

De Anza 2005: Pathways To Student Equity

Achieving the Goals of the Educational Master Plan

Approved by the Academic Senate on 1/22/01

Preface:

Student access, retention and success require a commitment of resources, time, thought, planning, and positive attitude from the entire college community - administrators, staff, students and instructors. The following document focuses primarily on the commitments of faculty to achieving these ends. This document is intended to map out the ways that faculty will take responsibility for implementation of student equity goals outlined in our Educational Master Plan. We are hopeful that administrators, staff and students will each take up this process and develop their own complementary plans which would detail their responsibilities in the college-wide effort to achieve the goals of access, retention and success.

No matter how strong the commitment of faculty may be, we realize that true progress in this area cannot happen without the contributions of the entire campus community. For example, students are responsible to attend classes and set aside adequate time for study (i.e. 2 to 1 ratio of out of class to in class time), to utilize the resources that are available to them (i.e. office hours, tutorial services, counseling, etc.), and to give their best efforts to complete the assignments that are given. Administrators need to make available appropriate resources to ensure that faculty and students who are making their best efforts can be successful, i.e. quality research data, appropriate funding for the Tutorial Center and Readiness Program, and other key areas of support for teaching and learning. In fact, student equity begins with the positive interactions on initial contact with the college. Staff are often those individuals who make that initial contact and therefore are key in establishing a supportive, empathetic climate. For example, Admissions and Records front line staff and division Administrative Assistants in the first two weeks of the quarter can make the difference in this initial perception by a student. Further, the design and maintenance of the college website so that it is culturally and linguistically sensitive and accessible to all students is another example of the importance of the role that staff play.

We hope that the next steps in bringing about the integration of the mutual responsibilities of all campus groups will include a dialogue between Student Equity Team members and the various constituency groups. We look forward to working with the Classified Senate, DASB and Administrators as participate in the development of Divisional plans for achieving the goals of our Educational Master Plan. We are convinced that with the effort of the entire college community, we can improve teaching and learning and move toward these goals of increased access, retention and success.

DE ANZA 2005: PATHWAYS TO STUDENT EQUITY

Achieving the Goals of the Educational Master Plan

by the Student Equity Team of the Diversity Advisory Council

Our Educational Master Plan is infused with affirmations of our commitment to student equity and related issues of diversity. Indeed, student equity is a dominant theme throughout the Master Plan's "indicators of quality" and is identified in every goal and expected outcome for 2005. We define student equity as ***on-going accountable processes that will work towards achieving equity in all measurements of student access and achievement across lines of gender, ethnicity and disability.*** Specifically, in order to continue to maintain excellence, the college must increase transfer rates and degree and certificate awards, improve access, course completion, course retention and persistence, and, importantly, equalize student success rates by gender, ethnicity, and disability.

De Anza's commitment to equity is affirmed in *De Anza 2005: Pathways to Excellence*, the Educational Master Plan. Of particular significance is our pledge to:

Improve the student success rates of all ethnic, gender, and disability groups for all major indicators of student outcomes so that they will be comparably high with no more than a 5% variance between each group. ***This will be guided by division and departmental plans to achieve student equity*** (Educational Master Plan, p. 30, emphasis added).

This may be a towering feat, but it is attainable. Student equity will be achieved through purposeful and planned action supported by judicious allocations of resources. The Master Plan further affirms that we will:

use program review for the appropriate allocation and/or reallocation of resources as well as the redesign of program mix. *The goal is to achieve proportional representation from underrepresented ethnic groups while attracting special populations...* (Educational Master Plan, p. 32, emphasis added).

While this document will focus almost exclusively on successful course completion, we recognize that we must actively develop plans to bring about more proportional representation in specific target areas.

College-Wide Standards and Measures

Standards and measures of student outcomes create the guidelines for achievement of the long-term goals in the Educational Master Plan. (The system of standards and measures outlined herein is an adaptation of the Michigan State system of standards and measures for Michigan Community Colleges as required by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998.) These standards and measures will be maintained by a *rolling benchmark* (see Appendix 1) – beginning at one level and then reviewing that standard every five years in order to continually RAISE the standard as the college reaches increased levels of success. We will use both Master Plan defined success rates and success rates including withdrawals (based on third week census data). As we raise our benchmarks, we will move to a fuller consideration and understanding of withdrawals and develop measures designed to address them. The following system of standards and measures will be used beginning in the 2000-2001 academic year:

- **A Minimum College Success rate** of 75% for developmental, transfer-level and vocational course offerings. Departments in which success rates for classes (or groups of classes) are currently below the minimum college success rate are eligible for the resources of the Equity Collaboration Team Planning and (see Appendix 1). Departments (or programs or groups of classes) which are already consistently meeting this standard will receive support from Planning and Budget Teams as best practices models (see Appendix). Each department will examine data reflecting successful completion overall and, where applicable, look at both developmental level and general college level courses separately.
- **Differential Success Rates** across gender, ethnicity and physical ability status of no more than 5% variance. Departments in which differential success rates for classes (or groups of classes) are currently greater than 5% may call upon the resources of the Equity Collaboration Team. Departments (or programs or groups of classes) which are already consistently meeting this standard will receive support from Planning and Budget Teams as best practices models. Again, each department will report differential success rates overall and, where applicable, by both developmental and general college level courses separately.

Our initial *benchmark* (See Appendix 1) is the 1999-2000 academic year, augmented by the 2000-2001 academic year and together will serve as the benchmark until 2005. At that time, a new benchmark will be established to guide a continuous process of improvement. These figures will be made available to each department and division in order to be reported as part of Program Review. Thoughtful, strategic, research-based planning to address inequities in achievement will be a primary criterion for the allocation of resources through the Planning and Budget Teams and the College Council.

(These standards and measures are a starting place. In conjunction with the Office of Institutional Research standards and measures relating to access issues, number or times a course is repeated before successful completion, awarding of degrees and certificates as well as successful employment and/or transfer to further training or education will be developed.)

Achieving Student Equity – Five Point Model

The five points of the student equity model are:

- **Research** to identify general and discipline-specific programs, courses and best practices which show a high degree of success with groups of students currently underachieving and under-served by the institution;
- **Curriculum Development**, pedagogy and student services evaluation;
- **Staff development**
- **Evaluation** of curriculum and pedagogy using multiple assessment methods;

- **Longitudinal Studies** of identified cohorts of students prior to and beyond their De Anza experience.

Each of these areas should be addressed in departmental and divisional Program Reviews. Specifically, a Program Review document will include a plan which delineates concrete departmental efforts for achieving benchmark figures in success rates and student outcomes. Allocation of resources through the Program Review and Planning and Budget Team process will be based on addressing these issues.

1. Research and Identification of Successful Programs

Aid the department(s) in the following:

- Identify successful courses and programs which already exist within the department
- Identify other discipline-specific courses and programs offered locally, statewide or nationally that successfully address equity issues (e.g., Puente, MESA, Affirm, Enlace, Adelante)
- Define the core components (best practices) of successful programs which increase academic success and student equity for those groups of students traditionally poorly served by the institution. Examples of core components may include collaborative learning models, interdisciplinary course linkages, multicultural perspectives, etc.
- Determine the variety of ways that these core components can be utilized in the department; determine which courses and programs incorporate these core components and what the desired outcome(s) will be.

2. Curriculum and Student Support Services Delivery

CURRICULUM:

- Aid the department in a self-assessment process examining existing curriculum to insure multicultural perspectives in all classes. The Curriculum Development Facilitator, the Multicultural Curriculum Specialist within the division and the division Curriculum Representative will serve as resources for faculty interested in rewriting existing courses. This will aid in ensuring that courses being updated as part of the 3-year review cycle as well as new curriculum will be addressed from this perspective.
- Aid the department in a self-assessment process of existing curricula to determine the appropriateness of currently established pre-requisites along with existing placement instruments since we know that the more appropriately a student is placed, the better chance she or he has to be successful.
- Aid the department in a self-assessment process examining the extent to which curricula and current departmental/divisional teaching practices are designed to adequately address the variety of learning styles of students. Determine the extent to which these issues can be incorporated into the curriculum itself and the extent to which staff development can be helpful in aiding interested in professional development activities.
- Aid the department in writing new curriculum based on the research of successful programs. In some cases new programs may be adapted for implementation within existing courses (e.g., Math Performance Success); in other cases, it will be preferable to write new curriculum to implement such courses or programs. New curriculum should be developed by instructors who will be most actively involved in the delivery of such courses with the assistance of the Curriculum Development Facilitator and the Multicultural Curriculum Specialist within the division.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES DELIVERY:

Working with the department, aid in the following:

- Define measurements of student success
- Define how equity is addressed in measures of student success
- Provide a demographic profile of student success data

Working with the department, aid in a self-assessment process to:

- Assess the level of cross-cultural competencies within each department; determine how cross-cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills of staff members are assessed and what training is needed

- Assess how service delivery strategies have been adapted to accommodate different ethnic, cultural, learning and behavioral styles and to what extent these strategies are peripheral to or comprehensively integrated into operation and services
- Assess the intervention strategies adapted to accommodate different ethnic, cultural, learning and behavioral styles
- Assess the multicultural atmosphere of facilities and the extent to which they are welcoming and inviting to students across lines of language, culture and physical ability
- Assess staff accessibility to students
- Assess the extent to which operational and service delivery procedures are easily discernable and conducive to different cultural styles
- Determine major barriers to achieving student equity goals and list greatest needs in achieving those goals in terms of training and resources

3. Staff Development

Staff development is essential to enable faculty and staff to generate and implement departmental and divisional equity plans. Training will be made available on a division-specific basis through the Office of Staff and Organizational Development, the Diversity Coordinator, and the Curriculum Development Facilitator. This training will include such issues as:

- Learning styles
- Collaborative learning techniques
- Cross-cultural competencies
- Discipline-specific multicultural curriculum infusion
- Assessment – ideally, each division will identify an assessment specialist person who will assist in generating and implementing appropriate assessment and evaluation practices.

4. Evaluation and Assessment

In addition to the mandate in the Educational Master Plan to “[i]mprove the student success rates of all ethnic, gender, and disability groups for all major indicators of student outcomes...” (Master Plan, p. 30), we are also mandated to create and implement “more *effective measures of outcomes* for both individual students and for programs and departments. These include methods of feedback that promote regular and thoughtful modifications of the learning environment.” (Master Plan, p. 30, emphasis added). In order to achieve this, assessment and evaluation will take place at several levels

- **Institutional** – Deans and department chairs/coordinators and program directors will receive data relating to college-wide standards and measures for their area at the start of each quarter. This will be made available through the Office of Institutional Research.
- **Programmatic** – (for example STARS, SLAMS, Math Performance Success) –Programs will have access to and be able to report their figures both specifically and within overall campus figures. For example, overall success of students participating in STARS will be reported; in addition, STARS students’ success in developmental English classes may be reported for comparison with overall success in that department.
- **Departmental** – Each department, division and program will identify to the Office of Institutional Research the kinds and types of data required to adequately measure student success. Such measures will assist the department to move beyond the evaluation, “it works” or “it doesn’t work.” Departmental assessment and evaluation tools require the following:
 - **Goals** for the class or group of classes. What specific group(s) of students are targeted to be served. What outcomes/changes are desired?
 - **Indicators** which best express the level of progress made toward the program goals/objectives. What are several ways of knowing if the program is doing what it sets out to do?
 - **Specific Means** by which the course(s) operate(s) to bring about observed changes. What specific activities need to be evaluated/assessed because they bear on the desired changes?
 - **Relationship** of observed/measured changes to the class/group of classes under review. What are the specific ways that these activities are expected to bring about the desired outcomes?

- **Assessment of Student Learning** – Because the major goal of assessment is the improvement of student learning, we need to learn how to promote “deep” rather than “surface” learning. Deep learning is defined as active learning in which students relate what they’re learning to previous knowledge, look for the “big picture” and examine arguments cautiously and critically. Surface learning, on the other hand, only put forth minimal effort; they tend to memorize rather than reflect, and they don’t take the time to think about why they’re learning something or how all the pieces fit together. The assessment tools we choose may directly affect how our students learn. For example, students are likely to study for multiple choice tests by memorizing facts but are more likely to study for essay tests and similar assessments using deep learning strategies. Research indicates that we can promote deep learning by:
 - Making clear to students our overarching goals Relating what we’re teaching to what students already know
 - Teaching so that we clarify meanings and arouse interest
 - Encouraging metacognition, i.e., thinking not only about what is being learned by how it is being learned

5. Longitudinal Study: Before, During, and After

With the assistance of the Office of Institutional Research, each division will identify a cohort of students who they feel will provide important information about the work in that area. The Director of Institutional Research will then build a long-term (5-8-year) study to follow students from before they come to De Anza through their experience here and for several years after they leave. This study will include both quantitative and qualitative data. These cohorts will meet with researchers on a regular basis (at least once every quarter). This study will provide invaluable data in the ongoing process of assessing and increasing our successes in achieving student equity and understanding the barriers to doing so.

APPENDIX 1

Definitions

Benchmark: A standard which is the yardstick by which progress is measured. The academic year 1999-2000 is adopted as the initial benchmark but will be augmented by data from the academic year 2000-2001. A two-year benchmark insures that the initial standard not be unduly affected by year-to-year variations.

Differential Success Rate: Comparison of successful course completion across race, ethnicity, gender and physical ability categories. The Educational Master Plan identifies a GOAL of no more than 5% variance in success rates among these groups.

Equity Collaboration Team: This team is intended to serve as a resource for the campus. When a department identifies that its outcomes fall short of the Minimum College Success Rate or the Differential College Success Rate, that department will develop a plan to address this shortfall. The Equity Collaboration Team may serve the department by working with the Division Dean, department chair(s)/coordinator(s), curriculum representative and classroom instructors to aid in developing such a plan for improving outcomes within that department. The Team will be comprised of a member of the Staff Development Committee, the Curriculum Development Facilitator, a member of the Diversity Advisory Council, the Diversity Coordinator, a member of the Student Equity Team, and various classroom instructors who have been engaged in the process of implementing curriculum transformation and/or best practices.

Minimum College Success Rate: The minimum college success rate for course completion for ALL college offerings is initially established at 75%.

Rolling Benchmark: The benchmark is adjusted every five years to reflect ongoing improvement of programs.

Successful Course Completion Rate: We will consistently report TWO versions of this item.

- **Successful Course Completion Rate Including Withdrawals:**
TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS RECEIVING “C” OR BETTER OR TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED ON LAST DAY TO DROP WITH NO RECORD

- **Successful Course Completion Rate Defined by the Master Plan:**
TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS RECEIVING “C” OR BETTER OR “P” TOTAL NUMBER
OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT THE END OF THE QUARTER