

## Learning Assessment Examples

### **1. ETS Major Field Test – History Chair - History**

Description of Assessment: The Major Field Tests are outcomes assessments designed to measure the basic knowledge and understanding achieved by students in a major field of study.

Analysis of Results: Graduating History majors took the Educational Testing Service Major Field Test in History while enrolled in HIST 498 Senior Seminar. The test is divided into three subsets as follows: Subset 1 United States History; Subset 2 European History; Subset 3 Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The total average test score for CCU history majors was slightly higher than that attained by history majors nationally, with a CCU test average of 145.13 and the national average at 144.56. Coastal's male students scored higher in each subset than males nationally, ranging from 1.08 to 2.75 higher depending on subset score assessed, but CCU's female history majors scored lower than females nationally in two of the three subsets (Chart 1). CCU's women students scored best in subset 3, Africa, Asia, and Latin America and worst in subset 1 United States History, a range of four points. There was no more than a 1.25 point deviation among CCU's male students for the three subsets. Test results show that Coastal students (male and female combined) exceeded minimally national averages for content knowledge in all three content subsets. These scores demonstrate that content instruction in the Department of History compares favorably to that offered in universities and colleges nationally.

#### **Chart 1 Department of History Exit Exam ETS Major Field Test (History) Academic Year 2009/10**

(by gender, national and CCU comparison)

	<b>National Scores</b>				<b>Coastal Carolina</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Combined Average</b>		<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Combined Average</b>
<b>Subset 1 (US History)</b>	<b>45.45</b>	<b>42.79</b>	<b>44.12</b>		<b>48.25</b>	<b>40.50</b>	<b>44.38</b>
<b>Subset 2 (European History)</b>	<b>46.42</b>	<b>43.60</b>	<b>45.01</b>		<b>48.00</b>	<b>42.75</b>	<b>45.38</b>
<b>Subset 3 (Africa, Asia, Latin America)</b>	<b>47.92</b>	<b>43.45</b>	<b>45.69</b>		<b>49.00</b>	<b>44.25</b>	<b>46.63</b>
<b>Total Subset Average</b>	<b>46.60</b>	<b>43.28</b>	<b>44.94</b>		<b>48.42</b>	<b>42.50</b>	<b>45.46</b>
<b>Total Test Score</b>	<b>146.33</b>	<b>142.78</b>	<b>144.56</b>		<b>148.75</b>	<b>141.50</b>	<b>145.13</b>

## 1. ETS Major Field Test – History (Cont.)

Use of Assessment Results for Continuous Improvement: The ETS Major Field Test (MFT) for History is no longer available to universities with the closing of the 2009/10 academic year. In Spring 2010 faculty in the Department of History discussed briefly the advantages of securing another nationally administered exam over an in-house, department generated test and concluded that it would serve the department better to locate a nationally-given test to replace the ETS MFT. An exam similar to the MFT would allow CCU to measure its students and its academic program against history majors and departments nationwide. In fall 2010 the department will receive and review a sample of the Academic Content Assessment Test (ACAT) and, if considered by the department to be a suitable replacement, adopt the ACAT test in history as the department's standard exit exam, effective fall 2010. If adopted by this department, the ACAT will compare CCU history majors with scores from 500 other universities and colleges nationwide, two of which are current CCU peer institutions and two others are located within South Carolina. The test will cover ten subject areas, four based on European History, five based on United States History, and one based on Latin American History. Missing from the ACAT at this time is a test section that covers Asian History and African History, two areas previously tested by the ETS MFT. Given this test deficiency, the Department will need to consider seriously whether or not to adopt the ACAT and, if adopted, how to approach department assessment of Asian and African history. Beyond test replacement, the Department should begin to consider seriously the disparity in scores between male and female history majors at CCU and consider strategies that will allow student average scores to surpass the fifty percent mark.

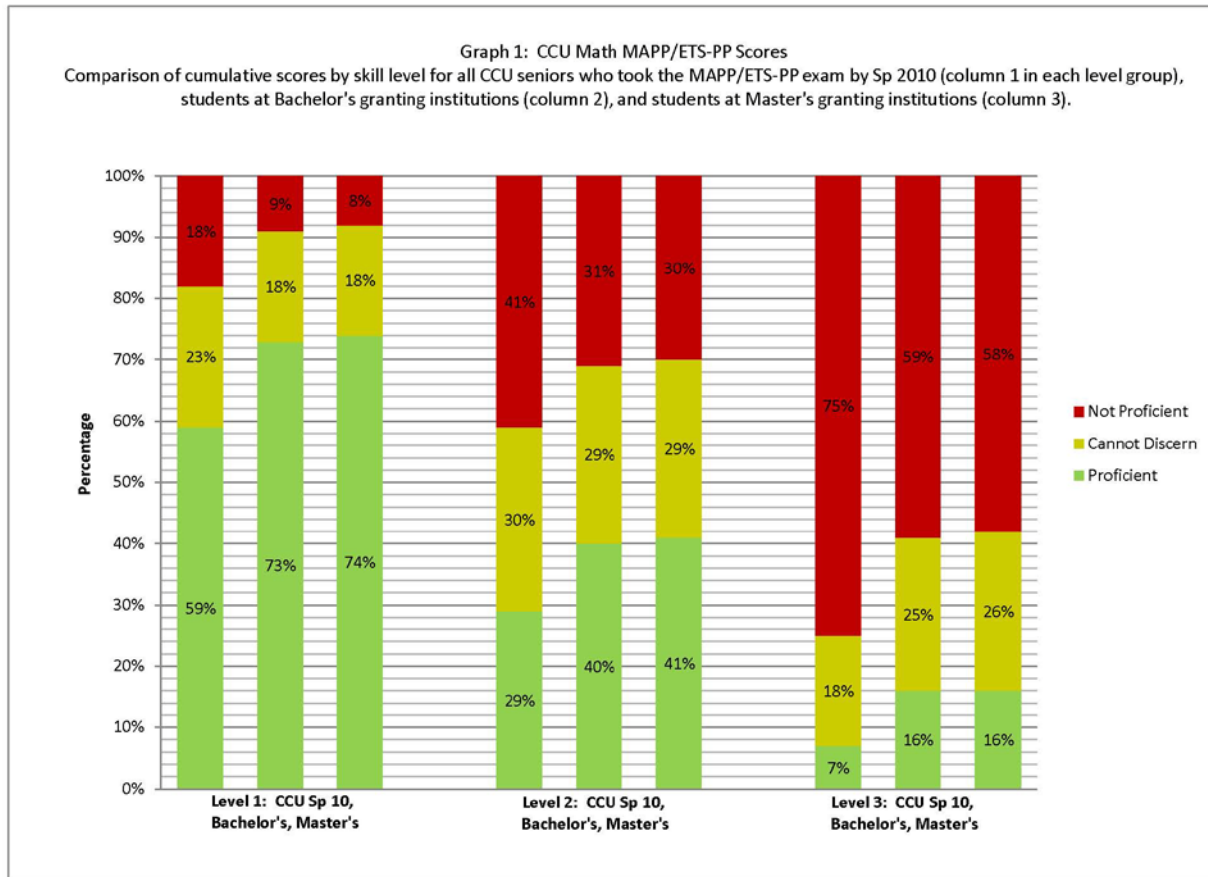
## 2. Core Curriculum/Educational Testing Services Proficiency Profile (ETSPP)

### Director of the Core Curriculum

Description of Assessment: The ETSPP is a general education exam that measures student proficiency in several core areas including math. The ETSPP exam assesses proficiency at three distinct levels. We will use the students' performance on Level 2 to evaluate this student learning outcome. Level 2 consists of word problems, simplification of algebraic expressions, interpretations of graphs, and questions involving sets. Each of these topics use quantitative problem solving skills so proficiency at Level 2 is a valid measure for the student learning outcome.

Analysis of Results: Coastal student ETSPP scores were collected for a four-year time period (SP 07, SP08, SP09, and SP 10). Student performance is measured for three Math skills levels to be either proficient or not proficient, or the test is unable to discern proficiency. Cumulative data for all CCU students (N=1394) was considered. For Math Level 1

performance we find that 59% of our students are proficient, and 18% are not proficient. A majority of our students are demonstrating proficiency at this outcome. However, we can compare this to national averages; for bachelor's granting institutions, 73% of students are proficient and 9% of students are not proficient, while for master's granting institutions, 74% of students are proficient and 8% are not proficient (Graph 1). When compared to both those measures, our students are underperforming.



Use of Assessment Results for Continuous Improvement: The data will be shared with the Math Department. One difficulty with analyzing this core goal is establishing criteria for success. After the Math Faculty has had an opportunity to review the data and to determine appropriate criteria for this goal, we will be in a position to develop strategies to improving outcomes in this goal. Additionally, because the assessment is given at the end of the academic career, and not at the time a course is taken, it is difficult to connect these assessment results back to particular curricular changes.