

Board Study Session | February 19, 2013

SMC Basic Skills Student Support and Intervention Projects

Project Priorities

ACADEMIC SUPPORT:

Supplemental Instruction

The Basic Skills Initiative supports the Supplemental Instruction program by providing resources to fund student workers that serve as Supplemental Instructors (SI's). Each year BSI funds all SI's for Math and English pre-college classes. These include Math 81, 84, 85, 31, 18, 20, and 32. In English this includes any C or B level course.

English Instructional Assistants-Writing Center and Accelerated courses

The Basic Skills Initiative is providing support for English Accelerated courses and the Writing Center by funding Instructional Assistants. The Instructional Assistants assist faculty who teach English 85 and English 20 courses by helping students complete directed learning activities for each course. Additionally, Instructional Assistants assist pre-college students on a one-on-one basis in the Writing Center.

Contextualized Math Modules

Math modules will be created to provide students with the sufficient math skills to successfully complete the second and third semester coursework in the Solar Photovoltaic Installation Certificate, as well as being successful in the workplace where math skills will be part of their job requirements. To that end, self-paced, online, industry-specific math modules would be developed with the assistance of the Math Department for students. These modules would also be used in other CTE departments to assist in providing students the necessary skills in Math to be successful in the designated CTE department. We are hoping to have the modules available to students through an app or mobile website. A total of six modules will be created.

CURRICULAR REDESIGN:

Accelerated Courses

A priority student success project included both the English and Math Departments departing from traditional course offerings in developmental areas and a move toward accelerated courses. A major goal of the college is to decrease the amount of semesters necessary to reach college level course work. English 85, Reading and Writing I, the entry level basic skills course, contextualizes reading and writing into a 5 unit class with a required lab. English 20, the B level course, also contextualizes reading and writing, combining English 21A, English Fundamentals I and English 23, Intermediate Reading and Vocabulary. The Math Department compressed Math 81, Basic Arithmetic and Math 84, Pre Algebra into Math 85. Math 31, Elementary Algebra and Math 18, Intermediate Algebra are currently in development to introduce Math 51. In addition, for STEM majors, Math 34 is currently in development combining Math 31 and Math 20, Intermediate Algebra.

Career Pathway Clusters-Themed Career Academies

Career pathway clusters are where teachers from across disciplines engage in a "pathway" curriculum (for e.g. Promo Pathways). The pathway is quite well defined for students, and teachers work together to dovetail curriculum so there is contextualization and integration of skills (math, reading, technology, public speaking). A very simple, scalable way to start a more general approach to contextualized learning is with themed composition/reading courses tailored to the kinds of real-life and academic reading/writing students will do in a field such as allied health, education, business, etc.

CURRICULAR REDESIGN (continued)

Early Childhood Education and Math Collaboration

Working closely with the Math Department, we will reserve spaces in a Math 85 course in Spring 2013 for ECE students. The course will be held on the Bundy campus and will include Supplemental Instruction for all students including ECE students.

Contextual General Education for Media Studies Majors

Course content will be contextualized within GE courses (including English and Math) for students in Promo Pathways and other media/arts/design programs to improve retention by adding relevance to careers. The instructors for these classes will be paid a stipend to work together to integrate curriculum across disciplines and all courses could potentially be contextualized for media-film-design studies to make the courses more relevant to students. These would be taken as part of a Career Pathway Model.

TRANSITION TO COLLEGE:

First Year student counseling

Additional counselors are funded by BSI in the Welcome Center to provide assistance to first time freshmen who place into the pre-college level. Counselors provide one-on-one assistance and conduct group counseling sessions for new students who place at the pre-college level. Counselors also assist with classroom presentations each semester to developmental English classes. Additionally, counselors will be assigned to assist with recruitment, and development of the Summer Jams program during the Spring 2013 semester.

Summer Jams in English and Math

First time freshmen who placed at the pre-college level in English and Math will receive contextualized instruction to be successful in Math and English classes. Students will receive instruction in English and Math that helps them understand how important English and Math are to developing the foundation for college success. Students will participate in group and hands on activities that help reinforce important course concepts. Students will also receive information on how to make their transition to college a successful one. Counseling workshops on study strategies, enrollment, financial aid, and navigating campus will be offered. The Jams will take place in Summer 2013. Faculty from English, Math, and Counseling are currently writing the curriculum for the Jams.

Assessment App

The Student Success Committee is developing an Assessment App to help students understand how important the assessment test is in relation to meeting their educational goals. The App will have an educational component which will educate students about the test and how to prepare to take the test. There will be a test readiness component which will have sample questions in English, ESL, and Math. The App is scheduled to be completed in the Spring of 2013. Eight faculty members from a variety of disciplines will conduct the interviews.

STAFF SUPPORTING BASIC SKILLS STUDENTS 2011-2012

English Department

Classified Staff

- 10 Part-time Permanent Instructional Assistants (11 month)
- 12 temporary part-time Instructional Assistants (6 month)
- 1 Full-time Tutoring Coordinator

Tutors/Student Workers

- 4 Supplemental Instructor Student Leaders working about 8 hours per week

Math Department

Classified Staff

- 7 Part-time Permanent Instructional Assistants (11 month)
- 1 Full-time Tutoring Coordinator

Tutors/Student Workers

- About 15 student tutors are hired each semester

Supplemental Instruction

Management Staff

- 1 Project Manager providing support for multiple disciplines including pre-college English and Math courses.

Tutors/Student Workers

- 25-30 student Tutors/Supplemental Instructor Student Leaders hired each semester for pre-college math courses.

ESL Department

Classified Staff

- 2 temporary part-time Instructional Assistants (6 month). The department is in the process of hiring a part-time permanent 11-month employee.

BASIC SKILLS AND STUDENT SUCCESS

Some Definitions

1. Supplemental Instruction – an instructional support intervention for which students who have excelled in a particular course are trained in a subsequent semester to develop and deliver group tutorial activities/exercises for students enrolled in that course. (Supplemental Instruction Leaders actually attend class sessions with the students to ensure that the activities/exercises are delivered in sync with the instructor’s presentation of course material.)
2. Gateway Course – a course that constitutes the initial experience for students pursuing a particular major. The course may be an introductory course in the discipline itself (Business 1 *Introduction to Business* for Business majors) or a general education course (Psychology 11 *Child Growth and Development* for Early Childhood Education majors).
3. Contextualized Learning – development of curriculum through which language or computation skills are presented through the lens of another discipline, using that discipline to provide content through which reading, writing, or math skills are developed (This practice is especially common in Career Technical Education disciplines, but can be used in any discipline and is not limited to basic skills levels.)
4. Cohort – a group of students sharing common characteristics (such as first-time college student, basic skills student in English or Math, honors student, etc.)
5. Boot Camp – one of the terms used to describe an intensive instructional program (often at the basic skills level) offered to students prior to their first semester in college. (“Summer Jams” is SMC’s version of a “boot camp.”)