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## SPECC YEAR 3 REPORT:

### DATA ON PCC, BASIC SKILLS, AND .XL STUDENTS

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This report provides data on Pasadena City College (PCC) students, PCC basic skills students, the TLC's .XL students, and an .XL comparison group. The comparison group discussed throughout this report was matched to the fourth .XL cohort (.XL4, 2005) on age, gender, ethnicity, first-time student status, and course -taking (math and English) during the Fall 2005 semester.

Both the college and the TLC have reported on basic skills students (also referred to as developmental or remedial students) in past years. Some of the data included in this report were previously produced by PCC's Institutional Planning and Research Office (IPRO). While a complete set of data was not available for all four of the subgroups mentioned above, it is valuable to see where differences appear among the data that are available.

#### **Significant Findings**

- 1. .XL students are younger and more Hispanic than mainstream and basic skills students at PCC.**
- 2. Students in .XL Cohorts 4-6 succeeded in all of their classes at a higher rate (78.5%) than PCC students in all classes (65.9%) and PCC students in basic skills classes (59.4%). Even the lowest performing cohort, .XL5, is more successful (74.3%) than either of these groups.**
- 3. A greater percentage of .XL 4-6 students (25%) who began in Math 402 (Level 1, prealgebra) registered for a transfer-level math course within 9 semesters than their non-.XL counterparts (11.1%).**

#### **I. Demographics – Age and Ethnicity (Refer to Figures 1-8 and Table 1)**

<b>PCC Students Fall 2006</b>	<b>Basic Skills Students Fall 1999 to Fall 2006</b>	<b>.XL 4-6 Students 2005 to 2007</b>
64.5% under 25 years of age 77% under 30	43% under 20 years of age 77% under 25	47.4% under 20 years of age <b>94.8% under 25</b>
Hispanic -- 32% Asian/Pacific Islander --28% White --18% Other/Undeclared – 22%	Hispanic -- 37% Asian/Pacific Islander -- 29% White -- 12% African American -- 7% Other/Undeclared -- 15%	<b>Hispanic -- 78.1%</b> Asian/Pacific Islander -- 7.1% African American – 7% Other -- 7.1% White or Undeclared --0.6%

## II. PCC First-Time Student Demographics – Fall 2006

- 21% of all PCC students were first-time college students.
- Almost two-thirds of them lived in another community college district, 30% within PCC’s district, and 5% from either another state or country
- Males -- 50.3%; females -- 49.5%
- 74.4% -- under 20; 13.4% -- between 20 and 24; 87.8% -- under 25 years of age
- 34.4% -- Hispanic, 29.2% -- Asian/Pacific Islander, 15.5% -- White
- 63% of the first-time students in Fall 2006 took a basic skills course.

**.XL students are younger and more Hispanic than the general college, basic skills, and first-time student population. This raises an interesting recruitment question for the TLC staff:**

**Should the .XL cohorts continue to reflect the current profile or diversify in terms of age, race, and ethnicity?**

## III. Grade Distributions (Refer to Tables 2-6)

	C or better	D or F
All PCC in transfer-level courses (Fall 2006)	61%	15.8%
All PCC in basic skills courses (Fall 2006)	54.9%	15.5%
.XL 4-6 in all courses (2005-2007)	53.1%	19.7%

## IV. Grade Distribution by Ethnicity

	C or Better	
	PCC Fall 2006	.XL 4-6 Through Fall 2007
Hispanic	57.5%	51.4%
African American	50.5%	53.8%
Asian/Pacific Islander	66.3%	69.6%
White	69.6%	52.0%

As expected, the success rate of .XL students is lower than that of PCC students in transfer-level courses: 1) the success rates for continuing students is higher than it is for first-year students; 2) the success rates for students in transfer-level classes is higher than it is for students in basic skills courses; 3) Asian and White success rates for the general population are higher than that of Hispanic students; 4) the success rate of students over 25 is higher than it is for young students.

In addition, the success rate for .XL students is lower than it is for students enrolled in basic skills courses at the college. However, please note that the .XL rate is for all courses, including transfer-level courses, which are arguably rigorous and very demanding for first-year students. In any case, TLC staff need to continue to develop innovative interventions to increase the 53.1% success rate of .XL students.

It is interesting to compare the data above with that below -- .XL students succeed at a higher rate than other groups in all their classes over time. This is consistent with previous findings that revealed that .XL students succeeded at a higher rate in their next basic skills math classes not immediately but over time.

#### V. Success, Retention and Persistence (Refer to Tables 7 – 17)

##### Definitions:

- Success -- completion of a class with a C or better
- Retention – of the class until the end (rather than withdrawing) with any grade
- Retention I – completion of the class with a grade higher than an F
- Retention II – includes F grades
- Persistence – measured and reported in the semester for which students returned the following semester for another class.

#### VI. All PCC Student Success and Retention Rates: Fall 2006

	Success	Retention
All Divisions	65.9%	82.7%
Mathematics	55.4%	79%
English	67.5%	83.8%

#### VII. All PCC Persistence Rates by Ethnicity: Fall 2006

Persistence	Asian/Pacific Islanders	Hispanics	African Americans
	71.5%	66.7%	58.5%

### VIII. Basic Skills Student Success, Retention, and Persistence Rates\*

	Success	Retention	Persistence
All PCC (Fall 2004)	59.4%	81.4%	79.3%
Hispanic(Fall 2004)	52.1%	78.3%	76.6%
African American (Fall 2004)	42.4%	72.9%	72.4%

\* Note: Success rate includes Credit/No Credit grades

### IX. Success, Retention, and Persistence Rates for .XL Students, Cohorts 4-6, 2005-2007\*

.XL Students, Cohorts 4-6 (2005-2007)	78.5%	78.8%	see below
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\* Note: Success rate includes Credit/No Credit grades

The .XL success rate in Table IX (78.5%) is different from that in Table III on page 2 (53.1%) because the success rate in Table IX takes into account the total classes for which students registered, including grades of Credit/No Credit.

**.XL 4-6 students are succeeding at a higher rate, 78.5%, than PCC students in all classes, 65.9% (Table VI), and PCC students in basic skills classes, 59.4% (Table VIII). Even the lowest performing cohort, .XL5 is more successful (74.3%) than either of these groups.**

Persistence data on the .XL cohorts supports a previously known phenomenon (see Table 16): Persistence from Fall to Spring is always stronger than from Spring to Fall. That is, many students do not return after the summer. .XL4 persistence from Fall 2005 to Spring 2006 was 93.5%, but from Spring 2006 to Fall 2006 it dropped to 72.1%. This trend continues in Fall 2006 with 81.3% returning in Spring 2007, but only 78.6% returning in Fall 2007. It jumps again to 91.3% for Fall 2007 to Spring 2008. This trend is somewhat mirrored with .XL5 with a persistence rate of 80.9% in Fall 2006, 76.9% in Spring 2007 and 84.8% in Fall 2007.

**Table 16: Persistence, .XL Cohorts 4-6**

	.XL4	.XL5	.XL6
<i>Percent</i>			
Fall 2005	93.5		
Spring 2006	72.1		
Fall 2006	81.3	80.9	
Spring 2007	78.6	76.9	
Fall 2007	91.3	84.8	88.0

**TLC staff must address the large drop in the persistence rate for .XL students from spring to the following fall. Recommendations include spring counseling and advisement and special summer courses.**

**X. .XL5 and a Comparison Group** – PCC’s IPRO provided comparison group data and divided the cohorts by the English class they started out taking and by gender. This is particularly informative because it highlights some unexpected gender differences. While it looks like the comparison group that started out in English 400 has been successful in their classes (80.2%), that success is tempered by a significant gender difference. The men are only succeeding 70.4% of the time while the women are succeeding 83.5%. This gender difference is also seen in the .XL5 cohort’s success rates of 63.3% for the men and 78.0% for the women. Interestingly, this gender difference is reversed for the comparison group who started with English 100 – the men did better with 74.1% success while the women succeeded only 68.3% of the time. And, for the .XL5 cohort beginning with English 100, no gender difference exists, with both groups succeeding 75% of the time.

The English 400 .XL 5 group did more poorly than the Comparison group. This class is the most basic English course available at PCC and implies that these students were in the most need of English remediation. It is not unexpected that they would also struggle in their other classes. We have no interpretation of why they would do less well than a Comparison Group.

English 400 (Level 1) Success

	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Comparison Group</b>	70.4%	83.5%	80.2%
<b>.XL 5</b>	63.3%	78.0%	74.1%

English 100 (Level 2) Success

	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Comparison Group</b>	74.1%	68.3%	71.1%
<b>.XL 5</b>	75%	75%	75%

Totals are based on unbalanced sample sizes of men and women, they are not averaged across genders:

Men .XL English 400 Cohort n=6, Women .XL English 400 Cohort n=17

Men .XL English 100 Cohort n=10, Women .XL English 100 Cohort n=13

Retention (I) rates for both the English 400 .XL5 and Comparison groups look very similar to the .XL5 cohort retaining a little less than their comparison group. Closer analysis shows this difference is due to the females’ low retention rate that semester (92%) vs. the male’s 95.5%. The comparison group once again shows a reversed gender difference, though not as great, with males being retained at a rate of 92.6% and the females at a rate of 94.9%.

The English 100 groups show no such consistency from cohort to comparison group. The .XL5 cohort retained much lower (73.7% vs. 90.9). Here the gender differences are again counterintuitive as the males in both groups are retaining more than the females.

#### English 400 (Level 1) Retention

	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Comparison Group</b>	92.6%	94.9%	94.3%
<b>.XL 5</b>	95.5%	92%	92.8%

#### English 100 (Level 2) Retention

	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Comparison Group</b>	93.1%	88.8%	90.9%
<b>.XL 5</b>	77.3%	70.9%	73.7%

For the group that started in English 100, persistence rates are very similar for the .XL5 Cohort (82.6%) and the Comparison Group (82.1%). Again, closer analysis by gender shows that for the .XL5 cohort the males are much less persistent (70%) than their female counterparts (92.3%). A reverse gender difference exists in the Comparison group – males (92.3%) and females (73.3%).

For the group that started in English 400, persistence rates vary quite a bit. The .XL5 Cohort (78.3%) shows much of its low rate in female persistence (76.5%) vs. its males (83.3%). This is not the case with the Comparison group, which has a better balanced 84% persistence rate (males, 85.7%; females, 83.3%).

#### English 400 (Level 1) Persistence

	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Comparison Group</b>	85.7%	83.3%	84.0%
<b>.XL 5</b>	83.3%	76.5%	78.3%

#### English 100 (Level 2) Retention

	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Comparison Group</b>	92.3%	73.3%	82.1%
<b>.XL 5</b>	70%	92.3%	82.6%

**Because of the small sample size (individual .XL classes are typically half the cohort) and the fact that there is one class and one teacher, discussion about success, retention, persistence, and gender is limited. For example, data are easily skewed by individual teacher grading patterns.**

### **XI. Progression from basic skills to transfer-level English and math courses (Refer to Tables 18, 19, and 20 and Figure 9)**

For students who started in a basic skills English class in Fall 2004, 15 semesters later (Fall 2007) 50.8% register for a transfer-level English course. This information for .XL students is not available for comparison.

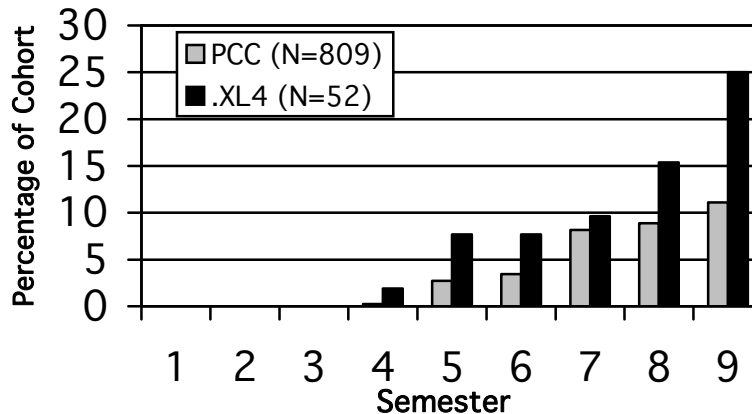
For students who started in a basic skills math class in Fall 2004, 15 semesters later (Fall 2007) only 17.8% of the original cohort had registered for a transfer-level math course.

For the .XL Cohort beginning in Summer 2005 (.XL4) at the end of the nine semesters we have data on, 25% of the .XL students registered for a transfer-level math class. In

comparison, only 11.1% of basic skills students at PCC registered for a transfer-level course in nine semesters (Figure 9).

**Figure 9 (Tables 18 and 20):**

**Semesters to 1st Transfer Level Math Class**



**More than twice as many .XL students registered for a transfer-level math course than their non-.XL counterparts during the same nine-semester period.**

## **XII. Final Thoughts**

- 1. There has been considerable dialogue both nation-wide and through the state about the value of isolating students of a particular race, ethnicity, age, or socio-economic group in special programs, such as summer bridges and first-year experiences. Whether or not the TLC decides to change its current recruitment policies and practices, it should be noted that .XL has made considerable progress in increasing the success rates of Hispanic students. The success rate for basic skills students of Hispanic descent at PCC is 52.1%. It is worth noting that .XL cohorts 4, 5, and 6, which are more than three-quarters Hispanic, enjoy a success rate in all classes of 78.5%.**
- 2. As stated above, .XL persistence from the spring semester of the students' first year to the fall semester of their second year drops considerably. The TLC staff must develop strategies and interventions to address this decline. Clearly, this targeted population needs support well beyond the first year.**