

Fall 2006 ETS Major Field Test in Business Results

This brief report describes how well last-semester seniors performed on the Educational Testing Service (ETS) Major Field Test in Business during the 2006 fall semester.

Background

The Major Field Test has entirely replaced the CSU-Business Assessment Test (BAT) that was given in the capstone course since the 2004 fall semester. The CSU-BAT was designed and administered by business faculty at CSULB. The exam is inexpensive and it allowed us to benchmark our performance against other CSU business schools. However, unlike the Major Field Test, the CSU-BAT does not allow us to benchmark our performance against business schools nationally and BAT questions have not been extensively tested for validity or reliability.

Exam Description

The exam contains 120 multiple-choice questions and is designed to be administered in a two-hour class period. The questions cover the following subject areas: accounting, economics, management, quantitative business analysis, information systems, finance, marketing, legal and social environment, and international issues.¹

More than 500 colleges and universities use the ETS Major Field Test in Business to measure the basic knowledge and understanding achieved by their senior undergraduates. Our participation provides an appropriate benchmark to gauge our student performance against the national average. We will receive this comparison data from ETS in mid-summer 2007.

Overall Results

Table 1 describes the overall performance of 84 students who took the Major Field Test during the 2006 fall semester. Students' total scores are reported on a scale of 120 to 200.

Table 1. Major Field Test Summary Results

Scaled Score Range	Number of Scores in Range	Percent of Scores Below Range
180 - 200	0	100
165 - 179	8	90
160 - 164	10	78
155 - 159	6	70
150 - 154	13	54
145 - 149	13	38
140 - 144	10	26
135 - 139	12	11
120 - 134	9	0
Mean		149
St dev		13
Sample size		81*

*Note: three students answered less than half the questions, so their scores are excluded from the frequency distribution.

¹ About 12 percent of the "international issues" questions overlap and are drawn from accounting, economics, finance, management, marketing, and legal and regulatory environment.

The mean score is 149 with roughly 80 percent of the students' scores falling between 135 and 164. The high score was 179 and the low was 120.

A breakdown of student performance by subject area is provided in Table 2. Students score highest on information systems, management, and finance questions (53 to 54 percent correct) and lowest on quantitative business analysis, legal and social environment, and marketing questions (43 to 45 percent correct).

The findings with respect to information systems and quantitative business analysis (which includes statistics) largely mirrors results from our prior business tests. For example, students scored highest on information systems questions (54 percent correct) and lowest on statistics questions (30 percent correct) when taking the fall 2005 CSU-BAT.

Table 2. Mean Scores by Subject Area

Subject Area	Percent Correct
Accounting	50
Economics	47
Management	53
Quantitative Business Analysis	43
Finance	53
Marketing	45
Legal and Social Environment	44
Information Systems	54
International Issues	48
Sample size	81