takes it?
Fall first-time students.

When is it administered?
At the end of Freshman Week (in August).

How long does it take for a student to complete the instrument?
15 minutes.

What office administers it?
Freshman Week Committee sends copies to the freshman colleges. The instructors administer it during the last day of Freshman Week and send it back to the Assessment and Testing Office for tabulation.

Who originates the survey?
Freshman Week Committee.

When are results typically available?
Beginning of October. The results are tabulated by the Assessment and Testing Office.

What type of information is sought?
The survey provides information on whether the student felt welcomed in the University, classroom, living and local community. The survey also asks students if they know where they can get help for various problems, about their comfort level in approaching faculty and staff for assistance, willingness to join in co-curricular activities, understanding the of goals of the liberal arts and sciences education, and active learning. Students are also asked whether they participated in writing and speaking, as well as reading, computer, research, and library assignments during the week. The incoming students are also asked to rate overall group activities, division activities, the freshman week class, residential hall/college activities, and various "social/fun" events.

From whom are the results available?
Freshman Week Committee.

To whom are the results regularly distributed?
Freshman Week Committee, Division Heads, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Are the results available by division or discipline?
The objective questions (bubble sheets) are available by division and discipline.

Are the results comparable to data of other universities?
No.

Student Interview Project

Who takes it?
A random sample from the class that is selected by the University Assessment Committee. Juniors were selected from 1992-93 to 1994-95 and from 1997-98 to 1999-2000. Freshmen were interviewed from 1995-96, 1996-97, and 2000-01.

When is it administered?
At the beginning of the Spring Semester.

How long does it take for the student to complete the interview?
About 30 minutes.

What office administers it?
The University Assessment Committee plus additional volunteers from students, faculty, staff and administrators. Each student interviewee is typically questioned by a pair (one of whom is a student and one of whom is a faculty member or administrator).

Who originates the questions?
The University Assessment Committee.

When are results typically available?
At the end of the summer.

What type of information is sought?
The University Assessment Committee selects questions based on current curricular or co-curricular topics of interest to the University. For example, in 2000 we were interested in answering questions about students' reading practices and their experiences with diversity while attending Truman. In 2001, we focused on retention.

From whom are the results available?
From the University Assessment Committee or the Chair of the Interview Project (currently Dr. David Gillette from the Division of Social Science).

Are the results available by division or discipline?
No. The sample size for the group interviewed (around 100) is too small.

Are the results comparable to data of other universities?
No.

Sophomore Writing Experience (SWE)

Who takes it?
The SWE is designed for sophomores and for transfer students during their first semester.

All students must take the writing assessment before enrolling in the required Junior Interdisciplinary Seminar course or, if they have transferred credit from another institution, before graduating.

When is it administered?
The SWE is offered a number of times during the fall and spring semesters and during the summer. Students schedule to take either a word-processing or handwritten SWE session.

How long does it take for a student to complete the SWE?
Students take three to four hours on average to complete the SWE, including prewriting, writing, revising, and editing a problem-solving essay, completing a self-assessment questionnaire, and conferring with a faculty member after the writing sample is evaluated.

What office administers it?
The Writing Assessment Director in the Writing Center, McClain Hall 303, administers the SWE.

Who originates the assessment?
The SWE, originally designed by the English faculty, continues to be administered by the Director of Writing Assessment with the assistance of the Composition Committee and faculty from across the curriculum who read SWE writing samples and confer with students taking the SWE.

When are results typically available?
Typically, students receive results during the semester in which they take the SWE. A general report is available to faculty, students, and administration at the end of each summer.

What type of information is sought?
The SWE is used primarily to advise student writers. Students compose an essay on a current issue that is read and scored by faculty from across the curriculum. After the sample is evaluated, the student and a faculty member confer one-to-one, using the writing sample as a springboard for discussion of the student's writing. Faculty encourage students to assess their writing strengths and weaknesses and to set goals for writing growth. Students who score a 2 or below on a 1 (weakest) to 6 (strongest) holistic scale are required to revise their SWE paper with the help of a Writing Consultant in the Writing Center before they are allowed to register for a JINS course and/or graduate.

From whom are the results available?
Students receive results from faculty from across the curriculum who confer with them in a one-on-one conference. A general report and any other information faculty or staff might seek regarding the SWE is available in the Writing Center.

To whom are the results regularly distributed?

Students receive results in a one-on-one conference.

Are results available by division or discipline?
Currently, no.

Are results comparable to data of other universities?
No.

Freshman/Junior Testing

(As of Fall 2001, freshmen testing is suspended.)

Who takes it?
Entering freshmen. 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 either in the fall or spring semester at specially arranged times by the Assessment and Testing Office.

How long does it take for the student to complete the test?
2 ½ to 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). Since each test focuses on different components, the two tests together prove to be effective assessment instruments.

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 Services tests students in all of these areas: natural science, social science, mathematics, humanities, reading, writing, and critical thinking. All students who take the Academic Profile take the same test 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?
Yes.

To whom are the results regularly distributed?
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?
Both the CAAP and Academic Profile provide comparative data norms. The CAAP has nationally normed scores for each test module, while the Academic Profile provides norms for only the total score.

Portfolio Assessment

Who takes it?
Right now, only seniors in classes that require creation of a Liberal Arts and Sciences Portfolio (most often capstone courses or senior seminars) submit portfolios. In May 2001, one thousand eleven seniors, or 84% of the graduating class, turned in portfolios. All students matriculating in or after the fall of 1999 will be required to develop and submit portfolios as a requirement for graduation.

When is it administered?
The instructor of the course requiring participation in the portfolio assessment distributes guidelines and collects portfolios during the course. This could occur in any semester during the student's senior year.

How long does it take for the student to compile the portfolio?
The average is about four to five hours.

What office administers it?

The class that requires it.

Who originates the submission requirements for portfolios?
Faculty readers and evaluators, the Assessment Committee and the director of the portfolio assessment design, evaluate and publish the requests for specific portfolio items.

When are results typically available?
The portfolios are read and evaluated in May and generally the results are available in late summer or early fall.

What type of information is sought?
Faculty evaluators and the Assessment Committee designate the types of works requested from students. In the past, many of the requested items have remained constant. In the 2000-2001 academic year, a portfolio included a pair of works showing *growth as a thinker,* a work demonstrating *interdisciplinary thinking,* a work applying *quantitative/mathematical reasoning* (about 60% of the portfolios), a work reflecting *historical analysis* (about 40% of portfolios), a work showing *scientific reasoning*, an item demonstrating *aesthetic analysis an/or evaluation*, a work or experience the student considered *most personally satisfying*, and *a cover letter* in which the student reflects on ways they have changed while at Truman and offers any other thoughts they care to express about their experiences here. Other items may be included and some disciplines may require additional items relating specifically to their major. The implementation of the new Liberal Studies Program (LSP) has prompted discussions including items representative of LSP modes of inquiry. These include Historical, Philosophical/ Religious, and Social Scientific Modes. This year, students submitting portfolios in the Spring semester submitted works showing *historical analysis*, a category that temporarily replaces *quantitative/mathematical reasoning*. Samples of student learning in the other modes of inquiry are expected to be included in portfolio assessment in the future.

From whom are the results available?
The director of portfolio assessment.

Are the results available by division or discipline?
By assessment tradition at Truman, results by discipline are not made available to the general public. However, each Division Head receives the results from students majoring in disciplines within his or her division, and each discipline is provided with results from students in its major. Furthermore, information about the classes serving as sources for portfolio submissions, including the scores of those submissions, are provided to individual disciplines. In this way, portfolio data can be used by disciplines in making informed decisions regarding their curricula and methods.

To whom are the results regularly distributed?
The results of portfolio assessment are made available to all members of the Truman community through this Assessment Almanac. Division Heads receive results for students majoring in disciplines within their divisions and individual disciplines receive results for their major students. Information about classes serving as sources for portfolio

submissions are provided to disciplines through their conveners. More detailed data are accessible in consultation with the Portfolio Director. Specific findings are shared with faculty and administrators through planning workshops, faculty development luncheons, and other forums. In the past, data and specific findings have been useful to the University in preparing a self-study report for reaccredidation by the North Central Association and in guiding the core reform that led to the development of the Liberal Studies Program. The Faculty and Student Senates have used the reports in developing planning documents. In discipline committees, some faculty use the information to reform their curriculum, improve their major, and engage in self-study for reaccredidation of their programs. Portfolio findings have also affected the assignments and syllabi of faculty who have participated as portfolio readers.

Are the results comparable to data of other universities?
No. Few universities are using portfolios for assessment of general education or liberal studies. However, many institutions have inquired about the development and results of the portfolio assessment at Truman.

Capstone Course

Who takes it?
All seniors take a capstone course in their major.

When is it administered?
During the senior year.

What office administers it?
The faculty of the discipline. Some, but not all, disciplines may use discussion of the capstone courses and portfolio work from that discipline to evaluate their discipline curriculum.

Who originates the capstone course and review?
The faculty of the discipline.

When are results typically available?
The fall following the year in which the capstone courses are given.

From whom are the results available?
The faculty of the discipline.

What type of information is sought?
The faculty may have particular concerns about different aspects of the curriculum.

Are the results available by division or discipline?
By discipline.

Are the results comparable to data of other universities?
No.

Senior Examination in the Major

Who takes it?
All seniors take a senior examination in the major.

When is it administered?
During the senior year.

How long does it take for a student to complete the senior test?
This depends on the test, but the average is about 2½ hours.

What office administers it?
Assessment and Testing Office.

Who originates the test?
The faculty pick the test that best suits their majors.

SENIOR TESTS AT TRUMAN
AS OF SPRING 2001

MFAT (Major Field Achievement Test)
in Accounting
Biology
Business Administration (Finance, Management, and Marketing)
Chemistry
Computer Science
Economics
History
Mathematics
Music
Physics
Political Science
Psychology
Sociology/Anthropology

Mosby AssessTest
in Nursing

CHES (Certified Health Education Specialist) Exam
in Health Science

MLA Cooperative Foreign Language Proficiency Tests in Spanish

Praxis II Exam: Content Knowledge
in French
German

GRE (Graduate Record Examinations) General Test
in Art
Art History
Agricultural Science
Classics
Communication
Communication Disorders
English
Exercise Science
Philosophy and Religion
Russian
Theatre

LSAT (Law School Admission Test)
in Communication
English

ACAT (The Area Concentration Achievement Tests)
in Art-Visual Communication
Justice Systems

When are the results typically available?
Usually several months after the test is given. University averages are typically available in the summer for the fiscal year.

What type of information is sought?
Information relating to general knowledge in the major. In some cases, the tests provide subscores for particular areas of the major. The GRE General Tests are generally used in majors where there is currently no good senior examination appropriate to the major. It generally provides information on analytical, quantitative, and verbal skills.

From whom are the results available?
Assessment and Testing Office and later from Division Offices.

To whom are the results regularly distributed?
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 available by division or discipline?

Yes.

Are the results comparable to data of other universities?
Usually, though not always (this may depend on the test involved).

Graduating Student Questionnaire

Who takes it?
All graduating seniors.

When is it administered?
A short time before graduation.

How long does it take for the student to complete the instrument?
20 minutes.

What office administers it?
It is sent out in a graduation packet by the Registrar's Office.

Who originates the survey?
The Vice President for Academic Affairs and the University Assessment Committee.

When are the results typically available?
For the fiscal year, in late June or July.

What type of information is sought?
The GSQ questions are virtually identical with those of the ISS. The GSQ asks about the highest academic degree sought, selection of Truman, future plans for employment and graduate school, knowledge and opinions on assessment, time spent outside of class on course-related work, writing required, and the challenge of courses. Students are also asked how often they dealt with other students in academic and co-curricular contexts, used the library, attended cultural or co-curricular events, used writing centers and other labs or tutorial services, and applied knowledge and skills from one area to another. Students are asked how many faculty members they know well enough to get a letter of recommendation. Students are asked how effective their education has been in regard to an extensive list of academic and social skills. The students rate various aspects of their major. Students respond as to how satisfied they are with the faculty and other aspects of campus including a variety of services, offices, and facilities. Students are asked about discrimination and the amount of time spent in various activities in an average week. Any additional student comments may be added.

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

To whom are the results regularly distributed?

University, division, and discipline averages are sent to the President, VPAA, Division Heads, Assessment Committee, and selected administrators.

Are the results available by division or discipline?
Yes.

Are the results comparable to data of other universities?
No.

Alumni Survey

Who takes it?
A sample of University alumni.

When is it administered?
Every three years. The last one was given in 1999.

What office administers it?
Assessment and Testing Office.

Who originates the survey?
ACT and Truman State University.

When are the results typically available?
Usually it takes about 9 months from when surveys are first sent out until they are processed and a final report is ready.

What type of information is sought?
The Alumni Survey asks first about some demographic information on the former students. The alumni are also asked about when they graduated and what is their highest planned degree. Other information is sought about why Truman/Northeast was selected and how they financed their college education. Alumni are then asked to rate various aspects of their university and curricular experience and their satisfaction with different services on campus. Alumni are asked about how their major affected their knowledge, abilities, and attitudes. They are asked about how their experience affected their ability to continue their education (if they did) and to select and carry out their employment. Finally alumni are asked whether they are willing to have their employer be sent a survey and whether the alumni wish to add any additional comments.

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

To whom are the results regularly distributed?
University averages are sent to the President, VPAA, Division Heads, Assessment Committee, and selected administrators.

Are the results available by division or discipline?
Yes, if requested.

Are the results comparable to data of other universities?
No.

State Alumni Survey

Who takes it?
A sample of University alumni.

When is it administered?
Every three years, although the last one was given in 1994.

What office administers it?
Coordinating Board for Higher Education of Missouri.

Who originates the survey?
ACT.

When are the results typically available?
No timetable has been agreed upon.

What type of information is sought?
This Alumni Survey asks first about some demographic information on the former students. The alumni are also asked about their major and degrees granted at this and other schools. Other information related to debt, GPA, highest degree granted, current job and salary, preparation for current job, satisfaction with it, salary of first job, educational outcomes, and educational experiences at college. Alumni are asked whether they would attend the same school, their rating, and recommendation to others. Finally they are asked about other co-curricular activities. The averages for Northeast/Truman are in one report and those for other Missouri four-year schools are in the other.

From whom are the results available?
The Coordinating Board for Higher Education and the Vice President's Office.

To whom are the results regularly distributed?
University averages for this school and other Missouri four-year schools are sent to the President, VPAA, Assessment Committee, and selected administrators.

Are the results available by division or discipline?
No. Sample is too small.

Are the results comparable to data of other universities?

To other four-year Missouri schools (in aggregate).

Employer Survey

Who takes it?
Employers are asked to take it if the employee on the Alumni Survey consents.

When is it administered?
Within a year after the Alumni Survey is returned.

What office administers it?
Assessment and Testing Office.

Who originates the survey?
Truman State University.

When are the results typically available?
The end of the year in which it is given.

What type of information is sought?
The survey asks for the type of organization at which the employee works, the number of employees, the percentage that are in management positions, the type of skills, knowledge and attitudes that are important to the organization, the toughest type of jobs to fill, rating Northeast/Truman graduates in knowledge and skill areas, general impression of the likelihood of hiring other Northeast/Truman graduates, and suggestions for improving the education process.

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

To whom are the results regularly distributed?
University, division, and discipline averages are sent to the President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Division Heads, Assessment Committee, and selected administrators.

Are the results available by division or discipline?
This is possible but only by cross-referencing this survey with alumni survey.

Are the results comparable to data of other universities?
No.

Faculty Survey

Who takes it?
Faculty at Truman.

When is it administered?
Approximately every three years. This survey was most recently given out in Fall 1998 and again in Fall 2001.

How long does it take for the faculty to complete the instrument?
30 minutes.

What office administers it?
The Vice President for Academic Affairs Office.

Who originates the survey?
Higher Education Research Institute
UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information
3005 Moore Hall/Mailbox 95121
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1521
(310) 825-1925

When are results typically available?
The summer following the survey.

What type of information is sought?
The survey gives information on age, rank, title, principal activity, race, highest degree (along with its field and year of degree), degree currently working toward, department, tenure information, primary interest (teaching, research, etc.), salary, father's and mother's education, marital status, and information on children. It also asks about the amount of time spent on teaching, research, advising, service, and consulting, scholarly activity, goals for undergraduate education, evaluation and teaching methods in class, and community service required for campus. General opinions are sought on curriculum, college environment, priorities at the institution, satisfactory aspects of job, personal goals, desire to continue teaching, and the amount and source of stress. Local questions (with no comparisons to other schools) were added. In Fall 2001, the local questions focused on student learning, faculty development, the co-curriculum, and the LSP.

From whom are the results available?
Vice President for Academic Affairs Office.

To whom are the results regularly distributed?
President, VPAA, Division Heads, Assessment Committee, and selected administrators.

Are the results available by division or discipline?
No.

Are the results comparable to data of other universities?
The data are comparable to averages of other schools in a class or classes that we select, usually with four-year private colleges, nonsectarian four-year colleges, public four-year

colleges, and all four-year institutions. Data regarding Truman's local questions are not comparable to other institutions.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

Who takes it?
Freshmen and Seniors.

When is it administered?
It began as a pilot program in Fall 1999. This survey was last given in Spring 2000.

How long does it take for the students to complete the instrument?
15 minutes.

What office administers it?
Assessment and Testing Office.

Who originates this survey?
National Survey of Student Engagement
Center for Postsecondary Research and Planning
Indiana University
Ashton Aley Hall, Suite 102
1913 East Seventh Street
Bloomington, IN 47405-7510
(812) 856-5824

When are results typically available?
The end of the following semester. (I.e. Spring 2000 results were available November 13, 2000.)

What type of information is sought?
The Spring 2000 NSSE was divided into three large sections: College Activities, Educational and Personal, and Opinions About Your School. The College Activities portion included questions on academic, intellectual, and social experiences, questions related to nature of exams, reading and writing activities, and questions regarding weekly activities. The Educational and Personal section asked questions on knowledge, skills, and personal development. Finally, the Opinions About Your School portion emphasized the amount of time spent studying, being tutored, and providing support for others.

From whom are the results available?
University Planning and Development Office.

To whom are the results regularly distributed?
The Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Are the results available by division or discipline?
No.

Are the results comparable to data of other universities?
Yes. Two hundred seventy-six four-year institutions participated in the Spring 2000 NSSE. NSSE provides the results for Truman as compared to Master's I- and II-level institutions and to all institutions participating in the Survey.

Funding for Results

This is not a separate assessment instrument, but it does allow the University to set goals (with results drawn from other assessment instruments). Meeting the goals provides money, depending on the amount provided by the legislature. The money usually goes to faculty grants and assessment projects. (See Volume II for details.)

Appendix

In Chapter I page 1, the concept of triangulation was introduced. Since no individual assessment instrument can provide perfect, flawless information, several instruments are combined with the expertise and knowledge of the university. The assessment instruments summarized in this chapter fit into the models of triangulation. Possible triangulation models for assessment follow:

TRIANGULATION MODELS FOR ASSESSMENT