

## Student Success Innovators Program/Initiative Description

**Date:** April 28, 2013

**Program Name:** Project Success

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**Primary Recipients**                       

(Check all that apply)      Employee Professional Development      Grossmont Students      Cuyamaca Students      High School Students

**Number of students/faculty (approx.) served this year:** 1,400

### **Brief Description:**

- 100-150 words or less
- Identify major project components

Project Success was established over twenty five years ago as an intervention for improving the retention, success, and persistence rates of developmental students. Presently, we offer approximately twenty six learning communities per semester, including twenty one developmental reading/writing links and five transfer level composition links with general education courses. In addition, we offer a compressed reading/writing link with a Counseling course that allows students to complete two levels of developmental reading/writing in one semester. We also offer contextualized learning communities as well as an Honors option. Project Success instructional teams represent eleven different disciplines and serve approximately 1,400 students per year.

### **Objective/Goals:**

Students enrolled in Project Success Learning Communities will:

1. Collaborate with each other for the purpose of analyzing and evaluating their own thinking as well as the thinking of others as they relate to relevant issues in their lives.
2. Understand how diverse disciplines intersect at meaningful points in their respective curriculums.
3. Improve language skills (reading and writing) and critical thinking skills as they relate to the disciplines in the LC but also as they relate to all of their courses of study.
4. Build confidence in their language skills and use those skills to contribute to the improvement of their own lives as well as the lives of others.

**Funding Source(s):**

The Project Success coordinator currently receives .55 reassigned time that is funded by the college. This academic year (2012/2013) faculty received small stipends funded with BSI funds for professional development activities (i.e., development of integrative assignments). Typically, faculty do not receive extra pay for teaching in Project Success learning communities.

**Evidence of Success:**

A recent longitudinal study (2001/2002, 2002/2003, and 2003/2004 cohorts) demonstrates higher success and course completion rates for students who enrolled in linked English 98/98R courses. On average, the percentage of linked English 98/98R students who passed the course on their first attempt is 71.5% v. 64.9% of students in unlinked English 98 courses. On average, 66% of the students who enrolled in linked courses persisted onto the next level of composition (English 110) within six years of enrolling in English 98/98R v. 59% of students who enrolled in unlinked English 98 courses. On average 53% of these students successfully completed English 110 while 48% of students who took the unlinked courses were successful in English 110. On average 31% percent of these students attempted the transfer level English course within six years versus 21% of students who enrolled in an unlinked English 98 course. Success rates for the linked students in the transfer level composition course are slightly higher (24% v. 21%).

The disaggregated data from the longitudinal study indicates that our diverse student populations experience more success in linked English 98/98R courses than in unlinked English 98 courses. For example, the percentage of Black non-Hispanic students who pass the linked English 98/98R on their first attempt is on average 61% v. 52% in unlinked English 98 courses. The percentage of Hispanic students who pass the linked English 98/98R on their first attempt is on average 69% v. 59% in the unlinked English 98s. Finally, White non-Hispanic students have a success rate of 75% on average in the linked courses v. 68% in the unlinked courses. Because of the higher success rates of our diverse student populations in particular, it is extremely important to create structured learning community pathways from developmental reading/writing coursework on through completion of the English composition sequence as well as certificate/transfer/degree completion.

**Next Steps to Program Improvement:**

During the 2007/2008 academic year, Project Success offered 76 links, and fifteen of these links were at the transfer level. Unfortunately, the transfer level links were all but eliminated during the lean budget years. In Fall 2012, sixteen links were offered at the developmental composition level, two links were offered at the English 110 level (one level below transfer), two links at the English 120 level (transfer level), and no links were offered at the English 124 level. The primary program goal is to restore the structured pathway that once existed in order to help students successfully complete the composition sequence from developmental placement on through transfer. The most recent student survey in Fall 2012 indicated that 75% of students polled (N = 494) would enroll in another learning community and 82% claimed that the Project Success link was beneficial. These responses come from an overwhelming majority of enrolled students who are new to Project Success (83%). The data from Fall 2012 is consistent with the data from previous surveys. Given that we offer few links beyond the developmental level, we are currently not meeting the needs of students. Therefore, the primary program goal is to rebuild the transfer level Project Success course offerings in order to continue to improve retention, success, and persistence rates, particularly for our diverse student populations.