



INSIGHTS

It has been a while since a research newsletter has been published. The four-page newsletter will be replaced by a double-sided, one-page information abstract, INSIGHTS. This will allow the office to publish research summaries and other relevant information in a timely manner. It is hoped that the information in future issues will be insightful. This issue summarizes the major research projects in progress. If you would like further information on any project, please contact the Research Office (ext. 370) or stop by the office (Room 401C). ♦

General Education Research



As we all know, one of the accreditation recommendations is “to evaluate the General Education model of the college and determine if it is the most appropriate one to meet current student needs.” Evaluating a general education model is clearly a challenge. “WHAT are we going to evaluate?” is the central question to be answered before any research is planned. Then, we must keep in mind that there is not a single method to assess a GE model. However, examining institutional indicators and researching student experiences with the various aspects of the GE model can be very instrumental for the review. Some of the GE research-related projects being coordinated by the research office include:

Needs Assessment: In coordination with the General Education Task Force, the Developmental Education committee, and the Student Services Shared governance committee, a study on needs assessment is being conducted this semester. This study consists of examining factors at the macro and micro levels to determine community needs. Factors at the macro level include examining the present and projected demographic, socioeconomic, and employment situation of the serving community. At the micro level, a survey is being implemented to assess student aspirations and needs in areas such as academic, personal, social, and career. Other indicators will include student enrollment patterns. Results are expected to be available in the Fall of 1997.

Student Experiences with The Packaging of the General Education Courses: A study to examine student experiences with the various aspects of the packaging of the general education is expected to be conducted during 1997-98.

Number of Class Hours Required in General Education Courses: For this research question, the number of class hours that are required at LMC is compared to DVC courses. The CCCCD intra-district articulation report and class catalogs are used to insure accurate comparison. Briefly, preliminary findings indicate that many courses at LMC require more class hours than the same courses at DVC (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Units and Required Class Hours for Math Courses: LMC and DVC

Course Title	LMC		DVC	
	Units	Class Hours	Units	Class Hours
Liberal Arts Math	3	5		
Elementary Algebra	4	6	3	7
Plane Geometry	3	5	3	5
Intermediate Algebra	4	6	4	7
Probability and Statistics	4	6	4	4
Finite Mathematics	3	5	3	3
Applied Calculus	3	5	3	3
Pre-calculus	4	6	4	5
Calculus & Analytic Geometry	4	6	4	5
Calculus & Analytic Geometry	4	6	4	5
Calculus & Analytic Geometry	4	6	4	5
Linear Algebra	3	5	3	3
Differential Equations	3	5	3	4

Source: CCCD intra-district articulation report: AG04, May 1996.

Student Retention and Success Rates for G.E Courses: The retention rates of General Education courses are examined and contrasted to the collegewide figures. Results are expected to be available this summer.



Academic Performance at Four Year Institutions of LMC Transfer Students.

Another indicator of students' academic experience and preparation from a community college has been suggested to be subsequent academic performance and students' perceptions of the effectiveness of the type of education they received from their two-year college. This huge undertaking is being addressed by seven districts in California, led by the CCCC Research Office, and consists of tracking the academic performance of students who transfer from California's Community College System into the CSU or UC systems. In addition, students will be asked to respond to a questionnaire about their experiences in the community college system. At this point, officials from the three systems are discussing implementation of the survey. (This instrument is available for review at the Research Office.) Results are expected by next academic year.



Matriculation Research



Three major Matriculation research projects are scheduled for this academic year:

Completion of the Validation of the English Section of the Assessment Instrument:

This is a full scale study on the faculty's perception of the students' English ability in reference to their placement level. This project is a follow-up study to a pilot project conducted last Spring. After finding a statistically significant positive correlation between the faculty's rating of students' ability and their assessment scores, it was concluded that the assessment instrument was potentially a good placement instrument. Report is expected to be completed in the summer of 1997.

Student Experiences with the College Orientation for New Students.

This project consists of gathering existing information on student experiences with the orientation. The main focus is to examine the extent to which the objectives of the orientation were met. The project is expected to be completed by the end of the semester.

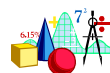
Development of an Instrument for Purposes of Assessing College Success Indicators.

Several colleges and universities are using multiple assessment measures to assist students in succeeding during their first year in college. One of the research objectives is to develop an instrument that assesses non-cognitive factors, such as academic motivation, time management, academic involvement, study skills, and social-integration, and to pilot it this semester with incoming students.



"To win is to overcome the obstacles presented before us"

Developmental Education Research



Of students enrolled in Language Arts 7 or 9, what proportion are concurrently enrolled in GE courses and how do they academically perform in the GE courses? These two questions, asked by the Developmental Education Task Force, yielded results that indicate about 5% to 15% of such students are concurrently enrolled in GE courses – depending on the GE area. Their academic performance in the GE courses is low. As an example, figure 2 displays the proportion of students who are enrolled in a Language Arts course and are concurrently enrolled in a GE Social and Behavioral Science course. As expected, the higher level of Language Arts enrollment, the greater the proportion of concurrent enrollment in a GE course and the greater the proportion of student success. A copy of the complete tables is available through the Office of Research or Nancy Ybarra, Chair of the Developmental Education Task Force. The same research questions are being addressed for students enrolled in pre-college math courses.

Figure 2. Student Enrollment in Language Arts and Concurrent Enrollment in GE Social and Behavioral Science Courses.

Courses	Academic Outcome					
	Success		No Success		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%*
LANGA 7 (n=234)	4	33%	8	67%	12	5%
LANGA 9 (n=465)	32	45%	39	55%	71	15%
LANGA 10S (n=537)	63	66%	32	34%	95	18%

* proportion of students enrolled in GE Social and Behavioral Science courses



Impact of THE EDGE



Another function of the Research Office is to advise faculty on classroom research. This semester a reading and writing center for Language Arts 9, *THE EDGE* is being piloted. The office is providing advice to the committee in all of the evaluation aspects of the project. Briefly, through a pre-post test design, affective and cognitive impact will be examined. Results are expected next Fall. For further information about the project call Nancy Ybarra.



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

