

The Strategy Team for Student Success in Mathematics—led by Linda Murphy and Bill Heineman

- The college level math lab continued to grow in Spring 2010, providing 1408 contact hours with students—a 17 percent increase over Fall 2009. The developmental math center and college level math lab have now been combined to serve the needs of all math students. All math tutoring in Haverhill will be in the Math Center (C201) featuring expanded hours (8 am to 8 pm M-R and 8 am to 3 pm F) with C300 available for specialized math tutoring services. The math tutoring space in Lawrence (LA103/104) has been doubled, with the addition of ten new computers (hours: 9 am to 3 pm M-F).
- Achieving the Dream and the National Science Foundation Step-Up Grant supported supplemental instruction (SI) sections of math, science, and developmental writing courses in Spring 2010. SI sections of math and Intro to Basic Writing courses had a student completion rate (with a grade from A to C) ranging from 3 to 29 percentage points higher than non-SI sections of the same courses. Completion rates in SI sections of biology and chemistry courses—offered for the first time in Spring 2010—were lower than in non-SI sections. SI will be offered in science classes again this fall to see if results improve. Nine SI sections are being offered in math, science, and developmental writing this fall.
- An online, non-credit preparation/tutorial course for the Math Accuplacer assessment exam has been developed. Approximately 15 students register for the course each semester.
- Professional development workshops were provided for more than 20 math faculty at the end of the summer on the use of active and collaborative learning in the classroom. Cognitive learning workshops were provided for math tutors in Spring 2010.

The Strategy Team for Academic Advising for Student Success—led by Grace Young and Nora Sheridan

Policies

- The team has drafted an institutional policy that allows the transfer of D-grades within the Mass Transfer Block for students who transfer from any of the Commonwealth's state institutions as long as the overall GPA of the block is 2.0. This policy was approved by the Academic Affairs Committee and is currently posted on the college's website.
- A new Drop/Add Policy was implemented in spring 2010 and will enter its second semester of operation in fall 2010.

Placement Cut Scores

- The Assessment Center will begin to use new cut scores for math in the Fall 2010 semester. The new placement rules for students who test into developmental courses will go into effect in spring 2011 for fall 2011 advising and registration.

Improving Advising and Retention

- Degree Works, a web-based product to aid advising, was purchased. Training of key staff members in Degree Works will conclude in late September. Scribing of the College's catalog dating back to Fall 2007 has been completed, and student demographics have been preloaded from Banner. College-wide training will begin in early spring 2011 for both faculty advisors and professional staff advisors.
- Additional focus groups on the advising process will be conducted in Fall 2010 for specific at-risk groups in an effort to improve the significance of the data being collected.
- In Fall 2009, thirty suspended students attended the first segment of a two semester workshop, which involved completing the Holland Inventory. In Spring 2010, these students attended the second segment in which they were administered the Strengths Quest Inventory, and the results were interpreted. The plan is to assist these students in finding some correlation between the results of their Holland and Strengths Quest Inventories.
- New and returning students were surveyed in relation to their advising experience; the data were reviewed and compiled during the spring 2010 semester. Surveys were analyzed and results shared with the staff of the Career Planning and Advising Centers. Continued improvements are being planned beginning fall 2010. One major improvement is the hiring of one additional fulltime academic advisor.
- In the spring, seven faculty members and one director were trained on the advising rubrics, policies and procedures. A survey of this training and its effectiveness is planned for the end of the fall 2010 semester.
- Training on the Mass Transfer Policy will continue in Fall 2010.

The Strategy Team for Enhancing the First Year Experience led by Karen Mitchell and Tom Greene

The team is currently

- Launching a revised College Success Seminar (CSS) pilot in Fall 2010.
- Students who are placed into two developmental courses are required to enroll in the course, which is a 3-credit college level course that counts towards all degree programs.
- To help determine effectiveness and outcomes for the pilot, weekly, monthly and end-of-semester data collection methods have been put in place. A careful review and analysis of the data collected will be conducted in May 2011.
- As of August 20, 2010, 184 students were enrolled in the pilot sections.

The team has already

- Reviewed data and discussed the team's data needs.
- Created a GANTT chart with the team's timelines and activities.
- Developed a college-level, credit bearing curriculum and created course materials and a course website in Blackboard for the College Success Seminar pilot.
- Provided an intensive training for CSS faculty June 8-9, 2010 and introduced the methods for collecting data to help determine the effectiveness and outcomes of the course pilot.
- Hired the NECC marketing team to create a brochure that describes the College Success Seminar.

General Goals of the Achieving the Dream national initiative for at-risk students

- Successfully complete developmental courses and progress to credit-bearing courses
- Enroll in and successfully complete gatekeeper courses
- Complete the courses they take with a grade of C or better
- Re-enroll from one semester to the next
- Earn certificates and degrees

Guiding Principles

The *Achieving the Dream* initiative at Northern Essex Community College will strive to embody these guiding principles from the *Achieving the Dream* initiative:

- Student-centered vision
- Culture of inquiry, evidence and accountability
- Commitment to equity and excellence
- Recognition that long-term impact requires change in systems
- Broad-based participation

Our NECC Goals

(approved by the Core Team from analysis of NECC data by Institutional Research and the Data Team)

1. **Mathematics**
Improve outcomes for all students in developmental and college level math
2. **English Composition**
Improve outcomes for all students in English Composition I
3. **Males in Developmental Reading and Writing**
Improve outcomes for male students in developmental reading and writing
4. **Students 25 Years and younger in Developmental Reading and Writing**
Improve outcomes for students 25 years and younger in developmental reading and writing
5. **Hispanic Students in Writing Courses**
Improve outcomes for Hispanic students in developmental writing, and in the transition into and through college level composition.

Our three strategies to improve success for these at-risk cohorts, to be supported by Achieving the Dream funds

1. Expanding support for math students
2. Improving advising services and academic planning
3. Enhancing the first-year experience

Two further strategies for the cohorts are being pursued in the NECC Academic Master Plan

1. Alignment of objectives for developmental and college-level courses
2. Alignment of NECC curricula with high school curricula

For more information on the Achieving the Dream initiative at NECC, visit the Web site at

<http://www.necc.mass.edu/achievingthedream/index.php>