

## **Intercultural Competency and Diversity BSU FRESHMEN TO SENIOR RESULTS**

Bowie State University freshmen and senior students took part in the HEIghten Intercultural Competency and Diversity (ICD) assessment, which is a national pilot assessment project conducted by the Educational Testing Services (ETS), and funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The pilot began in 2017, and Bowie State University participated in this study along with 4,669 students from 30 comparison institutions from across the country. The assessment for Intercultural Competency and Diversity is a scenario-based assessment with intercultural situations. The students analyze the situation and identify the action/response that provides the solution that is the most appropriate response.

This analysis provides a comparison between the BSU freshmen and the BSU senior cohorts. It should be noted that these are not the same groups of students tested four years apart, but rather a cohort of freshmen and a separate cohort of seniors at Bowie State University tested over the same time range.

A total of 114 freshmen and 177 senior students at Bowie State University took the ICD assessment, which according to ETS focuses on: “...*the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes.*”

This assessment provided important data about students’ knowledge and skills related to intercultural situations and diversity. As Bowie State University strives to achieve academic excellence, it is imperative that the university promotes intercultural competency and diversity to promote an understanding and appreciation of the knowledge, skills and experiences of all people in the global workplace.

The ICD assessment measured the following areas:

1. **Analyze and Act** - The ability to take in, evaluate, and synthesize relevant information without the bias of preconceived judgments and to translate thoughts into actions. The subcategories for Analyze and Act are:

A. **Self-Awareness** - Understanding the impact that one’s own culture, values, preferences and previous experiences has on cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses.

B. **Cultural Knowledge Application** - Utilizing relevant declarative cultural knowledge in an interaction.

C. **Suspending Judgment/Perspective-Taking** - Active consideration of others’ potential viewpoints and active refrainment of preconceived cultural schema interfering with informed processing.

D. **Social Monitoring** - Awareness of physical, verbal, and nonverbal behaviors and cues of others during a social interaction; attention to others’ responses to one’s own actions and signals

E. **Emotional Regulation** - Ability to monitor and revise emotions in an automatic or controlled manner.

F. **Behavior Regulation** - Active monitoring and revision of personal behavior to engage in culturally-appropriate behavior and avoid engaging in culturally-inappropriate behavior.

2. **Approach** - The overall positivity with which an individual views and responds to cross-cultural interactions. The subcategories for Approach are:

A. **Positive Cultural Orientation** - The evaluation of cross-cultural situations as favorable.

B. **Cultural Self-Efficacy** - The belief that one can successfully engage in cross-cultural situations.

<b>ANALYZE AND ACT RESULTS</b>	<b>BSU Freshmen n = 114</b>	<b>BSU Seniors n = 177</b>	<b>Difference in Score</b>
<b>Analyze and Act</b> (Mean Scaled Score - Developing = 150-157; Proficient = 158-174; Advanced = 175-180)	157.1 Developing	159.9 Proficient	+2.8
<b>Self-Awareness</b> (Scale of 1-10)	3.9	4.2	+0.3
<b>Cultural Knowledge Application</b> (Scale of 1-10)	4.3	4.6	+0.3
<b>Suspending Judgment/Perspective Taking</b> (Scale 1-10)	3.9	4.2	+0.3
<b>Social Monitoring</b> (Scale 1-10)	3.6	3.8	+0.2
<b>Emotional Regulation</b> (Scale of 1-10)	3.9	4.3	+0.4
<b>Behavior Regulation</b> (Scale of 1-10)	3.5	3.7	+0.2

### **Analyze and Act Results Discussion:**

Bowie State University freshmen had a mean scaled score at the high-end of the “developing” range (150-157) and senior students had mean scaled score at the low end of the “proficient” range (158-174) in the category of “Analyze and Act.” This indicates that the freshmen students are developing in, and seniors are proficient in: “their ability to take in, evaluate, and synthesize relevant information without the bias of preconceived judgments and also their ability to translate thoughts into actions.”

In analyzing the sub scores for “Analyze and Act,” seniors scored higher than freshmen in all areas. It is not surprising that senior students would score higher than freshmen in the overall “Analyze and Act” area, or within the subcategories. The assessment is “*based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes,*” therefore, it is not surprising, that given BSU senior students have experienced a wider variety of these intercultural experiences, leading to deeper knowledge and skills and potentially evolving attitudes, including their experiences as students at Bowie State University.

The largest differences in the scores between BSU freshmen and BSU seniors, from highest to lowest scores were:

1. Emotional Regulation (0.4 difference)
2. TIE for 3 areas: Self-Awareness; Cultural Knowledge Application and Suspending Judgment/Perspective-Taking (0.3 difference)
3. TIE for 2 areas: Social Monitoring and Behavior Regulation (0.2 difference)

It should be noted that the differences in each of the scores amounts to less than one point, with the largest being only 0.4. However, it can be inferred, as noted above, that there was some growth between freshmen students and senior students, based on their experiences, which resulted in senior students scoring higher in all areas when compared to the freshmen students.

In the sub score of Emotional Regulation, there was the largest difference between the scores of the BSU freshmen and seniors, where the seniors were 0.4 points ahead of the freshmen in their ability to monitor and revise emotions in an automatic or controlled manner.

The next largest differences were a tie, at a difference of 0.3 for the areas of Self-Awareness; Cultural Knowledge Application and Suspending Judgment/Perspective-Taking. Self-Awareness is understanding the impact that one’s own culture, values, preferences and previous experiences has on cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses. The next area, Cultural Knowledge Application is utilizing relevant declarative cultural knowledge in an interaction. The final area, Suspending Judgment/Perspective-Taking means that the students were able to take active consideration of others’ potential viewpoints and active refrainment of preconceived cultural schema interfering with informed processing.

The smallest difference was a tie for two areas for 0.2 for Social Monitoring and Behavior Regulation. The first area, Social Monitoring is the awareness of physical, verbal, and nonverbal behaviors and cues of others during a social interaction; attention to others’ responses to one’s own actions and signals. The second area, Behavior Regulation measures the student’s ability to actively monitoring and revise personal behavior to engage in culturally-appropriate behavior and avoid engaging in culturally-inappropriate behavior.

<b>APPROACH RESULTS</b>	<b>BSU Freshmen n = 114</b>	<b>BSU Seniors n = 114</b>	<b>Difference in Score</b>
<b>Approach</b> (Overall Group Percentage of Neutral + High)	91%	97%	+6.0
<b>Individual Scaled Scores</b> (Neutral = 105 - 121)	115.9	122.4	+6.5
<b>Positive Cultural Orientation</b> (Scale of 9-15)	11.7	12.0	+0.3
<b>Cultural Self-Efficacy</b> (Scale of 9-15)	11.5	12.3	+0.8

**Approach Results Discussion:**

Bowie State University freshmen and senior students had an overall neutral score in the category of “Approach,” where the neutral category is a score of 105 - 131. This shows that BSU freshmen and senior students view themselves as moderately capable of:

- adapting to and navigating cross-cultural environments
- communicating with and understanding the intentions and viewpoints of culturally different others
- facing/dealing with ambiguous circumstances or situations that do not have clear outcomes
- responding to cross-cultural interactions in a positive way

The “low” category (90-104) views oneself as “not very capable” of the above actions, and the “high” category (132-150) views oneself as “very capable” of the above actions.

An Approach Scaled Score of 115.9 for the BSU freshmen students is in the middle of the 90 - 150 scale, as is the score of 122.4 for the BSU senior students, though the senior score is notably higher at 6.5 more than the freshmen. For Positive Cultural Orientation, the BSU freshmen score of 11.7 on a scale of 9-15 is solidly in the middle of the range, and the score for the BSU seniors is also in the middle of this range, though slightly higher (by 0.3) at 12.0. For Cultural Self-Efficacy there is a larger difference between the BSU freshmen and seniors, with the freshmen score of 11.5 and the senior score of 12.3 - a difference of 0.8 between the two cohorts. These scores for Positive Cultural Orientation and for Cultural Self-Efficacy reflect students’ views of themselves based on self-reported reactions to hypothetical situations for the actions as described above.

In general, in the Approach sub scores, the BSU freshmen students scored lower than the BSU senior students with both groups scoring solidly in the middle of the “neutral” category - a self-reflection that they are moderately capable in dealing with hypothetical cross-cultural interactions in a positive manner.