

## Chapter Three



### Starting Points: Digging the Foundation

#### Where are you now?

Many of the people we know who work with basic skills students are incredibly hard-working and passionate about building structures that serve this special population. Sometimes they are also underappreciated by their college community, who is bewildered by the increasing numbers of basic skills students in their classes or programs and want to know why basic skills courses, programs and the people who staff them haven't "fixed" the problem. In addition to laboring under this burden, data show that many basic skills faculty are adjuncts. According to research listed in *Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges*, 67% of the faculty teaching basic skills nationwide are part time (Center for Student Success, 2007, p. 21).

The dedicated adjuncts in California often fly down the freeway to teach at more than one school, doing excellent work with their students but without the time to participate in college governance and departmental discussions about basic skills teaching and assessment. Finally, as in all academic endeavors, the faculty, student service providers and administrators working with basic skills students approach the work with a plethora of methods and attitudes.

Most of the methods used to meet the needs of basic skills students embrace the fact that teaching students today requires more than just content preparation. This is a secret that faculty unfamiliar with basic skills students may not know. "Based on their preparation, college and university faculty may believe they can communicate the information in their subject fields because they have acquired extensive knowledge about the content." (Travis, 1995, p. 3) However, it is clear that content mastery by faculty, as extensive and important as that may be, does not translate into functional student services or teaching effectiveness. Just as a thorough knowledge of the building plan in any structure is important, ultimately knowledge alone will not guarantee a perfectly constructed high rise. It is essential that faculty diagnose difficulties students are having with content and mastering skills essential to academic endeavors and then adapt the learning environment and teaching strategies. This is the scholarship of teaching and learning.

"Imagine a different way of thinking about institutional research as a capacity to work closely with faculty to explore questions about what students are actually learning. Such a shift would mean asking much tougher, more central questions: What do our students know, and

what can they do? What do they understand deeply? What kinds of human beings are they becoming — intellectually, morally, in terms of civic responsibility? How does our teaching shape their experience as learners, and how might it do so more effectively? At Los Medanos College, for example, getting better information to guide improvement has been part of a shift of focus from ‘the underprepared student’ to the prepared institution.” (Hutchings and Shulman, 2008, p. 1)

As a place to begin, we’d like you to take the short self-assessment quiz on the following page. This quiz will give faculty, staff and administrators an opportunity to test their knowledge about basic skills students in California Community Colleges. The goal is to appraise your knowledge, attitudes and practices in relation to a focus on student learning. Because our roles in serving students are so diverse, some of the self-assessment questions are more meaningful to instruction, but from a student learning perspective, every interaction with students can become a learning opportunity. This includes counseling sessions, registration interactions and classroom activities. Following the quiz are two rubrics with specific considerations, the first for student services settings and the second for instructional settings.



So, let’s start with a quiz!

What kind of builder are you?

This test will be most helpful if you answer the questions honestly, describing how you truly are, not how you’d like to be.

Then we want to encourage you to take this quiz again after you have done some reading or training to see if you have changed or expanded your repertoire of building strategies as a result of the information included here.

## Self-Assessment Quiz

General Knowledge about California Community Colleges, Basic Skills Students and Yourself.

### A note about answering these questions:

- **This is anonymous. Answer honestly; no one is looking.**
- **This is self-assessment.**
- **For each question, please select the best answer.**

1. Approximately what percent of California community colleges (CCC) students assess into one or more basic skills course in reading, writing, ESL or mathematics?
  - a. 0%
  - b. 25%
  - c. 35%
  - d. 50%
  - e. Over 70%

2. What percent of the students in your class probably require additional pre-collegiate training in order to be successful in college-level course work?
  - a. 10%
  - b. 20%
  - c. 40%
  - d. 60%
  - e. Over 70%
  
3. The definition of basic skills is: Those foundation skills necessary for students to succeed in college-level work in
  - a. Reading
  - b. Writing
  - c. Mathematics
  - d. English as a Second Language (ESL)
  - e. Any of the disciplines above as well as learning and study skills
  
4. How many students who start three or more levels below college level actually make it to a college-level course?
  - a. Less than 10%
  - b. 15% - 30%
  - c. Approximately 40%
  - d. Over 60%
  - e. 80% or more
  
5. What is the AVERAGE number of hours our CCC students work per week? (as reported by the CCC Chancellor's Office)
  - a. 8 hours/week
  - b. 16 hours per week
  - c. 24 hours per week
  - d. 28 hours per week
  - e. 32 hours per week
  
6. Which of the following is true of students with basic skills needs in California community colleges?
  - a. They generally assess uniformly low on placement tests in all areas; reading, writing, mathematics, and ESL.
  - b. They may assess low on placement tests in one discipline while testing at college level in other areas (i.e. a college-level writer but require additional work in mathematics).
  - c. They are easily identifiable in our classes by sex, age or ethnicity.
  - d. They usually have learning and study skills necessary to succeed in college-level work.
  - e. They are found only in the community colleges and are only rarely found at the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) campuses.

7. Which of the following is true about student success in basic skills courses?
  - a. The success rate in basic skill classes is the same as other college class success rates.
  - b. Ethnic diversity has no effect on student success in basic skills.
  - c. There are obvious and very different success patterns in basic skills courses based on ethnicity.
  - d. Students that take basic skills classes always do better in the college-level classes.
  - e. The majority of basic skills students complete the entire basic skills class sequence.
  
8. Latina/o students represent the fastest growing population of community college students (averaging 27% of CCC students statewide but up to 85% at some individual colleges). Approximately what percent of Latina/o students and parents were unable to name even ONE source of financial aid funding?
  - a. 5% -15%
  - b. 16% -30%
  - c. 31% -45%
  - d. 46% -50%
  - e. 51% -65%

#### **Self-assessment**

- **Answer these questions realistically with regards to your present work.**
  - **Select the answer that most closely represents your belief and practice.**
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9. In the courses I teach and/or in the work that I do with students (e.g. , as a counselor, librarian) I consider student learning styles:
    - a. Irrelevant with no conclusive research.
    - b. Possibly significant, but I don't know much about them.
    - c. Valid, but the students should adapt learning styles to teaching styles.
    - d. Important, but I don't know how to incorporate them into my class or work with students.
    - e. Essential, I include students learning style analysis opportunities for students and I adapt my work in consideration of various learning styles.
  
  10. I inform students about expectations by:
    - a. Referring students to the student expectations in the catalog or student handbook.
    - b. Informally discussing my overall expectations with the students.
    - c. Providing clearly documented expectations specific to the situation (e.g., instructions, process handout, syllabus, or rubric).
    - d. Describing a wide range of expected student behaviors associated with academic achievement, intellectual and psychosocial development, and personal responsibilities.
    - e. All of the above.

11. Concerning the design of your course or the way you interact with students in student services, which is **most** true? (Select the single answer that best represents your practice.)
- I have worked hard to create the course organization or student interaction dynamics as it is now and I am satisfied with my work.
  - I have worked on my interactions with students/course design and attempt to assess its effectiveness, but have been unable to incorporate assessments or any changes.
  - I regularly reassess my interactions with students/course design, content, and strategies.
  - I regularly reassess my course content, design and teaching strategies then document and share those changes and the data that led me to make them with my colleagues.
  - I adopted my course design or student interaction style from a senior faculty member and it has served me well.

12. On a **regular basis**, in my work with students, I **require** them to

<p>I. Work collaboratively or join a learning community</p> <p>II. Review and analyze their work</p> <p>III. Create projects or products involving multiple components of high-level application</p> <p>IV. Turn in written work</p> <p>V. Examine complex problems or case studies</p>	<p>VI. Communicate with me via e-mail or office visit</p> <p>VII. Give oral presentations</p> <p>VIII. Participate in field trips or observations of current relevant applications</p> <p>IX. Attend at least one office hour</p> <p>X. Become involved in campus or community activities (service learning)</p>
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- None of the above are required
- One of the above is required
- A few of the above are required
- I require at least 5 of the above
- I require all of the above in my work with students

13. In my work with students I

- Do not have planned assessments.
- Occasionally assess students.
- Limit assessments to final summative assessments such as exams or final report.
- Assess students frequently, including formative and summative assessment.
- Assess students frequently in a variety of different ways (projects, labs, quizzes, case studies), taking into account various learning styles, simulating real world tasks that relate to my course material.
- 

14. The feedback I provide students is

- Oral only.
- Written only.
- Either oral or written depending on the situation.
- Either oral or written feedback and within hours or a couple of days at most.
- Some form of oral or written feedback as quickly as possible and based upon criteria or a rubric with diagnostic and specific information.

15. I consult with colleagues on my work with students
  - a. Very infrequently or Never.
  - b. Occasionally.
  - c. In department meetings.
  - d. When accreditation or program review requires dialogue.
  - e. On a regular and scheduled basis to improve practice
  
16. I believe that student interactions and classroom instruction should:
  - a. Allow students the opportunity to express what they know.
  - b. Respect diverse talents and ways of learning including potential cultural differences or perspectives.
  - c. Emulate real world experiences, not those unique to academic environments.
  - d. Consider first what the student needs to learn and be able to do, then second what information or content is essential.
  - e. All of the above.
  
17. With regards to professional development dedicated to student success and basic skills:
  - a. I do not participate usually
  - b. There are very few options on our campus, but I would participate
  - c. I participate in some faculty development opportunities on my campus
  - d. I participate in faculty development opportunities in venues outside of my campus
  - e. I participate in faculty development opportunities on my campus and in other venues (such as statewide, national, online or other professional meetings).
  
18. Which of the following would be most beneficial to increasing student success in your area of work?
  - a. Principles of learning theory.
  - b. Specific pedagogical and student service practices.
  - c. Holistic student development.
  - d. Culturally responsive teaching theory and practices.
  - e. Curricular and program alignment strategies.

(A matrix linking these self-assessment questions to the *Effective Practices in Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges* and other seminal literature is found in the appendix).



## Examining our Practices

The following exercises use a series of rubrics to stimulate self evaluation with regard to effective practices. There are three rubrics and you should complete the rubric or rubrics consistent with the type of student involvement you have.

### Rubric 1: Student Services

The first rubric addresses student service interactions such as counseling, library, financial aid, student clubs and student government, etc.

### Rubric 2: Instructional Services

The second rubric addresses instructional interactions in the classroom, tutoring lab, library, or counseling, etc.

### Rubric 3: Administrative Services

The third rubric addresses administrative duties that direct and support our services and instruction to students. This rubric is in the experimental stages as we try to define the effective practices that enhance and build a foundation for meeting those basic skills needs addressed in the Basic Skills Initiative.

The rubrics below provide another opportunity for self-assessment of our practice based upon important principles of good undergraduate education and principles of good practice for student affairs. Both *The Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education* p. 1-2) and *The Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs* have been supported by research on teaching and learning over the last 50 years (a summary is available in the appendix). These rubrics were developed to educate and diagnose areas of potential improvement. These rubrics are not evaluation tools or used to justify what you are doing, but rather to stimulate us all to keep learning by identifying a few key areas.

The first rubric addresses work in student services, the second rubric addresses instructional work. Some people will need to complete both rubrics to cover the expanse of their work. Please circle the boxes that truly represent your practice, then place a star in the boxes that represent ways you would like to change your practice.

## Student Services Practitioner Self-Assessment Rubric

	Sage Practitioner	Engaged Practitioner	Mentor Practitioner
<b>1. Core Function</b>	I see the core function of my role to serve students.	I see my core function to serve and educate students.	I see my core function to serve and educate students, but also to focus on student learning outcomes.
<b>2. Active Learning</b>	I see my role in student services as providing necessary information and advice for a student to be successful.	I see my role in student services as providing information, advice, and leading the student to make a good decision.	I see my role in student services as providing learning opportunities so that the student can discover information, know when and where to seek advice, and think critically about decisions.
<b>3. Values and Ethical Standards</b>	I do not feel I should participate in ethics and value discussions; this is the purview of the dean of students.	B) I feel the ethics and values discussions are covered well in the student handbook and I address them if a student asks.	I emphasize that college is a learning community with values and ethics meaningful for all of life and I model these for students.
<b>4. Expectations for Student Learning</b>	I want students to be aware of campus learning expectations.	I regularly communicate the high expectations our campus has described in the student handbook or catalogue and mission statement.	I communicate and hold students to high learning expectations by checking in with them and discussing not only our college expectations, but also the student's own personal expectations.
<b>5. Perception about Learning Styles</b>	I have heard about learning styles, but am unclear how to incorporate them into my student interactions.	I understand that students learn differently and have various talents. I want to know more and have spoken with colleagues about strategies	I understand that people learn in different ways and have various talents they use to succeed in college. I believe students need diverse opportunities to show what they have learned and should continue to grow in the way they learn.
<b>6. Systematic Inquiry to Improve</b>	I get evaluated regularly and know how well I do my job.	My work is indirectly assessed through the student satisfaction survey we do periodically.	I regularly assess my work, including student input, and then dialogue with colleagues about results in order to improve.
<b>7. Student Interactions</b>	When talking with students I listen carefully and answer their questions.	In addition to listening carefully and answering questions, I also refer students to the appropriate academic support services.	I listening carefully, answer questions, and refer students to academic support services, while helping students consider learning, academic, and personal goals.
<b>8. Achieving the Institutional Mission and Outcomes</b>	I am very concerned with students but I am not how larger institutional goals are reflected in my work.	I have read the institutional mission and found it interesting or helpful. I am concerned about helping students meet the institutional learning outcomes.	I try to translate policy, such as our institutional mission, into a reality in student lives. I stay current on research and effective practices in human development and learning theory to help my students meet learning outcomes.
<b>9. Interaction with other Student Services and Instructional Faculty</b>	I don't see the advantage of discussing my work with others.	I meet with colleagues occasionally to discuss my work activities and inform other departments about pertinent information.	I regularly share things I am learning and new strategies or learning research with colleagues. I make an effort to forge educational partnerships with colleagues across the campus
<b>10. Faculty Perception of Multicultural Students</b>	I understand that many of my students are from diverse backgrounds with different ways of understanding the material.	I understand that I may need to alter my style to communicate effectively with students from different cultural backgrounds.	I have identified some of the different cultural backgrounds and perspectives among our students. I try to create an inclusive and appreciative learning environment with this in mind.
<b>11. Building Community</b>	I identify myself with the department in which I work.	I have created a few connections with people from other departments, when it has served the student's needs.	I cultivate supportive communities that connect faculty, students and student services colleagues.
<b>12. Commitment to staff development</b>	I occasionally attend professional development activities and conferences.	I attend professional development activities and conferences and bring information back to share with fellow faculty.	I present ideas and research at conferences and campus professional development activities.
<b>13. Faculty commitment to staff development</b>	I occasionally attend professional development activities and conferences.	I attend professional development activities and conferences and bring information back to share with fellow faculty	I presents ideas and research at conferences and campus professional development activities

## Instructional Faculty Self-Assessment Rubric

	Sage Teacher	Engaged Teacher	Mentor Teacher
<b>1. Faculty Perception about Learners</b>	I have heard about learning styles, but am unclear how to incorporate them into my teaching.	I understand that students learn differently and have various talents. I want to know more and have spoken with colleagues about teaching strategies	I understand that people learn in different ways and have various talents they use to succeed in college. I believe students need diverse opportunities to show what they have learned and should continue to grow in the way they learn.
<b>2. Course Design and Documented Student Expectations</b>	I provide statements of course expectations in my syllabus and other course documents and review them the first week of class.	I provide statements of course expectations in my syllabus and other course documents and I attempt to clarify and make them attainable to the students.	I have communicated and documented high expectations for every student in my courses. I try to ensure that the students understand and can meet them.
<b>3. Course Organization</b>	I have worked very hard to get my courses organized and I am satisfied with the way they are.	I assess my own teaching, but have difficulty changing my course organization.	I constantly assess my own teaching and make frequent changes to my course organization to reflect student needs.
<b>4. Faculty Feedback</b>	I provide feedback to the students, but the demands of my course content prohibit in depth discussion.	I offer relevant and instructive feedback, but it is difficult to provide it and help students to make appropriate adjustments.	I provide concise, timely and instructive feedback that affords students opportunities to make appropriate adjustments.
<b>5. Faculty Assessment Practices</b>	I provide three or fewer assessments AND these assessments are of one variety (only exams, for example).	I provide three or fewer assessments OR these assessments are of one variety (only exams, for example).	I assess students frequently and in a variety of ways (projects, labs, quizzes, case studies, Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs), exams, etc.).
<b>6. Assessment Alignment</b>	My assessments are not aligned with the course outcomes.	My assessments are aligned with the course outcomes, but results are not used to make adjustments to my teaching or course design.	I follow a clear cycle in the classroom of teaching, and assessing, then dialoguing about results with colleagues, to make adjustments to the course design and delivery.
<b>7. Student Interactions Outside of Class</b>	When talking with my students during office hours, I listen carefully and answer their questions about course subjects and materials.	In addition to listening carefully and answering questions about course subjects and materials, I also refer students to academic support services.	I listen carefully, answer course subject questions, and refer students to academic support services, as well as, consider learning needs, academic goals, and personal goals.
<b>8. Faculty Interaction with other faculty</b>	I don't see the advantage of discussing assessment techniques or results with colleagues. And I am too busy to examine outside learning research material.	I meet with colleagues occasionally to discuss classroom activities. I read learning research that is sent directly to me.	I regularly share assessment results and new teaching strategies with colleagues. I make an effort to stay current on new learning research.
<b>9. Student Meta-cognition (Thinking about Learning)</b>	I believe this is the responsibility of other departments (first-year experience courses, academic development, counseling, etc.).	My students take assessments to become aware of their learning.	I regularly challenge my student to think about their own learning and provide assessment and guidance to help them understand some of the new learning theories.
<b>10. Faculty Perception of Multicultural Students</b>	I understand that many of my students are from diverse backgrounds with different ways of understanding the material.	I understand that I may need to create new assignments or methods of teaching my course material in order to communicate effectively with students from different cultural backgrounds.	I have identified some of the different cultural backgrounds and perspectives in my classes and ask students to provide input on their diverse viewpoints. I try to use this information to improve my teaching material and strategies.
<b>11. Linkage to the Institution</b>	I am very concerned with my own students but I am not sure what resources are available and how to connect them with campus services, events, and activities.	I sometimes mention services, events or activities on campus that students might find interesting or helpful.	I actively send students to campus services, events and activities and/or create opportunities through class projects or activities.
<b>12. Connection and Integration with Student Services</b>	I can name the services available to help students at my college.	I know the student services available for students and often send them for help to specific services (tutoring, supplemental education, etc).	I have regular communication with faculty and staff in student services and instruction. I see the important connection between instruction and student services and actively facilitate student use of available services.
<b>13. Faculty commitment to staff development</b>	I occasionally attend professional development activities and conferences.	I attend professional development activities and conferences and bring information back to share with fellow faculty	I present ideas and research at conferences and campus professional development activities

## Administrator's Self-Assessment Rubric

	Sage Administrator	Engaged Administrator	Mentor Administrator
<b>1. Basic Skills Initiative an Institutional Priority</b>	I support my institution serving the underprepared student.	I can articulate the goals of the Basic Skills Initiative and I see my role in making the Basic Skills Initiative an institutional priority.	I work with colleagues, faculty, and staff to teach them about the Basic Skills Initiative and to incorporate serving underprepared students as an institutional priority.
<b>2. Shared Philosophy of Basic Skills</b>	I support the philosophy of basic skills.	I can articulate a basic skills philosophy and see my role in building a shared basic skills philosophy in the areas I supervise.	I work with colleagues to help them develop a shared philosophy for basic skills within my own institution and with colleagues across the state at their own institutions.
<b>3. Basic Skills Program Organization</b>	I understand the concept of centralized or highly coordinated basic skills programs.	I can envision and I advocate for a centralized or coordinated the Basic Skills Program at my college.	I am working with colleagues to develop and implement the structure and budgeting necessary for a highly coordinated Basic Skills Program.
<b>4. Early Basic Skills Student Involvement</b>	I recognize the value of early student involvement in basic skills.	I can identify early student involvement strategies that are effective for students with basic skills needs.	I work with faculty and staff colleagues to share and implement effective practices for early student involvement in basic skills.
<b>5. Integration of Instruction and Student Services</b>	I understand the value of integrating instruction and student services to better serve students with basic skills needs.	I work to identify and implement ways to integrate instruction and student services to better serve students with basic skills needs.	I work with faculty and staff colleagues to share effective practices and implement integrated instruction and student services strategies aimed at holistically serving underprepared students.
<b>6. Faculty and Staff Supportive of Basic Skills</b>	I recognize the importance of having faculty and staff who are supportive of the basic skills.	I work with others to ensure that we recruit and hire faculty and staff that are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about basic skills.	I work with colleagues to ensure effective practices in recruitment and to hire faculty and staff who are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about serving the underprepared student.
<b>7. Professional Development</b>	I understand the importance of providing professional development for the basic skills initiative.	I work to ensure that on-going professional development regarding the needs of the basic skills student is provided and available.	I work with colleagues to utilize effective practices in professional development for faculty and staff in meeting the needs of the basic skills student.
<b>8. Faculty and Staff Expectation Regarding Basic Skills</b>	I am learning about the factors that influence basic skills student success and retention.	I can describe some strategies that foster success for all students in all aspects of their chosen academic goals.	I work with colleagues to ensure effective practices for managing faculty and staff expectations for the success of underprepared students.
<b>9. Student Expectations Regarding Basic Skills Needs</b>	I am aware that underprepared students need to understand what they need to be successful in college.	I work to create and implement solid programs that clearly define for underprepared students what they must do to be successful in college.	I work with colleagues to utilize effective practices for programs that clearly prepare underprepared students for success in college.
<b>10. Information Dissemination</b>	I know that there are basic skills efforts being undertaken.	I have collected and read the CCC system-wide information about basic skills initiatives.	I work with colleagues to disseminate information about statewide and national strategies and initiatives to help underprepared students succeed. I understand the importance of an integrated statewide initiative involving K-12, Career and Technical Education and transfer institutions to improve the success of underprepared students.

The Student Services Practitioner Self-Assessment Rubric (p. 8) was designed based upon the *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs (1996)* jointly created by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) with additional principles from the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE), *Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning (AAHE, 1998)*. The *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs* are available online with inventories relating to each practice at <http://www.acpa.nche.edu/pgp/principle.htm>.

The Instructional Faculty Self-Assessment Rubric (p. 9) was designed based upon the *Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education* developed through “50 years of research on how teachers teach and students learn” (Chickering and Gamson, 1987 p.4) and on the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) *Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning (AAHE, 1998)*. Both can be found in the appendix in further detail.

The Administrator’s Self-Assessment Rubric (p.10) was designed by Dr. Jane Harmon (author of Chapter 19 of this handbook), a developmental educator and administrator, based upon the references above and directed towards good administrative principles.

#### **A word about the rubric titles:**

As higher education faculty, we have been trained as content experts. Sage teachers deeply embrace this fact, understanding and contributing to their field and believing that this is essential to all disciplines. **Sage faculty and practitioners** are skilled in their area of expertise, generally focusing on content and organizing their course and student interactions around that material. Though probably interested in active learning, they feel rushed to cover the content in their courses and don’t know how to incorporate the techniques; similar to having an improved architectural designs, but leaving them on the shelf because there is never enough time to incorporate the changes. Most of us have been overly concerned about delivering content which may or may not be adequately absorbed and digested by our students. Just walk into almost any class the week before finals as we attempt to cover everything left!

**Engaged faculty and practitioners** are those faculty who incorporate active learning with their content delivery. A good metaphor for their teaching is like a television building show, demonstrating measurements, ways to approach a project and explaining about the best quality materials. Obviously, this will impact the amount of content covered. A teacher can only “show” so many how-to projects, but viewers may be more likely to reproduce them on their own.

Finally, the **Mentor faculty and practitioners** represent faculty who coach other faculty in research-validated effective practices. This includes handing over the building plan and materials so new faculty can learn and contribute. In the classroom and student services, mentors have passed on the architectural drawings, demonstrated important things, but the lesson is not over until the faculty member or student service practitioner can see what the student is actually able to do.

Whether sage, engaged, or mentor faculty, administrators or practitioners - we are good at what we do but have different strengths and values. It's important to know where you are now, as you set off to learn about what methods and approaches are most effective for basic skills students and where you might grow. No matter where you are on the rubric, this handbook is full of strategies that will help you to do this work.



## Handbook Goals

Now that you've taken these two assessments, take a few minutes to think about your goals for using this workbook. What are your strengths in working with basic skills students? How would you like to grow? Jot down any of your thoughts here concerning things you would like to work on or examine more carefully in the coming chapters, the appendix and resource pages. Self evaluation is only useful if you consider how you will respond and act on your analysis. You will be asked to respond to many things in this handbook.

## Where is your College?

A good builder needs to know what's in the architectural plans the basic plans layout, and the use for the structure. Each of California's 110 community colleges was asked to prepare a Basic Skills Action Plan, describing how they were going to use funds received from the Chancellor's Office to further the basic skills programs on their campus. What is your college planning to do? How will you fit in with those plans? You can find your plan by contacting the Basic Skills Coordinator on your campus (if you have one) or your Vice President of Instruction. These plans were developed following college-wide discussions based on a self-assessment of practices used to serve ESL/Basic Skills students. Each college was asked to conduct this self-assessment and dialogue about it in order to assist in planning how to use additional funding provided by the state legislature.

If it's useful to you, use the chart below to chart the Action Plan's highlights and what role you will or might play in helping these efforts to be accomplished. Action plans were turned into the Chancellor's Office May 2008 and were made available at the BSI Phase III Regional Trainings. Ask your Vice President of Instruction or Chief Instructional Officer if you cannot find it. We have also included information for funding information in Chapter 19 of this handbook.

## Notes from Your Institutional Basic Skills Action Plan

Section	Planned Action	Effective Practice and Strategy	Your potential role
A Organizational/ Administrative Practices			
B Program Components			
C Faculty and Staff Development			
D Instructional Practices			

Many innate variables affect student success beyond simpler college preparedness: cultural differences, socioeconomic differences, familial value of education and a student’s family and job responsibilities. As was made clear in Chapter 1 of this handbook, it is very important to look at the demographics of basic skills students. Each college’s will be different. And, as Chapter 2 stressed, helping to build success for these students means examining some already created campus plans and seeing where they overlap. If you feel it will be helpful, the table below asks you to examine your college’s demographics data and your college’s Equity Plan, looking for where you might play a role. Take some time to fill it out and to brainstorm how you fit in with these plans to better help the students at your college.

Information on your student demographics can be accessed at [http://misweb.cccco.edu/mis/onlinestat/studdemo\\_annual\\_college.cfm](http://misweb.cccco.edu/mis/onlinestat/studdemo_annual_college.cfm).

Your campus Student Equity Plan (SEP) is probably housed with your Vice President; however, the administrative summary can be found at the Chancellor’s Website at <http://www.cccco.edu/SystemOffice/Divisions/StudentServices/StudentEquity/tabid/617/Default.aspx>

**Notes from Your Institutional Student Equity Plan (SEP) and MIS data**

<b>Information</b>	<b>The Data Indicates What?</b>	<b>Is there an Institutional Plan?</b>	<b>Your potential role</b>
Student Demographics			
BSI Success for Ethnic Populations			
Strategies that were proposed			

After working with the Basic Skills Action Plan and your campus Equity Plan, do you want to revise your goals for using this handbook? If so, jot down your thoughts below.

This is a handbook, a building guide of sorts. So we have asked you to start with an analysis of your own practices and your institution’s previous work. We have asked you to set goals for yourself, as you ask your students to set goals for their work. The rest of the handbook is directed toward specific aspects of basic skills work. The handbook addresses a variety of issues and specific topics with practical, hands-on examples that you can modify and implement in your practice. The appendices contain a lot of valuable materials, look through them for foundational research, teaching and student service examples, and resources to improve your practice and our students’ success. So we encourage you to open this tool box, get involved in the construction and make a difference!

## Appendix Chapter 3

### Starting Points



**Appendix 1:** Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs

**Appendix 2:** Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education

**Appendix 3:** AAHE Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

**Appendix 4:** Matrix Linking Questions and Rubric Components to Source Data

**Appendix 5:** Resources for Chapter 3

## Appendix 1

### Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs

1. Engages students in active learning.
2. Helps students develop coherent values and ethical standards.
3. Sets and communicates high expectations for student learning.
4. Uses systematic inquiry to improve student and institutional performance.
5. Uses resources effectively to achieve institutional missions and goals.
6. Forges educational partnerships that advance student learning.
7. Builds supportive and inclusive communities.

#### “Principles of Good Practice”

1. *Good practice in student affairs engages students in active learning.*  
Active learning invites students to bring their life experiences into the learning process, reflect on their own and others' perspectives as they expand their viewpoints, and apply new understandings to their own lives. Good student affairs practice provides students with opportunities for experimentation through programs focused on engaging students in various learning experiences. These opportunities include experiential learning such as student government; collective decision making on educational issues; field-based learning such as internships; peer instruction; and structured group experiences such as community service, international study, and resident advising.
2. *Good practice in student affairs helps students develop coherent values and ethical standards.*  
Good student affairs practice provides opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and student affairs educators to demonstrate the values that define a learning community. Effective learning communities are committed to justice, honesty, equality, civility, freedom, dignity, and responsible citizenship. Such communities challenge students to develop meaningful values for a life of learning. Standards espoused by student affairs divisions should reflect the values that bind the campus community to its educational mission.
3. *Good practice in student affairs sets and communicates high expectations for learning.*  
Student learning is enhanced when expectations for student performance inside and outside the classroom are high, appropriate to students' abilities and aspirations, and consistent with the institution's mission and philosophy. Expectations should address the wide range of student behaviors associated with academic achievement, intellectual and psychosocial development, and individual and community responsibility. Good student affairs divisions systematically describe desired levels of performance to students as well as to practitioners and regularly assess whether their performances are consistent with institutional expectations.
4. *Good practice in student affairs uses systematic inquiry to improve student and institutional performance.*  
Good practice in student affairs occurs when student affairs educators ask, "What are

students learning from our programs and services, and how can their learning be enhanced?" Knowledge of and ability to analyze research about students and their learning are critical components of good student affairs practice. Student affairs educators who are skilled in using assessment methods acquire high-quality information; effective application of this information to practice results in programs and change strategies which improve institutional and student achievement.

5. *Good practice in student affairs uses resources effectively to achieve institutional missions and goals.*

Effective student affairs divisions are responsible stewards of their institutions' financial and human resources. They use principles of organizational planning to create and improve learning environments throughout the campus that emphasize institutions' desired educational outcomes for students. Because the most important resources for learning are human resources, good student affairs divisions involve professionals who can translate into practice guiding theories and research from areas such as human development, learning and cognition, communication, leadership, and program design and implementation.

6. *Good practice in student affairs forges educational partnerships that advance student learning.*

Good student affairs practice initiates educational partnerships and develops structures that support collaboration. Partners for learning include students, faculty, academic administrators, staff, and others inside and outside the institution. Collaboration involves all aspects of the community in the development and implementation of institutional goals and reminds participants of their common commitment to students and their learning. Relationships forged across departments and divisions demonstrate a healthy institutional approach to learning by fostering inclusiveness, bringing multiple perspectives to bear on problems, and affirming shared educational values.

7. *Good practice in student affairs builds supportive and inclusive communities.*

Student learning occurs best in communities that value diversity, promote social responsibility, encourage discussion and debate, recognize accomplishments, and foster a sense of belonging among their members. Good student affairs practice cultivates supportive environments by encouraging connections between students, faculty, and student affairs practitioners. This interweaving of students' academic, interpersonal, and developmental experiences is a critical institutional role for student affairs."

A joint association effort from the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), initiated to draft *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs*. Retrieved from <http://www.acpa.nche.edu/pgp/principle.htm>

## Appendix 2

### Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education

By Arthur W. Chickering and Zelda F. Gamson

The following is a brief summary of the Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education as compiled in a study supported by the American Association of Higher Education, the Education Commission of the States, and The Johnson Foundation.

#### **1. Good Practice Encourages Student-Faculty Contact**

Frequent student-faculty contact in and out of classes is the most important factor in student motivation and involvement. Faculty concern helps students get through rough times and keep on working. Knowing a few faculty members well enhances students' intellectual commitment and encourages them to think about their own values and future plans.

#### **2. Good Practice Encourages Cooperation Among Students**

Learning is enhanced when it is more like a team effort than a solo race. Good learning, like good work, is collaborative and social, not competitive and isolated. Working with others often increases involvement in learning. Sharing one's own ideas and responding to others' reactions improves thinking and deepens understanding.

#### **3. Good Practice Encourages Active Learning**

Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing pre-packaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves.

#### **4. Good Practice Gives Prompt Feedback**

Knowing what you know and don't know focuses learning. Students need appropriate feedback on performance to benefit from courses. In getting started, students need help in assessing existing knowledge and competence. In classes, students need frequent opportunities to perform and receive suggestions for improvement. At various points during college, and at the end, students need chances to reflect on what they have learned, what they still need to know, and how to assess themselves.

#### **5. Good Practice Emphasizes Time on Task**

Time plus energy equals learning. There is no substitute for time on task. Learning to use one's time well is critical for students and professionals alike. Students need help in learning effective time management. Allocating realistic amounts of time means effective learning for students and effective teaching for faculty. How an institution defines time expectations for students, faculty, administrators, and other professional staff can establish the basis for high performance for all.

## **6. Good Practice Communicates High Expectations**

Expect more and you will get it. High expectations are important for everyone - for the poorly prepared, for those unwilling to exert themselves, and for the bright and well-motivated. Expecting students to perform well becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy when teachers and institutions hold high expectations of themselves and make extra efforts.

## **7. Good Practice Respects Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning**

There are many roads to learning. People bring different talents and styles of learning to college. Brilliant students in the seminar room may be all thumbs in the lab or art studio. Students rich in hands-on experience may not do so well with theory. Students need the opportunity to show their talents and learn in ways that work for them. Then they can be pushed to learning in new ways that do not come so easily.

Retrieved at [www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/guides/seven.html](http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/guides/seven.html)

## Appendix 3

### AAHE Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

1. *The assessment of student learning begins with educational values.*

Assessment is not an end in itself but a vehicle for educational improvement. Its effective practice, then, begins with and enacts a vision of the kinds of learning we most value for students and strive to help them achieve. Educational values should drive not only *what* we choose to assess but also *how* we do so. Where questions about educational mission and values are skipped over, assessment threatens to be an exercise in measuring what's easy, rather than a process of improving what we really care about.

2. *Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time.*

Learning is a complex process. It entails not only what students know but what they can do with what they know; it involves not only knowledge and abilities but values, attitudes, and habits of mind that affect both academic success and performance beyond the classroom. Assessment should reflect these understandings by employing a diverse array of methods, including those that call for actual performance, using them over time so as to reveal change, growth, and increasing degrees of integration. Such an approach aims for a more complete and accurate picture of learning, and therefore firmer bases for improving our students' educational experience.

3. *Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes.*

Assessment is a goal-oriented process. It entails comparing educational performance with educational purposes and expectations -- those derived from the institution's mission, from faculty intentions in program and course design, and from knowledge of students' own goals. Where program purposes lack specificity or agreement, assessment as a process pushes a campus toward clarity about where to aim and what standards to apply; assessment also prompts attention to where and how program goals will be taught and learned. Clear, shared, implementable goals are the cornerstone for assessment that is focused and useful.

4. *Assessment requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes.*

Information about outcomes is of high importance; where students "end up" matters greatly. But to improve outcomes, we need to know about student experience along the way -- about the curricula, teaching, and kind of student effort that lead to particular outcomes. Assessment can help us understand which students learn best under what conditions; with such knowledge comes the capacity to improve the whole of their learning.

5. *Assessment works best when it is ongoing not episodic.*

Assessment is a process whose power is cumulative. Though isolated, "one-shot" assessment can be better than none, improvement is best fostered when assessment entails a linked series of activities undertaken over time. This may mean tracking the process of individual students, or of cohorts of students; it may mean collecting the same examples of student performance or using the same instrument semester after semester. The point is to monitor progress toward intended goals in a spirit of continuous improvement. Along the way, the assessment process itself should be evaluated and refined in light of emerging insights.

*6. Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved.*

Student learning is a campus-wide responsibility, and assessment is a way of enacting that responsibility. Thus, while assessment efforts may start small, the aim over time is to involve people from across the educational community. Faculty play an especially important role, but assessment's questions can't be fully addressed without participation by student-affairs educators, librarians, administrators, and students. Assessment may also involve individuals from beyond the campus (alumni/ae, trustees, employers) whose experience can enrich the sense of appropriate aims and standards for learning. Thus understood, assessment is not a task for small groups of experts but a collaborative activity; its aim is wider, better-informed attention to student learning by all parties with a stake in its improvement.

*7. Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about.*

Assessment recognizes the value of information in the process of improvement. But to be useful, information must be connected to issues or questions that people really care about. This implies assessment approaches that produce evidence that relevant parties will find credible, suggestive, and applicable to decisions that need to be made. It means thinking in advance about how the information will be used, and by whom. The point of assessment is not to gather data and return "results"; it is a process that starts with the questions of decision-makers, that involves them in the gathering and interpreting of data, and that informs and helps guide continuous improvement.

*8. Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change.*

Assessment alone changes little. Its greatest contribution comes on campuses where the quality of teaching and learning is visibly valued and worked at. On such campuses, the push to improve educational performance is a visible and primary goal of leadership; improving the quality of undergraduate education is central to the institution's planning, budgeting, and personnel decisions. On such campuses, information about learning outcomes is seen as an integral part of decision making, and avidly sought.

*9. Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public.*

There is a compelling public stake in education. As educators, we have a responsibility to the publics that support or depend on us to provide information about the ways in which our students meet goals and expectations. But that responsibility goes beyond the reporting of such information; our deeper obligation -- to ourselves, our students, and society -- is to improve. Those to whom educators are accountable have a corresponding obligation to support such attempts at improvement.

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This document was developed under the auspices of the AAHE Assessment Forum with support from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education with additional support for publication and dissemination from the Exxon Education Foundation. Copies may be made without restriction.

## Appendix 4

### Matrix Linking Questions and Rubric Components to Source Data

answers	Source
1. e	CCC Chancellor's Office Document nation-wide the average is the same
2. varies	Thought question which may vary in some courses with multiple prerequisites, but probably reflects the same percentages of first year students unless basic skills are addressed
3. e	<i>Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges</i> (p 13)
4. a	If you take the percent success in a single course and multiply it by those that progress to the next course and then by those that succeed in the subsequent course – the result in CCCs is less than 10% this is supported by data from NADE and national organizations on developmental education
5. e	CCC Chancellor's Office report see Patrick Perry in the Management Information System division
6. b	Varies at institutions; some may be uniformly low most are in one area or another; the key here is not to assume someone is uniformly low. Sometimes students have scored low in English or mathematics but were at college level in the other assessments
7.c	Accountability Report for Community Colleges data analysis, Student Equity Plans and <i>Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges</i> (p 102)
8. d	<i>From Green and Red Tape</i> by The Institute for College Access and Success (p 23) <a href="http://www.ticas.org/files/pub/Green_Lights_Red_Tape.pdf">http://www.ticas.org/files/pub/Green_Lights_Red_Tape.pdf</a>
9. e	Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education & AAHE Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning and <i>Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges</i> (D.1, D.9 and p. 71-75) and Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) Accreditation Standards
10. e	Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education & AAHE Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning and <i>Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges</i> (D.1, D.9 and p. 71-75 ) and ACCJC Accreditation Standards
11.d	Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education & AAHE Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning and ACCJC Accreditation Standards
12. e	Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education & AAHE Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning and <i>Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges</i> (D.1, D.9 and p. 71-75)
13. e	Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education & AAHE Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning and ACCJC Accreditation Standards
14. e	Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education & AAHE Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning & <i>Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs</i>
15. e	Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education & AAHE Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning & <i>Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs</i> and ACCJC Accreditation Standards and ACCJC Accreditation Standards
16. e	Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education & AAHE Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning & <i>Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs</i>
17. e	ACCJC Accreditation Standards
18. any	Depends upon person's own desire and needs all are beneficial according to <i>Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges</i>

## Appendix 5

### Resources for Chapter 3

AAHE American Association for Higher Education. (1998). *Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning*. American Association for Higher Education Assessment Forum. Retrieved March 12, 2008 from <http://www.aahe.org/assessment/principl.htm>.

ACCJC-WASC. Accreditation Standards. (2002). Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges Western Association of Schools and Colleges  
[http://www.accjc.org/pdf/ACCJC\\_NEW\\_STANDARDS.pdf](http://www.accjc.org/pdf/ACCJC_NEW_STANDARDS.pdf)

Center for Student Success. (2007). *Basic Skills as a Foundation for Success in California Community Colleges*. Sacramento, CA: California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. Retrieved January 12, 2009, from  
[http://www.cccbsi.org/Websites/basicskills/Images/Lit\\_Review\\_Student\\_Success.pdf](http://www.cccbsi.org/Websites/basicskills/Images/Lit_Review_Student_Success.pdf)

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<http://www.fctel.uncc.edu/pedagogy/enhancinglearning/SevenPrinciples.html>

Hutchings, P.& Shulman, L.S. (2007) *Perspectives*. Learning about Student Learning from Community Colleges. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching retrieved February 16, 2008, from  
<http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/perspectives/sub.asp?key=245&subkey=1096>.

National Association of Student Personnel Administrators [NASPA]. (1996) *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs*. Retrieved August 19, 2008, from  
<http://www.naspa.org/resources/principles.cfm>

Travis, J.E. (1995). Models for Improving College Teaching: A Faculty Resource ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 6. Washington D.C.: The George Washington University, Graduate School of Education and Human Development.

#### Additional Online Resources

Information on your student demographics can be accessed at  
[http://misweb.cccco.edu/mis/onlinestat/studdemo\\_annual\\_college.cfm](http://misweb.cccco.edu/mis/onlinestat/studdemo_annual_college.cfm).

Your campus Student Equity Plan (SEP) is probably housed with your Vice President; however, the administrative summary can be found at the Chancellor's Website at  
<http://www.cccco.edu/SystemOffice/Divisions/StudentServices/StudentEquity/tabid/617/Default.aspx>.