

ARC Testing Center Accreditation Narrative

Core Component 3b: *The organization values and supports effective teaching.*

The ARC Testing Center allows instructors to administer tests in alternative formats and/or timeslots, to arrange testing accommodations for students with documented disabilities or linguistic challenges, and (via placement tests and waiver exams) to ensure that their students are placed in the most appropriate course or course level for their knowledge base, which will enable them to be taught more effectively. Each of these functions “support[s] improved pedagogies” on the instructor’s part, and in some cases the tests themselves may also constitute “innovative practices that enhance learning.” (If desired, it might be useful to elicit testimonies from selected faculty on how the Testing Center helps them improve pedagogy and enhance learning.)

Core Component 3c: *The organization creates effective learning environments.*

The Testing Center, by its very nature, provides an environment in which students and instructors across the Webster main campus can complete a variety of assessment instruments, allowing the results to “inform improvements in curriculum, pedagogy, instructional resources, and student services.”

Our accommodations and availability for students with disabilities, students with ESL-related challenges, and non-traditional students certainly “supports all learners and respects the diversity they bring,” and our willingness to offer test proctoring services for Webster courses based online or at other campuses just as clearly “support[s] learning throughout the student’s experience regardless of the location of the student.” (As support for this, it might be useful to consult current Testing Center statistics on the types of students who utilize our services.)

We are constantly “employ[ing], where appropriate, new technologies that enhance effective learning environments for students.” For instance, we currently offer a plethora of examinations online for either college credit (DANTES/DSST, CLEP) or placement (foreign languages, graduate accounting and economics). Our testing computers and other media equipment also allow students to take tests which feature computer-based, multimedia, or online components. (Over the past several months we have administered tests requiring cassette tapes, CDs, use of MS Excel, use of assorted websites....)

It is also worth noting informally that our student employees (a racially and socioeconomically diverse group) learn through experience and frequently combine their work in the Testing Center with additional peer tutoring, peer mentoring, or student leadership responsibilities.

Core Component 3d: *The organization's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.*

It is perhaps obvious that the Testing Center is itself a resource which “supports student learning and effective teaching,” but we also offer some additional services toward that end apart from testing facilities:

- Study guides for exams including DANTES/DSST and CBASE
- Test-taking advice and information for both tests we administer and those we do not, in person and over phone or email (for instance, we frequently advise students on how/where to take Praxis or Excelsior exams, and less frequently we receive questions about everything from GEDs to the CPA exam!)
- Answers to faculty questions about testing accommodations and test administration options
- Handouts dealing with study and test-taking skills
- Ongoing help for test-taking students in “using technology effectively” from our Coordinator and trained student employees (“effective staffing and support”)