

Greetings!

School of Continuing Education (SCE) is the fourth largest community college based noncredit provider of adult education in the State of California, serving approximately 30,000 students annually. SCE prides itself for meeting the communities' needs by offering a wide range of programs and services in Basic Skills, Career Technical Education (CTE), English as a Second Language (ESL), and Disability Support Services (DSS) programs. SCE also offers older adult and parenting courses.

SCE has an action plan which aligns with its mission, vision, and goals as with the North Orange County Community College District's (NOCCCD) strategic plan. The district's first three directions focus on student achievement, while the last two directions address district level processes. Since the institutional effectiveness report presents student level data, effectiveness indicators are tagged in accordance with only the first three directions, which include (1) improving the rates of completion for degrees, certificates, diplomas, transfers, transfer-readiness requirements, and courses; (2) making progress toward eliminating the documented achievement gap among race/ethnicity groups; and (3) improving the success rate for students moving into highest level possible credit basic skills courses from noncredit basic skills instruction, college-level courses from credit basic skills courses, and the next highest courses in the sequence of credit or noncredit basic skills courses.

In order to assess where SCE stands on meeting these goals, quantitative and qualitative analyses of data related to the programs and students served at SCE were conducted. In this executive summary we have identified the key findings from the data.

Completion

-  SCE has awarded 2,169 certificates between 2014 and 2016 (1,228 Career Technical Education, 855 High School Diplomas, and 86 English as a Second Language Academic Success).
-  On average, females received 37.2% more certificates than males over the last three academic years (2014 to 2016).
-  There has been a decrease in certificates awarded from 2014 to 2016, a large decline (22%) in the number of high school certificates awarded.

Enrollment

-  Despite a decline in total student enrollments over the years, the rate of decline has decreased by 3.5% in 2015-16 from the previous year.
-  Total enrollments in DSS increased by 2.8% from the 2014-2015 to the 2015-2016 academic year.
-  Total enrollments in Lifeskills Education Advancement Program (LEAP) increased by 8% from the 2013-2014 to the 2015-2016 academic years.
-  Despite a decline in CTE program's overall headcount and enrollments, the Electrical Trainee and Early Childhood Education certificate programs have consistent enrollments over the past three academic years.

Student Success

-  Success was assessed for students who attempted a grade in a course (i.e., have a passing grade if a grade was attempted). Over the three year period, there was an increase in success rates for SCE as a whole from 2013-2014 to 2014-2015 with a subsequent decline in 2015-2016. ESL success rate trend resembles the success rate of SCE as a whole.
-  The computer program (which is the largest in the CTE offerings) has the lowest success rates among the CTE programs.

Achievement Gap

-  African American students have the lowest success rate compared to Asian, Hispanic, and White students. However, there was a 7% increase in African American students' success from 2013-2014 to 2015-2016.
-  From 2013-2014 to 2015-2016 academic years, the proportion of certificates awarded to Hispanics and Asians is higher than the proportion they make up in the SCE student body, while the proportion of certificates awarded to Whites is lower than the proportion they make up in the SCE student body.
-  Males consistently have a two to three percent higher success rate than females; however, females have the highest average hours completed and also received more certificates compared to males.

Persistence/Retention

-  Retention is defined as the rate at which new students re-enroll at SCE or within a program for one academic year (fall to fall). Persistence is similar to retention but is reflective of consecutive enrollments from fall to fall. For 2013-2014 to 2014-2015, approximately one-fourth (23.9% in fall 2014 and 25.1% in fall 2015) of incoming first-time SCE students persist for one academic year; however, close to half (47.5%) of the first-time incoming students did not return after their first fall term (for the last academic year).
-  For the last three academic years, on average, 62% of first-time CTE students did not return after their first fall term.
-  Compared to SCE as a whole (26.1% retention and 25.1% persistence), DSS and LEAP programs have higher retention rates for 2014-2015, 54.4% and 54%, respectively, and higher persistence rates, 32% and 30.8%, respectively. CTE and ESL programs have lower retention and persistence rates compared to SCE as a whole

Focus Groups

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning conducted two student focus group discussions with 14 SCE students in fall 2016. The focus groups were conducted as part of the Student Equity conference. The focus group discussions explored students' experiences at SCE, uncovering specific barriers and challenges experienced by students on an SCE campus, identifying effective support systems that help them persist, and students' recommendations for improvement. Key findings are provided below.

Students' Educational Goals

-  To continue learning by taking more courses
-  To learn English and advance in ESL courses
-  To complete the certificate programs they are currently enrolled in
-  To transition to a college
-  To get a job
-  To pursue a Master's Degree

Top 4 Challenges Experienced by Students at SCE

-  Family responsibility (50%)
-  Financial responsibility/job (36%)
-  Childcare (29%)
-  Relationship with instructor (21%)

We recognize that we cannot control students' outside obligations, we can, however, bring to light some of the concerns our students have about their instructors. While the overwhelming majority spoke positively about their instructors, a handful did have concerns in terms of not being able to ask questions in class.

Final Remarks

One of the supplementary, but nonetheless important, aims of this report was to establish a benchmark for future research on institutional effectiveness. The results of the data analyzed at SCE have been invaluable in determining the overall effectiveness of the institution. There are opportunities for growth, specifically, eliminating the achievement gap, and finding the causes for the reduction in achievement awards and fluctuation in the success rates. Yet, it is also our belief that the data demonstrates that SCE is on its way to improving its educational goals in the areas of concern. We are sure the research findings contained in this document will provide many useful insights to you as well. This executive summary is a brief overview of the data, in order to receive a detailed description, we encourage you to read the report.

Thank you.