Basic Skills Initiative Update

Board of Trustees
May 8, 2008
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.
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