The Educational Testing Services (ETS) Proficiency Profile assesses four core skill areas—critical thinking, reading, writing, and mathematics. This test was administered in the first part of the spring 2013 semester to junior and senior students in each college. The University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) has participated annually since 2009 in the ETS Proficiency Profile as part of participation in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA). This test assists UCO in measuring the overall effectiveness of the core curriculum.

In 2013, there were 474 students who took this test; 322 were senior students having completed more than 90 semester credit hours. Testing was coordinated so that there was statistically significant representation between the five undergraduate colleges: College of Business Administration (CBA); College of Education and Professional Studies (CEPS); College of Fine Arts and Design (CFAD); College of Liberal Arts (CLA); College of Mathematics and Science (CMS).

The overall mean test score was 445. Among senior students this score was 450. One population of concern for UCO has been transfer students. Often, blame for low general education test scores falls on these students. Using the data since 2009, this hypothesis cannot be supported. Seen in the chart to the right, it is students who have transferred the fewest hours who have the lowest scores in each subject area.

With one exception, there was no significant variation in score among different demographics of the population. The one exception is between students whose primary language is English and students for whom English is not his/her first language. Students who speak English as their primary language achieved a mean score of 446, whereas students who did not speak English as their primary language had an average score of 442. One cause of this discrepancy may be that the test requires students to read a large amount of English text in a timed format.
Proficiency

ETS’ proficiency benchmarks are the primary feature of this test. ETS identifies levels of proficiency in reading, writing, and mathematics. Historically, there has been little change in the proficiency of UCO students. The percentage of students proficient at the highest levels can be seen in the chart to the right. Below this chart is a chart showing the differences in proficiency by college. One difference to notice is that students in the College of Mathematics and Science have the highest percentage of proficient students in writing and critical thinking and that the College of Business Administration students have the highest percentage of proficiency in mathematics.

Could this data be relevant to your work?

This report highlights several findings that the Office of Institutional Assessment thought might be of interest to you. Sometimes the data is much more meaningful if the responses are disaggregated to reveal contrasts or patterns among different categories of students or over time. Please let us know if you want us to create a report for you that reflects your specific interests. If you are unsure how the data could be helpful to you, the Institutional Assessment staff will work with you to clarify the parameters of a useful report. Please call or send us an e-mail; we welcome working with you to use the data to help us understand and improve UCO.