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OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PLAN FOR 2004-2006 FOR THE UVSC DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS

ASSESSMENT OF DEGREE PROGRAMS

The Department will continue to carry out exit interviews and follow-up interviews for its assessment of its degree programs. The exit interviews are conducted on a regular basis. With the mathematics majors (and any associate degree students that can be identified before graduation day), students are interviewed during their final semester at UVSC. With the mathematics education majors, students are interviewed during their penultimate semester, since these students do their student teaching during their final semester at UVSC and are not on campus for much of their last semester. The exit interviews and follow-up interviews have provided clear evidence that our graduates have achieved the goals the Department had set for them, so the Department feels the interviews are serving their intended purpose. All three of the Department's mathematics education graduates who wanted to find a teaching job upon graduation were hired immediately to teach mathematics in high schools. Also, the Department has received only positive comments from its mathematics graduates who have gone on to graduate school. All of these graduates have said in follow-up interviews that they felt the transition to graduate school was seamless and that they felt they were better prepared for graduate school than their graduate school classmates.

ASSESSMENT OF COLLEGE ALGEBRA

In the Spring 2001 semester and the Fall 2003 semester, the Department gave pretests and post-tests in randomly chosen MATH 1050 classes to analyze how well students were learning college algebra. Because some changes that may dramatically affect college algebra classes are going to take place starting in Fall 2005 and in Fall 2006, the Department will wait until Fall 2006 or Spring 2006 to do another pretest/post-test cycle. In Fall 2005, MAT 1010 (INTERMEDIATE ALGEBRA), the prerequisite course for MATH 1050, will change from a three-credit course to a four-credit course. All of us are expecting that having more class time to cover the material in the intermediate algebra course should help students become better prepared for the college algebra material that follows. Also starting in Fall 2005, mathematics placement test scores that are more than two years old will no longer be accepted for entry into any mathematics courses for which the COMPASS placement test is applicable. (The COMPASS mathematics placement test can place students into MATH 1030, 1040, 1050, 1060, 1100, 2010, 2040, or 1210.) Starting in Fall 2006 (provided this change is approved by the UVSC Curriculum Committee), prerequisite course grades that are more than two years old will no longer be accepted for entry into any mathematics courses for which the COMPASS placement test is applicable. Thus, in Fall 2006, if students have placement test scores and prerequisite course grades that are more than two years old, they will have to take the COMPASS placement test and abide by its placement recommendation. So starting in Fall 2006, students qualifying for MATH 1050 will have been placed there by a recent COMPASS test score or a recent ACT score or they will have had a four-credit MAT 1010 course fairly recently and achieved a C or better grade in it. We expect an improvement in the rate of student success in MATH

1050 when these changes take place. An odd outcome of these changes, though, may be that when we do a pretest/post-test cycle again, the difference between pretest and post-test scores may not be so large as before, because not so many students will be leaving problems on the pretest completely blank. (Judging from comments some of the students wrote on their pretests, it was clear that they were leaving problems blank because they had not had a mathematics course for several years.)