MULTIPLE MEASURES ASSESSMENT PROJECT (MMAP)

Phase III Project Summary

Introduction

The Multiple Measures Assessment Project (MMAP) has been an integral part of the Common Assessment Initiative (CAI) for the past three years. During this time, 64 California Community Colleges have signed on to the project (and the MMAP project team is providing assistance to another dozen unofficial pilot colleges). Colleges involved in the project are transforming their assessment and placement processes, thereby seeing improvements in the rates at which students place into transfer-level courses and successfully complete those courses. This brief includes a review of accomplishments by the MMAP team thus far, how MMAP is already being implemented, tasks to be completed in the next one to two years, and longer term tasks to be completed to sustain the effective use of multiple measures into the future.

Accomplishments

The following section provides details on what has been accomplished over the past 3 years.

Developing the multiple measures models

- Developed multiple measures models and guides to interpret the models for math, English, ESL, and reading, and worked with a graphic designer to make the rule sets user-friendly
- Researched and reviewed numerous non-cognitive variable (NCV) scales and recommended six measures to pilot statewide

Supporting pilot colleges

- Directly supported 64 pilot colleges across the state from early consideration to full implementation of multiple measures based on the statewide models while also working to support colleges developing variants based on local replication of the statewide research (types of support included technical assistance, local presentations and workshops, data matching and Q/A, local IT support for
integration, and networking with other colleges.) An additional set of colleges are implementing high school performance for multiple measures as part of Basic Skills and Student Outcomes Transformation Program (BSSOT) work as well.

- Held four in-person half-day convenings for pilot colleges in the North and the South to receive hands-on assistance and guidance as well as to collect feedback on the process.
- Provided ongoing statewide support and technical assistance to pilot colleges as well as other colleges over the course of thousands of phone calls, emails, and even text messages.

**Developing resources for colleges**

- Developed multiple user guides to walk pilot colleges through many different processes around multiple measures, including implementation and evaluation.
- Provided resources for colleges to replicate the statewide models with local data to determine any deviations.
- Delivered over 100 presentations at colleges and districts across the state and presented at an additional 100 conferences and events.
- Held 17 webinars on topics ranging from implementation to assessment.
- Created and maintained a robust website with resources and tools for pilot colleges.
- Created a visual crosswalk for counselors to place students via the models in a manual way.
- Created interactive enrollment management graphs for every college in the state to help them anticipate changes in course enrollment when implementing the multiple measures models.

**Working with partner organizations**

- Worked with CCCApply to add self-reported transcript questions, including GPA and high school math and English courses, to the college application.
- Worked with pilot colleges and Cal-PASS Plus to provide a transcript match for students to be placed using the multiple measures models; provided tools to walk colleges through the process.
- Worked with the CAI vendor on the interface for the CAI platform including integration of the multiple measures platform.
- Collaborated with the Chancellor’s Office to provide multiple measures information for other statewide initiatives (IEPI, Basic Skills, SSSP, Equity, Assessment Workgroup, Foster Youth, etc.).

**Sharing lessons with the field**

- Developed research briefs to help the CAI Steering Committee better understand various assessment validation models, ESL course sequences, and best practices in...
assessment validation

- Began the collection of assessment data from pilot colleges to validate the statewide models and determine if the models are performing as expected; created a robust structure for collecting this information, including a data element dictionary with example data, user guide, and an archived webinar
- Shared promising results from pilot colleges already implementing the models and seeing improvements in their students’ throughput rates and worked with colleges to share their results directly at statewide conferences as well
- Wrote a scholarly article for publication to institutionalize the California process and share the lessons with other states
- Conducted ongoing presentations and provided additional support to the professional development efforts of CAI
- Helped rekindle attention to best practices in assessment throughout the California Community Colleges and bring the system back into actual compliance with best practices and legal responsibilities for the appropriate assessment of student capacity

Current Integration of MMAP into Institutional and Statewide Initiatives

This section explores the institutional and statewide efforts into which MMAP has already been integrated and suggests others to consider.

Basic Skills Initiative (BSI), State Equity Plan (SEP), and Student Support Services and Programs (3SP) Plans

The California Community Colleges have seen unprecedented reform focusing on improving student completion rates and closing achievement gaps. Integration and alignment of the various statewide efforts at the local level is paramount to meeting this goal. The integration of multiple measures assessments within each of these plans is one evidence-based example of how to make these efforts more efficient and sustainable. The MMAP team has been working with colleges over the past three years to support local implementation of multiple measures by leveraging the support provided by these initiatives. The MMAP team members have accrued experience across a variety of local contexts that will be valuable in assisting colleges with this major undertaking.

California Acceleration Project

In a recent report from the California Acceleration Project (CAP), which provided a series of success stories about colleges that transformed their policies through sequence acceleration to help students move into college-level courses, almost every college included in the report used multiple measures assessment as one of the strategies to transform their policies.
Indeed, the CAP now includes the use of multiple measures, particularly student high school achievement, as one of its top two high-leverage strategies for improving student success and completion of gateway courses in foundational skills sequences in the California Community Colleges.

California Guided Pathways Project

Initial assessment and placement is often students’ first exposure to college and sends one of two messages: they are ready for college-level work, or they are not yet college-level material. In order to optimize students’ opportunities and success to meet progress milestones and program learning outcomes, students must first be placed at the most appropriate level. The use of high school transcripts for assessment and placement aligns with the guided pathways principle of redesigning remediation as an on-ramp to college and is a critical part of both the California and national Guided Pathways efforts.

Student Success Scorecard

The Chancellor’s Office has invested a great deal of time and resources into developing a comprehensive data dashboard available to all colleges and regularly viewed by legislators and reporters. While many initiatives help improve a college’s Scorecard rates, multiple measures assessment has so far proven to be a promising initiative to move the needle on completion metrics. Multiple measures implementation is one path whereby colleges can quickly see large improvements in the new one-year and two-year transfer-level English and math completion rates.

Integrating MMAP into other initiatives

Multiple measures assessment should be integrated into the Strong Workforce Initiative effort, as placing students at the appropriate level to help them reach their degree goal is a key element of any degree or transfer pathway, including Career Technical Education (CTE). If students are placed lower than their ability as determined by their performance in high school, they face the potential of never completing the CTE pathway. This, in turn, threatens their ability to complete any pathway. Long basic skills course sequences also reduce their immediate earning capacity by removing them from the workforce for a longer duration of time. Therefore, appropriate and effective assessment processes should be part of any Strong Workforce plan. Further, colleges could produce additional decision tree-based placement models that use students’ college performance data if they have been enrolled for part of a semester and have not yet taken a math or English course.

Next Steps (One to Two Years)

In order to institutionalize multiple measures assessment locally as well as within the foundation of the Chancellor’s Office, more work must be done over the next one to two years
to sustain the project and continue to support the great work already occurring across the state. This section offers potential next steps.

**Develop additional multiple measures models**

- Develop a rule set for currently-enrolled college students using their college transcripts (Many students start at the CCC but put off taking their English and math courses. A rule set should be developed for these students using their first or second-year college transcripts to place them most appropriately.)
- Develop rule sets for concurrently enrolled high school students who may have only completed one or two years of high school

**Evaluate the multiple measures models**

- Evaluate the models from the pilot colleges and the CAI platform once data are available
  - Re-run the statewide models to account for the implementation of Common Core coursework and the Smarter Balanced test once data are available to determine any necessary changes to the rule sets
  - Run additional statistical analyses on the predictive validity of NCV measures from the pilot colleges and the CAI platform once data are available
  - Run additional analyses and validation to determine the reliability of self-reported transcripts using data matched via Cal-PASS Plus transcripts
  - Evaluate the models with students placed using the new Common Assessment test results once data are available
- Assist colleges in developing a comprehensive research plan for evaluating the impact of local implementation of multiple measures
- Assist colleges in validating the models locally if they choose to develop local variants, using techniques applied in the development of the statewide models
- Assist colleges with determining disproportionate impacts, using the models on a regular basis and developing mitigation plans if needed
- Contribute to the development of guidelines for validating placement systems that integrate multiple measures and test scores
- Develop a statewide database of all pilot college data to allow for a comprehensive evaluation of multiple measure implementation, allowing for comparison and evaluation of local variations
- Establish a research data warehouse through Cal-PASS Plus to support local research and validation of multiple measures

**Provide ongoing support to pilot colleges**

- Continue to work with ESL departments across the state to help develop and determine valid multiple measures for students who did not attend a California high school
- Provide ongoing technical assistance to colleges transitioning to using multiple
measures for assessment

- Provide continuous support for pilot colleges to interface with their K-12 feeder districts to increase data submissions, recruit new districts, and communicate the positive changes brought about by multiple measures and the Common Assessment
- Provide continuous support to the pilot colleges, implementing the models through one-on-one trainings, webinars, and other means
- Determine ongoing support necessary for colleges as the CAI and multiple measures rule sets become available statewide

Work with partner organizations

- Continue to work with the CAI vendor on the interface for multiple measures
  - Fully integrate self-reported transcript data and Cal-PASS Plus data into the interface to provide placement to the greatest number of students
  - Enhance the platform to allow for potential compensatory placement models in addition to the current disjunctive models
  - Enhance the platform to enable colleges the ability to add in additional multiple measures questions outside of the models, particularly for non-traditional students
  - Enhance the platform to enable colleges to use non-cognitive variable scales as an additional multiple measure

Share lessons with the field

- Continue to present at conferences, events, and upon request by colleges or agencies
- Continue to develop and publish articles and briefs to inform the field on the work undertaken in California

Recommendations for Sustaining MMAP in the Long Term

Within the next 1-2 years and beyond, we need to determine the best way to continue the MMAP work even when CAI funding is no longer available. The following sections detail steps that should be taken to ensure the longevity of the project. These steps are particularly important if legislation (AB 705) were to pass that requires the use of high school transcripts for assessment.

Support colleges with Implementation and validation

- Work with the Department of Education to provide high school transcript data directly to Cal-PASS Plus to further increase the scale of high school achievement data available for use by community colleges for multiple measures assessment
- Complete ongoing statewide evaluation of the impact of multiple measures
implementations with attention to methods and fidelity of implementation

- Perform ongoing evaluation of the relative predictive contributions of the Common Assessment test and multiple measures, including local variation in implementation
- Provide ongoing technical assistance to colleges transitioning to using multiple measures for assessment
- Provide continuous support to colleges implementing the models through one-on-one trainings, webinars, and other means
- Assist colleges and promote the importance of validating the models locally if they deviate from the statewide models
- Assist colleges with determining disproportionate impacts using the models on a regular basis

Create a central location to house multiple measures activities

- Maintain a central location and point of contact for multiple measures where colleges can direct questions or concerns and receive support in a timely manner
  - These partner organizations or people shall serve as the spokespeople advocating for a continued commitment to multiple measures assessment and highlighting the work being done statewide as well as its value to the field
- Maintain a website with college resources
- Represent and promote multiple measures assessment at conferences, events, and upon request by colleges, agencies, or the legislature
- Serve as the statewide liaison for multiple measures assessment whenever the CAI test is updated, enhanced, or revised
- Continue to promote multiple measures assessment as a key element of colleges’ Student Equity Plans, Basic Skills Initiative efforts, and Strong Workforce plans

Conclusion

As a result of the support from partner organizations as well as the collaboration and commitment of community colleges across the state, the MMAP Project Team has been able to accomplish a lot over the past three years. However, this work has just begun. In order for long-term sustainability, there needs to be a continued commitment to the project and its integration into the California Community College System. In addition to this work enabling compliance with the law, it is critical for our students’ progress and success. As one of our pilot colleges stated, “There are thousands of reasons to engage in this work, and each one has a name.”

For More Information

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