

College Success Initiative

Volume 1, Issue 1

Spring 2009



On Course Participants
Shawna Whitney &
Luciana Castro

Inside this issue:

Getting "On Course"	2
New Student Orientation	3
Hermanos y Hermanas	3
Expanded Outreach Efforts	3
Supplemental Instruction (SI)	4

THE COLLEGE SUCCESS INITIATIVE (CSI)

Assisting the underprepared student to attain the basic skills needed to succeed in college-level work has been a core function of community colleges. Clearly there is a pressing need at California Community Colleges (CCC), where 70 to 80% of students need work in developmental mathematics and English courses.

Working in partnership with the Academic Senate and the Research and Planning Group of CCC, the CCC System Office committed \$1.6 m to address the needs of basic skills and English-as-a-second language (ESL) students

through the Basic Skills Initiative (BSI), which at Skyline has morphed into the College Success Initiative (CSI). (See <http://www.cccbsi.org/> for more information.) This semester, Skyline is in the third stage of three.

Under the very effective leadership of Rachel Bell, Jacquie Escobar, and Rick Hough, over seventy-five faculty and staff participated in reviewing effective practices and conducting a self-assessment of existing practices and how to strengthen them, the first two stages. These efforts resulted in the current CSI action plan, some of which are highlighted in this



Professional Development Coordinator Phyllis Taylor & Jennifer Merrill at the On Course Seminar

newsletter. Overseeing implementation are Karen Wong, Jacquie Escobar, and Soodi Zamani, with Phyllis Taylor facilitating professional development.

Early Alert + Early Intervention= Success

Now in its third semester, the Early Alert Pilot project has focused on providing counseling support to underperforming basic skills students in English, Reading, and Math. Mid-semester, they are sent letters, emails, and

even phone calls, encouraging them to meet with their instructors and an Early Alert Retention Counselor to discuss their academic progress and forge a plan to help them to succeed. This Spring, the project was expanded

to include all Skyline College classes. If you would like an Early Alert Counselor to provide a brief presentation to your class, please contact Carla Campillo at x4315 or Campillo@smccd.edu.



Getting "On Course"

On January 15-17, forty faculty, staff, and administrators, representing all divisions, both full time and adjunct, participated in a three day teaching and learning seminar, "On Course." A main thrust of "On Course" is

on how to empower a student to shift from a "victim" status to that of a "creator." The seminar was highly experiential and offered dozens

of innovative strategies to support students in successful learning. According to the evaluations, it was a rejuvenating, bonding, and at times inspirational learning experience for the participants. One participant noted, "This [type of seminar] gives



instructors...an opportunity to share ideas across the curriculum. I now feel a part of the Skyline package. It connects everyone." This workshop had such a strong impact on the participants that "support teams" (formed within the workshop framework) continued to e-mail each other through the first two weeks of the semester, sharing the "On Course" strategies that they suc-

cessfully implemented in their classes. For as another participant wrote, "[By participating in the seminar] I found new ways of motivating my students and placing the responsibility back to the student and not



carry it on me. It showed me ways to reach the students that need help." These strategies also impacted campus leaders, as participants such as the following considered how to integrate the strategies into decision making processes, "I will use what I learned about the Wise Choice Process to facilitate the work of several groups on campus. I envision embedding some EQ [emotional intelligence] content in

future leadership retreats." Feel like you missed the boat? No worries; so positive was the feedback that we plan

to host another "On Course" workshop for folks like you; keep an eye out for future announcements so you can get "on course," too!

On Course Seminar Photos:(l. top) Steve Aurilio, David Hasson, Rick Hough, Regina Pelayo, & Barbara Corzonkof; (l. right) Nancy Lam; (l. bottom) Rosie Bell & Nate Nevado; (r. bottom) Ray Hernandez & Steve Aurilio



On Course
Participants
Vicki Morrow,
Jocelyn Vila,
Jan Fosberg,
Lavinia Zanassi,
Tiffany Schmierer,
& Harriet Carion

CRER 410: New Student Orientation Class

One hundred and seventy-four students participated in the pilot Orientation Program this past Fall semester. Students who participated in this eight-hour orientation program received a comprehensive overview of Skyline College educational programs, policies and procedures, transfer and career information, learning strategies,

instructor classroom expectations, and so much more. Results from this first go-around were positive. For the next round, encourage students who would benefit from this class to enroll. For more information, contact Jacquie Escobar at x4305 or escobarj@smccd.edu.

Hermanos/Hermanas Transitional Learning Communities

As transitional learning communities, the Hermanos and Hermanas (Brothers and Sisters, en espanol) programs work with Latino and Latina

students in the high schools (currently South San Francisco and Capuchino) to help transition them into college by providing culturally sensitive instruction,

counseling, and mentoring. Students enter the programs in their senior year of high school in preparation for their transition to enter college.

Expanded Outreach Efforts

CSI resources have enabled us to expand our outreach efforts to local high schools and the community-at-large. Thus far, under the leadership of Nate Nevado and Jocelyn Vila, the Outreach team has organized many well attended

and enthusiastically received events for our feeder high schools, including High School Day for the San Mateo Unified High School District. Currently in the works is the development of HY-PHE (Heightening Your Personal Development through

Higher Education Day). The goal of this event is to provide new students with a fresh and innovative approach to building personal development skills necessary for college success.



For more information, see
<http://www.skylinecollege.edu/collegesuccess>

Supplemental Instruction in English, ESOL, and Math

One of the components of the College Success Initiative is Supplemental Instruction (SI). SI courses are paired with traditionally “high-risk” courses such as developmental English, ESOL, and Math, which have a lower success rate than the college average. SI courses, which meet once a week, seek to improve the success rate of students in such courses by providing a less formal, interactive learning environment where students can gain additional practice, review material, and generally reinforce whatever was covered that week. In addition, they might learn or improve test taking strategies, study and learning skills, and stress management, all of which are intended to enhance deeper understanding of the subject

matter. This spring semester, thirteen sections of Math, English, and ESOL courses are paired with SI courses: two sections of Math 110, three sections of Math 811, five sections of English 826, two sections of English 836, and one



Learning Center Director Leslie Shelton with Math faculty Stacey Hubbard, David Hasson, Soodi Zamani, Rick Hough, John Chavez, Jon Freedman, & Michael Hoffman

section of ESOL 400.

SI leaders work closely with the instructors to provide pertinent instruction and assistance to supplement the existing curriculum. They attend class at least once a week to be attuned to what’s covered and

sometimes help to facilitate group activities, and in their weekly SI sessions, they work with students on whatever will enhance their learning. English SI leaders Lucas Drisdell, Jarrod Feiner, Brooke Foged, and Kate Smith meet weekly to problem solve and provide support for each other, as do the Math SI leaders David Hasson, Michael Hoffman, and Stacey Hubbard. Hasson and Hoffman are working with Math Professor John Chavez to create study skills materials specifically related to Math, ESOL Professor Leigh Anne Sippel and ESOL SI leader Meegan Rivera meet once a week to review the students’ progress and plan the next lesson collaboratively.

So far, Sippel believes that the S.I. course is helping her students tremendously. To determine SI’s future direction, the SI faculty and leaders will continue to assess the program’s effectiveness.

Newsletter contributions from Jacquie Escobar, Phyllis Taylor, Karen Wong, & Soodi Zamani with photos from Nick Kapp