

## Palomar College Benchmarks for Core Skills – First Draft

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### A. Communication

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Students will communicate effectively in many different situations, involving diverse people and viewpoints.

**1. Listening:** Students will listen actively and respectfully to analyze the substance of others' comments.

#### **Beginner**

- Avoid interrupting the speaker.
- Summarize speaker's main points when called upon to do so.
- Integrate the message into his or her own frame of reference.
- Anticipate forthcoming points.

#### **Developed**

- Develop a framework for organizing the message.
- Differentiate between relevant information and information requiring further explanation or analysis.
- Take notes paraphrasing salient points.
- Ask clarifying questions.

#### **Accomplished**

- Differentiate between denotation and connotation; recognize irony, metaphorical language, and intentionally misleading language.
- Develop a framework for organizing the message.
- Summarize the speaker's purpose.
- Identify the relative importance of parts of the message and their relevance.
- Identify and evaluate evidence used to support specific claims.

**2. Speaking:** Students will speak in an understandable and organized fashion to explain their ideas, express their feelings, or support a conclusion.

#### **Beginner**

- Use brief opening and closing remarks.
- Clearly state and address an assigned topic.
- Develop a number of points appropriate to the time allowed.
- Express key points understandably.

#### **Developing**

- Establish eye contact with the audience.
- Avoid distracting physical actions and mannerisms.
- Speak understandable and clearly audible Standard English.
- Avoid repeated phrases or utterances irrelevant to the message.
- Develop a clear thesis.
- Use rhetorically appropriate opening and closing remarks.
- Differentiate points and move coherently from one point to another.
- Use supporting and interest material suited to the audience.

#### **Accomplished**

- Pay attention to the audience and speak directly to the listeners.

- Use appropriate gestures and facial expressions.
- Support a clear thesis, with supporting points, that move to a conclusion.
- Use concrete and sophisticated supporting material.
- Use audio-visual support, where it is called for, without creating distractions.

**3. Reading:** Students will read effectively and analytically and will comprehend at the college level.

**Beginner**

- Correctly decode vocabulary at the 13<sup>th</sup> grade-level.
- Understand and accurately summarize the major points of reading material.
- Learn specialized vocabulary through reading and use that vocabulary appropriately.

**Developing**

- Develop a framework for organizing the text and relating it to his or her own frame of reference.
- Correctly decode vocabulary appropriate to the reading material of one or more disciplines.
- Understand, summarize, and apply the major points of non-specialized and some specialized reading material.
- Diagnose some reading deficiencies and independently resolve them and seek aid in resolving others.

**Accomplished**

- Accurately summarize non-specialized and specialized reading material in two or more disciplines.
- Diagnose most reading deficiencies and independently resolve them.
- Develop a framework for organizing the meaning of a written text.
- Summarize the writer's purpose and the connection of the components to it.
- Differentiate between denotation and connotation, recognizing irony, metaphorical language, and intentionally misleading language.
- Identify the relative importance of parts of the text and their relevance.
- Identify and evaluate evidence used to support specific claims.

**4. Writing:** Students will write in an understandable and organized fashion to explain their ideas, express their feelings, or support a conclusion.

**Beginner**

- Write an essay or narrative of several paragraphs that they can read aloud understandably.
- Distinguish sentences within paragraphs, capitalizing the first word of a sentence and ending it with terminal punctuation.
- Write paragraphs that develop a main point.
- Produce a text in which paragraphs have a logical relationship to one another.

**Developing**

- Write an essay or narrative that moves toward a clear conclusion or thesis.
- Write paragraphs that usually state and develop a clear point.
- Support claims with evidence that is relevant and reasonable.
- Diagnose some errors in usage, spelling, and grammar, correcting some independently and seeking aid in correcting others.
- Express ideas in specific, concrete language and develop some specific examples.

- Substantially revise a piece of writing to achieve greater clarity, persuasiveness, or vividness.

#### **Accomplished**

- Develop a clear, significant, and complete thesis statement in an essay or narrative.
- Support claims by presenting credible and persuasive evidence.
- Develop and explain points in clear, specific language, providing concrete referents for key concepts that the audience can easily understand.
- Diagnose errors in spelling, usage, and grammar, correcting most independently and seeking aid in correcting others.

### **B. Cognition**

Students will think logically and critically in solving problems; explaining their conclusions; and evaluating, supporting, or critiquing the thinking of others.

**2. Problem Solving:** Students will identify and analyze real or potential problems and develop, evaluate, and test possible solutions, using the scientific method where appropriate.

#### **Beginner**

- Can identify problem types.
- Relies on standardized solution methods, rather than guesswork or intuition.
- Understands the level of complexity of a problem.

#### **Developing**

- Focuses on difficult problems with persistence.
- Can work independently with confidence.
- Sees the real world relevance of problem.
- Provides a logical interpretation of the data.

#### **Accomplished**

- Achieves, clear, unambiguous conclusions from the data.
- Employs creativity in the search for a solution.
- Recognizes and values alternative problem solving methods, when appropriate.

**3. Creative Thinking:** Students will formulate ideas and concepts in addition to using those of others.

#### **Beginner**

- Reads materials carefully.
- Recognizes differences between fact and opinion.
- Understands issues under consideration.

#### **Developing**

- Considers implications of data, patterns, ideas, and perspectives.
- Clearly outlines thoughts and considers issues, facts, formulas, and procedures appropriate to the discipline.
- Employs data from other disciplines.
- Demonstrates open-mindedness.

#### **Accomplished**

- Perseveres through complex issues and problems.
- Draws well-supported, logical conclusions.
- Uses a logical chain of thought when defending view.

- Eager to share understandings and exhibits confidence in conclusions.

**4. Quantitative Reasoning:** Students will use college-level mathematical concepts and methods to understand, analyze, and explain issues in quantitative terms.

**Beginner**

- Identify the quantities that are involved in the issue.
- Identify the quantities that need to be addressed in analyzing the issue.
- Make a prediction about the solution of the issue. (For example, the interest paid will be between \$50 and \$100.)
- Check the guess or solution against the issue. Refine the guess, if necessary.

**Developing**

- Have a clear understanding of the issue and be able to restate it in one's own words.
- Make a list of known facts related to the issue.
- Make a list of information that could be helpful in finding a solution to the issue.
- Make a logical guess about the solution.
- Check the guess or solution against the issue. Refine the guess, if necessary.
- Identify the different mathematical units involved in the issue.
- Identify the relation between the different mathematical units involved.
- Identify the mathematical units involved in the solution.

**Accomplished**

- Be able to explain why or why not a solution make sense.
- Use the logical skills, and develop a strategy to find solutions to the issue.
- Carry out the strategies and develop solutions to the issue
- Check the solutions against the issue.
- Interpret the solutions in the context of the issue.
- Justify the solution by giving practical and logical reasons.

**5. Transfer of Knowledge and Skills to a New Context:** Students will apply their knowledge and skills to new and varied situations.

**Beginner**

- Read the material carefully, or contemplates the situation carefully.
- Identify what the final solution should determine.
- Identify a few intermediate steps required that connects previous material to the new context.

**Developing**

- Read the material carefully, or contemplates the situation carefully.
- Identify what the final solution should determine.
- Identify some intermediate steps required that connects previous material to the new context.
- Be able to bring other resources to bear on the solution.
- Be able to see problem or challenge in a wider context.

- Recognize basic patterns from prior context that are applicable to new context.

#### **Accomplished**

- Read the material carefully, or contemplates the situation carefully.
- Identify what the final solution should determine.
- Identify all intermediate steps required that connects previous material to the new context.
- Be able to bring other resources to bear on the solution.
- Be able to see problem or challenge in a wider context.
- Recognize basic patterns from prior context that are applicable to new context.
- Arrive at solution expeditiously.
- Create complex analogies between new and old context.
- Go beyond solving the problem at hand to optimizing the process in a new environment or situation.

### **C. Information Competency**

Students will use printed materials, personal communications, observation, and electronic resources to find and evaluate information.

**2. Technological Competency:** Students will use technological applications to find, organize, and present information effectively.

#### **Beginner**

- Define and articulate the need for information that is appropriate to complete a specific college-level research project or paper.
- Match the information requirement with the appropriate resources, such as: format type; primary and secondary information; current and historical information; information representing various points of view; and scholarly versus popular press.
- Construct and implement search strategies appropriate for a variety of retrieval systems, including: online catalogs; periodical databases; statistical databases; online reference tools; and World Wide Web search tools.

#### **Developing**

- Organize and evaluate information from multiple sources based on usefulness, reliability, validity, accuracy, authority, timeliness, and point of view or bias.
- Read the selected texts, recognize main ideas with supporting details, and will synthesize the information obtained to meet the needs of a college-level assignment.
- Compile a discipline-appropriate bibliography of sources obtained through their research at the beginner level.

#### **Accomplished**

- Successfully complete a college-level research paper utilizing a word processing program, and other necessary software, such as a spreadsheet, data base management program, or graphics program.
- Successfully discuss, present and preserve the research findings using a variety of media, including presentation software and CD recorder.
- Successfully publish the final product of a research project on the Internet with software that may include multimedia recording and presentation capabilities.

### **D. Social Interaction**

Students will interact with individuals and within groups with integrity and awareness of others' opinions, feelings and values.

**1. Teamwork:** Students will participate effectively in teams, committees, task forces, and in other group efforts to make decisions and seek consensus.

**Beginner**

- Joins a group cooperatively.
- Acknowledge members of the group.
- Listens attentively to members of the group.
- Be prepared and reliable members of the group.
- Contribute to the end product of the group.

**Developing**

- Give input and/or recommendations confidently.
- Complete assigned tasks in a timely fashion.
- Respect differing points of view.
- Agree on group priorities, goals and procedures.
- Help to build a consensus.

**Accomplished**

- Take an active position in group by assigning tasks and/or speaking for the group.
- Take responsibility for end product that reflects the minority as well as the majority conclusions of the group.
- Encourage and acknowledge the work of other group members.

**F. Personal Development and Responsibility**

Students will develop individual responsibility, personal integrity, and respect for diverse people and cultures.

**1. Self-management:** Students will demonstrate habits of intellectual exploration, personal responsibility, and physical well being.

**Beginner**

- Demonstrates personal responsibility through generally good attendance, punctuality, and performance of required tasks.
- Monitors the quality of his/her own acceptance of responsibility and responds to advice or counseling where appropriate.
- Participates in the development of a personal educational plan by interacting with staff and others in shaping and refining his/her educational goals and strategies for achieving them.

**Developed**

- Demonstrates an understanding of the role of physical well being in achieving educational and personal goals.
- Participates in the development of a personal academic portfolio to document her/his educational growth and her/his habits of intellectual exploration.

**Accomplished**

- Develops and maintains an on-line portfolio to document his/her educational growth and habits of intellectual exploration.

- Selects institutions to which she/he wants to apply for admission, employment, or some other professional consideration.
- Identifies appropriate contact within the institution to send portfolio to.
- Sends electronic portfolio to institutions, including a cover letter addressed to a specific contact within the institution.

**3. Respect for Diverse People and Cultures:** Students will interact respectfully in groups whose membership includes such diverse human traits as language, culture, and physical ability.

**Beginner**

- Identifies and describes the aspects of a number of cultures, including their own.
- Can work in diverse groups when given the opportunity.
- Appreciates the variety of U.S. residents.
- Is familiar with the historical struggle for equality and justice in the U.S.

**Developed**

- Identifies many cultural and linguistic backgrounds and reflects upon cultural and linguistic prejudice.
- Understands cultural, linguistic and physical differences.
- Interacts respectfully with others in the classroom, including his/her instructor.

**Accomplished**

- Strives to be understanding and respectful, when working in groups with people who have diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and different physical abilities.
  - Proactively and compassionately influences others to respect diverse people and cultures.
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