Basic Skills Committee
February 3, 2004

After a brief review of our overall goals and the work we did last semester, the committee discussed the summary of the basic skills best practices as sent out before the meeting. With several edits and additions, the spirit of the draft was accepted by the committee. Nadine has incorporated those changes in a new draft that is attached to this message.

Using that document as a basis, we proceeded to discuss how to best assess where City College stands with regard to these best practices with the goal of eventually making recommendations for improving student success in Basic Skills at City College. We settled on a three-pronged approach:

1. We will conduct listening sessions with a wide variety of faculty, staff, and administrators in the next three Basic Skills Subcommittee meetings. To do that we will develop questions based on our best practices list. Because we believe that the Basic Skills issues affect everyone on campus, we will recruit faculty, staff, and administrators from all over campus for those listening sessions—not limited to only the traditional Basic Skills departments (English, Math, Transitional Studies, etc.).

2. Concurrently and in conjunction with the Office of Research Planning and Grants, we will develop questions for and conduct focus groups with students trying to get as much student input as possible to help us understand their experience in Basic Skills courses and how we can improve that experience.

3. We are sensitive to the fact that some members of the campus community may be uncomfortable talking honestly and completely in front large groups. Therefore, we will also distribute paper and/or email surveys based on the questions we formulate for the focus groups with the hope that we can capture valuable input that might otherwise be missed.

These three activities are going forward in small groups formed from volunteers from the Basic Skills Subcommittee meeting outside the regular committee meetings.

The first listening session will be at the next meeting: Tuesday, 2/24, 2:30-4 pm. Please note the room change: Arts 303.