



The Proof is in the Pudding: Showing that Learning Communities Work from Five Years of Institutional Research

District Opening Day 2006

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De Anza Research

Thanks to Marcy Betlach and Edwina Stoll

Agenda

- Describe Learning Communities
- Discuss methodology
- Highlight findings

Definition of Learning Communities

A variety of approaches that link or cluster classes during a given term around an interdisciplinary theme and enroll a common cohort of students. This represents an intentional restructuring of student's time, credit and learning experiences to build community and to foster more explicit connections among students, among students and their teachers, and among disciplines.

Types of Courses in Learning Communities

- Foundational English or ESL Reading and Writing courses.
- Foundational English, ESL or Math courses with GE transfer-level courses.
- Foundational English or Math with College Success.
- GE transfer-level courses with other GE transfer-level courses.

Effective Learning Communities

- Give a sense of purpose.
- Help overcome the isolation of faculty members from one another and from their students.
- Encourage continuity and integration in the curriculum.

Effective Learning Communities

- Encourage faculty members to relate to one another both as specialists and as educators.
- Help build a sense of group identity, cohesion and “specialness.”

Essential Characteristics of Learning Communities

- The same students enroll in the same classes together.
- The academic work of each course's subject matter is enhanced by interdisciplinary study in which students and faculty build connections between subject matters, disciplines and ideas.

Essential Characteristics of Learning Communities

- Courses are team-designed and team-taught.
- To facilitate inter-disciplinarity, the community focuses on a central theme.
- Multicultural thinking is encouraged and developed to promote inclusive perspectives.
- Collaborative learning and experiential learning methods are keystones of the pedagogy.

Research Question

Assess an important goal of the program:

To improve student learning by highlighting the connections between disciplines and interesting topics, thereby strengthening students' intellectual curiosity and experiences.

Methodology

- Use grades as a proxy measure of student learning
- Should expect higher course success rates for Learning Communities students, on average, than those in comparable non-Learning Community courses, *ceteris paribus*

Methodology

- Student grades in learning community sections were compared with non-learning community sections of the same or related courses for that term
- Did not control for different class sizes
- Did not attempt to account for differences in classroom teaching; grading; motivation

Methodology

- Grades grouped as:
 - Success - A, B, C, or P
 - Withdrawal - W
 - Non-Success - D, F, NP, I
- The grade percents were based on all the grades for the section, including W's

Methodology

2002F

Whose Country Is This Anyway?

LinC ESL 005.01D
 HIST017A01D

Non-LinC ESL 005.REL
 HIST017AREL

	<u>Success</u>		<u>Non-Success</u>		<u>Withdrew</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>LinC</u>	236	84%	23	8%	23	8%	282	100%
<u>Non-LinC</u>	3,288	66%	819	16%	869	17%	4,976	100%

Demographics

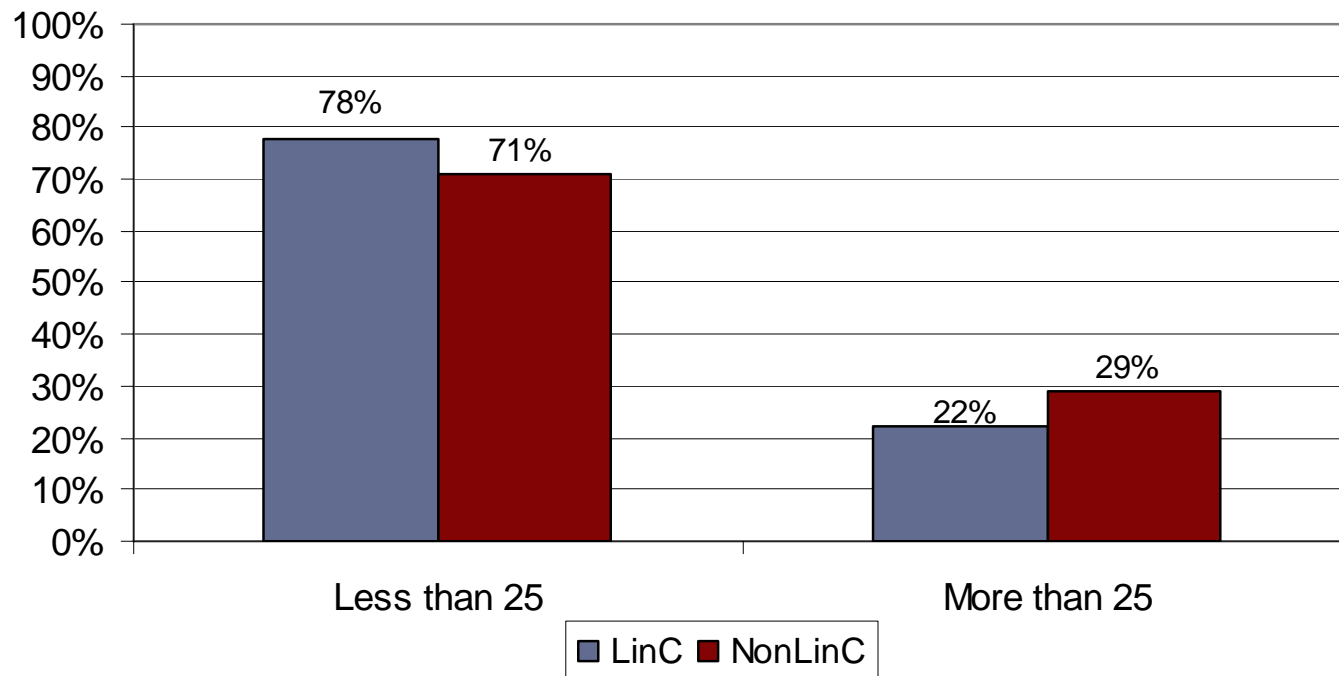
- Groups similar in terms of
 - Gender
 - Initial Goal
 - Where they live
- Differ in terms of
 - Age – LinC students are younger
 - Ethnicity – LinC students are more likely to be Asian (Vietnamese)

Demographics

- In a typical quarter
 - more than 200 students
 - 10 to 15 LinC sections
 - five or six “Learning Communities”
- 2,635 students have participated in LinC courses over the last five years

Demographics

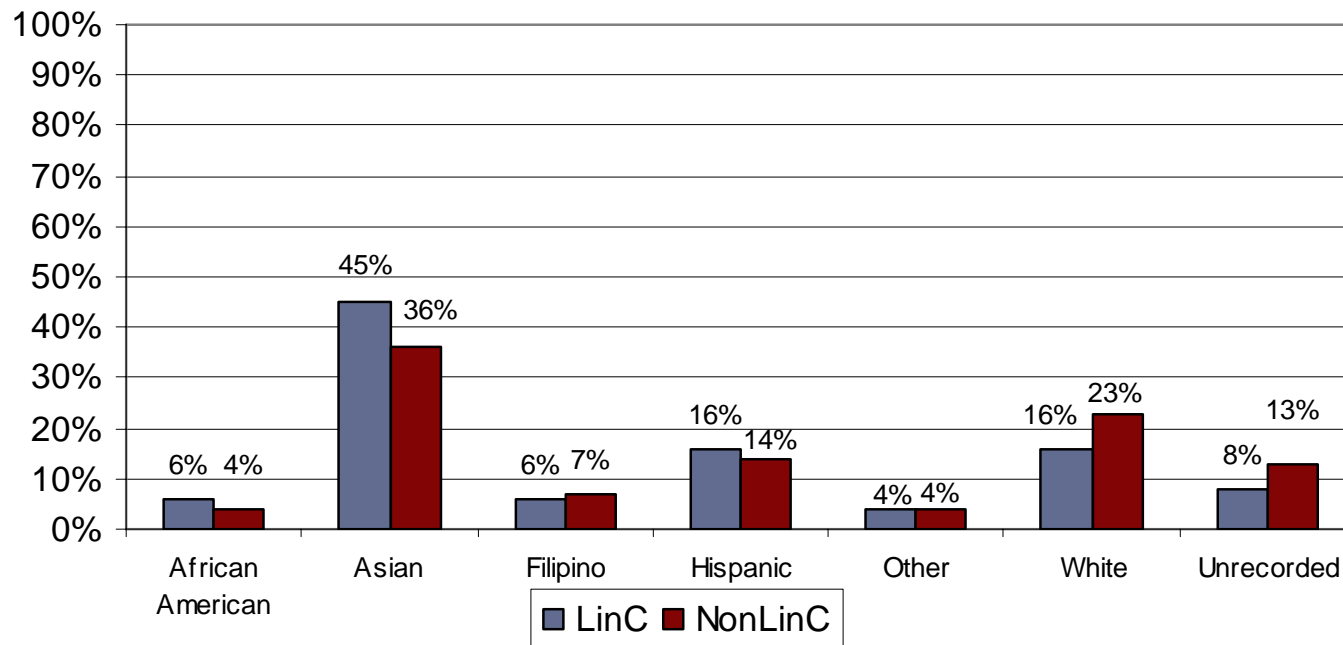
Unduplicated Count of Students Enrolled in LinC and NonLinC Sections by Age Group, 2002F-2006S



For the 22 terms from 2000F-2006S, there were 2,635 students enrolled in at least one LinC section and 25,132 students in NonLinC related sections.

Demographics

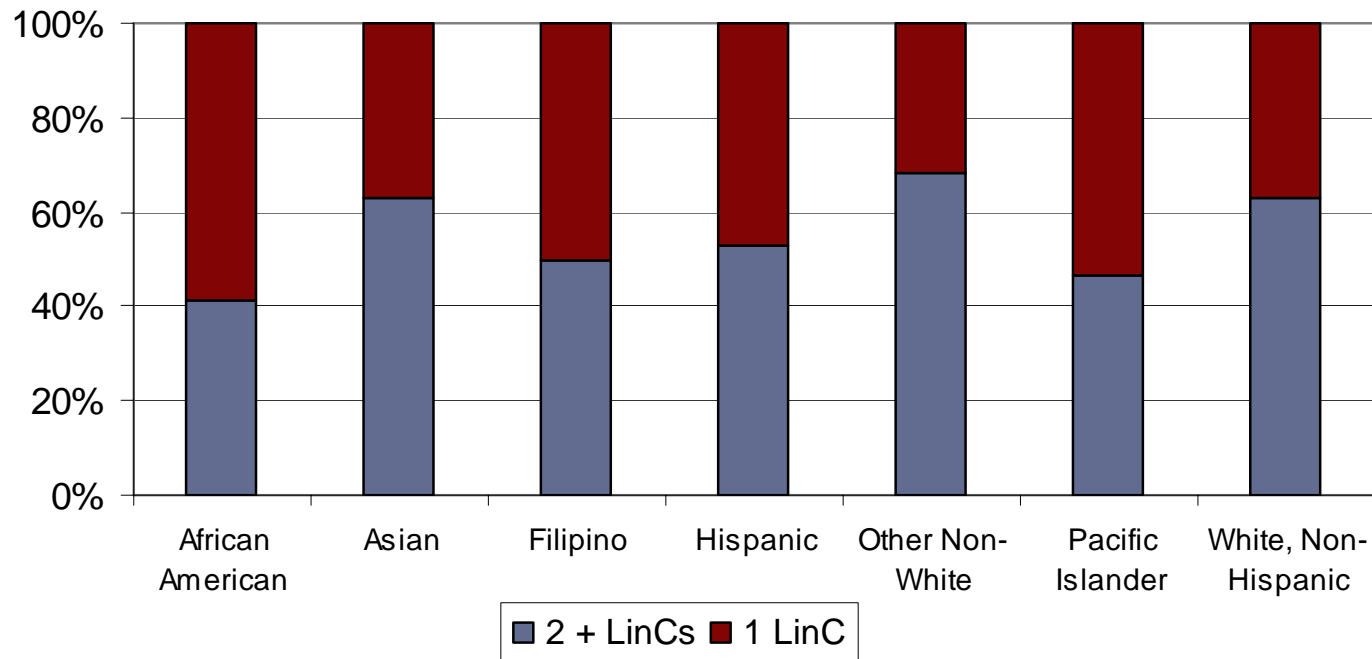
Unduplicated Count of Students Enrolled in LinC and NonLinC Sections by Ethnicity, 2002F-2006S



For the 22 terms from 2000F-2006S, there were 2,635 students enrolled in at least one LinC section and 25,132 students in NonLinC related sections.

Demographics

**Number of LinC Sections by Ethnicity
De Anza College, 2000F-2006S**



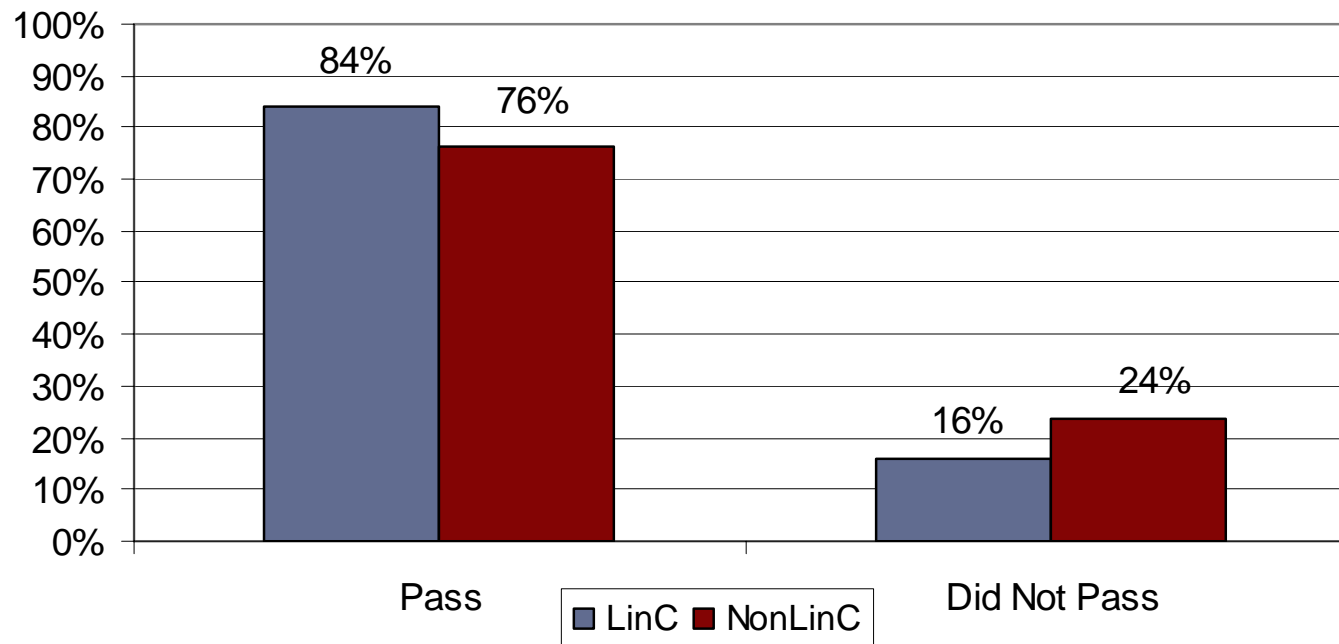
For the 22 terms from 2000F-2006S, there were 2,635 students enrolled in 4,523 LinC sections (including repeats). 59% of students enrolled in two or more sections over the period.

Results

- Overall, the course success rates were higher for LinC than similar courses
- LinC course success rates appear to vary by curriculum content

Results

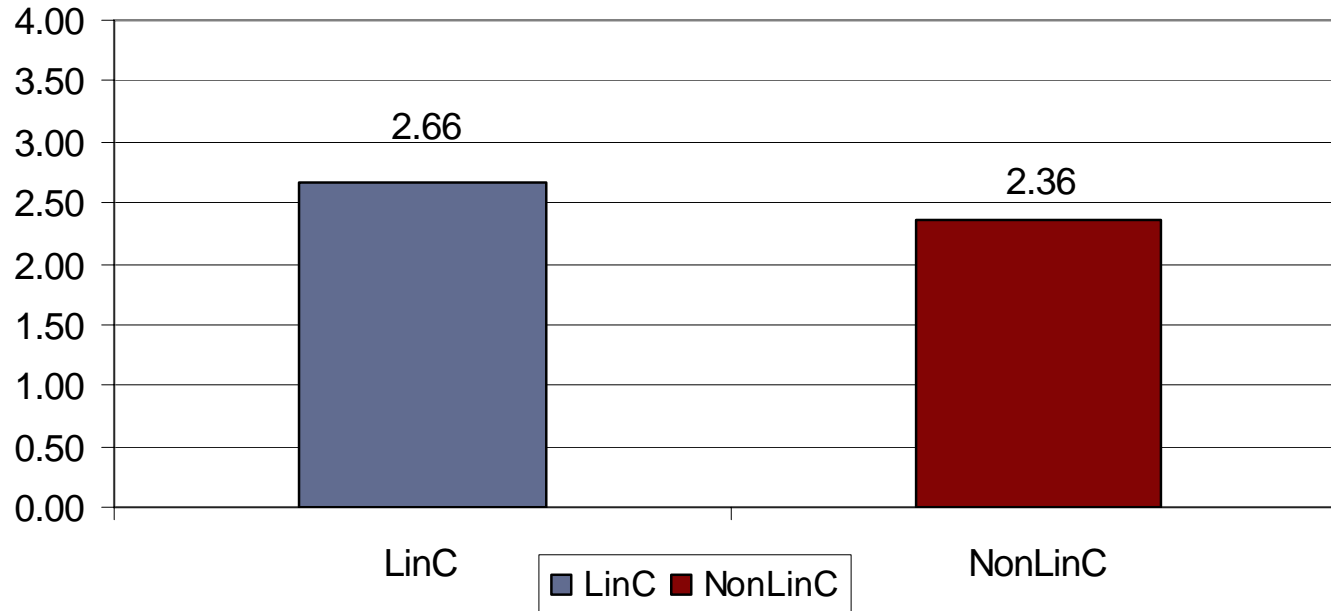
**Students Success LinC and NonLinC Sections
De Anza College, 2000F-2006S**



For the 22 terms from 2000F-2006S, there were 4,523 enrollments in LinC sections and 63,018 enrollments in NonLinC related sections (including repeats). Difference statistically significant using a 2x2 Chi Square.

Results

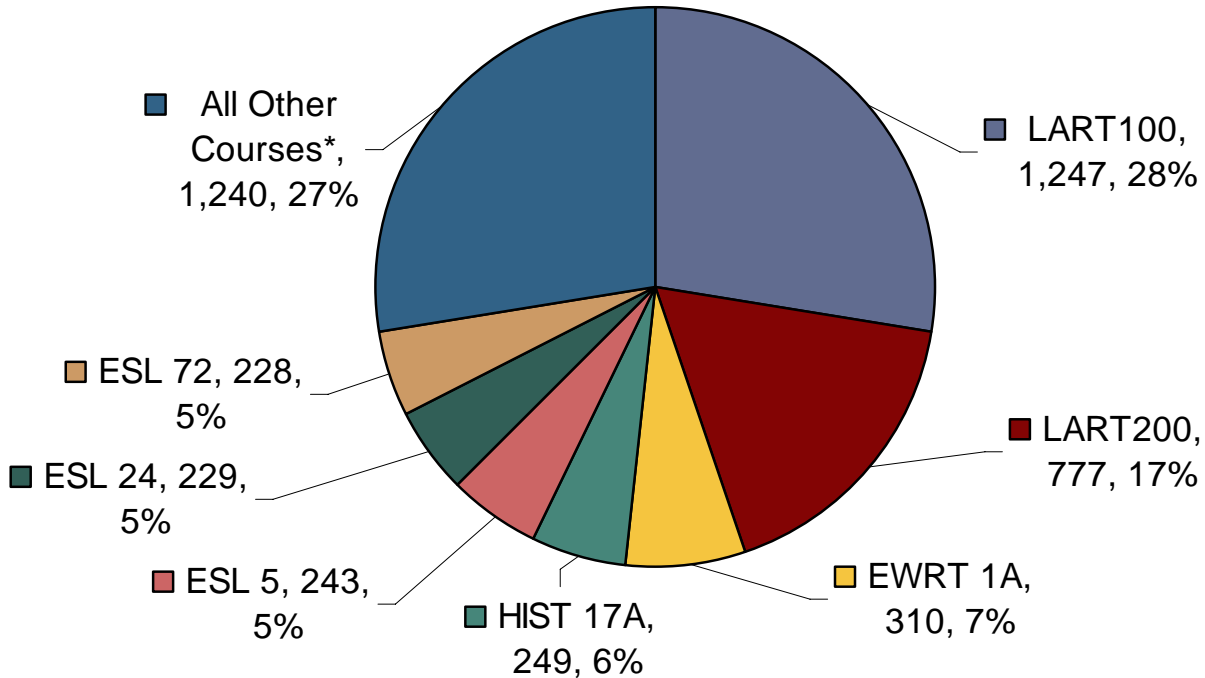
**Mean Course GPA LinC and NonLinC Sections
De Anza College, 2000F-2006S**



For the 22 terms from 2000F-2006S, there were 4,523 enrollments in LinC sections and 63,018 enrollments in NonLinC related sections (including repeats). Difference statistically significant at .05 using two tailed T test.

Results

**LinC Course Enrollments
De Anza College, 2000F-2006S**



* Other LinC courses include: ARTS001A, BUS 010, COUN057, COUN080X, ELIT039, ELIT 721, ELIT 173, EWRT100B, HIST17B, HIST17C, HUMA010, HUMA020, HUMA001, ICS 007, LART170, MATH010, MAH105, PHIL001, PSYC001, SOC 001, SPCH007, SPCH010

Results - Example

Whose Country is this Anyway?
Spring 2006

		Pass		Did Not Pass		Withdrew		Total	
		Grades	Per	Grades	Per	Grades	Per	Grades	Per
ESL 005.	All Other Sections of Course	36	84%			7	16%	43	100%
	ESL 005.01D	17	94%			1	6%	18	100%
HIST017C	All Other Sections of Course	256	70%	45	12%	64	18%	365	100%
	HIST017C03D	18	95%			1	5%	19	100%

Results - Example

Love and Heroes: Looking at Social Issues in America
Fall 2005

		Pass		Did Not Pass		Withdraw		Total	
		Grades	Per	Grades	Per	Grades	Per	Grades	Per
ESL 172.	All Other Sections of Course	77	83%	10	11%	6	6%	93	100%
	ESL 172.01D	20	83%	2	8%	2	8%	24	100%
ESL 173.	All Other Sections of Course	94	90%	6	6%	5	5%	105	100%
	ESL 173.02D	21	88%	1	4%	2	8%	24	100%

Results - Example

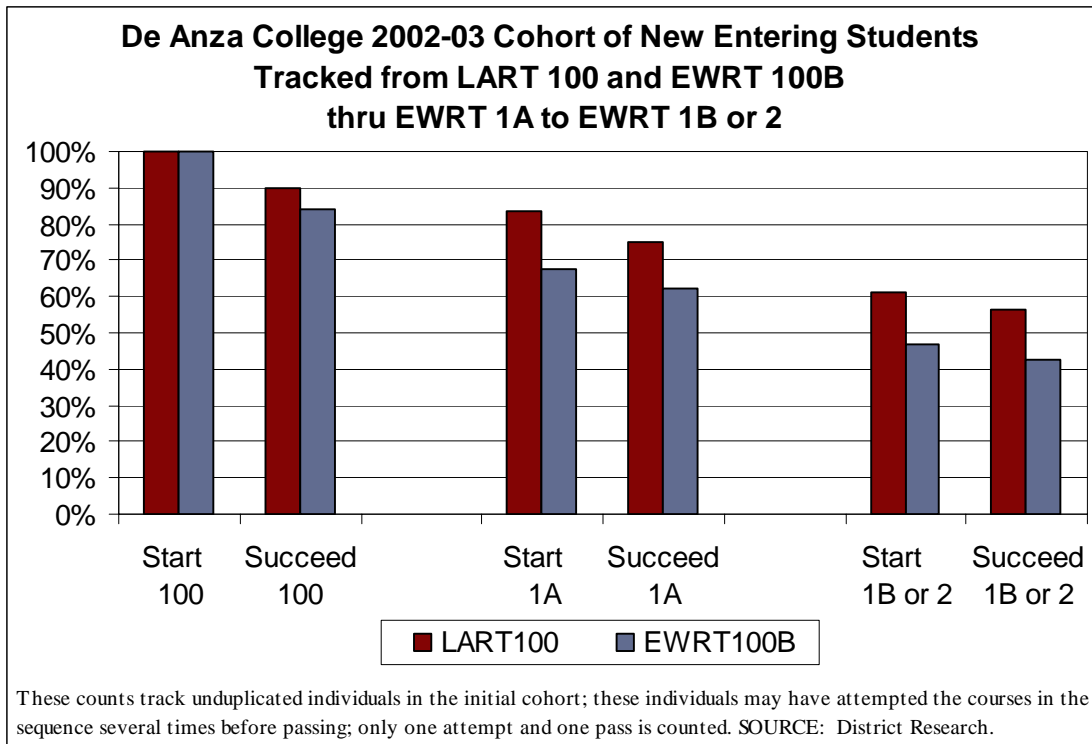
LART 100
Winter 2005

		Pass		Did Not Pass		Withdrew		Total	
		Grades	Per	Grades	Per	Grades	Per	Grades	Per
EWRT100B	All Other Sections of Course	378	72%	62	12%	83	16%	523	100%
LART100.	LART100.	21	75%			7	25%	28	100%
	LART100.	25	86%	1	3%	3	10%	29	100%
	LART100.	20	77%	1	4%	5	19%	26	100%
	LART100.	13	76%	3	18%	1	6%	17	100%
READ100.	All Other Sections of Course	325	78%	42	10%	48	12%	415	100%

Results

**De Anza College 2002-03
Cohort and Total Enrollment**

Course	Cohort Enr	Total Enr	Cohort / Total Enr
LART100	198	255	78%
EWRT100B	1,427	2,081	69%

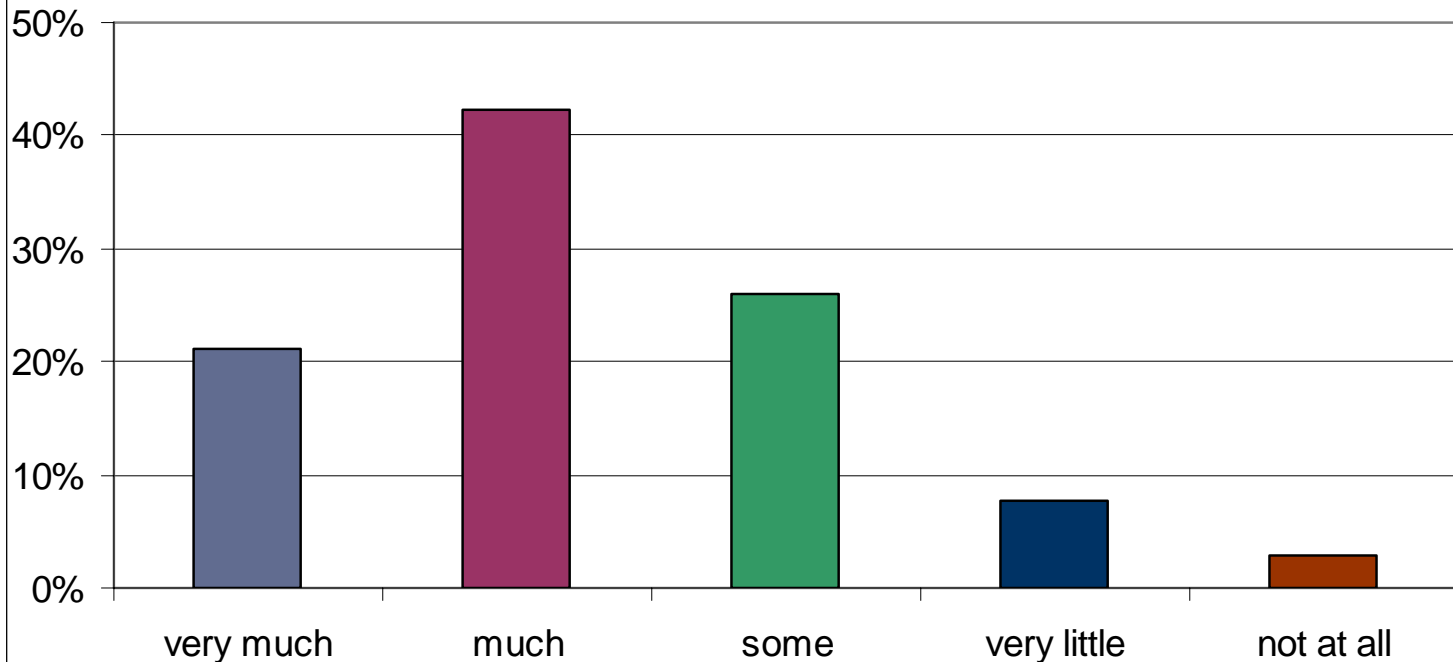


End of Term Assessment

- On-line in Winter 2006
- Positive responses on group work
- Less positive on work with counselors and student services
 - (new grant focuses on this work)

End of Class Survey

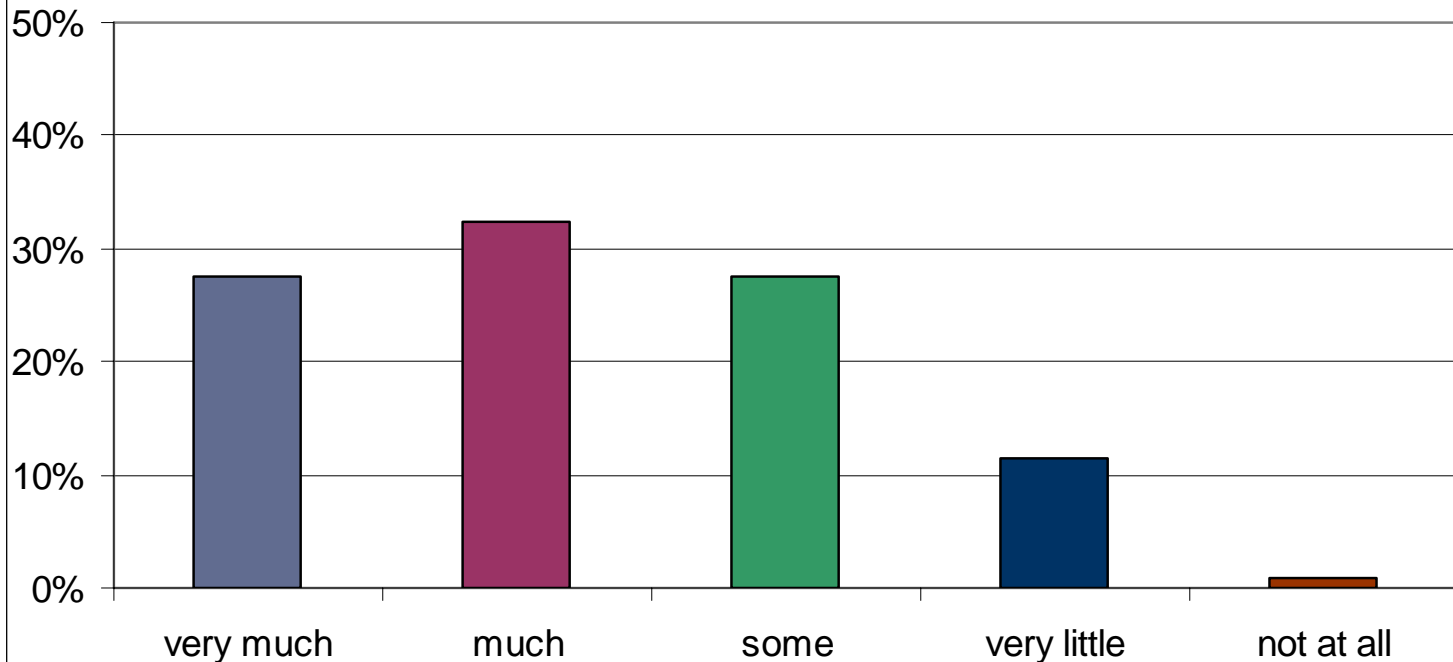
What benefits have you gotten by your experience in this learning community?
I learn more effectively.



Winter 2006 End of Class Survey N = 105

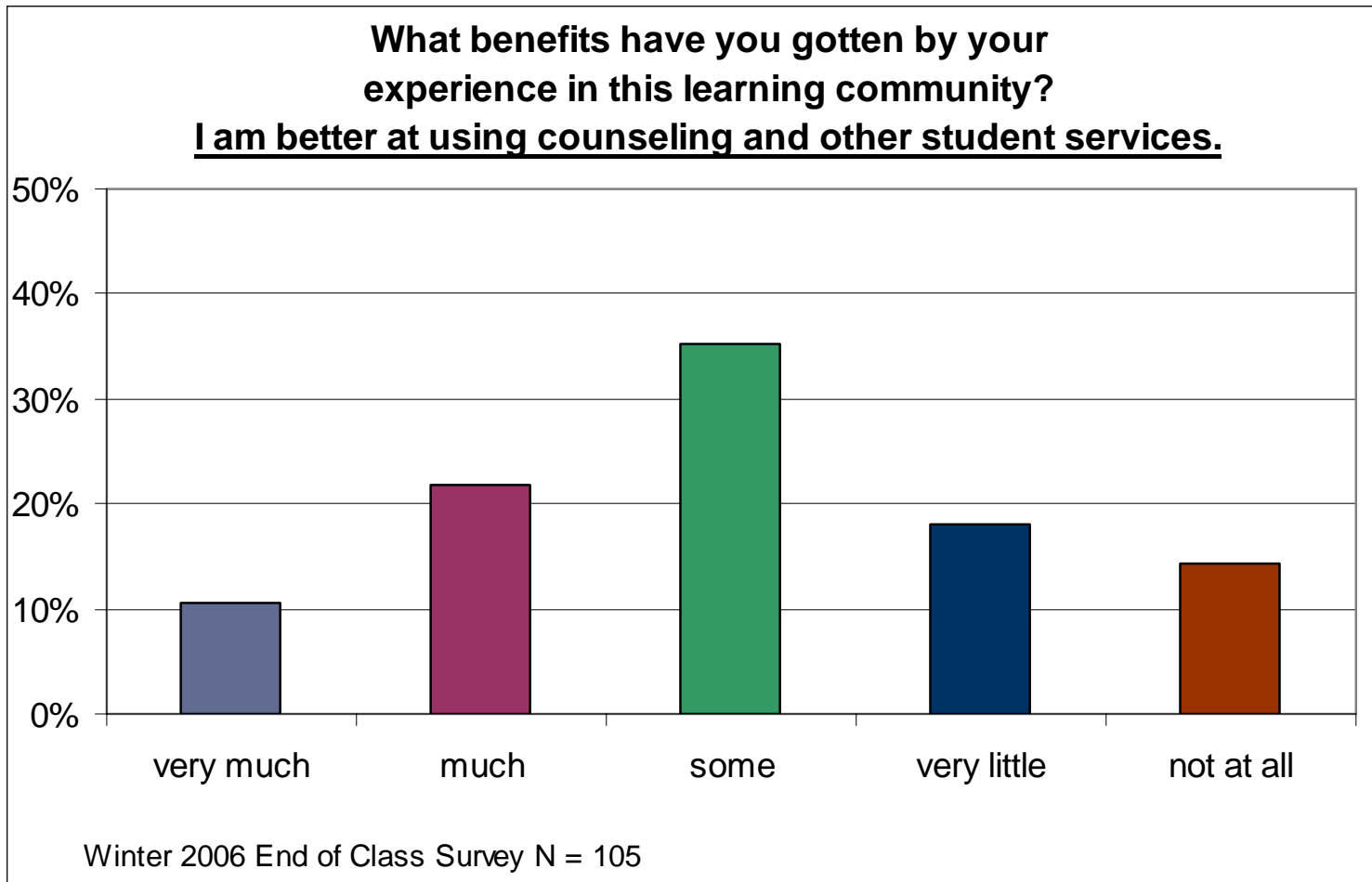
End of Class Survey

What benefits have you gotten by your experience in this learning community?
I work more effectively with others.



Winter 2006 End of Class Survey N = 105

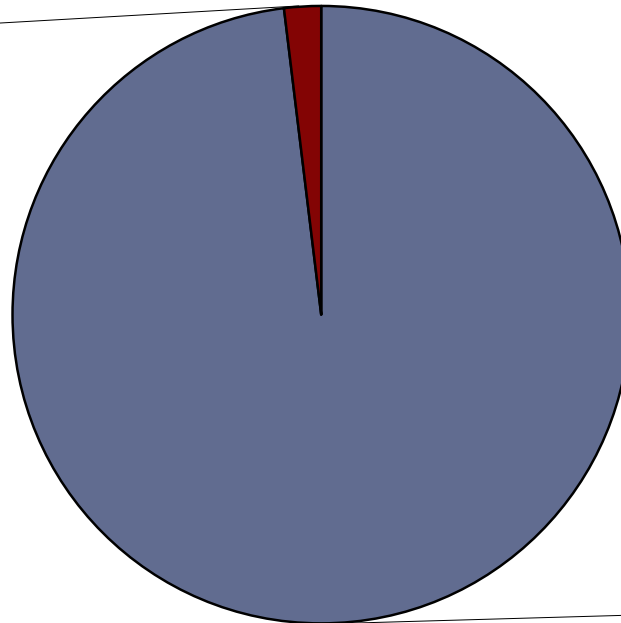
End of Class Survey



End of Class Survey

Would you recommend this learning community to a friend or family member?

No
2%



Yes
98%

Winter 2006 End of Class Survey N = 105

Questions?

- Suggestions?
- Other ways to measure success?