

## Information for Students

# ***WHAT WE'RE LEARNING ABOUT STUDENT LEARNING*** **Mesa Community College Student Outcomes Assessment Program**

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### **What is the MCC student assessment program?**

Student outcomes assessment is a term used to describe measuring and documenting what MCC students are achieving overall in their studies at the college. Faculty members define the outcomes of college programs and develop measures to assess them. The program includes three primary assessment areas - general education, career and technical education, and developmental education.

### **What is assessed?**

For students pursuing their general education studies at the college, seven areas are assessed: Written and Oral Communication, Arts and Humanities, Cultural Diversity, Information Literacy, Scientific Inquiry, Numeracy, Problem Solving/Critical Thinking.

For students enrolled in a career or technical program, seven workplace skills are assessed: Ethics, Interpersonal Communication, Critical Thinking, Organization, Team Work, Technology Literacy, Personal and Professional Responsibilities.

### **Who is assessed?**

For general education, the performance of groups of students who are beginning their general studies is compared to that of groups of students who are completing their general education. For career and technical programs, students who are beginning and completing specific programs leading to AAS degrees or certificates are assessed on their workplace skills.

### **Assessment Week 2007: February 26-March 3rd**

MCC's Eleventh Annual Assessment Week is scheduled for February 26 through March 3, 2007. A sample of classes will participate in one of the general education or workplace skills assessments.

### **What can students expect?**

Students are asked to take one of the assessments during one class period.

- It is important for students to make an honest effort to complete the assessments to the best of their ability so that the information collected is meaningful.
- Individual student scores are not reported, and a student's grade or class standing is not affected by his or her performance.
- Students are asked to provide background information about themselves so that the assessment data can be analyzed to be sure that the students who participated are representative of the whole student population.

## **What do the results show?**

The Mesa Community College Student Outcomes Assessment Program provides clear evidence of student learning at the college! Assessments are given in Information Literacy, Numeracy, Problem Solving, Scientific Inquiry, Oral communication, Written Communication, Cultural Diversity and Arts and Humanities. Students enrolled in Career and Technical programs participate in workplace skills assessment.

Highlights from the results include the following:

- In all assessment areas, the mean scores of completing students are significantly higher than the scores of beginning students.
- Critical thinking scores are significantly higher for completing students and are similar to the community college comparison cohort.
- The assessment results show that using results, making conclusions based upon information, making inferences, and using information effectively are relatively more difficult outcome areas.
- Students are relatively more skilled in the use of numeric models, evaluating information for currency, relevancy and reliability and distinguishing between possible reasons for a problem
- Completing students show a stronger sense of social obligation. They agree more strongly that they can improve the world, that voting in national elections is critical, and that interaction with people from different backgrounds is valuable. Student scores are higher on items related to knowledge of cultural differences.
- Students are relatively more skilled in making and supporting personal observations than in recognizing opposing positions and seeing topics in a broad perspective.
- Student scores are relatively higher for interpersonal communication when compared to team work and group interaction.
- When examining results across measures students have the most difficulty with skills involving the use, application and/or evaluation of knowledge.

### **Assessment Week 2007: February 26-March 3**

MCC's Eleventh Annual Assessment Week is scheduled for February 26 through March 3. A sample of classes will again participate in one of the general education or workplace skills assessments. Through the cooperation of the students and faculty members in these classes, the college will be able to continue to refine the assessment program, document student learning, and identify areas for improvement.

The findings are published in an annual report each fall and used by MCC faculty to document student success and to determine how programs can be improved. Summaries of results are posted on the assessment web site.

[www.mc.maricopa.edu/orp/](http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/orp/)