Cerritos College
College Committee on Developmental Education
Minutes of the February 19, 2008 Meeting

Members Present:
- M.L. Bettino
- B. Helberg
- S. Sestini
- R. Chomiak
- S. Parsons
- A. Soto
- J. Connal
- F. Quaas-Berryman
- J. Sugihara-Cheetham
- B. Farmer
- B. Reece
- K. Follett
- V. Romero

Members Absent:
- G. Codd
- M. Robles
- M. Cordero
- J. Swanson
- N. Durdella
- D. Worrel

Dr. Connal called the meeting to order at 2:10 pm

1. Dr. Follett moved to approve the minutes January 15: Approved Mr. Bettino, Mr. Farmer, and Ms. Parsons abstained.

2. Conference Reports
   - A. Dr. Follett commented on CTE (Career / Technical Education) and what a positive program that is. Ms. Parsons followed up with an explanation of the program. It is part of and modeled after Teacher TRAC. Career and Technical Education credentialing is different than standard credentialing. The program works with high schools and CTE on campus and recruits teachers for high school and community college. There are mentoring opportunities and internships, as well as a faculty development component.
   - B. Dr. Connal announced that the Student Success Conference will be held in October in Anaheim. Dr. Connal recommended that the mini grant people consider putting together presentations. Everyone was encouraged to sign up early because the conference sells out immediately.

3. The committee members were asked to review the material generated at the Jan 11th Basic Skills Forum and to look for recurring themes in the content. In addition, the committee members were asked to participate in a Survey Monkey activity that enabled us to identify the 10 most predominate themes from the Forum in order. Following are highlights from the discussion of those activities:

   **Survey Monkey Results: Page 1** (The survey prioritized what committee members identified as the most pressing themes from the January 11th data. Page one represents what committee members saw as the most prevalent theme. All committee members had the opportunity to participate in the survey. Eight members participated).
Many comments from the forum focus on organizational and administrative practices.
  - Coordination
  - Institutional priority
  - Mission Statement

Staff Development is another primary concern
On the first page of the survey, there is little focus on instructional programs
There is an expressed desire for Developmental Education (DE) to be a primary mission of the college with heavy administrative support, a high degree of coordination, and a person(s) with DE coordination as their sole responsibility on campus.
There was a question on survey item #6 regarding the distinction between “developmental courses” and “developmental students.” The explanation is that developmental students are taking class all over campus, not just in reading, math, English, and ESL, so any courses that do not have pre-requisites will need to be able to meet the needs of DE students.
We need a wide array of services to serve the needs of DE students.
We need to insure we are meeting the needs of students who function at a variety of developmental levels, regardless of what program they are in.

Survey Monkey Results: Page 2 (As we moved to each new page of Survey Monkey report, we were asked to look for new themes or for questions)
- There was a question about an “adequate number of faculty to teach developmental courses.” There was a question as to whether this contradicted the idea of focusing on DE students rather than DE courses. Rather than focusing on full-time or part-time status, a better way to look at this might revolve around what qualities are we looking for in DE instructors that we might not necessarily need in non-DE courses. There were also questions about how and when we offer particular courses. Personal faculty preferences should not drive schedules. We need to address the needs of students. Instructors who have training in methodology may be better prepared to address the needs of DE students.
- Faculty with training in pedagogy and andragogy teaching methodologies may be better prepared to meet the needs of DE students.
- The point of Grant Writing came up in the survey, but through the discussion it was determined that this was an isolated comment.
- There was interest in the idea of developing a “community of inquiry,” in which faculty are trained to do classroom research and thus assess and evaluate their own teaching practices and effectiveness. We need to learn how to document whether or not interventions actually have an impact on student achievement. We need to develop a “community of evidence.”
Through the “community of evidence,” we can then develop a forum through which faculty can share successful practices.

- How do we motivate the DE student to take and complete the required DE courses? This is a question that could be explored through a faculty development inquiry activity, such as a FIG (Faculty Inquiry Group).
- There was also a question about whether we can structurally require students to take the DE courses early, before other transfer level courses. If we don’t require this in some way, we may not be really getting at the heart of the problem.
- We need to keep in mind that the Basic Skills Initiative (BSI) plan is part of a process. We cannot do everything at once, and we need to focus on the initial steps and get the process going. Then we can continue the dialogue and advance the plan and the discussion.
- Cerritos Summer Connection: A week long orientation program for high school students. This program will emphasize the necessity to take the DE classes early in the program; however, this will only serve 180 students.
- If we were to develop requirements that force students to complete DE within a specific time frame, we would have to offer enough sections to accommodate all the students who would need to take the classes. “Have to” may not be possible due to limitation of faculty and space.
- How do we develop incentives for persistence? Students can be given “Early Bird” Registration if they do assessment and orientation. But what can we do to get them to sign up for the necessary DE classes and finish the classes?
- We might look at an “Academy” type program. This would be a program that students would commit to, and we, in turn, would provide the support services to enable students to follow through on their commitment.
- To facilitate persistence, we may also need to encourage faculty to get more involved, phone calls or emails to student who don’t show up to class for two meetings. It is also important for faculty to make personal connections with students, for example learning student names in the first two weeks.
- We can also look at what early alert program options are available to us.
- There are a lot of strategies available to faculty to help students persist, and we may want to require faculty to commit to a strategy that works for them.
- We need support services to help struggling students persist.
- We may also look at programs that enable students to complete the DE course sequence quickly, such as afternoon programs, weekend programs, 6 and 9 week course offerings. Accelerated learning might help students overcome the psychological hurdle as they look at a long sequence of courses. If we go with accelerated courses, we need to be sure the students can actually register for all the sequence in a semester without running into difficulty with PeopleSoft.
- We may focus on evaluating students’ reading skills. If students cannot read the text, this may be a reason they do not persist.
Faculty Development and training are key themes discussed on this page of the survey.

There was discussion of centralized tutoring services with a centralized coordinator, but with satellite centers with expertise in specialized writing needs (vocational, ESL). There was also a question about whether this was a priority theme in the material collected January 11.

How do we get students to utilize the tutoring services? Do we set up a class and make it a co-requisite or part of the class.

We need to begin a culture shift of campus, not just with faculty, but across campus. Everyone is focused on student success. The tutoring centers can be a place where people congregate; this is where we go on campus.

Following the lead of Faculty Senate, we need to make the culture shift public, something that is embraced campus wide.

How can we facilitate International Student participation in lab services? Right now the International students have to pay for the half unit to use the Writing Center, and with International fees, this can be expensive and pose a significant barrier for students.

We might be able to work “gentle reminders” or guides into the enrollment process. Messages like “you need to enroll in a reading 54 class...” and then lead the students to the appropriate classes. However, if we do this, we also need to commit to offering enough classes.

There was a question about how the gentle reminders work with students in the process of taking a prerequisite class currently and not being able to register for the subsequent class during the registration period. We might address this by initiating a mid-term progress grade that could clear students to enroll in courses the following semester. Could this also be a potential solution for the accelerated classes as well?

The specialty programs offer coordinated support services, which is a large part of what makes them successful. However, there does not seem to be a practical way to do that for large numbers of students and to get the support services where they are most needed.

How can we get students a one-on-one connection with people who have a passion for DE students and who could provide students with “Developmental Management.”

We might be able to tap into the students’ families as a coordinated support for the students. Find ways to reach out to “significant others” and bring them into the process. Teach the “significant others” how they can support their student through the academic journey. There are statistics that show that college is important to most families, so we can tap into that desire and show them how to make it happen. There might be a “parent night” event that gives parents the information they need.
Faculty and staff can be trained as “go to” people to facilitate the one-on-one connection with students on campus. This gives students more people they can go to.

Do we have any data that shows what percentage of the students live with their parents? Students in developmental English are very different than those in developmental math. The students in English tend to be younger, and just out of high school, whereas those in developmental math tend to be more diverse and cover a wider range of age and experience.

There is a difference between the level of support a family and a mentor can offer. Mentors will have a particular expertise, and may be able to address on campus student questions more effectively. There are programs at other campuses that have mentor programs for students. Pasadena is one example. This is something that could involve more people on campus, classified staff, faculty, administrators. This would require training and resources so everyone has the chance to be excellent in their mentorship. We would want to recruit mentors who are committed to the process.

A mentor program would need to provide significant training so mentors would have the ability to deal with a broad range of problems, including serious problems like suicide.

Survey Monkey Results: Page 4
- We need to find ways to expand orientation and encourage broader participation.
- We need to get students assessed and placed into appropriate courses.

Survey Monkey Results: Page 5
- There is a particular problem with coordination with adult ed. Course articulation needs to be more specific. Most committee members really didn’t know what is being done in adult ed to move students into regular college courses. We need an articulated series of courses that lead directly into the courses we currently offer.
- The biggest component of Adult Ed is ESL, and that part of the program is now articulated with the college ELS courses. We need to do that for other disciplines. We need to find a way to work with the instructors of those courses, some of whom may not understand what we are doing on the college side.
- We might look at assessments that give students numbers that they can understand. If the students don’t understand the results of their placement test, the score does nothing to motivate the student to improve. We need to move the students toward goals and give them tools to monitor their own progress. (Lexile / Total Reader).
- Faculty need to assess the reading level of their course materials and assure that they are appropriate for the level of students they are working with.
We could develop student contract independent learning opportunities (Lab?) through which students can monitor their own improvement. Rio Hondo, (Santa Ana?), and Cypress.

Survey Monkey Results: Page 6

- This page starts to get into instructional practices, yet those were not strong themes throughout the report.
- It might be that we identify instructional practices through faculty development activities.
- There seems to be a disconnect between the reading and writing placements. This disconnect adds to the disconnect between high school exit expectations and college entry level expectations.
- The committee discussed the problems related to the disconnect between high school and college and what we might do to address that problem, but it was pointed out that this might be beyond the scope of our project.
- There was also a suggestion that we might begin FIG groups that involve faculty from all levels of education to begin to align the expectations and to share teaching strategies that are effective with students.
- There needs to be more bridging from the high school to the community college.
- There was also discussion about the psychological effects of DE placement, especially on students who believed themselves prepared for college level work.
- We might do some outreach with the local schools by conducting assessments to let students know where they would place with their current ability, then following this up with some kind of orientation to help them understand what the scores mean and what their responsibility/choices would be based on those scores.
- Can there be some kind of a Saturday school outreach program?
- Could this be something like the program already in place in the Cal State system.
- This is the year that if high school seniors don’t pass the CAHSEE (California High School Exit Exam), they will not be able to graduate. This is all the more reason to create more programs to address that problem. There is currently something in process through Adult Ed.
- We might also do more test anxiety assessment, learning styles assessment, looking at more of these activities to help students understand where they could make adjustments. Then we can develop some kind of prescription to enable the student to change. We should assess more than content skills and have tools to assist students with these issues.
- The idea of study skills assessment was presented at an outreach idea, but this might not be an effective way to spend the money as many of those students may not come to Cerritos. We might be better off with bridge programs that address these concerns.
We might set up “boot camp”/accelerated programs in the summer for English or math that will help students assess at higher levels.

There was extended discussion about assessing study skills and developing some kind of program to help students develop these skills.

Survey Monkey Results: Page 7

- Semi-independent classes do not work well with developmental students. Online is also not successful at this level. The students do not have the independent study skills to be successful. However, in math, this can be effective for students who simply need a review, but it does not work well for students who are learning the skills.
- Can we clarify more clearly in the schedule of classes what it takes to be successful in the online and semi-independent classes? There is already a plan in place to set the semi-independent classes apart in the class schedule, so that students don’t end up in those classes without understanding what they are signing up for.
- How can we show appreciation to faculty who are involved with DE. This would be a means to get more faculty buy-in.

Survey Monkey Results: Page 8

- There is a lack of data/evidence to show what is working or not working on campus.

Survey Monkey Results: Page 9

- We don’t close the loop. We collect data, but we don’t utilize or disseminate the information.

Survey Monkey Results: Page 10

- Again, we need to share models and what our “experts” know.

After we went through the Survey Monkey information, Dr. Connal directed us to look for specific themes to determine where we need to begin our plan.

- Three themes: 1) Campus-wide coordination (structural coordination of the DE program), including a mission statement, goals, and objectives. 2) Staff Development 3) Coordination of support services.
- There is a clear desire to avoid a Basic Skills Department, but there might be a coordinator who looks at which classes are being offered, when they are being offered. Someone who looks at support programs, like the ASC and insures that all parts of the DE program are working together.
- Coordinated support services might include orientations, parent days, more specific than the global, structural part of DE.
Can we work on developing an integration of instruction and student services in a new way? What can we do to break down this divide? We have classrooms, and then we have everything else. Can we develop a model to see how we can get an integration of services and instruction?

Does this coordination mean that we need to make a structural change in the college in order to accommodate this idea?

We might look at the current models we have on campus (Like Teacher TRAC) that are already doing this kind of lateral connection within the existing structure.

A weakness of the coordinator model might be that a coordinator would have no authority other than a personal ability to persuade others.

If we create something where those who participate are valued, nurtured, and supported, there would be those who would come forward to participate, and who would be willing to do the extra mentoring and other activities we value.

We might also start off small, working with the lowest level courses and then working up from there.

If we have a coordinator, what is the coordinator coordinating? How does the coordinator meet the needs of DE students who are not in DE courses?

Students and faculty would need a “home” and to know that they are part of a program.

The DE program would have outcomes and a unit plan. The committee would then be the advisory committee for that position and program.

We need a full-time, dedicated coordinator.

There was some question as to whether this coordinator position is creating a developmental department.

How do we structure the program so that we are meeting the needs of the students? What are our goals with regards to students? What is the mission? What are our outcomes?

Two Goals
  o Develop a more coordinated DE program both structurally and in terms of student support services.
  o Improve/Increase staff development opportunities related to DE practices.

If those are goals, what objectives will help us reach the goals, and what activities will help us meet the objectives?

Is DE so important to who we are as an institution that we want it to be part of the main campus mission?

Making DE part of the campus mission will happen gradually, through focused staff development and discussion.

Students have to understand that DE is important as well.

What process will we use to involve other faculty, especially those not currently involved with DE programs or those who may not feel like they have much to do with DE students?
What kind of outreach can we do for part-time faculty? They are teaching a majority of the DE classes.

We may also need to say it is okay for some faculty not to get involved in this.

We need to respect and support those who do choose to get involved.

The students come with a lot of issues, and we need to support the faculty who get involved.

The question was posed directly to Mr. Farmer as to whether he supported a dedicated coordinator. Mr. Farmer has concern about what kind of authority the coordinator would have. What exactly is the coordinator doing? It is already someone's job to schedule the classes. What is the person coordinating?

The coordinator needs to coordinate meeting the needs of DE students throughout campus, not just DE courses.

Mr. Farmer asked for a job description for the coordinator. What would this look like?

The trustees might be asked to support staff development through the Avalon funds. We need staff development that is thematic, coordinated, and focused. There could be a move to devote staff development funds toward DE projects.

We need to think about what we are trying to accomplish across campus, and try to avoid locking into a solution too soon.

Another model would be to have specialists in key areas, and then those specialists could report to a dean. By putting all the responsibility on one person, we may diminish the importance of the situation and perhaps diminish the buy in by other groups.

If we go with the coordinator model, we need to look at what a person would need to have in terms of expertise in order to make a coordinator position work.

We might also look at release time for multiple specialists in DE with release time.

The problem with the specialist model is that it puts the focus on the DE classes rather than on the DE students.

There seems to be two goals coming out of the discussion: Developing a model for the coordination and developing a model for faculty development.

The group asked questions about the recommendations that were developed from the Basic Skills group three years ago.

Developing a mission statement and Faculty Development Program will take time to plan effectively.

Faculty Development will also take time to plan, so we will need to plan to plan.

**ACTION ITEM:** The committee decided that Dr. Connal draft out the action plan based on the topics discussed during the meeting. Once this is drafted, it will be sent to the committee members for review before the next meeting.
There was also a request for a visual aid that would demonstrate the student experience as he/she moves through the DE “Academy.” The committee was unsure as to whether we have enough information yet to create this visual.

- We need to have a draft of the plan ready for presentation to the campus at the General Meeting on March 27th. This information will also be presented to the Coordinating Meeting, and we may do a presentation to the Board even though this will not need Board approval.

Next Meeting

The committee will meet again from 2:00 to 5:00 pm in SS16 on Tuesday, March 4, 2008.

Dr. Connal adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.