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BASIC SKILLS STUDENTS TRACKED TO COLLEGE LEVEL PROFICIENCY

The Office of Institutional Research explored the question of how many students who require Basic Skills Math and English ever reach proficiency at the MAT121 or ENG121 level. In order to give the students as much time as possible to acquire this proficiency, we started with all students who took a basic skills course in Fall 2002 (200320). We tracked them through Spring 2008 (200830) to see how many of them ever received a C or better grade in 121, and how many semesters it took to do so. We included summer semesters in this analysis.

Please note that students could have taken other basic skills courses in semesters prior to Fall 2002. This analysis starts with the snapshot of basic skills students at this one point in time and follows them forward.

Each subject was handled separately, even though many students require basic skills courses in both Math and English. We identify which of the three basic skills course they initially took, 030, 060, or 090, and their grade in that class, aggregated to C or better, D, F, or W. For each of these groups we tracked them across the next eighteen semesters to see if they ever attained proficiency in their respective 121 course. Proficiency is defined as earning a C or better since a “passing” grade of D is not transferrable to most other colleges or universities.

For all students who took a Basic Skills English course, 42.8% eventually received a C or better in Eng 121. The average number of terms taken to achieve this goal was 2.6. A deeper breakdown held no surprises:

- Compared to students in ENG090, those who began in ENG030 were less likely to attain proficiency in 121. Those who did so required nearly twice as many semesters to successfully complete ENG 121 as their ENG090 counterparts.
- Those who received a C or better in their Basic Skills course were more likely to gain proficiency in 121, and in fewer semesters.

- Over half, 55.2% of those who earned a C or better in basic skills gained college level proficiency in an average of 2.5 semesters.
- Those who took a Withdrawal in any of their Basic Skills courses had better success rates than those who failed. This has implications for advising students when it appears they are in danger of failing.
- At no point is a student beyond the possibility of later success. 10% of those who withdrew from a basic skills course and 6.3% of those who failed later attained ENG121 proficiency.

Basic Skills English Fall 2002 (200320)				Proficiency in ENG121 (C or Better) Between Spring 2003 - Spring 2008		
Basic Skills English	Final Grade	Count	% of Total	Count	%	Mean of Terms between Basic English and Proficiency in ENG121
ENG 030	>=C	42	79.2%	5	11.9%	4.6
	D	1	1.9%		0.0%	
	F	8	15.1%		0.0%	
	W	2	3.8%		0.0%	
	Distinct Count	53	100.0%	5	9.4%	
ENG 060	>=C	195	69.1%	91	46.7%	3.7
	D	29	10.3%	3	10.3%	9.0
	F	39	13.8%	1	2.6%	4.0
	W	19	6.7%		0.0%	
	Distinct Count	282	100.0%	95	33.7%	3.9
ENG 090	>=C	578	72.8%	355	61.4%	2.1
	D	36	4.5%	12	33.3%	3.3
	F	113	14.2%	9	8.0%	4.7
	W	67	8.4%	9	13.4%	5.6
	Distinct Count	794	100.0%	385	48.5%	2.2
Distinct Total	>=C	812	72.2%	448	55.2%	2.5
	D	66	5.9%	15	22.7%	4.5
	F	160	14.2%	10	6.3%	4.6
	W	88	7.8%	9	10.2%	5.6
	Distinct Count	1,125	100.0%	482	42.8%	2.6

For students taking Basic Skills Math, the picture was not as rosy as for those requiring Basic Skills English.

- 13.4% of these students eventually attained proficiency in Math121, requiring an average of 5.3 semesters.
- Even for those with a C or better in basic skills, only 19.1% ever attained MAT121 proficiency.

- Those who did have a C or better in MAT090 had the highest rate of success, 34.2% attaining proficiency in MAT121 in an average of 4.2 semesters.
- Students taking MAT030 face very poor odds for MAT121 proficiency. Only 3.6% attain proficiency, requiring an average of seven semesters.

Basic Skills Math Fall 2002 (200320)				Proficiency MAT121 (C or Better) Between Spring 2003 - Spring 2008		
Basic Skills Math	Final Grade	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Mean of Terms between Basic Math and MAT121 Proficiency
MAT 030	>=C	69	62.2%	3	4.3%	6.3
	D	4	3.6%		0.0%	
	F	31	27.9%		0.0%	
	W	7	6.3%	1	14.3%	9.0
Distinct Count		111	100.0%	4	3.6%	7.0
MAT 060	>=C	696	70.5%	72	10.3%	6.7
	D	57	5.8%	2	3.5%	7.0
	F	147	14.9%	2	1.4%	11.0
	W	87	8.8%		0.0%	
Distinct Count		987	100.0%	76	7.7%	6.8
MAT 090	>=C	445	52.5%	152	34.2%	4.2
	D	76	9.0%	11	14.5%	6.8
	F	156	18.4%	6	3.8%	9.2
	W	171	20.2%	9	5.3%	6.4
Distinct Count		848	100.0%	178	21.0%	4.6
Distinct Total	>=C	1,190	61.9%	227	19.1%	5.0
	D	137	7.1%	13	9.5%	6.8
	F	330	17.2%	8	2.4%	9.6
	W	265	13.8%	10	3.8%	6.7
Distinct Count		1,922	100.0%	258	13.4%	5.3

In summary, Fall 2002 English and math basic skills students were tracked over 18 months toward proficiency (C or better in 121). 42.8% of the English students eventually received a C or better in Eng 121, averaging 2.6 terms to achieve this goal. 13.4% of the math students eventually attained proficiency in Math 121, requiring an average of 5.3 semesters.

Additional, more detailed, analyses have been completed and are available upon request. Please contact Kim Wallace by phone at 303-404-5316 or by e-mail at kim.wallace@frontrange.edu to request such an analysis.