



LONG BEACH CITY COLLEGE

Report to the Superintendent-President

CALIFORNIA BENCHMARKING PROJECT

*Enhancing Institutional Effectiveness and Equity
Through Benchmarking*

A Collaborative Research Project with the
University of Southern California Center for Urban Education

Funded by the
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
and The Ford Foundation

JANUARY 2008

LONG BEACH CITY COLLEGE

TEAM MEMBERS

Team Co-Chairs	Team Members
<p>Bobbi Villalobos <i>Dean, School of Language Arts</i></p>	<p>Christiane Woerner <i>Faculty, English as a Second Language</i></p>
<p>Ruben Page <i>Transfer Center Coordinator Liberal Arts Campus</i></p>	<p>Jordan Fabish <i>Faculty, English (Reading)</i></p>
<p>Institutional Research</p>	<p>Linda Bell <i>Faculty, Mathematics</i></p>
<p>Fred Trapp <i>Administrative Dean, Institutional Research and Academic Services</i></p>	<p>Lisa Goddard <i>Faculty, English</i></p>
<p>Hannah Alford <i>Research Analyst II</i></p>	<p>Lydia Turner <i>Financial Aid Counselor</i></p>
<p>Research Associates</p>	<p>Matthew Lawrence <i>Faculty, Philosophy</i></p>
<p>Estela Mara Bensimon <i>Professor and Director USC Center for Urban Education</i></p>	<p>Meena Singhal <i>Dean, Academic Services</i></p>
<p>Loni Bordoloi <i>Research Assistant USC Center for Urban Education</i></p>	<p>Sabrina Sanders <i>Student Resource Program Specialist</i></p> <p>Trevor Rodriguez <i>Articulation Officer</i></p>

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Executive Summary

Community colleges are the main gateway into higher education. At Long Beach City College (LBCC), the largest proportion of first-time students (32%) in Fall 2006 reported their primary goal as transferring to a four-year institution to earn their baccalaureate degrees. However, a great many of these students do not have the benefits of a college preparatory curriculum in high school. At LBCC, 88% of first-time students who take assessment tests place into pre-college math, 49% into pre-college reading, 94% into pre-college writing, and 78% into pre-college English as a Second Language (ESL). Additionally, disproportionately more under-represented students assess into pre-college (or basic skills) level courses when compared with their White counterparts. In light of the data, the need to promote successful basic skills course completion and migration into transfer-level coursework at LBCC cannot escape notice.

The California Benchmarking Project (CBP) is a joint endeavor between the Center for Urban Education (CUE) at the University of Southern California and California community colleges to design strategies and tools to promote excellence in basic skills instruction and a strong transfer culture. The goals and activities of the project support the current priorities of LBCC, as articulated in the College Mission, 2005-2010 Educational Master Plan, 2007-2009 Board of Trustees Goals for Measuring and Improving Student Success, the Superintendent-President's 18-Month Agenda. In addition, CBP complements the strategies of the LBCC Student Success Plan developed by the Task-force for Improving College Readiness.

CBP conceptualizes a practitioner-driven culture of inquiry as an eight-step process. The steps are as follows:

1. Build teams to address institutional goals
2. Collect outcomes data relevant to the problem under examination (*"take stock"*)
3. Develop hypotheses to explain data (*"our hunches"*)
4. Set benchmarks to direct team's activities
5. Engage in inquiry activities to explore hypotheses
6. Act on findings from inquiry activities and implement changes
7. Evaluate effectiveness of newly implemented changes
8. Disseminate findings from inquiry activities and effected changes, and repeat cycle to further refine solutions

The LBCC team has completed steps 1-5 of the inquiry cycle to date with plans to complete steps 6-8 in the spring term of 2008.

With support from the Office of the Superintendent-President at LBCC, CBP convened an inquiry team of faculty members, administrators, and staff who are engaged in a data-driven effort to improve basic skills completion and transfer success rates. The team examined successful course completion data, disaggregated by race and ethnicity, in gateway (pre-transfer basic skills) and benchmark (transfer-level) courses. Among other findings, the team discovered the following:

- A very low percentage of students (33-37%) were successful¹ in basic skills courses Math 110 and Math 130
- About 40% of students enrolled in the basic skills course ENGL 105 were unsuccessful
- More than half the students enrolled in READ 882 were unsuccessful
- Among students who began their sequence in the lowest level, a minuscule number never enroll in and successfully complete

¹Success in a course is defined as an A, B, C or CR grade. Success rate is calculated by dividing the total number of successful grades by the total number of grades (A, B, C, CR, D, F, NC, I, W).

the benchmark course, especially among students who begin in Math 805 (four levels below transfer).

African-American and Hispanic students are overrepresented in basic skills courses (based on their share of the students population), yet they experience the highest rate of attrition through the course sequence into benchmark courses, repressing their transfer rates to four-year institutions.

The team developed a set of *hunches*, or hypotheses, to explain the data. The hunches framed questions for further inquiry. The team organized the hunches into four categories: institutional policies and practices (e.g. transfer information is difficult to navigate); academic and student services (e.g. difficulty of accessing counselors); faculty (e.g. inaccessible to students); and students (e.g. lack confidence and motivation). The team then set performance, diagnostic and process benchmarks, and laid the ground-work for their inquiry activities.

The team has been engaged with two major inquiry activities to explore the validity of their hunches (see pages 19-22 for hunches): a syllabus reflection exercise and a student learning assessment. The team members reviewed syllabi for clarity, completeness, and equity-conscious indicators. The latter includes communication of high expectations, incorporation of rigorous learning activities, consideration of students' needs and aspirations, provision for multiple resources for academic assistance; connection to students' cultural and historical backgrounds; and promotion of academic transformation and empowerment. The in-class assessment was a tool to solicit anonymous feedback from students on effective and ineffective instructional practices. The two inquiry activities

complement each other: the former investigates implicit messages communicated to students through the syllabus and an opportunity to evaluate the syllabus design, while the latter asks students to share practices that help them succeed. When the findings from the two activities are viewed collectively, they provide a portrait of teaching practices and classroom culture that promote student success.

The team's findings from the inquiry activities confirmed many of their hunches about obstacles to student success. The syllabi typically do not emphasize instructor accessibility or campus resources available to students. They generally seemed to adopt a punitive stance towards students, and did not



Eloy Oakley, LBCC Superintendent-President (far left) and Jack Daniels, LA Southwest President (far right) with the principal investigators of the California Benchmarking Project, Alicia Dowd and Estela Bensimon

offer course objectives or the benefits of the course to students' future goals and aspirations. There was also little evidence in the syllabi that culturally relevant materials or activities would be incorporated in the course. The in-class assessment revealed that students seek accessible and understanding instructors who facilitate group discussion, interactive exercises, and educational games. They



**Ruben Page,
Co-Chair California
Benchmarking Project
Counselor**



Ruben Page is the LAC Transfer Center Coordinator. He also participated in the “Missing 87” Project investigating the transfer gap at LBCC.

As a counselor and transfer coordinator at Long Beach City College, I have seen the struggles that students face in attempting to transfer to a university and achieve their dreams of obtaining a baccalaureate degree. A student’s path from their first basic skills courses at a community college to transfer level courses required for university admissions can seem long and daunting. The California Benchmarking Project was of special interest to me because it addressed sources of possible support for both our students and the Long Beach City College community helping to lead and support them to their educational, career and personal goals.

respond to concrete examples and analogies drawn from their experience to illuminate the instructors’ point. They appreciate instructors who provide course objectives and clear syllabi with calendars of activities.

In response to the findings, the team will organize a series of three workshops to address constructing student-centered, equity-minded syllabi in the spring term. The team has also made preliminary recommendations to address basic skills course completion and migration into transfer-level courses below (please see pages 28-30 for the full discussion).

- Develop suggested guidelines regarding syllabus preparation in conjunction with Academic Senate
- Develop model syllabi in all departments in conjunction with faculty members. Each department can create a syllabus template, based on their vision of an exemplary syllabus, which includes relevant information for that subject area.
- Encourage reflective collaboration among faculty members
- Promote campus discussion on the equity-minded practitioner
- Organize Flex workshops around promoting student-centered learning
- Promote awareness of student services and campus resources so all faculty members are empowered to refer students
- Promote a culture of faculty-student interaction
- Consider ways of incorporating these recommendations into faculty search committees and hiring criteria
- Review current faculty orientation programming

Introduction

Community colleges are the main gateway into higher education, enrolling more than half of all undergraduate students each year. In California, the community college system serves 2.5 million students each year, the largest system of higher education in the world. These community colleges address the needs of a diverse population of learners who come to college with varying levels of academic preparation and educational goals. While many students enroll at the community college to acquire job skills, earn a career certificate or Associate Degree, and/or build essential academic skills, most community college students have their eye on the baccalaureate degree. According to Discroll (2007) at the Policy Analysis for California Education, more than two-thirds of first-time freshmen (ages 17 to 20) enter the community college with the main goal of transferring to a four-year institution and the ultimate goal of earning a bachelor's degree. At Long Beach City College (LBCC), the largest proportion of first-time students (32%) in Fall 2006 reported transfer as their primary educational goal on

their college application (refer to Table 1 for a breakdown of educational goals).

While most students enter the community colleges with high aspirations to transfer to a four-year college or university, many students will need remediation in reading, writing, and/or computational skills, often not prepared for college-level work. According to the California Research and Planning Group and the Center for Student Success (2005) approximately 70 to 80% of California Community College students need work in developmental mathematics and English courses. A little more than one-third of entering students enroll in a basic skills course. At Long Beach City College, 88% of first-time students who take the placement test assess into pre-college math, 49% into pre-college reading, 94% into pre-college writing, and 78% into pre-college ESL (English as a Second Language). These basic skills students face a huge challenge: they will need to successfully make the transition from basic skills to college-level work in order to realize their transfer goal.

Table 1. Educational Goals, First-time Students, Fall 2006 (N=5,251)

Highest Educational Goal	Count	Percentage
Transfer to a 4-Year Institution	1,695	32%
Associate Degree	178	3%
Vocational/Career	854	16%
Personal Enrichment	173	3%
Basic Skills/GED	272	5%
Undecided	716	14%
Unreported	1,363	26%
Total	5,251	100%

*Long Beach City College has one of
the most diverse student
populations in California.*

Our student population is:

- *35% Hispanic/Latino*
- *13% African-American/Black*
- *17% Asian/Pacific Islander/Filipino*
- *26% White*

(Spring 2007)



With its open-door policy, California Community Colleges enroll disproportionately more students from groups that have been historically under-represented in higher education, including ethnic minority groups (African American, Latino/Hispanic, and American Indian) and students from socio-economically and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. For many of these students, the community college is the best opportunity for the college degree. However, disproportionately more under-represented students assess into pre-college level courses (basic skills) when compared with their White counterparts. The large numbers of academically under-prepared, first-generation minority college students who have high aspirations to transfer and earn a baccalaureate degree presents both a challenge and opportunity for California's community colleges.

- *The **challenge** is to find effective ways of develop students' foundation skills so that they can transition into the college curriculum successfully.*
- *This challenge, while admittedly formidable, is an **opportunity** for community colleges to demonstrate that excellence in basic skills education can measurably increase the number of students who become eligible for transfer to four-year institutions.*

California Benchmarking Project

The *California Benchmarking Project* is a joint endeavor between the Center for Urban Education (CUE) at the University of Southern California and California community colleges to design strategies and tools that enhance institutional **effectiveness, efficiency, and equity**. The foundation of institutional effectiveness, efficiency, and equity is **excellence in basic skills and a strong transfer culture**. Excellence in a basic skills program and a strong transfer culture are made possible by expert and reflective practitioners. Practitioners gain expertise and meaningful knowledge by participating in facilitated rigorous assessment activities of how basic skills and transfer are “done” at one’s own campus and in peer campuses.

Project goals and goals of the college

With support from the Office of the Superintendent-President at LBCC, the California Benchmarking Project (CBP) has convened an *inquiry team* of faculty members, administrators, and staff who are engaged in a data-driven effort to improve basic skills completion and transfer success rates. Their goals are as follows:

- *Increase the number of students, particularly African-American and Latino students, who successfully complete their first transfer-level course after beginning college in basic skills level courses (and ultimately increase transfer rates)*
- *Develop an evidence-based model of assessment to improve college effectiveness*
- *Harness untapped practitioner expertise to produce equitable transfer outcomes*

The team’s primary activities are as follows:

- ***Monitor*** and set goals for increasing successful course completion rates from term to term (***Performance Benchmarking***)
- ***Diagnose*** successful instructional, administrative, and counseling strategies by investigating effective practices within colleges (***Diagnostic Benchmarking***) and among peer colleges (***Process Benchmarking***)
- ***Develop*** implementation and evaluation plans to analyze effectiveness by race and ethnicity in a systematic manner

The goals and activities of the project support the current priorities of the college as articulated in the College Mission, 2005-2010 Educational Master Plan, 2007-2009 Board of Trustees Goals for Measuring and Improving Student Success, and the Superintendent-President’s 18-Month Agenda (see Table 2). All are focused on strengthening the basic skills program, documenting improvements in student learning outcomes, and increasing transfer success.

In addition, the goals and activities of CBP complement the strategies of the Long Beach City College Student Success Plan, a comprehensive plan addressing the needs of the LBCC students, especially the under-prepared students. The Student Success Plan is the outcome of the work of the Taskforce for Improving College Readiness, appointed faculty and staff representing all discipline areas and programs, who engaged in a semester-long self-assessment process evaluating current programs, practices, and procedures at LBCC addressing students and their needs.

Table 2. Alignment of California Benchmarking Goals with Campus Priorities

GOALS OF THE CALIFORNIA BENCHMARKING PROJECT



Increase the number of students, particularly African-American students and Latinos, who successfully complete their first transfer-level course after beginning college in “basic skills” level courses (and ultimately increase transfer rates).

Develop an evidence-based model of assessment to improve college effectiveness.

Harness untapped practitioner expertise to produce equitable transfer outcomes.

LBCC Goal or Priority	Excerpts Articulating Goals That Are In Sync with CBP Goals
College Mission	“The college develops students’ college-level skills and expands their general knowledge, enables their transfer to four-year institutions...”
Educational Master Plan	<p>Strategies for Learning Goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhance student retention, persistence, and progression so students can meet their educational and career goals ▪ Foster and encourage innovation and creativity in instruction and support services ▪ Develop and implement a college-wide effort to better address the needs of under-prepared students <p>Strategy for Equity Goal: Develop equity measures for the following areas: Access/Pathways, Retention, Excellence, Institutional Receptivity, and Transfer Readiness</p> <p>Strategies for Teamwork/Organizational Development Goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employ qualitative and quantitative data and analysis to promote substantive dialogue and facilitate problem solving and decision making ▪ Create and facilitate opportunities for informal interactions across organizational boundaries
Board of Trustees Goals for Measuring and Improving Student Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor implementation strategies and their results to improve LBCC’s standing on the ARCC student success measurements, including results by ethnicity ▪ Review a report on LBCC’s transfer success programs such as the Honor’s Program to ensure that the needs of transfer oriented students are being met
Superintendent-President’s 18 Month Agenda for the Advancement of Student Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a culture of transfer ▪ Develop a plan to increase student recruitment and retention ▪ Examine the college’s Essential Skills Program and develop a plan with a focus on providing comprehensive coordinated serves to address the unique needs of LBCC students and improve their success ▪ Establish a culture of diversity and inclusion through the critical examination of the data collected in the Equity for All initiative for the purpose of achieving equality in student participation rates

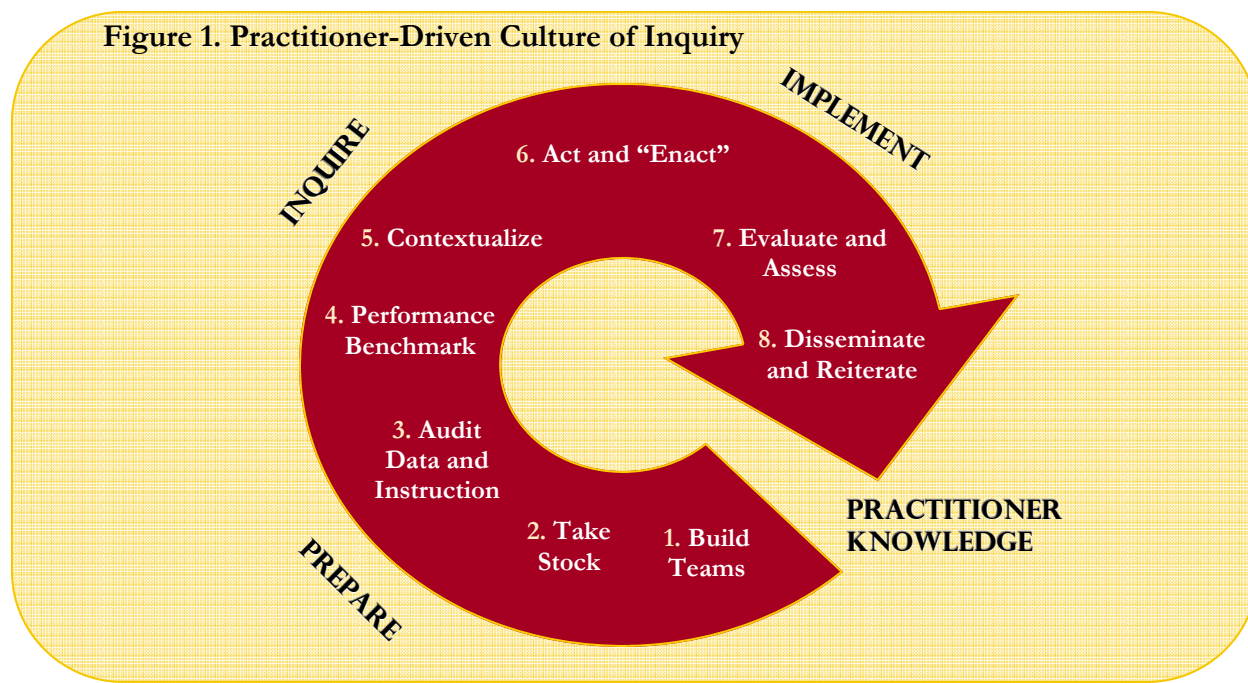
The 8-Step Practitioner-Driven Cycle of Inquiry

A culture of inquiry in educational settings is characterized by “administrators and faculty members who identify and address problems through purposeful analysis of data about student learning and progress” (Dowd, 2005, p. 5). Practitioners engage in a continuous cycle of data collection and interpretation, and data-driven action. CBP involves *inquiry teams* at three community colleges, Long Beach City College, Los Angeles Southwest College, and Rio Hondo College, who conduct research on their own campuses. These three colleges provide leadership in the development of practitioner-driven assessment. Information gathering and analysis requires practitioners to have some familiarity with quantitative and qualitative research methods. CUE facilitators support practitioners in their efforts by providing guidance with constructing assessment tools, interpreting findings, and refining solutions. In order to successfully conduct diagnostic and process benchmarking, CBP also includes approximately twenty California community colleges as project partners who can serve as a peer group for identifying effective practices.

Eight California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC) campuses will be project liaisons to reflect the four-year college responsibility for student transfer success. CBP conceptualizes a practitioner-driven culture of inquiry as an eight-step process. The steps are:

1. *Build teams to address institutional goal*
2. *Collect outcomes data relevant to the problem under examination (taking stock)*
3. *Develop hypotheses to explain data (hunches)*
4. *Set benchmarks to direct team’s activities*
5. *Engage in inquiry activities to explore hypotheses*
6. *Act on findings from inquiry activities and implement changes*
7. *Evaluate effectiveness of newly implemented changes*
8. *Disseminate findings from inquiry activities and effected changes, and repeat cycle to further refine solutions*

The LBCC *inquiry team* has completed steps 1-5 of the inquiry cycle to date with plans to complete steps 6-8 in the spring term.



Building an “Inquiry Team”

The Long Beach City College *inquiry team* was formed in Summer 2007. Members were appointed by the Office of the Superintendent-President and included faculty from math, English, reading, ESL, and philosophy, and administrators and staff from the academic services, articulation, research, and student service areas. The team members demonstrate commitment to building excellence in basic skills instruction and a strong transfer. The team, as a whole, benefits from the diverse perspectives, knowledge bases, and expertise each member brings.

The LBCC *inquiry team* has met once a month since the project started in August 2007. The calendar below documents its activities over the past fall semester.

Date of Meeting	Activities
August 16, 2007 USC Center for Urban Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collected baseline data, including course success rates and migration through basic skills to transfer-level courses in mathematics, English (composition), reading, and ESL ▪ Integrated data with curriculum maps showing the pathways from <i>gateway</i> basic skills to <i>benchmark</i> transfer-level courses in key discipline areas ▪ Developed <i>hunches</i> to provide preliminary explanations of inequitable outcomes to jumpstart practitioners’ investigation
September 11, 2007 Long Beach City College	Developed protocol for first inquiry activity, the syllabus reflection exercise
October 23, 2007 Long Beach City College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reviewed syllabi in basic skills (pre-transfer) courses for math, English, reading, and ESL and identified recurring elements that promote or create barriers to student learning ▪ Developed protocol for second inquiry activity, the <i>I Learn Best</i> assessment
October 31, 2007 Flex Day Workshop Long Beach City College	Team members organized a workshop to provide faculty (those teaching math, English, reading, and ESL) with a forum to share teaching practices they found effective in basic skills courses
November 13, 2007 Long Beach City College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussed team’s recommendations based on findings from the syllabus reflection exercise ▪ Administered the <i>I Learn Best</i> assessment to students enrolled in basic skills courses
December 11, 2007 Long Beach City College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reviewed findings from the <i>I Learn Best</i> assessment and identified instructional practices that enhance student learning ▪ Discussed team’s recommendations based on findings from <i>I Learn Best</i> assessment

“Taking Stock”

In the second step of the Practitioner-Driven Cycle of Inquiry, the LBCC *inquiry team* examined current data that revealed the performance of basic skills students in *gateway* (pre-transfer) and *benchmark* (transfer-level) courses.

Curriculum maps

The team began *taking stock* by examining curriculum maps (see Appendix A) sketching the sequence of courses from the lowest level basic skills course to the first transfer-level course in English (composition), reading, and math. The English and reading curriculum maps also described the migration from ESL to English and reading courses. The curriculum maps were useful in pulling the data into context, for example, basic skills students who begin their reading sequence of courses in READ 880 will have to enroll in and successfully complete four reading courses before moving on to the transfer-level reading course. The pathway to transfer is a long one for these basic skills students.

With the guidance of team members teaching in the discipline, the team identified one *gateway* course for each area. The *gateway* course represents a pre-transfer course that is a prerequisite to the transfer level course, or the *benchmark* course. A student who enrolls in the *gateway* course demonstrates the wish to complete the Associate Degree or transfer to a four-year institution. Enrolling a large proportion of students, the *gateway* courses have lower success completion rates than other courses. By focusing on the *gateway* courses, the *inquiry team* can gauge the experience of basic skills students in the path to transfer. Students who successfully complete the *benchmark* course are likely to become *transfer ready* and transfer to a four-year institution.

Baseline data: Course success rates

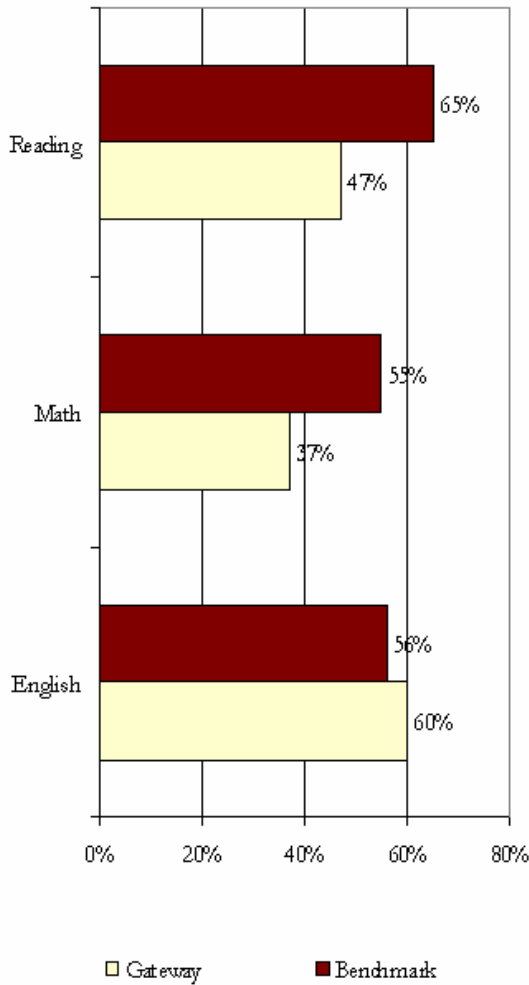
Next, the team investigated the baseline data: successful course completion and migration rates. The successful course completion rates (see Appendix B) were a snapshot of basic skills student performance in *gateway* and *benchmark* courses in Fall 2006. Success in a course was defined as an A, B, C, or CR (credit) grade and all other grades were considered non-successful. Successful course completion rates in the *benchmark* courses only included students who were able to enroll in the course by successfully completing the *gateway* or other prerequisite pre-transfer course. The data did not include students who directly placed into the *benchmark* course. The course success data revealed the following findings:

- *About 60% of students enrolled in ENGL 105 (one level below transfer) in Fall 2006 were successful;*
- *However, fewer basic skills and ESL students (56%) were successful in the benchmark course, ENGL 1;*
- *An alarmingly low number of students (33%-37%) were successful in the two courses below transfer (MATH 110, Beginning Algebra, and MATH 130, Intermediate Algebra);*
- *Among basic skills students who enrolled in transfer-level math, more found success (55%);*
- *Less than half of students enrolled in READ 882, the gateway course, were successful;*
- *Among students who migrated into READ 82, the benchmark course, through READ 880-883, more than two-thirds were successful in the course.*



Figure 2. Course Success Completion Rates, Summarized

Fall 2006



The successful course completion rates for the Benchmark courses only include students who previously enrolled in a lower level course in the same discipline. It does not include students who directly placed into the transfer-level course.

The team dug deeper into the data by disaggregating the numbers by race and ethnicity. This new layer of data revealed equity gaps in the course success outcome:

- *Disproportionately fewer African American students were successful in the gateway and benchmark courses for English and math, and the gateway courses for reading.*
- *Hispanic students performed worse in the benchmark English, math, and reading courses when compared with the average.*

Baseline data: Migration rates

While the successful course completion data offered a snapshot of students in one term, the migration data tracked a specific cohort and measured their performance in subsequent terms and courses, disaggregated by race and ethnicity. The cohort included students who began their sequence of English, math, and/or reading courses in the lowest basic skills level (ENGL 801A, MATH 805, and READ 880, respectively) in Fall 2003. The team tracked the cohort into subsequent terms and measured whether they successfully completed the initial course, enrolled in the next course, and successfully completed the next course by Spring 2007. The migration rate was calculated by dividing the number of students in the cohort who enrolled in the benchmark course by the total cohort of students who began in the lowest course.

The team compared the migration rates of the previous cohort with students who began their sequence of English, math, and/or reading courses in levels higher than the lowest basic skills course, but lower than the *benchmark* course in Fall 2003 (ENGL 105, MATH 110 or MATH 110A, and READ 882, respectively).

The migration data revealed the following:

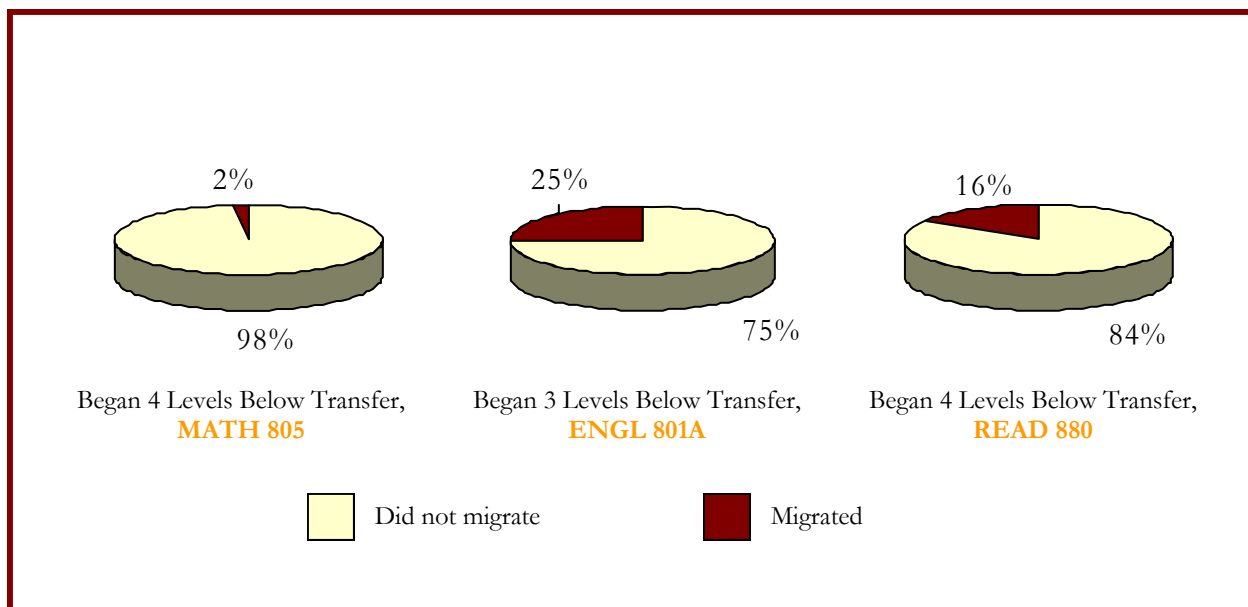
- *Among students who began their sequence of courses in the lowest level, a minuscule number ever enroll in and successfully complete the benchmark course, especially among students who begin in MATH 805 (4 levels below transfer). It is important to note that students' stated educational goal was not taken into consideration. All students, regardless of goal, was tracked in the analyses.*
- *Although a small figure, students who begin their English, math, and reading courses higher up in the sequence (but below the transferable benchmark course) have a higher migration rate than students who began in lower level courses.*
- *Disproportionately fewer African American students who begin in basic skills ever migrate into the transferable benchmark course, when compared with other groups.*

See Appendix B for detailed tables describing the migration of basic skills students into transfer level courses.

What the data revealed

The baseline data and curricular maps, examined collectively, reveal a disturbing picture. They demonstrate that students from various racial/ethnic backgrounds do not uniformly progress through the basic skills course sequences and into the transfer-level courses. African American and Hispanic students are overrepresented in basic skills courses (based on their share of the student population), yet they experience the highest rate of attrition through the course sequence. As a result, they are under-represented in the transfer-level courses and their transfer rates to four-year institutions are repressed.

Figure 3. Percentage of Basic Skills Students (Fall 2003) Who Enroll in the Transferable Benchmark Course by Spring 2007




“Our Hunches”

Based on the baseline data, the team engaged in a brainstorming exercise and asked, “*Why don’t lower level students progress into transfer-level courses?*” Each team member contributed to a list of *hunches* or a set of hypotheses explaining the data; the *hunches* provided a starting point for our investigations. The team organized the *hunches* into four categories: institutional policies and practices, academic and student services, faculty, and students. Within each category, the team distinguished between *hunches* that dealt with factors within the realm of the college’s influence (e.g., raising students’ confidence) and *hunches* that are beyond the college’s control (e.g., inadequate academic preparation). The team members used the *hunches* to frame questions for further inquiry.

The following table describes the *hunches* the team identified as being factors the college can influence, by theme.

Table 3. Hunches Explaining Low Course Success Rates and Migration to Transfer

Students	Faculty	Policies & Practices	Academic & Students Services
Lack confidence and motivation, easily defeated	Do not address student anxiety about math, writing, etc.	Basic skills curriculum is difficult to navigate	Process of making appointment with counselor is daunting
Under-utilize academic and student support services	Inaccessible to students	Transfer information and the general educational plan is difficult to navigate	No link between services and courses
Unaware of career opportunities and goals	Fail to match teaching styles to students’ learning styles	Basic skills students are allowed to take transfer-level courses in many disciplines	Adequacy and quality of academic services not consistent among learning centers
Need support with managing school, work, and family	Lack of innovation	Campus culture makes it too easy for students to give up and quit	
Lack study and time management skills	Unaware of the unique needs and profile of basic skills students		
	Unaware of available resources for students		

Setting Benchmarks

Dowd (2007) describes benchmarking as “*a process of comparing educational practices in one locale . . . to established standards, to prior performance, and to the practices and outcomes of peer colleges*” (p. 413). CBP is engaged in three types of benchmarking activities to enhance institutional effectiveness.

Performance benchmarking involves making comparisons of selected performance indicators over a period of time. Performance benchmarking measures improvements in institutional effectiveness and equity. The *inquiry team* evaluated baseline successful course completion rates, disaggregated by race and ethnicity, for basic skills students enrolled in the *benchmark* course (Fall 2006 data). It then set benchmark goals for successful course completion rates for Fall 2009, Fall 2010, and Fall 2011. In addition, for groups whose course completion rate consistently fell below the average, an equity adjustment was made to their goal. In addition to increasing success for basic skills students who enroll in transfer courses, the project aims to achieve equity in student outcomes. An equity adjustment is made by matching the under-represented group’s goals to be equal to the overall average goals. Over the next five years, the team will monitor progress towards our performance benchmark goals to assess our impact on basic skills student success in basic skills and transfer courses.

Effective practices benchmarking is used to “*identify practices that practitioners on other campuses, and/or the research and policy literature, consider effective*” (p. 413). The team conducted diagnostic benchmarking through its inquiry activities. The team conducted a literature review to identify exemplary practices for basic skills education and for supporting student transfer to four-year colleges. We then designed a protocol containing indicators of such practices,

colleges. The team then designed a protocol containing indicators of such practices, and used the protocols to compare instructional practices at LBCC against documented standards of effective practices. Findings from the inquiry activities reveal inequitable or ineffective practices that may adversely impact student learning outcomes.

Process benchmarking brings “*two or more organizations into an in-depth comparative examination of a specific core practice*” (Dowd, 2005, p. 7). The team has already developed a data-rich picture of LBCC’s campus culture and instructional practices through the fall inquiry activities. It will conduct a similar set of inquiry activities in the spring during a site visit at a peer college. Through the site visit, the team will “*explore the use of exemplary practices in another setting to determine how, when, and why such practices are effective*” (Dowd, 2007, p. 414). As a result, the team will have a “*point of comparison for [our] own campus culture, while serving to stimulate thinking about innovation and change*” (Dowd, 2007, p. 414). The team has already drawn up a list of peer colleges, and will conduct site visits at selected institutions next spring.

California Benchmarking Project is engaged in three types of benchmarking activities to enhance institutional effectiveness:

- 1. Performance Benchmarking**
- 2. Effective Practices Benchmarking**
- 3. Process Benchmarking**

Inquiry Activities and Findings

The team members have been engaged with two major inquiry activities to explore their hunches (see pages 19-22 for hunches): a syllabus reflection exercise and an assessment of student learning habits and processes. The team members employed their hunches as research questions to frame their analysis of teaching practices and artifacts in basic skills courses. An artifact refers to a tangible item that signals messages about the larger institutional culture of which it is a product (Long Beach City College Library, “Doing Research on Cultural Artifacts”). In this context, an artifact refers to a document that is connected to classroom practices such as syllabi, handouts, exercises, etc. We chose basic skills course syllabi as artifacts for examination because they not only set the blueprint for classroom instructional activities, they reflect the classroom culture. Syllabi convey messages to students through their organization, tone, values and content. It reflects the instructor’s educational philosophy, teaching practices and attitude towards students. The exercise prompted team member Jordan Fabish to aptly describe the syllabus as a “*microcosm of the classroom.*” To strengthen our findings from the syllabi reflection, we administered the *I Learn Best* assessment to students enrolled in basic skills courses. The assessment provided students with an opportunity to report instructional practices they have found beneficial for their learning. The two inquiry activities complement each other: the former investigates unconscious messages communicated to students through the syllabus, while the latter asks students to share practices that help them succeed. When the findings from the two activities are reviewed collectively, they provide a portrait of teaching practices and classroom culture that promote student success.

who teach basic skills courses in a flex day workshop this past October. Team members Matthew Lawrence and Hannah Alford led the workshop with support from CUE facilitators. The workshop consisted of a brief presentation on basic skills course migration data, followed by break-out sessions where participants reflected on the data and shared ideas, methods and practices in their teaching repertoire that push students to succeed (refer to Appendix E). Faculty members who teach basic skills courses indicated they were unaware of the extent of the problem in course migration, particularly for students of color. Workshop evaluations show that participants found the discussion component with their colleagues particularly helpful. During the discussion, workshop participants tended to share effective practices *and* their frustrations with reaching out to students. This suggests that creating a space where faculty members and administrators can freely discuss instructional practices without fear of judgment may positively enhance their professional development.

Syllabi reflection exercise

The syllabus is oftentimes the first point of contact between the student and the instructor. It provides a significant first impression for a student introduction (Gravalia, Hummel, Wiley & Huitt, 1999) and sets a tone that is “*warm and friendly, formal, condescending or confrontational*” (Slattery & Carlson, 2005, p. 161). It can be used as a teaching tool, referring students to resources available to them, and providing additional learning tools and other resources to assist in their skill development (Smith & Razzouk, 1993). Slattery and Carlson (2005) describe the three main functions of the syllabus as providing motivation, structure, and evidence. The syllabus provides the motivation for

“students to engage with the course,” the structure delineates “a clear map” for the purpose and plan of the course, and the evidence outlines the “policies” and “philosophy” of the course instruction (pp. 159-164).

The team members reviewed 13 syllabi for gateway courses from which the instructors’ identifying information was redacted (e.g., names, contact information, office locations, office hours, and course section numbers). Syllabi were randomly distributed out of a sample of 33 documents. The team developed a protocol based on its literature review to examine the document for clarity, completeness, and equity-conscious indicators. The latter includes communication of high expectations, incorporation of rigorous learning activities, consideration of students’ needs and aspirations, provision of multiple resources for academic assistance, connection to students’ cultural and historical backgrounds, and promotion of academic transformation and empowerment (the complete protocol is available in Appendix C).

The syllabus reflection exercise revealed differences in tone, teaching methods, assessment practices, and respect for students among instructors in different departments at LBCC. The charts in Figures 4-9 show the connections between the team’s hunches and findings from the inquiry activities. The boxes with the findings include team members’ generalized observations of the syllabi and representative examples drawn from their reflections. A more detailed description of the findings from the syllabus reflection then follows.

Figure 4. : In what ways do syllabi promote or impede students’ confidence and motivation? (Part 1 of 3)



Baseline Data

Minority students, particularly African American and Latino/a students, succeed at lower rates compared to their peers in composition, reading, and math.



Hunch

Students lack confidence and motivation.



Findings

Syllabi rarely demonstrate high expectations.
“It was not clearly conveyed that all students are expected to succeed. In fact, the section about recommendation to the next class seemed to suggest that some will probably fail.” – Matt Lawrence, English 105

Syllabi rarely have an encouraging tone.
“The text is often condescending and punitive. There is only one mention of ‘we’ in the syllabus.”
 – Christiane Woerner, Math 130
“The tone of the document was very disciplinary. The only positive statement was ‘Welcome to xxx!’”
 – Trevor Rodriguez, ESL 33X

Syllabi generally do not communicate the benefits of the course outside the classroom.
 One English 105 syllabus states it *“will help students become successful in their overall college career.”*
 – Ruben Page

Figures 5 and 6 : In what ways do syllabi promote or impede students' confidence and motivation? (Parts 2 and 3 of 3)

Baseline Data

Minority students, particularly African American and Latino/a students, succeed at lower rates compared to their peers in composition, reading, and math.



Hunch

Faculty members do not address student anxieties about reading, writing or math.



Findings

Only one syllabus explicitly “acknowledges that writing can be frustrating and that students need not suffer alone.” – Matt Lawrence, English 105

“There isn’t any acknowledgement of what may be considered math phobia. Past experiences/ fears not addressed.” – Lisa Goddard, Math 110



Hunch

Students need support with managing school, work and family responsibilities.



Findings

Few syllabi provided a comprehensive calendar of activities. “The lack of a course calendar lends itself to additional challenges for non-traditional college students who work full-time and/or are heads of households.”—Sabrina Sanders, Math 110

Few syllabi demonstrated that students would have frequent and timely opportunities for feedback. “Based on a 16-week semester, 5 homework assignments appear too minimal in providing students with an opportunity to strengthen their math skills or hold them accountable for meeting learning objectives.”—Sabrina Sanders, Math 110

Figure 7. In what ways do syllabi facilitate utilization of academic and student support services?

Figure 8. In what ways do the syllabi demonstrate the accessibility of instructors?¹

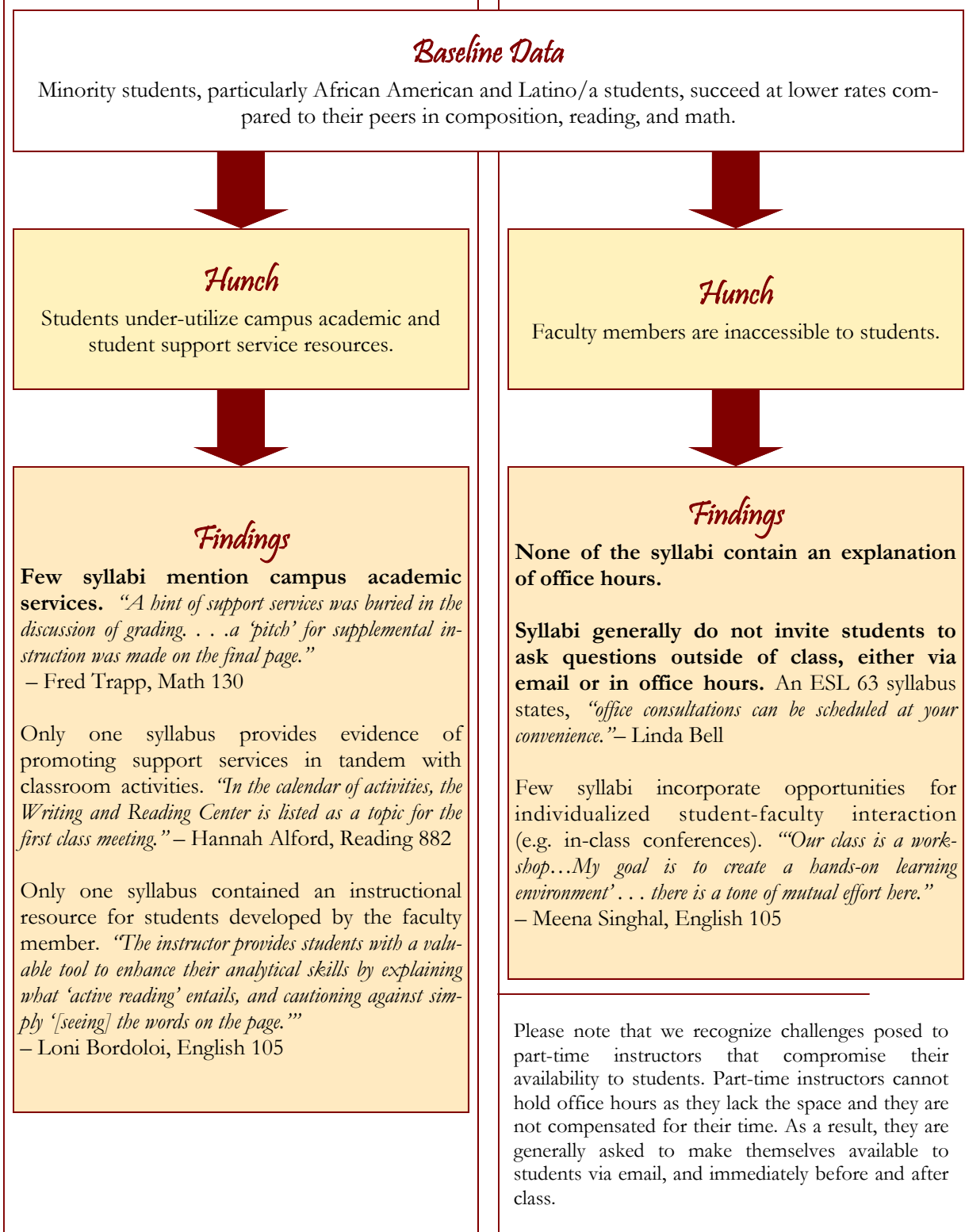


Figure 9. In what ways do syllabi demonstrate innovation in teaching approaches?

Baseline Data

Minority students, particularly African American and Latino/a students, succeed at lower rates compared to their peers in composition, reading, and math.



Hunch

Faculty members display a lack of innovation.
Their teaching styles do not match students' learning styles.



Findings

Syllabi show little evidence of being culturally inclusive.

"No statement acknowledging diversity." – Christiane Woerner, Math 130.

"Gets the sense that the instructor does want the students to ask themselves who the authors are writing to (the audiences), and not just what the authors are writing about. This may be a vehicle to incorporate discussion on cultural or historical backgrounds."—Ruben Page, English 105

Syllabi show little evidence of instructional variety.

"Syllabus seems to suggest the class is run as a strict lecture environment." – Lisa Goddard, Math 110

"Some indication that a variety of instructional techniques will be used, as evidenced by the 'diversity of assignments and exercises as well as in the use of peer review'."—Matt Lawrence, English 105

The team members found the exercise helped them reflect on their own syllabus and instructional practices. For example, one team member who is an ESL instructor plans to incorporate diverse authors who have written about the immigrant experience, and obtain student feedback regarding class activities on a regular basis throughout the semester. Other team members discuss campus support services in class, but now plan to incorporate them into their syllabi. The team members found the syllabi elements listed below of particular concern:

1. Instructor Accessibility. The syllabi generally do not indicate that the instructor is available to answer questions and help students outside of class. While we understand that part-time instructors face challenges that limit their interaction with students in out-of-class settings, the syllabi could still adopt a more welcoming tone and invite students to ask questions in class, via email, or during office hours. Other practical considerations include providing students with a brief explanation of office hours' function, and timing office hours so students can actually take advantage of them. E.g., *"Office hours are spread throughout afternoons on Mondays through Thursdays, which is appropriate if this is a traditional morning class, but challenging for evening or Friday/Saturday courses"*
– Sabrina Sanders, Math 110

2. Forms of Support. The syllabi contain little documentation that existing campus services are publicized to students. This state of affairs may have arisen due to confusion about available resources among full- and part-time faculty members. Only one syllabus offered an instructional resource created by the faculty member to facilitate students' development of analytical skills. Faculty members may very well provide students with informative handouts throughout the semester, but embedding a foundational resource in the syllabus itself is unique: it communicates the instructors' commitment to students, and signals to students that their skill enhancement is integral to the purpose of the course.

3. Discipline. The syllabi generally seemed to adopt an authoritarian stance towards students. According to Bobbi Villalobos, the ESL 63 syllabus states, *"civilized behavior befitting professional men and women is the standard of the class" . . . sounding like a mean parent doesn't encourage creativity or critical and reflective thinking.*" Two syllabi are unique in that they explicitly acknowledge both students' and instructors' responsibilities in maintaining a positive learning environment. Hannah Alford reports, *"the [Reading 882] instructor states, I will come to class well prepared, treating you with courtesy and fairness, and I expect the same from you."* Similarly, Meena Singhal notes that an English 105 syllabus states, *"I will treat you and your fellow colleagues with respect, and I expect you to treat me and your fellow students with respect as well."*



4. Relevance of Course to Students. Syllabi generally did not offer course objectives or the benefits of the course to students' future goals and aspirations. The syllabi also do not indicate that culturally relevant materials or activities will be incorporated in the course. Such materials can take the form of reading prose by diverse authors, learning about non-Western cultures, or being engaged with math activities connected to the students' everyday experience. Demonstrating an appreciation for culturally relevant pedagogy in the syllabus may enhance students' motivation and engagement with the course.

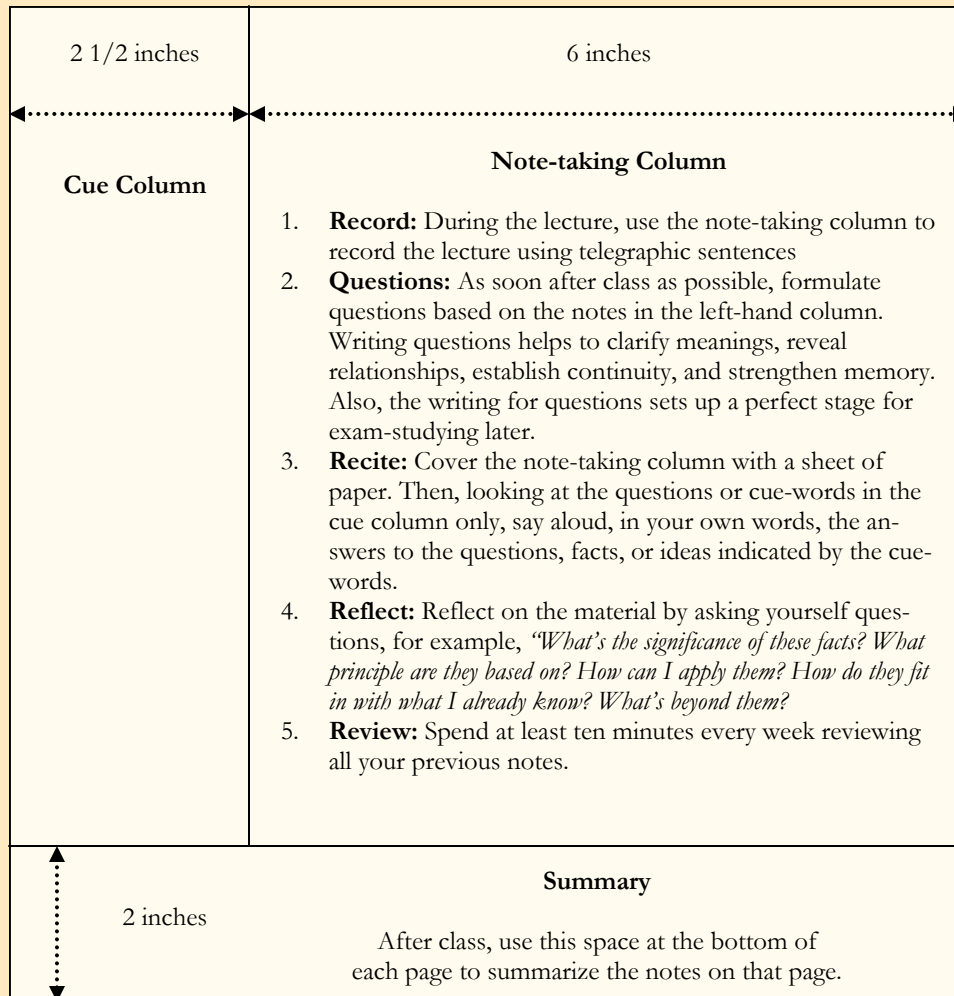
"I learn best" assessment

Team members administered the *I Learn Best* tool to students enrolled in their classes or to students (see Appendix D). The tool asks students to share instructional practices they have found effective; practices they find ineffective; and other teachers' practices that they find helpful. Data from 160 students were collected. The courses are as follows: ESL 33X, ESL 63, ESL 65, READ 880, READ 882, ENGL 801A, ENGL 801B, PHIL 6H, and PHIL 7. The majority of the classes are for basic skills, but two courses are transfer-level. The following instructional practices repeatedly surfaced students' responses:

- Students overwhelmingly prefer group discussion, interactive exercises, and educational games over the traditional lecture format. They also find that making presentations or solving problems on the blackboard before the class helps them learn course materials more deeply.
- They seek visual aids (e.g. movie clips, pictures, diagrams) to enhance presentations.
- They seek concrete examples and analogies that illustrate the instructor's point clarify students' understanding of the material. They particularly like examples drawn from familiar contexts that *"connect to the real world."*
- They find instructor-led review of reading and homework assignments and tests helps them understand course material and learn from their mistakes.
- Having objectives for the course and for the day's lesson helps students focus on the material. Repetition – during a class session and over the course of the semester – helps them retain information.
- They find syllabi containing due dates helpful.
- Strategies that improving reading ability and comprehension include reading aloud, reading with partners, and reading a newspaper article everyday.
- When asked what *"other teachers have done that really helped [them] learn,"* their responses include: study skills; note-taking and Cornell notes (see Figure 10) , time management, referral to campus resources, identifying the main idea of a passage, developing an essay structure, study groups, and peer revisions.
- They identify the following personal characteristics of effective teachers: patience, understanding, organization, motivation, and confidence-building. They make special note of teachers who *"show they really cared"* or encourage them *"to ask for help if [they] don't know something."*
- The effectiveness of flashcards seems to be uneven. Some students find them effective; others admit they are potentially useful tools, but they complete them for credit only.
- Similarly, journal entries have a mixed impact. Some students benefited from the writing practice and helping their teachers get to know them better; others disliked them.
- Unsurprisingly, students benefit from personal attention and individual meetings with instructors. They appreciate instructors who take the time to explain students' mistakes to them.
- They ask to be *"treated as adults"* by their instructors.

Figure 10. Cornell Note-Taking Strategy

The Cornell Note-Taking Method (called *Cornell Notes*) was created by Walter Pauk, Cornell University's reading and study center director, for his best-selling book, *How to Study in College*. Cornell Notes provides a systematic format for condensing and organizing notes for study. See example below.



Adapted from "How to Study in College", 7th edition, by Walter Pauk (2001)

The team developed the *I Learn Best* assessment in an effort to determine instructional practices students find effective. The findings from the *I Learn Best* assessment unexpectedly highlight the importance of the syllabi reflection exercise. Students notice and appreciate instructors who are accessible and organized, make course materials engaging, treat them with respect, share skills for success not directly connected to content (e.g. study and note-taking skills), and provide clear syllabi and learning objectives. Their marked preference for visual aids and concrete examples drawn from their experience suggest they seek learning materials that are relevant to their lives. When the findings from the two protocols are combined, they make a powerful case for having student-centered, culturally relevant syllabi – and by extension, instructional practice. As noted earlier, the syllabus is an *artifact* of instructional practices and the classroom environment maintained by the instructor. It can be designed to reflect the instructors' educational philosophy, professional practice, and stance towards students. Effective syllabi thus go hand in hand with effective practice.

Projected Spring Activities

The team will complete steps 6 through 8 of the *cycle of inquiry* this spring. We will complete *process benchmarking* by replicating our inquiry activities at peer colleges and comparing the results against our own institution. We will also implement changes based on our findings from the inquiry activities, and evaluate its impact on student learning outcomes.

Process benchmarking

In order to complete *process benchmarking*, we have identified potential alliance colleges. These colleges were identified in the 2007 Accountability Reporting for the California Community Colleges (ARCC) as sharing, with LBCC, a set of uncontrollable factors that influence the outcome of ARCC performance indicators like transfer and basic skills success. Typically, the alliance colleges performed better than LBCC and transferred more students (including minority students) to the CSU and UC systems. We are planning to visit at least one community college in the spring term for the purpose of comparing and sharing effective instructional practices. We will also have an opportunity to interact with practitioners from alliance colleges and the other lead CBP colleges at an Effective Practices Symposium in March this year.

Implementation and evaluating change

As part of our effort to implement campus-wide change associated with equitable student outcomes, we will conduct a workshop series to help instructors create equity-conscious syllabi. We will share our findings regarding inequitable student outcomes in benchmark courses, and how our inquiry activities reveal a gap between instructional practices currently used and those identified as exemplary based upon our literature review and students'

responses from the in-class assessment. We will then design modules that address various aspects of the equity-conscious syllabus.

Equity-conscious syllabi cannot be separated from equity-conscious instructional practices. The syllabi workshops thus present an opportunity for faculty members to discuss effective instructional practices in a non-threatening environment. We plan to create a template for the ideal syllabus in English, Math and ESL basic skills course in conjunction with workshop participants to start developing grassroots support for change. Ultimately, the workshop series is intended to initiate a broader discussion on improving instructional practices and being conscious of discouraging messages received by students through classroom artifacts and activities. We are developing an evaluation strategy for the workshop series to seek feedback from participants on the benefits of the materials and delivery method.



We recognize there are two significant challenges to implementing enduring change. First, the collective bargaining agreement with full- and part-time faculty members set minimal requirements for the *course information sheet*. The excerpt below is taken from the collective bargaining agreement with the Community College Association:

All faculty members are required to publish and keep on file in the division office a course information sheet (syllabus) for each course for each semester and distribute them at the first class meeting or no later than the end of the second week of class. The syllabus must align to the content of the course that is in the course outline and contain grading standards for the class, a description of the means by which the course is to be taught (lecture, laboratory, outside assignments, etc.), attendance requirements, and office location and office hours. Other recommended items are: examination dates, text assignments, and an outline of topics to be covered in the course. (p. 53)

The clause on syllabi in the college bargaining agreement with the Certified Hourly Instructors (part-timers) is almost identical. Instructors are not obligated to provide information beyond the course format, attendance requirements, grading standards, and office hours. Beneficial features such as a course description and calendar of class activities and assignments and are *recommended* only; many other beneficial features such as course objectives, student learning outcomes, and campus resources are excluded entirely. Because of the minimal expectations embodied in the college bargaining agreements, some faculty members may not feel a need to change their syllabi. The second challenge to implementing change is resistance from faculty members. Some faculty members may mistakenly interpret promoting student-centered, equity-conscious syllabi as an infringement of their academic freedom. We are not attempting to regulate the content instructors choose to achieve course objectives set by their departments. Rather, we wish to help faculty members reflect on their professional practice, envision themselves as agents of change, and modify their instructional activities so they are more sensitive to students' needs.

Our calendar for the spring term is as follows:

Date of Meeting 2008	Activities
January 17 & February 18 Long Beach City College	Preparation for workshop series
January 29 Long Beach City College	Meeting with the superintendent-president Preparation for the workshop series
February 26 March 4 March 11 Long Beach City College	Workshop 1: Why is examining syllabi relevant to basic skills courses? Faculty members as agents of change Equity-minded practice Workshop 2: Culturally-responsive pedagogy Assessing student learning Constructing the ideal syllabus Workshop 3: Active learning Constructing the ideal syllabus
March 14 Omni Hotel, Los Angeles	Effective Practices Symposium
April 15 & May 13 Long Beach City College	Meetings
To be scheduled	Site visit to alliance college

Preliminary Recommendations

- ***Develop suggested guidelines regarding syllabus preparation.*** We recommend that the Academic Senate assume leadership for the development of guidelines on the elements that exemplify a high quality course syllabus for dissemination to all faculty members and for inclusion in the orientation materials for new instructors as well as part-time instructors.
- ***Develop model syllabi in all departments in conjunction with faculty members.*** Encouraging faculty members to envision and construct a model syllabus for their discipline will help engage them in a discussion of *best practices*, and will make implementing changes in syllabi meaningful to them. New faculty members can be familiarized with department expectations by being given a model of an exemplary syllabus when they are hired.
- ***Create a syllabus template for each department, based on its vision of an exemplary syllabus, which includes relevant information for that subject area.*** Having a standard document containing information on campus resources and policies for referral and adaptation by faculty members will promote consistency of expectations across departments and will make syllabus construction easier for faculty members. For example, the English syllabus template can include information on writing resources and support services, definition and consequences of plagiarism, and discussion of disability services. It can also have suggested components for office hours, required and optional course materials, assignments, learning activities, and class schedule. Having an optional template will also help familiarize part-time faculty members with the institutional culture and campus resources available to students.
- ***Encourage reflective collaboration among faculty members.*** Faculty members may benefit from sharing effective and ineffective practices with their teaching colleagues in a non-judgmental setting. Faculty members can choose in-class assessment tools such as the *I Learn Best* exercise developed by the team, the *one-minute paper* or the *muddiest point* exercise (Angelo and Cross, 1993), to identify effective practices, activities and materials. The *one-minute paper* asks students to provide a short summary of the main ideas they learned in class that day. The *muddiest point* exercise encourages students to share concepts and procedures which confuse them. In addition to promoting a culture of reflective collaboration among faculty members, administering such exercises will help faculty members quickly assess student learning and engagement, and enhance faculty-student rapport. Opportunities for reflective collaboration can be incorporated into brown bag lunches, flex days, departmental meetings, and retreats.
- ***Campus discussion on the equity-minded practitioner.*** Sharing the indicators of an equity-minded practitioner (as described on next page) with faculty members will help catalyze campus dialogue on what it means to be an equity-conscious practitioner at an institution serving a diverse population. Online forums can be created to encourage input from as many campus constituents as possible, including part-time instructors.
- ***Organize Flex workshops around promoting student-centered learning.*** Deliberately planning flex workshops and other professional development opportunities to emphasize equity-minded, student-centered teaching will signal to faculty members that such practices are valued by the institution. In order to help faculty members incorporate such practices into their



The Equity-Minded Practitioner

Qualities that are indicative of an equity-minded practitioner

Being color-conscious (as opposed to color-blind) in an affirmative sense: noticing and questioning patterns of inequitable educational outcomes among minority students; and viewing inequalities in the context of a history of exclusion, discrimination, and educational apartheid.

Example: Community college practitioners interested in promoting the overall transfer rate to four-year institutions discover that minority students are less likely to enroll in transfer-level courses.

Being aware of racially-bounded beliefs, expectations, and practices. Practitioners are careful not to color findings regarding unequal educational outcomes among minority students with incomplete or inaccurate explanations regarding students' cultural predispositions, capacity or ambitions.

Example: Practitioners may ascribe low transfer rates to four-year colleges among Latino/a students to their apparent interest in vocational training, without examining whether there is tendency to "channel" these students away from transfer programs.

Being able to demonstrate "authentic caring" (Valenzuela, 1999). To care authentically means to reach out to students proactively and give them the tools they need to succeed. Authentic care encompasses substantial help-giving actions and should not be confused with being understanding or sympathetic. While understanding and sympathy may provide the motivation for help-giving actions, they are not sufficient to make a difference in minority students' lives.

Example: Instructors take the time and trouble to equip students with the tools to succeed in college, regardless of whether they teach basic skills or college-level courses, by showing them how to research and format a paper in an interactive setting like a computer laboratory.

Being willing to assume responsibility for the elimination of inequality. Rather than viewing inequalities as predictable and natural, practitioners allow for the possibility that inequalities might be created or exacerbated by taken-for-granted practices and policies, inadequate knowledge, a lack of cultural know-how, or the absence of institutional support.

Example: Practitioners may lament the low transfer rates of minority students without considering how difficult it is to obtain knowledge about transfer due to oversights like inadequate signage to the transfer center or confusing publications.

Being data-oriented for assessment. Practitioners define the cause of unequal outcomes in ways that make them observable, manageable and measurable. They also monitor outcomes by race and ethnicity, and their progress toward benchmarks.

Example: Practitioners select barriers to transfer they can ameliorate and purposefully monitor. They do not focus on wider social problems beyond their control such as poverty or inadequate preparation. As part of an effort to improve transfer rates, they can track minority students' course migration into transfer-level coursework, and assess the impact of interventions over time.

- **Promote awareness of student services and campus resources so all faculty members can refer students.** Being aware of appropriate campus services offered at no cost to students will empower faculty members to act as referrals for students who need help. Short presentations at department meetings can provide faculty members with an overview of the resources available on campus. New instructors can be apprised of campus resources through faculty handbooks and orientation sessions. Information on campus services available to students can also be included in the faculty section of the LBCC website. As noted earlier, having a standardized syllabus template with essential information spelled out will make the task easier, especially for part-time faculty members who may be unfamiliar with campus resources.

- **Promote a culture of faculty-student interaction.** We recognize that part-time faculty members face challenges in terms of being accessible to students as they do not have access to office space on campus, nor are they compensated for their time. Here are some suggestions that may be helpful to both full- and part-time faculty members:

- **In-class conferences:** Make time to meet with all students at least once a semester to discuss their progress during the class period. The meetings can be short, but the personal attention will demonstrate to students that their instructors are invested in their success.
- **Web-based applications:** Encourage students to contact faculty via email, web-based tools such as Instant Messenger, or through social networking sites such as Facebook.

- **Consider ways of incorporating the recommendations into faculty search committees and hiring criteria.** A means of fostering the values espoused in this report is by creating search criteria that increase the likelihood that new faculty members will have the experience, knowledge, skills, and values that reflect the qualities of student-centered, culturally responsive, and equity-minded pedagogy.
- **Review current faculty orientation programming.** The faculty orientation can include workshops on constructing strong syllabi that reflect culturally responsive



teaching practices. Faculty members can also learn about the myriad campus services available to their students. Familiarizing faculty members with institutional expectations about equity-minded syllabi, acting as referrals, and student-faculty interaction at the very outset will promote change over time.

We recommend that the Academic Senate encourage faculty members to explore how well-constructed and culturally responsive syllabi can positively impact student learning outcomes.

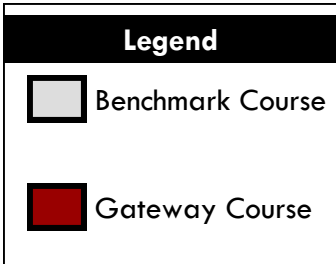
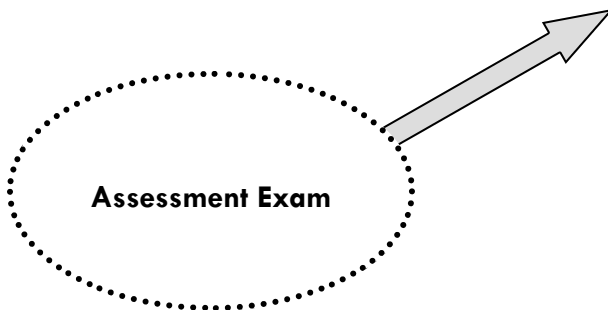
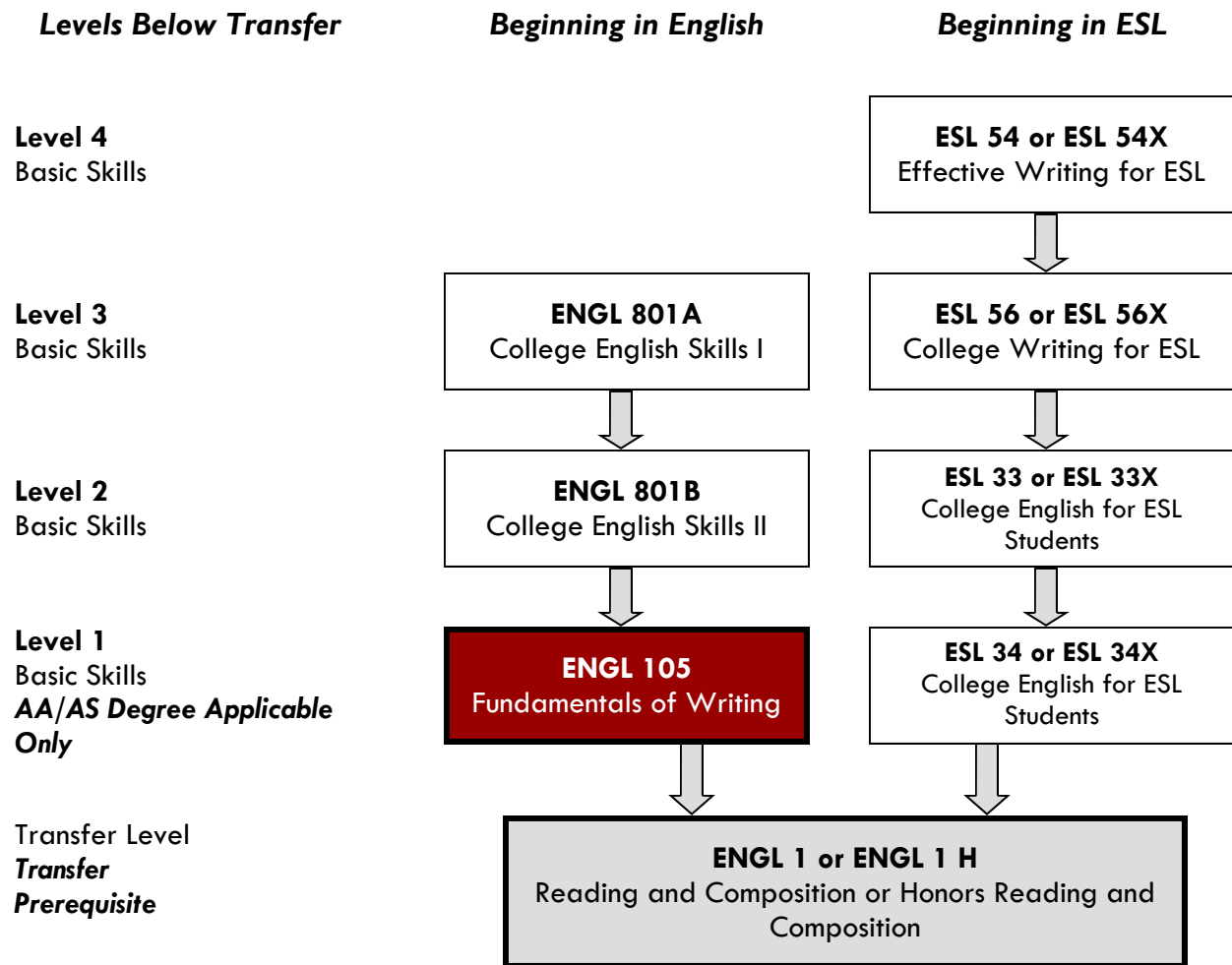
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Appendix A

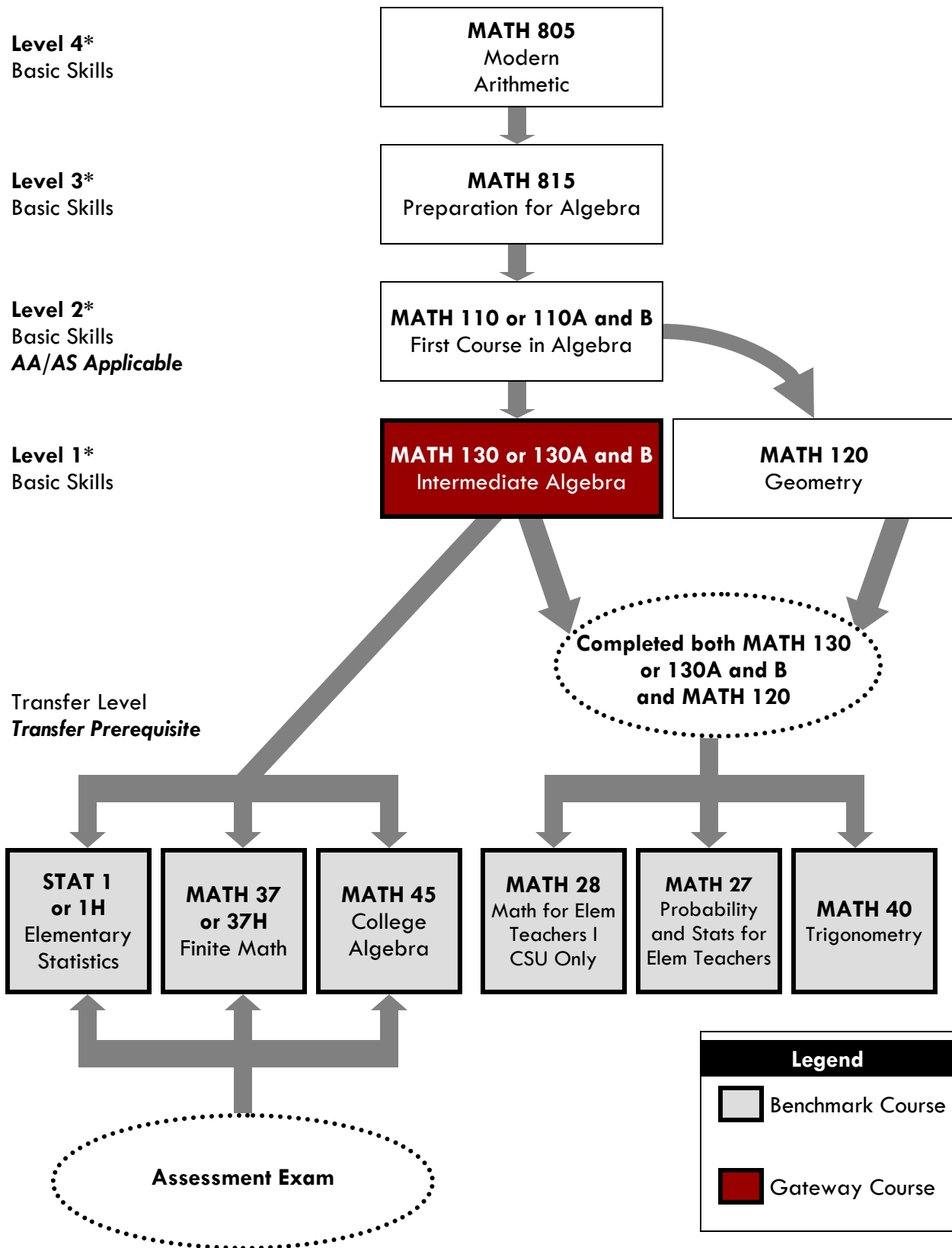
CURRICULAR MAPS SHOWING PATHWAYS FROM BASIC SKILLS TO TRANSFER-LEVEL COURSES

Pathways to the Benchmark Course in **English Composition**



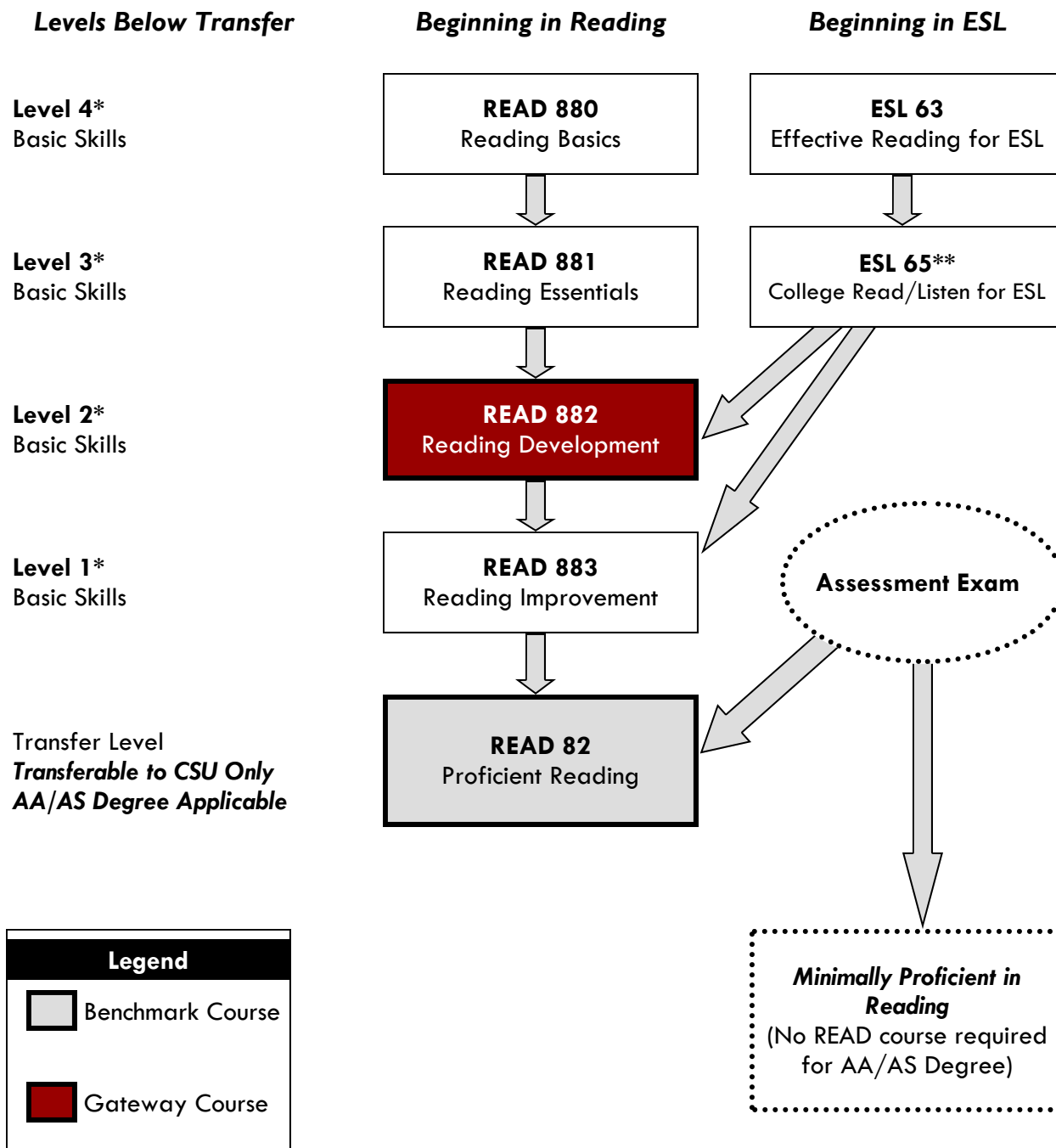
Note: 4*, 3*, 2*, and 1* represent basic skills level classes four, three, two, and one level(s) below the transferable-level course, respectively.

Pathways to the Benchmark Course in **Mathematics**



Note: 4*, 3*, 2*, and 1* represent basic skills level classes four, three, two, and one level(s) below the transferable-level course, respectively.

Pathways to the Benchmark Course in **Reading**



Note: 4*, 3*, 2*, and 1* represent basic skills-level classes four, three, two, and one level(s) below the transferable-level course, respectively.

Note: ** Based upon assessment process

Appendix B

BASELINE DATA OF BASIC SKILLS MIGRATION AND COMPETION, DISAGGREGATED BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

Baseline Data: Successful Course Completion Rates¹ of Basic Skills Students by Race and
Ethnicity for Fall 2006 in **ENGLISH COMPOSITION**

Racial/Ethnic Group	ENGL 105 ² (1 level below, Gateway)	ENGL 1 or 1H (Benchmark) ³	
		Basic Skills ⁴	ESL ⁵
African-American			
#enrolled	216	89	1
#course success	102	37	1
Course Success Rate	47.2%	41.6%	100%
Asian/Pacific Islander			
#enrolled	154	102	28
#course success	85	57	18
Course Success Rate	55.2%	55.9%	64.3%
Filipino			
#enrolled	82	36	8
#course success	54	23	5
Course Success Rate	65.9%	63.9%	62.5%
Hispanic			
#enrolled	536	312	17
#course success	339	168	5
Course Success Rate	63.2%	53.9%	29.4%
Other			
#enrolled	55	32	2
#course success	31	19	2
Course Success Rate	56.4%	59.4%	100%
White			
#enrolled	305	147	2
#course success	197	100	1
Course Success Rate	64.6%	68.0%	50.0%
Total⁶			
#enrolled	1,418	730	58
#course success	855	409	32
Course Success Rate	60.3%	56.0%	55.2%

¹ C/CR grades or better are success grades; The analyses does not include course enrollments with an 'RD' grade mark.

² Includes all students enrolled in ENGL 105 in Fall 2006.

³ Only includes students enrolled in ENGL 1 or 1H in Fall 2006 who successfully completed ENGL 801A, 801B, 105, ESL 54, 54X, 56, 56X, 33, 33X, 34, and/or 34X in a previous semester.

⁴ Only includes students enrolled in ENGL 1 or 1H in Fall 2006 who successfully completed ENGL 801A, 801B, and/or 105 in a previous semester.

⁵ Only includes students enrolled in ENGL 1 or 1H in Fall 2006 who successfully completed ESL 54, 54X, 56, 56X, 33, 33X, 34, and/or 34X in a previous semester.

⁶ Total includes Native-American/Alaskan Native/Unreported ethnicity/race

Baseline Data: Successful Course Completion Rates¹ of Basic Skills Students by Race and
Ethnicity for Fall 2006 in **MATHEMATICS**

Racial/Ethnic Group	MATH 110 ² (2 levels below)	MATH 130 ³ (1 level below, Gateway)	MATH 28, 37, 40, 45, STAT 14 (Benchmark)
African-American			
#enrolled	240	100	50
#course success	63	22	21
Course Success Rate	26.3%	22.0%	42.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander 1			
#enrolled	228	148	88
#course success	83	58	56
Course Success Rate	36.4%	40.7%	63.6%
Filipino			
#enrolled	81	44	32
#course success	34	26	24
Course Success Rate	42.0%	59.1%	75.0%
Hispanic			
#enrolled	622	411	239
#course success	184	159	117
Course Success Rate	29.6%	38.7%	49.0%
Other			
#enrolled	58	41	30
#course success	15	14	19
Course Success Rate	25.9%	34.2%	63.3%
White			
#enrolled	275	221	166
#course success	119	80	99
Course Success Rate	43.3%	36.2%	59.6%
Total⁵			
#enrolled	1,540	993	611
#course success	510	371	337
Course Success Rate	33.1%	37.4%	55.2%

¹ C/CR grades or better are success grades; The analyses does not include course enrollments with an 'RD' grade mark.

² Includes all students enrolled in MATH 110 in Fall 2006.

³ Includes all students enrolled in MATH 130 in Fall 2006.

⁴ Only includes students enrolled in MATH 28, 37, 40, 45 and/or STAT 1 in Fall 2006 who successfully completed MATH 130 and/or MATH 120 in a previous semester. MATH 36, 37H, and STAT 1H was not offered in Fall 2006.

⁵ Total includes Native-American/Alaskan Native/Unreported ethnicity/race

Baseline Data: Successful Course Completion Rates¹ of Basic Skills Students by Race and Ethnicity for Fall 2006 in **READING**

Racial/Ethnic Group	READ 882 ² (2 levels below, Gateway)		READ 883 ⁵ (1 level below)	READ 82 ⁶ (Benchmark)
	Non-ESL ³	ESL ⁴		
African-American				
#enrolled	84	—	64	45
#course success	32	—	25	31
Course Success Rate	38.1%	—	39.1%	68.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander 1				
#enrolled	50	18	94	61
#course success	29	9	50	39
Course Success Rate	58.0%	50.0%	53.2%	63.9%
Filipino				
#enrolled	23	3	22	23
#course success	12	1	11	18
Course Success Rate	52.2%	33.3%	50.0%	78.3%
Hispanic				
#enrolled	139	16	187	88
#course success	69	10	76	51
Course Success Rate	49.6%	62.5%	40.6%	58.0%
Other				
#enrolled	5	—	9	5
#course success	3	—	2	4
Course Success Rate	60.0%	—	22.2%	80.0%
White				
#enrolled	30	—	41	13
#course success	9	—	20	9
Course Success Rate	30.0%	—	48.8%	69.2%
Total⁷				
#enrolled	333	37	420	240
#course success	155	20	186	155
Course Success Rate	46.5%	54.1%	44.3%	64.6%

¹ C/CR grades or better are success grades; The analyses does not include course enrollments with an 'RD' grade mark.

² Includes all students enrolled in READ 882 in Fall 2006.

³ Only includes students enrolled in READ 882 in Fall 2006 who was directly placed into READ 882 or successfully completed READ 880 and/or 881.

⁴ Only includes students enrolled in READ 882 in Fall 2006 who successfully completed ESL 63 and/or 65 prior to enrolling in READ 882.

⁵ Includes all students enrolled in READ 883 in Fall 2006.

⁶ Only includes students enrolled in READ 82 in Fall 2006 who successfully completed READ 880, 881, 882, 883, ESL 63, and/or ESL 65 in a previous semester. Three ESL students were able to place directly into READ 82 without having to enroll in any of the 800-band READ courses.

⁷ Total includes Native-American/Alaskan Native/Unreported ethnicity/race

Migration through ENGLISH COMPOSITION courses:
Fall 2003 Cohort * Tracking through Higher Level Courses over 10 Semesters

Table 1. ENGL 801A Cohort and Migration to ENGL I or 1H

Ethnicity/ Race	1st Enroll ENGL 801A Fa 03	Successful in ENGL 801A		Enroll ENGL 801B	% of Orig. Cohort	Successful in ENGL 801B		Enroll ENGL 105	% of Orig. Cohort	Successful in ENGL 105		Enroll ENGL 1 or 1H	% of Orig. Cohort	Successful in ENGL 1 or 1H		% of E801A students who were able to complete E1 or 1H
		Count	%			Count	%			Count	%			Count	%	
African-American	128	86	67%	51	40%	40	78%	49	38%	34	69%	22	17%	15	68%	12%
Asian/PI	104	81	78%	51	49%	46	90%	56	54%	43	77%	32	31%	28	88%	27%
Filipino	32	24	75%	16	50%	14	88%	21	66%	17	81%	8	25%	4	50%	13%
Hispanic	241	196	81%	135	56%	109	78%	119	49%	94	79%	64	27%	40	63%	17%
White	69	53	77%	20	29%	15	75%	35	51%	30	86%	19	28%	14	74%	20%
Total	650	492	76%	296	46%	238	80%	306	47%	243	79%	165	25%	115	70%	18%

Table 2. ENGL 105 Cohort and Migration to ENGL I or 1H

Ethnicity/Race	1st Enroll ENGL 105 Fa 03	Successful in ENGL 105		Enroll ENGL 1 or 1H	% of Orig. Cohort	Successful in ENGL 1 or 1H		% of E105 students who were able to complete E1 or 1H
		Count	%			Count	%	
African-American	115	81	70%	56	49%	43	77%	37.4%
Asian/PI	113	86	76%	72	64%	53	74%	46.9%
Filipino	60	47	78%	36	60%	21	58%	35.0%
Hispanic	278	214	77%	171	62%	130	76%	46.8%
White	241	201	83%	160	66%	130	81%	53.9%
Total	937	723	77%	568	61%	436	77%	46.5%

1st Enroll ENGL 801A Fa03: Students who began their sequence of English courses in ENGL 801A; their first ENGL 801A enrollment was in Fall 2003

1st Enroll ENGL 105 Fa03: Students who began their sequence of English courses in ENGL 105; their first ENGL 105 enrollment was in Fall 2003. Does not include ESL students.

Students were tracked Spring 2004 to Spring 2007, including summer terms for enrollment and successful completion (A, B, C, CR grades) in higher level courses.

Success rates include the BEST attempt in a course.

% Original cohort is the percentage of the cohort who enrolled in the subsequent courses.

Total in Table 1 includes Other, Native-American/Alaskan, and Unreported.

Total in Table 2 includes Other, Native-American/Alaskan, and Unreported.

Migration through MATHEMATICS courses:
Fall 2003 Cohort * Tracking through Higher Level Courses over 10 Semesters

Table 1. MATH 805 Cohort and Migration to STAT1 or 1H, MATH 37 or 37H, MATH 45, MATH 28, MATH 40

Ethnicity /Race	1st Enroll MATH 805 Fa 03		Successful in MATH 805		Enroll MATH 815	% of Orig Co-hort	Successful in MATH 815		Enroll MATH 110 or 110A	% of Orig Co-hort	Successful in MATH 110 or 110A		Enroll MATH 130 or 130A	% of Orig Co-hort	Successful in MATH 130 or 130A		Enroll Tr. Math	% of Orig Co-hort	Successful in Transfer Math		% of M805 students who were able to complete Tr. Math
	Enroll	%	Enroll	%			Enroll	%			Enroll	%			Enroll	%			Enroll	%	
African-American	116	51	44%	48	41%	25	52%	28	24%	12	43%	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%	—	—	0.0%	
Asian /PI	50	34	68%	29	58%	26	90%	18	36%	13	72%	3	6%	2	67%	1	2%	1	100%	2.0%	
Hispanic	155	80	52%	73	47%	45	62%	44	28%	24	55%	13	8%	6	46%	4	3%	3	75%	1.9%	
White	52	30	58%	25	48%	19	76%	15	29%	10	67%	4	8%	3	75%	1	2%	1	100	1.9%	
Total	436	227	52%	198	45%	131	66%	119	27%	69	58%	29	7%	16	55%	9	2%	6	67%	1.4%	

Table 2. MATH 110 or 110A Cohort and Migration to STAT1 or 1H, MATH 37 or 37H, MATH 45, MATH 28, MATH 40

1st Enroll MATH805 Fa03: Students who began their sequence of math courses in MATH805; their first MATH805 enrollment was in Fall 2003

1st Enroll MATH110 or 110A Fa03: Students who began their sequence of math courses in MATH110 or MATH110A; their first MATH110/MATH110A enrollment was in Fall 2003

Students were tracked Spring 2004 to Spring 2007, including summer terms for enrollment and successful completion (A, B, C, CR grades) in higher level courses.

Success rates include the BEST attempt in a course.

% Original cohort is the percentage of the cohort who enrolled in the subsequent courses.

Total in Table 1 includes Filipino, Other, Native-American/Alaskan, and Unreported.

Total in Table 2 includes Other, Native-American/Alaskan, and Unreported.

Ethnicity /Race	1st Enroll MATH 110 or 110A Fa 03		Successful in MATH 110 or 110A		Enroll MATH 130 or 130A	% of Orig. Co-hort	Successful in MATH 130 or 130A		Enroll Tr. Math	% of Orig. Co-hort	Successful in Transfer Math		% of M110 or 110A students who were able to complete Tr. Math
	Enroll	%	Enroll	%			Enroll	%			Enroll	%	
African-American	116	52	45%	31	27%	20	65%	18	16%	11	61%	9.5%	
Asian /PI	134	79	59%	57	43%	38	67%	30	22%	17	57%	12.7%	
Filipino	53	33	62%	17	32%	10	59%	7	13%	5	71%	9.4%	
Hispanic	290	181	62%	128	44%	74	58%	63	22%	45	71%	15.5%	
White	163	102	63%	69	42%	44	64%	43	26%	35	81%	21.5%	
Total	829	478	58%	320	39%	196	61%	174	21%	123	71%	14.8%	

Migration through **READING courses:**
Fall 2003 Cohort * Tracking through Higher Level Courses over 10 Semesters

Table 1. READ 880 Cohort and Migration to READ 82

Ethnicity/Race	1st Enroll READ 880 Fa 03			Successful in READ 880			Enroll READ 881			% of Orig Cohort			Successful in READ 881			Enroll READ 882			% of Orig Cohort			Successful in READ 882			Enroll READ 883			% of Orig Cohort			Successful in READ 883			Enroll READ 82			% of Orig Cohort			Successful in READ 82			% of R880 students who were able to complete R82
	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%							
African-American	19	9	47%	6	32%	3	50%	3	16%	3	100%	4	21%	1	25%	1	5%	1	100%	5.3%																							
Asian/PI	26	23	89%	12	46%	10	83%	13	50%	9	69%	7	27%	6	86%	6	23%	5	83%	19.2%																							
Filipino	11	8	73%	5	46%	4	80%	4	36%	4	100%	3	27%	3	100%	3	27%	1	33%	9.1%																							
Hispanic	31	22	71%	15	48%	13	87%	11	36%	9	82%	10	32%	8	80%	5	16%	3	60%	9.7%																							
Total	104	69	66%	41	39%	32	78%	37	36%	29	78%	27	26%	21	78%	17	16%	11	65%	10.6%																							

Table 2. READ 882 Cohort and Migration to READ 82

Ethnicity/Race	1st Enroll READ 882 Fa 03			Successful in READ 882			Enroll READ 883			% of Orig Cohort			Successful in READ 883			Enroll READ 82			% of Orig Cohort			Successful in READ 82			% of R882 students who were able to complete R82
	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	Enroll	Enroll	%	
African-American	40	20	50%	19	48%	12	63%	7	18%	4	57%	10.0%													
Asian/PI	39	24	62%	24	62%	21	88%	15	39%	13	87%	33.3%													
Filipino	15	11	73%	11	73%	8	73%	7	47%	7	100%	46.7%													
Hispanic	78	55	71%	34	44%	22	65%	16	21%	11	69%	14.1%													
White	23	15	65%	6	26%	5	83%	7	30%	6	86%	26.1%													
Total	204	129	63%	96	47%	73	76%	54	27%	42	78%	20.6%													

1st Enroll READ 880 Fa03: Students who began their sequence of reading courses in READ 880; their first READ 880 enrollment was in Fall 2003

1st Enroll READ 882 Fa03: Students who began their sequence of reading courses in READ 882; their first READ 882 enrollment was in Fall 2003. Does not include ESL students.

Students were tracked Spring 2004 to Spring 2007, including summer terms for enrollment and successful completion (A, B, C, CR grades) in higher level courses.

Success rates include the BEST attempt in a course.

% Original cohort is the percentage of the cohort who enrolled in the subsequent courses.

Total in Table 1 includes White, Other, Native-American/Alaskan, and Unreported.

Total in Table 2 includes Other, Native-American/Alaskan, and Unreported.

Appendix C

SYLLABUS REFLECTION PROTOCOL

GUIDELINES & PROTOCOL FOR SYLLABUS REFLECTION EXERCISE

The syllabus reflection exercise is intended to generate dialogue about how a standard classroom document can serve as an instrument that promotes equity-consciousness in one's teaching practices. The purpose of this exercise is not to judge or assess the value of particular syllabi styles. Instead, the exercise is meant to encourage self-reflection on what characterizes an equity-conscious syllabus. Your reflections will help us in our efforts to build a model of the best teaching practices on your campus.

While completing the reflection exercise please keep the following guidelines in mind:

Be descriptive in your analysis. Try to avoid harsh or condemning language. Instead, provide honest, specific and constructive feedback.

Keep the student in mind. In your reflection, focus on how the document serves students' learning needs and educational trajectories.

Connect your reflection to your own expertise and practice. When writing your comments think about the issues that arise in your classrooms and with your students.

The outline for the exercise is as follows:

Part I: The Document Itself

- Completeness and Clarity
- Testing and Grading
- Pacing
- Professional Appearance

Part II: Indicators for Equity Conscious Practices

- Communication of High Expectations
- Incorporation of Rigorous Learning Activities
- Consideration of Students' Needs and Aspirations
- Provision of Multiple Resources for Academic Assistance
- Connection to Students' Cultural and Historical Backgrounds
- Promotion of Academic Transformation and Empowerment

SYLLABI REVIEWED:

Team Member:

PART ONE: THE DOCUMENT ITSELF

I. Completeness and Clarity

A. The syllabus has each of the following (if applicable):

1. Goals and objectives of the course
2. Instructor information and accessibility
3. Information on course readings
4. Description of assignments and due dates
5. Calendar of class activities
6. Policies on grading, academic misconduct, late work, absences, safety issues, accommodation for special needs
7. Support services available

B. The syllabus is clearly written.

C. It is consistent with college policies.

D. It describes responsibilities and consequences for students.

COMMENTS:

What is included?	What is excluded?

II. Testing and Grading

- A. The students have frequent opportunities for feedback.
- B. The grading policies are fair and appropriate for the goals.

COMMENTS

What is included?	What is excluded?

III. Pacing

- A. The course calendar is realistic
- B. The instructor has selected a reasonable amount of content for the time allotted.
- C. The dates for assignments are distributed well.

COMMENTS:

What is included?	What is excluded?

IV. Professional Appearance

- A. No grammatical punctuations issues noted.
- B. No formatting issues noted.
- C. Tone is respectful and encouraging.

COMMENTS:

What is included?	What is excluded?

MISC/ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

PART TWO: INDICATORS OF EQUITY-CONSCIOUS PRACTICES

I. Communication of High Expectations

The syllabus conveys the following.

- A. ALL students are expected to succeed in the course. Student success will be a collaborative effort between students, peers and instructor.
- B. Belief that ALL students (regardless of their stated intentions) are working toward transfer eligibility to a 4-year institution.
- C. Clear communication of the goals and objectives of course, including descriptions of how students are expected to meet and excel at these goals and objectives.
- D. All students are expected to actively participate in classroom discussions and activities.

COMMENTS:

What is included?	What is excluded?

II. Incorporation of Rigorous Learning Activities

The syllabus is characterized by the following:

- A. Encourages critical thinking and creates opportunities for students to debate issues that arise in classroom discourse and texts.
- B. Incorporates of a wide-variety of instructional techniques and resources.
- C. Requires higher-order thinking tasks such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

COMMENTS:

What is included?	What is excluded?

III. Consideration of Students' Needs and Aspirations

The syllabus contains the following:

- A. Sensitivity to students' skill level and possible past-experiences in inequitable and poorly resourced schools.
- B. Assistance in developing students' study skills. Modeling examples should be provided on issues such as: note-taking (while in-class and reading texts), how to read and synthesize texts, and how to develop and maintain peer study groups.
- C. Assistance with students' development of basic writing skills. Provision of resources/ instructions on proofreading, writing critically and building arguments, etc.
- D. Information provided about where to locate additional resource outlets on campus (e.g., library assistance, tutoring, counseling, transfer office).
- E. Discussion of how class and course objectives will benefit students' future academic trajectory and goals.

COMMENTS:

What is included?	What is excluded?

IV. Connection to Students' Cultural and Historical Backgrounds

The syllabus indicates the following:

- A. Instructor values the diversity of students' cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic experiences and backgrounds.
- B. Curriculum and classroom activities include materials that are culturally inclusive (e.g., readings and activities incorporates issues of gender, race/ethnicity, language, sexuality, and disability to show diversity of perspectives and lived experiences).
- C. Instruction is experiential in nature. It starts from what is real and common in students' experiences, and builds upon students' experiences and provides opportunities to expand learning repertoires and skills.
- D. Explanation of how instruction and course objectives are relevant to students' socio-cultural realities is provided.

COMMENTS:

What is included?	What is excluded?

V. Promotion of Academic Transformation and Empowerment

The syllabus contains the following:

Encourages students to develop skills and values that help them become reflective thinkers and social critics.

COMMENTS:

What is included?	What is excluded?
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MISC/ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Appendix C

“I LEARN BEST” ASSESSMENT

Course _____

“I Learn Best....”

As an instructor, I am always looking for ways to make my teaching more effective, and I need your help. Please take a few moments and think of specific things that really help you learn in this class or others you have taken. Your comments will help me better structure my teaching in ways that support your learning and success in this course.

Please remember this is not a test! Please be honest and as specific as possible.

The **most effective** thing we have done in this class that helps my learning so far is.....

The **least effective** thing that we have done in class so far which keeps me from learning is.....

One thing I wish you **would change**.....

Three things that **other teachers** have done that really helped me learn were:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

*Partially adapted from: National Council for Staff, Program and Organization Development, *Classroom Assessment : A Manual for Faculty Development*, 1999

Appendix E

FLEX DAY GROUP ACTIVITY

Contextualizing Teaching Practices in Light of Basic Skills Baseline Data

1. Reflect upon the data as it applies to your discipline. Consider the overall success rates in your Basic Skills courses, the success ratios of students progressing to the transfer-level courses, and the disparities or “gaps” between the baseline and the various ethnic groups.
2. Discuss why these success rates are not higher, and why the disparities between the groups are so prominent.
3. Discuss specific teaching methods that help your students succeed, and those that may help “close the gap” between the various student populations. Share ideas, methods, and practices that others can incorporate into their teaching repertoire to push students to succeed. Remember that while you may not be able to address factors like inadequate high school preparation, you can still have an impact on student success today.

The questions listed below may be helpful in guiding your discussion:

- A. What are the effective learning activities that you have used in the classroom that promote critical thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation?
- B. How do you encourage students to engage with course material outside the classroom beyond assigning homework (e.g. practicing language skills for ESL students)?
- C. How do you encourage students to communicate regularly with you regarding their needs and progress in the course?
- D. How do you incorporate information about on-site resources into your instruction? How are your teaching practices sensitive to students’ skill level and possible past-experiences in inequitable and poorly resourced schools?
- E. How are your curriculum and classroom activities culturally inclusive (e.g., readings and activities incorporate issues of gender, race/ethnicity, language, sexuality, and disability to show diversity of perspectives and experiences)?