EL CAMINO COLLEGE
PROGRAM REVIEW
STUDENT SERVICES
ASSESSMENT/TESTING
CENTER
SPRING 2014

_____

Program Description
1. Describe the program emphasizing the program's objectives and how the program supports the college's mission and vision statements, strategic initiatives, and core competencies.

_____

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

The Assessment/Testing Center primarily exists as one part of the foundational triumvirate of the new Student Success and Support Program (SSSP), formerly known as Matriculation. The three essential tasks that students will now be required to complete in order to receive priority registration at El Camino College are Orientation, Assessment, and an Education Plan. Assessment is very much at the heart of these activities, as it opens up the entry doors to the English, English as a Second Language (ESL), Math, and Chemistry courses offered at the College. Thusly, the main objective of the Center is to lead students through the placement test procedure and assure a behind-the-scenes process where all testing data is accurately and completely uploaded for registration purposes and for use by such campus entities as the Counseling Division, Academic Division Offices, El Camino Language Academy, International Student Program, Math Academy, Office of Institutional Research and Planning, and the Office of Outreach and School Relations.

SUPPORT OF COLLEGE'S MISSION STATEMENT:

The College's Mission Statement places emphasis upon ensuring the educational success of all students. The Mission Statement of the Assessment/Testing Center captures the essence of the Center's function in a nutshell, as well as illustrates its alliance in support of student success: "The Mission of the El Camino College Assessment/Testing Center is to meet the educational needs of the Campus' diverse community and ensure student success by offering open-access to a testing experience that is equitable, as well as one with integrity, through the use of standardized rules of testing." Most importantly, the Center continues to seek out various ways to encourage students to pre-review for their tests, so that they may receive appropriate and accurate placements into their initial courses at El Camino College.

SUPPORT OF COLLEGE'S VISION STATEMENT:

The College's Vision Statement places emphasis upon the creation of a positive student environment—one that incorporates respect, integrity, and excellence. To that end, the Center

strives to offer its services in a welcoming and nurturing environment—one with a friendly staff, well-functioning equipment, and an ambiance conducive to taking an exam.

SUPPORT OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

The Assessment/Testing Center conscientiously works toward supporting the College's Strategic Initiatives. While there are seven Initiatives, this Program interacts primarily with four of them—those dealing with strengthening support services that promote student success; improving processes, programs and services through continual evaluation and planning; using technology to improve ways of meeting the needs of all constituents; and working toward environmentally sensitive practices. In less obvious ways, the Program does interact somewhat with the other three Initiatives—those dealing with enhancing teaching; fostering a positive learning environment; and developing partnerships with other schools.

Enhancing Teaching
Students are assessed in a way that hopefully insures accuracy of placement, so that instructors will be able to more easily work with students who have been properly placed.

Strengthening Support Services for Student Success
In an effort to support student success, students are encouraged to pre-review for their placement tests and are provided with informational and sample test links to accomplish this task.

Fostering a Positive Learning Environment
Students are provided with the tools to pre-review initiates the fostering of a positive learning environment.

Developing Partnerships with Other Schools
The Center works closely with the Office of Outreach and School Relations, which, in turn, develops partnerships with high schools, and the community in general, to bring students to the College to assess.

Improving Processes, Programs, and Services
Procedures in the Center continually evolve and, hopefully, are improved upon via the use of the introspective processes and tools associated with Program Review, student surveys, and general day-to-day discussions.

Using Technology to Improve Services
Periodically, the computer lab equipment is upgraded/replaced, so that students continue to undergo a state-of-the-art testing experience. Continual improvements are made to the testing software itself by the College Board, which owns ACCUPLACER, the web-based assessment program utilized by both El Camino College and the El Camino College Compton Center.

Environmental Improvements
Lastly, being conscious of the environment, the Center has slowly begun to reduce its hard-copy test result files, since four years' worth of testing data is presently available online through the ACCUPLACER database. It is anticipated that within five years, the current paper files will

have been phased out entirely, creating more storage- and work-space for the Center. As well, electronic copies of *all* ACCUPLACER test results prior to 2010 have been uploaded into Assessment Reports, an ITS-developed WebService, which exists on the El Camino College Portal. On October 1, 2013, ACCUPLACER began purging their databases on a monthly basis of testing data more than four years old. Thusly, the uploading of all data from 2010 to present has become an essential and continuing task.

SUPPORT OF CORE COMPETENCIES:

As students progress through Assessment, they are already beginning a learning process. If they have pre-reviewed prior to testing, then they are putting the knowledge, skills, and abilities developed through that activity to the test, literally. During placement testing, they are also beginning to develop their problem-solving and decision-making skills. They are developing communication skills in listening closely to verbal instructions and following the written instructions of the tests themselves. Students who come through the Center are expected to follow the standardized rules of testing, completing their assessment with the proper decorum, which includes being honest and having integrity in their actions. Cheating on a test is unacceptable behavior. Those who choose to cheat will learn the hard way that there can be consequences which will follow students throughout their academic career. Hopefully, along the way, students will learn to be respectful to the Assessment/Testing Staff, as well as to other members of the El Camino College community. Finally, students who are extremely conscientious about test preparation will seek out and follow various avenues in preparing for their placement tests—not just the few links we offer them. This will help motivate students into becoming adventurous seekers of knowledge, which will help them during their educational path to a degree or vocation preparation.

_____

  2. Describe the student population served by the program using available data.

_____

The student population served by the Assessment/Testing Center is drawn from the District's own diverse community. The following data was obtained directly from the ACCUPLACER database. It covers the most recent three-month peak-period of testing from June 1, 2013 to August 31, 2013 and includes responses from the 6,395 students who tested between these dates.

Gender
A larger percentage of males (52.09%) tested over females (47.62%) with .30% choosing not to answer.

High School Graduates
High school graduates and potential graduates made up 89.38% of the testing population, with an additional 4.35% reporting that they had received a General Educational Development (GED) certificate or credential and another 3.43% reporting that they had not yet graduated from high school nor received a GED. 2.83% chose not to respond.

<u>Self-Description</u>
The self-description breakdown was as follows:

	Student Count	Percentage
American Indian or Alaska Native	17	.27%
Asian, Asian American or Pacific Islander	860	13.45%
Black or African American	1363	21.31%
Mexican or Mexican American	1556	24.33%
Multicultural	327	5.11%
Other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American	1314	20.55%
Puerto Rican	16	.25%
White	604	9.44%
Other	190	2.97%
I CHOOSE NOT TO ANSWER	148	2.31%

<u>Language Known Best</u>, <u>Language First Spoken</u>
In response to the question, what language do you know best, "English only" ranked first at 49.88%, "English and another language about the same" came in at 41.35%, "another language rather than English" scored at 7.78%, with .99% choosing not to answer. In conjunction with this question, they were also asked, what language did you learn to speak first, with the following responses: English only (48.46%), another language (26.06%), English and another language (24.31%), with 1.17% choosing not to answer.

<u>Majors</u>
In regard to majors, the top ten, in order, with the largest percentage first, included Undeclared (30.71), Nursing (7.70%), Business Administration-Transfer (4.26%), Business Management – AS (4.09%), Psychology – Transfer (2.93%), Biology – Transfer (2.74%), Computer Science – Transfer (2.19%), Psychology – AA (1.93%), Radiologic Technology – AS (1.82%), and Administration of Justice – AS (1.69%).

<u>Financial Aid</u>
Lastly, 80.94% indicated that they intended to apply for Financial Aid, while 19.06% said they were not.

_____

3. What happens after students participate in the program's activities? If applicable, address whether students are successful in meeting their educational goals.

_____

After completing their testing, students will complete their Orientation to the College, if not already completed, and will then meet with a counselor to create an Education Plan. The counselors will advise the students as to which classes to enroll into per their placement results and other multiple measures. They may even advise them to repeat one or more of the test sections. From there, students will enroll into their classes and the initial assessment process will have been concluded. It is hoped that with a good and accurate start with assessment, students will be on their way to successfully meeting their future educational

goals. The success or non-success of students meeting their educational goals is mainly tracked by other campus entities, such as the Office of Institutional Research and Planning.

_____

    4. List notable achievements that were linked to the College's Strategic Initiatives that have occurred since the last program review.

_____

Listed here are both major and minor achievements, all of which have been notable in their way to the Testing Staff. Please note: Three of the items (#7, #8, and #9) are current Program Review Recommendations (#6, #10, and #14), which were completed early, due to unusual circumstances. The items have been included here and remain in the original listing of Program Review Recommendations.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE B: **(Strengthen support services to promote student success.)**

    1. USE OF PRE-REVIEWING STRATEGIES
        The Assessment/Testing Center continues to employ various strategies in encouraging students to pre-review for placement tests. Evaluation of such strategies has been through Service Area Outcomes (SAO) and Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Surveys.

        A listing of sites with sample tests, softwares, and apps for English and Math review was developed and is updated from time to time with appropriate new recommendations. In order to facilitate students being able to access this information quickly and easily, this listing was replicated and placed onto the Testing webpage. A little over a year ago, at the urging of the Assessment/Testing Center, a link to this listing on the Testing webpage was added to the batch welcoming e-mail, which is sent from the Admissions & Records Office to all new applicants.

        Self-service racks of information sheets were installed both inside and outside of the Center. As well, the Information Desk in the Student Services Center Lobby has been well-stocked with a goodly supply of all information sheets.

    2. EXPANSION OF NON-CERT POOL
        The pool of non-certs was expanded by one (1) employee. The addition of new employees is not a task taken lightly, as each must undergo extensive and detailed training in testing procedures, in order to ensure that students receive the maximum amount of support when completing their testing task.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE E: (Improve processes through planning and self-evaluation.)

3. EXPANSION OF TESTING LOCATION
    Advance planning produced the advantageous idea to use a satellite location for testing larger groups of students at one time—up to 100. The location chosen was that of the Basic Skills Lab (BSL) located in the ECC Library. These larger groups have included the in-district high school students, who are recruited and bussed-in by the Office of Outreach and School Relations, as well as other on-campus groups, such as the Summer Math Academy.

4. DEVELOPMENT OF AN ELECTRONIC FORM FOR THE RELEASE OF TEST RESULTS
    After self-evaluation of some of the Center's processes, it was decided to make the process more convenient and expeditious for students requesting copies of their test results by developing and putting into use an electronic version of the Placement Test Result Release Form.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE F: (Using technology for improvement.)

5. REPLACEMENT OF TESTING LAB EQUIPMENT
    The failing Testing Lab computers from 2005 were completely replaced with newly refurbished Dell's in June 2011. The Office computers were replaced with brand-new Dell's in January 2012.

6. ADDITION OF COMPUTER WORK-STATIONS TO FRONT COUNTER
    Two (2) new computer work-stations were added to the Front Counter of the Assessment/Testing Center making a total of three (3) for that location. The addition of these stations has noticeably decreased wait-times for students requesting information or signing in to take their placement tests.

7. ADDITION OF FRONT COUNTER TELEPHONE
    An additional phone was added to the Front Counter making a total of two (2) for that location. The addition of this phone has increased the efficiency in which phone calls can be handled. [See PR Recommendation #6.]

8. A TELEPHONE BRANCHING SYSTEM
    A telephone branching system was set up for the Center in December 2013, which allows students to get specific items of basic information by pressing an appropriate number choice or staying on the line for direct connection with the Center. Most of the calls received by the Center request simple pieces of information, such as hours, location, what to bring, etc. This change has made the dissemination of information

by phone more efficient and has cut down the number of calls that ring through to the office. As well, according to the Program Review Student Opinion Survey that was administered in January and February of 2014, 96% of the respondents indicated that they received "adequate and useful information from the recording" compared to only 65% in 2010 and 49% in 2006. Thusly, this can be considered an extremely successful achievement. [See PR Recommendation #10.]

9. ACQUISITION OF WIRED KEYPADS
    In order to keep students' Social Security and ECC ID numbers more secure (i.e. not communicated verbally), wired keypads were received and installed on each of the Office computers at the end of January 2014. [See PR Recommendation #14.]

10. SET-UP OF ONLINE APPOINTMENT SYSTEM
    Working in coordination with the Counseling Center, the Assessment/Testing Center is currently completing the process of setting up an online appointment system through SARS for paper-and-pencil exams. It is hoped that this new online appointment system will make the task of making appointments for these exams more convenient for students.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE G: (Environmental practices.)

11. SHIFT TO ELECTRONIC DATABASES
    The Center is currently phasing out all hard-copy test result files in favor of reliance upon electronic databases containing the same current and archival data. As well, older test-record materials are being purged and various informational files merged. Since the acquisition of an imaging machine was ruled out some time ago, another direction had to be taken for the Center to go "green."

_____

5. What prior program review recommendations were not implemented, if any, and why? What was the impact on the program and the students?

_____

The Assessment/Testing Center had only one majorly important Program Review Recommendation in 2010--that of permanently restoring $10,000 to the Testing budget for the following year--which was not implemented.

Background
In the academic years of 2009-10 and 2010-11, the Institutional budget was a very pressing issue, as it was also for the Assessment/Testing Center. In Testing, the $80,000 budget, which paid for the hourly non-certificated employees that keep the office running smoothly, sustained

a significant blow—a cut of 30%, which reduced the budget to $56,464.80. With five non-certs on the books and a mandate to serve every student that came to the Assessment/Testing Center, nimble budgeting instantly became the norm that year, and subsequent years, in order to meet all testing obligations. Approximately $6,000 had to be requested to augment the 2009-10 budget in order to make ends meet at the completion of that year. The following year, 2010-11, the budget partially recouped in that the extra dollars were allowed to roll over and remain in the budget. Although more has been expected of the Assessment/Testing Center in recent years, the budget has remained the same for the last four years (2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14). Careful reductions of work-hours and repeated re-calculations-to-the-penny have been necessary to come in under budget for each of these fiscal years.

Program Review Recommendation for 2010
Thusly, at the time of the last Program Review, the budget was the main focus. Only one Program Review Recommendation was made at that time and that was to restore $10,000 to the Testing budget for the following year. Unfortunately, this was not implemented.

Current Situation
In Plan-Builder for 2013-14, a permanent restoration of $5,000 was requested for the Assessment/Testing Center budget for the hourly non-certs. It appears as though this request has been denied, as it has not been included in the Plan-Builder Funding VP's Priority Report for 2013-14. However, it should be noted that for the remainder of the 2013-2014 Academic Year, the Assessment/Testing Center has been kindly notified, that should it be needed, an extra $5,000 for the non-cert account will be made available to the Center by the Vice-President of Student and Community Advancement.

The Future
Looking toward the future, it is expected that many more students will be testing, as the new Student Success and Support Program (SSSP) processes unfold. It is, therefore, hoped that any additional dollars needed for the Assessment/Testing Office will be provided. Our request for an additional $5,000 will be repeated in the future. Having a tight budget and having to do more with less have created a tremendous impact on the busy Assessment/Testing Center. Through all of the rough budget patches of 2009-2012, students were protected from any negative impact--no students have ever been turned away and denied testing. However, there is no guarantee that such a thing could not happen in the future if needed dollars are not provided to the Center. At the very least, without additional dollars to cover additional staff and provide more office coverage, service to the students will suffer, as only so much can be accomplished with a smaller staff. Wait-times will be longer for those waiting to test, those waiting for their results, and those trying to call in for information. Lastly, if this amount, or more, is needed to complete the year, a permanent restoration of funds should be seriously considered and put into effect for all future Academic Year budgets.

_____

Service Area Outcomes (SAO)
1. Describe how program personnel are engaged in the creation, discussion, and review of SAO
   - statements, assessment results, and reports.

_____

All of the employees of the Assessment/Testing Center are asked to contribute ideas for future SAO's, whether they be of a general nature or metric-related. These ideas are collected and discussed and then a final decision is made by the Supervisor regarding which will be the best to pursue. Ideas for SAO's may also come from sources from outside the Center—in discussion with others on Campus or other colleges' assessment staff and even perhaps from the review of other campus' SAO's.

In regard to ideas for metric-related SAO's, the same process is followed; however, it is necessary to take care to avoid any overlaps with studies that may have already been done (or may be pending) by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning or other entities on Campus.

Non-metric SAO's have always been assessed via student surveys. Survey results are collected from students, broken down by the Office of Institutional Research, and then analyzed and written up by the Center Supervisor. For metric-related SAO's, the Center Supervisor is also the person who extracts, assembles, and analyzes the information in question. All completed SAO assessment results and reports are shared with the Assessment/Testing Center Staff and subsequently posted on the Testing webpage for public viewing.

_____

2. How does the program ensure that SAO's are assessed consistently?

_____

A methodical and repetitive approach is taken in the assessment of each SAO. For non-metric SAO's, surveys are always designed and disseminated to an appropriate number of students. The results are broken down by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning and then forwarded to the Assessment/Testing Center Supervisor, who in turn closely analyzes them in regard to how they relate to the Center and its processes. Depending upon the nature of the SAO, procedural changes in the program may subsequently be put into effect.

Metric-related SAO's are obviously not assessed in the same way, yet are carefully scrutinized in a mathematical fashion in order to extract every nuance of implication that can be perceived. Metric-related results are often extremely useful for future planning purposes or in justifying current processes.

_____

3. Have the SAO assessment results indicated the need to change or modify components of the program? If so, were the changes implemented?

_____

The Assessment/Testing area is not one that lends itself easily to a wide variety of non-metric-related SAO topics. Through the years, the main SAO topic for the Center has slowly evolved from that of students' satisfaction with their test results to the subject of how students pre-review for their placement tests. One SAO, pertaining to the subject of students' pre-reviewing, is repeated each year for comparative purposes and serves as a report card showing how well the Center is communicating with students on this issue. Each year, added survey questions have fine-tuned this SAO's student survey. Student responses have prompted the Center in becoming more proactive in its methods of persuading students to pre-review. These methods mainly revolve around the placement and dissemination of testing information materials, as well as in-office discussions with students regarding test preparation, both before and after assessing for the first time. One concrete example of the Center's proactivity is when the Center, in order to reach as wide an audience as possible on the subject, requested that the Admissions Office insert a test preparation link into their welcoming e-mail that is sent out to each new applicant. This "extension" of the influence of the Assessment/Testing Center was implemented, and since more students are pre-reviewing for their tests than ever before, it must be assumed that the addition of this link has served its purpose and, in some way, been beneficial to the cause.

Additionally, one SAO from last year, which dealt with metrics, concerned students who re-test. The analysis of the metrics revealed that a large majority of students who re-test score higher and place into higher-level courses. Prior to this documentation, there was a negative attitude toward students being allowed to re-test at will. This was prompted, no doubt, by the cost of the test units themselves. In previous years, when the budget was an overwhelming issue, it was once thought that re-testing should be even more restricted than established policy allowed because it was considered a "waste of money." The analysis of these metrics showed that it is well worth the extra dollars for students to re-test, as indeed, they do improve their placements substantially. While these results have not changed any testing components, they have provided justification to continue the re-test process as it is.

_____

Program Improvement
Explain what changes need to be considered to improve the program.

1. What activities has the program engaged in to improve services to students?

_____

The main activity that the program has engaged in to improve services to students has been in the use of the direct student survey, both paper-and-pencil and computerized, to acquire student feedback. In particular, the utilization of open-ended questions has provided the most useful, thoughtful, and honest responses. It is here that students indicate what is wrong with your idyllic set-up. Although generally complimentary, a small percentage of students offer responses that

give much food for thought. Out of such responses, a variety of changes have been made to the Assessment/Testing Center routine, such as having staff discussions regarding ways to improve customer service; instructing students in cellphone etiquette; revising the testing webpage; performing sanitation tasks in the Testing Lab, such as cleaning the monitors and keyboards; revising verbal and written test instructions for clarity and ease of understanding; increasing the number of hourly employees at peak periods to facilitate the testing process for students; communicating re-testing procedures more clearly; making the out-going phone messages more efficient by creating a telephone branching system; creating a listing of links to sample questions and study websites; and supplying the Information Desk in the lobby of the Student Services Center Building with a variety of test information hand-out's. The most recent Student Opinion Survey (2014) suggests the following future improvements to the Program: create a hand-out which explains each section of the test more clearly; pursue the placement of a small campus map on the Testing Webpage, showing the location of the Center; distribute test information guides at the high school via the El Camino College Office of School Relations; continue to persist in trying to get the room temperature adjusted; and when the volume of students being tested permits, seat students every other seat to give them more "space." Some students indicated that they would like to have immediate counseling available and that they would avail themselves of tutoring services. The Counseling Division has pointedly instructed us on more than one occasion not to send students to them for "immediate" counseling (unless the students have a pressing issue). The Division prefers to have students set up online appointments for a later date. As well, setting up tutoring for students who are not yet enrolled would also be problematic, but something that could possibly be considered for the future.

An additional activity, which has proved fruitful, as well as useful, is in the exploration of processes that other campuses utilize—particularly through the reading of discussion boards— such as the ACCUPLACER Discussion Board (supported and provided by the College Board), observing processes during off-site visits, or simply by networking with other testing personnel at off-campus workshops or via telephone conversations. While no improvements have yet to have been inspired through this exploratory side-activity, all comparisons to other programs' procedures have usually shown our processes to be superior.

_____

2. How have program personnel used metrics to improve program services? (Provide metrics from the last four years).

_____

The main use of metrics in the Assessment/Testing Center has been to track busy and slow periods for staffing purposes. This allows the budget to be used as economically as possible and ensures that the office is amply staffed for peak efficiency at all times.

As a side-note, it has been noticed that whenever there is a surge or drop in the number of students testing just prior to each semester or session, this is a fairly reliable indicator for a similar surge or drop in registration numbers. During each registration period, it has become useful to follow testing numbers on a regular basis and compare them to previous periods in

order to assist Divisions, such as Humanities, in deciding whether or not to increase or reduce the number of available class sections for the upcoming semester or session. (See attached Metrics Chart.)

_____

3. If applicable, explain any patterns in student success, retention, and persistence in terms of student characteristics and program objectives and discuss planned responses or changes.

_____

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning has the responsibility and resources available to track and explain student patterns of student success, retention, and persistence. The only instance in which the Assessment/Testing Center can offer proof of a pattern of persistence and success is via the previously mentioned SAO, in which it was found that a majority of students who re-test tend to score higher and place into higher-level courses.

_____

Program Environment

1. Discuss the program environment, including the relationship among program staff and students and involvement with other programs or support areas.

_____

Each classified or non-certificated employee in the Assessment/Testing Center serves a particular function. The Supervisor organizes, coordinates, and observes the activities of the Center. The Assessment/Testing Center Assistant is responsible for all technical aspects of the assessment program, which include programming the testing set-up for ACCUPLACER for both El Camino College and the El Camino College Compton Center, uploading all data into Colleague for both campuses, and training new users on the ACCUPLACER System.

The two Clerical Assistants are front-line employees, who interact directly with students who come to test. They sign-up students to test, answer questions, provide test results, answer the phones, look up past records and provide copies to students, process all paperwork, etc. In addition, these three classified employees administer the paper-and-pencil-based exams, such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language Institutional Testing Program (TOEFL ITP) Exam for the El Camino Language Academy and the Chemistry Placement Test.

The English as a Second Language (ESL) Coordinator (funded 75% by Testing and 25% by the Humanities Division) handles all students needing ESL assessment. The ESL Coordinator sets a schedule with ESL faculty members who participate in the assessment process by doing both the oral interviews and grading the writing samples. In addition, the Coordinator is responsible for managing all ESL testing and orientation sessions, as well as entering all test results from these sessions into Colleague. During peak registration periods, the Coordinator also assists ESL students in registering into classes.

Lastly, the non-certificated hourly employees are scheduled in support of the aforementioned permanent staff members and perform the same tasks as they do. Their work schedules range from one to three days per week, depending upon the volume of students coming into the Center to be assessed.

The Assessment/Testing Center Staff interacts with several other programs and support areas: Humanities Division (supplying metrics), Math Division (coordinating testing for special projects and groups), International Student Program (provide placement testing for all new incoming international students twice per year), El Camino Language Academy (provide placement testing and the TOEFL ITP Exam), Special Resource Center (refer students who need test accommodations that can only be provided by them; receive documentation regarding students requiring additional testing time for paper-and-pencil exams), Office of Outreach and School Relations (interact regarding off-campus on-line testing during the months from December through May for Summer and Fall), Counseling Center (refer students after completing placement tests; provide large testing room for counseling workshops), Admissions & Records Office (update testing information distributed by Admissions to students; request assistance regarding individual students), and the Office of Institutional Research and Planning (completion of validation and disproportionate impact studies).

As indicated, the Assessment/Testing Center staff has direct daily contact with students. Staff must remain current on processes and programs both inside and outside of the Center, so as to assure that proper referrals are made after testing is completed.

Other locations are aware of our heavy interaction with students and often ask us to provide brochures or notices to students for their programs and services, particularly those dealing with test preparation, advisement, orientation, special opportunities made available through the Divisions of Humanities and Mathematical Sciences, and other programs designed for student success such as First Year Experience (FYE) and the Summer Math Academy. Both FYE and the Summer Math Academy recruit and invite students into their programs based upon placement test results.

At the same time, the Supervisor must follow administrative mandates and interact with the specifications of Information Technology Services (ITS).
_____

    2. Describe the number and type of staff and faculty (include current organizational chart).
_____

The staff of the Assessment/Testing Center consists of ten employees (5 permanent full-time and 5 non-certificated part-time): 1 Supervisor, 1 Assessment/Testing Center Assistant, 2 Clerical Assistants, 1 ESL Coordinator, and 5 non-certificated hourly employees. The Supervisor reports to the Dean of Enrollment Services, who in turn, reports to the Vice-President of Student and Community Advancement. (See attached Organizational Chart.)

_____

   3. Describe facilities or equipment needs for the next four years.
_____

FACILITIES:

The current testing facility is quite adequate for the basic needs of the Assessment/Testing Center for the next three to four years.
EQUIPMENT NEEDS:

The computer replacement cycle generally runs on a five- to six-year basis (2005, 2011). Although all 44 of the computers in our Testing Lab were replaced in the Summer of 2011, they will need to be replaced again, due to the fact that Microsoft will cease supporting Windows operating systems older than Windows 7 after April 8, 2014. The present computers are all XP. As well, Technical Support for ACCUPLACER, the placement test software that is used by the College, has indicated that they will no longer support users with older operating systems, such as XP, for the same reason.

Additionally, although the actual facility is adequate for the basic needs of the Assessment/Testing Center, service to students could be greatly improved at peak periods if there were more computer stations available. Thusly, it has been requested that six (6) additional computer stations be added to the Lab now, rather than waiting for the move to the new building in the Fall of 2017 (or beyond). This would then provide a total of fifty (50) computer stations for heavy periods of testing, as well as increasing the number of students who can be assessed at once when special groups are brought to the campus to take their placement tests.

At present, all the rest of the office equipment (fax, shredder, copiers, etc.) is functioning as it should. The Center has no additional equipment needs beyond the mandated computer equipment replacement.

_____

   4. Describe how well the scheduled hours of availability meet student demand and indicate the specific hours the program operates.
_____

The Assessment/Testing Center provides approximately 40 hours of available testing time and approximately 45 hours of open office time each week for students. These totals reflect an increase over the hours during the previous Program Review period, which were 33 hours of available testing time and 37 hours of open office time. Even during more challenging budgetary periods, the Center has always made the effort to accommodate all students who present themselves for testing during the open sign-in hours. Only those who arrive after posted hours have been turned away. According to responses by students on the current Program Review Student Opinion Survey (2014), 97% indicated that the sign-in hours have adequately met their needs. However, there were four students out of the 331 who were surveyed that indicated testing should either begin earlier and/or run later. It should be noted here that the Vice President of

Student and Community Advancement mandates the hours for the Assessment/Testing Center, so there is not too much flexibility in that regard. However, it should also be noted that there is an unadvertised flexibility in the testing hours, which is put into effect on a case-by-case basis. If a student arrives after the sign-up cut-off time, we may offer him/her the option of being able to take one test (instead of two) or perhaps one section, depending upon how late he/she has arrived. The student may then come back another day to take a second test, if required. For students who inquire ahead of time, indicating that they cannot come during the regular hours, an appointment can be made for the student to come in 30-45 minutes past the cut-off time, so that he/she may complete at least one test and a second one on a return trip. Since the testing hours on Wednesday run later, students are usually encouraged to schedule these special appointments on a Wednesday.

The Assessment/Testing Center has two sets of hours—regular Office Hours and the more specific Testing Sign-In Hours:

<div align="center">

Office Hours:

</div>

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 9:00 am - 6:00 pm
Wednesdays: 9:00 am - 7:00 pm
Fridays: 9:00am - 4:30pm

<div align="center">

Testing Sign-In Hours:

</div>

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Wednesdays: 10:00 am - 5:00 pm
Fridays: 9:00am - 1:00pm

_____

5. Describe the influences that external factors such as state laws, changing demographics, and the characteristics of the students served have on the program and services and how the program addresses these factors.

_____

STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

Indeed, there are external factors, which affect the Testing Program, the most prominent of which are items of Federal and State Legislation. Most recently, the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012 (aka SB1456, aka Student Success and Support Program, aka SSSP), formerly known as Matriculation, has begun being implemented. It has two main stipulations. Firstly, this State Legislation requires students new to college to complete an orientation, assessment, and an educational plan. It is anticipated that many more students than usual will be taking their placement tests during SB1456's inaugural period (November 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014). Secondly, as a condition of receiving future State funds, the Senate Bill requires colleges to adopt CCCAssess (or "common assessment") when it becomes available. This new testing

instrument will provide centralized assessment and centralized access to placement testing data for all of the California Community Colleges.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

In order to satisfy the assessment requirements of SB1456, the main focus of change will be to the work-hours of the hourly Assessment/Testing Center employees. As per during peak periods, their hours will need to be expanded as much as possible to accommodate the needs of the Center. However, as of July 1, 2013, all hourly employees on campus are now limited to a maximum of 25 hours per week. This change is a result of the new Federal *Affordable Care Act*. This limitation on hours will surely hamper the ability to provide enough Center coverage until additional hourly or an additional classified employee can be added to the Testing Staff.

FINANCIAL AID LEGISLATIONAL CHANGES

Additionally, legislational changes to federal Financial Aid requirements in 2011 and 2012 dictated both the manner in which Ability-To-Benefit (ATB) Tests were administered to students, as well as specifying those who were qualified to take them. The Testing Staff had to go through extensive training for administering ATB Tests due to the 2012 legislation. The 2013 legislation more or less dismantled the ATB testing, so the office has gone from one extreme to the other.

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS AND ACADEMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Changing demographics and the academic characteristics of the students can perhaps affect the levels of classes to be offered and may require the adjustment of placement cut-off scores. These major types of changes would also necessitate programming modifications within the ACCUPLACER testing set-ups for El Camino College and the El Camino College Compton Center, as well as modifications required within Colleague dealing with pre-requisite changes and data uploading issues.

Lastly, the Assessment/Testing Center is an "equal opportunity" facility. All who present themselves (with appropriate picture ID and an ECC ID number) are tested. For those students who may require the assistance of the Special Resource Center in order to navigate through the assessment process, the Testing Staff continues to facilitate these referrals in a timely manner.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Present a brief summary of the program's strengths and areas for improvement. List all recommendations in a prioritized manner for subsequent placement into the program's annual plan.

1. Summarize the program's strength and areas that need improvement.

_____

The main strength of the Testing Program lies in the fact that students are provided with a state-of-the-art testing experience, as well as user-friendly testing software, and the proper ambiance in which to take their tests. Students may test on a drop-in basis with results becoming available immediately after completion of testing. The testing data is uploaded to Colleague on a daily basis. There is some stress-relief embedded in the process, as students are greeted by a friendly staff and the tests are not timed. As well, students may opt to take all of their tests in one sitting or may complete them over a period of two or more days.

In regard to areas that need improvement, there is always something that can be improved upon. Unfortunately, the flip side of our main strength is also our biggest weakness—power outages, the crashing of website servers, and a multitude of other unanticipated events can cause computer systems to go awry, and the wonderful convenience of computers is dramatically reversed. In these situations, students are very much inconvenienced and a smoothly running process is suddenly thrown into chaos. There's not much that can be done to prevent the unpreventable except for the occasional situation where something might be anticipated. If luck is present, these things will not occur during a peak testing period.

_____

2. List prioritized recommendations. (Provide proposed organizational chart if appropriate).

_____

All of the following Program Review recommendations have been placed into Plan-Builder for 2014-2015. Eight (8) of the items require funding beyond the regular Assessment/Testing Center budget. This additional funding may come from the Vice-President's budget, the Bond, the Graduation Initiative, or from presently undetermined sources.

Additionally, completion of three of the items (#6, #10, and #14) was accelerated due to unusual circumstances. However, it was decided to keep the original listing intact, with inclusion of completion dates.

PR#1: To replace all computers in the Testing Lab by April 2014, per current mandate that all computer equipment on Campus be Windows 7-compatible by that date. New computers must also be compatible with future "common assessment" software specifications.

PR#2: To add six additional computers to the Testing Lab.

PR#3: To request a permanent restoration of $5,000 to the hourly Testing non-cert Account (-2340). [This is a repeat of PR Rec #1 from Fall 2010, which requested a permanent restoration of $10,000 to the Testing non-cert account.]

PR#4: To add an additional Clerical Assistant to the Assessment Center Staff or expand the non-cert pool of employees.

PR#5: To add to the Testing Webpage the ACCUPLACER e-mail link that will allow students to access and print out their Individual Score Reports.

PR#6: To add a second telephone to the Assessment Center front counter.
[Completed 11/21/13.]

PR#7: To explore feasibility of the Admissions Office sending out a batch file e-mail to all new applicants, which would include a listing of test review website links and a .pdf of the goldenrod sample test.

PR#8: To add multiple e-mail links to the main Testing Webpage for students asking questions on specific test-related topics, so that they will forward to an appropriate responder, instead of all questions being channeled to the Testing Office Supervisor. For example, ESL questions would forward to the ESL Coordinator for response.

PR#9: To devise a more efficient student sign-in system for peak periods.

PR#10: To program phones for peak times, so that calls go directly into message with pertinent testing information; at end of message, students would stay on line, while phone rings through to office.
[Completed 12/18/13.]

PR#11: To create a supervisor's procedural manual for future office reference.

PR#12: To purge and re-organize all testing reference files, so that information can be quickly and easily found.

PR#13: To have ITS add student name, student ID number, and actual placements (or link to placement flowcharts) to MyECC WebAdvisor » Grades, Tests & Ed Plan » Test Summary.

PR#14: To install wired numeric keypads (7) to each of the front counter and staff computers in the Assessment Center.
[Completed 1/30/14.]

PR#15: To explore the feasibility of students making on-line appointments for paper-and-pencil tests, such as the Chemistry Placement.

PR#16: To install a scanner in the office to facilitate e-mailing forms and test results to students.

PR#17: To convert appropriate testing forms into .pdf fillable versions.

PR#18: To create a .pdf of the goldenrod sample test and add it to our website, so students may access it from off-campus.

PR#19: To replace carpeting in entrance lobby and office area of the Assessment Center.

PR#20: To send out testing information and updates via Facebook and Twitter.

_____

3. _X__ Continue Program

___ Discontinue Program (Explain how the program's services could be handled by other services on campus if the program has been declining or is no longer fully utilized.)

_____

V. Lockridge
02/11/2014