

Rhode Island College
Elementary Education Undergraduate Program Review

Section IV Evidence for Meeting Standards

Assessment 1: Licensure assessment, or other content-based assessment

Program Requirements

1. **Praxis 1: Pre-Professional Skills Test – Basic Skills (or SAT® Reading and Mathematics)**
 2. Praxis II: Elementary Education Content Knowledge
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Program Requirement 1 – Praxis 1: Pre-Professional Skills Test – Basic Skills (Required for Admission)

Brief Description of the Assessment

The Praxis I Pre-Professional Skills Tests (PPST®) measures basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. It is one of the requirements for admissions into the Elementary Education Program. Students may choose to take the test one of two ways, as they are offered a paper and pencil or computer delivered option. Both options pull multiple-choice questions from the same pool and both have an essay requirement in one section of the writing component. The computer option has six more questions in each section but both options have the same breakdown by percentages.

The Rhode Island State Department of Education includes a minimum SAT® score requirement as an option to the PPST® requirement. The SAT® measures reading, mathematics and writing skills. The reading test is multiple choice, the mathematics is multiple choice and some "student-produced response" and the writing portion requires a written essay.

Alignment with ACEI Standards

The PPST® test questions measure basic skills knowledge. The "Reading Test: Measures the ability to understand, analyze and evaluate written messages." The content of this reading test addresses literal and inferential comprehension (ACEI 2.1). The "Mathematics Test: Measures those mathematical skills and concepts that an educated adult might need." The content of this mathematics test includes a broad range: number and operations, algebra, geometry and measurement, and data analysis and probability (ACEI 2.3). The "Writing Test: Assesses the ability to use grammar and language appropriately and to communicate effectively in writing." The writing test requires basic skill usage of grammar and mechanics (ACEI 2.1). <http://www.ets.org/praxis/about/praxisi/content/>

The two accepted SAT® tests, reading and mathematics measure basic skills. The reading portion of this test includes questions that measure knowledge of extended reasoning, literal comprehension and vocabulary in context (ACEI 2.1) The math portion of this test includes questions that measure knowledge of number and operations, algebra, geometry and measurement, and data analysis and probability (ACEI 2.3).

Analysis of the Data Findings

It is imperative that teacher candidates have mastery of basic skills in reading, mathematics and writing. This knowledge is essential to being a successful student at the college level and also critical to delivering content once a classroom teacher. There is no substitute for this requirement and any student who applies to the program with a failing score in any of these three content areas is denied admission.

The Rhode Island State Department of Education set the 170 minimum score (all three tests) for acceptance in the teacher education program (09/28/09). Prior to this decision, the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development set the minimum requirement for admissions at 170 in Mathematics and Reading and 169 in Writing. Some exceptions were made with regard to the minimum score requirement, noted in the range of scores. The Department of Elementary Education Chair made some determinations based on an examination of a broader range of documentation, e.g. grades, Praxis II Content Knowledge. All students applying to the program as of August 20, 2010 must comply with this PPST® score requirement.

The mean scores of the data collected during the last three semesters provides evidence of passing scores for the applicants but it does not provide the clearest picture of the applicants' level of content knowledge. Data for the Spring 2010 applicants shows that 50 % scored at or above 180 on MATH, 50% scored at or above 179 on READING and 50% scored at or above 177 on the WRITING PPST® tests. The Spring 2010 data displays medians that are higher than the previous two semesters.

SAT® data for the state of Rhode Island shows mean scores for 2009 high school graduates at 498 in Reading and 496 in Mathematics. The data also shows that 25% of the test takers scored at or above 570 on both tests. The Department of Elementary Education admissions data shows that whether mean or median, in both cases the applicants scored well, scoring above the state's mean and in the top 25th percentile.

Interpretation of How the Data Provides Evidence for Meeting Standards

The comparison of test scores and closer examination of data shows applicants have a good foundation of basic skills in literacy and mathematics (ACEI 2.1, 2.3). The data provides the Elementary Education Department with the knowledge that the newest group of teacher candidates has the needed content knowledge to begin the teacher preparation program.

Assessment Documentation

Program Requirement 1 – Praxis 1: Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST®) – Basic Skills

	MATH			READING			WRITING		
	mean	range	median	mean	range	median	mean	range	median
Spring 2010 n = 62*	179	170-187	180	178	170-186	179	176	169-185	177
Fall 2009 n = 78	171	165-187	175	177	170-185	177	175	169-188	175
Spring 2009 n = 90	177	170-188	176	176	165-185	176	175	169-183	174

Program Requirement 1 – SAT® Reading and Mathematics

	MATH			VERBAL		
	mean	range	median	mean	range	median
Spring 2010 n = 5*	584	530-640	590	596	560-630	580

*Spring 2010: 67 admits, 62 PPST® results and 5 SAT® results

PPST® Assessment information available at: <http://www.ets.org/praxis/about/praxisi>

SAT Assessment information available at: <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/data-reports-research/sat/data-tables>