RIO SALADO COLLEGE

A MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Rio Salado College

Small Business Management Program Review

Review Period: Academic Years 2018-2022

Review Conducted: AY2022-23

Rio's Academic Program Review Process is an essential component of the College's Strategic Plan. The 2020-2023 work is guided by the following college-wide goals:

Rio Strategic Goal 1: Increase student goal attainment 23% by 2023 with innovative and world-class experiences

Rio Strategic Goal 2: Offer 23 new micro-credentials by 2023

Rio Strategic Goal 3: Foster a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging

Data relating to successful course completion, persistence, credentials awarded, and equity in program- and college-level outcomes across all student populations are aligned with the college-wide metrics that measure progress toward achieving the goals of the College's Strategic Plan.

I. Degrees and Certificates in the Small Business Management Program

CCL in Small Business Management Level I: The Certificate of Completion (CCL) in Small Business Management Level I program is designed to meet the needs of individuals who wish to own and/or manage a small business. Prepares students to acquire the skills, tools and knowledge necessary for successful start-up and operations of a business.

CCL in Small Business Management Level II: The Certificate of Completion (CCL) in Small Business Management Level II program is designed to focus on aspects critical to a specific individual's small business. Prepares students to acquire additional skills, tools and knowledge necessary for successful start-up and operations of a business.

II. Program Purpose and Mission

The Small Business Management Level I program aims to establish a solid base for individuals who currently own or plan to own a small business, ultimately benefiting the long-term growth of the small business community. Its objective is to provide students with the essential skills, resources, and understanding required to effectively initiate and manage a business venture. The Level II program is designed to concentrate on the specific requirements of an individual's particular small business. Its mission is to further prepare students with supplementary skills, tools, and knowledge essential for the prosperous establishment and operation of their businesses.

Educating current and future business owners aligns with Rio's vision statement to "Empower learners everywhere through innovative education." Owning a small business is a goal for many people, and can positively change the lives of business owners, their families and their employees. Small business owners may have the passion to run a company, but they may lack the skills necessary to operate a successful venture.

Rio's program provides high-qualified courses, flexibility in scheduling, affordable tuition and commitment to student success. One and two-credit courses are offered in an 8-week format and three-credit courses are offered in either 14-weeks or 8-week options. Coursework allows students to work through all aspects of owning, operating, and managing a business and provides many practical exercises to help students determine if they are ready to move from planning to execution.

The Small Business Management Certificates Level I and II offer a comprehensive program in various instructional modalities, including online formats for both levels. Additionally, the CCL is accessible through the print-based instructional modality, specifically catering to students enrolled in our Incarcerated Re-Entry (IRE) program. Moreover, the program extends an in-person, cohort model option to incarcerated individuals at Lewis Prison.

Most students are pursuing the Small Business Management Certificate Level I through the Incarcerated Reentry Program. The CCL equips these students with fundamental competencies in initiating and managing business ventures that are adaptable to diverse business settings to facilitate their reintegration into the workforce following incarceration. A main objective of the Small Business Management Certificate Level I is to help reduce recidivism rates by not only preparing our students to manage small businesses, but also get hired by small business owners and to participate effectively within such enterprises.

Incarcerated Re-Entry students progress through the program in a cohort model. In the *Forbes* article titled *"How Cohort-Based Learning Is Transforming Online Education"* Gibbons (2021) highlighted cohort-based learning as offering several benefits, including collaboration and support among students, an enhanced learning environment, motivation, improved learning outcomes, and increased diversity and inclusion. As part of the evaluation process, the faculty chair provides a short lesson and then questions students about previous and recently taught lessons, and then how they all tie together. All students were fully engaged, asked thought-provoking questions, made connections, and were able to participate in the class discussion. The department chair witnessed strong connections and support among students. Additionally, many of them have shared inspiring stories about their future plans and how they intend to utilize their education to significantly improve their lives.

Research has indicated that inmates who engage in postsecondary education while incarcerated experience a substantial 48% reduction in recidivism. This outcome holds significant social implications, benefitting the broader community, and has the potential to yield positive economic effects for the Arizona economy (Second Chance, 2021). Further insights concerning the impact of postsecondary education within the prison environment can be found in the comprehensive Workforce Development and Community Re-Entry Program Review.

References

Gibbons, S. (December, 2021) How Cohort-Based Learning Is Transforming Online Education. Forbes. https://www.forbes.com/sites/serenitygibbons/2021/12/17/how-cohort-based-learning-is-transforming-online-education/?sh=61a5df8a23eb

Second Chance Pell: Four Years of Expanding Access to Education in Prison. (April, 2021). Vera. https://www.vera.org/publications/second-chance-pell-four-years-of-expanding-access-to-education-in-prison

The Small Business Management program is clearly aligned with Goals 1 and 3 of the Rio Salado College (RSC) Strategic Plan:

Goal 1: Increase student goal attainment 23% by 2024 with innovative and world-class experiences.

Incarcerated Reentry student population - Rio is committed to supporting incarcerated students by offering the Small Business Management (CCL) Level I in an in-person format at Lewis Prison. This enables incarcerated individuals to pursue a college certificate with the

valuable advantage of receiving consistent support from a dedicated instructor throughout all the required courses. The personalized approach fosters a strong teacher-student relationship, allowing the instructor to provide comprehensive support to each student throughout their CCL journey.

Cost-effective textbook solutions - In an endeavor to minimize the financial burden on students, the Small Business Management Program strategically employs cost-effective measures related to textbooks. Among the six required courses, four of them utilize a shared textbook, reducing the overall cost for students. Additionally, for the remaining two courses, one of the books is available via the Rio Library at no cost, and the other textbook expenses are kept within a reasonable range of $30-$70. The department is actively seeking grant opportunities and professional development to enable subject matter experts to create proprietary content to eliminate the need for textbooks and mitigate the copyright limitations associated with print-based course materials.

Impact of pandemic-related challenges - The Small Business Management and Small Business Start-Up CCLs experienced notable fluctuations in program completions due to the unprecedented circumstances brought about by the pandemic. In 2020, 83 students successfully completed one of these awards. This number declined to 56 in 2021, and only 40 students successfully completed one of these awards in 2022. This decline can be directly attributed to the closure of the prison as a precautionary measure against the pandemic. With the resumption of the in-person program at Lewis, it is anticipated that the CCL awards will rebound in AY2022-23.

These strategies reflect the college's commitment to empowering students with the educational opportunities they deserve, even amongst challenging circumstances.

Goal 3: Foster a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

- Rio is planning to shift print-based course content to an intranet-accessible platform to incorporate visual and multimedia elements.
- In-person classes at Lewis Prison are facilitated by the college, with enrollment handled by prison staff.
- Instructors receive ongoing support through training, evaluation, and appreciation.
- Content represents diverse student populations through images, names, and examples.
- Course materials are designed to be accessible to all students with alt text, transcripts, and closed captioning.

III. Student Population of the Small Business Management Program

The Student Demographics table presented below illustrates that from 2018 to 2022, the majority of students in the program were male, representing a range of 58.6% to 60%. Over the last five years, there has been an increase in the representation of Hispanic/Latino students from 25.6% in AY2018 to 28.9% in 2022. During the same period, the enrollment of Black/African American students experienced growth, from 13.3% in 2018 to 16.9% in 2022.

Student Demographics

	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
Race/Ethnicity	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
American Indian/Alaska Native	27	3.5%	25	3.3%	23	3.9%	26	4.9%	13	2.9%
Asian	13	1.7%	9	1.2%	10	1.7%	10	1.9%	12	2.7%
Black/African American	103	13.3%	100	13.0%	82	13.8%	83	15.5%	74	16.6%
Hispanic/Latino	198	25.6%	220	28.7%	184	31.0%	152	28.4%	129	28.9%
Native Hawaiian/Oth Pac Isla..	6	0.8%	2	0.3%	2	0.3%	3	0.6%	7	1.6%
Not Specified	32	4.1%	30	3.9%	23	3.9%	13	2.4%	33	7.4%
White	394	51.0%	381	49.7%	269	45.4%	249	46.5%	179	40.0%
Gender	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Female	297	38.4%	271	35.3%	250	42.2%	207	38.6%	151	33.8%
Male	453	58.6%	469	61.1%	324	54.6%	312	58.2%	286	64.0%
Intersex	2	0.3%	2	0.3%	3	0.5%	3	0.6%	2	0.4%
Unknown	20	2.6%	25	3.3%	16	2.7%	14	2.6%	8	1.8%
Not Specified	1	0.1%								
Age Groups	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
1 - 17	1	0.1%	2	0.3%	5	0.8%	5	0.9%	8	1.8%
18 - 20	54	7.0%	49	6.4%	47	7.9%	51	9.5%	40	8.9%
21 - 25	173	22.4%	152	19.8%	121	20.4%	113	21.1%	90	20.1%
26 - 35	282	36.5%	304	39.6%	222	37.4%	197	36.8%	161	36.0%
36 - 45	173	22.4%	154	20.1%	130	21.9%	123	22.9%	111	24.8%
46 - 55	82	10.6%	91	11.9%	54	9.1%	40	7.5%	35	7.8%
56 - 65	15	1.9%	19	2.5%	15	2.5%	11	2.1%	8	1.8%
66+	2	0.3%	2	0.3%	3	0.5%				
UNKNOWN					1	0.2%				
First Gen Status	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Yes	498	64.4%	487	63.5%	382	64.4%	324	60.4%	277	62.0%
No	262	33.9%	257	33.5%	197	33.2%	178	33.2%	133	29.8%
Unknown	12	1.6%	23	3.0%	14	2.4%	34	6.3%	37	8.3%
Not Specified	1	0.1%								
Prevous Education	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
No college or university	205	26.5%	192	25.0%	152	25.6%	122	22.8%	107	23.9%
Some college while attend HS	8	1.0%	15	2.0%	10	1.7%	12	2.2%	6	1.3%
Some college, no degree	379	49.0%	369	48.1%	287	48.4%	258	48.1%	165	36.9%
Associate degree	31	4.0%	26	3.4%	24	4.0%	28	5.2%	18	4.0%
Bachelor's degree	32	4.1%	17	2.2%	14	2.4%	12	2.2%	19	4.3%
Master degree or higher	9	1.2%	12	1.6%	13	2.2%	9	1.7%	4	0.9%
Not Indicated	112	14.5%	137	17.9%	93	15.7%	95	17.7%	128	28.6%

It is noteworthy that over 60% of the program's most recent student cohort falls within the 26-35 and 36-45 age ranges combined. Over the past five years, these two age groups have consistently constituted the majority of the student population in the Small Business Management (CCL) Level I and II. The program is purposefully designed to cater to the needs of working students, who seek to enhance their job-related proficiencies and potentially acquire industry-specific skills conducive to career advancement or pre-retirement preparation.

Historically, approximately two-thirds of Small Business Management students report being first generation college students, with less than 10% indicating that they earned a previous academic credential. These demographics affirm the program's core mission of supporting diverse working adults in advancing their careers or pursuing entrepreneurship, fostering their professional development with essential skills and knowledge for successful business endeavors.

Most students in the Small Business Management (CCL) Level I Program are Incarcerated Re-Entry students, with most attending in-person classes. There was a substantial decrease in enrollment for the Small Business Management (CCL) Level I Program during the pandemic period as the closure of prisons resulted in the suspension of both in-person and print offerings. Although print-based courses resumed before in-person courses, the implementation of additional Covid protocols significantly slowed the process, leading to a notable reduction in overall enrollments.

In 2019, as part of the Guided pathway process, the Business Instructional Council made significant changes to the curriculum. They decided to phase out the Small Business Start-Up CCL and instead introduced the Small Business Management CCL Level I and II. This decision was implemented during the academic year 2019-2020.

In 2019, as part of a program review, SBS216: Planning for a Small Business was introduced as an alternative to MGT253: Owning and Operating a Small Business and EPS150: Introduction to Entrepreneurship, and SBS204: Small Business Marketing and Advertising was introduced as alternatives to MKT271: Principles of Marketing for all three modalities. Furthermore, SBS200: Small Business Operations was added to the program.

During AY2019-20, significant updates to the curriculum were implemented for both print-based and incarcerated students, aiming to better cater to their access and needs. Small Business Management (CCL) Level I for both print-based and incarcerated students requires the completion of a pre-selected set of courses – SBS200: Small Business Operations, SBS204: Small Business Marketing and Advertising, SBS213: Hiring and Managing Employees, SBS214: Small Business Customer Relations, SBS216: Planning for a Small Business, and SBS230: Financial and Tax Management for Small Business. The following changes were thoughtfully designed to ensure that incarcerated students have access to relevant, meaningful, and equitable educational opportunities, tailored to their unique circumstances.

- **SBS 200: Small Business Operations was added to the program.** SBS200 provides in-depth analysis of and individual plan development for the "day-to-day" problems encountered in the operation of a small business. Includes the development of an individual business operations plan including finance, purchasing, production scheduling, maintenance, shipping/receiving,personnel management and insurance/risk management requirements. Investigation of daily problems related to inventory control and business expansion.
- **SBS 220: Internet Marketing for Small Business was replaced by SBS204: Small Business Marketing and Advertising.** SBS 220: Internet Marketing for Small Businesses focuses on e-commerce and website planning, whereas SBS204: Small Business Marketing and Advertising provides an introduction to marketing and advertising strategies. The switch was particularly beneficial for incarcerated students, who do not have internet access. SBS204 exposes students to all advertising methods, including business image, target market analysis, and customer buying behavior profile, enabling a comprehensive understanding of marketing strategies suitable for their journey as small business owner or operator.
- **MGT253: Owning and Operating Small Business was replaced with SBS216: Planning for Small Business.** MGT253 covers starting, organizing, and operating a small business, including location, finance management processes, advertisement and promotion, credit, inventory control and ethics, which students already learn in SBS200. Adding SBS216 means that print and incarcerated students get a chance to review business management issues specific to their small business through development of an individual study plan. For incarcerated students, this class provides on-site review of business operations by trained instructors and for print based students provides the chance to put it all together so instructors can assess their individual study.
- **MKT271: Principles of Marketing, was removed.** MKT271 is an analysis of the marketing process and environment with regard to the product, pricing, distribution, and communication in order to satisfy buyer needs. Students are already getting needed information from taking SBS204 and SBS216 classes.

The enrollment chart below reflects the data on the phase-out of MGT253, MKT271, SBS220 classes in both print and incarcerated cohorts. The introduction of new courses, SBS200, SBS204, and SBS216, took place across all modalities.

Small Business Management - Course Enrollments by Modality

Class	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
EPS195	**52**	**55**	**65**	**83**	**47**
Hybrid	12	21	14	32	20
Online	40	34	51	51	27
SBS200		**27**	**198**	**269**	**180**
Incarcerated		27		45	54
Online			73	82	30
Print-Based			125	142	96
SBS204			**58**	**113**	**129**
Incarcerated			18		53
Online			20	62	13
Print-Based			20	51	63
SBS213	**271**	**234**	**172**	**200**	**128**
Incarcerated		10	18	30	53
Online	86	72	58	72	20
Print-Based	185	152	96	98	55
SBS214	**206**	**189**	**169**	**76**	**126**
Incarcerated		9	18		53
Online	44	58	57	18	10
Print-Based	162	122	94	58	63
SBS216			**80**	**33**	**110**
Incarcerated			18		53
Online			4	1	1
Print-Based			58	32	56
SBS220	**209**	**203**	**121**	**45**	**14**
Incarcerated		10			
Online	81	75	55	45	14
Print-Based	128	118	66		
SBS230	**114**	**163**	**159**	**111**	**94**
Incarcerated		9	25		53
Online	67	48	33	65	11
Print-Based	47	106	101	46	30
Grand Total	**852**	**871**	**1,022**	**930**	**828**

SBS200: Small Business Operations (2 credits), SBS204: Small Business Marketing and Advertising (2 credits), and SBS213: Hiring and Managing Employees (1 credit) experienced significant enrollment growth in AY2020-21, and those are frequently the initial courses completed by students. They provide a comprehensive overview, covering topics such as distinguishing between services and products, customer services, effective hiring and leadership skills for business owners, as well as essential marketing and selling principles. An additional contributing factor to the rise in SBS200, SBS204, and SBS213 enrollments is the

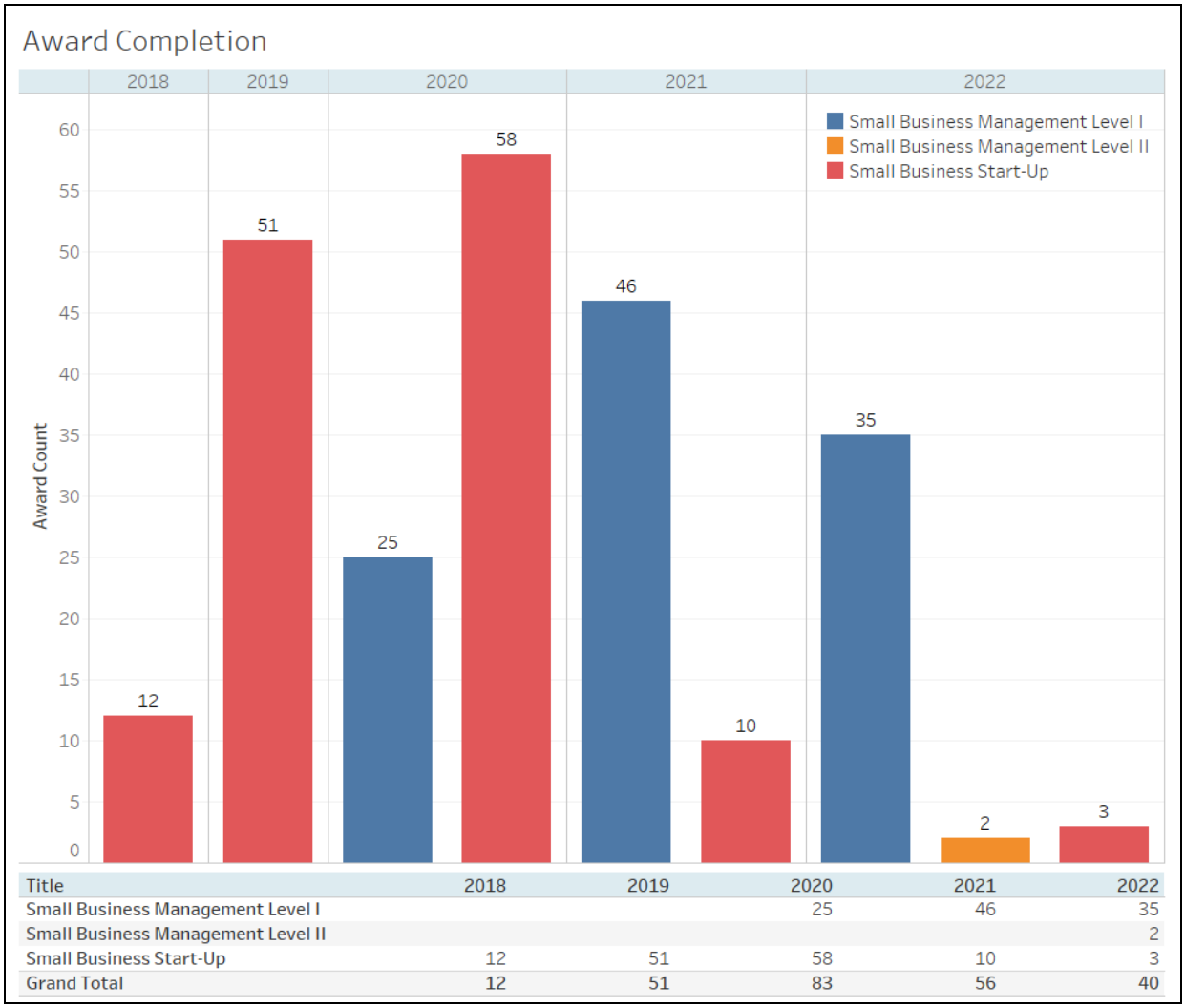
expansion of Honors course offerings. In response to the Honors Director's request, the availability of 1-credit and 2-credit courses was increased to cater to the needs of Honors students who may require 1 or 2 extra credits to reach a full 12-credit load.

Unfortunately, online enrollment in SBS200 and SBS213 experienced a decline in AY2021-22. One possible contributing factor could be the availability of in-person enrollment options in other Maricopa colleges, prompting students to opt for that format.

Since 2020, enrollment in online SBS216 has been experiencing slow growth; SBS216 is a newly-introduced course only used in the Small Business Management CCL program and does not serve as a prerequisite for any courses. Therefore, if a student investigating opportunities in the small business sector discovers that the content of SBS200 and SBS213 does not resonate with their interests, it may indicate a potential lack of enthusiasm for pursuing a path in business ownership or entrepreneurship. This could lead them to explore alternative academic paths that align more closely with their career aspirations and personal preferences.

Additionally, there has been a noticeable decline in online enrollment for MGT253 and MKT271 courses. This decline can be attributed to an overall decrease in college enrollments, despite these courses serving as required or prerequisite courses in multiple other business CLL and AAS degree programs. The curriculum offered in EPS195, MGT253, and MKT271 plays a crucial role in laying a solid foundation for business students. Consequently, these courses remain popular among students pursuing degrees in Business, Entrepreneurialism, and Management.

The predominant mode of enrollment for students in the Small Business Management CCL Level I is a combination of in-person classes held at Lewis prison and the utilization of the print-based modality. In 2019, the Business Instructional Council made a strategic decision to phase out the Small Business Start-Up CCL and introduce the Small Business Management CCL Level I and II. The chart below depicts the transition from Small Business Start-Up CCL to Small Business Management CCL Level I, reflecting the impact of this change. Notably, there has been a decline in certificate awards, which is closely aligned with the decrease in enrollments witnessed during the pandemic period. The shift in programs and the pandemic's repercussions have contributed to these fluctuations in awards and enrollments. See Action Plans in section XI c. for a plan to address low completion numbers for the Level II certificate.



Title	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Small Business Management Level I			25	46	35
Small Business Management Level II					2
Small Business Start-Up	12	51	58	10	3
Grand Total	12	51	83	56	40

IV. Retention and Persistence

Course Success Rates - Distance Education (Online and Print-Based)

Course	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	Retention Rate	Successful Retention	Retention Rate	Successful Retention	Retention Rate	Successful Retention	Retention Rate	Successful Retention	Retention Rate	Successful Retention
EPS195	83%	62%	67%	56%	88%	80%	100%	88%	53%	47%
SBS200					92%	80%	76%	72%	90%	71%
SBS204					85%	77%	71%	63%	95%	81%
SBS213	99%	80%	90%	83%	89%	80%	87%	85%	96%	71%
SBS214	99%	86%	90%	83%	93%	86%	89%	89%	97%	82%
SBS216					90%	80%	97%	73%	100%	93%
SBS220	100%	88%	93%	84%	86%	83%	52%	48%	60%	60%
SBS230	91%	70%	92%	84%	92%	85%	84%	76%	77%	74%

The low successful retention rate for EPS195 in 2021-22 coincided with uncharacteristically low enrollments. However, more current data reveals that retention rates have significantly rebounded, as 76.5% of EPS195 students were successfully retained in AY2022-23.

The anomalies in the retention rates for SBS220 from 2020-22 can be directly linked to low overall enrollment at that time, as the course is no longer being offered with a print-based option. Retention efforts are now focused on the online strategies listed below.

In the online modality, these actions are taken to promote retention at the course level:

- All students receive a personalized "Welcome to Class" message before or on their course start date. This message is tailored to each student and contains important information to support their success in the course. It includes details about the course structure, key deadlines, required materials, link to video how to use resources and register to MyAccountingLab (in SBS230) and instructions on how to access course materials and resources. Additionally, the message may provide tips and strategies to help students effectively navigate the course and make the most of their learning experience.
- If a student is inactive for 9 consecutive days, the instructor will message them, encouraging them to re-engage in the course.
- If a student approaches their course end date and is close to completion, the instructor will send the student a reminder to submit the remaining assignments. When necessary, instructors will recommend Tutoring and/or Counseling to students to assist with course retention and completion.
- If a student is inactive for 14 consecutive days, they are withdrawn from the course with Y (withdrawn, failing). Reinstatement requests are approved for those who have a reasonable chance of successfully completing the course. Unfortunately, not all eligible students request reinstatement, even after multiple attempts by the instructor to re-engage them in the course.
- In addition to these manual interventions, the RioPACE (Progress and Course Engagement) predictive analytics tool displays a red, yellow, or green icon on the class roster that, based on the student's online behavior, is used to indicate each student's likelihood of course completion. Instructors can view the PACE icons when they review the course roster, which alerts them to reach out to students who may need additional support.

For the hybrid, synchronous modality, these actions are taken to promote retention at the course level:

- Career training courses are completed concurrently while receiving adult education, literacy, and workforce preparation instruction. Additionally, students receive wrap-around support from a Rio non-credit occupational instructor. The occupational instructor provides office hours for students before and/or after class. During office hours, the instructor works with students with study habits, assignment completion, and communication skills with the adjunct course instructor.
- In 2022, RSC's Adult Education department worked with the Faculty Chair for Small Business to modify the course schedule to meet the specific needs of adult education students. For example, the credit courses are traditionally offered asynchronously to college students through Rio Learn; however, a modified synchronous course was developed for adult education students co-enrolled in the IET program. The instruction needed to occur within a timeline to support the student's success. As a result, the objectives within each course syllabus were closely analyzed to meet the needs of our students.

Course Success Rates - In-Person

In-person students in the prison are assigned courses based on a system that considers factors like priority ranking, previous education, remaining time for release, nature of the crime, location, and transportation availability. Once assigned, regular attendance in these courses is mandatory, and the resulting retention rates are quite high. Typically, the only reason students are not retained is if they are released or transferred to another facility. In the table below, no data is reported for 2017-18 since the program was offered in-person for the first time in 2018-19 and no data is reported in 2020-21 due to the prison lockdown during that time.

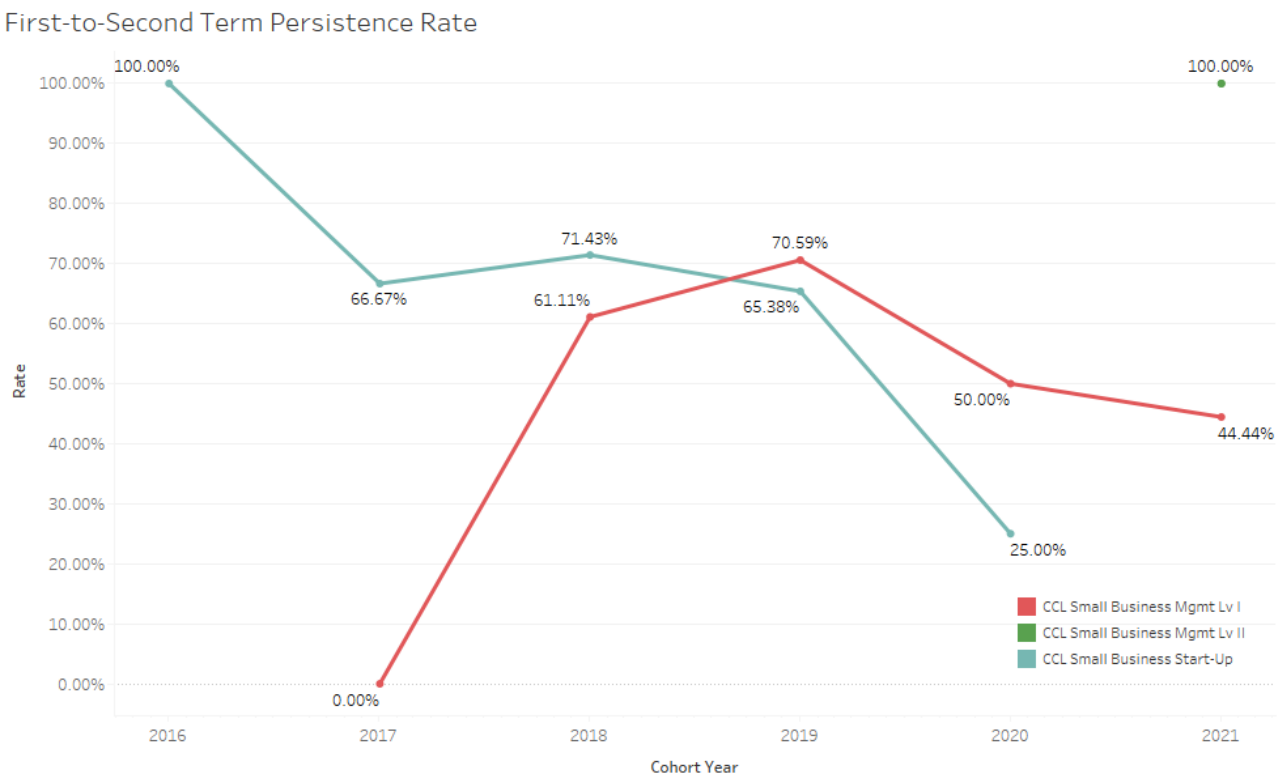
Course	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	Retention Rate	Successful Retention	Retention Rate	Successful Retention	Retention Rate	Successful Retention	Retention Rate	Successful Retention	Retention Rate	Successful Retention
SBS200			85%	85%					98%	93%
SBS204					94%	94%			89%	80%
SBS213			90%	90%	100%	100%			98%	89%
SBS214			100%	100%	100%	100%			93%	83%
SBS216					94%	94%			87%	76%
SBS220			100%	100%						
SBS230			100%	100%	72%	72%			91%	81%

In the in-person modality, these actions are taken to promote retention at the course level:

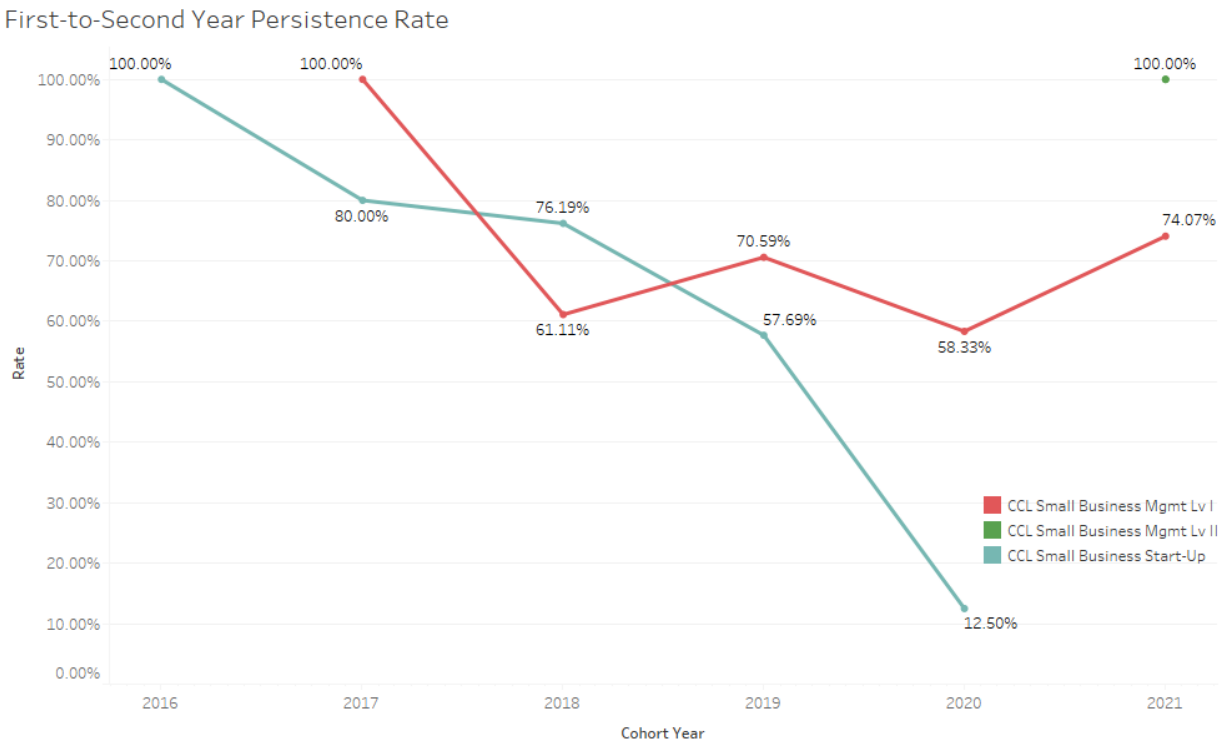
- Rio provides a single instructor to work with students throughout their courses.
- The faculty chair provides support and guidance to the instructor at Lewis prison, including in-person classroom visits, course evaluations, and assistance with various aspects of teaching, curriculum development, classroom management, and professional development.
- The instructor includes self-evaluations with some assessments and then discusses the different perspectives with the students.

As shown in the following graph, the 2016 cohort of students achieved a 100% persistence rate from the first to the second term, while approximately 70% of the 2017 and 2018 cohorts also persisted. The next graph in this section represents persistence to the second year and the third includes award completion rates. The data on all three graphs reflect the introduction of the Small Business Management Level I and II certificates and the "sunset" of the certificate CCL in Small Business Start-up.

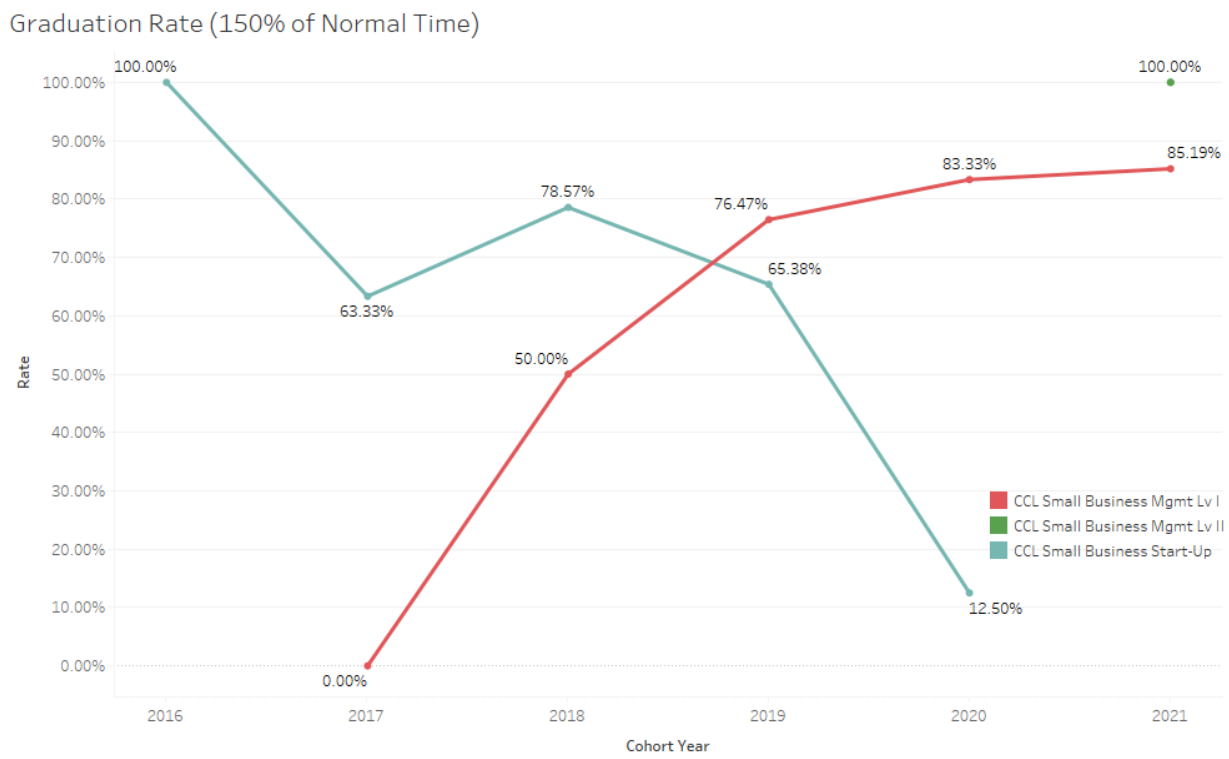
Note: The following graphs represent student cohorts based on when students first declared their academic program. For example, students who declared their program in Summer 2015, Fall 2015, and Spring 2016 are grouped into cohort year 2016.



PlanTitle	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
CCL Small Business Mgmt Lv I		0% 1	61% 18	71% 17	50% 12	44% 27
CCL Small Business Mgmt Lv II						100% 1
CCL Small Business Start-Up	100% 2	67% 30	71% 42	65% 26	25% 8	



PlanTitle	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
CCL Small Business Mgmt Lv I		100% 1	61% 18	71% 17	58% 12	74% 27
CCL Small Business Mgmt Lv II						100% 1
CCL Small Business Start-Up	100% 2	80% 30	76% 42	58% 26	13% 8	



PlanTitle	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
CCL Small Business Mgmt Lv I		0% 1	50% 18	76% 17	83% 12	85% 27
CCL Small Business Mgmt Lv II						100% 1
CCL Small Business Start-Up	100% 2	63% 30	79% 42	65% 26	13% 8	

The IRE team is committed to supporting students to succeed. This team comprises a Program Manager and a group of trained Student Service Specialists. Together, they provide comprehensive services, including advising, financial aid or scholarships assistance, enrollment, registration, graduation support, distribution of course materials, and prompt responses to correspondence to students or their FERPA designers.

In the print-based and in-person instruction modality, these actions are taken to assist student retention and persistence at the program-level:

1. The RSC IRE Program manager spends time in prison facilities, training student-mentors to support fellow students
2. Several facilities provide student mentors to support students' progress through their program

3. The RSC IRE Program manager and her team proactively registers students for the next course using a Course Continuation form, which is sent along with course materials for each subsequent course
4. During any outreach, the IRE department informs students about their upcoming course(s) to ensure they can complete their CCL
5. Once a student has earned the Small Business Management CCL Level I, the IRE department contacts them with information about an option of pursuing an AA degree

V. Program Learning Outcomes

Small Business Management Levels I and II

1. Prepare a business plan and budget to develop a comprehensive action, operations, and strategic plans. (EPS150, EPS195, MGT253, SBS200, SBS216, SBS217)

2. Apply basic accounting, finance, and marketing principles in a small business environment. (MKT271, MGT253, SBS202, SBS203, SBS204, SBS220, SBS221, SBS230)

3. Create and use effective oral, written, and visual business communication skills. (MKT271, MGT253, SBS200, SBS204, SBS213, SBS214, SBS220, SBS221)

4. Describe effective staff planning, personnel cost control, and discipline methods. (EPS195, MGT253, SBS200, SBS213, SBS216)

5. Apply problem-solving processes to problems in small business daily operations. (EPS150, EPS195, MGT253, SBS200, SBS213, SBS216, SBS217)

The table below displays student performance on representative assessments for each of these program learning outcomes.

Program Learning Outcomes - Small Business Management

Learning Outcome	Assessment Method	Submissions	Submissions @ College Level
Prepare a business plan and budget to develop a comprehensive action, operations, and strategic plans.	SBS200 Lesson 5 Assignment	437	87%
Apply basic accounting, finance, and marketing principles in a small business environment.	SBS 200 Lesson 8 Assignment	418	89%
Create and use effective oral, written, and visual business communication skills.	SBS 204 Lesson 8 Assignment: Marketing Plan	179	83%
Describe effective staff planning, personnel cost control, and discipline methods.	SBS200 - Lesson 2 Assignment: Management Team	469	88%
Apply problem-solving processes to problems in small business daily operations.	SBS213 Lesson 2 Project: Applying the Problem Solving Model	290	91%

Student achievement of the Program Learning Outcomes exceeds the 80% target across all modalities, and serves as a source of pride. One contributing factor to this success is the personalized content in many Small Business Management program courses, tailored to each student's business idea or growth plans, fostering higher student engagement. For instance, in SBS200 Lesson 5, learners are tasked with creating a budget that incorporates both strategic (where) and operational (how) action plans. This hands-on approach enhances their learning experience and practical skills.

VI. College-wide Student Learning Outcomes

In addition to the program-level outcomes addressed above, Rio Salado College places a high priority on developing core competence in the following areas:

1. **Critical Thinking:** The student will demonstrate the ability to analyze information, evaluate material, use inference to draw conclusions, and use deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning at a college level
2. **Information Literacy:** The student will demonstrate the ability to determine an information need, access successfully and evaluate critically the needed information, and organize and apply the information appropriately to accomplish a given research task.
3. **Oral Communication:** The student will demonstrate the ability to prepare and present oral communication in a variety of contexts as a college-level speaker.
4. **Reading:** The student will demonstrate the ability to comprehend a variety of materials by determining the central idea and providing textual evidence, drawing inferences or valid conclusions, analyzing the author's purpose and bias, and applying the text to a given task or course content.
5. **Writing:** On a written assignment, the student will demonstrate the ability to generate relevant and sufficient content; organize his or her thoughts coherently; adhere to the conventions of correct mechanics and sentence structure; and use correct terminology and rich vocabulary in the fulfillment, at the college level, of his or her writing assignments.

For more information:
http://www.riosalado.edu/about/teaching-learning/assessment/Pages/SLO.aspx

The following program courses include assessments that are aligned with the college-wide student learning outcomes:

Course	Critical Thinking	Information Literacy	Reading	Writing	Oral Communication
EPS195	Y	Y		Y	
SBS200	Y	Y	Y	Y	
SBS202					
SBS203					
SBS204	Y	Y	Y	Y	
SBS213		Y	Y	Y	
SBS214		Y			
SBS216	Y	Y	Y	Y	
SBS220	Y	Y	Y	Y	
SBS230	Y	Y		Y	

A challenge arose when addressing information literacy for students without internet access or limited external resources. In response, content was added to the print-based course appendix in 2020. This supplemental material equips students with valuable resources they can read and utilize to access relevant information, which they can then evaluate for inclusion in their written work. This modification now enables all students to develop their information literacy skills effectively.

At present, oral communication is not being assessed in the Small Business Management curriculum. Oral communication is a crucial aspect of personal and professional development, and the absence of formal content and assessments designed to develop this skill may hinder the students' ability to express themselves confidently and articulate their thoughts and ideas effectively upon exiting the program. See Action Plans in section XI c. for a Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle to address this need.

VII. Impact of Co-curricular Programs

According to the data in the table below, the target of 80% of students performing at a college level in each of the student learning outcomes was exceeded for assessments aligned with Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, Reading, and Writing. As indicated in Section VI, oral communication is currently being integrated and will be an area of focus for the next review period.

Learning Outcome	All Student Assessments	Assessments at College Level	Percent of Assessments at College Level	Co-Curricular Student Assessments	Co-Curricular Assessments at College Level	Percent of Co-Curricular Assessments at College Level
Critical Thinking	2,776	2,483	89.4%	174	160	92.0%
Information Literacy	4,550	4,026	88.5%	324	297	91.7%
Oral Communication	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reading	1,245	1,132	90.9%	48	48	100.0%
Writing	4,490	3,833	85.4%	304	266	87.5%

Co-curricular activities include Achieving a College Education (ACE), Honors, National Society of Leadership and Success (NSLS), and Phi Theta Kappa (PTK)

In addition to exceeding the target, the data indicate a positive correlation between participation in co-curricular activities and academic performance. IRE students are now eligible to join the Honors program, and there are ongoing efforts to promote IRE student involvement and increase overall participation in co-curricular opportunities that are appropriate for that population.

SBS200, SBS213, and SBS214 are offered as Honors courses. Students are required to cover topics in greater depth and complexity, and they complete advanced projects to enrich the learning experience.

VIII. Effective Teaching

The Small Business Department's main objective is to offer adjuncts timely support and assistance, achieved through various means. These include training, coaching, annual evaluations, policy revisions, and consistent communication. Upon hiring, adjuncts are required to complete AFD101 (Outstanding Online Instruction) or AFD106 (Print/Mixed Media Courses), along with a Department-specific training course (AFD150). Ongoing support is provided through section reviews and formal evaluations to ensure adherence to department policies and procedures. Each instructor receives at least one evaluation annually, with additional one-on-one training as needed. To maintain quality, assignment feedback is meticulously reviewed by the Faculty Chair and/or Department Lead, ensuring accuracy, personalization, and appropriateness for the course level. This comprehensive approach empowers adjuncts with the necessary tools to excel in their roles within the Small Business Department.

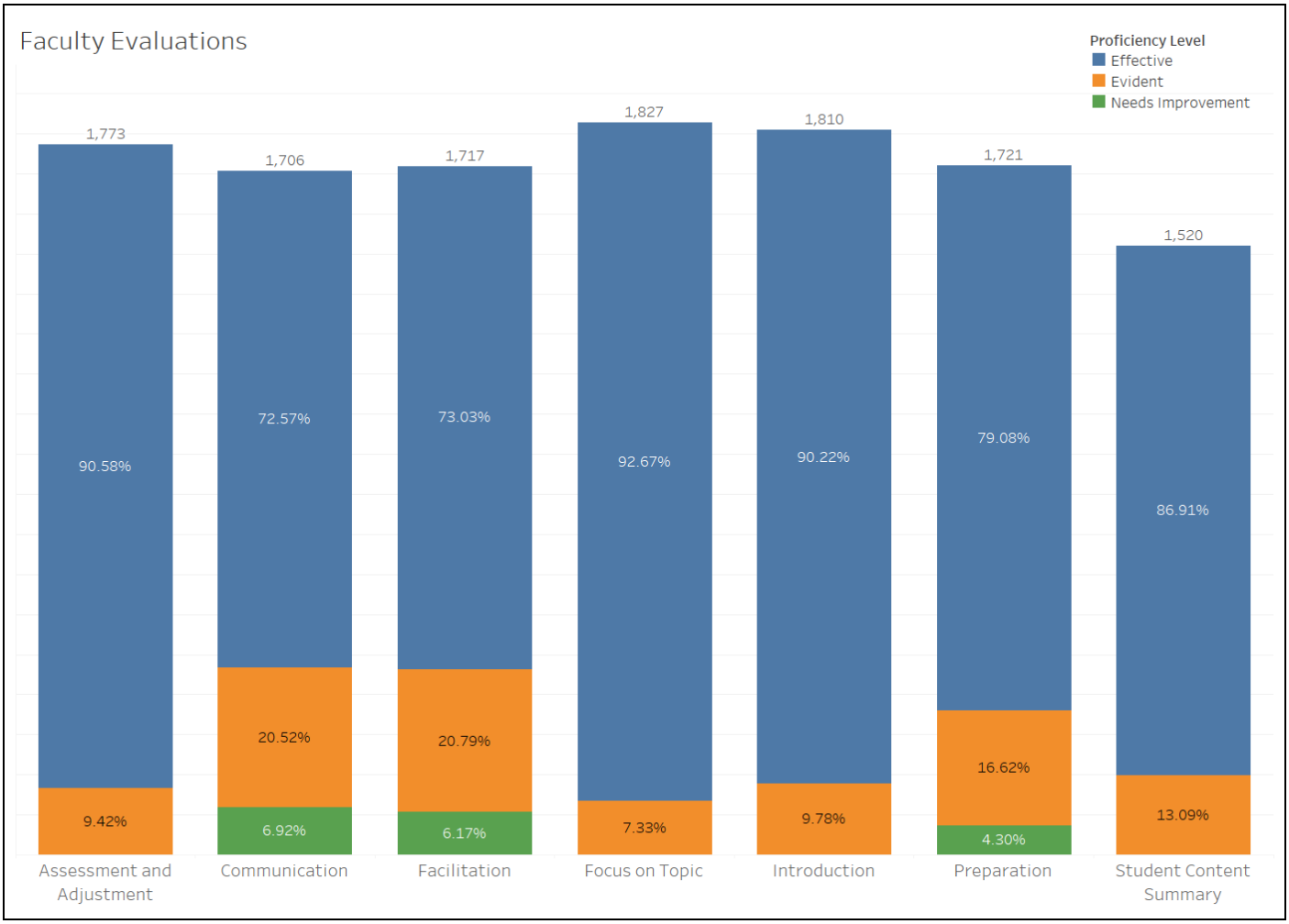
To cater to the unique nature of print courses, the Department has devised a distinct evaluation process for instructors in this modality. Recognizing the differences between print-based and online courses, this evaluation procedure enables adjuncts to showcase

samples of their assignment feedback and engage in thoughtful reflections on their teaching practices. By tailoring the evaluation approach, the department ensures that print-based course instructors receive valuable feedback and support, enhancing their effectiveness and the overall quality of instruction.

Adjunct faculty actively engage in biannual All-Faculty Meetings. During these meetings the faculty chair provides up-to-date information on current and new college and department policies and procedures. Starting in early 2022, the department's policies and procedures underwent a transition to an online training class hosted on RioLearn, the college's learning management system. This comprehensive training encompasses a dedicated module specifically tailored to teaching in the print-based modality. Additionally, during the 2022-2023 academic year, the department's adjunct training was fully integrated into RioLearn. This move streamlines the process, serving as both department training for new adjuncts and a convenient reference tool for existing instructors. The shift to an online platform facilitates continuous professional development and ensures all adjuncts remain well-informed and equipped for their roles within the department.

The success of this project is a result of the diligent efforts of the Business Management department and, in particular, the hard work of the Business Management department chair, who played a crucial role in developing core content that can be adapted for other departments.

During the Spring 2023 All-Faculty Meeting, time was dedicated to reviewing the Department Policies & Procedures course independently. Following this, adjunct faculty participated in a self-assessment to evaluate their comprehension and to offer valuable feedback on the course. These training initiatives have yielded positive results, directly correlating with high performance on each section of the annual instructor evaluations, as demonstrated below.



The combination of interactive learning and self-assessment has proven to be a valuable tool in promoting excellence in teaching and adherence to department guidelines.

In addition, student survey data consistently confirms the high quality of teaching in the core classes of the Small Business Management Program:

End of Course Evaluations

Question	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Course assignments required me to think critically	4.59	4.73	4.86	4.65	4.80
My instructor communicated the course policies and procedures	4.73	4.85	4.78	4.79	4.84
My instructor demonstrated knowledge of the course material	4.65	4.78	4.77	4.85	4.81
My instructor graded assignments or imported grades within the stated timeframe	4.68	4.80	4.73	4.82	4.75
My instructor provided feedback that explained what I did well and where I had opportunities to improve	4.63	4.79	4.74	4.76	4.72
My instructor responded to questions in a timely manner	4.65	4.79	4.77	4.79	4.72
My instructor was engaging and willing to give individual help	4.60	4.78	4.73	4.73	4.72
The assignment directions were clear	4.28	4.53	4.63	4.70	4.43
The course content (assignments/readings/study materials) is engaging	4.35	4.62	4.61	4.50	4.50

Questions rated on a Likert-type scale, range from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree")

To ensure ongoing excellence, the Faculty Chair meticulously reviews individual instructor evaluations. If any concerns arise, such as an overall score falling below 4.0, the Faculty Chair promptly investigates the matter and follows up with the instructor to address any issues or provide additional support if necessary. This proactive approach ensures that students receive the best possible learning experience and that instructors are well-equipped to excel in their teaching roles.

IX. Evaluation of Curriculum

In 2019, as part of the Guided pathway process, the Business Instructional Council made significant changes to the curriculum. They decided to phase out the Small Business Start-Up CCL and instead introduced the Small Business Management CCL Level I and II. This decision was implemented during the academic year 2019-2020.

At least one in five years, the Small Business Department conducts course reviews, to assess the need for any updates or redevelopment of the current course version. Furthermore, to ensure optimal learning experiences, the department consistently reviews and may adjust course content and assessments based on valuable input from both students and instructors. This proactive approach enables the department to maintain the relevance and effectiveness of its courses, aligning each course with the evolving needs and expectations of students and industry standards.

Annual assessment data is carefully examined to identify any areas of concern and to implement strategic changes aimed at enhancing student performance. In the past five years, there has been a shift in focus from solely emphasizing definitions and concepts to fostering practical application and honing critical thinking skills. To achieve this, real case studies have been integrated into the curriculum, allowing students to apply their knowledge to real-world scenarios. Furthermore, students are given the opportunity to develop their own business plans, encouraging innovation and exploration of their unique ideas.

As courses are redeveloped, assessments are modified when the average score is below 70%.

The process for redevelopment of all Small Business Department courses includes:

- Evaluate the feasibility of moving to Open Educational Resources material.
- Determine if any current adjuncts have the skills/time to amend the course.
- Revise content as appropriate to reflect updated data and relevant laws/ regulations.

- Employ varying types of assessments to provide a variety of measurements of student learning of the course content.
- Revise assignments to include more application/critical thinking components. This revision helps students to apply the lesson content/objectives and allows the Department to easily identify possible plagiarism issues.

In the past five years, courses have been adjusted as follows:

- Moved all courses into CourseArc and converted from blog to presentation style. While Print-Based courses are still presented as a single pdf, the chunking of content in the Internet-version is also reflected in the Print-Based courses.
- Added Lesson 0 to all courses to ensure students know how to properly cite before starting the main lessons. All courses were also updated to the APA Study Guide 7th edition.
- Added a new APA video (created in-house) to help students understand both APA format in-text citation and reference requirements as well as how to avoid plagiarism.
- Added "Ask a Librarian" information to all courses that have a required research assignment/assessment.
- Added a "Plagiarism Warning" in the first and last lessons (preceding the first written assignment and the final project) in courses that have a high plagiarism rate.
- A template for each assignment is provided within the course package for all Print-based courses

Starting Fall 2023, the SBS courses will include one of the 21st Century Skills Micro-credentials (badges) as a non-graded co-curricular option, while EPS150 will incorporate them as a mandated and graded learning activity.

Resilience has been selected to be the skill small business students will need to master. Resilience is vital for small business students as it enables them to overcome challenges, persevere in the face of setbacks, embrace failure as a learning opportunity, adapt to changing circumstances, make informed decisions, and build self-confidence in their entrepreneurial journey. Resilience badge in the 21st century includes the capacity to bounce back in the face of stress, challenge, and adversity. Resilient individuals exhibit these four sub-competencies: the capacity to learn from experience; exhibit flexibility; demonstrate self-awareness; and focus on solutions. By integrating Resilience badge earning into these courses, may increase retention and completion rates, and produce job-ready graduates.

Through the badge system, online students may have the chance to showcase their skills and competencies in real-time, complementing the established business studies curriculum. This approach not only enhances student engagement but also helps them grasp the most

sought-after skills that are applicable across various industries, connecting their education to future career opportunities. By offering this opportunity, RSC strives to create a more relevant and impactful learning experience for our students, ultimately preparing them for success in the job market.

X. Program Resources

The contract with the Arizona Department of Corrections is set for renewal in 2023, and the college will need resources to renegotiate and meet the requirements of the new contract. For Small Business Management CCL Level I, the largest expense is the full-time instructor who teaches the program on-site, the staff that support the program, textbooks, and adjunct instructors to teach the print courses.

The Small Business Management CCL Level I is one of the programs that qualify under Second Chance Pell funding. This funding allows currently Incarcerated ReEntry students to use Pell funding for postsecondary education.

A laptop pilot project for students at Perryville Prison is currently underway. Students in that pilot will be using laptops for their coursework rather than completing via the traditional print-based modality. The current plan is to offer laptops in the Small Business Management CCL once the initial pilot is completed.

In-Person students benefit from personalized support from a dedicated full-time instructor present on-site at the prison. Additionally, the IRE Department offers further assistance, providing a robust support system to ensure these students' academic success and progress in the Small Business Management Program. Following the resignation of the last in-person instructor in August 2022, the process of hiring the right candidate for the Senior Instructor in Lewis position has proven to be quite challenging. In an effort to enhance the chances of finding a suitable candidate, flyers with detailed descriptions of the position have been thoughtfully crafted and strategically placed in correctional facilities. A Rio Salado Employment Ad was placed in the local newspaper to seek qualified candidates. The intention behind this initiative is to attract qualified individuals who possess the requisite skills and qualifications to excel in this role and contribute to the continued success of the Small Business Management Program. By widening the recruitment approach and actively promoting the position in correctional facilities and in the local newspapers, the department aims to identify and engage potential candidates who may be an excellent fit for the position of Senior Instructor in Lewis.

The Small Business Department has a part-time lead faculty member who helps to oversee Dual Enrollment and Incarcerated Re-Entry processes, trains new adjunct faculty, completes adjunct section reviews, assists with Pitch competitions, and handles other day-to-day operational duties.

Print Based students in the Small Business Management Program receive comprehensive support services facilitated by the Incarcerated Re-Entry (IRE) staff. These services include registration assistance, academic advising, access to course materials, scholarships, and various other essential resources. Tests and quizzes are graded by the college's Testing Center, which then communicates the results to instructors via email, ensuring a streamlined and organized process.

Online students enrolled in the Small Business Management Program use program-level advising services and receive personalized guidance throughout their academic journey. Students also have access to the college's Library resources, which provide valuable assistance with research and citation in their coursework. Moreover, many course lessons include curated articles and videos from the library, enriching the learning experience. To support students who may need help with college-level writing skills, Tutoring services are readily available and encouraged for use.

Furthermore, as part of the Department's commitment to student success, completion of CPD150, a counseling study skills course, is required for any student who faces challenges and attempts a particular course three times (earning an F and/or Y) and then chooses to enroll in it for the fourth time.

Adjunct faculty play a vital role in guiding students toward additional resources when needed. College's Disability Resources and Services or the Counseling Department is available to help students to receive appropriate support and assistance tailored to their unique needs. This comprehensive approach fosters a supportive and conducive learning environment, helping students achieve their academic goals successfully.

In 2021, $10,000 in funding was provided by the National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship and Everyday Entrepreneur Venture Fund (NACCE/EEVF) and four student-entrepreneurs were awarded. In Fall 2023, an additional $5,000 gift will be given to RSC student-entrepreneurs to conduct at least one student idea pitch competition in the 2023-24 academic year. The college’s Institutional Advancement team proposed creative marketing briefs that include short bios of awarded students and Small Business Management program highlights.

In March 2022, the Maricopa Community Colleges Foundation received a generous $1 million grant from Wells Fargo. The purpose of this grant is to establish a pipeline connection between entrepreneurial college programs and the well-established resources available for small businesses in Arizona. In the last year, Small Business Management CLL Level I and II have been promoted with expansive marketing and advertising efforts provided by the Wells Fargo grant. Maricopa Entrepreneurship Day was heavily advertised and held in Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 to also help promote the Certificates of Completion in Small Business Management.

A portion of the Wells Fargo grant was used to scholarship Small Business Management students. Below is the table highlighting the number of RSC students who have been awarded tuition scholarships for SBS courses in Spring 2022, Fall 2022, and Spring 2023.

MARICOPA entrepreneur DAYS

DISTRICTWIDE SCOREBOARD SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Spring 2022 Semester		
College	Number of Awards	Total Awarded
Chandler-Gilbert CC	0	$0.00
Estrella Mountain CC	0	$0.00
Gateway CC	0	$0.00
Glendale CC	2	$1,260.00
Mesa CC	1	$1,156.00
Paradise Valley CC	4	$4,932.00
Phoenix College	0	$0.00
Rio Salado College	1	$1,056.00
Scottsdale CC	0	$0.00
South Mountain CC	0	$0.00
Total	**8**	**$8,404.00**

Fall 2022 Semester		
College	Number of Awards	Total Awarded
Chandler-Gilbert CC	6	$6,042.00
Estrella Mountain CC	0	$0.00
Gateway CC	1	$1,161.00
Glendale CC	9	$7,876.80
Mesa CC	6	$5,252.00
Paradise Valley CC	4	$3,804.00
Phoenix College	5	$4,956.00
Rio Salado College	8	$5,335.00
Scottsdale CC	6	$4,818.00
South Mountain CC	2	$2,507.00
Total	**47**	**$41,751.80**

MARICOPA entrepreneur DAYS

Spring 2023 Semester		
College	Number of Awards	Total Awarded
Chandler-Gilbert CC	3	$1,731.00
Estrella Mountain CC	0	$0.00
Gateway CC	0	$0.00
Glendale CC	4	$1,680.00
Mesa CC	8	$5,142.00
Paradise Valley CC	1	$1,331.00
Phoenix College	6	$5,842.00
Rio Salado College	9	$6,202.00
Scottsdale CC	1	$505.00
South Mountain CC	1	$1,730.00
Total	**33**	**$24,163.00**

Additionally, RSC received $20,000 from Wells Fargo scholarship funds to run and fund pitch competitions for RSC student-entrepreneurs. In Summer, 2023 four students have been awarded funds to start or grow their businesses. Each student has been assigned and met with a Small Business Development Center (SBDC) mentor and are working with the department chair to use awarded funds appropriately and efficiently.

In Summer 2023, the Small Business department chair achieved certification as an Entrepreneurial Mindset Facilitator. This training has equipped the chair with valuable knowledge and skills to support not only student-entrepreneurs pursuing academic paths but also everyday entrepreneurs looking to elevate their businesses to new heights. The chair's enhanced expertise will empower and guide these entrepreneurs on their journey of growth and success.

XI. Program Recommendations, Decisions, and Action Plans

a. Program Best Practices

Course Content

- Lesson content includes real-world application, case studies, and examples to assist students in transferring concepts to work situations.
- Lesson 0 is provided in all courses to include information on essay format, citation requirements, college-level writing, and academic integrity.

Adjunct Support

- Adjuncts are provided an online course for both instructor training as well as an ongoing resource for all Department Policies and Procedures. This practice helps maintain consistent application of Department policies and procedures across all courses.
- Adjuncts are emailed a “Friday FAQ” message every week. This short email is a quick reminder of a Department policy, or necessary Department, College or District announcement.
- Conducting proactive section reviews helps instructors understand expectations and assist in student retention.

Print-Based Evaluation Process

The process to evaluate print-based instructors was revised in 2022. Now, there is one process for instructors in their first three semesters of teaching and another for established instructors.

b. Program Viability

The Small Business Management CCL Level I and II programs are designed to cater to individuals aspiring to own and/or manage a small business. They equip students with the essential skills, tools, and knowledge needed to successfully launch and operate a business venture, as evidenced by this student success story.

The Small Business Management CCL Level I is primarily aimed at students who are incarcerated and need employment opportunities upon release. This program viability is primarily dependent on Arizona State Department of Justice policies, grant availability, and the ability to recruit and retain qualified instructors.

c. Action Plans

Marketing Small Business Management CCL Level II

A marketing request was submitted to target website optimization, strategic social media campaigns, and college partnerships in an effort to increase enrollment in the Small Business Management Level II CCL. In addition, the Chair will collaborate with the Business Advisory Council and will leverage Maricopa Entrepreneurship Days to host information sessions. Small Business Management faculty will proactively reach out to students who have successfully completed Level I courses to encourage them to register for Level II courses.

PDCA Cycle: Oral Communication

Plan: As a result of this review, it was discovered that Oral Communication was not being formally assessed in the Small Business Management program.

DO: The Final Essay in SBS216 is being converted into a Final PowerPoint Presentation for online and in-person students. Additional criteria are being added to the assignment to assess Oral Communication and the content will cover "Tips and Best Practices." Students will be required to record their presentation and will be graded according to the College-wide Oral Communication rubric.

Check: Oral communication data for online and in-person assessments will be pulled in Summer 2024.

Act: Curricular decisions will be made based on assessment results and additional PDCA cycles will be initiated, as needed.

Currently, assessing oral communication skills in print-based modalities poses significant challenges. The nature of print-based learning primarily relies on written materials and lacks the necessary interactivity to effectively assess oral communication abilities. However, with the potential implementation of Second Chance Pell funding and the adoption of laptop-based learning, the possibility of assessing oral communication skills becomes feasible in the near future.

Additional action plans for the Small Business Management program are pending the results of the laptop pilot project currently underway with IRE students in the Quality Customer Service program described in Section X of this review.

d. Assessment Team Recommendation

X Continue program and implement stated action plan. Next review due AY2028.

☐ Continue program, implement stated action plan, and address comments listed below. Spotlight follow-up report due {1-2 years}.

☐ Refer to college administration to determine program viability.

☐ Discontinue program.

Comments: