2. Narrative Response to BSI End-of-Year Report: Chaffey College 2012-2013

How is your college assessing how it uses BSI funds and how are these funds related to your college's educational master plan?

Chaffey College guides the planning for the BSI funds through the Enrollment and Success Management Committee, which is a large and well-represented group of administrators, faculty, and staff. Generally, our goals have stayed fairly constant, although the college builds in some flexible funding through BSI in order to take on new initiatives as deemed appropriate.

Chaffey's Educational Master Plan is termed an “Educational Strategic Vision” which is informed by the Gates Completion by design initiative. Four phases of the students' experiences have been identified and goals assigned to each phase as represented below:

BSI Funds at Chaffey are focused on several key areas: English, math, and ESL, the Faculty Success Center, and Early Advantage (formerly Early Alert). These focus areas map to the college’s “Connection,” “Advancement,” and “Completion” phases.

The assessment of the funds is closely monitored through the supervising manager, the Dean of Instructional Support, Institutional Research, and the respective departments. In every area where BSI funds are utilized, there is a rigorous research and data collection component, and the results of that data—surveys, completion/success data—are evaluated routinely by the stakeholders and recommendations for changes brought to the Enrollment and Success Management Committee and the administrative team.

What are the problems your college is still facing in the area of ESL/Basic Skills? What are the obstacles you need assistance with from 3CSN and/or the Chancellor's Office?
Over the past few years, success rates at Chaffey have been successively rising, and they are now at
their highest level in the college’s history at just over 71% as a result of some of the efforts funded
through the Basic Skills Initiative. Additionally, success rates in foundation courses (basic skills) are also
up overall and are almost on par with overall success rates at 69%. Despite those gains, ESL and math
continue to experience major challenges. Over the past few years, the ARCC data indicated that ESL
course success rates had dropped approximately 10%, and the department is working to discover the
causes. Math success rates are another area that requires attention. Cohort tracking indicates that the
long sequence is often an obstacle for completion. The college has organized a Faculty Inquiry Team to
examine possibilities for reforming the curriculum and support structures, as English/reading did last
year by compressing what was formerly 9 courses combined in English and Reading to just 3 courses in
which reading and writing are combined. One of the primary obstacles remains the unwillingness of
some to innovate and challenge the hypothesis that everything that can be done is already being done.

The Chancellor’s Office can continue to provide support through 3CSN, which has been very helpful for
the reforms in English/Reading. The same emphasis needs to occur in Math. A strand of professional
learning on mathematics instruction would be very useful, so it could be made clear that other
colleagues in the state are similarly challenged and exploring other alternatives to curricula, homework,
and support beyond the traditional norms.

What is your action plan for research to evaluate your programs and if/how your BSI funds have
helped?

The Faculty Success Center, which is a central aspect of the Basic Skills Initiative planning at Chaffey, is
evaluated through a series of surveys coordinated by the Institutional Research Office. Each workshop
and seminar is supported through data collection of a pre-survey, a post-survey, and then a post-post
survey months later. In part, we are measuring not just what participants learned in the short-term, but
what have they internalized in the long-term. Additionally, participants are asked to document their
experimentation from the Summer Institute into a project, and faculty present their findings to their
peers in the spring semester, which serves as both a method of evaluation as well as a way to foster the
teacher-researcher model we value as a college.

Early Advantage is evaluated with student performance outcomes associated with students who
participated in the program and comparing them with students who were also alerted and did not. The
Institutional Research Department also evaluates comparisons and contrasts with students in different
classes where the instructor participates to other instructors who do not. The college has been
collecting data on Early Advantage (formerly Early Alert) since 2008.

Basic Skills Initiative funds also supported the English and reading integration described above. This
effort was focused on cohort data from Institutional Research and then bolstered by the Cohort Tracking
Tool published by the Chancellor’s Office. The effectiveness may be difficult to establish immediately;
however, English instructors are already reporting significant increases in the numbers of students who
will be prepared to move to the next level after the college’s first round of Fast Track courses complete
this October. Comparing cohort data in the coming years to the previous year will be the first step.
3. Was your college's basic skills program more successful in 2010-2012 than it was in 2008-2010? How did you determine the answer? How did you measure the success?

Locally, Chaffey's Institutional Research Office has maintained a rigorous approach to data collection and reporting on the progress of students in foundation skills courses since the college adopted basic skills improvement as a primary strategic goal in 1999. Since then, the college has engaged in numerous efforts including major curricular reform, the Success Center and supplemental instruction networks, the hope and mindset campaign, Early Advantage, strategic scheduling, and Fast Track in order to advance the achievement of students who assess into foundation courses.

The results have been very positive as the table to the left indicates. This evidence is based on locally-tracked student success data (defined as a “C” or “credit”), which is evaluated each year in a number of committees and then used to make decisions. As the results indicate, since 2007-2008, success rates in foundation skills courses have steadily increased and have also almost reached parity with the college’s overall success rate. Since 2007-2008, the overall success rate in foundation skills courses has increased by 9.4%.

In 2012-2013, 53.9% of degree earners successfully completed at least one foundation skills course and 33.3% of certificate earners successfully completed at least one foundation skills course. By way of comparison, in 2000-01 just 18.7% of degree earners and 18.7% of certificate earners had successfully completed at least foundation skills course. Clearly, Chaffey College has made significant strides in improving the achievement rates of students who start in foundation skill areas. The challenge is that the college has so many efforts that engage students that it is difficult to determine a single innovation or program that makes the difference in students’ success.

Despite these strides, there is more work to do. Over the past year, the English and Reading Departments merged their curricula creating a 3 course sequence out of what were 9 courses. Since that initiative just started, there is no data to support its efficacy yet. However, the math sequence remains long, and students struggle to complete it. According to the Basic Skills Cohort Tracker, students who begin their mathematics journey 4 levels below transfer only have a 10% likelihood of completing the developmental sequence and reaching College Algebra. Specifically, within a 6 year window from fall of 2006 to fall of 2012, 413 students started the sequence, and only 45 reached the end. And as is often the case, Hispanic and African-American students were significantly underrepresented in the successful group. The college has committed to exploring alternative ways of delivering the math curricula. A Faculty Inquiry Team is working this year, paid by Basic Skills funds, to explore the possibilities with the hope that the sequence will be redesigned as English/reading has been.