

# The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

## Baker College

Project Details			
<b>Title</b>	College and Career Immersion: Improving Learning for the Emerging Student	<b>Status</b>	COMPLETED
<b>Category</b>	1-Helping Students Learn	<b>Updated</b>	09-12-2013
<b>Timeline</b>		<b>Reviewed</b>	10-04-2013
	<b>Planned Project Kickoff</b> 01-24-2012	<b>Created</b>	09-04-2012
	<b>Actual Completion</b> 03-06-2014	<b>Version</b>	1

### 1: Project Goal

**A:** To improve the retention and persistence rates for students who place into three developmental education areas: reading (ENG 098B), writing (ENG 091), and math (MTH 091)

### 2: Reasons For Project

**A:** With the national and state economic downturn and with the need to be fiscally responsible with funds for students, it is imperative that we provide students with every opportunity to be successful. Studies show that adults need learning that is meaningful, transferable, and relevant. This course provides an opportunity for students to engage much earlier in their programs and careers, which supports our mission and the reason students often chose Baker College over another institution.

DEQIP (Developmental Education Quality Improvement Project) has been working toward improving student learning for the underprepared student since its charter in 2004. We have had some success with improving subsequent course pass rates but have struggled with significantly and consistently increasing the rates of success for the developmental education courses themselves. This has been especially apparent for the population most at risk: students needing three or more developmental education courses. DEQIP has also worked toward developing a First Year Experience, and this project addresses that as well. This Immersion Project addresses the need for DEQIP to move to the next level of implementation and accountability.

### 3: Organizational Areas Affected

- A:**
- Academic Department
  - DEQIP – Developmental Education
  - Program Faculty in each of the major divisions: Business, Health, Computer Information Systems/Technology, and Education/Human Service
  - Support Services such as the Learning Support Centers (through the use of My Foundations Lab for skills practice), the Library (through the use of course-specific resource guides), and Career Services (through presentations on career and employment services)

### 4: Key Organizational Process(es)

- A:** This project has the potential to improve the orientation process for students, including the improvement of the hand-off from Admissions to Academics:
- Orientation for students into developmental areas – Admissions, CAOs, and Dev. Ed. Deans
  - Orientation for students into non-developmental areas – Admissions, CAOs, and Dev. Ed. Deans
  - This project has the potential to improve the delivery of developmental education courses and general education courses by incorporating, on a deeper and more strategic level, the relevance of foundational and general education skills and knowledge within the context of careers and programs. It also has the potential to improve the delivery of program courses by heightening awareness of the role of reading, writing, and mathematics within all program and career areas.

## 5: Project Time Frame Rationale

A: Winter 2012 through end of Fall 2014

Winter 2012 – Pilot implementation of COL 115 at two campuses (Allen Park and Jackson) in order to provide professional development, to implement on a smaller scale to gather lessons learned, and to manage new processes and programming. Enhancements and minor improvements to curriculum materials through pilot feedback. Ongoing professional development for CAOs, Deans, and Faculty.

Spring 2012 – Implementation by all campuses with sufficient numbers for enrollment (10 minimum with a solid 5 or more, as determined by the campus). Data from Winter will be gathered and analyzed from the two pilot campuses. Ongoing professional development for CAOs, Deans, and Faculty.

Summer 2012 – All campuses with sufficient numbers for enrollment. Data from Spring will be gathered and analyzed. Minor improvements and changes from winter and spring will be put into place for Fall 2012. Ongoing professional development for CAOs, Deans, and Faculty.

Fall 2012 – Full implementation at all campuses due to sufficient population of students and the increased capacity of campuses and faculty. Ongoing professional development for CAOs, Deans, and Faculty.

2012-2013 Academic Year – Collection and analysis of data to inform any changes for the 2013-2014 academic year. Continued professional development for CAOs, Deans, and Faculty.

Fall 2014 – Completion of the project with data collection and analysis to determine the success of the project and to make an institutional decision about continuing the work as institutional practice.

Winter 2012 to Fall 2014 gives us enough data but does not draw out the project beyond the time needed to determine its initial viability.

Additionally, this project will serve as the project for our application to NADE (National Association of Developmental Education) for certification of our developmental education program.

## 6: Project Success Monitoring

A: The following key milestones have been identified. The project will be monitored by the AQIP Council, the project team, and the units responsible for achieving these milestones.

- March 2011: CEO Mr. James Cummins delivered a call to action at the Academic Leadership Retreat to address the needs of the student requiring three developmental education courses.
- Spring and Summer 2011: Denise Bannan and Sandy Valensky met with an Ad Hoc committee of stakeholders to brainstorm ideas for the Immersion Project
- September 2011: Denise Bannan, Sandy Valensky, and Peni Aldrich met with the Criminal Justice Faculty at Jackson who provide a vision of the Immersion Project
- November 7-9, 2011: CAOs, Deans, Developmental Faculty, and Program Faculty met with Instructional Design team to develop curriculum using Understanding by Design (UbD) model
- November – December 2011: Instructional Design of Curriculum with Content Experts
- November 28- December 1, 2011: Web-Ex Meetings with all campus CAOs and Developmental Education Deans
- December 13, 2011: Regional Professional Development for all Pilot campus CAOs, Deans, and Faculty
- December 14-21, 2011: Campus Professional Development for Pilot campus CAOs, Deans, and Faculty
- January 2012: Implementation of the course at Allen Park with about 40 students and Jackson with about 10 students
- January 5, 2012: Web-Ex with all Developmental Education Deans to prepare for Spring Quarter launch at all campuses with sufficient enrollment
- January 2012: Meetings with Career Services and LSS Directors; meeting with CAOs and Deans from Pilot campuses; meetings with IS for programming
- February 8, February 15, and February 16, 2012: Regional Professional Development for all campus CAOs, Deans, and Faculty
- March 1-14: Campus Professional Development for all campus CAOs, Deans, and Faculty
- End of Winter Quarter 2012: Collection and analysis of pilot campus data; collection and analysis of baseline data for 2009,

2010, 2011

- End of Spring Quarter 2012: Collection and analysis of all campus data
- Summer 2012: Professional Development for all CAOs, Deans, and Faculty based on winter and spring implementation
- Fall 2012: Full implementation expected on all campuses based on enrollment
- 2012-2013 and 2013-2014: Quarterly collection of data; analysis of results; adjustments to delivery and curriculum as dictated by data
- 2012-2013 and 2013-2014: Ongoing professional development as warranted by feedback and data analysis
- Fall 2014: Conclusion of the project; evaluation of success; decisions for the future; application for NADE Certification.

## 7: Project Outcome Measures

A: Data for College and Career Preparation (COL 115)

- Pass rates for the course (COL 115)
- Quarter-to-quarter retention rates for students who begin with this course
- Year-to-year (Fall-to-Fall) Persistence rates for students who begin with this course

Eventual graduation rates for students who begin with this course

## Project Update

### 1: Project Accomplishments and Status

A: In the last year, we have continued to enroll students who need all three developmental areas (reading, writing, and math) in the COL 115 College and Career Preparation course. Both the developmental education faculty and program faculty who teach the course have expanded their collaboration to improve their delivery of the course. In surveys, students continue to report their satisfaction with and value of the cohort and program-focused approach. The project continues with support from both the Presidents and the Chief Academic Officers, with an eye toward collecting and analyzing more significant subsequent success and persistence data for the students who began their academic careers at Baker College with this course.

### 2: Institution Involvement

A: The institution involves many different groups in the implementation of this project. The Admissions Department has been a strong supporter of helping to promote this course among students who place in all three areas via COMPASS. The Academic Department (Chief Academic Officers, Deans of Developmental Education, Developmental Education faculty, and Program faculty) came together to design the course, implement the course, and work on continuous improvement of the course through a variety of meetings, professional development sessions, and system program workshops. The Library and Learning Support Services provide resources and assistance for student research projects, for completion of assignments, and for supplemental tutoring and instruction.

### 3: Next Steps

A: During the next few weeks, we plan to gather more data for analysis related to the subsequent academic progress of the students who complete the course. We will continue to monitor, on a quarterly basis, the completion and retention data of the students who enroll in College and Career Preparation. We will discuss this course as a standing agenda item at the twice a quarter System Program Workshops for Developmental Education. We will review all data and collect feedback from the faculty to determine if any revisions need to be made to the course. We already know that we need to put a stronger emphasis on helping these students develop their math skills. The System Directors for General and Developmental Education (English and Social Sciences and Math and Science) have visited all campuses this past summer to share the data and reinforce the messages to work toward further success, in particular in the math area, especially through the use of My Foundations Lab for additional practice.

### 4: Resulting Effective Practices

A: The main effective practice is increasing collaboration and the removal of barriers for that collaboration among various departments: Academics and Admissions, General Education and Developmental Education, Developmental and General Education and Programs. In

addition to the daily collaboration that occurs within the COL 115 course, this project has encouraged collaboration of program and English faculty at the annual writing conference. Another project that involves General Education writing and program directors is also underway in the Lean Six Sigma project teams. Increasing collaboration is occurring with the School of Education and General Education in English, history, and math. The General Education Science area has been collaborating with Sciences for Health and the School of Education Sciences areas. Developmental Education has re-designed the reading course to have a career focus and approach, modeling what we have learned from the College and Career Preparation course. Math courses, both in Developmental and General Education, have been re-designed with a more practical and career application and everyday math for life approach.

## 5: Project Challenges

A: Challenges that we continue to face and work on strategies to meet relate to the following areas:

- Staffing of this 12 credit hour course with a fulltime lead instructor and four program faculty in a team teaching environment
- Improving the math learning and math success rates
- Accessing data for subsequent success and persistence and making decisions based on that data when the numbers have been relatively small and the data is cumbersome to attain

## Update Review

### 1: Project Accomplishments and Status

A: The project is focused and being evaluated. It is excellent that the faculty are collaborating to improve delivery of the course! The program has the support of administration to continue. The continued collection of data is essential in order to analyze what is working and what needs to be modified. Nice work!

### 2: Institution Involvement

A: The project has the appropriate groups represented and involved in the project. Do any of the meetings and workshop include people from the Library and Learning Support Services. It would be helpful if they were more involved in the course in order to provide appropriate and effective support and instruction.

### 3: Next Steps

A: The next steps outlined are appropriate for the continuation and progression of this project. In analyzing the data, have you mapped the course to the learning objectives? If you can connect the assessments and the learning activities to the course objectives, it is easier to identify weak spots and have more specific information how to improve the course. Additionally, you will be able to drill down to specific assignments and assessments that particular students did not do well on to extrapolate other possible causes such as preparedness coming into the course, learning disabilities, etc.

Since Math is an emphasis, it would seem that perhaps more time should be spent on math earlier in the student's experience in this course so that those who are struggling can be identified early and have more time to work with a tutor and other support services.

### 4: Resulting Effective Practices

A: Excellent progress towards realizing the Effective Practice. It is refreshing to see departments, faculty, staff and administrators working together for the success of these students.

### 5: Project Challenges

A: The challenges fit the description of the project as well as progress made to date.

## Project Outcome

## 1: REASON FOR COMPLETION

A: The primary reason for closing the project is that the course was offered for two years and the data collected informed us that the retention and persistence rates were not positively impacted enough to warrant continuation of the project or the course.

## 2: SUCCESS FACTORS

A:

Mission-driven and career-focused perspectives in developmental education curriculum

Both developmental education and general education have more consciously and strategically been incorporating career perspectives into the teaching of reading, writing, and mathematics. For example, in our College Reading course (ENG 098B), we have redesigned the course and the course resources, including the textbook, to focus on a student's individual career rather than general reading topics.

Project-based learning in developmental education courses

Curriculum design and revision in reading, writing, and math has been focused on providing students with contextual learning through projects.

Practical, real-world application of concepts in developmental education courses

Curriculum has been or is being revised in reading, writing, and math to include more real-world application of concepts.

Collaboration with programs across departments, both developmental and general education

Whenever possible, both developmental and general education initiatives, projects, events, and curriculum design incorporate interaction and communication with program groups.

Team teaching and shared responsibility – additional opportunities for this type of learning environment should be investigated.

There is no specific plan at this point for team teaching opportunities, but it is something to consider for the future.

Cohort opportunity for students – additional opportunities for peer-to-peer, student-to-faculty, and student-to-institution should be employed in developmental and general education courses whenever and wherever possible.

Knowing the research that points toward the positive impact of cohort models for successful retention and completion of students in higher education, we are considering ways to create that cohort opportunity earlier than it is currently created through program cohorts.

The Immersion Project provided an avenue for increased collaboration between developmental education and general education, between developmental education and programs, and between general education and programs. One example of this is the inclusion of program representatives at the annual writing conference. Another example of this is the inclusion of program groups in decision-making processes about the types and focus of the reading, writing, and math that is taught in the developmental and general education courses.

## 3: UNSUCCESSFUL FACTORS

A: Our project objective was to improve the retention and persistence rate for students who place into three developmental education areas: Reading (ENG 098B College Reading), Writing (ENG 091 English Review), and Math (MTH 091 Essential Math Concepts). The three main questions we were seeking to have positive responses to are the following:

- Are students more successful (pass the course requirements) in COL 115 than in three developmental education courses?
- Are students in COL 115 more successful in the subsequent quarter courses (ENG 101 and MTH 099E) than those in three developmental education courses?
- Do students in COL 115 persist at a greater rate than the students in the past with three developmental education courses?

While administrator, faculty, and student surveys demonstrate a positive attitude toward the course, the faculty, the college, and the attempt at creating a cohort model for this population of students, the answers to all three main questions and the ability to positively impact student retention and persistence were not successful.