

Chapter IV: SENIOR TESTS 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 2 hours.

What office administers it?

Assessment and Testing Office, Violette Hall 1130.

Who originates the test?

The faculty of each major/discipline designates the test that best suits the major.

SENIOR TESTS AT TRUMAN FOR FALL 2013 AND SPRING 2014

MFT (Major Field Test)

- Accounting
- Biology
- Business Administration
- Computer Science
- Economics
- Mathematics
- Music
- Physics
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Sociology/Anthropology

DUCK (Diagnostic of Undergraduate Chemistry Knowledge)

- Chemistry

HESI (Health Education Systems Inc) Exam

- Nursing

BOC (Board of Certification) Exam

- Athletic Training

CHES (Certified Health Education Specialist) Exam

- Health Science

HFS (Health Fitness Specialist) Exam

- Exercise Science

Praxis II Exam: Content Knowledge
Art (including Art History)

Praxis II Exam: World Language Exam
French
German
Romance Languages (student chooses Spanish or French)
Spanish

CLA+ (Collegiate Learning Assessment)
Communication Disorders
Creative Writing
English
Interdisciplinary Studies
Linguistics
Philosophy and Religion (Fall 2013)
Russian
Theatre

ACAT (The Area Concentration Achievement Test)
Agricultural Science
Justice Systems
History

NLE (The National Latin Exam) and/or NGE (The National Greek Exam)
Classics

Communication Exam (internal instrument designed by Communication faculty)
Communication

Capstone Seminar Experience (PHRE 475)
Philosophy and Religion (Spring 2014)

When are the results typically available?

Availability of individual results varies by exam from immediate availability, to a matter of weeks or up to 6 months after the exam administration. University averages are typically available in late fall for the previous 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 CLA+ exam provides information on critical thinking skills.

From whom are the results available?

Assessment and Testing Office and Department Offices

To whom are the results regularly distributed?

Individual results are communicated to students and to their departments when available. University, college/school, and discipline averages are sent to the President, Provost, Deans, Assessment Committee, and selected administrators. University-wide results are also available through this *Almanac*.

Are the results available by department or discipline?

Yes

Are the results comparable to data from other universities?

Usually, though not always (depending on the test involved)

All Truman seniors are required to take exams or complete performance assessments in their majors. The faculty of each program selects the most appropriate exam or assessment for their students, with approval from the Department Chair, Dean and Provost. Currently a number of tests are used, including Major Field Tests, Diagnostic of Undergraduate Chemistry Knowledge, Board of Certification, Health Education Systems Inc. Exam, Certified Health Education Specialist Exam, Health Fitness Specialist Exam, Praxis II Exams (Content Knowledge and World Language Exams), Collegiate Learning Assessment, National Latin and/or Greek Exams, and Area Concentration Achievement Tests. These tests are coordinated and mostly administered by the Assessment and Testing Office. The method of administration depends on the test, but most exams are computer-based.

Results of the senior exam are used by the 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*. Results are also reported to the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE).

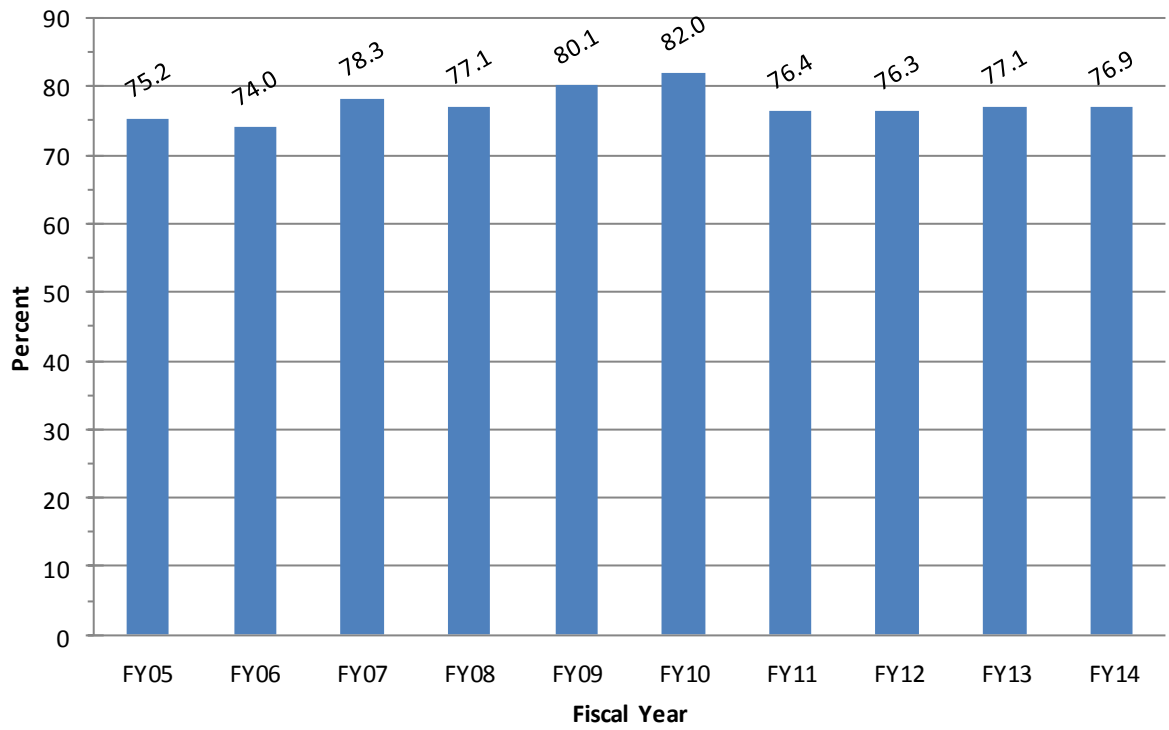
In order for the exams to be most useful as a measure of student achievement, students must give the tests their full attention and must exert significant effort. Except for the exams tied to licensure or certification, courses, or departmental honors, the results matter more to the university than to individual students. This situation causes some concern that current scores may underestimate student ability. Several techniques for encouraging students to take the exams seriously are used by some departments. For example, Chemistry, Justice Systems and Art include exam review in the curriculum. Several programs, such as Communication and the Sciences, require students who do not meet a minimum score to retake the test or to take an alternative assessment. Business includes a notation on the transcript for students who perform exceptionally well or poorly. Other programs use the results as one criterion for determining departmental honors or as an assignment in the capstone or senior seminar course.

Generally, senior test results are reported as percentiles. At the individual student level, percentiles indicate what percent of all students taking the test nation-wide have scores the same as or below that of the particular student. The University is typically interested

in the percent of students, both University-wide and by department and major, who score at or above the 50th and the 80th percentiles on the senior tests.

In fiscal year 2014, students took 1,101 senior tests in the major that provide percentile scores. Traditionally, results of the senior tests by major and department are not reported University-wide. It can be reported, however, that the percent of students scoring at or above the 50th percentile on their senior tests decreased from 77.1% in FY 2013 to 76.9% in FY 2014. The percent of students scoring at or above the 80th percentile on their senior tests increased from 42.2% in FY 2013 to 43.0% in FY 2014. Results from the past ten fiscal years are illustrated in the following graphs.

Percent Scoring at or above the 50th Percentile on Senior Test



Percent Scoring at or above the 80th Percentile on Senior Test

