



Adult Basic Education: Student Learning Outcome Support

Background

As a result of a portion of SB361, which was signed into legislation in 2008, accountability for noncredit student outcomes has increased. Certain noncredit courses are now categorized into a new instructional category, Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP). To adhere to CDCP stipulations, courses must be part of a sequence of coursework leading to career or college preparation. Therefore, faculty are needed to develop CDCP sequences that meet student need and provide positive noncredit outcomes. In addition, Continuing Education Division's 2008 WASC accreditation and the college's Student Learning Outcome (SLO) expectations have added to the overall accountability for noncredit curriculum and instruction, for which faculty must drive. These efforts to improve noncredit and college curriculum and instruction have been welcomed by Adult Basic Education (ABE) faculty, although challenges in addressing these endeavors exist. To help address these demands, the ABE department will assess their High School final exams for 32 courses that will ensure rigor of cumulative assessments.

Measurements

High School Content and Rigor

The specific outcome attached to this assessment was defined as follows: *ABE High School faculty will create final exams that meet CA HS standards and expected content and rigor. Faculty will create subject specific rubrics for high school courses that provide clear expectations and ratings on necessary components of final exams.* This outcome was a carryover from the previous year; the rubric to measure said outcome needed refinement to better prepare faculty for expectations of acceptable content and rigor. To address this problem, faculty constructed course specific rubrics that provided clear and distinct expectations and methods for evaluation. As before, the benchmark for success was that 75% of all High School final exams would rate an overall *meets* or *exceeds* standard on the faculty created rubric. In total, 291 final exams were evaluated.

Results

High School Content and Rigor

Of the 229 high school exams evaluated, 32% received a rating of *met expectations* while 68% received a rating of *did not meet expectations*. The result was not expected given the time devoted to course specific rubrics and detailing the expectations of the exams by providing the rubric to the high school site coordinators for distribution to high school faculty. It appeared that many had not used the rubric as to guide the content and rigor of their exams. Indeed, when high school faculty were queried, they stated they had not been giving the rubrics by their site coordinators before they created their exams. However, once they were provided with the rubrics and had given input on the content, all exams were revised easily and before exam administration. Thus, all students took cumulative exams based on the expected rigor and content determined by the faculty.

Action

- Dialogue between a representative number of summer school faculty members and ABE administration regarding the final exam process was productive and revealed that the culture of summer school does not always encourage the same rigor as during primary semesters. It was suggested that earlier and more extensive

training be provided to summer school teachers on final exam and SLO assessment that clearly spelled out the expectations of being a Mt. SAC adjunct instructor.

- Some faculty suggested that the Mt. SAC ABE faculty who rated the finals and do not teach on high school campuses may not understand the scope and sequence as well as the pacing generally found in summer schools. As a result, there may have been an unrealistic expectation of which CA content standards to include in final exams. Therefore, a more thorough examination by Mt. SAC raters, especially in the areas of social science standards, be conducted prior to the next summer session.
- In an attempt to facilitate the acquisition of the rubrics to the high school faculty, the Adult Basic Education program at Mt. SAC will remind the coordinators to disseminate the rubrics to the high school faculty members as soon as possible.

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