

## Chapter XIV: SENIOR TEST IN THE MAJOR

*Who takes it?*

All seniors.

*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, Violette Hall 1130.

*Who originates the test?*

The faculty designate the test that best suits their majors.

### **SENIOR TESTS AT TRUMAN AS OF SPRING 2003**

MFT (Major Field Test)

in    Accounting  
      Biology  
      Business Administration  
      Chemistry  
      Computer Science  
      Economics  
      History  
      Mathematics  
      Music  
      Physics  
      Political Science  
      Psychology  
      Sociology

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 (except Visual Communications)  
Art History  
Classics  
Communication  
Communication Disorders  
English  
Exercise Science  
Linguistics  
Philosophy and Religion  
Russian  
Theatre

LSAT (Law School Admission Test)  
in Communication  
English

GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test)  
in Communication

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

*When are the results typically available?*

Availability of individual results vary by exam from 2 weeks to 2 months after the exam administration. 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 Test provides information on analytical writing, quantitative, and verbal skills.

*From whom are the results available?*

Assessment and Testing Office and Division Offices.

*To whom are the results regularly distributed?*

Individual results are communicated to students and their division. University, division, and discipline averages are sent to the President, VPAA, Division Heads, Assessment Committee, and selected administrators. University-wide results are also available through this *Almanac*.

*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).

## Senior Test Executive Summary

All Truman seniors are required to take exams in their majors. Faculty in the majors select the most appropriate exam for their students. Currently a number of tests are used: Major Field Test, Mosby AssessTest, Certified Health Education Specialist Exam, MLA Cooperative Foreign Language Proficiency Test, Praxis II Exam (Content Knowledge), Law School Admission Test, Area Concentration Achievement Test, and Graduate Record Examinations General Test. These tests are administered by the Assessment and Testing Office, and the method of their administration depends on the test administered.

Results of the senior exam are used by faculty to assess student performance in the major. Additionally, student performance University-wide on the senior tests is used as an indicator that the University is meeting its institutional goal of “recruiting, supporting, and graduating a well-prepared, highly qualified student body” as stated in the Truman State University Master Plan Update (p. 20). Results are also reported to the Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) as required by the state of Missouri.

Generally, senior test results are reported as test percentiles. At the individual student level, percentiles indicate what percent of all students nation-wide taking the test have test scores at or below that of the particular student. Typically, we are interested in the number of students University-wide and by division and major who scored above the 50<sup>th</sup> and above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile.

Between 1998 and 2002, Truman included in its Master Plan yearly projections for University-wide, division-level, and major-level student performance above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile on the senior tests. The final version of the Master Plan Update document will include a 2007 projection for University-wide and division-level student performance above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile. Additionally, the CBHE requires a report of the average and range of percent of majors scoring above the 50<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup> percentiles on the senior tests.

In fiscal year 2003, 1,246 students took senior tests in the major. Traditionally, results of the senior tests by major and division are not reported University-wide. It can be reported, however, that the percent of students scoring above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile on the senior tests increased from 2002 to 2003 for two of the divisions. Of the remaining five divisions, three divisions showed that the percent of students scoring above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile was higher than the average reported for that division over the past five years.

Results showing the percent of students scoring above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile on the senior tests were even more positive. Four of seven divisions reported increases from 2002 to 2003 in the percent of students who scored above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile. Of the remaining three divisions, one division showed that the percent of students scoring above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile was higher than the average reported for that discipline over the past five years.

University-wide, the percentage of students scoring above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile was only slightly lower than last year (73.1% in 2003 compared to 74.9% in 2002). However, the 2003 percentage is higher than the average reported for the University over the past five years (71.6%). The percent of students University-wide scoring above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile was slightly higher in 2003 than in 2002 (38.7% compared to 38.0%) and above the average reported for the University over

the last five years (35.5%).

Overall, the percent of Truman students scoring above the 50<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup> percentiles on the senior tests has been slowly increasing.

