1. What goals or learning objectives/outcomes were assessed in the AY ending June 30?

The Learning Skills Math Program in 2008-09 evaluated student performance on the Elementary Algebra and Geometry Diagnostic Exam (EGAD) to determine the areas of strength and weakness in LS 7B and LS 10A in both the lecture and the multimedia format.

2. How did you assess these learning outcomes?

Describe the measures you used and the information gathered.

In 2008-09 the assessment focus was on evaluating the curriculum in LS 7B and LS 10A as revealed by an item analysis of the Elementary Algebra and Geometry Diagnostic Exam (EGAD). This is a standardized test developed by the California Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Project (MDPT) which is an intersegmental project used by mathematics programs across California in community colleges, the CSU and the UC. Student performance on this test was discussed by the Learning Skills math faculty to identify areas where the curriculum could be strengthened to improve student readiness for their GE level math classes.

3. As a result of faculty reflection on these results, are there any program changes anticipated?

a. If so, what are those changes?

Faculty concluded, as a result of the EGAD item analysis, that the LS 10A curriculum should include more measurement geometry and applied graphing. They also decided that a continued effort to focus on applied algebra skills was called for.

b. How will you know if these changes achieved the desired results?

Although curricular changes may need to be implemented in LS 10A in order to improve student learning, the math coordinator retired at the end of spring semester and his replacement will not begin until August 10. Therefore, the math faculty decided that it was necessary to wait until the new coordinator had time to evaluate the program and the proposed changes before implementing them. Once these changes are implemented, another item analysis of the EGAD, probably at the end of Fall 2010, will help to evaluate if the curricular changes have been successful in improving students’ learning in the areas of geometry, graphing, and applied algebra.
4. Did your department engage in any other assessment activities such as the development of rubrics, course alignment?

The Learning Skills department developed a pilot program to reduce the number of students who need preparatory math courses once they enroll in the university. It will be offered in Summer 2009 and will target students who have failed the ELM with the chance to reduce the required semesters of mathematics remediation. Students will be contacted by e-mail and can meet with the coordinator during First Year Orientation. They will be encouraged to purchase a $45 site license for the web-based ALEKS math program that is aligned with the ELM. They can then take an ALEKS assessment which will diagnose their areas of weakness. Once they have completed the assessment, they can independently complete the appropriate ALEKS course and take a proctored ALEKS assessment, to be given the week before school starts.

Activities for Closing the Assessment Loop 2008-09

- **MONTHLY COORDINATOR MEETINGS**: Coordinators in the LS Math Program meet monthly to discuss issues in the program. In these sessions program improvement is an on-going topic. As a consequence, we have identified critical areas of the curriculum that need to be emphasized.

- **MONTHLY MATH FACULTY MEETINGS**: Course coordinators meet monthly with math faculty including part-time lecturers and student instructors. In addition to discussing topics related to the on-going functioning of the program, they update faculty on assessment findings and talk about future directions for the curriculum.

- **ASSESSMENT BINDER FOR WASC ACCREDITATION VISIT**: Learning Skills created a binder of data and exemplars of student work reflecting the ways in which assessment activities are carried out in both the writing and the math program. For the math program, we included charts showing the percentages of students receiving credit in the courses from 2003 – 2008, the revised Student Learning Outcomes, sample student exams, and exemplars of strong passing, passing, and failing student papers for each course.

5. What assessment activities are planned for the upcoming academic year?

- **ASSESSMENT OF THE OUTCOME OF THE SUMMER ALEKS PILOT PROGRAM**: The coordinator in charge of the pilot will maintain a data base of all students who enroll in the ALEKS Challenge to Developmental Math placement summer program, with information on initial ELM score, initial LS placement, initial ALEKS assessment, ALEKS placement (ALEKS ELM Prep or Prep for Beginning Algebra), time spent on ALEKS, proctored ALEKS assessment score,
and final math placement. At the end of the pilot, the data will be analyzed to determine the success of the project and to identify any changes needed to improve outcomes for the next summer.

- **ANALYSIS OF SAMPLE EXAMS:** In 2008-09 sample exams for LS 7A, LS 7B, and LS 10X were selected as exemplars of strong passing, passing, and failing student exams for each course. These exams will be discussed with the Learning Skills math faculty in order to identify areas for curricular improvement.

- **CONTINUED EVALUATION OF EGAD DATA:** Once curricular changes have been implemented in LS 10A, the data from the administration of the EGAD at the end of the course again needs to be analyzed in order to assess whether the changes have improved students preparation for GE math.

- **MONTHLY COORDINATOR MEETINGS:** Coordinators in the math will continue to meet monthly to discuss issues in the program. In these sessions program improvement will be continue to be an on-going topic.

- **MONTHLY MATH FACULTY MEETINGS:** Course coordinators will continue to meet monthly with math faculty including part-time lecturers and student instructors. In addition to discussing topics related to the on-going functioning of the program, they will update faculty on assessment findings and talk about future directions for the curriculum.

6. Obstacles to Closing the Loop
With the exception of the program coordinator, everyone who teaches writing classes in the Learning Skills Center is a lecturer or teaching associate. Creating opportunities to bring everyone together to reflect on the outcomes of our assessment efforts and to devise ways to improve student performance is challenging because teachers often also work in other departments and at other campuses and must volunteer their time to participate. We desperately need on-going funding to ensure that we can continue and expand our assessment efforts and reward in even a minimal way the time and effort that teachers put into these activities.