

Session Topic: Placement Test Preparation

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Overview:

Test preparation at Tri-C

- Helping students be prepared for the placement test.
- Required for every new student at the College (approx. 5,000 per year)
- In-person session 90 -120 minutes.
- Between 15 and 30 students each session on average.
- Full Time Tutors offer 4 sessions per day during peak testing periods (early morning through 7:00PM).
- Students are not allowed to bypass test preparation.
- Test prep guides provided to students.
  - General guide – test-taking strategies and placement process
    - Address test anxiety issues. Students must complete packets with sample questions if they opt for self-study (30 minutes)
  - Math packet with sample questions – Full Time Tutor facilitates session (30 minutes)

- English packet with sample questions – FT tutor facilitates (30 minutes)
- Samples taken from COMPASS general site.
- Calculator instructions covered as well.

### What is working well?

- Well-received by most
- 9% decrease in # testing at lowest math with increase in mid-upper math levels.
- 7% decrease in #testing at lowest English with increase as well in upper levels.

### What are the challenges?

- Retests: CCC students are eligible for immediate retest.
- Refer them to resources in the guides prior to retesting.
- Making it mandatory – Preparation is not a barrier, but a resource. Being on campus is a good thing for incoming students.
- Overrides possible on some campuses.
- Gaining buy-in from institution. Dean and faculty buy-in needed first.

## How Cuyahoga will move forward?

- Content review is brief, but will be expanded in future.
- Will develop a virtual option perhaps with video and samples.
- Our bridge course is a better mechanism for understanding writing levels than writing sample. Bridge success will place students into next course.
- How to gain buy-in from administrators - stress outcomes over intake. We did not see a decrease in enrollment from mandatory test preparation.
- Track/document student success trends.

## What would be helpful statewide – student success center – to help with placement process?

- Funding is tight – They could provide test prep materials on the State level (best practices / guide). Colleges can customize from that template.
  - o If this could be online, even better.
  - o COMPASS and ACCUPLACER resources first.
- Workforce Development Division needs – Many of the students must still take COMPASS prior to credit courses. Providing preparation to those students would help as well.
  - o Testing skills
  - o Content material

- Computer skills
- Run test sessions in classroom with computer.
- Stress what Dev. Ed. costs student prior to testing. Bypass courses, save money, win-win. CCC covers possible cost savings briefly.

#### Other Colleges:

- Kelly @ Clark State - Question as to whether COMPASS writing is appropriate. Perhaps use writing sample? CCC uses bridge courses as predictor.
- Marsha AmeriCorps Member @ Tri-C. Breakdown of sessions requested - 20-30 minutes general test strategies, 30 minutes math, 30 minutes English.
  - Cuyahoga ABLE office created BOOST program for Math for some students in Math 0910. Also offered for many Math 0910 students if they choose (based on counseling session and student choice).
- Cheryl – Marion Technical College
  - Quick Start Grant – Credit-based
    - Spring 2013 sessions – three months, twice each week.
  - Transition classes – open to anyone
  - Starts 2-3 weeks after term begins.
  - Orientation, study skills, career, etc.

- Improving basic skills writing and math
- GED resources for math provided.
- General ABLÉ – Goal is to help everyone who is not at HS proficiency level (TABÉ score used). – Free to students and non-credit.
- James Blend, Southern State – Can earn college credit along with ABLÉ program.
  - Developing placement tests prep program
  - \$15 fee for retests.
- Amanda – Washington State-
  - One-stop services are changing – not the best level of service.
  - Moving toward test preparation – not mandatory.
  - Benefits – expectation of coming to campus.
  - Use test packets and distributed to students.
  - Use ACT / COMPAS concordance accept ACT scores.
  - Testing limits are being investigated. Perhaps fee-based for repeat testing.
- Stark State – Two reading courses. Can retest in COMPASS to bypass second reading course.
  - Offered in second tier reading course as well.
- Dawn – Eastern Gateway
  - Data driven approach – not necessary to offer reading along with writing.

- Does not administer reading test.
- Writing sample week one of class. Overrides possible. Student success coaches used.