



College Performance Indicators Series: BASIC SKILLS BRIEF

INTRODUCTION

Is this about the Basic Skills Initiative?

This brief is the first in a series of nine research briefs based on the CCSF *College Performance Indicators Report (CPI)*, a key tool that the College uses to evaluate how it is doing on the eight strategic priorities of its Strategic Plan. The CPI is organized according to those strategic priorities. For some time, CCSF has acknowledged basic skills as an area needing particular focus. It is the first strategic priority of the CCSF Strategic Plan (www.ccsf.edu/Offices/Research_Planning/pdf/ccpi2008.pdf) and therefore becomes the first topic in our series. This brief is not directly related to the Basic Skills initiative.

What do you mean by “Basic Skills?”

This research brief looks at precollegiate courses overall, including what we term lower precollegiate/basic skills and upper precollegiate. Collegiate level courses are excluded. Some noncredit indicators will be included in later report briefs in this series, but this brief focuses on credit basic skills courses. The basic courses discussed here include several courses in the Mathematics and English sequences. In addition, all credit ESL courses are part of this analysis. Please contact 239-3743 (Steve Spurling sspurlin@ccsf.edu), 452-7292 (Susan Lopez slopez@ccsf.edu) or 239-3227 (Pamela Mery pmery@ccsf.edu) for more information about this report.

From the CCSF Strategic Plan:

Strategic Priority #1 *To ensure student access, progress, success and transfer readiness through an effective and expanded approach to improving basic skills, remediation and transitional studies including instruction, academic and student support services, and other services as necessary.*

From the *College Performance Indicators*, the four Indicators for the above Strategic Priority:

- √ *Percentage of first-time students placed in precollegiate Math, English, ESL courses*
- √ *Student demand for and access to precollegiate courses*
- √ *Precollegiate student success by department*
- √ *Precollegiate student success—course cohorts*

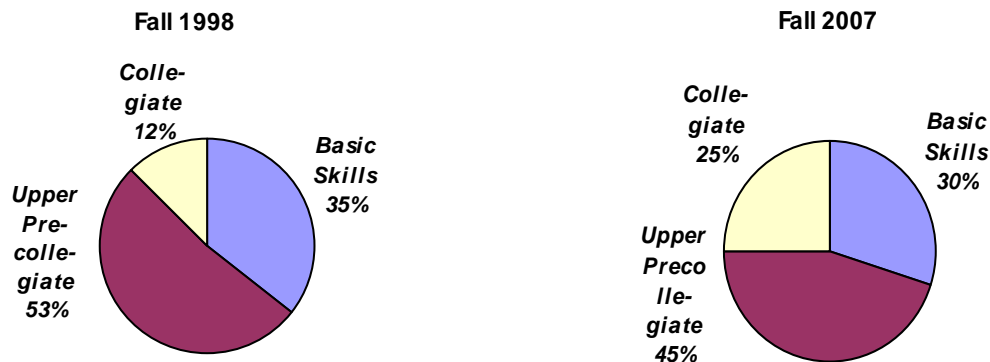
How is this report brief set up?

Each of the four indicators is followed by a summary of selected information from the larger report. Below each indicator, (shown in italics with a checkmark to its left), bulleted items and/or graphic elements will summarize some of the more striking findings. This approach is intended to give a selective sampling of the full report, and is not necessarily representative of the report's content in its entirety. Please see the full CPI Report for definitions of terms and much more context and explanation, at www.ccsf.edu/Offices/Research_Planning/pdf/ccpi2008.pdf

✓ *Percentage of first-time students placed in precollegiate Math, English, ESL courses*

- The percentage of students placing only into collegiate courses returned to 4% in 2007, after peaking modestly at 6% the prior year. This indicates that 96% of students who took placement tests at CCSF in fall 2007 placed into one or more precollegiate level courses.
- In fall 2007, students came in with higher mathematics placement than in previous years, placing into collegiate mathematics at more than double the Fall 1998 rate. The graphs below relate only to mathematics; comparable information on English and ESL is found in the full report.

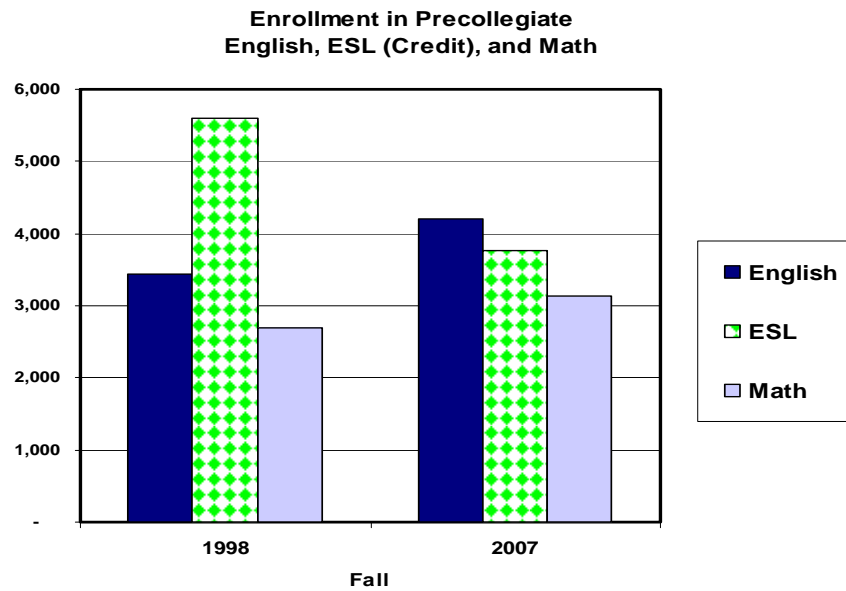
CCSF Mathematics Placement



✓ *Student demand for and access to precollegiate courses*

- The level of unsuccessful registration due to capacity limitations is one way of looking at course demand vs. access. This percentage is significantly higher for Math (26%) than for English (17%) or ESL (6%).
- In English, program changes have made course demand difficult to measure. The possibility of increasing impaction resulting from a trend toward lower English placement in combination with rising graduation requirements was not discernible in the 2006-07 CPI data.
- Total demand for credit ESL, including both enrollments and unsuccessful registration, rose 2% in fall 2007, following a similar 2% rise in fall 2006. That suggests a modest recovery in demand for ESL credit classes after several years of decreasing demand.
- The graph below shows how the enrollment patterns of English, credit ESL and Mathematics changed relative to one another from 1998 to 2007. While English and Mathematics enrollment

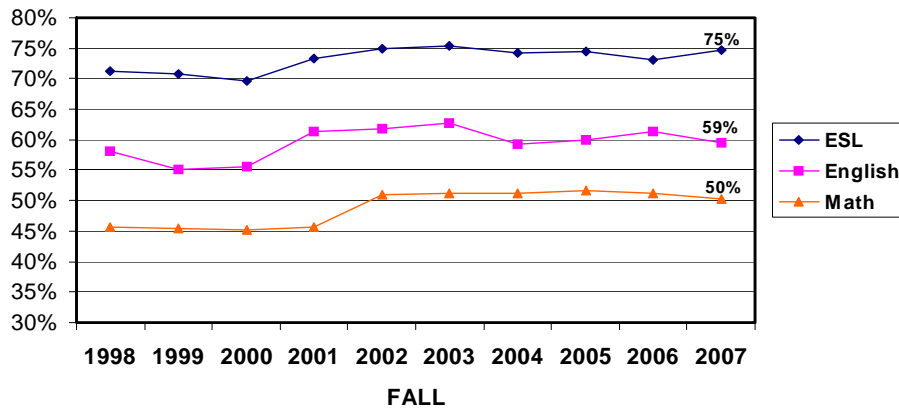
increased substantially, ESL credit enrollment declined to become the second largest of the three. Noncredit ESL enrollment is not included here¹.



√ ***Precollegiate student success by department***

- Of the three departments with the largest precollegiate enrollments, ESL has the highest passing rates and Mathematics the lowest.
- Math and ESL saw similar rises in course passing rates (“success”) from 1998 to 2007, with Math success rising from 46% to 50% and ESL success from 71% to 75%. As seen in the graph, English success rates have fluctuated, increasing 1% from 1998 to 2007.

Precollegiate Course Passing Rates By Subject



¹ See the ESL Report 2008 (http://www.ccsf.edu/Offices/Research_Planning/pdf/bskillv4.pdf) for information on noncredit ESL as well as credit ESL.

√ *Precollegiate student success—course cohorts*

The graph below shows the results of a cohort study. The achievements of cohorts of first time students in 1998 were compared with those of cohorts of students in 2002 who started in the same courses. The students were tracked over six years to see what percentage fulfilled certain requirements for transfer or the associate degree. In the full report, English, ESL and Math cohorts were all studied. The graph below shows the results of the English cohorts.

- Students placing into higher levels of precollegiate English did better on fulfilling certain requirements than students placing into lower levels.
- More students fulfilled English requirements for the associate degree or transfer to CSU than for transfer to UC.
- In a consistent uptrend across levels, students in 2002 did substantially better in the English cohort study than students in 1998.

**Cohorts' Fulfillment of Certain Requirements
By First Precollegiate English Class Taken**

