

IV. Evaluation

1. What changes were made to the program in the last year based on the recommendations made by the last program review?

- Introduced Credit-Accuplacer ESL
- Assisted in validation of the Non-Credit ESL test (CELSA)
- Acquired diagnostic testing
- Purchased a site license for online practice tests available free to our students
- Provided numerous additional study and resource links for test preparation
- Made testing reference books available at both campus libraries
- Conducted test prep workshops with review tips to prepare for the placement test(s)

2. What if any were the barriers/constraints the program faced when implementing those changes?

Some of the services we acquired in the past year had a monetary cost, so our main challenge was budgetary. We were able to avail ourselves of some Student Success Initiative funding to make this happen.

3. Based on data, how effective was the change in improving program performance in student retention, success, and progress?

We can now give the Credit ESL test to students anytime, year-round. Prior to this, the test was only given in a limited number of workshops clustered around the start of a new semester. This flexibility helps our ESL students who now can test whenever the ATC is open. Our diagnostic tests may help students succeed by improving their placement test scores. With the diagnostic tests in 2014, the ATC participated in the college's first-ever Summer Bridge program, designed to help students improve their test scores through intensive subject review. The Bridge program was very successful. Plans are to expand the number of Summer Bridge sessions offered this summer and, by extension, increase the number of students who may participate.

4. What was learned from these changes that would facilitate future program improvements?

- Students who take the Credit-ESL test follow a consistent seasonal pattern similar to students who take our regular English and math placement tests. Establishing a greater testing presence at the IVC campus will provide a valuable testing venue for our Credit ESL students. For greater overall staff efficiency, we recommend maintaining regular office hours during slower testing periods throughout the year, and focus extra testing days/extended hours primarily on the busy seasonal periods prior to (and just after) the start of a new school term.
- By self-identification, students who intensively review the subject matter before testing tend to get placement results they are more satisfied with. However, a student must take the initiative and actually utilize these resources, and at this point study review is voluntary. We can “strongly advise” prior review but nothing more. We recommend it become a requirement that students who schedule retests show proof they used the practice test site and/or have done a significant amount of subject review prior to their second try. Creating official policies restricting the amount and frequency of placement testing will better help students recognize the value of preparation in advance of taking the placement test.
- The better prepared students become, the more they know their limitations and understand what actions are necessary to proactively improve. We offer diagnostic tests in math and English to help students discover weak areas in their learning. Once revealed, other study resources we provide may continue the re-learning process, leading to an optimal retest outcome of higher placement. Students already enrolled in a Math or English class can avail themselves of free tutoring services from our Tutoring and Learning Center (TLC) and/or the Online Writing Center (OWC).
- To prevent cheating to the greatest extent possible, the Assessment & Testing Center now requires all backpacks, books, purses, phones, electronic devices, etc. to be left in a special storage area next to the Testing office. Students are to have nothing on or near their desk other than pencil and scratch paper.

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Respectfully submitted,
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