**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Reporting Process and Outcome Data for the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program**

How does our reporting of process and outcome (P&O) data fit in with other reporting requirements?

You have three types of reporting requirements: (1) a semi-annual progress report; (2) a semi-annual financial report; and (3) annual P&O data reporting. You submit all three into C-PAD, but on different schedules. Your semi-annual progress and financial reports are due on May 10th and November 12th; your annual P&O data reporting is due on August 31st.

If I am not sure how to submit my P&O outcome data into C-PAD, should I include these data in my semi-annual progress report?

No. Each type of reporting needs to be submitted using the proper process. If you are not sure how to submit your P&O data using C-PAD, please refer to the table on pp. 16-17 of the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program Formative Evaluation Toolkit that gives instructions for where to go in C-PAD to enter your data, and walks you through the eight data entry steps.

I know that in the Planning and Implementation Map, the information about P&O data is part of Phase V: Continuous Improvement. I know we need to submit P&O data every year, but my program hasn’t gotten to Phase V yet. This is a little confusing, can you help?

Yes! Submitting P&O data is a grant reporting requirement – you need to do this every August 31st no matter where you are in the Plus 50 planning and implementation process. The reason that P&O data are addressed in Phase V is that evaluation leverages and builds on data you already need to collect as part of your required grant reporting.

So even if you are in earlier phases, you can refer to the Formative Evaluation Toolkit, Chapter 3, pp. 9-17 to find everything you need to know about collecting the data that you will need to submit into C-PAD on August 31st. The Formative Evaluation Toolkit is available in the Helpful Resources sections of both Phase IV and V.

Should we be thinking about the non-P&O data parts of evaluation if we are still working through Phases I-IV?
Yes! Collecting data for the purpose of continuous improvement will be much easier if you are thinking about it from the beginning: begin with the end in mind! There are some simple steps you can take to get started. If you have not already identified someone to be in charge of evaluation, choose someone on your team to be the Evaluation Team Manager. The Evaluation Team Manager should read the first and second chapters of the toolkit (only six pages!): “Overview,” and “Getting Organized for Formative Evaluation.” Chapter 2 will show you how to get started. Once the Evaluation Team Manager and IR Partners sit down and start planning, data collection should seem much less overwhelming. You will see the road ahead and it will not be too bad!

Is there a place in C-PAD where I actually track my P&O data as I go – for example, a place to enter the names of students who attend a career development workshop?

No. When you enter data in C-PAD, you will be entering your data in the aggregate – for example, the total number of students who attended your Plus 50 career development workshop. C-PAD will never ask you for lists of individual students, and it will certainly never ask for student names or student IDs.

Is there a tool that I can access that will help me to track and store data, as I’m collecting it throughout the year?

Yes. In the Formative Evaluation Toolkit, on page 15, there is a link to an Excel Data Storage Workbook that you can download and use for the purpose of tracking and storing data as you go. (The link is also in the section below that addresses where you can find a variety of helpful resources.) You are not required to use the workbook – we provide it only for your convenience so that you don’t need to develop a system from scratch. This is a workbook where you can do things like store a list of students who visit your Plus 50 Advisor. Note that the Data Storage Workbook is a large file; for this reason, it will save time for you to save the workbook on your computer first, and then open it from the saved location.

P&O data collection includes collecting data on “workforce courses:” the number of courses taught, and the number of program participants taking these courses. Should we count every course students need to take to complete a workforce program, even if those courses include general ed courses? Or should we count only the courses that are teaching the actual workforce knowledge and skills content?

We understand that your program participants will take some general education courses (e.g. a writing course or a history course) that are required to complete their
workforce programs. However, please count only those courses that are teaching the particular skills and knowledge required to complete the program (e.g. a course on medical coding (for healthcare occupations) or a course on counseling troubled youth (for social services occupations)).

P&O data collection includes collecting data on math, English, and computer refresher courses tailored for the plus 50 student population. We have developmental/remedial math and English courses that students are required to take if they fail a placement exam – but these courses are standardized and we cannot tailor them. Can we count the plus 50 students who attend these courses?

No. The idea behind this program component is that Plus 50 programs offer some sort of course, workshop, or tutoring service that is truly tailored to plus 50 students. Examples of this might be: (1) a short course or workshop that helps them to place out of the developmental or remedial courses; (2) a for-credit math, English, or computer course in which one section is taught specifically for plus 50 students; or (3) tutoring designed for plus 50 students that they can take concurrently with a developmental or remedial course to ensure that they don’t get “stuck” at this level.

There are a lot of tools in the Formative Evaluation Toolkit. Do I have to use all of those?

Not at all! The tools are there for you in case you find them useful. You should use only the tools that work for you. You should also feel free to modify the tools – it may be helpful to start with what is provided, but then customize them so that they make sense for your college.

If we report in C-PAD that we are offering specific workforce programs in the first year, is it okay to alter the programs listed in later years?

Absolutely! Your Plus 50 program will evolve, and that may mean adding or removing specific workforce programs. Each time you enter data into C-PAD, make sure that those data reflect how your program is currently structured.

C-PAD asks for workforce development courses, but the programs that we include in our Plus 50 Program are not actually out of a Workforce Development Division, but out of Continuing Education. Do they still count as workforce development programs?
Yes. As long as your programs are teaching people occupational skills, and preparing people for a degree or certificate (whether credit or non-credit) that that has value in the labor market, then the programs count as “workforce development programs.”

**There are students 50 and older who are taking lifelong learning, or enrichment courses. How do we account for them in our data tracking?**

Remember: you may count only those students who are *participating in your Plus 50 Encore Completion Program*. Different colleges will define “program participant” differently – but students must be both 50 and older and participating in your program in some concrete way. Usually this means that – at a minimum – they are taking courses in workforce programs that you have identified as *part* of your Plus 50 Encore Completion Program. Hopefully it also means that they are participating in support services, such as meeting with a Plus 50 Advisor. But it is not enough for them simply to be 50 and older!

**For our Plus 50 program, we offer services and training that focus on the job search, success in the workplace, and using technology in the workplace. Our program does focus specifically on programs in healthcare, social services, and education. So to count students in those three fields, should we track students 50 and older in the college at large that are enrolled in courses in those three program/career fields?**

This is a question that is both about data tracking and about program implementation. First, from a program implementation standpoint: the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program funds community colleges to provide workforce training leading to successful completion of a certificate or degrees in the career fields of health care, education or social service. Providing support services to aid plus 50 students as they are working toward their degree or certificate are much needed, *but those support services alone do not meet the criteria of a Plus 50 Encore Completion Program*. Second, from a data tracking standpoint: you should *not* track students at large that are 50 or older in those three career fields. You need to track enrollment data for programs in those three career fields *only on students that are defined as program participants*. And you are also expected to track report on the support services you have provided those plus 50 students who are program participants.

**We offered some courses as part of our Plus 50 program, but no plus 50 students enrolled in them. Can we still count those courses?**

No. If you have zero students, you cannot count that course either. On a separate but related note, if you have zero courses, please do not enter a number for students!
Can we use the surveys in the Plus 50 Formative Evaluation Toolkit for the purpose of conducting a needs assessment?

No. The surveys in the Formative Evaluation Toolkit are designed to collect information and feedback that support your efforts to see how your program is doing and to inform continuous improvement efforts (answering the question: “how could current programming better meet the needs of plus 50 students?”). To collect survey data for your needs assessment, you may want to use the Plus 50 Needs Assessment Toolkit (link listed below and under “Helpful Resources” in the Needs Assessment Phase in C-PAD). That toolkit has guidance for how to develop a survey, and a sample survey tool that you can tailor to the needs of your college.

Where do I go to find:

• The downloadable version of the Formative Evaluation Toolkit?

You can find a link to the toolkit in multiple places in C-PAD; it is the helpful resource listed in the last step of Phase IV, and in every step of Phase V. Here is the link to the last step in Phase IV:
http://sp2010.aacc.nche.edu/encore_sites/encore_src/Pages/resources.aspx?cat=4&res=16

• The downloadable version of the Plus 50 Needs Assessment Toolkit?

You can find a link to the toolkit in C-PAD; it is under the helpful resources listed in Phase 2. You can also go to it directly:
http://plus50.aacc.nche.edu/Pages/Plus50NeedsAssesmentToolkit.aspx.

• The Excel workbook that we can use to track and store data internally?

The link to this tool is on p. 15 of the Formative Evaluation toolkit, and also here:
http://plus50.aacc.nche.edu/Documents/Plus50_Data_Storage_Workbook.xls

• A list of Plus 50 program component definitions?

You can find a link to the program component definitions in Phase III of the Planning and Implementation Map. It is the first resources listed under “Helpful Resources” in the first step (“Prepare for Program Development”). You can also link directly to it here:
http://plus50.aacc.nche.edu/Documents/Plus%2050%20Encore%20Completion%20Program%20Component%20Definitions.pdf