

Good News!

Northern Essex receives Implementation Grant for Achieving the Dream

The Achieving the Dream Core and Data Teams have received word that our implementation grant proposal was successful. Northern Essex will receive \$400,000 over the next four academic years—2008-2012—to implement three strategies to improve student success for cohorts identified by our data as at-risk. These strategies were selected by our Core Team based on suggestions by faculty and staff, and will help to fulfill our Student Success goals that match goals of the Achieving the Dream initiative.

Goals of Achieving the Dream 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 all cohorts in developmental and college level math
2. **English Composition**
Improve outcomes for all students in all cohorts 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 strategies to improve success for these at-risk cohorts, to be supported by Achieving the Dream

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, to be pursued in the NECC Academic Master Plan

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

(over)

Strategy Teams

Over the summer, strategy teams were set up to implement each of the three strategies to improve cohort success over the next four years. Each of the strategy teams has a work plan and a plan for evaluation that will inform any changes in resources or implementation over the course of the initiative and beyond. The strategy teams will report on a regular basis to the Core Team.



The Strategy Team for Student Success in Mathematics is led by Angela Guarino and is charged with implementing the following work plan:

- Establishing a college level math lab
- Providing professional development for instructors and tutors
- Researching and implementing alternative instructional delivery methods
- Piloting supplemental instruction in developmental and college level mathematics
- Developing tutorials to prepare students for the transition to the next level in their Math sequence

This fall, the team will collaborate closely with the Math Faculty as they work toward the following goals:

- Establish the college level math lab, including space plans, staffing, equipment, and software
- Define a model for supplemental instruction
- Identify existing initiatives which may be integrated with Achieving the Dream objectives
- Develop a communication system that will ensure the involvement of all Math faculty
- Research alternative instructional delivery methods
- Collaborate with Math faculty to research and design curriculum for Math Tutorials.

The Strategy Team for Academic Advising for Student Success is led by Grace Young and Nora Sheridan and is charged with implementing the following work plan:

- Reviewing and revising policies affecting student advising
- Reviewing and revising placement cut-off scores
- Creating an advising “road map” to be used by all advisors
- Developing specific strategies to improve success for targeted student populations
- Developing an “e-Portfolio” system
- Creating an “early alert” system
- Improving and expanding online advising services

An AdHoc e-Portfolio Committee will be part of the Academic Advising Strategy Team, charged with assessing the need for an e-Portfolio system, investigating resources and developing an action plan. If a need for such a system is determined, the committee will select the best tool and will seek campus-wide involvement in the committee. Systems at other similar institutions will be investigated, and the ability of the system to integrate with existing systems like Banner will be considered. A timeline for piloting the system will be developed.

This fall, the team will distribute new Advising rubrics, provide advising and financial aid training to appropriate areas of the college and collect data from student focus groups concerning their academic advising expectations. In addition, the team will research e-Portfolio systems and survey students, staff and faculty regarding use of a possible e-Portfolio system.

A third Strategy Team for Enhancing the First Year Experience will be led by Karen Mitchell and is charged with, among other tasks,

- Evaluating and improving NECC’s College Success course
- Integrating the elements of this course into other courses and workshops for new students
- Devising a plan for the professional development of faculty and staff in the use of learning styles tools and teaching strategies for the millennial and bilingual 1.5 generation.
- Creating learning communities for developmental students

This strategy team will begin its work in the 2009-2010 academic year.

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