

¿Tutoría De Matemáticas En Español?

WRITTEN BY BARBARA ILLOWSKY THURSDAY, 05 OCTOBER 2017



In a recent online discussion on the Basic Skills Coordinators Listserv, the question was posed whether any of the California Community Colleges (CCC) provides mathematics instruction in Spanish.

Chantée Guiney, a specialist in the Academic Affairs Division at the CCC Chancellor's Office, was quick to respond with text from *Legal Opinion O 06-10*, and an explanation about instruction in English generating apportionment. That cleared up the issue in relation to funding requirements, but what about tutoring when apportionment is not being generated?

An Online Tutoring Solution

The CCC [Online Education Initiative](#) (OEI) is working hard to identify and provide services that support participating colleges and students in achieving their educational goals, regardless of whether or not these services generate apportionment. Toward that end, the OEI worked with stakeholders to select NetTutor as the online learning tutoring provider for the OEI Consortium after a thorough RFP process.

NetTutor is an online service that provides “integrated technology and service solutions to educators in order to improve the quality of education and ensure student success.” In addition to online courses, NetTutor is used in face-to-face courses as well.

Feedback from one CCC student using NetTutor related that, “Through online tutoring, I had the opportunity to not be shy and ask how many questions I wanted. I had no fear of being judged.” This student happened to be fluent in English and received her tutoring in English, but what of those ESL students who struggle in their courses conducted in English? Understandably, many of those students may struggle to be successful in courses like mathematics or English, though the concepts themselves may not be the barrier.

Removing Language Barriers

California's demography shows us that a large percentage of our community college students may feel more comfortable speaking Spanish than English. NetTutor serves the needs of our Spanish-speaking students by providing mathematics tutoring in their native language.

Vincent Forese, President of Link-Systems International (the parent company of NetTutor), points out, “In some cases, the courses are taught in Spanish and therefore we tutor in Spanish. However, for most of our customers, including the California community colleges we serve, although the courses are taught in English, some students who are native Spanish speakers feel more comfortable talking about the English content to a tutor in their native Spanish. Our service is designed to meet the student in the place where we can give them the best help possible.”

Vice President of Strategy and Innovation Chris Bergeron adds, “Math en Español was born out of the recognition that some of our math tutors could speak Spanish, and by removing the potential language barrier, some students benefited from participating in a math tutoring session using their native language.”

We in the CCC are fortunate to have a strong focus on student equity and success. Math en Español is one more way to we can reduce the achievement gap in mathematics for our Spanish-speaking students and support the students in our colleges.

Visit the OEI website to find more information about the [OEI’s use of NetTutor, including information for faculty](#). Click [here](#) to find more information on how your college can contract for NetTutor.

Barbara Illowsky, PhD, is Chief Academic Affairs Officer for
the California Community Colleges Online Education Initiative