

CSU/UC Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Project
California Community Colleges—November 2008 Newsletter
MaryAnne Anthony, Community College Coordinator

MDTP Celebrates 30th Anniversary!

On June 30th, at the annual week-long summer workgroup meeting in San Diego, former and current members of the Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Project (MDTP) celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of the MDTP. The guest list included representatives from the California State University Chancellor's Office and the California Academic Partnership Program (CAPP). A slide show featuring the history of the MDTP was the highlight of the evening.

MDTP began as a joint project of the California State University and the University of California. The original charge included determining the mathematics skills and concepts in which competency was necessary for success in certain mathematics courses and developing diagnostic tests emphasizing some of those concepts and skills. From its inception, MDTP's test development workgroup has always included mathematics faculty from precollegiate schools, community colleges, and both university systems. By 1986, a series of four tests was in use at California high schools, where teachers used the diagnostic results of the tests to help them plan lessons and curriculum to ensure their students had the skills they needed to progress through the math curriculum and enter the university ready for Calculus.

Mathematics teachers and professors actively involved in classroom instruction at California middle schools, high schools, colleges, and universities are members of the MDTP workgroup. They meet several times during the academic year and spend one intensive week every summer creating new tests and revising existing tests. MDTP has readiness tests for courses from Prealgebra to Calculus currently available for use in California middle and high schools; in 2007-2008, over 660,000 MDTP tests were scored for California secondary school students and their teachers.

About fifty California Community Colleges use MDTP tests to recommend placement into mathematics courses as part of the matriculation process. Last year these colleges reported administering more than 168,000 MDTP tests. As required by the Chancellor's Office, validation studies have been conducted periodically and seven MDTP tests are on the list of approved assessment instruments. The most recent data submitted resulted in the full approval of the MDTP tests until 2012.

Community college license fees (\$800 per year for most colleges) allow colleges to administer MDTP tests to their students. Licensed colleges can purchase test booklets or request masters to make sufficient copies for their own assessment needs; they score the tests themselves. MDTP may waive the fee the first year a college is licensed to use MDTP tests so that the college can collect data to set appropriate cut-scores for placement into their math classes. Many MDTP-licensed colleges also choose to contract with CAPP Associates for computerized test delivery and scoring.

Besides using the tests approved for math placement, faculty at colleges licensed with MDTP may use any of the materials produced by MDTP in their classrooms. Teachers wishing to measure growth in student skills, for example as part of the Basic Skills Initiative, may wish to use the diagnostic capabilities of the multiple choice tests. The Written Response Items can provide assessment of students' mathematical reasoning and communications skills.

Further information about the MDTP and its materials can be found on the web site <http://mdtp.ucsd.edu>. The community college coordinator is also available to answer questions by phone or e-mail; please refer to the contact information at the end of this newsletter.

On Approved Assessment List

- 1007 (Form EA50C86)
UC/CSU MDTP ELEMENTARY ALGEBRA
Expires 03/01/12
- 1008 (Forms IA45C86 & IA45C91)
UC/CSU MDTP INTERMEDIATE ALGEBRA
Expires 03/01/12
- 1009 (Forms PC40C86 & PC60C86)
UC/CSU MDTP PRECALCULUS READINESS
Expires 07/01/12
- 1010 (Forms AR50/86 & AR50/90)
UC/CSU MDTP ALGEBRA READINESS
Expires 03/01/12

Computerized Forms available through CAPP Associates (www.cappassoc.com).

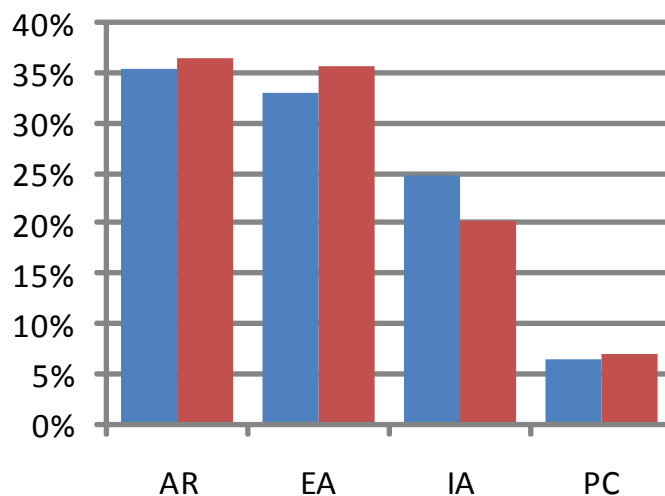
- 1060 (Computerized Form EA50C86)
UC/CSU MDTP ELEMENTARY ALGEBRA
Expires 07/01/12
- 1061 (Computerized Form IA45C86)
UC/CSU MDTP INTERMEDIATE ALGEBRA
Expires 07/01/12
- 1062 (Computerized Forms PC40C86 & PC60C86)
UC/CSU MDTP PRECALCULUS READINESS
Expires 07/01/12
- 1063 (Computerized Form AR50/86)
UC/CSU MDTP ALGEBRA READINESS
Expires 07/01/12

Increase in Testing for Developmental Math Courses

Last year, more than 168,000 MDTP tests were administered at 47 California community colleges. The Algebra Readiness test was taken by approximately 61,500 students. Comparing the test levels in 07-08 to those of the previous year, the percents of Algebra Readiness and Elementary Algebra Diagnostic tests were higher, while the percent of Intermediate Algebra Diagnostic tests was lower. The proportion of Precalculus Diagnostic tests remained a steady 7%.

Test Administered

■ 0607 ■ 0708



MDTP Community College Coordinator

For non-business matters, e.g., consideration of appropriate ways to use MDTP tests to support instruction and placement, please contact :

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MDTP Business Officer

For business matters, e.g., licenses, usage data, copyright, and ordering tests, please contact:

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La Jolla California 92093-0112

"This book is a gold mine!"

That is what the chair of a Southern California mathematics department said after looking through the collection of MDTP written response items. She and her committee were looking for ways to assess students' communications skills as part of the Student Learning Outcome process. The Written Response Item binder contains carefully developed, class-tested items ready for use in courses ranging from Basic Mathematics through Calculus. Each item includes

- a copy of the item, ready for reproduction and distribution to students;
- an instructor's supplement page explaining the "essence" of the item and suggesting ideas for classroom extensions; and
- a specialized scoring rubric created specifically for that particular item, which should be used in accordance with MDTP's General Scoring Rubric-also included in the binder.

The use of MDTP written response items is recognized by the Basic Skills Initiative as an exemplary practice. One item, AR96ILND, is included in the "Effective Practices in Mathematics" chapter in the Constructing A Framework for Success: A Holistic Approach to Basic Skills.

The Written Response 'binder' has just been released on CD. Faculty at colleges licensed with MDTP may request a complimentary copy. Faculty at other colleges, may order copies at \$10 each. You may order a CD by contacting the MDTP business office.



MDTP's web site,
<http://mdtp.ucsd.edu>
provides information about MDTP materials,
services, and licenses.



Fall and Winter Conferences

MDTP will once again have a table in the exhibit halls of the California Mathematics Council Community Colleges 2008-09 conferences. Please stop by if you have any questions about using MDTP tests and materials.

CMC3 Monterey,
December 13, 2008

CMC3-S Anaheim/Orange County
March 7, 2009

There will also be a brief presentation about MDTP at the California Community College Assessment Association Southern Chapter conference at Citrus College on Friday, December 12th.

Each year the K-12 MDTP regional sites host conferences to discuss current issues in mathematics education in California. The conferences often provide opportunities for intersegmental dialogue among faculty. Conferences have been tentatively scheduled on the following campuses in January, February, and March 2009:

UC Berkeley
UC Davis
CSU Fullerton
CSU San Bernardino
UC San Diego

Links to conference flyers and registration forms will be posted on the MDTP news and events web page as they become available.
(<http://mdtp.ucsd.edu/NewsEvents.shtml>)