

### The Strategy Team for Student Success in Mathematics—led by Linda Murphy and Lynne Nadeau

- The Math Center was busy in Fall 2011, logging almost 4000 contacts (a 27% increase compared to Spring 2011) with developmental and college-level math students. Also, one-on-one tutoring serviced 31 students. Outreach included 57 classroom visits (a 24% increase compared to Spring 2011), expanding outreach to the Lawrence campus classrooms. The Math Center provided study groups in College Algebra, College Algebra and Trigonometry, and Advanced Algebra and Trigonometry. An important initiative for Fall 2011 was the development of peer tutoring on the Lawrence campus; in Spring 2012, the first peer tutor will begin working at the Lawrence Math Center.
- In the Fall 2011 semester, there were 23 Supplemental Instruction (SI) sections in math, science, reading, and writing, supported by Achieving the Dream and the National Science Foundation Step-Up Grant. Twenty-nine SI sections are scheduled for Spring 2012, including new courses in Introduction to Accounting, Integrated Science II, and Physiological Chemistry. Fifty-two percent of spring SI courses will be within the Math department.
- Enrollment for the online Math SkillBuilder for Accuplacer preparatory program was approximately 65 students for the Fall 2011 semester, an increase of over 30% from Spring 2011. In addition, the sessions are now offered at both the Haverhill and Lawrence campuses.
- The math faculty, Math Center staff, and ATD Math Strategy Team continue to pursue other innovations related to math curriculum, pedagogy, and student support. A modularized Basic Math course was implemented in Fall 2011; this self-paced approach gives students the opportunity to advance more quickly. This strategy is expanding in Spring 2012 to include Basic Algebra I; Basic Algebra II is under consideration for future implementation. Ongoing initiatives for eventual institutionalization include looping and outcomes assessment.

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

#### Policies

The team revised the College's Academic Standing Policy, effective for Fall 2012. The policy was simplified by assigning three categories for students vs. the current four levels of attempted credits and corresponding quality points requirements for Good Academic Standing, Academic Probation and Academic Suspension.

A brief synopsis of the policy:

#### Good Academic Standing

- Maintain a Cumulative Quality Point Average (overall GPA) of 1.80 or higher after attempting 1 or more credits

#### Academic Probation

- A student who has attempted 1 or more credits and has a Cumulative Quality Point Average (overall GPA) of 1.3 but less than 1.79 will be placed on academic probation

#### Academic Suspension

- A student who has attempted 1 or more credits and has a Cumulative Quality Point Average (overall GPA) of less than 1.30.

An Academic Review Board consisting of seven staff members including faculty has been formed. The process of appealing to return to NECC has been formalized and decisions will be made by the Academic Review Board.

Faculty advisors will be trained in Fall 2012, prior to the advising and registration period in November on how to advise their advisees who find themselves on academic probation. Academic probation will now have additional restrictions and mandates for students to follow as an effort to reduce the number of students that get academically suspended.

#### Improving Advising and Retention

- *DegreeWorks* training for fulltime faculty was completed this fall.
- In Fall 2011, new and returning students were surveyed in relation to their advising experience; the data will be analyzed and compiled during the Spring 2012 semester.
- Expanding online advising services – we plan on identifying new advising faculty by Fall 2012.
- We will be training a broader base of advisors in the CPAC Centers to advise the ESL population.
- In an effort to utilize the Degree Works package more fully, Colleen Walsh, Sue Shain and Joan Scionti attended the SunGard Higher Education DegreeWorks Symposium in November. In addition, scheduling of further consulting by SunGard to assist the college in utilizing the various reports and automated degree review has been scheduled for March, June and October of this year. The intention of these trainings/consultations will be to better utilize DegreeWorks to identify students that have scheduled plans, and utilizing those plans for more efficient scheduling of classes.
- The new Student Success Center is now opened at the Lawrence campus. A full-scale advising training is being developed for the Student Success Center team as well as our new advising staff.

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

### The team is currently

- Collecting data from the revised College Success Seminar (CSS) that was piloted in Fall 2010, Spring 2011 & Fall 2011.
- Continuing the pilot in Spring, 2012, with the addition of two learning communities, one with Basic Algebra II and the other with College Reading.
- Making minor adjustments to the College Success Seminar curriculum.
- Planning discussions on how to scale up the College Success Course.
- Reviewing key features of FYE Programs at Roxbury CC and Bunker Hill CC from visits to those campuses.
- Sending team members to present NECC's College Success Course, with Roxbury CC, at the ATD Conference in February, 2012

### The team has already

- Developed a college-level, credit bearing curriculum, course materials and a website in Blackboard for the CSS pilot.
- Completed the Fall 2010, Spring 2011 & Fall 2011 semesters with a pilot of the revised College Success Seminar. The targeted student cohort included those who assessed into two developmental courses at the level of College Reading and above.
- Provided an intensive training and updated training for CSS faculty and underscored the methods for collecting data to help determine the effectiveness and outcomes of the course pilot. CSS faculty received updated curriculum and DegreeWorks training in Summer, 2011 to be able to do pre-advising with students and prepare them for advising.

### Some data results

The initial results of this pilot are promising and indicate that the College Success Seminar has had a positive impact on GPA and retention. Overall for each semester, the Developmental Course Completion Rate, Average Term GPA and Average Term Credits were higher for students who assessed into CSS, took CSS and completed with A-C than for those students who assessed into CSS but did not take it.

## 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 reading and writing courses
2. Alignment of NECC curricula with high school curricula

For more information on Achieving the Dream at NECC, visit the Web site at <http://www.necc.mass.edu/achievingthedream/index.php>