

## TLC Highlights The Year at a Glance

### Conference Presentations

- "Strengthening Student Success 2007: Making a Difference," San Jose, CA
- International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Annual Conference, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
- "Achieving the Dream," Lumina Foundation's National Community College Initiative, Albuquerque, NM
- Hewlett Foundation California Community College Symposium, Palo Alto, CA
- Annual State-wide Academic Senate Conference, keynote address, Newport Beach, CA
- Academic Senate Teaching Institute, workshop presentation, San Francisco, CA
- Tillery Summer Institute for Community College Leadership and Innovation, University of California, Berkeley, CA
- Basic Skills Effective Programs and Practices presentations – City College of San Francisco, Laney College

### Workshop Attendance

- Basic Skills Roundtable, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA
- Basic Skills Resource Center Task Force, Palo Alto, CA
- Basic Skills Initiative workshop, Mt. San Antonio College, Walnut, CA
- Strategic Literacy Institute's *Reading Apprenticeship*, (5-day summer and 3-day winter workshop,) Oakland, CA
- "Culturally Responsive Pedagogy," 3-day summer institute led by Pasadena-based *Facing History, Facing Ourselves*; Mt. St. Mary's College
- Pre-Collegiate Math Workshop, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Palo Alto, CA

### Visitors to the TLC

- Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, MDRC/Irvine Foundations, Hewlett Foundation
- Basic Skill Task Force committees from Columbia College, Pierce College, Harbor College, College of the Sequoias, and College of the Siskiyous
- Dr. Susan Kelly, VP, Institutional Advancement, Valencia College, Valencia, FL

### New Programs

- MathPath 2 — Trigonometry and Pre-Calculus
- .XL Health Sciences First-Year Experience
- Career Pathways – Business
- Summer 2007 Math Jam expansion — Intermediate Algebra
- Summer 2007 Reading Jam
- Winter 2008 Algebra Word Problem Jaam

### Publications

- *New Directions for Community Colleges*, "Making Prealgebra Meaningful," co-authored
- *Sage International Journal of Evaluation*, "Developing a Community of Practice: Learning and Transformation through Evaluation," co-authored

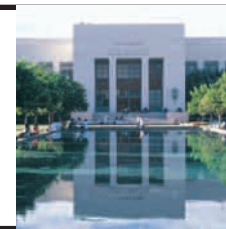
### Other

- *Windows on Learning*, Intermediate Algebra web project, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Palo Alto, CA
- Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), managed by the University of Texas, Austin
- Faculty Inquiry Groups: Math 125 and 131, Natural Sciences, Interdisciplinary Classroom Assessment



# TLC News

**The Teaching & Learning Communities Program at PCC**



2007

## The TLC Examines the *Intensity* Factor

Until recently, the most common programmatic innovation in basic skills education was to slow down, that is, to cover half the course material in one semester. Research now suggests that doing just the opposite, offering two courses in one semester, may increase success rates and accelerate students' journey from basic skills to college-transfer courses.

Critical to success in this intense, fast-paced process is the support that students receive. Faculty, counselors, and tutors must collaborate to integrate student support services with instruction in and out of the classroom.

For over a year, TLC staff and faculty have been carefully moving to more intense instructional models. Here are the programs the TLC has been developing, piloting, and evaluating:



### ■ .XL Health Sciences

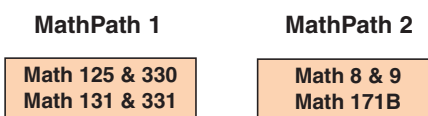
The TLC's newest program, .XL Health Sciences, streamlines a pathway for students interested in a healthcare profession. After a week-long reading jam and college orientation in summer, students move to an English-only fall semester and a math-only spring semester.



.XL HS faculty lead, English instructor Nika Hogan, stated, "We developed an intense, theme-based program for highly motivated students who may also be unprepared for college and unclear about their path to transfer or certification, but who will thrive in a supportive learning community. Everyone on the .XL team is deeply committed to making sure these students get through their first year of college successfully."

### ■ MathPath 2

Based on two semesters of success with MathPath 1 (Elementary and Intermediate Algebra), math instructors Hassan Kasfy and Donna Nordstrom have created MathPath 2 (Trigonometry and Pre-Calculus), which they offered for the first time in Fall 2007. Like .XL Health Sciences, MathPath students immerse themselves in one subject for the entire semester, in this case, math.



The Spring 2007 MathPath 1 students agreed that the program was demanding and required commitment and energy, but they felt that it was great to focus entirely on math. The students also recognized the power and value of the community they had formed. One student stated, "The program integrated all the forces working together really well. Mr. Cho's class, the way Ms. Mortensen broke down exercises in the support class, my tutor, my classmates' support, the support in the TLC. All of it was fantastic...I finished. And I passed!"





### ■ Summer Math Jam 2007

In the Fall 2006 *TLC Newsletter* we reported on the great response to and success of our first Math Jam for prealgebra students. This past summer's Jam was no different. We expanded the program by adding elementary algebra and doubled in size to 140 students, 4 instructors, and 10 tutor/mentors. The Jam staff recruited new students who had placed into developmental math and welcomed Ujima and Puente students as well as first-year football players.

Our innovative transition-to-college program has not gone unnoticed. In October 2007 Math Jam was one of 15 programs throughout the state that received a *Practice with Promise* award from the Campaign for College Opportunity, a non-profit

organization based in Oakland, CA. The award was presented to Brock Klein at a ceremony in Sacramento on January 8, 2008. To learn more, go [www.collegecampaign.org](http://www.collegecampaign.org).

## Faculty Learning

In 2007, TLC faculty developed intense, sustained, and cohesive learning opportunities for students. TLC staff did the same for faculty participants.

### ■ The Power of Inquiry

After two years, Faculty Inquiry Groups (FIGs) continue to provide basic skills math instructors with opportunities to delve into issues they and their students face. Math FIGs have led to program innovations; SLO, curriculum, and assessment development; and action research (not to mention increased collegiality, interdisciplinary mingling, and lots of great lunches).

In 2007 math FIG participants developed application-based curricula for beginning and intermediate algebra, evaluated the impact of reading and writing activities on success with word problems, and continue to work on a pilot for a common final.

During the Winter 2008 Intersession, Natural Sciences Dean Dave Douglass and TLC co-director Lynn Wright began working with two FIGs. In one, a group of faculty is focusing on Classroom Response Systems (clickers) to provide faculty with immediate feedback from their students. In the other FIG, a group of Natural Science faculty have started to explore the inter-related issues of under-preparation, engagement, and coverage in introductory science courses.



### ■ Windows on Learning

In the summer of 2006, the TLC sent a team up to the Carnegie Foundation in Palo Alto to document our faculty inquiry efforts in prealgebra. The result, "How Jay Got His Groove Back," is a part of Carnegie's Windows on Learning website, which documents effective practices in basic skills English, math, and ESL.

This past summer, Yu-Chung Chang, Carol Curtis, and Lynn Wright went up to the Foundation to document Yu-Chung's innovative reading and writing activities in Intermediate Algebra.

Check out Yu-Chung's site, "No Longer Lost in Translation" at <http://gallery.carnegiefoundation.org/specc>

### ■ Faculty Learn about their Students and Themselves

In addition to facilitating faculty inquiry groups, the TLC sponsored two more formal professional development workshops, the Strategic Literacy Institute's Reading Apprenticeship (RA) and Facing History and Ourselves' "Culturally Responsive Pedagogy." Two teams of 3-4 faculty from English, mathematics, chemistry, and speech attended RA's intensive week-long training in summer followed by a 3-day session in winter. RA's reading-across-the-curriculum instructional framework is designed to help students become more motivated and successful readers.

At a 3-day workshop facilitated by Facing History and Ourselves (FHO), 8 PCC faculty from English, math, and geology joined with 12 Mount St. Mary's College faculty to explore ways to improve student engagement by educating students for dignity and equity. These faculty reconvened in winter to share their experiences using the FHO model in their Fall 2007 classes.

## The Power of Engagement

In Spring 2007 PCC, along with 517 other community colleges throughout the US, conducted the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). The survey provides information about effective classroom practices and assists institutions in using that information to promote improvements in student learning and persistence.

After five years of surveying over 700,000 students, CCSSE researchers have been able to declare unequivocally that students “who are actively engaged in both academic and out-of-class activities are more likely to persist and succeed” than those who do not. The challenge is for institutions to assist faculty, administrators, and staff in finding ways to increase opportunities for meaningful and productive engagement.

CCSSE has defined five benchmarks of student engagement: active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction, and support for learners. Based on their findings and these benchmarks, CCSSE has set forth five effective strategies:



1. **Set High Expectations and Clear Goals** – Success begins with believing that students can learn. Although synthesizing, analyzing, applying and making judgments about information are examples of higher-order thinking, over 64% of CCSSE student respondents report that lecture and rote memorization are the dominant characteristics of classroom instruction.
2. **Focus on the Front Door** – Community colleges typically lose about half of their students by the end of their first year. Academic advisement has proven to be an effective practice for new students, yet almost a third of CCSSE respondents reported rarely or never using student services.
3. **Elevate Developmental Education** – Over 80% of all new PCC students place into pre-collegiate English and/or math. *Achieving the Dream*, funded by the Lumina Foundation, has found that successful completion of English and/or math in the first semester is highly correlated to persistence and success. Unfortunately, many students do not take either in their first semester of school.
4. **Use Engaging Instructional Approaches** – Because the majority of community college students work and commute, they spend little time on campus after class. It is no surprise, therefore, that the most successful engagement strategies occur in the classroom. For example, over 45% of respondents reported working on a project with classmates in class while 21% reported collaborating on an assignment outside of class.
5. **Make Engagement Inescapable** – According to CCSSE, student-faculty interaction is the most critical factor for success and happens primarily in the classroom. However, 55% of students reported that they rarely or never discussed their grades or assignments with an instructor, and 84% reported that they rarely or never discussed ideas from class with an instructor outside of class.

### Special Focus on the Entering Student

Because so many students are lost before their second term of enrollment, CCSSE is currently surveying first-term students. Findings from their pilot survey:

- 32% of all student respondents did not attend an orientation to college
- Of those who did, 36% were very satisfied with the orientation
- 43% met with an advisor to discuss educational goals within the first four weeks of school
- 36% did not complete an English and/or math placement test by the end of their first four weeks of college
- 35% of students reported that they were very satisfied with their college’s processes for working with new students

## The TLC Counseling Corner

In order to help our TLC students successfully navigate the many challenges they will encounter while in college, last fall the TLC required .XL students to enroll in two eight-week counseling courses, Counseling 10, “Introduction to College,” and Counseling 11, “Learning Strategies and College Skills Development.” The TLC counselor, Evangelina Quintanar, brought in several informative speakers, and, overall, the classes were well-received.

One of the success factors focused on time management. The students were given an assignment to monitor how they spend their time on a weekly basis; through this assignment they were able to see how much time they devoted to studying versus other activities such as surfing the internet and talking on cell phones. The goal was to help students prioritize their goals and align them with their use of time. The students’ final self-analysis papers revealed that they better understood how time management and motivational factors impact educational success and that most of the students had taken positive steps towards achieving their goals.

## TLC Spotlights Student Success

The Teaching and Learning Center staff and faculty appreciate the tremendous effort made by the students in our programs. We proudly recognize the academic achievements of some of them:



## Spring & Fall 2007 Awards

### PCC Valedictorian and Academic Senate Scholarship

Gabriella Castillo

### Teaching and Learning Center Scholars Awards

Elia Cabuto, Joab Campos, Javier Carbajal-Ramos, Gabriella Castillo

### MaS Academic Excellence Awards

Roxanna Rangel-Rodriguez, Weilin Kuo, Le Le Aye, Thomas Carter, Benji Macaulay, Rebecca Smith, Trung Vu, Anh-Trang Nguyen, Cindy Lin

### MaS Community Service Awards

Diarlen Leon, Savannah Appleby, Justine Ung, Thomas Carter, Jose Gonzalez, Benji Macaulay, Kimberly Mendoza, Giovanni Merino, Anh-Trang Nguyen

### MaS Bookstore Awards

Thomas Carter, Jose Gonzalez, Benji Macaulay, Rebecca Smith, Kan Yu, Zhuo Hao Zhao

### MaS Cal State LA Summer Internships

Le Le Aye, Rachel Hadley, Vega Shah

### President's Latino Committee Scholarship

Vanessa Quiroz

### The Association of Black Employees Scholarship and PCC Deans' Scholarship

Ben Minikwu

### PCC Tutoring Scholarship

Ben Minikwu  
Daniel Trevino

## TLC Staff

### Co-Directors

Ann Davis, Brock Klein  
Juan Carlos Morales II, Lynn Wright

### Counselors

Evangelina Quintanar, Maribel Morales

### Academic Advisor

Pablo Carreon

### Recruitment/Outreach

#### Coordinator

Melva Alvarez

### Lab Assistant

Carlos Altamirano



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