

CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES
CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

1102 Q STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95811-6549
(916) 322-4005
<http://www.cccco.edu>



Basic Skills Expenditure Guidelines

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In 2007 Assembly Bill 194 created basic skills funding, intended to improve outcomes of students who enter college needing at least one course in English as a Second Language (ESL) or basic skills.¹ The 2007 legislation identified categories of expenditure, but did not provide definitions or details regarding appropriate use of funds in each category.

Acting upon a request for guidelines from multiple colleges, in early 2015 the Chancellor's Office convened a working group with representatives from the Basic Skills Advisory Committee, Academic Senate, Academic Affairs, and Finance & Facilities. The workgroup developed these guidelines, which were then reviewed and approved by the Basic Skills Advisory Committee, and ultimately the Chancellor's Office. As the need arises, these guidelines will be updated. Commentary is welcome.²

REASONABLE & JUSTIFIABLE

All BSI expenditures should satisfy two tests: Be reasonable *and* justifiable. "Reasonable" means that expenditures will be made prudently and with every effort to utilize funds efficiently. "Justifiable" means that expenditures are consistent with program goals and activities related to Basic Skills and English as a Second Language.

RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICE

At the time of expenditure, it is recommended that colleges create written justification which establishes the reasonable and justifiable *nexus* between a given expenditure and the basic skills allotment. This is especially important when expenditures are not *obviously* related to basic skills education.

¹ Basic skills courses are: English reading, English writing, and mathematics. The official definition of basic skills ESL courses is found in the 2007 legislation that created the BS/ESL allocation. It can be found [here](#).

² Contact the Chancellor's Basic Skills Grant Coordinator, Eric L. Nelson, Ph.D., at enelson@ccco.edu.

ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY

Ultimately colleges and districts are responsible for allocation decisions. This responsibility cannot be delegated. Colleges and/or districts can be audited by the California Department of Audits, the Chancellor's Office, or other government agencies with a lawful interest in the expenditure of basic skills allocation funds.

NON-ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

The expenditures provided below do not constitute an exhaustive list. An effort was made to provide an expansive set of examples of expenditures that are seen as *not allowable*.

Construction, remodeling, and renovation.

Gifts, gift cards, T shirts, plaques, trophies, key fobs, monogrammed give away pens, etc.

Basic skills staff or instructor T shirts, clothing of any type, e.g., monogrammed shirts for staff, jackets, sweatshirts, etc.

Monetary awards of any kind.

Stipends, transportation expenses, snacks or meals, etc., for basic skills students.

Air fare, rental cars, or other transportation, hotel, travel expenses, food, etc. for basic skills students to attend off-campus events even if the event is basic skills related.

Stipends for basic skills students to attend basic skills courses. This should not be confused with former basic skills students being paid to tutor in basic skills courses they have previously successfully completed.

Office furniture, white boards, flip charts, chairs, bookcases, etc.

Non-instructor staff salary or benefits unless there is a *clear nexus* between the duties of the staff person and the basic skills program.

Political contributions, professional dues, group memberships, or contributions of any kind.

Rental of off-campus space, whether for a permanent office or teaching space, or rental space for meetings, seminars, etc.

Legal expenses.

Expenses incurred by an audit.

Indirect or support costs, such as janitorial service, campus transportation, heat, electricity, etc.

Unjustifiable travel or convention costs.

Vehicles, campus electric vehicles, bicycles, etc.

Writing, revision, or production of non-basic skills courses, even if they are English composition, English reading, or mathematics courses.

Student assessments not related to basic skills education, e.g., vocational aptitude testing, opinions and attitudes, health needs, safety needs, etc.

Provision of non-basic skills counseling services.

Tutoring costs, for non-basic skills topics.

Research that is not directly related to basic skills.

ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

The expenditures provided below do not constitute an exhaustive list. An effort was made to provide an expansive set of examples of expenditures that are seen as *allowable*.

Category A: Program and curriculum planning and development

- Development of a basic skills tutoring program.
- Development of a basic skills curriculum planning guide.
- Development of a basic skills drop in peer help center.
- Development of online distance education courses for basic skills students.
- Curriculum development for basic skills courses in noncredit and credit, including new courses.

Category B: Student assessment

- Purchase of computers and equipment such as scanners, to assess basic skills abilities.
- Purchase of software and licenses for assessment.
- Salary of non-instructor hired to administer basic skills tests.
- Development and implementation of assessment intervention programs, including preparation for Common Assessment Initiative test.
- Research and development methods for assessment preparation.

Category C: Advisement and counseling services

- Salary of basic skills peer advisor or counselor.
- Salary of basic skills mentor.
- Purchase of supplies to create basic skills campus announcements.
- Creation and maintenance of a website devoted solely to basic skills.
- Cost of a basic skills email list that delivers basic skills information to basic skills students.
- Direct advising and counseling services for credit and noncredit basic skills students.
- Embedded counseling in basic skills credit and noncredit courses.
- Counseling and advising in support of learning community basic skills courses.

Category D: Supplemental instruction and tutoring

- Purchase of a web-based interactive program of supplemental instruction for basic skills.
- Purchase of training videos, or online training videos, or similar that supplement basic skills instruction.
- Direct tutoring to noncredit and credit basic skills students in basic skills areas.
- Supplemental instruction for basic skills students in basic skills areas.
- Salary of teaching assistants assisting basic skills instructors.

Category E: Articulation

- Cost of studies that evaluate degree applicable English and mathematics courses on campus, to identify important points of instruction to include in credit and noncredit basic skills course curriculum.
- Support for basic skills faculty to attend or host meetings and discussions on K-12 course alignments and student preparation as these pertain to basic skills courses.
- Stipends for meetings, portfolio sharing, and discussions on noncredit to credit basic skills course alignment and curriculum.

Category F: Instructional materials and equipment

- Purchase of learning materials and equipment that support basic skills noncredit and credit students.
- The costs for safe storage of basic skills supplies, equipment, instructional materials, and similar.
- Purchase of textbooks and learning materials used in basic skills courses.
- Purchase of basic skills instructional software.
- All learning materials and equipment that support basic skills credit and noncredit courses and students.
- Purchase of computers to assess basic skills abilities.

- Purchase of supplies to create basic skills campus announcements.
- Creation and maintenance of a website devoted solely to basic skills.
- Cost of materials distribution across a variety of media, to basic skills students.
- Purchase of a web-based interactive program of supplemental instruction for basic skills.
- Purchase of training videos that supplement basic skills instruction.

Category G1: Coordination

- Salary of basic skills coordinator, or assistants, or project leads for hours of service provided, not to supplant a teaching salary.
- Cost of seminars to raise basic skills awareness among noncredit and credit campus faculty.
- Cost of a consultant providing services to create, coordinate, and implement basic skills programs on campus.

Category G2: Research

- Purchase of electronic support equipment, hardware and/or software for in-class use by basic skills students, used to capture data.
- Salary of qualified researcher hired to quantitatively assess basic skills student data against outcomes of success such as matriculation into credit courses.
- Cost of creating a safe storage process for basic skills research data.
- Expended bandwidth of research capabilities and services related to basic skills noncredit and credit data systems and queries.

Category G3: Professional development

- Travel to events whose training will directly benefit basic skills students, will enhance basic skills instructor capabilities, or both.
- Replication of basic skills related training, provided by attendees who return to their colleges to share this knowledge with their peers.
- Cost of seminars to raise basic skills awareness among campus faculty.
- Cost of a basic skills professionals/consultants providing services to create, coordinate, implement, and improve basic skills programs on campus.
- Workshop, conferences, and seminars attendance directly related to basic skills programs and students.
- Support for learning communities for professional development for faculty to learn basic skills best practices.