



# BASIC SKILLS COMPLETION

PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

LIFECYCLE OF A STUDENT

ADMINISTRATOR TOOLKIT

RESEARCH

## BASIC SKILLS COMPLETION

The Key to Student Success in  
California Community Colleges

Effective Practices for Faculty, Staff and Administrators



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### California

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California Association for Developmental Education (CalADE)

The Campaign for College Opportunity

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Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy (IHELP)

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# Foreword

by Ian Walton, Academic Senate for California Community Colleges past president (2005–2007)

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to *Basic Skills Completion: The Key to Student Success in California Community Colleges—Effective Practices for Faculty, Staff, and Administrators*. I hope you and your colleagues will find it useful in our ongoing struggle to better serve the large and hopeful numbers of basic skills students in the California Community College system. These students have an incredibly wide variety of goals and aspirations, and for many, successful navigation of basic skills in English, English as a second language, and mathematics is the key to their whole educational adventure. This is where we transform lives.

And it has indeed been an adventure for all of us since the heady days in 2006 when the Basic Skills Initiative was first created. The somewhat unlikely background to this groundbreaking project was the culmination of a five-year process by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) to raise the course requirements in English and mathematics that students were required to satisfy in order to receive an associate degree from a California Community College. A statewide conversation that eerily pre-echoed the current common core dialog made clear that for our students to succeed in transfer or high-wage, high-skill career choices, they needed improved skills in mathematics and English. The board of governors passed the ASCCC's recommendations in fall 2006, and they were fully implemented in fall 2009.

But throughout the sometimes heated debate surrounding associate degree requirements, every participant agreed it was vital for the changes to **not** simply become another barrier on the long, slow road to student failure and dropout. Our responsibility was to ensure that larger numbers of students would succeed in mastering the new higher standards—a tall order indeed. Out of this pressing need grew the Basic Skills Initiative. It was (and still is) one of the most successful system projects of all time because, from the very start, it combined three absolutely necessary but uncommon features. It had grass-roots support from

large numbers of classroom faculty and their ASCCC leadership; it had strong top-down political support from both the board of governors and the Chancellor's Office; and perhaps most unusually, it had ongoing funding.

Many people deserve credit for this unlikely journey. The apocryphal creation myth that mentions a late evening in a bar in Sacramento is actually true. While preparing for the following morning's Consultation Council agenda item about graduation requirements, three organizational leaders realized that accompanying the regulation changes should be a concrete proposal for changes that would enhance student success. Pam Deegan (Chief Instructional Officers), Robin Richards (Chief Student Services Officers), and Ian Walton (Academic Senate) agreed to draft and carry the initial proposal. It received a warm welcome as a concept and soon attracted a growing collection of ideas and people as it moved rapidly toward implementation. The board of governors endorsed the proposal as a primary component of the newly crafted System Strategic Plan in 2006. Vice Chancellor Carole Bogue Feinour provided academic leadership at the Chancellor's Office while Vice Chancellor Erik Skinner was the unsung hero who spirited up the funding. For an entire year, Chancellor Diane Woodruff included in her speeches around the state an impassioned plea to join her in making this project the number one priority for every one of our colleges.

As the vision moved swiftly into implementation, De Anza College mathematics faculty member Barbara Illowsky became the first statewide project director, and Foothill College's Rob Johnstone and City College of San Francisco's Robert Gabriner from the Research and Planning (RP) Group for California Community Colleges helped navigate the technical shoals of grant funding and research. Many of you participated in what happened at that point. In 2007, ASCCC launched a series of regional professional development workshops for faculty, staff, and administrators—to educate, inspire, and recruit cheerleaders for basic skills success—not from only a couple of disciplines but from all areas of the college that either would benefit from better prepared students or could help produce them. Many colleges

would later anecdotally report “the Basic Skills Initiative changed our entire college conversation; it let us talk about educational issues in a completely new way.”

The initial text for these workshops was the March 2007 first edition of the “Poppy Copy,” so named because of the color of the printed cover and its identification with California. The official title also made promotional banter difficult: “Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges.” But the content was fundamental and groundbreaking. It collected existing evidence-based research on successful techniques and strategies to address basic skills needs. This work was initially shared in 20 regional workshops all across the state, which in subsequent years led to a wider variety of more focused activities and additional research. Much of this was painstakingly compiled by the faculty trainers and coordinated by Bakersfield College biology faculty member Janet Fulks, Cabrillo College English faculty member Marcy Alan Craig, and Academic Senate Executive Director Julie Adams to create Web and CD resources. In particular, the *Basic Skills Handbook, Constructing a Framework for Success: A Holistic Approach to Basic Skills* was released in 2009. In subsequent years, a revised Basic Skills Professional Development Grant moved to the stewardship of Deborah Harrington and the Los Angeles Community College District.

And now in 2013, it is time to revisit what has been accomplished, what has been learned, and what remains to be done. To that end, the Basic Skills Advisory Committee commissioned the basic skills e-resource that you are about to experience. Here you will find detailed descriptions of many of the important projects and programs that resulted from the Basic Skills Initiative and the effective practices of the Poppy Copy as well as links to in-depth information about these projects and programs.

May you use it well to benefit all our students and colleagues.

# Acknowledgements

Many organizations and individuals participated in the leadership, planning, development, and review of this e-resource. Without their support, it would not have come to fruition. We gratefully appreciate the financial support of the Foundation for California Community Colleges and LearningWorks.

Dr. Barry Russell, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, always provides continuous support and encouragement to projects that move the system forward. We are indebted to the contributions of the California Community Colleges' Success Network, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, the California Community Colleges Chief Instructional Officers, the California Community Colleges Chief Student Services Officers, the RP Group, and the Basic Skills Advisory Committee to the Chancellor's Office.



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COMMUNITY COLLEGES



# Authors

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Dr. Barbara Illowsky is professor of mathematics at De Anza College, where she has been full-time since 1989. She is a past department chair and past president of the California Mathematics Council, Community Colleges. Dr. Illowsky is spending 2012–2014 working at the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office overseeing the Basic Skills Initiative (BSI) and meddling in other programs. She was the faculty statewide project director for the Basic Skills Professional Development Grant from 2007–2009.

**Faculty Leader:** Kathy Molloy

Kathy Molloy has been teaching in the English and English Skills Departments at Santa Barbara City College since 1987. During this time, she has served as department chair for English Skills and director of composition for the English Division. During her tenure as Academic Senate president, she led the senate’s Student Success Initiative. The result of the senate’s work was the Partnership for Student Success, Santa Barbara City College’s award-winning collaboration of tutoring programs. She continues to serve as chair of the Partnership’s Steering Committee. In 2010, when Santa Barbara City College received its first Title V Hispanic-Serving Institutions Grant, Molloy was asked to become the project director. Since then, she has worked with faculty from English, English skills, math, and counseling to plan and implement the Express to Success Program (ESP), which provides accelerated learning communities for students in developmental math and English. ESP received the 2012 Chancellor’s Award for Best Practices in Student Equity. Molloy has also worked closely with ASCCC, serving as the 2009 BSI faculty professional development coordinator and as an ASCCC representative on the Chancellor’s Basic Skills Advisory Committee. In 2011 she received the Stanback-Stroud Diversity Award.

**Administrator Tool Kit Leader:** Pamela Deegan

Pam Deegan served more than 36 years in higher education with 29 of those years in the California Community Colleges. She spent 17 years as a faculty member and 19 years as an administrator, which included service as dean of instruction at Irvine Valley College and Santiago Canyon College; and vice president of instruction (CIO) at Miramar College, Mt. San Jacinto College, and MiraCosta College.

Deegan served as president of the Chief Instructional Officers for California in 2005–2006. Her commitment to leadership was recognized with the 2007 Association of California Community College Administrators (ACCCA) Award for Administrative Excellence, an honor that culminated from nominations throughout the state. She also received the 2009 Carter Doran Award, which is granted to one CIO in California each year for leadership and vision.

Although retired, Deegan continues to serve the community college system by training instructional leaders through the CIO organization, writing manuals, teaching, and assisting colleges when called upon.

With...

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# Introduction

## Brief History

The California Community Colleges educate approximately 2.4 million students each year. The majority of first-time entering students (approximately 70–80 percent statewide) need at least one pre-transfer level mathematics, English reading and/or writing, and/or English as a second language course. Recognizing this need, in 2005/06, California Community Colleges Board of Governors member George Kaplan spearheaded the effort for the Chancellor's Office to focus system-wide attention on various obstacles our students face, including their need of basic skills. Realizing many of our students were not thriving, the Chancellor's Office commissioned a study called the System Strategic Plan, which identified barriers that confront our students. At approximately the same time, as you read in the Forward, the Basic Skills Initiative came to fruition and became an item in the strategic plan to help ameliorate the basic skills needs of our students.

To kick off the initiative, the Chancellor's Office commissioned a report to assist colleges in developing their action plans. In 2006/07, the Research and Planning (RP) Group's Center for Student Success published the study, "Basic Skills as a Foundation for Success in California Community Colleges" (also known as the "Poppy Copy" due to its distinctive California poppy-colored cover). This foundational document has three sections: an extensive literature review of effective practices with the findings categorized into four strands, a self-assessment tool that all of the (then) 109 California community colleges were required to complete, and a return on investment model to assist colleges in determining net downstream revenue when they are providing what appear to be expensive student support services. Since that time, colleges have been required to develop and implement action plans to receive annual funding dedicated to improving basic skills success rates in mathematics, English as a second language, and English reading and writing. The Chancellor's Office has also awarded annual professional development grants for one district to provide statewide professional development of the Basic Skills Initiative reporting requirements and leadership development.

Chancellor's Office staff have continued to provide ongoing support and monitoring for the wide range of statewide and local activities.

In summer 2012, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs Barry Russell, under advisement from the Chancellor's Office Basic Skills Advisory Committee, held a multi-day retreat of statewide leaders in the basic skills arena. The retreat's outcome was the consensus that, after several years of BSI funding, the system needed to examine how the BSI dollars had been spent and assess which interventions did and did not lead to increased student success. Thereafter, Vice Chancellor Russell commissioned this project, which was to include detailed descriptions of important projects and programs that resulted from the Basic Skills Initiative, the effective practices of the Poppy Copy, and links to in-depth information about these projects and programs.

## Purpose

This document is intended to be a practical resource guide for faculty, administrators, and staff to use as they develop, modify, and adapt data-supported and scalable programs and projects on their campuses. These programs include orientation, helping students learn to help themselves, classroom interventions, and course redesigns. Each year, the 112 California Community Colleges receive supplemental Basic Skills Initiative funding. Our hope is that this resource will help our colleges research, plan and implement programs and practices that will assist their students.

This resource is neither a research paper nor a thought piece. It is also not a step-by-step "how to." Instead, the resource is a guide to assist colleges in developing and implementing action plans for using their Basic Skills Initiative funds and any other available funding to increase student success. We encourage colleges to use these funds to institutionalize successful programs and practices and we discourage colleges' use to implement new pilot programs that cannot be scaled up or sustained long term.

Although we acknowledge there are societal reasons that contribute to adult students needing basic skills education, it is beyond the scope of this project to conduct research into such inequities and their history. Likewise, we acknowledge there are population subsets, such as older adults and returning veterans, whose specific needs we have not addressed, although many of the projects, programs, and strategies included in this document serve those students too. As a reminder, colleges should address all student populations in their Student Success and Student Equity Plans that they submit to

the Chancellor’s Office, and they should refer to these plans while developing their Basic Skills Initiative Plan.

This e-resource is a compilation of several parts. The “Reflections” section summarizes how colleges have spent Basic Skills Initiative funds. It includes a candid analysis of their allocation processes and the progress they have made in increasing student success rates. This section also describes interventions that have large data sets to justify their use.

The “Programs and Projects” sections describe the items, many of which are from organizations’ websites, URLs when applicable, and contact information when possible. For example, if you want information on learning communities, you can read the general description of them, read about specific campus learning communities, and read the administrators’ guide for information about what administrators need to know about offering them.

The “Administrators’ Guide” provides suggestions for implementing some of the programs and projects in the previous section. The authors decided to not separate out administrative leadership and tasks to the silos of instruction and student services because where a program lives on one campus is not necessarily the same as on another campus. Tutoring services, for example, is sometimes housed in instruction and other times in student services. In all cases, local colleges must determine which administrators handle which programs. This guide does not make that distinction.

Please be aware that due to the multitude of statutory and regulatory changes that are occurring at this time, citations may change.

## Conclusion

We hope you and your colleagues will find this e-resource useful in our ongoing struggle to better serve the large numbers of students with basic skills needs in California’s community colleges. These students have an incredibly wide variety of goals and aspirations, and for many, successful navigation of basic skills in English, ESL, and mathematics is the key to their entire educational adventure. This is where we transform lives.

# Reflections

In 2006/07, the RP Group's Center for Student Success published "Basic Skills as a Foundation for Success in California Community Colleges" (i.e., the Poppy Copy). This revolutionary document was comprised of three sections: an extensive literature review of effective practices with the findings categorized into four strands, a self-assessment tool that all of the then 109 California community colleges were required to complete, and a return on investment model for assisting in determining the net downstream revenue when providing what appear to be expensive support services for our students

## Lessons Learned: Summaries and Reflections from Five Years of College Basic Skills Initiative Funding

Since 2007/08, each California community college has received funding above its general funding to improve the success rates of students in courses below transfer level. The Basic Skills Initiative (BSI) allocations are based upon student enrollment in courses coded as CB08 (basic skills) in the English (reading and writing), mathematics, and English as a second language (ESL) departments. The purpose of this special funding is to transform how we teach students with basic skills needs and to utilize data to drive decisions.

When the statewide total allocation was approximately \$33,000,000 in 2007/08 and 2008/09, each college received a minimum of \$100,000. In 2009/10, the total statewide budget was reduced to approximately \$19,000,000 as a result of severe fiscal challenges. Since 2009/10, approximately 40 percent of the colleges have received the current minimum of \$90,000 due to declining enrollments in basic skills courses (largely as a result of state reductions in funded enrollment system wide). Currently 112 colleges plus the El Camino College Compton Center receive BSI funds.

## Summary of expenditures

Colleges have been free to spend their BSI allocations on courses, programs, and projects geared toward students enrolled in courses below college level as identified in the state management information system (MIS) code (CB21) for credit and noncredit classes in English (reading

and writing), mathematics, and ESL. Each year colleges submit reports to the Chancellor's Office documenting their expenditures. Through 2012/13, colleges had three years to spend their allocations before being required to return any unspent funds to the state.

Through 2012/13, BSI funds could be spent in nine categories: (A) Program, Curriculum Planning and Development, (B) Student Assessment, (C) Advisement and Counseling Services, (D) Supplemental Instruction and Tutoring, (E) Course Articulation/Alignment of the Curriculum, (F) Instructional Materials and Equipment, (G1) Coordination, (G2) Research, and (G3) Professional Development. In the first three years of BSI allocations, colleges reported they spent considerable funds on mini-grants. Most colleges reported that, in hindsight, small grants did not lead to institutional change. Overwhelmingly, these projects were not scalable, data-driven, or intended to become sustainable. They did not leave a lasting impact. Colleges reported they learned that instead of trying to be "fair" to all groups that applied for BSI funds, they needed to tackle the "big issues" of their colleges. As a result, expenditures in category (A) have decreased. The one major exception, however, is in mini-grants to faculty in pre-transfer level English and mathematics to work on course and program redesign for the writing and algebra series. Still in the experimental phase and with limited data for classes not taught by "star" faculty, these projects have the potential to become sustainable and lead to institutional change. Redesign is included here because of the common use of funds for this purpose and the state and national large-scale redesign programs in these disciplines currently occurring.

In the past three years, over one-third of the funds each year have been expended in (D) Supplemental Instruction and Tutoring. For 2011/12, 55 percent of total expenditures were in that category. Consistent with findings from other large-scale national and/or state research studies, claims of increases in success rates with courses (and programs) integrating supplemental instruction and/or required tutoring were supported by data. One of the major benefits was student persistence to the next level course in the next term after they had increased success in the course with the support services.

The next largest consistent use of funds, representing about 16 to 19 percent, was spent on (C) Advisement and Counseling Services. Colleges that expended significant funds in that category integrated counseling and advising into courses and/or programs. Services, such as the Puente

and Umoja programs, used along with supplemental instruction were touted as strong programs that led to increased success and persistence rates. What did **not** appear to raise student success rates was a straight addition of the more traditional approach of advising services with students going to a location to receive those services. However, what **did** show data-supported increased success, according to the reports, was when counselors and/or advisors went to the students, such as directly in the classroom and tutoring centers, and worked one-on-one or in small groups with students.

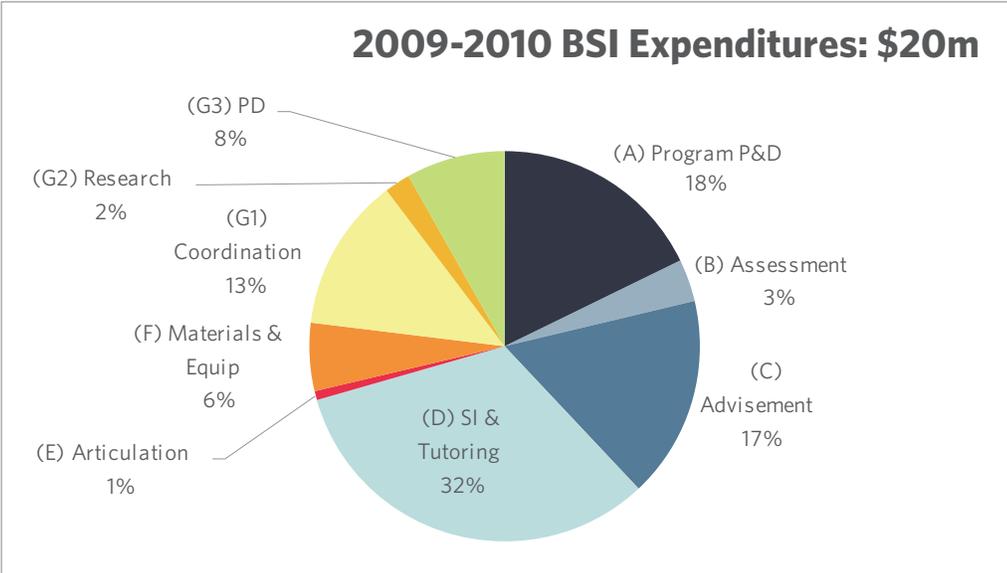
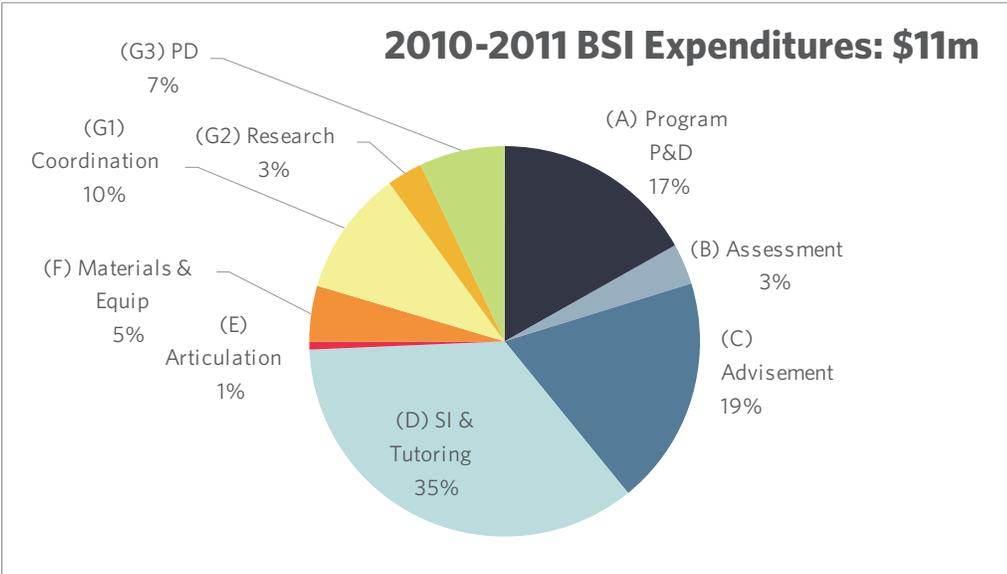
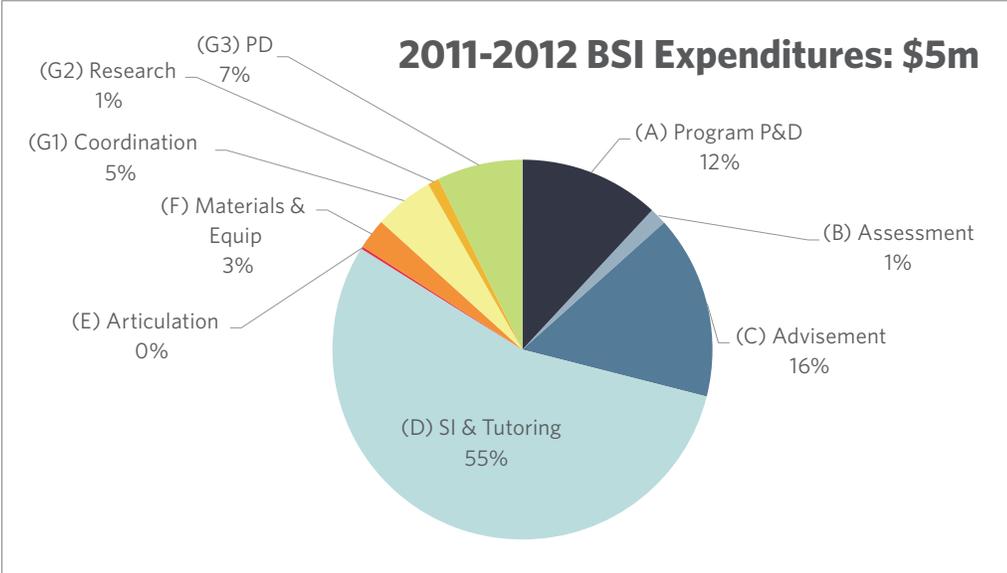
A variety of advising models integrated counselors into other programs and services, including the following:

- Establish one or two counselor offices in the tutorial centers in a location visible to students. Students sign up for an appointment, get assistance, and study in the tutorial center while waiting for their turn to meet with a counselor. Counselors and advisors walk around, inviting students to meet with them and conducting small group sessions.
- Assign specific counselors to four to eight classes. A counselor goes into those classes and pulls students out or works with them in small groups or individually. The time period can be anywhere from 3 to 15 minutes. To do so, the instructors and counselors must communicate so that the students who might be working with the counselor would do so during group work or individual lab time, not during active lecture.
- Students schedule time during class to meet with their counselor outside of class.
- Schedule counselor or advisor time in a class period or small parts of several class periods to work with students on education plans, study skills, and additional skill-building activities.

Category (G3) Professional Development has seen consistently less than 10 percent of the overall funds spent, yet colleges reported a variety of local professional development activities, almost all of which seem to be not only valuable on the local campuses but also mostly sustainable. Traditionally, professional development funds have been spent on conference travel. In the past five years, some colleges have developed faculty success centers, both physical and virtual, for faculty to get together and discuss issues in basic skills education. Colleges have developed

programs requiring minimal or no funding for faculty to meet regularly to share, study, and learn from each other, particularly colleges with flexible calendars and required instructional improvement activities. Some colleges have developed programs for disciplines outside of English, reading, ESL, and mathematics to educate faculty working with students in their classes who have basic skills needs.

The 2007/08, 2008/09, and 2009/10 funding years are over. More than 96 percent of the colleges have spent their full BSI allocations for those years. The 2010/11 funds expire on June 30, 2013; as of June 30, 2012, only 56 percent of those funds were expended. The 2011/12 funds expire on June 30, 2014; as of June 30, 2012, only 25 percent of those funds were spent. The expenditure rate is not consistent across colleges. While many colleges spend their allocations in the year they receive them, which is indeed the Chancellor's Office's intent, other colleges spend none or a small percentage of those funds for the targeted years. In many cases, colleges are holding the funds until their expiration year.



## Successes

Above all other success, the greatest increase in course completion and persistence through next level courses in pre-transfer English writing and reading, ESL, and mathematics was from students who received supplemental instruction and tutoring embedded in their courses. The next data-supported increase occurred when tutoring was paired with targeted counseling (as it is in Puente and Umoja programs) and counselors actively participated in discipline-specific classes.

At ☺ College, we have seen several basic skills interventions become institutionalized, such as the following:

- Counselors visit basic skills classrooms to inform students of resources, deadlines, and strategies for college success.
- English and ESL writing faculty serve as tutors for our Writing Center, assisting many basic skills students.
- Student tutors provide supplemental instruction in many basic skills math courses (and now other math courses as well).

Each of the above interventions has become part of how our college operates, including staffing and the burden of most of the funding. The most dramatic example is supplemental instruction in math because math faculty have reported that our students now expect to have supplemental instruction as part of their math classes. After assessing each of these interventions, we have learned they indeed contribute to students' progress through the basic skills curriculum toward their goals. Knowing that we have seen success with these interventions can help guide us toward how we could have created an even stronger program in other areas.

Other data-supported increases in course success and persistence rates reported by various colleges include the following:

- Having students complete a series of courses in cohorts
- Prescribing mandatory tasks for basic-skills level students: immediate enrollment in basic skills courses based upon assessment results; pre-assessment orientations and “boot camps” or reviews

- Having students complete directed learning activities ([“Opening Doors to Excellence at Chaffey College” on page 79](#)) at student success centers ([“Success Centers at Chaffey College” on page 80](#))
- Implementing bridge programs (successful but then stopped when funding went to others)
- Creating a faculty success center for professional development
- Creating a student success center (combining tutoring and advising).

These data-supported successes are consistent with national findings. The diagram below summarizes the findings from the Developmental Education Initiative.

**SEE FIGURE 4:** The Developmental Education Initiative: Student Success Pathways Model

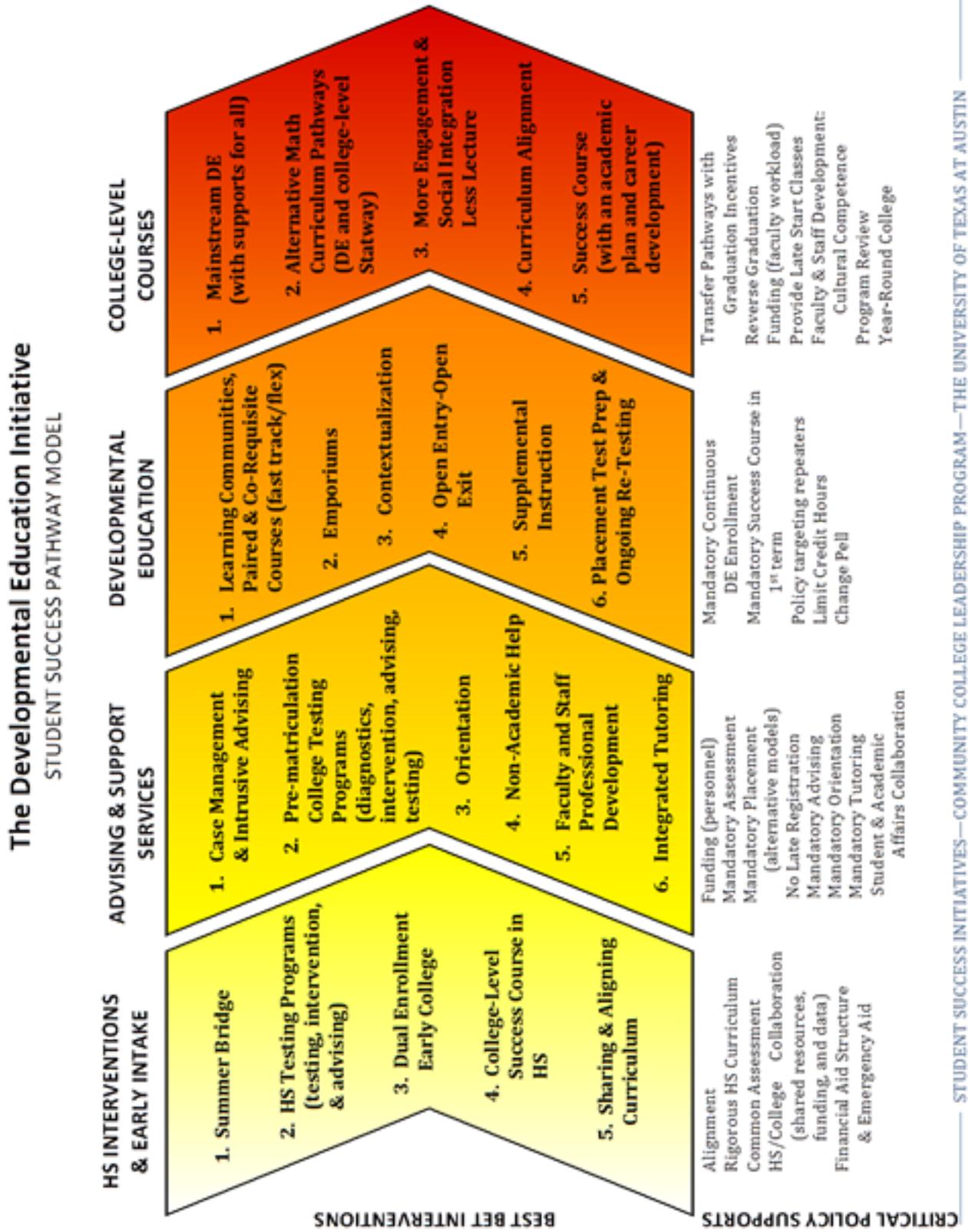
## Challenges

Reflecting back on the first five years of the Basic Skills Initiative, colleges identified three main challenges. By far, the most common challenges reported revolved around the effective use of data in determining budget allocations and assessing the use of BSI funds.

In general, colleges reported that in the first few years they had not used data analyses in deciding budget allocations. Commonly, funds were allocated and a narrative report was submitted at the end of the time period. These reports often did not include quantitative measures of student success. Some of the smaller colleges indicated they did not have full-time institutional researchers to support data-driven decisions. Thus, gaining access to useful data was problematic. Moreover, the actual type of data to request and/or review was not apparent to many of the stakeholders. These types of comments were mostly from colleges that reported using a “fairness” model in allocating BSI funds across the departments as opposed to using data to fund what actually works.

Several of these colleges reported that funding was distributed via negotiations as opposed to an analysis of data to determine which programs actually produced increased student success in courses and persistence. This lack of understanding also manifested itself when committees tried to scale up and institutionalize the practices and programs that were leading to increased student success,

Figure 4.



such as supplemental instruction, especially when the funds to do so would need to be redirected from projects that were not showing success. In general, colleges reported spending their funds on a variety of projects, yet few of those projects have data to support increased success rates.

The second common challenge was lack of coordination and process in the first three years; however, it should be noted that most colleges seem to have resolved this problem at the present time. This problem had two major contributors: a need for a BSI coordinator (many colleges have allocated at least partial reassigned time for faculty to do this job; other colleges have assigned this duty to a dean) and college leadership turnover of deans, vice presidents, and presidents, which remains a problem. The many campus silos contributed to the coordination challenges faced by the colleges. Campuses reported that although communication between instruction and student services is improving, the departments still work in silos. (For more information on this second challenge, see **“Basic Skills Instruction in Community Colleges: Inside and Outside of Classrooms”** on page 35.)

Another area in which many colleges have reported challenges with documenting student outcomes involves statewide MIS CB08 and CB21 coding of basic skills and pre-transfer level courses, many of which have been coded incorrectly for years. Although colleges have been correcting the coding of those courses over the past five years, inconsistency still exists.

Colleges with noncredit basic skills courses and programs reported difficulties in moving students from noncredit to credit basic skills courses. Additionally, the format of the noncredit courses generally makes useful data analyses extremely difficult to study.

## Lessons Learned

This year, colleges submitted a reflective report on the past five years of BSI on their campuses. Many of the “lessons learned” were similar from college to college. The most common lesson reported was the need to use data to analyze student success, persistence, and progression through programs.

**If we have the chance to do things differently, it would be to take a unified approach from the outset. Rather than creating individualized projects, we would establish the primary goal of a unified, holistic, and comprehensive program to serve basic skills students and support areas most critical to realizing that goal.**

Colleges are moving away from mini-grants and toward data-supported successful programs that can be institutionalized and scaled up. They have learned the necessity of documenting all activities and quantitatively assessing them. Assessment needs to be not only single course success rates but also program success rates. Colleges have also learned that if a project and/or program cannot be scaled up by nature of its design, it should not be funded. Several colleges also reported that data analyses showed which interventions are not leading to increased student success rates, which is very useful information for the colleges to learn. These analyses also represent an important system-wide cultural shift to a more evidence-based approach to decision-making.

Colleges reported they learned that students need pre-assessment workshops, advising, and instruction in mathematics, English (reading and writing), and ESL. In addition, students at the basic skills level should be completing an education plan, which is required by the Student Success Initiative beginning fall 2015.

Colleges reported a lack of understanding across disciplines about basic skills needs. More outreach is needed to students (and to the faculty teaching those students) who are not in English, mathematics or ESL classes but still have basic skills deficiencies and/or are in their first year of college. Another problem is a lack of persistence of students progressing through courses and programs. An education plan has been determined to be one of the major ways to encourage students to persist.

Most colleges now have some form of a basic skills coordinator. When an administrator is the coordinator, the responsibilities of that position are, in a sense, institutionalized as a part of the job duties. When a faculty member is the coordinator, that position is frequently funded by BSI allocations. Colleges expressed great concern that the position had not been institutionalized and could easily “disappear.” The basic skills coordinator position, whether full- or part-time, is being recognized as necessary and

permanent, especially if silos are to be broken down and communication across disciplines is to be increased.

funds to other colleges to use in the third year instead of returning the funds to the state's general budget.

**Table E2**  
Annual Successful Course Completion Rate for Credit Basic Skills Courses

	Systemwide Rate		
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Annual Successful Course Completion Rate for Credit Basic Skills Courses	60.5%	61.4%	62.0%
Mathematics Course Completion Rate	51.4%	52.7%	53.4%
English Writing Course Completion Rate	59.9%	61.7%	62.6%
Reading Course Completion Rate	63.0%	65.0%	65.7%
ESL Course Completion Rate	72.5%	73.4%	74.3%

Another change will be in the categorical spending guidelines. Colleges need to stop funding pilots that, based upon their design, do not have the possibility of being scaled and sustained. Colleges need to use data to decide what projects to fund and then to evaluate those projects. Fortunately, some colleges are already operating this way. This e-resource describes programs that have been scaled up and institutionalized and that have data showing significant increases in student success. Rather than develop new pilots, colleges are strongly encouraged to adapt successful programs

**[I]n hard economic times, it serves no [purpose] to deviate from effective practices, including professional development.**

to meet their local needs. Since both state and national data have shown supplemental instruction and embedded tutoring to be successful strategies, colleges are also advised to spend at least some of their funds in this category.

## Moving On

After five years and approximately \$120 million dollars, how should BSI continue on? From a policy perspective, has the investment from the state been successful? "Basic Skills Accountability: Supplement to the ARCC Report, November 2012" shows a statewide increase of the course completion success rates in each category of credit basic skills classes of approximately 1 percent per year. However, some colleges have had more significant gains in each category while other colleges have had decreases. In addition, much of the BSI funding for 2010/11 and 2011/12 has not been spent. Is it time for the spending guidelines to change so funds must be spent on interventions that have demonstrated success? What do colleges need in order to use data to make informed decisions?

The Chancellor's Office recommends the following:

Starting in 2013/14, colleges will have two years to spend their BSI allocations instead of the current three years. State law requires unspent funds to be returned to the California general budget at the end of three years. While many colleges have saved their funds for future years instead of spending them on interventions, others have returned funds to the state. With a two-year spending time, the Chancellor's Office can reallocate returned

Colleges will find the Basic Skills Cohort Progress Tracker on the Chancellor's Office website ([http://datamart.cccco.edu/Outcomes/BasicSkills\\_Cohort\\_Tracker.aspx](http://datamart.cccco.edu/Outcomes/BasicSkills_Cohort_Tracker.aspx)) to be a useful tool for tracking the progress of their students and evaluating their success initiatives. However, while we know that overall in the California Community Colleges, less than 10 percent of students starting at least two levels below transfer-level mathematics succeed in taking and passing a transfer-level mathematics course (both statewide and nationally), what we do not know is whether those students ever intended to take such a course. Students generally need proficiency at the elementary algebra level for many certificates and at the intermediate algebra level for the associate degree. Thus, we need a way to determine the percentage of students that actually started with the intention of transferring to earn a bachelor's degree in order to determine if those students are reaching their goals. Although the associate degree requires success at the English composition level, most certificates do not require such a course. Again, accurately determining the population under study is essential in order for the analyses to be meaningful.

The remaining foci are continual challenges the community faces. Colleges need to increase communication across their campuses. Faculty teaching non-basic skills courses still have students with basic skills needs in those courses. The work to support our students includes all faculty and

staff. Instruction and student services silos are still the common campus model, yet the barriers created by this model reduce student success. These last challenges are ones that do not require funding to solve. Instead, we need to continue educating our college leadership on their responsibility to embrace institutional change. 3CSN's BSILI (<http://bsili.3csn.org>) and Leading from the Middle (<http://www.rpgroup.org/projects/leading-middle>) are two examples of such professional development.

# Projects

All of the projects included in this section were chosen for their significant contribution to the goals of the Basic Skills Initiative, beginning with the study commissioned by the Chancellor's Office that identified effective practices in basic skills programs: *Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges*. Also featured is the recent work of the Student Success Task Force that is currently informing the discussion of effective practices in basic skills programs in California. The research projects included have added significantly to our understanding of the needs of students in developmental classes. Other projects provide effective practices for assessing, engaging, and teaching our students as well as professional development opportunities for faculty, staff, and administrators to learn about and implement these practices and strategies. All of the projects include contact information and links to further project descriptions, data, and resources.

# Academy for College Excellence: A Curriculum-Based Model of Student Engagement

## History

The Academy for College Excellence (ACE) is a student support approach that focuses on building intrinsic student engagement. ACE was designed by Diego Navarro, full-time faculty at Cabrillo College, out of a desire to help people transcend poverty through education. The first ACE cohorts began in fall 2003 after 15 months of student needs research and piloting of different types of affective/non-cognitive curriculum.

To date, seven partner colleges across the country are using the ACE model of student engagement and support, linking it to a variety of programs of study. Four of ACE's partner colleges have recognized the power of the ACE support model and have adapted it to meet the needs of career technical education (CTE) students navigating their first semester of college. In the last 10 years, ACE has served more than 2,700 students and has educated more than 650 faculty to use affective learning methods in their classrooms.

## Outcomes

A series of evaluative studies have demonstrated the positive academic effects of the ACE program at different colleges. In particular, studies of positive affective changes have been shown for students in ACE's Foundation of Leadership course (Foundation course). In collaboration with professor of psychology (emeritus) Martin Chemers and MPR Associates, ACE created the College Student Self-Assessment Survey (CSSAS) to assess students' perceptions of their own academic behavior, mindsets, perseverance/self-control, social skills, and self-awareness. In a study of 535 ACE students from seven colleges before entering the semester, after the two-week Foundation course, and four months later at the end of the semester, results show statistically significant differences in growth on almost all factors measured not only two weeks after completing the Foundation course but four months later after completing the ACE semester.

MPR Associates are also conducting a three-semester longitudinal study of academic outcomes of ACE students at multiple colleges. Not only are they documenting students' affective changes, but they are also finding differences in

persistence and academic performance. For example, in the latest longitudinal study report (February 2013) of 658 students from four colleges (where two colleges have scaled to serve more than 250 ACE students per year) compared to a matched control group, ACE students are more likely—by 148 percent—to complete transfer-level English within two semesters after completing the ACE semester. The ACE model does not provide any support to students after their one semester in the ACE program; it relies on the intrinsic affective shift produced in the student through the ACE curriculum during the ACE semester, and students also rely on the support services available to all students.

The current longitudinal study being conducted by MPR Associates corroborates the academic outcomes from the 2009 longitudinal study of the ACE program conducted by Columbia University's Community College Research Center (CCRC). It confirms the ACE model can be taught to other teachers and the program can serve between 250 and 350 students per year at a college with a growth target of 3,000 to 5,000 students. ACE has learned the parameters around adoption integrity to ensure both academic and non-cognitive outcomes at colleges adopting the ACE program. These studies are available at <http://academyforcollegeexcellence.org/>.

## The Model

Replicating ACE outcomes is accomplished through professional development and curriculum. The ACE engagement and support model can be adapted in multiple ways to meet the needs of a specific college, but all of the models begin with the Foundation course. A description of these models can be found on the ACE website (<http://academyforcollegeexcellence.org/>).

## Experiential Foundation of Leadership Course

The Foundation course is eight days, four days a week for the first two weeks of the semester or as part of a summer bridge before the semester starts. The daily schedule is full-time: eight hours a day, like a job. This is an intensive time to "light the fire," to build a sense of college identity and belonging and an excitement about learning. Students get to know other students and form a community. The experiential instruction of the Foundation course is a pragmatic amalgam of progressive education seasoned with behaviorism. The Foundation course is organized

around learning by doing; the content is structured as a series of activities, each followed by reflection.

## **Professional Development— Experiential Learning Institute (FELI)**

In order for faculty to understand the experiential pedagogy of the Foundation course, they need hands-on experience of the content because faculty's formal education does not usually include experiential pedagogy. The Faculty Experiential Learning Institute (FELI) is a five-day version of the Foundation course curriculum designed for community college faculty, staff, and administrators. Teachers who go through FELI find the skills they learn there useful not only in the classroom but in their personal and broader professional lives as well. The theme of FELI is "re-conceptualizing education."

### **MORE INFORMATION AT**

**<http://academyforcollegeexcellence.org/>**

(Includes webinars about ACE's affective student engagement model and presentations at conferences)

## Acceleration in Context

Moving into its third year of serving community colleges across California, Acceleration in Context (AIC) continues to operate from the premise that educational reform thrives best when faculty creativity and initiative are trusted to foster local innovation. AIC believes that best practices are only as effective as the best people who implement them—the faculty who work with students on the ground. To this end, AIC engages faculty around their passion for teaching, dedication to their craft while taking risks, and the complex contexts of their institutions and communities.

In California, AIC currently works with more than 20 community colleges comprised of 30 faculty teams from English as a second language, math, learning communities, counseling, and English—writing, reading, and integrated reading and writing. AIC also works with colleges and teams in several other states. AIC teams are all engaged in curriculum redesign; in most cases, teams are writing new courses, reducing levels in their basic skills sequences, and implementing dramatically new practices based on revised pedagogical assumptions. The AIC network shares tested curriculum models as a point of reference and inspiration for teams to do their design work. Most importantly, the models that AIC faculty teams implement work inside the local context of their college and community.

AIC aims to shift basic skills instruction from models that warehouse students until they are “ready” for college to basic skills instruction and counseling that immerse students in a college learning environment and experience from the first day they step on campus. AIC leaders, with decades of experience in higher education, believe that accelerating basic skills students requires challenging the whole educational enterprise as it currently functions in the United States. The majority of students coming to community colleges desperately need learning experiences that resonate in and with their lives **right now**. AIC faculty teams are designing models where the learning of basic skills and “studenting” skills are subsumed inside of “live” learning spaces that leverage student capacity and engage their affective domain, creating early on a sense of belonging and academic achievement.

AIC actively encourages many expressions of accelerated practice and curriculum by steeping faculty in seven core concepts: voices, practices, design, love, spaces, navigation, and capacity. AIC offers a wide range of professional development support: summer learning institutes, ongoing

consultancies, extended trainings, workshops, site visits, and more. In all of these professional development opportunities, faculty engage in exercises, challenges, and all manner of interactive work that spurs reflection and creativity. Deep questioning and reflection are encouraged, and space is provided for faculty to be vulnerable, lovely, wise, and sometimes off balance. The goal is to create a safe atmosphere where existing assumptions about student capacity—and faculty capacity—can be challenged. Faculty consciously break down old paradigms about remedial students—paradigms steeped in deficit and the belief that remediation mandates a step-wise, hierarchical, skills-for-skills-sake approach. AIC has had the opportunity over these last several years to witness faculty doing incredibly thoughtful, transformative, and even courageous work with their teams, their departments, and across their institutions.

Teams working with AIC are involved in many exciting endeavors, all of which can be accessed on the AIC website, such as the following:

- Creating models that stretch freshman composition across two terms while opening it to all students.
- Developing English as a second language curriculum that functions like an accordion where students move at varied rates, although always with the potential of accelerating.
- Designing new counseling practices centered around high-touch interactions and developing relationships with students that bring about identity and community.
- Integrating multiple levels of math into new pathways, with new assumptions and pedagogy.

What all of the AIC teams share is a commitment to dramatic redesign to facilitate moving students to transfer level more rapidly.

In support of its teams, AIC uses inquiry as a vehicle for innovation and implementation (the three Is). Bringing the many lessons learned while hosting the Faculty Inquiry Network (FIN), the AIC leadership infuses inquiry into the work of the AIC teams. Inquiry provides a structure for faculty to work from a deeper place of analysis and reflection, for it is when faculty cultivate ongoing collective and deep spaces that dramatic curriculum changes come about and old paradigms are defused. So much educational innovation falters because it tinkers around the margins. AIC’s work moves to the heart of the practitioners—pedagogy—and

the heart of the department—curriculum. By going to the heart, innovations are both scalable and sustainable. Major curriculum changes are made on average once a decade, or even less frequently! AIC works on reforms that are most impactful for the most students ([AIC Inquiry cycle](#)).

In addition to using inquiry in support of faculty, AIC leaders are pioneers in uncovering student voices. Offering a mix of practical advice and theoretical underpinnings, AIC trains faculty to access—and make visible—student voices through field research strategies, video, multi-media, and other means, in order to gain deeper understanding of how basic skills students learn and how they perceive their own educational experiences. The AIC team has a long history of creating a rich variety of educational videos, ranging from interviews with a single student or teacher to full-length award-winning documentaries. These student voice videos—most always made with the collaboration of student co-inquirers—are used in classrooms and professional development settings alike ([AIC educational documentaries](#)).

AIC's work continues to evolve, with the approach being to work with teams wherever they are in their development and whenever the time is right. AIC leaders work vertically, from students to chancellors, and laterally, across disciplines and college, always encouraging acceleration discussions across disciplines since students are not served by accelerating in one pocket of basic skills while getting stuck in others. As AIC teams make visible their work in the coming years, AIC will actively share its work and inform the discussion on developmental education.

Tom deWit and Sean McFarland, AIC co-Directors

#### **MORE INFORMATION AT**

<http://the-initiative.accelerationincontext.net>

(AIC's seven core concepts, representations of work being done by AIC teams, as well as dozens of posts and videos relevant to basic skills instruction)

<http://vimeo.com/channels/156165> (AIC educational documentaries on all aspects of the college experience)

<http://umojacommunity.org/> (The Umoja Community—a statewide consortium of educators committed to the academic success of African American and other students—is an important AIC partner)

<http://facultyinquiry.net/the-faculty-inquiry-cycle/>

(A robust set of resources for doing faculty inquiry)

## Alliance for Language Learners' Integration, Education, and Success

### Enabling English-learner Adults to Participate in Economic and Community Life

The Alliance for Language Learners' Integration, Education, and Success (ALLIES) strengthens the Silicon Valley's regional economy by providing educational and other services so English-learner adults can participate fully in the workforce, community life, and as the first teachers of their children. We promote coordination across educational providers and support implementation of best practices. Funded by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, ALLIES provides collaborative venues and tools for English-as-a-second-language practitioners from the adult schools and community colleges in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties.

### Partnering with Workforce Investment Boards, Employers, Labor, Community-Based Organizations, and Funders

In July 2012, ALLIES formed a partnership with a consortium formed by three local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) to support a systematic and coordinated strategy across San Mateo and Santa Clara counties to build the workforce-related competencies of adult immigrants. The work2future, NOVA, and San Mateo WIBs are joining ALLIES to expand a network of educators, labor unions, businesses, and community-based organizations committed to best-practice alliances to accelerate immigrants' success in career and education. The vision is to create an effective and sustainable collaborative infrastructure to increase participants' educational gains and career opportunities, thereby strengthening our region's economic health and civic vitality.

### Addressing Gaps in Services

ALLIES addresses two major problems. First, due to high levels of recent immigration, the need for English language instruction for working age adults in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties far exceeds the available supply. Second, the service delivery system to meet the needs of adult English language learners is highly decentralized and lacks the common goals, measurement systems, and coordinating structures that

would maximize the collective efficiency and impact of a system serving more than 20,000 students annually.

The overarching goal of this project is to connect workers requiring English-language acquisition, work readiness, and career-technical training to high-need regional career pathways through a structured and coordinated multi-sector network across workforce development, education, business and labor, and support organizations.

The approach will apply the best practices of change management—clarity of problem definition and vision, ownership and alignment of key leaders, ongoing use of performance data, and disciplined and structured follow-through—to the collective network of service providers. The goal is to maximize the cost-effectiveness of service delivery for a decentralized system in much the same way that mission focus, data-driven decision making, and high degrees of engagement maximize return on investment of single businesses and organizations. Building a business-like collaborative infrastructure will improve outcomes for workforce participants and the regional economy by significantly improving system alignment around common goals, strategies, metrics, and ongoing communication.

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://www.allies4esl.org/>

# Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges

From *Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges*

## Executive Summary

In 2004, the California Community College System Office began a comprehensive strategic planning process for the purpose of improving student access and success. On January 17, 2006, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges unanimously adopted the final draft of the Strategic Plan.<sup>1</sup> The plan includes five strategic-goal areas: college awareness and access; student success and readiness; partnerships for economic and workforce development; system effectiveness; and resource development.

The goal of student success and readiness contains seven areas of focus, one of which is basic skills, as the Strategic Plan describes:

Ensure that basic skills development is a major focus and an adequately funded activity of the Community Colleges.

To successfully participate in college-level courses, many Community College students need precollegiate math and/or English skill development. The goal is to identify model basic skills and English as a Second Language programs and their key features and, given availability of funds, to facilitate replication across the Colleges. In addition, best practices in classrooms and labs and descriptions of effective learning environments will be collected and disseminated widely to inform and assist both credit and noncredit programs. However, noncredit basic skills courses are funded at approximately 60 percent of the rate provided to credit basic skills courses, which is a disincentive for colleges to offer those courses. The Colleges need to gather practices with high effectiveness rates, such as innovative program structures, peer support, and counseling, and acquire funding to implement these approaches to reach all students needing basic skills education.

The study presented here was commissioned by the California Community Colleges System Office to identify effective practices in basic skills programs, as outlined above. The Center for Student Success (CSS), which is

affiliated with the Research and Planning (RP) Group for California Community Colleges, was selected to conduct the study. The study has three major components:

1. An extensive review of the literature related to basic skills practices, as well as an overview of examples of strategies employed by 33 California community colleges and nine out-of state institutions.
2. A self-assessment tool which will allow colleges to reflect on how their current practices fit with the findings from the literature regarding what are known to be effective practices for basic skills students.
3. A cost/revenue model for developmental education programs that provides a way to explore the incremental revenues that can be derived over time from such programs.

The approach to conducting the study combined the intense work of a group of associates of the Center for Student Success with iterative reviews of each of the three work products by a panel of faculty with extensive expertise in basic skills. In addition, drafts of each work product were reviewed by Dr. Carole Bogue-Feinour, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, California Community Colleges System Office, and Dr. John Nixon, Vice President of Instruction, Mt. San Antonio College.

For the purposes of this study, the following working definition of basic skills was established:

Basic skills are those foundation skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and English as a Second Language, as well as learning skills and study skills, which are necessary for students to succeed in college-level work.

In order to establish criteria for “effective” practices, this document adopted a variation of Hunter Boylan’s definition of best practice, modified as follows:

“Effective practices” refer to organizational, administrative, instructional, or support activities engaged in by highly successful programs, as validated by research and literature sources relating to developmental education.

Over 250 references, spanning more than 30 years, were reviewed, making this the most comprehensive review of literature in the area of basic skills conducted in California community colleges to date. Study after study by a multitude of researchers confirms a consistent set of elements that

commonly characterize effective developmental education programs. These elements can be organized under the broad categories of organizational and administrative practices, program components, staff development, and instructional practices. A total of 26 effective practices emerged under these four major categories.

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://www.rpgroup.org/sites/default/files/RPBasicSkills2007v2f.pdf>

## Basic Skills Cohort Tracker

Launched in 2012, the Basic Skills Cohort Tracker gives community college faculty easy, online access to information about how students progress through their basic skills sequences in English, reading, ESL, and mathematics.

For all 112 of the state's colleges, faculty can select a timeframe—such as fall 2008 to spring 2012—and a level in a basic skills discipline—such as mathematics three levels below transfer—and see how many students started at that level and what happened to them as they moved through the sequence toward completing a transferable course. To illustrate, the tool shows that at one Southern California community college, 106 students started in their developmental math sequence three levels below transfer in fall 2008, and four years later, six of them had successfully completed a transferable math course (6 percent).

The Basic Skills Cohort Tracker also enables colleges to disaggregate their data by ethnicity, gender, EOPS, financial aid status, and several other student characteristics. This feature helps colleges identify areas for attention, such as equity concerns about the disproportionate placement of students of color into lower levels of basic skills sequences.

The Basic Skills Cohort Tracker was envisioned and sponsored by the California Community Colleges' Success Network (3CSN) and developed through a partnership with the Research and Planning (RP) Group for California Community Colleges and the Chancellor's Office. Through its regional networks and events, 3CSN has provided trainings to faculty in how to use the tool, and through its partnership with the California Acceleration Project, 3CSN has also supported faculty to develop and pilot curricular models that improve completion rates among basic skills students.

The Basic Skills Cohort Tracker received the RP Group's award for excellence in statewide research in 2012. The Chancellor's Office now requires all colleges to use the tool to complete their ESL/Basic Skills Allocation End-of-Year Report.

**MORE INFORMATION AT** the following:

<http://datamart.cccco.edu/Default.aspx>

(Basic Skills Cohort Tracker on state Chancellor's office Data Mart system)

<http://3csn.org/basic-skills-cohort-tracking-tool/>

(Webinar introducing the tool and guidelines for use)

## Basic Skills Coordinators

From *Who Coordinates Your Campus-wide Basic Skills Efforts? Effective Organizational Practices in Basic Skills* by Janet Fulks and Marcy Alancraig, BSI Project Coordinators

Several factors are essential to help colleges address student success, particularly in basic skills education. Because 75-85% of our first year students assess at precollegiate levels in one or more of the foundational skills (in math, reading, or writing), we must look at student success in a new way. This requires a college-wide effort. The Basic Skills Initiative was designed to help California community colleges address this issue and provided some funding for the effort.

Collegiate success depends upon college-level skills, and yet we have no uniform requirements in the California community colleges that direct students to address these basic skills needs before taking college-level courses. As a matter of fact, according to statistics from the System Office, we know that of those 75-85% of students who assess into basic skills classes, only 27.4% are actually enrolled in courses that address those needs. Where are the rest? Taking collegiate level courses!

This affects the entire college community, in addition to the lives and academic progress of those students with basic skills needs. And, while we know that this issue about missing skills is an important issue for each individual community college, it is also becoming the focus of many external entities looking at California community colleges. How might we address this in the most effective way?

Many colleges in the past have responded to this need by creating programs in different areas across their campuses. While many of these programs have been wonderfully successful, they work with only a small cohort of students and are housed in pockets of a college. According to effective practices identified in *Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges* (2007), one of the greatest challenges with developmental education for many colleges is the lack of a focused and systematic effort.

Students with basic skills needs see their college career as a seamless pathway to their academic dreams. From Admissions and Records to Registration to Financial Aid to Counseling to the classroom, they are not concerned with each individual department's excellence or job descriptions, but rather the alignment of these disparate parts of their educational experience, working together to create a

pathway to success. Though many sectors of an institution do excellent work with students who have basic skills needs, unless those labors are coordinated, the students' overall experience may be disjointed or unsuccessful.

For many colleges, the creation of a faculty Basic Skills Coordinator has been the most effective solution to integrate and drive the services and courses they provide for students with basic skills needs **ACROSS** the college and between the various departments, disciplines and services. Most of these coordinators are faculty positions that have an undetermined length of service. Some are defined as the chair of Student Success Committees, others act in a department chair role for Academic Development departments, and still others serve as a connection between student services, tutoring centers, and instruction. It is very clear that the requirement for campus-wide dialogue to determine the best place to invest Basic Skills Initiative funding requires coordination, planning and inclusion of areas that have not been part of the basic skills discussions in the past.

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://asccc.org/content/who-coordinates-your-campus-wide-basic-skills-efforts-effective-organizational-practices-bas>

# The Basic Skills Handbook— Constructing a Framework for Success: A Holistic Approach to Basic Skills

From *The Basic Skills Handbook—Constructing a Framework for Success: A Holistic Approach to Basic Skills*

## Introduction:

Welcome to *Constructing a Framework for Success: A Holistic Approach to Basic Skills*, a handbook for faculty, student services personnel, and administrators working with students that have basic skills needs. Because research in California tells us that 70–85% of our entering students assess into basic skills courses in one or more areas, we know that helping them to achieve collegiate level is a task for everyone. Each of us is contributors to the college framework that houses those students' academic dreams. This handbook is for those of you with construction tools in your hands, the ones who are actively working to help these particular students succeed. You are the important folks striving to provide students with the skills needed to reach the penthouse suite of their academic goals. Some of you may be teaching specific basic skills courses or teaching transfer courses that include students with basic skills needs, staffing tutoring labs, providing student services, helping to develop Basic Skills Action Plans or acting as a Basic Skills Coordinator. Our goal is to honor your hard work and to excite you with new building techniques to try.

## Why This Handbook?

In *The State of Basic Skills Instruction in California Community Colleges* Grubb and Associates, in a national study based on observations of community college classes, found the best and the worst teaching in this arena. Instruction ranged from “the most inspired student- and learning-centered approaches and the most deadly drill-and-kill classes” (Grubb, p. 174). They cited the need for citizens and legislators to recognize the difference between the popular notion that institutions have “dumbed down” courses to match lowered student and instructor expectations and a carefully designed and rigorous course of remediation. They conclude, “we can see that developmental [i.e., basic skills] education is one of the most difficult teaching challenges and needs to be rescued from its second-hand status. (as cited in ASCCC, 2000, p.4)

Instead, precollegiate assessment and basic skills education acts like those regular building inspections during construction, examining weaknesses and then rebuilding foundational skills for a longer lasting more successful college career.

The California Community College Chancellor's Office *Report on the System's Current Programs in English as a Second Language (ESL) and Basic Skills* captured what is happening here in California. It stated,

Assisting underprepared students to be successful in college-level work is essential to the mission of the California Community Colleges. Research indicates that our colleges have many successes which are laudable. More than any other postsecondary segment in California, the community colleges exemplify the spirit of the California Education Code Section 66201 which affords each able Californian an unparalleled educational opportunity:

It is the intent of the Legislature that each resident of California who has the capacity to benefit from higher education should have the opportunity to enroll in an institution of higher education. Once enrolled, each individual should have the opportunity to continue as long and as far as his or her capacity and motivation, as indicated by academic performance and commitment to educational advancement, will lead him or her to meet academic standards and institutional requirements. (Board of Governors, 2008, p. 32)

California is unique in that we are obligated by the Education Code to provide basic skills instruction. The Legislature has recognized that mission and its vital importance by funding the Basic Skills Initiative (BSI), a multi-year effort to improve curriculum, instruction, student services, assessment, program practices, and campus culture in the areas of ESL and basic skills across the state.

This handbook is part of that BSI effort. It is packed with the kinds of specific strategies that Grubb and Associates lauded in their study; think of it as a tool kit. Many practices are designed for you to use immediately, while others, such as successful programs, will give you ideas for more long-term approaches for student success. Every strategy listed in the workbook has a track record of proven success at a California community college or is brand new, created by a statewide team of expert teachers, waiting for you to test. Each of these is accompanied by an assessment that you can use to see if the strategy will work in your particular wing of the building (look for the measuring man symbol).

Since every college and indeed, each course section is unique and different, built from the construction materials that arise from the needs of your particular students, it is important for you to critically determine whether a specific technique or program works for your students by assessing the outcomes. Yes, this is the same kind of assessment we do to meet accreditation standards and educational best practices. These assessment results can act as an advocate, improving student learning and helping you build evidence to advocate for funding the good work you are doing with your students. (There is more about assessment in Chapter 15 and assessment samples in each discipline specific chapter.)

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://www.cccbsi.org/basic-skills-handbook>

# Basic Skills Initiative Leadership Institute

The 3CSN method for creating ongoing professional learning in support of student success involves three elements or phases:

1. Holding a leadership retreat, where participants learn the tools they need to carry out a community of practice, create a one year action plan, and create an evaluation plan for the community of practice results.
2. Forming the community of practice itself, where participants conduct inquiry, share ideas, (c) pilot change, and (d) document and evaluate.
3. Sustaining ongoing recursive practice, where participants create a cycle of inquiry and change, become trainers for the next generation, and institutionalize the work.

Informally known as the Basic Skills Initiative Leadership Institute (BSILI) and technically referred to as *BSILI: Leadership for Curricular and Institutional Transformation*, this week-long annual leadership institute forms a center for 3CSN, grounding, seeding, and complementing all its other activities, including the regional networks, communities of practice, and local and statewide events such as LINKS.

BSILI brings together 3CSN leaders and California community college administrators, managers, faculty, and staff to explore ideas for transforming curriculum and institutions to improve student success and completion. Participants build community as they acquire and refine leadership skills and design campus initiatives to implement using newly acquired or refined leadership skills. Since 2009, 3CSN has hosted four BSILI institutes: the first was held in Northern California and the last three have been at the UCLA Conference Center in Lake Arrowhead, CA. Over the past four years, **64 California community colleges** have participated in BSILI.

The BSILI experience begins with engaging collaborative activities that bring together faculty from various disciplines and campuses. Quickly, new alliances are formed, ideas exchanged, and visions reshaped, forming a solid foundation for the week's work. Throughout the week, participants learn about leadership practices and tools required to initiate and sustain transformation individually and at participants' respective colleges. Whether participants are faculty, allied

faculty, administrators, or classified staff, the leadership framework emphasizes the necessity of networking and leveraging the strengths present within oneself and on one's campus to generate change that leads to student success.

The most recent BSILI in **June 2012** brought together community college teams of faculty, staff, and administrators from 17 colleges, totaling 46 individuals in attendance. During the course of the training, each college team developed a project to implement during 2012/13. Some colleges focused on a particular basic skills discipline, some focused on merging instruction with student services, and others focused on developing alternatives to existing basic skills pathways. Additionally, individuals had the chance to join a Community of Practice (CoP) focused on one of the following areas: Reading Apprenticeship, Acceleration, and Habits of Mind. These newly formed CoPs also developed a project to work on throughout the academic year. The CoPs stretch across the state to bring together faculty across regions; for example, the Habits of Mind CoP has members as far south as San Diego and as far north as Los Medanos. With innovative use of technology, CoP members communicate regularly to move forward their innovative projects.

The BSILI experience generates innovation that begins with the individual, and this innovation strengthens and expands as the individual acquires leadership skills through knowledge building, ongoing collaboration, and informed decision making.

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://bsili.3csn.org/>

## Basic Skills Instruction in Community Colleges: Inside and Outside of Classrooms

The book *Basic Skills Instruction in Community Colleges: Inside and Outside of Classrooms* on basic skills or developmental education in community colleges is based on a three-year research project by individuals from the University of California, Berkeley and the RP Group. The research involved visits to 20 varied community colleges to observe basic skills programs. Altogether, the analysis included 169 classroom observations to examine interactions inside classrooms and 325 interviews with instructors and administrators to clarify influences from outside the classroom.

The book is based on patterns that emerged from these observations and interviews.

- Chapter 1 begins with an introduction to the magnitude of the problem in basic skills instruction. Developmental education is first and foremost an instructional interaction, meaning it must be examined where instruction takes place—in classrooms as well as in student services. The chapter then argues in several ways for the importance of understanding different approaches to instruction, and it outlines the “triangle of instruction” that directs attention to students, instructors, and the institutional elements affecting instruction.
- Chapter 2 examines students in community colleges. It notes the heterogeneity of students as well as the ways in which they are “not ready to be college students,” a common description that can lead either to blaming students or to providing supports for them.
- Chapter 3 begins Part One on the instructional settings of basic skills. This chapter describes the dominant form of instruction, which we call remedial pedagogy: drill and practice on small sub-skills, without any applications to other subjects or applications, and entirely de-contextualized. The chapter includes an analysis of various forms of remedial pedagogy in math, reading, writing, and English as a second language. It ends with some of the reasons for remedial pedagogy’s dominance.
- Chapter 4 illustrates various innovations in colleges: idiosyncratic innovation, innovation initiated

by departments, Reading Apprenticeship, and the writing process. They provide evidence that developmental education need not follow remedial pedagogy. The dominant process of innovation—innovation from the middle, involving senior faculty and mid-level administrators—clarifies why innovation on a large scale is so rare.

- Chapter 5 describes the variety of student services in community colleges, where basic skills instruction also takes place. Unfortunately, many services follow the practices of remedial pedagogy, and many are quite independent of classroom instruction, so the promises of student services are often unrealized.
- Chapter 6 describes student services in an exemplary college. These policies help us understand why many other colleges have less effective forms of student services. By this point in the book, many different answers have emerged to its central question: why are so many students “stuck behind the wall of remediation”?

Part Two of the book shifts from instruction to the institutional factors shaping basic skills education.

- Chapter 7 examines the dynamic aspects of remediation, especially the initial assessments, the horizontal alignment among courses at the same level, and the vertical alignment of courses in a sequence. The results clarify other reasons why students have difficulty completing the sequence of courses necessary before college-level courses.
- Chapter 8 examines the role of money and resources. While some aspects of developmental education require more resources, others do not. Therefore, the common excuse of insufficient funding for innovation is only partly correct. In particular, community colleges waste resources, especially in a pattern of funding many “little programs” that are ephemeral rather than investing in substantial innovations and reforms.
- Chapter 9 analyzes several smaller influences of institutional factors on basic skills: the dominance of the course as the basic unit of instruction; the limited forms of professional development; the position of adjunct faculty who teach the majority of developmental courses, and their isolation from the rest of the faculty; and the nature of the community college as a laissez-

faire institution, making relatively few demands on either students or faculty. This analysis helps explain why basic skills instruction takes the forms it does.

- Chapter 10 summarizes the previous material in two ways. First, it brings together the explanations of the forms that basic skills instruction takes. Second, it offers a series of recommendations, tied to individual chapters, for improving the quality of basic skills instruction.

Overall, the book balances critique with documented innovation. It leads to a series of recommendations, grounded in research, for helping students progress through developmental education to college-level work and beyond.

W. Norton Grubb with Robert Gabriner

Book available at <http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415634755/> (20% discount available with code ERJ60)

**Note:** In addition to the book, the research team developed a brief that outlines key lessons learned in the research, available at: <http://www.rpgroup.org/resources/transforming-basic-skills>. To help colleges understand where to start comprehensive basic skills reform, this guide identifies and explores four key changes that can be made to basic skills programs in order to significantly improve student outcomes: reforming pedagogy; maximizing the effectiveness of student services; creating structural coherence; and building leadership at all levels. The guide examines each of these components of basic skills programs, highlighting key research findings and providing discussion questions that can jump-start important conversations among community college administrators, faculty, and staff and help them gain a new understanding of how students experience developmental education and how colleges can transform that experience to catalyze student success.

## The California Acceleration Project

The California Acceleration Project (CAP) initiative was developed to address the staggeringly high rates of student attrition among students classified as under-prepared for college. Both national and state studies have shown that the more levels of basic skills coursework a student must take (i.e., English, math, reading, and English as a second language), the more likely he or she is to disappear without making progress toward longer-term goals (e.g., degree, transfer). CAP supports community college faculty to redesign basic skills curricula so that more students complete transferable courses in English and math.

CAP is led by faculty with experience teaching successful accelerated courses on their own campuses. Director Katie Hern is a Chabot College English instructor who has conducted extensive research into her college's longstanding accelerated course, a one-semester model that integrates reading and writing and has no minimum placement score. Los Medanos College math professor Myra Snell developed Path2Stats, a one-semester course leading to statistics, with no minimum placement score, for students pursuing majors that are not algebra intensive. At both colleges, students in accelerated courses complete transferable English and math requirements at significantly higher rates than students in longer sequences.

In partnership with 3CSN, CAP has given presentations to faculty and administrators from at least 95 of the state's 112 community colleges. The outreach emphasizes a few key principles for rethinking remediation, informed by local and nationwide research into basic skills outcomes and placement.

### Principles for Curricular Redesign

1. Increasing completion of college-level English and math requires shorter developmental pathways and broader access to college-level courses.
2. Community colleges must reduce their reliance on high-stakes placement tests.
3. Streamlined developmental curricula should include the following:
  - Backwards design from college-level courses
  - Just-in-time remediation
  - Intentional support for students' affective needs.

Through its extended professional development program, CAP has also provided training to faculty in their first year of teaching an accelerated course. In 2011/12 and 2012/13, more than 100 faculty from 30 California community colleges participated in CAP's Community of Practice in Acceleration, offering more than 300 sections of new accelerated courses.

The RP Group is conducting a study of these accelerated pilots in 2013. Early data reported by the colleges are very promising, especially from the accelerated pre-statistics courses, where student completion of college math is two-to-four times higher than in the traditional sequence.

	Traditional Algebra Pathway: % of students completing college-level math course (in 3 years)	Accelerated Statistics Pathways: % of students completing college-level Statistics (in 1 year)
National Data	20%	--
Los Medanos College	21%	60% (71 of 119)
City College of San Francisco	17-19%	37% (30 of 81)
Cuyamaca College	20%	81% (22 of 27)
College of the Canyons (PALS sections: pre-stats & statistics in one semester)	12-16%	78% (39 of 50)

\* Data as of October 2012. The above increases are expected to grow as the accelerated groups are tracked for the full three-year period used for comparison groups.

CAP is funded by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office through its Basic Skills Professional Development Grant to 3CSN. Additional support has come from the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, LearningWorks, and the "Scaling Innovation" project of the Community College Research Center, funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

Katie Hern, Project Director

## MORE INFORMATION AT

<http://cap.3csn.org>

(Project website with resources for colleges at all stages of implementing accelerated pathways in English and math)

<http://cap.3csn.org/2012/02/24/new-report-chabot-accelerated-english/>

(Research into outcomes of longstanding accelerated developmental English course at Chabot College)

<http://cap.3csn.org/getting-started/>

(Links to national research on developmental education outcomes and placement)

<http://cap.3csn.org/2012/06/14/cap-in-national-magazine/>

(2012 Change magazine article on spread of acceleration across California, including detailed description of CAP principles for curricular reform)

## The California Community Colleges' Success Network (3CSN)

The California Community Colleges' Success Network (3CSN) is a large-scale networked improvement community focused on providing ongoing, sustained, and transformative professional development for California community college faculty, staff, and administrators. **More than 9,000 individuals from all 112** of the state's community colleges have participated in the activities of 3CSN's professional learning networks.

3CSN is a learner-centered organization whose approach to professional learning is grounded in research literature on the following:

- Connectivity and 21st century learning (e.g., George Siemens, Michael Weiss, Howard Rheingold)
- Affective dimensions to learning (e.g., Carol Dweck, Rebecca Cox)
- Constructivist perspectives on cognitive development and assessment of learning (e.g., Lev Vygotsky, Mary Driscoll)
- Equity-based teaching and learning (e.g., Mike Rose, bell hooks, Lisa Delpit)
- Innovative approaches to professional learning and evaluation (e.g., Anthony S. Bryk, Louis M. Gomez, and Alicia Grunow's work on Networked Improvement Communities).

Recognizing that learning is a network-forming process and that connections and relationships are crucial to the learning process, 3CSN posits the following:

- Everybody (students, faculty, and staff) has the right to ongoing, sustained, and challenging learning experiences to further their personal, educational, and professional growth.
- Deep learning and leadership are facilitated by maintaining:
  - o An appreciative inquiry mindset, i.e., curiosity about what's possible
  - o A growth mindset, i.e., a belief that change is possible.
  - o A balanced focus on the personal, social, cognitive, and knowledge-building aspects of learning (Schoenbach et. al., 1999, 2012).

If we model these habits of mind for our students, we will accelerate their learning—and our own.

Beginning its endeavor in 2009, 3CSN began with four pilot networks throughout the state, linking colleges geographically closely situated as well as the establishment of the week-long Basic Skills Initiative Leadership Institute (BSILI). Within a year, the number of regions expanded and colleges throughout the state were exponentially increasing participation in regional and statewide activities and events. 3CSN has hosted virtual and face-to-face opportunities for professional growth (workshops, technical assistance, webinars, and online courses). The networked infrastructure of 3CSN consists of these "home-room" regional networks that work hand-in-glove to support and sustain 3CSN's signature activities, which include the following:

- **Basic Skills Initiative Leadership Institute**
- BSI Coordinators
- Bi-Annual LINKS conferences (<http://3csn.org/learning-in-networks-for-knowledge-sharing/>)
- Communities of Practice: **The California Acceleration Project**, **Reading Apprenticeship Project (RAP)**, or **Habits of Mind Project**
- 3CSN's learner-centered approach and commitment to model the best practices it promotes creates a space for emergent, faculty-driven innovations. In some cases, these innovations have profoundly influenced the national conversation about best practices for developmental education and teaching in general. For example, just as 3CSN added opportunities for structured, sustained professional learning in specific communities of practice in direct response to the stated needs of participants, it then further supported innovation by developing professional learning experiences and tools as need or demand for them emerged. One example of this improvement cycle in action is the development of the Basic Skills Cohort Tracking Tool (<http://3csn.org/basic-skills-cohort-tracking-tool/>). The tool directly supports the work of the California Acceleration Project, but it has also become an essential inquiry tool for colleges in their quest to improve student success rates.

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://3csn.org/>

## The Course Identification Numbering System

The Course Identification Number System (C-ID) began as a two-year pilot project in 2007 to design and implement a supra-numbering system that responds to mandates and the expressed needs of the University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), and California Community Colleges. C-ID also welcomes the participation of independent colleges and universities.

C-ID is an intersegmental effort to develop a replacement for the California Articulation Number System (CAN) that addresses CAN shortfalls and realizes the potential of a new CAN model that was never implemented. In 2010, C-ID's visibility was increased as its system of descriptors became central to the statewide effort to implement associate degrees for transfer (AA-T and AS-T degrees) at California Community Colleges.

The ultimate goal of C-ID is to facilitate the transfer process for California's students by increasing articulation among all postsecondary segments and institutions. C-ID responds to such legislative pieces as Senate Bills (SBs) 652 and 1785 (Scott) and SB 1415 (Brulte).

Community college courses receive a C-ID designation for a course upon the determination that the course outline of record for that course is consistent with an intersegmentally developed descriptor. C-ID descriptors are intended to describe the minimum content and objectives a course must have in order to be deemed comparable to similar courses. When a community college submits a course outline of record to C-ID, it is agreeing to accept courses from other community colleges that have that C-ID designation. Universities and colleges can also indicate their willingness to articulate all courses that match a given descriptor, effectively creating a "one-to-many" articulation option.

C-ID has the potential to improve student goal-achievement by simplifying the identification of comparable courses as students navigate California's higher education system. For faculty, C-ID offers course descriptors that have been developed and vetted statewide as a minimum standard when developing or updating courses.

## Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC)

On September 29, 2010, SB 1440 (Padilla) was signed by the governor and required prompt action by the California Community Colleges to develop new "associate degrees for transfer," available to students by 2011/12. Completion of one of these degrees would guarantee a student's acceptance into a CSU and major deemed "similar" to the major completed at the community college as well as a pathway to CSU degree completion in 60 units. In response to the bill, leadership from the California Community Colleges and CSU Academic Senate determined C-ID's established infrastructure not only would be the best method to implement SB 1440, but its statewide approach to implementation would result in a system that exceeded the legislation's goals by permitting students to complete one transfer package at a community college that would be deemed acceptable by all or most CSUs with a given major (as opposed to having to meet the requirements of multiple CSUs to ensure acceptance). Thus, the Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) process was created as a means of facilitating a statewide response to the legislation.

SB 1440 requires the transfer degree to consist of no more than 60 units, and it prohibits community colleges from imposing additional local requirements on students. For each discipline, the TMC consists of a required "core" set of courses and then typically includes an additional list (or lists) of courses with varying flexibility that allows for the creation of locally developed degrees. When a community college develops an AA-T or AS-T that aligns with a TMC, it receives expedited review and approval from the Chancellor's Office. At the CSU, campuses review the TMCs and determine whether or not a student can complete a CSU degree within 60 units if the student enters having completed a TMC-aligned degree. If the determination is "yes," degrees aligned with that TMC are deemed "similar" to the major. The required courses in each TMC are described by C-ID descriptors.

Michelle Pilati, ASCCC President

**MORE INFORMATION AT** [www.sb1440.org](http://www.sb1440.org)  
and [www.adegreewithaguarantee.com](http://www.adegreewithaguarantee.com)

## Contextualized Teaching & Learning: A Faculty Primer

From *Contextualized Teaching & Learning: A Faculty Primer*, by Elaine DeLott Baker, Laura Hope and Kelly Karandjeff, Robert Gabriner, Project Director.

This report offers California community college faculty a closer look at contextualized teaching and learning (CTL) as a promising set of strategies and practices that can be expanded through the state's Basic Skills Initiative. The report is relevant to a range of instructional and counseling faculty, including academic and career and technical education (CTE), Mathematics, English and English as a Second Language (ESL) instructors, as well as to basic skills staff and administrators.

The report is organized into three main sections: (1) a case statement for contextualized teaching and learning that draws on relevant research and learning theory and situates the practice within workforce development, (2) a review of a range of contextualized teaching and learning practices, told from the faculty/program director perspective, and (3) a set of considerations for community college faculty and leaders as well as funders and policy makers interested in the potential of contextualized teaching and learning to strengthen student success.

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://asccc.org/sites/default/files/CTL.pdf>

## Basic Skills Curricular Alignment: CB 21 (Course Basic Coding for Pre-Collegiate Levels)

The CB 21 project developed curricular alignment through the re-coding of basic skills courses by a remarkable collegial effort involving faculty, administrators, and researchers. The project exemplifies meaningful participatory governance and displays the depth and extent of cooperative efforts in education. The goal of the project was to align student learning outcomes (SLOs) for every series of pre-collegiate or basic skills coursework and English as a second language (ESL) courses across 110 colleges. This included both credit and noncredit courses that overlapped in content and purpose but were taught very differently, with a great disparity of levels, numbers of courses, and methodology of teaching.

Initially, the impetus for this work was to provide accurate data for two accountability reports that monitored funding infusions into the California Community Colleges designed to address the basic skills development of its students. These two reports were the “Accountability Report for Community Colleges (ARCC)” required by Assembly Bill (AB) 1417 that reported basic skills/ESL success and progress and the “Basic Skills Supplemental Report” required by Senate SB 361 and AB 194 to provide accountability for supplemental basic skills and enhanced noncredit funding.

This accountability reporting was based upon the CB 21 code that had been assigned to every math, English, reading, writing, and ESL course to identify the levels of various courses in the MIS database. This data was then tracked for each student to determine successful progress through the pathway. However, the data quickly revealed that the coding used to track student success and progress was flawed and not comparable statewide. The number and design of the pre-collegiate courses varied greatly from college to college. Compounding issues was the fact that the courses were often incorrectly coded by people with no knowledge of the accurate levels, thus providing erroneous information about student progress.

Another major issue was that each of the 110 colleges had its own definition of “college-level” work and independently derived levels of basic skills. The colleges had individually developed their own basic skills curricular content with

widely differing numbers of levels required for a student to reach an ambiguous and ill-defined “collegiate level.” The ESL discipline had been working on ESL levels and defined expected outcomes for each level but had no agreement on what level of ESL was considered “collegiate level.”

Every college defined and taught the courses differently. For example, some colleges integrated reading and writing, while others taught reading courses independently from writing. Some colleges taught pre-algebra as a one semester course, others divided pre-algebra into two semesters, while other colleges experimented with combining pre-algebra and other math in a compressed summer course. State and national professional organizations in ESL, math, and English had defined various math and writing levels, and this work was used as research materials to initiate the California Community Colleges’ specific CB 21 curricular alignment.

The first work completed was to determine the average number of levels used by the 110 colleges to get a student to college level in each discipline. Although the goal was to define what was expected of students at each level of completion, the intent was to describe and define the curriculum coding but not to force any college to use a particular curricular strategy or specified number of levels.

The California Code of Regulations, title 5 change that identified intermediate algebra and freshman composition as graduation requirements was a great impetus to align the curriculum based upon these well-defined collegiate levels. The CB 21 alignment project gathered hundreds of faculty who discussed the coursework by disciplines that led to each of these graduation requirements. The faculty found that even though the coursework had been independently defined and developed based upon the local community and student population, there was a lot of overlap and expectations for students were very similar. The levels in each basic skills series was identified by a new CB 21 structure and agreed upon by all 110 colleges at a statewide plenary meeting.

This more accurate assignment of coding provided better data and contributed to a far better understanding of students with basic skills needs. The data also indicated that colleges had very different student populations with disparate curricular needs.

The alignment substantially affected statewide efforts in community college education from accountability to teaching methods, data accuracy, and tracking student success. The project resulted in the following:

- Clearer documentation of basic skills credit and noncredit pathways for institutions, students, faculty, and researchers.
- Unanimity among all 110 colleges about student abilities at the completion of each basic skills and ESL course level.
- Alignment of credit and noncredit basic skills and ESL courses.
- New and more accurate reporting metrics for student progress and assessment levels by individual disciplines.
- Actionable data for each basic skills and ESL discipline, rather than the previous data that aggregated English, math, and reading as one metric.

Statewide comparability for success and progress along the basic skills pathway.

- Robust discussion about what basic skills courses are, how they align, and what faculty expect.
- Correction of the Taxonomy of Program (TOP) coding for basic skills courses based upon discipline expertise.
- Adjustment of all ESL and basic skills coding backwards into history to maintain longitudinal analysis of student work.
- Opportunity to examine innovations at individual colleges as well as statewide.
- More accurate accountability reporting to the legislature and other external groups.
- Efficiencies where colleges could use placement and transcript data from different community colleges to enroll students in the appropriate course level.

Ultimately, this project became the foundation for other efforts, such as the Basic Skills Tracker and the Noncredit Accountability Project.

Janet Fulks, Chair, CB 21 Project

#### **MORE INFORMATION AT**

<http://www.cccbsi.org/cb21-information> (BSI website which archives all the work, resources and rubrics)

<http://www.cccbsi.org/basic-skills-handbook> (Chapter 12 of the BSI Handbook which explains the process)

Coding Instructions at the California Community Colleges State Chancellor's Office

[https://misweb.cccco.edu/mis/onlinestat/ret\\_sucs.cfm](https://misweb.cccco.edu/mis/onlinestat/ret_sucs.cfm) (Datamart ARCC Data for Basic Skills and ESL Courses 2009)

Links to the accountability reporting using the new re-coding

<http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/TechResearchInfoSys/Research/ARCC.aspx> (Statewide ARCC Report)

<http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/TechResearchInfoSys/Research/BasicSkills.aspx> (Statewide Basic Skills Accountability Report)

[http://datamart.cccco.edu/Outcomes/BasicSkillsCohort\\_Tracker.aspx](http://datamart.cccco.edu/Outcomes/BasicSkillsCohort_Tracker.aspx) (Basic Skills Tracker)

Links for more information on specific disciplines:

<http://www.amatyc.org/> (American Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges - AMATYC)

<http://www.catesol.org/> (California Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages - CATESOL)

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/> (California Department of Education standards)

<http://www.cmc3.org/> (California Mathematics Council of Community Colleges - CMC<sup>3</sup>)

<http://ecctyc.org/> (English Council of California Two-Year Colleges - ECCTYC)

<http://icas-ca.org/> (Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates - ICAS)

<http://www.cal-impac.org/> (Intersegmental Major Preparation Articulated Curriculum - IMPAC)

## Effective Practices for Promoting the Transition of High School Students to College

From *Effective Practices for Promoting the Transition of High School Students to College*, by Deborah Boroch and Laura Hope, Robert Gabriner, Project Coordinator.

Enrolling more than two million students annually, California community colleges serve as the primary gateway to higher education for a large percentage of the state's population. To provide affordable access for all Californians, the community college mission includes support for basic skills instruction as a key mechanism to prepare students for workforce and advanced educational opportunities, as well as in developing foundational literacy skills essential for an educated citizenry.

In 2007, the Basic Skills Initiative (BSI) was launched in California's 109 (now 112) community colleges. This initiative responds to an increasing awareness that state policies favoring "open access" also result in the enrollment of large numbers of students who are underprepared to succeed in college-level work. Identified as a key focus of the California Community College System Strategic Plan, the effort to systematically improve students' basic skills has subsequently received substantial redirected funding as colleges seek to evaluate their programs and services in alignment with effective practices that are documented and supported by research and published literature (Center for Student Success, 2007).

As a follow-up to the initial summary of literature contained in *Basic Skills as a Foundation for Success in California Community Colleges* (Center for Student Success), this report reviews effective practices for the successful transition of students from high school to college entry as documented in research-based literature. A significant body of literature has addressed various aspects of the high school to college transition. Much of the research has centered on defining the barriers or obstacles impeding successful transitions, with corresponding recommendations for strategies for overcoming these obstacles. The effective practices tend to be programmatic as opposed to isolated interventions; therefore, it is difficult to assess the impact of any single aspect within a program.

Instead, the research implies that a combination of strategies working together tend to have the greatest impact. Practitioners should view the interventions as

"packages" when considering implementation and weighing which strategies are most useful. The effective practices identified in the body of this report represent a synthesis of consistent findings and recommendations identified through the analysis of the published literature. While the collective wisdom of practitioners and/or expert opinion is occasionally referenced in this document, the general standard applied in selecting practices for inclusion is that they are supported by evidence gathered through rigorous, controlled research methods, and that claims of significant impact or correlation are well-substantiated.

Some of the strategies presented may be seen as largely within the purview of the secondary schools rather than the postsecondary partners, leaving community college practitioners to perhaps feel disengaged from the topic. However, the importance of early preparation and communication of appropriate expectations for college readiness cannot be overemphasized and must actively involve higher education participants. For this reason, the research related to high school course-taking and pre-college preparation is included.

Community college practitioners, the primary audience for this report, need a deep understanding of the factors affecting the college-going and readiness of incoming high school graduates. This same body of knowledge affects our understanding of delayed-enrollment adults who exited the preparatory pipeline in high school, many of whom later present themselves for college entry through adult education transition points. Moreover, this paper seeks to inform the development of cross segmental practitioner dialogues at many levels, to address the issues that impede the successful college transition of nearly two-thirds of California's high school students.

**MORE INFORMATION AT <http://www.rpggroup.org/projects/high-school-transition>**

## Habits of Mind Project

3CSN's Habits of Mind (HoM) initiative, launched in 2012, provides professional development for addressing students' limited academic dispositions and attitudes required for college success.

Recognizing that students bring to college different sets of learning experiences, expectations, values, and habits that influence what they attend to, the questions they ask, the choices they make, etc., this initiative focuses on how colleges do the following:

- Create structures and practices that preclude poor choice-making
- Intentionally incorporate HoM building into instruction and services
- Adopt strategies that promote self-regulated learning along with content mastery
- Deliver services that build self-efficacy and responsibility.

3CSN's HoM work is grounded in the research literature developed by educational psychologists over the last 10 years, most notably that of Arthur L. Costa and Bena Kallick:

"A Habit of Mind means having a disposition toward behaving intelligently when confronted with problems the answers to which are not immediately known. When humans experience dichotomies, are confused by dilemmas, or come face to face with uncertainties--our most effective actions require drawing forth certain patterns of intellectual behavior. When we draw upon these intellectual resources, the results that are produced through are more powerful, of higher quality and greater significance than if we fail to employ those patterns of intellectual behaviors." (From Describing 16 Habits of Mind, <http://instituteforhabitsofmind.com/>)

Costa and Kallick have identified the following exemplary habits of mind:

1. Persisting
2. Managing impulsivity
3. Listening with understanding and empathy
4. Thinking flexibly

5. Thinking about your thinking (metacognition)
6. Striving for accuracy
7. Questioning and problem posing
8. Applying past knowledge to new situations
9. Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision
10. Gathering data through all senses
11. Creating, imagining, and innovating
12. Responding with wonderment and awe
13. Taking responsible risks
14. Finding humor
15. Thinking interdependently
16. Remaining open to continuous learning.

Associated with the initiative is 3CSN's HoM Community of Practice (CoP) focused on leading campus practices. CoP has developed resources for identifying, assessing, and evaluating Habits of Mind and is building a searchable database of HoM practices and programs.

3CSN also offers a series of six-week, online professional development modules as a forum for instructors and counselors to explore and develop practices that improve students' habits of mind and college success.

Jan Connal, Counselor, Cerritos College, and Coordinator, 3CSN Habits of Mind Project

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://HoM.3csn.org>

# Noncredit Progress Indicator Task Force, 2010–2012

Noncredit education in the California Community Colleges serves nearly half of its basic skills and ESL needs as well as other areas, such as short-term vocational courses, health and safety, older adults, and parenting. Noncredit students are significantly more diverse than credit community college students and represent students with the greatest need: those least likely to succeed in higher education without the benefits noncredit provides, such as no cost, flexible schedules, increased contact hours, and opportunities for self-paced learning. Educating students through noncredit fulfills an indispensable function in California and even more so with the dissolution of many adult education programs in spite of growing needs in these areas. Nonetheless, because accountability has become so important and funding is often dependent on documenting student success, noncredit education has faced a huge challenge.

Historically, noncredit courses had not documented grades at the state level. Some attempts at noncredit metrics included counting Career Development and College Prep (CDCP) certificates, high school diplomas, and a few other measures, but noncredit had no means of reporting individual course success or progress. Noncredit has always been funded far less than credit even though the CB 21 project revealed that the same curricular coursework was being done. Noncredit enhanced funding became available through SB 361 in 2006 and was tied to annual accountability reporting.

After several years of confusion and metrics that did not report the work of noncredit, the Noncredit Task Force, comprised of 42 people from all disciplines and roles in noncredit across the state including 17 different institutions, was developed in 2010. This group oversaw a pilot project that was revolutionary to many areas of noncredit—the use of reportable progress indicators or grades for student work. No matter what the institution did with regard to grades or progress, once student attendance hours were submitted to the Chancellor’s Office, all grades were converted to UG (ungraded) and displayed in statewide reports as zero progress and zero success. The Noncredit Task Force worked on the following strategies in an effort to craft a means of reporting the work done in noncredit:

- Defined progress indicators/grades
- Educated and trained faculty and others about the purpose of indicators/grades
- Developed a pilot project to document, report, and analyze progress indicators from participating volunteer noncredit institutions
- Developed and conducted training for faculty in conjunction with the ASCCC Noncredit Committee about using indicators and addressing reporting gaps
- Developed methods, based on pilot college experiences, to help other institutions review and plan their own processes for reporting
- Collected feedback from faculty on the effects of pilot indicators
- Discovered that, in many cases, noncredit pedagogy produces more successful results with more at-risk students than comparable credit courses because of the flexible and outcomes-based paradigm.

After two years of research and work, in 2012 the task force recommended that the noncredit field use progress indicators or grades for all coursework in noncredit in every area or discipline as quickly as title 5 could be updated. They strongly recommended that UG should no longer be reported for any noncredit coursework. Faculty participating in the pilot shared the following benefits of implementing progress indicators/grades in their courses:

- Improved student self-assessment
- Improved teaching
- Improved judgment of when students should progress to the next class
- Better teaching techniques through faculty discussion, training, and explicit sharing of definitions of success
- Increased student motivation and understanding of success
- Better descriptions of noncredit accountability.

This immense statewide policy change was supported by noncredit managers and affirmed unanimously by a statewide vote of all 112 colleges.

Although noncredit can already use P, NP, A, B, C, D and F since it is not prevented by title 5, this policy change will require a modification to title 5 to allow SP (Satisfactory Progress) and indicate that progress indicator/grades **must** be submitted by noncredit, obligating submission and changing the historical practice in the California Community Colleges of changing reports to UG. In addition, the task force wanted noncredit metrics reported alongside credit basic skills and ESL metrics. Representative members of the Noncredit Task Force and other research specialists met with the California Community Colleges vice chancellor to develop and define metrics for the Noncredit Accountability Report for Community Colleges in July 2012.

Janet Fulks, Chair, Noncredit Task Force

#### **MORE INFORMATION AT**

<http://www.cccbsi.org/noncredit-taskforce>

(Background, Data, and Work of the Task Force)

<http://www.lao.ca.gov/reports/2012/edu/adult-education/restructuring-adult-education-120412.pdf> (LAO article on noncredit)

<http://cccbsi.org/noncredit-project-update>

(Training for Progress Indicator Implementation)

<http://www.caalusa.org/ScarceResources.pdf>

(A TIME OF SCARCE RESOURCES: Near Term Priorities in Adult Education)

# Promising Practices for Transitioning Students from Adult Education to Postsecondary Education

From *Promising Practices for Transitioning Students from Adult Education to Postsecondary Education*, by Ms. Sharon Seymour, et al., Robert Gabriner, Project Coordinator

## Executive Summary

This report examines the literature on practices and programs seeking to improve students' transition from adult education to postsecondary education. Ultimately, the report seeks to provide practitioners with models for effective strategies in transitioning students to postsecondary education that can be implemented at community colleges throughout California. From a review of more than 40 references, a total of 17 effective practices emerged. Because this report has been created as a follow-up to *Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community College*, it uses the same four major categories to organize the effective practices uncovered in the literature. The practices are summarized below.

### Area A: Organizational and Administrative Practices

- A.1 Improving transition of students from adult education to postsecondary education is an institutional priority for community college and adult education programs.
- A.2 Faculty and staff of transition programs are resourceful, experienced, and committed to serving adult students.
- A.3 Strong collaborative partnerships exist among college programs, adult education programs, business/industry, and community-based organizations.
- A.4 Institutions have innovative and flexible admissions and enrollment policies that facilitate transitions.
- A.5 To evaluate the effectiveness of courses and programs, student data systems track transitions and outcomes across programs.

### Area B: Program Component Practices

- B.1 Programs inform adult education students about the opportunities in and benefits of higher education.
- B.2 Programs provide adult education students with assistance in meeting the financial demands of college.
- B.3 Personalized support, such as peer mentoring, tutoring, or case management, is provided before, during, and after transitioning.
- B.4 Programs provide effective matriculation services, including assessment that is aligned between adult education and postsecondary programs.

### Area C: Staff Development Practices

- C.1 Institutions provide staff development opportunities to adult education faculty.

### Area D: Instructional Practices

- D.1 Adult education and postsecondary curriculum are aligned, sequential, and progressive to provide a seamless pathway for transition students.
- D.2 Instruction is contextualized so that transition students see the connection between basic skills education and academic or vocational content.
- D.3 Programs include career planning as a part of the curriculum.
- D.4 Curriculum and scheduling are designed to be flexible, chunked, and modularized with multiple entry and exit points.
- D.5 Sufficient language instruction is provided for English-as-a-second-language learners.
- D.6 Instruction and curriculum are designed and delivered in a way that integrates a variety of instructional methodologies.
- D.7 Institutions provide accelerated courses/programs that give transition students the opportunity to quickly meet their goals.

The report examines practices in each of these areas and provides examples from adult education programs nationwide. However, it is important to note that there

is little evidence-based research completed to date on students transitioning from adult to postsecondary education. Hence, the practices in this report fall mostly into the “promising” rather than the “effective” category. Nonetheless, the report identifies these practices and makes recommendations for further research.

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://www.rpgroup.org/sites/default/files/Adult%20Ed%20to%20Postsecondary%20Transition%20Lit%20review.pdf>

## Reading Apprenticeship Project (RAP)

Developed by the Strategic Literacy Initiative, Reading Apprenticeship is a research-based approach to academic literacy that helps instructors engage, motivate, and empower students to develop the tools they need to improve their content-area reading. **The original “Basic Skills as a Foundation for Success in California Community Colleges”** (i.e., the Poppy Copy, page 43) highlighted Reading Apprenticeship as a research-based best practice that has been proven to bolster academic literacy skills in and across subject areas. Research studies primarily involving high school students, from case studies through randomized controlled studies, indicate that Reading Apprenticeship can lead to significant gains in student achievement (as much as a year’s difference in learning at the high-school level) in key areas, such as biology, history, and literacy. Perhaps more importantly, Reading Apprenticeship has been shown to increase faculty’s awareness of students’ potential and lead to meaningful transformation of instructional approaches (Schiorring, 2010).

Reading Apprenticeship offers a powerful instructional framework and ongoing professional development, helping instructors from across the disciplines and levels to create classroom environments in which struggling students see themselves as learners capable of doing difficult work—work which goes beyond reading complex texts to analyzing and discussing them with their peers and in writing. One of the few approaches to teaching and learning that addresses both specific academic skills and the social-emotional-affective domains of student learning, Reading Apprenticeship calls on the teacher to weave four dimensions—social, personal, cognitive, and knowledge-building—into classroom instruction while emphasizing metacognitive processes that the teacher models and the students use to gain confidence and strategies for self-reliance in reading activities (Schoenbach, Greenleaf, and Murphy, 2012). Instructors learn how to create this environment conducive for learning through **extensive professional development** that builds on their expertise in their subject area and challenges them to impart how they approach their discipline to their students.

3CSN’s investment in the **Reading Apprenticeship Project (RAP)** has enabled tremendous growth of Reading Apprenticeship practitioners in the California Community Colleges. Leveraging the already existing network of faculty pursuing Reading Apprenticeship professional

development, and building on the documented successes of the Strategic Literacy Initiative’s Hewlett funded Reading Apprenticeship Regional Leaders Program and the Lumina funded Community College Literacy Research Group, RAP has quickly grown to encompass 76 of the 112 California community colleges. Within this broad network, 3CSN has supported more than 200 California community college faculty members from over 30 disciplines to study the Reading Apprenticeship instructional framework through scholarships to the introductory **online class, three-day seminar**, and **Leadership Community of Practice**.

In addition to the scholarships, RAP has provided space for California community college faculty to engage in an ongoing and sustained intellectual community while they learn how to support adult students’ academic literacy acquisition in discipline-specific contexts by hosting regional and campus-level Reading Apprenticeship workshops, supporting networking across campuses for discipline-specific coaching and knowledge sharing, and encouraging conference attendance, faculty inquiry groups, and classroom research projects. As a result, faculty are not only enriching their own classroom and campus practices with Reading Apprenticeship, but they are working together across disciplines and institutions to further develop innovative approaches to this work. For example, a group of faculty is working to develop a protocol for using RA as a way to train tutors. Another team is partnering with Educational Testing Services to investigate new ways to measure students’ cognitive growth. Another team is launching an inquiry into 21st century competencies and web 2.0 tools, considering the way that reading is changing and how to best support students’ metacognitive growth. Faculty report a **phenomenal growth in their own leadership** and significantly transformed classrooms in classrooms across the disciplines, from **English to math** and beyond.

Nika Hogan, RAP Coordinator for 3CSN

### MORE INFORMATION AT

<http://ra.3csn.org>

<http://www.rpgroup.org/resources/reading-thinking-learning-chabot-colleges-reading-apprenticeship-fig>

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## Student Transcript-Enhanced Placement Project

This project is enabling 22 colleges to evaluate the utility of using high school grade point average and math and English grades as predictors of students' abilities to pass college-level coursework to help inform the adoption of a common assessment process in California community colleges. (Note: This project is in process and updated materials will be released as they become available.)

California has placed a high value on assessment testing as part of its strategy to address basic skills. The Student Success Task Force recommendations call for the implementation of statewide common assessment, and several pieces of legislation in the past year have directly addressed the process of assessment in the California Community Colleges. However, given that common assessment is likely to move forward before a statewide definition of college/career readiness is developed, and absent a coordinated approach to basic skills curricula, it may be challenging for colleges to meaningfully coordinate common assessment with their developmental courses. This is particularly of concern given the poor correlation between placement test results and students' performance in college-level courses.

Studies such as the ones recently released by the Community College Research Center (<http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/>) indicate that the use of information contained on high school transcripts, such as grade point average and grades in math and English courses, may be a viable option to significantly improve our current placement process. However, this methodology has not been implemented on a large scale in California. Therefore the RP Group, with support from the Chancellor's Office, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, and the Gilbert Foundation, is conducting a pilot study that tests a specific transcript analysis methodology that has already been utilized at Long Beach City College. The RP Group will partner with LearningWorks to disseminate the results and their implications for statewide common assessment.

Terrence Willett, Senior Researcher, RP Group

### MORE INFORMATION AT

<http://www.rpgroup.org/projects/>  
**STEPS** (Project Web Page)

<http://www.rpgroup.org/sites/default/files/Student%20Transfer-Enhanced%20Placement%20Study%20>

**Summary.pdf** (Read more about the RP Group study here; note that the timeline has been extended to accommodate technical issues associated with the data sets)

<http://www.rpgroup.org/content/participation-instructions> (Learn more about the transcript analysis done at Long Beach City College here)

<http://www.rpgroup.org/resources/promising-pathways>

## The Student Success Task Force

From the “Student Success Task Force Final Report: Chronology of This Effort,”

In January 2011, the California Community Colleges Board of Governors embarked on a 12-month strategic planning process to improve student success. Pursuant to Senate Bill 1143 (Chapter 409, Statutes of 2010), the Board of Governors created the Student Success Task Force. The resulting 20-member Task Force was composed of a diverse group of community college leaders, faculty, students, researchers, staff, and external stakeholders. The Task Force delved deeply into complex college and system-level policies and practices. It worked for seven months to identify best practices for promoting student success and to develop statewide strategies to take these approaches to scale while ensuring that educational opportunity for historically underrepresented students would not just be maintained, but bolstered.

Each month, from January through June 2011, the Task Force met to examine topics critical to the success of students, ranging from college readiness and assessment to student services, from basic skills instruction to performance-based funding. The Task Force turned to state and national experts (such as Dr. Kay McClenney, Dr. David Conley, Dr. Vincent Tinto, and Dr. Alicia Dowd, among others) for the latest research-based findings and had frank discussions about what works to help students achieve their educational objectives.

Beginning in July, the Task Force spent three months forming the recommendations contained in this report. Recommendations were chosen based on their ability to be actionable by state policymakers and college leaders and to make a significant impact on student success, as defined by the outcome and progression metrics adopted by the group.

To foster public input, during October and November the Task Force held four public town hall meetings, made presentations to dozens of community college stakeholder groups, and hosted a lively online dialogue. In these venues, the Task Force heard from both supporters and critics of the recommendations and received substantial input that has been used to inform its deliberations. That input helped shape the final recommendations and elevated the public discussion about improving outcomes for community college students.

## Limitations of Scope

There are a variety of topics related to community colleges and student success that the Task Force was either unable to address or chose not to address. For example, policy issues related to the system’s governance structure have been well vetted elsewhere and thus were not discussed by the group. Further, the group chose not to address policies surrounding student fees. Due to time constraints, career technical education, transfer, and distance education also were not addressed directly by the Task Force. That said, the recommendations in this report are intended to strengthen the core capacity of the community colleges to serve all students, regardless of instructional program. Improved student support structures and better alignment of curriculum with student needs will increase success rates in transfer, basic skills, and career technical/workforce programs.

The Task Force recommendations present the California Community Colleges with an opportunity for transformative change that will refocus our system’s efforts and resources to enable a greater number of our students to succeed. Our colleges have a long, proud history of helping Californians advance. This plan for student success will help us be even more effective in achieving our mission.

### MORE INFORMATION AT

[http://www.californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/portals/0/executive/studentssuccesstaskforce/sstf\\_final\\_report\\_1-17-12\\_print.pdf](http://www.californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/portals/0/executive/studentssuccesstaskforce/sstf_final_report_1-17-12_print.pdf)

## Student Support (Re)defined

### What is Student Support (Re)defined?

As California's community colleges work to improve achievement using targeted student supports, many constituents—faculty, student services professionals, administrators, policymakers, and advocacy groups—are weighing in on how to preserve this essential function and redefine ways to effectively engage students with the assistance they need to succeed. To inform this dialog at both the institutional and system levels, the RP Group is currently implementing Student Support (Re)defined—a multiyear study funded by the Kresge Foundation. This research aims to understand how—in an environment of extreme scarcity—community colleges can deliver support both inside and outside the classroom to improve success for all students. Project activities include the following:

- **Student Engagement (Year 1, 2011/12):** The RP Group asked nearly 900 students from 13 California community colleges what supports their educational success, paying special attention to the factors African Americans and Latinos cite as important to their achievement.
- **Practitioner Engagement (Year 2, 2012/13):** The RP Group will engage practitioners in assessing their own colleges' approach to support based on what students say they need to succeed and identifying opportunities for related institutional change; we will also profile colleges that have pursued coherent institutional change to improve student support.
- **Dissemination (Year 3, 2013/14):** While dissemination efforts will occur throughout the project, this phase will focus on promoting dialog and action at both the college and system levels about how to encourage institutional approaches that strategically improve student support and increase completion, particularly for historically underrepresented populations.

### What have we discovered?

When considering the findings in total, five distinct themes emerge. These key themes supply colleges with a framework for reflecting on the outcomes they want for their students. They also offer colleges a launch pad for identifying how support can be strategically integrated across institutional divisions and into students' experience both inside and

outside the classroom, from entry to exit. Finally, the themes imply the need for systemic change to institutional structures if colleges aim to connect more students with necessary support. Key themes include the following:

1. Colleges need to foster students' motivation. While this research acknowledges students as key agents in their own educational success, it also highlights that the motivation learners bring to their college experience may not be enough to guarantee completion. Moreover, some students may arrive without this drive and need even more help developing it.
2. Colleges must teach students how to succeed in the postsecondary environment. These findings also imply that colleges must show students how to translate their motivation into success. Students need assistance building the specific skills and knowledge necessary for navigating their community college and thriving in this environment, particularly those who are new to higher education or who arrive without a specific goal in mind.
3. Colleges need to structure support to ensure "six success factors" are addressed.

Through a review of leading studies on effective support practices and interviews with practitioners and researchers, the RP Group determined that several factors contribute to students' success. These six success factors are listed below in the order of importance according to students participating in the study:

- **Directed:** Students have a goal and know how to achieve it.
- **Focused:** Students stay on track—keeping their eyes on the prize.
- **Nurtured:** Students feel somebody wants and helps them to succeed.
- **Engaged:** Students actively participate in class and extracurricular activities.
- **Connected:** Students feel like they are part of the college community.
- **Valued:** Students' skills, talents, abilities, and experiences are recognized; they have opportunities to contribute on campus and feel their contributions are appreciated.

Participants both confirmed these six success factors were important to their progress and achievement and indicated that different factors interact with each other in various ways. Students noted how experiencing one factor often led to realizing another, or how two factors were inextricably linked to each other. Since students do not experience these factors in isolation, these findings imply that colleges should consider solutions that can help students attain multiple factors at once.

4. Colleges need to provide comprehensive support to historically underserved students to prevent the equity gap from growing. Comprehensive support is more likely to address the multiple needs—academic, financial, social, and personal—identified by African-American, Latino, and first-generation students participating in this study. These students were more likely to cite a lack of academic support, the absence of someone at the college who cared about their success, and insufficient financial assistance as reasons for them not to continue their education. While it may not be feasible to expand existing special-populations' programs, colleges must find a way to provide a significant portion of these student groups comprehensive support—at scale. If they do not, the equity gap will likely continue to grow.
5. Everyone has a role to play in supporting student achievement, but faculty must take the lead. Student responses highlight how everyone on a campus can affect their achievement. They underscore the importance of colleges promoting a culture where all individuals across the institution understand their role in advancing students' success. Yet, across the board, students most commonly recognized faculty as having the greatest potential impact on their educational journeys. Instructors can support student achievement by finding ways to incorporate elements of the six success factors into course content and delivery. Faculty can also work with others across the college to integrate different types of support into the classroom and help students connect with needed assistance outside their coursework.

Darla Cooper, Director of Research and Evaluation, RP Group

More information and resources at <http://www.rpgroup.org/projects/student-support>

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# Programs

California's community colleges have many effective programs, some begun many years ago and some developed more recently that show much promise. Rather than attempting to include all programs, past and present, that contribute to the success of developmental students, this resource includes programs that have been either developed or expanded since the start of the Basic Skills Initiative. Each is an established program that involves a significant number of developmental students, and each has strong data to clearly demonstrate the success of the program. Many of the programs described here have received recognition as exemplary models of effective practices, including the Board of Governors Exemplary Program Award, the Chancellor's Award for Best Practices in Student Equity, and the Hewlett Leaders in Student Success. All of the programs include contact information and links to further program descriptions, data, and resources.

## Acceleration, Immersion, and Curriculum Redesign

From “Accelerating the Academic Achievement of Students Referred to Developmental Education” by Nikki Edgecombe, <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Publication.asp?UID=920>

Acceleration is an increasingly popular strategy for improving the outcomes of students referred to developmental education. Advocates of acceleration argue that a greater portion of students may complete remediation and succeed in college-level courses if colleges either help them complete requirements more quickly or enroll them in higher-level courses while providing effective academic support.

Acceleration involves the reorganization of instruction and curricula in ways that expedite the completion of coursework or credentials. Many accelerated course formats require as many instructional contact hours as traditional classes, but those hours occur within a truncated timeframe.

Acceleration is ubiquitous in higher education, there is an expansive literature describing its various manifestations, including summer school and other courses with non-traditional term lengths. For developmental education, acceleration involves a departure from the traditional multi-course sequence in favor of a more streamlined structure intended to better support students’ learning objectives and to accommodate students’ complicated lives by reducing the time required to complete academic requirements.

### Models of Acceleration

**Course Restructuring:** Many acceleration models restructure courses by reorganizing instructional time or modifying curriculum to reduce the time necessary to fulfill developmental education requirements. Course restructuring accelerates students’ completion of the developmental education sequence by eliminating course requirements and incorporating content with stronger linkages to the college curriculum.

**Compressed courses:** Compressed courses allow students to complete multiple sequential courses in one semester. Typically, the content of a single course is compressed into a seven- or eight-week segment, which is followed immediately by the next course in the sequence, also taught in a compressed format. The instructional contact hours are the same as in a traditional 16-week course, so class periods tend to be longer and generally require instructors

to modify lesson plans. Longer instructional blocks allow redundancies across the curricula to be reduced.

**Paired courses:** Paired courses link developmental and college-level courses with complementary subject matter, such as an upper-level developmental writing course and a college literature course. This allows students to begin to accrue college credit earlier than they would if they were required to complete developmental education first, eliminates exit points between courses that would otherwise be taken in different semesters, and makes basic skills instruction more relevant through linkages with the college curriculum. Students may also feel more like “real” college students and benefit psychologically from tackling higher-level coursework. Paired courses may promote a level of connectedness and peer support that is absent from typical courses.

**Curricular redesign:** Curricular redesign accelerates student progression by decreasing the number of developmental courses students must take. Redundant content is eliminated, and the remaining curriculum is modified to meet the learning objectives of a particular intervention or academic pathway. For example, the curricula of multiple developmental education courses can be consolidated into a single-semester course. The conversion of developmental content into modules is another curricular redesign strategy. Since students may need to spend more time mastering certain competencies and less on others, modules may accelerate student progress by permitting a customized approach to learning, allowing practitioners to address particular skills. The use of modules also allows for a focus on only those competencies that are necessary for success in specific academic pathways (for example, some programs require more math skills than others).

**Mainstreaming with supplemental support:** Mainstreaming with supplemental support involves placing students with developmental education referrals directly into introductory college-level courses and providing additional instruction through mandatory companion classes, lab sessions, or other learning supports designed to promote success in the college course. During these sessions, students may review concepts presented in the college course in greater depth, address particular skills necessary to complete an assignment, or preview upcoming lessons. Moreover, with college-ready and underprepared students in the same classroom, there are opportunities for students referred to developmental education to be exposed to the work habits of higher achieving

students and to engage with a more challenging and enriching curriculum.

**Basic skills integration:** Integrating basic skills instruction into college-level courses is a form of contextualization and a means to accelerate student progress. Integration is designed to address students' academic deficiencies in instructional contexts that are more relevant than traditional developmental classes.

More information available at the following:

<http://www.mdrc.org/publication/what-can-multifaceted-program-do-community-college-students> (What Can a Multifaceted Program Do for Community College Student? ASAP at Three CUNY Community Colleges)

<http://www.tc.columbia.edu/i/a/document/CCRC-CCBC-ALP-2012-study.pdf> (New Evidence of Success for Community College Remedial English Students: Tracking Outcomes of Students in the Accelerated Learning Program - ALP)

## The Fast Track Program at Chaffey College

MORE INFORMATION AT <http://www.chaffey.edu/fasttrack/index.shtml>

Chaffey College, along with most other California community colleges, was struggling to find ways to increase completion rates during times of increased enrollment and decreased sections/funding. Chaffey College saw accelerated learning as a way to address multiple problems:

- Help students progress through sequences more quickly (especially foundation skills courses such as English and math)
- Increase the likelihood of completion for students
- Provide additional access points for students needing to start classes later in the semester.

Chaffey College decided to start the accelerated effort in the area of offering compressed, “fast-track” classes. Since faculty members were familiar with this form of instruction through summer school modules, the Fast Track Program offered the college an efficient way to initiate and scale up acceleration efforts quickly with little resistance. More than 60 fast-track classes were offered in the first year. It became apparent very quickly that these courses provided a pathway to success for many students (success rates in fast-track classes consistently demonstrated 10–20 percent higher success rates than their full-term versions). With support from administration, Chaffey College has added fast-track classes each semester, with more than 250 fast-track classes scheduled for fall 2013 (about 20 percent of all class offerings).

After teaching fast-track classes, instructors were also more aware of how curricular changes might be possible in sequenced English courses. The college then decided to recreate the English and reading curriculum by combining the departments/courses and collapsing some of the levels. As a result, English and reading sequences were redesigned into one non-credit and two credit courses below college level instead of five reading courses and three English courses below college level. The new curriculum will be implemented starting fall 2013 and will provide students with significantly more opportunities to reach their goal of completing college-level English.

Cindy Walker, Chair, Fast Track Task Force

Laura Hope, Dean of Instructional Support

## College Success English and Reading Curriculum Redesign at Citrus College

Citrus College redesigned 18 units of English and reading coursework into 6 units of “college success” English coursework. Multiple factors led to the development of this integrated course sequence. First, the college noted particularly high persistence and success rates for fast-track courses (eight-week, accelerated courses) and learning communities. In fact, the highest persistence and success rates were found in combined fast track and learning community courses. Second, at the state level, factors such as Assembly Bill 1440, CB 21, full-time equivalent student (FTES) cuts, limits on units-to-completion, limits on financial aid, and concerns over time-to-completion were influential in the move toward redesign. Finally, research as part of a faculty’s doctoral study indicated that slowing down the developmental track de-motivates students and results in lower retention and completion rates.

In response to these factors, Citrus College English and reading faculty proposed an idea for curriculum redesign and vetted it through all constituency groups in a collaborative effort of faculty, management, staff, and students. This transformational change, which took place during spring 2011 and was accomplished from start to finish in one month, included the following:

- A curriculum redesign into two English courses that employ an integrated English and reading model
- Curriculum Committee revisions and approvals on all course outlines
- Revisions to the board administrative procedure on graduation requirements
- Changes in ACCUPLACER cut scores
- Development of faculty cross-training for course-specific minimum qualifications for the redesigned courses.

The advantages of this realignment are numerous and include the following:

- Elimination of redundancies in skills development and content
- Collaboration between English and reading faculty

- Increase of basic skills sections taught by full-time faculty
- Significant reduction of time-to-completion and fewer units for students
- Reduction of FTES devoted to basic skills
- Increase in number of students served in the sequence
- Fewer units to meet English and reading competencies
- Reduced textbook costs because students purchase fewer books
- Fewer exit points in the English sequence
- More productive use of financial aid.

Finally, preliminary data from the first year of the new sequence indicates increased student success, completion, progress, and improvement rates in the English course sequence.

Suzanne Martinez, College Success Coordinator

**MORE INFORMATION AT <http://citruscollege.edu/success/redesign/>**

## Personalized Accelerated Learning (PAL) at College of the Canyons

The Personalized Accelerated Learning (PAL) program at College of the Canyons compresses two or more sequential developmental and/or transfer-level math and English courses into one 16-week semester to create a learning-community-style cohort experience for students. PAL launched in 2008 as an extension of an accelerated-learning project created within College of the Canyons' Leadership Education in Action Program (LEAP).

Initially, the pilot semester ran three sequential compressed math or English courses taught back-to-back (five weeks each) in a given semester with the same instructor and same classmates. In addition, students took a counseling class to help individualize the learning experience and provide ample support for student success. The pilot program demonstrated initial success, but the counseling class co-requisite proved to be difficult to enforce and was seen by some students as an additional workload issue. In addition, though the three 5-week courses seemed to work for some English offerings, that format proved to be too intense for math. After the first semester, the college adjusted the program to no longer require the counseling course and, over time, an initial orientation became a required first step in order for students to register for PAL classes. In addition, the college adjusted some of the English and all of the math cohorts to consist of two 8-week offerings paired up.

Currently, students register for two 8-week math classes, two 8-week English classes, or three 5-week English classes, taught back-to-back in the same semester. The same students are registered for the classes in the cohort, and the same instructor is assigned to those courses. This experience provides a tight-knit learning community in which students are expected to collaborate, interact, and study with each other in order to promote their success. PAL's effectiveness has come from promoting student success and increasing persistence by reducing the number of opportunities for students to drop and "give up."

College of the Canyon's PAL math and English cohorts have success rates averaging 79 percent compared to 61 percent for students enrolled in the same courses taught in the traditional, semester-length format. Progression studies have also shown remarkable success for students who participate in the PAL math or English program compared

to students who follow the traditional, semester-length pathway. For example, students starting two levels below in English who participated in the PAL program successfully progressed to degree-applicable English at a rate of 79 percent compared to 38 percent for students from a cohort that followed the traditional path (tracked for a two-year period). Similarly, students starting two levels below in math who participated in the PAL program successfully progressed to degree-applicable math at a rate of 59 percent compared to 35 percent for students from a cohort that followed the traditional path (tracked for a two-year period).

Looking to the future, PAL will be including College of the Canyons' new developmental accelerated English and math statistics classes as part of a cohort to move students through two levels of developmental coursework and transfer in one semester.

John Makevich, Director, Distance and Accelerated Learning; Daylene Meuschke, Director of Institutional Research; Denee Pescarmona, Associate Dean, Instruction and Support Programs

**MORE INFORMATION AT** [http://www.canyons.edu/Offices/Distance\\_Learning/Pal.html](http://www.canyons.edu/Offices/Distance_Learning/Pal.html)

## The Network: A Basic Skills Learning Community at Fresno City College

In 2009, Fresno City College faculty teaching remedial courses began to look at ways to facilitate increased success for basic skills students from a campus-wide perspective. After two years of discussion and planning with colleagues throughout the campus, the faculty developed a three-semester learning community that redesigned how students take remedial courses. The Network Learning Community emerged as a first-year learning experience for basic skills students.

The program was designed to assist students entering the college at three levels below English 1A in both reading and writing and English as a second language (ESL) as well as two or more levels below transfer math. Participants take a compressed sequence of remedial English, ESL, and math courses along with designated general education courses over a span of three semesters. The designated sequence provides a focused pathway that facilitates completion of English and math graduation requirements for an associate degree. Network program components include mandatory orientation, assessment, and placement; integrated counseling and student support services (i.e., student education and career planning, financial aid, and registration assistance); learning support services (i.e., embedded tutoring, student success workshops; computer lab); and a cohort model.

The college has encountered challenges, such as campus culture, scheduling, recruitment, changes in courses, marketing, and funding, while bringing together six divisions and eleven departments to create a cohesive first-year experience. However, ongoing program evaluation and communication among stakeholders has helped the college anticipate and develop solutions. Network program staff worked with the college's Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of student outcomes. Quantitative data analysis included rates of successful completion, retention, and persistence. A student perception survey was administered at the end of the third semester to gain insight on factors, such as college experience, learning experience, development of oral communication, teamwork, and self-understanding. In addition, student and faculty focus groups were conducted to obtain feedback on program effectiveness and barriers to implementation.

The Network program is designed to improve student achievement and persistence through the basic skills sequence by providing a learning-community cohort model. Findings from the pilot project indicate that students successfully completed the reading, writing, or ESL sequence at or above the comparison group. All students in the Network were at the same English or ESL levels each semester; however, math levels varied each semester, which led to mixed outcomes for math courses. One of several limitations of the evaluation is that the numbers of participants were relatively small for the pilot. In fall 2012, the college launched the second cohort and is currently discussing ways to scale-up the program and provide multiple cohorts each semester. Program evaluation will be conducted regularly and findings will be disseminated campus wide.

Donna Cooper, Basic Skills Coordinator, and  
Janine Nkosi, Basic Skills Counselor

**MORE INFORMATION AT [http://fccwise.fresnocitycollege.edu/pages/fccwise\\_complete/index.html](http://fccwise.fresnocitycollege.edu/pages/fccwise_complete/index.html)**

## Path2Stats (Formerly Statpath) at Los Medanos College

Path2Stats is an intensive one-semester developmental math course that accelerates students' preparation for college-level statistics. The course has no prerequisite and offers students in majors that are not math intensive the opportunity to complete their transfer math requirements in two semesters (Path2Stats + Statistics) regardless of math placement. (For students assessing two to four levels below college math, this is a pathway to and through college math that is one to three semesters shorter.)

Path2Stats replaces the traditional set of algebraic skills that prepares students for the study of calculus with quantitative reasoning skills pertinent to the study of statistics. Students learn to formulate questions that can be addressed with data, and then they organize, display, and analyze relevant data to address these questions and communicate results. Remediation is "just-in-time" within the context of data analysis, which motivates students to learn pre-collegiate skills, such as how to use percentages or how to create and interpret linear and exponential models. The course uses specific activities and pedagogy to foster effective learning habits and to address affective obstacles to academic success.

Path2Stats was developed by Myra Snell as a solution to the well-documented problem of attrition in the remedial math pipeline in community colleges, a problem that impacts students of color disproportionately. Path2Stats students are three times more likely to complete a college-level math course when compared to students in the traditional remedial math sequence (60 versus 19 percent), with rates two-to-four times higher than students with comparable math placement scores. Path2Stats students pass college statistics at essentially the same rate as students coming from intermediate algebra (73 versus 74 percent with a C or better), with significantly lower drop rates than students taking statistics with no remediation (14 versus 20 percent,  $p < 0.057$ ).<sup>1</sup> In learning-outcomes assessment on the final exam in college statistics, 100 percent of Path2Stats students were rated proficient or better on two of three learning outcomes, with 82 percent on the third. On items from the Comprehensive Assessment of Outcomes for a first course in statistics, Path2Stats students' overall performance was within 3 percent of the national average.

The two main obstacles to implementing Path2Stats are a lack of professional support for math faculty teaching in this new pathway and articulation guidelines requiring intermediate algebra or the equivalent as a prerequisite for college-level math courses. As of spring 2013, at least 16 community colleges in California have implemented localized versions of Path2Stats. Math faculty received support via a community of practice facilitated by the California Acceleration Project. These colleges have side-stepped the articulation issue by using either existing local mechanisms that allow students to challenge prerequisites if they have the knowledge or ability to succeed in the course (see Cal. Code Regs., tit. 5, §55003(p)(4)) or the Path2Stats course as a multiple measure for placement as mandated by California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 55003(k).

<sup>1</sup>This data is from the first four sections of Path2Stats taught by two instructors. Path2Stats sections are open to voluntary enrollment; roughly half of each section was comprised of students also enrolled in Puente or Academy for College Excellence.

Myra Snell, Professor of Mathematics

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://cap.3csn.org>

## ESL Alignment at Mendocino College

The English as a Second Language (ESL) program at Mendocino College has undergone many phases of change over the past decade. Until August 2009, the department had no full-time faculty; instead, a full-time member of the English Department coordinated the program. Between 2000 and 2006, the college hired new faculty members, counselors, and administrators who saw the need to expand and improve the services provided to the Spanish speaking community in the area (the bulk the college's English language learners). Mendocino College's largest feeder high school, for example, had a very large English Language Development program; however, in 2000, the college's few sections were often cancelled due to lack of enrollment.

In the first few years of its reform, the department began offering several sections of courses off campus at community centers and the local high school. The number of ESL sections and students more than doubled in fall 2003. As a result, part-time faculty became more consistently employed and invested in the ESL program and work was done to update curriculum. Over the next few years, though, the stamina to manage the ESL program was uneven; publicizing, coordinating, and monitoring multiple sites was a difficult task when the work was split among faculty and staff already charged with non-ESL full-time positions. The college continued to offer one or two sections at an off-site community organization, but enrollments were uneven and the college's center in Lakeport stopped offering ESL classes.

With the onset of the Basic Skills Initiative (BSI) in 2006, Mendocino College was able to clarify and emphasize its need to hire a full-time ESL instructor. The college's BSI self-study, guided by "Basic Skills as a Foundation for Success in California Community Colleges," articulated the need and connected it to specific work. Finally with the help of BSI funding, Mendocino College was able to hire its first full-time ESL faculty.

In the first year, the college made contacts at new off-campus sites that were most relevant to its Spanish speaking community (the bilingual elementary school and the local Catholic Church). Enrollments at both sites and the sections on campus became fully enrolled. Additionally, the full-time instructor took a fresh look at the curriculum and added a parallel non-credit program, so that non-credit students can progress through intermediate and advanced ESL classes. As

a result, after one year with a full-time ESL faculty member, enrollments in the program more than doubled and many other new efforts are serving the college's ESL students.

Most recently, Mendocino College has added sections at campus centers in Willits and Lakeport as well as an ESL non-credit certificate of completion for students who progress through the advanced ESL courses. New collaboration is occurring with the English Department to offer a learning community targeted at multilingual students so that English language learners continue to get support as they progress through mainstream English courses. Additionally, ESL has successfully teamed up with the Automotive Technology program by offering a non-credit auto technology class linked to an ESL class with a focus on English for the workplace.

Sarah Walsh, ESL Coordinator, and Debra Polak, Basic Skills Coordinator

## The Express to Success Program at Santa Barbara City College

The Express to Success Program (ESP) offers accelerated learning communities in developmental math and English for students who assess at one-to-two levels below college level. The goal of the program is to get students through their developmental classes more quickly and better prepared so that they can begin taking the courses required for a degree or transfer.

ESP differs from the standard learning-community model where different teachers instruct the same cohort of students. Instead, students have one teacher for their classes in all of the math and English models. ESP students take two or more classes together, working collaboratively in class and forming study groups outside of class to support their learning. Students in ESP also receive full support from ESP counselors, who meet with each student to explain the program and assess the student's placement in an ESP learning community. At this time, students sign the ESP agreement that specifies the commitment necessary to succeed in the program. One important commitment is to become a full-time student and enroll in at least 12 units. ESP counselors also provide support services for ESP students throughout the semester, meet with each student to develop an individual student educational plan, and visit each learning community several times each semester to give presentations on a variety of student success topics. In addition, instructors and counselors work closely together to monitor student progress.

Other benefits of the program include support from Gateway tutors both inside and outside of class. These tutors are students who have taken the course during a previous semester, usually from the same instructor, and who complete an intensive training program that stresses identifying student needs and providing supplemental instruction in targeted areas. These peer tutors are especially effective in working with students since they have personal knowledge of the class, they have been successful in the class themselves, and they attend all of the class meetings so they know what is being taught at any given time. They work in small groups or one-on-one with students in class and outside of class.

The ESP instructional model, with its counseling and peer tutor components, has proven to be highly effective. The first-year course completion rates and college persistence

rates far exceeded the college average. ESP students completed two levels of accelerated math or English at a 30-to-40 percent higher rate than students taking traditional courses over a two semester period. In fall 2011, 95 percent of all ESP students persisted until the end of the semester, and 90 percent of all ESP students continued their studies the following semester, many of them in another ESP learning community. The program has grown from 10 learning communities in fall 2011 to 17 learning communities in fall 2012. Due to its success, ESP was recently awarded the 2012 Chancellor's Award for Best Practices in Student Equity.

Kathy Molloy, Project Director

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://sbcc.edu/esp/>

## Contextualized Instruction

From “Facilitating Student Learning through Contextualization” by Dolores Perin, <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Publication.asp?uid=882>

Skills in reading, writing, and mathematics are key to academic learning but are conventionally taught separately from the discipline areas to which they must be applied. For example, students may be taught writing skills in the morning in an English course and then be expected to apply them to writing an essay in a history class in the afternoon. Several problems arise with this structure. First, students do not necessarily transfer their morning writing skills to the afternoon history assignment. Second, students may not be motivated to learn writing skills in the English class because they do not consider such skills to be relevant to their personal goals. Third, weaknesses in essay writing skills may not be addressed by the afternoon content-area teacher, who aims to teach subject knowledge rather than basic skills. These problems have serious implications for the academic trajectory of the many underprepared students who enter postsecondary education.

One way to address this issue is through *contextualization*, or the teaching of basic skills in the context of disciplinary topic areas. The contextualization of basic skills is defined here as an instructional approach that creates explicit connections between the teaching of reading, writing, or math on the one hand and instruction in a discipline area on the other, as, for example, when writing skills are taught with direct reference to topics covered in a history class.

Contextualization is implemented in two distinct forms: *contextualized* and *integrated* instruction.

Contextualized basic skills instruction involves the teaching of academic skills against a backdrop of specific subject matter to which such skills need to be applied and is taught by reading, writing, and math instructors. The primary instructional objective is to teach academic skills rather than the subject matter. Generally, the same skills found in conventional developmental or other academic skills classes are taught, but they are presented in the context of content from current or future disciplinary courses.

Integrated basic skills instruction is the incorporation of reading, writing, or math instruction into the teaching of content. Integrated instruction is taught by discipline-area

instructors, with the academic skills serving as a means of developing critical thinking about disciplinary content.

## Career Advancement Academy: College of the Sequoias

College of the Sequoias has utilized a unique approach to contextualizing basic skills into career technical education (CTE) courses. English, English as a second language, and mathematics instructors worked with CTE instructors to develop a variety of approaches to assist CTE students in mastering basic skills by embedding them into the curriculum.

The college's first approach was to have basic skills instructors attend automotive classes and assist students in the classroom during classes. They also assisted students outside the classroom with tutoring sessions on a voluntary basis. Instructors also felt it was important to determine who the college's CTE students were. Partnering with the social science division, instructors interviewed more than 200 CTE students individually to determine their vision and goals for taking CTE courses in the first place.

The results of the survey showed that many of CTE students needed basic skills and did not have a strong career focus that matched the courses in which they were enrolled. The district is working on identifying strategies that will focus students on distinct career pathways they may choose to pursue.

The project is developing a CTE assessment program for English and mathematics skills utilizing a CTE focus. These assessment instruments will assist in determining the correlation between the CTE assessment and the district's placement tests for mathematics and English. In this way, the college will be able to determine what level a student would need on the placement test to be successful in machining or industrial maintenance courses.

The college's Industrial Tech program serves 265 students, most with low educational achievement and low basic skills in English, math, and writing. Data show that the college's Career Advancement Academy students in summer and fall 2011 and spring 2012 had an 80 percent mean course retention and an 82 percent persistence rate from fall 2011 to spring 2012.

Larry Dutto, CTE Dean

<http://www.cos.edu>

## El Camino Career Advancement Academy

The Career Advancement Academy (CAA) at El Camino College and the El Camino Compton Center offers one-year training programs in high-demand industries. It combines technical skills, workplace readiness workshops, and academic skills. Students can earn up to seven certificates and attend an exclusive job fair with the college's partner employers. Currently, CAA offers programs for aerospace fasteners, machine tool technology, and welding. The college would like to add cohorts in other areas, such as heating, ventilation, and air-condition repair.

**How CAA Began:** El Camino has long been involved in cohort programs that link classes like first-year experience and Puente. The idea of contextualizing career technical education (CTE) and basic skills was very appealing. The project has been funded by a grant from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

**Challenges:** One of the biggest challenges has been finding the right match of faculty to create a collaborative teaching team. It is also the biggest reward when faculty members "click."

**Contextualization:** When the college's teaching teams "click," they come up with some amazing results. For example, last year the welding instructor and English instructor worked on a metal heart project that culminated in students exhibiting reposé metal heart sculptures and written reflections on the process of creation and transformation in the El Camino Library. The math instructor not only took students on field trips to the welding lab, but she also fabricated a metal box from the blueprints the students had been manipulating in math class.

**Success:** A success is when a student reaches his or her own goals. The CAA training programs use many metrics to gauge success: course completion, college certificate completion, industry certificate attainment, and employment in the field of study.

**CAA Students:** CAA specifically recruits students who are interested in a specific trade and need help with basic skills. These students are from a variety of backgrounds and ages but are predominantly male and Latino. Approximately 90 percent of them are eligible for Board of Governor's Fee Waivers. Many receive federal financial aid and scholarships; however, many others are ineligible because they did not

graduate high school. Approximately two-thirds of CAA's students test into the lowest math level offered by the college. Some of the program's students are parents and some are recent high school graduates, but most students in the program's second year were referred by a friend.

**Teaching Teams:** In fall, the college offers two trades-based classes, a college success class, and a math class. In spring, it offers one trades-based class, a job readiness class, and an English class.

Naomi Tokuda, Director of Career Pathways

**MORE INFORMATION AT** [www.elcamino.edu/academics/indtech/career-advancement-academy/index.asp](http://www.elcamino.edu/academics/indtech/career-advancement-academy/index.asp)

## Programa en Carpintería Fina at Laney College

Programa en Carpintería Fina began as part of the California community college Career Advancement Academy (CAA) initiative, a statewide effort to build pipelines to high-wage, high-demand careers for underprepared and underemployed young adults.

Programa en Carpintería Fina attracts Spanish-speaking students and helps them gain confidence, knowledge, and work skills, thereby giving them tools to succeed in woodworking careers. An integrated and contextualized approach to learning foundational skills is used along with learning communities and team building. In the first semester, students work to improve their woodworking skills as they learn the English measurement system (versus the metric system), shop math, drawing, reading, project planning, and team skills. The program concurrently supports their English language learning and math skills by using initial bilingual support combined with ongoing vocational English as a second language (VESL) tailored to the woodworking industry.

Programa en Carpintería Fina trains students in high-demand woodworking manufacturing careers. Carpintería includes contextualized, embedded math and VESL with initial bilingual instructional supports in a wood technology/fine woodworking program leading to a certificate and employment in this high-skill, high-wage industry in the Northern California Bay Area. The program has been an institutional model as well as a model for other CTE programs in the state, contextualizing basic skills in the trades.

Carpintería delivers seven credit hours of fine woodworking instruction per semester. Most students enroll in two semesters and take two classes per semester, earning a total of fourteen credit hours. Carpintería students have many more options and paths to follow as a result of the program completion. This learning community will be folded into the majors program so Carpintería Fina students can choose to be on a pathway to an associate degree. Links to the Carpenters' Union as well as local industries for jobs are being developed.

Sonja Franeta, Facilitator and ESL Instructor

**MORE INFORMATION AT** the following:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDax6mK\\_t\\_s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDax6mK_t_s) (video)

<http://www.laney.edu/wp/woodtechnology/woodtech-courses/programa-de-carpinteria-fina/programa-de-carpinteria-fina-english/>

<http://www.careerladdersproject.org/carpinteria-fina-at-laney/>

## Skyline College Career Advancement Academy (CAA)

As one of its fundamental principles, Skyline College Career Advancement Academy (CAA) incorporates contextualized learning in both math and English. Two CAA career technical education (CTE) programs, Automotive Technology and Allied Health, have contextualized existing English and math courses. These courses are offered during the bridge program or the first semester of the program. In both technical areas, CTE faculty worked closely with English and math faculty to prepare materials that directly related to either automotive technology or allied health. In addition, since the English and math classes are taught concurrently with entry level CTE coursework, instructors continue to align and create common assignments and coursework.

The English class for both programs is a combined English/reading class that is one level below transfer-level English. The math class is a standard elementary algebra class. Students who place below these classes on standardized test scores are admitted to these classes as part of CAA. Preliminary data from the last two classes show significant success in both the overall pass rate and successful acceleration of students placing one course below. Results from the Allied Health CAA (N=40) show an overall success rate of 78 percent in math and 87 percent in English. Of greater significance is the acceleration of students who did not place directly into the math or English class. For that population, 68 percent passed math and 83 percent passed English. Results from the Automotive Technology program show similar results with an N=37 and N=30 respectively for math and English. The success rate in math was 87 percent and in English 77 percent. For those students placing one level below the contextualized course, the success in math and English was 75 percent and 65 percent, respectively.

Alina Varona, San Mateo Community  
College District CAA Coordinator

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://www.skylinecollege.edu/caa/aboutcaa.php>

## Spanish-to-English Child Development Associate Teacher's Certificate Program at Southwestern College

The Spanish-to-English Child Development Associate Teacher's Certificate Program, also called the "Spanish2English Program," was initiated in the late 1990s as a response to community demand in the San Diego Imperial Valley region for well-qualified and educated bilingual early childhood educators and daycare providers. This four-semester certificate program consists of a learning community linking child development and tailored English as a second language (ESL) courses to create cohort groups that focus on learning child-development principles while acquiring English language skills necessary for success as a bilingual teaching assistant upon program completion.

The four-semester program consists of one 3-unit child development course and one ESL course taken each semester for a total of 17 units required for the certificate. The first semester course, Principles of Child Development, is offered entirely in Spanish to provide a strong foundational base on which to build both child development knowledge as well as English skills necessary for the field. With each semester, the child development course increases the amount of English used so that by the fourth semester, the course is given 100 percent in English. The child development texts and materials are the same as those provided in English; the ESL materials have been written and designed by ESL faculty and are currently being updated and revised to align them with the ESL Department's move toward content-based instruction.

This project presented several initial challenges. First, scheduling both classes was challenging because most of the program's students work or are responsible for busy, growing families or both. Having the two courses taught once a week back-to-back increased student retention and success because it maximized students' time and efforts. Also, at the program's inception, registering students was challenging because it had to be done manually; however, online registration has mitigated this difficulty. Another ongoing challenge has been staffing courses because of the need for qualified bilingual instructors. Not having the initial background in child development required one professor to take all four courses as the program began in order to know which English skills the

students needed to acquire for success; the result was the development of the original ESL materials for each of the four courses. In the past, both the child development and ESL professors had to take on more than one cohort per semester in order to maintain instructional quality and program integrity. Fortunately the program now has a pool of instructors who work well as a team.

Southwestern College measures the program's success not only by the number of program completers who have continued their academic study to obtain a degree in child development but also by their linguistic ability to express and apply child development principles (resulting in their attainment of student learning outcomes). Due to fiscal constraints, Southwestern College has scaled back from four cohorts to three, but the college remains hopeful that it will be able to add back this cohort.

Sandra Corona, Professor of Child Development and Program Coordinator, and Angelina E. Stuart, Professor of Spanish and ESL

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://www.swccd.edu/~childdev/S2E%20Flyer%20-%20FALL%202012%20Eng.pdf>

# First Year Experience Programs

From the University of South Carolina, <http://www.sc.edu/fye/center/index.html>

New student seminars are special courses for undergraduate students designed to enhance their academic and social integration into college. Based on the data from the 2009 National Survey on First-Year Seminars, approximately 87.3% of responding American colleges and universities offer some type of first-year seminar. The precise content and goals for these seminars differ among institutions. Some are academic seminars, which focus on a faculty member's special area of scholarly interest or an interdisciplinary theme. Others are offered within academic departments or professional schools in order to introduce students to the expectations of an academic major or career. However, the majority of institutions (about 61.7%) offer extended orientation seminars designed to provide students with essential strategies and information to enhance the likelihood of their persistence and academic/social success.

New student seminars have been part of the academic curriculum at American colleges and universities for over 100 years. The first freshman seminar was offered in 1882 at Lee College in Kentucky and the first "for-credit" seminar became part of the curriculum at Reed College in 1911. But the popularity of first-year seminars has fluctuated since that time. After almost disappearing in the 1960s, the first-year seminar has enjoyed a gradual and steady rebirth since the mid-1970s. It is now recognized as an effective way to address many of the issues and problems of contemporary college life. All new student seminars give students the opportunity to interact with and gain support from other students and the seminar instructor. This supportive environment helps create a strong sense of community within the larger campus. Many of these seminars have been broadened in focus to include other categories of first-year students, especially transfer students, who also are students in transition. Hence, many former "freshman" seminars have been reconstituted as "new student" or "first-year" seminars.

The University 101 course at the University of South Carolina was introduced in 1972 as an educational experiment in response to 1970 student riots against the Vietnam War, other perceived social injustices, and local campus issues. The primary goal of the course was to build trust, understanding, and open lines of

communication between students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Other key aims were as follows:

- To encourage students to develop more positive attitudes and behaviors toward the University;
- To increase student retention to the sophomore year and subsequently through the senior year to graduation;
- To assist student efforts to understand the multiple, essential purposes of higher education;
- To facilitate a major faculty development initiative, which would improve teaching in all undergraduate courses, not just the first-year seminar

## The First-Year Experience Program at College of the Sequoias

The College of the Sequoias' First-Year Experience (FYE) program currently operates under a Title V grant named the SEQUOIAS (Student Excellence, Quality, Opportunity, Initiative, and Success) project. Awarded in 2009, the college has now entered into year four of this five-year grant. Although many noteworthy programs and projects have had their inception under this grant, FYE is at the core of this project. FYE program components include counseling services, augmented instruction, supplemental instruction, peer mentoring, computer lab, learning communities club, service learning, workshops, university visits, and textbook/laptop checkouts. Another supportive resource linked with FYE is the learning skills lab. Upon enrolling into a one-unit learning skills course, students then receive additional academic support via mandated study hours and study skills workshops.

Although the College of the Sequoias had a FYE program prior to this grant (which was funded under a previous Title V award), it found the transition to the current grant quite challenging. Along with the normal growing pains that accompany change (staffing, facilities, and administration), the current grant had one significant difference: faculty would no longer be compensated for participating in a learning community. The authors of the SEQUOIAS Project had institutionalization in mind while omitting this compensation. Initially, faculty accustomed to the pay voiced their concerns; however, another option was created via faculty inquiry groups, which have produced both qualitative and quantitative data in an effort to better serve first-year students.

The SEQUOIAS project, through a faculty coordinator, implemented augmented and supplemental instruction as another strategy to increase student success. This support has been added to both the college's basic skills and transferrable classes. Thus, the first-year student is supported by an intrusive mechanism, mandatory augmented instruction, while the second-year student continues to be supported by selecting courses with supplemental instruction.

Measuring success has been a challenge with the loss of the college's director of research and planning; however, with external guidance from the RP Group, the college has decided to measure success on various levels. For example, when the college compared a course with

supplemental instruction to the same course without it, the result was up to a 10 percent difference in student success (grades A, B, C, or P) in courses with it. The college has measured overall student success rates in basic skills and developmental English as well. For example, in 2008 (prior SEQUOIAS), the college had a success rate of 43 percent in one-level below transfer English; by 2012, the success rate had climbed to 59 percent.

Jessica Figallo, Assistant Director, SEQUOIAS Project

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://www.cos.edu/StudentServices/StudentSupportServices/FYE/Pages/FYE-Mission-Statement.aspx>

## Freshman Seminar at Cosumnes River College

Since 2006 more than 750 students have completed Cosumnes River College's award-winning Freshman Seminar. This course, developed to improve the retention rates of first-year students, particularly African American and Latino males, was presented the 2008 John Rice Diversity Award and the 2011 Exemplary Program Award by the California Community Colleges Board of Governors, and it has been recognized as a model program by the CLASS Institute (University of Texas at Austin).

The Freshman Seminar, designed to help students successfully transition from high school to college, emphasizes collaborative/active learning. The target group consists of new students entering from high school who complete the course the summer prior to their first semester or during their freshman year. This course differs from traditional college success courses which tend to emphasize study skills and career exploration; Freshman Seminar emphasizes working in small groups to promote the soft skills needed to run effective study groups in college and future work groups. Journal assignments, online resources, and interactive games help students become active partners in their education and develop the problem solving and decision making skills they will need to succeed in college. Students complete an educational plan as a formal assignment, learn how to access campus support services, and identify and address potential obstacles to academic success.

Rather than frontloading students with information as is typical of most new student orientation programs, information is delivered throughout the semester at key times (e.g., presentations by tutorial support staff after the first set of midterm exams and exploratory activities on transfer that occur at the same time as the college's Transfer Day activities). Guest speakers, such as the college president, professors, and financial aid representatives, frequently visit the classes. Peer advisors assigned to each class section serve as role models and referral agents to campus resources. (Peer advisors are competitively selected from a pool of returning students who have previously completed the Freshman Seminar). Peer advisors also participate in formal training prior to the start of the semester.

Cosumnes River College's Freshman Seminar was initially offered as a one-unit experimental course. Developed as a collaborative effort between

Student Services and Instruction, it is now a three-unit transferable course (fulfilling Area E of the California State University General Education pattern).

The biggest challenge in developing a freshman experience course was that these courses tend to be offered primarily at four-year universities. Thus, faculty developed a curriculum specific to community college students, such as (culturally relevant) case studies emphasizing the experience of students who commute, live at home, and work substantial hours at outside jobs to pay for their education. The course has been taught by faculty from a variety of disciplines, and discipline-specific sections are also offered. Instructors participate in training sessions prior to the start of the semester and continue to meet throughout the semester to share resources with one another, with the goal of continuous improvement. Instructors are provided resource binders with sample collaborative learning activities and also draw from a 40-page New Student Guidebook developed in-house as the text for this course.

Celia Esposito-Noy, Vice President Student Services & Enrollment, and Sharon Padilla-Alvarado, Tutoring Coordinator

**MORE INFORMATION AT** [http://www.crc.losrios.edu/Student\\_Services/Freshman\\_Seminar.htm](http://www.crc.losrios.edu/Student_Services/Freshman_Seminar.htm)

## First-Year Experience Program at El Camino College

El Camino College's First-Year Experience (FYE) program started in fall 2001 through a Title V Hispanic Serving Institutions Grant offered through the Department of Education. The program started with a cohort of 45 students enrolled in two learning-community courses for one academic year. Today, the program has more than 750 new students who participate in FYE learning communities. Funding for FYE was originally provided from a Title V Hispanic Serving Institution grant during 2000-2005 academic years to build a foundation for academic success. Upon completion of the Title V grant funding, the district provided the primary basis for funding and institutionalized all of the full-time positions within the program.

FYE students are first-time college students. The median age is 18 and the demographics are representative of the campus as a whole. The program offers learning communities for students at the basic, developmental, and transferrable college level. FYE also offers accelerated learning communities for students wishing to advance into college-level courses at a faster rate than the traditional pathway for math and English courses.

FYE has experienced several challenges since its inception that include size of the program, counselor-to-student ratio, faculty selection, and recruitment of students. FYE addressed each of these items over the years and re-examined best practices so that the growth of the program would not compromise the quality of services or student success rates. The college only scaled the program in size when adequate resources were in place that included more counselors and faculty development. Since 2001, the college measured success by collecting retention, persistence, course-progression, student success, transfer and graduation rates, as well as rich qualitative data capturing the voices of students participating in FYE.

The program evaluations over the years show clear indications of greater and faster throughput of students and goal completion for participants in FYE versus a control group of similar students who received no special services. FYE students needed fewer courses to successfully complete transfer-level English and college-level math, even when the starting course was held constant. FYE students also reached the 30-unit threshold faster than the control group, achieving 30 course units nearly one term faster than the control group.

FYE students were also more likely to persist into the second year at El Camino College and were twice as likely to earn associate degrees within a three-year time period. On average, FYE students persist to their second semester at a rate of 81 percent. This is higher than the control groups' persistence rate of 74 percent. Third-semester persistence rates for FYE cohorts remained stable from year to year. FYE students had a third-semester persistence rate of 72 percent. On the other hand, the control groups had an average persistence rate of 49 percent. FYE students demonstrated strong fourth-semester persistence rates. FYE cohorts had an average fourth-semester persistence rate of 67 percent, 29 percentage points higher than the control groups' persistence rate of 38 percent. Further, FYE students averaged a 42 percent transfer rate while the control group averaged a 21 percent transfer rate. In terms of college benefit, this and other reports show that FYE contributes positively to several core indicators of academic success, including course success (and thus fewer repeats), persistence, and, to a lesser extent, goal completion. Students benefit because of reduced college costs, and their higher achievement rates likely indicate higher personal earnings in the future.

Cynthia Mosqueda, Faculty Coordinator

**MORE INFORMATION AT <http://www.elcamino.edu/student-services/fye/>**

## The First Year Pathways Program at Pasadena City College

Pasadena City College made a bold investment in the success of first-year students, leveraging federal and district resources to create the First Year Pathways (FYP) program, an innovative approach to ensure that students identify and complete their academic goals in a timely manner. The program guarantees students' schedules—including English and math courses—in the fall and spring semesters of their first year and provides them with the critical support they need outside of the classroom. In 2012, more than 800 students enrolled in the FYP program.

The program has the following three key components:

- **Summer bridge:** Pasadena City College's summer bridge programs are called "jams." In 2012, the college hosted math, English as a second language (ESL), and design jams. The largest is Math Jam, a two-week (30 hours per week) program offered at no cost to students. It integrates innovative math instruction and structured supplemental support with engaging orientation-to-college activities as an important entry point to the college's FYP program. Math Jam received the prestigious national 2012 Bellwether Award for Program Innovation at the Community College Futures Assembly in Orlando, Florida, and was named a 2012 finalist by Washington, DC based Excelencia in Education.
- **FYP student success teams:** First-year counselors dedicate part of their workload to FYP students. At specific times each day, students can meet directly with counselors who have been trained to handle the special needs of first-year students. First-year coaches serve as advisors and mentors to the students. They closely monitor students' academic progress and communicate with them primarily via face-to-face interactions, but also via phone, email, and text messaging. FYP student success teams also include first-year tutors, the majority of whom are former Math Jam and FYP students. They facilitate most of the Math Jam activities, develop relationships with the students on their caseload, and are available throughout the year to work with students one-on-one or in small groups.
- **College 1 and "One Book, One College":** Pasadena City College's first-year seminar, College 1, is a three-unit University of California/California State University -transferrable course required of all FYP students. It

provides them with a rigorous academic experience in their first semester of college, during which time they exercise their critical reading, writing, and research skills while developing the academic and personal behaviors necessary for success in college. The One Book, One College initiative contributes to the Pasadena City College's ongoing conversations about who its students are, how the college can best serve them, and the college's vision as a learning institution.

Results from the 2010/11 FYE cohort indicate that the FYE students displayed positive outcomes compared to the comparison group. FYE students reported higher levels of engagement, with respect to their relationships with faculty and peers, and participation in campus activities than the comparison group. Course-taking data also reveal that FYE students are progressing through the math sequence at a faster rate and enrolling in Freshman Composition and Beginning and Intermediate Algebra at a higher rate during their first year.

Brock Klein, Director of the Teaching and Learning Center

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://pccproject90.org/pcc-pathways/>

## The Freshman Experience Program at Santa Ana College

The Freshman Experience Program (FEP), designed to create a learning-community experience for students and faculty at Santa Ana College patterned after the Puente Project, began in 1996 as a small part of a Title III grant. Beginning in that year with 5 cohorts, FEP has since grown to 21 cohorts, including those from the college's sister program, Learning Communities II. Today FEP is a medium-scale basic skills, retention, and transfer learning-communities program.

Each year approximately 600 to 700 students recruited from local high schools are placed in class-sized cohorts of peers who are enrolled in a pair of classes, English and counseling or math and counseling, ranging from developmental through associate-degree applicable and transfer levels according to their placement scores. Those cohorts of students stay together for a year with the same team of teachers who work with them in a two-semester sequence of English or math and counseling courses. The counselor in each team not only teaches an introduction to college course (fall semester) followed by a career counseling course (spring semester) but also attends the classes of his or her English or math team partner.

This model addresses four critical needs affecting students' ability to persist and progress academically in community college. Lack of attachment to new peers, teachers, and institutions is a major cause of leaving college; FEP helps students in cohorts bond and allows students and instructors to get to know each other well over the year. Providing students an in-depth introduction to campus resources in counseling/discipline classes and engaging them in cultural and academic events helps students form attachments to the college. This triple attachment supports students' social adjustment to the new college environment. FEP also addresses students' cultural acclimation to the new norms of college, helps students acquire solid, foundational academic skills, and engages students in developing the behaviors of successful students.

FEP faculty attend weekly meetings with their partners to discuss their students' academic progress, social integration, and acclimation to the culture of college and to plan and coordinate course curricula. They also attend monthly program-wide meetings throughout the year to discuss program business and special events; however, the bulk of each monthly meeting is concerned with faculty sharing effective practices and engaging in ongoing professional

development based on topics of their choosing drawn from the Basic Skills Initiative list of effective practices.

FEP students have been compared with control groups matched for multiple factors.

- Average persistence rate to a second semester (1996-2010) ~ FEP = 83%; Control = 71%; (all freshmen 2003-2009) 56.3%

Percentage of FEP courses outperforming comparison sections in pass rates (1996-2010) ~ FEP = 68% overall; FEP English sections = 64%; FEP math sections = 74%

Steve Bautista, Counseling; Todd Huck, English; Lynn Marecek, Math

**MORE INFORMATION AT** [www.sac.edu/fep](http://www.sac.edu/fep)

## Integrating Student Support and Instruction

From “Promoting Partnerships for Student Success: Lessons from the SSPIRE Initiative” by Evan Weissman, Oscar Cerna, Christian Geckeler, Emily Schneider, Derek V. Price, and Thomas J. Smith,

[http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/full\\_482.pdf](http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/full_482.pdf)

Across the nation, policymakers and educators are rightly concerned about strategies to improve instruction—particularly in developmental English and mathematics courses, where many students struggle to learn basic skills needed for college. But new scholarship suggests that, to be most effective, support for developmental-level learners should not be limited to the classroom. Student support services, such as academic and personal advising, counseling, tutoring, and financial aid, are also critically important for promoting better outcomes for students. The challenge is to integrate these support services with academic instruction. Unfortunately, the very way most community colleges are organized—with student services housed in one division and academic functions in another, each functioning in parallel but with little coordination—creates obstacles to successful integration. These obstacles are often exacerbated by competition between the divisions for limited budget resources.

To help overcome this divide, the Student Support Partnership Integrating Resources and Education (SSPIRE) initiative was funded by the James Irvine Foundation and coordinated by MDRC. SSPIRE aimed to increase the success of young, low-income, and academically underprepared California community college students by helping community colleges strengthen their support services and better integrate these services with academic instruction. MDRC’s observations of the colleges’ experiences over the three-year grant period reveal several lessons from the programs that were implemented the most smoothly:

- Bring instructional and student services faculty and staff together immediately and consistently: from planning and early implementation, through program operation, to program assessment and improvement.
- Move quickly from the broad concept of “integrating services with instruction” to clear and concrete goals and program definitions.
- Secure the support of senior leadership and employ strong program leaders who can bridge the gaps between student services and academics.

## Opening Doors to Excellence at Chaffey College

Ricardo Diaz, Counseling Coordinator

**MORE INFORMATION AT** [http://www.chaffey.edu/counseling/opening\\_doors/index.shtml](http://www.chaffey.edu/counseling/opening_doors/index.shtml)

Chaffey College's Opening Doors to Excellence (ODE) program targets students in their second semester of academic and/or progress probation. After semester grades post, students on second-level probation with a grade point average of 1.0 to 1.99 are identified and sent letters inviting them to go online to schedule an information session about the ODE program. Sessions are led by counselor apprentices, graduate students in master's degree programs in counseling, where information is shared about the probation and dismissal process and the ODE program. Students are given three options in the session:

- Show evidence that with anticipated grades for the current term they can regain good standing and subsequently waive the program
- Participate in the program and receive immunity from dismissal action for two additional semesters
- Refuse services and follow the process leading toward dismissal after the third consecutive semester on probation.

Students opting to participate in the ODE program sign a contract obligating them to the terms of participation, meet with an ODE counselor to complete a multiple semester educational plan, complete and pass a specially developed three-unit grade-earning college success course for students on probation, and attend directed learning activities in the college's Multidisciplinary Success Centers that correlate with instructional topics in the college success course. Targeted students are blocked from registering until they attend an information session and select one of the available options.

The ODE program was created through a comprehensive collaborative process involving counseling and instructional faculty, staff, and administrators. Chaffey College received funding from MDRC, a nationally recognized social and educational policy research organization, to develop a model program for community colleges to assist probationary students. They conducted research on the program and published the results of the study in the brief "Getting Back on Track: Effects of a Community College Program for Probationary Students" in spring 2009. The program earned the prestigious 2010 MetLife Community College Award for service to students and the California Community Colleges Board of Governors 2011 Exemplary Program Award.

## Success Centers at Chaffey College

The Chaffey College Success Centers began operating in 2000 as part of the institution's Basic Skills Transformation Project that started in the late 1990s. The network of academic support services supports all of the college's programs of study through a Language Success Center (reading, writing, English as a second language, and modern languages), Mathematics Success Center, and Multidisciplinary Success Center at the Rancho campus and through all-inclusive Multidisciplinary Success Centers at the Chino and Fontana locations. Fully integrated into the instructional life of faculty and students, the Success Center network annually supports approximately 60 percent of the college's unduplicated headcount and positively contributes to both increased student success and retention.

Although the scale of the Chaffey College Success Centers is unique, program efficacy made unparalleled strides during the era of the Basic Skills Initiative largely because of curricular advances that developed instructional deliveries in addition to traditional tutoring models. In particular, the Chaffey College Success Centers invented "directed learning activities" (now adopted by a multitude of other California community colleges), experiential learning opportunities that are faculty-designed and reinforce the specific goals of classroom instruction. Unlike tutoring services that, despite the best efforts of learning center personnel, tend to be product-driven exchanges, this instructional delivery better matches the process-driven nature of the classroom learning experience—a development that has laid the foundation for a synergistic partnership that better legitimizes the college's Success Centers and has transformed them from mere "support services" to true "extensions of the classroom."

The development of Chaffey College's Success Centers has been a collaborative process brought about by the will and determination of dedicated faculty, staff, and administrators. The re-positioning of the college's instructional support programs within the campus culture did not occur overnight, but the lessons learned over the years may provide strategies and hope to other community college learning centers still languishing on the margins.

Robert Rundquist, Success Center Coordinator

**MORE INFORMATION AT** [www.chaffey.edu/success/index2.shtml](http://www.chaffey.edu/success/index2.shtml)

## Academic Wellness Educators at Columbia College

Columbia College has adopted a holistic approach to basic skills and student success with the help of the college's Academic Wellness Educators (AWE). This group includes faculty, staff, and students across the college.

The mission of AWE is to promote academic wellness and improvement in the delivery of learning services throughout the entire college community for all students at all levels of preparation. Columbia College's holistic approach has created enthusiastic engagement from the entire campus community. In an early effort to raise awareness of and improve basic skills instruction across campus, an experimental course was drafted and offered: Embedding Basic Skills in Courses & Programs. Faculty and staff who participated in the course learned how sometimes frustrating interactions with students could be transformed into teachable moments. For example, staff members in the student service areas were given specific strategies to help students improve written petitions to make their cases clearer and more compelling. The college plans to offer a similar course for college support teams in spring 2013. At small colleges, "scaling up" often means sharing and replicating good practices; Columbia College welcomes the opportunity to host faculty and staff from colleges throughout the system to share and discuss its experience integrating student services and instruction.

AWE typically works through focused inquiry groups (FIGs) and encourages leadership of such groups from all constituency groups. Currently, the veteran's coordinator heads the Veterans Success FIG aimed at increasing engagement, retention, and student success of the veteran student population. This group has assisted students in building community among the college's veteran students and recognizing their success, including sponsoring an Academic Achievement Celebration recognizing veteran students with a term or cumulative grade point average of 3.0 and above.

Anne Cavagnaro, Professor of Mathematics

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://www.gocolumbia.edu/AWE>

## Math Performance Success Program at De Anza College

The Math Performance Success (MPS) program offers students a team approach to success, particularly for those who have had difficulty in previous math courses. Instructors, counselors, and tutor/mentors collaborate to help students complete their mathematics requirements.

Currently MPS offers two sequences of courses. In the first sequence, students take Elementary Algebra in fall, Intermediate Algebra in winter, and a college-transferable math class, Statistics, in spring. In the second sequence, students take Pre-algebra in fall, Elementary Algebra in winter, and Intermediate Algebra in spring. Currently, the college offers three sections of each sequence each year. An additional Math 10 Statistics class is offered in the fall and winter quarters.

MPS students attend class for two hours of instruction five days a week. This instructional time provides both whole class activities as well as collaborative group work, with group work comprising about 50 percent of the instructional time. The instructors collaborate on the course instruction, using a common calendar, similar activities, and common tests. Mentor/tutors are available during the class to assist students who have questions about the material.

The MPS team includes a counselor for each class section who works closely with the instructor to ensure student success. The counselor provides individual and academic counseling for students in the program and is available daily during class to talk to students regarding their grade to date, missing assignments, and absences. Additionally, counselors conduct student success interventions individually with students throughout the quarter. Topics include time management, anxiety reduction techniques, and test taking strategies. The MPS team of instructors and counselors meet on a weekly basis to plan program activities and discuss concerns related to students' achievement in the class.

In addition to in-class tutoring, the program offers students group tutoring outside of class. Each week, approximately 50 hours of tutoring are offered at various times throughout the day and early evening. The tutors are trained to reinforce the methods and approach taught in the regular class. In addition, study groups are formed for students interested in working with other students outside of class. Whenever possible, a tutor also attends the study group to assist with student questions.

The MPS program is evaluated annually by the college's institutional researcher. The success rates of the program are compared to traditionally formatted math classes as well as other non-MPS intervention math classes. In the 10-year period from 2001 through 2011, the success rates for the math courses offered by the MPS program averaged 24 to 28 percent higher than other math courses.

Herminio Hernando, Counselor and Program Coordinator

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://www.deanza.edu/mps/>

## Learning Communities

From The Washington Center at Evergreen College, <http://www.evergreen.edu/washingtoncenter/index.html>

Learning communities done well can make a significant difference in student outcomes, as well as increasing student engagement and improving the quality of students' learning experiences.

In one form or another, learning communities operate at hundreds of two- and four-year institutions throughout the United States. They serve a wide range of students with diverse needs and aspirations.

Learning communities have been developed to address all areas of the curriculum, from pre-college or developmental courses—sometimes in combination with college-level work—to honors programs and gateway courses to upper-division classes.

For several decades educators have agreed that learning communities—whether newly minted or long established—need to include, at minimum, the following three components:

- A strategically-defined cohort of students taking courses together which have been identified through a review of institutional data
- Robust, collaborative partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs
- Explicitly designed opportunities to practice integrative and interdisciplinary learning
- Educators also agree that the purpose of a learning community program needs to be informed by and tied to broader institutional goals.

Implementation of learning communities varies among institutions. Some campuses focus on creating cohorts, some focus on creating lots of integrative assignments, and others focus on developing strong partnerships between academics and student affairs. Working on any one of these components is worthwhile, but when they are integrated and tied to the institution's mission and goals, learning communities become a powerful intervention strategy for student success.

The expression “new era learning communities” refers to a new stage in learning community work—where curricular reform is cast more broadly as educational reform. The starting point for planning learning communities is no longer a conversation between faculty keen to teach together, but an institution's commitment to its students—from their arrival to graduation.

Situating learning communities in the thick of an educational institution's aims and concerns represents a coming-of-age for an emerging field.

The shifts include the following key moves:

- From learning community offerings based on faculty interest to learning communities situated where student need is greatest and at critical transition points (high school and pre-college to college, transfer from two-to-four year schools, entry into specialized studies)
- From learning community models to learning communities as an intervention strategy for student success where attention is paid to subsets of students whose completion rates lag behind their peers
- From one or two types of learning communities to multiple interventions with a common purpose informed by explicit learning community program mission and goals, articulated in relation to an institution's strategic plan

New era learning communities move forward the best of our collective efforts. The through line—the constant—is the commitment to quality education for all students, and an explicit institutional acknowledgement that curriculum planning time for faculty and other teaching team members is foundational to learning communities done well.

NOTE: researchers, such as MDRC, point to the fact that without strategic support beyond the learning community, the effects of the learning communities fizzle.

More information available at the following:

[http://www.postsecondaryresearch.org/i/a/document/23011\\_LCSynthesisFull.pdf](http://www.postsecondaryresearch.org/i/a/document/23011_LCSynthesisFull.pdf) (The Effects of Learning Communities for Students in Developmental Education)

[http://www.postsecondaryresearch.org/i/a/document/20496\\_LC\\_Merced\\_CCBC\\_](http://www.postsecondaryresearch.org/i/a/document/20496_LC_Merced_CCBC_)

**Feb2012.pdf** (Learning Communities for Students in Developmental Education)

**<http://www.mdrc.org/commencement-day>** (Commencement Day: Six-Year Effects of a Freshman Learning Community Program at Kingsborough Community College)

**[http://www.postsecondaryresearch.org/i/a/document/12887\\_LCfullreport.pdf](http://www.postsecondaryresearch.org/i/a/document/12887_LCfullreport.pdf)** (Scaling Up Learning Communities: The Experience of Six Community Colleges)

## Learning Communities at Cerritos College

Cerritos College began developing learning communities in 1995 as a key part of both a Title III grant and a larger institutional initiative to promote student success. As of fall 2012, the program has designed and implemented well over 700 learning communities and continues to offer 20 to 25 learning communities each semester that promote basic skills, associate degree, and transfer student success.

The Learning Communities Program (LCP) has faced challenges, such as refining an enrollment management system and engaging faculty members in the learning-communities model of teaching and learning, but with a robust partnership between Academic Affairs and Student Services, LCP is well established and continues to grow. The Cerritos College LCP is a disciplinary and interdisciplinary teaching and learning enterprise designed to help foster students' educational development and integrative knowledge, and it supports innovative strategies that address a multicultural and pluralistic student population.

LCP offers courses designed by creative faculty that model and build integrative skills. The program's curricula define pathways that encourage relevant integrative learning within and across fields. LCP offers a learning environment whereby students and faculty from over 14 disciplines work together as valued members of a team. LCP students are afforded a culture of consistent, cohesive support and academic guidance from the respective learning-community's faculty and students.

Through professional development, faculty continue to identify students' interdisciplinary thinking by examining academic work, they explore their own discipline in depth, and they develop interdisciplinary assignments with their learning-community colleagues that allow for integrative learning and assessment, enhancing the likelihood that teaching and instruction will be aligned intentionally to produce quality learning.

In addition to success, retention, and persistence data collected by the college's research department, since fall 2009 LCP has participated in a national online learning communities' student survey called Students' Experiences of Learning in Learning Communities. The survey supplies program benchmark data on students' experiences of learning in learning communities and provides another means of assessing program outcomes.

Sue Parsons, Director, Cerritos College Teacher TRAC and Learning Communities Program

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://cms.cerritos.edu/lcp/>

## Diop Scholars at Cosumnes River College

The impetus for the Diop Scholars program at Cosumnes River College came from faculty who were having “courageous conversations” about the plight of the African American student population. Current and historical data from the institutional research office show that African American students have the lowest success, persistence, and retention rates of any ethnic group in the Los Rios Community College District. A handful of faculty continued to meet to fully flesh out the parameters of the Diop Scholars program and to write a proposal for implementation to the college administration. The Diop Scholars program at Cosumnes River College began in fall 2006.

The mission of Diop Scholars is to intervene in the academic experience of African American students to increase persistence and retention rates at Cosumnes River College. The program model is a year-long learning community whereby students simultaneously enroll in English Writing 101: College Writing (one level below transfer-level) and Human/Career Development 110: Building Foundations for Success in the fall and English Writing 300: College Composition (transfer level) and Human/Career Development 310: College Success in the spring. Culturally responsive pedagogy is infused into the curriculum of all Diop Scholar courses.

The program’s students also participate in a mandatory orientation and extracurricular activities outside the classroom including five hours of community service, campus activities (including the Diop Club), and college tours. Students are required to complete a student education plan and see a counselor once per semester until they reach their stated goal.

Diop Scholars is one of 20 programs throughout California connected to the statewide Umoja Community grassroots organization (<http://umojacommunity.org>). The Umoja Community provides professional development for colleges that wish to start an Umoja Community program and want to incorporate culturally relevant pedagogical techniques into their curriculum using the Umoja Practices. The Umoja Community has been recognized by the California Community Colleges Board of Governors as a viable student success program.

The biggest challenge for the program is the absence of permanent funding. Diop Scholars has sustained its ability

to work with basic skills students because of the faculty’s and administration’s commitment to the program.

Another challenge is finding committed faculty who first and foremost accept students for who they are and what they bring to the institution. It is also challenging given there is no faculty release time, yet faculty are expected to invest the extra time it takes to effectively engage students in the pedagogical practices shown to increase the success of at-risk students.

Finally, another challenge is ensuring research data is always being captured about students at the local, district, and statewide level. Cosumnes River College has always received continuous support from the statewide Umoja Community program when going through these challenges. African American students make up 13.4 percent of the basic skills students enrolled at the college (Cosumnes River College Research Office fall 2009). More than 200 students have enrolled in the Diop Scholars program since 2006. The program measures student success through their progression in the English course sequence and their course completion rates as compared to other African American students on the Cosumnes River College campus. Diop Scholar students have consistently had higher course success rates in their English courses as compared to the overall English course success rates at the college.

Dr. Teresa Aldredge, Diop Scholars Counselor/Coordinator

**MORE INFORMATION AT** [http://crc.losrios.edu/Student\\_Services/DIOP\\_Scholars.htm](http://crc.losrios.edu/Student_Services/DIOP_Scholars.htm)

## Summer Bridge Programs

From "Summer Bridge Programs: Supporting All Students" by Adrianna Kezar, <http://www.ericdigests.org/2001-1/summer.html>

**History and Mission:** Over the past thirty years, access to higher education has expanded markedly. As in most historical times of expansion, remediation and support programs grow to help new populations make the transition to college. Remediation and support programs grew during the early 1800's when access expanded to include more "common men" in higher education. These programs also grew in the late 1800's when women and blacks entered higher education in larger numbers. Furthermore, after the G.I. Bill and civil rights movement, support programs were again reintroduced to help these new populations attend college.

Over the last thirty years, support programs' goals and mission continue to expand in response to international students, non-English speakers, and disabled students. One of the popular programs that emerged out of these various waves of increased access was the summer bridge program. Summer bridge programs are designed to provide assistance to individuals entering college in the fall. The focus of programs varies depending on the specific program mission and goals. The main thrust of the programs is to retain these new populations within higher education and to provide them an equal footing with other students.

**Range of Activities and Types of Programs:** Program activities range enormously. Some focus almost exclusively on academic support such as writing, mathematics, and reading. Many contain study skills such as time management, individual learning style, study strategies, and expectations for college work. Since students in summer bridge programs are often first generation college students, a section on the goals of a liberal arts education or general education and discussions about college life is included. Also, career counseling is found within the majority of programs, assisting students in expanding their vocational aspirations. Many programs are developing a parent involvement component, since research indicates that parental influence is strongly related to student success. Helping students to develop relationships on campus is another goal; this is accomplished by introducing students to campus offices and potential mentors. In addition, computer literacy is becoming a critical issue within the programs.

Journal writing and self-reflective activities have also been identified in the research as important program components.

Many summer bridge programs also develop partnerships within the community to enhance students' experiences. Some bridge programs include community service opportunities so that students meet and are connected with organizations within the area of the college. Others partner with businesses providing future internship possibilities for students. Some programs, for example the University of Missouri, St Louis, have established partnerships with K-12 educators in order to help them in development and evaluation of summer bridge programs.

The populations served by programs vary greatly. Some programs are specifically designed for target populations such as minority, low-income, disabled, or first generation students. Programs are developed for students within particular majors such as math and science. These summer bridge programs tend to have a very different curriculum focused on introducing lab work, understanding what it means to work in the science or math area, familiarizing them with group and problem based learning, and developing mentoring relationships. Other programs serve any student who does not pass an exam, serving more of a remedial purpose. Yet, there are also programs specifically aimed at gifted students, from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. These programs aim more on the transition to college and expectations rather than study skills. Another unique type of program is for students in tech prep high school curriculum. These bridge programs are often offered by community colleges and help students who never aspired to attend college, to enter and finish an associate's degree in a technical area.

Thus, the curricula vary greatly, depending on the population served and goals. Many institutions offer more than one summer bridge program, accommodating the unique needs of their student population. What should become apparent is that individualization of the program to the campus is critical. Conducting an audit of your own campus' needs is essential.

**Research Findings:** There has been a significant body of research on first generation college students, examining the factors that inhibit and enhance success. This research consistently shows that some of the major barriers to success include: 1) lack of self-confidence; 2) inappropriate expectations or knowledge about college environment; 3) lack of connection to the college community or external community; 4) lack of early validation within the college

environment; 5) family members who do not understand the goals of college; and, 6) not involving faculty in summer bridge programs and the transition process.

**MORE INFORMATION AT** [http://www.postsecondaryresearch.org/i/a/document/22731\\_NCPR\\_TexasDSB\\_FullReport.pdf](http://www.postsecondaryresearch.org/i/a/document/22731_NCPR_TexasDSB_FullReport.pdf) (*Bridging the Gap: An Impact Study of Eight Developmental Summer Bridge Programs in Texas*)

## Math Jam at Pasadena City College

Pasadena City College's two-week (30 hours per week), no-cost, no-credit summer Math Jam program represents the college's commitment to ensure that students make a smooth transition from high school to college and to address the issue of low success and completion rates. Math Jam does both by integrating innovative math instruction and structured supplemental support with engaging orientation-to-college activities as the important entry point to all of the college's First-Year Experience (FYE) programs.

Math Jam provides first-time Pasadena City College students with a creative, engaging, and no-stress environment in which to experience math success before they begin their first college math course in the fall. Collaborative activities, competitions and games, guest speakers, out-of-classroom activities, and community building help students feel comfortable in a college math class, understand the benefits of advisement and peer tutoring, and make friends with their teachers, classmates, tutors, advisors, and counselors. All materials and activities have been designed to increase the students' chances of success. The program's short-term outcomes are connectedness to campus community, improved attitudes toward math, and active engagement with faculty. Its long-term outcomes are acceleration through the math and English sequences and completion of significant academic milestones.

Current Math Jam staff includes a program coordinator, program assistant (always a former Math Jam student), math instructors, peer tutors (all former Math Jam students and/or Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement program students), FYE counselors, and FYE coaches. All program costs, including clerical support and evaluation, are covered by the college.

Based on evaluation conducted by external evaluators from Claremont Graduate University, University of California, Los Angeles, and Pasadena City College's Institutional Research Office, Math Jam students enrolled in pre-algebra (Level 1) and completed the last course in the pre-collegiate math sequence (Intermediate Algebra, Math 131) more than two-and-a-half times faster than students not in the program by the end of seven terms. These students also completed Math 131 and English 1A (Freshman Composition) more than twice as fast as the comparison group by the end of seven terms.

In addition, a mixed-model ANOVA conducted in 2011 by Claremont Graduate University evaluators found an

increased sense of self and enjoyment of mathematics and reduced mathematics anxiety among Math Jam students. These students completed their first semester of math with improved attitudes toward mathematics and were better positioned to succeed in math than a comparable Pasadena City College math student. The comparison group, on the other hand, reported increased math anxiety and decreased enjoyment of mathematics throughout the term.

Brock Klein, Director of the Teaching and Learning Center

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://www.pasadena.edu/externalrelations/tlc/mathjam.cfm>

## Summer Bridge Programs at Santa Barbara City College

The Educational Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) program at Santa Barbara City College developed the Running Start Summer Bridge program in 2000. It was developed because a donor wanted to support a program for at-risk high school seniors not interested in pursuing a college education. Since its inception, the program has more than doubled in size, and its model has been duplicated to serve other at-risk populations.

The ongoing challenge for Running Start is by program definition: the college recruits graduating high school seniors who have no desire to pursue a college education. At the end of the six-week program, these students have successfully completed four to seven college units and, more importantly, persist into the fall. Santa Barbara City College measures success by student completion and persistence rates. In the history of the program, Running Start has maintained a 94 percent persistence rate.

Because of its success, the Running Start program model has been duplicated with the Single Parents Arriving Ready for College (SPARC) single-parent bridge program and Transitions, a summer bridge program for recently released inmates or individuals on probation or parole. The primary challenge for all three programs is funding.

**Running Start:** Running Start is a six-week summer bridge program for local high school students completing the 12th grade. It provides services to students who may be financially and/or academically underprepared and who may not assess into college-level math and English. Sixty-five spots are available each summer, and students must go through an interview process to be selected. The program's goal is to help students make a smooth transition to college life. Students provide the motivation and a strong work ethic; in return, Running Start provides students the academic and tutorial support and the financial assistance they need to be successful college students.

**SPARC:** SPARC is a six-week summer bridge program for single-parent students who are new to college or returning to college and are struggling academically. The primary focus of SPARC is assisting students to have a successful college experience and achieve their educational goals. The program strives to increase the number of Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE) program single-parent students who are successfully placed into career

employment or who transfer to four-year universities. SPARC provides CARE single-parent eligible students both personal and academic support toward college retention and transfer.

**Transitions:** The mission of the Transitions program is to provide access to higher education to individuals released from the California criminal justice system, create a smooth transition from prison to the community college, and initiate ongoing dialogue between the college and the community. The program's goal is to assist individuals on parole to re-integrate into society by pursuing their goal of beginning or continuing college. Through a college success class and peer mentoring, students who complete the summer Transitions program have a support system in place and are better prepared to begin classes in the fall.

Marsha Wright, Director of EOPS/CARE

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://www.sbccc.edu/eopscare/Summer%20Bridge%20Programs.php>

## Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction

From the University of Missouri-Kansas City,  
<http://www.umkc.edu/asm/si/index.shtml>

Tutoring programs provide academic assistance to students across disciplines. Individual and group tutoring often take place in labs, centers or classrooms. Tutor training and ongoing evaluation are important components of all tutoring programs.

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is an academic assistance program that utilizes peer-assisted study sessions. SI sessions are regularly-scheduled, informal review sessions in which students compare notes, discuss readings, develop organizational tools, and predict test items. Students learn how to integrate course content and study skills while working together. The sessions are facilitated by "SI leaders," students who have previously done well in the course and who attend all class lectures, take notes, and act as model students.

The purpose of supplemental instruction is to do the following:

- Increase retention within targeted, historically difficult courses
- Improve student grades in targeted, historically difficult courses
- Increase the graduation rates of students (italics are direct quote from SI website)

SI is a "free service" offered to all students in a targeted course. SI is a non-remedial approach to learning as the program targets high-risk courses rather than high-risk students. All students are encouraged to attend SI sessions, as it is a voluntary program. Students with varying levels of academic preparedness and diverse ethnicities participate. There is no remedial stigma attached to SI since the program targets high-risk courses rather than high-risk students.

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://www.mdrc.org/publication/leading-example> (Leading by Example: A Case Study of Peer Leader Programs at Two Achieving the Dream Colleges)

## Critical Academic Skills Workshops at Bakersfield College

Bakersfield College's Critical Academic Skills (CAS) workshops were developed in response to a Basic Skills Initiative workshop in spring 2008 where a Butte College presentation described an integrated, cross-disciplinary approach. The CAS strategy involves diagnostic identification of basic skills student needs that could be addressed through one-hour free seminars addressing specific skills. This integrated strategy allows students to receive needed instruction, without committing to an entire semester-long basic skills course, while pursuing their own educational goals and pathways. Students are referred by individual faculty members throughout the semester as the needs become evident. Students then select workshops and attend outside of class without cost.

The CAS workshop mission is to provide critical academic-skills support for students across all programs and disciplines on campus. Topics are identified by faculty teaching transfer and basic skills courses and include sessions to develop English, math, study, and college survival skills. This hands-on and interactive approach to learning has created an environment where students leave every workshop with skills they can easily apply across disciplines and programs as well as help to plan, organize, and successfully achieve their college goals. Students are able to hand-select from a wide variety of workshop topics in order to find those that fit their individual personal, remedial, and academic needs and to choose topics that fit their current course requirements in a safe and friendly learning environment.

**Development of CAS:** The Bakersfield College plan does not involve course credit or a centralized delivery center. In 2008, the coordinator was appointed and faculty held more than 60 workshops in the first semester. The CAS workshops began with a full schedule at both the main campus and the Delano Center, but due to lack of faculty with flexible hours to teach the workshops, insufficient enrollments at Delano, and a big funding cut in fall 2011, workshops are currently offered only on the main campus. The enrollments on the main campus have increased by 100 percent since fall 2008, and workshops have become all but institutionalized. Plans are in place to track student success related specifically to CAS.

**Continuous Evaluation and Improvement:** The newest improvements include specialized workshops to meet the specific needs of vocational students on campus. Some

workshop topics remain popular while others have been modified, added, or deleted depending on embedded survey and enrollment data collected with every workshop. New career technical/vocational CAS workshops target the specific math needs for culinary art, welding, and automotive students. These needs became evident through student learning outcome (SLO) assessment and program review data. By working with vocational faculty, instructors modified the CAS curriculum, tailoring workshops to provide content that better matched the SLOs in target courses. The vocational faculty indicate that the workshops have definitely helped students to contend with the math conversions they need to know for the various courses. Post survey indicates that the students also found the CAS workshops improved their success in the vocational courses. The data from workshops show positive improvement as evaluated by both students and faculty. The positive impact of CAS workshops on vocational programs is extremely pertinent, especially in addressing career technical education program goals to increase success and retention rates through embedded remediation of basic skills.

**MORE INFORMATION AT** the following:

[http://bcacademicdevelopmentdepartment.weebly.com/uploads/1/7/8/7/1787454/bakersfield\\_college\\_cas\\_report.pdf](http://bcacademicdevelopmentdepartment.weebly.com/uploads/1/7/8/7/1787454/bakersfield_college_cas_report.pdf)

[http://bcacademicdevelopmentdepartment.weebly.com/uploads/1/7/8/7/1787454/cas\\_workshops\\_spring\\_2012.pdf](http://bcacademicdevelopmentdepartment.weebly.com/uploads/1/7/8/7/1787454/cas_workshops_spring_2012.pdf) (Critical Academic Skills Seminars - Descriptions)

[http://bcacademicdevelopmentdepartment.weebly.com/uploads/1/7/8/7/1787454/microsoft\\_word\\_-\\_cas\\_spring\\_13\\_schedule.pdf](http://bcacademicdevelopmentdepartment.weebly.com/uploads/1/7/8/7/1787454/microsoft_word_-_cas_spring_13_schedule.pdf) (Sample Schedule for CAS Seminars)

<http://bcacademicdevelopmentdepartment.weebly.com/cas-workshops.html>

## The Center for Academic Success at Butte College

Butte College's Center for Academic Success (CAS) was developed from the college's Learning Center, which began in the 1980s primarily to provide computer access and support to students. The original center was housed in the library and offered a classroom computer lab, drop-in computer stations, and drop-in tutoring support, all under the direction of a faculty coordinator. With an infusion of funds from a Partnership for Excellence Grant, the space was remodeled in 1999/2000 to include breakout study rooms and office space, and a second full-time learning resource specialist faculty position was added to the permanent staff in 2002. The name was changed to CAS and pilot programs were developed, including supplemental instruction and critical skills workshops.

The workshops, facilitated by campus and CAS faculty, were the more successful of the two innovations, so focus shifted from supplemental instruction to more fully developing workshop offerings for broad student support. Through Institute Day presentations and classroom visits, instructional faculty developed ways to encourage students to participate in skills-building workshops specific to reading, writing, math, computer skills, and study skills.

After moving into a newly built facility that increased capacity by four times, workshop attendance dramatically increased, along with participation in the newly developed half-unit course built on the workshops, Critical Skills Study Hour (EDUC 10, 110, 210). This course supports just-in-time skills development for students who find themselves in over their heads in challenging courses or who want to prepare themselves in advance for challenging curricula to come. The new facility also allowed for the implementation of the Student Athlete Success Program (SASP), and with grant funding, the re-introduction of supplemental instruction, both of which are currently robust and successful programs in high demand.

CAS faculty track student use by service and course and collect student learning outcome data for specific cohorts supported by the center. Challenges include staff time to analyze and report on data collected, but when this is possible, changes to improve student outcomes follow. CAS is currently staffed with only one permanent, full-time learning resource specialist, a part-time coach who oversees SASP, and five part-time faculty members, all of whom are dependent on grant funding. Plans to scale up depend

on institutionalization of supplemental instruction and permanent funding for current and additional CAS faculty.

Miya Squires, Student Success Coordinator

**MORE INFORMATION AT** [www.butte.edu/cas](http://www.butte.edu/cas)

## Extending the Class (ETC) at Fresno City College

In spring 2007, the Fresno City College Learning Center began a pilot Supplemental Instruction (SI) program with seven participating instructors, eight classes, and sixty-one participants. Although extensive research supports SI's merits, Fresno City College required internal data quantifying its effectiveness prior to providing the resources necessary to grow the SI program.

With limited funding and physical space and without compromising the success of the traditional SI model, the Learning Center implemented a modified program to increase participation and maintain high successful completion and retention rates. The goal was to allocate resources effectively and move beyond a boutique program in order to serve as many students as possible within a best-practice framework. What developed was Extending the Class (ETC), an adaptation of only the essentials of SI. Documenting success through data collection and assessment while systematically increasing the size of a program are both essential to receiving increased funding. Five years later in spring 2012, the program had 16 instructors, 45 sections, and 1,257 participants.

Through the use of a computerized tracking system, ETC collects frequency and duration of visits from each participant. ETC measures successful completion rates, retention, and grade point average for all students enrolled in participating classes and then compares ETC participants with students who did not attend within the same class. Additionally, entire classes are compared against baseline data, and baseline data is compared to ETC participants only. Finally, a trend analysis is done by collecting and comparing the data for each course and instructor that continue with the program. The ETC program continues to be statistically significant at the one percent level. Spring 2012 program results for ETC students (1,257 participants) compared to non-ETC students (2,348) show higher grade point average, retention, and completion rates.

A focused effort to scale up began in spring 2011, when ETC-supported courses were systematically increased in conjunction with a paring of drop-in tutoring. In three to five years, ETC will be the primary academic service offered to students in the Learning Center and drop-in tutoring will be a secondary source of support. Quantitative and qualitative data analyses, as well as an extensive review of the literature, provided evidence to support the shift toward an ETC model

of academic assistance. ETC was modified from SI in the following ways, all allowing for the program to be scaled up:

- Allowing for an informal drop-in format for students during review sessions
- Emphasizing learner collaboration (dialogue and collaborative learning) but allowing ETC leaders to provide direct coaching (monologue and leading lessons)
- Limiting the amount of time an ETC leader is in class with the instructor
- Giving the ETC leader an active rather than passive role in the classroom under the direction of the instructor of record
- Making student participation and review sessions open to the instructor rather than emphasizing anonymity.

Ray Sanchez, Coordinator, Student Learning Support Services, and Jessica Shadrick, ETC Coordinator

**MORE INFORMATION AT [http://fccwise.fresnocitycollege.edu/pages/fccwise\\_complete/etcwebsite/etcwebsitemain.html](http://fccwise.fresnocitycollege.edu/pages/fccwise_complete/etcwebsite/etcwebsitemain.html)**

## Supplemental Instruction Program at Mt. San Jacinto College

The Mt. San Jacinto College Supplemental Instruction (SI) program was piloted, under the direction of Janice Levasseur, in fall 2006 with a single section of Introduction to Statistics at the college's Menifee Valley Campus. Since then, the SI program has supported over 300 sections throughout the district (San Jacinto Campus, Menifee Valley Campus, Temecula Education Complex, San Geronio Pass, and on-line).

The program has come far since its humble beginnings and yet is ripe for further development. In the first two years, all SI leaders were paid as tutors from the general tutoring fund; therefore, growth was minimal. A turning point came in fall 2008 when the program began receiving Basic Skills Initiative (BSI) funding. Initially, BSI SI supported below college-level math and English courses. However, in spring 2010, BSI funds were used to support non-prerequisite college-level courses. After Mt. San Jacinto College collected data on success and attrition rates for these courses, it targeted courses in psychology, political science, and anthropology for SI. The results from SI efforts were textbook: SI students outperformed their non-SI counterparts in terms of success rates and attrition rates.

BSI is only one source of funding from which the Mt. San Jacinto College SI program draws. SI was written into the instruction component of the 2008-2010 CCRAA STEM Grant, the 2010-2015 Title V Grant, and the 2011-2016 HSI STEM Grant. With each grant awarding, the SI program expanded the number and scope of disciplines supported. Under all grants, the SI leaders continue to be paid as tutors with specific SI duties. The general tutoring funds continue to support a minimal number of sections. The college has begun the process of trying to establish a budget line for SI, a difficult process in the current fiscal climate.

An important turning point in the college's SI program came in fall 2011 when a district SI coordinator (non-teaching full-time faculty position initially grant-funded) was hired. A single coordinator ensures the quality and the reputation of the program.

Much of the SI program's success can be attributed to staying true to the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) SI model; the college has been adamant about not veering from the ten essential elements prescribed in the model. Data is also collected in accordance with

UMKC. The data has continually demonstrated that students who participate in SI are more successful (higher success rates and lower attrition rates) than their non-SI counterparts. The effective analysis and reporting of the data collected has enabled the growth of the Mt. San Jacinto SI program (through grant funding) and has enhanced its reputation as a credible program.

The growth of the program, however, has been met with challenges. Getting faculty buy-in was initially difficult. Now SI is fully supported by the faculty involved, the Learning Resource Center staff, and the administration. Another significant challenge is finding locations for all the SI group study review sessions, a challenge that is being met by establishing an SI dedicated room at the San Jacinto and Menifee Valley Campuses. Lastly, a continuing challenge is being able to promote the SI schedule before students register. Strides have been made, but much more needs to be done.

Janice Levasseur, SI Program Coordinator

**MORE INFORMATION AT** [www.msjc.edu/si](http://www.msjc.edu/si)

## The Partnership for Student Success at Santa Barbara City College

In spring 2005, the president of Santa Barbara City College asked the Academic Senate to assume responsibility for planning and implementing a Student Success Initiative. The goal of this initiative was to address the needs of the large population of under-prepared students entering the college and to increase the academic success of all Santa Barbara City College students.

The Academic Senate accepted this responsibility and formed a task force that included faculty representatives from all divisions as well as students, deans, and directors of successful college student support programs. After a series of meetings, the task force issued a college-wide call for proposals for the Student Success Initiative and subsequently reviewed over 60 proposals submitted by faculty, departments, and administrators before forwarding them to the Academic Senate for review. The senate's recommendation: provide comprehensive tutoring in a variety of formats by expanding existing successful programs and making them even more effective and by creating new programs to address unmet student needs.

The college approved funding for the initiative in fall 2006, and these initiative programs became known collectively as the Partnership for Student Success (PSS). PSS consists of the following programs: Writing Center, Math Lab, Academic Achievement Zone, and Gateway to Success.

- Writing Center: provides tutors who are trained to work with students at every stage of the writing process and to assist these students in developing their writing skills.
- Math Lab: provides tutors who are trained to work with beginning through advanced math students to develop their math skills.
- Academic Achievement Zone: works closely with the Writing Center and Math Lab and provides tutoring for all student athletes who assess at below college level in reading, writing, or math or who have grade point averages at 2.3 or below.
- Gateway: provides in class and outside of class tutoring for students in designated courses, from ESL and basic skills through first-year content and career technical education courses. Gateway faculty recruit students who have been successful in specific courses and train them to become Gateway tutors in those classes.

Tutors in all PSS programs must complete a required tutor training program before they begin working with students, and each program uses faculty-developed directed learning activities that enable students to further develop necessary skills by working independently and with tutors in guided activities.

As an Academic Senate subcommittee, the Partnership Steering Committee meets regularly to assess progress, address challenges, and conduct regular evaluations of PSS programs. PSS is in its sixth year at Santa Barbara City College, and as the evaluation data for 2006–2012 indicate, it continues to demonstrate strong success rates, especially among basic skills students. Because of this success, PSS received the 2008 Chancellor's Award for Best Practices in Student Equity and the 2010 Exemplary Program Award from the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges and California Community Colleges Board of Governors.

**MORE INFORMATION AT** <http://sbcc.edu/pss>

# The Role of Research in Program Assessment

Effective student success initiatives--including efforts to improve basic skills practices--depend on making institutional processes and improvement strategies more integrated and sustainable, with a clear focus on metrics and outcomes. Colleges should develop actionable data that is transparent, meaningful, and reliable, by applying evaluation and assessment techniques, practices, and models that are grounded in good assessment principles and result in evidence that is used to help students succeed.

With data in hand, key stakeholders then engage in discussions about how this actionable research evidence and assessment data can lead to improved program interventions and classroom teaching and learning strategies. These discussions around data must involve not just faculty leaders from within the basic skills disciplines, but also counselors and others from Student Services, as well as faculty in disciplines where students with basic skills needs are taking classes. These stakeholders can make sure that the data around basic skills completion and success rates and other key indicators is used in the college's integrated planning structures, maintaining a strong focus on equity. Finally, and ideally, basic skills practitioners should strive to create an environment that values inquiry and promotes thoughtful, evidenced based collaborative discussion as a normal, ongoing activity.

## General research on students with basic skills needs.

Sometimes it is good to start with seeking an initial understanding of the demographics and progress of students with basic skills needs. Typical research questions asked often include the following:

1. Who are my students with basic skills needs?
  - a. What are their demographics (socio-economic, ethnic, gender, etc.)?

- b. How are they different from or similar to students who place into college?
2. How do my students with basic skills needs progress through our college's basic skills sequences?
  - a. When do they start addressing their basic skills course requirements?
  - b. Do they continue straight through the course sequences, take breaks in between, or drop out them?
  - c. Do they complete in a timely manner?
  - d. How are they performing in other coursework?
  - e. Where in a course sequence do we see students struggle the most (i.e., where do we lose the most students)?

The answers to these questions lead to an understanding of student enrollment patterns and success. They help start the conversation on what strategies could help move more students successfully through the sequences and where and how those strategies can best be employed.

## Effective Evaluation

**An effective evaluation uses both formative & summative evaluation practices to examine the context of a program, implementation changes, and measure desired outcomes**

**The evaluation plan should envision a cycle of improvement**



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## Evaluating interventions or the effectiveness of programs.

The time to begin thinking about evaluating an intervention is when you begin designing it. Bringing researchers (faculty and institutional researchers) into the conversation at the beginning during program design helps ensure processes,

procedures, and data collection needs are considered and established up front in a way that will provide the best information to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention.

## Four core components to evaluation

### 1. Focusing the evaluation

Questions: What do you want to know?

Indicators: How will you know it (evidence)?

### 2. Designing the evaluation and collecting information

Methods and Approach: How will you assess effectiveness?

Sources: What data will collect and how will you collect it?

Timing and samples: When will you collect the data/evidence and from whom?

### 3. Analyzing

Information, interpreting

### 4. Using the information gained from the evaluation

To whom, when, and how

## Partnering with Institutional Research

The most effective evaluations occur when a collaborative partnership is formed with institutional research. Researchers can help support evaluations in the following ways:

- Provide options for assessment methods.
- Share knowledge of data readily available.
- Facilitate accurate interpretation of data.

Consider inviting Institutional Research into the conversation early during the initial conception and design phase if possible. If that is not possible, the more details that you can share about the project/program (e.g., goals, data interventions, expected outcomes) the better.

## Key Questions to Consider When Working with Researchers

NOTE: Asking these Key Questions will lead to a Collaborative Dialogue on Student Success

**Goal(s)** - What effect do you intend the intervention to have? e.g., Improve students' success in basic skills courses through ...?

**Outcomes** - What tangible results do you expect to see from students? e.g., Users have higher success rates than non-users; Increased rate of success to transfer over time

**Intervention** - What are the specific actions that involve or engage students? Where and when are the points of contact with students? e.g., One-on-one tutoring, phone calls during 1st three weeks of term



Data - What data will demonstrate intended outcomes? What data are the program/project already collecting or planning to collect? e.g., Course grades, test results, portfolio assessments, surveys, observations, qualitative data, etc.

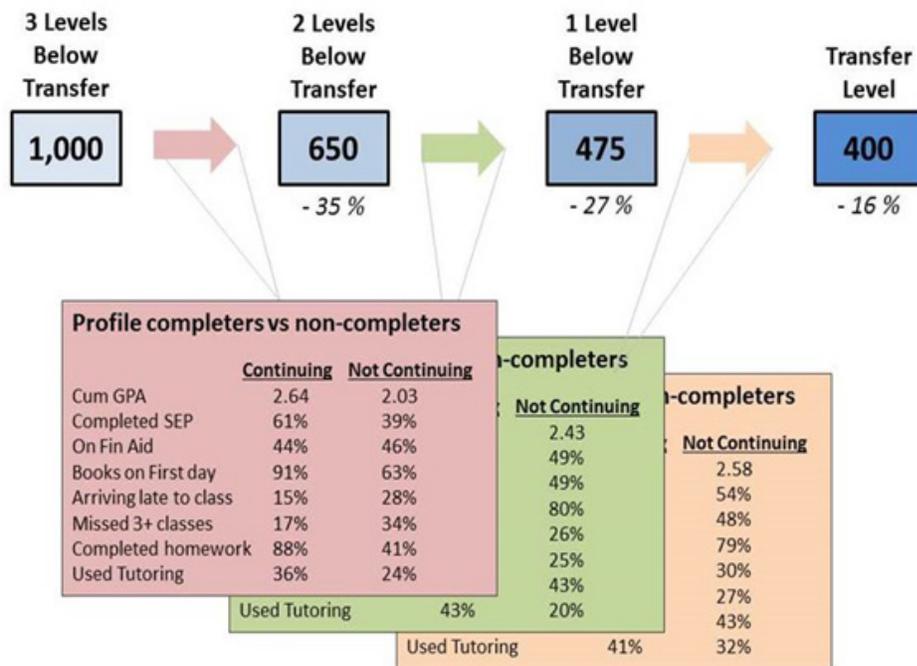
## Identifying successful strategies and interventions

One approach that can help colleges identify potential intervention strategies is to map out the development ed sequence at that institution and track students moving through the sequence. Then, at each point of transition, create evidence profiles comparing students completing the transition versus those not completing. Differences between the two groups may be related to shared patterns of behavior or institutional structures that completers maybe exhibiting or leveraging to a greater degree than non-completers.

support services students availed themselves of, student course taking behavior and study habits as well as the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of students in both groups. Identification of which data elements should be collected should begin with conversations with faculty and staff about what characteristics they believe are most relevant or that they suspect separate completers from non-completers. Furthermore, the college research office should be included in these dialogues to ensure that proper data collection techniques can be put in place.

Comparing differences in the data profiles of completers and non-completers at each step in the sequence can help anchor focused conversations on what interventions might help address and break recurring patterns displayed by non-completers.

## Tracking student progress through the basic skills sequence to identify interventions



Data are for illustrative purposes only. The graphic illustrates elements of a research project under development within the Contra Costa College District.

To be most effective the evidence profiles should contain multiple data points and capture evidence related to the basic skills pedagogy the students were exposed to, the

# Administrator Tool Kit

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# Part One – Explanation of the Administrator Tool Kit

## The Purpose of the Tool Kit

The purpose of this Tool Kit is to give readers—administrators, faculty, and staff—the administrative perspective regarding basic skills activities and processes. For administrators who are new to various basic skills endeavors, this information will assist them in understanding the steps that need to be followed to make each project work well. For faculty and staff, this manual will provide an understanding of why the implementation of many basic skills projects can take longer than one might anticipate.

The role of the administrator is to provide overall leadership to support basic skills efforts by working with all other administrators, faculty, and staff who are impacted by elements of the program; by identifying issues—large and small—that need to be resolved for the successful implementation of the program; by identifying costs and how those costs will be covered; by identifying personnel who will be involved in the project; and by identifying the individuals who will be responsible for monitoring the program and the program outcomes.

It is important to confirm basic skills efforts have adequate support and to make certain that basic skills philosophies are woven into the fabric of the college; that is, they are integrated into the college's institutional review, planning, and budgeting processes.

From an administrative perspective, and for the benefit of students, it is important that barriers between academic disciplines, as well as between departments and divisions, be eliminated. The administrator's role is to spearhead this effort, always bearing in mind that all college constituents need to work together for the betterment of students.

## How This Tool Kit Is Organized— The Lifecycle of the Student

This Tool Kit links to the Projects and Programs sections, when available, to describe specific programs. In these instances, the administrative guide discusses only the administrative perspective. It is important that California's

community colleges recognize the needs of students as ever-changing depending upon where students are in their college careers. Hence, this Tool Kit is organized according to what has been described by many as the lifecycle of the student. Many colleges and universities nationwide are accepting this student model as one that is more meaningful as it recognizes that the needs of students vary according to where they are in their college lives. For example, the needs of the entering student are different than those of the student who is graduating.

## The Lifecycle of the Student

This guide is divided into three different aspects of the student lifecycle.

### Stage One of the Student Lifecycle—Readiness for College

The first part of the student lifecycle is a student's readiness for college before that student arrives at college. Many programs and levels of support can be afforded to students prior to their entrance to college. The goal of this type of assistance is to help students become successful by being prepared for classes and familiar with all aspects of college life.

This section of the guide discusses these readiness programs from both the more traditional route from the K-12 schools as well as the route from noncredit programs. All of these programs involve a great deal of collaboration with K-12 and noncredit colleagues and help provide a seamless transition for students who enter community colleges.

This discussion includes how registration, assessment, orientations, and counseling can be provided to students while they are still in their pre-college learning environments. Students benefit greatly when high schools, noncredit instructional environments, and colleges work together to provide these services.

### Stage Two of the Student Lifecycle—The First 30 Units

Once a student is enrolled in a community college, emphasis shifts for that student to learning what she or he has to do to complete college in a meaningful manner. Working with counselors, faculty, and a variety of college systems, students are expected to complete an individualized education plan—a guide or road map that

helps each student attain her or his educational goal. During their first year, students are learning all aspects of college—both inside and outside of the classroom. Inside the classroom, students are learning about the expectations of their instructors. They are also learning about time management, the different ways of studying for different courses, and what disciplines they might enjoy working in for a meaningful career. It is a new world for students with new challenges and rewards to experience.

Outside the classroom, many college structures are in place to support the learning environment. Directed support services are available as are specific interventions that assist students as they attempt to do the best they can in their studies.

These services, such as tutoring, are available to students during both their first and second college years. For the sake of clarity, this section of the guide describes these services in either the first or second year of the student lifecycle, but not both. It is important to understand, however, that these services can be accessed by students throughout their college careers.

## **Stage Three of the Student Lifecycle—From 31 to 60 units**

The final stage of the student lifecycle used to organize this guide is the second year of college. In addition to their in-class experiences, students now have to take the time to focus on their progress toward their specific educational goal. In this phase of the cycle, students need to concern themselves with how they will transition out of college, whether that is via graduation, earning a certificate, transferring, or gaining meaningful employment. To assist students in this regard, many directed support programs and interventions are available to them. These programs and interventions are discussed in this section of the student lifecycle.

## **How Each Section of the Manual Is Organized**

A consistent format is provided for each section covered in the manual. Each begins with a brief description of students' needs and the related programs and processes that assist these students. Since the intent of the manual is to provide a how-to approach for overall program development, this section includes issues related to

each program and process that administrators should be mindful of. Finally, links to best practices in each of these areas are included (when available) in an effort to provide a comprehensive look at each program and process.

# Part Two - The Student Lifecycle

## Stage One of the Student Lifecycle—Readiness for College

### Why Readiness for College Is Important

Due to a downturn in the economy, a high school diploma no longer guarantees students a place in the current job market. The need for a college degree has increased since, in general, a college degree translates to an increase in earning power when compared to a high school diploma. However, significant gaps exist in college readiness and success of students entering a college, and these gaps are even more present among low income and underrepresented students.

According to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, between 70 to 90 percent of incoming community college students are not proficient in transfer-level math, English, or both, and most students are not ready for college-level work. Additionally, few of these students reach proficiency during their educational careers at a community college. According to the Student Success Task Force, of the students who enter a community college at one level below transfer level in math, only 46.2 percent ever achieve a certificate, degree, or transfer preparation. Of those students entering four levels below, only 25.5 percent ever achieve these outcomes.

The California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC) campuses are also experiencing the same lack of preparedness for college-level work from their admitted freshmen. More than half of the CSU and a third of the UC campuses admitted freshmen who were not prepared for college-level math or writing.

College readiness is a significant element to increasing the number of students who will be successful in college and earn a college degree.

#### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Defining and knowing what it means to be college ready
- Determining what skills and knowledge are needed from high school students to be successful in college and how to measure those skills

- Knowing the data from the local institution regarding college readiness of student cohorts and the persistence and success rate of the students in the basic skills courses
- Being mindful of data differentiation and gaps based on local high school cohorts, race, income level, and ethnicity and knowing the factors affecting college readiness to better respond to such factors
- Garnering resources to implement programming that will address skills gaps and student needs.

#### HELPFUL LINKS:

[http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/StudentSuccessTaskForce/REPORT\\_SSTF\\_FINAL\\_122911.pdf](http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/StudentSuccessTaskForce/REPORT_SSTF_FINAL_122911.pdf)

[http://collegeready.rice.edu/Resources\\_for\\_College\\_Readiness\\_.aspx](http://collegeready.rice.edu/Resources_for_College_Readiness_.aspx)

[http://collegeready.rice.edu/Programs\\_for\\_College\\_Readiness.aspx](http://collegeready.rice.edu/Programs_for_College_Readiness.aspx)

<http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/crs.pdf>

### The K-12 System

#### Mechanisms That Help High School Students Make the Transition to the Community College

Studies have shown that high school graduates who enroll in a community college are not aware of California's community college academic requirements and are not prepared to meet such requirements. The students' perception is that if they have passed the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) and have received a high school diploma, they are ready for college coursework. However, CAHSEE only assesses students for tenth grade English proficiency and ninth grade math proficiency.

Unfortunately, many students only become aware of their need for basic skills courses after they take college placement tests, which most often occurs just before students enroll for the courses. Since many students do not currently take the placement tests, they are not aware of their gap in college readiness until they have difficulties with courses that require college-level writing and math skills.

However, the State Board of Education sought to develop a new K-12 assessment system based on the Common Core State Standards. Under federal requirements, the new 11<sup>th</sup>

grade assessment must include an assessment of college and career readiness. Currently, in California, expansion of the CSU's Early Assessment Program (EAP) at the junior level has been one of the solutions to meet the requirement. EAP does provide high school juniors with information as to their level of preparation for college, thus allowing students the use of the senior year as an opportunity to work on the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in college.

In general, community colleges administer placement tests for high school seniors; however, for many unprepared students, that is too late to address the knowledge gap that exists to successfully complete college courses. Considering administering the placement tests (or access to EAP data) at the junior level would assist students to more realistically prepare for the rigors of college courses.

Additionally, "Effective Practices for Promoting the Transition of High School Students to College" (January 2009), a review of literature prepared by a team of researchers, faculty, and administrators, presents the following six effective practices that address the key issues facing students transitioning to community colleges:

- **Rigor:** While in high school, students should take and complete a rigorous curriculum of college-preparatory courses.
- **Relevance:** High school course content and delivery should be made relevant to students' lives, with clear applications for how high school work is connected to postsecondary education and career opportunities.
- **Alignment:** High school exit standards and skills should align with college-level entry requirements.
- **Realistic expectations:** Accurate and timely information should be communicated to students and families regarding expected knowledge, performance standards, attitudes, and behaviors that students will need in order to be successful in college.
- **Support for transitions:** Secondary and postsecondary partners should create bridge programs and activities that provide both academic and non-academic support during the transition period.
- **Articulated pathways:** Secondary and postsecondary partners should collaborate to provide integrated and articulated programs to facilitate student transitions.

#### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Establishing formal and regular channels of communication with local high school counselors, teachers, and administrators.
- Creating opportunities for dialogue among faculty in your institution and high school teachers that focuses on the rigor of college courses and skills needed to succeed in those courses; working through the Outreach Office to work with local elementary, middle, and high schools to emphasize the need for early strong academic preparation.
- Considering the administration of placement tests or use of EAP scores to work earlier with juniors in high school.
- Creating and supporting partnered innovation that will help students address skills gaps before they complete high school.
- Providing dual-enrollment and academic-support opportunities to local high school students whenever possible.
- Working with GEAR UP, TRIO, or other similar programs to prepare students from underrepresented groups to increase the knowledge of students and parents as to college expectations.

#### HELPFUL LINKS:

<http://www.rpgroup.org/sites/default/files/High-School-Transition-Full-Report.pdf>

#### How Curriculum Can Make the Transition Seamless

The National Curriculum Survey conducted by ACT every three years surveys thousands of middle school, secondary, and postsecondary teachers in reading, writing, mathematics, and science to determine what skills/knowledge are currently being taught that are considered to be important for success at each grade level.

The survey shows the disparate views of secondary educators versus postsecondary faculty in specific areas. Most frequently, postsecondary faculty rank writing mechanics, mathematics fundamentals, reading strategies, and science processes and inquiry skills as important. In contrast, high school faculty rank idea/topic development, advance mathematics topics, and science content as

most important. These misalignments indicate a cause for concern in student preparedness. Therefore, dialogue among faculty from both sectors of education can create a better understanding of expectations and skills needed for students to be successful. The Common Core State Standards attempts to align curriculum and standards that prepare students for postsecondary education and careers. A larger discussion of common core and best practices of curriculum alignment are discussed later on in this manual.

#### HELPFUL LINKS:

<http://www.act.org/research-policy/national-curriculum-survey/>

### Noncredit

#### Mechanisms That Help Noncredit Students Make the Transition to the Credit Program

Noncredit students tend to be nontraditional and often face many barriers that affect their success not only in adult education programs, but also in their ability to see themselves as college students. Addressing some of these barriers and creating a culture of transition in the campus and classroom environments can assist students in transitioning from noncredit to credit programs.

Many noncredit students lack an understanding of postsecondary education as well as of the difference between a community college and a four-year university. Increasing students' knowledge of postsecondary education, and making them aware of opportunities for higher salaries and better jobs, can assist these students in making informed decisions.

A lack of understanding of higher education can also cause difficulty in navigating the educational environment. This difficulty can include understanding college culture, understanding complex processes such as applying for financial aid, engaging in enrollment procedures, and understanding matriculation processes. It is important to increase students' academic and social skills in noncredit programs by providing opportunities for students to meet with faculty in office hours and to ask questions in class. Additionally, exposing students to a variety of assessment methods, encouraging them to participate in co-curricular activities, and familiarizing them with available tutoring can introduce students to skills needed to be successful in a college environment.

Noncredit, as well as credit, students also need to learn effective strategies to manage the competing demands of work, family, childcare needs, and school. A wide range of support services that address these demands can have an enormous impact on the ability of students to learn. These support services can include peer mentoring approaches, counseling group workshops, and one-on-one counseling.

Counseling programs and workshops can also assist noncredit students with their ability to address personal and psychological barriers as well as their lack of confidence in being able to succeed as a college student. Academic and student support services in and outside of the classroom can increase students' belief that they can be successful at applying skills and knowledge learned in noncredit to the task of successfully completing community college courses.

#### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

"Promising Practices for Transitioning Students from Adult Education to Postsecondary Education," a review of literature developed by the RP Group's Center for Student Success and the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges Basic Skills Initiative, presents 17 effective practices in students transitioning from noncredit to credit programs. These practices can also serve as issues that administrators need to be mindful of as they work toward creating an easier transition for students from noncredit to credit programs. The practices were organized in four areas.

##### Area A: Organizational and Administrative Practices

- A.1 Improving transition of students from adult education to postsecondary education is an institutional priority for community college and adult education programs.
- A.2 Faculty and staff of transition programs are resourceful, experienced, and committed to serving adult students.
- A.3 Strong collaborative partnerships exist among college programs, adult education programs, business/industry, and community-based organizations.
- A.4 Institutions have innovative and flexible admissions and enrollment policies that facilitate transitions.
- A.5 To evaluate the effectiveness of courses and programs, student data systems track transitions and outcomes across programs.

#### Area B: Program Component Practices

- B.1 Programs inform adult education students about the opportunities in and benefits of higher education.
- B.2 Programs provide adult education students with assistance in meeting the financial demands of college.
- B.3 Personalized support, such as peer mentoring, tutoring, or case management, is provided before, during, and after transitioning.
- B.4 Programs provide effective matriculation services, including assessment that is aligned between adult education and postsecondary programs.

#### Area C: Staff Development Practices

- C.1 Institutions provide staff development opportunities to adult education faculty.

#### Area D: Instructional Practices

- D.1 Adult education and postsecondary curriculum are aligned, sequential, and progressive to provide a seamless pathway for transition students.
- D.2 Instruction is contextualized so that transition students see the connection between basic skills education and academic or vocational content.
- D.3 Programs include career planning as a part of the curriculum.
- D.4 Curriculum and scheduling are designed to be flexible, chunked, and modularized with multiple entry and exit points.
- D.5 Sufficient language instruction is provided for English-as-a-second-language learners.
- D.6 Instruction and curriculum are designed and delivered in a way that integrates a variety of instructional methodologies.
- D.7 Institutions provide accelerated courses/ programs that give transition students the opportunity to quickly meet their goals.

#### HELPFUL LINKS:

[http://www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/research/op\\_collegetransitions.pdf](http://www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/research/op_collegetransitions.pdf)

<http://www.cccbsi.org/Websites/basicskills/Images/Promising-Practices.pdf>

<http://www.collegetransition.org/promisingpractices.overview.html>

<http://www.caalusa.org/calltoarms.pdf>

#### How Curriculum Can Make the Transition Seamless

Curriculum plays a large role in preparing adult education students for postsecondary education. Creating a clear curricular alignment between the exit criteria of adult education programs and entry-level requirements for college can enhance the transition process. The release of “College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education” (Pimentel, 2013) provides benchmarks aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for states to consider in creating or evaluating their own adult education standards and preparing adults for college transition and career skills. The report provides the following:

- A set of content standards reflecting broad agreement among experts about what is desirable for adult students to know to be prepared for the rigors of postsecondary education and training.
- A summary of the standards selection process and a description of key content decisions made by expert panels to select college and career readiness standards for adult education.

The College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards seek to identify and adopt from CCSS only those standards that are significant for adult learners to be successful in postsecondary education and careers. The shift in standards for language arts looks at focusing on more complex reading in the curriculum, the prioritization of textual evidence across the domains of reading, writing, and speaking and listening, and a focus not only on English language arts, but also on literacy across the disciplines of science, social studies, and technical subjects. A shift was also needed for math and the CCR standards centered on the knowledge and skills students must master to be adept at understanding and applying mathematical ideas inside and outside of the classroom.

While CCR standards are provided as a guide for adult educators to focus on learning outcomes that will prepare students for postsecondary education, having a constant dialogue with community college

educators is significant in addressing gaps that students are facing while transitioning to credit programs.

#### **ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:**

- Assuring the curriculum in adult education programs prepares students for basic skills courses and college-level courses.
- Providing opportunities for noncredit faculty to dialogue with credit faculty in sharing their curriculum and syllabi to address gaps and areas for improvement, especially in the areas of English/ESL and math.
- Encouraging the possibility of co-teaching between credit and noncredit faculty in germane courses to provide a link from noncredit to credit.
- Developing a seamless pathway between the two curriculums that is apparent to students, faculty, and counseling.

#### **HELPFUL LINKS:**

<http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/sectech/factsheet/promoting-college-career.html>

<http://www.otan.us/strategicPlanning/pdf/implementationguide.pdf>

<http://www.otan.us/strategicPlanning/pdf/AE-SP-112811.pdf>

<http://www.otan.us/strategicPlanning/pdf/AE-NA-113009.pdf>

## Related Programs, Processes, and Issues

### The Long Beach College Promise

Started in 2008, the Long Beach College Promise is a joint effort among Long Beach Unified School District, Long Beach City College, and CSU Long Beach (CSULB). This initiative is one outcome of the Long Beach Seamless Education Partnership, initially launched in 1994 by civic and business leaders in the City of Long Beach.

The goal of the joint school effort is to offer students a seamless educational pathway across the three institutions involved in this project. Long Beach Unified School District graduates who enroll in Long Beach City College in the fall semester immediately after graduation have all their enrollment fees paid by the college's Foundation. In order to inform students about the program and make them feel comfortable in the college environment, outreach from Long Beach City College and CSULB to the district's students begins in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades.

Additionally, Long Beach Unified School District students receive guaranteed admission to CSULB upon meeting A-G requirements and completing all grade point average and College Board test requirements.

Long Beach City College's Promise Pathways is a curriculum alignment and alternative assessment project at the college.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Starting small by focusing on common needs across the K-12 district, the community college district, and the four-year college/university.
- Coordinating and scaling projects across three sectors of public education and gaining buy-in from all partners and constituent groups.
- Recognizing that executive level leadership is critical.
- Ensuring open communication among leaders, administrators, and faculty.
- Recognizing that establishing these types of partnerships takes significant effort and time.
- Coordinating fundraising efforts with the college Foundation office for the scholarship portion of the program.

- Developing and sustaining business and civic partners to assist in fundraising, media events, and sponsorship.
- Establishing a highly coordinated effort between student services and instructional leaders in order to fulfill the promises made (priority enrollment, a sufficient number of seats in math, English, English-as-a-second-language, and reading courses, etc.).

### HELPFUL LINKS:

Long Beach College Promise

<http://www.longbeachcollegepromise.org/>

## Long Beach City College Promise Pathways

Promise Pathways is a curriculum alignment and student transcript-enhanced placement project. The intent of the project is to shorten the path for students entering Long Beach City College directly from Long Beach Unified School District high schools. These students are placed into the college's math, English, reading, and English-as-a-second-language (ESL) courses based on high school grade point average and grades earned in specific high school classes.

Promise Pathways students are required to complete a contract that stipulates they must remain in "good standing." To maintain this good standing, students in the program must do the following:

- Identify an educational goal
- Be a full-time student
- Complete a student education plan
- Take required English, math, reading, and ESL classes in the first semester
- Maintain a minimum 2.0 grade point average
- Complete at least 67 percent of all courses attempted each term
- Take a success course each semester.

As a way to keep students involved in the program, Promise Pathways students receive "priority" registration for any courses included in their Student Education Plan.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Remembering that data for Promise Pathways is emerging as the program is still in its pilot phase.
- Creating space for curriculum alignment based on faculty-to-faculty dialogue with K-12 partners in math, English, ESL, and reading.
- Understanding what is allowed as forms of comprehensive multiple-measures assessment— Education Code, California Code of Regulations, title 5, and the Standards, Policies, and Procedures for the Evaluation of Assessment Instruments Used in California Community Colleges handbook from the Chancellor's Office.

- Developing a plan for ongoing assessment of the program.
- Defining and maintaining metrics for analyzing the impact of a Pathways-style program on student success (current RP Group research project).

### HELPFUL LINKS:

Long Beach City College Promise Pathways <http://www.lbcc.edu/PromisePathways/index.cfm>

California Community College Chancellor's Office  
Matriculation and Assessment  
<http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/StudentServices/Matriculation/Assessment.aspx>

RP Group page on Student Transcript Enhanced Placement Project <http://www.rpgroup.org/projects/STEPS>

Community College Research Center (CCRC) Work on Assessment Measures in College Systems  
<http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/research-project/assessment-measures-college-systems.html>

## Sierra College Early Assessment Program (EAP) Curriculum Alignment for Conditionally Prepared High School Students

Sierra College worked on a curriculum alignment project with partner K-12 districts and CSU Sacramento to create a pilot intervention “math experience” that would allow “conditionally prepared” Early Assessment Program (EAP) students to enroll in college level math courses. Sierra College faculty and staff targeted the conditionally ready group because it made up a significant portion (39 percent) of incoming students directly from high school.

The program includes coordinated sessions with K-12 and college faculty to develop appropriate curriculum to meet the math experience requirement as a 12<sup>th</sup> grade math class. Students who were conditionally prepared based on EAP are directed to take this 12<sup>th</sup> grade math class.

The project included teacher training on the new curriculum and the creation of a regional EAP Advisory Council with Memorandums of Understanding created and signed by participating K-12 districts, Sierra College, and Sacramento State.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Facilitating meetings for curriculum alignment and faculty-to-faculty dialogue with K-12.
- Understanding the current state of EAP and upcoming changes as a result of the Student Success Task Force and Senate Bill 1456 calling for common assessment.
- Being aware of changes to California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 55522: Assessment.
- Identifying funding for curriculum alignment work, student outreach, teacher training, and research/assessment time.
- Working to avoid classic intersegmental blaming because it is counterproductive and not true.
- Understanding how K-12 Common Core State Standards impacts and improves curriculum alignment work
- Developing a plan for ongoing assessment.
- Defining and maintaining metrics for analyzing the impact of a Pathways-style program on student success.
- Developing a research plan to evaluate the effectiveness of innovation.

### HELPFUL LINKS:

California Community College Chancellor's Office  
Matriculation and Assessment EAP page

[http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/  
StudentServices/EAP.aspx](http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/StudentServices/EAP.aspx)

California Community College Chancellor's Office SB1456  
Student Success Act of 2012 implementation page

[http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/  
StudentServices/EAP.aspx](http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/StudentServices/EAP.aspx)

## Samples of Seamless Curriculum

### State Center Community College District— Willow International Center and Clovis West High School English Curriculum Alignment

A curriculum alignment project that began in 2010/11 focused on the English writing skills of incoming students from Clovis West High School to Willow International Center. A primary goal of the project was to revise the 12<sup>th</sup> grade English curriculum in order to better prepare Clovis West High School students to enter Willow International Center at the college English level. The fundamental problem identified through dialogue with stakeholders across both institutions was that between 69 and 75 percent of all incoming students from Clovis West High School tested in remedial English.

Prior to the initiation of this project, the English curriculum at Clovis West High School allowed 12<sup>th</sup> grade students to avoid taking a structured composition course. Instead, students had elective options, such as Creative Writing, Bible as Literature, or Contemporary Culture. As the faculty discussed curriculum alignment, they realized that the college English faculty expected students to have received significant preparation in composition and writing.

One major result of the curriculum alignment process was that the high school now requires more writing in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade composition classes and more emphasis has been placed on non-fiction literature. Faculty worked to align the course standards and outcomes across the California grade 11/12 English Standards, the college's English 125 course, which is the prep course for ENGL 1A Reading & Composition, and the 11/12 Common Core State Standards. Students who took Advanced Placement level coursework at Clovis West High School were found to place into college-level English, so the curriculum for these courses was not changed.

The project was comprehensive in that it not only targeted curriculum alignment but also investigated student self-efficacy, instructor classroom practices, and institutional practices at both institutions. Students at Clovis West High School now take the assessment test for placement up to three times between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

Initial results indicated that 13 percent more West Clovis High School students placed into college-level English (ENGL 1A) at Willow International Center as a result of the changes dictated by this program.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Facilitating productive meetings for curriculum alignment and faculty-to-faculty dialogue with K-12.
- Understanding the current state of EAP and upcoming changes as a result of the Student Success Task Force and Senate Bill 1456 calling for common assessment.
- Keeping Abreast of changes to California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 55522: Assessment.
- Identifying funding for curriculum alignment work, student outreach, teacher training, and research/assessment time.
- Encouraging faculty participation and collaboration with counseling in the alignment of assessment and curriculum
- Working to avoid classic intersegmental blaming because it is counterproductive and not true.
- Understanding how K-12 Common Core State Standards impacts and improves curriculum alignment work
- Developing a plan for ongoing assessment.
- Defining and maintaining metrics for analyzing the impact of a Pathways-style program on student success.

### HELPFUL LINKS:

California Community College Chancellor's Office  
Matriculation and Assessment EAP page

[http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/  
StudentServices/EAP.aspx](http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/StudentServices/EAP.aspx)

California Community College Chancellor's Office SB1456  
Student Success Act of 2012 implementation page

[http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/  
StudentServices/EAP.aspx](http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/StudentServices/EAP.aspx)

## Noncredit to Credit Transition in the San Diego Community College District

Non-credit programs can be large feeders to community college credit programs, particularly in areas such as English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and high school completion/General Educational Development (GED). One example of this successful transition is the San Diego Community College District's Continuing Education non-credit program that consistently transitions about 2,000 noncredit students to the three colleges in the district each year.

One significant component of this transition is an **adult joint diploma program** jointly offered by San Diego Community College District Continuing Education and the San Diego Unified School District. The joint diploma program provides adult students (18 years to 19 years 11 months) and secondary students at least 16 years of age who are enrolled at the San Diego Unified School District the opportunity to earn an Adult Education Joint High School diploma through the noncredit Continuing Education program. Students in the program complete noncredit courses as well as college credit classes as concurrently enrolled students. The program includes a prescribed course of study as well as special counseling and support services.

Another important component of the successful transition from non-credit to credit programs includes collaboration among faculty, particularly in disciplines such as ESOL and basic skills English and mathematics, to **align curriculum**. Faculty leadership and administration from both the credit and noncredit programs are members of the district's Instruction and Curriculum Council where they collaborate on academic programs and curriculum.

**Transition support services**, similar to those provided to incoming new high school graduates, are an important component of the movement of noncredit students to credit programs. Recognizing the importance of student support services in the transition of students from the noncredit to credit program, the student services leadership in the district collaborate on planning and implementing transition support services, including education planning, orientation to college, and early assessment in English, ESOL, and mathematics, to ensure appropriate placement in the credit program. In addition, a district-wide counselor workshop is held each semester to update all the counselors, including those in noncredit, about changes to state regulations and district policies and procedures and to

identify challenges that counselors and students may be experiencing with academic program requirements.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Becoming familiar with California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 55064, which allows boards of trustees to adopt policies that allow students to petition for a noncredit course to count toward satisfaction of a degree requirement provided the competencies are met.
- Being familiar with current assessment systems as well as new initiatives that challenge current practices.

### HELPFUL LINKS:

[www.sdce.edu](http://www.sdce.edu)

## MiraCosta College NC2C (Noncredit to Credit) Program

MiraCosta College developed a bridge program called NC2C (Noncredit to Credit) to assist students transitioning from the college's noncredit program to its credit programs. Noncredit experts were finding that students were not transitioning into the credit program either because of fear of the intricacies of the credit college environment or because students were developing a level of comfort with the noncredit environment.

A small pilot program was widely accepted by the college as a means of assisting noncredit students in their goals of obtaining a college degree. MiraCosta College then integrated an expanded NC2C program into the college's institutional goals with accompanying institutional objectives and finally with plan goals, which focused on the fine details that would accomplish each institutional objective and in turn each institutional goal.



**Institutional Goal 2:** MiraCosta Community College District will become the institution where each student has a high probability of achieving academic success.

**Institutional Objective for Goal 2:** Increase the rate of students who successfully complete noncredit English as a Second Language or Adult High School Diploma Program courses and subsequently successfully complete credit courses in comparison to the 2010/11 rates.

Plan Goals:

**Goal 1:** In close collaboration with the Office of Institutional Planning, Research and Grants, establish a data and research-based plan to capture student interest and achievement in the noncredit programs and research best practices of encouraging students to transition to credit.

**Goal 2:** Provide students with information and activities that increases their knowledge on the credit

programs and student services available to assist them in transitioning from noncredit to credit.

**Goal 3:** In collaboration with the Student Success Committee, present opportunities to faculty in the noncredit program to learn about degrees and services available to students in the credit programs as well as collaborate with credit faculty to assist in academic preparation of the students who transition.

Specifically, NC2C attempted to increase the transition of noncredit students to the credit program in as many ways as possible. NC2C program components are as follows:

- Assigning counseling hours for noncredit classroom visits and face-to-face meetings dedicated to the transition to credit programs.
- Dedicating student ambassadors (twice weekly) to meet with students interested in credit programs.
- Scheduling regular workshops on financial aid and college applications at the Community Learning Center (the college's noncredit campus).
- Scheduling placement tests for math and English throughout the semester at the Community Learning Center.
- Scheduling "Experience MiraCosta" events in which counselors and faculty take noncredit students to the credit campus to meet with credit faculty and student services staff and visit classrooms.
- Scheduling "Career Expo" events where all career faculty meet with noncredit students to talk about their programs.
- Offering "College Connections" events where all credit student services representatives visit and meet with noncredit students.
- Offering scholarships to noncredit students transitioning to the credit program.

## ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

### Counseling

- Assuring that counselors are available for classroom visits.
- Assuring classrooms are ready for the counseling visits.
- Speaking with the counselors prior to the classroom visits to determine what topics will be covered.
- Speaking with the classroom teachers prior to the counseling visits to gain their perspective.
- Dedicating resources to efforts for additional support.
- Coordinating that support in both instruction and student services.

### Student Ambassadors

- Training the ambassadors as to what information will be shared with the students.

### Events

- Planning events such as financial aid workshops, placement tests, and application workshops, which can be very useful to the student who is not sure how to access student programs in the credit program.
- Working to ensure the timing of these workshops is appropriate to college processes and the results will be distributed to the student with appropriate explanations and follow-up.
- Arranging for noncredit students to travel to the credit campus with appropriate insurance coverage according to college policy.
- Having faculty from the credit program put on information fairs in the noncredit program, including working with personnel to arrange faculty visits and arranging tables, electricity, and other requirements for display purposes at college expo fairs.

### Scholarships

- Working with the college Foundation or other appropriate offices to ensure scholarships are arranged for noncredit students, or solicit funds for this purpose.

- Advertising the availability of these funds to students.
- Following up with the appropriate office to ensure student information is appropriately recorded and students are indeed receiving their funding.

### Documentation

- Ensuring all aspects of the program are being recorded and appropriate statistical data and analyses of program results are being compiled and reported.

## Transition to College

Transition programs that help create a seamless experience for students enrolling in college courses are effective in helping students succeed. Such transition programs can be divided into academic programs and student support programs.

Academic programs include dual enrollment, concurrent enrollment, Middle College High Schools, and Tech Prep. These programs allow students to take college courses while still enrolled in high school. Some of the programs are held on college campuses and others are offered at the high school and are taught by either high school faculty or college faculty. These programs help students transition not only by preparing them in understanding the expectations of college work, but also by eliminating some of the fears that students have in going to college. These courses psychologically help students believe that college is a possibility for them.

Colleges provide a variety of opportunities for high school students to enroll in college courses. Some are provided through single-course offerings where students take the classes with other college students, and others (such as Tech Prep) provide a more comprehensive offering with a variety of courses designed to match the college courses.

Student-support transition programs that have academic coursework associated with them are very effective in helping students prepare to transition to college and be successful. Such programs include Gear Up, TRIO, Upward Bound, First-Year Experience, Summer Bridge, and Puente. These programs provide interactions with faculty, other students, and mentors as well as co-curricular activities, and they help students learn the expectations of a college experience.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Knowing that changes in enrollment priorities at the state level, paralleled with an increase in community college enrollments, have had a negative impact on high school students attempting to enroll in college courses.
- Being mindful of the student population attracted to the college.
- Analyzing whether these are overachieving students who want to get a head start in transitioning to universities.

- Knowing that when courses are offered at local high schools, students require support services.
- Formalizing articulation agreements.
- Establishing transition programs, such as Gear Up, that do require collaboration with K-12 districts.
- Creating bridge programs that target historically underrepresented students.
- Assessing programs regularly to determine if they provide an impact on student success.

### HELPFUL LINKS:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs/cpagen.asp>

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/trioupbound/index.html>

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html>

<http://www.avid.org/>

<http://www.puente.net/>

## Common Core Curriculum and Alignment with Community College Entry-level Expectations

The initial Common Core State Standards initiative was a state-led effort coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers to develop education standards for English language arts and literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects and mathematics for voluntary state adoption. In 2010, the State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

The standards were based on empirical evidence of what employers and educators actually demand of prospective employees and students. Currently 46 states—California included—have adopted the CCSS. According to the initiative, the standards:

- Are aligned with college and work expectations
- Are clear, understandable, and consistent
- Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills
- Build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards
- Are informed by other top performing countries so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society
- Are evidence-based.

The standards require that all 11<sup>th</sup> grade students be administered an assessment that will identify their readiness for college. Community colleges could use this assessment as a measure for placement decisions for students entering college directly after high school. Additionally, the assessment could be used by K-12 schools to build student skills.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Understanding that CCSS are still not widely known by community college educators.
- Understanding how CCSS will impact student learning and the preparation of incoming students in community colleges.

- Creating opportunities for dialogue among K-12 and community college faculty to discuss the expectations of the CCSS and how they align with the community college curriculum.
- Discussing the viability of using the 11th grade assessment (EAP in California) as a placement for math and English courses and as a measure of student preparation for college-level courses.
- Encouraging college readiness programs and activities in the senior year to prepare students to transition to the community college.

### HELPFUL LINKS:

<http://www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards>

<http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/common-core-state-standards-implications.html>

<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/05/03/common-core-curriculum-k-12-could-have-far-reaching-effects-higher-education>

## Pre-registration

Pre-registration contact with students is significant in assuring timely student advisement and enrollment. Both the Student Success Task Force recommendations and Completion by Design's "Understanding the Student Experience: Loss and Momentum Framework" focus on the importance of addressing pre-registration aspects of the students' transition to community college.

The Student Success Task Force recommended strengthening support for entering students through the following:

- Developing and implementing common centralized diagnostic assessments
- Requiring students to participate in diagnostic assessment, orientation, and the development of an educational plan
- Developing and using technology applications to better guide students in educational processes
- Requiring students showing a lack of college readiness to participate in support resources
- Requiring students to declare a program of study early in their academic careers.

Some of these recommendations take time and resources while others require changes to the California Education Code. The recommendations are based on data that clearly show students failing to enroll in a timely manner for courses appropriate for their skill levels.

The loss points of connection from interest to application to enrollment in courses are also the basis of the Completion by Design framework and their recommendation for strategies that would overcome these loss points. To address the issues in students failing to apply or delaying their entry and failing to apply for financial aid for which they qualify, strategies were developed to include the following:

- Developing consistent college and career ready standards
- Fostering college-going norms supported by peers and trusted adults

- Increasing understanding of college requirements, application and financial aid processes; improving information about matching and financial aid products
- Facilitating dual enrollment/Early College High Schools (on-ground, online options), Advanced Placement credit
- Providing a college placement exam in high school
- Enrolling students directly from high school.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Developing a comprehensive enrollment management plan that includes enrollment goals for local high school students and a plan to work with the students prior to enrollment.
- Offering opportunities for students to visit the campus for co-curricular activities, events, etc.
- Using students as student ambassadors to reach out to prospective students.
- Developing relationships with local area schools, principals, and counselors.
- Understanding the importance of involvement of the student's family.
- Developing early outreach activities that increase the awareness and possibilities for higher education with such programs as Gear-Up or Kids at College.
- Funding innovative practice for sustainability and impact.
- Evaluating innovative practice for efficacy.

### HELPFUL LINKS:

[https://www.completionbydesign.org/system/files/Loss\\_and\\_Momentum\\_Framework\\_rev\\_2013-04\\_0.pdf](https://www.completionbydesign.org/system/files/Loss_and_Momentum_Framework_rev_2013-04_0.pdf)

[http://www.californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/Executive/StudentSuccessTaskForce/SSTF\\_Final\\_Report\\_1-17-12\\_Print.pdf](http://www.californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/Executive/StudentSuccessTaskForce/SSTF_Final_Report_1-17-12_Print.pdf)

<http://www.rpgroup.org/content/inquiry-guides>

## Registration

Similar to pre-registration, the Student Success Task Force and Completion by Design also address issues with registration processes for students. Both address the need for appropriate diagnostic assessments, mandatory advising, and course enrollment for basic skills in the student's first year to address student deficiencies.

Additionally, Completion by Design as well as Basic Skills Initiative recommendations address the need for course redesign to meet the deficiencies more rapidly (accelerated courses or workshops).

Since community colleges are known for their "open access," students tend to delay their submission of a college application. Additionally, students are often not aware of application timelines required for financial aid processes. With increased enrollments, classes are filling faster and financial aid awards are taking longer than they did previously. Educating students, high school counselors, and parents about early registration would help eliminate the issues that come about due to student tardiness with college registration processes.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Identifying registration steps and considering whether there are any barriers to those steps.
- Identifying and developing strategies that help students stay on track for the entire trajectory of their educational career.
- Collaborating with faculty and staff to implement engagement strategies that help students stay active in the learning process.
- Collaborating with faculty and staff to create tools and strategies to help monitor students' progress on goal.
- Working with staff and students to increase the social capital of students navigating through the enrollment process.
- Knowing the mandatory changes required by Senate Bill 1456 and preparing the institution and students for those changes.

### HELPFUL LINKS:

[https://www.completionbydesign.org/system/files/Loss\\_and\\_Momentum\\_Framework\\_rev\\_2013-04\\_0.pdf](https://www.completionbydesign.org/system/files/Loss_and_Momentum_Framework_rev_2013-04_0.pdf)

[http://www.californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/Executive/StudentSuccessTaskForce/SSTF\\_Final\\_Report\\_1-17-12\\_Print.pdf](http://www.californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/Executive/StudentSuccessTaskForce/SSTF_Final_Report_1-17-12_Print.pdf)

[http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml;jsessionid=0b67d752195740eab1a3b2016f4e?bill\\_id=201120120SB1456](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml;jsessionid=0b67d752195740eab1a3b2016f4e?bill_id=201120120SB1456)

## Assessment

Community colleges assess the skill levels of incoming students in English/English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and mathematics in order to appropriately place students in courses commensurate to their preparation level. A number of assessment tools are available, ranging from test publishers' standardized tests, such as those from the College Board and ACT, to home grown assessment instruments. All assessment instruments must be approved for use by the Chancellor's Office (see the Chancellor's Office list of approved assessment tests).

The use of assessment instruments is fairly regulated in title 5 to ensure that tests are used properly and to minimize bias against any particular group. To help minimize test bias, title 5, section 55522 requires that "when using an assessment test for placement it must be used with one or more other measures to comprise multiple measures." In addition, regulations specify that colleges conduct ongoing research to demonstrate that assessment instruments and processes are not having a disproportionate impact on particular groups of students. Further, colleges are expected to have clearly articulated procedures on how assessment results are used, the availability of practice tests, and retesting policies, as appropriate.

Currently, some colleges are exploring the effectiveness of using other measures of skill levels for placement in English/ESOL and mathematics. One recent experimental program that has been showing promising results is known as the Long Beach College Promise, a partnership with the Long Beach Unified School District, Long Beach City College, and California State University, Long Beach. One key component of the partnership is predictive placement where students' placement in the college curriculum is based upon their performance in high school as measured by various factors. Other alternate means of assessment used by colleges include the use of the CSU's Early Assessment Program, which is an assessment administered in high school and determines if a student is ready for college-level work or not. Many colleges have incorporated Early Assessment Program results into their assessment and placement programs. Note that the Research and Planning Group of the California Community Colleges has done quite a bit of research on various assessment models.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Understanding what constitutes "multiple measures"

- Knowing which students need to be assessed
- Understanding that assessment instruments may not be used as college entrance exams. The following exceptions apply:
  - o Special full-time or part-time concurrently enrolled high school students: If a college uses an assessment test for admission decisions for concurrently enrolled high school students, the decision cannot solely be made based upon a test; multiple measures (e.g., high school grade point average, grades in the last English and mathematics class, length of time since last math class) are required.
  - o Applicants to nursing programs: If a college uses an assessment test for admission decisions for nursing programs, other measures must also be used.
- Maintaining currency with information from the Chancellor's Office. (The Chancellor's Office is exploring the feasibility of the use of a common assessment instrument. The primary goal of a common assessment is to eliminate practices in some areas of the state where students are required to take multiple assessment tests if they attend more than one community college. In addition, a common assessment would be more cost-effective statewide.) Note: At the time of publication of this manual, the project is still in planning stages.
- Understanding that multiple measures must be used.
- Understanding that certain Massive Open Online Courses are specifically designed for students to refresh skills in areas where they feel inadequately prepared. (In light of this development, many colleges are re-examining their policies regarding the frequency that students can retake assessment tools.)

### HELPFUL LINKS:

<http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/SSSP/Matriculation/Assessment/2007-08ApprovedInstruments.pdf>

<http://www.longbeachcollegepromise.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/LBCP-5-Year-ProgressReport.pdf>

<http://www.rpgroup.org/rpsearch/results/English%20and%20math%20assessment>

## Special Programs that Prepare Students for Assessment and Placement

### Boot Camps

A vast number and variety of programs in the community colleges throughout the state are specifically designed to assist students to transition to a collegiate environment. One successful model of transition services is an intensive several-day or week(s)-long program, typically held during the summer, where incoming students (and often parents) attend an orientation, are assessed in English/ESOL and mathematics, and attend various workshops, including education planning, financial aid, career planning, time management, and various student engagement activities. Some programs even include required basics skills credit and non-credit courses during the summer to give students a jump start in their academic program and build a sense of student community for incoming students. These types of intensive transition program have many different names, such as Boot Camp, Welcome Week, Jump Start, and Summer Bridge to name a few.

#### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Understanding that developing such a program requires adequate staffing and funding.
- Being mindful of the need for careful facilities planning, particularly if there is a summer session.
- Developing a robust evaluation process to ensure that innovations are meeting the students' and institutional needs
- Developing incentives for students to participate
- Engaging discipline faculty to lead and design such innovation

### Math Jam and Word Jam

Several programs provide students refresher information so they can perform better on their assessment tests. Two such programs, Math Jam and Word Jam, provide level-based refreshers for recent high school graduates, as well as any other student, who want to get a head start on college success. Generally, these programs are intensive, one or two weeks long, and adapt to the level of the student. Beyond improving skills, these programs develop a sense of connectedness to new students and help them navigate services and resources so they can be successful students in all of their classes.

Several colleges have been conducting these programs for several years and can provide information on how they might be structured. Pasadena Community College was the first to implement Math Jam. Cañada College has three Jams—Math, Word, and Physics—that are offered in several different formats (min-Jam, evening Jam, and the traditional week-long Jam).

#### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Making clear connections to the assessment, orientation, and counseling staff so they can effectively promote these types of programs to students prior to taking the assessment tests (if possible).
- Providing the rationale for “why” students should be a part of this program so they will want to attend (e.g., increase assessment scores to take higher level math or English, brush up on skills to be more successful in college, become connected to the college before starting classes).
- Making the program fun so the word gets out that it is something everyone should do.
- Setting the dates for these programs early in the year and promote extensively at the high schools so high school counselors can encourage their students to participate.
- Providing all levels, including pre-calculus reviews, to connect with as many students as possible.
- Identifying funding that will support all aspects of the program (appropriate number of staff, lunch, etc.).
- Including student tutors as part of the staff so they can connect with the new students.

#### HELPFUL LINKS:

<http://www.pasadena.edu/externalrelations/tlc/mathjam.cfm>

<http://www.canadacollege.edu/STEMcenter/mathjam.php>

## Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)

Relatively new to higher education, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are the subject of much research and debate. MOOCs come in many shapes and sizes (one MOOC course could have as many as 100,000 students enrolled) and are offered by faculty at prestigious universities. Typically, MOOCs are not directly taught by an instructor but rather are created by faculty and structured as online, self-paced learning. Examples of MOOCs are those licensed by technology companies such as Coursera. Another type of open educational program is the Khan Academy that touts “learn almost anything for free.” Khan Academy offers access to thousands of free videos covering a vast number of topics.

Some educational administrators consider MOOCs as an opportunity to support the basic skills needs of students through tutoring modules, such as those offered by the Khan Academy, as well as supplemental courses developed in a MOOC modality.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Understanding that administrators considering MOOCs should proceed cautiously and work closely with their faculty to determine the feasibility of such a modality for their institution and being mindful that some community college faculty have questioned the integrity of such a modality.

### HELPFUL LINKS:

[http://www.bdpa-detroit.org/portal/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=57:moocs-top-10-sites-for-free-education-with-elite-universities&catid=29:education&Itemid=20](http://www.bdpa-detroit.org/portal/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=57:moocs-top-10-sites-for-free-education-with-elite-universities&catid=29:education&Itemid=20)

[www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org)

## Orientation

Community colleges have been providing orientation programs to help new students become acquainted with the college campus and navigate expectations for decades. The importance of orientation as a component of student success was recently elevated with the enactment of the Student Success Act, where orientation will be a requirement for all new students, and for some colleges a requirement for continuing students to receive enrollment priority. With heightened importance being placed on orientation, colleges have been exploring creative ways to provide larger numbers of new students with an orientation to college.

College orientation programs are currently offered in many formats. For example, as previously discussed, orientation can be one essential component of an intensive summer transition program, or it can be offered as a short workshop held as part of application workshops or assessment. Many colleges offer an online orientation, which has become a common alternate format due to the accreditation requirement that colleges with online programs must offer the same level of services to online students as to on-campus students. In addition, colleges are finding that some online options are a more cost-effective delivery format.

There are several online options for college orientation programs, some of which can include academic program planning components. Options include design-your-own programs and systems purchased through technology companies, such as Cynasure, Adapt Courseware and Degree Works.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Understanding that when considering the purchase or creation of stand-alone orientation systems, administrators must be mindful of the need to ensure that the data is integrated into current MIS reporting mechanisms since these data will ultimately be the foundation for Student Success Act funding.
  - Being aware of the different types of orientations that occur on each campus. (For example, there may be generic orientations for most students, but some students may also need to attend customized orientations for programs such as athletics, EOPS, etc.).
  - Facilitating a dialogue between instruction and student services in order to elevate the impact of the orientation experience.
- Reconsidering the notion of orientation as a “one-shot” experience. Understanding that a general student orientation needs to emerge as a result of dialogue between instruction and student services.
  - Using data from orientation experiences to plan other strategies that will help propel students’ momentum toward their goals.
  - Ensuring that orientation data are tracked for future use in determining students’ registration priority.

### HELPFUL LINKS:

[http://www.cynasurenewmedia.com/portfolio\\_project1.htm](http://www.cynasurenewmedia.com/portfolio_project1.htm)

<http://www.ellucian.com/Solutions/Ellucian-Degree-Works/>

<http://www.accjc.org/>

## Financial Aid

The availability of financial aid—in the form of fee waivers, grants, loans, and scholarships—is essential for many students to be able to afford college. Determining a student’s eligibility for financial aid is a complex process that involves a number of factors. In addition, it involves a considerable amount of processing and validation of eligibility.

Students who are eligible for aid typically receive a financial aid package that can include several sources of aid as described below. Once a student is determined eligible for financial aid, the total amount of aid he or she will be awarded is determined based upon a number of factors, including the level of financial need and the total number of units enrolled. In addition, students who receive financial aid must maintain satisfactory academic and progress standards to remain eligible.

Common sources of financial aid include the following:

### State Aid

- Board of Governors Waiver: Provides assistance to low-income students to pay the community college enrollment fee.
- Cal Grant A: Provides financial assistance with tuition and fees for low- and middle-income students. Only available to students after they transfer to a four-year institution.
- Cal Grant B: Provides financial assistance to very low-income students who are residents of California. Grants can be as much as \$1,551 per academic year.
- Cal Grant C: Provides financial assistance to students from low- to middle-income families. Eligible students must be residents of California and enrolled in a career-technical program. Grants can be as much as \$576 per academic year.
- Chafee Grant: Provides financial assistance to former foster youth. Award maximum: \$5,000 per academic year.

### Federal Aid

- Pell Grant: The largest federal grant program that typically comprises the foundation award in a student’s financial aid package. Eligibility is based

upon federal income standards. Grants currently range from \$600 to \$5,500 each year depending upon financial need and the total number of units enrolled. (Note: This amount varies year to year).

- Federal Work Study: Provides students the opportunity to work either on or off campus for part of their financial aid package. Awards typically range from \$1,500 to \$5,000 per year.
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant: Designed to provide assistance to the most financially needy students who have not already earned a baccalaureate degree.
- Federal Direct Student Loan Program: Designed to allow eligible students to borrow funds to support their educational costs directly from the federal government.
- PLUS Loan: designed to allow parents to borrow funds to support the educational costs of a dependent child. Students must meet financial aid eligibility requirements.

## Scholarships

Colleges offer a variety of scholarships for students. Many are need-based and others are based upon academic achievement or student leadership. Some scholarships are specific to students in certain disciplines and career paths, and some are based upon a combination of factors.

One scholarship common to all community colleges in the state is the **Osher Scholarship** that originates from an Endowment of the California Community Colleges Foundation. It is awarded to applicants who have completed 24 degree-applicable units and qualify for financial aid as determined by eligibility for a Board of Governor’s Fee Waiver. The amount of the award is based upon total units enrolled (full-time, three-quarter-time, and half-time) and can be up to \$1,000.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Remaining current with changes in laws and regulations pertaining to financial aid since changes can not only affect student eligibility (such as AB 540 students), they can impact business processes and workload demands in the financial aid office.

- Knowing that administrators will often be called upon, sometimes at the last minute, to lobby public policymakers in favor or opposition of proposed changes, including proposals to increase student fees.
- Maintaining data on the amount of financial aid awarded each year as well as the proportion and number of students receiving each type of aid. (These data are essential to effective lobbying efforts and information campaigns.)
- Establishing deadlines for students to apply for aid in order to have access to funds before classes begin.
- Establishing partnerships with the college bookstore to ensure that financial aid students have access to purchase required books and supplies before classes begin so they are fully prepared for classes and will not get behind while waiting for resources to purchase textbooks and materials.
- Establishing parameters for financial aid appeals, including efficient and effective processes to meet the demand.
- Designing workshops for students seeking student loans to minimize the propensity for community college students to accumulate too much debt and end up in loan default.
- Utilizing automation to help manage the increasing processing demands in the financial aid office.
- Developing processes to monitor students in online classes who are receiving financial aid since, nationwide, there has been a serious increase in financial aid fraud, particularly in online classes.

#### HELPFUL LINKS:

<http://www.nasfaa.org/>

[www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov)

<http://foundationccc.org/WhatWeDo/ScholarshipEndowment/MediaEventandInformation/OsherScholarProfile/tabid/398/Default.aspx>

## Bridge Programs

Bridge programs are designed to transition first-time students to college. They are typically offered during the summer for cohorts of incoming students. Bridge programs have proven to be successful mechanisms to bridge the transition from high school to college, particularly for disadvantaged students.

Bridge programs can be referred to by a number of different names and can include any combination of the following components:

- Orientation to college and assessment in English/English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and mathematics.
- College preparation courses that focus on study skills, time management, academic planning, goal setting, and navigating the college enrollment, to name a few.
- Basic skills classes in English/ESOL and mathematics that allow new students to get a jump start on remediating their basic skills needs.
- Workshops on topics such as financial aid, career planning, education planning, time management, financial literacy, study skills, transfer, and student life.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Appreciating the need for early outreach to local feeder high schools to identify targeted participants.
- Understanding the potential for high no-show rates as students get summer jobs or have other commitments at the last minute.
- Developing incentives for student and faculty participation in such programs.
- Planning for the need for adequate facilities, particularly if the program is scheduled while summer classes are in session.
- Developing the costs to support the program, including support services, meals, materials, and events.

## Stage Two of the Student Lifecycle—The First 30 Units

### Why Goal-setting, Direction, Monitoring, and Supporting the First Year of College Is Important

Research has shown a number of momentum points throughout a student’s progress to a degree are predictors of academic success. Students who commit to a program of study in their first year are more likely to complete a degree, certificate, or transfer to a four-year institution. Moreover, success rates for students who begin their studies in mathematics or English/ESOL at a basic skills level have significantly lower degree, certificate, and/or transfer completion rates. Therefore, the need to ensure that students declare a program of study and have a clear path to follow, particularly in their first year, is essential for academic success. Further, ongoing goal-setting, academic planning, support services, and monitoring of academic progress are crucial in order to help students reach various momentum points and ensure they accomplish their academic goals. The importance of educational planning in a student’s first year was recently regulated by the Student Success Act, which mandates that institutions require assessment, orientation, and education planning for all new students beginning fall 2015 (Cal. Code Regs., tit.5, §55531 [proposed]).

#### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Applying the report and recommendations of the Student Success Task Force, including understanding the new title 5 requirements on Student Success and Support Programs.
- Implementing strategies for the Student Success Act.
- Connecting stakeholder departments on campus-wide initiatives that will impact students’ capacity to be “future-minded.”
- Developing tools to help students, faculty, and staff monitor progress on goal(s)

#### HELPFUL LINKS:

[http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/Executive/StudentSuccessTaskForce/SSTF\\_Final\\_Report\\_1-17-12\\_Print.pdf](http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/Executive/StudentSuccessTaskForce/SSTF_Final_Report_1-17-12_Print.pdf)

[http://www.csus.edu/ihelp/PDFs/R\\_Sense\\_of\\_Direction.pdf](http://www.csus.edu/ihelp/PDFs/R_Sense_of_Direction.pdf)

<http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/StudentServices.aspx>

## Related Programs, Practices, and Issues

### Engagement with Campus Life

Research has shown that student engagement is an essential element of academic success. Many different programs and activities that community colleges offer provide students an opportunity to get involved on campus.

Some examples of campus life activities include the following:

- Student government
- Various academic, service, and social clubs and organizations
- Honor's societies
- Intercollegiate athletics
- Intercollegiate academic activities
  - o Robotics
  - o Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE)
  - o Forensics
  - o Science and math competitions.
- Study abroad programs.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Understanding the need for club advisors to guide the activities of students to ensure compliance with college policies as well as with state and federal laws and regulations.
- Institutionalizing requirements for student travel (such as board approval of student travel, approval of funds for travel, advanced planning requirements, etc.).
- Identifying appropriate funding for the travel, student activities, and student events.
- Applying the restrictions for use of the revenue from the Student Representation Fee specifically intended to support students who are stating their viewpoints before local, state, or federal governments (Cal. Code Regs., tit.5, §54801 et seq.). See helpful link below.

### HELPFUL LINKS:

<http://law.onecle.com/california/education/76060.5.html>

<http://www.mpc.edu/campuslife/studentgovernment/ASMPC%20Documents/Student%20Representation%20Fee.pdf>

### Goal and Career Identification

Students should identify an educational goal as early as possible in their educational pursuit in order to most effectively use their time and resources. In addition, degree and transfer program requirements have become so specific that students must receive the necessary guidance to assist with educational planning. This is even more important for students with basic skills need since they have more preparation courses to complete. In fact, research shows that students who begin at basic skills levels in English/English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and mathematics have much lower degree, certificate, and transfer completion rates, since students often become discouraged along their path. Therefore, careful monitoring of academic progress and the need for comprehensive support services, including tutoring, are important to facilitate student success.

The emphasis on goal setting and identifying a program of study in the first year has been highlighted in the recommendations of the Student Success Task Force and subsequent implementation by the Student Success Act. Beginning fall 2015, all new students will be required to have education plans in their first year.

### Advisement (Role of Classroom Faculty)

Students undeniably spend the majority of time on campus with classroom faculty. When one considers that the average lecture class meets three hours each week, it is clear that the classroom faculty have an important role in advising students on matters related to academic disciplines as well as on career opportunities. There have been countless stories from students about a professor who changed their lives. Therefore, the potential influence of the classroom faculty on student progress and goal attainment cannot be overstated.

Discipline faculty advise students, both formally and informally, through a number of models:

- Designated office hours
- Flex activities (instructional improvement activities)

- Advising academic student clubs
- Summer bridge programs.

#### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Recognizing that degree and transfer requirements frequently change at both the local and state levels and that due to these changes, classroom faculty may have difficulty keeping abreast of all the changes and new requirements in their respective fields.
- Understanding that transfer to four-year institutions has become so complex in terms of major requirements, institution-specific requirements, and the strategic selection of general education courses that students are best served by counseling faculty for transfer advising.
- Acknowledging that the role of discipline faculty in advising students should focus primarily on career options and discipline expectations.
- Developing a multitude of deliveries to find guidance and support as they work toward their goals.
- Being aware of contract language related to the role and responsibilities for academic advising.

#### HELPFUL LINKS:

<http://www.asccc.org/papers/role-counseling-faculty-and-delivery-counseling-services-california-community-colleges>

#### Follow-up and Interventions

Institutions routinely monitor student progress to degree, follow-up with students having academic difficulty, and utilize early warning systems and intervention strategies to help students stay on track and not fall through the cracks.

Some common intervention strategies include the following:

- Notices to students below certain grade point average thresholds recommending they seek the services of the tutoring center or a counselor.
- Classroom faculty referral of students having difficulty to a counselor for follow up.
- Referral to disability support services for students who self-identify learning challenges.

- Unit limits for students below a certain grade point average threshold.
- Required counseling contacts for students identified as academically at risk.
- Required student success workshops for students who are not meeting institutional satisfactory progress standards.
- Automatic early warning messages during registration for students who meet certain academic thresholds, such as excessive Ws, and substandard grades.
- Learning communities for students identified as academically at-risk.

#### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Applying new title 5 requirements.
- Understanding the need for adequate counseling support when notices are sent in order to accommodate student demand for counseling at the time.
- Instituting sufficient tutoring services to support students who are struggling with their academics.
- Developing robust research protocols to measure the influence of various interventions on students who need additional services or help.
- Ensuring that students have ways to access additional support without the stigma associated with being a “struggling” or “at-risk” student.
- Appreciating that all learning, even for successful learners, is a developmental and iterative process.
- Engaging classroom faculty in the development of academic support, which then help students bridge the gap between what they know and what they need to know.
- Knowing the propensity for some students to take too many units, given their personal circumstances, in order to maintain financial aid. (A student enrolled in 12 units can receive considerably more financial aid than a student enrolled in 6 units.)

## First-Year Experience

First-year experience programs are designed to successfully transition students to college. They first emerged in the 1980s, precipitated by a renewed focus on the importance of the first year of college in a student's educational pathway. The basic premise of first-year experience programs is that, in reality, all students experience a first year of college, whether it is specially structured and monitored or not, and students entering college for the first time are coming into a "new culture." College has its own unique vocabulary, customs, practices, expectations, and environment.

First-year experience programs have many different designs and names. They usually consist of a fairly prescribed first-year of college in terms of required course-taking programs, goal-setting, and educational planning. Some programs are offered as a learning community where cohorts of students take the same sections of core classes, thus building a community of learners. Many programs also include a college success class/intensive workshop the first semester taught by counseling faculty that focuses on strategies to manage the competing demands of college life.

Helpful Links

<http://www.aacu.org/peerreview/pr-su06/documents/PRSU06.pdf>

## Support Programs

There are a number of special support services programs at colleges throughout the state. Many colleges also have special federally grant-funded programs, such as GEAR-UP and TRIO that augment student support services. Following is a description of some of the more common programs.

- CalWorks: Offers support services to students who receive TANF/CalWORKS benefits. The CalWorks program provides vocational and academic counseling, job placement, work study, and other services designed to support students' careers, education, and personal goals.
- DSPS (Disabled Student Program & Services): Supports the inclusion of students with disabilities into the campus community to facilitate academic success. DSPS offers eligible students access to a variety of specialized support services and assistive equipment as well as preparatory, skill maintenance, and personal growth courses.
- EOPS (Extended Opportunities Programs & Services): Provides special recruitment, counseling, retention services, and other support to increase college enrollment and success for low income, first generation, and disadvantaged students who may not have considered college to be an option.
- Puente Program: Assists educationally disadvantaged students adjust to college and prepare for transfer to four-year institutions through writing and personal growth instruction, counseling, and mentoring.
- Umoja: Seeks to engage, connect, educate, support, and encourage African American and other students through a series of courses that prepare them for transfer to four-year institutions. Course materials, discussion, and activities focus on African American culture, literature, and experiences. Program focuses on enhancing the learning experiences of African American students.
- MESA (Mathematics, Engineering and Science Achievement): Supports economically and educationally disadvantaged students to excel in math, engineering, and science-based majors and to successfully transfer to four-year institutions through tutoring and other support services.

- TRIO (grant-funded): Outreach and student services programs designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. Programs are specifically targeted to provide assistance to low-income, first-generation college students and individuals with disabilities to support their progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to post-baccalaureate programs.
- GEAR UP (grant-funded): A grant program designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP provides six-year grants to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools. Typically GEAR UP programs are cohort-based programs that provide services and track students from middle school through to college.

**HELPFUL LINKS:**

[http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/  
list/ope/trio/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/index.html)

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html>

## Classroom Issues

### Pedagogy and Student Learning Outcomes

It is obvious, but worth mentioning, that a major factor influencing student success occurs in the classroom, library, counseling office, and learning center. In these environments, each instructor has the ability to work his/her special magic—magic that allows each student to flourish. In addition to interacting with each student, college teachers provide a basic level of support for classroom experiences that includes what will be taught to students and how that information is best delivered and understood by students.

It is essential that faculty keep abreast of best practices in their fields to assure that content, as well as pedagogy, are always being examined and improved. To this end, faculty do attend discipline conferences, attend Flex activities, and stay active in discipline organizations, at both the state and national level.

To emphasize this continual self-examination, accreditation standards include student learning outcomes (SLOs) so that each college will constantly re-assess each course, discipline, and college-wide outcomes for students. In this regard, the accrediting commission has created a rubric for evaluating institutional effectiveness for SLOs. This rubric describes institutional behaviors that can be used to identify how thorough each college has been in its development and institutionalization of learning outcomes. The use of institutional behaviors places each college's efforts into one of four successive levels of implementation—awareness, development, proficiency, and, sustainable continuous quality improvement.

#### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Supporting faculty to stay abreast of discipline best practices.
- Assisting faculty in efforts to engage in discussions of ways to improve course content and pedagogy, particularly for the basic skills student.
- Assisting faculty in efforts to become an innovative institution.
- Supporting an SLO coordinator who works with faculty and administration to develop timelines, processes, and implementations of SLOs at the course, discipline, and institutional levels.

- Providing an administrative office that will support the SLO coordinator.

#### HELPFUL LINKS:

<http://www.accjc.org/bibliography>

[http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Accreditation-Standards-Annotated-for-CQI-and-SLOs\\_Edited-Nov-2012.pdf](http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Accreditation-Standards-Annotated-for-CQI-and-SLOs_Edited-Nov-2012.pdf)

[http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/CoverMemoAndRevisedRubric\\_10-28-2011.pdf](http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/CoverMemoAndRevisedRubric_10-28-2011.pdf)

<http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/Executive/StudentSuccessTaskForce/Tinto%20-%20Taking%20Student%20Success%20Seriously%20in%20the%20College%20Classroom.pdf>

## Tutoring

Many college students find they are not prepared for the academic rigors of college and need assistance. Most colleges provide assistance to these students in many ways, one of which is a Tutoring Center. In a Tutoring Center, students have the ability to obtain the assistance of a tutor—a trained individual in a certain discipline—as well as the broader skills involved in studying.

The tutor's goal is to help students become successful in their courses and to improve each student's ability to understand the components of good study skills. Although tutors are available for varied courses, most colleges offer expertise in reading, math, English, sciences, languages, economic, and accounting. These services are offered to the students at no cost to them.

All of those individuals who are associated with a Tutoring Center need to be acquainted with learning and study skill pedagogy to assure that programs offered to students represent national best practices. In addition to state organizations, a great deal of information can be gleaned through the national College Reading and Learning Association, an organization devoted to sharing the best practices of reading, development education, tutoring, and mentoring for the adult learner.

In addition to on-campus services, the passage of the Federal Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 attempts to assure that quality services such as those offered to on-campus students will be offered to online students. Therefore, comprehensive online tutoring programs need to be offered to students through the Tutoring Center.

Other regulatory items are also important to be aware of when operating a Tutoring Center. In order to collect apportionment for tutoring (at the noncredit rate), provisions outlined in title 5, section 58170 must be adhered to. The following is directly cited from title 5.

Apportionment may be claimed for individual student tutoring only if all the following conditions are met:

- (a) The individual student tutoring is conducted through a designated learning center.
- (b) The designated learning center is supervised by a person who meets the minimum qualifications prescribed by section 53415.

- (c) All tutors successfully complete instruction in tutoring methods and the use of appropriate written and mediated instructional materials, including supervised practice tutoring.

This requirement may be waived by the chief instructional or student services officer on the basis of advanced degrees or equivalent training. Academic credit and apportionment for coursework in tutoring methods for purposes of this section shall be limited to two semester or three quarter units of credit, or 96 noncredit hours. All tutors shall be approved by a faculty member from the discipline or disciplines in which the student will tutor.

- (d) All students receiving individual tutoring have enrolled in a noncredit course carrying Taxonomy of Programs number 4930.09, which is entitled "Supervised Tutoring."
- (e) Students enroll in the Supervised Tutoring course, through registration procedures established pursuant to section 58108, after referral by a counselor or an instructor on the basis of an identified learning need.
- (f) An attendance accounting method is established which accurately and rigorously monitors positive attendance.
- (g) Student tutors may be remunerated but may not be granted academic credit for tutoring beyond that stipulated in (c) above.
- (h) The district shall not claim state apportionment for tutoring services for which it is being paid from state categorical funds.

Authority cited:

Education Code **70901**

Education Code **84500**

Reference:

Education Code **70901**

Education Code **84500**

Education Code **87356**

(Amended by Register 2006, No. 1.)

Source: California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 58170

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Developing a method for determining which college courses require trained tutors.
  - Developing a method for soliciting input from college faculty regarding difficult aspects of their courses.
  - Developing a method for soliciting input from college faculty regarding possible tutors.
  - Developing college-wide advertising to ensure all students are aware of the services offered through the Tutoring Center.
  - Instituting comprehensive and consistent tutor training.
  - Determining the best time for students in determining hours of operation for the Tutoring Center.
  - Developing a budget for the operation of the center and tutors.
  - Connecting tutoring with specific learning skills and strategies that are directly related to classroom instruction.
  - Reducing stigma on help-seeking behavior and services
  - Developing an effective work schedule for tutors.
  - Developing a work environment that maximizes student learning.
  - Maintaining currency in state regulations regarding the training of tutors and the referral of students to the center.
  - Developing a system in which students are appropriately referred to the Tutoring Center to ensure state funding.
  - Recognizing that apportionment is only available for English and math tutoring.
  - Determining topics for specific workshops to maximize the benefit to students.
  - Appropriately maintaining statistics for analysis of student success.
  - Considering College Reading and Learning Association certification.
- Offering online tutoring to meet federal mandates.

### HELPFUL LINKS:

<http://www.crla.net/ittpc/index.htm>

<http://tutoringcenter.fullcoll.edu/referralForms.html>

[http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/reportsTB/DistanceEducation2011\\_final.pdf](http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/reportsTB/DistanceEducation2011_final.pdf)

<http://www.gamutonline.net/district/novato/DisplayPolicy/188844/8>

## Learning Communities

A learning community is a group of classes that are linked together. In the simplest learning community, two classes are linked together; in the most complex format, a student's entire course load is part of a learning community as is the case with first-year experience programs. In most cases, students who enroll in one class must enroll in the other. Instructors of all linked classes work together to assure assignments and activities are interconnected by a common theme.

Courses that are clustered together in a learning community are related in some way, although generally the courses are from different disciplines. The courses can be related in terms of themes or in some cases the courses are important for the success of students in a specific major.

Learning community classes are clustered together to promote student engagement and collaborative learning. Students are interconnected by the common curriculum, by the application of the elements of one course to the other, and by the familiarity with their classmates. The work of the faculty to integrate their pedagogy is important to the success of a learning community.

Although not involved in all learning communities, many learning communities involve activities outside of the classroom.

The California Community Colleges has formed the California Learning Communities Consortium (CLCC), a collaborative project of California colleges committed to improving the quality of student education through collaborative learning. CLCC seeks to do the following:

- Create professional development opportunities across the state
- Collect and highlight a diverse range of teacher materials and practices
- Assist in the development of new learning communities state wide
- Procure funding for statewide and regional conferences.

In addition to information regarding teaching strategies for learning communities, the CLCC website (<http://www.callearn.org/index.html>) maintains helpful information for administrators.

An additional resource for learning communities is the National Summer Institute on Learning Communities at the Washington Center of Evergreen State College in Olympia Washington. Since the mid-1990s, the institute has been assisting two- and four-year colleges as they start or strengthen learning community programs. The institute is held each year in July; attendance is by application starting in September of each year for the following summer. Colleges can send a team of up to nine faculty, staff, and administrators with 20 to 30 teams being accepted each year. The outcome of the institute for each team is to create a campus action plan for learning community development at their home institution.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Working with faculty to study learning community models nationwide if the college elects to establish learning communities. (The administrator needs approximately one year of planning time.)
- Understanding that the lead-time to establish a learning communities program may also include professional development for the faculty, staff, and administrators involved to establish a campus action plan for learning communities.
- Working with appropriate college personnel to have the courses linked so that one course cannot be enrolled in without enrolling in the second course.
- Linking the courses in the schedule of classes so that students understand what a learning community is, what the requirements for the learning community are, and why they must enroll in both classes.
- Some colleges provide an orientation to all students enrolling in learning communities. In some cases the orientation is mandatory in order to participate in the learning community.
- Working with the faculty to clearly establish compensation for teaching a class in the learning community. (In some cases, faculty receive extra compensation; in most cases they do not. The administrator needs to assure they are within the dictates of the district's contract.)
- Establishing and defining a learning community coordinator position.

- Developing a method for selection of a coordinator, including compensation, if the program is very large.
- Defining and maintaining appropriate metrics for analyzing student success.
- Working with faculty to establish Flex activities to provide training for creating successful learning communities and reviewing the accomplishments.

**HELPFUL LINKS:**

<http://www.callearn.org/index.html>

<http://www.evergreen.edu/washingtoncenter/institute/>

Specific programs at California Community colleges can be gathered at [“Programs” on page 5](#)

## Supplemental Instruction

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is an academic assistance program that utilizes peer-assisted study sessions. SI sessions are regularly-scheduled, informal review sessions in which students compare notes, discuss readings, develop organizational tools, and predict test items. Students learn how to integrate course content and study skills while working together. The sessions are facilitated by “SI leaders,” students who have previously done well in the course and who attend all class lectures, take notes, and act as model students.

(Source: University of Missouri-Kansas City, International Center for Supplemental Instruction, <http://www.umkc.edu/asm/si/overview.shtml#>)

SI was initiated as a method of helping students who were performing poorly in courses, such as chemistry, that are historically considered to be difficult. It targets the class and not the specific type of learner. Since its inception in 1973 at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, the program has been used very successfully nationally with other classes as well.

Statistical analyses show that students who participate in SI get better grades than those who do not. SI students also withdraw from their SI course less frequently than non-SI students, and SI students have higher graduation rates than those who do not participate in SI.

A wealth of information regarding SI can be gained by investigating the International Center for Supplemental Instruction website operated by the University of Missouri-Kansas. At this site, information regarding SI, SI training, statistics, video, and other helpful material can be obtained.

In many colleges, the SI program is operated through the Tutoring Center. This arrangement can work as long as it is recognized that SI is not managed the same as traditional tutoring.

Specific programs at California Community colleges can be gathered at [“Programs” on page 5](#)

## ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Developing an SI program based on international best practices as outlined at the University of Missouri-Kansas City website.
- Developing Flex training sessions for faculty who participate in SI and for presentation of the effectiveness of SI.
- Ensuring that SI is scheduled in high risk, high barrier courses, rather than just in areas where faculty are most willing to implement it.
- Developing a method for determining which college courses require supplemental instruction, including which faculty will support it.
- Developing standards for SI leaders.
- Developing a method for soliciting qualified SI leaders from appropriate faculty.
- Instituting comprehensive SI training.
- Developing a budget for SI.
- Establishing and defining an SI coordinator position, especially for large programs.
- Developing a schedule of meeting times and rooms for each SI group.
- Defining and maintaining appropriate metrics for analysis of the impact of SI.

Helpful Link: <http://www.umkc.edu/asm/si/overview.shtml>

## Math, English, ESL, and Reading Strategies

Current and evolving effective practices in developmental mathematics, English, English as a second language, and reading courses in the California Community Colleges center on a number of broad approaches. Many programs that highlight these methods, structures, and practices are outlined in the basic skills e-resource. The practices are broadly related to acceleration/compression, immersion, curriculum redesign, contextualized instruction, first-year experience programs, integrated instruction and student support services, learning communities, summer bridge programs, and tutoring and supplemental instruction.

## Related Programs

### Citrus College's Success English and Reading Curriculum Redesign

The curriculum redesign at Citrus College involved collapsing three levels of English and three levels of reading courses below the transfer-level courses. Refer to: **"College Success English and Reading Curriculum Redesign at Citrus College" on page 60.**

#### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Including all campus stakeholders in the planning process: English and reading faculty, counseling faculty, relevant instructional and student services administrators, Academic Senate leadership, Curriculum Committee chair, and Admissions and Records leadership.
  - Adhering to standing curriculum processes for course creation or modification.
  - Understanding the purpose of the redesign as shortening the path to college-level coursework.
  - Scheduling additional sections as this redesign actually reduced the number of units/hours across the developmental English and reading sequence.
  - Supporting cross-training work across English and reading faculty in order to meet minimum qualifications for the new courses that combine both disciplines.
- Working with the Academic Senate on equivalencies based on the cross training as necessary.
  - Establishing an assessment plan for the redesigned curriculum that allows for changes or tweaks as experience and data dictate.
  - Defining metrics and analyses to be performed as part of the project assessment plan.

Helpful Link: <http://citruscollege.edu/success/redesign/>

## Los Medanos College's Path2Stats (formerly StatPath) Curriculum Redesign

This initiative is detailed at: "[Path2Stats \(Formerly Statpath\) at Los Medanos College](#)" on page 63

Note: This program is not to be confused with Statway, another initiative run through The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Understanding that the planning process must include all campus stakeholders: math faculty, counseling faculty, relevant instructional and student services administrators, Academic Senate leadership, Curriculum Committee chair, and Admissions and Records leadership.
- Adhering to standing curriculum processes for course creation or modification.
- Understanding that the purpose of the redesign is to shorten the path to college-level coursework, in this case from arithmetic/pre-algebra to introductory statistics in one semester.
- Knowing the obstacles related to the position of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC), California State University (CSU), and University of California (UC) with respect to articulation and intermediate algebra using this model:
  - o IGETC Standard for 2A (1012 IGETC Standards, page 16)
  - o CSU Executive Order 1065
  - o Policy on Course Transferability/Transferable Course Agreement (TCA) Guidelines from UCOP (TCA Guideline, page 9)
  - o Title 5, section 55003. *Policies for Prerequisites, Corequisites and Advisories on Recommended Preparation*
  - o Title 5, section 55003(k). *Requirement for Multiple Measures in Assessment as a Prerequisite*
  - o Title 5, section 55063. Intermediate Algebra graduation requirement

- o Friction and dissonance with K-12 Common Core State Standards, which include topics typically found in elementary and intermediate algebra.

- Scheduling of sections in light of the reduced number of units/hours in the developmental math sequence.
- Establishing an assessment plan for the redesigned curriculum that allows for changes or tweaks as experience and data dictate.
- Defining metrics and analyses to be performed as part of the project assessment plan.

### HELPFUL LINKS:

California Acceleration Project  
<http://cap.3csn.org/>

ASCCC Rostrum Article on Policy Issues Surrounding Path2Stats/Statway <http://www.asccc.org/content/policy-issues-regarding-alternative-developmental-transfer-level-mathematics-pathways>

### Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching Statway and Quantway Pilot Programs

Carnegie Statway is a curriculum redesign and acceleration initiative focused on statistics, data analysis, and quantitative reasoning. The program is designed as a one-year course sequence that takes students who have tested into developmental math and provides a path through college-level introductory statistics in that timeframe. This pathway is primarily intended for students planning to transfer as humanities or social science majors.

This pathway includes new curriculum for the Statway courses and an intensive approach to student engagement. The primary focus of this approach is to provide students with tools and skills to promote self-efficacy, academic success, and the ability to navigate college.

Statway has launched in 19 community colleges in five states as of August 2011. The California community colleges participating in this project include American River College, Consumnes River College, De Anza College, Diablo Valley College, Foothill College, Pierce College, Mt. San Antonio College, San Diego City College, and San Diego Miramar College.

This project is not to be confused with Path2Stats, which was initiated by Myrna Snell at Los Medanos College. Note that Statway creates a new a yearlong sequence that replaces elementary algebra, intermediate algebra, and introductory statistics.

The Carnegie Quantway project started in 2012 as a curriculum redesign and acceleration initiative focused on producing quantitatively literate citizens. This is a non-STEM pathway for students who place into elementary algebra and proceed through a college-level quantitative reasoning course in one year. This pilot project is in its very early phases.

#### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Understanding that the planning process must include all campus stakeholders: math faculty, counseling faculty, relevant instructional and student services administrators, Academic Senate leadership, Curriculum Committee chair, and Admissions and Records leadership.
  - Adhering to standing curriculum processes for course creation or modification.
  - Understanding that the purpose of the redesign is to shorten the path to college-level coursework, in this case from arithmetic/pre-algebra to introductory statistics in one semester.
  - Knowing the obstacles related to the position of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC), California State University (CSU), and University of California (UC) with respect to articulation and intermediate algebra using this model:
    - o IGETC Standard for 2A (1012 IGETC Standards, page 16)
    - o CSU Executive Order 1065
    - o Policy on Course Transferability/Transferable Course Agreement (TCA) Guidelines from UCOP (TCA Guideline, page 9)
    - o Title 5, section 55003. *Policies for Prerequisites, Corequisites and Advisories on Recommended Preparation*
      - o Title 5, section 55003(k). *Requirement for Multiple Measures in Assessment as a Prerequisite*
      - o Title 5, section 55063. Intermediate Algebra graduation requirement
      - o Friction and dissonance with K-12 Common Core State Standards, which include topics typically found in elementary and intermediate algebra.
- Scheduling of sections in light of the reduced number of units/hours in the developmental math sequence.
  - Establishing an assessment plan for the redesigned curriculum that allows for changes or tweaks as experience and data dictate.
  - Defining metrics and analyses to be performed as part of the project assessment plan.

#### HELPFUL LINKS:

Carnegie Foundation Statway

<http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/statway>

Carnegie Foundation Quantway

<http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/quantway>

California Acceleration Project

<http://cap.3csn.org/>

ASCCC Rostrum Article on Policy Issues Surrounding Path2Stats/Statway <http://www.asccc.org/content/policy-issues-regarding-alternative-developmental-transfer-level-mathematics-pathways>

## College of the Canyons' Personalized Accelerated Learning (PAL)

College of the Canyons' Personalized Accelerated Learning (PAL) program is a compression model for math and English classes that are scheduled between five and eight weeks in length. The program is outlined: **"Personalized Accelerated Learning (PAL) at College of the Canyons" on page 61.**

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Working closely with staff responsible for scheduling in order to allow students to enroll in both short-term classes as a cohort when the second course requires the first as a prerequisite and establishing drop procedures for students who do not pass the first course.
- Developing schedules to accommodate extended instructional blocks in order to have each course run in a short-term format. (At eight weeks per course, the time in class effectively doubles per week.)
- Establishing faculty development where necessary to expand and diversify instructional repertoire to maintain student engagement over extended instructional blocks.
- Recognizing this model does not require new curriculum to be written but does require some technical enrollment issues to be solved.
- Forming a working group or committee around compression of basic skills classes that includes all relevant stakeholders.
- Deciding whether or not these classes will be coupled with student support services and the how intense or intrusive these services will be. Counseling/success skills courses proved problematic as part of PAL as they were viewed as "extra workload" by students.
- Establishing an assessment plan for the redesigned curriculum that allows for changes or tweaks as experience and data dictate.
- Defining metrics and analyses to be performed as part of the project assessment plan.

### HELPFUL LINKS:

College of the Canyons Personalized Accelerated Learning page

**[http://www.canyons.edu/Offices/Distance\\_Learning/Pal.html](http://www.canyons.edu/Offices/Distance_Learning/Pal.html)**

Community College Research Center Developmental Education Structure, Curriculum, and Pedagogy web page  
**<http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Developmental-Education-Structure-Curriculum-and-Pedagogy.html>**

## Skyline College Career Advancement Academy— Contextualized Learning

Skyline College’s Career Advancement Academy is a contextualized learning program that contextualizes math and English courses for automotive technology and allied health students. This project is detailed at: **“Skyline College Career Advancement Academy (CAA)” on page 70**

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Connecting faculty from career technical education, math, and English to contextualize the content and materials in existing basic skills courses, although new curriculum may not need to be written.
- Working with faculty and the college research office to identify which math and English courses to target for contextualization.
- Understanding that these types of academies are often parts of bridge programs or learning communities with the attendant scheduling issues.
- Establishing an assessment plan for the redesigned curriculum that allows for changes or tweaks as experience and data dictate.
- Defining metrics and analyses to be performed as part of the project assessment plan.

### HELPFUL LINKS:

Skyline College Career Advancement Academy (CAA)

**<http://www.skylinecollege.edu/caa/aboutcaa.php>**

## Stage Three of the Student Lifecycle—From 31 to 60 units

Completion of 30 units has been determined to be a significant momentum point in a student's academic career. Research has shown a strong relationship between completion of credits in the first year and degree/certificate completion, and some believe it to be a demarcation point for higher earnings. Once students enter the last half of their progression toward completing a degree or transfer program, there is a strong likelihood they will complete it. Therefore, colleges need to continue monitoring progress to degree, and intervene as necessary, to keep students on track.

### Interventions

Intervention strategies in the second half of a student's educational pathway are similar to those described in the section of this manual on the first year. Colleges generally continue to monitor progress and follow up with students who are having academic difficulty.

### Degree Audits

Colleges begin to conduct degree audits after the completion of certain unit thresholds to make sure that students are taking the courses they need to complete their certificate, degree or transfer requirements. Some colleges conduct periodic outreach campaigns to students, encouraging them to visit with a counselor to update their student education plan and complete an audit of progress to degree or transfer. A degree audit can be completed manually by reviewing an academic transcript for completion of requirements, along with the identification of missing requirements, or it can be completed electronically. Many colleges have electronic degree audit systems, some use home-grown systems, and others use products from various software vendors such as Ellucian's Degree Works.

Electronic degree audit systems automatically assess a student's completion of specified degree requirements and identify missing requirements for a student's specific situation (catalog year, major, work completed at other institutions, etc.). This powerful tool allows colleges to efficiently and effectively monitor progress to degree. Some systems are very sophisticated and can accommodate unique requirements for specific majors and courses. Degree audit systems have become invaluable tools as degree and transfer requirements have become more complex and difficult to navigate.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Tracking student progress during the second phase of their educational journey is essential even if the tracking is via a simple manual system.
- Building the infrastructure for an electronic degree audit system is complex and takes a considerable amount of time.
- Involving counseling faculty in the development of intervention strategies and degree audit systems will ensure effective systems and processes are in place.
- Allocating sufficient resources for a purchasing and implementing an electronic degree audit system is key to its success.

### HELPFUL LINKS:

<http://www.ellucian.com/Solutions/Ellucian-Degree-Works/>

## Transitioning Out

The last half of a student's academic program is a time to begin to help students transition out of community college, either to transfer to a four-year institution or to begin a career. This transitioning process has many elements, including ongoing academic planning, graduation preparation, resume writing, transfer application completion, career planning, and preparation for job-seeking. Colleges have several support programs and services to assist students with transitioning on. Examples of these programs and services include the following:

- **Transfer Center:** Transfer centers are designed to assist students with navigating the complex transfer process. Transfer from community college to a four-year institution has become very complex and often difficult for students to manage alone. Transfer requirements can be different for various institutions, even for universities in the same system. In addition, transfer requirements can vary considerably depending upon a student's major. Therefore, transfer centers play an essential role in assisting students with planning the proper course-taking patterns as well as transitioning on to the university. Transfer centers also provide assistance with completing university applications, obtaining letters of recommendation, and meeting various deadlines.
- **Career Placement Center:** Many colleges have comprehensive career placement centers that have resources to guide students in the various stages of career development. Career centers offer programs and services that help students identify careers, obtain internships, and prepare for employment. Career centers can also provide assistance with writing resumes, developing interviewing skills, and completing job applications. Providing assistance with career development and preparation can be a critical component of the successful transition of students to beginning a career.
- **Work Experience:** Work experience programs allow students to earn college credits while working. They are designed to provide students with an opportunity to use the work site as a learning laboratory. Students work with faculty to identify goals and learning outcomes specific to their work responsibilities.
- **Internships:** Many colleges have partnerships with business and industry to provide students with

internships while completing their program of study. Internships allow students to gain hands-on experience while applying their learning in the work world.

- **Service Learning:** Some community colleges offer service learning as a component of various programs and courses. Service learning programs focus on civic engagement and social responsibility by providing opportunities for students to perform community service as a component of classroom instruction.
- **Mentoring Programs:** Community college mentoring programs are generally structured as peer-mentoring where first-year students are paired with second-year students to help first-year students navigate college, such as helping them select classes and get involved with student life. Mentors can also serve as college ambassadors, providing tours for prospective students and participating in college nights. Mentoring programs provide unique opportunities for both the mentee and mentor.

### ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS AREAS:

- Providing support for counselors and faculty advisors to maintain current on transfer requirements is essential since transfer preparation requirements can be complex and frequently change.
- Ensuring sufficient resources are available for support services programs.
- Ensuring strong collaboration between Instruction and Student Services will ensure the most comprehensive approaches to successful student support services programs.

### LINKS:

<http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Resources/aaccprograms/horizons/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://bellevuecollege.edu/stupro/mentor/default.asp>

# Supporting Organizations

## California

### Association of Community and Continuing Education

Valentina Purtell

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The Association of Community and Continuing Education (ACCE) plays a leadership role in the development of community services, contract education, and continuing education programs, including basic skills. As the only organization for California Community Colleges noncredit administrators, ACCE has advocated for noncredit basic skills students and contributed to their success in a variety of ways:

Bi-annual conferences featuring sessions where practitioners and administrators discuss student success issues such as implementation of Student Success Task Force recommendations and related legislation; as well as success accountability measures for basic skills continuing education students.

Dissemination of statewide information on legislation relating to basic skills students.

Fostering on-going communication between agencies offering basic skills courses across the state.

Sharing best practices in providing instruction and student services to basic skills students completing noncredit offerings and transitioning to credit basic skills and degree-applicable courses.

**LINKS:** <http://acceonline.org/>

## California Association for Developmental Education (CalADE)

CalADE board members

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Our organization is called CalADE (California Association for Developmental Education), and it is the California chapter of the National Association for Developmental Education (NADE).

The purpose of the California Association for Developmental Education shall be to promote the following goals within the State of California:

- To provide visibility and significance to basic skills and developmental education programs and their support services through a professional group of practitioners in postsecondary education institutions.
- To promote support for basic skills and developmental education programming.
- To provide a means for identification and interaction with fellow professionals in basic skills and developmental education areas.
- To provide an informational channel for postsecondary basic skills and developmental education faculty, administrators, and staff.
- To provide faculty and staff development activities for sharing of professional methods, techniques, and strategies.
- To identify and initiate solutions for issues and concerns rising from basic skills and developmental education services within postsecondary institutions.
- To promote cooperation and communication between secondary and postsecondary institutions in the area of developmental education.
- To serve as an advocate for issues related to funding, assessment policies, practices, and procedures, and to the development and advancement of basic skills and developmental education programs.

**LINKS:** <http://thecalade.com/>

## The Campaign for College Opportunity

### Our Work

The Campaign for College Opportunity is focused on a single mission: to ensure that the next generation of California students has the chance to attend college and succeed in order to keep our workforce and economy strong.

### What We Do

The Campaign for College Opportunity is a California non-profit organization co-founded in 2003 by a unique alliance of prominent organizations, including the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), the California Business Roundtable, and the Community College League of California. This alliance believed strongly in the power of Californians to preserve the historic promise of the 1960 California Master Plan for Higher Education to provide an opportunity to go to college for every eligible student in the state.

Our work is even more critical today when thousands of students who have worked hard are being turned away from our community colleges and four-year universities or are unable to get the classes they need. In addition, we know that securing that spot in college is only the first step; we must make sure that students succeed in realizing their college dreams if we are to meet the workforce needs of the future and keep the California dream of opportunity and success alive in an increasingly diverse state.

### “What Works Now”

Student success matters and many community colleges are innovating and leading the way in finding solutions to some of the biggest challenges facing students. **“What Works Now”** is a report that provides examples of what is working now to improve student success. These leaders are not waiting for brighter budget times or “better students.” They are delivering high quality programs and services now, and they are demonstrating success. The Campaign for College Opportunity website provides individual profiles of the featured effective practices from across the state that are improving student success.

**LINKS:** <http://www.collegecampaign.org/resources/practices-with-promise/>

## Career Ladders Project (CLP)

CLP staff Linda Collins, Kris Palmer, Ada Rodriguez, Alison Nakashima

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The Career Ladders Project (CLP) works to galvanize educators, system leaders, philanthropy, and policymakers around basic skills reforms that make a difference for student achievement. CLP has worked to accomplish the following:

- Mobilize support and marshal evidence for accelerated pedagogies that integrate career technical education, academic, and basic skills instruction.
- Build will to substantially reform developmental education sequences, where disadvantaged students often “get stuck.”
- Improve alignment between high school and college systems.
- Identify a host of strategies that are efficacious for all students, but especially so for addressing the needs of underprepared and diverse youth and adults.

Since 2002, CLP has collaborated with the Chancellor’s Office, philanthropy, and more than 50 California community colleges to design and launch large-scale projects that test and demonstrate practices that hold promise for accelerating basic skills acquisition. Current initiatives include the following:

- The Chancellor’s Office Career Advancement Academies (CAAs) have worked to nest basic skills and bridge programs into structured career pathways in 35 colleges and spurred innovation statewide. Basic skills are accelerated and contextualized with technical instruction. CAAs have served more than 8700 diverse students with multiple barriers to success and in need of remediation with course success and retention rates of 75 and 90 percent, respectively.

Working in partnership with the Chancellor’s Office in the design and implementation of CAAs, CLP has supported CAA colleges by facilitating a Contextualized Teaching and Learning (CTL) faculty study group and peer-to-peer exchanges, organizing presentations at major conferences that feature CAA practitioners, and documenting impact by coordinating data collection and

evaluation and through the production of videos that tell the story of the CAAs and CTL in student voice.

- In partnership with the James Irvine Foundation, CLP has worked with colleges statewide in two high-school-to-college transition initiatives: the Concurrent Course Initiative (CCI), which focused on dual enrollment in nine colleges, and the California Community Colleges Linked Learning Initiative (CCLLI) aimed at making significant reforms to the provision of orientation and bridge instruction; academic placement; CTL and embedded basic skills instruction; provision of stackable certificates; and articulation between courses along a clearly mapped pathway.
- The Community College Pathways (CCP) initiative has created faculty networks, including basic skills faculty, to improve outcomes for foster youth in 11 colleges across the state. CLP has worked with CCP colleges to strengthen first-year experience models.

CLP has led or contributed to a range of other programs, such as the Green Challenge Initiative focused on expanding college automotive programs to include certificated hybrid auto repair components contextualized with basic skills instruction.

Across these initiatives, structured pathways are a framework for contextualized basic skills provision with particular emphasis on stackable certificate designs that connect the foundational skills to next steps in college and career within an industry sector. Throughout its work, CLP draws lessons from California community colleges and takes an active role in creating greater receptivity for effective policies that support basic skills reform, advising the Chancellor’s Office, state policymakers, philanthropy, and affinity groups, and learning from peers to make the case stronger.

CLP has also worked with philanthropy to launch new organizations with basic skills reform on their agenda, such as Learning Works, the Edge Campaign, the Faculty Inquiry Network, and 3CSN.

### LINKS:

URL: [http://www.careerladdersproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/caa\\_spra.pdf](http://www.careerladdersproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/caa_spra.pdf)

Title: **“Issue Brief: Career Ladders and Pathways for the Hard to Employ”**

Description: CAAs are featured in this issue brief from Social Policy Research Associates. They assess the importance of integrating basic skills remediation with career-specific content to maintain low income participant engagement and expedite program completion as a component of training the unemployed and hard-to-employ.

URL: [http://www.connectedcalifornia.org/direct/files/FORGOTTENJOBS\\_CA\\_FINAL.PDF](http://www.connectedcalifornia.org/direct/files/FORGOTTENJOBS_CA_FINAL.PDF)

Title: **California's Forgotten Middle Skill Jobs**

Description: CLP Executive Director Linda Collins served as an advisor to Skills2Compete-California campaign for this report, which urges California to make investments in training its workforce by improving the basic skills of low-skill workers. These investments will require California to address the state's structural budget issues to ensure sustainability of these investments in the future.

URL: [http://www.careerladdersproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/caa\\_pathways.pdf](http://www.careerladdersproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/caa_pathways.pdf)

Title: **"Pathways Out of Poverty for Vulnerable Californians"**

Description: CLP read and advised on early versions of this PolicyLink Report and cosponsored two assemblies to share data. Regarding the completion of certificates, the report highlights the need for good infrastructure-related workforce education programs and implies there will be a need for a basic skills education curriculum and the support service models that have proven most effective in boosting academic success.

URL: [http://irvine.org/images/stories/pdf/grantmaking/CCI\\_full\\_report2012JUL16.pdf](http://irvine.org/images/stories/pdf/grantmaking/CCI_full_report2012JUL16.pdf)

Title: **"Broadening the Benefits of Dual Enrollment: Reaching Underachieving and Underrepresented Students with Career-Focused Programs"**

Description: This report from the Irvine Foundation shows how eight programs participating in Irvine's three-year Concurrent Courses Initiative effectively integrated dual enrollment with a complementary career-focused strategy to engage struggling students. CLP provided technical assistance for the Initiative.

URL: [http://www.careerladdersproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/CAA\\_2-Page-9.12f02.pdf](http://www.careerladdersproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/CAA_2-Page-9.12f02.pdf)

Title: **"Career Advancement Academies"**

Description: In this two-page document, CLP describes CAAs and the need for contextualized basic skills to accelerate student progress.

URL: <http://www.careerladdersproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/PPV-CAA-Elements-2-pager.pdf>

Title: **"Career Advancement Academies: Critical Elements"**

Description: In this two-page document, CAA former evaluator Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) describes five key elements in the success of the CAAs. These critical elements were identified by P/PV during the first two years of the program evaluation. CLP provides technical assistance and policy advocacy for the CAA initiative.

CLP produced videos:

URL: [http://youtu.be/1Ka\\_aiHKlqg](http://youtu.be/1Ka_aiHKlqg)

Title: **"Bridge to Biotech Program City College of San Francisco"**

Description: This video is a CLP and RP Group collaboration. This two-semester bridge program integrates basic skills math and English with preparation for employment as a biotech lab assistant and/or college-level biotech coursework. The video features students' perspectives on how contextualization accelerates learning, increases retention, and builds learners' academic confidence and motivation.

URL: <http://youtu.be/4L781Z99KFc>

Title: **"Utilities and Construction Prep Program Los Angeles Trade-Technical College"**

Description: This CLP-produced video highlights Los Angeles Trade-Technical College's short, intensive training program that connects basic skills, like math and English, to construction and job readiness skill development to prepare students for entry into construction/utilities employment and/or advanced coursework. It underscores how contextualized instruction helps students recognize that math and English are vital tools for construction/utilities employment and career advancement.

URL: <http://youtu.be/BuRKVjyLEVI>

Title: **“Contextualized Teaching and Learning Overview: Students and Faculty Talk”**

Description: Using interviews and footage from various CLP-assisted projects, this video illustrates key CTL issues. Math and English are taught in context to students’ career sector of interest.

URL: [http://youtu.be/\\_j4exlvbKq8](http://youtu.be/_j4exlvbKq8)

Title: **“CAA: Overview”**

Description: This CLP-produced video provides an overview of the CAA Initiative and includes student perspectives on the power of contextualized basic skills and the cohort experience in the CAAs.

Report briefs for educators and administrators, recommendations for policymakers, and webinars:

URL: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLNsA4y\\_h5c&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLNsA4y_h5c&feature=youtu.be)

Title: **“Broadening the Benefits of Dual Enrollment”**

Description: This webinar was convened to highlight and share the findings and recommendations from the Irvine Foundation’s Concurrent Courses Initiative. CLP provided technical assistance to college participants in CCI. CLP Executive Director Linda Collins is a webinar presenter.

URL: [http://irvine.org/images/stories/pdf/grantmaking/CCI\\_practitioner\\_brief2012JUL16.pdf](http://irvine.org/images/stories/pdf/grantmaking/CCI_practitioner_brief2012JUL16.pdf)

Title: **“Lessons for Educators and Administrators from the Concurrent Courses Initiative”**

Description: This two-page practitioner brief summarizes the findings of CCI and provides program recommendations targeted at educators and administrators. CLP provided technical assistance for the initiative.

URL: [http://irvine.org/images/stories/pdf/grantmaking/CCI\\_policy\\_brief2012JUL16.pdf](http://irvine.org/images/stories/pdf/grantmaking/CCI_policy_brief2012JUL16.pdf)

Title: **“Recommendations for Policymakers from the Concurrent Courses Initiative”**

Description: This two-page policy brief summarizes findings from CCI and provides recommendations for policymakers. CLP provided technical assistance for the initiative.

URL: <https://www.workforce3one.org/view/5001014459487414917/info>

Title: **“Jobs and Career Ladders for the Hard to Serve”**

Description: This webinar features programs that have developed successful strategies to help hard-to-employ individuals enter training programs connected to career pathways. All programs share a focus on integrating basic skills remediation with occupational training. CLP Executive Director Linda Collins describes the CAAs.

Select CLP basic skills-related presentations:

URL: <http://www.careerladdersproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Skills-Gap-Effective-Practices-in-Addressing-Basic-Skills.pdf>

Title: **Skills Gap: Effective Practices in Addressing Basic Skills**

Description: CAAs increase foundational skills in reading, writing, and mathematics while enrolling students in career technical training programs that lead to careers or higher education opportunities. This slide presentation by CLP Executive Director Linda Collins provides an overview of the CAAs.

URL: <http://www.careerladdersproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Bridge-program-promising-practicesFINAL.pdf>

Title: **Increasing College Access, Student Success, and Career Prospects Through Community College Bridge Programs**

Description: This presentation by CLP Executive Director Linda Collins was given at a meeting of the community college partners in the Bay Area Workforce Funding Collaborative. It covers the growing use of career pathways and basic skills bridge models.

URL: [http://www.careerladdersproject.org/docs/CTL\\_Conference\\_May\\_7th.pdf](http://www.careerladdersproject.org/docs/CTL_Conference_May_7th.pdf)

Title: **Deepening Student Learning: Using Contextualized Teaching Practices & Faculty Inquiry**

Description: This slide presentation by Linda Collins and Luis Chavez of Career Ladders Project, Tom DeWit, and Lin Marelick provides an overview of CTL and its practice in CAAs.

URL: [http://www.careerladdersproject.org/docs/presentations\\_2009/bsi\\_cont\\_pleasanton\\_04\\_23\\_09.pdf](http://www.careerladdersproject.org/docs/presentations_2009/bsi_cont_pleasanton_04_23_09.pdf)

Title: **Contextualized Teaching and Learning:  
CTE/Basic Skills Workshop**

Description: This presentation by CLP Executive Director Linda Collins covers the rationale for CTL along with different transition program models. It provides an overview of approaches used by other states and reviews California's CAAs.

## Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy (IHELP)

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The mission of the Institute is to enhance leadership and policy for higher education in California and the nation through research and services for policymakers, practitioners, and educators. The Institute has an emphasis on community colleges in recognition of their importance to providing an educated and diverse citizenry and workforce. The Institute is a non-profit organization privately funded through grants and contracts.

**LINKS:** <http://www.csus.edu/ihelp/>

Title: **"Rules of the Game"** (2007)

**Description:** This report garnered much attention nationally and today remains IHELP's seminal work, credited by many as helping shape the attention to student success across the California Community Colleges. It highlights how the policies that govern the California Community Colleges are not aligned with the goals of student success. Many of the system's efforts to increase student success in recent years are aimed at addressing some of these policy issues, e.g., prerequisites, better placement into basic skills, student progress for Board of Governor's Fee Waiver, educational plans, and other student support programs.

Title: **"Invest in Success"** (2007)

**Description:** This follow-up report to "Rules of the Game" analyzes all the major fiscal policies that govern the California Community Colleges and shows how poorly aligned our policies are with the goals we should be hoping to attain. Some of the suggestions have been implemented (e.g., conditions for student renewal of fee waivers) and various approaches to outcomes-based funding are being widely discussed, although not yet implemented.

Title: **"Beyond the Open Door"** (2007)

**Description:** This report includes a comprehensive literature review that identifies the various factors that have been found to correlate with student success. It also includes an analysis of the California Community Colleges assessment and placement process and reasons why it is not working well to help students

into and through basic skills. It contains a set of policy recommendations for increasing student success.

Title: **"It Could Happen"** (2008)

**Description:** Another follow up to "Rules of the Game," this report identifies a set of feasible policy changes (identified with the help of advising panels, including California Community Colleges faculty/staff and legislative staff), and analyzes how these changes could "move the needle" on the poor completion rates that were identified in "Rules of the Game." Its communication innovation is the inclusion of a pull-out chart to clearly illustrate this impact.

Title: **"Technical Difficulties"** (2009)

**Description:** This policy brief summarizes a longer research report that documents the problems California faces educating people for jobs in STEM fields and contains recommendations.

Title: **"Pathways to Success"** (2009)

**Description:** This literature review analyzes evidence on the effectiveness of career-oriented education in high schools and community colleges and discusses the factors that promote successful educational outcomes for students enrolled in career technical programs. It finds the literature scarce on career technical education (CTE) student success and suggests that further research would help us better understand and strengthen CTE student and program outcomes to more effectively meet the needs of the workforce.

Title: **"Crafting a Student-Centered Transfer Process in California"** (2009)

**Description:** This report contains recommendations that have been reflected in the legislation that ultimately passed as Senate Bill 1440 and created the new associate degrees for transfer.

Title: **"Steps to Success"** (2009)

**Description:** This report introduces a framework for tracking student progress through intermediate progression points and relating progress to a set of student behaviors that have been found by researchers to correlate with student success, e.g., passing math within two years, registering on time, enrolling full time. The report's appendix shows the difference that such behaviors can make in student

progress and success. The report was intended to help colleges identify steps they can take to help more students make progress past some of these sticking points.

Title: **"Divided We Fail"** (2010)

**Description:** This report, commissioned by the Campaign, builds on the "Steps to Success" framework by disaggregating the data by race/ethnicity to call attention to the performance gaps and to show where patterns differ by group. Again, this was intended to help colleges identify practices to increase student progress and success. This work has been influential in highlighting the need for more structure and more support for students, as reflected in the Student Success Task Force recommendations.

Title: **"Concerns About Performance-based Funding and Ways That States Are Addressing the Concerns"** (2011)

**Description:** This brief was prepared for the Student Success Task Force as it was attempting to produce a recommendation on finance reform. While the group ultimately voted against recommending any outcomes-based funding, the brief was highly influential in shaping the discussions and has garnered much attention outside of California as two major foundations (Lumina and Gates) work with states to implement newer, better versions of performance funding to incorporate incentives for student success into state funding models that are mostly enrollment-driven.

Title: **"Sense of Direction"** (2011)

**Description:** This policy brief summarizes research that documents the importance of helping students identify a program of study (i.e., a major) rather than just assume students can navigate a huge set of course offerings and ultimately come out with a college credential. We found that students who enter a program of study within their first year (i.e., take three courses in one programmatic area) are twice as likely to complete a program as those who enter a program after one year. We also found that fewer than half of all community college students ever enter a program of study— a sobering finding in view of the goal of increasing completion. This report has been influential with the Student Success Task Force, whose report has led to new policies encouraging the development of education plans for students.

Title: **"The Road Less Traveled"** (2011)

**Description:** This report examines four high-wage, high-need career pathways in the California Community Colleges as a basis for exploring the CTE mission and its role in the college completion agenda. The study found that the potential of CTE to help meet the state's completion, workforce, and equity goals is not fully realized due to a lack of priority on awarding technical certificates and degrees and an absence of clear pathways for students to follow in pursuing those credentials. The report offers recommendations to strengthen the CTE function including reexamining the structure and function of occupationally oriented associate degrees, offering fewer, more consistent CTE programs that clearly meet regional needs, and having students formally declare a program of study, with colleges ensuring that students have access to the classes they need for those programs.

Title: **"Career Opportunities"** (2012)

**Description:** The enclosed brief summarizes the first two research reports in a four-part series that will produce, early next year, specific recommendations for changing state laws and regulations to better support the CTE mission of the community colleges. CTE has been a priority these last few years because it is poorly understood by lawmakers and has incredible potential to bolster educational attainment and economic competitiveness in the state. We are working with CTE faculty and staff from across the system, who are very pleased with this research focus, and with the California Community Colleges Vice Chancellor for Workforce and Economic Development, who is expecting our findings to be useful to the system's legislative agenda as it works to improve CTE. The Chancellor's Office has asked to see some of our work in progress as it develops the budget for 2013/14.

Title: **"On Balance"** (2012)

**Description:** The Gates Foundation asked us to do a case study of the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), which is the equivalent of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. SBCTC is viewed nationally as being highly effective in the particularly tough task of coordinating a set of colleges that have their own local governing boards. We found that there are some structural design issues that explain the success of SBCTC but that their leadership strategies are probably what have most led to their success—strategies that could be adopted more readily in California than changes in governance structure.

## Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges (RP Group)

Andrew LaManque

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The RP Group has helped gather information on effective practices related to basic skills policies, structures, pedagogy, assessment, and placement and has served as an evaluator for a number of innovations in developmental education.

The RP Group brought together a network of practitioners to write “Basic Skills as a Foundation for Success in the California Community Colleges,” popularly known as the Poppy Copy, as well as three follow-up guides on contextualization, adult education, and high-school-to-college transitions. Several years after its initial publication, the RP Group updated the Poppy Copy and published it nationally under the name “Student Success in Community Colleges: A Practical Guide to Developmental Education.” The updated version includes a tool to help calculate the cost-effectiveness of basic skills interventions.

The RP Group has also partnered with a number of organizations to support more effective basic skills practices. For example, the organization worked with 3CSN to create the Basic Skills Progress Tracker, a tool on the Chancellor’s Office DataMart that allows practitioners to see how many students make it through developmental education and through a gateway course. The organization also worked with 3CSN to provide customized support to colleges on evaluating their basic skills efforts.

The RP Group worked with UC Berkeley to conduct a multi-year study of basic skills instruction in the classroom, which yielded insights into the importance of institution-wide efforts. The Hewlett Leaders in Student Success Recognition, an award given by the RP Group in collaboration with the Hewlett Foundation, recognized California community colleges generating strong gains in basic skills outcomes. The RP Group also worked with the Hewlett Foundation to identify metrics that can track basic skills outcomes and wrote an inquiry guide intended to help colleges with basic skills assessments. Each year, the RP Group works with a number of other organizations to put on the Strengthening Student Success Conference, which allows practitioners to learn about effective basic skills interventions and research and discuss strategies with their peers.

The RP Group collaborated with Career Ladders Project to create a video on implementing contextualized basic skills instruction and has conducted workshops across the state on this approach. LearningWorks partnered with the RP Group to gather examples of how diagnostic assessment has been implemented in other parts of the country. The RP Group also worked with WestEd to assess the professional development component of Reading Apprenticeship.

Currently, the organization is partnering with Achieving the Dream to create a framework for transformative change to developmental education and with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching to help translate the findings from Quantway and Statway for practitioners.

Some of the RP Group’s recent basic skills-related evaluation contracts include the California Acceleration Project, Acceleration in Context, and the Bay Area Workforce Funding Collaborative’s bridge program. The organization is also conducting a study on the use of transcript data to support multiple measures assessment.

### LINKS:

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/resources/transforming-basic-skills>

Title: **“A Guide to Transforming Basic Skills Education in Community Colleges, Inside and Outside the Classroom”**

Description: This guide identifies and explores four key changes that can be made to basic skills programs in order to significantly improve student outcomes.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/publications/StudentSuccessBook.htm>

Title: **“Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges”** (aka the Poppy Copy)

Description: This report and its companion self-assessment guide describe strategies for meeting the needs of basic skills students.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/content/promising-practices-transitioning-students-adult-education-postsecondary-education-0>

Title: **“Promising Practices for Transitioning Students from Adult Education to Postsecondary Education”**

Description: Guide offering insights into how community colleges can support students transitioning from adult education.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/content/high-school-transition>

Title: **“Effective Practices for Promoting the Transition of High School Students to College”**

Description: Guide on successfully transitioning students from high school into postsecondary education, including rigor and relevance of high school programs, alignment of content and placement between high school and college, establishing realistic expectations for college readiness, elements of transition support programs, and developing articulated pathways to support transitions.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/css/CTL.html>

Title: **Contextualized Teaching and Learning Project**

Description: A primer, video, and related resources related to implementing contextualized teaching and learning, including key insights, instructional strategies, and student perspectives.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/resources/economics-innovation-excel-tool>

Title: **Economics of Innovation Excel Tool**

Description: Excel tool and explanatory PowerPoint that can be used to calculate the return on investment for basic skills staffing and programs.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/resources/basic-skills-progress-tracker>

Title: **Basic Skills Progress Tracker**

Description: Online tool for tracking the progress of various basic skills student cohorts through the developmental sequence and the first college-level course for English, math, or ESL, including resources for using the tool.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/resources/how-evaluate-basic-skills-program>

Title: **How to Evaluate a Basic Skills Program**

Description: A presentation covering the process of evaluating a basic skills program, including the important elements of a program evaluation model, different forms of evaluation and measurement, and methodologies and measures that can be used with common intervention strategies in basic skills programs.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/resources/placement-testing-basic-skills-and-student-success>

Title: **Placement Testing, Basic Skills, and Student Success**

Description: Resources and PowerPoint presentation to help identify key assessment resources, why you would want to use them, and where you can find them; clarify the role of the researcher in placement testing, basic skills, and student success; and explain key information related to placement testing, basic skills, and student success.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/projects/basic-skills-research-project>

Title: **The Basic Skills Research Project**

Description: A joint project of UC Berkeley and the RP Group, this suite of papers and summary guide offers an analysis of basic skills instruction as observed at 14 California community colleges and suggestions for ways to improve basic skills efforts.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/hewlettleadersinstudentsuccess>

Title: **Hewlett Leaders in Student Success Program**

Description: Website with case studies and cross-cutting themes from California community colleges that demonstrated large increases in basic skills outcomes and were given the Hewlett Leaders in Student Success recognition.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/content/recommended-basic-skills-measures>

Title: **Recommended Basic Skills Measures**

Description: Based on a review and analysis of basic skills student outcomes measures in California and nationally, this project developed recommendations for a simple set of measures that can be used both system wide and at the college level.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/BRIC/InquiryGuide/BasicSkills>

Title: **BRIC Inquiry Guide-Assessing Basic Skills Outcomes**

Description: Inquiry guide and PowerPoint presentation designed to assist in the development of evaluation tools for the implementation of basic skills innovations and strategies, including ways to promote inquiry and dialogue, develop a comprehensive research agenda, and foster a results-driven evaluation plan to promote the success of innovations that impact basic skills improvement.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/events/SSS11>

Title: **2011 Strengthening Student Success Conference**

Description: Scores of PowerPoint presentations on effective practices in developmental education as well as research results, featuring California community college efforts.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/events/SSS10>

Title: **2010 Strengthening Student Success Conference**

Description: Scores of PowerPoint presentations on effective practices in developmental education as well as research results, featuring California community college efforts.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/events/SSS09>

Title: **2009 Strengthening Student Success Conference**

Description: Scores of video-recorded presentations on effective practices in developmental education as well as research results, featuring California community college efforts.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/events/2008-strengthening-student-success>

Title: **2008 Strengthening Student Success Conference**

Description: Scores of video-recorded presentations on effective practices in developmental education as well as research results, featuring California community college efforts.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/events/2007-strengthening-student-success>

Title: **2007 Strengthening Student Success Conference**

Description: Scores of video-recorded presentations on effective practices in developmental education as well as research results, featuring California community college efforts.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/resources/diagnostic-assessment-challenges-opportunities-california-community-colleges>

Title: **Diagnostic Assessment: Challenges & Opportunities for the California Community Colleges**

Description: Brief examining the experiences of three other states that have been deeply engaged in developing statewide diagnostic assessments for their community college systems and practical implications for the California community colleges if they were to implement diagnostic assessments.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/content/2009-rp-statewide-research-award-winner-using-california-standards-test-identify-remediation>

Title: **Using the California Standards Test to Identify Remediation Needs**

Description: Study documenting the value of standardized high school test results and course grades in math and English as tools for placement and predicting success in college courses.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/resources/engineering-effective-practices>

Title: **Accelerating & Diversifying the Engineering Transfer Path in the Community Colleges**

Description: Brief and PowerPoint presentation describing how community colleges are recruiting underrepresented minorities to the engineering transfer path and helping students hurdle the math barrier that can inhibit progress to degree.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/resources/probability-based-advising-basic-skills-courses>

Title: **Probability Based Advising for Basic Skills Courses**

Description: Research model for advising students on courses they should consider taking concurrently with basic skills courses based on historical success rates for developmental education students.

# National Organizations & Projects

## Achieving the Dream

Achieving the Dream, Inc. is a national nonprofit that is dedicated to helping more community college students, particularly low-income students and students of color, stay in school and earn a college certificate or degree. Evidence-based, student-centered, and built on the values of equity and excellence, Achieving the Dream is closing achievement gaps and accelerating student success nationwide by: 1) guiding evidence-based institutional improvement, 2) leading policy change, 3) generating knowledge, and 4) engaging the public. Conceived as an initiative in 2004 by Lumina Foundation and seven founding partner organizations, today Achieving the Dream is leading the most comprehensive non-governmental reform network for student success in higher education history. With nearly 200 colleges, more than 100 coaches and advisors, and 15 state policy teams working throughout 32 states and the District of Columbia, the Achieving the Dream National Reform Network helps 3.75 million community college students have a better chance of realizing greater economic opportunity and achieving their dreams.

<http://www.achievingthedream.org/>

## Completion by Design

Completion by Design is a five-year Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation initiative that works with community colleges to significantly increase completion and graduation rates for low-income students under 26 years of age. The Gates Foundation has awarded competitive grants to four groups of community colleges to help transform their students' experience. The goal of Completion by Design is to substantially increase completion rates for these students while holding down costs and maintaining access and quality.

The initiative has three distinct phases following the selection of four grantees, or managing partners, by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in June 2011:

The first phase of the initiative is a one-year planning period, during which participating community

colleges will examine their own data to identify loss points and design strategies to address them.

The second phase is a two- to three-year implementation period, during which the colleges will implement strategies identified during the planning year.

In the final phase, the colleges will address the policy implications of their work—particularly at the state level—while scaling up the project for national impact.

Link: <http://completionbydesign.org/>

The RP Group has helped to translate the Completion by Design approach for California community colleges through a series of four guides and a number of videos:

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/sites/default/files/CbD-Building.pdf>

Title: **Building a Culture of Inquiry: Using a Cycle of Exploring Research and Data to Improve Student Success**

Description: Guide that explores the concept of a culture of inquiry and introduces a framework to strengthen a college's ability to better use research and evidence to inform improvement efforts.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/sites/default/files/CbD-Understanding.pdf>

Title: **Understanding the Student Experience through the Loss/Momentum Framework: Clearing the Path to Completion**

Description: Introduces an approach to examining students' own experiences at community colleges, identifying factors that catalyze and impede student progress and using these insights to address opportunities to improve student outcomes.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/sites/default/files/CbD-Nuances.pdf>

Title: **The Nuances of Completion: Improving Student Outcomes by Unpacking the Numbers**

Description: Examines the hidden complexity of completion outcome data and offers an approach to teasing out the complex factors that affect student completion in order to boost student success.

URL: <http://www.rpgroup.org/sites/default/files/CbD-Principles.pdf>

Title: **Principles of Redesign: Promising Approaches to Transforming Student Outcomes**

Description: Presents eight core ideas to help colleges address the fundamental challenges to student success.

A series of six videos tracing the applied inquiry framework are available at: <https://backup.filesanywhere.com/fs/v.aspx?v=8c6c658d605e72a970a0>

## National Association of Developmental Education

<http://www.nade.net/>

NADE seeks to improve the theory and practice of developmental education at all levels of the educational spectrum, the professional capabilities of developmental educators, and the design of programs to prepare developmental educators.

## Professional Development

Valencia College in Florida and LaGuardia Community College in New York are community colleges widely known for their innovative programs, including their expansive faculty professional development. Links to the professional development sites of these colleges are included in this section, even though the colleges are outside of California. The colleges offer services specifically geared for adjunct faculty and full-time faculty along with a host of services and programs for all faculty. Several of their offerings are online, self-paced modules.

**LINKS:** <http://valenciacollege.edu/faculty/development/>

<http://www.laguardia.cuny.edu/faculty-staff/professional-growth/>