Minutes of Consideration of Mandatory English Placement Meeting  
Feb. 27, 2015, 3:30 PM in Building 2, Room 1

Attendees: Kari Hensen, Beth Baker-Brodersen, Dan Nelson, Darwin Pagnac, Shannon McGregor, Bret Ross, and Judy Hauser  
Not Attending: Sharran Slinkard, Sharon Bittner

1. Kari Hensen discussed the Math Department’s process for putting mandatory placement in place. The Math Department started with research on success and failure rates, determined career pathways taken by math students, redefined what courses were needed for differing majors/pathways, rewrote competencies for some math courses, researched ALEX, and adopted Alex as a mandatory placement tool principally because it incorporates the potential for remediation.

2. Additional notes from Kari regarding mandatory math placement with Alex.
   a. Cost – presently DMACC absorbs cost of each student taking the Alex test.
   b. The Initial implementation saw an immediate drop in enrollment for math courses in the fall, but the Math Department is seeing some rebound in enrollment this spring.
   c. Also, dual enrollment schools need at least a year’s advance notice before mandatory placement can begin.

3. A discussion was held regarding need to define to more clearly define the term “developmental;” need to consider where ESL students fit into this process; need to include an ESL person(s) on our committee; the difficulty in having students write a placement essay when 65% of our students register in August when faculty are off-campus; the need to include personnel from admissions, the testing center, and IT early in our conversations, and what pre-requisites could be turned on in Banner immediately.

4. Dan Nelson reported on some success with combining a reading course with content course as a learning community. Shannon McGregor suggested writing courses might want to include a lab component in which students work one-on-one with their writing instructor during the very next hour after their comp class.

5. Several people mentioned potential instruments: Compass reading score, Accuplacer, College Success, and Pert. Bret Ross provided an article by Paul Fain published in Inside Higher Ed that contends that ‘placement tests fail to adequately determine whether incoming college students need remedial coursework” in large part because of a lack of definition of the concept of developmental and the different ways that scores are used to place students. The committee recognizes that there is no ideal placement instrument and that it is necessary to carefully research the options and go visit institutions where these options are being used.

6. Kari Hensen suggested that we bring in Joe DeHart for our next meeting. She will request data from him regarding various aspects of success rates for Comp I and Comp II.

7. Our next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 27, 2015, at 3:30 PM. with the room to be announced.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Hauser, English Department