Student-Right-to-Know Transfer Rates:
Reading the Fine Print

Student-Right-to-Know (SRTK) is a federal program that requires colleges to disclose their completion and transfer rates to the public. As these statistics provide some measure of institutional effectiveness, the idea is that prospective students can use them to compare institutions as they are selecting a college to attend.

SRTK data are derived from cohort studies. The cohorts consist of all first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students who enter in the Fall term. Those students are then tracked for a period of time to determine whether they receive a degree from the institution in which they originally enrolled or whether they transfer to another institution. Students are tracked for 150% of the standard time to degree. For community colleges, cohorts are tracked for three years. For four-year colleges, cohorts are tracked for six years. At the end of the tracking period, the completion and transfer rates are calculated.

The SRTK model was developed among four-year institutions and then applied at the community college level. This aspect of SRTK has important implications for community college data. Four-year institutions strive for high completion rates and low transfer rates. These goals influence the calculation of SRTK rates. The following process is used to calculate those rates: First, the number of “completers” is tallied. This number is divided by the number of students in the original cohort to generate the completion rate. Those students are then removed from consideration when the transfer rate is calculated. Students who do not complete a degree but show up at any other college during the tracking period count as “transfers.” The transfer rate is calculated as the number of students who transfer without completing a degree out of the number of students in the original cohort.

While this model is appropriate for four-year institutions, it is not necessarily appropriate for community colleges. While community colleges strive for high completion rates, they also desire high transfer rates — transfer to four-year institutions, that is. However, the SRTK transfer rate includes students that transfer to any other institution during the tracking period. That includes other community colleges as well as four-year institutions. Due to the process by which transfer rates are calculated, it is unclear how community college SRTK transfer rates should be interpreted. On the one hand, SRTK transfer rates might underestimate the true transfer rate — because students who complete a degree and transfer are not considered part of the “transfer” population. On the other hand, SRTK transfer rates might overestimate the true transfer rate — because they include students who transfer within the community college system, not just those who transfer to four-year colleges.

SRTK data for the five most recent cohorts are presented in the table below. Data for both Napa Valley College and the California Community College System are provided. NVC completion rates tend to exceed CCC completion rates. According to the SRTK measure, NVC transfer rates fluctuate considerably from cohort to cohort. While transfer rates within the CCC system have ranged from 23% to 27%, NVC transfer rates have ranged from 10% to approximately 33%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student-Right-to-Know Completion &amp; Transfer Rates, 1995-1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Napa Valley College</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cohort Year</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Student-Right-to-Know Data, California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office

Suggested Approaches to Research

The Visiting Accreditation Team suggested that the Office of Institutional Research present data at the demographic group level. To that end, this issue of the *Institutional Research Update* includes two items on the academic performance of different demographic groups. On page 5, IPEDS completion data are presented by gender and ethnic/racial background. On page 6, successful completion rates within the CCC system are examined by ethnic/racial group.
Survey of Fall 2003 Applicants: A New Outreach Effort

Each term, approximately 600-700 students apply to Napa Valley College but do not enroll in courses. This Fall, that number increased to 1,100. The sudden increase in students who did not complete the registration process led staff in Student Services, Admissions & Records, and Counseling to wonder why so many prospective students do not enroll each term. To learn more about this population and to identify ways that the college might better serve these students, a survey was conducted among students who applied prior to the Fall 2003 enrollment period but did not enroll in classes in Fall 2003. The idea for the survey originated with Student Services, Admissions & Records, and Counseling. These units worked with the Office of Institutional Research to design an appropriate survey.

The survey was intended to help NVC improve services for students and identify obstacles that might prevent students from enrolling. Although NVC cannot address all of the obstacles that might prevent students from enrolling — such as students’ leaving the NVC service area and demanding work or family obligations, NVC can offer assistance to students that might help them address other problems — such as course availability and the need for financial aid.

The survey consisted of seven questions. Students were asked whether they attempted to enroll in classes at NVC this term. They were then asked to identify the factors that prevented from enrolling, with the following options provided: work or family obligations, financial considerations, course availability, change of plans, or time constraints. The survey also asked whether they had participated in matriculation activities (orientation, assessment, counseling) and whether they were aware that financial aid is available for eligible students. Finally, students were asked whether the recent fee increase influenced their decision to postpone their educational pursuits, as well as whether they were enrolled at another campus and whether they intend to enroll at NVC in Spring 2004.

The surveys were mailed out in October, and the mailing included a registration information sheet for students’ future reference. The preliminary results of the survey, based on the first 128 respondents, are presented here.

- 49% of respondents claimed that they attempted to enroll in courses at NVC this Fall.
- 39% of respondents indicated that their work schedules made it difficult to attend classes.
- 34% of respondents reported that course availability was an issue.
- Less than 20% of respondents claimed that family obligations, financial considerations, a change of plans, or time constraints made it difficult for them to enroll.

(continued)
Between Fall 2002 and Fall 2003, credit-student headcount decreased by 5.5%. During that period, enrollments and FTES (based on positive attendance hours as of census day) decreased by less than 1%. How were changes in enrollment and FTES distributed across the divisions?

As described in the table below, changes in enrollment and FTES were not evenly distributed across the divisions. While some divisions experienced a decline in these figures, others experienced an increase, and still others experienced mixed results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Percent Change in Enrollments</th>
<th>Percent Change in FTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business &amp; Computer Studies</td>
<td>-10.5%</td>
<td>-16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>-4.1%</td>
<td>-1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>-7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine &amp; Performing Arts</td>
<td>-15.7%</td>
<td>-13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Occupations</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language &amp; Developmental Studies</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science &amp; Mathematics</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>-2.6%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>-3.2%</td>
<td>-3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Total</td>
<td>-0.8%</td>
<td>-0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The largest losses (in excess of 10%) came in the areas of Business & Computer Studies and Fine & Performing Arts. The Counseling and Technical Divisions also lost students. The largest gains (in excess of 10%) were claimed by Health Occupations. Other divisions claiming increases include Language & Developmental Studies, Physical Education, and Science & Mathematics. Divisions claiming mixed results include Criminal Justice, which increased enrollments but decreased FTES (due to the number of hours offered), and the Social Sciences, which increased FTES while decreasing enrollments.
In 2002-2003, Napa Valley College conferred 345 certificates and 609 degrees for a total of 954 awards. In 2001-2002, NVC granted 782 awards, with 159 certificates and 623 Associate degrees. Between the two years, the number of awards conferred increased by 22%. NVC’s certificate programs were responsible for this increase, as the number of certificates awarded more than doubled (as they increased by 117%). The number of degrees conferred decreased by roughly 2%.

IPEDS, the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, collects data on three award levels offered by Napa Valley College. The three award categories are: certificates requiring less than one year of study, certificates requiring one to two years of study, and Associate degrees. The table below describes the distribution of certificates and degrees across ethnic/racial and gender groups. The information is presented by award type, and the figures presented in the table represent the proportion of awards granted to the respective demographic groups.

For example, of the 226 certificates requiring less than one year of study, 6% were granted to African American students, 8% to Asian, Pacific Islander, or Filipino students, 18% to Hispanic/Latino students, 1% to Native American students, and 62% to White students. These 226 certificates were distributed among the gender groups in a ratio of 66:34, with male students receiving the majority of such awards.

To provide a baseline for comparison, the population share claimed by each ethnic/racial and gender group is presented in the final column of the table. A comparison of those population proportions and the proportion of degrees and certificates awarded to certain groups yields observations such as the following:

- African American students received a large proportion of certificates requiring one to two years of study (10%) and a small proportion of Associate degrees (2%), relative to their share of the credit-student population (6%). African American students’ share of certificates requiring less than one year of study (6%) corresponded to their share of the credit-student population.
- Hispanic/Latino students claimed a larger proportion of Associate degrees (22%) and a smaller proportion of certificates requiring one to two years of study (13%) than their population share (19%) would suggest. This group claimed a proportion of certificates requiring less than one year (18%) that was equivalent to their population proportion.
- White students received a large proportion of certificates requiring less than one year of study (62%) and Associate degrees (56%), relative to their share of the credit-student population (50%). White students claimed a smaller proportion of certificates requiring one to two years of study (40%).
- Female students claimed a larger proportion of certificates requiring one to two years of study (66%) and Associate degrees (72%) than their population proportion (61%) would suggest. Male students claimed a disproportionately large number of certificates requiring less than one year of study (compare 66% with their population share of 39%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ETHNIC/RACIAL GROUP</th>
<th>Share of Certificates Requiring Less than One Year of Study</th>
<th>Share of Certificates Requiring One to Two Years of Study</th>
<th>Share of Associate Degrees</th>
<th>Share of the Credit-Student Population Fall 2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander/Filipino</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Resident Alien</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENDER GROUP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF AWARDS</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NVC Fall 2003 IPEDS Submission, based on MIS data
Walt Unti's Application of Research to Create a New Business Program

Walt Unti, Instructor in the Business & Computer Studies Division, is in the process of restructuring the Management & Marketing degree program. He detected the need for a change based on data and observations he collected from several sources, including the CCCCO Data Mart, the NVC Articulation Office, and the Office of Institutional Research. Walt's research process as well as the components of the new program are outlined below.

The Puzzle: Every term, more than 200 Business & Marketing majors enroll at NVC (Source: NVC Census Data). Despite the large number of self-identified Business majors, NVC awards very few A.S. degrees in Management & Marketing. Over the five academic years spanning 1997 to 2002, NVC conferred a maximum of four Management & Marketing degrees in any academic year (Source: California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Data Mart).

Through informal surveys (i.e., a show of hands and informal discussions), Walt discerned that roughly 70-75% of NVC Business students were interested in seeking a Bachelor's degree. This hypothesis was confirmed by NVC Census Data, which showed that 72-73% of Business majors who identify a degree as their educational goal are seeking the 4-year variety of degree. These students might be described as “passing through” NVC on their way to a 4-year institution. Because such students are not seeking a degree from NVC, they tend not to engage themselves fully with the campus. Walt observed that this population was not coming to him for advice, although 2-year-degree-seeking students were. A similar pattern was noted among counselors.

Not seeking the advice of counselors can have serious repercussions for the population of 4-year-degree-seekers. Although the NVC Catalog indicates whether a course is CSU or UC transferable, not all CSU or UC campuses recognize/accept the same transfer-level courses. Only by meeting with a counselor can students learn which Business courses are accepted by a particular campus.

The need for change within the Business program was not limited to 4-year-degree-seekers. Through discussions with students as well as local employers, Walt learned that the A.S. Management & Marketing degree program was not addressing the requirements of the current job market. Entry-level positions demand more quantitative or/and technical skills than the current A.S. degree program requires.

The Solution: To address these problems, Walt worked with Jerry Somerville, Articulation Officer and Counselor, to modify the Business degree program to include both 2-year and 4-year students — to welcome both populations, focus them, and allow them to tailor their coursework to their individual needs.

The primary goals of the new program include:
- increasing the marketability of 2-year/A.S.-degree students by increasing the technical and mathematical requirements; and
- increasing the transferability of 4-year/B.A.-degree students by increasing the flexibility of the program.

To accomplish these goals, Walt proposes changing the core of required courses (to include more technical/quantitative courses) and offering more elective courses (so that transfer students can satisfy general education requirements and tailor the program to suit their needs, based on transferability and interest). The number of units required for the A.S. degree under the proposed system would be the same as under the current system. The proposal for the revision of the Management & Marketing program was approved by the Curriculum Committee in February 2004.

CURRENT PROJECTS:

- Disproportionate Impact Study for New CTEP-Derived English Placement Practices (Matriculation Steering Committee)
- Credit-Student Demographic Report, Spring 2004
- Study of Progression of NVC Students through Matriculation Services (Matriculation Steering Committee)
- Follow-Up Study on Prerequisite Skills within the Social Sciences (Psychology & Sociology)
- Study of Retention, Successful Course Completion, and Persistence, By Demographic Group (Planning Committee)
- Data Collection for Student Support Services Grant Proposal (Financial Aid)

Napa Valley College officially joined Cal-PASS (California Partnership for Achieving Student Success) in October. Cal-PASS is a regional, inter-segmental data-sharing consortium. NVC’s participation in Cal-PASS has the endorsement of the Offices of the President, Instruction, Information Technology, Articulation, Institutional Research, as well as the Academic Senate and the Board of Trustees. The Office of Institutional Research is in the process of identifying NVC’s initial partners among neighboring K-12 districts and transfer institutions. If you would like more information about Cal-PASS, please contact the Office of Institutional Research.
Results of Social Science Study

In Summer 2003, the Office of Institutional Research examined the relationship between students’ English skills and their performance in Social Science courses at Napa Valley College. The intent was to determine whether pre-existing English skills have some effect on the subsequent performance of students in Social Science courses. The study was conducted at the request of instructors within the Social Sciences Division, and the analysis was conducted on a select set of courses, consisting of History 121, History 145, and Sociology 123. The results of the study are intended to provide a foundation for discussion about English skill advisories in divisions outside of the Language and Developmental Studies Division.

The results spanning all three courses are presented in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Level Prior to Social Science Enrollment</th>
<th>Successful Course Completion Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developmental (below ENGL 85)</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic (ENGL 85)</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College-Preparatory (ENGL 100)</td>
<td>65.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College-Level (ENGL 120)</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As English skill levels increase among students, so too do their course completion rates. On average, successful completion rates within the Social Sciences increase by 9.1% for each level of English that students complete before enrolling in Social Science courses.

Successful Course Completion Rates
within the NVC English Sequence

In connection with a presentation Dr. Sally Fitzgerald, Vice President, Instruction, will be giving at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in March, the Office of Institutional Research generated data on successful course completion rates across the NVC English sequence. Sally is using the data to develop a demographic profile of basic English students. Data from Fall 2000 through Spring 2003 were included in the study, and the results are presented in the table on the right.

Three general patterns emerge in the successful course completion data. The patterns, along with the ethnic/racial groups exhibiting each pattern, are described below.

- **Steady increase across the sequence:** This pattern applies to groups whose successful course completion rates increase through the NVC English sequence. African American and White students display this behavioral pattern. (Note that this is not a longitudinal study. Therefore, these are not necessarily the same students progressing through the sequence.)

- **Steady decrease across the sequence:** This pattern applies to groups whose successful course completion rates decrease at higher levels of English. The performance of Asians and Pacific Islanders follows this pattern.

- **Peak in the English 100 range:** This pattern applies to students who claim low success rates in ENGL 85, higher success rates in ENGL 100, followed by lower success rates in ENGL 120. This pattern emerges among Filipino, Hispanic, and Native American students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Successful Course Completion Rates, 2000-2003</th>
<th>ENGL 85 (N)</th>
<th>ENGL 100 (N)</th>
<th>ENGL 120 (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnic/Racial Background</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>45% (104)</td>
<td>63% (132)</td>
<td>77% (114)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>80% (44)</td>
<td>75% (67)</td>
<td>73% (79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>64% (115)</td>
<td>67% (244)</td>
<td>64% (264)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>54% (404)</td>
<td>66% (553)</td>
<td>62% (540)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>0% (7)</td>
<td>65% (17)</td>
<td>56% (32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>70% (10)</td>
<td>64% (28)</td>
<td>63% (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>57% (256)</td>
<td>66% (801)</td>
<td>69% (1,458)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>0% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Respondent</td>
<td>55% (40)</td>
<td>64% (84)</td>
<td>64% (154)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>56% (981)</td>
<td>66% (1,927)</td>
<td>67% (2,675)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NVC Grading History and NVC Demographic Data, Fall 2000 - Spring 2003
Recent Changes in the School-Age Population

The school-age population (defined as the population of 5- through 17-year-olds) of the United States increased by approximately 167,000 between April 2000 and July 2002. California claimed an increase of more than 144,000 during that period. Only Florida, which claimed an increase of more than 146,000, experienced a larger increase among the school-age population. While California’s numbers increased within the two-year period examined, the size of the school-age population in most (35 out of 50) states actually decreased. Within the United States, California claims the largest school-age population, with 6.9 million. Texas ranks second in terms of school-age population, claiming 4.4 million. (Sources: Tables STCH-EST2002-01: State Characteristic Estimates for July 1, 2002 and STCH-EST2002-02: State Characteristic Estimates for Population Estimates Base 2000)

California Ranks 23rd in Education Spending

According to the Annual Survey of Local Government Finances, California ranked 23rd in per-pupil spending within elementary and secondary public school systems in the United States in 2000-2001. During that period, California spent $6,965 per pupil. Per-pupil spending in California fell below the national spending level of $7,284 in 2000-2001. Per-pupil spending at the state level ranged from $4,625 (Utah) to $10,922 (New York).

California Ranks 45th in Funding Community Colleges

In a study conducted for the Public Policy Institute of California, Patrick J. Murphy of the University of San Francisco found that California ranked 45th out of 49 states in terms of its support for community colleges. In 1999-2000, California taxpayers contributed $7,979 per full-time equivalent student (FTES). The national average for that year was $9,810. Wisconsin claimed the highest level of funding, with $14,409 per FTES. Only Arkansas, Tennessee, Nevada, and Virginia fared worse than California. (Source: San Francisco Chronicle, 25 January 2004, D4)

When California Community Colleges were ranked by 2000-2001 revenue per FTES, Napa Valley College ranked 15th out of 74 districts. In 2000-2001, the District claimed revenues of $5,489 per FTES. Statewide revenues per FTES in that year were $4,882. (Source: Financing California’s Community Colleges, Patrick J. Murphy, Public Policy Institute of California, 2004)

### Measures of Student Performance

**Student Learning Outcomes Assessment**

Student learning outcomes (SLOs) and the assessment of student learning are the hot topics on the conference circuit this year. Not only is the Research & Planning (RP) Group offering another installment of Student Learning Outcomes Workshops, but the topics of several panels at the annual RP Conference also relate to SLO assessment. In addition, the California Association for Institutional Research Conference provided an opportunity for researchers and planners to meet with Barbara Beno, Executive Director of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), to discuss the new accreditation standards. Two requirements of the new standards that are directly related to student learning outcomes research are outlined below. The process linking these two requirements is also described.

**The new accreditation standards require that institutions assess student achievement and student learning.** In general, data that satisfy the student achievement requirement consist of data collected and compiled by the Office of Institutional Research. This category of data includes data on student progress, such as persistence, successful course completion, transfer, graduation, and assessment. The second category of data — that related to student learning — represents a new approach to the assessment of course, program, and institutional effectiveness. Student learning data focus on the value added (to a student’s skill set) by a particular course, program, or activity. Working with Jerry Somerville, Title III Student Learning Outcomes Specialist, individual instructors, instructional departments, and administrative units will develop SLOs at the course, program, and institutional level.

**The new accreditation standards require evidence of broad-based dialogue on institutional quality and student learning.** This requires that a college foster an institutional dialogue and use that dialogue to support and improve student learning.

When these two aspects of the new standards are combined, they describe a process of ongoing dialogue aimed at educational improvement. The process is outlined as:

\[
\text{Data} \rightarrow \text{Dialogue} \rightarrow \text{Implementation} \rightarrow \text{Feedback}
\]

Data on student learning are used to inform the dialogue. Through the dialogue, changes are proposed. Those changes are then implemented. Feedback is gathered to determine whether the improvement worked. The resulting data (from the feedback) are used to inform the subsequent dialogue. Thus, identifying SLOs and engaging in the dialogue require data as well as processes.
Results of English (CTEP) Validation Study

In Summer-Fall 2003, the Office of Institutional Research conducted a validation study to determine whether current NVC English placement practices, based on student performance on the College Tests for English Placement (CTEP) Reading and Writing Tests, are appropriate. NVC began using the CTEP Tests to place students in Spring 2002. (Prior to that term, NVC used the Assessment & Placement Services (APS) Tests.) Following the Spring 2002 testing period, a consequential validity study was conducted to determine if the cut scores were appropriate. That study was inconclusive; the placement system was not validated, nor was a viable alternative system identified. The 2003 study represents a second attempt at validating NVC placement practices.

The 2003 validation study consisted of three analyses:

- **Cross-validation of CTEP placement practices**: In this part of the analysis, individual placement recommendations derived from the CTEP Test were compared with placement recommendations derived from the NVC Writing Sample. According to this analysis, only 26% of students that were recommended for ENGL 120 based on their performance on the CTEP would have qualified for ENGL 120 based on their performance on the NVC Writing Sample. This evidence indicated that the cut score for ENGL 120 should be increased.

- **Consequential validity study**: For this analysis, English instructors and students participated in a follow-up survey intended to gauge the appropriateness of students’ English placements, given their reading and writing skills. NVC placement practices were deemed to be appropriate, according to both sets of respondents.

- **Traditional Validation Study**: In this part of the analysis, the relationship between CTEP scores and successful completion of NVC English courses was examined. Data spanning Spring 2002 through Spring 2003 were used for this analysis. The evidence suggested that the cut score defining ENGL 120 placements should be increased, as students who were not eligible for ENGL 120 (based on their performance on the CTEP Test) successfully completed the course at a higher rate than students who were eligible for ENGL 120.

Two recommendations emerged from the study:

- **Increase the cut score for ENGL 120 placement**: As the results outlined above suggest, the cut score for ENGL 120 should be increased. Data from the validation study were used to identify the appropriate (proposed) threshold.

- **Adopt a composite score for all English placement levels**: Under the current system, students can place into NVC English courses using the CTEP Reading Test, the CTEP Writing Test, or both. Under the proposed system, students will receive one placement recommendation, based on their combined performance on both CTEP Tests. This practice aligns nicely with changes in the English curriculum slated for 2004-2005, and it should alleviate confusion among students who receive divergent placement recommendations under the current system.

(continued)