

The California Adult Education 2003 —
2005 Innovation and Alternative
Instructional Delivery Program

A Review



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2005

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The California Adult Education 2003 – 2005 Innovation and Alternative Instructional Delivery Program — A Review

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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. Over 50,000 adult learners participated in 81 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. 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. The result is the most complete look at adult education distance learning programs available.

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
- 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 distance learning programs are particularly successful in providing ESL learning opportunities. Local research data on student persistence and retention support these findings.

The Innovation Programs meet the three crucial benefit–cost criteria necessary to be accepted by adult education providers and the California Department of Education. These programs are effective, efficient, and equitable. This is the fifth year that these summary conclusions have been supported. They indicate the continued success of the Innovation Program initiative.

The Report

This report is the fifth in a series of annual research papers on the California Innovation and Alternative Instructional Delivery Program.ⁱ 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.ⁱⁱⁱ

The report draws data from three sources as follows:

- 2004 – 2005 Innovation Program applications
- 2003 – 2004 Tracking of Programs and Students (TOPSpro) Entry and Update records
- 2003 – 2004 CASAS reading and listening pre and post tests

These data sets provide a quite complete 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.^{iv}

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.
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:

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- 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.^v

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.

Eighty One Participating Adult Schools

The statewide Innovation Program has reached extensive acceptance by the adult education field. In the spring of 2005 81 adult schools had been approved to operate Innovation Programs for the 2004 – 2005 fiscal year. This represents roughly 45% of adult schools large enough to reasonably consider the Innovation Programs option as part of their instructional strategies.

On the other hand it has become very clear that creating an Innovation Program for small adult schools is too time consuming and counter-productive, particularly if the purchase of specialized equipment or materials was 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.^{vi} This points to finding new approaches, further research, varied technology, and/or more flexible policy to allow cost-effective services to these small programs.

Over 23 Million Dollars Requested

The requested approvals for Innovation Programs totaled over \$23,385,014 with an approximate average of \$280,340 per adult school. The median requested budget is \$123,074.^{vii} The range of approvals was from the Los Angeles Unified request of about \$10.5 million to Livermore's \$6,756. The Los Angeles request represents almost 45% of the state total. The estimated average cost per student is \$480 and the median cost is \$411. These funds come from each adult school's apportionment. They are not new funds.

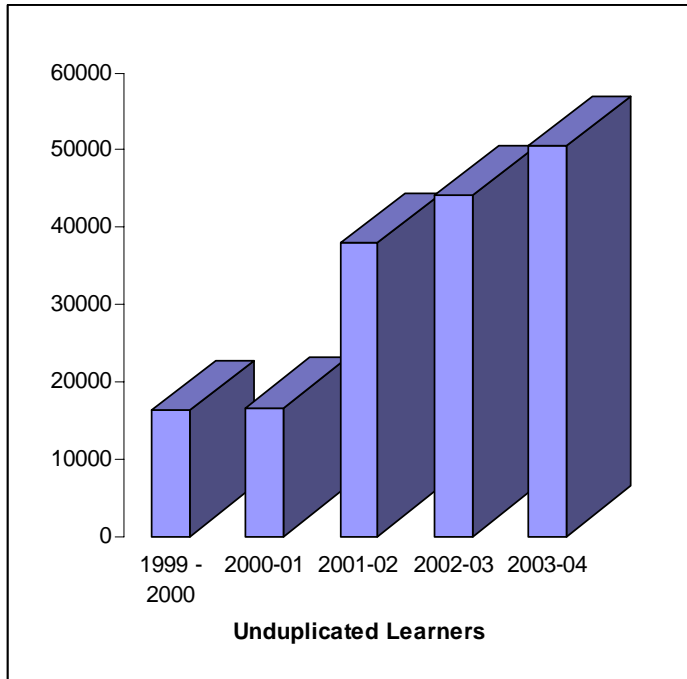
Changes in Participation Since 1999

Figure 1 displays the growth in the Innovation Programs since standardized data were 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 7% Innovation Program waivers, especially Los Angeles Unified.

Figure 1

Participation in Innovation Programs from 1999 to 2004



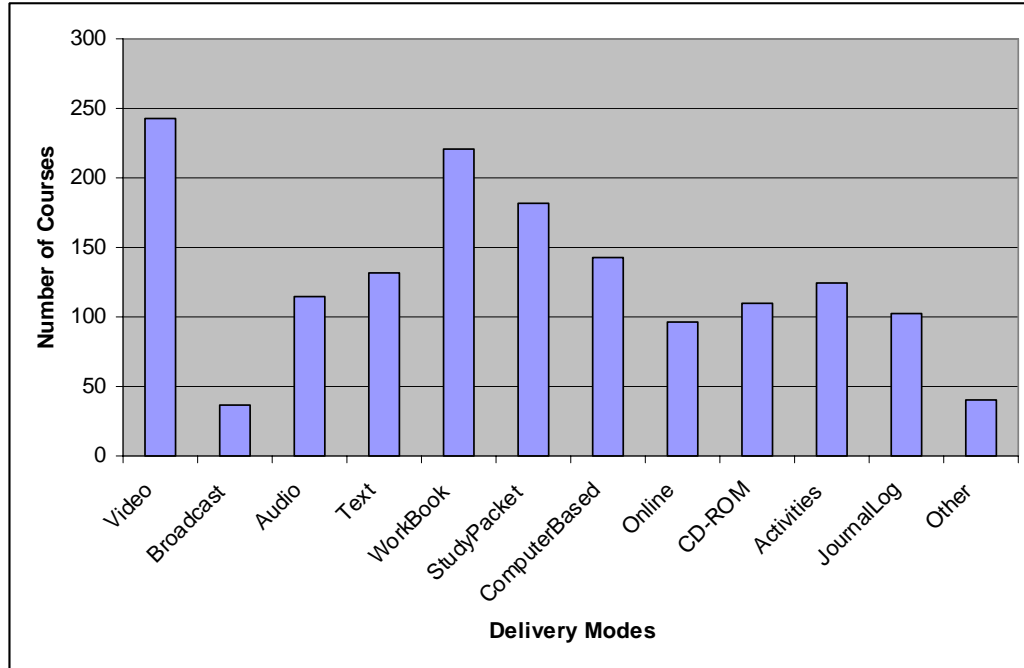
Sources: CASAS

Distribution by Instructional Media Delivery Type

Figure 2 summarizes the most popular innovative approaches approved for FY 2004 – 2005. These numbers reflect multiple courses 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 2004 – 2005



Source: 2004–2005 Applications

The video and audio media normally are provided on a checkout basis with workbooks, study packets, work assignments, or activities included. With video checkout usually 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. Multiple delivery methods can be used for any approved course. This increase probably represents increasing capabilities on the part of programs to use these methods along with publishers producing more and more materials in these formats.

The “Other” category includes 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.^{viii}

Course Distribution by Instructional Areas

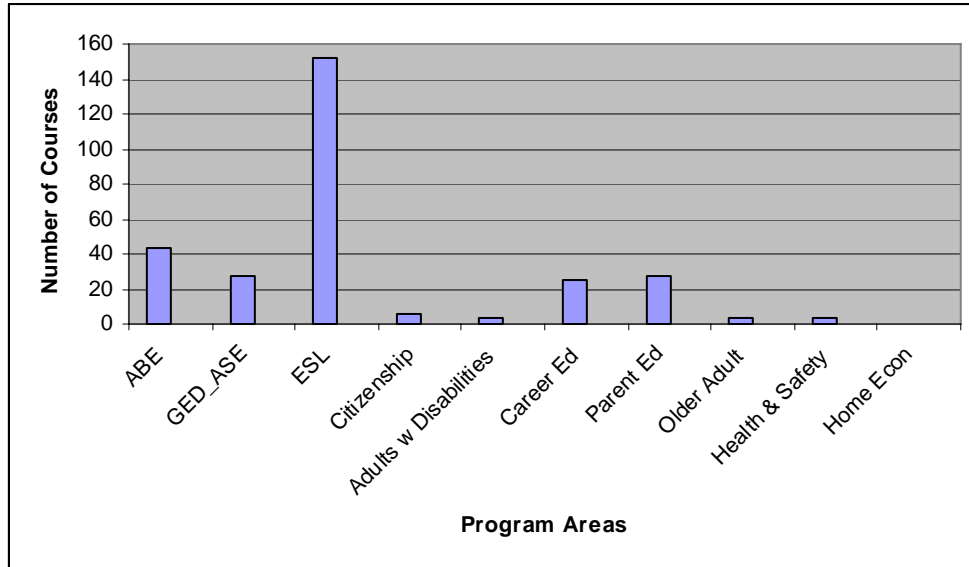
Innovation Programs are permitted to offer multiple courses. It is not unusual for an adult school to offer several levels of English as a Second language (ESL), an adult basic education course (ABE) as well as a parent education course. Figure 3A describes the fiscal year 2004 – 2005 distribution for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

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ESL is the predominant instructional program offered (152). They represent 52% of the total courses offered. GED/ASE (29%), parent education (27%), and career education (25%) are the next most popular.

Figure 3A

Distribution of Innovation Program Courses by Instructional Area (FY 2004–2005)



Source: 2004–2005 Applications

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

Figure 3B

Rank Order Distribution of Innovation Program Courses by Instructional Area (FY 2004–2005)

Program Area	Number of Courses
ESL	152
ABE	44
GED_ASE	28
Parent Education	27
Career Education	25
Citizenship	6
Health & Safety	4
Older Adult	3
Adults w Disabilities	3
Home Economics	0
Total	292

Most of the adult high school subjects (adult secondary education – ASE) in fact are GED 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.^x

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 \$1,977. The overall average is \$449 and the median is \$407.

Student – Teacher Contact

Learners and teachers are expected to maintain contact throughout the distance learning course. This contact can include direct presentation of instruction, tutoring, progress monitoring, advising, and explaining new assignments. The distribution among the primary methods of student – teacher interactions follows. They represent the primary method of contact, and it is useful to note that many programs use a variety of contact methods.

Figure 4

Distribution of Offered Teacher – Contact

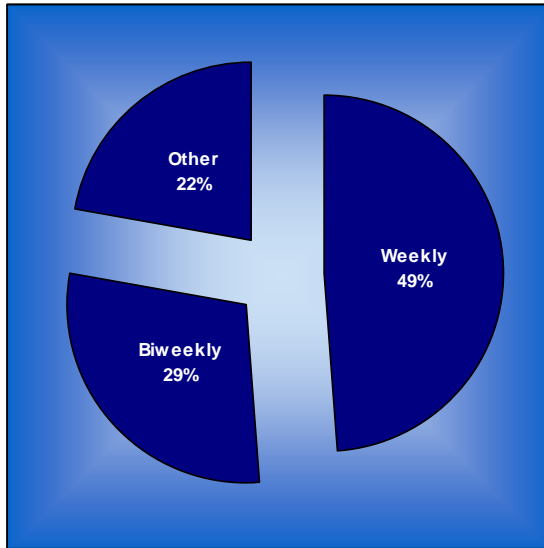
General type of contact offered	Number of Courses
Face to Face	297
Teacher initiated (not face to face)	249
Student initiated (not face to face)	223

Source: 2004–2005 Applications

The approximate frequency for the face to face contacts is displayed in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Frequency of Face to Face Learner – Teacher Contacts (FY 2004–2005)



Source: 2004–2005 Applications

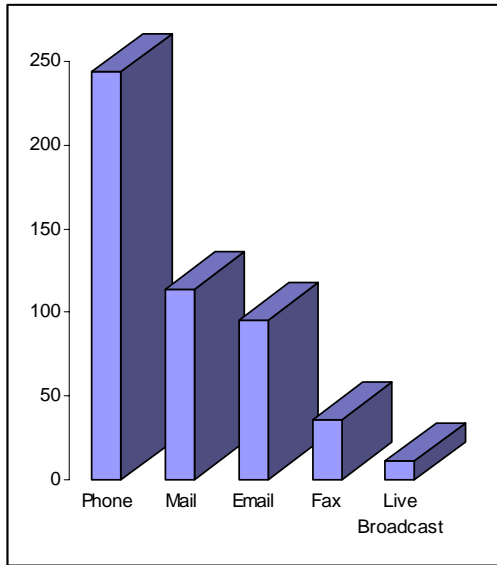
Remote Contact

Two hundred ninety seven approved courses require or offer face to face contacts of which 211 (49%) are scheduled weekly, 124 (29%) are biweekly, and 96 (22%) are scheduled on an as needed, drop-in, open office and unit completion basis.

Not all Innovation Program learner – teacher contact can be face to face. Two figures display the distribution of types of teacher initiated and student initiated contact. The distribution of the remote teacher initiated contacts is set forth in Figure 6. Phone and voice mail contacts account for 49% of these proposed methods of contact.

Figure 6

Distribution of Teacher Initiated Contacts by Course (FY 2004–2005)



Source: 2004–2005 Applications

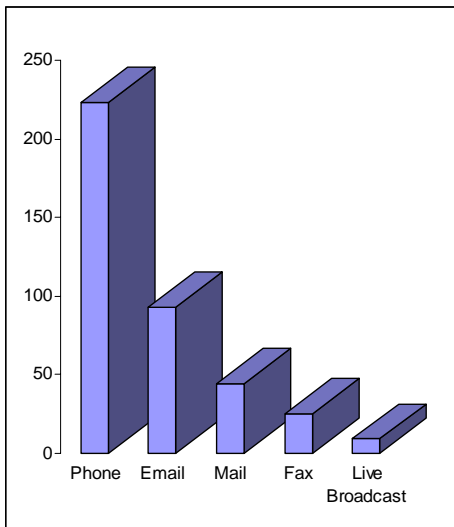
Phone and voice mail is the common method of contact. US mail and email are the next most frequent methods of remote teacher contact.

Student Initiated Contacts

Student initiated contacts in Innovation Programs are similar with the exception of email where students used this method of contact slightly more often than instructors who use the mail much less often (Figure 7).

Figure 7

Distribution of Student Initiated Contacts (FY 2004–2005)



Source: 2004–2005 Applications

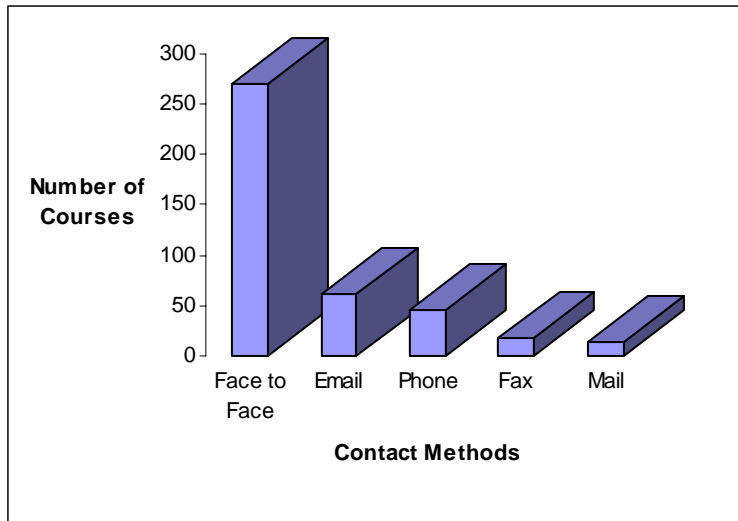
Monitoring Student Progress

Four 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 four figures (7 – 10) document how the contact occurs for each event.

Face to face orientation on the distance learning courses was by far the most prevalent approach used to place learners into the appropriate courses (Figure 8).

Figure 8

Approaches to Learner Placement (FY 2004–2005)



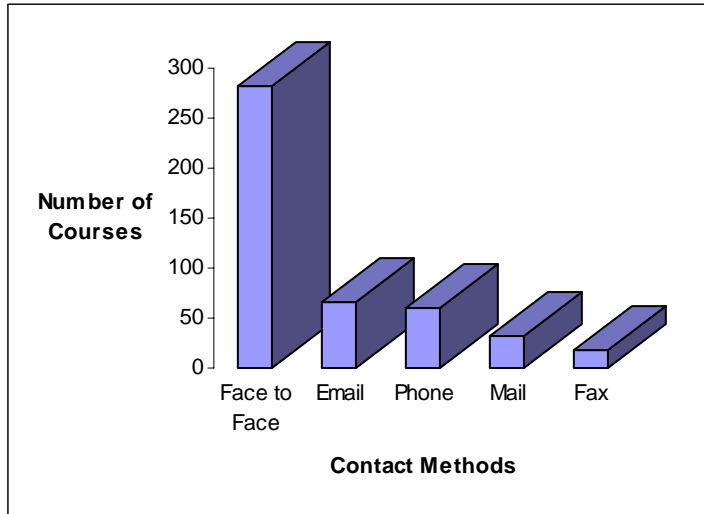
Source: 2004–2005 Applications

Email (62) and voice mail (46) were the next most common approaches used in placing learners into the proper course.

Face to face communications for the distance learning courses was by far the most common orientation approach (Figure 9).

Figure 9

Approaches to Learner Orientation by Course (FY 2004–2005)

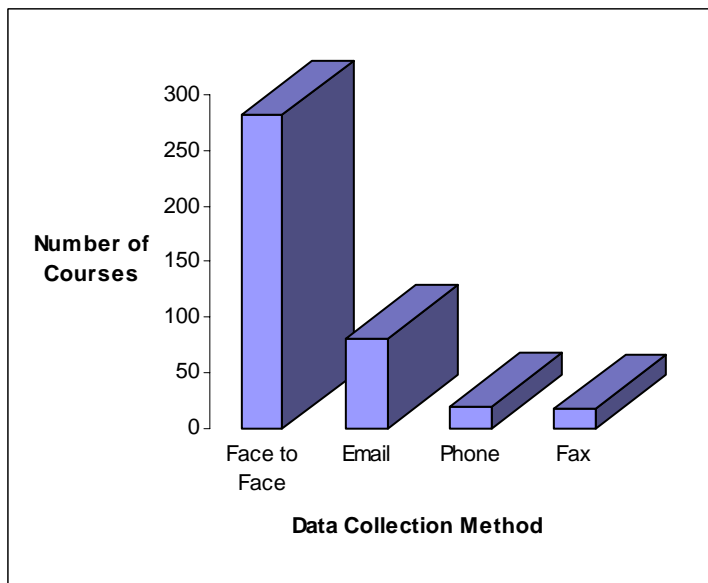


Source: 2004–2005 Applications

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 10). The use of the computer has increased and phone and U.S. mail slightly declined from the previous program year.

Figure 10

Approaches to Learner Pre – Post Testing by Course (FY 2004–2005)



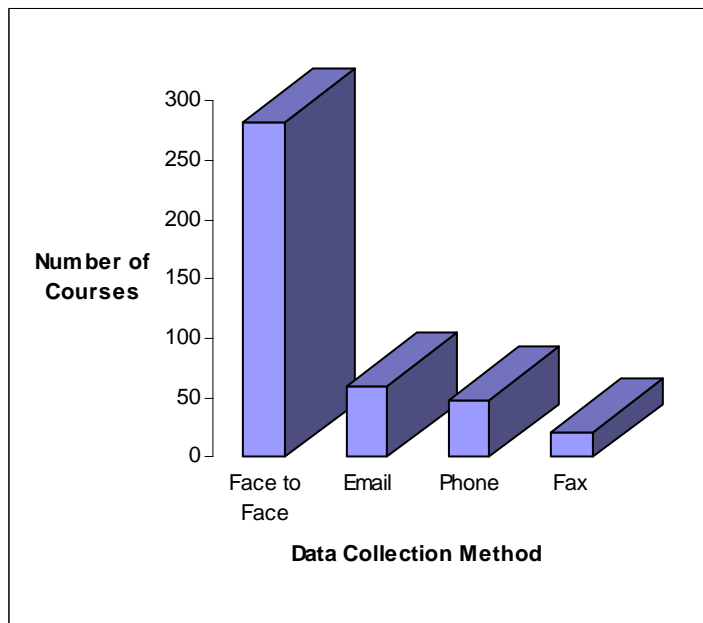
Source: 2004–2005 Applications

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 like 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. In the short run we cannot look to technological breakthroughs to assist us.

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 11 displays how the data are collected.

Figure 11

Approaches to TOPSpro Data Entry Data Collection by Course (FY 2004–2005)



Source: 2004–2005 Applications

Face to face data collection is the primary approach in 71% of the courses. However, this does not tell us the proportions of actual record entry. Our supposition is that the face to face method accounts for well over 75% of the actual TOPSpro data collection.

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 to the Department of Education’s Adult Education Office. This interactive report form is available to the Innovation Program administrators via the Internet.

2003 – 2004 Learner Statistics

The following tables are drawn from TOPSpro data collected by CASAS for fiscal year 2003 – 2004. 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 (92.4%) percent of the learners recorded via TOPSpro participated in ESL programs. The adult secondary education / GED programs represent a distant second at 2.3% followed by the parent education programs (2.2%).

Table 1–A

Students Participating in Innovation Programs by Instructional Program (FY 2003–2004)

Program	N	%
ABE	398	0.8
ESL	46,621	92.4
ASE/GED	1,152	2.3
Citizenship	95	0.2
Vocational Ed. Adults	592	1.2
w/Disabilities	163	0.3
Health & Safety	74	0.1
Home Economics	82	0.2
Parent Ed.	1,113	2.2
Older Adults	175	0.3
Total	50,465	100

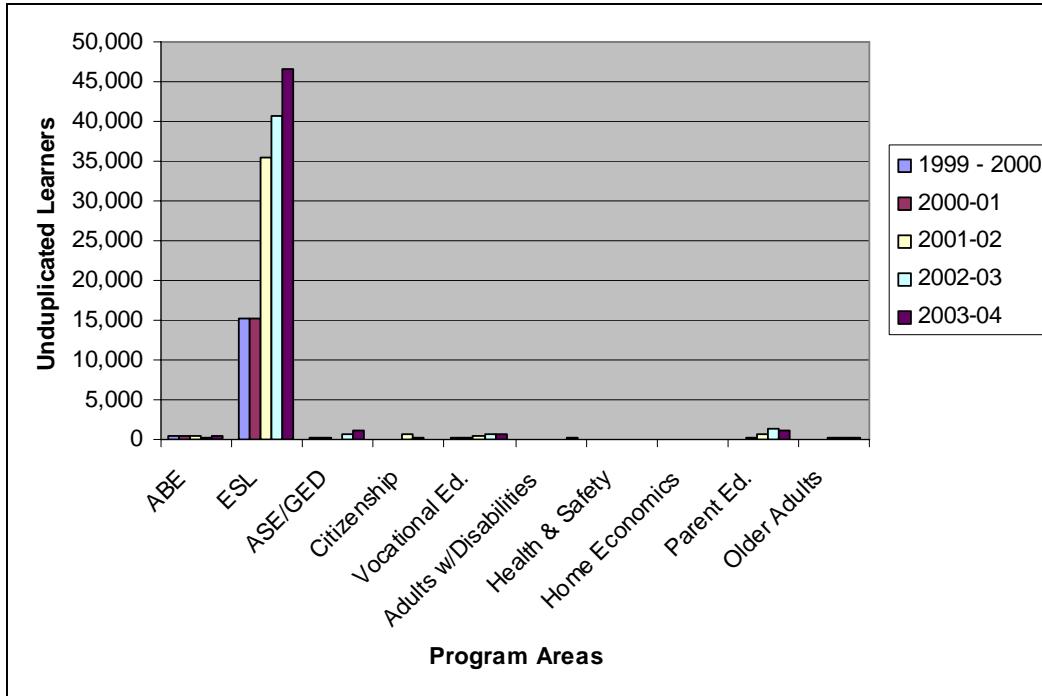
Source: CASAS 2005

The percent participation over the last three program years is remarkably similar with over 92% of the learners participating in ESL. Overall there has been a steady increase in Innovation Program participation from inception with an increase of 6,315 learners in 2003 – 2004.

The numbers are based on unduplicated counts, meaning that a student is not counted twice unless enrolled in a separate course.

Table 1–B

Comparison Annual Population Participating in Innovation Programs by Instructional Program — Fiscal Years 1999 –2000 through 2003 – 2004



Sources: CASAS

The following table represents the program area distribution of the 2003 – 2004 adult school classroom student population and the Innovation Program participants. Innovation Programs have a substantially larger portion of ESL students in the classroom programs.

Table 1–C

Comparison of Innovation Program Participation and Traditional Classroom Programs by Instructional Program (FY 2003–2004)

Program	Innovation Programs		Classroom Programs		Proportional Differences
	N	%	N	%	
ABE	398	0.8%	73,137	5.9%	-5.1%
ESL	46,621	92.4%	503,616	40.7%	51.7%
ASE/GED	1,152	2.3%	214,724	17.3%	-15.1%
Citizenship	95	0.2%	3,638	0.3%	-0.1%
Career Ed.	592	1.2%	172,658	13.9%	-12.8%
Adults w/Disabilities	163	0.3%	32,198	2.6%	-2.3%
Health & Safety	74	0.1%	26,557	2.1%	-2.0%
Home Economics	82	0.2%	21,059	1.7%	-1.5%
Parent Ed.	1,113	2.2%	57,496	4.6%	-2.4%
Older Adults	175	0.3%	133,355	10.8%	-10.4%
Total	50,465	100.0%	1,238,438	100.0%	

Sources: CASAS 2005

Clearly the Innovation Programs continue to focus primarily on the needs of ESL students. This is partially due to the demand for ESL instruction, partially because of the multi-media resources available for ESL, and partially because programs like career education and older adults may not lend themselves to distance learning interventions. It has also been noted in reports from several projects that having videos available for ESL students presents an appealing way for them to repeat and review instruction in order to approach language mastery. It is often also a topic or skill that can be discussed with other family members and, in which they can practice their skills at home.

We assume that a significant portion of the adult secondary education (ASE) is provided via independent study.

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 77.7% of the participants residing in Los Angeles County. This is a decrease of 0.1% for LA County over the previous year.

Table 2

Innovation Programs Distribution by Region – FY 2003–2004

Geographic Region	N	%
Balance of State	4,248	8.4
Bay Area Region	2,920	5.8
Central Valley Region	1,338	2.7
LA Perimeter Region	1,547	3.1
Los Angeles County	39,191	77.7
San Diego Region	1,221	2.4
Total	50,465	100.0

Source: CASAS 2005

Distribution by Gender and Program

Women participated in far greater numbers than men (65.5% to 34.5%). The preponderance of women was even greater in the career education (78.3%), parent education (87.5%), and older adult programs (79.9%). The overall averages are about the same as the previous year.

Table 3

Gender of Students Enrolled in Innovation Programs by Instructional Program – FY 2003–2004

Program	Female %	Male %	Total
ABE	69.8	30.2	397
ESL	64.7	35.3	46,586
Citizenship	73.7	26.3	95
ASE/GED	66.1	33.9	1,149
Career Ed. Adult w/	78.3	21.7	590
Disabilities	41.7	58.3	163
Health & Safety	93.2	6.8	74
Home Economics	86.6	13.4	82
Parent Ed.	87.5	12.5	1,111
Older Adults	79.9	20.1	174
Total	65.5	34.5	50,421

Source: CASAS 2005

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 (30.2% and 30.1%). The third largest cohort was the 41–50 year olds at 18.19%. Over 13% 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 (30.5% and 30%).

Table 4–A

Learner Age in Innovation Programs by Instructional Program – FY 2003–2004

Age	ABE		ESL		Citizenship		ASE/GED		Career Ed		Adults w/ Dis.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
16-20	60	15.1	3,716	8.0	4	4.2	325	28.4	11	1.9	1	0.7
21-30	98	24.7	14,218	30.5	11	11.6	339	29.6	118	20.0	30	19.6
31-40	118	29.7	13,988	30.0	27	28.4	264	23.0	159	26.9	30	19.6
41-50	66	16.6	8,439	18.1	30	31.6	153	13.4	168	28.4	56	36.6
51-64	41	10.3	4,571	9.8	21	22.1	61	5.3	105	17.8	28	18.3
65+	14	3.5	1,625	3.5	2	2.1	4	0.3	30	5.1	8	5.2
Total	397	100.0	46,557	100.0	95	100.0	1,146	100.0	591	100.0	153	100.0

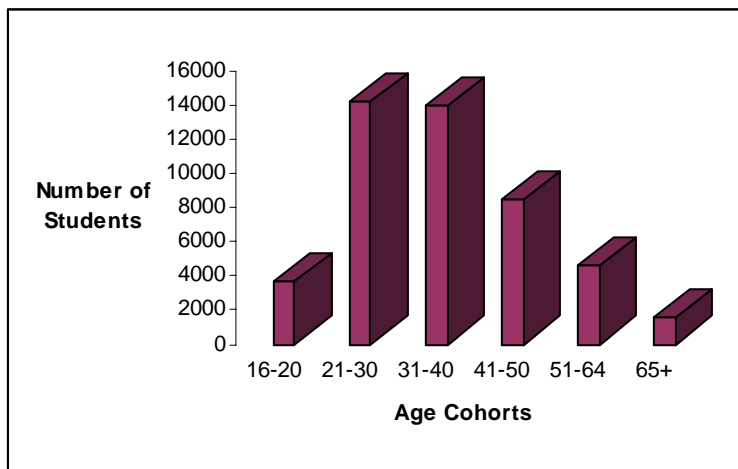
Age	Hlth. & Safety		Home Econ.		Parent Ed.		Older Adults		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
16-20	1	1.4			36	3.2	0	0.0	4,154	8.2
21-30	11	14.9	13	15.9	378	34.0	0	0.0	15,216	30.2
31-40	11	14.9	21	25.6	508	45.7	19	12.2	15,145	30.1
41-50	14	18.9	17	20.7	133	12.0	16	10.3	9,092	18.1
51-64	24	32.4	13	15.9	47	4.2	42	26.9	4,953	9.8
65+	13	17.6	18	22.0	9	0.8	79	50.6	1,802	3.6
Total	74	100.0	82	100.0	1,111	100.0	156	100.0	50,362	100.0

Source: CASAS 2005

Table 4–B provides a graphical picture of the age distributions for the ESL students. The 21 – 30 age cohort is the largest (14,218) closely followed by the 31 – 40 cohort (13,988).

Table 4–B

ESL Learner Age in Innovation Programs – FY 2003–2004



Source: CASAS 2005

Ethnicity by Instructional Program

Hispanics comprise 76.1% of the distance learning participants. This is an increase over the previous year (71.7%). Asians made up 15.3% which is a decrease from the previous year ((16.7%) and a large decrease from two years ago 21.3%). White non-Hispanics represented 7.4% of the participants while Native American and Native Alaskan learners made up 3.6% of the participants. Hispanics dominated in ESL, Citizenship, ASE/GED, career education and parent education while white learners dominated enrollments in Adults with Disabilities and Older Adults Programs with Asians having a dominant enrollment in Health and Safety Programs.

The absence of Black (non-Hispanic) learners participating in the Innovation Program (0.8%) is striking and disappointing. The Black learner participation percentage is about the same as FY 2002–2003, 2001–2002, 2000–2001 and 1999–2000.^{xi}

Table 5
Innovation Programs' Learner Ethnicity by Instructional Program – FY 2003–2004

Ethnicity	ABE		ESL		Citizenship		ASE/GED		Career Ed		Adults w/ Dis.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
White (Non-Hispanic)	120	30.2	2,922	6.3	12	12.6	176	15.7	62	10.7	122	74.8
Hispanic	182	45.8	35,900	77.7	62	65.3	787	70.2	333	57.3	31	19.0
Black (Non-Hispanic)	23	5.8	220	0.5	1	1.1	66	5.9	17	2.9	2	1.2
Asian	60	15.1	7,029	15.2	17	17.9	55	4.9	155	26.7	7	4.3
Pacific Islander	2	0.5	22	0.0	1	1.1	6	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Filipino	10	2.5	95	0.2	2	2.1	23	2.1	13	2.2	1	0.6
Native American	0	0.0	3	0.0	0	0.0	7	0.6	1	0.2	0	0.0
Native Alaskan	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	397	100.0	46,191	100.0	95	100.0	1,121	100.0	581	100.0	163	100.0

Ethnicity	Health & Safety		Home Economics		Parent Ed.		Older Adults		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
White (Non-Hispanic)	12	16.4	13	16.3	204	18.4	72	42.6	3,715	7.4
Hispanic	22	30.1	30	37.5	645	58.3	36	21.3	38,028	76.1
Black (Non-Hispanic)	0	0.0	1	1.3	46	4.2	3	1.8	379	0.8
Asian	38	52.1	33	41.3	175	15.8	56	33.1	7,625	15.3
Pacific Islander	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	0.7	0	0.0	39	0.1
Filipino	1	1.4	3	3.8	26	2.3	2	1.2	176	0.4
Native American	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.3	0	0.0	14	0.0
Native Alaskan	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.0
Total	73	100.0	80	100.0	1,107	100.0	169	100.0	49,977	100.0

Source: CASAS 2005

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 74% (74.9%) of the participants reported speaking Spanish as their primary language. This is an increase of 2.1% from the previous year (72.8%) and 8.3% from two years ago (66.6%).

Chinese is a distant second at 6.3%, followed by Korean (4.1%) and English (3.7%).

Table 6

The Primary Language Spoken by Innovation Programs' Participants by Instructional Program – FY 2003–2004

Primary Language	ABE		ESL		Citizenship		ASE/GED		Career Ed		Adults w/ Dis.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
English	136	34.3	568	1.2	4	4.2	418	36.6	83	14.1	118	72.4
Spanish	156	39.4	35,738	77.2	61	64.2	638	55.9	317	54.0	31	19.0
Vietnamese	6	1.5	909	2.0	1	1.1	6	0.5	20	3.4	2	1.2
Chinese	25	6.3	2,826	6.1	8	8.4	18	1.6	62	10.6	1	0.6
Hmong	0	0.0	59	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Cambodian	3	0.8	127	0.3	0	0.0	3	0.3	1	0.2	0	0.0
Tagalog	7	1.8	145	0.3	2	2.1	11	1.0	16	2.7	2	1.2
Korean	8	2.0	1,932	4.2	4	4.2	10	0.9	41	7.0	2	1.2
Lao	0	0.0	29	0.1	1	1.1	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Russian	12	3.0	974	2.1	3	3.2	3	0.3	1	0.2	1	0.6
Farsi	5	1.3	540	1.2	1	1.1	3	0.3	5	0.9	2	1.2
Other	38	9.6	2,441	5.3	10	10.5	30	2.6	41	7.0	4	2.5
Total	396	100.0	46,288	100.0	95	100.0	1,142	100.0	587	100.0	163	100.0

Primary Language	Health & Safety		Home Economics		Parent Ed.		Older Adults		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
English	10	13.5	12	14.8	416	37.6	73	42.2	1,838	3.7
Spanish	21	28.4	30	37.0	491	44.4	36	20.8	37,519	74.9
Vietnamese	1	1.4	1	1.2	11	1.0	3	1.7	960	1.9
Chinese	18	24.3	14	17.3	100	9.0	19	11.0	3,091	6.2
Hmong	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	60	0.1
Cambodian	0	0.0	1	1.2	1	0.1	0	0.0	136	0.3
Tagalog	1	1.4	3	3.7	18	1.6	1	0.6	206	0.4
Korean	10	13.5	12	14.8	17	1.5	24	13.9	2,060	4.1
Lao	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	31	0.1
Russian	3	4.1	0	0.0	3	0.3	1	0.6	1,001	2.0
Farsi	2	2.7	2	2.5	6	0.5	3	1.7	569	1.1
Other	8	10.8	6	7.4	42	3.8	13	7.5	2,633	5.3
Total	74	100.0	81	100.0	1,105	100.0	173	100.0	50,104	100.0

Source: CASAS 2005

Years of Schooling

Over forty five percent (45.8%) of the learners reported having nine or less years of schooling at the time of enrollment (44.5%, 43.6% and 45.6% for the previous three years respectively) and about half of these (22.8%) 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. (Traditional classroom programs report 30.4% of learners have nine or less years of schooling.) 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 47.5% 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 2003–2004

Program	<=3Years		4-6 Years		7-9 Years		10-11 Years	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	8	2.2	24	6.6	43	11.8	84	23.1
ESL	2,167	5.0	8,174	18.8	10,299	23.7	4,412	10.1
Citizenship	7	7.5	18	19.4	19	20.4	6	6.5
ASE/GED	15	1.4	81	7.4	181	16.5	465	42.3
Vocational Ed.	10	1.8	43	7.7	75	13.4	48	8.6
Adults w/ Disabilities	4	11.1	3	8.3	3	8.3	3	8.3
Health & Safety	3	4.3	3	4.3	6	8.6	2	2.9
Home Economics	2	2.5	4	5.1	12	15.2	9	11.4
Parent Education	18	2.0	91	10.2	151	16.9	103	11.5
Older Adults	1	0.7	6	4.0	5	3.3	5	3.3
Total	2,235	4.8	8,447	18.0	10,794	23.0	5,137	11.0

Program	12 Years		13+ Years		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	116	31.9	89	24.5	364	0.8
ESL	9,584	22.0	8,895	20.4	43,531	92.9
Citizenship	25	26.9	18	19.4	93	0.2
ASE/GED	236	21.5	120	10.9	1,098	2.3
Vocational Ed.	182	32.5	202	36.1	560	1.2
Adults w/ Disabilities	18	50.0	5	13.9	36	0.1
Health & Safety	23	32.9	33	47.1	70	0.1
Home Economics	26	32.9	26	32.9	79	0.2
Parent Education	223	25.0	307	34.4	893	1.9
Older Adults	44	29.3	89	59.3	150	0.3
Total	10,477	22.4	9,784	20.9	46,874	100.0

Source: CASAS 2005

The following contrasting table represents all learners served in traditional programs by adult schools in FY 2003 – 2004. Note that only 30.4% of the learners served had nine or fewer years of schooling. However, the ESL students with nine or fewer years of were greater in classroom-based programs than in the Innovation Programs (52.1% to 47.3%).

Table 7–B

Years of Schooling for Traditional Classroom Adult School Participants by Instructional Program – FY 2003–2004

Program	<=3Years		4-6 Years		7-9 Years		10-11 Years	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	1,034	1.8	2,797	5.0	9,261	16.5	23,284	41.6
ESL	24,394	5.6	93,555	21.3	110,587	25.2	47,600	10.9
Citizenship	220	7.2	689	22.6	559	18.3	303	9.9
ASE/GED	1,913	1.0	3,360	1.8	21,957	11.8	121,681	65.4
Vocational Ed.	1,262	0.9	3,841	2.9	8,771	6.6	19,991	14.9
Adults w/ Disabilities	1,234	6.6	780	4.2	1,335	7.1	1,626	8.7
Health & Safety	165	1.0	242	1.4	443	2.6	945	5.6
Home Economics	126	0.8	240	1.5	485	3.1	791	5.0
Parent Education	577	1.7	1,859	5.3	2,570	7.4	3,001	8.6
Older Adults	1,741	1.9	2,167	2.4	4,100	4.5	3,907	4.3
Total	32,666	3.3	109,530	11.0	160,068	16.1	223,129	22.4

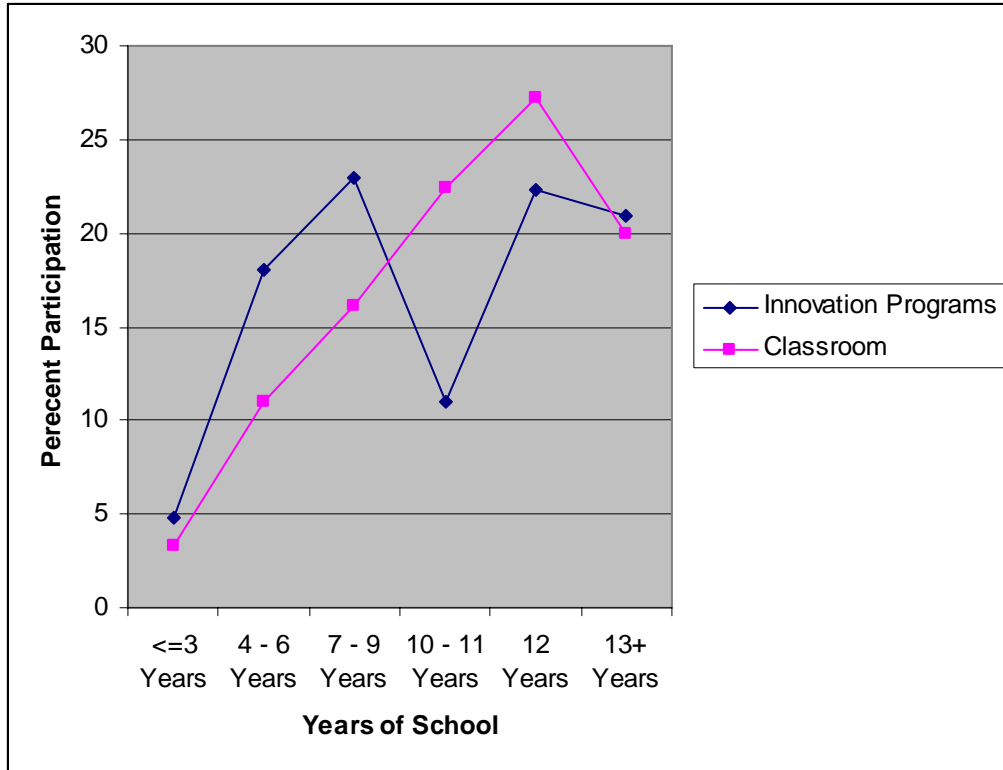
Program	12 Years		13+ Years		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	14,314	25.6	5,329	9.5	56,019	5.6
ESL	92,288	21.0	70,040	16.0	438,464	44.2
Citizenship	662	21.7	616	20.2	3,049	0.3
ASE/GED	30,233	16.2	7,023	3.8	186,167	18.7
Vocational Ed.	56,405	42.2	43,517	32.5	133,787	13.4
Adults w/ Disabilities	11,305	60.3	2,480	13.2	18,760	1.9
Health & Safety	6,685	39.4	8,483	50.0	16,963	1.7
Home Economics	6,279	39.4	7,997	50.2	15,918	1.6
Parent Education	9,131	26.2	17,758	50.9	34,896	3.5
Older Adults	43,746	48.1	35,300	38.8	90,961	9.1
Total	271,048	27.2	198,543	20.0	994,984	100.0

Source: CASAS 2005

Table 7–C displays the differences in participation between the Innovation Programs and the traditional classroom programs by previous years of schooling. Overall the Innovation Programs are serving a less prepared learning population. This is due, in large part, to the overwhelming ESL focus in the Innovation Programs.

Table 7–C

Comparison of Years of Schooling for Innovation Programs and Traditional Classroom Adult School Participants – FY 2003–2004



Source: CASAS 2005

Highest Degree by Instructional Program

Over half (50.5%) of the Innovation Programs' learners reported having no earned degrees or certificates at the time of enrollment — about the same as in the previous year (49%). Over 27% (27.9%) reported possessing a high school diploma or GED, while 7.4% said they had a technical or associate of arts (AA) degrees. Eleven percent (11.4%) of the learners reported having a college degree or some graduate study.

Table 8–A

Highest Educational Level Attained by Innovation Program Participants in Instructional Programs – FY 2003–2004

Program	None		GED		ASE Diploma		Technical		AA Degree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	176	47.7	12	3.3	93	25.2	21	5.7	11	3.0
ESL	22,425	50.9	778	1.8	11,531	26.2	2,013	4.6	1,178	2.7
Citizenship	51	53.7	1	1.1	26	27.4	1	1.1	3	3.2
ASE/GED	697	67.1	33	3.2	149	14.3	67	6.4	14	1.3
Vocational Ed.	137	24.6	24	4.3	181	32.5	37	6.6	42	7.5
Adults w/ Disabilities	146	90.7	0	0.0	7	4.3	0	0.0	1	0.6
Health & Safety	11	15.9	3	4.3	22	31.9	3	4.3	4	5.8
Home Economics	24	32.9	1	1.4	18	24.7	4	5.5	8	11.0
Parent Education	326	33.7	25	2.6	280	29.0	49	5.1	72	7.5
Older Adults	12	8.0	4	2.7	51	34.0	5	3.3	16	10.7
Total	24,005	50.5	881	1.9	12,358	26.0	2,200	4.6	1,349	2.8

Program	4 Yr College		Grad Study		Other		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	34	9.2	0	0.0	22	6.0	369	0.8
ESL	3,561	8.1	1,373	3.1	1,155	2.6	44,014	92.7
Citizenship	8	8.4	1	1.1	4	4.2	95	0.2
ASE/GED	44	4.2	0	0.0	35	3.4	1,039	2.2
Vocational Ed.	92	16.5	30	5.4	14	2.5	557	1.2
Adults w/ Disabilities	2	1.2	2	1.2	3	1.9	161	0.3
Health & Safety	18	26.1	7	10.1	1	1.4	69	0.1
Home Economics	16	21.9	1	1.4	1	1.4	73	0.2
Parent Education	156	16.1	36	3.7	22	2.3	966	2.0
Older Adults	35	23.3	21	14.0	6	4.0	150	0.3
Total	3,966	8.3	1,471	3.1	1,263	2.7	47,493	100.0

Source: CASAS 2005

The percentages of learners with no earned degrees are highest in Adults with Disabilities (90.7%), ASE/GED (67.1%) and ESL (50.9%). Citizenship is not considered because of the low number of participants.

These data also suggest that the Innovation Programs continue to reach learners most in need of adult education services. While this is a value judgment, an important goal of adult education is to reach learners needing literacy and basic education services.

The following table represents unduplicated counts of adult school learners served in the traditional classroom programs during the same program period. Those with no earned degrees are about the same (50.5%).

Table 8–B

Highest Educational Level Attained by Traditional Classroom Learners by Instructional Program – FY 2003–2004

Program	None		GED		HS Diploma		Technical		AA Degree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	40,233	66.9	1,819	3.0	11,970	22.9	1,306	2.2	906	1.5
ESL	251,409	56.7	8,000	1.8	107,901	26.2	16,079	3.6	9,822	2.2
Citizenship	1,768	55.1	47	1.5	725	24.0	79	2.5	90	2.8
ASE/GED	158,830	84.4	2,689	1.4	16,707	10.3	2,882	1.5	1,180	0.6
Vocational Ed.	32,604	22.8	7,389	5.2	59,243	46.6	7,769	5.4	10,619	7.4
Adults w/ Disabilities	11,496	49.2	262	1.1	8,490	37.5	304	1.3	522	2.2
Health & Safety	1,723	9.7	451	2.5	7,161	42.9	807	4.5	1,769	10.0
Home Economics	1,853	11.2	290	1.8	6,569	41.3	837	5.0	1,941	11.7
Parent Education	7,804	21.0	997	2.7	9,559	28.4	1,581	4.3	2,952	8.0
Older Adults	15,678	16.1	981	1.0	43,738	46.0	2,994	3.1	7,344	7.5
Total	523,398	50.8	22,925	2.2	272,063	28.7	34,638	3.4	37,145	3.6

Program	4 Yr College		Grad Study		Other		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	1,675	2.8	806	1.3	1,419	10.2	60,134	5.8
ESL	27,973	6.3	11,533	2.6	10,387	17.1	443,104	43.0
Citizenship	295	9.2	115	3.6	92	20.9	3,211	0.3
ASE/GED	2,144	1.1	1,125	0.6	2,532	5.2	188,089	18.3
Vocational Ed.	14,881	10.4	7,374	5.2	3,007	30.5	142,886	13.9
Adults w/ Disabilities	967	4.1	373	1.6	952	13.3	23,366	2.3
Health & Safety	3,268	18.4	2,230	12.6	332	47.4	17,741	1.7
Home Economics	2,925	17.6	1,849	11.1	332	47.5	16,596	1.6
Parent Education	8,384	22.6	5,109	13.8	739	50.5	37,125	3.6
Older Adults	13,969	14.4	9,800	10.1	2,802	37.9	97,306	9.5
Total	76,481	7.4	40,314	3.9	22,594	20.5	1,029,558	100.0

Source: CASAS 2005

Over fifty percent (50.8%) of the learners had no earned degree — slightly more than the Innovation Programs (50.55). Almost 31% (30.9%) reported an earned high school diploma or GED and 71% said they had a technical or associate of arts degree. Over 13% (11.3%) reported having a four year college degree or greater.

ABE / ASE Instructional Level on Program Entry

Over four percent (4.4%) of the adult basic education and adult secondary education learners were enrolled in beginning literacy or beginning adult basic education. This is a decrease from 8.8% and 10.7% in the previous two years. Over 76% (76.5%) were enrolled in intermediate ABE instruction (56.5% in the previous year). Nineteen percent were enrolled in adult high school subjects or GED. This is a sharp decrease from the previous three years as compared to (32.5, 35.2% and 23.2% respectively).

The changes from the previous year are in GED/ASE. This reflects a change in focus from the previous years.

Table 9

Adult Basic Education Instructional Level of Innovation Programs' ABE and ASE Program Participants Upon Entry – FY 2003–2004^{xii}

Level Upon Entry	Score Range	ABE		ASE		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Beg. Literacy	200 & below	10	8.8			10	2.6
Beginning	201-210	7	6.1			7	1.8
Intermediate Low	211-220	20	17.5	45	16.7	65	16.9
Intermediate High	221-235	66	57.9	163	60.4	229	59.6
ASE Low	236-245	11	9.6	46	17.0	57	14.8
ASE High	246+			16	5.9	16	4.2
Total		114	100.0	270	100.0	384	100.0

Based on pre-test means

Source: CASAS 2005

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.^{xiii} 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 21.2% of the students receiving English language instruction (23.7% in the previous year) while intermediate low learners represented 34.7%. 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 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.

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 2003–2004^{xiv}

Level Upon Entry	Score Range	ESL N	%
Beg. Literacy	180 & below	1190	3.4
Beginning	181-200	7432	21.1
Intermediate Low	201-210	12009	34.2
Intermediate High	211-220	6372	18.1
Adv. Low	221-235	7409	21.1
Adv. High	236-245	736	2.1
Total		35,148	100.0

Based on pre–test means

Source: CASAS 2005

Primary Reasons for Enrollment

Improving basic skills and English skills account for more than 83% of the primary reasons for learners reported for enrollment (83.5%). This is a 4.6% increase from the previous year (78.9%). 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 improvement was most important for ABE learners (42.5%) and career education learners (24.3%). More than 25% of ABE learners cite the need to improve English skills (26.9%). This suggests that many of them, in fact, are advanced ESL learners. Improving English skills was the most important for ESL learners (70.7%). Family goals were the most important for learners in parent education (51.8%).

Table 11–A
The Innovation Programs’ Participants Primary Reason for Enrolling in FY 2003–2004

Primary Reason	ABE		ESL		Citizenship		ASE/GED		Career Ed		Adults w/ Dis.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Improve Basic Skills	169	42.5	7,805	16.7	5	5.3	302	26.2	144	24.3	148	90.8
Improve English Skills	107	26.9	32,979	70.7	41	43.2	136	11.8	29	4.9	0	0.0
ASE Diploma or GED	54	13.6	628	1.3	2	2.1	598	51.9	13	2.2	0	0.0
Get Job	5	1.3	1,277	2.7	0	0.0	15	1.3	131	22.1	1	0.6
Retain Job	3	0.8	522	1.1	0	0.0	4	0.3	21	3.5	3	1.8
Enter College or Training	4	1.0	295	0.6	0	0.0	13	1.1	16	2.7	0	0.0
Work-Based Project	0	0.0	76	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1	15	2.5	0	0.0
Family Goal	5	1.3	543	1.2	0	0.0	8	0.7	15	2.5	2	1.2
U.S. Citizenship	0	0.0	730	1.6	26	27.4	2	0.2	4	0.7	0	0.0
Military	0	0.0	14	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Personal Goal	17	4.3	1,469	3.2	2	2.1	52	4.5	152	25.7	8	4.9
None/ Not Identified	33	8.3	156	0.3	18	18.9	13	1.1	27	4.6	0	0.0
Other	1	0.3	127	0.3	1	1.1	5	0.4	25	4.2	1	0.6
Total	398	100.0	46,621	100.0	95	100.0	1,152	100.0	592	100.0	163	100.0

Primary Reason	Health & Safety		Home Economics		Parent Ed.		Older Adults		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Improve Basic Skills	3	4.1	19	23.2	94	8.4	38	21.7	8,727	17.3
Improve English Skills	0	0.0	1	1.2	78	7.0	16	9.1	33,387	66.2
ASE Diploma or GED	0	0.0	0	0.0	12	1.1	0	0.0	1,307	2.6
Get Job	0	0.0	1	1.2	5	0.4	0	0.0	1,435	2.8
Retain Job	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	0.4	0	0.0	558	1.1
Enter College or Training	1	1.4	0	0.0	1	0.1	0	0.0	330	0.7
Work-Based Project	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1	0	0.0	93	0.2
Family Goal	8	10.8	12	14.6	576	51.8	8	4.6	1,177	2.3
U.S. Citizenship	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	0.4	0	0.0	766	1.5
Military	0	0.0	0	0.0		0.0	0	0.0	17	0.0
Personal Goal	61	82.4	45	54.9	325	29.2	103	58.9	2,234	4.4
None/ Not Identified	0	0.0	4	4.9	6	0.5	7	4.0	265	0.5
Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	0.5	3	1.7	169	0.3
Total	74	98.6	82	100.0	1,113	100.0	175	100.0	50,465	100.0

Source: CASAS 2005

The Secondary Reason for Enrolling

Participants reported personal goals (38.6%), improving English skills (16.8%), and work related reasons (12.6%) as the important secondary reasons for enrolling along with improving basic skills (15%).

Table 12
Innovation Programs' Participants Secondary Reason for Enrolling – FY 2003–2004

Primary Reason	ABE		ESL		Citizenship		ASE/GED		Career Ed		Adults w/ Dis.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Improve Basic Skills	63	15.8	7,247	15.5	5	5.3	105	9.1	37	6.3	2	1.2
Improve English Skills	51	12.8	8,222	17.6	8	8.4	52	4.5	34	5.7	2	1.2
ASE Diploma or GED	28	7.0	1,125	2.4	0	0.0	188	16.3	7	1.2	0	0.0
Get Job	21	5.3	3,623	7.8	2	2.1	84	7.3	84	14.2	0	0.0
Retain Job	6	1.5	2,429	5.2	1	1.1	37	3.2	31	5.2	22	13.5
Enter College or Training	22	5.5	1,019	2.2	0	0.0	112	9.7	21	3.5	1	0.6
Work-Based Project	0	0.0	221	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	1.5	2	1.2
Family Goal	11	2.8	1,783	3.8	3	3.2	17	1.5	25	4.2	0	0.0
U.S. Citizenship	4	1.0	911	2.0	14	14.7	3	0.3	5	0.8	0	0.0
Military	0	0.0	46	0.1	0	0.0	10	0.9	1	0.2	0	0.0
Personal Goal	136	34.2	18,037	38.7	40	42.1	420	36.5	197	33.3	128	78.5
None/ Not Identified	52	13.1	1,178	2.5	22	23.2	105	9.1	61	10.3	0	0.0
Other	4	1.0	780	1.7	0	0.0	19	1.6	80	13.5	6	3.7
Total	398	100.0	46,621	100.0	95	100.0	1,152	100.0	592	100.0	163	100.0

Primary Reason	Health & Safety		Home Economics		Parent Ed.		Older Adults		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Improve Basic Skills	1	1.4	2	2.4	114	10.2	15	8.6	7,591	15.0
Improve English Skills	3	4.1	1	1.2	94	8.4	21	12.0	8,488	16.8
ASE Diploma or GED	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	0.6	0	0.0	1,355	2.7
Get Job	1	1.4	1	1.2	9	0.8	0	0.0	3,825	7.6
Retain Job	1	1.4	1	1.2	3	0.3	0	0.0	2,531	5.0
Enter College or Training	0	0.0	1	1.2	3	0.3	0	0.0	1,179	2.3
Work-Based Project	0	0.0	3	3.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	235	0.5
Family Goal	17	23.0	20	24.4	196	17.6	14	8.0	2,086	4.1
U.S. Citizenship	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	0.4	1	0.6	942	1.9
Military	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	57	0.1
Personal Goal	14	18.9	32	39.0	426	38.3	34	19.4	19,464	38.6
None/ Not Identified	10	13.5	11	13.4	144	12.9	35	20.0	1,618	3.2
Other	27	36.5	10	12.2	113	10.2	55	31.4	1,094	2.2
Total	74	100.0	82	100.0	1,113	100.0	175	100.0	50,465	100.0

Source: CASAS 2005

Learner Progress

Learners are monitored on their progress throughout the time of enrollment. Almost one fourth of the ESL participants completed or moved to a more advanced course — 23.8% compared to 23.6% in the previous year. Over 12 percent (12.4%) of the ESL enrollees were no shows or left before completion compared with 11% in the previous year. This area still requires continual improvement in spite of the fact that the ESL learners enter and leave adult education according to life’s circumstances.

Forty eight percent (48%) of the ABE learners remained at the same level. There are multiple reasons for remaining at the same level including recent enrollment at the time of testing.

Adult secondary education / GED, career education, and parent education learners completed or advanced 8.2%, 22.49%, and 11.3% respectively.

Table 13–A

Innovation Programs’ Participants Progress by Program – FY 2003–2004

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	165	48.0	39	11.3	65	18.9	25	7.3	50	14.5	344	100.0
ESL	16,988	39.0	10,355	23.8	7,664	17.6	3,100	7.1	5,408	12.4	43,515	100.0
Citizenship	35	71.4	2	4.1	1	2.0	2	4.1	9	18.4	49	100.0
ASE/GED	355	36.7	79	8.2	207	21.4	122	12.6	204	21.1	967	100.0
Career Education Adults w/ Disabilities	147	26.8	123	22.4	84	15.3	68	12.4	127	23.1	549	100.0
Health & Safety	152	95.0	1	0.6	2	1.3	1	0.6	4	2.5	160	100.0
Home Economics	27	39.1	2	2.9	5	7.2	7	10.1	28	40.6	69	100.0
Parent Ed.	33	42.9	5	6.5	8	10.4	6	7.8	25	32.5	77	100.0
Older Adults	533	52.3	115	11.3	161	15.8	135	13.2	76	7.5	1,020	100.0
	74	45.4	24	14.7	21	12.9	19	11.7	25	15.3	163	100.0

Source: CASAS 2005

Participant progress is a key indicator of the impact of the service delivery. ESL data indicate that 31% of the Innovation Program participants completed and moved up or left after completion in contrast of 21% for the classroom programs (Table 13–B). There also were fewer no shows in the ESL Innovation Programs (12.4% to 18.4%).

Table 13–B

Traditional Classroom Programs’ Participants Progress by Program – FY 2003–2004

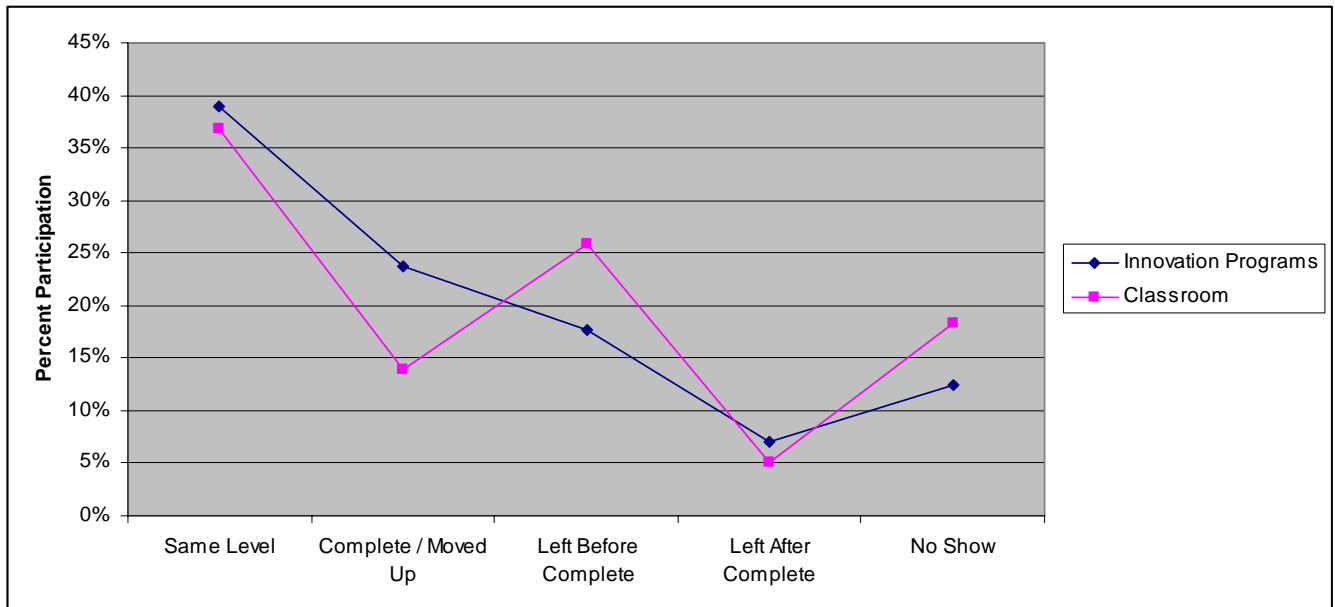
Program	Continuing Education at Same Level		Completed & Moved Up		Left Before Completion		Left After Completion		No Show or < 12 Hrs		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	18,333	33.6	4,459	8.2	12,608	23.1	6,625	12.1	12,537	23.0	54,562	100.0
ESL	165,576	36.8	62,623	13.9	116,719	25.9	22,513	5.0	82,944	18.4	450,375	100.0
Citizenship	1,405	48.9	114	4.0	441	15.4	480	16.7	430	15.0	2,870	100.0
ASE/GED	49,734	27.9	16,412	9.2	44,942	25.2	30,260	16.9	37,189	20.8	178,537	100.0
Career Education	41,327	27.6	25,718	17.2	23,024	15.4	27,334	18.3	32,131	21.5	149,534	100.0
Adults w/ Disabilities	17,141	65.1	859	3.3	3,756	14.3	1,986	7.6	2,544	9.7	26,286	100.0
Health & Safety	6,107	32.7	1,627	8.7	1,019	5.5	3,238	17.3	6,701	35.8	18,692	100.0
Home Economics	8,965	46.9	2,139	11.2	1,714	9.0	2,988	15.6	3,299	17.3	19,105	100.0
Parent Education	14,296	31.3	6,309	13.8	5,352	11.7	7,666	16.8	12,046	26.4	45,669	100.0
Older Adults	61,400	56.7	9,800	9.0	14,781	13.6	7,213	6.7	15,149	14.0	108,343	100.0

Source: CASAS 2005

Table 13–C compares the ESL participants’ progress for the Innovation Programs and the traditional classroom programs. A slightly greater percentage of ESL Innovation Program learners were retained at the same level while substantially fewer left before completion of the course. Innovation Program learners completed at a higher rate than the traditional classroom ESL learners and were more likely to show up for learning.

Table 13–C

Comparison of ESL Innovation Program and Traditional Classroom Programs’ Participants Progress by Program – FY 2003–2004



Source CASAS 2005

Learner Status by Program

Another look at learner progress shows that overall 56.5% (56.3% in the previous year) of the Innovation Programs' enrollees were retained at the same level, 32.8% completed their course or moved up, and 10.6% completed their program and did not reenroll.

Completion rates (completed and moved up and left after completion) were highest for career education learners (56.5%), followed by ESL (44.2%) and older adults (36.7%).

Table 14–A

Innovation Programs' Learner Status by Program – FY 2003–2004

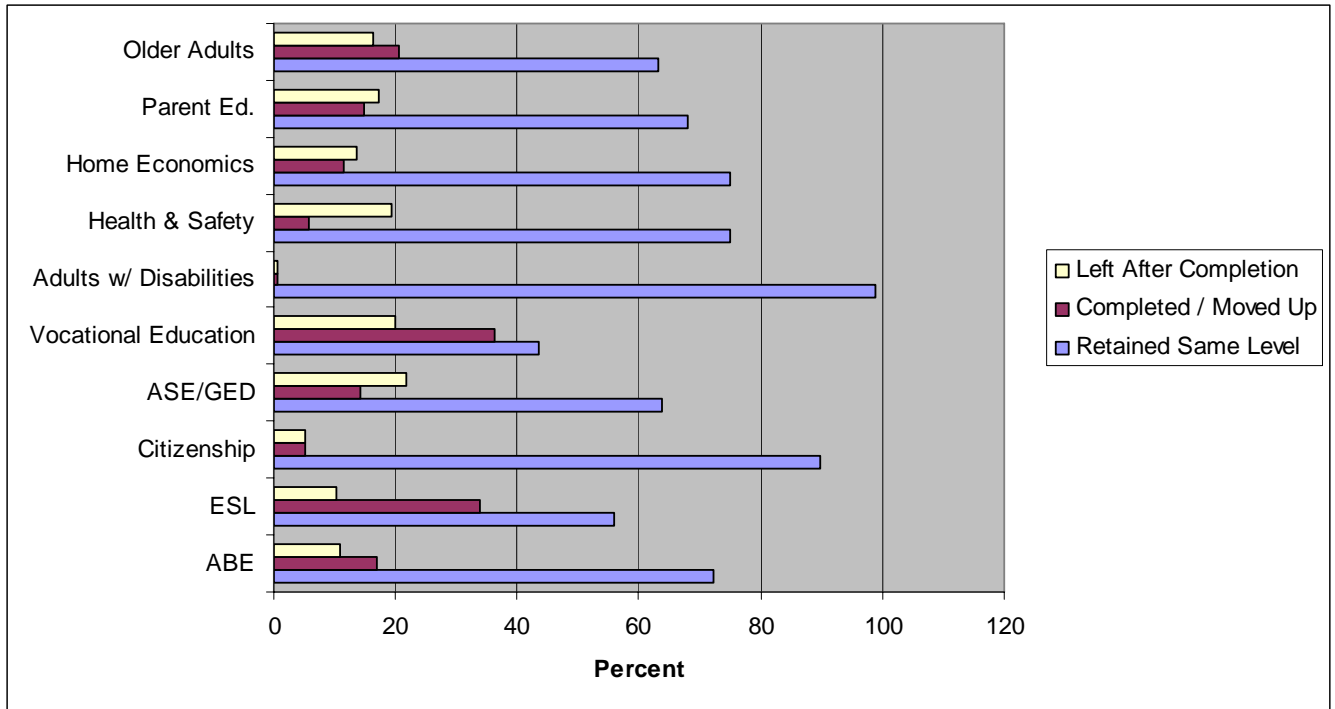
Program	Retained at Same Level		Completed & Moved Up		Left After Completion		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ABE	165	72.1	39	17.0	25	10.9	229	100.0
ESL	16,988	55.8	10,355	34.0	3,100	10.2	30,443	100.0
Citizenship	35	89.7	2	5.1	2	5.1	39	100.0
ASE/GED	355	63.8	79	14.2	122	21.9	556	100.0
Career Education	147	43.5	123	36.4	68	20.1	338	100.0
Adults w/ Disabilities	152	98.7	1	0.6	1	0.6	154	100.0
Health & Safety	27	75.0	2	5.6	7	19.4	36	100.0
Home Economics	33	75.0	5	11.4	6	13.6	44	100.0
Parent Ed.	533	68.1	115	14.7	135	17.2	783	100.0
Older Adults	74	63.2	24	20.5	19	16.2	117	100.0
Overall	18,509	56.5	10,745	32.8	3,485	10.6	32,739	100.0

Source: CASAS 2005

Table 14–B graphically displays the learner status by program. The career education, the parent education, and the older adult programs show the best learner progress. However, these programs tend to offer unique classes rather than a series of increasingly more difficult classes like ABE and ESL.

Table 14–B

Graphic Representation of Innovation Programs’ Learner Status by Program – FY 2003–2004



Source: CASAS 2005

Comparing Learner Progress between Innovation and Traditional Classroom Programs

Table 14–C compares and contrasts learner progress by program for the Innovation and classroom programs. It suggests that the classroom programs were more successful in serving the ABE learner. However, the Innovation Programs’ ESL learners completed and left after completion at a higher rate (44.2% to 39.8%) as did parent ed and ASE/GED students, and at substantially higher rate for career education and older adults. There also was a higher rate of retention at the same level for the ESL Innovation Programs (55.8% compared to 36.8% for classroom learners).

This is a marked change from the previous year when the classroom programs demonstrated better completion rates for ASE/GED, career education and parent education students.

Table 14–C

Comparison Table of Innovation and Traditional Classroom Learner Status by Program (FY 2003–2004)

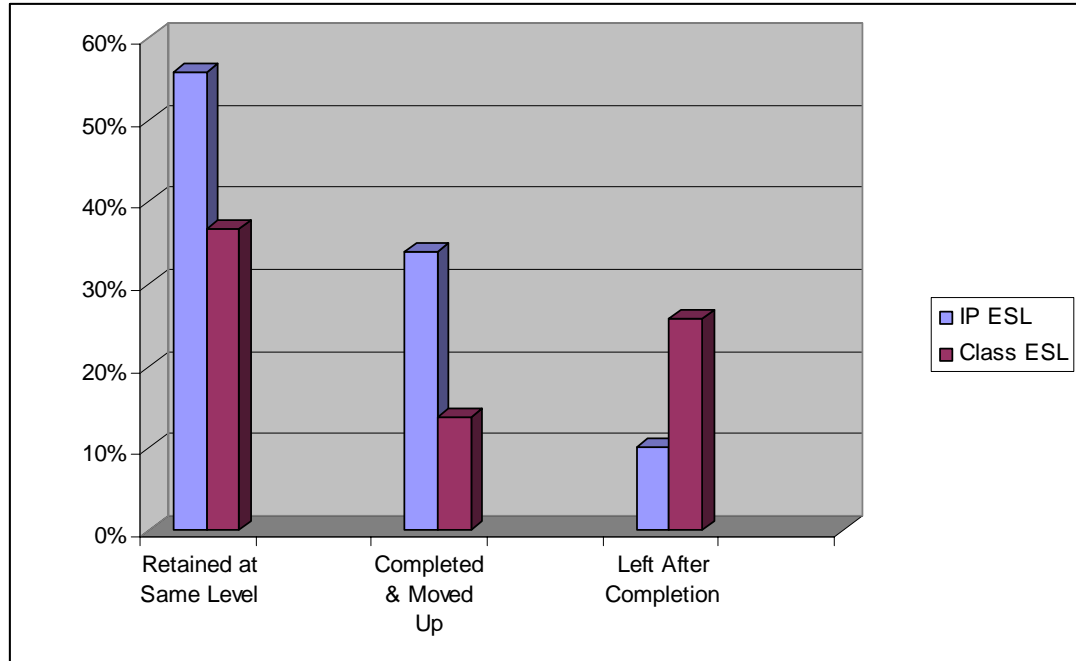
Program	Retained at Same Level		Completed & Moved Up		Left After Completion		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
IP ABE	165	72.1	39	17.0	25	10.9	229	100.0
Class ABE	18,333	33.6	4,459	8.2	12,608	23.1	6,625	12.1
IP ESL	16,988	55.8	10,355	34.0	3,100	10.2	30,443	100.0
Class ESL	165,576	36.8	62,623	13.9	116,719	25.9	22,513	5.0
IP Citizenship	35	89.7	2	5.1	2	5.1	39	100.0
Class Citizenship	1,405	48.9	114	4.0	441	15.4	480	16.7
IP HS/GED	355	63.8	79	14.2	122	21.9	556	100.0
Class ASE/GED	49,734	27.9	16,412	9.2	44,942	25.2	30,260	16.9
IP Career Ed	147	43.5	123	36.4	68	20.1	338	100.0
Class Career Ed	41,327	27.6	25,718	17.2	23,024	15.4	27,334	18.3
IP Adults w/ Disabilities	152	98.7	1	0.6	1	0.6	154	100.0
Class Adults w/ Disabilities	17,141	65.1	859	3.3	3,756	14.3	1,986	7.6
IP Health & Safety	27	75.0	2	5.6	7	19.4	36	100.0
Class Health & Safety	6,107	32.7	1,627	8.7	1,019	5.5	3,238	17.3
IP Home Economics	33	75.0	5	11.4	6	13.6	44	100.0
Class Home Economics	8,965	46.9	2,139	11.2	1,714	9.0	2,988	15.6
IP Parent Ed.	533	68.1	115	14.7	135	17.2	783	100.0
Class Parent Education	14,296	31.3	6,309	13.8	5,352	11.7	7,666	16.8
IP Older Adults	74	63.2	24	20.5	19	16.2	117	100.0
Class Older Adults	61,400	56.7	9,800	9.0	14,781	13.6	7,213	6.7

IP = Innovation Program
 Class = Classroom (traditional programs)

Source: CASAS 2005

Table 14–D

Comparison of ESL Innovation Program (IP) and Traditional Classroom (Class) Learner Status by Program (FY 2003–2004)

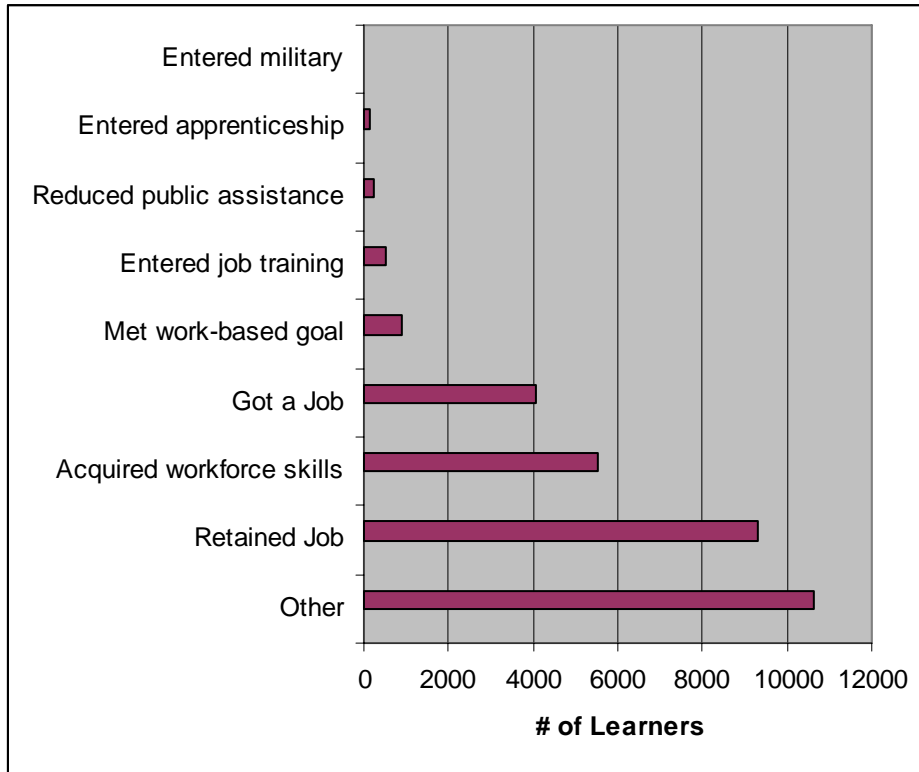


Source: CASAS 2005

Work Related Outcomes

Among the learners identifying work related outcomes, 45.2% reported that they obtained or retained a job — higher than previous two years. The “other” category accounts for 32.55% of the responses while acquiring workforce readiness skills accounts for 16.8%.

Table 15
Reported Innovation Programs’ Learner Work Related Outcomes – FY 2003–2004



Source: CASAS 2005

Personal Outcomes

Over 18% (18.1%) of the learners identifying personal outcomes said that they have increased their involvement in their children’s education while 13.5% said they had increased their involvement with their children’s literacy activities. Meeting a personal goal(s) accounts for 60.7% of the responses. The “other” category accounts for 28%.

Table 16–A

Reported Innovation Programs’ Learner Personal Outcomes – FY 2003–2004

Personal/Family Outcomes	N	%
Met personal goal	19,862	60.7
Other	9,177	28.0
Met other family goal	6,457	19.7
Increased involvement in children's education	5,936	18.1
Increased involvement in children's literacy activities	4,418	13.5

Source: CASAS 2005

In contrast only 9.2% of the traditional classroom learner’s reported increased involvement in his or her children’s education and 6.3% said they had increased their involvement in their children’s literacy activities. About half (49.6%) stated that their personal outcomes were “meeting personal goals.”

Table 16–B Reported Traditional Classroom Programs’ Learner Personal Outcomes – FY 2003–2004

Personal/Family Outcomes	N	%
Met personal goal	57,524	49.6%
Other	39,077	17.6%
Met other family goal	84,207	13.5%
Increased involvement in children's education	309,860	9.2%
Increased involvement in children's literacy activities	109,839	6.3%

Source: CASAS 2005

Community Outcomes

Learners reporting community outcomes identified increased community involvement in 30.4% of the cases and “other” outcomes in 35.9% of the responses. It is difficult to know how much importance to put in this self reported information. The large “Other” category makes it difficult to interpret the information. Over time and with large numbers it is a useful measure of increased community participation.

Table 17

Reported Innovation Programs’ Learner Community Outcomes – FY 2003–2004

Community Outcomes	N	%
Other	11,746	35.9
Increased involvement in community	9,963	30.4
Achieved U.S. citizenship skills	1,995	6.1
Registered to vote or voted first time	291	0.9

Source: CASAS 2005

Educational Outcomes

Learners reporting educational outcomes identified the mastery of course competencies (27.5 versus 29.9% in the previous year) and gained computer/tech skills (17.2% versus 14% in the previous year) the most often. Over eleven percent (11.7%) 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 (35.2%) and provides little information regarding what the respondents had in mind.

Table 18

Reported Innovation Programs’ Learner Educational Outcomes – FY 2003–2004

Educational Outcomes	N	%
Returned to K-12	211	0.6
Passed GED	464	1.4
Earned Certificate	2,736	8.4
Earned High School diploma	638	1.9
Entered college	538	1.6
Entered training program	501	1.5
Gained computer/tech skills	5,615	17.2
Mastered course competencies/Education Plan	9,017	27.5
Other	11,527	35.2

Source: CASAS 2005

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.^{xv} 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.

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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.

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 intermediate and high beginning ESL CASAS instructional level. Levels 201 – 210 and 211 – 220 identify the low intermediate 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.

The ESL learners reading at the intermediate and advanced levels form the majority of the Innovation Programs participants (76.47%). This seems appropriate because the learning resources are the most robust for these groups.

Table 19–A

Innovation Programs' Participant Reading Pretest Mean Scores – FY 2003–2004^{xvi}

CASAS Reading Score Range	Mean Score	N	%
ABE/ASE			
181-200	--	9	2.5
201-210	--	7	2.0
211-220	217.4	32	9.0
221-235	229.2	199	56.1
236-245	240.1	90	25.4
246+	--	18	5.1
ABE/ASE Overall	227.7	355	100.0
ESL/ESL-Cit			
<=180	173.5	1,129	3.2
181-200	193.3	6,839	19.6
201-210	205.5	11,949	34.2
211-220	216.1	6,257	17.9
221-235	227.0	7,644	21.9
236-245	239.6	854	2.4
246+	248.3	294	0.8
ESL/ESL-Cit Overall	209.9	34,966	100.0

Source: CASAS 2005

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 reading group. ESL learners with listening pretest scores of 236 – 245 are ready for adult secondary education.

Table 20–A

Innovation Programs’ Participant Listening Pretest Mean Scores – FY 2003–2004

CASAS Listening Score Range	Mean Score	N	%
ESL/ESL-Cit			
<=180	175.5	103	2.4
181-200	193.2	1,245	28.9
201-210	205.4	1,205	28.0
211-220	215.0	992	23.0
221-235	225.7	734	17.0
236-245	238.3	26	0.6
ESL/ESL-Cit Overall	207.0	4,305	100.0

Source: CASAS 2005

For all Innovation Programs the mean listening pretest score for ESL learners was 207.0.

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 reading score gains for ESL/ESL citizenship learners pre–testing below 180 and 181–200 respectively are substantial (28.3 and 14.7 points respectively). The overall reading score mean gains (10.9) are encouraging, especially since we don’t know the number of hours of instruction for the tested learners. Research is currently being sponsored by CDLP to further investigate and compare CASAS score gains for distance learning students. All of the students in this on-going study will have between 80 and 100 hours of instruction.

The ABE numbers are very small. They do show above average gains for the 221–235 cohort (4.4 points).

Table 21–A

Innovation Programs' Participant Reading Score Mean Gains – FY 2003–2004

CASAS Reading Scoring Range	Pretest Mean	Post-test Mean	Learning Gain Mean	N	%
ABE/ASE					
< 200	--	--	--	1	1.1
201-210	--	--	--	2	2.2
211-220	--	--	--	9	10.1
221-235	228.8	233.2	4.4	60	67.4
236-245	--	--	--	17	19.1
ABE/ASE Overall				89	100.0
ESL/ESL-Cit					
< 180	173.5	201.8	28.3	486	
181-200	193.4	211.7	14.7	2,773	
201-210	205.5	217.7	12.2	5,329	
211-220	216.2	224.5	8.4	2,582	
221-235	226.9	232.6	5.7	3,150	
236-245	239.7	241.9	2.2	290	
ESL/ESL-Cit Overall	209.3	220.9	10.9	14,610	

Source: CASAS 2005

Table 21–B reports traditional adult school classroom reading score mean gains for the same program year. Statewide mean reading learning gains were 7.0 points for ABE learners and 9.9 points for ESL learners for all tested learners.

Table 21–B

Traditional Classroom Programs' Participant Reading Score Mean Gains – FY 2003–2004

Reading Score Range	Pretest Mean	Mean Learning Gain	N
ABE			
200 & below	177.7	7.2	772
201-210	206.1	14.0	575
211-220	216.6	9.4	1,007
221-235	228.0	5.7	2,911
236-245	239.7	3.5	742
ABE Overall	219.0	7.0	6,007
ASE/GED			
200 & below	192.2	29.5	71
201-210	206.5	18.5	293
211-220	217.0	9.6	677
221-235	229.3	5.6	3,978
236-245	240.0	3.1	2,122
ASE/GED Overall	230.0	6.0	7,141
ESL and Citizenship			
180 & below	173.0	23.7	4,947
181-200	192.9	12.2	27,453
201-210	205.3	10.5	36,162
211-220	215.9	7.7	18,058
221-235	226.9	5.2	19,536
236-245	239.6	1.9	2,237
ESL Overall	207.1	9.9	108,393

Source: CASAS 2005

Table 21–C shows the ESL/ESL–Citizenship differences in the reading score mean gains by scoring ranges between the Innovation Programs and the traditional classroom programs (Tables 21–A and 21–B). Note that tested learners in the Innovation Programs' ESL/ESL–Citizenship programs showed higher mean learning gains for all the CASAS scoring ranges except 221–235 and 236–245.

Table 21–C

Comparison Table of Innovation and Traditional Classroom Programs’ Participant Reading Score Mean Gains – FY 2003–2004

Reading Scoring Range	Pretest Mean	Learning Gain Mean	N
ESL/ESL-Cit			
IP < 180	173.5	28.3	486
Class < 180	173.0	23.7	4,947
IP 181–200	193.4	14.7	2,773
Class 181–200	192.9	12.2	27,453
IP 201–210	205.5	12.2	5329
Class 201–210	205.3	10.5	36,162
IP 211–220	216.2	8.4	2,582
Class 211–220	215.9	7.7	18,058
IP 221–235	226.9	5.7	3,150
Class 221–235	226.9	5.2	19,536
IP 236–245	239.7	2.2	290
Class 236–245	239.6	1.9	2,237

Source: CASAS 2005

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 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–A

Innovation Programs’ Participant Listening Score Mean Gains – FY 2003–2004

CASAS Listening Scoring Range	Pretest Mean	Post-test Mean	Learning Gain Mean	N
ESL/ESL-Cit				
< 180	175.3	198.9	23.6	41
181-200	193.2	206.6	12.2	454
201-210	205.3	213.5	8.2	389
211-220	214.7	220.7	6.0	325
221-235	225.2	227.7	2.5	211
236-245	--	--	--	6
ESL/ESL-Cit Overall	204.8	213.7	8.5	1,426

Source: CASAS 2005

The adult school classroom programs (Table 22–B) for the same program year show a slightly lower mean learning gain (8.5 vs. 7.8 points). The Innovation Programs show greater gains in all the scoring ranges.

Table 22–B

Traditional Classroom Programs’ Participant Listening Score Mean Gains – FY 2003–2004

CASAS Listening Score Range	Level Descriptors	Pretest Mean	Mean Learning Gain	N
ESL				
180 & below	Beginning Literacy/Pre-Beginning ESL	175.5	22.6	150
181-200	Beginning ESL	192.7	11.8	1,500
201-210	Low Intermediate ESL	205.4	7.8	1,330
211-220	High Intermediate ESL	215.1	5.5	1,166
221-235	Advanced ESL	226.1	2.3	878
236-245	Adult Secondary	238.4	-3.0	61
ESL Overall		207.0	7.8	5,085

Source: CASAS 2005

Table 22–C provides a comparative look at the listening score mean gains. The Innovation Programs scored similar or greater gains in all of the listening score ranges. However, the data cannot be considered representative of the whole state because not all traditional classroom and Innovation Programs use the CASAS pre – post testing with all or a similar sample of their respective learners. However, these data provide the best comparative snapshot available on the impacts of the respective ESL interventions (traditional and innovative).

Table 22–C

Comparison Table of Innovation and Traditional Classroom Programs’ Participant Listening Score Mean Gains – FY 2003–2004

ESL/ESL-Cit	Pretest Mean	Post-test Mean	Mean Learning Gain	N
IP < 180	175.3	198.9	23.6	41
Class < 180	175.5	198.1	22.6	150
IP 181–200	193.2	206.6	12.2	454
Class 181–200	192.7	204.5	11.8	1,500
IP 201–210	205.3	213.5	8.2	389
Class 201–210	205.4	213.2	7.8	1,330
IP 211–220	214.7	220.7	6.0	325
Class 211–220	215.1		5.5	1,126
IP 221–235	225.2	227.7	2.5	211
Class 221–235	226.1	228.4	2.3	878
IP 236–245	--	--	--	--
Class 236–245	238.4	235.4	-3.0	61

IP = Innovation Program
 Class = Classroom (traditional programs)

Source: CASAS 2005

Program Effectiveness and Student Persistence

Learner persistence is a California strategic focus to enhance adult education program improvement in 2005 and beyond. 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. 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.

In distance learning and other non-traditional instruction learning outcomes are usually measured in terms of instructional units completed successfully. 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.”¹ 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

¹ 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>.

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.

There are some semantic and contextual difficulties with the ways the terms student retention and student persistence are applied. They are treated as having almost synonymous meanings. In fact 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. Distance learning is a viable instructional strategy to address both goals.

From the analyst's perspective the easiest way to increase student persistence is to post-test 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.

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 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.

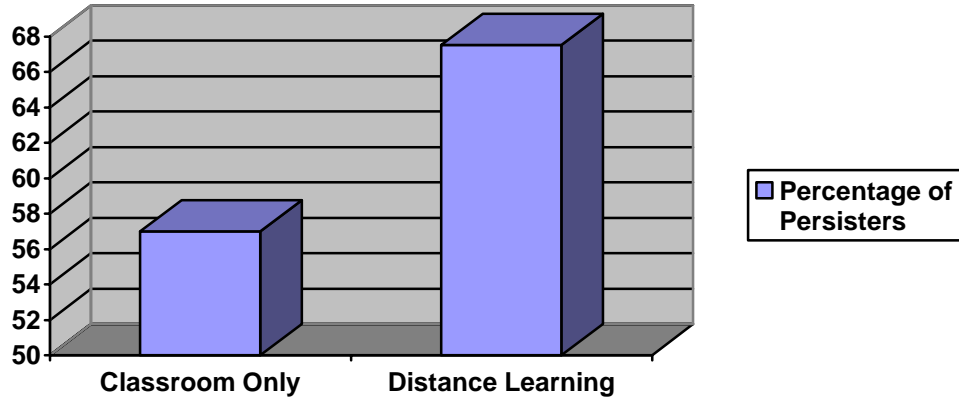
Increasing learning flexibility should help improve student persistence. It should be the basis for providing instructional strategies that accommodate adults' multiple responsibilities that impact their continuing participation and access to learning services. Over the next five years strategies that 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.

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.^{xvii} 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.

ESL students taking a combination of regular ESL classroom and DL classes ("blended" students) showed a significantly higher rate of persistence than students taking only ESL classes. These findings are powerful because the data are straight forward and easy to understand, i.e., more DL Blended students stayed long enough to take a CASAS post-test. This provides another compelling reason for adult schools to offer DL programs—to increase student persistence. Simultaneous participation in regular classroom and distance learning programs provided blended students with an opportunity for continued study when family, work or other circumstances prevented them from attending regular classroom programs. Blended students showed greater persistence because, when they "stopped out" from attending regular classes, their continued enrollment in DL courses kept them from completely dropping out.

Table 23

Percentage of Persisters: ESL Classroom Only versus DL Blended Group (FY 2003 – 2004)

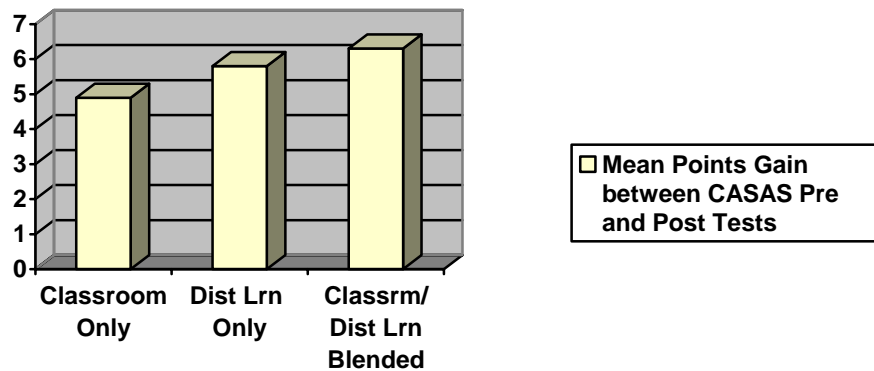


The percentage of persisters for the DL Blended group was at 68% while students only enrolled only in regular ESL classes had a rate of 57%. The DL Blended Group had a persistence rate of more than 10 percentage points higher than the ESL classroom group.

The study also examined learning gains between classroom only, distance learning only, and blended learning. 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, however, these findings should be validated 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.

Table 24

Learning Gains Comparison for ESL Groups (FY 2003 – 2004)



For the overall sample (N= 509), the “DL Blended Group” had the highest mean learning gain with 6.3 points. The “DL Only” Group had a mean gain of 5.8 points. Students in the “ESL Classroom Only” group scored lowest at 4.9 points gain. Therefore, the “Blended” group had

learning gains 28.5% higher than the classroom group and the “DL Only” group was 18.3% higher than the classroom contingent.

What We Don't Know

These Innovation Program data are very comprehensive because of the standardized collection of program, student, and testing data. It would be hard to refute the outcomes' findings which have remained quite similar over the five-year period of the CDLP's annual program reporting. The comparisons with classroom outcomes demonstrate the effectiveness of the distance learning interventions. However, there are a number of very important program and policy questions where more information and analysis will be useful.

The CDLP is continuing its student persistence and retention research to further identify the circumstances and conditions where Innovation Programs perform the best. This requires local program participation. It will not yield the certainty of controlled field research but will add more information and raise new questions.

A major missing piece of information is the extent to which learners are served in distance learning programs only, and the extent to which they are enrolled in both classroom and Innovation Programs.

The CDLP will begin to examine comparative outcomes—based on mode of instructional delivery. For example, it seems very likely that interactive online learning should be more effective and engaging than the video checkout approach. It also supports the need for adult learner digital literacy. However, there is no research or anecdotal evidence in California to support this conclusion.

The design questions surrounding increasing online interactive learning with ABE, ESL, and ASE/GED learners requires more attention and information. For example the CDLP online ASE pilot test findings suggest that around a CASAS 236 reading level should be a minimal requirement for participation. This needs to be validated, along with norming other online curricula to appropriate reading levels.

Conclusions

Over the last ten 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,

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- 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 data with the Innovation Programs, it is clear that the distance learning programs are particularly successful in providing ESL learning opportunities. 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.

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 (92.4%) in 2003 – 2004. Los Angeles County adult schools dominate the enrollment statistics (77.7%). Women represent two thirds (65.5%) of the basic education participants in the Innovation Programs.

In 2003 – 2004 age group participation was balanced between the 21–30 (30.2%) and the 31–40 (31.1%) age groups. Hispanics accounted for 76.1 (71.7% in the previous year) of the enrollments with Asians representing 15.3% (16.7% in the previous year). Spanish accounted for 74.9% of the primary language spoken (72.8% in the previous year).

Over 45% of the Innovation Program participants reported having nine or less years of schooling. About half (50.5%) of the 2003 – 2004 Innovation Program participants reported having no earned degrees with 27.9% having high school diplomas or GEDs. Over 21% of the ESL learners were at the beginning or beginning literacy levels at the time of entry and 52.3% 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 2003 – 2004. Improving their English skills accounted for 66.2% and improving basic skills was 17.3%.

The Innovation Program ESL participants' progress was better than adult school classroom programs for the same period in all categories (Table 13–C). Overall Innovation Program ESL/ESL citizenship programs' reading mean learning gains and ESL/ESL citizenship listening gains for the most part were better than the classroom programs.

Tested learners in the Innovation Programs' ESL/ESL–Citizenship programs showed higher mean reading gains for the <180, 181–200, and 211–220 CASAS scoring ranges than the traditional classroom learners. Comparative listening score mean gains show a mixed picture between the Innovation Programs and the classroom-based learning.

The Innovation Programs follow the same accountability requirements as class-based apportionment programs. Over the past two 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 posttesting 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.

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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. The ABE/ASE participants show learning gains consistent with historical data. ESL learner progress and program status show better results than overall ESL classroom programs.
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 fifth year that these same summary conclusions have been reached. This indicates the continued success of the Innovation Program initiative.

One major missing piece of information is the extent to which learners are served in distance learning programs only, and the extent to which they are enrolled in both classroom and Innovation Programs. This second option is referred to as blended or dual learning when combined with classroom instruction. Both interventions are useful and appropriate. However, more informed conclusions about them are needed. A series of separate studies of student progress is examining this program design question.

Another area for future research and development is to find effective ways to form consortia or other methods to bring Innovation Programs via distance learning to more remote locations and smaller adult education programs.

Reports from participating adult education sites have also indicated numerous other benefits to the continued development and provision of Innovation Programs. These benefits have included:

- Development of an ever increasing number of excellent video programs, particularly for ESL, produced both by private firms and by programs themselves.
- Establishment of an effective practice for some students of enhancing classroom instruction with video check out (termed “blended or dual instruction”) and other distance education methods to supplement their in–class learning.
- Fewer ESL “no–shows” for students enrolling in Innovation Programs (10.1% to 16.6%) than the traditional classroom programs.

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 10 years these Innovation Programs can no longer be considered “demonstrations” or innovative. 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 papers can be found on the California Distance Learning Project Web site at <http://www.cdlponline.org/fivepercent.htm>.

ⁱⁱ I gratefully acknowledge the work of Pat Rickard and her staff at CASAS and Drs. Paul Porter and Richard Stiles, CDLP consultants, in the development of this paper.

ⁱⁱⁱ 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.

^{iv} 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.

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

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

^{vii} 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.

^{viii} Alpha Smart is a simplified computer like product with built in instructional applets.

^{ix} Figures 1 – 9 display data from the FY 2004 – 2005 applications. The tables in this report utilize data from FY 2003 – 2004.

^x For example, the CDLP is pilot testing online ASE courses with a wide range of adult schools in 2005. Most of the pilot test sites are using Independent Study or lab attendance rather than the Innovation Programs because the courses were not previously approved to be included in the Innovation Programs.

^{xi} Data from the previous fiscal years are drawn from three reports that are available at <http://www.cdlponline.org/fivepercent.htm>.

^{xii} ABE & ASE Instructional Level Upon Entry (based on pre-test means)

^{xiii} 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 *English for Success* under development by the Los Angeles USD's Division of Adult and Community Education. These materials should be available in late 2005.

^{xiv} ESL & ESL-Citizenship Instructional Level Upon Entry (based on pre-test means)

^{xv} 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 highly desirable.

^{xvi} Note: When Reporting Mean Scores and Mean Learning Gains CASAS normally does not report values with Ns below 30.

^{xvii} *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.