At a recent IESS retreat, the staff participated in an activity called “storyboarding”. In storyboarding, you have the opportunity to map out concepts or ideas and explore the various elements of those concepts in detail. It is a great way to brainstorm in a team setting and a great educational tool to help students become familiar with certain concepts. For our activity, we storyboarded the different kinds of data that we find at about the District and we started to break down the “story” of SJECCD. Each member of the team was allowed to the storyboard (one at a time) until we felt we had exhausted the life of the story. What we came up with was fascinating. Essentially, the story starts with the Diverse Student Population that we serve within the Silicon Valley, including current and potential students, and alumni. These students are served by a Diverse Faculty and Staff. We talk about closing the Achievement Gap which starts with Basic Skills. In addition, we talk about our work with CTE courses and coursework to prepare students for transfer. Below is the actual story board. For each of the areas branching off from the middle of the board, we specify where we might find data to elaborate on the story. The purpose of this exercise was to center our team and focus our attention on the research that is going to make a difference to our district for decision-making that ultimately leads to student success. Indeed our tag line for the story can be seen in the middle of the storyboard: **SJECCD has a diverse student population led by a diverse staff and faculty committed to building basic skills to decrease the achievement gap which ultimately leads to student success.**

In this issue of the IESS Monthly, we hope to inspire you to think about where you might be able to find data to help you focus on the stories that you wish to tell about your students and your programs. We are still working on our storyboard and as we make progress, we will share with you. We certainly want to be partners with you in telling our story to the broader community.
What’s New?  

**By Maria Duran, Research Assistant**

**Writing a Grant?**
This is a call to all grant writers who may be in need of assistance with District data for grant proposals completion or for the process of funding.

**We can assist you!**
One of the goals of Office of Institutional Effectiveness is to maintain the integrity and consistency of all district data. In an effort to provide enhanced service and management of data requests, our preference is to receive requests for data online so that we can track what is being requested to better service our campus community.

If the information you are seeking is not available from the District portal, contact us by completing and sending the online Data Request Form located on our department web page at:


Depending on the complexity of the request, the time of year, of requests we have in queue, it may take anywhere from a few days to several weeks

If you have a question give us a call at 408-270-6409

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**Student Success Talk**  
**A Guaranteed Degree**

**By Ruth Villasenor, District Curriculum Coordinator**

What is an AA-T and AS-T Degree?
AA-T and AS-T are acronyms for Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degrees that are designed specifically for transfer to the California State University System. The degrees are the result of a transfer bill (SB 1440) that required the California Community Colleges to offer associate degrees for transfer in many of the most popular majors, and for the CSU to provide priority admission to California Community College students who have earned an AA-T or AS-T degree.

How are the AA-T and AS-T degrees different from the associate degrees that our colleges already offer?
Students completing an AA-T or AS-T degree receive priority admission to the CSU system. Students who have completed an AA-T or AS-T and are admitted to a CSU major that has been deemed similar are guaranteed admission at junior standing, and the opportunity to complete a baccalaureate degree with 60 additional semester units. AA-T and AS-T degrees are recognized by both the California Community College and CSU systems as a measure of preparation and readiness for transfer to upper-division course work at the CSU.

What degrees do our colleges offer?
At present, Evergreen Valley College offers transfer degrees in the following areas: Administration of Justice, History, Mathematics, Physics and Psychology.

Transfer degrees for San Jose City College include: Administration of Justice, Business Administration, Communication Studies, Economics, Kinesiology, Mathematics, and Psychology.

Students can explore the transfer degrees each college offers by visiting their college’s respective website or get answers to frequently asked questions at: http://adegreewithaguarantee.com/

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**Ask a Data Nerd**  
**by Ronald Lopez Ramirez**

The Census Bureau is the one-stop place for your demographic information needs. If you are not familiar with the American FactFinder website, simply the thought of trying to gather the information you are seeking is daunting, especially when you consider the amount of data that the Census Bureau provides. The great thing about American FactFinder is that the Census Bureau made data accessibility a top priority.

On the main page of American FactFinder, choosing "Guided Search" redirects the page to a 4-question survey that asks the type of information you’re looking for. The five questions ask:

- Who? Are you looking for information on individuals? Households? Businesses?
- Race/Ethnic Groups?

Once you complete the first 4-sections, the guided search returns all of the datasets that match your requirements.

Below is a sample of the Topics you can choose from:

- People
  - Basic Count Estimates
  - Age & Sex
  - Age Group
  - Age by Ethnicity
  - Age by Income
  - Age by Education
  - Age by Employment
- Income & Earnings
- Education
- Housing
- Health
- Household
- Income & Earnings
- Language
- Marital Status & Family
- Sex
- Summary Statistics
- Degree
- Population Change
- Poverty
- Relationship
- Veteran

Note: The Race & Ethnicity topic is available under the Race and Ethnic Groups drop down.
Data Points

By Ying-Fang Chen, Campus Based Researcher

Item Analysis for Course Assessments

This section introduces some numerical item analysis indices from the Classical Test Theory. Course instructors can easily apply these indices in their course assessments to evaluate the quality of the developed test items. Based on item analysis results, instructors could further edit and revise test items, which would improve a test item’s power to truly measure students’ actual proficiency levels. I use a set of multiple-choice items as an example, in which (*) refers to the correct answer of an item.

Item Difficulty ($p$)—item difficulty is the proportion of students who answer an item correctly. For example, the item difficulty for Item 1 is 0.8 (40/50=0.8), and the item difficulty for Item 2 is 0.3 (15/50=0.3). Easy items are those items with $p$ values above 0.75, and $p$ value below 0.25 are difficult items. It is suggested that a set of test items are developed with difficulty levels between 0.20 and 0.80 and with an average of about 0.50. Very difficult ($p \leq 0.1$) or very easy ($p \geq 0.90$) items have little discriminating power and should be carefully reviewed (e.g., a very difficult item might have confusing language issues or might not measure the targeted learning outcomes).

Item Discrimination ($D$)—there are several different kinds of item discrimination indices; one of the measures is to determine how well a test item discriminates between high-ability students and low-ability students. It is the ratio of the number of students in the upper group who get the item correctly minus the number of students in the lower group who get the item correctly, divided by half of the total number of students. For example, item discrimination for Item 3 is $(17-3)/25=0.56$, and item discrimination for Item 4 is $(13-8)/25=0.2$. A positive value of discrimination index ($D>0$) is appropriate, and a discrimination index of at least .30 is desirable. A negative $D$ value occurs when there are more low-ability students getting an item correctly than there are high-ability students; an item with negative item discrimination value should be discarded or modified. The higher the $D$ value, the better an item has the ability to differentiate students between low- and high-ability groups.

Item Option Analysis—we can also look into the quality of item options of a multiple-choice item to determine whether the developed item options function well. Take Item 3 for example, the option D functions well as the correct answer because more high-ability students choose it as correct answer than low-ability students; the option C is effective as a distractor because more low-ability students choose it as a correct answer than high-ability students. However, the option A of Item 3 does not function appropriately as a distractor because it is not attractive and none of the students choose it as correct answer; the option A should be rewritten or discarded. For Item 4, the option D does not perform well because it is chosen about as frequently as the correct answer; there might be some ambiguity or flaws in this item option.
IESS Mission:
We are the lens that provides clarity for leaders at San José Evergreen Community College District to make informed decisions to improve student success.

2014-2015 Operational Priorities
• Accreditation
• Enrollment Management
• Standardization of Reports
• Enhance the Student Experience through Data and Information

What are Student Learning Outcomes?
The National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) defines student learning outcomes as “…the expected knowledge, skills, attitudes, competencies, and habits of mind that students are expected to acquire at an institution of higher education.”

NILOA presented a report in early 2014 titled, Knowing What Students Know and Can Do: The Current State of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment in U.S. Colleges and Universities.

The report presented findings from a survey of 1,202 accredited two and four year institutions across the country. Some of the major findings include:

• 84% of all colleges and universities utilize student learning outcomes assessment
• Faculty involvement is critical and essential
• Use of multiple measures to assess learning has increased, measures include:
  • Classroom based assessment
    ◦ Portfolios
    ◦ Rubrics
    ◦ Surveys
  • Learning outcomes assessment tends to be driven by regional accrediting agencies, but institutions tend to use them internally rather than externally
    ◦ Most institutions consider the internal use far more than important than external use

To access the full report, go to:
http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/knowingwhatsstudentsknowandcando.html

Research in Review by Joyce Lui, Campus Based Researcher
In each Research in Review, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Student Success will present research related to student success, community colleges, and/or higher education.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours from IESS!