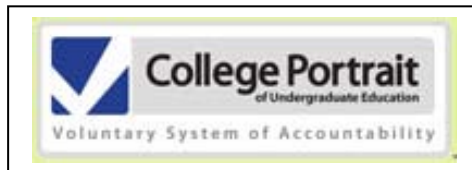


## Accountability in New Mexico

There are three major accountability requirements for institutions of higher education: (1) membership in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA), (2) assessment reporting on general education courses (courses in the common transferrable core), and (3) reporting required by the Accountability in Government Act. This **DataWave** will provide some information about all three of these and a report on spring semester ICAT testing.

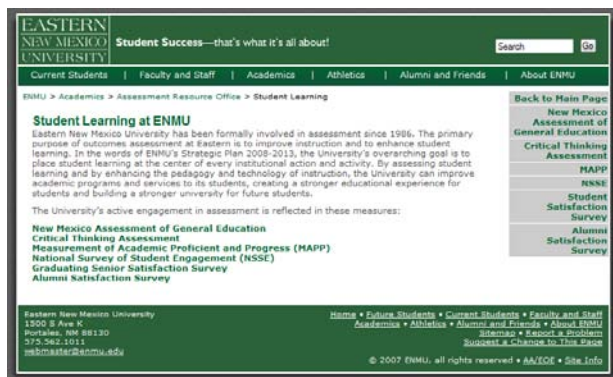


**Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA)** ■ As described in an earlier **DataWave**, all four-year universities in New Mexico have elected to participate in the VSA program, a joint project of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AACSC) and the Association of Public and Land-Grant

Universities (A•P•L•U). The purpose of the VSA is to measure educational outcomes and identify effective educational practices and institutions. The VSA College Portraits also compile information about colleges and universities in an accessible, understandable and comparable way. View ENMU's "portrait" at <http://www.collegeportraits.org/NM/ENMU>.

As part of VSA reporting, ENMU will be administering the MAPP test to 200 freshmen this fall and 200 seniors this spring. This testing, required every three years, will be one VSA reporting or accountability measure. Another will be the reporting of selected results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). These assessments are required on three-year rotations, though institutions are encouraged to post additional assessments in their College Portrait. ENMU will stagger the administration of these tests, with MAPP testing in 2009-2010 and the NSSE survey in spring 2011.

**State-Wide General Education Assessment Reporting** ■ Eastern New Mexico University, along with all other 2-year and 4-year New Mexico institutions, is required to report on assessments of student learning in general education courses that transfer across the state. The rotation of assessments is left to the institutions, and reports are monitored by a faculty committee drawn from all institutions. This committee reports its findings to the HED, which posts the assessments on their web pages. The first required reporting cycle was fall 2008, and ENMU's results were judged appropriate measures of student learning. ENMU's results are posted on the assessment webpage: <http://www.enmu.edu/academics/assessment/student-learning/index.shtml>. Programs that completed assessments last fall and spring will be reporting in October 2009.



### Rotation for General Education Assessment 2009-2010

According to the rotation set up with the General Education Committee and the Assessment Committee, these courses will conduct classroom-based assessments this fall and spring. If for any reason these classes cannot be assessed during their listed semester, please notify the Office of Planning and Analysis as soon as possible.

Fall 2009		Spring 2010	
ANTH 243	MUS 113B	BIOL 152	GEOL 152
BIOL 214	PHYS 151	ECON 222	HIST 203
CHEM 151	PHIL 201	ENG 201B	MATH 120
COMM 101	PSCI 102	FR 102	PHYS 202
ENG 211	THTR 111		PHIL 202

**Reporting for the Accountability in Government Act** ■ In 1999, the New Mexico Legislature enacted the Accountability in Government Act, which required all state agencies to implement performance-based budgeting by fiscal year 2004. Four-year universities report on several common measures and additional, institution-specific measures.

#### Common Measure 1 (reported by all 4-year NM universities)

##### ENMU Access Measure -- Number/percent of Hispanic first-year students enrolled.

Maintaining low-cost tuition and high-quality student services certainly contribute to access. This accountability measure, however, demonstrates how universities provide access to New Mexico's under-represented groups. ENMU seeks to recruit a freshman class that reflects the population of its region. Hispanics make up 38% of the University's service area.

Access Measure		Fall 05	Fall 06	Fall 07	Fall 08	Fall 09
Number and percent of Hispanic first-year students enrolled.	Target	220	220	225	200	200
	Actual	210	219	188	170	
	Percent	36.0	34.0	32.6	29.6	

Please note that this measure is changing slightly. We will now be reporting on percent of Hispanic degree-seeking undergraduates. In fall, 2008, Hispanic represented 30.4% of the freshmen class and 28% of all undergraduate students.

#### Common Measure 2 Retention -- Percent of first-time, full-time degree-seeking ENMU students enrolled 3<sup>rd</sup> semester.

This common measure shows that universities are working to help students persist (and therefore succeed) in college. The percent of students beginning as first-time, full-time freshmen who persist to fall semester of their sophomore year is also a federal reporting measure. The benchmark is the retention rate of similarly-sized institutions with average ACT scores less than 21 that participate in the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE) based at the University of Oklahoma. Persistence has been a major initiative on campus. While ENMU lags behind its peers (who have an average persistence rate of 68% fall-to-fall retention), retention numbers are now stable and may soon rise.

Retention Measure		Fall 05-06	Fall 06-07	Fall 07-08	Fall 08-09
Percent of first-time, full-time degree-seeking students enrolled 3 <sup>rd</sup> semester	Target	62.5	60.0	60.0	61.0
	Actual	52.4	59.5	59.5	
CSRDE Benchmark		65.5	64.8	67.9	

**Common Measure 3, Completion -- Percent of first-time, full-time freshmen completing their academic program within six years.**

Today's students take longer to complete their education and often finish at different institutions than where they started college, so this measure is only a small measure of the job that universities do. However, like 3<sup>rd</sup> semester retention, this is a federal reporting requirement. While ENMU lags behind CSRDE peers, advising initiatives and other student services are slowly increasing completion rates.

Completion Measure		Fall 00– Sum 06	Fall 01– Sum 07	Fall 02 – Sum 08	Fall 03– Sum 09	Fall 04- Sum 10
Percent of first-time, full-time freshmen completing their program within six years	Target	32.0	32.5	33.0	33	33.5
	Actual	28.6	32.5	28.5		
CSRDE Benchmark		34.9	33.6	32.6	36.6	



**Other Measures, and Some Proposed Changes**

In addition to the access, persistence and completion measures discussed above, ENMU also reports number of students transferring to ENMU, amount of external grant dollars secured during the year, number of internet courses offered, and student satisfaction percentages.

The New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration and the Legislative Finance Committee have requested that all universities review their accountability measures in three areas: (1) relevance, significance, and rigor of measures, (2) the addition of measures that reflect New Mexico's participation in VSA, and (3) the addition of measures that might reflect student learning success. This will be a major initiative in the coming year.

Some possible changes being discussed are these:

- ✓ Add a Completion Measure to track graduation rate of students who complete their degree at another institution within six years of enrollment
- ✓ Add a student learning outcomes measure that seniors will show a gain (over freshmen) on the MAPP test consistent with the national average gain of MAPP test takers
- ✓ Add a student engagement outcome that reports number of students involved in research with faculty members, internships, or practicum as part of their educational experience.

These measures will be topics for faculty discussion, for the Assessment Committee and other committees in the coming year. Your comments and suggestions are invited!



**Reminder: Assessment Day Wednesday, April 7, 2010.** We will need the support of the entire campus when we test 200+ seniors as part of the VSA reporting!

## Critical Thinking Test

Last April 2008 and this spring, 2009, over 80 ENMU juniors took the Assessment of Critical Thinking (ICAT) exam. The ICAT, administered in ENMU computer labs or, for distance students, online, asks students to read an article, answer several questions about the article that assess the ability to analyze argument and data, and then to write an essay that presents the student's position on the topic. Exams are scored by graduate students trained to use the ICAT rubric.



### Scoring Rubric

	Inadequate (1)	Marginal (2)	Successful (3)	Exemplary (4)
<b>Thesis and Support</b>	No thesis, little specific support	Thesis, but little support.	Thesis and adequate support for it.	Strong thesis, effectively supported.
<b>Organization and Development</b>	May be only one ¶; no elaboration (development) of argument.	Multiple ¶s, organization evident (beginning, middle, end), but marred by repetition or lack of clarity	Multiple ¶s, clear organization (topic sentences), ideas are developed clearly.	¶s demonstrate clear sequence of ideas and argument.
<b>Level of Critical Analysis</b>	Does not propose a thoughtful solution. May re-state the facts as the essay's evidence.	Solution is proposed, but may not be viable; may re-state facts as the essay's evidence	Solution is viable or, if no solution possible, solid discussion provided.	Solution addresses problem creatively or very competently.
<b>Grammar and Style</b>	Numerous, distracting errors.	Some errors, a few are distracting	No distracting errors.	Prose is well-written, correct, effective.

Spring 2009			Spring 2008	
Ranking	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Inadequate	4	4.6%	0	0.0%
Marginal	28	32.2%	26	30.6%
Successful	39	44.8%	48	56.5%
Exemplary	16	18.4%	11	12.9%

Scoring Rubric	
Inadequate	0-8
Marginal	9-16
Successful	17-24
Exemplary	25-32

Average	2009	2008
Short Answer	17.20	17.29
Essay	19.13	19.28
Total	36.33	36.57

Results for the spring essay exam showed a decline from last year's 69% "successful" or "exemplary" essay, but a larger percent and a larger number of students wrote "exemplary" essays in 2009 than in 2008. Performance on the short answer questions declined slightly from 2008 but the students' average both years was a "successful" score.

For more information or comments on any part of this issue of *DataWave*, please contact the Office for Planning and Analysis, Station 2, at 575-562-2315.