



**Local Validation of Cut-Scores for the College Test of English Placement (CTEP),
Spring 2001-Fall 2002
Compiled by the RSCCD Research Department**

Background

The College Test of English Placement (CTEP) was pilot-tested in the Fall, 2000 semester, and put into use districtwide in the Spring semester of 2001. Since that time, the Research, English, and Testing Departments have continued to re-evaluate the cut-scores for appropriateness. Now, with six semesters of historical data, we have repeated the process.

Analysis

The study sample included all RSCCD students who completed an English course (N50, N60, 061, or 101) during the semesters from Spring 2001 through Fall 2002 with a grade of A, B, C, CR, D, F, NCR, AND who had taken the CTEP immediately prior to enrolling in that class. The course sample sizes are as follows:

- English N50- 212 students
- English N60- 531 students
- English 061- 747 students
- English 101- 923 students.

Students' final course success then, was compared to their CTEP test scores.

Findings

Current cut-scores, alone, do not appear to enhance appropriate English course placement. The correct predictions of the current cut-scores fall significantly below the base rates (that is, the percentage of students who succeed at that level regardless of advisory test placement) at every course level. Consideration should be given to lowering the cut-scores in order to allow access to more students who scored below the cut, but were still successful in the course (Tables 1-4).

Table 1			
English N60			
Current Cut Score=32			
	success	non-success	TOTAL
above cut	49.3%	14.9%	64.2%
below cut	27.7%	8.1%	35.8%
TOTAL	77.0%	23.0%	n=531
Base Rate=77.0%			
Correct Predictions=57.4%			



Proposed Cut Score =19			
	success	non-success	TOTAL
above cut	74.6%	21.8%	96.4%
below cut	2.4%	1.1%	3.6%
TOTAL	77.0%	23.0%	n=531
Correct Predictions=75.7%			

Table 2			
English 061			
Current Cut Score =40			
	success	non-success	TOTAL
above cut	43.6%	9.9%	53.5%
below cut	34.8%	11.6%	46.5%
TOTAL	78.4%	21.6%	n=747
Base Rate=78.4%			
Correct Predictions=55.2%			



Proposed Cut Score =25			
	success	non-success	TOTAL
above cut	74.7%	19.5%	94.2%
below cut	3.7%	2.0%	5.8%
TOTAL	78.4%	21.6%	n=747
Correct Predictions=76.7%			

Table 3			
English 101			
Current Cut Score =48			
	success	non-success	TOTAL
above cut	48.9%	11.7%	60.6%
below cut	33.0%	6.4%	39.4%
TOTAL	81.9%	18.1%	n=923
Base Rate=81.9%			
Correct Predictions=55.3%			



Proposed Cut Score for 101 (33)			
	success	non-success	TOTAL
above cut	75.4%	16.3%	91.7%
below cut	6.5%	1.8%	8.3%
TOTAL	81.9%	18.1%	n=923
Correct Predictions=77.2%			

Related Studies

In Fall 2002, students in all college credit courses into which the RSCCD placement tests place students (English, English as a Second Language, and Math sequences) were administered a very brief survey (“Student Self-Rating of Appropriateness of Placement”). Quite simply, students were asked:

“Which of the following statements is most true of your placement into this course?”

This course is too difficult for me.

This course is the right level for me.

This course is too easy for me.

A total of 706 of the respondents (323 enrolled in courses at SAC, and 393 enrolled in courses at SCC) had been placed into their current English course by the CTEP. Of those, most (86-88%) believed that their placement was appropriate (see Table 5 below).

Test Taken	Santa Ana College				Santiago Canyon College			
	Too Difficult	Right Level	Too Easy	Total	Too Difficult	Right Level	Too Easy	Total
CTEP English	1%	86%	13%	323	1%	88%	12%	383

CTEP Score by Successful Course Completion, Spring 2001-Fall 2002				
CTEP Score	Count Successful			
	N50	N60	61	101
1				
2				
3				
4				
5	1			
6			1	
7				
8		1		
9				
10	1	1		
11				
12	1		1	
13		1		
14	1	1		
15		5	4	1
16	3	4		
17	5	2	3	2
18	3	7	5	1
19	5	4	4	3
20	8	3	3	3
21	10	10	4	2
22	5	4	3	3
23	7	9	6	3
24	4	7	3	6
25	9	14	10	3
26	12	11	9	4
27	12	17	9	5
28	6	22	11	6
29	8	24	11	8
30	16	27	19	10

31	6	25	9	7
32	3	39	20	7
33		35	25	17
34	2	28	18	5
35		25	22	13
36	2	29	26	9
37		28	34	10
38	1	5	40	17
39	1	6	50	22
40		2	46	21
41		2	46	16
42	1	2	39	20
43		2	34	25
44		3	21	20
45		2	24	36
46			3	41
47	1	1	5	37
48			1	37
49			1	36
50			2	24
51			4	34
52			1	42
53		1	2	38
54				42
55				28
56				28
57			1	16
58			1	15
59			2	12
60				4
61			1	9
62			1	3
63				5
TOTAL	134	409	586	756