

**Oklahoma State University
Annual Assessment Report, 2001 – 2002**

Executive Summary

Entry-Level Assessment

Three methods are used for entry-level assessment at Oklahoma State University (OSU): the ACT, a locally-developed predictive statistical model called Entry Level Placement Analysis (ELPA), and COMPASS, the ACT Computer Adaptive Placement and Support System placement tests. The first stage of entry-level assessment is the ACT subject area test scores; an ACT subscore of 19 or above (or SAT equivalent) automatically qualifies a student for college-level coursework in that subject area. The ACT Reading subscore is used to indicate readiness for courses in reading-intensive introductory courses in Sociology, Political Science, Psychology, History, Economics, and Philosophy. The second stage of entry-level assessment is ELPA; it is a multiple regression model that uses high school grades, high school class rank and size, and ACT scores to predict student grades in entry-level courses. Students scoring below a 19 on the ACT subject area test *and* with predicted grades from ELPA of less than “C” in a particular subject area are recommended for remedial coursework. All first-time OSU students are assessed using the ACT and ELPA prior to enrollment. The third level of assessment is the COMPASS placement tests; students who are not cleared for enrollment in college level courses via their ACT scores or ELPA results may waive a remedial course requirement by passing a COMPASS test. Students who are missing ACT information or high school grade information needed for ELPA may also take the COMPASS placement test to waive a remedial course requirement.

In 2001-2002, entry-level assessment was conducted for all admitted and enrolled new freshmen and new transfer students with fewer than 24 credit hours (n=3,686). After all stages of entry-level assessment were completed, 615 new students (16.7% of the total number enrolled) were recommended to take at least one remedial course. Of these, 126 (3.4%) were recommended to enroll in remedial English (ENGL 0123); 548 (14.9%) needed remedial math (MATH 0123); 134 (3.6 %) needed remedial science, and 122 (3.3%) in remedial courses focused on reading and study skills (UNIV 1111) (note: some students are required to take remedial courses in more than one subject area). Institutional Research and University Academic Services track success of students in remedial courses each semester.

Additional entry-level assessments used at OSU include the locally-developed New Student Survey, the CIRP Freshman Survey, and the Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory. The New Student Survey was conducted to obtain student input regarding OSU orientation programs for new freshmen and transfer students. The survey was administered on the web and via telephone in January 2002; 396 students participated. Results provided useful information for continued development of orientation programs. The CIRP Freshman Survey is conducted in alternate years at OSU and was not conducted in 2001-2002. The College Student Inventory by Noel-Levitz, Inc. is a retention-management tool that may be used to identify potential problem areas for new students and is used each year in the College of Human Environmental Sciences (n= 289 for 2002). Residential Life also uses this survey on a limited basis for students in some residence areas.

General Education Assessment

In 2000, the General Education Assessment Task Group was formed to create and implement a plan for assessing the effectiveness of the OSU general education program. This faculty group has developed an innovative and holistic model for assessing OSU’s general education program that includes:

- Institutional Portfolios that directly assess student achievement of the primary learner goals for general education
- University-wide surveys that indirectly assess student achievement of general education learner goals,
- A web-based General Education Course Database that is used to review and evaluate general education course content.

These methods are aimed at evaluating student achievement of the expected learning outcomes for general education that are described in the *OSU General Education Course Area Designations Criteria and Goals* document (approved by the General Education Advisory Council in January 2001). General education assessment is also guided by the university's mission statement and the purpose of general education as articulated in the OSU catalog.

In 2001 – 2002, institutional portfolios were developed to evaluate student written communication skills and student math problem solving skills. The portfolios included student work from 187 OSU students from all classes (freshmen through seniors) and disciplines. Each 'artifact' of student work in the Institutional Portfolio is evaluated by a team of faculty reviewers and scored using a 5-point rubric, where a score of 5 represents excellent work. For writing assessment, 66% of students received a score of 3 or higher (representing acceptable, good, or very good work). Portfolio results show that seniors demonstrate better writing skills than freshmen, and students who start at OSU as freshmen demonstrate better writing skills than transfer students. For math assessment, 71% of students received a score of 3 or higher (representing acceptable, good, or very good work). The sample size in the math portfolio is not large enough at this time to make additional comparisons. Each year, the use of institutional portfolios is expanded to cover additional general education student learner goals.

Surveys that provide information for general education assessment include the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the College Student Survey (CSS), and the university-wide alumni surveys. These surveys provide secondary measures of students' general education knowledge and skills development and compliments the data collected via institutional portfolios.

Although it does not directly measure student achievement of general education learner goals, the web-based General Education Course Database is an important component of general education assessment. The database is a tool used by the General Education Advisory Council (GEAC) for evaluating course content and the extent to which courses in the general education curriculum are aligned with the criteria and goals for general education courses. GEAC is in the process of reviewing all general education courses; this will be completed in spring 2004.

OSU's general education assessment methods are aimed at holistically evaluating student achievement of general education outcomes and critically evaluating the curriculum itself by evaluating how each course incorporates general education learner goals. The institutional portfolios are implemented such that student participants are anonymous; therefore, this method does not permit tracking individual students into future semesters. Information from general education assessment is shared annually with the faculty via a new 'General Education Assessment Newsletter' and is formally presented to GEAC, Assessment Council, Instruction Council, and Faculty Council. The process has generated attention to student learning, general education outcomes, and how individual general education courses provide opportunities for students to develop general education knowledge and skills. After two years of implementation, the process is yielding interesting results and effecting change at several institutional levels.

Program Outcomes Assessment

All OSU degree programs, including undergraduate and graduate programs, must have an outcomes assessment plan, and assessment activity for each degree program is described in annual assessment reports. Plans and reports may be submitted by colleges, schools, departments, or by individual degree programs depending on the organizational level that faculty from these programs have elected to use for assessment. The Assessment Council reviews all assessment plans and reports on a 3-year cycle.

Academic units use a broad range of methods to assess student achievement of the learning outcomes articulated in assessment plans, and these are described in detail in the individual assessment reports submitted by each unit. The most commonly used program outcomes assessment methods reported in 2001-2002 were:

- Capstone course projects, papers, presentations evaluated by faculty or by outside reviewers
- Senior-level projects & presentations
- Course-embedded assessments & Classroom Assessment Techniques
- Exams – local comprehensive exams, local entry-to-program exams
- Exams – standardized national exams, certification or licensure exams,
- Exit interviews
- Internships – evaluations from supervisors, faculty members, student participants
- Portfolios - reviewed internally or externally
- Professional jurors or evaluators to evaluate projects, portfolios, exhibits, or performances
- Student performance in intercollegiate competitions
- Surveys - alumni
- Surveys - employers / recruiters
- Surveys – students, esp. seniors
- Surveys – faculty
- Tracking enrollment data, student academic performance in particular courses, student participation in extracurricular activities relation to the discipline, degree completion rates, time-to-degree-completion
- Alumni employment tracking

Graduate programs reported the following outcomes assessment methods *in addition to* the methods described above:

- Qualifying exams
- Theses / dissertations / creative component papers, projects, presentations, and defenses
- Comprehensive exams
- Tracking research activity / publications / professional presentations / professional activity

In addition to these outcomes assessment methods, the Office of University Assessment coordinates alumni and student surveys and provides program-specific results of these surveys to academic programs so that faculty may use this information for program outcomes assessment.

In keeping with the guidelines of the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association and the policy of the OSU Assessment Council, faculty are encouraged to develop effective program outcomes assessment methods that will provide meaningful information for program development and improvement. The Assessment Council reviews of outcomes assessment programs show that most degree programs are satisfactorily implementing their assessment plans and using assessment results for program development and improvement. Academic units are encouraged, but not required, to use assessment methods that may provide comparison of student performance with statewide or national norms. Programs that use such assessments report their findings in their individual annual outcomes assessment reports (Appendix A of this report).

The number of individuals who participate in each outcomes assessment method within each academic unit is shown in Table 12.1 and is described in detail in the individual assessment reports submitted by each academic unit (Appendix D). Academic units are required to report the number of individuals assessed *in each assessment method*. Because the same students are assessed by multiple methods, the reporting process does not provide an accurate count of the total, number of students that participated in outcomes assessment. Outcomes assessment reports demonstrate that every academic program uses multiple assessment methods and a majority of students within each program participate in outcomes assessment measures. The sum of all individuals who participated in all assessment methods is 17,040, but this total includes multiple counts of the same students (because students participate in multiple assessment methods) and also may include non-students (because, the 'number of individuals assessed' in an alumni survey or employer survey will reflect alumni or employers, respectively).

Uses of assessment results are unique to each program but can be generally categorized as sharing assessment information with faculty members, developing curriculum changes in response to assessment findings, and using assessment results to justify curriculum changes have recently been implemented. The most commonly cited uses of assessment results in 2001-2002 were:

- Changes in course content
- Addition / deletion of courses
- Changes in degree requirements or degree sheet options
- Development of tutorial and academic services for students
- Justification of past curriculum changes and to show program improvement resulting from those changes
- To further refine the assessment methods or to implement new assessment methods
- Changes in course sequences
- Changes in advising processes
- To facilitate curriculum discussions at faculty meetings, curriculum committee meetings, and faculty retreats
- Changes to student facilities such as computer labs and science labs
- Development of program-based websites to provide students with academic and program information

Student and Alumni Satisfaction Assessment

Alumni surveys are conducted every year at OSU; undergraduate program alumni and graduate program alumni are surveyed in alternate years. The purpose of these surveys is to identify institutional strengths and areas for improvement as indicated by recent graduates; to track the careers and continuing education of recent OSU graduates; and to assess achievement of learning outcomes as perceived by alumni from individual academic programs. All alumni surveys target alumni who are 1- and 5-years post-graduation; include Common Questions that cover employment and career issues, continued education, and general satisfaction; and include program-specific questions for the purpose of program outcomes assessment as well as assessing alumni satisfaction. Alumni surveys have become a cornerstone of assessment at the university-, college- and program- level by providing regular feedback from OSU graduates about their perceptions of their educational experiences at OSU and its impact on their career and personal development.

A total of 1,544 alumni completed the 2002 Survey of Alumni of Undergraduate Programs. An estimated 66.2% of the alumni who participated in the survey were living in Oklahoma, and 33.8% were contacted out-of-state. Over 95% of alumni reported that they were satisfied with their overall educational experience at OSU. Almost 30% of alumni had completed or were currently enrolled in graduate programs or professional schools. . Over 85% of alumni reported that they were employed. Most alumni reported working for large corporations (35.9%) or small corporations or business (26.9%).

Over 9% were employed by government agencies, and educational institutions employed 19.0%. Alumni most frequently reported that their annual salary was in the range of \$26,000-35,000 per year (28.0%). Eighty-seven percent of employed alumni reported that their OSU education had prepared them very well or adequately for their current position.

OSU participates in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in alternate years. This survey is designed to obtain information about student participation in programs and activities that institutions provide for their learning and personal development, and results provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending college. NSSE also includes items related to student satisfaction, and those results may be used to assess OSU student satisfaction. OSU participated in the NSSE in 2000 and reported those findings earlier. The 2002 NSSE results will be described in the 2003 Annual Assessment Report.

The national College Student Survey is another university-wide survey conducted at OSU in alternate years and used to measure, in part, student satisfaction. The College Student Survey is a follow-up survey that compliments the CIRP Freshman Survey and compares freshmen and senior responses to items and indicates how students' actual college experiences were different from their expectations as freshmen, and how they changed during their years at OSU. In Spring 2001, 319 OSU seniors completed the College Student Survey.

The Noel-Levitz, Inc. Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) is administered each year on the Tulsa campus to evaluate student satisfaction programs and services on the Tulsa campus. Because of the rapid growth of enrollment on the Tulsa campus, this survey provides an effective means for monitoring student perceptions of programs and services and incorporating student feedback into the development of student programs and services on that campus. The results provide comparison information with other institutions and allow year-to-year comparisons within the institution. A total of 427 students participated in this survey, out of a target population of 1,797 students enrolled in classes on the Tulsa campus in spring 2002. Students at OSU-Tulsa reported higher degrees of satisfaction with Safety and Security, Registration Effectiveness, Concern for the Individual, Campus Climate, Student Centeredness, Service Excellence, Recruitment and Financial Aid, and Responsiveness to Diverse Populations when compared to peer institutions.

Results of these surveys are widely distributed to faculty and administrators at the program-, college- and university-levels. The alumni survey results provide important information for developing academic programs and are used as a measure of student achievement of program outcomes. The NSSE, College Student Survey, and Student Satisfaction Inventory are used to stimulate discussion about the development of student services and programs at OSU.

Graduate Student Assessment

Student outcomes assessment in graduate programs is part of Program Outcomes Assessment and is reported in that section of this report. In addition, the Graduate College conducts the Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey in alternate years and the Office of University Assessment conducts the Survey of Alumni of Graduate Programs in alternate years. These university-wide assessments provide university- and program-level assessment information about graduate students. The Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey was conducted in spring 2002, and 908 graduate students participated in the survey; results were not available for inclusion in this report. The second Survey of Alumni of Graduate Programs will be conducted in spring 2003.

What's New in Assessment at OSU in 2001-2002:

- *Assessment Council Reviews of Outcomes Assessment Programs.* The Assessment Council reviews of outcomes assessment programs have resulted in greater communication and understanding of what outcomes assessment is about and what programs should be doing. Changes resulting from these reviews became very apparent in 2001-2002. This year, as a result of these reviews, three-quarters of all academic units revised their assessment plans or otherwise demonstrated greater commitment to outcomes assessment in their programs.
- *The Institutional Portfolio for General Education Assessment.* Institutional Portfolios are now the primary tool for evaluating student achievement of the learner goals for general education at OSU. This year, the portfolios moved from a 'pilot test' stage to full implementation. Separate portfolios are developed for each general education learner goal, and each portfolio includes students' work from throughout the curriculum. Groups of faculty members evaluate the work in each portfolio and assess student achievement of relative to the learner goal that is being assessed. The results provide a measure of student achievement of the expected learning outcomes for general education.
- *The General Education Course Database.* This course database is used by the General Education Advisory Council to evaluate content of general education courses. Although it does not directly assess student achievement, it is an important component of general education assessment. In spring 2001, the database was pilot tested during the review of courses with Analytical and Quantitative Thought (A) designations. The reviews continued in fall semester, focusing on the courses with Humanities (H) designations.
- *The Survey of Students with 100+ Credit Hours and No Degree.* This survey was a one-time study of students who were enrolled at OSU for several years but do not complete their degrees within six years. The purpose of the study was to determine what factors hinder students in the latter stages of college and may prevent them from completing bachelor's degrees within a six-year timeframe. The study included an extensive transcript analysis and a telephone survey. Results have stimulated discussion about policies and programs that could be modified to facilitate students' successful degree completion.
- *The New Student Survey.* The new student survey was a new assessment effort in 2001-2002 that was aimed at providing feedback from first year students about their OSU orientation experiences. The web-based survey provided student perceptions of four distinct orientation programs (Summer Enrollment Program, Camp Cowboy, Alpha Program, and Transfer Days), students' fall semester orientation courses, and general perceptions of first semester experiences and OSU services for new students.
- *OSU Survey of Alumni of Undergraduate Programs.* The Office of University Assessment coordinated the second university-wide survey of alumni of OSU undergraduate programs in 2001-2002. The survey provided data on careers, continued education, and satisfaction of alumni of OSU undergraduate programs who received their degrees in 1996 or 2000. A total of 1,544 telephone interviews were completed from a target population of 5,568 alumni, a response rate of 27.7%.

Additional information about these assessments is available from the OSU Assessment website:

www.okstate.edu/assess.