Basic Skills Initiative

Funded Projects from 2010 to 2011
October 6, 2011

Basic Skills Initiative (BSI) & Planning for Institutional Effectiveness (PIE)
2010 to 2011

Executive Summary

During the 2010-2011 academic year, the college provided the support and funding for a total of 32 basic skills projects from funds provided by the Basic Skills Initiative (BSI). The total funding for the 32 projects was $1,335,681. Projects were funded in the following areas:

- Adult Basic Education 4
- English as a Second Language 4
- Humanities and Social Sciences Division 5
- Instruction 6
- Library and Learning Resources 5
- Natural Sciences 1
- Research and Institutional Effectiveness 1
- Student Services 6

Additionally, the college funded $1,014,402 for 15 permanent positions. Positions were funded in the following areas:

- Adult Basic Education 1
- English as a Second Language 1
- Research and Institutional Effectiveness 1
- Natural Sciences 1
- Instruction 3
- Humanities and Social Sciences 1
- Library and Learning Resources 2
- Student Services 5

Each project and position funded was linked to an effective practice identified in the **Basic Skills Initiative (BSI)** literature review, *Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges.* Linking the college's basic skills projects with the effective practices is important because the practices identify institution-based actions that foster student success, retention, and persistence through the delivery of highly integrated developmental education programs and services (Boroch et. al, 2007).

While the final approval of the funding allocation rests with the Vice-President of Instruction and the Vice President of Student Services, the members of the Basic Skills Coordinating Committee, a shared governance committee of the Academic Senate, worked diligently to examine, evaluate, and recommend projects for funding approval through a thoughtful and well established process. Each proposed project was evaluated and ranked using a predetermined rubric for its feasibility, potential for improving student achievement outcomes, direct support to students, supporting data or rationale to support need, and direct connection to effective basic skills practices.

Each of the project managers and the teams of the funded projects, in collaboration with Research and Institutional Effectiveness, completed a formalized assessment review known as BSI-PIE. These project reports included the establishment of goals, projected outcomes (Student Learning Outcomes, Strategic Actions, and Administrative Unit Objectives), research

methodology, assessment, and outcomes. The details of the individual project assessments are included in this report.

The assessment of outcomes for this year's projects shows great success. The college's basic skills student population has been provided with myriad opportunities and support services that have resulted in increased retention and success. Additionally, faculty, managers, and staff involved in the projects have become a community of learners dedicated to providing quality programs and services that support our basic skills students. We encourage you to read the project summaries that are provided in this report in order to more fully appreciate the efforts of all the people involved with the basic skills projects.

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Acknowledgements

The Research and Institutional Effectiveness (RIE) department would like to thank the Mt. San Antonio College (Mt. SAC) managers, faculty, as well as the supporting staff that both envisioned and realized the Basic Skills-funded projects in 2010 to 2011. These projects were made possible by the Basic Skills Coordinating Committee (BSCC), Academic Senate (AS) and the College administration. The BSCC, AS, as well as the College administration collectively recognized the need for and thus the funding for these projects—for this we are very grateful. Our Basic Skills-funding this year was awarded to programs and supporting services which illustrated quality as well as excellence. These were projects that strived to improve developmental education with overarching goals of attaining student success, persistence, and transfer at the highest level possible.

Our own Mt. SAC family of employees conceptualized and designed the many Basic Skills-funded projects you will see in this report. Through a team-oriented approach between the project staff and RIE, these projects were set out by the managers, faculty, as well as staff. The results were then analyzed through coordination from the RIE department. After the findings were examined, they were meaningfully discussed in order to inform the next iteration of the Basic Skills-funded projects. Collectively, these steps in project development and management have been applied to our Basic Skills-funded projects to generate campus enthusiasm in basic skills projects as well as research. Their goals are also to encourage research-related dialogue, to instill a culture of inquiry for developmental education, and to inform effective pedagogy as well as services for developmental learners.

In most cases, in order to conduct their Basic Skills-funded project, employees had to fit their new project/s and accompanying duties into their normal day-to-day activities. It is with ceaseless energy and innovation that employees worked to improve basic skills for Mt. SAC students.

Our students' desire for academic excellence ultimately drives the creation of these projects. A special thank you goes out to all the students who participated in the programs and services. In addition, it is important to recognize those who spent their time completing program evaluations (e.g., surveys and student learning outcomes).

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Adult Basic Education: Student Learning Outcome Support

Background

As a result of a portion of SB361, which was signed into legislation in 2008, accountability for noncredit student outcomes has increased. Certain noncredit courses are now categorized into a new instructional category, Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP). To adhere to CDCP stipulations, courses must be part of a sequence of coursework leading to career or college preparation. Therefore, faculty are needed to develop CDCP sequences that meet student need and provide positive noncredit outcomes. In addition, Continuing Education Division's 2008 WASC accreditation and the college's Student Learning Outcome (SLO) expectations have added to the overall accountability for noncredit curriculum and instruction, for which faculty must drive. These efforts to improve noncredit and college curriculum and instruction have been welcomed by Adult Basic Education (ABE) faculty, although challenges in addressing these endeavors exist. To help address these demands, the ABE department will assess their High School final exams for 32 courses that will ensure rigor of cumulative assessments.

Measurements

High School Content and Rigor

The specific Student Learning Outcome attached to this assessment was defined as follows: *ABE High School faculty will create final exams that meet CA HS standards and expected content and rigor. Faculty will create subject specific rubrics for high school courses that provide clear expectations and ratings on necessary components of final exams*. This outcome was a carryover from the previous year; the rubric to measure said outcome needed refinement to better prepare faculty for expectations of acceptable content and rigor. To address this problem, faculty constructed course specific rubrics that provided clear and distinct expectations and methods for evaluation. As before, the benchmark for success was that 75% of all High School final exams would rate an overall *meets* or *exceeds* standard on the faculty created rubric. In total, 291 final exams were evaluated.

Results

High School Content and Rigor

Of the 229 high school exams evaluated, 32% received a rating of *met expectations* while 68% received a rating of *did not meet expectations*. The result was not expected given the time devoted to course specific rubrics and detailing the expectations of the exams by providing the rubric to the high school site coordinators for distribution to high school faculty. It appeared that many had not used the rubric as to guide the content and rigor of their exams. Indeed, when high school faculty were queried, they stated they had not been giving the rubrics by their site coordinators before they created their exams. However, once they were provided with the rubrics and had given input on the content, all exams were revised easily and before exam administration. Thus, all students took cumulative exams based on the expected rigor and content determined by the faculty.

Action

- Dialogue between a representative number of summer school faculty members and ABE administration regarding the final exam process was productive and revealed that the culture of summer school does not always encourage the same rigor as during primary semesters. It was suggested that earlier and more extensive

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training be provided to summer school teachers on final exam and SLO assessment that clearly spelled out the expectations of being a Mt. SAC adjunct instructor.

- Some faculty suggested that the Mt. SAC ABE faculty who rated the finals and do not teach on high school campuses may not understand the scope and sequence as well as the pacing generally found in summer schools. As a result, there may have been an unrealistic expectation of which CA content standards to include in final exams. Therefore, a more thorough examination by Mt. SAC raters, especially in the areas of social science standards, should be conducted prior to the next summer session.
- In an attempt to facilitate the acquisition of the rubrics to the high school faculty, the Adult Basic Education program at Mt. SAC will remind the coordinators to disseminate the rubrics to the high school faculty members as soon as possible.

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American Language: Academic Toolbox

Background

The intent of this project is to develop curriculum modules to be used as supplemental materials in the American Language (AmLa) writing classes. These modules will focus on support for student academic success. The delivery methods will be one of three styles: (i) self-serve online modules, (ii) tutor or faculty led workshops, or (iii) teacher taught assignments adaptable to the writing assignments for AmLa42 Intermediate Writing and AmLa43 Advanced Writing. Each unit will be self contained with directions, assignments, activities, and evaluative rubrics. Teachers will be able to supplement these units as homework assignments, as credit for attending a workshop, or in the classroom as guided writing assignments. Some students, especially students lacking foundational skills, have not acquired the necessary self-regulatory strategies to become successful learners. Students coming from varied educational backgrounds especially are not familiar with what is expected of them in college in the United States. In order to facilitate this acquisition of knowledge, learning modules were developed to help students gather their own *Academic Toolbox* for success.

Measurements

Strategies for Success

The Student Learning Outcome attached to this project is defined as follows: *AmLa students who are in writing classes in which the Academic Toolbox curricula are used will acquire strategies for success in college*. To measure this outcome a self-reflective essay was administered to students in selected AmLa42 and AmLa43 courses. The specific prompt was: *Did your study habits or ideas about college improve? Do you think that what you learned from doing these activities will be helpful in your future classes as Mt. SAC? Why or why not?* In total, 25 students were assessed using this method. No identifying information was recorded on the essay and students were instructed that their participation was voluntary and they were within their right to cease participation at any time, for any reason. Success for this outcome was constructed such that 60% of students will be able to say that they positively changed their study habits as a result of having participated in the curriculum modules; additionally, 50% of the will be able to say that they will continue these changed study habits in future courses.

Results

Strategies for Success

Of the 25 participants, 100% stated that they did change their study habits as a result of partaking in modules from the Academic Toolbox. As a result of such overwhelmingly positive responses, this outcome was successfully achieved.

Action

- The comments from the students in the reflective writing assignment will be used to modify some of the curriculum units that were piloted.
- The Toolbox developers will create a means to measure the follow through of students engaged with tools.
- The Toolbox will be introduced to other AmLa faculty during a workshop in fall 2011 and gradually throughout the academic year.
- A faculty and student assessment method will be developed to improve the units in the Toolbox.

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American Language: Tutoring

Background

American Language (AmLa) students require specialized tutorial needs. While other tutoring services on campus employ trained and qualified tutors, AmLa students required specialized subject matter and grammar. To combat this challenge, the AmLa department has employed specialized tutors with an advanced degree in the area of teaching English as a second language. Specifically, these tutors hold a Masters Degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). All of the tutors have been noncredit or AmLa faculty at Mt. SAC. This project attempts to measure the impact of advanced tutoring on AmLa students by assessing the ability for students to communicate knowledge gained in tutorial sessions as well as the overall success and retention rates in similar courses of those receiving AmLa specific tutorial support compared to students not receiving this support.

Measurements

Articulation of Knowledge

The Student Learning Outcome attached to this assessment is defined as follows: *as a result of students receiving AmLa tutoring, they will be able to articulate the knowledge gained during the tutorial session*. To measure this outcome, students having just received tutorial services from specialized AmLa tutors were interviewed; they were asked to reflect on what knowledge was gained during the session and to articulately communicate that to the tutor. Responses where recorded by the tutor. The students either did or did not sufficiently articulate the knowledge imparted in the tutorial session. A checklist was kept for all the students (n=79) having been assessed. Success for this outcome was constructed such that 66% of students will be able to properly communicate the knowledge gained from the tutorial session.

Comparative Success

The Administrative Unit Objective attached to this outcome was defined as: *students receiving tutorial services from AmLa tutoring will have higher comparative success rates in the course tutored compared to their peers not receiving tutoring*. The courses taken by the students receiving specialized AmLa tutoring services will be determined. Of the 79 students that were assessed, 65 had an identification number that matched internally with Banner. Success for this outcome was defined as the students having AmLa specific tutoring will have 5% higher success rates than those not receiving tutoring.

Comparative Retention

A similar design will be used to measure retention as with Comparative Success, save measuring retention as those that did not withdraw from the course. Success for this outcome was defined as AmLa tutoring recipients would experience a 5% higher retention rate than their peers not receiving AmLa specific tutoring.

Results

Strategies for Success

Of the 79 participants, 81.55% were able to articulate knowledge gained during the tutorial session. As a result of such overwhelmingly positive responses, this outcome was successfully achieved.

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Comparative Success

Students having received specialized AmLa tutoring support enrolled in two courses, AmLa42W and AmLa43W. Using these two courses, the success rate for the 65 students was 83.9% for AmLa42W and 67.6% for AmLa43W while their peers experienced 74.1% success rate in AmLa42W and 77.4% in AmLa43W. This outcome was met for AmLa42W but not for AmLa43W.

Comparative Retention

The retention rates for the students receiving specialized tutorial services (*n*=65) was 100% and 94.1% for AmLa42W and AmLa43W, respectively. Conversely, students not receiving specialized tutorial support experienced a retention rate of 94.4% and 94.8% in AmLa42W and AmLa43W, respectively. Similarly, this outcome was met for AmLa42W but not AmLa43W.

Action

- Institute a policy for tutors to ask each student (when time permits) to articulate a lesson learned during the tutoring session.
- Ask tutors to check name and ID so that we get names and IDs that match to facilitate more accurate data collection.

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ASPIRE Placement Analysis

Background

ASPIRE is a dynamic program designed to provide essential educational support and services to increase the academic success, retention, degree completion, and transfer rates of African-American and other students enrolled at Mt. San Antonio College. This project looks at the historical placement scores of ASPIRE students compared to their non-ASPIRE counterparts. Historically, ASPIRE students at Mt. SAC represent a population that places into Basic Skills courses (i.e., one or more levels below college level, and not degree applicable or transferable). Additionally, student perceptions of ASPIRE will be measured by conducting a focus group with the goal of collecting information in three areas: (i) strengths, (ii) weakness, and (iii) changes in behaviors as a result of enrolling in ASPIRE.

Measurements

Placement

The specific Administrative Unit Objective attached to this outcome was defined as: *placement data will be gathered from the Enterprise Resource System (Banner) used by Mt. SAC by the reporting tool Argos to identify the placement of ASPIRE students*. Only valid placement scores were used to establish the highest placement by subject (i.e., from the start of the fall 2010 term and 775 days prior). There are three main categories of assessment: Math, English, and Reading. Therefore, it is maximally possible to place into three Basic Skills courses. However, students are allowed to repeat a placement test of the same type every 90 days; some students retake the same placement test to achieve a higher course placement. To control for test retaking, this analysis examines the number of Basic Skills course placements for all ASPIRE and non-ASPIRE students as of fall 2010 by their highest placement (i.e., highest course placement per assessment type). ASPIRE students were compared to placement scores of non-ASPIRE student over a six month period.

Perception

Another Administrative Unit Objective attached to this project was defined as: *students of the ASPIRE program will be asked to participate in a focus group to reflect and respond to questions so as to determine how future resources can be spent and how their behaviors have changed as a result of enrolling in the ASPIRE program*. The focus group was conducted on June 10th, 2011 with 10 student participants ranging from those who had recently enrolled in ASPIRE to those having been in ASPIRE for multiple semesters. To measure the strengths of the program the students were asked, *what was the most valuable part of the program to you?* Conversely, students were also asked two questions to measure the weaknesses of the program (i) *If you could change one thing about the ASPIRE program, what would you change and why?* and (ii) *If you had to cut one thing back from the ASPIRE program, what would it be?* Lastly, students were asked *what behaviors have changed as a result of enrolling in ASPIRE?* Success for this outcome was set that 75% of participating students would have changed their behavior as a result of enrolling in the ASPIRE program.

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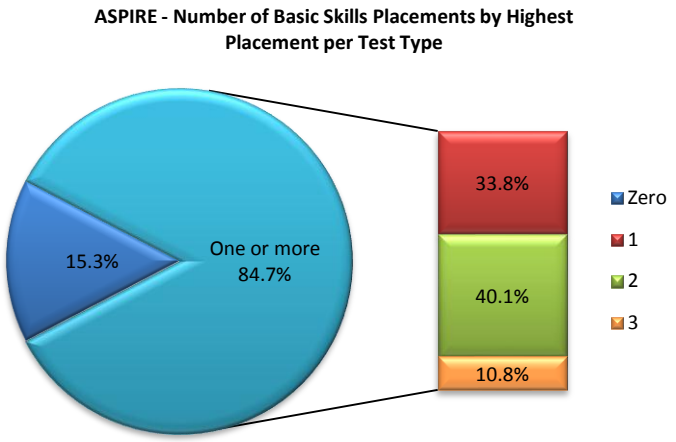
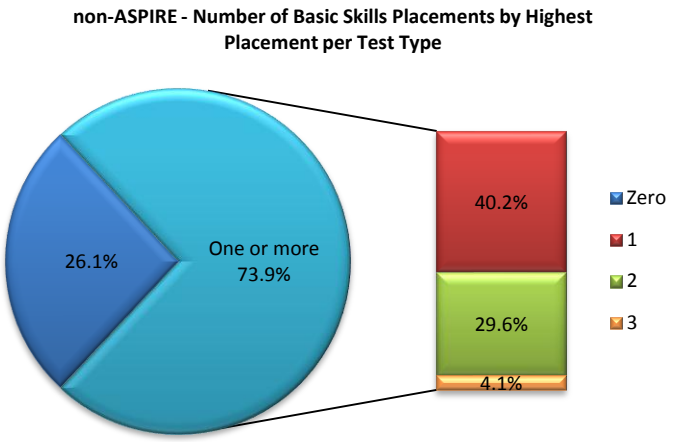
Results

Placement

In aggregate, ASPIRE students (*n* = 157) placed into one or more Basic Skills courses 84.7%% of the time. While 10.8% placed into three basic skills courses, the majority placed into two Basic Skills courses (40%). Conversely, non-ASPIRE students were less likely to place into one or more Basic Skills courses; if a non-ASPIRE student did place into one or more Basic Skills courses, they placed into fewer courses as a result.





Perception

All students expressed that the program has changed them for the better, as a person and as a student, due mainly to the support they receive and the relationships they have built within the program. One student shared, "I have been changed by being more open and able to connect to people that look like me and how African American men interact one on one and it really opens my eyes that we're different in some ways and the same in a lot of ways. It gave me a lot of common ground to connect with others on a personal level." Students also responded that their study habits have improved and they utilize campus resources (e.g., Writing Center, Learning Assistance Center). Community was a reoccurring theme imbedded within many of the responses; students felt that they could rely on their peers for both academic and personal support. All 10 students responded that they had positively changed as a result of enrolling in the ASPIRE program; this outcome was successfully achieved.

Action

- Offer learning community courses in alignment with placement scores of incoming ASPIRE students.
- Collaborate with the Assessment Office to ensure students understand the importance of the assessment tests and the necessity of preparing for the tests.
- Identify ways to cut program costs based on focus group responses.

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Community and Videos: An Action Plan to Increase Success Rates in California Community College Developmental Mathematics

Background

This project will replicate a dissertation by Gary Long that was executed during the fall 2009 semester at Mt. San Antonio College. Specifically, this project aimed at increasing the success rates in two developmental mathematics courses, Pre-Algebra (Math50) and Elementary Algebra (Math51), by two fundamental treatments: (i) providing student access to educational math videos, and (ii) proactively striving to create a sense of community. Videos provide a scaffolding structure to student success, while a sense of community provides the spirit to embrace that opportunity. To facilitate community building, the technology product, Blackboard, will be integrated into the course design. Additional components of the action plan whose inclusion depends on individual professor preference include the use of graphic organizers, distributive practice, class-time management, and frequent feedback.

Measurements

Success

The Administrative Unit Objective was defined as follows: *developmental mathematics courses involved in this project will achieve increased success rates relative to historical faculty-participant success rates*. To measure this outcome, internal data will be extracted from Enterprise Resource Planning tool, Banner, using Argos after spring 2011 grades have posted. A total of seven faculty members and 501 students were affected by this project. Most of the students were enrolled in Math51. For each participating faculty member, courses taught using the intervention in spring 2011 were identified. Historical data will then be examined for the courses that were identified for the faculty. Success for this outcome was defined as 75% of faculty participants having a significantly higher rate of success compared between historical data and the spring 2011 courses.

Retention

Similar to the above measurement, the following defined the Administrative Unit Objective: *developmental mathematics courses involved in this project will achieve increased success rates relative to historical faculty-participant success rates.* The same methodology was used and the same number of students were affected (*n*=501). Success for this outcome was defined as 75% of faculty participants having a significantly higher rate of retention compared between historical data and the spring 2011 courses.

Test Scores

This project used an indirect measurement of student achievement on test scores by surveying faculty on their perception of whether their students received higher or lower test scores compared to their past students' test scores as a result of this intervention. Specifically, the Administrative Unit Objective in question was: *developmental mathematics students involved in this project will achieve higher test scores relative to individual faculty-participant historical test scores*. As above, seven faculty participated in the survey; the 5-point agreement Likert scale survey item was stated as: *I* feel *that my students involved in this project achieved higher test scores relative to my historical students' test scores*. Successful achievement of this outcome was defined as 75% of faculty responding with *agree* or *strongly agree* to the item.

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Empowerment

Another indirect measurement was used to gauge the sense of empowerment that this project instilled in the participating students. Specifically, the Student Learning Outcome was defined as: *developmental mathematics students will feel less dependent upon their professor for the acquisition and understanding of mathematical knowledge.* Both participant groups, faculty (*n*=7) and students (*n*=196), were queried using the following 5-point agreement Likert scale to one survey item; the item follows with altered language in brackets for the appropriate audience: *I believe that the new resources (videos, community, etc.) provided to [my students|me] in this project helped [them|me] to feel more independent as [learners|a learner] and less dependent upon [me|my professor] as a mathematical information provider when compared to my [historical students|previous math classes]*. The benchmark for this outcome was set at 75% of students and 75% of faculty will *agree* or *strongly agree* to the survey item.

Results

Success

Four of the seven participating faculty members had an increased success rate compared between their spring 2011 courses using the Community and Videos intervention and their historical data of the same courses. Of the four aforementioned faculty, one experienced an observed test statistic that, when replicated using random sampling, would obtain a value at least as extreme if there were no difference between the two population of students (i.e., the intervention produced statistically significant results for this particular instructor). However, despite over 50% of faulty achieving a higher comparative success rate, this outcome was not successfully met as less than 75% of faculty experienced a significantly higher comparative success rates.

Retention

Of the seven faculty members participating, five had an increased retention rate compared between their spring 2011 courses using the Community and Videos intervention and their historical data. However, none experienced a statistically significant difference in their spring 2011 data and their historical data; this outcome was not successfully met.

Test Scores

As per the survey item measuring the perception of increased test scores given the intervention, three of the seven (43%) faculty responded that they *agree* or *strongly agree* their spring 2011 students had higher achievement on test scores than their historical counterparts. The criterion of success for this outcome was set at 75%; consequently, this outcome was not successfully met.

Empowerment

Five of the seven faculty (71%) responded that they *agree* or *strongly agree* their students had become more independent learners than compared to their students in previous courses of the same type. Conversely, 143 of 195 students (73%) believed the components of the intervention allowed them to become more independent learners compared to their previous math courses. With a benchmark of 75% to achieve success for both faculty and student groups, this outcome was not successfully met, yet yielded positive results.

Action

- While this report does not examine the wealth of qualitative data gathered, it should be mentioned that students overwhelmingly enjoyed the intervention. Future research may examine the likelihood of participating students to construct communities on their own in math courses taught without video and community components.
- The data support the effectiveness of the program; additional resources will be requested for continued improvement of existing videos and creation of new content.

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Developmental Education Faculty Certificate Program

Background

The Developmental Education Faculty Certificate Program offers faculty members at Mt. San Antonio College an avenue to delve into the cognitive, emotional, and social theories existing within the realm of teaching and learning. In doing so, faculty members not only learn about the aforementioned theories, but are trained on how to best translate that knowledge into the classroom. The certificate is awarded after successful completion of a three module sequence. The first module introduces faculty with the philosophy and definitions of developmental education. Module two examines how to best implement the knowledge gained from module one while the third module further expands upon integration and implementation and learning community models. To improve the program, faculty were assessed on their understanding, awareness, and ability to articulate the application of key concepts taught in the modules.

Measurements

Application of Developmental Education Principles

The specific Student Learning Outcome being measured is defined as follows: *Developmental Education Certification graduates will demonstrate their application of Developmental Education teaching methods in the classroom*. Faculty (*n*=6) completing all three modules were assessed using a pre- and post-test design. Before completion of module one, faculty were asked to provide answers to two scenarios. Answers were then scored using a 3-point rubric consisting of five variables: (i) Emotional Intelligence Needs in the Classroom, (ii) Active Learning Strategies, (iii) Successful Learning Community Principles, (iv) Locus of Control/Self-Efficacy, and (v) Developmental Education Philosophy. Faculty were again asked to answer the two same scenarios at the end of module three. Successful achievement of the outcome was determined to be 95% of participants scoring 2.5 or higher, based on the average of their scores from the two answers across five variables.

Results

Application of Developmental Education Principles

All six of the participants received exceptionally high marks, with all six scoring 3.00 on both the pre-test and post-test. As a result of such high marks, the outcome was successfully met.

Action

- A new measurement will be designed for the subsequent assessment cycle to better measure the acquisition of knowledge by the faculty participants of the program.
- Query past Developmental Education Certificate graduates for the purposes of identifying to what degree they have had success implementing the knowledge gained from the program thereby allowing for improvements in future curricula.

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Extended Opportunity Programs & Services: Tutorial Services

Background

Extended Opportunity Programs & Services (EOPS) are extended to students with academic and financial disadvantages. As a result, the typical EOPS students has lower success, retention, and persistence rates than other students as they struggle with a variety of financial and academic issues. To combat the disadvantages of EOPS students, specialized tutoring is offered for those enrolled in the EOPS program. EOPS tutoring aims at increasing the academic proficiency of the student while simultaneously increasing their academic confidence. To improve upon the tutorial services offered by EOPS, the EOPS department assessed the degree to which students receiving EOPS tutoring increased their academic confidence.

Measurements

Student Academic Confidence

The Student Learning Outcome measured was defined as follows: *as a result of an EOPS student receiving tutoring from EOPS tutors, the EOPS student will have increased academic confidence*. EOPS students (*n*=10) were randomly selected to participate in a focus group facilitated by EOPS staff. Questions for the focus group were jointly constructed by the director and counselors of the EOPS department and the office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness. Students were informed that their participation was voluntary and all responses given during the focus group were confidential. The responses of the students were audio taped and transcribed. Success for the outcome was determined to be 66% of the participants indicating EOPS tutorial services increased their academic confidence.

Results

Student Academic Confidence

The responses from the focus group were unanimous; EOPS tutoring was essential to the academic success of respondents. All participants (100%) felt increased confidence in their ability to succeed academically. Consequently, the outcome was successfully achieved. When referring to EOPS tutorial services, one respondent described it as, "The Little Gold Mine on campus." The reason for the success of the EOPS tutorial services is clear; EOPS tutors understand the student and not just the course content of the tutorial session. As stated by one respondent, "The tutors really try to relate the information you are trying to learn to something that is going on for you and your life." This kind of empathy of tutors toward tutees increased the engagement of students with EOPS tutorial services, other EOPS peers, and the campus as a whole. As expressed by many, "[the students] feel at home." Specifically, one respondent stated, "We all care for one another. We all try to help each other out."

Action

- To further support the effectiveness of the specialized EOPS tutorial services, future studies could include the measurement of confidence at two separate points of time, namely measuring the confidence of students who are new to tutorial services in one study, as well as measuring the confidence of those who have received these services for one semester or more in another.

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ESL: Software and Video Implementation

Background

Advanced English as a Second Language (ESL) students continuing to credit classes and AmLa (American Language) students stated in an interview that their oral fluency was a barrier interfering with their ability to participate in the classroom. As a result the Language Learning Center acquired Flip Camcorders and two pieces of software, Native Accent and Voicethread, in an attempt to address the concerns of their students. Specifically, the technology implementation of the aforementioned hardware and software will address the five following areas of oral communication: (i) Vowels, (ii) Consonants, (iii) Intonation, (iv) Delivery, and (v) Understanding. The strength of the software and hardware is that both can be utilized outside of the classroom and provide opportunities for students to practice in a variety of methods, at their own pace, and at their convenience. The goal for this project is to increase the oral communication skills of students continuing to college level courses thereby streamlining the transition.

Measurements

Oral Pronunciation Improvement

The Student Learning Outcome attached to this project is defined as follows: *as a result of using Native Accent, Voicethread and Flip Camcorders throughout the spring 2011 semester, AmLa21 students will improve their oral communication skills*. To measure this outcome a pre- and post- test design was utilized. The pre-test was embedded within a course assignment for selected AmLa21 students (n=18). A 10-point rubric with one variable per area of oral communication mentioned above was used to grade the assignment, a maximum of 50 points earned. The assignment was then repeated at the end of the spring 2011 semester with all 18 students completing the assignment. The criterion of success for this outcome was such that 70% of the participants would improve their overall communication skills by 5%.

Results

Oral Pronunciation Improvement

The majority of the participants improved their oral communication abilities with 16 of the 18 (88.89%) students improving their total scores by five percent or greater. While all students increased in their overall scores, two fell short of the five percent improvement. When the difference between pre- and post- test was averaged across all participants, all categories experienced positive increase; the biggest gains were in the areas of Intonation (Δ = +2.03) and Delivery (Δ = +2.17), the smallest gains were in the areas of Vowels (Δ = +1.5) and Consonants (Δ = +1.58).

Action

- More research would have to be conducted to establish the degree to which the software and hardware intervention positively contributed to the oral communication skills from pre-test to post-test. However, the data appears to support the continued use and expansion of such an implementation.

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Adult Basic Education: High School Tutoring and Counseling

Background

Currently, the high school dropout rate in the United States is nearly 11% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008). Adult high school completion programs serve a population of marginalized, disengaged adult students who have dropped out of school and have not experienced academic achievement in traditional educational settings. While adult education programs provide alternative educational opportunities in supportive learning environments, diploma completion programs experience a greater dropout rate than our nation's comprehensive high schools. According to the National Evaluation of Adult Basic Education Programs (NEAEP), 50% of adults who enroll in adult secondary programs drop out before completing 35 hours of instruction (Comings, 1999). The majority of dropouts name situational or life issues as the reasons for disengagement and dropout. However, there are a great number of students who list institutional factors as their impetus for low engagement and dropout. These include lack of academic support services, poor quality of instructional programs, and unclear expectations (Quigley, 1998). This project examines significant engagement factors for this population of students in the hopes of alleviating, if not eradicating, sources of disengagement.

Measurements

Engagement: Quantitative Relationships

The Administrative Unit Objective accompanied to this assessment was such that *the Adult Basic Education department would gather descriptive statistics on engagement using a survey instrument and perform logistic regression on the engagement factors thereby drawing correlations between persistence, as measured by attendance 5 weeks after administering the survey, and the survey items*. The ABE program measured engagement using an externally constructed and validated Student Engagement Instrument (SEI) coupled with supplemental survey items querying the participant on their behavioral engagement and demographic items. Specifically, the SEI consisted of 33 items, 14 and 19 items on a 4-point Likert scale of agreement dealing with cognitive engagement and emotional engagement, respectively. In addition, fifteen behavioral engagement items were added using a similar 4-point scale. In order to participate in the survey, respondents had to (i) be 18 years or older, (ii) be enrolled in the Adult High School Diploma Program, and (iii) have accumulated 12 hours of classroom attendance. A total of 184 surveys were collected.

Results

Engagement: Quantitative Relationships

Overall, the survey data indicated that respondents had positive levels of engagement concerning staff, school policies, schoolwork, future goals, and family. Specifically, when clustering the items that targeted future goals (five items), the mean score was 3.67. The lowest reported engagement score concerned peer relationships, with a mean score of 2.86. However, when disaggregated by gender, females exhibited a much higher mean score over the 48 items with a mean score of 3.40 and standard deviation of 0.65. Comparatively, males had a lower overall mean score and standard deviation of 3.21 and 0.68, respectively. Based on the responses of this sample, females had a higher overall level of engagement, while both males and females showed moderately positive mean scores. Interestingly, while the overall reported engagement was high, the overall mean score for boredom was also high.

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Learning Assistance Center Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction Support

Background

The Learning Assistance Center (LAC) provides students access to essential resources significantly increasing academic success. One such invaluable resource is tutorial services from which general drop in tutoring and supplemental instruction is organized and deployed at Mt. San Antonio College. However, the LAC department understands that each student has specific and highly individualized methods for learning as well as unique barriers preventing success. As a result, tutors are trained to best serve students with a broad array of academic, social, and psychological needs. In keeping with the high standards of Mt. San Antonio College, the LAC continually assesses the strength of its services thereby creating a climate of constant improvement and adaptation to best serve the needs of its students.

Measurements

Math Tutoring

The Student Learning Outcome for Math Tutoring was defined as: *tutors will receive training that promotes students' independent learning. As a result, students receiving tutoring in the MARC will report increased confidence after working with a tutor, and show a commensurate level of ability after working with a tutor*. This outcome was measured by administering a survey in the Math Activities Resource Center (MARC) after having received a tutorial session. The survey asked students (*n*=113) to solve an equation appropriate for the course being tutored in (Math50 or Math51) which was then graded on a univariable 5-point (0-4) rubric; additionally, a survey item asked the students if they felt confident they would be able to solve a similar problem on their own. Success is defined as 70% scoring a 3 or higher on the rubric.

General Tutor Training

Pre- and post-surveys were administered to tutors (*n*=11) having received training about tutoring best practices. The Student Learning Outcome measured by the survey was defined as: *Basic Skills Initiative (BSI) tutors who receive training will have increased knowledge on program procedures and tutoring strategies*. The survey asks the participants to respond to two 5-point items regarding their ability to solve the problem on their own, and additionally, if they could explain the solution to the tutee; success was defined as 80% having scored a 4 or higher, averaged over the two items, on the post-test.

Basic Skills Math Achievement

Grade data for students (*n*=72) in spring 2011 having received tutoring for Math50 and Math51 was analyzed based on successful completion of the course, defined as attaining a grade of C or better. Specifically, the Administrative Unit Objective measured was: *students will be successful in the course being tutored as a result of receiving at least 90 minutes of one-on-one tutoring or at least 6 hours of supplemental instruction*. The criterion of success was that 70% of students having received sufficient tutoring, as defined above, would be successful.

Summer Bridge Student Academic Confidence

LAC staff conducted a pre-test at the beginning of the semester for Summer Bridge students (*n*=127) and post-test at its conclusion for the remaining students (*n*=108). The Student Learning Outcome measured by the survey was: *Summer Bridge students will report improvement in their level of confidence as a result of the activities of the SI leaders*. Success for this outcome is defined as 90% of students scoring 5 or higher averaged over items 1 through 6 (7-point scale; 1-7) on the post-test.

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Results

Math Tutoring

As of spring 2011, 113 surveys were compiled and scored; 85% of respondents scored 3 or higher while 15% scored between 2 or below. The outcome was successfully met.

General Tutor Training

Of the respondents completing the pre-test, 64% scored 4 or higher on the average of items 1 and 2. When queried after the tutor training had completed, 91% scored 4 or higher on the average of items 1 and 2. As a result, the criterion for success was met. The tutor training resulted in an overall increase of 27%.

Basic Skills Math Achievement

Of the students receiving sufficient tutoring for Math50 (*n*=29) and Math51 (*n*=43), the rate of success was 72% and 60%, respectively. The criterion of success that 70% of students would succeed in the course being tutored was not met. However, when compared to the student population not receiving sufficient tutoring for Math50 (*n*=1218) and Math51 (*n*=1300), the rate of success was 59% and 46%, respectively. Consequently, the population of students receiving sufficient tutoring had an increased success rate of 13% for Math50 and 14% for Math51.

Summer Bridge Student Academic Confidence

Of the respondents completing the pre-test, 80.2% scored 5 or higher on the average of items 1 through 6. Similarly, 79.6% of respondents completing the post-test scored 5 or higher on the average of items 1 through 6. As a result, the criterion for success was not met. Interestingly, the average of the items dropped from pre to post. After an inspection of the surveys, highly positive comments on the qualitative section do not match the decrease in ratings.

Action

- The LAC will focus on refining comparative data to assess student achievement and progress. For example, in Summer 2012 we will do a student by student pre and post test for Summer Bridge assessment to investigate the improvement in individual students' self-reports of academic preparation and/or familiarity with college.
- The LAC will continue to develop the assessments used to measure the impact of tutoring on students in Basic Skills courses and those from designated populations such as student athletes and students on academic probation.
- Tutorial Services will look into researching the impact of training done in the TUTR courses on the quality of tutoring services, to ensure that course content is practical and helpful for both tutors and students.

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Library Extended Support

Background

The Library is an academic support service, which is available to assist and instruct all basic skills students. It has developed print and online collections in order to support these students' curricular and learning needs – reading, writing, mathematics, English as a Second Language, learning skills and study skills. The complexity of assessing information needs and finding sources of information within multiple diverse Library collections requires the knowledge of Library faculty. The Library has effectively used past basic skills allocations to hire adjunct faculty to provide instruction at the Reference Desk throughout the day. Reference Desk transaction statistics and anecdotal evidence strongly suggest that, to adequately serve our large populations of students, staffing two librarians on the Reference Desk is required several hours a day during peak periods. This project measures the ability of students enrolled in READ70 and READ80 to articulate how to find a book in the library collection.

Measurements

Reference Desk Support

Specifically, the Student Learning Outcome measure was defined as: *As a result of an intervention with Library faculty, students will be able to correctly answer scenarios relevant to their experience with the Library faculty*. Students enrolled in one section of READ70 and five sections of READ80 were administered scenarios before and after having an interaction with Library faculty at the Library Reference Desk. The scenario asked the student to articulate the steps necessary to find a book in the Library. Responses to the pre- and post- scenarios were rated using a three point rubric across eight variables. Success for this outcome was set at 75% of participants scoring a 2 or higher on one of eight variables. In total, 79 READ students participated.

Results

Reference Support

Of the 79 students that completed pre- and post- scenarios 33 (42%) scored a 2 or higher using the rubric to evaluate their responses. When examined by rubric score, 46 students (58%) scored a 1, 31 (39%) scored a 2, and 2 (3%) scored a 3. However, when examining the scores of the pre- and post- scenarios at the student level, 23 students (29%) showed growth. As a result of 42% of students scoring a 2 or higher, this outcome was not successfully met.

Action

- Library faulty would like to reassess in the 2011-2012 academic year with three modifications to the current assessment.
  - Pre- and post- scenario needs to be more detailed to provide the student with more context.
  - Library Reference Desk faculty and staff should allow the student to use the computer to find books rather than doing the searches for them.
  - The rubric was too detailed. Instead of a 3-point rubric measure 8 variables, a 2-point rubric measuring 6 variables will be constructed.
- While the criterion for success was not met, faculty were pleased students responded with "getting help from the Library staff or faculty" in their post-scenarios.

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Before the regression model was run, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was executed on the data. The result of the EFA showed seven factors emerged: (i) Staff Student Relationship (SSR), (ii) Peer Support for Learning (PSL), (iii) Family Support for Learning (FSL), (iv) Control and Relevance of Schoolwork (CRS), (v) Future Aspirations and Goals (FAG), (vi) Attention and Conduct (ATT), and (vii) Productivity and Resourcefulness (PR). These seven factors were then grouped into three types of engagement: Emotional, Cognitive, and Behavioral. One regression model was run for each of the following two boolean variables: (i) participants having attained 28 or more hours of attendance (1) and participants having attained less than 28 hours (0), and (ii) participants having attained 62 hours (1) and participants having attained less than 62 hours (0). The results of the first regression model yielded no statistically significant findings; however, the second regression model indicated a correlation between persistence and PSL.

Action

- Increase the frequency of peer to staff interaction. Specifically, classroom-based activities that encourage students to interact with staff and their peers should be promoted.
- Adult Diploma Program counselors should examine the content of new student orientations and address the impact of barriers that students may potentially face as well as the importance of goal orientation.
- In order to address the issue of poor persistence and boredom specifically in the male population, the Adult Diploma program staff and faculty need to create opportunities for males to be influenced by positive male role models.
- Finally, it is suggested that this study be followed by one-on-one interviews, specifically with male students that could offer deeper findings related to boredom, future aspirations, and school relationships.

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Library Resources

Background

Having access to Library resources is essential for the basic skills students' success. The Library has effectively used basic skills allocations to purchase books and subscribe to full-text databases in support of multiple basic skills areas – reading, writing, mathematics, English as a Second Language, learning skills and study skills. When developing these print and online collections, consideration is given to audience level, and purchases are connected to curricular and lifelong learning needs. Funding the Library's basic skills programming has enabled the essential growth of the print collection and access to important and useful databases. This project aims to assess the transaction data of books purchased through Basic Skills monies and assess the usage of print databases.

Measurements

Book Transactions

The specific Administrative Unit Objective to be measured was defined as: *Library faculty will compare transaction data of books purchased under basic skills funding and library funding*. In assessing the aforementioned outcome, Library faculty will deepen its understanding of the use and non-use of the materials in the 300 division thereby identifying strengths and weaknesses in this division, faculty will analyze circulation statistics by subdivision (ex. 300, 310, 320, etc.). Library faculty will compare the circulation statistics of materials purchased with Basic Skills funding to the circulation statistics of the entire collection.

Database Usage

The specific Administrative Unit Objective to be measured was defined as: *Use of underutilized databases will increase due to communication and instruction*. To assess the outcome, Library faculty will: (i) gather usage statistics from database vendors, (ii) track usage of ebooks (e.g., ABC-CLIO/Greenwood titles) via links found in Library Catalog, and (iii) report out the availability of these resources to the campus community.

Results

Book Transactions

Library faculty reviewed circulation statistics for materials classified in the 300 division. Faculty is highly satisfied with the circulation statistics of books purchased with Basic Skills and Library funds. Books in each subdivision were used by students and the number of uses ranged from 6 (subdivision=commerce) to 510 (subdivision=education). The circulation rate of books purchased with Basic Skills funds particularly exceeds faculty expectations.

Database Usage

Faculty reviewed statistics for multiple databases - *CQ Researcher*; *Credo Reference*; *Issues & Controversies in American History*; *Issues & Controversies on File*; *Literature Resource Center*; *Oxford English Dictionary*; and *Oxford Language Dictionaries*. Most of these databases sustained over 1,000 sessions and the number of articles retrieved ranged from 3,000 to 27,000 articles per database. Library faculty continued to report out the availability of database resources via information competency instruction in the classroom, workshops, and at the reference desk; via the Library web site; and via messages to faculty. Library faculty did not track usage of ebooks available via ABC-CLIO/Greenwood due to a substantial interface change during 2010-11. Despite meeting with the vendor, Library faculty continues to explore the impact of these interface changes.

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Action

- The circulation rate of books purchased with Basic Skills funds indicates that materials at this reading level and on these topics are needed and used. Collection of these materials will continue.
- Database vendors traditionally track the number of sessions, searches, and retrieved documents. While Library faculty noted increases and decreases, they are satisfied overall with the high number of sessions, searches, and retrieved documents. High usage statistics indicate that the databases supported by Basic Skills funding are needed and used.
- The high rate of usage of both books and databases reinforces the department's disappointment at sustaining a 100% cut to its Basic Skills materials funding for 2011-12.

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High School Outreach: Seniors' Day

Background

The High School Outreach Program helps high school seniors transition into Mt. SAC once they graduate from high school. Specifically, the following opportunities are offered, but not limited to, prospective Mt. SAC students: (i) application workshops, (ii) placement tests, and (iii) other college preparatory steps at participating high schools. Additionally, the High School Outreach program offers prospective high school students from district feeder high schools, 48 in total, the opportunity to come to the Mt. SAC campus and participate in an orientation which provides information on advisement, articulation, student services, and student activities; this two day event is called Seniors' Day. With the help of chaperones, it is designed to streamline the transition from high school to college.

Measurements

Recruitment

The Administrative Unit Objective attached to this project was such that as a result of attending the Senior's Day Program, potential Mt. SAC student will have increased positive attitudes toward Mt. SAC. This outcome was measured using a pre- and post-survey design. One chaperone was assigned to each group of students. This chaperone initially queried the students, using a show of hands, as to whether the students would attend Mt. SAC, were unsure of attending, and would not attend. This initial assessment took place before the perspective Seniors' Day students had been exposed to the orientation opportunities. At the conclusion of the orientation, students were then queried again using the same method. Respondents were informed their participation was voluntary, their answers would be anonymous, and they had the right to cease participation at any time. In total, 645 respondents participated in the pre-test and 640 in the post-test. Demographic data was not collected. The criteria of success for this outcome was defined as a 5% increase in the number of students indicating they would attend Mt. SAC from the pre-test to post-test.

Results

Recruitment

Of the 645 participants of the pre-test, 74.73% (*n*=482) indicated they would attend Mt. SAC, while 24.03% (*n*=155) and 1.24% (*n*=8) indicated they were unsure or would not attend, respectively. The results of the post-test yielded an overall reduction in the number of responses to 640, a decline of 5. The category of unsure responses decreased from 24.03% of the pre-test to 17.66%. The reduction in the number unsure responses contributed to the increase of both will and will not attend responses; specifically, the number of will responses increased by 5.43% while the number of will not responses also increased by 0.95%. As a result of a greater than 5% increase in the number of prospective students indicating they would attend Mt. SAC, this outcome was achieved.

Action

- Next assessment cycle, prospective students will be sent a parental consent form; this will allow the High School Outreach Program to better research their target populations.

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Teaching and Learning Center

Background

The Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) is a campus resource with the overarching goal to support the campus community to engage in life-long learning by examining issues related to the scholarship of teaching and learning. This goal is achieved by promoting the following five principles: (i) improve practices related to developmental education, (ii) promote the scholarship of teaching and learning, (iii) facilitate sharing of best practices, (iv) connect faculty with resources and experts, and lastly (v) support the interconnectedness of existing programs. Operationally, this takes the form of workshops, mentoring, campus dialogues, and Faculty Inquiry Groups (FIGs). The 2010-2011 academic year saw the following activities supported by the TLC: six campus dialogues between fall 2010 and spring 2011, three mentor/mentee pairings for fall 2010, one Spotlight on Best Teaching and Learning Practices, and the design, development and implementation of MyBook@MtSAC.

Measurements

Campus Dialogues

The six Campus Dialogues were: Exploring Effective Basic Skills Practices (09.14.2010), Basic Skills Effective Teaching Practices (10.14.2010), Technology and Education: Trying to Understand the Connection (11.18.2010), Distance Learning @ MTSAC (03.29.2011), Building a Sense of Community in the Classroom - Lessons Learned from Learning Communities (4.21.2011), and How the Faculty Association Affects Teaching and Learning (5.19.2011). The Student Learning Outcome for the Campus Dialogues was defined as follows: *participants in the Campus Dialogue will indicate a greater level of understanding of the issue discussed*. One dichotomous item from a paper survey measured the success of this outcome; the benchmark for success was defined as 70% of participants indicating *Yes*. All attendees were given the opportunity to evaluate the event.

Mentorship

Three mentor/mentee pairs were formed in fall 2010, each with a different strategy being taught: computer assisted instruction, i>clickers, and Blackboard. The Student Learning Outcome was stated as follows: *as a result of the mentoring relationship established by the TLC, participants will have implemented the teaching strategy into their spring 2011 courses*. Success for the outcome was defined as 66% of mentees implementing the strategy learned. To measure this, an interview was conducted by the director of the TLC during the spring 2011 term via email; one dichotomous item from the interview queried the mentee as to whether the mentee had implemented the strategy gained from the fall 2010 mentorship. All mentees were given the opportunity to evaluate the mentorship.

Spotlight on Best Teaching and Learning Practices

The TLC supported a workshop highlighting programs (Chemistry FIG, WIN, LERN department, and Writing Center) focused on developmental education (05.13.2011). The Student Learning Outcome for this workshop is such that *as a result of attending the Spotlight on Best Teaching and Learning Practices, attendees will gain a greater understanding about the different Basic Skills Initiative (BSI) funded projects currently active on campus*. Success was measured by one dichotomous survey item, with a benchmark of 70% of attendees indicating they had gained greater understanding about BSI programs on the Mt. SAC campus. All attendees were given the opportunity to evaluate the workshop.

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MyBook@MtSAC

The goal of the MyBook@MtSAC event was to increase the cohesion and engagement of Mt.SAC employees with each other. In fall 2010, nominations for potential books were submitted to the director of the TLC, 28 in whole. The members of the campus community were then invited to cast a single vote for their favorite nomination; the emerging winner was *The Last Lecture* by Randy Pausch. Group discussions about the book were held throughout the subsequent spring term. The measureable outcome for the activity was as follows: as a result of participating in a MyBook@MtSAC discussion, the participants will foster a greater sense of community with other Mt. SAC employees. Success for the outcome was defined as 80% of respondents finding the activity valuable; additionally, 60% of participants would respond that they experienced an increased sense of community as a result of engaging in discussion with other employees on campus. Six participants of the discussion groups were randomly selected to evaluate MyBook@MtSAC.

Results

Campus Dialogues

Of the attendees, 19 responses were collected. The benchmark of 70% was met, as all of those surveyed indicated they had gained knowledge of the topic at hand.

Mentorship

All three mentees responded to an interview conducted via email by the director of the TLC. 33% of respondents indicated they had implemented the strategy learned through the mentorship in spring 2011 term. As such, the benchmark for success was not met. The other two mentees did not feel as though they had sufficient time to integrate the teaching strategy into their coursework, but felt confident they would in subsequent terms.

Spotlight on Best Teaching and Learning Practices

Six of the 15 attendees completed the dichotomous survey item used to measure the success of the outcome attached to this activity. The criteria for success was met as 100% of participants indicated they had gained a greater understanding of Basic Skills Initiative funded programs at Mt. SAC.

MyBook@MtSAC

The assessment yielded a 50% response rate, with three of the six selected responding to the interview. All three respondents felt the MyBook@MtSAC experience was valuable; one participant stated that they would *definitely* join in the reading and discussion for the next MyBook@MtSAC event. One of the three respondents answered the query as to whether they felt an increased sense of community as a result of participating in the discussion; they answered in the affirmative. As more than 80% of respondents indicated they found the experience valuable and more than 60% of responses found the discussion led to an increases sense of community, the criteria for success was met.

Action

- Given the overwhelmingly positive feedback of participants to TLC events, it is recommended the college expand the capacity of the TLC in its endeavors to achieve its goals.
- Increase the depth of assessment for educational activities (Workshops, FIGs, Mentorship, Campus Dialogues) provided by the TLC to ensure and improve upon the transition of knowledge acquired at TLC activities to the classroom.
- Expand the MyBook@MtSAC intervention by introducing a fourth constituency, students, into the discussion groups.

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Tutors in the Classroom

Background

The Tutors in the Classroom program matches experienced peer tutors with professors in the following courses: ENGL67, AMLA42W, and AMLA 43W. These tutors then work closely with the professor, participating in the classroom as an instructional assistant as students work on homework and assignments and designing group work outside of class to support and augment in-class instruction and activities. The tutor attends to the needs of students both in their assigned classroom and out of the classroom by providing group tutoring and one-on-one tutoring sessions for a combined total of ten hours per week. The need for such tutoring is apparent since ENGL67 students, for example, have historical overall success rates of only 62%. American Language students, for their part, require intensive support since their efforts to develop basic writing skills are challenged by language acquisition issues. Both groups of students need more intensive academic support to succeed and benefit from the intensive and well-coordinated support that an assigned tutor provides.

Measurements

Success

This Administrative Unit Objective measures the degree to which students experience increased rates of success in the course they receiving tutoring. Specifically, the outcome was defined as: *students with five or more tutorial contacts within or outside the classroom will experience a higher rate of success than students in the same course having fewer than five contacts.* To measure this outcome, internal data will be extracted from Enterprise Resource Planning tool, Banner, using Argos after spring 2011 grades have posted. A total of 351 students were enrolled past transcription date in one section of AMLA42W, one section of AMLA43W, and ten sections of ENGL67. Success for this outcome was defined as students having enrolled in sections with a tutor in the classroom and having five or more tutorial contacts will experience a success rate 10% higher than all other students in the same course with fewer than five tutorial contacts.

Participation

This Administrative Unit Objective was defined as follows: the Writing Center will provide services to students enrolled in ENGL67, AMLA42W, and AMLA43W courses. These participation rates will then be examined to establish usage statistics of tutors in the classroom. Success for this outcome is defined as 60% of students enrolled in a section with a tutor in the classroom will have at least one contact with a tutor, and of those students 30% will have three or more and 20% will have 5 or more tutorial contacts.

Results

Success

The success rate for all students having zero to four tutorial contacts in AMLA42W was 62.8% while those having five or more tutorial contacts experienced a success rate of 66.7%, a difference of 3.9%. AMLA43W experienced a higher success rate differential; those not receiving five or more tutorial contacts had a success rate of 72.8% and those with five or more had a success rate of 95.7%, a difference of 22.9%. Lastly, ENGL67 students with less than five tutorial contacts experienced a success rate of 60.2% while those with five or more contacts had a success rate of 77.9%, a difference of 17.7%. While the success differential less than 10% for AMLA42W, both AMLA43W and ENGL67 had

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comparative success rates much larger than 10%. As a result, this outcome was successfully achieved for AMLA43W and ENGL67.

Participation

Of the 351 students enrolled in sections with a tutor in the classroom past transcription date, 63.1% had at least one tutorial contact; of those, 44.8% had three or more contacts and 38.7% had five or more contacts. This outcome was successfully met at each interval.

Action

- If Tutors in the Classroom is to be helpful at the level of AmLa 42, tutors will require more extensive, specialized training, probably from an individual with experience in tutoring pedagogy and expertise in ESL, such as TESOL certification and/or a Master's in the field.

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VESL Career Paths Coordination and Continued Improvement

Background

The Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) program is devoted to facilitating the transition of ESL students from non-credit courses to credit courses in order to achieve degrees or certificates, as well as improving skills for job development. The program consists of six courses spread over two semesters that targets three specific skills: computer proficiency, college and business vocabulary, and career planning. To improve upon the program, constituents of the VESL program are invited to an annual retreat for the purposes of curriculum improvement and professional development.

Measurements

VESL Career Paths

The Administrative Unit Objective for the VESL retreat was defined as: *VESL program stakeholders (faculty, students, AMLA liaison, classified staff, and administrators) will contribute items toward the agenda regarding effective practices and areas of concern in order to improve the rate of noncredit-to-credit transitions for advanced ESL students*. This outcome was measured by administering a survey at the conclusion of the VESL retreat. The survey queried the attendees of the retreat using six 5-piont Likert scale items and three open-ended items. Eight participants completed the survey. Success was defined as 80% scoring a 4 or higher on the aggregate of the six Likert scale items and 80% feeling their agenda items were satisfactorily addressed.

Results

VESL Career Paths

All eight respondents of the survey felt the retreat was valuable with all 8 responding with an aggregate score of 5 for all Likert scale items. Additionally, all eight felt they had the agenda items they submitted were addressed at the retreat. Given the data from the survey, the participants strongly agreed that they now have a better understand about the VESL students' aspirations, needs, and potential barriers. Specific themes that emerged from the survey results included streamlining the process of matriculating students into credit, collecting more data representing a variety of students (VESL to Credit, VESL to Career/Jobs, Credit to VESL and back to Credit, etc.), and improving student recruitment and retention.

Action

- Continue to provide professional development and departmental networking for ESL and VESL constituents via annual retreats.
- Collect programmatic data (matriculation process, student recruitment, student success, and student retention) to best understand and improve upon the pathways of ESL and VESL students.

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WIN Counseling and Tutoring

Background

Mt. SAC is dedicated to the academic achievement and success of its student athletes. This is achieved by providing resources and academic support in the form of a specialized tutorial center, designated the WIN program. The WIN program provides a quiet space of study for student athletes accompanied by counseling and tutorial support, as well as internet ready computers equipped with standard software for course assignments; approximately six to seven hundred students avail themselves of these services. However, the WIN Program was to be relocated to a geographically disparate location, the second time within a single academic year. As a result, the WIN program assessed its current tutoring and counseling implementation, and collected staff and student data to facilitate the transition from its current to new facilities.

Measurements

WIN Tutoring: Student Study Skills

The Student Learning Outcome measured was defined as follows: as a result of participating in WIN tutoring, students will be able to articulate how the WIN program positively influenced their study skills. Student athletes were asked to volunteer to participate in a focus group assessing the strengths of the WIN tutoring and counseling services. After three focus groups were held, a reasonably proportionate number of student athletes (n=45) were represented based on gender and sport. Students were informed that their participation was voluntary and all responses given during the focus group were would be confidential. The responses of the students were audio taped and transcribed. Two open-ended questions were used to assess the aforementioned outcome. Success for the outcome was determined to be 75% of the participants indicating WIN tutorial services had positively influenced their study habits.

WIN Counseling: Student Success

The Student Learning Outcome for WIN counseling was such that *students receiving academic counseling would have the knowledge to better plan for their academic progress*. This outcome was also measured during the above outlined focus group using three open-ended questions. Of the 45 student athletes participating in the focus group, 36 participants received WIN counseling. Success was defined as 75% of participants indicating that counseling positively influenced their academic success by plotting a roadmap for their academic progress with the help of the WIN counselor.

Facility Transition

The WIN program faced the challenge of moving to another facility on campus in the summer 2011 term. To best alleviate potential challenges from transitioning to a new facility, a focus group of WIN staff members was conducted. The specific Administrative Unit Objective for this transitional endeavor was defined as follows: *to best facilitate the transition back to building 45, the WIN staff will identify previous challenges met when moving to building 40, document and anticipate possible challenges, and construct solutions to mitigate or overcome the aforementioned previous and future challenges*. All WIN staff members were invited to attend the focus group but only four were able to attend the focus group. Ten open-ended questions were asked of the participants relating to both the previous transition in the summer 2010 term and future transition slated for the summer 2011 term. Success for this outcome was defined as participants of the focus group constructing solutions for a successful transition to the new facility.

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Results

WIN Tutoring: Student Study Skills

Of the participants in the focus group, all but one indicated that the WIN tutorial services had positively influenced their study skills; particular skills included: (i) decreased procrastination, (ii) time management, (iii) and motivation to study. Consequently, the benchmark that 75% of participants would indicate that WIN tutoring positively influenced their study skills was achieved.

WIN Counseling: Student Success

WIN counseling also received high marks as all but three of the participants (91.7%) of the focus group that received counseling indicated that it had positively influenced their academic success. Specifically, students found the adjunct counselor for the WIN program as highly empathetic and understanding of the specifics challenges student athletes encounter. However, many participants felt their initial course load during their first term was not rigorous enough and were academically delayed as a result; they believed it would be helpful for the counselor to provide more information to future freshmen about the consequences of enrolling in too many courses not aligned with the specific academic goal of the student. Other participants felt they would have benefited from detailed information about transfer requirements, scholarship opportunities, and a wider variety of majors.

Facility Transition

The results of the focus group yielded an itemized action plan to best facilitate the transition from the old facility to the new facility. Specifically, the WIN staff planned to examine the future facility's floor plan to best utilize the space and maximize resource delivery. Additionally, the one of the two rooms provided to the WIN program in the future facility will be utilized as a study hall, supervised by WIN tutors, and open during peak hours.

Action

- Explore options that would provide more tutoring support. This may include recruiting faculty needing to fulfill supplemental hours.
- Students indicated that as freshman, they needed more comprehensive information from their counselors regarding the appropriate course selections and load. Thus, this is important information that will be shared with athletic counselors when they are advising new community college student athletes.
- Counselors will be informed that students are in need of more notices regarding scholarships. This can be done by conducting a scholarship workshop during the fall semester so that students can be ready to apply during the winter/spring application period.
- Students indicated that they are seeking from the counselors more information about transfer requirements and the availability of advising services for majors OTHER than kinesiology. This could be done by offering workshops specifically focused on transfer requirements and various majors.
- Both the students and the staff reported that the space for the WIN progam in not sufficient. Although the space being built for the WIN program will actually decrease, there are ways to mitigate this potential space issue. This includes utilizing an additional room during peak hours.
- WIN staff would be more able to overcome challenges tied to moving to a smaller facility if they could examine the floor plan prior to the move. This will assist them in determining the number of students that could be served during peak periods and when specific study groups could be scheduled.

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Writing Center

Background

Funding for tutoring in the Writing Center enhances the coordination between the classroom and academic support in delivering direct support to students with Basic Skills needs in writing. The Writing Center employs discipline-specific practices, namely in the fields of composition and tutoring pedagogy, to improve the success rates of students working on Basic Skills in the Basic Skills defined courses of ENGL67, AMLA41W, AMLA42W, and AMLA43W. This project directly enhances the development of comprehensive academic support mechanisms, including the use of trained, supervised tutors. The Writing Center has, in a short time and thanks to strong departmental, divisional, and cabinet level support, become an important aspect of academic support at Mt. San Antonio College, complementing other academic tutoring services on campus by specializing in the field of writing through tutoring and noncredit instruction (in the form of student-centered workshops). In particular, the Writing Center has worked closely with the English and American Language departments to serve the needs of Basic Skills students in their courses.

Measurements

Writing Awareness

The Student Learning Outcome to be measured for this construct was defined as follows: *students will develop a greater awareness of their own writing process*. An awareness construct was composed of two survey items from a survey constructed by the Writing Center; these two items were as follows: (i) working with a tutor made me aware of my strengths as a writer, and (ii) working with a tutor made me aware of the areas in need of improvement in my writing. The items use a bipolar 4-point Likert scale of agreement ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (4). Administration of the survey occurred after the student had completed a tutorial session. A total of 724 surveys were examined. Successful achievement of this outcome was set at 70% or more of respondents to the survey will have a response of 3 or greater from the average of the two items.

Academic Skills

The acquisition of skills during a tutorial session is also an objective of the project. Specifically, the Student Learning Outcome to be measured was defined as follows: *students will improve essential academic skills for college courses as a result of contact hours in the Writing Center*. This was measured using the same instrument as above but examining a qualitative question asking the student to identify one skill or strategy they have learned from their tutor. A total of 148 surveys were randomly selected and evaluated. Success for this outcome was such that 50% of students that responded to the item would be able to identify at least one skill or strategy.

Success

Lastly, as a result of attending tutoring in the Writing Center, the academic achievement of the student will increase. Specifically, the Administrative Unit Objective is defined as: *students receiving tutoring from the Writing Center will have higher rates of attaining a grade of A, B, or C in ENGL67 with more tutorial contacts*. The total number of English 67 students enrolled in spring 2011 receiving support at the Writing Center was 568 with 1227 students having not received any tutorial support on campus. Success for this outcome was measured by partitioning students in groups based on the number of contacts (1-2 contacts, n=124; 3-4 contacts, n=110; 5-6 contacts, n=72; 7-8 contacts, n=57; 9-10 contacts, n=53; and 11 or more contacts, n=152) and then comparing the groups to a baseline of students with no tutorial support from anywhere on campus. Success for this outcome was determined to be an incrementally higher success rate

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compared to the baseline of students for each group with more tutorial contact (i.e., the 1-2 group would experience a 5% increase, 3-4 a 6% increase, 5-6 a 7% increase, 7-8 a 8% increase, 9-10 a 9% increase, and 11+ a 10% increase).

Results

Writing Awareness

Of the 724 surveys, 503 (70.4%) responded with an average of 4 on the two survey items. Additionally, 696 (97.5%) responded favorably with an average score of 3 or higher. As a result of the overwhelmingly positive responses, this outcome was successfully achieved.

Academic Skills

Of the 148 surveys, 116 (78.38%) students were able to identify a skill or strategy that would help them succeed academically. As the benchmark for success was set at 50%, this outcome was successfully achieved. Additionally, the responses were grouped together by theme; in descending order, the four most common themes were: (i) Development of writing process strategies, (ii) Grammar, (iii) Thesis, and (iv) Documentation.

Success

Each group of students that had been tutored in the Writing Center experienced a higher success rate compared to the baseline of students not having any tutorial support; the baseline of students had a 57.1% success rate. The 1-2 group had an increase of 6.6%, 3-4 had an increase of 3.8%, 5-6 had an increase of 16.5%, 7-8 had an increase of 11.3%, 9-10 an increase of 8.9% and 11+ an increase of 10.6%. While the outcome was not met with all groups, the majority of groups met or exceeded the benchmark of success.

Action

- Since 21.8% of English 67 students receiving tutorial support at the Writing Center only attended one or two tutorials, the Writing Center will develop training approaches for tutors and work with faculty to reduce this number. Relatedly, future research might query students who are attending tutoring two times or less to better consider how such students can be encouraged to make five or more visits—the number of visits where success differentials rise above 10%. A focus group would be one way to acquire helpful qualitative data in this regard.

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