Assessment Note

Office of Academic Assessment and Institutional Research Ball State University

AAIR No. MAP-A2-2004

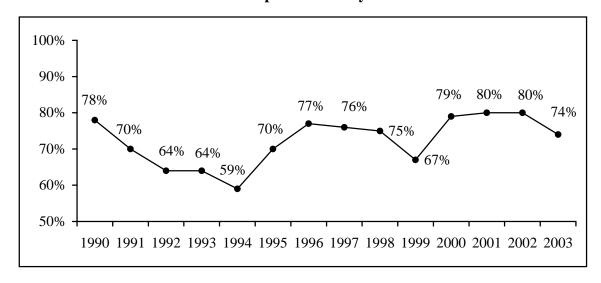
Making Achievement Possible or A Unique MAP to Freshman Success

Every year, Ball State's first time freshmen receive the Making Achievement Possible (MAP) survey. The Making Achievement Possible project is a model for best practices in both assessment and collaboration. The purpose of the project is not only to collect data about our freshman class, but also to generate feedback to freshmen very early in their Ball State careers. This note outlines some of the features of this unique project.

1. Making Achievement Possible is a success because of the collaborative efforts of numerous campus units and many Ball State faculty and staff.

The MAP project is coordinated by a committee that includes Academic Advising, Academic Assessment and Institutional Research, Housing and Residence Life, and the Learning Center. Over the years, these units have worked together to manage all aspects of the project. Because Housing and Residence Life distributes and collects the survey with the help of resident assistants, assistant hall directors, and hall directors, the percentages of students who participate each year are quite high.

MAP Response Rates by Year



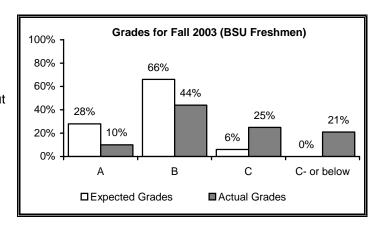
2. Making Achievement Possible provides feedback directly to students.

Each student who completes the survey receives a 6-8 page individualized report along with a list of campus resources. The purpose of the report is to give the student feedback about their goals, plans, expectations, and experiences. For instance, if a student indicates he/she is not attending all of his/her classes, the following feedback is sent to the student:

Your response indicates you may not be attending all of your classes. **Campus research indicates that Ball State students who do not regularly attend classes often experience academic difficulties.** See your professors, academic advisor or residence hall director if you are having difficulties attending all of your classes.

Students are also told that freshmen often overestimate their first semester grades:

As shown on the right, many freshmen overestimate the grades they will receive.
Ninety-five percent of 2003 freshmen thought they would receive an A or B average, but only fifty-seven percent actually received an A or B average. About 19 percent received an average below C which means they were on academic probation.



Students are given suggestions if they are not planning to study enough, if they are uncertain about their major, or if they are experiencing adjustment issues. Overall, the purpose of this report is to give individualized feedback and resource information to students early in the semester when they can still make changes in their behavior.

3. MAP provides information directly to advisors and hall directors.

Not only is information provided to students themselves, reports are also sent to their advisors and hall directors. A number of questions on the survey are early indicators of potential difficulties. Advisors look at social and academic adjustment items to identify problems early. Hall directors follow up with students regarding study hours, grade expectations, social issues, residence hall issues, and unrealistic expectations.

Overall, this project provides us with opportunities to intervene early and affect students' experiences here at Ball State. Please encourage your students to participate in the MAP project!

For additional information about the MAP Project, please contact Sherry Woosley in the Office of Academic Assessment and Institutional Research.