



Due March 7, 2008

Project Title: Developing Opportunities for Educational Retention & Success (DOERS)

Theme project is related to:

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic Support | <input type="checkbox"/> Career Advising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adjunct Training | <input type="checkbox"/> Distance Learning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advising | <input type="checkbox"/> Instruction |
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Project Description:

Project DOERS will enhance learning and support for students who receive two or more developmental placement recommendations. In a process similar to the implementation of Learning Communities, Project DOERS will begin with faculty development and then phase in a system of structured support including orientation, advising, peer mentoring, tutoring, and integrated instruction (such as Learning Communities and redesigned developmental courses), starting in fall 2010. The outcomes will be timely course progression, increased enrollment for students needing developmental courses, increased retention and graduation rates, and enhanced skills for continuous and self-directed lifelong learning.

How does this project support the mission and vision of the institution?

Project DOERS provides a dynamic learning environment that supports the mission and vision of the institution by addressing personal, academic and professional needs and goals of the target population.

How is this project tied to the strategic plan of the institution?

The project responds to the following details of the strategic plan:

- 2.1.1 Deliver training on new instructional techniques.
- 2.1.3 Continue to design and implement cross-curriculum learning communities that engage a variety of approaches to enhance student learning.
- 2.2.2 Implement continuous improvement projects in the instructional areas that will be the foci of continuous improvement projects at the college, school, and program levels.
- 2.3.3 Improve services to part-time, distance, and evening students.
- 2.3.4 Begin implementation of e-services for JSRCC.
- 2.4 Enhance and refine the professional development and renewal program.

- 2.4.1 Continue to implement the professional development training program designed by the Professional Development & Renewal Committee to meet the continuing needs of employees in their varied and changing roles.
 - 2.6 Increase the college's first-time, full-time, program-placed student retention rate from 56% to 65% (90th percentile for peer institutions) and the first-time, part-time, program-placed student retention rate from 41% to 45% (90th percentile for peer institutions).
 - 2.6.1 Continue implementation of the college's [Retention Plan](#).
 - 2.8 Increase the college's graduation rate of first-time, full-time, program-placed students from 10.7% to 20% (90th percentile for peer institutions) by 2010.
 - 2.8.1 Implement best practices from peer institutions for increasing graduation rates.
 - 2.8.2 Increase the college's graduation rate of first-time, full-time, program-placed students to 15% by June 2009.
 - 2.8.3 Increase the college's graduation rate of first-time, full-time, program-placed students to 20% by June 2010.
 - 2.8.4 Continue to market the timeliness and benefits of graduation.
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What data (internal and/or external) supports the importance of implementing this project?

A significant and steady proportion of incoming students receive developmental course placements. For example—

- In Spring 2007, 744 (68%) of 1462 students who took the COMPASS Algebra test placed in MTH 02 or MTH 03.
- In Fall 2006, 1143 (67%) of 1717 students who took the COMPASS Algebra placed in MTH 02 or MTH 03.
- In Spring 2007, 233 (22%) of 1034 students who took the COMPASS Reading test placed in ENG 04 or ENG 05.
- In Fall 2006, 415 (25%) of 1639 students who took the COMPASS Reading test placed in ENG 04 or ENG 05.
- In January through August 2005, 457 (18%) of 2509 students who took the college's writing placement test received recommendations for ENG 01.
- In Spring 2006, 191 students were enrolled in one or more ESL courses.
- In Fall 2005, 184 students were enrolled in one or more ESL courses.
- In Spring 2005, 206 students were enrolled in one or more ESL courses
- In Fall 2004, 199 students were enrolled in one or more ESL courses

In Fall 2007, 2004 students enrolled in classes had tested into two or more developmental (English, Math, or ESL) classes (PeopleSoft query, March 2008).

CCSSE (2005): Underprepared students are more likely to drop out within the first semester and less likely to return in their second semester; drop out rates grow in proportion to the number of developmental courses that the students need. (Engaging Students, Challenging the Odds, p. 3).

In a 2007 VCCS report , *Tracking the Fall 2003 Cohort of First Time Students*, however, only about a third of students receiving remedial recommendations actually take those courses (Jovanovich, p. 13). Students who took multiple developmental courses were actually more likely to enroll in successive semesters than those who took none (Jovanovich, p. 17).

SIS queries on comparative graduation and transfer rates for developmental and nondevelopmental students.

SACS broadly defines student learning as changes in knowledge, skills, behaviors or values. What is the definition of student learning in the context of this project?

Student learning is the process of developing one's knowledge and use of college resources and cognitive skills in order to master course content and meet personal and professional goals.

What are the specific learning outcomes?

1. Faculty members will develop successful skills for working with students in developmental courses
2. Students will learn to self-assess, identify needs and obtain resources to define and realize personal, career and educational goals

Students will demonstrate:

- Increased confidence in their ability to self-assess, identify needs and obtain resources
- Improved life management skills (time management)
- Ability to develop realistic expectations
- Increased commitment to goal completion (educational)
- Increased understanding of educational goals
- Increased self-assessment skills (understanding strengths and weaknesses)
- Increased knowledge of social and academic resources
- Realization of career and personal goals
- Increased participation in life-long learning

3. Students will improve skills in reading, communication, critical thinking, and math

Students will demonstrate:

- Improved critical thinking
- Increased metacognitive awareness
- Increased range of reading strategies and skills
- Increased competency in math strategies and skills

4. Students will successfully complete developmental requirements in a timely manner, successfully progress through a curriculum/program, and graduate in 5 years or less.

Students will demonstrate:

- Increased student success (completion of developmental course sequence, retention, graduation, GPA, timely course progression, success in subsequent courses) compared to developmental students who do not participate in the project.

How will you know that the identified learning outcomes have been achieved (assessment)?

1. Self-confidence assessment post-test scores will improve over pre-test scores.
2. Tracking of use of resources such as Blackboard and PeopleSoft will demonstrate improved competence and confidence.
3. Student use of electronic portfolios will demonstrate:
 - Improved life and time management skills
 - Ability to develop realistic expectations
 - Increased understanding of educational goals
 - Increased commitment to educational goal completion
 - Increased self-assessment skills (understanding of personal strengths and weaknesses)
 - Increased knowledge of social and academic resources
 - Realization of career and personal goals
 - Increased participation in life-long learning
4. Core competency critical thinking assessment will document improved critical thinking.
5. Developmental course exit assessments will evaluate increased competency in knowledge, skills, and strategies.
6. Faculty, mentor, tutor, and advisor observation of students completing tasks and/or functioning in groups will document increased metacognitive awareness.
7. Rates of completion of developmental course sequences will improve.
8. Retention of developmental students will improve.
9. Enrollment will increase among students needing developmental courses.

10. Success in subsequent college-level courses will improve as demonstrated by GPA and timely completion of program.
11. Students will successfully complete developmental requirements in a timely manner, successfully progress through a curriculum/program, and graduate or transfer (to a four-year institution) within 5 years.

What best practices are going to be used as a part of this project and why?

SDV 100 sections developed particularly for developmental students (Schwartz and Jenkins 10)

Learning Community inclusive of introductory academic courses such as BUS 100 (Schwartz and Jenkins 10, 14-15)

Design and implement courses like integrated Improving Reading and Writing to reduce the number of non-credit courses some students must enroll in; this is already identified in the VCCS course book as ENG 07 and ENG 08 (*could be incorporated into planned learning communities*)

Mentoring (Heisserer & Parette)

Specific expanded orientation for target population, including pre-enrollment activities and collaboration with the college community (Rouche and Rouche)

Tutoring (specific for this population and this project) inclusive of study groups and peer-to-peer tutoring (Boylan).

Advising (inclusive of a mentoring component) with focused advisor training (Heisserer & Parette; Earl).

What resources (human, fiscal, academic, technology) will be needed to complete this project?

- Operating budget for funding development and implementation
- Staff, including mentors and advisors, for development and implementation
- Course development time for multiple components
- Staff development budget for training
- Faculty to teach courses
- EPortfolio software package

What could be the impact on student learning if this project is not implemented?

The ability to improve retention, success and graduation rates of developmental students will be compromised.

Name(s) of faculty/staff involved in the preparation of this project template.

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