

## Chapter 5: 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?*

Varies depending on the test, but the average is about 2 hours.

*What office administers it?*

Assessment and Testing Office.

*Who originates the test?*

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

### SENIOR TESTS AT TRUMAN

ACAT (The Area Concentration Achievement Test)

in     Agricultural Science  
       Communication  
       Justice Systems

American Chemical Society – Biochemistry

       Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

Capstone Seminar Experience (PHRE 475)

In     Philosophy and Religion

CHES (Certified Health Education Specialist) Exam

in     Health Science

CLA+ (Collegiate Learning Assessment plus)

in

       Communication Disorders

       Creative Writing

       English

       History

       Interdisciplinary Studies

       Liberal Studies

       Linguistics

       Russian

       Statistics

       Theatre

DUCK (Diagnostic of Undergraduate Chemistry Knowledge)

       Chemistry

EP-C (Certified Exercise Physiologist) Exam

in     Exercise Science

HESI (Health Education Systems Inc) Exam

in     Nursing

MFT (Major Field Test)  
in Accounting  
Biology  
Business Administration  
Computer Science  
Economics  
Mathematics  
Music  
Physics  
Political Science  
Psychology  
Sociology/Anthropology

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

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

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

*When are the results typically available?*

Availability of individual results varies by exam from immediately 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 their department 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 of other universities?*

Usually, though not always (this depends on the test involved).

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

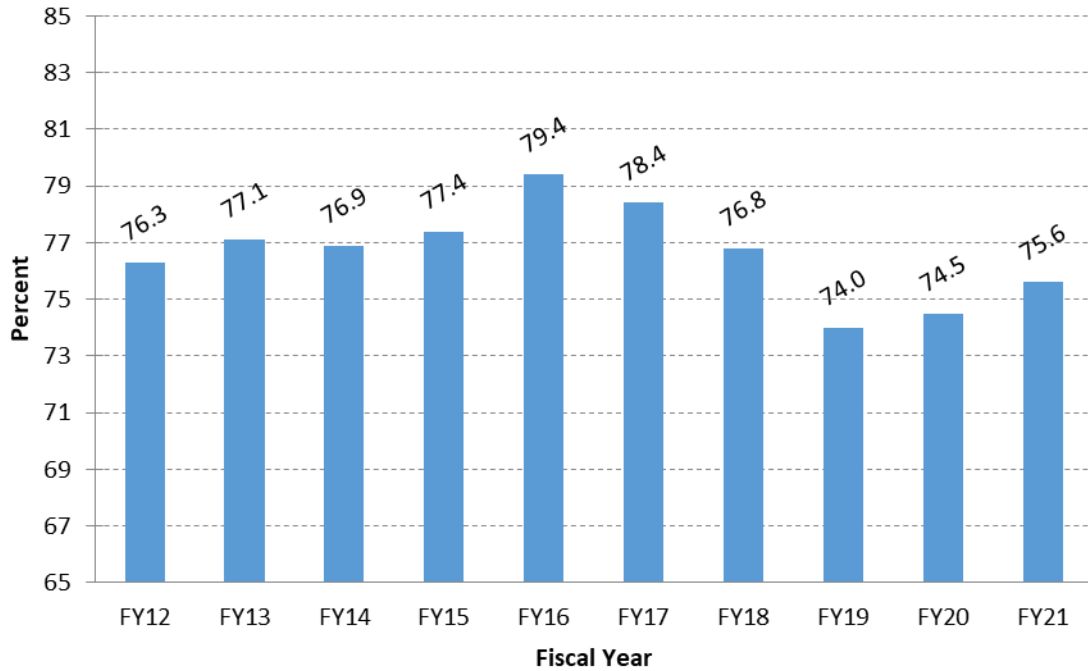
Results of the senior exam are used by faculty to assess student performance in the major. Additionally, student performance University-wide on the senior tests is used as an indicator that the University is meeting its institutional goal of “recruiting, supporting, and graduating a well-prepared, highly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

In order to be most useful as a measure of student achievement, students must give the tests their full attention and 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 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. Departments such as Chemistry, Justice Systems, Communication, Exercise Science and Health Science include exam review in the curriculum. Several programs, like the sciences, require students who do not meet a minimum score to retake the test or take an alternative assessment. Other programs use the results as one consideration 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 nation-wide taking the test have scores at or below that of the particular student. At the University level, we are typically interested in the percent of students University-wide and by department and major who scored at or above the 50<sup>th</sup> and the 80<sup>th</sup> percentiles on the senior tests.

In fiscal year 2021, students took 926 senior tests in the major which 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 50<sup>th</sup> percentile on their senior tests university-wide increased from 74.5% in FY 2020 to 75.6% in FY 2021. The percent of students scoring at or above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile on their senior tests decreased from 41.0% in FY 2020 to 39.1% in FY 2021. The 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

