

**2007 FOLLOW-UP REPORT ON THE
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF THE
Pre-College Learning Support Program in the Department of University Studies
FOLLOWING COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM REVIEW
IN 2001-2002
AND THE
2003 FOLLOW-UP REPORT
Prepared by
The Department of University Studies
Kennesaw State University
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2007 Follow-up Report on the Learning Support Program Unit of the Department of University Studies, December 2007

The "Pre-College" Learning Support Program is a unit of the Department of University Studies. It is comprised of three academic components, English as a Second Language, "Pre-College" Learning Support including the Math Lab, and Regents Test Preparation and Remediation. Each of these segments will be addressed in this follow-up report. As a result of the 2001-2002 comprehensive program review, the following recommendations for improvement were suggested.

I. Evidence of *quality* enhancement of the program since 2003

Action Plans and Priorities Adopted for Improving the Program's Quality Since the Self-Study and UPRC Evaluation

- 1. As enrollment of international students rises, there is a need to address staffing and advising in the ESL Study, Tutorial, and Testing Center. In cooperation with KSU's International Center, the ESL arm of Learning Support currently shoulders all testing, academic advising, and tutoring for international students.**
 - The ESL Study and Tutorial Center Coordinator is a full-time, 12-month staff member. This person is responsible for all the programs and activities associated with the Center, including tutoring, advising, administration of the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP) and ESL Regents' tests, conducting workshops, and coordinating the Conversation Partners Program. With the help of a student assistant/English tutor, the coordinator has been able to serve the increasing number of international students who participate in the Center's programs and activities. However, to ensure the Center's services, programs, and activities continue growing, a permanent part-time or full-time tutor/advisor should be added to the Center's staff.
 - Since the spring of 2003, international students who elect to take the alternative (ESL) Regents' reading test must take a short-answer version of the test. Prior to 2003, students taking the alternative reading test could choose between the short-answer version or a multiple-choice version, but the multiple-choice version did not change (the same test was given every semester). Therefore, eliminating the multiple-choice option at that time increased the security and validity of the alternative (ESL) Regents' reading test. However, over time, questions have been raised about the short-answer version of the test, including questions about the somewhat subjective nature of grading short-answer responses, asking ESL students to *write* their responses to a reading test, and the tremendous amount of time it takes to grade and post the grades for these tests. Therefore, other options for this version of the alternative (ESL) reading test are currently under review.

- 2. The Learning Support Programs needs increased funding for technology, specifically in light of curricular innovations.**
 - In conjunction with the 4th floor Library renovation in 2003, the University Studies Department was given a high priority in funding from the CIO to equip all LS classrooms and labs with state-of-the-art technology, transforming all traditional classrooms into smart classrooms. This upgrade was completed in Fall 2003.

- 3. As resources are available, the Learning Support Program should seek out opportunities to provide academic assistance to departments and programs across campus.**
 - As indicated in the 2003 Follow-up Report, the Regents' Remediation Coordinator in University Studies now handles student questions and complaints about the Regents' testing program to ensure that students receive accurate information about the program and to relieve the counter staff at the Registrar's Office.
 - As a result of a joint request from University Studies and the Registrar's Office, IT has enabled BANNER to direct students who have completed 45 or more hours of coursework but never taken the Regents' Exam into RGTV 0197. In the past the Regents' Remediation Coordinator and the Registrar's Office had to perform this job manually. This change has made the registration process for Regents' courses much easier and less time-consuming.

- The Math Lab Advisory Committee consists of members of the LS faculty, the Math Lab Coordinator and members of the Department of Mathematics. It continues to meet and is in the process of rolling out several new initiatives. The most important of these is a qualitative survey to be given to Math students to address attitudes towards the Math Lab and tutoring in general.
- The Math Lab continues to reliably serve students from Math 0097 through Calculus I at all times. In addition, classes up through Differential Equations and Linear Algebra are supported when tutors with the appropriate experience are available. The Lab has also added advanced calculator workshops to cover topics that are important to a variety of Math classes in addition to the basic workshops.
- In Spring 2006 the Chemistry Tutoring Center was established and the Chemistry Advisory Committee was established. Since opening the center has seen a 33% increase in attendance per semester and that number is expected to remain steady for the next couple years as more tutors and hours are added.
- LS faculty worked with members of the Department of Mathematics to discuss the need for and the development of the Math 1111 College Algebra and Math 1112 Trigonometry courses which were added to KSU's curriculum in Fall 2005. LS faculty also worked the Department of Mathematics to implement the new Math Placement Test.
- LS faculty work closely with the CAPS center during orientation sessions to provide academic advising and help with registration not only for LS students but also with students from other colleges.

II. Evidence of *productivity* enhancement of the program since 2003

Action Plans and Priorities Adopted for Improving the Program's Productivity Since the Self-Study and UPRC Evaluation

1. **LSP must continue to fully implement and monitor KSU's newly approved limited freshmen admission policies, which were instituted summer 2001 in accordance with BOR guidelines.**
 - Although LS Programs must respond to enrollment demands, there is no plan to change services at this time. With the decision for Fall 2003 to raise admission standards for entering freshmen, LS has seen a reduction in the number of English and Reading students, while the number students needing Math assistance has remained steady since Fall 2005. Therefore, the program will maintain its current level of operation, yet direct more emphasis to Math instruction; ESL students, and Presidential exceptions as mandated by BOR policy.
 - The ESL Program continues to offer the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency to international applicants, but undergraduate international applicants may also take TOEFL or, in the near future, IELTS. The number of ESL students in LS English classes varies greatly from semester to semester.
 - The ESL Program offered the first summer alternative (ESL) Regents' tests in 2004. The ESL Program continues to offer ESL versions of the tests in the summer, as well as the fall and spring. The summer tests help international students who attend summer classes to fulfill their Regents' requirement during that term. The summer tests also reduce the number of ESL students who test in the fall, which makes the fall tests somewhat more manageable.
2. **LSP should continue to provide academic instruction and assistance for students who enter the university with deficiencies in mathematics, English, or reading.**
 - The LS unit has made curricular innovations designed to improve overall program quality. These include the creation of Developmental Learning Communities. Learning Communities including Math 0097 and/or Math 0099 and Engl 0099 are offered each fall. Because of the elimination of the ESL sections of Read 0099 and Engl 0099 we are no longer able to offer an ESL learning community or involve ESL students in a "sister" relationship with students in other classes. Other improvements include revising course materials and syllabi, exams and grading policies.

- Writing Sample and COMPASS EXIT pass rates remain consistently high as evidenced by the following charts:

Writing Sample	Passing	Failures	Percentage Passing
2005-2006	132	6	95.75
2006-2007	101	10	91%

COMPASS WRITING EXIT RESULTS	Passing	Failures	Percentage Passing
2005-2006	41	9	82%
2006-2007	37	3	92.5%

COMPASS READING EXIT RESULTS	Passing	Failures	Percentage Passing
2005-2006	28	5	84.8%
2006-2007	27	7	79.4%

COMPASS MATH EXIT RESULTS	Passing	Failures	Percentage Passing
2005-2006	204	3	98.6%
2006-2007	211	3	98.6%

- LSP must prepare students who are non-traditional, who are international, or who simply have inadequate academic backgrounds for success in college-level courses.**

 - The Math Lab staff provides support for any student struggling in math courses through tutoring in courses from Math 0097 through Calculus I and has expanded the calculator workshop offerings to better address issues particular to specific courses. The attendance of the lab has continued to increase and now exceeds 4000 student visits during Fall semester.
 - The ESL Center offers tutoring to ESL students in writing, reading, and Regents' test preparation as well as Regents' and grammar workshops
 - LS faculty members consult with faculty in the Department of English and the Department of Mathematics to ensure that the developmental courses prepare students for college-level courses.
 - Changes have been made to the testing policies in LS math courses to align them more closely to the credit level courses.
 - All testing in LS math courses is now delivered through WEB-CT.
 - All LS math students have access to My Math Lab tutorial software that accompanies the textbook for developmental math courses.
 - The practice test booklets once used in LS math have been replaced with on-line practice tests delivered through WEB-CT.
- LSP should encourage competency and training in new technology and software by offering faculty development opportunities through conferences and presentations.**

 - LS faculty members are able to travel to conferences and make presentations. By creatively scheduling group presentations, LS faculty increased their competency and received training in new technology and software.
- LSP should work to improve the efficiency of delivering Regents 0020 instruction and increase pass rates on the Regents' tests.**

- All the practices listed in the 2003 Follow-up Report have been continued except that we are not offering online instruction for students who have failed the exam.
- RGTV 0197 for students who have completed 45 or more credit hours but never taken the Regents' Exam is now entirely online, and faculty are continuing to upgrade the presentation of the course.
- The number of hours during which tutoring is available for students who have failed the exam multiple times has been extended.
- Passing percentages are as follows:

	2004	2005	2006	2007 (Spring and Summer)
Reading	52%	50%	44%	65%
English	71%	68%	76%	84%

6. LSP should implement and administer ESL admission and placement testing in accordance with new ESL Admissions policies.

- The ESL Program continues to administer the MTELP to undergraduate international student applicants. This test, approved by the BOR for use at KSU, is a free alternative to the TOEFL examination. However, the number of ESL students placed in LP courses based on this, or any other, admission test has not been consistently high enough to sustain separate ESL-only sections of English 0099 and Reading 0099. Currently, ESL students are placed in regular sections of these courses with developmental native English-speaking students. Faculty members believe this is a step in the wrong direction as the two groups of students have very different needs.

7. LSP should continue to help students develop the skills and habits that enhance academic success; to understand the goals of higher education; to provide students with the essential information about campus resources; to help increase students' self-awareness and self-knowledge about career and life choices.

- KSU's new policy requiring all first time, full time students to take either a KSU 1101 class or enroll in a learning community will help to achieve this objective. All LS students are encouraged to take KSU 1101 or enroll in a community, even if they are not enrolled as a full time student. Providing learning communities including LS courses gives the students more options to gain these skills.

III. Action Plans and Priorities from the 2003 Follow-up Report that have been accomplished

- While many of the action plans address the need for continuous improvement of programs, always an ongoing process, much progress has been made since 2003 and all but one have been accomplished.

IV. Action Plans and Priorities from the 2003 Follow-up Report that still need to be addressed

- The ESL Study and Tutorial Center is currently staffed by a full-time coordinator and, at various times and for limited hours, a student assistant/English tutor. Often during the semester, the number of international students seeking tutoring or advising is great. Because the coordinator also teaches ESL composition classes and coordinates a variety of other activities (for example, the Conversation Partners Program and ESL Regents' tests), and because the student assistant is not always available, it is sometimes difficult to meet with all the students who come to the Center for assistance. There is clearly a need for a permanent part-time or full-time tutor/advisor at the Center. Not only would this allow the Center to serve more students, it would open up the possibility of expanded services and activities (for example, frequent grammar and/or writing workshops). This is a need that has been identified since the last review and requires funding for the position. In addition, the department has requested funding to upgrade the coordinator position from staff to faculty status. This status of these funds is unknown at this time.

- The coordinator of the Regents' Remediation Program is working to institute changes recently mandated by the BOR. The most important one will be moving to tiered levels of remediation. Although the BOR has not yet announced exactly how these tiers should work, we are expecting to add another level of group instruction beyond the courses we currently offer and to continue tutoring critical needs students. This cannot be completed until the BOR finalizes their policy.

V. Current Status of the Program's Viability

This follow-up review report of Learning Support Programs' strengths and weaknesses in both quality and productivity suggests that it remains a viable program. There is significant evidence to support that its viability has not diminished since the self-study and UPRC evaluation. Although the Learning Support Programs must respond to enrollment demands, there is no plan to increase services at this time.

A. Indicate how the program advances specific goals and action steps of KSU's Strategic Plan.

- Over time, the number of international students participating in the programs, services, and activities of the ESL Center has steadily increased. Certainly, many of these programs, services, and activities contribute to KSU's RPG goals by helping international students become an integral part of the KSU community, and also by helping them become successful communicators in English.
- KSU's RPG goal is advanced by LS Programs, the Math Lab and the Regents' Remediation Program as each is designed to help students by giving them instruction and assistance to overcome their deficiencies and be successful in their coursework at KSU.

B. Identify resources needed to strengthen the program's ability to meet the goals of KSU's Quality Enhancement Plan

- The ESL Study and Tutorial Center also contributes greatly to KSU's QEP. The Center is one of the most important international student centers on campus. All of its programs, services, and activities contribute to the success of international students who have chosen to make KSU their academic home. One program in particular—the Conversation Partners Program—brings native English-speaking students, faculty, and staff together with international students every fall and spring in an exchange of language, culture, and friendship. The addition of a permanent part-time or full-time tutor/advisor would help to advance this goal.

C. Off campus cost analysis

- None of these programs are offered off campus.

D. Indicate the resources needed to sustain, reconfigure, or enhance the program's quality and productivity

- For the sustainability of both the Math Lab and Chemistry Tutoring Center, substantial budget increases are needed. These increases are needed to bring the pay-rates of the tutors inline with comparative jobs on and off campus as well as to slightly expand services to handle continually increasing demand.
- Though the number of students who use the ESL Center has increased over time, permanent staff—full or part-time—has not increased. The coordinator and one part-time student assistant (whose availability, because of academic commitments, often varies greatly) handle all the work for the Center. Therefore, there are no plans to expand the Center's programs, services, and activities in the near future.
- We expect the Regents' Remediation Program to remain viable as it is mandated by the Board of Regents for students who fail the exam. We don't know yet whether recent changes to Regents' testing policy will affect the number of students we serve.
- Although the LS programs must respond to enrollment demands, there is no plan to increase services at this time.