



San Luis Obispo County Community College District

2016 Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment Report

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Background to the Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment Project

In 2011, the San Luis Obispo County Community College District (SLOCCCD) initiated a project to define and assess Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs). The Academic Senate Council approved the ILO statements on March 16, 2012. An electronic assessment for the ILOs was distributed to all district degree applicants in the spring semesters in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016.

The District considers the ILO statements to encompass the outcomes in the General Education program. The combined ILO statements are the expected student learning outcomes for Cuesta College students either graduating with Associate degrees (A.A., A.S., or A.D.T.) or transferring to a four-year college or university. These students will be able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills contained within all of the six ILO areas based on General Education and discipline-specific courses at the lower division level. In addition, these ILOs address areas of learning that are specified by the Accrediting Commission for Colleges and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) in Standard II.A.3 (of the 2002 standards) that go beyond the current General Education patterns for degrees. Therefore, all students who attend Cuesta College will be exposed to at least one ILO as a result of their overall experiences with any aspect of the college, including courses, programs, and student services.

Assessment Administration

The assessment of student attainment of the ILOs was initiated in spring 2012. An electronic assessment tool was created and delivered via the district-issued email addresses to all students who applied for A.A., A.S., or A.D.-T. degrees at the end of the spring terms in 2012 (746 applicants), 2013 (843 applicants), 2014 (856 applicants), 2015 (980 applicants), 2016 (1036 applicants), and 2017 (910 applicants). The assessment went through some minor changes for the 2017 survey. In the current survey, we eliminated all content specific questions towards particular degrees and only asked questions about the ILOs and student services. In 2015, 3 additional questions were added to the survey pertaining to Cuesta College's mission statement and so those responses are tallied separately, since there is less data.

Appendix A contains the exact questions in the assessment tools.

In 2017, students were given a deadline of June 30 to respond to the survey in order to qualify for prizes. A follow-up reminder message was sent approximately one week after the initial notice. As an incentive for students to complete the assessment, the Vice President of Academic Affairs arranged for a \$200 Amazon gift card grand prize and four Amazon gift cards (\$25) to be randomly awarded to participating students. Numbers were chosen randomly by Institutional Research (who conducted the survey through Survey Monkey) and award information was sent by the SLOA Coordinators.

Assessment Results

The 2017 ILO assessment was completed by 311 students completed the survey for a 34.2% response rate (31.1% response rate in 2016, 19.2% in 2015, 31.4% in 2014, 30.1% in 2013, and 25.2% in 2012). In 2017, we asked participants to self-identify the cluster in which they completed their degree and 147 or 45% were from the Arts & Humanities cluster, 95 or 29 % from the Math & Physical Sciences cluster and the remaining 85 of 26% were from the Workforce & Economic Development cluster. The following figures present the assessment results from the persistent questions over the six-year period and the three new questions asked over the previous three-year period (since 2015) about the college's mission statement are shown separately.

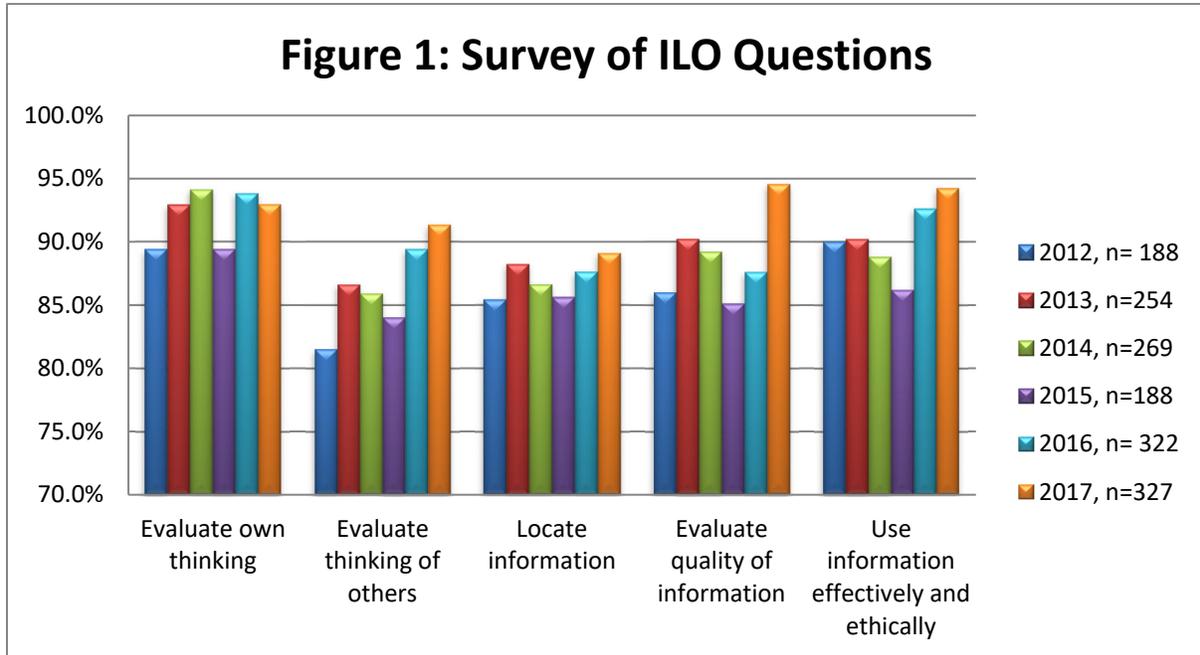


Figure 1: The percentage of students who agree or strongly agree that their abilities in selected ILO areas have improved while at Cuesta College.

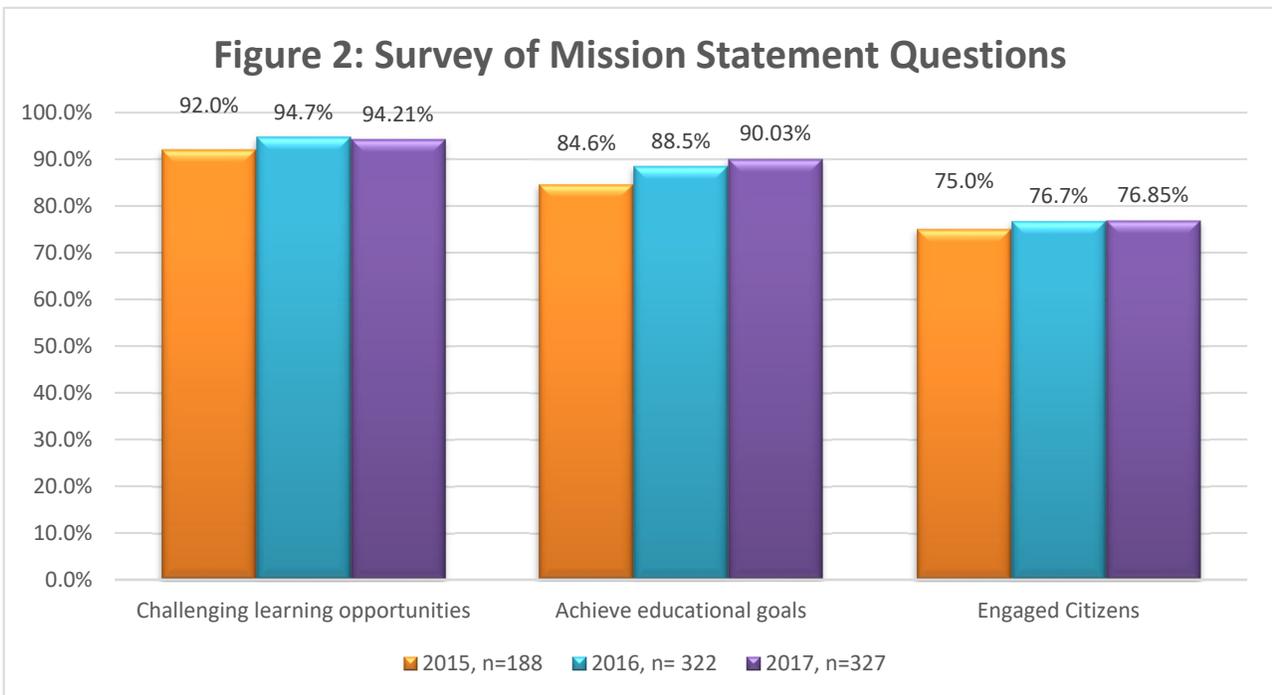


Figure 2: Students who agree or strongly agree that their abilities in selected areas relating to the district's mission statement have improved while at Cuesta College.

Discussion of Assessment Results

In the ILO survey, students were asked to identify their primary goal in attending Cuesta College and 13.2% of respondents were there for workforce preparation, while 75.6% identified that transfer to a 4-year college as their primary goal (the remaining identified 'other' as their primary goal).

For the third year in a row, responses for most of the questions fell into the 90-95% "agree", with one notable exception: Engaged Citizens.

However, students responded "agree" more frequently when asked about their ability to evaluate the quality of information than in any previous survey results.

Actionable Improvement Plans

As a result of last year's survey, the question about being an "engaged citizen" including the statement "An engaged citizen is an informed and active participant in the life of the community" to help clearly identify what it meant to be an engaged citizen. However, this is still the lowest performing question and far lower any other questions response. As a result, we will be asking for feedback from Academic Senate about what we can do in light of these results.

Appendix A: ILO Survey Questions

1. I earned my degree in the following academic area of study: (If you earned more than one degree, chose the answer choice that represents the area closest to your primary field of interest).
2. I experienced interesting and challenging learning opportunities at Cuesta College.
3. Cuesta College inspired me to achieve my educational goals.
4. Cuesta College prepared me to be an engaged citizen. An engaged citizen is an informed and active participant in the life of a community)
5. In my courses at Cuesta College, I improved my ability to critically evaluate the quality of my own thinking.
6. In my courses at Cuesta College, I improved my ability to critically evaluate the quality of other people's thinking.
7. During my time at Cuesta, I improved my ability to locate information that helps me answer questions or solve problems.
8. During my time at Cuesta, I improved my ability to evaluate the quality of information that I locate or receive.
9. During my time at Cuesta, I improved my ability to use information effectively and ethically.
10. During my time at Cuesta, I improved my ability to communicate clearly and logically.
11. During my time at Cuesta, I found the following student service areas to be effective and helpful:
12. Please provide any additional comments you have regarding your educational experiences at Cuesta College, or this survey
13. What is your primary goal after earning your degree?
14. If you wish to be entered for the prize drawing, please enter your name and primary email address below (non-Cuesta email address preferred).

Appendix B: Cuesta College's Mission Statement

"Cuesta College is an inclusive institution that inspires a diverse student population to achieve their educational goals.

We effectively support students in their efforts to improve foundational skills, earn certificates or associate degrees, transfer to four-year institutions, and advance in the workforce.

Through innovative and challenging learning opportunities, Cuesta College enhances lives by promoting cultural, intellectual, personal, and professional growth. We prepare students to become engaged citizens in our increasingly complex communities and world."

Appendix C: Student Service Graph

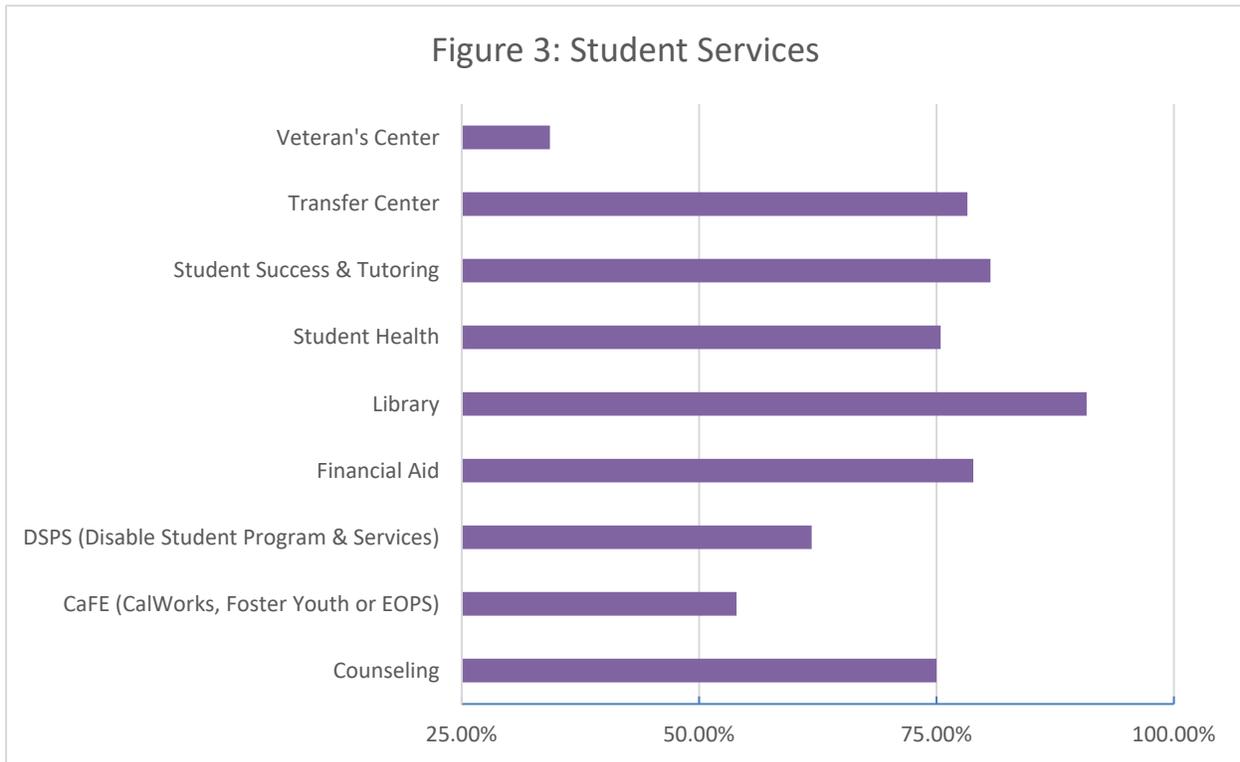


Figure 3: Percent of students who agreed or strongly agreed each of the following Student Service area was “effective and helpful” (excludes those who marked “Did not use”).

Appendix D: Student Comments from the ILO Survey

I am very thankful to have attended a college with helpful resources to grow intellectually and personally. It's been a wild ride!

More support for Cuesta athletics!!!

There were some teachers I didn't like, but most I thoroughly appreciated for their excellent teaching and willingness to explain things a different way if I was confused.

Wish the library had longer hours

Cuesta help change my outlook towards school, I now have a much better attitude towards school, and have learned better study skills. I encountered numerous incredible teachers here, and many of them made a lasting impression on me. I could not have asked for a better experience here.

You should put another vending machine on the fine arts side of campus.

I enjoyed my classes at Cuesta but there were times when I felt as if some of the teachers were only there for the check and not for the right reasons.

All services I have utilized at Cuesta have greatly helped me in achieving my goals.

My experience at Cuesta College was very gratifying. The personnel were approachable, helpful, patient, and they always made me feel that they had my best interest in mind. My professors were knowledgeable and challenging. They always encouraged me to do my best and told me to never to give up until I have reached my goal. They became family; we shared laughs and some tears and always pushing me forward focusing on my goal. I highly recommend Cuesta College to family and friends when they ask if they should attend Cuesta. I tell them to talk to the wonderful counselors to help them find the right path to their educational goals. Kudos to Regina Vriend! She is such an amazing counselor at Cuesta College. I could have not made it to where I am

without her guidance. If I could convey my thoughts to others about Cuesta College I would say; Challenge yourself at Cuesta College!

Thanks Cuesta! It's been real :)

The Promise Scholarship was wonderful!

A great experience and school!

The graduation ceremony with the presentation of the colors and national anthem was amazing.

I absolutely loved my time at Cuesta. The teachers genuinely care about their students and want to see them succeed. Beautiful campus, excellent music program. I must say, I was not aware of the health and diversity requirement until I applied to graduate and now have to take it over summer as I prepare to transfer. Maybe make that requirement more well-known?

I thoroughly enjoyed my time at Cuesta College. The immense amount of knowledge and life lessons I learned from my peers and professors will always be cherished.

I LOVE CUESTA

The teacher who work at Cuesta are hard working and care so much for their students, and it really shows!

Lamon and finnoula are great!

Loved it!

Cuesta is great at providing you with what you as an individual need. The three years I spent here were amazing, i wish could stay but furthering my education is what's best for me.

The only resources I accessed where fun aid and counseling and I found the regular counseling office not very knowledgeable about the nursing department and the nursing counselor hard to get an appointment with.

Was a good time at Cuesta

EOPS needs to have counselors that are extremely knowledgeable about transferring and degree paths in order to keep students on track. Too many of us are first generation college students that are deeply dependent upon our counselors being knowledgeable and accurate with our SEP. I have written letters and have spoken to staff-- this has been an ongoing weakness in EOPS for years. I have left an appt with another students student ID and SEP plan. I hope this is remedied for future students. Our EOPS program needs the best counselors that are dedicated to help us succeed.

I was very pleased with Cuesta College's Science classes as well as the teachers. I took Microbiology, Physiology, Physics, Biology, Organic chemistry, as well as several other courses and I was VERY inspired by each professor's passion for teaching. I learned a lot.

I strongly believe that the counseling department needs to make some huge changes. The staff needs to be more educated on transfer requirements to all 23 CSU's and the AD-T programs/agreements. Different people in the counseling department give conflicting information.

Teachers like William Snider really make a difference at Cuesta. I would not have graduated without him. He is incredible. All my teachers were.

Cuesta is an exceptional school for the transfer student, but since it is a community college, it would be a great idea to offer a few more vocational courses.

Loved it!

Cuesta College was a great school to me for the two years I attended. I was able to get in, do my job, and get out and transfer to a 4 year University. I could not have done it without the help of counselors and especially the tutors.

Some of the teachers in the engineering department need to be evaluated by professionals because the students have so little respect I imagine it'd be hard for the teachers to take their criticisms seriously. I'm talking like undercover evaluations, because we all know they make major improvements when they know they're being sat in on.

It is been fun Thanks to all Cuesta employees

If more time is needed to explain a subject properly so the use of it can be fully understood then more time needs to be given and teachers need to learn to explain things at the level of their elements and relationships so true appreciation and use can be memorized and understood, just forcing people to remember rules doesn't actually help them, people always want to know why, ignoring this is neglect and distraction from what

is ethical, efficient, and good, when people ignore and don't fully explain things only get harder, one must take the time to do things right the first time.

There are so many remarkably talented teachers here that inspired me on my academic path! Cuesta has been an amazing place to attend.

I wish the counselor told me about the graduation health requirement before my last semester.

Over all a very interesting, helpful, good yet stressful experience,

Even though I was only here for one year, I consider Cuesta to be very important in my educational journey.

My professors have been engaging and caring, and the staff always makes me feel welcome on campus.

The Nursing program is amazing, very academically rigorous and much support is given for students to achieve success.

Music program was amazing!

Counselor kind of discouraged me with getting into Cal Poly even though I ended up being accepted. I wish he had more faith in me as a student.

Awesome Community College

So happy Cuesta College was there for me and provided me with the tools to use in my everyday life as a mother and a citizen in society.

I had a great experience at Cuesta, until I went to transfer to a 4 year university. The counseling department made an administrative error that cost me getting accepted into my top school choice. Even after admitting fault for the mistake the department failed to recognize the weight and consequences they had caused. It was extremely disheartening as I have been a very involved student including being a student ambassador and speaking on the Promise Scholarship with Gil Stork. The counseling department is hands down Cuesta's weakest point.

Financial aid office and counselors could be a little better! Everything else is great for a community college! :)

Cuesta College is a fantastic school with a large variety o programs and opportunities. The teachers love what they are doing and search out opportunities and resources for their students. It has been an amazing couple of years for my own growth in knowledge and towards my goals.

The staff at CAFE and DSPS are great!!

My experience at Cuesta has been stressful. I did not get the help I needed from the counselors in time to take my courses and understand how to transfer. Applying and submitting documents were very confusing and I had little help. I think there should be more emails sent out to the students about deadlines for transfer forms and more workshops for students to meet with a counselor or transfer helper in order for them to have a stress-free semester when finishing their studies.

Great professors and challenging classes

I transferred here from another state, and Cuesta made me feel like I belong in SLO. Thank you for the great learning experience!

I am a local student who went to Morro Bay High School. Cuesta College carries an unfortunate stigma amongst local high school students as a place for UC or CSU rejects and/or future burnouts. I found this stigma to be entirely false. I have had an excellent 4 years of education here at a nice price. I have had time to explore fields of study and hone my interests. I have made friends and been taught by high quality instructors. I have enjoyed musical performances on campus. I have utilized the student services including health and counseling. I have enjoyed swimming and feeling Cougar Pride. I have grown as a person and I will be graduating from Cuesta with no debt. I am transferring to Cal Poly in the Fall and I owe much of that to the education and transfer system established here at Cuesta. I have only good things to say about Cuesta and I would recommend it to any student.

It was easy to get the classes you need and made it possible for me to transfer in two years!

The registered nursing program and all allied health programs are out of this world!

Teachers really care about their students are willing to provide help when it is sought.

Many of the English classrooms were falling apart -- it would've been nice to see those classrooms be fixed up.

Overall it has been a great experience.

It was fun! Had everything and more that I needed to get me to the next step

I love Cuesta. I will be back for more classes in the near and far future. Most of my teachers have been great to me, teach the material well and clearly and are understanding people.

I feel like some students take advantage of DSPS service too much. Mental illnesses such as testing anxiety and etc. are too abstract to be evaluated by doctors' note, when you tell them you have one, you do. Everyone gets a little nervous and anxious when exams are approaching. I think students shouldn't be able to utilize DSPS unless they really have a serious mental illness. I've seen so many students who got a doctor's note (since it is easy to get one), just so they could take exams at much more relaxing environment with more time. If they were taking an exam for a computer class, they were also allowed to take it in a different room. I know some people teamed up with their friends or classmates to cheat because there was no supervisor. They would take pictures of exams and send those to their friends for help, and in return, their friends got to see the exam.

Even though it took 4 years Cuesta helped me finish my credits for transfer

Had a good experience with most of my teachers. Very glad I chose to get my undergrad done at Cuesta. Cuesta is great, the teachers are great (especially the math teachers) but if you want more students to transfer you need to put a greater focus on training for counselors and transfer center workers. I had to figure out my academic plan myself, as did most students in STEM fields.

I love Cuesta. It has definitely prepared me for my major and I will miss it dearly.

I liked that there was options for distance learning.

Thank you

Sad to leave

My experience at Cuesta College has helped me become a far better student than I was before entering Cuesta. From being able to write essays on my own, to managing my own time effectively. My life has changed greatly because of my experience at Cuesta.

Cuesta's nursing instructors are fabulous. They are a wealth of knowledge and incredibly supportive.

Cuesta College inspired me to be the person I always wanted to be. You guys do your job well.

I believe the professors (all of the men professors, all of my women teachers were extremely pride) were amazing. They genuinely cared about the subject they were teaching and were willing to except that not everyone is interested in their subject, but still need to pass the class with a decent grade

Had a blast finishing up and getting ready to transfer, Thanks!

The counseling department needs WORK but the professors and admin are amazing

I have earned my AA by taking night classes and online classes, during my time at Cuesta I did not meet one teacher I didn't like. Each instructor was knowledgeable, friendly, and really cared about the quality of education they provided. I am thankful we have such a nice college readily available for the community. Thank you Cuesta College for all you provide.

I transferred to Cuesta from Saddleback, I thought I didn't like Cuesta when I got there but with the semester ending, I realized that the teachers at Cuesta care a lot more than my previous school (at least the ones I had). They all updated our class with emails continuously, provided extra help or had class tutors, and overall just cared a lot about my success.

I learned so much to help me into the workforce.

I had an "OUTSTANDING" time at Cuesta. I thank all my teachers.

Loved it. Some of the most rewarding years of my life

I have loved my time at Cuesta. I love the teachers, classes, and atmosphere.

I had a great time at Cuesta, thanks for everything!

Cuesta has taught me many things about life outside of school. I have learned to think critically and should always exceed my own expectations.

Classes offered outside of general work times (8-5) were extremely beneficial, and online courses made my degrees possible.

Cuesta was great, if I had to do it all over again I would pick this school again.

With the exception of one English class, where the instructor glorified dodging the war, I loved all the courses I took at Cuesta.

I feel that all the teachers I encountered at Cuesta had a passion to help their students succeed.

"Although many teachers at Cuesta taught me critical thinking and strategies that have improved my life one of the most influential teacher in my life was Dr. Brent LaMon. He instructed his students to always question what they hear. To look for truth before just believing. Amazing mind. Amazing man!

Thank you Cuesta"

Joe Vasta (math), Mr. Hiding (English), Sherilyn Young (Family Studies), and Steve Hendricks (science) were the best instructors I've had at Cuesta. Steve is the reason I love bio so much. Sherilyn was the reason I wanted to pursue Family and Marriage Counseling.

Excellent training with world class standards