

BREAKING THROUGH BI-ANNUAL REPORT
COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF DENVER
ELAINE DELOTT BAKER, RUTH BRANCARD, CO-DIRECTORS
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General Learning

- With the adaptations around an expanded career exploration focus, we feel that the accelerated cohort model has basically matured. While there may be other adaptations, the experience of the four cohorts, coupled with careful outcome analysis, has taken the model to a close to optimum state, one which can be replicated at other colleges.
- While we have not yet reached the completion of the College Connection program, it is clear by the response of Adult Education practitioners and students, that remedial preparation for GED completers is an area of acknowledged need.
- Preliminary indications are that ESL students will respond well to “bridge programs” that help them accelerate from ESL through developmental coursework to college level coursework
- Math continues to be the area of greatest need. Involving math faculty in contextualizing curricula is a promising strategy in the effort to impact math outcomes and increase retention.
- Outcomes show strong, statistically significant gains for accelerated cohorts.

Progress Points for January – June, 2007 (identified in the MOU)

4th learning community and self-paced cohorts will be launched.

The fourth cohorts were launched, with 100 students in the FastStart group. Self-paced cohorts are also running, although we have not been comparing outcomes of the two groups. A total of 287 students have been served in FastStart. The numbers of students in the self-paced cohorts is about half that amount. Self-paced cohorts do not receive direct services from the grant; however, their performance and the issues associated with this delivery of instruction are being tracked and will be addressed in the final evaluation.

Launch implementation of the Bridge.

The Bridge program, called “College Connection”, was launched through a joint effort of the Colorado Department of Education and CCD. The CCD BT team presented a session on College Connection at the Colorado Adult Education Professional Association conference, which was well attended by GED program leaders and community colleges that are sub-grantees of the Title 11 program. Interest was very high and responses were very positive. Joint recruitment was done by sending out mailers to recent GED grads, inviting them to participate.

College Connection is using the same instructors and staff as FastStart and is incorporating many of the same strategies, including career exploration activities and case management. Fifteen students began the program on June 6th. Fourteen are still active.

Assess feasibility of contextualizing and accelerating the pre-algebra and introduction to algebra curriculum

Preliminary outcomes from the Spring 06 cohort show passage through gatekeeper math courses is significantly higher for FastStart students than for students in the comparison group.

Math instructors, including the math chair, have been meeting around contextualizing math projects for the three levels of developmental math, which is scheduled for the summer.

Continue work on diagnostic tools and contextualized curricula.

The most significant work in this area has been in strengthening the career exploration and guidance piece. A career advising fair was held in the spring, which was integrated into the curriculum by the English/reading faculty (see attachment on planning for the second advising fair). FastStart faculty also redesigned the College Orientation course to strengthen the career guidance component. See paragraph above for contextualized math curriculum

Continue professional development of adjunct developmental education faculty.

Adjunct faculty staff meetings continue for project faculty. As part of efforts to expand these practices beyond the program, Ruth Brancard presented on the program for developmental education faculty at the center-wide staff meeting. We are currently planning a system wide peer learning summit on developmental education, for October 19th.

Pilot additional course pairings for acceleration

One new pairing was added this past semester to meet the needs of students who are exiting from the ESL program, a group with a different educational profile than other developmental students. The new learning community pairs two levels of reading and one level of writing (REA 060 and 090; ENG 090). This has been a very successful pairing, which has broad-based application for other programs transitioning students from ESL to developmental education.

Challenges

There are two major challenges. The first challenge is the institutionalization of the program. The aspects of institutionalization that have been implemented are the restructuring of the courses; the distribution of information on the program to the relevant recruitment, advising, testing, and case management staff; integration of curricula; the positioning of the program within the college; and the integration of career exploration activities within the college orientation course and student life activities. The two aspects of institutionalization that are still

pending have to do with funding two positions – the educational case manager and the program coordinator. Plans for this were approved by President Christine Johnson, but with her departure, there is no certainty that these plans will be implemented. The case management position has been funded through general funds at .5 FTE for the coming year, with a provisional commitment to fund it fully in the next year. The coordinator position is tied to a faculty hire in reading/English.

The second challenge has to do with the present status of the college's IR capability. The system is currently switching from SIS to Banner. In the process, historical data has not yet been transferred to the new data warehouse. Individual college data was frozen in the fall, but the cohort tracking programs that would facilitate the analysis have not been developed yet.. The result is that the college is caught between two systems. The data warehouse will be operational for IR functions in Spring 08, but in the interim, data collection and analysis is very slow and cumbersome, with additional limitations on the kinds of analyses that can be performed.

Technical Assistance Needs

Consultation of evaluation methodology would be useful.