

C2C Assessment Plan

The effectiveness of the Countdown to College program is assessed primarily through yearly assessment of our students. Our guiding questions are:

1. Are our students making progress in basic literacy skills needed for success in college classes?
2. Are our students increasing in their confidence, determination, and persistence in pursuit of a college education?
3. Are our students mastering the skills and knowledge of each class?

Each of these questions are assessed with specific, quantifiable measures that indicate growth from year to year.

Assessment of Academic Skills

Reading: Growth in reading from year to year is measured by the Nelson-Denny Reading Tests: Vocabulary, Reading Rate, and Comprehension. This test was chosen because it has norms for measuring progress from 9th grade through senior year in college. For further information, see <http://riverpub.com/products/ndrt/index.html>

Math: The Wide Range Math subtest is used as a norm-referenced survey test of basic mathematical skills. The norms for this test cover the ages 5 through 94. For information about this test, see <http://www4.parinc.com/Products/Product.aspx?ProductID=WRAT4>

Assessment of Noncognitive Attributes

An emerging research literature is documenting the importance of noncognitive variables-- e.g., persistence, passion for a long-term goal, determination—for success in college. Research also suggests that these characteristics can be taught. It is our belief that successful immersion in our rigorous and supportive college prep program will result not only in higher academic skills but also the grit needed for making it to the finish line—a college degree.

To test this hypothesis, we administer the GRIT survey each summer. This noncognitive assessment was developed by Angela Duckworth. For information, see

<https://sites.sas.upenn.edu/duckworth/pages/research>

https://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_the_key_to_success_grit

Curriculum-Based Assessments

Each instructor also conducts assessments at the end of each session. For example, at the end of Year 4, students are graded on a college-level rubric for the two-year science immersion class. Those who attain a grade of C or better are given college credit. The science instructors also use a criterion-referenced test of the concepts and skills taught during this course.