



## Basic Skills Proficiency, Performance, and Progress of Students at Santa Ana College (Fall 2009 Cohort)

July 2011

### Background

Because basic skills coursework spans our college's curriculum, it is necessary to analyze data for this group so that faculty can strategically plan programs and services to better prepare these students for college-level coursework. For the purpose of this study, the following courses are considered basic skills: English (N50 and N60), ESL/EMLS (N49, 055, 107, 109 and 110), Math (N05A/B/C, N06 and N48) and Reading (N80A/B and N90A/B). Of the 2066 course sections offered at SAC during Fall 2009 semester, 6% (n=134) were basic skills: 23 sections in English, 27 in ESL/EMLS, 36 in Math, and 48 in reading. Course-taking patterns, course success, and progression to college-level coursework by basic skills students enrolled for the first-time in Fall 2009 (n=4121) were analyzed and are presented in this report.

### Summary of Findings

- 47% (1954 of 4121) of SAC's first-time freshmen were administered placement test(s) for math, English, ESL/EMLS and reading coursework.
- 55% (1078 of 1954) of those tested were **advised** into basic skills coursework in Fall 2009.
  - About one-fifth (331 of 1954) of tested first-time freshmen actually **enrolled** in the advised basic skills coursework in their first semester.
- One-fifth (809 of 4121) of SAC's first-time freshmen enrolled in basic skills coursework in Fall 2009.
  - Overall, the success rate (grade of A, B, C, or Pass) of students enrolled in basic skills courses was 54%. One-fifth (20%) withdrew from their courses.
  - Students enrolled in any level of basic skills course(s) persisted to a second semester at higher rates than those who were not enrolled in basic skills (55% vs. 47%).
  - Counseling 107 and 116 topped the list of college-level courses most-often enrolled in (concurrently) by basic skills students.
  - The majority of basic skills students are females and Latinos.

## Overview of Basic Skills Advisements and Enrollments

The basic skills environment at SAC can be examined from different perspectives: that of individuals in our student population who, through placement testing, multiple measures, and counselor recommendation, demonstrate the **need** to gain proficiency in the basic skills areas AND that of our students who actually **enroll** in basic skills coursework—regardless of how or why they enrolled in that course. The table below offers an overview of these two populations:

**Pattern of Advisement and Enrollment into  
Basic Skills Coursework at SAC (Fall 2009)**

1 <sup>st</sup> -Time Freshmen	Advisement to Basic Skills Coursework								Actual Enrollments (with or without advisement) in Basic Skills Coursework (n=809 hc)*			
	Advisements (n=1078 hc/1765 enr)*				Enrollments (n=331 hc/367 enr)*							
	ENG	ESL/ EMLS	MATH	READ	ENG	ESL/ EMLS	MATH	READ	ENG	ESL/ EMLS	MATH	READ
4121	579	159	463	564	119	96	115	37	368	148	344	236
	54%	15%	43%	52%	36%	29%	35%	11%	45%	18%	43%	29%

\* course advisement/enrollment (enr) exceeds total headcount (hc) due to advisement/enrollment in multiple subjects

- More than half (1078 of 1954) of SAC's first-time tested freshmen were advised into basic skills coursework in Fall 2009.
- 17% (331 of 1954) of first-time tested freshmen actually enrolled in the advised coursework that semester.
- An additional 478 first-time freshmen enrolled in basic skills coursework without advisement (for a combined enrollment of 809).

To further describe the proficiencies of our incoming freshmen, 49% of those students advised to enroll in basic skills coursework were advised to take courses in **multiple subject areas**, as follows:

### **SAC First-Time Freshmen Advised to Enroll in Basic Skills Coursework**

# of Subject Areas Advised Into	Advised into Basic Skills Fall 2009 Coursework (n=1078)
1 subject area	51%
2 subject areas	34%
3+ subject areas	15%

It is the primary intention of this report to analyze student performance and progress towards college-level coursework. Therefore, all subsequent analyses will be limited to the student population who actually enrolled in basic skills courses during the Fall 2009 semester at SAC (n=809).

## Enrollment in Basic skills Courses at SAC

To understand the effectiveness of current basic skills coursework at SAC, data for students who actually enrolled into these basic skills courses (**regardless of advisement**) have been analyzed. Those data are as follows:

- One-fifth (n=809) of SAC's first-time freshmen (n=4121) enrolled in at least one basic skills course.
- 69% of basic skills students enrolled in only one basic skills course; 26% took two courses, and 5% took three or more basic skills courses in their first semester of college.
- 45% (368 of 809) of basic skills students enrolled in English, 43% enrolled in math, 22% enrolled in reading, and 18% enrolled in ESL/EMLS basic skills coursework.

### # of First-Time Freshmen Enrolled in Basic Skills Coursework, Fall 2009 N=809

Total	Headcount	Percent
1 Subject Area	556	69%
2 Subject Area	213	26%
3+ Subject Area	40	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>809</b>	

Subject Area	Enrollments	Percent
English	368	45%
ESL/EMLS	148	18%
Math	344	43%
Reading	236	29%

Overall, the success rate (A, B, C, or P) of students enrolled in basic skills courses was 54%, while their combined withdrawal rate was 20%.

- The discipline with highest success rate was ESL/EMLS at 76%, while the disciplines with the lowest were math and reading (both 48%).
- English was the discipline with the highest overall withdrawal rate (23%).

### Grade Distribution of SAC Basic Skills Courses, Fall 2009

Basic Skills Course	Course Success						Non-Success				Non-Completers	
	# Grades Rec'd	A	B	C	P	Rate	D	F	NP	Rate	W	Rate
English N50	113	13	20	28	1	55%	7	22	0	26%	22	19%
English N60	255	7	42	92	0	55%	25	27	0	20%	62	24%
<b>English Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>49</b>		<b>22%</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>23%</b>
ESL N49	28	2	6	9	0	61%	3	1	0	14%	7	25%
EMLS 055	46	7	19	11	0	80%	4	1	0	11%	4	9%
EMLS 107	41	5	22	3	1	76%	4	0	0	10%	6	15%
EMLS 109	24	5	13	2	0	83%	2	0	1	13%	1	4%
EMLS 110	9	0	3	3	1	78%	0	0	1	11%	1	11%
<b>ESL/EMLS Total</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13%</b>
Math N05A	22	0	0	0	12	55%	0	0	7	32%	3	14%
Math N05B	4	0	0	0	4	100%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%
Math N05C	2	0	0	0	2	100%	0	0	0	0%	0	0%
Math N06	87	7	17	14	0	44%	10	22	0	37%	17	20%
Math N48	229	29	27	52	0	47%	26	44	1	31%	50	22%
<b>Math Total</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>20%</b>
Reading N80A	138	0	0	0	60	43%	0	0	42	30%	36	26%
Reading N80B	3	0	0	0	1	33%	0	0	2	67%	0	0%
Reading N90A	92	0	0	0	52	57%	0	0	26	28%	14	15%
Reading N90B	3	0	0	0	1	33%	0	0	1	33%	1	33%
<b>Reading Total</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>All Basic Skills</b>	<b>1096</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>20%</b>

**Semester-to-Semester Persistence**

Another indicator of success is the length of time (in semesters) students continue (persist) in college. Overall, students enrolled in any level of basic skills course(s) persisted at higher rates than those who did not. Additionally,

- Fall 2009 first-time freshmen enrolled in basic skills courses persisted to subsequent semesters at a high rate: 55% to a 2<sup>nd</sup> semester, 40% to a 3<sup>rd</sup> semester, and 37% to a 4<sup>th</sup> semester. Persistence rates were even higher for basic skills students who were successful in at least one basic skills course in their first semester.
- Fall 2009 first-time freshmen who were **not** enrolled in basic skills courses persisted at lower rates of 47 % to a 2<sup>nd</sup> semester, 35% to a 3<sup>rd</sup> semester and 32% to a 4<sup>th</sup> semester.
- Semester-to-semester persistence rates of those who were successful in basic skills coursework were comparable across the four disciplines.

**Semester to Semester Persistence Comparison of  
Those Enrolled in Basic skills Courses vs. Not Enrolled in Basic skills Courses  
Fall 2009 First-Time Freshmen**

	N	2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester	3 <sup>rd</sup> Semester	4 <sup>th</sup> Semester
First-time freshmen not enrolled in basic skills courses	3312	47%	35%	32%
First-time freshmen enrolled in a basic skills course	809	55%	40%	37%
Successful in at least 1 basic skills course	481	90%	73%	65%
Successful in ESL/EMLS basic skills course	130	89%	68%	63%
Successful in English basic skills course	202	92%	79%	69%
Successful in math basic skills course	158	89%	69%	63%
Successful in reading basic skills course	113	94%	75%	68%

## Performance in Concurrent College-Level Coursework

Most students do not have the luxury of time where they can concentrate on perfecting their basic skills before taking college-level courses. In fact, 85% (688 of 809) of the Fall 2009 first-time basic skills freshmen were concurrently enrolled in college-level courses (designated as 100+) during their first semester in college.

- They took a total of 221 different college-level courses, ranging from the arts to science courses. The top 13 courses taken by basic skills students are listed below. Of these, course success ranges from a low of 23% in Biology 109 to a high of 68% for Counseling 107.
- Basic skills students concurrently enrolled in a collective 1425 college-level classes in their first semester versus 5572 classes enrolled by their non basic skills freshmen.
- Overall, basic skills students had slightly lower success rate (54%) compared to non basic skills students' success rate of 57% in college-level courses.

<b>College-Level Courses Concurrently Enrolled Basic Skills Students vs. Non-Basic Skills Students (First-time Freshmen), Fall 2009</b>				
<b>College-Level Courses</b>	<b>Basic Skills Enrollment</b>			<b>% Success of Non-Basic Skills Students</b>
	<b>Count N=688</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>% Successful (grade of A,B,C,P)</b>	
Counseling 107	176	26%	68%	72%
Counseling 116	142	21%	66%	68%
Criminal Justice 101	69	10%	32%	51%
Biology 109	56	8%	23%	42%
Psychology 100	44	6%	32%	50%
Art 100	29	4%	66%	60%
Computer Science 100	29	4%	48%	33%
English 101	26	4%	31%	63%
Exercise Science Fitness 110	26	4%	35%	18%
Fire Technology 101	26	4%	35%	68%
Speech 102	26	4%	46%	67%
Speech 101	20	3%	35%	64%
Study Skills 109	20	3%	40%	38%

## **Comparison of Grades Received in College-Level Courses Concurrently Enrolled Basic Skills Students vs. Non-Basic Skills Students**

	<b>Fall 2009 Course Completion</b>			
	<b># of Grades Rec'd in College-Level Courses</b>	<b>Success (A,B,C,P)</b>	<b>Non- Success (D,F,NP)</b>	<b>Non- Completion (W,I)</b>
<b>Basic Skills Students</b>				
ESL/EMLS (N=148)	286	73%	11%	16%
English (N=368)	614	51%	24%	25%
Math (N=338)	576	50%	27%	24%
Reading (N=236)	352	47%	26%	27%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1425</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Non-Basic Skills Students</b>	<b>5572</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>24%</b>

## Performance in College-Level Coursework Subsequent to Basic Skills Course Success

Nearly all (421 of 481) of those first-time basic skills freshmen who successfully completed their basic skills course(s) continued on to enroll in college-level coursework in subsequent semesters (Spring 2010, Fall 2010 and Spring 2011). Has the basic skills course(s) helped them in their college-level coursework?

- Counseling 116, English 101 and Political Science 101 topped the list of the college-level courses basic skills students most often enrolled in.
- In subsequent semesters (Spring 2010 through Spring 2011), Fall 2009 cohort students enrolled in a wide variety of college-level courses (n=338), ranging from the arts to science and English courses. The top 12 courses taken by basic skills students are listed below.
- Overall, basic skills and non-basic skills students' success rates are the same at 63%.

<b>Performance in College-Level Coursework Subsequent to Basic Skills Course Success Successful Basic Skills Students vs. Non-Basic Skills Students (Fall 2009 Cohort)</b>				
<b>Top 12 College-Level Courses</b>	<b>Spring 2010-Spring 2011</b>			
	<b>Basic Skills Students</b>		<b>Non-Basic Skills Students</b>	
	<b>Number of Enrollments</b>	<b>Course Success</b>	<b>Number of Enrollments</b>	<b>Course Success</b>
Counseling 116	159	69%	304	68%
English 101	134	64%	494	60%
Political Science 101	127	54%	442	64%
Biology 109	105	48%	338	55%
Psychology 100	83	52%	339	57%
Art 100	64	77%	211	73%
Speech Communication 101	63	70%	220	74%
Computer Science 100	61	62%	143	58%
Speech Communication 102	49	80%	174	81%
Exercise Science 110	44	72%	74	28%
Human Development 107	44	52%	112	53%
Earth Science 110	43	58%	143	57%

<b>Comparison of Grades Received in College-Level Courses in Subsequent Semesters Successful Basic Skills Students vs. Non-Basic Skills Students</b>				
	<b>Spring 2010-Spring 2011 Course Completion</b>			
	<b># of Grades Rec'd</b>	<b>Success (A,B,C,P)</b>	<b>Non-Success (D,F,NP)</b>	<b>Non-Completion (W,I)</b>
<b>Basic Skills Students (Fall 2009 Cohort)</b>				
ESL/EMLS	675	80%	10%	10%
English	1197	59%	22%	19%
Math	796	57%	20%	23%
Reading	717	59%	22%	19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2772</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Non-Basic Skills Students</b>	<b>11430</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>20%</b>

**Performance in Courses with English Content Subsequent to Basic Skills English Course Success**

Nearly all (190 of 202) of those first-time basic skills freshmen who successfully completed basic skills English courses (includes N50 and N60) continued on to enroll in college-level coursework in subsequent semesters. Transcripts were analyzed to determine if basic skills English course success enhances success in other courses. The list below identifies 12 courses in which English proficiency is key and have the highest enrollment (Spring 2010 thru Spring 2011) of basic skills English students of our Fall 2009 cohort.

- English 061, Counseling 116 and English 101 topped the list of the most often courses students enrolled in after successfully completing a basic skills course.
- In subsequent semesters, Spring 2010 through Spring 2011, successful Fall 2009 cohort students enrolled in 273 courses across a wide of subject areas.
- 190 Fall 2009 cohort students successfully completed basic skills English courses and subsequently enrolled; they had an overall success rate of 57%.
- Overall, non-basic skills students succeeded at a higher rate than the basic skills students did (64% vs. 57%).

<b>Performance in Courses with English Content Subsequent to Basic Skills English Course Success Successful Basic Skills English Students vs. Non-Basic Skills Students (Fall 2009 Cohort)</b>				
<b>Courses with English Content</b>	<b>Spring 2010-Spring 2011</b>			
	<b>Basic Skills Students</b>		<b>Non-Basic Skills Students</b>	
	<b>Number of Enrollments</b>	<b>Course Success</b>	<b>Number of Enrollments</b>	<b>Course Success</b>
English 061	171	59%	164	61%
Counseling 116	79	72%	304	68%
English 101	76	68%	494	60%
Biology 109	66	38%	338	55%
English N60	65	52%	57	54%
Political Science 101	58	43%	442	64%
Psychology 100	44	48%	339	57%
Speech Communication 102	32	78%	174	81%
Speech Communication 101	31	61%	220	74%
Art 100	27	70%	211	73%
History 124	27	67%	140	74%
Human Development 107	24	54%	112	53%
<b>All Subsequent Coursework</b>	<b>N=190</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>N=1953</b>	<b>64%</b>

\* N - headcount

**Performance in Math Courses Subsequent to Basic Skills Math Course Success**

Nearly half (43%) of those enrolled in basic skills at SAC needed additional assistance in the area of math; therefore, it was also important to track this group to see how they perform in subsequent math courses.

- Introductory math courses (Math 081 and 060) were predominant among basic skills students' subsequent coursework.
- Non-basic skills students had a higher overall success rate than the basic skills students did (64% vs. 56%).
- The top four courses taken by basic skills students are listed below.

<b>Performance in Math Courses Subsequent to Basic Skills Math Course Success</b>				
<b>Successful Basic Skills Students vs. Non-Basic Skills Students</b>				
<b>Math Courses</b>	<b>Spring 2010-2011</b>			
	<b>Basic Skills Students</b>		<b>Non-Basic Skills Students</b>	
	<b>Number of Enrollments</b>	<b>Course Success</b>	<b>Number of Enrollments</b>	<b>Course Success</b>
Math 060	109	43%	256	42%
Math 081	65	51%	164	45%
Math N48	41	59%	-	-
Math 140	6	67%	128	41%
<b>All Subsequent Coursework</b>	<b>N=143</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>N=1953</b>	<b>64%</b>

\* N- headcount

## Demographics and Student Characteristics

- The proportions of students who enrolled in basic skills coursework were representative of SAC's first-time freshmen at large. More females and far greater numbers of Latinos enrolled in basic skills; most basic skills students (81%) were 21 years of age or younger.
- By far, the largest group of first-time students intended to transfer and to obtain an AA/AS degree (45% and 63%, respectively).

### First-Time Freshmen Demographics by Basic Skills Enrollment, Fall 2009

	Not Enrolled in Basic Skills (n=3,312)		Enrolled in Basic Skills (unduplicated) (n=809)		Basic Skills Course Enrollment by Subject Area, Fall 2009							
					Enrolled in Basic Skills ESL/EMLS (n=148)		Enrolled in Basic Skills Math (n=338)		Enrolled in Basic Skills English (n= 368)		Enrolled in Basic Skills Reading (n=236)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Gender</b>												
Male	2091	63%	366	45%	62	42%	133	39%	177	48%	108	46%
Female	1221	37%	443	55%	86	58%	205	61%	191	52%	128	54%
<b>Ethnicity</b>												
African-American	75	2%	4	0%	1	1%	1	0%	2	1%	1	0%
Asian	204	6%	94	12%	70	47%	16	5%	7	2%	21	9%
Latino	1547	47%	587	73%	50	34%	266	79%	307	83%	185	78%
Caucasian	638	19%	28	3%	4	3%	19	6%	5	2%	4	2%
Other	52	2%	3	0%	2	1%	-	0%	1	0%	-	0%
Decline to state	796	24%	93	11%	21	14%	36	11%	46	12%	25	11%
<b>Age</b>												
17 and under	17	1%	2	0%	1	1%	2	1%	-	0%	-	0%
18-21	1722	52%	655	81%	75	51%	282	82%	344	93%	208	88%
22-29	588	18%	89	11%	34	23%	38	12%	17	5%	15	6%
30-39	446	13%	30	4%	13	9%	11	3%	5	1%	8	3%
40 and over	539	16%	33	4%	25	17%	5	1%	2	1%	5	2%
<b>Educational Goal</b>												
Vocational Cert.	118	4%	20	2%	8	5%	6	2%	6	2%	4	2%
Employment Crse	259	8%	24	3%	7	5%	10	3%	8	2%	6	3%
Transfer	155	5%	39	5%	8	5%	18	5%	15	4%	14	6%
AA/AS Degree	1333	40%	473	58%	84	57%	189	56%	222	60%	134	57%
4yr Univ Student	61	2%	19	2%	2	1%	9	3%	9	2%	4	2%
Personal Interest	99	3%	10	1%	5	3%	4	1%	1	0%	3	1%
Improve basic sk.	470	14%	13	2%	8	5%	2	1%	1	0%	4	2%
Maintain License	215	6%	3	0%	2	1%	-	0%	1	0%	1	0%
Undecided	531	16%	183	23%	22	15%	90	27%	93	25%	57	24%
Other	71	2%	25	3%	2	1%	10	3%	12	3%	9	4%