

Basic Skills Meeting Agenda
Tuesday, September 21st
3:00-4:00pm Building 3-104

Present: Alicia Aguirre, Carla Stoner-Brito, Leonor Cabrera, Salumeh Eslamieh, Jeanne Gross, Denise Hum, Sandra Mendez, Michelle Morton, Elizabeth Terzakis, Rita Sabbadini, Greg Stoup, Yolanda Valenzuela

1. Update on items discussed at the last Basic Skills Meeting (Carla/Group Discussion) 20 min

a. Placement testing:

Carla talked to Bob Haick about what is being done to reach out to HS students and prepare students for the placement test: flyers & postcards emphasizing importance of the test, visits to high schools; when students first apply they get an e-mail with a link to practice tests; students encouraged to take math senior year (not required).
LEAP and August Math Jam do help students improve placement, but then there are no sections open for them to register for (see "shadow classes" item b).
Concern about placement for ESL students: placed at different levels; sometimes above their level; a lot of questions for Carla when she's visiting ESL classes. This question was studied by the English department, concluded the test wasn't great but it was working. Maybe a need to evaluate placement test for ESL with new sequence?

b. Availability basic skills classes ("shadow classes"? System for counselors to track students in need of spots?)

VPI Perkins brought up the idea of "shadow class" that would be ready to go and would open in the same time slot once a section had a long waiting list. How would this work? Would there be a place counselors could enter information on students needing courses? If waitlists were made longer on (e.g. 20), would students see that and get discouraged?
ESL students also need "shadow classes."
It would be best to open new sections ASAP. Would be hard for these students to catch up if they're starting week 3; often times weaker students to begin with.

c. ESL class visits Fall 2010

Initially planned workshops, decided instead on class visits.
Provided general information, certificate vs. degree (ACE and PASS), meeting with counselors. Did an evaluation.
Saw a lot of students multiple times. Might be more efficient to combine classes, bring all students at a particular level (though repetition can be good for ESL students).
Questions: what other mainstream classes can I take; what are majors; how do I balance when I place in different levels.
Still gauging how much info to give out. Some instructors would like counselors to go into more detail; some colleges have faculty and student ambassadors give ESL students tours.
Do we need more CRER classes? CRER 401 didn't fill Fall 2010 (do ESL students know about CRER classes?).

Note: LC's used to be hard to fill, now it seems like stand alone basic skills classes are harder to fill for English & Reading. Students are beginning to prefer LCs, more convenient. Should we go back to linking more 836 classes to CRER classes?
Math is still having trouble filling LC courses.

2. Update on UCSC Researchers (Michelle)

10 min

George Bunch, Eduardo Mosqueda, Ann Endris
Did study on testing and placement in California Community Colleges; following up looking at innovative practices for ESL / Generation 1.5 students
Grant I. Generation 1.5 students and language demands of community college
Grant II. Developing innovative practices, related to language demands question. Possibly building on what's being done in learning communities, ENGL/READ 836 and HIST in particular. Larger grant from federal department of education, most applicants don't get grant on first try. Will come to October Basic Skills Committee meeting
Questions:
Please send testing & placement report to committee
Please send a short description of the grant projects to help instructors formulate questions

3. Formulate Questions for Research (group discussion)

30 min

2. UCSC Researchers; Research Questions

- How can we track the impact of learning communities on students long term? E.g. where are students from Fall 2008 now?
- How does work/home impact students ability to be successful? Counselors hearing from a lot of students who are working longer hours, leaving school to help their families.
- Can we gather more information about the language background of students? Yolanda Valenzuela uses _____ language assessment in class, uses assessment to work with individual students. Could all 826 and 836 courses do a similar assessment in class at the beginning of the semester? Use to adapt/develop teaching strategies
- What are students' education backgrounds? How did they arrive at Cañada?
- For 826 students, where did they place on the scale (0 or 75)?
- Where are ESL Students going after level 4 (basic skills ENGL or ESL 400)? How do they make choices? Friends, counselors, instructors?
- Do ESL students think technology is helping or hindering them?
- What do students think? What do they consider challenging assignments?

Next Meeting: Tuesday, Oct. 19, 3:00-4:00pm