

Basic Skills Committee

Tues. Aug. 20, 2013

4:00-5:00 Room 902

Adopted Minutes

Melissa called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

Susanna Gunther, Melissa Reeve, Genele Rhoads, Josh Scott, Barbara Villatoro, John Yu

I. Approve any remaining minutes from AY '12-13

Approved - May 8, 2013 minutes

II. Review 5-year goals

Melissa requested the Committee review the goals to check on progress now that the first of the five years has passed. English goals were very ambitious. Peter Cammish has looked at current Math 330 (feeder class to 104) data.

Genele suggested a need to get more students to continue with math, to offer more advising and counseling to keep them going, rather than skipping a semester or year, and look at closing persistence gaps. Those who stay in their cohort and in sequence have higher pass rates. It might be better to change the goal from success to persistence.

For first year activities a report was submitted last October and distributed at the meeting to help identify activities to support goals for the next report.

1. Goal 1 was successful with Umoja support, FYE, the writing of a strategic proposal for this year and next, and a commitment was made for supplemental instructors. Students are all taking English 360, Counseling 7, and math. Support of cohort models is good for persistence and a much higher persistence was seen in FYE, especially in math. Melissa expressed it will be interesting to see what happens this year and she hopes to see the same persistence in sequencing. The retention rate in math was nearly double. The goal is to get through Basic Skills and on to transfer level. John noted supplemental is an additional instructor in a section, not a separate section.

2. Goal 2 has persistence rates consistent with the goal, but what is happening needs to be identified.

3. Goal 3, supporting the growth of the ESL program, hasn't been done at all. The Committee had brainstormed how to expand the program.

4. Goal 4 was to support faculty development offered lot of opportunities for professional development, part of that funding goes to the Academic Success Center, \$20,000 was spent sending faculty to conferences and trainings and the same amount is earmarked for this year.

Three out of four activities had a lot of energy put into them.

Melissa attended the Student Equity Plan meeting today and was asked for Basic Skills documents that might relate. Some excerpts were woven into the report. How to better serve the district's ESL population is an important part of the plan to make progress in. Ideas to increase the ESL program included getting former students to work in the community to recruit more students and hire ESL ambassadors to disseminate program information, financial aid opportunities, etc. Job descriptions will be needed. Jane Berger and Melissa had conversations with Shemila and other recruiters who go to high schools. The students who would benefit from ESL don't always think they need it and it would be helpful for them to know what college ESL is and how it would help them advance. Some students will stay at adult schools. There is also a lot of mixed information regarding defunding of ESL adult school classes and a question if the College ESL offerings are appropriate for that population. College ESL is focused on preparing students for readiness for other courses at college while the adult schools focus more on life skills learning. The goal is worded to target local communities and building programs aligned with CTE. John pointed out there are good activities in the plans but one thing missing is technology. He suggested that BSI might look at getting funds from a science foundation. He spoke of flipping classes, put the best instructor on video, students watch the video before coming to class, then the classroom instructor helps with problems. Genele noted she has included flipping in the math plans and added that continuing to support and promote retention and success could be the tech part.

Josh reported the BSI English Committee is talking about ways to better identify placement for success and make ESL part of the conversation, possibly pulling students out of English classes for late start. Melissa added that one of the proposed projects was to develop alternate intake for English consistent with the same activity looking at impact from every component. In English there are concerns about not being placed accurately. The project is BSI funded and should be kept pretty broad to review through the year what will support the goal. The BSI report is due on October 10. Susanna will ask Barbara Illowsky if one of the five-year goals can be changed. Melissa will give a Basic Skills report to the Board of Trustees.

III. Genele's Ideas for Math

Genele presented on screen her math ideas for fall and spring and gave an overview.

- FYE – 2nd year: Improve Math Placement; 3 math courses offered for cohort; 3 FYE Math Teachers. After the FYE orientation, the three instructors gave a small Pearson test assessment, created a study plan with things students might need to review, and gave them the review before they came in for the assessment. This resulted in about one third of the students being reassigned. Plans are to continue next year along these lines to help get students in the right class.
- Complete a set of Math 330 Activities. A set for 330 has been completed and one for 320 is being finished.
- Maintain/Expand the online Math Guide. Maybe use more applied type problems contextualizing math and have the math guide online to maintain and ensure it is good. Counselors use it quite a bit.

- Second Chance Program for 330, 104. Talk to Sac City about their program. Corrine and Randy tried this program. When a student barely doesn't pass, they are asked if they'll review and take the final again. This may be expanded.
- Create more contextualized math (workshops?); CTE cooperation.
- Standard SLO assessment tool for 310, 320, 330. Adjuncts will be helped in assessing SLOs.
- Try some re-designed sections of 310 & 320 into flipped classrooms; create videos; research the use of more active learning and manipulatives; recruit embedded tutors. Susanna suggested speaking with Dean Morinec and there are whole conferences on embedded instruction.
- Coordinate with "Common Core" standards in local K-12 schools.
- Investigate re-implementing a lab for Math 310.
- FYE – Academic advising for 104 students into 11, 12, or 4.
- Plan a Math "Boot Camp" for summer 2014.
- Investigate offering 112 with another cohort of FYE students.

IV. Josh's ideas for English

Josh reported that the English Basic Skills Committee, currently down several members, is trying something different this year. The first goal is writing the program level assessment. They read SLOs for courses from the last couple years to use as the basis for the Committee to complete over the course of the year.

English 360 was created as an accelerated five-unit course and is in its fifth semester. It has been in some ways very successful with overall pass rates still slightly over 50%, which he would like to see higher, but persistence data shows improvement. Students who have taken English 305 (lowest level) average a 9-11% chance of ever passing English I, and the same students in 360 do significantly better. English 305 students have been passing English 360 in the 30% range. English 360 offers four to six sections and classes max out quickly. Students from any 360 group are doing much better at passing English 1—roughly 75% of students who pass 360 pass English 1 on their first attempt. The skill level students come in with varies. Students who complete all assignments and attend all classes are passing in very high numbers. English 370 has around 68% passing rate. In both 360 sections Josh taught, all 370-level students who made it to census ended up passing the class, and he believes these results are similar in other sections. Instructors have five hours per week with students and they are evaluated through portfolio assessments. English 305 students don't have to assess, so they maybe could have been placed higher. Some students just want to start at the beginning but the longer students are in these classes the less likely they are to complete.

Josh personally sees that the number of courses, five Basic Skills English, currently offered can be an obstacle for students. Big things the Committee is looking at this year include:

- Streamlining the Basic Skills sequence, they would like to see a 360 led sequence.
- Have optional labs, maximize benefits of labs.
- Conversion of English 305 to lab-based instruction.

- Significant revision of the CME rubric; making more explicit the CME function in the English department. Not all faculty are aware of how to use the rubric as a level of advancement. The rubric will be revised this semester and tied to outcomes.

V. Budget update

Melissa reported approximately \$65,000 will be available after all the approved proposals are funded for the current academic year. Sometimes funded proposals use less than what the Committee approved. She will email the budget information to everyone in preparation for decision making this year.

Genele reported that an interest email about embedded tutors garnered more responses than expected. Recruiting actual tutors won't happen this semester, but hopefully a few tutors can be recruited and paid for by the Tutoring Center, and then hopefully everything will be ready for spring. Melissa suggested basing a cost on responses received and how many classes she hopes to have staffed in the spring and put it into a proposal. Susanna opined it would be good to have embedded tutors in at least one of the DE classes for online class support as well.

Melissa requested members send her conference and professional development ideas to share with the Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

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