



Information and Decision Making

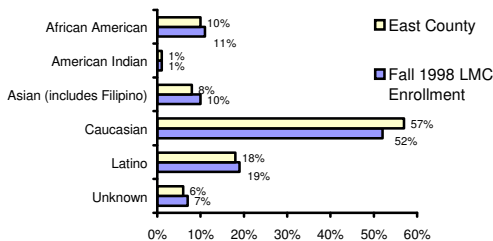
More and more colleges and universities are using data for planning and decision making. At Los Medanos College, college personnel are finding that information has been useful for departmental planning, grant writing, gauging the progress of their programs, planning for new strategies, etc. Data has been important in Master Planning, Program Review, Unit Planning, and for other college-wide planning, accountability and decision-making efforts. In this issue of *INSIGHTS*, some *Institutional Effectiveness* indicators, community projections, and findings of the CPT validation cut scores are presented. The *Institutional Effectiveness* study and the latest community demographic projections are being used as a resource for strategic planning 2000.

Institutional Effectiveness 2000: A Brief Summary

Once a year, the Research Office publishes an Institutional Effectiveness report for LMC. The report displays indicators that gauge the progress of the college. Institutional Effectiveness can be defined as "...the fit between institutional purpose and performance" (Peter Ewell, 1992) or simply as the extent to which institutions achieve their goals for purposes of gauging progress. The complete report can be viewed at the office's web site. Some of the findings in this year's report include:

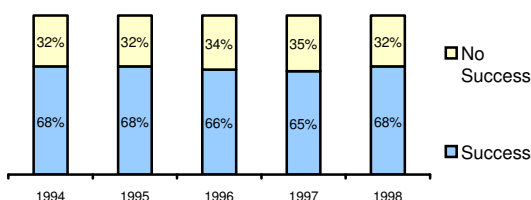
Student Access

- The ethnic composition of LMC's overall student enrollment continues to reflect the composition of the service area.

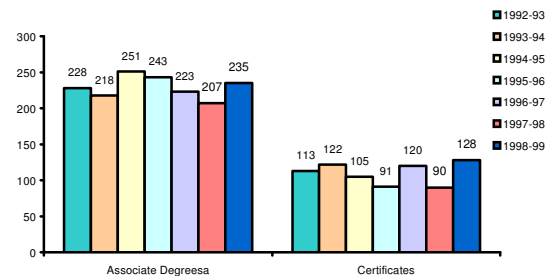


Student Success

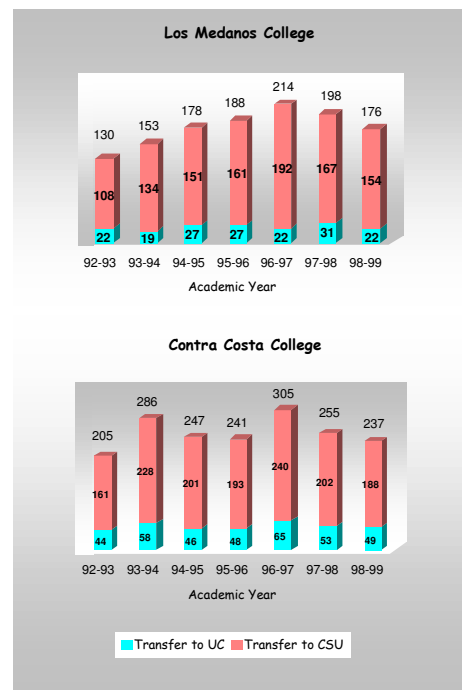
- Course Success:** Overall course success increased from 65% in Fall 1997 to 68% in Fall 1998.



- Degree/Certificate Completion:** Associate degrees awarded have ranged from 207 to 251 in the last seven years. An average is the low 200's. The number of certificates awarded has ranged from 90 to 128 in the last seven years. The greatest number of certificates that LMC awarded to students was in 1998-99 (n=128).



- Transfer Students:** There was a steady increase of LMC students transferring to the CSU and UC systems from 1992-93 to 1996-97. A decrease has been experienced since then. Figures for Contra Costa College are provided for comparison purposes.

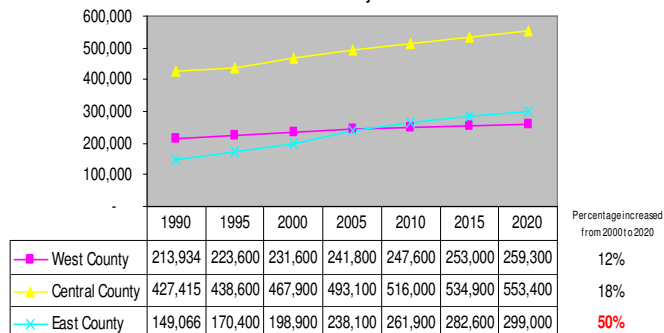


Contra Costa County Demographic Projections: 2000

As expected, the latest community demographic projections from the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG, 2000), indicates that the greatest growth in Contra Costa will occur in the eastern part of the County.

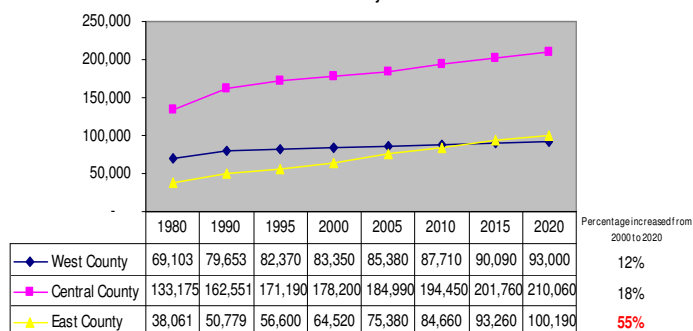
- Population projections for east Contra Costa County will increase by 50% in the next 20 years.

**Population Projections: 1990-2020
Contra Costa County**



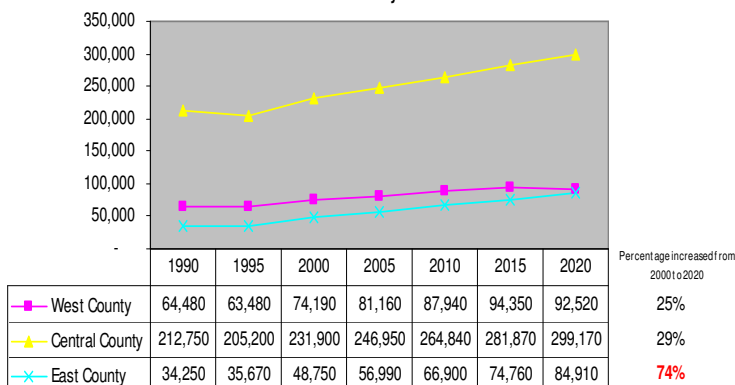
- 20-year households projections will increase by 55% in east contra Costa County.

**Households Projections: 1980-2020
Contra Costa County**



- Jobs in east Contra Costa County will increase by 74% in the next 20 years.

**Total Jobs Projections: 1990-2020
Contra Costa County**



Validation of the Assessment Instrument for Placement

Los Medanos College adapted the Computerized Placement Test (CPT) a year ago for purposes of placing students in the appropriate levels of English and Math courses. Cut scores were set for each level of English and math by faculty of the corresponding departments. The research question is: *Is the CPT accurate in placing students in the appropriate course level?* In the last two semesters, a *Consequential Validity* approach has been utilized for purposes of validating the cut scores of the CPT. Briefly, *Consequential Validity* consists of examining the instructors' views of each student's level of preparedness for the course into which the student placed based on CPT scores. In addition, the student's own perception of the appropriateness of his or her placement is examined. In order to determine that the cut off scores of the placement test are appropriate, at least 75% of the faculty and students have to perceive that the students are placed in the appropriate level course (Standards, Policies and Procedures for the Evaluation of Assessment Instruments Used in California Community Colleges, 3rd Edition, January 1998, p. 23). The following table illustrates two semesters of data. The results suggest that the CPT cut scores are accurate for placement. Detailed information is available in the report.

Spring 1999			Fall 1999		
Course students Placed at	Percentage of FACULTY Who believed students are placed appropriately in the course	Percentage of STUDENTS who believed they are placed appropriately in the course	Course students Placed at	Percentage of FACULTY who felt students are placed appropriately in the course	Percentage of STUDENTS who felt they are placed appropriately in the course
All students who assessed at and enrolled in the recommended English 70, 90, or 10s (n=63).	80%	75%	All students who assessed at and enrolled in the recommended English 70, 90, or 10s (n=197).	85%	88%
All students who assessed at and enrolled in the recommended Math 1, 2, 15, 25, 30 courses (n= 56).	90%	72%	All students who assessed at and enrolled in the recommended Math 1, 2, 15, 25, 30 courses (n= 113).	87%	87%

The Research Office's Web Site

Have you had an opportunity to visit the Research Office's web site? The purpose of the web site is to have research information readily available to the public and the college community for whatever the need may be. If you have visited the web site, you probably have noticed that the site contains demographic projections of the community, high school student information, enrollment trends, students needs, matriculation research, student success for each department, and effectiveness of the college. The information has been useful to college personnel and community leaders in many ways. For example, some faculty have examined student academic performance in a specific course over a time period; other staff have used student information for writing a grant; others have examined student experiences with the matriculation components. Whatever the need for research information is, it is available 24 hours a day at: www.losmedanos.net

INSIGHTS is a publication of the Office of Institutional Research. Forward any comments to Humberto Sale (Box 317) or call ext. 3370.

