

The table below indicates the performance of community college students for each of the test administrations.

Table IV
Summary of CLAST Results
for
Community College Students

Dates of Test	Number of Students Taking Test	Computation	Reading	Writing	Essay	All
October, 1982	8,691					64.0
March, 1983	10,553					70.0
June, 1983	6,956					65.7
October, 1983	6,926	90.4	96.7	89.9	78.7	70.8
March, 1984	9,041	96.7	94.1	95.3	89.3	84.2
June, 1984	6,182	91.9	82.1	94.7	88.0	73.5
September, 1984	5,344	98.1	95.2	96.1	88.3	84.1
March, 1985	6,566	97.5	98.0	96.3	92.8	89.3
June, 1985	4,865	97.3	97.2	94.6	92.2	87.9
October, 1985	5,348	98.0	94.3	95.3	90.4	84.9
March 1986	6,814	97.0	97.2	96.5	81.7	87.9
June, 1986	5,296	97.8	97.5	97.3	91.1	88.1

Of the community college students who took the College-Level Academic Skills Test on the dates indicated, the percent achieving the 1984-86 standards is indicated for each subtest and for the total test. All categories of students, including the ethnic minorities, have experienced improvement. While only a year earlier, student performance indicated that only twenty-five percent of the university and community college students would have met the 1989 standards, the Spring 1985 results showed that over sixty percent would have met those higher standards had they been imposed during the Spring of 1985. It is also important to note that while community colleges have open access and the universities all have selective admissions, community college students perform as well on CLAST as the much more highly selected university students. The success of CLAST can be attributed to the colleges' excellent response to the need for increased academic standards.

In addition to CLAST, increased and prescribed course requirements in the areas of English and mathematics have caused a revolution in campus-level curriculum development. In the early 1980's, the State Board of Education promulgated administrative rules which mandate that the community colleges and universities require all students receiving associate in arts and baccalaureate degrees to have completed six credits in mathematics and twelve credits in English and the general humanities in courses where at least 6,000 words of writing are required. The increased standards and new requirements necessitated course revisions. More importantly, students seem to have a renewed seriousness about learning basic skills.

While CLAST and the English/mathematics rule requirements have not been viewed favorably by all faculty and students, evidence exists that public confidence in higher education has risen steadily in Florida, as has student performance. In addition, the \$17 million which the Legislature appropriated to community colleges between 1983-1985 to decrease class size and to make other improvements had a profound, positive impact on instruction. In two years, class sizes

in English were reduced from an average of 30 to 22 and in mathematics from 40 to 25.

CLAST is not the only test administered systemwide to community college students. Entry-level testing, the outgrowth of a commission established by the Legislature and the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission (PEPC) to explore the problems minority students were having gaining access to higher education, was instituted during the Fall, 1985 term. Along with entry-level testing, a new program, called "College Prep," was created to help students bridge the gap between what they had learned in high school and what is needed to be successful when entering college. Common placement tests were identified to be used in designating students who would be enrolled in college preparatory classes. Students in the universities who score below the designated cut-off scores are being taught by community colleges under contract. Data for Fall, 1985, indicate the forty to fifty percent of the first-time-in-college degree-seeking students tested require some form of college preparatory instruction.

In 1983-84, the Community College System completed the design and implementation of a new statewide program review process. Initially field tested in 12 of the 28 colleges in the Fall of 1983, the model became operational in all institutions during Spring, 1984. The review process places a strong emphasis upon an evaluation by the colleges and the State Board of Community Colleges of a set of program performance indicators and standards for program efficiency and effectiveness. The review process involves three phases with Level III involving a statewide review.

In 1984, a Level III program review of teacher education revealed the following findings:

- Community colleges are involved in a full range of teacher education activities.
- Approximately twenty-five percent of the recertification courses evaluated by the