

*Basic Skills Initiative
Update*

Board of Trustees
May 8, 2008

Background

- In 2006, the statewide Strategic Plan for the California Community Colleges identified basic skills as a major focus
- In 2006-2007, a statewide study was conducted to identify effective practices in basic skills
- The study estimated that nearly 70%-80% of community college students, statewide, need developmental work

Background (Continued)

- Additional funds have been provided to implement effective practices and programs, as well as professional development to improve basic skills and ESL
- Basic skills committees have been established at each college and Continuing Education, along with a districtwide coordinating committee
- Basic skills action plans have been developed identifying goals and objectives for 2008-2009

Basic Skills Needs

- About 43% of first-time high school graduates are not assessed
- Of those who assess, 40% place at or below college level math and 20% at or below college level English
- Of the students who complete a basic skills course, about 12% move on to complete a transfer math course and 32% complete college level English

Focus in Months Ahead

- Course articulation with Continuing Education in ESOL
- Course articulation with high school curriculum in English and math
- Mandatory assessment and placement for first-time matriculants
- Professional development in basic skills instruction
- Supplemental instruction in all basic skills courses
- Expansion of Freshman Year Experience

5 Effective Practices

- Freshman Year Experience
- IBEST
- Supplemental Instruction
- Learning Communities
- e-Portfolio

Freshmen Year Experience

City ✦ ***Mesa*** ✦ ***Miramar***

Components of Program

- Assessment and Early Counseling in the High School
- Prescriptive 1st Year
 - English
 - Math
 - Personal Growth (College Success Skills, Career & Life Planning, Study Skills)
 - General Education Elective
- Priority Registration
- Individual Program Planning with Counselor

Outcomes

- 118 student cohort
- 92% persistence rate (Fall 2007 – Spring 2008)
 - Compared to 59.1% for all first-time freshmen
- 92% completion rate
 - Compared to 73% rate for all first-time freshmen
- 68% completed 12+ units
 - Compared to 20% for all first-time freshmen
- 80% successfully completed English & math courses

IBEST

Continuing Education

Overview

- Incorporates basic skills reading, writing and math instruction into the curriculum
- Currently being piloted in the Automotive Technology Program
- Automotive Technology courses are team taught by an Auto Tech Instructor and Basic Skills Instructor
- Designated vocational counselor is assigned to provide additional support
- Similar programs at other institutions show a high student success rate

Supplemental Instruction

Miramar College

Overview

- Supplemental instruction is provided by trained tutors and Instructional Assistants in basic skills English, math and ESOL classes
- Instructional Assistants provide additional support in-class, and with out-of-class assignments
- Students receive individual assistance throughout the semester, reinforcing class content
- Nearly 90% of students enrolled in courses with supplemental instruction successfully completed the course
- Similar programs are in place at City and Mesa
- Program will be expanded in 2008-2009

Learning Communities

Mesa College

Overview

- Learning communities are “clustered” classes around an interdisciplinary theme
 - Same students enroll in both sections
- Sample learning community: Beginning Algebra (Math 95) and Personal Growth 120 (College Study Skills) where the Personal Growth course incorporates instruction in study skills, specifically for math
- Success rate in math learning community courses was 54% compared to 42% success rate in “stand-alone” math courses
- 9 learning communities are planned at Mesa for Fall 2008
- Similar learning communities are in place at City and Miramar College

e-Portfolio

City College

Overview

- Pilot program began Fall 2007
- Replaces “exit” exam in English 51
- Encourages students to take ownership of their writing
- e-Portfolio contains 5 pieces of writing
- Student portfolios are graded collaboratively by the English department faculty
- e-Portfolio assessment provides a more comprehensive understanding of student ability
- Shows improvement in student retention and performance

Questions