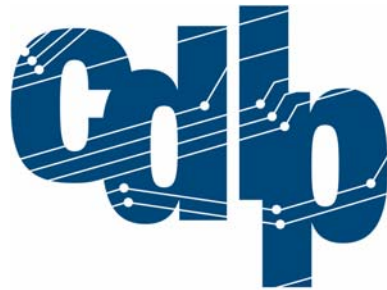


The California Adult Education 2005 —
2007 Innovation and Alternative
Instructional Delivery Program

A Review



Dr. Richard Stiles, Consultant, and
Dennis Porter, Director,
California Distance Learning Project

California State University Dominguez Hills College of Extended and
International Education

2007

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The California Adult Education 2005 – 2007 Innovation and Alternative Instructional Delivery Program — A Review

Dr. Richard Stiles and Dennis Porter, California Distance Learning Project,
California State University Dominguez Hills College of Extended and International Education

Summary

State legislation permits California adult schools to spend up to 5% of their apportionment on non traditional educational approaches. The resulting “Innovation Programs” continue to grow while overall adult education remains relatively static. In program year 2005–06 over 59,000 adult learners participated in Innovation Programs, all of which were distance learning in nature.

This data driven report draws information from the annual Innovation Program applications, the statewide student information system — TOPSPro, and from statewide CASAS reading and listening tests.¹ The availability of these standardized data enables researchers to describe and examine distance learning program characteristics, learner characteristics, and learner progress and outcomes using several measures. For the second year the report is able to compare and contrast key outcome data between classroom, distance learning only, and blended learning. The findings alter the researcher’s understanding of the utility of the distance learning interventions.

The Innovation Programs provide significant and meaningful alternatives for adults —

- needing more practice of skills to achieve mastery,
- having work and family obligations that make attending a regular class time difficult,
- lacking the full confidence to participate in a large classroom setting in front of other students,
- wanting the participation, assistance, and support of their families in their learning,
- living in locations without convenient access to traditional classes,
- living in areas where desired programs are either full or not available
- interested in pursuing their education in work settings with co-workers
- learning more effectively from video, audio, and web-based media when moving at their own pace, and
- other groups who can not access traditional classroom programs.

When comparing classroom data with the Innovation Programs, it is clear that the blended learning programs that combine classroom and distance learning instruction are particularly successful in providing ESL learning opportunities. Local research data on student persistence, retention, and reading and listening gain scores support these findings.

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Video and audio checkout programs were the most common delivery modalities followed by online instruction. Telecourses may serve the largest numbers per class, but only anecdotal data are available on overall numbers.

English as a second language instructional programs represent the bulk of the Innovation Program enrollments (90.3%) in 2005 – 2006. Los Angeles County adult schools dominate the enrollment statistics (71%) and the outcomes data. Women represent two thirds (65.4%) of the basic education participants in the Innovation Programs. The basic education programs are English as a second language (ESL), adult basic education, and GED / adult secondary education (ASE).

In 2005 – 2006 age group participation was balanced between the 21–30 (30.1%) and the 31–40 (28.8%) age groups. Hispanics accounted for 70.4% of the enrollments with Asians representing 17%. Spanish was the primary language spoken by 73.6% of the population.

Over 45% of the Innovation Program participants reported having nine or less years of schooling. About half (51.7%) of the 2005 – 2006 Innovation Program participants reported having no earned degrees with 27.3% having high school diplomas or GEDs. Over 25% of the ESL learners were at the beginning or beginning literacy levels at the time of entry and 53% were determined to be at the intermediate levels.

Over 83% of all the learners reported that improving basic skills or their English skills were their primary reasons for enrolling in 2005 – 2006. Improving their English skills accounted for 66.9% and improving basic skills was 16.9%.

The Innovation Program participants' level of program completion was better than adult school classroom programs with blended learning showing the highest completion rate (Table 23). Overall Innovation Program persistence rates are higher than the classroom programs. However, distance learning–only programs showed the lowest levels of persistence (Table 24). Persistence in this case is defined as completing a CASAS post test.

Tested learners in the Innovation Programs' ESL/ESL–Citizenship programs showed higher mean reading gains for the <180, 181–200, and 210–220 CASAS scoring ranges than the CASAS historical norm (Table 21). Their comparative listening score mean gains also are greater than the historical norms (Table 22).

The Innovation Programs follow the same accountability requirements as class–based apportionment programs. Over the past seven years the Innovation Programs have been successful in standardizing their reporting procedures, while still maintaining alternative instructional delivery methods. All Innovation Program students are expected to be tracked in the TOPSPRO system, and all programs are using a standardized format for both program applications and annual evaluation. This format makes gathering of data and program monitoring more substantive and meaningful.

CASAS pre and post reading and listening testing are not required for state programs, only those that participate in the WIA II programs. However, it is strongly encouraged. Pre and post testing are more difficult than in traditional settings. The tests are not standardized for programs other than ESL, ABE and GED / ASE. In general, the Innovation Program coordinators have noted that they collect more program documentation and learner progress information than do the classroom programs.

The Innovation Programs continue to meet the three crucial benefit–cost criteria necessary to be accepted by adult education providers and the California Department of Education. They are:

1. Effectiveness — CASAS pre – posttest data indicate that the Innovation Programs' ESL program participants, on average, show substantial learning increases in reading and

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listening. Much of this is attributed to the results of the blended learning model. The ABE/ASE participants show learning gains consistent with historical CASAS testing data.

2. Efficiency — Participant and program cost data indicate that the Innovation Programs are cost effective. Common sense tells us that the programs would not be offered if they are not cost effective.
3. Equity — Reported years in school, primary language, reading and listening scores on entry, and ethnic data indicate that lower level, often hard-to-serve learners are the primary participants in the Innovation Programs.

This is the seventh year that similar summary conclusions have been reached. However, they are tempered by a closer look at comparative classroom, blended learning, and distance learning only data.

Local Innovation Program operators have many stories of how their programs have introduced adult education to people who would not otherwise attend classes, enabled learners to meet the complex demands of family, work and learning, and introduced the possibilities of multi-media learning to classroom teachers.

The Report

This report is the seventh in a series of annual research papers on the California Innovation and Alternative Instructional Delivery Program.ⁱⁱ The purpose is to provide current and comparative information on the implementation of EC 52522 and provide an overview of the adult education Innovation Program initiative.

The report draws data from three sources as follows:

- 2006 – 2007 Innovation Program applications
- 2005 – 2006 Tracking of Programs and Students (TOPSpro) Entry and Update records
- 2005 – 2006 CASAS reading and listening pre and post tests

These data sets provide a detailed examination of adult school distance learning programs in California.

The Legislation

In 1993 the California legislature passed EC 52522 permitting the Superintendent of Public Instruction to approve adult school plans to spend up to 5% of their block entitlement on innovation and alternative instructional delivery. This authorization and the subsequent initiative are commonly known as the Innovation Program initiative.

Types of innovative programs identified in the legislation follow.ⁱⁱⁱ

1. Worksite adult basic education skills instruction.
2. Distance learning using video and other communication technologies.
3. Home-based and community-based independent study approaches using instructional technologies.

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4. Tests of alternative reimbursement approaches other than average daily attendance to determine whether they are reasonable and feasible, to the extent that there is no decrease in the number of students served nor an increase in cost to the state.

Any adult school wishing to request authorization for the innovative programming submits an annual application to the California Dept. of Education. The application form is available on the CDE Adult Education Office website — www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ae — under Governance and Accountability. Authorized programs are required to submit an annual report outlining budget information, student activities, learners served, accomplishments, the alternative instructional delivery design, average daily attendance (a.d.a.) accounting procedures, and how the program is evaluated and continuously improved.

Current Uses

The Innovation Program initiative began in earnest in 1995. Almost all the approved innovative programs have fallen under the California Distance Learning Project's definition of distance learning. This means that several key requirements must be met. They are:

- the separation of teacher and learner in space and/or time during at least a majority of each instructional process,
- the provision of two-way communication between teacher, tutor, or educational agency and learner,
- the use of educational media to unite teacher and learner and carry course content, and
- the control of the learning pace and frequency by student rather than the distance instructor.^{iv}

The California Department of Education and the Distance Learning Project continue to stress the importance of the two-way communication. While some people equate distance education with impersonal self-directed learning, California adult education emphasizes the role of the instructor in providing the learning intervention. In fact, feedback and comments from the field indicate that the relationship between the teacher and the learning in distance learning is often rated as more responsive and personal than in traditional classes.

Ninety Three Participating Adult Schools

The statewide Innovation Program has reached extensive acceptance by the adult education field. In the winter of 2007 ninety three adult schools had been approved to operate Innovation Programs for the 2006 – 2007 fiscal year.

Feedback from the field indicates that an Innovation Program for small adult schools is too time consuming and counter-productive, particularly if the purchase of specialized equipment or materials is necessary. The smaller adult schools have little incentive to participate, which is unfortunate, because the opportunity to offer non-traditional learning opportunities could help address problems of distance, limited curricula, and oversight, which are challenges often faced by these small or more isolated programs.^v This problem requires finding new approaches, further research, varied technology, and/or more flexible policy to allow cost-effective services to these small programs. This realization is one reason the California Distance Learning Project is pioneering a program to offer on-line Adult Basic Education to a variety of programs in the state.

Over 27 Million Dollars Requested

The requested approvals for Innovation Programs totaled over \$30,868,970 with an approximate average of \$299,699 per adult school. The median requested budget was \$112,932.^{vi} The range of approvals was from the Los Angeles Unified request of about \$12.54 million to the Anderson Valley Adult Education's \$1,909. The Los Angeles request represents about 41% of the state total. The estimated average cost per student is \$480 and

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the median cost is \$475. These funds come from each adult school's apportionment. They are not new funds.

Current Participation

Figure 1–A describes the distribution of current distance learners in program year 2005 – 2006. According to TOPSPro data collected by CASAS, 57,629 unduplicated learners participated in Innovation Programs in program year 2005 – 2006. This represents an increase of 12.8% from the previous year.

Figure 1–A

Innovation Program Participation in 2005– 2006

Program	N	%
ABE	750	1.3
ESL/ESL Cit	53,766	90.3
ASE (HS/GED)	1,885	3.2
Citizenship	130	0.2
Career/Technical Ed.	714	1.2
Adults w/Disabilities	72	0.1
Health & Safety	53	0.1
Home Economics	44	0.1
Parent Ed.	1,921	3.2
Older Adults	210	0.4
Total Students	59,545	100.0
<i>Total Unduplicated Students</i>	<i>57,629</i>	

Source: CASAS 2007

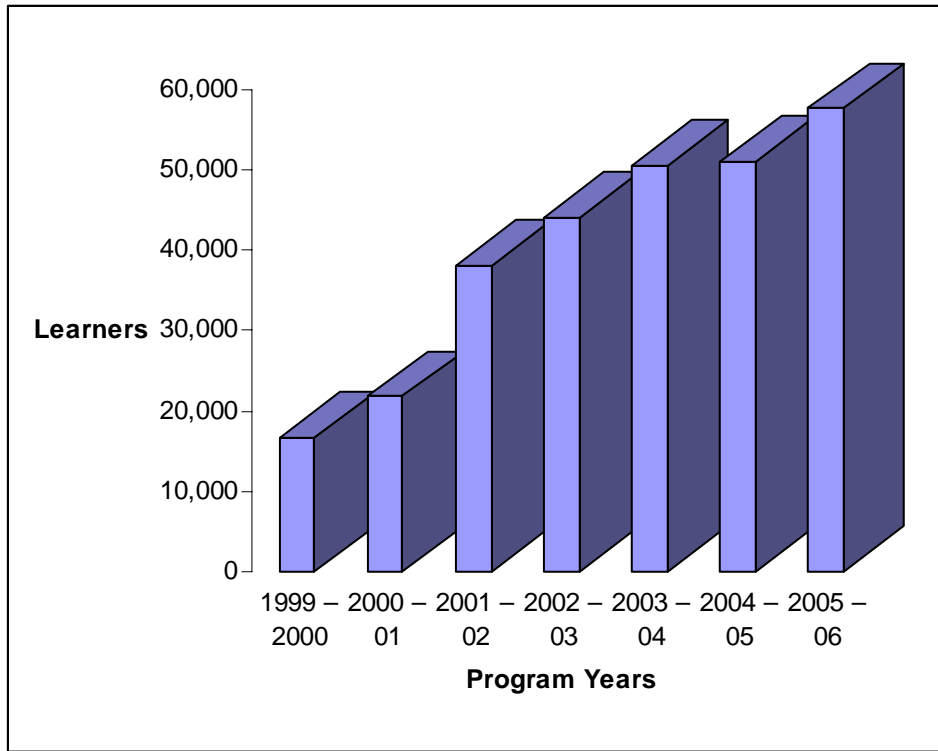
Changes in Participation Since 1999

Figure 1–B displays the growth in the Innovation Programs since standardized data have been available. In the earlier days some Innovation Programs did not document their “distance learning” participation, so there may be a slight undercount in programs years 1999 – 2000 and 2000 – 2001.

The graphic shows a steady growth in Innovation Program size even though overall adult school apportionment has remained reasonable stable for this time period. The probable explanation for this steady increase is the increase in adult schools seeking waivers to allow them to operate at 7%, especially Los Angeles Unified.

Figure 1–B

Participation in Innovation Programs from 1999 to 2006



Source: CASAS 2007 and previous

The changes in program participation over the last three program years are displayed in Figure 1–C. They are only modest changes with ASE/GED and Parent Education increasing slightly and ESL decreasing slightly.

Figure 1–C

Participation in Program Areas 2003 to 2006

Program	PY 2003–2004		PY 2004–2005		PY 2005–2006	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	398	0.8	526	1.0	750	1.3
ESL	46,621	92.4	47,140	92.3	53,766	90.3
ASE/GED	1,152	2.3	1,039	2.0	1,885	3.2
Citizenship	95	0.2	111	0.2	130	0.2
Career Tech	592	1.2	693	1.4	714	1.2
Adults w/Disabilities	163	0.3	33	0.1	72	0.1
Health & Safety	74	0.1	108	0.2	53	0.1
Home Economics	82	0.2	73	0.1	44	0.1
Parent Ed.	1,113	2.2	1,116	2.2	1,921	3.2
Older Adults	175	0.3	250	0.5	210	0.4
Total	50,465	100	51,089	100	59,545	100

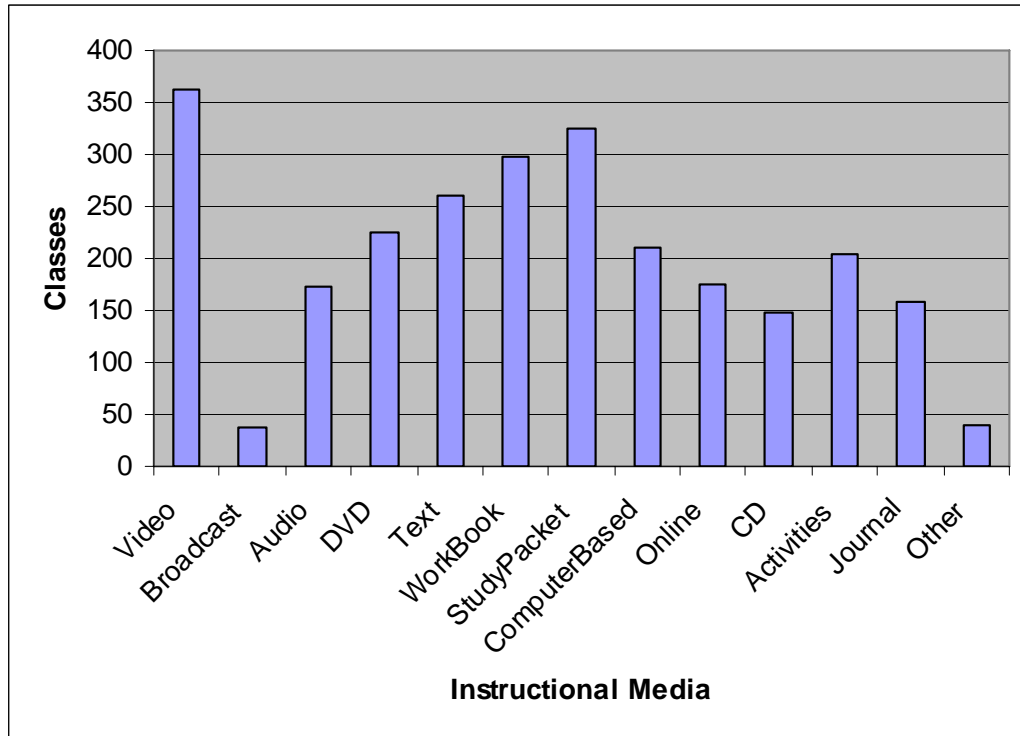
CASAS 2007

Distribution by Instructional Media Delivery Type

Figure 2 summarizes the most popular instructional media types proposed for FY 2006 – 2007. These numbers reflect multiple classes offered at some adult schools. Video checkout remains by far the most popular media used in Innovation Programs.

Figure 2

The Most Popular Instructional Delivery Modes Used in the Innovation Program Courses in FY 2006 – 2007



Source: 2006–2007 Applications

The video and audio media normally are provided on a checkout basis with workbooks, study packets, work assignments, or activities included. Since video checkout usually is combined with one or more other delivery methods, it makes determining the statewide percentages of the delivery modes difficult.

The checkout model is flexible and easy to manage. The availability of pre-produced and school site produced videos continue to make checkout a popular model.

Changes from the previous year are slight increases in online and CD-based learning. This increase probably represents increasing capabilities on the part of programs to use these delivery methods along with publishers producing more and more materials in these formats. Multiple delivery methods can be used for any approved course.

The “Other” category encompasses a wide range of activities including “software to develop English and life skills,” community activities, group discussions, DVDs, “learning events,” career plans and practice interviews, and using portable intelligent keyboards.^{vii}

Class Distribution by Instructional Areas

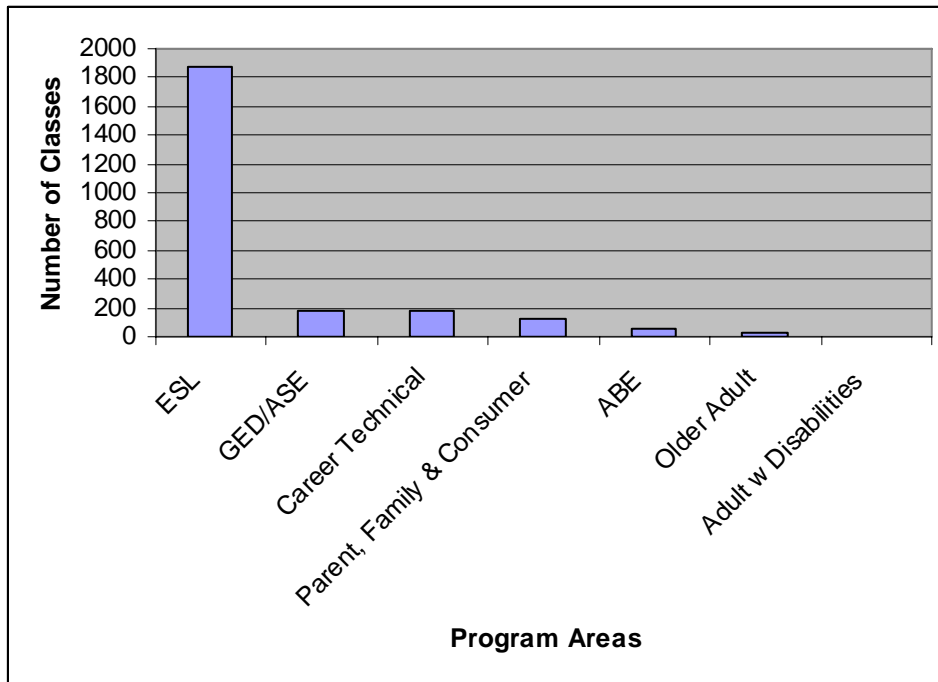
Innovation Programs are permitted to offer multiple classes. It is not unusual for an adult school to offer several levels of English as a Second language (ESL), an adult basic education course (ABE) as well as a parent education course. Figure 3–A describes the fiscal year 2004 – 2005 distribution for the 10 areas of authorized instruction.^{viii}

ESL is the predominant instructional course offered (163). Those courses represent 48.5% of the total courses offered. GED/ASE (19.6%), adult basic education (13.1%) and career education (6.5%) are the next most popular. There is a substantial decrease in the parent education courses offered from the previous year (27% to 5.7%).

It is important to remember that the CDE Adult Education Office modified the course coding system effective in the 2005–06 fiscal year which slightly changes the authorized areas of program instruction.

Figure 3–A

Distribution of Innovation Program Classes by Instructional Area (FY 2006–2007)



Source: 2006–2007 Applications

These data are based on approved courses and classes, not necessarily those actually offered. Figure 3–B provides the rank order and numbers of courses proposed for each program area. Data later in this report (Table 1–A) shows the distribution of learners served by each program in the previous program year.

Figure 3–B

Rank Order Distribution of Innovation Program Classes by Instructional Area (FY 2006–2007)

Program Area	Number of Classes	Percent Distribution
ESL	1,876	76.7%
GED/ASE	176	7.2%
Career Technical	176	7.2%
Parent, Family & Consumer	126	5.2%
ABE	60	2.5%
Older Adult	28	1.1%
Adult w Disabilities	3	0.1%

Source: 2006–2007 Applications

Most of the adult high school subjects (adult secondary education – ASE) in fact are GED test preparation. Few high school subjects are offered via the Innovation Program initiative. The Independent Study option often is considered more useful because it is not capped at 5%, although other rules apply to this delivery method.^{ix}

Estimated Cost per Learner

There is a very wide range of local averages for cost per learner per course. Innovation Program applications show the estimated average cost per learner ranging from \$97 to \$2,298. The overall average is \$485 and the median is \$444.

Student – Teacher Contact

Learners and teachers are expected to maintain contact throughout each distance learning class. This contact can include student orientation, assessment, demonstrating student progress, tutoring, progress monitoring, advising, and explaining new assignments. The distribution among the primary methods of student – teacher interactions follows.

These data represent the primary method of contact, but it is useful to note that many programs offer multiple ways for student contact.

Figure 4

Distribution of Offered Teacher – Contact

General type of contact offered	Number of Classes
Face to Face	433
Teacher initiated (not face to face)	769
Student initiated (not face to face)	353

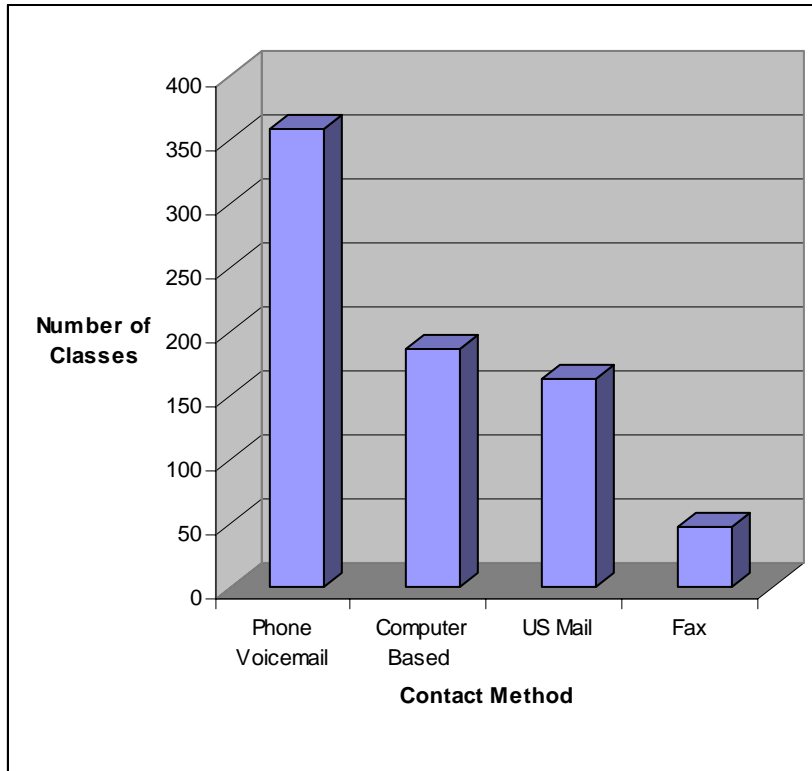
Source: 2006–2007 Applications

Remote Contact

The distribution of the remote teacher initiated contacts is set forth in Figure 5. Phone and voice mail contacts account for 49% of these proposed methods of contact.

Figure 5

Distribution of Remote Teacher Initiated Contacts by Class (FY 2005–2006)



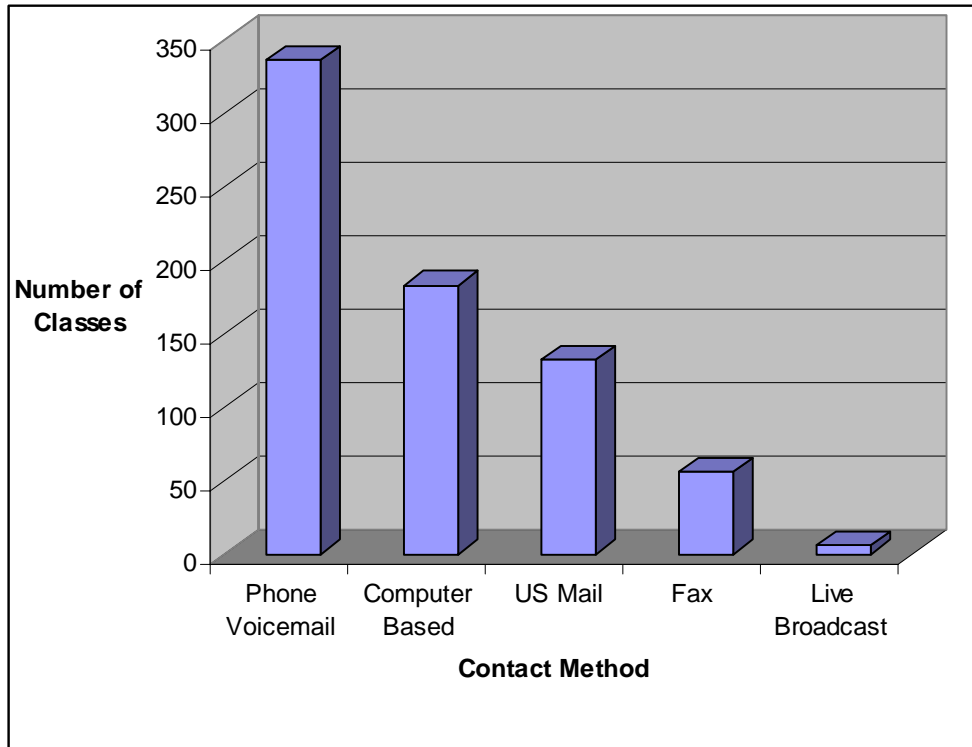
Source: 2006–2007 Applications

Student Initiated Contacts

Student initiated contacts in Innovation Programs are somewhat similar (Figure 6).

Figure 6

Distribution of Remote Student Initiated Contacts (FY 2005–2006)

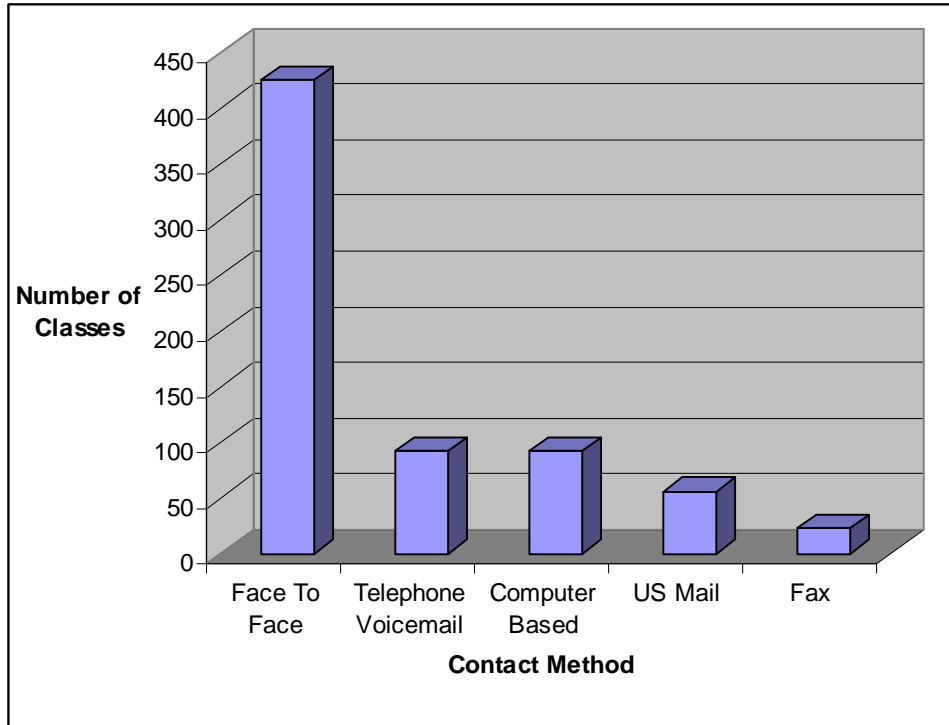


Source: 2006–2007 Applications

It is expected that all students receive a solid orientation to distance learning as well as their learning options before starting a class. Face to face orientation on the distance learning courses was by far the most prevalent approach used to place learners into the appropriate courses. Current data show that in 72% of the offered classes the orientations were offered face to face and while the orientation was offered via phone and voicemail and via email in slightly over 13% of the classes.

Figure 7

Learner Orientation by Course (FY 2005–2006)



Source: 2006–2007 Applications

Monitoring Student Progress

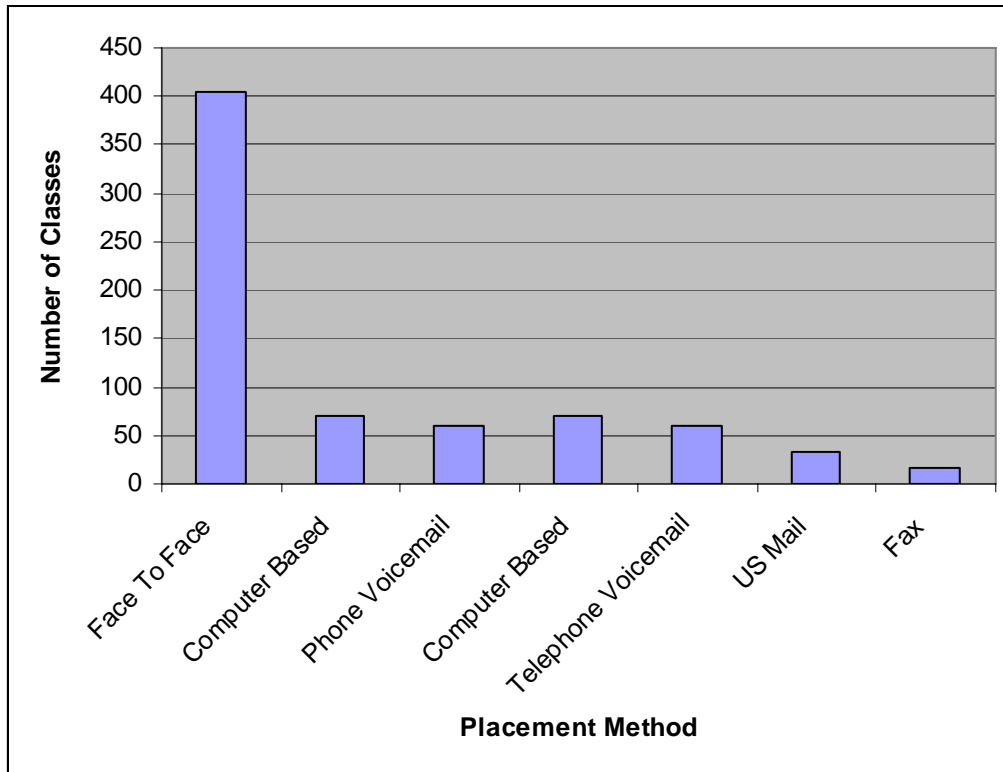
Three key events are identified in measuring student progress — the placement into a course, the initial orientation, the pre – post testing, and the TOPSpro data entry. The following three figures (8 – 10) document how the contact occurs for each event.

Student Placement

Face to face communications between the student and teacher for the distance learning classes was by far the most common placement approach (Figure 8). Email (71) and phone (59) were the next most common approaches used in placing learners into the proper course.

Figure 8

Learner Placement (FY 2005–2006)



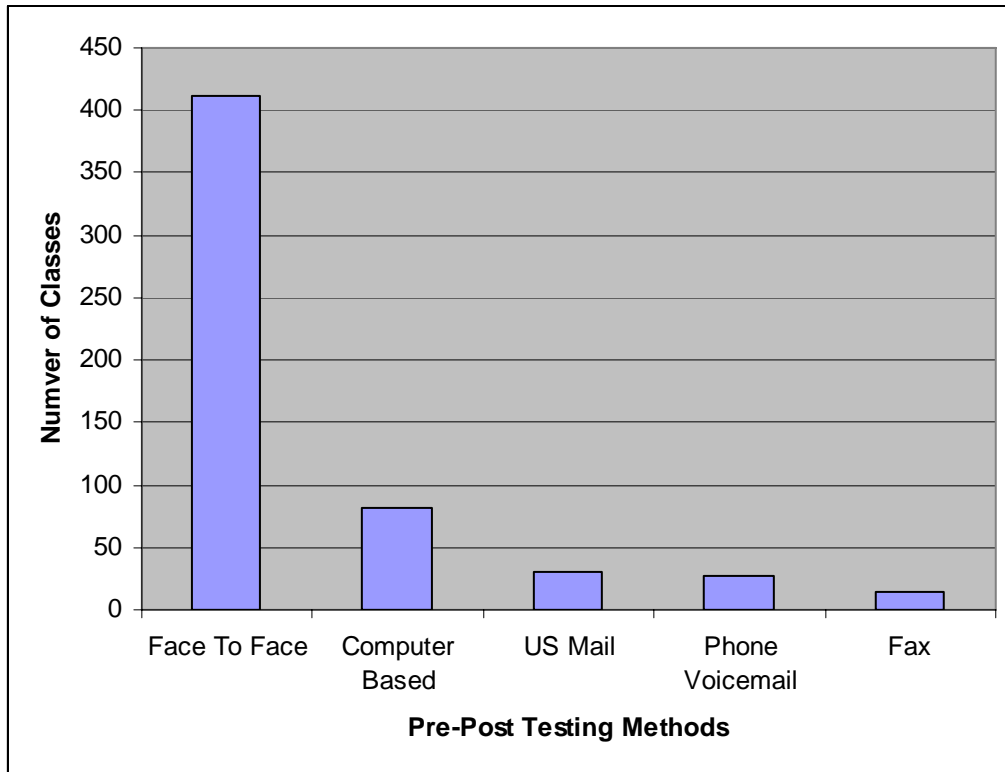
Source: 2006–2007 Applications

Testing, especially post-testing, is difficult in distance learning programs. The optimal approach is a proctored face to face setting. However, this cannot always occur. Currently other options such as secure web sites and computer test facilities do not exist. Test security issues also complicate this area. This is an area that needs research and development.

For pre and post testing the methods of communication are about the same as for the student placement with mail and computer-based testing slightly greater (Figure 9). The comparative use of the computer increased and phone and U.S. mail slightly declined from the previous program year.

Figure 9

Contacting Learners for Pre – Post Testing by Class (FY 2005–2006)

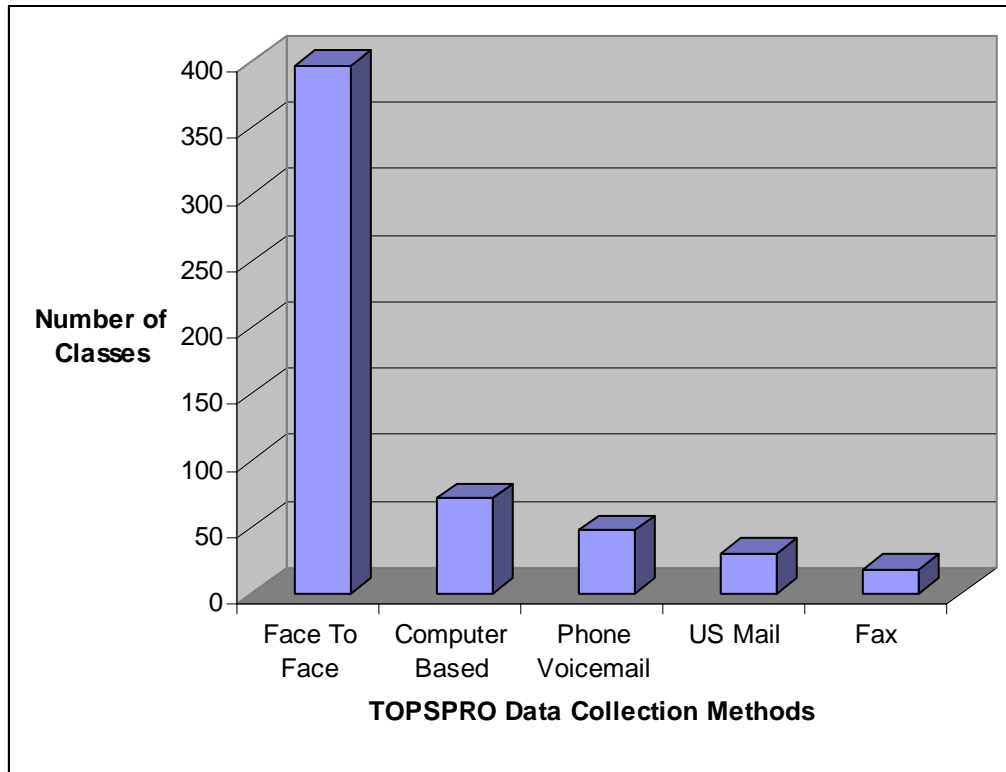


Source: 2006–2007 Applications

Innovation Programs use the Tracking of Programs and Students (TOPSpro) Entry and Update records. All adult schools are required to utilize these data elements as part of their apportionment related reporting. Figure 10 displays how the data are collected.

Figure 10

Approaches to TOPSpro Data Entry Data Collection by Course (FY 2005–2006)



Source: 2006–2007 Applications

Face to face data collection is offered in 71% of the courses.

Accountability

All adult schools are required to utilize the Tracking of Programs and Students (TOPSpro) Entry and Update records for their student participation reporting. As noted in Figure 11 this applies to the Innovation Programs also. Other program outcomes are included in the annual performance reporting submitted by the Innovation Programs to the Department of Education's Adult Education Office. This interactive report form is available to the Innovation Program administrators via the Internet at

<http://www3.scoe.net/fivepercent/login.cfm?fuseaction=main>.

2004 – 2005 Learner Statistics

The following tables are drawn from TOPSpro data collected by CASAS for fiscal year 2004 – 2005. They are based on programs that identify their learners as participating in distance learning programs, and consequently are a very good approximation of the statewide Innovation Programs' learning populations. The data are based on unduplicated counts.

Participation by Instructional Program

Over 92 (92.3%) percent of the learners recorded via TOPSpro participated in ESL programs. The parent education programs represent a distant second at 2.2% followed by the adult secondary education / GED programs (2.0%).

Table 1–A

Students Participating in Innovation Programs by Instructional Program (FY 2005–2006)

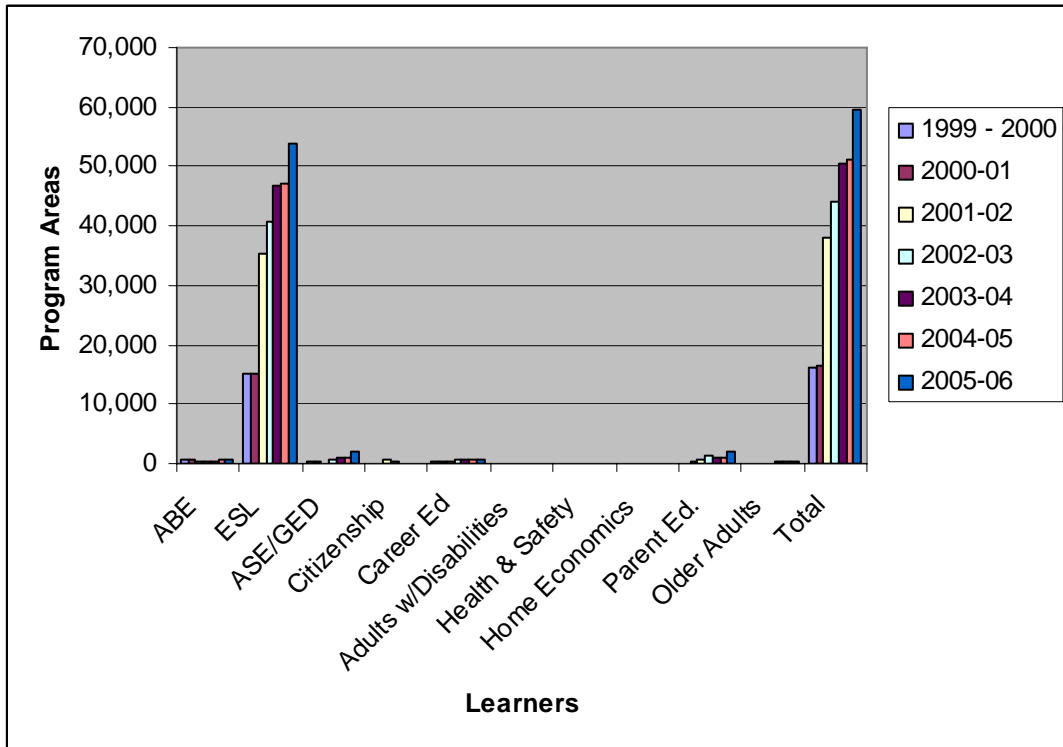
Program	PY 2005–2006	
	N	%
ABE	750	1.3
ESL	53,766	90.3
ASE/GED	1,885	3.2
Citizenship	130	0.2
Career Tech	714	1.2
Adults w/Disabilities	72	0.1
Health & Safety	53	0.1
Home Economics	44	0.1
Parent Ed.	1,921	3.2
Older Adults	210	0.4
Total	59,545	100

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The percent participation over the last six program years is remarkably similar with over 90% of the learners participating in ESL. Overall there has been a steady increase in Innovation Program participation from inception with an increase of 8,456 learners from 2004 – 2005 to 2005 – 2006.

Table 1–B

Comparison of Annual Population Participating in Innovation Programs by Instructional Program — Fiscal Years 1999 –2000 through 2005 – 2006



Sources: CASAS 2007 and previous

Enrollment by Geographic Region

The Innovation Programs distribution by region remains very uneven. Los Angeles County and the Los Angeles Unified School District, in particular, dominate the enrollment statistics with 71% of the participants residing in Los Angeles County. This is a decrease of 4.7% for LA County over the previous year and a 0.06% increase for the balance of state and the San Diego Region respectively. The Bay Area Region increased by 1.9% and the San Diego region by 0.07%.

Table 2

Innovation Programs Distribution by Region – FY 2005–2006

CASAS Geographic Region	N	%
Balance of State	5,753	9.7
Bay Area Region	5,715	9.6
Central Valley Region	1,340	2.3
LA Perimeter Region	2,271	3.8
Los Angeles County	42,305	71.0
San Diego Region	2,161	3.6
Total	59,545	100.0

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Distribution by Gender and Program

Women participated in far greater numbers than men (65.4% to 34.6%). The preponderance of women was even greater in the career education (71%), parent education (89%), and older adult programs (82%). The overall averages are about the same as the previous year with a very slight decrease in women’s participation (1.1%).

Table 3

Gender of Students Enrolled in Innovation Programs by Instructional Program – FY 2005–2006

Program	Female %	Male %	Total
ABE	64.3	35.7	750
ASE/GED	66.6	33.4	1,885
ESL	64.4	35.6	53,753
Citizenship	69.2	30.8	130
Career Tech	70.8	29.2	712
Adult w/ Disabilities	62.5	37.5	72
Health & Safety	86.8	13.2	53
Home Economics	88.6	11.4	44
Parent Ed.	88.5	11.5	1,921
Older Adults	81.9	18.1	210
Total	65.4	34.6	59,530

CASAS 2007

Participation by Age Group

Participation by age groups shows the 21–30 and 31–40 year old age groups being the largest cohorts with about the same percentage (30.1% and 28.8%). The third largest cohort was the 41–50 year olds at 18.0%. Fifteen percent (14.5%) of the participants were 51 years old or older. Among the ESL learners, the largest program, the 21–30 and 31–40 age cohorts were quite similar in size (30.4% and 28.4%).

Table 4–A

Learner Age in Innovation Programs by Instructional Program – FY 2004–2005

Age	ABE		ESL		Citizenship		ASE/GED		Career Tech.		Adults w/ Dis.	
	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%
16–20	100	13.3	4,444	8.3	1	0.8	422	22.5	25	3.5		0.0
21–30	230	30.7	16,334	30.4	19	14.6	556	29.6	148	20.7	10	13.9
31–40	185	24.7	15,237	28.4	46	35.4	478	25.5	217	30.4	10	13.9
41–50	134	17.9	9,731	18.1	38	29.2	291	15.5	187	26.2	13	18.1
51–64	67	8.9	5,625	10.5	16	12.3	109	5.8	123	17.2	12	16.7
65+	34	4.5	2,325	4.3	10	7.7	20	1.1	14	2.0	27	37.5
Total	750	1.3	53,696	90.3	130	0.2	1,876	3.2	714	1.2	72	0.1

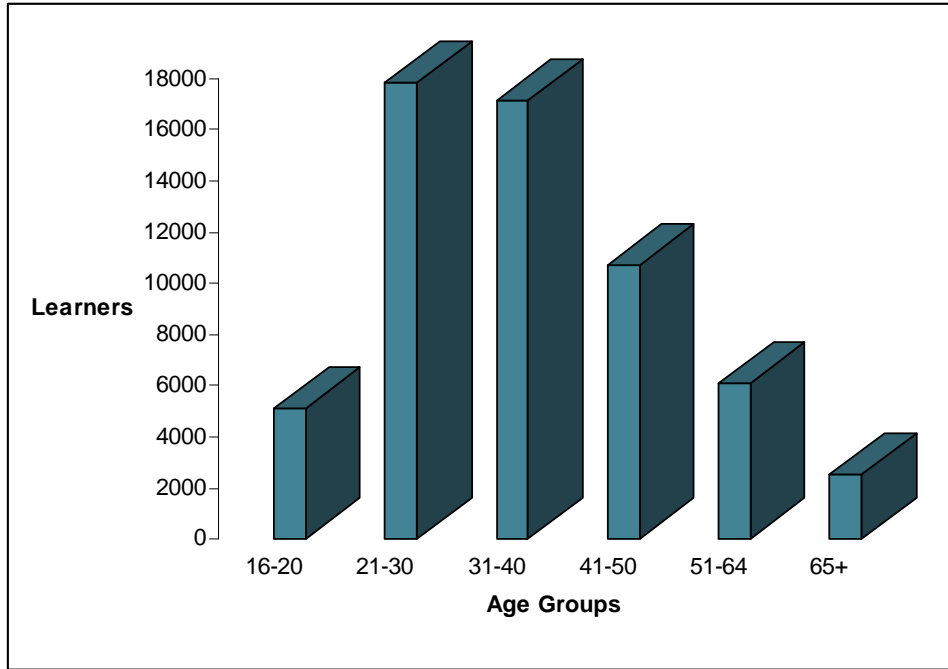
Age	Hlth. & Safety		Home Econ.		Parent Ed.		Older Adults		Total	
	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%
16–20	2	3.8			100	5.3		0.0	5,094	8.6
21–30	4	7.5	4	9.1	552	29.1	11	5.2	17,868	30.1
31–40	18	34.0	8	18.2	902	47.5	22	10.5	17,123	28.8
41–50	12	22.6	6	13.6	273	14.4	26	12.4	10,711	18.0
51–64	10	18.9	18	40.9	51	2.7	54	25.7	6,085	10.2
65+	7	13.2	8	18.2	22	1.2	97	46.2	2,564	4.3
Total	53	0.1	44	0.1	1,900	3.2	210	0.4	59,445	100.0

Source: CASAS 2007

Table 4–B provides a graphical picture of the age distributions for the ESL students. The 21–30 age cohort is the largest (17,868) closely followed by the 31 – 40 cohort (17,123).

Table 4–B

ESL Learner Age in Innovation Programs – FY 2005–2006



Source: CASAS 2007

Ethnicity by Instructional Program

Hispanics comprise 70.4% of the distance learning participants. This is a slight decrease from the previous year (71.7%). Asians made up 17% which also is a slight decrease increase from the previous year (17.7%). White non-Hispanics represented 7.2% of the participants while Native American and Native Alaskan learners made up 3.4% of the participants. Hispanics dominated (more than 50%) in ABE, ESL, Citizenship, ASE/GED, career technical education and parent education while white learners had the largest enrollments in Adults with Disabilities and Older Adults Programs.

The absence of Black (non-Hispanic) learners participating in the Innovation Program (1.2%) continues to be striking and disappointing. The Black learner participation percentage is the about same as the previous programs years from FY 2004–05 to 1999–2000.^x

Table 5
Innovation Programs' Learner Ethnicity by Instructional Program – FY 2005–2006

Ethnicity	ABE		ESL		Citizenship		ASE/GED		Career Tech.		Adults w/ Dis.	
	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%
White (Non-Hispanic)	101	13.5	3,136	5.9	6	4.7	274	14.6	87	12.4	45	62.5
Hispanic	421	56.4	38,370	72.1	97	75.8	1,093	58.1	414	59.1	18	25.0
Black (Non-Hispanic)	51	6.8	398	0.7	0	0.0	187	9.9	29	4.1	3	4.2
Asian	85	11.4	9,276	17.4	22	17.2	144	7.7	131	18.7	3	4.2
Pacific Islander	7	0.9	98	0.2	1	0.8	18	1.0	4	0.6	1	1.4
Filipino	23	3.1	140	0.3	1	0.8	65	3.5	11	1.6	2	2.8
Native American	59	7.9	1,821	3.4	1	0.8	99	5.3	24	3.4		0.0
Native Alaskan		0.0	15	0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0
Total	747	1.3	53,254	90.3	128	0.2	1,880	3.2	700	1.2	72	0.1

Ethnicity	Health & Safety		Home Economics		Parent Ed.		Older Adults		Total	
	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%
White (Non-Hispanic)	16	30.2	5	11.4	477	25.2	96	46.4	4,243	7.2
Hispanic	19	35.8	22	50.0	1,033	54.5	55	26.6	41,542	70.4
Black (Non-Hispanic)		0.0		0.0	32	1.7	2	1.0	702	1.2
Asian	18	34.0	16	36.4	286	15.1	50	24.2	10,031	17.0
Pacific Islander		0.0		0.0	5	0.3	2	1.0	136	0.2
Filipino		0.0	1	2.3	34	1.8	2	1.0	279	0.5
Native American		0.0		0.0	26	1.4		0.0	2,030	3.4
Native Alaskan		0.0		0.0	1	0.1		0.0	16	0.0
Total	53	0.1	44	0.1	1,894	3.2	207	0.4	58,979	100.0

Source: CASAS 2007

Innovation Program Participants' Primary Language

The large number of primary languages spoken by Innovation Programs participants is a clear indicator of participant diversity. More than 73% (73.6%) of the participants reported speaking Spanish as their primary language. Chinese is a distant second at 6.4%, followed by English (3.6%) and Korean (3.3%).

Table 6

The Primary Language Spoken by Innovation Programs' Participants by Instructional Program – FY 2005–2006

Primary Language	ABE		ESL		Citizenship		HS/GED		Voc. Ed		Adults w/ Dis.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
English	159	21.3	261	0.5	1	0.8	733	39.1	112	16.0	55	76.4
Spanish	457	61.3	40,125	76.1	98	77.2	924	49.3	427	60.9	12	16.7
Vietnamese	7	0.9	1,185	2.2	2	1.6	12	0.6	13	1.9		0.0
Chinese	30	4.0	3,437	6.5	11	8.7	45	2.4	59	8.4		0.0
Hmong	1	0.1	295	0.6		0.0	6	0.3		0.0		0.0
Cambodian	5	0.7	146	0.3	1	0.8	8	0.4	1	0.1		0.0
Tagalog	17	2.3	138	0.3	1	0.8	35	1.9	11	1.6	2	2.8
Korean	15	2.0	1,807	3.4	1	0.8	26	1.4	22	3.1	1	1.4
Lao		0.0	29	0.1		0.0	1	0.1		0.0		0.0
Russian	8	1.1	1,080	2.0	2	1.6	10	0.5	5	0.7		0.0
Farsi	7	0.9	1,024	1.9	4	3.1	8	0.4	5	0.7		0.0
Other	40	5.4	3,181	6.0	6	4.7	66	3.5	46	6.6	2	2.8
Total	746	1.3	52,708	90.2	127	0.2	1,874	3.2	701	1.2	72	0.1

Primary Language	Health & Safety		Home Economics		Parent Ed.		Older Adults		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
English	12	23.5	4	9.1	679	35.9	88	42.9	2,104	3.6
Spanish	17	33.3	22	50.0	850	45.0	54	26.3	42,986	73.6
Vietnamese	1	2.0	2	4.5	18	1.0	2	1.0	1,242	2.1
Chinese	7	13.7	8	18.2	117	6.2	16	7.8	3,730	6.4
Hmong		0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0	302	0.5
Cambodian		0.0		0.0	5	0.3		0.0	166	0.3
Tagalog		0.0	1	2.3	26	1.4	2	1.0	233	0.4
Korean		0.0	4	9.1	12	0.6	12	5.9	1,900	3.3
Lao		0.0		0.0	1	0.1		0.0	31	0.1
Russian	1	2.0		0.0	5	0.3	6	2.9	1,117	1.9
Farsi	1	2.0		0.0	39	2.1	5	2.4	1,093	1.9
Other	12	23.5	3	6.8	137	7.3	20	9.8	3,513	6.0
Total	51	0.1	44	0.1	1,889	3.2	205	0.4	58,417	100.0

Source: CASAS 2007

Years of Schooling

Over forty five percent (45.7%) of the learners reported having nine or less years of schooling at the time of enrollment. About half of these (22.6%) have six or fewer years of prior schooling. This continues to suggest that the Innovation Programs reach lower level learners in need of adult education services.

Further it suggests that lower level learners can, in the judgment of program operators, be effectively served by non-traditional interventions. This is reinforced by the fact that 47.9% of the participating ESL learners report having nine or fewer years of education.

Table 7–A

Years of Schooling for Innovation Programs’ Participants by Instructional Program – FY 2005–2006

Program	<=3Years		4–6 Years		7–9 Years		10–11 Years	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	15	0.7	58	0.6	135	1.1	175	2.7
ESL	2,129	95.9	9,893	96.3	11,939	93.6	5,259	80.1
Citizenship	9	0.4	22	0.2	18	0.1	6	0.1
HS/GED	22	1.0	76	0.7	267	2.1	811	12.4
Vocational Ed.	18	0.8	54	0.5	109	0.9	73	1.1
Adults w/ Disabilities	2	0.1	0	0.0	2	0.0	6	0.1
Health & Safety	1	0.0	5	0.0	6	0.0	1	0.0
Home Economics	2	0.1	5	0.0	4	0.0	0	0.0
Parent Education	22	1.0	157	1.5	265	2.1	226	3.4
Older Adults	1	0.0	8	0.1	12	0.1	6	0.1
Total	2,221	4.0	10,278	18.6	12,757	23.1	6,563	11.9

Program	12 Years		13+ Years		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	163	1.3	158	1.4	704	1.3
ESL	11,024	90.4	9,765	87.3	50,009	90.6
Citizenship	28	0.2	23	0.2	106	0.2
HS/GED	302	2.5	202	1.8	1,680	3.0
Vocational Ed.	192	1.6	220	2.0	666	1.2
Adults w/ Disabilities	49	0.4	11	0.1	70	0.1
Health & Safety	8	0.1	22	0.2	43	0.1
Home Economics	11	0.1	20	0.2	42	0.1
Parent Education	373	3.1	656	5.9	1,699	3.1
Older Adults	50	0.4	104	0.9	181	0.3
Total	12,200	22.1	11,181	20.3	55,200	100.0

Source: CASAS 2007

Highest Degree by Instructional Program

Over half (51.7%) of the Innovation Programs' learners reported having no earned degrees or certificates at the time of enrollment — the about the same as the previous year (50.5%). Over 27% (27.3%) reported possessing a high school diploma or GED, while 6.6% said they had a technical or associate of arts (AA) degrees. Twelve percent (12.1%) of the learners reported having a college degree or some graduate study.

Table 8

Highest Educational Level Attained by Innovation Program Participants in Instructional Programs – FY 2005–2006

Program	None		GED		HS Diploma		Technical		AA Degree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	379	1.3	14	1.5	160	1.1	41	1.9	24	1.6
HS/GED	1,120	3.9	31	3.3	265	1.9	69	3.2	28	1.8
ESL	26,282	91.4	786	84.2	13,094	91.9	1,925	88.9	1,285	84.1
Citizenship	52	0.2	6	0.6	22	0.2	3	0.1	4	0.3
Vocational Ed.	209	0.7	37	4.0	182	1.3	46	2.1	44	2.9
Adults w/ Disabilities	20	0.1	3	0.3	36	0.3		0.0	4	0.3
Health & Safety	9	0.0	2	0.2	10	0.1		0.0	6	0.4
Home Economics	10	0.0		0.0	13	0.1	1	0.0	3	0.2
Parent Education	635	2.2	48	5.1	407	2.9	67	3.1	115	7.5
Older Adults	26	0.1	7	0.7	58	0.4	14	0.6	15	1.0
Total	28,742	51.7	934	1.7	14,247	25.6	2,166	3.9	1,528	2.7

Program	4 Yr College		Grad Study		Other		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	54	1.1	25	1.4	14	1.1	711	1.3
HS/GED	77	1.6	32	1.8	34	2.6	1,656	3.0
ESL	4,216	87.3	1,538	85.2	1,220	92.2	50,346	90.6
Citizenship	12	0.2	6	0.3	2	0.2	107	0.2
Vocational Ed.	100	2.1	22	1.2	20	1.5	660	1.2
Adults w/ Disabilities	6	0.1		0.0	2	0.2	71	0.1
Health & Safety	6	0.1	4	0.2	3	0.2	40	0.1
Home Economics	9	0.2	4	0.2		0.0	40	0.1
Parent Education	316	6.5	152	8.4	21	1.6	1,761	3.2
Older Adults	32	0.7	22	1.2	7	0.5	181	0.3
Total	4,828	8.7	1,805	3.2	1,323	2.4	55,573	100.0

Source: CASAS 2007

ABE / ASE Instructional Level on Program Entry

Upon entry over eleven percent (9.9%) of the adult basic education and adult secondary education learners were tested and enrolled in the beginning literacy or beginning levels adult basic education in contrast to 11.6% in the previous year. Over 65% (65.1%) of the learners were enrolled in intermediate ABE instruction while over twenty five percent (25.6%) were enrolled in adult high school subjects or GED.

Table 9

Adult Basic Education Instructional Level of Innovation Programs' ABE and ASE Program Participants Upon Entry – FY 2005–2006^{xi}

Level Upon Entry	Score Range	ABE		ASE		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Beg. Literacy	200 & below	7	2.2	4	0.8	11	1.3
Beginning	201–210	26	8.2	31	6.0	57	6.9
Intermediate Low	211–220	57	18.0	68	13.2	125	15.0
Intermediate High	221–235	167	52.8	258	50.1	425	51.1
ASE Low	236–245	48	15.2	121	23.5	169	20.3
ASE High	246+	11	3.5	33	6.4	44	5.3
Total		316	100.0	515	100.0	831	100.0

Source: CASAS 2007

ESL and ESL–Citizenship Level on Program Entry

The instructional continuum of adult basic learning goes from beginning ESL literacy through advanced adult basic education to adult secondary education / GED. Beginning literacy is very difficult to provide in a distance learning format and is usually discouraged.^{xii} This is because students need a certain foundation level of literacy in order to access the curriculum and program components.

Participation in the lower level programs (beginning low ESL and above) serves as another indicator of whether the distance learning programs are reaching the hard to serve and / or the most in need of adult basic education services.

Beginning literacy and beginning ESL learners represented 25.9% of the students receiving English language instruction (24.3% in the previous year) while intermediate low learners represented 35.8%. These data reflect the statewide focus in lower level ESL instruction and continue to suggest, as do other measures, that distance learning can be used to reach and serve learners once they demonstrate beginning literacy.

For example, the following are the kinds of reading and listening life skills stressed in the beginning low courses.

- Relating phonological sounds to letters and clusters of letters (sound/symbol correspondence).
- Recognizing basic sight words.
- Interpreting sentences using vocabulary and structures previously learned orally.

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Language practice and drill types of activities often are a part of the beginning low instruction. These drill and practice often lend themselves well to at-home practice and repetition.

Those students in the Intermediate Low and above levels probably benefit the most from blended classroom and distance learning alternatives because of the improving quality of the available learning materials, opportunities for repetition and review at times convenient to the learner, potential family support, and the opportunity to incorporate life skills and higher-order thinking skills with the language acquisition instruction.

Table 10

ESL and ESL–Citizenship Instructional Level of Innovation Programs’ Participants on Entry – FY 2005–2006^{xiii}

Level Upon Entry	Score Range	ESL N	%
Beg. Literacy	180 & below	1,501	3.7
Beginning	181–200	9,104	22.2
Intermediate Low	201–210	14,646	35.8
Intermediate High	211–220	7,011	17.1
Adv. Low	221–235	7,992	19.5
Adv. High	236–245	693	1.7
Total		40,947	100.0

Source: CASAS 2007

Primary Reasons for Enrollment

Improving basic skills and English skills account for more than 83% of the primary reasons for learners reported for enrollment (83.8%). This is the same as the previous year. Direct work related reasons (get a job and retain a job) make up 3.7% of the primary reasons for enrolling. However, improving skills probably have implications for work preparedness and therefore link these two reasons for enrollment.

Basic skill and language improvement was most important for ABE learners (64.7%). Improving English skills was the most important for ESL learners (73.2%). Family goals were the most important for learners in parent education (49.8%).

Table 11
The Innovation Programs' Participants Primary Reason for Enrolling in FY 2005–2006

Primary Reason	ABE		ESL		Citizenship		ASE/GED		Career Tech.		Adults w/ Dis.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Improve Basic Skills	335	44.7	8,566	15.9	17	13.1	682	36.2	200	28.0	53	73.6
Improve English Skills	150	20.0	39,333	73.2	10	7.7	167	8.9	47	6.6		0.0
HS Diploma or GED	149	19.9	577	1.1		0.0	782	41.5	17	2.4	1	1.4
Get Job	32	4.3	1,062	2.0		0.0	38	2.0	112	15.7	1	1.4
Retain Job	5	0.7	553	1.0		0.0	9	0.5	15	2.1	1	1.4
Enter College or Training	23	3.1	290	0.5		0.0	28	1.5	9	1.3		0.0
Work–Based Project	1	0.1	55	0.1	2	1.5	1	0.1	16	2.2		0.0
Family Goal	4	0.5	609	1.1		0.0	10	0.5	25	3.5	1	1.4
U.S. Citizenship	6	0.8	829	1.5	100	76.9	7	0.4	1	0.1		0.0
Military	1	0.1	10	0.0		0.0	1	0.1		0.0		0.0
Personal Goal	39	5.2	1,336	2.5	1	0.8	101	5.4	171	23.9	14	19.4
None/ Not Identified	3	0.4	329	0.6		0.0	53	2.8	57	8.0	1	1.4
Other	2	0.3	217	0.4		0.0	6	0.3	44	6.2		0.0
Total	750	100.0	53,766	100.0	130	100.0	1,885	100.0	714	100.0	72	100.0

Primary Reason	Health & Safety		Home Economics		Parent Ed.		Older Adults		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Improve Basic Skills	1	1.9	2	4.5	196	10.2	26	12.4	10,078	16.9
Improve English Skills	2	3.8		0.0	145	7.5	8	3.8	39,862	66.9
HS Diploma or GED		0.0		0.0	44	2.3		0.0	1,570	2.6
Get Job		0.0		0.0	20	1.0	1	0.5	1,266	2.1
Retain Job	1	1.9		0.0	4	0.2		0.0	588	1.0
Enter College or Training		0.0		0.0	5	0.3		0.0	355	0.6
Work–Based Project	2	3.8		0.0	2	0.1		0.0	79	0.1
Family Goal	7	13.2	3	6.8	957	49.8	5	2.4	1,621	2.7
U.S. Citizenship		0.0		0.0	1	0.1		0.0	944	1.6
Military		0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0	12	0.0
Personal Goal	39	73.6	35	79.5	507	26.4	158	75.2	2,401	4.0
None/ Not Identified		0.0		0.0	26	1.4	9	4.3	478	0.8
Other	1	1.9	4	9.1	14	0.7	3	1.4	291	0.5
Total	53	100.0	44	100.0	1,921	100.0	210	100.0	59,545	100.0

Source: CASAS 2007

Learner Progress

Learners are monitored on their progress throughout the time of enrollment. Over 27% (27.1%) of the ESL participants completed or moved to a more advanced course compared to 23.8% in the previous year. Over 44% (44.5%) of the ESL enrollees were retained at the same level. For students remaining at the same level, more information is needed about the year in which they enrolled and progress within their given level.

Over 60% (61.1%) of the ABE learners remained at the same level (48% in the previous year). The increase in beginning literacy level students might be once explanation for this increase (Table 9).

Adult secondary education / GED, career education, and parent education learners completed and/or advanced 21%, 20%, and 11.5% respectively.

Table 13

Innovation Programs' Participants Status by Program – FY 2004–2005

Program	Retained at Same Level		Completed & Moved Up		Left Before Completion		Left After Completion		No Show or < 12 hrs		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	267	61.1	41	9.4	60	13.7	19	4.3	50	11.4	437	100.0
ESL	19,837	44.5	9,356	21.0	7,707	17.3	2,727	6.1	4,909	11.0	44,536	100.0
Citizenship	12	46.2	0	0.0	3	11.5	10	38.5	1	3.8	26	100.0
HS/GED	317	35.7	81	9.1	114	12.8	159	17.9	217	24.4	888	100.0
Career Education	195	31.0	126	20.0	83	13.2	77	12.2	149	23.7	630	100.0
Adults w/ Disabilities	25	80.6	2	6.5	3	9.7	0	0.0	1	3.2	31	100.0
Health & Safety	50	47.2	5	4.7	5	4.7	13	12.3	33	31.1	106	100.0
Home Economics	37	52.1	1	1.4	6	8.5	16	22.5	11	15.5	71	100.0
Parent Ed.	539	52.0	119	11.5	91	8.8	192	18.5	95	9.2	1,036	100.0
Older Adults	124	52.5	44	18.6	18	7.6	25	10.6	25	10.6	236	100.0

Source: CASAS 2006

Participant progress is a key indicator of the impact of the service delivery. ESL data indicate that 27.1% of the Innovation Program participants completed and moved up or left after completion.

Learner Status by Program

Another look at learner progress shows that 46.8% of the ESL enrollees were retained at the same level, 19.9% completed their course and/or moved up, and 6.6% completed their program and did not reenroll.

Completion rates (completed and moved up and left after completion) were highest for career parent education learners (20.8%), followed by older adults (18.5%) and career tech education students (16.7%).

Table 14–A

Innovation Programs' Learner Status by Program – FY 2005–2006

Program	Retained at Same Level		Completed & Moved Up		Left Before Completion		Left After Completion		No Show or < 12 hrs		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	304	52.3	64	11.0	118	20.3	20	3.4	75	12.9	581	100.0
ESL	23,364	46.8	9,952	19.9	7,891	15.8	3,319	6.6	5,412	10.8	49,938	100.0
Citizenship	55	47.0	2	1.7	25	21.4	21	17.9	14	12.0	117	100.0
ASE/GED	606	35.6	128	7.5	431	25.4	224	13.2	311	18.3	1,700	100.0
Career Tech Ed	239	37.0	108	16.7	106	16.4	75	11.6	118	18.3	646	100.0
Adults w/ Disabilities	56	90.3	0	0.0	5	8.1	0	0.0	1	1.6	62	100.0
Health & Safety	11	25.6	1	2.3	3	7.0	10	23.3	18	41.9	43	100.0
Home Economics	18	48.6	6	16.2	3	8.1	7	18.9	3	8.1	37	100.0
Parent Ed.	692	40.6	355	20.8	237	13.9	309	18.1	112	6.6	1,705	100.0
Older Adults	93	49.2	35	18.5	17	9.0	27	14.3	17	9.0	189	100.0

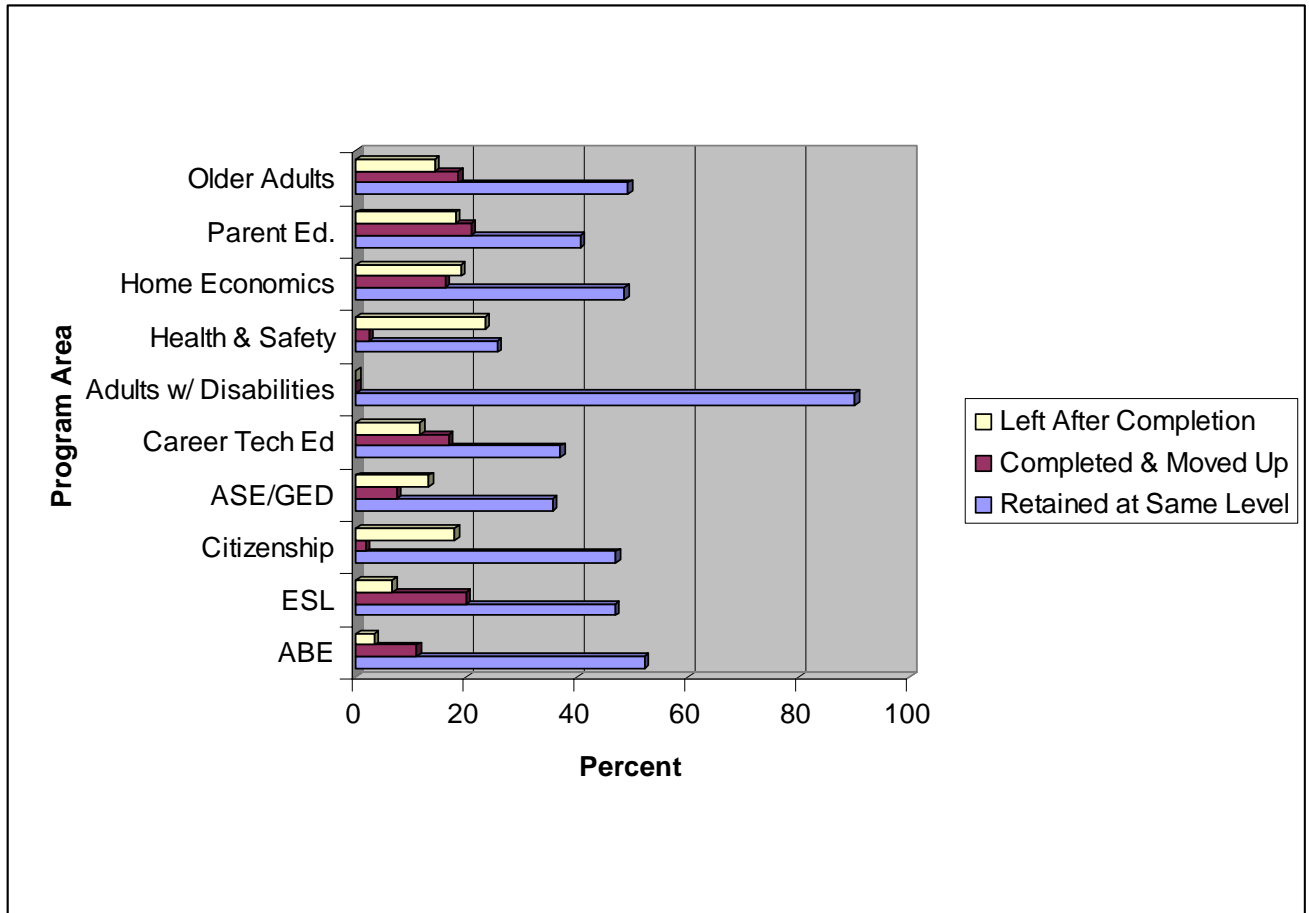
Source: CASAS 2007

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Table 14–B graphically displays the learner status by program. The completed and moved up and left after completion are the two measures of progress; however, much depends on when the student entered the course. The health and safety, ESL, parent education, older adult, and career tech ed. show promising results.

Table 14–B

Innovation Programs’ Learner Status by Program – FY 2005–2006



Source: CASAS 2007

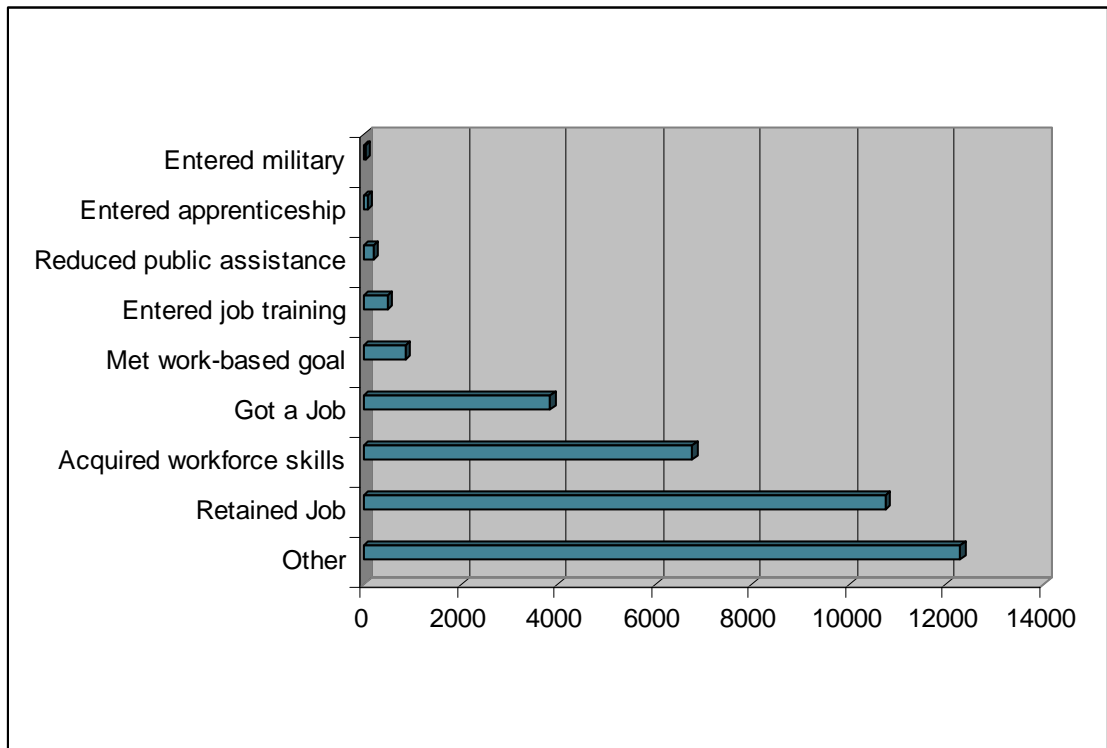
Learner Outcomes

Work Related Outcomes

Among the learners identifying work related outcomes, 29.9% reported that they obtained or retained a job. The “other” category accounts for 26.4% of the responses while acquiring workforce readiness skills accounts for 13.8%.

Table 15

Reported Innovation Programs’ Learner Work Related Outcomes – FY 2005–2006



Source: CASAS 2007

Personal Outcomes

Learners identified meeting a personal goal(s) accounts for 48.6% of the personal outcome responses. Over 9% (9.8%) of the learners identifying personal outcomes said that they have increased their involvement in their children’s education while 15.6% said they had met a personal goal. The “other” category accounts for 23.2%.

Table 16

Reported Innovation Programs’ Learner Personal Outcomes – FY 2005–2006

Personal/Family Outcomes	N	%
Increased involvement in children's education	6,385	13.0
Increased involvement in children's literacy activities	4,774	9.8
Met other family goal	7,712	15.8
Met personal goal	23,785	48.6
Other	11,377	23.2

Source: CASAS 2007

Community Outcomes

Learners reporting community outcomes identified increased community involvement in 23.8% of the cases and “other” outcomes in 28.7% of the responses. Over five percent (5.8%) of the learners identified achieving U.S. citizenship skills as their primary community outcome.

Table 17

Reported Innovation Programs’ Learner Community Outcomes – FY 2005–2006

Community Outcomes	N	%
Achieved U.S. citizenship skills	2,449	5.0
Registered to vote or voted first time	274	0.6
Increased involvement in community	11,650	23.8
Other	14,067	28.7

Source: CASAS 2007

Educational Outcomes

Learners reporting educational outcomes identified the mastery of course competencies (17%) and gained computer/tech skills (14.4%) the most often. Over seven percent (7.3%) reported passing the GED, earning a certificate or high school diploma as their educational goal.

The “other” category accounts for over thirty five percent of the responses (30.8%) and provides little information regarding what the respondents had in mind.

Table 18

Reported Innovation Programs’ Learner Educational Outcomes – FY 2005–2006

Educational Outcomes	N	%
Returned to K–12	140	0.3
Passed GED	232	0.5
Earned Certificate	2,889	5.9
Earned High School diploma	434	0.9
Entered college	364	0.7
Entered training program	428	0.9
Gained computer/tech skills	7,050	14.4
Mastered course competencies/Education Plan	8,310	17.0
Other	15,082	30.8

Source: CASAS 2007

Reading Pretest Scores

The following tables are taken from CASAS reading and listening test data. The reader can observe the comparatively smaller number of tested learners to enrolled learners.^{xiv} As noted, CASAS pre – post testing for all ESL, ABE, Citizenship, and ASE / GED learners in distance learning programs is difficult due to non–traditional schedules, infrequent visits to campus, and other factors associated with the very reason they are enrolled in a distance learning program.

ABE / ASE reading level 181 – 200 denote beginning and pre–beginning literacy. Reading levels 201 – 210 and 211 – 220 reflect beginning and intermediate basic skills learners respectively while level 221 – 235 identifies the pre–GED / advanced basic skills learners. Level 236–245 is adult secondary education, and the 246+ grouping identifies the advanced adult secondary learner including GED preparation.

The small numbers of learners involved in the ABE / ASE reading pretest don’t provide useful information other than to identify the reading level characteristics of the Innovation Programs ABE / ASE learners. The largest percentage (4.4%) were tested in the pre–GED / advanced basic skills level.

For the ESL / ESL – civics learners the data are more useful. A reading score level at or below 180 identify beginning literacy and pre–beginning ESL learners. The 181 – 200 reading score level identifies the low and high beginning ESL CASAS instructional level. Levels 201 – 210 and 211 – 220 identify the low and high intermediate ESL learners while level 221 – 235 is the advanced ESL reading group. ESL learners with reading pretest scores of 236 – 245 are ready for adult secondary education. However, it is not unusual that they do not feel comfortable with their language skills and wish to receive more language training.

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The ESL learners reading at the intermediate and advanced levels form the majority of the Innovation Programs participants (72.7%). This seems appropriate because the learning resources are often the most robust for these groups.

Table 19

Innovation Programs' Participant Reading Pretest Mean Scores – FY 2005–2006^{xv}

CASAS Reading Score Range	Mean Pre Test Score	N	%
ABE/ASE			
181–200	—	6	0.8
201–210	206.8	32	4.3
211–220	217.1	80	10.9
221–235	229.1	357	48.4
236–245	239.7	193	26.2
246+	249.3	69	9.4
ABE/ASE Overall	231.2	737	100.0
ESL/ESL–Cit			
<=180	173.7	1,443	3.6
181–200	193.5	8,845	22.0
201–210	205.7	14,533	36.1
211–220	216.0	6,836	17.0
221–235	227.0	7,878	19.6
236–245	239.7	750	1.9
ESL/ESL–Cit Overall	208.4	40,285	100.0

Source: CASAS 2007

Listening Mean Scores

The ESL / ESL citizenship listening scores fall into the same categories as the reading scores — levels at or below 180 and 181 – 200 are beginning / pre–beginning literacy ESL learners. Levels 201 – 210 and 211 – 220 are intermediate ESL learners while level 221 – 235 is the advanced ESL group. ESL learners with listening pretest scores of 236 – 245 are ready for adult secondary education.

For all Innovation Programs the overall mean listening pretest score for ESL learners was 210.5, the ESL beginning ESL intermediate score range.

Table 20

Innovation Programs’ Participant Listening Pretest Mean Scores – FY 2005–2006

CASAS Listening Score Range	Mean Pretest Score	N	%
ESL/ESL–Cit			
<=180	175.2	76	2.4
181–200	193.3	657	21.0
201–210	205.7	745	23.9
211–220	215.4	782	25.0
221–235	226.0	832	26.6
236–245	238.8	31	1.0
ESL/ESL–Cit Overall	210.5	3,123	100.0

Source: CASAS 2007

Reading Score Gains

CASAS has maintained a long history of research on reading gains. This research shows that learners testing 210 or below on the CASAS reading pre–test on average show five point gains after 80 – 100 hours of instruction. Learners testing 211 or above on average show three point reading gains with 80 – 100 hours of instruction. All mean scores with the exception of the ESL/ESL citizenship 236–245 group tested at approximately the average when comparing the Innovation Programs with this longitudinal CASAS data.

The Table 21 reading score gains for ESL/ESL citizenship learners pre–testing below 180 and 181–200 respectively are substantial (26.9 and 13.7 points respectively). The overall reading score mean gains (10.9) are encouraging. Research is currently being sponsored by CDLP to further investigate and compare CASAS score gains for distance learning students. Reading score gains for students in this study will be examined after all students have between 80 and 100 hours of instruction

The ABE numbers are very small. They do show above average gains for the 211–220 and the 221–235 cohorts.

Table 21

Innovation Programs' Participant Reading Score Mean Gains – FY 2005–2006

CASAS Reading Scoring Range	Pretest Mean	Post-test Mean	Learning Gain Mean	N	%
ABE/ASE					
< 200	—	—	—	—	—
201–210	—	—	—	—	—
211–220	216.8	227.4	10.6	44	13.7
221–235	229.2	235.2	6.0	176	54.8
236–245	239.2	242.1	3.0	101	31.5
ABE/ASE Overall	230.6	236.3	5.7	321	100.0
ESL/ESL–Cit					
< 180	173.6	200.1	26.5	1024	3.6
181–200	193.5	207.2	13.7	6165	21.8
201–210	205.7	216.8	11.1	10232	36.2
211–220	216.0	223.2	7.2	4928	17.4
221–235	226.9	232.0	5.1	5494	19.4
236–245	239.7	241.8	2.1	436	1.5
ESL/ESL–Cit Overall	208.3	218.6	10.2	28,279	100.0

CASAS 2007

Listening Gains

The same history of CASAS research shows that learners testing 210 or below on the CASAS listening test on average show five point gains after 80 – 100 hours of instruction. Learners testing 211 or above on average show three point reading gains with 80 – 100 hours of instruction.

The Table 22 listening gains were highest with the lower level ESL/ESL citizenship learners. All groups performed above average with exception of the higher groups. The 221–235 group performed below average.

Table 22

Innovation Programs' Participant Listening Score Mean Gains – FY 2005–2006

CASAS Listening Scoring Range	Pretest Mean	Post-test Mean	Learning Gain Mean	N	%
ESL/ESL–Cit					
< 180	175.3	199.0	23.7	66	3.3
181–200	193.1	207.4	14.3	456	23.1
201–210	205.5	214.7	9.2	503	25.4
211–220	215.4	221.1	5.7	487	24.6
221–235	225.8	228.3	2.5	466	23.6
236–245	—	—	—		0.0
ESL/ESL–Cit Overall					
	208.7	217.3	8.4	1,978	100.0

CASAS 2007

Program Effectiveness and Student Persistence

Learner persistence became a California strategic focus to enhance adult education program improvement in 2005. In adult education student persistence is often defined as the length of time that learners spend in active instruction. Another definition sees persistence as the learner staying engaged in some kind of formal learning structure even if not enrolled in specific adult education classes. Increasing persistence addresses methods to retain adult learners in programs long enough to significantly improve their learning skills — usually in the 80 – 100 hour range. CASAS defines persistence as completing a post test, which usually equates to 70 hours or more of instruction.

Increasing persistence is very important for learners enrolled in ESL programs. A study (Stiles 2004)^{xvi} of ESL learner gains in California over a four year period showed CASAS reading test scores for ESL learners increased as the number of hours of instruction increased, although the actual gains in reading scores varied across years and program levels.

1999 research by Comings, Parella, and Scoicone defines persistence broadly as “adults staying in programs for as long as they can, engaging in self-directed study when they must drop out of their programs, and returning to programs as soon as the demands of their lives allow.”^{xvii} The Comings *et al* contribution recognizes that adult learner’s lives and responsibilities make consistent participation in learning difficult over the approximately 80 hours often necessary to demonstrate learning gains. The study discusses several strategies to facilitate persistence, and elaborates at some length on self study interventions. However, it does not dwell on the possible roles for distance learning — though self study and distance learning can be viewed as somewhat interchangeable terms. Distance learning may also provide a “bridge or link” so that students stay involved and keep learning during times when they are not able to attend traditional classroom programs. Further study on this topic is necessary and is being undertaken by the CDLP Persistence study currently underway.

There are some semantic and contextual difficulties with the ways the terms student retention and student persistence are applied. In some cases they are treated as having almost synonymous meanings. However, retention refers to keeping a learner enrolled long enough to show learning gains while persistence promotes flexibility allowing students to leave and return to learning somewhat seamlessly. Persistence refers to the strategies and compromises that learners make to maintain participation in formal instruction — to persevere. Retention relates to institutional strategies while persistence refers to student strategies.

Distance learning is a viable instructional strategy to address both goals. From the analyst’s perspective the easiest way to increase student persistence data is to post-test more adult learners. Unfortunately, the foci in the persistence discussions address retention strategies to reduce student drop out and to reengage them when they “stop out.” What is missing is a strong emphasis on systematically encouraging and introducing independent learning in curricular strategies including more emphasis on distance and alternative forms of instruction to serve as a bridge back and forth for students stopping out and as a way to encourage students to see their learning as continuous and not limited to one form of instruction.

Distance learning and interventions like hybrid and blended learning offer ways to make learning more convenient and accessible to many adult learners. They allow the student to continue learning when classroom or site-based attendance is difficult for multiple reasons. They should receive substantially more prominence as a significant intervention strategy. Instead they are overlooked for the most part.

From the distance learning perspective there is no need to “stop out” from learning if the reasons for the break in learning are not catastrophic in nature. Learning can continue

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through asynchronous distance lessons that place the learner in charge of the pace of instruction. California Distance Learning Project data indicate that distance learning and blended learning can be quite effective in this regard.

In distance learning and other non-traditional instruction learning outcomes are usually measured in terms of instructional units completed successfully. Increasing learning modality options should help improve student persistence. It should be the basis for providing instructional strategies that accommodate adults' multiple responsibilities that impact their continuing participation and access to learning services. Over the next five years strategies that promote and support asynchronous learning are likely to become more prevalent and important. In the shorter run (1) making classroom learning more engaging, (2) blending classroom and distance learning for the eager learner, and (3) encouraging distance learning for the busy learner should receive more policy and program attention.

The CDLP supports continuing target research on the relative effectiveness of classroom, distance learning, and blended learning (students enrolled concurrently in classroom and distance learning courses). A 2004 – 2005 CDLP study conducted by Dr. Paul Porter and Van Woolley focused on student persistence and learning gains of ESL students in reading.^{xviii} The hypothesis was that students who enrolled in a classroom course and distance learning course concurrently (blended learning) will have higher rates of persistence because they have an opportunity to engage in directed self-study, either in between or in conjunction with, their regular classroom experiences. The curriculum is different for each course.

The study also examined learning gains among classroom only, distance learning only, and blended learning. The study was pioneering since it held the number of instructional hours constant and examined the comparative learning gains. With the same amount of instructional hours, ESL distance learning students showed higher learning gains in reading on standardized achievement tests than students in traditional classrooms. Because of the small sample size, these findings required validation by further research. It can be said conclusively that DL students performed "at least as well as" regular classroom students, which is the minimum expectation of the CDE. These findings provide further evidence that distance learning is a viable instructional alternative to regular ESL classroom programming.

Two activities were undertaken to expand on the Porter and Woolley research. The authors are continuing their local research in 2006 and 2007 while Dr. Richard Stiles, a CDLP research consultant, reviewed statewide TOPSPro and CASAS testing data.

The Distance Learning Blended Model

In California adult education the distance learning blended model has a very specific description. It refers to adult schools with Innovation Programs that offer somewhat simultaneous classroom and distance learning courses in which students can dual enroll.^{xix} The key considerations are that each course must have its own approved course outline, course number, assigned instructor, separate student roster, and distinctive and different full length course materials. The courses can share the same course outline (A22), meaning the courses cover the same designated competencies, but the course materials must be different, and each course has its own course number.

As a standard practice the distance learning portion of blended learning and distance learning only classes are based entirely on learner outcomes. For each unit or module of instruction there is a test or method to demonstrate mastery (usually at about 80% correct answers). When a unit of instruction is completed, approved hours of average daily attendance (a.d.a.) are claimed. Any direct teacher contact time is included in the claimed hours, not claimed separately.

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To a certain extent, the blended model was a ‘ground up’ design based on student requests for additional material to study on their own. This is especially the case for students in classes that meet less often. They desire to learn more rapidly than traditional classroom instruction allows.

The blended model has been used almost exclusively with adult education ESL courses which have not involved elective or other credits towards a high school diploma. For example, it is the Los Angeles Unified School District Adult and Career Education (LAUSD) policy that a student can only earn credits one time when he or she takes a DL course involving credits and also takes the classroom version of that course. Credits cannot be awarded twice when the student completes both courses—only once, no exceptions.

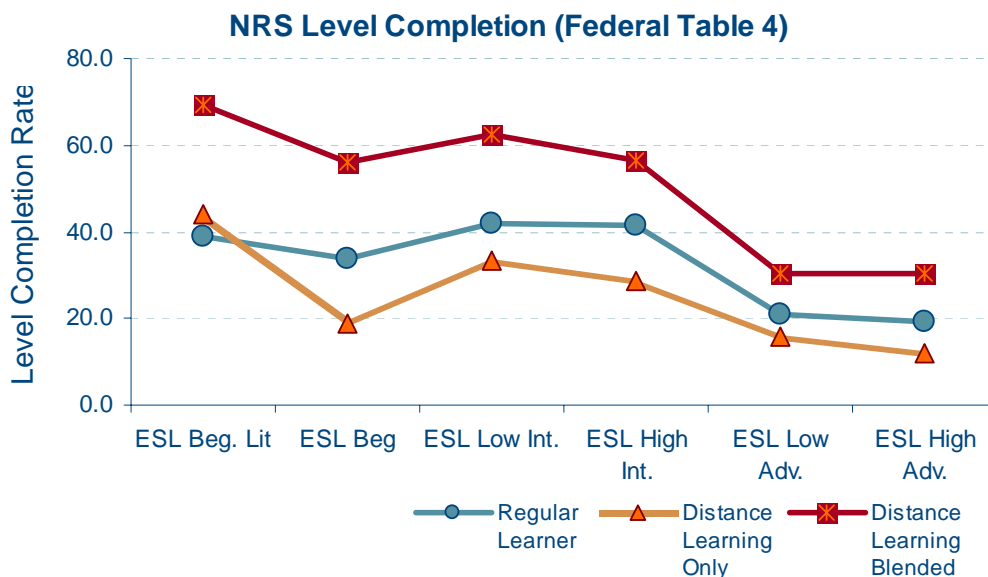
This means that a student, whether blended or distance learning only, can only be awarded hours of attendance one time per completed unit of a distance learning course. Once all of the units of a DL course have been completed, the student can never retake those units and have hours claimed by a school. In a traditional ESL class, a student can retake the same class multiple times and hours can be claimed for each re-taking of the class without limit—assuming the student is appropriately placed in the course multiple times.

The following tables (23 – 26) are developed by Dr. Stiles and CASAS staff. This is the second year that these data are reported. They are based on data from the National Reporting System (NRS – WIA Title reported data). They clearly demonstrate the utility of distance learning (a combination of blended and distance learning only) and in particular the role of blended learning in producing effective completion, reading and listening gains.

Table 23 shows that blended learning in most cases and most importantly in ESL beginning through intermediate has the highest completion rates. Completion means that a student has completed a learning level (e.g. ABE beginning). The blended rates also drive the distance learning rates in the table. The low ABE beginning literacy and ASE high completion rates for blended learning are based on very small numbers.

Table 23

Completion Rates in Federal Table 4: ESL Distance Learners Contrasted with Regular Learners – FY 2005–2006



Source: CASAS 2007

Blended learning and distance learning show higher persistence rates with the federally reported WIA Title II learners (Table 24). In this table the CASAS definition of persistence is used – completing a CASAS post test. Distance learning only as an intervention performs poorly in comparison to classroom and blended learning. Again it is the blended model that enables the distance learning approach to show good results.

Table 24

Distance Learners Contrasted with Regular Learners Federal Table 4

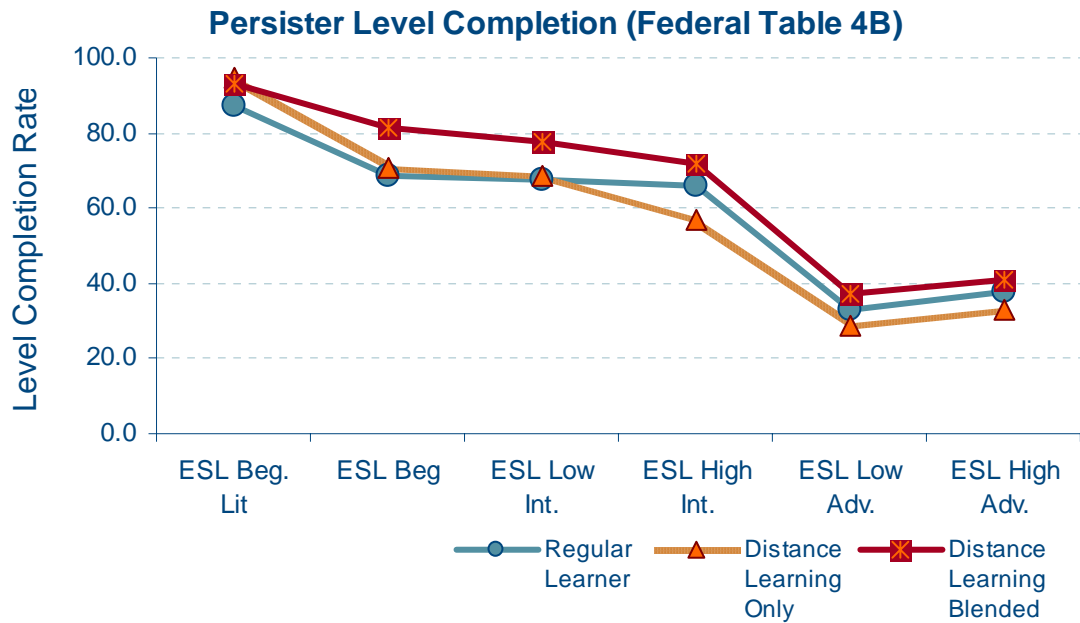


Table 25 compares the reading gains for WIA II learners in 2005 – 06. It indicates that blended learners perform the best and that the distance learners as a group perform about the same as classroom ESL learners.

Table 25

National Reporting System ESL Level Reading Gains by Hours of Instruction: ESL Distance Learners contrasted with ESL Regular Learners

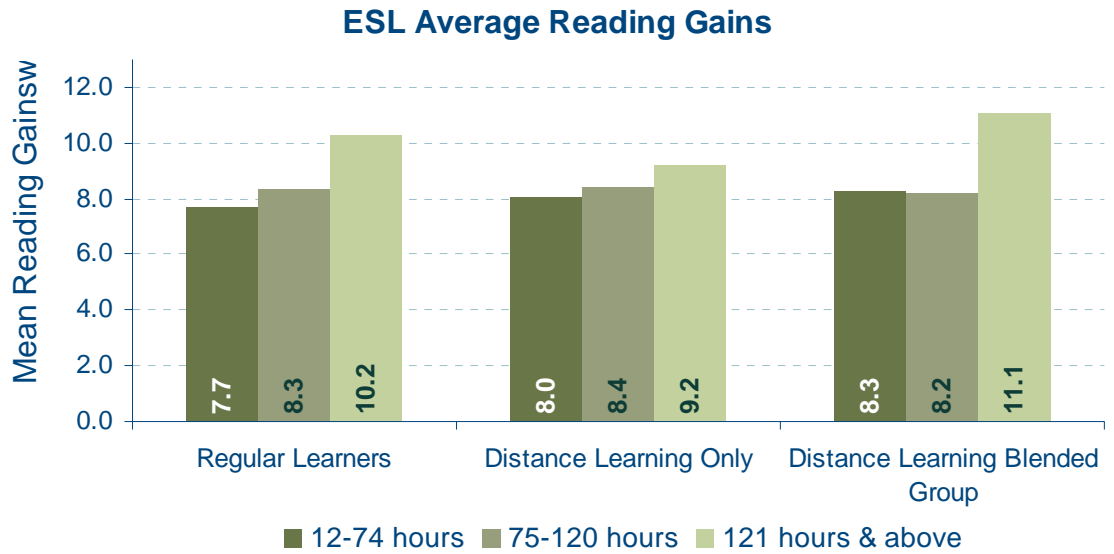
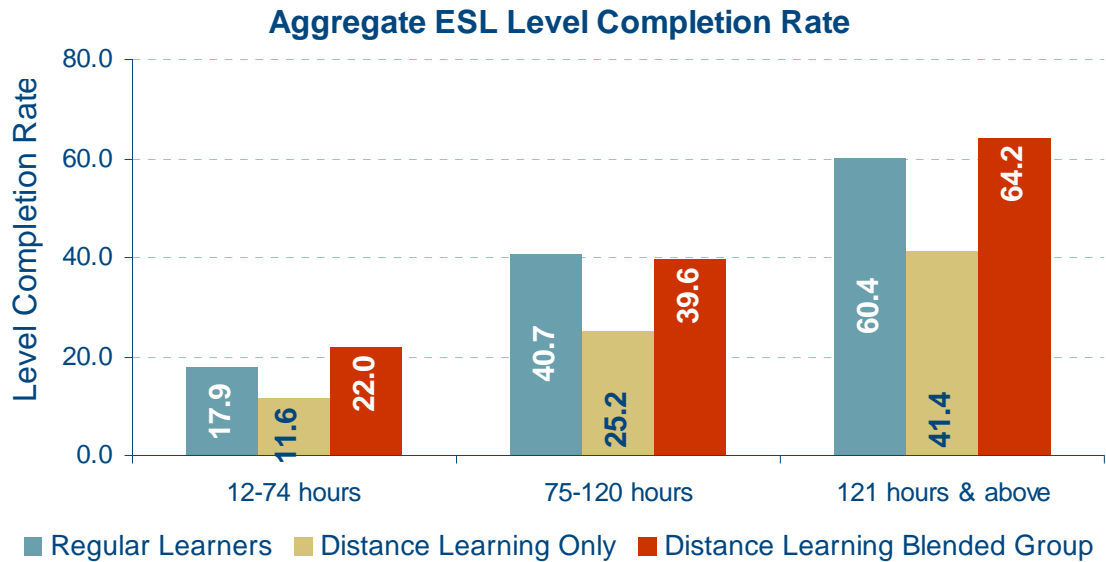


Table 26 describes relative ESL completion rates based on hours of instruction. Distance learning only produces the poorest results with the blended model performing the best, especially when students participate in 121 or more hours of instruction.

Table 26

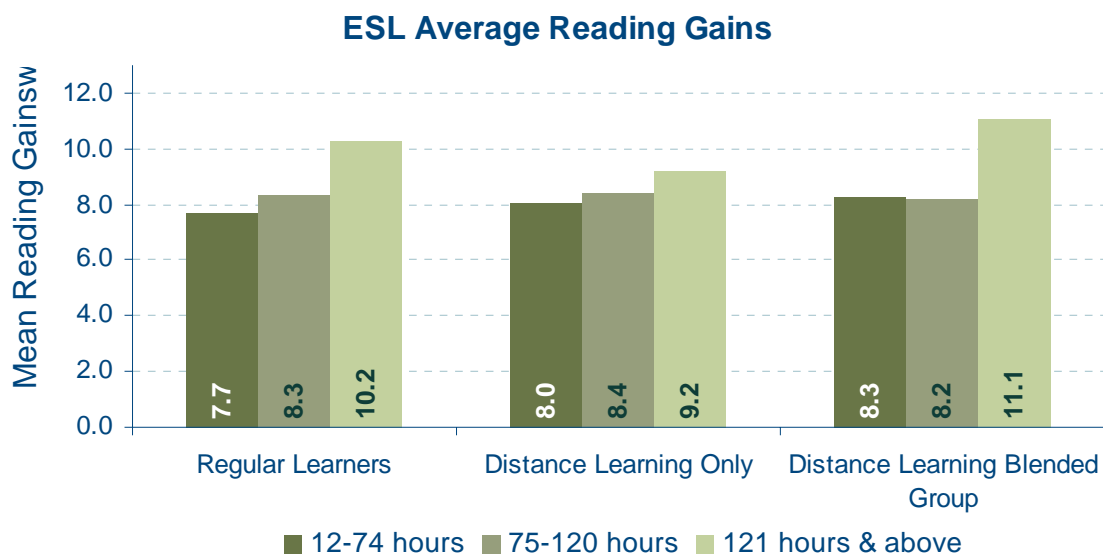
ESL Distance Learners contrasted with ESL Regular Learners by Hours of Instruction. Total Completion Rates in Federal Table 4



In Table 27 there is a comparison of reading gains based on mode of delivery and hours of instruction. All modes and hours of delivery show better gains than the historical norm. Blended learning performs the best followed by classroom only instruction and distance learning only instruction.

Table 27

Mean Reading Gains: ESL Distance Learners contrasted with ESL Regular Learners by Hours of Instruction



The researcher’s ability to examine key outcomes data comparatively provides a better view of how distance learning only instruction performs in comparison to the classroom only and blended learning modes. Common sense tells us that the blended learning instruction, where two curricula are provided and the resultant interventions are more substantive, would produce the best results. However, until this year we have not had the data to examine these comparisons.

What Researchers Don’t Know

As noted there is a new understanding of the relative effectiveness of distance learning, because CASAS analysts are able to break out the reported testing and persistence data by blended and distance learning only and compare both data sets with classroom instruction. In previous years’ reports the benefits of distance learning overall were trumpeted, when in fact the blended learning data were driving the overall success of the distance learning data. This is an important analytic advance.

There remain major gaps in our knowledge about the distance learners and the DL interventions. One new effort will begin to examine the relative outcomes of Internet delivered learning in contrast to the video checkout model which is the current norm. CDLP staff is promoting the utility and inevitability of Internet based instruction without having the confirming data.

In 2006 and 2007 Dr. Paul Porter is conducting research with online adult secondary education (ASE) learners.^{xx} It should begin to provide information on factors that define student success with Internet based instruction.

Conclusions

Over the last fourteen years the California Innovation Program initiative and distance learning have become well accepted and vital parts of adult basic education. The data reported here indicate that the original goal of increasing access to learning opportunities continues to be addressed. The program has increased access to a variety of learners who would have a difficult time attending traditional in classroom courses or who might not progress at the same rate in a traditional program.

The Innovation Program Initiative continues to provide significant and meaningful alternatives for adults —

- needing more practice of skills to achieve mastery,
- having work and family obligations that make attending a regular class time difficult,
- lacking the full confidence to participate in a large classroom setting in front of other students,
- wanting the participation, assistance, and support of their families in their learning,
- living in locations without convenient access to traditional classes,
- living in areas where there is no space in traditional classes,
- learning more effectively from video, audio, and web-based media when moving at their own pace, and
- other groups who can not access traditional classroom programs.

When comparing classroom completion and persistence data with the Innovation Programs, it is clear that the distance learning programs, especially blended learning, are particularly successful in providing ESL learning opportunities. Other local research data on student persistence and retention support these findings. The availability of engaging life skills instructional materials is a key factor in all likelihood.

The Innovation Programs follow the same accountability requirements as class-based apportionment programs. Over the past six years the Innovation Programs have been successful in standardizing their reporting procedures, while still maintaining alternative instructional delivery methods. All Innovation Program students are expected to be tracked in the TOPSPRO system, and all programs are using a standardized format for both program applications and annual evaluation. This format makes gathering of data and program monitoring more substantive and meaningful. Pre and post testing are more difficult than in traditional settings. It is not standardized for programs other than ESL, ABE and GED / ASE. In general, the Innovation Programs collect more program documentation and learner progress information than do the classroom programs.

The Innovation Programs meet the three crucial benefit-cost criteria necessary to be accepted by adult education providers and the California Department of Education. They are:

1. Effectiveness — CASAS pre – posttest data indicate that the Innovation Programs' ESL program participants, on average, show substantial learning increases in reading and listening. Much of this is attributed to the results of the blended learning model. The ABE/ASE participants show learning gains consistent with historical data.

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2. Efficiency — Participant and program cost data indicate that the Innovation Programs are cost effective. Common sense tells us that the programs would not be offered if they are not cost effective.
3. Equity — Reported years in school, primary language, reading and listening scores on entry, and ethnic data indicate that lower level, often hard-to-serve learners are the primary participants in the Innovation Programs.

This is the sixth year that similar summary conclusions have been reached. However, they now are tempered by a closer look at comparative classroom, blended learning, and distance learning only data.

Local Innovation Program operators have many stories of how their programs have introduced adult education to people who would not otherwise attend classes, enabled learners to meet the complex demands of family, work and learning, and introduced the possibilities of multi-media learning to classroom teachers.

After more than a dozen years Innovation Programs can no longer be considered as a demonstration or innovative initiative. Learner advancement and the awarding of a.d.a. are based on measures of proficiency – not seat time. This outcomes-based approach is in keeping with the adult education trend towards accountability by measuring student progress rather than teaching method. Ideally these Innovation Programs should more fully integrate the innovative distance learning programs into the overall adult school instructional strategies based on the needs of the individual learners. This is especially important as distance learning instruction begins to evolve from the video-based checkout approach to more interactive online instruction.

End Notes

ⁱ The research and data collection for this paper are funded by Federal P.L., 105–220, Section 223, from the Adult Education Office, Secondary, Postsecondary, and Adult Leadership Division, California Department of Education. However, the conclusions and opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the position of that department or the U.S. Department of Education.

The California Distance Learning Project is a CDE Adult Education Leadership Project under contract with the California State University Dominguez Hills College of Extended and International Education and the Sacramento County Office of Education.

ⁱⁱ The research papers can be found on the California Distance Learning Project Web site at <http://www.cdjponline.org/fivepercent.htm>.

ⁱⁱⁱ The worksite – workplace learning skills focus has proven unattractive to adult schools, and the test of alternative reimbursement approaches poses very difficult policy and program issues. This leaves the distance learning and off-site instructional approaches as the primary foci. They are essentially the same.

^{iv} This is due to the asynchronous nature of most instruction. Each learner interacts with the learning materials and the instructor on an individualized basis.

^v The Adult Education Office and the leadership programs have a priority to find new methods to serve the smaller programs.

^{vi} The Innovation Program database used for Figures 1 – 9 comes from the approved online applications. Several adult schools submitted their applications in hard copy only.

- ^{vii} Alpha Smart is a simplified computer like product with built in instructional applets.
- ^{viii} Figures 1 – 9 display data from the FY 2006 – 2007 applications. The tables in this report utilize data from FY 2005 – 2006.
- ^{ix} For example, the CDLP is continuing its pilot testing of online ASE courses with a wide range of adult schools in 2006 – 07. In the past most pilot test sites used Independent Study or lab attendance rather than the Innovation Programs because the courses were not previously approved to be included in the Innovation Programs.
- ^x Data from the previous fiscal years are drawn from reports that are available at <http://www.cdlponline.org/fivepercent.htm>.
- ^{xi} ABE & ASE Instructional Level Upon Entry (based on pre–test means)
- ^{xii} There remains a large group of learners unable to attend site–based learning that could benefit from beginning ESL instruction. In 2004 the CDLP licensed a beginning ESL DVD and print series entitled *Putting English to Work – 1* under development by the Los Angeles USD’s Division of Adult and Community Education. Half of these materials were distributed in the winter of 2006–07.
- ^{xiii} ESL & ESL–Citizenship Instructional Level Upon Entry (based on pre–test means)
- ^{xiv} Programs utilizing federal adult education funds must test all learners. Participants in state apportionment programs are not required to pre– posttest learners using standardized tests, although it is strongly recommended.
- ^{xv} Note: When Reporting Mean Scores and Mean Learning Gains CASAS normally does not report values with Ns below 30.
- ^{xvi} Stiles, R., 2004. The Relationship of California Adult ESL and ESL–Citizenship Reading Performance to Amount of Instructional Time. *California Adult Education: Research Brief, 2*, San Diego: CASAS. Retrieved January 16, 2006, from http://www.casas.org/Downloads/more.cfm?mfile_id=3692&bhcp=1
- ^{xvii} Comings, J.P. Parella ,A. & Socione, L., 1999. *Persistence among adult basic education students in pre–GED classes*. National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy, Cambridge, MA., p.3. Retrieved February 17, 2005 from <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/~ncsall/research/report12.pdf>.
- ^{xviii} ESL Distance Learning Effectiveness Study: Comparative Study of Student Persistence, Reading Score Gains and Program Effectiveness, Dr. Paul Porter and Van Woolley for the California Distance Learning Project, March 2005, pp 2–3.
- ^{xix} The enrollments are simultaneous in the sense that a student will enroll in either a classroom or a distance learning program and subsequently enroll in the other. Sometimes students enroll in distance learning because of a classroom waiting list but remain in the distance learning class also.
- ^{xx} The CDLP and the University of California College Prep program (UCCP) are pilot testing the delivery of online high school subjects to adult students. See www.uccp.org.