

# LACCD Student Success Initiative Steering Committee

January 12, 2006

## Minutes

Attendees: Louise Barbato (LAMC), David Beaulieu (ELAC), Gary Colombo (District), Deborah Harrington (LAVC), Chini Johnson-Taylor (LATTTC), Daryl Kinney (LACC), Audre Levy (LASC), Leon Marzillier (DAS—LAVC), Joy McCaslin (LAPC), Edward Pai (WLAC), Abbie Patterson (LAHC), Hector Plotquin (LACC), George Prather (District), La Verne Rosow (DAS—LAVC), Rebecca Tillberg (LACC), Carlie Tronto (LAVC), Maria Elena Yepes (ELAC)

Absent: John Clerx (District)

## Reports on College SSI Progress

College representatives updated the committee on local college student success efforts, including the following:

ELAC—East’s Student Success Committee meets on the first Wednesday of the month on a regular basis. It is focusing its efforts on four primary areas: English and mathematics instruction, learning communities, and matriculation issues. David B. is serving as the committee’s liaison to the District SSI Steering Committee.

LAHC—Harbor’s Student Service Cluster/Retention Committee—which includes administrative, faculty, staff, and student representation—is being expanded to take on the SSI effort. Abbie P. serves as committee chair and liaison to the District SSI Steering Committee. This fall, Harbor will begin its First-Year Experience pilot program, which has been funded by a “Talent Search Grant.”

LAPC—Pierce’s Educational Planning Committee has established a new Student Success Sub-Committee to address the SSI effort. This group will revisit the 2003 Student Success plan to assess progress made and reevaluate planning goals. It will focus on three primary issues: student under preparation, diversity and the campus climate, and the development of a college success curriculum, including the possible institution of a first-year experience program. Pierce has already developed a 3-unit “College Success Seminar” in the form of PD 40. Most students applying at Pierce also participate in an on-line orientation program before enrolling. Joy M. is serving as liaison from Pierce to the SSI Steering Committee.

LACC—City had a student services coordination committee in the past, but has none at present. Currently, the college’s Matriculation Committee and Student Learning Outcomes Taskforce are sharing the SSI effort. Daryl K. is serving as liaison to the campus for the DSSI Steering Committee.

WLAC—Over the past six months, West has focused most of its energies on its approaching accreditation site visit. However, the college’s senior staff is supportive of the SSI effort. West already has a number of student success initiatives and interventions in place, which only need to be coordinated. The college is also establishing a Strategic Enrollment Committee that will address SSI-related issues. The idea of a first-year experience program and the innovations associated with the “Lifemap” student engagement system are both gaining support on the campus. Ed P. is serving as campus liaison to the DSSI Steering Committee.

LAVC—At Valley, the SSI effort is being handled by the STARS Committee which focuses most of its work on promoting faculty/student interaction. The college’s Enrollment Management Team also addresses issues related to student success. Valley counselors have been visiting classes across the college to offer one-hour orientation sessions. The college also experimented this year with a phone-bank

outreach effort targeting roughly 5,400 Fall Semester enrollees who did not re-enroll for Spring '06. In addition, Valley is organizing "Enrollment Fairs" which will offer one-stop registration and financial aid assistance for new and returning students. Deborah H. is serving as the liaison between the DSSI Steering Committee and Valley's STARS Committee.

LATTC—Trade has recently reorganized its College Council and is establishing an Institutional Effectiveness Committee and an Enrollment Management Committee which will focus on "branding" and marketing the college. The most acute problem for returning students at Trade stems from the lack of available parking due to construction. The college has mitigated this situation by providing bus tokens for a thousand students. The college has also completed a detailed Equity Plan with goals that relate to student success issues. In addition, Trade has implemented "one-stop" enrollment days and has established a faculty mentoring program which aids vocational students with goal-setting and the development of individual educational plans. Finally, Trade, like some of the other colleges in the District, has developed its own college orientation course. Marcy D. is serving as liaison between Trade and the SSI Steering Committee.

LASC—At Southwest, student success is seen as a campus-wide issue and not the concern of only one committee. However, the college's Retention and Marketing committees do address student success issues on a regular basis. In addition, the college president has asked the Senate to explore the possibility of creating a formal committee devoted to student success. The college also plans to take steps to address the needs of basic skills students, including the development of a new, integrated basic skills curriculum. Audrey L. will act as Liaison to Southwest for DSSI issues.

LAMC—The college governance structure is currently being rebuilt at Mission. As part of this effort, the college's Educational Planning Committee is being re-structured. Key college documents, like the Educational Master Plan and the Equity Plan require revision. Generally, the college bases enrollment management decisions on FTES considerations, and not on student success. However, the interim president is very concerned about student success and hopes to reorient the college so that it focuses more directly on the quality of student learning. Louise Barbato will serve as liaison between the DSSI Steering Committee and the college.

### **SSI Research Update**

George P. shared reports with the Steering Committee on within class retention, course completion, and transfer performance. Some of the findings offered included the following:

Retention: Over the past 25 years, within-class retention from census to end of term has increased relatively steadily, showing an overall gain of roughly 10%. Current within-class retention rates are generally above 80%.

Successful Course Completion: Over the same period, course grades and completion rates have also increased steadily. The percentage of students receiving "A" grades has gone up by roughly 5% over the past two and a half decades, and now hovers near 30% of all who are enrolled at census. The percentage of students who successfully complete courses with a "C" or better (or "credit") has risen by roughly 7% over the same period. In addition, District retention and successful course completion rates compare favorably with State averages.

Transfer Performance: District-wide transfers to UC and CSU are at their highest rates since the early 1980's. In 2004-5, a total of 4,658 students transferred from District colleges, with 741 entering UC and 3,912 entering CSU institutions. Changes in the ethnic distribution of transferring students over the past fifteen years mirror changes in overall District demographics during the same period.

Mr. Prather also shared the results of a 2002 State Chancellor's Office study with the Steering Committee ("Transfer Capacity and Readiness in the CA Community Colleges"). This report suggests that District

colleges actually perform better than expected in relation to transfer when factors like levels of student preparation, median income, the percentage of students taking basic skills instruction, the number of students receiving financial aid, and distance from receiving institutions are considered. According to the study's results, all nine LACCD campuses do a better job of meeting their "expected rate" of transfer than do institutions like Santa Monica College and Mt. San Antonio. However, Mr. Prather cautioned that for a number of reasons the study should not be cited as evidence of the District's transfer effectiveness and noted that it is currently under review by Chancellor's Office staff.

During the discussion that accompanied this presentation, the following points were made:

- That increases in within-class retention might stem from grade inflation
- That successful course completion rates would change dramatically if we were to base them on initial enrollment and not on census-week figures
- That the colleges typically lose large numbers of students between the time that they apply for admission and enroll, and similarly large numbers are lost from semester to semester
- That early enrollment in basic skills and ESL appear to make a significant difference in student success rates
- That there has been little change in degree and certificate completion rates over the past 20 years
- That a number of difficulties complicate the assessment of college transfer rates, including the inability to track students after they leave District colleges, the problem of collecting data from private and out-of-state receiving institutions, the complexity of determining how to identify students with the goal of transfer (For example, should we count students who indicate transfer as one of several goals at the time of admission? Should we count only those who have completed a certain number of transferable units? Should we count only those who finish basic English and math requirements? Etc.)

It was agreed that members of the SSI Steering Committee would continue to collaborate with District research staff to address these issues and to develop an approach for measuring student persistence from semester to semester and for tracking student progress toward verified educational goals. It was also agreed that creating a means of tracking the "flow" of students through District colleges is crucial to the SSI effort.

### **Spring SSI Workshop Planning**

David B. and Gary C. reported on the SSI Planning Sub-committee's efforts to lay the groundwork for the first of two Spring Semester District-wide SSI workshops. The first event—now scheduled to take place on the original target date of Friday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>—will focus on the topic of "Building a Culture of Engagement through Institutional Transformation." The second workshop, scheduled for Friday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, will focus on first-year programs and District best practices. It was agreed to invite Michael Bosley, Associate Vice Chancellor of the Valencia, Florida, Community College District, and developer of the "Lifemap" student engagement system, to be the featured speaker of the March 3<sup>rd</sup> workshop. It was also agreed that the event would be staged at Trade Tech., and that it would take place during morning hours. The Planning Sub-committee agreed to meet again to work through the event's details and to report back at the next SSI Steering Committee meeting.

### **Next Meeting Date**

The SSI Steering Committee will meet again from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup> in room 803 at the District Office. Agenda items will include the role of Student Learning Outcomes in the SSI effort, planning for the March 3<sup>rd</sup> SSI District-wide workshop on student engagement, and an update on additional SSI-related research.