

Matriculation Committee Assessment Policy Recommendation
Fall 2013

Problem: The Matriculation Committee has recently recognized that the current assessment policy for the college is somewhat unspecific and unrestrictive. As a result, it is proposed that the current policy be revised in an effort to provide more structured and clear guidelines regarding the process of assessment. Specifically, three issues have arisen as a result of the lack of specificity in the current policy; as identified by the assessment center staff.

- It has been quite customary for students to re-take the assessment in an effort to bypass a course of which they have already attempted three times. For instance, a student who has attempted Math 942 three times and has not successfully passed the course, may elect to reassess in an effort to “test out of” Math 942 as opposed to taking the Math 942 equivalent at an institution outside of the district. The committee has recognized that in some cases it is possible for students to utilize external resources (i.e. online practice videos) to sharpen their skills in a designated area and then in turn assess higher. However, it is also probable that students simply may study “for a test” like the assessment and not fully gain the rudimentary skill set to pass a course higher than the course they initially placed into.

Note: Unfortunately, this issue has solely been identified via student self-report to assessment staff. Despite the fact that this clearly can be problematic, the committee understands that it would be exceedingly difficult to actual monitor whether a student is re-taking the assessment for this purpose devoid of staff reviewing transcripts.

- Currently, the assessment policy reads, ***Students may be reassessed once when one of the following conditions exist: (1) When one full year has elapsed from previous tests; (2) When recommended by the department chair or division dean to retake the test; (3) When recommended by the Student Policy and Scholastic Standards Committee in accordance with the exemption permitted by the SBVC Policy of Assessment.***

Initially in reading the first part of this policy, “***Students may be reassessed once***” it appeared as though a student could not take the assessment more than once. However, in actuality, as long as one full year has elapsed, a student can continue to take the assessment once. Therefore, the way the policy is currently written, a student could legitimately reassess once per year; and the assessment center staff and Dean of Counseling and Matriculation has confirmed this to be both true and frequent.

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As a result, an investigation by the Matriculation Committee Co-Chair has been conducted in an effort to identify the average number of times our local community colleges allow a student to reassess. It was determined that on average most community colleges within our region do not allow a student to reassess more than twice within the student's entire duration at the college. In fact, oftentimes, it was indicated that a student is only afforded one time to reassess.

- Lastly, based on the existent policy, a student is permitted to use other assessment scores from another California Community College within 2 years of testing, devoid of any restriction on the number of and/or frequency of reassessments. In other words, a student may decide to reassess at multiple colleges via "assessment shopping" and continually get these scores cleared by a counselor in an effort to register for the highest level course possible in that the current policy does not identify any restriction. For example, a student tests in Math 942 at SBVC and decides that they want to reassess at Chaffey to possibly earn a higher score. The student then assesses into the equivalent of Math 952 and then decides that they feel they could still assess higher. As a result, they reassess at MSJC and test into the equivalent of Math 090. Based on the fact that there is no regulation in the current policy indicating how many times a student could submit new scores for clearance, the student may be cleared using as many assessment results as they submit. Additionally, the student currently is not required to allow any specific length of time to elapse prior to the submission of new scores for clearance. Therefore, in the example provided above, this student could very easily have reassessed at all three of these colleges within a short period of time.

Matriculation Committee Recommendation: Based on a comprehensive series of discussions and vote, the Matriculation Committee is proposing to revise the current Assessment Policy in an attempt to (a) be more in alignment with our surrounding community colleges and (b) appropriately account for the myriad of issues that have emanated from a lack of policy specificity predominantly inclusive of those mentioned above.

- It is proposed that students who assess at SBVC may be permitted to reassess once within the first year of matriculation to the college. However, assessment scores will expire after two years if courses in Math, English and/or Reading are not completed. Furthermore, assessment results from colleges outside of the San Bernardino Community College District will not be permitted for use.

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Note: The recommendation that scores from other community colleges will not be used stems from the concern of both multiple score submissions as well as a significant difference in cut scores across the system in Math, English and Reading. Despite the fact, that the mass majority use Accuplacer, cut scores are altogether different. Therefore, it may be within the college's best interest to simply utilize their own assessment.

Initially the recommendation by the committee was that Crafton scores would also be excluded from use. However, Crafton scores automatically upload to our system (Datatel) and it has been confirmed that it would not be an easy nor smooth process to export Crafton scores to replace them with SBVC scores. Although, it also must be admitted that the committee is reluctant in accepting Crafton scores due to a discernible difference in cut scores. Regarding this issue, the committee's first preference is to not accept scores from Crafton; however, will enlist the consultation of Academic Senate regarding this matter.