Family and Consumer Sciences

STUDENT ASSESSMENT BROCHURE

College of Agricultural, Life and Natural Sciences
Alabama A&M University
Normal, Alabama
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FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES
STUDENT ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION
In recognition of the need to provide for quality assurance of the teaching/learning process at various levels and to ensure the graduation of competent professionals, Family and Consumer Sciences has implemented a comprehensive student assessment program. The student assessment program is based on a diagnostic, prescriptive, teaching/learning process with appropriate follow-up, follow-through, and support services. The development of such a student assessment program stems from well-defined student outcomes (knowledge and skills) for each concentration offered in Family and Consumer Sciences. The competencies identify the skills and knowledge necessary for meaningful progress through three levels of learning (entrance, mid-level, and exit). As a result, accountability is enhanced, and a student is graduated who has met the required 70% quality and competence level of the department.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES
The student assessment program is designed to strengthen the academic programs in Family and Consumer Sciences and to ensure the preparation of competent professionals for jobs in Family and Consumer Sciences and related fields. The program provides data necessary to adequately implement or realign programs to meet varying student needs. It includes three assessment levels (entry, mid, and exit) which are designed to achieve the following purposes:

1. Provide a system of quality control and accountability at specifically identified points in the teaching/learning process, to determine whether each student is achieving the desired knowledge and skills necessary for academic and personal progress, as well as competency for professional practice.
2. Acquire evidence needed as a basis for improving student learning and the teaching content and instructional strategies used by faculty.

The objectives of the assessment program are to:
1. assess and monitor the student learning outcomes (knowledge and skills) of students at three levels of academic preparation;
2. implement a system of enhancement and remediation activities designed to assist students with difficulties as well as to supplement the activities of average students;
3. identify the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching/learning process.

ASSESSMENT LEVELS
ENTRY LEVEL ASSESSMENT
The Entry level evaluation is the initial step of the total assessment program. Each student with a concentration in any of the areas offered in Family and Consumer Sciences is administered a three-part evaluation instrument during the freshman year. The initial evaluation is designed to:

1. assess the entry knowledge of the student regarding the general purpose of the profession;
2. Assess specific entry level knowledge and skills related to the student’s identified major; and
3. determine personal qualities and characteristics, interests, hobbies, and general communication skills of each student.

Assessment results are used to identify necessary and meaningful support services for each student (i.e., tutorial services, communication skills, human relationship skills).

MID-LEVEL ASSESSMENT
The Mid-level evaluation is the second step in the assessment program. Strengths and weaknesses are identified and the appropriate enhancement and remediation activities are implemented. The purpose of the mid-level evaluation is to:

1. determine the overall performance level of students in foundation and support courses;
provide a database for the evaluation of lower division courses as these relate to instruction, course content, and related activities; and
2. determine the student’s level of readiness to handle upper level courses.

EXIT ASSESSMENT
The Exit evaluation is the third and final step of the assessment program. Students are administered a comprehensive examination based on the overall stated competencies for each program. The purpose of the exit assessment is to provide:

1. a comprehensive evaluation of each student’s readiness for the world of work;
2. the final opportunity to determine strengths and weaknesses of each student; and
3. a database that can be utilized in overall program assessment, to include specific subject matter, instructional approaches and techniques, course content, remediation and enhancement activities, and related support services.
ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

1. All students majoring in Family and Consumer Sciences (Apparel, Merchandising, and Design; Human Development and Family Studies; Family and Consumer Sciences Education; Nutrition and Hospitality Management) are required to take the Entrance, Mid-Level and Exit Assessments.

2. Each student must register for the Mid-Level and Exit Assessment one month prior to the examination date. The registration process includes the completion of an application, which must be secured from the student’s advisor. (The time frame discussed in this brochure should be a guideline for determining when to register for the Mid-Level and Exit Assessments.)

3. Completion of the first three semesters of the planned degree program and enrollment in the prescribed courses for the second semester of the sophomore year are required before taking the Mid-Level Assessment.

4. The student must take the mid-level exam after completing sophomore courses in the major concentration and a majority of general core courses. The exam must be passed or successful progress must be demonstrated in the outcomes associated with the exam before the student can:
   a) begin taking upper level courses related to areas of weakness identified by the assessment exam;
   b) begin his/her formal internship; or
   c) take the exit exam.

5. Enrollment in the first semester of the senior year is a requirement to take the Exit Assessment.

6. Both the Mid-Level and Exit Assessment must be completed with a score of seventy or above.

7. In the event of a failure on the Exit Assessment, the student should report to his/her advisor to address proper enhancement/remediation strategies needed to support identified deficiencies. When these areas have been fully addressed, the student may then schedule for a second administration of the examination.

ENHANCEMENT AND REMEDIATION STRATEGIES

1. Each student who takes the exam will receive a letter from the Area Coordinator (see sample included) within two weeks after the exam, stating his/her pass or fail status, including score. Students failing the exam will also be notified of their weaknesses. This letter will ask those who fail to arrange a conference with their advisor within the next week. A copy of the letter will be forwarded to the Chairperson, and one copy will be placed in the student’s folder.

2. The advisor and/or a committee will develop with the student the steps to be taken to address weak competency areas. These steps and a dated schedule will be entered on the Competency Enhancement Form.

3. To address deficiencies identified on the entrance exam the student will:
   a) design competency improvement sessions through FCS 101;
   b) use extra hours in the computer lab to improve basic skills; and/or
   c) work through basic skills and deficiencies, using appropriate remediation materials.

4. The methods of remediation for either the mid-level or exit assessment will be adapted to the student but will include modules developed by each area based on the competencies outlined for the mid and exit levels. A variety of the following techniques may be used:
   a) programmed learning;
   b) review of the professor's class notes;
   c) computer programs;
   d) videos;
   e) tutorial sessions;
   f) reading assignments;
   g) peer round table discussions, stimulations, etc.;
   h) special problems classes.
ASSESSMENT TIME FRAME

1. ENTRANCE ASSESSMENT
   As a rule, the entrance assessment is administered to new students (freshmen and transfers) during the second week of the fall or spring semester in the Introduction to the Profession class.

2. MID LEVEL ASSESSMENT
   The mid-level assessment may be taken the second semester of the sophomore year. The assessment is administered in concert with the assessment schedule.

3. EXIT ASSESSMENT
   The exit assessment is administered to seniors graduating in May and December in concert with the assessment schedule below.

4. SCORING OF ASSESSMENT
   The evaluation instruments for all assessment levels must be scored by each test area and the results provided to advisors, students and the Departmental Chairperson within two weeks after the tests have been administered.

5. ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE
   Unless otherwise notified:
   a) The entry assessment is administered during the second week of class of fall and spring semester.
   b) The Mid-level and Exit assessments are administered the second Friday of November and April of each year.
   c) Students will receive written notification of the examination results within two weeks after each examination period.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. Each student will be provided a departmental calendar of events which will Include the assessment exam dates.

2. The Area Coordinator will provide the Chairperson with a list of those students who are eligible for the assessment at Mid and Exit levels by the beginning of the semester (September or January).

3. The Chairperson will send the student an official letter of notification.

4. Each student who is contacted must register for the Mid-Level and Exit Assessment by completing the application form included in the notification letter.

5. The application form must be returned to the main office of the Family and Consumer Sciences Department. The advisor and area coordinator will sign the form and process a copy for the chair of the Graduate/Undergraduate Affairs Committee.

6. The Mid-level and Exit assessment will be given on the second Friday of November and April from 5:00-7:00 p.m.

7. Each student is expected to report to the specific room identified on the designated date, at least five minutes prior to the exam time. No students will be allowed to begin the exam if he/she is late unless prior arrangements have been made with the Graduate/Undergraduate Affairs Committee.

8. If a student misses the exam without a prior approved excuse, the student must wait until the next semester to take the exam. If the student has arranged beforehand via the application form to take the exam at a later date, the schedule will be individually arranged.
APPLICATION FORM
For Assessment Exams

Name: ________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________
____________________________________________________

Telephone: ______________ Email: _______________________

Exam to be taken: Exit Level ___ Mid Level ___

Major Courses completed: (May attach copy of transcript with courses identified or list courses below).
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

__________________________
Signed: ______________________ Date: ______________

Student Number: ____________________________

Advisor’s Signature: ______________________ Date: _________

Return to the Office of:
Family and Consumer Sciences
104 Carver Complex-Hobson Wing

Sample Passing Letter

Dear __________________:

Congratulations! We have completed the scoring of the recently administered _______ exam. We are happy to inform you that you have successfully passed the exam with a score of _____.

Please make an appointment for a conference with your advisor to discuss your results. During this conference, your strengths and weaknesses will be discussed and possible steps for improvement, if needed, will be suggested.

Again congratulations! We are proud of your progress.

__________________________
Coordinator

__________________________
Chairperson
Sample Failure Letter

Dear __________________________;

We have completed the scoring of the recently administered ____________ exam. Your score was ____. As you know, you must receive a score of 70 to pass the exam.

To ensure your success for the next test administration, please schedule an appointment to see your advisor within the next week. During your scheduled conference, your advisor will discuss your area of weakness and outline steps to assist you in improving your score.

You must pass this exam! Please refer to the Student Assessment Brochure for clarification of the penalties associated with failing the exam.

Your advisor, who has been notified of your score, is looking forward to your conference. Remember, we are concerned about your progress and will do our part to assist you in completing this requirement.

Coordinator

Chairperson

Family and Consumer Sciences
Student Assessment
Competency/Enhancement Form

Name: __________________________ Major: ____________

Address: ___________________________________________

Date Taken: ____________ Date to be retaken: __________

Test Level: Mid-Level____ Exit Level____ Score____

Weakness(es):
________________________________________________

Competencies to be addressed:
________________________________________________

Procedure Date to be completed

________________________________________________

Student’s Signature ____________ Date ____________

Advisor’s Signature ____________ Date ____________

Outlined Procedures completed: ______Yes ______No

Advisor’s Signature: __________________________ Date: __________