

SANTA MONICA COLLEGE

# Institution-Set or Minimum-Set Standards

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FAQ and Data Description for Program-Level Data

Prepared by the Academic Senate Joint Institutional Effectiveness Committee

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# FAQ

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## 1. What are institution-set or minimum-set standards?

Institution-set standards are the minimum level of performance set internally by institutions to meet educational quality and institutional effectiveness expectations. Standards reflect the “**floor**” or “**baseline**” levels of satisfactory performance of student learning and achievement below which the institution does not want to fall. Standards are different than improvement or target goals as goals are aspirational in nature.

## 2. Why do we have to report institution-set or minimum-set standards?

Federal (Higher Education Opportunities Act of 2008) and accreditation (ACCJC Standard IB3) regulations mandate that all higher education institutions establish institution-set standards for student achievement, assess performance on student outcome metrics against the standards, and use this assessment to set goals for improvement when the standards are not being met. ***The regulation requires colleges to set standards for institution-level and program-level student success metrics. Program is defined as those leading to a degree or certificate of achievement.***

## 3. Which student learning and achievement metrics are required for reporting?

At a minimum, colleges are required to set institution-set or minimum-set standards for:

- Successful course completion
- Licensure exam pass rates
- Program completion (degrees and certificates awarded); departmental certificates are not required
- Job placement rates

In addition, the college sets and assesses performance against an institution-set standard for the following metrics on the annual ACCJC report and/or the SMC Institutional Effectiveness Dashboard:

- Persistence
- Transfers to four-year institutions
- Basic skills course improvement
- Basic skills transition to degree course
- CTE completion
- Progress and achievement rate (completion rate)
- ILO mastery rates
- Distance learning course success and retention rate gap

#### 4. Has SMC satisfied the federal/accreditation mandates related to institution-set or minimum-set standards?

Santa Monica College has partially met the mandate. Currently, the College has set standards and analyzes performance on several metrics against the standard to inform planning for college-wide data. However, the College has not yet defined and published institution-set standards for degree and certificate programs.

#### 5. Who set the standards for SMC?

The Academic Senate Joint Institutional Effectiveness Committee initially set standards for 20 college-wide student success metrics in spring of 2013. The committee and key stakeholders review the appropriateness of each standard on an annual basis and make modifications to the standard in cases where the standard is deemed to be too low or unreasonably high while considering factors such as the reduction in course offerings due to budget cuts and changes in course enrollment priority policies.

It is expected that instructional departments will set the standards for program-level metrics. To facilitate this process, the Office of Institutional Research has prepared a data packet for each instructional department offering degrees and certificates. The data include:

- Course Success Rate by Discipline
- Course Success Rates by Time of Day (Arranged Hours, Day, Evening, Weekend)
- Course Success Rates by Instructional Delivery Mode (On ground, Online)
- Course Success Rates by student demographics (gender, ethnicity/race, age)
- Course Retention Rate by Discipline
- Degrees and Certificates Awarded
- License Exam Pass Rates (when applicable)
- Job Placement Rates (when applicable)

The data reports are available here:

<http://www.smc.edu/EnrollmentDevelopment/InstitutionalResearch/Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2fEnrollmentDevelopment%2fInstitutionalResearch%2fDocuments%2fProgram%20Review%2fSuggested%20Institution-Set%20or%20Minimum-Set%20Standards&FolderCTID=0x012000F330DB2966BB194B89D8A5301910815A>

-or-

[www.smc.edu/ir](http://www.smc.edu/ir) --> Program Review

**6. How were the standards determined?**

A common formula was used to determine the standards for college-wide student success data. For data measuring percentage or rates (for example, course success rate), the standard was set at 95% of the average performance over four baseline years. For data measuring whole numbers or volume (for example, associate degrees awarded), the standard was set at 90% of the average performance over four baseline years.

To facilitate the standard-setting process for instructional departments, the Office of Institutional Research applied the formulas (baseline years Fall 2010 to Fall 2014) for all program-level metrics and included the results in a column called “suggested minimum standard”.

<b>Successful Course Completion Rates</b>							
		Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Suggested Min.*
COSM	%	70.0%	67.0%	72.4%	70.4%	71.5%	66.7%
	N	2512	2180	2255	1938	1804	
College-Wide		68.2%	68.8%	68.3%	68.1%	67.7%	
*Based on baseline years Fall 2010-2014							

**7. Does my department/program need to use the suggested minimum standard?**

No. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee expects that the suggested minimum standards will serve as a starting point for departmental discussions about institution-set or minimum-set standards for program-level metrics.

**8. Does my department/program need to use all of the data provided by the Office of Institutional Research?**

No. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee expects that department will use only the data metrics that are significant and/or meaningful to the program.

## 9. Where do I document how our program(s) set standards and analyzed performance against the standard for planning?

The Institutional Effectiveness Committee suggests that programs document the use of institution-set standards through the annual program review process.

Programs are able evaluate performance on student achievement metrics against set standards in program review question #C4:

*What other evaluation measures does your program or discipline use to inform planning? For example, student surveys, enrollment trends, student success, retention, degrees/certificates awarded, job placement, transfer rates, TIMS report, tutor usage, etc. Note trends and differences in performance by group (ethnicity, gender, age), or enrollment type (day/evening, on-ground/on-line)*

Programs are able to describe how the analyses of student achievement data against the standards have informed program goals/objectives and planning/decision-making processes #D8:

*Discuss and summarize conclusions drawn from data, SLOs, or other evaluation measures identified in Section C and indicate responses or programmatic changes planned for the coming year(s), including:*

- *How the assessment results are informing program goals and objectives, program planning, and decision making*
- *Specific changes planned or made to the program based on the assessment results*

## 10. How will multidisciplinary degrees and certificates be addressed?

At this time, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee will review and set institution-set standards for multidisciplinary degrees and certificates in consultation with the relevant instructional departments. For example, the physical and life sciences departments will be consulted in the setting of standards for the General Science Associate Degree.

## 11. Where can I get more information about institution-set standards?

[http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/ACCJC-Cover-memo-AND-External-Evaluation-Team-Resp-for-Compliance\\_2-5-13.pdf](http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/ACCJC-Cover-memo-AND-External-Evaluation-Team-Resp-for-Compliance_2-5-13.pdf)

[http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/ACCJC-Memo-AND-External-Eval-Team-Responsibilities-for-Compliance\\_9-6-12-.pdf](http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/ACCJC-Memo-AND-External-Eval-Team-Responsibilities-for-Compliance_9-6-12-.pdf)

SMC Institutional Effectiveness Report:

[www.smc.edu/iedashboard](http://www.smc.edu/iedashboard)

**12. Who can I contact if my department needs assistance in setting standards for my program?**

Christine Schultz, Chair, Institutional Effectiveness Committee  
[Schultz\\_Christine@smc.edu](mailto:Schultz_Christine@smc.edu)

Hannah Lawler, Vice-Chair, Institutional Effectiveness Committee  
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# Data Description

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**Course Success:** Successful course completion rates were calculated by dividing the number of A, B, C, CR, or P grades divided by the number of A, B, C, CR, D, DR, F, I, NC, NP, P, and W grades. Grades of RD (report delayed) and IP (in progress) were excluded from the analyses.

**Course Retention:** Course retention rates were calculated by dividing the number of A, B, C, CR, P, D, F, I, NC, and NP grades by the number of A, B, C, CR, D, DR, F, I, NC, NP, P, and W grades. Grades of RD (report delayed) and IP (in progress) were excluded from the analyses.

**Student Demographics:** Course success rates are disaggregated by student gender, ethnicity/race, and age. The gender and ethnicity/race information are self-reported by students on the college application. Age was calculated from student birth date information and reflects ages as of October 15 for the term recorded.

## **Day/Evening Status:**

- **Day:** First class session or meeting of the week has a start time beginning on or after 6:00AM and before 4:30PM and has days scheduled of Monday through Friday.
- **Evening:** First class meeting that occurs on or after 4:30PM.
- **Arranged Hours:** Does not meet at a specified date or time and includes online courses.
- **Weekend:** First class meeting occurring on a Saturday or Sunday.

## **Online/On ground Status:**

- **Online:** Class delivers instruction exclusively online or in a hybrid format (combination of online and on-ground).
- **On ground:** Class delivers instruction exclusively on ground (face-to-face)

**Associate Degrees and Certificates:** Number of Associate Degree and Certificate of Achievements awarded in an academic year by TOP code and award type. The counts are duplicated by students (i.e., students were counted once for each award earned in the observed year).

**License Exam Pass Rates:** The College offers three programs leading to state licensing exams, including Registered Nursing, Respiratory Therapy, and Cosmetology. The rates were calculated by dividing the number of students who achieved the outcome by the number of students in the cohort.

- Registered Nursing:
  - Denominator (cohort): graduates who met all of the following criteria:

- Earned an RN Associate Degree at SMC at any time; and,
    - Took the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX) Exam for the first time in academic years (July 1 to June 20) 2009-2010 to 2013-2014.
  - Numerator (outcome): students in the cohort who earned a passing score on the NCLEX examination on their first attempt.
- Respiratory Therapy:
  - Denominator (cohort): graduates who met all of the following criteria:
    - Earned a Respiratory Therapy Associate Degree at SMC/East Los Angeles College at any time; and,
    - Took the Certified Respiratory Therapist (CRT) exam for the first time in calendar years (January 1-December 31) 2010-2014.
  - Numerator (outcome): students in the cohort who earned a passing score on the CRT examination on their first attempt.
- Cosmetology:
  - Denominator (cohort): Total testing events of students who met the following criteria.
    - Completed the cosmetology program coursework (no formal award is necessary); and,
    - Took one or more of the California state cosmetology board examinations in calendar years (January 1 – December 31) 2010-2014.
    - Students were counted once for each test taken in the same calendar year.
  - Numerator (outcome): The total number of passing events on the state board examinations in cosmetology taken by students in the denominator.

**Job Placement Rates:**

The data were obtained from the California Community College Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO) Data-on-Demand website. The indicator is referred to as the “Employment Rate” in the CCCCCO Perkins Core Indicators Report.

Denominator:

The denominator included CTE concentrators who were either a CTE program leaver or CTE program completer in cohort years 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, or 2012-2013:

- CTE program leaver:
  - Reports a valid Social Security Number (SSN); and,
  - Successfully completed a minimum of 12 units of related coursework within the same two-digit TOP code within three years; and,

- At least one of the courses completed was coded with a SAM priority code of A – C; and,
  - Did not transfer to a two or four year institution during one of the four fiscal quarters after leaving Santa Monica College; or,
- CTE program completer:
    - Reports a valid Social Security Number (SSN); and,
    - Earned a Chancellor’s Approved Certificate of Achievement, Associate Degree, or were transfer prepared (completed 60 UC/CSU transferable units with a GPA or 2.0 or higher); and,
    - Did not transfer to a two or four year institution during one of the four fiscal quarters after leaving Santa Monica College.

The cohort years refer to the last academic year enrolled at Santa Monica College. The SAM priority code is used to indicate the degree to which a course is occupational and assists in identifying course sequences in occupational programs (A – apprenticeship; B – advanced occupational; C – clearly occupational). The Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) code refers to the subject matter of the course. Only programs with CTE-related TOP codes leading to a degree or certificate and those with a cohort in each of the last five years (2008-2009 to 2012-2013) were included in the analyses.