

Basic Skills Committee
November 4, 2003

The date and location of the next Basic Skills Committee meeting has changed. These changes reflect the facts that we are having difficulty getting the articles for the next meeting copied and distributed in a timely manner and that we are anticipating a larger audience. We want to give people as much chance to read the articles as possible and we will get them to you as soon as possible.

NEW MEETING DATE AND LOCATION: Tuesday, 9 December 2003. 2:30 – 4:00 pm. Science 100.

Agenda for next meeting: Six groups of 2-4 committee members each volunteered to read a selection of articles for the next meeting. (Please let us know if you would like to join a group.) They will summarize the articles' main ideas, and speak to what's in it for CCSF. You are all invited --- bring your colleagues, too --- to attend as a guest, whether or not you want to be on the committee. The meeting should be an interesting one with lots of information on basic skills revealed.

Nadine and Hal

Notes from the Basic Skills Committee
Tuesday, 4 November 2003, from 2:30 - 4 pm in Cloud Hall, C258.

Present:

Karen Batchelor, Suzannah Bray, Brenda Brown, Andre de Cordova, Timotha Doane, Bob Gabriner, Lynda Hirose, Ni Hornor, Cindi Harrison, Veronica Hunnicutt, Hal Huntsman, Larry Klein, Keith McAllister, Joanne McGlothlin, Amy McLanahan, Mabel Michelucci, Dennis Piontkowski, Lisa Romano, Nadine Rosenthal, Jim Sauve, Sharon Seymou, Bruce Smith, Jane Sneed, Debra Stewart, Elizabeth Stewart, John Batty-Sylvan, Mo-Shuet Tam, Laura Walsh

Notes:

1. Brief discussion of the Strategic Plan Implementation Schedule, Priority 1, with special emphasis on the idea that this committee is helping perform the literature and CCSF practices review mentioned in that schedule.
2. Discussion of the California Academic Senate paper, "A Survey of Effective Practices in Basic Skills," yielded the following topics and ideas:
 - A. Learning communities and other courses with counseling components can be effective. We do not know how this works in practice or how we can afford it on a City College-wide scale. Included in this is the importance of helping our students with affective issues such as student self-assessment and self-awareness, study skills, time management, college enculturation, etc.

- B. The relationship of ESL to Basic Skills is problematic. The majority of ESL students place into basic skills math courses. Although there is probably no perfect filter, this might be an effective way of distinguishing between ESL students and Basic Skills students. See the following link for more on the ESL department's position on this: www.catesol.org -- once there you can click on position papers and see the basic skills paper along with other ones.
 - C. Integrating reading and writing programs appears to be the way to go. However, exactly what integration looks like is less clear.
 - D. Faculty development is a key piece for improving Basic Skills.
 - E. Basic Skills is an issue for the entire college, affecting every department, instructor, administrator, and staff member.
 - F. Math is frequently a roadblock for students. As such, one way we might improve success is by directly addressing the reading requirements in basic math, either through a class or workshops or through existing structures' increased focus on it.
 - G. Coordination between all aspects of support for basic skills students is the key to an effective program, whether it has a "centralized" or "decentralized" structure.
 - H. When thinking about prerequisites and placement issues, we need to balance the need to give students access to transfer level courses with the need to give students the skills to pass those courses.
3. In our role as literature reviewers, the committee members volunteered, in groups of 2-4, to read literature collected by the committee and report back to the group as a whole at the next meeting.

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