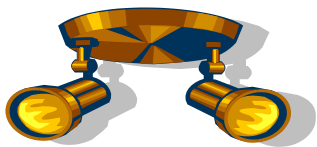




Assessment Times

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In the next edition...USM and BSU collaborate on Badging Essential Skills for Transitions (BEST) Initiative



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IN THE SPOTLIGHT~ Research & Information Literacy Skills

The Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS) test is based on standards developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). Eight skill-sets are measured by SAILS: 1) developing a research strategy 2) selecting finding tools 3) searching 4) using finding tool features 5) retrieving sources 6) evaluating sources 7) documenting sources and 8) understanding economic, legal and social issues.

The SAILS on-line assessment tool is an instrument that measures skill areas that are directly aligned with the ACRL standards and the general education competencies of technological competency, critical thinking skills and information literacy skills. A pilot study was conducted in fall 2016 and in spring 2017 with 162 BSU students participating. Comparative data examined BSU students with benchmark institutions and institutions nationally.

	Bowie State Univ. (%) n=162	Benchmark Inst. (%) n=1711	US Inst. - All test-takers (%) n=15,866
Overall	44.3	56.4	53.4
CLASS STANDING			
Fresh.	41.1	52.8	52.6
Soph.	39.4	55.0	51.4
Junior	47.4	57.1	54.3
Senior	56.3	60.0	57.4

The SAILS results are a powerful indicator of the information literacy and research skills of Bowie State University students. Measuring results for freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors provides a means of assessing students' growth in these eight skill areas over their college careers. The data presented below represents average scores of students overall and by year. Scores of BSU students are compared to scores from students representing benchmark institutions and national institutions. Overall the scores demonstrate the expected growth for BSU students over the course of their academic careers. The average score for BSU students increased between freshman and senior year. The dip in the average score in the sophomore year mirrors the dip in national scores for sophomores.

*SAILS Proficiency=70% and Mastery=85%

Civic and Intercultural Competency in Higher Education: ETS HEIghten®

Increasingly, graduates are expected to compete globally. Thus, Educational Testing Services (ETS) launched HEIghten®, a pilot study in which Bowie State University participated in during fall 2017. The purpose of the study was to evaluate students’ learning in civic and intercultural competencies and to design assessments that specifically measure these domains. The operational definitions included the following; Civic Competency and Engagement (CCE) - what individuals know, do, believe, and participate in (i.e., civic knowledge, civic skills, civic attitudes, and civic participation); Intercultural Competency and Diversity (ICD) - a person’s capability to gather, interpret, and act upon radically different cues and function effectively in multicultural situations. Multiple item formats were used to gather information, and a total of 1,841 students from 38 U.S. higher education institutions took the CCE assessment and 1,901 students from 37 U.S. higher education institutions took the ICD

assessment. The final collection of data indicated a total of 1,818 students from 23 U.S. higher education institutions took the CCE assessment and 1,889 students from 25 U.S. higher education institutions took the ICD assessment. The aggregate mean scale score ranged from 150-180; BSU scored 157.5 which denotes proficiency. Proficient in the area of civic competency and engagement, implies students at the proficient level have demonstrated the ability to do the following: (a) understand government institutions (b) understand policy debates (c) recognize types of media (d) understand foundational documents (e) understand aspects of democracy, civil rights, and rule of law

(f) consistently distinguish fact from opinion and (g) apply appropriate ethical principles.

Demographic Information	CCE		ICD	
	n	Percent	n	Percent
Gender	1617	87%	1706	90%
Male	674	37%	699	37%
Female	926	50%	983	52%
Race/Ethnicity	1667	91%	1740	92%
Black/African American	245	14%	184	10%
Bowie State University	119	7%	117	7%

Similarly, with the intercultural competency and diversity, the mean scale scores again ranged from 150-180. BSU’s mean scale score was 156.6, which denotes developing; meaning not very aware of/ able to identify the some of following: (a) the impact of their own culture, values, preferences, and previous experiences on their cognitive, emotional and behavioral responses (b) how certain behaviors or actions may be interpreted by other people (c) how nonverbal behaviors or cues may signal certain feelings, thoughts or intentions, and (d) others’ responses to their own actions and signals.

Based on the pilot and conclusive study, results indicated that there is opportunity for improvement in terms of students’ civic and intercultural knowledge and skills that institutions can focus on in their efforts to further promote these essential competencies. Results also suggest that more exposure to intercultural experiences is associated with greater awareness and enhanced performance.



On The Horizon:

MSCHE self-study will begin in fall 2018.

WAVES National Pilot Study: Critical Thinking & Student Writing

Bowie State University (BSU) is one of eight institutions participating in a U.S. Dept. of Education (DOEd)/Educational Testing Services (ETS) grant called WAVES. This project is studying critical thinking and writing in freshmen cohorts to ascertain how achievement in these areas relates to student success in college.

Students take two on-line assessments to measure skills in critical thinking and writing, as well as a writing attitudes survey. The pilot focuses on conventions, topicality, coherence, organization, and source use and integration. Researchers are also analyzing whether critical thinking skills correlate with writing ability and whether the student's interest, engagement, goal-setting and motivation in writing correlate with the student's writing ability.

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★ "When we talk about ★
★ 21st century pedagogy, ★
★ we have to consider ★
★ many things—the ★
★ objectives of education, ★
★ the curriculum, how ★
★ assessment strategies ★
★ work, the kind of ★
★ technology infrastruc- ★
★ ture involved, and how ★
★ leadership and policy ★
★ facilitate attaining ★
★ education goals." ★
★ - Chris Dede ★
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In fall 2017, CAPA tested 76 freshmen in critical thinking and 101 in writing. An additional 76 freshmen have taken the critical thinking assessment, and the writing assessment was completed this past spring semester. Preliminary results are expected in the summer of 2018 and will be analyzed summer/fall 2018. National and institutional data are expected by December 2018.

Overall initial findings from the ETS' analysis of all student writing samples via the Automated Writing Evaluation (AWE) suggest that: "...features from essays were found to be predictors of broader outcome measures: college success indicators and learning outcome measures" (Burstein, p. 101). The WAVES data will be triangulated with other national standardized assessments.

Further analysis of the results of the critical thinking and writing assessments for BSU students will be conducted by BSU assessment staff. Complete data analysis will be available from ETS by spring 2019. The findings from further analysis of the data will be used by assessment staff and English faculty to inform future practice and will be made available to the campus community.



Exploratory Analysis of Mathematics: Modules for Student Success

Since 2017, Bowie State University has participated in a pilot project with the University System of Maryland Office, USM institutions, other Maryland colleges and universities and EdReady, a developer of on-line college preparation modules. The focus of the pilot is to develop an alternative placement (ALT-Placement) model for math for incoming students. Customized modules which identify areas of student need are used by the students. This gives students tools to increase their knowledge of mathematical concepts, thus increasing the likelihood of success in passing math courses. Together, the University Testing Services and the Center for Academic Programs Assessment are testing the use of these on-line customized mathematics modules as part of the process for placement of incoming students in mathematics courses.

Fall 2017	Mathematics Course % Passing	
Average mathematics passing rates (incoming students—all math courses)	COMBINED AVERAGE PASSING RATE 57%	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 57% - No use of math modules 	MATH 99	53%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 63% - Used modules, didn't meet target* 	MATH 125	63%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 82% - Used modules, met target* 	MATH 127	52%
	MATH 141	62%
	MATH 150	57%

Bowie State is one of several Maryland universities participating in this Kresge Foundation funded project. In summer 2017, BSU offered all incoming students the opportunity to use the modules prior to enrollment. Students who initially were placed into developmental math based on Accuplacer scores could use modules to achieve a combined target score of 80%. This gave them the opportunity to be transferred into college-level math courses. A total of 334 pre-enrollment students who took the Accuplacer mathematics placement test during spring and summer 2017 also used the on-line ALT-Placement modules for customized mathematics preparation for college-level mathematics.

Preliminary results indicate that incoming Bowie State University students who used the online mathematics modules prior to enrolling in mathematics courses passed any math course at a higher average rate than students not using modules. Initial results indicate a benefit of using the customized mathematics modules. This pilot project is being continued in spring and summer 2018, and the results for student success in mathematics courses with module use will continue to be tracked and analyzed in fall 2018 and spring 2019.