

Reading 052: College Reading Learning Outcomes Assessment Project Executive Summary

Stage 1: Designing and Proposing a Learning Outcomes Project

This assessment of learning outcomes for students enrolled in Reading (RDNG) 052 was conducted for the Developmental Education Program during the fall 2001 and 2003 semesters. The assessment tools chosen by the reading faculty team included two standardized instruments: the Nelson- Denny Reading Test (Forms G and H) and the Learning Attitudes and Study Skills Inventory (LASSI). Both instruments are normed at the national level and therefore are considered both reliable and valid.

Stage 2: Implementing the Design and Collecting and Analyzing the Data

In fall 2001, the reading faculty, including full time and adjunct from all three of CCBC campuses, participated in administering the assessment tools. The LASSI results were very similar to the results previously obtained via two semesters of a Reading LOA pilot project. The data showed significant improvement from pre to post on most of the LASSI subscales. Thus it was determined that this tool was not necessary to include in further assessment. Each time the LASSI was administered, students demonstrated significant improvement from pre to post-test.

The mean pre-test score on the Nelson–Denny for all CCBC students was 24.4 (8.9 grade level equivalent), and the mean post-score was 27.9 (9.6 grade level equivalent). The mean pre-test/post-test difference of 3.5 was statistically significant at the .001 level. In 74% of the cases, the post-test score was greater than the pre-test score. This resulted in a grade level increase of 0.7 for CCBC students in fall 2001. Mean grade level increases for fall 2001 varied considerably among the campuses.

Stage 3: Redesigning the Course to Improve Student Learning

The data clearly showed that students were learning in RDNG 052 and their reading levels improved significantly from the beginning to the end of the semester. Disaggregating the data by campus provided evidence that students involved in a highly interactive lab component and the use of challenging and relevant reading assignments were more successful than their peers in a more traditional setting.

Stage 4: Implementing Course Revisions and Reassessing Student Learning

The recommendation was made to include more computer-assisted instruction and to incorporate relevant readings that challenged the students' literal reading skills. By fall 2003, the reading faculty team felt that the interventions had been successfully implemented and that it was time to reassess to determine if the interventions improved student learning.

Stage 5: Final Analysis and Reporting Results

The analysis of data provided by the Planning, Research and Evaluation Office shows that the interventions have led to significant improvement in student reading levels (as seen in the chart below). The mean 2003 pre-score on the Nelson–Denny for all CCBC students was 24.2 (8.1 grade level equivalent), and the mean post-test score was 28 (10.1 grade level equivalent). The mean pre-test/post-test difference was 3.7 points, which was statistically significant at the .001 level. In 75% of the cases, the post-test score was greater than the pre-test score. This resulted in an overall grade level increase of two (2) grade levels for CCBC RDNG 052 students in fall 2003.

The RDNG 052 faculty plan to use the information from this LOA project to continue to improve student learning in this course by re-examining the placement cut scores, encouraging professional development in Culturally Mediated Instruction, and establishing a uniform exit exam.