

If We Can Do it at the Post Secondary Level ... So Can You!

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We teach the Realtime Reporting Program at Clark State Community College, which falls under the area of Business and Applied Technology. Realtime Reporting offers two options to students - Judicial Reporting (formerly Court Reporting) and Broadcast Captioning/CART.

Our challenge is to increase student enrollment and the graduation rate. That being said, our work is cut out for us. We are in school improvement mode!

We are sharing some of the changes we have made in our program. Our first task was to redo all of our learning outcomes so that they align with our national standards. We then had to restructure our classes, and thereby all of our syllabi, to align with the learning outcomes. This is charted and displayed in our offices for easy reference. For the time being, we cut out some "good to know" to allow us to focus on the "need to know."

How we got started:

At the beginning of the school year, we had a lunch meeting with all of our students and explained the changes we would be implementing. At that time we developed a program-wide vision, a first-year mission statement, and a second-year mission statement. We explained how to develop class goals and then subsequently developed them in all of our courses. We have incorporated random assessment into each one of our speed dictation courses. Each course has its goal, measurement system to monitor progress toward the goal, and the weekly random assessment data displayed.

How we used data:

We looked at last year student performance and identified a huge gap in the curriculum between the first machine theory course and the subsequent speedbuilding course. We redesigned the speedbuilding course in an effort to close that gap by re-teaching some content and using random assessment to reinforce their prior learning. We are quite hopeful that these changes will reap benefits for the first-year class.

A major change was in our weekly speed assessments. First, we redesigned the testing format to allow us an additional one hour of class time per week. We then incorporated data folders and line-item analysis. Students perform a LIA on each dictation test that they take, identifying dropped words, wrong words, and specifying punctuation errors, immediately following completion of their test. This data is broken down by each minute. After analyzing the LIA, they must then

write a summary paragraph of their performance, identifying their strengths and weaknesses. Based on the LIA and the summary paragraph, they then write a weekly action plan. The data from the LIA is displayed in line-graph form so they can easily monitor their growth over the course of the quarter.

Involving the student in the process:

Based on student feedback, we believe this has contributed significantly to students owning their learning. In fact, we videotaped two students on this very topic. They attribute their growth this year to the data folder process.

When students conference with us on their progress or lack thereof, the first thing we ask for is their data folder...we won't talk with them without looking at the data.

Two of the classes right now are not progressing toward their goal, and we have put them in the PDSA cycle. We will look at the results over the next few weeks. The students came up with some creative ideas.

Other changes include a daily plus/delta in each class. We make all the suggestions for improvement that we can. This has been a very efficient way for us to better meet their needs in our limited class time. We also used the plus/delta to work the bugs out of our newly-implemented testing format...and by the end of the quarter, no deltas!

Another tool that is beneficial is the Clark State intranet. We have tapped into that as a way to efficiently gather survey data. As an example, we are redesigning our schedule for next year to support student success; but we needed assurance that it would not negatively impact our enrollment. We sent out a survey to all of our students via the intranet and, within a very short time, had the student input necessary to make an informed decision.

We truly enjoyed the JSA workshop that we attended in Springfield. We are so fortunate to have been trained by your company and by Denise Woody specifically.

We are extremely optimistic about the future of our program.