

BSI Report to Academic Senate: Student Success and Persistence

The Problem:

We have long focused on pass rates in our current system, which are as follows:

Basic Skills English (Fall '13- Spring '15):	58% ¹
Basic Skills Reading (Fall '13- Spring '15):	60%
ESL Writing (Fall '13- Spring '15):	57%
ESL Reading ((Fall '13- Spring '15):	62%
Basic Skills Math (Fall '13- Spring '15):	48%

However, when we look at persistence rates (the percentage of students who successfully complete a transfer-level course in their discipline within two years), the data are much more troubling:

Persistence rates from basic skills English to English 1 within two years:		
Levels below transfer	fall '13→ spring '15	
3 levels	English 305	3/41 (7%)
2 levels	English 355	35/130 (27%)
1 level	English 370	180/417 (43%)
1 level	English 348E/380	95/189 (50%)
Accelerated English (all levels, together)	English 348G/360	77/204 (38%)

Persistence rates from basic skills Reading to English 1 within two years:		
Levels below transfer	fall '13→ spring '15	
2 levels	English 331	4/68 (6%)
1 level	English 353	22/102 (21.5%)

Persistence rates from basic skills math to transfer-level math within two years:		
Levels below transfer	fall '13→ spring '15	
4 levels	Math 310	2/180 (1%)
3 levels	Math 320	4/88 (4.5%)
2 levels	Math 330 (and A/B)	43/366 (12%)
1 level	Math 104	73/323 (22.6%)

¹ All data compiled from the Chancellor's office:
http://datamart.cccco.edu/Outcomes/BasicSkills_Cohort_Tracker.aspx

Possible Solutions:

Acceleration. In English we have created an accelerated class (359/360) open to all basic skills students, which allows students in one semester to meet the prerequisite requirements for English 1. This course (or previous iterations of it) has been in place since 2012. In Math, the department is experimenting with Math 112, Algebraic Reasoning, which is offered as an alternative to the traditional intermediate algebra course that prepares students for Statistics or Math Ideas, and as such, has the potential to increase students' persistence rates to and through a transferable class. **Math people: is 112 open to all students? How are students currently placed?**

Improve Placement. Research at Long Beach Community College which tracked 7,000 students found that standardized tests such as Accuplacer accurately predicted success in college-level English classes just 17% of the time, while high school GPA accurately predicted success 88% of the time. Similarly, in math, standardized tests predicted success in math 20% of the time while high school GPA predicted success 73% of the time. Currently SCC does not use high school GPA and performance in any systematic way to place students, but English 310D (to be offered in Spring '16 as English 348D), a corequisite basic skills class for English students, will allow any student with a 2.7 HSGPA + a "B" in their Junior or Senior English classes to enroll immediately in English 1, with 348D/310D as a corequisite. Similar changes at LBCC (but without the prerequisite) allowed 60% of their incoming students to take English 1A, as opposed to the standardized test (Accuplacer), which allowed 14% of these students to enroll in English 1. **Importantly, success rates in English 1A did not significantly decrease as a result of this exponential increase in admission to English 1.** We are currently working with Peter Cammish, Shemila Johnson, and others to begin collecting HSGPA + relevant HS course grades as part of the CCC Assist application process. Our English department is considering the use of HSGPA as primary placement in their basic skills sequence as part of their current program review. Math also uses high school grades as one element of placement, but this is not yet in place institutionally as a primary placement mechanism. **Math people: any clarification or additional information here would be helpful.**

Reinstate LD Support for our Basic Skills students. As already discussed, the cuts to our LD support have significantly impacted our students' ability to succeed and persist at SCC.

Reinstate the campus-wide Learning Communities Coordinator Position. Much data shows that students in learning communities, whether First Year Experience, UMOJA, Puente, or other programs, experience significantly higher pass rates and persistence rates, both while in the program (usually for the first year) and during subsequent years (after completing the program). The Basic Skills Committee hopes that a LC Coordinator could help us scale up learning communities on this campus, so that incoming students could be placed in discipline- or population-specific learning communities.

Fund the strategic proposals approved by the Shared Governance Council last spring.

Currently, administration has released roughly \$65,000 of the \$200,000 allocated for the 2015-16 fiscal year, with the remaining proposals in "pending" status at this time, with no explanation for the held funds given to the faculty who have made these proposals. In almost all cases these strategic proposals have been assessed and been shown to improve student success and persistence on this campus.

