

Reading Task Force Report and Recommendations to the Academic Senate: April 16, 2014

Appointed Task Force Members: Pat Bower (Learning Assistance), Glenda Bro (AMLA), Jim Jenkins (Dean, Humanities), Joe Jennum (Dean, Kinesiology), Matt Judd (Co-chair, Interim Dean, Natural Sciences), Jennifer Leader (AMLA), Richard Myers (English), Jim Ocampo (Director of Assessment), Shane Poulter (Counselor), Michelle Sampat (Co-chair, Learning Assistance), Ivan Sanchez (Sociology), Karen Schnurbusch (Physics), Jeff Wakefield (Mathematics).

One of the initial charges of this task force was to determine if the campus process for determining Reading Competency is Title 5 and Ed Code compliant. Further, the task force was charged with providing recommendations to the Academic Senate for clarifying Reading Competency.

Currently, Mt. SAC utilizes the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) to place native English speaking students into READ 70, 80, 90, and 100. Over 8,300 students take the DRP annually. The DRP is designed to serve as a placement instrument, and satisfaction surveys over the years have shown a high degree of student and faculty satisfaction with placement into READ courses. Title 5, Section 55522 states that community colleges may not, "use any assessment test in a manner or for a purpose other than that for which it was developed or had been otherwise validated." The Reading Task Force opinion is that Mt. SAC is not out of compliance with Title 5. The DRP is being used as a placement instrument, which is the purpose for which it was developed. Section 55522 pertains to Matriculation. In terms of Matriculation, the DRP is not used in a prohibited manner. It is used to determine students' eligibility for READ courses. This is similar to the Assessment of Written English (AWE) which gives students eligibility for writing courses.

Once eligibility is determined, the campus may then exercise its right under Title 5, Section 55063 which states, "The governing board of a community college district shall confer the associate degree upon a student who has demonstrated competence in reading, in written expression, and in mathematics..." Title 5, Section 55063 also provides that, "Requirements for demonstrating competency in reading shall be locally determined." The DRP assesses students' eligibility for READ courses. Subsequently, the campus exercises its authority to determine which course eligibility meets Reading Competency.

This Task Force recommends that Mt. SAC affirm that students continue to meet Reading Competency requirements by:

- 1) Demonstrating eligibility for READ 100 or
- 2) Completing READ 90 (for native English speakers) or AMLA 33R (for non-native English speakers) or READ 100 or
- 3) Passing the "Reading Competency Test" developed by READ faculty or

Further, as the DRP establishes eligibility for READ 100, the Task Force recommends:

- 1) Automating and implementing the Multiple Measures Questionnaire in accordance with Title 5 requirements immediately.
- 2) Applying Multiple Measures for Reading with Department Chair, Counselor, Director of Assessment, or Dean of Library and Learning Resources authorization in the interim.
- 3) Encouraging all first year students to take the DRP and enroll in reading courses when appropriate.
- 4) Allowing students to retest for eligibility for READ 100
- 5) Encouraging READ faculty to review the READ competency exam to ensure that it represents content consistent with appropriate knowledge and skill sets held by students who have not taken READ courses.