Basic Skills Committee
Report to the Academic Senate
January 2008

Approved unanimously by the Basic Skills Committee at its regularly scheduled meeting of January 9, 2008.

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- Learning Center Proposal
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- UMOJA Proposal
- Descriptive Budget

NOTES

The Basic Skills Committee’s charge was to provide to the Senate by February 12, 2008, a recommendation for implementation of Objective #2 of West’s Educational Master Plan that includes an evaluation component and provides a descriptive budget and spending guidelines. This was to be a plan for 2008-2011. The BSC report reflects the results of the Basic Skills Self-Assessment conducted at West during the Spring semester of 2007.

Recommendations are annotated with bracketed references to the March, 2007 CSS report Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges (the “Poppy Copy”)

Members of the Basic Skills Committee:
Bruce Anders, Bonnie Blustein (co-chair), Cathy Froloff, Holly Hoffman, Betty Jacobs, Arthur Lara, Alma Narez-Acosta, Jawell Samilton, Bob Sprague, Lloyd Thomas (chair), Jack Waites

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<th>Educational Master Plan Objective 2.</th>
<th>Implement a comprehensive, integrated written plan for an effective basic skills program to meet the needs of all West students by Fall 2010.</th>
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<td>A. By 2008 institute educationally-sound class sizes in all basic skills classes.</td>
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<td>B. Re-label basic skills as pre-collegiate.</td>
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<td>C. Establish learning communities and recruit students during registration.</td>
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EMP #2 -- Strategy A – Recommendations: [Organizational /Administrative Practices]

1) Starting in Fall 2008, all Basic Skills classes in English, Math, and ESL should be capped at a number projected to result in a working cohort of 30 students in each class. [A1.4]

2) By Fall 2010, all English, Math, and ESL classes that are two levels or more below transfer level should be capped at a number projected to result in a working cohort of 25 students in each class. [A1.4]

3) Division chairs should be appraised of this policy with sufficient notice to recruit instructors for the additional sections needed and to alert appropriate administrators about changed facilities requirements. [A2.4]

4) The Basic Skills committee will work with division chairs or their designees to submit FPUP requests for 2009-2011 so that at least 75% of Basic Skills classes can be staffed with full-time faculty. [A4.4]

Evaluation:
Percent of Math, English, ESL Basic Skills classes with thirty or fewer students
Percent of Math, English, ESL classes that are two levels or more below transfer level with twenty-five or fewer students.
Percent of Math, English, ESL Basic Skills classes staffed with full-time faculty
Student and Faculty Surveys (see below under General Evaluation)

EMP # 2 -- Strategy B – Recommendations: [Organizational /Administrative Practices]

1) Basic Skills Committee will work with Academic Senate president and other interested parties to adhere to EMP #2B as far as possible, consistent with Title V terminology. [A2.3]

2) Basic Skills Committee will report to Academic Senate with factual findings and recommendations during Fall 2008. [A2.3]

Evaluation:
Report presented to Academic Senate as action item (goal: Fall 2008)
EMP #2 -- Strategy C – Recommendations: [Program Components, Staff Development, Instructional Practices]

1) Organize and deliver focused staff development which enables faculty to feel comfortable with thematic based instruction, student-centered learning, project-based learning, and other alternatives to traditional lecture-based courses. [C2.2, C3.1]

   Evaluation:
   Number of workshops organized and offered
   Attendance at workshops
   Faculty Surveys (see below under General Evaluation)

2) Establish learning communities

   a) Implement the “Learning Center Proposal” for an open learning center in precollegiate studies in the LRC in which students make extensive use of technology in acquiring basic skills (see below) [D1.1, D6.2, D9.1, D10.7]

   b) Implement the “Freshman Academic Community Experience” proposal (see below) [B1.4, D3.3, D4.2, D6.1, D7.2, D9.2]

   c) Continue existing “learning communities” programs such as the linked English 21-PD5, ESL6-PD5, and Math 112-PD5 courses. [B3.2, D3.4]

   d) Develop and implement procedure to manage enrollment in learning-community courses to ensure that students enroll for the full “package” of courses in a program. [A4.2]

   e) Provide continuing comprehensive student services support for Basic Skills students—counseling, tutoring, SI. [B3.2]

   f) Implement the UMOJA learning community proposal (see below) [D4.1, D4.3]

   g) Encourage faculty, staff, and students to develop additional learning community proposals designed to serve specific sub-populations of the WLAC student body, such as parents of small children, Latinos/Latinas, etc.

   Evaluation:
   Persistence rates - percentage of students in Basic Skills learning communities who remain at West one semester and two semesters after entering the program
   Student success rates - Assess all incoming students in new programs in English and Math and track progress using multiple measures, including some or all of the following:
   - Complete course with C or better (progress to next level)
   - Re-assessment scores (progress to next level)
   - Complete next level course with C or better
   - 50% or better on “standard” exam such as (disused) District Math Competency Exam or Math Dept. 115 final exam
   Track in absolute terms and as a percentage improvement over existing rates and in comparison with Basic Skills classes that are not part of formal learning communities
   Student and Faculty Surveys (see below under General Evaluation).
3) Recruit students:
   a) Educate faculty and staff (especially in Counseling and Matriculation) about the new Basic Skills programs; enlist their support in recruiting students, helping each incoming student choose the program that best suits his or her needs. [B3.1]

   b) Work with the publicity office to create promotional and informational materials in various media. [A2.4]

   c) Recruit in the feeder high schools during Spring 2008 [D3.5]

**Evaluation**
Establish target numbers of students to enroll in each new program, by semester, Fall 2008-Fall 2010, and track success in recruitment to these programs. Student and faculty surveys (see below under General Evaluation)

**EMP #2 – Additional components for an effective basic skills program to meet the needs of all West students by Fall 2010. These components address specific subgroups of the West student population.**

1) Develop and implement procedures for DSPS to screen all Basic Skills students to identify individual needs that can be met through the DSPS program. This should be in place for learning communities starting Fall 2008, and for all students in Basic Skills courses starting Fall 2009. [B3.1]

   **Evaluation:**
   Document specifying screening procedures signed-off by all relevant bodies. (Goal: August 2008)
   Number of students screened each semester
   Percentage of Basic Skills students screened

2) Develop and implement procedures for EOPS and Financial Aid to provide information to all Basic Skills students, starting in Fall 2008. [B4.1]

   **Evaluation:**
   Document specifying procedures signed-off by all relevant bodies. (Goal: August 2008)
   Number of students provided with EOPS and Financial Aid information through Basic Skills classes each semester
   Percentage of Basic Skills classes in which students are provided with this information either in Basic Skills class or in linked PD class.

3) Request the Language Arts Division to consider how the Division and the College might best meet the needs of students who test in below ESL 4, and report back to the Basic Skills Committee by February 2009. [C2]

   **Evaluation:**
   Report received by Senate no later than February 2009
General Program Evaluation [A3.5, A4.4, B2]

1) Basic Skills Committee will work with College Researcher to refine evaluation procedures and goals.

2) Develop, administer, and analyze student survey pre-and-post using Likert scale with questions relating to learning environment, pedagogy, self-confidence, technology, and general satisfaction.

3) Develop, administer, and analyze faculty survey pre-and-post using Likert scale with questions relating to basic skills issues in general education classes, basic skills initiatives, staff development, learning environments, comfort level with student-centered learning strategies, resource allocation, technology, and general satisfaction.

4) Faculty and staff working in the Basic Skills initiative programs will produce annual written narrative evaluations.

5) Students in the Basic Skills initiative programs will produce written narrative evaluations of the program, including self-assessment of their own progress.

6) The Basic Skills Committee will submit brief progress reports to the Senate each semester, and will, in collaboration with the College Researcher, produce a written annual report which will include expenditures, outcomes, and recommendations.