

Santiago Canyon College
Student Services
Student Learning Outcomes Annual Report
2009-10

Department Name

Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS)

Department Mission Statement

We support the success of students with disabilities by providing programs and services that promote access, equal opportunity and empowerment.

Student Learning Outcomes

The DSPS Department has maintained the same Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for the past three years. We consider these SLOs essential for students with disabilities if they are to successfully navigate the college environment and ensure they have the accommodations they require. As stated in previous year's reports, many students with disabilities are unclear about the nature of their disability, its educational impact, and the accommodations they need. This is especially true of students with hidden disabilities transitioning to the college from high school. Because self-advocacy is a critical component of student success, the DSPS Department maintained the following student learning outcomes for the 2009-2010 academic year:

As a result of participating in Disabled Students Programs and Services,

1. Students will be able to identify their disabilities and explain their educational limitations.
2. Students will be able to articulate the accommodations they require.

Methods

New Students

All students who apply for DSPS participate in an individual evaluation of needs with a DSPS faculty member to determine program eligibility and required academic accommodations. The evaluation is a didactic process designed to help students learn about their disabilities and the accommodations that will benefit them. The evaluation culminates with students learning what disability category they qualify under and the academic accommodations that are authorized for them. This information is provided to students orally and in writing.

Before meeting with the faculty member, students complete a DSPS Application for Services. The application includes three questions designed to provide an initial assessment of students' awareness of their disabilities, educational limitations, and needed accommodations. The application questions are as follows:

1. What is your disability?
2. What educational difficulties do you experience because of your disability?
3. What services/accommodations are you requesting?

Responses to these questions are used by DSPS faculty to inform them in their discussions with students about their disabilities and accommodation needs.

To assess the student learning outcomes for new students, DSPS faculty asked them the following three questions at the end of the evaluation meeting:

1. What is your disability?
2. How does your disability affect your learning?
3. What accommodations are authorized for you?

Students who were unclear about the answer to any of these questions were provided with additional instruction and asked the questions again to check understanding.

Criteria for each outcome

Evaluators assessed students' verbal responses to the three questions utilizing the following criteria outlined on the back of the DSPS Application for Services:

The student is able to:

1. Identify disability(ies)
2. State educational limitations
3. Articulate needed accommodations

Responses were rated according to three levels and recorded as: yes, somewhat, or no. These assessment results were then transferred to an excel spreadsheet.

Limitations

In some cases, confounding factors related to the nature of students' disabilities interfered with their ability to meet outcome criteria. These factors included below average cognitive ability, receptive/expressive communication difficulties, attention problems, anxiety, and other psychological issues.

Continuing Students

At the end of each semester, most DSPS students meet with their DSPS instructor to review progress towards their stated educational goals and develop a class schedule for the following semester. This year, SLOs for continuing students were assessed through a written questionnaire that students completed just before their review/planning meetings.

The SLO questionnaire asked students to respond to the following three questions:

1. What is your disability? (a checklist of disability categories was provided)
2. My disability makes it difficult for me to: (written response required)
3. I can receive the following accommodations: (written response required)

Criteria for each outcome

Evaluators assessed students' responses to the three questions utilizing the following criteria:

The student is able to:

1. Identify disability(ies)
2. State educational limitations
3. Articulate needed accommodations

Student responses were rated according to three levels: yes, with assistance, or no. These assessment results were then transferred to an excel spreadsheet.

Students who were unclear about the answer to any of the questions were provided with additional instruction and asked the questions again to check understanding.

Limitations

Confounding factors similar to those demonstrated in new students were also observed with continuing students.

Implementation of Assessment Process

Individuals Responsible for the Evaluation Process

DSPS full-time faculty was responsible for assessing student learning outcomes for new and continuing students. New students were assessed as part of the process of evaluating their eligibility for program services. Continuing students were assessed during individual review/planning meetings with DSPS faculty. The DSPS faculty evaluated the data.

Implementation Timeline

Data assessing learning outcomes for new students applying to DSPS was gathered over the course of fall 2009 and spring 2010. Continuing students were assessed during individual review/planning meetings during the last few weeks of the spring 2010 semester.

Students Evaluated

Learning outcomes were assessed for all new students applying for DSPS services. The continuing student population was made up of students seeking assistance with program planning.

Intended Users of Collected Data

Disabled Students Programs and Services is the intended user of the assessment data collected. Information learned from the assessment of student learning outcomes will be used to improve and expand practices related to helping students develop self-advocacy skills.

Results

New Students

Two hundred and nine (209) new students were assessed during fall 2009 and spring 2010 with the following results:

The student is able to:	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>No</u>
1. Identify disability(ies)	90.4%	9.6%	0%
2. State educational limitations	88.5%	11.5%	0%
3. Articulate needed accommodations	88.5%	11.5%	0%

These results for new students were somewhat lower than last year but within acceptable margins of variability. It was expected that most students would meet the outcome criteria after the instruction provided since the process allowed for a verification of understanding and additional instruction as needed. However, in some cases, students were unable to meet the criteria because the nature of their disabilities interfered with their ability to process and/or articulate the information. This year's slightly lower results may be attributed to a greater number of new students with intellectual disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Continuing Students

Ninety-four (94) continuing students were assessed during the last few weeks of the spring 2010 semester. The results are as follows:

The student is able to:	<u>Yes</u>	<u>With Assistance</u>	<u>No</u>
1. Identify disability(ies)	87.2%	12.8 %	0%
2. State educational limitations	89.4 %	10.6%	0%
3. Articulate needed accommodations	80.9%	18.1%	<1%

This year, results for continuing students were relatively consistent with those for new students. They were also slightly higher than last year's results for continuing students. This may be attributed to improved practices over the years for helping students learn this information and ongoing efforts to reinforce this information during review/planning meetings. The small differences between new with continuing students may also naturally result from the time lapse between continuing students' initial evaluation and the assessment of learning outcomes. Many students with learning-related disabilities have memory difficulties and may not effectively hold on to the information over time.

Validation of Results

The results of student learning outcomes for new and continuing students are deemed valid because they are consistent with the subjective experiences of DSPS faculty and staff.

Decisions and Recommendations

Summary of Recommendations

The following recommendations apply to both DSPS student learning outcomes and are designed to enhance instruction in self-advocacy:

- Continue to assess these student learning outcomes as part of the Special Services N60 individualized assessment class.
- Continue to incorporate self-advocacy strategies throughout the Special Services N65 curriculum and through individual consultations.
- Continue to assess students' self-advocacy skills through Program Effectiveness Surveys.

Decision Participants

DSPS faculty and staff participated in discussions that led to the recommendations.

Suggestions for Improving the Assessment Process

DSPS will develop questionnaires or surveys when possible to better ensure the standardization of SLO assessment results.

Future Evaluation Plan

New Department SLOs targeting transitioning high school students will be developed for 2010. Current SLOs and assessment methods for new students will be utilized for students enrolled in Special Services N60 during fall 2010 and spring 2011.

Implementation of Changes

The DSPS faculty will be responsible for implementing the recommended changes.

