

---

## Evaluation, Measurement, Continuous Improvement

---

### Study Committee Commentary

---

#### *Key Findings and Trends*

Several Michigan community colleges, such as Oakland, are participating in National Community College Measurement Benchmarking (NCCMB) system that provides a network to facilitate the sharing of measurement practices and results of participating institutions.

#### *Common Measurements*

Course completion

Completion of gateway courses and prerequisites

Completion of all courses

Fall-to-Spring retention

#### *Like to Examine*

Focus Groups: how do students define success, what are their barriers to achieving that success?

Longitudinal Studies

Instructional Strategies

#### *Questions/Comments*

1. How do we separate student failure based on academic problems vs. personal problems?
2. Are we examining how courses like OnCourse are affecting student persistence?  
Washtenaw and Lake Michigan have reported different related findings.
3. Are we really using what has already been implemented before advocating something new?
4. Can we create a culture that promotes teacher engagement? Alerting support services to connect with troubled or at-risk students is a crucial intervention. "Save one student at a time; one or two students in any class add up over time."
5. Do Adult Education reporting systems identify measurables that can improve evaluation practices in developmental education?
6. Are we collecting/examining credible data?

#### *Intervention Tools*

Starfish early alert...works in combination with blackboard @20000 for 2 or 3 yr trial

WAVE

Retention Alert

\*Most reported that automated listings, calls, and mailings are relatively ineffective.

---

## Collaborative Partnerships

---

### Study Committee Commentary

---

#### *Key Findings and Trend*

While all community colleges partner with outside agencies, the partnerships have not been deliberate or targeted. There are significant partnerships with K-12 and Michigan Works! Agencies. The contact people are varied, most contacts are academic administrators or Workforce Development Administrators. Recently, the partnerships are more targeted. There are ten partnerships ARRA Demonstration Grant Projects across the state with community colleges, Michigan Works!, local literacy councils, and adult education programs. There is also a cross-functional Michigan Literacy Plan being designed by MDE (reference WCC Denise Crudup).

#### *Observations/Implications*

Partnerships need to be more deliberate and targeted to the student population they serve. There needs to be a contact at the community colleges that is aware of all the partnerships and their purposes to avoid duplication of effort. We should continue to provide this information for all colleges about the partnerships because each of the Michigan colleges are at different points in the partnership process.

#### *Recommended Reading:*

I-Best Washington State Program

Michigan Adult Learning Work Group Report

Achieving the Dream, Breaking Through in Michigan and nationally

Michigan Literacy Plan

---

Faculty & Staff

---

Study Committee Commentary

---

*Key Findings and Trends*

In house training is vital and done by most institutions

Colleges are moving to hiring people who have teaching degrees and certificates, or developmental experience in math, reading, and writing.

*Observations/Implications*

Full time DE faculty is a commitment by the college for student success.

Important to understand HS curriculum and discuss alignment

*Certification & Training*

Faculty Success Center trains faculty on assessment, classroom management, teaching, learning styles, self-efficacy development

Some schools have created a Center for Organizational Success; faculty have to participate/enroll in teaching education or training targeted to developmental education. Some training programs are tied to pay raises.

New Faculty Academy

Talked about NADE certification, CRLA, program certification & Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education

Important to provide faculty with opportunities to network and share and meet with mentors in their field.

---

## Assessment & Placement

---

### Study Committee Commentary

#### *Key Findings and Trends*

Good placement makes for happy staff and students.

Lansing and GRCC have absolute mandatory placement...would like to track their success.

#### *Observations/Implications*

Accurate course placement is vital to student success.

Current cut scores are not always effective (to low) and underprepared students are getting into wrong courses

Some institutions have no means for enforcement of placements.

Partnerships can be important. Ex: Learning Bank Partnership with ISD; supposed to refer students that are at very basic levels. This is where students who place below college level can go. This type of service is not available in all areas. Most colleges take all students and “deal” with it.”

Most schools provide unlimited opportunities to test out of coursework. Some charge fees for retesting. If students study for retesting, they may advance. Otherwise, retesting does not seem to make a difference.

Most students are not told to prepare to test.

ESL testing is highly dependent on the population and location. Some schools do not have an ESL population.

College Survival Skills are important to improve skills. Most placements concern reading, writing, and math only.

If students can get through reading, they can get through math. Best predictor of math success is good reading.

Students are reluctant to take developmental reading. They don't see the link with success.

Some schools have students retake COMPASS test for the course at the end of the course to either exit DE or go to the next level.

*Questions*

1. Who determines cut scores? This should be a collaborative process. Prerequisites for classes should also be examined. Do they make sense to all involved parties?
2. If you are requiring students to go through multiple levels of developmental education, are you creating barriers to program completion? What is the most effective number of levels to better enable student success, but not take too long. What is the impact of acceleration and immersion?
3. What will happen to students that get HS certificate instead of diploma? Ability to Benefit (ATB) policy affects those districts or regions with high ESL populations and the large number of returning adults without a high school degree or GED.
4. Is there a placement test for basic computer skills? Are there any good placement tests for computers?

---

## Institutional Practices & Policies

---

### Study Committee Commentary

---

#### *Key Findings and Trends*

Seventeen of the schools are participating in ATD; ten joined this year. It is hoped to drive the increased engagement by school leadership and boards of trustees.

#### *Observations/Implications*

Comparison of the institutional policies might provide some insight as to the driving forces within the schools. Every school has the same problem: underprepared students. Are the boards of trustees engaged in the issue?

#### *Questions*

1. Should we look at the strategic plans as opposed to the institutional policies? What changes might have been made to strategic plans and board policies because of ATD involvement?
2. Is the ACS Report the best place to find Developmental Educational (DE) funding information?
3. Is centralized DE leadership really more effective than decentralized? How does this leadership model affect students' ability to navigate educational pathways, or the institution's ability to create new pathways, or effect the leveraging of resources, communication, etc... How might these impact non-credit students?
4. Centralized/decentralized; the most successful programs appear to be those with team leadership exercising excellent communication and leveraging expertise. *Only 1 school reported centralized controlled by 1 person. Sixteen have decentralized, led by a team.*
5. Does the leadership model enable parallel/alignment with basic skills/non-credit to de credit coursework?
6. Do institutions have practices/policies in place that ensure that students have access to comprehensive services?
7. A discussion of funding issues related to credit or non-credit and combination programs indicated that the coursework must be related to a declared certificate or associate degree program to qualify for Pell grant funding. (Robert Matthews provided expertise based on MOTT career pathways programming.)

---

## Curriculum & Instruction

---

### Study Committee Commentary

---

#### *Key Findings and Trends*

Some colleges provide more developmental courses than others because of their student population. It is interesting to see past data - - - are students improving? It doesn't appear that things are changing. Longitudinal studies are required to measure the success of new requirements; high school certificate of completion and/or diploma.

More diverse ways and kinds of courses, but we think bulk are traditional.

More alignment needed from HS to college but very difficult to enforce – many are in survival mode.

#### *Observations/Implications*

MACRO requirements Gen Ed/associate degree outcome determine what needs to be college-level including locked in courses which may not be necessary.

Courses will no longer count towards degree/certificates after January. But, some may be changing numbers on courses so that developmental course are number within the 100 level to adapt.

January – changes to developmental credit – students are no longer able to take developmental courses for credit.

Some colleges have faculty sign-off if students fall below college-level.

Developmental education instructor also teaches introductory course – so that students have are familiar with the instructor.

There is a national movement to recode Algebra as developmental.

Lack of success is not necessarily due to the student's error.

.

Reading – need to define ability to read based on “courses taken.” Some instructors do not require reading.

More students are enrolling with cognitive impairments. This is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Need to do a better job of contextualizing foundational skills: require more reading, writing, math, time management, critical thinking, study skills.... Orientation courses may also help develop skills

*Clarification Requested by Committee Members*

The committee requested clarification and definitions for Work Readiness, Learning Modalities, and the instructional strategies identified in the survey.

*Responses from Ann Iseda*

*Work Readiness* is defined by the National Work Readiness Council (2006) as the ability to add value in frontline jobs in entry level positions. While creating value through relationships is complex, the foundational skills needed comprise an integrated mix of communication, interpersonal, decision-making and learning skills and sub-skills are the key to building value-creating relationships. *Equipped for the Future* (2006) identifies the pertinent competencies as: reading with understanding, conveying ideas in writing, speaking clearly and understandably, listening actively, observing critically, using math to solve problems, communicating to solve problems and make decisions, planning, cooperating with others, resolving conflict and negotiating, taking responsibility for learning, reflecting and evaluating, learning through research, and using information and communications technology.

*Learning Modalities* are described by Dunn, Dunn, and Price (1989) as primary elements that make up all of the possible learning styles. These elements are categorized in one of the following areas: environmental elements, emotional elements, sociological elements, physical elements, and sense. Planning curriculum to address the needs of this specific target population; adults returning to develop work-readiness skills, entails tailoring programs to address unique demographic characteristics. The modalities are briefly defined as:

*Environmental – atmosphere, light, temperature* Environmental venues on the community college campus include proximity to student support services, and teachers who act as facilitators of learning and coaches promote self-efficacy and model reflectivity, inquisitiveness, risk-taking, and initiative.

*Emotional – interests, persistence, responsibility, structure* This refers to using content such as the On-Course text or other self-development coursework can assist these adults in learning how to take personal responsibility for their learning, develop self-efficacy and self-regulatory behaviors, and challenge their fears regarding learning and goal setting.

*Sociological – grouping, peer tutoring, adult, guidance* Providing tutors, social workers, and learning support can promote the emotional development, confidence, and persistence of these students. Tutors trained to facilitate the learning process within collaborative groups aid the development of student thinking and reasoning skills through Socratic engagement.

*Physical – time of day, mobility* Scheduling and location are one aspect of physical modality. Daily block scheduling is one way to support accelerated cohort programming AND depict a work-like routine thereby reducing lifestyle and familial discordance.

*Sense – visual, auditory, tactile/kinesthetic* Contextualized and differentiated learning activities engage students through a variety of instructional approaches to enable the mastery content and development of competencies.

*Instructional Strategies* identified in the survey instrument included differentiated, brain-based learning, inquiry-problem solving, active learning, multiple intelligences, collaborative learning groups, and contextualization. *Committee members indicated that there is no monitoring of what strategies instructors are using in the classroom.*

*Differentiation* indicates using a variety of methods to accommodate diverse learners and styles; collaborative group work, individual project, guided inquiry, limited direct instruction.

*Inquiry/Problem-Solving* Designed to involve students in a process of investigation, guided inquiry requires students to identify problems, brainstorm solutions, formulate questions, investigate, collect data, analyze and interpret findings, discuss, reflect, make conclusions, and present results.

*Active learning* Students are engaged and involved as active participants in the learning process. Students are not simply receivers of information.

*Multiple intelligences* Most people are more likely to learn and retain information based upon the way it is presented due to their natural inclinations or learning preferences. While some can readily adapt to any style, others have difficulty doing so. Eight intrinsic intelligences have been identified: linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist. New categories under examination include social and emotional.

*Collaborative group work* is most effective when there is positive interdependence, face-to-face interaction, individual accountability, effective communication and problem-solving is promoted, and group evaluation includes an examination of how well students worked together.

*Contextualization* is when content and competencies are presented within the context of a real life situation/application. Students readily grasp how and why the learning outcomes will serve them. For instances, percentages applied to a shopping during a sales event.

Reference:

Hunt, G. H., Wiseman, D. G., Touzel, T. J.(2009) *Effective teaching; preparation and implementation*, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed., Charles C. Thomas Publisher, Ltd., Springfield, IL

*Questions*

1. Do the trends make a difference?
2. How successful are accelerated courses? Are results same/better than 16 week?
3. What is the level of training of instructors? Are they certified teachers or developmental education professionals?

---

## Workforce Development

---

### Study Committee Commentary

---

#### *Key Findings and Trends*

Most of the community colleges in Michigan have workforce development programs outside of developmental education. These programs do include workforce competencies. They have clearly defined career pathways aligned with adult education and workforce readiness. These programs often use contextualized education. The connection with faculty in the support services is strong, but the academic areas do not have as strong a connection with workforce development as the support areas may have. Workforce Development helps to fill seats in programs with spaces because they often have a direct connection to funding and support services outside the college.

Little understanding of the skills required or what it means to be work ready.

#### *Observations/Implication*

The Workforce Development programs grew out of contract training. The newer programs are ongoing. There are ways to offer financial aid for non-credit courses. Some courses can be non-credit modules moving into credit articulation agreements. Non-credit courses may fill the clock time with non-credit for credentialing, to speed the credentialing process. Articulations from non-credit to credit may be patterned after the articulation agreements with local high school programs and the community colleges. (Tech Prep).

Developmental programs could be a part of the students program, if basic reading, writing and math skills were necessary to complete the module. Contextualized learning within the module can also be used to improve basic skills within the workforce class itself.

Navigation, counseling and advising are very significant parts of these programs. This is done in a wraparound service model with intrusive counseling that can often extend into the classroom. The goal is to make this service model look easy to the student, while dealing with some difficult and diverse service providers. These people need additional training beyond what the normal counselor/advisor is trained to do at the colleges.