

College-Ready in the California State University System

Campus Experiences Implementing EO 1110

**Kathy Reeves Bracco
Cynthia Schrager
Grace Calisi
Priscilla Gutierrez
Maria Saliccioli
Neal Finkelstein**

May 2019

Executive Summary

In 2017, the California State University (CSU) Chancellor’s Office issued Executive Order (EO) 1110, eliminating non-credit-bearing developmental courses in written communication and math/quantitative reasoning and requiring campuses to provide new types of course models to help students succeed in entry-level college courses. EO 1110 also eliminated the use of the English Placement Test (EPT) and Entry-Level Mathematics (ELM) exam. These were replaced by use of “multiple measures,” a combination of high school grades and test scores, to determine students’ placement in courses upon entry to the university. Similar to other efforts across the country and in California community colleges, these changes are intended to acknowledge that students admitted to the CSU system are all college-ready, and to help more students move through the system successfully. These changes mark an extraordinary policy shift for the largest four-year college system in the country, and the bold policy has major implications for change on the 23 CSU campuses.

This report, focusing on campus experiences implementing EO 1110, is the first in a multiyear series of implementation studies undertaken by WestEd to help the CSU system understand how campuses are approaching these changes and to gauge the policy’s impact on student progress. Findings are based on interviews and focus groups conducted between October 2018 and February 2019 at nine of the CSU campuses, as well as a review of relevant course catalog offerings at all 23 campuses. It is too early to understand the full impact of the policy or to determine which curricular changes on the campuses are most effective and why. This report presents a snapshot of the campus implementation from the perspective of those on the ground working to make changes in response to the new policy.

According to the interviewees and focus group participants, all of the campuses have made significant progress in a short period of time; however, “one size doesn’t fit all” in terms of implementation approaches. Significant variation exists across the CSU campuses that were studied for this report — in terms of the demographics of their student bodies, the available instructor pool, and the number and types of departments that offer quantitative reasoning (QR) and written communication (WC) courses, factors that affect their choices for how best to redesign curricula. Campuses also exhibit distinctive approaches to supporting students with study skills, engagement, self-advocacy and other factors that impact success in the first year. Campuses vary in the ways they are leveraging existing efforts to advance student success.

Course redesign strategies generally fall into two categories: (1) single-semester (or quarter) courses with additional supports attached (including corequisites, supplemental instruction, and/or optional labs and workshops) and/or (2) multiterm sequences that use either a stretch model (spending more time on

material by stretching a one-semester course over two semesters) or a prerequisite model. Key findings concerning campus course redesign approaches include the following:

- Corequisite models are in use across both QR and WC courses, with variations in the degree and type of articulation between parent and support courses.
- Stretch models are well-established in the WC curriculum and are being developed in the QR curriculum, particularly for STEM and statistics pathways; most faculty reported that these models function best when they maintain the same instructor and student cohort across semesters.
- Campuses are experimenting with different QR curricular pathways to better meet the needs of all students.
- Campuses are utilizing optional supplemental instruction, face-to-face tutoring, and/or online tutorials to support student success.
- Active-learning pedagogies are being incorporated into the curriculum in QR.
- Campuses are engaged in an iterative process of implementing curricular redesigns and expect to continue to make changes in the coming semesters.

Campus administrators reported relying heavily on part-time lecturer faculty to teach redesigned entry-level WC and QR courses and identified a need for professional development to ensure consistency in course delivery across multiple instructors. Course coordinators are often taking an informal role in organizing QR professional development, whereas WC courses tended to have more structured professional development, frequently organized through a writing center or by a director of composition studies. Some campuses that use student instructors and tutors have developed robust training models. However, across the board, faculty and administrators said that funding for ongoing professional development is limited and that there are insufficient structures to implement effective practices in their respective disciplines.

Campus staff and faculty who were interviewed for this report generally expressed agreement with the elimination of the EPT and ELM. However, they identified some challenges with implementing multiple measures, most consistently pointing to the lack of the timely availability of high school transcripts to determine final student placement. Many campuses also reported success using Directed Self-Placement, particularly for WC, although some expressed concerns that multiple measures may lessen the impact of this approach. The new placement efforts have required strengthened collaboration structures across Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, a collateral benefit of EO 1110 implementation.

Campus interviewees also provided their perspectives on the implementation process:

- Interviewees identified the one-year timeline as their greatest implementation challenge.
- Campus constituents indicated being largely in agreement with the overall goal of ending developmental education, crediting the Chancellor's Office with accelerating the conditions for important, student-centered curriculum reforms to take place.
- Campus stakeholders said they want to be engaged early in the development of initiatives to build on local expertise and context.

- Interviewees requested sustainable, ongoing support that is tailored to local needs.
- Stakeholders said they would appreciate more coordination at the Chancellor’s Office regarding the rollout of related student success initiatives to help them with integrated planning.

The findings from nine CSU campuses suggest that overall the campuses are positively engaged in curriculum redesign efforts to comply with EO 1110. The report’s findings indicate that to maximize success with the continued implementation of EO 1110, both campus leadership and the Chancellor’s Office should direct future efforts and supports in the following ways:

- support data-driven, iterative curriculum redesign to assess the efficacy of curricular reforms and consider improvements to further support student success;
- support local professional development efforts aimed at ensuring consistency in the quality of instruction;
- provide more flexibility for campuses to implement multiple measures placement and provide effective communication and training to those tasked with implementing the new placement measures; and
- build capacity for effective enrollment management, including scheduling and lecturer faculty hiring.

In addition, lessons learned from the implementation of EO 1110 can help inform the rollout of other potential student success initiatives in the following ways:

- identify strategies for creating a sense of urgency while also providing support for campuses to engage in an evidence-based, iterative process of design;
- provide early and ongoing communication and supports that are tailored to campus needs;
- support campuses to build capacity for cross-functional collaboration and integrated planning; and
- look for opportunities to better integrate and coordinate related Chancellor’s Office initiatives.

Future reports in this series will address the implementation of changes to Early Start, an analysis of student progress through the different types of supported WC and QR courses, and a validity study of the new multiple measures placement process. Additional reports will be released by WestEd over the next several years.