

Promising Practices in Developmental Summer Bridges

Implementation Lessons from
The National Center for Postsecondary Research's
Texas Developmental Summer Bridge Study

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Strengthening Student Success
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Presenters

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N CPR Research Overview

- The National Center for Postsecondary Research is designed to build evidence on how to help low-income students succeed in college.
 - Primary funding from the U.S. Department of Education
 - Center partners:
 - MDRC
 - Community College Research Center at Teachers College, Columbia University
 - University of Virginia, Curry School of Education
- Two Institution-Based Random Assignment Evaluations:
 - Texas Developmental Summer Bridge Study
 - Learning Communities Demonstration

Developmental Summer Bridge Study

- Eight colleges and universities around Texas
 - Three are coordinated and funded in part by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
 - All contribute some college funds, receive NCPR funding, and some other funds
- Programs last 4 to 8 weeks, offering accelerated, individualized, developmental math, English and/or reading
- College orientation, college success strategies, and peer mentoring
- \$400 stipend

Potential Benefits of Developmental Summer Bridge Programs

- Reduce the need for developmental education before students officially begin college;
- Exposure to college and academic expectations;
- Contact with college faculty and administrators;
- Opportunity to learn with a small cohort of students before the fall semester;
- Student stipends to offset costs of attending college;
- Stronger links between secondary and postsecondary institutions.

Texas Developmental Summer Bridge Study

- Qualitative
 - What do the programs and students look like?
 - What are some of the challenges in implementing developmental summer bridges?
 - How did the programs face these challenges?
 - Which program choices or models may be best suited for developmental summer bridges?
- Quantitative
 - Do developmental summer bridge programs reduce the need for developmental education and improve other postsecondary outcomes?

El Paso Community College: Project Dream 2009



- Project Dream Program Design
 - Five weeks of instruction, four hours per day
 - Math (2 Hours), Reading-Writing (1 hour), Dream Class-College Knowledge (1 hour), and college preparatory workshops
 - Involvement and participation of Counseling, Career Services, PREP and PASS
 - Computer Assisted Instruction: Math Emporium - ALEKS

Project Dream: Students & Assessment

- Students

- Recent (2008 and 2009) high school graduates
- All levels of Developmental Placement, based on Accuplacer scores
- First generation college students



- Assessment

- Pre and Post tests:
 - THEA
 - LASSI
 - Accuplacer

Project Dream: Program Strengths

- Preparatory workshops on all subjects
- Blended instruction
- Holistic approach
- Brain-based instructional pedagogy
- Contextualized instruction
- Mentors
- Access to college computers
- Reading-writing transfer of knowledge
- Involvement of different student resource personnel
- Building sense of community of learners



Project Dream: Lessons Learned/Challenges

- For Discussion...



Texas A&M International University: Intensive College Math Prep Program

- Program Design:
 - Five weeks, 4 days/week, Monday – Thursday (9:00am – 3:00pm or 10:00am – 4:00pm)
 - All levels of Developmental Math
 - Daily Math instruction:
 - 3 hours of lecture/group work class time (with instructors and tutors)
 - 2 hour lab (with tutors)
 - Weekly meetings with a student mentor
 - 1 hour/week College Readiness Presentations
 - Daily lunch provided
 - \$400 stipend for program completion

Intensive College Math Prep Program: Successes, Challenges & Results

What made it work:

- Instructor training
- Tutors
- Student Mentors
- Fun was part of the equation!

Difficulties/Challenges:

- Recruitment challenges
- Some high school counselors/schools--hard to access
- Emergency plan of action—have one!
- Develop a relationship with your institution's Office of Public Relations, Marketing and Information Services

Results:

Of the 108 students who completed the program:

- 48 students reached our College Algebra standard of 250 on the THEA.
- 83 students (77%) advanced a math level

Intensive College Math Prep Program: Lessons Learned

Knowing what I know now...

- Start with the end in mind.
- Ask the Director of Tutoring Services to select the lead tutors and work with them to develop class tutoring teams. Have a tutor training with the program instructors.
- Have a half-day retreat/training for all program staff .
- Have tutors and mentors work in teams to identify student concerns.

Possible Topics for Discussion:

- What are the trade-offs between building summer bridge around an existing credit course vs. non-credit?
- Should students focus on one subject, or several?
- What is the ideal time and schedule for a summer bridge?
- How can you best prepare faculty, staff, mentors and tutors for the program?
- What are meaningful ways to provide students with “college knowledge”?
- How can data be used to inform and improve summer bridge programs?

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