Greetings
Elizabeth Zarubin welcomed all those who were present and asked each person to state his/her name and to state his/her department.

Matriculation:
Laura Walsh, ESL department member and member of the Matriculation Advisory Committee, asked “Who is the parent committee of the BSSC?” (Academic Policies). She then briefly discussed the pilot project being designed to eliminate placement testing at CCSF. (The pilot project will place SFUSD students into English and Math courses using multiple measures, including high school transcripts and secondary test scores, or students will self-place based on informed consent):

She raised a number of questions for the BSSC group to consider:
- If this is a pilot, for what? Elimination on a wider scale?
- How big is the pilot?
  Who are the candidates selected? How are the candidates
- What makes students eligible for this option?
- Does it apply to English and Math and ESL?
- Who is initiating the pilot?
- How many are basic skills students?
- How are basic skills and basic skills students defined?

Laura also raised a number of other questions relating to the pilot program if it becomes implemented on a larger scale at CCSF:
- If the placement test is eliminated, how will CCSF as a whole and its funding be affected when CCSF’s funding is tied to its use of the placement test (Matriculation money will be tied to state-wide funding—AB 740)?
- Who will conduct the advising? Will students consult with and get advice about placement from a Math/English Instructor? (too expensive)
- How much does CCSF pay to administer the placement test each semester? Is the cost of administering the placement test an actual issue?

According to Laura, the CCSF Trustees’ Board is heavily considering eliminating the placement test (but the Chancellor has made conflicting statements about the elimination of the placement test).

The BSSC group generated a number of other questions related to the placement test:
- What is basic skills issue versus 1A? (Approximately 70% of students are tested into basic skills at CCSF. English 93 and lower are considered basic skills courses; Math E but Math 840 is considered by CCSF.)
If asked to self-place, would students place themselves successfully or would they suffer a more negative impact?

What is the best way to help basic skills students pass courses and to be successful?

What resources can basic skills students utilize to pass and excel?

Are placement issues (including self-placement) different for Math and English courses or can they be “lumped” together?

Are high school courses and curricula aligned with college courses and curricula? Are/can the Math and English standards of high schools and community colleges be aligned?

Would the elimination of the English placement affect the number of students enrolling in ESL courses? (Would ESL students try to bypass ESL to graduate more quickly?)

How would the elimination of placement testing affect students’ success in content courses? (pivot)? How will this elimination affect advising and perquisite courses for content courses?

Diversity Committee: Tracy Burt

Tracy Burt emphasized that BSSC should not make assumptions about the goal of eliminating the placement test. She also argued that current research suggests that GPA and transcripts are better predictors of students’ success than the placement test; Mary Bravewoman concurred with this argument, believing that the results of placement test are questionable and lack validity (“How well does it (the placement test) predict performance?”).

Math Department: Mary Bravewoman

Mary briefly discussed a placement proposal that the Math Department will pilot.

- The Math Department will consider multiple measures of assessment: student placement test results, high school attendance, GPA/transcripts in high school courses. According to Mary, the Student Success Task Force found the multiple measures are better indicators of students’ success. (However, the length of the elapsed time (the period when a student takes his/her last Math class in high school and when the student is placed into a college Math class) is not necessarily an indicator success.)
- Students can also challenge their placement.

Steven Spurling will meet with the Math Department on 3/20, when a proposal will be made to the Math Department.

Changes to Student Course Repetition

The BSSC discussed the new rules that will take effect at CCSF:

- Students will pay for classes only twice.
- Multiple course repetition offerings will no longer be allowed. (Therefore, more accurate assessment is needed to eliminate course repetition. Also CCSF has been paying “out of pocket” for students’ third course repetition.)
- English and Math Departments may have to re-align their sequences to be in congruence with the new placement test mandated from Sacramento and with transfer-level and basic skills courses at other California community colleges.
Student Success
The BSSC group discussed larger issues dealing with student success:
- How many basic skills students do not do well because of a lack of skills?
- To what degree are external factors (e.g., parental responsibilities/home life and personal issues) the reason for basic skills students’ poor success?
- To what degree do affective issues (e.g., low motivation and engagement because of past educational experiences) affect basic skills students’ success?

Questions Defining the Problem with Placement Testing
The BSSC group, in a brainstorming session, tried to define the problem/question with placement testing at CCSF. The BSSC group raised a number of questions, which were recorded on a piece of butcher paper, in order to define the problem:
- Would the pilot have a negative or positive impact on students’ success?
- Since the current tests has been called into question, what are creative ways to change the existing structure to help improve accuracy?
- What is the best system that will lead to the most success among basic skills students?
- What is the basic skills problem? Is the issue related to their skills or to other factors?
- Can motivation be solved pedagogically?
- What is the best and most accurate way to assess students’ skills and abilities in college-level courses?
- How does placement testing affect non-credit placement?
- Does the placement tests in English and Math inhibit the success of current basic skills students?
- What do basic skills students have to say about this issue?
- If placement testing in Math and English is eliminated, would the integrity of the English and Math courses be at stake and would the courses themselves be changed radically?

Upcoming BSSC Meetings (from 2:30-4:00)
The following meetings were tentatively scheduled for the remainder of the semester:
- April 9th and 23rd
- May 7th and 21st

The location of the upcoming meetings will be announced on the BSSC listserv.